

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: THE ALTARPIECES OF DOMENICO
GHIRLANDAIO (1449-1494): BETWEEN
HEAVEN AND EARTH, FAITH AND ART

Sarah Mellott Cadagin, Doctor of Philosophy,
2017

Dissertation directed by: Professor Meredith J. Gill, Department of Art
History and Archaeology

This dissertation examines the altarpiece paintings of the late fifteenth-century Italian artist Domenico Ghirlandaio (1449-94). While Ghirlandaio's frescoes have often been studied as paradigms of portraiture and visual narrative, the artist's 12 surviving altarpiece paintings have received little attention, despite Ghirlandaio's status as one of the major figures in the history of Renaissance painting. This study is the first comprehensive and contextual investigation of Ghirlandaio's altarpieces, and one of the first to consider his works on panel outside questions of attribution. My analysis utilizes archival discoveries, alongside focused examinations into the identities of patrons, the commission histories of these works, the original locations of the altarpieces, and the paintings' diverse sacred iconography.

Organized around a range of case studies that include altarpieces for religious orders, cathedrals, civic hospitals, and private patrons, this dissertation also demonstrates the purposes and uses of altarpieces, revealing how this persistent type

functioned as a form of visual *and* sacred power. Altarpieces visualize and index the divine presence contained and invoked at the altar, while also drawing the beholder fully into that presence. As a vehicle between the visible and the invisible, the altarpiece was the perfect means by which artists could explore the challenges of naturalism and mimesis, illusion and the imagination. Rather than seeing artists and their altarpieces as simply reflecting cultural and religious mores, this study argues for the active role that altarpieces played – and the artists who created them – in articulating the ontologies of the altar and its liturgies. Through an examination of Ghirlandaio's altarpieces, this study proposes a new definition of the fifteenth-century altarpiece as a dynamic object that mediated between the realm of art, as an aesthetic artifact, and the realm of the sacred, as an image that participated in the liturgies of the altar.

As the first study to explore Ghirlandaio's altarpieces, this dissertation produces a new body of knowledge about the artist, his workshop, and his painting practices. More broadly, it reassesses the materiality, functions, and ontologies of altarpieces, leading not only to a greater understanding of Renaissance religious art, but also of sacred art more generally.

THE ALTARPIECES OF DOMENICO GHIRLANDAIO (1449-1494): BETWEEN
HEAVEN AND EARTH, FAITH AND ART

by

Sarah Mellott Cadagin

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2017

Advisory Committee:
Professor Meredith J. Gill, Chair
Professor Anthony Colantuono
Professor Renée Ater
Professor Alfred Acres
Professor Philip Soergel

© Copyright by
Sarah Mellott Cadagin
2017

Disclaimer

The theis or dissertation document that follows has had referenced material removed in respect for the owner's copyright. A complete version of this document, which includes said referenced material, resides in the University of Maryland, College Park's library collection.

Dedication

For Dr. John Pfordresher

Faithful and beloved mentor, dearest friend, and instiller of wisdom, especially:

“Of this wisdom, the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for art’s sake, has most; for art comes to you professing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments’ sake.” (Walter

Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, 1893)

Acknowledgements

Any student of Italian Renaissance culture is well-versed in the notion of *communitas* – familial, civic, and sacred – that is so pervasive in that period. In writing a dissertation on altarpieces, I became even more attuned to this ethos, for an altarpiece is, at its essence, a communal image: it is a work that is at once viewed by a specific community as much as it also calls upon those viewers towards community through the unifying presence of the altar. I am remarkably fortunate that I had my own “community,” so to speak, in developing, researching, and writing my dissertation, and it is my true delight to offer my gratitude to the following individuals and institutions.

First and foremost, I must thank my incredible advisor, Dr. Meredith J. Gill. Dr. Gill has supported me at every step in my graduate career, from the awkward juvenilia of my early seminar papers to the final drafts of my dissertation. At each milestone – and in between – she was a constant source of strength and inspiration. I am so grateful for her unwavering cheerleading; gentle, yet firm guidance; and her indefatigable support. Dr. Gill is additionally an endlessly kind and generous person – a model of both scholarly and personal goodness, a terrific listener, and a sympathetic and encouraging mentor. I could not be more fortunate in being her student.

Many faculty members of the Department of Art History and Archaeology at the University of Maryland, as well as at my alma mater, Georgetown University, were outstanding in their support of my work and development as a scholar. I wish to especially thank my dissertation committee members, Drs. Alfred Acres, Anthony Colantuono, Philip Soergel, and Renée Ater. Dr. Ater, in particular, was a trusted and

beloved mentor and friend, both as my minor advisor in early American art and as a cherished professor, teaching advisor, and carpooling buddy. Dr. Acres, my undergraduate thesis advisor at Georgetown and very generously a “special member” of my dissertation committee, has always been an inspiration to me; it has been truly edifying to have him support my work from undergraduate paper to doctoral dissertation.

I thank Drs. Alicia Volk and Joshua Shannon, Directors of Graduate Studies during my dissertation writing, for their support and aid in grant and fellowship recommendations. I am grateful to the inimitable Dr. June Hargrove, who, as external fellowships’ advisor, wholeheartedly supported me and my various applications. Dr. Quint Gregory, the Department’s Director of the Michelle Smith Collaboratory for Visual Culture, was a lifeline of good humor, friendship, and much appreciated (and needed!) digital assistance.

My dissertation was generously funded throughout its gestation, and I am extremely grateful to the Graduate School and the College of Arts and Humanities at the University of Maryland; and to the Cosmos Club Foundation in Washington, D.C.

Working and living in Atlanta, away from the resources of Maryland’s libraries, has often been a challenge. The librarians and staff of Emory University’s Robert W. Woodruff Library have more than made up for the inconvenience. I wish to particularly thank Debra Madera, of Special Collections at the Pitts Theological Library, for aiding me in accessing – and later photocopying – the early Gesuati texts. The Interlibrary Loan staff of the Atlanta-Fulton County Public Libraries was also indispensable to me, and I especially thank the staff at the Buckhead branch. Anne

England, Curator of Visual Resources at the Ernst G. Welch School of Art and Design at Georgia State University, was additionally generous and helpful with obtaining and digitizing images for me.

I feel incredibly lucky to have many colleagues and friends here and abroad, and wish to thank the following, in no particular order, for friendship, professional advice, and collegial assistance: Gerardo de Simone (Accademia di Belle Arti di Carrara); Diane Cole Ahl (Lafayette College); Jean Cadogan (Trinity College, Hartford); Sara Nair James (Mary Baldwin College); Donna Sadler (Agnes Scott College); Lara Yeager-Crasselt (The Leiden Collection); Alessio Assonitis (Medici Archives Project); Fabrizio Ricciardelli (Kent State University in Florence); Eleonora Mazzocchi (Museo dello Spedale degli Innocenti); and Roberta Pagliai (Museo Erolì, Narni). My “family” at and through Georgetown’s Villa le Balze in Fiesole, Italy has additionally always been an immense blessing to me; Simona Mocali, Giuditta Viceconte, Flavia Maltese, Valeria Speroni-Cardi, and most especially the late Bruno Wanroij, deserve special and loving mention. The best “Italian” friend is, however, undoubtedly Sissy Seiwald. Sissy was (and is) indispensable to me in everything Florentine, and generously opened up hers and John’s home not only to me, but also to my family and friends. Her openhearted spirit in aid, friendship, and Aperol Spritzes will not soon be forgotten.

My family has always supported my aspirations, most especially my parents, John and Suzy Mellott. My mother and father’s encouragement, pride, and love mean the world to me. My maternal grandparents, Fred and Ruth Miller; my in-laws, Ed and Vicki Cadagin; and my two younger sisters, Jenny and Betsy Mellott, have also

been wonderful and loving cheerleaders. My husband, Ed, is the truest and dearest supporter, never questioning, nor complaining, about my life spent in paintings and books. In addition to his friendship and love, Ed makes possible my “room of one’s own,” and for that I am so grateful.

This dissertation is dedicated with much love, esteem, and gratitude to Dr. John Pfordresher. I was lucky enough to study at Georgetown’s Villa le Balze when John was the professor-in-residence, and memories of hearing him recite Byron on the Villa’s loggia will stay with me all my days. I was even luckier that John believed in me enough to ask me to serve as his teaching assistant for the Villa’s summer program; this was the true beginning of a deep and special friendship and mentorship. His early encouragement of me to pursue graduate studies is really the reason I took this path, and in addition to the scholarly inspiration he always provides, it is his moral goodness and generosity that I feel privileged to know.

Table of Contents

Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	vii
List of Illustrations.....	viii
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Domenico Ghirlandaio: Life and Art.....	13
Apprenticeship and Training.....	15
Ghirlandaio as Master: Works of the 1470s and 1480s.....	20
The Workshop.....	25
Personality: Piety, Identity, and Reputation.....	31
Final Works: the 1490s and Death.....	39
Chapter 2: The Italian Renaissance Altarpiece Reconsidered.....	42
The Altarpiece and its Setting.....	45
Seeing and Sensing the Altarpiece.....	52
The Altarpiece in the Fifteenth Century.....	62
Chapter 3: Corporate Identity and Communication: Ghirlandaio's Altarpieces for Religious Orders.....	69
Altarpieces for the Gesuati.....	72
Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Narni's Observant Franciscans.....	102
Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Volterra's Camaldolesi.....	115
Chapter 4: Curtains, Relics, Altarpieces: Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Lucca Cathedral.....	130
Lucca, San Martino, and the <i>Volto Santo</i>	132
Ghirlandaio in Lucca.....	135
Ghirlandaio's Lucca Altarpiece.....	139
Chapter 5: Fostering Foundlings: Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for the Ospedale degli Innocenti.....	147
The Ospedale degli Innocenti.....	149
Ghirlandaio and the Ospedale.....	154
The Innocenti Altarpiece.....	156
Chapter 6: Memory and Commemoration: Ghirlandaio's Altarpieces for Private Patrons.....	165
Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Dionigi Fiorini.....	170
Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Francesco Sassetti.....	177
Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Lorenzo Tornabuoni.....	189
Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Stefano Boni.....	198
Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Giovanni Tornabuoni.....	202
Conclusions.....	216
Appendix A: Altarpieces of the Ghirlandaio Workshop.....	221
Appendix B: Ghirlandaio's Lost/Destroyed Altarpieces.....	225
Bibliography.....	227

List of Illustrations

Figure 1: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Virgin and Child with Sts. Catherine of Alexandria, Stephen, Lawrence, and Dorothea* (c. 1478-79), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Museo Nazionale di San Matteo, Pisa.

Figure 2: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Virgin and Child with Sts. Matthew (?), Jerome, Raphael, and Benedict with Donor* (c. 1478-79), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Museo Nazionale di San Matteo, Pisa.

Figure 3: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Virgin and Child with Sts. Peter, Clement, Sebastian, and Paul* (c. 1479-80), tempera and gold on panel, San Martino, Lucca.

Figure 4: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Virgin and Child with Sts. Dionysius, Clement, Dominic, and Thomas Aquinas* (c. 1481), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Figure 5: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Virgin and Child with Sts. Michael, Giusto, Zenobius, and Raphael* (c. 1482-86), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Figure 6: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Coronation of the Virgin* (1484-86), tempera and gold on panel, Museo Eroli, Narni.

Figure 7: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Adoration of the Shepherds* (1485), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Santa Trinita, Florence.

Figure 8: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Adoration of the Magi* (1485-89), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Museo degli Innocenti, Florence.

Figure 9: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Resurrection of the Roman Notary's Son* (1479-85), fresco, Sassetti Chapel, Santa Trinita, Florence.

Figure 10: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Expulsion of Joachim from the Temple* (1485-90), fresco, Tornabuoni Chapel/Cappella Maggiore, Santa Maria Novella, Florence.

Figure 11: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Virgin and Child with Sts. Dominic, Michael, John the Baptist, and Thomas* (1490-94), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.

Figure 12: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Visitation* (1491), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Figure 13: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Christ in Glory with Sts. Romuald, Benedict, Attinia, and Greciniana* (c. 1490-92), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Pinacoteca di Volterra, Volterra.

Figure 14: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Sts. James, Stephen, and Peter* (1492), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence.

Figure 15: Duccio, *Maestà* (1308-11), tempera and gold on panel, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena.

Figure 16: Leonardo da Vinci, *The Virgin and Child with Sts. Anne and John the Baptist* (c. 1500), black chalk and touches of white chalk on brownish paper mounted on canvas, National Gallery, London.

Figure 17: Vittore Carpaccio, *Apparition of the Crucifix in the Church of Sant'Antonio di Castello* (c. 1512), oil on canvas, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.

Figure 18: Hugo van der Goes, *Adoration of the Shepherds (Portinari Triptych Inner Panels)* (c. 1477-78), oil on panel, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Figure 19: Hugo van der Goes, *Annunciation (Portinari Triptych Outer Panels)* (c. 1477-78), oil on panel, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Figure 20: Fra Angelico, *Annunciation* (c. 1432-34), tempera and gold on panel, Museo Diocesano, Cortona.

Figure 21: Fra Angelico, *San Marco Altarpiece* (c. 1439-41), tempera and gold on panel, Museo di San Marco, Florence.

Figure 22: Fra Angelico, *Pietà* (c. 1439-41), tempera and gold on panel, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.

Figure 23: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Sts. Sebastian and Roch* (c. 1478-79), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Museo Nazionale di San Matteo, Pisa (Photograph courtesy of Gerardo de Simone).

Figure 24: Sandro Botticelli, Domenico Ghirlandaio, and workshops, *Coronation of the Virgin with Sts. Giusto of Volterra, Romuald, Clemente, and the Blessed Jacopo Guidi* (c. 1490-92), tempera and oil on panel, Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach.

Figure 25: Detail of fig. 13.

Figure 26: *Volto Santo di Lucca* (c. 11th-12th centuries), partially gilded wood, Cathedral of San Martino, Lucca.

Figure 27: Vincenzo Frediani, *Madonna and Child with Sts. Peter and Paul* (c. 1491), tempera and gold on panel transferred to canvas, Museu d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona.

Figure 28: Matteo Civitali, *Tempietto for the Volto Santo di Lucca* (c. 1480-84), Cathedral of San Martino, Lucca.

Figure 29: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Visitation* (1485-90), fresco, Tornabuoni Chapel/Cappella Maggiore, Santa Maria Novella, Florence.

Figure 30: Andrea del Verrocchio, *Christ and St. Thomas* (1467-83), bronze, Museo di Orsanmichele, Florence.

Figure 31: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *St. Lawrence* (c. 1493-94), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.

Figure 32: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *St. Stephen* (c. 1493-94), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest.

Figure 33: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *St. Catherine of Siena* (c. 1493-94), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.

Figure 34: Davide and Benedetto (?) Ghirlandaio, *Resurrection of Christ* (c. 1494), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Staatliche Museen, Berlin.

Figure 35: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *St. Peter Martyr* (c. 1493-94), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Magnani Collection, Reggio Emilia.

Figure 36: *Madonna Lactans with St. Catherine of Alexandria and Donor (Madonna della Pura)* (late 14th century), fresco, Cappella della Pura, Santa Maria Novella, Florence.

Figure 37: Filippo Brunelleschi, *Ospedale degli Innocenti* (1419-27), Florence.

Figure 38: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Virgin and Child* (c. 1470), tempera on panel transferred to hardboard, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Figure 39: Domenico and Davide Ghirlandaio, *St. Jerome* (1475-76), fresco, Biblioteca Latina, the Vatican, Rome.

Figure 40: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Funeral of Santa Fina* (c. 1477-78), fresco, Chapel of Santa Fina, Collegiata, San Gimignano.

Figure 41: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Sassetti Chapel* (1479-85), fresco, Santa Trinita, Florence.

Figure 42: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Calling of Sts. Peter and Andrew* (1481-82), fresco, Sistine Chapel, the Vatican, Rome.

Figure 43: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Sala dei Gigli* (1482-83), fresco, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence.

Figure 44: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Tornabuoni Chapel* (1485-90), fresco, Santa Maria Novella, Florence.

Figure 45: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Coronation of the Virgin with Saints and Angels* (c. 1484-86), pen, brown ink, and brown wash over black chalk on cream-colored paper, Istituto Nazionale per la Grafica, Rome.

Figure 46: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Christ in Glory with Saints* (c. 1490-92), pen, brown ink, and brown wash on cream-colored paper, Albertina, Vienna.

Figure 47: *Golden Altar of Sant’Ambrogio* (c. 9th century), gold and enamel with pearls and other gemstones, Sant’Ambrogio, Milan.

Figure 48: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Giovanna degli Albizzi Tornabuoni* (c. 1489-90), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid.

Figure 49: Pietro Perugino, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Sts. John the Evangelist and Augustine* (1494), oil on panel, Sant’Agostino, Cremona.

Figure 50: Pietro Perugino, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Sts. John the Baptist and Sebastian* (1493), oil on panel, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Figure 51: A. Soli and M. Florimi, *Plan of Pisa* (c. 1590), Museo Nazionale di San Matteo, Pisa [N.B.: Complex of San Girolamo dei Gesuati marked with a red box].

Figure 52: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *St. Jerome* (1480), fresco, Ognissanti, Florence.

Figure 53: Workshop of Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Madonna and Child with Sts. Blaise, Giovanni Gualberto, Benedict, and Anthony Abbot (Vallombrosan Altarpiece)* (c. 1485), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Museo d’Arte Sacra dell’Abbazia di Vallombrosa, Reggello.

Figure 54: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Drapery for a Seated Figure* (late 1470s), gray and black washes on linen, heightened with white, Cabinet des Dessins, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Figure 55: Raphael, *Madonna and Child with Sts. Sixtus and Barbara and Angels (Sistine Madonna)* (1512), oil on canvas, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden.

Introduction

In his 1568 *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, Giorgio Vasari had this to say about one of Domenico Ghirlandaio's altarpieces:

He painted for the Gesuati friars a panel for the high altar, with some kneeling saints...truly in this Domenico deserves praise, because he was the first to begin to counterfeit with colors some gold trimmings and ornaments...But, more beautiful than the other figures is Our Lady, who has the little son in her lap with four angels around her. This panel, of any work in tempera, could not have been better made.¹

Despite the praise for both technique and religious feeling that Vasari lavished on Ghirlandaio's Gesuati painting, attention to the artist's altarpieces has been muted since Ghirlandaio's death in the late fifteenth century. Scholars have concentrated instead on Ghirlandaio's more well-known frescoes, his striking portraits of Florentine patricians, and his role as the teacher of the celebrated Michelangelo. Although Ghirlandaio's 12 surviving altarpieces present an especially rich and diverse array of patrons, original locations, and sacred iconography, they have received neither close contextual analysis,² nor widespread integration into the history of early Renaissance art.

¹ Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence: G.C. Sansoni, 1906), vol. III: 257. The original Italian reads: "Dipinse a' Frati Ingesuati una tavola per l'altar maggiore, con alcuni Santi ginocchioni...e, nel vero, merita in questo lode Domenico; perchè fu il primo che cominciasse a contraffar con i colori alcune guarnizioni ed ornamenti d'oro...Ma, più che l'altre figure, è bella la Nostra Donna che ha il figliuolo in collo e quattro Angioletti attorno. Questa tavola, che, per cosa a tempera, non potrebbe meglio esser lavorata..." Except where noted, all translations are my own.

² This is especially true of the work of Jean Cadogan, the most noteworthy scholar of Ghirlandaio. Her groundbreaking and magisterial *Domenico Ghirlandaio: Artist and Artisan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000) remains the most important study of the artist and his works. It focuses almost

This dissertation is the first comprehensive study of Ghirlandaio's altarpiece paintings. It is, in essence, an examination of a specific artist; a study of a specific kind of image; and an investigation of the contemporary resonance that those images had for their owners and beholders. Through this examination, a new picture unfolds both of Ghirlandaio and of painted altarpieces more broadly.

Ghirlandaio's altarpieces first and foremost reveal him to be a much more sophisticated and nuanced creator of sacred art than has been previously understood – an artist as capable of creating an emblem of divine encounter as he was in naturalistically imitating a physical likeness. Ghirlandaio emerges in his altarpieces neither as the mere chronicler of Renaissance Florence's elite, as has traditionally been assumed of his murals and portraits,³ nor as the binary of the practical “artist and artisan,” as the subtitle of the most important Ghirlandaio monograph asserts.⁴ While Ghirlandaio's altarpieces certainly showcase his noted facility in managing a large workshop and a large number of prestigious commissions, they more vitally reflect the artist's intellect and his comprehension of the fecund potentialities of sacred art. This is in contrast with the achievements of his narrative frescoes.

If Ghirlandaio's murals showcased the artist's keen powers as an imaginative visual storyteller of the Bible and contemporary hagiography, his altarpieces had different and arguably more complex sacred functions. As painted or sculpted images

exclusively, however, on Ghirlandaio's frescoes and drawings. His altarpieces are treated in the text's catalog raisonné, which largely considers them in terms of attribution, date, and style.

³ Bernard Berenson defines nineteenth- and twentieth-century criticism of Ghirlandaio in his assertion that Ghirlandaio had “industry...love of his occupation...talent”, but “not a spark of genius. Bright color, pretty faces, good likenesses, and the obvious everywhere – attractive and delightful, it must be granted, but, except in certain single figures, never significant.” Bernard Berenson, *The Italian Painters of the Renaissance* (London: Phaidon, 1952), 64.

⁴ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio: Artist and Artisan*; see note 2.

that hang on or above altars, the stone or wooden monoliths that are the central sites of the Christian liturgy, altarpieces are very particular kinds of religious images. The altar itself is a site of both rupture and reconciliation, a point of encounter between the sacred and the mundane and between conceptions of heaven and earth. Here, believers understand that Christ becomes physically present in the Eucharist bread and wine, providing his body for both physical and spiritual nourishment.⁵ Here, too, the potent relics of saints are displayed and also interred.⁶ While altarpieces evoke the dedications of their churches, at their core, they are images that encapsulate the paradoxical rupture and reconciliation of the altar: that the separation between heaven and earth is broken by the presence of Christ and the saints at the altar, and that believers are now reconciled to Christ through their consumption of the Eucharist. Altarpieces visualize and index the divine presence contained and invoked at the altar, while also drawing the beholder fully into that presence.

Like other medieval and Renaissance artists, Ghirlandaio was certainly aware of the general purpose and use of altarpieces. But his altarpieces, in particular, show an artist who was exceptionally conversant in distinctions of iconography, for both the altarpiece type itself and for the specificities of his patrons. In his altarpieces for Francesco Sassetti and Lorenzo Tornabuoni, for instance, Ghirlandaio amalgamated a sense of both liturgical and chronological time past, present, and future, addressing the memorial context of the altarpiece's chapels and the fluidity of time evoked at the

⁵ This understanding of the Christian altar and Eucharist is generally true for Roman Catholics, most Orthodox Christians, Lutherans, and Anglicans/Episcopalians. Many other Protestant sects, such as Baptists and Methodists, view the altar and Eucharist as only symbolic of Christ's body and blood. For a concise discussion of the distinctions in Eucharist theology among Christians, see Paul Bradshaw and Maxwell Johnson, *The Eucharistic Liturgies: Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2012).

⁶ This is true primarily for Roman Catholics.

altar. His altarpieces for the religious orders of the Gesuati, Camaldolesi, and Observant Franciscans address the special corporate identities and particular devotional practices of those groups. Ghirlandaio's altarpieces for Lucca's cathedral and for Florence's Santa Maria Novella allude to miraculous cult images within those sacred spaces, suggesting both the specific local context of the altarpieces as much as the notion of divine presence mediated through images.

This precision and specificity in altarpiece iconography is in marked contrast to Ghirlandaio's closest contemporaries, who often utilized the same figures, compositions, and backgrounds for multiple altarpieces. The altarpiece *oeuvre* of Pietro Perugino (1446/52-1523), for instance, shows numerous exact or almost-exact copies.⁷ A notable example is Perugino's altarpiece for the Roncadelli family in Cremona (figure 49), which is a copy of the artist's earlier altarpiece for Fiesole's San Domenico (fig. 50); only the identities of the saints next to the enthroned Virgin and Child are different.⁸ Ghirlandaio's altarpieces, unlike many of Perugino's and others', are also unusual for the extent of the master's hand evident in the completed painting. While Ghirlandaio, like all Renaissance artists, utilized assistants and collaborators in his paintings, he painstakingly made multiple preparatory drawings for his altarpieces and painted the bulk of his altarpieces' figures, background architecture and landscape, and smaller iconographic details. The few painted altarpieces of Andrea Verrocchio (c. 1435-88), a family friend of Ghirlandaio's and possibly one of the artist's teachers, were, in contrast, completed in large portions by pupils or

⁷ Carlo Castellaneta, *L'opera completa del Perugino* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1969). This catalog raisonné of Perugino's works is especially useful in seeing the artist's copying of his own work as it presents photographs of similar paintings together.

⁸ Ibid. 93.

collaborators,⁹ while Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510) made very few preparatory drawings for his altarpieces.¹⁰

The Ghirlandaio of this study is thus hardly only the “expeditious man who gets through much work,”¹¹ in the words of one contemporary, or the dazzling muralist of large-scale visual narratives. Rather, he is one of the fifteenth century’s foremost creators and inventors of altarpieces, one of the period’s most important forms of sacred imagery. To consider Ghirlandaio’s altarpieces is to see both a greater sense of the artist’s intellect and deep attention to sacred iconography, as it is see paradigms of the Renaissance altarpiece more broadly.

As one of the more ubiquitous forms of art in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, scholars have long considered the altarpiece. Jacob Burckhardt first charted the stylistic evolution of the form from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries in his 1893-4 essay, “Das Altarbild.”¹² Hellmut Hager’s 1962 *Die Anfänge des italienischen Altarbildes* outlined the development of the altarpiece in the early Middle Ages, and connected its iconography to the architecture and mosaics of

⁹ Verrocchio’s painted altarpieces include, with his pupil Leonardo da Vinci, *The Baptism of Christ* (c. 1473-78), tempera and oil on panel, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence; and, with later additions by Lorenzo di Credi, *Madonna di Piazza (Madonna and Child Enthroned with Sts. John the Baptist and Donato)* (1475-86), tempera on panel, Duomo di San Zeno, Pistoia.

¹⁰ For Botticelli’s drawings, see Ronald Lightbown, *Botticelli*, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), vol. II: 161-71. Of the 16 autograph drawings that Lightbown lists (excluding Botticelli’s famed series of studies of Dante’s *Inferno*), only one, the *St. John the Baptist* in the Gabinetto dei Disegni at the Uffizi (c. 1485-90; pen, with bistre shadows and white heightening on prepared pink paper), can be definitively connected with one of Botticelli’s altarpieces.

¹¹ Around 1490, the Duke of Milan’s agent included Ghirlandaio in his assessment of Florentine painters: “Domenico de Grilandaio bono maestro in tavola et piu in muro: le cose sue hano bona aria, et e homo expeditivo, et che conduce assai lavoro.” Published and translated in Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 26.

¹² Jacob Burckhardt, *The Altarpiece in Renaissance Italy*, ed. and trans. Peter Humfrey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

medieval churches.¹³ Since the late 1980s, altarpiece studies have flourished, with most modern scholars considering both the type and specific examples from multiple perspectives, whether from the context of the liturgy; the needs and identities of patrons; the theology of the Eucharist; or the larger architectural setting of the Renaissance church.¹⁴ Medievalists have, in particular, stressed the multisensory dimensions of the altarpiece-altar ensemble and its links to broader exegetical and theological developments.¹⁵ Scholars of sixteenth-century art have also considered altarpieces from the perspectives of religious reform and reformation.¹⁶

¹³ Hellmut Hager, *Die Anfänge des italienischen Altarbildes: Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte des toskanischen Hochaltarretabels* (Munich: Anton Schroll and Co., 1962).

¹⁴ David Ehresmann, "Some Observations on the Role of Liturgy in the Early Winged Altarpiece," *The Art Bulletin* 64 (1982): 359-69; Barbara Lane, *The Altar and the Altarpiece: Sacramental Themes in Early Netherlandish Painting* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984); Henk van Os, *Sienese Altarpieces, 1215-1460*, 2 vols. (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1984/1990); Staal Sinding-Larsen, *Iconography and Ritual: A Study of Analytical Perspectives* (Oslo: Universitet Sforlaget As, 1984); Martin Kemp and Peter Humfrey, eds., *The Altarpiece in the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); André Chastel, *La Pala ou le retable italien des origines à 1500* (Paris: L. Levi, 1993); Eve Borsook and Fiorella Gioffredi Superbi, eds., *Italian Altarpieces, 1250-1550: Function and Design*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Kees van der Ploeg, "How Liturgical is the Medieval Altarpiece," in *Italian Panel Paintings of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor Schmidt (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2002): 103-122; Beth Williams, "Altarpieces, Liturgy, and Devotion," *Speculum* 79, no. 2 (2004): 241-406; Christa Gardner von Teuffel, *From Duccio's Maestà to Raphael's Transfiguration: Italian Altarpieces and their Settings* (London: Pindar Press, 2005); Michelle O'Malley, "Altarpieces and Agency: The Altarpiece of the Society of the Purification and its 'Invisible Skein of Relations,'" *Art History* 28, no. 4 (September 2005): 417-441; Machtelt Israëls, ed., *Sassetta: The Borgo San Sepolcro Altarpiece* (Florence: Villa I Tatti, 2009); Scott Nethersole, *Devotion by Design: Italian Altarpieces before 1500* (London: National Gallery of Art, 2011).

¹⁵ Erik Thunø and Kasper Sørensen, eds., *Decorating the Lord's Table: On the Dynamics between Image and Altar in the Middle Ages* (Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen, 2006); Jeffrey Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché, eds., *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Sally Cornelison and Scott Montgomery, eds., *Images, Relics, and Devotional Practices in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006); Poul Grindler-Hansen, ed., *Image and Altar 800-1300* (Copenhagen: National Museum of Denmark, 2007); Justin Kroesen and Victor Schmidt, eds., *The Altar and its Environment 1150-1400* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009).

