THE POLITICS OF MAGNIFICENCE IN FERRARA
1450-1505: A STUDY IN THE SOCIO-POLITICAL
IMPLICATIONS OF RENAISSANCE SPECTACLE

by

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In its present, final form, this study has considerably outgrown the original plan laid down in the autumn of 1976, which was merely to examine some aspects of Renaissance processions. That it gradually evolved, as the title suggests, into a "study in signorial culture", is due in no small part to the guidance of my teacher, Professor Denys Hay, who encouraged me to scrape beneath the surface of the "small tyrannies". It was a special privilege to have been his pupil. When Professor Hay retired in the summer of 1980, Professor Kenneth Fowler kindly volunteered to act as my supervisor. His scholarly insight and editorial skills helped me to overcome numerous problems while I prepared the final drafts. I am also grateful to Doctors John Stephens, Gary Dickson, and Angus Mackay of Edinburgh University, who listened patiently while I tried to polish several "rough" ideas.

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SUMMARY

This study attempts to decipher some of the cultural aspects of a Renaissance principate, taking as its subject the reigns of Borso (1450-1471) and Ercole (1471-1505) d'Este in Ferrara. Contemporary cultural and artistic forms (games, festivals, processions, theatre, dance, music) are surveyed, but several strands of a complicated texture, or "despotic style", have been isolated to focus attention on the ritual needs of signorial government in the second half of the quattrocento. Part One examines the socio-economic problems confronting the Estensi signori in the fifteenth-century, and the effects these had upon the relationship between signore and popolo. Chapter One studies the image of responsible rulership, with attention drawn to the public rituals enacted to institutionalize poor relief, charity, and signorial tutorship. The ceremony of signorial election is reconstructed to emphasize the alterations in the perception of the political communitas from the inception of the signoria. In Chapter Two, signorial justice is scrutinized through the medium of public execution, not only to outline the local problems associated with crime-prevention and prosecution, but to reveal the spectacle of punishment as a ritual exercise in princely sovereignty. The second part of the study deals with the typology of signorial festivals and ceremonials. In Chapter Three, signorial participation in and association with the customs, traditions, and rituals of the city is explored. A review of the festival year helps to show how the prince incorporated the image of his dynasty with the typological image of the urban centre. Problems associated with ceremonialization form the basis for an assessment of the signore's public identity in Chapter Four. The nature of ceremonial space and triumphal processions are studied to explain the complications of signorial rulership. A selected bibliography follows.
List of Abbreviations

ASMo  Archivio di Stato Modena
ASFe  Archivio di Stato Ferrara
ACSF  Archivio Comunale Storico di Ferrara
AAF   Archivio Arcivescovile di Ferrara
ASMan Archivio di Stato Mantua
AG    Archivio Gonzaga
ASM   Archivio di Stato Milano
ASF   Archivio di Stato Firenze
ASE   Archivio Segreto Estense
BCAF  Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea di Ferrara
BEM   Biblioteca Estense di Modena
CMPDE Cancelleria Marchionale Poi Ducale Estense
LG    Libro de' Giustiziati in Ferrara 1441-1557, Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea di Ferrara, MS. Classe I, no. 404
THE ESTENSI DOMINI: ORDER AND DISORDER

Chapter One

THE RITUAL OF REALPOLITIK

Signorial Action: Patronage, Institutionalized Charity, and Poor Relief

The accession day of Borso d'Este in 1450 (1 October), and of his step-brother Ercole in 1471 (20 August), were marked by the time-honoured tradition of a popular election. These elections, and the corpus of ceremonial accompanying them, preserved an historical continuity by publicly reconfirming the socio-juridical relationship between the signore and the Ferrarese popolo. Ostensibly, this relationship had been established with the election of Obizzo II d'Este as signore in perpetuam in 1264, the codification of Ferrarese statute law in 1287, and the interpretation given the electoral laws in consiglio generale upon the accession of Azzo d'Este, Obizzo's nephew, in 1293. The tradition of election in Ferrara was a record of participation in a public world whose temporal bounds were set by shared political experience. The ritual of election codified the precedents, prohibitions, and rights which arose from specific historical events and local ideological
assumptions. It established a particular kind of social and political order by arranging the movement of officials and the symbols of their office through a defined space at a special time. Whether the ceremonial functioned as Staatsymbolik or was merely didactic, "it was ordered so that a particular time and place were separated from the mundane and made memorable". 3

A certain degree of precision concerning the relationship between signore and popolo in Ferrara is essential to an understanding of the local ritual process during the later Middle Ages and Renaissance. For it was precisely this relationship which identified the temporal limits of the communitas. 4 Thus, in the Ferrarese election ceremonial, beneath an apparently regulated mechanism of official secular ritual, forces potentially injurious and disruptive to the community were singled out and confronted by the weight of local authority. The law of the signore was visibly reinstated following a brief, chaotic interregnum between the death of the prince and the elevation of his successor, 5 and with it, the signorial prerogative to legislate and act on behalf of the corporate will of the community was publicly confirmed. A show of physical force in the armed possesso procession threatened harmful consequences to the "enemies of the Ferrarese", and brought assurances that the princely vigil over the peace of the city would continue. The significance of possesso, however, was double-edged. In addition to solemnizing a familial protectorate over the city, wherein the physical and psychological well-being of the popolo were entrusted to princely tutelage
"comi boni padri famiglia", the formal assumption of "possessio" by the signore during the electoral cavalcata included a legal interpretation of the ceremony as induction into the holding of personal property. Similarly, in the case of the inauguration of signorial law, a certain price was exacted in recompense for the signorial promise to maintain a just and peaceful society. Lex, in the final analysis, was exchanged for voluntas. The sanction of government ultimately resided in the absolutum imperium of the prince. So the exiled Riccobaldo observed upon the election of Obizzo II d'Este:

Stipulatione facta, Syndicus constitutus ei Obizoni dominum defert plenissimum, ut omnia possit, justa vel injusta, pro suae arbitrio voluntatis.

According to Werner Gundersheimer, this kind of exchange fulfilled the conditions pertinent to an "implicit social contract" existing between the Estensi signori and the Ferrarese popolo in the fifteenth-century. Historical roots for a social contract are located in the late thirteenth-century, when popular collaboration assisted the subversion of communal institutions and precipitated the demise of a nascent republic. The conscious decision of the Ferrarese to "escape from freedom", he argues, was "a deliberate step toward the mastery of their natural and human millieu". To be sure, these are highly contentious conclusions. Gundersheimer offers few clues as to how the contextual language of "social contract" may be applied to Ferrarese socio-political experience. Moreover, the discussion of basic contractual agreements led by medieval legists, especially upon the arrangements encompassed by the constitutional responsibilities of the
prince as a holder of officium, was purely academic. No satisfactory means of realizing effective popular participation in communal government was discovered in the later Middle Ages. Oligarchy's "iron rule" remained safely intact. Quattrocento pseudo-Aristotelian prescriptive texts outlining ethical political behaviour, like their medieval antecedent "mirrors for princes", sought to impose moral constraints on the prince's freedom of action by enumerating virtues, but could not hinder the possibility of bad government. The prince ought, in every case, to serve "misura e ordene", declared Michele Savonarola in a treatise dedicated to Borso d'Este: "Sey esser le cose che tiranno i popoli in lamore dil suo Segnore beneficentia cioe e Liberalita e Forteza e magnanimita e Equalita e Iustitia". Reminding Borso of the duties circumscribed by his role as the active agent of the respublica, Savonarola added that the prince ought to preserve "il bene publico" by removing "li impedimenti intrinsechi per il suo biem vivere ma anco se conviene remove li impedimenti extrinsechi". However, the installation of a signore as the constituted authority in the community, whether by the express will of the people residing in the concionem or otherwise, almost inevitably led to the hereditary rule of an individual who was not limited by communal statutes or by communal magistrates. This fact had been made explicit in Ferrara with the amendments to the statute law in 1287, which recognized Obizzo II d'Este and his successors as the sole legislators for the city:

Quod si reperiretur aliquod statutum, quod repugnaret
Hence the signore was theoretically in a position "to do as much evil as good". As Riccobaldo caustically remarked of the powers conferred upon Obizzo: "Plus potestatis tunc est illatum novo Dominatori, quam habeat Deus aeternus, qui injuste non potest".

Nevertheless, students of Renaissance Ferrara may find Gundersheimer's intention to designate a style of rulership in association with the historical experience of the Este signoria, and the Weltanschauung bound up with it, conceptually instructive. It need not be assumed, as Jane Laurent recently suggested, that the whole issue of popular support for the Este regime in Ferrara is superfluous, "no more than an anachronistic concern of modern historians". True it may be that the Estensi did not regard the device of popular election as an additional imprimatur upon their legitimacy as rulers of Ferrara and the dominions. The notion of signorial election was repugnant to the superior brand of authority they wielded by the mid-fourteenth-century as papal and imperial vicars, later as marquesses of Modena, Reggio, and Rovigo (1393), and by 1471, as dukes of Ferrara, Modena, and Reggio. Yet the continued survival of popular election until the devolution of the signoria to the papacy in 1598 prima facie indicates that it had not been rendered wholly obsolete upon the election of Obizzo in 1264. That the survival of the Este signoria ultimately depended on the lord's ability to retain the support of his noble vassals through a system of feudal clientage,
and the careful maintenance of external political alliances, is not to be doubted. In practical terms, these considerations represent a continuum of Estensi domestic and foreign policy well into the sixteenth-century. To imply that the popolo ceased to participate actively in Ferrarese political society with the coming of the Este signoria, however, not only underestimates the complexity of that society as an organic whole, but severely curtails the possibility of understanding the substantive changes wrought over the course of several generations, which subsequently altered local modes of socio-political perception during the Renaissance.

Several factors mitigate against such a conclusion. First, it is apparent that despite the harsh and decidedly anti-popular legislation enshrined in the Ferrarese statute law and city ordinances, the Estensi devoted considerable energy towards cultivating, at least outwardly, an amicable, working relationship with the popolo in the fifteenth-century. Especially is this true of the reigns of Borso and Ercole d'Este, whose diligence in matters of "il bene publico" often went to quite elaborate lengths. Concern for equitable law and the misfortune of the city poveri was conventionally exhibited in the form of personal patronage, that is, the prince was moved to act in his capacity as law-giver or in his traditional role as a dispenser of largesse. The following petitions help to clarify the nature of princely patronage in these areas:

A La Illu\textsuperscript{mo} et ex. du. s.v. humelmente expone il fidelissimo servitor vostro Jacomo di Alioti barbiero e citadino vostro de ferrara che mo po essere misi
octo che dicto vostro servitor fu posto in presone del Comune ferrara per certi debiti et li e stato insino a hora, e perche el gie uno ordene a lo offitio de la Mag. mes. Jacomo di trotti honorabile Judice de li xii Savii, che passato misi sei non havendo de che pagare se licentia et cussi e sta facto a dicto vostro servitor de insire, Ma se trovo vostro servitor essere sta sequestrato per la Camera de la v. ex. de lire xii de marchesane per certa condemnatio za piu de uno anno facea dicendo havendo biastimato, e perche Illmo. Signore dicto vostro servitor e in infirma per poverta et non ha niente in questo mondo, per tanto supplica a la prefata v. Ex. che quella se digni de fare Gratia libere de dicte lire 12 de marchesane acio chel possa insire de dicta presone, e non morire dentro, e questo domanda de gratia.

Cancelletur dicta condemnatio libere et Intotem de Gratia, Siverius de Siveriis scripsit, xviii Jan. 1481 28

Antonii Nataliis ala Illustrissima et excellentissima duca s.v. Supplica il fidelissimo vostro Antonio de Nadale citadino de ferrara homo poverissimo et gravato de inutile famiglia che la excellentia vostra se digni amore del et pro amma Illustrissimo Nicolai patris vostra farli libera gratia et donarli uno sacho de frumento...

factores generales dominus domini faciant supplicati starios quatuor frumenti quos sua Celsitudino donnus ei, Joannes Compagnuo x Jan. 1472 29

It was generally recognized in Ferrara, as elsewhere in Western Christendom, that an integral function of princely office was to issue dispensation from or to set aside the city statutes and ordinances for the well-being of the citadini. Temperance in the application of public law at civil instance, danedati (civil damages collected on behalf of private persons or the state), dazi e gabelle (civil levies on financial transactions, consumer foodstuffs, luxury items, imports and exports, moveables and immovableables), tasse (taxes on notarial acts, weights and measures, and civil licences), the colte (communal income-tax), civil fines, and public debt, was a theme familiar to the daily regimen of petitions which began to flood the Este cancelleria about the middle of
the quattrocento. Significantly, neither the law of the signore nor his capacity to legislate were challenged by the petitioner. Rather, the prince was called upon to exercise his "climintia et misercordia" in a special case. Remarkable for its clear exposition of the consequences of punitive action undertaken by the civil administration at public law, of the terrible dread which descended upon the city prior to the posting of condemnations in the windows of the Palazzo della Ragione (hall of justice), and of a plea for princely intervention in civil matters, is the following unsigned petition to Borso d'Este on behalf of the popolo of Ferrara:

Illustrissimo et excellentissimo principe Duca, Marchese, conte, ecc. Perche secundo e mio obbligo Reverire et Amare Illustrissima vostra Serva che intendo de quella esser sempre fidele bon subdito et vostro servo, non mi posso hora contenire che quello sento in publico e privato nel faci almeno in parte noto a vostro clemente Signoria. Et anche per lo amore de Idio che cussi senza fine me zudigi in quello univers sal tremendo Judicio quanto cum drito animo et pura e simplice veritate questo scrivo, Come ozzi e stato facto crida nel palazzo de la raxone vostro per parte de sig. Antonio Sandeo notificando ad ognuno come Sabbado che sera a 10 de questo se publicammo le condanaxone de poveri homini al danedati, Ne lequale voglio Rendasse certissima vostra benigna Signoria che e proprio Idio Sancto ad epsi poveri homini, Delliquali certo sono assaissimi da esser condannati che hora mena sua vita stentando cum limoxine et hano in fine ad essere constricti o al murare o fuzire stentando cum sua lamentoxe famiglie. Che so se li Vedesse vostra Signoria et plene intendesse come he vera se ha la cosa se strenzeria per piaitoxa humana condic tion e farge bene suleravli et adiantarli, non voglio dare azunzere tribulatione et pene al soi martiri dove che non e alchun dinari e pocho altro bene, Et convense vivere pur cum quelli et per la puncta de epsa pecunia maxime nel tempo nel tempo presente caro et angustroxo, De che Illustrissimo principe che cussi Idio magno zudigi vui e mi come dal core proprio et sinceretade questo scrivo e senza saputa de altra cre atura alchuna che viva. Altro vogliati ala extrema poverta suvenire che non su... perhora suffocata max imamente insino al proximo Ricolto, provedendo per altre vostre ad epsa massaria de vostro comune come fare bene sa e po vostra Signoria cha sia struchato
et torchiolo Afflictì vostri miseri vassali, liquali in veritate se some bem cerchati et examinati sono fontichi de lacrime pauvertade e miseria, Et digni de adiuntorio prega a Idio e al mundo, parlano pur cussi ala grossa. Ma quello epso magno Idio non guarda parole, che vole lui sol e core e i facti e del tutto habiamo Nui a rendere Raxone. Valete, In ferrara a 2 de Mazo 1466.

Servitor humile e subdito vostro ecc. 33

Interesting too, is the sophisticated level of rhetoric apparent in the text, a marked departure from the standard notarial style indigenous to common petitions in Ferrara, from which it would appear that the petitioner was a cleric or formally educated, perhaps in the university. The idea of the Christian, God-fearing prince (subject to God's law) and the notion of active public virtue (God observes action, not words) were oft-repeated themes in humanist treatises recounting the triumph of signorial justice, but unusual in this particular context. However, it is unlikely that this petition represents an example of humanist-related philanthropy. Despite the rhetorical framework, the subject matter is directly concerned with the local problems associated with the prosecution of individuals for civil damages and the high level of communal income-tax, both of which are cited by the petitioner as inflicting extreme hardship upon poorer members of the Ferrarese community. In the circumstances, it was a reasonable expectation that grievances such as these could be redressed by the intervention and action of princely grace.

Also conventional were notions of princely piety, charity, humility, and concern for the psychological welfare of the popolo as expressed by means of religious patronage. If their predecessors Alberto I, Niccolò III,
and Leonello were not recalcitrant in bestowing favours upon the Ferrarese clergy, or in their profession of faith by private and public devotion,\textsuperscript{35} the considerable reputation enjoyed by Borso and Ercole d'Este as religious patrons overshadows them. Borso's personal piety, "sempre inanti il fare del die del letto se leva et incontanente cum il sacerdote l'officio de Dio et de la Matre per ordine, e le sue hore secundo che per la romana chiesa è ordinato",\textsuperscript{36} strict observance of religious festivals of adhesion, and willingness to protect mendicant preachers alone "lui meritara de essere canonizate" thought Caleffini.\textsuperscript{37} It appeared to the popolo, remarked the anonymous chronicler of the Diario Ferrarese upon Borso's death in 1471, "che Idio Eterno fusse iterum morto".\textsuperscript{38} Ercole, who according to Burckhardt employed religion "for the ends of statecraft",\textsuperscript{39} was widely celebrated as a figure of pietas and as a protector of monasteries.\textsuperscript{40} His singular devotion to temples of God and sacred relics, "de vere accrescere per la magnanime Religione del nostro divo pio principe",\textsuperscript{41} became, in the hands of Sabadino degli Arienti, the blueprint for a Christian prince, directly related to an ideological formula for good government.\textsuperscript{42} Indeed, it is perhaps misleading to over-emphasize continuity in the style of religious patronage undertaken by the Estensi during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. While Borsian and Herculean modes of patronage were not wholly new, and may be conveniently traced back to earlier devotional manifestations, the increased scale, signorial control, and modus operandi of religious patronage in Ferrara during the sec-
ond half of the fifteenth-century, suggest a certain degree of innovation.

Many of the devotional practices and customs which were adopted by Borso, and later expanded and elaborated upon by Ercole, were of course recognized standards of princely behaviour. Both Borso and Ercole regularly bestowed alms "in elemosine" upon the regular clergy to aid in the cure of souls, poor relief, and the care of the sick and infirm. Cloth, wool ("pezzi di lana"), and "un quantita de denari per li usi de lanno" were dispensed "ali frati et suore" in the septime after Advent (Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday), salt, oil, wax, and fish in Lent, and "in li giorni dele loro festivitate... del cibo e del poto necessariamente". Aside from these specially appointed times, there were frequent gifts of bread, wine, cheese, meat, and sums of money "per subventione" made throughout the calendar year. The eclectic range of ritual activities which attended these gifts according to the time of year, also had considerable material significance. As we shall see, food was often in precarious supply during the late autumn and early spring due to the annual floods in the Po valley. Seasonal gifts of natural produce helped to overcome chronic shortages as well as the rigours of fasting. The custom of seasonal provisioning naturally extended into the lay sector of society. Largesse in the form of bread, cloth, and small coins were regularly distributed amongst the city poveri upon the vigils of important religious holidays, and the popolo could count on a round of ducal generosity during the visits of "illustri" and on occasions of public "signi di
Ercole was accustomed to dispensing small sacks of grain about the city daily and during his visits to the countryside, and he further increased the institutionalized time sequences, those which appear in the financial records of the ducal camera and conto generale as yearly expenses, by initiating the custom of distributing ten soldi to the "poveri vergognosi" of the confraternity of S. Martino each Sunday, and by providing twenty denari for ten poveri each Saturday, "achieste dato quel disenare per la spenderia". The glut of petitions for pecuniary aid and "frumenti" which annually besiegèd the ducal camera during Advent and Lent, like their counterpart "petitions for grace", testify to seasonal signorial generosity in Ferrara.

Perhaps the most significant instances of seasonal provisioning in the lay sector were the penitential "festa dei poveri", commenced by Ercole d'Este in 1472, and the procession "andata cercando la sua ventura", inaugurated the following year. Attended by upwards of one-hundred city poor (though the numbers would increase dramatically during the later years of Ercole's reign), the former commemorated the Last Supper. At ducal invitation, the poveri gathered in the sala grande of the Palazzo della Ragione each Maundy Thursday eve, whereupon twelve of them "in li quali ge hera uno prete" were selected to sit at the high table "per significazione de la tavola de li xii Apostoli", raised upon a tribunal for this ceremonious occasion. In a remarkable scene of ritualized humility, Ercole then personally served the apostles a magnificent banquet consisting of
sturgeon, trout, and marine delicacies, wild game and wine, and afterwards, attended by members of his immediate family, bathed their feet "come uno devoto Christo". Jackets, shoes, caps, cloth, and a single golden ducat were later distributed to the favoured twelve, while the other guests received alms of bread (it is important to note that while Ercole was assisted throughout the ceremonial, he reserved for himself the prerogative of dispensing money, followed by the kiss of the recipient's enfolded hand). The whole of these proceedings was witnessed by a concourse of "gente de' clari citadini, sacerdoti e religiosi", who sat below the high table in the manner of spectators. 52 A recent analysis of Herculean piety has argued that the duke often presented himself in public "come principale attore di una religione accentuatamente teatrale". 53 In truth, this ceremonial representation of institutionalized poor relief at the Este court, albeit on a limited scale, encompassed wider implications. Ercole's Christo-centric piety, essential to the formulation of his public image, was continuously revealed to the popolo during the calendar year in a cycle of collective, intensively theatrical moments. Here we discover Ercole in the role of principal protagonist in the drama of Christ the King, occupied with the reconciliation of penitents and fulfilling the commandment concerning the washing of feet. 54

In the signorial procession "andata cercando la sua ventura", which normally occurred on two consecutive days, the vigil and eve of Epiphany (January 5-6), another segment of this annual ducal drama was portrayed: Jesus is
revealed as the Christ to the Gentiles in the persons of the Magi at Bethlehem, the Festum Trium Regum. Traditionally, the calendar feast of Epiphany was a time of joy and thanksgiving. It heralded a month-long (approximately) communal revelry which culminated in the excesses of Carnival, sharply distinguished from the abstinence of the Lenten fast which prepared the penitents for the tides of Easter Sunday. Licence to masquerade "per recreatione de la zoventude" was customarily granted to the Ferrarese by the duke upon Epiphany, though this was by no means an inalienable right. Permission "di andara in maschara" was often withheld in an effort to combat banditry, crimes of violence (in particular the vendetta), and other social ills which plagued Carnival celebrations. A certain degree of disorder was tolerated, but the atmosphere in the city always remained one of controlled spontaneity. The procession itself closely paralleled the activities of the Compagnia de' Magi in Florence, and it is possible that Ercole drew inspiration from these Medici-sponsored political allegories. The Herculean model is described in the Diario Ferrarese:

MCCCCLXXIII, a di v de Zenaro, et era de marti, lo illustissimo duca Hercole improviro, accompagnato da terbelissimo tempo di neve et vento, da li illustri messer Sigismondo, messer Alberto et messer Rainaldo, fratelli suoi da Este, et molti gentilhomini et citadini, andò per la citade de Ferrara cercando la sua ventura, a pede, la prima sera cum suoni di trombe, cantori et piffari; et la seconda sera, che fu a di 6 dicto, el giorno di Pasqua, a cavallo... 58

Food was solicited by the compagnia from the Ferrarese citizenry (this was accomplished by knocking on doors, seeking the fortune or "good luck" of Ferrara), and was conveyed by the ducal carriages (carete di corte) to the
piazza, there to be stockpiled for distribution to the city poor. Impressive lists of foodstuffs compiled by Ugo Caleffini during Ercole's reign attest to the enormous success of this venture: in 1473, 1,823 capons, 276 large cheeses, 54 head of cattle, assorted game birds, pies, marzipan, and other confectionaries were among the items collected, and the list might well have been greater had it not been for the inclement weather. The ventura served at once as a mirror image of Estensi affluence and generosity as patrons, combining simplicity with ostentation, humility with power. Perhaps more important, the procession, like the "festa dei poveri", cloaked Ercole with a ceremonial identity which operated within the framework of an awakened and revitalized Ferrarese civic consciousness.

The long procedure of recognizing the privileges of the Corporazioni di Arti e Mestieri initiated by Niccolò III d'Este and continued by his sons Leonello, Borso, and Ercole, worker's organizations, craft guilds, and public trade amalgams which had been banned by provision of Ferrarese statute law in 1287, began to affect civic life soon after the turn of the fifteenth-century. No longer politically affiliated, but committed to the purpose of civic responsibility and deeply involved in communal religious life under the direction of the signore, the emerging Arti became a focal point for lay piety in the community. Guild organizations afforded the possibility of direct participation in "rounds of acts of charity (as Marvin Becker calls them) to a much greater proportion of the population. Aside from the private,
institutionalized devotions enscribed in the matricole of each guild, the veneration of protector saints (SS. Cosmas and Damian - Speciali, St. Homobonus - Sarti, St. Andrew - Sprocani, St. Romanus - Drappieri, and so on) and the oblations made in the name of these saints at the church, chapel, or altar dedicated to them (the presentation at Mass of oil, wax, altar cloth, food, and money for the use of the officiating clergy, the poor, and the sick), the celebration of a fraternal meal which normally coincided with the "festa del patrono" and involved public acts of charity, the procedures for the oblations upon the feste of St. George and St. Maurelius (co-patrons of Ferrara) and the procession upon the feast of St. Dominic Guzman commemorating the expulsion of the Venetians from Ferrara in 1309, membership in a corporation offered manifest opportunity for the lay community to express collective piety in public devotions, and moral-social responsibility for the poor in philanthropic enterprises. This began with the care and protection duly established for members of guilds in the matricole, which functioned in a manner analogous to modern corporate insurance:

Item hanno statuito et ordinato, che se alchuno de detti Fornari se infermasse et non havesse il modo de vivere che tutti li altri Fornari della scola et compagnia predette siano tenuti ad ogni loro possanta proverderli de le spese per suo vivere. E venendo il caso della sua morte siano tenuti essi Fornari far lo sepelire a spesa della detta scola et compagnia. 69

The provision of funeral expenses and the care extended to widows of guild-members were recognized as standard charitable acts. Reliefs herein illustrated for the ass-
ociation of Ferrarese bakers, however, are clearly more comprehensive. Included is the promise to provide aid for members who had fallen ill and no longer had the financial means to sustain themselves or their families. Written in 1410, this is the earliest recorded instance of a Ferrarese corporate statute which espoused social welfare as opposed to Christian charity, that is, where poor relief extended beyond works of mercy. And to some extent, it seems to have established a precedent. An increasing number of Arti took up the notion of corporate welfare as the century wore on. The idea of civic philanthropy became more sophisticated and entrenched in enforced regulations. The statutes of the the Merciari (haberdashers, pedlars), officially recognized by Ercole d'Este in 1472, for instance, provided aid for members who had fallen into a state of poverty and penalties for the massaro who failed to carry out the association's obligation to care for them:

Item che se alcuno di detta universita divenesse povero o vero s'infermasse in stato di poverta', che all' hora il Massaro predetto sia obligato visitarli e provedesse alli suoi bisogni alle spese di detta arte in quel modo e forma, che al detto Massaro e savii parerra, e piacera, sotto pena di soldi venti marchesane, nella qual pena subito incorra ciascuno Massaro contrafaciente...

We should recall that the theory of poverty as a blessed condition, and the notion of the rich man as steward of wealth entrusted to him on behalf of the poor, were then currently emotive, and contributed greatly to the professed motivation behind poor relief enshrined in these statutes. The task of the guild-master, in his role as corporate steward, was to determine the state of poverty into
which individual members had fallen, and to issue the financial assistance deemed necessary according to his own judgement. Despite a resemblance to what our modern society now refers to as "schemes of social welfare", or even accident indemnities and insurance, it is doubtful whether it was entirely respectable to admit motivation other than in terms of charity in the more exalted and spiritual sense of the word. Nevertheless, the promulgation of penal language in statues associated with poor relief suggests a more vigorous pursuit of charitable service in the private sector during the later fifteenth-century. Moreover, it appears reasonable to assume that the inclusion of relief provisions in corporate matricola was encouraged by the Estensi. Efficiency in the care of the poor was maximized by the enlistment of established quasi-public organizations, and greater resources (especially liquid capital) were made available for this purpose by tapping directly into corporate wealth. Luciano Chiappini has recently noted that it is possible to verify a certain harmony in relations between the Estensi and the Arti developing from the beginning of the fifteenth-century, "lo si dovette soprattutto ad una prudente quanto astuta condiscenza dei primi e ad un effettivo e sostanziale cedimento delle seconde". Recognition of corporate privileges, and the initiation of a sense of civic responsibility, are the most obvious manifestations of this new rapport after the years of suppression. Might one argue further, that in the formulation of a new domestic policy rooted in anxiety for the preservation of their state, the Estensi sought to
ameliorate the woeful living conditions in Ferrara by participating in and encouraging civic philanthropy?

One can also detect the germination of limited civic patronage in Ferrara about the mid-fifteenth-century. Arrangements of sponsorship, wherein a single guild acquired the responsibility for the subvention of a religious order, though an infringement of signorial prerogative and a departure from the regular lines of patronage in the city, were not altogether unusual. For example, the Cambiaduri or Arte de Cambio (in the fifteenth-century this organization included the bancieri and prestatori, and supervised matters related to banking, currency exchanges, pawns, and credit) was bound to provide "per singulos dies et annos in perpetuam alere nuture et alimentare cibo potu vestibus et alis necessariis" for the order of Dominican Observants of S. Maria degli Angeli.76 How indicative of the increasing secular preoccupation with the notion of credit-worthiness in the sight of God, that a corporate body which indulged in usurious practices and harboured individuals who were accustomed to extortion, bribery, and fraudulent account-books,77 should embrace a religious order which espoused corporate poverty. The hand of the signore, however, was ever-present. The terms of the subvention cite the Estensi as the exclusive patrons of the order, and make explicit the fact that funds were to be made available by the Cambiaduri for the use of the Observantines at the specific request of the signore.78 The nature of this business agreement also helps to illustrate how closely interwoven the activities of the Observantines were with the fabric of public life
in Ferrara at Estensi instigation. In 1444 (the date of the decretal and subvention), we are still some sixty-three years from the installation of a monte di pietà in Ferrara, an official pawnshop where lending rates were rigidly controlled in an effort to reduce the abuses of usury and the exploitation of the poor. Fiercely anti-Semitic, the impetus behind the founding of these finance houses has been attributed to the criticism of the Jews and usurious practices indigenous to the sermons of Michele Carcano of Milan, and especially Bernardino Tomitano of Feltre. An entry in Wadding's Annales Minorum records the presence of Fra Bernardino in Ferrara at the height of the Venetian War (1483), and notes further that the chiding tenor of his Lenten sermons preached in the cathedral so aroused the wrath of his audience that the duchess Eleonora (of Aragon, wife of Ercole d'Este) was forced to intercede on his behalf lest he suffer violent injury. It was in the year 1507, when, according to the chronicler Paolo Zerbinati, Alfonso I d'Este was persuaded to institute the monte by the anti-Semitic sermons of the Observant Dominican Giacomo of Padua. Later, in 1533, Alfonso inaugurated the monte delle farine, a similar pious foundation where poor citizens could borrow seeds for sowing in Spring time. The local delay can be accounted for by the heavy reliance of leading Ferrarese citizens upon Jewish money-lenders (in some cases their direct financial support of local pawn-brokers), and the critical financial problems which beset the ducal camera. Two interrelated fiscal constants may be observed in Ferrara during the fifteenth-century: an increas-
ing spiral of inflation which devalued the ducal lira marchesana against foreign currencies, and an increasing Estensi indebtedness to local and foreign creditors. Indeed, by the later years of Ercole's reign, this economic trend was virtually irreversible. It was only through serious canvassing of the local nobility, and by establishing lines of credit with Jewish financiers, that the Estensi managed to keep the camera (and the state) above bankruptcy. Hence the protection of the Jewish community, a frequent victim of acts of popular violence, terrorism, pillaging, and mob hysteria whipped up by the general economic malaise which descended upon Ferrara in the later quattrocento, remained an integral part of Estensi domestic policy. Yet clearly, by promoting a sponsorship between the Cambiaduri and the Observantines, the Estensi sought some form of remedy to the growing abuses of credit-banking, pawn-broking, and trafficking in consumables. The watchfulness of the Dominicans, and in some instances their direct involvement in the provision of loans, brought moral constraints to local merchant activity as well as increased supervision of obedience to the statuti of the guild.

A more common area of corporate patronage was the provision for the decoration or construction of religious temples, either the embellishment of an altar or a chapel, or by participation in larger civil projects. Each of the Arti was usually affiliated with a particular Ferrarese church, the Bastaroli, Assagiatori, Crivellatori, and Brentatori with S. Paolo, the Mercari, Strazzaroli, and Pellicciari with S. Romano, the Lanaroli, Pis-
catori, and Orefici with S. Giuliano, and so on. Normally this relationship was cemented with a business understanding. In return for the privilege of conducting corporate affairs within the church precincts, the guild was charged with the partial upkeep of the building or the maintenance of grounds. On occasion, these relationships were actively promoted by the Savi del Comune to alleviate pressure on the city treasury. However, there was little difficulty in locating sponsors. An active catalyst to corporate unity was a strong sense of saintly affiliation. Images of saints and beati associated with the occupation of a guild, or who held some other special devotional qualities or historical significance, were continuously illuminated by ornate lamps placed upon the altar dedicated to them. Not only did this help to affirm a corporate brotherhood and identity essence in an otherwise undifferentiated network of commercial institutions, but the supernatural protection of "specialist" saints was invoked. The Fornari, for instance, whose patron was St. Alexius, also maintained "una lampada" in the cathedral, "davanti la Figura del beato Thomaso di Conturbia et quella mantenere piena e fornita de oglio et altra cosa necessaria per illuminare la detta Figura, in remissione de li peccati di essi Fornari...". A natural extension of these private devotions was the erection of altars: the sacral space of Ferrarese churches was intensified by the addition of new saintly shrines. In S. Giuliano, first established as a parish church in 1278 and rebuilt by Avogaro degli Avogari in 1405, four new altars were constructed dur-
ing the course of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries at the expense of the following guilds: the principal or *altare maggiore* dedicated to St. Julian, enscribed "Artis cauponum protector"; the first altar to the right of the *maggior* dedicated to St. Luke, enscribed "Artis laniorum protector"; the second altar to the right of the *maggior* dedicated to St. Eligius, enscribed "Artis aurificium protector"; the first altar to the left of the *maggior* dedicated to St. Andrew, enscribed "Artis piscatorum protector". Possibilities were of course limited by the availability of architectural space and the preeminent claims of noble patrons. Perhaps this might explain the practice of embellishing the walls of churches with sculpted images of protector saints which developed in Ferrara during the sixteenth-century, when, for example, the work of Giuseppe Ferreri (St. Eligius at the expense of the Argentieri and Orefici, St. John the Baptist and St. Antony Abbot Fruttaroli and Casaroli, St. Romanus Drappieri and Mercari), Luigi Turchi (St. Crispin Calzolari, St. Luke and St. Raphael Medici and Filosofii), and Pietro Turchetti (B. Giovanni da Tossignano and St. Catherine Giudici and Notari) newly adorned the walls of the duomo. Participation in large civil projects was less frequent. Construction of the campanile at the south-east corner of the cathedral was resumed in 1451 after a hiatus of thirty-nine years, funded by a special offering on the vigil of the feast of St. George, "et ge vene tute le castele, podestarie e capitaniati del distrecto del Signore et tute le Arte di Ferrara". Similarly, the Certosa, the famous Carthusian charter-
house built by Borso d'Este between the years 1452 and 1461, was the object of pious donations by the Arti to help defray the costs of construction. Gener

Generally speaking, historians have tended to overlook the role played by corporations in the society of Renaissance Ferrara. And certainly, we would be mistaken to suppose that corporate beneficence ever rivalled the favours bestowed by signorial patrons upon the Ferrarese clergy or the popolo. Nor is there any evidence to suggest that local guilds actively sought out clients for their patronage without first obtaining permission from the Estensi. Patronage, especially of a public nature, was stringently controlled by the signore. Yet it appears that the Arti did enjoy a limited freedom of action in the latter stages of the fifteenth-century, insofar as they were permitted to participate in a system of patronage (however marginal this may have been), and moreover, there are indications that they began to act as media for an extended sense of civic responsibility. There can be little doubt, however, that the Estensi were themselves the principal inspirational source for local civic action. Contemporary chroniclers assumed this implicitly, thus the careful attention paid to the physical movements of the signore and his public deeds, and to a dialectic which presupposed that these movements and deeds were supported by law grounded in virtue. Analogies drawn between the signore and the image of a fountain (fontico: variously expressed, a fountain of mercy, of justice, of charity, of liberality, etc.) which periodically appear in quattrocento political treatises and chronicle are
further testimony to this assumption. Here a series of metaphors, politically articulated, stress the symbolic value individuals possess and their relation to the active centres of the social order. The signore, or more precisely the signore's power, was the main reference point in Ferrarese society, the "fountain" of the social order which ultimately determined social realities and channelled social actions. Let us begin to examine this premise more closely, and in particular, the exterior manifestations of the signore's civic virtue.

Thus far it has been suggested that the religious patronage undertaken by Borso and Ercole d'Este differed from the philanthropies of their predecessors. Though patronage remained firmly rooted in traditional princely virtues fostered through the dynasty, the idea of seasonal provisioning, for example, extended beyond the realm of charity. Time sequences became increasingly institutionalized and formally codified in a series of ceremonial moments. The time sequences of the Ferrarese calendar even included the annual seasonal exchanges between the princes of northern Italy, which seem to have attained ceremonial status about the mid-fifteenth-century. Immediately prior to Lent, the Estensi regularly conveyed large quantities of Comacchian salt and fish to the dukes of Milan and Urbino, the marquesses of Mantua and Monferrato, the lords of Rimini, Cesena, Forli, and Imola, and the more important noble families in the domini, the Pio of Carpi, the Mirandola of Modena, the Rangone, Strozzi, Trotti, etc. Exchanges were no doubt made, but it is only known that the Duke of Milan customarily sent a prize Lombard steer
to Ferrara in early January for the celebration of Carnival (special emphasis was placed on a formal reception of this gift), and that the Gonzaga often reciprocated in kind with a present of sturgeon. A letter from Ercole to the Marquis of Mantua also confirms that the Estensi favoured the university at Pavia with a customary gift as a token of their patronage, "che ogni anno quasi ab eterno si e usato de mandare a pavia per uso di quello studio un burchio de anguille de le valle nostro de comachio... cum nostre littere de fede".

On the domestic front, hospitals too, fell within the province of Estensi generosity. The hospital of Sant' Anna, founded in 1444 by the Bishop of Ferrara Giovanni Tavelli da Tossignano with the financial assistance of Leonello d'Este, found a willing patron in Borso. In 1488, at the instigation of Ercole d'Este, Pope Innocent VIII granted plenary indulgence to persons visiting the hospital "ad hora de vespero... e dura insino al vespero del di sequente che hè la Zobia Sancta" to bestow alms for its maintenance. Later, in 1502, Ercole commissioned Antonio Costabili, Carlo Strozzi, Giacomo dalle Frutta, and Ludovico Muzzarelli as sindici to the hospital, "homini tutti richissimi, a ciò epso hospitale sia governato bene, ad utilitade de l'hospedale e di poveri". Another familiar theme was the prince in his role as guardian to virgins and orphans. Borso, "ut bonus princeps et dominis, ad quem cura pupillorum ed orphanorum spectat", regularly provided poor virgins with small dowries so that they might marry, and often financed students of little means in their professional studies.
at the university. Ercole's charity was especially extended to virgins who wished to "marry Christ" by providing dowries for novices. Patronage of this sort was wholly conventional in terms of the charitable service expected of a Renaissance prince. Yet Sabadino could was able to describe a more organized framework of poor relief under Estensi auspices. The poveri of Ferrara were divided into two categories, the "ordinary poor" who benefited from charity dispensed by the ducal camera and customary ducal generosity, and the poveri vergognosi of the confraternity of St. Martin, incorporated by Ercole in 1490, whose charity was destined for "La moltitudine de poveri citadini de ferrara li quali, si per la guerre, si etiam per altri infortunii del mondo de stato di prosperita esser venuti in necessita et misero extreme". A further seven categories of poveri are enumerated: mendicant priests and monks, wandering mystics and sages, the poor aided by a special fund of fifty ducats entrusted to the ducal chaplain, monasteries outside the ducal dominions, monastic orders local, citizens left destitute by bandits and pirates, and singers. Both the implied structure and scale of this patronage are revealing, above all, the resources placed at the disposal of monasteries. Here customary seasonal provisioning often included extraordinary gifts. In 1496, for instance, the monastery of S. Francesco received 400 golden ducats, S. Paolo 300, and the frati of S. Nicolo, S. Domenico, S. Maria del Vado, S. Andrea, S. Spirito, S. Maria della Rosa, and S. Maria degli Angeli 200 each. Between the years 1490 and 1497 alone, the number of monasteries
listed on the registers of the ducal camera who qualified for annual subvention rose from twelve to twenty-nine. The celebration of the Estensi as "padri" or "protettori" of monasteries in Ferrara dates at least from the reign of Niccolò III d'Este (1393-1441), who built S. Maria degli Angeli for the Observantine Dominicans in 1403. To this church the Estensi would express constant devotion, and the monastic complex became the burial site of the Este rulers. Niccolò III, Leonello (1441-1450), and Ercole were buried within its walls (Borso was enshrined in the cloister of his beloved Certosa), and in this way S. Maria degli Angeli functioned for the Este family as S. Maria delle Grazie did for the Sforza and S. Lorenzo for the Medici. It was not unusual for noble patrons to favour one religious order over all others, and the popularity of the Observantine Dominicans amongst noble philanthropists in the fifteenth-century is well known. The Estensi preference for this order, however, was tempered by historical loyalty to the Benedictine Nunnery of Sant'Antonio, founded upon the island of the same name in the river Po at the southernmost edge of the city, by the Blessed Beatrice d'Este in 1254. Regular donations and extraordinary dispensations made to Sant'Antonio and S. Maria degli Angeli are well-documented in the registers of the Mandati, and the important sponsorship noted above between the Cambiaduri and the monks of S. Maria degli Angeli may be considered as a signorial move to secure regular payments for their subvention. Security for Sant'Antonio also featured prominently in the Borsian Addizione to Ferrara, which incorporated the
island within the walls of the city.\textsuperscript{125} Embellishments to S. Maria degli Angeli included the financing of a new bell in 1456, the lining of the approach to the monastery along the Via degli Angeli (which ran from the Castel Vecchio) with poplar trees in 1457,\textsuperscript{126} and in 1471, Borso arranged for the construction of its new sacristy. Conventional support for these "family" monasteries was continued by Ercole, who also financed the campanile of S. Maria degli Angeli, completed in 1483 under the direction of the civil engineer and architect Biagio Rossetti.\textsuperscript{127}

Further evidence of increasing Estensi interest in the Observantines occurs with the reforms of 1469, when Borso imposed the passage to observance upon the Dominican monastery in Reggio under the General of the Order,\textsuperscript{128} and organized five houses of the Dominican Congregation of Lombardy (three from inside the dominions, two from Tuscany), reconstituted under a vicar who took the title "vicario sui conventi riformatori del dominio del duca d'Este".\textsuperscript{129}

Other religious orders did not necessarily suffer from neglect. We have already mentioned the construction of the Certosa by Borso, formally accepted on behalf of the Carthusian Order by Don Filippino of Milan, Prior of the Certosa of Galuzzo, and Don Ugo, Prior of the Certosa of Siena, on the \textit{festa} of S. Giovanni Battista (June 24) in 1461.\textsuperscript{130} According to the notarial instrument, the gift comprised a church (dedicated to the Virgin and St. Christopher), an arcaded cloister, a palace, feudal landholdings worth 2000 golden ducats per annum, and an exemption from all civic taxes and duties.\textsuperscript{131} Additional
Borsian undertakings included the sponsorship of a meeting of the chapter general of the Order of Augustinian Hermits in S. Andrea (1451), where between 1000 and 1200 monks were said to have received "una grande quantitate de victualia per la loro sustenazione",\textsuperscript{132} the roofing of the Servite monastery (S. Giovanni di Castel Tedaldo), substantial donations to the Franciscans for the construction of a new chapel in Santo Spirito (1454), sponsorship of the abacus schools of S. Domenico and S. Francesco,\textsuperscript{133} and the underwriting of repairs to the Carmelite monastery S. Paolo. Ercole's contributions to the regular clergy were no less significant. The financial records of the ducal camera indicate a steady rise in charities dispensed to the "frati e suore" over the course of Ercole's reign, increasing dramatically during the last fifteen years of his life.\textsuperscript{134} But it was as a patron of religious architecture that Ercole earned the accolade of pietas, celebrated by Gogio, Sabadino, and Francesco Ariosto amongst others.\textsuperscript{135} Extraordinary devotion to Sister Lucia Brocadelli da Narni, a Dominican tertiary "che ha le stigmate de Christo alle mane",\textsuperscript{136} led Ercole to build the convent of S. Caterina da Siena in the Addizione or "terranuova" in 1501 to accommodate his new "pia consigliera" and twenty-two of her companion-followers.\textsuperscript{137} The famous Addizione Erculea,\textsuperscript{138} a vast architectural scheme of urban renewal and amplification initiated by Ercole in 1492 under the direction of Biagio Rossetti, contained ten new or wholly reconstructed monasteries by 1505: (feminine) S. Rocco, Mortara, S. Vito, S. Caterina da Siena, Casa Bianca, Consolazione;
(masculine) S. Maria degli Angeli, Pomposiana, S. Francesco, S. Gabriele. In the older city-centre, three new chapels were added to the interior of S. Maria della Rossa (1495), and S. Niccolò was enlarged (Ercole also improved the capella maggiore in the cathedral in 1498, and saw the completion of the campanile).

To what might one attribute this burgeoning interest in the monastic community? No doubt Borso and Ercole were well aware that absolute temporal authority within the boundaries of their state did not exonerate their human actions, or protect them from the wrath of God. By accomplishing pious and charitable works, personal "treasure" was stored up in heaven. Incorporating new religious institutions into the community also expanded and intensified the sacral space of the city. Architectural alterations to the city's typological image offered testimony to the presence and protection of God in the community. "Godliness" was imported to mediate between earth-bound man and his Creator. Beneath personal concern for signorial salvation and Estensian manipulation of Ferrarese scenography, however, lay imminently more pragmatic concerns. Clearly, the Estensi sought to regulate communal spiritual life with a view to further bulwarking their preponderance over the social direction of the temporal communitas. It was Leonello d'Este who solemnly announced that in his own heart matters temporal and spiritual were indissolubly bound together, and that it was fully within the competence of the prince to govern the "immortalis Dei templa". This signorial attitude naturally caused a good deal of consternation in Rome,
particularly over the issues of ecclesiastical control and the assignation of benefices within Este territory. A fifteenth-century prince inevitably found it "inconvenient" when he discovered one of his subjects cited in an ecclesiastical court beyond the borders of his state. This could be construed (and often was) as a serious affront to the dignitas of the prince, who was, in every sense of the word, arbitrar in domestic matters of civil and criminal law. More important perhaps, problems arose in the Estensi dominions with delinquents "in abito ecclesiastico" who escaped punishment by virtue of their residency in a diocese not subject to the local bishop's tribunal. The possibility of princely intervention in ecclesiastical delicts by citing delinquents in the secular courts was the subject of a long correspondence between Ferrara and Rome in the later quattrocento. In 1494, Ercole managed to obtain certain concessions by provision of a papal bull, which allowed clerics to be cited and judged in secular courts under Estensi jurisdiction provided that the delinquents were of the orders minor and did not habitually wear clerical dress. No less important were the problems which arose over the control of benefices. It is not surprising to find the Estensi actively engaged in resisting the established curial practice of providing papal familiare to wealthy benefices, or providing benefices with candidates proposed by other princes as political favours at the expense of local clerics. Thus the public decree noted by Bernardino Zambotti in 1476:

Fu facta la crida da parte del excellentissimo duca
nostro quod niuna persona ardisca impetrare beneficio alchuno ecclesiastica in le terre de la soa signoria senza licentia de quelle, a la pena de doxento d'oro. 147

Resistance to these papal practices, for the most part, was motivated by signorial concern for local fiscal problems. Non-resident titularies could syphon off a considerable amount of wealth to be consumed abroad, detrimental to a state such as Ferrara, which already showed signs of serious economic decay by the date of the decree. As Giovanni Boccaccio, signorial ambassador to Rome, gravely reported to Ercole:

La maggior parte de li beneficii che vacano in nel dicto dominio suo tochano a forastieri... Et cosi in puoco tempo quella chiercia rimarh desolata... perochè veruno non li fa residentia et se portano via la grassa di quella terra. 148

Whether one can accept that the Estensi allowed this problem to have become so serious is a matter of debate, although protest against non-residency is a consistent feature of ducal correspondence to Rome. Resistance was also motivated out of consideration for the established ducal custom of enriching his own familiairs by providing ecclesiastical prebends for canons of cathedral chapters, letterati at the university, and members of local noble families. Recent studies by A. Samaritani upon local bishop's registers have confirmed a signorial policy which saw men in ducal service, consiglieri, ambassadors, and secretaries, compensated with ecclesiastical benefices. 149 The assignation of minor benefices to ducal functionaries is more difficult to analyse, but Adriano Prosperi suggests the following letter from Leonello Trotti to Ercole typifies signorial bargaining:
It would seem reasonable to conclude that with few notable exceptions, the Estensi usually succeeded in providing their own candidates to minor benefices, and by mustering their curial influence, managed to retain control of some of the more prestigious and lucrative offices.¹⁵¹

The monastic community, by contrast, offered little resistance to the signorial will.¹⁵² The reform of Dominican houses in the Este state, for example, was used as a political device by the duke, who arbitrated freely in their monastic affairs and commanded the obedience of the monastic hierarchy. Unquestionably, this had important consequences for spiritual devotion in Ferrara. Monasteries and monastic spirituality began to assume a new preponderance over communal religious life at the expense of secular ecclesiastical institutions and the older, traditional forms of worship they offered. Local religious excitement, often aroused by the Lenten sermons of mendicant predicatori who frequented Ferrara at the invitation of the duke,¹⁵³ focused on a revitalized or "living" Christianity, increasingly identified with works of mercy and charity directed at the poor. A significant aspect of this new religious sensibility in Ferrara was the proliferation of lay confraternities. The oldest Ferrarese confraternity, the Compagnia dei Battuti Neri di S. Maria, was founded in 1366 and officially recognized in 1378,¹⁵⁴ in 1389 the Compagnia de Cha
de Dio erected the Oratory of St. Christopher "di raccogliere i Parti esposti si legiti, che spuri o bastardini abandonati dalla crudelta de' loro Genitori", and in 1399, a second group of flagellants, the famous Compagnia dei Battuti Bianchi, arrived in the city amidst all the devotional furore which would make them highly unpopular with the authorities in a number of urban centres in north and central Italy. An anonymous chronicle lists nine confraternal organizations in Ferrara upon Borso's death in 1471, and by 1494, the number had risen to thirteen. For the present we need not concern ourselves with the charitable aspects of confraternal activity (especially confraternal affiliation with local hospitals "per alogiare poveri"), nor the confraternal role in the ritual manifestations of public spirituality, the processions and sacre rappresentazioni. What needs to be emphasized here is the installation of a new kind of spirituality in Ferrara and its relationship with civic action, a "religione cittadina" wherein greater numbers of citizens were encouraged to participate in corporate piety. Above all, one ought to remember that much of the impetus for local religious sensibility, at least insofar as the moulding and organization of public expressions of spiritual devotion were concerned, emanated directly from the Estensi court.

It must be stressed that Borsian and Herculean policy towards the local clergy, secular and regular, was not unusual in the signorial context of late quattrocento northern Italy. Yet in a very real sense, externalized Christian virtues, piety, charity, humility, and liberality, each of
them intimately connected with Estensi religious patronage, contributed to a new interpretation of rulership in Renaissance Ferrara. As we shall see, ducal religious sensibility, especially its ritualized attributes, helped to elucidate a conceptual framework for a new notion of princely majesty, of dignity, and of spatial distance (both psychological and physical), which furnished the Este dynasty with ideological content in the second half of the fifteenth-century. An interesting monograph by Ludovico Zorzi, suggestively entitled "Ferrara: Il Sipario Ducale", has recently discussed the concept of "distance" by exploring the cultural implications of urban space in Renaissance Ferrara. Sig. Zorzi presents us with a tri-partite model of urban space-qualities, "dalla città reale alla città simbolica alla città immaginaria", each corresponding alternatively to "Ferrara visibile, dagli stereotipi delle peregrinationes e dei mirabilia e dalle illustrazioni dei trattati". Most important for our purposes is his thesis that each of these spatial orders reflected dynastic auto-contemplation, or more exactly, that urban space was continuously elevated to the plane of theatre, with the duke and his courtiers in the role of actor-spectators (spectators in the sense that they were witnesses to their own self-images), and the citizenry in the role of passive observers. Although he does refer to an Estensian theatre of "intimidation, sanction, and social order" which involved necessarily the Ferrarese citizenry as active participants, Zorzi's principal concern is to reveal courtly culture as exclusive. The popolo are an unnecessary ingredient to
successful courtiership. Yet ceremonies such as the "festa dei poveri" and "la ventura", mentioned earlier, and ducal participation in the public vita liturgica, fall easily into a theatrical category, and one is apt to question their omission from Zorzi's model of urban space. Indeed, one might justifiably conceive of Estensi religious patronage and charity, always public, as a total theatre of ducal benevolence. If we accept Zorzi's analogy between urban space and a theatrical stage, we will want to query his contention that courtly culture was wholly monolithic. Ducal piety, however, was only one component of a constant public expression of ethical governorship and moral-social responsibility inherent in the signorial possession of absolutum imperium. Can the analogy be drawn further to include contemporary political experience?

The Este Signoria in the Fifteenth-Century: Socio-Economic Problems in their Historiographical Background

The city which Borso d'Este entered in procession upon his election in 1450 nestled along the north bank of a branch of the river Po, just west of the junction of the Po di Primaro and the Po di Volano, the two major streams leading east from the Polesine of S. Giorgio to the Adriatic, a distance of some thirty-five miles. To the north of the city, the Po grande crossed the Ferrarese Polesine, meandering north-eastwards towards the Gulf of Venice. The Ferrarese contado was a fertile
land, where cereals were cultivated in abundance (chiefly wheat, but also barley, rye, corn, and oats) and cattle grazed in large herds on the pasture-lands of the plains. Local rivers teemed with fish, and from the marshes of the vale of Comacchio near the sea-coast came eels (a Ferrarese delicacy) and a steady supply of salt, the latter perhaps the most precious of all commodities. As we have briefly indicated above, much had transpired from the heady days of communal independence in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries, when Ferrara contested with Venice for commercial supremacy in the east-central Po valley. In place of the thirty-two proud towers, each controlled by a noble family, which Riccobaldo noticed at the beginning of the duecento, there now stood just two imposing fortresses, the Castel Vecchio opposite the cathedral and piazza del Comune, and the Castel Tedaldo, near the river's edge at the south-west corner of the city. Where the old communal walls had been pierced by numerous passageways leading to the interior of a thriving urban marketplace, there now stood bastions and ramparts (by 1476 only four gates remained open, the others having been barricaded for reasons of security). If the Ferrarese had purchased security and ended factionalism by accepting Obizzo II as signore in 1264, the cost to their commercial prosperity was proportionately high. When one imagines how Ferrara appeared to its quattrocento inhabitants, it must have been first and foremost as a prince's stronghold, a commanding position of stone and earthenworks at variance with its pastoral surroundings.
To assess how the Ferrarese viewed their signori during the Borsian and Herculean years, we might begin by making a distinction between ducal spectacle as Staatsymbolik, or morally instructive political ceremonial, and "bread and circuses", a political subterfuge designed to escape unpopularity. The former may be thought of as belonging to the communal ritual process, the local mode of social and political perception, whose didactic qualities and symbolic expression underwent evolutionary changes under Estensi tutelage. In many ways critical to Estensi political survival in Ferrara, the latter may be likened to a "choreography of state". Survival was of course the most immediate signorial concern. Despotic regimes in northern Italy were notoriously fragile, ultimately depending on the good will of noble clients, the maintenance of powerful allies, and to a certain extent, a responsible form of governorship. The Este signoria in Ferrara proved no exception to this steadfast rule. A list of official rebels "della Serenissima Casa d'Este" was kept from 1287, and conspirators were rooted out with ruthless efficiency by the captains of justice in co-operation with the officio dei traditori. Yet ducal vigilance did not prevent the Pio conspiracy against Borso d'Este in 1469, nor the attempted coup d'état by Niccolo d'Este in 1476. The Libro de' Giustiziati records the ritualized fate of those involved in the abortive plots and other sudditi periodically found guilty of crimen laesae maiestatis in the fifteenth-century. On this "theatre of intimidation", more will be said in conjunction with ducal justice (chapter two).
The image of responsible governorship, however, merits immediate investigation. Historians of Renaissance Ferrara have always accepted, no less implicitly assumed, the constant loyalty of the popolo to the Estensi signoria. In consequence, it is suggested that the Ferrarese were committed reflexively to despotic government. Readers of the Ferrarese chronache are inevitably struck by the lack of references to popular criticism of the Estensi (though this is exactly what one would expect in chronicles written by men in ducal service), but it is equally apparent that given the opportunity, popular discontent could emerge and exert a considerable moral and physical force in the community. Moreover, if one accepts the hypothesis of "reflexive commitment" to signorial government, and it appears reasonable to do so in terms of Ferrarese historical experience, it does not necessarily follow that loyalty to the Estensi was an irrevocable corollary. D.M. Bueno de Mesquita reminded us of this in his reflections upon signorial government:

When it is equipped for the purpose (of ruling) with a formal doctrine of power absolved from the law, it is subject to an immense moral strain. If the ruler chose to satisfy his inclinations and take what he wanted, there was no human law that could call him to account. Irresponsibility in personal conduct, fed by such a doctrine, accounts for much in the more bizarre and bloodstained episodes of the Signoria. There were few who would be astonished or particularly shocked if the prince indulged himself in moderation.

His remarks concerning Visconti and Sforza history, "that there were limits beyond which it was unsafe for a ruler to trespass", should further remind us of the importance of acting, or being witnessed acting, as a responsible
governor. Discontent, even hostility to Estensi domestic policies, simmered throughout the fifteenth-century. The first recorded case of popular aggression and violence regarding the high level of communal taxes occurred as early as 1385, during the reign of Niccolò II d'Este. Twenty years of hardship, floods in 1362, 1369, 1385, famine in 1369, 1370, 1374, and 1375, the plague in 1382, had reduced the population by approximately one-third: the survivors suffered enormously under a fiscal policy designed to increase signorial wealth. The architect of this policy, the cancellarius and consilio Tommaso da Tortona, was especially hated by the Ferrarese, and it was his announcement of yet another rise in the colta for the year 1385 which animated hostility. On the 3rd of May the signorial palace was stormed by "thousands" of the popolani shouting "Vivat Dominus Marchio et moriatur Dominus Thomasinus proditor", finding Niccolò completely unprepared to deal with such an emergency:

Praefatus Dominus Nicolaus timens, ne sibi deteriūs posset contingere, ut providus, atque considerans, quod suis blandis verbis & promissionibus tantem furorem sedare non posset, celebrato consilio, pro salubriori suo statu praedictum Dominum Thomasinum istius cladi auctorem praedictis Popularibus in eorum manibus liberā mandavit. 175  

The fate of Tortona, torn to pieces by the mob, burnt on a pyre composed of his own financial records from the cancelleria, and finally hideously displayed at the city gates ("et ibidem posita omnibus in spectaculum"), must have served as a hard lesson in the business of despotism. We learn from Zambotti that Ercole took no chances, and had a private bodyguard of twenty-five men watch over his personal security day and night. 176
Still, the Estensi seem to have been remarkably successful at evading popular criticism and being branded the exploiters and evil-doers they undoubtedly were. Before we begin to discuss the nature of a methodical Estensi subterfuge regarding their relationship with the popolo, however, it is necessary to place their brand of rulership in a common signorial mould. Here again, Bueno de Mesquita has noted the futility of questioning contemporary signorial attitudes and the constant expression of concern for justice and social welfare. The test of the way in which the signorial system worked, he says, must be the acts rather than the words of the government, "and it is quite easy to find specific cases which demonstrate the hypocrisy". One perforce ought to agree.

Yet the relation of evidence concerning Estensi hypocrisy, particularly during the reigns of Borso and Ercole, can serve two useful purposes. First, it helps to defuse the myth of the "golden age" of Renaissance Ferrara, largely a product of traditional Ferrarese historiography. It is not at all clear that contemporaries envisaged a "golden age", nor whether the "mediocrita umana" of the Estensi was sufficiently camouflaged to warrant the use of this term. Second, and perhaps most important, it helps to illuminate the kinds of socio-economic problems confronting the Ferrarese in the later quattrocento, and the pressures which were brought to bear upon Estensi domestic and foreign policy.

A recent survey of criminal activity in Renaissance Ferrara makes the point that in the period 1440-1500, "there were many years of real tranquility and consider-
able well-being", such that the popolo laboured together to solve common problems in agriculture, in urban construction, and in defense.\textsuperscript{179} But although reference is made to the growing problem of political as well as criminal violence in Ferrara during this time, few passages are devoted to an appraisal of the natural problems of flood, famine, and plague which afflicted the padovano generally, and the Ferrarese città-contado on a regular basis after 1450. A connection between famine and the banditry which terrorized the Modenese contado, for example, was made by the chronicler Jacopino de' Bianchi:

Del 1474 adi ultimo febraro se levò circha 200 homini contadini armati li quali si chiamavane la compagnie de li arabi, li quali andone per forze e per fame che avevano al Cavezo e in altre vile li de intorno e la Bastia da Cexa, per forza intravane in le caxe dove hera formento, de quelo tolevane. Nota che per questa fame e carastia e per grando mancamento de dinari, si trovo in questo tempo molte famie che non se viveano xv di alla volta altro che herbe cote, in de quale ge butavane uno pocho de formaio o in lato o in sero. \textsuperscript{180}

Leaving aside the connection with crime for the present, it is possible to place the famine of 1474, which devastated the whole of the Estensi dominions, in a proper perspective. No relief for the contadini would be forthcoming: the state coffers were empty following the enormous financial outlay on Ercole's wedding to Eleonora of Aragon in July of the previous year, and the Este court itself lacked bread.\textsuperscript{181} Moreover, Ercole's instructions for the reception of illustri in Ferrara and elsewhere in the domini remained abundantly clear: "che le cose passino con honore, cum honore et con honore".\textsuperscript{182} The hypocrisy of the signorial concern for his subject's welfare is self-evident.
Events surrounding the ducal regulation of grain prices in 1476 provide additional evidence:

Adì 7 il sabbato. El fromento se hera venduto a li passati molto caro. Hozi il duca nostro mandò a vendere il fromento suo in Piazza a soldi xii il staro, e non volea se ne desse piú che stara doa a ciaschaduno commeratore, cum zuramento che lo tolseno per loro a non per altri, perche el fromento de li citadini se vendeva 17 il staro. 183

One of the methods employed by Niccolò d'Este (son of Leonello d'Este and disputed heir to the signoria of Ferrara from 1450)184 to incite the citizenry against Ercole, was to circulate rumours that the price of grain was kept over-high in order to increase Herculean profit-margins, and that he, if accepted as signore, would lower it. Ercole's action indicates a desire to dispel those rumours (he was willing to take a loss to do so) and demonstrate his good will towards the cittadini. Yet one month later, the following decree was issued from the windows of the Palazzo della Ragione:

Fu facto comandamento per publica crida da parte del duca nostro che ciaschaduno che faci vita rustica, dibia fare pane di mistura a fine che piú longamente se possa havere del pane, perchè se ritrova grande carestia per tutto e hozi se vendeva in Piazza soldi 20 il staro del fromento e apena se ne ritrovare, el milgio valea soldi 10, el orzo soldi 10 il staro. E questo perchè questi Ongari sono qui comperano assay biave da cavalli: se espectano de accompagnare la Rezina al viazo de Ongaria; perchè ge sono anche molti Neapolitani, Fiorentini e Veneciani. 185

Undoubtedly the flooding of the river Po was instrumental in raising grain prices and bringing about the call for pane di mistura (bread made with wheat-substitutes like millet and barley), but it is significant that Zambotti records that rural dwellers alone were expected to suffer the brunt of the shortages, and that Ercole wished to ensure a sufficient supply of grain for the cortège quart-
ered in the city, which waited to accompany Beatrice of Aragon north to Hungary for her marriage to King Matthias Corvinus. Queen Beatrice arrived in Ferrara on the 13th of October after several days delay in the village of Corbola due to the flood-waters (where Ercole had contrived to render all possible honours), and a week of banquets and feste ensued, by all accounts, some of the most sumptuous Ferrara had yet witnessed. A similar preoccupation with his international image had often driven Borso to inflict hardship upon the popolo, particularly the inhabitants of the subject contado. The most notorious example of Borso's wanton disregard for the desperate plight of his subjects came in the flood-year of 1471, when preparations for his investiture as Duke of Ferrara by Pope Paul II in Rome took precedence over the misery caused by the resulting famine. The instructions delivered to the Captain of Justice in Reggio were "a trarre quel piu sugo se potesse", and to extract money from every place "per possibile et per impossibile".

If the test of the methods of a government must be the acts committed, however genuine the concern for social welfare is expressed in words, then the records of the fattori generali, the chief financial administrators of the ducal camera, certainly cast suspicion on the view of the Estensi as precursors of enlightened despotism. Incidents listed in the cameral registers (Registri di Mandati) reveal signorial justice to have been exceptionally harsh, and the demand for service and obedience unequivocal. It is puzzling, therefore, to find that historical judgement pronounced upon the Este
signoria has often been kind, perhaps far kinder than it deserves. Little attempt has been made to analyse the economic problems which afflicted Ferrara in the later quattrocento, or to correlate these problems with the pressures brought to bear on the Estensi. We will notice below, time and again, how both the signore's perception of and reaction to the woeful state of his finances were determined by the formulation of his public image, and galvanized signorial behavioural patterns. A useful introduction to this relationship involves a brief conspectus of the historiographical view of Renaissance Ferrara.

The delay in assessing Ferrarese historiography until now allows us to better illustrate its inadequacies and the problems encountered by the historian in search of synthesis. In the past, the strength of historical scholarship on Renaissance Ferrara has been "studies in humanism". This may be explained by a scholarly legacy of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when Ferrara provoked a great deal of interest amongst Italian historians for what appeared to be its stable, just, and unrepressive government. This is hardly surprising, given the wave of local patriotic fervour which urged on Pardi, Gandini, Cappelli, Solerti, Bertoni, et al in the task of reconstructing the glorious past, and brought forth a host of learned journals devoted to italianità. Indeed, one could hardly have expected these scholars to engage in a critical approach to their subject. The nature of their inquiry into the Ferrarese past did not attempt to challenge the
imposing antiquarian works of Muratori, Baruffaldi, Frizzi, Citadella, and Campori, but sought to augment them. Fascinated by a hypothesis that Ferrara rivaled Florence as a centre of culture during the fifteenth-century, these scholars devoted much of their energy to the study of humanist-related phenomena: philosophy, art-history, literature, and education. Consequently, synthetic investigation into lo stato, signorial politics, administrative and legal history, the economy and foreign policy, suffered from relative neglect.

The trend in post-1945 Ferrarese historiography has largely been to correct this imbalance, although the older tradition has lingered on in the penetrating analyses of Eugenio Garin, and to a lesser extent, of Ludovico Piromalli and Sesto Prete. The earlier work of Laderchi, Zaccarini, Gatti, and Simeoni upon medieval and Renaissance statute law has been supplemented by Montorsi, Farnetti, Zucchini, Franceschini, and Lombardi. Filippo Valenti has studied the Estensi cancelleria, and more recently his pupil Paola di Pietro has helped to reorganize the copialettere di cancelleria in the Archivio di Stato Modena, and conducted preliminary research upon the catastre delle investiture. The theme of "signorial clientage" has been variously explored by Chittolini, Marini, Tagliati, and Jane Laurent, their attention drawn both towards the internal consolidation of Estensi power through a policy of refeudalization, and the evolution of the notion of stato with an expanded and more comprehensive bureaucracy.

Research upon Estensi foreign policy in the second
half of the fifteenth-century remains uneven. The standard works on the Venetian War (1482-85) and the diplomacy of the "crisi italiana" (1454-94) by Fuscaldo, Negri, Segre, and Picotti have not been revised, although the Venetian historian Roberto Cessi provides a useful analysis of the war in Ferrara and the subsequent Treaty of Bagnolo. Precious information may be gleaned from studies upon the structural equilibrium of the Italian Staatsystem. Research upon Ferrarese diplomatic missions, however, is distinctly lacking. Traditionally, the attention of Ferrarese scholars has focused on the carefully orchestrated series of marital alliances contracted between Ercole I d'Este and the princely houses of Italy (Sforza, Aragon, Gonzaga, Borgia), or has pursued the debate concerning Herculean complicity in the French invasions of 1494 and after. Recent Ferrarese historiography has adopted a not altogether new approach. We now view Estensi diplomacy through the careers of the professional letterati who acted as signorial ambassadors. The work of Varese on Pandolfo Collenuccio, Ascari on Francesco Ariosto, Gualandi on Antonio Sarzanella di Manfreddi, and Rotondò on Pellegrino Prisciani are the best examples of this re-orientation of scholarly inquiry.

Given the variety of the subject matter listed above, it is curious that no comprehensive study of Ferrara's economy in the fifteenth-century has been written, or is yet in progress. This poses serious problems for the student in search of a reasonable understanding of the local socio-economic milieu, which more often than not determined the direction of Estensi domestic
policy. We must still rely on Vincenzo Bellini for an explanation of Ferrara's complex "money-economy", and on Pietro Sitta's lengthy saggio for an elementary grasp of Estensi financial administration. Various studies have been made upon Ferrarese agriculture, the problems of hydrology in the padovano, and the financial legislation concerning the vale of Comacchio. Yet few elaborate upon the accumulation of capital wealth, whether in corporate structures, or in private patrimonies. The administration of public and private allods contained in the records of the Camera Marchionale Poi Ducale has not been examined analytically, nor has the extent of feudal revenue been measured against the capitalization of wealth. It may be logical to assume that the greatest of the local noble landowners, the Trotti (whose possessions were said to rival Estensi holdings), financed their land purchases by speculation in the Venetian grain exchanges, trafficking in Comacchian salt, investing in pawn shops, price fixing in the local marketplace, and avoiding the costs of special licences and import tariffs by petitioning the Estensi for exemption. But while there is evidence which suggests that local landowners shipped large quantities of grain to Venice, where the international commodities market increased the likelihood of higher profit-margins, it has yet to be determined how far Ferrarese nobles were involved in regular commercial enterprise. One might also point to the example of Teofilo Calcagnini, whose loyalty to Borso d'Este was rewarded outright with landholdings worth an estimated 300,000 golden ducats.
This type of signorial gift was not unusual in Estensi Ferrara (though in this instance the value of the gift far exceeded normal bounds of generosity), in fact the very ability to allocate, confiscate, and re-allocate landholdings was the principal source of signorial political power in the dominions. Clearly, landed estates in the contado generated wealth, which perhaps had as much to do with the Venetian economic hegemony in the padovano as the favourable agricultural conditions. Did such feudal and agricultural revenue suffice in light of the requirements of the Ferrarese nobility?

This assuredly was not the case with the Este court. The communal administrative mechanism, as it was originally conceived in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, was never designed to support a governmental superstructure like the ducal camera, or the institutionalized "consumption" of a princely court: the prince's gentlemen, consiglieri, cancellieri, fattori generali, notaries, chamberlains, seneschals, messengers, pages, domestics, musicians, singers, doctors, barbers, falconers, masters of hounds, stable masters and their stipends, the maintenance of ambassadors, the upkeep of delizie and palaces, the ordinary domestic expenses of the court and its household (alimentary provisions, firewood, wardrobes, etc.), the costs of extraordinary state events, and the entertainment of an idle nobility. Ugo Caleffini, who found employment at the ducal court as a notary, was able to leave us with a fairly accurate assessment of the signore's annual expenses. A list of the salaried officers of the ducal household
in the year 1476 (ranging from the most prestigious camaral positions down to the merest stable boy) puts the total of monthly stipends at 9328,5,8 lire marchesane (hereinafter cited LM). When this figure is combined with the monthly expenses of the duchess's household (her monthly income was 700 LM and the stipends of her salariati totalled approximately 1000 LM), we arrive at a total of some 11000 LM expended on household salaries each month, or 132000 LM per annum. The Libro dei Salarlati published by the fattori generali in 1492 confirms that these figures remained relatively constant throughout the later fifteenth-century. Caleffini also tells us that in the year 1473, the ducal household numbered 721 individuals, a total which may have declined over the years due to economizing, though Cristoforo Messisbugo's register written in 1539, the Compendio Generale di Spese e Provisioni per la Corte di Ferrara, indicates that the ducal court had grown substantially by the reign of Ercole II d'Este. To feed the household in 1473 (this figure includes the expenses of transporting consumables, the price of firewood and wicker articles for the kitchens, hostelry at inns, shoeing horses, copper utensils, medicines, etc.) cost 40556,2,8 LM, and 420 horses in the ducal stables consumed 40573,3,4 LM worth of hay and oats. The annual operational costs of the ducal household, then, yield a figure somewhere in the neighborhood of 213000 LM, though the omission of the household's annual consumption of grain (19640 bushels: moza 982 at 20 bushels each, or sachi 4910 at "stara 4 per sacho") and wine (13550 barrels or mastelli) from
Caleffini's calculations must put the figure for total expenditure well in excess of 250,000 LM per annum. Also absent from these computations are the figures for the salaries of nearly 150 office-holders who governed the ducal dominions (podestàs, captains of justice, vicars, judges, treasurers, tax-collectors, garrison commanders, etc.). The cameral subsidy of the rota of dottori at the university (Borso d'Este assumed the responsibility of paying university stipendaries in place of the Comune of Ferrara, a staff of some twenty to twenty-five lecturers, who shared between them 10,000 to 11,000 LM per year), the cost of replenishing the household's wardrobe, the expenses of sending embassies to foreign courts, and the funds expended upon the reception of illustri and diplomatic delegations. Because ceremonial expenses varied according to the dignitas of the individual being honoured and the duke's discretion, it is difficult to ascertain annual figures of expenditure. Ceremonials were essentially extraordinary state events, whose requirements ranged from the organization of small honour guards to mobilizing the entire community and astronomical investment. At the very least, however, visitors could expect to be subsidized while they remained in Este territory:

Item accade alcune fiate chel passa per transito per le terre del nostro Illustrissimo S. alcuni Signuri on suoi fameglie vel imbassiatore onver gentilhomini on altre persone allquali vora la excia. del nostro Illumo. S.... chel ge siano facte le spese de sua S. et per tanto scrivino ali massari vel camerlengi on altri officiali che ge faciano le spese che puoi lo ge servano acceptate vel el provisore de la corte ge scrivira lui chel ge sia facto le spese... Communal taxes were perforce increased and extended
to accommodate the extra expenditure, but clearly, this revenue was insufficient to support consumption on the Estensi scale. Ducal agents scoured the countryside for financial donors, using the tactics of *prestanze* (forced loans which were not repaid) and *donativi* (citizens were frequently obliged to make a gift of a private possession which would later be placed in pawn) to extract money from the signore's wealthier subjects. Significant too, is the fact that the duke's jewels (including Ercole's personal emblem, the triangular diamond *il diamante*) were constantly pledged at the financial houses in Venice, Florence, and London, and that the duke was often unable to pay the annual census of 4000 golden ducats to the papacy because he was "impotenti per le spese". The financing of the court also placed a heavy, at times intolerable, burden upon local administration throughout the dominions. Even the Comune of Ferrara (exempt from some of the more extreme measures because of its capital status), already responsible for the stipends of local officialdom (*Maestrato dei savi*, *Podestà*, *giudice*, *assessore*, *malifice*, *sindici*, *notari pubblici ferraresi*, *massari*, *cavazellani*, *saltari*, *consulteri*, *notari dei memoriali*, and their lesser functionaries), the maintenance of roads, walls, churches, public buildings, bridges, canals, and public utilities, found itself indirectly supporting both the ordinary and extraordinary expenses of the ducal camera. The term "indirectly" applies here because the *colta* did not, at least in the administrative records, comprise part of the ducal income. However, the *Maestrato dei savi*, the
public official responsible for determining the extent of local "fiscal necessity", allocating public funds, and levying communal taxes, was also directly responsible to the duke. Thus the colta and other communal charges, and the appropriation of these funds, were effectively determined by the duke and his advisors, leaving the communal functionari to act as bureaucratic intermediaries between ducal policy and the citizenry. In certain cases the Comune was forced to relinquish its claim to the colte altogether, as in the days when Borso made his preparations for his investiture in Rome and during the Venetian War, when all tax-moneies went straight to the tesoro di guerra. In others, it relinquished revenue from predetermined borgate under its control. With cash at a premium, the Estensi were not averse to dipping their hands into the communal till.

To be sure, a structural analysis of the Ferrarese economy in the fifteenth-century is needed. At present, there are several lines of inquiry which help to provide a more balanced economic appraisal of contemporary society. In particular, the massive extension of taxation, and the misuse and re-allocation of public funds, deserves the full attention of scholars intent on evaluating the socio-political relationship between the Estensi and the popolo. Undoubtedly, this also applies to historians of Ferrarese culture, who, in their quest "a definire un ambiente come quello ferrarese", seemingly continue to regard the court solely as a repository for humanist dialectics, and its functional role in terms of systems of patronage. One should not assume of course
that an inquest into the state of Estensi financial affairs would inevitably produce earth-shaking results. On the contrary, the manipulation of land resources, misappropriation of public funds, high tax levels, and the haphazard economic policies engendered by Estensi rule were not unlike those to be found elsewhere in the signorie of northern Italy. Yet it is precisely this kind of evidence, arbitrary executive orders, petitions for exemption from taxation and unfavourable financial settlements, confiscations, petitions for relief, and the economic and subsequent social-penal legislation contained in the registers of the ducal camera and cancelleria (the Archivio Segreto Estense) which casts doubt upon the traditional historiographical view of the Estensi à propos their relationship with the popolo.

Save Michele Catalano's work on Ludovico Ariosto, Antonio Piromalli's Marxist interpretation of Ferrarese society (not particularly useful), and the well-known recent publication by Werner Gundersheimer, we are to be persuaded of an idyllic picture of Ferrarese life in the quattrocento.\textsuperscript{228} The local divertimenti (the hunts, jousts, regattas, palii, festivals, carnivals, and court spectacles), we are told, were presented in a context wherein the popolo smiled, danced, and sang the praises of their signori.\textsuperscript{229} Indeed, one is often reminded of the view of the aging Ariosto, who came to regard the patronage dispensed by Borso and Ercole with some nostalgic regret: Borso d'Este, whose sole concern was "His people's welfare and serenity", and Ercole, to whom "As deep indebtedness as any State, Will feel towards its
prince, Ferrara's debt, Will ever be to him." Evidence concerning the daily life of the Ferrarese citizenry is scanty, but it is possible to construct a general overview based on the chronicles and cameral registers. For example, it is apparent that despite ducal efforts to regulate grain prices in Ferrara, the citizenry remained wholly subject to the vicissitudes of the market place. Statistics produced by Luciano Chiappini from the Ferrarese chronache clearly show the uncertainty of the grain market between the years 1450 and 1505. Moreover, the wildly fluctuating prices, as high as 50 soldi marchesane per bushel during the Venetian War and as low as 3-6 denari marchesane during the abundant harvests of 1479-80 and 1492-93, testify to the inadequate nature of ducal scrutiny and control. It has been argued that Borso and Ercole were interested in improving agricultural returns from the land and initiated programs of reclamation in the marshes of the contado. Seeds for planting were given to local farmers, and in times of hardship, some grain was imported by the duke to ease the suffering, though this was sold at the going rate. Yet no real attempt was made to curb speculation by noble families in the international grain exchanges, nor were any programs of "stockpiling" (such as those sponsored by the Gonzaga in Mantua) to ensure a supply of grain in times of famine inaugurated by the Estensi. As one chronicler remarked rather poignantly during the terrible Spring of 1497, when famine descends upon the Ferrarese contado the people eat worms, suck the marrow from bones, and make meals of grass, weeds, and other obscen-
ities unfit for human consumption, while the signore and his nobles enjoy honey, beans, and legumes:

Quasi universaliter per tutto il Ferrarese, da chi non colgie biave, se vive hora de lumage, trigoli, herbe et de altre ribaldarie e se contadini havesseno melica, fave et legumi seriano signori. 237

Generally, the price of grain seems to have had an upper limit of 20-22 soldi marchesane, and a bottom limit of 10-12 soldi marchesane, though here alone the market price differentials are wide enough to have caused hardship amongst the Ferrarese citizenry, especially the unenfranchised labourers and poorer elements. Hardship naturally increased in times of drought, flood, and plague. An analysis of the chronicles reveals that drought occurred in the years 1453, 1456, 1459, 1473, 1477, 1478, 1495, 1497, 1498; plague in 1463 (when the death-rate was said to have reached over a hundred per day and 14,000 people died), 1482-84, 1493, 1498, 1499, 1500, 1503 (an epidemic of dysentery struck in 1497, "e morivano di molti puti et pute"); 238 serious floods in 1454, 1464, 1471, 1474, 1476, 1481, 1482, 1487-89, 1493, 1495-96, 1498, and 1499. 239 Penitential processions (1459, 1463, 1474, 1477, 1482, 1493, 1500) were common, as the Ferrarese invoked the mercy of God to relieve them of their afflictions:

Fu facta precessione solenne e devota per questa citade, pregando Dio che volgia dare alturio a le biave le quale, per la gran siccitade che hà, se dimostrano poco, perchè son più de 20 di che non piove e li campi se sechano e se induriscono. E quello medemo se fece il di seguente. 240

If the Renaissance was an age where the professional merchant and his capital gains flourished, historians sometimes still need to be reminded just how fragile the nature of his economy actually was. When the plague visited
Ferrara, the city's gates were sealed: commercial traffic was halted and the fields were left untended. An epidemic in a neighbouring state meant that it was off-limits to Ferrarese commerce and vice-versa: local goods were left without an export market and essential supplies could be cut off. When it was too hot, the wheat crop withered and died, when too much rain fell, the river Po burst its embankments and the dykes, when it was too cold, the river froze over, halting commercial traffic (goods had to be transported by sledge or *lilza*), and, as Zambotti relates, there was no flour to make bread because the mills were out of action:

Nota che de questo mexe se pol male havere pane, perch'è non ge hè farina e Po hè azelato che li munari non possano maxenare; e spesse fiate per li dinari non se ritrova pane cotto. Il fromento se vende soldi 20 il staro. Il populo sta molto de mala volgia. Se vendono quatro pani nigri e picoli per bolognino.

While "la povertà crida e pianze", he says, "La Excel-entia del duca nostro fece invitare molte zintildone e la Corte a ballare in sala grande...".

The quality of life in Ferrara between 1450 and 1505 would seem analogous to the twenty years preceding the serious outburst of citizen violence in 1385. The rapid devaluation of the Ferrarese currency coupled with the natural disasters which destroyed crops and brought on famine, the heinous scheme of communal taxes and the brutal-illegal tactics of the ducal tax-collectors, contributed to the rumbling of citizen discontent. Historians like Piromalli, Pallone, and Percopo have long subscribed to a "theory of popular discontent" in Renaissance Ferrara, but have encountered difficulty in documenting it. Much of their evidence is based upon the satirical poetry of
Antonio Cammelli da Pistoia, an acknowledged critic of the Estensi signoria and writer in the anti-courtier genre. References to popular restiveness, however, do exist in the chronache. Here is Ugo Caleffini's assessment of the popular reaction to onerous taxation in 1490:

Perche el Duca hercule volea et havea cum effecto et non cum parole posto che tutti li suoi subditi et terrieri et forastieri che stavano in et sotto el suo dominio gli havesseno adonare secondo la tassa aloro per sua Signoria inposta aducati pero tuto insino al Cielo cridavano et per tute le sue tere non se intendeva se non de biasteme et maledictione alui date per tale in usitate cosse. Et chi contradicen de pagare il dopio gli era per forza facto pagare et ogni homo piangere de stima de tal cossa, perche da che ferrara fu edificata in qua Ferrarexi non steno mai pezo che se fano. Et tuta via sua Signoria agranda il barcho et non paga quello chel toglie ad alcuno. 244.

By consulting the cameral registers, we can see how individuals were affected by signorial policy and the woeful state of the Ferrarese economy. In 1466, for instance, we read of one Nicolo di Magdalona, who, "nel tempo de la peste, cazato da la forza per lo mancamento et bisogno dil pane et de li altre victuarie gli fu forza se non volea morire de fame andare alla piazza". Because this action violated the city ordinances which came into effect when Ferrara was beset by plague (no one was permitted to enter the piazza and all markets were banned), Nicolo was fined 25 LM. Unable to pay because "lui non ha altro in questo mondo se non la persona", he was forced to flee the city: "gli e forza e fuzersene et del territorio de la Ex. V. absentarse". 245 Another citizen, condemned for defrauding the ducal tax-collectors, managed to escape the communal dungeons by leaving Ferrara, but later petitioned the duke for mercy because his wife and sister were starving without his financial support:
... si che seria cagione che mai non vegna a Ferrara e cussi andare malabiano per le altrui terre non sciano che se fare se non che Ricoreno ali piedi de la Du. S.V. quella pregando devotissimamente che per sua benigna Gratia et misercordia voglia remercarge et perdonarge dicta condemnatione... 246

Still another, in 1496, could not pay the communal boccatico (a species of personal tax similar to the colta) of 5 LM and was forced "a fugire via cum sua famiglie et perdire tutti li suoi beni". Whole villages were devasted by flood-waters and starvation. Listen to the pleas of the men from the podesteria of Codegoro, an Estensi outpost near the vale of Comacchio:

Illume. P. et Dux Exme. Essendo accaduto ali fidelissimi servitori vostri Comune et homini de la podesteria vostra de Codegoro che lanno presenta et el prossimo passato per le Aque et rotte de po habiano persso tutti i loro racolti in modo che se ritrovano in grandi affanni et necessitade. Considerando che non hanno biave da sostenarse ne modo alcuno de comprarne et dubitano che per necessitade serano constricti ad Abandonare quello luoco totalmente, per tanto ricorsi spiedi de v.d.s. quella devotamente pregano che non voglia have mancho a caro epsi che li altri suoi subdi et servitori concedondoli al meno gratia libere che dove habiano el modo possano vegnicae a comprare a ferrara et suo contegno biave per il loro proprio vivere et quello condure in dicta podesteria ut supra libere acio non morano in tuto de fame et non siano constricti in tuto ad abandonare el paexe de la prefata V. Cel. A laquale de continuo se ricomandano. 248

Such was the havoc wrought in the village of Fossadalbaro by floods in 1489, that the inhabitants could not provide a living for the new rector of the local church, who, "per non havere la sua provissione non e mai stato in quello luoco in gravissimo damno de dicti homini et de le anime di quelli che sono morti in quella villa senza confessione ne ordine alcuno, a modo animali et bestie". 249

We will encounter many more tales of despair in the course of our study. But for the most part, we will also find that popular discontent was concentrated on the imm-
ediately visible perpetrators of hardship, high-ranking communal officials, giudici, captains of justice, and tax-collectors. That hostility should have focused almost exclusively upon bureaucrats while the Estensi generally escaped identification as malefactors, is evidence of the success of a ducal public image-making process.

The Image of Responsible Governorship

The response of the Estensi to the manifest socio-economic problems in Ferrara was conditioned by their propensity to utilize the theatrical moment, and an acute ability to recognize imminent political danger which might threaten their signorial survival. We have already mentioned the increased scale and theatrical modus operandi of Estensi religious patronage, and the willingness of the duke to intervene on behalf of petitioners in matters of civil law. Even the latter, normally dealt with in the cancelleria, was incorporated into a framework of personal spectacle. It was customary for Borso to walk between the Castello and the Palazzo della Ragione each morning surrounded by his consiglieri, and during this brief interval, to examine several petitions proffered to him from the crowd who gathered daily in the hope of being heard. Borso's reputation for justice and fairness grew thereby, however fleeting these moments were: "Daxeva benignamente ogni di audientia a suoi popoli et ad ogni persone examinava le letere e supplicando in brevita de tempo". 250 Emphasis was laid on
the public role of the prince by Borso and Ercole, yet their public appearances also stressed the physical distance between the signore and his subjects. According to the chronicler Antigini, Borso never appeared publicly without a display of wealth or dressed in the ducal robes of gold: "Vestiva ponpoxamente co, -A in vila como in cita de pani doro e de seda cum colane e zoie".\textsuperscript{251} Pope Pius II's recollection of Borso, perhaps unkind due to personal animosity, reveals a politician concerned with his public image:

He was eloquent and garulous and listened to himself talking as if he pleased himself more than his hearers. His talk was full of blandishments mingled with lies. He desired to seem rather than to be magnificent and generous...\textsuperscript{252}

In times of trouble or citizen discontent, Ercole d'Este relied heavily on measures which purported to lessen the burden upon the popolo. Instances of this Herculean politic are legion. In January 1475, following the famine of the previous summer and the "carastia de dinari fra li populi" in the city, Ercole sought to ameliorate conditions and quell any latent hostility to the signoria by cancelling monetary penalties attached to civil delicts: "La excellentia del duca hercole in kalende de zenaro tolse tute le condenatione die se farano per danni dati multe et malefittii et altro per li officiali".\textsuperscript{253} In October 1476, one month after Niccolò d'Este's conspiracy against Herculean rule, "per fare bene a questo fidellissimo populo e gratificarse a quello e sublevarlo da le graveze" (especially those citizens whose sympathies had been with Niccolò's claim to the duchy), Ercole abrogated taxes upon pacti di
appropriare (declarations of ownership and the recovery of private property by order of the signorial courts). To finance the marriages of his daughter Isabella to the Marquis of Mantua Francesco Gonzaga, and his first-born son and heir Alfonso to Anna Sforza (1490-1491), Ercole imposed a tax "a discrezione", wherein citizens were obliged to make donations according to their own conscience, rather than raise the colta, already at an extortionate level. In the famine year of 1497, to quell grumbling in the city and arrest the growing instances of criminal violence, Ercole first lowered the price of meat by removing the high licensing fees charged to the beccari for the privilege of maintaining vending stalls in the piazza, and in the month of May, reduced the gabella levied upon imported consumer foods by two-thirds:

A favore e beneficio di questa nostra fidelissima Citade populo concedessimo che per li frumenti che se conducesseno in epsa nostra citade per tuto il presente mese de magio non se havesse a pagare se-non uno terzo di la gabella... Et desiderosi noi de accomodare epso nostro populo in cio che conosemo tornarli ad utile et beneficio per la fede constante et indissaissa soa verso noi et il stato nostro.

Ferrara xxvii Mai 1497

Each of these measures, however temporary, was designed to remedy economic problems with a view to curbing possible popular unrest.

Noticeable too, is a change in tenor concerning the contextual language of ducal decrees during Ercole's reign. The operative phrase "fu comandato dal duca Herc- ole" was now preceded by language attesting to signorial watchfulness over the well-being of the city, and the
continued responsibility of the prince for good government in his role as tutor. Nearly all penal ordinances made these claims. A proclamation of 7 October 1490 to check the circulation of money mozze o tosate (defaced or clipped), for example, established ducal vigilance "per il bene e honesto vivere de questa sua citade": "Al bene et utile de questa sua Inclita cita e dilectissimo populo de ferrara, non cessa continuem vigilare et metta li occhi de sua climentia ale cose necessarie et utile a dicta citade...". Similar sentiments were commonly expressed in instructions to officials charged with the responsibility of examining petitions or arbitrating in disputes, who were required to act in a manner befitting their position as representative of ducal authority ("facendo un bono et diligenti examine del tuto" was the usual phrase attached to letters of instruction). The notion of vigilance, inextricably bound up with the image of responsible governorship in Ferrara, also found constant public expression in signorial civic action. Periodic inspections of the city walls and battlements were conducted to ensure the security of the citizenry, while both Borso and Ercole, in addition to issuing supplies for the repair of dykes, waged a public battle against the flood-waters of the river Po every year. In 1464, Borso financed and personally supervised repairs to the dykes in the Ferrarese Polesine: "lui provvedere et riparare alli danni, che riceve il Polesine di Ferrara per cagion delle acque". Ercole interrupted the Easter sermon of the Carmelite preacher Battista Panetto to lead the Ferrarese against
the flood-waters in 1489:

E la Excellentia del duca, cantato che fu il Passio, montò a cavallo e andò a la rotta con grandissima provisione de legnami e feramente e marangoni con tutti li fachini per serare, che l'aqua non venga insino a Ferrara. 263

More striking than this Estensi reliance upon a traditional public image framed by the notion of princely tutorship, was a policy designed to focus public attention upon the misdeeds of the communal government. The upper echelons of the articulated chain of command in the Comune of Ferrara were dominated by an essentially non-Ferrarese nobility, men whose roots lay in the feudal hinterlands: veronese, padovana, rodigiana, modenese (Costabili, Pendaglia, Bevilacqua, Pasini, Gualengo, Maroncelli, Mosti, Strozzi, Roverella, Trotti). 264 These were the officials responsible for effecting ducal policy in matters of tax (Giudice dei XII Savi), tolls and licences (Giudice delle Gabelle), civil and criminal law (Giudice della Massaria, Malefice), and for dealing with the public at the local level through the offices of the podestà and capitani. In effect, these offices acted as a physical and psychological barrier between popular discontent and the signore. The popolo did not associate the grievous taxation and violent-illegal methods of the captains of justice with the expenses and consumption of the Este court, but rather with the greed and ostentation of a corrupt nobility who used governmental offices to enrich themselves. Not surprisingly, the Giudici dei XII Savi were especially hated. 265 When Tito Strozzi raised the colta at Herculean insistence in 1500, he did so with "grandissimi cridi del populo et maliovolentia del populo
verso messer Tito universaliter odiato.\textsuperscript{266} Uberto Sac-
rati was "malvoluto da tuta la cità in lo suo governo",\textsuperscript{267} and such was the hatred for Nicolo Ariosto, who held the post between the years 1486 and 1488, that he awoke one morning to find the doors to the ducal palace, the cathedral, the church of S. Domenico, and most of the public meeting places plastered with ribald sonnets (bischizi) reviling him as a "giudice dei matti, matto dei dodici savi, divoratore di Ferrara, magnaterra, magnaferro, ladro, manigoldo, traditore".\textsuperscript{268} According to Caleffini, this popular campaign continued for an entire week:

Fu adi dicto (9 June 1487) ritrovato essere stato atacato cum colla suso ambedue le porte del palatio del duca per mezo il Vescovo e s. Dominico e sotto le banche di Calegari e in multi altri tribi, bischizi in grandissima Vergogna e obrobrio de Nicolo di Areosti, Iudice di XII Savii de Ferrara, in rima e non se pote intender lo auctore e scriptore. Domenica adi x dicto ne fue etiam ritrovati de altra maniera pure contra el dicto Nicolo Areosto. Luni similiter ne fu retrovati li de altre sorte. Marti similiter ne fu retrovato de altra sorte. Vegneri adi xv dicto ne fu retrovato multo piu vituperosi contra el dicto e contra Zoanne Jeronimo Marchese, fiolo che fu de Zoanne Ludovico Marchese da Ferrara.\textsuperscript{269}

To the people's universal joy, Ercole was obliged to dismiss him from his post (Ariosto was made Captain of Justice in Modena), but his replacement, Galeazzo Trotti, fared little better: "Re di dinari, struzzo, mangiaferro, mangiasasso".\textsuperscript{270} It was generally held that members of the Trotti family, who occupied many of the prestigious offices in Ferrara both before and after the Venetian War (during which time they were in exile), were "inimici del sangue dei poveri", "malvasi", and at the root of the economic malaise which afflicted the city.\textsuperscript{271} Of Gregorio Zampante, Captain of Justice and later Podestà di Ferrara,
even the brothers and children of the duke were afraid:

... il maggior homo in autorità appreso il prefacto signore che epso signore havesse appresso di sè, et che per l'autorità grandissima et credito che l'havae con sua signoria et non estimasse homo del mondo, nè pur il filioli et fratelli de sua ducale signoria, et che el facesse tremare tutti li subditi de epso signore, et che le sue condannatione fusseno arbitrale, et che le pecuniarie sempre fusseno in migliara de ducati et centenara, et che mai le sportulle fusseno le ultime, ma si bene le prime pagate a suo modo, et non per tassa; cum sit etiam che questo homo fusse il più grandissimo ribaldo, senza compassione et remissione alcuna... 272

The outcry of the citizenry against Zampante was such that Ercole was forced to have him assassinated, thus ending the Zampantean "reign of terror": "et cusi fini il misero Zampante, che andò a casa del maledetto diavolo". 273

The Estensi, however, often preferred to use Realpolitik in a theatrical way to evade popular hostility. During moments of crisis, when the peace of the city was threatened by anti-signoria related violence, the duke offered a formal scapegoat to the citizenry. The annals of Mario Equicola record Borsian action concerning the problems related to the high level of communal taxes in 1458:


Noticeable here is the identification of the local nobility as malefactors, and ducal acquiescence in violence committed against private property. There is implicit signorial recognition of a potentially hostile force, and an expedient use of that hostility to reconfirm ducal
credit-worthiness as governor. Disorder is both condoned and controlled. Citizen violence is fomented by unjust taxation but aggression is perpetrated against personages in communal office, and having spent its fury, a return is made back to an ordered and "happy" state of affairs: hostility is transformed into a public holiday. This ritualized cycle of events, a recognition of impending violence and aggression, licence granted for civil disorder, and a reconstitution of social order in public manifestations of joy, was often repeated in the later quattrocento.

The sequence of events surrounding the public trial of Bonvicino dalla Carte, fattore generale during the famine year of 1475, further illustrates this point. Calleffini records Bonvicino's crime as profiteering in office (a regular occurrence in Este Ferrara): 275

Benche la fortuna lo havesse tanto in alzato chel fusse facto et in vinticinque anni diventato richo de trenta milia ducati et che in bene pochissimi anni havesse havuto adiventato richo di piu de cinquanta milia ducati. Et essendo pure venuto il tempo et hora che Idio ha aperso li ochi... in lassare incorere che questo homo da bene bono servo de dio, che sono 25 anni che non confesso nisecomunicho... 276

A special commission was appointed to investigate accusations against Bonvicino and Hieronimo di Bonfrancischi, communal treasurer and official in charge of the records of the ducal granaries, headed by Galeazzo Trotti, Filippo Cestarelli, and Antonio Maria Guarnieri. Found guilty of extortion (he was cheating on the measures of grain sold to the citizens), dalla Carte was summoned to the ducal palace to confront his accusers. On the way to his ducal audience, he was attacked and robbed of his
possessions, "tanto era bene amalato questo Bonvicino da ogni homo". While the duke granted dalla Carte safe-conduct from Ferrara through his consiglieri in the courtyard of the palace, Ercole's refusal to admit him to the ducal presence was taken as a public acknowledgement of his guilt, whereupon the popolo stormed and ransacked Bonvicino's home ("metterli la casa asachio"). After a convenient interval, Ercole despatched Trotti to put an end to the disturbances and ensure a return to orderliness. The following day Bonvicino's crimes were read out in the piazza, "a la quale condenatione lecta in tribunale fu de le persone 2000 ad. audire", signalling a public holiday in the city and throughout the ducal dominions. Prisoners were liberated in Ferrara, Modena, Reggio, and the Polesine: processions, bonfires, and the ringing of bells proclaimed public joy. A local noble contributed "vinti bolognini ali preti del vescovato per che tutto quel di e nocte facesseno festa de Campane... et poi mando due carri de legne in piazza de verso Castelvechio et qui fece faluo per alegreza". Bonvicino, impoverished and taunted by the insults of the crowd, was driven from the city in a ritualized purging of the unclean, exiled in perpetuam, without recourse to the aid or succour of a single inhabitant within the Este state.

The notion of a ritual purging of the guilty from the city in procession also featured prominently in the expulsion of the Trotti from Ferrara, recorded by Caleffini (Partita del traditore de Paulantonio da ferrara pure adi novembre 1482). Numerous crimes committed
by the Trotti against the popolo are cited, "inemici di tutti li virtuosi et homini da bene, tanto era la sua maledecta avaricia et cupidita de dinari che haveriano crucifixo unaltro frato Christo per dinari", but it was generally thought that it had been they who had bewitched Ercole into provoking war with the Venetians: "Opinione del popolo che havesseno ribaldi afaturato sua Signoria la quale da si era megliore".\(^{280}\) Precisely why Ercole chose to exile the Trotti has never been fully explained. It may well be that Francesco Ariosto (di Rinaldo)\(^{281}\) had succeeded in turning the duke against his mortal foe Paolo Antonio Trotti, the family spokesman, and with his brothers, leader of a powerful noble faction in Ferrara which included the Sacrati and Boccamaggiori families. From documents preserved in the Archivio di Stato Venezia, we now know that Ariosto, who headed a rival faction which claimed the Bevilacqua and Contrari as adherents,\(^{282}\) was secretly treating with the Venetians during the Autumn of 1482. The details of Ariosto's treachery are revealed in a pact concluded with the Venetian Council of Ten, signed on his behalf (16 December 1482) by Brunaro Ariosto and Giovanni Vittore Contarini, the Venetian Visdomino resident in Ferrara.\(^{283}\) In exchange for aiding the enemy in the conquest of Bondeno and the Polesine of S. Giorgio, Ariosto was promised a listing for himself and his heirs in the golden book of the Maggior Consiglio,\(^{284}\) a private income of 4000 ducats per annum (Brunaro was promised 1000 per year, and Francesco was authorized to guarantee the same income to any Ferrarese noble who joined their conspiracy, which al-
ready included Rinaldo Bevilacqua, Rinaldo Costabili, and Antonio Guarini in its ranks), possession of the Trotti palace, the confirmation of lands, privileges, and exemptions received from the Este, the nomination of two familial relations to bishoprics, "coe uno per cascaduno, overo qualche bona abbatia de le prime vacanti", and an exemption in perpetuam from Venetian taxes.285 Owing to the changing fortunes of the war, especially the papal alliance with the Este concluded on 23 December 1482 and the arrival of military aid in 1483,286 the Venetians soon abandoned their conspirators, but Ariosto's move to secure the exile of the Trotti in November 1482 may be considered as a prerequisite of his machinations against the Este signoria.287 It would appear more likely, however, that Ercole was not prepared to shatter the illusion of Trotti warmongery. If the Ferrarese were convinced that the duke had been led astray by evil Trotti counsel, he would turn this misconception to his advantage. The circumstances of the Trotti exile testify to Herculean genius for the theatrical moment.288

November 1482 was a bleak month in the annals of Ferrarese history. From the moment Venice had invaded Este territory (30 April 1482), the war had gone badly. The whole of the Ferrarese contado beyond the Po Grande, including the citadels of Rovigo and Ficarolo, had fallen to the enemy during the summer, the Captain-General of the anti-Venetian League (Ferrara, Naples, Milan, and Florence) Duke Federigo da Montefeltro lay dead, and Ferrara found herself assailed by land and sea. On the
20th of November, the Venetians were within sight of the city's walls, planting the standard of St. Mark in the Barco (the Este game reserve north-west of Ferrara) and plundering the suburbs. News had come from Modena on the 18th that the people, "senza pane frumento et farine et dinari", had ransacked the local granaries and carried off the provisions destined to relieve Ferrara:

Et male disposti se levo el populo menudo in arme et ando ali granari di richi zentilhomini et richi et per forza gli rope li granari et tolse le biave et asacomano et per loro destribuite et tolse etiam li frumenti de lo Illustriissimo Sigismondo da Este chelli erano conducti a ferrara et ogni altre robe.

Inside the walls of Ferrara, the situation was very grim indeed. Living conditions were overcrowded and squalid, plague was rife (the death-rate already stood at ten persons per day), supplies were exhausted, and the duke lay critically ill in his bed-chamber. Few citizens, recalls Caleffini, mustered to the call of arms: "Lo quale populo non era cussi caldo per lo pre-facto Duca como gia fu per li tempi di altri Signoria". This was not because the people were unwilling to shed their blood for the duke, he says,

... ma per rispetto di tradituri Trotti li quali pure sua Signoria gli teneva pure in spechio et in mostra et epso populo li volea tanto bene che tutti et picolo et grandi per le piace cridavano et domandavano diche tradituri per tractarli como meritavano. 289

Ercole's response to these problems was swift and calculated. First, the Trotti were arrested and confined to the precincts of the Castel Vecchio to protect them from mob hysteria. Several days later (November 20), the Trotti womenfolk and children were sent to safety in Milan, conducted out of the city under heavy guard "per
paura che el popolo de ferrara non li tayesseno tutti a peci, et in quel tayare a pezi non fusse stato facto de la carne", while the heads of the family, Brandeligi, Paolo Antonio, and Galeazzo remained in the city (Giacomo Trotti had been cashiered from the office of Giudice dei XII Savi and exiled several months earlier in a signorial cover-up over the misappropriation of communal funds). That same day, the duchess Eleonora was presented in the company of Brandeligi Trotti at the windows of the ducal palace, whereupon the citizenry, rallying to the call to arms in the piazza under the captaincy of Rinaldo and Sigismondo d'Este, became outraged at the juxtaposition of the innocent duchess and one of her traitorous advisors. The demand for Trotti blood began immediately, "cridando Crucifige, Crucifige li trotti, moranno li traditori trotti, datineli ne le maneti."

The characteristic Estensi response was both to encourage and control this "spontaneous" expression of popular hostility. The duchess, her new advisors (among them Francesco Ariosto, Rinaldo Costabili, and Bonifaco Bevilacqua), and the ambassadors of the League issued forth to calm the mob. Eleonora spoke at length about the duke's illness and pleaded for the people's loyalty during the crisis, "che epsa faceva tuto il popolo lacrimare". Francesco Ariosto then stepped forward to accuse the Trotti of exploiting the popolo and warmongery, "et domente li Trotti et la loro casa fussero destructi et puniti, come meritavano per haver facto tanto male al populo". To dispel rumours of the duke's death (he had not been seen in public for some ten days), the
speeches were concluded with an invitation for the people to view the duke in his sick-bed. This remarkable scene of Herculean panoply was witnessed by Zambotti:

E fece aprire tutti li ussi de le camere e anticamere dove hera la Excellentia del duca suxo il lecto, con una turcha, con la barba lunga, che a pena parlava e apriva li occhi, e teniva uno brazo e la mano aperta tocandola a tutti quelli che intrava; e per la grande moltitudine del populo, che tuto corse a ved-erlo intrando per uno uscio e insendo per l'altro, soa segnoria se strachò che bixognò aserare li usci, che tale persona ge tornò doe fiate, e tutti piangevano con soa segnoria, altri lo confortavano. 294

Two days later (22 November), it was announced that the Trotti were to be banished from the city. The Trotti palace was ransacked and their coat-of-arms defaced (the precious possessions had previously been removed for safe-keeping), and a company of men were sent out to confiscate grain and meat from Trotti warehouses, which were brought to the piazza for distribution to the popolo. Thereupon the Trotti themselves were given horses and the protection of the palace guard to shield them from the abuse and missiles hurled at them by the citizenry as they rode out of Ferrara. With the expulsion of the "traitors", order was restored to the city. It was at this moment that the duke appeared in the piazza, dressed in his armour and ready to take command of the defence of his city.295 As they left Ferrara, the Trotti could take comfort in the knowledge that Paolo Antonio had in his possession a signorial commission as governor of Reggio and Giacomo had been named ducal ambassador to the court of Milan.296 They would return in 1484 with Ercole's blessing.
The Ceremony of Signorial Election

In the course of the preceding pages, it has been suggested that the issue of signorial survival was central to the formulation of Estensi domestic policy during the second half of the fifteenth-century. Despite the possession and the quality of their unlimited authority as despotic rulers, the Estensi both recognized and felt compelled to fulfill the moral-social obligations incumbent upon them. Initially, the basic aim of their domestic policy was to present a public image comprising traditional princely action: the dispensation of charity and mercy, patronage of the local clergy, and the maintenance of a just and peaceful society, but on a wider and increasingly institutionalized scale. Reminded of "classical" political behaviour by humanist educators and advisors, Borso and Ercole adopted Aristotelian principles, dedicating (or purporting to) themselves to the common good or "il bene publico". Their assumption of civic responsibility, however, continued to operate within a transcendental Christian framework. Secular political authority in Ferrara acquired a new philosophic dimension, yet remained sanctified by "Godliness" and traditional Christian virtues fostered through the dynasty.

It has also been suggested that the ruler's public image was largely conditioned by the exigencies of Realpolitik. Signorial participation in the public vita liturgica and patronage of religious architecture con-
firmed ducal piety, but helped to bolster Estensi control over public religious sensibility and the daily regulation of the lives of private citizens. Peace, order, and good government, concord within the Republicae Ferrariae, was a condition not only of the secular, but also of the spiritual well-being of the citizenry. Our brief discussion of some of the socio-economic problems afflicting Ferrara in the later quattrocento showed how Borso and Ercole were obliged to create an image of responsible governorship, which was used as a political device to evade popular hostility to signorial behaviour. Public attention was focused on the misdeeds of an unworthy nobility, while signorial exploitation and reluctance to adopt genuine measures to further civic harmony were not brought to account. In each case, the requisite ducal image was celebrated in a sequence of collective, theatrical moments. Urban space assumed the quality of a signorial stage, where aspects of princely tutorship were ritually enacted. Visual responses to apprehended social and economic problems illustrated the signore's assumption of his civic responsibilities. Whether these were self-imposed, or arose out of fear for the preservation of the state, the subterfuge of Estensi "choreography" should remind us of the continued role of the popolo as a moral and physical force in the community.

From the beginning, we have assumed that an appraisal of the relationship between the signore and the popolo in Ferrara is crucial to an understanding of the local political process during the Renaissance. We have
attempted to frame local political consciousness in terms of pragmatic signorial action within the community. Each signorial act, however, was charged with a vitality, or a moral and ethical justification, which ultimately depended upon the intransigent right of the signore to legislate, render judgement, and act on behalf of the communitas. Inevitably, this "right to act" was drawn from the domain of social experience and ethical evaluations made within the community, which scholars now refer to as Weltanschauung. But what made the encapsulated properties of the Ferrarese communitas accessible to its constituent membership was a process of communal ritual. It may be useful here to follow the distinctions made by social anthropologists between two types of ritual: life-crisis rites and calendrical rites.297 These distinctions have been conveniently summarized for historians in an important study by Edward Muir, The Ritual of Rulership in Sixteenth-Century Venice. Life-crisis rites define the biological transitions in the human condition: the christening or baptism of a new-born child, the testing of an adolescent, the blessing of a young couple in marriage, or the burial of a dead monarch. They may also mark the transition of an individual to a lower or higher status (rites of degradation and rites of elevation). Calendrical rites, usually derived from the annual agricultural cycle or phases of the moon, nearly always embrace social groups or whole societies undergoing a process of social change. Calendrical rites are closely linked to the "rites de passage" which normally accompany a non-calendrical change
in an entire society or social group: when the *communitas* declares war, signs a treaty, changes a political alliance, or confronts natural disasters. Calendrical rites and "rites de passage" allow societies to deal with potential chaos: ritual magic assures the return of summer, penitential processions combat the ravages of famine, flood, and disease, and public ceremonials sacralize political decisions. Life-crisis rites define the idiosyncratic, the personal, the biological; calendrical rites and "rites de passage" proclaim the communal, the universal, and the eternal.

All ritual deals with change. Through ritual individuals and societies can confront potentially confounding change by recognizing it, defining it, explaining it, and controlling it. 298

The survival of the signorial election ceremonial in Ferrara illustrates the importance of ritual to Ferrarese political consciousness in the *quattrocento*. The swearing of oaths, the exchange of tokens, and the display of the regalia of high office explained the social, legal, and sacred justification for princely power. Nor was this ritualized expression of power immutable. Capacities for recognizing alterations in the "public world" of Ferrara were embodied in the language and rites of election. New ritual motifs were grafted onto the original *duecento* corpus of "stipulation, election, and acclamation" during the course of the fifteenth-century, perhaps reflecting the capacity of the community to respond to apprehended political and social change, and to particularize those changes within the context of traditional usage and historical experience.
Ceremonial behaviour in Renaissance Ferrara was simultaneously a testimonial to a local historical continuum and to altered modes of socio-political perception. The need to formulate new visual language codifying processual changes in the organization of the polis was stimulated by the increasing civic consciousness of the prince, the self-awareness of a ruler creating his own public identity, yet tempered by the need to retain historical continuity in the field of social and political relations.\(^{299}\) It ought to be useful, therefore, to continue our assessment of the relationship between the signore and the popolo by studying the ritual of signorial election.

In their quest to define "le origine delle signorie", some scholars have attached great importance to the precise juridical nature of the relationship between the signore and the popolo. Ernst Salzer, for instance, observed that despite the absence of a popular party in duecento Ferrara, the new Este signoria of 1264 nonetheless resided in a solid block of democracy. The institution of the signore not only ended factional strife and made possible a more stable system of communal economics, but it evolved from communal officialdom, the offices of podestà and capitanato del popolo; the key element of sovereignty was the expression of communal "will" residing in the concio or communal assembly.\(^{300}\) Responding to Salzer's theory, Francesco Ercole and Antonio Anzilotti stressed the co-operation between communal and signorial government which gave rise to absolute dictatorship in constitutional form, or, as
Ercole called it, a diarchy. Within this diarchy, he argued, the comune retained its juridical and political personality. While the signore had unrestricted power and authority over the comune, he could not abolish its constitutional structure nor eliminate its offices. This diarchy remained in operation for some years in the signorie of northern Italy, but the eventual result was a discord between theory and fact. In fact, the signore ruled the city, in theory, he co-operated with the communal officials. This was, says Ercole, the fatal flaw in signorial government. Anzilotti too, understood signorial government as diarchical, though he realized that the signore managed to suppress communal authority early on. This was, however, perfectly reasonable given that signorial government was a regime of full legality: "La Signoria... non è un governo di imposta tirannide, di violenza esteriore sulla costituzione comunale, ma è un regime di piena legalità, che, almeno formalmente, proviene della volontà popolare". Giovanni Picotti would later reject Anzilotti's argument by emphasizing the constitutional illegitimacy of the signoria. Even if the ruler was elected by a vote of the communal assembly, he thought, the election resulted in the hereditary rule of a man who was not limited by communal statutes or communal magistrates. The act of election merely recognized a state of affairs "che il plebiscito puo sanzionare ma non potrebbe mutare".

