

## **Castel Nuovo.**

### **Aragonese and later viceregal renovations to original Angevin fortress and residence**

In 1266, Charles I of Anjou decided to build Castelnuovo with the plan of architect Pierre de Chaule.

In 1282 the Castle was finished, and was called *Castrum Novum* to distinguish it from the older Castel dell'Ovo and Castell Capuano.

Castelnuovo became the main residence of the king, and became with Castel Capuano, the centre of political, ceremonial and cultural life of the court.

In 1442, Alfonso I of Aragon conquered Naples, and Castelnuovo was almost completely destroyed in the war against Rene d'Anjou.

Alfonso entered the city on February the 26th of 1443 (as *Rex utriusque Siciliae*).

Today's Castelnuovo is the result of a 20th c. rebuilding attempted to restore the castle to its Aragonese times, based on 15th c. descriptions and images, like *the Tavola Strozzi*; and by freeing monumental evidence remaining from subsequent additions made after 1734, when the castle got surrounded by buildings, warehouses and houses.

The director of the *Archivio di Stato* and director of the restorations of the castle in 1926, Riccardo Filangieri is one of the main sources about the Aragonese Castelnuovo. He considered Alfonso I rebuilt Castelnuovo reusing the structures of the Angevin castle; while Achille Stella, president of the *Associazione per la tutela dei monumenti e del paesaggio*, considered it was reconstructed from its base.

#### **\* Restorations and Additions made by Alfonso I of Aragon**

In March the 25<sup>th</sup> 1443 the reconstruction of Castelnuovo started as a family residence as an aim take symbolic possession of the city. It became important to reinforce the castle and the city, with up-to-date architecture techniques of defence against potential offensive of new firearms.

This was achieved by increasing the thickness of the walls, building towers and buttresses, by the establishing of *rivellini* (a triangular fortification of open air crenelated battlement, with capacity of 1000 horses and 2000 soldiers<sup>1</sup>); by the existence of two moats, one of which could be flooded with water; and the construction of a *citadella* (trapezoidal fortress surrounded by five bastions) in charge of the military architects Francesco di Giorgio and Antonio Marchesi da Settignano, which works lasted from 1498 to 1500. (The *citadella* was lost in the attempt to isolate the castle).

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<sup>1</sup> Troilo di Muro and Orfeo Cenni, Milanese ambassadors in a letter to the Duke of

At the time of Carlo I of Anjou, the entrance was at the north, to the city. The door was flanked by towers and connected to a second door with a drawbridge, it open to the perimeter fence, called *balium*. This door was in a way connected to the port, and therefore was a vulnerable point for Castelnuovo's defence, which the Aragonese knew from the battle against René d'Anjou. So, Alfonso decided to change the entrance to the west.

Alfonso provided the port with another pier and an arsenal<sup>2</sup> and started to reinforce the perimeter wall.

In 1446 was finished the coverage of the new entrance to the castle.<sup>3</sup>

By September 1446. Batolomeu Prats and Bartolomeu Villasclar, two Catalan stonecutters or stonemasons (*pedra-piquers*) started to work on the Catalan style ribbed vault that gave access to the vestibule. It is set on a squared plan and covered by a rib vault (which is now visible after crossing the Triumphal Arch).

King Alfonso's coat of arms was disposed at the centre of the vault so as to surround the keystone, related with the corbels and with the vertices of the four-pointed star formed by the ribs of the vault.

By January the 14th 1451<sup>4</sup> it was ordered the transportation of stone from Majorca to Naples. Antoni Sagrera, son of Guillerme *protomagister* of the factory of Castelnuovo, and Cristofol Vilasclar were in Majorca in charge of selecting the piperno stones (igneus rock of grey colour) to be used in the construction. They had to cut and sand the blocks of stone before sending them to Naples. The stones were mostly brought from the areas of Santanyi and Felanitx. Antoni Sagrera had to select a block to be used as a tabernacle of a sculpture of a *Justice* that was to be set in front of the vault of the entrance to the Castelnuovo (which would be 6 palms long, 5 pals high and 4 palms width).

