MANSIONS AND HISTORICAL DWELLINGS IN VAL DI NON

Caskets of a centuries-old history
Cover:
The door of the “Sala della Colonna superiore”, particular (Cles, Palazzo Assessorile)
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A treasure trove of rare beauty, the Val di Non contains a historical and artistic heritage of outstanding quality and incontestable historical value. Ancient castles, glorious churches, charming hermitages and historical dwellings, testifying to a secular history, can be seen spread throughout the whole region. Over the course of the years, these buildings have been restored and turned into venues for cultural events and exhibitions, thanks to the commitment of the Municipalities, the Provincia Autonoma di Trento and the Consorzio B.I.M. dell’Adige.

The Val di Non Community, supported by the Centro Culturale d’Anaunia and in collaboration with the regional Municipalities, works ceaselessly to put online and promote this precious heritage, co-ordinating and co-financing cultural activities. By doing so, it serves the dual purpose of keeping these places alive and making them known, through the promotion of events, to the local inhabitants and the large numbers of tourists who visit the Val di Non every year. These activities accordingly include the publication - also in German and English - of this book, which is the fruit of in-depth research and historical reconstruction of the identity of these places. The desire is for readers to be able to immerse themselves in the magical atmosphere of these places and thus be stimulated to capture their beauty and charm by participating in the numerous cultural initiatives which are periodically organised.

CULTURAL COUNCILLOR OF THE VAL DI NON COMMUNITY

Fabrizio Borzaga

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MANSIONS AND HISTORICAL DWELLINGS IN VAL DI NON

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Palazzo Assessorile – the City Council building – stands in the heart of Prato which, along with Spina and Pez-San Vigilio, is one of the ancient centres around which the town of Cles grew up. The piazza which it overlooks is the central point of the Anauni town, with Palazzo Scotti, where the council offices are today, and Palazzo Dal Lago de Sternfeld, the former seat of the law court. On the outside, the compact and austere building, which is still medieval in style, masks well the complex architectural evolution of its fabric and the different uses over the course of its history: from tower house for living in and storing foodstuffs to a stately mansion and then a public building, when it became the headquarters of the Councillor of the Non and Sole Valleys, from which it derived its current name.

The first documented evidence relating to the building dates back to 1356, when the ancient square 13th Century tower house, with an external curtain wall which widens to the south east, was sold to Giovanni di Arpone of Castel Cles (died after 1363). Later, it became part of the ownership of the noble Noneso lineage, to which its destiny was linked for almost three hundred years. During the second half of the 15th Century, Giorgio di Riprando Cles (c.1410-1492), a leading figure in the family and Captain of the Non and Sole valleys, undertook a complete reconstruction, widening the annex of the building which then assumed its facies (appearance) of today. To celebrate the completion of this extensive building work, a fresco was painted, still visible today on the principal southern prospect, almost a painted standard, bearing the coat of arms of the House of Cles and the year, 1484. However, it was in the 16th Century that the palazzo reached the height of its splendour. In 1538, on the wishes of Bernardo Cles (1485-1539), from 1514 was Prince Bishop of Trento and, from 1530, cardinal of the church of Santa Romana, the ownership passed into the hands of Aliprando (c.1490-1551), his favourite nephew, who was then a law student at the university of Bologna. The noble and knight of the Empire married in 1529 Anna Wolkenstein Rodeneck (1509-1582). He was the Imperial Counsellor and hereditary Chamberlain of the Tyrol, Captain of the Valleys of the Noce and of the Four Vicariages in Vallagarina and of the Castle of Pietrapiana, on the hill to the east of Trento, between the current towns of Povo and Villazzano. It was thanks to the two spouses that the building’s surroundings
The massive, square building, dating to the late Middle Ages, sits between the two principal piazzas of the town of Cles, Corso Dante and Piazza Granda. Its south facing facade, which is somewhat linear in conception, is characterised by some distinguishing features. The entrance portal, in red stone, is rather severe and ogival in shape; the upper fresco, the work of a German painter, depicts two angels with rainbow coloured wings spread out and supporting the coat of arms of the Cles family with two red and silver rampant lions, with forked tails, rather curiously turned towards the right (in other words, to the heraldic left) whereas the original coat of arms would have them turned towards the left (in other words, to the heraldic right). At the base of the mural there is an inscription on stone commemorating the acquisition of the building by the Municipality of Cles in 1677 and also, as already mentioned, its use as the permanent seat of the Councillor of the Valleys from 1679. On the second floor, the four mullioned windows with trefoiled arches of clearly Venetian style, embellished by mouldings machined by diamond tips, together with the central balcony, which is supported by three descending corbels, confer an originality and elegance on the facade. The top of the front is dominated by Guelph battlements and by other defensive features such as small openings and trapdoors which have over time assumed an exquisite ornamental character, so much so that some of them are painted and are not in brick, as they might appear at first glance. Between the defensive and service features there is also a small tower on the northern side, perhaps originally used to accommodate a connecting stairway between the floors, but now occupied by a lift which, being of a good size, makes the building fully accessible without any architectural barriers.
The Interiors

The palazzo consists of five floors above ground. On the ground floor, it is easy to make out the overall structural composition, with the oldest part being the tower house. Once inside, it is easy to see the building materials consisting of grey, white and reddish pebbles, and the widening of the 15th Century facade, organised into three distinct spaces, nowadays with a multi-purpose use where informative material and publications on the building are displayed. In the north western corner, in the area of the original square tower house, is now the so-called ‘Sala della Colonna’ (room of the column) which takes its name from the central column, in bare ashlar stone, on which the cross vault is set. A copy of the Tabula Clesiana sits on a transparent display unit: the bronze sheet (49.9x37.8x0.61cm) which is today conserved in the Castello del Buonconsiglio in Trento, was found in the town of Campi Neri di Cles in 1896 and bears a long inscription in Latin containing the edict with which, on the 15th March in 46 CE., the Emperor Claudius (10 BCE-54 CE.) granted Roman citizenship to Anauni, Sinduni and Tulliasi; that is, to the populations stationed, at that epoch, around the Valleys of Non and Sole. From this place, through an opening in the eastern wall, there is access to a passage which leads to the stairs, in the north eastern section, entirely reconfigured under the most recent reconstruction work in order to make the stratification of the building more comprehensible.

Going up to the first floor, on the right we come to the ‘Sala della Colonna superiore’ (upper room of the column) which replicates, in appearance, the room of the same name on the ground floor. The door in red stone with elegant diamond ashlar working as well as the beautiful solid wood windows and shutters are valuable indeed, while the sides of the partially cemented archway are set on stone corbels. The three small communicating rooms on the southern side, whose planimetric layout is replicated both on the second and third levels of the palazzo, are now used mostly for exhibition purposes. In these spaces, fresco decorations, inspired by the heraldry of the Cles, are still visible: above an imitation tapestry in red and white stripes, which are in essence the colours of the Cles coat of arms, is a border embellished with wheels or stylised flowers in circles around it.

The staircase which leads to the second floor has also been repropor tioned and repositioned, based on the single stairway type which is recognisable in other similar contexts of important Renaissance buildings in our region linked, not by chance, to the Cles family: from the ancestral castle a little to the north of the Anaune capital, to the Magno Palazzo, which is in fact the dwelling built from the foundations, between the walls of the Castello del Buonconsiglio in Trento, on the wishes of the Prince Bishop, Bernardo Cles (1485-1539). The way in which the staircase has been restored has once again provided sufficient space for the ‘Sala Baronale’ (Baronial Hall), also known as the hall ‘del Giudizio’ (of the Judgement) or ‘del Consiglio’ (of the Council), to be returned to being one area, to re-emphasise its multi-purpose use and the different legal and administrative functions which were carried out there: if in ancient times justice was administered here, in more recent times, the Municipal Council of Cles met here. This is the main room of the noble residence and which, more than any other, is described in terms of its general appearance. This can be easily understood from the flamboyant frieze which is visible on the upper part of the walls. It represents a lively interpretation of the so called peopled scroll or inhabited raceme, where a
plant scroll, populated with enchanted prisons, cherubs and fantastical creatures - satyrs and satyress-es, tritons, nereids, two tailed mermaids - hosts divinities and allegorical figures, scrolls bearing moralizing advice in Greek and Latin and, above all, the coats of arms of some of the most important noble families of the Trento-Tyrol region. These are families with which the Cles had ties of kinship and had approved matrimonial alliances. Starting with the east wall and going towards the west one we find, from left to right, the coat of arms of the Firmians just above the window (quartered: the 1st and 4th quarters in silver, with three bands of red, bearing three, two and one upside down crescents in silver; in the blue 2nd and 3rd quarters a deer antler with four brancheseach); that of the Arco family (with three overlapping arches on the fascia and the rope towards the tip of the shield); the Cles and Wolkenstein coats of arms (quartered: silver and red waves in the 1st and 4th quarters; in the 2nd and 3rd in blue, elongated spike on a stake of three pieces of silver on a red countryside); the emblem of the Lodrons (red, with a silver lion, with a tail in a love knot) and, lastly, that of the Trautmannsdorfs (quartered: the 1st and 4th quarters in silver, with three triangles in red one over the other; the 2nd and 3rd cutaway quarters in red and silver with a rose coloured from one to the other rose coloured from one to the other). Above the staircase, meanwhile, there is a sign which is difficult to identify, on the north side, above the large coupled window restored to 16th Century dimensions in the last refurbishment, and is that of the Völs-Colonna (quartered: in the 1st quarter in black, with a silver band, carrying a Maltese cross in red and in the 4th in black, with a silver band, carrying a red rose; the 2nd and 3rd quarters in red, with a silver pillar).

One has the feeling here of being in a truly imposing and majestic room and it must also have been impressive during the epoch of Aliprando and Anna, providing the homeowners and their guests with great pleasure as well as being a sight to behold. The most important wall is the southern one, with the insignia of the palazzo owners, in a prime location, to the sides of the female allegorical figure in the middle. She has a partially uncovered breast, a pinkish-orange dress and strings of pearls embellishing her hair while at her side a flickering flame burns. It concerns the personification of Friendship, alluded to in the motto “QVAM FAVSTE NIL FICTVM IN AVRVM SEMPER IDEM” (transl. “Fortunately nothing false blends with the gold which always remains the same”). Without any precise literary sources and findings, the sentence would indeed suggest friendship, understood as love towards the spouse and neighbour, solid and constant even if put to the test, just like the gold which in the flames neither alters nor merges with other metals but rather acquires greater brightness. Also contributing to the celebration of the Cles lineage and, in particular, the conjugal harmony between the august spouses, Aliprando and Anna, parents of twelve children, are the female divinities at the edges of the wall: to the left, Diana, with a crescent moon on her forehead, intently caressing a pure white greyhound, to the right, Abundance, bejewelled and with a cornucopia overflowing with fruit, flowers and sheaves of corn who announces, with writing on a scroll, that she has settled in the house of the barons of Cles (“HIC DEGAM” meaning “I will spend my life here”). The lavish decoration in this room takes you by surprise with its over-abundance. As well as the freize we have just described, there are geometrical motifs and red and white flowers covering much of the walls as well as the wooden ceiling, with graceful pet-
tenelle - namely, small panels, also in wood, decorated with monochrome animals and incorporated in the space between two beams at the top of the southern wall. Such treatment, which addresses every detail – even the most minor one – presupposes the work of a leading artist: an artist who answers to the name of Marcello Fogolino (1483/1488-doc.1550/1558) from Vicenza, who was active in his native city, Venice and Pordenone and then in Trentino after being banned from the Venetian region, together with his brother and partner, Matteo, following the homicide of a barber from Friuli in 1527. During that year he is also confirmed as being in Trento, where he became court painter of the Prince Bishop Bernardo Cles and his successor, Cristoforo Madruzzo (1512-1578). Fogolino worked in the bishop’s residence – the Magno Palazzo – as well as in numerous aristocratic residences of the south Tyrolean capital, its outskirts and the surrounding valleys: from Palazzo Firmian in Trento to the Torre Franca in Mattarello, from Castel Valer in Tassullo (in the municipality of Ville d’Anaunia) to Castel Cles. Whilst working in ateliers in the Trentino region, Fogolino also engaged in intensive espionage activity on behalf of the Republic of San Marco, to the detriment of the ecclesiastical principality where he had taken shelter. During those years, his vast artistic output emerged from all over the region and was certainly carried out from a genuine studio. The équipe led by him brought to the Val di Non the sparks of that Renaissance splendour that Bernardo Cles had wished to imprint on the capital of his ecclesiastical principality, transforming it from a medieval city into a centre of European rank, worthy of hosting the big Council of the Church which would be held only some years after the death of the prelate of the House of Cles.

The three rooms to the south, which are accessed from the Sala del Consiglio, have been designed as intercommunicating rooms of equal size and importance. The only completely frescoed room is the central ‘Salotto del balcone’, in which Aliprando is exalted, dominating the room by means of a cryptogram, or a mysterious encrypted text, on the north and south walls, where the letters “ALIPR” (above the door which opens onto the balcony) and “ANDUS” (above the entrance to the hall) respectively stand out. These elegant gilded letters, which together form the name of the Baron, are accompanied, in a tightly entangled mass of plant shoots, by the heraldic Cles lions – red and white – and by goats, wolves, satyrs and strange dragons with the body of a dog, identical ones of which are also found in the ‘Study’ of the palazzo of the Magnificent Community of Cavalese in Val di Fiemme, a building whose reconstruction was commissioned by Bernardo Cles between 1537 and 1539 and decorated by the same team of painters co-ordinated by Fogolino. The head of Medusa in the centre of the west wall is also evocative of Aliprandino, echoed by, on the wall opposite, a plaque with the year 1543. In fact the Gorgon, alluding to careful prudence, armed and ready to respond in case of necessity and provocation, is reminiscent of the nobleman of the House of Cles who could easily be recognised in a similar guise.

In the adjoining ‘Stanza dell’Erker’, decorations only appear on the small area of the overhang or rather erker, jutting out of the main body of the building and supported, externally, by mighty stone corbels. In the lunettes, the allegories of the Seasons unfold: there is a fresco of Spring, young blonde and flanked by two cupids of a very Fogolinian flavour, towards the south; towards the west Ceres and Bacchus allude respectively to Summer and Autumn; towards the north is Winter,
in the guise of an ancient bearded man who warms himself at the fire in a well illustrated domestic interior. On the cross vault are featured the images of the Moon and the Sun, which determine the course of the seasons. The face of the Sun is accompanied by the writing “COSSI RISPLENDE D’VN CORTESE IL NOME” “(Thus shines the name of a courtly gentleman) whilst that of the Moon is accompanied by the words “SOL LA TVA LVCE L’OMBRA MIA REMOVE” (only your light takes away my shade). These frescoes can be attributed to an artistic figure who, although different to Marcello Fogolino, nonetheless worked in parallel, both chronologically and stylistically with the Venetian maestro. Recent-ly, and fairly persuasively, it has been suggested that these frescoes can be attributed to the Veronese painter, Antonio da Vendri (1485/1489-1555), who is documented as having been in Trentino from the 1530s where evidence shows he worked alongside Fogolino, in the workshop of Castel Selva at Levico, or to another painter very close to Vendri. As regards the remaining parts of the second floor, which come from within the perimeter of the ancient tower house, they consist of two rooms without any wall decora-tion and of a vestibule which must have led to the private rooms on the floor above and linked via the staircase which originated in the internally decorated space where the tower was. In the first two, the remains of windows and panneling from the prisons have been reassembled, the sur-faces of which show signs, inscriptions, decorations of various types and caricature like drawings, engraved or outlined on the wooden boards with the means that were available to the detainees who, according to legend, would even have written in blood in some cases. Apart from these gory details, the presence of this evidence leads us to think that, amongst the convicts, there were people who were well-educated and of a certain social class, imprisoned behind double doors with bolts, latches and peepholes secured from the outside.

A narrow rectangular shaped barely-lit passage, the ‘Vestibule’ has walls decorated with frescoes of red and white bands in the lower part and, high up, by a frieze of grotesques on a yellow background. Between the tritons and the plant tendrils of the frieze, subdivided on the four walls, runs the Latin inscrip-tion “HAC CASTE ITUR RELIGIONE” (transl.: “with religion, you live here in purity”) which calls people to live in devout moderation.

