

QUATTROCENTO FEMALE PORTRAITURE:
A STUDY OF LITERARY, CULTURAL,
AND ARTISTIC RELATIONSHIPS

by

KRISTEN VAN AUSDALL

A THESIS

Presented to the Department of Art History
and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

December 1980

MISSOURI COLLEGE LIBRARY
MISSOURI BOULDER

APPROVED:

[Redacted Signature]

Frances L. Pitts

An Abstract of the Thesis of
Kristen Van Ausdall for the degree of Master of Arts
in the Department of Art History
to be taken December 1980

Title: Quattrocento Female Portraiture: A Study of
Literary, Cultural, and Artistic Relationships

Approved:


Frances L. Pitts

"Quattrocento Female Portraiture: A Study of Literary, Cultural, and Artistic Relationships," is an analysis of the unique visual nature of female portraiture in fifteenth-century Italy. Although rarely commented on in modern scholarship, depictions of men and women during this period had differing rates of evolution and divergent stylistic characteristics. The distinctions between male and female portraits can be interpreted by investigating not only the early visual precedents, but also the literary ideals of women that pervaded Italian society, the examples of womanly perfection established in Catholic doctrine, and the special social roles that upper-class women fulfilled. The interaction of cultural ideals created a complex feminine image; a conflation of these ideals is revealed in the portraiture. The necessity of an image which conveyed this desirable information about a woman was determined by the transitional character of Quattrocento society.

Copyright © 1980 by Kristen Van Ausdall

VITA

NAME OF AUTHOR: Kristen Van Ausdall
PLACE OF BIRTH: Los Angeles, California
DATE OF BIRTH: May 2, 1951

UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

Humboldt State University
University of Oregon

DEGREES AWARDED:

Bachelor of Arts, 1974, Humboldt State University

AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

Italian Renaissance Art
Northern Baroque Art
English Illustration

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Graduate Teaching Fellow, Department of Art History,
University of Oregon, Eugene, 1979-80

AWARDS AND HONORS:

Ina McClung Award, 1979
Samuel H. Kress Tuition Grant, 1979

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people to whom I am indebted, and I gratefully acknowledge their assistance. In particular, I wish to thank the members of my committee, Professors Ellen Johnston Laing and Sylvia B. Giustina. During the last stages of this thesis, Professor Laing generously provided her vast experience and unflagging energy, and I am grateful for the many hours she contributed. Professor Giustina's enthusiasm for the topic, and her knowledge of Italian language and literature, were both warmly appreciated.

It is not possible to adequately thank my advisor, Professor Frances L. Pitts, for all her help. Not only has her consistent emphasis on scholarship been an essential part of the formulation of this topic, but her patience and understanding have been of inestimable value. Throughout the evolution of this thesis, Professor Pitts' ability to promote creative thought has been as sustaining as it is rare.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	viii
INTRODUCTION	1
<u>Chapter</u>	
I. EARLY VISUAL AND LITERARY SOURCES	9
Trecento Profile Portraiture	9
Literature	16
Early Fifteenth Century Female Portraits	30
II. RELIGIOUS SOURCES	36
III. LATER QUATTROCENTO SOCIETY AND PORTRAITURE	48
Social Roles of Women	49
Portraiture and Quattrocento Social Aims	58
CONCLUSION	78
NOTES	80
Notes to Introduction	80
Notes to Chapter I	83
Notes to Chapter II	93
Notes to Chapter III	96
ILLUSTRATIONS	110
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	138

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

For a complete bibliographic citation of the sources of illustrations see the Bibliography. Dimensions are included only for purposes of comparison in independent panel portraits.

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Simone Martini: <u>St. Louis of Toulouse Crowning Robert of Anjou, 1317. Panel.</u> Naples, Galleria Nazionale. White, pl. 101 . . .	111
2. Jacopo del Casentino: <u>San Miniato and Scenes from His Legend, c. 1342. Panel.</u> Berenson, <u>Florentine School</u> , v. 1, pl. 108 . . .	112
3. Bernardo Daddi: <u>Madonna of the Magnificat, 1334. Fresco. Florence, Opera del Duomo.</u> Berenson, <u>Florentine School</u> , v. 1, pl. 165 . . .	113
4. Taddeo Gaddi: <u>Tree of Life, Lives of the Saints, and Last Supper, c. 1340-50.</u> Fresco. Florence, Sta. Croce, Refectory. White, pl. 121	114
5. Taddeo Gaddi: <u>Entombment with Female Donor, c. 1350. Fresco. Florence, Sta. Croce, Capella Bardi di Vernio.</u> Berenson, <u>Florentine School</u> , v. 1, pl. 125	115
6. Nardo di Cione: <u>Paradise, c. 1350's.</u> Fresco. Florence, Santa Maria Novella, Strozzi Chapel. Berenson, <u>Florentine School</u> , v. 1, pl. 194	116
7. Christine de Pisan and Cité des Dames Workshop: <u>Tournament, c. 1410. Miniature.</u> London, British Museum, Harl. 4431, fol. 150. Meiss, <u>Limbourgs</u> , ill. 155	117
8. Christine de Pisan and Epître Workshop: <u>Portrait of Christine de Pisan, c. 1403-04.</u> Miniature. Brussels, Bibl. royale, ms. 9508, fol. 2. Meiss, <u>Limbourgs</u> , ill. 12	118

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
9. French School: <u>Portrait of a Lady</u> , c. 1410. Panel, 52.5 x 30.6 cm. Washington, D.C., National Gallery. Sindona, pl. 137	119
10. Pisanello: <u>Portrait of Ginevra d'Este</u> , c. 1434. Panel, 42.5 x 29.5 cm. Paris, Louvre. Sindona, pl. 104	120
11. Fra Filippo Lippi: <u>Portrait of a Lady</u> , c. 1445-1450. Panel, 47 x 31.5 cm. West Berlin, Staatliche Museen. Pope-Hennessy, ill. 42	121
12. Giotto: <u>The Adoration of the Magi</u> , c. 1305. Fresco. Padua, Arena Chapel. Stubblebine, ill. 27	122
13. Domenico Ghirlandaio: <u>The Adoration of the Magi</u> , c. 1485. Panel. Florence, Uffizi. Berenson, <u>Italian Painters</u> , pl. 180	123
14. Fra Filippo Lippi: <u>Altarpiece</u> , c. 1437. Panel. Paris, Louvre. Berenson, <u>Italian Painters</u> , pl. 157	124
15. Fra Diamante: <u>Portrait of a Lady</u> , c. 1440. Panel, no dimensions available. New York, Metropolitan Museum. Lipman, fig. 32	125
16. Piero della Francesca: <u>Diptych of Battista Sforza and Federigo da Montefeltro</u> , c. 1460- 65. Panel, 47 x 33 cm. each panel. Florence, Uffizi. Clark, pl. 100	126
17. Piero della Francesca: <u>Discovery and Proof of the True Cross</u> , c. 1453-1466. Fresco. Arezzo, San Francesco. Clark, pl. 59	127
18. Piero della Francesca: Detail from <u>Discovery and Proof of the True Cross</u> . Fresco. Arezzo, San Francesco. Clark, pl. 71	128
19. Piero della Francesca: <u>Triumphs</u> , reverse of the Uffizi diptych, c. 1460-65. Florence, Uffizi. Clark, pl. 101	129
20. Master of the Adimari Chest: <u>Marriage Chest</u> , c. 1440. Florence, Galleria dell'Accademia. Maguire, pl. 1	130

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
21. Antonio Pollaiuolo: <u>Portrait of a Lady</u> , c. 1470. Panel, 46 x 34 cm. Milan, Museo Poldi-Pezzoli. Del Lungo, frontispiece	131
22. Domenico Ghirlandaio: <u>Visitation</u> , 1486-1490. Fresco. Florence, Santa Maria Novella, Choir. Ediz. Giusti di S. Becocci	132
23. Domenico Ghirlandaio: Giovanni degli Albizzi, detail from the <u>Visitation</u> , Florence, Santa Maria Novella, Choir. Ediz. Giusti di S. Becocci	133
24. Domenico Ghirlandaio: <u>Giovanna degli Albizzi</u> , c. 1490. Panel, 77 x 49 cm. Lugano, Sammlung Thyssen-Bornemisza. Pope-Hennessey, ill. 25	134
25. Domenico Ghirlandaio: <u>Nativity of the Virgin</u> , 1486-1490. Fresco. Florence, Santa Maria Novella, Choir. Ediz. Giusti di S. Becocci . . .	135
26. Domenico Ghirlandaio: Donor figures, detail from the <u>Nativity of the Virgin</u> . Fresco. Florence, Santa Maria Novella. Ediz. Giusti di S. Becocci	136
27. Domenico Ghirlandaio: Donor figure, detail from the <u>Nativity of the Virgin</u> . Fresco. Florence, Santa Maria Novella, Choir. Ediz. Giusti di S. Becocci	137

INTRODUCTION

Female portraiture of the Quattrocento exhibits a unique visual character distinct from male portraiture of the same period. Although it is true that paintings of both men and women are idealized, the recognition of the distinctions which existed between the female and male ideal in the fifteenth century is crucial to the study of the portrait image. Yet, this distinction has been virtually ignored by modern scholars in the study of early Renaissance portraiture.¹ John Pope-Hennessy, for example, has suggested that the reason for the persistence of the female profile portrait was purely aesthetic:

The profile was not only the most advantageous, it was also the most flattering view, and for this reason, until quite late in the fifteenth century it was the form in which the portraits of women were invariably cast.²

However, to understand the singularity of female portraiture in the fifteenth century, it is necessary to examine some of the cultural ideals current during that era. Meaningful investigation of this ideal requires both a study of the visual precedents, and a thorough grasp of the influences of society, religion, and secular literature. The last, in particular, developed out of the close cultural contacts between France and Italy that continued throughout the fifteenth century. By the late Quattrocento, through the

formation of a cross-cultural idea, these influences had exerted a profound effect upon Italian female portraits. Thus a consideration of the arts and letters of both countries is imperative to understanding the development of the feminine ideal found in Italian portraits of the last half of the century. It is not the intent of this study to compile a catalogue of types, but to explore major trends in the depiction of women, and to endeavor to establish links between these artistic trends and the cultural environment from which they spring.

Any discussion of fifteenth century Italian portraiture necessitates dealing exclusively with the upper classes, since it was only the elite who could afford to commission these works. In this context, it is interesting to note that male and female portraiture did not develop at the same rate, nor for identical reasons. Introduced in Florence in the first half of the fifteenth century, the independent male portrait had been profoundly altered by the latter part of the century. In contrast, female portraiture became popular only in the second half of the century,³ and during that time the profile took overwhelming precedence over any other form. These different rates of evolution suggest that the social and cultural concepts underlying the development of female portraiture were distinct from those dictating the appearance of male portraiture.⁴

Although there are a few early renditions of the kings of France (c. 1360-1410), portrait painting as a popular genre belongs primarily to Florence, where it flourished early in the fifteenth century. Much has been written, both in primary sources from the Renaissance and in modern scholarship, analyzing men in society and the arts.⁵ The aims of male portraiture, as well as the male role in Quattrocento society, were clearly set out, and were often influenced by the major directions of humanism throughout the century.⁶ The late Trecento and early Quattrocento saw the rise of wealthy merchant families in Italy to positions of power and political influence. Men controlled society, and at the beginning of the century wished to assert themselves as idealized leaders, often in imitation of the venerated politicians of ancient Rome. This emulation appears to have been a major factor in the formation of the portrait images.⁷ They needed to reinforce their images as leaders, in order to have themselves seen as equals of the noble class which represented the traditional rulers in most of the Italian city-states. The powerful financial families wished to be associated with both the nobility and with antique politicians, in order to create an unassailable public image. The citizens of Florence took pride in maintaining a high standard of civic humanism. Such an attitude was fertile ground for commemorating those who had contributed to the well-being of the State, and this in turn

nurtured a flowering of female portraiture.

Two types of portraiture influenced the early profile portrait in Italy. The first is donor portraiture, both male and female, which was connected primarily to large church commissions from the wealthiest families. One purpose of this type of portrait was to insure a place in heaven for the donors, by emphasizing their generosity and interest in the Church. Further, the piety and penitence thereby demonstrated was often an effort to mitigate a lifetime of usury or other serious crime against Church doctrine.⁸ The second influence was restricted to male portraiture in which the presentation was directly related to the antique Roman medal. Numismatic portraiture of ancient Rome depicted the rulers of a period that was greatly admired by fifteenth century humanist society. The strong interest in and admiration of antique literature, as well as Latin and Greek languages, had been forming for over a century, so it was logical that fifteenth century portraits be modeled partly after those of the ancients.

It must be stressed that the use of the profile was common to both types of early portraiture. Hence the antique prototype was more easily absorbed and reconciled with the donor portrait, thereby creating a new portrait formula. It must also be mentioned that women are not depicted in the ancient medallion form, thus the direct influence of the antique will not be discussed in this thesis.⁹

When turning to female portraiture of the late fifteenth century, one finds the continuing use of the profile. (It would seemingly have connections to male portraiture of the first part of the fifteenth century, and there are indeed some influences that can be readily detected.) However, visual precedents such as donor portraiture, courtly depictions, and Quattrocento male portraiture, cannot fully explain the persistence of the highly idealized female portraits in the latter half of the Quattrocento. An explanation, though, can be found by examining attitudes toward the upper-class woman at this time. Three factors were crucial in shaping these attitudes: the important role of women in secular literature, the expectations of the Catholic Church which set the example for female behavior through art and doctrine, and women's function in society.

Courtly literature, which formed an important part of the body of secular literature, was instrumental in laying the foundation for the development of the concept of the ideal woman found in Quattrocento portraiture. The courtly ideal provided a universally accepted image of the noblewoman, which was acknowledged by both men and women, and used by those striving for social recognition. The courtly ideal not only provided a behavioral model for women, but also a physical paradigm. Both of these aspects were in harmony with Italian literary tradition. This can be seen

in the image of the ideal woman presented in the work of the major Italian writers, Dante, Petrarch, and even in some instances, Boccaccio.¹⁰

The courtly tradition was also compatible with religious values and saintly emulation. Since medieval theology was still a primary social factor in the early Renaissance, the ideal was easily extrapolated into a new fifteenth century Italian image. This religious reevaluation of the literary ideal did not conflict with the domestic role of women in the noble or pseudo-noble class, for the system of love which it extolled was one grounded in honor and self-control. Considering the prominence of women in the literature, the extant visual illustrations of this genre become important in determining the influences of literature on the independent panel portrait.

Religious virtue can be seen as the overriding behavioral motivation within fifteenth century society, especially for women, influencing as it did all parts of their lives. Women were responsible for the spiritual well-being of their families, but were discouraged from placing formal religious ritual before domestic duties.¹¹ Domestic duties could be part of Christian virtue, and Christian virtue was always a part of domestic expectations, but any aspect of a woman's behavior which caused the neglect of her duties, including too great an attention to religion, was considered detrimental to her personality.¹²

Socially, there were distinctly disparate expectations for women of different classes. In the middle-class the domestic capabilities of a woman were the crucial concern. In addition, her managerial abilities were often essential to the family's livelihood. Women of the upper-classes not only had these responsibilities, but also had to maintain themselves as representatives of powerful and respected families. Therefore, it was particularly important for them to conform to the ideal feminine image. For this study, the role of women of the wealthiest merchant class and the noble class is of primary concern, for the extant portraits are of noble or pseudo-noble sitters, and much of the need for the idealized portrait lies in the conversion of families from the status of merchant-burgher to that of merchant-prince.

This social mobility is exemplified by the Medici family in Florence, who in the fifteenth century, increasingly became the epitome of the new merchant-noble class, holding political power equal to such noble families as the Visconti in Milan and the Estense of Ferrara. The behavior of the family members reflected positively or negatively on the powerful men who headed them, and this was no less true of wives and daughters than it was of the sons. The rise of the merchant class in Italy produced a competitive atmosphere in which each member of a ruling family had to assert and reassert the right to power. From this desire

for differentiation arose the need for an idealized concept of womanhood, and a need for a suitable visual presentation. It is important, then, to look at the cultural conditions which structured fifteenth century lives and try to determine the varied influences that created the ideal of womanhood controlling female portraiture, and which ultimately explain why the approach to female portraiture remained relatively unchanged long after male portraiture had expanded in new directions.

CHAPTER I

EARLY VISUAL AND LITERARY SOURCES

Painted depictions of women in the Quattrocento are inextricably linked to a number of social values presented to the viewer in the portrait image. The most significant social concept for the understanding of this portraiture is the development of the complex notion of the ideal woman. This concept is related to both the changing role of women in fifteenth century Italian society, and to the formulation of an ideal pictorial image which makes that role manifest. Visually, the ideal image of womanhood had its roots in two sources: representations of women as donor figures in Trecento religious paintings, and illuminations accompanying the literature of courtly love. Each of these sources had a strong influence on the evolution of female portraiture in Italy, and it is necessary to investigate each in some depth to see how the style and content of Quattrocento depictions were affected.

Trecento Profile Portraiture

A consideration of donor portraiture in Trecento religious commissions must include the examination of both male and female figures, since the differences in the portrayals are generally subtle, and often negligible. The

portraits can be roughly divided into three categories: the first and most common displays a profile view donor (or donors) worshipping and/or being presented by a holy figure which denotes their position as patron; the second, a group scene which represents an ecclesiastic or historic event, with several portraits contained within it; the third, an infrequent type, in which a portrait is the central subject.

The first two categories have many subdivisions, but are generally straightforward in depiction and function. The third category, the individual portrait, poses a more complex problem in terms of portraiture, but is nonetheless characteristic of the pictorial approach at that time. Portraiture as a recording of features solely for the purpose of psychological insight into character is virtually unknown in the Trecento. This is true of all three categories, though the individual portrait was not limited to strictly religious interests as in the donor figures. An example is the 1317 portrait of Robert of Anjou receiving the crown from his late brother, St. Louis of Toulouse, by Simone Martini (c. 1285-1344) (Fig. 1). The political significance of this painting is the overriding factor in its formation because Robert's right to rule was insecure. The profile features of Robert are recorded primarily to stress a didactic political manifesto: Robert is the natural heir to his canonized brother, and as such must be recognized by the influential citizens of his realm.¹

Therefore, the portrait is specific enough for this recognition to occur, but allows the viewer only a public perception of the man.

A knowledge of the aesthetic properties of the profile portrait is important to an understanding of the function of the portrait image in the development from the Trecento donor portraits to the fifteenth century independent panel portrait. In discussing the profile portrait of fifteenth century Italy, Jean Lipman states that he believes that the profile view implies a separation between the spectator and portrait figure (since they do not face each other), establishing an objective view of the person depicted.² He goes on to say that the profile is also the most characteristic presentation of an individual, since only one half of a face is shown and the side view is the most easily identifiable configuration of the features. In addition, the profile is the least foreshortened manner in which to portray a person, and has the least amount of plastic projection; the contour rather than the mass is emphasized.³ The method of depiction a Trecento artist chose to use related directly to the function of the portrait image. Obviously, if the figure's features were intended to be readily recognized, thus associating a specific person with a desirable action, whether it was a donor portrait or one with more subtle motives (such as the portrait of Robert of Anjou), the profile view was more successful.⁴

In Trecento religious paintings containing donor figures, the portraiture was always subsidiary to the holy figures. Most portraits represent private donors, and it is here that a sequential pattern emerges based on size and distance vis-à-vis the holy figures. In general, the closer the donor is to the main image, the smaller it is. This is also true if there is any representation of physical contact between the two. When donor figure is larger it is separated from the main image in a personal space. Two examples illustrate these relationships, one by Jacapo del Casentino (active c. 1339-1358), and the other by Bernardo Daddi (c. 1312-48). Jacapo's San Miniato of c. 1342 (Fig. 2) shows a donor figure with extreme proximity to the holy figure. In this altarpiece the tiny donor embraces the toe of the full-length central saint, who spans the center of the panel between four scenes of his life.

Increasingly, the larger, more austere donor figures begin to take precedence over the excessively humble donor type displayed in the naively reverential San Miniato figure. The relationship of the donor and holy figure becomes less rigidly defined and, among other things, more psychologically complex in the following century. Bernardo Daddi's Madonna del Magnificat of c. 1340 (Fig. 3), is a huge central half-length Madonna enclosed by a framing device flanked by two smaller full-length saints (SS. Catherine and Zenobius), who stand on a shallow stage. Immediately below this stage are

two female donors on a reversed perspectival floor. The Virgin gestures to the older woman, extending her hand outside her enclosure. An intriguing aspect of female donor portraiture is demonstrated by the women in the Magnificat. Women are very often unidentified, except by virtue of a husband's portrait. This anonymity is underscored by the simplification of their features. When the primary donor is female there is a slight shift in emphasis; while still not specific in feature, there seems to be a greater attempt to depict a particular person. In the Magnificat the features of the older woman are somewhat idealized, but her position of respect is denoted by her garb and by the Virgin's feature. In addition, the exchange between this donor and the Virgin is quite direct in comparison with her companion. This personal interchange with a holy figure is an indication of the honored position accorded the donor. This can also be seen to a degree in the small figure of the nun in close proximity to the saints in Taddeo Gaddi's (c. 1300-1366) Tree of Life fresco in the Refectory of Sta. Croce (c. 1350, Fig. 4). She kneels, praying to S. Bonaventura's vision, set apart only by her scale and proximity to the picture plane. There is no question of her becoming part of the vision, but her drapery overlaps that of the holy figures, thus denoting her consequence to the viewer. Women in donor portraiture become more important when treated without their male counterparts, preparing for a development

in the fifteenth century of an independent female portrait genre.

In the later Trecento the increase in the number of donor portraits can perhaps be explained by the changing patterns of patronage. This seems to have been occasioned by a trend toward more lay involvement in the Church, thereby causing a shift from commissions made largely by ecclesiastic orders to those made by wealthy citizens.⁵ Types of donor portraiture in the late Trecento tended to merge and the lines between these types grew less distinct as the century progressed. An early, tentative exploration of a personal attitude toward salvation can be detected in the startling position of the female donor in Taddo Gaddi's Entombment in the Bardi di Vernio Chapel (c. 1350, Fig. 5). Here the old and new are somewhat uneasily combined. Framed in the middle section of Christ's tomb, the wife of the donor is shown both as extremely significant due to her central position on the tomb, and conventionally reverent because of her small size and pious attitude of supplication. Her features are subordinated to the profile line, creating a generalized portrait with little idealized beauty. The intent of the portrait is very clear: the woman is framed individually to imply her importance as a donor, representing not her own personality, but her moral rectitude which merits salvation.

The mid-century crisis in the Trecento creates a pressing question in the formation of portraiture. Economic and political crises early in the 1340's were followed by widespread famine. In 1348 the bubonic plague hit Italy for the second time within the decade, striking with great force in both Siena and Florence. This sudden proximity to death appears to have instilled in some Christians the desire for a more subjective involvement in salvation. Holy figures and donors are seen side by side in the Strozzi Chapel frescoes in Santa Maria Novella (Fig. 6) of the 1350's, by Nardo di Cione (active c. 1348-66). These frescoes help to support the argument of a growing awareness of a personal involvement in salvation. In the Last Judgement and Paradise scenes, the immediate recognition of many contemporary or historical personages encourages the living to seek their own eventual salvation through these instances of the Triumphant.

From these examples it becomes clear that Trecento portraiture shows the donor completely absorbed with the holy personage, scene, or event depicted. This necessitated the subordination of the donor to her devotional attitude. As the century progresses, the donor increasingly becomes the focus of the painting, and an attempt is made to show the influence of the spiritual content on the individual. The portraits begin to reveal the way in which the donor's religious contemplations affect his or her soul. This is a

significant indication of the increased influence of the importance of the individual in Italian art.⁶ The emphasis on prominent donor representations in these religious paintings was of fundamental significance to the development of portraiture in the following century. In addition, these portraits had an impact on later times because of their spiritual content and the differentiation in the treatment of male and female figures.

Literature

The other major source which influenced the ideals underlying female portraiture of the Quattrocento is the literature of love. It is here that women gain a primary role, since the concern of the genre is the glorification of the noble woman. The role of women in literature does not parallel her role in donor portraiture, because in courtly literature the woman is not seen as an appendage of her husband, family, or religious order, but through the eyes of a man recounting her virtues--she is adored rather than adoring.⁷

It is generally recognized that French Romances were avidly read by upper-class Italians of the fifteenth century. In this courtly literature they found the image of the ideal woman which corresponded to that developed in the work of Dante and Petrarch.⁸ Eventually, these literary ideals were to be combined with the existing female donor formula to

fashion a new mode of feminine portraiture.

