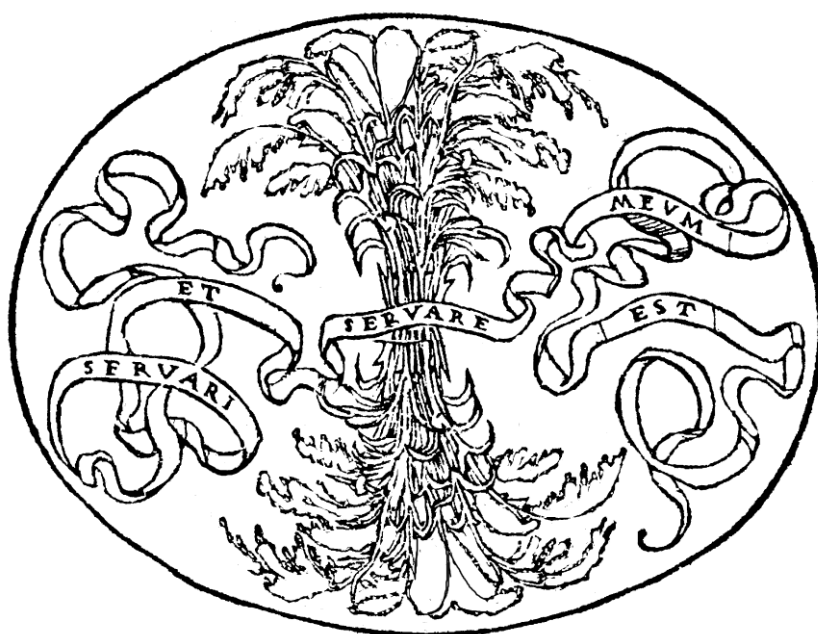


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RECONSIDERING THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE *LIVES*. SOME OBSERVATIONS AND METHODOLOGICAL QUESTIONS ON VASARI AS A WRITER

*Del resto mi rallegro con voi che certo avete fatto una bella et utile fatica.
E v'annunzio che sarà perpetua, perché l'istoria è necessaria e la materia dilettevole.*
Annibal Caro to Giorgio Vasari, 11 December 1547

The resurgence of interest in Giorgio Vasari meritoriously prompted by the fifth centennial celebrations in 2011¹ has been accompanied by the resurfacing of certain theses that I regard with misgivings in more than one respect. I refer in particular to the view, cherished by some Anglo-Saxon historians but now broadly held, that rejects Vasari's authorship of the *Lives* in favour of a *kollektive Autorschaft*, to use the term specifically coined² for the first edition of Vasari's biographies, printed in Florence by Torrentino in 1550³. This claim, which has now acquired the status of an authentic axiom, was born, in my humble opinion, out of the difficulty that non-Italian-speaking scholars had in fully understanding the introductory sections of the *Lives*⁴, which prompted them to suggest that they were the result of the direct involvement of Florentine men of letters connected with the Accademia Fiorentina, first and foremost Pier Francesco Giambullari (1495-1555), on the grounds that Vasari himself was not a writer⁵.

Examination of the sources cited and employed by Vasari as well as of the terminology and vocabulary he used, both in the letters and in the *Lives*, constitutes the methodologically sound and hence the only correct way to address with a constructive and unbiased attitude both the great work of the Torrentiniana, the above-mentioned edition of 1550, and the Giuntina, which takes its name from the printers that brought it out in 1568⁶.

The quotations of 16th-century texts are based on the following criteria. A distinction is made between *u* and *v*; *j* becomes *i*; accents, apostrophes and punctuation marks are introduced in accordance with modern usage, which is also followed for the division of words and use of capital letters (except in some cases so as to respect the style of courtly or ecclesiastic language with words like *Duke*, *Lord* and *Abbot*). All abbreviations have been withdrawn without giving any account (except for titles like S.E., *Sua Eccellenza*, Your Excellency, and V.E., *Vostra Signoria*, Your Lordship). All emendations made to correct errors on the part of the person writing or physical losses (lacunae in the paper support or the restitching of sheets) are shown in square brackets. All translations are by Paul Metcalfe for *Scriptum* s.r.l., Rome, unless otherwise stated.

I'm very grateful to Claudia Conforti, Floriana Conte, Emanuela Ferretti, Donata Levi, Salvatore Lo Re, Nicoletta Maraschio, Diana Toccafondi and Veronica Vestri for their helpful suggestions. A final word of thanks is due to Martina Nastasi for her willingness in revising my text. This paper was presented at the 54th Meeting of the Renaissance Society of America (Berlin, 27 March 2015) by kind invitation of Liana De Girolami Cheney, to whom it is dedicated.

¹ See *VASARI, GLI UFFIZI E IL DUCA* 2011 and *GIORGIO VASARI. DISEGNATORE E PITTORE* 2011.

² See BLUM 2011, p. 185.

³ For the Torrentiniana, see *VASARI, GLI UFFIZI E IL DUCA* 2011, p. 384 (entry XV.14 by E. Carrara), and SCAPECCHI 2011.

⁴ A providential addition to the literature in this sense is DE GIROLAMI CHENEY 2012, where Vasari's texts are accompanied by translations in English. See pp. XVII–XVIII: «In the present study, the aim is to present Vasari's prefaces as a unique, cohesive whole [...] and] to provide direct access to the entire preface of the 1568 edition of the *Vite* and its dedication to Vasari's most devoted patron, Cosimo I de' Medici, Duke of Florence and Siena, as well as his fellow artists».

⁵ See FRANGENBERG 2002, p. 245: «Vasari's education in Arezzo and Florence qualified him for the careers of courtier (he had a basic grasp of Latin) and artist, not for that of a man of letters». For the Vasari's education and scholarly grounding, see CARRARA 2011-2012, pp. 135-146.

⁶ For the Giuntina, see *VASARI, GLI UFFIZI E IL DUCA* 2011, pp. 386-387 (entry XV.16 by E. Carrara).

In his *Conclusione della opera a gli artefici et a' lettori*, as a corollary to the proud and explicit assertion of his merits, Vasari made a profession of humility as regards the language used in the *Lives*:

I have written as a painter and in the language that I speak without otherwise considering whether it is Florentine or Tuscan and whether many words of our arts scattered throughout the work can be safely used, being prompted to employ them more by the need to be understood by practitioners than by any desire for praise. Still less attention have I paid to common orthographic rules or bothered about whether *z* is to be used rather than *t* or whether *b* can be omitted. I placed all of the work from the outset in the hands of a judicious person worthy of honour, one dear to me and to whom I am particularly dear, with full and complete freedom to guide it as he wished as long as the meaning was not distorted and the content of the words, though perhaps ill-woven, was not altered⁷.

Crucial importance attaches to the last of the above lines, which document the complex procedure of the writing of the *Lives* and its revision in the printing works with the utmost concision. The meaning of these words is further clarified in a passage of the letter that Vincenzio Borghini (1515-1580) wrote to Vasari on 24 January 1550, when neither the *Proemio* («the missing first part») nor the above-mentioned *Conclusione* (or «epilogo») had been completed:

I have seen your [letter] and understood as regards the work [the *Lives*]; and I had already seen it because two days ago I was at the printers and took all the printed pages. For my part, I will do as you ask and if there are any doubts I will confer with Cosimo [Bartoli] and Giambullari, and everything will be decided with their advice. And since it is not organized (I speak of the entire work) as I would have wished at the beginning and as would, if I am not mistaken, have been better, it will be arranged so as to be satisfactory. As for the other things, i.e. the missing first part, I leave that to you [...]⁸.

Again in connection with the letter of dedication, Pier Francesco Giambullari⁹ had written on 7 January 1550 urging Vasari to deliver the text to Torrentino:

They [the printers] want the letter of dedication, which goes at the beginning, and the start of the proem, which I cannot give them because you have them, not I¹⁰.

⁷ See VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, VI, p. 412. As pointed out by POZZI-MATTIODA 2006, p. 5 n. 12, the passage (from «toscana» on) appears in this form only in the first edition of the *Vite*, published in Florence by Lorenzo Torrentino in 1550 (referred to hereafter as the Torrentiniana or T), being radically altered in the second, published in Florence by the Giunti in 1568 (hereafter the Giuntina or G). It belongs to the group – considerably larger in T than in G – of assertions regarding the role and status of artists, for which readers are again referred to POZZI-MATTIODA 2006, pp. 310 ff. See also LE MOLLÉ 1988, pp. 219-220.

⁸ See *IL CARTEGGIO DI VINCENZIO BORGHINI* 2001, letter LI, pp. 299-300: p. 299; VASARI/FREY-FREY 1923-1940, I, pp. 255-256: p. 255. For Pierfrancesco Giambullari (1495-1555) see PIGNATTI 2000, VITALI 2011 and ALBONICO 2013; for Bartoli (1503-1572) while BRYCE 1983 is still useful, esp. pp. 51-55 and 229, see also BRAMANTI 2013 and BERTOLINI 2014, with reference to further bibliography. For the various phases in the publishing of the printed texts, see RICHARDSON 1994, esp. pp. 127-139 and 155-181, and TROVATO 1998, esp. pp. 163-216.

⁹ For Giambullari's role as corrector of the manuscript copy (produced by a copyist in Rimini under the guidance of Giovan Matteo Faitani, abbot of the Olivetan monastery of Santa Maria Annunciata Nuova in Scolca), the source in all probability of the text that arrived in the Torrentino printing works, see SCAPECCHI 1998 and ALBONICO 2013, p. 204. It should be noted that not all of the changes made by Giambullari to Vasari's text on the only surviving sheet of this manuscript copy were then taken up in the printed edition. For the *Adoration of the Magi* painted by Vasari for Faitani, see SOHM 2015, pp. 95-96, fig. 4.

¹⁰ VASARI/FREY-FREY 1923-1940, I, pp. 247-252: p. 247; See SIMONETTI 2005, pp. 71-73.

Attention should also be drawn to what Borghini wrote to Vasari on 22 February in favour of addressing the dedication to the new pope Julius III¹¹ rather than Duke Cosimo («so many books have been dedicated to him as to have become almost wearisome») and assuring his readiness to work on the *tavola* or table of contents of the *Lives*:

Now I can tell you that I am working on it constantly as diligently as I can and have shown part of it to Giambullari, who approves. If I have to change it, I will. If I have to do two or three, I will. But I think that even if it is dedicated as he says, the original design will not need to be changed at all, that even if the work is divided in the dedication, there is no need to change the subject matter or the order or the body of the thing as a whole, which can remain the same. I am telling you all this as it comes to mind, without having thought about it at all, having received your letter¹² this morning, Saturday 22nd, and begun this reply immediately after reading it¹³.

Despite the clear reference to Vasari's request («that you should finish the table of contents and place the errors in the margin»)¹⁴ and the result attested in the Torrentiniana, which presents the *Table of the lives of the artists described in this work* (*Tavola delle vite degli artefici descritte in questa opera*), the *Table of many artists nominated and not fully described in this work* (*Tavola di molti artefici nominati e non interamente descritti in questa opera*) and the *Table of places where works described are located* (*Tavola de' luoghi dove sono le opere descritte*) one after the other¹⁵, Scoti-Bertinelli claimed that in writing «If I have to change it, I will. If I have to do two or three, I will», Borghini was referring to the drafting, evidently by his own hand, of Vasari's dedication. In support of this, he presented the transcription of what he regarded as a 'variant' of the Torrentiniana dedication but is in actual fact nothing other than an extensive draft of the one (added as a second dedication) later included in the Giuntina¹⁶.

I regard the above as the most glaring example of the reluctance of critics, also in recent times¹⁷, to accept the idea of Vasari as an author¹⁸ and to identify the characteristic features of his writing within a complex system of collaboration¹⁹ that involved not only the above-

¹¹ For the copies bearing the dedication to Julius III, see ROSSI 1986a, p. 183; ROSSI 1986b, p. XLII.