If the rooms on the second floor had a representational function, gorgeously decorated with clear celebratory intent, the third floor comprised instead the private apartment of Aliprand Cles and his spouse, Anna Wolkenstein. Although it had already been carrying out this function for decades, it was in the Napoleonic era that this level became definitively used as a prison and its rooms were subdivided into eight dark cells, lined with thick larch floorboards under which valuable frescoes remained hidden and incredibly well preserved, until the recent restoration works which were conclud-ed in the Spring of 2009. They have now re-emerged together with the original floors in beaten lime: exceptional finds which enrich the image and perception of these rooms. The room most towards the east, between the three which clearly make up the block of the facade, has been called ‘Room of the Gods’, because of the Olympian divinities portrayed on the border around the top of the walls. Here, marked at the sides by imitation cornices with marble panels, runs a frieze of twisting racemes populated by plump cherubs who are in no way frightened by the monstrous creatures - goats with tails and enormous hens - which surround
them. They climb over the twisted branches then dangle, like little Tarzans, above the backs of the swift greyhounds which threaten the nimble fleeing hares. It all stands out against a luminous dotted yellow background to great chromatic effect. The true protagonists of the decoration are, however, Mars, in a rest position, with a spear in his right hand, armour, helmet and sparkling shin guards which give off a realistic flash of metal; Diana, symbol of disciplined and athletic femininity, who avoids all male contact, staying in the woods with her band of Nymphs; and Jupiter deep in thought, with the inevitable eagle at his side. For reasons of symmetry it is probable that, opposite Diana on the western wall that was demolished to create the above-mentioned cells and which has now been re-erected to divide the ‘Room of the Gods’ from the next room, another feminine divinity was portrayed, possibly Ceres or Venus.

The iconographic scheme described above was one which particularly emphasized feminine virtues and therefore, more or less explicitly, those of the baroness Anna. It is she after all who is celebrated in the adjoining room: la ‘Stanza di Anna’, so-called because, on the imitation tapestry with elegant red and white geometric decorations which include the rampant lions of the Cles coat of arms – red on a white background (those of the walls to the south and north) and white on a red background (those of the west wall) – the name of the noblewoman appears frequently. The upper part of the frieze is divided into boxes in plain coppery red on a blue background, framed by robust herms with the faces of satyrs. The corners of the room are reinforced by some clipeate faces which, on the one hand are reminiscent of Roman art but on the other have a sixteenth century feel to them. The principal box, on the north wall, is a clear example of secular imagery, depicting a stately procession on the landscape background just mentioned, where the figures on horseback participate in a Hunt with a falcon, a favourite pastime in the courtly world. At the centre of the scene, the amazon with a plumed helmet advancing gracefully on her steed led by a groom and the gentleman next to her whose bearded face she turns towards, must be Anna Wolkenstein and Aliprandi Cles.

The box on the wall opposite, on the other hand, depicts a mythological episode told by Ovid in The Metamorphoses. It is of the The killing of the Calydonian boar by Meleager and his hunting companions, amongst whom is the beautiful and reckless virgin huntress, Atalanta, who was the first to reach with her dart the fearsome wild animal which for some time had been devastating the Calydonian forests. Also at Castel Cles, in the small second floor room overlooking the courtyard, frescoes are conserved of eight scenes inspired by Ovid. The scene depicted reworks a composition which can be traced to Giulio Romano (c.1499-1546) and the same goes for the Battle between the Horatii and Curiatii (west wall), fairly close to prints inspired by Giulio Romano. Similar wall paintings, which are like those on the second floor and perhaps even more so, give a good portrayal of the sophisticated culture of the owners and of the people who gravitated around their small court, who were clearly not strangers to the sophisticated imagery chosen.

The choice of decoration of the last room in the south west corner was fairly unusual: the ‘Room of Apollo’. Here, crowning the usual tapestry painted in alternate red and white bands, embellished with geometric arabesques, is a frieze where the masculine and feminine characters, ending in racemes, amongst giant insects, serpents and strange birds, are...
arranged symmetrically at the sides of three imitation marble classical busts, accompanied by inscriptions. The busts represent Apollo, god of music and poetry, patron of the arts; Geta (189-212 CE.), son of Septimius Severus (146-211 CE.) and brother of Caracalla (188-217 CE.), with whom he was co-Emperor of Rome before being killed; and Agrippina the Younger (15-59 CE.), ambitious and calculating spouse of the Emperor Claudius, on whom he managed to exert a powerful influence paving the way for his son Nero (37-68 CE.) in the succession to the Imperial throne.

Relations between these last two individuals from antiquity are somewhat elusive, both fated to damnatio memoriae and Cles, where they are – perhaps – represented because they were put under the protection of Apollo. There is no doubt, however, about Aliprando and Anna’s knowledge and familiarity with the history of Rome and the events which happened there, even with the less well known events which may appear rather obscure in the eyes of the modern visitor.

On this floor, are also the ‘Vestibule’, which is fairly spacious and with an east-west elevation, and two more internal rooms: the ‘Stanza del Camino’ (Chimney room) and the ‘Stanza del torricino’ (Tower room). In these three rooms, a very interesting cycle of as many as 34 scenes on an Old Testament biblical subject has come to light, divided from an illusionistic portico with columns and where people are dressed according to the fashion of the mid-16th Century with the dominant colours used being green-blues, browns and other cold hues, notably in landscapes visible at the shoulders of protagonists, and generally in the foreground. This is a one off in the context of Renaissance residences in Trentino, as much for the rarity of such a figurative choice as for the extraordinary scale of the sequence of scenes depicted. Taken from the Books of Genesis, Exodus and Numbers, they are the transposition to fresco of the woodcuts of the German engraver Hans Sebald Beham (1500-1550) accompanying the volume Biblicae Historiae, artifiosissimis picturis effigiaeae, published in Frankfurt in 1533 for the Lutheran Christian Egenolph (1502-1555), and are provided with captions, with the citations and references to the sacred text drafted in German rather than in Latin. This is another unusual fact, especially during the years when the frescoes were executed: years under the lee of the Council of Trento, which would have stipulated the supremacy of the Latin version of the Bible at the expense of the editions in national languages.

The possibility cannot be ruled out that, in these rooms, which were more private than those dedicated to public use on the second floor and therefore regularly used by Aliprando and Anna for their family life, their own unorthodox inclinations and tastes found expression which, in those days, had taken root elsewhere in the episcopal principality of Trento, amongst the better off. Meanwhile, the Trentino prince bishop, Cristoforo Madruzzo, succeeded the Cles in 1539 to lead the diocese and committed himself personally to defending the use of the vernacular in translations of the Holy Scriptures during the work of the Council in 1546.

A very evocative, and not fully understood, chapter in history and art, which makes the voyage of discovery of Palazzo Assessorile and its many attractions all the more fascinating.
Casa da Marta
Municipality of Predaia, fraction of Coredo

Coredo, today a fraction of the Municipality of Predaia, is an important centre of Val di Non, and a panoramic balcony overlooking it. In the oldest part of the town there are numerous buildings of considerable historical and architectural value, the ancient walls of which have acquired an unmistakable charm in the course of the centuries. One of the most significant of these old houses with a strong identity for the local community is undoubtedly Casa da Marta, in the centre of the town.

Its history begins in the Middle Ages, when the building faced the late-Gothic church of San Rocco, demolished in 1948, and is connected to the noble family of the Coreth counts: a family whose genealogy is very complex to trace and that originates with Oluradino (approx. 1150-1217), to whom the first written attestation of the territory of Coredo, dating to 1170, can be linked. His descendants erected two castles in the area: Castel Coreth or Coredo, of which documentary mention dates to 1291, built on a small hill at the eastern edge of the village near today’s cemetery and the church of Our Lady of the Assumption and of the Invention of the Cross (Italian di Santa Maria Assunta e dell’Invenzione della Croce), and Bragher Castle or Schloss Bragher which, among the best preserved of the entire Alpine arc, still rises majestically on a rock guarded by deep ravines on the old road that leads from Coredo to Taio (again in the Municipality of Predaia). It owes its original name to the eponymous builder Bracherio, or Bragherio Coreth, of whom there is no attestations until after his death, which occurred before 1266. In 1286 his niece Faidia married Enrico Rospaz, the natural son of Simone I Thun († 1314), in Bragher Castle, and a portion of the family manor became possession of her husband as part of her dowry. With further transactions, the heirs of Bragherio, in 1321 and 1322, entirely ceded the castle founded by their ancestor to the Thun and returned to Coredo.

It is a common opinion that some members of the noble lineage settled in Casa da Marta, once known as “Casa Coreda”. In the second half of
the fifteenth century, Michele Coreth lived here, among others, who was the episcopal “Massaro” or bailiff of the Noce valleys in the nineties of this century and in 1505 he was already dead. At that time the building, certainly erected much earlier according to the information provided by Federico Schuler, remembered as revolutionary and resident here in 1336, must have been composed of only the northern portion, as suggested by the distribution of spaces, and in particular, by the spaces opening on that side, all of reduced size and enclosed by sober and essential stone frames.

During the sixteenth century the factory was enlarged and was equipped with the south façade, erected according to renaissance construction methods and styles. Today’s global aspect is marked by successive interventions connected to changes, also radical ones, in the intended uses of the building. In the following centuries, in fact, the building changed its voca-
tion, progressively being transformed from a noble residence into country house.

This evolution took place starting mainly in the eighteenth century. In 1688 the building had been partially given to Giacomo Antonio or Antonio Sicher (born in 1662), son of Giovanni Antonio called “Cadorino” (1625-1703), most likely also because of the kinship between the Coredo and Sicher families, which dated to the first half of the century – February 27 1615, the Countess Caterina Coreth, who was born in 1582 and was daughter of Antonio († around 1605) and Margherita Heydorf of Castel Ossana, married Bartolomeo, son of Matteo Sicher. During the eighteenth century, Vincenzo Antonio Rizzardi (1738-1807), the factor that managed farmers and workers employed by the Sicher and Coreth, bought the entire building which owes its current name to his wife, Marta Pezzini (1749-1817) from Amblar (a fraction of the Municipality of Amblar-Don).

Casa da Marta was recognized as being of particular historical-artistic interest already in 1922 and, after that, in 1949, and remained property of the Rizzardi until the beginning of the seventies of the twentieth century, when it became the property first of private individuals and later of the local rural bank, from which the Municipality of Coredo bought it in 1992. The public body, with the help of the Autonomous Province of Trento, promoted a rigorous conservative restoration between 1995 and 1998. Its rooms now host cultural events, temporary exhibitions and also two museums: the Ethnographic Museum of Farming Culture of Anaunia and the Museum of Popular and Folkloristic Customs from the Around the World.

The first, of significant documentary quality, is located in the basement. It consists of a rich and varied permanent exhibition of past daily use objects of the inhabitants of the Val di Non, with special attention to domestic life, work in the fields and local crafts. The second, located on the first floor, includes a noteworthy collection of costumes and ornamental accessories typical of the popular traditions of the most diverse corners of the earth. It is an important donation of the Mondial Folk event, which was an interethnic fair held from 2000 for over a decade almost yearly, which spread from Coredo and reached different locations in the Trentino Alto Adige region with performances of folk groups from all over the world, allowing people to relive emotions that today can be found, at least in part, in the spaces of Casa da Marta.
The Exterior

The building, which is of great value, is one of the main examples of Renaissance architecture in Val di Non, where elements typical of the courtly tradition coexist and mingle with others of more rustic extraction. The oldest parts of Casa da Marta date to the 14th century, and have undergone expansion and various renovations over the centuries. The most important interventions date to the sixteenth and to the nineteenth centuries, when the southern front and the Blockbau structure to the west were added respectively.

Of a substantially quadrangular plan, the construction is now made up of a basement and three floors entirely above ground, and an attic. Its façade provides a remarkable variety of architectural details. In the northern part full spaces prevail clearly on empty spaces. Here the ground level has been raised to that of the first floor, connected to the road via Marta through the characteristic “pont” (bridge) that leads to a large portal with square blocks in light stone and bush-hammered surface, with a keystone on which the outline of a shield is visible, with no further heraldic connotations, accompanied on the top by the date 1718 and below by the initials “A S”, most likely the initials of Antonio or Giacomo Antonio Sicher (1691-1754), son of the already mentioned Giacomo Antonio. The eastern front, rather simple, is paced by the regular rhythm of the openings: the window in the basement is square and covered by gratings, while the windows of the first and second levels are rectangular and with cymatium moulding. The southern façade is certainly the most imposing: the east and west corners are covered by rustic ashlar, and it is decorated with sixteenth century frescos; on the whole it determines the very image of Casa da Marta.

At the basement level (first level), the façade is marked, on the sides, by two rectangular windows, not very large, rather high from the ground, equipped with grating and elegantly moulded stone sections; in central position there is a portal with an archivolt which reads the date 1658, carved in the wood, which marks the year the frame was constructed, not the year the jamb and the architrave vaulted door were installed, whose structure, with all evidence of the sixteenth century, is composed of pink and white limestone. On the keystone there is a carved coat of arms, representing three mountains surmounted by a cross. Although connected to the coat of arms of the Crociferi (azure with three silver cross pattee over three mountains, the central one taller [alias azure with three green mountains surmounted by three golden crosses]), it seems much more similar to that of the Hermits of San Girolamo of the Fiesole Congregation (azure, with three mountains surmounted by a red cross), established in Fiesole by Carlo dei conti Guidi di Montegranelli (approx. 1330ca.-1417) of the Third Order of Saint Francis, approved by Pope Innocent VII (1336-1406, pope from 1404), which followed the rule of St. Augustine and was finally suppressed, despite its flourishing, by Clement IX (1600-1669, pope from 1667) in 1668.

On the mezzanine level (second level), a graceful little balcony is placed at the centre, and in line with the portal and the small window with grating above it: this balcony is the only detail providing a projecting movement to the surface of the wall. With a parapet made of slender turned wooden columns, it has a walking surface and supporting corbels in stone. A double colour pattern similar to that of the entrance door can be found in the stone elements that make up the portal that gives on to the terrace, articulated precisely in bevelled pinkish jamb and lighter corbels that, embellished by a diamond-like effect on the inside, support an equally light architrave, above which stands a lunette in smooth stone with a stronger pinkish nuance. On the level of the balcony and symmetrically arranged on its sides are four round arched windows. The windows placed to the left of the façade are almost all the same, inserted in the front part of the impost, and are decorated with paterae and semi-paterae inside which are flowering corollas
and semi-corollas, respectively. Those on the right, both marked by a regular series of notches that, carved in the thickness of the stone, cover the arch, have different imposts: one with fluting and ropework moulding, while the other is characterized by chequered elements and cabled moulding.

The first floor (third level) and the entire façade is characterized by a beautiful central triple arched window composed of squared side lesenes with capitals with ropework moulding and median columns with circular cross-section with a base sitting, at the corners, on leaves and capital with echinus and four volutes in the angular caulicules. As for the other windows, the arches are rounded. On the right and on the left of the triple arched window, two single-arched windows made up of simple elements emphasize the harmonious distribution of the openings as well as the balance of the compositional system marked by a strong symmetry.

Finally, on the second floor (fourth level) there are some curious small-sized holes underneath which are some small corbels decorated in red and yellow: they were dovecotes, and the corbels’ function was to facilitate birds to take flight and to return to the shelter; this function is confirmed also by the adjacent frescoes that depict pigeons.

The frescoes, which can be appreciated mostly in the upper part of the building, from the first floor to the level of the dovecotes, provide interesting and clarifying information to better understand the development of the entire prospektus and the evolution of the building during its history. The band of hanging arches which, as a form of cornice, must have once served to delimit the front, recalls the original gabled roof that was replaced, with the rural conversion of the building, with a four-pitch roof.

Most of the façade is covered with a faux rusticated ashlar motif, of a pinkish-white colour and with joints carved into the plaster.

As for the wall paintings that frame the single arched and triple arched windows, they clearly serve as a surrogate for architectural interventions. This is the case of the frames of the single windows: the single arched window of the left has a saw-tooth frame, while the one on the right has a frame that imitates sectioned imposts with central clipei, the median triple arched window is framed with a red and yellow chequered pattern that simulates, together with the red medallions in the spandrels of the round arches, perhaps once hosting old-fashioned profiles, typical solutions of Venetian architecture, to be found in the lagoon as much as on the mainland. This motivates the historiographical tradition that generally defines Casa da Marta as having a “Venetian style”. The similarities with the Venetian rendering of the proto-Renaissance and Renaissance vocabulary lead one to formulate the hypothesis of an intervention, here in Coredo, of workers geographically and culturally connected to the territories of the Serenissima.