The unique idea of romantic love between a man and woman, first expressed by the late twelfth century by the Provençal troubadours, created a contrast to the view that women were naturally defective, and as St. Chrysostom said, "a necessary evil, a natural temptation, desired indeed, but bearing calamity with her, a domestic peril, a deadly fascination."⁹ In the service of courtly love men surrendered themselves to unrequited passion; they felt that women exalted the spirit rather than debased it. Women become untouchable goddesses instead of a necessary evil, thus creating a theoretical potential in women to achieve the highest moral virtue, and inspiring men to virtue also. This can be seen vividly in the work of Petrarch in praise of Laura:

When sometimes Love is borne in her sweet face
and comes among the other ladies there,
as each one suddenly seems much less fair,
by so much does my will to love increase.

I bless [*benedico*] the time, the very hour, the place,
that raised my eyes up to a height so rare,
and say: my soul, your thankfulness declare
that you were rendered worthy of such grace.

From her there comes to you the thought of love
which, if you follow, leads to highest good,
careless of all that other men regard;

from her there comes the blithe and graceful mood
that shows the fittest path to heaven above:
and thus my hope already seems to thrive.¹⁰

By the fifteenth century there were many exponents of this literary adulation of women, a tradition which

influenced the behavior of the nobility, as well as those seeking that status.¹¹ In courtly love, the contemplation of a lady's virtues prompted men to undertake noble deeds in the service of chivalry. These deeds were expressions of a man's love as well as an indication of the manner in which his lady led him to honor. The extent to which this literature influenced Italian upper-class culture during the course of the fifteenth century can be found in a comparison between a fictional account of a jousting tournament and the record of an actual joust. That the spirit of a public occasion such as a joust was not only similar in both French and Italian culture, but was little changed throughout the fifteenth century, can be illustrated by comparing the account of the French writer and artist, Christine de Pisan, with that of the 1468 tournament sponsored by Lorenzo de' Medici.

In her Book of the Duke of True Lovers, written c. 1405, Christine de Pisan describes a fictional tournament and accompanies the description with an illumination.¹² As narrator, the Duke tells of the lavish preparations arranged to impress his lady. The Duke's lady was seated in a place of honor surrounded by noble ladies in descending order of rank. This placement acknowledges the lady's superiority, in both her worldly rank and, by implication, her moral character. The joust was preceded by the readying of arms and emblems; on his helmet the Duke wore a green "chaplet"

(garland) and a sleeve, both given to him by his lady. Thus arrayed, he sallied forth for a day of jousting. Deeds of chivalry were done in honor of the lady and, due to the effort to impress, hard blows were "aimed at the opening of the visor, or else struck at shield or helm."¹³

The brutality is somewhat diminished in the Italian version, for it became the form, rather than the content that was most important in the later tournaments. While Lorenzo de' Medici speaks modestly of the actual tournament,¹⁴ its lavishness was recorded in a poem by Luigi Pulci, "La Giostra di Lorenzo de' Medici."¹⁵ It took place in the Piazza S. Croce, and cost, as Lorenzo notes in his Ricordi, 10,000 ducats.¹⁶ This estimate only refers to the structures and decoration in the Piazza, and doesn't include money spent on personal adornment. Lorenzo rode to the event on a horse given to him by Ferrante, King of Naples. The account of this event shows how thoroughly the Medici were assimilated into the position of nobility by this time, and how great a part the courtly ideal played in the reaffirming of that position. Over his surcoat Lorenzo wore a silk scarf, with fresh and withered roses embroidered around his motto, Le Temps Revient, written in pearls. Placed in his black velvet cap amidst gold and jewels, on his heraldic shield were displayed the three golden lilies of France,¹⁷ while in the center of the shield was the Medici diamond. In the field he mounted a charger presented to him by the Duke of

Ferrara, and buckled on armor sent by the Duke of Milan.

Lorenzo was awarded the tournament prize, as was the fictional Duke in Christine de Pisan's account. In addition, both the Duke and Lorenzo comment modestly on this accomplishment.¹⁸ Both jousts were arranged for an admired lady, inaccessible as always, and each tournament was ostensibly arranged for another purpose.¹⁹ There were numerous visual illustrations of jousts in both France and Italy, and the way in which women are depicted appears to have a relationship to courtly literature and to the development of female portraiture.

The first visualizations of the woman described in courtly literature were in book illumination. With its graceful, delicate lines and vivid color, International Style was the perfect vehicle to convey her physical appearance. One of the miniatures in Christine de Pisan's Duke of True Lovers depicts the joust (Fig. 7). Knights are seen frozen in active poses, compressed into the foreground by a decorative backdrop. The compositional emphasis is not the sport per se, but concentrates on the women serenely watching the scene from a raised box which creates the backdrop. The long sleeve of the Duke's lady, placed in the center, hangs over the enclosure drawing the eye upward. A dark horizontal line leads the viewer's eye across the box to each lady; at each end a female profile figure draws the eye back to the center, producing a closed composition.

Further, the ladies are larger in scale than the contestants in the foreground, emphasizing the woman's key position in courtly love tradition. Despite their key position, the ladies have very little individual character in their faces, rather, all conform to the International Style ideal of elegance derived from the Limbourg workshop of Paris.²⁰ Interestingly, the visages of all the women have counterparts in literary description: very white skin, broad foreheads, small rounded chins, and fair hair.²¹ The presence of these direct parallels attests to the existence of a broadly accepted physical ideal. This important example emphasizes the consequence of the woman to the tournament, staged for her. When deeds of chivalry were done in this context, the man's sense of honor was heightened and the quality of his soul elevated. In this miniature, the lack of characterization of the Duke's lady is deceptive, because the values she represents are of the highest order. The literary text accompanying the visual illustration is crucial to the understanding of the depiction, for to comprehend the seemingly bland quality of the lady's pictorialization, one must look to the correct demeanor of a woman in Christine's account of the chivalric ideal.²²

When turning to Italian sources one finds a body of literature which expresses related concerns. A Florentine of the Trecento, who had traveled in Provence, Francesco da Barberino,²³ composed two popular works setting forth the

courtly ideal to the upper-class of Florence.²⁴ The popularity of the books demonstrates the assimilation of the courtly ideal into the everyday life of the upper-class Italians. Barberino's Costume e Reggimento di Donna is a guidebook of model behavior for women, written in an aphoristic style in verse. All of Barberino's maxims are illustrated by examples or stories. The rules that were to be observed by women come under fifty-four headings, in addition to many preliminary warnings and special precepts for reigning houses. For every occasion, according to this author, there was an appropriate response. For example, Barberino often gives instructions such as, "[a woman should] stand with her eyes lowered and her limbs still."²⁵ These admonitions correspond very closely to the modesty displayed by the ladies in Christine de Pisan's tournament illustration, as well as to other International Style depictions. The anecdotes accompanying Barberino's instructions describe paragons from the courts of Provence, Normandy, England, and Castile. The international background reveals the pervasiveness of this behavioral mode for women. In addition, the popularity of the volume suggests the admiration for the aristocratic ideal and the Italian desire to emulate it. As was usual with literature of this period, unmistakable religious overtones are present. In Barberino's work this takes the guise of female allegorical figures personifying the Virtues.²⁶ The author converses throughout

the book with the allegorical figures, who serve to unite the otherwise disjointed parts of the book. Each of the Virtues is subordinate to the Madonna, who represents Wisdom.²⁷ The subordination to the Virgin implies that she is the source for all virtues, and she is thus inextricably bound to the chivalric ideal.²⁸

More sophisticated forms of literature were plumbed by Elizabeth Cropper for her article on the ideal woman in art. She points out that the same type of woman who was the subject of the panegyric of the thirteenth century Latin poetics became the donzella svelta, gracile, and ridente, who in the vernacular Romances always appears with ivory skin, blonde hair, rosy cheeks, and red lips. The most influential vernacular poet who absorbed this description was Boccaccio.²⁹ In praising Emilia in the *Teseida*, he continues the tradition by discussing her physical beauty in nearly the same terms.³⁰ Since the poem was written by an author whose best known work, the Decameron, often exposed the foibles of men and women, this poem underscores the wide acceptance of the ideal in Italy.

Christine de Pisan

One of the most fascinating individuals of the courtly world in the early fifteenth century was Christine de Pisan. She was born in Venice about 1364; her father, Tommaso da Pizzano, was a noted professor of astrology at

Bologna who subsequently accepted an offer from Charles V, King of France, to work in his service. Tommaso's position at the French court brought his family into contact with many prominent people of the day. After a unique education under her father's supervision,³¹ Christine was married at age fifteen to Etienne de Castel, who became notary and Secretary to the King. Christine subscribed to the courtly ideal of womanhood in theory, promoting the image, but an examination of her life shows that she also contradicted some of the tenets of the ideal. She was to become an extremely unusual and unconventional woman in many ways. Both her father and her husband had died by 1389, and she was involved for fourteen years in litigation concerning her husband's estate. Though she had some staunch champions, she was highly criticized during these legal battles for appearing in the antechambers of the palace to defend her rights. (This transgression was rendered more onerous by her appearing unescorted.)

In order to support herself and her three children, Christine wrote courtly and lyric poetry, but in the years between 1399 and 1405, her interests were awakened to more serious subjects. In her "Epistre au Dieu d'Amour," she defended women against male detractors; particularly offensive to her were the attacks against women and marriage contained in the second part of the popular, thirteenth century, Roman de la Rose, written by Jean de Meung.³² In

the "Dieu d'Amour," she championed women with a carefully constructed argument, highlighted by her assertion that though there were miscreants, that fact did not condemn all women. In her argument, Christine also enumerated the virtues of womanhood, underscoring them with religious references: women should be honoured for the sake of the Virgin, and because, unlike men, no woman in Biblical example had ever turned her back on Christ.³³ The publication of this defense was followed by an intense exchange of letters, debating the subject, between Christine and learned men of Paris such as Gontier and Pierre Col and Jean Monstreuil. Christine's side of the debate was supported by, among others, her friend Jean Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris.³⁴

Another of Christine's defenders in the debate was Marshal Boucicault, who had returned from his successful campaign in the East, and in 1399 founded an order of knighthood dedicated to the defense of ladies, "l'écu verd à la dame blanche." On St. Valentine's day in 1400, another association for the defense of women, and the cultivation of poetry, was founded by lords of the Burgundian party. Christine was the only woman who took a leading role in the organization of this "Cour Amoureuse." Among the members of this association were two of Christine's chief adversaries in the debate concerning the Roman de la Rose, Gontier and Pierre Col. This indicates the wide acceptance of the

courtly ideal, even in the presence of a blatant philosophical contradiction. In addition, Christine was widely read and highly praised by prominent and learned men of her day,³⁵ again underscoring the co-existence in social values of the courtly ideal and humanist studies.

Another work written and illustrated by Christine, the Livre de Trois Vertus (1405), expanded upon these synthesized theories of ideal womanhood. In this educational treatise on the duties of women in different ranks of society, Christine explains the lack of great female authors and thinkers of the Medieval era:

Si la coustume estoit de mettre les petites filles a l'escole, et que communement on les fist apprendre les sciences comme on fait aux filz, au'elles apprendroient aussi parfaitement et entenderoient les subtilites de toutes les arz et sciences comme ils font.³⁶

In her writing, interests and activities, Christine can be seen to embody the different impulses of the courtly ideal and the new humanist learning, which came to complement each other. Although she wrote out of necessity, her writing was not confined to courtly literature or poetry. This is an important point, for it indicates that while she knew the conventions of courtly love and was skillful at portraying its manifestations, she also knew its intellectual limits. Not only was Christine an Italian-born woman active in promoting the position of her sex, but she also regularly commissioned workshops to illustrate her books and maintained

aesthetic control.³⁷ This remarkable woman provides a clue to the process which occurred in the pictorialization of the ideal woman.

One of Christine's courtly prose works, The Book of the Duke of True Lovers, from which the description and illustration of the joust discussed earlier in this study were derived, is interesting in its implication for the issue of Quattrocento female portraiture. The story is concerned with the love a noble young man feels for an inaccessible woman, married to a jealous, high-ranking husband. The process of the idealization of a lady and all its ramifications is developed in the brief novel. A dual image of the ideal woman is implied in one of the many poems the Duke (i.e. Christine) writes to express his overwhelming emotion:

Thou O Love, the traitor art!
Tender once as any may,
The wielder of the dart
That is pointed but to slay.
Thee with reason, but my fay,
Double-visaged we declare:
One is as the ashes grey,
But one is an angel fair.

Loth am I to find my part
In the night without a ray,
Yet desire hath stung my heart
And I sigh in sorrow's sway.

Gentle hope will never stay
In the mansions of despair:
One to death would point the way,
But one is an angel fair.

Hope might in my spirit start,
 Death thy servant bids her nay;
 While beneath thy scourge I smart,
 Doleful still must be my lay,
 Since to set my steps astray,
 Thou at once art wheat and tare;
 One is like a devil, yea,
 But one is like an angel fair.

Love, thou teachest me to say,
 Double tribute is to apply
 For thy servant everywhere:
 One is grievous, well-a-day!
 But one is an angel fair.³⁸

Love itself is the subject of this ballad, but one infers the object of that love is the guiding force behind the double image; denigrating and sublime, the poem furnishes an impression of the woman herself. Not as an individual, but as a concept, she wields a two-edged sword with her ability to bestow or withdraw her favor at will, affecting the quality of the Duke's life. Woman as a concept, rather than an individual is important to the understanding of Quattrocento female portraiture, since Italian portraits were influenced by the literary image of the ideal woman. The poem quoted above implies that the lady has the power both to destroy the spirit, and conversely, to exalt earthly life, thus giving the Duke the ability to achieve more than he would without her silent inspiration. This is an extremely subtle role and very difficult to express visually. Thus the International Style miniatures which developed around this literature tend to formalize the depiction of the ideal woman into set attitudes and poses in order to illustrate

an accepted concept.

Christine cleverly delineates the ironic relationship of men to women in courtly love logic. As we have seen, the womanly object of desire has the power to deny the man her love, thereby lessening his ability to achieve knightly honor. Thus when the Duke, the archetypical lover, is assured of returned love, the woman becomes the incarnation of good. In another ballad he likens her to a saint and requests that she grant him Grace:

Kind and fair Saint,
My heart's repose,
Whose sweet constraint
Doth all enclose
that the world knows
Of graciousness,
Vouchsafe me grace!

Fresh without taint,
As the new rose,
This my heart's plaint
That overflows
Ere my breath goes,
Pity and bless.
Vouchsafe me grace!

Ah, sweet dove pent,
Shy dove, for whose
Dear grace I faint,
So my heart glows
It dares Disclose
Love, Love nought less.
Vouchsafe me grace!

Save thy heart close
To longing's throes,
O Loveliness,
Vouchsafe me grace!³⁹

Thus in courtly love and the chivalric tradition noble women attain a higher status in theory than that accorded to men.⁴⁰

The parallel between images of saints and the Virgin and this ideal woman is blithely drawn in poetry, and it would seem increasingly that painting takes on a growing respectability as an art from literature. If the artists of the early Quattrocento wished to attain the status of poets, what more effective method than to draw their forms from literary tradition, extending portraiture beyond a simple likeness. Portraiture in the fifteenth century was to become a self-contained vision, invested with a widely acknowledged ideal, rather than the direct, immediate, and humble relationship of portrait figure to holy figure seen in Trecento donor painting.

Early Fifteenth Century Female Portraits

Very few independent female portraits that can be dated to the beginning of the fifteenth century are extant. The transition from women in illustrations of courtly life to the independent panel portrait can be seen by examining two early French examples: the first a portrait of Christine de Pisan (Fig. 8), a book illumination from about 1405,⁴¹ and the second, an independent panel now in the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., artist unknown and dated tentatively about 1415 (Fig. 9).⁴²

Christine portrays herself in a standardized visual language, identifying with an impersonal pictorial style which emphasizes her role as a writer. Christine intended

to show herself in this portrait as a courtly woman, and at the same time, surround herself with literary emblems. She is seen in her study, framed by an arch motif, in a three-quarter view, writing in an open book. International Style conventions are employed; the face is characterized by a wide brow, rounded chin, pale skin, and small, unpronounced features. Controlled by this courtly style, Christine's portrait reveals little about her appearance, and nothing about her psyche.

The Washington Portrait of a Lady⁴³ is set against a dark foil which accentuates the extreme white and rose tones of the face.⁴⁴ The movement of the design begins within the profile line of the face against the dark ground; each curve repeats the rounded shape of the brow, nose, and chin. The eye moves up to the headgear, which slopes rapidly downward to the simple line of the back, where the eye is caught by the deliberate curve of the beads, and led back up to the face. The head rises out of a high collar and heavily brocaded, deep blue and gold gown. This is counter-balanced by the sumptuous headgear wound round the dark gold tones of the elaborately dressed hair. The whole is designed to be read as a two-dimensional surface pattern as well as a portrait. Despite this stylization, the portrait expresses some individuality of feature. The linearity is deceptive, for the face itself begins to emerge from the subordination to two-dimensional design; the plasticity of the face pulls

away from the stylized flatness of the torso. This seeming awkwardness is extremely effective because it accentuates the face and creates strong contrasts, all of which are highly charged with energetic and unresolved tensions. These characteristics are shared to a limited degree with the early profile portraits of Italy.

The Veronese, Pisanello (c. 1395-1455), took his artistic inspiration from International Style, combining French with Lombard characteristics. As in the French panel in Washington, Pisanello's Portrait of Ginevra d'Este (c. 1435, Fig. 10) includes two-dimensional patterning, although here transferred mainly to the background. The artist displays other International Style preferences, such as the attenuated, three-quarter body versus a profile head. Though the profile is silhouetted against a dark green background, the botanical detail lessens the impact.⁴⁵ The flattening of the figure to merge with the background is achieved by a correspondence in the colors of Ginevra's gown with the flowers, butterflies, and foliage. Against this richness the unbroken surfaces of the face and neck appear well articulated. Ginevra's face is suffused with a soft, golden light which defines the features with moderate shadow, creating the illusion that the features are pronounced, without delineating them precisely. The ear is defined by the shadow, bringing it into sharper focus than any other feature. A white ribbon catches the light and directs

attention to the minutely rendered hairs, pulled back tightly from her face and neck. Her facial expression, on the other hand, conforms to a courtly attitude of self-contained superiority, with a slight, stiff smile. Thus Pisanello, by carefully selected detail, and by balancing idealization with naturalism, convinces the viewer of Ginevra's existence. At the same time he establishes her as in possession of ideal womanhood; this is further reinforced by the nobility inherent in the emblems of her family, seen in the botanical background and the impresa on her sleeve.

The Portrait of a Lady, by Fra Filippo Lippi (c. 1406-69, Fig. 11), probably painted around 1445-50, also exhibits tensions, although it is stylistically more consistent and self-consciously abstracted into a more universal statement. This profile portrait provides an early example of Florentine painting in the formation of an idealized female portrait lineage. Lippi advanced the portrait, with its remnants of the awe and reverence inherited from early donor portraits, to a more mature state. Although the original impetus of Lippi's Lady stems more from donor portraiture than from the courtly image, the portrait is overlaid with Renaissance innovations, such as the perspectival background, a greater facility in rendering the substance of the body, and the reconciliation of the linearity with three-dimensional form.⁴⁶

The lady is dressed in French fashion,⁴⁷ with a green gown, and a headdress composed of a scarlet cap, outlined by pearls, and a white, translucent veil. The veil floats about her neck, covering a single strand of pearls, and emphasizing the decorative effect of the line. Her face is portrait-like, but the features are subordinated to the expressive force of the line, which exaggerates the extreme slope of the forehead and receding curve of the chin. Light shines consistently from the left, unifying the composition and highlighting selected areas. In particular, it models her hands, a device that serves to guide the eye upward. In addition, it falls on the converging lines of the window frame and sill, focusing attention on the head. The light glows with a crystalline luster on the face, emphasizing the ivory tones and distinguishing it from the mundane world. There is abstraction in the facial expression; though the eye stares straight ahead, the heaviness of the lid allows for an impression of psychological inwardness, and reinforces a reverential quality akin to religious paintings. The embellishments of her costume tend to focus attention on the abstracted face to a greater extent than either the Pisanello or Washington portraits. Although Lippi delights in the sensuality of texture, it does not negate the piety that characterizes the face. The diaphonous veil is as luxuriously conceived as that of a Lippi Madonna. However, because of the Renaissance viewer's preconceived acceptance

of the Madonna's innate spirituality and purity, she is allowed a greater degree of soft, pliable beauty. These human attributes instill religious didacticism with qualities comprehensible to the secular viewer. On the other hand, even though profile features can be flattering in secular portraiture, they do not convince the viewer of a woman's existence, as we have seen in Pisanello's portrait of Ginevra d'Este. An important conceptual advance is created by Lippi's use of the tactile qualities to affirm his sitter's genuineness. At the same time, the profile portrait idealizes the features, and emphasizes the qualities of womanhood valued by the patron and society.

Although a sense of ideal womanhood had been formalized in both literary and, as will be discussed, in social terms, the pictorial poetry of womanhood was only beginning to be developed in the first part of the fifteenth century. In the feminine ideal of secular literature, the infusion of a religious element was inevitable. Petrarch was able to make reference to Laura as a divine figure,⁴⁸ but was also able to distinguish the characteristics which constituted her superiority and connect them with earthly love. This tradition was assimilated into the work of other authors, and religious imagery tends to become mingled with secular imagery in later love lyric. This can also be seen in painting, hence the traditions of both the secular and religious arts become influential in the depiction of women in the fifteenth century.

CHAPTER II

RELIGIOUS SOURCES

The significance of fifteenth century female portraiture lies in a structure of great cultural complexity. Having dealt with the importance of early portrait styles and literature on the formulation of depictions of women, it is now necessary to investigate the religious sources that exerted an influence on the genre. It is important to understand that an essential element of Renaissance society was its absorption in Christianity; religious rituals and dogma permeated every facet of life. Renaissance Christians fundamentally understood the iconographical language of the art they saw so profusely around them. From medieval society, the Renaissance inherited a religious legacy of profound impact.

Both public and private devotion was an important part of medieval and Renaissance religious life. Mass was said frequently, marking the events on the Biblical calendar. Prominent families made decorative donations to the Church, often in the form of side chapels dedicated to their own patron saint. Preaching figured significantly, and was quite popular, especially among women. At home, wealthy citizens had private chapels, as well as paintings of religious subjects for meditation within their own chambers.

Women were expected to pray for all members of their families, and elaborate rosaries were crafted to aid in this aspect of Christian worship. Due to this interrelationship, it is not possible to separate religious life from secular life in any but the broadest terms.¹ The Church and her ~~her~~ ^{its} representatives were engaged in worldly affairs, and the reciprocal nature of secular and religious life created only nominal divisions between the two. Women especially were expected to live the Christian life, adhering to its stringent moral requirements. Religion influenced both their behavior, and the attitudes of men toward them.² Michelet summed up the education of the medieval woman in one short phrase, "l'imitation de la Vierge."³

There was no great division between the education of medieval and early Renaissance women, and the attitude of reverence toward the Virgin continues throughout the fifteenth century. In the Christian point of view, the highest state of perfection ever attained by a woman was that of the Virgin, the Mother of Christ. It was this image of womanhood and motherhood, however unattainable, toward which women could aspire. There were numerous pictorial examples of the Madonna in various roles, used for public and private devotion.⁴ Increasingly in the fifteenth century, images of the Virgin became more human and approachable. This accessibility in the artistic image led to a wider acceptance of human qualities in the portrayal of

other important women, thus facilitating an evolution in female portraiture. Paintings of the Virgin were visual reminders of this ideal of womanhood, and it was naturally through this subject that the Christian artist first conceived of an artistic feminine ideal.⁵

The womanly identification with the Virgin was very common, and can be seen, for example, in the visions of the great fourteenth century saint, Catherine of Siena.⁶ Her mystic marriage to Christ echoes that of St. Catherine of Alexandria in the fourth century; both visions are reflections of Mary and Christ as Bride and Bridegroom.⁷ Many Italian female saints after Catherine of Siena became the spouses of Christ.⁸ This was the consummate example of imitatio Maria, but the concept of this devotion--the ability to move closer to Christ through the Virgin's intercession, and ultimately through emulating and identifying with her--affected all Christian women.⁹

In order to strengthen this identification, artists of the fifteenth century show a growing tendency to depict the Virgin as a mortal being, albeit extremely beautified and idealized. In Trecento paintings of the adoration of the Magi, the Virgin is shown with greater dignity and solemnity, as befits the Mother of God receiving the homage of the earthly kings (Fig. 12). Only during the Renaissance does her face begin to show more expressiveness, displaying interest in the homage shown to the Child, as well as a

heightened sense of motherly affection (Fig. 13).