In April the 19th 1451, a contract was established between the king and four masters of soil quarry: Onofrio di Giordano, Coluccio di Stasio, Carlo e Pretello de Marino. For 41,000 ducats, they would leave unaltered the façade facing the sea and remake the north, west and south curtains walls, with its correspondent towers: The *Beverello* to nord-east; *San Giorgio* nord-west, the *Mezzo* tower, and the *Guardia* tower to south-west.

These towers at corners of the fortress and at the entrance followed the model of the cylindrical tower *dell'Oro*. They were, and were also made from the very resilient piperno stone.

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<sup>2</sup> Aided by Onofrio di Giordano della Cava. Battista.

<sup>3</sup> According to a *Cedula della Tesoreria Aragonese* transcribed by Riccardo Filangeri.

<sup>4</sup> "Memorial fet per la magestat del senyor Rey an Antoni Sagrera da la obra del Castellnou." Battista

The quarry masters were asked to supply the three towers (the tower of *san Giorgio*, and the two towers of the entrance door to the castle) with piperno stone. The two stands (*basamenti*) of the Guard tower and of the Mezzo tower were coated with an ashlar work<sup>5</sup> at diamond tip (*a punta di diamante*) following the pattern executed by Guillerme Sagraera in the north-west tower. They didn't do the work on marble, nor windows.

The piperno stone<sup>6</sup> was also used to finish the upper side of the new curtain walls, where it was possible to do a gallery of arcs, as a covert corridor that should run to three sides of the perimeter.<sup>7</sup>

In the contract of 1451, there is also one reference of the need to do a bridge to unite the wall of the counterscarp of the moat and the entrance door.

Although there was the plan to do a triumphal arch at the entrance, it was only around 1452-1453 that the actual work of the marble triumphal arch *all'antica* started at the entrance of Castelnuovo. It would commemorate the victorious entry of Alfonso the 1st of Aragon into Naples in 1443.<sup>8</sup> Part of the team of sculptors working on the triumphal arch were Pietro di Martino da Milano, Francesco Laurana, Pere Johan, Paolo Romano, Isaiah and Domenico Gagini. (Although Andrea dell'Aquila is the only sculptor name documented on the *Triumpho del portal del Castell nou* in January 1456).<sup>9</sup>

The arch represents on a first frieze, Alfonso's triumphal, and pacific, entrance to the city, with his quadriga, musicians, the Victory and the Fame. Above the frieze is a second lower arch with paired columns, topped by four niches containing statues and a curved front with figures of abundance.

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<sup>5</sup> Masonry made of large square-cut stones, typically used as a facing on walls of brick or stone

<sup>6</sup> Rosanna di Battista estimates that more piperno came from Pozzuoli, a city in Campania.

<sup>7</sup> Filangeri who found traces of the southern and western curtain wall, in the 1926 restoration works, which retrieved the original disposition. Filangeri; Battista.

<sup>8</sup> Gudeli mentions how during the festive entry, an actor dressed as Julius Caesar greeted Alfonso calling him *Eccelso Re* and *Cesare novello*. Gudeli, 439.

Gudeli suggests the relation between the Alfonso's arch and the Sergii Arch in Pulas, for not only is the shape and style similar, but Alfonso's arch follows the roman ratio (resulted for the multiplication by 6), the similar iconography, the function of the arch as an entrance of a fortified gate, the greek origin of the cities Pula and Naples, and that of similar inscriptions which lead to a recognition of Cesar as a conqueror and merciful man, and a probable consideration of the arch as an arch of Cesar, which would be important due to Alfonso's great admiration for the emperor.

<sup>9</sup> Hersey 1973, pp. 46-55.