The remaining frescoed motifs seem to respond to essentially decorative needs: this applies both to the curious bas-reliefs made up of delicate plant racemes of the side openings, and to the geometric details, the pomegranates, the pumpkins, the stylized roses and the schematic flowers inscribed in circumferences that embellish the three arched window. The latter is also supported by an expanded funnel support, also painted and defined by phytomorphic elements in the form of a trumpet, inside which a large horse-head shield stands out with a light field and a red cross, with two flagella and a paternoster, that is, a rosary. Although literature provides no indications, is not to be excluded that also such an emblem has its own precise value and must be referred – at least as a working hypothesis – to the Fiesole congregation, whose emblem marks the entrance portal at the basement level.

Also, the meaning of the two faces barely visible above the arch of the single arched window on the right is not clear: one, perhaps a female face, covered by a cap, has today almost completely disappeared; the other, framed by long thick hair, has very delicate and masculine features.

Such frescoes, a precious testimony of profane
decoration conveniently integrated into the architectural organism, contribute to make Casa da Marta one of the major examples of a Renaissance civil construction in Val di Non. The raising of the level of the eaves and the modification of the original cover, which in the nineteenth century was in the shape of a pavilion and rested on a sturdy wooden belt that, interposed between the walls and the roof, allowed the ventilation of the attic (which was used for storing hay and food and as storage space in general), renders the house an equally emblematic case of a noble complex totally readapted to a farmhouse. In this sense, the large barn on the west side of the residence should also be interpreted: its stone base that serves as the base for the overlying massive septum construction formed by wooden beams (Blockbau), demonstrates well the typical building methods of rustic architecture in the Anaunia region.

The profound changes undergone by the building during renewal interventions – carried out to meet the different needs of the various owners in the course of the centuries – complicate the description of the original complex and of its interiors. Restructuring, alterations and changes of use have caused many of the original features of Casa da Marta to be lost, and restorations carried out in the 1990s and early 2000s were able to recover them only partially.

The overall structure of the living room in the basement, with a central column and groin vault, dates to the first half of the sixteenth century. Cutting the old vaults without a precise criterion, the room was divided at the beginning of the nineteenth century (the date 1802 is engraved on the above mentioned column) to create additional spaces for the storage of hay, to create cellars and barns: on the floor of the room on the left of the entrance the drainage channel used for slurry was still visible before the last restorations and, near the west wall, the manger in stone and wood. Today these rooms house the Ethnographic Museum of Farming Culture of Anaunia, inaugurated in 2011 and originating from the rich private collection of Darío Widmann, which includes various objects and tools for everyday use, documents of life and agro-silvo-pastoral work of the past, restored and exhibited with labels that in addition to providing the name of the objects, briefly describe their history and use. In addition to this information, illustrations and photographs explain how these artefacts were used, also illustrating the traditions and social customs associated with them. The objects are arranged in “islands”, so as to respect and evoke the specific activities of the past: from the old economic activities of Coredo and the valley, such as agriculture and crafts, to school, religious devotion and emigration. Among the items exhibited there are also some ‘relics’ of the ancient furnishings of Casa da Marta such as the worn larch boards set next to others in fir where the degradation process was stopped using iron nails.

The upper floors of the building are accessed through the stairs that today stand in the block of the nineteenth-century barn where an elevator has also been placed that makes the entire building free of architectural barriers and occupies the space of the old toilet facilities (pit latrine).

The mezzanine floor is the one that best reflects the organization at the time of the construction of Casa da Marta. It extends through the whole length from north to south with a central corridor and a vaulted ceiling. Along it there are six architrave doors made of carved stone and datable to the first half of the sixteenth century, which give onto many rooms, distributed regularly to the right and the left. The doors are different and more or less simple; those of the corner rooms to the south-east and south-west recall the layout of the portal that gives onto the balcony and have corbels decorated with notched and diamond-like mouldings. Particularly interesting is the room in the south-east corner, its pe-
The perimeter walls are covered with wooden boards, according to the typical characteristics of a "stube", and the geometric-floral decorations in tempera, in the centre of the ceiling, are surrounded by a sinuous mixtilinear frame in stucco.

This is the so-called "grandparents’ room" (Italian "Stanza dei nonni") where it is possible to admire some local and Italian traditional clothes with very shapes, fabrics, colours and decorative motifs different from those displayed in the other rooms on the same floor, where dozens of costumes, jewellery, musical instruments are on display, together with objects and various ornaments belonging to the folk customs of the various nations of the world.

The considerable and colourful collection belongs to the Associazione Culturale Trentino Mondialfolk, which was born as a branch of the local folk group of “Lacchè” and with the contribution of various associations and institutions, and constitutes the legacy of the homonymous event started in Coredo in 2000 and later extended to the whole provincial territory. The event is centred around dance and folklore but also and above all the reciprocal enrichment deriving from the encounter and exchange of diverse experiences, promoting, as is stated by the motto of the association, "unity through the spontaneous exchange of cultures".

The stairs lead to the first floor, where the large hall of the triple arched window opens up and where today civil marriages are held in a very picturesque setting.

Its state of conservation was partly compromised by subsequent interventions and the quality of the room is therefore lower compared to the floor underneath. Despite this, its internal organization is modelled on that of the floor below: the room to the south-east has the same wooden panelling divided by thirteen columns with capitals and a coffered ceiling, also in wood; in the central section, in the shape of an octagon, a cross and the initials IHS, the Latin transcription of the abbreviation of the name of Jesus in Greek (ἹΗΟΥΣ), to be linked perhaps to the churchmen of the Sicher and Rizzardi families who resided here, such as Don Celestino Rizzardi (1819-1888), dean of Fassa and Taio (today a fraction of the Municipality of Predaia). In the remaining rooms on this floor, as well as on the second floor, now totally reconfigured, events and exhibitions of various kinds are periodically held.
A natural terrace overlooking the lake of Santa Giustina – the large artificial reservoir formed with the construction of the imposing, homonymous dam completed in 1951 – and the entire Val di Non, the village of Revo spreads over the great spur that extends from the slopes of Mount Ozolo towards the lake basin, between the Pescara torrent and the Rio Novella. Of remote origins, as demonstrated by the archaeological findings in the area, inhabited since the Copper Age, in the village of Revo there are numerous testimonies of its illustrious historical past.

Revo has always been a cultural centre of “Terza Sponda Anaune” (transl. 3th shore of Val di Non), and boasts numerous buildings and prestigious residences, such as Casa Thun-Martini, now Ziller and Zuech, and Casa Campia. The first, with its unique frescoes that date to the beginning of the seventeenth century, is one of the best examples of a domus picta, located in the Noce valleys, and was built between the end of the sixteenth century and the first decades of the seventeenth century, expression of the patronage of two exponents of the main aristocratic lineages of the region: the spouses Giovanni Arbogasto Thun (1565-1633) and Giuditta d’Arco (1564 approx.-1629), whose first husband was the noble Carlo Guglielmo d’Arsio and Vasio (1540 approx.-1588) from the Val di Non, who died the same year of the marriage – in 1588 – on the battlefields in Flanders. Among the most interesting aristocratic dwellings of the valley, Casa Campia is located not far from the main square of Revò, on the edge of Via IV Novembre, i.e. the local stretch of the motorway 42 of Tonale and Mendola that leads to the town of Fondo and from here to the passes of the Palade and the Mendola, and then descends towards the Alto Adige valley floors. Purchased by the Municipality in 1989 and entirely restored in the following years, it was the property of the noble Maffei family for centuries, who probably restored it and expanded it from a pre-existing construction assigned by tradition to the nobles Campi of Cles, from which it derived its peculiar name of “Campia”. Active in notary and trade, the Maffei of Revò, who claimed to be descendents of a certain Alphonsus Mediolanensis, who lived in Bologna in 1036, were originally from Valtellina (SO) and, like other inhabitants of the same area, of Comasco and of the region of Bergamo, and came to Trentino in the sixteenth century. According to the eighteenth-century family tree preserved among
the furnishings of the house, the family history starts with a Maffeo de Maffei “a Ganda Vallis Malenci oriundus Bononiae”, that is Ganda in Valmalenco in Lombardy (SO), native of Bologna, who in 1558 divided his belongings among his children. From his eldest son Pietro il Vecchio, the branches of Cles derived, still thriving today, and the one of Revò.

One of his sons, Andrea, who was a merchant at the beginning of the seventeenth century, in fact settled in the territory of the parish of Revò, and died here in 1632 at the age of ninety. His son Jacopo (1590-1668) worked in the field of trade, and he invested his earnings in land, thus laying the foundations of the subsequent economic fortunes of the Maffei who, now owners of land also outside the boundaries of Val di Non, had possessions also in the Merano area in South Tyrol (BZ), around to the centres of Andriano and Gargazzone. The same Jacopo erected the family tomb in the local curial church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel (Italian Santa Maria del Carmelo) in 1653, the epigraph of which mentions the Valtellina origins of the family.

In the space of a few generations, the descendants of “Maffeus de Maffeis” had therefore become well integrated in the local territory and had established themselves to such an extent that they were elevated to the rank of nobles of the Holy Roman Empire. Together with the noble dignity conferred on them, in November 1657, on behalf of the prince-elector, duke of Bavaria and imperial vicar Ferdinand Maria of the House of Wittelsbach (1636-1679), the Maffei also obtained a new coat of arms (truncated: in the 1st gold with black imperial double-headed eagle, surmounted by an imperial crown; in the 2nd azure with three golden beaded silver roses placed in bar [alias: silver bar with three natural roses]; crest: trunk of man without arms, with azure garments and hood of the same colour, with a silver bend, carrying on his chest the three silver roses of the shield).

However, it is between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries that the most important exponents of the family lived: Jacopo Antonio (1745-1806), Giovanni (1791-1859) and Francesco (documented 1771-1805). The first, born in Revò, son of the Doctor of law Giovanni Francesco and Maria Khuen, after completing secondary school studied between Trento and Merano, then went to Innsbruck and after that to Vienna, to attend university courses in philosophy and law. In the Austrian capital he received the post of substitute professor of philosophy, which he was forced to renounce due to his father’s infirmity. Returning home, following the premature death of his father, he devoted himself to the care of the family’s possessions, also offering legal advice and, above all, becoming passionate about the historical events of the Val di Non and Trentino. A member, from 1768, of the Accademia Roveretana degli Agiati, he was also a member of the Academy of Sciences of Mantua and of the Universities of Brescia and Treviso. Jurist and scholar, he was a learned epigrapher, and composed various inscriptions, both in Latin and in vernacular, on the occasion of certain occurrences or historical anniversaries. He was married to the noble Marianna de Wisenegg from Bolzano, and died in April 1806 in Revò. Here, on the outer wall of the apse of the church of Santo Stefano, his tombstone is still visible. His name, however, is linked, in particular, to his editorial endeavours: in 1805 his Periodi storici e topografia delle Valli di Non e Sole nel Tirolo meridionale (Historical periods and topography of the Val di Non and Val di Sole in southern Tyrol) was published in Rovereto. The volume contains a detailed account of facts and data as well as a chronology of the events that occurred in these lands from antiquity up to the author’s time, including a geographical and descriptive itinerary of the Noce valleys.

Giovanni, son of Jacopo Antonio, studied first in Merano and Trento and then moved to Padua and Pavia to pursue his academic studies. In 1812 he interrupted his university career and was enrolled in Napoleon’s Italian Royal Guards of Honour, reaching the rank of quartermaster and later first lieutenant of cavalry. In the last campaigns of the Viceroy of Italy Eugenio Beauharnais (1781-1824), in which he took part, he earned the title of Knight of the Order of the Iron Crown.

His portrait on canvas, which depicts him in uniform, with the sword and the military decorations pinned to his chest, is part of the municipal collections of Revò. With the fall of Bona parte, he retired to his native village, where he occupied for a long time the role of head of the municipality and took care of the family farm. In 1848, following the turmoil that affected the major European capitals as well as the Habsburg territories, he was delegated to represent the Val di Non and Val di Sole and their demands to the imperial Diet convened by Ferdinand I of Austria (1793-1875, emperor from 1835 to 1848), during which, together with the rest
of the Trentino delegation, he demanded that Trentino be united with the Lombardy-Veneto region, or that administrative autonomy from the German Tyrol be granted. This intense activity carried out in the two years 1848-1849 did not produce the expected results and Maffei abandoned active politics, withdrawing to private life. In 1858, a year before his death, he obtained from the French consul the medal of Saint Helena which Napoleon, on his death bed, had ordered be given to his “companions of glory”.

Finally, Francesco Maffei, one of the noble founders of the agricultural tradition of Revò, and, more generally, of the Anaune area, was a prominent figure in the family and valley affairs between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Francesco, in fact, not only imported new varieties of fruit trees, but also held the office of “mayor general” of the Val di Non and Val di Sole in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Francesco, in 1858, a year before his death, he obtained from the French consul the medal of Saint Helena which Napoleon, on his death bed, had ordered be given to his “companions of glory”.

Although generally it was uninhabited during the nineteenth century, Casa Campia always remained the heritage of the noble Maffei family, from generation to generation and up to the

The Exterior

The plan of Casa Campia is not regular and it is probably the result of the subsequent enlargements of an original central nucleus that is of an almost rectangular shape. The architectural complex is spread over three floors above ground on the southwest side, while, due to the slope of the land on which it stands, on the northern side it only has two floors, to which the attic is added. The northern prospect, on Via IV Novembre, is marked by elegant windows with stone frames of good quality: those on the lower floor are protected by internal railings, while those on the upper floor are still the beautiful original ones with lead-glass. At the centre of the ground floor stands the round arch portal in square ashlers and with a keystone on which there is a shield bearing the year 1669 and the inscription “P M”, which stands for Pietro Maffei, son of the already mentioned Jacopo di Andrea.

He was born in Revò in 1621 and became notary (his deeds dating to the twenty-year period 1644-1664 are kept in the family archive, donated to the Municipality of Revò). If it is very unlikely that the date 1669 should be related to the construction of the
building from its foundations, indeed it could more probably refer to the conclusion of a first phase of restorations promoted by Maffei. As anticipated, in fact, Casa Campia was built on pre-existing structures and its current structure is the result of successive enlargement and restructuring interventions, mostly documented by chronological indications inserted in precise points of the structures. The oldest inscription is in fact 1669, followed closely by the one on the sundial on the edge of the window pointing north-west on the fourth floor of the turret, completed in 1671. On the eastern side another year is engraved: 1736, it is the year the portal was placed on the ground level. Moving up along the façade, on the same axis, we see the ovate that contains the bas-relief representing a half-length Virgin, her head veiled and surrounded by twelve stars, according to the iconographic model of the Immaculate Virgin Mary. The style of the work suggests it may be attributed to the sculptor Pietro Antonio Barbacovi (1693ca.-1763) of Taio (today a fraction of the Municipality of Predaia). The Marian icon is very close to a large fresco with a sundial surmounted by the Maffei family’s coat of arms with a heraldic crest.

On the sides of the carved medallion and the sundial, arranged with regular symmetry, the single-lancet windows of the two main floors are visible, protected on the first level, by railings. The railings of one window, close to the protrusion of the angular tower, has a curved profile in the inferior part: an eighteenth-century style that can also be found in other buildings of the Val di Non, which allowed to lean out of the window. The same type of hunched railings recurs on the front north side, in correspondence with the southern section added during the eighteenth century. This façade, now surrounded by a lovely Italian garden with hedges, is decorated by an elegant double overlapping loggia: on the ground level an impressive round arch is surmounted by an encased parapet on which two arches rest supported by square masonry pillars, also with rounded arches, accessible by means of a beautiful external stone staircase. On the upper floor stone columns, with a slight entasis, support the architrave loggia; the balustrade is made of solid wood pillars.

Here, on a beam of the roof facing south-west, the year 1739 is recorded to mark the restoration – at least partial – of the roof. In 1765, on the other hand, works were carried out on the south-east turret which, with an angle in fake stone and a pyramidal spire culminating in weathervane, imitates the one, dated 1677, of Palazzo Maffei, which stands near the church of Santa Maria del Carmelo, in the town of Revò. Elements such as the airy loggia and the graceful turret belong to the vocabulary of the Überetscher Stil, the style of late-Renaissance architecture of the South Tyrolean Überetsch-Unterland, models of which can be found, for example, in the Zinnenberg and Weissenheim residences in Appiano, built between the fifteenth and seventeenth century by Lombard and local workers.

The Interiors

The configuration of the interiors of the building, which was essentially completed in the second half of the seventeenth century, was very much influenced, with regard to the type of plant and the structural and decorative elements, by the models of the previous century of Renaissance inspiration. This influence is visible in the two main floors that both develop on the sides of a wide passageway or “portego”, on which the various rooms open up.