Seven sorrowful events in Mary's life form the Via Matris which corresponds to Christ's Via Crucis. Mary as a human being suffered and partook of Christ's sufferings, and through that, and because of it, shares in the atonement of mankind.¹⁰ Through the veneration of Mary, people of the Renaissance had to recognize this role the Creator allowed the Virgin, and in doing so, took their highest ideal of woman from this example. The worshipper could see that the Virgin's sufferings were the human, physical expression of Christ's sorrows. This is one of the ways in which the relationship between Christ and Mary could be elucidated.

Among Mary's sorrows, Simeon's prophecy was one of the most potent, since it was the presentiment of all her future sorrows. At the Presentation of Christ in the temple, Simeon said to Mary:

Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed (Luke 2:34-35).

In the Versio vulgata, this was translated, "and his sword shall pierce through thy soul [*italics mine*]." ¹¹ This caused the commentators to interpret the "sword" as the lance that pierced Christ at the Crucifixion. The sword that was to be figuratively thrust into her bosom at the Sacrifice was often shown literally in art, not at the Crucifixion, but at the moment Mary receives Simeon's words.

Hence Mary's presence at Christ's Presentation became associated with her suffering at Golgotha, and the popular interpretation of Simeon's prophecy was instrumental in asserting a greater consanguinity with Christ.¹² In addition, the apocryphal literature which grew up around Mary and her relationship with her Son emphasized her human tenderness and affection. These were qualities on which women could not only meditate, but which aided them in the devotional task of identifying so closely with the Virgin that they lived through her experience.¹³ Each presentiment of separation from Christ, each search, paralleled the final separation, both physical and metaphysical. Through His mother, Christians could see the human side which Christ progressively abandons for his true role. This had a parallel in earthly life that a Renaissance man and woman could easily comprehend: in order to realize full manhood, men had to progressively leave the tutelage of their mothers, sorrowful, but necessary. Therefore, in the minds of both men and women, a preconceived parallel existed, and a transference was natural in Quattrocento portraiture from Madonna image to secular female image.

In the first half of the fifteenth century, female portraits begin to exhibit more complex states of mind, corresponding to those of the psychologically responsive Virgin figures. There is a time discrepancy in the manifestation of this characteristic in these two types of

painting. In addition, in portraiture this new treatment demonstrated less an individual personality, than a general awareness of the ideal woman, or rather ideal wife/mother. Her womanly role, in turn, was defined by the example provided by the unwavering devotion of the Virgin.¹⁴ During the fifteenth century, the Madonna depictions surpass the secular figures in displaying psychological states. While there seems to be a growing trend in the Quattrocento to depict the Virgin as a mortal being, the female portrait images tend to elevate mortal women.¹⁵

Although it is not easy to convey psychological states through the profile view, since it gives only half the face, it is not impossible. Fra Filippo Lippi's Portrait of a Lady (Fig. 9), when compared to the full-face Madonna in the Louvre Altarpiece (c. 1437, Fig. 14) by the same artist, shows the portrait to be much less open in its expression. The profile view is one reason for this formalization, but a comparison with the Portrait of a Lady (c. 1440, Fig. 15), attributed tentatively to Fra Diamante,¹⁶ confirms that a limited psychological state can be revealed in a profile portrait. The woman is framed by panelling on all sides; she pokes her head forward a bit, increasing the intensity of her gaze, as if she sees something that the viewer cannot. (This mental alertness is used and refined later in the century.) In Lippi's Madonna, the full-face gaze is directed pensively downward, expressing a more

definable emotion; she is contemplating the future sorrow of Christ's Sacrifice. In Fra Diamante's work, the austerity of the surroundings helps to create the mood of quiet contemplation. The sitter's character is intimated by the pictorial treatment of the features, but this character is more an ideal of Christian virtue, influenced by the Virgin's example, than the portrayal of an individual personality. Despite this, the images of women are not merely blank and idealized beyond any character, but attempt to depict an inner spiritual life.

The spiritualized aspect is partially created by the extremely psychologically remote quality in the portraits, appearing as if the woman depicted were in a partially transcendent state, rather than the ordinary temporal realm. This emphasis on the spiritualization of female portraiture, its connection with women and religion, and especially with imitatio Maria, can be seen in a diptych (painted on two sides) of Federigo da Montefeltro and his wife, Battista Sforza (c. 1460, Fig. 16), by Piero della Francesca (c. 1420-1492). Since both are seen in profile, these portraits provide a perfect example of the disparity between male and female depictions.¹⁷ The bust-length portrait of Battista is stylistically related to Piero's female figures in the narrative cycle in San Francesco in Arrezo (Fig. 17), whereas the pendant profile portrait of Federigo portrays the utmost individuality of feature and personality, and

stylistically is difficult to relate to the artist's depictions of male saints.

While Battista's portrait resembles, for example, Piero's kneeling figure of an attendant to St. Helena in the Proof of the True Cross (Fig. 18), there is also a subtle specificity in the rendering of the secular face. Both the faces of St. Helena's attendant and Battista are defined by the bone structure that Piero manipulates to create volume. In addition, each face projects a sense of reverence and purity. Despite the extreme idealization, it is the structure of Battista's head itself, as well as the sensitivity of the individual features, that gives the face character, and lends to the portrait an aura of inner strength and knowledge. The decorative line is used to unify the figure, creating depth in the coiling headdress, and, originating from the unseen ear, it is continued in the curve of the deeply cut jawline. An extension of this line molds the silhouette of the features and describes the perfect oval of the head set against the sky. The interior of the face echoes this shape, particularly in the foreshortening of the eye which is structured by a dark line, encircling the area and emphasizing the socket. The eye itself is a small wedge within the oval shape; the pupil is only half seen under the protruding lid, reinforcing the spiritually inward expression.

When compared with the profile portraits of Pisanello, the difference is immediately evident. Pisanello's Portrait of Ginevra d'Este (Fig. 10) demonstrates this disparity in its abstract flatness against a fantasy background. Ginevra's face is basically two-dimensional; the features are composed rigidly, with the mouth tilted upward in a formalized smile. In Piero's work the density of the head overcomes the limitations of the profile. The figures and background of the diptych possess an independent reality, each existing to play against the forms of the other. The Pisanello portrait, on the other hand, does not appear to exist in any real time or space: Piero's work captures the essence of an environment existing in suspended time.

The portraits of Battista Sforza and Federigo da Montefeltro succinctly dramatize the disparity between the male and female profile portrait in the second half of the fifteenth century. The landscape behind each figure, as well as the common light source unify the paintings, but the light illumines Battista's face and places Federigo's in shadow. This technique allows for far greater modulation in the male portrait, and thus greater specificity. The Duke's brilliant crimson garb contrasts with the muted tones of Battista's portrait. Her delicate, nearly translucent flesh acts as a foil to her husband's robust swarthy. It attests both to Piero's skill as a colorist, and to the power of the female ideal, that Federigo's physicality does

not overwhelm his wife's portrait. Battista's portrait displays a natural continuity with the idealized women of other portraits. There is no need to depict her in any other pose, for all the information necessary about her is here and, as in Trecento portraiture, this is sufficient to convey the desired message. Although more specific in feature than the face of St. Helena's attendant in the Arezzo fresco, the tranquility, sense of inner knowledge, and spiritual attainment are all present--as if the soul were worn on the exterior as well as the interior.

The association of women and religion is reinforced on the reverse side of the diptych; Battista is accompanied in her Triumphal chariot by personifications of the theological Virtues, while the Duke is accompanied by the secular Virtues (Fig. 19).¹⁸ Furthermore, the Duchess' chariot is drawn by unicorns, symbols of chastity. Chastity was a fundamental attribute of the Virgin, and the imitation of the Virgin was a prerequisite for attaining all other virtues. This was also a crucial virtue to the upper-class woman's role in society, as demonstrated by the severe punishments for incontinence.¹⁹ This chastity was the center of onestà, a significant concept to the medieval and Renaissance Italian woman. The implications of onestà go far beyond its most fundamental meaning of honesty and modesty. In Thomistic tradition,²⁰ a woman in possession of her onestà had a sensitivity to anything shameful or immoderate,

instigating a sense of honor devoted to duty, and was crowned by a spiritual beauty.²¹ Thus the image of Battista is bound together with the social requirements that she has ostensibly met, and which the portrait seeks to convince the viewer she has fulfilled, bringing honor to her, and consequently to her husband and family. Similarly, the iconography of the Duke's depiction represents the counterpart in men--worldly goals and assets. The two portraits become mutually complementary, embodying the highest expectations for noble manhood and womanhood. All of the virtues seen in the Triumphs on the back are synthesized in the portraits of the Duke and Duchess on the front; the two panels in conjunction provide a public statement of the fame and honor of the House of Montefeltro.

In summary, there is a close relationship between women and their imitation of the Virgin, because it was through the Virgin's suffering that women were able to respond to Mary on a human as well as a spiritual level.²² Specifically, this imitatio Maria seems to have encouraged forbearance, nobility of mind, and piety, and these qualities are reflected in the portraiture. A woman such as St. Catherine of Siena could gain special recognition through unusual spiritual prowess, but the majority of women had to rely on embellishing the image of womanhood, and glorifying their natural attributes through spiritual identification with the Virgin. In this effort, the beatific

superiority of the woman in the courtly tradition was beneficial. Women created a mystique of religious devotion by conforming to the role that was extolled as their Christian duty, and used every method within the scope of that role to gain as powerful a position as it would allow. The perpetuation of this position can be seen as an important factor in the evolution of female portraiture, for the image of woman that it conveys reveals the manner in which they wished to be perceived.²³

CHAPTER III

LATER QUATTROCENTO SOCIETY AND PORTRAITURE

Key aspects of literature and religion contributed to the formation of the cultural imagery of noble womanhood in the fifteenth century. And it is that social structure which provided the final component for female portraiture of the late Quattrocento. During this latter part of the century, the form female depiction embraced in Italy was still primarily that of the profile portrait. Developed in Florence during the first half of the century to depict men,¹ this form persisted as a convention only in female portraiture as the century progressed. As pointed out earlier, one of the advantages of the profile was to present the features of an individual in the most immediate and easily recognizable way possible, while maintaining a standard of idealization as a direct statement of the sitter's virtues. Pope-Hennessy only touches on the complexity of female depiction when he notes that the purpose of some portraits was informative. For example, he states that by the end of the century in Ferrara, portraits of Estense women were sent to prospective husbands to acquaint them with the appearance of the bride.² He fails to point out, however, that this informative function is suggestive of the complexity of the portrait; the portrait

was the sole impression that would be received before betrothal was seriously contemplated, and the impression conveyed would therefore be crucial. Thus the portrait commissioned by a particular family needed to state the most desirable characteristics of the prospective bride. To achieve this the ideal of womanhood which had been developed was employed, because of its wide acceptance.

The information about the lady portrayed in a profile portrait was necessarily that which the patron wished to be conveyed. Therefore, in order to achieve advantageous alliances, not only did these portraits contain information about a specific woman, but they also expressed the quality of a woman's family.³ Thus it was essential to create a portrait image that embraced all those ideals of womanhood formulated in religion and literature, and absorbed into feminine social roles.

Social Roles of Women

The importance of a woman's domestic competency was traditional in the merchant class of the communes of Italy.⁴ Intelligence and business acumen were also desirable traits in women of mercantile families, though not always essential so long as the household was well managed. With the upward mobility of a wealthy merchant-class, women of these families were seen increasingly as "ladies," traditionally a noblewoman's prerogative. Women of the Italian nobility

fulfilled more than just a domestic role. Their additional social expectations were intimately connected with the courtly image, as well as with the moral elevation they were theoretically capable of achieving.⁵ This was an image to which the bourgeois woman earlier need not conform. With the rise in status of families such as the Medici in Florence, however, noble attitudes and expectations began to affect the behavior of women in the new merchant-noble class. The roles of women in this emerging society were determined by the changing status of their influential families in Italian communes.⁶ By the second half of the fifteenth century, noble and merchant-noble women were fulfilling similar roles, and both were seen within the same ideal. Merchant families such as the Medici were increasingly pursuing traditionally noble customs, duties, and pleasures. The nobles, however, found themselves in political competition with the emerging class. At the same time each class was influenced by the other's traditional values. It should be pointed out that the responsibility of running a household was required in all classes, but the noble or merchant-noble woman had considerable leisure because her family could afford servants to perform menial tasks.⁷

Although the highest expectations of the religious, courtly, and domestic realms are ostensibly contradictory, these concepts in the Quattrocento tended to be complementary, and were synthesized into one overall ideal for the

upper-class woman. These three differing aspects of the ideal were inseparable, and it is important here to understand how the familial role of women reinforced the other aspects of the complete ideal. This total concept of womanhood was crystallized in the portrait image. The persistence of the female profile portrait in the latter half of the fifteenth century is undoubtedly due to the fact that during this period the aspects of the ideal were brought together in its final form in the perfected image of femininity.

The ideal as it developed in Italian communes was unique, differing considerably from that in societies dominated by systems of royalty such as France, with whom Italy had its closest cultural interchange in the fifteenth century.⁸ The source of these cultural differences was primarily economic; the rise of the merchant class in Italy to positions of power brought competition with the traditional noble ruling-class. The nobility had to compete with the wealth of the merchant princes, and they in turn had to compete with the deeply ingrained tradition of rule that the nobles possessed.

One of the factors which gave the wealthy merchants increased influence was the arrangement of marriages between powerful families to cement economic and political alliances. Marriage festivals were the one occasion in which the woman was not only a primary concern, but was even displayed in

public.⁹ Wedding scenes were not uncommon in Italian art, and marriage was one of the rare public ceremonies depicted where the woman was not a subsidiary or background figure. A good example of this can be seen in the Adimari Marriage Chest (c. 1440, Fig. 20). In the scene painted on the lid of a chest, a canopy in the foreground shelters a wedding procession of several elegant, richly clothed couples, advancing with great dignity and ceremony. Great emphasis is placed on a courtly attitude. The men's faces are more fully seen and defined, each escorts and turns toward a lady (and consequently toward the viewer). It is the women who function compositionally to draw the eye around the scene. There is more visual interest created in the self-contained, serene visage of each woman seen in profile, despite the uniformity of depiction. They appear to be psychologically removed from the immediate scene, and this special treatment creates a mysterious attitude which captures the viewer's attention.

It should be noted that the bridal couple (Boccaccio Adimari and Lisa Ricasoli), members of the new merchant-noble class, are treated in a standard International Style mode of depiction. This piece demonstrates the infusion of courtly ideals into Quattrocento upper-class values. This type of association of a real event with a courtly style results in a scene that is more symbolic of an ideal nuptial festival than the depiction of an actual wedding.

Consequently, it becomes the visualization of an abstract ideal.¹⁰ The formalization, associating the bride and groom with a physical and behavioral ideal, makes a concrete visual statement about the rank of society to which they belong. In delineating the surroundings, the artist makes use of a well-developed perspectival system and identifiable Italian buildings. Thus the idealized figures are placed in an actual time and place, convincing the viewer of the fidelity of the ideal image.

A blending of the real and the ideal is used to great effect in this marriage scene. The removed elegance of the central female figures is juxtaposed against the carefully rendered background, and the richness of the flowing drapery forms a compositional unity. The scene is divided by the poles of the canopy; the women in the two central sections are placed close to the picture plane, setting them apart, physically and psychologically, from the rest of the composition. The men escorting them are placed firmly within the space and lead the eye into the background, connecting the courtly women with the real setting. This emphasizes the concept that the man is marrying an ideal woman, and in addition, implies the society whose marriage customs are depicted actually exists in a perfected state. The ideal nature of these women, then, is an important aspect in asserting a more universal statement about the society in which they live.

The development of the public wedding was crucial to social mobility in Italy, for in the union lay the seeds of future power.¹¹ The image of the ideal woman was of great importance to these connections between families. The nobility were allying themselves with the new wealth, and affluent merchants were allying themselves with the noble heritage of prestige and power. The conduct of the bridal couple, particularly the woman, was essential to the promotion of her family's position, since the moral expectations of an upper-class woman were so high. Rarely were the bride's feelings considered. Instead, the bride adjusted her feelings to suit the occasion, conditioned to accept the choice of her family, and desirous of promoting its cause. It was vital to her family that she conduct herself in marriage in a manner that would reflect honor on her family.¹²

The expectations of noble women in marriage had evolved in the Trecento, and were different from those pertaining to women in other levels of society. The ideal for the noble woman was derived from religious values, the image of the courtly woman, and the ability to procreate and effectively manage a family.¹³ The utmost loyalty to her husband and his family was also a requirement, and because of the acceptance of political realities, many quite successful marriages were formed. This system of alliances engendered many difficulties, and the deterrents to the women who did not live up to the ideal were many. There are

numerous instances, both in documents and fiction, which tell of the pitfalls of the system and the failure of women to live by the ideal. One of the most serious offenses was adultery, which violated all the tenets formulated for women in the maintenance of power. While the forgiveness of adultery in the Trecento for women of non-noble classes was commonly a matter of a beating or a fine, the penalties for those wives and daughters of the powerful were often extremely severe. The importance of the ideal to a woman's family is seen not only in harsh punishments, but also in the frequency with which cases of upper-class adultery are recounted, and the relish with which they are told.

The origins of this ideal of behavior in the Trecento has a bearing on the development of the image of women established in society by the late Quattrocento. In the fourteenth century laws did not apply with consistency to powerful men, and they were not required when meting out justice to their own dependents (to which group women belonged) to abide by the laws set up for the rest of the populace. Women who married into families such as the Visconti of Milan, the Gonzaga of Mantua, or the Estense of Ferrara were victims of the arbitrary power, which in Longobardic and Roman law, permitted the execution of an adulteress caught in flagrante delicto.

An example of the seriousness with which an infringement of the feminine ideal was regarded is seen in the case

of the daughter of Bernabò Visconti of Milan. In the mid-fourteenth century Bernabò had many mistresses and illegitimate children. By one of his favorites he had a daughter named Bernarda. When she was still quite young,¹⁴ he betrothed her for political expediency to Giovanni Suardi Cavaliere, the head of a Ghibelline family of Bergamo.¹⁵ She paid many visits to her father, who by every indication was very fond of her. Bernabò was told that when Bernarda visited Milan she consistently admitted a lover to her bedroom. The rage which accompanied Bernabò's discovery of this indiscretion was undoubtedly founded on the awkwardness it engendered for the political marriage alliance. The claim against Bernarda was subsequently substantiated, and to save the Visconti from humiliation, a public charge of robbery was brought against her lover, and he was hanged in disgrace. Bernarda was sent to a fortress and imprisoned with Andriola Visconti. Andriola had been made Abbess of a convent when she was twenty years old, and had been accused of incontinence.¹⁶ In 1351, on Bernabò's instruction, they were both put on a ration of bread and water and were slowly, cruelly starved to death.¹⁷

The importance of Bernarda's case to scholarly investigation of the feminine ideal, lies in the fact that it documents the acceptance of this punishment for adultery by society. Such acceptance can be clearly traced: some years after her death, rumors spread that Bernarda was still

alive; Bernabò initiated a legal inquiry to verify publicly that she had died in 1351. This inquiry revealed the relevant facts, and many people testified to the brutal death of Bernarda. It was assumed that justice had been done; further, Bernabò was extolled before the court as a man of true appreciation of virtue and richly endowed with the highest moral principles.¹⁸

The easy acceptance of the righteousness of harsh punishment suggests reasons for the way women were depicted in the fifteenth century because of what it reveals about the society. In addition, Bernarda's case clearly elucidates the differences in the ideal for men and women. The fact that Bernarda was one of many illegitimate children of this "virtuous" man, was not hypocritical to the social values of the time. Keeping mistresses was a completely separate matter from the political marriage contract; a liaison of the former kind was acceptable and did not interfere with male familial duty. There was no contradiction, for the social status of mistresses was established in Italy; they were accepted or, at least, tolerated, and the children of such unions could be legitimized if necessary.¹⁹

Not only were noble men judged by an entirely different moral ideal than the noble women, but the latter's standard of behavior distinguished them from women of other classes. Because of their wealth, they had leisure time to engage in sophisticated intellectual pursuits. The

privileges of the noble woman were greater, and in a sense she enjoyed more freedom, but she was expected to take greater responsibility in maintaining the image of the family. Although these women benefitted from wealth and rank, they were often victims of and pawns in political maneuvering. The excessively dignified image which they had to attain (and maintain) affected their lives, and consequently the ideal directly informed the portraits that developed in the fifteenth century. If their virtue was a requirement, ladies used it to great effect, and thus proved their superiority over women of less influential families. They cultivated the image, perfected, and conformed to it throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, thereby earning an intellectual freedom and mobility in other areas of life.

Portraiture and Quattrocento Social Aims

In order to understand the development of female portraiture in the latter half of the fifteenth century, it is important to look at the early male precedent; both versions were similar in their aim of asserting nobility. At the beginning of the Quattrocento, portraiture as a social phenomenon can be demonstrated in the independent panel male profile portrait that was developed in Florence.²⁰ This kind of depiction was extremely popular for a few decades, and then nearly disappeared from the artistic scene.²¹ The

portraits represent merchants of prominent families of communes, showing them to be the equals of members of noble families.

Rab Hatfield has several opinions about this kind of portrait which are pertinent to this thesis. He maintains that though they are boastful and assertive, they also appear at the same time to be reticent and moral; this ideology became a weapon for the society, and served as a conceptual basis for the portrayal of excellence. The portraits also demonstrate a spiritual nobility which is dependent on a man, rather than a heritage and could, therefore, exist within any society. Hatfield goes on to say that before long, noblemen also had to be "heroized" in portraiture, since the universality of the concept made it powerfully appealing.²²

Female portraits also functioned as an ideological weapon and endured throughout the fifteenth century in this profile form, whereas male individuality was being extensively explored in the second half of the century. During this time, the male profile portrait aimed at conveying not only the ethical character of the sitter, but also the political and economic power integral to asserting their nobility.²³ It is interesting to note that while the heroized male profile portraits declined in number as the century progressed, the spiritually idealized female profile portrait increased in popularity.²⁴ It would seem, then,

that the lack of marked individualization of female portraits is directly linked to the function of women in asserting spiritual nobility and their position as an ideal representative of the family.²⁵

By the second half of the Quattrocento this idealization was crystallized in the female profile portrait as exemplified by the Portrait of a Lady (c. 1470, Fig. 21), attributed to Antonio Pollaiuolo.²⁶ The artist's interest in the natural world is vividly evident in this elegant portrait; the bust-length figure is rendered with a keen eye for detail. The lady's face, turned to the left, is illuminated evenly, and stands out from a neutral ground. An implied mobility in the features compels the viewer to believe in her palpable existence, and convinces one that the portrait is an accurate record, both of facial features and, more importantly, of character. This type of technique, blending naturalism with idealism, was seen earlier in the century in the work of Pisanello, and Pollaiuolo exploits this element to the utmost to create an image which convinces the viewer of its veracity. Pollaiuolo was conforming to the ideal image with tenacity. The portrait displays the same serenity as has been noted in female portraits by other artists. This portrait states the sitter's social status, expressed in spiritual terms through her transcendent gaze, and her restrained, youthful beauty; her energy is controlled by the firm line of the lips, and

the delicate luminosity of the surface. This status is also expressed in purely physical terms: fair skin, richly dressed hair flecked with gold highlights, jewels, and the mobility of features achieved by the balance of the plasticity with the profile line.