The theme of constitutional illegitimacy now appears to be widely accepted by historians. It has been recognized by Chabod, Torelli, Masi, Cognasso, Sestan,
and more recently by the Marxist scholar Perry Anderson:

The sovereignty of the signoria was consequently always in a deep sense illegitimate: it rested on recent force and personal fraud, without any collective social sanction in aristocratic hierarchy or duty behind it. 304

Contemporary Ferrarese observers in the thirteenth-century were certainly under no illusions as to the ramifications attached to the coming of the Este signoria. The carefully orchestrated moment of acclamation in the piazza did little to conceal the Estensi balestrieri within convenient bow-shot of the Ferrarese citizenry upon the election of Obizzo II d'Este, or the fact, as Brother Giovanni of Ferrara noted, that all known dissidents and supporters of the rival Torelli faction had been banished from the city. 305 In the years following the election of 1264, the fears expressed by Riccobalido were soon confirmed. In 1271, for example, the promulgative language of new laws changed from that of personal edict ("statuit et ordinavit dominus Obizco") to the royal imperative ("Statuimus"). 306 This symbolic change was accompanied by the gradual removal of traditional powers from communal magistrates. As a number of scholars have observed, the podestà was reduced from a virtually autonomous figure to a mere functionary of the signore:

"Quod dominus marchio possit elligere potestatem Ferrarie quandocumque, quemcumque et quocienscumque et ad quem terminum sibi placuerit pro eius arbitrio voluntatis". 307 "Iuro obedire et observare", promised the podestà, "omnia et singula precepta domini Obizcos marchionis Estensis quotquot michi facta per se...". 308

In effect, any notion of de facto popular sovereignty,
even in the most limited sense, was completely erased from the Ferrarese political scene with the legal dismemberment of the remains of communal government. 309

Both the survival and the content of the election ceremonial, however, suggest that some sort of formal arrangement between the signore and the popolo continued to exist. The corpus of ceremonial attending the election of Borso in 1450, and Ercole in 1471, comprised five separate parts: (1) the election "da parte del Consiglio" (2) the acclamation or "l'approvazione della Concione" (3) the cavalcata (4) the investiture (5) the taking up of residence. According to the anonymous Diario Ferrarese, the election of Borso was undertaken "cum voluntate de popolo di Ferrara", and the election of Ercole "cum consentimento del popolo ferrarese". 310 Ugo Caleffini's Storia di Ferrara further underlines the traditional popular-consensual nature of the Ferrarese electoral process enthusiastically recorded by quattrocento chroniclers: Niccolò III (1 August 1393) "fu dal Popolo di Ferrara creato per suo Signore perpetuo", Leonello (29 December 1441) "dal Popolo di Ferrara fu eletto per Signore", Borso "dal Popolo de Ferrara fu fatto Signore di ferrara", and Ercole, whom the popolo had "electo in suo Signore et Duca perpetuo". 311 The contextual language is similar in Zambotti, Legnago, Antigini, Zerbinati, Vitale, Rodi, Equicola, and the anonimi. All of these chronicles specify some notion of popular consent in conjunction with the election of the signore in Ferrara. First expressed in 1264 with the Decreta Populi Ferrariensis in eligendo Obizone Marchione, 312 the idea of popular consent cont-
continued to be formally proclaimed by the Giudice dei XII
Savi immediately prior to his conferment of the bachetta
(the baton of office) upon the new signore at the moment
of investiture. However, it must be emphasized that the
"popular" role in the electoral process had from the be-
ginning been post eventum, strictly limited to approval
by acclamation. This is confirmed by Giacobbe Delayto
in his relation of Niccolò III's election:

... à quo de Vicariatu ante patris obitum solenissime
investitus, & post per populum, & universitatem Ferr-
arie in dominio unanimiter confirmatus. 313

and by Michele Savonarola, who also tells us that the
people played no part in the stipulation and election
of candidates other than voicing their consent to a dec-
ision already made:

Et inanti che compito havesse de dire Incomenzuorono
in consiglio cridare ad alta voce viva Borso Marchese
viva Borso nostro principio e cio aldendo il populo
che en piazza stava aspectando tal determinatione dil
senato per somegliante cridare incomenzio viva
Borso... 314

One should not assume in consequence that the popular
acclamation was unimportant. On the contrary, it was
indispensable to the juridical ethos of the signoria,
being one of the two legal elements (the other being
the "act" of election) which satisfied the constitutional
legitimacy of the signore as prescribed by Ferrarese sta-
tute law. 315 And one ought to remember that the popolo
were here vested with the power to disapprove of the
candidate, and arguments to the effect that such a power
did not exist because this right was never invoked, do
not alter this fact. But it is as well to recognize
three basic points. First, the ante eventum "power to
elect" at the municipal level resided in the hands of the
consiglio maggiore, a legally constituted body acting on
behalf of the concione, but a body which remained highly
subject to the whims and dictates of internal party-
politics and external political pressure.\textsuperscript{316} Second, by
the terms of the act of election in 1264, and the inter-
pretation thereof in consiglio maggiore at the accession
of Azzo VIII d'Este in 1293, legislation empowering the
signore with the right to designate his successor was
consented to.\textsuperscript{317} Henceforth, the signore's legitimation
was dynastical, independent of election by the people.
"Once the choice of the dynasty had been made by the
people, election was in abeyance": dynastic primogeni-
ture itself manifested the prince's election to the
signoria.\textsuperscript{318} Finally, the question of constitutional
legitimacy had long been removed from the arena of
communal debate by the fifteenth-century with a series
of Imperial and Papal investitures in the trecento,
which established the Estensi as vicars.\textsuperscript{319} The cons-
titutional issue would, in fact, seem to be somewhat
of a dead letter in the Ferrarese context.

Why then, did the ceremonial of signorial election
survive and continue to be carried out with due process
and solemnity? We cannot immediately discount Werner
Gundersheimer's argument that the Estensi "very care-
fully kept the popular election alive because of its
evident political value",\textsuperscript{320} although his suggestion
that the Estensi welcomed the election as an additional
imprimatur upon their authority is one to be resisted.
The Estensi recognized no such imprimatur. Rather, they
appear to have recognized the efficacious properties of the ceremonial and its ritual symbols. On its own, ritual is essentially a "non-material" activity in the sense that it has no moral function, lying outside, as it were, the antithesis of good and evil. It does, however, perform a social function, especially when it is a recognized cultural phenomenon like a rite or a ceremony. Here, ritual denotes obligation and a sense of duty, and countenances the formation of social groups who exhibit their physical and psychological differences from one another by means of display. It codifies prohibitions, rights, and responsibilities, and sets them down in a historical record which may be consulted by members of the community. Thus, the ritual of signorial election not only explained the mechanisms of the local political process but made them coherent through historic association. Still, it was a record of history subject to periodic rectification.

The latter point is borne out by alterations in the act of election. In the thirteenth-century, the election of the signore comprised stipulation, election, and acclamation. Upon the death (or the impending death) of the signore, the consiglio maggiore convened in the communal palace to deliberate upon the candidacy of the successor to the Ferrarese dominio. Ostensibly, political authority in the city devolved to this governing body, yet clearly in the fifteenth-century, the Ferrarese existed in a state of lawlessness during the "hours" of deliberation. Where France and England had resolved the "little interregnum" between the accession of the king
and his coronation,\textsuperscript{322} the principate of Ferrara manifestly had not and could not.\textsuperscript{323} Upon the death of the signore, effective civil authority within the community ceased, and the city was plunged into a state of disorder and chaos. It was customary for the Ferrarese citizenry, for instance, to take advantage of these hours by ransacking the pawn-shops of the money-lenders in the hope of destroying evidence of their indebtedness. Contenders for power in the city, divided along factional lines, filled the streets with their supporters in an effort to intimidate the opposition.\textsuperscript{324} The decision reached in consiglio, in theory the selection of one candidate from amongst those stipulated as worthy of office and his election, was then made known to the popolo, who, according to custom, gathered in the piazza in response to the bells of Ferrara to voice their consent, completing the act of election. Later, at the foot of the altare maggiore in the cathedral, the oaths of office and fidelity were solemnly exchanged in the presence of the Bishop of Ferrara and the Giudice dei XII Savi. It was at this moment that the imperium of the city, symbolized by the bachetta, was formally bestowed upon the new signore. With the completion of the investiture ceremony, social order was restored to the city. Out of chaos, signorial law was visibly reconstituted, and with it, the institutionalized structure of Ferrarese society confirmed anew under the protection of signorial justice. Almost immediately, the signore began to legislate: the political process resumed.\textsuperscript{325}

It might reasonably be objected that the act of
election and the investiture ceremony were academic exercises, since the consiglio had no real power to elect and candidacy itself was secured by the threat of military action. Yet this does not sufficiently explain the new ritual motifs grafted onto the original ceremonial corpus during the course of the fifteenth-century. The sign by which Borso made his acceptance of office known to the Ferrarese was the cavalcata, a procession through the city by the signore under a baldacchino in the company of his household, his noble supporters, and his military forces. The origins of the signorial cavalcata are somewhat obscure. The earliest notice of it is made in an anonymous description of the election of Leonello d’Este in 1441. Riding his horse under a baldacchino and accompanied by the popolo shouting their acclamations, Leonello “si toxela tegnua comenzando da la loza e per su la via di Sabion e da santo Andrea e per suxo la via grande e per fina a i Servi e per fina in piazza sempre chridando viva el marchese lionelo da este...”. We need not assume that this was the first occasion. In a round-about way, Michele Savonarola intimates that the cavalcata was rooted in Ferrarese custom, although he does not specify when it was inaugurated:

Apresso iungero che i principi debbono discorrere le contrate di la cipta adicio che se rendino iocundi a tutto il popolo. Apresso che come boni padri di famiglia dezeno circuire vedendo se la casa sua cioe la cipta ha on ne le mure o in le strate o in le case alcuno diffecto se manazino ruina o somegliante e quelli deffecti corezare dendo altutio a poveri et impotenti. E non circuire per vagezare e far despiacere ad alcuno suo ciptadino e per tal casuone credo fosse introducto il cavalcare da segnori per la cipta. 327
century chronicles,\textsuperscript{328} suggests that this procession was in fact initiated upon the accession of Leonello. Savonarola's description of electoral procedure, written after the investiture of Borso d'Este as Duke of Modena and Reggio in 1452, possibly refers back to the election of Leonello, perhaps further, but there is no evidence to suppose that a cavalcata took place in the trecento.

One might argue that the Estensi were not just manipulating the ceremony of signorial election in the interest of their dynasty but actually creating it. The nature of ritual is such that it resists change because much of its power depends upon the repetition of traditional forms. Ritual symbols, for example, become increasingly charged with efficacious properties through repeated usage and the historic associations derived from repetition. But the active component in ritual is its moral content, discriminating and instructive. It is the didactic quality of ritualized action which determines what holds in the temporary world circumscribed by ceremonial, not the actual ritual itself. By elaborating new ritual motifs, therefore, the Estensi transformed the meaning of their ceremonial elevation to the signoria. Election attested to the historic communion between the signore and the city, but also explained the ideological assumptions of rulership, the corporational doctrines which Ernst Kantorowicz called the "mysteries of state". It envisaged the polis as a community of individuals bound together by the Rule of Law and the state as a body corporate, of which the prince was "head" and his subjects "members".\textsuperscript{329}
During the fifteenth-century, the constitutional position of the signore and his subjects found expression in the ritual manifestations of "possessio". In the description of the cavalcata at the accession of Leonello d'Este, the idea of possesso appears to translate in the strict legal sense of the word, that is, "toxelatognua" means "signorie possessive", or the occupation of private property. This "physical" interpretation of possession was often repeated by Ferrarese chroniclers in conjunction with the cavalcata. Ugo Caleffini's description of Ercole's procession, for instance, tells us that the duke "in astate e vestito a moda de duca, cavalcho per la tera toiendo de la tera tenuta secondo usanza di signori passati...". In contrast, Savonarola expresses the notion of possesso in an analogical sense, that is, signorial rulership is likened to the power men have over their children, "comi boni padri famiglia". The Savonarolian formula is not without its practical exigencies. He refers to the maintenance of walls, streets, and public buildings, and the moral-social responsibility the prince ought to feel towards the poor and powerless. He reminds his prince of the obligations encompassed by tutorship and the inalienability of public property. Both the physical and analogical conceptions of possession were clearly exhibited during the cavalcata of Borso d'Este in 1450, which was divided into two separate parts. The first segment involved the signorial entrance into the city. When the decision of the consiglio maggiore was reached, an embassy of the chief citizens was sent to Belriguardo
(an Este palace some eight miles south-east of Ferrara near Voghiera), where Borso waited with his military forces and noble supporters. At the invitation of these spokesmen, Borso began to make his preparations to take possession of the city, while in Ferrara, the Savi selected "certi offitiali i quali havesseno per lo zorno sequente ad ordenate il modo che tener se doveva per andar incontra alo Illustre Borso". It was decided that the city would receive its new prince at the monastery of S. Giorgio, which stood by the bank of the Po, near the bridge leading across the river to the portal of S. Pietro. Here, members of the Arti would muster behind their gonfalonieri (standard-bearers) and the principal citizens would form their processional ranks. The children of Ferrara would present Borso with olive branches and jewels, and inside the church, a golden robe "de principo degna cum una beretta da principio" would be laid upon the altar, which Borso would don after he had made his devotions. Accordingly, when Borso approached the city, his cortège was halted at the monastic complex. At the entrance to the church, the Giudice dei XII Savi Agostino Villa, "civium concionem advocat", offered Borso the keys to Ferrara ("claves civitatis") as a token of submission (it is important to note that the keys were not returned to Villa's possession). After Borso had exchanged his mourning dress (the court wore black to mourn Leonello's death) for his regalic costume inside the church, the procession moved off to cross the bridge of S. Giorgio and enter the city, ultimately to arrive at the cathedral where Borso would be solemnly invested.
with the bachetta.

Inside the cathedral, in the presence of the Bishop of Ferrara and the Savi, Borso made his devotions before the high altar and the image of the Virgin, promising to maintain justice and concord within the city. Agostino Villa, in the name of the Ferrarese, then stepped forward to invest him with the bachetta:

**Tuoni adonca Illustrissimo principe nostro questa bachetta di iustitia e di la Segnoria di ferrara, e dil contato, La qual ad te done in nome di questo popolo che te creato ha suo glorioso principe e vero Segnore cussi manifestendo per quella il dominio di questa cipta...** 335

The investiture ceremony completed, Borso reappeared at the door of the church. Acclaimed by the people, the new signore rode out of the piazza to inspect his city, following the route of Leonello d'Este: along the Via dei Servi and Via Grande to S. Andrea, returning to the Via dei Sabbioni back into the piazza. This processional route was expanded by Ercole in 1471 (to include the inspection of the secondary city gates, the Porta di Sotto and Porta de la Rotta), 336 and by Alfonso I d'Este in 1505 (to include the church of S. Domenico and the Palazzo Schifanoia). 337 Several interesting changes also occurred upon Ercole's accession. First, the signorial entrance into the city, the pure act of physical possesso, appears to have been left out. The new procedure involved a prolonged investiture ceremony, wherein the new signore rode from the Castel Tedaldo to the cathedral to receive the bachetta, and having been solemnly invested according to custom, rode in procession "per la tera", returning to the piazza to re-enter the cathedral, thereafter to make
his devotions and exchange oaths, swearing to maintain "Iustizia al popolo di Ferrara et fare più et manco che a lui parerà et piacerà." The procedure of Alfonso's investiture is almost identical, suggesting that the ordo of the ceremonial had been settled on. Also significant is the disappearance of the token of submission, the ritual symbol of the keys. After Borso's election, the keys are mentioned only on two other occasions, during Borso's triumphal entrance into Reggio in 1453, and upon the reception of Pope Pius II in 1459, when Borso presented them to the pontiff as a token of his fidelity. The symbol of the keys was replaced by the ducal regalia (which Borso received from Pope Paul II in 1471), the sword of state, the golden robe, and the beretta, which enveloped the signore in higher authority. Greater emphasis was placed upon the visits to holy shrines, testifying to the spiritual nature of lordship in Ferrara, while the inclusion of the city's gates and battlements in the processional agenda visibly established signorial guardianship over the security of the city.

The procedure of the election ceremonial was altered further by Borso with the addition of a formal "taking up of residence". After returning to the piazza, the signore dismounted at the steps to the cathedral and walked directly across the square to the Palazzo della Ragione. Accompanied by his counsellors, the signore entered the palace, the great doors closing symbolically behind them. Both the bachetta, the symbol of government, and the signore, the governmental instrument, were now hidden from sight, inaccessible to public scrutiny. The appearance
of the *bachetta* in public, during the proclamation of
decrees, during the execution of criminals, and upon
occasions of state ceremonial, would lend an added
dimension and significance to signorial action. Govern-
ment for the people perhaps, but certainly not by them;
the promise to render a superior brand of justice, but
the justice of the *signore* alone. The symbolic quality
of the *bachetta* represented the assumption of regal
sovereignty.

If new ideological content was appended to the
ceremonial of signorial election with the *cavalcata*
and the formal occupation of the communal palace, the
pure act of election (*stipulation-election-acclamation*)
remained untouched and untainted by manipulation. Great-
er emphasis was laid upon the investiture's sacramental
character and mythical qualities. As we shall see, the
Estensi sought to identify their dynastic history as
far as possible with Ferrarese history (indeed the pre-
history of their presence in the city) in an effort to
shed the stigma of "intruder" attached to the family
name by virtue of their conquest of the city. This att-
tempt to shape and direct local historical consciousness
contributed significantly to alterations in the process
of communal ritual. Natural time, professional time, and
supernatural time became increasingly identified with
dynastic time sequences as the essential separations
between them narrowed and contingent encounters grew at
Estensi instigation. The collective religious experience
of the Ferrarese devotional calendar suffered a concerted
process of secularization during the second half of the
fifteenth-century. Similarly, the organization of urban space periodically underwent a metamorphosis. We have already seen how signorial Realpolitik employed urban space as an arena to diffuse propaganda and to create a public image of responsible governorship. Alterations to Ferrara's scenography during ceremonial and festive moments also provided metaphoric images illustrating the nature of signorial communion with the city. Our view of the election ceremonial, therefore, must be tempered by the didactic qualities of the ritual as a whole, as an essential ingredient in the formulation of Estensi Staatsymbolik. The ceremonial was not without its practical qualities, but it encompassed no popular mandate. Rather, it is possible to view the election itself as a ritual symbol, as a mechanism which both identified and set in motion a communal ritual process, in which the Estensi were able to initiate ideological assumptions and mould local socio-political perceptions to suit dynastic interest. This is the process we will study in the course of the pages which follow.


Social anthropologists like Victor Turner (see especially his concept of communitas in The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure, London, 1969, chapters 3-5) have long posited a normative community model which might be applied to medieval and Renaissance political experience. Sociologists, on the other hand, have attempted to relate Max Weber's conception of "charisma" to the active centres of the social order by emphasizing the symbolic values individuals possess. Clifford Geertz suggests that medieval kingship may be understood in terms of charismatic symbols in "Centers, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power", in J. Ben-David and T.N. Clark, eds., Culture and Its Creators, (Chicago, 1977), pp. 150-77. For the historical approach to the notion of communitas and the arguments to be closely followed in the present study, see Ernst Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology, (Princeton University Press, 1957).
The transfer of authority after the death of a ruler often threatens the constitutional resiliency of government and the established canons of social order. Signorial government in Ferrara was personal, possessing neither a theory of popular sovereignty nor a de jure theory of regal sovereignty. Upon the death of the signore, the Rule of Law was effectively suspended until the elevation of his successor.

The concept of possesso and princely tutorship in Renaissance Ferrara is discussed in a treatise by Michele Savonarola, De felici progressu illustissimi Borsii Estensis ad marchionatum Ferrarese liber. There are two existing copies of this MS. (1) BEM, Fondo Estense, MS. Latin cod. 215, Alpha W 2, 15. I have used the Italian presentation copy (2) Biblioteca Classense di Ravenna, cod. 302, here at fols. 35r-39r. The treatise has been partially published by A. Segarizzi, Della vita e delle opere di Michele Savonarola, (Padua, 1900), pp. 65-74. For a more recent analysis of this treatise and Savonarola's career in Ferrara, see Antonio Samaritani, "Michele Savonarola riformatore cattolico nella corte Estense a metà del sec. XV", Atti e Memorie della Deputazione Provinciale Ferrarese di Storia Patria, series III, 22 (1976), pp. 1-105.

The similarity between the signorial cavalcata and the papal possesso procession to St. John Lateran is striking, and it gave rise to a controversy over the meaning of the signorial procession in the fifteenth-century. For the history of the papal possesso, see Francesco Cancellieri, Storia de' Solenni Possessi de' Sommi Pontefici detti Anticamente Processi o Processioni dopo la Coronazione dalla Basilica Vaticana alla Lateranense, (Rome, 1802), and the recent article by Marc Dykmans S.J., "D'Avignon à Rome: Martin V et le cortège apostolique", Bulletin de l'institut historique belge de Rome, 39 (1968), pp. 202-309. The theory of apostolic "signorie possessive" is explained by E.C. Radcliff, "On the Rite of the Inthronization of Bishops and Archbishops", Theology, 14 (1942), pp. 71-82.


11 The terminology and psychological analysis employed by Gundersheimer to assess the Ferrarese reaction to the Este signoria in the late thirteenth-century are borrowed from Erich Fromm in his book Escape From Freedom, (New York, 1941), especially "Medieval Background and the Renaissance", pp. 56-80.


15 Savonarola, De felici progressu, fol. 37v.

16 Ibid., fol. 38r.

17 On the concept of the popular will expressed in plena concione populi in Ferrara, see Antonio Frizzi, "Antiche Forme del Governo del Comune di Ferrara. Suoi Consiglieri, Consoli, Giudici, Savii, e Giudici de' Savi", in idem, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, 5 vols., (Ferrara, 1848), II, c. xv, pp. 284-309. The standard texts on early communal public law remain Ernst Salzer, Uber die Anfange der Signorie in Oberitalien, (Berlin, 1900), and Francesco Ercole, Dal Comune al Principato, (Florence, 1929). A useful review of some of the more recent contributions and revisions may be found in an article by Ernesto Sestan, "Le origini delle signorie cittadine: un problema storico esaurito?", Italia Medievale, (Naples, 1967), pp. 193-223 (especially notes 2-3, pp. 194-96 for bibliography).


20 Riccobaldi, *Chronaca Parva Ferrariensis*, col. 488.


23 As Miss Laurent demonstrates, Ibid., pp. 57-130.


26 Laurent, "The Este and their Vassals", especially pp. 130-150, assembles a considerable body of evidence to support this contention as does the short study of Lino Marini, *Per una storia dello stato estense: dal quattrocento all' ultimo cinquecento*, (Bologna, 1973). The system of Estensi feudal "clientage", aside from the registers of the Catastre delle investiture (registri A-Z), the Investiture di feudi, usi e livelli, and the Registri notarile camerile in the Archivio di Stato Modena, may be studied in two indexed printed sources: "Feudatari della Serenissima Casa d'Este con li loro rispettivi feudi disposti per ordine alfabetico", Giornale modenese civile ed ecclesiastico per l'anno 1774, pp. 92 ff., and Lodovico Ricci, Elenco dei feudi degli Stati estratto dalla Corografia dei Territori di Modena, (Modena, 1802). The role of the nobility in the Estensi domini has attracted little scholarly attention in the past, but see now Paola di Pietro, "I Catastri delle Investiture dell' Archivio Segreto Estense: osservazioni su alcune tipologie..."
contrattuali", (Tesi di laurea, Università degli studi di Bologna, 1973-74); Giorgio Chittolini, "Il particolarismo signorile e feudale in Emilia fra Quattro e Cinquecento", in Paolo Rossi, ed., Il Rinascimento nelle Corti Padane, (Bari, 1977), pp. 23-52; Gilberto Tagliati, "Relazione tra la famiglia Romei e la corte estense nel secolo XV", in Ibid., pp. 61-76.

27 This is in direct contrast to Laurent's conclusion that the Estensi spent little time in consolidating a public image for popular consumption, "The Este and their Vassals", pp. 151-67.

28 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1481, reg. 22, c. 4v.

29 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1472, reg. 16, c. 4r.

30 D. M. Bueno da Mesquita, "The Place of Despotism in Italian Politics", p. 316, for Milanese examples in the reign of Lodovico Sforza.

31 An important distinction between civil and criminal law was made by contemporary political writers. Leniency was prescribed for certain categories of civil offences, notably public debt, but it was generally considered essential to punish violent crime harshly. Ferrarese attitudes to justice are summed up by Sabadino degli Arienti, De triumphis religionis, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Rossiano 176, now published with an introduction by W. L. Gundersheimer in Art and Life at the Court of Ercole I d'Este, (Geneva, 1972). See Book Seven, "Dela conditione, dignitate et excellentia della iustitia e suo triumpho", pp. 82-87.

32 Filippo Valenti has argued that the substantial increase in the number of petitions was a vital factor in the expansion of the Estensi cancelleria from one fondo to three (sez. A officiorum publicorum, sez. B decretorum, sez. C epistolarum) about the middle of the fifteenth-century in "Note Storiche Sulla Cancelleria Degli Estensi a Ferrara Dalle Origini Alla Metà del Sec. XVI", Bulletino Dell' Archivio Paleografico Italiano, part II, 2-3 (1956-57), pp. 357-368. This is confirmed by Paola di Pietro in "La Cancelleria degli Estensi nel periodo ferrarese (1264-1598)", Atti e Memorie della Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Antiche Provincie Modenesi, 10 (1975), pp. 91-99.

33 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Minute e Memorie di Cancelleria, busta 166, anonymous letter to Borso d'Este, 2 May 1466.

34 On notarial style in Ferrara, see Paola di Pietro, "La Cancelleria degli Estensi", pp. 91-99.

35 For the careers of these signori see Chiappini, Gli
Estensi; Gundersheimer, Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance Despotism (for Niccolo III and Leonello); Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, III, IV, ad nomen.


38 DF, p. 71, l. 11.


40 On this point see the important article by Gabriella Zarri, "Pietà e profezia alle corti padane: le pie consiglieri dei principi", in Il Rinascimento nelle Corti Padane, pp. 201-38.

41 Francesco Ariosto Peregrino, Translatione del sacro sacello e sacro sancto Simulacro Virginale dignamente facta dal divo pio et Illustrissimo principe messer hercule duca de Ferrara, BEM, cod. latin 309, Alpha W 4, 4, fol. 105v.

42 Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, Book One, "Del triumpho dela dignit& dela religione et sua excellentia", pp. 32-37.

43 Instances of this practice are too numerous to list here. See for example the monasteries qualifying for Adventen gifts in ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, 1492, reg. 31, c. 12r:

"Mandato Illustrissimi et Excellentissimi domine nostri herculis ducis ferrara. Vos factores generales ipsius dari faciatis superscriptis venerabilis fratribus et sororibus Monasterior predictor petias pannis Celsitudo sua eisdem in elymosinem iubet dari. Et portari faciatis ad expensam celsitudo sue, hieronymus stabellinus scripsit, xxviii decembris, 1492". (These included eight Ferrarese monasteries, three in Modena, and one in Reggio)

For dispensations of money see ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1479, reg. 21, cc. 154r, 156r, 162r, etc. It was also customary for the
duke to delegate citizens to dispense wine to the local clergy on the streets of Ferrara during Advent:

"... Vos factores generales eius dari et solvi faciatis de introtibus Illius camere infrascriptis civibus ferrariensis infrascriptis denariorum quantitates pro vino quod ipsius dederunt curie prefati domine pro dispensando superstratis... in adventum ferrariae...

Gabrieli de sacro pro mastellis xv ad rationem soldorum viginti pro qualibet mastello...... L. 14
Laurentio de villa pro mastellis viij ad rationem soldorum viginti pro qualibet mastello...... L. 8
Matheo fasolo pro mastellis viij ad rationem soldorum viginti pro qualibet mastello...... L. 8
Joanni de albertis pro mastellis sex ad rationem soldorum viginti pro qualibet mastello...... L. 6

(ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1474-75, reg. 18, c. 19r)

44 The following Lenten gifts (ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1481, reg. 22, c. 51v) may be considered typical of those dispensed by the duke each year:

"... Vos factores generales dari faciatis venerabilis Monialibus Corporis christi huius civitatis ferrariae Nemarolum unum Anguillarum salitarum. quas eisdem Monialibus sua cel. donat amore dei. Item venerabilis fratribus Sancti Dimidiam unius buticello Anguilla salita quas sibi dari mandat sua ex. in subventionem eorum victus pro presenti quadragesima. Et ponantur ad expensam pro donatis...".

In this register, see also cc. 27r, 36v, 53r.

45 Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, p. 95, eulogizes this princely custom in Ferrara.

46 For example, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1486, reg. 24, c. 144r:

"Vos factores generales eius dari faciatis venerabilis monialibus Corporis christi civitatis ferr. castellam una vini cum grapis quam prelibatus Ill. d. noster dux de solita eius liberalimente donat amore dei... vii septembris 1486". See also in this register cc. 99r, 101r, 142r, 158v, 164v, 172v.

47 For example, bread was distributed to the poor upon the visit of Pope Pius II to Ferrara in 1459, the visit of the Emperor Frederick III in 1469, the baptism of Isabella d'Este in 1474, and so on. See the relevant descriptions of these events in the Ferrarese chronache.

48 By the late fifteenth-century, there was a special poor-fund "per elimosine hogi di" of 18 LM, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Guardaroba: Libro delle Partide, 1502-1504, reg. 120, c.3r

49 Ugo Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, Biblioteca
Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Chigi I. I. 4, fol. 18r.

50 Discussed by Gundersheimer, Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance Despotism, pp. 186-188.

51 In 1492, for instance, there were 132 individuals present at the feast:

"Dinari che se hanno a pagare a le infrascripte persone per sue robe date le commissione del Sp. Antonio maria guarniero factore generale per la elimosine de la zobia sancta questo anno presente per vestire li poveri la quale elimosina fa ogni anno il Signore... Ad Aldegiero biso lire centoquindexe et sol. dieexe de m. per braza 462 de pignolato bretno et bianco a sol. cinque de m. il brazzo monta in tutto... L. 115,10,0

A Mamia da Cremona lire cinquantadoe et sol. sedexe de 6 per zuchoti 132 nigri a sol. octo de m. monta in tutto... L. 52,16,0

A maestro Francesco bivilaqua calegaro lire cinquantadoe et sol. sedexe de m. per para 132 de scarpi a sol. octo de m. il paro monta... L. 52,16,0

Evidently, Ercole had decided to present gifts to all the poveri attending the feast in this year at the considerable cost of 221,2,0 LM, though it was usually the case that only the designated apostoli were favoured in this way, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1492, reg. 31, c. 85r.

52 There are several excellent descriptions of this ceremony in the chronicles (see Chapter Three), but here I have followed Sabadin's recollection of the feast in 1497, De triumphis religionis, pp. 90-94.

53 Adriano Prosperi, "Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche e le idee religiose", in Il Rinascimento nelle Corti Padane, p. 135.


55 The popular "right to games" is discussed by Jacques Heers in Fêtes, Jeux et Joutes dans les sociétés d'Occident à la fin du moyen âge, (Montreal, 1971), pp. 77-95.

56 See below, Chapter Two.

58 DF, p. 83, ll. 11-16.

59 For the various etymological interpretations of the word "venturall and their ritual significance see below Chapter Three.

60 DF, p. 83, ll. 20-34, p. 84, ll. 1-33.

61 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 14v.

62 While it may be true to say that guilds never completely disappeared from Ferrarese society in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, it is equally true that industrial and commercial growth was halted until new legislation was initiated under Niccolò III. For the account of this legislation, see P. Teodosio Lombardi, "Le Corporazioni di Arti e Mestieri a Ferrara dal 1173 al 1796", La Pianura, no. 4 (1976), pp. 3-20; Pietro Sitta, "Le Universita delle Arti a Ferrara dal secolo XII al secolo XVIII", Atti e Memorie della Deputazione Ferrarese di Storia Patria, 8 (1896), pp. 5-204; Ferrante Borsetti, Historia Almi Ferrariae Gymnasi in duas partes divisa, (Ferrara, 1735), vol. I

63 "Statuimus et volumus inviolabiliter observari quod omnia collegia sive scolae artium quarumlibet et mercationum sive negociationum, cuiuscumque maneriel i et quocumque nomine censeantur vel censori possint, auctoritate presentis statuti cassentur et irritentur et pro cassis et irritis ipso iure de cetero habeantur", Montorsi, Statuta Ferrariae Anno MCCLXXXVII, VI, 60, p. 309.

64 Denys Hay, The Church in Italy in the Fifteenth Century, (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 67-71, calls the longing for collective joy and collective devotion the "clubbable part of man".


66 See Appendix B.


68 On the cults of S. Giorgio and S. Maurelio in Ferrara,
see Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, V, app. ii, "Antichità del culto de' Ferraresi ai ss. Giorgio e Maurelio", pp. 270-90, and Luigi Ughi, Il culto di S. Giorgio presso i Ferraresi, (Ferrara, 1811). The procedures for the oblations upon these feasts are discussed in Chapter Three.

69 Decreti, Ordinationi, Provisioni, Capitoli et Altri Concessi per li Serenissimi Duchi e Marchesi Giudici de' Dodici Savi a gli Huomini dell' Università dell' Arte de Fornari, BEN, MS. cod. Campori 126, Gamma H 33, cap. 12.

70 Another early example of institutionalized poor-relief enshrined in corporate matricole are the Statuti dell' Arte de Calzolari (shoe-makers), ASFe, MFM, vol. 47, cc. 148r-326v, which included similar provisions for members who had fallen into a state of poverty in addition to the standard care for widows and funeral expenses.

71 Statuti dell' arte de' mersati della mezaria, BCAF, MS. Classe I, no. 214, cap. 15.

72 Especially in Florence, where Hans Baron, "Franciscan Poverty and Civic Wealth in Humanistic Thought", Speculum, 13 (1938), pp. 1-37, and more recently Gene Brucker, The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence, pp. 14-59, have authoritatively illustrated the influence of the theory of apostolic poverty upon contemporary civic values.


75 The reception of Florentine civic values in Ferrara was essential to the evolution of an Este courtly style during the second half of the fifteenth-century, and surely crucial to the signorial public image, which was used as a subterfuge to camouflage the exploitation of the popolo by Borso and Ercole. Lewis Lockwood, "Music at Ferrara in the period of Ercole I d'Este", Studi Musicali, I (1972), pp. 101-31, calls the phenomenon of "reception" and its resultant style "despotic humanism", though this seems to be an over-simplified explanation of a rather complex problem. In Chapter Four, we will attempt to investigate the reception of a Florentine "theory of magnificence" in Ferrara, and its effect upon the concept of nobility at the Este court.

76 Decretum fratrum sancte Marie Ab Angelis, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Cancelleria, Leonelli decreti, sez. B, 1442-1446, reg. 5, cc. 165r-168v. This was confirmed by Ercole in 1472, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1472, reg. 16, c. 43r.
Numerous examples of the notorious behaviour of the money-lenders in Ferrara, Christian and Jewish, can be found in the registers of the Mandati. By the end of the fifteenth-century, the official lending-rate stood at 35% (though it was often higher), aggravating an already desperate economic situation in the city, ASMo, ASE, Libri Camerali, Conto Generale, 1499, c. 85r. Increased scrutiny of account books under the supervision of the Obervantines helped to check extortion and related crimes of violence. This had clearly been the aim of the statutes recognized by Niccolò III in 1440, which required the Cambiaduri to offer their registers for periodic inspection, Decretum Campororum Civitatis ferrarle, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Cancelleria, Nicolai III epistolae et decreta, sez. B, 1419-1441, reg. 4, cc. 253r-264r.

78 Decretum fratrum sancte Maria Ab Angelis, c. 166v.


82 Paolo Zerbinati, Memorie, BCAF, MS. Classe I, no. 357, fol. 18r.

83 Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, IV, p. 332.

84 It was common practice for wealthy nobles (the Trotti family being the best example) to lend money to the Ferrarese citizenry through the brokerage of Jewish financiers, thus avoiding the stigma attached to usury. I wish to thank Mr. Richard Tristano of New York University for bringing this commercial venture to my attention.

85 Interesting revelations concerning ducal monetary problems and their effect upon payments made to artists and architects in ducal service are made by Adolfo Venturi in "L'Arte Ferrarese nel Periodo di Borso d'Este", Rivista Storica Italiana, II (1885), pp. 689-749. Venturi reveals that artists and architects were not paid for their work in cash but in letters of credit, that is, scriptures of debts owed by individuals to the ducal camera, hence artists...
"si trovavano facilmente nel caso di fare il poco gradito e incomodo ufficio di essatore" (p. 696). In the Herculean era, the evidence suggests that artists and architects often laboured for a number of years without any financial remuneration at all. Such was the poverty of the ducal camera, that even Biagio Rossetti, the architect responsible for the splendour of the Herculean Addizione, was reduced to petitioning for his salary. In 1488, Rossetti informed the camera that he was owed 700 LM in back wages (ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1488, reg. 27, c. 158r), but unable to receive satisfaction, he was obliged to demand building materials in order to construct a house for himself in 1491:

"... sono anni septe che lui serve v. Ex., et mai non ha havuto dinari alcuni excepto il salario de uno anno, et perche a lui fa bisogno de farse una caseta per habitacione de lui cum la sua famiglia, per tanto devotissimamente prega quella se voglia dignare de commettere cum effecto al facturi de sus Ex. che gie daga travi centocinquanta et asse cinquecento, ad cio chel possa fare dicta sua casa...", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1491, reg. 30, c. 133r.

The following monetary relationship between the golden ducat of Venice and the Estensi lira marchesana helps to illustrate the rate of inflation in quattrocento Ferrara:

1 ducato in 1385 = marchesini 34
idem 1424 = idem 40
idem 1440 = idem 45
idem 1452 = idem 50
idem 1475 = idem 57
idem 1483 = idem 60
idem 1500 = idem 63

Reproduced from Vicenzo Bellini, Dell’antica lira Marchesini detta volgarmente Marchesana, (Ferrara, 1754), pp. 32-34.

In pure monetary terms the value of the silver lira marchesana remained constant throughout the fifteenth-century in Ferrara:

1 lira marchesana = 20 marchesini or soldi
1 marchesino = 12 denari ferrarini

This was the most common subdivision, but the marchesino was also divided into 6 quattrini, and each quattrino into 4 bagatini. However, this relationship belies the real value of the Ferrarese currency since it was "moneta ideale" or a money of account, that is to say, not related to a determined quality and quantity of finished metal but to set denominations in circulation. Hence the lira marchesana did not follow the vicissitudes of its relationship with foreign currencies. On the Ferrarese money of account, see

Aside from the well-known connections between the Este and Jewish financiers in Ferrara, throughout the second half of the fifteenth-century the Estensi were heavily indebted to the Florentine money-lenders Antonio, Giuliano, and Leonello Gondi. See in particular the crisis which developed upon the death of Antonio Gondi in 1486, when Giuliano Gondi (who already held Este pledges amounting to 11,000 golden ducats) refused to extend Ercole further credit until he settled his debts, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Minutario Cronologico: Lettere Sciolti, busta 2, 1483-1486, letter from Ercole to Aldrovandino Guidoni, 20 February 1486; busta 3, 1487-93, letters from Ercole to Aldrovandino Guidoni and Baptista Bendedei, 24 January and 15-16 February 1487. Ercole's solution was to offer the Gondi Comacchian salt worth 2,000 ducats "perche sia nui sapia... che se loro havesseno la dicta summa et li trafficasseno ne loro traffichi et botege ne fare beno piu assai...",

Forced loans from the nobility were a vital component of Estensi fiscal policy. Typical of the lists of sponsors to be found in the cameral registers are the "impresto de Regio" and "impresto de Modena" in 1475, when a cancellarius was sent "a Modena et Regio per sua S. atorti Impresto... et de commissione de epso nostro S. missi in bancho de Baldassera de Giovanni mercandante...", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1474-75, reg. 18, cc. 157r-157v. It was usual for the Estensi to finance state ceremonies in this manner, as in 1502, when Ercole underwrote some of the expenses for the reception of Lucrezia Borgia by tapping noble resources. See the records of the cancellarius Leonello Recepta, who canvassed the nobility in Reggio on Ercole's behalf to the sum of 1500 golden ducats, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, Leonello Recepta Cancelliere 1501-1509, busta 4, "Impresto de Reggio", 25 March 1501.

Protection for the Jewish community was frequently established in response to individual petitions, for instance, the Decretum in favore hebreo Luigi di Bagnacavalli, 29 April 1454, where protection was guaranteed by Borso d'Este on the condition that the petitioner would wear a recognition symbol: "quam in Bagnacavallo teneantur et seu obligati sint a portandum Signum O. prout portant alii hebrei...", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Cancelleria, Borsii decreta, 1454-1460, sez. B, reg. 7, c. 17r. Two other exam-
pleas may be found in this register, Decretum Angeli hebrei de Rodigo (c. 168r) and the Pacti e capituli concessi per la Magnifica Comunità di Rezo "In nome di quella a Zinatano hebreo figliolo, che su de musetto hebreo et per lui acceptati solennemente per sì e per la sua famiglia et per li suoi heredi...", at c. 52r. It appears that the Estensi, and especially Ercole, were well-disposed towards their Jewish subjects. The subject has been treated by A. Balletti, "Gli Ebrei e gli Estensi", Atti e Memorie della Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Antiche Province Modenese, ser. 5, 7 (1913), esp. pp. 11-16.

90 Decretum fratrum sancte Marie Ab Angelis, c. 168r for lists of loans.

91 Obedience to the statutes of guilds was initiated in the matricole, since members were obliged to obey their masters and sindici upon matters of corporate business on pain of civil fine. Supervision yet remained difficult, and the addition of another supervising body helped to curb abuses.

92 Normally this followed saintly affiliation. See G.A. Scalabrini, Memorie storiche delle Chiese di Ferrara, (Ferrara, 1773), and Marc Antonio Guarini, Compendio storico dell'origine, accrescimento e prerogative delle chiese, e luoghi pii della città di Ferrara, (Ferrara, 1621), for mention of guild affiliation and patronage, ad nomen.

93 Payments for maintenance were usually considered to be part of the oblation made on the festa of the patron saint of each guild. See for example the Statuti dell' Arte de Strazzaroli, ASFe, MFM, vol. 46, cc. 1r-129r, at cap. 21 and 30.

94 Sitta, "Saggio sulle Istituzioni Finanziarie del Ducato Estense", p. 117.

95 The literature upon saints and their relationship with collective expressions of public devotion is extensive. A useful introduction to late medieval piety is provided by E. Delaruelle in "La pietà popolare alla fine del medievo", X Congresso Internazionale di Scienze Storiche, (Florence, 1955), relazioni iii, pp. 309-32, and in "La Spiritualité aux xiviese et xviie siècle", Cahiers d'histoire mondiale, V (1959), pp. 59-70. Scholars will now want to consult the recent thesis by Dr. M.G. Dickson, "The Cult of Saints in the Later Middle Ages", (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1975) for synthetic ideas.

96 Decreti... dell' Università dell' Arte de Fornari, MS. cit., cap. 4.

97 For the history of altars in Ferrarese churches see Scalabrini, Memorie storiche delle Chiese di Ferrara, ad nomen.
Ibid., pp. 72-73.

Ibid., pp. 72-73.

Ibid., pp. 7-8, 18-19; Gualtiero Medri, "La scultura a Ferrara", Atti e Memorie della Deputazione Ferrarese di Storia Patria, n.s., 17 (1957), pp. 1-140, reviews the careers of Ferreri, Turchi, and Turchetti.

DF, p. 33, ll. 21-22.


The Muratori (masons), for example, actively supported the hospital and orphanage attached to the Oratory of S. Cristoforo: "Item che tuti le Muraduri de dicta scola et compagnia una cum loro Massaro et Syndici se dibia adunare alo hospedale de la cha de dio ogni anno la vigilia de mes. Sancto Zorzo in li vespri, lo di de mes. Sancto domenico la matina, lo di de messere Sancto Antonio de Zenaro la matina per andare ad offerire a dicte Giesie, et chadauno dibia portare ad offerire a dicte giesie in mane uno dopirolo de valuta de soldo uno de marcesane a soe spese, aut quello per li fusse imposto et commandato per lo dicto Massaro. Et lo dicto Massaro a spese dela scola predicta dibia portare ad offerire ad cadauna de le dicte Giesie uno dupiero de cira de peso de-libre quattro de cirall", Decretum Artis Muratorum Civitatis Ferrariae, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Cancelleria, Leonelli et Borsii decretar, sez. B, 1447-1454, reg. 6, cc. 55r-58r, cap. II.

See for example the frequent references contained in two treatises by Antonio Cornazano, De Excellentium Virorum Principibus ab Origine Mundi per Etates, BEM, cod. ital. 101, Alpha P 6, 4, esp. fols. 65r-71v, and Canto del modo del regnare, BEM, cod. ital. 177, Alpha J 6, 21.


This custom is only mentioned on one occasion in the chronicles, in Zam p. 191, ll. 31-34, but it is clear that these exchanges were traditional: "A di 8, il marti (1488). Fu presentato al duca nostro uno bo' grande, biancho, grassissimo, da parte de lo illustrissimo duca de Milano, secondo che ogni anno ha facto soa segnoria e suoi precessori a la Cha' da Este: e questo perché anche la Cha' Da Este ge manda ogni anno a donare una nave de pissi salati de la vale de Comachio". The size of the Este gifts varied according
to the dignity of the recipients, and usually consisted of herring or eels (anguille): "... Vos factor
ores generales eius dari et solvi faciatis iusto et Giare mullionibus sue celsitudinus libras 40 m. pro
expensis faciendis causa conducendi Mediolanis Mant
uum et in Montesferati pisces salitos presentandos
et dandos perce eius Celsitudinus Ill. d. ducibus
mediolani et Bari et aliis nobillibus eiusdem urbis
e Ill. d. Marchionis Montesferati...", ASMo, ASE,
Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1489, reg. 28, c. 24r.
For the gift to the Duke of Urbino, c. 24v, to Gio
vanni Bentivoglio, c. 27v, to various nobles within
domini, cc. 31r-31v.

107 Borso d'Este issued a set of instructions for the reception of the Milanese steer to his referendarius Lodovico Casella in 1466, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, busta 2a, 12 February 1466.

108 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Principi e Signorie Estero, Mantua/Gonzaga, busta 1181, Isabella d'Este to Ercole, 3 February 1499.

109 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epist
colarum registrum, sez. C, 1476, reg. 4, c. 214v,
Ercole to Lodovico Gonzaga, 25 November 1476.

110 Borso financed the expansion of the hospital during the 1450's and he also made a gift of 100 LM to the prior Francesco Attolini, ASMo, ASE, Libri Camerali Diversi, P. Giornale de Intrata et Uscita del Conto Vecchio, 1453, reg. 12, c. 10r.

111 Zam, p. 194, 11. 24-28.

112 Ibid., p. 346, 11. 9-14.

113 Fr. Gorius, Simbolae litterariae, (Florence, 1751),
VIII, p. 183.

114 For example ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati,
1468, reg. 13, c. 62r, where Borso donated 20 LM
to one Carlo Scaglioni, a student of law, for the payment of his room and board, and at c. 104v, where Borso presented 100 LM to Giovanni Sadoleto "ad preparandos honores futuri conventus et doctoratus ipsius".

115 For example, Ercole provided Bartholomea, "filie Antonis Turchetis", with a dowry for her entrance into a monastery: "Queste sie le Cosse che debbe portate la spoxa de lo eterno dio quando va in lo monasterio...", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1493, reg. 32, c. 87v.

116 Capitoli della compagnia chiamata la scola de' pov
eri vergognosi sotto la protezione di S. Martino,
BCAF, MS. Classe I, no. 346, fol. 3r.
It is not altogether surprising to find reference made to mystics at the Herculean court. Ercole's fascination for mysticism, astrology, and black magic (in Carlo Sosena, a local cleric, he had his own sorcerer), despite his avowed policy to stamp out "un-Christian" consultations with proscribed authorities, is well-documented by A. Rotondò, "Pellegrino Prisciani", Rinascimento, 11 (1960), pp. 69-110, and S. Samuel Ludovici, Il 'De Sphaera' estense e l'iconografia astrologica, (Milan, 1958).

The inauguration of this special fund seems to have occurred during the reign of Borso d'Este. It is attested to by a letter from the cancellarius Giovanni Compagni to Borso dated 30 April 1470, where the intention of this fund is made abundantly clear: "Et ho facto investigare diligentimente da multi canti per intendere a cui meglio et per poverta et per bonta se habi a fare questa elimosita...", ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, busta 2b. The chaplain decided to divide the fund of 50 golden ducats between the "poveri che adimandavano adiuto pur per maritare doncelle" and the hospital of the Compagnia dei Battuti Bianchi.

Ercole was always generous to singers, and went to quite elaborate lengths to procure their services. In 1502, for instance, Ercole ordered his ambassador in Rome to Naples where he was to persuade a singer in the King's service to come to Ferrara: "Dilectissime nostre. Desideramo de havere qua ali servitii nostri per cantore uno frate Felice da Nolla del ordine de S. Francesco giovane de anni 25 quale fu cantore del Re Federico et stantia ala Annunciata in Napoli. Et pensando Nui il modo che debiamo tenire per haverlo siamo venute in deliberatione che tu sii quello che habii a fare questa opera, persuadendosse che cum la diligentia et ingezno tuo saperai ben condurre il tuto...", ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Dispacci Ambasciatori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Dispacci da Roma, busta 18, Ercole to Francesco Gualengo, 31 May 1502. This was accomplished, according to Gualengo's letter of 4 September, with a bribe of 50 golden ducats and the promise of a monthly stipend of 25 LM. Given these circumstances, it is not surprising to find that members of Ercole's chapel choir were the recipients of numerous gifts in addition to their wages, ranging from the payment of room and board to shoes, jackets, cloth, and "frumenti". See for example ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1472, reg. 16, cc. 93r, 139r; 1473, reg. 17, c. 46r; 1474-75, reg. 18, c. 136v; 1478, reg. 20, cc. 21v, 23r; 1481, reg. 22, c. 16r etc. Additional documentation may be gleaned from Lockwood, "Music at the Court of Ercole d'Este", pp. 101-31, and L.F. Valdighi, "Cappelle, Concerti e Musiche di Casa d'Este", Atti e Memorie delle Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Provincie Modenese.
120 DF, p. 192, 11. 21-38.

121 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1492, reg. 31, cc. 3r, 12r, 25v, 29v, 64r, 137v; 1493, reg. 32, c. 16r; 1494, reg. 34, c. 88r; 1495 (not recorded); 1496, reg. 36, c. 31v; 1497, reg. 37, cc. 190v-191r.

122 Adriano Prosperi, "Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche e le idee religiose", pp. 131-32, examines the Estensi predilection for the Observantines.

123 Charles Rosenberg, "'Per il bene di... nostra cipta': Borso d'Este and the Certosa of Ferrara", Renaissance Quarterly, 29 (1976), p. 331

124 Rosenberg, Ibid., p. 330, mistakenly identifies Sant' Antonio as a Dominican monastery and gives the date of foundation as 1249. See G. Brunacci, Vita della B. Beatrice II d'Este, (Venice, 1963), and D. Balboni, "Ferrare", in Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie, (Paris, 1967), XVI, col. 1190.


128 See the letter from Borso d'Este to the Anziani of Reggio, Archivio di Stato Reggio, Archivio Communale, Carteggio di Anziani, busta 1464-69, 3 November 1469 (published by Rosenberg, "Borso d'Este and the Certosa of Ferrara", p. 338), where Borso advises the Anziani that reform would take place under the General of the Order because "the Vicar General did not abide by our wishes which always were and always will be according to God and as befits a good and Catholic ruler" (translation by Rosenberg).


130 The ceremony is described in an anonymous Cronaca di Ferrara, BCACF, Collezione Antonelli, no. 255, fols. 18r-18v.

131 ASMo, ASE, Notai Camerale, Liber instrumentorum regatorum per olim D. Philippum Bendedei, 1450-61, fols. 79r-84r.
132 DF, p. 33, 11. 28-29. This kind of sponsorship was continued by Ercole: "Dilectissimi nostri. Alla recevuta di questa subito mandati per lo Guardiano de Sancto Spirito he nominata frate Silvestro de ferrara et fatigli dare uno mozo di frumento e de farina secondo che meglio li piacera per subventatione del suo Capitolo provinciale che fano de presenti et fati che siano ben trattati et cum expeditione", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1476, reg. 19, c. 69r.

133 For Borso's connection with the university see Secco-Suardo, "Lo Studio di Ferrara a tutto il secolo XV", pp. 103-115, and Giuseppe Pardi, "Borso d'Este Duca di Ferrara, Modena e Reggio (1450-1471)", Studi Storici, XVI (1907), pp. 113-133.

134 According to Gundersheimer, Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance Despotism, p. 197, this reflected a Hercules desire to create a kind of Mecca for the religious in Ferrara.


136 Mentioned by Zam, p. 307, l. 23; Mario Equicola, Annali di Ferrara, BCAF, MS. Classe II, no. 355, fol. 70v; Paolo da Lepnago, Cronaca Estense, ASMo, MS. Biblioteca no. 69, c. 164v; Filippo Rodi, Annali di Ferrara, BCAF, MS. Classe I, no. 645, fols. 451v-452r.


139 "Decem monasteria sua in Herculea additione locavit, quae religiosis viris ac mulieribus ita iam replevit ut mirabilibus nihil contueri possit", AAF, Residui Ecclesiastici, S. Caterina da Siena, Catasto I, c. 5r (noted by Zarri, "Pietà e profezia alle corti padane", p. 202). The list of these monasteries is taken from Gasparo Sardi, Historie Ferraresi, (Ferrara, 1556), p. 327.

140 DF, p. 167, 11. 16-18.


ance, 19 (1972), pp. 7-41.


144 Especially in Ferrara, where the Estensi assumed the responsibility for prosecuting moral crimes. The signorial attitude to blasphemy, for instance, was inflexibly harsh. Even upon his accession, Borso excused all delictual fines owed the camera "per qualunque ragione eccetto che per la bestemmia...", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1450, reg. 10, c. 158r.

145 For this correspondence, see ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Dispacci Ambasciatori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Dispacci da Roma, buste 1-20.


147 Zam, p. 26, ll. 16-18.

148 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Dispacci Ambasciatori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Dispacci da Roma, busta 8, Giovanni Boccaccio to Ercole d'Este, n.d.


150 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Dispacci Ambasciatori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Dispacci da Roma, busta 1, Leonello Trotti to Ercole d'Este, 26 August 1473.

151 The single area where the Estensi met with little success was in the appointment of the Bishop of Ferrara. On occasion, this resulted in open conflict between the signore and the bishop, as in 1457, when Borso attempted to list the local clergy on the rolls of the communal colta (see Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, IV, pp. 29-30, for the circumstances). In 1477, Ercole and his magistrates were excommunicated by the bishop's vicar for having executed a priest before obtaining papal permission, but "Tuthora il duca expecta la absolutione dal Papa", Zam, p. 32, ll. 13-24.

152 Denys Hay, The Church in Italy in the Fifteenth Century, p. 82, notes that the Estensi were one of a number of princely families who meddled in the affairs of friars, and that it was virtually impossible to hold a chapter in Ferrara without the benevolence of the signore. Or as Ludovico Ariosto put it in 1523, "Se bene li Signori temporali non hanno potestà sopra li chierici, pur mi pare che ne ancho li chierici debbiano poter star nel dominio de li detti Signori contra loro vol-
Among the preachers whose presence is recorded in Ferrara are Fra Cherubino da Spoleto, who preached to an audience of 12,000 people "tutta questa quaresma (1481)... con gran caritate e devotione di tutto il popolo predicato" (Zam, p. 87, li. 27-34); Fra Francesco da Trivulzio, "... il quale ha predica questa quaresma (1488) in lo vesquado et ha demonstrato hozì con grandissima devotione in pergolo li misterii de la passione de Christo, zoë il sudario, li chiodi, la schorezada, la corona de spine... dicando che Christo, quando il venera il di del judicio a zudicare li vivi e li morti, impropererà tali beneficii a la humana natura" (Zam, p. 194, li. 7-12); Battista Panetto (Zam, p. 205, li. 15); Fra Mariano Genazzano, disciple of Girolamo Savonarola and founder of the Compagnia di S. Martino in Ferrara (Zam, p. 221, li. 28-31), and of whom Ercole was an enthusiastic admirer. "Ogni matina", records Bernardino Prosperi, "el S. va ad audire il padre fra Mariano, il quale se mai predichoe bene mo predica benissimo e differente dal us-ato", ASMan, AG, busta 1234, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 17 February 1494. See also the letter from Prosperi to Isabella of 30 June 1492 in ASMan, AG, busta 1233, and the letters from Giovanni Maria Trotti to Isabella of 18 and 25 June 1492 in this busta. Religious excitement, however, often ended with violence committed against the Jews. For what follows, see Chapter Two.


For the Ferrarese reaction to the Battuti Bianchi, see Giaccobe Delayto, Annales Estenses, in L. A. Muratori, ed., Rerum Italicarum Scriptores ab anno Aerae 1000 ad 1500, vol. 18, cols. 956-958.

Gundersheimer has argued that only one confraternity clearly antedates the Herculean period (Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance Despotism, p. 189). See however the description of Borso's funeral in 1471, where nine confraternities are said to have participated in the procession of the body to the Certosa: Cronaca di Ferrara, BCAF, Coll. Antonelli, no. 255, fol. 27v; Hondedio di Vitale, Memorie-Cronaca, BCAF, Coll. Antonelli, no. 257, fol. 3r-4r.

Similarly, Gundersheimer suggests that "there were at least eight such bodies by 1505" (p. 189), whereas the chronicler Ugo Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 263r, lists thirteen in the year 1494 (he
excludes the Compagnia di S. Martino, which would bring the total up to fourteen).

159 "Hospitali per alogiare poveri che sono in ferrara et burgi 1494... hospitale de s. lanardo, hospitale de s. Anna, hospitale in s. luca ultra po, hospitale in s. thomaso, hospitale in S. Agnese, hospitale di batu bianchi, hospitale di batu negri, hospitale de la cha de dio, hospitale de S. Justina, hospitale de s. Maria di ferni", Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 263r.


162 Typical of these public gestures was the annual felling of timber in the barco at Christmas time, when the duke personally distributed "le asse usuale" to selected religious orders, hospitals, and confraternities, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1478, reg. 20, cc. 9v-10r.

163 The size of the herd of cattle belonging to the Este was such that their butchers could not keep track of it, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1494, reg. 34, c. 186v. During floods, landowners were permitted to send their herds north to pastures in Gonzaga territory: ASMan, AG, busta 1231, Leonello Guarini to Francesco Gonzaga, 21 July 1488.


165 The history of this competition in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is related by Bernardino Ghetti, I patti tra Venezia e Ferrara dal 1191 al 1313, (Rome, 1906).

166 "Accepi puer a Genitore meo hiberno tempore noctis confabulante in lare, quod ejus tempore videt fratrum & dirui", Riccobaldi, Chronaca Parva Ferrariensis, col. 482.

167 The history of local military installations certainly needs a fresh review. For now, see Campori, "Gli architetti e gli ingegneri civili e militari", pp. 1-70, and Malagoli, Le Mura de Ferrara, pp. 4-10.

168 Hondedio de Vitale, Memorie-Cronaca, fol. 5v: "...lo dicto Duca fece murare tute le porte de ferrara salvo che quatro, signo e male angurio per lo ben comune".
169 Anon., Nota dei ribelli della Serenissima Casa d'Este con suoi cognomi, anni ecc. dal 1287 al 1509, BCAP, Coll. Antonelli, no. 50.

170 For the Pio conspiracy, see Cappelli, "La Congiura dei Pio Signori di Carpi contro Borso d'Este", pp. 367-416; for Niccolò's attempted coup (Chiappini, Gli Estensi, p. 525 for bibliography), see the entries in Zam, DF, and Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, for September 1-3, 1476.

171 Gundersheimer, Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance Despotism, pp. 4-6.

172 Typical of this sort of chronicle is the Cronaca Ferrarese of Girolamo Maria Ferrarini, BEM, cod. ital. 178, Alpha F 5, 18. It is devoid of any social comment which might be construed as criticism of signorial policy, yet it remains interesting for its descriptions of feste and insights into the world of the court notary.


174 Chiappini, Gli Estensi, pp. 70-73.


176 Zam, p.

177 D.M. Bueno da Mesquita, "The Place of Despotism in Italian Politics", p. 323.

178 Antonio Piromalli suggests that an insatiable demand for cash led to a signorial "mediocrità umana" by virtue of the increased exploitation of the popolo in La Cultura a Ferrara al Tempo di Ludovico Ariosto, (Florence, 1953), esp. pp. 3-56.


181 The expenses of Eleonora's reception have now been published by Luciano Chiappini in "Indagini Attorno a Chronache e Storie Ferraresi del Sec. XV", Atti e Memorie della Deputazione Provinciale Ferrarese di Storia Patria, 14 (1955), pp. 21-31. The famine of 1474 was caused by floods (ASMO, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1474-75, reg. 18, c. 129r), but it should be noted that the problem was compounded by the reception of Federico of Aragon, "perche se mai
Disputes over the succession to the signoria were indigenous to Ferrara throughout the fifteenth-century. Even where a clear line of succession had been established, members of the Este family were wont to challenge signorial authority (as in 1507, when Giulio and Ferrante d'Este plotted against their elder brother Alfonso I). The untimely death of Leonello d'Este in 1450, leaving a legitimate but minor heir, Niccolò, left the door open to Borso. Niccolò's youth, inexperience, and humanist education were unsatisfactory to the local nobility despite Gonzaga's machinations (Niccolò's mother was Margherita Gonzaga), while the other young pretender, Ercole, son of Niccolò III d'Este and Riccarda di Saluzzo, likewise inexperienced and without the backing of a noble faction in the city, proved incapable of mustering loyalty at the crucial moment. The desire to avoid a regency, especially one where Gonzaga would have influence, moved the Ferrarese nobility to offer the signoria to Borso, then 37 and an acknowledged military leader; Ercole was despatched to the Neapolitan court to continue his education, while the young Niccolò remained in Ferrara under Borso's protection (the circumstances of Borso's succession are carefully examined by Alfonso Lazzari, "Il primo duca di Ferrara Borso d'Este", Atti e Memorie della Deputazione di Storia Patria per l'Emilia e la Romagna, sez. Ferrara, n.s., II, 1945). Upon the death of Borso in 1471, the succession was again in dispute. Ercole was able to count on noble support within the city and also the promise of military intervention from Venice to overcome Niccolò and his partizans, who were subsequently banished from Ferrara. An attempt on Niccolò's life shortly before the end of 1471 failed (the attempted assassination was organized by Nicolo Ariosto at Ercole's instigation), leaving Niccolò free to regroup his forces in Mantua under the protection of Lodovico Gonzaga for the aborted coup of 1476.
188 For example, the construction of Montesanto by forced labour: "MCCCCLXXI, de Zenaro, lo illust-rissimo duca Borso cominciò dare principio a fare una montagna de terra per forza de carri, navi et brozi et de opere manuali, che era una grande facenda; del che tutto il popolo se ne redoleva molto, perchè non era utile alcuno et li contadini non poteano lavorare le possessione per cagione de dic-to lavorierò; et facea fare questa montagna dove se chiama Monte Sancto; et di questo il popolo mormor-ava molto", DF, p. 66, 11. 8-12.

189 For the reference to "a trarre quel piu sugo se potesse", see ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio de Rettori Modena e Modenese, busta 2a. The original letter from Borso to Luchino Marocelli, Captain of Justice in Modena, has now gone missing, but the phrase re-mains intact in Marocelli's response dated 24 Feb-ruary 1471: "Nui havessemo una littera da vostre signore che ce cavacava assai a stringersi cum questi citadini di qua quali ni paresse havere il modo de subvenire et scrivere a vostra signore in questa sua benedetta andata per vedere di trarre quel piu sugo se potesse". For the reference to "per possibile et per impossibile", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1472, reg. 16, c. 66r: "... humelmente ex-pone il fidelissimo servo di quella Jacomo di Gale-ffini che altre volte supplico ala du. s.v. che li Mag. generali factori per landata de lo Ill. condam Duca Borso havevano tracto dinari dogni luogo per possibile e per impossibile et essendo daui sugumto la camera a certo srecto bisogno non sapevano ni a trovavano piu credito e per facturi cum li nigni in mano alhora el sp. Bonvicino cum parole et menaze fece tanto chel dicti serviti li consigno certi qua-dri da Rezento et per fece impignare per ducati 20 doro...".

190 In the registers of the Mandati, one finds all of the daily financial transactions conducted by the ducal camera. They comprise a varied and enormously rich fondo, which, on the whole, has been sorely neglected. One of the few scholars who has made good use of these registers is the art historian Adolpho Venturi in "L'Arte Ferrarese nel periodo di Ercole d'Este", Atti e Memorie della R. Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Province di Romagna, ser. 3, 6 (1888), pp. 91-119, 350-422; 7 (1889), pp. 368-412.

191 A remarkable example of the obedience expected by the signore from his subjects is provided by an artist who was left stranded in Venice by Borso d'Este. "Soa prefacto S. me disse Nicolo veni a Venesia", records the artist, whereupon he was expected to leave immediately, without word to his family, and accompany his prince. Unable to afford the return journey and having run up a large bill in a Venetian hostel, the artist was reduced to
petitioning the ducal camera for three years before receiving the funds which would allow him to return to Ferrara, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1472, reg. 16, c. 23v.

192 The turn of the twentieth-century also witnesses the nascent interest of British historians in Ferrara. See E.P. Gardner, Dukes and Poets in Ferrara, (London, 1904), and Julia Cartwright, Isabella d'Este, 2 vols., (London, 1904), both of these still very useful texts.

193 See bibliography, ad nomen.

194 See bibliography, ad nomen.

195 See below, pp. 54-7.

196 See below, pp. 54-7, 163-205.

197 See bibliography, ad nomen; below, pp. 57-8.

198 See bibliography, ad nomen; below, pp. 163-205.

199 See bibliography, ad nomen.

200 See bibliography, ad nomen.

201 Chiappini, Gli Estensi, pp. 526-28, for bibliography.

202 See below, Chapter Three, n. 259.

203 See bibliography, ad nomen.

204 See below, pp. 163-205.

205 See below, n. 233; Chiappini, Gli Estensi, p. 537.

206 Piromalli, La Cultura a Ferrara al Tempo di Ludovico Ariosto, pp. 38-44, makes this assumption without producing evidence to substantiate his claim. However, the endless sequence of exemptions granted to the Trotti can be located in the registers of the Cancelleria and the Mandati, while Ugo Caleffini's comments, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fols. 164r-164v, establish them as speculators in grain, beef, and land.

207 There are two important references which establish members of the local nobility as speculators on the Venetian grain exchanges:
"Mag. Theophilo (Calcagnini) ni ha richiesto la tracta di centocinquanta in centosexanta mogia di fromento del suo da Belomba ala misura Ferrarese per poterlo mandare a Vinesia on darlo ad altri che gli lo condura, la quale siamo contenti di concedere gli libera da pagamento de le gabelle...", ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 67, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 17 August 1479.
"... Vos factores generales eius fieri faciatis bulletas opportunas Sp. equiti d. Francisco Ariosto ... pro extrahendo modios centum frumanti ex civitate ferrara ul eius districtu et illud conducendo usus venetias solumdo debitas gabellas et dimidiam tracta", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1481, reg. 22, c. 11r.

208 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Cancelleria, Borsii decretorum archetypa, sez. B, 1453-1461, reg. 8, cc. 206r-207v, for the details of this gift.

209 The usual procedure was to re-allocate confiscated lands to noble supporters. Both Niccolò III and Leonello d'Este frequently employed this method to ensure the loyalty of their noble clientele, although the practice appears to have been waning by the mid-fifteenth-century. Thereafter the threat of confiscation was an equally effective device. But see, for example, the circumstances surrounding the execution of the Consigliero Segreto Uguccione dell'Abbadia in 1460, whose lands were forfeited to the camera and subsequently divided up amongst several noble families, DF, p. 43, ll. 4-13.

210 Above, n. 165.

211 See below, Chapter Four, ii.

212 Ugo Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fols. 66r-70v.

213 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Libri e Carte d'Aministrazione dei Principi, 1492, Libro dei Salariati, reg. 25.

214 Cristoforo Messisbugo, Compendio Generale di Spese e Provisioni per la Corte di Ferrara, BEM, MS. cod. Campori 1582, Gamma E 1, 7.

215 For Caleffini's calculations on the Este household in 1473, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fols. 36r-37v.

216 Ibid., 64r-65v, 71r-71v (office-holders and garrison commanders); A register of salaried office-holders during the reign of Borso, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Cancelleria, sez. A, Libro d'uffici del Stato di Ferrara al tempo del Signore duca Borso, 1450-1465, reg. 6, lists 119 positions exclusive of military personnel.

217 The rolls of university lecturers and their salaries for the years 1450-1474 are now published by Secco-Suardo, "Lo Studio di Ferrara a tutto il Secolo XV", pp. 226-289.

218 Wardrobe expenses can be studied in the registers of the ducal camera, ASMo, ASE, Guardaroba, 1451-1504, regs. 30-120 (new index). The richness of this fondo is partially communicated in a short
Caleffini's list of the cameral salariati records the monthly stipends of four resident ambassadors (at Rome, Venice, Milan, and Florence), but this does not include travelling expenses. Nicolo di Roberti's journey to and from Milan in 1481 cost 45 golden ducats, "per landata che lui fece in franza per nostro Ambasciatore apresso el christianissimo Re de Franza", 78 golden ducats, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1481, reg. 22, cc. 17v-18v. Travelling costs to and from Venice totalled 53 golden ducats in 1479 (reg. 21, c. 28r); Hungary, 70 golden ducats (1486, reg. 24, cc. 142r-143v); Germany, 52 golden ducats (1478, reg. 20, c. 10r). Ordinary embassies naturally proved more costly. The expenses of sending an ambassador to England (to receive the Order of the Garter on Ercole's behalf) amounted to 1263 golden ducats, 1481, reg. 22, cc. 37v-38r.

Some tentative estimations of ceremonial expenditure will be made in Chapter Four.

ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1479, reg. 21, c. 120r.

See above, nn. 88 and 189.

The following is typical of the instructions issued by the duke: "... In questo die mandassimo Antonio-maria Guarniero nostro officiale de la salina de Modena insino a Venesia per trovare certa quantita de dinari per bisogno de la Camera nostra, et fessimo dare alui alcune nostre zoie per le mane de Marco de Galeoto nostro Maistro Camerlengo per depositare et assecurare quilli talli da chi el fusse servito de li dinari...", ASMo, ASE, 1474-75, reg. 18, c. 143r. For pledges of the triangular diamond, see 1482, reg. 23, c. 90r; 1486, reg. 24, c. 78v; 1492, reg. 31, cc. 150v and 193v.

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Ufficiali Camerali, busta 1, Ercole d'Este to Filippo Cestarelli, 29 August 1485.

The administrative separation between the ducal camera and the communal government was purely theoretical. Sitta has argued that the communal administrative mechanism in Ferrara was a model of efficient bureaucracy, perhaps even the first modern state bureaucracy in Western Europe, "Saggio sulle Istituzioni del Ducato Estense", pp. 118-121. If this be true, it did not prevent the Estensi from disregarding all sound economic advice from their consiglieri,
nor did it prevent them from treating the communal treasury as part of their private patrimony.

226 During the Venetian War, communal officials were obliged to turn all revenues over to the cameral treasury: "Dilectissimi nostri. Lo accadera a fare de molte spexe et pagare dinari assai in piu et diverse cosse per cagione de la guera... le quale spese et dinari volemo che siano pagati per le mane de nostro thesauriero de commissione de dicti nostri provedituri subito senza dimora alcuna...", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1481, reg. 22, c. 72v.


229 Gardner, Dukes and Poets in Ferrara, esp. pp. 122-64.


231 Borso was obliged to take steps as early as 1456:

"Item che li Officiali di Granari non ossino a vendere frumento ni biava ni luno ni altre intrade che ge vengono per le mane per lo dicto officio senza expressa licentia de lo Ill. n.s. et lo dinaro che retravavano de tale cosse vendute cum licentia como e dicto debiano pagarli al depositario generale...

Item perche male dicti officiali pano et non senza grandissima difficoltà reportare da di corvali al libro autentico per le occupatione che havo dicto officiali... delibera et vole chel sia electo uno altro officiale lo quale habia a tenire et governare lo libro autentico et fare le scriptuure...", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1456, reg. 11b, c. 8r.

232 Chiappini, "Indagini Attorno a Cronache e Storie Ferraresi del Sec. XV", pp. 33-44.


234 See the proclamation "De herpegando terras anteque
124

Grain was often imported free of communal levies to keep the price at a moderate level during times of famine: "... Vos factores generales eius fieri faciatis bulletas opportunas Comuni et homibus Abbatie pro extrahendo modios quinqueginta frumenti quod sua S. vendidit Comune ferrarese ex civitate ferr. vel eius districtu, et illud conducendo abbatiam libre et sine solutione ali cuius dati tracte gabelle", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1482, reg. 23, c. 27r.

I wish to thank Mr. Stephen Kolsky of the University of London for bringing the example of the Gonzaga granaries to my attention.

Zam, p. 275, ll. 14-15; DF, p. 203, ll. 18-20. Autumn rains brought annual bouts with various species of malarial fever: "Gabriele Tassino, nobile citadino de questa citadel hozi fu sepelito con grandissimo honore e pompa, morta de febre strania, como de quest to mexe molti se ne ritrova morire. Et se estima che in questa citade sii al presente de le persone cinque milia infrime per la majore parte de febre terzane, quartane e doxie quartane", Zam, p. 96, ll. 16-20.

Statistics for the incidences of flood, drought, and plague have been gleaned from the registers of the Mandati and the Ferrarese chronicles (Caleffini, Antigini, Equicola, Legnago, Zerbinati, Ferrarini, Vitale, Sardi, Zam, DF).

As in 1476, when the plague ravaged Milan: "Dilectissimi nostri. Nui sentemo che le cosse fano molto male di peste a pavia e cussi ad unaltra terra del Duca di Milano... chel non sia per alcun modo recep tato in quella nostra citade persona alcuna che vegna de dicte terre ni da alcune de epse perche non gli havendo mente lezermente se povano infectare le cosse da Casa nostra in modo che se no trovaressimo mal contenti", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolarum registrum, sez. C, 1476, reg. 4, c. 190r.

Zam, p. 30, ll. 16-19, 31, ll. 1-8. Alternatively, when there was a drought, there was insufficient
water to power the mills: "Po era tanto basso che
apena li era acqua et male se potea macinare biave", DF, p. 137, ll. 15-16. Hence the duke often prov-
vided the Comune with milled flour from his private
stores, Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, c. 91r.

243 Antonio Piromalli, La Cultura a Ferrara al Tempo di
Ludovico Ariosto, pp. 19-62; Rocco Pallone, Anticler-
cicalismo e Giustizia Sociale nell' Italia del '400,
(Rome, 1975); Erasmo Percopo, "Antonio Cammelli e i
suoi sonetti faceti", Studi di letteratura italiana,
VI (1904-06), pp. 299-920.

244 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 274r.

245 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1466, reg.
12, c. 33r.

246 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1479, reg.
21, cc. 36v-37r.

247 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1496, reg.
36, c. 167v.

248 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1481, reg.
22, c. 172r.

249 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1489, reg.
28, c. 5v.

250 Cronaca Antigini, BCAF, Coll. Antonelli, no. 257,
fol. 27r.

251 Ibid., fol. 27r.

252 The Commentaries of Pius II, trans., Florence Alden

253 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 50r.

254 Zam, p. 15, ll. 15-20.

255 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 273v.

256 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1497, reg.
37, c. 50r.

257 Ibid., c. 82r.

258 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1490, reg.
29, c. 167v.

259 Ibid., c. 203v.

260 See below, pp. 87-92.

261 See for example ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mand-
ati, 1481, reg. 22, cc. 6r and 85v, where Ercole iss-
ued wood, iron, and grain (the later to feed the work-
gangs) to villages in the contado, and commanded his
carpenters "ad venire cum carete ala reparatione de po...".

262 L. Fanno, Cenni storici sulla grande bonificazione ferrarese, (Ferrara, 1903), p. 3.

263 Zam, p. 205, 1l. 15-24.

264 The names of the most prestigious Ferrarese families in the thirteenth-century are listed by parish in an anonymous Cronica di Ferrara, BEM, MS. cod. ital. 731, Alpha G 8, 29, fols. 2v-3r. For the reign of Ercole d'Este, Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fols. 39r-39v, lists 38 families of older lineage ("zentilhomini antiqui") and 19 families whose "nobility" was of comparatively recent origins ("zentilhomini moderni"). The latter may refer to the families who acquired noble status by virtue of the landholdings bestowed upon them by the Estensi during the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries (see Laurent, "The Este and their Vassals", pp. 130-150, and Pietro, "I Catastre delle Investiture"). For identification purposes, the discussion of the quattrocento nobility and the "nuova borghesia" in Ferrara by Antonio Piromalli, La Cultura a Ferrara al Tempo di Ludovico Ariosto, pp. 37-52, remains useful.

265 The identity of the individuals occupying this office during the reigns of Borso and Ercole may be discovered in Ferrarante Borsetti, Serie dei Giudici dei Savi e dei Savi del Maestrato della Città di Ferrara dall' anno 1321 sin al corrente 1760, BCAF, MS. Classe I, no. 492. Helpful, though not always accurate, is A. Maresti, Cronologia et Istoria de Capi e Giudici de Savi della Città di Ferrara, (Ferrara, 1683).

266 DF, p. 247, 11. 29-30.

267 Zam, p. 274, 11. 23-25.

268 Bischizo translates as bisticco, or a play on words, though here they were intended as "carmina maledica", or capricious verse designed to tarnish Ariosto's reputation, Catalano, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, I, p. 62; Percopo, "Antonio Cammelli e i suoi sonetti facetti", pp. 53-54. Percopo attributes the authorship of the verses in question to Cammelli in I sonetti facetti di A. Cammelli, (Naples, 1908), p. 26.

269 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 256v.

270 Catalano, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, I, p. 63.

271 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 145v.

272 DF, 182, 11. 5-16.
Following this notice are three sonnets ("bischizzi") vilifying Zampante's memory, p. 184, ll. 15-41; 185, ll. 1-45; 186, ll. 1-14. For Zampante's career in Ferrara, see Chapter Two.

Equicola, Annali di Ferrara, fol. 46v; Legnago, Cronica Estense, fol. 126v.

The cameral treasurer Cristoforo Rosetto, for example, was "strazati et bruzati et tutti consumati per robare il prefacto duca Borso, et questo perchè lo havea confessato havere robato dodicemilia docento lire di Bologna ni al duca Borso, per lo tempo che havea tenuti li suoi conti", DF, p. 81, ll. 29-31. In 1496, the cameral treasurer Alessandro di Fanti was imprisoned "per havere falsificato et facto falsificare libri et scripture fra lui et il duca Hercole", DF, p. 168, ll. 4-5.

Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 58r.

Ibid., fol. 60r.

Ibid., fol. 60v.

Ibid., fol. 170v.

Ibid., fol. 145r.

Francesco "il seschalco", son of Rinaldo Ariosto, not to be confused with Francesco "il Pellegrino", son of Princivalle Ariosto. See Catalano, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, II, appendix I, pp. 357-369, for genealogy.

Chiappini, Gli Estensi, pp. 163-166.

A legacy from a trade agreement concluded between Venice and Ferrara in the year 1204 was the presence of a Venetian magistrate (Visdomino) in the city, who was empowered to judge civil cases involving citizens of the republic, Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, III, pp. 45-46; Ghetti, I patti tra Venezia e Ferrara dal 1191 al 1313, p. 109.

Where the status of the Venetian nobility, their membership in the Great Council, and their right to take part in government were recorded, James C. Davis, The Decline of the Venetian Nobility as a Ruling Class, (Baltimore, 1962), p. 18.

Archivio di Stato Venezia, Consiglio dei X - Misti, reg. 21, cc. 2r-3r, now published by Catalano, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, II, pp. 20-21. The Ariosto conspiracy has been examined by A. Lazzari, L. Ariosto e Venezia, (Ferrara, 1929), and idem, "Il padre dell' Ariosto capitano generale del Polesine di Rovigo nella guerra del 1482", Atti e Memorie della Deputazione Ferrarese di Storia Patria, 30 (1936).
Trotti had in fact been approached by the Venetians (Catalano, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, I, p. 50), but he refused to enter into a conspiracy against Ercole.

Chiappini, Gli Estensi, pp. 163-65.

Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fols. 168r-170r.

Ibid., fol. 168r.

Zam, p. 106, ll. 6-10.

Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 170r.

Ferrarini, Cronaca ferrarese, fol. 110v.

Zam, p. 119, ll. 15-21.

Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 171v.

For Paolo Antonio Trotti's commission, see G.B. Venturi, "Relazione dei Governatori Estensi in Reggio al Duca Ercole I in Ferrara (1482-99)", Atti e Memorie delle R.R. Deputazioni di Storia Patria per le Province Modenesi e Parmensi, ser. 3, II (1883), p. 242:

"Dux Ferrarie Dilectissimi nostri. Mandemo il spectabile nostro Secretario Pauloantonio Trotto per nostro Commissario generale là oltre. Et lui vi dira quanto da lui lha havuto in commissione sicchè prestaggi piena fede in tuto quello che l vi dirà da parte nostra, come se presentialmente et ore proprie parlassemo cum vui, Ferrarie tertio decembris 1482."

Conceptual approaches to this distinction have been drawn from A. Van Gennep, The Rites of Passage, trans., Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Cafee. (London, 1960), and Victor Turner, The Ritual Process, esp. pp. 166-203.


J.G.A. Pocock, "Civic Humanism and its Role in Anglo-American Thought", pp. 80-103, attempts to analyze the socio-political changes in the Renaissance in terms of language-experience. Thoughts upon the effects these changes had on the formulation of ceremonial identities are provided by Richard C. Trexler in the introduction to The Libro Cerimoniale of the Florentine Republic, (Geneva, 1978), pp. 9-52.

Salzer, Uber die Anfange der Signorie in Oberitalien, p. 42 (see Sestan, "Le origini delle signorie cittadine", pp. 196-98 for a review of Salzer's constitutional thought).

Francesco Ercole, "Comuni e signori nel Veneto (Scag-


306 Gundersheimer, Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance Despotism, p. 35.

307 Montorsi, Statuta Ferrariae Anno MCCLXXXVII, 1, 16, p. 28.

308 Ibid., I, 2, p. 8.


310 DF, p. 33, 1. 12, p. 69, 1. 24.

311 Ugo Caleffini, Storia di Ferrara, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, MS. Classe XXV, no. 539 (see relevant entries).

312 Published by Montorsi, Statuta Ferrariae Anno MCC- LXXXVII, p. 31.

313 Delayto, Annales Estenses, col. 907.

314 Savonarola, De felici progressu, fol. 24v.

315 Montorsi, Statuta Ferrariae Anno MCCLXXXVII, pp. 31-33.

316 Ibid., pp. 7-17.

317 Simeoni, "L'Elezione di Obizzo d'Este a Signore di Ferrara", appendix II for relevant documents.

318 Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies, p. 330.

319 Rinaldo, Obizzo III, and Niccolò I d'Este were made papal vicars of Ferrara by Pope John XXII in 1329; Aldrovandino III d'Este was made imperial vicar of Modena by Emperor Charles IV in 1354.

320 Gundersheimer, Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance Despotism, p. 28.
Here I have merely substituted the word "ritual" for Johann Huizinga's "play-concept", discussed in Homo Ludens, (London, 1949), pp. 1-15. Huizinga's analysis of "play" as a cultural phenomenon lying outside exact definition either logically, biologically, or aesthetically, seems a more palatable explanation of what social anthropologists call the social function of ritual.

Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies, pp. 383-450.

Even the Palazzo della Ragione was ransacked as the popolo destroyed the records of condemnations made by the giudici: "... il quale Suo posto asacomonado dal popolo come e di costume in tal caso a fare", Savonarola, De felici progressu, fol. 28v.

Savonarola, De felici progressu, fol. 29r.

Cronaca di Ferrara, BCAF, Coll. Antonelli, no. 255, fol. 17v.

Savonarola, De felici progressu, fol. 24r.

The only reference to a signorial cavalcata in the trecento is made in connection with Obizzo III's acquisition of Parma in 1344. Significant too, is the fact that the Parmensi consigned the keys to the city into Obizzo's possession: "... & confirmavit dicto Domino Marchioni Dominium liberum dictae Civitatis, ejusque Districtus, ac claves Portarum dictae Civitatis". See the Chronicon Estense, cols. 413-414.

Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies, pp. 207-272. For what follows, see Chapter Two.

Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 3v.

Savonarola may or may not have been thinking about Aristotle's distinction between "political" government (a "marriage" between the ruler and the polity) and "regal" government (the power a father has over his children), though his debt to the philosopher should not be minimized. For the literature, see Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies, pp. 215-231.

There is no record of what transpired during this convocation, nor indeed is there any evidence which suggests that the consiglio was convened. Savonarola employed the meeting as a literary vehicle to catalogue the Aristotelian virtues which applied to Borso, De felici progressu, fols. 1r-21r.

Ibid., fols. 24v-25r.

For the constitutional significance of the keys, see
Chapter Four.

335 Savonarola, De felici progressu, fols. 25v-28r for the investiture and oaths, also related by Johannes Ferrariensis, Excerpta ex Annalium Libris illustri Familiae Marchionum Estensium, p. 36, ll. 41-44, 37, ll. 1-24. The investiture ceremony followed the ordo established upon the election of Aldrovandino III d'Este in 1352, Chronicon Estense, cols. 469-470.

336 DF, p. 69, ll. 25-34.

337 Zerbinati, Memorie, fols. 9r-9v.

338 DF, p. 70, ll. 1-5.

339 The only difference between Ercole's investiture and that of his successor was the fact that Alfonso received the Bachetta from the Giudice dei XII Savi in the ducal palace, thereafter proceeding through the city in procession to arrive back at the cathedral where he swore his oath of office, Zerbinati, Memorie, fols. 9r-9v.

340 When he received two keys (one to "open" and one to "close") to the gates of the city. See Chapter Four.

341 "E quando il Papa fu suso la Porta de Sancto Piero, il prefacto duca Borso se inginocchì e basòli li pedì, et poi li apresentò le chiave di Ferrara cum grande reverentia", DF, p. 40, ll. 27-29. Significantly, "Il quale Papa le acceptò e poi le restituì al prefacto duca Borso".

342 Savonarola, De felici progressu, fol. 29r.
Chapter Two

IMAGES OF DUCAL JUSTICE: THE SPECTACLE OF THE SCAFFOLD

Quattrocento Theories of Punishment

The Este rulers of Renaissance Ferrara, like their princely counterparts elsewhere in Christendom, cherished the efficacious properties invested in the tools of justice, especially the sentence of death. "The cruel excitement and coarse compassion raised by an execution formed an important item in the spiritual food of the common people. They were spectacular plays with a moral ....", Huizinga reminds us in his famous chapter, "The Violent Tenor of Life". 1

Quanto La Iustitia commova i populi ad amare i principi habiamo di sopra Impero Aristoteles tuici amiano molto i iustifia le punitione de i delinquenti cussi non sparagnando veruna ne picola ne grande. E questa tal punitione in se laude doe cose, La persona cioe, che punita esser debbe, e il modo dil punire. Se debbono punire i delinquenti e quelli che perturbano il bene di la re publica, vole essere la punitione dretta e averuno per donare, non a padre, non a fiolo, non ad amico cussifacendo vero iudicio e Iusto, che se sempre il principio tale observare sera temuto. Intendono la brigata non potere evadere la punitione Comettendo il fallo, Anti Aristotile ensegna i principi esser ne le punitione piu severi ne li suoiii cha in li extranei. 2

Thus Michele Savonarola explained the signorial obligation to punish delinquents to Borso d'Este in his chapter, "Come i principi se debbono fare amare e temere da li Suoii Populii"."
Dexembre, a di 20, de' vegneri, la matina. Alberto Mansulino, canzellero che fu de messer Nicolò Da Este, e Arditasso da Pistoia, scudero suo, dop' il terzo sono del arengo forno menati de Castel Vechio insieme cum Antonio Philippo di Aldegati mantano suxo una carreta in Piazza, denanti a la regn- era del Palazo de la Raxon, sedente pro tribunali il magnifico messer Agostino di Bonfrancisci da Rimene jurispetro e consiliario secrete del duca nostro. Et fu lecta la condennatione a li predetti per Simon Codechà, nodaro ferrarexe. Ne la quale se contineva como questi tri traditori e assassini intendevano ogni modo fare messer Nicolò Da Este Segnore de Ferrara per molti e vari vie e modi, e per questo herano venuti con lui e con li soi armati per darge ogni alturio, per il che fono condannati ad esserli talgiata la testa a tutti tri. Et in Executione de la sententia incontinenti fu talgiata la testa ad Alberto e Arditasso. E vol- giando li cavalero tore Antonio Philippo da Mantua zoxo de la caretta per talgiare la testa, epso messer Agostino comenzò a chiamare: grazia, grazia, la quale ge havea facto il duca per soa clementia. E cusi quello da la caretta corse insino drito a la porta di mixi del domo dove fu tirato epso Ant- onio Philippo e spinto in giesia tuto attonito ch'el non sapea andare, nè sapea che se fosse de paura havuta; e questo vedando la duchessa nostra e messer Sigismondo e messer Raynaldo Da Este fra- telli, suxo li pozoli de marmoro de la Corte e altri asay. 3

Thus in 1476, the citizens of Ferrara witnessed the visible manifestation of moral and legal truth in the public implementation of the death sentence, and further observed the celebration of life through the public conferment of amnesty. In the interlocking of two rituals, one concerned with physical destruction and moral-spiritual annihilation, the other concerned with physical preservation and moral-spiritual redemption, we find a synthesis of contemporary signorial justice dramatically revealed: the oscillation between unreasonable cruelty and unreasonable mercy.

Our modern sense of justice perhaps dictates that we ought to recoil with horror at the judicial array of torture, mutilation, and painful death enscribed in coll-
ections of late medieval and Renaissance statute law. Indeed, some of the most sophisticated and continuously articulated modern views of "correctional treatment" (as punishment is nowadays referred to in behaviouralist circles) even advance theories which deny that punishment is the proper and fitting thing for those who have committed crimes. But this is not the place to review the traditional philosophic debate over the justification of legal punishment, nor its sister controversy, as to whether death serves punishment's supposed purposes. It is an ongoing debate, symptomatic of indecisiveness currently prevalent in the modern legal profession and modern society as a whole, of a wavering between theories of retributive and therapeutic punishment. The waning Middle Ages, according to Huizinga's vivid analysis, knew little of the social utility of criminal rehabilitation:

... knew nothing of all those ideas which have rendered our sentiment of justice timid and hesitating: doubts as to the criminal's responsibility; the conviction that society is, to a certain extent, the accomplice of the individual; the desire to reform instead of inflicting pain; and, we may even add, the fear of judicial errors. Or rather these ideas were implied, unconsciously, in the very strong and direct feeling of pity and forgiveness which alternated with extreme severity.

Nevertheless, it is worth remembering that philosophic objections to the sentence of death were occasionally raised in the fifteenth-century. Perhaps the most remarkable contemporary statement opposing capital punishment was made by Antonio di Piero Averlino, known as Filarete, in his famous Treatise on Architecture. While Filarete's plans for a model prison outwardly seem to conform to quattrocento concepts of penology with "the
cells of the prisoners... varied according to the gravity of the crime", with its purpose-built dank, unpleasant interior and its torture chambers, a notable anomaly was the fact that there would be no capital punishment in his ideal city of Sforzinda. Rather, he envisaged criminals set to institutionalized hard labour, since "if someone has virtù and has committed a crime, his virtù will be lost if he is killed, nor could he communicate that virtù to other persons and make them useful. If he has no virtù, it is better to make him work and labour and bear the punishments for the evil he has done". Filarete's representation of punishment remains cruel by modern standards ("I do not doubt that anyone who had to submit to them would rather have been dead", he says), yet his penology was far in advance of the contemporary treatment of criminals. The reluctance to sacrifice individual utility "in exchange for useless penalties" anticipates the late eighteenth-century penal reforms which transformed the European prison into an exhaustive disciplinary apparatus, and his vision of a prison manufacturing scheme wherein inmates could earn small wages mirrors current penal practices. Filarete's utilitarian philosophy bound him to express innovatory penal thought.

On occasion, one may also discover individuals criticizing the wanton brutality of public executions. Even the Mantuan envoy Bernardino Prosperi, doubtless a person hardened to the cruelty of signorial justice in Ferrara, was moved to voice his disapproval of Herculean penalties in a letter to Isabella d'Este. Commenting on a series of especially horrifying executions carried out
in 1491, he remarks that the scenes would have been enough to induce a "barbarian" to weep, and he expresses doubts as to whether one of the executions was justified:

A more striking example of an individual philosophically opposed to the sentence of death is provided by Count Matteo Maria Boiardo, author of the Orlando Innamorato and Estensi Captain of Justice in Reggio (1487-94). On account of maintaining what was rumoured to be an abhorrence of the death-penalty, the count stood accused of dereliction of duty, to the extent of harbouring known criminals at his own palace in Scandiano in their flight from civil retribution. Vociferously denying the charges, Boiardo wrote to Ercole d'Este:

Though Boiardo's protestations were eventually accepted by the duke and his honour vindicated, there appears to be little doubt that he employed exemplary punishment, in particular the death sentence, with some degree of reluctance. Commented Beltramino Cusatro, ducal comm-
issario extraordinario to Modena and Reggio during Boiardo's captaincy:

Credo che questo accada per invidia, vedendomi visitare ogni di da questi et da altri innumerabili homini da bene, et anche vedando tanti cativi fugire et altri essere puniti, quali forse soa M. non voria se punisse; et mi pare havere uno animo de non punire ne piacergli che altri puniscano...

Few of Boiardo's magisterial colleagues, however, shared his perception of duty and justice. Some, like Gregorio Zampante, Captain of Justice in Ferrara during the late fifteenth-century, staked their personal reputation on the number of condemnations enscribed on the rolls of the court notaries and the quietude of the community, however the latter was achieved. A copious list of condemnations provided clear evidence of a vigorous pursuit of justice and personal dedication to magisterial duty. It was a recognized measuring-stick of successful governorship. Other magistrates were specifically charged by the duke to use strong-arm tactics in order to quell notorious civil disorder and serious outbreaks of crime. Essentially, this was the function of the ducal commissario extraordinario. A letter from Ercole d'Este to Francesco Gonzaga concerning the future employment of Beltramino Cusatro as an Estensi commissario, helps to illustrate a signorial predilection for judicial servants with a heavy-handed disposition and the nature of the policing services the commissioners provided:

... Nui havemo pensiero de punire alcuni giotti et homini de mala sorte, che stanno nel dominio nostro, quali questo tempo passato hanno commesso di multi manchamenti, acciò che de le terre nostre siano extirpate queste mala herbe. Ma ad volere fare questo effecto ni bisognaria un homo vivo, et che gli
Ercole's intention to employ the reputedly ruthless Cusatro to root out delinquents in the Modenese contado during the summer of 1488 is confirmed by Caleffini:

The "experiment" proved moderately successful, and it was soon succeeded by a ducal decree (16 January 1489) formally appointing Cusatro commissario extraordinario "ad urbes nostras Mutine et Regii", with wide-ranging policing powers to assist the detection and punishment of local crime. But whether civil magistrates were personally encouraged to utilize brutal methods or otherwise, their magisterial business, to preserve public security and peace in accordance with communal statute law and extra-statutory legislation, relied heavily upon a graduated scale of punishment for its success. The irrationality of criminal violence was confronted by the rational Rule of Law in an enduring lexicon of crime and punishment enshrined in the communal statutes. And while magistrates ostensibly enjoyed a very extensive power in the determination of the penalty for a criminal act, wherever a statute fixed a punishment for an offence, they were nat-
urally and duty-bound to apply it, without recourse to any discretionary power. The possibility of a deviation from the prescriptive norms of the judicial inquisitonsprozess was expressly forbidden by the oath of office sworn by the "iudicis ad maleficia deputari", and moreover, the chief executive administrator of the Comune, the podestà, was bound to dispense justice according to Ferrarese statute law and the determination of the court. These principles were implicitly understood by the Este signori and their giudici, though significantly, care was often taken to reiterate their underlying assumptions. For instance, while Borsian governor of Modena during the mid-1460's, Ercole d'Este was beset with a crime-wave in the city and surrounding contado, "e in commotione per questo si per li numero de li citadini robati si per li furte facte in grandissima copia et si per il numero de questi tristi et per le casade loro". Reassuring his elder brother that the problem had been given his utmost attention, Ercole reaffirmed the basic Estensi policy concerning the punishment of criminals: "La corte procedera col pie del piombo contra loro et punirli secondo li statuti per quanto meritano et per la restitutione de de le robe o del precio".

In this brief Herculean pronouncement upon the mechanism and modality of signorial justice, we find encapsulated several points of confrontation. Irrational criminal violence (if the least act of a criminal nature may be considered "irrational" and a form of "violence") is met by the full physical force of signorial law, that is to say, violence is repelled by violence. "Per Dio
gubernati queste cosse gagliardamente", instructed Borso concerning the punishment to be meted out to an arsonist in Reggio, "come speremo fareti et per mainera chel se intenda che non meno siate desideroso che la iustitia habia loco...". Yet if punishment was severe, retributive, and often physically violent, it was also legitimate, organized, and rational. The law might be more scrupulously observed, surveillance over delinquent activity increased, magistrates exhorted to prosecute criminals to the law's fullest measure, but statutory justice had also to be observed. Recourse to illegal modes of prosecution and other excesses of judicial authority would not be tolerated. Penalties were to be settled in accordance with the offence definition and prescription of substantive criminal law. These were principles frequently repeated in signorial instructions to magistrates, and measures were adopted to ensure that they were stringently observed in the everyday course of justice. Writing to his fattori generali in 1486, Ercole complained that pecuniary revenue did not correspond with previous yearly averages, nor did it appear in any way commensurate with the overwhelming evidence of civil disorder throughout the regions of the domini. The lack of condemnations, when combined with conspicuous instances of crime, suggested to Ercole

... che on veramente li officiali nostri se passano ala ligiera che non se circano de punire li delinquenti... la qual cosa considerandola bene ne pare chel sia mala alassarla passare che dicte doe casone impero che el procede da la prima casone per negligentia di officiali li cativi et delinquenti non essendo puniti de li loro mancamenti facti se fano piu presumpti et piu andacci a comittere de li altri excessi et maxime contra li boni attendono al ben vivere...
"Vollemo et per questa nostra expressamente vi comittemo", instructed the duke, "che vui per uno deli Ragioneri on nodari di quella nostra camera quale a vui pare di allegare e deputare a questo, il quale cavalchi fori doe on tre volte lanno ale dicte potesterie, vis-contarie et capitaneato...". Not only were these special deputies to ensure that records of judicial inquisitions were kept more diligently, "et maxime da che fo facto la pace in qua... percheci vollemo che questo nostro ord-ine se observi infuturum", but that the judicial inquir-ies themselves were conducted in compliance with duly prescribed processes of law: "secundum formam iuris et de li statuti et ordini de le potestarie, viscontarie on capitaneati dove se trovano essere sta comesso li mancamenti...". The tenor of these measures is clear. Criminal offenders were not to escape legal punishment under any circumstances: "Adcio che li cativi non pass-ino inpuniti". But while increased attentiveness to mag-isterial duty is demanded, prerequisite legal procedures and communal penal legislation were not to be circumvent-ed. Moreover, Ercole's instructions invested the fattori with extraordinary coercive power to punish disobedient, negligent, or corrupt magistrates:

... Et da laltra parte trovandosi alcuno potestade, vesconte on capitano ul notaro on altro officiale havere omesso de condemnare li descripti mancamenti in li acti del notaro, on ver omessi de farli notare et scriverli per amicitia on tributo, che tale rag-ieronero on notaro per vui electo ut supra vel faci intendere et vui li procedati contra per quel meg-liore modo che vi para etiam mandandoli li Syndici dela camera a sindicarlo sopra questi tali manca-menti selui aperpera chel sia bisogno per multi man-chamenti che glie fusseno et li habiati a punire secundo havemo meritato al quadruplo ut supra etiam se loro officiali fusseno cassi de li loro officii
Extra-statutory executive orders which sought to rationalize the administration of signorial law were not unusual in the Ferrarese context after the accession of Borso d'Este. Yet in several respects, it is significant that Ercole should have herein seized the opportunity to threaten his judicial servants with punishment under the sindicatus process, and furthermore, that he should have envisaged the possibility and made provision for an insincere judgement of a colleague on the part of the sindici. Ercole's preoccupation with administrative corruption, especially corruption directly related to the criminal law, the courts, and their jurisdiction and procedure, initially reveals a personal concern for justice in the broadest sense. "Ad questa preclarissima virtute de iustitia sento per benignia fama tua Celsitudine, iustissimo principe, tanto habituata, che'l pare dove dimori li sia la etate d'oro", was Sabadino's enthusiastic appraisal of Herculean action at the turn of the sixteenth-century. There is evidence which suggests that Ercole was concerned about the quality of justice being dispensed to the popolo by his magistrates. In 1496, for example, Nicolo Ariosto was cashiered from the post of special commissioner to the Romagna "per havere dato de la corda ad uno da Lugo contra ogni ragione". The circumstances of Ariosto's dismissal are recorded by Giovanni Maria Trotti:
havea ritrovato in cassa uno che li andava per sua molgiere et per non volerse dischopir le sue vergogne non li volse confessare al chomesario cossa alguna per modo che li dete la corda. Et venendosi a dolere al Signore, sua Sria. lha chasso et ha perso la prestancia. Il fece per lofficio et la condanatто 500 ducati et ha donatto ducatti 100 a quello hauto la corda. 28

Numerous examples of Herculean hypocrisy can of course be dredged from the registers of the ducal camera to verify signorial complicity in the most flagrant miscarriages of justice. Indeed, Ercole's motives for issuing threats to the judiciary and his regard for the legal safeguards accorded private individuals at criminal instance, as we shall see, are also highly suspect. It would not be over-presumptuous to characterize the administration of the law in Ferrara as enlightened self-interest, where the organized justice of the signore barely concealed a calculated fiscal exploitation of society's poorer elements and the repression of persons officially designated as pernicious to the welfare of the state. 29

Inevitably, the law was one of the most powerful weapons in the signore's arsenal. More important for our immediate purposes, however, is the suggestion of a perceptible breakdown in signorial law and order, and the recognition of an urgent need for judicial remedies to be applied. This alleged unhappy state of affairs in the late fifteenth-century brings into sharper focus particular aspects of signorial justice in Ferrara: the issue of internal communal violence and the question of public safety, the seizure, punishment, and removal from circulation of lawbreakers. 30

* * *
The quattrocento had its own basic assumptions concerning criminal violence and crime prevention, though clearly many of them were related generically to the systematic social philosophy of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when one first begins to encounter the notion of a social utility for punishment. Violent lawbreakers (persons guilty of the so-called "enormous" crimes: theft, arson, rape, homicide, sodomy, counterfeiting, treason)\(^31\) opposed divinely sanctioned human reason and a human society based upon a rational Rule of Law; they disrupted civic peace and tranquility, they poisoned the Christian body corporate. Precisely because criminally violent acts, or any act which led to civil disorder and dissension, were deemed to be wholly irrational since they both contravened natural and divine law and threatened the moral-social welfare of the communitas, the summum bonum, violent criminals were commonly viewed as corporeal harbingers of discord, of chaos, of human misery and deprivation. Some lawbreakers, according to contemporary medical opinion, were also apparently suffering from a pathological condition, an organic dysfunction which had rendered them either momentarily or permanently incapable of rational thought. Thus a pioneer in the field of pathological anatomy, the Florentine physician Antonio Benivieni (d. 1502), engaged in the dissection of the corpses of criminals hoping to discover physiological explanations for their persistence in crime despite repeated punishment, such as an underdeveloped area at the base of the skull where the seat of memory resided, or a heart filled with globules of blood due to excessive heat.\(^32\) No less emin-
ent an authority than Giovanni Manardo, personal physician to Alfonso d'Este, maintained that a super-abundance of black bile (melancholia) in the body induced coma, loss of reasoning power, loss of memory, psychological trauma, and violent behaviour. If Manardo did not directly link irrational criminal behaviour to organic disorders such as melancholia, he, like most post-Galenic physicians prior to the seventeenth-century, subscribed to a theory of humoral "characterology", that is, the notion that the preponderance of a primary humor in the body determined the characteristic qualities of various types of men. Present in the heart, we are told, is one of the four principal elements of human chemico-composition (fuoco = Yellow Bile, hot and dry) which, in certain determined conditions, is diffused throughout the body producing a fever. A febbre may be one of three types: ephemera, putrida, or hectica. Each of these fevers is due to a particular imbalance in human body fluids, an imbalance which is also capable of producing a "mala temperatura" or evil disposition in the body, depending upon the manner in which the four elements (Yellow Bile, Black Bile, Blood, and Phlegm), or humors, are combined. We know from earlier medieval writings on the properties of humors that black bile was normally held responsible for the most serious diseases of the mind and body, and that it compounded the toxic effect of fevers. Black bile was clinically associated with putrefaction, cancer, anthrax, and leprosy, and was thought to have an especially noxious effect on the brain, inducing (as Manardo argues) delirium and mental derangement. Thus it is not surpris-
ing to find in many of the non-pathological texts, those
devoted to a humoral doctrine of temperament rather than
the clinical influence of humors on specific diseases,
that black bile is overwhelmingly presented as a negative
aspect of human nature. The severe melancholic is often
disposed towards sadness, hostility, forgetfulness, indolence, and the practice of deceitful arts. Little empirical evidence existed to support such bald assertions, yet even the great Ferrarese physician Ugo Benzi prescribed treatment according to the patient's "complexion of humors", and confidently diagnosed a young man's manic sorrowfulness and fear of death as melancholy in the veins of the brain.

In terms of both pure natural philosophy and pathological medicine, an often ill-conceived and arbitrary distinction, there was a fundamental acceptance of classical Galenic humoral doctrine during the Middle Ages and Renaissance. It was Galen, who, in the mid-second century, had argued that men were not born as foes or friends of justice, but rather that every individual is influenced by bodily constitution, in fact, "The soul is rendered ill by the disposition of the body". This assertion belonged to Galen's general theory, "according to which the four humors are shown to contribute to the formation of moral characteristics and aptitudes". We find these Galenic propositions, causally linking moral-spiritual ills to bodily constitution, readily accepted in the scholastic writings of Alexander Neckam, Michael Scot, Thomas of Cantipré, Albertus Magnus, Pietro d'Abano, perhaps no more cogently expressed than in the work of
of the great thirteenth-century theologian William of Auvergne:

There is no doubt that many are hindered from direct illumination by the stench of their vices and sins, but many are hindered by their complexions. For some complexions gorge the soul and hinder its noble power, for which reason Galen, the great physician, says that phlegmatic complexion benefits none of the faculties of the soul.... The reason is that they bend the soul and take possession of it; for which reason they keep it far from the attainment of sublime and hidden matters, even as a vessel filled with liquid can receive no other liquid....

The influence of this mode of physiological explanation for mental, spiritual, and emotional disturbances remained strong in the quattrocento, and, one might suggest, made important (though indirect) contributions to contemporary "knowledge" of crime and the criminal.

So too, did the related fields of astrology, magic, alchemy, demonology, and hermetic theology, subjects which occasioned wide intellectual speculation and study during the Renaissance. The individual complexity of these natural science disciplines precludes an attempt to examine them in detail here, but generally, the modern reader is immediately struck by the almost total rejection of empirical data and the acceptance of a "scientific" dialectic which observed the physical world purely on human terms. Human mental habits, physical actions rational and irrational, psychic phenomena, and even man's role in the spiritual-cosmic order were reduced to a confusing homogeneity of natural processes, a speculative science which, if it lay within the bounds of human perception, clearly lay beyond the bounds of empirical knowledge.

Scientific speculation gave rise to the most blatant incongruencies. An experienced social and political observ-
er like Diomede Caraffa understood that the rate of crime generally rose in times of famine and flood, and he advised the young Duchess Eleonora of Ferrara to pursue an organized policy of victualing the citizenry during moments of distress in the interests of law and order. Yet it is unlikely that he, or any inhabitant of fifteenth-century Ferrara, would have doubted the existence of demons, or questioned their ability to adversely tamper with human life. It was sometimes supposed that criminals guilty of exceptionally atrocious crimes had been guided by malevolent spirits; that they had acted as men or women "possessed". The Libri di Conforterìa of the Battuti della Morte, for instance, cite a case wherein the hanging of a murderer upon the communal gallows (he had confessed to having been in the power of the devil during the commission of his crimes) was attended by a malevolent clamour which filled the heavens, "alla qual cosa le persone impauriti si diedero a fugire, di modo che il Malfattore rimase con pochi spettatori, e di quelli che fuggirono, alcuni persero li Mantelli, altri le berette, e molti i cospi e le pianelle". A glimpse into the dungeons of the Castel Vecchio on the eve of a public execution in the year 1495, reveals a confrontation between the conforters and a self-confessed murderer "nele forze del diavolo" who refused to acknowledge his sins at confession, whereupon it was decided to attempt to exorcise the evil spirits which held the condemned in their power. The prisoner was dragged hand and foot from the prison confessional back to his cell, and there, with the assistance of two priests, the confortari tried in vain to
overcome the spirits, "presentandoli il crucifixo acom-
pagnato con salutifere parole". The following day sever-
al more attempts were made, all of them unsuccessful, and
the condemned was subsequently hung from a window of the
Palazzo della Ragione, his body "fu gettatto nel Po per
escha di animali come lui meritava".\textsuperscript{50} Another murderer's
longevity on the scaffold ("per niun modo non voleva mor-
ire") eventually turned into a vicious spectacle under
the apparent influence of the devil, when the condemned,
while hanging, sought to attack "con li denti aquili che
li erano propinqui siche atacho a uno povero heremito el
quale era venuto per sua devotione insieme con li confor-
tatori per savarli lanima".\textsuperscript{51} Still another case records
how two women of the city, possessed by demons, lured
young boys back to their lodgings, and then contrived
(it was commonly believed) to have their victims murdered
by conjuring up serpents to strangle them by the neck.
One of the women was apprehended, convicted of murdering
a thirteen year old boy, and executed in the piazza,
first by hanging and later by a variation of quartering,
"per li pedi tira' zozo tanto ch'el sconlogasse". The
remnants of her body were taken to her home and flung
down the well accompanied by a large piece of bread, "ad
ciò che paresse ch'el puto, che era de anni xiii et chier-
ico in vescoato, fusse caduto da sè in lo pozo et anegat-
osse".\textsuperscript{52}

Demons, the pattern of the stars, intermittent extra-
terrestrial rays, malevolent cloud-gatherings, the very air
that humans breathed, these were all construed as possible
explanations for deviant behaviour. "Scientific explanat-
ions", however, did not excuse the delinquent from punishment in the eyes of the law, as is sometimes the case today. Rather, two important non-juridical elements in the mechanism of contemporary punishment were rooted in these "scientific" discourses upon human behaviour: (1) The notion that the body of the condemned criminal was in some manner diseased, possessed, or contaminated, an object to be scorned, vilified, and cast out. The notion of the celestial soul imprisoned in an evil body, struggling to free itself from corporeal pollution. In the course of the present chapter, we will encounter the "body of the condemned" and the image of the "non-corporeal", the Christian soul, both as active catalysts in the formulation of Estensi punishment technology and as vital components in a public ritual of armed law.

The association of crime, or more properly sin, with disease has a long history, aspects of which can only be briefly alluded to here. But it is important to recall that a study of Renaissance crime-prevention is also a study of "political anatomy". Synthetic work by Bloomfield, Katzenellenbogen, Shumaker, and Klibansky, among others, has alerted historians to a medieval and Renaissance passion for allegory, and especially organological analogy, which frequently obliged the corpus verum (the tangible body of the individual) to confront sin in animal and human form, to smell the evil of lechery, to endure punishment for sin as open wounds and debilitating diseases of the body. Sin and vice were commonly related to specific diseases in contemporary literature, and virtues often appeared as remedia for the sufferings of the
soul, like medicines applied to the ills of the body. 56 Quattrocento political philosophers and juristic writers exhibit a similar predilection for organological analogy, imagining the secular state as a "mystical body" composed of a head and members, a soul and a body, but most of all as a body which had over the years accumulated particular legal connotations, that is, as a "body politic". Synthetic treatment of the fiction of a Corpus Reipublicae mysticum (expressing the idea that a political constitution was a living organism) and the metaphor of the "King's Body" by Ernst Kantorowicz has shown how, juridically speaking, the person of the prince assumed a "double-identity" during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance: first as the human transitory element, a physical being that is born and which dies, and second, as a fictitious persona, transcendental, timeless, and maintained as a physical yet wholly intangible support to the state. The prince, suggests Kantorowicz, possesses a "super-body distinct from his natural mortal body", originally close to a Christological model, around which is organized Staatsymbolik, a corpus of state ceremonial, and an ideology of princely power, but it is also inseparably linked to the fundamental demands and obligations encompassed by the prince's possession of the imperium. 57 The relationship between this princely "super-body" and the corpus mysticum, the "body politic", was explained anatomically by legal scholars. Lucas de Penna's fourteenth-century Commentaria, for instance, argued that there was a marriage contracted between the prince and the respublica, a matrimonium morale et politicum, and by analogy, as
the man is the head of the wife, and the wife the body
of the man, so the prince is the head of the **respublica**, and the **respublica** the body of the prince:

And just as men are joined together spiritually in the spiritual body, the head of which is Christ... so are men joined together morally and politically in the **respublica**, which is a body the head of which is the Prince. 58

Or as the English jurist Sir John Fortescue put it in the fifteenth-century:

> Just as the physical body grows out of the embryo, regulated by one head, so does there issue from the people the kingdom, which exists as a corpus mysticum governed by one man as head.