Later, Ferrante inserted an inner arch facing the fortress's courtyard built the upper part during Alfonso's second campaign on the Apennine peninsula (ca. 1465-1471).<sup>10</sup>

Along with the inscriptions *Hanc condidit arcem* and *Alfonsus rex hispanus sicutus italicus/ pius clemens invictus*

It seems that the sculptors started working from the base towards the top, and so around 1453 they could have been working on the base and on the left relief, before Isiaia's arrival in 1455.

Scholar Christoph Luitpold distinguishes the personal work of the sculptures in the reliefs of the door: For him, Laurana could have been the one representing king Alfonso; Pietro da Milano could have helped him with the execution of the figures on the second row. Isaiah probably represented Ferrante and his military (in the first row). Luitpold mentions that Paolo Romano and Pere Johan might have been working on the decoration of griffins and plumes. He considers that Andrea dell'Aquila is the author of the left side of the relief (where he identifies some forms close to Donatello's). Luitpold concludes that it is probable that Pietro da Milano was the author of the *Saint 'Antonio abate* and of *San Giorgio*; Isaiah, of the *Fortitudo* and the *Virtù guerriera*; Laurana, of the *Guistizia*; Gagini, of the *Temperanza*, and Antonio Chiellino of the *Prudenza*. Pere Joan was the author of the statue of *San Michele* (from 1560). The completion of the arch extended until the new reign. In 1466, Ferrante called Pietro di Martino to finish the arch.

In the frieze, the procession changes direction five times; which added to the slightly different variety on the style of the figures, suggests the work is the result of the collaboration of the different artists.

From 1456 to 1458 Donatello was working in Florence on a bronze equestrian statue of king Alfonso that was probably placed at the top of the arch.<sup>11</sup>

In 1452 took place the refashion of the courtyard on Catalan style with an external staircase. That is, courtyard at the centre of the building with a main staircase that could be either open or half closed.<sup>12</sup>

The courtyard contained stone *intaglios* done by the stonemasons, and antiquities acquired by Alfonso in 1447, from which, according to De Divitiis, two marble ones sent from Rome could have been antique.

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<sup>10</sup> Jasenka Gudeli, p. 435

<sup>11</sup> Today in the Museo Nazionale di Napoli. In 1467 after Donatello's death, the head was given to Lorenzo il Magnifico who gave it as gift to Diomedes Carafa, an old partisan and Alfonso's admirer. It is possible that the original knight had been placed in the superior arch in 1458.

<sup>12</sup> De Divitiis.

The courtyard had plants and was overlooked by loggias, galleries, windows and balconies, and by the façades of the *Gran Sala*, the Palatine Chapel and the royal apartments. The courtyard was illuminated at night only on certain occasions.<sup>13</sup> In 1456 Alfonso I repaired the original Angevin Palatine chapel, for it was damaged after an earthquake. Its entrance presents a small arch, with columns to the sides, and a niche on top of the door. Alfonso commissioned the team working on the triumphal arch with sculptures for the chapel.

The chapel, dedicated to *Santa Barbara* and *San Sebastiano*, contains a *Madonna* by Domenico Gagini and a *Madonna in trono col bambino* of Francesco Laurana (amongst others from the Angevin times, like the affreschi di Giotto).<sup>14</sup>

King Alfonso acquired several sculptures and reliefs, as well as Flanders's canvases and tapestries to be displayed in Castelnuovo, through the Catalan merchant Andreu Pou, and some others through the librarian Janne Terres active in Rome around September 1455.

#### **\* Restorations and additions made by king Ferrante I of Naples**

The construction of the *Gran Sala* lasted from 1454 to 1457. The Majorcan architect Guillem Sagrera was in charge to built it, but died in November, so the his brother Joan de Sagrera stepped in for the work. The piperno stone was also employed in this area.

The *Gran Sala* is squared with an octagonal ribbed vault, like the Islamic vault in a *tuba*. The *Gran Sala* fused Spanish late-Gothic style with classic antiquity influences.