The first impression of the portrait, the uprightness of the figure's bearing and proud carriage of her head, immediately asserts the superior quality of her character and the pride of her family heritage. It is the subtlety of the shading which both preserves the effect of physical perfection, and distinguishes her from a mere symbol of a woman. Pollaiuolo convinces the viewer of her existence, treating the features in a boldly pliable manner, with the shadows accentuating the delicacy of the nostrils and mild sensuality of the mouth. The upper lip extends beyond the lower, giving the impression of a half-parted mouth (though the lips still preserve a guise of control), reinforcing the physical existence of the figure and her earthly perfection.

The face is defined first by the profile line, which becomes darker from the nose to the neck, balancing the broad expanse of the forehead and detailed rendering of the headdress. The eyebrow is reduced to a bare suggestion, and only interrupts the expanse of the brow to aid in defining the eye socket. Below the smooth, untroubled brow, the eye itself is skillfully foreshortened; the upward gaze from beneath the heavy lid lends a slight pensiveness to the

face. This quality is mitigated by the lack of deep shadow in this area, which is inconsistent with the strong lighting which illumines the rest of the face. This impression of thoughtfulness aids in transmitting information regarding the woman's intelligence, producing a statement pertinent to the perfection of her character. There is also a hint of good humor in the curve of her mouth; the artist is able to accentuate this upward lift without resorting to a stiff smile (such as in the Pisanello portrait of Ginevra d'Este).²⁷ The fleeting impression of a smile is strengthened by the use of rose tones in the shadow on the cheek and jaw, corresponding to the deeper color of the mouth, through which the artist leads the viewer's eye upward toward the ear where the colored areas converge. Thus the artist infuses a sense of the sang-froid of this woman's character, while maintaining the seriousness and spirituality of her visage. This portrait shows how thoroughly the literary and cultural ideals of women were blended, and how felicitous this combination was when creating a visual ideal.

Permeation of the feminine ideal into the Quattrocento culture can be seen in the writings of Leon Battista Alberti. It is important to the understanding of female portraiture to realize that the same traditional attitudes also affected a man in the midst of the humanist movement in Italy. (It is interesting to note that the conservative visualization resulting from these views seems antithetical

to the innovative attitudes of Alberti's artistic circle.) Using an ancient source to reinforce Renaissance values, Alberti, in his De Architectura, describes the ideal quarters for ladies in a country villa:

I remember to have read [sic] in Aemilius Probus the historian, that among the Greeks it was never usual for the wife to appear at the table, if anybody was there besides relations; and that the apartments for the women were parts of the house where no men ever set foot except the nearest kindred. And indeed I must own I think the apartments for the ladies ought to be sacred, like places dedicated to religion and chastity. I am besides for having the rooms particularly designed for virgins and young ladies, fitted up in the neatest manner, that their tender minds may pass their time in them with less regret and be as little weary of themselves as possible. The mistress of the family should have an apartment in which she may easily hear everything that is done in the house.²⁸

In this passage, one may ascertain not only the constant association of women and religion, but the dichotomy that existed between the view of women as "virgins and young ladies" and their practical role in married life as managers of the household. There is a realistic recognition of youthful interests when Alberti differentiates between a young lady, presumably married but as yet without a family to manage, and the mistress of the family. The latter was an extremely important role, because the smooth running of a household was a necessity in times of uncertainty. The wife in this role represented a continuity amid the turmoil; the man of influence could return from an ambassadorial post, business trip, or even a temporary exile and be

guaranteed that his possessions and his childrens' education were under the guardianship of the most loyal member of his household, and that his wishes would be carried out in his absence as well as his presence.²⁹ Moreover, women in the domestic role never completely left the courtly ideal behind, but carried both along with them into their public life. The adherence to the courtly ideal persisted despite the fact that a woman might develop excellent business acumen with which to advise her husband, or cultivate her mind with the tenets of humanism; the latter became an increasingly more common pastime as the fifteenth century progressed.³⁰

These diverse aspects of the ideal would appear on the surface to be irreconcilable. This includes a fundamental dilemma between the manner in which men idealized a woman as an object of adoration in the courtly tradition, and the wife/mother idealization. To the modern observer, the duality in these concepts appears because the married state of domestic virtue was intended to be one of eternal forbearance and virtuous self-denial in the Christian mode, whereas the woman in courtly love was more often than not inaccessible for marriage. In addition, the same men who honored a married woman in compliance with the rules of courtly love, expected the women of their own families to conform to a code of behavior that precluded any notice of male admiration.³¹ Fifteenth century Italian men resolved this seemingly irreconcilable problem by acting out the

precepts of courtly love only in a formal sense, and by adulating women with whom any reciprocal relationship was impossible, as well as often keeping mistresses who had no ties with powerful families.³²

It is difficult to express the abstract virtues of womanhood in a portrait without using blatant symbols, which were not used extensively in later Quattrocento portraits. Therefore the portraits of that period had to draw from images that were familiar and easily recognizable as ideal. The depiction of the complete ideal of womanhood was facilitated by the fact that each part of the ideal was interconnected. The spiritual nature of women was linked with the domestic, for the latter role was seen as a Christian duty, and the Madonna was the ultimate model of motherhood. The courtly image was also tied to the spiritual, since the women in courtly literature often took on saintly virtues and imagery. Thus each aspect contained associative links and one aspect implied the aggregate. When the ideal image was presented to the world in visual form, all three aspects were, by implication, synthesized into the female portrait.

The necessity for the ideal is clear when one closely examines the changing role of a woman from an ordinary bourgeois housewife to that of an aspiring lady. This growth is well illustrated by the Medici family in Florence.³³ The women of the Medici acted as helpmeets,

confidants, and stabilizing forces in an often chaotic life. This family did not have the long history of power and despotism as did a family such as the Visconti, and Medici records indicate that there is a probable correlation between the formation of an ideal that called for respect of women, and the merchant-class heritage.

Indicative of the best of middle-class attitudes toward women, is Cavalcanti's record of Giovanni de' Medici's words as he lay dying in 1429:

He called his sons Cosimo and Lorenzo and in the presence of their mother, Piccardo Bueri, of their wives, and of other citizens, spoke to them thus: ' . . . I leave you in Possession of the great wealth which my good fortune has bestowed upon me and which your good mother and my own hard work has enabled me to preserve. . . . I commend to you Nannina my wife and your mother, see that after my death ye change not the habits and customs of her life!'³⁴

Whether or not Cavalcanti's record of Giovanni's last words is accurate, it underscores the regard in which Medici wives were held; Nannina is given credit for her hard work, and a promise is extracted from her sons to sustain her life in the manner to which she was accustomed. This attitude is certainly different than that of the Trecento nobility; there are no examples in Medici history such as Bernabò Visconti's outrageous punishment of his wayward daughter.³⁵

In both the treatment of women in society and the creation of the ideal in the latter half of the fifteenth century, this merchant-class regard combines with the courtly view

of women.

Three generations of the Medici family in the fifteenth century exemplify the gradual assimilation of attitudes toward noble women into their inherited attitudes. The most prominent personality in Florence among the advocates of civic responsibility after 1430, was Cosimo di Giovanni de' Medici.³⁶ His wife, Contessina,³⁷ was still primarily fulfilling the role of a bourgeois woman in a domestic capacity, though Cosimo exerted great influence, unofficially, on Florentine society. The difference between Contessina and the woman who married her son Piero, Lucrezia Tornabuoni,³⁸ illustrates the changing behavior and image of the merchant-nobility, conforming to the same expectations as women of noble lineage. By the time Lucrezia's son Lorenzo (the Magnificent) was of his majority, this process was complete.

The letters of Contessina and Lucrezia reveal the changing role of women within the family as it gained in prominence and status throughout the fifteenth century. Contessina's letters are full of homely details of life, such as a typical one of 1445 replying to her son Piero:

I have thy letter asking for the rose-coloured
lucco lined with down, a jacket, and the boots.
The hat I sent thee by Benedetto Altoviti.
The other things I will send next week. I
have received the steaks, hams and the salted
meat thou has sent.³⁹

Lucrezia, on the other hand, attained great authority, and addressed herself to assessing the ideal which she had assimilated. She was consulted, particularly after Cosimo's death in 1464,⁴⁰ by her husband Piero on political questions, and was kept informed on all important events during his absences. She corresponded with many of the literary men of her time; the poems, sacred plays, and lauds she wrote became popular during her lifetime.⁴¹ She also made translations from the Bible into the vernacular and was praised for this and for her writing ability by Niccolo Valori. But she as well as Contessina carried on her household duties with vigor, and in addition, was intimately concerned with the education of her children.

The contemporary standard of beauty and virtue appropriate for a wife of the merchant-nobility is well stated by Lucrezia in a letter to her husband. The occasion of choosing a bride for her son Lorenzo was of primary concern to her, and the aristocratic status of the bride's family is indicative of the prestige of the merchant-nobility achieved by Lorenzo's generation.⁴² Lucrezia had insisted on going to Rome to inspect the prospective bride, Clarice Orsini, to determine the girl's suitability. In 1467 Lucrezia wrote:

. . . She is of good height and has a nice complexion, her manners are gentle, though not so winning as those of our girls, but she is very modest and would soon learn our customs. She has not fair hair, because here there are

no fair women; her hair is reddish and abundant, her face rather round, but it does not displease me. Her throat is fairly elegant, but it seems to me a little meagre, or to speak better, slight. Her bosom I could not see, as here the women are entirely covered up, but it appeared to me of good proportions. She does not carry her head proudly like our girls, but pokes it a little forward; I think she was shy, indeed I see no fault in her save shyness.⁴³

Lucrezia shows herself to be cognizant of all the requirements of the ideal, as well as the desire to find a woman for her son who would represent the nobility they needed to further the family's power. Her husband criticized her in a return letter for writing so coldly of Clarice's characteristics, but it is clear from Lucrezia's reply that she was merely demonstrating her position as caretaker of the family, was interested in perpetuating the ideal image, and critical of any woman who deviated from it.

By the 1480's, the portrait ideal of noble womanhood had permeated artistic production so thoroughly that this fifteenth century mode was introduced into the donor portrait--the very genre out of which Italian portraiture had evolved in the Trecento. The infusion of the new panel portrait ideal into donor portrait depictions produces the most definitive visual testimony of the function of these women. The choir frescoes of Santa Maria Novella in Florence (c. 1486-90), by Domenico Ghirlandaio (1449-1494),⁴⁴ a commission by Giovanni Tornabuoni (brother of Lucrezia Tornabuoni), includes many portraits of female family

members. One of these, a commemorative portrait of Giovanna degli Albizzi, clearly illustrates that the aim of the idealized profile portrait was to represent the virtues of the woman depicted. Giovanna married Giovanni Tornabuoni's son Lorenzo in 1486 and died in childbirth two years later. There are two extant portraits of Giovanna, the full-length one in the Visitation scene of the choir frescoes (Fig. 22-23), and another half-length, independent panel portrait in Lugano (Fig. 24).⁴⁵

Though the depiction is essentially similar, the figure of Giovanna in the panel portrait is reduced to half-length and is even more formalized than the fresco. A cupboard added behind the panel figure creates a dark background, heightening the pallor of her face. The cupboard contains a jewel, representing, among other things, the worldly life, and a rosary and prayer book symbolizing the spiritual life. The aim of this image is beautifully summed up by the inscription on the cupboard wall immediately behind Giovanna's neck, an epitaph from Martial: "O art, if thou wert able to depict the conduct of the soul, no lovelier painting would exist on earth."⁴⁶ As a commemorative portrait, the woman is more idealized than even a life portrait, and the intent of the patron is made explicit by the inscription.⁴⁷

It is helpful to view the fresco figure of Giovanna in the Santa Maria Novella frescoes particularly in

conjunction with the other female portraits in the cycle. It is Giovanna's commemorative portrait that shows the highest degree of idealization possible in order to convey the perfect state of spiritual well-being, imperative in the depiction of the deceased. Heaven was the goal, and in depicting the transcendence of the temporal realm and the perfection of the soul, the highest of honors was reflected on the Tornabuoni family. While the style of Giovanna's portrait in Santa Maria Novella conforms to the rest of the frescoes, her physical grace is somewhat lessened by the stiffness of her bearing. A comparison with the other female profile portrait, in the Nativity of the Virgin (Fig. 25-27), shows evidence of a greater animation in both face and figure.⁴⁸ The maiden stands with her body turned slightly toward the viewer, in gentle contrast to the purely profile face, her hands clasped across her abdomen. The elaborate brocade of her gown is highlighted with the same gold that is seen in the background, reflected in her hair, and in the edging of the gowns in the female figures directly behind her. The brocade of the girl's overgarment separates from the tight lacing of the bodice, to the hem, overlapping the red undergarment of one of the attendants to the holy scene. This color echoes the red and green of her own undergarment, leading the viewer's eye directly up to the face. This movement is only momentarily stilled by the heavy pendant, gold encircled with pearls, held by a

narrow chain emphasizing the slender elegance of her neck.⁴⁹ The gold is repeated in the mesh of a small headdress, emphasizing the tones in one of the most unusual features of this portrait, the long, simply dressed hair waving down her back.

The contrast between the commemorative portrait and the life portrait can be seen in the generalization of Giovanna's face and figure, as well as her hair, clothing and ornaments. Her bearing is quite rigid, as shown in the long line of her inflexible body. The schematized facial features of Giovanna are clearly subordinated to the idealization; there is no suggestion of sensuality in the straight line of the nose or the firm, compressed lips. Every curve of the face is flattened by the patterning produced by the even lighting; shadow is used only to the degree necessary to maintain the structural logic. Unlike the Nativity profile figure, no real visual interest is elicited by the jeweled ornament around her neck, which blends with the rest of her costume. The generalization of the gown can be seen distinctly in comparison with the figure in the Nativity of the Virgin, for Giovanna wears a gown of the same pattern, both undergarment and overgarment. The undergarment is a red and green diamond pattern whereas the overgarment (beautifully rendered in rich detail in the Nativity scene), is a brocade of alternating phoenixes and suns.⁵⁰ The generalization of Giovanna's attire is an

important aspect of her removal from earthly transience. While the gown and jeweled ornament are described with enough richness to be adequate symbols of the family's wealth, the lack of specificity contrasts with the liveliness of the garments in the other fresco figure.

The girl in the Nativity of the Virgin seems to be completely absorbed in the scene taking place before her. This appearance of concentration is partially due to the nature of the profile portrait; in rendering only one side of the face, the artist limits the viewer's capacity to ascertain the precise focus of the eyes. In this case, the uncertainty causes the figure to seem transfixed by the image of St. Anne. The reclining saint looks toward the girl, and it is this connection between the two that spiritually links the donor figure to the holy event. Another important function is fulfilled by the uncertainty of the profile gaze: it imposes a psychological segregation from the holy group, so that the connection established cannot be interpreted as irreverent. Conversely, the spiritual proximity is reinforced in the donor's visual relationship with the infant Virgin; both the baby and an attendant look in her direction. In addition, the movement in the holy scene does much to distinguish the secular donors from the religious event. The actions and the drapery of the holy figures contrast with the stasis of the secular group. A subtle change in scale is accentuated by the drapery which

defines the attendant's limbs; the bulky monumentality is appropriate to the holy figures, but not to the elegant women of the Tornabuoni family. Although the spiritual proximity to the holy figures is established by her complete absorption, the central donor's physical proximity is immediately denied by the backward sweep of her gown, pulling her toward the tightly linked group of women behind her.

The portrait of Giovanna in the Visitation is considerably more formalized than any other important female portrait figure in the major scenes of the cycle, and lacks any implication of movement. The stiffness of her bearing differentiates her from the active poses of the heavily robed attendants to the meeting of Mary and Elizabeth. Giovanna's gaze is directed straight ahead, but her attitude is not so much of transfixion as of removal, for to be transfixed implies a certain amount of participation. This removal is shared by the two female portrait figures accompanying her. Unlike the women in the donor group in the Nativity of the Virgin, the portraits in the Visitation display a psychological unity. They are related to Giovanna not only by attitude, but by the distinction seen in the rich dress and jewels of the younger woman,⁵¹ and the religious habit and specific facial features of the older woman.⁵² The face of each woman has a glossy, marble-like quality, most emphatically seen in Giovanna's profile. This

is achieved by the bright glow of light which seems to emanate more from the face itself than any external source. The light defines the profile against the dun colored stone of the bridge, and gives the woman a deathly pallor. Giovanna is placed more definitely within the holy space than any other figure; she stands in the shadow cast by St. Elizabeth, an honor acceptable by virtue of her earthly transcendence.

It is in the similarities between the commemorative fresco portrait of Giovanna degli Albizzi and of the other major female portrait figures, rather than the differences, that one can determine the extent of idealization found in the women. Giovanna's portrait illustrates the epitome of idealization, having achieved spiritual perfection and superiority through death. The differences in the portraits are, for the most part, a matter of greater animation and visual interest in the figure of the woman in the Nativity of the Virgin.⁵³ In Giovanna's portrait, the stillness of her figure, and the erect bearing of her head, and the sense of eternal time and space, creates an awareness of the greater dignity because of her death.

These portraits in Santa Maria Novella reflect not only the women's virtues, but by implication, those of her family. It was incumbent upon the artist to attempt to characterize a woman in a fashion appropriate to the purpose for which the portrait was commissioned, and to insure that

these portraits reflected the finest qualities of the clan they represented. The prominent profile figures we have seen demonstrate these qualities, while preserving different emphases: Giovanna reflects the emphasis on spirit appropriate to her decease, and the Nativity portrait shows the artist's attempt to capture the delicate balance between a physical reality and a spiritual ideal.

The introduction of the important female portrait figures in the Nativity and Visitation has significant implications for their status as representatives of the Tornabuoni family. Each is prominently placed in the scene though they are not participants. They appear to be contemplating the scene before them, a virtuous activity in itself. The Nativity figure is even presented to the holy figures, as if the virtues of the woman were being pointed out to the holy figures, as well as to the viewer. Part of the meditation originally intended only for the holy scene is shifted to these women. In traditional religious narratives, the piety of a donor figure is illustrated, and her status of potential redemption is accomplished through the Church donation. However, in the Santa Maria Novella frescoes, the female donor portraits are a presentation of women with no doubt as to their perfected state, only one step away from a heavenly ideal (i.e. earthly perfection as a stepping stone to the heavenly). This quality glorified the family who could claim virtue by association. Since it

was women who traditionally looked after the spiritual well-being of their families, and who, having lived an exemplary life, as asserted by the portrait, could act as proponents or "intercessors" for the living. Because of their perfection, they would be listened to, either in prayer during their lifetime, or later in Paradise. Thus the prominence of a portrait of a woman who was already dead, such as Giovanna, seen in the same cycle as portraits of the living, implies both heavenly and temporal perfection. It is in this function that the importance of these women lies, for as spiritual representatives of the Tornabuoni family in Santa Maria Novella, the ideal of womanhood, which had been consolidated by this time in Italy, could be utilized in its ultimate expression.

CONCLUSION

In Quattrocento female portraiture, an idealized social role was directly reflected in the formal means used to convey the image of the perfect woman. This idealization was developed out of a complex set of behavioral expectations derived from three main cultural sources--religion, literature, and domestic roles. The final evolution of the ideal received its most poignant statement from the function in society of women such as those of the Medici.

It is apparent that all of the aspects of this complex imagery were part of the sensibility of the artist as well as of the patron. The various characteristics of the ideal were intricately woven into the fabric of social consciousness, varying only with the needs of the patron and the style of the artist. Consequently, the motivation behind the visual conventions of Quattrocento female portraiture are elucidated by investigating the social background of the ideal. The resulting pictorial image is a positive statement of the virtues of a particular woman, thus the specificity with which the features are rendered. More importantly, the virtues of the family who instilled the desirable qualities, or allied themselves with the woman depicted, are presented in the female portrait, and in this lies the necessity of the image.

The remarkable pictorial image of Quattrocento female portraits was a unique phenomenon due to its cultural function. In certain respects the developments in these fascinating portraits created a foundation for later images of women. However, at the close of the fifteenth century, the changes in the social and political environment marked the end of this type of female image since it was so closely tied to cultural factors. This social evolution facilitated the acceptance of the innovations in the female portrait made by Leonardo da Vinci. Leonardo's application of an expressive individuality to female representation, and later, his universalizing of that image, made a new statement about women and society. These sixteenth century developments in female portraiture demonstrate for the art historian the singularity of the Quattrocento pictorial conception.

NOTES

Notes to Introduction

¹The foremost works on Renaissance portraiture include: John Pope-Hennessy, The Portrait in the Renaissance, Princeton, New Jersey, 1966; J. H. Lipman, "The Florentine Profile Portrait in the Quattrocento," Art Bulletin, XVIII, 1965, 54-102; Rab Hatfield, "Five Early Renaissance Portraits," Art Bulletin, XLVII, 1965, 315-334.

²Pope-Hennessy, Portrait, 41.

³There are isolated examples of early fifteenth century female portraits, such as those of Pisanello and Fra Filippo Lippi (as discussed in Chapters I and II of this study), but as a convention they do not occur until the second half of the century. These examples are, however, part of a stylistic evolution.

⁴The portraits presented represent examples from some of the major centers of artistic activity in the fifteenth century. In this selection there are non-Italian examples, for the influences of other cultures, particularly French, are a factor in the early Renaissance, especially in the area of secular literature and book illumination. International Style influenced French panel painting, and was the great unifying force in book illumination. (For a discussion of International Style, see Erwin Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting, Its Origin and Character, vol. I, New York, 1953, 51-74.) A problem of attribution exists in Quattrocento female portraits because of the lack of any extensive scholarly consideration of the genre, as well as the similarity of depiction which partially obscures individual stylistic characteristics. The personal styles of the artists tend to be subordinated to a cultural ideal, thus making attribution of female portraits problematic. This is consistent with fifteenth century artistic practices, for it was not unknown for artists to make stylistic alterations conforming to a patron's needs or wishes. In panel portraiture, there was no complex iconographic scheme wherein the artist could satisfy the requirements of patronage and, at the same time, assert himself stylistically.

⁵In contrast to this, works written about or for women of the late Medieval era and the Renaissance, often deal with women on the basis of their relationship with

husband and family, and the duties attendant on that role. For example, in Leon Battista Alberti's Della Famiglia, Giannozzo Alberti states of his new wife:

"Locking the door I showed her all the things of value, the silver, the tapestries, the fine clothes, the gems, and the places in which they were all kept. For I did not wish any of my precious things to be hidden from my wife. . . . Only my books and papers, and those of my forebears I kept hidden and locked, both then and thereafter, so that she would neither read, nor even see them. . . . I always kept my papers, not loose in my sleeves but locked up in my study . . . into which I never allowed my wife to enter, either alone or with me." (The Albertis of Florence: Leon Battista Alberti's Della Famiglia, trans. Guido Guarino, Lewisburg, Pa., 1971, 229).

⁶ Strictly speaking, humanism was the cultivation of the study of grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, and moral philosophy. In the Renaissance, this term also encompassed the passionate interest in the classical world. Humanists used classical antiquity as a model for all cultural activities. During the first half of the Quattrocento, Florentine "civic humanism" added another dimension to this term, and later in the century, Neoplatonism played a vital role in the evolution of humanism. However, this term was also used in a much broader sense. It often meant no more, for example, than someone who took pleasure in humanistic conversation or was a collector of classical sculpture. (See Paul O. Kristeller, Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters, Rome 1956, 557. For a discussion of civic humanism, see Lauro Martines, The Social World of the Florentine Humanists 1390-1460, Princeton, 1963, 263-302.)

⁷ See Pope-Hennessy, Portrait, 64-100.

⁸ This type is well illustrated by the figure of Enrico Scrovegni in Giotto's Last Judgement fresco in the Arena Chapel in Padua (c. 1305). There is every indication that Scrovegni built this chapel to expiate his father's sin of usury. There are many other more conventional examples, for those who had acquired great wealth often violated the laws set down by the Church. (See Ursula Schlegel, "On the Picture Program of the Arena Chapel," Giotto: The Arena Chapel Frescoes, ed. James Stubblebine, New York, 1969, 182-202.)

⁹The influence of the antique medals did appear indirectly in painted portraiture, in conjunction with a male portrait. This can be seen in the pendant portraits of the Duke and Duchess of Urbino by Piero della Francesca (c. 1460), which will be discussed at length in Chapter II. The double sided panel is similar in concept to the numismatic portrait: on one side is a profile portrait, and on the other an allegory related to the portrait figure.

¹⁰See Chapter I, p. 23 of this study for this kind of feminine description in Boccaccio's work.