¹² The undated *Ricordo* sent by Vasari to Borghini on leaving for Rome to attend the coronation of the new pope Julius III. See VASARI/FREY-FREY 1923-1940, I, pp. 257-262; *IL CARTEGGIO DI VINCENZIO BORGHINI* 2001, letter LIII, p. 302. See also KALLAB 1908, pp. 83 and 445. This dating is challenged in SIMONETTI 2005, pp. 67-68 and pl. VI.

¹³ *IL CARTEGGIO DI VINCENZIO BORGHINI* 2001, letter LIV, pp. 303-304. See VASARI/FREY-FREY 1923-1940, I, pp. 262-265: p. 263. For the dedications to Cosimo I, see PLAISANCE 1989 and PLAISANCE 1990, reprinted in PLAISANCE 2004, pp. 235-255 and pp. 257-269.

¹⁴ *IL CARTEGGIO DI VINCENZIO BORGHINI* 2001, p. 302; VASARI/FREY-FREY 1923-1940, I, p. 257. In this short letter Vasari also asked Borghini to arrange for the correction of «una carta» (a sheet) of the introduction to the section on sculpture that had been poorly printed (VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, I, p. 89). See ROSSI 1986a, p. 179 and ROSSI 1986b, p. XXXIV. See also SIMONETTI 2005, pp. 69-70.

¹⁵ VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, VI, pp. 419-446. For the Giuntina, see pp. 447-544.

¹⁶ See SCOTI-BERTINELLI 1905, pp. 70-71 n. 1. The text, written by Vasari but with the coeval annotation «1564» by another hand, most probably Borghini, in the upper part, is now published in VASARI/FREY-FREY 1923-1940, II, pp. 140-141, and in SIMONETTI 2005, pp. 64-65 and pls. IV-V, with its present location: ASFI, *Carteggio d'Artisti*, 2, c. 144r-v. See also CARRARA 2015, p. 41 and note 51.

¹⁷ See HOPE 1995; FRANGENBERG 2002, esp. p. 258; and HOPE 2014. See the very balanced objections raised in POZZI-MATTIODA 2006, p. 22 n. 45, CONTE 2010, p. 43, FRATINI 2012, pp. 204-205, ROSSI 2014, p. 54, and ROSSI 2015, p. 241: «Charles Hope's contribution («Vasari's Vite as a Collaborative Project») pays homage to the theory of the *Vite*'s collective authorship, a theory once in fashion and perhaps already in decline». The observations of BAXANDALL 1980 on the importance of Vasari's work remain crucial.

¹⁸ See NENCIONI 1952; BAROCCHI 1984, pp. 134-140; DARDANO 2004; SIEKIERA 2013; QUAGLINO 2015, pp. 96-97.

¹⁹ See KALLAB 1908, pp. 146-147, 397-399 and 437-447; DAVIS 1981; MATTIODA 2007, pp. 493-495; AGOSTI 2013, pp. 79-89.

mentioned Bartoli, Borghini and Giambullari but also Annibal Caro²⁰ and Paolo Giovio²¹, to mention only the best-known figures. This reluctance is often connected, it should be noted, with a failure to understand the passages of Vasari taken into consideration. Clear proof of this is provided by the highly original translation «Schlussomelett», which stems – as Enrico Mattioda acutely points out²² – from a banal misunderstanding of the phrase «quelle frittate di Chiusura» in a letter that Paolo Giovio sent from Rome to Vasari in Florence on 7 May 1547²³. Giovio is speaking here in very concrete terms of the omelettes served to Vasari in the refectory of the Abbey of Monte Oliveto Maggiore at Chiusure, near Asciano, and not of «komplizierte und anstrengende Fertigstellung der Künstlerviten»²⁴.

In a context thus characterized by a less than perfect understanding of Vasari's language and by interpretations not always in line with the reality of the historical facts, I believe that it has now become absolutely essential for any serious research into the *Lives* to focus the utmost attention precisely on the words and expressions used by Vasari as from his earliest letters.

One surviving letter handed down in manuscript form, and hence without the mediation of copying, editing or revision, was sent by Vasari to Francesco Leoni, a Florentine merchant resident in Venice, on 30 October 1540, where the artist speaks with gratitude of Ottaviano de' Medici's affectionate benevolence towards him:

the great efforts made by the illustrious Ottaviano on my behalf have not been entirely wasted.
May the Lord grant him a life long enough to see me go from youth to maturity in the masterly practice of the profession that is mine above all²⁵.

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first documented example of Vasari's use of the adjective «maestrevole» (masterly)²⁶, which then appears in both the first and second editions of the *Lives*²⁷, thus indicating a lexical continuity that bears witness through the occurrences of the term to the evolution of his style of writing.

²⁰ For Caro, an acute polemicist and influential secretary of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, see LO RE 2008. See also ANNIBAL CARO 2009.

²¹ For this ecclesiastic and man of letters from Como, see ZIMMERMANN 1995; GIOVIO/MAFFEI 1999; AGOSTI 2008; and SPAGNOLO 2013.

²² MATTIODA 2014, pp. 277-278. Cfr. also CONTE in press, p. 9 and note 47. I'm very grateful to Floriana Conte for allowing me to read her essay still in draft.

²³ GIOVIO/FERRERO 1956-1958, II, p. 85 («Io penso che quelle *frittate di Chiusura* non arete gittato l'ozio indarno senza fare le gambe alla vostra bell'opera, pensando che già gli abbiate fatto il capo e il corpo. E certo, sarete assai più allegro, più glorioso e più rico d'aver fatto questa bell'opera che se avessi dipinto la capella di Michelagnolo, quale si va consumando con il saniro e con le fessure. Scrivete, fratel mio, scrivete: perché da la laude viene il guadagno e dal guadagno non viene la laude». My italics). See VASARI/FREY-FREY 1923-1940, I, pp. 198-199.

²⁴ BLUM 2011, p. 251. As pointed out by MATTIODA 2014, p. 277, Blum's mistranslation stems from the misreading already present in SIMONETTI 2005, p. 59, where «frittate di Chiusura» is interpreted as a reference to the *Conclusione dell'opera agli artefici et lettori*. For Vasari's close relations with the Olivetan order, see CARRARA 2013a, pp. 131-134. In particular, for Ippolito Trezzi (not Trecchi/Trecci as erroneously indicated in CARRARA 2013a, p. 132), created abbot in 1532-1534 and again in 1546-1548, see SCARPINI 1939, pp. 50 and 58, CATTANA 2003, p. 320 (doc. 6) and DAVIES-HEMSOLL 2004, p. 148.

²⁵ «Le fatiche che il magnifico Ottaviano à spese in me non sono in tutto perse: che Iddio felicità Sua Signoria tanto che quella vegga la giovinezza de' mia anni in età matura da potere l'ufitio, ch'io fo in maestrevole fare, esercitar oltra modo». Letter in ASFI, Acquisti e Doni 67 I, cc. n.n. See CARRARA 2013a, pp. 131-134. For Ottaviano de' Medici (1482-1546) see GIORGIO VASARI. *DISEGNATORE E PITTORE* 2011, pp. 70-73 (entry 3, by A. Bisceglia); CARRARA 2011-2012, pp. 137-138; AGOSTI 2013, pp. 18-19, 22, 26-27, 30, 39, 47, 53, 82 e 100.

²⁶ See BATTAGLIA 1961-2002, IX, pp. 409-410: p. 410.

²⁷ The occurrences, seven in the Torrentiniana and ten in the Giuntina (four of which in the *[Descrizione dell'apparato]*), are listed in the *Lemmario artistico* of the section *Vasari scrittore* produced by the Fondazione Memofonte under the supervision of P. Barocchi and M. Fileti Mazza (<http://vasariscrittore.memofonte.it/lemmario/lemma/maestrevole> <20/09/2015>). Antonio Lorenzoni was

It is in any case only deeper consideration of Vasari's vocabulary that can help us to avoid hasty conclusions as to the paternity of parts of the *Torrentiniana* based on the presence of words mistakenly regarded – as we shall see immediately – as not belonging to Vasari²⁸. Frangenberg thus claims that the term «segreti» (secrets) found in the *Proemio*²⁹ is not part of his vocabulary:

Cosimo Bartoli, usually in introductory sections of his publications, refers to the objects of discussion as 'secrets' (segreti), a usage occurring only in sections of the *Lives* containing further indications that Vasari did not write them, and not found elsewhere in the works of Vasari's other editors³⁰.

And the authorship of this section of the *Lives* is thus attributed to Cosimo Bartoli solely on the grounds that the same term occurs at least twice in his writings³¹.

Arguing in the opposite sense, we can assert that the passage from the *Torrentiniana* in question is by Vasari precisely because of the appearance of the term «segreti», which is also found in passages that cannot be other than his due to the fact that they are explicitly technical or appear within biographies of artists.

One example is provided by the closing part of chapter XXVIII of the *Introduction to the Three Arts of Design* (*Introduzione alle tre arti del disegno*, known as the *Teoriche*), where Vasari speaks *Of the manner of applying Gold on a Bolus, or with a Mordant, and other methods* (*Del modo del metter d'oro a bolo et a mordente, et altri modi*):

And sometimes also gold leaves are ground in a glass cup with a little honey and gum and made use by miniature-painters and many others who, with the brush, delight to draw outlines and put very delicate lights into pictures. And all these are most valuable secrets; but because they are very numerous one does not take much account of them³².

Another comes from the discussion of woodcut engravings in chapter XXXV:

Therefore although all processes (*secrets*) and styles are good, that is the best by which every lost thing is recovered and every difficult thing becomes easy: as we shall see in reading the *Lives* of

the first to show, with concrete documentation and a precise reading of the work, that the [*Descrizione dell'apparato*] was the work of the Florentine man of letters Giovanni Battista Cini (1528–1586). See CARTEGGIO BORGHINI 1912, pp. 154–159; p. 155: «Eppure anche lo studioso meno esperto poteva notare che lo stile del Vasari è ben diverso dallo stile di questa descrizione [...]». As pointed out by Michele Feo, Cini's text bears no title in the Giuntina and is conventionally known by this name. See FEO 2012, I, pp. 296–297. Readers are referred to this study (which takes up and completes FEO 1981) for a description of the author of the [*Descrizione dell'apparato*].

²⁸ The word is found in *INDICE DELLE FREQUENZE* 1994, I, p. 397, as are «segreto», «secreti» and «secreto» (p. 396).

²⁹ See VASARI/DE VERE 1912–1915, I, p. XXIV: «I will treat thoroughly of many things that appertain to the science of one or other of the said arts; but before I come to the *secrets* of these, or to the history of the craftsmen [...]». See VASARI/BAROCCHI–BETTARINI 1966–1987, I, p. 11: «Tratterò bene di molte cose che si appartengono al magistero di qual si è l'una delle arti dette, ma prima che io venga a' *segreti* di quelle o alla istoria delli artefici [...]» (my italics). The passage is identical in the edition of 1568.

³⁰ FRANGENBERG 2002, p. 253. See BIFFI 2011 for an analysis of the words used by Bartoli.

³¹ See FRANGENBERG 2002, p. 253 note 79. See also FRANGENBERG 2011 for Bartoli as a writer on art.

³² VASARI ON TECHNIQUE 1960, p. 250. See VASARI/BAROCCHI–BETTARINI 1966–1987, I, p. 147: «E se ne macina ancora di questi fogli in una tazza di vetro con un poco di mèle e di gomma che serve a' miniatori et a infiniti che col pennello si diletano fare profili e sottilissimi lumi nelle pitture. E tutti questi sono bellissimi *segreti*, ma per la copia di essi non se ne tiene molto conto» (my italics). The passage is almost identical in the Giuntina.

the artists, who, aided by nature and by study have done superhuman things solely by means of design³³.

Another from the passage in the Life of Lorenzo Ghiberti describing what he left to his son Buonaccorso:

he had been left with the secrets of making castings in such a way as to make them come out delicate, that a long experience had taught to Bartoluccio and Lorenzo, and the method of perforating the metal in that manner which is seen in the works left by him³⁴.

And another from the Life of Gherardo, illuminator of Florence, a protégé of Lorenzo the Magnificent by virtue of his «sophisticated brain»:

In mosaic he was a companion and rival of Domenico Ghirlandaio, and worked very well. He made a head of St Lawrence in competition with Domenico and thus began to work in mosaics, devoting a great deal of time to discovering its secrets. Lorenzo therefore kept them constantly supplied so that they would always be at work in that place³⁵.