Filangieri, the architect in the 20th c. in charge of Castelnuovo's demodulation relates it to the Roman *Pantheon*, for the predilection for classic sculptures.<sup>15</sup> The scholar Amadeo Serra, relates it to architecture from southern Spain, by the similarity of its vault to the ones in Valencia's Cathedral,<sup>16</sup> the *Aljafería* of Zaragoza,<sup>17</sup> the *Cuarto de los leones*, and the *Sala de las Dos Hermanas* in the Alhambra in Granada.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Like on September 1465, with 14 candelabra holding torches, according to Filangieri. De Divitiis

<sup>14</sup> Relief of the *Natività* by Andrea dell'Aquila (¿)

<sup>15</sup> De Divitiis mentions how it recalled the throne rooms of Arab palaces in Sicily and Spain, as well as the thermal baths of the Campi Phlegrei.

In a letter from Pietro Summonte to Marco Antonio Micheli in 1524, Pietro devalues the artistical work mentioning: "its catalan," which shows his nationalistic taste.

<sup>16</sup> The cathedral dates from the 13th c. but the crossing was done between 1300-1350. Directed by architect Antoni Gilabert Fornés.

<sup>17</sup> 11th c.

<sup>18</sup> 14th c.

Sagrera also constructed a spiral stair behind the walls.

Tapestries with biblical themes, and Valencian tiles from Manises covered the walls.

The *Gran Sala*, also called *Sala del Trionfo*, was later named the *Sala dei Baroni* after the story of barons plotting against king Ferrante were detained there in a banquet in 1486.

We know the route from the entrance to the *Gran Sala*, thanks to a pamphlet written by the Florentine humanist Pier Andrea da Verrazzano dedicated to Breatice of Aragon in the 15th c.<sup>19</sup>

From outside, there was a balcony from the *Gran Sala* that was sculpted by a Catalan artist at the time of Alfonso I.<sup>20</sup> Di Divitiis mentions the possibility that the balcony was built together with the rest of the *Gran Sala* in 1457, and, together with the window, was also known as the *finestra trionfale* (as another name of the *Gran Sala* was *Sala del Trionfo*)

For De Divitiis, the staircase, balcony and courtyard functioned as a theatrical setting for celebrations and feasts attended by a great number of guests.<sup>21</sup>

The balcony rested on one stone in the form of a vase, and was decorated with putti, animals, birds and various types of leaves and flowers. A tabernacle with a niche surmounted the balcony, where there was a stone sculpture of a "Justice" in human form, put there by Ferrante in 1472.

Ambassadors and other dignitaries would enter the *Gran Sala* from the monumental stone staircase.

A pamphlet written by the Florentine humanist Pier Andrea da Verrazzano dedicated to Breatice of Aragon (dated between 1474 and 1475) describes in a tale the route that led from the entrance to the *Gran Sala*.

Pompeo Sarnelli (in his guide of the city in 1685) mentions that the staircase was decorated at the bottom with a marble statue of a soldier. Fifteen years later (in 1700) Domenico Antonio Parrino, in his guide to the city, identified the statue with Nero. Parrino also mentions a bronze statue of Nero in a niche at the entrance of the Palatine Chapel, with a clock sphere with the figures of the seven planes.

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<sup>19</sup> Between 1474 and 1475

<sup>20</sup> It was destructed by a lighting bolt on 26 May 1511. De Divitiis

<sup>21</sup> For example the wedding of Isabella of Aragon to Gian Galeazzo Sforzza on 21 December 1488. Joanpiero Leostello describes how the many people made the fix balustrade of the staircase colpase.

Sarnelli and Parrino in their guides to Naples at the end of the 17th c. mention how Castelnuovo's courtyard was leading throughout Italy in being decorated with carefully arranged ancient statues.

Parrino mentions that next to the door on top of the staircase were two statues that were removed, and that two marble bas-reliefs portraits of Trajan and Hadrian were still in place. The court humanist Antonio Beccadelli (Panormita) mentions that Alfonso I considered Trajan and Hadrian as his predecessors. Scholar Virgilio Carmine underlines the exposition of busts of roman emperors from Iberic origin, Trajan and Hadrian, expresses a symbolic aim to legitimize Alfonso the 1st rule in Naples, relating to the antique Roman classicism and Alfonso's Mediterranean politics.