¹¹Religious duty can be seen in its practical manifestation in the diary of a Trecento man writing of his deceased wife:

"She was a most worthy soul, and there is reason to believe that Our Lord Jesus Christ has received her into his arms, since she did good--nay the best deeds, giving alms, praying and often resorting to church. . . . She lived with me in blessed peace and got me favour, honour and possessions enough." (From D'Ancona e Bacci, Manuale delle lett. ital., 1904, 1:577-78. Quoted by William Boulting, Woman in Italy, New York, 1910, p. 97.)

It should also be noted that the full-time dedication to religious life, although often admired, did not promote an independent portraiture, for the money that paid for secular commissions was not often an attribute of those women following a strictly religious life. Convents required a much smaller dowry than a prospective husband, and girls were often given over to a convent to take the veil. It is also possible that private portraiture would have been considered too worldly a vanity for a nun, even though she might be a member of a wealthy family.

¹²This holds true even among women of the most powerful families. Lucrezia Tornabuoni, for example, was extremely dedicated to religious activity, composing lauds to the Virgin and John the Baptist. An examination of her life shows, on the other hand, that she was also closely involved in the affairs of her household and family. (See G. Levantini-Pieronni, Lucrezia Tornabuoni, Florence, 1888.)

Notes to Chapter I

¹The history of Robert of Anjou's reign in Naples (1309-1343), made this statement of the right to rule a necessity. Naples had been under Angevin domination since the reign of Charles I (1266-1285), and Robert, his grandson, was the third son of Charles II (1285-1309). Robert's accession was challenged, but the College of Cardinals decided in his favor. However, Robert's political opponents spread rumors that he had unduly influenced one older brother (who later became St. Louis of Toulouse), to pursue the religious life, and the injurious, though unsubstantiated, claim that he had poisoned his other older brother, in order to gain the crown of Naples. St. Louis of Toulouse (1274-1297) had taken his religious Profession as a Franciscan friar in Rome, and was canonized soon after his death. King Robert capitalized on his pious brother's popularity and used the image of Louis' approval (albeit posthumous) to assert his claim to power.

The Angevins, particularly Robert, played an extremely important role in the affairs of Italy. French influence was strongly felt, especially in Guelf Florence. Many Florentines went to Naples; both the Bardi and the Peruzzi were among the banking families with representatives in Naples. In addition, in 1313 the Florentines, already allied with Robert against the Emperor, gave the lordship of Florence over to Robert for eight years. (See Émile Léonard, Les Angevins de Naples, Paris, 1954; and Édouard Jourdan, Les origines de la domination angevine en Italie, vol. 1, New York, 1960.)

²Lipman, "Profile Portrait," 59-60.

³Ibid.

⁴The profile was not the only view that could express attributes of a general nature. Another portrait of Robert of Anjou, seen in a group setting in Ambrogio Lorenzetti's (active 1319-1347), Admission of St. Louis of Toulouse in the Franciscan Order (c. 1331) (see R. Oertel, Early Italian Painting to 1400, New York, 1968, p. 94) provides an example of a portrait contained with a depiction of an historical event. In this portrait, the artist attempts to present a less psychologically remote interpretation, hence the depiction of Robert in a three-quarter view. The profile view in which the vast majority of Trecento donors are portrayed does not lend itself to a penetrating investigation into individual character, and the three-quarter view does not substantially alter this characteristic. Robert's expression of extreme concentration appears to be a public

image of a generalized emotion, rather than a psychological representation of a man in a deeply personal attitude of contemplation. Ambrogio succeeds in making an almost universal statement of a concerned leader, again making this a more political than personal statement.

⁵See Frederick Antal, Florentine Painting and Its Social Background, London, 1948, 135-38, for some discussion of this topic.

⁶The families responsible for most of the art patronage were equally concerned with this trend.

⁷The literature of courtly love first developed in Provence. During the latter half of the twelfth century troubadours devised a lyric poetry combined with the theory of courtly love, and the concept spread throughout Western Europe. The ideal of chivalry was formed by the aristocracy and gentry in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In chivalry, the romantic adoration of a woman was a necessary quality in the perfect knight. The cult of the lady was the counterpart to the cult of the Virgin which was also being popularized during the same period. The main beneficiaries and patrons of courtly art and literature were the great ladies who welcomed the troubadours and became exponents of the true art of courtly love. The rules of courtly love were set down by Andreas Capellanus in the twelfth century, and state the precepts of this system. The rules were prefaced with the statement:

"Love is a certain inborn suffering derived from the sight of and excessive meditation upon the beauty of the opposite sex, which causes each one to wish above all other things the embraces of the love and by common desire to carry out all of love's precepts in the other's embrace."

Among the rules were included:

"Marriage is no real excuse for not loving";
 "That which a lover takes against the will of his beloved has no relish"; "It is not proper to love any woman whom one would be ashamed to seek to marry"; "When made public love rarely endures"; "He whom the thought of love vexes eats and sleeps very little"; "A true lover is constantly and without intermission possessed by the thought of his beloved"; "A man who is vexed too much by passion usually does not love."
 (Capellanus, Art of Courtly Love, trans. and ed. John J. Parry, New York, 1964, 184-185.)

⁸The ideal of womanhood in both Dante's and Petrarch's work was influenced by the Sicilian poets, who gave new life to the troubadour tradition of Provence. In Dante's Purgatorio (XXIV, p. 155-60), Giacomo da Lentino is named as the foremost Sicilian poet of the first half of the thirteenth century. Giacomo was a notary and lyric poet at the court of Frederick II (the Holy Roman Emperor himself was a poet and learned man). The Sicilian School's poetic style influenced the course of Italian love poetry, developing a new concept of love. Giacomo is credited with the development of the sonnet, and in "Io m'aggio posto in core a Dio servire" ("I have set my heart to serving God"), he opens the issue of religious devotion to a lady. He developed the dual imagery by combining religious and courtly terminology. His lady's beauty makes him mistake her for an angel and, confusing poetic and real heaven, he refuses to go to Paradise without her. The poem establishes the woman as both the object of physical desire and an angel, laying the groundwork for extensive development of Dante's Beatrice and Petrarch's Laura, combining courtly, romantic love with religious adulation. See Christopher Kleinhenz, "Giacomo da Lentino and the Advent of the Sonnet: Divergent Patterns in Early Italian Poetry," Forum Italicum, X, 1976, 218-32.

⁹A. Bartoli, Storia della Letteratura Italiana, Florence, vol. 3, 1880, 110-11.

¹⁰Francesco Petrarca, Petrarch: Selected Poems, trans. Anthony Mortimer, Alabama, 1977, 25.

¹¹The issue of the influential and wealthiest class of non-nobles seeking the status of nobility is discussed in regard to social mobility in Chapter III of this study.

¹²See Christine de Pisan, The Book of the Duke of True Lovers, trans. from the Middle French by Alice Kemp-Welch, London, 1903, 16-37.

¹³Ibid., 23.

¹⁴In his Ricordi (reproduced and translated by Janet Ross, Lives of the Early Medici as Told in Their Correspondence, London, 1910, 150-156), Lorenzo states: "To do as others had done I held a joust in the Piazza S. Croce . . ." and " . . . although I was not versed in the use of weapons and the delivery of blows, the first prize was given me."

¹⁵Luigi Pulci had attended the poetry lessons of the humanist Bartolomeo Scala in the house of Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco de' Medici. By 1461 Pulci was an intimate of Lorenzo the Magnificent. "La Giostra di Lorenzo" was written

in 1482, after a somewhat checkered career in which Matteo Franco, who was much esteemed by Lorenzo, accused Pulci of heresy founded on his unorthodox beliefs. Though Pulci made an effort to regain his good standing, when he died in 1484 he was refused burial in consecrated ground. Nonetheless, Pulci's minor work set the poetic precedent for Poliziano's epic, Stanze Cominciate per la Giostra del Magnifico Giuliano de' Medici, celebrating the Florentine tournament of 1475 in which victory went to Lorenzo's younger brother. Significantly, this 1475 tournament was attended by Simonetta Vespucci, adored by Giuliano, among others. Both Giuliano and Simonetta are celebrated in the Stanze as hero and heroine, though the latter's death in 1476 necessitated her appearance as Fortune in the second book. With Giuliano's assassination in the Pazzi conspiracy of 1478, Poliziano stopped work on the Stanze. Poliziano's writing in some senses was indebted to the courtly tradition, but his emphasis, as a major figure of humanism, was on the emulation of classical writers. Uniquely, the Stanze has been directly connected as the literary source for Botticelli's Birth of Venus (after 1482) (Book I, Stanzas 99-101), Venus and Mars (c. 1475) (octave 122), and the Primavera (c. 1478) (octave 68). Due to the singularity of Botticelli's specific literary connections as well as his unique stylistic characteristics, his work does not fall within the mainstream of contemporary Quattrocento artistic theory, and in terms of female portraiture must be analyzed separately. (See E. H. Gombrich, "Botticelli's Mythologies: A Study in the Neoplatonic Symbolism of His Circle," in Gombrich, Symbolic Images, London, 1972, 31-81; for a bibliography of studies concerning this topic see Symbolic Images, 31-35.)

¹⁶Ross, Lives, 154.

¹⁷The privilege of quartering the Lily of France on his arms was granted to Piero di Cosimo de' Medici after his father's death in 1464. Louis XI, King of France, granted this honor, and in addition, in 1465 made Piero a Privy Councillor. (Ibid, 87.)

¹⁸See note 14 above for Lorenzo's statement in his Ricordi. The Duke of True Lovers says, "But I trow that the ladies did this for they saw how eager I was, and because of this favourable disposition, I believe that when they awarded me the prize, they were really desirous that I might be constrained to joust the more readily." (Christine de Pisan, Duke, 33.)

¹⁹In Christine de Pisan's tournament account, the Duke promotes his joust as an opportunity for knights to gain honor and esteem by displaying their prowess. Lorenzo

de' Medici, on the other hand, outwardly arranges his tournament in honor of a friend's marriage. Lorenzo's festival had an additional political dimension occasioned by a peace treaty with Venice. (See The Stanze of Angelo Poliziano, trans. David Quint, Amherst, Mass., ix.)

²⁰Christine de Pisan had close connections with this outstanding Parisian workshop; both were connected to the royal courts of France. Erwin Panofsky characterizes this style, and in particular the Limbourg Brothers' Tres Riches Heures de Duc de Berry, as having an "amazing sophistication and extravagance in manner, dress, and appurtenances: for those thin, nervous hands and wasplike waists; those choking collars, those turbanlike 'chaperons'; that jaggging of all edges which combined a maximum of waste with a minimum of comfort. . . ." Panofsky also asserts that the style came into being by the "interpenetration and ultimate fusion of the Gallic as represented by the French, the Latin as represented by the Italians, and the Anglo-Germanic as chiefly represented by the Flemings; and when it spread to Germany, Austria, to Spain, to England to Flanders and even back to Italy--the reflux from north to south beginning and steadily growing from ca 1370-1380--it did so, as it were, by way of multilateral repatriation." (Erwin Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting, vol. 1, New York, 1953, 66-67. See also: Millard Meiss, The Limbourgs and Their Contemporaries, 2 vols., New York, 1974.)

²¹In Christine de Pisan's Duke of True Lovers, for example, the Duke variously describes, "ladies with fair tresses, nobly born," his lady's "laughing grey eyes" with a soft look that through me sped," and often reiterates that she had "fair flesh as white as a lily." For a discussion of the correspondences of the descriptions of beautiful women in romances, see R. Renier, Il Tipo Estetico della Donna nel Medio Evo, Ancona, 1885, 1-42.

²²For a thorough account of the correct conduct for a noblewoman, see Pisan, Duke, 102-118.

²³For Francesco da Barberino's (1264-1348) complete work, written c. 1309-13, see Del reggimento e costumi di donna, Collecto di oper inedite, Tomo 26, Bologna, 1875.

²⁴The Costume e Reggimento di Donna is partially reproduced and translated in Isidoro del Lungo, Women of Florence, London, 1910, 92-110.

²⁵Ibid, 92.

²⁶This convention is similar to that in the Roman de la Rose. (See Le Roman de la Rose, ed. Ernest Langlois, 3 vols., Paris, 1914-24.)

²⁷Del Lungo, Women of Florence, 94.

²⁸This issue is discussed in Chapter II of this study.

²⁹Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375) assimilates the ideal into Italian epic in more concretely physical terms than either Dante or Petrarch. Petrarch himself never simply enumerated Laura's features, though the Petrarchists of the sixteenth century were able to find most of them in his poems. (See Elizabeth Cropper in her article, "On Beautiful Women, Parmigianino, Petrarchismo, and the Vernacular Style," Art Bulletin, LVIII, 1976, 386.)

³⁰This is discussed and quoted in full by ibid., 387, and bears reproducing here:

Era la giovinetta di persona
grande e ischiette convenevolmente,
e se il ver l'antichità ragiona,
ella era candidissima e piacente;
e i suoi crin sotto ad una corona
lunghi e assai, e d'oro veramente
si sarian detti, e'l suo aspetto umile,
e il suo moto onesto e signorile.

Dico che i suoi crini parean d'oro,
non con treccia ristretti, ma soluti
e pettinati sì, che infra loro
non n'era un torto, e cadean sostenuti
sopra li candidi omeri, né fôro
prima né poi sì be' giammai veduti;
ne altro sopra quelli ella portava
ch'una corona ch'assai si stimava.

La fronte sua era ampia e spaziosa,
e bianca e piana e molto dilicata
sotto la quale in volta tortuosa,
quasi di mezzo cerchio terminate,
eran due ciglia, più che altra cosa
nerissime e sottil, tra le qua'lata
bianchezza si vedea, lor dividendo,
né 'l devito passavan, sé stendendo.

Di sotto a queste eran gli occhi lucenti
e più che stella scintillanti assai;
egli eran gravi e lunghi e ven sedenti,
e brun quant'altri che ne fosser mai;

e oltre a questo egli eran si potenti
d'ascosa forza, che alcun giammai
non gli mirò né fu da lor mirato,
ch'amore in sé non sentisse svegliato.

Io ritraggo di lor poveramente,
dico a rispetto della lor bellezza,
e lasciogli a chiumque d'amor sente
che immaginando vegga lor chiarezza;
ma sotto ad essi non troppo eminente
né poco ancora e di bella lunghezza
il naso si vedea affilatetto
qual si voleva a l'angelico aspetto.

Le guance sue non eran tumerose
né mage fuor di debita misura,
anzi eran dilicate e graziose,
bianche e vermiglie, non d'altra mistura
che intra-gigli le vermiglie rose;
e questa non dipinta, ma natura
gliel'avea data, il cui color mostrava
perciò che 'n ciò più non le bisognava.

Ella aveva la bocca piccioletta,
tutta ridente e bella da basciare,
e era più che grana vermiglietta
con le labbra sottili, e nel parlare
a chi l'udia pareva un angioletta;
e'denti suoi si potean somigliare
a bianche perle, spessi e ordinati
e piccolini, ben proporzionati.

E oltre a questo, il mento piccolino
e tondo quale al viso si chiedea;
nel mezzo ad esso aveva un forellino
che più vezzosa assai ne la facea;
e era vermiglietto un pocolino,
di che assai più bella ne pareva;
quinci la gola candida e cerchiata
non di soperchio e bella e dilicata.

Pieno era il collo e lungo e ben sedente
sopra gli omeri candidi e ritondi,
non sottil troppo e piano e ben possente
a sostenere gli abbracciar giocondi;
e 'l petto poi un pochetto eminente
de' pomi vaghi per mostranza tondi,
che per durezza avean combattimento,
sempre pontando in fuor col vestimento.

Eran le braccia sue grosse e distese,
lunghe le mani, e le dita sottili,
articulate bene a turte prese,
ancor d'anella vote signorili;
e, brevemente, in tutto quel paese
altra non fu che cotanto gentili
l'avesse come lei, ch'era in cintura
sottile e schietta con degna misura.

Nell'anche grossa e tutta ben formata,
e il piè piccolin'; qual poi si fosse
la parte agli occhi del corpo celata,
colui sel seppe poi cui ella cosse
avanti con amor lunga fiata;
imagino io ch'a dirlo le mie posse
non basterieno avendol' io veduta:
tal d'ogni ben doveva esser compiuta!

Teseida, XII, 53-63, quoted from G. Boccaccio, Opere in versi, ed. P. G. Ricci (La letteratura italiana, storia e testi, IX), Milan, 1965, 412-15.

³¹Christine's studies, which included Latin and sciences, was directed by her father, who had been educated at the University of Bologna. Christine was allowed a surprisingly complete education compared to other women in contemporary French society. Her education emphasizes her Italian heritage; Italian universities early gave women the opportunity for higher education, and Christine's comparatively liberal education reflects this attitude. (See Charity C. Willard, The "Livre de la Paix" of Christine de Pisan, The Hague, 1958, 11.)

³²The first part of the Roman de la Rose had been written fifty years earlier and was a conventional courtly tale.

³³See Maurice Roy, Oeuvres Poétiques de Christine de Pisan, 3 vols., Paris, 1886-96.

³⁴For a compilation of the documents of the dispute see Charles F. Ward, The Epistles on the Romance of the Rose and Other Documents in the Debate, Chicago, 1911.

³⁵Eustace Deschamps, a disciple of Jean de Meung and a contemporary of Christine, ranked her with the Muses:

"Muse eloquent entre les .IX., Christine
Nompareille que je saiche aujourd'hui,
En sens acquis et en toute doctrine,
Tu as de Dieu science et non d'autrui;

Tes epistres et livres que je luy
 En pluseurs lieux, de grant philosophie
 Et ce que tu m'as escript une fie
 Me font certain de la grant habondance
 De ton scavoir qui toujours monteplie
 Seule en tes faiz ou royaume de France . . ."
 (Quoted in Mary L. Towner, L'Avison-Christine,
 Washington, D.C., 1932, 13.)

In addition, Martin Le Franc, another contemporary, praised her ability in his work, Le Champion des Dames:

"Aux estrangiers povons la feste
 Faire de la vaillant Cristine
 Done la vertu est manifeste
 En lettre et en langue lantine." (Ibid.)

³⁶ Mathilde Laigle, Le Livre des Trois Vertus de Christine de Pison et son Milieu Historique et Litteraire, Paris, 1912, 120.

³⁷ For a discussion of Christine's activities as a patron of book illuminations, see Meiss, The Limbourgs and Their Contemporaries, 18-41.

³⁸ Pisan, Duke, 54-55.

³⁹ Ibid., 78-79.

⁴⁰ This quality, also seen in the Sicilian School and elaborated on particularly by Dante and Petrarch, is in direct opposition to the role of the majority of women in society. Women were at best protected by men, but were also often the recipients of domestic tyranny and the subject of ongoing and widespread jests. This is reflected in another trend of literature at the time, rhymed stories known in France as fabliaux, in which an extreme anti-feminism was the secular counterpart of religious treatises condemning women. (See J. Bedier, Les Fabliaux, 5th ed., Paris, 1928.)

⁴¹ There are many extant portraits of Christine de Pisan, and because of a stylistic similarity, it is difficult to ascertain which are genuine. Figure 9 represents the most common type that embellishes her manuscripts.

⁴² The Portrait of a Lady in the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., has been attributed to the French School, with a possible localization in the Limbourg workshop. This attribution to the French School came from G. M. Richter in his article, "Pisanello Studies," Burlington Magazine, LV, 1929, 139, refuting the earlier attribution to Pisanello

given by A. Venturi in Grandi Artisti Italiani, Bologna, 1925. The original confusion stems from the mutual indebtedness to International Style. For support of the French attribution see: B. Degenhart, Pisanello, Turin, 1945, 39; Ulrich Middeldorf, "B. Degenhart: 'Pisanello,'" Book Review, Art Bulletin, XXIX, Ec. 1947, 281; Millard Meiss, The Limbourgs and Their Contemporaries, text vol., New York, 1974, 228; and Erwin Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting, vol. 1, New York, 1953, 82.

⁴³A similarity of idealization can be seen in a French miniature from the Lucon workshop of c. 1410 in the profile figure of Thais. (See Meiss, Limbourgs, vol. 1, pl. 82.) Though much of the detail that characterizes the National Gallery portrait is not present in the miniature, the sense of serenity, as well as the physical attributes of the courtly ideal are contained within the depiction. The quality accentuates the difference between a generalized depiction and that of a portrait of this period. This can be seen in a more specific male portrait in book illumination, such as that of the Duke of Berry in the Brussels Hours (see Meiss, French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry, London, 1967, pl. 179). He kneels between two saints, his profile silhouetted against the dark ground in much the same manner as is the National Gallery portrait. Each feature is exploited to the fullest extent to create a pattern against the dark ground.

⁴⁴The general tone of this portrait, including the plucked hairline, can be read as part of the standard of physical attractiveness for a lady.

⁴⁵Pisanello's figure wears an amphora or vase, the arms of the Este family, on the sleeve of her gown. In addition, she wears a sprig of juniper on her gown, signaling her possible identification as Ginevra d'Este, wife of Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta. Another conceivable identification of this figure is Margherita Gonzaga, wife of Lionello d'Este. Enio Sindona's monograph (Pisanello, trans. John Ross, New York, 1961, 126), contains a bibliography of the works which attempt to identify this figure.

⁴⁶When comparing Pisanello's work with Florentine portraits, Jean Lipman ("Profile Portrait," 71) has stated that, "Within the decorative silhouette of the Pisanello profile one sees that the edges are more suggestive of a revolution of the surface, that the substance is more pulpy, and the whole is more spacial and more pictorial than is the case with the Florentine profile."

⁴⁷Pope-Hennessey, Portrait, 41.

⁴⁸This is first seen in Dante's relationship with his lady. Not only is Beatrice seen as a divine figure, but she serves as an instrument of Dante's Salvation. He was able to see Love and Beauty through her in life, and in the Divine Comedy she leads him from the threshold of Heaven, through the first levels to St. Bernard who, in turn, leads Dante to the Mother Mary. Beatrice's action is that of intermediary in Dante's quest for the highest spiritual attainment possible. (See The Divine Comedy, trans. and ed. Charles S. Singleton, 6 vols., Princeton, New Jersey, 1970-75.)

Notes to Chapter II

¹Chapels were often built or decorated as donations from wealthy families, and the iconographic program was sometimes the result of close consultation between the ecclesiastical order and the donor. In addition, sons and daughters of families of wealth and influence who went into the religious life generally attained high positions in the Church hierarchy. (See L. Eckenstein, Woman under Monasticism, London, 1896, 263-70.)

²The different moral requirements for men and women can be seen in every level of society, but the higher the social status, the greater the divergence in behavioral expectations. Women of the highest rank were expected to be of perfect moral character, since they were assumed superior by birthright. Women in lower classes actually led lives of greater equality with men of the same class. (See Eileen Power, Medieval Women, ed. M. M. Postan, London, 1975, 53-75.)

³Cited by Towner, LaVision, 49.

⁴The Cult of the Virgin Mary had risen to great heights in Italy by the fourteenth century, and these visual representations of her roles were very important to her veneration. (See Eileen Power, The Miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary, London, 1928, 3-4.)

⁵The ways of depicting Mary were varied and, since secular art was very rare, the women depicted were generally confined to donor figures, female saints, and the Virgin.

⁶Catherine of Siena was born in the mid-Trecento, as Caterina Benincasa, the daughter of a dyer of Siena. She was subject to religious ecstasy from childhood, and devoted the whole of her life to the service of God. She first took

religious vows in 1362, and her extraordinary piety attracted many followers. She and her followers ministered to the sick and poor, leading an actively Christian life. She found favor and support in the 1370's from the Dominicans after coming to the attention of the Church hierarchy when she urged the Christian princes to form an alliance against the non-Christians who held the Holy Land. Her numerous letters and her treatise, Dialogo della divina provvidenza (1377-78), provide impressive documents to the religious and political life of that era, since she did not confine herself to ecstatic or humanitarian activities. She was intimately concerned with papal politics, and traveled to Avignon to encourage Gregory XI to return the Holy See to Rome. When she died in 1380, steps were immediately taken for her canonization, which became final in 1461. (See Edmund G. Gardner, St. Catherine of Siena, New York, 1907.)