The heart and nerves of the natural body he compares to the structure of the "body politic", "for just as the body is held together by the nerves, so is the corpus mysticum joined together and united into one by the Law". 59

In his **De Concordantia Catholica**, prepared for the Council of Basle in 1433, Nicholas of Cusa gives us a remarkable exposition of this political "anatomy" (Liber III), comparing crime to a disease which can infect the corpus mysticum, law-breakers to infected members of the body corporate, legal penalties to remedia for infirm members (**poenas medicinales**), and likening the role of the prince to that of a "physician of the state", who must diagnose the various maladies afflicting the body corporate and prescribe remedies to obtain a cure. The anatomical analogy he traces is a powerful metaphor: the state is a living being with a soul, a physical body whose limbs correspond to the limbs of men. It is a body, he adds, which is highly susceptible to infectious fevers and humoral imbalances. For this reason, it is the duty of the prince
... ut recte ad instar experti medici corpus in sanitate servet, ut vitalis spiritus recte per proportionabile medium sibi iungi possit. Nam dum viderit aliquem ex quattuor complexionibus excedere a temperamento vel deficere et propterea corpus disgrasia-tum, vel propter abundantem avaritiosam melancholiam, quae pestes in corpus seminavit varias, usuram, fraudes, deceptiones, furta, rapinas et omnes eas artes, quibus absque labore cum quadam calliditate deceptria divitiae magnae acquiruntur, quod absque laesione rei publicae fieri nequit, vel si ex colericis guerris, discissionibus et divisionibus aut sanguineis pompositatibus, luxuriis, commessionibus et similibus, aut phlegmaticus acediositatibus in cunctis vituosis et lucranti victus causa et ob patriae tutelam lab-oribus corpus torpescere, febrescere, tumescere vel exinaniri, querat medalam et audiat libros et consilia peritissimorum quondam rei publicae medicorum. 60

When the prince has found a remedy to a "humoral malady", he must bring it forth and test it by means of "taste, sight, and smell", in an assembly convened at the proper time and in the proper place. Criminal cases are sent to a judicial assembly where the delinquent undergoes a process of healing and purification. The law is applied like a medicine to the infected member, and through this application of judicial remedies, the body corporate disinfects itself. Legal punishment is a cleansing process. 61

The physician's role, however, is as conservator. Capital punishment must be approached cautiously and carried out with compassion, and then only where an exceptionally virulent species of infection exists:

Post hoc depuratum mittat ad consistorium iudicum, scilicet ipsum hepar, ut iuxta necessitatem culis-libet membro ipsa sanativa medicinalis lex distribuat, et paternam curam in omnibus et ad omnes partes et membra exhibeat, iam unguento dulcorativo, iam lotione abstersiva aut cauterio utendo ac alii omnibus conservatorialibus medicinis. Et numquam ad abscessionem membra, nisi cum dolore compassionis, accedat, et tunc, quando alia nulla prosunt et periculum infectionis existit. 62

"What is the prince but the physician of the state?", asked Erasmus in the early sixteenth-century. 63 Although
Erasmus did not retain the humoral doctrines apparent in Nicholas' analogy to explain crime and certain other political disorders, the anatomical motif framed his discussion of legal punishment. "The majority of crimes arise", he argued, "from polluted ideas, as if from poisoned springs". In addition, "where wealth is exalted and poverty is scorned... a goodly part of crime arises", and generally, "the great mass of the worthless crowd in every state is created through idleness, which they all seek in different ways". He cites beggars, contractors, street pedlars, money-lenders, brokers, caretakers of country establishments, wardens of game preserves, priests selling "pseudo-relics" and living under the "guise of religion", inhabitants of monasteries and colleges, and servants of the ambitious as those who through wanton idleness "will resort to any evil course". Worst of all, he claimed, were those in military service, who resorted to a "busy sort of time wasting... by far the most destructive, for from it result the complete cessation of everything worthwhile and the source of all things evil". Erasmus proposed two methods by which a prince could overcome social disorder and the evils of crime within his state, the first method being what we now call "crime-prevention". Accordingly, the watchful prince will employ every available means to ensure that transgressors of the law are punished, but he will also attempt to prevent crimes from being committed. As he suggests: "The better physician is the one who prevents and wards off disease, not the one that cures the disease with drugs once it is contracted". This can be accompl-
ished if the prince will seek to discover the causes from which most crimes spring "and then cut them off if he can, or at any rate, suppress them and deprive them of their force". Enacting laws which restrain crime "by reason rather than by punishment" will assist this process, but his notion of "suppression" also hints that it is necessary for the prince to have an effective and reliable police force at his disposal. The second method envisaged by Erasmus, if no headway was made by the application of "preventative medicines", was to halt delinquency by "arousing a fear of that divinity which takes vengeance on criminals and also by the threat of punishment". If the threats are unsuccessful, "the incorrigible must be sacrificed by the law (just as a hopelessly incurable limb must be amputated) so that the sound part is not affected". To explain the degrees and procedures of legal punishment, Erasmus typically resorted to a motif of political anatomy:

A reliable and skilled physician never resorts to an operation or cauterizes if he can stop the malady by plasters and strong medicines; and he never resorts even to those unless forced to do so by the seriousness of the disease. So a prince should try every remedy before resorting to capital punishment, keeping in mind that the state is a single body. No one cuts off a limb if the patient can be restored to health by any other means. The honest physician has only one purpose in mind when he prepares his remedies and that is how to overcome the ailment with the very least danger to the patient; so it is with the good prince in passing laws. He has no other end in view than the advantages of his people and the remedying of their misfortunes with the least disturbance.  

Approximately eighty years separate Nicholas of Cusa's analogical use of a political "anatomy" to illustrate the prince's role in the maintenance of public law
and order from Erasmus' fuller treatment of the subject in his legacy to the *speculum principis*, a span of years roughly coterminous with our period in Renaissance Ferrara. Yet despite several obvious distinctions between their respective approaches to the problem of crime (Nicholas speaks only of "curative medicine" or punishment, while Erasmus includes a discussion of "preventative medicine" or crime-prevention, for example), the nature of the obligations incumbent upon the prince and the analogical model devised to explain them remained fundamentally identical. Crime is an infectious disease which can seriously compromise the health of the body corporate. Since possession of a legitimate *imperium* invests the prince with a trusteeship for the physical well-being of its corresponding political "body", it befalls him to act as personal physician to the state, diagnosing diseases (crime) and applying remedies through the process of law. The *topos* of the prince as "physician of the state" and the organic analogy of the *corpo politico* were of course standard metaphors in *quattrocento* Italy, but it is important to note how far these formulae dominated contemporary views of justice. "A city ought to be like the human body", wrote Filarete, "composed of organic compounds which give life to its inhabitants". If one of the constituent elements "becomes turbid and spoiled by filthy matter or by things not suited to it, so the men of the territory are spoiled and become turbid through bad practices". Ferrarese writers leave us in no doubt as to the course the prince must adopt to avoid such a calamity. He must use his skills as a physician to "scaciare ogni
moerore da cuor nostro", thought Savonarola. Because the people understand that justice is the remedy for the ills of Ferrara, he wrote to Borso, "supplichandoti che a questa nostra imperata iactura e gran piaga cum la tuaa sancta medicina soccorrere dignar ti voglii". A visible and armed justice, suggested Carlo da San Giorgio, will help to preserve the security of the soul and body corporate. As he advised Borso: "Il vostro scudo et la vostra chorazza sia la iusticia. Questa e una via a la salute de l'anima et del corpo securissima". Sabadino was more precise. Not only must the prince seek to strike a harmonious balance between the state's composite elements ("l'aere, il vento, la terra, l'acque et il foco"), but he must also expell malevolent forces from the state's physical environs "perch' quello principe che non castiga li iniqui acusatori e susseroni, li inanima e conferma nel malefase, si è de si istisso mortal inimico perch' sono casone de ruinare li stati, regni et imperii e il corpo e l'anima".

It is possible to argue that the image of princely justice, with the advent of scientific jurisprudence in the thirteenth-century, had not substantially altered for a period stretching over the previous two-hundred and fifty years. During this time, a succession of Roman and Canon law scholars, inspired by Aristotelian and Augustinian dialectic and especially Gratian's synthetic body-soul schematic, had frequently used fictitious persona and organological analogies to explain complex legal relationships and their attendant obligations. Theoretically, spiritually, and even physically (as
these analogies attest), the "super-body" of the prince was identified as the fons justitiae, the "living and vigilant Justice" or the "living form of the Law", as Albertus Magnus wrote. By its very nature, personified princely justice revealed the true relations between sovereign and subject. It animated the common knowledge of philosophical, social, and political truths, and preserved them in an established order of interpersonal relationships. And most important, as the guardian of public order, it opposed chaos: the unpredictability of events, the absence of protection, and the exposure to the whims of dangerous or incomprehensible forces. From the juristic point of view, the keeping of peace and the administration of justice was wholly consonant with the integrity of the imperium. The English jurist Henry Bracton, whose political theories closely paralleled continental formulae of the day, perhaps expressed the obligation to maintain law and order incumbent upon the prince most succinctly in his De legibus et consuetudinibus Angliae (c. 1259): "nec a corona separari poterunt cum faciant ipsam coronam". A King who fails "to exercise justice and judgement and to maintain the peace" automatically ceases to be king and is rather a tyrant, the "Devil's minister", since he has lapsed into injustice. Not only a tyrant, according to later erudition upon the figure of the negligent prince, but a rex inutilis; whose willful neglect of "just action", or incapacity to accomplish his governmental obligations, seriously compromised the public welfare and almost inevitably led to a princely identity crisis, sometimes to the ultimate sanction of deposition.
Spiritually consecrated by solemn oath before the altare maggiore in the cathedral, and legally testified to by possession of the bachetta or imperium of the city, the preservation of law and order provided the raison d'être for signorial government in Ferrara. And indeed, from Dante's glorification of Caesar, Petrarch's despair at Cicero, and Conversino's defence of the Carrara dynasty in Padua, no single subject appears to have animated contemporary scholars more than the notion of princely justice, either in heralding its innate superiority over republican discord and strife, or in deprecating its tyrannical nature and wanton abuses. The climate of scholarly opinion in Ferrara naturally inclined towards the support of its patrons, and in the writings of Guarino, Michele Savonarola, Tribachus, San Giorgio, Francesco Ariosto, Cornazano, P.C. Decembrio, Gaspare Sardi, Pistofilo, and a host of others, we have ample testimony to the superior qualities of Estensi justice. Observed Sabadino in his Herculean eulogy, besides "religiosity", all other virtues commonly pertain to the senses, "excepto la iustitia, che solamente nella ultima volontà consiste, per essere facto habito in quella, che altro non è che appetito intelletctivo, come li iurisconsulti diffiniscono che lla iustitia essere una constante, ferma e perpetua voluntate ad contribuire il debito a ciascuno". By personal example, through an active pursuit of justice and its attendant virtues of clemency and mercy, Ercole had not only fulfilled his primary obligation to the citizens of Ferrara, but had also confirmed "che molto è meglio il governo e regimeneto de
uno principe buono... che quello de uno senato de una republica". For without justice, without the preservation of public peace, so intrinsically difficult to obtain in a republic, the state cannot survive:

Perche tu sai che la concordia le picol cose fa felicie e grande, et la discordia e dissensione fa le grande cose non solum anichilare ma ruinare, come Tulio dice che non è cosa tanto stabile nè tanto forte citate la quale per odio et insidie non se possano fino al fondamento ruinare e disolare. 79

"Primum igitur debet princeps, aut quicumque regendos populos susceperint", Caraffa advised the new Duchess of Ferrara, "eos homines juri dicendo praeficerel qui et Deum timeant, et presentem rerum statum diligant". But, he argued further, the manifest responsibilities of the prince towards his subjects do not end with the giving of law. The prince must act as arbitrator, appointing wise and incorruptible men to settle legal disputes and dispense the prince's justice. The prince ought also to act as conservator, both providing a body of law which is rational, simple, and easily understood by those subject to it, and by castigating delinquents, ensuring that the law is stringently observed so that "quicumque contra leges aliquid ad miserit, e vestigo puniatur". 80

In the pages which follow, we shall be examining the role of the prince as conservator in Ferrara, that is, the nature and extent of Borso and Ercole d'Este's commitment to law enforcement. Our principal interest will be the modus operandi of legal punishment, particularly the modality of public execution, first as a signorial response to the problem of crime within the communitas, and second, as an important element in the visible formulation of signorial Staatsymbolik; as a polit-
ical ritual or ceremony wherein signorial power was made publicly manifest. It is an attempt, therefore, to trace a small chapter in the history of scaffold rituals, or what Michel Foucault, in his recent book *Discipline and Punish*, has called "the spectacle of the scaffold". Of special relevance to our study then, must be the translation of the primary site of public executions from the old communal gallows (the *forche di San Giacomo* located on the south bank of the river Po at the foot of the bridge of Castel Tedaldo) to the *piazza maggiore* about the mid-1470's. It is not immediately apparent whether the former site fell into complete disuse, though it is clear that the majority of public executions in Ferrara took place in the piazza by the 1480's, either on a special gallows or tribunal constructed for the occasion, or in the windows of the Palazzo della Ragione. The significance of this alteration in penal scenography must not be underestimated. In the first place, such a move was a marked departure from the usual penal procedure in most European cities at the time, which saw common criminals generally executed outside the city limits. More important, however, this was a reversal of Ferrarese penal custom and Estensi penal policy, which, by virtue of a statute enacted in 1287, had expressly forbidden executions to take place in the piazza: "Statuimus quod nullus decapitetur aut alio modo debilitetur in platea comunis Ferrarie", Anticipating the move to the piazza, and codifying penal practice which had gained common currency by the mid-quattrocento with re-
spect to the punishment meted out to traitors, Borsian statutory reforms carried out between the years 1456 and 1462 replaced this ordinance with a new law providing for the execution of criminals in the piazza at the discretion of the podestà:

Prohibemus aliquem in platea comunis ferrariae de capitari nel aliò modo debilitari aut cивem ferrarie presentem ad mortem nel membri abscessionem vel aliam penam corporis affactinam damnari die sabati sue quo fiat mercatum in civitate ferrarie nisi alter videatur d. potestati propter enormitatem delicti. 86

By investigating the motivations behind this alteration in signorial policy, we hope to deepen our understanding of contemporary attitudes to crime and the criminal, and perhaps open new avenues to an analysis of social and political relations between the individual and the state in Renaissance Ferrara.

A number of basic questions will have to be asked where often only a tentative response is forthcoming. How far did this new policy seek to overcome deficiencies in other areas of Estensi law enforcement? How conscious were Borso and Ercole d'Este of public punishment as a ritual exercise in princely sovereignty? In what way, if any, was this new penal procedure a response to changes in public morality? To new directions in the field of legal knowledge? To Ferrarese socio-economic problems? Our view of penal functions in Ferrara, however, cannot be complete without a brief examination of the problems of policing the community. A distinction ought to be made between two modes of law enforcement (as Erasmus suggests); between policing systems and punishment systems. In the context of "organic justice", such a separ-
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ation cannot be absolute, since each is a constituent part, constantly interacting with and reinforcing the other. And each in its own way makes substantial contributions to what might be called the "image of justice", whether by a visual impression of justice in action, or by a mental picture conceived and contemplated within the realm of abstract consciousness. Nevertheless, our analysis of signorial justice and its manifest image ought to be tempered by a separation between organized crime-prevention and organized civil retribution, between police functions and penal functions, for several reasons. Let us begin to ascertain these reasons by considering some of the problems associated with policing the community.

Crime and Crime-Prevention in Ferrara

The actual rate of crime in Ferrara during the second half of the fifteenth-century, especially during the 1480's and 1490's, has been a source of consternation for historians. The majority of Ferrarese scholars seem to subscribe, in whole or in part, to the so-called "crime-wave theory". Much of the evidence for this thesis, which suggests that Ferrara suffered a dramatic increase in the rate of crime towards the end of the century, has been drawn from the three principal chronicles: Zambotti, Caleffini, and the anonymous Diario Ferrarese. Owing to the frequency of public executions, public mutilations, murders, robberies, and criminally violent assaults cited by these chronicles, the standard portrait of life in
Ferrara has been exceptionally bleak. Here is Luciano Chiappini's assessment of living conditions in the city during the last fifteen years of Ercole's reign:

Le turbolenze non mancavano e spesso della lettura delle cronache contemporanee si ricava l'impressione dell'impotenza da parte dell'autorità di controllare l'ordine cittadino e di impedire risse, furti, ferimenti ed offese perpetrated talvolta in pieno giorno. Il popolo soffriva, costretto in oscuri tugurii e non di rado in balia della miseria e delle fame, specie nei momenti di emergenza. 87

Giuseppe Pardi thought that Ercole's willful neglect of his obligations towards the Ferrarese citizenry was responsible for the misery: "la giustizia non pare che si dia molta cura di rintracciare i colpevoli, nè la polizia di impedire le incessanti ruberie. I negozianti, esasperati, ricorrono al principe, che promette di provvedere, ma i furti non cessano". 88 Difficulty arises, however, when one attempts to substantiate these claims with archival records. The Libri del Maleficii for the years 1450-1505, which contain the notarial records of criminal inquisitions for the Comune of Ferrara, are damagingly incomplete, some twelve fragmented registers extant. Even if one were to have a complete set of registers for these years, it appears that records were kept rather haphazardly, and there is further evidence which suggests that it was not altogether unusual for condemnations to go unmentioned. Thus Antonio Rodi, notary "del malefitio" to the communal court, wrote to the duke complaining that he found it impossible to earn a living in the capacity of his office, "et questo per la bailia usata de meser lo podesta contra li delinquenti in non darli alcuna difesa ne processi ne scripture, ne examini de testimoni,
Whether the practice of condemning delinquents without benefit of trial remained a consistent feature of Estensi judicial administration, or how long such a policy had been in force before Rodi was moved to petition the duke for financial aid, cannot at present be determined. It is important to note, however, that Rodi's petition merely complains of his indebtedness to creditors and demands recompense from the ducal camera, but does not question the policy nor the wisdom of such arbitrary justice: "ben che sia stato cosa utile a la terra in punire quisti delinquenti, ni tutte de mancho e stato la desfactione del supp.". Here we have some indication of the problems posed by crime in Ferrara, and the approval of a private citizen for the dispensation of arbitrary justice to help reduce public distress.

Preserved in the Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea in Ferrara are two manuscripts helpful to the historian seeking to establish patterns of Ferrarese criminality during the second half of the quattrocento: the Libro de' Giustiziati, which lists the executions carried out in Ferrara between the years 1441 and 1557, and an anonymous seventeenth-century MS., Rebelli della Serenissima Casa d'Este, coi suoi cognomi, anni, ecc. dal 1287 al 1509, which records the names of those individuals guilty of treasonous offences and officially designated as rebels of the state. The former need only concern us in the present context, for it is upon the basis of statistical information gleaned from this register that Werner Gundersheimer has recently chall-
enged the standard interpretation of law and order in Renaissance Ferrara briefly outlined above. Gundersheimer himself sets out the limitations imposed upon the value of such a statistical survey:

It is, of course, of no help in the case of capital crimes that never came to trial, or in which the death sentence may have been rejected or commuted to banishment and confiscation of goods, or punished by retaliation outside the courts. Nor does it provide information on the frequency or seriousness of non-capital crimes, which, owing to their less disruptive nature, also tend to be less noticed by chroniclers. 93

To this list one might also add that it is of little help in cases where malefactors were not apprehended, surely the largest single statistic in the annals of Ferrarese crime. 94 Despite these qualifications, Gundersheimer concludes that the annual rate of capital crimes remained relatively constant throughout the period 1441-1500, "except for the very dramatic and atypical fluctuations introduced by political disorders". Out of a total of 293 executions, the average number of people executed per annum is "4.88", and this falls dramatically to an average of "3" if one subtracts political crimes. By comparing the total number of executions by decade, for instance between the 1460's (40) and the 1490's (42), he finds no dramatic increase in the annual rate of crime. Thus Gundersheimer would argue that there can be little substance to the view which characterizes the 1490's as a decade of "particular criminality", especially "if there is any more or less constant ratio between the frequency of capital and other kinds of crimes". 95 Moreover, he adds, if the Addizione Erculea (begun in 1492), which more than doubled the metropol-
itan area of Ferrara, was essentially a response to over-
crowded conditions in the city, then "these figures sugg-
est a relative decline (as well as an absolute decline) in the criminality of the Ferrarese people around the turn of the century". 96

Turning to the most reliable Ferrarese chronicle, however, one finds that Ugo Caleffini's assessment of living conditions in Ferrara during the year 1492 cer-
tainly cast suspicion upon Gundersheimer's conclusions:

In Ferrara molte se usa al presente per Christiani a Christiani ad uxura io dio a cento per cento cum pigni in mano et al pezo che se po. Se gli roba, se gli sotomia, fa monete false et tosane, se gli amaza e se gli fa tanti et tanti mali che e cossa incredibile et vergognome a scriverli. 97

Elsewhere he remarks that during the month of July 1491, no citizen was safe on the streets of Ferrara. Hinting at an alarming breakdown in law and order, he records that twenty-five robbers dressed in white roamed the streets at night, even the piazza, "et niuno era ponito, et li boni erano opressi da li tristi". 98 Signorial just-
ice, he implies, was no longer enforced with confidence but had stooped to timidity. Thus the execution of Hier-
onimo di Sansoni in March 1493 was conducted with minimal publicity and "senza troppo suoni de Campana de Iustitia" because the accused, unless his crimes were pardoned, had threatened the duke with the destruction of the court's stables at Belriguardo by sixty of his companions. 99 Nor are Caleffini's remarks strictly confined to the notor-
ious 1490's, when the frequent instances of homicide, rape, arson, and pillaging moved him to portray the era as a time of general "mala conditione". With considerable
satisfaction he notes that the possibility for a malefactor to obtain sanctuary in a Ferrarese church, after having committed a crime meriting corporal punishment, was withdrawn in a joint public decree issued by Ercole and the Bishop of Ferrara on 28 May 1480: "Et cio fu facto per che como amazava uno altro et fusse fuzito in chiesia era salvo et per questo ogni di se faceano multi mali che andavano in poniti." The following day, it was further decreed that an accused could not lodge a defence for his actions unless he first entered prison, a measure which received the general support of the popolo.

In the immediate aftermath of the Venetian War, it is not surprising to find conditions in the city described as deplorable. But it is clear that the road to recovery was to be a long and arduous process. Following a list of robberies committed in private residences and churches during November 1486, Caleffini comments that "in questo tempo e tanti zagaduri et ladri et assassini in ferrara che e cossa Incredibile". This lamentable year was succeeded by an especially unfortunate Carnival during the months of January and February 1487. Traditionally a time of vendetta, when the drunkenness, licence, and ritualized violence of the celebrations afforded ample opportunity for the renewal of blood-feuds and the settling of old scores (the feud between the Sacrati and San Vitali families was perhaps the most infamous), the festivities of this year were attended by a series of brutal murders, robberies, and the wanton destruction of private property. A public decree was issued by the
duke, offering a reward of 100 golden ducats to any member of a robber-gang then operating in Ferrara who would inform on his fellows, with a complete pardon and exemption from corporal punishment (as an accuser-informant, his name would also remain secret). Violence of a wholly criminal nature, as opposed to the more "respectable" pursuit and salient interests of vendetta, had become indigenous to Carnival in Ferrara by the late fifteenth-century, prompting Caleffini to observe one Shrove Tuesday eve: "Et in dicta nocte molte altre famelie furon robate secundo el consuetuo". Thus, even the podestà's personal guard was assaulted on the second day of Carnival in January 1488, "ove il potestade dubitandose de pezo se mise afuzire in lo suo palatio", and two citizens were murdered the day after a ducal proclamation prohibiting the carrying of arms in the city had been posted in the windows of the Palace of Justice. Summing up the year 1489, significantly the year of Rodi's petition mentioned above, Caleffini remarked:

It is clear where Caleffini apportions the blame for this miserable state of affairs. The duke had for much of the time rarely ventured forth from his palace, "et cum uno Carlo Soxena Chierico ferrarexe per incantamenti et scorzamenti parlava adiavoli et volea intendere di facti de Italia et de altre cosse et questo da molti et molti di et septimane in qua". Hondedio di Vitale similarly accused Ercole of neglecting his subjects: "... s'e piato
tuti li piaceri che li e parso, e con musiche e con astr-
ologie e negromancie, con pochissima audencia al suo pop-
olo". In the interim, crimes had gone unpunished, and
perhaps more important, the consumptive demands of the
Herculean court had raised communal taxes to such here-
tofofore unknown heights that ordinary citizens had been
pressed into uncharacteristic criminal behaviour. The
extortionate rates of interest upon pawns and loans
(which Caleffini claims oscillated between 70 and 84%),
left unchecked by official policy, had prompted citizen
violence against the money-lenders, "et era molto scoreto
maxime el populo ferrarexe in robare amazare altrui dare
ad usura". The high rate of communal taxes and extra-
ordinary levies, "imposte poste per il duca de ferrara
generaliter atuti li suoi subditi per amore et per forza",
was generally recognized to be the principal source of
the unfortunate circumstances: "Et tuto fu dicto che
havea facto per levare le pompe de le done cheli pareva
che in quelle troppo pompe regnasse. Unde che per questa
tal cossa have (Ercole) tante bisteme et maledictione da
suoi subditi...". When Ercole raised the colta in Feb-
uary 1491 to finance the expenses of the wedding of Alfon-
so d'Este and Anna Sforza, "tuto el populo grosso et
menudo cridava insino al cielo", affording Caleffini the
opportunity to elaborate the grievances of the citizenry:
Upon the strength of the convictions in Caleffini's chronicle, which may be wholly supported by the evidence established in Zambotti and the Anonimo, one hesitates to discredit the "crime-wave theory". A fundamental complaint lodged against signorial government by chroniclers of Herculean Ferrara is that a high proportion of criminal offences, particularly acts of violence committed against private persons and private property, did not go undetected but went unpunished: "Homicidii, furti et asasinamenti de di ed de noce in quantità se sono facti et dietim se fano, et tale ha morto sei persone et roba' in quantità et assassina' che ha gratia de stare a casa, percìò a bonora bisogna andare la sira a casa". Ercole himself admitted that his magistrates often left criminals to their own devices, "on veramente recevino tributo dali malifactori perche non li'condemninol". Just how this sort of bribery and corruption could affect the quality of signorial justice may be illustrated by the circumstances of a case of rape in Reggio. In exchange for several handsome gifts, a local noble accused of violating the daughter of the court artist Baldassare d'Este was exempted from examination under torment and a false testimony was accepted by the podestà, absolving the accused of criminal liability in the incident. Unable to receive satisfaction in the local courts, the outraged father petitioned the duke demanding that the prisoner be held in custody and sent to Ferrara, where he would be handed over to the dreaded Zampante for examination by judicial torture. Ercole, however, refused to overrule the finding of his court in Reggio.
nificant too, is the fact that the indictment of Hercul-
ean justice was not strictly confined to Ferrarese obser-
vers. Cordial relations between the duchies of Milan and
Ferrara did not prevent Lodovico Sforza from reprimanding
Ercole for his failure to bring criminals to trial. Writ-
ting to the duke in 1493, Sforza complained that one of
his principal feudatories had been brutally murdered by
sixteen masked bandits just outside the city of Modena,
and that the malefactors had not been apprehended. The
letter demands that Ercole take the necessary steps to
capture and punish the offenders, lest it be said that
the Duke of Ferrara permitted criminals to walk his
streets without fear of retribution: "... pregarla vog-
lia fare la provisione quale per la sapientia quella
castigatione quale el debito vole, per non lassare chel
si dica che nel dominio suo sia permessa questa licentia
de rumpere la strata senza farne castigo".117

The statistics quoted by Gundersheimer, therefore,
can be somewhat misleading as a reliable guide to local
criminality, though they should not be dismissed entirely.
In fairness, there is no social observer comparable to
Caleffini, Zambotti, Ferrarini, or Vitale for the reign
of Borso d'Este from which one might initiate a reason-
able comparison. Borso's reign stands eulogized as an
era of unprecedented civic peace and good government.
Cornazano's Borsian vita named him "Re de iusticia",
San Giorgio wrote at length concerning his wisdom and
fairness as a dispensator of justice ("Chi è piú iusto,
chi è piú clemente, chi è piú humano, chi è migliore
del divo Borso"), while Caleffini later recalled how
Borso "scia ben netare citade e castille de quelle zente che da noi mal vive" in order that the people "per le strade ed i fiumi con le rive andar si po' securi el di e la nocte". These were the sort of authorities which inspired Muratori to write of Borso: "Sommo... fu in questo principe l'amore e lo studio della giustizia". Pasquale Villari, however, issued a note of caution: "La rinomata giustizia non aveva mai potuto sostenere una prova difficile". In fact, we know relatively little about the rate of crime in Borsian Ferrara due to a lack of archival resources (only three badly damaged registers of the **Maleficii** survive for the years 1450-1471), though as we have seen in the preceding, Borso's signoria was not without its share of socio-economic troubles and "natural disasters". These problems no doubt contributed to and encouraged criminal acts, and quite possibly made for a higher crime-rate in Ferrara during his reign than has otherwise been assumed by scholars. If one employs Gundersheimer's methodology, it is noticeable that the **Libro de' Giustiziati** yields an appreciably higher annual execution rate for Borso's reign, and that of the ten years in the period 1450-1505 in which more than six people were executed, all of them (excluding the years when there were wholesale executions for treason, 1476, 1482-84) fall within the period prior to Ercole's accession: 7 in 1451, 11 in 1454, 8 in 1455, 7 in 1458, 8 in 1465, 7 in 1469. Yet it is equally noteworthy that the profusion of extra-statutory legislation designed to check criminal violence which so char-
acterizes Herculean judicial administration, is conspicuously absent during Borso's *signoria*. On no fewer than twelve occasions, for instance, was Ercole compelled to revoke the privilege of public masquing during Carnival celebrations in order to safeguard the security of the citizenry: 1482-84 (on account of the war), 1486, 1487, 1488, 1489, 1491, 1492, 1493, 1496, 1499. The orders were sanctioned with exceptionally harsh penalties:

... *niuna persona de che stado, grado, preeminencia et conditione voglia essere on sia Travestia on Immascarata on altramente col volto coperta ossi, ni presumi portare bastoni ni arme devedate, ni de veruna qualita a pte ad offendere sotto pena de lire cinquanta de marchesane da fir applicate ala Camera sua Ducale; et de tri tracti de chorda, quali li siano dati Incontinente senza alcuno riguardo on rispetto.*

Item che *veruna persona de che conditione on grado vogli essere on sia travestita on Immunascarata on altramente colvolto coperto dara percotera, on feria cum arme vedate on non vedate alcuna persona... cada in pena de perdere la vita da essergli tagliata la testa et ala confiscatione de tutti li suoi beni cussi presenti, come futuri...* 123

The privilege of carrying arms, both in the capital and in the subject towns of the *domini*, was also often withdrawn in a concerted effort to eliminate the possibility of civil disorder:

... *Perche ogni qual di sentenamo qualche disordine et qualche homicide commetterli in la terra nostra de Nonantula il che procedea per la liberta che haveano quilli nostri homini del portare le arme per virtu di certi decreti a loro concesse per nui: Ni e pariso de rivocarli in tuto et per tuto dicta faculta et licentia acioche habino a vivere piu pacificamente, et cussi ne havemo scripto opportune al dicto nostro Capitano...* 124

These decrees, at first sanctioned by a scale of civil fines (in the 1470's), were later enforced with a high fine and corporal punishment, normally public flogging. 125

Some of the other methods adopted by Ercole to
improve the rate of convictions we have mentioned previously: the creation of special commissions (which appear to have been of purely Herculean invention), and the threat of punishment to delinquent magistrates. Another important measure was the extension of opportunities for reward by allotting a one-third share in the proceeds of delictual fines to secret informers or accusers. This was a marked departure from Borsian policy in criminal matters, which maintained a tight control over revenue derived from criminal prosecutions, apportioning one-half of the proceeds to the Comune, and the other half to the injured party as compensation. It is difficult to document precisely when this policy became standard practice (it was of course not unknown during Borso's signoria), though the clauses attached to signorial criminal legislation suggest the region of the 1470's. Here again, it appears reasonable to assume that the measure was inaugurated to increase the number of condemnations inscribed on the rolls of the malefici and to encourage greater citizen vigilance. But one might also legitimately question signorial motivation behind this policy, since it is not without coincidence that the practice was established at a time of rapidly escalating Estensi financial problems. Such a policy could lead to abuses, and as we shall see, crime was a lucrative business not only for the criminal element, but for the ducal camera as well.

How then, may we characterize Ferrarese criminality in the later fifteenth-century? There seems little doubt that the rate of unpunished crime began to rise
during the late 1470's, owing to the tenor of the extra-
statutory measures taken to assist local authorities in
the policing of the domini. The preamble to the new city
ordinances imposed upon Modena in November 1476, sets
out signorial motivation for what amounted to the eff-
ective disarming of the entire community:

Ad Regimen Mutine
Dilectissimi nostri. Per oburare a multi desordini
et inquementi che tuto el die accadeno in quella
nostra citade et suo ducato per esserli persone
assai descorcete, presumtuose et male obedientie,
le quale non solo par se sono male costumate se
etiam incitano altrui a mal fare, habiamo statuiti
et ordinati li infrascripti capituli et ordini, li
quali volemo che Vui et vostri successori faciati
servare in omnibus et per omnia per lege soleniss-
ime di quella nostra citade et suo ducato non obs-
stante altri statuti leghe provisini ordinii consuet-
udine decreti et qualunque altra cossa che in con-
riniano apparesse quibus omnibus et singulis ex-
presse derogamus...

No citizen was permitted to carry arms "offensibile o
defensibile" upon a penalty of 25 LM; failure to pay
this fine resulted in three public lashes. No citizen
was permitted to retain the services of more than five
men-at-arms, or to proceed upon the public roads with
a personal guard in excess of five men-at-arms, without
the express written consent of the duke; failure to com-
ply with this order resulted in a fine of 50 golden duc-
ats or alternatively four public lashes. Any citizen
found guilty of giving aid or shelter to persons banish-
ed from the city by civil authority incurred "pena corp-
orable" (unspecified) and a fine of 100 LM. "Provedendo
deinde vui et vostre successori", ordered the duke, "cum
ogni studio et diligentia che siano servati et custodi
et facendo punire qualunque transgressore secundo la
regula et continentia de epsi capituli". The very
nature of these orders, which sought to reduce the physical challenge to civil authority on the streets and to isolate the criminal in his flight from civil retribution, lodges a serious indictment against the basic ability of the communal government to maintain law and order. Whether this was in fact due to a rise in the rate of crime, or alternatively, to a reduction in the efficiency of the police service, remains debatable, but the former suggestion would appear most likely. At the very least, we may safely assume that established standards of police vigilance in Modena were often unsuccessful in curtailing criminal violence, and that the sanctity of communal law was being placed continuously in question.

Frequent also were the legislative steps undertaken by the duke to safeguard the moral welfare of the community. Ostensibly, this was why the crime of blasphemy was so rigorously prosecuted in Ferrara. An oath uttered in a loud voice against God or the Virgin Mary brought a fine of 50 LM (for merely remarking that "non lo potrebbe fare Iddio", a Ferrarese citizen was fined 50 LM in 1460), against the saints 25 LM, but the offence also comprised gambling in a Ferrarese church or entering a church in disguise, penalized by a fine of 20 ducats and three public lashes. Blasphemy offences were numerous in the late fifteenth-century, and the pecuniary revenue derived from condemnations was regarded as a normal (not accidental) source of ducal entrate. Inevitably, the camera's willingness to accept false testimony to increase delictual quotas made for an uncomfortable atmosphere of accusation and counter-accusation in the city. "Havendo dato
da manzare a tri gioti e puossa domandoglie il suo", com-
plained a local innkeeper, "quisti tali sono andati acc-
usarlo ala camera ducale che la biastemato, e per dicto
cagione e sta condemnato e loro medemi hanno testimini-
ato." The local clergy were certainly not above pro-
fiting from this cameral enterprise. So a parishioner
in the village of Francolino, whose sister had been
abused by a priest "piu volte... in modo che ne havuto
tre pute", suffered the further indignity of having his
entire family assaulted by the priest and his companions,
and then found himself repeatedly condemned for blasphemy
upon their testimony:

... venuto asaltare per fina in caxa e batudo mia
sorella per forza e fatoli sangue e poi lui me ha
facto accusare che io ho biastemato dio e cio uno
de li soi compagni ha facto testimonare in modo
Illmo. S. che la parte de la acusatore tra lui e
quelli soi compagni hano havuto lire 4 marchesane
e la resto la camera dela V.S. e questo fo el mese
de novembre, dapoi S. mio le predicte cosse del
mese de dexembre anchora novamenti me ha accusado
che io biastemato dio e pure cio quello medeno
testimonio suo compagno... 135

Similarly, gambling was also forbidden within the pre-
cincts of Ferrara. Offences under the gaming laws
could bring fines of up to 100 LM, another important
source of revenue to line the ducal coffers.137

By far the most significant "moral legislation",
however, concerned the activities of prostitutes. As
in many north Italian cities, prostitution was organized
and run under a state monopoly. Ferrarese prostitutes
were obliged to register their names with the Ufficio
delle Bollette, to wear the symbol of their profession,
and to pay a small annual tax to the ducal camera.138

By all accounts, illegal prostitution in the city was
a serious problem. "Et pochissimi e pochissimi maritazi se fano in ferrara", wrote Caleffini, "et la ragione e che sono tante putane casalenge in ferrara che la brigata non cura de tore moglie". In 1476, Ercole issued a decree which prohibited women from parading in public with their faces covered, "e questo se fa per non dare materia a molti cattivi de commettere molti delicti come he sta facto", and the following year prostitutes and procurers were banished from the city, either forcing them to leave its environs altogether, or to ply their trade in the public brothel located in the Gambaro, a small area of hovels and tenements outside the north-west wall. Designed not only to rid Ferrara of a moral nuisance but to check the related problems of petty thievery, criminal assault, and crimes of passion, the legislation provided stiff fines for persons convicted of receiving payment for the purposes of prostitution, soliciting in public or in secret, and for sheltering prostitutes within private residences or places of business. In addition to a fine of 25 LM, the prostitutes "li serano discapellate et dischoperte publicamente cum suo grandissimo dishonore et vergogna per esser cognosciute che li siano...". Yet the evidence suggests that these decrees were largely ignored. So inextricably bound up with the fabric of social life was prostitution, that Zambotti laments a case of parri-cide over the invitation of a prostitute to a private residence, "e questo perché il padre, nianche li parenti voleano menasse dicta meretrice in caxa". In April 1479, the ordinances were reissued with a higher scale
of fines, 144 and again in March 1489, "pro vedere che questa sua inclita Cita di ferrara sia purgata de tanti publici lenocini qui quanto al prexente se gli trovano et levare la infamia del tal vitio per il ben et honesto vivere de questa sua Citade". 145 Notwithstanding the decree, sanctioned by a fine of 50 LM or four public lashes, Ercole was forced to make an example of two offenders six months later in the presence of the prostitutes from the public brothel. Zambotti records that he himself, "como suo superiore a li bolete, feci due squassi de corda a ciascuna, a uno travo messo fora in Piazza a le fenestre del podestà... e a tal spectaculo ge feci venire presente tute le altre meretricell. On occasion, a stern sense of communal righteousness transformed moral indignation into ritualized castigation. Writing to Isabella d'Este in 1497, Bernardino Prosperi described how the wife of a police agent in Ferrara, guilty of a number of illicit amorous affairs, was compelled to walk the streets of the city wearing a mitre depicted with devils. After the procession, she was conducted into the piazza before the assembled court and general public, there to be subjected to a torrent of abuse. Apples, turnips, and gourds were hurled at the victim by the crowd: "La festa fue grandissima, el romore grande cum la mostra della carne della povra dona et fortemente battuta dal boglia et bersagliata dali puti et etiam da multi grandi". 147 Animal excretion was sometimes flung into the face of women of dubious moral character, both by private citizens personally moved to avenge communal indignation (an action which did not
necessarily receive the blessing of the civil authorit-
ies) and by magistrates, as a legal punishment for moral
offences. Outraged fathers avenged the honour of their
daughters by staining the doors to residences belonging
to rapists with "merda". In all of the cases mention-
ed above, a sense of moral outrage appears to mingle
with, and is intensified by, the modality of legal pun-
ishment. By exposing the physical body of the condemned
to public ridicule and pain, the delinquent is identif-
ied and marked as unclean. Through the process of law
(in some instances private revenge), the communal body
corporate purges the unclean member by ritual humiliation.

* * *

Communal laws and ordinances designed to protect
the merchant community, and to ensure the stability of
the state economy, were also regularly defied. Traff-
icking in contraband flourished (specifically, commerc-
ial goods transported or sold without payment of the
requisite licences or taxes). As early as 1466, the
fattore generale Bonvicino dalla Carte wrote to Borso
d'Este from Modena describing an appalling lack of comm-
mercial supervision on the part of local officials, esp-
sially during public holidays, when the normal flow of
traffic into the city was proportionately high:

... heri che fu domenega di dui del presente arrivar
qui al basso et cum mal tempo, et in lo intrare den-
tro da la cita quando fru ala porta vite che lo volsi
facendere che offitiale alcuno de gabelle non ge era
ala guarda di contrabandi et per la informatione che
ne havi trovar che al piu de le feste li officiali
mai non stano ale loro poste dele porte et chi el po
vedere Illmo. s. mio se uno vole fare contrabando
che lui non el possa fare el di de la feste indus-
iando e quello di che lo officiali non segreterova.
By the late 1480's, the problem had become so acute in Ferrara that the revenue derived from licencing and taxing commercial traffic had dwindled, and illegal goods vied with licenced produce in the local consumer marketplace. A number of preventative measures were taken to help stem the flow of illegal produce and curb official abuses. One important method was to invest the appaltatori with greater discretionary powers. The most common method of collecting indirect taxes on commercial goods (dazi interni) followed in Ferrara, was to let out the privilege of collection on contract (appalto) to a private citizen or private consortium. In return for a predetermined sum, based on the average fiscal revenue calculated for the commodity in question, and payable either monthly or yearly, the appaltatore was granted a conductoria, that is, the privilege of administering taxes upon a specified commercial item: wheat, corn, wine, fish, oil, fruit, timber, and the membri de li libriccioli. For example, the fattore generale Niccolò di Coadi was granted a conductoria to administer and collect the 10% communal tax on wine for a period of four years in December 1487, in exchange for the promise to pay the ducal camera 4400 LM annually.

The advantages of this scheme for the ducal camera were enormous. Not only did it provide a guaranteed source of fiscal income and allow for the future possibility of systematically raising taxes, but much of the popular animosity for the burdensome level of taxation and coercive methods of the tax collectors was shifted onto the head of the appaltatore. Yet in the late fif-
teenth-century, the *appaltatori* were clearly encountering difficulty in meeting their quotas, despite a notorious use of armed force in accordance with statutory privilege: "gabellatori et sui custodi possint impune ire de nocte per civ. Ferr. et burgis cum lumine et sine lumine et ferre arma de nocte sine contradictione vel molestia alicuius vel rectoris".154 In order to protect the livelihood of local wine-purveyors and the lucrative tax revenue which accrued to the *camera*, therefore, the privileges accorded the *conductoria* of Niccolo Coadi included the most arbitrary of policing powers:

*Item che dicto conductore habia balia, e debba havere alturio, et favore, et subsidio de condemnare e multare cadauna persona che contrafaresse ale provision, cride, ordeni et statuti spetanti a Beneficio et utilitate del dito datio, summarie secundo fa la camera, reprovando pero sempre ali spetiali facturi ogni debita superiorita casu quo alcuna persona se candolesse esserli fatto alcuna iniustitia per dicto conductore.* 155

Designed to curb abuses, the illegal vending of wines, fraud, smuggling, illegal private manufacture, and tax-evasion, the measure amounted to no less than the creation of a special police force, with *carte blanche* authority to investigate (with power of entry into any Ferrarese premises), arrest, convict, and punish citizens, and to use armed force whenever necessary: "durante la presente locatione la camera sia tenuta, et debba concedere, prestare, porgere, et mantenire al dicto conductore ogni et singula immunita, favore, brazo et subsidio necessario al dicto datio, come se dicto datio fusse in camera".156

Ferrara was of course subject to a strict evening curfew, insofar as any unauthorized presence on the city streets "sine lumine... post tertium sonum campane de sero usque
ad perfectum sonum eiusdem campane de mane" was punished by a fine of 5 LM; groups of individuals exceeding six in the case of a torch or a lamp, or ten in the case of tapers, incurred a fine of 10 LM. Nevertheless, it appears that illegal commercial activity thrived in the city after dark, and tighter controls upon the movements of private citizens and commercial goods were needed. In the year following the installation of Coadi's police-prosecution force, a ducal proclamation was issued which effectively rendered the movement of consumer foodstuffs from the contado the city impossible without a duly authorized licence from the communal authorities, "in grande ne in pichola quantita ne per suo uso on pro bisogno ne per altro modo". The penalty for contravening this order was a fine of 25 LM, "e cadauno che sera accusato non spieri de gratia alcuna". These are perhaps the two most revealing examples of a continuous flow of signorial legislation well into the 1490's, when, for instance, further measures were adopted to protect commercial trade in meat and meat by-products, wood-conveyance, and even to help stamp out the illegal trade in Lenten fish:

"Il se fa comandamento per parte de lo Illmo. m. hercule che da qui inanci non sia nesuna persona terriera on forastiera, de che condizione se voglia essere on sia ossi on presume per modo alcuno rasone on cagione portare, on far portare de pisce extrahere per si on per altra persona alcuna quantita de pisce de po ni sturioni ni ladani ni capisi fuora di passi de soa Ex. senza expressa licentia a bollete del superiore vel governadore del dicto datio del po..."

Significant too, was a translation of the threat to prosecute delinquent or negligent officials into concrete action. One cashiered official, who kept the books of a Ferrarese granary and stood condemned of fraud, complained
that a confession had been extracted out of him under duress: "... et tandem examinato piu et piu volte et ala corda per li judici deputati se e ritrovato il supp. havere fraudato per tutto il suo tempo gabelle". Yet another, who kept the records of the gabelle di piazza in the city, similarly convicted of fraud and condemned to pay a heavy fine in addition to suffering banishment and the confiscation of all his possessions, complained of the testimony of false witnesses and was subsequently exonerated. Perhaps the most interesting case concerns the auditing of the tax-registers of the city of Modena for the years 1486-90 by a special investigative committee, headed by the fattore generale Antonio Maria Guarnerio. The task confronting the committee was to seek an explanation for an alarming drop in local fiscal revenue during these years, and to determine the guilt of Giovanni Hieronimo Marchesio, treasurer of the Comune of Modena: "... se Zoane hieronymo per lo governo de lanno 1490 merita biasimo o non". Marchesio was eventually absolved of any fraudulent intentions in the matter by Guarnerio, and it was recommended that the allegations against him be dropped. Upon examining the evidence presented to him, Ercole was forced to agree, though he was clearly dissatisfied with the findings and ordered the committee to continue its inquiry, "perche anchora presume la ragione". It remains unknown, however, whether the investigation unearthed any clues to the abnormally low level of tax revenue. Could a thriving market in contraband goods have affected communal entrate this drastically?

In light of the important relationship between the
fiscal extent of communal entrate and the collection of the dazi, and given the exceptional nature of some of the steps taken to combat official and unofficial abuse of the laws regulating commercial traffic, such a conclusion is not altogether unwarranted. Communal tax revenue was down generally throughout the Estensi domini in the late fifteenth-century. How far down is difficult to determine, but it was unquestionably a constant source of worry to the duke, coming at a time when cash was at a premium, when the consumptive demands of his court were steadily rising, and when the costs of the grandiose Addizione would soon begin to outstrip all available capital.

Some indication of the extent of Ercole's problems is contained in a letter from the fattore Antonio Maria Guarniero to the duke, dated 30 November 1487. According to Guarniero's prognosis for the year 1488, communal entrate would be insufficient to pay the debts of the camera, and moreover, even the personal honour of the duke and his household was in jeopardy:

... Nel quale piu volte come ho dicto a v.s. vedo, non essere modo de pagare li debiti, et havere da provedere per il vivere de v.s. per essere ultra il modo piu li debiti che se hanno ad pagare, et le spese che non e la Intrata... Poi, quando la se ritrovera qui, gli fare intendere il tuto particulamente, et bisogno ad ogni modo Illmo. s. mio farli bem pensiero suxo, perche non gli pigliando qualche bom pretito, prima se ne portoria senstro disascola cum in cariche assai per il vivere de v.s. et Madama, de figliuli, et de la corte, et cum grande in caricho alo honore. Puoi succedere ebbe clamori et cridi grandi per quelloro che hanno ad havere, che tuto tenderia a disonore de v.s. et a diminuizione de la fama de quella... 165

Particularly revealing is Guarniero's assertion that between spese and entrate "gli seria puocha differentia": revenue simply did not match fiscal calculations (or
signorial expectations). The problem does not lie with mathematical "figures"; he says, but with cash-collection, "una difficoltà che a tempo per tempo se puossi havere el dinaro da pagare ali Creditori, et le spese che accadeno a la giornata". Just as conspicuous is Guarniero's close identification of ducal honour with great expenses and the ability to satisfy debts incurred in the course of honourable expenditure. There is not the slightest hint of courtly "economizing". Indeed by 1497, the extravagance of financing the Addizione and the celebrated fama of the Herculean court had so taken precedence over all other signorial expenses, that even the salaried officers of the camera, numbering among their membership the most important office-holders in the state, were reduced to petitioning for their annual stipends:

Diletissimi nostri. Ritrovandoni gravati de bona quantitate de debiti per varie et infinite spese havuto sino a questo die et volendo provedere alla satisfactione... per tanto ve dicemo et commettemo sub obligatione de pagare del vostro che non dac-iati ni faciati dare dinari ni roba de sorte alcuna ad alcuno nostro salariato senza nostra licentia...

It is evident that a high proportion of signorial orders designed to establish economic stability went unheeded, and as such, were valueless. This was the fate, for example, of much of the legislation which prohibited the circulation of foreign currency in Ferrara, and more dramatically, of the provisions made to counteract the counterfeiting, clipping, and defacing of Ferrarese coins. The penalty provided by communal law for the defacing or clipping of good coin combined a heavy fine with corporal punishment:
For reasons which remain obscure, since under Roman law the defacing and clipping of good coin and the falsifying of base coin were equally regarded as crimen maiestatis, the communal law of Ferrara solely treated false moneying as an enormous crime. The penalty prescribed for counterfeiting was death by fire (subsequently amended to death by hanging under the Borsian reforms), and the Libro de' Giustiziati records the executions of fifteen offenders between the years 1450 and 1505. The spending or possession of foreign currency was clearly a lesser civil offence, which resulted in a fine of 25 golden ducats and the confiscation of the currency in question. This was also an ambiguous offence, since the Este often required forced loans from the nobility to be paid in Venetian or Florentine currencies. Judging from the number of petitions pleading for ducal mercy, currency-related offences were common in Herculean Ferrara. Yet to attribute Este financial woes solely to an escalation in commercially related criminal activity would be misleading. Doubtless this delinquency compounded financial problems private and signorial, but the increase in the rate of crime was far more a symptom than a cause of economic distress.

In the preceding, our observations have tended to
lend credence to the case for an increase in the rate of crime within the Estensi domini towards the end of the fifteenth-century. The explanation for this growth in Ferrarese criminality, if one is permitted a simple answer to a problem of some complexity, seems to lie in the series of protracted disasters which befell Ercole's reign: the public opposition of the veleschi to Ercole's accession (1471-76), a debilitating war between 1482 and 1484, the French "presence" in Italy after 1494, and an economic crisis in the late 1480's and 1490's, the latter to a large extent self-induced. These misfortunes aggravated the already calamitous quality of life in Ferrara and encouraged criminal elements to take advantage of the unsettled conditions, perhaps secure in the knowledge that the possibility of detection and punishment had been dissipated by insufficient governmental vigilance. Whether conditions were such that increasing numbers of so-called "honest" citizens were prompted to turn to uncharacteristic criminal behaviour out of self-preservation (as the chronicles occasionally suggest), whether criminal violence was rooted in a historical antipathy between the Ferrarese feudal nobility and the popolo, complicated in the later quattrocento by the pretentions of an aspiring bourgeoisie, or whether Ferrara proved to be attractive ground for a foreign criminal element remains a contentious issue, and one which cannot be successfully resolved within the scope of the present study. One might point out, however, that the basic issues surrounding the problem of crime in Renaissance Ferrara have usually been approached historiographically rather than as objects of
empirical study. The crucial poverty of the Libri del Maleficii may largely be held responsible for many of the methodological shortcomings. Yet in the face of substantial evidence suggesting that unfavorable economic conditions within the community were responsible for a sizeable proportion of criminal acts, some scholars have been unwilling to explore alternative archival resources, especially the cameral registers. Though these registers are records of payments made to and on behalf of the camera, it is possible to discern several important features of Ferrarese crime from them.

We should not be surprised to find that chronic food shortages alone, which kept the price of grain and other consumer commodities at an intolerable level for most of the Herculean era, were accountable for a large segment of the illegal trade in contraband goods. Yet for the most part, the historian is not confronted by organized professional criminals systematically exploiting the fragile nature of local commercial supervision, but by society's poorer elements, reduced to taking small but illegal steps from time to time. The following petition helps to illustrate a common dilemma for many citizens in the late fifteenth-century, forced to borrow money to purchase food, and forced to evade communal tolls:

Ala Illumo. et Exmo. Du. S.V. humelmente expone il suo fid. servitore Gasparino Crepaldo I come caciato fino a questa Decembre proximo passato da la fame et dal bisogno et per subtenire tri suoi figliuli se fece prestare certi dinari et andete a comprare da circa trea mozzi et mezo de formento a villa nova da li frati de la certosa et lo condux in Adriano et li lo parti tra lui et suoi amici che moriano de fame et erano tutti disperati per le aque de la rotta de po et questo fece bona fide, non credendo di fare veruno contrabando et conducendo dicto formento da lochi de v.s. ad altri
lochi pur de la s.v. se bene conduceva fuora de li passi sappendo non havendo dicto formento ad uscire de le terre de v.s. ma a succorriere ali homini tuti suoi servitori et subditi. Et perche pare chel fusse pur contrabando il capitano da le papoce il secundo die de zenaro proximo passato fesce pigliare dicto servitore et lo ha facto sempre stare in pregione salvo che al presente... Per tanto ricorrendo ala Illumo. s.v. la prega et supplica che de gratia singolare la vogli cometere chel sia liberato de pregione et chel sia cancellata dicta condemnatione.

xx Mai 1497 177

Would-be retailers and poor shopkeepers were also often obliged to turn a blind eye towards the law. In 1496, for example, three citizens of Ferrara were condemned by officials of the Victuaglia for illegally vending foodstuffs "in piazza verso el Campanile... in li giorni de ogni festa". The petitioners admit their guilt, but claim that although they knew their actions to be in contravention of communal law since a request for a special licence to operate a stall in the piazza on public holidays had been refused, they nevertheless endeavoured to do so "per essere loro gravarissima de in utile famiglia li bisognaria stare per vivere et mantenire le loro famigliole... et non per adunare dinari". 178 An innkeeper similarly blamed his defrauding of the communal boccatico for ten years upon mounting business debts and a series of misadventures which had left him destitute: "... la rotta, et da poi la guera ni quelle parte, presse ogni sua substantia et ogni suo bene, et fu pregione, et pago quello che havere al mondo per uscire de tanta asprezza et crudeltà". 179 Severe destitution naturally led to more serious infractions. Such was the desperation of some citizens in 1479, that they were willing to commit murder for a coat:
Fu facto una crida da parte del duca: che pilgiando soa signoria al dispiacere assay de li furti e assass-inamenti facti li di passati, ha deliberato di prov-edere e perhò fa intendere che, se alchuno cometterà tali mancamenti in tuore, nè de di nè de nocte, pagni nè mantelli da torno ad alchuno, incorrerà la pena de la forcha; e se uno di compagni accusarà l'altro compagno, ge sera remessa la pena e guadagnarà ducati 25 d'oro. 180

Another common plight which befell the popolo was to be requisitioned by ducal officials as a labour force to perform services for the community. The civil "press-gang" was viewed with particular distaste by the poorer citizenry and contadini, but even in cases where citizens faithfully turned out to perform the required tasks, signorial functionari found ways to commit further outrages. Seven Ferrarese citizens commanded to attend "cum carete ala reparatione de po", delayed for a day by impassable roads, were subsequently condemned for civil disobedience and fine 5 LM each despite having completed the repairs: "... non se sono partiti ni di ni nocte da lavorare ale dicte reparatitie". 181 A more familiar case concerns twenty-two men of the Massafiscaglia, condemned by the local podestà "per disobedientia per non havere facto cavare li suoi fossadelli secundo loro usanze per obviare ala mala via", despite protests that they could not leave their homes and "che in veritate li servitori sonno tanto agravati per lo loro vivere et per altre loro gravate". 182 An exhaustive list of civil offences committed by individuals under economic duress need not detain us further. It is sufficient to note that an increasing number of the duke's subjects, "desfacti per la guerra e lo morbo", were often compelled to disobey communal statute law and extra-statutory legislation to meet daily requirements,
in some instances to commit serious infractions and acts of violence. It is equally noteworthy, however, that delinquency during this so-called "age of violence" in Renaissance Ferrara often involved comparatively trifling and essentially non-violent offences: infringements of the commercial licencing laws, poaching, moral crimes (gambling, blasphemy, adultery, prostitution), curfew violations, tax-evasion, smuggling, public debt (the inability to pay communal taxes or the costs of civil damages was treated as a criminal offence), and disobedience. In this list one might also include offences which involved a degree or implied a threat of physical violence, but which the law regarded as less perilous to the welfare of the community than enormous crimes: rioting, drunkenness, and brawling (disturbing the public peace), petty theft of goods valued under 20 LM, and the carrying of excessive weaponry. Non-violent law-breaking by Ferrarese citizens was a way of life, habitual and regular, and if we can accept the evidence of the petitions in the cameral registers, it was steadily rising in the late fifteenth-century. For communal authority, this brand of law-breaking engendered relatively painless resolutions, a scale of fines, incarceration, and on occasion, mild forms of corporal punishment: ritualized castigation and the humiliation of exposure in the public pillory.

Less disruptive though the majority of criminal offences appear to have been, they were prosecuted by the giudici with ruthless efficiency. Ercole d'Este clearly saw the scheme of delictual fines envisaged by communal
law as one way of easing the burden on his beleaguered treasury. Laws governing pecuniary revenue were constantly amended in favour of the camera, fines increased, spying by secretly paid informers encouraged. In 1496, any pretenses as to the motivation behind this policy, previously masked by a confusing body of regulations concerning the ducal mitade, were dropped completely. Ercole henceforth expected "che tute le condemnatione et mulcte che per la forma et dispositione de lie ode questa nostra citade se hanno applicare alla camera nostra ducale", including all condemnations made by "nostri podesta et officiali del contado de ferrara" and condemnations "che per li dicti statuti non se dispono dove se habiano applicare le pene", thereby abrogating the communal mitade and increasing the ducal share from one-third to two-thirds in most criminal cases.

Local crime, it seems, could turn a handsome profit for the ducal camera. Delictual revenue was treated in the same manner as ordinary ducal entrate. The same computations normally applied to fiscal revenue could be made, quotas devised and expected to be filled. We need go no further than the example provided by the Podestà of Rachano, who was dismissed from his post in March 1496 for failing to fill his delictual quotas. His request to be reinstated clearly indicates that Ercole was devising fiscal plans based on the revenue derived from the prosecution of criminals:

Ala vostra Inclita Ex. Expone lo fidelissimo servitore de quella Carlo del Conte gia podesta che fu de Rachano, como lui fu cassato questo Natale proximo passato et fu sindicato, lo quale sindico non gie trovo altro manchamento in lui se non che lui non ha facto le condemnatione de mese in mese come dictano le sue loro de lo offiti, ma lui non ha facto
dicte condemnatione perche etiam li suoi processori non faceano ne hanno facto tal condemnatione perche li non se costumava de fare tal cose, con maxime dappo la guera perche in dicto loco sono pochi homini et desfacti et per tal causa dicto syndico ha condennato dicto supp. ala camera ducale... 189

In the meantime, the new debtor's prison constructed intermittently between 1478 and 1488 to separate citizens in the public debt from violent criminals, was crowded with individuals who could not pay their fines. But what of the disruptive offences, those designated by the law as enormous crimes? Did such financial considerations in any way affect signorial attitudes toward and treatment of violent criminals?

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One branch of Herculean justice where questions of finance did produce a marked consequence was in the hiring of judicial servants and police agents. We read in December 1493 of the arrangements concluded between Francesco Albaresani and Ercole d'Este concerning the purchase of a captaincy:

Dilectissimo nostro. Nui te concedessemo lo offitio nostro del capitaneato de le Papoce del destrecto nostro de Ferrara per anni diece li quali habiano a kalende de zenaro de lanno 1495 advenire videlicet dui anni firmi et continui et il resto a nostro bene-placito. Per la quale concessione promettesti et te obligati pagare per nui et nostro nome a bartholamio et Tadio de li Albaresani lire mille de m. per beni immobili comprati da loro et come meglio se contione ni le lettere nostre circacio facte et scripte al factore nostro generale a die 7 de marzo de lanno 1492... 191

A similar pact was concluded in 1494 between Ercole and Paolo de Pizabecari with respect to the office of notary "de li Rebelli de la camera", interestingly with a clause of misfortune, whereby if the office-holder by reason of sickness or war did not complete his term in office, his
heirs would remain liable to pay any outstanding monies owed the camera in satisfaction of the original agreement. These were not isolated incidents, but represent a commercializing of governmental posts begun in 1486, when, according to Caleffini, Ercole began to sell all his offices to the highest bidder:

... el duca de Ferrara universalmente tutti li suoi officii, et grandi et piccoli, et de forteze et del Comune, vendeva a chi piu ge ne dava, pigliando prima li denari, et vendendo per due anni et non per piu, et pero veneva suxo gente incognite ad havere officii... vendeva tulti li offitii suoi de ogno facta a chi piu ge ne dava, et chi non havea dinari non ne havea. 193

Trade in minor government posts was a consistent feature of signorial policy throughout the quattrocento, a customary avenue into the echelons of ducal service for the sons of the local nobility and wealthier merchant families. Generally, immunity from this practice enveloped positions of responsibility, insofar as decision-making was normally entrusted to men of proven experience, often with legal training at the university or acknowledged vocational skills. Some offices were protected by statute. Caleffini's remark concerning "gente incognite" entering "officii... grandi", therefore, holds special significance. It raises questions as to the quality of justice being dispensed to the popolo by Ercole through his appointed servants, and perhaps doubts as to the competence or aims of local police forces within the Estensi state.

Like his colleagues in outlying communities, the Podestà of Ferrara was held partly responsible for public security and safety (partly, since there were often as many as four separate police forces responsible for
for law enforcement in some areas).\textsuperscript{195} He was empowered to appoint justices "ad maleficia deputatem", to hire commandants of police, and charged with the task of supplying 10 birri (police agents) for each constable appointed by the Comune.\textsuperscript{196} His appointed "miles socius ... cum familis seu berroeriis suis et notario maleficiorum et uno precone palatii iuris communis ferrarie" were obliged to patrol the city streets each evening after the sound of the "third bell". Failure to comply with this order resulted in a penalty of 5 LM.\textsuperscript{197} A second police force was commanded by the Captain of the Piazza (under two constables, each at the head of twenty-five men).\textsuperscript{198} Police functions were also performed by the Captain of Justice, captains of the city gates (door-wardens), and there was a special force of citizens in each contrada who were obliged to muster during fires to prevent looting.\textsuperscript{199} Until such time as comprehensive research upon communal police forces in Ferrara has been completed, historians will be forced to speculate as to the possible effects the selling of podestarie might have had upon law enforcement: whether it altered the nature of the office, influenced recruitment into police services, or reduced its effectiveness. Commercialization of law enforcement offices did however divert the attention of officers towards the possibility of enrichment in the performance of their duty. This was inevitable if one considers the nature of the contracts drawn up over the concession of posts. An Estensi capitano in the late fifteenth-century could only expect a salary of 150 LM per annum in return for an office which
cost 1000 LM to obtain for a guaranteed two years. One can only presume that the unwritten "benefits" which accompanied the concessions proved sufficiently attractive to induce individuals to enter into binding agreements. Whether any unwritten clauses were discussed by the contracting parties we shall probably never know, but it appears reasonable to conclude that individuals did not merely purchase an office but a "block of patronage". Did Ercole tolerate a degree of corruption within his police forces as long as official delictual quotas were met?

Effects upon everyday police actions are more easily discerned. Petitioning the duke in 1492, a citizen of Ferrara records how he sent his nephew to the home of a co-worker in the Ferrarese contado "ad portarli el pretio de uno sacho de formento quale haveva venduto a dicto suo barba ad fine che gel fecesse macinare". Upon completion of the transaction, his nephew had set out on the return journey to Ferrara, only to encounter "alcuni fanti del podesta che andavano ad pigliare uno persone". Seeing that his nephew was merely a young boy of fifteen years, the podestà's men had seized and beaten him, robbed him of his cloak and money ("fra loro se li hano partiti"), and then conducted him to the prison in Camissa, "dove essendo e senza alcuno delicto". It followed that the podestà later condemned the boy for carrying illegal weapons and fined him 150 LM, a crime which the petitioner claimed could not have been committed "quando bene li fusse qualche ordine del portare tal arme suori quando se va in viazo...". Such cases were the norm in con-
frontations between the citizenry and Estensi police agents. A constant stream of petitions vilifying arbitrary police actions besieged the camera in the late fifteenth-century, and it appears that the duke devoted some time to resolving individual problems. One of the more unfortunate consequences of selling important governmental posts was that citizen disaffection towards signorial officials often turned violent. Zambotti records the assassination of the Podestà of Massafiscaglia in July 1488, "il quale podestà hera horiundo de dicto loco e perhò hera odiato. E anche l'havea comprerato tale officio; e li homini temevano che fosseno sta' venduti e perhò lo amazòno". One year later, Pellonio Minotto, ducal bursar in Argenta, "fu amazato de alcuni Arzentisi, per le sue exactione e cativi portamenti uxava". While Captain of Justice in Ferrara, the infamous Zampante was known to have amassed a fortune by extorting money from captives under torture with promises of exoneration, only to send the victims of this deception to the podestà for sentencing. Zampante was known to listen to any offer of money in exchange for exemption from prosecution, and he took bribes publicly without fear of Herculean intervention:

... et se il querellante li diceva: messere, non ha covelle, et lui ghe diceva: bene, vanne, vanne al potestade; et ge lo mandava; ma se covelle havea, subito senza che havesse mandato per lui, lo mandava a pigliare per lo capitaneo de la Piazza et suoi sbirri; et molte fiate non se trovava in dolo il preso, et bisognavali pagare le spexe, che montavano in grosso, et spurtole et notaro, per modo che ognuno tremava di questo homo et di sua crudeltade... 205

Zampante too, as we have seen, was eventually assassinated by two anonymous assailants in July 1496. The popular
view of Estensi law enforcement was surely often confused, if not wholly paradoxical. Police agents and the signorial courts were regarded with fear, mistrust, sometimes loathing, but these feelings were paralleled by a general longing for more positive legal action to be taken against violent law-breakers. Almost as many petitions demanded an increase in the vigilance of the police, as those which condemned the abuse of police power.

When approaching the problem of violent crime in Renaissance Ferrara, therefore, the historian ought to bear in mind the manner in which Estensi financial problems determined and conditioned the official response to local crime. A connection might be made, for instance, between financial self-interest and criminal violence, insofar as special emphasis was laid upon the apprehending of delinquents whose eventual punishment brought financial gain for law-enforcers and the camera. Violent criminals seem to have benefited from this official preoccupation with less disruptive crime. Less time, money, and energy was devoted to preventing and prosecuting violent crime than one might reasonably expect in the circumstances. Could this sort of official negligence explain a rising crime-rate in the late fifteenth-century? Doubtless a statistical survey of crime in quattrocento Ferrara, classifying each delinquent act according to the nature of the offence, would be a valuable asset in developing patterns of local criminality.207 The problems which might affect the outcome of such a survey are not insurmountable, but a number of factors extraneous to "categories of crime" would have to be consider-
ed. If one assumes "that in any age there is a predisposition to violence, more or less measurable, which determines the crime rate", what are the factors, conscious and unconscious, which trigger off the physical and psychological release of violence? The historian might therefore wish to question the temper of contemporary lay morality, which refused to condemn any act of vengeance outright, prosecuted religious crimes rigorously, and occasionally sanctioned quasi-official violence against the Jewish community. The anatomy of the anti-Semitic pogrom in Ferrara is especially relevant here. So clearly had the religious violence of the crowd become legitimized by mendicant preaching and ritualized insofar as it generally occurred within recognized calendrical time-sequences, that the duke could anticipate outburst and take measures to control them:

Perche il suole accadere aliquando in simile tempo che li predicatori che predicano ne le giese de la cita confortano et inanimano li populi a cazare li hebrei et a farli andare ad oldire il verbo de dio contra loro voglia, in modo che quandoque gli e facto per il dire loro qualche novita. Unde la V. S. puo farli dire per prevenire il tempo che se portino nel loro predicare per modo che questi nostri hebrei che habitano in quella nostra Cita non siano molestati ni astricti per le loro persuasione ad andare a oldire prediche ni che per parole sue gli fusse facto qualche novitade. Regi, xxvi Febraro, 1479. 209

Communal expressions of joy were also normally attended by violence against the Jews. In 1476, Ercole ordered his magistrates to take precautions against "qualche desordine per signo de alegrezza" which threatened the personal security and property of his Jewish subjects, especially the bankers:

Ad potestas sancto felicis. Dilectissimo noster. Se
la nostra Illustrissime consorte per dio gratia parturiste uno fiolo maschio et che per questa cagione quilli nostri homini facendo signo de alegreza volseno fare molestia o in inuria alcuna reale o personale a quilli zudei che sono lie et maximo a quello che tiene lo banco fati che vui ve contraponiati per modo che scandolo alcuno non seguа facendo tutti quilli boni ripari et provedimenti che vi parerano necessari...

Ercole's protection of the Jews remained steadfast, but it is significant that anti-Semitic violence was never wholeheartedly condemned, except in cases which resulted in a death. Even here, the sympathies of the community predictably lay with the assailant and not the victim. When on the second day of March, 1480, a young student attending the university was hung from the windows of the Palazzo della Ragione for the murder of a Jewish money-lender, "La morte del quale scolaro dolse ad ogni christianо.

Caleffini's marginalia to the description of the execution has the ring of an epitaph: "Morte de uno christianо per uno Zudio". Thus we might also wish, as John Hale recently suggested, to conduct a socio-scientific inquiry into the nature of contemporary violence, in this case employing categories of violence rather than categories of crime:

Violence can be divided into four categories: personal violence (assault, rape, murder); group violence (men conspiring to common action to achieve economic or political goals); organized illegitimate violence, as in brigandage or sea piracy; organized legitimate violence (legitimized, that is, by the laws as well as the values of both church and state) in the form of armies and navies, and possibly of the mass exilings and other punishments that follow a successful coup d'état.

In Ferrara, to be sure, given the uncertainty of the economy and the scope of Estensi financial problems, a survey of criminality would have to treat several categories of crime, or violence, with a certain degree of discretion.
Professor Hale's enumeration of a category of "organized legitimate violence" for the later Middle Ages and Renaissance, sanctioned both by the law and contemporary lay-spiritual morality, should remind us that legitimate political authority was capable of producing its own imical brand of mayhem. As Nathalie Davis noted in her analysis of the religious riot in sixteenth-century France, the official and formal violence of political authorities who were legally empowered to "silence, humiliate, demolish, punish, torture and execute" can in principle be distinguished from the unofficial acts of terror and violence perpetrated by individuals or groups of individuals, though occasionally, the distinction becomes blurred: "In mid-sixteenth-century France, all these sources of violence were busily producing, and it is sometimes hard to tell a militia officer from a statue-smasher". Equally is this argument applicable to Ferrara during the reigns of Borso and Ercole d'Este. Not only are there numerous accounts recorded where signorial agents committed indiscriminate acts of repression and violence against private citizens, ostensibly in the name of the law, but also private acts of vengeance, riot, robbery, rape, pillage, and murder. The bailiffs of the courts of justice were particularly notorious. Listen to the complaints of one citizen in 1490:

Ala Illu. et Ex. du. s.v. humiliter expone il fid. servitore de quella, Polo di bonmartini... come al tempo de la guera gli fu tolta tuta la roba, et reducto in extreme miseria, et perche ogni qual die el viene molestato da li comandadori de la camera vostra per lire circa octo, chel se ritrova debitore uno suo fratello et uno suo barba insieme cum lui per bucatico et gabelle di vino. Et considerato e et fue creato nanti la guera, et attento la sua infirma poverta prega la Illuma. du. s.v. se digni cavarlo
The oppressed citizenry retaliated in kind, "et... molte fiate li comandatori et famiglia son feriti". Ercole was eventually obliged to take steps to protect his bailiffs, and decreed that any citizen who interfered with the comandatori in the performance of their duty would lose a hand, "da essergli tagliato una manc". Adding to the confusion between official and unofficial violence, as we saw earlier, is the tacit approval bestowed upon the moral invective and physical force of the mob by the Estensi. On several occasions, we have observed how the violence of the crowd was incited and deployed as a direct political weapon by the signore. Given these circumstances, where the servants of signorial justice were often responsible for gross infringements of the law and were commonly held to be harbingers of irrational violence, and where the violence of the crowd sometimes achieved rational, quasi-official status, the line of demarcation between official and unofficial violence was extremely tenuous. Nevertheless, just as there are occasions when historians can single out a violent crowd bent on a specified goal in Ferrara, it is similarly possible to single out for examination violence committed by individuals as agents of legitimate authority. The most obvious example of this formal and official violence occurred with the imposition of legal punishment, when signorial law was bent on a course of physical and inevitably violent retaliation against the convicted criminal. And it was upon the communal scaffold, before an
assembly of witnesses, that legal punishment as a form of official violence reached its zenith.

iii

The Condemned's "Two Bodies"

The signorial obligation to punish delinquents, especially villains guilty of enormous crimes, was a duty which Borso and Ercole performed with equanimity. Unflinching in their application of the penalties envisaged by communal statute law and the mode of punishment fixed by local custom, there are only five recorded instances between the years 1450 and 1505 where persons condemned to death were spared the ignominy of a public ordeal: the execution by decapitation of Borso's prime minister Uguccione dalla Badia in 1460, of a young nobleman Osarcho Cantabene in 1463, of the rebel Niccolò d'Este and his cousin Azzo in 1476, all of these in the Castel Vecchio, and the execution of the Giudice del Maleficii in 1464, who was hung "impresone per vergogna de loffitio del palazzo". Yet excessive, unmerited punishment, and summary execution, were virtually unknown in Ferrara during these years. There are only two known cases of summary execution, the first involving a possible act of defenestration:

Adi xi de stembre uno iacomo dala mirandola essendo aparola con uno suo compagno in la sua botega preso uno manarino edege suso il collo che monte et el ditto iacomo corse al altar mazor in santo paulo et li fu preso et lo duca ercole lo fece butare zo da le fenestre in mediante senza lezere condanaxon. 220

Little is established about the second case (it is not recorded in the Libro de' Giustiziati) save that it re-
sulted in the execution of a tutor to Ercole's son Ippolito, and that the miscreant was hung by the bell-rope in the church of S. Benedetto.\textsuperscript{221} Indeed, it would be something of an understatement to say that considerable emphasis was laid upon the formal dialogue between crime and punishment enshrined in the communal statute law by Borso and Ercole. Carlo da San Giorgio found this conservation of the legal process to be one of the most admirable traits of Borsian justice:

\textit{... il divo Borso non di meno se despose et ordinoe, per conservazione de la iusticia, secundo le nostre lege li iudici ver loro malfactori di regione procedesseno, et secundo la lege et la consuetudine de la nostra patria li iudicasseno.} \textsuperscript{222}

So much emphasis was in fact placed upon the substantive criminal law, that even in a case where the formal judicial inquisitions had been suspended by the duke, "e questo de plenitudine nostre potestatis", punishment continued to be meted out according to the sole written tenor of communal law. The aroused anger of the signore, vested with the capability of rendering summary justice, was itself tempered by the need to punish within a framework of organized chastisement:

\textit{Dux ferrarie}

\textit{Dilectissimi nostri. Ad cio chel consti a vui et a tutti li altri nostri officiali, volemo che Nui intendiati come Nui havemo tenemo et reputemo, et cussi per queste nostra publicamo et decliaremo Mauro da le Carte per nostro Rebelle, per li suoi mali deportamenti per lui usati contra de Nui et dal stato nostro... Per tanto volemo et cussi per questa nostra commettenno a vui et a qualunche altro officiale chel se proceda contra de lui a tute quelle pene reale in le quale in correno li Rebelli nostri. Et se per caso alcuno lui venisse mai in le nostre forze, volemo che etiam il sia punito in la persona, et chel sia tractato in tuto et per tuto come il merita lui e ciascuno nostro rebelle et punito in la robe et in la persona,}
The rationale behind this strict signorial adherence to the punitive mechanisms of communal statute law, it is suggested, transcends their repressive or "punishment" aspects alone. While a primary function of punishment was undoubtedly its expiation of obtaining redress or revenge, reflected in the growth of Renaissance criminal law from the early medieval bloodfeud and commutation of feud, contemporary legal punishment yet served a number of more complex social and political functions. As early as the thirteenth-century, we begin to encounter the fruits of a new scholarship of Canon and Roman law throughout Western Christendom with the notion of social self-defence, that is to say, with the notion of legal punishment serving as a deterrent to crime. In the *Coutumes de Beavaisis* (1280-83), for example, Beaumanoir sets out the vengeance which "doit estre prise de chascun mesfet", but he seems to hint at punishment as a deterrent when he says that he is writing "pour ce que li communs peuples sachent comment il devront estre puni s'il mesfont", and when he makes a "grant difference entre peine d'argent et peine de cors, car les peines de cors si sont establies pur ce que l'en se gart de fere male". The idea of a social utility for legal punishment is later couched in stronger terms when he suggests that it is an excellent thing to anticipate criminals, and to punish them so severely according to their crimes, "que, pour la doute de la justice, li autres en prengent ess-
ample si qu'il se gardent de mesfere". Aquinas' discussion of punishment similarly comes under the heading De vindicatione (Secunda secundae, quaestio 108). He concludes that vengefulness is a special virtue "so far as it tends to the prevention of evil", because God is an avenging God, but also, quoting Cicero, because the obligation of revenge is a deterrent against *vis et injuria*. Aquinas too, points to the utility of punishment based on terror: "The very fact that the punishment, whether of death or of any kind that is fearsome to man, is made known at the same time as the sin, makes man's will averse to sin: because the fear of punishment is greater than the enticement of sin". Both of these statements, while framed in the traditional language of the *lex talionis*, distinguish a valuable element in punishment, stressing not only the moral disapproval implied by punishment but also its beneficial consequences. For Beaumanoir and Aquinas, punishment has an "educative" function because of its efficacy in deterring anti-social behaviour. Punishment, therefore, has a positive role to play. Its social function, while retributive necessarily, can also be supportive.

Aside from the important contributions made to a general theory of legal punishment by the fourteenth-century commentaries of Bartolus and Baldus on the *corpus juris*, Italian jurists were also responsible for a number of specialist treatises on criminal law. The earliest surviving text is the *Liber de maleficiis* written by Alberto di Gandino da Crema about the year 1299. Gandino's monumental inspiration was followed by successive
generations of legal scholars, in the fourteenth-century with the work of Jacopo Belvisio and Bonifacio dei Vitali
ini di Mantova,\textsuperscript{227} in the fifteenth-century with Angelo
dei Gambilioni d'Arezzo and Ippolito dei Marsili di Bol-
ogna,\textsuperscript{228} and in the sixteenth-century with Egidio Bossi,
Tiberio Deciani, Giulio Chiaro, and Prospero Farinaccio.\textsuperscript{229}
Of special interest to historians of Ferrara is the
\textit{Tractatus de Maleficiis} written by Angelo dei Gambilioni
about 1437 and first published in 1472. The treatise in-
spired several commentaries, one of them written by Agos-
tino Bonfranceschi di Rimini, Herculean \textit{consigliere di
giustizia}, lecturer of law at the University of Ferrara,
and special public prosecutor during the late 1470's.\textsuperscript{230}
Gambilioni himself had been a lecturer of law in Ferrara
for ten years, and he figured prominently in the most
significant Borsian achievements: the creation of the
\textit{Consiglio di Giustizia} and the reform of the statutes of
Ferrara in the mid-1450's.\textsuperscript{231} The former body, an appel-
late board comprising legal scholars from the university,
was founded in 1453 to supervise the administration of
the signorial courts and to assist in the rendering of
complex legal decisions, particularly when a legal solu-
tion to a problem could not be found amongst the statutes
of the city in question.\textsuperscript{232} Some historians have argued
that Borso was desirous of direct solutions to civil and
criminal cases, and by creating the \textit{Consiglio}, he herein
recognized the valuable role jurists could play in the
administration of his law. As a private student of the
\textit{corpus juris}, it is supposed that Borso understood the
judiciary as an administrative body acting independent
of the directives and will of the signore, albeit in principle. The reform of the statutes was initiated on 26 June 1455 under the direction of Gambilioni and another jurist of celebrated reputation, Benedetto de' Bargi. A commission of reform was summoned on 30 June, numbering among its members a further two jurists, Ugolino de' Bonfranceschi and Laomedonta Dal Sacrato; three civil justices, Giovanni de Valenza, Guido Massa d'Argenta, and Filippo Del Gardo; three notaries, Jacomo Mazzone, Urbano Rossetti, and Niccolò de' Vincenzi; and two principle citizens of the city, Maestro Giovanni Dai Carri strazarolo, and Maestro Bartolommeo de' Leuti drappiero. The reforms acquired the force of law on 22 March 1463, although the new civil code was not officially published until 1476 by Severinus Ferrariensis.

Strangely neglected by historians of Renaissance Ferrara, Gambilioni's treatise and the companion commentary written by Agostino de' Bonfranceschi provide valuable insight into contemporary mechanisms of legal punishment. Gambilioni's text constitutes the best guide we have to the theoretical precepts behind Ferrarese statutory reform; a reform which saw the expansion of the statutory Liber de Maleficiis from the 80 articles of Obizzo II's civil code to 145 articles, from a homogenous legal text to two separate books, De forma procedendi super accusationibus (III, i-lx), and De variis delictorum penis (III, i-lxxxv). Gambilioni's contribution to Ferrarese criminal law has not been fully acknowledged. Additionally, in a broader sense, the treatise and commentary introduce a scientifico-legal complex. They represent
an investigation into a relatively new field of knowledge, a penal technology. A tradition of legal scholarship and study established in the lecture halls of the university, a scientific jurisprudence, and the prescribed formulae of communal statute law are embraced, but also political concepts, philosophy, religious thought, and elements of the human speculative sciences. Penal operations, as Michel Foucault contends, encompass necessarily a corpus of knowledge, techniques, and scientific discourses which become entangled with the practice of the power to punish. From this theoretical complex, the power to punish draws its inspiration, its justifications, and its rules. The texts are not, however, a compendium of local penal custom or of local theories of punishment. Rather, like all of the criminal law treatises mentioned above, the studies are based exclusively on Roman law and firmly rooted in the belief that penal law was wholly alimentary to ancient wisdom. Still, in the legal treatment of crime and the criminal, evidence of an evolution of new principles to regulate penal law within an increasingly complex society highlights this specialist scholarship; the notion that a penalty could not be inflicted where there was no grievous intention, the elaboration of criminal intent and the determination of a scale of degrees, the theory that the responsibility for an offence could not be extended to an individual who had not truly participated in the commission of a crime, the distinction between veritas and opinio, and the idea of moderation and equity in the application of penalties. New principles governing the laws of evidence and pro-
A dual function was served thereby. The right to punish was identified with the personal power of the sovereign, with "qui etiam habeat merum imperium" as Gambilioni wrote. The right to avenge the law, to inflict *poena talionis*, was solely consonant with the prince's office. Or, to borrow Kantorowicz's analogy, the "super-body" of the prince was invested with a corresponding "super-power"; legal punishment was placed at the disposal of legitimate political authority embodied in the fictitious *persona* of the prince, the *fons justitiae*. At the same time, as the new regulations governing the judicial *inquisitionsprozess* attest, strenuous efforts were made by jurists to place legal constraints on this super-excess of princely power in the hope of preventing the dispensation of arbitrary justice. We have seen how infrequently these theoretical curbs on judicial abuses were heeded in practice by the Estensi and their magistrates.

Indeed, despite the theoretical protection accorded the accused at criminal instance, the reader of Renaissance texts on the criminal law will often encounter the interests of the offended party, compensation for injuries or damages, the indirect intimidation of men by crime, and the defence of public order. Roman law had established the principle that a penalty was settled in order to obtain the correction of those subject to it. A violent criminal could normally expect to be treated with severity, since, according to the Roman formulation
of legal reprisals, violence repelled violence. Thus Gambiliioni and Bonfranceschi repeat, with rigid formality, a standardized hierarchy of legal penalties: death, judicial torture pending proof, mutilation, flogging, deportation, public humiliation, civil fine. A high proportion of physical punishment. The objective of this official legitimate violence had several constituent elements. Revenge, the ultio, was of course maintained as a primary motivating factor behind violent punishment, especially for capital offences. But additional goals are also readily apparent. Between the reading of the court's sentence and final process (judgement or execution day), for instance, individuals condemned to death are granted a period of ten days, during which time they may bring forward appeals. If an accused dies during the interim period, however, his death will have served the penalty and satisfied the law, for the object of capital punishment is the separation of the soul from the body:

Adde Bal. in l. is qui C. si pend. appel. mors interve. qui dicit multum singulariter, qui illi, qui in prae sentia damnantur ad mortem, confestim moriuntur primo moriuntur galdo oris iudicis, quia fiunt servi poenae: secundo moriuntur per separationem anime a corpore: et testamentum inter has duas mortes non valet: quia post mortem nemo testatur. Important exceptions to this rule were the crimes of heresy and laesae maiestatis. Natural death or suicide "pendente iudicio" in these cases did not extinguish the legal process, nor did they cheat the executioner. The criminal inquisition merely continued post mortem, citing, accusing, hearing testimony, sentencing, hearing
appeals, condemning, and finally executing: "... ibi lex habebat consideratione etiam de casibus atrocissimis: et sicut lex habuit considerationem de crimen laesae maiestatis, haeresi, et repetundarum: ita dixisset de famosis latronibus, et similibus... an corpus mortem velit facere suspendere: quia illud est corpus poenae". The possibility of citing a traitor or heretic post mortem countenanced the exhuming of cadavers, although there is no record of such an occurrence in Ferrara. It was standard legal practice, however, for the syndics of the Palace of Justice to requisition the corpse of a criminal who had died during the inquisitions process: "... quando delinquens moritur processu pendente, quod eius cadaver non suspendatur, alia tenetur in syndicatu... quod aliquando contrarium servatur in famosis malefactoribus: et hoc in odium eorum videtur posse tolerari...". Thus a robber who had committed suicide while incarcerated in the communal dungeons was brought to the Palazzo della Ragione, his corpse there displayed on a wooden plank "ad cio che ogni homo il potesse vedere, et doppiu fue portato asepelire al trai como meritava". Nevertheless, in cases of heresy and treason, the law clearly envisaged a "double-death", one under natural circumstances, another under the process of inquisition. The concept of "judicial death" perhaps helps to explain the often gruesome duration of capital punishment, when the body of the condemned, long after natural expiration, continued to be subjected to physical punishment. For example, the anonymous *Diario Ferrarese* reveals how the rebel Philippo di Cipri, on a
tribunal constructed at the base of the equestrian statue of Borso d'Este, was clubbed to death with a mallet by the executioner; thereafter his head was cleaved from the body with a sickle, the corpse dragged around the piazza by horses, the corpse then quartered, each of the quarters dragged, and finally the dismembered pieces of his body strategically placed, "uno quarto fu posto su il ponte del Castel Tedaldo, uno altro al Bondeno, uno altro quarto all'Ostelata de Figarolo et l'altro quarto fu portato al Finale de Modena; a ciò che ogni persona lo vedesse". Each of these actions ritually compounded the original single death-blow which culminated in natural expiration. Each physical act of punishment, under normal circumstances, would have resulted in natural death, a separation of the soul from the body.

But the prosecution and punishment of treason were legally defined as abnormal circumstances:

In the eyes of the law, the criminal's earth-bound judicial death occasionally required that extraordinary measures be taken. Punishment for treason required that the condemned be obliterated from human memory by physical annihilation.

Separation of the soul from the body yet remained the fundamental objective of capital punishment. Medically, the disjunction of the spiritual and the corporeal signalled clinical death; legally, it satisfied the ob-
ligations of the penalty imposed by the court. In addition, the body-soul disjunction accorded the criminal inquisition a pastoral function. Criminals were also sinners, the condemned penitents, penal laws penance for sinful actions. Collecting evidence, completing dossiers, hearing testimony, and examining witnesses, the secret procedures of the judicial inquisition moved the accused along the path to confession, in effect, a double declaration of guilt; a confession to a criminal offence and a confession of sin. Legal punishment, therefore, acquired the nature of a purification process, wherein penance was imposed for the salvation of the condemned soul. Medieval inquisition manuals make this abundantly clear. The early fourteenth-century Manuel de l'Inquisiteur written by Bernard Gui, for instance, describes a solemn ceremonial in the course of which the inquisitor ought to render judgement:

... après expédition et clôture des dossiers de défense, concernant morts ou vivants, après examen minutieux et consciencieux de toutes les pièces du procès, pièces à aveux ou décharge, les inquisiteurs prendront l'avis de prélats et de jurisconsultes; ils procéderont ensuite au sermon avec la solennité voulue: c'est là qu'ils feront grâce, imposeront des pénitences ou porteront des sentences, suivant le mérite ou le démente de chacun.

Heretical cadavers may be exhumed because the deceased expired "dans l'impénitence", and because the object of inquisition is to ensure that delinquents "à se purger de leur crime". "C'est le salut des âmes et la pureté de la foi qu'il e en vue et recherche avant tout...".

Conceptual roots for the notion of a legally imposed body-soul disjunction are located in medieval Canon Law. The theory of legitimate warfare and the moral just-
ification of corporal punishment discussed by Gratian in the *Concordia Discordantium Canonum* (Secunda Pars, Causa 23) treated the subject synthetically. Gratian understood the punishment of a criminal as "particular warfare", as a legal process whereby legitimate authority both resisted and restrained injury to the *communitas* through the medium of officially sanctioned violence. Several passages justify a resort to violence for Christian moral purposes: wars served peace when they coerced evil-doers and when they punished the wicked and raised up good and pious men. 254 Severe vengeance is pronounced against those who were contemptuous of divine mandates, and the physical coercion of heretics is justified. 255 These measures are not motivated by a lust for inflicting punishment, he says, but rather "by the judge's love of justice that sought to render justice to the unjust". 256 Gratian condoned a resort to official violence for two reasons. First, the moral objectives of punishment are analogous to the evangelical precepts of patience. Since the soul is more important than the body, Christian patience applies more to the inward disposition of the individual than to the external acts of the body. He thus accepted without question Augustine's contention that physical punishment of the wicked was an act of Christian charity, an act of Christian love, performed in the best interests of the condemned. 257 The act of punishment freed the criminal from his sin, separating the immortal soul from its contaminated mortal body: "Non est iniquitatis, sed potius humanitatis societate devinctus, qui properterea est criminis persecutor, ut hominis liber-
ator". The mutilation of pirates and thieves, and judicially sanctioned capital punishment, not only prevented miscreants from committing further wickedness, but the punishment was inflicted out of concern for the soul of the condemned. Gratian also argued that the punishment of the wicked was a necessity, yet he rejected the older theological ideal of the Mosaic lex talionis as unjust and vicious justice. In its place he suggested a theory of social self-protection, wherein legitimate authority was moved to punish criminals out of a sense of duty to protect the innocent, and not by motives of vengeance.

The influence of Gratian's moral justification for corporal punishment upon the medieval inquisitionsprozess and penal thought needs to be examined more closely. Strains of his theories still echo in quattrocento formulations of princely justice. Carlo da San Giorgio, for example, devoted a substantial portion of his treatise on the Pio conspiracy to the enumeration of the sins and vices which polluted the body of Ludovico Pio, quoting the maxim "Il spirito de Dio ne li cori humani tuti li beni inspira: il spirito diabolico tutti li mali". "Vah, che costui non era homo", he wrote, "ma una bestia, et, come soglioneno le bestie, conducto alla becharia, del suo mal fare ha portato pena". Diomede Caraffa thought that the "true prince" protected the "innocent" by punishing malefactors, while Sabadino urged Ercole to punish criminals for the salvation of their sinful souls because "ogni humana ragione debbe essere posta in la mente sola", and because "quanto più è l'anima nobilissima che'l cor-
But it is perhaps the notion of a moral and physical sacrificing of the human mortal body for the salvation of the immortal soul, manifested in the contemptuous treatment accorded the body of the condemned, which is most striking. A remarkable Florentine scene concerning the corpse of the conspirator Jacopo Pazzi, executed by the Signoria in 1478 for the murder of Giuliano de' Medici, is described by Angelo Poliziano. Several days after the execution, when unseasonable rain began to inundate the contado, a mob gathered in Florence murmuring "that it was an abomination that the body of Jacopo Pazzi had been buried in consecrated ground; that this was why it had rained so long, since he was an evil man who had no respect for religion or God even in death; that it was an offence against human and divine law that he be buried in a church...". Pazzi's consecrated burial, it was commonly believed, had even interfered with the production of milk and grain. "A great crowd then gathered at the grave-site itself, took out the corpse, and buried it outside the city walls". The next day, however, "monstrous events occurred":

... a huge crowd of young boys, as if fired by certain mysterious torches of the Furies, dug up the buried corpse again... Then they seized the dead man by the noose with which he had been strangled, and with much abuse and ridicule dragged him all over the streets of the city... Eventually they brought the corpse to his own doorstep, where they forced him to knock on the door with his head while they shouted, "Is there anyone home? Is there anyone to welcome the master returning with his great retinue?" Since they were forbidden to come into the piazza, they went off to the Arno and threw the body in it. When it floated, a huge crowd of peasants showered it with abuse... 264

Similar scenes are recorded in the Ferrarese chronicles. 265 Ferrara also witnessed a notable anomaly in
1476, with the legal treatment bestowed upon the corpse of Niccolò d'Este. Caleffini reveals how Azzo and Niccolò d'Este were privately executed in the Castel Vecchio at the instigation of Agostino de' Bonfranceschi, "ma la matina sequente che fu il mercoledì adì quattro de setember per tempo fu portato a s. Francesco in larcha de li Illustri de la casa da este senza alcuna pompa et manca de officio suso uno cadilecto Azzo da Este morto in camisa tuto sanguinato...". In contrast, Niccolò was granted a solemn state funeral attended by "ciaschadun zintilhomo, doctori e citadini e officiali", his body carried in procession from the castle to S. Francesco "con gram pompa, vestito de lungo de una turcha de broca doro e una bretta cremexina e li guanti novi in mano". His broken body had been reconstructed artificially, the severed head sewn back onto the torso, the tell-tale signs of blood washed away:

Et morite come e dicto soto il Duca hercole suo barba antedicto per haverli voluto tore lo stato come ho pure dicto a primo di questo. Lo quale populo adimato al hora suso la piazza del Castello, dove alo intrare in lo Castello dentro la capella era in corpo vestito tuto de panno d'oro, seu brocato doro cremesino loprefatto messer Nicolo da Este morto come e dicto, al quale era stato lavato il colo et insieme poi cosito acio non paresse li fusse stato taito la testa con una bereta de roxato in capo. 266

Affixing the severed head to the torso had the effect of negating the legal instrument of decapitation. Symbolically, the execution had not taken place. The efficacy of the dismembered corpse as a signorial weapon of terror was lost through a merciful "camouflage". For the Ferrarese citizenry, deprived of the spectacle of capital punishment and a mutilated corpse, the execution of Niccolò d'Este had been a non-event.
The emergence of the non-corporeal, the Christian soul, onto the stage of punishment scenography, assigned the *modus operandi* of execution a dual function: the seizing of the human body in a ritual of public torture (or public mercy), the judgement of man, and the preparation of the soul for the divine judgement of God. The body-soul disjunction effected by the legal instruments of judicial death provided the spectacle of execution with not only juridical but liturgical significance. Punishment was a penitential process. Descriptions of executions in Ferrara are a constant reminder of this. The condemned was normally attended upon the evening prior to execution by *confortari*, when the scriptures were read and the penitent exhorted to confession before the prison altar. The reading of the sentence and the signed confession, the procession of the executioner's cart and the mounting of the gallows, also found the condemned assisted by comforters, sinister figures of mercy enrobed in black, their heads covered with hoods emblazoned with the skull and crossbones. The condemned expired amidst his confessors and their crucifixes. Entrusted with the task of comforting the condemned on the scaffold by offering prayers for his soul, and later interring the cadaver in consecrated ground, was the pious confraternity of S. Maria or the Battuti della Morte (Confraternitas batutorum nigrorum Sancte Marie Albe a morte nuncupati), a local chapter founded in 1366 by Niccolò dall'Oro, the son of a Ferrarese merchant. The principal objectives of this organization were two-fold: to assist in the cure of sinful souls by hearing
confessions under the auspices of their priest, and to put an end to the un-Christian treatment accorded the giustiziati, who were often left to rot on the scaffold or else flung into the river. Other charitable enterprises included the interment of individuals who for want of family or fortune had been abandoned, and the offering of hostelry to poor pilgrims visiting the city. On the eve of execution, condemned individuals could join the confraternity, which, besides the spiritual assurances which were obtained, afforded them the privilege of wearing the confraternal robes, and afterwards, the promise of a proper Christian burial. Doubtless it was the solace of prayers which moved the majority of the giustiziati to enlist. When, for instance, a forger was about to be hung from a window of the Palazzo della Ragione, he confidently announced that his soul would be saved:

Lo quale homo morite melgio che moresse mai persona viva che moresse a quella morte, et tanto fu constante el saldo che, quando il boia il volse getare zoxo, sempre se confortò et dicea forte come lui era certo che l'anima sua saria salva. Et era de le bone case de Modena et doctissimo, industrioso e virtuoso d'ogni cosa, e fece piangere ogni persona che vete così bene morire. Et la sira li frati de Sancto Francesco de Ferrara et li Batu' de la Morte lo portèno, honorificé acompagnato, a sepelire a Sancto Francesco... 268

In 1370, the Battuti obtained the church of S. Giacomo Apostolo close by the communal gibbet, which was set in a swampy wasteland known as the Prato della Trappola near the bridge of Castel Tedaldo. Upon this site, "deputato jam ad decapitandum malefactores et fures suspendum", the Battuti erected an oratory to serve the spiritual needs of the giustiziati. With the gradual translation
of signorial justice to the piazza ("attento quod eo in
loco nov suspendantur amplius fures, & malefactores, &
in plateis ad fenestras Palatii"), however, the oratory
gradually fell into disuse, and in 1490, it was finally
demolished by order of the Giudice dei XII Savi Galeazzo
Trotti to make way for a recreational palace. The build-
ing was carefully dismantled, and the stonework, iron,
and wood were donated to the great hospital of S. Anna
for the construction of a new chapel and cemetery for
the giustiziati. The chapel, dedicated to SS. Philip and
James, was erected under the hospital's arcade, facing
the city's moat:

... fieri debère ex lapidibus, lignaminibus, & ferra-
mentis acceptis a dicta Ecclesia S. Annae versus
foveam claudendo eum portichetum expens. dicti Hosp-
italis, quae Capella fit deputata pro ipsis miserab-
ilibus personis, & quod ibi super sacrato in uno
Carnerio deputando pro eis reponentur Cadavera earum
personarum.

The Battuti also possessed a well-endowed confraternal
oratory, Santa Maria Annunziata, located to the east of
the piazza, and listed among their membership artisans,
merchants, and several prominent Ferrarese citizens.

On one occasion, it is recorded that the concourse
of comforters in the piazza and on the tribunal was so
great that chaos ensued, and a reluctant executioner
was able to slip away during the confusion, delaying the
execution for an hour. Believing he had been granted
mercy, the condemned "subito levo gli occhi al cielo
dicendo o dio sempre visi rengratiatto la tua clementia",
but his joy was short-lived: "... tanto che soe trovate
un boglia di novo fu menatto impiazza al tribunale dove
era il cepo con animo gagliarde ando per sostenire la
morte, e ingenochiatto messi il capo sotto il cepo e
chiamandio iddio et santto francesco passo di questa
vita".270 The technology of hanging, which sought to
strangle the victim rather than break the neck, some-
times led to extraordinary scenes of religious devotion.
The execution of a thief in 1502 resulted in a night-
long vigil for the comforters and the citizenry: "et
nota che tuta la note non fece senon cridare et chiamare
la madre et sorela dolendose grandemente dela influentia
sua et per essere giovanetto et disposto grazone gran
pieta de lui ne fece al popolo cire constante".271 An-
other victim who suffered a relatively long ordeal, con-
sumed by fire in the customary "caxone di cana" for ar-
son, found solace in the prayers of the assembled wit-
nesses, "et per andare con grande animo et divotamente
ala morte fu forza che li circonstanti homini et donne
per compassion e Citasseno de molte lachrime per suo
amore".272 Ferraresè observers were often careful to
enlighten their readers upon the condemned's modus
moriendi, describing how the names of saints were invok-
ed at the moment of death, the manner in which the soul
was rendered to God, and how the peccatore understood
his crime as a contravention of divine law.

In his important study La Vie et La Mort, Alberto
Tenenti introduces us to a contemporary "art of dying",
an Ars moriendi, or iconographic crystalization of
Christian death:

L'Ars situe dans le moment même de l'agonie la ren-
contre directe du chrétien avec les deux royaumes
qui se partagent l'audelà. Ce que l'homme a craint
ou attendu, il va maintenant le voir; la présence
de l'autre monde s'impose à lui échappent. La vie
entière, il est vrai, subit l'attraction ou cherche
à éloigner l'angoisse de son point final; mais, dans la vision chrétienne, toute l'existence est mise en jeu par son dernier instant: de lui dépend le sort qui sera réservé à l'âme.

His iconographic model comprises three elements: "l'attitude du chrétien mourant, l'assaut des diables et la revanche de la foi". Public executions provide an interesting variation on this iconography of death. In a recent monograph, Samuel Edgerton has shown how the body of the condemned assumed an iconic quality during the Renaissance. Dangling on the gallows, the criminal's corpse becomes a didactic image, a moral lesson imparted to the community. But, he argues, the purposes of punishment extend beyond publishing the truth of the crime, and threatening would-be evildoers with a terrifying example:

It was also a matter of the whole city squaring itself with God, of proving through public ritual that the community, like a metaphorical sick person purging himself of disease and excrement, had exorcized all peace-disturbing, "unnatural" elements. The body of the condemned, therefore, is simultaneously an icon of justice, a "monument to civil authority", and an icon of the divine macrocosm, a confirmation of God's "divinely ordained, geometrically formed universe". Because execution occurs exactly at the juncture between the judgement of man and the judgement of God, it is the criminal's soul which must be saved. The torture of the execution anticipates the punishments of the beyond; the pains endured may be counted as penitence to alleviate the afflictions of divine justice. To illustrate this point, Edgerton reproduces three details from a panel painted by an unknown Florentine artist (c. 1505) which narrates the "Story of Antonio di Giuseppe Rinaldeschi and his Blasphemy". A familiar pattern emerges. Rinald-
eschi is goaded by the devil into defacing an image of the Virgin with dung, a crime for which he is condemned to death by the podestà. Later we find him confessing his sins to a priest before the prison altar in the company of two members of the Battuti della Morte, while an angel of mercy looks on. Finally we see him hanging from a window of the Bargello, the podesta's palace in Florence. A battle ensues between two angels and two demons for possession of Rinaldeschi's departing soul (a small nude figure at prayer), with the angels vanquishing the demons and bearing the soul aloft.276

Taking the iconography of death a step further, Elie Konigson suggests that executions represent a transition from art to theatre, a variation "sur le spectacle de la mort, de toutes les morts, de toutes les manières dont l'homme reçoit ou donne la mort". Christian iconography, miracle-plays, and the passions of the saints are inscribed "dans un comportement général dont la représentation des exécutions capitales marque en quelque sort le sommet, puisqu'aux mannequins habituels est substituée en condamné dont la tête sera véritablement tranchée sur scène. Icis tous les spectacles se confondent, théâtre et exécutions capitales, or des décors et sangs des victimes".277 Is it not possible, therefore, to view the spectacle of the scaffold as a theatrical model of the Christian vision of death? Confession leading to penitential punishment, the possible intervention of malevolent spirits on the gallows, the religious devotions of the condemned, his confessors, and the spectators mirror Tenenti's tri-partite iconographic model.
Public execution placed in evidence a moment of truth which all participants, the condemned, the executioner, and the witnesses were bound to question. It provided the *Ars moriendi*, the triumph of the faith, with a frightening reality.

* * *

As conspicuous on the scaffold as the crucifix and religious icons, however, was the *bachetta*, the *imperium* of the city. It was a symbolic reminder of omnipresent sovereignty. The right to condemn and execute criminals were privileges of the state alone, in Ferrara, as we have seen, the exclusive prerogative of the prince. Indeed, despite the liturgical significance of capital punishment we have briefly outlined, the Church was obliged to abandon impenitents to the secular courts and princely justice. The execution of delinquents was a princely function, a ritual of armed law related to the prince's right and duty to make war on his enemies. *Balcestrieri* and pike-men surrounded the scaffold to prevent the condemned's escape and to deal with outbursts of sympathy or rage which could lead to riot, but they also revealed the justice of the prince to be armed justice: the sword that punished the guilty was the weapon which vanquished and destroyed enemies. Every crime constituted a rebellion against the prince's law, potentially a rebellion against the prince's person. Every criminal was a personal enemy of the prince. The inflicting of *poena talionis*, therefore, was an aspect of princely vendetta.

Secular courts, on the other hand, had no jurisdiction over clerics, a constant source of irritation
to the Estensi. The impasse was normally resolved by ritual degradation of the accused, a legal process wherein a cleric was divested of his orders and the protection of the Church. The formulae of this meticulous ceremonial, verbal and physical ("nam duplex est degradatio, una verbalis, altera actualis sive solennis: ut d.c. degradatio de actuali & solenni dicamus"), are listed by Gambilioni. Degradation of a cleric was a ritual not only liturgical, but also in a sense military, since the act of divesting was modelled upon the treatment of the dishonoured knight by secular authority: "... quae est ad propositum nostrum, quae actualis degradatio fuit inventa ad similitudinem exaurationis armata militie: quoniam miles coelestis militiae, & armatae, aequiparantur...". God's soldiers in the battle for souls are disarmed. Zambotti, for example, records how one Don Zoanne Antonio da Lignano "fu degradato e toltege li ordini sacri per dui vesqui suxo uno tribunale grande facto suxo la porta grande de fora dal vesqua, per havere conducto con sue persuasione messer Niccolò Da Este a Ferrara". Personal intercession by the pope on behalf of the accused had proved fruitless, nor did Lignano's promise of a miraculous intervention by the Virgin materialize. The ceremony was conducted with due solemnity before the assembled citizenry:

Il quale prete fu apparato como il volesse cantare Messa, da poi essere degradato per più delicti perpetrati per epso prete, maxime per havere conducto epso messer Nicolò per discazare messer Hercule suo barba de Segnoria. E cusi, lezendo li ordini, fu despojato a pocho a pocho epso prete. E poi li vesqui andono in la sagrestia, el prete fu spinto del solaro, dove poi per li sbirri e cavalero de la justitia fu prexo e cusi fu conducto in Castello
Vechio per procedere contra di lui e punirlo come laico. 280

Initially, our understanding of degradation rituals must be guided by the legal connotation of the ceremony: a step in the laws of evidence and procedure which allowed clerics to be cited in the secular courts, and, as in the case of heretics and incorrigible sinners, condemned to death. Emphasis on the ritual as a public manifestation of guilt, the exposure of the sinful cleric to organized public humiliation, nevertheless accorded clerical degradation a place in the corpus of communal rituals which identified and marked the unclean. Step-by-step defrocking, each act accompanied with an accusation and a confession, removed the vestments which hid the contaminated human body from public view. When the degradation was complete, the body "naked" before the law, the vestments consumed by fire, and the bishop's official party withdrawn from the tribunal, an identification process was also complete. A criminal offence was revealed. The accused was immediately seized by the communal police, incarcerated, cited, examined, sentenced, and condemned by the secular inquisitionsprozess. Only three days were to pass before Lignano again found himself on a public stage, responding to each accusation with an acknowledgement of guilt according to the requirements of execution-procedure, on this occasion not to be identified but marked by the law: "Unde, visto il tradimento suo, fu condannato ad essere impicato, il quale incontinenti, per la licentia data, fu impicato a le fenestre del palazzo, como quello che hà sta causa de
tal male". Clerical degradation prepared the body of the accused for its seizure in another, more terrifying public ritual.

In the *Tractatus Repraesaliarum*, Bartolus examined legal reprisals in a wide sense, likening them to the sovereign's right to make war on his enemies, in fact, "concedere repraesalias est indicere bellum". To be lawful, he argued, reprisals required two necessary preconditions: the authority of the superior, whoever the superior be, and a just cause. What is then a just cause? Thus far we have observed that quattrocento formulations of penal theory in Ferrara would countenance a response to this question in three ways; justifying capital punishment with the necessity of taking revenge (which includes the notion of securing compensation for the injured party), with the satisfaction of a lexicon of crime and punishment contained in the communal statute law, and with the Christian moral purpose of freeing the criminal from his crime or a sinner from his sin. The objectives of the latter two have been especially identified with the notion of a separation of the soul from the body. Although often not explicitly stated, a fourth justification, with important ramifications à propos the maintenance of signorial law and order, may be discerned: the defence of the common good. Unequivocal acceptance of a social utility for capital punishment, of the example based on terror, marks Estensi penal technology. This was a technology which drew inspiration and support from texts on the criminal law. Thus Gambilioni instructs: "Ante oculos tu iudex habeas ius & iustitiam, & quando
facis executionem corporalem, facias quod res sit bene clara...". How is the example to be obtained?

Historians have long employed the language of the theatre, and rightly so, to describe the final phase of public condemnation and execution during the later Middle Ages and Renaissance. A recent analysis of the Constitutio Criminalis Carolina (1532), for example, reveals the German Rechttag (law-day or judgement day) as a meticulously scripted performance, complete with an elaborate formalism of stage directions and set speeches: "It is in fact the ceremonial spectacle at which a decision already concluded among the members of the court is publicly promulgated". Whether the ritual of public execution may be raised to the level of civic pageantry as one scholar has suggested, accompanied by an almost festive atmosphere and "an outward figuration that was at once emblematic and realistic", remains slightly dubious. But there can be little doubt that the spectacle of capital punishment was crucial to the image of princely justice in Ferrara. No catastrophe or joyous celebration, it appears, could delay or cancel punishment's vivid theatrical denouement. During the great plague years, when executions were carried out in the piazza at midnight to avoid attracting the usual throngs of citizens and the spread of contagion, the ceremony was repeated the following day outside the city. Corpses of criminals were carted to the site of the old communal gallows, the condemnations repeated, the bodies "poi repichatti". Even the week-long celebrations attending the wedding of Alfonso d'Este and Lucrezia Borgia in 1502 were
interrupted for a period of three hours one afternoon, when the new bride witnessed the execution of a murderer in the piazza. 287 Yet if the contextual language of the theatre is to remain a valid conceptual avenue for historical analysis of capital punishment, some assessment of the ritual meaning of execution as a mechanism of legal violence is obligatory. We need to understand more about punishment's juridical and political functions, its excesses and its objectives. Perhaps we ought to re-direct our attention; away from the spectacle as a theatrical concept, and more towards the principal prop of the mis-en-scène, that is, towards the body of the condemned. Beaten, broken, and butchered, it was the condemned's physical body which bore the prince's revenge for his injured sovereignty. Seized in a penal liturgy, the criminal's body was sacrificed on the scaffold in a physical struggle between chaos and order, between executioner and condemned. The outcome of this struggle was of course never in doubt. Capital punishment was a ceremonial of triumph, a leitmotif of power eclipsed and restored. Yet it is important to recognize punishment as a visible reconstitution of public order. The notion of "order arising out of chaos" shaped the liturgy of execution, and provided the ritual with an educative function. Furthermore, it allowed the spectacle of the scaffold to take its place alongside the other great signorial rituals in Ferrara: election, investiture, triumphal entry, and ceremonies of submission.

Michel Foucault has understood the spectacle of the scaffold as a "political investment of the body". The
aim of public execution was to bring into play, as its extreme point, "the dyssymmetry between the subject who has dared to violate the law and the all-powerful sovereign who displays his strength". Although the penalty must be proportionate to the offence, although the sentence must be equitable, the spectacle of capital punishment did not reflect measure but produced imbalance and excess. Public executions in France between the years 1500 and 1800, he would argue, were emphatic affirmations of power. Foucault's analysis of punishment is perhaps too specialized for our Ferrarese context, but he does provide valuable insight into capital punishment as a ritual exercise in sovereignty. Significantly, he enlists the aid of Kantorowicz's conception of the "King's Body" to relate a field of political anatomy (a "body politic") which invests human bodies with rights and powers, and also subjects them to punishment, supervision, and constraint. According to Foucault's formulation of this political anatomy, the condemned individual, like the prince, possesses a fictitious persona:

At the opposite pole one might imagine placing the body of the condemned man; he, too, has his legal status; he gives rise to his own ceremonial and he calls forth a whole theoretical discourse, not in order to ground the "surplus power" possessed by the person of the sovereign, but in order to code the "lack of power" with which those subjected to punishment are marked. In the darkest region of the political field the condemned man represents the symmetrical, inverted figure of the king. We should analyze what might be called, in homage to Kantorowicz, "the least body of the condemned man". Locating the fictitious persona of the condemned in contemporary juristic literature is a task for another occasion. It is inscribed, first of all, in the legal ceremon-
ial of inquisitionsprozess. Discourses upon legal punishment naturally refer to the "poenis corporalibus" to be meted out to convicted criminals, but punishment acquires an added dimension in the legal maxim "an corpus mortuum velit facere suspendere: quia illud est corpus poenae". The body of the condemned is both an object of knowledge and an object of penal procedure, an icon of the power that is exercised upon it through physical punishment. The reconstruction of a public execution in Renaissance Ferrara, however, clearly reveals a codification of a princely "super-power", and a public arena where the physical manifestation of this theoretical power was deployed. The condemned's body, seized in a ritual of terror and unable to alter its course, becomes in a sense princely property. A model of Estensi scaffold procedure comprises four parts: the introduction of the accused, condemnation and confession, execution of the sentence, and post-mortem disposal of the body. Mercy, although in some instances directly related to modes of execution, deserves a special category.

iv

The Spectacle of the Scaffold

The final process of condemnation and execution commenced with the customary bell-ringing, signalling that the court had reached a definitive verdict. Provision was made for a ceremony of absolution, but there is no known record of such an event taking place: innocence was normally made public by proclamation. The
rumbing of bells also attended the expiration of the condemned, sometimes embellished with a flourish of trumpets. It is customary, explains Gambilioni, "quia semper in huiusmodi processibus criminalibus fit citatio per campanarum, per quam campanarum omnes citantur, & actor, & reus". The bell-ringing raised the curtain, as it were, on the execution stage, and called to assembly the dramatis personae. The Giudice de' Malefici and the Consiglieri paraded from the hall of justice to the pozolo (the balcony on the eastern face of the Palazzo della Ragione's bell-tower) where the Notario de' Malefici prepared to read the sentence, the citizenry assembled in the piazza, and the prisoner was brought forward.