¹⁶ Carlo Cresti, *Altari controriformati in Toscana: Architettura e arredi* (Florence: A. Pontecorboli, 1996); Alexander Nagel, *The Controversy of Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); Marcia Hall, *The Sacred Image in the Age of Art: Titian, Tintoretto, Barocci, El Greco, Caravaggio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011); Walter Melion and K.A.E. Enenkel, eds.,

These important studies fail, however, to deeply consider the multiple liturgies that surrounded altarpieces and the actual viewing conditions of altarpieces in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. While many scholars have considered the connections between the Eucharist liturgy and altarpieces, there were, in fact, many others forms of worship that occurred at and around the altar. Altarpieces were additionally often only visually accessible to the clergy, making them largely privileged images for the eyes of priests and monks. In investigating the meanings of altarpiece iconography, it is thus vital to consider the precise viewing audience of the altarpiece in question.

Previous studies also neglect the shifting artistic and religious dynamics of the fifteenth century and their effects on altarpiece design and iconography. In an era of rising naturalism and illusionism in the visual arts, how did the tasks of altarpieces change? As artists like Ghirlandaio were increasingly praised and valued for their originality and invention, how did they grapple with the more traditional thematic parameters of altarpieces? And, as personal devotional practices and the need to perpetuate individual and family memory increased throughout the fifteenth century, how did patrons and beholders alike understand and utilize the altarpiece?

Given the relative paucity of contemporary documentation concerning the reception of Renaissance altarpieces, this dissertation can hardly purport to definitively answer such questions. Nonetheless, through an examination of Ghirlandaio's altarpieces and the contexts and conditions of their comprehension, this study proposes a new definition of the fifteenth-century altarpiece as a dynamic

Meditatio: Refashioning the Self: Theory and Practice in Late Medieval and Early Modern Intellectual Culture (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

object that mediated between the realm of art, as an aesthetic artifact, and the realm of the sacred, as an image that participated in the liturgies of the altar. In this sense, it does not fit neatly into the influential binary of “art” and “image” proposed by Hans Belting,¹⁷ nor Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood’s more recent dichotomy of Renaissance art works as either “performative” or “substitutional.”¹⁸ While these ideas will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2, suffice it to say here that altarpieces like Ghirlandaio’s simultaneously reflect notions of art and image, performance and substitution, as objects of both artistic manufacture and sacred context.

This dissertation unfolds in six parts. The first chapter presents a biography of Ghirlandaio, and seeks to situate his altarpieces within the context of his productive, two-decade-long career. It suggests new dates for several of Ghirlandaio’s paintings, and proposes a collaborative apprenticeship for the artist among the workshops of Alesso Baldovinetti, Fra Filippo Lippi, and Andrea del Verrocchio. It additionally explores Ghirlandaio’s membership of the devout Confraternity of San Paolo, and the effects that that membership may have had on his creation of sacred art.

The second chapter reassesses the Italian Renaissance altarpiece from material, liturgical, ecclesiastical, and stylistic perspectives. It reviews the origins and functions of painted altarpieces as a distinctive type of religious art; the viewing conditions of fifteenth-century altarpieces; and the links between the altarpiece and

¹⁷ Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult – Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich: Oskar Beck, 1990); published in English as *Likeness and Presence: a History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

¹⁸ First discussed in Alexander Nagel and Christopher Woods, “Interventions: Toward a New Model of Renaissance Anachronism,” *The Art Bulletin* 87, no. 3 (September 2005): 403-15; and expanded upon in Idem., *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010).

the multisensory environment of the altar. As stated above and as the subtitle of this dissertation asserts, it ultimately defines the fifteenth-century altarpiece as an object of both heaven, in its sacred function as a visualization of divine presence, and earth, in its creation by artists increasingly valued for their originality and invention.

Chapters 3-6 examine each of Ghirlandaio's 12 surviving altarpieces. While there are several ways in which one might categorize Ghirlandaio's altarpieces – by subject, for example; original geographical location; or date – this study organizes the altarpieces according to patron, as the content and intended meanings of altarpieces were largely determined by the patron and original beholders.¹⁹ Ghirlandaio's altarpieces, like most works of Renaissance art, were commissioned, and Ghirlandaio worked closely with his patrons to create objects that addressed their needs and wishes.²⁰ In classifying Ghirlandaio's altarpieces by patron – in this case, religious orders (Chapter 3); a civic cathedral canon (Chapter 4); a hospital (Chapter 5), and lay individuals (Chapter 6) – a broader picture emerges of the motivations behind different kinds of altarpiece commissions.

¹⁹ The importance of the patron and original viewers, or what he termed “patron and public,” in altarpiece form and iconography was emphasized by Henk van Os in his *Sienese Altarpieces 1215-1460*; he stressed the importance of patronage again in his essay, “Some Thoughts on Writing a History of Sienese Altarpieces,” in *The Altarpiece in the Renaissance*, eds. Humfrey and Kemp: 21-33.

²⁰ The subject of Renaissance patronage is rich and vast, but the studies that I have utilized most extensively are: F.W. Kent and Patricia Simons, eds., *Patronage, Art, and Society in Renaissance Italy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Richard Goldthwaite, *Wealth and Demand for Art in Italy, 1300-1600* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Giovanni Ciappelli and Patricia Rubin, eds., *Art, Memory, and Family in Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Jill Burke, *Changing Patrons: Social Identity and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Florence* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004); Michelle O'Malley, *The Business of Art: Contracts and the Commissioning Process in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); and Patricia Rubin, *Image and Identity in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

Chapter 3 explores Ghirlandaio's five altarpieces for specific religious communities: the Gesuati in Pisa and in Florence; the Observant Franciscans in Narni; and the Camaldolese Benedictines in Volterra. Ghirlandaio tailored the iconography of each altarpiece to the specific concerns of each order, and it is in these altarpieces, in particular, that we see the artist's engagement with the richness of liturgical and devotional practice. Since most of these altarpieces were produced for churches outside of Florence, this chapter additionally offers new perspectives on the history and visual culture of smaller centers in fifteenth-century Italy. Ghirlandaio's altarpieces for Pisa and Volterra – cities that were conquered by Florence in 1406 and 1472 respectively – are especially significant as they give testimony to Florentine-Medicean manipulation of the visual arts towards precise political ends. This chapter also offers previously undiscovered connections between Ghirlandaio and the powerful Medici family, de facto rulers of Florence in the fifteenth century and one of the era's most significant patrons of art.

Chapter 4 analyzes Ghirlandaio's altarpiece for the cathedral of San Martino in Lucca. Utilizing recently uncovered archival documentation of the altarpiece, this chapter is the first study to consider Ghirlandaio's Lucca altarpiece in terms of its cathedral-canon patron, Pietro Spada. It is also the first examination of the Lucca altarpiece in light of the architectural renovations of Lucca's cathedral in the 1470s and 1480s. Most critically, this chapter argues for the vital connections between Ghirlandaio's altarpiece and the cathedral's famed *Volto Santo*, Lucca's popular, miracle-working wooden sculpture of the crucified Christ.

Ghirlandaio's altarpiece for Florence's Ospedale degli Innocenti, the city's foundling hospital and orphanage, is the subject of Chapter 5. While the altarpiece is often cited as a paradigm of contemporary contractual arrangements, this chapter focuses on the meanings of Ghirlandaio's altarpiece for its intended audience, the young orphans and their caretakers. This chapter also argues for the potency of the altarpiece's subject of the Magi for both Florence's youth and for the city's powerful Silk Guild, the sponsor and administrator of the hospital.

Chapter 6 investigates Ghirlandaio's five altarpieces for individual lay patrons in Florence. Despite the varying social status and wealth of these patrons, Ghirlandaio was careful to craft each altarpiece with an eye towards encapsulating and strengthening individual and family identity. Since these altarpieces adorned burial or commemorative spaces, these paintings were additionally vital agents of memory and memorial.

The dissertation concludes with two appendices. Appendix A catalogs the altarpieces produced by Ghirlandaio's workshop, while Appendix B describes Ghirlandaio's lost and/or destroyed altarpieces. While this study asserts the unequivocally collaborative creative environment of the Ghirlandaio workshop, in keeping with recent scholarship that stresses the corporate nature of Renaissance art production,²¹ its ultimate aim is to examine Ghirlandaio as an individual agent. As

²¹ Bruce Cole, *The Renaissance Artist at Work: From Pisano to Titian* (New York: Harper and Row, 1983); Anabel Thomas, *The Painter's Practice in Renaissance Tuscany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Evelyn Welch, *Art and Society in Italy 1350-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 83-91; and Michelle O'Malley, *The Business of Art and Idem., Painting under Pressure: Fame, Reputation and Demand in Renaissance Florence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

Cadogan's chapter on Ghirlandaio's workshop (in *Domenico Ghirlandaio 153-71*) is the best assessment of the character and division of Ghirlandaio's *bottega*.

such, as much for clarity and length as for argument, this dissertation only investigates Ghirlandaio's autograph altarpieces in the main text. In judging whether an altarpiece was produced primarily by Ghirlandaio himself, I relied on documentary, contextual, and connoisseurial evidence. The assessments of Ghirlandaio scholar Jean Cadogan, a noted expert in Ghirlandaio's drawings and working methods, in particular, were also paramount in determining an altarpiece's autograph status.

Chapter 1: Domenico Ghirlandaio: Life and Art

Domenico Ghirlandaio, the eldest son of Tommaso and Antonia di Currado di Bigordi, was born in Florence in 1449.²² A family of modest merchants and artisans, the Bigordi lived near the church of San Lorenzo on Via dell' Ariento; they also owned a small farm, which produced grain and wine, outside the city near Scandicci.²³ Ghirlandaio's father was a goldsmith and dealer in silk, leather, and fabric goods. Vasari attributed some silver liturgical vessels in the church of Santissima Annunziata to him, as well as the invention of "*ghirlande*," gilt hair garlands worn by Florence's most fashionable young women. The alleged creation of such garlands is the origin of his son Domenico's nickname of "*Ghirlandaio*," or garland maker.²⁴ The attendance book of the Confraternity of San Paolo, of which Ghirlandaio's father was a long-serving member, additionally lists his occupations as "*setaiuolo minuto*" (silk dealer), "*grillandaio*" (garland maker), "*cuioaio*" (leather worker), and "*merciaio*" (haberdasher or dealer in fabric, buttons, etc.).²⁵

As Ghirlandaio grew, the Bigordi gained in fortune. By 1469, when the artist was 20 years old, his family had possession of part of another house in Florence, as

²² Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 14.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Vasari III: 254.

²⁵ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 15, 27, and 386, note 26; Cadogan also publishes the San Paolo attendance records relating to the entire Bigordi family as Document 7, pages 337-340. Their original archival notation is Florence, Archivio di Stato, Compagnie religiose soppresse da P. Leopoldo, 1594 (Compagnia di San Paolo), no. 42.

well as the ownership of more farms in the countryside, at Cercina and Viciano.²⁶ Ghirlandaio's family also grew in size through his childhood. Tax records indicate that Ghirlandaio had at least three sisters and three brothers, all born between 1450 and 1475.²⁷ Brothers Davide (1452-1525) and Benedetto (1458/9-97)²⁸ would prove to be Ghirlandaio's most important artistic collaborators, and, particularly in the case of Davide, partners in his workshop.

According to Vasari, Ghirlandaio was a precocious child, and showed his artistic talent at an early age: "He remained continually at drawing. Having been given by nature a perfect spirit and a marvelous and judicious taste in painting, even though he was a goldsmith in his youth, he was always attending to design."²⁹ This anecdote certainly accords with Vasari's frequent references to early genius in his artists' lives. But it is likely that Ghirlandaio, as the eldest son and heir to his father's estate, was hardworking and expeditious. In patriarchal Renaissance Florence, the eldest son was the future head of the family, responsible for taking care of his aging parents, his siblings, and his extended family.³⁰ Ghirlandaio was thus likely taught from an early age to show initiative, responsibility, and discipline. Given his family's

²⁶ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 15.

²⁷ Ibid. 14-15.

²⁸ Ibid. 14.

²⁹ "...non restò di continuo di disegnare. Perchè, essendo egli dotato dalla natura d'uno spirito perfetto e d'un gusto mirabile e giudicioso nella pittura, quantunque orafo nella sua fanciulezza fosse, sempre al disegno attendendo..." Vasari III: 254-255.

³⁰ Gene Brucker, *Renaissance Florence* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1969), 91-92. See also Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

involvement with artisanal production and sale, it would also not be surprising if Ghirlandaio showed a propensity towards art at a young age.

Like most children of his class, Ghirlandaio likely attended a grammar school for the sons of merchants and artisans.³¹ Here, he would have learned basic reading and writing in vernacular, Florentine Italian, as well as elementary arithmetic.³² Around the ages of 10-13, he would have been apprenticed to a master for the particular field he was to practice.³³ For Ghirlandaio, this would have occurred between 1459 and 1463.

Apprenticeship and Training:

Vasari asserted that Ghirlandaio trained as a goldsmith,³⁴ and new documentary evidence from a family history confirms that Ghirlandaio and his brother Davide initially trained as goldsmiths. According to Ghirlandaio's grandson Alessandro (1531-1595), writing in a family *ricordanza* entitled "Notizie e albero della casa Ghirlandari...", Ghirlandaio was apprenticed to the jewelers and goldsmiths Bernardo di Guccio and Bartolo (or Bartolomeo) di Stefano in 1463, at the age of 14/15.³⁵ While the apprenticeship agreement was renewed until 1469, when

³¹ Brucker 69; Francis Ames-Lewis, *The Intellectual Life of the Early Renaissance Artist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 19; Jean Cadogan, "An 'Huomo di Chonto:' Reconsidering the Social Status of Domenico Ghirlandaio and his Family," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 77 (2014): 27-46, 46.

³² Ames-Lewis *The Intellectual Life*, 19. We know that Ghirlandaio was literate as he signed some of his paintings in Latin and/or Italian script; see Cadogan, "An 'Huomo di Chonto,'" 46.

³³ Cadogan, "An 'Huomo di Chonto,'" 35.

³⁴ Vasari III: 254-55.

³⁵ Cadogan, "An 'Huomo di Chonto,'" 28 and 33. The Ghirlandaio family *ricordanza* was discovered in the late 1980s in the archives of the Vatican in Rome, and only recently transcribed, though as yet unpublished, in 2005. Nicoletta Baldini is currently preparing a fully annotated publication. See Cadogan, "An 'Huomo di Chonto,'" 28, note 6. The full Vatican citation is Archivio Segreto Vaticano,

Ghirlandaio would have been around 20 years of age and likely at full master level, Ghirlandaio appears only to have worked as a goldsmith for around two years at the very beginning of his apprenticeship.³⁶ Like other artists, such as the Pollaiuoli, Verrocchio, and Baldovinetti, Ghirlandaio seems to have turned to painting and draftsmanship relatively quickly after learning goldsmithing. He did, however, use his goldsmith training throughout his career. In the May 1470 matriculation log of the Confraternity of San Paolo, just after Ghirlandaio had joined the sodality, he is listed as being “*all’orafo*,” or “occupied in goldsmithing.”³⁷ In 1481, long after he began making paintings, Ghirlandaio was paid to gild some candlesticks for Florence’s cathedral.³⁸ In 1486, his expertise in metalwork was called upon by Florence’s church of Santa Trinita, when he evaluated the value of a silver censer.³⁹

Vasari cited Alesso Baldovinetti (1425-99) as Ghirlandaio’s “master in painting and in mosaic.”⁴⁰ A master of stained glass, intarsia, metal work, and mosaic in addition to painting, Baldovinetti is generally celebrated today for his frescoes in Florence’s San Miniato al Monte and Santissima Annunziata. While Ghirlandaio’s mature style is unlike the flatter modeling and carpet-like landscapes of

Archivio dell’Arciconfraternità del Gonfalone, 1276 (Eredità Ghirlandari. Notizie diverse 1336-1734), I. “Notizie e albero della casa Ghirlandari...” c. 6 verso.

³⁶ Cadogan, “An ‘Huomo di Chonto,’” 33.

³⁷ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 27. For the archival notation, see note 25, specifically c. 5 verso.

³⁸ Florence, Archivio dell’Opera del Duomo, Deliberazioni, 1476-82, c. 104. Published as Document 17 in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 345-46.

³⁹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 29.

⁴⁰ “...Alesso Baldovinetti, maestro di Domenico nella pittura e nel mosaico.” Vasari III: 263.

Baldovinetti,⁴¹ several of Ghirlandaio's earliest works do suggest training under his hand. Ghirlandaio's frescoed prophets (c. 1477-78) in the spandrels framing his Santa Fina frescoes in San Gimignano, for instance, are almost exactly the same as those of Baldovinetti in the Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal in San Miniato.⁴² The books in St. Jerome's study in Ghirlandaio's fresco of the saint in Florence's church of Ognissanti (1480) are also quite close to the designs Baldovinetti made for some intarsia panels in Florence's cathedral.⁴³ Ghirlandaio was also clearly close with Baldovinetti, as he named the older master one of his children's godparents in the 1480s.⁴⁴

Several contemporary scholars have also suggested Andrea del Verrocchio as Ghirlandaio's master.⁴⁵ Although Ghirlandaio's paintings showcase diaphanous and delicate draperies, golden lighting, and elegant, feminine Madonnas similar to Verrocchio's, Ghirlandaio does not seem to have had an official tenure in Verrocchio's shop. Ghirlandaio did not work in sculpture, Verrocchio's most renowned medium,⁴⁶ and Verrocchio was not known to have worked in mosaic,

⁴¹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 24-27; Ronald Kecks, *Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei der Florentiner Renaissance* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2000), 67; Ruth Kennedy, *Alesso Baldovinetti: A Critical and Historical Study* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1938), 159.

⁴² Ronald Kecks, "La formazione artistica del Ghirlandaio," in *Domenico Ghirlandaio 1449-1494: Atti di convegno internazionale Firenze, 16-18 ottobre 1994*, eds. Wolfram Prinz and Max Seidel (Florence: Centro Di, 1996): 43-60, 46-47.

⁴³ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 33-37.

⁴⁴ Cadogan, "An 'Huomo di Chonto,'" 39; this citation comes, again, from the family *ricordanza* in the Vatican archives.

⁴⁵ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 24-27; Kecks, *Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei*, 67; Kennedy 159; and Andrew Butterfield, *The Sculptures of Andrea del Verrocchio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 185-198.

⁴⁶ Verrocchio's apprentices, like his most famous student Leonardo da Vinci, worked in sculpture even if their favored or primary medium was painting. See Gary Radke, ed., *Leonardo da Vinci and the Art*

stained glass, or fresco – media that Ghirlandaio excelled in and practiced throughout his career.⁴⁷ While Verrocchio, as one of the most prominent masters of mid-fifteenth-century Florence, was almost certainly influential for Ghirlandaio's stylistic development, it does not appear that Ghirlandaio was ever a formal member of his *bottega*.

Francis Ames-Lewis has proposed Fra Filippo Lippi (1406-1469) as Ghirlandaio's early painting master.⁴⁸ He argues that Ghirlandaio's unique cross-hatch drawing style derives directly from drawings in the Lippi workshop; Ghirlandaio also copied drawings by Lippi, suggesting that he either executed them during an apprenticeship, or, at the very least, acquired a sketchbook or drawings.⁴⁹ Ames-Lewis surmises that a "Domenico" mentioned among Lippi's apprentices at Prato in 1459-60 could be Ghirlandaio,⁵⁰ and connects Ghirlandaio's landscapes, with their Flemish-inspired hazy light and carefully delineated atmosphere, to the direct influence of Lippi.⁵¹

Stylistically, Ghirlandaio's earliest works, particularly his Madonnas, are indeed quite similar to the linear contours, soft modeling, and Netherlandish-inspired light of Lippi's late paintings. An apprenticeship under Lippi may, in fact, be the

of Sculpture (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

⁴⁷ Butterfield 192-197.

⁴⁸ Francis Ames-Lewis, "Drapery 'Pattern'-Drawings in Ghirlandaio's Workshop and Ghirlandaio's Early Apprenticeship," *The Art Bulletin* 63, no. 1 (March 1981): 49-62; and Idem., "Il paesaggio nell'arte del Ghirlandaio," in *Domenico Ghirlandaio 1449-1494*, eds. Prinz and Seidel: 81-88.

⁴⁹ Ames-Lewis, "Drapery 'Pattern'-Drawings," 58-59; see also Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 289-291 (entry 77) for an example of one such drawing.

⁵⁰ Ames-Lewis, "Drapery 'Pattern'-Drawings," 58-60.

⁵¹ Ames-Lewis, "Il paesaggio nell'arte del Ghirlandaio," 83.

conduit for Ghirlandaio's marked interest in Netherlandish art throughout his career. As Paula Nuttall asserts, Lippi was one of the first Florentine artists to adopt Flemish painting techniques in his works, and Lippi's long tenure as the Medici family's favorite painter also exposed him to their growing collection of Northern European art.⁵² If Ghirlandaio was Lippi's apprentice, he certainly could have developed his taste for Netherlandish painting from Lippi.

In light of these considerations, I propose the following for Ghirlandaio's artistic training and development. First, inspired by his father's work, Ghirlandaio initially trained as a goldsmith. During the early 1460s, he may have then entered Lippi's workshop to learn painting. Around the same time or later in the 1460s, Ghirlandaio learned the art of mosaics and stained glass, and perfected his painting technique, under Baldovinetti. Verrocchio, as stated previously, inspired Ghirlandaio, but he did not formally apprentice the artist.

While this proposal is convenient in synthesizing the critical scholarship on Ghirlandaio's education, it is also in line with the fluidity of artistic training in the period. Aspiring artists were encouraged, for instance, to train in different shops so that they could develop specific skills. Cennino Cennini, in his famous early fifteenth-century *Il libro dell'arte*, advised apprentices to learn drawing with one master and coloring, gesso, and gilding with another.⁵³ Documentary evidence shows that artists, particularly sculptors, often changed masters to gain new skills and to work with

⁵² Paula Nuttall, *From Flanders to Florence: the Impact of Netherlandish Painting, 1400-1500* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 20-23, 164.

⁵³ Cennino Cennini, *The Craftsman's Handbook*, trans. Daniel Thompson, Jr. (New York: Dover, 1954), 64-65; cf. Thomas 66.

different patrons in different locales.⁵⁴ The time an apprentice spent in any one workshop was also not fixed, and could range anywhere from two to three months to several years.⁵⁵ And since the Renaissance workshop was what Bruce Cole deems an “*ad hoc* organization,” young artists, whether still apprentices or independent, may have moved from shop to shop early and often in their careers.⁵⁶

It would thus not be unprecedented or unusual if Ghirlandaio had worked under both Lippi and Baldovinetti. And despite the lack of concrete evidence to suggest a formal tenure in Verrocchio’s shop, it is not inconceivable that Ghirlandaio may have worked in his workshop as an occasional assistant or collaborator during the 1460s and early 1470s. In fact, the family *ricordanza* states that Verrocchio was the godparent to Ghirlandaio’s half-sister, Alessandra. Ghirlandaio was thus certainly known to and likely familiar with Verrocchio, at the very least, on a personal level.⁵⁷

Ghirlandaio as Master: Works of the 1470s and 1480s:

By at least 1472, Ghirlandaio was an independent master, as evidenced by his matriculation into the Compagnia di San Luca, the Florentine painters’ guild.⁵⁸ His earliest works, frescoes in the churches of Sant’Andrea a Brozzi in San Donnino and in Ognissanti in Florence,⁵⁹ show Ghirlandaio’s marked predilection for naturalistic

⁵⁴ Thomas 67.

⁵⁵ Cole 15.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 16.

⁵⁷ Cadogan, “An ‘Huomo di Chonto,’” 34.

⁵⁸ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 29.

⁵⁹ The full citations for these works are: *The Virgin and Child with Sts. Sebastian and Julian* and *The Baptism of Christ* (c. 1468-70), fresco, Sant’Andrea a Brozzi, San Donnino (Florence); *Madonna della Misericordia* and *Pietà with Saints* (c. 1470), fresco, Ognissanti, Florence. Catalog entries are in Ibid. 191 and 192-94 respectively.

portraiture and carefully considered narrative detail. Small devotional panels of this period, among them the so-called *Woodward Virgin* now in a Milan private collection and the Washington *Virgin and Child*⁶⁰ (fig. 38), also show the artist's early development of contemplative, elegant Madonnas. Other works from the early 1470s include a fresco of saints in Sant'Andrea in Cercina, the small town where the Ghirlandaio family had a farm;⁶¹ and two fresco fragments now in the United States, the Metropolitan Museum of Art's *St. Christopher* and the Fogg Museum's *Virgin Annunciate*.⁶²

Around the middle of the 1470s, Ghirlandaio embarked on his first major paintings, frescoes for the Chapel of Santa Fina in the Collegiata of San Gimignano and for the Biblioteca Latina in the Vatican in Rome. While the Vatican Library frescoes (fig. 39), depicting the Doctors of the Church and classical philosophers, are hardly Ghirlandaio's most sophisticated or notable works, they show that the artist's reputation was high enough at the beginning of his independent career to merit a papal commission.⁶³ The Santa Fina murals (fig. 40), on the other hand, show early Ghirlandaio at his best, and are marked by naturalistic coloring, striking portraits of

⁶⁰ *Virgin in Adoration* ("Woodward Virgin") (c. 1470), tempera on panel, private collection, Milan; *Virgin and Child* (c. 1470), tempera on panel transferred to hardboard, National Gallery of Art, Washington. Catalog entries are in Ibid. 243 and 246.

⁶¹ *Sts. Jerome, Barbara, and Anthony Abbot* (c. 1472-73), fresco, Pieve di Sant'Andrea, Cercina (Florence). The catalog entry is Ibid. 195-96.

⁶² *St. Christopher and the Infant Christ* (c. 1472), fresco transferred to canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City; *The Virgin Annunciate* (c. 1473), fresco transferred to canvas, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Catalog entries are in Ibid. 196-197.

⁶³ Ibid. 197-202.

San Gimignano citizens, and an inventive sense of narrative.⁶⁴ Ghirlandaio continued to travel for commissions in the latter part of the 1470s, painting, in 1476, a fresco of the Last Supper in the Badia di Passignano,⁶⁵ and his first altarpieces, for the Gesuati in Pisa (c. 1478-79: figs. 1 and 2) and in Lucca's cathedral (c. 1480: fig. 3).

The 1480s were a decade of intense activity and success for Ghirlandaio, both personally and professionally. In 1480, after years of itinerant travel, he returned to Florence and married the prosperous Costanza (1461-86); his sons Bartolomeo (born 1481) and Ridolfo (1483-1561) were born soon afterwards.⁶⁶ Ghirlandaio quickly gained prestigious commissions in Florence: more frescoes in Ognissanti;⁶⁷ an altarpiece (fig. 4) and mural in San Marco;⁶⁸ and the decoration of the Sassetti Chapel for Medici banker Francesco Sassetti in Santa Trinita (fig. 41).⁶⁹ In 1481, Pope Sixtus IV commissioned Ghirlandaio, as well as Botticelli, Perugino, Cosimo Rosselli, Luca Signorelli, and others, to paint frescoes on the side walls of the newly constructed Sistine Chapel. This important commission not only increased Ghirlandaio's reputation, for it also directly exposed him to the painting practices of his Tuscan and

⁶⁴ Ibid. 203-07; Linda Koch, "The Portrayal of Female Sainthood in Renaissance San Gimignano: Ghirlandaio's Frescoes of Santa Fina's Legend," *Artibus et Historiae* 19, no. 38 (1998): 143-170; Deborah Krohn, "Between Legend, History and Politics: The Santa Fina Chapel in San Gimignano," in Stephen Campbell and Stephen Milner, eds., *Italian Renaissance Cities: Cultural Translation and Artistic Exchange* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004): 246 – 272.

⁶⁵ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 202-03.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 16, 20. Ghirlandaio would have seven children. In addition to Bartolomeo and Ridolfo, he also had two daughters, Antonia and Francesca, with his first wife, Costanza; with his second wife, Antonia Paoli, he had sons Antonio and Paolo, and a daughter, Costanza. Ibid. 387, note 56.

⁶⁷ *St. Jerome in his Study* (1480), fresco, Ognissanti, Florence; and *The Last Supper* (1480), fresco, Ognissanti, Florence. Catalog entries are in Ibid. 213-18.

⁶⁸ The altarpiece is discussed in Chapter 6. The fresco is *The Last Supper* (c. 1481-3), San Marco, Florence; see Ibid. 218-20.

⁶⁹ Discussed in Chapter 6.

Umbrian colleagues. While Ghirlandaio's *Calling of Sts. Peter and Andrew* (fig. 42) is not the most complex of the fifteenth-century Sistine frescoes, it shows the artist beginning to work in the monumental and grand style that would characterize his mature frescoes in Florence's Santa Trinita and Santa Maria Novella.⁷⁰

Upon returning to Florence from Rome in 1482, Ghirlandaio received another significant commission, to paint frescoes in the Sala dei Gigli in Florence's town hall, the Palazzo Vecchio (fig. 43).⁷¹ Ghirlandaio also began working on the Sassetti Chapel in earnest. Here he would create not only one of the most exquisitely frescoed chapels in all of Renaissance art, but also his own masterpiece. Teeming with convincing likenesses of the Sassetti and their close friends, as well as careful depictions of contemporary Florence, Ghirlandaio's Sassetti Chapel is as much a testament to the artist's powers as it is to the contemporary urban cityscape of late fifteenth-century Florence.

After completing the Sassetti Chapel in 1485, Ghirlandaio received the commission to fresco the Tornabuoni Chapel in Florence's Santa Maria Novella (fig. 44).⁷² Commissioned by Giovanni Tornabuoni, a Medici banker and relative, the chapel was both the family's burial chapel and the high altar chapel for the church's Dominican choir. Ghirlandaio and his workshop painted over 20 different murals for this space, and they also designed the three stained glass windows on the chapel's

⁷⁰ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 221-26.

⁷¹ *Sts. Zenobius, Eugenius, and Crescentius; Brutus, Mucius Scaevola, and Camillus; and Decius, Scipio, and Cicero* (1482-83), fresco, Sala dei Gigli, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence; see Ibid. 226-30.