⁷This conception of Mary and Christ as Bride and Bridegroom was based on the interpretation of the Song of Songs as an allegory by the Fathers of the Church. In Honorius of Autun's commentary, which possessed great authority, it was written that, "Everything that is said of the Church can also be understood as being said of the Virgin herself, the bride and mother of the Bridegroom." (Cited by Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting, 145.) The Old Testament marriage songs contained a type of heroine that prefigured the Mother of God. The celebration of the bride's beauty was therefore applied to the Virgin, and influenced the Medieval Mary-poetry which characterized her as a young bride. The language of the Song of Songs was often utilized when referring to the Virgin; not only is Mary the "rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys (Solomon 2:1)," but at her Assumption, her Son/Bridegroom uses chants from the Song to call her soul up to His Heavenly Throne. According to the theologians, Christ married the Virgin, just as He married her symbolical counterpart, the Church. (See Yrjo Hirn, The Sacred Shrine, London, 1912, 435-470.)

⁸Catherine was wedded to Christ with a ring, invisible to others, but always visible to her. Her successors in this type of spiritual marriage included: Sta. Caterina of Racconigi in Piedmont, who received the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, and was married to Christ on three separate occasions between the ages of six and twenty-six, each time with a different ring; an angel brought the Blessed Angelina of Spoleto a ring as a sign of her espousal to Christ; the Blessed Stefana Quinzani also became a heavenly bride; and the Blessed Osanna of Mantua was married by the Holy Virgin to her Son with a ring. (William Boulting, Woman in Italy, New York, 1910, 243-44.)

⁹In some instances women wished to identify directly with Christ, as when the fifteenth century heroine, the Blessed Christina Visconti (d. 1453), drove a nail through her foot in order to feel the sufferings of Christ. There were also several saintly women who received the Stigmata. (Ibid., 240.)

¹⁰For a complete discussion of Mary as the sorrowing mother, see Hirn, Sacred Shrine, 375-404.

¹¹Ibid., 380.

¹²Barbier de Montault, X, Traité d'Iconographie Chrétienne, vol. II, Paris, 1890, 230.

¹³Hirn, Sacred Shrine, 382.

¹⁴Every upper-class woman was seen for her potential excellence in the roles of wife and mother. In a politically and economically insecure society, threatened with vendetta, plague, or war, women often had to demonstrate their physical and emotional strength. Their daily devotion to religious ritual was helpful, as was the example before them of the Virgin's strength and virtue. (See Boulting, Woman in Italy, passim.)

¹⁵There are exceptions to this, such as the very lively profile Portrait of a Lady (c. 1460) in London by Alesso Baldovinetti. When speaking of this portrait, Pope-Hennessy (Portrait, 47-48) states, "Though the impresa sewn on to the sleeve reveals that the intention is once more documentary, the treatment of the features is more sharply focussed and more astringent than in most Quattrocento portraits."

¹⁶Attributed tentatively to Fra Diamante by Lipman, "Profile Portrait," 76.

¹⁷Federico da Montefeltro was always depicted in profile because of a disfiguring injury sustained in a tournament. These pendant portraits provide an unusual opportunity for direct comparison of the differences inherent in male and female portraiture.

¹⁸This imagery of the Triumphs was quite common and, according to Kenneth Clark, (Piero della Francesca, London, 1969, 56) was known "from a hundred cassone fronts and illustrations to Petrarch."

¹⁹This issue is discussed in Chapter III of this study.

²⁰See Rev. Joseph A. Burroughs, Prudence Integrating the Moral Virtues, According to St. Thomas Aquinas, Washington, D.C., 1951.

²¹Thomas Aquinas (Summa Theologica, 2a, 2ae, q143, al, vol. 43, London, 1964, 51) states:

"Et dicuntur partes integrales alicujus virtutis conditiones quas necessest concurrere ad virtutem: et secundum hoc sunt duae partes integrales temperantiae, scilicet vericundia, per quam aliquis refugit turpitudinem temperantiae contrariam, et honestas, per quam scilicet aliquis amat puritatem temperantiae. Nam sicut ex dictis patet, praecipue temperantia inter virtutes vindicat sibi quendam decoram, et vitia intemperantiae maxime turpitudinem habent."

("The integral parts of virtue are the elements that go to make it up. Temperance has two, namely a sensitiveness to shame that recoils from anything squalid or against temperance, and a sense of honour [honestas] devoted to its beauty. For among the virtues, as we have seen, temperance is markedly handsome, and of the vices intemperance is especially ugly.")

²²In addition, through women, men could express their own misgivings, joys, and sorrows, while the Renaissance ideal man could flourish in public life. This image of the Mother Mary was well known in the Renaissance, and permeated literature and art. In one of St. Birgitta's visions Christ says: "And therefore I wish to say that my mother and I saved mankind as with one heart, I suffering in body and heart, and she suffering the heart's sorrow and love." (Cited by Hirn, Sacred Shrine, 393.)

²³The portrait image of women also betrays the manner in which men wished women to be perceived.

Notes to Chapter III

¹For analyses of the male Quattrocento profile portrait see the works cited in note 1 of the Introduction.

²Pope-Hennessey (Portrait, 163-164) states that, "After the death of Leonello d'Este in 1450, the principal portrait painter in Ferrara was Cosimo Tura. Isabella of

Aragon first made the acquaintance of her husband, Ercole d'Este, through a painting by Tura which was sent to Naples. . . . When Lucrezia d'Este was betrothed to Annibale Bentivoglio of Bologna, and Isabella d'Este was contracted to Gian Francesco Gonzaga, and Beatrice d'Este was affianced to Lodovico il Moro, a portrait by Tura was in each case the means by which the prospective husband was apprised of the appearance of his bride. Only one of these portraits by Tura survives, a little known painting of an unknown Este prince in the Metropolitan Museum."

³The necessity of alliance by marriage, and the arrangement of marriages between families is discussed at more length in this chapter, pp. 54-55.

⁴Boccaccio's merchant, residing at Paris, boasts that by the special grace of God, he has a wife at home who is incomparable. Among her virtues he numbers, most importantly, honesty, chastity, as well as youth, beauty, health, discretion, and household skill. In addition, she can read, write, and give her reason for an opinion "like a merchant." (Giovanni Boccaccio, The Decameron, trans. G. A. McWilliam, Baltimore, 1972, Day 2, Novel 9, 167.) Youth was an asset to women of all classes, since they had the strength to bear many children. The precarious nature of existence, and with infant mortality quite common, made this attribute in a wife very desirable.

⁵See Chapters I and II of this thesis for a lengthier discussion of the courtly and spiritual attributes desirable in upper-class women.

⁶Though many of the attributes of a good, practical wife remained the same, the courtly image of womanhood influenced upper-class behavior, and with the increase in leisure time pursuits such as card playing became very popular among upper-class women in the fifteenth century. For example, in 1424 a request from Parisina Malatesta for "cards for our girls, and send them at once," attests to this popularity. Gambling too was part of this passion. Though most amusements were separate for the sexes, there were various forms of entertainments for the display of coquetry. (Boulting, Woman in Italy, 202-204.) Travel, too, became an extremely popular activity for the upper-class woman. Women in the Quattrocento could travel in relative safety on religious pilgrimages, as well as other kinds of journeys. Mineral baths, for example, were in vogue, and there were many celebrated resorts. Attesting to the popularity of this pastime, is Lucrezia de' Medici's purchase and rebuilding of the hot springs resort at Bagno

a Morba, which was part of the Commune of Volterra over which the Florentines ruled. (See Ross, Lives, 114.)

⁷The importance of the domestic role in the middle-class tended to be of primary concern, and was a fairly universal expectation for women. This is well illustrated by a French treatise of the late fourteenth century containing an enumeration of the requirements of a good bourgeois wife. It instructs a wife in the care of her husband, to "keep him in clean linen, for that is your business," and to "have a care in winter he have a good fire and smokeless. And in the summer take heed that there are no fleas in your chamber, nor in your bed." After this admonition, the author lengthily discusses several ways to rid the house of fleas, as well as mosquitos and flies. "And thus shall you preserve and keep your husband from all discomforts and give him all the comforts whereof you can bethink you." The discourse is followed by a number of recipes and specific outlines for menus. (Eileen Power, ed., The Goodman of Paris, London, 1928, 60-70.)

⁸See Chapter I, note 1, for the political origins of this French and Italian interchange.

⁹In many parts of Italy during the fifteenth century, and particularly in Florence, the serraglio, a vestige of marriage by capture, was common. In Florence, it was combined with the remnants of the marriage by purchase. When the bride left her father's house for the church (the church was the most appropriate place to be married since a statute required the wedding to be held in the most public place in Florence--other communes had different requirements), a band of youths stopped the bride with a rope of flowers or a long ribbon, and the leader gave her flowers, for which he received a ring from the bride. Then the groom, separated from the bride by the youths, had to break through the barrier; the bride's defenders then allowed her to be taken to the church. At the banquet after the wedding, the youth with the ring returned it with a witty speech, and the bridegroom presented him with money to "purchase" the bride. (A. de Gubernatis, Storia comprat degli usi nuziali, Florence, 1878, 223.)

¹⁰Among the descriptions of Quattrocento weddings, many attest to the lavishness of display, despite sumptuary laws. However, the courtly serenity and decorum displayed in the Adimari Chest scene does not conform to these descriptions. The average procedure for a wedding involved much merrymaking, with dogs barking and children playing practical jokes amid general confusion. People looked out their windows on the marriage procession and passed comments

on the bride and the rest of the party, all accompanied by loud music. (See Boulting, Woman in Italy, 81-94, for bibliographic references regarding marriage festivals.) In the Adimari scene, these activities are merely treated symbolically by the representation of the group of music-makers on the left and the two women conversing in front of the Baptistery.

¹¹Marriage, as it existed in the Quattrocento, consisted of a number of customs derived from both Roman and Lombard laws. Both of these traditions in Italy placed the woman under the protection of the male; the purpose was to protect her and her property (as well as her children's) in dangerous times. In ancient Rome there were three forms of wedlock: confarreatio, which was a religious ceremony that made the contract nearly indissoluble; coemptio, where the bride was bought from the parents and repurchased her own rights by a small payment; and usus, particularly a plebian practice, where the couple lived together for the period of a year with the intention of forming a marriage, with a formal declaration of mutual consent in the presence of witnesses. Usus was the form that became the basis of medieval marriage in Italy; legally the wife still belonged to the family of her father, and retained rights over her own property. When a member of the mercantile class was to marry into the noble class, the contract was often signed while the couple were still young children, although cohabitation was deferred. For example, when Cosimo Rucellai was married to Giovanna, daughter of the Marquis of Fordinuovo, he was eight years old, and she was five years old. (See ibid., 66-77.)

¹²This included both religious virtue and domestic competence. (See ibid., 128-160.)

¹³A woman's ability to bear children, especially male children, was essential in medieval and Renaissance society. According to David Herlihy ("Women in Medieval Society," The Smith History Lecture, Houston, Texas, 1971, 6-7, note 15), life expectancy was very low in Italy, often not more than thirty years. In 1427 Florence, for example, the average age of women was 27, and for men only 26 years of age. Interestingly, superior female longevity was recognized in both medieval and Renaissance times, and woman's sexual function thought to be the cause. As late as 1516, Baldesar Castiglione (The Book of the Courtier, trans. Charles Singleton, New York, 1959, 219), states this belief, and in addition, female longevity becomes another proof of earthly perfection in the courtly view:

"And thus, since men dry out more than women in the act of procreation, it frequently happens that they do not keep their vitality as long as women; thus this further perfection can be ascribed to women that, living longer than men, they carry out the intention of nature better than men."

¹⁴It was very common to marry girls at only thirteen years of age, and the average was generally not above sixteen or seventeen. Occasionally, one finds instances of younger consummated marriages, such as that in the Quattrocento of Caterina Sforza, illegitimate daughter of Galeazzo Visconti. She was married at the age of eleven in 1473 to a nephew of Pope Sixtus IV. (The consummation of this marriage was confirmed by her father, in a letter to his representative at Rome on January 17, 1473. Six days later he wrote bluntly: "Lui ha dormito con la moglie un'altra volta e viene ben contento et lieto." (Cited by Boulting, Woman in Italy, 76.)

¹⁵A betrothal was nearly as binding as the actual marriage, and those who broke a contract of betrothal often had to forfeit part of the dowry or a sum of money. F. Perrens, Histoire de Florence Jusqu'à la Domination des Médicis, vol. 3, 1877-83, 331.

¹⁶This charge against Andriola Visconti (daughter of Matteo Visconti, Abbess of the Monasterio Maggiore, cannot be proved in any extant document. (See Boulting, Woman in Italy, 261. Cited from M. Caffi, Arch. Stor. Lomb., 1889.) Although most abbesses, like Andriola, were chosen for their high station in life, most were somewhat older. Nuns were generally not treated with such severity, though occasionally the seducer of a nun met with the loss of life. More usual was the imposition of a fine. For a history of woman's role in the Church see L. Eckenstein, Woman Under Monasticism, London, 1896.

¹⁷Bernabò Visconti had the warrant of both statutes of 1351 for his act. (See Boulting, Woman in Italy, 263.)

¹⁸Ibid., 267.

¹⁹This generally occurred if a man needed a legitimate son for inheritance purposes. Illegitimate children were accepted quite readily in most cases. (See E. Rodocanachi, Une Phêdre Italienne, Paris, 1896.) Lucrezia Tornabuoni, for example, raised a natural daughter of her husband's (Piero de' Medici) with her own two daughters, with no apparent distinction. (See Ross, Lives, 108-109.)

²⁰After the mid-Quattrocento, the three-quarter view portrait became the most popular way to depict men. The exploration of individual character can be seen in many examples from the latter half of the century. (See Pope-Hennessy, Portrait, passim.)

²¹Rab Hatfield, "Five Portraits," 333.

²²Ibid.

²³In Quattrocento Italy, this power base was more important to society than mere nobility, and the noble class had to maintain their money and political power to compete with the merchant princes. See Hans Baron, The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance, 2 vols., Princeton, 1955, and George Holmes, The Florentine Enlightenment, 1400-1450, New York, 1969, 137-67, for an analysis of social and political attitudes, as well as primary bibliographic sources.

²⁴It should be noted that Rab Hatfield (Five Portraits, 333) has pointed out a potential problem concerning the idealization of the early male profile portrait. He questions whether living persons would have been shown to have become perfected, especially in an era unfavorable to most "manifestations of personal ostentation." He goes on to suggest, by way of possible justification, that the portraits were not necessarily recognized as personal statements, but represented a "norm toward which certain men were urged." Although much of what Hatfield states is valuable, I do not believe that the portraits need to be justified in this way. In their assertion of innate superiority these portraits might appear in some cases to be expressions of undue pride, but the issue of ostentation need not be raised in this connection. The prejudice against show had an extremely esoteric origin; during the Trecento and Quattrocento, sumptuary laws were passed governing the expenditure of money on luxuries within the commune. Among other things, the laws continually sought to limit the richness of clothing, and the number and value of the jewels women wore. Although they were rarely obeyed in full, their purpose was very practical--to keep money in the family and the commune. In addition, sumptuary laws helped to limit the growth of the jealous rivalries that caused civil disturbances in a time when vendetta was rife. However, the assertion of innate nobility, such as seen in the portrait images, was part of the business/political life of the wealthy and influential man, and as such did not come under the social jurisdiction opposed to ostentation. As the fifteenth century progressed, the constant reassertion of power was part of the political survival of influential men.

This is well illustrated in the case of Lorenzo de' Medici. When his father, Piero, died in 1469, it was necessary for Lorenzo to take over control and become the premier citizen of Florence, or run the almost certain risk of political exile. He writes in his Ricordi:

"The princes of Italy, especially the principal ones, sent letters and envoys to condole with us and offer us their help for our defence. The second day after his death, although I, Lorenzo, was very young, being twenty years of age, the principal men of the city and of the State, came to encourage me to take charge of the city and of the State, as my grandfather and my father had done. This I did, though on account of my youth and the great responsibility and perils arising therefrom, with great reluctance, solely for the safety of our friends and of our possessions. FOR IT IS ILL LIVING IN FLORENCE FOR THE RICH UNLESS THEY RULE THE STATE.
(Reproduced in Ross, Lives, 154.)

²⁵Although Leonardo da Vinci's experiments in the late fifteenth century included the individualization of female portraiture, his influence in this area was not generally felt until the last decade of the century. (For a discussion of Leonardo's portraiture, see Kenneth Clark, Leonardo da Vinci, New York, 1939.)

²⁶This generally accepted attribution for the Milan portrait was first given by Adolfo Venturi (Storia dell'Arte italiana: La Pittura del Quattrocento, VII-I, Milan, 1911, 574), and is dated by S. Ortolani (Il Pollajuolo, Milan, 1948, 200) at c. 1470. A similar portrait in Berlin is also ascribed to Antonio Pollaiuolo, and is dated earlier (c. 1460) than the Milan portrait by A. Sabatini (Antonio e Piero del Pollajuolo, Florence, 1944, 77). See also: J. Lopez-Rey, Antonio del Pollajuolo y el fin del "Quattrocento", Madrid, 1935, 28. Unfortunately, an inscription on the back of the panel, identifying the sitter as "Uxor Johannes de Bardi," was removed, and as Pope-Hennessy has noted (Portrait, note 68, 309), there is now no way of ascertaining the accuracy of that identification.

²⁷A smile was often part of the literary ideal of womanhood. This can be seen in Boccaccio's Teseida, reproduced in Chapter I, note 28 of this thesis.

²⁸Leon Battista Alberti, Ten Books on Architecture, trans. James Leoni (first ed. 1755), Joseph Rykwert, ed., London, 1955, 107.

²⁹ Prosperous, influential citizens found it necessary to take extended business trips, and often left their affairs in the hands of their wives. The wife therefore had to be able to read, write, and do accounts in order to guard her family's interests at home and the country villa. Because of this need, the education of women gradually improved until girls often shared in their brothers' studies in the fifteenth century. (See Eileen Power, Medieval Women, ed. M. M. Postan, Cambridge, England, 1975, 76-88.)

³⁰ See Boulting, Woman in Italy, 47.

³¹ Meticulous mothers kept their daughters from reading Boccaccio, and even the sonnets of Petrarch, so that their pure minds would not learn anything about love other than God's or a future husband's. Religious treatises and sacred poetry were the only truly desirable reading material for a young girl, since they cultivated serious reflection rather than frivolous behavior. (Ibid., 174.)

³² Mistresses generally did not have too great an influence over men, or any hope of marriage to their consort (although they were often married off for expediency), but occasionally there were instances of clever manipulation on the part of a mistress. This can be seen in the case of Isotta degli Atti, mistress of Sigismondo Malatesta. Sigismondo eventually married this woman in 1456, and a letter she dictated (she was not able to read or write) illustrates her influence over him.

"My Lord, I have received the letter wherein your lordship swears that you love me more than ever. I am sure of it, and I wish to believe it, and I should feel surer still if you would put an end to what always keeps me furious. As concerning what your lordship desires more than I, I ask it as a boon, even if you do not eagerly desire it, as you love me, that your lordship, wishing to preserve my life and peace, will desire this thing also, and effect a regular marriage as soon as you can.

As to the passage wherein your lordship writes me that I should not reply to your letter, being always suspicious and full of jealousy, I am positively assured that you have been unfaithful with the daughter of Signor G . . . and moved by these two passions that possess me, it seemed to me that the least restraint I could put on myself is to show my resentment, and that is why your lordship found my letter a little sharp. Your lordship, if you love me as you say, not to

deprive me of the only compensation I have for your absence. Will you take pity on me, poor little thing that I am? Our Malatesta is well and was very gleeful at getting the little horse. All our other boys and girls are also well. I commend me a thousand times to your lordship. Dec. 20, 1454. Isotta di Rimini." (Cited in ibid., 114-115.)

Later in the fifteenth century, a new type of courtesan became a unique component in wealthy Italian society. This new style "cortigiana," (exemplified by a woman such as Cecilia Gallerani, who was painted c. 1485 by Leonardo da Vinci), often became the epitome of cultivation and learning, employing the finest masters to instruct them--not only in music and other leisurely refinements, but in more serious scholarly pursuits as well. They competed with the ladies of the courts, drawing highly reputed scholars, poets, and high ranking men into their salons. (See E. Rondocanachi, La femme italienne avant, pendant, et après la Renaissance, Paris, 1922.)

³³The precise origins of the Medici are uncertain, but records show that in the twelfth century the family owned houses and towers in the Florentine ghetto, in the Piazza de' Medici, near the church of S. Tommaso. Ardingo de' Medici was the first of the family to hold high office in Florence. He became Prior of the city in 1291, Gonfalonier of Justice in 1296, and again in 1297. (The old nobility was excluded from all magisterial offices by a law, the "Ordinament della Giustizia," passed in 1293.) In 1314, another Medici, Averardo, was Gonfalonier of Justice. One of his grandsons, Filigno di Conte de' Medici, wrote his Ricordi in 1373. The degree to which the Medici had risen, both in prestige and wealth, is illustrated in this Ricordi:

"I pray you to write well in the future and to preserve those lands and houses which you will find inscribed in this book; most of them were bought by the noble knight Messer Giovanni di Conte, my brother of honoured memory, after whose death I began to write this book, taking from his records and from those of others. . . . Preserve not only the riches but the position attained by our ancestors, which is considerable but ought to be higher." (Ross, Lives, 3-4.)

The founder of the branch of the family who became the leaders of Florence in the fifteenth century was Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici (1360-1429). A wealthy and powerful banker, he was a prior several times, and Gonfalonier of Justice in

1421. (See R. De Roover, The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank, 1397-1494, Cambridge, Mass., 1963.)

³⁴Giovanni Cavalcanti, Istorie Fiorentine, Florence, 1838, 262.

³⁵See this chapter, pp. 56-57.

³⁶Cosimo de' Medici (1389-1464), was the son of Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici. Cosimo was elected Prior of Florence in 1415, and again in 1417. Niccolò Macchiavelli (The Florentine History, trans. T. Bedingfield, London, 1905, 240) states that after his father's death in 1429, Cosimo made so great an effort to increase the political power of the Medici, that "those who had rejoiced at Giovanni's death, now regretted it, perceiving what manner of man Cosimo was. Of consummate prudence, staid yet agreeable presence, Cosimo was liberal and humane. He never worked against his party nor against the State, was prompt in giving aid to all, and his liberality gained him many partisans among the citizens."

Exiled in 1433, Cosimo returned to Florence in triumph a year later, and continued to increase his power and his family's standing. (See R. De Roover, Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank, passim, for a discussion of the economic basis of Medici power.)

³⁷Contessina (c. 1398-1473), daughter of Giovanni de' Bardi, Count of Vernio, married Cosimo de' Medici c. 1413. The Bardi were leading members of the Arte di Calimala, and had been very wealthy. Although there is no known extant portrait of Contessina, Vasari (Lives of the Artists, trans. George Bull, New York, 1965, 184) says that Donatello made a bronze bust of her and that it was preserved in the 16th century in Duke Cosimo's wardrobe. (For a history of Contessina's life see Yvonne Maguire, The Women of the Medici, London, 1927, 18-59. See also Casini & Morpurgo, VII Letter di Contessina dei Bardi dei Medici . . . per nozze Zanichelli-Manotti, Florence, 1866.)

³⁸Lucrezia Tornabuoni (c. 1425-1482), belonged to an old Florentine family descended from the noble Tornaquinci. In 1393, under Simone Tornaquinci, they abandoned their nobility, changed their name to Tornabuoni, and became successful merchants. Lucrezia married Piero di Cosimo de' Medici in 1444. In the fifteenth century the Tornabuoni were closely connected with the Medici; for many years Lucrezia's brother Giovanni was head of the Medici bank in Rome.

At Lucrezia's death, her son Lorenzo gave just tribute to her intelligence. His letters are expressive of the

great respect which she earned during her lifetime. To the Duke of Ferrara he wrote:

"In spite of my tears and grief I cannot but inform Your Excellency of the sad fact of the death of Madonna Lucretia, my beloved mother, who to-day passed from this life. Wherefore I am as unhappy as I can say, for besides losing my mother, the thought of which alone breaks my heart, I have also lost a helper who relieved me of many troubles." (Cited by G. Levantini-Pieron, Lucrezia Tornabuoni, Florence, 1888, 54.)

³⁹Ross, Lives, 49.

⁴⁰Before his death, Cosimo had been Piero's closest adviser; Lucrezia assumed part of this role after Cosimo died. (See ibid.)