At the level of the basement instead, spaces with rustic features prevail, reflecting its ancient use as a warehouse and cellar. The two large main rooms have umbrella vaults that come together in large pillars: the octagonal one in the centre of the first ample room one encounters when entering from the door towards north bears the date 1789, the most recent chronological indication among those, already mentioned, that can be found in Casa Campia. At the base of the corner turret is the so-called “family room” with original wooden lining where, according to tradition, the groom resides.

The large entrance hall on the ground floor, that once
Thun (1686-1758), prince-bishop

A peculiar one can be seen in the with some paintings, including walls, still have the original eight - which open up along the side was kept, which was generously the first space on the right (west) en -

ting from via IV Novembre: the so-called “vòut de fer”. Beyond the portrait of Domenico Antonio the late eighteenth century, along the occasion of a pastoral visit to Revò in 1743. The beautiful stone doors with cymatium moulding, which open up along the side walls, still have the original eighteenth century wooden windows. A peculiar one can be seen in the first space on the right (west) entering from via IV Novembre: the so-called “vòut de fer”. Beyond this armoured small door, made of wood and iron, the family archive was kept, which was generously donated by the Maffei heirs to the Municipality of Revò. It includes documents from the sixteenth to the twentieth century and today constitutes the Maffei Fund of the local Municipal Historical Archive.

In the room on the opposite northern side, the kitchen used to be located, with a large traditional fireplace and the hood supported by a horizontal wooden beam still visible today.

Here there is also the loading oven of the majolicstaove in the adjoining room, which has a panelled wooden floor and walls painted in a delicate sage colour. The monumental tower shaped stove, a typical artefact of the workshops active since the mid-sixteenth century in the small village of Sfruz, is dated 1753 and rests on a stone base supported by ridged legs. Finely decorated in saffron blue (or cobalt) on an ivory background, its base is decorated with the allegories of the months and seasons which alternate with lesene-telamons, while, on the turret, on the front of which the coat of arms of the owners stand out, there are depictions of the four continents known at the time (Oceania is missing) together with spiral columns, fruit baskets and grotesque masks. The space of the corner turret corresponds to the beautiful boiserie paced by pilasters with ridged stems and composite capitals, the design of which includes a double order of acanthus leaves surmounted by oval motifs, which support a cornice with ovules and dentils. The thickness of the walls allows for shelves and various cabinets enclosed by doors.

An exquisite boiserie of great decorative effect, datable to the early eighteenth century, painted in green and enlivened by slender carved lesenes, the panels of which are surrounded by phytomorphic elements, also covers the long rectangular room that opens up south of the door of the loggia. The room was once heated by a stove, which rests on stone feet turned in the shape of a baluster, placed at the corner pointing south-east and powered by the tube installed in the contiguous “portego”. To fix the stove in the vault, the pinnacle at the top was removed and placed on the side of the turret. Its copper green colour, on which the ivory-white ornamental friezes stand out, is the most typical artefact from Sfruz.

Finally, a small chamber lined in wood, connected directly by a small door with fanlight openings on which hexagonal glass modules with lead are mounted, in the area added in the eighteenth century and projecting south. The gold yellow of the wooden panels on the walls and of the flat ceiling, decorated with a large plastered panel with a mixtilinear profile, is predominant. A room characterized by a light stucco frame on the ceiling, which closes the rectangular compartment of the boiserie just described, is also an addition of the eighteenth century.

Similarly to the ground floor, also the first floor is organized around the central hall, whose walls are embellished with a fake draped curtain, dated 1673 and decorated with vapo
rous natural roses evoking those that recur in the bend of the coat of arms of the Maffei. On the axis of the long rib vault there is a succession of stucco panels with a mixtilinear and rectangular outline respectively. By the window-door that overlooks the loggia there is a beautiful “fake fireplace” in stone, with an interrupted tympanum, used to load the majolica stove in the neighbouring south-east room, closed by wooden doors. Another tube, aesthetically less refined, is at the opposite end of the room, the design of which is inspired by renaissance canons of balance and regularity.

This second tube feeds a cylindrical stove in majolica in the adjoining north-east room. It is manganese brown, enriched with festoons depicting buds and ivory white leaves, an umbrella dome and a ribbed vase, its lid with a crowning pinecone.

One of the most characteristic rooms of Casa Campia is the one facing north, on this same level: a typical “stube” (living
room) with a wooden panelling that recalls that of the *boiserie* of the turret on the lower floor. Here one finds the same ridged lesenes, which rise quickly on high plinths and end in composite capitals. Above the mighty cornice, covered by friezes with dents and ovuli alternated with simpler mouldings, is a quadrangular lacunar ceiling radiating from the central panel characterized by a more elaborate octagon. A large stove in copper green, exemplary of the production of Sfruz, with a combustion chamber and a turret, both round, rises on a stone base partially embedded in the wall and supported by only two free-standing balusters. In the small passage that leads to the window pointing north-west, one can admire a precious portion of the stuccoed vault, fortunately recovered in the last restorations.

Within the perimeter of the turret there is a square room whose west wall is replaced by a simple wooden partition to complete the adjacent “stube”. The rib vault and the original pale floor with darker zig-zagging inlays are very interesting.

On the opposite southern side, there are other rooms, part of the eighteenth-century addition. In 1788 there was a private chapel, with a ceiling embellished with a double stucco frame and recesses that were functional to accommodate the altarpiece, recently restored and depicting *Saint Joseph with Baby Jesus being invoked by the faithful*, which, thanks to an accurate comparison with the altarpiece depicting a similar subject in the church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel (Italian Santa Maria del Carmelo) in Revò, can be said to be the work of Matthias Lamp (approx. 1698-1780), a painter from the Pusteria Valley who moved to Romeno, in the upper Val di Non, and father of the very known artist Giovanni Battista Lampi (1751-1830). Above the entrance to the noble chapel runs the biblical quote from the Book of Numbers: “OFFERETIS HOL-OCAUSTUM DOMINO” (transl. you are to give a burned offering to the Lord).

From the longitudinal hall you can enjoy a breathtaking view of the Val di Non, which opens up before the eyes of visitors, and lets itself be discovered gradually together with its nature, its history and its vocation to fruit growing.

From here it is possible to contemplate the Lake of Santa Giustina and Castel Cles, which is reflected in the lake, standing on the top of a small promontory, from where one passes to the nearby Val di Sole and the Brenta Dolomites, but also to observe the extensive apple orchards covering the slopes of the high plateaus and the more circumscribed vineyards of Groppello nero, the pride of Revò’s countryside, in the production of which the Maffei distinguished themselves, and which, in the most generous years, were distributed in the markets of Überetsch and Merano in South Tyrol (BZ), sometimes reaching the square of Desenzano del Garda on the Garda Lake (BS).
Sanzeno, which developed on one of the three high plateaus where the Val di Non is located, is a real treasure of historical, artistic and religious importance. It is cornerstone of regional archaeology, with numerous important finds mainly from the north of the inhabited area and now partly kept in the Museo Retico of Sanzeno, inaugurated in 2003. The village is also one of the most relevant sites of the spirituality of the Trentino region, because of the presence of the three deacons Martirio, Sisinio and Alessandro – Sanzeno owes its name to the second one – who, originally from Cappadocia (now Turkey) were sent by Saint Vigil to convert these lands, and were martyred here on 29 May 397 d. C. The village is mostly located along the state road (SS 43 dir), which from Dermulo (a fraction of the Municipality of Predaia) leads to the Passo della Mendola, and around the main square, from where it continues in the direction of the small church of Santa Maria, on the edge of the wild Valle del Rio San Romedio where, on top of a rock, the famous shrine, with the same name, stands.

Opposite the large stone fountain in the above-mentioned square, stands Casa de Gentili: a property of inestimable value – not only architectural –, and one of the most significant and interesting residences of the entire valley. Its foundations were laid certainly in more ancient times, as is confirmed by the archaeological investigations (2009) that have documented an intense and articulated settlement activity in the area in question which dates from the pre-Roman era to the Renaissance and modern age; the building underwent transformations that were decisive for the current layout from the second half of the sixteenth century. Subsequently, a definitive arrangement, dating to the eighteenth century, shaped it into an authentic patrician residence, suited to the status of its inhabitants, embellished by formal details such as decorated doors, elegant three arched windows and wrought iron gratings of uncommon beauty and rarity. The building owes its name to the de Gentili, who belonged to the “minor” or “rural” nobility.

Originally from Denno, a village in the lower Val di Non, and descendants of Oluradino (according to attestations: 1170-1205), the established ancestor of the da Denno, they are attested to have lived in Sanzeno from the early decades of the sixteenth century, when, together with his brothers, Giorgio (approx. 1505-post 1576), the ancestor of the owners of the building, obtained from the court of Vienna a new certificate of no-
bility where he also claimed a Central Italian ancestry from Camerino, in the province of Macerata. In the following centuries, in addition to practicing the trade of pharmacist, until his death, (also the last de Gentili, Dr. Guido, was pharmacist in Egna, in South Tyrol), the exponents of the family distinguished themselves as artistic patrons and military administrators.

On the one hand, in fact, the brothers Francesco Antonio (1709-1771) and Giovanni Michele (1712-1778) built, between 1770 and 1771, the grandiose high altar, in polychrome marble, of the local church of Pieve – which in 1973 acquired the title of basilica –, to which the family also donated the altarpiece, painted in 1775 by Giovanni Battista Lampi (1751-1830) and illustrating the Glory of the Holy Martyrs Sisinio (bearing the coat of arms of the de Gentili embroidered on his dalmatic), Martirio and Alessandro and of Our Lady of Good Counsel. The aforementioned Francesco Antonio and his nephew Giovanni Giorgio Giuseppe is, for example, entrusted to two portraits painted during the period of his service at the fortress near Belluno.

Inhabited until 1996, Casa de Gentili is now owned by the Municipality of Sanzeno, which promoted the purchase and therefore a careful and widespread restoration in collaboration with institutions such as the Autonomous Province of Trento and the BIM Consortium of the Adige region, which now owns the heritage composed of the valuable original interior furnishings, and includes paintings, chests, chests of drawers and other furniture from different periods and of different styles, some items bearing the coat of arms of the de Gentili family (azure and silver bend with a pair of proboscis also with azure and silver bend), but also pottery and kitchen utensils, a remarkable collection of antique locks and, above all, the historical pharmacy with its set of jars, alembics and various equipment. In the prestigious setting of the building, which has hosted over the years and still hosts important art exhibitions, cultural events, conferences, seminars and informative evenings, the cultural centre of Anaunia, “Val di Non Multimediale” is located, and a restaurant.

The Exterior

Externally Casa de Gentili, which stands on a terrain characterized by a difference in altitude between the mountain (east) and valley (west) of about six meters, has a solid and compact structure in late Renaissance style which gives it a remarkable unity and tends to conceal its hypothesized origin with the addition of different blocks and of successive extensions, in line with a very common and widespread construction practice of the Valley. The building rises on three levels above ground, to which the attic must be added, with a beautiful truss structure, and only one fully underground room accessible from the ground floor, in the heart of the house. To the east, the property includes a fairly large area, completely fenced, which spreads over two distinct levels articulated by an internal retaining wall and recently reconfigured in such a way as to reinforce the peculiar and close relationship existing between the architecture and the exterior. On the highest level a small public park has been created, open to the community, directly connected to the village through a gate opposite the entrance of the church of Santa Maria, where the road that descends towards the...
sanctuary of San Romedio starts, creating a direct visual relationship between the palace and the small sacred building. In this space, covered by grass and scattered with some trees, in a sort of ideal continuity with the ancient pharmacy inside the building, aromatic and medicinal plants have been planted. Close to the building and at a lower level than the above mentioned garden, there is a paved courtyard, with a slightly inclined surface, part of the de Gentili property.

The north façade gives onto to the secondary via di Sant’Alessandro, connected to it by a traditional “pont” (bridge) which, from the arched door in pink ashlar, the shutters of the arch embellished by elements moulded in lighter stone, leads to the church dedicated to Alessandro, the youngest of the three Holy Martyrs Anauniani or of the Val di Non. The west façade overlooks the main road and is characterized, on the first floor, by six wrought iron railings that protect as many windows. These gratings are undoubtedly among the most distinctive elements of Casa de Gentili. They are to be found also on all the other openings of the same level: three on the main façades, pointing south; two on the northern one and the single window just before the “pont” that connects the road axis leading up to small church of Santa Maria to the arched and rustic portal on the eastern façades, which reads, on the keystone, the date 1673.

Different in the making and the design, which is more or less elaborate, the gratings were put into place at slightly different times, but all during the eighteenth century; many similarities with artefacts from the regions of the Uberetsch and the South Tyrolean Unterland in Alto Adige are visible. Critics, in fact, have correctly pointed out the similarities between the Sanzeno gratings and those of civil and sacred buildings in Appiano (Eppan) and Egna (Neumarkt), places with which the de Gentili always maintained close economic-cultural links, as is attested by the fact that the last descendants of the family practiced as pharmacists in Egna where they also had a home.

The gratings above the main entrance belong to the oldest kind, where the lobed lozenges of the upper part give way to the gibbosity of the lower band, and the letters “G G C G” appear - the hypothesis is that they are the initials of Giovanni Giorgio Giuseppe, Captain of Livinallongo from 1765 to 1774. It therefore is possible to date the instalment of the gratings in question and of the most similar ones - the ones visible on the façade and the ones placed after the angle, towards the state road - in this time frame: all four are characterized by similar cymas terminating, at the top, in a series of rings gathered together and, at the side, in bunches of grapes represented in a very simplified but effective manner. Certainly the richness and decorative exuberance that characterize them are explained by their special location. Inserted in the context of the more “public” façade of the building, and facing the main square of the village, these bars, as well as other details of the same front, were used to enhance and celebrate the owners of the house.

The arched portal had a similar function, in squared stone blocks and engraved on the key-stone, inside an almost heart-shaped section, the year 1694 can be read. The inlaid wooden window is worthy of note, conceived as a miniature triumphal arch with aediculae in the sections and broken elliptical pediment in the middle of which stands a small finial in the shape of a triangular tympanum. In the median section of the door the de Gentili coat of arms is inserted without its heraldic colours, but rendered finely. Together with the aforementioned gratings to protect the single arched windows of the first level, several other elements soften the grandeur of the façade such as the stone balcony, always on the first floor, with a central door window and lateral rounded arch windows, separated by columns with a rather marked entasis.

On the second floor, slightly off-axis with the terrace below, there is a triple arched window between two squared jambs on the sides and two circular separation columns. The other openings of this same level are large rectangular single arched windows, soberly framed in stone, above which are painted polylobed rosettes. Looking at the top of the building, finally, on the beams of the roof that protrude at the corners of the house towards the square, emphasized by bush-hammered quoin, we can see the date 1777, carved in Roman numerals, which probably indicates the date of a total or partial restoration of the large pavilion roof.
The Interiors

The interior of Casa de Gentili offers the visitor many surprises, with an organization of spaces that is much more articulate than what one would imagine from the outside.

The construction system is the traditional one to be found in these areas, with walls and stone vaults with slaked lime mortar and an arrangement of the areas which corresponds to typologies that can also be found elsewhere in Val di Non, in similar elegant and rustic but refined constructions: barrel vaults and cross vaults on the bottom level; doors of different rooms that open onto a central corridor, rooms with flat ceilings embellished by pictorial decorations, friezes and stuccos on the upper levels. Many rooms have wooden floors that, depending on the importance of the room, form more or less complex designs thanks to the use of different materials. The main staircase, quite steep, allows vertical connections: two adjoining ramps lead from the ground floor to the second floor and to other secondary staircases.

The total area is over 1800 square meters spread over three levels. The ground floor seems to have undergone more adaptations and transformations over the centuries than the others, the rooms have less regular shapes and seem to be placed one in the other: the rooms along the perimeter of the building all communicate with the outside through windows that are mostly quadrangular and covered with gratings. Many of these rooms must have once been used for storage, as cellars and perhaps barns for poultry and small to medium size animals such as chickens, rabbits and pigs, given the lack of traces of structures – mangers, drinking troughs – necessary for the shelter of larger animals such as cows, oxen and horses.

This floor is crossed by the “Val di Non Multimediale” route, a showcase of the Anaune lands (or Val di Non), its cultural and natural treasures as well as its historical, social and economic-productive peculiarities. Thanks to projections and films, it is possible, for example, to virtually fly over the entire valley by helicopter, moving between villages, castles, lakes and mountains from a perspective that is nothing short of unusual; plan excursions and obtain timely information on multiple itineraries; learn, in an agile and captivating manner, about Casa de Gentili and its inhabitants, about agriculture, local crafts and about the destinies of the many inhabitants of the Val di Non who migrated in not so distant times.