⁷² Besides the success of his Sassetti Chapel frescoes, Ghirlandaio also most likely received the commission from the Tornabuoni because he had previously worked for the family in Rome. In 1477, the artist painted four murals for the burial chapel of Francesca Pitti Tornabuoni in Rome's church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva. The frescoes are, unfortunately, no longer extant. See Ibid. 285.

back wall. Depicting scenes from the lives of the Virgin and St. John the Baptist, the Tornabuoni Chapel frescoes bring Ghirlandaio's predilection for naturalistically-depicted figures and architectural spaces, elegantly-portrayed narrative action, and charming details of everyday life to full fruition. The completed space was truly a triumph for the artist, and today remains his best-known work.

Throughout the 1480s, Ghirlandaio also produced several monumental and important altarpieces. In 1482-1486, he made an altarpiece for the Gesuati at San Giusto in Florence (fig. 5).⁷³ In 1484, the Observant Franciscans of San Girolamo in Narni commissioned Ghirlandaio to make an altarpiece for their high altar (fig. 6).⁷⁴ In addition to his frescoes on the chapel walls, Ghirlandaio also made the altarpiece for the Sassetti Chapel (fig. 7).⁷⁵ His altarpiece for the church of Florence's foundling hospital, the Ospedale degli Innocenti, was created between 1485 and 1489, as he was in the midst of painting the Tornabuoni Chapel (fig. 8). During the late 1480s, Ghirlandaio additionally made panel portraits for the Sassetti, Tornabuoni, and other Florentine patrician families.⁷⁶

⁷³ See Chapter 3.

⁷⁴ See Chapter 3.

⁷⁵ See Chapter 6.

⁷⁶ These include *Francesco Sassetti and his Son Teodoro* (c. 1485), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; *A Young Woman (Sassetti Daughter?)* (c. 1485), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; *Giovanna degli Albizzi Tornabuoni* (c. 1489-90), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid; *An Old Man and his Grandson* (c. 1490), tempera on panel, Musée du Louvre, Paris. See Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 276-80.

Ghirlandaio's Workshop:

Ghirlandaio appears to have had a fully functioning workshop only after his return from Rome in 1482.⁷⁷ Prior to this, he was largely an itinerant artist, and appears to have either rented space in the various towns he worked in through the 1470s and/or to have set up shop *in situ* at the work site. During the early part of his career, Ghirlandaio worked mostly with his brother Davide, who served as both his chief business partner, as well as primary painting assistant; Ghirlandaio hired other painters when needed throughout the 1470s.⁷⁸ By the early 1480s, however, Ghirlandaio had not only returned more or less permanently to Florence, but he had also legally emancipated himself from his father. This process allowed him to take charge of his own finances and to become the official head of his own household.⁷⁹ These factors, combined with his larger artistic output, led to the establishment of a permanent workshop sometime in the early 1480s. It is not known exactly where Ghirlandaio's workshop was in Florence, but it was perhaps near Piazza degli Antinori where Davide had a workshop in the late 1490s.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Ibid. 161.

⁷⁸ Ibid. 155.

⁷⁹ It was typical for sons to legally emancipate themselves from their fathers so that they could legally establish their own households, pay their own taxes, make and manage dowries, draw up wills, and buy and sell land and property. This traditionally happened once a son had come of age, had married, had set up his own profession, and/or the father was either in ill health or effectively retired. For Ghirlandaio, this occurred in 1484 after he had been married for four years and been an independent professional master for at least a decade. Ghirlandaio's first wife's large dowry – 1000 florins at a time when dowries for well-off artisan families were around 300 florins – may also have had something to do with the emancipation; Ghirlandaio would have most likely wanted to manage such a large sum himself. See Ibid. 16-18. Cadogan publishes Ghirlandaio's emancipation document as Document 23, pages 348-50; the original archival notation is Florence, Archivio di Stato, Notarile antecosimiano 16269 (Ser Antonio di Parente, 1481-84), c. 153 recto-161 verso. For the emancipation process more generally, see Thomas Kuehne, *Emancipation in Late Medieval Florence* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1982).

⁸⁰ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 18.

Wherever Ghirlandaio's shop was, it appears to have been a well-organized, efficient, and profitable establishment. Ghirlandaio's income increased steadily through the 1480s and 1490s, and payment records show that Ghirlandaio's shop largely completed works on time and to the client's satisfaction.⁸¹ Vasari characterized Ghirlandaio's workshop as a place of hard work and prosperity, asserting that, "Ghirlandaio was so much a friend of working and of satisfying everyone that he commanded his assistants to accept any work that was brought to his shop."⁸² Whether or not Vasari's estimation of the artist's work ethic is true, Ghirlandaio certainly would have needed to be a well-ordered and disciplined master in order to successfully take on and complete the large number of works his shop produced in the 1480s and early 1490s.

Ghirlandaio typically purchased materials and made preliminary compositional drawings immediately after receiving a commission.⁸³ He then systematically planned the work by making a series of drawings: first, basic compositional sketches; then finer studies of details; and finally, as in a *modello*, whole compositional drawings with details intact.⁸⁴ Using these drawings, Davide and assistants would then outline the basic composition and figures of the work on the

⁸¹ Ibid. 20-21; for various payment records, see Ibid. 341-343, 344-347, 351-359, 362-369 (Docs. 9-12, 15-17, 19-20, 26, 29-32, 37-38).

⁸² "E tanto fu amico del lavorare e di soddisfare ad ognuno, che egli aveva commesso a' garzoni, che e' si accettasse qualunque lavoro che capitasse a bottega..." Vasari III: 269-270.

⁸³ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 154.

⁸⁴ For frescoes, this would also include cartoons at the final stages. Charles de Tolnay, *History and Technique of Old Master Drawings: A Handbook* (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1983), 19-21; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 125, 144. See also Carmen Bambach, *Drawing and Painting in the Italian Renaissance Workshop: Theory and Practice, 1300-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

panel or wall. As in most Renaissance workshops, Ghirlandaio then completed the painting, paying particular attention to the physiognomy of any figures, the modeling of drapery, and the rendering of particular textures such as fabric, glass, or metal.⁸⁵ Throughout the painting process, Davide collected and dealt with all payments and financial transactions.⁸⁶

While this working procedure is more particular to Ghirlandaio's frescoes – large-scale works that would have required extensive planning and preparatory drawings by necessity – Ghirlandaio used a similar method for his panel paintings, and, in particular, for his altarpieces. There are, for instance, several compositional drawings, both highly finished and others less so, for the altarpieces for Narni and Volterra (figs. 45 and 46).⁸⁷ There are also numerous drawings of specific passages of drapery or figural motifs that correspond with several of the altarpieces.⁸⁸ Typical of Renaissance artistic practice, Ghirlandaio likely had Davide and/or his assistants

⁸⁵ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 154.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ These include the *Coronation of the Virgin with Saints and Angels* (pen, brown ink, and brown wash on pink-prepared paper heightened with white; Musée Bonnat, Bayonne); *Coronation of the Virgin with Saints and Angels* (pen and brown ink on cream-prepared paper; Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence); *Coronation of the Virgin with Saints and Angels* (pen, brown ink, and brown wash over black chalk on cream-colored paper; Istituto Nazionale per la Grafica, Rome), all for the Narni altarpiece; and *Christ in Glory with Saints* (pen, brown ink, and brown wash on cream-colored paper; Albertina, Vienna) for the Volterra painting. See Ibid. 288, 298, 304, and 305 for catalog entries on each drawing respectively.

⁸⁸ These include *Drapery Study for a Standing Figure* (brown wash on pink-prepared paper heightened with white; Gabinetto dei Disegni, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence) for the Lorenzo Tornabuoni altarpiece in Cestello; *Drapery Study for a Kneeling Figure* (metalpoint on pink-prepared paper heightened with white; Gabinetto dei Disegni, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence) for the Narni altarpiece; *Seated Virgin and Child* (black wash on grey linen heightened with white; Gabinetto dei Disegni, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence) possibly for the Pisa, Lucca, and San Giusto altarpieces; *Youthful Male Saint (St. Stephen?)* (pen and brown ink over black chalk on cream-colored paper; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City) for the Boni altarpiece in Cestello; and *Drapery for a Seated Figure* (grey and black washes on linen heightened with white; Cabinet des Dessins, Musée du Louvre, Paris) for the San Giusto altarpiece. See Ibid. 296-97, 302 and 303.

prepare his altarpiece panels, just as he would have had them prepare the walls for frescoes. This preparation included sanding the wooden (usually poplar) panel to create a smooth surface for painting; and then applying gesso, a thick, white plaster. Ghirlandaio may then have had these assistants make a compositional under-drawing in charcoal or tempera in order to lay out the basic design of the painting. Unlike many of his frescoes, where Ghirlandaio's direct hand is at times less prominent, most of his altarpieces, with a few exceptions,⁸⁹ were painted entirely by the master's hand.

By the 1480s, when Ghirlandaio had established a permanent workshop, Davide's role had expanded to that of collaborator-partner rather than that of a mere assistant. Visual evidence suggests that Davide completed numerous commissions for the Ghirlandaio shop by himself, and he also began to create works of his own – mostly mosaics and panel paintings – as an independent master.⁹⁰ Other assistants and collaborators in the Ghirlandaio workshop of the 1480s and early 1490s include Sebastiano Mainardi (1460-1513), a painter from San Gimignano who would marry Ghirlandaio's sister, Alessandra; Bartolomeo di Giovanni (active late 1470s-1501), an independent master who was often contracted by Ghirlandaio to paint the predellas of his altarpieces; Ghirlandaio's younger brother, Benedetto, who only worked in the Ghirlandaio shop in the 1490s after his return from a long sojourn in France; and, most famously, the young Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564), who spent approximately three years as an apprentice in Ghirlandaio's shop between 1487 and

⁸⁹ See Appendix A.

⁹⁰ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 155-160; see also Appendix A.

1490.⁹¹ In addition, Vasari named Francesco Granacci, Niccolò Cieco, Jacopo del Tedesco, Jacopo dell'Indaco, Baldino Baldinelli, and "other masters, all Florentine," as Ghirlandaio's "disciples."⁹²

The scholarship on Ghirlandaio's workshop has largely concentrated on connoisseurial investigations.⁹³ As Cadogan rightly contends, however, these studies tend to ignore the corporate nature of Renaissance art production and the importance for apprentices to consistently and effectively imitate the master's style.⁹⁴ The lack of convincing identifications for assistants' hands in Ghirlandaio's works, despite scholarly attention, is thus an indication of the success of Ghirlandaio's workshop and his skills as an instructor. While this dissertation focuses on Ghirlandaio's largely

⁹¹ Kecks, *Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei*, 122-131; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 160-171. See also Annamaria Bernacchioni, ed., *Ghirlandaio: Una famiglia di pittori del Rinascimento tra Firenze e Scandicci* (Florence: Edizioni Polistampa, 2010); and Everett Fahy, *Some Followers of Domenico Ghirlandajo* (New York: Garland, 1976). For Bartolomeo di Giovanni, see Bernard Berenson, "Alunno di Domenico," *The Burlington Magazine* 1 (1903): 1-20; Everett Fahy, "Bartolommeo di Giovanni Reconsidered," *Apollo* 97 (1973): 462-69; and Nicoletta Pons, ed., *Bartolomeo di Giovanni: Associate of Ghirlandaio and Botticelli* (Florence: Pagliai Polistampa, 2004). For Ghirlandaio and Michelangelo, see Everett Fahy, "Ghirlandaio and Michelangelo," in *Studies in Late Medieval and Renaissance Painting in Honor of Millard Meiss*, eds. Irving Lavin and John Plummer, 2 vols. (New York: New York University Press, 1977): vol. I: 152-57; Jean Cadogan, "Michelangelo in the Workshop of Domenico Ghirlandaio," *The Burlington Magazine* 135, no. 1078 (January 1993): 30-31; Artur Rosenauer, "Ghirlandaio e Michelangelo: Problemi di bottega e metodi di lavoro," in *Michelangelo: La cappella sistina: Atti del convegno internazionale*, ed. Kathleen Weil-Garris Brandt (Novara: Istituto Geografico De Agostini, 1996): 115-117; and Paul Barolsky, "Michelangelo, Ghirlandaio, and the Artifice of Biography," *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 31, no. 2 (Winter 2012): 31-32.

⁹² "Restarono suoi discepoli Davide e Benedetto Ghirlandai, Bastiano Mainardi da San Gimignano, e Michelangelo Buonarroti fiorentino, Francesco Granaccio, Niccolò Cieco, Jacopo del Tedesco, Jacopo dell'Indaco, Baldino Baldinelli, e altri maestri, tutti fiorentini." Vasari III: 277.

⁹³ This is particularly true in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century literature on the artist; see Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 401, note 3 for an extensive listing of such texts. See also Berenson, "Alunno di Domenico;" Paul Küppers, *Die Tafelbilder des Domenico Ghirlandajo* (Strassburg: J.H. Heitz, 1916); Fahy, *Some Followers of Domenico Ghirlandajo*; and Artur Rosenauer, "Domenico Ghirlandaio e bottega: Organizzazione del lavoro per il ciclo di affreschi a S. Maria Novella," in *Tecnica e stile: Esempi di pittura murale del rinascimento italiano*, eds. Eve Borsook and Fiorella Superbi Gioffredi, 2 vols. (Milan: Silvana, 1986): vol 1: 25-30.

⁹⁴ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 153. For the corporate nature of the Italian Renaissance workshop, see note 21.

autograph altarpieces, it should be stated unequivocally that all of Ghirlandaio's paintings, as with most Renaissance paintings, in general, were ultimately collaborative creations of the master and his assistants.

Besides Ghirlandaio's reputation as an efficient, effective, and hard-working manager, the workshop's success and status were strengthened by other factors. Ghirlandaio appears to have been, by all contemporary accounts, a kind and generous master. Vasari, for example, detailed the encouragement and care that Michelangelo received under Ghirlandaio's tutelage,⁹⁵ as well as the "experience" that fellow apprentice Francesco Granacci received in the Ghirlandaio shop.⁹⁶ Patrons also seem to have viewed Ghirlandaio as easy to work with and accommodating. Giovanni Tornabuoni, Ghirlandaio's patron in Santa Maria Novella, was, for instance, notoriously controlling and exacting; his contract with Ghirlandaio for his chapel is famously precise in its specifications for subjects and style, and for requiring Ghirlandaio to submit presentation drawings to Tornabuoni before any painting.⁹⁷ A more temperamental artist, such as Leonardo da Vinci, would certainly have balked or simply failed at such stipulations, but Ghirlandaio seems to have thrived under the arrangement, completing the frescoes more or less on time and subsequently

⁹⁵ Vasari VII: 137-141; see also Barolsky, "Michelangelo, Ghirlandaio, and the Artifice of Biography;" and Cadogan, "Michelangelo in the Workshop of Domenico Ghirlandaio."

⁹⁶ Vasari V: 340.

⁹⁷ First published by Gaetano Milanesi in 1887, the contract is still preserved in Florence's Archivio di Stato as Notarile antecosimiano 13186, Ser Jacopo di Martino da Firenze, 1481-87, cc. 159 r.-160 r. It is published in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 350-351 as document 25, and an abridged English translation of it is in David Chambers, *Patrons and Artists in the Italian Renaissance* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971), 172-75 (document 107).

receiving further commissions from Tornabuoni and his family.⁹⁸ Ghirlandaio would have to have been an excellent manager to successfully work under Tornabuoni's strict instructions while completing his other numerous commissions during the late 1480s.

Ghirlandaio's Personality: Piety, Identity, and Reputation

Unlike artists such as Leonardo da Vinci or Michelangelo, who left behind extensive personal records in the form of notebooks, poems, and letters, nothing to date survives of Ghirlandaio's own thoughts, words, or beliefs. Documentary and visual evidence can, however, give some insights, however fragmentary and imprecise, into the mind, faith, and personal identity of the artist. Ghirlandaio appears, first and foremost, to have been an actively pious man. In an age and place where Christian faith might seem unremarkable, Ghirlandaio went beyond traditional religious practices by becoming actively involved in a particularly devout confraternity. As Cadogan first delineated, the artist and his family were members of the Compagnia di San Paolo, "an especially religious"⁹⁹ flagellant confraternity that modeled its rituals after those of the Observant religious orders.¹⁰⁰ Known as a "company of the night," the Compagnia di San Paolo held its meetings each week from Saturday evening until Sunday morning.¹⁰¹ At such gatherings, members dressed in hooded robes for anonymity, practiced self-flagellation as a group,

⁹⁸ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 239; O'Malley, *Painting Under Pressure*, 80.

⁹⁹ John Henderson, *Piety and Charity in Late Medieval Florence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 41-43.

¹⁰⁰ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 18; Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 41.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

confessed their sins, and then observed the Divine Office through the night just as ordained monks and friars would.¹⁰² Company statutes required members to pray daily, fast regularly, go to confession at their parish churches, and attend members' memorial Masses and funerals, as well as special society meetings on feast days.¹⁰³ Diverse in terms of age, residency within the city, and social class, San Paolo counted among its most noteworthy members Lorenzo "the Magnificent" de' Medici, Filippino Lippi, illuminator Francesco d'Antonio, and Sebastiano Mainardi.¹⁰⁴

Emphasizing, in the words of Ronald Weissman, "the exaltation of divinity, but also the penitential denigration of humanity,"¹⁰⁵ the Compagnia di San Paolo and Florence's three other "companies of the night" saw flagellation and other related practices as physical, tangible acts of contrition. They also viewed them as means by which to share in Christ's suffering and, ultimately, his salvation.¹⁰⁶ Unlike *laudesi* confraternities that met to sing songs of praise to God, the Virgin, and the saints, or more traditional flagellant confraternities that held shorter meetings and often participated publically in city-wide processions, the Compagnia di San Paolo and the other "companies of the night" required greater, and arguably more intense,

¹⁰² Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 133.

¹⁰³ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 19.

¹⁰⁴ Ronald Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Academic Press, 1982), 111; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 19. Lorenzo de' Medici was actively involved in San Paolo, serving as its head for four separate years and, in 1472, even going so far as to renounce all of his other confraternity memberships in favor of San Paolo. See Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 98, note 171.

¹⁰⁵ Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 50.

¹⁰⁶ Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 114.

participation in their activities.¹⁰⁷ While it is impossible to gauge the individual beliefs and feelings of San Paolo members such as Ghirlandaio, certainly even cursory attendance at their long meetings would have required greater commitment than membership in other kinds of religious organizations. As John Henderson notes, “the growing numbers of confraternities as rigorous in their devotion as the penitential companies points to a commitment of time beyond mere interest.”¹⁰⁸

Ghirlandaio, along with Davide, Benedetto, and their father, Tommaso, attended San Paolo meetings regularly while in Florence.¹⁰⁹ Ghirlandaio also served, in January and May of 1480, as “*infermiere*,” a leadership position that required visiting sick members and administering the sacraments to them, as well as aiding invalid members in any financial or personal affairs.¹¹⁰ Along with Davide, he also either helped fund or painted an image of St. Catherine of Siena for the confraternity’s oratory.¹¹¹ While we cannot know Ghirlandaio’s true feelings about the confraternity, nor his religious beliefs, in general, his participation in San Paolo suggests that he was an especially devoted Christian. It also seems reasonable to

¹⁰⁷ Benedetto Varchi, writing in the 1520s, for instance, called the “companies of the night” “more secret and devout than the others.” Benedetto Varchi, *Storia Fiorentina*, ed. Lelio Arbib, 3 vols. (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2003), vol II: 98-100. Cf. Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 3.

¹⁰⁸ Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 415.

¹⁰⁹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 18, 20. Tommaso was an especially involved member, serving in every position, including a term as “*governatore*,” or head of the confraternity, throughout his life.

¹¹⁰ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 20; Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 130.

¹¹¹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 20. The citation for the St. Catherine painting is ambiguous in terms of whether Ghirlandaio and Davide made the painting, helped pay for it, or simply had it in their possession: “Tra i benefattori della compagnia Ambrogio di Ser Baldese merciaio donò una sancta caterina da Siena in tutto rilievo. Domenico e David di Tommaso di Currado ha la dipintura di detta sancta caterina.” Florence, Archivio di Stato, Compagnie religiose soppresse da P. Leopoldo, 1591, no. 34, c. 199 verso; cf. Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 388, note 92.

imagine that Ghirlandaio, as a member of San Paolo, was more attuned to themes of sin, repentance, and personal salvation through his participation in the sodality's rituals. His election – twice – as *infermiere* indicates not only Ghirlandaio's inclination towards good works, but also his fellow member's estimation of his abilities as a comforting and helpful presence for members in need.

Ghirlandaio's self-portraits additionally seem to attest to the artist's piety, and to his identity as a family man and an artist of skill and stature. Ghirlandaio made three self-portraits: two within his frescoes at Santa Trinita and Santa Maria Novella, and the other in his altarpiece for the Ospedale degli Innocenti. At Santa Trinita, Ghirlandaio included a portrait of himself in the mural of the *Resurrection of the Roman Notary's Son*; the artist is standing to the very right edge of the painting, staring out confidently at the viewer and firmly placing his right hand on his hip (fig. 9). Behind him is a portrait of either his brother Davide or his assistant and brother-in-law Sebastiano Mainardi. In the Innocenti altarpiece, Ghirlandaio depicted only his head, peeking out behind the youngest, golden-haired Magi on the left (fig. 8). Again looking directly at the viewer, Ghirlandaio is framed by the edge of St. John the Baptist's cross, next to a portrait of the painting's patron, Prior Francesco di Giovanni Tesori.¹¹² At Santa Maria Novella, Ghirlandaio included his portrait in the scene of the *Expulsion of Joachim from the Temple* (fig. 10). Here, his figure again gazes out at the viewer, his right hand on his hip, and with perhaps Davide and his father, Tommaso, behind him. In this portrait, however, the artist also showed his left arm

¹¹² Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 260-261.

across his chest, pointing to himself in a gesture that at once boldly calls for the viewer's attention and suggests the artist as the creator of the murals.

Ghirlandaio's self-portraits certainly are in keeping with contemporary notions of artistic identity.¹¹³ Style additionally played a role in Ghirlandaio's self-portraits. Alberti instructed painters to include a figure that directly addresses the viewer, thereby pulling that beholder, as it were, into the picture, and to include portraits taken from "Nature" to enhance the "power and attraction" of the work.¹¹⁴ Ghirlandaio's self-portraits obey both of these prescriptions, with the artist depicting himself from "Nature," and, in the case of the Santa Maria Novella self-portrait, gesturing to the viewer to pay attention to both him and his painting.

In each of these self-portraits, however, Ghirlandaio depicts himself not just as an artist, but, rather, as a witness to the sacred narrative that unfolds around him. Like the other portraits of patrons and Florentine citizens that surround him in these paintings, Ghirlandaio is not an active participant in the sacred events; he stands, albeit assertively, to the side – as an observer. Scholars have seen such portraits as memorials to personal and family identity; as votive offerings that perpetually enshrine the subject's devotion; and as dramatic details that both enliven the scene's

¹¹³ Joanna Woods-Marsden's *Renaissance Self-Portraiture: The Visual Construction of Identity and the Social Status of the Artist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998) is the best account of artist's self-portraits in the period, but see also Katherine Brown, *The Painter's Reflection: Self-Portraiture in Renaissance Venice, 1458-1625* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 2000); Mary Rogers, ed., *Fashioning Identities in Renaissance Art* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000); and Jodi Cranston, *The Poetics of Portraiture in the Italian Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

¹¹⁴ "...I like there to be someone in the 'historia' who tells the spectators what is going on, and either beckons them with a hand to look, or with a ferocious expression and forbidding glance challenges them not to come near...or points to some danger or remarkable thing in the picture, or by his gestures invites you to laugh or weep with them....We can see how desirable this is in painting when the figure of some well-known person is present in a 'historia'...so great is the power and attraction of something taken from Nature." Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, ed. Martin Kemp, trans. Cecil Grayson (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 77-78, 91.

narrative action and entice the viewer's attention.¹¹⁵ Ghirlandaio's self-portraits correspond with such assessments. The artist certainly memorialized himself for posterity, and possibly his family members, with the inclusion of such portraits in the sacred scenes. As an eyewitness to, but not a participant in, the holy events occurring in the painting, Ghirlandaio in his self-portraits is a humble beholder of the sacred; his presence within the scene at once testifies to his devotion and to the continued efficacy of such sacred stories. His self-portraits also call attention to Ghirlandaio as a confident and rightfully proud artist.

We might also look at Ghirlandaio's self-portraits in light of Patricia Fortini Brown's scholarship on "the eyewitness style" in fifteenth-century Venetian painting.¹¹⁶ Brown argues that the profusion of portrait-witnesses in these paintings functions as a potent testimony to the veracity of the sacred happenings; these portraits also honor the devotion of the individuals portrayed. More significantly, however, the portrait-witnesses act as "intermediaries" between the contemporary viewer and the historical event.¹¹⁷ While Brown's examples are specific to Venice's

¹¹⁵ The scholarship on Renaissance portraiture is vast, but those studies that relate specifically to Ghirlandaio's portraits are: Aby Warburg, "The Art of Portraiture and the Florentine Bourgeoisie. Domenico Ghirlandaio in Santa Trinita: The Portraits of Lorenzo de' Medici and His Household," in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, trans. David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999): 185-221; Eve Borsook and Johannes Offerhaus, *Francesco Sassetti and Ghirlandaio at Santa Trinita, Florence: History and Legend in a Renaissance Chapel* (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1981); Patricia Simon, "Patronage in the Tornabuoni Chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence," in *Patronage, Art, and Society in Renaissance Italy*, eds. Kent and Simons: 221-250; Patricia Rubin, "Domenico Ghirlandaio and the Meaning of History in Fifteenth-Century Florence," in *Domenico Ghirlandaio 1449-1494*, eds. Prinz and Seidel: 97-108; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 87-90; Kecks, *Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei*, 92-99; Michael Rohlmann, *Domenico Ghirlandaio, Künstlerische Konstruktion von Identität im Florenz der Renaissance* (Weimar: VDG, 2003); and Patricia Rubin, *Images and Identity*, 120-130.

¹¹⁶ Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 224.

unique confraternal context, and Ghirlandaio was hardly the first artist to depict himself within larger sacred narratives, such a reading enhances our view of Ghirlandaio and his artistic and personal identity. If we read Ghirlandaio's self-portraits within sacred scenes as intermediaries between the viewer and the holy happenings, we see the artist as comprehending himself as a conduit between the profane, outside the picture, and the divine, contained within the painting that he created. As such, Ghirlandaio's self-portraits show him to be at once a self-assured and confident artist, a pious devotee and witness to the sacred, and a self-appointed mediator between the worldly and the otherworldly.

Such an assessment of Ghirlandaio's personality is in keeping with the few contemporary records that mention or describe him. He was certainly viewed by contemporaries as a talented and capable artist. In a letter of about 1490, the Duke of Milan's agent called him a "good master" whose works have a "good air,"¹¹⁸ while the late fifteenth- to early sixteenth-century anonymous author of the *Libro di Antonio Billi* described Ghirlandaio's work in Santa Maria Novella as "many good figures, very beautiful."¹¹⁹ Raphael's father, Giovanni Santi, included Ghirlandaio in his late-1480s poem about excellent and praiseworthy contemporary artists.¹²⁰ Considering that Santi, a resident of Urbino in Le Marche, may not have seen any of Ghirlandaio's

¹¹⁸ See note 11.

¹¹⁹ "Domenico del Grillandaio dipinse la cappella maggiore in Santa Maria Novella e la tavola, e guastossi la dipintura vecchia fatta per mano dello Orcagna, donde cavò parecchi buoni tratti in fiure molto belle." *Il Libro di Antonio Billi*, ed. Fabio Benedettucci (Rome: De Rubeis, 1991), 98.

¹²⁰ Giovanni Santi, *La vita e le gesta di Federico di Montefeltro, Duca d'Urbino*, ed. Luigi Michellini Tocci, 2 vols. (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1985), vol. II: 668, 673-4.

works in person, his comments show that Ghirlandaio's reputation as an artist of skill and brilliance was well-known throughout central Italy.¹²¹

Vasari was particularly admiring of Ghirlandaio and his works in his chapter on the artist in *Lives of the Artists*. Writing that Ghirlandaio, "who for his virtue and for his greatness and for the multitude of his works may be called one of the principle and most excellent masters of his age," Vasari praised the artist, in particular, for the vividness and lifelikeness of his portraits and figures. Vasari also lauded Ghirlandaio for his technical skills in fresco and for his inspiration from Netherlandish artists.¹²²

Vasari additionally emphasized the artist's affability and work ethic, echoing the agent of the Duke of Milan who described Ghirlandaio as an "expeditious man who gets through much work."¹²³ According to Vasari, Ghirlandaio's frescoes at Santa Maria Novella gave Giovanni Tornabuoni "very great satisfaction and contentment."¹²⁴ Finally, Vasari stressed throughout his account that Ghirlandaio had a special ability to create divinely-inspired works. Vasari contended that Ghirlandaio's paintings inspired religious devotion first and foremost through their realism and beauty; the heads of the shepherds in the Sassetti altarpiece, for instance, are "something divine," while "one recognizes the honest beauty and grace that art

¹²¹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 2; O'Malley, *Painting Under Pressure*, 10-11.

¹²² "Domenico di Tommaso del Ghirlandaio, il quale per la virtù e per la grandezza e per la moltitudine delle opera si può dire uno de' principali e più eccellenti maestri dell'età sua..." Vasari II: 253-254; for descriptions of the naturalism of Ghirlandaio's portraits and his inspiration from Northern European painting, see Vasari II: 259 and 257 respectively.

¹²³ See note 11.