There are also significant occurrences of the term in the singular, one being found precisely in the opening of the above-mentioned chapter XXVIII of the *Introduction to the Three Arts of Design* (*Introduzione alle tre arti del disegno*) under the heading *Of the manner of applying Gold on a Bolus, or with a Mordant, and other methods* (*Del modo del metter d'oro a bolo et a mordente, et altri modi*):

It was truly a most beautiful secret and an ingenious investigation that discovery of the method of beating gold into such thin leaves, that for every thousand pieces beaten to the size of the eighth of a braccio in every direction, the cost, counting the labour and the gold, was not more than the value of six scudi³⁶.

³³ VASARI ON TECHNIQUE 1960, p. 284. See VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, I, p. 172: «Perché, se bene tutti i *segreti* et i modi sono buoni, quello è ottimo per lo quale ogni cosa perduta si ritrova, et ogni difficil cosa per esso diventa facile; come potrete vedere nel leggere le Vite degl'artefici, i quali dalla natura e dallo studio aiutati hanno fatto cose sopraumane per il mez[z]o solo del disegno» (my italics). The passage is identical in the Giuntina.

³⁴ VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, III, pp. 101-102: «Rimasili tutti i *segreti* del gittare, ché venissino le cose sottili, che la lunga sperienza aveva insegnati a Bartoluccio et a Lorenzo, e quel modo di strafurare il metallo come si veggono le cose campate da lui [...]» (my italics). The passage reads as follows in the edition of 1568: «Non fece poi Bonacorso, perché morì giovane, molt'opere come arebbe fatto, essendo a lui rimaso il *segreto* di gettar le cose in modo che venissono sottili, e con la sperienza et il modo di strafurare il metallo in quel modo che si veggiono essere le cose lasciate da Lorenzo [...]» (my italics). See VASARI/DE VERE 1912-1915, II, p. 160.

³⁵ VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, III, p. 473: «Nel musaico fu concorrente e compagno di Domenico Ghirlandai, e quello molto ben lavorò. Fece una testa di S. Lorenzo a concorrenza di Domenico, e così cominciò il musaico, nel quale molto tempo spese a ritrovare i *segreti*; perciò Lorenzo fece loro ordinare continua provvisione, acciò in quel luogo si lavorasse sempre» (my italics). The passage in the Giuntina instead reads as follows: «Ma quanto sodisfaceva costui agl'altri, tanto meno sodisfaceva a sé in tutte le cose, eccetto nel musaico; nella qual sorte di pittura fu più tosto concorrente che compagno a Domenico Ghirlandaio; e se fusse più lungamente vivuto, sarebbe in quello divenuto eccellentissimo, perché vi durava fatica volentieri, e aveva trovato in gran parte i *segreti* buoni di quell'arte» (my italics). See VASARI/DE VERE 1912-1915, III, p. 215. See also CARRARA 2005 for the role of mosaics in the *Lives*.

³⁶ VASARI ON TECHNIQUE 1960, p. 248. See VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, I, p. 145: «Fu veramente bellissimo segreto et investigazione sofistica il trovar modo che l'oro si battesse in fogli sì sottilmente, che per ogni migliaio di pezzi battuti grandi uno ottavo di braccio per ogni verso, bastasse fra lo artificio e l'oro il valore solo di sei scudi» (my italics). The passage is identical in the Giuntina.

Vasari uses the word «secret» in connection with van Eyck's invention of oil painting³⁷:

on seeing his works and not knowing how he made them, they were forced not only to praise him but also to admire him greatly, especially as he refused for a time to let anyone see him working or to teach anyone that secret³⁸.

and how it was spread through Italy by Antonello da Messina:

Now, while he was undecided whether to leave, Jan died and Antonello, wishing to see his native land again and share such a useful and advantageous secret with the country, returned to Italy³⁹.

The Sicilian painter took this «bel segreto»⁴⁰ with him to Venice, where he «taught [...] the secret of colouring in oil» to Domenico Veneziano⁴¹.

The term also appears, as *secreto* rather than *segreto*, in the Life of Luca della Robbia,

who worked with marble for many years. Having wonderful skill with clay, which he worked with great diligence, he discovered the way to glaze it by firing so that neither water neither wind could harm it. Having succeeded in this invention, he left the secret to his sons⁴².

It also appears as an adjective associated with the noun «ammaestramenti»⁴³ in the *Proemio* as the conclusion of the arguments previously developed:

³⁷ For the question of the invention of oil painting, which Vasari attributes to Jan van Eyck, see CERASUOLO 2014, pp. 23-35, where it is pointed out that Vasari cannot have known the *Libro dell'arte* of Cennino Cennini before his rewriting of the *Lives* for the Giuntina edition (*ibid.*, pp. 23-24). For the important letter of 9 October 1563 in which Vasari mentions the late 14th-century treatise, see SOTTILI 2011, p. 59 (the author has the merit of having found the autograph letter in the Archivio Niccolini di Camugliano, Florence, filza 212, inserto 16), and CARRARA 2012-2013, p. 132.

³⁸ VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, III, p. 304: «vedendo le opere sue e non sapendo quello che egli si adoperasse, era costretto non solamente a lodarlo, ma a celebrarlo quanto e' poteva, e tanto più quanto egli per un tempo non volse mai esser veduto lavorare né insegnare a nessuno artefice quel *segreto*» (my italics). The passage reads as follows in the Giuntina: «Sparsa non molto dopo la fama dell'invenzione di Giovanni non solo per la Fiandra ma per l'Italia e molte altre parti del mondo, mise in desiderio grandissimo gl'artefici di sapere in che modo egli desse all'opere sue tanta perfezzione; i quali artefici, perché vedevano l'opere e non sapevano quello che egli si adoperasse, erano costretti a celebrarlo e dargli lode immortali, et in un medesimo tempo virtuosamente invidiarlo, e massimamente che egli per un tempo non volle da niuno essere veduto lavorare né insegnare a nessuno il *segreto*» (my italics). See VASARI/DE VERE 1912-1915, III, p. 61. For envy and its role in the *Lives*, see GRAUL 2015, whose interpretations are sometimes questionable.

³⁹ VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, III, p. 306: «Ora, mentre che egli stava fra el sì et il no di partirsi, Giovanni si morì, et Antonello desideroso di tornare in Italia per rivedere la sua patria e per fare il paese partecipe di sì comodo et utile *segreto*, se ne ritornò in quella» (my italics). The passage reads as follows in the Giuntina: «Né dopo molto, essendo Giovanni morto, Antonello se ne tornò di Fiandra per riveder la sua patria e per far l'Italia partecipe di così utile, bello e comodo *segreto*» (my italics). See VASARI/DE VERE 1912-1915, III, p. 62.

⁴⁰ VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, III, p. 307. The passage reads as follows in the Giuntina: «Et inteso poi il nuovo *segreto* che egli aveva in quella città di Fiandra portato [...]» (my italics). See VASARI/DE VERE 1912-1915, III, p. 63.

⁴¹ See VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, III, p. 307 (my italics). The passage reads as follows in the Giuntina: «insegnò il *secreto* e modo di colorire a olio» (my italics). See VASARI/DE VERE 1912-1915, III, p. 63. The passages from the *Lives* on Antonello da Messina and Domenico Veneziano are also mentioned in KIM 2014, pp. 109-110. See SRICCHIA SANTORO 1986, p. 12 for the historical context of Vasari's reconstruction. See also ELSIG 2013, pp. 242-243.

⁴² VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, III, p. 50: «il quale s'affaticò nei marmi lavorando molti anni; et avendo una maravigliosa pratica nella terra, la quale diligentissimamente lavorava, trovò il modo di invetriare essa terra col fuoco in una maniera che e' non la potesse offendere né acqua né vento: e riuscì tale invenzione, lasciò dopo sé eredi i figliuoli di tal *secreto*» (my italics). The passage is not included in the Giuntina.

I will begin, then, with architecture, as the most universal and the most necessary and useful to men, and as that for the service and adornment of which the two others exist; and I will expound briefly the varieties of stone, the manners or methods of construction, with their proportions, and how one may recognize buildings that are good and well-conceived. Afterwards, discoursing of sculpture, I will tell how statues are wrought, the form and the proportion that are looked for in them, and of what kind are good sculptures, with all the most secret and most necessary precepts. Finally, treating of painting, I will speak of draughtsmanship, of the methods of colouring, of the perfect execution of any work, of the quality of the pictures themselves, and of whatsoever thing appertains to painting; of every kind of mosaic, of niello, of enamelling, of damascening, and then, lastly, of the printing of pictures⁴⁴.

Between this passage and the one with which our discussion began («I will treat thoroughly of many things that appertain to the science of one or other of the said arts; but before I come to the secrets of these, or to the history of the craftsmen»⁴⁵), there is another of great importance in the economy of the *Proemio* that can also serve to demonstrate Vasari's authorship once and for all:

But because it appears to me that the sculptors have spoken with too much heat and the painters with too much disdain, and seeing that I have long enough studied the works of sculpture and have ever exercised myself in painting, however small, perhaps, may be the fruit that is to be seen of it; none the less, by reason of that which it is worth, and by reason of the undertaking of these writings, judging it my duty to demonstrate the judgment that I have ever made of it in my own mind (and may my authority avail the most that it can), I will declare my opinion surely and briefly over such a dispute, being convinced that I will not incur any charge of presumption or of ignorance, seeing that I will not treat of the arts of others, as many have done before to the end that they might appear to the crowd intelligent in all things by means of letters, and as happened, among others, to Phormio the Peripatetic of Ephesus, who, in order to display his eloquence, lecturing and making disputation about the virtues and parts of the excellent captain, made Hannibal laugh not less at his presumption than at his ignorance⁴⁶.

⁴³ See LONG 2001 for an intelligent discussion of the relationship between secrecy and the need to spread the techniques discovered.

⁴⁴ VASARI/DE VERE 1912-1915, I, p. XXXV. See VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, I, pp. 28-29: «Comincerommi dunque da l'architettura come da la più universale e più necessaria et utile agli uomini et al servizio et ornamento della quale sono l'altre due, e brevemente dimostrerò la diversità delle pietre, le maniere o modi dello edificare con le loro proporzioni, et a che si conoschino le buone fabbriche e bene intese. Appresso ragionando de la scultura, dirò come le statue si lavorino, la forma e la proporzione che si aspetta loro, e quali siano le buone sculture con tutti gli ammaestramenti più *segreti* e più necessarii. Ultimamente scorrendo de la pittura, dirò del disegno, de' modi del colorire, del perfettamente condurre le cose, de la qualità di esse pitture e di qualunque cosa che da questa dependa, de' musaici d'ogni sorte, del niello, degli smalti, de' lavori a la damaschina, e finalmente poi de le stampe delle pitture» (my italics). The passage is almost identical in the Giuntina.

⁴⁵ See note 29 above.

⁴⁶ VASARI/DE VERE 1912-1915, I, p. XXXIII. See DE GIROLAMI CHENEY 2012, p. 115. VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, I, p. 25: «Ma perché a me pare che gli scultori abbino parlato con troppo ardire et i pittori con troppo sdegno, per avere io assai tempo considerato le cose della scultura et essermi esercitato nella pittura, quantunque piccolo sia forse il frutto che se ne vede, non dimeno, e per quel tanto che egli è e per la impresa di questi scritti giudicando mio debito dimostrare il giudizio che nello animo mio me ne ho fatto sempre – e vaglia la autorità mia quanto ella può –, dirò sopra tal disputa sicuramente e brevemente il parer mio, persuadendomi di non sottentrare a carico alcuno di prosunzione o di ignoranza, non trattando io de l'arti altrui – come hanno già fatto molti per apparire nel vulgo intelligenti di tutte le cose – mediante le lettere, e come tra gli altri avvenne a Formione peripatetico in Efeso, che ad ostentazione della eloquenza sua predicando e disputando de le virtù e parti dello eccellente capitano, non meno de la prosunzione che de la ignoranza sua fece ridere Annibale». The text of the edition of 1568 is identical to that of the Torrentiniana.