Introduction of the accused:

A ritual of introduction, where the guilty individual was identified as a "contaminated body" by the community, and where the prisoner effectively heralded his own condemnation, is not attested to by the Borsian statutory reforms. Yet it is evident that an identification parade of the condemned was an important constituent in the ceremonial treatment of the guilty body. Gambilioni acquaints us with the custom: "Practica ducendi condemnatos per loca publica cur sit introducta... Ista practica fuit introducta, ut publica videatur ab omnibus, ut multis grassantibus locus sit exemplo". The translation of the site of public executions from the old communal gallows to the piazza, however, upset the location of ritualized identification in the ceremonial ordo. Borsian execution procedure indicates that the
accused was first publicly condemned in the piazza, then placed in the executioner's cart (*carretta per i condannati*), and subsequently driven through the city and across the bridge of Castel Tedaldo to the gallows. Along the route, prisoners passed by the Servite monastery of S. Maria where there was an iron grate leading to a sewer (a subterranean channel to drain water from the city's environs) known as the "Grata de' Servi". The condemned could hope for a reprieve before passing this landmark, and a local proverb, "ha passata la Grata de' Servi", was coined to describe a forlorn cause. The close proximity of the communal dungeons to the piazza altered the *ordo* in cases where executions were carried out in front of the Palazzo della Ragione. Chroniclers of Herculean Ferrara, for instance, take up the description of executions with the *carretta* already present in the piazza, implying that a procession of the condemned had previously taken place (the distance between the dungeons at the rear of the Palazzo della Ragione, where prisoners were normally incarcerated, cannot have exceeded 300 yards, much of this distance being courtyard. The movement of the condemned to the piazza, therefore, would have been a partially concealed spectacle). Alternative methods of exhibiting the condemned were devised, which placed the identification process prior to the reading of the sentence. Thus a criminal convicted of treason was obliged to circumvent the piazza "apede per mezo il palatio de la ragione drito la rengera cum uno cavestro ala gola, et ligato le mane de dreto per essere apichato per la gola ale finestre del palatio predicto...".
More common was a procession of the condemned through the streets of the city. An early example is provided by the execution of a rapist and murderer in 1396:

Fuit enim per Civitatem Ferrariae super curru tana-ajatus, postmodum reportatus ad plateam, & alligatus cum funibus ad quatuor equos, ut squartaretur, per horam magnum ventilatus est; sed cum per equos eo modo nequiret esse conscissus, solutus ab illo martyrio, fuit per lictorem Communis ibidem, videlicet in platea, decapitatus, atque squartatis, & quart-eria cum capite & intestinus in calatho uno positis delata fuerunt ad locum homicidii perpetrati, & ibi ad furcam in strata publica catenis ferreis suspensa capite super fixo cum clavo & calatho cum intestinis appensa. 299

"Villanus debito damnatus supplicio fuit, per Civitatem super curru tenalleatus", writes Delayto of a murderer in 1403, "deinde ductus ante domum commissi homicidii fuit squartatus...". 300 In 1469, Ludovico Pio was conducted in the carretta through the four contrade of the city, his body bound so that his eyes were fixed on the rear of the horse. It is interesting to note that the imagery of animal excretion "covering" the body of the condemned was reenforced on the scaffold, since the block had been arranged in order that Pio's head should face the rear of the bronze equestrian statue of Borso. 301

We should bear in mind that the identification of a criminal was also a ritualized identification of an unclean, diseased, and contaminated body. The procession stained the guilty with infamy; the condemned bore his crime as "filth" on the body. A vicar of the Bishop of Ferrara, condemned for offences against the sacraments by the Inquisitor General of Lombardy in 1476, was dragged on a wooden plank around the periphery of the cemetery at S. Domenico before the assembled citi-
zenry. His head bore a mitre depicted with devils, his body was arranged "col viso rivolto verso la coda dell' animale". 302

If the purpose of the procession was two-fold, publishing the truth of the crime and identifying the unclean, the formula of the ritual was left unsettled. Clearly, there was room for improvisation, depending on the seriousness of the crime. On occasion, the procession made halts at churches, where the sentence was read out and a confession extracted from the prisoner. In extreme cases, an element of torture could be involved:

A di 19, il sabato (1476). Antonio da Ravenna, assassino e homicidiale suprascripto, fu menato per questa citade e, conducto suxo la via aprovo la chiesa de San Petro, ge fu talgiato la man destra, e poi menato ligato suxo una axe strassinato per la terra insino in Piazza, dove fu apicato al palazo de la Razon del Comun de Ferrara. Dapoi ge fu talgiato il lazo e cadette sopra li cuppi del teraxo, et anche parlava; et butado di cuppi in terra, incontinenti ge fu talgiato il collo. Dapoi fu facto in quatro parte per exemplo d'altri. 303

Condemnation and confession:

The quattrocento statutory reforms did not envisage a formal phase of public condemnation and confession, at least insofar as providing the public declaration of guilt with a subject of ceremony. The level of sophistication detected by Langbein in the German Carolina of the mid-sixteenth-century, the awareness of and provision for a ceremonial acknowledgement of guilt, would not begin to be reached until the drafting of a new civil code under Ercole II d'Este in 1534. 304 What is clear in the minds of Ferrarese draftsmen in the mid-fifteenth-century, however, is the need for a sententia diffinitiva. The peal of bells ended litigation and announced condemnation
or absolution, a decision which was irrevocable:

... Quod ab eis apellari non possit nec possint dici nulle nec adversus eas possit beneficium restitutionis in integrum postulari nec aliquo modo etiam iudicis officio infringi vel retractari vel modo aliquo suspendi sed plenam et irrevocabilem modis omnibus obtineant firmitatem. 305

The reading of the condemnation by the Notario de Malfici, therefore, was purely ceremonial. With all litigation completed, the condemned could not dispute his sentence but merely acknowledge his guilt. He had no further role to play in the determination of his fate: the dialogue which ensued on the pozolo was between the definition of the offence and the sworn confession of the condemned presented by a single orator. 306 According to the chronicles, the condemnations were rather full accounts of crime, detailing with notarial precision the horror, the infamy, the brutality, and the treachery of the offences. This was perfectly understandable in a society where the legal process, the inexorable search for the inquisitorial truth, remained opaque to the general public. Oral presentation of the signed confession, the assembly of judicial servants, the issuing forth of the bachetta and communal standards, established the public execution as a moment of truth revealed; a legal truth which was to be borne by the condemned physically.

Execution of the sentence:

The purpose of capital punishment, wrote Gambilioni, is to provide a horrifying example. When the preliminary introduction of the prisoner is over, the condemned must be executed in the customary place of just-
ice "ad maiorem exagerationem, unde ante domum, in qua
furtum comissum, furcae aliquando eriguntur: et ita
semel observari feci cum casus occurreret Perusii: vel
in loco ubi hominem interfecit, decapitatur...". 307 Bon-
franceschi adds, discussing the customary punishment
meted out to traitors in Ferrara, that in a case of in-
famous or atrocious crime, the offender ought similarly
to be hung from a window of the Palazzo della Ragione or
from the bell-tower. This will augment the effectiveness
of the example, since "Locus ergo, ubi fit executio cor-
poralis, aggravat infamia ipsius malefactoris". 308 Sab-
adino distinguished between civil matters, where the
duke is presented as especially merciful, and criminal
matters, where the duke is urged to castigate offenders:
"Ma pur quando criminale iustitia fare te conviene, la
fai sencia tu ultione e vendecta, perchè altrimenti tu
sai che Idio se offenderebbe". 309 Vendetta sometimes
moved the signore to take drastic measures. When a ser-
vant of his household was murdered during Carnival in
1466, Borso d'Este rejected the ordinary procedures of
criminal justice in favour of private revenge: "Vogliamo
et deliberiamo che per tri giorni luno dreto laltro tu
faci fare le crida li a ferrara per la quale permettiamo
cento ducati doro a chi lo dara (the murderer) vivo o
morto. Mettandolo tuta via in bando perpetuo secundo il
suo demerito...". 310 But these were rare occurences. As
we have observed, the Estensi preferred the organized
violence of the scaffold to ritualize coercion and pub-
lish a terrible coded message to intimidate would-be
offenders. Public punishment was an integral part of
crime-prevention, and it appears that the signore was prepared to overlook discrepant testimony, infringements of judicial procedure (especially confessions extracted under torture), and the dispensation of arbitrary justice to ensure that a sufficient quota of exemplary moments was filled. Much concerning the signorial attitude towards capital punishment is revealed in a remarkably frank letter from the duchess Eleonora to Ercole in 1493. "Il capitano de Justito me ha facto intendere quello che1 ha scripto a vostra Ex. quanto la ge ha risposto per quelli due che1 voria justitiare per sodomiti", she says, but continuing on, she advises the duke of murmuring amongst the citizenry: "... ni ho sentito assai mormorare che se fæ per la terra et chi legissero il caso et chi ne dice una et chi unaltra che vendendolo molto solito per fare uno casone da brusarni domatina uno...". The indecision of the giudici and citizen restiveness moved Eleonora to examine the dossiers and testimonies. She concluded that the entire inquisition had been conducted unsatisfactorily, and ordered the case to be reopened: "Et interim se differira la executione". If the signore desired the image of his justice to be indelibly imprinted in the minds of his subjects, he had also to be reminded that malicious justice served no purpose, and in some instances, was a dangerous thing. Too much official violence and penal severity, wrote Caraffa, was injustice, and injustice was tyranny.

Nevertheless, the translation of punishment scenography from the communal gallows to the piazza was a signorial attempt to heighten the dramatic horror and
terror of the example. Execution unfolded sequentially: the binding of the prisoner, procession through the city, condemnation and confession, the mounting of the tribunal, the death-blow. But it was the death-blow, the swiftness of the sword, the slow strangulation of the rope, or the untold agonies of the fire, which linked the punishment with the crime. The statute law speaks coldly of the condemned: the traitor shall be decapitated, the assassin, robber, and petty thief hung, the sodomite, rapist, and arsonist consumed by fire. Yet it was precisely at the moment of an application of justice that the spectacle was transformed; from a legal ceremonial in exposition of inquisitorial truth to a political ritual. The marshalling of troops in the piazza, the blare of trumpets, the sounding of bells, the presentation of standards, and the parading of the bachetta proclaimed the prince as head of justice and head of war. The witnesses shed their tears and shouted their encouragement or abuse at the condemned, but the physical confrontation between the victim and the executioner had already been decided. Estensi scaffold procedure produced disproportion and triumph. It assembled the awesome power of the sovereign and exhibited the helplessness of the condemned. In this sense, public executions in Renaissance Ferrara were a terrifying restoration of sovereignty. The image of exemplary princely punishment, its moral lessons, lived on for weeks, sometimes months in the case of traitors. Examples of post-mortem operations carried out on the corpses of infamous criminals and rebels abound in the
chronicles: disembowelling, dragging, and quartering were regularly performed "per exemplum". Calefﬁni records the fate of two rebels in 1471:

Luni adì dui de decembre 1471 de matina li infra-
scripti foreno Impichati per la gola al pozolo de
la rengera nova del palazo de la ragione del com-
une de ferrara verso il vescoato. Et steteno tutto
tutti il di di cussi Impicati. Et poi il martì mat-
a li forno portati ad Impichare alla Stellata de
ﬁgarolo per che li la havesseno aremenare. 317

In the quest to punish crime where the offence was
committed, horror was often an exported commodity.

Mercy:

Throughout our assessment of signorial justice in
Ferrara, attention has been focused on the apprehension,
prosecution, and punishment of delinquents. However, a
synthesis of signorial justice, as we indicated earlier,
includes unreasonable mercy as well as unreasonable
cruelty. The prerogative of mercy, which was not found
in the Ferrarese legal system and existed merely as an
expression of princely clemency, inspired its own
ritual. Condemned individuals, for instance, were often
obliged to go through the preliminary motions of execut-
ion procedure before a "last-minute" reprieve arrived at
the gallows. The traitor Agostino de Ferro stood on the
tribunal and heard the condemnation read out before "sua
Signoria li faceva la gratia libera de la vita et de la
roba":

Et alhora tutto il popolo ad una voce cride gratia
gratia et per quelli cridi li fu desolto le mane,
spogliato li pani de la morte et levato el capes-
tro da la gola et messo in libertade. Et cussi se
ne intro in vescovato et stetoli alquanto tanto
che revene uno pocho per che gia era perduto et
fora de si. 320

The rough justice of the signore also found an equival-
ent expression in rough mercy. The slow agony of hanging and burning moved the giustiziat to petition the duke for the mercy of decapitation. The Libro de' Giustiziat records seven such cases (significantly, none after 1474) of which the following is a model entry:

1452: Adi primo de aprile uno Stephano todesco Sodomito fu decapito loquale have gratia del bruxare. 321

It is interesting to note that loaded weights were normally fastened to the feet of the condemned to hasten death on the gallows, and in 1489, new technology was introduced by Gregorio Zampante: a platform with a trap-door was placed outside a window of the Palazzo della Ragione (intended to put an end to prolonged death throes which might incite the crowd during long vigils, the new method was not always successful). 322

Intercession by the duke in matters of criminal law was generally expected by petitioners and the courts. The issuing of dispensation from condemnations was an integral function of the prince's office, even for the most serious offences. Counterfeiters were granted mercy, murderers spared, while blasphemers remained outside the province of signorial clemency. 323 Decisions pertaining to the granting of mercy appear to have been taken arbitrarily:

Ad podesta Abbatii. Dilectissime nostro: havemo visto quanto tu ne scrivi de quel Berthon da Iviari che hai ne le mane per quelli pochi furti, che lha confessato havere commesso, per li quali secundo li statuti de lie meritava essergli tagliata la mane. Et in reposta te dicemo che po ci che dicti furti non sono de altra natura che se siamo, siamo contenti per questa frata de fargli gratia libera de la pena in la quale lo era incorso per dicta cagione... 324

When one thinks of mercy in Este Ferrara, however, it is
the nature and function of amnesty which ought to be considered. More than a dozen general amnesties, celebrating treaties, marriages, births of children, and investitures are recorded in the chronache for the years 1450-1505, and the number was probably greater. Hundreds of citizens benefited, even those who had evaded capture. Writing to Ercole on behalf of a convicted murderer who had been forced to flee Ferrara, Alfonso d'Este describes the desperate plight of the exile and his family and pleads for clemency, reminding his father "che in questo tempo de letitia che la v. Exc. per la promotione del figliolo al cardinalato nel qual gaudio se sole fare gratia al presoni, la mi voglia concedere questo dono et gratia che lo predicto Jacomo de Bonin-siagna possi ritornare in la patria...". Ferrarese chroniclers are prone to describe general amnesty as the liberation of all prisoners in the communal dungeons, but this certainly was not the case. A list of prisoners and their offences was kept, and the signore called for a consultation with it before proclaiming who should be subject to amnesty:

... Et perche li pregioneri che sono li a ferrara ne le pregione del Comune, ne scriveno et supplicano che li vogliamo fare relaxare tutti in questo nostro retorno a Ferrara, ne pare che la s. vostra subito ne habia ad mandare una lista de tutti quelli che se trovano destenuti in dicte pregione et le cagione per le quale ge sono, accio che meglio sapiamo come governarse circa cio: Ma bisogna che habiamo dicta lista cum ogni presteza possibile... 

It is highly unlikely that criminals guilty of enormous crimes would have been liberated, and indeed, many of the debtors and petty thieves who were freed soon found themselves back in the gaol. One bewildered citizen re-
lates how he was seized by officials of the ducal camera for the failure to pay the costs of a licence "et baterlo in pregione", but the following day he was released "insieme cum tutti li altri pregioni" in honour of the marriage between Isabella d'Este and Francesco Gonzaga. Yet only hours passed before the petitioner was again seized and imprisoned by the bailiffs, "gli feceno tore lo letto et subito impignato non havendo rispecto ala dicte ragione per la donatione e liberatione facta al servitore de dicte Carcer...". A general amnesty in Herculean Ferrara was necessarily selective, the duration of the truce extremely limited. It belonged to the corpus of ceremonial subterfuge we have become acquainted with in Renaissance Ferrara.

Amnesty also found ritual expression in the ceremonial liberation of prisoners before the altare grande in the cathedral by the signore on Good Friday. Confraternal custom in Ferrara provided for the freeing of captives as an expression of lay piety. Oblation requests of the Bianchi, for example, were directed to the signore during the quaresima. Signorialization of this custom occurred in the early years of Ercole's reign, the first recorded instance in the year 1478: "A di 20, de vegneri sancto. La Excellentia del duca fece offerire al altaro grande quatro prexoneri, de quanto se diceva el Passio in domo per lo amore de Dio". The relationship between institutionalized signorial mercy and signorial quaresima behaviour, that is to say, the incorporation of mercy into a well-defined body of Estensi dynastic ceremonial, will be examined
more thoroughly in the course of Chapter Three. Mercy, like signorial piety, was governed by the traditional time sequences of the liturgical calendar, "le cirimonie sancte de christianissimo principe", as Sabadino called them. But it is important to remember that candidates for the annual signorial oblation in the duomo were carefully scrutinized, chosen for their manifest misery and poverty. It is unlikely that violent criminals would have qualified:

... Cussi essendomi sta porto per el Capitaneo de la presone la lista de li presoneri addio fari elezione de quelli che mi parano essere digni per clementia de vostra Ex. ad essere offerti per el giorno solenne de questa proxima pasca. Vista et considerate maturamente hauto respecto che alcuno non habia vista cava de dolersi ni ho exceptuato dece per fare dicta oblatione quali sono miserabili assai. Ma e parso il tuto significare a vostra Signorin... 333

Our brief review of signorial justice in Renaissance Ferrara has accorded public execution several functions, which transcend its punitive or repressive role: a pastoral function (the separation of the soul from the body), an educative function (the identification and castigation of the diseased body in support of public order), and a political function, a ceremonial operation carried out on the body of the condemned which ritually codified the basic assumptions of princely power. The art of punishment relied on a whole technology of representation, a ceremony of triumph, wherein the instruments of execution and the body of the condemned acquired Staatsymbolik. Public punishment was a "festival of power", the legible lesson, as Luchino Marocelli (Capitano di Modena) intimated to Borso d'Este in 1470:

Illustrissimo signore excellentissimo et domine d.
mi observandissime. In exeugitone di quanto me ha
scripto v. ex. io ho facto impichare il cavalero
del podesta ale fenestre del palazo dela raxon. Et
quello Zimignam messo del palazo del quale ho
scripto a v. Sig. essendo stato suo compagnuo a
questo furto. Et havendolo confessato et anche hav-
ere robato una cavalla uno paro di vadie una cavalla
et uno cavallo, undexe stara di frumento tri lenzoli
et altri panì una vena prena di olio xxxxta galine
tute in dui si torrisi, et adiverse persone pensando
che mo sia la littera de v. Ex. per via la quale
comanda io facti il simili a questo messo per fare
piu bella festa. Et ad cui che lu no non in vidia
al altro lho Pietro impichare apresso il cavalero
suo compagno. Et rendomi etro questo acto dara
esempio al altri tristi et ali homini di bene de
questa vostra cidade conforto asai cussi volesse
Idio havesse habiuto quello. Benincha che fusse
lassato ussire del castello contra il mio comand-
amento che haveria questa bella festa. 334

A policy of ritualized terror will ensure that the citi-
zenry, through the legal treatment of the body of the
condemned, are made aware of the unrestrained presence
of the sovereign.

A comment from the late eighteenth-century penal
reformer Cesare Beccaria is not inappropriate here:

One of the greatest curbs on crime is not the cruelty
of punishments, but their infallibility, and consequ-
ently, the vigilance of magistrates, and that sever-
ity of an inexorable judge which, to be a useful
virtue, must be accompanied by a mild legislation.
The certainty of a punishment, even if it be moder-
ate, will always make a stronger impression than the
fear of another which is more terrible but combined
with impunity... 335

Today, we have inherited the fruits of Beccaria's vision,
a modern penal society with its sophisticated bank of
computerized crime-detectors, its houses of detention,
its "gentle way in punishment". Modern justice rejects
the principle of punishment based on terror, "physical
fear, collective horror, images that must be engraved on
the memories of the spectators": our art of punishing is
hidden.336 Perhaps this is because our governors no longer
economize on crime-prevention, nor regard the gallows as a
stage for ritual explanation of power relations. They no longer seek to create images, and school the governed in justice, terror, and mercy.

2 Savonarola, De felici progressu, fol. 37r.

3 Zam, p. 27, 11. 17-34.


6 Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages, pp. 23-24. According to the legal historian Carl Ludwid Von Bar, medieval jurists allotted a relatively important part of their writings to the criminal law yet they did not approach the problem of the right to punish, indeed "they did not even seem to suspect its existence", A History of Continental Criminal Law, trans., T.S. Bell, (London, 1916), p. 146. This is a rather narrow view of medieval juristic thinking, and one which will hopefully be revised in what follows.

7 Antonio di Piero Averlino (known as Filarete), Treatise on Architecture, trans., John R. Spencer, 2 vols., (Yale Univ. Press, 1975). The treatise, written between 1461 and 1464, rests on the literary device of the construction of an ideal city, "Sforzinda", and its port, "Plusiapolis". The fiction provided Filarete with the opportunity to describe ideal buildings "each with its own suitable orders and measures", including a communal prison.

8 Ibid., I, pp. 124-126.
9 Ibid., I, pp. 181-185.

10 ASMan, AG, busta 1233, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 10 October 1491.

11 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio dei Rettori di Reggio, busta 1, M.M. Boiardo to Ercole d'Este, 30 May 1494, now published by Venturi, "Relazioni dei Governatori Estensi in Reggio", p. 315.

12 Boiardo's philosophic abhorrence of the death penalty was first noticed by Guido Panciroli, Storia di Reggio, (Modena, 1849), VI, pp. 120-25, although he does suggest that this did not deter Boiardo from executing criminals in accordance with justice and the requirements of his office. See the comments of Venturi, "Relazioni dei Governatori Estensi in Reggio", pp. 232-36, and Giulio Reichenbach, Matteo Maria Boiardo, (Bologna, 1929), pp. 101-30, 203-40.

13 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio dei Rettori di Reggio, busta 1, Beltramino Cusatro to Ercole d'Este, 17 March 1489.

14 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Minutario Cronologico, busta 2, Ercole d'Este to Francesco Gonzaga, 30 October 1484.

15 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 263v.

16 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio dei Rettori di Reggio, busta 1, Ercole d'Este to Beltramino Cusatro, 16 January 1489.


18 Ferrariensis, Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, I, 7, fol. 32r.

19 Ibid., I, 10, fol. 33v: "Volumus quod potestatis in civitate ferrarie et eius districtu in futurum eligendis beant, et here intelligatur vigore presentis statuti baiiam et iurisdictionem plenam cognosce undum ordinem statutorum civitatis ferrarie et eo ordine deficiente, secundum quod ius comune disponit". Similarly, he must sentence criminals "prout iuris municipalis primo disponit et eo cessate ordo comunis determinat ac decernit".

20 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 67, Ercole to Borso d'Este, 24 October 1465.

21 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Minutario Cronologico, busta 1, Borso to Sigismondo d'Este, 24 November 1469.

22 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1486, reg.
24, c. 184v.

23 Ibid., c. 185r.

24 The reign of Borso d'Este has been rightly seen as a "watershed" for signorial administration in Ferrara. The increase in extra-statutory executive orders after 1450 saw the expansion of the Estensi chancellery from two to three fondi, and the collection of factoral decisions in the registers of the Mandati. Administrative relations between the central bureaucracy in Ferrara and officials governing the cities of the subject contado are discussed by Giorgio Chittolini, "Il particolarismo signorile e feudale in Emilia fra Quattro e Cinquecento", in Il Rinascimento nelle Corti Padane, pp. 23-54, and Lino Marini, Per una storia dello stato estense, (Bologna, 1973), esp. pp. 1-35.

25 A condemnation had to be based upon proven facts, not upon presumptions and suspicions, Baldis de Ubaldis, In Primam Digesti Veteris Commentaria, (Venice, 1616), c. iv, 19, 25, fol. 45r. To curb the possibility of abuse, the magistrate who did not adhere to the restrictive rules of the inquisitionsprozess could be punished before a tribunal of his peers, where the opinion of the doctores legum decided the issue. Ferrarese statute law sets out the rules of inquisition (Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, III, 1-4), restricting torture, III, 38, 57, and providing for the punishment of delinquent magistrates (pena corrupti) under the syndics of the palace, III, ii, 47. The general background of the syndicatus process is related by Walter Ullmann in "Reflections on Medieval Torture", Judicial Review, 56 (1944), pp. 123-37 (for the abuses of the sententia interlocutoria), and in idem, "Medieval Principles of Criminal Procedure", Judicial Review, 59 (1949), pp. 1-28.

26 Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, p. 82.

27 ASMan, AG, busta 1234, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 1 December 1496.

28 ASMan, AG, busta 1234, Giovanni Maria Trotti to Isabella d'Este, 5 December 1496.

29 The designation of an individual as a rebel of the state of course provided the signore with legal justification for confiscating the property and possessions of the "rebel". Further research needs to be conducted on Estensi confiscation policy, although it does appear that Borso d'Este seized lands from some of his predecessor's intimates and re-allocated them to his own noble supporters.

30 Few historians have examined the issue of internal communal violence and crime-prevention in later
medieval and Renaissance Italy, although the symposi- 
num held at UCLA in 1469 indicates new scholarly
interest in the subject. The papers have been col-
clected and edited by Lauro Martines, Violence and
Civil Disorder in Italian Cities 1200-1500, (UCLA
Press, 1972). An important article has been written
by William Bowsky, "The Medieval Commune and Intern-
al Violence: Police Power and Public Safety in Siena,
1287-1355", American Historical Review, 73 (1967-68),
pp. 1-17. Valuable insight may also be gleaned from
Yvonne Lanhers, "Crimes et criminels au xivème
siècle", Revue Historique, 240 (1968), pp. 325-38;
D.M. Nicholas, "Crime and Punishment in Fourteenth-
Century Ghent", Revue belge de philologie et d'histo-
ire, 48 (1970), pp. 289-334; Marvin Becker, "Chang-
ing Patterns of Violence and Justice in Fourteenth
and Fifteenth-Century Florence", Comparative Studies
in Society and History, 18 (1976), pp. 281-96.

Enormous crimes may be defined as those offences
which were punished by death. The Ferrarese statutes
list seven enormous crimes: Statuta Civitatis Ferr-
arie 1456, III, ii, 2 (treason), 7 (homicide), 30
(sodomy), 31-37 (rape, but also incest, adultery,
unnatural sexual acts, rape with or without "consen-
t", the raping of "country womenfolk"), 48 (robb-
erly, robbery with violence, wounding), 74 (counter-
feiting), 84 (arson).

Antonio Benivieni, De Abditis Nonnullis Ac Mirandas
Et Sanationum Causis, trans., Charles Singer,
(Springfield Ill., 1954), lxxxix, "Things of inter-
est found in an opened body", pp. 169-70.

Giovanni Manardo, Epistolarum medicinalium Libri XX;
(Lugduni, 1549), IV, Epist. iv, p. 181.

Adalberto Pazzini, "Giovanni Manardo Medico e Clin-
ico", Atti del Convegno Internazionale per la Cele-
brazione del V Centenario della Nascita di Giovanni
Manardo, 1462-1536, (Università degli Studi di
Ferrara, 1963), pp. 11-42. On the notion of humoral
characterology, see R. Klibansky, F. Saxl, and E.
Panofsky, Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the
History of Natural Philosophy, Religion and Art,

Manardo, Epistolarum medicinalium, Epist. cit, p. 182.

The medical theory that chemical imbalances of the
four humors produced clinical fevers was not aban-
doncd until the late sixteenth-century. See Allen
G. Debus, "Guintherius, Libavius and Sennert: The
Chemical Compromise in Early Modern Medicine", in
Science, Medicine and Society in the Renaissance:
151-166.

This had been the case since Galen first applied the

38 A superexcessio of any one of the primary humors in the body was regarded as capable of leading to behavioural disorder, but the severe melancholic seems to have been singled out as especially sinful, since his irascible nature and inherent laziness made him prone to pestilential vices, avarice, thieving, usury, and pillaging. Hugo de Polieto (d. 1174), for example, identified melancholics as sinners within the arcus diaboli, De Medicina Animae, in P.L. Migne, ed., Patrologiae Cursus Completus, (Paris, 1880), vol. 176, c. vi, col. 1191. A comprehensive review of the "melancholic literature" related to human temperament is conducted in Klibansky et al., Saturn and Melancholy, pp. 97-123.


41 Galen identified criminals as pathologically sick, since physiological changes were accountable for most mental, emotional, and behavioural disturbances. One ought not to judge a man "as bad without intention", he suggests, "but we should consider him as sick". For Galen's opinions on criminal behaviour see Charles Daremberg, ed., Oeuvres anatomiques, physiologiques et medicinales de Galien, 2 vols., (Paris, 1854-56), I, pp. 67-69, and Siegel, Galen's System of Physiology and Medicine, pp. 240-41.

42 Galen, "The disposition of the soul depends on the constitution of the body", in Daremberg, Oeuvres anatomiques, I, p. 64.


44 The state of medical science under Estensi patronage is examined by Ladislao Munster, "La Cultura e le Scienze nell' Ambiente Medico Umanistico-Rinascimentale di Ferrara", in Atti del Convegno Internazionale per la Celebrazione del V Centenario della Nascita di Giovanni Manardo, pp. 57-93, and G. Muratori and C. Menini, Contributi allo studio
Among the more recent studies, two articles in the collection *Il Rinascimento nelle Corti Padane*, one by Luigi Belloni, "Jacopo Berengario da Carpi, chirurgo e anatomico del Rinascimento", pp. 379-400, the other by Gabriele Baroncinis, "Forma e ruolo dell'esperienza nel sapere di un medico e filosofo naturale dello studio bolognese: A. Achillini (1465-1512)" , pp. 439-468, carefully analyze the influence of natural science, philosophy, and magic upon contemporary medical knowledge. Still the most useful general text is Lynn Thorndike, *History of Magic and Experimental Science*, vols. 2-4 (vol. 4, pp. 183-214 for the career of Michele Savonarola, personal physician to Borso d'Este).


48 Thus Caleffini remarks concerning the thief and assassin Simone dalla Turicella: "Questo homo da bene era il piu grande ribaldo che formasse mai la natura humana. Quello che dio non voleva et el diavolo lo refudava et se ne sorbiva el Culo. Inemico di tutti li homini et pare da bene cautissimo et onze de carne et peso de malitia sempre insomava de fare male... Me credo cheI diavolo lo cago per dolore de corpo", *Chroniche del Duca Ercole*, fol. 72r. Another young man was accused of conjuring up the devil in the church of S. Maria in Vado on Good Friday, and while in the force of the devil having committed sodomy in the church, for which crimes he was burnt to death in the piazza, "el quale cognoscendo havere offese dio ando virilmente aIa morte", ASManj AG; busta 1235, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 21 September 1497; LG, fol. 14r.

49 LG, fol. lv.

50 LG, fol. 13r.

51 LG, fol. 14r.

52 DF, p. 265, ll. 6-27. If we are to believe the Fondo Inquisizione, ASMo, busta 2, Processi 1489-
1549, Ferrara was plagued by witchcraft and sorcery during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. According to Albano Biondi, "Steghe ed eretici nei domini estensi all'epoca dell'Ariosto", Il Rinascimento nelle Corti Padane, pp. 165-199, the offices of the inquisition had to deal with more than sixty cases of sorcery and witchcraft between the years 1490 and 1540, aside from the routine prosecution of individuals for "superstitious" practices. Punishment of offenders was usually public, "normalmente l'ultima immagine che ci viene conservata della strega è quella della penitente mitriata, inginocchiata alle porte di una chiesa, che rende conto alla curiosità dei fedeli delle proprie colpe" (Biondi, p. 170). Bernardino Prosperi records how a young woman suspected of being a sorceress was brutally tortured in the piazza, suffering ten strokes of the lash before confessing, "poi fo raxa tuta da la testa ali pedi quanti pilli haveva addosso e denanci e de dietro". With this operation complete, the inquisition could affirm that the devil had been exorcized from her body, but, he writes, "alcuni ge credo poco": ASMan, AG, busta 1235, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 18 August 1499, also cited by Catalano, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, I, p. 108.

53 See Samuel Edgerton, "Icons of Justice", Past and Present, no. 89 (1980), pp. 23-38, for the contemporary iconography associating the criminal with excrement and the tortures of hell, and nn. 148 below. Emphasis was laid upon the recognition of the diseased criminal body, the identification of symptoms, and the prescription of legal cures in a procession of the prisoner through the city. According to Nathalie Davis, "The Rites of Violence", in idem, Society and Culture in Early Modern France, (London, 1975), pp. 152-187, these official acts of communal "purification" may be likened to the unofficial terrorism of the religious riots in sixteenth-century France. Violent crowds, Catholic and Protestant, imitated their magistrates by purging their opponents through rites of purification or desecration (riots) in an effort to rid the community of "vile filth", "pollution", "contamination", and "vermin". "The acts of violence performed by Catholic and Protestant crowds... intended to cut down on uncleanness by placing profane things... back in the profane world where they belonged" (Davis, p. 159).

54 The struggle between the soul and the body was mirrored in philosophic writings on the condition of man and his aspiration to grace. For example, according to the Neapolitan humanist Aurelio Brandolini, the dignity of the human soul exceeds that of the body, and even animal souls exceed the bodily. The "body is so vile, so abject, so fragile, so alien to the nature of God, who would fear to expose innumerable bodies to death for the sake of saving one soul?", Aurelio Brandolini, Dialogus de humanae vitae cond-


56 Bloomfield, The Seven Deadly Sins, pp. 209-224.

57 Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies, pp. 193-272.

58 Lucas de Penna, Commentaria in Tres Libros Codicis, (Lyon, 1597), chap. II, 58, vii, excerpt trans., Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies, p. 216.


61 Ibid., III, no. 591, p. 471, where the obligations of the prince as conservator of the law are clearly stated, as are the repercussions of negligence: "Etiam ad hoc advertere debet, quod, sicut nervi ossibus fortiter etiam putrepectcta carne adhaerent, sic patriae leges quoad ipsum principatum perpetuum et iura patriae incorruptibiliter servari debent... Cum quibus oportet principem ut patrem agere iam parcendo, iam dispensando, iam puniendo, ut culuislibet saluti convenit, lege semper firma remanente. Nam si lex in quacumque parte inficitur, sicut si nervus laeditur in quacumque corporis parte, totum corpus languescit".

62 Ibid., III, no. 594, p. 473.


64 Ibid., VI, "On Enacting or Emending Laws", p. 226.

65 Ibid., VI, p. 224.

66 Ibid., VI, p. 225.

67 Peter Burke, Tradition and Innovation in Renaissance Italy, (London, 1972), pp. 220-221, notes that these concepts may be found in many contemporary statements on the nature of political government, but
he also points out that the analogies were taken less seriously in Italy than elsewhere due to the early development of a rival concept, "il stato". In contrast, Garrett Mattingly, "Changing Attitudes Towards the State During the Renaissance", in W.H. Werkmeister, ed., Facets of the Renaissance, (USC Press, 1959), pp. 25-27, argues that men continued to consider themselves as part of a hierarchically structured organic communitas up to and beyond 1500, and passed judgement on its constituent parts in terms of "how proper they were for that society's overriding final ends".

68 Filarete, Treatise on Architecture, p. 45.
69 Savonarola, De felici progressu, fol. 26v.
71 Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, pp. 30, 37.
73 Albertus Magnus, In Matthaeum, ed., A. Borgnet, (Paris, 1893), VI, 10, xx, p. 266: "Haec autem potestas animata debet esse iustitia, quia rex non tantum debet esse iustus... non torpens vel dormiens, sed viva et vigilans... Et licet rex supra legem sit, tamen non est contrarius legi: et est supra legem, eo quod ipse est viva forma legis...", cited by Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies, p. 133.
74 Savonarola, De felici progressu, fol. 37r.
76 For the concept of the rex inutilis, see Edward M. Peters, The Shadow King, (New Haven, 1970), and Charles T. Davis, "Remigo de' Girolami and Dante: A Comparison of their Conceptions of Peace", Studi Danteschi, 36 (1959), pp. 105-136. The duties of the emperor were formulated precisely by Pope Innocent III and the canonists in the thirteenth-century, including a category of negligence for the non-punishment of criminals and heretics, J.A.

The humanist literature on this debate is reviewed by Hans Baron in his masterful study, The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance, (Princeton University Press, 1966), and N. Rubenstein, "Florence and the Despots: Some Aspects of Florentine Diplomacy in the Fourteenth Century", Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, series 5, 2 (1952), pp. 21-45. Ferrarese contributions to this scholarship, especially their relationship to the writing of dynastic history, have not been studied. Thoughts on the humanist "ambiente" in Ferrara are provided by Garin, "Motivi della Cultura Filosofica Ferrarese nel Rinascimento", pp. 402-431, and Gundersheimer, Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance Despotism, pp. 272-284.

78 Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, p. 82.

79 Ibid., p. 84.

80 Caraffae, De Regentis et Boni Principis Officiis, pars ii, pp. 654, 656.


82 The location of the communal gallows is described in Zam, p. 5, ll. 25-26, p. 9, ll. 16-20, and by Scalabrini, Memorie Storiche delle Chiese di Ferrara, pp. 105-6.

83 The last direct reference to an execution taking place at the communal gallows in the Libro dei Giusztiziati is the burning of Andrea Guardino for counterfeiting in 1471, fol. 6v. But clearly there were exceptions to this rule. For example, Zambotti records the following in 1478: "... Siando conducto uno fiolo de Galasso de Ruberti fora de la città in carretta per esserli talgia la testa per homicidio commesso per lui...", Zam, p. 46, ll. 26-27.


85 Statuta Ferrariae Anno MCCLXXXVII, IV, 42, p. 190.

86 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, III, i, 23, fol.

87 Chiappini, Gli Estensi, p. 181.

89 ASMo, ASEý Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1489, reg. 28, c. 231r. For the registers of the giustiziati, see ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Libri de' Malefici, 1454, 1461-2, 1473, 1486, 1488-9, 1495, 1498, 1500, 1504-5. Most of the surviving registers are in a state of considerable disrepair. As a valid source for the study of Ferrarese crime, the libri have extremely limited value.

90 See Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 294v.

91 See LG (list of abbreviations).

92 Above, Chapter One, n. 169.


94 Most of the evidence points directly to the failure of local police forces to maintain sufficient vigilance and to apprehend law-breakers. A typical example is the execution of "zoliano montachiese da ferrara per ladro et homicida et incantore... pero che 187 furti havea facto et in quelli havea robbato molte giesie in ferrara e havea facto assai male", Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 299v; LC, fols. 11v-12r. Ferrarese statute law provided for the banishment of malefactors accused in absentem unless they gave themselves up for trial (Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, III, i, 52), and it is clear that lists of the baniti were kept. Thus far, I have been unable to determine whether any of the lists survive in the Este archives in Modena and Ferrara. Some thoughts on banishment as a civil measure taken to combat disorder are contained in Martines, "Political Conflict in the Italian City-States", pp. 71-96, and C. Ghisalberti, "Sulla teoria del delitti di lesa maestà nel diritto comune", Archivio Giuridico, 149 (1955), pp. 100-179.


96 Ibid., p. 114. Gundersheimer's study helps to emphasize the need for a re-evaluation of Estensi law making and judicial administration during the Renaissance. Ferrarese scholars have generally tended to avoid the problems. For now, one might consult I Farnetti, "L'evoluzione della giustizia a Ferrara", Atti dell'Academia delle Scienze di Ferrara, 35 (1957-58); Donato Zaccarini, "Delitti e Pene negli Statuti Estensi nel Secolo XVI", Atti e Memorie della Deputazione Ferrarese di Storia Patria, 27 (1928), pp. 3-67; T. Gatti, "Il diritto female del lavoro e
negli statuti con particolare referimento agli statuti ferraresi"; Atti e Memorie della Deputazione di Storia Patria per L'Emilia e la Romagna, 2 (1944), pp. 16-32.

97 Gundersheimer has dismissed the "crime-wave theory" owing to the authorship of the anonymous Diario Ferrarese, which he contends may have changed hands during the crucial 1490's. If this be so, "one could suppose that an author more concerned with crime had replaced someone who took it in stride". This is certainly possible, but surely upon the basis of such an assumption the chronicle cannot be wholly dismissed. In order to avoid the chronicle controversy, however, the picture presented has been drawn from the usually reliable Ugo Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 293r.

98 Ibid., fol. 275r.
99 Ibid., fol. 306v; LG, fol. 12v.
100 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 127v.
101 Ibid., fol. 127v.
102 Ibid., fol. 248v.
103 Ibid., fol. 258r, for notice of the feud.
104 Ibid., fol. 251v.
105 Ibid., fol. 252r.
106 Ibid., fol. 251r.
107 Ibid., fol. 260v.
108 Ibid., fol. 268r.
109 Ibid., fol. 265v.
110 Vitale, Memorie/Cronaca, fol. 16r; Biondi, "Streghe ed eretici nei domini estensi all'epoca dell'Ariosto", pp. 175-76. The sorcerer Carlo Sosena was also in correspondence with Francesco Gonzaga, ASMan, AG, busta 1231, 4 July 1488.
111 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 270r. Elsewhere Caleffini remarks how "Ogni homo richi et poveri erano mal contenti in ferrara preter li mastinaci homini et uxurari et inganaturi de homini et magiasturi del sangue de poveri che triomphano et erano portati in palma de mane...", fol. 287r.
112 Ibid., fol. 275r.
113 Ibid., fol. 281v.
114 DF, p. 262, 11. 32-34.
262

115 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1486, reg. 24, c. 184v.

116 ASMo, ASE, Carteggio dei pittori, Busta del pitt. Baldassare d'Este, Baldassare d'Este to Ercole d'Este, 3 November 1493: "... Tuta via che bisogna dire... testimoni non li e il dicto loro, che e vario, se bene e tute pieno de ogni falsita, con tuto cio dicono talmente il male suo che se condannano et se vo le metere a la corda, dove se haveria la verita, et vedeno ben con chi han... Se il zampante li avesse nele mane, come miritariano, averiano mo ditto... ato e mostrato per potere piu de mi, et ultra il male me hano menazato e dicono che mia fiola e mata e una putana, non sio... Queste non mi parono belle cose da comportare che questi giottoni, la de... questa non mi parono (...) questa non e gia la prima fecino maii, che chi li facesse ragione meritiriano tuti la forcha...", cited by Venturi, "L'Arte Ferrarese nel periodo di Ercole d'Este", 6 (1888), pp. 361-62.

117 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Principi e Signorie, Estero, Milano, busta 3, 1215/3, Lodovico Sforza to Ercole d'Este, 1 February 1493.


121 LG, fols. 2v, 3r, 3v, 5v, 6r. In 1476, 29 individuals were executed, fols. 7v-8r; in 1482, 15 (fols. 8v-9r); in 1483, 9 (fol. 9v.); in 1484, 10 (fol. 9v.).

122 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Gridi Ducali Moanoscritti, buste 1-2, and ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, (see listed years in these fondi). Michele Catalano also suggests that Ercole had been convinced of the sinfulness of masquing by the mendicant preachers who frequented the Herculean court, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, I, p. 106. In a letter to Isabella d'Este, Bernardino Prosperi relates how Sigismondo d'Este and several other courtiers, with the assistance of theologians, attempted to disuade the duke of this belief: "Et cusi la cosa e in desputa nanti de sua Signoria cum multi theologi, ma el non pare sina qui chel se possi excusare el Signore", ASMan, AG, busta 1233, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 14 January 1492.

123 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1486-87, reg. 24b, c. 14v. Sanctions became increasingly severe dur-
ing the 1490's. See ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1493, reg. 32, cc. 2r-2v; ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolae registram, sez. C, 1493-96, reg. 11, c. 3r.

124 ASMo; ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 67, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 26 February 1479.

125 See especially the "Crida per Armis", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, reg. 31, 1492, c. 66v: "Et chi non haura da pagare dicta pena pecuniaria, sia punito in la persona, cioe in quattro tracti de corda per qualunque volta contrafara".

126 To my knowledge, the use of extraordinary commission-ers begins with the signoria of Ercole d'Este. Employed in times of crisis, their magisterial powers were virtually unlimited, and frequently, this aroused a considerable degree of hostility from the local captain of justice (the conflict between Matteo Boiardo and Beltramino Cusatru is well-documented in ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio dei Rettori di Reggio, busta 1). The success of these commissions was such that they became a recognized ducal office, and the adjective "extraordinario" was dropped during the reign of Alfonso d'Este. It is also important to note that Ercole employed extraordinary commissioners to collect back taxes and to prosecute debtors to the ducal camera. Thus in May 1487, Ludovico Anguille was sent to Reggio "per cagione de minare la exactione de li debitori di Memoriali de la camera nostra e anche di altre ragione". The Reggiani were required to place soldiers at his disposal to assist the commission, "che anche bisognae fare qualche exequtione per forza con qualche pertinace e desobediente e dicto Ludovigo te richiesa tu in per cum li toi fanti fa di exegela e fare quanto lui te ordinava...", ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolae registram, sez. C, 1486-88, reg. 10, c. 17r.

127 Pietro Sitta, "Saggio sulle Istituzioni Finanziarie del Ducato Estensi", pp. 182-184. Ostensibly, as Sitta notes, this measure was taken "per stimolare ogni cittadino a cooperare al mantenimento dell'ordine e diminuire le transgressioni alla legge comune" (p. 184). However, it soon became apparent to Ercole that the extention of opportunities for reward could supplement the income of the ducal camera by increasing the number of condemnations in which the camera shared in the proceeds. Legislative steps were taken to guarantee a ducal mitade. See the decree, "In favorem camere per condemnationibus applicare Camere ducale", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1496, reg. 36, cc. 127r-128r, which formally recognized what had become standard practice by the mid-1490's (see also the decree concerning the spending of foreign currency in Ferrara issued the previous year which repeated the standard sanctions "excepto per lo applicare de le pene": the
camera was allotted a share, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1495, reg. 35, c. 29r.

128 For the general procedural rules of Borsian policy, see the "Ordini et modi da essere servati per la camera et per li facturi generali... sopra la Intrata del nostro Illmo. Signore Duca", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1469, reg. 14, cc. 14v-15r. It was conventional to allot a share to the secret accuser in the Borsian era, but opportunities were carefully restricted, and the officials in charge of the libri memoriali were required to keep diligent records of payments "fata per la parte che tochinata alo accusatore".

129 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolarum registrum, sez. C, 1476, reg. 4, c. 204r.

130 ASMo, ASE, Libri Camerali Diversi, Intrata et Spesa de la chamera, 1460, seg. GG, reg. 32, c. 15r.

131 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, III, ii, 1; Bellini, Dell'antica lira di Marchesini, p. 109.

132 Sitta, "Saggio sulle Istituzioni Finanziarie del Ducato Estense", p. 182, accords blasphemy offences a position in ducal intrate accidentali, but it is clear from the number of condemnations and the ruthless manner in which offenders were sought out and prosecuted that Ercole considered blasphemy revenue as an ordinary fiscal intrata.

133 This is indicated by the Herculean orders to the fattori generali in ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1486, reg. 24, c. 184v, when the duke demanded that the annual quotas for blasphemy and other crimen peculatis be raised from 6000 to 8000 LM, "perche la brigata non e gia piu diventata sancta che la sia stata per el passato".

134 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1482, reg. 23, c. 53r.

135 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1472, reg. 16, c. 35r.

136 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, III, ii, 61-62, for gambling in a Ferrarese church and other restricted areas, for running a gambling premises or possessing gambling paraphernalia.

137 Fines are not specified in the statute law, but it is evident that the camera intended to benefit from the proceeds: "... humelmente expone il fideles servo zoane du taia come ali giorni proximi passati lui sia stato in carcere de commissione del Cap. de Justitia de la cita vostra de ferrara et questo per una condemnatione a lui data per dicto Cap. de lire
cento de marchesane ala camera de v. ex. et questo per cagione de zuogo, et perche il servitore e pauvro et mendico et piu presto morirebbe in preghie che potare pagare uno soldo per tanto supplica a v. Ex. che quella se digni de farge la gratia libera..."

ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1492, reg. 31, c. 68r. See also a petition of 1479, reg. 21, c. 101v, where another accused "de giocho prohibito" pleads that he has no means of paying his fine "sel non giocesse de novo e vincesse...".

138 "Pacta postriboli", in Statuta, provisiones et de-chretab gabellarum civitatis Ferrarie, (Ferrara, 1624), II, pp. 67-69; Sitta, "Saggio sulle Istituzioni Finanziarie del Ducato Estense", p. 151; Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, V, pp. 259-262. The taxes were collected by an appaltatore (see below, nn. 151-53), thus Zuane Grego, "conductore del datio de le mamole", was obliged to pay the camera 600 LM annually in return for the privilege of collecting the state tax on prostitution in 1434 (the first official record of these agreements): ASMo, ASE, Libri Camerali Diversi, Intrata et Spesa, 1434, seg. A, reg. 1, cc. 11r, 157v.

139 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 55v.

140 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, appendices, fols. 226r-226v for the text of the proclamation, and Zam, p. 6, 11. 14-18.

141 Zam, p. 36, 11. 30-34. In 1501, the public brothel was moved to the environs of the church of S. Agnese, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis decretorum archetypa, sez. B, 1491-1505, reg. 11, c. 60r.

142 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, appendices, fol. 226v.

143 Zam, p. 166, 11. 10-15: "O sceleritá nephanda, o crudeltá intolerabile, o caxo inaudito che un fiolo, per essere corecto dal padre per li acti meretricii e femene lascive, siando vechio, pensatamente, a posta, desmentegato che sii al mondo per il patre, habia havuto ardimento in luogo publico, da mezo di, bastonarlo insino al sangue e poi amazarlo con ferri, talmente ch'el genitore sii amazato dal genito senza offexe". Another similar case is recorded in 1487, p. 180, 11. 27-32.

144 Zam, p. 62, 11. 19-32.

145 "Proclama Meretricum", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1489, reg. 28, cc. 135v-136r, which repeats the legislation of the decrees in 1477 and 1479 but with more severe penalties.

146 Zam, p. 209, 11. 15-18.
ASMan, AG, busta 1235, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 21 September 1497.

For example, Zambotti records how "Messer Tomaxo di Arienti, scholare de leze ferrarese immascherato, dette de uno giastura piena de merda suxo la faza a la mogliere del Machagnano brentadore, per il che fuzi et fu de commission del duca nostro bandito", p. 72, ll. 27-30, and how an outraged father flung excrement on the door to the home of a Ferrarese merchant who had violated his daughter, p. 272, ll. 18-20. Following the directives of communal law concerning prostitutes and their public humiliation with "sterco", Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, appendices, fol. 226r, a woman of low morals was seized during Carnival celebrations in 1493, and the magistrate "fu roto susa la faza... un ingistara de merda", Caleffini; Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 305v.

In addition, the offender would have been "conduci ad locum publicum per vim cum familia domini potestatis, vel alis, quos elegerit d. iudex massarie communis ferrarie precedentemente sono tamburi, et aliorum instrumentorum". Husbands of offenders were displayed "super una careta cum duobus cornibus irci sive bovis in capite per loca publica civitatis ferrarie", while other relations (mother, father, brother, tutor etc.) "ponatur ad berlinam et ibi stare debeat arbitrio d. iudicis massarie, et inde relaxetur eius arbitrio", Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, V, v, 22-24, fols. 177r-177v.

This not only applied to communal statute laws, but to the restrictive rules of the matricole of the Arti as well. In 1481, for example, the local shoemakers petitioned the duke complaining of a "manchato de justizia" because their livelihood was being threatened by individuals who ignored the monopoly protections accorded their profession, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolarum registrum, sez. C, 1481, reg. 7, c. 180r.

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Ufficiali Camerali, busta 1, Bonvicino dalla Carte to Borso d'Este, 3 March 1466.


Ibid., p. 177. The membri de li libriccioli were those commodities subject to a special tax paid by consumers on goods which had been acquired outside the city: "Membro de Libriccioli, che si riscuote a ragione di 10% di tutti li marzedelli, vini et bestiami che vengono dentro la città et si contrattano fuori nel distretto...", Statuta, provisiones et dechreta gabellarum civitatis Ferrarie, III, p. 18.

"Ad factores generales: Dilectissimi nostri. Qui inclusi li capitali et pacti del datio nostro del vino a spina et che se vende a minuto, facti e conclusi
cum m. Nicolo di Coadi spetiale, pertanto ve dicemo et commettemo che voi in nostro nome et della camera nostra ge ne faciati lo Instrumento della afficto al dito Nicolo per anni quatro firmi proximo futuri che commenciarono m. Kal. de zenaro proximo 1488 pagando lo anno L. 4400 marchesane a quatrini moneta lunga et corrente per la terra senza lagio, ni sopra lagio alcuno secundo, et per quello modo che se contiene in dicti Capituli et pacti", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1487-88, reg. 24b, c. 8v.


155 "Capituli et Pacti del dato del vino a spina facti et conclusi per la Camera ducale cum m. Nicolò di Coadi spetiale", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, 1487-88, reg. 24b, cc. 8v-10v, at c. 9r, cap. vi.

156 Ibid., c. 8v.

157 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, III, ii, 58.

158 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1488, reg. 27, c. 94r.

159 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1495, reg. 35, c. 25r.

160 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1488, reg. 27, c. 157v. It is evident that at an early stage in his reign, Ercole had become convinced that the fraudulent activities of his own officials were responsible for the drop in fiscal revenue which normally accrued to the camera. In 1481, for instance, the duke wrote to the Maestri di conti in Modena demanding that action be taken against officials and ordinary citizens who, apparently in collusion, had contrived to defraud the Modenese tax records: "... volemo che per quanto haveti cara la gratia nostra, et se mai pensati de fare cosa sincera e justa, et che ne habia a piacere, debiati diligentissimamente et cum ogni vostro ingegno et sentimento esaminare, pensare, et investigare tutte quelle vie et modi, per li quali possa essere sta fraudato lo estimo predicto, aprendo ben li occhii et lo intelllecto a questa parte, cum fargli quella debita et conveniente provisione che vi parera rechiedare la natura de simili fraudi per succorso de la verita et conservazione del estimo, et de le ragione di poveri contadini, senza havere rispetto a persona alcuna, sia de che conditione o grado se voglia...\"

161 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1488, reg. 27, c. 178v.
162 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1492, reg. 31, c. 158r.

163 Ibid., c. 158v, "Relatio mag. Antonii marie guarnierii in favorem dicti Joannis hieronymi pro absolvsi frenda".

164 According to Sittal, "Saggio sulle Istituzioni Finanziarie del Ducato Estense", pp. 173-180, the collection of the dazi provided the largest single source of communal (and hence ducal) revenue.

165 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Ufficiali Camerali, busta 1, Antonio Maria Guarniero to Ercole d'Este, 30 November 1487.

166 Guarniero's calculations are to be found in a second letter in Ibid., busta 1, Antonio Maria Guarniero to Ercole d'Este, 30 November 1487.

167 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1497, reg. 37, c. 42v. Ercole's order merely confirmed a state of affairs which had existed since the Venetian War. The Consiglieri di Justitia were already petitioning for their annual stipends in 1488, as were judges and notaries, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1488, reg. 27, c. 151v.

168 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1492, reg. 31, c. 143r.


170 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, III, ii, 74. LG, 1455 (2), fol. 3v; 1459 (2), fol. 4v; 1463 (1), fol. 5r; 1467 (1), fol. 5v; 1469 (2), fol. 6r; 1471 (2), fol. 6v; 1491 (2), fol. 11r; 1496 (1), fol. 13v.

171 See the decrees concerning "spending and possession" in ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1490, reg. 29, c. 167v, and Mandati, 1495, reg. 35, c. 29r.

172 Ducal requests were for golden ducats which, according to Herculean proclamations, were neither to be circulated nor possessed within the borders of his state. However, when Ercole sought to finance the entertainments he had planned for Ludovico Sforza in 1493, he issued the following demand for a loan to a Modenese nobleman: "... nui siamo in pensiero de honorare sua excellentia quanto sia possibile per il quale effecto ni bisognano dinari in bona summa come poteti molto ben pensare ni e forza richiedere li amici in questo nostro bisogno maxime quelli quali speremo che non ci debano venire scarsi come speremo di vui per lamor e fede la qual semper ni haveti dimostrato in ogni
caso. Pero vi preghiamo ex strengemo questo più poss-
emo che ci vogliati servire in presto de ducati
cinquecento doro senza farni exccusazione alcuna..."
ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis
I epistololarum registrum, sez. C, 1493-1496, reg. 11,
c. 22r.

173 See below, pp. 193-95.

174 The lingering threat of invasion by the French is
partially blamed for the miserable conditions in
Ferrara by local chroniclers. See especially Vitale,
Memorie-Cronica, fol. 28v, for an analysis of the
year 1496 "che fu mediocre".

175 The most recent formulation of this thesis is to be
found in Piromalli, La Cultura a Ferrara al Tempo di
Ludovico Ariosto, pp. 19-62.

176 The notion that the construction of the Herculean
Addizione attracted a large foreign work force which
frequently turned to crime to support itself is the
explanation offered by Pardi, "Prefazione" to Zam,
pp. xxxi-xxxvi. See the comments of Chiappini, Gli
Estensi, pp. 177-82, and Gundersheimer, "Crime and

177 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1497, reg.
37, c. 91v.

178 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1496, reg.
36, c. 125r.

179 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1488, reg.
27, c. 29v.

180 Zam, p. 70, ll. 28-33.

181 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1481, reg.
22, c. 6r.

182 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1497, reg.
37, c. 68v. Similar condemnations are recorded in
Mandati, 1490, reg. 29, c. 27r (a whole village)
and c. 135r; 1494, reg. 34, c. 179r.

183 A common complaint in most ordinary petitions after
1484. See for example ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera,
Mandati, 1486-88, reg. 25, c. 4r; 1489, reg. 28, c.
95r; 1488, reg. 27, c. 29v. The desperation of the
contadini is clearly illustrated in a petition from
a village, which records how individuals were starv-
ing to death because of the collection of back taxes:
"Et per la guera et morbo grandissimo fuseno desfati
dele persone... Per tanto divotamente ricoreno ali
pedi de V. Illma. S. pregando quella amore dei se
voglia dignare comettere che intuto et per tuto tal
debito sia cancellato, et che li sia messo perpetuo
silentio, et che al poveri servitori sia restituti li
soi pigni libere che le spese li hano tolti li
Comandatori che per questa via non siano manzati et consumati et basta che basta che sono rimasti disfatti de le persone et de la roba per modo tale che non posser vivere per la sua grandissima calamita...

184 Private citizens also urged the duke to render summary justice against their debtors: "... humelmente expone... Zacharia Zamboto herede de olim Zoanne Zamboto, cum sit, che dovendo haveri bona somma de dinari da piu et diverse persone per cagione de speciaria nel tempo del dicto m. zoanne le quale volendo il servitore gravare, bisognara andasse in palazo nanti al vicaro on al judice del comune, et perche il servitore e occupato per modo che non poteria andare ogni giorno in palazo ad fare li facti sue, supplica a v. ex. che se digni de gratia commettere alo exactore de la ducale camera che gravi dicti debitori facendo al servitore ragione summaria et breve et expedita cognita viritate et more camera", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1490, reg. 29, c. 27r.

185 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, III, ii, 48.

186 Ibid., III, ii, 24. The wording of the statute is very general, describing the differences between licenced and unlicenced arm-bearers and a scheme of fines (of unspecified amounts). Given the frequent extra-statutary orders dealing with weaponry, the permutations of the offence were often complicated. For instance, one young man was condemned "per haveri uno cortello el quale fu ritrovato essere magior de mesara (length not recorded)" for which he was fined 25 LM, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1489, reg. 2a, c. 200v.

187 For example, two bakers who were condemned "per essere ritrovati fare il pane e pestarlo con li pedi e haveri le gambe marze, e metteano la lissia in lo pane per farlo piu mole", were placed in the communal pillory near the campanile of the cathedral, and suffered the further indignity of being pelted with eggs by young boys throughout the day, Zam, p. 63, 11. 30-31, 64, 11. 1-4.

188 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1496, reg. 36, c. 129r.

189 Ibid., c. 76v.

190 For the construction of the debtor's prison, see Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, IV, p. 160.

191 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1493, reg.
ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1494, reg. 34, c. 14v.

Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 244v.

Especially magisterial offices. See the requirements for the offices of podestà, giudice, sindicus, etc., Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, I, 1-14; Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, II, pp. 268-270.

A study of the communal police forces within the Estensi domini is needed, but see now Bowsky, "The Medieval Comune and Internal Violence: Police Power and Public Safety in Siena", pp. 8-12, for the general background.

Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, I, l.

Ibid., III, ii, 73.

Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, "Bulleta de Soldati", fols. 71r-71v.

Each year, "omnes et singule contracte civitatis ferrarie teneantur elligere aliquidos homines... deputati ad custodiam rerum que salvanda fuerit ab incendio...", the contrada of S. Romano 20 men, S. Stefano di Boccacanale 16 men, all others 10 men, Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, "De custodia rerum tempore incendi et de furto", V, v, 42. For the 24 subdivisions of the city, see Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, V, p. 258.

ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1493, reg. 33, c. 222v: "... et come ni persuasmo farai, et cussì te dicemo havere recevute da nui per gratif-
icatione et honoranti de dicto officio lire cento-
cinquanta de marchesane, le quale ni hai facto de
dare et exbursare per questa nostra concessione...".

See below, pp. 198-200.

ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1492, reg. 31, c. 144v.

Zam, p. 199, ll. 22-25.

Ibid., p. 210, ll. 34-35.

DF, p. 183, ll. 18-26.

Equicola, Annali di Ferrara, fol. 69r, identifies a single assassin by the name of Giorgio Cassela da Reggio, "et questo perchc essendo Podesta haveva fatto dare molti trati di corda contro ragione al detto Girolamo".

An invaluable study employing categories of offences
has been recently conducted for the Comune of Brescia during the reign of Pandolfo III Malatesta by Giorgetta Dosio, "Criminalità ed emarginazione a Brescia nel primo Quattrocento", Archivio Storico Italiano, 136 (1978), pp. 113-64. Historians now appear to be agreed that categories of offences provide the best conceptual approach to criminology. See for example, Paulette Leclercq, "Delits et répression dans un village de Provence", Le Moyen Age, 82 (1976), pp. 539-555, and Carl J. Hammer, Patterns of Homicide in a Medieval University Town: Fourteenth-Century Oxford", Past and Present, 78 (1978), pp. 3-23. The historical evolution of offence definition in Italian criminal law is surveyed by Pertile, Storia del Diritto Italiano, V, pp. 421-676.

208 John Hale, "Violence in the Late Middle Ages: A Background", in Violence and Civil Disorder in Italian Cities 1200-1500, p. 36.

209 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 67, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 26 February 1479.

210 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolatarum registrum, sez. C, 1476, reg. 4, c. 132r (see also in this register c. 110r).

211 In 1481, Ercole was forced to intervene personally in a riot which threatened the bank of two money-lenders "dove ge son le robbe del citadini e zintil-homini, e anche de la Caxa Da Este". Rumours that the bankers had crucified a young girl whipped up mob hysteria, and the duke was obliged to threaten the crowd with death unless it dispersed peacefully, Zam, p. 92, ll. 4-19.

212 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 125r. IG, fol. 8v.

213 Hale, "Violence in the Late Middle Ages", p. 37.

214 Davis, "The Rites of Violence", p. 163.

215 Examples of official abuse abound in the registers of the Mandati, and need not be listed at length here. It is interesting to note, however, that riots were often instigated by members of the local police. Between December 1500 and February 1501 alone, there are five wholesale brawls recorded between the duke's balestrieri and spadacieri (birri), DF, p. 261, ll. 7-10, 263, 11. 24-25, 34-35, 265, 11. 36-37, 266, 11. 27-28.

216 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1490, reg. 29, c. 38v. See also 1479, reg. 21, c. 39v, and 1492, reg. 31, c. 144v, for cases where individuals were wrongfully imprisoned for tax-evasion.
217 "Quos exequitiones alique non impediantur", Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, appendices, fol. 226v, 18 March 1476.


219 LG, fols. 4v, 5r, 8r.

220 LG, fol. 10r. Zambotti agrees that the execution was summary, but records that the miscreant "fu impicato a le fenestre del palazzo", Zam, p. 200, 11. 24-30.

221 "Et insino adi ultimo de aprile se impico alla corda de le Campane de la giesia de s. benedocto burgo de ferrara Silvestro che gubernava don Ipolito fiolo del Duca de ferrara. Non se intenden perche et mor-ite...", Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 246v.

222 San Giorgio, Storia del tradimento fatto verso il Duca Borso, in Cappelli, "La congiura dei Pio signori di Carpi", p. 393.

223 ASMO, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1489, reg. 28, c. 87v.


226 Albertus de Gandino, Tractatus Maleficiorum, edition dedicated to Ludovico Maria Sforza, (Venice, 1494).

227 Jacopo di Belvisio, Practica criminalis, (Lyon, 1515); Bonifacio Vitalini, Tractatus de Maleficiis, (Lyon, 1555).

228 Angelus de Gambilionis Areiatus, Tractatus de Male- ficiis (additionibus optimi practici D. Augustini
Bonfrancisci Arimensis), (Colonaie Aggripae, 1559); Ippolito dei Marsili, Practica criminalis, (Lyon, 1546).

229 Aegidii Bossii patricii mediolan., Tractatus varii qui omnem fere criminalem materiam excellenti doctrina completeuntur, (Venice, 1584); Tiberius Decianus, Tractatus criminalis utriusque censurae, (Venice, 1614); Giulio Chiaro, Practica civilis etque criminalis cum additionibus, (Venice, 1614); Prosperi Farinaciij Praxis et theoricne criminalis libri, (Lyon, 1534).


231 Pertile; Storia del Diritto Italiano, V, p. 43, records Gambilioni's death in the year 1451, as do most Italian encyclopedias, but this is clearly mistaken. Secco-Suardo, "Lo Studio di Ferrara", p. 158, produces documentary evidence which shows Gambilioni as a salaried member of the university staff (see Documenti, D, pp. 227-259) until 1461, the year of his death.


233 Valenti, in Ibid., p. 20, gives a diametrically opposed view, arguing that "i consigli non vengono mai menzionati nemmeno negli atti marchionali poi ducali come concorrenti alla formazione della volontà del Signore, e la loro figura, toite le attribuzioni giurisdizionali... fu tutt' al più quella di organi puramente consultativi". See also the comments of Chiappini, Gli Estensi, pp. 134-35, and Gundersheimer, Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance Despotism, pp. 56-57, 142-143.

234 ACSF, Archivio Segreto del Magistrato, reg. 6, no. 1, pp. 38-39, cited by Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, IV, p. 28.

235 Ibid., reg. 6, no. 1, p. 39.

236 ACSF, Archivio Segreto del Magistrato, reg. 7, no. 4, pp. 68-69.


238 A review of these texts and of the new principles in criminal evidence and procedure is conducted by Carlo Calisse, "Principi di Diritto Penale nei Giuristi del Rinascimento", in Studi di Storia e Diritto in Onore di Arrigo Solmi, (Milan, 1940), I, pp. 3-18.

Gambilioni, *Tractatus de Maleficiis*, "Qui habeat merum imperium?", p. 27, 1.


However, the ultio was solely consonant with a legitimate imperium, Ibid., "qui habeat merum imperium?", p. 27, 1-ix, p. 51, i-ii.

Ibid., pp. 458-459, xlili-xlilix; *Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie* 1456, "De forma procedendi super accusationibus", III, 1-12. The procedure of appeals was formulated in the fourteenth-century by Bartolus, *De poenis, in Commentari in Primam Digesti* (Lugdunij 1547), fol. 208v: "Sententia corporalis, quod non possit mandari executioni de ea quae fit ab homine intra decem dies qui dantur ad appellandum".


Ibid., p. 566, iv. A full account of the rationale behind execution post mortem is provided by Chiaro, *Practicam Criminalem, in Opere Omnia*, (Lugduni, 1600), V, q. 51, xv, p. 193: 

Nam fuit statim publice ductus per civitatem et vias publicas, et igne crematus. Ita etiam quandoque visisse sorvari in vilibus, et publicus latronibus... Et ergo vidi aliquando delinquentes, qui in actu capturem a satellitibus occisi fuerant, suspendi ad aliorem terrorem, et hoc quando delictum erat notorium. Similiter vidi suspendi quendam incognitum, qui aggressus fuerat quendam, et contra eum scelopum exoneravit, licet enim fuisset ille incognitus in illa rixa interfectus, iussit tamen Senatus illum furcis suspendi. Sic etiam vide alios qui pendente processu seipsos inter fecerant, furcis publice suspendi..."


LG, fol. 10r; Caleffini, *Chroniche del Duca Ercole*, fol. 254v.
The possibility of executing a criminal post mortem emphasizes the ceremonial nature of public punishment in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, and one is bound to argue, the use of the corpse as Staatssymbolik. The cadaver takes its place in an iconography of princely sovereignty, Samuel Y. Edgerton, "Maniera and the Mannaia: Decorum and Decapitation in the Sixteenth-Century", in F.W. Robinson and S.G. Nichols, eds., The Meaning of Mannerism, (Hanover N.H., 1972), pp. 67-103, and idem, "Icons of Justice", pp. 23-38.

LG, fol. 6v; DF, p. 75, ll. 30-40; Caleffini, Croniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 20v.

Gambilioni, Tractatus de Maleficiis, p. 458, xlii.

An intimate connection between the juridical and moral orders was made early on by Augustine, who equated the commission of crime with the commission of sin, Hartigan, "Saint Augustine on War and Killing", p. 199, an equation which provided the conceptual framework for medieval and Renaissance inquisitionsprozess. It also had considerable influence over the technology of punishment. See H.C. Lea, Superstition and Force, (London, 1896).


Ibid., q. 3, c. 1, excerpt trans., Russell, The Just War in the Middle Ages, p. 73.

Ibid., Causa xxiii, q. 5, c. 17.

Ibid., Causa xxiii, q. 5, c. 17.

Ibid., q. 3, c. 6; q. 5, cc. 13, 16, 18, 30, 41.

Ibid., q. 4, cc. 18, 25, 35, 44.

Ibid., see the texts in quaestio 2.


Caraffae, De Regentis et Boni Principis Officiis, pars iii, p. 661; Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, pp. 33-34.

Angelo Poliziano, The Pazzi Conspiracy, trans., Eliz-
See especially the treatment of the corpses of the veleschi conspirators in 1476, DF, p. 91, 11. 12-32, 92, 11. 1-36; Zam, p. 15, 11. 26-29, 16, 17, 18, 11. 1-35; Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, "Guerra fra messer Nicolò da Este et ferraresi", fols. 78v-80r.

We are fortunate to have an artistic impression (crude though it may be) of an execution in the piazza known as "Il Supplizio", which is contained in the LG, fols. 17v-18r. The artist has captured the full horror of the scene, with the executioner swinging his sword towards the bared neck of the condemned, and a priest presenting a crucifix before the eyes of the victim. The tribunal is congested with armed soldiers, magistrates, the Notario de' Malefici reading the sentence and holding the bachetta. At the top of the stairs leading to the scaffold are two members of the Battuti della Morte holding tavollette (religious icons), and at the bottom of the stairs are another dozen Battuti, who wait to transport the corpse to its resting place. Three executions have already taken place, and their dismembered bodies lie in a heap beside the condemned.

AAF, Residui Ecclesiastici, Confraternitas batutorum nigrorum Sancte Marie Albe a morte nuncupati, for the original matricole of 1378, now published in Capitoli da osservarsi dai fratelli di Confraternita della Confraternita della Morte, (Ferrara, 1678), and in Tommaso Gnoli, Dell'Origin, utilità ed uffizi dei confratelli della morte in Ferrara, (Rome, 1840). See also Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, V, pp. 263-64, and Scalabrini, Memorie storiche delle Chiese di Ferrara, I, pp. 344-45, II, pp. 82-84, the latter being the source for the quotations used in the text. The most recent examination of the activities of the Battuti is Lombardi, "Le Corporazione di Arti e Mestieri a Ferrara dal 1173 al 1796", pp. 10-11, where the rota is analyzed.


Edgerton, "Icons of Justice", p. 25.
275 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 46.


278 Gambilioni also suggests that the interim ten-day appeal should be shortened if the citizenry are disgruntled or threaten violence, *Tractatus de Maleficiis*, p. 563, xxii.

279 Ibid., p. 570, xxxvi-xxxix.


286 See for example the plague year of 1502, recorded in the LG, fol. 15r.


288 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 73-104.

289 Ibid., p. 17.


292 Statuta Civitatis Ferrariae 1456, III, ii, 45: "Statuitur quod omnes condamnationes et absolutiones quae fiunt per dominum potestatem et alios officiales et rectores civitatis ferrarie super aliquibus maleficiis vel eorum occasione et eis pro damnis datis flant et fieri in consilio publico sive general curie d. potestatis vel arengo et sonata campana ut moris est; culus campane pulsatio pro citatione legitima habeantur ad sententiam audiendum et aliter facto ipso iure non valeat".

293 Ibid., III, ii, 46.
The Borsian statutes take the reader up to the "bell-ringing", and do not include any further illumination upon the judicial procedures of execution.

Gambilioni, *Tractatus de Maleficiis*, p. 555, i.

The execution of Pio is described in detail by most contemporary chroniclers. It is interesting to note that in his relation of the events, San Giorgio records how Pio and Andrea da Varegnana "cum corde ligati guardavano, circumdati per le large et publice strade de la cità, ne la fortissima rocha del Leone, la quale Castello vecchio se nomina, cum la facia coperta conducti furno: perchè se cum il volto scoperto fusseron stati conducti, non è senza suspicione dal furore del popolo stati fatti in milli pezzi serìanno", *Storia del trãdimento fatto verso il Duca Borso, in Cappelli, "La congiura dei Pio signori di Carpi", pp. 392-93. This is in marked contrast to the actual execution, "la quale a tuto il populo uno horribile spectaculo è stata, havemo visato", p. 381.

The best example of a "dialogue of confession" is the execution of Antonio da Lignano in 1476, when the condemned was questioned on the tribunal by Agostino de' Bonfranceschi. His responses detailing complicity in treasonous acts against the duke amount to a ceremonial confession of guilt, *Zam*, p. 26, ll. 1-10.

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ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, *Carteggio di Referendari, Consig-

ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 132, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 27 June 1493.

Caraffae, De Regentis et Boni Principis Officiis, pars iii, p. 655.

No official statement appears to have been issued by Ercole concerning capital punishment in the piazza, though it seems reasonable to conclude that the translation of punishment scenography into the centre of the city was undertaken to combat a significant escalation in the rate of crime. It is interesting to note that Ercole was not alone in altering penal customs. The Duke of Milan also executed criminals inside the city, issuing the following decree in 1477: "La morte si eseguiva a Milano fuori della città, nisi condannati contra statum, aut tale crimen commiserint, quod pro exemplo et maiore sceleris excrezione intra moenia puniri mereantur", ASM, Decreto Ducale, 1477, cited by Pertile, Storia del Diritto Italiano, V, p. 267, n. 36. The new practice was reflected in the opinions of Agostino Bonfranceschi: "Tu autem in hac materia addej quod dubito quod ista conclusio non sit falsa, et damno ego istos iudices, qui in loco ubi delictum fuit factam puniunt malefactores, idem quando ad fenestras palatii suspenderunt reos, vol ad regioriam, ubi rebelles principum suspenduntur, et non faciunt executiones suas in loco consueto", Tractatus de Maleficiis, p. 556, B, i.

The legal treatment of the condemned is described in some detail by Gambilioni, for instance, the punishment meted out to the arsonist: "Secundo casu prim. quando incendium committitur lata culpa, et tunc secundum Iac. pro magno incendio imponitur poena corporalis, tamen mitior quam pro dolo; ut 1. fortuito ff. de incen. nui nau. et secundum eum speciale est nam peona mortis vel quasi mortis naturalis, ut cum membrum truncatur, regulantur non imponitur, nisi pro dolo: fallit secundum eundem, nisi in incendario: qui verum intelligitur in vili persona", Tractatus de Maleficiis, p. 325, x.

LG, fols. 9v: "Adi xxx de otobre uno Vergilio di malviti da sancto martino del ferrarexe ditto el balestra per havere assassinato dui scholari todeschi nelle vale de male albergo, fu strasinatto et poi taliatto la testa et poi squartatto impiazza suso uno tribonale et poi li quarti forno posti uno
alatore de la fossa laltro ne le vale de male albergio et la sua testa in capo de una lanza suso la tore da la fossa", llr: "Adi xx ditto uno Pelegrino ditto el Volla da santto Nicolo homo humicidiale fo impichatto ale fenestre del comun de Ferrara et poi squartato implaza et li quarti fu mandatti a impichare a reagenta dove haveva comesso homicidio", 16r-16v: "Forono per stado ducale incopadi poi tagliato la testa con una manara poi squarati in quattro quarti sopra un tribonale su la piazza de ferrara... li lor corpi in quarti forno impichati ale tre porte de terra nova de ferrara, le reste de epsi forno poste incima ala tore dela rengiera in capo di tre lance a terere de ogni malfatore...".

317 Caleffini, Chroniche del Ducn Ercole, fol. 23r; LG, 6v.


320 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, "Como fu per essere impichato Agostino de ferro", fol. 56v.

321 LG, fols. 2v, 3v, 4v, 6v.


323 The following executive order reveals the apparent arbitrary nature of the amnesties granted to murderers: "Dilectissime noster: Ii furono a mesi passati condannati per il capitando nostro de justitia Mascharone di mascaroni da hostellato ad capitis amputationem et ad confiscationem eius bonorum per imputatione datoli chel havesse facto amazare on consultato chel fosse morto uno morando, et zoanne mascaroni suo nepote in ducati mille per essere imputato havere dato recapito al Zago dal marino el quale era bannito sechando che il tutto apparo per processi et sententie date contra loro et facte et formare ne li acti de Antonio rodo Notaro. Et perche noi siamo pregati che vogliamo far gratia ali dicti mascaroni et zoanne de dicto condemnacione, et volendo usare verso loro clementia, volomo et imponri note per questa nostra, la quale sera soprascripta se nostra propria mano che dobbi fare cancellare et depinar le dicte condemnatione contra dicti Mascaro-ne et Zoanne, percheExcellentissime gie ne facemo libera gratia...", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1495, reg. 35, c. 30v. For an example of unreasonable mercy granted to convicted counterfeiters, see 1492, rog. 31, c. 202v. I have located only four references to mercy granted for blasphemy, and significantly, it was the duchess who intervened on these occasions.

324 ASMo, ASE, CMPDEj Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolarum registram, sez. C, 1481, reg. 7, c. 179r.
The most comprehensive public amnesty in the Herculean era was proclaimed at the duke's accession, which included mercy for the supporters of Niccolò d'Este "in bando fuori per nemici et rebelli de la persona propria del prefato nostro Duca hercole et de suo stato"; Caleffini, *Chroniche del Duca Ercole*, fol. 20r.

ASMo; ASE, *Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi*, (a) *Principi Regnanti*, busta 70, Alfonso d'Este to Ercole d'Este, 5 February 1490.

ASMo; ASE, *Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi*, (a) *Principi Regnanti*, busta 58, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 22 June 1487.

ASMo, ASE, *Registri di Camera, Mandati*, 1490, reg. 29, c. 39r.

There is a case, however, where a citizen successfully invoked an amnesty seven years after it was proclaimed to extinguish a debt dating back some thirty-one years, ASMo, ASE, *Registri di Camera, Mandati*, 1479, reg. 21, c. 59r ("... e quando pur fosse tale debito vegneria essere extincto per vigore de le cride facto per parte di v.s. nel tempo de la assumptione de questo suo stato...").

Scalabrinii, *Memorie storiche selle Chiese di Ferrara*, p. 365. The Battuti della Morte also had the privilege of liberating one individual condemned to death and several prisoners from the communal dungeons, p. 345.

Zam, p. 46, ll. 1-2.

Sabadino, *De triumphis religionis*, pp. 87-107.

ASMo, ASE, *Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi*, (a) *Principi Regnanti*, busta 70, Alfonso d'Este to Ercole d'Este, 5 March 1492.

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, *Carteggio dei Rettori Modena e Modenese*, busta 2a, Luchino Marcelli Capitano di Modena to Borso d'Este, 18 December 1470.


Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 142.
THE ORGANIZATION OF URBAN TIME, SPACE
AND HISTORY IN RENAISSANCE FERRARA

Chapter Three

"LA CITTA FESTEGGIANTE": THE FESTIVAL YEAR

Festivals and Festivity:
Theory and Typology

Urban festivals, which played so conspicuous a part in the cultural orientation of civic life in Europe during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, have recently been acknowledged as a legitimate field for historical inquiry. The comparative innovation of the historian's intrusion into the "world of festival", however, a world previously annexed by specialists from a number of other disciplines, does not proceed without difficulty. Several contentious analytical and conceptual problems are wont to render arduous the historian's task of assessing festival's underlying implications for a sociology of urban culture. Symptomatic of current festival historiography are the rigid lines of demarcation drawn between groups of classifying criteria, to some extent illustrated by the multiplication of monographs investigating urban festival culture witnessed during the past twenty-five years. Not only are scholars now keenly aware of festival as a legitimate historical
horizon, but they are also highly conscious of a general modal diversity within the conceptual context of festival itself, and the possible substantive variations upon festive phenomena encompassed by notions of time and space. It is commonly accepted that pre-industrial urban festivals are not ritually monolithic, but rather reflect and convey a broad configuration of cultural associations and functional meanings, some of these mutually exclusive of one another. As we shall see, structural alterations in the collective experience of festal procedure and behaviour offer important testimony to support this thesis.

Although a degree of interaction between different modes of festal experience has often been admitted, the impulse to subdivide festival into watertight compartments continues to exert a powerful influence over all interested branches of research. Each discipline, equipped with its own distinctive tools, skills, and language has contributed to the gradual evolution of a festal classification scheme, which may be summarized briefly as follows: according to frequency (festival periodic or occasional), the social, political, economic, or geographic domain embraced (festival general, local, or particular), the scope and intensity-level of individual participation (festival collective, associative, or private), codes of festal behaviour (festival of adhesion, transgression, or inversion), biological rhythms (life-crisis rites, calendrical rites, or rites of passage), the identity of festival patrons and organizers (festival erudite, bourgeois, or popular), the goals of festival patrons and organizers (festival of commemoration, ex-
planation, or rectification), the artistic or ritual conventions encountered (ceremonial, procession, devotional, dance, games, music, architecture, theatre, carnivalesque). It is not surprising to discover, therefore, that a "vue globale" of festivals has attracted few adherents, inevitably leading to a voluminous and enormously rich literature, but one which often remains non-interdisciplinary. Analysis of urban festivals during the Renaissance in particular, continues to be a province for specialist research and specialist commentary.4

Uppermost in the minds of Renaissance historians, however, has been the need to formulate a meaningful festival typology. That such a vast enterprise of archival and conceptual coordination has not been forthcoming reflects both the multiple problems of methodology and the shortcomings of regional history, which have in the past combined to emphasize the heterogeneous culture of social substrata as opposed to the notion of a homogeneous "culture of community".6 It is indeed tempting to envisage the north Italian urban centre during the quattrocento within the wider context of a cultural diversity; as an amalgamation of craft culture in the plural (shoemaker culture, tailor culture, goldsmith culture, and so on), erudite courtly culture, religious culture, popular culture, apprentice culture, and even youth culture.7 The social anthropology associated with the writings of Lévi-Strauss, Turner, and Leach has also taught us to search for oppositions when interpreting myths, rituals, and other cultural forms. Thus one might represent the structurally distortive "world turned upside
down" of Carnival, charivaris, and rituals of misrule in a two-tiered diametrical opposition: at loggerheads with the formally codified world of civic, dynastic, and religious festivals, and as the exact opposite of everyday life. Nevertheless, it is impossible to ignore several important synthetic problems to which a local survey of urban festivals would necessarily have to address itself. Historians will want to follow the innovative scholarship of Comblin, Trexler, Davis, Ozouf, and Ladurie by linking oppositions together, to see in the urban festival a willingness "to give organizational expression to the internal articulations of society", and to explore their complexity "s'assemblent dans un tout organique unique par son sens et son style". Considerable prudence will naturally be required to entertain these questions within the historical environment of Renaissance Ferrara. Until such time as a reasonable selection of local festive studies is made available, our conclusions upon the nature and meaning of Ferrarese festivals, especially upon the nature of their relationship with the Este signoria, will have to remain tentative. A fundamental contention of the present chapter will nonetheless be that urban festivals in quattrocento Ferrara are conceptually complementary. Together, they form a coherent pattern of collective ceremonialization which can be identified and charted. Initially, our task will be to provide a synthetic perspective of festival, which hopefully will help to deepen our understanding of patterns of Ferrarese ritual. Some preliminary observations upon approaches to festive definition are therefore
in order.

Regarding the definitional problem, much of the valuable interpretive work has focused on festival as a formal "time-construct", that is to say, as a ritually codified event (or sequence of events) of specified duration, occurring outside or in opposition to the ordinary usage and notation of time: a momentary interruption of "la vie sacrée et profane", the occasion of excess and expenditure, a stoppage imposed upon the course of time between the past and the future, or a "temporal juxtaposition", an occasion when individuals find themselves transported into another world, a world devoid of all constituted systems, structures, and culture, an activity connected with no material interest, proceeding within its own boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules, a ritualized action where "present time" is fossilized, providing for an ultra-formal identification and perpetuation of social groups, institutions, and societies. Among these suggestive interpretations of festival are clear points of contention which cannot be easily reconciled. Still, common ground may be distinguished. Festival, according to the general consensus of scholarly opinion, is an extra-temporal concept. It extends beyond the sphere of ordinary human affairs, momentarily suspending obligations countenanced by normal time notation (time-labour divisions or "task-orientation" for example), and substituting new sets of rules to be observed in a specially delineated festive world. The specified time circumscribed by festival, or "festive time", is to be
understood as antithetical to "normal time", or the time spent engaged in the ordinary routine of daily experience. Might not it be objected then, that in this sense festival resists historical inquiry? "The activities of the festival do not endure beyond the time given to them; the expectations satisfied within it do not continue in the period that follows. There is no tomorrow: the evidence of an exuberant squandering of time, of energy and of goods reveals festival's lack of concern with an afterwards". If festivals seldom exhibit an awareness of the linear progression of time, and consequently fall outside the modern view of the historical process, it is equally true that they are seldom without an inbuilt sense of the past. Man's flight into the extra-temporal hinges upon a series of exceptional encounters between the real and the festive world: it is rooted in the temporal. Certain festivals seek to recapture history through a ritual of commemoration, others offer to explain and clarify the special set of circumstances which have inaugurated celebration, still others are manifestly concerned to rectify or to create history. It can be observed that while festivals appear to be historically anachronistic since they are non-aligned with the notion of progress and temporal change, festal celebrations yet enjoin history through their ties with temporal affairs. We must also bear in mind contemporary views of time in their relationship with culture. Commemorative calendar days, for example, provided medieval men with a cycle of natural, spiritual, and historical explanation, but they also evoked a "con-
sciousness of discontinuity or potent interval".\(^{22}\) A causal link between the present and the past, between the natural and the supernatural, between the finite and the eternal, was forged by festive commemoration. A festive construction was placed on temporal coincidences. Yet commemorative festive time, possessed of a "monumental fixity", had its own existence, "without true temporal relevance, for the prescribed period had no value or significance in itself". This medieval attitude to commemorative time has been called "temporal formalism".\(^{23}\)

As one scholar noted recently, fifteenth-century man's sense of time was similarly built on an awareness of discontinuity, "on the shattering difference between the general situation - his presence somewhere in the immeasurable era of full revelation... and the particular situation in which he found himself in this moment or that of his physical existence". Men were committed to a view of time and culture as being discontinuous, a mystery, whose rises, falls, advances, and recessions were explicable only by revelation, "at the same time assuming that the rhythms and continuity of daily experience were guaranteed by divine intervention".\(^{24}\) Historians have sought to explain contemporary views concerning temporal and cultural processes in terms of structural antagonism, that is, a fundamental antithesis between cyclical and linear time:\(^{25}\) "temps vécu et le temps-mesure", "temps de l'Eglise et temps du marchand", "employer's time and free time".\(^{26}\) We may observe something of this contrast with the concept of "festive
time". What initially characterizes festival is a conscious reallocation of temporal resources. The importance of time-reallocation as a factor in the creation of a festal homogeneity, in establishing festival's autonomous, limited, and secluded nature has been signalled by Mona Ozouf:

Festive time, insularly delimited, opens the parenthesis of uncommon days: separated from daily rhythms, men relinquish the serious use of their time, and their ties with ordinary moral and social values become undone. The festival gives bounds to an autonomous activity: there is, then, between the festival and men's daily life an insurmountable antagonism that Nietzsche has well observed. 27

Important changes were afoot in the later Middle Ages regarding the apprehension of time. The emergence of the communal clock and the advent of "professional time" as the arbitrators of private and collective discipline, as the focal points for urban organization, ushered in a sense of time increasingly bound up with the systemization of temporal affairs. 28 The statutes of Ferrara record that the sindici of the Comune were each month required to designate official bell-ringers to sound the hours at a salary of 20 soldi marchesane, with the stipulation that a failure to perform this duty would be penalized by a fine of 2 LM. 29 The first communal orologio appeared in Ferrara when the Marquis Niccolò II d'Este converted a tower of his palace (Torre de Rigo-bello) for this purpose in the year 1361. 30 In May 1472, a second "clock" was installed in the Torre della Prigione (or Torre dei Ribelli, the tower of the Palazzo della Ragione facing the church of S. Romano at the south-west corner of the piazza) to sound the hours in
response to the Torre de Rigobello, and Caleffini tells us that the two official clock-towers were then tended by monks: "In lo anno predicto de mazo fu ordinato che due frate in ferrara sonasseno le hore. La prima frata per la torre de rigobello suso il Canton de la via che va a s. paulo: et sonate quelle gli rispondesse sonando la torre de le pregione che e suso il Canton de s. Romano andare a la via grande de piazza".\(^{31}\) The clocks regulated the official business of the Comune: the sitting of the courts of session and appeal, the hours of public audience in the Palazzo della Ragione, the work-day of salaried communal and cameral officers, the sessions of instruction at the university, the opening and closing of the city gates.\(^{32}\) Jacques Le Goff argued that a pre-occupation with the precise measurement of official time in western Europe had by the early fifteenth-century created a "temps non du cataclysme ou de la fête, mais du quotidien, réseau chronologique qui encadre, emprisonne la vie urbain". A second issue raised in conjunction with official time notation ("temps de l'état") is the notion of a general progress of fiscality, which he saw as the principal stimulus to a gradual transition from a "temps religieux" to a "temps laïque".\(^{33}\)

It would appear that by the mid-fifteenth-century, the so-called new "time-sense" which is historically associated with the commercial enterprise, modes of production and distribution, and overall business acumen of the medieval Italian merchant, had perceptibly altered patterns of work-discipline for city-dwellers. One need look no further than the comprehensive work legislation
enshrined in the matricole of the Arti to confirm the foothold efficient time-labour management had secured in the lives of the communal work force. Shop openings and closures, the regulation of the work-day, the distribution of duties and production quotas, were closely monitored under the ultimate authority of the maestri and their deputies. In Ferrara too, the need for increased fiscal supervision in the face of mounting economic hardship persuaded the Este court to adopt a considerable degree of professionalism in the handling of its international and domestic affairs. As early as 1456, it was determined that ambassadors were overspending during their representations abroad, and henceforth it was decided "che per lofficio del mese lofficiale non se pagi ne faci pagare dinaro alcuno ad alcuno ambassatore ni ad alcuno altro che sia mandato fora per li bisogni de lo Illmo. n.s. senza mandato de sua Illmo. s. suso el quale mandato ge sia expresse specificato li dinari". The accession of Ercole saw stipends granted to ambassadors calculated on the basis of time: the number of days required to reach a particular destination, the duration of the representation, and the time needed to return to Ferrara. Ambassadors were obliged to prepare a record itemizing all expenses made in the execution of their duty for approval by the fattori generali. Perhaps more revealing are the regulations governing payments made to official couriers compiled in June 1475. Here, payments conveyed to couriers were directly linked to specific time sequences. The journey to Naples, for instance, normally took ten days, for which the messen-
ger "debiano havere de ordinario fiorini septe doro largi i quali siano soi franchi cioe che non ne habiano arendere rason alcuna, et dicto pagamento se intendia per lo andare et ritornare": if he failed to reach his destination within the specified time, the courier forfeited one-half of his stipend. When haste was required, bursaries were adjusted accordingly. A commission to reach Naples in nine days was rewarded with eight golden florins, and if a response was requested within the same period of time, "per la sua ritorno la quarta parte"; eight days yielded ten florins "et un terzo", seven days brought fourteen florins "et la mitade". Similar calculations were made for commissions to Rome, Florence, Milan, Venice, and other less important destinations. The courier who squandered his time could expect to be disciplined accordingly. By 1485, salaried members of the ducal household were also subject to a daily timetable. Familiars were obliged to present themselves in the ducal antechamber for inspection "la matina a bonhora... et li stagino sino alhore che la vora andare a tavola mangiato in camera come la sola, ma quon la mangiasse in publico o altrove in convido non se partino che lanno hava disenato". A second roll-call was made in the evening "alhora de la cena". Failure to attend the household muster, either when the duke was in residence or otherwise, was sanctioned by the withholding of salaries:

... sia noto a ciascuno et cussi ordina che chi mancara la matina perda la mita del salario di quello die et il simile chi manchara la sira, et qui manchato la matina e la sira perda tutol die. Quando el
non manchasse per commissione e facende chel havesse
de sua extie., et quando anche ciascuno se present-
asse cum manchamento de li famigli chel ha a tenire
li sera retenuto pro rata. 39

"Le temps du travail se transforme, se précise, se fait
plus efficace", argues Le Goff, "non sans peine". 40

The division of the day into twenty-four equal time
units might show how contemporaries were more perceptive
of a need to make constructive use of their time. 41
Chroniclers acquaint us not only with the chronological
calendar day but also with subdivisions of day-time and
night-time. Events are located in a twenty-four hour
time-span with notarial precision. We are apprised of
the hour of execution, the hour of arrival and departure,
the duration in hours of human actions, the hours of
birth, marriage, investiture, sickness, and death: "Adi
marti 23 di luic ad hore 14 m. Jacobo phillipo grotto de
adria novo ellectio da la universita delle lezisti tolse
el capuzo in vescovado"; "Adi sabbado 6 febbruario hora
23 vena da bologna a ferrara Zoanne di bentivolgi bolo-
naxa con sua comitiva"; "Adi sabbado 20 di Mazo ad hore
x la Ill. madama Duchessa... in castello vechio parturi
et fece uno filiolo maschio"; "Adi 28 aprile ad hore 21
fu fatta lo offerta solenne ala giesia cathedrale";
"MCCCCLVIII, a di xvi de Magio, ad ore 22 1/2, de mer-
cori, Papa Pio Secondo giunse a Sancto Antonio suso il
Polesene... e li stete per quella nocte"; "Adi dicto
doppo dexinara fu fa iostrano... et da hore 18 insine
ad hore 23 duro la iostra". 42 The clock-work precision
demanded by organizers of triumphal entries, banquets,
official receptions, theatrical performances and the
like, similarly convey a sense of a more organized, linear marking of time. That this new "clock-time" was as important to the duke and his officials as it was to the Ferrarese merchants cannot be doubted. The correspondence of Ercole's secretary Siviero Sivieri to the duchess Eleonora, for instance, provides us with remarkably precise itineraries of the busy ducal day: the hearing of petitions "da le xxii hore fino appresso ad una hora di nocte"; an ambassadorial audience "de una hora e meza... et sua extie. li attende cum grande pacientie"; the dispensation of alms to the poor "per una hora la mattina"; and even the time spent engaged in playing chess, "dipoi manzare attese pur al giocho di scachi fino a le xxii hore", or reading, "due sira o tre circa una hora de nocte ha lecto un pezo un libro vulgare che si chiama Josepho che fa intentione de cosse et historie...". The increasing burden of governorship inevitably tended to invest the movements and actions of the signore with temporal exactitude.

The human apprehension of time was slowly becoming secularized during the fifteenth-century, and in the process, "as the values of this world crowded in, something difficult to signify was crowded out". But one must not imagine this inexorable operation as a fait accompli even by the seventeenth-century. For rural-dwellers, suggests Gaignebet, "la manière dont... on compte le temps, se distingue absolument du compte officiel". The fundamental opposition of day and night still delineated work-time for the agricultural labourer, the rhythm of the seasons, the times of planting and
harvest, human biological stages, and the forty day lunar cycle continued to establish a formal relationship between the cyclical notation of time and human action. For a large number of urban-dwellers too, the linear notation of time often retained an air of conceptual vagueness, while a cyclical "temps du l'Eglise" endured as a context for the affirmation of social values and cultural identity. "Temps du fête" continued to polarize holiday behaviour and work-discipline. Indeed, one requires more than urban clock-towers, official timetables, work schedules, and itinerary compilations to illustrate a subversion of the Christian reckoning of time and its temporal impositions and dispositions. Plainly, an awareness of the duties and obligations countenanced by mercantile commercial work-discipline was becoming more acute in the Renaissance, yet "the everyday reality of the great mass of mankind was not regulated by the clock". While quattrocento Ferrarese chroniclers express more concern with the relationship between human affairs and linear time notation than do their trecento counterparts, the common usage of such phrases as "durante la nocte", "dreto desnare", "inanti la messa", "doppo vespvero", "dipoi manzare", "durante la vizilia", "mal tempo di neve et acqua", "in questo tempo, cioè da Sancto Michaele", and so on, admits the survival of older and alternative modes of time perception. Hours of canonical offices regularly find their way into chronicled relations, as do the feast days of universally and locally venerated saints. Moreover, the weight of tradition, usage, and custom, which governed
contemporary cultural experience and hence issued a reciprocal knowledge of "cultural time" to all members of Ferrarese society, is in several respects overwhelming. It is first of all expressed in the contextual language of the chronicles: "a modo usato", "secondo usanza", "come e di usanza", "come consueto", "iuxta consuetum", "come e di passati", "secondo li signori passati", "como usanza sua". Chroniclers often express a newly acquired sense of urban time, yet they appear bent on preserving the immemorial past,

Adi luni 24 Zugno el di di sancto Zoanne baptista come e di usanza ogni anno in tal di fu posto apresso la giesia uno bersaio et ad ogni persona con li tiro balestrata...

or locating their readers both in the temporal world of human affairs and in the extra-temporal world of divine revelation and festal celebration: "A di 8 di marzo mercoli ad hore 23 et il di secondo di la quaresima", "El luni di carnevale, che fu a di primo di Marzo", "A di domenega 29 la ottma. di la resuretione de Christo", "a di xxiv de Lujo, la mattina, et era la vigilia de Sancto Iacomo Apostolo", "Eodem millesimo, a di v de Zugno, de sabato, a hore xiv, che fu la vegilia de Pasqua Roxata", "Eodem millesimo, a di xvii de Zenaro, de domenica, a hore xvi, et era il giorno di Sancto Antonio".

If the vocabulary of the Ferrarese chronicles assigns a note of caution to the argument which suggests that a new laicized apprehension of time superceded "un temps religieux" during the course of the fifteenth-century, it is the impositions upon the behaviour of the
Ferrarese citizenry envisaged by obligatory religious observance, fraternal festal regulations, and customary communal celebrations which lead one to question part of its intuitive validity. Contemporaries were perfectly aware, sometimes painfully so, of the festive and devotional time of the year. The nature of common petitions to the ducal chancellery, for example, suggests a distinctive pattern linked to devotional time sequences. We have noted previously that between Christmas and Lent, the signore was customarily expected to dispense charities to the city poor, usually in the form of foodstuffs: grain, wine, vegetables, cheese, sometimes meat. Everyday at this time of the year, the duke devoted several hours to public audiences for the purpose of dispensing alms or offering collations, normally in conjunction with the celebration of mass in the cathedral or ducal chapel.49 "El prefato Signore duca questa matina si e mosso molto tardi fece la elemosina molto per tempo", reports Sivieri of a typical December day in 1491, "et poi perche tonasse a repossare per modo che si e poi mosso assai tardo come ho predicto ha audito una bella messa in canto qui dentro palazzo".50 "In hoc festo dominice nativitatis", musicians were also singled out for special financial rewards,51 singers and familiars clothed by the ducal wardrobe,52 and local monasteries received the first of their annual subventions fiscal and alimentary.53 Citizens occasionally received substantial gifts as signs of signorial favour,54 and local feudatories paid their dues and brought tokens of submission to the palace in observance of the signorial Buone Feste.55 But it is the de-
luge of citizen petitions for relief which each year began to accumulate in the chancellery during Advent which must draw our attention. Following a familiar formula, the Adventen petition usually requested an alimentary gift (though financial provisions were also common), reminding the duke of the time of the year and calling upon the memory of a well-established signorial tradition:

La Illme. d.s.v. humelmente supplica el povereto michele calefino chel povereto se trova stropiada de uno brazo et e pur vecchio pino de dolgie per modo chel povereto no po lavorare. Se che per tanto ricorre ala vostra S. che per lo amore de dio et per la bona memoria del Illu. n.s. marchese nicolo vostro padre che la vostra S. me faci lemosene a questa festa per la anima de epso vostro padre o de denari o de frumento o vino azio possa instrie questo inverno. Rimedio non ge el povereto pur se vergogna andare cercando Illumo. s. le posto in gran miseria senza miseria alguno e non in po guadagnare nesuno e non ha avimento nesuno se el va a casa de uno una volta lastra el ge rencieste ve dimanda misercordia la carita e florita perch e indisturbo de guadagnare alcuna cosa la vostra S. proveda almeno per questo inverno dopoi a questa e state forsi ge accadera qualche amaniento la vostra S. se racordi del piacere za ha dado ala v.s. poveretto adesso ge mancha ogni cosa niente de meno spiera in la v.s. ala quale se aricommanda.

Illumus. D.M. Dux ecc., Mandat factoribus qualibet et de condemnationibus camere dari faciant suppti. Libras decem marchesane quas sua Cel. in suum compatiens sibi donat,

F. Nasellus xxviii dec. 1469 56

As the Lenten fast drew near, the number of petitions for amnesty in the matters of condemnations civil and criminal markedly increased. The formula of the Lenten petition agains makes reference to the devotional time of the year, in anticipation of an annual round of ducal clemency:

Illume. et exme. du. D.V. humilmente ac pia prece exponit fidelissimus servitor voster Joannis a Carera olim laborator D.V. super casali olim bonvicino porto
in cogomaria... Et sic ad huc remanet debitor D.V. dicte servitor de stariis 24 frumenti de quo frumento servitor est carceratus... Et quia alias supplicavit D.V. ut dignaret Amore dei relapsare ei dictum frumentum et prefata d.V. fecit gratiam de dimidia dicti debiti. Et alteram dimidiam nullo modo poter restitute nec solvem ob eius miseriam, Ideo orat D.V. dignaret ipsa amore dei in hac quadragesima ei pauperculo gratia facet de dicta altera dimidia que sestari 12 frumenti et e carcere relapsari facet, cum havat septem filios qui nundi sunt...

Illma. Domina nostra Ducissa ecc., Mandat hunc pauperem libere relaxari et debitem cancellari de gratia, attentis narratis,

F. Nasellus x Martii 1479 57

Notably, seasonal petitions seem to have been carefully scrutinized by prominent chancellery officials.

Regarding the petition cited immediately above, Giacomo Trotti reported to the duchess that "dicto supp. essere poverissimo, et non havere alcuna cosa, et ha la dona cum frotta de figliolo et de figliole, et essere stato et al presente essere in pregione da di 15 de setembre passato in za, disponit modo D.V. fieri circa predicte come a quella pare et piacere...". Some indication of the enormous task which confronted the chancellery staff during the Christmas and Lenten seasons is revealed by Sivieri in a letter to the duchess. Complaining of a large petition back-log, he describes the long hours engaged in reviewing matters of supplication and judicial cases, "et per una zornata crediti madama mia che lho habuto bona, che credo tra littere et supplicatione havere expedite appresso centocinquanta cosse, siche me pare che le cose vadino bene quando se attende a spazare la brigata". The relationship between citizen petitioning and the annual observances of Advent and Lent was of course not invariable. A degree of overlap often occurr-
ed between them, and one can find pleas for amnesty registered in January and as late as September. The devotions of the Lenten fast, of which alms-giving and charities were also especially associated, ensured that the duke would be equally amenable to requests for poor-relief, and perhaps the greatest spectacle of institutionalized ducal charity, the "festa dei poveri", fell each year on Maundy Thursday. Indeed throughout the year, it is noticeable that petitions for gifts and pardons frequently coincide with locally observed devotional days, attesting to a commonly held belief that pleas would be received more favourably by the duke at sacred punctuations in the official calendar. What needs to be emphasized, however, is a general petitioning pattern, which localized ducal generosity during Advent and Christmas, and similarly, ducal clemency during Lent and Easter. The significance of this polarized signorial behaviour for Sabadino was its visible demonstration of ducal religiosity: the triumph of prudence and liberality. Judging from the nature and pattern of petitioning, it also had important practical consequences for the Ferrarese citizenry.

Carnival and the Carnivalesque: Comedies and Rituals of Misrule

To probe beneath the bureaucratic surface of the chancellery into the nature of festal impositions and dispositions, is to perceive necessarily a structure of discontinuity. Comparisons between generic festive categories are initially invited by conceptual oppositions in the contextual proceedings of the festival year,
oppositions of which contemporaries were abundantly aware. Especially familiar to the Ferrarese was the fundamental opposition between Carnival and Lent, between the excesses of food and drink, the ritualized violence and sexual promiscuity related to a "tempo di carne", and the abstinence, mortification, and propitiation associated with a "tempo di pesce". A striking illustration of how modes of communal behaviour were regulated by this opposition is revealed by Herculean ingenuity during the Ferrarese preparations for the reception of Anna Sforza, Alfonso d'Este's new bride, in February 1491. With the resources of his treasury seriously depleted due to the expenses of marrying his daughters Isabella to Francesco Gonzaga, and Beatrice to Lodovico Sforza, Ercole was at pains to economize without appearing niggardly. Writing to the duchess Eleonora, who was in Milan to attend Beatrice's wedding and to escort Anna to Ferrara, Ercole requested a list of the members of the bridal party, and advised the duchess to delay her return to Ferrara until the Friday before Shrove Tuesday. As he explained to Eleonora:

Unde in resposta le dicemo che havendo nui molto bene considerato il tutto, intento che seremo sotto el carnevale ne pareria che la v.s. cum la brigata se havesse a retrovare qua el veneri inanti carnevale che sera xi de febraro proximo et quella sira la sposa restasse a S. Zorzo secundo l'ordine et poi la matina sequente che sera el sabato xii se fara la intrata, et poi quelli altri die che serano la dominica, il luni et marti che sera el die de carnevale se potrano fare le feste ordinate et poi el mercori primo de quadragesima la brigata se ne potera tornare perche non li sera piu tempo de feste et non veniremo ad havarli sulla spesa qua se non cinque giorni, chel sel se venisse prima tri ne 4 giorni, essendosse poi suso el carnevale non pareria cussi conveniente che la brigata se partisse far facto carnevale che ne seria piu spese. Siche queste rag-
One could not wish for a more precise statement concerning the nature of the interdictions imposed upon collective behaviour by the Lenten fast, nor a more acute awareness of the contrast between Carnival and Lent. The revelry, transgressive conduct, and ecstatic joy of Carnival was replaced with the solemnity, interdictive conduct, and penitential joy of quadragesima. It was this structural antagonism within the festival year which provided Ercole with the solution to his financial woes. With the providential arrival of Lent, his obligation to entertain his illustrious guests ceased, since entertainments were clearly incompatible with the strictures of the seasonal fast.

One may also observe that quadragesima was incompatible with all celebrations which countenanced carnivalesque behaviour. So Ercole was compelled to remind Giovanni Bentivoglio in March 1478, regarding the timing of the engagement between the illegitimate Lucrezia d'Este and Bentivoglio's heir Annibale. Bentivoglio intended to send four Bolognese nobles to Ferrara to proclaim the betrothal, a plan greeted with some enthusiasm by Ercole. But realizing that such announcements customarily signalled spontaneous acts of communal joy, and that the attendant behaviour of the citizenry would not be consummate with the observance of Lenten devotions, Ercole requested that the proclamation be delayed until the Easter octave:

... Ma perche siamo in questo tempo quadragesimale et molto propinquo a li die de passione ci pare
Similarly, in April 1481, Ercole was forced to acknowledge a conflict in the devotional calendar when the annual palio in honour of Ferrara's patron saint, S. Giorgio, coincided with the observance of Easter Monday. A letter was conveyed to the Marquis of Mantua announcing that the palio would be held at the end of the Easter octave:

Ad Illustrissimo d. Marchione Mantui:

Illustrissimi e exse. domine havéndo nui considerato che la festa de Sancto Zorzo viene questo anno el marti de Pasca (sic) proxima nel quale die la piu parte de la brigata sono occupate in le devotione ne e parso de differire la festa e el corso del palio fino ad octava Pasca perche cum piu commodita se possi fare la festa et pero ni haverno voluto dare adviso a v. Ill. s. acio la sapia qual die haverano a correre li cavalli, e meglio intenda a che tempo mandare li soli, li quali pero puo mandare ad ogni suo piacere, ma pur ni e parso che la intenda il tutto... 71

The contrast between fast and feast was frequently renewed throughout the devotional year on a smaller but equally intensive scale. Preparatory fasting, sexual abstinence, and attendance at mass were enjoined on the vigil of a locally venerated saint's feast, usually to be followed on the feast-day proper post nones with carnivalesque activities: singing, dancing, games, masquerades, drinking, and banquets. We shall notice below that this contrast helped to designate the saint's feast as an uncommon day, and strengthened the manner in which private and collective behaviour were governed by ritual oppositions enshrined in the calendar year.
Behind these contextual contrasts in ritual behaviour, lies a second basic opposition which requires explanation. Both Carnival and Lent, diametrically opposed to one another, may also be placed in opposition to the "everyday". A favourite Carnival theme throughout Europe, but particularly strong in the south, was the enactment of the "world turned upside down". Physical reversal was iconographically represented: "people standing on their heads, cities in the sky, the sun and moon on earth, fishes flying... a horse going backwards with its rider facing the tail". Reversal of the relations between men, age reversal, sex reversal, and inversions of status were similarly depicted: the wife is shown scourging her husband, the student giving orders to his master, the poor giving alms to the rich, the laity saying mass or preaching to the clergy. The normal ordering of human affairs was demonstrably restructured. Thus, when a seneschal was sent ahead of the company to find accommodation for Isabella d'Este on her progress to Milan in January 1495, he arrived at the gates of Lodi to find the city guarded by two men-at-arms mounted on lions. Conducted into the presence of local ecclesiastical "authority", he found his blessing issued by a bell-ringer disguised as the pope:

... E giunto li, mi tolsero di peso peso da cavallo e mi portarono davanti a esso vescovo, qual era il campanaro vestito da pontefice. Et li posto in piedi, fui da uno dil pontefice cum uno penello pieno di colore verde bolato sopra uno pomello. Fatto questo, fui dal sumo padre cum una benedizione menacevole licentiato, et cusi puroso fui remisso a cavallo cum la magiore vergogna che mai havessi a mie di per la moltitudine de gli uomini e donne che in essa giesia erano...
Overturning ecclesiastical authority was a Carnival norm. The Mantuan buffoon Mattello, whose presence was frequently in demand at the Este court during the late fifteenth-century, specialized in dressing up as a priest and performing parodies of religious ceremonies. Isabella d'Este referred to him as the "venerabile padre Bernardino Mattello", while Alfonso d'Este described his antics in Ferrara: "La Mtia. del Mattello sta benissimo et attende a dire solenissime messe". So popular was this buffoon with Alfonso, that he was bestowed a formal reception upon his arrival in Ferrara in November 1498: "... gli mandette dupieri incontro et forse x persone che solicitassino di condurgeli denanci". During the Ferrarese carnival, the city was visited by improvvisatori, clowns, singers, actors, and musicians who regaled the citizenry with bawdy stories and engaged in mimic performances of role reversal: Prando da Verona "vir facetissimus et jocosus", Branga da Firenze, "el quale fu qui a Saxolo a sonare e a cantare in giestia da la sua S....", Michele Spagnolo, "lo quale canto dinanzi a la soa Signoria a la ziciliana a Beriguardo", "Lapacino da Firenze che dice in rima". In 1465, Borso d'Este presented ten golden ducats "a dui bofoni li quali vennero travestiti come donna a cantare dinanzi a la tavola della Soa Signoria", and in 1471, another ten ducats were given to a singer "che canta de gesta dinanzi ala soa signoria in belfior". The famous Parmense improvvisatore Giovanni Cieco was a permanent fixture at the Este court during the 1470's, and made frequent visits to Ferrara thereafter. Among the individuals
who provided entertainment in their professional capacity as buffoons during the Herculean era were Moschino Magnanino, the renowned "sponga di vino", Carlo dalla Carte, known as "il Barone", Socio dei Bonlei, "fra Gualengo", and Giovan Francesco Corione, called "il Fertella" or "il Frittella". No social order seems to have been immune to the sort of carnivalesque mockery the buffoons supplied. Buffoonesque investitures of knights were common in Ferrara, as Bernardino Prosperi records in a letter to Isabella d'Este. Joining in the revelry, we find the duchess Eleonora and two of Ercole's favourites, the cancellarius Francesco Castello and Zaccaria Zambotti (the brother of the chronicler Bernardino):

... un altro novo cavallero creato per la nostra Illma. Ma. fu el Scotio gia homodarme, a la quale creatione gli intervene homini famosissimi, el primo fo mro. Zacharia che pose uno sperone laltro mro. Francesco Castello, Il Barone, Socio, Fertella e m. Moschino gli cinse el stocho, et poi per piu vero cavallero fo bategiato de vino dal Fertella... 89

Such ribald occasions naturally tended to emphasize a loosening of moral and social restraint during Carnival, and moreover, solemnized a loosening of men's ties with ordinary law and order. The licence to masquerade, issued each year to the Ferrarese by the duke upon Epiphany, authorized an annual bout of licentiousness. Public drinking, whoring, brawling, and gambling, actions which deliberately flaunted city ordinances, were largely left unchecked. Indiscriminate acts of physical violence rose sharply, and citizens engaged in ritualized vendetta. 90 Students in masquerade disrupted the routine of the lecture-hall and heckled their masters, so much so that Ercole was obliged to enact legis-
lation forbidding masques to be worn in the classroom:

Per parte dell'Illustrissimo Signor Nostro Hercule Duca se fa Comandamento ad ogni, e singole persone, cussi terriere, come forastiere de che condizione se siano, che da qui inanti non ardiscono, ne pressumano andare in Mascara alle Schole del Studio de questa Inclyta Città de Ferrara, ad impazare li Legenti, e li Docturi, o veramente le lezioni di Scolari alla pena de Ducati disse de oro da farsi applicare alla Massaria Ducale, et de stare otto di in prigione; Notificando à cadauna persona, che a tale Maschere serano levate le Maschere dal volto, e menate in prigione, e non uscirono, se non paghanno la pena.

1478 Die 14 Januarii, hora decima prima, Ferrarie. 

Hours of curfew seem also to have been suspended, as throngs of disguised revelers took to the streets after dark in open defiance of the law. Perhaps inadvertently, signorial behaviour during Carnival legitimized the chaos on the streets. Crowds naturally gathered to witness the spectacles arranged by the duke: the tightrope walker "ditto el Cingano ando sopra una corda tirata in piazza... dal palazzo del Duca alli merli dell'utro la cima del domo in piedi armato da ho d'arme perho cum el contrapesso, et dappoi ando altramente susso una piu bassa dal palazzo alla casa dell'episcopato", the procession of an elephant, "animal teribilissimo", through the city, or an erudite comedy, torchlit in the cortile, a performance which chroniclers claim could attract upwards of ten-thousand spectators.

The duke and his courtiers customarily rode through the city streets after dark, accompanied by piffari and tamburini, the specially decorated court carette, and members of the signorial household to enter private homes and join in the carnival merriment. In such circumstances, the duke's participation in Carnival licence bestowed tacit approval upon spon-
taneous law-breaking.