¹²⁴ "...con grandissima soddisfazione e contento di esso Giovanni [Tornabuoni]..." Vasari II: 261.

can give in the Mother of the Son of God” in the Innocenti altarpiece.¹²⁵ But more than that, according to Vasari, Ghirlandaio’s paintings encourage proper religious belief and behavior, suggesting that the artist and his art were active agents in promoting piety. The fresco of the “Baptism of Christ” in Santa Maria Novella, for example, shows the Baptist with such “reverence” that the painting inspires “the faith that one should have in such a Sacrament.”¹²⁶

Ghirlandaio’s Final Works: The 1490s and Death:

Ghirlandaio’s string of professional and personal successes continued in the early 1490s. The artist bought two large plots of land in the countryside, near Prato and Viciano, and he married for a second time after the death of his first wife in 1486. Ghirlandaio’s second wife, Antonio di Ser Paolo di Simone Paoli, gave birth to three more children: two sons and a daughter.¹²⁷ Around 1490, Ghirlandaio received the commission to paint the high altarpiece of Santa Maria Novella from the heirs of Giovanni Tornabuoni (fig. 11).¹²⁸ As in the Sassetti Chapel, where he painted both the walls and the altarpiece of the space, Ghirlandaio’s Santa Maria Novella altarpiece

¹²⁵ “...e fece alcune teste di pastori, che sono tenute cosa divina.” Vasari II: 257; “...nella testa della Nostra Donna si conosce quella onesta bellezza e grazia, che nella madre del Figliuol di Dio può esser fatta dall’arte...” Vasari II: 258.

¹²⁶ “...si vede San Giovanni battezzare Cristo; nella reverenza del quale mostrò interamente la fede che si debbe avere a Sacramento tale...” Vasari II: 267-68.

The positivity of Vasari’s assessment of Ghirlandaio was likely influenced by the historian’s friendship with Ghirlandaio’s son, Ridolfo, as much as it was by Vasari’s hope to ingratiate himself with Ghirlandaio’s most famous student, Michelangelo. By writing such a glowing assessment of Ghirlandaio, Vasari suggested the prestige of Michelangelo’s artistic lineage. See Barolsky, “Michelangelo, Ghirlandaio, and the Artifice of Biography;” and Patricia Rubin, *Giorgio Vasari: Art and History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

¹²⁷ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 18, 20.

¹²⁸ See Chapter 6.

completed the chapel's visual program. In 1491, Lorenzo Tornabuoni, Giovanni's son and heir, also commissioned Ghirlandaio to make an altarpiece for his deceased wife's memorial chapel in the Florentine church of Cestello (fig. 12).¹²⁹

Ghirlandaio made other altarpieces in the last years of his life, including those for the Camaldolesi in Volterra (fig. 13) and for Florentine silk merchant Stefano Boni (fig. 14).¹³⁰ The artist also received a prestigious commission for an altarpiece from the noble Malatesta family in Rimini around 1493, but the altarpiece was entirely executed by Davide and his workshop after the artist's death.¹³¹ Ghirlandaio also worked extensively in Pisa during this period, for the Opera of the city's cathedral. Well-preserved payment records indicate that Ghirlandaio made a pair of organ shutters; painted the façade of the Cappella Maggiore; repaired mosaics; and perhaps painted other murals in Pisa's cathedral.¹³² Except for a few heavily restored fragments of the façade frescoes, however, all of these works are unfortunately no longer extant.¹³³

According to the account books of the Compagnia di San Paolo, Ghirlandaio died from the plague on the morning of January 11, 1494, aged 45.¹³⁴ Ghirlandaio appears to have been widely mourned, as the same account book describes him as a “man of importance in every part of his quality and widely mourned....our dear

¹²⁹ See Chapter 6.

¹³⁰ For the Volterra altarpiece, see Chapter 3. For the Boni painting, see Chapter 6.

¹³¹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 272.

¹³² Ibid. 287.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid. 21.

brother.”¹³⁵ Davide immediately became the legal guardian of Ghirlandaio’s children, and also took over the artist’s workshop. Of Ghirlandaio’s children, Ridolfo became an established and important painter in sixteenth-century Florence, and Bartolomeo became a monk and eventually prior at Santa Maria degli Angeli, a Camaldolese community in Florence.¹³⁶

Had Ghirlandaio lived, he would have seen a Florence that would drastically change politically, socially, and artistically in the years to come. The late 1490s, in particular, were a period of tumultuous religious and political change, with the rise and fall of Savonarola, the expulsion of the Medici, and the brief return of the Florentine Republic before the establishment of the Medici Grand Duchy in 1537. Ghirlandaio’s career, spanning almost the entire last quarter of the fifteenth century, thus stands at the chronological, but also arguably the visual, apex of the first flowering of the Italian Renaissance in the fifteenth century.

¹³⁵ “Funne grandissimo danno perchè era huomo di chonto per ogni parte di suo qualità e dolse molto gieneralmente...Ricordo come adì 25 di gennaio 1493 [1494] si fece l’ufficio de morti della chompagnia per l’anima di domenicho di tomaso di churado nostro charo fratello al quale iddio abbia fatto verace perdono.” Florence, Archivio di Stato, Compagnie religiose soppresse da P. Leopoldo, 1594 (Compagnia di San Paolo), no. 42, *Fratelli morti della Compagnia di San Paolo*, c. 42 verso, no. 130 and Florence, Archivio di Stato, Compagnie religiose soppresse da P. Leopoldo, 1582 (Compagnia di San Paolo), Partiti e ricordi, no. 8, c. 277. Published in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 340, document 7.

¹³⁶ Ibid. 20. For Ridolfo Ghirlandaio, see Bernacchioni; David Franklin, *Painting in Renaissance Florence, 1500-1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); and Heidi Hornik, *Michele Tosini and the Ghirlandaio Workshop in Cinquecento Florence* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2009).

Chapter 2: The Italian Renaissance Altarpiece Reconsidered

On July 9, 1311, in the city of Siena, Duccio di Buoninsegna's magnificent altarpiece of the *Maestà*,¹³⁷ painted for the high altar of the city's cathedral, was finally finished (fig. 15). In honor of this occasion, the city organized a public procession, complete with trumpeters, horn players, and drummers, to accompany the image from Duccio's workshop, just outside the city, to the cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta. An anonymous Sienese chronicler recalled the great parade in his account of 1351:

And then they took it to the cathedral from Duccio's workshop, and the bishop ordered a great and devoted company of priests and friars with solemn procession, accompanied by the lords of the *Nove* and all the officials of the community, and all the people, pressed up to the said panel, and holding lighted lamps in their hands; and behind it were women and children with much devotion...and throughout Siena they gave many alms to the poor people, with many speeches and prayers to God and to his mother.¹³⁸

Almost two centuries later, around 1500, Leonardo da Vinci made a design for the altarpiece of the high altar of Florence's church of Santissima Annunziata. While

¹³⁷ Duccio, *Maestà* (1308-11), tempera and gold on panel, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena.

¹³⁸ "E in quello dì che si portò al Duomo, si serrorò le buttighe e ordinò el Vescovo una magna e divota compagnia di preti e frati con una solenne pocisione, acompagnata da' signori Nove e tutti e gli Uffiziali del Comuno e tutti e popolari e di mano in mano tutti e più degni erano apresso a la detta Tavola co' lumi accesi in mano; e poi erano di dietro le donne e fanciugli con molta divozione... E tutto quello dì si stette a orazione con molte limosini, le quali si fecero a povere persone, pregando Idio e la sua Madre..." Published in Gaetano Milanesi, *Documenti per la storia dell' arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena: Onorato Porri, 1854-56), vol. I: 169. My translation was aided by that of Henk van Os in his *Sienese Altarpieces* I: 39.

Leonardo's cartoon¹³⁹ (fig. 16) lacked the finish, sparkling gold, and monumentality of Duccio's *Maestà*, reaction to it after it was displayed in Santissima Annunziata was similar. Vasari recounted that:

Finally he made a cartoon with Our Lady and St. Anne, with Christ, which not only amazed all the artisans, but once completed and set up in a room, brought men, women, young and old to see it for two days, as if they were going to a solemn festival, in order to gaze upon the marvels of Leonardo which stupefied the entire populace. For in the simple and beautiful face of the Madonna can all the simplicity and beauty which can properly shed grace upon Christ's mother be seen, since Leonardo wished to show the modesty and humility of a virgin delighted to witness the beauty of her child, who [she] holds him tenderly in her lap...Such considerations had their origin in Leonardo's intellect and genius.¹⁴⁰

Certainly the responses to Duccio's and Leonardo's altarpieces are signs of the elevated status of the artist from the fourteenth to the early sixteenth centuries. Duccio's *Maestà* was paraded through the streets of Siena in a similar manner to that

¹³⁹ The cartoon was likely similar to Leonardo's *The Virgin and Child with Sts. Anne and John the Baptist* (c. 1500), black chalk and touches of white chalk on brownish paper mounted on canvas, National Gallery, London.

¹⁴⁰ "Finalmente fece un cartone dentrovi una Nostra Donna et una S. Anna, con un Cristo, la quale non pure fece maravigliare tutti gl'artefici, ma finita ch'ella fu, nella stanza durarono due giorni d'andare a vederla gl'uomini e le donne, i giovani et i vecchi, come si va a le feste solenni, per veder le maraviglie di Lionardo, che fecero stupire tutto quel popolo. Perché si vedeva nel viso di quella Nostra Donna, tutto quello che di semplice e di bello, può con semplicità e bellezza dare grazia a una madre di Cristo; volendo mostrare quella modestia e quella umiltà, che in una vergine contentissima d'allegrezza del vedere la bellezza del suo figliuolo, che con tenerezza sosteneva in grembo..." Vasari IV: 38. My translation was aided by that of Peter Bondanella and Julia Conaway Bondanella in Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 293.

of miracle-working images.¹⁴¹ Leonardo's drawing for an altarpiece, on the other hand, was admired as a work of art, and even seemingly set up in its own "gallery" for viewing and contemplation. Closer inspection of the two accounts reveals, however, that the fourteenth- and sixteenth-century responses were not so divergent. The Sienese chronicler was careful, for instance, to identify the *Maestà* as being a creation of Duccio. According to Vasari, the response to Leonardo's cartoon had as much to do with the artist's pious evocation of the grace, humility, and modesty of the Madonna as it did with Leonardo's reputation and his general "intellect and genius." And while the fanfare surrounding the two altarpieces was in many ways exceptional, both works typify the importance and effect of altarpieces in the long Renaissance from the late thirteenth to the mid sixteenth centuries. Duccio's altarpiece was, for instance, honored by both the city's clergy and by its political leaders, while Leonardo's amazed artisans and ordinary men and women of all ages. Both altarpieces inspired devotion and solemnity. In Duccio's case, his altarpiece caused acts of charity, in the giving of alms to the poor, and acts of piety, in the "speeches and prayers" made to God and the Virgin. In other words, both altarpieces were dynamic: their appearances caused ritual, religious, and civic action, and their creation occasioned celebration, wonder, and written commemoration.

This chapter examines the dynamics of the Renaissance altarpiece as an object of both sacred and artistic significance. It considers the Renaissance altarpiece as a

¹⁴¹ Such behavior was common for miraculous images, as in Florence's famed Virgin of Impruneta, which Richard Trexler first analyzed in his "Florentine Religious Experience: The Sacred Image," in *Church and Community 1200-1600: Studies in the History of Florence and New Spain* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1988): 37-74. For miraculous images in the Renaissance more generally, see Megan Holmes, *The Miraculous Image in Renaissance Florence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

special kind of Christian image, with its own specific visual, material, and sacred qualities and functions – functions that artists, patrons, and beholders alike understood and cultivated. In examining fifteenth-century altarpieces such as Ghirlandaio's in particular, this chapter examines the possibilities for altarpieces in articulating Christian mysteries, as much as it also explores the role artists played in visualizing those mysteries. This dissertation does not suggest that Renaissance artists such as Ghirlandaio created altarpieces as direct visual forms of theological argumentation. But by investigating the particular functions, viewing conditions, patronage, and iconography of Renaissance altarpieces such as Ghirlandaio's, this study fundamentally argues for the discursive and rhetorical operations of such art objects.¹⁴²

The Altarpiece and its Setting:

Since the foundations of Christian worship in late antiquity, the altar has long been the focal point of the Roman Catholic liturgy, the rites, observances, and practices of public worship. As a traditional site of sacrifice in many religious cultures, the altar for Christians offered a range of interconnected ritual and symbolic significances. It harkened back to the traditional Jewish custom of offering animal sacrifices to God as both thanksgiving and atonement for sins. For the Christian, Christ himself had become the ultimate sacrifice in his death on the cross for the salvation of believers. Since early Christians often worshipped at the tombs of martyrs and other holy figures, the altar also recalled the physical sepulchers of these saints, as much as it also reflected the continuing power and presence of those figures

¹⁴² This study focuses in particular on painted altarpieces. For a consideration of sculpted altarpieces, see Lorenzo Buonanno, "Stone Mediators: Sculpted Altarpieces in Early Renaissance Venice" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2014).

through the form of the altar itself and the internment of relics within it. Finally, as an actual table or a table-like structure, the altar was a recreation of the site of the Last Supper, the final meal Christ shared with the apostles at which he instituted the sacrament of the Eucharist. As the Eucharistic meal was reenacted at each Catholic Mass, making Christ again physically present for the consumption of the faithful, the altar was (and is) the site of the continuing presence of the divine.¹⁴³

Given the liturgical and sacramental primacy of the altar, it is not surprising that it has long been adorned. From at least the fourth century, the altar was covered on all sides by fine textiles; these cloths were of the best fabrics, and were often embroidered with Biblical inscriptions and/or figural and floral imagery.¹⁴⁴ As in painted and sculpted altarpieces, this imagery was often specific to the dedication of the church and altar and to the patron of the cloth. The lavish silk, gold, and silver-thread altar cloth of Santa Maria Novella's high altar, embroidered with the date "1336" and the name of its creator, Jacopo di Cambio, shows, for example, scenes from the life of the Virgin, the patron saint of the church.¹⁴⁵ Altars themselves were carved with decorative designs or with figural reliefs; ornamented with costly gems; or covered around the sides with elaborate *antependia*, rectangular sculpted or painted

¹⁴³ Joseph Braun's *Der christliche Altar in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 2 vols. (Munich: Karl Widmann, 1924) remains the essential study of the altar. See also J.G. Davies, ed., *A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1972), 4-6; Justin Kroesen and Victor Schmidt, "Introduction," in *The Altar and its Environment 1150-1400*, eds. Kroesen and Schmidt: 1-10, 1; and Sible de Blaauw, "Altar Imagery in Italy before the Altarpiece," in *The Altar and its Environment 1150-1400*, eds. Kroesen and Schmidt: 47-55, 47-48.

¹⁴⁴ Davies 6; Kroesen and Schmidt 1; Thunø and Sørensen 7.

¹⁴⁵ This cloth is preserved in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence.

altar frontals.¹⁴⁶ The ninth-century gold *repoussé* altar frontal of Milan's Sant' Ambrogio, for instance, is framed by pearls, gems, and enamel, and contains images from the New Testament and of Christ and the apostles (fig. 47).¹⁴⁷ Florence's church of Santo Spirito still preserves several fifteenth-century tempera-on-panel *antependia*, which display painted renderings of fabric and medallions of the *tituli*, or dedications, of the altars.¹⁴⁸

The oldest surviving painted altarpieces, which, unlike *antependia*, hung on or above the altar, date from the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Scholars have traditionally connected the emergence of painted altarpieces to the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215.¹⁴⁹ This council affirmed the doctrine of transubstantiation, the belief that the Eucharistic bread and wine, when consecrated, literally become the physical, tangible body and blood of Christ. Since Christ was now believed to be physically present at the altar, the council stipulated that priests should face this presence from the front of the altar, with their backs to the congregation, as opposed to the traditional sacerdotal orientation of standing behind the altar and looking out towards

¹⁴⁶ Nethersole 21-22; Blaauw 50-52.

¹⁴⁷ A recent study of Milan's so-called "golden altar" is Erik Thunø, "The Golden Altar of Sant' Ambrogio in Milan: Image and Materiality," in *Decorating the Lord's Table*, eds. Thunø and Sørensen: 63-78. See also Cynthia Hahn, "Narrative on the Golden Altar of Sant' Ambrogio in Milan: Presentation and Reception," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 53 (1999): 167-87.

¹⁴⁸ See Luisa Becherucci, ed., *I musei di Santa Croce e di Santo Spirito a Firenze* (Milan: Electa, 1983); and, although it focuses primarily on altarpieces in Santo Spirito, Antonia Fondaras's "Decorating the House of Wisdom: Four Altarpieces from the Church of Santo Spirito in Florence (1485-1500)" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 2011).

¹⁴⁹ Os, *Sienese Altarpieces*, I: 12-13; Julian Gardner, "Altars, Altarpieces, and Art History: Legislation and Usage," in *Italian Altarpieces 1250-1550*, eds. Borsook and Gioffredi: 5-19, 6-7; Goldthwaite 79; Jochen Sander, ed., *Kult Bild: Das Altar- und Andachtsbild von Duccio bis Perugino* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2006), 14; and Nethersole 25-27. While Burckhardt did not name the Fourth Lateran Council explicitly, he discussed its liturgical changes in regard to altarpieces in *The Altarpiece in Renaissance Italy*, 19-21.

the faithful. With the priest now blocking the front of the altar, an altarpiece behind or above the altar thus became at once an indication of the altar itself, as much as it was also an attractive visual focal point for the worshipper.

The effect of the ecclesiastical legislation of the Fourth Lateran Council should be seen as correlative, rather than causative in the emergence of altarpieces. Many priests, for instance, continued to celebrate the Mass *versus populum*, and, as several scholars have asserted, altarpieces in and of themselves were never required for the liturgy of the Mass.¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, as will be discussed presently, many altarpieces, particularly those for high altars, were rarely seen by a large, far-away congregation in need of monumental visual stimulus; rather, altarpieces were primarily beheld by the priests who officiated around them at the altar, and by the gathered clergy in the immediate vicinity of the altar. Nonetheless, as will be argued later in this chapter, transubstantiation and the notion of active divine presence at the altar played a vital role in the apprehension and comprehension of Renaissance altarpieces.

Besides an altar cloth and perhaps an *antependium*, medieval and Renaissance altarpieces were surrounded on the altar by a veritable treasure trove of objects tied to the differing liturgical or festal observances of the day. Canon law from the late twelfth century stipulated that two candles and a cross must always be present on the altar.¹⁵¹ For the Divine Office and the Mass, a copy of the Bible and, more

¹⁵⁰ Gardner, "Altars, Altarpieces, and Art History," 6-9; Ploeg, "How Liturgical is the Medieval Altarpiece?" 103-105 and 115; Williams 346-48.

¹⁵¹ Gardner, "Altars, Altarpieces, and Art History," 7; he specifically cites Innocent III's (1160/61-1216) *De missarum misteriis*.

importantly, a missal, a collection of liturgical prayers and responses, were also usually present on the altar. Various objects that were normally stored in the church's sacristy were brought to the altar for the celebration of the Eucharist. These could include a pyx, a vessel for the Eucharistic host; a monstrance, a decorative container more commonly used in northern Europe to show the consecrated host to the people; a chalice, for the drinking of the Eucharist wine; a cruet, a small pitcher or decanter to hold the unconsecrated wine before it was poured into the chalice; and a paten, a usually circular plate for the consecrated, broken host.¹⁵² Each of these objects, whether an illuminated missal or a gilded pyx, was carefully crafted to honor its sacred purpose and to emphasize the material splendor of the church and the largesse of its donors and parishioners.

As the site of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist and the physical remains of the saints in relics, altars often included elaborate tabernacles and reliquaries. Tabernacles – boxes, cases, or larger sculptural containers for the consecrated elements of the Eucharist – became arguably the most important material objects in the church during the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, as they enclosed the body and/or blood of Christ.¹⁵³ While tabernacles could be placed on altars, they were often separate, sculptural entities with their own special chapels or

¹⁵² Nethersole 21-22 lists each of these objects, while Davies contains entries for each in alphabetical order.

¹⁵³ For Renaissance tabernacles generally, see Hans Caspary, "Das Sakraments-Tabernakel in Italien bis zum Konzil von Trient" (Ph.D. diss., Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, 1964). See also Eve Borsook, "Cults and Imagery at Sant' Ambrogio in Florence," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 25, no. 2 (1981): 147-202, 153-58 and 178-81; and Henk van Os, "Painting in a House of Glass: the Altarpieces of Pienza," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 17, no. 1 (1987): 23-38, 32-34. Caroline Walker Bynum has written provocatively on the increased veneration of the Eucharist in *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

spaces within the church.¹⁵⁴ Reliquaries – containers for relics – were more commonly placed on the altar.¹⁵⁵ In order to be consecrated, altars themselves, from late antiquity on, usually had to contain relics.¹⁵⁶ While traditional Christian practice, in keeping with the aforementioned worship at tombs, usually entailed the internment of the relic(s) within the altar itself, the increasing cult of relics in the Middle Ages necessitated the display of relics for the faithful outside the usually opaque interior of the altar.

Murals, carved wooden choir stalls, mosaics, and stained glass usually surrounded the altar, and often echoed and enhanced the themes and content of the altarpiece (and vice versa).¹⁵⁷ Ghirlandaio's altarpieces in the Sassetti and Tornabuoni chapels, for example, were surrounded by the artist's frescoes. Particularly in the case of the Sassetti Chapel, the frescoes surrounding the altarpiece directly spoke to its form and iconography. Ghirlandaio's stained glass windows also augmented the

¹⁵⁴ This is the case, for instance, in Desiderio da Settignano's famed marble wall tabernacle (1461) in San Lorenzo in Florence. See Andrew Butterfield and Caroline Elam, "Desiderio da Settignano's Tabernacle of the Sacrament," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 43, no. 2/3 (1999): 333-57.

¹⁵⁵ See Cornelison and Montgomery; Erik Thunø, *Image and Relic: Mediating the Sacred in Early Medieval Rome* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2002); and Cynthia Hahn, *Strange Beauty: Issues in the Making and Meaning of Reliquaries, 400-c. 1204* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012).

¹⁵⁶ This was first officially codified in the Council of Epao in 517, which asserted that an altar must be consecrated with chrism, or holy oil that was sometimes mixed with saintly remains and/or relics; Gardner, "Altars, Altarpieces, and Art History," 10, note 24.

¹⁵⁷ The literature on Renaissance murals in churches is vast, but an excellent introduction for the fifteenth century in Tuscany remains Eve Borsook, *The Mural Painters of Tuscany: From Cimabue to Andrea del Sarto* (London: Phaidon, 1960). For intarsia choir stalls, see Luca Trevisan, ed., *Renaissance Intarsia: Masterpieces of Wood Inlay* (New York: Abbeville Press, 2012). For mosaics, a good introduction to those from late antiquity to the High Middle Ages is Joachim Poeschke, *Italian Mosaics, 300-1300*, trans. Russell Stockman (New York: Abbeville Publishers, 2010). Ghirlandaio's mosaics are reviewed in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 281, 286-287. For stained glass, see Alison Luchs, "Stained Glass above Renaissance Altars: Figural Windows in Italian Church Architecture from Brunelleschi to Bramante," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 48 (1985): 177-234; and Virginia Chieffo Raguin, *Stained Glass: Radiant Art* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2013).

Tornabuoni chapels in both Santa Maria Novella and Cestello (later Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi).

The altarpiece itself was surrounded by a carved wooden or stone frame that was often more materially and technically elaborate than the altarpiece.¹⁵⁸ Gabled and gilded wooden frames for multi-paneled altarpieces – polyptychs – were particularly popular and ubiquitous in Italy in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, while marble *all’antica* frames with cornices, columns, and other antique architectural features were the norm from the middle of the fifteenth century onwards. The altarpiece’s frame often cost more than the painting itself, and generally occupied a greater portion of contract negotiations – evidence that the frame’s construction was just as vital to the altarpiece’s completed form as the painting itself.¹⁵⁹ This was the case for Ghirlandaio’s altarpiece for the Ospedale degli Innocenti, for instance, which necessitated separate contracts for the frame and for its gilding.¹⁶⁰ Altarpiece frames not only provided physical support for the painting itself, for they also enclosed the picture plane within a richly decorative border. The frame was also vital to an understanding of the altarpiece as a form of both artistic and sacred potential; it

¹⁵⁸ Timothy Newbery, et al., *Italian Renaissance Frames* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1990) and Christine Powell and Zoe Allen, *Italian Renaissance Frames at the V&A* (Amsterdam: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2010) are both good introductions. The chapter by Ciro Castelli and the large section devoted to “the reconstruction of Sassetta’s Borgo San Sepolcro Altarpiece” in *Sassetta*, ed. Israël, I: 319-335 and 161-209 respectively are highly useful for the consideration of the altarpiece and frame *in situ*, in context. See also Christoph Merzenich, “Carpentry and Painting in Florentine Altarpieces of the First Half of the 15th Century,” *Mededelingen van het Nederlands Instituut te Rome* 55 (1996): 111-141; and Otto Kurz, “A Group of Florentine Drawings for an Altar,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 18, no. 1/2 (January-June 1955): 35-53.

¹⁵⁹ O’Malley, *The Business of Art*, 23-24.

¹⁶⁰ See Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 352-353 (Doc. 26-A) for the fully transcribed contracts.

alerted the viewer to the altarpiece's manufacture while also conditioning the beholder's response to the image as an object of material and sacred culture.

In cataloging and describing the environment of the medieval and Renaissance altar, it should be clear that altarpieces did not exist in material and visual isolation. They were intimately connected to the functions and symbolism of the altar; to the real presence of the divine in the Eucharistic species; to relics and their containers; to the flickering light of candles and the colored illumination of stained glass; and, at times, to the monumental images of the saints in surrounding murals. The splendid materiality of the altar environment suggested the goodness and bounty of God's creation, and it also honored that munificence – and the continued physical manifestation of it in the Eucharist and relics – through visual and material means.

Seeing and Sensing the Altarpiece:

Seeing:

Beholding an altarpiece was both an ordinary, or, conversely, a largely privileged experience in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Vittore Carpaccio's 1512 *Apparition of the Crucifix in the Church of Sant'Antonio di Castello*¹⁶¹ gives a detailed sense of such differing experiences in its lateral view of the nave of a Venetian church (fig. 17). Behind the foreground procession of friars carrying tall crosses into the church are three different altarpieces, set over altars on the right side aisle of the nave; on the left is a contemporary, lunette-shaped altarpiece of a landscape view, with an *all'antica* marble frame, while on the right are two

¹⁶¹ Vittore Carpaccio, *Apparition of the Crucifix in the Church of Sant'Antonio di Castello* (c. 1512), oil on canvas, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice. See Peter Humfrey, *Carpaccio* (London: Chaucer, 2005), 136-137.

seemingly older medieval polyptychs showing the Madonna and Child and various saints. To the left of these altarpieces is a large rood screen, or *tramezzo*, that divided the more public area of the nave from the area of the choir reserved for the church's friars.¹⁶² Sant'Antonio's *tramezzo* is about as tall as half the height of the church, and appears to be made of both wood and stone. Beneath and in front of the *tramezzo* on the left are two other altars; the altar closest to the front of the picture plane appears to have a sculpted altarpiece of the Madonna and Child on it, while the other altar, closest to the wall, might contain a tabernacle, as it shows a small, pentagonal niche on the wall next to the altar.

Carpaccio's painting alerts us to the several different locations and viewing conditions of altarpieces in Renaissance churches. Some altarpieces, like those on the aisle wall of the nave and those underneath the *tramezzo*, were readily visible to an assembled congregation or to a casual visitor. Altarpieces like these were commonly patronized by individuals, families, or smaller religious groups such as confraternities. These individuals and groups endowed Masses at these altars for the salvation of their souls and/or for the commemoration of deceased members. In keeping with their more "public" viewership, altarpieces like these, as well as those in

¹⁶² Marcia Hall was one of the first scholars to probe the implications of rood screens in medieval and Renaissance churches. See her "The Ponte in Santa Maria Novella: The Problem of the Rood Screen in Italy," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 37 (1974): 157-173; Idem., "The Italian Rood Screen: Some Implications for Liturgy and Function," in *Essays Presented to Myron P. Gilmore*, eds. Sergio Bertelli and Gloria Ramakus, 2 vols. (Florence: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1978), vol. II: 213-218; and Idem., "The Tramezzo in the Italian Renaissance, Revisited," in *Thresholds of the Sacred: Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical, and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screens, East and West*, ed. Sharon Gerstel (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2006): 215-232.

somewhat more private chapels, reflected family or group identity, as much as they also honored the piety and taste of the patrons.¹⁶³

The high altar and altarpiece of Sant' Antonio are not, however, visible to the general congregation, the casual visitor, or even the viewer of Carpaccio's painting. Masked by the height and expanse of the *tramezzo*, the high altar and its altarpiece would only have been seen by the friars of the church community. Originally intended to maintain the *clausura* of a monastic community within its public church,¹⁶⁴ *tramezzi* effectively created two or even three different areas of worship within the Renaissance church: that of the sanctuary or choir, where the clergy performed the sacred rituals of the Mass at the high altar, and that of the nave, where the laity heard the celebration from the area in front of the *tramezzo*. Communion was distributed to the faithful in the nave (rather than the contemporary practice of a worshipper coming to the altar), and sermons were preached from the top of the *tramezzo* or at a pulpit in the nave.¹⁶⁵

In some churches, laymen were permitted to attend Mass within the area in front of the choir, behind the *tramezzo*; laymen thus sometimes had visual access to the high altarpiece.¹⁶⁶ Laywomen, on the other hand, almost always attended Mass in

¹⁶³ This idea will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6.

¹⁶⁴ As Hall posits, the rood screen allowed friars and monks to "gain access from the cloister to the choir in the upper nave without leaving the seclusion of the *clausura*;" Hall, "The Italian Rood Screen," 215.

¹⁶⁵ Joseph Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development*, trans. Francis Brumer, 2 vols. (Westminster, Maryland: Christian Classics, 1986), vol. I: 129, 362; John Harper, *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy: From the Tenth to the Eighteenth Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 40; Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 70.