The evident reference to the discussion aroused by Varchi in 1547 with the question he addressed to artists as regards primacy among the arts – which Vasari described as a «disputa» and was actively involved in (the letter that opens the second part of the *Lezzioni* in the Torrentino edition, dated 12 January 1549 in the Florentine style⁴⁷ and hence 1550, is indeed his) – makes any claim that this was written by Cosimo Bartoli debatable to say the least⁴⁸. The passage instead bears witness to Vasari's role as a militant critic and is aimed at those who wish to «appear to the crowd intelligent in all things». It is difficult not to see this as a reference to Doni and his *Disegno*, printed in Venice in 1549 by Gabriele Giolito de' Ferrari, confirmation being provided by Doni's venomous response in *La Zucca* (Venice, Marcolini, 1551-1552) ridiculing the frontispiece, based on a drawing by Vasari (Florence, Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe, 394 Orn.), of Leon Battista Alberti's *L'Architettura*, translated by Cosimo Bartoli and printed by Torrentino in 1550⁴⁹ (Figg. 1-3).

The scathing final remark was thus aimed at a very precise and dangerous adversary, and Vasari drew here on a passage from Cicero's *De oratore* (II, 75-76), brought up to date and made readily available by the translation published in Venice by Lodovico Dolce in 1547⁵⁰.

Any attempt to cast doubt on Vasari's knowledge of a classical source in that period, just before the printing of the Torrentiniana when the proem to the work as a whole (where the passage in question appears) was written⁵¹, thus entails the greater difficulty of denying his ability to refer to an immediately intelligible work readily available in Italy. And even if the literary comparison was suggested by someone else, this in no way affects his authorship of the passage and his fully aware and complete use of the anecdote in writing that is unquestionably his precisely by virtue of its evident similarity to the piece included in Varchi's *Lezzioni*.

In the same way, it would also be rash to dismiss the entire question from the outset with crude superficiality and facile dogmatism by regarding the edition of 1568 as a work of «kollektive Autorschaft». ⁵² While it has been known for some time and confirmed recently that men of letters⁵³ and artists (both Italian⁵⁴ and non-Italian⁵⁵) were involved in the revision of

⁴⁷ See VARCHI-BORGHINI 1998, pp. 7-84: pp. 61-66. The date is present in Torrentino's dedication to the Florentine merchant Bartolomeo Bettini. See VARCHI 1550, pp. 3-4: p. 4. See the precise analysis in VASARI, GLI UFFIZI E IL DUCA 2011, p. 390 (entry XV.19 by C.A. Girotto).

⁴⁸ See FRANGENBERG 2002, p. 254. This view is taken up in an anachronistic and laboured way in FRANGENBERG 2011, p. 331: «I have found that already in 1759-60 Giovanni Bottari in his edition of the *Lives* saw no problem with such an assumption, speaking of the *Promio delle Vite* which Vasari 'aveva fatto, o si era fatto fare'».

⁴⁹ See MULINACCI 2000, pp. 116-129 and figs. 44-46; CARRARA 2010-2012, p. 162 and notes 61 and 62; ROSSI 2012, pp. 315-316 and 323. For the treatise by Alberti published by Torrentino, see L'UOMO DEL RINASCIMENTO 2006, pp. 348-349 (entry 133 by E. Daniele); VASARI, GLI UFFIZI E IL DUCA 2011, p. 388 (entry XV.17 by C.A. Girotto). See also LO RE 2013 on the turbulent nature of the Florentine literary world.

⁵⁰ See CICERONE/DOLCE 1547, cc. 69v-70r; c. 70r: «fu dimandato ad Annibale quello che egli di quel philosopho giudicava. Rispose l'Africano [...] che egli haveva più volte veduto degli altri vecchi impazziti, ma uno che più fosse pazzo di Phormione, non haveva veduto giamai». The entire passage is quoted in CARRARA 2010-2012, p. 175 note 43.

⁵¹ See CARRARA 2005, pp. 82-83.

⁵² See HOPE 2014.

⁵³ The collaboration of Vincenzo Borghini was first examined in SCOTI-BERTINELLI 1905, pp. 78-87. See WILLIAMS 2014 for the close relations between Vasari and Borghini. For the role of the Dominican monk Marco de' Medici from Verona in providing Vasari with information on the that area, see PLEBANI 2008. The edition of 1568 does in fact present a considerable amount of precise and detailed information on the artistic world of Verona. See PLEBANI 2012 and MARINELLI 2013.

⁵⁴ See CARRARA 2011-2012, pp. 147-150 on the role of Giovanni Antonio Dosio in the revised version of the Life of Michelangelo in the Giuntina. For Michelangelo's biography in the first and in the second edition of the *Lives* see RUFFINI 2011 and MARONGIU 2013. For information concerning Cola dell'Amatrice gathered by Vasari see PEZZUTO 2013, especially pp. 334-338.

the *Lives* that then led to the Giuntina, it is equally certain that Vasari himself worked as the author in all respects of his work, and indeed undertook a long journey in 1566 for the precise purpose of gathering information on the artistic scene in northern and central Italy⁵⁶. Irrefutable proof of this is now available.

In the *Zibaldone* by Giorgio Vasari, the codex 31 in the Vasari Archives in Arezzo, which contains various decorative projects and letters to and from the artist⁵⁷, there are also two long collections of autograph notes which, although already published⁵⁸, are worth going back over carefully, in order to completely review Vasari's working method (supported by other manuscript evidence)⁵⁹, which pertains as much to the creation of frescoes or the making of ephemeral works as to the writing of the *Lives*, published by Giunti in 1568.

At f. 109r of the *Zibaldone* Vasari wrote in his own hand «Portraits of all the heroes of the house of Medici»; the annotation must have been a note to himself so that he could easily identify the detailed sequence of names of characters penned by him in the following pages (ff. 109v-110r) (Figg. 4-5) and who were to be depicted on the walls of the rooms that Cosimo de' Medici had destined for himself and his family in the house formerly owned by the Signoria, and known today as the Palazzo Vecchio⁶⁰. Vasari considers the individual rooms: the «SALA DI LEONE» and the rooms of «Cosimo Vecchio», the «Magnifico LORENZO Vecchio», «Clement VII», «Signor Giovanni» and «Duke Cosimo». He mentions the leading figures (from «Giovanni di Bicci», father of the founder of the house of Medici, to Eleonora da Toledo, «La Signora Duchessa» and her children), as well as peripheral figures, such as «CITIZENS, friends of Cosimo Vecchio», «neutral figures», «ENEMIES OF COSIMO [that is, the Elder]», «CAPTAINS FOR LORENZO VECCHIO», «Florentine painters and sculptors» and «men of letters». Vasari went back to and gave a detailed account of the information received from Cosimo Bartoli, who on more than one occasion discussed with the artist his entire decorative cycle⁶¹. Bartoli also offered advice on how to realize the planned scenes, while fully respecting Vasari's acknowledged creative skills:

In the history of Greek and Latin letters you must include the portraits of Pico della Mirandola, Politiano, Marsilio Ficino, Christoforo Landino, Messer Giovan Lascari, Messer Demetrio Calcondile and Marullo, surrounded by various books, astrolabes, globes, armillas and other similar instruments, as you will know how to do [...] ⁶².

In his notes Vasari therefore responded in detail to all Bartoli's requests, mentioning where he could obtain the various portraits he needed for the background of the painted histories, whether they were to be found in the Medici «Guardaroba» or in Raphael's *Stanze* («in Rome in the Rooms»), in Florentine churches («in Santa Maria Novella», «in Ogni Santi», «in Santa Trinita») or among other members of the Medici family («Bernardetto»,

⁵⁵ See LAMPSONIO/SCIOLLA-VOLPI 2001 and MOTOLESE 2012, pp. 123-129, for Vasari's fruitful relations with the learned Flemish painter Dominicus Lampsonius as attested by their surviving correspondence.

⁵⁶ RUBIN 1995, pp. 225-226, and AGOSTI 2013, p. 112.

⁵⁷ For the description of the manuscript (AVAR, ms. 31) see DEL VITA 1938, pp. 9 and 27-33, and CARRARA 2009a, pp. 359-361.

⁵⁸ See ZIBALDONE 1938, pp. 225-231 and 260-268.

⁵⁹ See CARRARA 2012-2013, pp. 141-145 and figs. 3-6, and CARRARA 2013b.

⁶⁰ See ALLEGRI-CECCHI 1980, *passim*; KLIEMANN 1993; CONTICELLI 2011; GIORGIO VASARI. DISEGNATORE E PITTORE 2011, pp. 99-111 (entries 13 and 16-17 by A. Baroni, and entries 14-15 and 18 by E. Bonato); DE GIROLAMI CHENEY 2015.

⁶¹ See AVAR, ms. 31, ff. 20r-23v, 31r-32v and 49r-50v. The iconographic programs written by Bartoli, and presumably datable to spring-summer 1556, are published in VASARI/FREY-FREY 1923-1940, I, pp. 437-442 e 447-451, and in ZIBALDONE 1938, pp. 61-67, 78-83 and 113-116. See also CECCHI 2011.

⁶² AVAR, ms. 31, f. 22r; see VASARI/FREY-FREY 1923-1940, I, p. 437; ZIBALDONE 1938, p. 66.

«Ottaviano»⁶³ and collectors such as «il Iovio»⁶⁴. Between 1556 and 1562 the artist managed to execute with the help of his workshop an imposing narrative cycle that exalted the Medici dynasty also by reinterpreting the 15th century from a dynastic and political point of view⁶⁵.

The names of the people Vasari mentions in the *Zibaldone* also occur in some notes written by him that are to be found in the Magliabechiano Manuscript 1393 in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence. The codex is known to scholars of Vasari because it contains many letters addressed to him by Don Vincenzo Borghini regarding the preparations for the marriage of Prince Francesco and Joanna of Austria⁶⁶. It also contains other letters by the Benedictine scholar, or addressed to him, written in the same period⁶⁷, as well as additional exchanges of letters about monasteries⁶⁸ and discussion of the planned expurgated edition of Boccaccio in 1573⁶⁹. The list, undoubtedly written by Vasari himself⁷⁰, is a roll-call of «Princes, Emperors, Kings, Dukes, Pontiffs, Doges, Captains, Citizens and Scholars»⁷¹.

The sequence of names was destined to be used in the ephemeral works constructed in December 1565 to welcome and accompany the court of the young Hapsburg bride of Prince Francesco, from Porta al Prato to the entrance to the Palazzo Vecchio, and the arrival in the *Sala Grande*⁷². In addition to the cycle of frescoes in the Salone dei Cinquecento, characters from the history of Florence, from the Medici family and other European families with connections to it, including the church hierarchy and the most important religious orders, all took their places in the richly embellished sequence of triumphal arches, gates, theatrical sets⁷³. Confirmation of this is to be found in the letter that Vincenzo Borghini wrote on 10 of July 1565 to Lelio Torelli, first secretary of Cosimo I, requesting clarification: «needing to put in the painting certain men of letters, the painter would like to have some way of identifying them, which not being known by their own portrait may have some sign or note that may serve the same purpose [...]. Now since there are certain jurists, I would like from your lordship, if you have any information about it, to know what works they wrote [...]»⁷⁴. The «jurists» mentioned here (from Accursio to Lorenzo Ridolfi, including Forese di Rabatta) appeared in the Porta al Prato, in the celebration of Florentine virtue⁷⁵; however on the back of the letter, sent back to Borghini with Torelli's opinion («Note by Messer Lelio»), the learned Benedictine sketched the design of the ephemeral apparatus in the Carnesecchi Arch, the one

⁶³ For Ottaviano de' Medici see *supra* note 25. On Bernardetto de' Medici, Ottaviano's son, see the entry written by F. Dommarco and M.I. Gurgo (available *online*: <http://siusa.archivi.beniculturali.it/cgi-bin/pagina.pl?TipoPag=prodfamiglia&Chiave=42797> <19/09/2015>).

⁶⁴ On Paolo Giovio's portraits collections see CANNATA 2014 (*with further bibliography*).