In 1455, Alfonso I commissioned a set of twelve heads of Roman emperors from the Florentine sculptor Desiderio da Settignano. In the same year, Mino da Fiesole portrayed Alfonso in a marble bust. Other half-bust profile portraits of emperors or generals inserted in laurel wreaths, executed by the Lombard sculptor Domenico Gagini, were set above the pediments of the double-sided marble "triumphal door" that led from the *Gran Sala* to the royal apartments in the northern wing.

The scholar Francesco Gaglioti questions if that set of twelve roman emperor's heads requested by king Alfonso in 1455 was the one taken to Ferrante in 1472 by Gregorio di Lorenzo who was Desiderio's pupil.<sup>22</sup> He wonders if the pupil Gregorio di Lorenzo had to complete, or even rework the series in the 17 years of interruption due to the deaths of king Alfonso in 1458 and that of Desiderio in 1464.

Andrea da Verrazzano mentions a sculpture of "Sleeping Ariadne" above the door at the top of the stairs.<sup>23</sup> According to De Divitiis, this image, in the Aragonese context, should be identified with the mermaid Parthenope, the mythic founder of Naples.<sup>24</sup> Alfonso received a sculpture from Cardinal Ludovico Trevisan in 1446, and in a letter, he asks the cardinal for his opinion on the place where it should be settled, now that he decided to identify it with Naples, which was finally in peace after many years in war.

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<sup>22</sup> Alfonso like divus "*Divus Alphonsus rex triumphator et pacificus*" from the medall done by Pisanello in 1449.

<sup>23</sup> "Rests the marble figure of a fourteen-year old naked virgin asleep, of such natural beauty that, whoever sees her, passes inside full of silent admiration so as not to wake her". De Divitiis

<sup>24</sup> On whose grave the Greek town of Parthenope was founded the bay that would eventually grow to become Naples. Jasenka Gudeli (438).

The *Gran Sala* is 26 meters on each side and 28 meters high.<sup>25</sup> Each face of the square is divided into two triangular surfaces, resulting in a ceiling with the shape of an eight-point star, whose edges are marked in stone.

The Scholar Amadeo Serra explains that the centre was surrounded by the keystones with the coat of arms of Aragon, Durazzo, Jerusalem and Sicily, alternating with the alphonine *emprese*: the *siti perillós* of the arthuric legend, with the inscription *In dextera tua salus mea, Domine*; the open book with the motto *Vir sapiens dominabitur astris*; the knot (for Salomon's knot or the anjevine order with the same name) and the millet, symbol of the incorruptibility and charity. All of which were visible before a fire in 1919.

The Florentine humanist from the 15th c. Andrea da Verrazzano offers a description of the *Gran Sala*. He says that the catafalque stood on the right of the entrance and occupied an entire side of the room; it had seven steps to ascend it and was covered with fine tapestries. Next to the wall, at the centre of the room was the royal throne worked in gold and silk, higher than the seats to its right and left. Behind the throne and higher up, there was a rich gold brocade *pallium*, and various embroidered liveries.

The *Gran Sala* walls were adorned with tapestries, representing stories of the Pastorella, Alexander the Great, Samsin, Queen of Sheba and Salomon, amongst others.<sup>26</sup>

The "triumphal door" dates from before 1458 and can be attributed to Domenico Gagini.<sup>27</sup> It is 4.70 meters high and 1.67 meter large. The door had a lower frieze representing Alfonso's triumphal procession through the centre of Naples, which was damaged in a fire in 1919. At the centre of its upper frieze, there was a resting nymph surrounded by an oval acanthus garland. To both her sides, there were other water divinities and a pair of nymphs reclining in the same way. Results interesting to note that from the other staircase, it was possible to see the sleeping nymph above the entrance to the *Gran Sala*, and the resting nymph from the frieze of the triumphal door.