¹⁶⁶ Donal Cooper, "Franciscan Choir Enclosures and the Function of Double-Sided Altarpieces in Pre-Tridentine Umbria," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 64 (2001): 1-54, 47.

the nave (or in a nave balcony), making their viewing of the choir, high altar, and high altarpiece extremely difficult, if not impossible.¹⁶⁷ A tripartite arrangement of clergy, laymen, and laywomen was the case, for instance, in Florence's San Marco, where Ghirlandaio's altarpiece for Dionigi di Chimenti hung over an altar at the nave *tramezzo*.¹⁶⁸ At San Marco, there were two *tramezzi*: one at the middle of the nave, dividing it into an "upper" and "lower" church (in the words of William Hood), and another between the upper church and the choir.¹⁶⁹ Laywomen and laymen were permitted within the lower church, while only laymen had access to the upper church; only the Dominican friars of the church were allowed in the choir.¹⁷⁰

The laity was sometimes allowed access to the high altar and its altarpiece. St. Antoninus (1389-1459), archbishop of Florence in the mid fifteenth century, made allowances for laymen to enter the choir of a church when the friars or monks were not present.¹⁷¹ Women whose families had chapels in the transept or apse were also able to enter the space behind the *tramezzo* at certain times.¹⁷² St. Bernardino of Siena (1380-1444) additionally encouraged the faithful to "go to the high altar when you enter a church, and adore it," suggesting that the laity could enter the choir area on

¹⁶⁷ Ibid; Richard Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Academic Press, 1980), 117.

¹⁶⁸ See Chapter 6.

¹⁶⁹ William Hood, *Fra Angelico at San Marco* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 2-3.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. See also Theresa Flanigan, "Ocular Chastity: Optical Theory, Architectural Barriers, and the Gaze in the Renaissance Church of San Marco in Florence," in *Beyond the Text: Franciscan Art and the Construction of Religion*, eds. Xavier Seubert and Oleg Bychkov (St. Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2013): 40-60. Flanigan 41 and 45 includes some particularly useful digital reconstructions of the plan and optics of San Marco in the fifteenth century.

¹⁷¹ Hall, "The Tramezzo in the Italian Renaissance, Revisited," 219.

¹⁷² Ibid.

some occasions.¹⁷³ At San Marco, the doors between the two *tramezzi* were opened before the Eucharistic host was consecrated and lifted above the officiant's head. Congregants could thus see a view down towards the high altar, the lifted host, and Fra Angelico's famed high altarpiece.¹⁷⁴ But in the majority of cases, high altarpieces were privileged images largely only for the eyes of the clergy. Their visual consumption was primarily by the priests who officiated around them, and by the assembled clergy who worshipped alongside them.

The privilege of viewing altarpieces, especially high altarpieces, was often enhanced by the addition of curtains, covers, and shutters. Usually hung on either side of the altarpiece, or attached to the front and back of the image, such coverings not only protected the altarpiece, for they also enhanced its sacred and liturgical operations.¹⁷⁵ The covering of sacred images, in general, reenacted the Jewish tradition of veiling the Ark of the Covenant, the gold container that held the Ten Commandments and was also the site of God's presence on Earth.¹⁷⁶ Curtains were

¹⁷³ Bernardino of Siena, *Le Prediche Volgari*, ed. C. Cannarozzi, 2 vols. (Pistoia: 1934), vol. I: 212; cf. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, 55.

¹⁷⁴ Fra Angelico, *San Marco Altarpiece* (c. 1438-41), tempera on panel, Museo di San Marco, Florence.

Hood, *Fra Angelico at San Marco*, 2; Flanigan 43-46.

¹⁷⁵ Johann Eberlein, "The Curtain in Raphael's Sistine Madonna," *The Art Bulletin* 65, no. 1 (March 1983): 61-77; Alessandro Nova, "Hangings Curtains, and Shutters of Sixteenth-Century Lombard Altarpieces," in *Italian Altarpieces 1250-1550*, eds. Borsook and Gioffredi: 177-89; Victor Schmidt, "Curtains, Revelatio, and Pictorial Reality in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy," in *Weaving, Veiling, and Dressing: Textiles and their Metaphors in the Late Middle Ages*, eds. Kathryn Rudy and Barbara Baert (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007): 191-213; and Holmes, *The Miraculous Image in Renaissance Florence*, 218-22.

¹⁷⁶ This is outlined in Exodus 25: 22, when God speaks to Moses and tells him, "There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat [on top of the Ark], from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people Israel" (English Standard Version). For a discussion of this association with the veiling of Christian images, see Eberlein 65-69.

also associated with the rending of the temple curtains at Christ's crucifixion; according to Johann Eberlein, the Church Fathers asserted that the rent curtain "signified the revelation of the truth of the new faith,"¹⁷⁷ and thus curtains were more generally symbols of revelation. In addition, since miraculous images were commonly veiled,¹⁷⁸ the covering of an altarpiece likened it to the most potent, active, and holy of images.¹⁷⁹

Some altarpieces, particularly those in northern Europe, also had wings or doors that could enclose relics and/or, depending on the occasion, cover the imagery of the altarpiece.¹⁸⁰ Hugo van der Goes's *Portinari Triptych*,¹⁸¹ for example, which greatly influenced Ghirlandaio's altarpiece for Francesco Sassetti,¹⁸² had two hinged wings on either side of the main panel (fig. 18). These wings, with exterior *grisaille* images of the Annunciation (fig. 19), could be closed over the central panel of the Adoration of the Shepherds. Roger Crum has surmised that these doors were likely closed when Masses were not being said at the altar.¹⁸³ If this hypothesis is correct, then the altarpiece depicted the Annunciation – a moment signaling the Incarnation

¹⁷⁷ Eberlein 68. Eberlein specifically cites St. Bruno Segni (c. 1047-1123) and his *Episcopus Signiensis*.

¹⁷⁸ Holmes, *The Miraculous Image in Renaissance Florence*, 211-255.

¹⁷⁹ Belting is the most important art historical discussion of the practices surrounding miraculous images.

¹⁸⁰ Altarpieces with relics most often occurred north of the Alps, in Germany and the Low Countries. See Ehresmann.

¹⁸¹ Hugo van der Goes, *Adoration of the Shepherds (Portinari Triptych)* (c. 1477-78), oil on panel, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

¹⁸² See Chapter 6.

¹⁸³ Roger Crum, "Facing the Closed Doors to Reception? Speculations on Foreign Exchange, Liturgical Diversity, and the 'Failure' of the Portinari Altarpiece," *Art Journal* 57, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 5-13, 12.

anticipated and expected – when not in “use,” and it showed an image of Christ’s birth – the Incarnation triumphant – when Mass was celebrated. In this sense, the altarpiece actively reflected the liturgy and the notion of divine presence contained at the altar.¹⁸⁴

Sensing:

Medieval and Renaissance altarpieces were beheld in the context of the altar and its attendant liturgies; the altarpiece was principally approached, viewed, and comprehended with and through the liturgy. In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, this liturgy was primarily that of the Mass, the daily celebration of the Eucharist. While scholars have often connected the specific rituals of the Eucharist to altarpieces,¹⁸⁵ several other liturgies occurred at or around the altar and altarpiece in addition to the daily Mass, including the Divine Office, the hourly singing of the Psalms and other hymns; requiem Masses for the dead; and endowed Masses for the souls of the living. The Eucharist itself was additionally only one part of the Mass that occurred at the altar. Other rites of the medieval and early modern Mass that took place at the altar included the *Confiteor*, the general confession of sins at the beginning of the liturgy; the Offertory, the ritual offering of alms, as well as the unconsecrated bread and wine; and intercessory prayers offered by the priest on

¹⁸⁴ More concrete evidence of the use of wings/doors to alter the imagery of the altarpiece depending on the liturgy is offered in Ehresmann 366-69, who documents several fourteenth-century examples from Germany. See also Bernhard Decker, “Reform within the Cult Image: the German Winged Altarpiece before the Reformation,” in *The Altarpiece in the Renaissance*, eds. Kemp and Humfrey: 90-105.

¹⁸⁵ Lane; Sinding-Larsen; Kees van der Ploeg, “Architectural and Liturgical Aspects of Siena Cathedral in the Middle Ages,” in Os, *Sienese Altarpieces, 1215-1460*, I: 107-156, 132-35; and Sander 7.

behalf of the gathered congregation.¹⁸⁶ An altar and altarpiece could also be sites of personal meditation or prayer when the altar was not being actively used for the liturgy.¹⁸⁷

In each of these liturgies and devotions, God's and the saints' presence was invoked, and in the case of the Eucharist, physically made manifest in the bread and wine at the altar. The altar in this sense was a decidedly liminal site, one that the anthropologist Victor Turner first defined as among "entities that are neither here nor there...betwixt and between,"¹⁸⁸ both "transition" and "potential."¹⁸⁹ The liminality of the altar lay in both its earthly and heavenly status; it was a piece of material furniture in an earthly church, but it became a threshold or bridge to the divine through the liturgies of the Mass, the placement of relics, and the Eucharist. It was a site of transformation, passage, and transcendence: from, to, and of the effable and the ineffable and the visible and invisible.

The altar was (and is) also a site where time was collapsed and reordered. In the liturgies of the Mass and the Divine Office, the lives of Christ and the saints, which occurred in the historical past, were recalled through readings from Scripture and the singing of hymns. Their help was called upon in the present in prayers for the lives of the faithful. The future was considered in appeals to Christ's Second Coming

¹⁸⁶ For the *Confiteor*, see Jungmann I: 311-313, 317. For the Offertory, see Davies 282 and 285, and Jungmann II: 6-7. For the prayers, see Jungmann II: 427-464. For the medieval and early modern Mass more generally, see John Bossy, "The Mass as a Social Institution 1200-1700," *Past and Present* 100 (August 1983): 29-61.

¹⁸⁷ Williams 361; Thomas Lentes, "'As far as the eye can see...': Rituals of Gazing in the Late Middle Ages," in *The Mind's Eye*, eds. Hamburger and Bouché: 360-373.

¹⁸⁸ Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969), 95.

¹⁸⁹ Victor and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 3.

and the Final Judgment.¹⁹⁰ Hood has called the Christian liturgy overall “recollection, retrospection, and representation...the exercise of the Church’s corporate memory.”¹⁹¹ In verbally, aurally, and ritually recalling Christ’s Passion through the Eucharist, but also through prayers, exhortations, and readings from Scripture, the liturgies of the Christian altar revived the past for the present.¹⁹²

Altarpieces visualized the loosening of temporality suggested in the liturgy. They showed the Virgin, Christ, and the saints as present in the here and now, while also memorializing past sacred events for the present. The noted “anachronism” of much of Renaissance art, recently brought to the forefront of scholarship in the work of Alexander Nagel, Christopher Wood, and Alfred Acres,¹⁹³ arguably finds its greatest expression in altarpieces. Here, the ubiquitous iconography of the *sacra conversazione*, where the saints gather around the Madonna and Child seemingly in “holy conversation,” becomes less a divine gathering than an evocation of future heavenly community brought into the present. In a similar vein, the frequent insertion of contemporary donors among the figures portrayed in altarpieces suggests as much

¹⁹⁰ This comes most overtly from the *mysterium fidei*, or “mystery of the faith,” the proclamation usually translated in English that, “Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.” While the exact wording of this declaration varied in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the sentiment remained that the acts of Christ and the salvation that comes from his death and resurrection continue into the future, for all eternity; see Jungmann II: 199-201.

¹⁹¹ Hood, *Fra Angelico at San Marco*, 18.

¹⁹² My thinking was greatly influenced by Alfred Acres, “The Columba Altarpiece and the Time of the World,” *The Art Bulletin* 80, no. 3 (September 1998): 422-51; Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*; and Alexander Nagel, *Medieval Modern: Art out of Time* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2012).

¹⁹³ See note 192, and Nagel and Wood, “Interventions:” and Alfred Acres, *Renaissance Invention and the Haunted Infancy* (Turnhout/London: Brepols/Harvey Miller, 2013).

an awareness of the fluidity of time at the altar as it does the largesse and piety of the patron.

More fundamentally, altarpieces visualized the active divine presence of God at the altar. The visualization that altarpieces offered was a vital instrument in the understanding of and belief in that sacred presence. The physical presence of God was, after all, contained in decidedly non-corporeal matter – bread and wine – and relics were often desiccated parts of a once-alive body. Altarpieces crucially imaged divine presence through more discernable means, showing God and the saints in corporeal and naturalistic form. Furthermore, since viewing and consuming the Eucharist was rare for the laity in the centuries before the Reformation,¹⁹⁴ altarpieces were all the more significant in more directly depicting the presence of God, Christ, and the saints.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁴ The laity traditionally only took communion one to three times a year; in Florence, for instance, the Eucharist was administered to the laity only on Easter, Pentecost, and Christmas. See Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, 55. For a broader discussion of the implications of limiting the Eucharist for the laity, see Michael Camille, *The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image-making in Medieval Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 215-220.

Nonetheless, medieval and early Renaissance vision theory, based upon St. Augustine's conception of the visual ray, posited a direct connection between eye and image, or an imprinting of the image within the soul through the visual rays projected by the image into the eye. As Margaret Miles explains, "The visual ray, the strongest concentration of the body's animating fire, is projected from the eye to touch its object. In the act of vision, viewer and image are connected in dynamic communication;" Margaret Miles, *Image as Insight: Visual Understanding in Western Christianity and Secular Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), 7. In this way, viewing the Eucharist, or we might even argue a painting that depicts Christ or the saints, imprinted its holiness into the body and soul of the viewer; see Miles 96.

¹⁹⁵ Paul Barolsky's eloquent arguments for Renaissance naturalism as a consequence of the desire to see God are germane here. See Paul Barolsky, "The Visionary Experience of Renaissance Art," *Word and Image* 11 (1995): 174-81; Idem., "The History of Italian Renaissance Art Re-envisioned," *Word and Image* 12 (1996): 243-50; and Idem., "Naturalism and the Visionary Art of the Early Renaissance," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 129 (1997): 57-64. Regina Stefaniak's discussion of Eucharistic controversies during the Reformation and their relationship to Rosso Fiorentino's *Dead Christ with Angels* (c. 1524-27; oil on panel; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) is also relevant. See Regina Stefaniak, "Replicating Mysteries of the Passion: Rosso's *Dead Christ with Angels*," *Renaissance Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (Winter 1992): 677-737, especially 679-93.

The Altarpiece in the Fifteenth Century:

As images of the divine presence contained at the altar, altarpieces, particularly in the Middle Ages, most often showed non-narrative images of the Virgin, Christ, and the saints amidst a timeless background of heavenly gold. Duccio's *Maestà* is a sovereign example, as it presents the Virgin, Christ, and various saints in front of a shining gold background that lavishly evokes the splendor of heaven (fig. 15).¹⁹⁶ In the fifteenth century, however, the design and iconography of altarpieces shifted, as artists began to explore new understandings of perspective and naturalism. Instead of the elaborate polyptychs common in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, artists now created square or rectangular, single-field panels, or *pala*, surrounded by *all'antica* frames. Fifteenth-century artists also increasingly created altarpiece imagery that depicted nature and the human form in a more naturalistic and illusionistic manner.

Fra Angelico's c. 1432-34 *Annunciation* altarpiece for Cortona's San Domenico¹⁹⁷ was one of the first in this new format (fig. 20).¹⁹⁸ Here, in a square panel framed by gilded pilasters, Fra Angelico showed the Annunciation occurring in

¹⁹⁶ Even the smaller panels of the altarpiece, including scenes from the Passion and the life of the Virgin, have gold backgrounds.

¹⁹⁷ Fra Angelico, *Annunciation* (c. 1434-34), tempera and gold on panel, Museo Diocesano, Cortona.

¹⁹⁸ There is some dispute over which altarpiece was the first Renaissance square or rectangular *pala*. Hood asserts that although Fra Angelico's Cortona panel was an early prototype, it was not a full *pala* as the top of the frame is curved. Hood argues instead that Fra Angelico's *Annalena Altarpiece* (c. 1433-36, tempera and gold on panel, Museo di San Marco, Florence), which he convincingly locates in Brunelleschi's redesigned San Lorenzo, was the first. See Hood, *Fra Angelico at San Marco*, 100-107.

Christa Gardner von Teuffel, on the other hand, asserts that Fra Filippo Lippi's *Annunciation* (*Martelli Altarpiece*) (c. 1440, tempera on panel, San Lorenzo, Florence), also painted for San Lorenzo, was the first; see Gardner von Teuffel, "From Polyptych to Pala: Some Structural Considerations" (1979), in *From Duccio's Maestà to Raphael's Transfiguration*: 183-210, 190 and 210. Regardless of the exact painting, it is undeniable that the Renaissance *pala* emerged out of the context of San Lorenzo.

an open-air loggia composed of Corinthian columns that recede gently back into space on the left side of the painting. Hood has characterized the altarpiece's frame and careful perspective as "accentuat[ing] the painting's quality as representation of perceived reality."¹⁹⁹ Through its window-like, square format and more exact spatial illusionism, Fra Angelico's altarpiece is thus more overtly a threshold to sacred reality, as much as it also illuminates divine presence through its very representation of the Virgin and Gabriel.

Scholars have often cited a convergence of architectural, antiquarian, and theoretical advances as leading to the emergence of the Quattrocento *pala* altarpiece.²⁰⁰ Filippo Brunelleschi, inspired by the geometry of ancient Roman architecture, had, for instance, insisted on uniform square altarpieces for the side chapels of his re-designed San Lorenzo in 1434.²⁰¹ Square, single-field altarpieces additionally fulfilled Leon Battista Alberti's conception of painting as a two-dimensional window onto a three-dimensional world.²⁰² Yet given the altarpiece's

¹⁹⁹ Hood, *Fra Angelico at San Marco*, 100.

²⁰⁰ Christa Gardner von Teuffel, "From Polyptych to Pala;" Idem., "Lorenzo Monaco, Filippo Lippi und Filippo Brunelleschi: die Erfindung der Renaissancepala" (1982), in *From Duccio's Maestà to Raphael's Transfiguration*, 211-60; Hood, *Fra Angelico at San Marco*, 100-107; Victor Schmidt, "Filippo Brunelleschi e il problema della tavola d'altare," *Arte Cristiana* 80 (Nov-Dec. 1992): 451-61.

²⁰¹ "Ac etiam fiat in eis et earum tribunis unum altare pro qualibet, lapiden [sic] macigni, super quinque culunnia [sic], cum tabula quadrata et sine civoriis, picta honorabiliter." Florence, Archivio di Stato, Notarile antecosimiano M273, insert I, fol. 32r-v, June 3, 1434. Published in Jeffrey Ruda, "A 1434 Building Programme for San Lorenzo in Florence," *The Burlington Magazine* 120, no. 903 (June 1978): 358-61, 360-61. Brunelleschi also seems to have considered the Gothic-style gables, lavish use of gold, and multiplicity of panels of fourteenth-and early fifteenth-century polyptych altarpieces as ostentatious and gaudy; see Schmidt, "Filippo Brunelleschi e il problema della tavola dell'altare."

²⁰² While Alberti did not explicitly call painting a window, his explanation of linear perspective necessitated a sense of the two-dimensional painting as showing a three-dimensional world; Alberti, *On Painting*, 37-59 and 65-72. See also David Rosand's discussion of Alberti and altarpieces in his "'Divinità di cosa dipinta': Pictorial Structure and the Legibility of the Altarpiece," in *The Altarpiece in the Renaissance*, eds. Kemp and Humfrey: 143-64, 146-50.

privileged location at the altar, and its special function in delineating sacred presence, it is not surprising that artists like Fra Angelico developed some of the earliest innovations in spatial and optical perspective, as well as increased stylistic naturalism, in altarpieces.²⁰³ As an art form intimately tied to the meanings and uses of the altar and its liturgies, the altarpiece was the ideal arena to experiment with more naturalistically representing the seen and unseen, the real and imagined. By portraying God, Christ, and the saints in more naturalistic, corporeal form, and by more accurately composing their pictures as illusions of a three-dimensional world, fifteenth-century artists effectively evoked the altarpiece's central purpose as a visual threshold between the heavenly and the earthly.

As artistic skill increasingly came to be associated with artistic invention through the fifteenth century,²⁰⁴ the altarpiece became an important form by which artists developed new iconographies. Fra Angelico was again one of the earliest innovators. While his c. 1438-41 *San Marco Altarpiece*²⁰⁵ depicts a traditional subject – the Madonna and Child enthroned with saints – it also more unusually includes a painting-within-a-painting (fig. 21). Located at the bottom center of the main panel, in front of the rug underneath the Virgin's throne, this smaller "painting" shows Christ's crucifixion with the Virgin and St. John. This fictive panel certainly

²⁰³ This is true, as well, for earlier altarpieces that are not *pala* shaped, such as Masaccio's for Pisa's Santa Maria del Carmine. The central panel of the *Madonna and Child with Angels* (1426; tempera on panel; National Gallery, London) is one of the first examples of single-point, linear perspective.

²⁰⁴ John Spencer, "Ut Rhetorica Pictura: A Study in Quattrocento Theory of Painting," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 20 (1957): 26-44, 36-38; Martin Kemp, "From 'Mimesis' to 'Fantasia': The Quattrocento Vocabulary of Creation, Inspiration, and Genius in the Visual Arts," *Viator* 8 (1977): 347-398; Ames-Lewis, *The Intellectual Life*, 177-88.

²⁰⁵ See note 175.

showcases Fra Angelico's skill in *trompe l'oeil* visual effects. More vitally, however, it strengthens the altarpiece's function as both a visual embodiment of sacred presence and as a bridge towards heaven momentarily brought to Earth. As a crucifixion image, the smaller painting reinforces the remembrance of the Passion in the Mass, and the sacrifice of Christ contained in the Eucharist. The small *Crucifixion* directs the beholder's attention, leading the eye from the *Pietà* predella panel originally located just below it (fig. 22), to the crucifixion "painting," and then upwards towards the Virgin and Child. In this way, it creates a visual byway of sacred transcendence; as Hood writes, "'Heaven' is represented in the main panel, the 'Bridge' to it in the Crucifix below, and the 'tavern' of the Eucharist in the *Lamentation* panel on the predella underneath."²⁰⁶ The inclusion of the fictive *Crucifixion* within the main altarpiece panel thus enforces the purpose of the altarpiece as much as it also highlights Fra Angelico's hand in the painting.

Fra Angelico's invention in the *San Marco Altarpiece* could be characterized as both visual and rhetorical. The fictive *Crucifixion* is certainly visually striking. It ultimately, however, strengthens the sacred argument of the painting, namely that through the illusionism of the fictive crucifixion panel, the viewer is led to a higher understanding of Christ's sacrifice memorialized at the altar and his physical presence within the Eucharist. Its inclusion, moreover, underscores the seeming "reality" of the holy figures depicted behind the fictive panel; since this *Crucifixion* seems like a real painting, the sacred figures behind it – who become ritually and physically present at the altar – seem even more present, more real. Hood has described this

²⁰⁶ Hood, *Fra Angelico at San Marco*, 110.

effect as that of, “strengthening the border between the real world of the viewer’s experience and the ideal one created by the painter’s craft.”²⁰⁷ The effect is certainly this, but it is also that of rupturing, or at the very least visually breaching, the border between heaven, depicted in the painting and physically made present at the altar, and earth, the space of the beholder’s viewing of the altarpiece.

As a Dominican friar, Fra Angelico was certainly more versed in theological argumentation and its potential manifestation in painting than most artists. But religious images, in general, had long been vehicles for persuasion and instruction. As famously argued by St. Gregory the Great (c. 540-604) and then often repeated by medieval and Renaissance theologians,²⁰⁸ sacred images were useful and necessary precisely because they were didactic and memorable, and they more actively incited devotion than mere words alone. Furthermore, memory was conceived in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance as a system of knowledge and the means by which knowledge was processed, stored, used, and spread.²⁰⁹ Sacred images like altarpieces

²⁰⁷ Hood, *Fra Angelico at San Marco*, 98.

²⁰⁸ St. Gregory’s letter is published as Epistle XIII in the *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J.P. Migne, 221 volumes (Paris: Apud Garnier Fratres, 1844-91), vol. LXXVII (1849): 1128-1130. Both Michael Baxandall and David Freedberg include several quotations from later medieval and Renaissance apologists, including St. Thomas Aquinas, that more or less repeat St. Gregory’s three-part justification. See Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, 40-45, and David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 162-66.

²⁰⁹ Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 1-16.

It has long been noted that fifteenth-century artists, patrons, and theoreticians increasingly conceived of painting, whether sacred or secular in content, in rhetorical terms. See Spencer; Michael Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971); and Ames-Lewis, *The Intellectual Life*, 141-76. While perhaps not as germane to altarpieces, Peter Howard’s work on the connections between narrative religious frescoes (particularly the 1481-82 Sistine Chapel frescoes, of which Ghirlandaio painted *The Calling of Sts. Peter and Andrew*) and the Renaissance rhetoric of preaching is also noteworthy; see Peter Howard, “Painters and the Visual Art of Preaching: The *Exemplum* of the

that functioned to incite memory thus participated in the creation of knowledge through their very form and content.

The fifteenth-century altarpiece was thus an object of marked artistry, as much as it remained a vital object of sacred contemplation in its placement over or on the altar. In this way, as briefly stated in the Introduction, the Quattrocento altarpiece does not adhere to Hans Belting's distinctions between medieval "image" and Renaissance "art." Belting contended that late antique and medieval religious paintings were "images," in that beholders considered them to have direct divine agency and presence. "Art," on the other hand, emerged in the fifteenth century, as paintings were judged by artistic skill and invention, and not necessarily by sacred provenance. As Belting writes:

The image formerly had been assigned a special reality and taken literally as a visible manifestation of the sacred person. Now the image was, in the first place, made subject to the general laws of nature, including optics, and so was assigned wholly to the realm of sense perception. Now the same laws were to apply to the image as to the natural perception of the outside world. It became a simulated window in which either a saint or a family member would appear in a portrait. In addition, the new image was handed over to artists, who were expected to create it from their 'fantasy.' Seen in this light, a work was an artist's idea of invention, which also provided the standard for evaluation.

Fifteenth-Century Frescoes in the Sistine Chapel," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 13 (2010): 33-77.

With its double reference to imitation (of nature) and imagination (of the artist), the new image required an understanding of art.²¹⁰

More recently, Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood have implicitly redefined Belting's binary as two different "modes" of Renaissance art: the "performative" and the "substitutional." The performative mode stressed the artist as author and highlighted the artist's originality and invention, while the substitutional anachronistically referred back to older models, traditions, or practices.²¹¹ While Nagel and Wood stress that these modes should be seen as dialectical rather than antithetical, they argue that they are fundamentally in contention and tension with one another as "two competitive models."²¹²

Altarpieces such as Fra Angelico's or Ghirlandaio's may not have been miracle-working paintings like many of the medieval "images" Belting examines, but they still vitally imaged the divine presence evoked and contained at the altar. Furthermore, through the inventive hand of the artist, fifteenth-century altarpieces critically enhanced that divine presence through the new aesthetic languages of mimesis and illusionism. This invention could be both performative, as in Ghirlandaio's inclusion of his self-portrait in the Innocenti altarpiece, and substitutional, such as Ghirlandaio's reference to miraculous images in his Lucca and Santa Maria Novella altarpieces. These "modes" of invention were not in contention in fifteenth-century altarpieces like Ghirlandaio's, but rather worked in tandem,

²¹⁰ Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 471.

²¹¹ Nagel and Wood, "Interventions," especially 405-7; and Idem., *Anachronic Renaissance*, especially 7-19.

²¹² Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, 17.

effectively showing both the new (the artist) and the old (previous visual and religious traditions). The fifteenth-century altarpiece was thus both heavenly (“image”) and earthly (“art”): a visual threshold between God and humankind that was created and mediated through the special hand of the artist.

Chapter 3: Corporate Identity and Communication: Ghirlandaio's Altarpieces for Religious Orders

Tucked into the bottom-right corner of Ghirlandaio's altarpiece for Volterra's Camaldolesi is a donor portrait of the panel's patron, Abbot Bonvicini of the Abbey of San Giusto e Clemente (fig. 13). A tonsured, elderly man dressed in a white cassock, Abbot Bonvicini clasps his hands piously in prayer, and looks up with devotion towards the heavenly apparition in front of him: Christ in glory, surrounded by angels and saints. Ghirlandaio's portrait of Abbot Bonvicini is a perpetual reminder of the abbot's largesse and piety, and an exemplar of the ideal Camaldolese brother: devoted to prayer and mediation, faithful to the message of Christ, and generous in serving the Lord.

As the primary beholders of altarpieces as the officiants of the liturgy at the altar, clergymen like Abbot Bonvicini commissioned countless altarpieces to adorn their churches throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. While these altarpieces fulfilled the general functions of altarpieces discussed in Chapter 2, within the context of a particular religious order's church, they were also vital forms of corporate, or shared, identity and communication amongst the order's members.²¹³ As

²¹³ There are many noteworthy studies of the relationships between altarpiece iconography and the corporate identity of the order that commissioned and beheld the altarpiece. Briefly, for the Dominicans, see Hood, *Fra Angelico at San Marco*, 45-121, and Joanna Cannon, *Religious Poverty, Visual Riches; Art in the Dominican Churches of Central Italy in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013). For the Franciscans, see Israëls, ed., *Sassetta: the Borgo San Sepolcro Altarpiece*, and Rona Goffen, *Piety and Patronage in Renaissance Venice: Bellini, Titian, and the Franciscans* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986). For the Augustinians, see Louise Bourdua and Anne Dunlop, eds., *Art and the Augustinian Order in Early Renaissance Italy* (Aldershot.: Ashgate, 2007). For the Benedictines, see *Iconografia di San Benedetto nella pittura della Toscana: Immagini e aspetti culturali fino al XVI secolo* (Florence: Centro d'incontro della Certosa di Firenze, 1982). There is also a rich literature on female religious orders and their patronage. A general overview is Anabel Thomas, *Art and Piety in the Female Religious Communities of Renaissance Italy: Iconography, Space, and the Religious Woman's Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

the visual locus of the liturgy, these altarpieces, particularly those for the high altar, visually enforced the order's specific devotions, history, and spiritual perspectives. As some of the largest and most splendid images in churches, they also broadcast the taste and special character of the order and its members – both to the clergy themselves and, at times, to parishioners and visitors to the church.²¹⁴ Since these objects were both commissioned and visually consumed by the order's members, these altarpieces were crafted by artists to engage and reflect the particular needs of the order. In sum, altarpieces for religious orders imaged divine presence and the functions of the altar through the lens of that order's history, traditions, and precepts.