⁶⁵ See CARRARA 2015, p. 37.

⁶⁶ See VASARI/FREY-FREY 1923-1940, II, pp. 170-180, 182-184, 191-192 and 194-199.

⁶⁷ See CARTEGGIO BORGHINI 1912, pp. 16-27, 33-47, 49, 62-65 and 67-69.

⁶⁸ See CARTEGGIO BORGHINI 1912, pp. 71-73.

⁶⁹ TAPPELLA-POZZI 1988, pp. 56-57, 63, 79-81, 212-216, 367-370, 375, 380, 385-386, 390-394, 514 and 516-517.

⁷⁰ Vasari's handwriting is not recognized by SCORZA 2014, p. 82 and note 11.

⁷¹ See BNCF, ms. Magliabechiano VIII 1393, ff. 279r, 280r e 281r. A complete transcription in CARRARA 2012-2013, pp. 141-145 and figg. 3-6, and CARRARA 2013b, pp. 206-209 and figg. 1-4.

⁷² See ALLEGRI-CECCHI 1980, pp. 231-285; VASARI, *GLI UFFIZI E IL DUCA* 2011, pp. 162-165 (entries III.5 and III.6 by V. Conticelli) and pp. 166-167 (entry III.7, by E. Carrara), with further bibliography.

⁷³ See GINORI CONTI 1936, TESTAVERDE MATTEINI 1990, STARN-PARTRIDGE 1992, pp. 51-304 and CASINI 1996, pp. 225-242.

⁷⁴ See BNCF, ms. Magliabechiano VIII 1393, f. 214r-v: in particular f. 214r: «havendo a mettere in pittura certi huomini di lettere, il pittore desiderrebbe quanto e' può contrassegnarli, ché non essendo conosciuti pel volto ritratto di naturale havessino qualche segno o nota che facessi il medesimo offitio [...]. Hora perché vi e' vi sono certi legisti, io desiderrei da Vostra Signoria, se ella ne ha notitia, sapere che opere scrissono [...]»; see also CARTEGGIO BORGHINI 1912, pp. 39-40; CARRARA 2012-2013, p. 118 and fig. 7, and CARRARA 2013b, p. 205 and fig. 5.

⁷⁵ See [*Descrizione dell'apparato*], in VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, pp. 258-259 and 262-264.

celebrating the glory of the house of Medici⁷⁶, thus bearing witness to Borghini's constant activity as an iconographic adviser in the frenetic preparations for the royal wedding⁷⁷.

The wide-ranging historic research required to identify the portraits to be created in effigy and placed in the magnificent wedding set pieces was directly derived from the scrupulous investigations undertaken for the scenes in the *Stanze del Principe*⁷⁸, that is the apartments of Cosimo I de' Medici. It was based on meticulous investigations in the fields of both historiography and the chronicles⁷⁹ as well as an antiquarian context (this last giving rise to bitter battles over which sources had reliable information)⁸⁰, necessary to achieve the complex decorative cycle in the Salone dei Cinquecento (1563-1571), an authentic *manifesto* of the power and prestige attained by the Medici dynasty thanks to the political prowess and successful wedding strategies of Cosimo I⁸¹.

On the other hand, following the example of Paolo Giovio and his *Museum*, interest in portraiture found expression at a time fairly close to Vasari's great creations⁸²: it is no accident that the Giunti edition of the *Lives* contains a *Table of Portraits of the Museum of the most illustrious and excellent Signor Cosimo, Duke of Florence and Siena*, listed under the *Index of notable things*⁸³.

Based on what has been set out so far, it can be affirmed that the second series of notes in the *Zibaldone* studied here (Figg. 6-8), refers neither to Vasari's painted histories in the *Stanze del Principe* of Palazzo Vecchio, nor is it a second or second-choice draft of the *Ragionamenti*, written at the same time as the creation of the paintings; the themes and characters quoted do not match and nor, more generally, do they coincide with the historic period meticulously analysed by Vasari at f. 103r: «From 1381 until 1400»⁸⁴ (Fig. 6). Tangible proof of this is provided by what the artist noted on f. 103v (Fig. 7): «1381 Luisgii Marsili and the other ambassadors go to the Duke of Anjou, who passed through Romagna with his army on his way to the Marches and from there to Abruzzo, where the people demonstrated their affection for Queen Joanna»⁸⁵. The Florentine Augustinian Brother Marsili (1342-1394), who was very friendly with Francesco Petrarch⁸⁶, appeared instead among the illustrious representatives of the history and culture of the city situated in the temporary arch at Porta al Prato for the previously mentioned marriage of Prince Francesco to Joanna of Austria⁸⁷.

⁷⁶ See CARRARA 2009b: pp. 424 and 430-432 with further bibliography.

⁷⁷ See BNCF, ms. Magliabechiano VIII 1393, f. 214v: «Nota di Messer Lelio»; see CARRARA 2012-2013, p. 118 and fig. 8, and CARRARA 2013b, p. 205 and fig. 6.

⁷⁸ See JONIETZ 2010, pp. 168-172.

⁷⁹ See CARRARA 2015, p. 39 and note 30.

⁸⁰ See RUBINSTEIN 1967; MOYER 2003; CARRARA 2007.

⁸¹ See WILLIAMS 1998; MALZ 2008; GIORGIO VASARI, *Disegnatore e Pittore* 2011, pp. 117-135 (entries 21 e 25, by F. Martelli; entries 22-24, by R. Scorza and 26-28, by A. Baroni) and pp. 141-151 (entry 29, by C. Garofalo, entries 30-31, a cura di A. Baroni and entry 32, by A. Cecchi); CARRARA 2015, p. 39.

⁸² For the so-called *Gioviana series* (commissioned by Cosimo I in 1552 and set up in the Sala del Mappamondo or Sala delle Carte Geografiche) see CECCHI 2008, pp. 72-82; DE LUCA 2009, pp. 17-31, especially pp. 27-28. On the hall, decorated in 1562-1563 by Vasari and his workshop, see PACETTI 2008 and ROSEN 2014, in particular p. 79 ff.

⁸³ For the *Tavola de' Ritratti del Museo dell'Illustrissimo et Eccellentissimo Signor Cosimo, Duca di Fiorenza et Siena*, published in the *Indice delle cose notabili*, see VASARI 1568, ff. ♣♣♣♣♣v-♣♣♣♣♣r: especially f. ♣♣♣♣♣v. On the list see ALLEGRI-CECCHI 1980, pp. 310-312; see also GIORGIO VASARI 1981, pp. 145-146 (entry 45d, by Ch. Davis).

⁸⁴ See AVAR, ms. 31, f. 103r: «Dal 1381 fino al 1400». See CARRARA 2012-2013, p. 123 and CARRARA 2015, p. 39.

⁸⁵ See AVAR, ms. 31, f. 103v: «1381 Luisgii Marsili et gli altri inbasciatori vanno al Duca d'Angiò, il quale passò con l'esercito per la Romagna per la Marcha et di quivi per l'Abruzzo, ivi facendo i popoli molte rivoluzioni per l'affectione che portavano alla Reina Giovanna». See CARRARA 2012-2013, p. 123 and CARRARA 2015, p. 39.

⁸⁶ On this scholar, ambassador of the Florentine Republic, see FALZONE 2008; see also FUBINI 1992, in particular pp. 79-80 and 84-86.

⁸⁷ See *supra* p. 11 and note 66.

This is confirmed by the relevant passage in the *Description of the Porta al Prato* in the 1568 edition of the *Lives*:

And [...] within an enclosure of balustrades made as it were for a walkway, could be seen a great throng of grave and solemn men, who, although all rejoicing and making merry, yet retained in their aspect a certain something of the venerable, and these also, were portrayed from life. For Theology and Sanctity there was the famous Fra Antonino, Archbishop of Florence, for whom a little Angel was holding the episcopal mitre, and with him was seen Giovanni Domenici, first Friar and then Cardinal; and with them Don Ambrogio, General of Camaldoli, and M. Ruberto de' Bardi, Maestro Luigi Marsili, Maestro Lionardo Dati and many others⁸⁸.

Vasari sought information about his illustrious «maestro» in the *Historiae Florentini populi* by Leonardo Bruni⁸⁹, a reworking of the vulgate version by Donato Acciaiuoli (1429-1478), republished by Francesco Sansovino (1521-1586) in Venice in 1561⁹⁰. Book IX of the *Historia universale de' suoi tempi di Messer Lionardo Aretino* mentions Marsili among the messengers sent by the Florentine Republic to the court of Louis of Anjou in 1381:

In the midst of this the Duke of Anjou, passing through the plains of Lombardy had already come to Bologna, and Maestro Luigi Marsili, most famous theologian, and Messer Luigi Guicciardini and Messer Guccio di Cino, two most splendid knights, were sent as ambassadors from Florence⁹¹.

That Vasari should have consulted this very text and this edition is made quite clear by the extract that follows the above-mentioned passage:

[...] The route taken by this prince [*i.e.* Louis of Anjou, heir of Joanna I, Queen of Naples] proceeded via Romagna and the Marches, and thence into Abruzzo and the borders of the Kingdom, where it immediately aroused much and great commotion, and the Lords and people who held the queen in affection came in large number to pay homage to him, as the legitimate successor⁹².

Comparison of the two texts, Bruni's vulgarized version and Vasari's, clearly points up the origin of the artist's notes as being the relevant passage in the *Historia universale* (the same names and places recur in the same time period) such as to eliminate any reasonable doubt,

⁸⁸ VASARI/DE VERE 1912-1915, X, p. 40; see VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, VI, p. 258: «E [...] entro ad un recinto di balaustri, fatto quasi per passeggiare, si vedeva una grande schiera di gravissimi uomini, i quali, benché tutti lieti e festanti, ritenevano nondimeno nella sembianza un certo che di venerabile. Erano questi, ancor essi al natural ritratti, nella teologia, e per santità il chiarissimo frate Antonino arcivescovo di Fiorenza, a cui un Angeletto serbava la vescovil mitria; e con lui si vedeva il prima frate, e poi cardinale, Giovanni Domenici, e con loro don Ambrogio generale di Camaldoli, e messer Ruberto de' Bardi, maestro Luigi Marsili, maestro Lionardo Dati et altri molti».

⁸⁹ See FUBINI 2003. On Bruni (1370-1444) and his work see IANZITI 2012, especially p. 308 for the the vulgate version by Donato Acciaiuoli, printed in Venice in 1476.

⁹⁰ See RICHARDSON 1994, p. 151. For Sansovino's attention to the history of Italy see GRENDLER 1969. On his role as publisher, translator and polygraph in *Sixteenth-century Venice* see BONORA 1994; CARRARA 2002; FIGORILLI 2011; PANZERA 2012a; PANZERA 2012b and PROCACCIOLI 2013.

⁹¹ See *HISTORIA UNIVERSALE* 1561, f. 183v: «In questo mezzo il Duca d'Angiò, passando per la pianura di Lombardia era già venuto in quel di Bologna, et di Firenze vi furon mandati ambasciatori Maestro Luigi Marsili, famosissimo theologo, et Messer Luigi Guicciardini et Messer Guccio di Cino, due splendidissimi cavalieri».

⁹² *HISTORIA UNIVERSALE* 1561, f. 183v: «[...] La via di questo Principe [*scil.* Luigi d'Angiò, erede di Giovanna I, regina di Napoli] fu dopo per Romagna et per la Marca, et di quindi passò in Abruzzi et ne' confini del Regno, dove subitamente suscitò molte et gran revolutioni, percioché i Signori et i popoli che erano affettionati alla Reina in gran numero vennero alla sua divotione, come a legittimo successore [...]».

but raising a question as to whether Vasari considered this source purely and exclusively in this context. Apparently not.

In fact, thanks also to the information in the *Historiae Florentini populi* by Bruni on the important role played in 13th and 14th century Tuscany by the Tarlati⁹³, Vasari was able to create around the powerful Ghibelline family an artistic panorama with ambitions to rival other centres such as Florence and Siena, and which nevertheless records, in the 1568 version, the presence in Arezzo of figures such as Giotto and Pietro Lorenzetti, while the local 'primitive' painter Margarito was given a higher profile⁹⁴.