Yet one must not imagine Carnival, despite a demonstrable predilection for rituals of misrule and lawlessness amongst the citizenry, as a time of chaos. Rather, Carnival invited participants to celebrate an annual period of organized disorder. In an earlier chapter, we saw how stringent measures were adopted by the Estensi to protect citizens from physical violence perpetrated at the hands of individuals in masquerade. This was a problem not easily resolved. Ultimately, it appears that the success or failure of Carnival festivities depended on disguising. Siviero Sivieri enthusiastically records the proceedings of the Carnival in 1493:

Il si e facto Madama mia un carnevale assai lieto et jocundo perche e stato un tempo bello quanto dire si possa, et se vostra extia. se fusse ritrovata qua son certo che le cosse seriano andate ancora assai più alegramente. Mascare assai si son facte ma veramente la più bella liurea et più zentile che sia facta e stata el luni e lo marti de quattro compagni zoe Agustum da Villa messer Jan regazo Thomaso da pistoglia et bernardino pavone li quali andorno vestiti da quattro zentilhomini spagnoli cum tavardi et borichi de brocato et de seta et cum cateme et altri honorevoli adobamenti, et mascare et caviare spagnole et cavalcono mulle cum un famiglio per cadauno et cum un lento, et cantorno in diversi modi canzone nove cum tanta gratia quanto dire si possa... 97

A festa in the Ferrarese suburbs, on the other hand, "non fu bella per non li esser mascare perche il era el divedo in li borgi come notificari a vostra extia.", and the celebrations were only salvaged the following day when Isabella d'Este pleaded with the duke "per sua parte et de alcune altre sue compagnic et vicine che volesse dare licentia che le mascare potessono venire per quello die de fora". 98 One suspects that similar pressure obliged Ercole to lift the ban on masquing in 1492, and as
Prosperi happily reported, to reject the theological arguments outlining the sinfulness of disguising (for the time being) in favour of "lo usato de andarli e darsi-piacere". It should come as no surprise, therefore, to find that masques and costumes for Carnival, especially the sophisticated creations of court painters and festaiuoli, were at a premium. Neighbouring signori were often lent masques from the Estensi wardrobe, as a relieved Mantuan envoy reported to Farlano Gonzaga:

"... per Jacomo Trovalusso mando a v.m. sei mascare de le meglio chio habii trovato qui, et si fosse tardato piu de quello che lei havesse desiderato excusivi a questa volta...". When a member of the Este family went abroad during Carnival, a supply of masques was an important consideration, and even Estensi ambassadors were issued with masques for official representations at foreign courts. Artists employed at the Este court were expected to divert their talents towards the creation of new designs, herein for the Carnival of 1490:

"Pertanti pagati a fino depintore per una mascara et conzaduria di due altre mascare per bisogno de sua sig. quon la Illma. Madonna marchesana de mantoa, L. 0,6,0". Costumes "per le moresche" also occupied a conspicuous place in the ducal wardrobe, and these too were constantly improved and replaced. Whether disguising lay at the root of Carnival's attendant evils, as Ercole came to believe, is not always clear. But there can be little doubt that masquing was immensely popular with the Ferrarese citizenry, and one might add, that it was regarded as a customary communal right. We have
seen that this "right to games" was not inalienable. Nevertheless, when the signore imposed his will upon communal tradition, in the present case by acquiring the wardenship of Carnival through the granting of official licences, he bound his signoria to the protection of that tradition. If the tradition of Carnival helped to lend cultural continuity to Estensi rulership, it was not without pressure from the popolo to ensure its customary survival.

Our impression of Carnival mayhem, however, must be tempered by the nature of the festal celebrations. The notion that "In Carnival, everything is permitted", as the proverb runs, belies the fact that revelry and licence were often officially organized and ritually structured. The classical comedies of the later fifteenth-century, performed in Ferrara as part of the signorial Carnival celebrations (see Appendix A), permitted a level of citizen participation in an "other-world" fraught with bawdiness, sexual innuendo, fantastic beings, buffoonery, and ferocious beasts. Into the theatrical otherworld of the sala grande, wrote Jano Pencaro of the comedies performed in February 1499, enter "successivamente la corte, la nobilita del popullo et appresso la plebbe", there to be greeted by scenes which tax "la imaginativa", the "sena de comici", tribunals "coperti de panni rossi, bianchi et verdi, il resto de la parata amodo vecchio", and the players themselves:

... che furono centotrentatre vestiti tucti de vesti nove facte aposta che de raso, chi zambelotto, chi cendado, che panne et chi subtilissime tele habiti
Between the acts of the comedies, the players of the \textit{intermezzi} issue forth: the figure of fortune battles to regain his freedom after being captured by "deci gioveni gagliardi cum vestiti leggiadre e riche",\textsuperscript{108} a "tamburino sonando una moresca e dietro alui uno cum una pignate in mano, nell'altra una caza de legno", and these greet ten male dancers "cum... fochi in mano",\textsuperscript{109} a musical interlude is played by the ducal orchestra, "de tucti non scrivo a v.s.", remarked Pencaro to Isabella d'Este, "perche seria longo et forsi tedioso",\textsuperscript{110} and six nymphs conduct a hunt of wild animals:

Finito el quarto acto uscirono sei nymphe in habito de cacciatrice cum archi e turchassi et altri tanto homini cum dardi e corni et errando et attornando alcuni boscetti cum strepito e suoni de corni smachiorono dalcuni boscetti orsi leoni pantera et una simia, li cacciatori sempre servando lordine e misure ferono la caccia sua gratiatamente alfine presi leone, orso, et pantera, li incatenerono et danzando cum loro data la piena volta uscironsi quon in quello instanti si scoperse uno cacciatore quale parle todesco faceva la simia che reinselvata se era, et quella doppo molti acti prese et riprese et partise... \textsuperscript{111}

For the present, it may be observed that participation in this imaginary world of the Carnival comedies was passive. The audience could shout out encouragement, laugh, identify and relate to characters, voice disapproval, but could not actively participate. The chaos of the theatrical otherworld was performed by actors according to carefully planned conventions. The licence, bawdiness, and "violence" lacked spontaneity.
This is also true of other Carnival "signi di alegrezza" organized by the duke. Chroniclers often leave one with the impression that the ducal feste di ballo were undertaken in a general atmosphere of merry-making, as spontaneous festive celebrations. Yet it is clear that these feste were meticulously prepared by the signorial master-of-ceremonies, leaving little room for unsolicited improvisation. Tribunals were erected "in sala di madonna anna per una festa la sera di carnevale", "per le moresche se fare in sala di corte", in the Palazzo Schifanoia "perche don alfonso vol fare carnevale". The emphasis on theatrical apparatus suggests the use of formal celebrations, with the actual mayhem performed by actors and buffoons, and the participation level of the celebrants limited to codified revelry. Carnival feste in the ducal palazzi appear to have been moments of organized licence, perhaps bordering on ceremonial behaviour. So too, apparently, were the feste held in the homes of notable citizens, despite the contention that the duke or members of his family surprised hosts with unheralded visits. Thus, in a letter to Isabella d'Este, Francesco Bagnacavallo records the careful planning of Jacomino Compagno for his festa in honour of the signorial family. "Anti cena", the formal rules of dancing were observed, "balare madonna Anna tenere la festa lei et madonna Agnolla ma non balare le persone loro maschare assai, la corte grosso stava in camera". Following a short visit by some merry-makers from the street ("maschare non conosciute"), the company retired to the banqueting tables,
where the guests were seated according to precedence. We might reasonably suppose in these circumstances that some leeway existed for impromptu festivities, but unfortunately, these are rarely mentioned. In 1473, "da principio de Zenaro per tuto giorni de Marzo durò il carnevale et se andò in mascara per la citade de Ferrara et burgi cum grande triumpho et feste. Et ge andete il prefacto duca con tuta la Casa da Este dove per li citadini fu facto festa in le loro case cum damiselle et balli". Feste were also held on successive days at the residences of Bonvicino dalla Carte, Count Lorenzo Strozzi, Alberto d'Este, and Giacomo Trotti, but outside of the customary masquing, dancing, and banqueting, the festivities are left unrecorded. Over four-hundred guests attended a Carnival banquet given by the merchant Bernardino Taruffo for Ercole d'Este in January 1500, but the chronicles merely note that the duke received "grandissimo piacere". Secretary Sivieri, however, informs us that the feste and ceremonies of the Carnival in 1493 proceeded "cum molto ordine". For what this phrase signified, we may turn to an example drawn from the Milanese Carnival of 1491, illuminated in a letter from Eleonora to Ercole.

"Hogi se facto una bellissima et dignissima festa de balli in la sala grande", wrote the duchess, "qui in castello dove sum allogiata". The ceiling of the sala was covered with "panno Celestre cum stelle doro", and a tribunal with fifteen rows ran the length of one wall, "et suxo li schalini tapeti assai". There was a tribunal for the singers and musicians, and two others where
people could stand. Each guest entered the room according to the ceremonial ordo: "Le zentildone invitate a questa festa se li trovorono circa le 19 hore benissimo in ordine", "Io insieme cum le Illu. nostra nuora et figliole se trovassano in ordine", "Lo Illm. Duca de milano et duca de Bari... lo Illu. s. Marchese de man- toa... La Illma. Duchessa Bona... cum grande ordine et pompa traversassano il cortile et intrassano in la sala predicta adornata". No one was permitted to exceed his dignity in the ordo of the entrata, nor were uninvited persons able to enter, because "li erano chi sapevanog et potevano prohibire". Inside the sala, the guests sat "su li gradi del tribunale... cum l'ordine", the seats having been assigned according to "le persone piu digne secundo li gradi". The dancing and masques then commenced, following formal conventions:

Se balete cum 'li tamborini et pifari balleti gentili come se costume qui, et la prima fu la Duchessa de Milano cum una sua favorita, et benche la sia appresso il tempo del parturire ballete gallante come donzella, poi descesseno a ballare insieme lo Illu. nostre figliole, deinde similmente la Illu. madonna biancha et nostra nuora, et poi dele zentildone del tribunale, et successive venero dele maschare ornate et vestite de brochati et sete cum turche et belle liveree, et ballorono guidese et vinte ala volta cum quelle zentildone da basso pur a dicti balleti: sopravene la sira, furono etiam facte ballare nostre figliole ad un ballo gallante, et fue finita la festa in modo che se potete arivare a casa inanti nocete, et credo se ballara anche domane, et in questa festa non se sentiva ne strepito ne calcha, et ballavasse in luoho sparioso che fu molto piacere, et in la partita lo Illmo. s. Ludovico cum li soi se tolse fatica de far partire le done cum grande ordine, et cussi aviate tute queste madone et nui insieme ale nostre camere... 121

It is interesting to note that Eleonora placed so much emphasis on the ordines of the festa, and that she commented on the lack of an uproar and crush of bodies
during the masques. Almost certainly, this indicates that the Carnival feste she was accustomed to at the Herculean court were slightly uncouth in comparison. But even in Ferrara, however far the revelers were prepared to admit spontaneity and raucous behaviour, we may assume that the recognized conventions of formal celebrations cushioned the impact of Carnival "liberation" upon courtly conduct.

Outside the noble residences in the city streets, the atmosphere was naturally less restrained. Serious fighting occasionally broke out, and citizens were often obliged to carry weapons secretly to ward off violent assaults; "ma de molto e molto male per le mascare se facea". Even the local clergy were not above indulging in physical violence. Among the robbers who terrorized Ferrara during the Carnival of 1487 could be found the personal chaplain to Sigismondo d'Este, and in 1495, a priest was condemned to life imprisonment after a lengthy career of Carnival immorality: "... se ritrovò a la morte de altri homini... et sposò due mojere... sforzò femine, menò via femine per forza... amizzare et bevere et aloggiare per forza". Carnival, wrote the chronicler Ugo Caleffini, was a time of "uribilissimo pecoato". Physical aggression was often informally ritualized. People hurled insults at one another, and also a variety of missiles: rocks, eggs, rotting vegetables, dung. Companies of children armed with sticks ran through the streets to rap at windows. Upon the first snowfall of the new year, it was customary for men to ride through the city and throw snowballs at
the women standing in windows or on balconies. On one occasion the lecture halls of the law faculty in S. Francesco were stormed by snowball-wielding courtiers in masquerade, and on the day following, the law students challenged the ducal household to a snowball fight:

Li scholari lezistil siando sta' asaltari heri in le scole de San Francesco da li cortexani con la neve, mascherati, domente che se lezeva, hozi deliberatamente circha trexento inmascheradi, con una penna in testa, andasseno, a son de tamburo, al Corte del duca a chiamarli a fare la neve, nè may volseno descendere. E messer Nicolò Maria, fiolo de messer Guron, hera nostro capo. E tuto hozi nevò e sempre andassemo tragando per la terra a le fenestre a le done, da hore 20 insino ad hore 22. 128

A similar battle was waged annually by the duke near quadragesima, in this instance using eggs as missiles. 129

With a company of his courtiers, the duke "andono per la citade con uno cesto de ove ciaschaduno e con le coracine, inmascheradi e con camixe bianche, tragendo a le fenestre a le zovene". Young girls were not the sole targets for the barrage. Arriving in the piazza, the company offered combat to six knights armed with blunted lances:

... ge herano sei con bauti grandi in testa, con lanze zenza fero, e combattno con quelli da le ove, e molte bastonate dettino, a quelli da le ove; ma loro sbattno molte ove in le vixere di bauti talmente che non poteano vedere e bixognò abandonassero l'impresa; ma quelli stavano a vedere ne recolseno la più parte adosso. E poi fu comenzzo a trare a Madama e a le donzelle e zintildone herano suzo li pozoli de marmoro a vedere, ma fuzino in caxa. 130

Spectators often joined in the mêlée. "Tuti quelli se ritrovòno in Piazza", says Zambotti of these combats, "forno caregi de ove rotte". 131
Other events attempted to channel the chaotic energy of Carnival into more formal structures. The classical comedies are the most obvious examples of structured behaviour, that is, where a distinction was made between participants and spectators. These Herculean contrivances followed the tradition of Carnival "spettacoli scenici" established in Ferrara, the oldest recorded instance being the rappresentazione staged in the piazza on 6 February 1329 by order of Obizzo III d'Este. Tribunals and pavilions were erected for theatre, games, and banquets. Presiding over the festivities were two citizens elected as rulers of an imaginary "empire", an Emperor and an Empress of "Misrule", who held court, issued orders, and received homage:

MCCCXXIX. Tempore Carnisprivii Magnifici Domini Domini Raynaldus & Obizo Marchiones Estenses dirigi fecerunt super platea Communis Ferrariae trabacas, & pavilliones, sub quibus multos ludos, & alia gaudia faciebant cum Civibus, & aliis Forensibus existentibus in Ferraria. Etiam constituerunt unum Imperatorem propter solatium, scilicet Dominum Zagayam militem Curiae dictorum Marchionum, & unam Imperatrixem pauperem Domicellam de Ferraria, & honorifice indutam; & ibi in dicto loco mulieres, uxorares, homines, parvi & magni ibant ad Curiam praedictam ad prandium, & coenam cum maximo gaudio; & facientes diversarum specierum ludos, & sumpto prandio hastiludcrunt super plateam. Et similiter Domini Marchiones, & uxorares eorum. Finitis omnibus Domini Marchiones, amore Dei, dictam Domicellam pauperem tradiderunt in uxorem cuidam bono Notario dictae Civitatis cum decenti mobilia; & eodem sero maximus ignis fuit in Canonica juxta Episcopatum Ferrariae. 134

The tradition of Carnival spectacles was continued by Obizzo's successors. Aldrovandino d'Este (d. 1361) provided theatre in the piazza, pagan gods delivered elegiac praises to Niccolò III during masques for the
Carnival of 1433 (organized by the humanists Marsilio and Guarino on behalf of Soccino Benzi), and in 1444, the first erudite comedy witnessed in Ferrara, a Latin elegy with Plautine influences, was performed before Leonello d'Este and his court - the Isis of Francesco Ariosto Peregrino. It was after the accession of Ercole d'Este, however, that Ferrara became one of the most important centres for contemporary theatre and theatrical experimentation in Western Europe. During the Herculean era, we are able to count (by my reckoning) forty-two recitals of erudite or classical comedies, principally the plays of the ancient Roman comic authors Plautus and Terence but also several original works, exclusive of the presentations made outside Ferrara such as the performances of the Captivi, Mercator, and Poenulus in August 1493, when Ercole had costumes, actors, stage properties, and festaiuoli brought along in his cortège to entertain Lodovico Sforza at Pavia. In addition, we may count ten Lenten sacre rappresentazioni, the later recitals benefiting from the intervention of professional actors. In Pellegrino Prisciani's special treatise on Spectacula, based upon his measurements of the ruins of ancient Roman theatres and his study of Vitruvius, above all upon the interpretation of Vitruvius's information on ancient theatre provided by Leon Battista Alberti in his De Re Aedificatoria, the Herculean court produced a watershed document on the function and construction of theatres and the organization of scenography. Prisciani's supervision of the Ferrarese stage, combined with the
engineering skills of Biagio Rossetti\textsuperscript{142} and the artistic flair of \textit{festaiuoli} like Nicoletto Segna di Modena, Fino dei Marsigli, Giovanni da Imola, Sigismondo Fiorini, "il Dosso", and Pellegrino da Udine ensured that Herculean productions were among the most sophisticated of the day.\textsuperscript{143} At Ercole's instigation, Ferrara also became an important centre for the translation of the Plautine and Terentian Latin comedies into the vernacular, and there is considerable evidence to support a contention that the duke intended to convert his sala gr\'ande into a permanent theatre as early as 1503.\textsuperscript{144} In the circumstances, it is difficult to disagree with Anna Coppo when she argues that Herculean theatre provided a "model" which the other Italian courts imitated.\textsuperscript{145}

Scholars searching for the details of the Herculean productions may now consult a quite extensive literature,\textsuperscript{146} and it is not the intention of the present study to comment upon them at length. It is vital, however, that we do not over-emphasize the Herculean comedies (as some scholars have in the past) as pure examples of an erudite courtly culture which "esclude l'apporto necessario del pubblico"; which saw the presence of the "people" as "un fatto accessorio" to what has been called dynastic "autocontemplation"\textsuperscript{147}. Initially, we must inscribe them in a Carnival program which included balls, banquets, masques, jousts, rituals of misrule, and "altri spettacoli pi\'e grossolani".\textsuperscript{148} They take their place amongst the Carnival pastimes we find frequently reviled by local preachers, as Prosperi reports, to little or no avail: "Sequimo
le feste ordinate la domenica, e zobia e lo currere a questa quintana cum multitudine de mascare a pedi e a cavallo. Et lo predicatore ne minaccia de multi flag-elli, ma pocho ge attendemo". 149 The comedies are, as Prisciani recalls of ancient customs in his Spectacula, part of an annual cycle of celebrations, when the ruler calls his people together to partake of merriment, story-telling, and nourishment. Just as Moses was prais-ed "per haver instituto che in uno templo tuta la gente de soi dovesse convenirse a certi solemni tempi et lie insieme confabulare et mangiare", and this "che per il convenire insieme, stare, ragionare et cibarsi li animi loro facessero piu miti, piu dolci et piu prompti et parechianti al fructo de la amicitia", writes Prisciani to Ercole, "Non mancho nui dovemo laudare vostra Celsitudine, la quale, cum tanti et tanto ordinati spectaculi, congregi questo suo fidissimo et dolce populo". Like the ancient Greeks and Etruscans, like the Roman emperors, like the earliest farmers who "in li giorni feriali celebravano soi sacrificii a diversi soi dêi per boschi, campagne et ville", each year Ercole built wooden tribunals and "theatres" to offer amusements to his subjects: "... como semper insino a qui ha facto Vostra Signoria, et facte le feste, ioci se levavano; et per ciò essere stato incusato Pompeo che facesse el Theatro suo perpetuo". 150 Indeed, unlike Mantua, Milan, Urbino, and Rome, where theatre tended to be a recreation limited to the amusement of the aristocracy, 151 Herculean theatre is characterized by the progressive "popularization" of its public. Many of the early recitals, for example, were
restricted to spectators invited personally by the duke, "illustri" from Bologna, Mantua, Venice, and Florence. 152

But listen to the observation made by Jano Pencaro, who estimated that as many as 9000 spectators squeezed into the sala grande to witness a performance of Terence's Eunuchus in February 1499:

... hoggi vedendo tanto popullo cominciai a chieder vari iudicii quanti huomini esser puotevano, li quali variamente rispondendo, chi sei, chi septe, chi octo millia huomini vi estimava... Zoanne de Jasone, el quale cum molte ragione me costrinse a credere che passassero nove millia huomini... Questo ben vidi io, el popullo tanto strecto che apena si puoteva uno mettersi la mano al naso se gia le braccia non teneva sopra le spalle al suo vicino. 153

While Pencaro's estimation is surely exaggerated, the physical crush of bodies caused by the vast numbers of "la plebe" at these performances is confirmed by Francesco Bagnacavallo. 154 As he related to Isabella d'Este concerning a production some five days earlier, ten persons fainted due to the excessive heat and it took two hours to clear the sala. Such was the stench left by excretion, that the duke was obliged to perfume the room:

... et cossì durò la festa della comedia fino alle 5 horre passate - ma le ben vero che il non fue livero de partire tucte le gente de sala che l'era quaxi horre 7 per la tanta calcha de gente, che erano in quella sala, che per lo gran calore tra-mortiti della persone da più de dieci: ma partito ognuno de sala li remaxe una tal puza da tanpho et de pisso del tanto pissare che havono fatto quelle done per modo che tucto hogi lo Illmo. S.D. ha bisognato... perfumare la dicta sala. 155

Like other Carnival divertimenti, therefore, the Herculean comedies belonged to a collective "tempo ideale... il tempo della festa come celebrazione". 156

Alterations to the scenography of the piazza, the
cortile (the courtyard of the ducal palace), the audience hall in the Palazzo della Ragione, or the salla grande created a particular kind of otherworld which separated the spectators from everyday time and place. Enormous tribunals were constructed by Ercole's carpenters to support the scene di comici (from the Mantuan envoy Niccolò Cagnolo we learn that the stage constructed in 1502 was "longo circha braza quaranta e largo cinque", or 80 x 10 feet), there were townscapes "cum caxe e castelle de legno facte e dipinte", with windows and doors where characters appeared to say their lines, and there were floats and mechanical devices which moved across the podium. Inside the salla grande, the walls were hung with tapestries, and the ceiling was covered by a paradiso (heaven) illuminated by candles. Even in day-time, screens were placed over the windows leaving the spectators in semi-darkness while the stage shone with "mille lampade". Similarly, the intermezzi inaugurated a particular kind of social order, a fantastic "world turned upside down" ruled by nymphs, satyrs, buffoons, and mythological beasts which separated the audience from ordinary experience. Yet the theatrical otherworld, and its attendant order of misrule, was not chaotic or rebellious. Just as the performances were scripted, played by professional actors, and perhaps even rehearsed, so the theatrical otherworld evoked a consciousness of scripted order often linked to the realities of the community and human life. Covering over the communal clock-tower with "un celo alto... con lampade che ard-
evano a li lochi debiti de drio de tele negre subtile e radiavano in modo de stelle", or dressing up children "in forma de li pianeti", or creating a kingdom ruled by an enormous dragon, "lorribil bestia", or reviewing the twelve labours of Hercules "in modo antica", may have had the effect of suspending time for a moment, enveloping the spectators in an atmosphere where time lost its true meaning and utility. But there is no hint of chaos on the Carnival stage. Disguising provided an opportunity for mockery, derision, and licentiousness, for the exchange of personality and identity, but these proceeded according to fixed rules, custom, and of course, the script. Moreover, considerable emphasis was placed upon the return to the real world. Just as it was necessary for poets and playwrights to summarize the plot for the audience prior to a performance, so too was it necessary to formally end the proceedings with an announcement that the production was over. The attempt to imprison fortuna must be doomed to failure, the dragon must be slain by men-at-arms: with the theatrical apparatus dismantled and the dispersal of the crowd, the clock is revealed once again tolling the hours, and the planets and stars have resumed their places in the heavens. The Carnival stage provides for the emergence of order from disorder.

As Prisciani reminds us, theatrical productions also had political utility. The ancient Greeks, and afterwards the Romans, he says, "instituirono li spectaculi in le citate, non solamente per festegiare et dare piacere a li populi, ma per utilitate ancora et non pic-
Plato commanded that every year there must be theatre and games, "como necessario a la salute et ornamento de le citate". "Spectaculi" spread the *fama* of the state. 167 In his *De triumphis religionis*, Sabadino took this argument a step further when he related Ercole's sponsorship of theatre to the special princely virtue of magnificence. "Magnificentia" symbolized and reinforced power and authority, and it comprised "cose sumptuose, grande et sublime", or "public deeds and large expenses": "Li quali non senza-degna laude et magnifico tuo recimento anchora recordano, come magnificentia in le cose pubbliche e de spense grande consiste". Large-scale theatrical productions, therefore, were especially efficacious for the formulation of political propaganda and the glorification of the ruler: "Noi hai anchora, magnificentissimo principe signor duca mio, perdonato a spensa grande in fare morale representationi come se facevano in le sene e theatri deli romani principii". 168 It is well-known that Ercole intended to exhibit his political neutrality (after the disastrous consequences of the Venetian War) and to add luster to his court through the medium of public spectacles. 169 We shall see that his financial investment in official "productions" and ceremonials was not only enormous, but that it took precedence over all other affairs of state. 170 Equally important, however, was Ercole's desire to provide his theatrical productions with a rigorous cultural validity. He took a personal interest in the technical problems of translating the classical texts. 171
he employed the finest humanist scholars to execute new vernacular editions of the plays (of which he himself was a prodigious collector), and he was an enthusiastic supervisor of the actual productions. We find him, for instance, closeted in his bed-chamber with Ercole Strozzi for four days in February 1493, while he reviewed Strozzi's "cartoons" for the fabula to be presented before Lodovico Sforza during May of that year. A letter from Beatrice d'Este to her sister Isabella concerning the comedies performed in February 1491, confirms Ercole's personal involvement in the organization of Ferrarese theatre:

... Et sono certissima che quelli apparati et trionphi siano facti cum quello magnifico et galanteria che me scrive la Ex. V., perchè essendo stati pensati et ordinati da lo Illmo. nostro patre non è dubio alcuno che'l tutto sarà stato mensurato cum summa sapientia et perfectione, essendo così costume de la Ex. sua.

Various interpretations have been applied to the emergence of erudite comedy in northern Italy during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. It has been argued (by Georg Weise) that they are representative of a new "classicism", a new cultural "ambiente" defined by a new sense of majesty, of dignity, and of distance (both psychological and physical). The comedies belong to a ceremonial synthesis which catalogued processual changes in social organization. Their culture is exclusive. To Fabrizio Cruciani, they derive from a common ideological abstraction, "una comune concezione idealizzatrice che va rintracciata in tutte le espressioni della civiltà". Since theatre is also "festival", and hence "tempo ideale", it is
a moment when the various social *aggregates* of the *communitas* come together in celebration. On its stage, Renaissance theatre visualized and formalized a "model society", codifying the hierarchical *ordines* of social organization, and celebrating a world "ben regolate" under the auspices of the prince. 176 In his analysis of Ferrarese scenography, Ludovico Zorzi comes to a similar conclusion. On the Ferrarese stage, we find an ideal model in municipal dimension, like a "minuta topografia della Ferrara reale e dei suoi dintorni". Pointing to Prisciani's reservation of special seating areas for the "illustri" (the *orchestra*, where distinguished spectators were "segregati dala plebe"), 177 Zorzi suggests that both on and off the podium, "la festa-spettacolo... si fissa come uno dei primi macroscopici esempi dell'uso della scena di corte a fine intimidatorio, portavoce e sanzione del discorso dell'ordine". 178 More recently, Lauro Martines has placed the *spettacoli* within a contextual "courtly order of consciousness". Court pageantry, he says, was a ritualized way of tracking down courtly "self-images"; the court spectacle served the "egocentrism of the courtly space". 179

A theme common to all of these theories is the notion of an exclusive, or erudite courtly culture, which defined and codified a social stratification. Nevertheless, we ought to remember that during times of ritualized collective rejoicing (like the Carnival comedies), the so-called "educated few" took part in popular culture. Indeed, we know that some of the
Carnival productions, especially those which placed a heavy emphasis upon pure academic erudition, were greeted with stony silence by courtiers and popolani alike, "perchè la manchòe de quella moralità et subtile astutie che soglieno essere inserte in le Comedie", as Prosperi recalls of one dismal affair.\textsuperscript{180} Evidently, the sort of bawdiness and "impurity" which Isabella d'Este found so distasteful and tedious in the Herculean productions of 1502,\textsuperscript{181} transcended cultural and "class" barriers. Structuralists sometimes need to be reminded that the erudite comedy was rooted in an older tradition of games and carnivalesque celebration.

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In a less "dramatic" way, the activities of fraternal societies also tended to organize Carnival revelry. A good example is provided by the annual celebration of the feast of S. Sebastiano, conducted under the auspices of the nominal confraternity. The feast day of St. Sebastian fell about mid-way in the Carnival season, on the 20th of January. The compagnia can be seen borrowing tapestries from the Estensi arazzeria\textsuperscript{182} to adorn the altare maggiore in the church of S. Francesco: "una coltrina de razo da sala cum due arme con la corda signa", "una copta de tella azura dapinta cum due arme grande de la casa da este et franze ala divixa intorno", "quattro Bancali de razo fatti adiamenti signati".\textsuperscript{183} As one might expect from the evidence of the tapestries, depicted with the Este coat-of-arms and the Herculean device of the diamond, it was customary for the duke to attend the celebrat-
ions. Following a solemn mass in honour of the saint, the festooned congregation engaged in a round of revelry:

... heri che fu el di de s. se bastiano si fece una bella festa qui a san Francesco perche fu belissimo tempo, et erani tanta zente in la chiesa da per tutto, et la suso ala compagnia de S. Sebastiano chel non se gli poteva stare et tutto el sacrato ancora era pieno tra de festaglioli et confortinari e zoveni che erano a le poste et anche qualche maschare che era un miracolo, et per quelle contrade da ogni canto era tanto concorso de persone homini e done che pareva li fusse el perdono, et vi sero dire che le done da ferrara se miseno li belli gabani cum diverse foze e bernie e molte cosse. El nostro Illmo. Signore duca venne ancora lui ala festa et oldite messa desopra ala compagnia sopradicta et poi se ne tornassem a corte. 184

There is no indication as to whether these festivals followed a ceremonial pattern, but the sacral space of the church surely imposed a degree of institutionalization upon congregational licence when one considers the fact that disguising was normally forbidden in a Ferrarese church, and gambling, blasphemy, and sexual activity therein were severely punished. 185 Similar limitations upon Carnival behaviour were no doubt imposed by the Carmelite friars upon the feast of S. Paolo Eremita (15 January), "una bella festa et un bello tempo", 186 the monks of S. Spirito who petitioned the duke for a calf "per fare lo nostro carnevale", 187 and the monastery of S. Guglielmo in the Ferrarese suburbs, which annually petitioned the arazzeria for tapestries to honour their patron saint on 10 February. 188 The feast of St. Blaise was a public holiday in Ferrara (3 February), celebrated with street revels and masquing, 189 and no doubt it had connections with the folkloric associations described by Gaignebet and Ladurie, 190 though evidence is wanting.
Public games also harnessed Carnival aggression and diverted it towards more harmless pastimes. There was tilting at the quintain, and foot-races for men and women were popular. These were normally staged on the customary route, along the Via Grande and Via Sabbioni, though Sivieri notes that Ercole's *Addizione* to the city altered the starting-points during the Carnival of 1493, requiring the engineers to "fare li partegati de pali e partege nove". Ludovico Zorzi's impression of the Ferrarese *palli*, gathered from the iconographic evidence of the frescoes in the Palazzo Schifanoia (Sala del Mese, "Il mese di Aprile"), suggests that they involved the participants in a species of ritualized humiliation, with the Jews obliged to race naked, prostitutes vying with children riding or chasing donkeys, men and women on foot in competition with the signorial barbary race-horses and their jockeys. "Al palio, di assunto derisorio e di crudele spirito di classe... facevano ala il ludibrio della plebe e il distacco del ceto signorile". While this view would conveniently suit a Carnival context, supporting evidence is scanty. One might reasonably assume that the communal law, which formulated the rules and regulations for the *palli* in terms of four separate competitions (horses, asses, men, women), was occasionally bypassed in favour of a more derisory event, much in the manner of the Roman Carnival. However, we ought to recall the remarks of Bernardino Prosperi, who recorded how the Roman magistracy entertained Alfonso d'Este during Carnival in 1502; with tournaments, bullfights,
"corsi palii da pano rosso et azuro da puti et vechii", but also with the ludicrous spectacle of the Roman butchers racing on cattle against a motley assortment of competitors (la brigalia), a scene "che fue brutto a vedere".\textsuperscript{197} There is every reason to believe, as Prosperi's offended sensibilities seem to indicate, that races for the coveted palii in Ferrara were taken far more seriously, at least insofar as the northern signori were concerned. Anything untoward during the proceedings of a race was liable to nullify the result, and disputes over the eventual outcome could spark off international incidents. Thus in 1490, when Alfonso d'Este had lost his race during the annual Luccese palii because "li altri barbari luchesi hanno facto male et cosa iniusta", Ercole wrote to the governors of Lucca "dolendosse de questa Iniustitia facta et de la pocha stima et respecto invite a nui et a nostro figliolo non che faciamo conto del palio ma facemo conto de lo honore come e dicto...".\textsuperscript{198} It remains unclear whether such an attitude may be transposed to the sphere of popular Carnival competitions due to a lack of descriptive evidence, but the notion that the signore would have allowed his horses to participate in an unseemly competition appears to be ill-considered.

Tournaments were another important aspect of Carnival competition, and perhaps no other genre of festal celebration subjected both participants and spectators alike to formally codified behaviour comparatively as great. In the world of tournament heralds, little room existed for undecorous conduct in the public
forum. For the present, we shall leave our discussion of Ferrarese tournaments until the final chapter, subject to one small but interesting point concerning the structural opposition of Carnival and Lent. Historians have long familiarized themselves with this opposition through the iconographic battles depicted by Bosch and Brueghel, of which Brueghel's magnificent Combat of Carnival and Lent has attracted special commentary. A fat man, capped by a pie and sitting astride a wine barrel, jousts with a haggard old women seated on an upright chair: he (Carnival) is armed with a skewer for meat, she (Lent) with a baker's pallet. Within the context of contemporary Shrovetide festivities, the literal meaning of the scene is plain enough, although the wider implications of the painting have meant an iconographic commemoration of the Christological cycle running between Christmas and Whitsun to Claude Gaignebeet, and to Peter Burke, a representation of the attempt by clergy Catholic and Protestant to suppress or reform popular festivities at the time of the painting's composition (1559). There is some evidence which suggests that Brueghel's combat drew inspiration from publicly enacted rituals. In Venice, for example, a pig was beheaded every year on Shrove Tuesday, in Madrid, alternatively, a herring was buried with ceremonial honours. Here is Peter Burke's synthesis of the closing stages of a "model" Carnival celebration: "The last act of the festival was often a drama in which 'Carnival' suffered a mock trial, made a mock confession and a mock testament, and was given a mock execution,
usually by burning, and a mock funeral". In Bologna, during the Carnival of 1506, the jousting theme found vivid expression. A tournament was held in the piazza between "Carnival", mounted on an obese horse, and "Lent", mounted on an emaciated one, both figures commanding a squadron of knights. Equally poignant to the spectators must have been the Ferrarese tournament held on 4 February 1502 as an intermezzo during the performance of the Bacchides. A young girl, in the company of ten nude young men, is assailed by a Lenten dragon "ando per devorarla", but she is saved by a knight who upon defeating the monster, "lo prese, et, menandolo ligato, la giovane a brazo con un giovane lo seguitava". Following this, a young man, naked except for a pair of shoes which are worn upon his head, is scourged by ten boys dressed in white "a modo turchesca", the shoes are captured by the company and placed upon a horse to be carried in procession about the theatre (in the Palazzo della Ragione). For the time being, the rigours of the Lenten fast are postponed? Surely more significant, however, was the annual tournament held in the piazza on Shrove Tuesday, the Spettacolo del Porco. As Prosperi described the proceedings to Isabella d'Este, a tribunal was erected upon which a pig was loosed. Twelve familiars of the ducal household, armed with clubs (bastoni) and protected by helmets and breast-plates, were blindfolded and led onto the stage. "Dato il segnale a suon di trombe", the men moved forward to give combat, the object being to club the animal to death and make off
with the prize. 206

If the meaning of these allegories and customs appears reasonably certain (though one can only guess at the symbolic value attached to the "shoes"), the so-called "reasons of misrule" and the ritualized acts of aggression which characterize Renaissance Carnival are more difficult to fathom. Why, for instance, did people throw snowballs, eggs, rocks, flour, vegetables, dung, and the like at one another? Why was masquing so crucial to the success of Carnival celebrations? What purposes were served by rituals of status-reversal or imaginary kingdoms? Why did the authorities permit and participate in ritualized mockery? Historians have sought explanations to these complex problems in the functional analysis of social anthropology, insofar as they have recognized Carnival's "seasonal and winter, agricultural and fertility functions; its relation to social conflict; its symbolic or ritual nature". 207

In his study Les jeux et les hommes, Roger Caillois invokes the leitmotif of "chaos into order", suggesting that festivities like Carnival bring coherence to primitive societies; their apparent disorder is actually a source of order for societies lacking contractual relationships. 208 A variation upon this theory is argued by Max Gluckman, who explains ritual licence as a sort of "safety-valve" where the ordinary taboos and restraints are lifted in order to emphasize them, in fact, it is "intended to preserve and even strengthen the established order". 209 Similar conclusions are formulated by Victor Turner in his book The Ritual
Process, using the paradigms of "festival" and festal cycles developed by Arnold Van Gennep and Edmund Leach. Rituals of status-reversal (like Carnival masquing, when social inferiors dominate behind the anonymity of disguise) may be found in all societies. These rituals, called the (A) "preliminal" stage (when society sets itself apart from time as experienced in daily life), lead to an ecstatic experience which enhances a generalized social bond or sense of community transcending structural ties, called the (B) "liminal" stage, when society passes through a cultural realm (or threshold of festive or sacred time) which possesses few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state. This phase, according to Leach (and Ladurie), corresponds with Carnival rites of role-reversal and misrule, signalling "that the human group serving as the societal base for the festivities is momentarily turned upside down". Following "liminality", there is a sober return to the network of ordinary human organization in a (C) "post-liminal" or stage of "reintegration", when members of society return to the normative rules of daily experience through the enactment of ritualized "formalities" (like the Spettacolo del Porco in Ferrara). In other words, during Carnival, society undergoes a cyclical (annual) "rite of passage" which reaffirms social order through acts of "reversal":

By making the low high and the high low, they reaffirm the hierarchical principle. By making the low mimic (often to the point of caricature) the behavior of the high, and by restraining the initiatives of the proud, they underline the reasonableness of everyday culturally predictable behavior between the various estates of society.
To see how these theories have been used by writers of history, we might listen to the views of Keith Thomas. Carnival, he suggests, is a kind of "prepolitical safety-valve" for the members of a rigidly structured, hierarchical society. In addition, because of its spontaneity and irregular rhythm, Carnival expresses and reinforces a "preindustrial sense of time". Both Claude Gaignebet and Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie have shown how Carnival's folkloric, biological, agricultural, and religious associations inscribe it in an annual festal cycle, "dans un découpage du temps en tranches de 40 jours que s'inscrivent les dates du Carnaval et que s'ouvre le champ de leur compréhension (Gaignebet), but especially in a Christian time cycle. The flesh, gluttony, and lubricity of Carnival (sin) evoke its primordial concept as a ritualized prelude to the Lenten fast: "burying one's pagan ways, having one last pagan fling before embarking on the penitential rigours of the catachumen's lententide, which would result in spiritual and baptismal rebirth at Easter. In short, the rites of Carnival were a logical prelude to their opposite: Lenten fasting and preaching" (Ladurie). Interesting contrasts to these arguments are posed by Mikhail Bakhtin and Natalie Davis. Here is Miss Davis' understanding of Bakhtin's contribution to the functional analysis of Carnival in his study Le monde de Rabelais. Carnival is always a primary source of liberation, destruction, and renewal, but the scope it is allowed changes in different periods. The Renaissance Carnival provided the people with a second reality, separated from power
and the state but nevertheless public and perennial. The Carnival does not, however, reinforce institutions, hierarchical social structures, or the rhythms of the community: it helps to change them. Carnival provides the people with an actual experience of life without hierarchy, as opposed to the fixed categories of "official culture". What Miss Davis adds to Bakhtin is the notion that the rules and rationale of popular festivals like Carnival ensured that they remained in close contact with the realities of the community. As we stressed earlier, the extra-temporal world of festal celebration is firmly rooted in the temporal. She would argue further to suggest that the "structure of the carnival form can evolve so that it can act both to reinforce order and to suggest alternatives to the existing order". Dare one venture to add that it was necessarily the political order which maintained a constant interest in the antics of homo ludens? Can we discover any significant links between the nature of festal celebration and a contemporary ritual of rulership?

These are certainly important issues to be considered in a study of urban festivals in quattrocento Ferrara, where the ruling dynasty not only participated in the popular culture of public feste (taking dramatic roles in the comedies, organizing games, posing as beggars, or even cavorting naked in the city streets), but thought of them as belonging to what may properly be called a corpus of state ceremonial. Beyond the obvious utility public feste retained as media for
propaganda, there appears to have been a conscious effort on the part of the Estensi to identify their dynasty with ceremony, especially during the later fifteenth-century. From the accession of Borso in 1450, an increasing magnificence in the public sphere was fostered, and from 1471 onward, it thrust itself upon all aspects of ecclesiastical, familial, corporate, individual, and public behaviour. This not only included foreign relations, where strenuous efforts were made to sponsor a ceremonial identity for the Este dynasty, the city, and its inhabitants, but also in the realm of domestic politics. It was a necessary adjunct to signorial power to maintain a ceremonial identity within the perimeters of the city walls; to frame the exercise of political power with the sacramentals of office, and to provide it with a cultural association and historical continuity. Direct association with the customs, traditions, and rituals of the city, alterations made to their experience or indeed the creation of new ones, greatly aided the latter process. Signorial association with the city's holy shrines, its cloisters and relics, the formal business of the communal palace and the festivals of the piazza, helped to incorporate the image of the prince with the typological image of the city. Such associations (and integrations) formed the very ethos of dynastic identity for the Estensi, and solemnized their historical communion with Ferrara. To properly address the problem of urban festivals in Renaissance Ferrara, therefore, we must explore both their social and political functions. We must, as Davis argues, seek to identify and understand the links
between the temporal and extra-temporal world. We must not neglect festival's historical functions.

A preliminary question concerning festival's social functions may be posed: Can modern anthropological theories be applied to festivities like Renaissance Carnival? One of the texts historians have used to support an affirmative response, first noticed by Bakhtin, concerns the defence of the Feast of Fools offered by some French clerics in 1444, repeated here in the translation supplied by Peter Burke:

We do these things in jest and not in earnest, as the ancient custom is, so that once a year the foolishness innate in us can come out and evaporate. Don't wine skins and barrels burst very often if the air-hole (spiraculum) is not opened from time to time? We too are old barrels... 221

Or as an English visitor to Italy in the mid-seventeenth-century put it, commenting upon the licenced mayhem of the Roman Carnival: "... all this is allowed the Italians that they may give a little vent to their spirits which have been stifled in for a whole year and are ready else to choke with gravity and melancholy". 222

We may safely assume that contemporaries themselves were able to grasp that Carnival served functions other than its mere enactment as a series of particularly ribald public holidays. But should our discussion be confined to an analysis of Carnival proper? It is perfectly clear that carnivalesque behaviour and ritualized aggression went on throughout the year, and in some cases attended even the most solemn occasions. The calendar contained any number of these so-called "safety-valves". Let us look at some Ferrarese examples.

* * *
Perhaps the most important carnivalesque festival outside the official season in Ferrara was the annual *Festa del Maio*. The celebration of May Day was anciently accustomed in northern and central Italy, as it was in most European countries, and during the Middle Ages, a tradition of ritualized status-inversion was injected into the proceedings with the election of private citizens to preside over the festivities as reigning monarchs; in Florence, for example, a *Signor dell'Amore*, in Bologna the *Contessa di Maggio*, in Modena and Ferrara the *Regina* or *Reginella del Po*.\(^{223}\) It is an ancient custom, records Guarini, that on the day of the Ascension of Our Lord,

... si fabbricassero alcuni palchi, in foggia di teatri, li quali si adoravano di razzi di Fiandra et altri abbellimenti, con pitture e festoni di verdure. Nel mezzo dei detti palchi in prospettiva, sopra ad una bella seggia eminente, sedeva una giovinetta vagamente adornata, con una corona in capo ad uso di Regina, et alle bande haveva altre donzelle, che la servivano come tante damigelle; altre ve n'erano al piede di detti palchi, con bacili in mano, le quali, quando vedevano comparire alcuno, vi andavano contro danzando et cantando certa canzone che principiava: *Ben venga Maggio*, nella quale chiedevano la manza, et era svergognato et si haveva per scortese colui che non offeriva alcuna cosa; il che era di molto gusto et allegrezza alla città. Continuava questa cerimonia ogni festa fino alla Pasqua di Rose, et era di grande emolumento alle dette donzelle.\(^{224}\)

May Day proper in Ferrara (1 May or the liturgical feast of SS. Filippo e Giacomo) was the customary occasion for young men to make public their suits for young ladies, by placing the branch of a tree (*a maio*) at the window or door of their beloved's residence.\(^{225}\) The duke and his courtiers helped to elevate this custom to quasi-official status with their public participation:
Intoxicating liquors were provided for the popolo at the duke's expense, and in the sala grande, for the city notables, there was "una colazione magnifica in confectione et piatti d'arzento cum castelli, tore, terre, et figure tute de zuccharo, poi de tutti li animali, frutti della terra, similmente de tutti li pesi del mare et volatise del cielo". Courtiers ran to the windows of the palace to fling morsels to the multitude which gathered below "a veder solazare et danzare". Lest we suppose that chaos reigned during these pantagruelian affairs, it is important to note that the collations were conducted with formal ceremonies: "fu accompagnata ditta colazione cum trombe, piffari et tamburini cosa molto excellentissime. Li quali furno portati tutti uno dietro l'altro cum grandissime ordine". Important too, is the fact that the Festa del Maio eventually became a day of official games at Herculean instigation. On the 1st of May, 1496, Ercole arranged a regatta on the river Po, with forty craft of various description (with "due homini per burchiella") racing from the island of San Lazzaro (the leper colony to the west of the city in the Po di Ferrara, known as the "boschetto de li amorbati") to the bridge of S. Giorgio (at the juncture of the Po di Primaro and Po di Volano), and from there, back to the bridge of Castel Tedaldo, at the south-west corner of the city. According to the proclamation of 18 July
1500, which lists the rules and regulations for a regatta to be held on the feast of St. James (the Greater, 25 July), these were "open competitions", devised by the duke "in dare piacere che recreazione a questa suo fidelissimo et dilectissimo popolo di Ferrara". Prizes of cloth, shoes, and jackets were awarded to the victors, and so long as only two individuals occupied each craft, any manner of vessel was entitled to enter:

Per tanto se exhorta caduno che habia sandolo usato, et da pescare come e dicto, et che se senta apto acto debia venire a questo corso, et chi vora correre debba farsi scrivere ala capitanio del porto. 230

In 1499, the venue of the May Day games was switched from the river to the ducal game preserve (the Barco), where the citizens of Ferrara were invited to watch six palii in the new hippodrome, built by the duke's engineers:

Se manifesta per la presente crida, come sua excellentia per recreacione sua, et de qualoncha vora intervenire a quanto se contene qui de sotto, ha deliberato et statuito de fare correre li infra- scripti palii, il primo die de maggio proximo venturo, che sera la festa de 1i sanctissimo apostoli Jacobo et Philippo, tra xxi et xxii hore nel barchetto de sua cel. che e in terra nova el quale corso se fara per modo de circuito ala forma de hippodromo... 234

Some 15,000 spectators are said to have gathered to watch the races, one contest between horses, and five others between local farmers competing in carts drawn by oxen. 235

Ritualized violence was the order of the day during the annual Battagliuola, held in the piazza on 22 July. A mock battle was contested between two squadrons of young boys, who assaulted their opponents with varieties of peeled fruit launched by slings. 236 In the sixteenth-
century, because adults were prone to join in the combat, and because substituted for the fruit were paving stones, clubs, and knives, Alfonso II d'Este was obliged to abolish the custom to avoid a mounting death toll and the resulting disorder in the city. In its place was instituted the commemoration of S. Maria Maddalena, whose feast conveniently fell on this day, with a communal procession of the Savì and the Artì, and an obligational visit to the denominational church.\textsuperscript{237} Given the circumstances, we might wonder why festal celebration was not abolished outright. One reason may well have been the historic value associated with this date; for it had been upon the 22nd of July, 1317, that the Ferrarese had rebelled against Robert of Anjou's Catalan governors, heralding the return of the Este to Ferrara and the installation of the marquesses Rinaldo, Obizzo, and Niccolò as signori.\textsuperscript{238} One suspects that Alfonso was loath to part with the celebration of a day so significant in the annals of his own dynastic history.

We may also observe carnivalesque behaviour in Ferrara during the celebration of more solemn events. Elections of rectors to the university were consecrated before the altare maggiore in the cathedral (the "capping" ceremony), events which normally drew the presence of the duke or members of the signorial family.\textsuperscript{239} Partisanship amongst rival supporters of candidates occasionally turned investitures violent, as in May 1479, when fighting broke out in the congregation despite the presence of the duchess, and the losing candidate had to be imprisoned for inciting riot.\textsuperscript{240} Following the official inauguration,
it was customary for new rectors to offer entertainments (loosely described in the chronicles as *fece collatione*) to the student body and city notables.\(^{241}\) While some rectors found themselves in the unenviable position of being unable to afford the costs of *collatione*,\(^ {242}\) the majority could offer competitions for *palli* and banquets. Withdrawals of tapestries from the Este *arazzeria* show us how elaborate the proceedings could be.\(^ {243}\) Wealthier rectors often staged tournaments,\(^ {244}\) and took the liberty of inviting illustrious guests. So the newly elected rector Thomaso Dainerio wrote to the Marquis of Mantua in April 1488:

*... Et pero che io fece intendere a v.s. che obtiningendo voleva a contemplatio ne de quella fare giostrare uno precio sina hora io li offerisse braza quindese de bel raso carmesino da giostrara quando piaicera a quella. Et prego la excelcia. v. se degni per mio amore accettarlo voluntieri e darmi adviso del tempo comodo a quella de ritrovarsi a ferrara accio puossi meteorre in ordine di quello me necessario pero che quello di da la giostra e di consuetudine de pigliar il Capuzo. 245*

But whatever the nature of the official ceremonies, the election of new rectors signalled a general round of student revels which in some instances surpassed Carnival mayhem. In anticipation of a period of holidays, students threw dung about the lecture halls, and dressed up in Carnival masquerades to steal their masters' books, carrying them in procession through the city to the sound of bagpipes (*pive*).\(^ {246}\) On 21 May 1476, "El prefato rectore nostro messer Jacobo Grotto fece la collatione de confecti e vini dolci a la universitate de li scholari e doctori secondo il consueto, in caxa de messer Alberto Trotto doctori lezente nostro ferrarexe; a se feceno vachacione per octo zorni".\(^ {247}\) During these holidays,
observed Pardi, "era impossibile impedire agli studenti
di far risse, debiti, baldorie carnivalesche, tumulti e
tripudi clamorosi". Disguising outside the licenced
period of Carnival was common enough in Ferrara, and
even solemn religious processions were susceptible to
this form of ribaldry. An extraordinary scene is related
by Prosperi upon the octave of Corpus Christi in 1502,
when the duke issued his wardrobe of Carnival costumes
to be worn in the procession by the confraternities:
"Zobia che fo heri per la octava del Corpus domini fo
principato una bella processione, quale havova a voltare
per nova fina al monasterio de Suor Lucia. Et lo Signore
vostro padre per farla honorevole haveva dato fora tute
le veste de le Comedie a quisti de le Compagnie...".

Important dynastic ceremonials similarly fostered
periodic outbursts of disorder amongst the citizenry,
although their connection with the "carnivalesque" app-
ears doubtful. Upon the birth of the ducal heir Alfonso" in 1476, for example, there was "grande alegreza de tuta
questa citade, de che fonno facte gran feste a son de
campane e cum bombarde e fogi per la Piazza e per la
terra, e fonno bruxate le robalte de le botege, e li
banchi del palazo de la Raxon, maxime a terreno, fonno
rotti, e laxadi li prexoni, rotte le banche de le schole.
Il simile fu facto anche in tute le terre del dominio
del duca nostro". The burning of the shop-keepers'
doors and those of the official pawn-brokers near the
Palazzo della Ragione, the opening of the prison gates
and the ransacking of Jewish money-lending establishments,
proclaimed a day of liberation which far exceeded Carn-

Pilfering was unofficially licenced by ducal acquiescence, old debts were torn up, and the records of condemnations made by the giudici were seized and flung onto a pyre in the piazza. It is interesting to note that the magistrates' benches (banche) were also seized and burnt so that the courts of justice literally could not "sit". For the moment, law and order was effectively suspended. In time, some of the citizens' actions received official blessing. All condemnations, for instance, were cancelled:

In signo de letitia per la nativita del Ill. nostro primogenito il quale per sua infinita clementia ni ha dato et accesso nostro Signore Idio, siamo attenti et volemo che tute li condenatione... spectans a la camera nostra siano remesse et cancellate liberamente et in totum questo sia per quelle che si trovano facte fino al zorno de dicta nativitatis... 251

An official manifestation of joy was proclaimed two days after Alfonso's birth, which commanded "che ciaschaduno artexano tenesse asserate le soe botege per tuta questa septimana", but with the provision that "niuno avesse ardimento de bruxare nè guastare più paramenti nè bot- ege". 252 The pandemonium of the previous days was over and a return to more orderly festivities was at hand, with special masses and processions of gratitude to God in honour of the noble birth. Legislation was enacted to ensure the safety of Jewish citizens, who suffered greatly during these moments of official joy: "... che scandolo alcuno non segua et chel non gli sia data mollesia alcuna reale ni personale". 253

Much is revealed concerning the nature of official celebrations honouring dynastic events in the year 1493, when Beatrice d'Este, then Duchess of Bari, gave birth
to a son (by Lodovico Sforza). Receiving the news in Ferrara, Ercole ordered three days of communal rejoicing in the city. "Nui tuto oggi per segno de alegreza", he wrote to Eleonora, "habiamo facto fallodi, sone de campane et tute le altre demostraionte et signi de alegreza che recarchano simili case festivi, et habiamo ordinato che di matina a laude de dio se faci una bella et solenissime processione et faremo etiam cantare una messa per tale effecto". An entire day was spent washing the streets and laying greenery "per le quale ha a passare epsa processione", and orders were sent to Modena and Reggio commanding that similar arrangements be made for "le processione et il sonare de campane", but significantly, in these two cities, a tight rein was to be kept on the celebrations. "Sua S. non vole che le faciano faloi, ne altro", says Tebaldeo, "accio che non se faceisse qualche scandolo in questa allegreza". Secretary Sivieri relates the details of the Ferrarese celebrations:

For the elevation of Ippolito d'Este to the cardinalate, announced in September of this same year, formal reverence was made to the symbols of office upon their re-
ception from Pope Alexander VI in March 1495. Ercole himself describes how, following a solemn mass in the Duomo, the cardinalate hat (capello) was received "cum grande honore et reverentia et fune portato cum assai cerimonie perche mandassimo incontro a questo cameraro fin a la porta de castel tealto molti nostri zentilhomini, consiglieri et cortesani a cavallo cum suoni de trombe et pifare fu accompagnato...". The post-script to this letter is also worth noting:

Quando si sera deliberato il die solenne de faire la Cerimonia de pigliare il Capello, poteria quella matina secretamente mandare per uno il Capello fuori de la porta de la terra, et poi mandarlo a levare cum honorabile compagnia et accompagnarlo come dire la instructione et farlo portare alto in mano et anche suss uno bastone rosso, che sopravanza la alteza de li homini perche meglio si veda come si ha facto qua per questo messo... 257

Ercole's post-script instructions to Ippolito usher us into a world far removed from the irreverent lampooning of Carnival. It is the world of ceremonial ordines, of the court herald, the referendary, the syndic, and the master-of-ceremonies, and of formalized behaviour.258 No hint of violence or disorderliness is permitted to subvert the proceedings. Communal joy is encouraged but it is not spontaneous. Festal celebration is enjoined but it is officially "controlled" with the imposition of ritual structures which enforce conformity: processions, investitures, masses, oblations, audiences, receptions. Rather, emphasis is placed upon a visible structuring of the temporal world through the medium of ceremonial behaviour. We might launch the phrase "controlled spontaneity" with any number of Ferrarese examples, but it may be useful to cite an early instance which
offers the most complete testimony: the Borsian instructions for the celebration of the Italian League in 1455. Writing to his cancellarius Aristotile Bruturi, Borso ordered a tribunal to be constructed in the piazza before the cathedral, "suso dignamente cum adornamenti de tapedi et tapetiarie et cum de lo verdure accruiammente et in bon copia cum ordine chel para esservi stato el maestro et non ciavatieri ni para opera da grossolani", this at the expense of the Comune. Trumpeters were to assemble the people with a fanfare ("intonare la voce publichi"), whereupon the treaty would be published "per modo che chi dira bene te intenda et bene il proferista si chiaramente il sia inteso". Another fanfare would follow, and immediately the bells of the cathedral and "tute le altre chiese et luoghi pii" would begin to toll, heralding a public holiday. Bell-ringing was to continue throughout the day and night to remind the citizenry that this was an occasion of obligational joy "et non da besse vive altre frate se suola negligamente fare". Fires were to be lit in the piazza, wine freely distributed, and a calf slaughtered for the enjoyment of the popolo. Succeeding days were to be marked by the celebration of special masses and communal processions under the direction of the bishop: "Cum dire anche a messer lo vescovo che sel pare ala sua paternita de fare dopo quello di qualche processione cum qualche messe solenne lui el facia fare". Borso's instructions conclude with a reminder to Bruturi that the festivities were to be conducted honourably, and that order was to be strictly maintained. Official ceremonies not only helped to
structure expressions of communal joy, but, as Ercole later admitted to Eleonora during the preparations for the reception of Anna Sforza in 1491, they offered concrete support to the dynastic and state identity:

... Siamo certo che laoltra (the state's reputation) se servino ceremone, et grande ordine si in le feste come in 'ogni altra cosa, et che cum studio et abundantia siano annotate le brigate come scriva la v.s. perche ni e noto quello che siamo et possano fare quelli Illmi. Sri. Nui anche se sforzaremos de provedere che le cose qua andaron bene e cum ordine et che di quello che poteremo non ce manchera cov.-elle. Vero e che nui mo siamo gia Duca de milano da potere fare de quelle cose et provisione si ample et magnifice... 261

In our concluding chapter, we shall see how much time, energy, money, and genius was invested by the Estensi in "controlling spontaneity" and "enforcing conformity" in search of a ceremonial identity. 262

For the present, we may observe that ritualized disorder, carnivalesque revelry, and in some cases violence, accompanied several festive occasions outside the Carnival season in Ferrara. How frequent, or how deep-rooted, these "pastimes" were, is difficult to discover. It is virtually certain that popular festivals linked to agricultural cycles countenanced carnivalesque bouts of eating and drinking during the summer and autumn, but our knowledge of them is unfortunately handicapped by a lack of record material. From the records of the arazzeria and guardaroba, we may surmise that private banquets (convidi) were a constant feature of communal life throughout the year. 263 A brief glimpse into the popular world of summer feste is also afforded by a condemnation levied on a rural inn-keeper for civil disobedience. Interestingly, the fine was brought about
by a dispute arising over the playing of bagpipes, a favourite Carnival instrument. The inn-keeper relates "como ogni anno per una usanza la Domenega seguente sancta maria de Agosto ob. dicto hosto fa fare un festa in casa sua", and how he contracted annually with a musician to play his pivi. On this occasion, however, the local Podestà of San Crispino desired his newly acquired bagpipes (pivi da Cologne) to be played at the festa, and when the inn-keeper refused for fear of dishonouring his contract, the podestà banned the celebrations and fined him 10 LM. Such incidents might convey how seriously men took their merry-making, but they offer small insight into the nature of festal behaviour. Our knowledge of public festivals in Ferrara, those organized under the auspices of communal law, ecclesiastical authority, local custom, or at signorial instigation, is fortunately much broader. Let us continue our survey by returning to the problem of festal definition.

Civic Festivals of Adhesion

Thus far, we have approached Carnival as a period of ritualized inversion, a "world turned upside down", wherein men actively engaged in separating themselves from ordinary daily experience and its attendant obligations. Authority was overturned, licence encouraged, disorder tolerated, although much of this behaviour found expression in formal games and festal conventions. Constables (birri) patrolled the streets to ensure that the revelry did not go too far. The concept of festival, however, may be subjected to a tri-partite divis-
ion, comprising, as we have seen, the celebration of inversion, but also the celebration of adhesion and transgression. Transgressive celebration is perhaps the most difficult to define and interpret. Initially, we might apply the notion of transgression to Carnival, or any celebration where men are not strictly bound by conventional law and order. During a celebration of transgression, the individual is permitted to indulge in a period of relative lawlessness: his behaviour deliberately flaunts the norms of a society based upon the Rule of Law. The festival year in Ferrara contained numerous occasions when citizens were allowed to transgress socio-legal conventions. These include, as one local historian has argued, the patron saint's feasts of Ferrarese guilds. On saints' days, the legal authorities turned a blind eye towards deviant acts committed by members of guilds. Short of particularly heinous crimes, there was a genuine reluctance to prosecute law-breaking: guild-members celebrated a day outside the law. But in its most acute form, transgressive celebration provided men with the actual experience of living without law and order. We have seen instances of this arise before in Ferrara; between the death and election of a new signore, with the ransacking of Bonvicino dalla Carte's residence and the storming of the Trotti palace, and in the present chapter, with the celebration of Alfonso d'Este's birth. "Celebrations" such as these naturally posed a threat to signorial authority, and we should not be surprised to find that they were as infrequent as they were carefully stage-
managed. Often, transgressive celebration functioned in conjunction with the celebration of adhesion, that is to say, order was visibly reconstituted out of disorder. We might recall Mario Equicola's description of the events surrounding Borso d'Este's lowering of communal tariffs in February 1458. Then, we observed how communal "joy" was initially manifested by transgressive conduct (the willful destruction of private property with full signorial approval), followed by an official public holiday where joy was formally expressed in the conventional manner, as Legnago wrote, with the closing of shops, mass, and a procession of gratitude to God for signorial benevolence. As we saw with Carnival, the leitmotif of "chaos into order" seems to be consciously invoked.

In contrast to transgressive celebration, a festival of adhesion (religious, dynastic, or civic) was normally marked by the imposition of extraordinary regulations governing personal conduct. Festivals of adhesion were bound up with a sense of obligation and duty operating on an elevated plane, distinct from the requirements of everyday communal life. In other words, a code of festive behaviour, of varying regulative and obligatory degrees of intensity, was substituted for a normal behavioural pattern. To the inhabitants of quattrocento Ferrara, festivals of adhesion usually meant work-abstention, either in conjunction with the rubricated days of the local ecclesiastical calendar, or feste fori, or in connection with a more heterogeneous corpus of festivals contingent upon irregular dynastic events, and thus without a permanently assigned
calendar day: the celebration of dynastic births, baptisms, marriages, deaths, investitures, treaties of alliance, civic receptions accorded foreign dignitaries, the installation of local officials into prominent communal posts, communal penitential processions, and even public joy expressed for the lowering of taxes or the provision of subsidies for the purchase of meat and grain. As one might expect in a north Italian city with a long history of papal affiliation, popular observance of religious holidays was encouraged by civic authority, especially in the fifteenth-century. Compared with the ordinances of 1287, which list a mere twenty-seven days when "nullus mercator sive artifex vel caxarolus civitate Ferrarie debeat aperire nec apertam tenere stationem suam causa vendendi aliquid de mercimonis suis... in banno decem soldorum ferrariorum", the Borsian statutes enumerate sixty-six days (besides Sundays) when work was prohibited, subject to a lengthy list of exceptional circumstances and special labour legislation. Exempt from civic holiday regulations were carters of grains and wine purveyors, and the vending of eggs, cheese, curd, milk, chicken, fruit, vegetables "et his similia comestabile" was permitted in the piazza on feste fori, except on Christmas and Easter Day. Grocers, inn-keepers, and taverners, however, were forbidden to sell victuals in Ferrara and its suburban environs from nones on the preceding day until nones of a public holiday, nor could meals be served to the general public by inn-keepers during this period of interdiction. All shop premises were closed on
pain of civil fine for disobedience,\textsuperscript{277} proceedings in criminal matters and civil litigation were suspended,\textsuperscript{278} the interrogation, condemnation, and physical punishment of prisoners was deferred (except in cases of heinous crime),\textsuperscript{279} and public notaries were forbidden to make scriptures, register contracts, or lodge petitions on behalf of clients in "diebus festis inquibus artifices civitates ferrarie non laborat apertis appothecis, et si quis contrafecerit cadat in penam libre v. marchesan".\textsuperscript{280}

From this brief sample of local holiday legislation, it is immediately apparent that holy days of adhesion could alter substantially the most basic behavioural patterns of individuals, and furthermore, that the entire community was geared to accommodate the cyclical rhythm of sacred conduct.\textsuperscript{281} Withdrawing the citizenry from its daily experience of work-discipline by authorizing leisure time, Ferrarese statute law envisaged an alternate code of private and collective behaviour; a discipline of religious devotion, pinpointed by the commemorative days of the ecclesiastical calendar, and imposed upon the citizenry by recourse to the threat of legal sanctions. \textit{Feste fori,} as opposed to \textit{feste chori} (wholly liturgical observances within the cloister or church),\textsuperscript{282} propelled laymen into an extra-temporal world of divine revelation and saintly affiliation. Equally noteworthy, however, is the fact that not all ferial days were locally recognized as occasions of pious observance beyond the acknowledgement of a duty to attend the celebration of mass.
Attendance at mass was of course obligatory on *feste fori*, "those days when laymen should rest from labour and go to church". But of the sixty-six religious holidays in Ferrara, only forty-seven were of sufficient devotional significance to warrant the cancelling of the Saturday market when the two conflicted. Similarly, as few as thirty-three ferial days (seven of which were not officially designated as statutory holidays) interrupted the public auction of immovable possessions seized by the bailiffs of the *Comune*, held daily in the Palazzo della Ragione. We must remember that throughout the Middle Ages, religious holidays coincided with special holiday markets, and despite the protests of ecclesiastical authorities, some commercial business was conducted as usual. In Ferrara, local businessmen were able to obtain special licences to sell their wares in the piazza on religious holidays (save Christmas and Easter Day), and farmers were also able to obtain permits to transport their agricultural produce from the *contado* to the marketplace.

By way of contrast, the Borsian statutes codified special festal regulations to be observed by the community for the celebration of three annual oblations: the feasts of S. Giorgio "civitatis ferrarie patroni", S. Domenico, and S. Antonio (abate, patriarch of monks). Operating here are rules of devotional behaviour wholly distinct from conventional ferial religious observance. Muratori records the inaugural statute of 1268 concerning the feast of St. George, later enshrined in the codification of 1287, which obliged each Ferrarese
corporation, and each citizen who was in possession of property valued in excess of 100 lire imperiali, to offer wax tapers at the altare maggiore in the cathedral "in vigilia beati Georgii ad honorem Dei et beate virginis Marie et ipsius martyris". Subsequent amendments to the statute in 1322, 1454, 1457, and 1462 expanded the oblation franchise and the nature of the obligations, compelling not only members of the duke's household, senior officials of the Comune, doctors of the university faculties, and members of the Arti to march in procession with their gonfalonieri "cum paliis et vexillis suis" and to make offerings of a specified weight of wax, but also commanding the presence of emissaries from the podestarie and vicariates of the subject contado with their tokens of submission: Bondeno, "uno cero librarem trigenta cere", Melaria (70), Trecenta (20), Ficarolo (20), Recano (40), Crispino (30), Massafiscaglia (60), Migliaro (60), Porto (40), Coparo (20). These rules also applied to the oblations of S. Antonio and S. Domenico, save in the latter case university doctors and the College of Notaries were not required to take part. Failure to obey the dispositions of the statute was penalized with a fine of 15 soldi marchesane.

Equally forthright were the dispositions concerning holiday behaviour contained in the matricole of Ferrarese guilds. Members of the Arti were frequently obliged to assemble in procession upon important civic occasions, to attend special masses and convocations, to make oblations at appointed saintly shrines, to attend funeral services for civic notables and fraternal members, and
to otherwise respect regulations covering communal devotional observances. Shop closures on guild and official statutory holidays were rigidly enforced by the maestri and their sindici, and fines were levied on those individuals who failed to heed festal ordinances: beyond corporate sanctions, disobedient persons could be cited before the giudici of the Comune. In fact, the matricole of the Arti in Ferrara are conspicuously dominated by holiday legislation. Many statute compilations include corporate devotional calendars, which offer testimony to the generic roots of local guilds as pious foundations and their continuing role as focal points for communal religious life, despite their proscription as political entities by Obizzo II d'Este in 1287. Earliest of these fraternal organizations to stipulate rules for corporate religious observance in Ferrara was the association or Arte of the shoemakers (Callegari or Calzolari) with its affiliated devotion to SS. Crispino and Crispiniano, records of which have been discovered as early as the year 1112. Quattrocento statute compilations offer insight into the development and complexity of corporate festal behaviour from these early manifestations. The statutes of the Speciali (manufacturers and dispensers of pharmaceutical medicines), for example, list twenty-seven feste (besides Sundays) when shops were to be closed, with the provision that two members elected by the master upon the eve of each festival would keep their dispensaries open "per habdita et comodita de li medici et de li infirmi ali quali infirmi possano quilli tali Speciali fare medecine secundo che fara mestaro", and
also for the benefit of citizens who wished to purchase wax for tapers. The statutes listed in the Decretum Campsorum, which regulated the business of money-lenders, bankers, and houses of exchange cite eleven festivals of special religious devotion, provide for compulsory attendance "ad tute quelle offerte et honorí deputate et ordinate per li dicti massaro et consoli" (covering extraordinary devotional and civic occasions), and enumerate a further sixty-seven festive closures when finance houses were to be closed. For the benefit of visitors to Ferrara, one predetermined bank remained open during each of these sixty-seven ferial days outside the city walls.

Not all of these festive closures, of course, were directly related to the imposition of celebratory obligations upon corporate members. Regarding the disposition of some matricole, it should be borne in mind that holiday legislation was often formulated out of concern for marketing procedures; the need to maintain a proper balance between the availability of goods and consumer demand, to regulate commercial traffic and supervise the purchase and distribution of raw materials. A clear distinction between "shop closure" and festival of adhesion is consistently made. For example, the statutes of the Fabbri (blacksmiths, iron-mongers) order "che ogni et singuli fabri et homini de la schola siano tenuti et debano celebrare tute le feste de li apostoli, et Virgine Maria, et tute le altre feste comandate per la chiexia, a la pena de soldi tri per cadauno che contrafacesse", celebration in these cases linked to the shop closures imposed by civil ordinances. On the
feste of S. Giorgio, S. Domenico, and S. Antonio, the Fabbri were compelled to take part in the civic procession and communal oblation, gathering behind their standard-bearer and corporate banner (palio). S. Eligio (St. Eligius, often called S. Alò in the matricole), patron saint of the guild, was singled out for special private devotions by fraternal members, and a lamp illuminating the altar of this saint in the church of S. Anna was maintained throughout the year: "Ad honore de dio et de sancto Alò puossino dare di beni de la schola libre quattro de olio il mese per alluminare laltare de la capella de sancto Alò in sancta Anna". On the feast-day of S. Eligio, a high mass and oblation was celebrated, followed by a fraternal meal, attendance at which was compulsory: "Et chi lavorasse e facesse lavorare, e aprisse la botega come e dicto, pagi per pena libre una de marchesane, li quali hano de larte predicta". For the spiritual relief of members who were obliged to work on ferial days (selected for this task by the master), four pounds of oil per month were offered for the illumination of the altar of St. Cataldus in the church of Holy Trinity, in remission of their sins.

The importance of saintly affiliation as a visible manifestation of Ferrarese corporate brotherhood is undeniable. With the nascent political role of the Arti erased by signorial legislation early on (assemblies of the Arti were still illegal in the fifteenth-century, except on religious feasts of adhesion and upon the annual elections of new masters), local corporations
concerned themselves with the regulation of communal economic life; defending societal interests against encroachment by other commercial organizations and foreign competition, regulating prices, setting standards of weights and measures, equalizing salaries, maintaining standards of work-discipline, and regulating the purchase and distribution of raw materials. But it was the individual saint's feast, honoured annually by the entire membership, which afforded corporate cohesion beyond common occupational interests. One is perhaps bound to point out how charitable acts accomplished in a saint's name helped to forge a bond of corporate self-help: sick and crippled members were allotted a living, widows were cared for, and members were obliged to ensure a proper Christian burial for their fellows. More important, however, were the corporate devotional activities associated with the saint's feast-day. These acts solemnized the fraternal bond and provided individual members with the opportunity of confirming their allegiance to the brotherhood by participating in a ritually structured process of identification; through the celebration of mass, by entering the confessional, by offering wax and devotional cloth, and by breaking bread in a fraternal meal. One day in every year, therefore, was set aside as especially efficacious for each guild. For the scuole of notaries and civil and canon lawyers in S. Francesco, it was natural that this day should have been the feast of S. Catherina. As Zambotti records, St. Catherine's miraculous intervention upon her feast-day in the early
years of the law school at Bologna, reinforced her formal adoption by the Ferrarese legisti:

A di 25, il luni, a la festa de Sancta Catharina. Li rectori di scolari lezisti e canonisti cum tuta la universitate fece una offerta con trombe a la chiesia de San Francesco secondo loro uxorza de dupieri a l'altare de Sancta Catharina. Un miracolo se dice fu a Bologna che, habiendo li docturi lecto e nesciuti de le scolae in tal festa cadeteno tutti i coperti de le scolae e niuno se amazò, per gran tempesta fu. E per questo miracolo se fe' tale oblatione per tute le scuole. 306

Too little may be said about these festal celebrations due to a lack of descriptive evidence. We are able to discern the nature of the mass, to record the size of the oblational offerings, to locate the altars where the offerings were made, and to list the penalties formulated to counteract disobedience. We also know that the customary fraternal meals were held in relatively splendid surroundings, with the walls of the churches and meeting-halls decorated with tapestries borrowed from the arazzeria. Consigned to maestro Nicolo da San Severino, a tailor (Sarto), "per honorare la festa de sancto homo bon" (St. Homobonus, 13 November) in 1466, were "una coltrina de razo da salla cum la cords signag una parede delo apparato dala fontana cum la cords signa" and "dui bancalli de razo fatti adiamenti signatti". In the same year, to maestro Jacomo da Cremona, a dealer in second-hand merchandise (Strazzrollo), were lent "tri Bancalli de razo fatti a verdure solamente signatti" and "uno Bancali de razo fatto adiamenti signatto" to honour the feast of St. Romanus (9 August). As we noticed earlier, tapestries were in constant demand throughout the year, but especially
for the celebration of liturgical feasts: "per honorare la festa a m. San Lazaro", "per honorare la festa de m. Sancto Zorzo", "per honorare la festa de m. Sancto Bernardino", "per honorare la festa de m. Sancto Michele", "per honorare la festa de nostra dona". But beyond these references, aside from the brief glimpses into the festive world of the Scholari related by the chronicler G.M. Ferrarini, our knowledge of corporate behaviour upon the feasts of patron saints is somewhat limited. We can only suppose, along with the Ferrarese historian Pietro Sitta, that festal regulations were generally obeyed, and that fraternal meals often turned into raucous drunken affairs once the formal celebrations were completed. The evidence provided by the matricole, on the other hand, does permit us to raise two issues. The first concerns the identification of local patron saints. It has been suggested that every Ferrarese Arte had a patrono in the fifteenth-century, and that the images of saints acted as the stemme, or emblems, of particular guilds. What this argument does not take into account is the fact that some of the Arti adopted patrons relatively late, nor does it help to explain the changes in devotional allegiance which may have occurred over the years. For example, we might reasonably suppose St. Joseph to be the patron saint of the local carpenters (Marangoni). Yet nowhere in the quattrocento compilations of this guild is St. Joseph mentioned: he does not appear until the sixteenth-century. Rather, the statutes only cite the obligation for the carpenters to respect and celebrate "omnes
festivitas que per clero et populum dicte civitatis celebrant et omnes festivitas in eorem matricula descriptas" (SS. Giorgio and Domenico). Similarly, Sitta rather carelessly lists St. Francis of Paula (d. 1508, can. 1519) as the patron of the Ferrarese masons (Muratori), while the fifteenth-century matricola records special devotions made to St. Michael. The manufacturers of earthenware and glass receptacles (Vassellari, Mastellari, Conchellari) could not have adopted St. Charles Borromeo (d. 1584, can. 1610) until the statute reforms of 1620, but St. Albert Carmel could have replaced St. Paul as advocate for the wine purveyors (Brentatori) in the later fifteenth-century, but did not do so until 1610 (even here St. Paul retained a rank as a secondary patron). Clearly, we must be cautious in assigning patrons to the Arti in Ferrara, especially where for want of a direct reference, we might anticipate later festal behaviour and pass over earlier devotional manifestations. So often, the lack of a patron saint in quattrocento statute compilations is compensated for by extraordinary obligations upon important communal feasts, special devotions to the Virgin, or other choices (such as Corpus Christi). The calendar of the festival year which appears in Appendix B lists only those guilds where it has been possible to determine the identity of fifteenth-century patrons.

The second issue we might raise concerns the nature of festal behaviour upon a day of adhesion. It may be observed that festivals of adhesion, of which
the celebration of patron saints' feasts by the Arti are distinctly representative, produced a rupture in the passage of time. For members of the Arti, patron's feasts afforded an avenue into the extra-temporal world. Devotional activity which focused on the altar, the church, the meeting-hall, distinguished the feast-day from the ordinary experience of the work-day and the marketplace. Submission to the saint and allegiance to the fraternity required alterations in individual and collective behaviour which bore marginal significance in the temporal world. Primarily, the ceremony of cult operated on an exaggerated plane which was quite distinct from normal experience. It idealized social norms and the Christian communitas. Might not this argument equally apply to communal rituals in Ferrara, both religious and civic?

In a recent study, Richard Trexler has shown how Florentine public religious ritual focused on the narrow confines of power: the altar, the cloister, and the throne. Within the confines of these three places, he argues, "the behaviour of Florentines took on a ritual nature distinguishable from the forms of the marketplace". Following the concepts of sacred space evolved by Comblin and Van der Leeuw, Trexler suggests that a peculiarly urban religious mode operated in cities like Renaissance Florence, expressed by formalized, ritual behaviour. The city, therefore, must be viewed as a unified, organic whole:

No boundary processions marked off its sectors, and no administrative subdivision of the city had its own divinity or saint, its own particular sacrality.
The standard processional route in Florence was a via sacra only when the processional day and its activity were underway. 323

Periodically then, festal celebration transformed urban space and metamorphosed the habitual rhythms of the city. A sacred object, for example, carried in procession by the clergy, or accompanied by the Signoria, transformed the processional route into a via sacra wholly distinct from the unconsecrated remainder of the city. Not only ritual behaviour countenanced by festal regulations, but visibly manifest alterations to urban space, helped to define the extra-temporal. 324 Two further elements may be added to Trexler's analysis of festive time and space with a view to the context of Renaissance Ferrara. Earlier, we remarked how the Estensi considered public religious and civic occasions to belong to a corpus of state ceremonial. While it is difficult to discover a precise theory governing the relationship between festal behaviour and the ideology of signorial rulership, since most festivals were not overtly political, we might argue that they exemplified urban history. 325 Public rituals lent cohesion to the community, they codified precedents, prohibitions, and rights, they formalized the mode of social order, but most of all, they were the visible means of relating individuals to the formal constitution of the city. Ceremonies were a constant reminder of the city's discreet and historical identity. 326 For the Estensi, it was a logical consequence of their signorial presence in Ferrara to seek to identify with the city's historical annals: its churches, its saints, its relics, its battles, its miracles, its traditions, and its cus-
toms. Such associations helped to ceremonialize their communion with Ferrara, and to cast off the stigma of "intruder" which the family bore historically as conqueror of the city.\(^{327}\) We shall see below how new rituals were created, or old ones rectified, to forge a dynastic identity and to impress upon the city the imprint of dynastic history.

A final point concerning festive definition returns us to the basic premise with which we began our survey, that is, the notion that rituals of inversion, transgression, and adhesion are conceptually complementary. It is Trexler's opinion that calendrical feasts achieved group solidarity in urban Florence through behavioural deviations towards both ends of a continuum (from "dance to procession"). What he particularly emphasizes is the manner in which both sacred and profane behaviour attended the most solemn events. Foot and horse races, singing, buffoonery, and carnivalesque floats counter-balanced the oblation and the procession of the clergy with their relics, images, and crucifixes upon a saint's feast: "Both were in honour of the saint".\(^{328}\) We might also like to stress the notion of a festal continuum in another, broader sense. Throughout the calendar year in Ferrara, there were occasions upon which men relinquished their ties with ordinary daily experience and embarked upon alternative codes of behaviour. Some of these codes, as we have seen, inverted normal experience or transgressed recognized conventions of law and order; others elevated festal behaviour to the level of ceremonial. Nevertheless, upon all of these
occasions, men found themselves transported into an "extra-temporal world", both in time and in space. Their actions during these festive moments were not governed by temporal impositions, but hinged upon contingent encounters between the real and the festive world. Our attention must focus necessarily, therefore, upon the circumstances which give rise to festival, for it is this region of contingency which helps us to assign meaning to festive behaviour.

Contingent relations between the temporal and the extra-temporal in Este Ferrara allow us to locate another festal continuum. In this case, we may notice how contingent festive circumstances were linked to a dynastic impress upon festive time; insofar as the principles of inversion, transgression, and adhesion were rooted in a calendar of behaviour sanctioned by communal law and signorial licence. Thus, we might answer the suggestion that holy days were only externally related to deviant behaviour, or that days of licence were only externally related to political seriousness, by citing them within the framework of an overriding order; a festal continuum contingent upon the desires and needs of local political authority. While we have encountered evidence to suggest that the Estensi differentiated between modes of behaviour on occasion, there is no evidence to suppose that they understood festivals other than in a continuum of festal rhythms over which they presided as custodians. On the contrary, signorial registers reveal a homogeneous corpus of festivities linked to princely obligations, and a conscious attempt to identify the dynasty with
local traditions. "Cossa consuete de farse per anno a la spesa sua" included provisions "per lo Palio de pano doro che ogni ano se correra da li barbari", "per la Elemosina fa lo Illmo. d.s.n. il di de la Zobia Sancta", "per li palii che corseno il di de San Zorzo ano presente li homeni la femina et li asini", "per lo palio che fa balestra il di de mes. San Giovanni". By participating in "popular culture" and the public vita liturgica, the signore provided his dynasty with a cultural continuity. Through a ritualized process of integration and association (festivals), the history of Ferrara was metamorphosed into the history of the Este dynasty.

Let us conclude our examination of the festival year in Ferrara with a brief review of those communal festal occasions which may be inscribed in a corpus or continuum of Este state ceremonial.

The Festival Year

La Ventura or L'offerta della Befana: Epiphany (5-6 January, above pp. 13-15)

Introduced by Ercole d'Este in 1473, the custom coincided with local traditions surrounding the twelve days of Christmas, which culminated with the personification of Epiphany as an old woman (La Befana) riding through the streets of Ferrara. On the vigil and eve of Epiphany, the duke "como in di usanza... ando cercando la'ventura per la terra da li soi citadini", accompanied by his courtiers, pipers, trumpeters, and singers. There were standard-bearers carrying special "palii di ventura" to herald the approach of the company, and the duke and his favourites rode in open-
air carriages ("carrette per la ventura"). During his progress through the city, the duke stopped to solicit gifts from the citizenry, and, as we have seen, the response was generous. The Jewish bankers, for example, banded together to offer an assortment of gifts:

... ge feceno uno bello presente, de piati de quelli soi tortelli de zucharo e marzapani e cire bianche zoe dopieri et candelloti, et un piato de figadi de ocha belissimi et bianchi quanto un lacte, et due belissime oche a pastade et molto grasse... 334

Scholars are divided over the issue of what meaning may be assigned to this annual Herculean rite. According to Catalano's etymology, the word "ventura" links the custom with the chivalric romances of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (of which the Estensi were prodigious collectors) which idealized the knightly search for perilous adventures, but the duke, "più practico, batteva alle porte dei suoi sudditi e riceva la ventura sotto forma di caccio, vitelli, agnelli, maiali, capretti, salame, torte, confetti e di altro ben di Dio". There is evidence to support Pardi and Sitta in their contention that the ventura signified an ordinary (but discretionary) tax levied on the Ferrarese citizenry, with individuals vying for signorial favour by offering tokens of their esteem. A letter from Pietro Gentile to Francesco Gonzaga records how "Il Signor Ducha se expecta questa sira in questa terra e andare a la ventura, essendosi ognun provisto de volerli presentare grossamente", and Bernardino Prosperi relates how "La ventura la piu parte lha mandata ala spenderia" (the ducal treasury) despite popular protests. "Hersira Il Signore v. patre andete da la piazza in suso per la ventura",
wrote Prosperi to Isabella d'Este in January 1503, "ma le cose vano secondo li esempi che dano li mazori". Catalano's argument, however, appears to be ill-founded. Rather than an expression of "courtly amusement", the ventura was a moment of ritualized collective rejoicing, with the Herculean court taking part in popular culture. The proceedings suggest a ritual of Carnival inversion, with the duke assuming the position of the beggar soliciting charity door-to-door, and the popolo engaged in the role of the poor giving alms to the rich. Just how important this annual observance was within the context of the festival year in Ferrara may be illustrated by the number of occasions Ercole postponed other princely "business" to fulfill its festal functions, and during his absence or illness, by the fact that other members of the signorial family were appointed to act as deputies. The ritual was itself significant, not its identification with the personal style of the signore.

S. Antonio Abate: 17 January (above pp. 354-55)

On the feast of St. Antony Abbot, communal law ordered a procession of the Arti to the denominational church, where a special oblation was made before the altare maggiore. The commemoration of this feast was directly linked to the foundation of a Benedictine nunnery in the church of S. Antonio by the Blessed Beatrice d'Este, daughter of the Marquis Azzo VII, in 1254.

Purificazione B.V.M. or Santa Maria Ciriola: 2 February
During the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, it had been customary for the Bishop of Ferrara to marshal a procession to the church of S. Maria di Bocche for the purpose of offering tapers on this day. Neither the trecento nor quattrocento chronicles mention this custom, and it appears that the practice had long been supplanted by a signorial oblation in the cathedral, herein noted Borso d'Este's observance (in the company of the Emperor Frederick III) in 1469: "... zobia, che fu II di Febraro, audito che have Messa in Domo palam et offerto quattro ducati a lo altare et tolto la candela secondo la usanza de Sancta Maria Ciriola, che è in quel di II di Febraro...". Herculean offerings were comparatively large. In 1479, for example, 338 LM were expended by the duke "per costo e spexa de cire bianche tra dorate e non dorate lui assigna havere mandato in questo anno da Venesia a ferrara... per bisogno de la festa de madona S. Maria Ciriola...". We shall see below that Ercole's ceaseless efforts to add luster to the Marian feasts were intimately connected with his custodianship of the miraculous immagine of the Virgin, credited by the Ferrarese with cures of the infirm, lepers, barren women, and the seriously diseased, and by the duke with the preservation of his state during the Veleschi conspiracy of 1476.

Festa dei Poveri: Maundy Thursday (above pp. 12-13)

Introduced by Ercole d'Este in 1472 as a penitential feast, we have observed that the duke engaged in an elaborate ritual of pedilavium by washing the feet of twelve poor citizens and distributing alms in
the *salla grande*. In *imitatio Christi*, Ercole performed perhaps the most visually emotive ritual of status-inversion enshrined in the festival year, an act of contrition which Sabadino degli Arienti related directly to the image of ducal religiosity.\(^{348}\) The association of *pedilavium* rituals with princely devotions has a long history,\(^ {349}\) but what needs to be particularly emphasized in the Ferrarese context is the manner in which common liturgical usage, and a simple case of private piety, were transformed into a collective and intensively theatrical moment of signorial benevolence. Preparations for the feast were elaborate. Every year tribunals were constructed in the *salla grande* and adorned with tapestries,\(^ {350}\) the treasury was instructed to make provisions for alms,\(^ {351}\) jackets, shoes, caps, and cloth were purchased from local merchants "per la elimosine de la zobia sancta... per vestire li poveri la quale elimosina fa ogni anno il Signore",\(^ {352}\) and the *poveri* sent their oblation requests to the chancellery.\(^ {353}\) The proceedings are described in a variety of texts, herein by Zambotti:

A di 19, la Zobia Sancta (1478). El duca nostro devotissimo e religiosissimo dette dexenare hozi suxo la sala grande a cento poveri, splendidissimamente de più vivande e confecti, facendo diverse tavole, maxime una di XII poveri citadini, in li quali ge hera uno prete, per significatione de la tavola de le XII Apostoli. E lui proprio ge serviva insieme con il signore messer Sigismondo e messer Raynaldo, soi fratelli, e altri cavaleri e compagni, facendo cantare a li soi cantori: *mandatum domini* in mezo la sala. Poi, tutti vestiti de biancho, soa signoria con li altri, ge lavöno li pedi. E ge dette la elimosina infrascripta:

- uno paro de scarpe grosse
- uno paro de calze torchine
- una bretta negra
- pano per uno vestito torchino
- pano per mantello torchino
- pignolato per uno zipone
When Ercole was absent from Ferrara on the appointed day, the ceremonial was performed by the duchess. As Ercole explained to Eleonora:

... A quanto v.s. ne ricorda per la sua de xxvii di passato per la nostra bona consuetudine de la helymosine de la Zobia Sancta, Rispondemo che la deba pare fare la provisione per il comprare panni, pignolati et quelle altre cose che se harano a distribuire in dicta helimosina, perche on a Ferrara on altrove se trovaremo, Intendemo che la se faci, secundo la nostra usanza siche faza la v.s. che li factori nostri generali mettano ordine al tudo... 355

In 1490, fourteen year-old Alfonso deputized for his father, following precise instructions sent to Ferrara by the duke:

Hogi, che e la Zobia Sancta secundo el solito si e facto el desinare, lotione di pedi et elemosyna ali poveri nel zardino de la corte qui de vostra Ex. come la potera intendere per el scrivere che li fa diffusamente el Renzo taruffo al quale mi raporto. 356

Two elements fundamental to Ercole's domestic policy help to explain his insistence that this ritual be invariably observed: his own personal piety (his desire to ensure that both he and his subjects "stare bene cum Idio", as one chronicler wrote), 357 hypocritical at times, but apparently unchallenged by contemporary witnesses, 358 and his intention to furnish the dynasty with ceremonies, or "cirimonie sancte", "spectaculi sancti", and "opere beate et sancte", as Sabadino called them. 359 Something of the latter concern is revealed by Bernardino Prosperi in a series of letters to Isabella d'Este in March 1497. Describing the magnificent prepar-
Prosperi later relates how Ercole performed the ceremonial despite the fact that many officials of the ducal camera remained unpaid: "... et forsi multi salariati rimanerano privi de le provisione et chi in parte et chi del tuto". The poveri, he complained (Prosperi was then a salaried member of the Herculean chancellery), were expensively entertained, "ma tenemo de vedere ala partita sua mutatare assai de salariati che mancarano del tuto et chi de parte come credo che anché ne scrivesse ala s.v....".

To be sure, signorial piety is more complex than it initially appears, but it was always public. During Lent, devotional activity extended to the ceremonial liberation of prisoners before the high altar in the duomo "pro oblatione crucis per ipsam facienda die sancte veneris" (above pp. 246-47), financial provisions for which were made by the fattori generali. Pardi intimates that this custom was introduced by Ercole in the year 1478, although there is evidence which suggests that Borso engaged in similar practices:

Mandato Illmi. principis ac Exmi. domini nostri Borsi ducis Mutine et Regii Marchionis estense Comitisque Rodigii ecc. Vos factores generales eius dari et solvi faciatis infrascriptis quantitates denarius quas prefatus solvi facit ipsis in elimosinam per rigo de Mediolano eor debitore quem idem dns. amore dei relaxari fecit e carcere et offeri in paschate preterito. Et portentur ad expensam viz.

Antonio teotonico....... L. una sol. sedecim m.
Tadeo bovandino....... L. duas marchesane
Johanni de Mutina....... L. duas sol. decem den. sex

Constantinus de Larchis scrispit xvii aprilis 1456

Whether Borsian custom involved a "spettacolosa" (as
Pardi refers to Herculean practice) remains unknown. Important too, were the Lenten sacre rappresentazioni staged by Ercole in the later fifteenth-century as visible manifestations of his Christo-centric piety (listed in Appendix A). The sacra rappresentazione arrived in Ferrara from Florence, with a performance of the Legend of St. James in the piazza on 16 June 1476. The play, it appears, was not particularly gratifying, fraught as it was with "molti elementi profani", and subsequent Ferrarese productions, at Herculean instigation, were more faithful to the pure liturgical drama. By liturgical drama in Ferrara, we generally mean "open-air theatre", or an "acting-space", where the popolo, along with the duke and his courtiers, were collectively invited to participate in and witness the annual cycle of Christ the King. Tribunals were erected in the piazza, in the ducal chapel, or inside the cathedral. The liturgy (Latin) was sung by the choir of the ducal chapel, and actors issued forth to recite their lines "vulgarmente": The principal props and scenography consisted of a large wooden serpent (representing the "Inferno" or "Limbo") and a "cielo alto", a scaffolding erected over the top of the stage representing "Paradiso" (heaven). The scene is graphically described in the Ferrarese chronicles (see Appendix D).

In these dramatic expressions of contemporary religious spirituality, one is able to perceive a particular extra-temporal mode within which they were expressed (religious excitement). But like the Carnival
comedies, the sacre rappresentazioni evoked a consciousness of a festal continuum which had dynastic associations. Like the penitential processions where the duke led "his people" in prayer, fasting, and supplication, like the sermons organized and attended by the duke with "his congregation" in the piazza or the cathedral, like the "ceremonie sancte" performed "pubblicamente" in the salla grande, indeed like his sponsorship of "castelli del cielo" (monasteries and monastic life), the sacre rappresentazioni belong to the series of collective moments where the duke appeared as the principal protagonist in the public vita liturgica. While sacred drama bespoke an "otherworld" of divine revelation, performances were localized according to a dynastic apprehension of and impress upon calendrical time. The signore was custodian of his own "religione cittadine".


It was a tradition begun in the mid-thirteenth-century (according to Muratori), that on the feast of St. George, patron saint of Ferrara, a horse-race should be run: "Item statuimus quod in festo beati Georgii equi currant ad paliam et porchetum et gallum". By the mid-fifteenth-century, as we noted earlier, the celebration comprised four separate races: for horses "super via magna incipiendo in contracta piope in loco consueto usque ad locum consuetum iuxta castelum tealtum"; after vespers, for asses (assini) "incipient a porta inferiori usque ad portam gosmarie"; for men, "a via et quadrivio sancti petri usque ad predictam portam gosmarie"; and for women, "a via et quadrivio sancte
Local veneration of St. George as patron of the city may be dated as early as 928, when records reveal an episcopal church dedicated to M.S. Giorgio on the banks of the river Po opposite the present site of the city, but the saintly affiliation was not formally consecrated until the completion of the cathedral in the city-centre, and its dedication to St. George in the year 1135. From that date forward, notes Frizzi, communal charters, decrees, and investitures were habitually prefaced by a reverence to B. Georgii et omnium Sanctorum etc. Signorial association with Ferrara’s patron was manifested in several ways during the fifteenth-century. Newly minted Herculean coins, for example, portrayed St. George and the dragon, and on the obverse, the ducal profile, solemn and bare-headed. But it was as custodian of the games on the saint’s feast, that the duke ritualized the bond.

On the vigil of St. George, in observance of communal law, "Fu facta una solenne offerta a la giesia catedrale secondo il consueto con li palii de le Arte, et artexani con li soi dupieri e tute le castelle con li soi cirii...". Often, the oblation was postponed to accommodate signorial wishes. In response to a request from Lodovico Sforza in 1493 "che la volesse sopra sedere de fare correre el dicto palio per fin a la venuta nostra", Ercole arranged that the palio be run on 20 May and so delayed the offering until the 19th of that month:

Ad Comissarium generales in Romandiola:
Dilectissime nostre. Per chel si haveva a correre il palio qua consueto corrersi ala festa di Sancto Georgio, e il di inanti che sera la domenica a di 19 se fara la offerta qua ala chiesa cathedrale secondo usanza, Volemo che admoniati on vero commandati a tute le convintade laoltra, che sono consute di venire a dicta offerta che si debano ritrovare qua il die che la se fara, cum li suoi circi consueti per honorare dicta offerta a fare il debito suo. Et qui inclusa haveriti la li ta delle covintade che haveriti a commandare e deli cirii che haverano portare secondo che sono obligati. Ferrara, x maii, 1493

For more practical reasons, Ercole ordered the festa to be postponed for a week in 1480 so that his citizens would be free to combat the flood waters of the Po and he suspended the proceedings outright between the years 1482 and 1484 on account of the war and plague, but in 1489 the palio was delayed because the duke had arranged a performance of the Ressurection and in 1504 to await the arrival of the Marquis of Mantua.

Sometimes the feast was only partially celebrated, as in 1503:

Fu facta la offerta de San Zorzo secondo uxanza in l'hora de vespero, con tuti li cirii e palii, a la chiesa del domo... El palio de brocha' d'oro non se corse con li barbari secondo il consueto, ma in tal zorno il duca nostro donnó dicto palio al monastero de le sore de Sancta Catarina... perche l'hera morto pochi zorni fa il signore messer Raynaldo suo frate-tello. 396

Sacred time, it appears, could be restructured to suit a dynastic impress upon local festal behaviour: the liturgical calendar obeyed a dynastic dynamics.

Ercole's demands also point to assertive political principles underlying the feast. Procession and oblation were rituals of submission to signorial rule, and moments for contemplation of the signore and the community at peace with the protector saint. Civic order was cere-
monialized, and social stability was revitalized. The more spontaneous celebrations which attended the races themselves also contributed to dynastic contemplation: the palio was an occasion of princely magnificence which honoured the signorial family. The festivities were inaugurated with the formal blessing of the palii (pieces of cloth acting as prizes to be awarded to the victorious contestants)\textsuperscript{398} administered by the Bishop of Ferrara upon the vigil, and following the celebration of mass, a review of the horses (mostra dei cavalli) was conducted on the cathedral steps: "E tuti sedèno a l'altare grande insino che fu finita l'offerta e lo vespero, poi stètèno a vedere la mostra di Barbari li quali hanno a correre, suxo la porta del vesqua', et Madama con le altre zintildone herano a li pozoli de marmoro a vedere con multi zintilhomini...".\textsuperscript{399} On the morning of the feast-day, after mass, musicians led the horses onto the Via Grande where tribunals adorned with tapestries had been erected to seat the noble spectators.\textsuperscript{400} Perhaps the most poignant account of the palio in Ferrara was written by the duchess in two letters to Ercole in April 1479 (Ercole was absent in Modena), for it reveals something of the principal signorial objectives in the custodianship of the games. Eleonora's description of the oblation in the cathedral suggests a preoccupation with the ceremonial ordines of the proceedings, with the young Alfonso (then three years of age) taking his father's place in the procession beside the Marquis of Mantua,\textsuperscript{402} while her account of the palii indicates a concern to win honour and to solicit acclamation from the popolo:
Lo palio per questo die de s. Zorzo seria stata bellissima se v. Ex. come la gli e sta mille volte chiamata... Lo e vero che la sta honorata per la presentia de la Mag. Generva bentivogli et de misser hannibal cum li quali sono venuti il chonte Antonio da la Mirandula et madona Costantia sua consorte. Il nostro Alfonso ni ha facto grande honore imore che heri il vene al Offerta et questa matina fin ale mosse cum bona gratia veramente et molto meglio che non stimava. La brigata per la via grande cridava Alfons alfons et Lui diceva Duca duca Madama madama. Li barbari sono sta x in tuto, tri da Mantua, duo da la Mirandula, tri da Bologna cioe de mes. Zoanne bentivogli uno, laltro de li Malvesi, il terzo de quello del Engrati, uno de mes. theophilo ultimo uno cavallo turcho de uno padoano. Nol levare da le mosse quello cavallo del Engrati traverso la via et urto cum li altri in modo che li dicto facto ni casco duo cavallo... Quello de mes. Theophilo ne vene primo fin dentro la porta de sotto per bon pozo, poi al cursto se ritrovo o quatro o quinto. Quello bavoscuro da la Mirandula qual etiam lanno passato hebe il palio e sta il primo et haute il precio. Il secondo e stato uno Saginato da Mantua. Il terzo uno Saginato da la Mirandula, et successivo li altri in frotta. Quello primo era nanti li altri forsi per quatro cavalli. Sia tuto ad honore... ferrarie, xxiii aprilis, hore xvi. 403

The tenor of Eleonora's letters also suggests an avid interest in the actual race itself, and we ought to remember that horse-racing was a particularly popular pursuit amongst the nobles of northern Italy, as it was elsewhere in Europe. Both Borso and Ercole kept a large stable of barbary horses, and sent them abroad to compete in other cities. Of the "popular" games, there is unfortunately too little to say. Chronicles merely mention that races took place (without elaborating any details), and no new evidence has been unearthed by recent Ferrarese studies.

San Marco: 25 April

A legacy from a trade agreement concluded between Venice and Ferrara in the year 1204 was the presence of a Venetian magistrate (Visdomino) in the city, empowered...
to judge civil cases involving citizens of the Republic. On the feast of St. Mark, patron saint of Venice, it was customary for members of the Este family, the communal government, and civic notables to accompany the Visdomino in procession to the denominational church, at that time located just inside the western gate to the city:

It appears, however, that Este participation in the oblation was used as an instrument of political propaganda, and not, as Pardi suggests, as evidence of the historic bond between Venice and Ferrara, surely an anathema to the Ferrarese. When relations were friendly between the two, as in the league against King Charles VIII of France mentioned in the reference cited above, the feast of St. Mark was exploited to the fullest extent. When relations were less friendly (as they naturally were during the Venetian War when the feast was suspended), on the other hand, one finds the Visdomino reduced to petitioning intermediaries to convince the duke that honour ought to be rendered upon the feast by members of his
household:

Magnifico mes. francesco Areosti: Priego la v. mta. se digni esser cum la Extia. de lo Illmo. s. et supplicar sua Extia. che accadendomi piacendo a quella far la Offerta de s. marcho gli prag darmi qualche zentilhomo in compagnia de che antonio francesco di doctori viceregente dil Mco. mes. lo vicedomino accompagnare il stendardo de s. Marcho facendomi dar i trombiti e pifari sua extia. secondo la sua summa sapientia non sia fato qualche ultraggio e circa cio darmi risposta... 409

Festa del Maio: 1 May and Festum Ascensionis (above pp. 340-42)

S. Giovanni Battista or Palio di Castel Tedaldo: 24 June

Every year on the feast of St. John the Baptist, a palio for crossbow-men (balestrieri) was staged: the target (customarily supplied by the signore) was erected by the side of the denominational church located near the Castel Tedaldo. The origins of this contest are obscure, but it clearly belongs amongst those signorial customs which antedate the accession of Borso d'Este, whose administrative records show payments made for a target as early as 1451. Here again, we may note that members of the Este family frequently took part in the games:

A di 24, de luni, le festa de San Zoanne Baptistag ad. hore 20. Se balestrò in uno bersaio aprovo la chiesia de San Zoanne, drito al Castello Thealto, et quello trette più aprovo a la brocha fu illustrissimo messer Sigismondo Da Este, al quale fu dato il palio de panno roxado de braza XII, al secondo fu data una balestra grande da molinello, al terzo fu dato il bersaio con tutti li vertoni ge herano dentro. Cusi è il consueto ogni anno in cusi facto zorno. 412

Palio di S. Pietro Apostolo: 29 June

According to Caleffini, Ercole introduced the custom of racing for palii on this saint's feast in 1474 to honour the birth of his first child (Isabella): "Lo illu.
Sig. Duca misser hercole fece secondo lusanza per lui lo anno proximo passato principiata in simile di che fu et il di de s. pietro apostolo correre li infra- scripti precii..." (identical to the palio held on the feast of St. George). No other chronicle mentions such an event until the year 1480, when the palio coincided with the ceremonial betrothal of Isabella to Francesco Gonzaga.

Corpus Christi: Thursday after Trinity Sunday

Adi zobia 13 Zugno el di del corpo de Christo et di Tomaso antonio da padoa in la cita nostra di ferrara fu fanno solenne processione a modo usato et da uno lado erano questi che infra nominando del baldachino chel portavano primus d. iacobus trottus secondus mes. guibano da fonsana rectore de li lezisti tercio mes. sigismondo da este quarto mes. maestro melia- duse da este quinto el podesta di ferrara da laltro lado del baldachino chel portava erano questi eor primo mes. andrea gualengo secondo lo rectore de li canonisti 3. el vicedomino de ventianis 4. el vic- ario del vescovo quinto mes. francesco suetta cons- iliano di justitia in cosi portono ditto balda- chino...

The Corpus Christi procession was intended to touch most of the signal buildings within the city. From a holy shrine temporarily erected in the piazza, the company bearing the baldachino over the effigy of Christ moved in a circuit about the city, passing through the cortile and ducal gardens to Santa Maria dei Servi, along the Via Grande (where another altar was customarily erected, perhaps indicating a halt for prayer or a sacred presentation) to the Palazzo Schifanoia, from thence to the church of San Francesco and along its avenue to the Via Sabioni passing San Andrea and Sant' Antonio, returning to the piazza where the Bishop of Ferrara "dette la benedictione" while
holding the effigy in his arms. On occasion the procession traveled as far as San Domenico near the old northern wall of the city, from there to San Francesco and the Via Grande, returning to the piazza by way of San Paolo. Our initial impression of these processions must be that they were intensively spiritual in nature. Sacred objects and images were carried along the route to add luster to the processional group, and there were halts for rappresentazioni:

A di l8 de Zugno, zobia, el di del Corpo di Christo in ferrara fu fatta la solenne processione usato fare intal di per la cita nostra. Acompagnare il corpo di Christo per la cita li ando la Illustrissima madama nostra di ferrara con li fioli et fiola et done et li ando tutti li altri li dela caxa da este. Lo duca nostro non li fu perche era fora dela cita soa... Li frati di sancto francesco di ferrara in tal processione feceno tutti li santi et sante forno de la sua religione: item, tutti li papi sono stati del suo ordine: item, uno imperatore; quello era in loco di sancto Francesco haveva christo in alto et lo guardava fixo, et era conzignata con fili de ramo che era cosa dificile. 421

Yet there is also cause to suggest that the Corpus Christi procession also bore a secular message. Chroniclers, for example, appear singularly unmoved by collective spirituality and more concerned with identifying personages and their physical proximity to the baldachino, that is, with the ceremonial ordo of the procession. In fact, the problem of precedence within the processional group seems to dominate contemporary thinking. Just how jealously men guarded their ceremonial identity on sacred occasions is indicated by a dispute over a matter of precedence which arose between the Milanese ambassador and the Venetian Visdomino in 1485. A remarkable testimony is provided by Eleonora in her
correspondance with Ercole, from which it may be useful to quote at length. Diplomatic protocol, it appears, lay at the root of the problem. Called to a formal audience in the presence of the duchess, the two protagonists arrived simultaneously at the palace, and, because both men refused to yield the right of precedence into the audience hall, the duchess was forced to cancel the proceedings. As Eleonora relates, the matter threatened to disrupt the forthcoming Corpus Christi procession:

Advisando v.s. se bene prima non ge lho scripto che per la solennita del corpo de Christo io dubitai in correre in qualche inconveniente per il portare il Baldachino et andare insieme in processione. Pero che havendo io inteso a cert propositi che dicto oratore ducale non voleva per niente cedere al vice-domino come vicedomino, Et parendomi necessario invitare alla solennita ciascuno de loro, li quali pero da si medesimi, sentiva che gli seriano venuti feci che francesco nasello nel invitate chel fece il vice-domino come da si dextramente gli disse la lungezza et fastido dela via et che non si volea pero niuna sua incommodita attento che in quelli giorni sua Magitia. non si haveva sentita bene et che la facesse come li paresse...

Both parties protested that they were "good Christians", but that the problem of protocol involved the honour of their respective states. Not wishing to cause a "calumn-iata a Vinesia et a Milano", Eleonora arrived at an ingenious solution: no layman would carry the baldachino, the Visdomino would accompany the procession from the piazza to the church of San Domenico, whereupon his place would be taken by the Milanese ambassador for the remaining progress back to the cathedral. The feast was thereupon celebrated without incident:

... presi pertito che prima niuno laico portasse il baldachino et ordinari che li Canonici del Vescovato lo porterono, et fu pregato loratore de Milano amore-volmente che non se li trovasse quon il vicedomino gli fusse. Et cussi venuto prima il vicedomino presi
a brazo lo Ill. mes. Sigismondo et dal altro me venne appresso il vicedomino et seguissemo la processione drieto et appresso il baldachino. Et quon fussemo appresso S. Domenico il vicedomino se partite et andete a casa sua, et dali ad un pochetto giunse loratore de Milano et cussi et tolsi appresso come haveva tolto il vicedomino et seguissemo insieme sino al compimento de la processione. Et parve che per questa via satisfacesse a luno et laltro extrinsecus...

The procession was conducted with great honour, records the duchess, and there was the benefit of laying down a ceremonial format "acio che per lo advenire se sapia come governare". If Corpus Christi helped to liturgize signorial power, and supported a dynastic communion with the city through signorial association with local saints, relics, and religious orders, we may also observe that its ceremonial helped to explain contemporary foreign relations. The combination of eternal salvation and diplomacy contrived to make Corpus Christi susceptible to manipulation and a powerful weapon of official propaganda.

**Battagliuola: 22 July (above pp. 342-43)**

**S. Domenico: 5 August (liturgical feast translated from 4 August)**

Local commemoration of the feast of St. Dominic Guzman was instituted by communal law in 1322. Members of the Ferrarese Arti were compelled to issue forth in procession to offer "unum Ciriotum saltem ab uno Bononeno grosso" before the altare maggiore in the denominational church. Considerable confusion has arisen over the historical circumstances surrounding the feast's inauguration in Ferrara. Recent scholarship, notably the study written by Luciano Chiappini, has argued that the feast was celebrated in commemoration of the "cacc-
iata dei catalani da Ferrara avvenuta nel 1317”. 425

Fritz too, was under the impression that the feast was observed in memory of the revolution against the rule of Robert of Anjou (papal vicar in Ferrara from 28 August 1309 to 15 August 1317), since the Ferrarese forces which offered battle to the Catalan garrison on 22 July 1317 were not victorious until the 4th or 5th of August, hence the association of St. Dominic's feast with the expulsion of the Catalans. 426 Quattrocento chronicles, however, suggest a link with an earlier battle:

Agosto, a di 5, de luni, la festa de San Domenego. Fu facta una solenne processione e oblatione per tute le Arte a la chiesia de San Domenego secondo l'uxanza, per memoria de la victoria havuta za molti anni in tale dì per Ferrarexi contra Veneciani, li quali intròno in la cità e lie aprovo la chiesia forno rotti e prezi e cazati. 427

Zambotti's history is supported by Paolo da Legnago:

In dott'anò (1476), nel di de San Dominico se fece processione et oblatione in memoria de una rottà che hebero Venetiani in ferrara. Li quali venerno per insino a quel luochò de Santto Dominico. 428

According to Giovanni Soranzo, the battle in question was fought on the 5th of August, 1309, near the church of S. Domenico. It was there that the forces of the Venetian republic, who had occupied Ferrara in November 1308 ostensibly to aid Fresco d'Este in his machinations against his uncles the marquesses Aldobrandino and Francesco, were dealt a crushing defeat at the hands of the Ferrarese, aided by a force of crusaders invited by the papacy to battle for possession of the city. 429 Neither the Chronicon Estense nor Frizzi's Memorie mention this battle, and we know that Ferrara was not liberated from the Venetian occupation until the 28th of August and the
victory at Castel Tedaldo. Nevertheless, it appears reasonably certain that the feast of St. Dominic was observed locally in memory of the victory over the Venetians in 1309. The translation of the feast from the 4th to the 5th of August was made to accommodate the historical circumstances.

**Assunzione di B.V.M. or Ferragosto: 15 August**

The statutes of 1287 record that a palio was customarily held of the feast of the Assumption:

> Ut in imensi festo sancte Marie de augusto in civitate sollatium habeatur, statuimus quod potestas, qui per tempora fuerit, teneatur octo diebus ante diem dicti festi scire voluntatem hominum maioris consicili, de faciendo equos currere ad bravium in dicto festo: scilicet ad unum runcinum, ancipitrem et duos bracos et quod superinde consciliaris placuerit immiitari. 431

Yet in the fifteenth-century, there is no evidence suggesting that such an event took place, nor is it mentioned in the Borsian statutes. 432 We may safely assume, therefore, that this early communal tradition had fallen into disuse. A manuscript preserved in the Biblioteca Estense (cod. latin 309), written by Francesco Ariosto for Pope Sixtus IV, indicates that the days preceding the feast, and the feast-day proper, were given over to special devotions to the Virgin during the Herculean era. 433 On the 6th of August 1474, relates Ariosto, "fu preordinata una universale e Religiosa processione temporale e spiri-tuale". Following a solemn mass in the cathedral, the processional body was marshalled in the piazza:

Antecedendo le sancte croce subsequendole li gloriiosi stendardi ecclesiastic i e confalon i doppo epsi li gradi de Religiosi seriosamente possa el cleru ogniuno cantando laude et hymni ad alta voce. Approximavasi ladornatissimo e sancto tabernaculo cum el sancto sacro simalcro de la gloriosissima verzene imperatrice
de luniverso levado in collo da octo venerabili canoni ci humilima e devotamente seguitando el devotissimo principe cum tuti digni seculari de uno e laltro sero la pompa. Qual preso havea el camino fuori de questa magna porta de corte ver la piazza frumentaria piscinaria et ortulana al conspecto del nostro inexpugnabile castel vecchio dove piegadosi da man dextra per sotto questa hercuilea ma voltada in archi su la quale per aera si passa de corte nel magno e munitissimo castello Ducale. Proceda la pompa de cossi admiranda processione nel Borgo nuovo per el quale si ritrovano tanti eminenti pallati da ogni banda sino che si vene a questo superbo e delitiosissimo pallazo de nobilissimi trotti... procedendo piu oltra si passava per la casa de idio dove per da man dextra cum questo ordine singulare se adrizoro ver la piazza nella quale etiamdio lassivano da man senestra questa Magnifico pallazo de contrarii turrito a guisa duna rocha passando per davanti a questa magna loza de calzolari cum tante columnne marmoree sublevada dove ha lo aspecto ver la piazza per mezo la quale andando da uno lato la magna et eminentissima sacrista chatedrale da laltro el tempio del beatissimo sancto Romano e venendo tra quel tremendo pretorio et questo reformado pallazo ducale sublimada in aera cum tanta diversita de candidissime columnne de marmo in fine de la quale ni affiliamo per mezo questi due spectandissimi simalcri deli Illustriissimi condam divi principi nostri del pientissimo e sapientissimo gia padre nostro e gloriosissimo principe messer Nicolo e del delicatissimo Duca Borso... 