⁴¹Francesco Cionacci, Rime Sacre del Magnifico Lorenzo de' Medici il Vecchio, di Madonna Lucrezia sua Madre, Bergamo, 1760.

⁴²The Medici prestige extended far beyond Florence. Not only had Lorenzo received the education of a prince, but he had, owing to Piero's ill health, represented his father from an early age at foreign courts. See André Rochon, La Jeunesse de Laurent de Medicis (1449-1478), Paris, 1963.

⁴³Ross, Lives, 108-109.

⁴⁴In this cycle dedicated to John the Baptist (including the Life of the Virgin), men and women of the Tornabuoni family occupy separate regions in the painting. This convention would appear to stem from Trecento donor portraiture. Professor Sheila Ross of Humboldt State University has been kind enough to point out to me that not only do the men and women occupy separate spaces, but the female portraits are relegated to the inside wall. Prof. Ross suggests that this could be a visual device denoting the protected status of these women. (For a discussion of these frescoes, see G. Marchini, "The Frescoes in the Choir of Santa Maria Novella," Burlington Magazine, XCV, 1953, 32-39.)

⁴⁵Although J. Lauts (Domenico Ghirlandaio, Vienna, 1943, 53) assumes that the panel of Giovanna degli Albizzi was painted before the fresco, I concur with Pope-Hennessy's assessment (Portrait, 28), asserting that the panel was adapted from the fresco. He states that this is established

by two details: the left hand has been reduced by means of a border, and the handkerchief she clutches has been abbreviated. In addition to the obviously greater formalism in the panel, it is interesting to note that Giovanna's gown is a variation of that of the profile donor figure in the Nativity of the Virgin.

⁴⁶The Latin inscription reads: "Ars Utinan Mores Animum Que Effingere Posses Pulchrior In Terris Nullatabella Foret."

⁴⁷The idea of external beauty reflecting and symbolizing inner beauty was well established in Italy, particularly in the later fifteenth century when Neoplatonic thought had become influential. This Neoplatonism was seen especially in the court of the Medici, which included among its intimates the foremost exponents of this philosophy. E. H. Gombrich, "Botticelli's Mythologies: A Study in the Neoplatonic Symbolism of His Circle," in Gombrich, Symbolic Images, London, 1972, 31-81.

⁴⁸Although the profile figure in the Nativity of the Virgin has occasionally been identified as Ludovica, daughter of Giovanni Tornabuoni, there is little documentary evidence to substantiate the identification. (See Gerald S. Davies, Ghirlandaio, New York, 1909, and Frederick Hartt, Italian Renaissance Art, New York, 307.)

⁴⁹An examination of the jewelry worn by the other portrait figures in the cycle shows the necklace worn by the Nativity figure to be unique. The other prominent women in the frescoes wear necklaces which are essentially similar--each has three pearl drops suspended from a large red gemstone. The possibility of symbolic or emblematic associations for family jewels opens an issue that needs investigation. Since the necklace worn by the Nativity figure is quite distinctive, it could possibly prove to be helpful in her identification.

⁵⁰The phoenix and the sun were widely recognized Christian symbols (see Louis Réau, L'Iconographie de l'art chretien, 3 vols., Paris, 1955, 94-96), but whether they have any religious significance in this context is open to question.

⁵¹Another portrait of this young woman, the subject of a paper by Helen Ettliger ("The Portraits in Botticelli's Villa Lemmi Frescoes," Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz, XX, 1976, 404-406), is found in the Botticelli frescoes in the Villa Lemmi. Ettliger attempts to identify the figure as Nanna, daughter of Niccolò

Tornabuoni, and niece of Giovanni Tornabuoni. She suggests that this portrait, and the pendant portrait of a young man identified as Matteo d'Andrea Albizzi, are in celebration of their marriage. Ettlenger arrives at this conclusion because the use of a heraldic shield on the portrait, impaled with the Albizzi arms, was a device that was used often in Renaissance wedding pictures. She found that the only Albizzi-Tornabuoni marriage on record that corresponded to the stylistic dating of this fresco at c. 1484, was between Nanna and Matteo. When applied to the comparable portrait in the Santa Maria Novella fresco, however, this identification fails to take into consideration the problem inherent in combining a portrait of a living woman (as Nanna must have been, since Ettlenger states that the first of Nanna's five children was born in 1485), with a commemorative portrait figure such as Giovanna degli Albizzi. While the conventions of funerary portraiture need further investigation, there are stylistic anomalies that also seem to suggest that the portrait under consideration might be commemorative. It seems unlikely that Ghirlandaio, a popular artist with a conventional outlook, would connect the three portrait figures in the Visitation by their physical proximity, establish a common inaccessibility, and create for each an individual, separate psychological space, without a specific intention. It is important here to look at this portrait, identified by Ettlenger as "Nanna," in conjunction with the other portraits in the cycle. A marked contrast is found between the Visitation group and the other two female portrait groupings in the cycle--the Nativity of the Virgin and the Birth of John the Baptist. In each of these last two scenes, the most prominent portrait figure is clearly differentiated from the background figures, and among these background figures is found less formality and some interaction, neither of which are present in the Visitation figures. In addition, because of Botticelli's unique relationship with the Neoplatonic avant-garde, the iconography in his Villa Lemmi frescoes must be interpreted with care. If we are to accept the Ghirlandaio and Botticelli figures as the same woman, her identification cannot be removed from the context of the visual evidence found in the Santa Maria Novella frescoes.

⁵²This figure creates a stately presence within the solemn portrait group, and must have been an eminent woman in the Tornabuoni family. In light of the commemorative appearance of all three women in the Visitation scene, it is a possibility that this older woman in pious garb may represent Lucrezia Tornabuoni (see note 38 above). It seems unlikely that Lucrezia, as an extremely illustrious member of the family, should have been excluded from depiction in this cycle. She had died in 1482, only three years before

her brother, Giovanni Tornabuoni, commissioned the Santa Maria Novella frescoes dedicated to the life of John the Baptist. Not only was Lucrezia an important personality in her own right, but it could only be to the Tornabuoni's financial and political advantage to honor the mother of Lorenzo de' Medici (see De Roover, Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank). In addition, Lucrezia had been especially devoted to John the Baptist, and had written a poetic life of the saint. (See Conacci, Rime Sacre, XXVI.)

⁵³The other prominent female portrait in the cycle, the young woman seen in three-quarter view in the Birth of the Baptist, is not directly comparable to the profile portraits. Instead, her direct gaze hints at the developments to come in female portraiture in the last years of the fifteenth century, instigated largely by the innovations of Leonardo da Vinci.