And yet an awareness of the value of artistic activities in Arezzo was already present in embryo from the first edition of the *Lives* since the craftsmen of the monument of Bishop Guido already figure in the Torrentino edition, both in the biography of *Niccolò d'Arezzo sculptor* where we are told that «[...] For the entombment of Guido Pietromalesco, their lord and bishop being already dead, [...] the people of Arezzo commissioned the Siense maestro Agostino and Agnolo»⁹⁵, and above all in the preface to part 2 of the *Lives* in which they are counted among the sculptors who knew how to create innovative art after the decline of the High Middle Ages:

The same do I say of sculpture, which, in that first age of its new birth, had no little of the good, for after the extinction of the rude Greek manner, which was so uncouth that it was more akin to the art of quarrying than to the genius of the craftsmen – their statues being entirely without folds, or attitudes, or movement of any kind, and truly worthy to be called stone images – when design was afterwards improved by Giotto, many men also improved the figures in marble and stone, [...] as also did those two Siense masters, Agostino and Agnolo, who made the tomb of Guido, Bishop of Arezzo⁹⁶.

In short, in the Giunti edition Vasari merely develops what he had already sketched out in the Torrentino edition, and thus it happens in similar fashion also from a historiographic point of view, if the writings and authors he referred to for the creation of his own literary work are examined. In fact, if the name of Leonardo Bruni was often mentioned as the ineluctable precedent already for the 1550 edition⁹⁷, it is in the revision of the dedicatory letter to Cosimo I to be added to the 1568 edition that the artist indicates clearly the humanist as his own model, in the wake of the fortune enjoyed by the man of letters and politics from Arezzo at the Medici court of Cosimo il Vecchio⁹⁸:

Given that Your Excellency, following in the virtuous footsteps of your most illustrious ancestors, has brought every consideration to bear not only on upholding the State with excellent justice and most protected peace, but in nurturing and honouring all the excellent arts no less than in helping and encouraging the study of literature, I thought you would most surely welcome this effort, that I have made to celebrate the most noble names of those craftsmen

⁹³ See *HISTORIA UNIVERSALE* 1561, f. 121r: «Dopo questo vescovo [*scil.* Guglielmino degli Ubertini] la famiglia de' Tarlati molto potente prese il governo della città [*scil.* Arezzo], et tenendo il reggimento della Repubblica».

⁹⁴ See CARRARA 2012-2013, pp. 125-132 and 134-135.

⁹⁵ See VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, III, p. 35: «gli Aretini [...] de la sepoltura di Guido Pietromalesco signore e vescovo loro già morto [...] fecero allogazione a maestro Agostino et ad Agnolo sanesi». For the Siense sculptors see BARTALINI 1991; BARTALINI 2002; BARTALINI 2011.

⁹⁶ See VASARI/BAROCCHI-BETTARINI 1966-1987, III, p. 10: «Questo medesimo dico de la scultura, la quale in quella prima età della sua rinascita ebbe assai del buono, perché, fuggita la maniera goffa greca, che era tanto roz[z]a che teneva ancora più della cava che dello ingegno degli artefici, essendo quelle loro statue intiere intiere senza pieghe o attitudine o movenzia alcuna e proprio da chiamarsi statue, dove, essendo poi migliorato il disegno per Giotto, molti migliorarono ancora le figure d[e] marmi e delle pietre, [...] come que' due sanesi Agostino et Agnolo che feciono la sepoltura di Guido vescovo di Arezzo [...]».

⁹⁷ See WAŻBIŃSKI 1976, pp. 2 and 7; RUBIN 1995, p. 115.

⁹⁸ See IANZITI 2008.

who in architecture, sculpture and painting from Cimabue to our times for the excellence of their intellect and for the greatness of the works that have provided no small amount of utility and great glory to all parts of Italy, but perhaps more to Tuscany, where the heavens are broader and more liberal for it alone than for the rest of Italy, and in Tuscany undoubtedly most to its most lovely Florence, than to any other Tuscan city. [...] And if to the most illustrious forefathers were already welcome the honourable labours of the *Florentine History* by my compatriot Messer Lionardo Bruni for his excellent writing and for his faithful service, do not now disdain the *Lives* of so many of your most noble Florentine spirits written by me, nor seek out other judgement nor other language than what Nature has given me⁹⁹.

The figure of Bruni, Vasari's alter-ego in the unpublished dedicatory letter to the Duke of Florence, was in any case openly celebrated in the second of the *Ragionamenti* of the «Second Day»; in the form of a dialogue that is typical of the work, Vasari replied to Prince Francesco who was keen to have news («Tell me who is that person who has his back to us, with that blue hat on his head, and who speaks to that other young man?») ¹⁰⁰ about one of the scholars sitting beside Lorenzo in the *Sala di Lorenzo il Magnifico* ¹⁰¹ (Figg. 9-10):

This is our Messer Lionardo Bruni from Arezzo, who I wanted to put amongst this academy, since he wrote the history of the Florentine Republic and the Procopius, and he was also secretary of the Signoria, who is speaking to Giovanni Lascari, a most learned Greek; and the figure seen in profile between Lionardo and Lascari is the ingenious Leonbatista Alberti, a most gifted architect who wrote about architecture at the time of Lorenzo; and finally, Your Excellency may see behind Lascari the profile of Marullo Tarcagnotto, a most learned Greek, who terminates this honourable school¹⁰².

The gracious way in which the young Medici, heir to the throne of Cosimo I, replied to the artist clearly illustrates full awareness of the prestige of Lorenzo's legacy but at the same time it is a blessing too often given little consideration in other periods, including recent ones:

I do not believe, Giorgio, that at any time in this city has it happened, that greater abundance of fine works has been found, whether that be in Greek, Latin or vulgar literature, in

⁹⁹ See ASFI, *Carteggio d'Artisti*, II, ins. 3, f. 144r-v: Vasari's *autograph letter*, to the Duke Cosimo I de' Medici («Allo Illustrissimo et Eccellentissimo Signor il Signor Cosimo de' Medici Duca di Fiorenza Signor suo osservandissimo»), *undated*: «Poi che Vostra Eccellenza, seguendo le virtuose orme de' suoi illustrissimi progenitori ha posto ogni suo pensiero non solamente a reggere lo Stato con ottima iustizia et sicurissima pace, ma in nutrire et honorar insieme tutte l'arti eccellenti non meno che ella sì aiu[ti] e favorisca gli studi delle buone lettere, ho pensato non dover esserle se non grata la presente fatica, presa da me per celebrare i nobilissimi nomi di quelli artfici che nella architettura, scultura et pittura da Cimabue insino a' tenpi nostri, per la ecellenza degli ingegni elevati loro et per la grandezza dell'opere, hanno recato in utilità non piccola et gloria grandissima a tutte le parti di Italia, ma più forse alla Toschana, essendone stato il Cielo più liberale et largo a lei sola che a tutto il resto, et della Toscana senza dubbio più alla sua bellissima Fiorenza, che a nessuna altra città di quella. [...] Et se già alli illustrissimi Avoli suoi furono in grado le honorate fatiche della *Istoria fiorentina* del m[io] compatriota Messer Lionardo Bruni per le buone lettere sue et per la sua fedel servitù, non isdegni hora le *Vite* di tanti suoi nobilissimi spirti fiorentini scritte da me né ricerchi altro giuditio né altra lingua che la Natura mi si habbia dato». The text was first published by SCOTI-BERTINELLI 1905, pp. 70-71 note 1; see also CARRARA 2012-2013, p. 136 and CARRARA 2015, p. 41.

¹⁰⁰ See VASARI/MILANESI 1878-1885, VIII, p. 117: «Ditemi chi è quello che volge a noi le spalle, con quella berretta azzurra in capo, e che parla con quell'altro giovane?».

¹⁰¹ For the hall see ALLEGRI-CECCHI 1980, pp. 136-142 and MUCCINI-CECCHI 1991, pp. 128-137.

¹⁰² See VASARI/MILANESI 1878-1885, VIII, p. 117: «Quello è il nostro M. Lionardo Bruni Aretino, il quale ho voluto mettere fra questa accademia, poichè egli a questa repubblica scrisse l'istoria fiorentina ed il Procopio, ed anche egli fu segretario della signoria, il quale parla con Giovanni Lascari, dottissimo greco; e quel profilo, che è fra Lionardo ed il Lascari, è lo ingegnoso Leonbatista Alberti, grandissimo architetto, il quale scrisse nel tempo di Lorenzo i libri d'architettura; e l'ultimo, che Vostra Eccellenza vede in profilo dietro al Lascari, è il Marullo Tarcagnotto, greco dottissimo, il quale fa fine a questa onorata scuola».

sculpture or painting or architecture, in wood or iron or bronze casting, nor anyone of our house who could prize, honour and reward, or who could know better than Lorenzo: this can be judged from these signs, that no benefit is to be had from these sciences unless where they are held in esteem and are rewarded¹⁰³.

To conclude, on the basis of what we have endeavoured to show on the evidence put forward here, it appears objectively difficult to deny Vasari's authorship of the *Lives*, both the first edition and the second.

We can also add that a careful parallel reading of the two editions¹⁰⁴ clearly reveals a solidity of logical construction and of the historical framework¹⁰⁵ onto which Vasari grafted the documentary data and the narrative *excerpta*, drawn from a broad oral tradition¹⁰⁶, which he obtained through constant discussion with the literary and cultural figures with whom he came into contact as well as artists and patrons. Nor should it ever be forgotten that it was the painter from Arezzo that created a previously non-existent literary genre, namely the artist's biography. As Michael Baxandall wrote in a memorable review, «it was Vasari who made it»¹⁰⁷.

We thus regard identification of the sources¹⁰⁸ used by Giorgio Vasari in writing the *Lives* and fully informed analysis of the vocabulary he employed¹⁰⁹ as the two paramount means for what Baxandall calls «doing justice to Vasari» once and for all.

¹⁰³ See VASARI/MILANESI 1878-1885, VIII, p. 117: «Io non credo, Giorgio, che mai in tempo nessuno in questa città e' sia accaduto, che si sia trovato maggiore abbondanza di begl'ingegni, o volete nelle lettere greche o latine o vulgari o nella scultura o pittura o architettura o ne' legnami o ferramenti o ne' getti di bronzo, né chi ancora di casa nostra le pregiassi, e le onorassi, e premiassi, e più se ne intendessi, che Lorenzo; che si può giudicare da questi segni, che queste scienze non fanno mai profitto, se non dove elle si stimano e si premiano».

¹⁰⁴ As carried out, for example, in CONFORTI 2013.

¹⁰⁵ See SOHM 2000 and PAYNE 2001.

¹⁰⁶ As clearly attested by the recurrent use of the phrase «si dice» (they say) in both the first and second editions of the *Lives*. Immediate confirmation is provided by the research on the two texts now available on the Fondazione Memofonte website: http://www.memofonte.it/home/files/pdf/vasari_vite_torrentiniana.pdf and http://www.memofonte.it/home/files/pdf/vasari_vite_giuntina.pdf <16/09/2015>).

¹⁰⁷ BAXANDALL 1980. An echo of the scholar's observation can also be heard in EISENSTEIN 1983, p. 130: «Vasari's was the first systematic investigation, based on interviews, correspondence, and field trips, of the procedures used and the objects produced by generations of European artists».

¹⁰⁸ Great importance still attaches to GOMBRICH 1960.

¹⁰⁹ In addition to the writings of Nencioni and the authors mentioned above in note 18, the research long under way on other artists, especially Alberti (MARASCHIO 1972) and Cellini (ALTIERI BIAGI 1972), provides very useful stimuli.