Ariosto’s account continues on to describe the public mass in the cortile sung by the ducal choir, the sacred music provided by the duke's orchestra, the devotions rendered to the Virgin in the ducal chapel, and Ercole’s public piety: "Per tal modo beatissimo padre cum tute le forze et inzegno non manco che prima gli si rende honore e gloria accresciendoli continuamente ceremonie e laude e culto come se la sanctissima so maistade constantemente". 434

The relation is perhaps important for its panorama of Ferrara, its detailed description of the ducal chapel, and its elaboration upon the customary processional route through the city (of which there are few records). Of special interest, however, is Ariosto’s evident inter-
pretation of "ceremonie sancte" as rituals performed by
the signore "a piu preservare la salute de la nostra
patria", and the public reverence accorded the mira-
culous immagine of the Virgin. The sacred object in
question, a fresco (artist unknown), was enshrined in
a special altar near the kitchens of the ducal palace,
where the people flocked to bathe in its efficacious
powers. The immagine was associated with a lengthy hist-
ory of miracles, catalogued by the tavolette which de-
corated the shrine, and there were iron rings attached
to either end of its tabernacle through which poles
could be run to facilitate its transportation, which
tells us that it was often borne through the city during
important processions. According to Zambotti, Herc-
ulean devotion to the immagine began "a li di che mori
il duca Borso, che fu del 1471, del mexe de agosto", and it was generally believed that the Virgin had moved
Borso to name Ercole as his successor rather than Niccolò
(di Leonello), expressing her wishes to Borso through a
miraculous intercession (vision) upon his death-bed.
Certainly, this miraculous association added luster to
Ercole's accession-day (20 August), celebrated annually
with a public holiday "come fusse stato de dominica",
a solemn procession "come se fa il giorno del Corpo de
Christo in Ferrara", and bell-ringing, bombardments, and
tournaments. On the feast of the Purification in 1476,
the immagine was translated from its shrine to more splen-
did surroundings in the ducal chapel:
A di 2 Febraro. Lo illustrissimo duca nostro fece
portare, el di de Madonna Sancta Maria da le candele,
la imagine de la Nostra Donna, la quale hera al muro
In 1481, the immagine was moved again, from this chapel (called the "cappelletta del cortile") to another, larger edifice called "Maria Regina di Cielo", \[441\] "il quale, con tuto il clero del vescovado con croce, l'accompagnò con gran devotione del populo e fece cantare una Messa solenne a li soi cantori con l'organo, a laude de epsa beata Verzene Maria". \[442\] From this year forward (perhaps in 1476), the ducal palace superceded the cathedral as the site for local celebration of the Marian feasts. It was a conscious attempt to incorporate Her festal observance into the annals of dynastic history. Through his custodianship of the immagine, communal miracles also belonged to the signore, and were inscribed in a signorial festal continuum.
The study of urban festivals by historians was pioneered by scholars who gathered for two conferences on Renaissance culture under the auspices of the Centre National de Recherche Scientifique in Paris during the 1950's. The essays presented at these colloquiums have been bound and edited by Jean Jacquot, Les Fêtes de la Renaissance, 2 vols., (Editions CNRS: Paris, 1956, 1960). A third volume in the series was published in 1975.


A "vue globale" is signalled by Jacques Heers in Fêtes, Jeux et Joutes dans les sociétés d'Occident a la fin du moyen âge, (Montreal, 1971), and Roy Strong, Splendour at Court: Renaissance Spectacle and Illusion, (London, 1973), although the latter is prone to inaccuracies.

An excellent review of current festival historiography may be found in Lecoq, "La 'Città festeggianti': les fêtes publiques au XVe et XVIe siècles", pp. 83-100.

See the comments of Jean Jacquot in "La Cité et le Prince: Les Entrées et réjouissances civiques et le problème du pouvoir", in Les Fêtes de la Renaissance, III (1975), pp. 8-9.

Beginning with Robert Redfield's formulation of the "great tradition" (culture of the educated few) and the "little tradition" (culture of the non-elite) in his book, Peasant Society and Culture, (Chicago, 1956), esp. pp. 40-42, sociologists have emphasized social diversity and interaction within a framework of cultural stratification. In a stimulating chapter of his recent book, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe, (London, 1978), pp. 23-64, Peter Burke reviews the literature, stressing the plausibility of "cultural unity" for an historical appraisal of Renaissance culture.

"Youth culture" has recently drawn the attention of scholars. See E.P. Thompson, "Rough Music: Le Chari-vari anglais", Annales ESC, 27 (1972), pp. 285-312;

8 Lecoq, "La 'Città festeggiante': les fêtes publiques au XVe et XVIe siècles", p. 87.


13 Roger Caillois, "Théorie de la fête", in idem, L'Homme et le Sacré, (Paris, 1939), chap. 3; Comblin, Théologie de la Ville, pp. 211-216.


17 Jacquot, "La Cité et le Prince", pp. 8-9; Ladurie, Carnival in Romans, pp. 269-299; Julio Caro Baroja, El Carnaval, (Madrid, 1965), pp. 1-16.

18 E.P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industry..."


29 *Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456*, V, i.


32 *Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456*, V, i, iii-iv.

33 Jacques Le Goff, "Le temps du travail dans la

34 T. Gatti, "Il diritto penale del lavoro e negli statuti con particolare referimento agli statuti ferraresi", pp. 16-32. See for example the dispositions of the Decretum Draperiorum Civitatis Ferrare, (1) ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Nicolai III epistolae et decretal, sez. B, 1393-1400, reg. 2, cc. 91r-98v, (2) Leonelli decretal, sez. B, 1412-1446, reg. 5, cc. 200r-206r. Drapers who failed to observe the regulations herein contained were liable to fines not exceeding 100 LM, and could be cited before the Podesta of Ferrara.

35 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1456, reg. 11b, c. 8r.

36 See ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1476, reg. 19, cc. 49r-54v (an embassy to Naples); 1481, reg. 22, cc. 37v-38r (an embassy to London).

37 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1474-75, reg. 18, cc. 154r-155r.

38 Thus a ducal courier was publicly whipped in June 1477, "lo quale havea porta' lettere e, per havere zugato li denari, non torno più, e siando in questi di venuto a Ferrara, li fu dati tri tracti de corda a le fenestra del palazo de la Raxon del Comun de Ferrara", Zam, p. 35, ll. 3-5.

39 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carichi e Onori di Corte, busta l, Decreta 1 October 1485.

40 Le Goff, "Le temps du travail dans la 'crise' du XIVe siècle", p. 600.

41 Glasser, Time in French Life and Thought, pp. 71-79, contends that Renaissance men were more aware of "earthly time" than their medieval predecessors, and hence they developed an acute apprehension of the twenty-four hour linear progression of time.

42 These miscellaneous references have been drawn from the pages of G.M. Ferrarini, Cronaca ferrarese, fols. 39r, 69r, 73v; Vitale, Memorie-Cronaca, fols. 7r, 21r; DF, p. 39, ll. 22-23.


44 Dickson, "The Cult of Saints in the Later Middle Ages", p. 376.

Glasser, *Time in French Life and Thought*, p. 73.

Ferrarini, *Cronaca ferrarese*, fol. 3r.

These miscellaneous references have been drawn from Bernardino Zambotti’s *Diario Ferrarese*.

Borsian customs are explained by Pardi, "Borso d'Este Duca di Ferrara", pp. 18-27. Under Herculean tutelage the scenography of poor-relief was shifted from the piazza and cathedral to the ducal chapel, Sabadino, *De triumphis religionis*, pp. 87-89.

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, *Carteggio di Referendi, Consiglieri, Cancellieri, e Segretari*, busta 4, Siviero Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 26 December 1491.

Christmas gifts to musicians: ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1456, reg. 11b, c. 4r; 1466, reg. 12, c. 2v; 1469, reg. 14, cc. 4v, 11r, 42r, 236r; 1470, reg. 15, cc. 3r, 16v, 65r, 65v, 169v, etc. The nature of the gifts varied from money to alimentary provisions, and even to the paying of pensione (room and board), 1482, reg. 23, c. 47r. Ambassadors resident at foreign courts were also provided with resources to reward local musicians at Christmas time, 1479, reg. 21, c. 20r. The full rota of Ferrarese musicians singled out for signorial Christmas generosity is provided at 1481, reg. 22, c. 1r; 1486, reg. 24, c. 1r; 1492, reg. 31, c. 16r.

See especially, ASMo, ASE, Guardaroba: I. I. Spesa, 1473, reg. 91, cc. 37r-v. Personal gifts were not unusual: ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1472, reg. 16, cc. 93r, 139r; 1473, reg. 17, c. 46r; 1474-75, reg. 18, c. 136v; 1478, reg. 20, cc. 21v, 23r; 1481, reg. 22, c. 16r.

Christmas gifts to monasteries and religious orders: "... Vos factores ipsius solvi facatis venerabilis Monialibus S. Augustini huius civitatis Ferrarie ducatos decem auri et in auro latos quos prefatus dominus noster dux ipsis monialibus donat amore dei et pro subventione victus eorum. Portando eos expenses pro donatis...", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1486, reg. 24, c. 4v. Similar references can be found throughout the registers of the Mandati for the years 1450-1505. As Sabadino remarked of the annual Christmas and Easter subventions, "Non è monastero sotto il tuo dominio che ogni anno dala tua pietosa Celsitudine due overo tre pecie de ottimo panno non receva per il suo vestire, con pondi de cinque in quindeci de oleo, secondo de' monasteri la conditione, et altritanti pondi de casio e de salati pescii per l’uso quadragesimale duoni in grande quantitate, et anchora de pesci freschi in loro advenuto li provedi", *De triumphis religionis*, p. 95.
See for example the register of Borsian gifts for the year 1471, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Libri e carte d'amministrazione dei Principi, reg. 19. Often signorial gifts were intended to reward citizen generosity: "E a di 19 de zenaro ducati due doro e per la sua Signore in dono a due veronesi che a prexentoro parnixe vive e morte a donare ala soa Signore disse Franzesto di ariostii", c. 18r.

At Christmas and Easter, Estensi feudatories were required to render homage to the signore by presenting gifts as tokens of submission. The custom of Buone Feste, as it was called, was inaugurated by Azzo Novello d'Este in 1252. The size of the gift was determined by the size of the landholding, and they were written into charters of investiture, Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, II, pp. 148-50.

ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandatii, 1469, reg. 14, c. 237r.

ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandatii, 1479, reg. 21, cc. 37v-38r.

Ibid., c. 38r.

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, cancellieri, e Segretari, busta 4, Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 21 January 1493.

For example, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandatii, 1456, reg. 11b, cc. 3r-3v; 1466, reg. 12, c. 33r.

Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, pp. 89-94. Provisions for Lenten poor-relief were made annually for outlying communities, herein for Modena: "Mandato Illumi. ecc..., Vos factores generales fieri faciatis creditorem presentem Virum Antonium de Raimondis ad computem suum Massarie Mutine cui pre-fuit de anno 1473 de stariis Octuagintanovum et quartis dubius frumenti ad mesurii Mutinese, quod ipse dispensavit pluribus personis in elimosinam et pro amore dei et commissione prefati domino nostre, et poni faciatis ad expensam sue Cel....", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandatii, 1478, reg. 20, c. 11r.

Or at least petitioners could hope that their supplications would be considered during institutionalized moments of signorial mercy. Even blasphemers could qualify, as we find with the petition of one Alberto Miratore, "como gia sono anni due passati quello fue condannato in L. 12 de marchesane ala camera ducale per havere biastemato. Et cussi al misenon gie fue tolto quello pocho havea in caxa, et fue tra venduto et impegnato per L. sei et cussi el povereto e rimasto debitore ala dicta camera del
resto... Libere et intotum cancellatur dicta condemnatione pro dicto resto, attenta divoturnitate temporis (feast of St. Martin)", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1478, reg. 20, c. 105r.

63 Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, pp. 46-50, 87-105.

64 I have not undertaken to chart a petitioning pattern. However, it is suggested that such a graph (relating the nature of the petition to the time of the year) would bear out the points made above.

65 Alterations in the daily dietary regimen of the Ferrarese account for local usage of these terms to describe Carnival and Lent. The linking of dietary habits to calendrical time is treated in an interesting book by Bridget Henisch, Fast and Feast: Food in Medieval Society, (Penn St. University Press, 1976).

66 Isabella was married to Francesco Gonzaga in February 1490, and Beatrice to Lodovico Sforza in January 1491. We shall see below that the costs of dowries and the wedding festivities had virtually bankrupted the ducal treasury.

67 Because all available resources had been invested in the triumphal reception to be accorded Anna at Ferrara, and in the entertainments for ambassadors and guests, the duke could not afford the costs of receiving the Milanese in Reggio and Modena (he had in fact stripped his palaces there bare of tapestries and plate). For this reason, Ercole advised the duchess to return with the bridal party by way of Cremona and Mantua rather than the usual route through Reggio and Modena. As he wrote to Eleonora, "per modo alcuno non se facesse la via de Regio et Modena perche mettendo nui in ordine qua a ferrara per tante brigate, questo facemo non seria possibile che anche mettessemo in ordine a modena et a Regio et in quelli lochi et non haveresesse tapezarie ne altro da farse honore. Et per essere questa parte de grande importantia come debe cognoscere la v.s. la ge haveva bona adventia accio che per modo al-cuno non se venisse da modena ne da Regio...", ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 68, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragon, 12 January 1491.

68 Ibid., busta cit., Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragon, 31 January 1491, discusses the list of members of the bridal party.

69 Ibid., busta cit., Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragon, 19 January 1491.

70 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolarum registrum, sez. C, 1478, reg. 5, c. 41r.
71. ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolæorum registrum, sez. C, 1481, reg. 7, c. 122r.

72. Dickson, "The Cult of Saints in the Later Middle Ages", p. 211.


74. Burke, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe, p. 188.

75. Davis, "The Reasons of Misrule", pp. 97-123; Ladurie, Carnival in Romans, pp. 269-82.


77. Davis, "The Reasons of Misrule", pp. 97-123; Bakhtin, Le monde de Rabelais, pp. 4-12; Ladurie, Carnival in Romans, pp. 269-82.


79. ASMan, AG, busta 1235, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 17 November 1498.

80. To whom Leonello d'Este paid a salary of 6 Lf per month and provided room and board, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1449, reg. 9, c. 67r.

81. A tooth-drawer and strolling player by trade, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Libri e carte d'amministrazione dei Principi, 1462, reg. 10, c. 11r.

82. ASMo, ASE, Libri Camerali Diversi, Intrata et Spesa de la Camera, 1471, reg. 87, c. 20r.

83. ASMo, ASE, Libri Camerali Diversi, Intrata et Spesa de la Camera, 1479, reg. 125, seg. CCC, c. 57r.

84. ASMo, ASE, Libri Camerali Diversi, Intrata et Spesa de la chamera, 1465, reg. 53, seg. MM, c. 37r.

85. ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Libri e carte d'amministrazione dei Principi, 1471, reg. 19, c. 20v.


87. As Bernardino Prosperi refers to him in a letter to
Isabella d'Este, ASMan, AG, busta 1235, 17 May 1497.


89 ASMan, AG, busta 1231, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 24 March 1490.

90 A typical instance of Carnival violence related to celebratory excesses is recorded by Sivieri in a letter to the duchess: "El luni pur ancora fu facto question sul polesine tra mascare. Mes. Scipion da este cum francesco dai leuti erano in mascara vestiti a la grossa et cum se havevano una piva, et ussendo de una casa dove havemo ballato et sonato, sopragionse altre mascare et tra le altre un fiolo da Antonio de hettor becaro cum un altro compagno forastiero, et volendo che questa piva sonasse che potessemo balare lui recusava dicendo che non era a sua posta aga cum quelle mascare, et de qui se commenzorno a dare de parole et da parole veneno ali facti cum bastoni et si Scipion have puochie bastonate et cussi francesco et mes. Scipion ne have una sul collo molto grande et francesco un altra su la testa de la quale se dice chel non sta tropo bene. Et essendo andato dicto francesco a casa cussi maltractato pare che un suo fiolo cercasse de intendere come era passata questa cosa et che habito havea le mascare che havea date a suo padre et inteso chel have se vesti in mascara et ando cercando quelloro ali contrasigni, et pare chel trovasse mro. Ugo benzo in mascara cum quilli contrasigni che li era sta dato e si se li messe a torno cum un bastone stimando chel fusse quello che havesse dato a suo padre, et si rope la testa et tractolo molto male per modo che anche lui non sta tropo bene", ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancelleri, e Segretari, busta 4, Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 21 February 1493.

91 The statute is published by Ferrante Borsetti, Historia Almi Ferrariae Gymnasi, II, p. 99.

92 Legnago, Cronaca Estense, fol. 167r.

93 An elephant was brought secretly to Ferrara for the Carnival of 1479, Zam, p. 59, ll. 20-29, and was conducted through the city in procession, later performing tricks in the sala grande, Zam. p. 61, ll. 1-9.

94 This is Zambottis estimation of the crowd which gathered in the cortile for a performance of the Menaechmi in 1486, Zam, p. 171, ll. 28-29, p. 172, ll. 1-10.

95 For the construction and decoration of carriages for Carnival, see ASMo, ASE, Composteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1502, reg. 39, Memoriale, seg. DD,
c. 33v: "Maestro bart. braxoni e zoanne da Imola conpani depintore... per avere depinto due carete da corte con li trombe et le cornixe dorade che monta tareza.... L. 4,0,0; ASMo, ASE, Guardaroba, Libro delle Partide, 1502, reg. 120, cc. 20r, 25r, here at c. 4r:

"Per le carete da corte:
Maestro fino depintore.............. L. 12,0,0
Maestro bart. Braxone depintore..... L. 8,0,0
Maestro Bernardino de donabona...... L. 3,0,0
Maestro Stefano de donabona........ L. 1,11,0"

96 See especially the correspondence of Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona for the year 1493 in ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancelleri, e Segretari, busta 4, which records in detail Herculean Carnival activities.

97 Ibid., busta cit., Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 21 February 1493.

98 Ibid., busta cit., Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 22 February 1493.

99 ASMan, AG, busta 1233, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 17 January 1492. See above p. 174 (and n. 122).

100 ASMan, AG, busta 1238, Alessandro Farafino to Farlano Gonzaga, 8 January 1502.

101 Thus the duchess sent Ippolito d'Este, then Archbishop of Strigonia in Hungary, the following consignment of masques in October 1493:

"Mascara se mandano in hon garia:
mascara 5 contrafare.... ma. 5
mascara 4 contrabarbare.... ma. 4
mascara 2 con barba negra.... ma. 2
mascara 2 saraxina.... ma. 2
mascara 4 da omanide tempo.... ma. 4
mascara 3 con tutto il collo raxa da pello.... ma. 3
mascara 4 con la barba de pello con tutto 12 collo.... ma. 4
mascara 16 da damexela et damixeli.... ma. 16
mascara 10 da barberi raxa de anni 25.... ma. 10
mascara 6 con la barba raxa ala Spagnulla.... ma. 6

ma. 56"

This important notice appears in Eleonora's correspondence to Ippolito, ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 132, October 1493 (n.d.)

102 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1490, reg. 29, c. 25r.

103 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1491, reg.
30, c. 41r.


105 ASMan, AG, busta 1235, Jano Pencaro to Isabella d'Este, 9 February 1499. Pencaro's correspondence has been partially published by A. Luzio and R. Renier, "Commedie Classiche in Ferrara nel 1499", Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana, 2 (1888), pp. 177-89.

106 ASMan, AG, busta 1235, Jano Pencaro to Isabella d'Este, 13 February 1499, fasc. 703v.

107 Ibid., busta cit., Jano Pencaro to Isabella d'Este, 9 February 1499.

108 Ibid., busta cit., Jano Pencaro to Isabella d'Este, 13 February 1499, fasc. 703v.

109 Ibid., fasc. 703v.

110 Ibid., fasc. 704v.

111 Ibid., fasc. 705r.

112 For the Este master-of-ceremonies, see below Chapter Four, iii, "Ceremonial Management in Ferrara".

113 ASMo; ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriiche, 1496, Memoriale, reg. 31, c. 18r.

114 ASMo; ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriiche, 1499, Memoriale, reg. 35, seg. AA, c. 4v.

115 ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriiche, 1501, Memoriale, reg. 37, seg. CC, cc. 125v, 131r.

116 How carefully courtiers observed these rules is indicated by an anonymous MS. dedicated to Ercole d'Este, Dell'Arte dell Ballo, BEM, Codices Italici no. 82, Alpha J 9, 4.

117 ASMan, AG, busta 1233, Francesco Bagnacavallo to Isabella d'Este, 8 January 1492.
118 DF, p. 85, ll. 33-37, p. 86, ll. 1-16.
119 Ibid., p. 240, ll. 34-36.
120 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri, e Segretari, busta 4, Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 27 January 1493.
121 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 132, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 24 January 1491.
122 Though she does not say so directly, Eleonora seems to have disapproved of Ercole's habit of inviting "la plebe" to his feste in the *salla grande*. See below, pp. 321-22.
123 Caleffini, *Chroniche del Duca Ercole*, fol. 245v.
124 Ibid., fol. 252v.
125 DF, p. 162, ll. 21-32. For another case, see above p. 178.
126 Caleffini, *Chroniche del Duca Ercole*, fol. 132r.
127 Local customs are described in an anonymous monograph, "Carnivali ferraresi nel '400 e '500", *Corriere Padano*, 16 and 21 February, 1926.
128 Zam, p. 84, ll. 31-34, p. 85, ll. 1-3.
129 The custom of a joust with eggs was continued by Alfonso d'Este, ASMan, AG, busta 1240, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 23 February 1506.
130 Zam, p. 60, ll. 21-30.
131 Ibid., p. 44, ll. 12-13.
133 For what these kingdoms signified, see Davis; "The Reasons of Misrule", pp. 97-123, and Ladurie, *Carnival in Romans*, pp. 269-82.
134 *Chronicon Estense*, col. 390.
135 For the MS. which calls these performances "comodie", see Catalanino, *Vita di Ludovico Ariosto*, I, p. 117.
the text and description of the performance.


138 Ercole himself, assisted by Matteo Maria Boiardo, undertook the adaptation of the texts for the performances in Reggio, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri, e Segretari, busta 4, Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 23 June 1493, before journeying on to Pavia by bucentoro "cum... circa vinti gioveni, quali menemo per fare recitare alcune Comedie...", ASMan, AG, Lettere dei Signori di Ferrara, busta 1185, Ercole d'Este to Francesco Gonzaga, 14 August 1493, among whose number was probably the young Ludovico Ariosto, Catalano, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, I, p. 122. We are able to date the performances from the correspondance of Alfonso d'Este, ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 70, Alfonso d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 28 August 1493, and Borso da Correggio: "A li xxv del instante giungessimo a Pavia, racolti da questi Exmi. Sigri. secundo el solito. Trovassimo queste Signore Duchesse stare bene e tutte galante, luna gravida, che e quella di Milano la nostra tutta alegra e cuntenta. Ali xxvii se fece la commedia de Captivi ordine medessimo, dimane el Penulo, venerdi se non limpedisse un puocho di febre che e venuta in questo di alo Ill. Sig. Don Alphonso se andara a Milano...", ASMan, AG, busta 1313, Borso da Correggio to Isabella d'Este, 28 August 1493, cited by Catalano, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, I, p. 123.

139 According to Bernardino Prosperi, for example, the performance of the Passion in April 1489 was improved by the intervention of professional actors: "... domatina se fa alcuni acti de la passione, dove gli e stata Madama, et andaragli questa notte ala predica et a dicte representatione lequale non creda
v.s. che se facino cum megliore gran de quella che fece el signore lanno passato, perche in questa gli intervine pochetino et alcuni altieri de la sua scola", ASMAn, AG, busta 1231, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 8 April 1490.

140 Pellegrino Prisciani, Spectacula, BEM, cod. Latin 466, Alpha X 1, 6, now published by Ferruccio Marotti in Lo spettacolo dall'Umanesimo al Manierismo, (Milan, 1974), pp. 53-77.


142 Records from the Compusteria show that Rossetti was put in charge of the carpenters who built the tribunals, and he was required to translate artists' "cartoons" for "case", "merli", "nave", etc., into scenery:
"Le infrascripte et sequente spese denari adi soprascripto la infrascripta et sequente quantitate de L. per tanti faciam boni per epse e mistro nicoleto depintore per lo amontare de li infrascripti lavoreri che lui ha dorati et depinto ad use sue spese ad oro et de colori man factura in mexi zenaro fevraro proximi passati como distintamente apereire per una sua scrita sotoscripta et tarezada per mane de maestro biaxio roseto...
Item per haver hornadi sedexe trabelli de oro et colori et dodexe banzole depinte.... L. 80,0,0
Item per haver facto et depinto arme cinquanta-cinque de diversi segnuri et octo trianguli con le arme dil sposo et de la spoxa.... L. 22,10,0
Item per haver dipinti una nave dil menechino et per haver dato la bracha a le ase del baldachino et per haver contrafacto 4 fenestre per ditto menechino.... L. 2,0,0
Spexa de carete da Corte de dar adi ditto L. centotrenta m. per lo amontar de haver dorato et depinto una careta per la sposa de don alfonso con sue arme et divixe.... L. 130,0,0"

The references listed here refer to the preparations for the triumph of Anna Sforza in 1491 and the comedies played on this occasion, ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1491, Memoriale Munizioni, reg. 25, seg. T, c. 3r. In this same register, we find Rossetti in charge of the work accomplished by the festaiuolo Fino dei Marsigli, c. 6r, and the carpenters building the triumphal arches (see Chapter Four).

143 The majority of the references (with some important
exceptions) to scenographic work by these artists have been published by Venturi, "L'Arte Ferrarese nel periodo di Ercole d'Este", 6 (1888), pp. 91-119, 350-422; 7 (1889), pp. 368-412. We are especially fortunate to have an artistic impression of what the scenery may have looked like through the sketches of the most renowned Herculean festaiuolo, Nicoletto Segna di Modena, now published in two studies by Margherita Licht, "A Book of Drawings by Nicoletto da Modena", Master Drawings, 4 (1970), pp. 379-387, and "L'influsso del disegni del Filarete sui progetti architettonici per teatro e festa (1486-1513)", Arte Lombarda, 38-39 (1973), pp. 91-102.

144 Until recently, it had been supposed that Ferrara did not possess a permanent theatre with fixed scenery, "una scena fissa", before the years 1529-32, Scoglio, Il Teatro alla Corte Estense, pp. 21-23; Zorzi, "Ferrara: il sipario ducale", pp. 26-32. However, from the records of the Compusteria, we can now show that Ercole was converting the sala grande into a "teatro stabile" for rappresentazioni during the years 1503-4, and though his death (1505) prevented completion of the project, to my knowledge, this is the earliest reference to fixed scenery in the history of modern theatre:

"Spese... per la sala nova delle comedie che se fa:
A maestro Antenore muradore...... L. 5,0,0
A maestro Michele venderanni marangone..... L. 10,0,0"

ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1503, Memoriale, reg. 41, seg. EE, c. 4v. For other expenses referring to the "sala nova" in this register, see cc. 5r, 6v, 7v, 8r, 17v, 29r, 44r, 62r.


in general works are listed by Coppo, "Spettacoli alla corte di Ercole I", pp. 39-42, and by Zorzi, "Ferrara: il sipario ducale", pp. 32-59 (the most complete bibliography).


149 ASMan, AG, busta 1242, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 21 January 1508.

150 Prisciani, Spectacula, ed. cit., p. 54.


152 Coppo, "Spettacoli alla corte di Ercole I", p. 36.

153 ASMan, AG, busta 1235, Jano Pencaro to Isabella d'Este, 11 February 1499.

154 In 1502, Isabella d'Este gave the measurements of the audience hall in the Palazzo della Ragione as 146 x 40 feet, and estimated its capacity to be 5000 persons (for her letters to Francesco Gonzaga detailing the performances of 1502, see Carlo D'Arco, "Notizie di Isabella d'Este Gonzaga", Archivio Storico Italiano, 2 (1845), append. 11), while Niccolò Cagnolo estimated that the hall held 3000 spectators, Zam, p. 331, 11. 11-12. Since this room was approximately (slightly larger) than the sala grande, Pencaro's figure is plainly exaggerated.

155 ASMan, AG, busta 1012, Francesco Bagnacavallo to Sigismondo d'Este, 8 February 1499, reproduced by Coppo, "Spettacoli alla corte di Ercole I", p. 55.

156 Cruciani, "Per lo studio del teatro nel Rinascimento", p. 5.

157 Zam, p. 325, 11. 8-9.
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158 Zam, p. 324, ll. 20-37, p. 325, ll. 1-42, for a description of the stage in 1502. See also, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Dispacci Ambasciadori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Dispacci da Mantova, busta 1, Sigismondo Cantelmo to Ercole d'Este, 23 February 1501, for a detailed description of the "temporaneo theatro delle antiquil" in Mantua, based on the Ferrarese model. In 1508, for a performance of the Cassaria (written by Ariosto), we read of perspective scenery: "Ma quello che è stato il meglio in tutte queste feste e representazione, è stato la sena dove se sono representate, quale ha fatto uno Maestro Peregrino (Pellegrino da Udine) depinctore che sta col Sre, ch'è una contracta et prospectiva de una terra cum case, chiesie, torre, campanili e zardinini, che la persona non se può satiare a guardarla per le diverse cose che ge sono, tute de inzegno e bene intese, quale non credo se guasti, ma che la salvarano per usarla del altre fiate", ASMan, AG, busta 1242, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 8 March 1508, reproduced by Catalano, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, II, p. 83. According to Beijer, "An Early 16th-Century Scenic Design", p. 115, this is the first known reference to perspective painting on the theatrical stage in Western Europe (and there is also the suggestion that the scenery was to be retained as part of a new "teatro stabile"). Numerous references to the "case", "merli", "torri" can be found in the registers of the Compusteria for the late fifteenth-century.

159 For the boat which traversed the stage during a performance of the Menaechmi, see ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1491, Memoriale Munizioni, reg. 25, seg. T, c. 3r:

"Spese de la noze de lo Illustro don alfonso de dar adi infrascripto L. cento trentatre m. per lo amontare de li infrascripti lavoreri per haver depinto soto li pozo di fanti ecc.... a mistro nicoleto depintore...

Item, per haver dipinto una nave del menechino et per haver dato la biacha ale ase del baldachino et per haver contrafacto 4 fenestre per dicto menechino..... L. 22, 10, 0".


161 Davis, "The Reasons of Misrule", p. 107, and Burke, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe, pp. 200-1, suggest that ritualized disorder served the purposes of social control.

162 Cruciani, "Per lo studio del teatro nel Rinascimento", pp. 1-16, who bases his argument upon a treatise written in the late sixteenth-century by Leone de' Sommi, Quattro dialoghi in materia di rappresentazioni sceniche, ed., Ferruccio Marotti,
(Milan, 1968).

163 Zam, p. 179, ll. 7-17.

164 ASMan, AG, busta 1235, Jano Pencaro to Isabella d'Este, 13 February 1499, fasc. 704v.

165 Ibid., fasc. 705r.

166 For example, at the end of Pachino's Ippolito e Leonora, the playwright appeared to announce the completion of the performance and thank the audience: "Poi il dicto Pachino rengratio li audit- ori et fu compita la festa", ASMan, AG, busta 1233, Francesco Bagnacavallo to Isabella d'Este, 21 May 1492.

167 Prisciani, Spectacula, ed. cit., pp. 54-55.

168 Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, pp. 50, 78.


170 See below, Chapter Four, ii, "The Concept of Nobility and the Theory of Magnificence".

171 Above, n. 138, and Luzio and Renier, "Commedie Classiche in Ferrara nel 1499", pp. 177-78, esp. n. 2 where two letters from Battista Guarini to Ercole are reproduced, revealing the duke's scholarly interest in the texts and his desire to ensure that they were carefully translated so that "il vocabulari saranno bene espositi". It has been shown (by several historians) that Ercole was greatly displeased with Niccolò da Correggio's Cefalo (1487) because the text did not remain faithful to its Plautine roots.

172 The translators appear in Appendix A. Ferrara's importance as a centre for translations is revealed in numerous letters, herein by Prosperi: "Illma. Madama: Mando qui alligate a v.s. la commedia traducta per Mes. Cosmice, la quale me ordinoe pallazo chio pig- liasse et chela remettesse a lei...", ASMan, AG, busta 1235, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 8 January 1498. On translations in general, see D'Ancona, Origini del teatro italiano, II, pp. 125 (n. 1), 128 (n. 1), 136, 368-9, 372-74, 378 (n. 1); Ireneo Sanesi, La Commedia, 2 vols., (Milan, 1911), I, pp. 143-150; Douglas Radcliffe-Umstead, The Birth of Modern Comedy in Renaissance Italy, (University of Chicago Press, 1969), pp. 59-85, which traces the evolution of dramatic translation from the discovery of a manuscript containing fourteen Plautine comedies by Nicholas of Cusa in 1428. On Battista Guarini, see Luzio and Renier, "Commedie Classiche in Ferrara nel 1499", pp. 177-78; on Cosmico, see

173 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri, e Segretari, busta 4, Silverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 13 February 1493: "Non vi poria mai dire abastanza quanto sua extie. e intenta piu cha piu e queste sue picture et come scripsi per laltra m. hercule li ha designato et desigina una historia o fabula molta bella e grande suso uno cartone de folii reali incolati el quale ancora non e compito et egli stato suso questi 4 die da la matina ala sira in la camera propria del nostro Illmo. Signore duca, assetado al suo desco dal lato de fora, e lo Signore duca sopra dal lato dentro del desco che mai non se parte, et per dicta cagione e stato quasi hora de disnare ogni matina quando lha odito messa e dreto disnare andara non se ne parte quasi mai...".

174 For the text of this letter, A. Luzio and R. Renier, "Delle Relazioni di Isabella D'Este Gonzaga con Ludovico e Beatrice Sforza", Archivo Storico Lombardo, 16 (1890), p. 97.


176 Cruciani, "Per lo studio del teatro nel Rinascimento", pp. 9-16.

177 Prisciani, Spectacula, ed. cit., p. 62.


180 ASMan, AG, busta 1242, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 8 March 1508.

181 Isabella's disgust with the comedies was perhaps motivated by her jealousy of Lucrezia Borgia, Gardner, Dukes and Poets in Ferrara, pp. 417-20. For her letters maligning the plays, D'Arco, "Notizie di Isabella d'Este Gonzaga", pp. 307-8.

182 Tapestries were absolutely vital to public ceremon- ies and feste for decorative purposes (above, n. 67). The Estensi had several Flemish weavers in their
service during the fifteenth-century to ensure the stock was constantly replenished, and artists were expected to contribute "cartoons" for new designs. See Giuseppe Campori, "L'Arazzeria Estense", Atti della Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Province Modenesi, 8 (1876), pp. 415-480, esp. documenti 1-ix, for the careers of the weavers, and F. Gibbons, "Ferrarese Tapestries of Metamorphosis", The Art Bulletin, 48 (1966), pp. 409-11, on the subject of cartoons for tapestries. Despite these precautions, the Estensi were frequently obliged to borrow tapestries from neighbouring signori. In 1473, for example, Ercole was lent a large consignment of Mantuan tapestries for his wedding to Eleonora, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1474-75, reg. 18, c. 108r.

183 ASMo, ASE, Arazzie e Tappezzerie, 1466, + Tappezzerie: Debitori e Creditori, reg. 5, c. 27r; 1466-69, Tappezzerie-Memorale: Debitori e Creditori A, reg. 6, c. 7r.

184 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri, e Segretari, busta 4, Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 21 January 1493.

185 Above, pp. 177-78, and nn. 130-137.

186 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri, e Segretari, busta 4, Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 21 February 1493, describes the festal proceedings.

187 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1491, reg. 30, c. 15v.

188 ASMo, ASE, Arazzie e Tappezzerie, 1466-69, Tappezzerie-Memorale: Debitori e Creditori A, reg. 6, c. 7r.

189 See Appendix B, and ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1490, reg. 29, c. 94r, for payment made on behalf of Isabella d'Este to two buffoons performing of the feast of St. Blaise: "... Vos factores generales domini dari et solvi faciatibus Bernardino Tabacho et sociis de Cremona inventoribus joculis per diti per Illma. d. Isabellam Marchionissam Mantue usque in festo sancti Blaxii proximo ellapso ducatos decem auri et in auro quos prefata Illma. domina nostra condonat eisdem pro remuneratione bone fidei qua usi fuere in restitutione dictorum jocali...".

190 According to Gaignebet, Le Carnaval, pp. 17-39, in the trans-alpine version of this feast, St. Blaise is a bear-like character who emerges from his lair (like the groundhog in England) signifying the advent of Spring. For other associations,
see Ladurie, *Carnival in Romans*, pp. 102-3, 170-71.

191 Above, p. 321.

192 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri, e Segretari, busta 4, Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 21 February 1493.

193 The frescoes have been the subject of numerous studies, among them Paolo D'Ancona, *The Schifanoia Months at Ferrara*, (Milan, 1954), and Charles Rosenberg, "Notes on the Borsian Addition to the Palazzo Schifanoia*, Musei Ferraresi, 3 (1973), pp. 32-42, whose connections between the frescoes and real events form the basis for Zorzii's observations on the palio in Ferrara.


195 See below, pp. 377-78.

196 For the celebration of Carnival in Rome, see F. Clementi, *Il Carnevale Romano*, (Rome, 1899).

197 ASMan, AG, busta 1238, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 1 January 1502.

198 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 68, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 28 September 1490.


203 Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, p. 185.

204 Ibid., p. 185.

205 The intermezzo is described in several places: ASMan, AG, busta 1238, Alessandro de Baesio to Francesco Gonzaga, 4 February 1502; Marino Sanuto, *I Diarii*, (Venice, 1880), IV, col. 226; Zam, p. 326, 11. 23-39.

206 ASMan, AG, busta 1240, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 8 February 1506.
207 Ladurie, Carnival in Romans, p. 283.


210 Ladurie, Carnival in Romans, p. 284; Leach, Rethinking Anthropology, p. 185.


213 Gaignebet, Le Carnaval, p. 18.

214 Ladurie, Carnival in Romans, pp. 17, 285.

215 Bakhtin, Le monde de Rabelais, pp. 4-12 and chap. 2, for the notion of living without the experience of hierarchy.

216 Davis, "The Reasons of Misrule", p. 103.

217 Ibid., pp. 122-23.

218 Surely one of the most remarkable examples of Estensi revelry is reported by Marino Sanuto in August 1496, when Alfonso d'Este and some courtiers frolicked naked in the city streets at mid-day, possibly in conjunction with the celebration of Ferragosto: "Item, che, pochi zorni fa, che don Alfonso Tece in Ferrara cosa assa' liziera, che andoe nudo per nudo per Ferrara, con alcuni zoveni in compagnia, di mezo zorno, adeo per Ferrara era reputa pocho savio", Sanuto, I Diarii, I, col. 706.


220 Ferrarese historians have rightly pointed out the architectural manifestations of this association, Zorzi, "Ferrara: il sipario ducale", pp. 5-59, and Zevi, Saper vedere l'urbanistica: Ferrara di Biagio Rossetti, pp. 127-204. Important connections between the manipulation of public space and ritual experience are made by Trexler, "Ritual Behavior in Renaissance Florence: The Setting", pp. 125-144, and Konigson, L'Espace Théâtral Médiéval, pp. 205-230, 255-264. It is my view that the association of the dynasty with festal space (processional routes, the piazza, the cloister, etc.) encouraged a historical relationship between the signore and the city,
and provided a public forum where communal history could be both rectified and created.

221 The original text can be found in H. Denifle, ed., Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis, IV (Paris, 1897), pp. 652-53.


226 Zam, p. 7, ll. 13-17.

227 For instance, in 1478 when Rainaldo d'Este "tolse per piacere la colana dal colo al magnifico caval-ero e zudexe di Savii messer Jacomo di Trottì e portòla impignare a la hostaria de Gorgadello, e fece dare del sirolo a bevere a tutti quelli ne voleva", Zam, p. 48, ll. 24-26.

228 Legnago, Cronaca Estense, fol. 138v.

229 DF, p. 178, ll. 3-11.

230 ASMo, Archivio Per Materie, Spetacoli Pubblici, busta 9-A, 18 July 1500.

231 Construction of this preserve began in 1471, and among the most extraordinary of its attractions (which included all manner of exotic animals) was an aquarium stocked with all species of fish, ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1488, Memoriale, reg. 21, seg. Q, cc. 21r, 29v.

232 ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1499, Memoriale, reg. 35, seg. AA, cc. 83v-84v, for the construction of the hippodrome and the tribunals "per starga suso le donne avedere corere el palio".

233 ASMo, Archivio Per Materie, Spetacoli Pubblici, busta 9-A, 27 April 1499.

235 DF, p. 227, ll. 20-30; Zam, p. 289, ll. 20-28.

236 Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, III, p. 264.


239 Ferrarini, *Cronaca ferrarese*, fols. 31r-31v.

240 Zam, p. 65, ll. 10-33. The previous year saw a serious riot break out over the issue of rectorial elections, with the result that the two candidates shared the post, alternating each week, Zam, p. 49, ll. 5-36, p. 50, ll. 1-14.


242 It was also customary for graduating students to offer collations to their comrades, and here too, one can find poorer students unable to sustain the expense: "Messer Mathio Dal Canale scolaro canonista se ha adoblarato in jure canonico, senza altra spexa nè pompa", Zam, p. 10, ll. 4-5.

243 ASMo, ASE, Arazzie e Tappezzerie, 1466-69, Tapezzerie-Memorie*: Debitori e Creditori A, reg. 6, c. 67v: "Alessandro da mantoa rectore novo eletto deli medici de dare adi xvii de febraro la infra-scripta tapezaria alui data de comission del spectacle Lud. Casella per honorme la sua colatione secondo usanza...".

244 Thus the newly elected rector of the legisti, Ugutio de Morenis of Modena, offered a prize of 30 golden ducats to the victor of his tournament in the piazza in 1480. Among the notable contestants were Scipione d'Este and Gaspare Sanseverino, Ferrarini, *Cronaca ferrarese*, fol. 62r; Zam, p. 79, ll. 1-12.

245 ASMan, AG, busta 1231, Thomaso Dainerio to Francesco Gonzaga, ? April 1488.


247 Zam, p. 8, ll. 27-28, p. 9, ll. 1-2.


249 ASMan, AG, busta 1238, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 3 June 1502.

250 Zam, p. 12, ll. 24-27, p. 13, ll. 1-3. Most Ferrarese chronicles mention the official manifestation of joy, but the anonymous *Cronaca di Ferrara*, BCAF, coll. Antonelli no. 255, reveals the violence, looting, and burning which attended the celebrations at c. 39r, including the fact that the magistrates benches were burnt: ". . . e fu bruso tutti li banche
di nodari chera soto il portego dei nodari".

251 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolarum registrum, sez. C, 1476, reg. 4, c. 101r.

252 Zam, p. 13, 11. 6-9; Equicola, Annali di Ferrara, fols. 54v-55r; Vitale, Memorie-Cronaca, fol. 7r.

253 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolarum registrum, sez. C, 1476, reg. 4, cc. 110r, 132r. It is interesting to note that the letter sent to the Podestà of S. Felicia instructed him to take precautions prior to the birth (in case it was a boy), indicating that Ercole expected violence against the Jewish community as part of the spontaneous "acts of joy".

254 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 68, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 27 January 1493.

255 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri, e Segretari, busta 4, Tebaldeo Tebaldi to Eleonora d'Aragona, 27 January 1493. His description of the celebrations may be found in the letter dated 28 January 1493.

256 Ibid., busta cit. 9 Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 28 January 1493.

257 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 69, Ercole d'Este to Ippolito d'Este, 9 March 1495. The news of Ippolito's elevation to the cardinalate (at the age of fourteen) was greeted with the usual manifestations of official joy, with tribunals erected in the piazza for the official proclamation and collations, ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitioni-Fabbriche, 1493, Entrata et Uscita, reg. 29, seg. X, c. 39v.


260 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri, e Segretari, busta 2b, Borso d'Este to Aristotle Brusati, 22 March 1455.
These phrases are coined by Trexler, *The Libro Cerimonialeg of the Florentine Republic*, p. 9.

Campori, "L'Arazzeria Estense", p. 418. Among the borrowers can be found Ludovico Carbone on the occasion of his marriage, M.M. Boiardo for a private festa at his residence (1475), Ambrogio orefice for a banquet at his home (1476), etc.

ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1481, reg. 22, c. 72r.

Not always successfully however. A riot in Ferrara on May Day in 1476 brought forth a scathing letter from Ercole to the podestà: "Dilectissime noster: Credemo habiati havuto noticia de la questione et rixa che fu facta lie in Ferrara tra alcuni scolari et altri citadini et cortesani la notte de San Jacomo philippo passato de la quale per ancora non habiamo potuto havere la certeza in che modo sia passata la cossa unde per questa nostra ve dicemo et inponemo stretemente che ala havuta di questa subito ve mettrati su questa facenda et faciati de intendere come hac passata et tutti quilli che furno in epsa et chi fu cagione de apizare el rumore facendo un bono et diligente examine del tuto... Belriguardo iv maii 1476", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolarum registrum, sez. C, reg. 4, c. 95r.


Sitta, "Le Università delle Arti a Ferrara del secolo XII al secolo XVIII", pp. 130-33. Evidence for this assumption is wanting. I have found no condemnation of a guild-member for crimes related to behavioural excesses on a saint's feast in the records of the Mandati or the Libri de Malefici, although we have seen the problems associated with the latter fondo. How far we can assume signorial leniency towards the Arti on a patron's feast, however, remains a matter of some debate. We are permitted an all too brief glimpse of corporate revelry on the feast of St. Eligius in 1477, with the Fabbri, accompanied by musicians, parading through the city streets drinking and masquerading, Caleffini, *Chroniche del Duca Ercole*, fol. 76v.


For feste fori and feste chori, see A. Villien,

271 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1497, reg. 37, c. 50r, for the proclamation exempting Ferrarese butchers from paying import duty on foreign meat, thereby lowering the retail price in the market.

272 Statuta Ferrariae Anno MCCLXXXVII, II, ccclxxxxv, p. 195.

273 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, V, 1, 10.

274 Ibid., V, 1, 10.

275 Ibid., V, 1, 27.

276 Ibid., V, 1, 28.

277 Ibid.; V, 1, 22.

278 Ibid., III, 1, 5.

279 Ibid., III, ii, 67.

280 Ibid., V, vii, 38.

281 This is reflected both by the ordering of the communal dietary regimen and the harsh penalties which could be meted out to individuals who disobeyed the provisions of local holiday legislation. The Ferrarese butchers, for example, were forbidden to slaughter or sell meat on Saturdays post vespers, from the feast of the Resurrection until the end of the month of October on Thursdays after the third bell, on the vigil of any saint's feast celebrated in Ferrara "segundo I ordine de la gixia", on Sundays, Christmas, or any Lenten day, Statuti dell'arte dei becchetti di Ferrara, BCAF, Classe I, no. 215, caps. 11 and 13. The bakers were forbidden to sell bread "ad alcuna persona in alcun di de Feste principali, cioe della Beata Maria vergine e delli beati Apostoli, eccetto che se tal festa si celebresse nel giorno del sabato o lunedi, che in quel caso non siano tenuti sotto pena a chi contrafara di solidi cinque marchese da essere applicati alla scola...", Decreti, Ordinationi... Concessi a gli Huomini dell'Università dell'Arte de' Fornari, BEM, Cod. Campori 125, Gamma H 3, 38, cap. 9. Most guilds observed statutes similar to the following: "Item quod nullus de dicta schola andeat vel presumat laborare vel laborari facere nec vendere seu emere aliquid de pertinentibus ad dictam Artem strazarie in diebus ali quibus festivis Apostolorum sue Beatem Mariae Virginii seu dominici et in die Sancti Georgii et cuilibet alteri diei solemn
haben vigiliam sub paena soldore decem m. pro quolibet et qualibet vice", Statuti dell'Arte de Strazzaroli, ASFe, MFM, vol. 46, cc. 1r-129r, cap. 21.

282 Above, n. 270.


284 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, V, i, 21.

285 Ibid., IV, ii, 5.

286 Ibid., V, i, 22; II, i, 66; Above p. 191.

287 Ibid., V, v, 3, "De obligationibus generalibus que fieri debeant in anno".


289 Borsetti, Historia Almi Ferrariae Gymnasi, I, pp. 15-16, for the text of the statute.

290 These amendments are discussed by Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, IV, p. 11, the insinuation being that the expansion of the oblation franchise in these years was designed to extend the range of communal taxes. Borso himself admitted as much, Statuta, provisiones et dechreta gabellarum civitatis Ferrarie, I, p. 61.

291 Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, IV, p. 11.

292 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, V, v, 3.

293 The communal treasury and the Arti shared the proceeds of fines levied for non-observance of festal regulations: "Item quod quilibet de scola predicta faciens artem Cimarie teneat et debet celebrare omnia festa principalia et omnia festa que fuerint precepta celebrari homnibus dicte scole et artis per precones dicte scola pena contra predicta facienti imponenda per massarios scole et artis predicte soldos decem m. cuius pene dimidia perveniat masserie Comunis ferr. et alia dimidia dicte scola", Decretem Cimatoriorum Civitatis ferrarie, ASMo, ASE, CMPEDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Nicolal III epistolae et decreta, sez. B, 1401-1409, reg. 3, c. 45r.

294 Above, p. 15, and n. 63.

295 Luigi Simeoni, "Il documento ferrarese de lll2 della fondazione dell'Arte dei Callegarill Accademia delle scienze dell'Istituto di Bolorna, Classe di scienze morali, series iii, 7 (1932-33), pp. 56-71; Gennaro M. Monti, Le corporazioni nell'evo antico e nell'
alto Medio Evo, (Bari, 1934), pp. 228-32.

296 Decretum Universitatis hominum artes Speciarie et Casarie, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Borsil decretata, sez. B, 1454-1460, reg. 7, cc. 1r-17r.

297 Decretum Campsorum Civitatis ferrario, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Nicolai III epistolae et decretata, sez. B, 1419-1441, reg. 4, cc. 253r-262r.


299 Decretum Universitatis fabrorum ferrario, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Nicolai III epistolae et decretata, sez. B, 1419-1441, reg. 4, cc. 209r-214r.

300 Ibid., c. 213r.

301 This devotion appears in the matricola of 1394, Decretum Scule fabroriorum, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Nicolai III epistolae et decretata, sez. B, 1393-1400, reg. 2, cc. 287r-291v.

302 Most contemporary matricole contained regulations similar to the following: "Item che li Massari de la predicta scola non puossino ossine ove overo pressuma no adunare o convocare ni fare convocare fabri per alcuna ragione, overo cagione per li facti et utili de la scola senza licentia del Judice di XII Savii sotto pena de libre diece marchesane, che se applich per la mita al Comune et per talora mita a la dicte arte, salvo se per exequie de alcuno de la dicta scola la defuncto o morto, et per le oferte de San Georgio de San Domenico et de sancto Antonio, et de sancto Allo...", Decretum Universitatis fabrorum..., matricola reg. 4 cit., c. 14r.

303 This was of course the reason why membership in local corporations was limited: the Arti were state monopolies. Any individual practicing a trade outside of a recognized corporation was liable to arrest and a heavy fine, and members of guilds were not permitted to enter into partnerships with non-members. The master who failed to notify the civic authorities of such contraventions of corporate law was also liable to prosecution. See for example the statutory dispositions of the drapers, Decretum Draperiorum Civitatis ferrario, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Leonelli decreta, sez. B, 1442-1446, reg. 5, c. 204r.

304 "Item che se alcuno di detta universita divenesse povero overo s'infermasse in stato di poverta, che all'ora il Massaro predetto sia obligato visitarli e provedese alli suoi bisogni alle spese di detta..."
arte in quel modo e forma che al detto Massaro e savii parrera e piaceria sotto pena di soldi venti m.

Item che ciascuno dell'universita predetta quando che'l Massaro gli comandara sia obligato andare, overe mandare un'altro sufficiente a portar al corpo de morti alle sepulture overo andar alle essequie dellì defonti... sotto pena di soldi cinque m. per ciascuno e per ciascuna volta sara contrafatto.

Item che l'Massaro di detta arte sia obligato mantenere a spese dell'universita quattro dopieri convenenti per l'essequie dellì defonti di detta universita sostenuti con le loro sten. che pe'l qual mantenimento e conservazione gl'heredi di ciascuno defonto alle essequie del quale si portarono li quattro dopieri siano tenuti pagar al Massaro soldi doi m....", Statuti dell'arte de' mersati della mezaria, BCAF, Classe I, no. 214, caps. 15, 16, 20. See above, pp. 17-18.

305 St. Catharine was universally recognized as the patron saint of Christian philosophers, The Book of Saints, compiled by The Benedictine Monks of St. Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate, (London, 1939), p. 60.

306 Zam, p. 26, ll. 19-23.

307 "De Missa celebranda ad honorem Omnipotentis Dei, eisque Matris gloriosissime Virginis Mariae, totius-Curiae triumphantis", Statuta Collegi Artium et Medicinae Doctorum, in Borsetti, Historia Almi Ferrariae Gymnasii, II, p. 100, i.

308 "Vogliamo et ordiniamo che li Massari ogni volta che venira il giorno dell'Offerta abbiano per li Comandatori far chiamare tutti gli Huomini dell' Arte, et interpellari per quel giorno dell'offerta e non venendo cadano nella pena di soldi duoi march. per cadauna volta che contrafaranno...

Vogliamo et ordiniamo che tutti li descritti nellì Arte della Sartaria, coss' Terrieri come Forastieri si abitanti nella Citta di Ferrara come in suo Distretto che la mattina del giorno della festa di S. Huomobuono, si abbiano a presentare alla bottega dellì Massari di detta arte et ivi abbiano da stare sintano averanno fatte le loro offerte; al che contrafacendo cada ciascuno nella pena di soldi 10 da esser applicati all'Arte, eccettuando quelli che fossero infermi et averanno licenza dallì Sindici, ne si sia scusato alcuno infermi da tal pena se prima non fara fede a detti Sindici; oltre di questo, che non sia alcuno, che ardisca in tal giorno lavorare ne far lavorare ne aprire la bottega sotto la pena di lire 3 marchesane da essere applicate la meta all'Arte e l'altra meta alla Massaria del Comune, eccetto quelli che per causa necessaria fussero
forzati ma pero in tal caso, vogliamo vi sia la licenza dei Sindici; et in tal giorno si faccia cantar la messa in musica, in memoria del Santo, alla quale stiano tutti quelli dell'Arte con devotione pregando Nostro Signore Iddio che ci doni gratia di prosperar in bene; Il giorno sequente si faccia uno Anniversario da morto la mattina, invitati tutti gli stessi Huomini per l'anime di tutti li Defonti dell'Arte. Statuti dell'Arte de' Sarti, ASFe, MFM, vol. 43, cc. 183r-219r, caps. 7, 8. Saintly affiliations of Ferrarese corporations and the locations of some altars are listed by Scalabrini, Memorie storiche delle Chiese di Ferrara, pp. 7-8, 57-63, 72-73, 140-45, 237-42, 356-58.

309 ASMo, ASE, Arazzie e Tapezzerie, 1466, + Tapezzerie: Debitori e Creditori, reg. 5, cc. 19r, 64r.

310 Ibid., c. 28r.

311 Ibid., cc. 34r, 35v, 42r, 58r; fondo cit., 1466-69, Debitori et creditori de lo officio de la tapezaria, reg. 8, c. 7r.

312 Ferrarini, Cronaca ferrarese, fols. 13r, 31r-31v, 39r, 62r, 75r, 78v, none of these relations, however, dealing with the celebration of the feast of St. Catharine.


314 Decretum Marangonorum Civitatis ferrarie, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Nicolai III epistolae et decretae, sez. B, 1401-1409, reg. 3, cc. 53r-55r.

315 Decretum Artis Muratorum Civitatis ferrarie, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Leonelli et Borsii decretae, sez. B, 1447-1454, reg. 6, cc. 55r-58r. For the affiliation with the hospital and orphanage of S. Cristoforo, where the Muratori assembled for the oblations of St. George, St. Antony, and St. Dominic, see above, Chapter One, n. 103.

316 Statuti dell'Arte de' Vassellari e Mastellari, ASFe, MFM, vol. 43, cc. 123r-182r. It is interesting to note that a dispute between the Vassellari and the Mastellari arose over the issue of precedence and custody of the corporate banner in 1620. The problem was resolved by the creation of a second palio (same colour and emblem): one year the entire company proceeded to the offerti under the palio of the Mastellari, the next year under the palio of the Vassellari, described in a later compilation, Statuti dell'Arte de Vassellari, BCAF, Incunabili, no. 28, cap. 3.
Statuti dell'Arte de' Brentatori, ASFe, MFM, vol. 43, cc. 73r-121r: "... et del Beato Apostolo Paolo Avocato del detto Collegio, mantenere una lampada accessa di giorno e de notte nella Chiesa di S. Paolo in Ferrara, com'era solito, et si conteneva nell'antica Matricola de' Brentatori" (cap. 2). For the devotions to St. Albert Carmel, see cap. 25, and for the historical association of the guild with the church of S. Paolo, see Scalabrini, Memorie delle Chiese di Ferrara, pp. 32-49.

"Item quod Massari et Sindici dictae scholae ten-eantur et debeant emere expensii dictae scholae quattuor duplerios cere et ipsos facere portare accensos ad processionem associando Sanctissimum Corpus Domini Nostri Jesu Christi in die festis ipsius per quattuor honorabile homines dictae scholae quos ipsi Masarii et Sindici ad hoc eleg-erint...", Statuti dell'Arte de' Comandatorij, ASFe, MFM, vol. 45, cc. 108r-237r (this compilation 22 June 1419), cap. 4.

Insofar as the ceremony created a particular kind of social order by arranging the movement of individuals and the symbols of their affiliation through a defined space at a specific time, Muir, "The Ritual of Rulership in Renaissance Venice", p. 33; Phythian-Adams, "Ceremony and the Citizen: The Communal Year at Coventry", p. 75; Turner, "The Center Out There: Pilgrim's Goal", pp. 191-230.

This is the assumption underlying Mona Ozouf's argument that the festivals of the French Revolution did not affirm history, but were inaugurated rather in an "immense entreprise de rectification", that is, they rewrote the pages of urban and national history. See Ozouf, "Le Cortège et la Ville: les Itinéraires parisiens des Fêtes Révolutionnaires", pp. 889-916, and idem, "La Fête: sous la Révolution", Faire de Centre III: Nouveaux objets, (Paris, 1974), pp. 276-77.
pp. 205-10, societies nearly always possess a ritual topography, "a distribution in space of permanent sacred sites", which embodies the ideas, values, culture, and history associated with the community. There is an itinerary of sacred places to be visited during peregrinations, processions, and festal observances. Sometimes these ritual topographies coexist with political "landscapes", an integration which becomes visible during major state ceremonials (like the elections, investitures, marriages, and burials of the Este signori in Ferrara). Unlike the French revolutionaries of 1792-94, who attempted to rewrite their national history by altering the itinerary of shrines to be visited on festal occasions (Ozouf, "Space and Time in the Festivals of the French Revolution", pp. 372-84), the Estensi sought to associate their dynasty with local history by observing the bounds of a well-defined communal (and ritual) topography. Affiliation with Ferrara's itinerary of sacred places laid down signorial roots in the city.

Contemporary observers took the view that the Estensi liberated the Comune from factional strife despite the serious repression of local commercial aspirations and individual freedom (for contemporary histories, see Chiappini, Gli Estensi, pp. 6-14, and idem, "Indagini attorno a cronache e storie ferraresi del sec. XV", pp. 1-44). Scholars were engaged to write genealogies which not only linked the family with illustrious ancestors (including Charlemagne of course), but set down familial roots in the Ferrarese hinterland prior to the conquest in 1240, amongst others, Mario Equicola, Genealogia degli Signori Estensi, BCAF, Classe IIa, Manoscritti Esteri, no. 349.


ASMo, ASE, Guardaroba: Debitori e Creditori, 1473, reg. 91, c. 78v.

Ferrarese customs are noted in a short monograph, "La Befana a Ferrara nel sec. XV", Domenica dell' Operaia, 6 January 1901. The custom of the Befana was widespread in northern Italy, Pola Falletti-Villafalletto, Associazioni Giovanili e Feste Antiche, (Turin, 1939-42), I, p. 87.

Ferrarini, Cronaca ferrarese, fol. 13r. See also in this chronicle, fol. 26r, 42r, 54r, 66v, 80v, 155v, 189r, 224r, 254v. Significantly, in 1479, the ventura was delayed for a day while the duke entertained Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga and Annibale Bentivoglio (fol. 42r).

ASMo, ASE, Guardaroba: Libro della Partide, 1502-1504, reg. 120, c. 2r.
ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1503, Memoriale, reg. 41, seg. EE, c. 37r.

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri, e Segretari, busta 4, Silverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 6 January 1493.

See the lists of chivalric romances possessed by the Estensi published in Venturi, "L'Arte ferrarese nel periodo di Borso d'Este", Rivista Storica Italiana, 2 (1885), pp. 692-93, and idem, "L'Arte Ferrarese nel periodo d'Ercole d'Este", pp. 103-112.

Catalano, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, I, p. 105.


ASMan, AG, busta 1236, Pietro Gentile to Francesco Gonzaga, 4 January 1500.

ASMan, AG, busta 1235, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 6 January 1497.

ASMan, AG, busta 1239, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 6 January 1503.

This is also the opinion of Lauro Martines, Power and Imagination, p. 321.

As in 1502, when Alfonso d'Este replaced his father in the pageant. ASMan, AG, busta 1238, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 6 January 1502, suggests that this was due to Ercole's illness, whereas Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, IV, p. 206, speculates that there was a more practical reason: "... l'immensa spesa nella quale Ercole I s'era impegnato a cagione del ricevimento della nuora Lucrezia e delle feste a farsi, obbligò lui ad esigere somme maggiori del solito dai promossi il 9 gennaio, alle cariche mutabili del governo (savi, giudice dei savi ecc.) ma induse tutti i sudditi facoltosi e la comunità e regalarlo con prodigalità sorprendente di comestabili, non solo nella notte dell' Epifania ma per molti giorni appresso".

Above, pp. 28-9, and n. 124; Scalabrini, Memorie storiche delle Chiese di Ferrara, pp. 275-83.
427

345 Scalabrini, Memorie storiche delle Chiese di Ferrara, pp. 387-88, for a description of this custom.

346 DF, p. 56, ll. 15-17. Numerous references to the signorial oblation exist in the Ferrarese chronicles.

347 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1479, reg. 21, c. 57v.

348 Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, pp. 87-107, which includes the most complete description of the ceremonial, pp. 90-94.

349 Above, Chapter One, n. 54.

350 ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1501, Memoriale, reg. 37, seg. CC, c. 76r.

351 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1482, reg. 23, c. 54v.

352 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1491, reg. 30, c. 42v; Above, Chapter One, n. 51.

353 Among the petitioners can be found the court artist Baldassare d'Este, "vergogna a chiedere questa elemosina... Ciò è de quella tavola de dodece apostoli...", ASMo, ASE, Carteggio dei Pittori, busta del pitt. Baldassare d'Este, 24 April 1502, published by Venturi, "L'Arte Ferrarese nel periodo d'Ercole d'Este", p. 387.

354 Zam, p. 45, ll. 21-37.

355 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 67, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 1 March 1479. The letter responded to an earlier query from the duchess: "Secondo la laudabile consuetudine de V. Ex. per la sua elemosina de la Zobia Sancta, li factori Generali ricordano che questo e il tempo che se suole mettere e ordine al comprare de li panni, de li pignolati e de le altre cosse per quella distributione. Il perché prego V. Ex. mi dica quanto sia de sua mente fare questo anno per più una cosa che unaltra, il se possi commodo fare...", fondo cit., (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 131, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 27 February 1479.

356 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 70, Alfonso d'Este to Ercole d'Este, 28 March 1490.

357 DF, p. 254, ll. 11-12.

358 Prosperi, "Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche e le idee religiose", pp. 133-38; Zarrì, "Pietà e profezia

359 Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, p. 93.

360 ASMan, AG, busta 1235, Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 10 March 1497.

361 Ibid., busta cit., Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 13 March 1497.

362 Ibid., busta cit., Bernardino Prosperi to Isabella d'Este, 28 March 1497.

363 Prosperi, "Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche e le idee religiose", pp. 135-36.

364 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1482, reg. 23, c. 54v.

365 G. Pardi, in Zam, p. 46, n. 1.

366 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1456, reg. 11b, c. 45v.

367 Ferrarini, Cronaca ferrarese, fol. lv: "Adi domenega 16 Zugno uno fiorentino, insieme cum alcuni altri della cità nostra havendo facto fare et parare uno tribunale lungo dal lato de le bolette de la cità nostra di ferrar, face una representatione de uno el qual non poteva haver fioli, qual fece vodo al sancto Jacobo se ne haveva d'andare a visitare la giesia sua et così per il voto la dona sua si impregno et ne hebe uno qual filiolo poi andagando a sancto Jacobo fu apichato, perche lo hosto diceva che ge haveva robato la taza et la fiola sua innamorata di epso laveva meso in le sue tasche, como de questo sese publice comenzo dicta festa ad hore 20 et ad hore 22 fu finita..." (also published by Coppo, "Spettacoli alla corte di Ercole I", p. 43.


369 D'Ancona, Origini del teatro italiano, I, pp. 1-665, still the most useful text on medieval and Renaissance liturgical drama (pp. 290-96, 337-39, for Ferrarese sacre rappresentazioni), and Konigsson, L'Espace Théâtral Médiéval, pp. 21-38, 113-130, for the configuration of ecclesiastical "space" in sacred drama.

370 ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1489, Memoriale, reg. 24, seg. K, c. 19r: "Spexa facta per la passione del Veneri Santo de dare adì dicto L. octantasei s. octo de m. per tanti faciam boni per epsa a maestro baptista de
Argenta medigo per lo amontare de pianete septanta-doe lequale lui dete sino in la septimeana santa per fare el tribunal de la mostracione de la passione del nostro Signore Jesu Christo che fo fata in su la piazza como apare per una scripta soa sopra scripta per mane de maestro biaxio roseto e poste in filza e posto dicto baptista dibia avere.

L. lxxxvij, s. viij, 0"

See also in this register cc. 4v, 5r, 6r-7r, 9r, 10r, 11v, for expenses related to carpentry and payments made to artists "per conperare robe per fare camare per la festa de la passione che vole fare el nostro Illmo. Signore Veneri Sancto...".

371 ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1481, Memoriale, reg. 15, seg. 1, c. 70r:
"Spexa de corto e castelo deno dare adi sopra scripta L. vinteocoto s. quatro per lo amontare de li infrascripti lavoreri che ha facto maestro gir-olimo zuicho marangone... per fare banche e per fare mode da fare la passione in corte..... L. 28, 4,0".

372 ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1503, Memoriale, reg. 41, seg. EE, cc. 6r-6v, 7v, 8r-9v, 11v, 12v-13r, 17v, 22v, 24v, 26v, 28r, 29r, 39r-41r, for references to the "Spexa del paradiso et tribunali se fano, in veschoa...".

373 Coppo, "Spettacoli alla corte di Ercole I", p. 36.

374 Ferrarini, Cronaca ferrarese, fol. 265v.

375 For the serpent "grande di legno che se apriva et serava" (Ferrarini, Cronaca ferrarese, fol. 68r), see ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabb-riche, 1503, Memoriale, reg. 41, seg. EE, c. 41r: "Adi 5 aprile... a maestro michele per fare una testa de serpa...... L. 1,0,0", etc.

376 For the paradiso "in lo quale staseva il Dio Patre et suoi angeli" (Legnago, Cronaca Estense, fol. 169v), see Ibid., fondo cit., reg. cit., (above, n. 372), especially c. 6v, where it is revealed that the scenery was painted by the festaiuolo and artist Sigismondo Fiorini:
"Spexa del paradiso che se fa in veschoa de dare adi xviii de marzo L. sei de m. per lei faciam boni al nostro Illmo. Sig. per tante che per sua signoria al sp. girolimo ziliolo fece pagare per il bancho de bart. de liuti a maestro Sixesmondo depintore per conto de indorare diedeme per la demostracione se fa in veschoa.... L. 6,0,0".

377 DF, p. 254, 11. 10-18: "El duca Hercole... ordinò et dete in dicto presente giorno principio a fare processione per Ferrara ogni terzo infino frate, con tuto il clero de Ferrara et con circa quatro
milia on più puti da dodixe anni in zozo, vestiti tuti de camise bianche, cum una bandirola in mano per cadauno, suso la quale era dipinto uno Jesus; et sua signoria et fioli et fratelli andorno dreto a dicta processione, videlicet sua signoria a cavallo, perchè non haveria potuto caminare, et tuto il resto a pede dreto a vescovo; et così è ordinato fare insino al compimento de nove processioni, a laude de Dio".

378 Above, Chapter One, n. 153.
379 Ferrarini, Cronaca ferrarese, fol. 265r.
380 Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, pp. 73-76.
381 Above, pp. 9-15.
383 Statuta Ferrariae Anno MCCLXXVII, II, cxvi, p. 93.
384 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, V, v, 40, "De paliis curren in die festo beati georgii".
386 Scalabrini, Memorie storiche delle Chiese di Ferrara, p. 2.
387 Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, V, pp. 271-72.
388 Bellini, Dell'antica lira di Marchesini detta volgarmente Marchesana, p. 204.
389 Zam, p. 6, ll. 23-26. Descriptions of the proceedings can be found in any major Ferrarese chronicle (strangely, the trecento chronicles do not mention this old communal custom).
390 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Principi e Signorie, Estero, Milano, busta 3, 1215/3, Lodovico Maria Sforza to Ercole d'Este, 7 April 1493.
391 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolarum registrum, sez. C, 1493-96, reg. 11, c. 25r.
392 Zam, p. 74, ll. 30-39.
393 Ibid., p. 139, ll. 5-15.
394 Ibid., p. 206, ll. 4-8.
It was customary for the signore to supply the palii: ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Libri e Carte d'Amministrazione dei Principi, 1450-1471, reg. 20, Mandati Sciolti, 31 May 1451, 1 June 1454; ASMo, ASE, Guardaroba: I.I. Spesa, 1473, reg. 91, c. 78v; ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1499, reg. 37, c. 118v. On occasion, the Estensi deferred the expense by obliging the local nobility to provide money for the manufacture of the prizes, as in 1490 (Giacomo Trotti), ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Ufficiali Camerali, busta 1, Filippo Cestarelli to Ercole d'Este, 1 April 1490.

For musicians playing at the palio, see ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1469, reg. 14, c. 64r; 1474-75, reg. 18, c. 149r; 1476, reg. 19, c. 48r; 1479, reg. 21, c. 64v, etc.

ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 131, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 24 April 1479.

In 1462, for example, Borso d'Este sent his racehorses to the palio in Luca (feast of S. Croce) and Modena (S. Michele), ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Libri e Carte d'Amministrazione dei Principi, 1450-1471, reg. 20, Mandati Sciolti, Todeschino dei Barbareschi to Borso d'Este, 4 May 1462. In 1486, we find Ercole's barbari in Bologna for the races on the feasts of St. Rafael and St. Peter, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1486, reg. 24, c. 90v.

It appears that Borso d'Este suspended the popular races for several years during the 1460's "ut effrenatum ac lascivam adolescentium multitudinem a prodigalitate averterat et ad virtutes veras et frugem mellioris vitae revocaret", which, as Zorzi suggests ("Ferrara: il sipario ducale", p. 40), indicates that women of dubious virtue were able to exhibit themselves publicly upon the race-course and solicit customers. G.A. Facchini, Il torneo
delle contrade per il palio di San Giorgio, (Ferrara, 1939), pp. 4-12, also argues that the popular races bordered on pure exhibitionism, which Ercole attempted to cure by encouraging young girls "honesta et da bene" to participate. The recent text by Nino Franco Visentini, Il palio di Ferrara, (Ferrara, 1968), is basically a tourist pamphlet, adding little to what is already known about the palio in Ferrara.

406 Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, III, pp. 45-46; above, Chapter One, n. 283.


408 The ritual was re-commenced in 1485 to ceremonialize the resumption of diplomatic relations, Zam, p. 164, l. 24-27.

409 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio dei Rettori Ferrara e Ferrarese, busta 5, Giovanni Nicola to Francesco Ariosto (n.d.).

410 Targets constructed and painted for the palio: ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munizioni-Fabbriche, 1499, Memoriale, reg. 35, seg. AA, cc. 71r, 81r; 1500, Memoriale, reg. 36, seg. BB, c. 83v; 1501, Memoriale, reg. 37, seg. CC, c. 76v.

411 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Libri e Carte d'Amministrazione dei Principi, 1450-1471, reg. 20, Mandati Sciolti, 27 June 1451.

412 Zam, p. 11, l. 6-11.

413 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 56v.

414 Ibid., fol. 128v. Ferrarini, Cronaca ferrarese, fol. 61r, says that this palio was held "per la venuta del zenero suo il fiolu del marchexe di mantoa cum la Illustrissima madama a ferrara", while Zambotti, p. 78, l. 18-21, records how the palio was staged "de comandamento e volentà del duca nostro, per piacere del populo", perhaps meaning a customary occasion.

415 Ferrarini, Cronaca ferrarese, fol. 2r.

416 ASMo, ASE, Arazzie e Tappezzerie, 1466, + Tapezzerie: Debitori e Creditori, reg. 5, c. 43v; 1466-69, Tapezzerie-Memoriale: Debitori e Creditori A, reg. 6, c. 33r, etc.

417 The cortile was specially decorated for the occasion, ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munizioni-Fabbriche, 1501, Memoriale, reg. 37, seg. CC, c. 139v.

418 ASMo, ASE, Arazzie e Tappezzerie, 1466-69, Tapezzerie-Memoriale: Debitori e Creditori A, reg. 6,
c. 19v: "M. Jacomo del baillo de dare adi vii de zugno la infrascripta tapezaria alui data per apar-are uno altaro in suxo la via grande per onorare el Corpo de Christo appresso...
uno copertinollo de razo novo affigrado bello signa
uno tapedo mezano vechio da piedi signa
quatro canizi de corde inforzade"

419 Zam, p. 197, ll. 26-30.
420 See the route described "come fusse sta la process-ione si fa el di del Corpo di Christo" on 17 Decem-ber 1482, Ferrarini, Cronaca Ferrarese, fol. 104r.
421 Ferrarini, Cronaca ferrarese, fol. 274r.
422 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Rognanti, busta 131, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 15 June 1485.
423 See below, Chapter Four, ii, "The Concept of Nobil-ity and the Theory of Magnificence".
424 Above, n. 289.
425 Chiappini, Gli Estensi, p. 323.
426 Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, III, pp. 264-65.
428 Legnago, Cronaca Estense, fol. 135v.
429 Giovanni Soranzo, La guerra tra Venezia e la Santa Sede per il dominio di Ferrara, (Città di Castello, 1906), pp. 137ff.
431 Statuta Ferrariae Anno MCCLXXXVII, II, cxvii, p. 93.
432 Both Borso and Ercole, however, held games on the feast of the Nativity B.V.M. (8 September), DF, p. 50, ll. 15-17 (Borso), p. 81, ll. 14-22 (Ercole).
434 Ibid., fols. 103r-104r.
435 Ibid., fol. 106r.
Ibid., fols. 1r-52v, for the catalogue of 53 miracles said to have occurred between the years 1471 and 1476, and fols. 10lr-101v for a description of the immagine. The relationship between this popular cult and Ercole's signoria is discussed by Zarri, "Pietà e profezia alle corti padane: le pie consigliere dei principi", pp. 219-220, who suggests that the immagine provided public evidence of thaumaturgic power working in the city through Herculean devotion. On the powers attributed to sacred images by popular piety, see Richard Trexler, "Florentine Religious Experience: The Sacred Image", Studies in the Renaissance, 19 (1972), pp. 7-41.

Zam, p. 83, ll. 28-29.

The immagine also intervened miraculously in 1476, helping to preserve Ercole's signoria from Velleschi pretensions, Ariosto, De novi intra Ducalem Regiam Ferrariensem, fols. 54r-55v.

DF, p. 81, ll. 5-13.

Zam, p. 5, ll. 3-7. See also Ariosto, De novi intra Ducalem Regiam Ferrariensem, "Translatione del sacro sacello e sacro Simulacro Virginale", fols. 99v-105v.

Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, p. 52.

Zam, p. 83, ll. 24-28.
Chapter Four

INVESTITURE, RECEPTION AND ENTRY: THE
CREATION OF A CEREMONIAL IDENTITY

Concepts of Ceremonial

When Jacob Burckhardt decided that the Renaissance witnessed a psychological re-awakening of individual personality leading to an equalization of social classes, increased social mobility, and an emphasis upon the social rewards of merit, he acknowledged that these phenomena were counter-balanced by an apprehension of new standards of environmental uniformity less conducive to individual self-determination: festivals, processions, etiquette, language, education, and morality. Renaissance man, he argued, developed a consciousness of self distinct from his membership in a "race, people, party, family, corporation" or other general category. A liberated personal identity, a self-awareness of personal status unfettered by the associative and corporate criteria of the medieval world, fostered a new field and freedom for human endeavour. But Renaissance society was not without entrenched modal perimeters which limited choices, restricted movement, and structured behaviour. Even personal accoutrements could issue a reciprocal knowledge of personal status within the community, sponsored by a complex set of regulations designed to govern
modes of public dress. Contemporary costume provided an iconic representation of public identity, but not an identity wholly free from the impositions of society. Renaissance Ferrara affords an instructive case. Ordinary citizens, for instance, were forbidden to wear the ornamental garments which distinguished local nobles. The Jews bore the yellow "0" on their clothing, prostitutes were marked by the badge of their profession, servants wore the livery of their masters, bailiffs, constables, and signorial pawn-brokers were identified by special caps and insignia, dottori lectured in their faculty robes, notaries were forced to adopt a modest habit, mendicants laboured for the cure of souls in the vestments of their monastic affiliation, privileged individuals carried swords and bore armour, and the local nobility, exempt from regulative dress codes by virtue of special concession, were apparelled habitually in finery imported from northern Europe. Deviations from the prescribed mode of dress aroused suspicion and resentment, and sometimes moved the communal authorities to take punitive action. An important example may be found in the records of the Archivio Segreto del Magistrato for the year 1456, when the social-climbing wife of a local merchant, who paraded publicly in the attire of a noblewoman, was arrested and charged with impersonating her peers and conspiring to undermine public morality. In addition to levying a substantial fine of 50 LM, the presiding magistrates seized the opportunity to outline the barriers which separated ordinary citizens from
local nobles. No person "ignobilis" (defined as one who engages in trade or manual labour), reads the condemnation, is permitted to wear "vestis cremisini" or similar garments unless a dispensation has been issued by the Giudice dei Savi and a recognition (capsoldo) has been paid to the treasurer of the Comune. The husband of the accused, one Maestro Lodovico di Niccolò Perondoli, protested the fine, alleging that his father "per nobilis in Civitate ferr. erat, et in nobili familia", that his personal fortune made him a member of the Ferrarese nobility, and citing the example of Venetian aristocrats, whose merchant activities did not prevent them from assuming noble prerogatives. But while the magistrates, after much deliberation, decided to cancel the fine, they remained intransigent over the issue of the dress code. Perondoli was ordered to sell the offending gowns in his wife's wardrobe, and the accused was instructed that she should never again wear any garment "de qualitatis aut condicionis vestem nobilibus mulieribus...". In a social world where newly acquired wealth, education, or creative talent provided several avenues for the ambitious to win advancement, individual aspirations sometimes conflicted with an older, deep-rooted sense of hierarchical order.

Recently, by focusing upon the fifteenth-century as the inaugural era for a new "European ceremonialism", historians have called the dialectical tension implicit in Burckhardt's Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy to attention. "In the so-called age of individualism",
writes Richard Trexler, "Europeans spent more time, money, and genius controlling spontaneity and enforcing conformity than they had before or would later". The countless tracts which instructed the laity upon the mechanics of obtaining indulgences, praying, eating, loving, marrying, and dying, in conjunction with the acute attention paid to behavioural detail in contemporary accounts of important ceremonial events, suggest a concentration upon formal actions unparalleled in earlier European history.14 Scholars of Renaissance forms have understood that the individual emerged from the associative world of the later Middle Ages bereft of traditional and institutional supports. With the gradual dissolution of corporate social strata, a feeling of insecurity, disorientation, and alienation left the individual suffering from an "identity crisis". While the wider sociability of the medieval world was never wholly lost, the increasing commitment of the individual to private incentives and material wealth severely challenged his ability to forge a personal identity in terms of older hierarchical concepts. No longer did the three-tiered model of the Christian corporate communitas rationalize sufficiently the intricacies of contemporary social and political relations. The case for an erosion of the medieval "sense of community" is reviewed by Marvin Becker in his psychological study of the individual in northern Italy during the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Becker detects strong tensions between the corporate ethic and citizen ego in the public world.
of the new city-states. The weakening of extended association in the business world and the economic changes which isolated the individual, were paralleled by a weakening of ritual-social ties in the community and the loosening of sacramental bonds in politics. Through a process of collective alienation, human individuality was not only detached from the medieval cosmic order, but also released from a world of ritual, ceremony, and a supportive associative impulse:

The history of the individual was no longer so readily structured by hierarchy and consorteria; his public world was not given meaning by crusading enthusiasm, visions of an age of ultimate justice, or decisive victories by angelic popes or messianic emperors.

In short, according to Becker, the individual was detached from a world of traditional ritual and ushered into an era of ceaseless change.¹⁵

Scholars have also understood that the estrangement of the individual from the medieval environment assumed several manifestations. In an important study, Gerhart Ladner introduces us to two types of alienation prevalent in the later Middle Ages: an estrangement from God and an estrangement from the world for the sake of God. These forms of alienation are represented by the medieval conception of Homo Viator, of the wayfarer in a strange world who is also a pilgrim toward a divine order. Owing its conceptual roots to monastic prototypes and mystic influences (and especially Augustinian dialectic), the metaphor of the viator was a pivotal component in the medieval ideology of an ordered cosmos: "the wayfarer's life was conducted within a universal order which was in
itself good and which was made up of many particular orders". While this concept naturally remained relevant to the Christian persona in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, its power as an accepted tenet of the human condition was slowly losing its efficacy as men reassessed their relationship with God. As Ladner explains, the continual theological pronouncements affirming the "unknowability" of God increased the inaccessability of the divine order, engendering dynamic cultural tension for individuals who both adhered to the order of the temporal world and accepted the judgement of the extratemporal. Out of this cultural tension, Ladner argues, was spawned a new kind of alienation "which had not existed in the same degree in Christian Antiquity and in the earlier Middle Ages": man's alienation from man, of which the witch-hunts, mass persecutions, and heresies of the later fourteenth-century are the most obvious early examples. Taking this argument a step further, we can see how this sort of alienation weakened the universal bonds of the medieval communitas and its cosmic hierarchy. By questioning the validity of a universal order, or at least admitting the perception of "individuals" in the physical world as opposed to philosophic abstractions of form and essence, men began to question the validity of the social and political orders which operated within the conceptual framework of universality. Earlier, we saw how the organization of space and time underwent a gradual transformation during the course of the fifteenth-century. "Temps du l'Eglise" was partially metamorphosized to suit the needs of "temps
du marchand", and in Renaissance Ferrara, to suit dynastic needs. Le Goff would also maintain that structural alterations in the perception of space and time re-introduced the individual to the psychology of capitalism, producing dramatic effects not only upon his "mentalité", but also upon his understanding of the socio-political process. Like Ladner, Le Goff sees the fourteenth-century as an era of cultural tension. It is in this century where he locates "l'affirmation de l'homme individuel, et d'abord, bien sûr, de l'homme puissant", but in a society which offers

... la même image et semble plutôt retourner à ses vieilles conceptions: société des trois ordres ou des trois états, toujours dominée par noblesse et clergé avec un bourgeoisie sans doutes plus nombreuse, plus riche, plus sûre d'elle-même, mais qui se contente soit de s'infiltrer dans les rangs supérieurs par ennoblissement, soit de représenter à elle seule le tiers état. 18

As Lodovico Perondoli discovered to his cost in the Borsian courts of law, even "infiltrating" the ranks of the Ferrarese nobility was not accomplished easily. Nevertheless, the cultural tension described by Le Goff inevitably induced alterations in the perception of social and political systems. It would be foolhardy to suppose that a society whose superior ranks were threatened by the presence and aspirations of "new men" remained untouched by new assumptions and new values. The extent to which bourgeois values emanating from Florence helped to catalyze Ferrarese cultural experience in the later quattrocento, for example, is an issue of considerable import. As we shall see, the argument which naturally formed around Florentine patricians in defence of
private patronage encouraged the Este dukes to adopt similar, if not more consumptive, standards of public expenditure. The theory of magnificence, upon which this defence ultimately resided, proved to be an attractive ideological explanation for princely behaviour.¹⁹ We might also wish to consider the extent to which the later Middle Ages were "the locale for an assertion of the less reflective values of an older military chivalry".²⁰ Recent readings of the later chivalric romances by Georges Duby and Arno Borst have emphasized the splits in personality and psyche afflicting individuals trained for war. In the final analysis, divisions of loyalty between God, the patria, the dominus, and la donna led to a disorientation of the warrior's identity. Brutality and familial aggression brought home the fact that knights were unable to find solace in an outmoded and hopelessly utopian ideal.²¹ While this "identity crisis" is normally associated with the northern European feudal warrior, we must not discount the psychological discomfort suffered by Italian knights, especially by those residing in the hinterlands of the feudal north. It is not true to say, as some scholars contend, that medieval Italy was without a chivalric tradition, or that Italian warriors were immune to the tensions and pressures experienced by their ultramontane contemporaries.²² Thus, we may want to explore the consequences the problems associated with a chivalric identity bore for the concept of nobility in quattrocento Italy, especially in Este Ferrara, where we can observe the gradual transformation
of a feudal nobility into an urban aristocracy over the course of the century.

Of more immediate relevance to the subject of this chapter, however, are the processual changes in the field of political thought and political organization detected by Kantorowicz, Ullmann, Wilks, and Reisenberg. Here is Kantorowicz's analysis of the processual change he called the "demystification of politics." From the late thirteenth-century, medieval jurists sought to articulate a new theory of polity-centred rulership. They recognized (1) that the original conception of a corpus mysticum, that is, the totality of Christian society in its organological aspects (a body composed of a head and members), had lost much of its transcendental meaning, and could no longer be employed to rationalize the various political aggregates of human society (2) that the twin pillars of early medieval political experience, Empire and Papacy, were less meaningful to the political forum of Christendom in the face of rising monarchical and quasi-national states. The formula they evolved to replace the designation of polis in an ecclesiological body corporate, that is, the ancient idea of liturgical kingship (expressed in the dichotomy of sacerdotium and regnum), was to envisage the polis as a community of individuals bound together by the Rule of Law. To accomplish this re-direction of the political process, the jurists also recognized (3) that the new territorial states, self-sufficient according to their claims and independent of Empire and Papacy, required new ideology or "mysteries of state" to sustain a theory of rulership.
centred on the sphere of Law (4) the general usefulness of ecclesiastical thought and language, in particular, the corporational doctrines developed by the Church. "The new territorial and quasi-national state... quarried the wealth of ecclesiastical notions, which were so convenient to handle, and finally proceeded to assert itself by placing its own temporariness on a level with the sempiternity of the militant Church".25 Hence the designation of the state as a corpus reipublicae mysticum, the prince as "head of state", and the polis as "body politic".26

The process by which the secular state acquired self-sustaining ideological precepts, or "mysteries" as they were then called, invites several important questions. Were individuals aware of this alteration in the political world? If so, how were these changes communicated and explained? If there was, as Becker suggests, a withering away of comforting political ideology, a loosening of the polis from the universal frame, was the individual likewise deprived of facets of his ascribed identity? Did the new secular state evolve substitute (and ritualized) paradigms to affect the identity, form, timing, and behavioural standards of individuals? These are problems we shall have to bear in mind as we approach the notion of ceremonial identity in Renaissance Ferrara.

* * *

In the preceding, we have attempted only to briefly sketch some of the psychological tensions encountered by the individual as he stood poised upon the threshold
of the Renaissance. The problem of "individualism" is far more complex than appears here, as the masterful survey of Renaissance historiography conducted by Wallace K. Ferguson has shown. It is all the more puzzling then, considering the intensity of the debate aroused by Burckhardt's original thesis, that so many scholars have neglected the structural limitations imposed upon personal freedom by Renaissance society. For example, the shift from the universal to the particular, the inauguration of a new Weltanschauung which admitted "human perception as a creative activity" and led to a revolutionary change in the individual's relation to the world, has often been assessed in conjunction with the relationship of humanism to the Middle Ages. Humanist concepts of "individualism" help to support a contention that the Renaissance represented a new age in the history of civilization. We are reminded by Charles Trinkaus, however, that Renaissance humanists occasionally encountered difficulty in rationalizing their position in contemporary society, and did not always find an audience sympathetic to their views. The desire for security of tenure at a recognized institution, or for recognition of personal status within the community, sometimes called for subtle re-adjustments in personal philosophy. On the other hand, critics of the Renaissance "thesis of individualism", those who wish to demonstrate "the existence in the medieval period of elements of culture traditionally regarded as having originated in the Renaissance", or those who wish to
highlight the "medieval features of Renaissance civil-
ization", rarely discuss the kinds of cultural prob-
lems we have outlined above. By locating isolated traces
of individual self-awareness in the Middle Ages (often
taken as the basis for a "medieval humanism"), scholars seek to redress the view which depicts the medieval
and Renaissance world as fundamentally antithetical. In
other words, the notion of a cultural rupture between
the medieval and Renaissance Weltanschauung is replaced
by the notion of a cultural continuum. Consequently, the
cultural tensions engendered for the individual are dim-
inished, or in direct contrast to the so-called "rupture
theory", at least confronted prior to reaching the stage
of crisis.

Both sides of this continuing debate raise import-
ant questions for the student of quattrocento Italian
ceremonial. For instance, if one accepts that the ero-
sion of the medieval sense of communitas was accompanied
by the individual's detachment from an associative corpus
of rituals and ceremonies, how does one account for the
concentrated ceremonialization of public behaviour during
the course of the fifteenth-century? Similarly, if one
accepts the emancipation of individual consciousness
from the medieval cosmic order, how does one explain the
rigidly hierarchical structure of processional groups
in contemporary ceremonies, or the assumption of a cere-
monial consciousness in contemporary chronicles and
festal annals? Alternatively, if one accepts the notion
of a cultural continuum, how is one to understand the
advent of new processional décor and new ritual modes?
Why was it necessary to formalize a model of *communitas* during political ceremonies, and why was this model so much more complex than its medieval predecessor? The knowledge that the ceremonialization of public behaviour was a European phenomenon provides some additional complications. Must the historian seek a general theory to cover the European ceremonial impulse, or can regional variations contribute to our analysis of an evolving ritual process?

To help assemble conceptual approaches to these problems, historians may find the functional analysis of social anthropology instructive, especially the paradigms devised by Victor Turner. In his recent book *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors*, Turner expands Van Gennep's concept of "rites of passage" to relate a field of interaction between social dramas and ritual metaphors. Social dramas are to be understood as representational sequences of social events arising in conflict situations. The nature of these conflict situations varies. It may be determined by the binding or separating of individuals (men in servitude to rights, obligations, or loyalties), the loosening of the bonds of norm-governed social relations, the rites of passage which mark changes in a group's or an individual's social status; or more pertinent to the present discussion, the attempt by the individual to liberate himself from the yoke of an obsolete *communitas*. Typically, social dramas comprise four main phases of public action accessible to observation. They may be related to the
problems set out above as follows: (1) A breach between individuals or groups and their set of shared assumptions and values, or a breach between individuals or groups within the same system of social relations. We might relate this phase to the gradual alienation of the individual from the medieval "sense of community", and the gradual dissolution of ecclesiastical corporate social strata. (2) A crisis, during which, unless the breach can be resolved immediately, there is a tendency for the breach to become co-extensive with some dominant cleavage in the widest set of social relations. Following our model, we could relate this phase to the detachment of the individual from the associative world of the Middle Ages and its corpus of rituals and ceremonies. As Becker, Ladner, and Le Goff suggest, alterations in the political process, cultural tension and alienation, induce an "identity crisis" for the individual. (3) A process of redressive action, brought into operation by leading or structurally representative members of the disturbed social system. Redressive actions may range from informal mediation and arbitration to formal juridical and legal machinery, and, to resolve certain kinds of crises, the organization and performance of public rituals. We could relate this phase to the recognition by constituted authority of a need to restore continuity in the field of social and political relations during the course of the fifteenth-century. Alterations in the perception of *communitas*, and in the perception of the individual within the bounds of the *communitas* (his rights, obligations, and
prohibitions), are provided with new explanatory points of reference. Hence we witness the advent of formalized public behaviour in an attempt to invest both the state and the individual with a ceremonial identity. We find, according to Trexler, the self-awareness of the new territorial state creating its identity for a new constituent body of politicized personae. Or, to borrow Turner's terminology, we observe a restructured community furnished with a new set of ritual metaphors, which bring into relation a number of ideas, images, sentiments, values, and stereotypes, and which select, emphasize, suppress, and organize their frames of reference.

(4) The final phase of Turner's conception of the social drama consists either of the re-integration of the disturbed social group, or the recognition and legitimization of irreparable schism between the contesting parties. To complete our model, we might relate this phase to the formulation of a corpus of ceremonial in the territorial states of western Europe by the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries (the codification of ceremonial behaviour in prescriptive texts), the adoption of the princely entry as the standard ritual metaphor of social and political organization, and the assumption of a ceremonial consciousness as the basis for individual action in the public forum. Turner suggests that this final phase affords the social historian an opportunity to assess the extent of manifest alterations in the structure and perception of the community. He can, for example, compare the ordering of political
relations which preceded a power struggle erupting into an observable social drama with that following the "redressive" phase. Ritual metaphors also help the observer to draw conclusions upon the scope and intensity of adjustments in the pattern of social and political relations. By examining major rituals formulated in the redressive phase (those which all members of a society would be invited to participate in or observe), scholars are able to determine the extent to which the *communitas* is functioning upon a different level of social and political integration.  

The shortcomings of Turner's model will appear in the...
Nevertheless, scholars may draw several important conclusions from Turner's conception of the cultural process. What was underway in the fifteenth-century, if one applies his theory of processual change, was an attempt by powerful interest groups (governing bodies) to redefine the modal perimeters of society for their constituent membership. Ritualized behaviour, both as a function of social structure and of social change, helped to decode individual identities and render the temporal bounds of a more complex communitas intelligible. The theoretical liberation of the individual from the bonds of the hierarchically ordered medieval cosmos did not result in his emancipation from a rigidly structured social environment. Rather, the individual found himself re-integrated into a new community which countenanced alterations in the social and political world, but carefully regulated them through stringent codes of public behaviour.

Nowhere was the impact of a concerted shift towards prescriptive behaviour experienced more profoundly by individuals than at the prince's court. The disintegrating social strata of fifteenth-century Europe, wrote Sydney Anglo, "led to an increasing formalization of court functions and public spectacle in an effort to maintain the old, or to legitimize new hierarchies". Life at court grew more intricate, its rituals and forms assumed a greater degree of complexity, especially where "lofty political pretensions were upheld by artistic and
social buttresses.  As a result, streams of consciousness developed to further sharpen the lines of demarcation between social orders. The court, for example, produced the courtier and the insular world of courtiership. It produced a new ideological conception of nobilitas for the upper classes, a "nuovo senso di maestà, di dignità e di distanza", based upon the supposition that certain human virtues were exercised exclusively by great men, especially the virtue of magnificence.

According to Lauro Martines, the princely courts in northern Italy also produced a ceremonial space to frame and amplify the ruler's power. Court ceremonial acted as ritualized centrepoints for a courtly order of consciousness; as visual media for the delineation and tracking down of self-images. They were major reference points in the possession and celebration of power. The prince's ceremonial "was converted into an identity essence". We shall see below that these assumptions, coupled with an approach to contemporary public ceremonies as forums for the ritualization of institutional and personal identities, will require some adjustments in the traditional view of spectacle in Renaissance Ferrara.

The Concept of Nobility and the Theory of Magnificence

Under Estensi tutelage, it was inevitable that Ferrara would prove no exception to the European trend towards ceremonialization. In a city "dove pompa grande regna", and where it appeared to some observers that
"troppo pompe regnasse", scarcely a year passed by without a public ceremony of international import, and the daily lives of the citizenry were punctuated by the ceremonial management of local powers secular and ecclesiastical. At the centre of this ceremonial impulse stood the Este court. Orders for the reception of princes and ambassadors, the erection of tribunals, the cleansing and decoration of city streets, the marshalling of musicians, honour guards, and city notables were constantly issued by the offices of the camera and ducal chancellery. Indeed, signorial insistence that all foreign dignitaries should be received with a plenitude of honour, "che le cose passino con honore cum honore et con honore", consistently marks public life in Ferrara after the accession of Borso d'Este in 1450. If we look through the registers of the Compusteria, we find that public speeches, announcements of treaties and betrothals, and even theological debates were all provided with a ceremonial forum. As Francesco Ariosto wrote to Ercole upon Isabella d'Este's betrothal to Francesco Gonzaga, it was difficult to keep track of all "li magni e Magnifici gesti de la inclita virtu vostra Magnanime e Sapientissimo Principe et Exmo. duca....".

Much is revealed by the contextual language of contemporary documents, which converts the ordinary experience of the princely court into a consciousness of formal behaviour. Princes no longer act merely, they proceed "molto cerimoniosamente", "cum grande fasto
pompa, Triumfo, et cum grande ordine", 47 "honorata et corteza", 48 "cum grande demostracione accompagnate", 49 "cum grandissime ordine et cum ceremonie solemne et cum magnificentia", 50 "cum molto ordine et ceremonie", 51 "cum grandissime demostracione de solemnita", 52 "cum grande honore et reverentia et cum assai ceremonie". 53 Courtiers present themselves "secondo le conventione", 54 "secondo loro grade, dignita o preeminentia", 55 "per il loco della precedentia", 56 "de grado in grado", 57 "dove a dove secondo loro dignita", 58 "secondo havea ordinato", 59 "secundo le Ceremonie, et ordini, et provisione", 60 according to the "Ordini liquali harano ad observare tutti li zentilhomini cortesani et altri de la famiglia del nostro Illmo. S. Duca de ferrara per servir bene et honorvolmente la sua Extia". 61 Foreign dignitaries visiting Ferrara receive "tutte quelle amorevole accoglienze et quel honore chio e possol", 62 "delle amorevole et honorvolve acoglienze usate per sua Signoria", 63 "grandissimo honore per tutte le terre... et tuto quello honore che sia possibile", 64 "tante carezze et honore ad ogniuno che piu non se poteria dire", 65 "provisioni honorvolmente et come se conviene ala loro conditione", 66 "cose assai piacevole, honorvolve per delectione et admiratione", 67 "le solemnita et honorificentiae usate". 68 But it is perhaps the regular investment in formal ceremonies, the signorial willingness to sacrifice both the resources of the communal treasury and the well-being of the citizenry in pursuit of honour "per la nostra propria persona" as Ercole ordained it, 69 which reinforces a contention that the Estensi presided over a
ritualization of public behaviour during the fifteenth-century. Factorial registers, the correspondence of cancellieri and referendaries, the volumes of the Comp- usteria, and signorial letters reveal the extent of the financial and munitional commitment. And as we shall see, some basic estimations of ceremonial investment can be made, especially upon the costs of festal décor. For the present, however, we may observe how signorial interest in public ceremonies gradually took precedence over all other affairs of state, and how patterns of signorial behaviour were moulded coincidentally in the interest of ceremonial self-aggrandizement.

Writing to his provisory local in Curia in December 1470, Borso d'Este issued the following instructions for the reception of Lodovico Gonzaga at the fortified town of Ficarolo, a small Estensi outpost in the Ferrarese padana:

Dilectissime noster: Forsi che mo tu hai inteso per la via de li nostri seschalchi come volemo andare a figarolo ali xx o xxii del mese per far li de feste et starli parechii et parechii die. Il che ni e par- so notificarsi ancora a ti acio che tu proveid dal canto tuo quanto sia necessario. La prima cosa e che tu solici com mes. Nigrisol che e la oltre, al quale ha commesso maistro pedro da roncogallo che facia certo lavorero de muro et cussi il maran- grone da le fenestre de laltro che ha a fare certe fenestre et racunciarno de le altre. Solicita adon- que luno et laltro che perto il sia fornito cio che hanno a fare et cussi ognaltro mancamento fusse laltrc in quelle stantie maxime di sopra dove sta- remo et anche di sotto conferendoni cum maestro pedro che debe esser li et poi fa che per le cosse pertinente altro officio tu li far una digna pro- visione de ogni cossa fornende del tutto quanto sia bisogno, et grassamente et copiosamente perche il non bisogni navigare ni caregare questa festa. Si che metterli intorno conferendoni col seschalco et che nulla e manchi perche puoi ne daressimo la colpa a ti. 70

An extraordinary second letter was despatched to the
Captain of Justice in Ficarolo, which ordered all persons in the public debt and all prisoners awaiting trial for civil and criminal offences to be immediately condemned, with the delictual proceeds to be turned over to Mauro dalla Carte, provisory general of the Borsian court, to help sustain the expenses of Gonzaga's reception:

... il perché te dicemo et commettemo che ad ogni sua instantia et requesitione on qualucha suo messo tu gli faci ragione summaria contra tutti quelli che sono sotoposti alla tua jurisdizione et non solo summariamente ma breve et expedita senza strepito et alcuno figurau de judicio et remosso ogni cavillatoria exceptioni. 71

Beds, tapestries, and luxury items (silver plate, jewels, cloth) were consigned to Ficarolo by the Podestà of Bondono from Borsian stores, and instructions for the purchase of a "bone summa et quantitate de vini, strami, legne, olii ed altre cose assai" were directed to the local purveyors. 72 Recreational visits to country houses (delizie) by the Estensi and their guests were a commonplace throughout the fifteenth-century, 73 and one might be disposed to argue that the renovations carried out in Ficarolo indicate Borso's intention to convert another residence for use as a princely retreat. Yet the nature of the preparations for the feste also suggests that the duke wished the proceedings to be as sumptuous as possible. Even informal encounters between signori in the countryside, when the more salient activities normally involved hunting, fishing, gambling, and drinking (though the Venetians suspected that Borso had ulterior motives for meeting Gonzaga), 74 were to be accorded a ceremonial "space" on a relatively grandiose scale.
It is equally apparent that Borso considered his duties as "pater patriae" to be secondary to his manifest obligations as "principe magnificentissimo". Not only was he prepared to threaten officials and extort monies, but even to subvert his own courts of law in order to further his splendid public image. Additional testimony to this inversion of signorial priorities is provided by Borso's decision to build a mountain (of earth) in January 1471, henceforth to be known as Montesanto. So many peasant labourers were pressed into service that the fields were left untended, and letters of complaint were sent to the Giudice dei Savi by irate Ferrarese citizens who feared severe grain shortages.  

75 MCCCCLXXI, de Zenaro, lo illustrissimo duca Borso cominciò a fare una montagna de terra per forza de carri, navi et brozi et de opere manuali, che era una grande facenda; del tuto il popolo se ne re-doleva molto, perché non era utile alcuno et li contadini non poteano lavorare le possessione per cagione de dicto lavoriero; et facea fare questa montagna dove se chiama Monte Sancto; et di questo il popolo mor' morava molto. 76

We may recall that the construction of this monument came hard on the heels of autumnal floods which had damaged the harvest, 77 and coincided with Borso's preparations for his progress to Rome, during which he had ordered his tax-collectors, magistrates, and bailiffs to extract the "gravy" ("a trarre quel piu sugo se potesse") from his subjects. 78 Despite the suffering of the popolo, Borso remained steadfast in desire to make an impression during his investiture. Citizens were condemned without benefit of trial and old debts were called in regardless of the terms of contractual arrangements. 79 Threats of physical violence to encourage individuals
to pawn their precious possessions, or to negotiate interest-free loans were common. As late as 1481, citizens were still petitioning the ducal camera for compensation, though one suspects that many had long since abandoned hope of repayment.

Borso's fondness for ceremonies, feste, and ornamental luxuries is well known. "When the Emperor Frederick passed through Ferrara on his way to and from Rome", recalled Pope Pius II, "Borso loaded him with gifts and honours and thus persuaded him to raise the earldom of Modena to a duchy and create him duke". The new duke was renowned for his ostentatious display of expensive ornaments:

He bought as many precious stones as he could and never appeared in public without jewels. He collected rich household furnishings: even in the country he used gold and silver dishes.

Pius himself had a first-hand knowledge of Borsian hospitality, both as Frederick's private secretary and as pontiff, having been honoured in the latter capacity on two occasions: with a solemn entrata into Ferrara while journeying to the Congress of Mantua in 1459, and by a flotilla of decorated barges in the river Po, upon his return passage to Rome in 1460. The papal entrata into Ferrara, by contemporary standards, ranks as one of the most splendid ceremonials during Borso's signoria. Among the festaiuoli working on processional décor are listed the court artist Cosmè Tura, the architect Antonio di Gaspare da Firenze, Titolivio da Padova, and Gherardo da Vicenza. Ten barges decorated with "feste all' antica" (unspecified) guided the pope to the monastery.
of Sant'Antonio near the gate of S. Pietro upon the eve of the entrata. 88 The following day, the ritual submission of the keys, the public acts of hommage rendered by Borso to Pius, and the papal progress to the cathedral under the baldacchino were furnished with a pastorale: tapestries were hung along the processional route, facades of buildings were hidden by branches of trees and decorated hangings of cloth, the streets were covered with white cloth and strewn with garlands, and a wooden bridge had been constructed between the duomo and the Palazzo della Ragione to ensure an unhindered view of the papal cortège. 89 The Mantuan observer Antonio Donato marvelled over the sophistication of the pastoral décor "per le sinesurate spese... tanto sumptuosamente e in tanto ordine che non se poria dir piu", 90 and Borso's ability "di far le spese interamente" for the illustrious company which had gathered in the city, including thirteen cardinals, Cecco Ordelaphi (Signore of Forlì), Sismondo and Domenico Malatesta (Signori of Rimini and Cesena), Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Giovan Galeazzo Manfredi of Faenza, the Pio and Mirandola (Signori of Carpi and Correggio), and the ambassadors of the King of Portugal, the Duke of Burgundy, the Marquis of Monferrato, and the Signorie of Venice and Florence. 91 Although we know few of the details concerning the festal décor on this occasion, we may assume that the city underwent a process of metamorphosis similar to the alterations witnessed during the preparations for other famous Borsian pastorals, when festaiuoli contrived to transform the "città
reale into the "città immaginaria". A memorable exposition of a Borsian pastoral in Reggio (for the reception of Ippolita Sforza in 1465) is contained in a poem by the courtier Antonio Cornazano, *De Excellentium Virorum Principibus*. The city of Reggio, he wrote, "fusse per arte magica traducto". The streets were cleansed and covered with cloth, vines, and garlands, and large arbours "come sel boscho Idalio" had been constructed at intervals along the processional route.

In questa giorno come in di di festa
la terra si poli tucta di verde
e di fior recchamata era la vesta
Par chogni piaggia ridi et si rinverdi
van mormorando le chiare fontane
e ne varii placer locchio si perde...

From windows "ornate a porre", young girls threw roses down on passers-by, and the city's fountains ran with wine "al qual ciaschun chi bever vol si drizì". In the piazza were assembled members of the celestial court, Venus in a triumphal car surrounded by angels, the figure of Justice on a tribunal, and an assortment of wild animals. The piazza itself resembled heaven (*paradiso*), with decorated curtains separating the audience from the city's sky-line, and behind the scenery, lighted torches to portray the stars and planets. A choir sang between the pageants, which included an attempt to rob Venus of her love by a villainous knight, and an assault on Justice by a pack of savage beasts. No other Italian prince, thought Cornazano, was capable of mounting such extraordinary scenes. 92

Pius' indictment of Borso as a calculating host, prompted without doubt by the duke's failure to lend
the financial aid promised for a crusade against the Turk, nonetheless remains a shrewd character assessment. It has been observed that Borso's personal conduct epitomized an age of princely ostentation and wanton luxury, wildly extravagant, yet often motivated by a policy calculated "di stupire il popolo con l'apparato esterno". Luciano Chiappini suggests that the duke's vainglorious nature may also be held accountable for a sizeable investment in festal decorations and public ceremonies. Especially revealing is a letter written by Borso to his referendarius Lodovico Casella from Venice, which describes the honours showered upon him by the doge, and concludes with a request for special preparations to be made for a formal reception upon his return to Ferrara, consonant with the new international prestige he had won:

... Havendo Nui questo manegio in mano cum tanta nostra reputatione, pensa mo fra te se dovemo reputarse et estimarse grande, essendo Nui appreciati et estimati tanto da una tanta Signoria come questa. Si chel bisognara, al ritorno nostro, che tu ne apparecchi de altre nove reverentie ver de Nui per questa nova subliminatione... 96

A whole catalogue of public ceremonies may be compiled to show how Borso's hyperbolic vanity found a visual medium for expression. Besides the honours bestowed upon Pope Pius and the pastoral in Reggio, the catalogue might list among the major events the reception of the Emperor Frederick in Ferrara on four separate occasions (twice in 1452, 1468, 1469), of the Empress Eleanor (1467), of Galeazzo Maria Sforza and Lodovico and Federico Gonzaga (1461), of Filippo Maria Sforza at Belfiore (1468); the investiture of Borso as Duke of Modena,
Reggio, and Count of Rovigo (1452), the signorial posessso of Modena and Reggio (1453), the triumphal entry and investiture of Borso as Duke of Ferrara in Rome (1471); the marriages of Borso's sisters Beatrice (1455) and Bianca Maria (1469), and of his nephew Scipione (1462); the funerals of Leonello (1450) and Meliaduse d'Este (1452), and of the referendarius Lodovico Casella (1469); the ceremonial posessso of the Certosa by the priors general of the Carthusian order (1461), and two allegorical tournaments held in the piazza of Ferrara (1462, 1464). So concerned was the duke with his public image, that even on his death-bed we find him planning the meticulous stages of his own funeral. One-hundred men and one-hundred and sixty women were provided with mourning dress at his expense, carpenters were commissioned to erect a tribunal in the piazza for the funeral orations, a robe of gold brocade was designed "per vestire el corpo", and artists hastened to decorate the funeral carriage. It is difficult to determine how deeply involved the duke was in organizing the funeral procession, but the proceedings bear all the attributes of a Borsian pageant. The duke's body, resting on a mortuary in the state regalia ("con una beretta... in testa ala Ducale, con la bachetta in mano, e la spada sopra il corpo"), was transported from the piazza to the sepulchre prepared in the cloister of the Certosa on a circuitous route, passing by the city's holy places and ensuring the assembled throng of on-lookers an opportunity to view the open coffin. Leading the procession were members of the nine recognized Ferrarese confraternities, regular
clergy from twelve local monasteries, and curates from twenty-four chapels secular "che li andavano inanzi pregando dio per l'anima sua". Following these were:

Lo Veschoado, tuto con lo capitolo che fano 60, Tute le crote dele compagnie, Tuti li confaluni dele arte che fano 180, Tute le arte a homeni 25 per arte con dupieri bruxava in mano li quali numerati fano 400, e drieto a quilli seguitava famigli de Bassa liga 175 vestiti tutti de pano cupo tutti cuperti, E drieto a tali era portato quello corpo digno de ogni honore. Poi li era drieto lo novo Duca Ercule fratelli e nepote, et altri homeni de conto tutti vestiti deno cupo con lo capo superto che fano 225 che fano in tuto homeni tribulate 400. Dopo li diti li era tuto lo populo... 103

At the gate to the monastic complex, the Certosini received the body and conducted it into the inner sanctum for private interment.

In addition to harnessing the creative talents of engineers, architects, and artists for the purpose of manufacturing the appropriate ceremonial décor, it was customary for the signore to marshall his private wealth about his person in a tribute to his princely magnificence. "Sempre vestiva de drappi de oro", Borso withdrew his most precious jewels from the treasury for ceremonial occasions, and saw that members of his household were outfitted suitably by the ducal wardrobe. 104 When he travelled abroad, his gold, silver, jewels, tapestries, carpets, and wardrobe accompanied him. One-hundred and thirty-eight mules, for instance, were needed to transport Borso's belongings to Rome for his investiture in 1471:

Questa era cento e trencta otto mulli fortissimi carichi a bisaze, faldelli, valise e forcieri et altri panni e cosse da camino, de etiamdio arme et arnise da pace, parte de argentarie da credenze, tapezarie e zoie preciose. Tra qualli li vinti ul-
timi vegneano carichi de piu secreta suppellectile e de gran conto, tutti cuperti di drapo cremisino, li loro mullatieri da capo a piedi in divisa ducale si givano travagliando per li mulli, drizando le some, animando a caciando li mulli tenendoli in filo. 105

The intended effect upon his entrata into the city was a total success, recalls Francesco Ariosto: "Monstravasi più tosto el principe un altro triumphante cesare che la so digna serenità Borsiana". 106

However much the quality of largitas was admired or deprecated by contemporary observers, especially ostentatious "open-handedness" or what economists now "conspicuous consumption", 107 we ought to remember that the public display of tangible objects (precious non-consumables which could be converted into cash) was a conventional means of establishing an exalted position in the community. As K.B. McFarlane once remarked concerning the financial transactions of the nobility in later medieval England, investment in plate and jewellery (one might also include household furnishings, personal costume, and perhaps "objets d'art") was not "a form of hoarding in a period of economic recession". Rather, the sole purpose of this investment was public display. 108

Thorstein Veblen called this sort of expenditure investment in "conspicuous leisure", that is, assembling evidence of the pecuniary ability to afford a life of idleness. According to Veblen's theory, if abstention from manual labour or the non-productive consumption of time are behavioural components fundamental to the formulation of a recognized leisure class (and quattrocento definitions of the gentilhuomo suggest that this was indeed the
case with the nobility in northern Italy, despite philo-
sophic protestations to the contrary in some quarters), 109
it is also incumbent upon the idle individual to identify
himself as a member of the leisure class by exhibiting
some tangible, lasting results of the leisure so spent.
He must convince spectators of his credit-worthiness as
a gentleman of leisure. 110 In his well-known monograph.
"Hard Times and Investment in Culture", Robert Lopez
reminds us that expenditure on humanistic culture re-
presented an economic investment for the nobility in
quattrocento Italy. With land prices falling and the
wealth of merchant entrepreneurs increasing, "culture
tended to become the highest symbol of nobility, the
magic password which admitted a man or a nation to the
elite group". Sponsoring a circle of humanists at his
court, investing in works of art, books, theatre,
music, and new architecture, the quattrocento prince
set a new, universally accepted standard of nobility. 111
But the prince who literally wore his wealth, or who
surrounded himself with ornamental luxuries, also con-
firmed his membership in a leisure class and his iden-
tity as a nobleman. His precious possessions performed
a dual function: because they were converted easily into
cash, they could act as a viable currency, and since
they offered visual proof of their possessor's wealth
(and hence his nobilitas), they could act as media for
public spectacle.