As regards the history of the building, the most interesting room is the one located left of the entrance hall. Beyond a very heavy door in wood and iron, which today we would say is “armoured”, was the pharmacy and herbalist workshop where the last de Gentili still worked, Dr. Guido (1908-1993). He was the heir and last exponent of the family tradition, indeed his ancestors had been pharmacist and herbalists since the eighteenth century, cultivating strong interests in natural sciences. The small pharmaceutical workshop, fully equipped with scales, stills, flasks, ampoules and various other instruments will soon be reorganized and made accessible. The front room is also protected by a very sturdy door, with iron framework and covering, also in iron foil, reinforced by studs and diagonally placed strips. A very similar door – as critics rightly point out – can be found in the residence of the noble Longo family in the South Tyrolean town of Egna, also frequented, as we have seen, by the de Gentili. Carved in the wall is a tabula ansata bearing the date 1684 and the name of the person who probably had the underlying small portal erected: Gaspare de Gentili (1644-1689).

On the first floor the rooms, in greater number, are organized in a more orderly way. Here there is the operative office of the Cultural centre of Anaunia (Centro Culturale d’Anaunia), with the library and the workstations equipped with information technology equipment, and the large congress hall which is located where once the characteristic “somas” was, typical of the Trentino and Val di Non houses in particular, joined to the street level by a ramp on the northern side of the building (via di Sant’Alessandro). Carts once used this connection to unload the goods they transported. The room opposite the one hosting the cultural centre of Anaunia is particularly interesting because of the sophisticated decorations on the painted ceiling, where refined frames ending in oak branches support large blue crystal amphorae, with sinuous looped handles and other inserts of gold, filled with ferns, papyri, berries and delicate flowers. The adjoining room in the south-west corner, lined with wood, is also of considerable interest. In this room there is a stove covered in ceramic tiles – the typical olle – in dark brown manganese, with an elegant perforated door in the tower that allowed the circulation of hot air and was also used to warm food. Characterized by slender
forms, it can be dated to the end of the nineteenth century and is a product of Sfruz, on the Predaia plateau, where kilns and artisans specialized in the production of similar ceramic artefacts are documented since the sixteenth century. In the adjacent rectangular corridor, which leads to the balcony facing the square, there is the loading oven of this stove, with a beautiful stone frame in Rococo style, with side with volutes decorated with knurled motifs and crowned with a striped comb shell valve.

Equally interesting, continuing along the rectangular corridor, is the large kitchen, beyond the door at the opposite end of the terrace, characterized by the presence of a large fireplace, the so-called “foglar”, consisting of a single block in the shape of a parallelepiped. It is of considerable size, and the large surface allowed both to heat the surrounding area and to cook using furnishings and equipment which can be found in great number in the kitchen, which is now being rearranged.

On display are jugs, coffee pots, jugs, various containers, ceramic and pewter dishes, pots and pans in copper, some with a curious shape like the one with cavities to keep the eggs separate, that faithfully reproduces the frying pan for making “ova frit-tolate” (fried eggs), illustrated by Bartolomeo Scappi (1500-1577), one of the most famous chefs of the Renaissance age who was employed in the service of various popes, author of Opera, published for the first time in Venice in 1570 and enriched by twenty seven engraved tables. Many of the dishes of the de Gentili kitchen, its wealth reflecting the wealth of the owners, are now carefully placed on wooden shelves that cover, almost entirely, the north wall of the room, framing a door with four sections which leads to various rooms connected to one another, through a sequence of aligned doors, and embellished by beautiful painted decorations in correspondence of ceilings and walls. Used once as living rooms and bedrooms, these rooms currently host the furniture for the storage of materials and documents produced and collected by the cultural centre of Anaunia together with other important institutions and cultural associations operating on site – and not only – with partnership agreements.

The second floor’s explicit function was reception, and it consists of a smaller number of rooms which are, however, larger. Here we find the Salone degli Stucchi (Hall of the Stoccos), notable both for its size and for the quality of its decorations. The large room has a wooden floor enriched by two pentagonal walnut stars and a perimetral band, probably the work of Lombard craftsmen, in light stucco in the upper part of the walls, where the de Gentili coat of arms with its crest is inserted (west wall) and, in the four corners, the Allegories of the seasons, personified by charming and plump putti. The allegory of Spring is rocking happily astride a wreath of flowers with overblown petals; that of the Summer is holding in his left hand a golden sickle and in the other a bundle of ears, equally golden; that of Autumn is playing happily with a large wreath of grapes and grape vines with which his crown is also made; the putto representing Winter is wrapped in a drape that softly descends from his head covering his pudendum and is warming himself with the heat of the nearby brazier with golden flames. A fifth enchanting putto leans out from a dense acanthus head, from which thin buds protrude, in the medal-lion in the centre of the ceiling, intent on playing a wind instrument no longer in use.

Similarly to the arrangement of the lower level, also here the block of the southernmost rooms is organized around a long central corridor where the internal stairs end – which allow a direct connection with the south-east room on the floor below (today the library). On the wall flanking these stairs there is a large emblem, very realistically painted to mark a marriage alliance between the de Gentili family and some other aristocratic lineage not yet identified. With an exception to the rules of heraldry, the coat of arms is divided into four sections and two different coats of arms are joined with their respective crests: the coat of arms of the de Gentili is reproduced on the left of the viewer (azure and silver bend with two proboscis also with azure and silver bend); on the right there is a second crest that is to this day mysterious (azure, gold chevron, with three spurs – or spur rowels – of the same colour and a phoenix as crest). Along the corridor there are two “false fireplaces”, which in the past were used to fuel the stoves now no longer existing. Also, the doors of the various rooms give onto the corridor, framed with jambs and cymatium moulding in stone. The south-west corner room and the other two placed west, which give onto the highway, have refined ceilings with both painted and relief decorations.

On the opposite side there is a second kitchen, with a smaller fireplace than the one on the first floor, but well preserved and still equipped with a hood, black-
ened by centuries of use. The accessories linked to its functioning are displayed here today, such as firedogs, tripods and springs but also the typical “lavezi”, or washing pots, with three feet to allow it to be placed on the cooking surface. In the wall to the east there is a sink and next to it a double arched window with ancient glass and small hexagons held together by lead threads. The room that directly communicates with the kitchen most likely served as a dining room, as is indicated by the tempera decoration of the ceiling with four elegant gilded risers – one on each side – with fruit and vegetables of all sorts: apples, pears, loquats, plums, cherries, figs, succulent slices of watermelon, pomegranates, but also pumpkins, turnips, asparagus, artichokes and carrots.

Paintings are a recurring element in the rooms on the second floor, mostly in friezes and wall decorations, also present, with a light blue band more than one meter above the ground and stretching along the walls, in the family chapel, which is at the top of the staircase, and is separated from these by a wrought iron gate, finely built.

The addition of the building giving onto the courtyard made it necessary to open a door where the altar used to be. In the last living room to the north, on this level, engraved in the plaster of the wall facing north, the date 1569 is visible, a date of great significance for the building, because it is the oldest among those found.

Among the old furnishing of Casa de Gentili, a place of primary importance is the picture gallery, owned by the BIM Consortium of the Adige region, which underwent a specific restoration intervention that ended in 2004.

Originally consisting of nineteen paintings, now mostly distributed in the rooms on the second floor of the building, the collection has been recently enlarged with the acquisition of three more paintings. On the north wall of the already described kitchen three paintings are hung, which date to the second half of the seventeenth century, and represent two still lifes, with rather dark shades, and a hunting scene. The portraits, however, many of which are displayed in the central corridor, represent the most significant pieces of the collection. Many of the portrayed subjects are exponents of the de Gentili family who are, however, to this day without a name, the same way the artists who created them are still anonymous.

The paintings, however, have a documentary value that is by no means marginal, both for the family history and for that of eighteenth-century fashion and costume, in that they offer an impressively vivid representation, rich in details, also minimal, that are investigated and described with singular accuracy: from the bonnets to the lace, from jewellery to fans and exquisite passementerie for ladies; from embroidered tail-coats to fur-lined cloaks, from refined buttons to lace jabots to powdered wigs for gentlemen. Among the members of the family it is possible to identify with absolute precision Giovanni Giorgio Giuseppe de Gentili (1740-1782), whose identity is revealed to us by the letter addressed to him that he is holding in his left hand, which qualifies him as Captain of the Prince bishop of Bressanone in the Castle of Andraz in Livinallongo Col di Lana (BL).

This portrait is perfectly mirrored – similar elements are the refined frame and the setting, composed of a fluted column and a red draped curtain in the background – by the one of his wife Anna Bombardi, whom he married in September 1771.

Although not on display, other portraits are more easily recognizable thanks to the writings that accompany them, depicting Father Epifanio, that is, Guidobaldo Giuseppe Daniele de Gentili (1699-1729), who died in Caprarola (in Latium, in the province of Viterbo) in March 1729, and had joined the order of the Discalced Carmelites in 1716, and of St. Carlo Borromeo, depicted in devout prayer before the crucifix. Two regal portraits can also be identified easily, one of Empress Maria Theresa of the House of Habsburg (1717-1780), dressed in morning and therefore immortalized after the death of her beloved husband Francis I, Holy Roman Emperor (1708-1765) and founder with his wife of the Habsburg-Lorraine dynasty, the other of her son Joseph II of the House of Habsburg-Lorraine (1741-1790), who shared the throne of the Holy Roman Empire with his mother until her death in 1780. The two paintings can therefore be dated between 1765 and 1780.
On the slopes of Mount Roen, in a secluded position on a plateau kissed by the sun lies the village of Don, now a hamlet of the municipality of Amblar-Don. The village originates from three ancient villas: di Sopra, di Mezzo and di Sotto. In the upper part of the town (Villa di Sopra), rising from the square in front of the parish church and beyond the characteristic portico of Casa Simbeni, you will find the front of Palazzo Endrici. The palace was built in the eighteenth century by the Endrici family.

Originally from Rallo - the current hamlet of the town of Ville d’Anaunia - the family was ennobled on 6 January 1535 by Prince-Bishop of Trento Bernardo Cles (1485-1539). In the first quarter of the seventeenth century the family moved to Don. Here, in just a few decades, they established themselves amongst the richest in the country. Remodelled in the second half of the nineteenth century and again at the beginning of the twentieth century, the building (which was largely under public ownership) was restored at the end of the last century. In more recent times, alterations were made to the facades, with restoration of the south-east terrace being completed in 2015. Today, the palace’s interior preserves a unique artistic heritage, consisting of antique furniture and an intriguing gallery of portraits. These portray the founding ancestors of the building, such as Giovanni Battista I Endrici (1703-1783), and above all, the numerous clergymen and high prelates of the family. This includes Giovanni (1707-1754), doctor of theology and parish priest of Romeno, up until Celestino (1866-1940), last Prince-Bishop and first Archbishop of Trento.

Celestino, ninth of eleven children, was born in Don on March 14, 1866. After his childhood in Val di Non, he completed his secondary school studies at the princely bishopric school of Trento. Once he graduated, he was sent to Rome, where he attended the Pontifical Gregorian University of the Germanic-Hungarian College. After first graduating in philosophy, he was ordained a priest in 1891 and graduated in theology in 1892. In that same year he returned to Trento and began his ministry, first in Cles, in his Val di Non, and then in Trento, in the parish of Santa Maria Maggiore. From 1896 he was a professor of philosophy and moral theology at the seminary of Trento, and was subsequently entrusted as the chair of Social Doctrine of the Church. During these same years, he was a passionate spiritual assistant to the Associazione Universitaria Cattolica Trentina. Not
yet thirty-eight, in January 1904 the emperor of Austria Francesco Giuseppe (1830-1916) appointed him Prince-bishop of Trento: an appointment that was confirmed by the Holy See the following year on the 6th of February.

After taking his oath to the Hapsburg ruler in Vienna, he obtained episcopal ordination in Rome on March 13th. There, Celestino and his delegation were granted a special audience by Pope Pius X (1835-1914), who had been elected in August 1903. On that occasion, the pontiff defined him as “a special grace” for his diocese. Monsignor Endrici held fortune for over three difficult decades, marked by the first world war, the advent of the fascist regime, by tensions in society and the deterioration of the local economy.

During his long episcopal government however, he left his mark in many areas of economic, social and political life in Trentino, making use of lay collaborators of high stature like the politician and statesman Alcide Degasperi (1881-1954), who was held in high regard by the bishop. The outbreak of the Great War represented a clear break in the pastoral activity of Celestino Endrici, who openly criticised military authorities and the arrests of Trentino civilians. Many were forced - particularly in border areas - to abandon their homes, causing them to become displaced within the territories of the Danubian monarchy or Italy. Celestino Endrici was placed under house arrest first in the suburban residence of Villa San Niccolò near Trento, and then in Heiligenkreuz, a Cistercian abbey of ancient foundation in the Wienerwald or Viennese Forest, southwest of the Austrian capital.

At the end of the war, the bishop pledged with renewed dedication to the material and moral reconstruction of his land and its people. During this time, he dealt with the abuses caused by fascism which had become established in Trentino, as in the rest of Italy. In 1929 the diocese of Trentino was elevated to the position of the Archdiocese by Pope Pius XI (1857-1939, pope since 1922). Endrici, 25 years after his episcopal appointment, became the first Archbishop of Trento. After 5 years, during a stay in his birthplace in Don, a heart attack suddenly came to heavily weaken his health. Despite his illness, Celestino Endrici did not cease to take an interest in diocesan affairs and his parish, while the Holy See was provided with support by Enrico Montalbetti (1888-1943), proceeded by Oreste Rauzi (1888-1974). Endrici continued to demonstrate his objections to National Socialism and its perverse ideology, instead siding in defence of the German-speaking and Ladin-speaking population of South Tyrol. He fought both against forced “Italianisation”, promoted by fascism, and against the practice of the so-called ‘Options’. This was the agreement signed in June of 1939 by Italy and Germany imposing the choice of either to retain Italian citizenship or receive the German citizenship and be moved to the territories of the Third Reich.

In the autumn of 1940, leaving Don, where Endrici had spent the summer, as was his custom he stopped at the Basilica of the Santi Martiri d’Anaunia in Sanzeno. It is supposed that here he spoke the words: “Now let’s go to Trento to die”.

In fact, death took place in the following weeks, on the night between 28 and 29 October. By visiting his home village and the house where he was born, along with its collection of art and the objects that belonged to him, you are given the opportunity to know a person of the highest level in contemporary Trentino.

The Exterior

A typical example of residential architecture of the small rural nobility of the area, Endrici palace is divided into two distinct parts. Today the southern structure can be visited.

This part looks noble, with the garden bordered by a merlon wall with squared top. It is held that the current structure was established between 1720 and 1758, as evidenced by dates given to the western and southern eaves. On the eastern front of this portion of the building, another area was added in the late nineteenth century, perhaps with the intention of ensuring greater stability in the south-eastern corner. This corner had already been previously affected by creep phenomena towards the underlying valley. Used as a shed for agricultural tools and as the attic, it is surrounded by pillars of cement and a wrought iron railing, which has since been utilised as a terrace.

The northern structure dates back to 1755, a year inserted in a mixtilinear table in the façade. Today, it is used as a warehouse and multifunctional recreation hall for the local community and, in part, is still used as a civil dwelling by the descendants of Bishop Celestino Endrici. This
The windows are softened by ocher-coloured frames. Due to the slope of the land, the building has three floors above ground on the east side, at only two to the west. The development of the latter was adapted to that of the existing building units that the Endrici unified in order to ensure larger and cheaper living spaces in relation to their social status.