Fig. 1: Anton Francesco Doni, *La Zucca*, Venice, Marcolini, 1551-1552, Frontispiece, woodcut (Photo: MULINACCI 2000, p. 118, fig. 44)

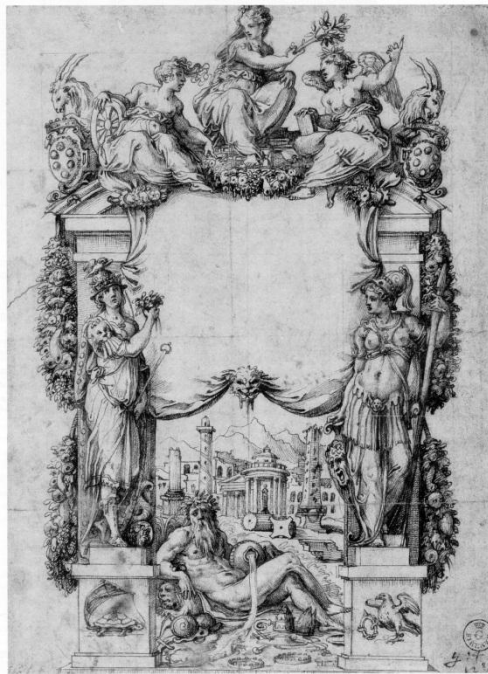


Fig. 2: Giorgio Vasari, Preparatory Drawing for the Frontispiece of *L'Architettura*, Florence, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi, 394 Orn (Photo: *L'UOMO DEL RINASCIMENTO* 2006, p. 342)

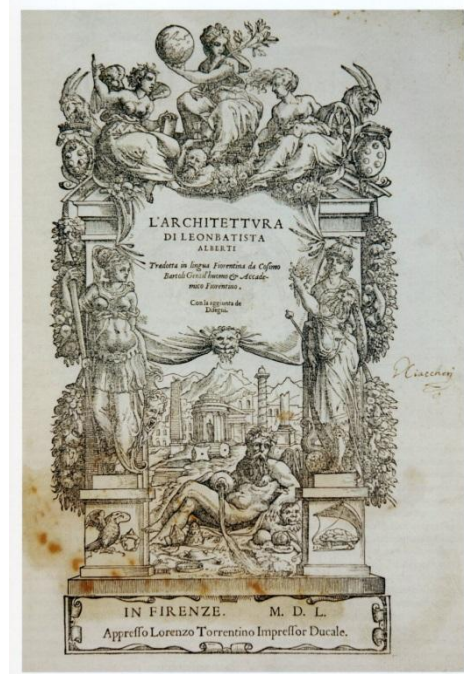


Fig. 3: Leon Battista Alberti, *L'Architettura*, Florence, Torrentino, 1550, Frontispiece, woodcut (Photo: *L'UOMO DEL RINASCIMENTO* 2006, p. 349)

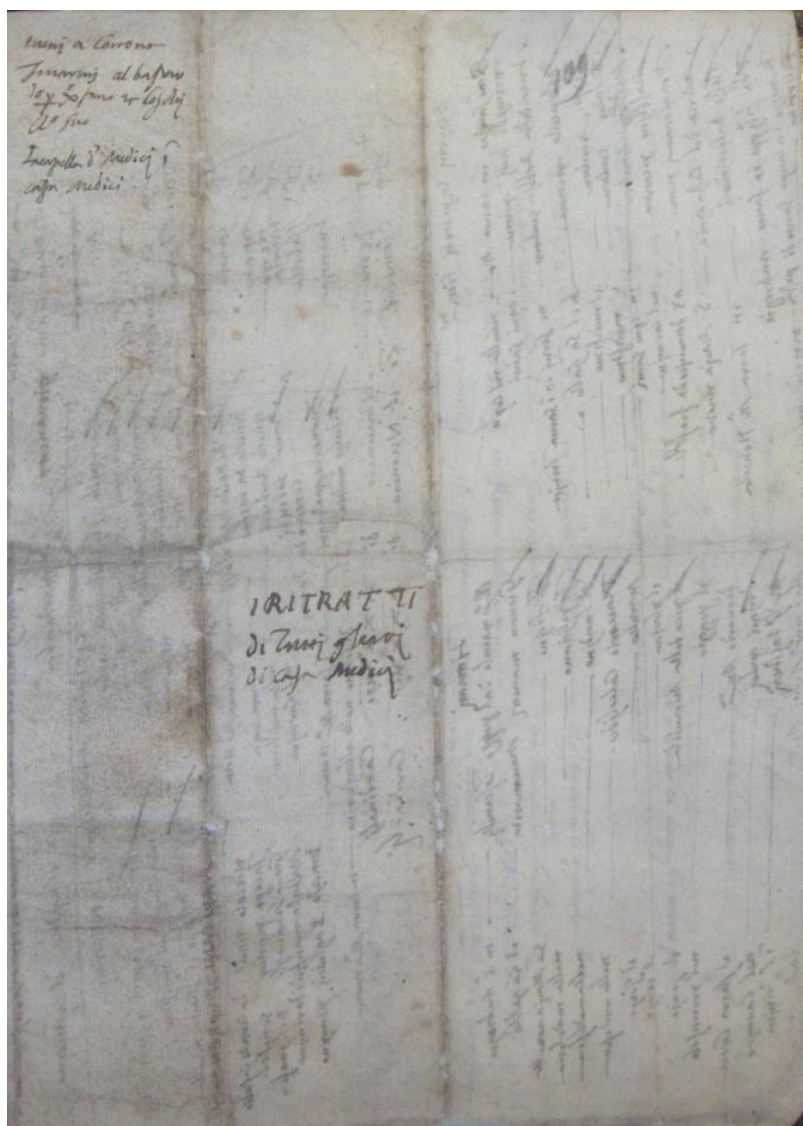


Fig. 4: G. Vasari, *Autograph Notes*, Archivio Vasariano di Arezzo, ms. 31 (Vasari's *Zibaldone*), f. 109v (Photo: Fondazione Memofonte; Reproduced by permission of Soprintendenza Archivistica per la Toscana)

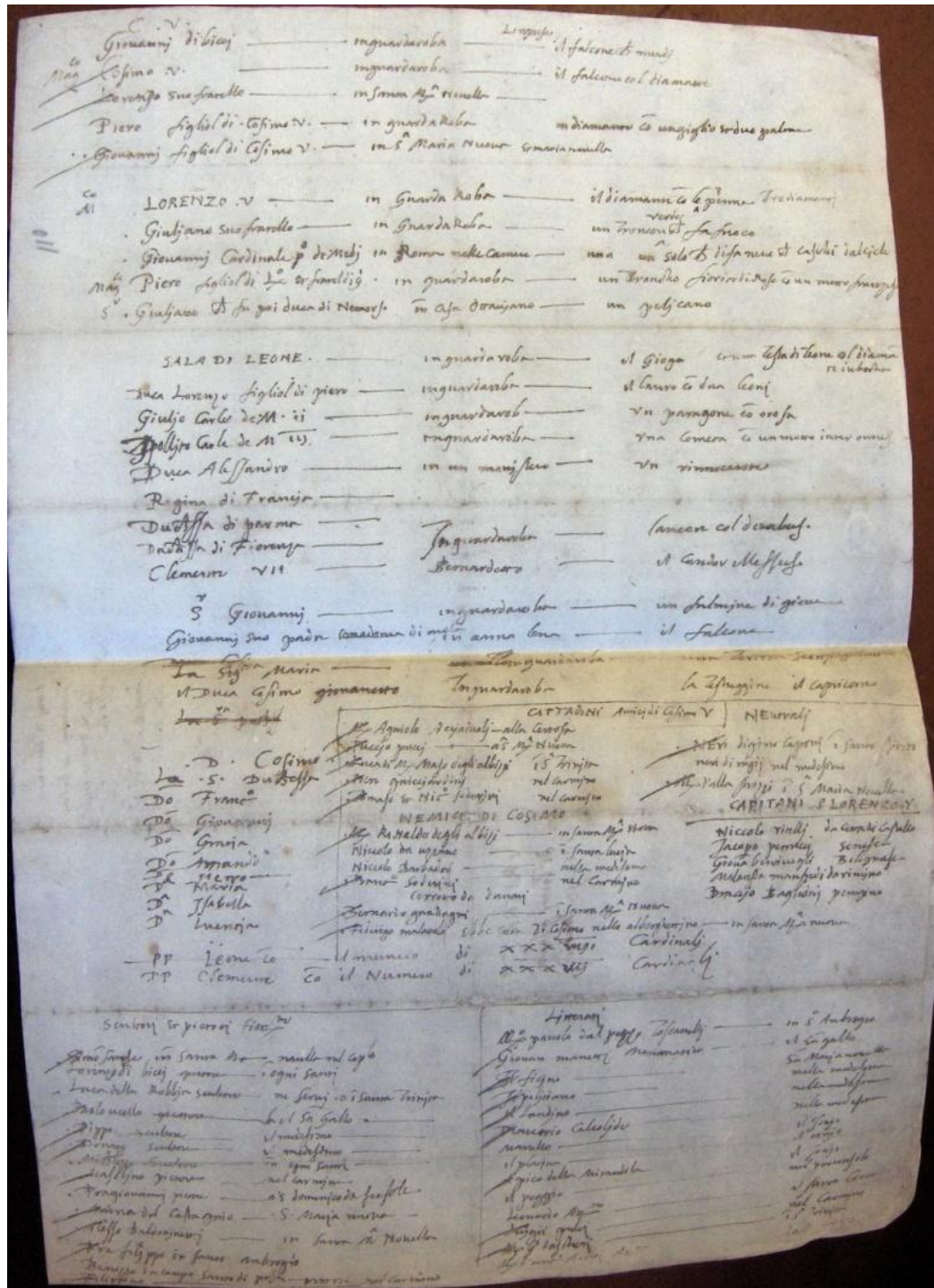


Fig. 5: G. Vasari, *Autograph Notes*, Archivio Vasariano di Arezzo, ms. 31 (Vasari's *Zibaldone*), f. 110r (Photo: Fondazione Memofonte; Reproduced by permission of Soprintendenza Archivistica per la Toscana)

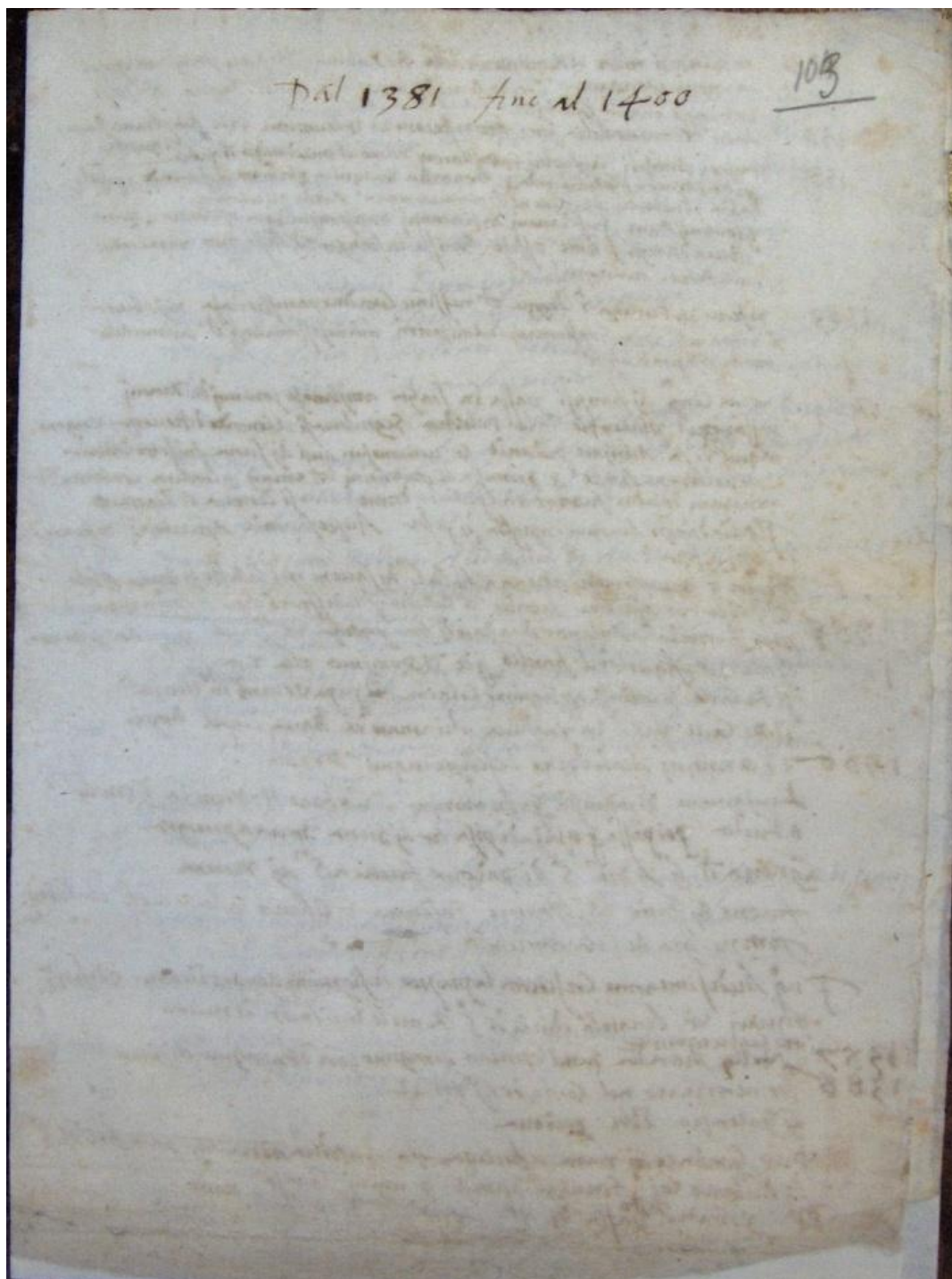


Fig. 6: G. Vasari, *Autograph Notes*, Archivio Vasariano di Arezzo, ms. 31 (Vasari's *Zibaldone*), f. 103r (Photo: Fondazione Memofonte; Reproduced by permission of Soprintendenza Archivistica per la Toscana)