Given these circumstances, we should not be sur-
prised to find the Estensi investing substantial sums
in gems and gold and silver objects: plate, cutlery, candlesticks, vases, statues, crucifixes, mirrors, combs, etc. The inventories cataloguing annual ducal expenditure on these items after the accession of Borso indicate both a steady rise in the rate of this financial outlay, and a signorial preference for precious stones and ornamental jewellery. Even when sufficient capital could not be raised to purchase gems, it was normal for Borso and Ercole to pledge other assets, including unrealized profits from commercial enterprises such as the sale of Ferrarese wheat on the Venetian grain exchanges, or the sale of Comacchian and Modenese salt, against the retail value of jewels. The transactions conducted between Ercole and the Florentine merchant consortium headed by Giuliano Gondi are typical:

Ad Salinarum Mutine:
Dilectissime nostre. Nui te havemo deputadi et consignati in pagamento per conto di quella nostra Salina in lanno 1488 proximo che viene ali spli. Juliano heredi di Antoni di Gondi citadini et merchadanti fiorentini per la summa di 3000 doro largi, pro robe havuti da loro per la Beatrice nostra figliola et per nui et per la illustrissima consorte...

The purposes of these arrangements were two-fold. First, the holding of one’s private wealth in gems and precious objects made sound economic sense in a state wracked by inflation. While one could not hope to make a profit by acquiring gems (the acquisition of jewels cannot properly be described as an investment to increase profit-margins), neither did one run the risk of currency devaluations of the sort which sapped the strength of the Ferrarese lira marchesana. The value of gems was largely immune to the vicissitudes of the market-place, and they could
be instantly redeemed for cash in the financial houses of Venice, Florence, and London, where the business of the signore was principally transacted.\textsuperscript{117} As the cameral registers indicate, however, the Estensi rarely dealt with cash: gems were exchanged for gems.\textsuperscript{118} More important perhaps, jewels (or any object of evident financial worth) were valuable assets in the formulation of a public image: they represented an investment in "conspicuous leisure". A trip to the duke's treasure room, for example, was an important item on the itinerary of illustrious visitors to Milan. The display of strongboxes filled with coins and gems was calculated to solicit awe and admiration of the kind expressed by Beatrice d'Este upon her initial tour of the Sforza treasury shortly after her marriage to Lodovico il Moro:

... el s. mio consorte eli ambassatore veneziano e mes. iachomo e li ambassatore fiorentino e tutti questi altri signori et io fusemo in rocha dove era tuti li arzenti e la chapella chera belissima cosa a vedere e poi insu una tavola gera tute le chadene et lapreso gera tute le zoie chera grandissima quantita a vedere po in uno cantone gera tuta la moneda poi e apreso a una fenestra gera de steso uno tapero longo sedese braza e octo largo choerto de duchati... \textsuperscript{119}

If the Estensi signori could not hope to compete with the riches of the duchy of Milan, every attempt would be made to amplify their wealth. They unashamedly borrowed tapestries from their neighbours,\textsuperscript{120} and stripped down whole palaces, stockpiling the goods in designated reception places.\textsuperscript{121} On state occasions, Borso emptied his storerooms, and placed his treasures in strategic positions.\textsuperscript{122} In the later years of his reign, Ercole even took to exhibiting his renowned ward-
robe of costumes for the classical comedies "a fine che si conoscesse che li vestimenti fussero facti a posta, et che quelli de una comedia no havesseno ad servir le altre". 123

It was in the ceremonial forum, of course, where the display of gems found the most complete expression as a medium of personal spectacle. Ceremonial narratives often contain lengthy descriptions of the costumes worn by notables, including an itemized list of the jewels on show and their monetary value. Indeed, contemporary observers sometimes neglected the actual ceremonial in favour of assessing an individual's financial credit-worthiness. For instance, an anonymous chronicle of Lorenzo de' Medici's tournament in 1469 makes no mention of the combat, but tells us that Giuliano de' Medici's robe was worth 8000 ducats; Lorenzo's cap, "una beretta di balascio shietta, legato in castone d'oro", 2000 ducats; the pearls covering Lorenzo's horse-cloth, 4500 ducats; that Francesco de' Pazzi's cap was encrusted with 2508 pearls valued at 2 ducats each, and that his shield bore "tremila perle grosse da giojelare, di valuta pell' altra d'j ducato", and so on. Two participants in the tournament, Giovanni del Forte da Vico and "Boniforte", are excluded from the relation because they entered the piazza S. Croce "sanza compagnia e pompe da farne menzione": they wore no jewels. 124 Ferrarese annals exhibit the same tendency. The historian is frequently presented with the most elementary grasp of ceremonial detail in combination with the most precise calculations upon the
value of jewellery and costumes. Just how important the public display of gems could be in a ceremonial context may be illustrated by a series of Herculean letters concerning a spinel ruby. The gem in question, valued at 4000 golden ducats, had been placed in pawn in Florence, one-half of the pledge held by the Medici bank, the other half by the Gondi merchant consortium. In December 1489, with the marriage of his daughter Isabella to Francesco Gonzaga only two months away, Ercole wrote to Giuliano Gondi expressing his desire to wear the ruby during the festivities. A second letter was despatched to Lorenzo de' Medici, requesting that the gem be released into his custody while admitting that he could not hope to pay the pledge. Lorenzo replied that he was willing to accept Herculean credit for his bank's interest in the gem, but could not release it unless Ercole reached an agreement with the company which held the other half-share in the pawn. Undaunted by the knowledge that his financial relations with this consortium were under serious strain, Ercole wrote to secure the ruby from Gondi, asking for a surety of 2000 ducats to be repaid in April 1492, guaranteed by the revenue derived from the salt mines of Modena.

If the Estensi signori were willing to take such measures to maintain the splendour of their personal accouterments on ceremonial occasions, their "consumptive" expenditure was no less remarkable. Borsian hospitality naturally extended to the provision of suitable hostelry for visiting dignitaries. Embassies passing
through the dominions could expect to be lodged and fed, and retinues were supported while they remained in major city centres. The Emperor Frederick's cortège, numbering approximately 2000 persons and 1200 horses, was quartered in Ferrara for a total of nineteen days during the stopovers in 1452 at a staggering cost to the municipal treasury. The 379 individuals and 332 horses accompanying Duke John of Calabria north from Florence to rejoin his father René of Anjou in Provence rested in Modena for three days (5-7 July 1455), a visit for which the treasurer of the Comune was obliged to pay out L. 427,9,5 to sustain the company in comparative splendour at Borso's order. A single banquet held at the palace of Lodovico Casella upon the reception of the Sforza and Gonzaga in 1461 cost an astonishing sum of L. 548,20,0 for food and wine alone, and the ducal camera did not find the resources to settle the debts incurred until 1466. Whatever the personal intentions of this expenditure, it is perfectly clear that Borso considered the reputation of his state to be at stake. In this belief he was supported by his counsellors, who thought that "grande spese" enhanced the public image of the prince and spread the fama of the state. As Giovanni Compagni assured the duke when it appeared that the banquets offered the nephew of the King of Portugal might have been overly extravagant, "per dio non me imputi la Signore Vostra questo motto a prodigalita ma tuto ad honoranza et exaltatione sua".

Borso's principal interests, however, centred on
the ritual of the public moments which ceremonialized his person and his lordship. He wrote enthusiastically (if not knowledgably) on the subject of his own triumphal entry into Rome, and he appears to have taken a technical interest in the ceremonies attending the coronations and funerals of the Kings of France, which were the object of particularly extensive descriptions by the mid-fifteenth-century. According to the chronicler Hondedio di Vitale, he was an acknowledged authority on ceremonial procedures: "Lui era savio naturale tute le grande et importante pratiche dele potenere de itallia passavano per le mane sue et a ogniuno satisfacea secondo il bisogno". Like many of his princely contemporaries, Borso realized that ceremonials were essential to the proper exercise of government. No less convinced of this need to ceremonalize his power was Borso's successor. Indeed, one of the most striking features of Ercole's signoria is its studious commitment to "pensieri de magnificentia", "costumi decorate", and "magnificentia in le cose pubbliche e de spense grande", as Sabadino wrote. Part of this commitment is revealed by the nature of Herculean ceremonial annals. Whereas one occasionally finds that descriptive accounts of ceremonies in the Borsian era suffer from a lack of technical and behavioural detail, Herculean records are often careful elaborations upon the ceremonial honours accorded foreign dignitaries, the nature of the festal décor, personal ornamentation, processional routes and processional groups. Part of this commitment is also revealed
by the heavy financial and munitional investment in public ceremonies. Whereas Borsian records show large-scale investment, Herculean expenditure is prodigious by comparison. Ercole's instructions "di spendi gaiardamente" upon all public occasions placed the cameral treasury in serious financial straits throughout the years of his signoria. Here is Filippo Cestarelli's analysis of the dilemma confronting the fattori in the wake of Isabella d'Este's wedding in February 1490:

... Le forastiere questa sira som quanti qui de le quale V. Extia. per la sua de xviii del presente me scrive carricamente per provvedire ale spese loro. Et mi risposta, certificio v. ex. che dal canto mio, faro ogni possibile per provvederli a sufficientia come e il desiderio de v.s., se beni qui non gli vedo modo ni via alcuna da potersi provaltre de uno soldo et sempre sopraginte spese extraordinarie, ioascio fare de le cosse de la camera ni troppo extremita, priego Idio, che se adiuti... 137

In 1502, despite signorial access to 30,000 golden ducats, paid to the cameral treasury by Pope Alexander VI in November 1501 as the initial installment of Lucrezia Borgia's dowry, and despite the levying of special taxes (taxas nupitrarorum) and the imposition of forced loans on the nobility, Ercole determined that an additional 10,000 ducats was needed to cover the costs of his heir's marriage, and he wrote to his ambassador in Rome to secure papal credit in Florence, Bologna, and Venice. So great was the strain upon the munitional stores during the preparations for this wedding, that even the Palazzo della Ragione was ransacked for its iron-works and wood to construct tribunals and triumphal arches: "... li Banchi de li officiali et Notari del palazo de la rasone... le Asse et ferramente... furno facte por-
tate via per li officiali de la Munitione, Et anche le Chiavadure de tuti li Banchiti deli Notari, le quale sono sta Cavate et portate via...". Until these munitions are returned, wrote an alarmed magistrate, the courts of justice cannot be convened. \(^{141}\) In 1473, a carte blanche authority to expend whatever funds were deemed necessary for Ercole's marriage to Eleonora, "per honorare la nostra Illustrissima Consorte ne la venuta li", \(^{142}\) was granted to the fattore Bonvicino dalla Carte:

*Mandato Illumi. principis... Vos Joannes pirondule et hieronymus de bonfranciscus Tesaurarii Camere prefati domini nostri detis solvatis et exbursetis ad omnem instantiam et requisitione Spectabilis Bonvicini acartis factoris generalis prefati domino nostro omnes illas quantitates denariorum quas ipse dari solvi et exbursari mandabit quocunque et per modum per eum declarandum in et pro expensis occurentibus et nunc et infuturum occasione felicem et faustarorum Nupitarorum prelibati domini nostri de proximo celebrandorum... 143*

We do not know the cost of this wedding, but according to the records of Ugo Caleffini, during eight days of celebration the company in Ferrara managed to consume 3600 lbs. of veal, 400 lbs. of mutton, 2200 lbs. of lamb and kid, 200 lbs. of pork, 14000 chickens, 8000 pullets, 5600 lbs. of spiced meat (salami), 3000 lbs. of fish and "Strege et pesse de mare in quantita et pesse dal lago", 1500 cheeses, 30000 eggs, 18000 apples, 10000 lemons, 4000 barrels of strong wine, and 1000 barrels of sweet wine. \(^{144}\) The problems experienced in 1474 as a result of this "consumptive" expenditure make familiar reading in the Ferrarese context. Unable to pay the annual papal census of 4000 ducats, the duke was
forced to pawn jewels in Venice, \textsuperscript{145} salaried officers were left without their stipends, and the court itself lacked sufficient resources to purchase bread. \textsuperscript{146}

A list of financial woes induced by ceremonial investment need not detain us further. What must be emphasized is that greater sums were being withdrawn from the cameral treasury for ceremonial purposes during the Herculean era. Areas of ceremonial investment normally comprised the entries and receptions of notables (including ambassadors), \textsuperscript{147} rituals attending the births, baptisms, marriages, funerals, and investitures of signori and other notables (including foreigners), \textsuperscript{148} the issuing of retinues and allowances for ambassadorial representations abroad, \textsuperscript{149} and providing public forums for local officialdom. \textsuperscript{150} Yet even a French singer who took service in the chapel choir in 1487 was furnished with an escort into Ferrara and lodged in the ducal palace at cameral expense, \textsuperscript{151} and a Mantuan buffoon was received at the city gates by an entourage fit for an ambassador: "... gli mandete dupieri incontro et forse x persone...". \textsuperscript{152} Any attempt to catalogue Herculean ceremonies without reference to typological models, therefore, would prove to be a difficult task. They are simply too numerous. Equally onerous would be an attempt to calculate rates of ceremonial investment based upon percentages of annual ducal expenditure. Initially, a working knowledge of seven different sets of financial registers would be required: \textit{Conto Generale, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, Guardaroba, Mandati, Ufficio
Equipped with a command of these fondi, the historian would have to be selective necessarily in his choice of record material. What sort of expenditure constitutes ceremonial investment? If we examine some of the expenses associated with the marriage of Isabella d'Este to Francesco Gonzaga, we can see why this problem cannot be easily resolved. In the records of the Mandati (1490, reg. 29), we find the following items listed: the cost of transporting silk from Naples "per bisogni de le noze de la Illma. Madama marchesana" (L. 7,090) and the cost of transporting the Marquis of Mantua's horses to Ferrara for use in the tournaments (L. 1,10,0); 500 LM spent "per li fornimenti de la Illma. Madona Isabella", 25 golden ducats paid to two Bolognese artists for the decoration of a triumphal car (curru triumphali) "pro usu Illme. D.D. Isabelle", and ten golden florins delivered to a Florentine merchant for a quantity of brocaded cloth; 8 golden ducats paid for a barge to transport tapestries from Mantua to Ferrara and 15 soldi paid for the horse and attendant towing the barge; a local artist charging 12 LM for six masques "per li ambassatori che vano al marchese"; the cost of transporting tapestries to the podestarie of Ficarolo and Bondeno "per la noze de la Illma. madona Isabella" (L. 3,0,0) and the expenses of the nupital mass (25 golden ducats); L. 32,19,6 paid to local artists and carpenters for the decoration of processional carr-
159 150 golden ducats paid to support the ducal musicians on their way to and from Mantua; 160 L. 4330, 7,6 delivered to a Milanese merchant for ornaments, jewels, and embroidered silks "per bisogno de le felice noce de la Illuma. madona Isabella"; 161 L. 3569,13,0 paid to a Venetian merchant for cloth, jewels, and ornaments "per bisogno de le felice noze"; 162 and L. 67, 15,3 credited to an artist and his apprentices for work on carriages, costumes, heraldic devices, etc. 163 Which of these miscellaneous items, if any, may be disregarded by the historian seeking to calculate a figure for total ceremonial investment in this instance? Which conversion-tables may be used to rationalize the different currencies with which the camera reimbursed its creditors?

A figure for total ceremonial investment would of course be extremely useful here. An equally reliable guide, however, are the financial statements issued by the fattori generali. These suggest that the ducal camera was on the verge of bankruptcy during the years 1489-91, and that the massive expenditure on ceremonials was at the root of the camera's distress. 164 When the signore needed money to finance his pageants, he merely turned to the local bankers and demanded (and received) credit, or to the local nobility by imposing forced loans. 165 A letter from the duchess to Siverio Sivieri concerning Isabella's wedding illustrates the signore's unequivocal demand for cash for ceremonial purposes:

... habiamo havuto la soa de ii del presente et la lista che cum epsa ce hai mandato et inteso lopera che hai facto a modena circa li impresti ecc. Et in
risposta te dicemo che serressimo contente che havesti altramente trovato le cose perche come sciai il se ha bisogno de dinari et non de frumento come ti et sta offerto per loqual cosa ni pare, et cussi te facemo advertere ad usare ogni tuo spirito et ingegno per ritrovare et lie a Regio, et etiam a modena dinari secundo hai ni commissione facendo dextramente intendere ale brigate che usaran de mententis che non li dando per amore bisognara forsi li diano per forza come etiam per una altra nostra te habiamo tochato, perche questo et un caso et bisogno; perche li rechiederemo che e necessario che siamo succursi et aiutati da li nostri, li quali considerato limportanza di la cosa et l'onori et utile che ni e a mandare a marito la figlia nostra; non debbono pigliare tante excuse maxime asse curandosse molto bene et sapendo dove certo li ritraran li dinari suoi. Si che non li manchare in cosa perchel ni segui lo effecto desiderato et necessario. Et de questo succedera ne advisarai acio potramo pigliare quel partito che ne parera il megliore mo che sira qui il nostro Illme. S. consorte che domane laltro se li expecto. 166

Foreign observers too, watched as Ercole's consumptive expenditure impoverished his state. Commented Marino Sanuto in August 1490, "Ferrara era molto povera, et chi privasse che non havesse li comerchii con questa terra, sarebbono disfati dil mondo, etc.". 167 From the evidence of similar statements issued periodically by the fattori, we can safely assume that ceremonial investment exhausted a substantial portion of the annual ducal income.

Another way in which Ercole's interest in ceremonies found expression was through signorial participation in the circulation of ceremonial texts (descriptive accounts) during the latter stages of the fifteenth-century. Regarding the correspondence of Estensi ambassadors, it would appear that a fundamental task assigned resident diplomats was to write or to procure accounts of ceremonial events. Ercole, for example, was
"copiosamente advisata... de la intrata nostra in Napuli et deli honori et Magnificentie facere in questo excellentissimo luoco" on the occasion of his marriage by proxy to Eleonora in March 1473, and the new duchess' triumphal entries into Rome and Urbino during her progress to Ferrara were the subject of long narrations. Sigismondo Cantelmo and Francesco Castello, amongst others, kept the duke abreast of Mantuan spettacoli, Gerardo Saracini, Francesco Gualengo, Francesco Gualandini, and Gianandrea Boccaccio reported from Rome upon papal ceremonial, and in Milan, in addition to chronicling Sforza court ceremonial, Giacomo Trotti and his successors transcribed the Duke of Calabria's trionfo in Naples, the coronation of King Charles VIII of France, Lodovico Sforza's imperial investiture as Duke of Milan, the entrata of King Louis XII into Milan, and even managed to procure a copy of the Count of Carazza's recollection of Anna Sforza's triumphal entrance into Ferrara for Herculean scrutiny. The princely correspondence between the courts of Ferrara, Milan, Mantua, and Urbino (especially the letters written by Isabella and Beatrice d'Este and Elizabetta Gonzaga), as the seminal studies of the archivists Luzio and Renier indicate, also evokes a consciousness of ceremonial. Interspersed with political events and the idle gossip of the court are the details of triumphal entries, public acts of courtesy and chivalry, court spectacles, personal ornamentation, and noteworthy foreign (non-Italian) ceremonies. Indeed, a significant aspect of the social relations
between the courts of northern Italy is the initiation of an institutionalized network for the exchange of specialist literature upon ceremonials. Like musicians, singers, playwrights, actors, festaiuoli, dramatic texts, masques, and tapestries, ceremonial narratives circulated from one princely court to the next. Examples of exchanges abound. A useful illustration concerns an account of the coronation of King Charles VIII's queen, Anne of Brittany, which Ercole obtained from Lodovico Sforza and sent later to Ferrara for Eleonora to study. "La copia dela incoronatione dela Regina de fraanza ho retenuta per legerla a mio piacere", wrote the duchess, though Ercole intended the text to be eventually passed on to his daughter Isabella in Mantua. 173

Significant too, is Ercole's evident interest in ultramontane ceremonies, especially the rituals royal of the Kings of France and England. 174 By the early sixteenth-century, the superiority of Italian festal design and decoration was generally recognized throughout northern Europe. Flemish burghers were impressed enough to allow Florentine merchants to finance several triumphal arches, designed and executed by Italian artists, for the entry of Charles V into Bruges in 1515, and in 1520, with the imminent meeting between Henry VIII and Francis I in mind (on the Field of Cloth of Gold), Henry's counsellors took steps to ensure that English pride would not be dented by the rumoured magnificence of the French preparations. As Cardinal Bibbiena warned Louise of Savoy:
Madama: De Inghilterra sono venuti homini in Italia mandati dal Duca di Soffolc et dal marchese per comprare cavalli et per condurre a quel Re homini che sappino fare paramenti delli festini alla Italiana, et ricercano con instantia le inventioni et li modi di diversi giochi et feste che se usano in Italia. 175

The Italian influence upon the décor of the French royal entries in the sixteenth-century is well-known: "Le style à l'italienne domine". 176 Early efforts to explain the Italian influence upon ceremonial décor in France emphasized the fundamental opposition between medieval and Renaissance sentiment. Edouard Bourciez, for instance, related the differences between the entry of Henry II into Paris (1549) and the royal entries described by Froissart in terms of an opposition between decorative "paganism" and chivalric piety. 177 Similarly, Joseph Chartrou discovered that Christian asceticism and sanctity had been replaced by "le culte de héros, et la passion de l'antiquité" in the early sixteenth-century, hence the décor of the entrances of Charles VIII into Paris (1484), Rouen (1485), and Troyes (1486) "est toute traditionelle", and the décor of the entrances of Henry II and Catherine de' Medici into Rouen (1550) and Orléans (1551) "est entièrement antiquesante". Sacred images, the enumeration of the cardinal virtues or the illustration of a miroir du prince in a series of allegorical tableaux vivants, references to Old Testament rulers and the mysteries of the faith, the exhibition of relics and the appearance of saintly figures, were replaced with pagan images: triumphal arches and cars, obelisks, columns, mythological beasts and gods, astrological signs, legend-
ary figures from Roman and Greek antiquity, and the ceremonial paraphrenalia associated with the emperors of Rome. "Le moment critique, celui où Rome paie une l'empire sur le Moyen-Age, nous avons pu le placer entre 1530 et 1532": the royal entry "familiale" was reconstituted as a "triomphe de l'antique". 178

More recently, scholars of Valois France have accepted the notion of a transfiguration in the décor of "la rue théâtralisée" during the reigns of Francis I and Henry II, but as the eventual outcome of a gradual transformation in the collective experience of the royal procession as it evolved over the course of the preceding two-hundred years. 179 Alterations in the scenography of the royal procession were not brought about by the mere reception of Renaissance values from the south, or by the European ascendancy of Italian decorative techniques, but primarily in response to manifest alterations in the ritual needs of the crown and the "royal power". Jean Jacquot has outlined the crucial factors which determined both the content and the modal expression of princely entries in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries:

Il y a d'abord le déclin de l'organisation féodale et de l'autonomie des grandes communes urbaines, et le renforcement du pouvoir monarchique. On observe un conflit entre l'aspiration à l'universalisme, qui reste un trait dominant de la culture, et l'exaltation de l'état national, chaque souverain reprenant à son compte l'idéal Empire. 180

In other words, as Sydney Anglo found in his study of Tudor pageantry, it is the ideological response of the crown to apprehended problems, whether these be related to dynastic continuity (coronations and funerals), the delineation and tracking of self-images (the celebration
of the "royal power"), the social and juridical liens between the ruler and the polis (mysteries of state), or the exigencies of international diplomacy (ceremonial receptions), which inspires alterations in the décor and function of the royal entry. The Tudors of course drew inspiration from the great continental displays of the Burgundian dukes and Valois kings, but generally, comparisons between Tudor and Valois pageantry are important for negative rather than positive reasons. Because these problems were perceived by the Tudors within the perimeters of a different social and political environment, and because these problems elicited a different ideological response from the English crown (the inauguration of what Anglo calls the "Tudor Idea"), so too does the history of royal entries under the Tudors read differently from the history of royal processions under their Valois counterparts. 181

We shall notice below that the cultural experience of Renaissance Ferrara is susceptible to this kind of summary, in particular, the evolution of the triumphal entry within the "orbitâ erculea". Herculean ceremonial was essentially courtly, its décor and its ideological content inspired by the alliance between the court establishment and humanist letterati from the university. 182 It was this "inspiratore ideologico-iconologico", suggests Ludovico Zorzi, which initiated the evolutionary stages of Estensi ritual, leading ultimately to the creation of a ceremonial space for "l'identità-differenza dei personaggi", dynastic "autocontemplazione", and a
princely majesty "autosufficiente". It was this same courtly order of consciousness, ideologically moored to "un nuovo modello di vita", which presided over the passage from the "città reale alla città immaginaria", selecting the set of ritual metaphors and decorative stereotypes appropriate to the ceremonial circumstances. In the strictest sense, therefore, the prince's court is the main reference point in the organization of Ferrarese ceremonial.

* * *

Scholars have also recognized the "small tyrannies" of northern Italy as the location for the assertion of a nascent Renaissance cosmopolitanism. Especially is this true of developments in urban architecture, figurative art, and festal scenography:

"Ferrara non è, come è stato detto, l'anti-Firenze, ma piuttosto un carrefour di sperimentazioni e di influssi, che accosta il calcolo rigoroso delle rappresentazioni toscane e urbinati alla colloqualità del narrato veneziano e al decorativismo prezioso del gusto cavalleresco e internazionale."

Indeed, if the Este court may be said to have evoked a certain "style of despotism", it was based upon the principle that any visible manifestation of social superiority or political power was capable of being absorbed within its ideological province. The Este signori slipped easily from one identity to another, here a chivalric knight, or feudal landlord, or figure of pietas, there a triumphant imperator, or urban aristocrat, or figure of magnificenza. Self-confident pragmatism allowed them to borrow foreign ideas and ceremonial processes unashamedly. Nor did they find incongruous the
possibility of appearing as armoured feudal warriors during processions modelled on the *trionfi* of classical antiquity, encountering Christian saints and pagan gods on the *Via Sacra*, giving battle to mythological beasts and ancient heroes in the tournament lists, or providing members of a sacred progress with costumes from the classical comedies. The *quattrocento* court in Ferrara was a virtual repository of "styles" which, as Professor Hay reminds us, neither established despotism nor were essential to sustain despotism: they merely "fitted in". 188

In his book *Power and Imagination*, Léuro Martines decodes the contextual layers of "despotic style" at the ingénue courts in northern Italy. The key is power: "the magnetic force radiating out from the prince, organizing people and space into relations of service and overlordship". The prince is the "animating force of the courtly establishment", the "centerpoint of the courtly order of consciousness", around whose person all life revolves and all dominant forms of thought, passion, and entertainment crystalize. But this process, he says, is not altogether one-sided. Courtiers are seen to exercise some psychological and physical force upon him, and humanists urge forward their program for the ruling classes. Confidants curry favours and graces, upsetting the natural course of justice and influencing signorial policy, and artists and architects working in "international gothic", or "civic realist", or "aristocratic-courtly" styles seek his patronage. Such factors necessarily make for a more complicated dialectic. 189 It naturally follows
that the ritual process which girded the signore's power was equally complex. The number of aesthetic alternatives available for festal décor may be one reason for this, but we are closer to the truth when we begin to examine "les dessous de la fête", that is, the underlying motivations and incentives for the public enactment of signorial ceremonies.\textsuperscript{190} Let us briefly review some of the stimuli which may have had a bearing upon the advent of ceremonialization at the quattrocento court.

One of the adjectives (it is also commonly used as an adverb and a noun) which invariably appears in any late quattrocento ceremonial narrative is the word "magnificence". The word has been linked (by Georg Weise) with a whole contextual language outlining the sublimation of the Renaissance prince as possessor of innate and exclusive virtù, and outlining the elevation of his behaviour to a level of moral and spiritual perfection; as the physical realization of virtù.\textsuperscript{191} It has been linked (by A.D. Fraser Jenkins) with a theory which urged great men to patronize the arts and spend liberally on the construction of public buildings to confirm their nobilitas.\textsuperscript{192} It has even been linked (by Roy Strong) with a theory which encouraged the "exultation of vast prodigal expenditure as a virtue":

No other philosophy (the theory of magnificence) could otherwise explain the vast sums of money expended by Henry VIII on The Field of Cloth of Gold, Mary of Hungary on the fêtes at Binche, or Catherine de' Medici on her sets of "magnificences". \textsuperscript{193}

If Strong's argument is slightly off the mark (since no
contemporary theorist would have accepted the notion that prodigal expenditure was a component of the virtue of magnificence), there can be little doubt that magnificenza was equated with splendid ceremonies and ornamental pomp. As Sabadino informed Ercole:

Lassaremo stare de narrare le magnificentie, le glorie et li triumphi d'arme, de giostre e tornamenti, che hai facto piu presto per honorare altrui et per dare ali toii amantissimi populi piacere et ala tua splendida corte, che per tuo proprio dillecto, che questo non è stato senza singolare spensa e tua magnifica laude. Non possiamo anchora tacere, magnificentissimo principe, che non hai perdonato ad spensa grande de magnifica et splendida pompa in abiti et fogie de drappi d'oro et de argento, de rechami, armili e de gene et torquei d'oro per te e per la tua nobilissima corte, quando sei andato ad Roma al pontifice maximo, ad Venetia et ad Milano et precipuamente quando fusti per andare in Hyspagnia... Et come quivi in la cità nostra dove pompa grande regna, fusti veduto, se affirma ad tua illustre gloria tanta tua ducale magnificentia ...

The theory of magnificence was not a new concept. A human virtue of Aristotelian origin, "magnificence" had naturally attracted the attention of Aquinas, who made it a subsection of Fortitude:

As the philosopher says (Ethic VI. 5), there must be a virtue of act, i.e. a moral virtue, whereby the appetite is inclined to make good use of the rule of act; and this is what magnificence does. Hence it is not an act but a virtue.

The virtue of magnificence, he continued, was directly related to the expenditure of capital wealth, and while poor men could choose to be magnificent (since the chief act of virtue is the inward choice), poverty yet denied them the opportunity of pursuing the external acts of this virtue:

But goods of fortune are requisite as instruments to the external acts of virtue: and in this way
a poor man cannot accomplish the outward act of magnificence in things that are great simply. 200

In effect, Aquinas provided a "medieval justification in terms of Christian philosophy of the displays of power and wealth" by princes secular and religious. 201 But it was not until the debate upon the nature of true nobility, reopened by the Florentine humanists in the early fifteenth-century, that the theory of magnificence found any real practical application. 202 This debate, which arguably ended with the publication of Castiglione's Book of the Courtier, 203 centred on the readjustments in the humanist attitude towards the active life; the gradual reaffirmation of the Aristotelian definition of nobility as a combination of inherited wealth, good family, and personal excellence. 204 Hans Baron singles out Leonardo Bruni's translation of the Pseudo-Aristotelian Economics for Cosimo del Medici (1419-20) as the text which catalyzed the philosophic reassessment of nobilitas. 205 Until the appearance of Bruni's translation, the majority of humanist scholars shared the Christian Stoic attitude adopted by Dante in the Convivio, where he disconnected "nobile" and "nobilità" from every condition of birth and identified them with with the capacity for moral and intellectual eminence. Wealth, he declared, was inherently evil because of the insatiable greed it generated in the individual who first desired to acquire and then maintain it. Riches could not confer nor take away nobility (IV, x-xiii); good family did not ennoble (IV, xiv-xv); and "nobility" was only an
attribute of individuals where virtue was present (IV, xix). 206

Bruni, too, focused on the notion of virtue as a prerequisite to nobility, but he also commented that riches were neither good nor bad in themselves, and at times, they were exceedingly useful in the exercise of virtue. 207 Buonaccorso da Montemagno echoed these sentiments in his treatise De Nobilitate, written in 1420 and dedicated to Carlo Malatesta:

Wealth also confers nobility because it makes liberality and the practice of virtues possible which the impoverished person is in no position to exercise. Through wealth one's virtue becomes known; in poverty it remains obscure. 208

The relationship between "active virtue" and material possessions was re-enforced by Matteo Palmieri, Della Vita Civile (1431-32, the fourth book added 1437-39), L.B. Alberti, Della famiglia (1434), and Poggio Bracciolini, De nobilitate (1440), but the connection between the active pursuit of the civilis vita and the virtue of magnificence remained tenuous. Yet Alberti could write: "Puossi colle ricchezze conseguire fama e autorità adoperandole in cose amplissime e nobilissime con molta larghezza e magnificenza." 209 The Florentine humanists would go no further than Timoteo Maffei's defence of private patronage in his treatise In magnificentiae Cosmi Medecsi Florentini detractores, written between 1454 and 1456. 210 Using Aristotelian and Thomistic sources, Maffei made several crucial distinctions; whether magnificence was a mean, an action, or a virtue in control of the action; whether it was a subsection
of Fortitude; whether it could be practiced by the poor; whether the magnificent man was "in the sanction of God". If he was inevitably obliged to conclude that magnificence was a virtue exclusive to the wealthy, there was yet little in his text that could be construed as a positive recommendation for great men to be magnificent. The significance of Maffei's theory lay in its emphasis upon magnificenza as an abstract virtue, which shifted the discussion of nobility away from the "value" of riches and its equivocal conclusion. He merely defended the right of great Florentine patricians to spend "greatly". It was left to the servants of princes, like Francesco Filelfo in Milan and Saba in Ferrara, to seize the initiative and urge their patrons on in the raising of splendid buildings and expenditure on public ceremonies.

The theory of magnificence, rooted in the civic humanism of Florence, provided the Renaissance prince with a new standard of public behaviour. Not only did it positively encourage his grandiose architectural schemes and his "consumptive" expenditure, but it also obliged him to put into evidence manifest signs of the magnificenza which he alone was thought to possess. Estensi magnificence, however, did not necessarily translate as the civic virtue of classical antiquity. In his analysis of despotic style in Renaissance Ferrara, Werner Gundersheimer suggests that comparative domestic security allowed the Estensi to indulge themselves in a neo-feudal model of monarchy "that included
all the elaborate trappings of country life - hunting, fishing, falconry, jousting, and the attendant pleasures of the traditional feudal aristocracy". They drew inspiration for this model from northern European aristocratic ideals, notably those of Carolingian France, and they maintained close ties with the Burgundian and French courts during the course of the fifteenth-century. Relations between Ferrara and Burgundy were especially amicable. In 1444, Leonello's son Francesco was sent to the court of Philip the Good, where he completed his military education and stayed on as a ducal favourite and correspondent of Burgundian affairs. Singers, musicians, artists, and weavers were recruited from Burgundian territories for service at the Este court, and we also find several Burgundian scholars studying at the university in Ferrara, one of whom was made a knight by Ercole in 1476. Ercole himself was on cordial terms with Charles the Bold. In 1471, Charles sent an ambassador to Ferrara to offer his personal congratulations on Ercole's accession to the duchy, a Burgundian ambassador was present at Ercole's wedding in 1473, and in turn, a lavish reception was accorded Anthony "il Gran Bastardo de Borgondia" upon his visit to Ferrara in July 1475. Four months after Anthony's reception, relations between the duchies of Ferrara and Burgundy were further strengthened when Charles had Ercole invested as a member of the internationally prestigious Burgundian order of chivalry, the Order of the Golden Fleece.
Scholars have long recognized that a cultural affinity existed between Ferrara and northern Europe, at least insofar as literary and artistic tastes often exhibited a self-conscious interest in the reflective values and visions of the northern chivalric tradition.\textsuperscript{220} Surveys of _quattrocento_ holdings in the Este library have shown both Borso and Ercole to be prodigious collectors of chivalric romances, favouring the Breton cycles and Arthurian tales in particular.\textsuperscript{221} Wealthy notables and even court humanists numbered epic titles among the volumes of their private libraries,\textsuperscript{222} and some twenty-five to thirty Ferrarese _cartolari_ (binders and booksellers), in addition to stocking a large inventory of Latin and vernacular "classics", were kept busy filling the demand for new illustrated texts in translation.\textsuperscript{223} It was in Ferrara too, where the old popular heroic cycles were elevated to the status of high art with the publication of Cieco's _Mambriano_ and Boiardo's _Orlando Innamorato_ in the late fifteenth-century, and Ariosto's _Orlando Furioso_ and Tasso's _Gerusalemme Liberata_ in the sixteenth.\textsuperscript{224} To confirm the influence of the northern tradition upon the plastic arts in Ferrara, we need go no further than the south wall of the Sala dei Mesi in the Palazzo Schifanoia, where the frescoes flanking the great fireplace depict notable allegorical tournaments which took place during Borso's reign,\textsuperscript{225} the Sala dei Paladini in the ducal palace near the clock-tower, so called for its illustrations of Charlemagne and the twelve pala-
dins (douzepers) of his court, or the frescoed walls of the delizie of Belfiore and Belriguardo, surviving in the vivid descriptions of Sabadino and perhaps the best examples of what may justly be called "courtly iconography" in Ferrara, where scenes from classical mythology were juxtaposed with scenes familiar to contemporary noble life: allegorical tournaments, hunts in the countryside, signorial processions, banquets, and commemorations of signorial virtues and deeds. The Belriguardo image of Ercole in the ceremonial robes of the English Order of the Garter, into whose membership he was admitted by King Edward IV in 1480, should remind us of the popularity of chivalric portraiture in Ferrara, and the debt owed by Ferrarese artists to the Flemish and French masters.

Let us also be reminded that there was nothing uniquely Ferrarese about this "Francophile tendency", nor was it, as Gundersheimer rightly points out, a consistently dominant influence. Northern aristocratic ideals merely co-existed with other, primarily civic, cultural concerns and influences. Nevertheless, the chivalric image was self-consciously cultivated by the signore as a component of his ceremonial identity. In a recent monograph, Antonio Franceschetti suggests that Ferrarese chivalry in the later quattrocento ought to be considered as part of the socio-cultural sublimation of the duke and his courtiers. The allegorical tournament, for example, furnished a ceremonial (and aristocratic) space where Ferrarese courtiers could
demonstrate, through the "magic invulnerability" of their bodies and their armour, the noble qualities which set them apart from (and above) the rest of the community. We have ample testimony to support this thesis. Like the famous Burgundian tourneys of the fifteenth-century (which certainly influenced allegorical jousts in northern Italy), the majority of Ferrarese tournaments seldom risked life or limb. Blunted lances which broke on contact were substituted for the weighted lance spuntate, and measures were taken to ensure the safety of the combatants. Here, for example, are the regulations governing a tournament staged by Borso d'Este in 1462:

Il se fa noto e manifesto a ciascun persona per parte del Illmo. principio et exmo. signore nostro messer Borso per la Dio gratia Duca e marchese et conte ecc. Che havendo la soa excellentia deliberato de fare qualche festa a piacere e a solatio de soa citade Ferraria e per exercitare chei habia voluntà de fare prova de la virtù de persona soa et per vedere experientia de li homini valenti et gaiardi, la ordinato e vol far fare ne la soa cità de Ferrara a kalende del mese de Magio proximo che vene uno torniero cum queste conditione: cioè che ciascun persona che vora torniare, sia a cavalo armato de tutta la persona soa de che arme se voglia, on da Bataglia, on che altramente piu gli piazza, ma che labia la testa armata, de uno elme one facto de cuore cocto et ferrato nel modo e forma cum sta questo che se mostràrà qui, e che habiano le spade senza punta e senza taglio, e che siano longe de ferro spanne tre e meza comune, e del manegio siano facte a so muodo. Le quale spade se faranno asagliare e fare equale nanti al tornimento e che habiano una maza de legno, senza niuno ferro, ne per forteza ne per ornamento, e che ciascun habita le sele ali loro cavalì a so modo como li placera suso le quale niuno se possa ligare; e se alchun vorà pectorare ali loro cavalì, chel non sia lícito meterli scodelini, ne altre cossee che fossi offendere al cavalo del compagno... 231

Contestants engaged in a whole panoply of formal addresses and challenges, with greater emphasis being placed on the "mostra de la giostra", where contestants
exhibited their armour, jewels, and horses in parade, rather than on the actual combat. 233 Exhibitions of "gentile liveree et gallantarie" could last for several hours, and floats and pageant cars often accompanied combatants into the arena. 234 In 1462, an entire day was devoted to "la mostra dele turmnieri", with the procession ranging through the four quarters of the city. 235

Ferrarese "combats" often assumed the form of elaborate pageants. In 1464, we read how a wooden castle was erected in the piazza between the cathedral and the offices of the signorial pawn-brokers (in front of the Palazzo della Ragione), which was guarded by a giant. Contestants entered the lists and demanded entrance into the castle by touching a sword laid at the giant's feet, whereupon the giant selected one of his champions to defend his honour. If the giant's knight was vanquished, the assailant won permission to enter the premises; if the assailant was defeated, the giant's champion "il menava in prigione lui et il cavalo". 236 The scene is described by Nicolò Ariosto:

... Sabato passato che forno li 12 de questo, da poi xxxiii hore fu incominiciato et inanzi di finito uno castello de legname che commenzava dala volta del vescovo in piazza et venia al cantone delo offitio del colaterale, che proprio parea de muro pertal modo era depinto, et era scarpato tute con una girlando che pero parea de marmoro, merlato de uno capo alalta quelli merli depinti con le arme de questo Illu. Sig. Et havea doe torre una drito ale bolete laltra drito lo offitio del colaterale merlade facte a bechadelli. Et sopra la torre da le bolete era una gigante tutto armato excepto la testa con una granda maza in mano et uno scudo trato inanzi ali pedi con larma de questo Illumo. Sig. Et ha nome dicto zigante Nabucharim daral-mih. Fra queste doe torre era uno castello con uno
ponte levadura. De fuora dal castello era uno trave piantato sopra il quale era a modo una gabia de nave nella quale stava uno ragazino in forma de uno nanno con una barba longa, uno vestido et una beretta verde con uno corno alcolo, il quale facea questo vostra Sig. intendera. Quando sera tempo la piazza aveva era sbarata dal castello fina al palazo del podesta con certe boche per le quale se potea intrare et uscire le quale pero sempre stavano serate con provisionati che le guardavano. Questo trionfo e durato tri zorni domenega, luni et marti, dal 16 hore fina a 22 passato... 237

In June 1476, the city of Reggio honoured Ercole d'Este with an allegorical joust ("se combaterà uno castello de legname facto suxo la piazza"), the combatants entering the lists disguised as legendary knights, and similar scenes were witnessed in Modena during that summer. Rinaldo d'Este, disguised as Cupid, issued a universal challenge to the knights of Ferrara in May 1478, and one month later, the tournament took place in the piazza. Rinaldo entered the lists in a triumphal car bearing the figures of Cupid, Venus, and one-hundred young boys, who represented a celestial court. The object of this joust was to defeat Rinaldo in combat, whereupon his patron (Cupid) would be conducted to the summit of a gallows near the cathedral, there to suffer a mock trial and a mock execution. The allegorical presentation of "il Dio d'Amore" was especially popular, and in July 1480, we find Ercole himself among the combatants attempting to bring Cupid before the figure of Justice for trial. Naturally enough, as Cupid mounted the gallows, the duke "fece la gratia al dio damore che no fusse impichato".

Periodically then, the urban centre of Ferrara underwent a metamorphosis. Civic "space" was exchanged
for chivalric "space": the scenography of the tournament, associated with the occupations of a neo-feudal nobility and linked to the hinterlands of the contado, imposed upon the "civil topography" of the urban centre, its churches, its palaces, its streets, and its market places.\(^{242}\) It provided a ceremonial forum where aristocratic self-images could be reflected. Instead of approaching the quattrocento tournament as a ritualized manifestation of a declining and decadent chivalry,\(^ {243}\) therefore, we might consider its role as a spatial symbol of the prince's power; the sublimation of his virtue (magnificence), his nobility, his person, and his dignitas.\(^ {244}\) In their search for continuity rather than fluctuation in processional décor, this is a point which art historians also neglect. Witness Robert Payne's assessment of Borso d'Este's trionfi in Modena and Reggio:

Borso d'Este deserves a special place in any history of the triumph. More than anyone else he reduced it to nonsense... Borso was a freak, his triumphs no more than charming improvisations on the theme of the unconquering conqueror.

Similarly, Herculean trionfi were "homespun affairs", celebrating the triumphs of virtue, agriculture, love, and music instead of Roman heroes.\(^ {245}\) In this particular instance, excessive emphasis on questions of form and style has allowed a scholar to bury the why and hence the sociology of processions.

Historians now recognize the entry of a Renaissance prince into an urban centre as a "fait social total, à la fois juridique, économique, politique, religieux,
esthétique"; as a phenomenon which concerns "la totalité de la société et des ses institutions". They recognize both continuity and complexity in processional scenography (a synthesis of arts), but also a complex-cultural dynamics instigating evolutionary changes in the procession's form and style:

Il y avait dans ses cortèges, dans ses fêtes, un élément moral, essai de justification éthique du pouvoir du prince, un élément sacral, religieux, et même, pour les humanistes, métaphysique, peut-être mystique, mais aussi cet élément que nous appelons aujourd'hui propagande.

Historians are urged "de quitter le plan esthétique" and concentrate their labours on the procession "autour d'un ensemble d'idées, de sentiments d'ordre politique, religieux, etc." Such an approach has been adopted by scholars investigating the evolutionary changes in the form and ideological content of the royal entry in medieval France. Not only is this work instructive conceptually, but students of Estensi ceremonial will find certain parallels between the royal procession north of the alps and the signorial model in Ferrara. Let us conduct a brief conspectus of the arguments.

By the end of the fifteenth-century, the entry of the King of France "dans une de ses bonnes villes" comprised two principal elements, one related to the constitutional position of the monarch and his subjects, the other related to the image of royal power and royal institutions. The constitutional element assumed the form of a legal dialogue between the sovereign and the city. Tokens of submission (keys, seals, banners) were offered to the king by townspeople "in signum majoris obedientiae
et subjectionis", or "en signe de obedience et recon-
niosant qu’il estoit leur Roy souverain et naturel Seigneur", in exchange for the sovereign's promise to recognize the city's rights, laws, privileges, and exemptions, signalled customarily by the return of the tokens to the custody of the city's representatives. According to Bernard Guenée, the legal precedent for this ceremony was established during the reigns of Philip VI and John II. When, in the late thirteenth-century, the sovereign approached one of his cities, "son seul désir est au fond d'y exercer son droit de gîte". The king had a customary right to subvention, the townsmen a customary obligation to fulfill his alimentary and lodging requirements. Gifts of meat, wine, and fish, presented in the finest crockery and vessels, were often bestowed upon the king in a public ceremony. About the middle of the fourteenth-century, however, changes in the ceremonial format of the royal entry are apparent. Upon King John II's coronation entry into Paris (1350), for instance, he is obliged to guarantee the privileges of the clergy before entering the cathedral of Notre Dame to make his devotions; in 1362, prior to entering Chalon-sur-Saône, he is obliged "de garantir aux susdits échevins et à toute la communauté de la dite ville ou cité de Chalon leurs franchises, libertés, privilèges et usages". The entrance of King Charles VI into Lyon in 1389 sees the sovereign received by a delegation from the city:

Avec quels transports de joie les habitants de cette ville accueillirent leur roi. Ils lui envoyèrent d'abord en présent des moutons, des boeufs et du
The symbolic exchanges between the sovereign and the city fulfilled the conditions pertinent to a social contract: the king offered his royal presence "inestimable", and the city its ramparts "en contre-don". The introduction of the royal presence into the city, writes Elie Konigson, marks off its urban space as an objet royal "que les édiles ont pour charge de conserver au roi". In the final analysis, we witness the ceremonialization of an old feudal exchange and the inauguration of a new ritual procedure celebrating the king's constitutional communion with the city: the king is received en avant the city's portals, tokens of submission are symbolically offered and returned, gifts and oaths are exchanged, the king enters the city, oaths are once again exchanged before the door to the church-cathedral, and finally, the city celebrates the presence of the sovereign with a series of divertissements.

While the constitutional framework of the royal entry was preserved through the sixteenth-century, ceremonial décor underwent several evolutionary transformations. Bernard Guenée was the first scholar in France to draw attention to the importance of the processional dais (in Latin pallium, in Italian baldacchino), which
made its initial appearance during the great progress of
Charles VI into the Midi in 1389 (at Lyon, Montpellier,
and Béziers), and whose religious inspiration (the
imitation of carrying a baldachin over the effigy of
Christ's body upon "Fête-Dieu" or the feast of Corpus
Christi) transformed the royal entry into a liturgical
"Fête-Roi". The procession of the king under a canopy
lent an added dimension to royal religion (roi thauma-
turge), but also enlarged upon the regalia of the
sovereign's dignitas. Royal funeral processions would
later juxtapose the physical body of the dead king in
its human misery (his banners furled, his sword of state
sheathed, and his emblems covered) with the triumphal
pageantry assembled around the king's effigy, which
alone was paraded under a canopy. The processional dias
helped to explain why "the king never dies". The
advent of the dias was not the sole element which linked
the "Fête-Dieu" with the royal entry. Earlier, in 1380,
upon Charles VI's entry into Paris, we encounter "les
premières représentations des mystères". "Come une fête
liturgique", notes Guenée, "une entrée royale est dés-
ormais l'occasion de théâtre". Using the paradigms
developed by André Chastel and George Kernodle (the pro-
cession creates its own time and space), Elie Konigson
has recently shown how the royal entry metamorphosed
urban space by superimposing the theatrical décor of
"une ville idéale" upon the topographical features of
"une ville réelle", and traced this metamorphosis
through a series of thematic qualifications which trans-
pired during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. 260

Conceptual roots for the transfiguration of urban scenography are located in the original contractual arrangements concluded between the king and his subjects. The royal entry identified the nature of the juridical bonds between the free communes and the sovereign (the exchange of oaths and tokens of submission), and coincidentally, on a typological and ceremonial level, validated the urban precincts and portals as spatial symbols of the city's political autonomy. The glorification of the king as guarantor and dispensator of communal privileges, however, was also expressed by the civic procession which received him. Townsmen representing "ses corps communaux" were delegated by the city to greet the king outside the walls: "un autre cortège s'avance face au souverain, non plus celui des bourgeois mais celui des allégories où s'exprime le mythe royal ou princier par excellence, de suzerain-héros associé aux figures des preux légendaires". 261 In effect, two processions, one composed of civic notables and workers both parading in les Tiers État and charged with the responsibility of glorifying the king's person, another composed of the king and his followers assembled in their ornamental pomp, combined to delineate "une espace de l'Entrée", in this instance validating the entire processional group as a spatial symbol of the king's royal dignitas. 262 The entry of the sovereign into the city, therefore, witnessed a fusion between two different sets of spatial models "pour transformer la ville réelle
en espace idéal": because the royal entry was organized by the city, principally by the masters of the merchant associations, it was a "fête bourgeoise", and since the physical act of entering the city was undertaken by the king and his double-retinue, it was also a "fête aristocratique". According to Miss Konigson, the apparent fusion of these spatial symbols was only temporary, if not purely theoretical. Inevitably, as a ritual of submission, the superimposing of an "espace aristocratique" upon an "espace communal" was the primary objective of the royal entry. Hence it is Miss Konigson's contention that the history of the royal entry in France must be read in conjunction with the manifest aspirations of the crown. The progress of the French monarchs towards greater authority and independence during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, she argues, was mirrored in a psychological and physical confrontation between the décor of "espace bourgeoise" and the décor of "espace aristocratique" upon the entrance of the sovereign into one of his subject cities; with the eventual ideological and spatial triumph of the latter signalling "la perte d'autonomie des cités tout au long de la dernière partie du Moyen-Age". An impressive range of evidence has been examined to substantiate this claim which, for reasons of brevity, will be summarized as follows:

A special symbolic and political role was played by the city's gates during the reception of the monarch: they marked a passage between two discontinuous units of physical and psychological space, urban and suburban,
communal and feudal, commercial and agricultural, bourgeois and noble, etc. They marked the passage between the countryside and the social world organized by the city. Spatial discontinuity was naturally re-enforced by the symbolic rendering of keys to the sovereign at the principal entrance to the city, but also by the physical appearance of the portal: the decorative symbolism of the entryway explained the political concord which existed between the king and the city. Early manifestations of portal décor were inspired by the mysteries of the faith. When Queen Isabella enters Paris in 1389, for instance, she finds the gate of Saint-Denis (the Bastide) depicted as "un ciel tout estellé" (heaven), with young children dressed as angels and a representation of the Virgin, and passing onto the second gate of Saint-Denis, another paradis, this time a wooden castle acting as a stage for a representation of the Trinity, with music provided by a second choir of angels. In this case, political concord is promoted by the location of the prince and the city within a religious (and distinctly medieval) cosmography. By the early fifteenth-century, however, figurative religious symbols are being combined with other allegorical elements signifying unity between the urban estates and the ruler's glory. A tribunal was erected at the gate of Saint-Denis for the entry of King Henry VI of England in 1431:

... laquelle estoit si grande que en icelle avoit XII personnages en trois estas, distingans ses estas de la dicte ville, lesquels personnages tenoient et presentoient au dit roy trois cuers... en signe que les cuers des estas d'icelle ville se ouvrirent de joye de la venue de leur prince et seigneur...
Inside the city, along the processional route to the cathedral, the configuration of religious tableaux and allegories juxtaposed the Nativity and the martyrdom of St. Denis with "un tabernacle a six pans, moult riche-ment fait, tout housse d'azur et de fleurs de liz d'or; et dessus icelui avoit un bois planté, ouquel avoit hommes et femmes sauvages jouans des estus tres gentil-ment"; the relic (arm) of St. George with a second "bois planté, ouquel avoit veneurs et chiens de chasse... sailly un serf du bois hors, tout courant, au travers de la rue devant le dit roy, et les chiens apres''.

Upon the gate of Saint-Denis in 1437 "estroit un escu de France que trois angles tenoient eslevé, et audessus dudit escu estoient angles chantans", while inside the city appeared

... une fontaine en laquelle y avoit ung pot ou estoit une fleur de lis, laquelle fleur de lis jettoit bon ypocras, vin et eau. Et dedens ladicte fontaine estoient deux daulphins, et au dessoubz avoit une terasse volsee de fleurs de lis. Et dessus ladicte terrace estoit ung personnage de saint Jehan Baptiste qui monstroit le Agnus Dei. Et y avoit angles, chantans moult bien et melodieusement.

During the reigns of Louis XI and Charles VIII, the configuration of religious, royal, and allegorical themes became increasingly complex. Often, all of these themes appeared simultaneously on a single tribunal or tableau vivant. But gradually, political allegories linked to royal actions began to dominate the processional décor. When Charles enters Paris after his coronation in 1484, for example, the portal of Saint-Denis is adorned with a fleur-de-lys supporting the effigy of the king, and by its side the allegorical figures of Justice, Mercy, Love,
Science, Reason, and Peace. Inside the city, along the route to the cathedral of Notre Dame, are representations of the Passion of Christ, the suicide-hanging of Judas, the Massacre of the Innocents, David and Goliath, and an allegorical tableau showing France relieved of her maladies by the new sovereign. At Rouen, in 1485, the portal is decorated in a similar fashion. A tribunal bears the effigy of the king in his regalia under a tabernacle (dais or canopy) and the figures of Justice, Fortitude, Prudence, Temperance, and Peace. Below the stage, a further seven allegorical figures are assembled in a miroir du prince. Urban space now qualified the image of the ideal prince. But perhaps more significant, it also qualified the image of society as corporeal; as an organological body or corpus mysticum. Thus, at the gates to Rouen, three shepherds and three shepherdesses remind the king of his pastoral responsibilities, urging him to confirm his royal power by maintaining law and order and by punishing the enemies of the people, by seeking peace within the realm and by preserving the public good, concluding their eulogy with the unequivocal statement: "Longuemement vive le chef du corps mystique". Political concord between the sovereign and the city now resides in the written laws and mystical forces which unite the king and his subjects in a "body politic". It is, therefore, the entrance of the king's mystical body, that is to say his authority, magnificence, and majesty, which transforms the collective experience of the royal procession from a simple cere-
monial exchange of lordship and service into a rite confirming the corporeal bonds of a new politicized society, and which lends permanence and continuity to the metaphoric images illustrating the nature of these bonds. The prerogative claims of the city, still manifested by the symbolic arrangement of exchanges at the portal, now explain the mystical origins (political fiction) and qualifications of royal power. At the gates of Paris and Rouen, the king confronts his own figurative image, his own dignitas, his own myth: "le roi sera littéralement initié à la nature de la royauté". Symbolic exchanges explain the principles of a new world-view, of which the king's royalty is the ideological focal point and the city is the image.

In the sixteenth-century, we witness the eventual triumph of political allegory over religious themes in the organization of processional scenography (first illustrated by the entrance of Mary Tudor into Paris in 1514), and a progressive rejection of human personages and tableaux vivants in favour of pagan images, statuaries, and the triumphal arch. By the accession of Henry II, the groundwork has been laid for the king to enter his cities as a triumphant imperator. With technical assistance rendered by Italian festaiuoli and French humanists, the royal procession becomes an urban progress modelled on the great imperial trionfi of Roman antiquity. Characteristic of this transformation is the disappearance of the medieval configuration of spatial discontinuity, multiple theatrical stages, and multiple organizational themes, and the advent of contin-
uous processional "space" extending beyond the walls of the city; an "espace de l'Entrée" given artistic unity by a succession of triumphal arches and trophies, and conceptual unity by its interpretive relationship with the king's royal dignitas. The entry of King Henry into Paris in 1549 attests to the spatial continuity between the countryside and the city during a royal triumph. Outside the gate of Saint-Denis, an "avant-portail" was constructed, Arc Triomphal De La Force: the city's own portal was no longer used. In the final analysis, the triumphal entry of the king is also a triumph of "espace aristocratique" over "espace bourgeoise". The glorification of the king finds expression in an architecture and an allegory committed to physical space in such a way as to be free of a human time-element. It finds expression in a "jeu anhistorique", an extra-temporal ritual which bears no connotative relationship with ordinary urban experience or its psychological environment. It is the king's royalty, and no longer a processional assembly of the urban estates, which explains the ideology of the Tiers Etat.

Ceremonial Management in Ferrara

In the present state of research, a direct relationship between ultramontane and Italian ceremonial is not easily discerned, and perhaps it may be misleading to suppose there is one. On the other hand, enough circumstantial evidence exists to allow one to draw tentative conceptual parallels between ceremonies and
ceremonialists both north and south of the Alps. We might begin our inquiry by posing the following problem: Who organized the public ceremonies in Renaissance Ferrara? Unfortunately, the answer to this question remains unclear. In a letter from Siverio Sivieri to the duchess, dated 12 February 1493, we find reference made to a signorial master-of-ceremonies:

... Io bato el chioldo per zanino del conte lorenzo per far cossa grata a vostra extia., alcuni altrì bate per le altri et maxime el maestro de le cерemonie, el quale non lassa cossa a fare ogni hora per haverlo ma presto si vedra qual martello sera de meiore azale a piu fino a unaltra cavalca vostra signoria lo intendera, et se io poro el non la vincera... 279

To my knowledge, this letter (which refers to a rivalry for the position of cancellarius in Bagnacavallo) represents one of the earliest recorded instances of a secular official charged with the regulation of public ceremonies bearing this title. The Florentine herald-ceremonialist Angelo Manfridi would not begin to style himself as "cavaliere e maestro di cerimonie della Signoria" until 1515, the office of "grand-maitre des cérémonies de France" was not created until 1585, and the English counterpart of these was not instituted until the reign of King James I. Yet no mention (as far as I have been able to determine) of this Ferrarese official appears on the rolls of the household or communal stipendiaries, nor do we encounter any evidence to suggest that an office responsible for laudatory and ceremonial institutions existed. While the use of this title implies that ceremonial duties were in the process of being rationalized in Ferrara, it emerges
that (1) ceremonial management was part-time, perhaps supervised by an official who had other administrative and counselling duties, but ultimately spread over a number of offices (2) codes of ceremonial procedure were being evolved, but these prescriptive ordines were not written down in a manual and remained subject to frequent alteration (3) Ferrarese ceremonial was fundamentally derivative, in the sense that local practices were influenced by codes of procedure originating elsewhere.

Partly because of the centrality of the liturgy of the Mass, partly because of the growing pressure to identify the different tasks, functions, and ranks of curialists, and partly because of the increasing complexity of its own diplomatic decorum, the papal court affords the most prominent example of a domestic setting where the regulation of formal behaviour was inscribed in manuals of prescriptive procedure under the guidance of professional ceremonialists. Scholars have understood that the rationalization (division of labour) of curial administration at Avignon during the fourteenth-century, also led to a more sophisticated approach to ceremonial functions and duties. Towards the end of this century, we find chapel ritual placed under the jurisdiction of clerici cerimoniarum (clerks responsible for all curial ceremonies but especially those related to the pontifical Mass and the person of the pope), and by the composition of Pope Nicholas V's ceremonial diary (between the years 1451 and 1453), the three clerks charged with chapel regulation have begun to call
themselves *magistri cerimonialium.* In 1487, the *magistri cerimonialium* Agostino Patrizi and Johann Burckard were instructed to compose a new manual of papal ceremonies based upon their research into eight "libros cerimoniales antiquos", placed at their disposal by Pope Innocent VIII. But while the fruits of their labour, the now famous *Caeremoniale Romanum* (presented to Innocent in 1488 and first published in 1516), continued to emphasize the preeminent role played by the *magistri* as supervisors of ceremonial traffic in *capella*, it is abundantly clear that their ceremonial duties were far broader than merely attending the celebrant priest.

Outside the chapel, papal *magistri* were called upon to instruct cardinal-legates (legatus a latere) on the ceremonials to be observed during their embassies abroad. As the personal deputy of the pope, the cardinal-legate enjoyed precedence over all other papal officials. He was, as Franz Wasner describes him, a personal representation of the pope (empowered to bear the papal insignia); a visible manifestation of the invisible forces and relationships of papal power. Hence the legate departing Rome was issued an *ordo* by the *magistri*, that is to say a list of instructions detailing the *ordines* of his ceremonial, to ensure that he was received and that he acted in a manner consummate with the papal dignity. The papal vicariate of Ferrara naturally had many encounters with the ceremonial of legates, an early instance being the reception of Baldassare Cossa in 1403:
Among the several elements of this ceremony worthy of comment, we shall mention only one here; the presence of the legate's camerarius. His role in the proceedings is not altogether certain. However, we know that the ordines for papal processions during the pontificate of Martin V (1417-1431) were issued by François de Conzié, Archbishop of Narbonne and papal camerarius, whom Mark Dykmans describes as master of the papal household, chief of protocol, chancellor of the curia, and "enfin, son grand maître des cérémonies". Conzié organized papal voyages, accompanied the pope on his travels, and significantly, when the pontiff approached a city, he supervised the ordo of the papal cortège and sent instructions to the civic authorities "sur la reception à faire au souverain pontife". It may be then, that the legate's camerarius performed similar duties on his behalf. We are perhaps on more solid ground when we...
assume that at an early date, the responsibility for regulating the processions of popes and legates into cities outside Rome rested with senior curialists, and by the mid-fifteenth-century, with the papal magistri cerimoniarii. The city may have assembled a reception committee and decorated its precincts, but the actual ceremonial procedure of the entry, its ordo (the location of personae, regalia, banners, and shrines in the processional group), was determined by ecclesiastical officialdom. Thus, despite the pastoral décor of Pope Pius II's entry into Ferrara in 1459, the ceremonial duplicated the procedure of Legate Cossa's entry fifty-six years earlier:

*Et a di dicto, ad ore xxii, il prefacto Papa fece la intrada in Ferrara... A lo quale Papa precedeva xii cavali bianchi coperti de carmesino, cioè de veludo, cum arme papale, et dui stendardi et uno pavaione et uno cavallo bianco, dove era suso il corpo di Messer Yesht Christo, cum octo superi impressi. Et era il Papa vestito dì biancho cum la mitria in capo. E quando il Papa su suso la Porta de Sancto Piero, il prefacto duca Borso se ingen-chio e basoli li pedi, et poi li presentète le chiave de Ferrara cum grande reverentia. Il quale Papa le acceptò e poi le restituì al prefacto duca Borso. Et il prefacto Papa era suxo una scarana aureata tutta, soto il baldachino de dalmasco bian-chö, soto il quale era portato... 293*

Marshalling the papal cortège on this occasion was certainly a task for a professional (it was estimated that 1500 individuals took part in the procession). The presence of the papal magistri in Ferrara is confirmed by the Florentine herald Francesco Filarete, who noted with some relief upon Pius' entry into Florence a month earlier, that it was not his duty to record the details of ecclesiastical ceremonies:
Gli ordini che s'aspettavano alle cerimonie ecclesiastiche a me non s'aspetta narrare, né l'ordine de' signori cardinali né de' principi che seguano la ecclesiastica corte, perchè mi pare che da me s'aspetti solo quanto alla nostra repubblica s'apartiene. 294

Further testimony suggesting that the magistri were responsible for regulating papal processions outside Rome is provided by Leo X's triumphal entry into Florence (1515), when the papal master-of-ceremonies Paris de Grassis "hordinat... el modo del procedere", and when a bitter dispute broke out between de Grassis and the emissaries of the Gonfaloniere di Giustizia, who had claimed for the Signoria equality with the cardinals in the processional ordo. 295

Thanks to the ceremonial diaries of Pierre de Burgos, Burckard, and de Grassis, 296 we know that the magistri were also called upon to organize papal processions in Rome (of which the papal possessu procession to St. John Lateran is the most obvious example), 297 to arrange the ceremonial entries of foreign dignitaries, to supervise coronations, conclaves, and meetings in consistory, and when disputes arose, to exercise their authority upon matters of precedence. Here again, it is noteworthy that the Estensi were thoroughly versed in papal ceremonial procedure. Borso's progress to Rome in 1471, for instance, came to a halt six miles outside the city to await instructions upon the ordo of the entrata despatched by the master-of-ceremonies. As Francesco Ariosto related to Ercole d'Este:

Quivi se refiece la brigata zoiosamente fino al mezo zorno, ni se intendeamo levarni indi sino a le xx hore, attento che quello pontificale senescalco ne
era mandato al incontro per ordinare la pompa de la comitiva nostra e cosi havea deliberato, se non che uno excessivo numero de grandi huomeni e de prelati de sancta Chiesia che vegneano per visitare e per agradire il principe intanto moltiplicava che el si estimava come la via si caricaria per modo che poi non senza gran fatica se gli poteria servare ordine a cavalcarla. 298

Ariosto's recollection of the "cosse sacre cerimoniale" during Borso's investiture as Duke of Ferrara indicates that the papal master-of-ceremonies (whom he calls "el maestro de capella") was on hand to orchestrate the movements of personages to and from St. Peter's. 299 The best-laid plans, however, were not always successful. Ercole's arrival in Rome in May 1487 was marred by a row between the Bishops of Durham, Hereford, and Lismore on the one side, and the ambassadors of England and Spain on the other, over a question of precedence, and the signorial entrata itself, as Burckard relates, proceeded contrary to the arranged order: "... qui postquam ipsum receperunt, antecesserunt extra ordinem; ordinatem enim erat quod sola familia ducis suo ordine antecederet ducem...." 300 Matters of precedence often delayed ceremonies while the magistri deliberated over the ordines, sometimes led to utter confusion on the podium, and were serious enough to provoke fist-fights among the participants. 301 Diplomatic relations between states, in fact, could be jeopardized if parties believed that their honour had been slighted by wrongful positioning in the ceremonial pecking order. Such was the case in 1492, when a dispute arose between the Florentines and the Ferrarese concerning a right of precedence into the papal audience chamber. According to Alfonso d'Este, who
was in Rome representing his father at the time, papal appointments were cancelled for a day while the magistri deliberated. Eventually, they decided that the Florentine ambassadors should be heard first. "Poi questa sira", relates Alfonso, "e venuto il maistro de le ceremonie, et ha ditto che anchora non era revocato il consistorio de domane perche la Sta. dil Papa stava in dubio". Notwithstanding the moratorium, the Florentines tried to gain access to the audience hall at the appointed time on the strength of the previous resolution, and finding the way barred to them, left the city in a diplomatic huff. Alfonso hoped that this incident, over which he had no personal control, would not promote antipathy between Florence and Ferrara. 302 We might recall that this particular question of precedence was never resolved satisfactorily. During the second half of the sixteenth-century, the issue was a source of constant bitterness between the Medici and Este dukes, who quarrelled incessantly over their ceremonial rights at the papal court, and sought legal precedents in increasingly fantastic genealogies to sustain them. 303

Among the Italian states where the quattrocento activities of the papal magistri cerimoniarum made a deep impression, foremost was the Florentine Republic. In December 1475, the Signoria commissioned Francesco Filarete to compile a manual to be kept in the chancellery, "in su quello riduca almeno dal 1456 in qua tucte le venute di principi ecclesiastici et temporali venuti nella città et suti honorati, et le cerimonie facte et spese in modo se n'abbia". 304 Describing the nature of
his task, Filarete emphasized that he was writing a prescriptive text on ceremonial behaviour, a code of procedure which could be consulted prior to the reception of foreign dignitaries:

Perchê io mi persuado che la principale intentione di chi questo peso m'impuose piuttosto fusse intendere le ceremonie e honorì e modi a gli'avenimenti de' principi usate e seguite, che el quando a lle spese nelle loro honoranze seguite, pertanto mi pare dovere anteporre a' tempi e lle spese, gli' onori, pompe, e ceremonie a quelli con diligentia usate. 305

Ceremonial behaviour in Florence needed to be standardized, and ceremonial modes needed to be normalized, he thought. This could be accomplished if one understood that ceremonies were not always observed in the same fashion, "ma più e meno secondo che amuniscono le qualità de' tempi e delle persone". Receptions of ambassadors, therefore, were not the subject of many ceremonies "perchê... quello che si fa a uno s'intende di tutti o reali o altrì", nor was the ceremonial management of visiting ecclesiastics worthy of intensive research: "le ceremonie stare più ferme a gli'eclesiastici, o poco variare". It was only upon the reception of secular princes that one observed "le cose variarsi e spesi e modi". Evidently, as Richard Trexler suggests, Filarete was sensitive to a dialectic which supposed that the actions of charismatic forces could not be repeated, hence secular lords were accorded more individual, variable treatment. 306

There appears to be little doubt that the installation of a laudatory and ceremonial office in Florence was inspired by the papal institution, and that the
duties performed by the Florentine ceremonialist were derived largely from those undertaken by the papal magistrati cerimoniarum. Yet the Florentine ceremonialist was not a master-of-ceremonies, but rather an araldo della Signoria. Like the heralds in northern Europe, whose history may be traced back to the thirteenth-century jongleurs, the Florentine herald emerged "from amongst the buffoons": poets, actors, and singers who occupied the communal office of sindicus et referendarius from the mid-trecento onwards, combining their professional skills with judicial and administrative duties. The figure which appears in the Florentine Book of Ceremonies, says Trexler, is a medieval persona with a distinctly ultramontane lineage; "a buffoon-poet who still counted gifts and sold verse", but who had now become an important ceremonial official, a modern "trouble-shooter in the midst of pageant" charged with the regulation of civic receptions: "a soministrare l'ordine della ceromonia e pompa della entrata a lui commessa".

The picture which emerges in Ferrara, by contrast, is considerably less clear. Among the Estensi officials who might have performed duties in the capacity of "maestro de le cerimonie", the most likely candidates are the chief executive of the signorial chancellery, the referendarius, and his subordinates, the cancellieri. The origins of the Ferrarese referendary are located in the decade 1380-90, a notarial instrument of 1386 citing Francesco de Taiapetrus as the first titular "referen-
darius et consiliarius domini marchionis". The appointment of Taiapetrus as referendarius placed him at the head of a powerful administrative office (cancellaria domini marchionis) composed of six chancellors, nearly all of whom were notaries (notarius et cancellarius), whose duties ranged from those of the ordinary notarial scribe (registering land investitures, transfers, and sales, letters patent, testimonials, decretals, exemptions, signorial correspondence, etc.) to those of counsel to the marquis. This latter function was formally recognized in 1372, when the chancellors were designated consiliari. Between the years 1391 and 1425, the post was occupied by Bartolomeo della Messa who, especially during the minority of Niccolò III d'Este, assumed the prerogatives of a de facto prime minister. In addition to supervising the chancellery and being the automatic choice to chair meetings of the consiliari, della Messa also headed the cameral administration, having been appointed "factoris generalis" in 1393. With the gradual rationalization of the Este bureaucracy after the accession of Borso, however, the role of the referendary in formulating signorial policy diminished. The expanding competence of the fattori generali coupled with the creation of two new advisory boards, the Consiglio Segreto and the Consiglio di Giustizia, began to limit the jurisdiction of the referendary to the chancellery proper. Lodovico Casella (d. 1469) was perhaps the last referendary to retain a vestige of the office's former power, calling himself Borso's consiliarius secretus, but his presence on councils was
a formality. Though not without considerable responsibility, his duties were increasingly secretarial; countersigning decretals and civic ordinances, signing the mandati directed to the fattori generali on behalf of the signore, drafting important political correspondence and treaties of alliance, registering corporate statutes and economic agreements, and examining petitions before assigning them to the competent officials. Similarly, the cancellieri, who were organized into a collegiate body in 1466, found themselves reduced to setting out the capitoli of public decrees, transcribing notarial documents, tending the registers, and preserving signorial records. The reorientation of the referendary's administrative functions was confirmed by Casella's successor Giovanni Compagni, who referred to himself as secretarius. By 1476, we find that an ordinance listing the salaried officers of the ducal household no longer mentions a referendarius but three secretari supervising six cancellieri: Paolo Antonio Trotti "secretario primo" (who sometimes calls himself referendarius secretus in his correspondence to underline his preeminent position), Giovanni Compagni and Francesco Nasello "secretarii". The once powerful referendary has all but disappeared, his place taken by three bureaucrats.

Assigning the referendary and his secretarial successors a definitive ceremonial role is not an easy task. Almost certainly, it was purely administrative, in the sense that they both received and passed on instructions for the organization of ceremonies. Borso,
for example, normally wrote a daily letter of instruction to his referendarius Lodovico Casella. In one, dated 7 March 1466, Casella is ordered to prepare a civic reception for a visiting notable:

... Messer Justiniano Cavitello viene li per andare a regio et poi a Milano. Volemo che li in Ferrara montre sta, tu faci gli sia provisto de una bona compagnia honorevole et fa gli facto carezze et honore et sia li pagate la hostaria de quanto il sera stato a ferrara... 319

The same year we also find him issued with a brief outlining Borso's plans for feste in Bondeno, with the referendary left to work out the details ("et che se mettasse tal ordine e tal modo che sene conseguisse megliore servigio"), and another letter instructs him to prepare for the reception of the Duke of Milan's annual gift (il Bove). In April 1467, it is assumed that the referendary will be responsible for the "nove reverentie" upon Borso's return to Ferrara from Venice, and in January 1469, Casella is issued with instructions for the reception of the Emperor. Not all of these orders, however, were destined for the hands of the referendary. The cancellarius Vittorio Pavoni suggests that it was he and his colleagues who helped to organize Borso's entry into Modena in 1453, and that Pavoni himself had been on hand to ensure the processional ordines were observed: "Montato a cavallo et ordinata la corte, scudieri, Gientilhomini, cavallieri et compagni del nostro Signore...". We may also remember that it was the cancellarius Aristotile Bruturi who was responsible for the ceremonies celebrating the Italian League in 1455:
... Restiamo che come e dicto vi ritrovati cum messer lo vescovo per quanto e toco de sopra, cum messer polo per intendera el suo parte et per la spesa de leligne et faluo et altre spese che vi andasse cum Galeoto per sentire el judico suo per lo adornamento del desco et per le tapetiare et chiamato et Guielmo fusaro se pona ordine a tutto si che fra loro et vui se facia qualche digna et honorevole cossa et de spectabile representatione et de bona alegreza e jubilo per quel di... 325

It is safer to assume, therefore, that ceremonial management was localized in the chancellery rather than under the sole direction of the referendary during Borso's reign.

As it happened, the referendary's successors, the secretari, came to occupy a more prominent ceremonial position. In constant attendance upon the prince, they divided their time between administrative and notarial duties on the one hand, and ceremonial ones on the other. They wrote with authority upon the ordines of processions and signorial rites, conferred with the duke on his ceremonial arrangements and found the money to finance them, consulted with festaiuoli, engineers, artists, carpenters, and provisioners, and even acted as the signore's deputy on ceremonial occasions. Much can learned from the activities of the secretarius Niccolò da Correggio during the preparations for the reception of Anna Sforza in February 1491. A series of letters from Correggio to Eleonora (who was in Milan to escort Anna back to Ferrara) places the secretary in the organizational forefront. In one, dated 15 January 1491, Correggio writes to say that he and the duke were engaged in supervising "questi lavorieri et provisione de le noze". They stood on the ramparts of the Castel Vecchio
ad vedere li lavorieri se fano per la collatione; questi archi triumphali serano forniti a tempo et serano cose magnifiche et molto excellente et non se li perde tempo.331 Another letter suggests that Correggio was privy to signorial plans for the ordo of Anna's entry into Ferrara, and that he was responsible for ensuring that the ordines were observed:

... Il s. nostro Duca ha commenzato a disgrossare et dare forma al ordine de la intrata et de lo accepiare, et cussi al sedere ben stabilita dicto ordine et per removerse ogni die qualche cosa non pare a sua s. che se ne mandi anchora fuori copia et pero la v.s. me havera excusato se non he la mando... 332

Yet another letter finds Correggio explaining that the venue for the nupital mass had been switched from the cathedral to the ducal chapel because the duke had borrowed all of the bishop's tapestries, and that some confusion had arisen over the seating arrangements on the benches (scabelli) which had been placed there for the benefit of the illustri, since no one was sure of the customary procedure on these occasions:

... Il Signore fa fare xii scabelli in li quali hav-erano a stare ala messa li sposi et li ambassatori et sua Extia. non li sera, perche pare non se cost-umi chel parre intervenga in questo acto, non se sciamo, se la v.s. li vora essere o non, et pero la v.s. me ne poteria dare adviso et cussi anche se li parera, che li habiano ad essere altre donne o madonne perché se fariano tanti piu scabelli. 333

It is interesting to note that Correggio asks the duchess to write to him on matters related to the ordo of the entry, and the seating arrangements during the mass and the entertainments which would follow. As he later confirms while discussing the resolution of the seating problem in the salla grande (the venue for the present-
ation of classical comedies during the marital festivities), it was his duty to ascertain the duke's pleasure on ceremonial procedure:

... Il Signore per il sedere et stare in tribunale in salla grande ordina che li Ill. Don Alfonso et madonna Anna habiano a stare in li lochi piu digni et sua Signoria non ha anche ordinato posta seu loco per epsa, et anche non scia se la ge ordinara, Sua Extia. intenderia voluntiera se la v.s. vora loco in dicto tribunale, et quale loco le parera de havere, et cussi anche se intenderia voluntieri il parere de la sig. vostra per la Ill. marchesana de Mantua et del loco siche la v. Extia. poteramo, piscendoli darme adviso del tutto, acio che se intenda el suo parere, si per la intrara in la Citade, como per lordinate de la messa et del tribunale... 334

Correggio's correspondence certainly suggests that he was heavily involved with the organization of ceremonies in 1491. Coupled with Siverio Sivieri's professed close friendship with the maestro de le cerimonie in 1493, and the fact that both individuals were supporting rival candidates to the position of cancellarius in Bagnacavallo during the elections of that year, it appears likely that one or other of the secretaries was working part-time in a capacity similar to that of the papal magistri cerimoniarum by the 1490's; though this does not discount the possibility that the title may have belonged to one of the cancellieri.**335** Hopefully, further research will allow us to ascertain the identity of this Este official. The indications are, however, that the ceremonial management undertaken by the Este ceremonialist went no further than carrying out signorial instructions, and perhaps offering advice from time to time. Unlike the situation in northern Europe, where, for example, the premier maistre d'ostel Olivier de la Marche
and his four subordinate maitres had taken charge of the Duke of Burgundy's household ceremonial ("conduisent les cérémonies et ordre de l'ostel"), and where the royal herald's custodianship of the chivalric code led to his new role as arbitrator in matters of precedence and "the etiquette of intercourse in all situations undetermined by direct feudal obligations", or the situation in several Italian centres, where new offices were created as repositories of ceremonial knowledge, the Este dukes were themselves custodians of their own ceremonial. Indeed, it is doubtful whether any Herculean ceremonies could have taken place without Ercole's personal intervention, such was the nature of the duke's avowed interest in diplomatic protocol and decorum. Copious instructions detailing the ordines of civic receptions were issued by the signore to his officials. To ensure that he was received with the customary "strepiti de bombarde et schiopetri" in Reggio, for instance, Ercole despatched two seneschals bearing a list of orders:

Ad Regimen Regii:
Dilectissimi nostri. Mandemo laoltre Jacomo da Bologna et Ugolino tosabecho per nostri sescalchi a provedere et mettere in ordini li allogiamenti per la nostra venuta, et farano capo a vui si che strengitive insieme et datigli ogni favore et subsidio a mettere in ordine le cosse che secundo che da loro intenderiti essere bisogno perche da nui sono bene instructi di quello che hano a fare. 339

Similarly, Eleonora was obliged to relay Ercole's ordines for the reception of the Marquis of Mantua to officials in' Modena and Reggio:

Nui ge lo havemo facto et ordinato ali Regimenti nostri de Modena et de Regio che gli faciano grand-issimo honore per tute le terre del lochi nostri
If we examine these orders carefully, it is possible to discern different codes of ceremonial procedure being used to accord honours to different ranks of *persona*. The treatment of ambassadors was reasonably standardized, insofar as they could expect to be received by a fair-sized civic contingent, often with members of the Herculean court and musicians in attendance. The following order, addressed to Eleonora in October 1492, may be considered typical:

... Intendemo che hanno a venire li a ferrara alcuni amb. Venetiani li quali pare vadino a Roma. Vostra s. li fara allogiare et trattare honorevolmente et come se conviene ala loro condizione et mettera in ordine che gli undi incontro lo Ill. Don Alfonso nostro figliolo et cussi li Ill. Raynaldo et m. Alberto nostri fratelli cum de li gentilhomini et cum li trombiti et pifari et cum quello modo che parera a v.s. accio li sia facto honore, et che siano racolti cum bone dimostratione...

What makes this document especially interesting, is the fact that there would be a row involving Venetian officials over a question of ceremonial decorum several months later, and the reception of the Venetian ambassadors in 1492 would be employed as a precedent to resolve the problem. Diplomatic disputes of a ceremonial nature were of course not unusual in Ferrara. We might recall the bitter argument waged between the ambassadors of Milan and Venice over their personal location in the local Corpus Christi procession in 1485, and the ingenious solution arrived at by the duchess "acio che per lo
advenire se sapia come governare". Broadly speaking, the issue in 1493 was generically the same, and once again, it was Eleonora who settled the matter. The problem arose during the preparations for the reception of the Venetian cardinal Battista Zeno, when Zeno's father Thomaso wrote to the duchess on behalf of the Venetian Visdomino resident in Ferrara to inquire whether additional honours could be bestowed upon him as a token of Ferrara's loyalty to the League of St. Mark, specifically, as to whether the Visdomino could be considered as an ambassador of the Republic during the reception. Eleonora replied that "ogni conveniente honore" would be accorded the Visdomino, "et come si e facto per lo passato a li suoi precessori", her rationale being, as she related to Ercole, "che sempre ho inteso essere costume et voluntà de Vostra S. honorata epso Visdomino nel suo consueto loco, et come si e costumato per il passato, non come imbassatore ma come officiale per la prefata Signoria". Hence the ordo of Cardinal Zeno's entry into Ferrara placed the Milanese ambassador in the first processional rank, and "in secondo ordine... il prefato Visdomino". This decision so rankled the Visdomino that he refused to take part in the reception, and Eleonora was obliged to write a letter to Messer Thomaso detailing the Visdomino's misplaced sense of honour:

... De la quale cosa ne ho facto dare notitia al prefato M. Thomaso montrandoli che epso Visdomino ha torto in questo, et chel scia bene che lo Imbassatore de Milano debe essere honorato et preposto come imbassatore, et epso Visdomino come officiale, et cussi essere costume de Vostra Extia. de fare in similibus, adducendogli lo exemplo di quello che
fece Vostra S. verso epso Visdomino quando vene li Magci. Ambassatori venetiani che andavano a Roma a la Sta. de nostro S., et come la non attese ad ordine che fusse posto da quella, quando in alcuno loco se convinge Imbassatore venetiano cum epso Visdomino... 343

Here is a perfect illustration of the fundamental changes in contemporary attitudes towards modes of public behaviour, or more precisely, to what Garrett Mattingly called the "ceremonies and procedures" of the "new diplomacy". 344 There is a clear distinction made between the ceremonial identity of diplomatic agents (ambassador as opposed to "official"), a suggestion that the identity and dignity of different personae prescribed a fixed behaviour on the part of the receptionists (determining both the size of the reception committee and the agent's ceremonial position in the processional ordo), and a basic conviction that the systematic action of ceremonies could not be altered, at least at the rank of ambassador and below. Yet this systematic mode of ceremonial thinking was of such recent vintage in Ferrara that we may still detect a certain degree of improvisation; the use of precedents instead of definitive codes of procedure to resolve questions of decorum, and ceremonial decisions taken at the highest governmental level rather than by professional ceremonialists. Significant too, is the fact that two additional explanatory letters were sent to Venice in this case, "perche da ogni canto se intenda lo amore sincero et benivolentia che la porta a quella Illustriissima Signoria". If the principal goal of ceremonial action was to express ritual continuity in "an inherent internal state of the nation", 345 it was yet
capable of consolidating or breaking off diplomatic relations.

Surveying the innumerable receptions accorded secular princes in Ferrara during the second half of the fifteenth-century, it is immediately apparent that the majority of them were exceptionally lavish, perhaps varying only in the amount of money the signore was willing to part with in each case. The most precise calculations had to be made upon ceremonial expenditure, not only to keep costs reasonably close to the state's fiscal means (though we have seen that the Estensi were not above bankrupting themselves), but also to ensure that honours proportionate to the quality of his station were bestowed upon the visitor. The kind of discussion which doubtless went on prior to the arrival of any sovereign prince is revealed in a letter concerning the reception of the dukes of Milan and Bari in 1486:

...havessemo le vostre de iii del presente, et se piu presto non li havemo facto resposta e stato perche havemo expectato parlare cum Antoniomaria et anche de havere da Milano le liste de le comitive de li Illmi. Sri. Duchi de Milano et de Bari, hora che havemo havisse dicte liste, et che habiamo parlato cum Antoniomaria, quale e stato a nui come heri scrivessimo a v.s. gli dicemo che habiamo diffusamente ragionato cum Antoniomaria circa le provisione che se hanno a fare per honorare li prefati Illustrissimi Signori. Et cussi circa il modo de la spesa et del tuto lo habiamo ad plenum informato... 346

Of the many documents which help to illustrate the signorial rationale behind this careful ceremonial planning, one in particular is worthy of special comment. This is a letter from Ercole to the duchess regarding the reception of Lodovico Sforza and Beatrice d'Este in May 1493. The text reads as follows:
Visto quanto ne scrive la vostra per la sua lora del die de heri circa lo intrate lie in ferrara de lo Illmo. s. Ludovico cum dire che seria forsi meglio che se venisse per la via de servi fino ala casa de Bonlei, et lie voltarsi per la Gosmaria ala via grande per li rispecti che vostra s. allega. Gli dicemo che circa questo intrare se ne remettemo al parere de la prefata s. vostra la quale fara secundo li parera il meglio et piu honore nostro, maisi che ni pareria bene, che il se havesse assere le boche de tutte quelle strate dove non se havera andare, accio che la brigata non se vadi spargruando per la terra et che tute vadino per una via et non andare ale avanzate come fariano percheci a questo modo la intrata non potera essere se non bella et honorevole. Siche vostra s. li mettere quello ordine che li parera necessario... 347

One of the first things to be noticed about this letter is the selection of the processional route and the closing off of sidestreets. Ercole knew the topography of his city well, the interminable maze of narrow lanes and alleys which apparently waylaid persons unfamiliar with Ferrara's urban terrain. There was always a danger that individuals would become separated from the main processional body and wander off in the wrong direction, or that some would choose avenues alternative to those designated in the ordo: barricading the entrances to streets bordering the processional route made sure "che tute vadino per una via". The Via dei Servi, Via Gusmaria, and Via Grande, these were the major arteries leading from the bridge at Castel Tedaldo to the piazza and the ducal palace, though they were some three to four yards (braze) narrower than the "vie nove" of the Herculean Addizione where, estimated one observer, a man would have to take twenty-five large steps ("tute large pedi vinticinque") to traverse one of the new boulevards (the width of Ferrara's older thoroughfares must have ranged between a minimum of ten and a maximum of sixteen
Walking through the medieval quarter of the city today, it is difficult to imagine how the great princely retinues managed to negotiate their way along these narrow roads. The sheer size of the prince's cortège, the inevitable crush of human bodies, horses, and carriages, surely defined "l'espace de l'Entrée" as intensely claustrophobic. For this reason, the signore normally took precautions to ensure his own personal safety and to maintain the public peace. "Inanti che facessemo la intrata", the duke despatched one of his criers with a trumpeter to the piazza, where it was decreed "che ogniuno deponesse le arme, et che niuno facesse disordine ne tumulto, sotto pena de la furca".

Aside from the practical considerations of selecting the proper route into the piazza, the signore had also given some thought to the conceptual design of the entry. From Paolo da Legnago, we learn that Sforza's entrata into Ferrara found the city prepared to greet a triumphant imperator, with the streets strewn with grasses and flowers, and triumphal arches erected along the processional route:

El di sequente a hore tredesse fu ornata la torra dove ha vena apassare ditto Signore e sposa, et prima fra schato tuto el ponte. Et posto alla porta l'arma del signor Ludovico qual era una testa di moro in campo verde. Et posto le sue insignes sopra le tore cum gran strepito de campane et tamburi, trombe et piffari, fu introducto esso signore cum la sua sposa sopra uno cavallo biancho ornata de drappo d'oro con zoglie de mirabil valore, accom- pagnata da sue donzelle e done gran parte a cavallo el resto in careti da corte. Drietto al quale seg- uitava poi la Duchessa di ferrara anchora lei acc- ompagnata da le sue pure a caval et altre zentil- done in carota da corte. Et poi cum le loro corte seguitate chi donati e chi di drietto, con le quale ge era la nobilita de Ferrara. Et veneno per susso
la via grande volto seno alla piazza. Ma per ferrara a corti tribi erano certi archi triumphanti dopinti a varie hystorie molto belli, et per la terra dalle finistre eran trato sopra quelli herbe et fiori odorisseri cum altre voce di giubillo cum soni et canti. Et arrivato in ultimo alla porta della intrata del palazzo del duca, sopra l'Archo frascato erano questi versi in littere grosse fatti per Messer Tito Strozzo nobile Cavaliero;


Fatta l'intrata del palazzo cum grandissimo ordine furno ascesse le scale intrando in quelle stantie apparati da Imperator, dove proprio habitava el duca, el quale in quel tempo se retiro in castello. 351

Ercole's letter to Eleonora suggests that the purpose of the triumphal décor was to preserve the state's honour. The duke certainly had no intention of allowing Sforza, who arrived with some fifty carriages laden with all manner of precious objects, to overshadow him in the public forum. "Nui siamo in pensiero de honorare sue excellentie quanto sia possibile", Ercole advised his bankers. 352 If we probe beneath the surface of consumptive expenditure, however, we may perceive some additional functions and features of triumphal scenography in Renaissance Ferrara. Let us conclude our survey of ceremonial by reconstructing several triumphal entries.

Estensi Triumphs

The Triumphs of Borso d'Este in Modena and Reggio: 1453

On the 18th of June, 1452, the Emperor Frederick III invested Borso d'Este as Duke of Modena, Reggio, and Count of Rovigo. 353 One year later, in the company of a magnificent retinue, Borso left Ferrara to take formal possession ("signorie possessive") of his cities. We
know nothing of Borso's preparations for the journey, but we may follow the duke's progress to Modena and his entrance into the city through the eyes of the cancellarius Vittorio Pavoni. The morning of 19 June 1453, the company reached the citadel of Bondeno and crossed the river Panaro, some twelve miles west of Ferrara. Trees had been transplanted to line the road leading to the castle, and the popolo turned out to acclaim their prince, throwing garlands in the path of the procession. By late afternoon, the company had turned south, journeying as far as Finale (another seven miles) "dove fu recevuto lo Illmo. nostro s. cum clamori et soni de campane et soni et balli et feste che vi haria parso una meraviglia". The morning of the 20th found Borso in San Felice:

Et da quella communita fu facto quella festa che certamente haria bastado a una citade: furono mandati infiniti puti fuori de la terra contra el Signore cum bandirolle in mane dipincte ale arme ducale li quali acompagorno inseme col popolo la soa Signuria cum grande festivitade entro a la terra. Lui se deseno et ceno a spexe dela communitade et dicontinuo in soni de campane, pive et tamburi.

A delegation of thirty Modenese citizens arrived, and the following day, they led the duke from San Felice to a point some three miles outside their city. Here Borso halted to don his ceremonial robes of gold and the beretta bearing the ducal insignia, which he had received from the emperor at his investiture.

As Pavoni relates, Modena was prepared to greet a triumphant imperator. The streets were covered with cloth and strewn with grasses, tapestries hung from every window, and children were given palms and garlands to throw and wave. Immediately inside the city gates
were three triumphal cars; the first bearing an allegorical representation of the seven cardinal virtues, with the figure of Liberality scattering coins to the crowd; the second bearing the figure of S. Gemignano (patron saint of Modena), who holds a model city in his hands; the third bearing an allegorical figure of Peace:

Each of these rappresentazioni delivered special messages to the duke in the piazza. Following a mass in the cathedral, Borso was conducted to a tribunal in the centre of the public forum, "dove monto et fu metuto il nostro Duca speciosos a sedere in spectaculo di
tuto il populo". From the triumphal car bearing the seven cardinal virtues, the figure of Liberality presented an oration in Latin verse signifying the fidelity and devotion of the Modenese towards their sovereign prince. While the other Virtues made their reverences to Borso, Liberality invited the duke to use his magnanimity to ensure a plentiful supply of grain for the popolo. A young boy then mounted the triumphal car bearing the allegorical figure of Peace to deliver an oration, inviting Borso to maintain the security and tranquility of the Modenese:

... poi facto tacere la brigata, se presenta quella altra festa de lo olivo, et monta sul carobio uno altro garzonetto bene adorno et fece una oration de pace in versi ritimi chel fu una zentileza cum pregare la excellentia del nostro s. volesse servare quella citade et tute le altre soe in bona et sanc- ta pace et tranquilitade et fornita quella pure ale feste.

Finally, the figure of S. Gemignano descended from his triumphal car to render homage, presenting Borso with a token symbolizing the duke's possession of Modena: "la citade laquale haveva in mane". 354

Documents published by Adolpho Levi have added greatly to our knowledge of Borso's triumphal entry into Reggio. 355 The duke approached the city on 4 July, halting in the suburbs at the church of S. Barnaba, where he was greeted by a procession of children carrying pennants (banderuole) bearing the ducal coat of arms. After exchanging his riding habit for the ceremonial robes and beretta inside the church, Borso entered Reggio under a baldacchino carried by six Anziani, passing through the gate of S. Pietro. Inside the city, along
the processional route to the cathedral, seven rappresentazione had been positioned. Close by the city gates, Reggio's patron S. Prospero and two angels, who bore two keys (one gold and one silver; one to open and one to close the city gates) and a sceptre (baton of justice or bachetta), appeared to float under a baldachinoheld by three other members of the celestial court, who stood on columns. Below these a large wooden disk rotated "circondata da fanciulli angelificati, che suonavano cembali e avevano nelle mani altri diversi istrumenti". Descending from heaven, S. Prospero consigned the keys and sceptre to Borso's custody, who duly returned them in recognition of Reggio's communal privileges. Opposite this contrivance was a triumphal car pulled by four horses, in the midst of which stood "una cattedra innalzata con tre gradini dal piano del carro, sopra un palco ornato decentemente di drappi di seta". A young boy representing the figure of Justice sat on the second level, with a sword in his hands and a pair of scales at his feet. At the corners of the wagon, four boys disguised as doctors of law held a baldachinodepicted with the arms of the duke and the Comune of Reggio; at the corners of the baldachinofour angels carried helmets, two bearing the ducal and two bearing the communal insignia. An angel sitting at the feet of Justice addressed verses to the duke, telling him how she had been scorned by the world since the death of the wise Roman emperors but now found herself captured by Borso's love; and the figure of Justice descended to invite Borso to sit on the vacant throne, who modestly declined.
Following these presentations, the cortège moved towards the piazza. Leading the procession were two mounted knights, each bearing a standard depicted with the arms of the duke and the Comune, and behind them came a trireme rowed by "Greeks", who used their sweeps to beat kettledrums. Next came a triumphal car pulled by fifty men which bore a silver unicorn symbolizing Prudence, which stood by the side of a small lake under a date-palm; opposite the unicorn, the figure of Charity held a lighted taper. In succession came singers and musicians, the chariot bearing S. Prospero, the duke's retinue, and finally the popolo, acclamining their prince. Several halts were made. Near the church of S. Pietro, a St. Peter (represented by a young man in pontifical habit) descended from heaven to offer Borso a laurel crown signifying the dominion of Reggio. By the side of a canal, a column had been erected on top of which stood a devil; in front of the column, a fountain threw wine, water, and fire into the air. As the cortège approached, a priest stepped forward to announce the arrival of Borso, "gonfaloniere della Chiesa cristiana", and pulling the fuse of a carbine hidden inside the column, toppled the devil into the water. Next came an allegorical mirror-of-princes, with Caesar seated on a tribunal, and by his side, seven women in the guise of the cardinal virtues: Justice bearing the sword and scales, Fortitude holding a column, Temperance pouring water and wine from two pitchers, Prudence regarding herself in a mirror, Faith holding a cross, Hope standing by an
anchor, and Charity offering a cloak to a naked individual. Beside the Virtues there was a vacant throne, and opposite this a revolving map of the world (a disk) bearing the figure of Fortune, who proffered the locks of his golden hair to the duke. Caesar informed Borso that the Virtues were prepared to enthrone him if he paid heed to their instruction, and begged the duke not to trust Fortune and his fickle world.

As we observed during Borso's entry into Modena, the pageants were designed both to advertise the glory of the ruler and to commit him publicly to certain policies. Prior to entering the city, for example, Borso was compelled to recognize the rights, privileges, and immunities granted to the Comune by returning the keys to the city gates to the custody of S. Prospero. Similarly, the destruction of the column representing Idolatry committed him to the protection of the local Church. Caesar impressed upon Borso the Comune's conception of the ideal prince (the prince confronts his own figurative image in the person of an Emperor), and Justice reminded the duke of his role as law-giver and magistrate. These messages were subsequently re-enforced in the piazza following the customary mass. From her triumphal car, the figure of Charity delivered verses eulogizing the duke, but she also prayed that he remember the prudence of the unicorn (which purged the water of poison with its horn before drinking from the lake) and exhorted him to deliver the reggiani from their afflictions. S. Pros-
pero offered the "city" and the allegiance of the reggiani to Borso, but he also invited the duke to exalt law-abiding citizens and to punish malefactors, to maintain the public peace and to assist good citizens by passing equitable laws. Finally, from a tabernacle (paradiso) in front of the cathedral bearing Christ, the Virgin Mary, and a heavenly host of saints, three angels descended to offer Borso an olive branch signifying the duke's love of peace. Like King Charles VIII of France passing through the streets of Paris and Rouen, Reggio's prince was initiated and educated in the nature of his own sovereignty.

The Reception of Anna Sforza in Ferrara: 1491

Following the splendid marriage of her daughter Beatrice to Lodovico Sforza in January 1491, Eleonora wrote to Ercole from Milan with great concern. Evidently, the duchess was worried about the quality of the Ferrarese ceremonies destined to honour the forthcoming marriage of Alfonso d'Este to Anna Sforza. "Qui si serva molto ordina et ceremonie come scia v.s.", she wrote of one festa, "et in queste feste non si sente ni vede tumulto ne strepito al mondo ne per lo ballare ne per lo Intrare et stare in sala et camere ne per altro... se ben sono cussi conforto v.s. a fare che da Casa nostra similiter non manchi niente come sum certa che la fara". 356 Elsewhere she urged the duke to select individuals with some knowledge of ceremonial ("persone apte per sapere honorare") to supervise the reception of the cortège accompanying Anna to Ferrara. 357 The corr-
espondece of Niccolò da Correggio, who may have been acting as Ercole's master-of-ceremonies on this occasion, reveals the detailed nature of the ceremonial planning undertaken by the duke in early February. The Zornale de la spenderia per conto de la noce di Alfonso I con Anna Sforza may be consulted for lists of expenses concerning alimentary provisions.

The company escorting Anna to Ferrara left Milan on the 1st of February, spending five days in Pavia. Embarking in seven large bucintori and one-hundred lesser craft (nave) on the morning of the 6th, the company journeyed on to Cremona and Mantua before arriving at the monastery of S. Giorgio (located on the bank of the river Po opposite Ferrara), where Anna lodged on the evening of the 11th. The Ferrarese entrata of Anna Sforza was an event of striking political and visual significance, and naturally, it was well recorded; though on the whole, the documentation (descriptive accounts) is slightly disappointing. Here is Mario Equicola's recollection of the entrata:

Adi 11 Febraro venero a Ferrara con 7 bucintori et circa 100 navi, stette la notte a S. Georgio. Il di sequente a hore 22, entro nella Citta con gran festa accompagnata da trombetti et da 40 pifari, tamburini, et piu di 120 cavaglieri, et 1200 cavalli, con gentilhomini, Ambasciatori, et Cavaglieri, fra quelli erano li Ambasciatori Venetiani, Fiorentini, et Luchesi; il Signor Gio. Bentivoglio et suoi figliole; il Marchese di Mantova et il Signor Ermes fratello della spoza; e furono fatti 4 archi uno su il Policino, sopra del quale era la diva Venere in un monte, uno a Schivanoia, e sopra li erano duoi cavalli sfenati che tiravano il Carro del Sole, uno da S. Francesco con cavalli che tiravano il Carro di Cupido, laltro fra il domo et il Palazo Ducale, alla somita erano duoi Giganti dorati con un cavallo armato fra loro; era ornata riccamente la sala del Palazo di S. Ecc-
Some confusion has arisen over the subject matter of the triumphal arches. Pietro Ghinzoni, after studying the ambassadorial despatches to the Duke of Milan, reported that they represented Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, and Mars (with analogous inscriptions). Paolo da Legnago's version, however, fits Equicola's description almost verbatim (suggesting perhaps that both chroniclers had access to and copied an official narrative):

Et furono fatte a queste nozze quattro Archi triumphali, cioè uno fra el vescovato et il palazzo del duca, dipinto a varie fantasie, alla cima del qual erano due giganti dorati et uno cavallo armato in mezzo a loro. Uno da S. Francesco sopra el qual era un bellissimo Caro cum el Dio d'amore tirato da bellissimi cavalli. Uno da Schivenoio sopra el quale erano due bellissimi cavalli nudi e sferinati che tiravano il Caro del Sole. Uno suso el Polesene sopra el quale era Venus in un monte, et tutti quelli Archi erano fatti a loggie dorati e depinti a varii et bellissimi modi.

Ugo Caleffini's relation permits us to follow the procession from the monastery of S. Giorgio to the ducal palace, and to map out the location of the arches. With Alfonso and Anna seated in a triumphal car (curru triumphali), and an enormous baldacchino positioned over the couple "portato per xx doctori de leze et xx de medicina del studio de ferrara bene vestiti", the cortège set off from the monastery across the bridge of S. Giorgio, entering the city by way of the Porta di Sotto. From this point, the company proceeded "per la via de suso la giara, ove se dice suso el polesene de Sant'Antonio (now the Via della Ghiaia)... insino ala casa di heredi del Conte Gasparo da foiano", where the
triumphal arch of Venus stood, "suso el quale era uno che recepto alcuni versi per la venuta de la sposa". The records of the Compusteria tell us that this arch was designed and painted by Romano de' Bonacossi, who received the sum of L. 37,000 for his work; that the arch was constructed by the master carpenter Bonaventura Novelino and eleven of his apprentices who shared between them L. 92,170; and that the iron work and nails used by the carpenters cost L. 30,111. The wood needed to build the arch would have been drawn from a special store of munitions "per far quattro archi triumphali", laid aside in December of the preceding year.

From here the procession turned north to the Via Grande, and moving east along this route, backtracked to the Via de San Andrea, turned north once again "et vene insino a San Francesco traversando et passando per mezo Schifanoio, ove era uno altro simile Archo...". The arch was designed and painted by Sigismondo Fiorini, a well-known festaiuolo, who received 75 LM for his work, though we know that this was only a partial payment. Maestro Paolo da Tamara and thirteen of his helpers shared L. 163,170 for their carpentry, and Maestro Domenego dal Cavalo earned 8 LM "per conto de fare dui cavali che andorno suxo lo archo triumfale de schivenoio". The cost of the iron work and nails amounted to L. 48,118; the wood was drawn from the special stores mentioned above. After listening to the orations praising the
bride, the cortège rounded the corner to the church of S. Francesco and the Triumph of Cupid. Gabriele Bonaccioli is listed as the festaiuolo who designed and painted the arch, receiving the sum of 48 LM for his work, and "mistro bartolamio da modena sculptore" cast the horses pulling Cupid's chariot (L. 10,0,0); Maestro Francesco de Rigoni "et diexe altri" were paid L. 124,2,0 for constructing the arch, and the iron and nails cost L. 16,15,2. From here (there was a halt for "versi pure a laude... de la sposa") the company marched onto the Via dei Sabbioni, the route leading to the piazza. The arch bearing the "dui giganti dorati" and the armoured charger, stationed between the cathedral and the ducal palace, must have been a more ambitious project than the others, for we find six artists engaged in the decoration of it: the festaiuolo Fino dei Marsigli, his brother Bernardino, Rinaldo Cerchiaro, and three unknown Modenese artists who were lodged in Fino's house. Fino and his companions were paid 185 LM for their work, and the carpenters received L. 149,15,0. The iron and nails cost L. 30,15,0. Caleffini's narrative gives us a fair idea of the sort of organized confusion which must have attended the entrata. Arriving in the piazza at the head of a company which included in excess of one-hundred musicians, and four thousand "cavalli", the duke proceeded to the communal dungeons and liberated the prisoners held there. Following the recital of verses at the triumphal arch, the "illustri" entered the ducal palace, leaving the baldacchino and triumphal car behind for
The popolo, who tore them to pieces in spontaneous "acts of joy":

... per un altra muda venendo da san francesco suso la via da li sapioni et de li se ando ala piazza cum bene 76 trombeti senza li pifari et tamburini et cum tristissimo tempo et de piove et de gazare le case per la neve cum cativissima via cum circa quattro milia cavali et cum tanto popolo che era una cossa stupenda a vedere il populo tanto venuto a vedere et cum infinite persone stravestite et in mascerate, et cussi cum la gratia de messer jesu chri

The Reception of Lucrezia Borgia in Ferrara: 1502

A. The Ordo of the Entrata (described by Isabella d'Este in a letter to her husband Francesco Gonzaga).

Illustrissimo signor mio. L'ordine de la intrata quale hozi ha facta questa illustrissima sposa, et quanto digno de adviso ho notato, serà descripto per me più ordinatamente che si potra. Prima de un pezo vennero li settantacinque balesterii a cavallo del signor mio patre, cum saglioni tutti a livrea de pano biancho et rosso, cum tre capi diversamente vestiti. Seguitarono poi ottanta trombette, fra quali erano sei del Duca di Romagna, vestiti de uno saglione, mezo brocato d'oro, et l'altro mezo di raso morello et biancho; vintiquatro tra piffari et tromboni. Dretto erano li cortesani et nobili ferraresi senza ordine, fra quali furono contate settanta cathe

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Illustrissimo signor mio. L'ordine de la intrata quale hozi ha facta questa illustrissima sposa, et quanto digno de adviso ho notato, serà descripto per me più ordinatamente che si potra. Prima de un pezo vennero li settantacinque balesterii a cavallo del signor mio patre, cum saglioni tutti a livrea de pano biancho et rosso, cum tre capi diversamente vestiti. Seguitarono poi ottanta trombette, fra quali erano sei del Duca di Romagna, vestiti de uno saglione, mezo brocato d'oro, et l'altro mezo di raso morello et biancho; vintiquatro tra piffari et tromboni. Dretto erano li cortesani et nobili ferraresi senza ordine, fra quali furono contate settanta cathe
stafa havea otto stafieri, quattro piccoli, cioè puttini, et quattro grandi, cum zuppone a la franciosa di brochato d'oro et veluto morello, cum calze de pano morello et incarnato. Dopo, andava la comitiva de la sposa: fra la quale erano decte chipppe de Spagnoli, cum saglii di brocato d'oro et di veluto negro schietto: tra tutti loro sono dodice cathene d'oro non molto grandi, quali farano paragone a quelli de la compagnia mia. Succedevano li Episcopi: cioè, el Vescovo de Hadria, el Vescovo de Comachio, quello de Gervia, et due mandati dal Papa. Apresso gli erano li ambassadori acopiati a du: cioè, il Luchese et uno Senese, l'altro Senese et lo Fiorentino, li due Venetiani vestiti de manti longhi de raso creme, fodrati di panche: li quattro ammassadori Romani cum manti longhi de brocato d'oro, foderati de raso cremesino. Dreto li quali erano sei tamburini et li dos Aloches, vestiti di brocato d'oro et raso di diversi colori. La sposa sotto il baldachino de raso creme-ino portato de docturi; nanti la quale era menato a mano uno cavallo leardo grosso, donatogli dal signore, guarnito de veluto creme,ino cum certi ricami d'oro; otto stafieri suoi, cum saglioni de raso morello et giallo et calze de li medemi colori. Lei cavalcava una mula morella guarnita de veluto, tutto coperto d'oro tirato, cum certi chiodetti d'oro battuto, che è una bellissima et richa cosa. Indosso havea una camora cum manighe larghe a la francosa de tela d'oro, et raso morello intersceto a list insieme: sopra havea una sbernia de oro tirato rizzo, alto e basso, tutta aperta da uno canto, fodrata de armellini, et medesimamente erano foderate le maniche de la vesta. Al collo, uno vezo de diamanti et rubini, qual fu de la bona memoria de Madama di Ferrara; in testa, la scufia de zoglie che li mandò il signor mio patre a Roma, insieme cum quello vezo senza lenza. Sei camerieri de don Alphonso la aredenavano, vestiti diversamente, ma tutti cum cathena grande al collo. Di fuori dal baldachino, lo ambassatore francesse solo la accompagnava. Dreto, la duchessa de Urbino et lo signore mio patre, apparo. La duchessa era a man dritta, sopra una mula morella fornita de veluto negro, temestata de certi trini d'oro battuto, che sono signi de astrologia; al colo un vezo de perle, in testa una scufia d'oro. Il signor Duca havea sotto un cavallo morello guarnito de veluto negro, cum uno rubone in dosso di veluto morello. Seguivano poi due zentildone, cioè D. Hieronyma Borgia et una Ursina, vestite de veluto negro, et dreto li era madonna Adriana vidua, vecchia, parente del papa. Ne altre donne gli erano a cavallo. Madonna Lucretia Bentivolia (ne la caretà coperta di brocato d'oro), cum duodeci altre carette pien de zentildone de la sposa, ferrarese et bolognese, la seguitavano. Dreto, erano condute due mule pur de la sposa, fornite de veluto negro guarnito de argento battuto, diversamente lavorato: muli cinquantasei coperti de raso morello et giallo, et dodici coperti de raso morello col giallo.
Alcuni archi, come per altre mie ho scripto a la Excel- lentia Vostra, sono per li cantoni dove la passava; cum certe representationi che non meritano commoratione: pero non se n'è tenuto conto. Ale vinti-quattro hore giunse suso la piazza, dove hebbe spec- tulo de due che descersero gioso de le corde: uno da la torre di Rigobello in terra; l'altro da la toretta del palazzo de la Ragione. A la scala de la corte, io cum la comitiva mia e molte zentil done ferraresi, la recolsi. Li balestrieri rapirono il baldachino; li staferi del signor mio patre et don Alphonso, contessero per haverle la mula: ma finalmente, quelli de don Alphonso la obtenero. Da li ambasatori, el signor Don Alphonso, la duchessa de Urbino, mi, et tutto el resto fu accompagnata per la sala grande a le camere ducale, quale sono apparate de li aparamenti de casa: dove stati un pezo, tutti retornassimo a le stantie nostre. Credo che questa notte se accompagnneranno.

B. The Route of the Entrata (described by the chronicler Paolo de Zerbinati). 377

Et entrata dentro nella Città a hore 22 a un bel tempo sereno, ivi su il piano delle fosse appresso la prima casa vi era un tribunale fatto in forma di Tor- ione tondo, depinto con due collone dal latti. In cima vi erano due balle tone, che haveano buttare fuoco, et sopra dicto tribunale erano 3 putti vestiti da Deo con balle doro in mano, cioe Venere, Pallade, e Giunone, et gionta che fu la sposa appresso il tribunale una delle dicte Deo comincio a parlare receven- dola gratiosamente et in questo dire farno tiratti certi raggi di fuoco verso Po e le Balle comincieron a brusare e fare strepito come fano il raggi, per modo che il cavallo della sposa hebbe paura... et si levo dinanzi per modo che fu necessita che la sposa cadella da cavallo in piedi perché ragolo gia ne si fece male alcuno, il qual cavallo era un corstiero leardo, coperto di veluto cremesino ricamente tutto sino in terra; poi li fu menato una delle sue mulle coperta di pano d'oro et in continent monta su quella...; poi sene venero da S. Giovanni e da Servi e da S. Domenico per insino al cantone de dove era un altro tribunale, o Portone, con altre demonstra- ioni; poi si voltorno per S. Stefano a sene andorno a S. Andrea e in Schivenoio alli capuzzoli, nella qual croxara che si trova avoltar da Schifenoia alli capuzzoli vi era un altro tribunale o Portone; e sene venero al cantone dellli Muzzarelli ove si volta a S. Francesco e ivi vi era un altro Tribunale con un bove in cima rosso ove li furno recitati versi; poi si voltorno e sene andorno da S. Francesco a el Saracino, et ivi era un altro Tribunale con 12 putti in forma di Angelli et uno che sonava una lira et tutti ad uno parlorno in
laude della sposa, et poi sene andorno per la via de Sabioni, e gioíssero alla fontana et andorno dritto al Campanile nova del Vescoato, ove se fermo cum la mulla et il baldachino...