Ghirlandaio produced five altarpieces for three different orders: the Gesuati; the Observant Franciscans; and the Camaldolesi. While each of Ghirlandaio's altarpieces was beheld, and we might say “used,” by the clergy, these five altarpieces are distinctive for being either commissioned by the clergy themselves, or for being in churches that were largely closed to the laity. As such, their iconography and meaning is best understood within the context of the order for which they were created.

Like most of Ghirlandaio's altarpieces, these works have been largely considered in terms of style and attribution alone. This chapter orients these altarpieces for the first time within the contextual matrices of their original church, city, and religious order. In doing so, it shows the depth of Ghirlandaio's engagement with the rich spiritual diversity of the fifteenth-century Roman Catholic clergy.

2003). And while it focuses on the patronage of confraternities, the theoretical basis of O'Malley's “Altarpieces and Agency,” is equally valid for religious orders and their patronage.

²¹⁴ This would, of course, depend on the viewing conditions of the altarpiece in question. As discussed in Chapter 2, many altarpieces were out of sight to the laity.

Ghirlandaio appears to have been especially attuned to the working habits of the orders and to the particularities of their saintly intercessors. His Gesuati altarpieces, for example, reference the order's care for the sick and dying, while his altarpiece for Narni's Observant Franciscans creates a visual canon of newly venerated Franciscan saints. While Ghirlandaio was hardly exceptional in customizing his works to his patron's distinct wishes, his altarpieces for religious orders reveal him to have had a much more complex understanding of the multiplicities of ecclesiastical identity and thought than previously imagined.

Altarpieces for the Gesuati:

Ghirlandaio created his earliest altarpieces for the Gesuati of San Girolamo in Pisa. The larger²¹⁵ of the two is a square *sacra conversazione* of the Madonna and Child enthroned with Sts. Catherine of Alexandria, Stephen, Lawrence, and Dorothy (fig. 1: c. 1478-79; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Museo Nazionale di San Matteo, Pisa). The second, slightly smaller square altarpiece also shows the Virgin and Child enthroned, but with Sts. Jerome, Benedict, possibly Matthew, and Raphael (fig. 2: c. 1478-79; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Museo Nazionale di San Matteo, Pisa). This altarpiece also includes an unknown donor figure, kneeling and hands joined in prayer, on the bottom right. Later in the 1480s, Ghirlandaio made an altarpiece for the high altar of San Giusto, the Gesuati church in Florence. Like his earlier panels in Pisa, this altarpieces depicts the Madonna and Child enthroned, with Sts. Michael, Zenobius, Giusto, and Raphael (fig. 5: c. 1482-86, tempera and possibly oil on panel, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence).

²¹⁵ This altarpiece measures 156 by 161 centimeters. The other is 144 by 143 centimeters.

The Gesuati:

Founded in 1367 by Sienese patrician and wealthy merchant, the Blessed Giovanni Colombini (c. 1300-1367), the Gesuati were a religious order dedicated to helping the poor and the sick, to burying the dead, and to strict mortification and asceticism.²¹⁶ They followed the example of Colombini, who initially lived as a beggar on the streets of Siena, wearing rags, forsaking all food, and loudly proclaiming the name of Jesus to any passerby.²¹⁷ Even though many Sienese were taken aback by the extremes of Colombini's devotion – almost nude, he went so far as to ride backwards on a donkey through the city's streets, praying and singing aloud, as a sign of his utter humility towards God – he quickly began to gain followers.²¹⁸ Living either as beggars on the street or as wards of Siena's hospital of Santa Maria della Scala, where they assisted in caring for the sick and dying, the early Gesuati originally eschewed any formalization of their nascent community. Colombini, in fact, thought that too much emphasis was placed on the role of the clergy in communicating with God and he thus resisted early attempts to officially organize his followers under the auspices of the Church.²¹⁹ Nonetheless, as with the official

²¹⁶ Thomas Kennedy, "Blessed John Colombini," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, eds. Charles Herbermann, et al., 15 vols. (New York: Encyclopedia Press, 1913): vol. 8, <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08458a.htm>>; Hugh Blunt, *Great Penitents* (New York: Macmillan, 1921), 30; R. Guarnieri, "Gesuati," in *Dizionario degli istituti di perfezione*, eds. Guerrino Pelliccia and Giancarlo Rocca, 9 vols. (Rome: Edizioni paoline, 1974/1983), vol. 4: 1116-1130. See also Paolo Bensi, "Gli arnesi dell'arte: I gesuati di San Giusto alle Mura e pittura del rinascimento a Firenze," *Studi di storia delle arti* 3 (1980-1981): 33-47.

²¹⁷ Kennedy; Feo Belcari, *Vita del B. Giovanni Colombini da Siena*, ed. P. Oderigo Rainaldi (Rome: Tipografia Salviucci, 1843), 9; Guarnieri 1120.

²¹⁸ Blunt 26-27.

²¹⁹ Guarnieri 1119.

sanction of the mendicants, the Gesuati were officially recognized by the Church as an order in 1367.²²⁰

The order's overall aim was to live a life dedicated to God, but also in service to the poor. The men lived in community under first the Benedictine and then the Augustinian Rule in a Gesuati house, and prayed the Office of the Virgin daily. They worked with the needy in some capacity; this typically involved care of the sick, particularly the plague stricken, and the burial of the dead.²²¹ The Gesuati, officially called the "Clerici apostolici [di] San Hieronymi," or the "Apostolic Clerics of St. Jerome," had a special devotion to that saint, and, in particular, admired Jerome's asceticism and penitence.²²² While explicitly rejecting theological training, the order nonetheless stressed reading and study in addition to manual labor and the care of the poor. Colombini had encouraged his followers to read the lives of the saints daily, and the order's statutes, written in 1426, called on the brothers to read holy books while in their cells.²²³

To fund their aid to the poor, the brothers usually engaged in some sort of business. This most often included the production of herbal medicines and other remedies, the making of stained glass and other glass works, and the printing and

²²⁰ Kennedy; Guarnieri 1123; Blunt 29.

²²¹ Kennedy.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Lisa Pon, *Raphael, Dürer, Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Italian Renaissance Print* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 53; Guarnieri 1124. For the complete statutes of the Gesuati, see their publication in Giovan Battista Uccelli, *Il convento di S. Giusto alle Mura e i Gesuati* (Florence: Tipografia delle Murate, 1865), 154-229. The call for reading in one's cell is specifically on 195.

production of books.²²⁴ The Gesuati in Florence were famous for their manufacture of the finest colored pigments. Fra Filippo Lippi, Benozzo Gozzoli, Neri di Bicci, Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Perugino, Filippino Lippi, Michelangelo, and Ghirlandaio himself are all documented as having bought pigments from Florence's Gesuati.²²⁵

The Gesuati in Pisa:

The Gesuati community in Pisa was founded in 1434, and like most Gesuati houses, probably had between 24 and 36 members.²²⁶ Like their colleagues in Florence, they appear to have produced and sold pigments for artists. In fact, Ghirlandaio was directly connected with buying pigments from Pisa's Gesuati in the 1490s, when he returned to make mosaics, frescoes, and painted organ shutters for the Opera di Pisa. On November, 23 1492, for example, Ghirlandaio paid a "frate Iacopo ingiesuato" for linen and *asurro* pigment.²²⁷ After the artist's death, in 1494, his *garzone* Poggio Poggini and assistant/collaborator Francesco Granacci, who completed Ghirlandaio's work in Pisa, also bought "fine" *asurro* from the Gesuati.²²⁸ The Pisan Gesuati pigment production was likely smaller in scale than that of

²²⁴ Bensi 33-34; Pon 55. Pon discusses the prominent printing activities of Venice's Gesuati in the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries in particular.

²²⁵ See Bensi for a thorough discussion of the sale of pigments by Florence's Gesuati.

²²⁶ Guarnieri 1127.

²²⁷ "E adì 23 di ditto, lire quarantasei ebbe lui contanti, disse li voleva dare a frate Iacopo ingiesuato, per lino e asurro ebbe da lui." Archivio di Stato di Pisa, Opera del Duomo, 446, c. 64 verso. Published in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 365, doc. 38.

²²⁸ "E a primo di diciembre lire sei e soldi tredici per una honcia e ½ asurro fine si comprò da' frati Ingiesuati per dipingere detta arme." Published in L. Tanfani Centofanti, *Notizie di artisti tratte dai documenti pisani* (Pisa: Enrico Spoerri Editore, 1897), 437. Also cf. Bensi 44, n. 8.

Florence, but it was clearly significant enough that Ghirlandaio could buy his supplies directly from them.

Pisa's Gesuati were based in the complex of San Girolamo, constructed in the mid 1470s.²²⁹ A c. 1590 map of Pisa shows the modest size of San Girolamo (fig. 51). The complex is depicted as a small square building with a smaller outlying structure and perhaps a garden surrounded by a wall.²³⁰ The interior of the church, like other Gesuati churches, likely had a *tramezzo* across the nave.²³¹ As with other Gesuati communities (and seemingly confirmed by the 1590 map), the entire complex also included a dormitory, chapterhouse, and refectory, and given the production of pigments, a workroom to make and store the tools and materials of the trade.²³²

Ghirlandaio in Pisa:

Vasari was the first to discuss Ghirlandaio's presence in Pisa, writing that the artist made, "in San Girolamo, of the Gesuati Friars, two tempera panels, one for the high altar and another. In that place also is another painting by Ghirlandaio's hand, a picture of St. Roch and St. Sebastian; it was donated to those fathers by one of the Medici, hence the arms of Pope Leo X have been added at the bottom."²³³ While

²²⁹ The church was destroyed in the eighteenth century.

²³⁰ Anna Rosa Masetti, *Pisa storia urbana: piante e vedute dalle origini al secolo XX* (Pisa: La Giuntina, 1964), 45, note 23. The map is reproduced on page 53.

²³¹ This was the case, according to Vasari, of San Giusto in Florence. See Vasari III: 570-576.

²³² See *ibid.*

²³³ "...ed in San Girolamo, a' Frati Gesuati, due tavole a tempera, quella dell'altar maggiore ed un'altra. Nel qual luogo ancora è di mano del medesimo, in un quadro, San Rocco e San Bastiano; il quale fu donato a que' Padri da non so chi de' Medici; onde essi vi hanno perciò aggiunta l'arme di papa Leone X." Vasari III: 271. The painting of Sts. Sebastian and Roch survives, and is also in the Museo Nazionale di San Matteo, Pisa (fig. 23). It will be discussed in conjunction with the altarpieces presently.

Vasari does not detail the subjects of the two altarpieces, he associates them with the Gesuati. A payment document from Pisa's Opera del Duomo confirms Ghirlandaio's work in Pisa in the late 1470s. Dated February 19, 1479, it discloses that the Opera paid Ghirlandaio 34 *lire*, 10 *soldi* for two paintings for the Opera's Sala Grande, one depicting the Virgin with the Christ Child in her arms and the other a Coronation of the Virgin.²³⁴ While this document does not describe Ghirlandaio's Pisa altarpieces,²³⁵ it does affirm that the artist was in Pisa in 1479.

Ghirlandaio likely received the Pisan commissions shortly after finishing his mural of the *Last Supper* in the refectory of the Badia di Passignano south of Florence (1476), and completing the chapel of Santa Fina in San Gimignano's Collegiata (c. 1477-1478).²³⁶ The Pisan altarpieces likely arose from several interconnected sources.

²³⁴ "A dominicho di ghirlandaio da Firensa dipintore lire trenta quattro soldi dieci, sono per due figure di nostra donna fatte in sala grande dell'opera, cioè una nostra donna col bambino in collo e una Incoronata come appare alle ricordanse segn. F., c. 126." Pisa, Archivio di Stato, Opera del Duomo, 147 (Entrata e uscita, 1478-1479), c. 85 recto. Published in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio* as document 12, page 343.

²³⁵ While it might be tempting to connect Ghirlandaio's Pisa altarpieces with the 1479 payment document, it is unlikely that these panels were made for the Sala Grande. As Cadogan cogently points out, 34 *lire* 10 *soldi*, or six florins, is much too low a price for two altarpieces such as the Pisa panels, even for an artist at a relatively early point in his career (*Domenico Ghirlandaio* 248). Most likely, Ghirlandaio painted frescoes in the Sala Grande; Benozzo Gozzoli's workshop is documented as having made frescoes there (Diane Cole Ahl, "An Unpublished Frieze in Pisa and the Workshop of Benozzo Gozzoli," in *Benozzo Gozzoli Viaggio attraverso un secolo*, eds. Enrico Castelnuovo and Alessandra Malquori [Pisa: Pacini, 2003]: 175-181.), and the price of six florins would be much more in keeping with the cost of small murals.

Construction and provenance records also indicate San Girolamo dei Gesuati as the original location of the paintings, confirming Vasari's account. Built in 1474, the church certainly would have needed visual embellishment in the late 1470s, the long-standing date of the panels. Provenance records from the Museo Nazionale also confirm their origin in San Girolamo. After the church was destroyed in the mid-eighteenth century, its contents passed to the neighboring Benedictine church and convent of Sant'Anna before being transferred to Pisa's Museo Civico (now the Museo Nazionale di San Matteo) in the nineteenth century (Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 248-9 and 275; Enzo Carli, *Il museo di Pisa* [Pisa: Pacini, 1974], 103; and Idem., *La pittura a Pisa: Dalle origini alla 'bella maniera'* [Pisa: Pacini, 1994], 178-79.).

²³⁶ See Chapter 1.

First, Ghirlandaio had a relationship with the Gesuati Order in both Florence and in Pisa, as evidenced by his patronage of their pigment business. Second, Ghirlandaio also had patronage ties in Pisa in the 1470s, given the record of payments to him from the Opera di Pisa. His work for the Opera, an organization composed of some of Pisa's most prominent citizens and guild leaders, may have led to his work for Pisa's Gesuati and their newly constructed church; perhaps even the donor in the smaller altarpiece had encountered Ghirlandaio in his work for the Opera.

The Medici's patronage of the Gesuati and in fifteenth-century Pisa more broadly can also be connected with Ghirlandaio's commissions in San Girolamo. The Medici had a history of patronage of the Gesuati: while certainly not as extensive as the family's long-standing connections with the Observant Dominicans, the family did donate relics to the Florentine Gesuati of San Giusto. Lorenzo de' Medici, in particular, gave San Giusto a relic of the arm of San Giusto di Volterra.²³⁷ More importantly, after Pisa's fall to Florence in 1406 and the Medici's rise to power in the mid 1430s, the family, as well as the city of Florence, sponsored large-scale renovation, architectural, and artistic projects in Pisa that served to explicitly

²³⁷ Kate Lowe, "Lorenzo's 'Presence' at Churches, Convents and Shrines in and outside Florence," in *Lorenzo the Magnificent: Culture and Politics*, eds. Michael Mallett and Nicholas Mann (London: Warburg Institute, 1996): 23-36, 25. Lowe mistakenly says that the relic was of St. Zenobius, not San Giusto. The mix-up is a common one in the literature, and especially so given the fraught circumstances of San Giusto's destruction in 1529. When the church and convent of San Giusto were demolished, the convent's congregation subsequently moved to San Giovannino (later renamed San Giusto della Calza) within Florence's walls. While most of San Giusto's treasures were transferred to San Giovannino, some, including the church's famed relic of the arm of San Giusto given by Lorenzo, went to the cathedral. In compensation for the loss of the San Giusto relic, the cathedral's chapter donated a relic of St. Zenobius (either a part of his hat or his miter) to the newly installed Gesuati at San Giovannino. See Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine*, 10 vols. (Florence: Pietro Gaetano Viviani, 1754-62), vol. IX (1761): 103; also cf. Uccelli 38.

consolidate their power and rule.²³⁸ While these projects certainly provided important new services and beautified Pisa, they also emphatically and often literally imprinted Florentine and Medici domination over every aspect of daily life, from religion to the economy to even the dissemination of knowledge.

The Medici additionally donated paintings and sculpture by Florentine artists to local churches within subject territories like Pisa, making their presence known in even the most seemingly insignificant of spaces; these images reinforced Medici presence explicitly through the insertion of either a donor portrait, or through the addition of the family's coat of arms.²³⁹ Ghirlandaio's votive panel of the plague saints Sebastian and Roch for San Girolamo, first mentioned by Vasari and now in the Museo Nazionale,²⁴⁰ certainly seems to accord to this kind of Medici patronage, and particularly so in the addition of the Medici's coat of arms (fig. 23). Pisa suffered constant malaria epidemics and experienced outbreaks of the plague in 1464, 1479, 1482, and 1486.²⁴¹ Ghirlandaio probably received the commission for the votive image in 1479 when there was both a plague in Pisa and he was already working on

²³⁸ The most important construction and renovation included that of Pisa's famed cemetery, the Camposanto, particularly sponsored by Medici-appointed Archbishop of Pisa, Filippo de' Medici; the construction of a new archbishop palace modeled after the Palazzo Medici in Florence; the renovation of several of Pisa's churches; the reinforcement of the city's walls along the Arno River; the enlargement of Pisa's customs house and arsenal; and, particularly promoted by Lorenzo de' Medici, the revival of the University of Pisa as the Studio Pisano. See Diane Cole Ahl, *Benozzo Gozzoli* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 160; Emilio Tolaini, *Pisa* (Rome: Edizione Laterza, 1992), 82; Michael Mallett, "Pisa and Florence in the Fifteenth Century: Aspects of the Period of the First Florentine Domination," in *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein (London: Faber and Faber, 1968): 403-441, 431, 409-415; and Gabriele Morolli, et al., eds., *L'Architettura di Lorenzo il Magnifico* (Florence: Silvana, 1992), 197.

²³⁹ Lowe 23.

²⁴⁰ Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Sts. Sebastian and Roch* (c. 1478-79), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Museo Nazionale di San Matteo, Pisa.

²⁴¹ Mallett 407-408.

San Girolamo's altarpieces. Given the Gesuati's noted care for the sick and particularly the plague-stricken, it is not surprising that Ghirlandaio would have been hired to make an ex-voto that attests to the saints' power to intervene in times of sickness as well as one that refers here to the idealized concern and care that the Medici felt for Pisa's citizens in times of need.

There is no historical evidence of Ghirlandaio working within the Medici orbit before 1482, when he began painting frescoes in Florence's Palazzo Vecchio, a commission from the Opera del Palazzo which was headed by Lorenzo de' Medici.²⁴² Nonetheless, earlier Medici patronage of Ghirlandaio in Pisa might have occurred through the artist's membership and leadership within the confraternity of San Paolo, of which Lorenzo de' Medici was also a prominent member, and through the close connections between the Ghirlandaio family and the favorite artist of the Medici, Verrocchio.²⁴³ And despite the lack of definitive evidence of Medici involvement in Ghirlandaio's Pisan altarpieces, the oft-cited role of Lorenzo as "*maestro della bottega*" – a term identifying him as "an arbiter, with a reputation for wisdom and judgment," as F. W. Kent has explained²⁴⁴ – makes his participation likely. While Lorenzo de' Medici himself did not practice the conspicuous material consumption of his father and grandfather, choosing instead to inspire or recommend commissions, he was nonetheless heavily involved, however discreetly, in countless works by

²⁴² F.W. Kent, *Lorenzo de' Medici and the Art of Magnificence* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 103-104; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 228; Melinda Hegarty, "Laurentian Patronage in the Palazzo Vecchio: the Frescoes of the Sala dei Gigli," *The Art Bulletin* 78, no. 2 (June 1996): 264-285.

²⁴³ See Chapter 1.

²⁴⁴ Kent, *Lorenzo de' Medici*, 2.

Florentine artists, and especially by ones outside the city.²⁴⁵ His likely recommendation of Ghirlandaio for commissions in Pisa is typical of this approach, and shows his hand in supporting Florentine artists for his own, his family's, and his city's advantage.

Ghirlandaio's Altarpieces for the Gesuati in Pisa:

Ghirlandaio's Pisan altarpieces are both *sacre conversazioni* that display the saints in communion with the Virgin and Child. In the larger altarpiece (fig. 1), the holy figures stand on a colored marble floor in front of a colored marble wall. Only a blue sky and a few wispy white clouds are visible behind the wall. In the center is the Madonna, seated in front of a gilded, classicizing niche. The Madonna wears a rose-colored dress and blue mantle; a gold star on the shoulder of her cloak alludes to her identification as *stella maris*, the "star of the sea" described by St. Bernard of Clairvaux. Mary holds a small white flower in one hand and balances the Christ Child, who sits on a small cushion and reaches up to her face, with the other.

To the left of the Madonna is St. Catherine of Alexandria, who was particularly venerated in Pisa by the Dominicans at Santa Caterina, a convent that was supported by Lorenzo de' Medici.²⁴⁶ Ghirlandaio shows her with red hair, wearing a yellow dress, and holding both a martyr's palm and a wheel, a torture device that she

²⁴⁵ Ibid; Mallett and Mann, eds., *Lorenzo the Magnificent*; Morolli; and Melissa Bullard, *Lorenzo il Magnifico: Image and Anxiety, Politics and Finance* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1994). See also William Connell and Andrea Zorzi, eds., *Florentine Tuscany: Structures and Practices of Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and G.C. Garfagnini, ed., *Lorenzo il Magnifico e il suo mondo: convegno internazionale di studi, Firenze 9-13 giugno 1992* (Florence: Leo Olschki, 1994).

²⁴⁶ Cynthia Stollhans, *St. Catherine of Alexandria in Renaissance Roman Art: Case Studies in Patronage* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 8.

endured.²⁴⁷ Next to Catherine is St. Stephen, another early Christian martyr who, as first deacon of the Church, was stoned to death by an angry mob for his beliefs. Ghirlandaio adheres to the traditional iconography of this saint, showing him in particularly splendid deacon's robes, a tonsure, and the stones of his martyrdom on his head. Like Catherine, Stephen also holds a martyr's palm. Paired with Stephen on the right is St. Lawrence, another early Christian deacon and martyr. While artists typically depicted Lawrence with the grill of his martyrdom, Ghirlandaio shows Lawrence, also dressed in deacon's robes and tonsured, holding a martyr's palm and a book. The traditional juxtaposition of Lawrence and Stephen makes such identification highly likely despite Ghirlandaio's decision not to include Lawrence's grill.²⁴⁸

The identity of the last saint, a young woman dressed in a green dress with a purple mantle who holds a book and wears a crown of flowers in her light red hair, has long been contested. While scholars have identified her variously as Sts. Rose, Cecilia, Fina, and Rosa of Palermo,²⁴⁹ she is most likely St. Dorothy. Also known as

²⁴⁷ The wheel is described in the c. 1260 *The Golden Legend* as, "studded with iron saws and sharp-pointed nails;" Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), vol. II: 338.

²⁴⁸ Besides both saints being early Christian deacons and martyrs, they were joined further by their relics; Stephen's were translated to Lawrence's tomb at San Lorenzo fuori le Mura in Rome in 425. Both saints were especially venerated in the mid fifteenth century, after the veracity of Lawrence's relics were reaffirmed in the late 1440s and Pope Nicholas V (r. 1447-55) restored San Lorenzo fuori le Mura. Their lives were memorably frescoed by Fra Angelico in Pope Nicholas's private chapel in the Vatican Palace in 1448. For that cycle, see Diane Cole Ahl, *Fra Angelico* (London: Phaidon, 2008), 161-4 and 169-8, and Innocenzo Venchi, et al., *Fra Angelico and the Chapel of Nicholas V* (Vatican City: Edizioni Musei Vaticani, 1999).

²⁴⁹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 248; Kecks, *Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei*, 209; Gemma Landolfi, "Domenico di Tommaso Bigordi, detto Domenico Ghirlandaio (1449-1494)," in *Nel secolo di Lorenzo: restauri di opere d'arte del Quattrocento*, ed. Mariagiulia Burrelli (Pisa: Pacini, 1993): 151-167, 156. The placard currently in place next to the painting in the Museo Nazionale identifies her as St. Cecilia.

St. Dorothea of Caesarea, she was an early Christian martyr and virgin, and the patron saint of flowers. She is often depicted with a crown of flowers in her hair, and, in particular, she is juxtaposed with St. Catherine of Alexandria as one of the early Christian virgin-martyrs.²⁵⁰ Her presence here with prominent fellow early Christian martyrs thus seems entirely appropriate, and particularly so given the Gesuati's concentration on suffering and on the propagation of the faith.

The second, smaller altarpiece that Ghirlandaio made for the Gesuati in Pisa also shows the Madonna and Child enthroned in the center, in front of a colored marble wall with a blue sky with white clouds behind (fig. 2). The Madonna here wears a pinkish-red dress tied with a simple woven cord at the waist, as well as a dark blue mantle. The Christ Child, again nude except for a translucent loin cloth that the Virgin drapes over his lower body, stands on his mother's right knee and gingerly rests his left arm on her neck. While the throne of the Madonna with its shell-shaped niche in this panel is almost identical to that in the larger altarpiece, the top of the semi-circular throne has an inscription in gold that reads, "AVE MARIA GRATIA PLENA DOMIN," or "Hail Mary, Full of Grace, the Lord [is with thee]." The angel Gabriel's greeting to the Virgin at the Annunciation, the phrase is also the first line of the Catholic rosary and was used in numerous musical and spoken liturgies in the

St. Rose can be ruled out as she was a Franciscan tertiary, and is thus almost always depicted in brown Franciscan garb. Santa Fina, patron saint of the small Tuscan town of San Gimignano, was little venerated outside that city. St. Cecilia, a patron saint of music, almost always has instruments or other musical attributes with her. And St. Rosa of Palermo, like Santa Fina, was only commonly venerated in Palermo, Sicily; although she is often depicted with a crown of flowers, her more common attributes of hammer and chisel are also not present in Ghirlandaio's painting. For all these saints, see their entries in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, eds. Charles Herbermann, et al., 15 vols. (New York: Encyclopedia Press, 1913).

²⁵⁰ Gabriel Meier, "St. Dorothea," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1909), vol. V., <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05135d.htm>>.

Middle Age and the Renaissance. Cascading down the one step up to the Virgin's throne is a Turkish-style²⁵¹ rug in green, red, and white.

There are no firm identifications of the saints, whom scholars since the nineteenth century have identified variously as Sts. Paul, Matthew, Jerome, Raphael, Benedict, Giovanni Gualberto, Joachim, Bernard, and Augustine.²⁵² Careful study of Ghirlandaio's *oeuvre*, as well as the history and concerns of the Gesuati, however, reveals the saints to most likely be, from left to right, Matthew, Jerome, the angel Raphael, and Benedict. St. Jerome, second from the left and here bearded, wearing a red robe, and holding a book with a gold starburst on it, is certainly appropriate as he was both the titular saint of the church and the most venerated Gesuati saint.

Ghirlandaio's well-known fresco of the saint in Florence's church of Ognissanti (fig. 52: 1480) seems to confirm such an identification, as the Florentine St. Jerome is remarkably similar in dress and physiognomy to the artist's slightly earlier image of him in Pisa. St. Benedict, on the far right with a long, white beard and wearing a white cassock and holding a cane in his hand, would be appropriate for the Gesuati as his rule originally governed the order. Ghirlandaio's depiction of Benedict also accords with the rendering of him by the artist and his workshop in the recently

²⁵¹ The design is similar to those from fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Turkey compiled in Julius Lessing, *Alt orientalische Teppichmuster, nach Bildern und Originalen des XV-XVI Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: E. Wasmuth, 1877); cf. David Young Kim, "Lotto's Carpets: Materiality, Textiles, and Composition in Renaissance Painting," *The Art Bulletin* 98, no. 2 (June 2016): 181-212. Kim reproduces some of the designs as fig. 4, pg. 184.

²⁵² Crowe and Cavalcaselle identified the saints as, from left to right, Sts. Jerome and Joachim, and the far right saint as St. Bernard; Joseph Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, *Storia della pittura in Italia*, 11 vols. (Florence: LeMonnier, 1886-1908), vol. VII (1896): 446-447. Augusto Bellini-Pietri, writing in 1909, saw the saints as Matthew, Augustine, Raphael, and Giovanni Gualberto; Augusto Bellini-Pietri, "Di due tavole del Ghirlandaio nel Museo Civico di Pisa," *Bollettino d'arte* 3 (1909): 326-329. Gemma Landolfi, in 1993, identified the saints as unknown; St. Jerome; Raphael; and St. Bernard; Landolfi 162, 165. More recently Cadogan has argued for Sts. Matthew or Paul; Jerome; Raphael; and Giovanni Gualberto; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 249.

restored “Vallombrosan Altarpiece” (fig. 53: c. 1485),²⁵³ which shows a very similar Benedict in dress and physicality to Ghirlandaio’s saint in Pisa.

Ghirlandaio’s definitive image of the angel Raphael in the Florentine Gesuati San Giusto altarpiece, to be discussed presently, also accords with the artist’s depiction of him in Pisa; both have on golden gowns with red-and-green mantles, and both hold a small dish or wafer in their hands. An angel primarily associated with healing and medicine – in the Book of Tobit, Raphael gives Tobias special substances to heal his father’s blindness, while in the apocryphal Book of Enoch, the angel gives Noah a medicine book²⁵⁴ – Raphael would certainly have been appropriate for the Gesuati, an order dedicated to healing the sick. The small circle in the angel’s hands is likely either a Eucharistic host, or perhaps the small dish of fish that Raphael used to heal the blindness of Tobias’s father. The left-most saint is the most difficult to identify as his only attribute is a book and he is physically not particularly individualized with his generic long, brown beard. He is perhaps, as some scholars have suggested, St. Matthew, the repentant tax collector and Gospel writer who is often shown bearded and with a book. Whatever the exact identification, however, Ghirlandaio has clearly emphasized the Gesuati’s concern with reading by including a book with both this saint and with St. Jerome, as well as with Sts. Stephen, Lawrence, and Dorothy in the larger Pisa altarpiece.