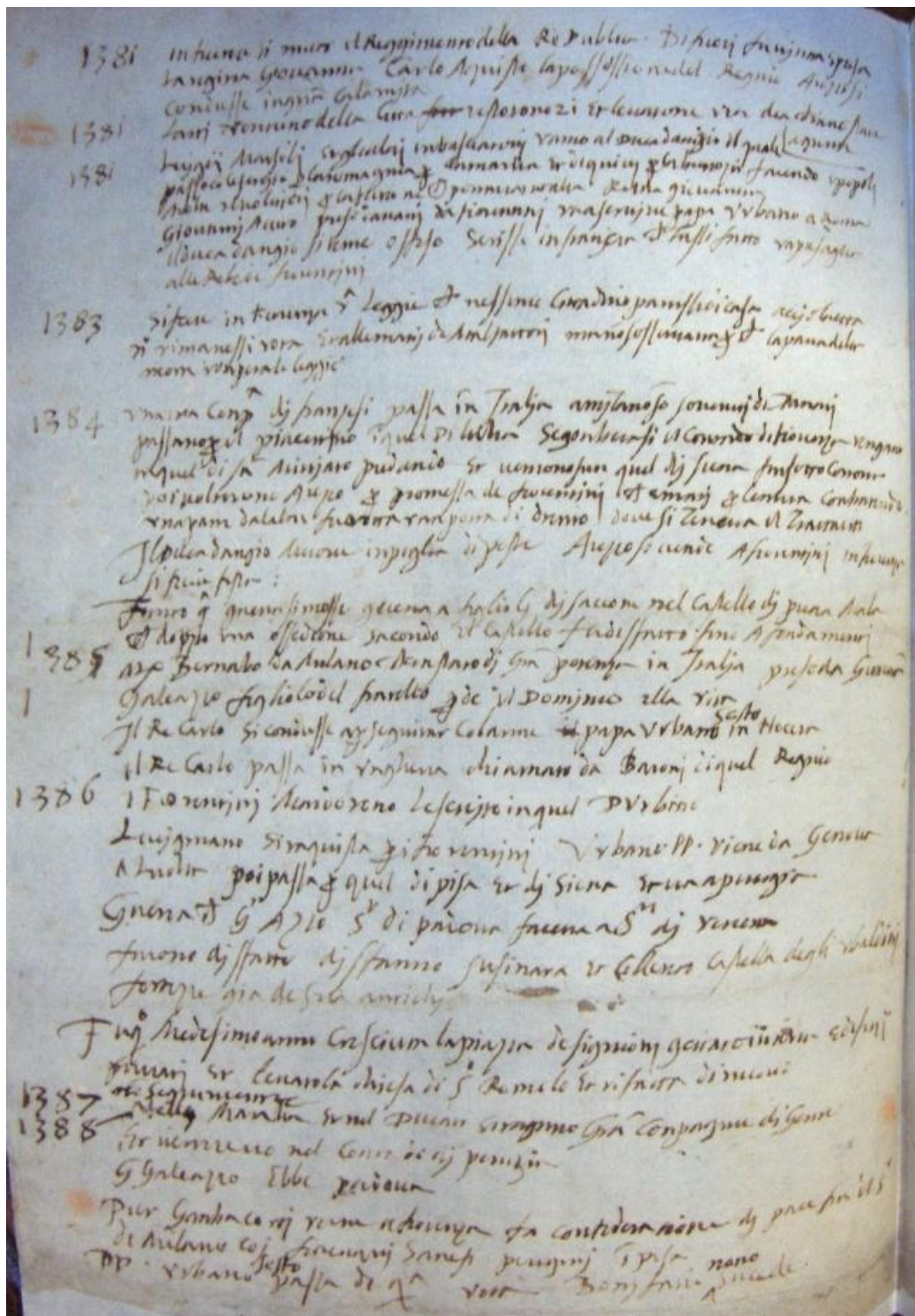


Fig. 7: G. Vasari, *Autograph Notes*, Archivio Vasariano di Arezzo, ms. 31 (Vasari's *Zibaldone*), f. 103v (Photo: Fondazione Memofonte; Reproduced by permission of Soprintendenza Archivistica per la Toscana)

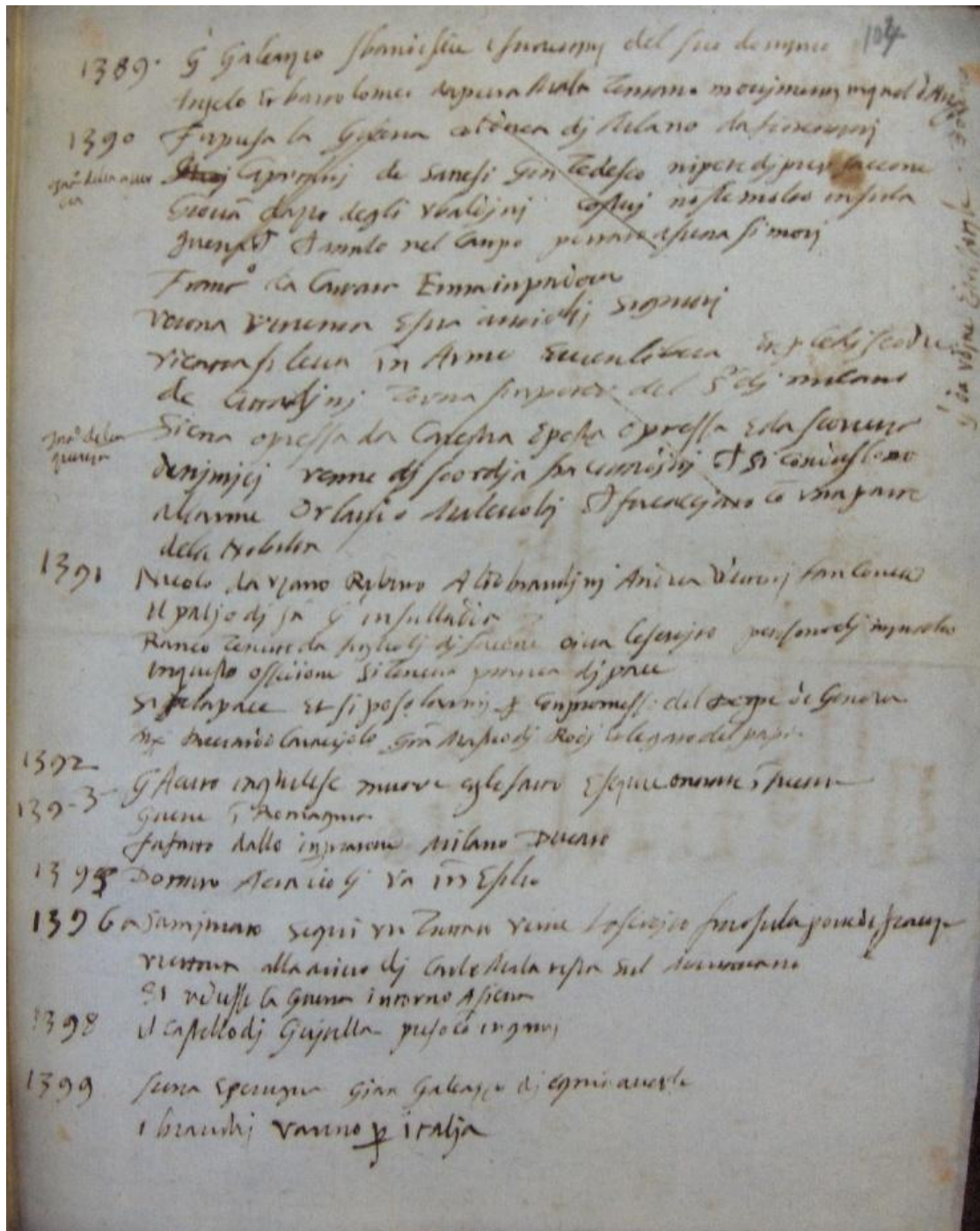


Fig. 8: G. Vasari, *Autograph Notes*, Archivio Vasariano di Arezzo, ms. 31 (Vasari's Zibaldone), f. 104r (Photo: Fondazione Memofonte; Reproduced by permission of Soprintendenza Archivistica per la Toscana)



Fig. 9: Giorgio Vasari and Marco da Faenza, *Ceiling Decoration*, *Sala di Lorenzo il Magnifico*, Florence, Palazzo Vecchio, fresco, 1556-1558



Fig. 10: Giorgio Vasari and Marco da Faenza, *Lorenzo Surrounded by Philosophers and Scholars*, *Between Allegories of Fame and Virtue*, *Sala di Lorenzo il Magnifico*, Florence, Palazzo Vecchio, fresco, 1556-1558

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ABSTRACT

Nel rinnovato, e meritorio, nuovo interesse per Giorgio Vasari, accresciutosi in coincidenza con il Cinquecentenario celebrato nel 2011, si sono affermati anche alcuni filoni di ricerca che non riconoscono in Vasari l'autore delle *Vite* a favore della tesi di un lavoro collettivo (o 'multiplo'). L'intento del mio saggio è, invece, quello di riaffermare la piena paternità vasariana dell'opera.

Riesaminare le fonti citate e impiegate da Vasari nonché la terminologia e il lessico da lui utilizzati, sia nelle lettere sia nelle *Vite*, è la via metodologicamente corretta, e perciò l'unica percorribile, per avvicinarsi, con un atteggiamento costruttivo e non prevenuto, tanto al grandioso cantiere della Torrentiniana - l'edizione approntata da Lorenzo Torrentino a Firenze nel 1550 - quanto a quello della Giuntina, che prende il nome dai suoi stampatori, i Giunti, presso cui apparve nel 1568.

The resurgence of interest in Giorgio Vasari meritoriously prompted by the fifth centennial celebrations in 2011 has been accompanied by the resurfacing of theses that reject Vasari's authorship of the *Lives* in favour of a collective (or 'multiple') work. My essay aims, instead, to confirm the full authorship of the *Lives* to Vasari.

Examination of the sources cited and employed by Vasari as well as of the terminology and vocabulary he used, both in the letters and in the *Lives*, constitutes the only methodologically way to address with a constructive and unbiased attitude both the great work of the Torrentiniana - the edition printed by Lorenzo Torrentino in Florence in 1550 - and the Giuntina, which takes its name from the printers that brought it out in 1568, the Florentine publishing house Giunti.