C. The Triumphal Arches (described by Niccolò Cagnola of Parma, secretary to the ambassador of France).

Et per la terra in quattro lochi forno facte representacione dignissime. Et subito che forno entro da la Porta, perchè sagitavano fulgori, lo cavalo de la illustrissima spoxa, dove hera su, spaventòsi talmente che l'hebbe a gitare in terra. Et lei ridendo desmontò et ascese una de le mule sopradicte. La prima representatione heranno tre dee con pomi d'oro in mano, che cantavano versi vulgari in laude, de li illustrissimi spoxi, la 2a. hera uno Hercule col dio d'amore, pur che recitavano versi in laude ut supra, la 3a. hera un Mercurio cum certe altre nymphe apresso, che recitavano versi ut supra, la quarta hera uno bove rosso cum una nymphe a cavallo, che recitava versi ut supra, et altre nymphe a pede con octo bovi con dardi in mano e octo satyri che balavano e saltavano.

While Cagnola's narrative identifies the themes of the rappresentazioni, it mentions only four triumphal arches (nor does it tell us where the arches were situated). Like Paolo de Zerbinati, the Marchesa di Cotrone described five tribunals, and located them on the processional route. Her version of the entrata may be found in a relatively unknown letter to Francesco Gonzaga:

Abiando dato ordine il Signore ducha di cavalchare oggi ale 19 ore per acompanyare la sposa ala predita ora surobarono in corte tuti li ambasatori li quali andarono in questo modo; prima queli di luchesi di perse et drieo queli di Senesi et poi queli di flor- entini et poi queli di Veneciani et poi quelo dil Re di franca acompanyato di Signore ducha vestiti con oro velemente et poi quatro ambasatori dil papa vestiti di quatro veste di brocato doro assai richo, in questo modo andaro fino ala casa dil Signore messer alberto onde la sposa hera alogiata. Dita madama lucretia se parti per vegnire dintro di ferrara vestita di una galante camara di domascho carmesino tes- uta... una sbernia di brochato doro sopra... suso uno cavalro grosso liardo... Vene acompanyata dil ambasa- tore di franza fino al intrare dila terra, onde herano aparechiati li dotori cum uno baldachino di veluto
carmesino... drieto il baldachino vegnea la Illma.
duchessa di orbino... et li altre zentil done di
mano in mano secondo il grado suo; come forono in-
trate dentro hera fato uno tribunale onde herano
suso certe dee che diseno alquanti versi et dintro
si butava focho dil quale focho il cavallo di madama
lucretia che paura et buto zu la sposa abenchè fosse
pigliata et tegnuta per forza al fine ando zu, et fo
messa suso una mula bene adobata che drieto li mena-
vano. La via che fece fo questa; per la via di santo
domenichino fino di casa di forrategli, et era uno
tribunale al modo di prima, et per santo stefano ala
via grande fino ala roversa di santo andrea et hera
uno altro tribunale, et poi per schifanoio et per li
capucioli ala casa di musarello et ivi hera unaltr
tribunale, et per santo francisco et voltarono al
sarasano et hera uno altro tribunale, et venero in
piazza, onde si rudeceno tutti li trombeti che erano
vegnuti davanti sempre sonando che herano quasi cento
li sonavano insieme che facevano uno teribile
rumore... 379

The records of the Compusteria and Guardaroba, however,
suggest that there were six triumphal arches constructed
in the city. These were as follows:

(1) "Archo trionfale al ponte di Castel tealto"

The company entered the city across the bridge of
Castel Tedaldo, where, according to the ceremonial narra-
tives, there was a triumphal arch bearing Venus, Minerva,
and Juno stationed near the moat immediately inside the
urban precincts. Listed as festaiuoli are Bartolomeo
Brasoni and Giovanni Giacomo da Imola, who also designed
and painted the triumphal arches at the church of S.
Domenico and outside the residence of Gerardo Saraceno:

Le infrascripte e sequente speixe deno dare adi dito
la infrascripta e sequente quantita de d. per epsse
e faciam boni a maestro bartolomeo braxoni e zoane
da Imola conpani depintori per lo amontare de avere
depinto li infrascripti lavoreri per lo tempo dele
noze como distinamente apare per una sua scripta de
foli 2 de carte vista per mi e posta in filza in
monizione...

Item per la depintura de uno tribonale el quale e
fu fato da san domenego.......... L. 8,0,0

Item per la depintura del tribonale da saraxino
The arch was constructed by Maestro Michele da Porto and his apprentices, and they drew their munitions from a special store laid aside in January "al spexa dela Cita".  

(2) "Tribunale di San Domenego"

From Castel Tedaldo, the procession marched north, passing by the church of S. Giovanni and the Servite monastery (S. Maria dei Servi) to the church of S. Domenico, which may have been the location of Cagnola's triumphal arch bearing Hercules and Cupid. Save the names of the festaiuoli (as above) and the expenses of the carpentry, we know nothing of the allegorical presentation which evidently took place.

(3) "Archo trionfale a San Stefano"

Leaving the church of S. Domenico, the company turned south into the Via Boccacanale of S. Stefano, proceeding to the denominational church. Here again, we cannot know whether the rappresentazione corresponds with one of the arches described by Cagnola. It may be, however, that Francesco da Vento or "maestro hectore et compagnia depinturi" designed the arch, since both of these minor Herculean pittori worked with Maestro Antonio Schanalocha, who is listed as the carpenter in charge of construction.

(4) "Tribunale de la Porta di Sotto"

Rejoining the Via Grande, the procession moved east along this boulevard to the Via delle Rovere of
S. Andrea, which joined the Via Grande near the Porta di Sotto. Both the Autentico and Memoriale of 1502 confirm that a triumphal arch was stationed at these crossroads (Zerbinati suggests that it was near the Palazzo Schifanoia), and tell us that the festaiuolo was a "Maestro Morelio", one of a number of minor court artists working at the Herculean court near the turn of the century:

Spexa de noze di dare adi dito L. dexevo de m. per lei faciam boni a maestro morelio depintore per lo amontare de avere depinto dui tribonali che se fe per le noze, uno dale bechiarie dala porta de soto e laltrro da caxa de muzarelli che instano L. 16 m. e per avere fato uno pedale che ge anda suxo uno bove grande e uno al naturala dado de zonaperto. da cordo L. 3 m. como apare per una scripta............ L. 19,0,0. 383

The arch was constructed by "Maestro Zolo da Tamara et compagna".384

(5) "Tribunale da la Caxa del muzarelo"

Proceeding north past the Palazzo Schifanoia into the Via di S. Girolamo, the company arrived at the residence of Lodovico Muzzarelli, himself a member of the cortège and one of the richest merchants in the city.385 Here, according to Zerbinati, a triumphal arch was positioned "con un bove in cima rosso ove li furno recitati versi", which certainly refers to the arch mentioned by Cagnola as the fourth rappresentazione. Aside from listing Maestro Morelio as festaiuolo, the records of the Compusteria also cite payments made to a Maestro Jacomo dal Burchelo "per fare uno caro trionfale da caxa de muzarelli", and to a Maestro Domenico dal Cavalo "per fare uno tauro".386
From the Muzzarelli residence, the procession marched along the Via S. Francesco, Via dei Sogari, and Via dei Contrari into the piazza. There was a halt, however, for a sixth presentation on the Via del Saraceno, "con 12 putti in forma di Angelli et uno che sonava una lira et tutti ad uno parlorno in laude della sposa". We know nothing of this arch save the identities of the festaiuoli (Bartolomeo Brasoni and Giovanni Giacomo da Imola) and the carpenter (Maestro Andrea dal Finale). 

* * * 

We began our discussion of ceremonialization in quattrocento Ferrara by proposing three hypotheses: (1) that the gradual dissolution of corporate social strata and the weakening of the associative impulse left the "individual" suffering from an "identity crisis" during the later Middle Ages (2) that formalized behaviour (ceremonies) helped to reshape personal identities during the fifteenth-century, and helped to re-integrate individuals into a more complex society (3) that the secular state evolved ritualized paradigms to affect the identity, form, timing, and behavioural standards of individuals in an effort to redefine (or re-establish) the modal perimeters of society for its constituent membership. To test these hypotheses, we focused on the Este court, and decided that (4) the prince's court was the location for a concerted shift towards prescriptive behaviour (5) the court evolved a ceremonial "space" to frame and amplify the ruler's power (6) the prince's
ceremonial was converted into an "identity essence". In an earlier chapter, we also saw how the Ferrarese liturgical calendar obeyed a dynastic dynamics: sacred time was restructured to suit a dynastic impress upon local holiday behaviour. We found that official ceremonies (festivals of adhesion) afforded men passage into an extra-temporal world, but, in contrast to the disorder and ritualized inversion of Carnival and the carnival-esque, these celebrated social cohesion by enforcing conformity and controlling spontaneity through codes of public conduct, varying only in their regulative and obligatory degrees of intensity. The most prominent example of an official ritual of adhesion operating on an intensive regulative plane is the signorial procession. Thus, we might add the following hypotheses to our conception of Ferrarese ceremonial: (7) that the immutable order of the signorial procession was recognized as the standard ritual metaphor of social and political organization (8) that alterations in processional décor reflected adjustments in the perception and structure of the community (9) that the princely entry metamorphosed urban topography by imposing "espace aristocratique" upon "espace civique". By the end of the fifteenth-century, the entry of the signore into his city provided a ceremonial forum for the sublimation of his dignitas.

It is important to bring several nuances to the thesis outlined above. One must first distinguish between entries organized by the prince, where auto-celebration and demagogy were two constant temptations, and receptions accorded the prince by the city, which
not only sought to praise its overlord but to make him aware of its conception of the ideal prince. Pageant cars and *tableaux vivants*, for instance, allegorized the political concord between the prince and the Comune during Borso's *trionfi* in Modena and Reggio. The prerogative claims of the city were still manifested by symbolic exchanges of keys and tokens (of which there are *trecento* records), and the prince was reminded of his duties as "head of state", that is to say, the political "fiction" of his sovereignty, by effigies of model rulers and Christian saints. In contrast, the Ferrarese entries of Eleonora d'Aragona in 1473 (when seven triumphal arches praised the glories of the houses of Este and Aragon), of Anna Sforza in 1491, and of Lucrezia Borgia in 1502, all organized by the *festaiuoli* of the Herculean court and "professional" ceremonialists, were characterized by dynastic auto-contemplation. These contained no contextual references to ordinary urban experience or the responsibilities of rulership. Rather, they reflected self-conceptions and self-images of power.

Second, one must exercise caution in the use of processional stereotypes. Tracing the history of princely entries, for example, Andrew Martindale makes a distinction between Italian *trionfi* and the rituals royal of northern Europe. In the north, the royal entry was naturally composed of a splendid gathering of courtiers and dignitaries, and had its focus upon the person of the king. But the main points of interest (*tableaux vivants*), he argues, although orientated towards the king in the centre, lay outside the procession: "Winding its way
through the streets of a town, this procession stopped at frequent intervals before particular tableaux - at which point it became an audience". Italians also staged this kind of event (he cites Borso's entry into Reggio as a conspicuous example), but by the end of the fourteenth-century, through the writings of Petrarch, Dante, and Boccaccio, they had developed an appreciation of the classical triumph. Hence the main points of interest in the princely entries of quattrocento Italy did not lie outside the procession. Rather, "everything was contained within it, so that to anyone standing firm at one point along the processional way, everything of importance or interest would pass before his eyes". Naturally enough, the triumphs of classical antiquity were celebrated at the Este court: Virtues "triumphed" in books eulogizing the prince, the months of the year "triumphed" on the walls of the Palazzo Schifanoia, and mythological figures "triumphed" in the friezes of Ferrarese architecture. Yet it is perfectly clear from the reconstructions discussed above, that Estensi trionfi rarely (if ever) found expression in terms of classical "models". They represented a confusing configuration of Christian, mythological, chivalric, humanistic, and aristocratic components.

Why, we may ask, was this so? Some scholars would argue that the dynamic elements in the triumphs of classical antiquity (the head-long rush of a continuous procession) were negated by the need to explain the ideology of the urban estates in an immutable and static processional ordo. Others would contend that the fail-
ure of contemporaries to produce a reasonable facsimile of the Roman triumph was caused by the advent and nature of aristocratic "space", which necessarily contained both static and dynamic elements. Indeed, it has even been suggested (by Aby Warburg and E.H. Gombrich), and rightly so, that ceremonial space had become so complex that only the festaiuoli themselves could ever hope to understand all the learned allusions lavished on processional décor and costumes. Perhaps this is the key which can help us to decode Estensi ceremonial. Unlike the kings of France, whose power and ceremonial identity rested on a theory of royal sovereignty, the Estensi signori merely possessed power. Ceremonies provided for the sublimation of the signore's dignitas, and allowed him to reflect upon his own self-image. The princely entry enabled him to "triumph" by replacing "espace civique" with "espace aristocratique". Without a true constitutional basis for his power, however, the image he found in the ceremonial "mirror" reflected the uncertainty of his identity.
1 Burckhardt, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, p. 121.

2 Ibid., pp. 264-65. See also the comments of Myron P. Gilmore, "Burckhardt as a Social Historian", in Society and History in the Renaissance, (Washington, 1960), pp. 27-33, and Burke, Tradition and Innovation in Renaissance Italy, pp. 279-301.

3 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, V, i, 66, "De vestibus et ornamentum mulierum civitate et districte ferrarie", nos. 1-3 (for general regulations).

4 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, V, i, 57, "De signo portando per hebreos et hebraes": Item statuimus quod omnes et singuli hebrei ab annis xii supra stantes et habitantes in civitate et districtu ferrarie teneantur et debent portare unum signum panni, vel telle zalle, sive crocei coloris, latitudinus unius digiti grossi, et rotonditates unius scutelle comunis ad minus, et illud portent super pectus a latere sinistro, incipiendo a collo per quattuor digitos; Quod quidem signum sit sutum per totum, et undique sit et stent decopertum et patentes omnibus videntibus. Femine autem hebree ab annis x supra, teneantur et debent ipse portare annulos ad abas aures pendentes, et infixos in ipsis auribus, qui sint et stent decoperti et patentes omnibus videntibus. Et si quis in predictis vel aliquo predictorum contrafecerit, etiam si inventus non fuerit per consules ad victualia, cadat in penam ipso iure et facto ducatorum x boni auri. See above, Chapter One, n. 89, for individual examples.

5 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, V, v, 22, "De mulieribus inhoneste viventibus", and above, Chapter Two, n. 138.

6 See below, pp. 463-64.

7 For example, Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, IV, 2, 55, "De signo portando per precones comunis ferrarie": Statuimus et ordinamus quos precones comunis ferrarie teneantur diebus iuridices portare biretum unum cum signo balzane comunis ferrarie, retro et ante, de panno velde quo metallo volverint vel illud signum portent in pectore, a deo quod videri possit, et ut ipsi cognosci et discerni possint ab aliis, sub pena soldorum quadraginta m. pro qualibet vice cuilibet contra facienti, applicanda comuni ferrarie.

9 Statuta Civitatis Ferrarie 1456, V, vi, 15, "De habitu et vestibus procuratorum".

10 Above, p. 32.

11 Above, p. 174.

12 The Ferrarese nobility especially favoured garments worn by French courtiers, and a lengthy description of these costumes can be found in Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 58v.

13 ACSF, Archivio Segreto del Magistrato, Libro 6, n. 39, p. 65.

14 Trexler, The Libro Cerimoniale of the Florentine Republic, p. 9.


19 See below, pp. 485-89.


22 See especially on this subject the recent study by John Larner, Italy in the Age of Dante, (London, 1980).

23 Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology; Ullmann, Principles of Government and Politics in the Middle Ages; Wilks, The Problem of Sovereignty in the Later
Middle Ages; Reisenberg, Inalienability of Sovereignty in Medieval Political Thought; See the citations of these works in chaps. 1-2.


25 Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology, p. 207.

26 Above, pp. 150-60.


30 Ferguson, The Renaissance in Historical Thought, pp. 372-85.

31 Charles H. Haskins, The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century, (Harvard University Press, 1927), is the standard text. Subsequent contributions to the literature are discussed by Ferguson, The Renaissance in Historical Thought, pp. 333-85.

32 Ferguson, The Renaissance in Historical Thought, pp. 342-58.

33 Above, pp. 334-37.


35 Trexler, The Libro Civinomiale of the Florentine Republic, p. 11.
This is precisely the methodology employed by Mona Ozouf to assess alterations in the pattern of French society during the years immediately following the French Revolution in *La Fête Révolutionnaire 1789-1792*, (Paris, 1976).

Lecoq, "La 'Città festeggiante': les fêtes publiques au XVe et XVIe siècles", esp. pp. 91-92, and above, pp. 283-87.

See below, pp. 481-83.


Sabadino, *De triumphis religionis*, p. 79.

Caleffini, *Chroniche del Duca Ercole*, fol. 275r.

Francesco Ariosto, *De fausta Illustrissimae Divae Heleonorae in Mantuanos profectione*, BEM, cod. latin 499, Alpha 0 9, 18, fol. lr. The MS. carries on to give a vivid description of Eleonora's entry into Mantua (1481) and the celebrations held there in honour of Isabella's betrothal to Francesco Gonzaga.

ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 132, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 16 January 1493.

Ibid., busta 'cit.', Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 17 January 1493.

Ibid., busta cit., Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 17 January 1491.

Ibid., busta cit., Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 23 January 1491.

Ibid., busta cit., Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 23 January 1491 (second letter written on this day).

Ibid., busta cit., Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 23 January 1491 (third letter written
on this day).

52 Ibid., busta cit., Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 1 February 1491.

53 Ibid., busta cit., Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 1 February 1491 (second letter written on this day).

54 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Dispacci Ambasciatori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Dispacci da Milano, busta 6, Giacomo Trotti to Ercole d'Este, 22 January 1491.

55 Ibid., busta cit., Giacomo Trotti to Ercole d'Este, 24 January 1491.

56 Ibid., busta cit., Giacomo Trotti to Ercole d'Este, 10 February 1491.

57 Ibid., busta cit., Giacomo Trotti to Ercole d'Este, 17 February 1491.

58 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 132, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 24 January 1491.

59 Ibid., busta cit., Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 25 January 1491.

60 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 70, Alfonso d'Este to Ercole d'Este, 22 May 1495.

61 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carichi e Onori di Corte, busta 1, Decreta 1 October 1485.

62 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 131, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 15 June 1485.

63 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Dispacci Ambasciatori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Dispacci da Milano, busta 6, Giacomo Trotti to Ercole d'Este, 22 January 1491.

64 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 67, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 9 October 1479.

65 ASMan, AG, busta 1231, Silvestro Calandra to Francesco Gonzaga, 3 February 1488.

66 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 68, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 30 September 1493.

67 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi
Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 132, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 27 May 1493.

68 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Dispacci Ambasciatori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Dispacci da Milano, busta 5, Giacomo Trotti to Ercole d'Este, 13 January 1487.

69 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1474-75, reg. 18, c. 72r.

70 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Lettere dal 1445 al 1449; dal 1469 al 1471, sez. C, reg. 2, c. 17r.

71 Ibid., registro cit., c. 17r.

72 Ibid., registro cit., c. 26r.

73 For the Estensi delizie, see Gianna Pazzi, Le "Delizie Estensi" e l'Ariosto: Fasti e Piaceri nella Rinascenza, (Pescara, 1933), and Gianni Venturi, "Scena e giardini a Ferrara", in Il Rinascimento nelli Corti Padane, pp. 553-67.

74 Apparently, the Venetians suspected that Borso was negotiating with Gonzaga to nominate Niccolò d'Este as successor to the signoria: "Tu ne advisi come sua mta. ti dimandette se nui se abocharressemo cum lo illustissimo marchese di Mantua in questo nostro venire a ficarolo. Nui siamo venuti qua oltre a far le feste cum quisti nostri per pigliare qualche recreazione et piacere per esser solto da li impaci de la terra et non per altra ragione et se bene lo Illustissimo Nicolo nostro e stato quisti di a Mantua il ge e andato domesticamente senza saputa d1 quello Signore per visitarlo come e suo debit essendo cum sua Signoria quelle che lui e anche per pigliaro la oltre qualche piacere per alcun di...", Borso d'Este to Giovanni Ludovico Marchesi "Oratore in Venetiis", 28 December 1470, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Lettere dal 1445 al 1449; dal 1469 al 1471, sez. C, reg. 2, c. 39r.

75 ACSF, Archivio Segreto del Magistrato, Libro 8, n. 6, p. 132.

76 DF, p. 66, 11. 8-12.

77 Which virtually destroyed the entire crop according to Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, IV, p. 72.

78 Above, p. 45.

79 Above, Chapter One, n. 189.
A list of some of the individuals who were obliged to commit themselves to loans may be found in ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Libri e carte d'amministrazione dei Principi, 1471, reg. 19, "Dinari impresto per lo Illumo. nostro Signore per la andata da Roma", cc. 2r-3r. For example (c. 2r):

"E adi 7 de marzo duc. cento doro de Venesia per la soa sra. da antonio del Sarasino spiziale liquali la soa Sra. lia fati regredere impresto per questa andata da Roma e così sua sra. inegra fato promettere ali infrascripti che presterano diti dinari che intervane de mexe sei io li deba restitorli della deputazione dela soa sra. che altro aritare e stotere al zornale..... L. 277, 10, 0".

It is interesting to note that this loan was not repaid until 1481, some ten years after the note was due:

"Dilectissimi nostri. Siamo contenti et commettevome che faciati fare creditore a li libri de quella nostra camera in lo computo vechio noviter ordinato Antonio dal Saraceno speciale nostro citadino de quilli ducati cento doro che lui presto al quondam Illumo. duca Borso nostro fratello per la sua andata a Roma del 1471 come apperse al libro del rosseto, il quale nui havemo visto, et poi provedereti chel sia satisfacto de quello computo come ad vui parera... ferrarie xxvii junii 1481", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1481, reg. 22, c. 92v.


The Commentaries of Pius II, Bks. 2-3, p. 182.

DF, p. 39, ll. 22-35, p. 40, ll. 1-37; Equicola, Annali di Ferrara, fol. 47r; Cronaca Antigini, fol. 7r; Legnago, Cronaca Estense, fol. 128r.

Venturi, "L'arte a Ferrara nel periodo di Borso d'Este", pp. 712, 727-29, with archival references.
562

88 ASMang AG, busta 1228, Antonio Donato to Lodovico Gonzaga, 16 May 1459.

89 DF, p. 40, 11. 21-37; Equicola, Annali di Ferrara, fol. 47r.

90 ASMang AG, busta 1228, Antonio Donato to Lodovico Gonzaga, 17 May 1459.


92 Antonio Cornazano, De excellentium virorum principibus in terza rime, BEM, cod. ital. 101, Alpha P 6, 4, fols. 68r-71r.


95 Chiappini, Gli Estensi, pp. 130-32.

96 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri, e Segretari, busta 2a, Borso d'Este to Lodovico Casella, 15 April 1467.

97 This list is suggested by Pardi, "Borso d'Este Duca di Ferrara", 15 (1906), pp. 381-84. For references to these events, see below, passim.

98 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1472, reg. 17, cc. 3r-3v.

99 ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1471, Memoriale, reg. 6, seg. BB, c. 38r.

100 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1472, reg. 17, c. 3v.

101 ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1471, Squarro, reg. 5, seg. BB, c. 32r.

102 Unlike the funerals of the kings of France, which dressed an effigy of the sovereign in regalic costume to reveal the constitutional sempiternity of the king's dignitas ("dignitas non moritur"), the funeral procession of the signore in Ferrara emphasized the transitory nature of his authority, since the signore's dignitas "perished" upon the death of the incumbent. The imperium of the signore was not perpetual. See Ralph Giesey, The Royal Funeral Ceremony in Renaissance France, (Geneva, 1960), and below, p. 500.

103 Vitale, Memorie/Cronaca, fols. 3r-4r.


Ariostol, *Dicta de la fortunata e felice entrata in Roma de lo illustrissimo duca Borso*, p. 43.

For example, Gene Brucker has argued that by indulging in extravagance and display (conspicuous consumption), Florentine patricians emphasized their exalted place in communal society: "patricians were announcing their release from the restraints imposed by egalitarianism", *Renaissance Florence*, (New York, 1969), p. 124. The phrase "conspicuous consumption" was originally coined by Thorstein Veblen in his book *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, (London, 1925), pp. 74-77, to explain the behaviour of aristocracies during the early stages of economic development (like "Feudal Europe", p. 1). Veblen's theory rested on three basic assumptions: (a) that "with the inheritance of gentility (or nobility) goes the inheritance of obligatory leisure" (b) that the "life of leisure" must be witnessed by spectators in order for it to become "honorific" (c) that the consumption of goods, "ideally all consumption in excess of the subsistence minimum", was a conventional means of communicating "reputability" within a specific sphere of acquaintance. Hence the quattrocento noble who puts his opulence in evidence by consumptive expenditure, establishes his membership in a leisure class. His spending habits provide his nobilitas with credit-worthiness.


For example, "... the term gentry (nobility) is used of those who live in idleness on the abundant revenue derived from their estates, without having anything to do either with their cultivation or other forms of labour essential to life", Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Discourses*, trans., Leslie J. Walker S.J., ed., Bernard Crick, (London, 1970), Bk. 1, c. 55, pp. 245-46. See below, pp. 485-89.


R.S. Lopez, "Hard Times and Investment in Culture",

See for example ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, passim, (especially Herculean registers).

Below, p. 469.

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Minutario Cronologico: Lettere Sciolte, busta 3, 1487-93, Ercole d'Este ad Salinarium Mutine, 24 January 1487.

See above, Chapter One, n. 86.

The international nature of Estensi financing is revealed by an early example drawn from ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1456, reg. 11b, cc. 76v-77r:

"Borsius dux Mutine et Regii, Marchio Estense: Dilectissimi nostri. Come vui sapiti nui siamo redeturi a quella nostra camera de duc. cinquemilia doro li quali nui vi facessemo pagare a messer francesco venero messo mandato dal papa usque duc. 4000 per lo censo de ferrara del termine de san pedro et san polo del anno presente 1456 et duc. 1000 per parte del dicto censo... del anno proxime futuro 1457. Hora e de bisogno che ala dicta ragione ce faciati fare debitori de ducati treamillia cinquecento doro che nui habiano facto pagare in Venexia per le mane de Alberto dolceto al prefato messer francesco venere che fo de messer sancto li quali lui ce havea prestati contanti facandone fare creditori de altritanti Alberto dolceto o veramente piedro et francesco di medici compagni in Vinexia... et aliquali piedro et francesco di Medici el dicto Alberto ha consignato per sua segureza certe nostre gioe...

Sia manifesto a chi vedera questo scripto como nui piero et francesco di Medici e compagni di Venexia habiamo in servanza da messer Alberto dolceto
le infrascripte gioie le quale ha lasciate per nostra segurta de ducati tremillacinquecento datoli a cambio per Londra cum condicione che se al tempo exira ad xxiýii de zenaro proximo non pagasse delo capitale et delo interesse le possiamo vendere per lo meglio potiamo et farne come di cosa nostra...

una Colana doro facta a sciepi in pieci xx sono le infrascripte gioie:
Diece peci de rubini
Diece diamanti punta
Vintiuna perla grossa
Vinti perle mezane
uno pendente a dicta colana soni uno balasso e perle tre grosse e uno diamante tavola in mezo
uno fermaglio picolo nel quale e uno balasso tavola quadro e cinque perle a torno cioe cinque perle et di sopra uno diamante punta
uno fermaglio grande in el quale e uno gran balasio tavola dorato per mezo una perla grossa da pie et di sopra uno angello cum uno smeraldo in pecto...".

118 For example, Ercole pawned his famous triangular diamond ("il diamante", his personal emblem) in Florence in exchange for other jewels held in pledge there, ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1487-88, reg. 26, c. 12r: "Galeazo (Trotti). Siamo contenti che ni habi dato ad antonio nigrisolo nostro famiglio il nostro Diamante triangolare gran ligato in una panizola doro cum una perla grossa per pendente, secundo che te habiamo commesso per portarlo a firenze per cambiarlo in altre nostre zoglie che stanno in pigno in quello lucho...".

119 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Principi e Signori, Estero, Milano, busta 9, 1219/9, Beatrice d'Este to Ercole d'Este, 22 September 1491. It was also usual for the Venetians to display the treasures of the Republic to visiting dignitaries, ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 132, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 29 May 1493: "Ilme. Princeps et Exme. Domine... Questa matina sino ad hora de disenare e piovuto fortemente in modo che non si e potuto andare a s. Marco a vedere le zoglie secundo era ordinato... et e dato ordine che domatina e bon hora se vadi a messa a s. Marco e vedere le zoglie".

120 There are numerous examples of this. See for instance ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1502, Memoriale, reg. 39, seg. DD, cc. 20r, 26r, for tapestries borrowed from Mantua to decorate the sala grande during the reception of Lucrezia Borgia, and below, p. 475.

121 Ercole removed all of the tapestries from his resi-
dences in Modena and Reggio during the preparations for the reception of Anna Sforza in 1491 (above, Chapter Three, n. 67). Even the Bishop of Ferrara was forced to hand over the tapestries which normally would have adorned the interior of the cathedral: "Il prefato s. nostro ha facto pregare il Reverendissimo Vescovo qui de Ferrara che voglia dire la messa la dominica et fare la benedictione ali sposi... la quale messa et benedictione se fara in capella qui in corte et non in vescovato; et questa e la cagione che havendo il Signore dimandate le sue tapezarie al vescovo in prestito per queste nozze, il se scusava et diceva non le potere dare, perche el voleva cum epse adornare el vescovato el die de la Messa. Et il Signore per havere le tapezarie li ha resposto che se dira la messa in capella, la quale capella in ogni modo se adornà et cussi el vescovo de ogni cosa e restato molto ben contento", ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, busta 3, Niccolo da Correggio to Eleonora d'Aragona, 2 February 1491. In 1502, the Palazzo della Ragione was ransacked by officials of the Compusteria for its wood and iron works, below P. 473.


124 Pietro Fanfani, Ricordo di una giostra fatta in Firenze a di 7 di febraio del 1468 sulla piazza di Santa Croce, (Florence, 1864), pp. 5-23.

125 Of all the ceremonial narratives one could choose to illustrate this point, perhaps the best example is Isabella d'Este's account of the ordo of Lucrezia Borgia's entrata into Ferrara. See below, pp. 543-45, for the text.

126 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Minutario Cronologico: Lettere Sciolte, busta 3, 1487-93, Ercole d'Este ad Salinarium Mutine, 26 December 1489; Ercole d'Este to Baptista Benedezi, 17 December 1489. The background of these letters is reported by Janet Ross, Lives of the Early Medici as Told in their Correspondence, (London, 1910), p. 309.

127 See the dispositions of the "Ordini et modi da essere observati per la camera et per li facturi generali", in ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, reg. 14, 1469, cc. 14v-15r, which contain a provision similar to the one noted above, p. 52, for the reign of Ercole.

128 Some indication of the massive investment is provided by ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Libri e carte d'ammini-
strazione dei Principi, reg. 7, Conto de spese de lo Imperatore fu la sua venuta a ferrara 1451-52.

129 The list of these expenses has now been published by Alessandro Spinelli, "Spese Fatte dal Massaro Ducale il 5-6 Luglio 1455 per la Sosta di Giovanni D'Angià", Atti e Memorie della Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Province Modenesi e Parmensi, ser. iv, 8 (1897), pp. 153-82.

130 ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1466, reg. 12, cc. 43r-44v.

131 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancelleri e Segretari, busta 2b, Vittorio Pavoni Cancelleri a Constantino de Sardi Canceller, 25 June 1453 (in reference to Borso's triumphal entry into Modena).

132 Ibid., busta cit., Giovanni Compagni to Borso d'Este, 28 July 1470.

133 The Cronaca Antigini (fols. 19r-23v), for example, contains two detailed ceremonial narratives written for Borso d'Este; one describing the funeral of King Charles VII, the other relating the entrance of King Louis XI into Paris upon his coronation in August 1461. Borso's letter concerning his triumph in Rome (which adds little to Ariosto's account) has been published by Giuseppe Antonelli, Lettera inedita di Borso d'Este scritta in Roma il di 15 aprile 1471 al suo segretario Giovanni Compagni nelle quale descrive la sua esaltazione a primo duca di Ferrara, (Ferrara, 1869).

134 Vitale, Memorie/Cronaca, fol. 1r.

135 Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, pp. 50-51.

136 This phrase is common to a number of orders sent to various officials in the dominions during the preparations for the reception of Eleonora d'Aragona in the summer of 1473: "Dilectissime noster. Per risposta de la tua de di xviii del presente te dicemo che tu debbi fare tanto quanto te scrive Bonvicino nostro generale factore cussi per la spesa de la chiavega se ha a fare, come per il spendere dinari per honorare la nostra illustissima consorte ne la sua venuta li. Siche spendi gaiardamente che ogni cosa te faremo acceptare", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1474-75, reg. 18, c. 71v.

137 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Ufficiali Camerali, busta 1, Filippo Cestarelli to Eleonora d'Aragona, 20 February 1490.

138 Frizzi, Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara, IV, p. 206.
For lists of forced loans from the nobility in Modena and Reggio, see the letters of Leonello Recepta (Autumn 1501) in ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, cancellieri e Segretari, busta 4.

"Perche havemo pur bisogno de valerse per le occurrentie de queste nozze de dinari che non sono quelli che havemo havute, volemo che subito vediati de fare opera cum la sta. de n.s. et cum chi bisogna, che habiamo adesso sino a dece milia ducati oltra quelle che havessimo provingendo che le habiamo per via de lore de Cambio in vinetia et qui a ferrara et a Bologna perche a tuorli a fiorenza gli e pur qualche pericolo per la via. Et poterasse fare a questo modo, ordinare che qui se havessero circa tre milia ducati et a Bologna due milia et cinque milia de vinetia", ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Dispacci Ambasciatori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Dispacci da Roma, busta 12, Ercole d'Este to Gerardo Saracini, 2 December 1501. (It was Saracini who originally negotiated the advance on Lucrezia's dowry mentioned in the letter).

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio dei Rettori Ferrara e Ferrarese, busta 5, Officiale Palacii et Collegium Notariorum ferrarie to Ercole d'Este, 17 February 1502.

ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1474-75, reg. 18, c. 72r., and above, n. 136.

ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1473, reg. 17, c. 51v.

Ugo Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fols. 30r-33v, this excerpt now published by Chiappini, "Indagini Attorno a Cronache e Storie Ferraresi del Sec. XV", pp. 21-31. See also Luigi Olivi, "Delle Nozze di Ercole I con Eleonora d'Aragona", Atti e Memorie R. Accademia di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti in Modena, ser. II, 5 (1887), pp. 16-68.

ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1474-75, reg. 18, c. 143r: "Dilectissimi nostri. In questo die mandassemo Antoni Maria Guarniero nostro officiale de la salina de Modena in sino a Venesia per trovare certa quantita de dinari per bisogno de la camera nostra, et fessino dare alui alcune nostre zoie per le mane de Marco de Galeotto nostro Maistro Camerlengo per depositare et assecurare quilli tali da chi el fusse seguro deli dinari...".

Above, p. 43.

See below, pp. 525-28.

It is interesting to note that the Milanese ambassador was accorded a state funeral upon his death in
1487, the reasons for which are made abundantly clear in the following letter: "... volemo che li a ferrara il sia sepelito a nostre spese et che li sia facto ogni honore possibile, ordinara adonque la v.s. che lo Ill. don Alfonso nostro figliolo et li altri da casa nostra vadino ad honorare il corpo, et che siano commandati gentilhomi, citadini et compagnie et cussi il capitolo de vescoato cum li frati de tutti li monasterii, come se conviene in simile caso. Ricordando ala v.s. che se nui fussemo a ferrara seressemose andati in persona ad honorare la sua sepultura per respecto del Illmo. s. duca de milano et de quello Exmo. stato... et non bisogna pensare cheil patre de dicto ambassatore ne habia a fare restituire la spesa che se fara circa dicte exequie, perche per nostro honore non curamo che spese ne sia restituita...", ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 68, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 3 November 1487.

149 Ercole's intention to provide his ambassadors with suitable "livings" at foreign courts may be illustrated by the following order: "Ludovico. Se mai tu facesti reforza in exequire commissione alcuna dele nostre che ne tocasse il Chuore, fa hora che tu el faci in questa, che molto ne importa et strenze, Se tu hai carà la gratia nostra et se mai te inezgnati de fare cossa che ni fusse grata et cara singularmente. Nui mandemo Messer Nicolo di Roberti, nostro imbasciatore al Duca de Milano, el quale va oltra ala festrexà, et non bisogna se indusi cossa alguna per il che volemo che non che piu tosto lecta questa, tu gli pagi et exbursi cento ducati doro et non guardare a deputatione alguna, ni pagamenti di sale ni de altre sorte che tu habii a fare, perche volemo che messo ogni altra cossa da canto questa sia preferita et exequinta al dire et fare non havendo rispetto ad alguna altra cossa come quella che troppo in tocca et strenze. Siche non falli presto spazo et bono, che piu non tene possesse strenzere et incarricare, et acio che tu cognosci et toca cio mane quanto lacesia a chuore, tu vederai questa soprascripta'del nostro nome che nostra propria mane desopra. Ad Officiali nostro Saline Regii Ludovico della Cavaleria, iii Aprilis 1475", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1476, reg. 19, c. 88r.

150 For the ceremonial investiture of the Podestà of Ferrara, see below, n. 329.

151 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 68, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 1 December 1487.

152 Above, p. 306.
For full citations of these fondi, see bibliography (archival materials).

ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1490, reg. 29, c. 2v.

Ibid., registro cit., c. 26v.

Ibid., registro cit., c. 4v.

Ibid., registro cit., c. 25r.

Ibid., registro cit., c. 26r.

Ibid., registro cit., c. 27r.

Ibid., registro cit., c. 34r.

Ibid., registro cit., c. 19r.

Ibid., registro cit., cc. 127r-127v.

Ibid., registro cit., c. 33v.

Above, pp. 185-87, 472.

To finance the reception of Lodovico Sforza in 1493, for example, Ercole demanded credit from his bankers: "Ad Andream Zobolum: Andrea nostro. Essendo per venire di curto qualoltra lo Illustrissimo signore Duca di Barri insieme cum la sua Illustrissima consorte come poteti havere inteso lo Illustrissimo signora nostro consorte, nui siamo in pensiero de honorare sue excellentia quanto sia possibile per il quale effecto ni bisognano dinari in bona summa come poteti molto ben pensare ni e forza richiedere li amici in questo nostro bisogno, maxime quelli quali speremo che non ci debano venire scarsi come speremo di vui per lamor e fede la qual semper ni haveti dimostrato in ogni caso. Pero vi preghemo et strengemo questo piu possemo che ci vogliati servire in presto de ducati cinquecento doro senza farni excusatione alcuna, et nui vi promettemo restituireli effectualmente remossa ogni exceptione la mitade a Kal. de zenaro d lanno proximo futuro 1494, et laltra mitade ala pasca de la resurectione del dicto anno...", ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistolarum registrum, sez. C, 1493-96, reg. 11, c. 22r.

ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1490, reg. 29, c. 203v; ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendi, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, busta 4, Eleonora d'Aragona to Siverio Sivieri, 5 December 1489.

Sanuto, I Diarii, I, col. 706.
ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Dispacci Ambasciatori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Dispacci da Napoli, busta 1, Ugoletto Facino to Ercole d'Este, 17 May 1473; Manfredo Maldente to Ercole d'Este, ? May 1473; unknown to Ercole d'Este, ? May 1473. For the festivities in Rome and Urbino, see Corvisieri, "Il trionfo romano di Eleonora d'Aragona nel Giugno 1473", pp. 629-687; Saviotti, "Una rappresentazione allegorica in Urbino nel 1474", pp. 194-95; Olivi, "Delle Nozze di Ercole I con Eleonora d'Aragona", pp. 36-43.

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Dispacci Ambasciatori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Dispacci da Mantova, buste 1-2. Several ambassadorial reports relating the Mantuan ceremonies during the betrothal and marriage of Isabella d'Este and Francesco Gonzaga have been published by Alessandro Luzio, Isabella d'Este e Francesco Gonzaga Promessi Sposi, (Milan, 1908), pp. 11-16, 35-38.

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Dispacci Ambasciatori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Dispacci da Roma, esp. buste 12-18.

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Dispacci Ambasciatori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Dispacci da Milano, buste 3-6, above nn. 54-57. Ercole himself was on hand to witness the entry of King Louis XII into Milan in 1499. See Leon G. Pelissier, Les Préparatifs de l'Entrée de Louis XII à Milan 6 Octobre 1499, (Montpelier, 1891).


ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 132, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 27 April 1492.

The range of Italian interest is indicated by an anonymous volume in the British Library, Tractatus Varii Historici Philologici, MS. Harley 3462, which contains 33 ceremonial narratives including the funeral of Queen Jean of France (1514, written for Alfonso d'Este), the coronation of Francis I (1515), and the reception of the ambassador of the King of
Spain in Paris (1517), fols. 98r-102v, 202r-214v, 265r-265v. According to John Shearman, "The Florentine Entrata of Leo X", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 38 (1975), p. 138, it is likely that the volume was compiled for Gian Giacomo Calandra, secretary to Francesco Gonzaga, by several amanuenses working from material supplied by Gonzaga correspondents.


183 Zorzi, "Ferrara: il sipario ducale", pp. 5-32.

184 Weise, "Il Concetto dell'Eroico nell'Umanesimo e nel Rinascimento", in L'Ideale Eroico del Rinascimento, I, pp. 79-119.

185 Hay, The Italian Renaissance in its Historical Background, pp. 155-184; Martines, Power and Imagination, pp. 334ff.


187 Gundersheimer, Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance
Despotism, pp. 229-284.

188 Hay, The Italian Renaissance in its Historical Background, p.

189 Martines, Power and Imagination, pp. 301-334.

190 Lecoq, "La 'Città festeggiante': les fêtes publiques au XVe et XVIe siècles", pp. 87-89.


193 Strong, Splendour at Court, p. 72.


195 Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, pp. 78-79.

196 Aristotle, Ethics, trans., J.A.K. Thomson, (London, 1953), Book Four, chap. II, p.116: "The next thing to be considered by us is, I take it, magnificence in spending, which is another virtue that has to do with money. It differs from liberality in being limited to such transactions as result in the expenditure of money, operating on a larger scale than liberality, for, as the word itself implies, magnificence is the suitable expenditure of wealth in large amounts... This puts it out of the question for a poor man to be magnificent".

197 The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas, Part II (second part), Q. 134, art. 1, Reply obj. 4.

198 Ibid., Q. 134, art. 3, Reply obj. 2.

199 Ibid., Q. 134, art. 3, Reply obj. 4.

200 Ibid., Q. 134, art. 3, Reply obj. 4.

201 Maloney, "St Thomas and Spenser's Virtue of Magnificence", p. 60.


203 According to Francesco Tateo, "La disputa della
nobilità", in Tradizione e realtà nell'umanesimo italiano, (Bari, 1967), p. 421, with Castiglione the subject changed to "una particolare categoria sociale di cui s'intendono definire le doti in ordine ad un ideale di perfezione". See also Anglo, "The Courtier: The Renaissance and Changing Ideals", pp. 33-54.


205 Baron, "Franciscan Poverty and Civic Wealth in Humanistic Thought", pp. 11-16.


207 Baron, "Franciscan Poverty and Civic Wealth in Humanistic Thought", pp. 11-16.

208 Buonaccorso da Montemagno, De Nobilitate, this excerpt translated by Trinkaus, Adversity's Noblemen: The Italian Humanists on Happiness, p. 50. Significantly, the treatise inspired debate at the Burgundian and Tudor courts during the later fifteenth-century, having been translated by Jean Miélot (around 1475) and later by John Tiptoft (printed by Caxton in 1481). See Willard, "The Concept of True Nobility at the Burgundian Court", p. 34, and R.J. Mitchell, John Tiptoft, (London, 1938), pp. 176-77, and Appendix I, pp. 216-41, for the Tudor translation.


210 The dialogue exists in two manuscripts, both in the Biblioteca Laurenziana: (a) Plut. xlvi, cod. xvii, fols. 78-102 (b) Plut. lxxxx, Sup. Cod. xlviii, fols. 125v-131v. It is also published inaccurately (according to Fraser Jenkins, "Cosimo de' Medici's Patronage of Architecture and the Theory of Magnificence", pp. 162-70) in G. Lami, Delicae Eruditorum, XII (1742), pp. 150-68. The library of the Warburg Institute now has several photo-copies of MS. (a), which I have consulted.
211 Ibid., MS. (a), fol. 82v.

212 In the treatise Convivia Mediolanensia, written in 1443 and dedicated to Filippo Maria Visconti, Filigelfo made a distinction between Aristotle's concept of megaloprepeia (magnificence) and megalpsychia (magnanimity). His main concern was to refer magnificence, magnanimity, and liberality to standards of behaviour thought suitable to the situation and the agent, the agent being anyone who wished to appear "civilized". Inevitably, he concluded that magnificentia was an exclusive virtue of the rich, Fraser Jenkins, "Cosimo de' Medici's Patronage of Architecture and the Theory of Magnificence", p. 166.

213 Weise, "Gli Ideali Etici", in L'Ideale Eroico del Rinascimento, pp. 181-238.

214 Gundersheimer, Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance Despotism, pp. 276-77.


216 See Appendix F for musicians and singers, and also Valdrighi, "Concerti, Cappelle e Musiche di Casa d'Este", pp. 415-22, 437-59 (Documenti), and Lockwood, "Music at Ferrara in the period of Ercole I d'Este", pp. 101-131, who discusses the composition of the mass Hercules Dux Ferrariae and the Miserere by Josquin des Prez for Ercole. For the weavers, see Campori, "L'Arazzeria Estense", pp. 418-33, 461-67 (Documenti). The presence of Roger Van der Weyden at the Este court has been dismissed by Kantorowicz, "The Este Portrait by Roger Van der Weyden", pp. 165-80.

217 Zam, p. 4, 11. 18-21: "Lo nobile et prestantissimo scolaro de Leze messer Philippo da Borgogna fu creato cavaliro per la Excellentia del duca nostro, al quale ge cinse la spada el magnifico messer Niccolò di Contrarri, compagno de sua Excellentia, et similiter ge messe li sproni secondo uxanza".

218 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fol. 56r.


220 See especially Giulio Bertoni, La Biblioteca estense e la coltura ferrarese ai tempi del duca Ercole I, (Turin, 1903), and idem, L'Orlando Furioso e la Rinscenza a Ferrara, (Modena, 1919); Catalano, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, esp. I, pp. 261-307; Antonio Franceschetti, "L'Orlando Innamorato e gli ideali caval-


222 See the references cited by Catalano, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, I, p. 270.

223 A list of the Ferrarese booksellers at the time of Ariosto may be found in Cittadella, Notizie Relative a Ferrara, pp. 476-78.

224 The works on Boiardo, Ariosto, and Tasso are too numerous to list here. For Cieco's Mambriano, see Bertoni, "Il Cieco di Ferrara e altri Improvvisatori alla Corte d'Este", pp. 271-78.


226 Catalano, Vita di Ludovico Ariosto, I, p. 269, n. 27. The frescoes were destroyed by fire in 1509, Zerbinati, Memorie, fol. 35v.

227 Sabadino, De triumphis religionis, pp. 56-66. Ercole received his robes in August 1480 according to ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1481, reg. 22, cc. 37v-38r (expenses of the embassy to the King of England), though Zambotti has him appearing in public with them in June of that year, Zam, p. 77, ll. 17-20.

228 Franceschetti, "L'Orlando Innamorato e gli ideali cavalereschi nella Ferrara del Quattrocento", pp. 325-33.


230 It is important to note, however, that Ercole was particularly fond of giostre a demenini. According to Truffi, Giostre e Cantori di Giostre, p. 71, the demenino "era una speciale foggia di lance, o meglio di punta di lance... il quale doveva essere molto probabilmente una punta che rendeva, o poteva ren-
dere, pericoloso il combattimento, se non si osservavano certe cautele". That these jousts could be dangerous is indicated by a letter from Francesco Gonzaga to his son Federico in France, in which he forbade Federico to take part in combats "che se hanno a fare in Franza a demenini" because "noi le iudiciamo molto pericolose", ASMan, AG, Copialettere, reg. 252, 27 April 1518, reproduced by Truffi, Giostre e Cantori di Giostre, p. 71. In 1476, the Anziani of Reggio decided to cut out Day Two of the tournaments honouring Ercole's presence in the city because of the heavy expenses of sponsoring professional jousters for a "giostra a demenino". Ercole's reaction to this decision reveals his passion for this form of combat: "Dilectissimi nostri. Nui se maravigliamo grandemente che vi siete tirati indietro de non voler fare le spese ali chiostradori che havranno a venire aaltra ad honorare quella vostra festa, secondo che vi havemo facto richiedere per el nostro Regimento li et tanto piu ce ne maravigliamo, quanto che vedemo, che de le cosse de grande spese non ne faci conto, et che de questa che è minima, et che vi cede a tanta honorificentia, ne faciato conto. Ma ditine quale sarà il più bello de la festa, che havere de li valenti homeni suso questa chiostra, che gli veranno essendogli facto le spese, li quali altramente restarano, per non volere fare spesa?... Nui etiam ne havemo facto dare intentione che cu si se farà, sperando che debiati condescere in questo ale voglie nostre; per il che vi confortemo et stringemo quanto sapemo e potemo, che ni vogliate di ciò compiacere et metere modo che habiano le spese, secondo che scrivessimo al prefato nostro Regimento, per honore vostro. Et quando pur questa spesa vi paresse tropo grande, factine levar via de quelle altre, che non sono de tanto honore ni de tanta reputatione, et facti che questa habia luoco, la quale Bramamo et desideramo per vedere de li valenti homini in questa chiostra, de la quale ne faciamo molto piu stima che de le altre feste..."


231 Archivio Municipale di Deposito in Reggio-Emilia, Gridano del 1462, now published by G. Rossi, Un torneo del 1462 a Ferrara, (Reggio, 1883), pp. 3-4.

232 Anglo, "Anglo-Burgundian Feats of Arms: Smithfield, June 1467", pp. 271-83. Anglo suggests that the importance of ritual in comparison with combat is illustrated by the English ceremonial narrative of this tournament. Only one page is devoted to the actual fighting, while the other thirty-four describe the inception, the letters of challenge, the proclamations, the journey of the Burgundian Answerer, his reception, and the processions to the lists.

ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 132, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 26 January 1491: "... se commenciète a fare la mostra de li giosktratori, et havendo ad essere il primo lo Ill. s. Marchese di mantoa nostro genero desessero del tribunale li Illmi. sri. Duca de milano et de Bari et anche nostro figliolo et lo accompagnorono et comparse molto honorevolmente cum suoi camerari, ragazzi, et altri servitori tutti richamente vestiti et cum cavalli et sopraveste et zaneti bene adornati, et lui col cavallo suo gallante vestito de veluto verde tempescato de argentarìa dorata, et le lanze sua de chel recedevano erano dodese dorate perche ciascuno ha a correre xii volte, et per questa non mi extendero ni scrivere particularmente l'ordine de le veste et le liveree de ciascuno giosktratore et de li nomi suoi et cum chi sono accopiati perche vedero de haverne piu certeza che non se puo cussi havere la prima ochiata essendo tanti quanti sono et per un'altra ne adviso vostra extia. Dipoi epso s. Marchese gionsi li mco. m. hannibale bentivolio anchor ben lui in ordine et de cavalli ... poi vene li mco. frachasso cum persone assai a piedi et a cavallo vestiti al indiana precedendoli un carro triumphale sopralquale era uno che dice alcuni versi in rima... li quali tutti comparseno richamente et honorevolmente et de cavalli, et de persone avarie, et Gentile Liveree et gallantry, et facta la mostra che duro piu de doe hore...".

ASMan, AG, busta 1228, Folando Guardo to Lodovico Gonzaga, 1 May 1462.


ASMan, AG, busta 1228, Nicolò Ariosto to Lodovico Gonzaga, 16 May 1464.


Ibid., p. 11.

Ferrarini, *Cronaca ferrarese*, fol. 34r, 37v-38r; Zam, p. 51, ll. 23-29, p. 52, ll. 1-5.


See below, pp. 500-507.


Konigson, L'Espace Théâtral Médiéval, p. 254.


Ibid., p. 461.


Guenée and Lehoux, Les Entrées Royales Françaises de 1328 à 1515, p. 23.

Ibid., "Proces-verbal de la joyeuse entrée de Louis, Roi de France", App. XVII, p. 173: "Ayant accepté l'étendard, notre sire le roi le remit sur-le-champ au susdit de Roaix, en même temps que le baudrier de chevalier, que ledit de Roaix avait humblement sollicité. On assure que, par cette tradition, le susdit de Roaix fut armé chevalier et que le roi lui restitua l'étendard". For similar ceremonial exchanges in Modena and Reggio upon the entrance of the signore, see below pp. 531-38.

Guenée and Lehoux, Les Entrées Royales Françaises de 1328 à 1515, p. 141.

Ibid., p. 143.

Konigson, L'Espace Théâtral Médiéval, p. 254.

Guenée and Lehoux, Les Entrées Royales Françaises de 1328 à 1515, pp. 14-18; Du Cange, Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis, s.v. pallium. In Ferrara, the funeral of Niccolò II d'Este (1388) appears to have been the first occasion upon which a processional baldacchino was used in conjunction with the person of the signore. Thereafter we find Alberto d'Este's new bride received by the citizens of Ferrara under a dais (1388), and Alberto buried "in feretro funeralibus ornatibus insigni, & super-tecto nobilissimo baldacchino more majorum per manus Nobilium ad Locum Minorum cum magnificus honoribus funeralibus...", Chronicon Estense, cols. 516-17,

257 The role of the processional dais is not examined by Marc Bloch, *Les rois thaumaturges*, (Strasbourg, 1924).


260 See George R. Kernodle, From Art to Theatre: Form and Convention in the Renaissance, (University of Chicago Press, 1944), and idem, "Déroulement de la Procession dans les Temps ou Espace Théâtral dans les Fêtes de la Renaissance", in Les Fêtes de la Renaissance, I (1956), pp. 443-62; André Chastel, "Le Lieu de la Fête", in Les Fêtes de la Renaissance, I (1956), pp. 419-25: "Cette association du cortège, du combat et du théâtre dans l'unité complexe et féérique de la fête, peut aider à rendre compte d'une constante assez remarquable du phénomène: la fête n'a pas de lieu particulier, son espace est l'espace quotidien de la ville, rue, place, cortile... métamorphose par un décor. Le lieu de fête est entièrement imaginaire; il ne peut être défini ni comme un intérieur (une cour, une salle) ni comme un extérieur" (p. 420).

261 Konigson, L'Espace Théâtral Médiéval, p. 197.

262 Ibid., pp. 196-204.

263 Ibid., p. 203.

264 Ibid., pp. 197-98.


267 Ibid., pp. 66-70.

268 Ibid., "Première entrée du roi Charles VII à Paris", pp. 70-86.


270 For the texts and analysis, see Konigson, L'Espace Théâtral Médiéval, pp. 253-64, and idem, "La Cité et le Prince: premières entrées de Charles VII", in Les Fêtes de la Renaissance, III (1975), pp. 55-70.


272 Konigson, L'Espace Théâtral Médiéval, p. 264.

274 Konigson, L'Espace Théâtral Médiéval, pp. 195-204.


278 Konigson, L'Espace Théâtral Médiéval, p. 264.

279 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, busta 4, Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 13 February 1493.

280 Ibid., busta'cit., Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 15 February 1493: "... el cancellariato de bagnacavallo e pur dato a zanino vostro del conte lorenzo non obstante che io li habia habuto concurrentia assai assai secundo che per la tral mio (...) a vostra Illma. Sigria., deche el maestro de le cerimonie se ne e molto amaricato parandolo che cum mi potesse altra maior cossa, et maximo non intendendo lui alt... el respecto che mi habia mosso, ad favore zanino...". This letter is the only other reference to an Estensi master-of-ceremonies that I have discovered to date.

281 Trexler, The Libro Cerimoniale of the Florentine Republic, Text, p. 118.


284 No official bearing this title appears on the rolls of the salariati in 1476 (see Appendix F) or in 1492, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Libri e carte d'amminis-
trazione dei Principi, 1492, reg. 25, Libro dei SalariaEi.


286 B. Schimmelpfennig, Die Zeremonienbuecher der Romi-
iale of the Florentine Republic, p. 17, n. 24.

287 Marc Dykmans S.J., "Le Ceremonial de Nicholas V", Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique, 63 (1968), pp. 787, Text, p. 793: "Magister cerimoniarum duas pro duobus, quia plures non sunt, saltem ordin-
arii et participantes". See also p. 792, n. 1.

288 Schimmelpfennig, Die Zeremonienbuecher der Romi-
schen Kurie im Mittelalter, p. 139, and Trexler, The Libro Cerimoniale of the Florentine Republic, p. 28.

289 See the Sacrarum Cerimoniarum, sive rituum eccles-

290 Franz Wasner, "Fifteenth-Century Texts on the Cere-

291 Delayto, Annales Estenses, col. 976.


293 DF, p. 40, ll. 21-31.

294 Trexler, The Libro Cerimoniale of the Florentine Republic, Text, p. 76.

295 Shearman, "The Florentine Entrata of Leo X", p. 152, n. 56, who uses the version of the dispute written by de Grassis himself, Diarium, British Library, MS. Additional 8443, fol. 147v.


Ariosto, Dicta de la fortunata e felice entrata in Roma de lo illustrissimo duca Borso, p. 42.

Francesco Ariosto, Origine de la excelsa dignità del ducato de Ferrara, in E. Celani, La venuta di Borso d'Este in Roma, pp. 54-92, esp. p. 59.


Typical of the sort of bickering which went on is the dispute which arose during the reception of the sacred spear-head in May 1492. Participants fought over their positioning in the processional ordo, and eventually, threats had to be used to get the reception committee moving: "Clerus Urbis, cum societatibus, sive confratis Salvatoris, Annunciate, Confalonis et pluribus aliis, hinc inde extra dictam ecclesiam, erant in tanta confusione quod plusquàm per horam processionem retardavit antequam posset per r.d. camerarium ordinari; namsocietates volebant sequi clerum, et etiam mutuo inter se super precedentia contendeant; tandem r.d. cardinale ipsis vel recederunt vel procederunt sub pena mandante, prosserunt et sequuntur nostri ordine infrascripto...", Burckard, Liber Notarum, xxxii, pt. 1, p. 366, ll. 6-12.

ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 70, Alfonso d'Este to Ercole d'Este, 27 May 1492.

Chiappini, Gli Estensi, pp. 5-14.

ASF, Prov., 166, fol. 268v, published by Trexler, The Libro Cerimoniale of the Florentine Republic, Text, p. 78.

Ibid., Trexler, "Internal Analysis", pp. 57-68.


309 Ibid., Text, p. 130.

310 Valenti, "Note Storiche sulla Cancelleria degli Estensi a Ferrara dalle Origini alla Metà del Sec. XVI", p. 361.

311 Pietro, "La Cancelleria degli Estensi nel periodo ferrarese (1264-1598)", pp. 96-98.

312 Valenti, "Note Storiche sulla Cancelleria degli Estensi a Ferrara dalle Origini alla Metà del Sec. XVI", pp. 361-62, and n. 5.

313 Above, p. 209.

314 See his correspondence, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, buste 1 and 2a.

315 Valenti, "Note Storiche sulla Cancelleria degli Estensi a Ferrara dalle Origini alla Metà del Sec. XVI", p. 363, and ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, busta 2b, where from 1466 Borso addresses the cancellieri as "Cancellariis nostris dilectissimis".

316 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, busta 2b, for Compagni's correspondence.

317 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, busta 3.

318 See Appendix F.

319 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, busta 2a, Borso d'Este to Lodovico Casella, 7 March 1466.

320 Ibid., busta cit., Borso d'Este to Lodovico Casella, 24 January 1466.

321 Ibid., busta cit., Borso d'Este to Lodovico Casella, 13 February 1466.

322 Ibid., busta cit., Borso d'Este to Lodovico Casella, 15 April 1467.

323 Ibid., busta cit., Borso d'Este to Lodovico Casella, 14-16 January, 1469.

324 Ibid., fondo cit., busta 2b, Vittorio Pavoni to Constantino de Sardi, 25 June 1453.
325 Ibid., fondo cit., busta 2b, Borso d'Este to Aristotile Bruturi, 22 March 1455, and above, p. 349.

326 See for example the correspondence of Siverio Sivieri, ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, busta 4, cited above, p. 347, passim.

327 Ibid., busta cit., Tebaldo Tebaldi to Eleonora d'Aragona, letters of 7 April 1492 and 25 June 1493; Above, pp. 476-77, and Chapter Three, n. 138.

328 The secretaries were in constant touch with these individuals since they were responsible for assigning signorial mandates and orders to the competent functionari, Valenti, "Note Storiche sulla Cancelleria degli Estensi a Ferrara dalle Origini alla Metà del Sec. XVII", p. 363.

329 In 1491, for instance, the secretarius Francesco Nasello deputized for the duke during the ceremonial election of the Giudice dei Savi: "Questa ma..." (ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, busta 39 Francesco Nasello to Eleonora d'Aragona, 18 July 1491.

330 Niccolò da Correggio the secretarius (Giovanni Niccolò da Correggio, according to Zam, p. 222, ll. 28-31), not to be confused with Correggio the poet and courtier.

331 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, busta 3, Niccolò da Correggio to Eleonora d'Aragona, 15 January 1491.

332 Ibid., busta cit., Niccolò da Correggio to Eleonora d'Aragona, 1 February 1491.

333 Ibid., busta cit., Niccolò da Correggio to Eleonora d'Aragona, 2 February 1491.
334 Ibid., busta cit., Niccolò da Correggio to Eleonora d'Aragona, 3 February 1491.

335 Above nn. 324-25.

336 Olivier de la Marche, L'estat de la maison du Duc Charles de Bourgongne dit le Hardy, in idem, Mémoires, eds., H. Beaune and J. D'Arbaumont, Société de l'Histoire de France, (Paris, 1883-88), IV, p. 13. Olivier was naturally convinced that a splendid court and magnificent entertainments were of vital importance to the prestige of the House of Burgundy, IV, pp. 164-66.

337 Mattingly, Renaissance Diplomacy, p. 29. Wagner, Heralds and Heraldry in the Middle Ages, p. 45, calls it "a kind of general professorship of the science of chivalry".

338 Above pp. 509-17.

339 ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Registri di Cancelleria, Herculis I epistololarum registrum, sez. C, 1476, reg. 4, c. 96r.

340 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 67, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 9 October 1479.

341 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 68, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 30 October 1492.

342 Above, pp. 385-87.

343 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 132, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 12 June 1493.

344 Mattingly, Renaissance Diplomacy, pp. 95-111.

345 Trexler, The Libro Cerimoniale of the Florentine Republic, pp. 57-68.

346 ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 68, Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 7 May 1486.

347 Ibid., busta cit., Ercole d'Este to Eleonora d'Aragona, 15 May 1493.

348 These estimations are based on the measurements contained in ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendar, Consiglieri, Cancelleri e Segretari, busta 4, Siverio Sivieri to Eleonora d'Aragona, 17 September 1493, and my own personal observations.
For instance, when the throngs of onlookers pressed in on Lucrezia Borgia's retinue during her Ferrarese entrata in 1502, her horse shied, throwing her to the ground. See below, pp. 543-47.

ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio Fra Principi Estensi, (a) Principi Regnanti, busta 70, Alfonso d'Este to Ercole d'Este, 2 June 1495.

Legnago, Cronaca Estense, fol. 151v-152r.

Above, n. 165.

For accounts of the ceremonial investiture, see Savonarola, De felici progressu, fol. 29v-34v; DF, p. 35, ll. 10-29, p. 36, p. 37, ll. 1-7; Mendola, Memorie intorno alla Cita di Ferrara, fol. 52r-53v; Equicola, Annali di Ferrara, fol. 45v-46r; Ferrarensis, Excerpta ex Annalium Libris illustrii Familiae Marchionum Estensium, p. 38, ll. 18-45, p. 39, p. 40, ll. 1-29.

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Carteggio di Referendari, Consiglieri, Cancellieri e Segretari, busta 2b, Vittorio Pavoni to Constantino de Sardi, 25 June 1453.


ASMo, ASE, Casa e Stato, Carteggio di Principi Estensi, (b) Principi Non-Regnanti, busta 132, Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 25 January 1491.

Ibid., busta cit., Eleonora d'Aragona to Ercole d'Este, 24 January 1491.

Above, nn. 330-34, and Chapter Three, pp. 302-303 (with nn. 67-68), 350.

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Libri e carte d'amministrazione dei Principi, 1491, reg. 31.

ASMo, ASE, CMPDE, Disspacci Ambasciatori, Agenti e Corrispondenti Estensi, Disspacci da Milano, busta 6, Giacomo Trotti to Ercole d'Este, 1 February 1491.

Ibid., busta cit., Giacomo Trotti to Ercole d'Este, 6 February 1491. Above, Chapter Three, n. 68.

Equicola, Annali di Ferrara, fol. 65v.

P. Chinzoni, "Nozze e comedie alla corte di Ferrara nel febbraio 1491", p. 751.
Legnago, Cronaca Estense, fols. 151r-151v.

ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1490, reg. 29, c. 215v. The car was designed by Niccolò di Segna of Modena, the famous Herculean festaiuolo, above, Chapter Three, n. 142.

"A Maestro Roman depintore de dare adi soprascripta L. quINDEXE m. per compto de depinzere lo archo de la giara...", ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1491, Memoriale Munizioni, reg. 25, seg. T, c. 8r, and further payments on cc. 26r, 28r. For the carpentry, see cc. 8r-8v, 9r, 26v, 56v.

Ibid., registro cit., c. 1r-2r: "Spexa facta per le felice noze de lo illustrissimo don alfonso de dare adi soprascripte L. mile setecentodexesep te s. tredexe m. per compti faciam boni per esa a bernadino cestarelli et fratelli per la montare deli infrascripti legnami che loro hano dati da xxiii dexembre de lanno proximo passato per sino adi 29 zenaro de lanno presente per far quatro archi triumphali videlicet uno in piazza, uno da santo francesco et uno da schivenoio et uno in su la giara et per far tribunali in sala grande et altri lavoreri...". There follows a complete itemization of all the munitions.

Ibid., registro cit., c. 8r: "A maestro Sigismondo depintore L. vinticinque m. per conto de depinzere lo archo triumphale de Schivenoio...". See also cc. 7v, 26r, 28r.

In 1492, we find Sigismondo petitioning the camera for the remainder of his fee: "... humelmente ricor a v.d.s. che adesso al prexente me faza acceptare quello io digo havere che sono lire centoquatro com- puta L. 19 que resta per lo archo triumphale depinsi a schivinoglio et per domando de gratia che adesso me sia facto boni per li termini hano a venire de dicto uso...", ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1492, reg. 31, c. 138v.

ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1491, Memoriale Munizioni, reg. 25, seg. T, cc. 7v, 8v, 9r, 26r ("a mistro domenego..."), 26v, 28r, 29r, 57r.

Ibid., registro cit., c. 26r: "A maestro Cabrileto depintore per conto dello archo triumphale de san francesco.... L. 12,0,0", and further payments listed at cc. 8r, 28r. For notice of the carpenters, cc. 7v, 8r, 27r, 57r.

ASMo, ASE, Libri Camerali Diversi, Memoriale, 1490, reg. 170, seg. 000, cc. 100v, 101r, 101v; Memoriale, 1491, reg. 171, seg. PPP, c. 226v.
590

373 ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1491, Memoriale Munizioni, reg. 25, seg. T, c. 7r: "Spexa de le noze de lo illustro alfonso de dare adi soprascripto L. centotrentacinque m. per tanti faciam boni per epsa a maestro fino depintore et fratelli et a ramaldo suo compagno per lo amontare de havere depinto lo archo trionfale de piazza a tute soe spexe...", and further payments at cc. 8r, 26r, 28r. Other expenses (carpentry) are listed at cc. 7v, 8v, 9r, 26v, 56v.

374 A complete list of the musicians taking part in the procession and their stipends may be found in ASMo, ASE, Registri di Camera, Mandati, 1491, reg. 30, c. 18v (the majority of them having been "borrowed" from neighbouring signori).

375 Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole, fols. 279r-279v. See also Vitale, Memorie/Cronaca, fols. 21v-22r; Cronaca Antigini, fol. 42r; Gaspar de Sardi, Attestorium Principium historia, BEM, cod. latin 476, Alpha J 3, 39, fols. 115v-116v.


377 Zerbinati, Memorie, fols. 2v-4v.

378 Cagnola's relation can be found in Zam, p. 323, ll. 26-35.

379 ASMan, AG, busta 1238, Marchesa di Cotrone to Francesco Gonzaga, 2 February 1502. Marino Sanuto's version of the entrata, "Ordine di le pompe e spectaculi di le noze de madona Lucretia Borgia", I Diarii, IV, cols. 222-225, repeats Isabella d'Este's relation virtually verbatim, which suggests that both of them may have been working from an official narrative (personal comments would of course be added).

380 ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1502, Memoriale, reg. 39, seg. DD, cc. 22v, 23r, 23v; ASMo, ASE, Guardaroba, 1502-1504, Libro delle Partide, reg. 120, c. 33v, 98r-99r.

381 Ibid., registri cit.

382 ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1502, Memoriale, reg. 39, seg. DD, cc. 23r, 40r. ASMo, ASE, Guardaroba, 1502-1504, Libro delle Partide, reg. 120, cc. 25r, 4r.

383 ASMo, ASE, Compusteria, Libri Munitione-Fabbriche, 1502, Autentico, reg. 40, c. 66v; Memoriale, reg. 39, seg. DD, c. 184r.

384 Ibid., Memoriale cit., c. 23r; ASMo, ASE, Guardaroba,
1502-1504, Libro delle Partide, reg. 120, cc. 98r-99r.

385 See Zam, p. 329, ll. 18-19, p. 346, ll. 13-14.

386 References as above, n. 383.

387 References as above, n. 380.


389 See for example the entry of Obizzo III d'Este into Parma in 1344 (which he had purchased from Azzo da Correggio for 60,000 golden florins), when he was solemnly presented with the keys to the city: "... & super Salam dicti Palatii qui-dam Judex constitutus Syndicus dicti Communis Parmae coram omnibus tradidit, & confirmavit dicto Domino Marchioni Dominum liberum dictae Civitatis, eiusque Districtus, ac claves Portarum dictae Civitatis", Chronicon Estense, cols. 413-14.

390 For Eleonora's entry including mention of the arches, see Sardi, Atestinorum Principium historia, fols. 105v-106v, and Merenda, Memorie intorno alla Citta di Ferrara, "Entrata di Madama leonora in Ferrara", fols. 56r-56v.


392 A conspicuous example of the "triumph" of Virtue is the poem by Gasparo Tribraco, Divi ducis Borsii estensis, BEM, cod. latin 82, Alpha M 7, 21, discussed briefly by Gundersheimer, Ferrara: The Style of a Renaissance Despotism, p. 128 (a miniature from this MS. showing Borso seated on a carroccio under a baldacchino is reproduced between pages 116 and 117).


395 Aby Warburg, "I Costumi Teatrali per gli Intermezzi del 1589", Gesammelte Schriften, I (Leipzig,
**Appendix A**

Calendar of Erudite Comedies and Sacre

Rappresentazioni in Ferrara: 1444-1505

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Author/Translator(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 Jan. 1444</td>
<td>Isis</td>
<td>ducal palace</td>
<td>Francesco Ariosto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 March 1444</td>
<td>Legend of St. George</td>
<td>piazza</td>
<td>.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 June 1476</td>
<td>Legend of St. James</td>
<td>piazza</td>
<td>.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 April 1481</td>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>ducal chapel</td>
<td>Plautus; trans. by Battista Guarini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Jan. 1486</td>
<td>Menaechmi</td>
<td>cortile</td>
<td>Niccolò da Correggio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Jan. 1487</td>
<td>Cefalo</td>
<td>cortile</td>
<td>Plautus; trans. by Pandolfo Collenuccio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Jan. 1487</td>
<td>Amphitryon</td>
<td>cortile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Feb. 1487</td>
<td>Amphitryon</td>
<td>cortile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17 April 1487</td>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>piazza</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 April 1489</td>
<td>Resurrection</td>
<td>piazza</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Feb. 1490</td>
<td>unknown comedy</td>
<td>sala grande</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 April 1490</td>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>Church of S. Francesco</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Feb. 1491</td>
<td>Menaechmi</td>
<td>sala grande</td>
<td>Plautus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Feb. 1491</td>
<td>Andria</td>
<td>sala grande</td>
<td>Terence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Feb. 1491</td>
<td>Amphitryon</td>
<td>sala grande</td>
<td>Plautus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 July 1491?</td>
<td>unknown comedy</td>
<td>Palazzo Belreguardo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 April 1492</td>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>piazza?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 May 1492</td>
<td>Ippolito e Leonora</td>
<td>Palazzo Pachino Schifanoia (Florentine?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(cortile)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 May 1492</td>
<td></td>
<td>Palazzo Schifanoia (sala di madama)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 May 1493</td>
<td>unknown comedy</td>
<td>sala grande? Ercole Strozzi</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 May 1493</td>
<td>unknown comedy</td>
<td>sala grande? Ercole Strozzi</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 May 1493</td>
<td>unknown comedy</td>
<td>Gardens of the Castel Vecchio</td>
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<tr>
<td>? 1494</td>
<td>The Conversion of St. Augustine</td>
<td>Church of S. P. Domizio Domenico</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 March 1494</td>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>Church of S. Francesco</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Feb. 1499</td>
<td>Eunuchus</td>
<td>sala grande Terence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Feb. 1499</td>
<td>Trinummus</td>
<td>sala grande Plautus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Feb. 1499</td>
<td>Poenulus</td>
<td>sala grande Plautus</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Feb. 1499</td>
<td>Eunuchus</td>
<td>sala grande Terence</td>
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<td>14 Feb. 1499</td>
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<td>sala grande Terence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Feb. 1499</td>
<td>unknown comedy</td>
<td>sala grande ?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Feb. 1499</td>
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<td>19 Feb. 1499</td>
<td>Eunuchus</td>
<td>sala grande Terence</td>
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<td>24 Feb. 1499</td>
<td>Eunuchus</td>
<td>sala grande Terence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>? (Lent)</td>
<td>Filostrato e Panphila</td>
<td>? Antonio Cammelli da Pistoia</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>23 Feb. 1500</td>
<td>Eunuchus</td>
<td>sala grande Terence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Feb. 1500</td>
<td>Captivi</td>
<td>sala grande Plautus</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 March 1500</td>
<td>Asinaria</td>
<td>sala grande Plautus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 March 1500</td>
<td>Mercator</td>
<td>sala grande Plautus</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>31 Jan. 1501</td>
<td>Captivi</td>
<td>sala grande Plautus</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Feb. 1501</td>
<td>Mercator</td>
<td>sala grande</td>
<td>Plautus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Feb. 1501</td>
<td>Pseudolus</td>
<td>sala grande</td>
<td>Plautus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Feb. 1501</td>
<td>Menaechmi</td>
<td>sala grande</td>
<td>Plautus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Feb. 1502</td>
<td>Epidichus</td>
<td>Palazzo della Ragone</td>
<td>Plautus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Feb. 1502</td>
<td>Bacchides</td>
<td>Palazzo della Ragone</td>
<td>Plautus; trans. by Girolamo Berardo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Feb. 1502</td>
<td>Miles Gloriosus</td>
<td>Palazzo della Ragone</td>
<td>Plautus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Feb. 1502</td>
<td>Asinaria</td>
<td>Palazzo della Ragone</td>
<td>Plautus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Feb. 1502</td>
<td>Casina</td>
<td>Palazzo della Ragone</td>
<td>Plautus; trans. by Girolamo Berardo, Paolo Cerasara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>? 1502</td>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Feb. 1503</td>
<td>Aulularia</td>
<td>sala nova delle commedie</td>
<td>Plautus; trans. by Battista Guarini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Feb. 1503</td>
<td>Mustellaria</td>
<td>sala nova delle commedie</td>
<td>Plautus; trans. by Girolamo Berardo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Feb. 1503</td>
<td>Eunuchus</td>
<td>sala nova delle commedie</td>
<td>Terence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Feb. 1503</td>
<td>Menaechmi</td>
<td>sala nova delle commedie</td>
<td>Plautus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 April 1503</td>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>duomo</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 April 1503</td>
<td>Annunciation</td>
<td>duomo</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 April 1503</td>
<td>Resurrection</td>
<td>duomo</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-31 March 1504</td>
<td>Comedia de Jacob et de Joseph</td>
<td>duomo</td>
<td>Pandolfo Collenuccio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 April 1504</td>
<td>unknown comedy</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Calendar of the Festival Year in Ferrara c. 1500

Guilds (Arti) and Confraternities listed by patron
* - designates non-statutory holidays

Immovable Feasts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January 1</th>
<th>Circumcisio domini: beginning of the official year and elections of the maestri dell'arti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Epiphany: La Ventura or Offerta del Befana; first day of Carnival in Ferrara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>St. Antony Abbot: civic procession and oblation in the denominational church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>SS. Sebastian and Fabian: Compagnia di S. Sebastiano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>St. Agnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2</td>
<td>Purification B.V.M. or S. Maria Ciriola: Compagnia de Nostra Donna in S. Paolo,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compagnia de Nostra Donna in S. Francesco, Compagnia della Morte; signorial oblation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in the duomo and veneration of the immagine of the Virgin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>St. Blaise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>St. Matthias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>St. Thomas Aquinas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>St. Gregory the Great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Annunciation B.V.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 24</td>
<td>St. George: civic procession and oblation in the duomo; Palio di Ferrara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
25 St. Mark: civic procession of the Venetian Visdomino and oblation in the denominational church

29 St. Peter Martyr: Compagnia di S. Pietro Martire in S. Domenico

May 1 SS. Philip and James: Festa del Maio

3 Invention of the Holy Cross

7 St. Maurelius: co-patron of Ferrara

8 Revelation of St. Michael

20 St. Bernardine of Siena

June 13 St. Antony of Padua

22* St. Julian: Osti, Tavernieri

24 St. John the Baptist: Palio di Castel Tedaldo; Fruttaroli, Casaroli; Compagnia di S. Giovanni Battista in S. Domenico

29 St. Peter the Apostle: Palio di S. Pietro

30 St. Paul the Apostle: Bastaroli, Crivellatori, Brentadori

July 17 St. Alexius: Fornari

22 St. Mary Magdalen: Battagliuola

25 St. James the Greater

St. Christopher: Compagnia de Cha de Dio

26 St. Anne

August 5 St. Dominic Guzman: civic procession and oblation in the denominational church

9 St. Romanus: Drappieri, Merciari, Pelliciari, Strazzaroli

10 St. Lawrence of Rome

15 Assumption B.V.M.

24 St. Bartholomew

25* St. Louis IX: Compagnia di S. Ludovico in S. Andrea
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>St. Augustine of Hippo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>Nativity B.V.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10*</td>
<td>St. Nicholas of Tolentino: Compagnia di S. Nicola in S. Andrea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>St. Mathew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>SS. Cosmas and Damian: Speciali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>St. Michael Archangel: Muratori</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>St. Jerome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 4</td>
<td>St. Francis of Assisi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>St. Luke: Scholari, Medicinali, Beccari, Macellari, Arte della Lana; beginning of the university term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>SS. Crispin and Crispinian: Calzolari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>SS. Simon and Jude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1</td>
<td>All Saints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>St. Martin of Tours: Compagnia di S. Martino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>St. Homobonus: Sarti, Calzettai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>St. Catharine: Legisti, Dottori, Notari, Carradori</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>St. Andrew: Sprocani, Pescivendoli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>St. Eligius: Fabbri, Orefici, Argentieri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6*</td>
<td>St. Nicholas of Bari: Paroni, Navicellai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>St. Ambrose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>St. Lucy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>St. Thomas the Apostle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Nativity of Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>St. Stephen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>St. John the Apostle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B cont'd.

28 Massacre of the Innocents
31 St. Silvester

Movable Feasts:

Shrove Tuesday:* final day of Carnival in Ferrara; Spettacolo del Porco

Maundy Thursday: Festa dei Poveri

Good Friday: signorial oblation of prisoners in the duomo

Resurrectionis domini and two following days (Easter)

Ascensio domini (forty days after Easter)

Pentecost (fifty days after Easter) and two following days

Corpus Christi (Thursday after Trinity Sunday): civic procession in Ferrara; Comandadori; Compagnia di Corpus Christi in the duomo
Appendix C

Performance of the "Eunuchus" in the Sala Grande - 7 February 1499

(AMan, AG, busta 1235, Jano Pencaro to Isabella d'Este, 9 February 1499)

Parmi Illma. mia signora et patrona esser mio debito essendo gionto hoggi nella patria nostra dare adviso a vostra Sria. de casi in epsa occorsi, et maxime circa le Comoedie; et tanto piu che essendo adi passati in Mantoa et refferendo al conspecto dalcun huomini da bene della spesa quale faceva questo Illmo. duca non solo non mi fu creduto, ma quasi fui stimato mendace allegando montare dicta spesa circa duomilia ducati. Onde essendo in ferrara cum la prima informatione dico che passa quanto io dissi, et per pingere a vostra S. come sta, bisogna che quella alquanto ponga in exercicio la imaginativa, e considir la sala grande di corte come stava per laltre comoedie. La sena de comici e come suole longo le fenestre dal capo di sopra della sala, e il tribunale non come suole imperoche el primo grado e alto quatro pedi da terra dove era una solo pede, poi camina per nove gradi alto. El tribunale quale camina per longo della sala facto sopra modioni come scia V.S. e tanto magiore del solito, quanto che li modioni erano quatro pedi necti fuera del muro, et adesso sono octo, poi cam- ina per nove gradi alto quasi fino al solaro, con le sue sbarre e colonelli tucti coperte a bussi et verdure cum le arme et divise ducali che e bellissimo a vedere. Tucti li tribunali sono coperti de panni rossi, bianchi et verdi, il resto de la sala parata a modo vecchio; da laltro capo verso la credenza e formato el tribunale come da laltro capo con simile ordine et parato.

Sopra a dicti tribunali condicionato el popullo, al
Appendix C cont'd.

suo opposito si comincio zobia proxima passata la comedia
di lo Eunucho, di laquale piu oltre non e da parlare per-
che nel proprio auctore ognun la vede, ma lo apparato suo
fu tale che merita qualche adviso, imperoche primo longo
el tribunale passeggioro tucti quelli che haveano a re-
presentar tucte le comoedie che furono centotrentatre,
vestiti tucti di vesti nove facte aposta, chi di raso,
chi zambelotto, chi cendalo, chi panni et chi subtil-
issime tele habiti formati adiversi costumi, chi greci
schiavi, chi servi, chi patroni, chi mercanti et chi
femine secondo e casi. Appresso a questi comparseno
quelli dali tramezi che furono cento quarantaquatro,
vestiti similmente cum habbiti tucti novi, chi villani,
chi pazzi, chi nimpre, chi buffoni et chi parasiti, et
benche in qualche acto sia comparso uno piu che una
volta, non e pero comparso habbito alcuno piu che una
volta, tal che a volere sumare serano habiti tucto
ducento octantasepte tucti novi habiti per la piu parte
venerabili et gravi et di gran spesa.

Nel primo tramezo comparse una compagna di deci
vilani quali per sei exercici cavorono fructo della
loro ben cultivata terra, impero che primamente in un
subito saltati fuora in acto di moresca cum zappe com-
incioro zappare la terra sempre ogni acto, motto et
misura serbarsi col tempo alla proporcione dil suono,
che pareva che tanti huomini se movessero cum uno
spirito solo concordati al tempo del sonatore. Cosi
usciti e zappata la terra di semente doro la riempirono,
cum quella misura e tempo chio ho sopradettol talche
ogni movere di pede, pieghare di mano, volgere di faccia
sempre era col suono concordato. Nasciuta la seminata,
bia da comincioro con il medesimo modo e misura a tag-
liarla, tal che uno menar di segetto, un racoglier de
bia da, un ligare di manipulo era tucto tempo et misura,
poi cum sopraditti tempi la batterono, poi aventorno
cum le pale, poi insachata preparaono per ultimo refrig-
erio uno bello convito con canti, balli e danze et cum
zoia e canto dierono loco al secondo acto.
Appendix C cont'd.

Nel secondo tramezo comparssero guidati da uno buffone dodexe vestiti de vesti leggiadre di zendalo cum tagliamento calce a nove divise, sonagli oro et tremola assai, quali doppo la chiaranzana sonata ferono una moresca gagliarda et bellissima.

Nel terzo tramezo uscirono sei nimphe guidate da uno sonatore tucte alegre et libere, et apresso loro alcuni gioveni dogliosi cantando cum suave armonie lamentevoli cancioni dolendosi di sua perversa sorte che servì fussero di donne, a cui nulla del suo male premeva, cum catene a guisa di servi.

Nel quarto tramezo comparirono dodici vestiti ad habiti varii con nove divise et ciascun di loro cum occello selvaggio in mano, chi fasciano, chi perdice, chi lepore o paone ecc. Et facta la volta per la sena cum una nova misura, nel mezo si fermoro a condire dicte carne per farne convito, et sempre ogni minimo acto cum solemne concordancia al suono, mentre al pelare e scorticare se faticavano si scoperse uno orso quale tanto aptamente fece lofficio che a molti parve esser naturale. Gionto lorso nel drapello de convivanti tucti furono sbaragliati sparsi chi qua e chi la, excepto uno che per sua sorte non puote fuggire et qui da lorso occiso rimase freddo in terra. Rivolto lorso a piu suave preda li occelli et ogni altra carne mangioe che qui lassata fusse. Pasciuta la feroce bestia se mise grave a rodere longie, e fuggiti convivanti assicuratisi ritornorono, ogni minima partita sempre facendo a tempo e misura. Ligata la indomita fiera andorono al morto et qui de membro in membro rivolgendolo trovaronlo morto che non altrimenti che senza spirito con tanta sagicitade seppe accozare el falso al vero, et levatolo suso se stessi passerono de le vivande cun acti exteriori pieni de alegreza. Seguitoe el quinto acto e fecessi fine, ogni huomo o donna a casa sua.
Appendix D

Performance of the "Passion of Christ" in
in the piazza - 16 and 17 April 1489

(Girolamo Maria Ferrarini, Cronaca ferrarese, BEM, cod. ital. no. 178, Alpha F 5, 18, fols. 264v-268r; partially published by Anna Maria Coppo, "Spettacoli alla corte di Ercole I", Contributi dell'Istituto di Filologia. Serie Storia del Teatro, ser. iii, I, (1968), pp. 48-51)

A di luni 13 aprile lo Duca nostro di Ferrara lo tribunale che haveva facto fare dietro le bolete e lo officio del Collecterale fece disfare a gran furia nanti dexenare e lo fece fare verso el palazo del podesta di Ferrara a la lunga de dicto palazo. Lasando uno andavino tra lo fonticho de Hieronymo de Vicentii et le altre botege, che per quello se possi andarsi inanti e indieto; et uno capo de dicto tribunale tochava li banchi sino sotto li pozoli, pilgiando la largheza de dito andavino lasato denanti el fonticho de Hieronymo de Vicentii et altre botege insino al secondo bancho, et soto li poz- olli delle collone di marmoro et dicto bancho e de Nic- ola Leopardo e lo conduxe ad affito Lanzallotto di Fanti; laltrro capo traversava la piazza et andava verso la straz- aria et la fontana, ed era lungo dicto tribunale da dicti banchi insino quanto tene la strazaria et la botega de Christofolo Corezaro strazzarollo et la largeza e como era il primo fece fare diverso lo officio de le bolette et suso dicto tribunale le era con ase facte certe caxe con colone di legnamo, una caxa era dove magno Christo lo agnello con li discipuli che era drito la botega de Hieronymo de Vicentii, laltra caxa dove Maria Madalena
ando a unzere li pedi a Cristo la qual era in capo il tribunale verso la fontana; una altra caxa con atrio dove favono li zudei consiglio et stava Chaifas, si era in capo lo tribunale verso li banchi una altra propinqua caxa era a questa di verso la contra di Santo Paulo et de le Cartolarie et la quale era pure de Pontefice de Judei, et la faza del tribunale per la quale se faceva la demostrazione de la Passione, chel populo la potesse vodersi guardava verso caxa del Vescovo di Ferrara. Et così a di zobia 16 aprile la zobia Sancta la matina doppo la Messa circha ore 16 lo duca de Ferrara nostro in sala grande ducale lavo li pedi a molti poveri homeni....

Adì dicto 16 aprile la zobia sancta. Doppo fu dicto il matutino quale e consueto de dirse de di et essendo circha meza hora a venire sira, lo duca nostro di Ferrara ando con li soi nobili et cortesani suso il pozollo ultimo a descendere delli pozolli de marmoro, sono denanti la tore de lo horologio de Rigobelli. Item li fu Madama nostra a laltro di sopra in modo che tutti tri pozolli erano pieni tuti per vedere la Passione de Christo et fece lo duca dopo le hore 24 per spacio comenza la Passione de Christo et era una scala stachata a tribunale de drieto via andava a lusio de la botega de Hieronymo de Vicentii in la quale botega tutti quelli havevano a fare la Passione se vestivano in dicta botega; et il principio de la passione et il primo acto fu come la Verzene Maria viene fora con tre Marie, lamentandose vulgarmente como per lo peccato di Eva fece bisogno a Christo venire in terra et incarnarse et patire et como li gaudii in pianto ritornavano, essendo li il fiolo suo Christo in juditio dinanti ali Judei per essere condemnato et altre parole assai notande e bone. Fatto questo primo acto Christo con li XII disipuli usi fora, vestidi dignamente et convenientemente, et fece la Cena, et li lavo li pedi a tutti et le parole di tal acto erano latine et le parole dil Passio. Et
Appendix D cont'd.

cosi per ordine andono come va il Passio pur lassandoli alcune cose, et in tuto non recitato de verbo ad verbum; l'ultimo acto fu quando Christo fu prexo da li zudei. Doppo questo ultimo acto venne uno chiamato il Conchelle Domenico, quale era et representava il ciecho illuminato fu da Christo, il quale disse alcune parole vulgare. E così doe volte solum insino qui e stato parlato vulgare, tutto el resto per littere in latino, et lo efecto del parlare del ciecho fu come andava per ritrovare a caxa la Verzene Maria per farli asapere chel suo fiolo era stato prexo da li zudei et fornito tal parlare fu fornito la Passione quanto per la zobia sira; et ogni persona se parti poi de piaza, essendo piena la piazza de persone et di banche dove sentavano, et li pozzoli del duca et le finestre del palazo ducale ed altri luoghi de piazza; et quando fu fornito poteva essere hore doe et mezzo de noxte.

La mattina del Venerdì di Sanco a di 17 aprile, inanti di como e usanza maestro Baptista Paneto de l'ordine Frati di Sancto Paulo di Ferrara predico in piazza essendo le persone in piazza per vedere la Passione fornirla. Fornito hebbe la predica, che la forni nante hore 12, perche lo duca così volse, et standing lo duca et madama alli pozzoli ut supra con le loro corte, lo primo acto fu facto il Venerdì fu como Anna et Caifa: pontefice e vestido a modo di pontefice Anna a modo di vescovo quando e a lo altare con lo piviale; et mitria in testa, con zudei assai drieo a loro, vestidi tutti de diversi hab-iti, ed Herodes, Pilato poi con uno puto innanti, che li portava la spada et lo cappello come se fanno a podes-tadi, seguendoli altri drieo. Haveva lui una turcha di brocchato doro et stava suso una scranna parata, et li altri zudei erono con tutti questi che erano assai, chi haveva barbe posticce, chi senza, con cappelli grandi in testa, chi con altre cose, li quali tutti erano piu de 50 persone et se assentonno. Et lo primo acto fu come Juda venne fora suso il tribunale dal capo verso li zudei che era appresso li banchi de lo altro capo del
tribunale verso la fontana. All'incontro venne sancto Zoanne Baptista il quale, vedendo Juda vulgarmente com-

venzò a reprendere, digando vulgarmente molte cose in

repressione sua, che aveva venduto il suo maestro, che

tanto bene li haveva facto, ed altre molte parole de

simile effecto. Juda non rispose mai, ma mesto passezava

suso il tribunale grattandose spesso il capo, facendo

acti de essere malcontento. Finito il parlare di sancto

Zoanne se parti. Juda ando a rendere li dinari haveva

tolti a li zudei, poi passeziando se messe in fantasia
dappiccarse, et in quello mezo usci fora da una boccha
de serpente facto de asce che era verso il capo del

tribunale verso la fontana, la qual bocca era caxa del
diavolo, usci uno diavolo, o vero in forma di diavolo,

il quale drieto a Juda a le oreccchie li andava digando:

Appicate, appicate, et li buttava pezzi de soge denati,
perche se appiccasse. Dopo hebbe molto passezato ando

al trocho de uno legno posto suso dicto tribunale et

se finse de appicare, et stava appiccato per la gola,

ma era zogo sotto le scene chel sosteneva. Lo diavolo

subito asexe lARBore et dicto troncho, che era con rame
 verde et li messe li pedi suso le spalle, come fa il

manigoldo, standingosì appicato per la gola. Christo fu

poi menato a Pilato in pretorio, et così successive fu

facta la Passione. Stando un poco Juda impiccato, venne
dui diavoli, e dispiconno il corpo di Juda e lo portonno

in la testa de la serpe che era il locho di caxa del

diavollo. Christo, dopoi alcuni altri acti, fu tolto zo
di la croce per Nicodemo e due altri, e messo in lo

monumento, li quali cantonno alcune laude nanti la croce,
nanti lo tolseno zoso. Nanti fusse portato al monumento

la Madre sua Verzene Maria lo tolse in brazo così morto,
et li piangendo disse alcune parole vulgare, et così in

questa Passione si e sta dicto solum in quattro acti

parole vulgari. Lo primo fu il principiare la Passione,

parole di Nostra Donna ut supra; lo secondo acto di

parole vulgari, fu lo Ciecho; lo terzo acto, santo Zoanne;
lo quarto et ultimo, il pianto di nostra Donna dopo morto il fiolo; le altre tutte parole sono state latine, et como dice il Passio, et in canto sono sempre sta dicte in tutti li parlamenti, perche tutti li cantori del Duca et altri che sapevano de canto, sono stati quelli che hanno facto dicta Passione. Lultimo acto de la Passione fu quando Christo ando a torre li sancti Padri fora del Limbo, li quali drieto a lui li andavano cantando laude et alli pedi della croce tutti stati zenocchioni. Et così fu fornita dicta Passione.
Appendix E

Ordo of a Religious Procession

in Modena - 8 June 1500


Conte tenute de el no. de le persone grande e pizole in la ultima procession de le nove lequale fece fare lo Ilust. S.N. Misser Ercole da Este, le quale procession se fecene nove di in Modena: se dice che le faceva fare per el Turche che voleva vignire in Italia.

La croxe de san Marche con 24 puti con 16, zoè 12 apostoli e 4 evangelista e 11 putie vestite da sante.

Item el stendarde de santo Homobon.
Item el stendarde di Fornare.
Item el stendarde di Barcaroli.
Item el stendarde de li Oste.
Item el stendarde di Muradore.
Item el stendarde di Tesare.
Item el stendarde di Barbere.
Item el stendarde di Ligname.
Item el stendarde de Fornasare.
Item el stendarde de Oredexe.
Item el stendarde de Calzolare.
Item el stendarde de Nodare.
Item el stendarde di Frare con lui duperi.

Item una compagnia vestita de sachi con teste de morte in man con dui doperi denanze et uno crucifixe, no. 30 tuti descalze.

Item el stendarde de Santo Bernardin con batu no. 14
Appendix E cont’d.

Item el stendarde de santa Maria de gratia con batu no. 14 de la compagnia de san Zimignan.
Item el stendarde de Jesu con batu no. 12.
Item el stendarde della Nonciada con batu no. 21.
Item el stendarde di Batu con batu no. 20.
Item el stendarde di San Pedre martire con batu dui che se batene con cadene de fere e batu 16.
Item la crox de li Servi con frati 8.
Item la crox de li frati del Carmene con lo suo stendarde no. 16.
Item la crox de santo Agostino con frati 20.
Item la crox de santo Francesco con frati del Terze ordine no. 9 e frati de Santa Cecilia no. 30, e frati de san Francesco no. 15.
Item la crox de san Pedre con puti no. 26.
Item la crox de san Bertolamè con puti e pute tuti ben vestiti no. 25.
Item el stendarde de santo Zohane vechie con puti e pute ben vestiti no. 172 e homini vestiti da proferta no. 12 et uno anzole denanze.
Item bandere sete con tri pive e trombete, dui diavoli e le sete vertù con dui anzoli de dre.
Item undexe donzeli ben vestiti uno care con Dio padre e Saul morte con 4 anzoli suse e con tri asene de dre carege de vituaria e doe bandere inanze e con 13 donzeli che acompagnane il Dio padre.
Item uno home in forma de uno cigante con uno home in forma de uno orse et uno con lui a pe con uno can a man.
Item la crox de Santa Margarita con puti e pute tuti ben vestiti no. 142.
Item li tri Mazi a cavale a asini et una Maria con lo putin in braze, oferende ore, mira, e incense con donzeli no. 18.
Item la crox de Santo Laurenze con puti e puteie ben vestiti no. 66 con tri puti de drede e lo confalon de santo Laurenze con homini vestiti de sache descalze scav-iati con croxie in man no. 70 con uno santo Laurenzo e con uno Cristo che porta la croxet uno calize in man con uno subdiacone con lui.
Item la crox de santo Vicenze con dui anzoli inanze con puti e pute tuti ben vestiti no. 64, 4 dottore de la gexia e il sore.
Item la croxie de san Catalde con puti e putie no. 38 con sore con li diavoli che strasinane una donzela che era la Invidia, e la Morte drede a quella con santo Bernardo che strasinava li diavole incadenati.
Appendix E cont'd.

Item la crose de san Pole con puti e pute 64 e sore vestite de bianche 46 con la nostra Donna con doe donzelle con uno santo Agustín con quatro preti inanze con areligiuie e san Pole de dre con la spada in man.

Item la croxe de san Jacomo con puti e pute 66.

Item la croxe de santo Barnabe con la sua reliquia con puti e pute vestite da sore e altre foze no. 30 e disipuli vestiti con mantelì negri a l'apostoli che con libri in man e descalze no. 46 significande 72 disipuli con uno Criste morte con quatro che lo portane con due dopere aprexe con le tre Marie e cinque zoe Josepho e altre e la lanza e la sponge denanze.

Item la croxe de san Michele con puti e putie no. 132 e donzeli zoe se calche no. 12 con lo monde, cinque pute che lo portano con santa Catalina vestita tuta d'ore e con donzele con santo Dominico, uno santo Francesco, uno santo Sebastiano portato in suxo una barela, tutto el misterie de la passion, zoë Criste menato in suxo una lanza adobada con persone no. 20 la quale lelza la menava uno bufale e uno cavale.

Item una compagnia vestita de sache con li sachi in cho e crucifixe in mane descalze no. 58, una bara con la nostra Donna morta suxe con dodexe apostoli che la portane tuti abruniti con pute abrune no. 90: questi feze el prete de la Pompoza con le tre Marie e con canti piatose.

Item li tri Maze con 12 a cavale e 12 stafere li quali oferse al presepie che era in lo Castelare ore, mire, incense.

Item la croxe de lo Capitolo con tuti li chierege, preti e lo Vescovo con lo baldachino, tuti li cho de cinquantina con dopère aprexe e lo veschove portava lo braze de San Zimignan e un canonico lo legnie de la Croxe e altra reliquiuia con la veste de la nostra Donna e tute lo popule maschie e femine li quali sono circha a no. 5000 et da più persone fu estimate che tuti quelli che sono state a dita procession poseno essere da persone no. 12000.
Appendix F

Salaried Members of the Ducal Household and their
Monthly Stipends in Lire Marchesane - 1476

(Ugo Caleffini, Chroniche del Duca Ercole,
Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Chigi
I. I. 4, fols. 66r-70v)

Principiano qui li salariati e provisionati
acadauno el mese:

Lo Illustrissimo messer Sigismondo fratello de Duca
il mese.................................................. L. 2375,0,0
Lo Illustrissimo messer Rainaldo.................... L. 500,0,0

L. 2875,0,0

Illustrissimo messer Alberto da Este......... L. 831,5,0
Illustrissimo messer Scipion da Este suo nepote... L. 120,0,0
Messere Polidoro da Este suo nepote........... L. 15,0,0

Consiglieri Secreti:

Magnifico messer Nicolo di Contrarii.... L. 80,0,0
Magnifico messer Ambroso di Contrarii... L. 80,0,0
Magnifico messer Hanibale da Gonzaga
del consiglio secreto.......................... L. 40,0,0
Magnifico messer Christoforo rangone
da Modena del dicto Consiglio.............. L. 75,0,0
Speciali Rainaldo di Costabili de
dicto consiglio..................................... L. 20,0,0
Speciali messere Augustino di bonfran-
ceschi da rimino......................... L. 8,0,0
Salvano suo messo............................... L. 3,0,0
Conseglio di Justitia:

Messer Guliano pincharo da parma...... L. 45,0,0
Messer Manfredo maldente da forli...... L. 45,0,0
Messer Francesco verlato cavaliero
da vicenza.................................. L. 45,0,0
Pietro di bondinari suo messo.......... L. 2,10,0

Cancellieri:

Magnifico Paulo Antonio trotto
secretario primo......................... L. 50,0,0
Zoanne de Compagno secretario......... L. 24,0,0
francesco nasello da ferrara
secretario............................... L. 24,0,0
Constantino di lardi................... L. 8,0,0
Arestotile del brutura.................. L. 8,0,0
Libanore di libanori.................... L. 8,0,0
Mengo da le arme........................ L. 18,0,0
Sivero de Sivero........................ L. 18,0,0
Rainalido di fanti, hano a tenir dui
cavali per homo.......................... L. 18,0,0

Messi ala Cancelleria:

Zoannefrancesco de li imperii......... L. 3,0,0
Bartolomeo bressano.................... L. 3,0,0

Correri:

Bartolomeo zato........................ L. 3,0,0
Zoanneandrea soncino................... L. 3,0,0
Nico1o albanese......................... L. 3,0,0
Ugo panegiaia.......................... L. 3,0,0
Aiolso................................. L. 3,0,0
Belino da le aguchie................... L. 3,0,0
Antonio maria corio.................... L. 3,0,0

Cavalari:

Zoanne copella........................... L. 4,5,0
Alovise scapese......................... L. 4,5,0
Zoanne de montolino .................. L.  4,5,0
Bergamino ................................ L.  4,5,0

**Oratori:**

M. Bonfrancesco di arloti da rezo
phisico in corte de roma ............ L.  28,0,0
M. Alberto cortese da modena
in Venesia ................................ L.  40,0,0
M. Nicolo di roberti da rezo
in milano ................................ L.  83,6,8
Nicolo de bendedio da ferrara
in fiorenza ............................ L.  41,13,4

Illu. ma. sor margarita de arimino
sorella del duca ..................... L.  30,0,0
Ma. Philippa da la tavola madre de
lo Illu. messer Alberto ............ L.  15,0,0

**Superiori ali Viandanti:**

Philippo bendedio da ferrara za
cancelliero .......................... L.  10,0,0
Jacomo magnamino da ferrara ...... L.  10,0,0

Ludovico di fanti cesatore
ale bollette .......................... L.  5,0,0

**Notari a viandanti:**

Zoanne maria bellava ............... L.  5,0,0
Jeronimo da le calce ............... L.  5,0,0

**Facturi Generali:**

Philippo cestarello da ferrara ...... L.  20,0,0
Jacomo machiavello da ferrara ...... L.  20,0,0

**Maestri di Conti:**

Pietro da la farina .................. L.  12,0,0
Żorzo darzenta ....................... L.  12,0,0
Fino de Ariano ....................... L.  12,0,0
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<td>Pietro alfani da fiorenza al Conto vechio zenerale</td>
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Notari di Maestri di Conti:

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<td>Jacomolorenzo ali Catastri de la Camera</td>
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<td>Zoanne castigante ad incontrare</td>
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<td>Zoannemaria girondo al governo di libri de Camera</td>
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<td>Simon de milano ala bolleta di salariati</td>
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Messi di Facturi:

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Facturi ale posser:
Appendix F cont'd.

Antonio de soperbo .................... L. 5,0,0
Ludovico di Catti ..................... L. 5,0,0

Rasonati li:

Baldassare da la farina ................ L. 8,0,0
Antonio dalaro ....................... L. 8,0,0

Notari:

Jacomino da Corlo ................. L. 8,0,0
Ludovico de mazoni ................ L. 8,0,0
Ludovico de francho messo li ...... L. 2,0,0
Bartolommeo de rabono officiale sopra le bestie ...... L. 7,0,0
Jacomino menore notario ali rebelli .... L. 8,0,0

Officiali ali Granari:

Christoforo darqua .................. L. 7,0,0
Ludovico da le vieze ................ L. 7,0,0

Castaldi:

Jacomino et omero fratelli de novello ... L. 4,0,0
And. di modenisì a mellara .......... L. 4,0,0
Antoniomaria cavedon al miaro ...... L. 3,0,0
Alberto da la grano al belriguardo .... L. 6,0,0
Antonio tosego a porto .......... L. 1,0,0
Bartolommeo de becharia a fossadalbaro.......... L. 1,0,0
Galasso di roberti a Consandali ...... L. 1,0,0
Francesco sogaro in core creva ...... L. 4,0,0
Alberto de moise ale papoze .......... L. 3,0,0
Rosso in Casaia ...................... L. 4,0,0
Nicolò de la checha alla Canda ...... L. 4,0,0
M. Domenego da piasenza in Coparo ... L. 2,0,0
Bartolomeo di bertoldi in medelana .... L. 2,10,0
Mercatello a pontechio ............ L. 4,0,0
Jacomino in Caramagna ............. L. 4,0,0
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**Compagni:**

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Appendix F cont'd.

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<td>Philippo Celegino alias Sotio da ferrara</td>
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<td>Guizardo riminaldo</td>
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<td>Nicolo de Jacomo de Nicolo di Trotti</td>
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Ludovico de messer lippo cavaliero
di bocamauiiri da ferrara.............. L. 22,8,0
Leonello che fu de Bartolomeo fiascho
da ferrara................................ L. 22,8,0
Boldrino da parma........................ L. 22,8,0
Ugolino tosabecho da gambologa de
erarexe.................................... L. 22,8,0
Francesco bellaia da ferrara.......... L. 22,8,0
Jacomo da larpa da bologna sonatore... L. 22,8,0
Pietro de Constantino di Silvestri
da roigo................................... L. 15,0,0
Zangarino da ferrara ducale barbero... L. 9,0,0

Portonari seu hostiariii:

Christoforo de moro da ferrara........ L. 6,0,0
Pietroalovise de lo reame.............. L. 6,0,0
Guogo da ferrara........................ L. 6,0,0

Baldiserra da montechio spenditore... L. 15,0,0
Bertolazo di pizolbechari da ferrara\nsASCAlcho ali forastieri............... L. 10,0,0
Zoanne de zoanne de bondinari da\nferrara za spiciale per li bisogni de\nla spenderia dentro la tera et a cav-\nlacare fora per la spenderia.......... L. 12,0,0
Antonimaria mazon da ferrara sopra\nle legne dentro et de fora et sopra\ntl i strami et biava fora in contado..... L. 10,0,0
Jacomo da le calze da ferrara per\ncomparer et despensare dentro alla\ngrassa.................................... L. 6,0,0
Troilo de becharia da ferrara\nmaestro Panatiero...................... L. 6,0,0
Lazaro de galeoto da modena\nmaestro fornaro......................... L. 15,0,0
Guido di trotti sotto panatiero\ndentro et fora........................... L. 6,0,0
Malatesta da Coparo officiale al\npolar........................................ L. 5,0,0
Dui fachini per la spenderia dentro\ne fora la spisa computa............... L. 12,0,0
Uno fachino cum dui turchi al lignaro\nnon intendano la spisa che haverano\nli turchi................................. L. 6,0,0
Appendix F cont’d.

Augustino fachino a portare aqua et legne ale cosine................. L. 4,0,0
Scornelio fachino compagno de dicto Augustino......................... L. 4,0,0
Simon fachino ala grassa........................................ L. 1,10,0

Credentieri:

Modenino da Modena................................. L. 8,0,0
Jacomò da bruzzo................................. L. 8,0,0
Francesco da Cremona alo arzento de Cosina......................... L. 10,0,0

Ala Caneva:

Pietro da i cortelini maestro canevaro dentro............................ L. 8,0,0
Gulielmo da chiavena soto canevaro dentro e fora.................... L. 5,0,0

Cogi:

Maestro Martino todescho cogo............................... L. 8,0,0
Maestro Antonio da muzanega col suo scoto.......................... L. 18,0,0
Maestro Andrea da Scandiano col suo scoto........................ L. 18,0,0
Maestro Jacomo da verze col suo scoto............................. L. 18,0,0
Antonio da chiavena scutellaro per lo Signore dentro et fora........ L. 5,0,0
Messer Marino Sarto di ragazzi............................... L. 10,0,0
Zanino et Boton ali Serviti di ragazzi.......................... L. 4,0,0

Ali Servitii:

Zoanne carata fiolo de Simon fachini da la grassa.................. L. 10,0,0
Messer Cevalo........................................ L. 10,0,0
Agnolo.............................................. L. 10,0,0

Ali Cani:

Ravanello............................................. L. 10,0,0
Appendix F cont'd.

Zoanne zenoeexe .................................. L. 10,0,0
Gatamela fachino che attende a i cexendoli .................. L. 5,0,0

Maestri di Stalla:

Biasio da birago da milano............................. L. 30,0,0
Antonio de messer francesco doctore di areosti da ferrara...... L. 30,0,0
Rosso da milano sopra li strami e biava et a tenire conto di famegli da stala dentro ala tera..................... L. 5,0,0

Cavalcaturi:

Santino da milano................................... L. 8,8,0
Pietro da modena................................... L. 9,16,0

Pertonari de sotto:

Bartolomeo toza dicto la Mare............. L. 6,0,0
Bartolomeo dicto Zoia......................... L. 6,0,0
Antonello da bressa.............................. L. 6,0,0

Ocellatori:

Mago albaresano da ferrara che fu de tadio maestro di ocelli.................... L. 30,0,0
Pietro da Sanguene per la spisa et salario de sei garzoni da cachari cioe L. 2,10,0 per salario et lo resto per loro spisa et di cavali..... L. 54,0,0
Zordano pinceta da modena per la spisa et salario de 6 garzoni da sachari et lo resto per loro et cavali ut scriptis in Pietro......... L. 54,0,0
Zoanne Lombardo per la spisa et salario de sei garzoni da sachari et per modo che e in Pietro et Zordano.............................. L. 54,0,0
Maestro Cirlo de Candia......................... L. 28,0,0
Trovalusso......................................... L. 28,0,0
Gelfo................................................ L. 28,0,0
Jacomino dastrì................................... L. 28,0,0
Albertazo........................................... L. 28,0,0
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<td>Zampolo da viola</td>
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<td>Andrea da viola</td>
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<td>Rainaldo dal chitarino</td>
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<td>Constantino tantino maestro de fare organi da modena</td>
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Appendix F cont'd.

Mathio marian di tomasi da Siena...... L. 10,0,0

Trombeti:

Gasparo de alemagna..................... L. 10,0,0
Bazo................................... L. 12,0,0
Lucido da norsa........................ L. 10,0,0
Marcho da norsa........................ L. 12,0,0

Pifari:

Maestro Corado de alemagna............. L. 26,0,0
Stephano de Savoia..................... L. 15,0,0

Tromboni:

Pietro de augustino..................... L. 18,0,0
Zoanne de alemagna..................... L. 12,0,0

Sarti:

Maestro Bertono Sarto.................. L. 6,0,0
Maestro Zoanne da napoli Sarto........ L. 16,13,4

Staferrri:

francesco rivale oltra uno ducato chel ha il mese dal officio del Collaterale L. 4,14,0
Padoano oltra uno ducato chel ha utscripta............................... L. 4,14,0
Castegliano utscriptis................. L. 4,14,0
Rosso da Corezo utscriptis............. L. 4,14,0
Fenochio utscriptis..................... L. 4,14,0

Balestrieri:

Balestrieri 30 a ducati 2 il mese per cadauno oltra uno ducato e mezo che hano il mese da Collaterale........ L. 168,0,0

Mulateri:

Vicenzo mulatero....................... L. 6,10,0
Jacom o suo fiolo...................... L. 6,10,0
Appendix F cont’d.

Antonio da san Cassano ................ L. 6,10,0
Tomino.................................. L. 6,10,0
Lusignano............................... L. 6,10,0
Zoanne de le sepe........................ L. 6,10,0
Zoanino ................................ L. 6,10,0
Marioto .................................. L. 6,10,0
Ruziero .................................. L. 6,10,0
Paulo de Vicenzo ...................... L. 6,10,0
Uno che attende a dui Gambili ........ L. 6,10,0

Carateri:

Zorzo grande cartero dela Illuma. Madona Duchessa con puta il suo salario et del sue fameglio .................. L. 9,6,0
Zorzo vechio cartero per lui e suoi famegli predicta araxon .................. L. 9,10,0
Domenico caratero ....................... L. 5,0,0
Spagnolo caratero ....................... L. 5,0,0
Andrea da la mirandola .................. L. 5,0,0
Francesco caratero ...................... L. 5,0,0
Rigo biondo ali strami et cazare la biava .................. L. 5,0,0
Leonardo suo compagno .................. L. 5,0,0

Famegli da Stala:

Simon de arimino per la sua provision et spisa et per la spisa de dui regazi L. 14,12,0
Scrinoz per suo salario et spiza cum uno regazo .................. L. 9,0,0
Franceschino utsscriptis ................ L. 9,0,0
famegli xx da stalla de lo Illumo. Signore nostro a L. 4,10,0 luno salario et spisa computa .................. L. 90,0,0
Zoanne Spizaro a barbari utscriptis ... L. 90,0,0

Maestro Antonio marescalcho ........... L. 16,13,4
Messer Ludovico da Imorsi ............. L. 6,0,0
Messer Marino del reame ............... L. 15,0,0
## Appendix F cont'd.

### Capellani:

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<td>do. Zoanne de Bechari</td>
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### Cantaduri:

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<td>do. Andrea da Mantoa tenorista</td>
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<td>Nicolo de Olandia</td>
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<td>do. Domenico Contrabasso</td>
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<td>Rainaldo di Cambrai</td>
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<td>do. hieronymo soprano</td>
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<td>Jacheto da Cambrai</td>
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<td>Bartolomeo raimondo</td>
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<td>Zoanne martino de barbanti</td>
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<td>do. zoanne pedrosobe</td>
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<td>do. Zoanne de troia de franza</td>
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<td>Alberto soprano</td>
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<td>Gulielmo da flandria</td>
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<td>do. Zuliano da faenza Capellano in fossadalbaro</td>
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L. 9328,5,8
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5. Herculis I epistolarum registrum, 1478.
6. Herculis I epistolarum registrum, 1479.
7. Herculis I epistolarum registrum, 1481.
8. Herculis I epistolarum registrum, 1482.
11. Herculis I epistolarum registrum, 1493-1496.
13. Herculis I epistolarum registrum, 1498-1500.

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buste 1-5.

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1181, 1181a - Mantua/ Gonzaga.
1152 - Florence/ Medici.
1213.1, 1214.2, 1215.3-4, 1216.5, 1216A.6,
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Dispacci da Mantova - buste 1a-2.
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