The building was formed through the addition and integration of pre-eighteenth-century structures. This can be seen in the varying vertical and horizontal alignments of the windows, which do not correspond between the ground floor and the upper floor, and the bending of the perimeter walls, particularly evident on the west facade. The main entrance is characterised by an elegant door on which Giuseppe Golner (1848-1924) from Sarnonico carved, the coat of arms of the Endrici family on the right portion of the door (quartered: in the 1st and 4th quarter, silver bar in the red field; in the 2nd, blue golden lily on the top, gold on the bottom, in the 3rd quarter, red lion with gold). On the left we can see the personal coat of arms of Celestino Endrici, with the eagle of the bishop's principality of Trento. The same emblem is also carved in relief on the plaque placed by the community of Don to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the prelate's ascent to San Vigilio chair. It also marks his appointment as first Archbishop of Trento, which took place 25 years after the beginning of his episcopate: “IL XIX MARZO MCMXIX S. [UA] ALTEZZA ILL. [USTRISSI]MA E REV.[ERENDIS-SI]MA | MONSIGNOR CELESTINO ENDRICI | VESCOVO DI TRENTO E PRINCIPE | CELEBRAVA IL XXV ANNIVERSARIO | DAL GIORNO IN CUI | ASCENDEVA LA GLORIOSA CATTEDRA DI S. VIGILO | IL XXVI GIUGNO MCMXIX | FRA IL PLAUSO DEL CLERO E DEL POPOLO | VENIVA ELEVATO ALLA DIGNITÀ | DI I° ARCIVESCOVO DI TRENTO | I CONCITTA-DINI DI DON E IL COMUNE RENDONO | LA DOPPIA FAU.[STISS] | MA DATA IN QUESTO MARMO” (transl. “The XIX March MCMXIX HIS ILLUSTRIOUS AND HONORABLE HIGHNESS MONSIGNOR CELESTINO ENDRICI BISHOP OF TRENTO AND PRINCE CELEBRATED THE XXV ANNIVERSARY FROM THE DAY IN WHICH HE WAS AWARDED THE GLORIOUS CATHEDRAL OF S. VIGILIO. THE XXVI JUNE MCMXXIX BETWEEN THE PLAUSE OF THE CLERGY AND THE PEOPLE WAS APPOINTED TO THE DIGNITY OF I ° ARCHBISHOP OF TRENTO. THE CONCITTADS OF DON AND THE COUNCIL PLACE THE DOUBLE FORTUNATE DATE IN THIS MARBLE”).

On the façade, in line with the portal, stands a fresco representing the Madonna and Child, crowned by angels and seated on a cushion of clouds. San Remedio, who is venerated in the nearby dedicated Sanctuary, look devoutly at the Virgin Mary and controls a bear holding the bibles. According to the legend, the bear ate the saint’s horse in the woods not far from here but then was tamed by the saint: the holy hermit was able to saddle and mount it. We can also see St. Anthony of Padua, with the white lily in his left hand, and St. Anthony the Abbot, with his little pig at his side. Depicted outside the mixtilinear frame of main scene, are then St. Bridgid, patron of Don and owner of the parish church, and St. Florian, very revered in German-speaking countries and invoked as a protector from the fire (distinguished by the bucket of water that spills on a burning house).

The five Saints interceded jointly for the purging souls depicted below. They are situated in the centre of the fresco, between tongues of flickering fire and above the inscription “SVISC- IPE VIRGO DEI GENITRIX PIA EXPOSCENTIVM VOTA” (transl: “Welcome, Virgin, Mother of God, the devotees prayers of those who plead for you”). Some letters of the invocation, corresponding to Roman numerals, are highlighted in bold and, when added together, indicate the year the fresco was created, 1747. The creator is most probably Matthias Lamp (c. 1698-1780), father of rather more famous Giovanni Battista Lampi (1751-1830), a highly appreciated portrait artist in the great courts of Europe. The persuasive attribution of the wall painting is based on the stringent stylistic affinities identified with Mattia’s autograph works and on the attestation of a special custom between the Lampi and Endrici families.

On the one hand, there is in fact, no lack of precise references to the production of ‘Lamp’ - a popular creation with mostly religious characters (in many churches in Val di Non there are cycles of the Via Crucis he created and, often, signed and dated). His work was so widespread that it
made him the most prolific painter active in Val di Non during the 18th century.

Conversely, on December 31, 1751, Anna Maria Cristina Endrici, the seventeen-year-old daughter of previously mentioned Giovanni Battista I (1703-1783), was the patroness of Giovanni Battista Lampi at the baptism administered by his uncle, Don Giovanni Endrici, then parish priest of Romeno.

The front door of Palazzo Endrici leads to a vast hall, now equipped for conferences, concerts, theatrical performances and other cultural events. The hall has a partially irregular map but is normalised by the axis of the barrel vault. At the centre of which stands the bishop’s coat of arms for Celestino Endrici, modelled in stucco and created along with the tempera decoration of sails and walls, after his appointment as head of the Trento church in 1904. Underneath the coat of arms are doors which open onto the balcony. During this period, the building, adapted as a summer residency for the bishop who was born here, was subject to a number of improvements and changes. It also underwent widespread decorative changes under the hands of Ubaldo plugs (1873-1949), a painter from Mantova who spent large periods of time in Trentino. In 1910, he created the fresco depicting Santa Brigida’s Glory on the presbyter vault of the parish church of Don under the commission by the Prince Bishop Endrici. During this time, renovation work also involved rooms on the ground floor. On the right side of the entrance there is the door of the ancient kitchen which is now dismantled and a second door that leads to the dining room. This was reduced in size in order to obtain a storage closet and a hallway to reach the kitchen with which it was directly connected. Here we find a rustic wooden plate rack, from the nineteenth century, on whose shelves are arranged with fine pewter dishes.

Beyond a double glazed door there is the cross vaulted passage, which serves as a connection to the reception hall to the left (east), and to the noble chapel, to the right (west). On the walls of the reception hall, furnished with care and with simple flat ceiling unlike the adjacent spaces, there is the great lithography with Benedict XV, Giacomo Della Chiesa (1854-1922). Benedict XV was Pope from 1914 to 1922, during the difficult years of the confinement of Celestino Endrici in Austria, which the Pope followed with great involvement. The photo portrays Bishop Endrici, who sits on a chair with a wide back and arms ending in leonine protomes, wrapped in an ermine cappa magna on which the pectoral cross is pinned. The picture was taken in 1904 by Giovanni Battista Unterveger (1833-1912), a pioneer of photographic art in our region and the first permanent photographer in Trentino. We can also see the photographic portrait of Adolfo Endrici (1888-1972), nephew of the bishop Celestino and from 1919 to 1926, first mayor of Don after the annexation of this territory to Italy. This was taken by Giuseppe Brunner (1871-1951), student of the aforementioned Unterveger, and is characterised by a soft pictorial effect. Also worthy of mention is the view of the sanctuary of San Romedio, perched like a castle on a rocky spur in the middle of the green woods, which was painted by Metodio Ottolini (1882-1958). The usual sign of the artist from Aldeno, just South of Trento, is “M. Blini”, as is the case here. Ottolini was trained at the Academies of Venice, Parma and Florence and was very active as a decorator of churches in the valleys of the Noce. He always had a privileged connection with the valleys and he moved to the area during the Second World War. He settled in Tres (today’s fraction of the municipality of Predaia), where years before he had completed a large-scale intervention frescoing the nave, the vault, the presbytery and the apse of the parish church; rebuilt from the foundations and consecrated around the mid-nineteenth century.

On the opposite side of the reception room is the chapel, first mentioned in 1795, when Don Giovanni Nicolò Endrici
(1739-1795) who was already a cooperator in Termeno and benefitted in Don since 1753, had obtained authorisation to build a private oratory at his home from the prince bishop of Trento Pietro Vigilio Thun (1724-1800, bishop since 1776) the authorization to build a private oratory at his home. The chapel has a lowered enclosure and fascinating testimonies connected to Celestino Endrici. Here we can find a plaster bust of the Archbishop modelled by the Roman sculptor Pietro Lazzari (1898-1979) and a talar gown with elegantly embroidered priestly robe. This latter article was found in the attic and was recently returned for the visitors’ enjoyment thanks to the passion of the volunteers involved in the protection and enhancement of the site. In addition, we can also find the statue of Our Lady of Sorrows and the eighteenth-century portraits of St. Charles Borromeo, patron of Don together with St. Brigid. The decoration of the wall of the local cemetery and surmounted on the head by a six-pointed star of gold, with the head of Venice in silver, the winged lion watching and holding an open book).

The upper floor is accessed via a beautiful stone staircase that rises parallel to the entrance hall and separates the southern portion of the building from the north. The various rooms on this floor are arranged along the corridor-gallery with a marked north-south axiality and ceilings embellished with elegant tempera decorations of neo-Rococo style. The gallery is overlooked by all the rooms, whose access, surmounted by moulded cymatiums, are specularly arranged and face two by two. On the walls we can find the eighteenth-century portraits of the high priests of Trentino Domencico Antonio Thun (1686-1758), prince bishop of Trento (1730 to 1758) and Leopoldo Ernesto Firmian (1708-1783). This was his coadjutor in Trento between 1748 and 1756, but already prince bishop of Seckau in Austria from 1739 to 1763 and therefore, until his death, of Passau in Bavaria. In addition, we can see the portrait picture gallery of the ancestors of Celestino Endrici, evoked from the portrait to a practically whole figure, in a purple dress and a white bobbin with a lace trina) painted by Giambattista Chiocchetti (1843-1917 in 1909.

In that same year, the original painter and restorer of Moena (Trentino) trained at the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice. He perfected his art between Munich and Rome and also completed the altarpiece depicting San Romedio with the bear in the Chiesa Maggiore of the Sanctuary of San Romedio. The church is reachable on foot from Don, following a path (CAI SAT No. 539) of about ten kilometres. The path is set in woods that slope steeply down to the bottom of the canyon of the Rio San Romedio and retraces the ancient pathways beaten by pilgrims to the suggestive place of worship.

Among Edrici’s ancestors immortalised in the paintings of Matthias Lamp, we can find the brother priests Nicolò (1693-1749) and Giovanni (1707-1754), the parish priest of Romeno. These are also remembered, for the expansion of the old church of Don, by a plaque now hung at the base of the bell tower that rises along the wall of the local cemetery and bearing the following inscription: “AD AVCTVM EXI|STENTIBVS PA|ROCHIO IOANNE | ET BENE|FFICIATO | IOANNICOLAO | FRA|TRIBVS | ENDRCI | 1744” (transl. enlarged at the time of the parish priest Giovanni and the benefited Giovanni Nicolò, brothers Endrici).

The third of the brothers, Giovanni Battista I (1703-1783), is depicted as a country gentleman, with a tobacco-coloured jacket with high-bended cuffs and walking stick. Father of Giovanni Battista II (1753-1836), he was born in Don and, after finishing his studies at the Germanic College of Rome, was assigned to the Nunciature of Vienna. Following that, he became secretary of Ferdinand III of Habsburg Lorraine (1769-1824), who followed him to Florence when his superior was appointed Grand Duke of Tuscany from 1790 to 1801 and then again from 1814 to 1824. He remained in Florence until 1836, the year of his death. John Baptist II must be credited to the Habsburgs, as testified by the offer of the bishopric of Livorno, which he refused because of his advanced age. He would go on to be remembered in his native house by the photographic reproduction of a painting depicting a prelate, hanging on the immediate right of those who enter the corridor. The original painting, once in a private Sienese collection, could be the work of the aforementioned Giovanni Battista Lampi.

Other interesting portraits are exhibited in the side rooms. Firstly, there is that of Felice Endrici (1828-1898), professor of theology at the Trentino seminary.
A diocesan vicar, he was canon of the cathedral of Trento and uncle to Bishop Endrici. It was painted posthumously in 1910 by Agostino Aldi (1860-1939). Another posthumous painting is that of Monsignor Edoardo (1853-1921), brother of Celestino and long parish priest of Coredo (today a fraction of the Commune of Predaia), painted in 1953 by Gino Bedin in oil on hardboard. Finally, there is that of Celestino Endrici himself, made in 1926 by Orazio Gaigher (1870-1938) who after his studies in medicine, devoted himself exclusively to painting from the age of thirty. Gaigher travelled throughout Europe (England, Spain, France) and the Americas and specialised in portraiture, in which he achieved remarkably refined results. The fine results of his art made him gain the appreciation of prelates, cardinals and pontiffs, who entrusted themselves to him to eternalise their image in the Vatican.

The small views of the abbey of Heilingenkreuz and the Carmel of Mayerling handed down to us through the places of Celestine Endrici’s ‘captivity’ during the First World War. In addition, there are many memorabilia, furnishings and personal effects that evoke in these rooms the figure and the work of the prelate. We can find his stockings with his monogram, the purple birettas with purple bow, school reports and numerous black and white snapshots that immortalise pastoral activity in various corners of the diocese. In addition, we can see the copy of the decree with which he was awarded in 1919 the honour of the Grand Cordone of the Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus. Finally, we can admire the wall cupboard, now empty but used at one time to put away hunting rifles, which the bishop practiced with passion on Mount Roen.

Monsignor Celestino also belonged to the Knights of Great Cross decoration of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. This is kept in the same room in its south-east corner. The cross is that of Jerusalem, glazed with red and surmounted by a military trophy, hanging from a band of black silk and a chest plate in silver, surmounted by an enhanced cross and enamelled with red.

Turning to the rest of the furniture, the two sitting rooms are in Biedermeier style in the two rooms towards east (on the left) are exquisite, as the briar-root desk with objects of Bishop Endrici that we can find in the corridor. Other examples of excellent quality include the inkstand in perfect Liberty style with typical floral motifs and the trumeau, also in briar wood, with the chest in walnut and the front carved. Here leans a small cauldron (or lavéz in the local dialect), suspended on three feet modelled like grotesque masks with goat’s legs and the insignia of Bishop Endrici. Finally, we can also see a small bronze mortar, a modern imitation of late-German specimens of German manufacture.
In the middle of the high plateau of Alta Val di Non (or Alta Anaunia), which extends between the mountain passes of Palade to the west and of the Mendola to the east, (important routes connecting the Alto Adige fondles) is the town of Sarnonico. Its historical centre is concentrated to the east, that is to say on the soft slope on which - in an elevated position - we find what remains today of the Morenberg castle. The castle, which was oldest domicile of the homonymous noble family, was destroyed by ruinous fires and then decayed to a farmhouse.

Attested since the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, during the fifteenth century the Morenberg dynasty was a “nursery” for lawyers and vicars in the non-jurisdiction of Castelfondo and Arsio. Thus, for example, it happened at the beginning of the sixteenth century for Nicolò who, formerly Vicar of Castelfondo, was then massaro vescovile of the Valli del Noce, an office he held until 1528. Advancing in the modern age, the Morenbergs thought of adding to the inherited manor, more isolated, a dwelling in the town of Sarnonico. In the year 1544 they bought a „domus“ (a house) at the central public square of the village. It is here that, after a few decades, Carlo settled, transferred to Sarnonico from the Castle of Giovo or della Rosa, in Ville di Giovo (hamlet of the Municipality of Giovo) in Val di Cembra, which the Morenbergs had acquired some time before together with the feuds of the Giovo family (German “Jauffen”).

He was responsible for the radical reconfiguration of the building which, redesigned and internally renovated, took on today’s appearance as a refined manor house. While the family was elevated, with the opening of the eighteenth century, to the dignified comitia, the line of Sarnonico became extinct in the second half of the same century. The family’s possessions passed into the hands of the barons of Cles.

Meanwhile, the building in the heart of the village had already changed hands. First it was owned by the Geneetti of Dambel and their coat of arms, granted by Charles VI of Habsburg (1685-1740, emperor from 1711) in 1717 - terminus post quem to date his execution and the transfer of ownership of the residence - signs the entrance door at the

Palazzo Morenberg
Municipality of Sarnonico
head of the external staircase that goes up to the first floor on the eastern front (quartered shield: the 1st and 4th silver field with a black eagle - today no longer visible; the 2nd and 3rd blue field with a golden griffon, holding a barely visible silver arrow; in the heart of the coat of arms there is a small shield on a blue background and a silver towered castle). Then it was the turn of the Martini family of Revò who, in 1766, sold the property to the parish priest of Sarnonico don Giuseppe Franzoi. The priest made it a canonical house that remained here until the purchase of Palazzo Morenberg by the City to use it as institutional headquarters. The complex restoration work, which ended in 2002, was conducted with philological rigor and, focusing primarily on the protection of the ancient architectural organism, restored it to its original elegance. This is also to make it to a prestigious setting for the offices of the local administration as for the various cultural and exhibition initiatives hosted here.

### The Exterior

In its historic core, Palazzo Morenberg is a happy example of a noble residence, totally reconfigured in the course of the sixteenth century forwarded on older pre-existences according to the model of the villa-palace, then affirmed in parallel to the lack of defensive needs of the fortified castles of the medieval age.

It is spread over three floors above ground, to which is added the tall attic with no dividing walls, and is covered by a large pavilion roof, which is covered with shingles (overlapped larch tiles). The quadrangular building has a dry and compact volume, altered only by the barbican. This was leaned on the southern side in the early eighteenth century and covers the decoration of the red painted bossages which are placed on the yellow coloured paint that covers the entire building.

The south façade is also embellished by an imposing sundial, placed in the empty space between the windows of the first and second level. This was designed following the widespread system of French or astronomical hours and framed by a fake architecture in perspective of late-fifteenth-century flavour.