Bianca De Divitiis considers that each portal in the *Gran Sala* would have served to reiterate the triumphal procession through Naples in the wake of the peace symbolised by the sleeping nymph, reinforcing the image of king Alfonso.

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<sup>25</sup> For Andrea da Verrazzano, its width and height were approximately 21.5 meters (40 Florentine braccia -1 braccio=0.538 meters). Three quarters of the *Sala's* high remain square, while the last quarter would narrow.

<sup>26</sup> Alcibiades. De Divitiis. Some sculptures of the Palatine Chapel, like the works of Francesco Laurana, were done around this time (1474).

<sup>27</sup> According to De Divitiis. Christoph Luipold on the other hand, considers the designer must have been somebody with a better understanding and experience on arches, and concludes that the only person with that ability in Naples at the time was Alberti.



## \* Restorations and Additions made by king Alfonso II, also called Alfonso of Aragón

Alfonso the 2<sup>nd</sup>'s additions are the refashion of the interior spaces and the reinforcement of the outer defences.

We know of the works Alfonso II did in 1494 to refashion the interior rooms (in only a only month a half) thanks to a Modenise ambassador's letter to the Marquis of Mantua Francesco II Gonzaga. The ambassador visited Castelnuovo on May the 8th of 1494 with the Pope's legate, and nephew, Goffré Borgia.

The interior apartments were behind the *Gran Sala's* "triumphal door." The ambassador says that: "They were formed of an *enfilade* of rooms with windows facing the courtyard on one side and the external *citadella* on the other; from these windows the king could enjoy a privileged view of his horses and of the jousts, which usually took place in the moat below the castle just outside its walls. (...) The ambassador begins with the two most private spaces used as bedrooms decorated with golden tapestries; these were followed by five rooms: the first was hung with tawny yellow velvet (>>*lionnato*<< or >like a lion<), the second of a black silk called >>*zambeloto*<<, the next of green velvet; the fourth room was completely decorated with curtains of gold and silver (...) This sequence of rooms terminated with a *studiolo* decorated in a Moorish style, with books in precious bindings and a chessboard."<sup>28</sup> All these rooms were covered with the emblems of king Alfonso the 3<sup>rd</sup>. The group concluded their tour in the Palatine Chapel that was adorned with fine tapestries representing sacred subjects.

The Venetian historian Marin Sanudo wrote a chronicle on Charles the 8th descent through Italy. In it, he describes hanging gardens adjoined to the royal residence, which the King could reach through a system of drawbridges; he also mentions there were fountains, and diverse types of fruit trees, encaged exotic birds (like a parrot given by the King of Spain), manuscripts, and jewellery.

Later, Castelnuovo got severely crowded. It included prisons, part of the Law Courts, and workshops, which produced diverse goods from pottery to manuscripts.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> De Divitiis.

<sup>29</sup> 40 years after Alfonso I renovations, Ferrante decided to live in modern residence in the city, like his son Alfonso II. Knowing this intentions, Lorenzo de Medici sent with Guiliano da Sangallo, a model of a palace as a gift, which was never done. Later, not even the viceroy lived in Castelnuovo. Pedro de Toledo lived in a residency built in the 17h c. by Domenico Fontana, which with time would become the Royal Palace of Naples, residency of the Bourbon kings.

### **\* Vice regal additions and modifications**

Castelnuovo's importance resided in military purposes; therefore, the defence structures of the castle were strengthened. On each battle the defence was proved and the necessary modifications were made. Some of these modifications were related to the overall improving of the walls to defend the city.

Around 1497-1499, under king Federico of Aragon, the military architect Antonio Marchesi di Settignano (Francesco di Giorgio's student) started to work in a belt wall around the castle. The wall would have long ramparts, struts and semi-circular towers protecting the city.