²⁵³ See Appendix A, entry III, and Caterina Caneva, ed., *Il Ghirlandaio di Vallombrosa: un restauro difficile, un ritorno trionfale* (Florence: Edifir, 2006), 16.

²⁵⁴ Meredith J. Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 172, 174.

Finally, an unknown donor on the right kneels in profile at the feet of Raphael and Benedict. This young man has short brown hair and wears a black, belted tunic trimmed with brown fur and red fabric. His legs are clothed in red tights and he holds a red hat. His costume is that of a well-to-do young gentleman. His identity remains a mystery, although, as previously suggested, he may have come into contact with Ghirlandaio through the artist's work for Pisa's Opera del Duomo. No documentary evidence remains of the patronage of Pisa's Gesuati or of San Girolamo, making conjecture on his identity or that of his family speculative at best.²⁵⁵ Regardless, his presence in Ghirlandaio's altarpiece signals that the Gesuati in San Girolamo certainly had supportive lay patrons who were willing to donate works of art for the order's small church.

Art historians have long seen Ghirlandaio's larger altarpiece as autograph and the smaller panel as a workshop piece or one produced primarily by Davide Ghirlandaio.²⁵⁶ To be sure, the larger altarpiece is certainly much more refined in modeling, highlights, and overall finish. The folds of the Madonna's robes in the

²⁵⁵ It would appear that any records from San Girolamo were either destroyed when the Gesuati Order was suppressed in the late seventeenth century, or were subsequently destroyed or lost when the contents of the church moved to Sant'Anna in the mid eighteenth century. Any records may additionally have been lost or destroyed when religious orders in general were suppressed in Italy during the Napoleonic invasions of the early nineteenth centuries (though many of these were saved and archived under *fondi* for suppressed orders). The Archivio di Stato di Pisa, for instance, includes some documents from Sant'Anna in the late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth centuries (primarily lists of the names, ages, and parentage of the convent's nuns), but nothing for their neighbors at San Girolamo or for the Gesuati. There may be some information in Pisa's Archivio storico diocesano, but I have thus far not found anything as the majority of documents in that archive concern the city's archbishopric based out of the cathedral, or, alternatively, are later in date. The *fondo* of that archive's "clero e ordini religiose," for instance, is from 1560-1745.

²⁵⁶ Cadogan, for instance, describes the smaller panel as "showing a clear connection to the *oeuvre* of Ghirlandaio...but not entirely, or even primarily executed by the master, as all scholars acknowledge;" Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 249. Kecks implicitly echoes this by not including the painting in either his catalog of what he deems the autograph works of Ghirlandaio, nor in his listing of "directly [or] falsely attributed works;" Kecks, *Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei*, 167, 386.

larger panel, for instance, fall much more naturalistically than those of the Virgin in the smaller panel, and may, in fact, be based on Ghirlandaio's skillful drawing of similar drapery folds in his *Seated Virgin and Child*.²⁵⁷ The gold threads in the robes of Saints Stephen and Lawrence in this panel, similar to fine metal etchings in jewelry, are also suggestive of Ghirlandaio's fine touch and his training as a goldsmith. The smaller panel, particularly the more schematic handling in the Madonna's features, as well as the heavier brushstrokes in the modeling of the saints' robes, does not seem to reach the level of the larger panel, or to have the high degree of finish characteristic of most of Ghirlandaio's autograph works; it should be emphasized, however, that the smaller panel is clearly more damaged than the larger one.²⁵⁸

Given the early partnership and collaboration between Ghirlandaio and his brother, we should not be surprised if Davide aided Domenico in his commissions in Pisa. Ghirlandaio is likely to have designed the settings and compositions of the altarpieces around 1478 shortly after finishing his work in San Gimignano. He then probably painted the entire larger altarpiece before moving onto the smaller one, where the faces of the saints, the carpet, and the donor portrait show the greater refinement of the master's hand. Called to Rome in late 1478 or early 1479 to paint the now-destroyed frescoes in the Tornabuoni family chapel in Santa Maria sopra

²⁵⁷ Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Seated Virgin and Child* (c. 1478-79), black wash on gray linen heightened with white, Gabinetto dei Disegni, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. See Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 297 (entry 90).

²⁵⁸ Crowe and Cavalcaselle noted that the painting was gravely damaged in the late nineteenth century; Crowe and Cavalcaselle VII: 446-447. The painting, as noted by Cadogan in *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 249, was last restored in 1992. For that restoration, see Burrese.

Minerva,²⁵⁹ Ghirlandaio then likely turned over the completion of the smaller altarpiece to Davide, his trusted collaborator. Davide thus likely finished the robes of the saints, the background architecture and sky, and perhaps even the entire figure of the Madonna and Child by 1479.

Given its greater size as well as the clear evidence of the master's hand, the larger panel would logically seem to be the altarpiece in San Girolamo that Vasari described as "for the high altar,"²⁶⁰ and especially so given the greater prestige and importance of that site. The smaller panel, particularly with its donor portrait, would thus seem to be for a side altar, or perhaps an altar on the *tramezzo*, that was sponsored by a parishioner at San Girolamo. Regardless of where each altarpiece originally was placed in San Girolamo, however, both paintings were consistently viewed by the Gesuati. Because the order's members were initially not ordained clerics, their services were conducted by other priests who only performed Masses in the church for the Gesuati. If the laity did attend Mass in a Gesuati church, it was likely in relation to either a special devotion to the order itself or perhaps because a layman or woman was sick and receiving care from the brothers.²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ Both Vasari and Francesco degli Albertini, writing in 1510, mention Ghirlandaio's frescoes for the tomb of Francesca Pitti Tornabuoni in the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome. Commissioned by her husband Giovanni Tornabuoni, the frescoes included scenes from the lives of the Virgin and St. John. See Vasari III: 259-260, and Francesco degli Albertini, *Opusculum de mirabilibus novae urbis Romae*, ed. August Schmarsow (London: British Library Historical Print Editions, 2011), 17. Cadogan discusses the destroyed frescoes in *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 285.

²⁶⁰ See note 234.

²⁶¹ The Gesuati only became ordained priests in 1604, just a few decades before their suppression in 1668. For the lack of ordination of the Gesuati, as well as a description of their services, see Guarnieri 1124-1128, and Blunt 30.

The Gesuati in Florence:

Florence's Gesuati community was founded much earlier than that of Pisa, in 1383.²⁶² According to Florentine Gesuati historian Giovan Battista Uccelli, the city's Gesuati were originally based at the church of "Trinita vecchia" on Via Guelfa, although they may also have worked and lived at the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova.²⁶³ In 1438, they took over the church and convent of San Giusto alle Mura, outside the walls of the city at the Porta Pinti.²⁶⁴ Originally a convent for a community of Augustinian nuns and dedicated to St. Justus of Lyon, a fourth-century saint from Gaul who was bishop of Lyon and later a hermit in Egypt, San Giusto was re-dedicated by the Gesuati to San Giusto of Volterra and St. Jerome.²⁶⁵ The Gesuati immediately began a large-scale renovation and rebuilding campaign at San Giusto that was not completed until the late 1480s.²⁶⁶

²⁶² Guarnieri 1123; Uccelli 57.

²⁶³ Uccelli 57-61.

²⁶⁴ Ibid. 67.

²⁶⁵ Ibid. As with the confusion over whether the relic Lorenzo de' Medici donated to San Giusto was of San Giusto di Volterra or San Zenobius, there is much confusion in the literature as to whether the church of San Giusto was dedicated to St. Justus of Lyon or San Giusto of Volterra. We know that the convent was originally dedicated to St. Justus of Lyon (San Giusto di Lione) because the original Augustinian nuns who founded the convent had a special devotion for that saint, and a relic of that saint's vertebrae was donated to the church in the thirteenth century. The relic donated to the church and the Gesuati by Lorenzo de' Medici sometime in the 1470s, however, was of the arm of San Giusto di Volterra, a late fifth-century Christian missionary to Volterra from northern Africa who later became bishop of the town. Lorenzo likely obtained this relic from Volterra after the city's fall to the Florentines in 1472. Ghirlandaio's high altarpiece for San Giusto thus depicts, in the predella, a scene from the life of San Giusto di Volterra, making the depiction of the saint in the main panel not St. Justus of Lyon, as some scholars still maintain, but San Giusto of Volterra (confusion is heightened even more given the fact that both saints were bishops, and thus would both be depicted in bishop's robes). See Uccelli 38-39 for documents that confirm the church's original dedication to St. Justus of Lyon; and Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 250-251 for the confusion of the saint's identification in Ghirlandaio's altarpiece.

²⁶⁶ Francis Russell, "Towards a Reassessment of Perugino's Lost Fresco of the 'Adoration of the Magi' at San Giusto alle Mura," *The Burlington Magazine* 116, no. 860 (November 1974): 646-652.

The main business of Florence's Gesuati was the production of colored pigments for artists; the brothers also made stained glass windows, perfumes, and medicines.²⁶⁷ This business was highly esteemed, as evidenced not only by the patronage of the city's most prominent artists, but also by that of the civic government. The Signoria, for instance, purchased stained glass windows from the Gesuati at San Giusto in 1490.²⁶⁸ Florence's Gesuati also served as some of the city's most important glass and painting appraisers, as well as contract negotiators. The contract for Ghirlandaio's altarpiece for the Innocenti, for example, was laid out under the direction of "Fra Bernardo di Francesco frate agl'Ingiesuati."²⁶⁹ Fra Bernardo also directed the contract for the Innocenti altarpiece predella to Bartolomeo di Giovanni and the gilding of the frame to Andrea di Giovanni, and assisted in making payments to Ghirlandaio on behalf of the Innocenti.²⁷⁰

San Giusto was destroyed before the siege of Florence in 1529 in order to make way for fortified, defensive walls. Vasari, however, included an extensive description of the complex in his life of Pietro Perugino.²⁷¹ In addition, a survey and valuation of the church survives in a 1529 book preserved at the Getty Research

²⁶⁷ Ibid; Bensi 34.

²⁶⁸ Uccelli 109.

²⁶⁹ Florence, Archivio degli Innocenti, ser. XIII, no. 8, Giornale dal 1484 al 1489, c. 158. Published in Cadogan as doc. 26, A, c. 158 in *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 352.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.; the contract with Bartolomeo di Giovanni is transcribed in Ibid. as A, c. 352 verso; that with Andrea di Giovanni is in Ibid., A, c. 352 verso, page 353. Payments to Ghirlandaio where Fra Bernardo assists are in Ibid., B, c. 424 left and c. 318 right, page 353.

²⁷¹ Vasari III: 570-576.

Institute in Los Angeles.²⁷² The document, called the “Libro delle stime degli edifice private...demoliti per costruire le fortificazioni,” is extraordinary not only for the wealth of information it reveals about the architecture – domestic, ecclesiastical, and civic – of early sixteenth century Florence, but also for the fact that its production was ordered by no less a person than Michelangelo. A member of the city’s Nove delle Milizia at the time of the siege, Michelangelo was charged with both restoring the medieval walls of the city and with building new fortifications that could withstand the attacks of Spanish artillery.²⁷³ The survey, undertaken by the “stimatori del popolo” Giovanni di Zanobi della Parte and Viviano di Lorenzo da Poppi, was meant to be a valuation record for property owners so that they could be appropriately compensated after their buildings were destroyed.²⁷⁴

According to the “Libro delle stime,” the “body” of the church of San Giusto was 44 *braccia* by 23 *braccia*, and included a sacristy and a loggia outside the church with columns.²⁷⁵ Around the high altar was an *intaglio* “tribuna,” a raised wooden

²⁷² “Libro delle stime degli edifice private...demoliti per costruire le fortificazioni...da Michelangelo,” 1 November 1529-20 March 1530, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (860787). The book has been completely digitized by the Getty and is available at <http://rosettaapp.getty.edu:1801/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE716333>.

Guido Rebecchini describes the history of the document and details its sections on the church and convent of San Gallo in his “Beyond Florence’s Walls: A List of Evaluations of Buildings to be Demolished during 1529 to 1530,” *Getty Research Journal* 3 (2011): 163-168. For a consideration of Michelangelo’s architectural plans more broadly, see Mauro Mussolin, “Forme *in fieri*: I modelli architettonici nella progettazione di Michelangelo,” in *Michelangelo e il disegno di architettura*, ed. Caroline Elam (Venice: Marsilio, 2006): 94-111.

²⁷³ Rebecchini 163.

²⁷⁴ Ibid. 163-164.

²⁷⁵ “Al nome di dio addì 20 di dicembre 1529...chiesa e convento de’ frati degli Gesuati posto fuor di porta a pinti nel popolo di san piero maggiore o altro più vero popolo: confinato da primo a via a secondo via...E prima un corpo di chiesa di braccia 44 lunga con la loggia in volta in sulle cholonne fuor di detta chiesa [...] Larga braccia 23 colla sagrestia alta braccia 24 [...] 8 (?) mura maestre..” “Libro

gallery that at San Giusto had pilasters, a decorative cornice, and four conch-shaped “eyes,” likely niches or circular openings on the four sides of the *tribuna*.²⁷⁶ Vasari described the raised choir as being made of walnut wood and in the Doric Order, and he also described a second raised choir in the nave “above the principle door of the church...which was positioned over reinforced wood, and under which was a platform or loft, with very beautiful partitions, and with a row of balustrades that made a border in front of the choir that looked towards the high altar.”²⁷⁷ Vasari asserted that this nave choir was very convenient for the Gesuati for the performance of the night hours of the Divine Office, and for their “particular prayers” and weekday services.²⁷⁸ San Giusto additionally had a stone *tramezzo* at the crossing of the nave and the choir; as in San Marco, this *tramezzo* had a door in the center, which was perhaps opened before the consecration of the Eucharist.²⁷⁹

delle stime” 21 recto. A *braccia* measures approximately 23 inches long, making San Giusto thus 1,012 inches by 529 inches, or 84.3 by 44.08 feet.

Vasari described this exterior loggia as a small entrance cloister: “All’entrare di quel conveto era un piccol chioostro di grandezza appunto quanto la chiesa, cioè lungo braccia quaranta e largo venti; gli archi e volte del quale, che giravano intorno, posavno sopra colonne di pietra, che facevano una spaziosa e molto commoda loggia intorno intorno.” Vasari III: 571.

²⁷⁶ “...colla tribuna sopra all’altare maggiore con pilastri fregio e cornice tutta d’intaglio con 4 occhi di conci in detta tribuna...” “Libro delle stime” 21r.

²⁷⁷ “...e sopra la porta principale della chiesa era un altro coro, che posava sopra un legno armato, e di sotto faceva palco ovvero di balaustri che faceva sponda al dinanzi del coro che guardava verso l’altar maggiore...” Vasari III: 571.

²⁷⁸ “...il qual coro era molto comodo, per l’ore della notte, ai frati di quel convento; e per fare loro particolari orazioni, e similmente per i giorni feriatì.” Ibid.

²⁷⁹ “A mezzo la chiesa era un tramezzo di muro, con una porta traforata dal mezzo in su...” Ibid. 570.

The “Libro delle stime” values San Giusto and its contents at 3,000 gold florins,²⁸⁰ a large amount that attests to the splendor of the church and Vasari’s description of it as “one of the most beautiful and best appointed in all of the state of Florence.”²⁸¹ Ghirlandaio’s altarpiece on the high altar took pride of place in Vasari’s account; he praised the artist’s tempera imitation of gold and his depiction of the Madonna in his life of Ghirlandaio, and called the panel “richly ornamented” in his life of Perugino.²⁸² Surrounded by the *intaglio* choir, and visually privileged behind the *tramezzo*, Ghirlandaio’s San Giusto altarpiece was the visual centerpiece of the Gesuati’s liturgical life at the altar.

Ghirlandaio’s Altarpiece for the Gesuati at San Giusto:

Like his altarpieces for Pisa’s Gesuati, Ghirlandaio’s panel for the high altar of the Gesuati church in Florence is a *sacra conversazione* with the Madonna and Child enthroned with saints. The San Giusto altarpiece, however, is much more elaborate than those of Pisa, and includes more figures, more complex architectural delineation, and greater sumptuousness in the renderings of fabric, armor, flowers, and other details. The enthroned Virgin and Child sit in the center of the panel. The Madonna, whose pose echoes that of the Uffizi drawing connected with the smaller

²⁸⁰ “Insomma quel convento era de’begli e bene accomodate che fussero nello stato di Firenze...” Vasari III: 572.

²⁸¹ “Tutto somma della chiesa et sagrestia in posto detto (?) fiorini tremila Larghi d’oro in oro. Cioè f[iorini] 3000 d’oro in oro.” “Libro delle stime” 21r.

²⁸² “...sopra il qual era l’altar maggiore con molti ornamenti di pietre intagliate; e sopra il detto altare era posta con ricco ornamento una tavola, come si è detto, di mano di Domenico Ghirlandaio.” Vasari III: 570. For the description from the life of Ghirlandaio, see the Introduction and note 1.

Pisa panel, as well as a virtuosic drapery study by Ghirlandaio now in the Louvre²⁸³ (fig. 54), wears a red dress and a richly saturated blue mantle trimmed with gold. As in the larger Pisa altarpiece, she has the gold *stella maris* on her right shoulder. At her neck is a large blue jewel – most likely a sapphire surrounded by pearls – that forms the clasp of her mantle across her chest. The Christ Child, here a particularly chubby baby, sits on her lap and holds his right hand up in blessing to the kneeling saints assembled below.

The Madonna's throne in the San Giusto altarpiece is much more sophisticated and detailed than those of Pisa. At either side of the throne and flanking the Virgin are two gold columns composed of a series of gold vases or urns with floral, vegetal, and scroll motifs. Behind the throne is a sculpted, classical-style niche, complete with a coffered ceiling with floral lozenges and a pediment with pearls, gems, and further gold decoration. As in the smaller Pisa altarpiece, the semicircular front of the niche contains an inscription; here, it reads "A REG...INA C," an abbreviation of "Ave Regina Coeli," of "Hail Mary, Queen of Heaven."

Four angels surround the throne, two on either side. Wearing wreaths of spring flowers on top of their curly hair, each angel gazes in a different direction – one upwards, one out towards the viewer, and the other two towards something seemingly outside the picture frame. The two angels closest to the front of the picture plane hold lilies of the valley, traditional symbols of the Virgin and her purity. Floral emblems of the Virgin are furthered in the vase of flowers at the foot of her throne,

²⁸³ This drawing, *Drapery for a Seated Figure* (late 1470s; gray and black washes on linen, heightened with white; Cabinet des Dessins, Musée du Louvre, Paris), has long been attributed to Leonardo da Vinci. Cadogan, however, convincingly links it to Ghirlandaio's working method and stylistic development in the late 1470s. See Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 110 and 303.

which contains lilies, roses, and small white, blue, and yellow wildflowers.

Underneath the vase, and falling over the step up towards the Madonna's throne is a Turkish-style carpet.²⁸⁴ As in the Pisa altarpieces, a wall forms the background of the painting. This wall is fenestrated, with a view towards an idyllic Tuscan countryside of rolling hills and cypress and orange trees, and includes a pediment with the same gold- and gem-encrusted decoration as the Madonna's throne.

Around the Madonna's throne are four saints. The angels Michael and Raphael stand on the steps leading up to the throne, while Sts. Zenobius and Giusto kneel below. St. Michael the Archangel wears his traditional armor and holds a sword, and turns towards the Virgin and Christ Child. Raphael, looking out towards the viewer, holds a small, white circular object in his right hand; as in the smaller Pisa altarpiece, it is likely either a Eucharistic host or the vessel of fish gall that Raphael uses to help heal Tobit. The bearded Sts. Giusto and Zenobius, both wearing bishop's garb, kneel and turn towards the Virgin and Child. St. Zenobius, the first bishop of Florence, is particularly identifiable on the right by the red Florentine lily on the clasp of his cope.

The predella of the San Giusto altarpiece contains five panels that depict narrative moments from the lives of the saints and the Virgin: *St. Michael Fighting the Rebel Angels*; *Sts. Giusto and Clemente Distributing Bread to Soldiers at the Siege of Volterra*; *The Marriage of the Virgin*; *Translation of the Body of St. Zenobius*; and *Tobias and the Angel*.²⁸⁵ While the predella panels have been attributed

²⁸⁴ See note 252.

²⁸⁵ The predella panels are all by Bartolomeo di Giovanni (c. mid 1480s, tempera on panel). *St. Michael Fighting the Rebel Angels* is in the Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit. *Sts. Giusto and Clemente*

to Francesco Botticini, Sebastiano Mainardi, the Ghirlandaio workshop, and even to Ghirlandaio himself,²⁸⁶ they were most likely painted by Bartolomeo di Giovanni, Ghirlandaio's frequent collaborator in predellas.²⁸⁷ Given his long-standing work with Ghirlandaio, as well as the stylistic similarities in facial features and modeling between the San Giusto predella and Bartolomeo's other documented works, it is highly likely that Ghirlandaio turned over the painting of the San Giusto predella to Bartolomeo rather than painting them himself.

The San Giusto altarpiece has been largely dated to the late 1470s and early 1480s.²⁸⁸ Stylistically, the San Giusto altarpiece is more sophisticated in composition and form than the earlier Pisa panels, making a date of the early 1480s, when Ghirlandaio returned to Florence after years of itinerant work in Tuscany and Rome, appropriate. As Cadogan has affirmed, the San Giusto altarpiece was completed by June 1486 at the latest, as the contract between the Innocenti and Antonio di Sangallo for the frame of Ghirlandaio's Innocenti altarpiece states that it should be in the style of the frame of Ghirlandaio's San Giusto altarpiece.²⁸⁹ The continued renovation of

Distributing Bread is in the National Gallery, London. The three other panels are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

²⁸⁶ For Botticini, see Osvald Sirén, *A Descriptive Catalog of the Pictures in the Jarves Collection belonging to Yale University* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1916), 21-26. For Mainardi, see Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, *Italienische Forschungen*, 3 vols. (Berlin: Nicolai'sche buchhandlung, 1827-31), vol. II: 285, 287. For the workshop, see the citations listed by Cadogan in *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 250-251, as well as Berenson, *The Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, 63. For Ghirlandaio himself, see Fahy, *Some Followers of Domenico Ghirlandajo*, 146 and Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 251.

²⁸⁷ Bartolomeo painted the predellas for Ghirlandaio's altarpieces for the Innocenti and San Marco in Florence, Lucca's cathedral, and San Girolamo in Narni. See Pons 11-30.

²⁸⁸ Most recently, Cadogan dated it to c. 1479-1480 based solely on stylistic evidence; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 251-252.

²⁸⁹ "...el quale adornamento ditto Antonio debbe...esse nel modo e forma chome per disegno dato per detto Antonio di sopra, intagliato e lavorato sechondo l'adornamento della tavola ch'è al presente nella chiesa degl'Ingiesuati all'altare maggiore..." Florence, Archivio degli Innocenti, ser. XIII, no. 8,

San Giusto until 1487, as well as Perugino's documented work in the complex's church and cloisters in the mid 1480s,²⁹⁰ suggests that Ghirlandaio was most likely commissioned by the Gesuati around the same time. It is possible that Ghirlandaio received the commission for the San Giusto altarpiece upon returning to Florence in 1480; perhaps even his work for Pisa's Gesuati immediately recommended him to Florence's congregation. The artist's likely work in Lucca in 1480 (see Chapter 4), however, as well as his documented work in fresco at Florence's Ognissanti and Santa Trinita mitigates the likelihood of such an earlier date, given the scale and number of these works. Furthermore, Ghirlandaio's sojourn in Rome from 1481 until 1482, when he helped fresco the lateral walls of the Sistine Chapel, strongly suggests that he would not have begun the San Giusto altarpiece until after his return to Florence in 1482.

Message and Meaning in Ghirlandaio's Altarpieces for the Gesuati:

Ghirlandaio's three altarpieces for the Gesuati in Pisa and Florence reflect the order's concerns with suffering, healing, aid to the poor, and asceticism. The larger Pisa altarpiece's Sts. Catherine of Alexandria, Stephen, Lawrence, and Dorothy were all early Christian martyrs who suffered for the faith, mirroring the words of Gesuati founder Colombini in his famous laud to Christ that, "[even] Being afflicted, annihilated, and driven away.../You, blessed Jesus, will never depart from me."²⁹¹

The books in the hands of Sts. Stephen, Lawrence, and Dorothy, as well as the

Giornale dal 1484 al 1489, c. 158 verso, 6 giugno 1486. Published as doc. 26, A, c. 158 verso in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 352.

²⁹⁰ See Russell.

²⁹¹ "Essendo afflitta, annilata e scacciata.../Non ti partir da Iesu benedetto." Published in the last chapter of Belcari as "Laude del Bianco Iesuato," 177-179, 178 (lines 35 and 38).

possible St. Matthew and St. Jerome in the smaller panel, allude to the order's promotion of personal reading and meditation by its brothers – the private, personal study of God promoted by the order as opposed to formal instruction. Sts. Jerome and Benedict in the smaller Pisa altarpiece reference the order's most venerated saint, a model of ascetic devotion towards God, as well as the saint whose rule originally governed the order and the lives of the brothers. In addition to the healing that is particularly associated with the angel Raphael, the altarpieces' other angels are links to the Gesuati's service towards others, as angels were traditional harbingers of comfort, aide, and welfare.²⁹²

The choice of subjects for the predella of the San Giusto altarpiece, like the saints in the main panel, stresses particular Gesuati concerns. The scene of Tobias and Raphael emphasizes healing, the main charitable practice of the order, while the panel of Sts. Giusto and Clemente of Volterra distributing bread to Volterra's soldiers highlights almsgiving and aid to the needy. The translation of the body of St. Zenobius, while less germane to the Gesuati themselves (as their relic at San Giusto was of the Volterranean saint), nonetheless concerns the potency of relics contained at the altar and identifies the San Giusto community as distinctly Florentine. These scenes, along with those of the Virgin and St. Michael, present the active life of the faith in contrast to the more contemplative aspects of the saints in the main panel. The

²⁹² See Voragine's seven reasons for honoring angels in *The Golden Legend* II: 207-211. See also Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven*.

predella panels overall are points of visual transition: from the sacred contents of the altar to the timeless and idealized vision of heavenly communion in the main panel.²⁹³

As *sacre conversazioni*, the three Gesuati altarpieces present one of the most ubiquitous – but as discussed in Chapter 2, appropriate – iconographies for altarpieces. Ghirlandaio's panels are distinguished, however, by several details that showcase the artist's understanding of the theme as one that unites the notions of the altarpiece as a threshold to heaven and as an emblem of heavenly community.²⁹⁴

Ghirlandaio first varies the glances of the figures in the altarpieces, stressing that his panels do not present an imagined conversation between the saints, but rather an eternal gathering of sacred presence and proximity to the divine. Ghirlandaio's parallelism in the figures through gesture and dress augments the communion among the gathered saints. In the larger Pisa altarpiece, Sts. Stephen and Lawrence, dressed in the same deacon's robes, both hold martyr's palms in their right hands with their arms held up next to their chests. The poses of Sts. Catherine and Dorothy, who both turn towards the Virgin, also mirror each other. St. Jerome and Raphael in the smaller Pisa altarpiece have a similar echoing of arms; here, one arm is crooked at the elbow while the other is loose at the side. In the San Giusto altarpiece, Sts. Giusto and Zenobius, dressed almost identically in white robes, elaborate copes, and miters, hold their hands in similar gestures of prayer and supplication while also both kneeling and

²⁹³ This is similar to Hood's notion of the "bridge" from the main panel of Fra Angelico's San Marco altarpiece to the fictive crucifix to the altar and the Eucharist contained there. See Chapter 2 and Hood, *Fra Angelico at San Marco*, 110.

²⁹⁴ Rona Goffen memorably redefined the *sacre conversazione* as one that unites the Virgin and Christ "physically and psychologically with the saints accompanying them, in a 'holy community' joined together outside historical or narrative time and events." Rona Goffen, "*Nostra Conversatio in Caelis Est*: Observations on the *Sacre Conversazione* in the Trecento," *The Art Bulletin* 61, no. 2 (June 1979): 198-222, 202.

turning towards the Virgin and Child. While this harmony in gesture and costume certainly balances the compositions of the altarpieces,²⁹⁵ Ghirlandaio, nonetheless, uses it to effectively further the sense of unified celestial communion between the saints and the divine.

Ghirlandaio's richly saturated colors in his Gesuati altarpieces – goldenrod, forest green, vermillion, pink, lavender, slate, and deep blue – present further parallelism. In the larger Pisa altarpiece, for instance, the robes of Sts. Stephen and Lawrence are both pink and grey. Tellingly, Ghirlandaio shows St. Stephen's mantle as having pink sleeves and a large grey panel in the front-middle, while St. Lawrence has the opposite: grey sleeves and a large pink panel in the middle of his robes. In the smaller Pisa altarpiece, the eye is led from the yellow fabric edging St. Matthew's robes across to the yellow of Raphael's, while similarly, in the San Giusto altarpiece, Ghirlandaio diagonally matches reds in the cope of St. Giusto and in a portion of Raphael's cloak, and in the blues in the clothing of the Virgin and St. Zenobius. Ghirlandaio's tempera color in his Gesuati paintings – singled out by Vasari for replicating the sheen and gloss of oil – indicates both his own particular and careful handling of pigment, as much as it also enhances the sense of celestial unity among the sacred figures depicted in the altarpieces.

Ghirlandaio's imitation of metals, colored marble, and carpets in the altarpieces emphasizes the artist's skills in virtuosic illusionism, as much as it also indicates the altarpieces' status as works of both sacred and artistic provenance.