To the north-east there is a non-pertinent building that once constituted the rustic wooden annex, with the typical “pont”, functional to the climb of the carts. This was replaced by a masonry construction in the early sixties of the twentieth century. Another merit of the last restorations is that of having split the building of the last century from the historical part with a clear caesura, made evident through the inclusion of a modern glazed structure of different height.

The renovations promoted by the Morenberg in the house they had acquired in the mid-sixteenth century were aimed at normalising the fronts by giving them greater harmony and balance. The various openings, carved in local limestone, are thus distributed symmetrically. For the most part architraves, the windows have a molded pediment and windowsill, with the exception of the holes along the central axis of the east and west elevations. Here, there are good-looking mullioned windows, characterised by exquisitely embellished windows, side piers decorated with geometric motifs and central column with leaflet capital. On the first floor, on the rear facing east, in the place of the mullioned window there is the main entrance door of the building, above which, as we have seen, stands the emblem of the Genetti family of Dambel. The archivolted portal on the ground floor is inserted in a totally asymmetric position with respect to the general context, which reflects the destination of this level as warehouse and animas shelter (very different uses compared to the upper floors). The radical humanistic-renaissance reconfiguration of the building, perceivable with greater clarity on the exterior, presupposes the involvement of a valiant workforce. This was influenced by the work experience on the field and informed about early modern age architectural novelties, as illustrated in contemporary essays.

The Lombard stone craftsmen, present permanently and extensively working in the valleys of the Noce (Val di Non and Val di Sole), were already responding to similar requirements, starting from the end...
of the fifteenth century and, with the new century, in the nearby Alto Adige. The stylistic-formal consonances of some of its South Tyrolese buildings, suggest to bring back the paternity to Silvestro del Gallo. Some examples are the current Weißes Rössl hotel, on the main square of Caldaro, or, in the same village, the Mühlburg residence (see “Ansitz Mühlburg”). Another example is the Castel Campan (see “Schloss Campan”) owned in 1582 by Cipriano Morenberg, brother of Carlo, owner of the palace of Sarnonico. Silvestro del Gallo was a lapicida, an architect and a master builder. Between 1580 and 1590 he is mentioned in relation both to the above mentioned South Tyrolean construction sites and to the same town of Sarnonico. In 1585, and therefore at the time of the modernisation of the residence of Carlo Morenberg, Silvestro was in fact guarantor for the sum anticipated by the community and the parish of Sarnonico to the painter Giuseppe da Lurago. The painter was temporarily residing in Sarnonico to perform an altar in the local church of San Lorenzo where the surviving doors of a triptych assigned to the da Lurago are still preserved today, hung on the right wall of the presbytery.

The half-bust Madonnina praying and crowned with stars now inserted in an aedicule along the low perimeter fence of the courtyard of Palazzo Morenberg was created in the mid-eighteenth century by a sculptor from Val di Non. It is attributed, according to the style, to Pietro Antonio Barbacovi, originally from Taio (current fraction of the Municipality of Predaia) where he died “70 years and older” in 1763.

The internal organisation of Palazzo Morenberg tries to support the search for symmetry which, in the external fronts, is mainly achieved through the distribution of the holes. The division of the rooms accommodates the principles of Renaissance architecture with median hallways on which the doors of two-rooms (north and south) overlook. The presence of painted decorations on the walls of the two upper floors, so copious and widespread as to make it a real domus picta, is linked to their different function. The first level was intended for negotia, i.e. business and public life, especially householder. The second was dedicated rather to the otia, that is to the more recreational activities and to the private life of the whole family.

From the courtyard, surrounded by a time of perimeter walls, you can access both the ground and the upper level. The ground floor, composed of rooms that differ from each other by surface, plan and type of roofing (rib-vaulted ceilings or barrel-vaulted or flat), was intended for housing animals and foodstuff storage. This is suggested by some particular characteristics: the use of the stone in the construction in order to have fresher environments and the limited height, with lowered vaults, until the openings to the outside. Where today we find spaces for temporary exhibitions and events once there were stables and cellars.

The first floor is very different, obviously destined to perform functions of representation and therefore to the lord’s negotia. It is reachable via an external stone staircase, leaning against the eastern wall and probably built between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The wrought iron parapet is more recent, dating back to the sixties of the twentieth century. At the top of the staircase, a trapezoidal door framed by jambs of sober elegance leads into the central hall, which extends longitudinally throughout the entire body of the building and is lit by the mullioned window. On the walls, where there are four doors from the moulded cymatiums, there is a frescoed curtains decoration with real-
istic tassels and painted with vertical bands alternated in shades of white and yellow and red ocher. The bands evoke the heraldic colours of the owners. The knowledge and cultural interests of the Morenbergs allude to the subjects depicted in trompe l’oeil above the painted frame that closes the fake curtain.

Here we see many objects related to music, alchemy, geography and everyday life of men who boasted something uncommon in past centuries – such a degree of literacy that made writing and studying familiar. Here is a score and various musical instruments - the mandola, the horn, the trumpet; a magic square, where the sum of the numbers shown on each side always gives the same result, and an alchemical table; an astrolabe and a globe; a book, a parchment and an inkwell.

In addition to the terrestrial globe, another reference to distant worlds is also the monkey represented at the right of the mullioned window, symmetrically to a cat on the opposite side. The exotic animal, caught in the act of eating a fruit, is chained and therefore alludes to the lack of ways and habits that must be curbed. In addition to the reasons now mentioned, in the upper part of the walls are shown some laurel wreaths suspended from the ceiling by red ribbons. Plant garlands frame the coats of arms with the intention of celebrating the owners of the palace and their important alliances with other families of the Trentino-Tyrolean nobility. The coat of arms today are not easily identifiable because they have been largely made with the fresco-secco painting technique and therefore deteriorated, compared to the remaining pictorial passages. Among the coats of arms that can be better identified are the Langenmantel di Termeno (a double silver R on a red field), the Caldes (red, silver band) and the Morenberg-Giovo (quartered: in the 1st and in the 4th golden field, with a red hunting dog with the head turned and the silver collar; in the 2nd and 3rd silver field, with a red lion of red, holding a golden yoke). The latest is reproduced twice, one of which has its own crest (rising hunting dog turned and rising red lion).

Another reference to the Morenberg family is the cryptogram which, inserted in the medallion on the intrados of the mullioned window (painted to imitate marble, is dissolved in Maria (the daughter of Carlo Morenberg).

From the first door on the southern flank of this environment, we reach the room called “of the apples” because of the decoration on the walls. Here, in fact, the band that runs above the tapestry painted in parallel strips (white, ocher yellow and ocher red), similarly to the Coat of Arms, serves as a shelf on which are placed red apples and quince apples, pomegranates and pumpkins. All these fruits are therefore rich in seeds and harbinger of abundance, prosperity and numerous descent.

Slender leafy branches stand out against the light background of the masonry and the wood is also embellished with phytomorphic motifs. The adjacent room, once connected to the “apple” room by a walled door and then used as a wardrobe, is completely covered with Swiss stone pine boards and wooden coffered ceiling. The room in question is characterised as a typical “stube”; in the past equipped it was with a stove, as indicated by the presence of a fireplace. Other noteworthy elements are the fir cabinet with worked mirrors, work of local handicrafts from the 17th and 19th centuries, and the decorations of the doors, which are made are made with fluted columns. These are supported by a high architrave and a tympnum, below which we can see denticles moldings. The two rooms to the north compared to the median saloon have undergone more important tampering due to the shifting of doors and the opening of windows. The vaulted roof in the north-west environment (the only one of this type on the first and on the second level) would suggest that it was originally used as a kitchen.

The connection with the second floor is guaranteed by stairs obtained in the former rustic annex and reconfigured during the last restorations. On the other hand, we do not know with absolute certainty how it worked at the time of building of the palace. A very plausible hypothesis is that the access was guaranteed by an external wooden staircase ending in a walkway. Two mullioned windows - one on the east front and the other on the west one - accompanied by original stone side
seats, illuminate the central hall of this level. These provide with a certain solemnity which is also emphasised by the thresholds stones with architraves and piers of renaissance style refined by lozenges carved according to typical forms of the shops of stonemasons active in these valleys during the sixteenth century. Here too, a rich pictorial parade unfolds along the wall surfaces in the “Sala degli Stemmi” (transl. “Room of Coats of Arms”) on the lower floor. Over a high band with marble mirrors, some greyhounds - or rather, some hunting dogs, heraldic animals of the Morenbergs - are illustrated on all the walls in different attitudes but mostly intent on chasing their prey: a pair of running hares and a tawny fox holding a mallard in its mouth.

Other animals are represented on the wall to the south where there are a bear, two wild boar and, above the loading mouth of the tiled stove placed in the next room, an elephant. The first door towards south leads to the “daughters’ room”, whose two doors and two windows are enriched by complex frescoed architectures: pedestals, large volute shelves and powerful entablatures supported by half-timbered figures without veils or wearing clothes that can be traced back late to sixteenth-century fashion of Nordic influence. The lintels of the eastern and southern windows lay respectively on naked atlantes, one bearded and older, the other beardless and much younger, and on caryatids, always naked, with one arm hidden by the drapery and the other engaged to support the architectural element above.

Around the door facing the living room we find two female figures with a rather austere set with a crown on the head and a ruff around the neck. Also the most mature lady and gentleman flanking the door to the south-west corner room wear a similar pleated collar. It is evocative to imagine them as the portraits of the owners and patrons of the decoration of the building: Carlo Morenberg, the consort and daughters. Next to the room, there is a second stube much more sumptuous than the one on the first floor and entirely lined in wood, including the coffered ceiling of different geometric shapes.

The walls are punctuated by Tuscan-style pilasters with a mirrored trunk, above which a cornice is set, distinguished above by an uninterrupted line of dentils. A similarly denticular frame encloses the tympanums of the portals framing the two entrances of the room, which are conceived as en miniature monumental architectures. Doric fluted semicolumns with ovoid echinus rise to support the architrave, topped by the tympanum, in whose central field is a shield that, inserted in a fan of scalloped elements to create almost the valve of a shell, had to bear a time the Morenberg armor.

In the upper third of the walls, within panels with horizontal pattern, eleven paintings are placed where, at the centre of medallions with exuberant carved frames, we can see the Theological Virtues (Faith, Hope, Charity) and the Cardinal Virtues (Pruudence, Justice, Fortress, Temperance). We can also find the biblical characters of Judith, with the sword in one hand and the head of Holofernes in the other, and of Salomè, with the severed head of St. John the Baptist on a tray. Inserted within rectangular geometric patterns are the Patience, with a lamb on the side, and the allegory of Fortuna, portrayed according to the typically Renaissance iconography: naked, with feet on a globe, recalling the world on which she extends her own domain, and a sail inflated by the breeze in hand, allusion to the volatility of the wind and fate. In correspondence with the windows, the figurative cycle interrupts and leaves room for the reproduction of two pairs of coats of arms bearing both, at the bottom, the date 1588, which provides a secure chronological support to date the execution of the works.

Above facing south, the Morenberg emblem is next to the coat of arm (in silver filed a red salient steinbock with golden horns) identified as that of the Jelsperger. Above the single-lancet window to the west we can see the emblem (quartered: in the 1st and 4th blue field, with silver band, accompanied by a golden star to six tips at the top and at the tip of a golden crescent, in the 2nd and 3rd silver field, with a red salient chamois) of the Conzin Ritschenegg family, to which also belonged the mother of Carlo Morenberg. Resting on sturdy shaped feet
and decorated with geometric modular motifs in green, yellow and blue lozenges, there is also a tower-shaped stufa a olle (masonry heater), typical of the production of Sfruz’s furnaces in Val di Non. Sfruz is the highest village of the Predaia plateau where, from the 16th century, the production of similar artefacts was flourishing. The stove is wrapped half-height by a band of elegant panels representing folders with the imperial double-headed eagle flanked by lions and bearing the date 1643. The stove culminates, at the top, with a laced border as antefixes and angels who hold the coat of arms in the corners.

Away from prying eyes, half hidden behind the stove, a maid is finally painted in simple clothes, barefoot and with the keys of the house tied at the waist. This space, among the most beautiful interiors of the Val di Non, has some important similar examples, more or less precise, both in the area and in South Tyrol. For some time now, the critics have noted the affinities that exist with the subsequent pictorial decoration, dateable to the early seventeenth century, of Casa Thun-Martini (now Ziller and Zuech) in the not far Revò. Here the stove room, which is named after a tiled stove, presents a cycle of Virtues and rural scenes, above a wooden lining on the walls. Another suggestive comparison is with the Room of the Prince of Velthurns Castle or Schloss Velthurns in South Tyrol, summer residence of the prince-bishops of Brixen/Bressanone. The room was built by Giovanni Tommaso Spaur, who was born in 1528 by the Val di Non captain Ulrico (1495-1549) and Caterina Madruzzo († 1551). From 1578 until her death, which occurred in 1591, Spaur sat on the episcopal chair of Bressanone.

The furnishings of the room of Velthurns were put in place in the early eighties of the sixteenth century and therefore in the same period of the Sarnonico stube. Examples of the furnishing are the elegantly inlaid boiserie, the great majolica stove and the Cycle of the World Wonders painted in the upper band of the walls. Although documented as early as 1581 (“nova stuba pallati”), its decorative campaign ended in 1588, marking the coats illustrated above the windows. If the sumptuous room of the South Tyrolean manor seems to be a sort of noble prototype for the one in Val di Non, archetypes of the north also look at the decoration of the last two rooms located in the north of the building. These have suffered the most, over the centuries, unfortunate alterations and renovations not always respectful of the original assets.

In the north-west room, however, in the lower register there is a parade with alternate stripes (green, white, yellow, purple) with ornamental motifs and, on the sides of the panel that acts as a painted overdoor towards the hall, the personifications of Justice, with sword and balance, and Prudence, with the mirror. Other frames, this time grotesque, remain around the buffered openings of the north wall. The one on the right culminates in a mask with a severe expression and presents, on the left margin, a humorous and scurrilous scene at the same time: a naked and crouched putto looks at himself in the mirror while he is defecating on a second putto intent on reaching him, climbing on the decorations of the frescoed frame.

The artistic personal-

ity working in these various rooms manifests a figurative culture of Nordic extraction re-elaborates suggestions lead us to its important precedents in pictorial texts of the area such as the frescoes of the Bertagnolli house. Owned by the Thun family, we can find it in the nearby town of Fondo, just over a kilometre away. The house is imbued with late-Renaissance and mannerist elements and is characterised by a lively chromatism.

The wall paintings representing musical animals, lansquenets and the Trojan outlet, were performed around the fifth decade of the sixteenth century by Bartlmä Dill Riemenschneider (1500 ca.-1550ca.). The painter was born in Würzburg by the famous sculptor and engraver Tilman (1460ca.-1531). He was active for several decades in the ecclesiastical principalities of Trento and Bressanone, where he moved from the third decade of the century.
At the centre of the Mezzalone plateau, stretched between the Bassa Val di Sole, the central part of Val di Non and the so-called Terza Sponda anaune (the area north of the torrent Noce and the Rio Novella), lies the town of Livo. Of ancient foundation, the village includes several mansions and country houses and, in the immediate surroundings, castles such as Zoccolo. The castle once stood where the remains of the farm of the same name stands today, on top of a hill among the inhabited Cis and Livo, or the late Castel Livo. It is not currently possible to identify its precise location, although in the past there have been hypotheses in favour of the doss Caslir, not far from the village, placed in a dominant position. This would have provided natural defences on three sides, being reachable only from the north. Another hypothesis is the Plodos or Plovi, a portion of the countryside between the settlements of Scanna and Varollo (fractions of the Municipality of Livo), in a site lower than the doss Caslir.

It is difficult to outline a clear genealogical pattern that would encompass all the noble characters who have boasted the distinctive title and toponymic denomination of ‘da Livo’ over the centuries. They could be considered as a sort of “common stock” which gradually took life as a new lineage during the Late Middle Ages, yet destined to differentiate according to their place of residence. The Aliprandini-Laifenthurm family resided in the homonymous palace. This palace, commonly called “Toresela” or “Castello della Rosa”, faces on the main - via Marconi - around which the town of Livo extends. The Aliprandini family may derive from the ancient lineage of the Malosco lords, with whom they share the coat of arms (silver field, with a red rose; red filed with a silver rose or red field with a purple rose).