After King Carlos V of Spain visit to Castelnuovo in 1537, he became concerned to increase its defence from the sea. Thenceforth, the viceroy Pedro di Toledo,<sup>30</sup> along with the military architect Antonio Marchesi di Settignano, did the major defence works on the area, in charge of the strengthening of:

1. The walls of the City, visible in Etienne Du Perac map, edited in Rome by Antonio Lafrery in 1566.<sup>31</sup>
2. Of the *cittadella*, described by Francisco de Hollanda in 1538. The *cittadella* no longer survives due to the 20th century restoration for the isolation of Castelnuovo, where it was demolished;
3. Castelnuovo's defence, which was done by extending its fortifications to avert artillery attacks, and by widening of the moat, and its north and east counterscarp (for which it was necessary to overturn some of the construction made in the past).

### **\* Some remarks on the origin of the Triumphal Arch**

Jasenka Gudeli mentions the role humanist Ciriaco d'Ancona had in the elaboration of the triumphal arch, for his study of triumphal arches and antiquities, for his collection of drawings and coins, as well as for his collaboration with art work and his connections between arts and patrons. For him, Ciriaco d'Ancona would also be an important figure in the development of the idea of the Triumphal Arch in Alfonso's humanist circle of Pontano and Panormita (this one, in part educated in the Paduan school where he met Alberti); and with the Dubrovnik architectural scene (Onofrio della Cava and Pietro di Martino). Gudelj considers, the triumphal arch of Castelnuovo was copied from the Pula arch, based on a lost and very faithful drawing copy of it. This possibility of communication could be identified through the link between Ciriaco d'Ancona and the humanist circle of Alfonso.

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<sup>30</sup> Viceroy from 1532-1553.

<sup>31</sup> Planos: Del La\_Citta\_di\_Napoli\_Gentile\_c1590 39,8 x 52,5 cm. Hay otra, editada por N. van Aelst Rome 1590, Graue sur cuivre 399x545, Naples, Musee de S. Marino. Another source can be Theresa da Colletta.

Christoph Luitpold suggests the iconographic program of the Arch could be the one represented in the design at Boymans museum in Rotterdam,<sup>1</sup> signed by the non identified Bonoms de Ravenna, and which he considers wrongly attributed to Pisanello (for it lacks of proportion and of the different orders). Rosanna Di Battista credits Pisanello's possible authorship and *ideatore* of the design but for the arch that was used for the celebration of the legal marriage (*per procura*) of Frederick III of Austria and Eleonora of Portugal in December of 1450.

The ephemeral Triumphal Arch would have been set in front of Castelnuovo, from where later Alfonso would have the idea to do a Triumphal Arch in the entrance. Riccardo Filangeri dates the design around 1449-1452 and considers it some kind of precedent to the Triumphal Arch. Baxandall estimates that this design was a preparation for a frieze in Castel Capuano where Giovanni Carafa wanted to depict the king, and would date before 1448. Hersey notes that the design of scene would not have been done by Pisanello for he was not in Naples by 1448.

### **A few words**

There is still much to think about diverse elements of Castelnuovo's eclecticism present not only in materials, but also in style. The Castle's belong to different ruling families and was rebuilt over the years. It became a symbol of richness, power and resilience; still, mainly a fortress to defend the city. Castelnuovo then became a residence of kings, and of prisoners, as well as a workplace for artisans, and lawyers.

We see Castelnuovo from a cultural and from a material distance. Fires, constructions and destructions have led to a restoration that allows us to see the 20th century Neapolitan interest in Castelnuovo.

An iconographic analysis can be useful for a better understanding on the political aims as well as the spiritual concerns of the Aragonese kings.

I would like to call for a discussion on Castelnuovo's architecture in two directions:

The first, on the communication and reception of motives in the development of the *all'antica* style, based on a few opinions on the probable iconographic source of the Triumphal Arch at the entrance. The second, about the role the collaboration between patrons, humanists and artists had in the development of architecture and political projects.

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