Alexander Bond
25% COTTON FIBER 2 1/2

ILLUSTRATIONS



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

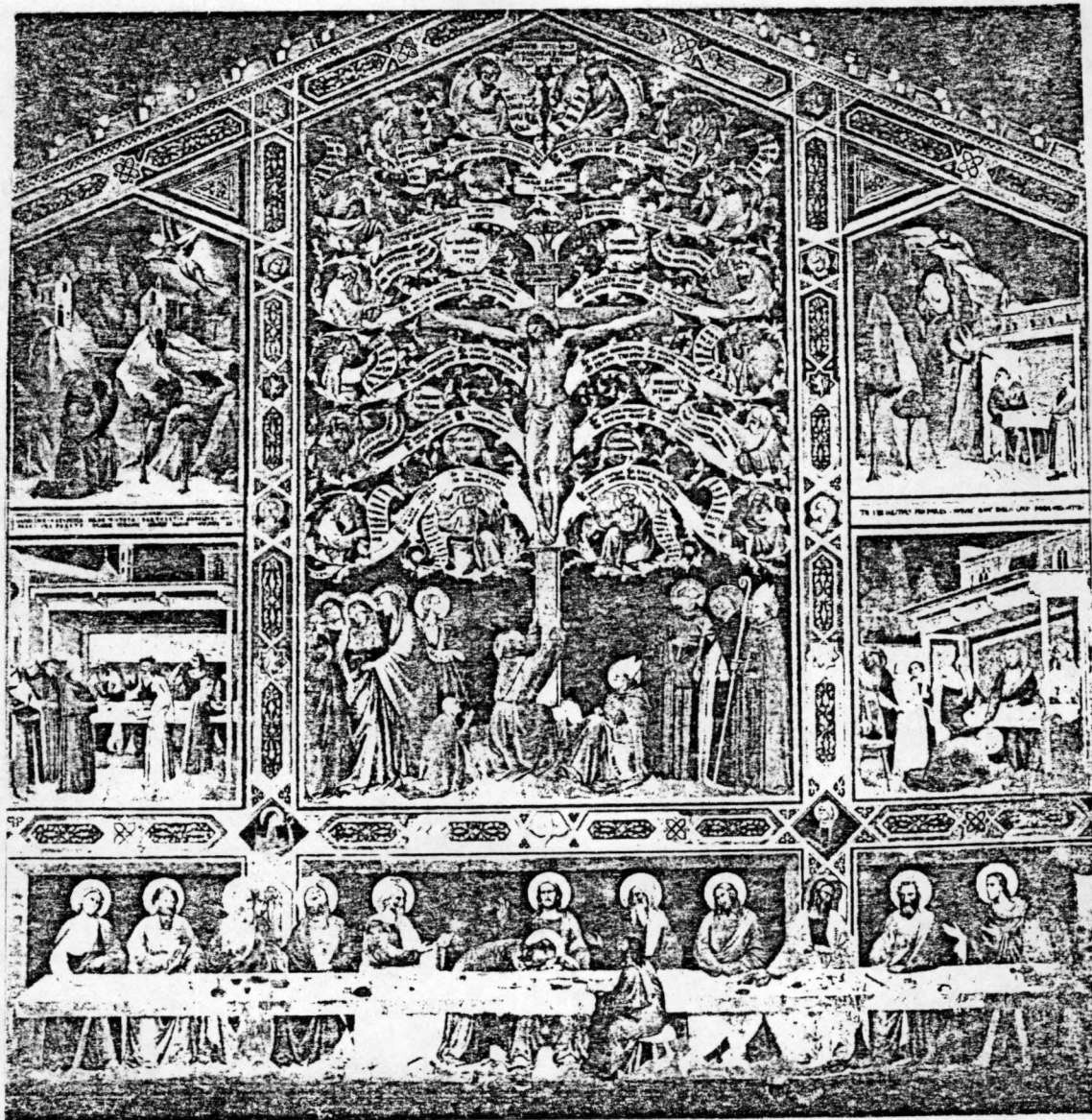


Figure 4

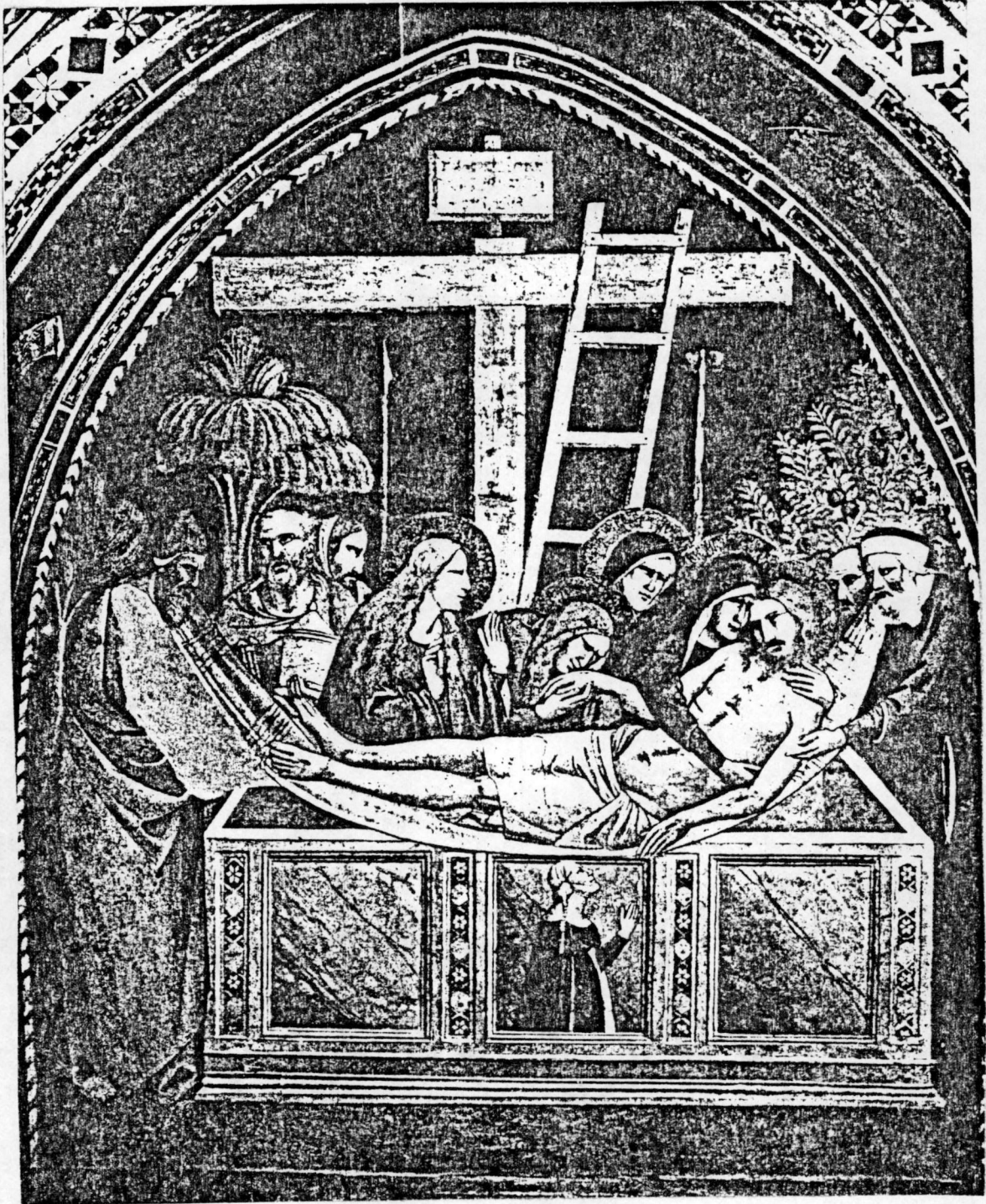


Figure 5

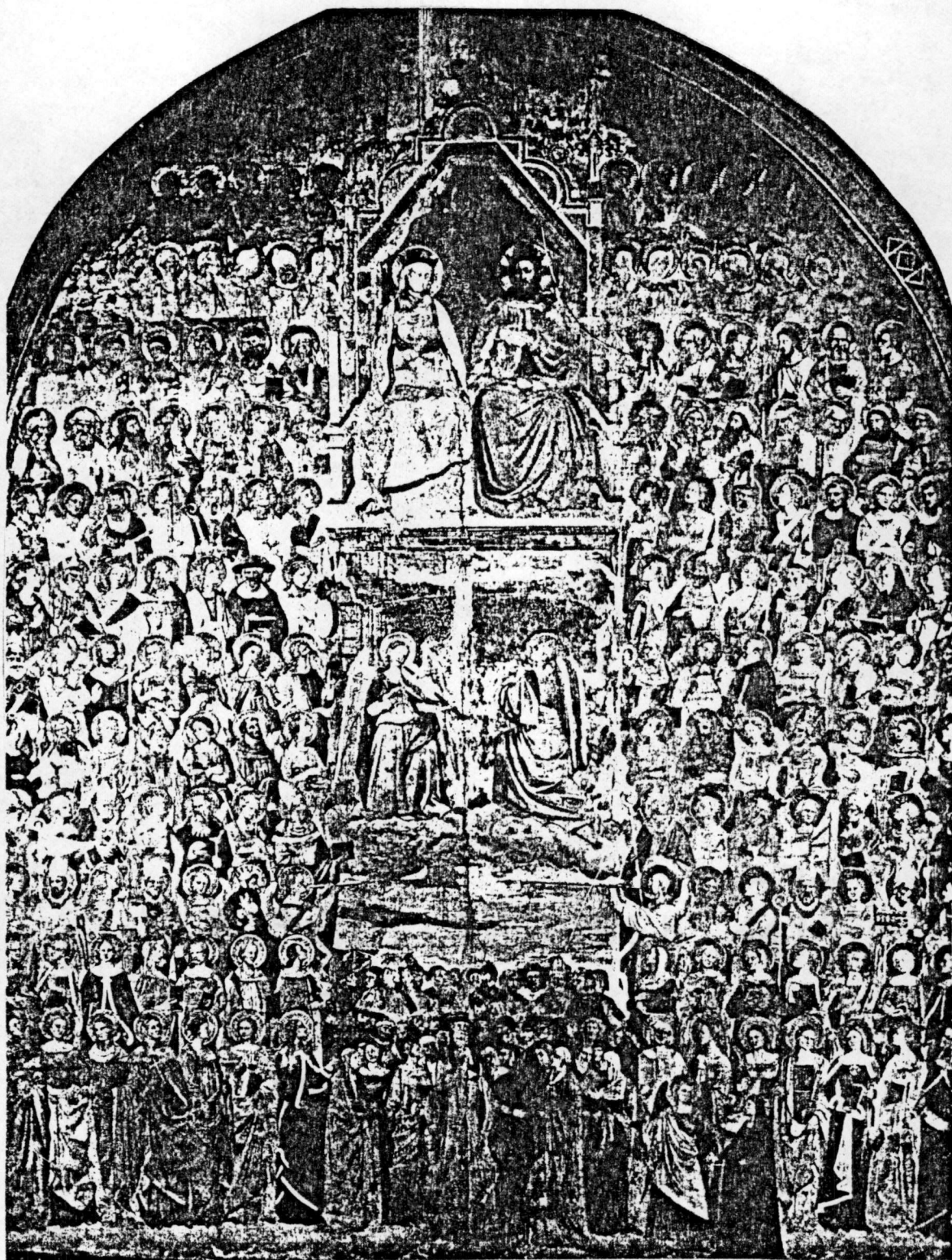


Figure 6



Figure 7

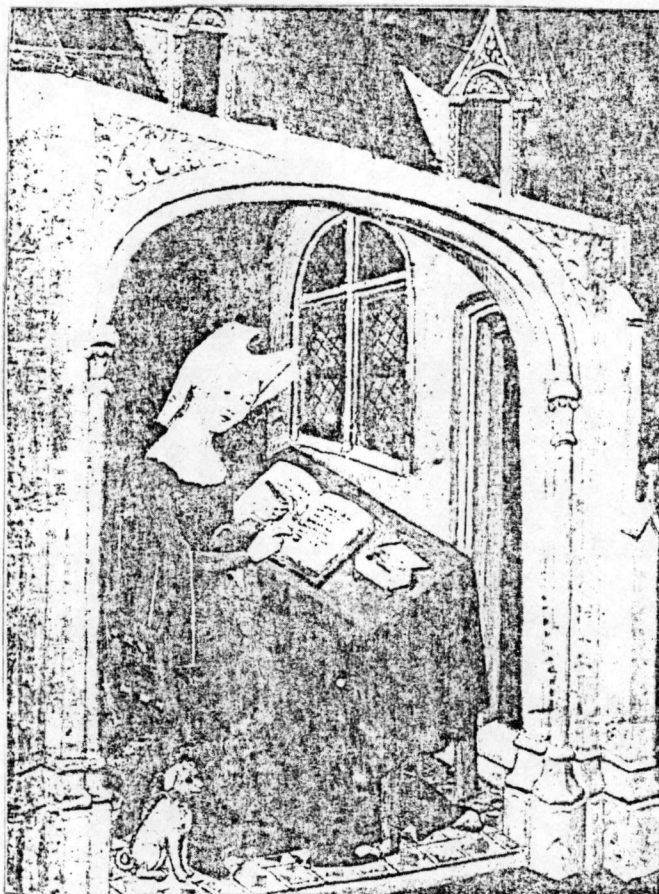


Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

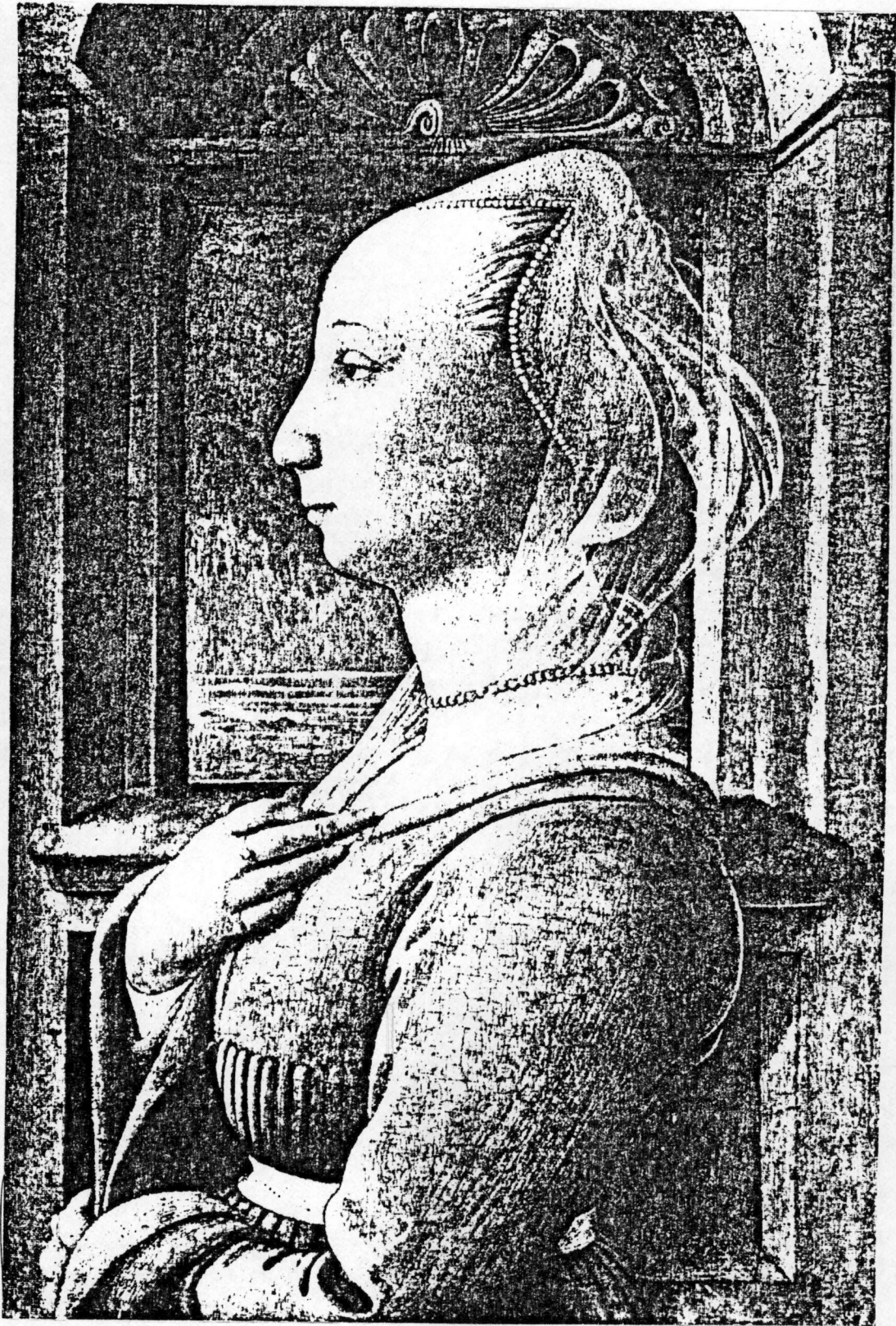


Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15

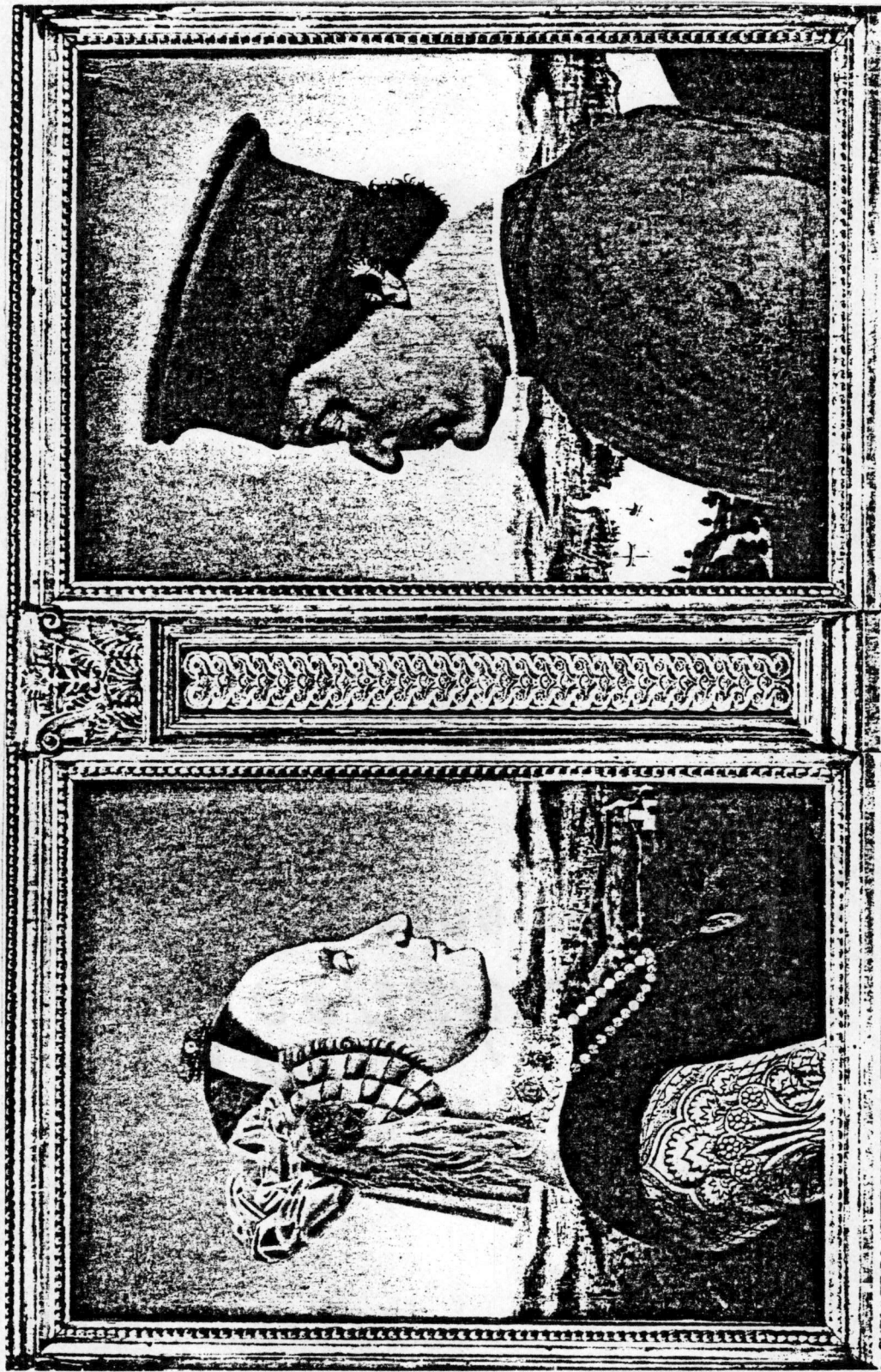


Figure 16

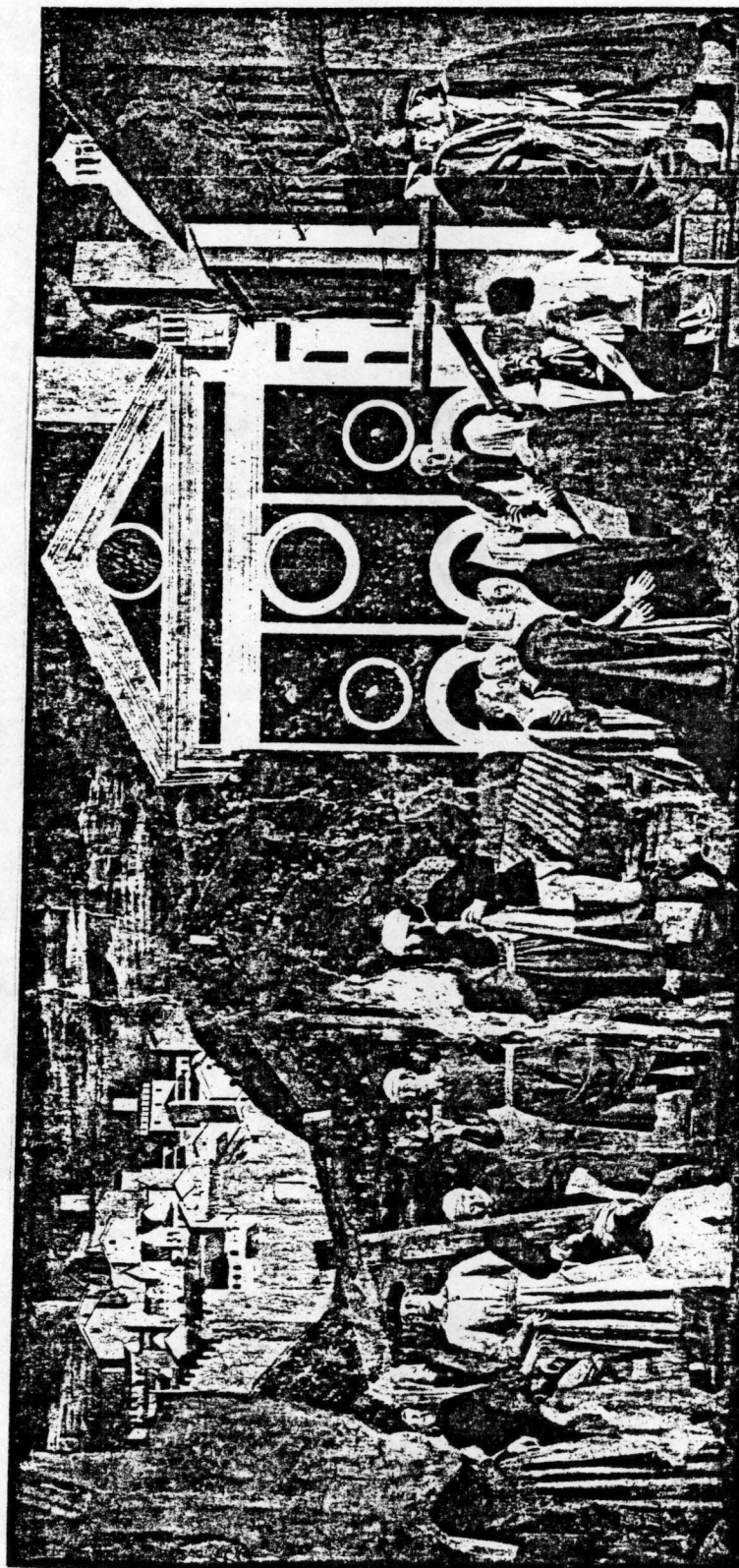


Figure 17



Figure 18

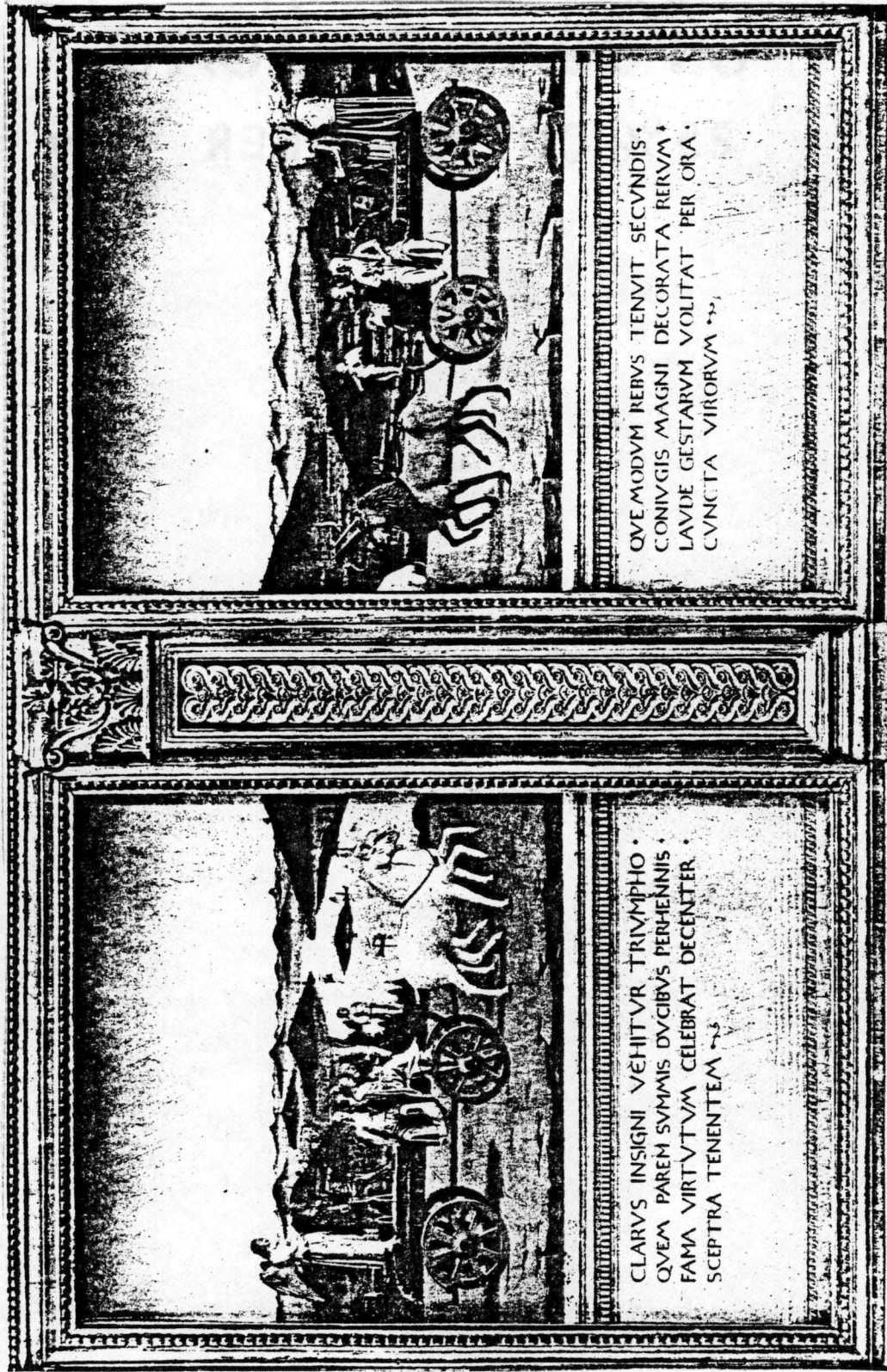


Figure 19



Figure 20



Figure 21



Figure 22



Figure 23



Figure 24

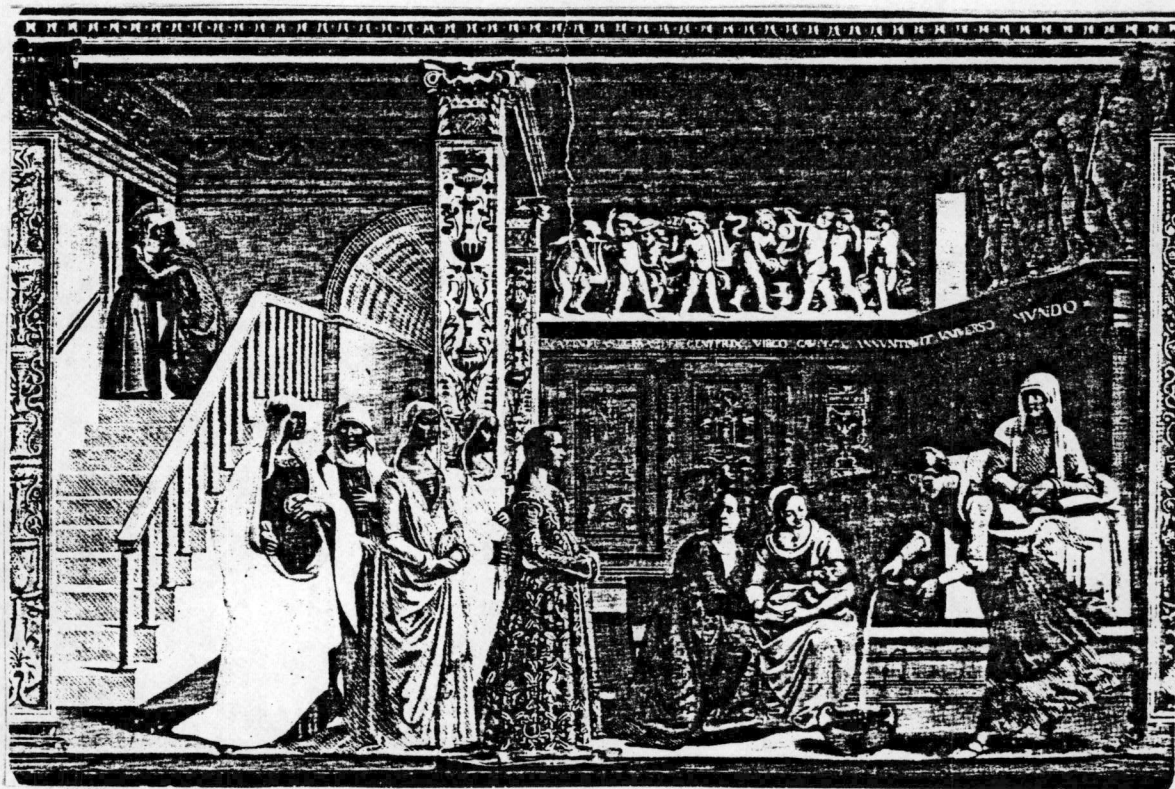


Figure 25



Figure 26



Figure 27

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alberti, Leon Battista. The Family in the Renaissance.
Trans. R. N. Watkins.
- _____. Ten Books on Architecture. Trans. James Leoni
(London, 1755). London: 1955.
- Alighieri, Dante. The Divine Comedy. Trans. and ed.
Charles S. Singleton, 6 vols. Princeton: 1970-75.
- Antal, Frederick. Florentine Painting and Its Social
Background. London: 1948.
- Aquinas, St. Thomas. Summa Theologica. Vol. 43. London:
1964.
- Baron, Hans. The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance.
2 vols. Princeton: 1955.
- Berenson, Bernard. The Italian Painters of the Renaissance.
5th edition. London: 1959.
- _____. Italian Pictures of the Renaissance; Florentine
School. Vols. 1 and 2. London: 1963.
- Besta, Enrico. La famiglia nella storia del diritto
italiano. Padua: 1933.
- Boccaccio, Giovanni. The Decameron. Trans. G. A. McWilliam.
Baltimore: 1972.
- Boulting, William. Woman in Italy. New York: 1910.
- Brockwell, Maurice. "Two Albizzi Family Portraits."
Connoisseur (Am. Ed.), CXXIX, 1952, 92-93.
- Burroughs, Rev. Joseph A. Prudence Integrating the Moral
Virtues According to Saint Thomas Aquinas.
Washington, D.C.: 1951.
- Cappelli, Adriano. Cronologia. Milan: 1906.
- Capellanus, Andreas. The Art of Courtly Love. Trans. and
ed. John J. Parry. New York: 1964.
- Castiglione, Baldesar. The Book of the Courtier. Trans.
Charles Singleton. New York: 1959.

- Chastel, André. The Age of Humanism. Munich: 1963.
- Chatelet, Albert. French Painting. Geneva: 1963.
- Cionacci, Francesco. Rime Sacre di Lorenzo de' Medici e
Madonna Lucrezia sua Madre. Bergamo: 1760.
- Clark, Kenneth. Leonardo da Vinci. New York: 1939.
- _____. Piero della Francesca. London: 1969.
- Cropper, Elizabeth. "On Beautiful Women, Parmigianino,
Petrarchismo, and the Vernacular Style." Art Bulletin,
LVIII, 1976.
- Davies, Gerald S. Ghirlandaio. New York: 1909.
- Degenhart, Bernhard. Pisanello. Turin: 1945.
- Del Lungo, Isidoro. Women of Florence. Trans. Mary
Steegmann. London: 1907.
- De Roover, Raymond A. The Rise and Decline of the Medici
Bank, 1397-1494. Cambridge, Mass.: 1963.
- De Wald, Ernest T. Italian Painting 1200-1600. New York:
1961.
- Eckenstein, Lina. Woman Under Monasticism. London: 1896.
- Ettlinger, Helen. "The Portraits in Botticelli's Villa
Lemmi Frescoes." Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen
Institutes in Florenz, XX, 1976, 404-406.
- Felice, B. Donne Medicee avanti il Principato. Florence:
1905-06.
- Focillon, Henri. The Art of the West in the Middle Ages.
Vol. 2. Trans. Donald King. London: 1963.
- Frankfurter, Alfred M. "Ghirlandaio and Mainardi: A Study
in Portraiture." Antiquarian, XVII, 1931.
- Friedländer, Max J. Landscape, Portrait, Still-life.
Trans. R. F. C. Hull. New York: n.d.
- Gardner, Edmund G. Saint Catherine of Siena. New York:
1907.

- Gielly, Louis J. "Un Ghirlandaio inconnu; le portrait présumé de Giovanna degli Albizzi." Gazette des Beaux-Arts, XXI, 1939, 194-195.
- Gilbert, Stuart. Italian Painting: The Creators of the Renaissance. Geneva: 1950.
- Gombrich, Ernst H. "The Early Medici as Patrons of Art: A Survey of Primary Sources." Italian Renaissance Studies. Ed. E. Jacob. London: 1960, 279-311.
- _____. Norm and Form, Studies in the Art of the Renaissance. London: 1966.
- _____. Symbolic Images. London: 1972.
- Guasti, Cesari. Lettere di una gentildonna Fiorentina. Florence: 1877.
- _____. Tre lettere di Lucrezia Tornabuoni a Piero de' Medici. Florence: 1878.
- Gubernatis, Angelo de. Storia comparata degli usi nuziali in Italia e presso gli altri popoli indo-europei. Milan: 1869.
- Hatfield, Rab. "Five Early Renaissance Portraits." Art Bulletin, XLVII, 1965, 315-334.
- Herlihy, David. "Women in Medieval Society." The Smith History Lecture. Houston, Texas: 1971.
- Hicks, Eric. Le débat sur le Roman de la Rose. Paris: 1977.
- Hirn, Yrjö. The Sacred Shrine. London: 1912.
- Holmes, George. The Florentine Enlightenment 1400-1450. London: 1969.
- Jordan, Édouard. Les origines de la domination angevine en Italie. 2 vols. New York: 1960.
- Kelso, Ruth. Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance. Urbana, Ill.: 1956.
- Kristeller, Paul O. The Classics and Renaissance Thought. Cambridge, Mass.: 1955.
- _____. Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters. Rome: 1956.

- Laigle, Mathilde. Le Livre de trois vertus de Christine de Pisan et son milieu historique et littéraire. Paris: 1912.
- Landucci, Luca. Diario Fiorentino. Florence: 1883.
- Lauts, Jan. Domenico Ghirlandaio. Vienna: 1943.
- Lehmann, Andre. Le rôle de la femme dans l'histoire de France au Moyen Age. Paris: 1952.
- Léonard, Émile G. Les Angevins de Naples. Paris: 1954.
- Levantini-Pieroni, Giuseppe. Lucrezia Tornabuoni. Florence: 1888.
- Lipman, Jean. "The Florentine Profile Portrait in the Quattrocento." Art Bulletin, XVIII, 1936, 54-102.
- Longhi, Roberto. Piero della Francesca. Milan: 1946.
- Macchiavelli, Niccolò. The Florentine History. Trans. T. Bedingfield (1595). London: 1905.
- Maguire, Yvonne. The Women of the Medici. London: 1927.
- Marchini, Giuseppe. "The Frescoes in the Choir of Santa Maria Novella." Burlington Magazine, XCV, 1953, 32-39.
- Martines, Lauro. The Social World of the Florentine Humanists 1390-1460. Princeton: 1963.
- Maulde La Claviere, Marie A. R. de. The Women of the Renaissance. Trans. G. H. Ely. London: 1900.
- Meiss, Millard. French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry, 2 vols. London: 1967.
- _____. The Limbourgs and Their Contemporaries. 2 vols. New York: 1974.
- _____. Painting in Florence and Siena After the Black Death. New York: 1964.
- Middledorf, Ulrich. "B. Degenhart: 'Pisanello,'" Book Review, Art Bulletin, XXIX, 1947, 278-279.
- Mirandola, Pico della. A Platonick Discourse Upon Love. Ed. Edmund G. Gardner. Boston: 1914.

- Oertel, Robert. Early Italian Painting to 1400. New York: 1968.
- Offner, Richard. Corpus of Florentine Painting. New York:
- Ortolani, Sergio. Il Pollajuolo. Milan: 1948.
- Paccagnini, Giovanni. Simone Martini. Milan: 1955.
- Pächt, Otto. "The Limbourgs and Pisanello." Gazette des Beaux-Arts, LII, 1963, 109-122.
- Panofsky, Erwin. Early Netherlandish Painting. 2 vols. New York: 1971.
- Perrens, François T. Histoire de Florence jusqu'à la domination de Medicis. Vol. 3. Paris: 1877-83.
- Petrarca, Francesco. Selected Poems. Trans. Anthony Mortimer. Alabama: 1977.
- _____. Sonnets. Trans. Joseph Auslander. London: 1932.
- Pinet, Marie-Josèphe. Christine de Pisan, 1364-1430. Paris: 1927.
- Pisan, Christine de. The Book of the Duke of True Lovers. Trans. Alice Kemp-Welch. London: 1903.
- Pope-Hennessey, John. The Portrait in the Renaissance. New York: 1966.
- Power, Eileen E., ed. The Goodman of Paris. London: 1928.
- _____. Medieval Women. Ed. M. M. Postan. Cambridge, England: 1975.
- Pulci, Luigi. Lettere. Ed. S. Bonghi. Lucca: 1886.
- Poliziano, Angelo. Stanze. Trans. David Quint. Amherst, Mass.: 1979.
- Rains, Ruth R. Les Sept Psaumes Allégorisés of Christine de Pisan. Washington, D.C.: 1965.
- Réau, Louis. L'Iconographie de l'art Chrétien. 3 vols. Paris: 1955-59.

- Renier, Rodolfo. Il tipo estetico della donna nel medioevo.
Ancona: 1881.
- Richter, George M. "Pisanello Studies." Burlington Magazine, LV, 1929.
- Rigaud, Rose. Les idées féministes de Christine de Pisan.
Geneva: 1973.
- Rochon, André. La jeunesse de Laurent de Medicis (1449-1478). Paris: 1963.
- Rondocanachi, E. La femme italienne avant, pendant et après la Renaissance. Paris: 1922.
- _____. Une Phèdre Italienne. Paris: 1896.
- Ross, Janet, ed. and trans. Lives of the Early Medici as Told in Their Correspondence. London: 1910.
- Roy, Maurice. Oeuvres poetiques de Christine de Pisan.
3 vols. Paris: 1886-96.
- Sabatini, Attilio. Antonio e Piero del Pollajuolo.
Florence: 1944.
- _____. Domenico Ghirlandaio. Florence: 1944.
- Sandberg-Vavala, Evelyn. Studies in the Florentine Churches.
Florence: 1959.
- Sindona, Enio. Pisanello. New York: 1961.
- Stubblebine, James H., ed. Giotto: The Arena Chapel Frescoes. New York: 1969.
- Tenhove, Nicolaas. Memoirs of the House of Medici. 2 vols.
London: 1797.
- Towner, Sister Mary L. Lavision-Christine. Washington, D.C.: 1932.
- Vasari, Giorgio. The Lives of the Artists. Vol. 1. Trans. George Bull. Baltimore: 1965.
- Venturi, Adolfo. Grandi Artisti Italiani. Bologna: 1925.
- Venturi, Lionello. Italian Painting. Trans. S. Gilbert. Geneva: 1950.

Ward, Charles Fredrick. The Epistles on the Romance of the Rose and Other Documents in the Debate. Chicago: 1911.

White, John. Art and Architecture in Italy. Baltimore, Md.: 1966.

Willard, Charity C. The "Livre de la Paix" of Christine de Pisan. The Hague: 1958.

Winkler, F. "Paul de Limbourg in Florence." Burlington Magazine, LVI, 1930, 94-96.

Typed by
Paula Brody Demong