In 1385, indeed, Albert of Ortenburg (1335 ca. - 1390), who was from 1360 the prince bishop of Trento, enfeoffed a certain Leonardo of Malosco of the rights owned by Giovanni Francesco di Livo, son of Adelpreto di Giacomo of Castel Cagnò. His son Riprando, married to Giovanna daughter of Genesio, notary of Varollo, had three children including Aliprando, eponymous progenitor of Aliprandini. The Aliprandini appear in the lists of noble bishops of Livo in the mid-sixteenth and in 1760 with such surname, appearing in the whole Mezzalone area, from Scanna to Varollo. During the modern age, the Aliprandini saw their nobility confirmed by both the Holy Roman Emperors (1614) and the prelates of Trentino.

Palazzo Aliprandini
Municipality of Livo
(1704). In May of 1736, the Hapsburg ruler Charles VI (1685-1740, emperor from 1711) was raised to knighthood under the predicate of “Leifenthurm”, that is “of the Livo Tower”, Giovanni Romedio (1667-1755), personal physician of the prince bishops of Salzburg Leopoldo Antonio Eleuterio Firmian (1679-1744, archbishop in Salzburg from 1727) and Jakob Ernst von Liechtenstein-Kastelkorn (1690-1747, archbishop in Salzburg since 1745), both belong to important traces of the Trentino-Tyrolean aristocracy.

In addition to the aforementioned Giovanni Romedio, the most famous member of the Aliprandini family was undoubtedly Biagio (1501-1571), born in Livo from Aliprando († 1542), son of Giovanni Riprando († 1490), and from Chiara Tavonatti.

Biagio studied between Rome, Padua and Pisa, where in 1554 he obtained the title of Doctor Decretorum. In 1528, when still a simple cleric, was appointed vicar general, canonico custode (since 1561) and then canonico scolastico (from 1565). Biagio died in Bressanone and was buried near the cemetery of the city’s cathedral which still holds, in the nearby cloister, the tombstone with the family emblem with miter and crosier.

Over the years, despite numerous commitments related to its important function, Aliprandini did not fail to return to the inherited palace and the Valli del Noce. Here, in 1567, he consecrated the church of St. Mary Magdalene (Italian Santa Maria Maddalena) in Cusiano (part of the Municipality of Ossana) in Val di Sole. In 1569 he promoted the consecration of St. Sebastian a Livo, to which, dictating his will in his native village, June 4, 1570, he devoted generous legacies. On July 4, 1570, he consecrated the chapel of St. Michael the Archangel (Italian San Michele) in Marceda (fracture of the Municipality of Rumo), not far from Livo.

The destinies of his nephews were also peculiar: the cousins Biagio and Recordino or Riccardino Aliprandini. The first, who died in 1629, was a Doctor of Law, like the uncle whose name he bore, and a court chaplain. In 1609 he became parish priest and dean of Linz, in the at that time diocese of Passau. On 13 September 1614, he and his cousin Riccardino, received from the monarch Mattia of Habsburg (1557-1619, emperor from 1612), recognition of their ancient nobility with the predicates of “Leuffed” and “Malusch” (i.e. of Livo and of Malosco). He was also the author of the Carmina ad varios and of the Oration De praestantia & utilitate sacerdotii, dedicated to his maternal uncle Giovanni Battista da Coredo († 1616), canon of Trento and Bressanone and bishop chancellor.

The cousin Riccardino, son of Giovanni Romedio, brother of the bishop Biagio, was soldier in Spain and Portugal and, after his return home in 1587, held the position of Captain of Val di Non and Val di Sole. He got married with Delaguardia and from him descend the Aliprandini who inhabited the Palazzo Aliprandini-Leifenthurm for generations, which, in more recent history, was gradually bought by the municipal administration. His great-grandson was the previously mentioned Giovanni Romedio, a doctor in Salzburg, where he died on December 13, 1755 and was buried in the Archabbey of St Peter. Of his sons, Giuseppe Antonio (1740-1779) was honorary canon of Coira and parish priest of Mezzolombardo. Giuseppe Antonio died in Mezzolombardo before the age of forty, while Giovanni Riccardo († 1767) married Barbara Elisabetta Teresa Betta of Castel Malgolo (1723-1788). From their union fourteen children were born with whom this branch of the Aliprandini family died out. The only attested marriage is that of daughter Anna Cattarina (1756-?), with Luigi de Stefenei of Fondo. In the nineteenth century, the Palace was then sold to the Bondi and Zanotelli families, ancestors of the last owners of the building. During this phase, the building was able to accommodate roughly fifty people - consequently splitting the palace into multiple housing unit arrangements dictated by the various needs of individual residents.

Since the end of the last century and for over two decades, the Municipality of Livo has
The special historical-artistic value of Palazzo Aliprandini-Laifenthurn, which makes it one of the most important and appreciated constructions of the Val di Non, is its exterior. This is distinguished both by angular towers, inherited from its medieval fortified architecture and by Renaissance composition of balanced proportions and symmetry in the openings distribution (a trait that still dominates the many changes of the building).

These characteristics, typical of the so-called madruzziana era at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, are a tangible manifestation of a new sensibility, affirmed among the noble classes of the entire valley but also of the nearby Oltradige in South Tyrol. Here we find numerous factories typologically and morphologically similar to that of Livo. These noble classes subsequently busied themselves converting their residences into palace-villas under the banner of greater elegance and comfort and the clear influence of the Italian Renaissance.

Today’s planimetric layout of the building is “U” arranged around the backyard and, together with the various elevations, tells us a lot about its construction. The original nucleus of the building dates back to the Middle Ages and consists of a quadrangular tower, built around 1000-1100 and developed with three floors above ground. Its walls have considerable thickness and its openings are arranged only on the north side, the side most protected from enemy attacks.

This turreted structure, which probably had a defensive function and viewpoint of the surrounding territory, remains hidden from the outside by the current facades. The west-facing side, on the stretch of Via Marconi in the direction of the church of St. Martin of Tours (Italian San Martino), faces the public park and is closed by two corner towers. The south tower is sixteenth century and is slightly higher than the rest of the building, while the north tower, commonly called “Toresela”, was built in the fifteenth century and was then elevated in the madruzzian period with the addition of the dovecote. Organised on four levels, the western front presents a double order of elegant windows with shelves: five on the second floor and four on the first. Here there is a ramp in stone, re-adapted in the nineteenth century (the so-called ‘pont’), which leads to the round arch portal. The portal is made up of piers and archivol in dark limestone ashlars and, underlining the arch, with fluted capitals in lighter stone. On the keystone, there is an engraving with the date 1788 and the shield of Aliprandini, with the characteristic rose. That is where the name “Castle of the Rose”, which is widely used locally to indicate the building, derives from. This area of the palace was considerably altered in the eighteenth century by restyling and expansion aimed at obtaining a single connecting front. This was an example of neo-renaissance, following the model of Castle Cles, between the aforementioned “Toresela” and the southern tower.

As a consequence, an independent perimeter curtain was built, which was only partially accompanied by the older one. The two walls then diverge by more than a meter, creating an interspace where they were created service spaces, bathrooms and vertical connections now clearly identifiable by visiting the interior.

The architecture of the northern front is more detailed and very suggestive, keeping its original appearance quite intact. The “Toresela”, sixteen meters high, is marked at the corners by false purple angle bars and with beautiful external railings on the first floor. These are decorated at their middle by a flower with...
four petals, a symbol of the heraldic rose of the owners. The Toresela protrudes distinctively from the façade, creating a movement that brings together both the different shape of the openings and the presence of various protruding elements.

Close to the “Toresela”, we find a staircase that gives access to an architraved door. This was redesigned with the latest Cor-Ten steel restoration, which fits well into the context because of its aesthetic qualities and its oxidized colour. Placed on the first floor and with a fanlight, it appears to be off centre from the rest of the building and the upper windows, revealing its later insertion. On the left of the ground floor, there is a large portal consisting of square stone blocks. Its old closing frame in carved wood, which is replaced by a glazed window, is currently kept is now admitted inside the building. In line with the door are arched single-lancet windows with elegantly sculpted white limestone frames. The first of them is protected by a tympanum window grille similar to that on the north face of the “Toresela”. The windows mark the various floors, while towards the east three corbels connected by small arches support a picturesque bay window (or erker), presumably erected in the seventeenth century.

The barbican placed in defense of the wall leaned until recent years on a lower rustic structure, with a two-pitched roof, which was removed during the restoration. This made it possible to highlight the structural elements of at least one of the two ancient bread ovens that served the house, protruding from the wall with wooden support and a characteristic plastered dome. Finally, on the third floor there is a long balcony, made entirely of wood. Secured to the roof above through five vertical and orthogonal beams, on its walking surface there are long rectangular tables arranged parallel and supported by eight large, wooden load-bearing modillions.

This balcony, with a parapet formed by more modelled columns, was installed in a period after the sixteenth century. The access door was obtained by demolition of the lower part of a sixteenth-century window and prior to 1748, when the wall was restored by applying a new plaster that reaches the base of the balcony. The latter, as well as the aforementioned kiln, give the space the character of a peasant yard: a sign of the progressive conversion of the building from a stately residence to a popular settlement of farmhouses. With the castles ongoing descent into decadence, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the need to cope with the needs, not only housing, of the numerous families settled in the building complex led to the raising of further buildings. These were often rather invasive and not very coherent with the pre-existent structures: some of them were also destined to agricultural and commercial activities. Later restorations have systematically demolished such architectural redundancies, reaching a new appearance, as well as the remaining areas outside Palazzo Aliprandini-Laifenthur. In addition, these restorations created an interior courtyard full of charm but at the same time equipped with the most modern facilities to accommodate video projections and musical performances (including a raised platform for orchestra and the structure for a big screen).

Finally, we find the southern prospect, which is different and more regular, especially concerning the sequence of openings. This was the first to be acquired by the City of Livo and it is where the council headquarters are, overlooking the square planted with mulberries. The presence of false angle bars and the in-depth examination of the wall connections allow us to identify the changes made in the façade and its development by adding new artifacts in successive stages. The oldest of these is contiguous to the southern tower, born from the Renaissance age as part of another building of which no trace remains. Subsequently, an angle bar was created and then another, which was hinged to the entrance hall that brings to the ground floor. Finally, we can see the modern structure on the far right, which was erected in the second half of the twentieth century.
The Interiors

The internal layout of Palazzo Aliprandini-Laifenthurn reflects the complex construction of the building with several parts adding to the initial nucleus, which consisted of the ancient Romanesque quadrangular tower.

On the ground floor, the building includes rib vaults, barrel vaults and multiple rooms used in the past for housing livestock and storing food and work tools. This demonstrates the coexistence of traits of both elegant architecture with the rustic and functional purposes of such as agriculture. At this level of the palace, of particular interest is the “Sala della Colonna”, which is northwest within the structure of the original tower. On a structural level, the room has compelling similarities with the homonymous environment located on the ground floor and this is proposed in an almost identical way on the first floor of the Palazzo Assessorile in Cles. On the southern wall of the room in Livo, whose rib vault is set on the central pillar that gives it its name, we can find the old wooden window frame from the previously mentioned north portal. This is carved with geometric patterns and inlaid roses, evoking the arms of the Aliprandini. The old central tower dates back to the XI-XII centuries and is the heart of the entire system, which has, in fact, determined its development in later times. Its corners are underlined by angle bar stones and the wall surface is made of broken stones of grey, red, and white colour and generally quite regular shape and size.

Continuing in the northern portion of the building, on the first floor we can still see doors with copings and jambs moulded in stone, a provincial translation of its own form of Renaissance courtly architecture. Three of these overlook the corridor, where we find the small portal at the top of the external stairs (now in Cor-Ten steel). According to tradition, the suffragan bishop of Trento and Bressanone Biagio Aliprandini, who was the most authoritative exponent of the family, was born in the first room on the left (east).

The room has a ceiling with eight wooden beams, of which the two sleepers along the walls are painted to imitate marble patterns. Traces of frescos also remain, although now virtually indecipherable, in the space of the erker connecting with the hall. Next to the southern wall, on the opposite side of the door just mentioned, is a ceramic stove in green copper and embossed with white decorations that can be certainly assigned to the Sfruz factories, in Val di Non. In fact, the central panel of the square tower refers to the well-known workshop of fornelari, active in the small village of the Predaia plateau. Here, within an elaborate lozenge defined by vegetal-floral elements, we can see a young woman. The character is wrapped in a long dress with small dense parallel folds and marches carrying in her hand a bouquet. The clay mold of the female figure, which is dated 1833, is preserved at the Museum of the Uses and Costumes of the Trentino People of San Michele all’Adige. This persuade us to place the making of the Livo artefact in the first decades of the Nineteenth century.

According to a very common practice, the stove was powered, for reasons of practicality and cleanliness, through an open pipe in the adjoining room facing east and looking over the internal courtyard. This area was once used as a kitchen, as evidenced by the “mouth” of the bread oven and, above all, the two large, solid beams on which the hearth mantle rests; once placed in the north-east corner. Mirroring what was found in the part facing north, on the western front we also find two rooms, but this time directly connected with each other and with only one access point to the atrium. The access in placed in correspondence with the room that looks yeast within the limits of the old Romanesque tower. Within the perimeter of the “Torresela”, there is instead a beautiful 18th century boisserie. The wooden cover that is placed on the walls includes the splays of the windows and the access door and is extended up to the pedestals on which the rib vault cover is set. The cover is marked by pilasters with a mirrored trunk and by Tuscan-style capitals. These support a cornice where fragments of fresco peep out on the eastern side, resurfaced under lime and tempera tints. These frescos depict wheels, or corollas depicted in a very concise manner and inscribed in circumferences. In addition, we can see a stylised rose, which is a clear heraldic reference to the Aliprandini.

Here there is a second stufa a olle (masonry heater) in brown-coloured manganese with more modern lines than the previous, but powered in a similar manner through an ad hoc passage with outlet in the adjacent room. This is characterised by a peculiar ceiling with decorated beams, together with the wooden partition that they support. In addition, we can see luxuriant floral pattern with bright colours such as orange
red, green and ocher yellow. Moving on the same level along the west wing of the complex, there is an imposing void that constitutes one of the most original outcomes of the last restoration. It is a sort of large covered cavaedium with a considerable scenic value. This is developed over three floors and makes the ancient warping of the roof visible to the visitor. We can also see the outer walls of the Romanesque tower, the south tower and also the gap created by the divergence between the walls of the front in the evening, exploited to obtain service rooms and stairs. All these elements can be enjoyed from unusual points of view thanks to suspended paths and balconies. These are absolutely invasive and are made with modern lines and materials that avoid any mimetic intent or risks of fabrications of history. The structures have been placed in order not to help the understanding and the view of the volumes and spaces brought to light and made usable again with the restoration of the last thirty years. To enhance the cavaedium is the installation of Synthesis Space (Italian Spazio di Sintesi): a site-specific intervention specifically conceived for this place, by the Trentino artist Stefano Cagol (born in 1969). The artist wanted to transport inside the centuries-old walls of Palazzo Aliprandini- Laifenthurn the external reality. He could achieve that by reproducing, via the peculiar pattern of the light tubes, the contour lines of the cartography of the Mezzalone territory, on which lie the town of Livo and its fractions Varollo, Scanna and Pregehenia.

On the second floor of the north block, we can admire the large double-height living room, with a walkway next to the perimeter walls. This has been totally reconfigured during recent renovations and is destined to host representations, events and public meetings. The recovery operations undertaken aimed to evoke the ancient facies of this room, which underwent a redevelopment in the eighteenth century of which traces can be seen in what is left of the stucco moldings. These used to run along the walls and on the vault before the collapse of the ceiling occurred during the twentieth century due to the weight of the hay here stored.

In stucco are also the elegant mixtilinear and oval-shaped frame, which at this same level soften the ceilings respectively of the northeast room and the adjacent erker.

On the same second floor there is a further stufa a olle made by the expert artisans of Sfruz. This can be found in one of the rooms of the southern block, just outside the south tower. This is similar to that of the so-called ‘Bishop’s Room’ both in its nuance (the traditional green ramina) and in the repertoire of the ornamental elements (the hanging leaves, the crowning vessel of the dome). However, it differs for the cylindrical turret instead of the parallelepiped one and for the combustion chamber lying on a wooden base with molded feet. The walls of the room are also covered with wood which, prepared and well insulated as well as oriented towards the south, has all the characteristics of the „stua“ or stube. The stua is an environment typical of the valley and alpine houses in general. Its furnishings and furniture changed in a more or less significant way according to the socio-economic conditions and the artisanal skills of the workers responsible for their construction. Used in the past as a living room, the room is currently home to the cultural association “Il Quadrifoglio”.

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