Ghirlandaio's carpets are particularly important. Their placement on the steps leading

²⁹⁵ The parallelism may have also been practical, as Ghirlandaio and Davide may have used the same cartoons for the altarpieces.

up to the Virgin's throne honors the Madonna and Child's presence,²⁹⁶ but it also crucially directs the viewer towards the divine. As the beholder's eyes follow the steps up to the Christ Child and his mother, the carpet, in the words of David Young Kim, "encourages visual approach or ascent."²⁹⁷ In this sense, it mirrors the contemplative ascent from the earthly to the heavenly that was advanced in both the liturgies of the altar and in altarpieces themselves. Ghirlandaio accentuates this role of the carpet by having the saints sit or stand on it: Sts. Zenobius and Giusto rest their knees on the carpet in the San Giusto altarpiece, while St. Jerome and Raphael stand on top of it in the smaller Pisa altarpiece.

It is tempting to imagine the Gesuati – themselves creators of material goods like stained glass, books, and colored pigments – as being especially attuned to the spiritual potentials of material things like marble, metal, color, and carpets. Ghirlandaio's fictive evocation of these materials in his Gesuati altarpieces communicates his skills as an artist as much as it also shows him to be the mediator of these materials and the sacred messages they might convey.²⁹⁸ In his altarpieces for the Gesuati, Ghirlandaio created a timeless evocation of both Gesuati ideals and the ideals of the altarpiece: a visual indication of divine presence that here also emblemizes Gesuati identity.

²⁹⁶ Kim 187; see also John Mills, "Carpets in Paintings: the 'Bellini,' 'Keyhole,' or 'Re-Entrant' Rugs," *Hali* 13 (1991): 86-103.

²⁹⁷ Kim 189.

²⁹⁸ As a creator of sacred pictures, Ghirlandaio himself was an instigator of devotion, as discussed in Chapter 2 with St. Gregory's apology for religious images. Alberti also described painting more generally as "a very great gift to men that...has represented the gods they worship, for painting has contributed considerable to the piety which binds us to the gods, and to filling our mind with sound religious belief." Alberti, *On Painting*, 60. My thoughts on materiality and the sacred were influenced by Caroline Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Zone Books, 2011).

Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Narni's Observant Franciscans:

In 1484, in the midst of a particularly busy period in his career as he finished his frescoes for the Sassetti Chapel and worked on his altarpiece for San Giusto, Ghirlandaio received a commission for a painting well outside the confines of his native city. Appointed by Fra Giovanni di Galeotti of the Observant Friars Minor at San Girolamo in Narni, a small town in southern Umbria, Ghirlandaio was tasked with making a large altarpiece for the high altar of the recently renovated church.²⁹⁹ Depicting the Coronation of the Virgin surrounded by saints and angels, the altarpiece is Ghirlandaio's largest at over 300 centimeters high (fig. 6: 1484-1486; tempera and gold on panel; Museo Eroli, Narni).³⁰⁰ Lunette-shaped, and with extensive tooled and punched gilding, the altarpiece also incorporates a three-panel predella by Bartolomeo di Giovanni with scenes of the *Stigmatization of St. Francis*; *Ecce Homo*; and *St. Jerome in the Wilderness*.³⁰¹ The large and lavish frame, also elaborately gilded, features red and blue angels on the arched top, and various Franciscan saints on the two side pilasters.

²⁹⁹ We know that Ghirlandaio was commissioned sometime in 1484 and had completed his Narni altarpiece by 1486 because of a notarial appraisal document now preserved in the Archivio di Stato in Florence. The 1486 document appoints a new appraiser for Ghirlandaio's completed altarpiece, as the original appraiser, the illuminator Francesco d'Antonio, had died in October 1484. Thus, as Cadogan posits, "the commission must have been given before the death of the original appraiser, that is, before October 1484, and had been completed, the document tells us, by 3 June 1486;" Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 256. The document is published in Ibid. as document 27, page 357. The original notation from the Archivio di Stato is Notarile antecosimiano 10951 (formerly G 849) (Ser Domenico Guiducci di Firenze), pt. 3 (1485-90), c. 10.

³⁰⁰ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 255. The altarpiece measures 330 centimeters.

³⁰¹ Pons 17-18. Cadogan also sees work by Davide in the predella. See Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 256.

The Observant Franciscans:

Founded by St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) in 1209, the Order of Friars Minor, or Franciscan Order, was originally a mendicant religious group dedicated to total poverty and to public preaching. Eschewing any form of property ownership – from shoes and clothing to houses and churches – the order stressed direct imitation of the humble, poor, and peripatetic life of Christ. In its early years, the fledgling order strictly followed Francis's rule of complete poverty, chastity, and obedience, becoming known for austerity and simplicity, as well as for fiery and passionate sermons.³⁰² As the order grew, however, it relaxed many of St. Francis's strict guidelines. By the late fifteenth century, when the Franciscan Pope Sixtus IV (r. 1471-84) was elected, the Franciscan Order was similar to others, possessing large churches and convents and beneficed priests.³⁰³

In response to this “normalizing” of the Franciscan Order, the Observant Franciscans emerged in the late fourteenth century in Umbria.³⁰⁴ Like other Observant movements, they stressed a return to the primitive roots of the order's

³⁰² For medieval Franciscan homiletics, see Daniel Lesnick, *Preaching in Medieval Florence: The Social World of Franciscan and Dominican Spirituality* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1989).

³⁰³ The literature on the Franciscans is vast. The texts I have found most helpful are: John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order from its Origins to the Year 1517* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968); Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division in the Medieval Franciscan Order: From St. Francis to the Foundation of the Capuchins* (Rome: Capuchin Historical Institute, 1987); and Grado Merlo, *In the Name of St. Francis: History of the Friars Minor and Franciscanism until the Early Sixteenth Century*, trans. Raphael Bonnanno, eds. Robert Karris and Jean Francois Giodet-Calogeras (St. Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute, 2009). And while it has been criticized for taking a rather uncritical approach to the primary sources describing Francis's life, Adrian House's *Francis of Assisi: A Revolutionary Life* (New York: HiddenSpring, 2001) remains a riveting account of the founder's life.

³⁰⁴ Moorman 441. The Observant Franciscans specifically traced their origins to Fra Paoluccio di Vagnozzo, sometimes known as Fra Paoluccio Trinci, who was a Franciscan in Brogliano, a small town on the border between Umbria and Le Marche. See Roberto Cobianchi, *Lo temperato uso delle cose: La committenza dell'Osservanza francescana nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2013), 1.

foundation.³⁰⁵ For the Observant Franciscans, this largely meant a return to individual and corporate poverty, and, at least initially, to a greater stress on eremiticism and private, contemplative prayer as opposed to public preaching.³⁰⁶ As Franciscan historian John Moorman puts it, “the policy of the Observants contained nothing that was new. Their only desire was to adhere more closely to the [Franciscan] Rule, and so to recreate the conditions under which the first friars had lived in the days of real poverty and insecurity...they wanted to rescue the Order and set it up again as the ideal of evangelical perfection.”³⁰⁷

Observant congregations and houses were typically founded after the brothers received an invitation from the laity of a particular city or town. These brothers would usually take over an unoccupied church or convent outside the city’s walls, renovating and/or reconstructing the structure after receiving patronage from the same devoted citizens. Observant Franciscan churches tended to have more confessionals and smaller, single naves in keeping with their stricter ascetic ideals.³⁰⁸

The Observant Franciscans in Narni:

The Observant Franciscans arrived in Narni in 1471 and took over the formerly Benedictine convent of San Girolamo just outside the city.³⁰⁹ They came to

³⁰⁵ Although it pertains particularly to the Dominican Observance, Hood’s account in *Fra Angelico at San Marco* remains a cogent introduction to the Observant reforms of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. See Hood 15-27.

³⁰⁶ Moorman 457-458.

³⁰⁷ Ibid. 444.

³⁰⁸ Roberto Cobianchi, “The Practice of Confession and Franciscan Observant Churches: New Architectural Arrangements in Early Renaissance Italy,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 69 (2006): 289-304; see also Cooper.

³⁰⁹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 256; Roberto Nini, “Una sorprendente cascata di luce. L’Incoronazione del Ghirlandaio nella sua primitiva collocazione,” in *Ghirlandaio: la pala di Narni*

Narni explicitly on the invitation of Cardinal Berardo Eroli (1409-1479), one of the city's most prominent and wealthy citizens.³¹⁰ In many ways a humanist-cleric *par excellence*, Berardo di Ludovico Eroli was a scion of Narni's most illustrious family, a noted jurist, and the first bishop of Spoleto, appointed by Pope Nicholas V in 1448.³¹¹ Close with both popes and nobility, Eroli became the private *consigliere* for papal judicial affairs in 1450, and was named cardinal by Pope Pius II (r. 1458-64) in 1462.³¹² Known as much for his legal acumen as for his close relationship with the papacy, Eroli was also a noted patron of the arts. He patronized Benozzo Gozzoli at Montefalco in the 1450s; initiated renovations to the façade of Perugia's cathedral in 1462; hired Fra Filippo Lippi in the early 1460s to fresco Spoleto's cathedral; and also commissioned and/or bought works from Vecchietta and Pinturicchio.³¹³

The Observant Franciscans initially declined Eroli's offer to come to Narni as they deemed San Girolamo much too large and luxurious for their austere and simple ideals.³¹⁴ But Eroli's insistence finally won them over. San Girolamo itself, built sometime in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth centuries, was originally a single-nave structure in both late-Romanesque and Gothic styles with rib vaulting in a local

(Terni: Provincia di Terni, 2004): 75-76, 75. The convent had been abandoned by the Benedictines after briefly being occupied by a group of Dominicans in 1413.

³¹⁰ Roberto Stopponi, "Berardo Eroli: un cardinale aperto ai nuovi fermenti culturali," in *Ghirlandaio: la pala di Narni*: 79-81; Daniele Manacorda and Francesco Mancini, eds., *Museo della città in Palazzo Eroli a Narni* (Prato: Giunti, 2012), 352.

³¹¹ Stopponi; Alessandro Novelli, "La nobile casata degli Eroli e il Palazzo della famiglia a Narni," in *Museo della città in Palazzo Eroli a Narni*: 115-151, 115.

³¹² Stopponi 81.

³¹³ Manacorda and Mancini 352; Stopponi 79.

³¹⁴ Cobianchi, *Lo temperato uso*, 94.

white stone.³¹⁵ Like most Franciscan churches, and particularly for those in Umbria, it likely had a *tramezzo* that separated the choir from the nave.³¹⁶ Eroli initiated renovations to the church almost immediately after he convinced the Observant Franciscans to establish a community there. These renovations included an expansion of the church to include lateral chapels, and the commissioning of several new works of art to adorn the interior.³¹⁷

Ghirlandaio and Narni:

As in his altarpieces for the Gesuati, Ghirlandaio likely received the Narni commission through several interconnected channels of patronage. The commission appears to have been a joint initiative of San Girolamo's Observant Franciscans and the Eroli family. The appraisal document of 1486 attests to the active involvement of Fra Giovanni Galeotti, the procurator of San Girolamo at the time of Ghirlandaio's commission in 1484.³¹⁸ The large size and lavish materials of Ghirlandaio's completed altarpiece, however, point towards lay-patron participation in the commission and design of the painting. While Berardo Eroli had died in 1479, some five years before Ghirlandaio was hired, it is probable that he provided funds for a new high altarpiece for San Girolamo in his will.³¹⁹ Berardo Eroli's nephew,

³¹⁵ Nini 75. The church was abandoned during the Napoleonic Wars after several subsequent renovations and then passed to the city of Narni in the late nineteenth century. It then became a private home throughout much of the twentieth century before again passing into the hands of the city where it remains (closed) today. Local Narni newspapers report it may become a luxury hotel, but it currently remains closed to the public.

³¹⁶ Cooper 47-48.

³¹⁷ Nini 75.

³¹⁸ Manacorda and Mancini 349.

³¹⁹ Ibid. 352.

Constantino, who had taken over his deceased uncle's position as bishop of Spoleto, then likely carried out his kinsman's wishes by commissioning Ghirlandaio sometime in 1484.³²⁰

Ghirlandaio himself may have come into contact with Berardo Eroli when the artist was in Rome in the mid 1470s, first in his frescoes for the Vatican Library in 1475 and then in his tomb murals for the Tornabuoni family chapel in Santa Maria sopra Minerva in 1478-79. Eroli also had close relations with the Medici in the late 1470s, and they may have perhaps recommended Ghirlandaio to the Umbrian cardinal.³²¹ If Ghirlandaio also briefly apprenticed under Fra Filippo Lippi in the 1460s, the young artist may have additionally met Eroli when Lippi was frescoing the apse of Spoleto's cathedral, a commission the Carmelite friar received from Eroli himself.

The appraisal document undertaken by a Florentine notary suggests that Ghirlandaio never traveled to Narni, but, rather, produced the altarpiece entirely in his studio in Florence. Ghirlandaio must have been in close contact, however, with Fra Galeotti and perhaps other Franciscans at San Girolamo throughout the process; the choice of saints, most particular to the Observant Franciscans, would certainly have necessitated communication with the friars, and the expense of the gold used in the completed painting would have also required approval. Ghirlandaio likely produced the altarpiece almost entirely in 1485, when he was just finishing up the Sassetti Chapel frescoes and only in the initial stages of the Tornabuoni Chapel murals in

³²⁰ Ibid. 358.

³²¹ Ibid. 353.

Santa Maria Novella. The altarpiece was likely shipped to Narni in the summer of 1486, after it was appraised in Florence in early June of that year.

Since the nineteenth century, scholars have attributed most of the altarpiece's painting to Ghirlandaio's workshop.³²² It is this author's opinion, however, that although some of the figures, particularly the angels and upper-level saints, were exclusively completed by the workshop, the majority of the altarpiece, especially the fine portrait heads of the kneeling saints at the bottom of the main panel, shows Ghirlandaio's skilled and sensitive touch. Three existing preparatory drawings, now in Rome (fig. 45), Bayonne, and Florence,³²³ additionally show Ghirlandaio to have been actively involved in the conception and composition of the altarpiece. More recent technical evidence also suggests Ghirlandaio's direct hand in the creation of the altarpiece; infrared reflectography conducted in 2004 shows that no pricked cartoon was used for the figures, suggesting that Ghirlandaio himself principally painted them rather than preparing a cartoon that his assistants would have used.³²⁴ The painting's conservator also affirms that the intricacy of the gold tooling and

³²² Cadogan includes an extensive list of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century attributions to the workshop in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 256. More recently, Emma Micheletti, Lisa Venturini, and Kecks have also affirmed workshop participation; see Emma Micheletti, *Domenico Ghirlandaio* (Florence: Scala, 1990), 64; Lisa Venturini, "Tre tabernacoli di Sebastiano Mainardi," *Kermes* V, no. 15 (September-December 1992): 41-48; and Kecks, *Ghirlandaio und die Malerei*, 331-2. Cadogan largely sees Davide's hand in the altarpiece; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 256.

³²³ These drawings are *Coronation of the Virgin* (c. 1484-1486), pen, brown ink, and brown wash over black chalk on cream-colored paper, Istituto Nazionale per la Grafica, Rome; *Coronation of the Virgin* (c. 1484-1486), pen, brown ink, and brown wash on pink prepared paper, heightened with white, Musée Bonnat, Bayonne; *Coronation of the Virgin* (c. 1484-1486), pen and brown ink on cream prepared paper, Gabinetto dei Disegni, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. Cadogan discusses them in *Domenico Ghirlandaio* 288, 298, and 304.

³²⁴ Michele Benucci, "In linea con la tradizione fiorentina del Quattrocento," in *Ghirlandaio: La pala di Narni*: 59-61, 60.

incisions in the background of the work could only have been done by someone as skilled as goldsmith-trained Ghirlandaio himself.³²⁵

Ghirlandaio's Narni Altarpiece:

At over ten feet high and extensively gilded, Ghirlandaio's Narni altarpiece is the artist's largest and grandest; with over 30 different figures, it is also one of the artist's most complex. The main, lunette-shaped panel is divided into two parts. The top portion shows the Virgin and Christ in the center, floating on blue clouds. The Madonna, wearing a blue robe covered with gold, almost snowflake-like lozenges, as well as her *stella maris* on her left shoulder, kneels on the left with her hands crossed in humility over her chest. Christ, on the right and seated slightly higher on a separate blue cloud held aloft by baby-faced seraphim, places a crown on Mary's head, establishing her as the Queen of Heaven. Between them, in a particularly intricately incised sunburst of golden light, is a three-dimensional gold orb, symbolic of Christ's power and indicative of this coronation moment. To either side of the Virgin and Christ are haloed figures likely meant to represent the saintly community of heaven,³²⁶ as well as music-making angels; the angels here play trumpets, cymbals, the galoubet pipe, a small drum, a tambourine, a *lira da braccio*, and a lute, in addition to singing.³²⁷ Completing the top half of the main panel are two angels who

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Given their lack of recognizable features or attributes, these figures most likely represent a general sense of the faithful in heaven. Cadogan, citing Crowe and Cavalcaselle, also suggests they may be Old Testament prophets and sibyls; see Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 256. More fanciful identifications of them as Adam and Eve, St. George and St. Michael, and Constantino Erolì are proffered in Manacorda and Manicini 357-358.

³²⁷ Maurizio della Porta, "Angeliche voci, musiche celestiali," in *Ghirlandaio: La pala di Narni*: 41-45, 42.

hold a golden canopy over the heads of the Virgin and Christ. Fabric hanging beneath it spells out “VENI ELECTA MEA ET PONAM,” or “Come, my elected one, and I will place [you in my throne],” a section of the fourth antiphon sung during Marian feast days and particularly associated with the coronation of the Virgin.³²⁸

The bottom portion of the main altarpiece panel shows a group of twenty-three saints, who kneel with their hands clasped in prayer and their eyes turned upwards towards the heavenly coronation. These saints have been variously identified,³²⁹ but persuasive identifications can be made as follows: St. Francis, identified by his stigmata wounds and Franciscan habit, kneels in the very center of the group of saints. In front of him to the left are the Franciscan bishop-saints, Louis of Toulouse (1274-1297) and Bonaventure (1221-1274), recognizable here by their Franciscan habits and bishops’ copes. In front of Francis to the right is the titular saint of San Girolamo, St. Jerome, who here looks over his shoulder out at the viewer in

³²⁸ Patrizia Tosini, “Un progetto organico: La pala di Narni nella bottega del Ghirlandaio,” in *Ghirlandaio: La pala di Narni*: 18-39, 29.

³²⁹ For Cadogan, starting from the front-center left and then moving clockwise to the right, these saints are: St. Bonaventure, St. Louis of Toulouse, unknown, St. Peter, St. John, St. Dominic, unknown, St. Clare, unknown, St. Hortulana, St. Bernardino da Siena, St. Francis, a “bishop saint,” St. Catherine of Siena, St. John the Baptist, unknown “female saint,” unknown “male saint,” unknown “male saint,” St. Lawrence, St. Stephen, unknown, St. Anthony of Padua, and St. Jerome. Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 256.

Tosini suggests, in the same clockwise movement, St. Bonaventure, St. Louis of Toulouse, St. Andrew, St. Peter, St. John, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Elisabeth of Hungary, St. Berardo da Calvi (here in the guise of Berardo Erolì), St. Bernardino da Siena, St. Francis, St. Augustine, St. Monica, St. John the Baptist, St. Mary Magdalene, St. Paul, two Moroccan Franciscan martyrs, St. Stephen, St. Lawrence, St. Anthony of Padua, and St. Jerome. Tosini 29-36.

Manacorda and Mancini argue for: St. Bonaventure, St. Louis of Toulouse, St. Paul, St. Peter, St. John, St. Dominic, two Moroccan Franciscan martyrs, St. Elisabeth of Hungary, St. Berardo da Calvi (in the guise of Berardo Erolì), unknown, St. Francis, St. Augustine, St. Clare, St. John the Baptist, St. Mary Magdalene, unknown, two other Moroccan Franciscan martyrs, St. Stephen, St. Lawrence, St. Anthony of Padua, and St. Jerome. Manacorda and Mancini 354.

the same pose of Ghirlandaio's earlier St. Clement in the San Marco altarpiece.³³⁰ St. Anthony of Padua (1195-1231), a Franciscan saint from the earliest days of the order in the thirteenth century, is on Jerome's right. On the left-most edge of the group of saints appear to be three apostolic saints; the white-bearded man on the very left is most likely St. Peter. Behind St. Louis of Toulouse and St. Bonaventure on the left are several saints whose identities are more difficult; the man in a black habit just behind St. Louis of Toulouse is perhaps a Dominican saint, such as St. Dominic or St. Thomas Aquinas.³³¹

The two female Franciscans behind St. Bonaventure are likely either St. Clare (1194-1253), a close companion of St. Francis and founder of the Poor Clares, a group of Franciscan nuns; or St. Elizabeth of Hungary (1207-1231), a Hungarian princess who became a Franciscan tertiary, or lay member of the order. The older, hooded, and androgynous figure directly behind St. Bonaventure and next to St. Francis may be the Beata Ortolana, the mother of St. Clare. Directly behind St. Francis on the left is likely St. Bernardino da Siena (1380-1444), the most influential member of the Observant Franciscans and an influential preacher. To the right of St. Francis are a few recognizable saints: St. John the Baptist, in his camel-hair tunic; St. Stephen, with the stones of his martyrdom on top of his head; most likely his traditional partner, St. Lawrence, right next to him, and here in deacons' robes; and two Franciscan saints with blood on their heads, most likely a reference to recently martyred Franciscan missionaries in Morocco. The black-robed woman behind St.

³³⁰ See Chapter 6.

³³¹ The Augustinians also wore black, however, so this is only conjecture.

Jerome may additionally be the Dominican tertiary St. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380).

While a full, definitive identification of all the saints in the altarpiece is impossible given the lack of authoritative attributes for many of the figures, it is clear that Ghirlandaio's Narni altarpiece includes three kinds of saints: Franciscan saints; martyrs, both from the Early Christian era and likely from recent Franciscan history; and Biblical saints like St. John the Baptist and the apostles. The choice and placement of these particular figures within the vaunted sphere of heaven, as witnesses to the coronation of the Virgin, suggests a sense of sacred, celestial communion and community that would have particularly appealed to Narni's Observant Franciscans. In Ghirlandaio's altarpiece, it is a community of both peers – the Franciscans – whom the friars venerated and aspired to be, as well as a community that includes some of the greatest figures from Biblical history. The inclusion of martyrs for the faith, and ones who were martyred by Muslims, in particular, additionally appealed to long-standing, and particularly Observant, Franciscan concerns. Francis himself had longed to be martyred and traveled as a missionary to Egypt, and the Franciscans became the guardians of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem in the fourteenth century.³³² St. Giovanni da Capestrano (1386-1456), one of the “four pillars” of the Franciscan Observance,³³³ stressed missionary and

³³² Anne Derbes and Amy Neff, “Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere,” in *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)*, ed. Helen Evans (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004): 449-461, 450.

³³³ Along with contemporaries Giacomo della Marca (1393/4-1476) and Alberto da Sarteano (1385-1450), Giovanni da Capestrano and Bernardino da Siena are commonly known as the “Four Pillars of the Observance.” See Cobianchi, *Lo temperato uso*, 2-3.

crusading activity for the order, and even went as far as to participate himself, at the age of 70, in a crusade against the Ottoman Turks in Hungary.³³⁴

The frame and predella continue the specifically Observant Franciscan orientation of the altarpiece, while also connecting the altarpiece to the city of Narni. The saints on the two side pilasters of the frame are likely a mix of both Franciscan and local Narni saints and *beati*.³³⁵ The predella shows the traditional Franciscan theme of St. Francis as *alter Christus*, or “another Christ,” in his reception of the stigmata.³³⁶ Bartolomeo di Giovanni’s inclusion of Francis’s companion, Brother Leo, in the scene appropriately emphasizes the fraternal nature of Franciscanism. The *Ecce Homo* panel in the middle of the predella references Christ’s dead body as sacrifice and salvation. This panel has two small wooden pulleys fixed to its sides, allowing the panel to be removed and creating a small compartment between the other two predella panels.³³⁷ According to the painting’s conservator in Narni, this compartment was likely used as a tabernacle for the Eucharistic host;³³⁸ the *Ecce Homo* on the front is thus an eminently suitable subject for this sacred function. The final predella panel of St. Jerome in the desert refers to both the titular saint of the

³³⁴ Moorman 470-476.

³³⁵ Manacorda and Mancini see on the left, starting from the left pilaster at the bottom: a Clarissan saint; St. Lucia; and St. Eleazario da Sabran. On the right, starting again from the bottom, they identify: Beato Matteo da Narni, a local Franciscan whose body was said to perform miracles; Beato Valentino da Narni, buried in Assisi; and St. Agnese da Assisi, St. Clare’s sister. See Manacorda and Mancini 354-355.

³³⁶ This is a well-documented theme in Franciscan art; for a succinct explanation of it, see Rona Goffen, *Spirituality in Conflict: Saint Francis and Giotto’s Bardi Chapel* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988).

³³⁷ Benucci 60.

³³⁸ Ibid.

church, and, by emphasizing Jerome's asceticism, the ideals of Observant Franciscanism.

The Coronation of the Virgin had long been a popular subject in Italian altarpieces since the late Middle Ages.³³⁹ For the Franciscans, in particular, the subject became an important theme in theological writings and sermons in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.³⁴⁰ St. Anthony of Padua, for example, often referred to the Virgin's regal dignity after her heavenly coronation, and Ubertino da Casale (1259-c. 1329), leader of the Spiritual Franciscans, the precursors to the Observants, described Christ's elevation of Mary to her royal throne in heaven.³⁴¹ St. Bernardino da Siena preached an entire sermon on the Assumption of the Virgin and her subsequent coronation as Queen of Heaven in 1427. His words describing the Virgin in heaven mirror Ghirlandaio's altarpiece: "Mary is surrounded...by angels, apostles, martyrs, and confessors: everyone is turning towards her, giving her the sweetest and most delightful songs and perfumes."³⁴² For Bernardino – and subsequently for the Observant Franciscans – the Virgin's Coronation is the literal

³³⁹ Julian Gardner, "The Franciscan Iconography of the Coronation of the Virgin before Bellini," in *Essays in Honour of John White*, eds. Helen Weston and David Davies (London: University College London, 1990): 63-68, 63.

³⁴⁰ Ibid. 64.

³⁴¹ Ibid. For Anthony of Padua, see Anthony of Padua, *I sermoni*, trans. Giordano Tollardo (Padua: Messaggero, 2002) and L. Di Fonzo, "La Mariologia di Sant'Antonio," in *S. Antonio dottore della chiesa* (Vatican City, 1947): 85-172. For Ubertino da Casale, see Ubertino da Casale, *Arbor vitae crucifixae Christi* (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1961).

³⁴² "...Maria è circondata a tutti i tempi d'angeli, d'apostoli, di martiri, di confessori: tutti le stanno da torno, dandole dolcissimi e soavi canti e odori." Bernardino da Siena, *Le prediche volgari*, ed. Luciano Banchi, 3 vols. (Siena: Tipografia editrice all'insegna di S. Bernardino, 1880-1886), vol I: 24. A more recent reprinting of Bernardino's sermons (and a reprint of the Banchi edition) is *Prediche volgari: sul campo di Siena 1427*, ed. Carlo Delcorno, 2 vols. (Milan: Rusconi, 1989). Cf. Mary Tuck Echols, "The Coronation of the Virgin in Fifteenth Century Italian Art" (Ph.D. diss., The University of Virginia, 1976), 117.

crowning moment of her entrance into and then eternal presence in heaven.

According to Bernardino, God the Father invites Mary to perpetually feast upon his bread and wine, and to feel continual “joy, consolation, triumph, and delight” as she forever gazes upon Him.³⁴³ Bernardino’s words show that the Virgin’s Coronation was as much about the joy of the perpetual vision of God and the saints in heaven as it was about the Madonna’s honor and special status in heaven.

Ghirlandaio emphasizes the importance of perpetual, heavenly vision in his Narni altarpiece by having the work depict three different kinds of imagined seeing. First, there is the heavenly gaze of the saints and angels in the altarpiece as they look towards the Virgin and Christ. Second, there are Christ and the Madonna’s own gazes; she turns her eyes humbly downwards as she receives her celestial diadem, while he looks triumphantly at his mother as he places the crown on her head. Finally, there is the imagined viewer of the altarpiece beholding this delineation of heaven. Ghirlandaio’s interpenetration of these visions – both corporeal (as in the eye of the viewer) and imagined (as in the figures in the altarpiece) – accords with Bernardino’s own imaging of the Coronation. It also reveals Ghirlandaio’s understanding of the painting’s function as an altarpiece – an image that communicates heavenly presence brought to earth at the altar. Moreover, St. Jerome’s outward gazing face acts as an overt invitation to the beholder to join in this celestial revelation. This figures calls upon the imagined Franciscan viewer at San Girolamo to kneel himself with the company of Franciscan brothers and sisters, saints, and martyrs, in this company of heaven.

³⁴³ “...Maria ha tanto gaudio, tanta consolazione, tanto triunfo, tanto diletto...” Bernardino da Siena, *Le prediche volgari*, I: 27. Cf. Echols 119.

Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Volterra's Camaldolesi:

In the early 1490s, Ghirlandaio produced a vertical, lunette-shaped altarpiece depicting Christ with angels and saints for the Camaldolesi of Volterra (fig. 13: c. 1490-92; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Pinacoteca di Volterra, Volterra). Set amidst a verdant Tuscan landscape of rocky hills, green meadows, a small lake, and the seeming outer wall of a fortified castle or city, the altarpiece shows Christ at the top. Lit by a mandorla from behind and supported by clouds and the wings of seraphs, Christ holds his right hand up in blessings towards the assembled saints below. In his other hand, Christ holds a book with the Greek letters alpha and omega, a reference to his exhortation that he is “the first and the last.” Two angels, floating gracefully and with fluttering robes, are on either side of Christ.

Below Jesus and the angels are four saints. St. Benedict, holding an ear of wheat and a book which contains a portion of his rule, stands on the left and looks up towards the divine apparition of Christ in the sky. St. Romuald, founder of the Camaldolese Order, stands on the right, and, pointing up to Christ, looks down towards the lower right corner of the painting. This corner contains the small portrait of Don Giusto di Gherardo de' Bonvicini, the abbot of Volterra's Camaldolesi at the Badia di San Giusto e San Clemente.³⁴⁴ Abbot Bonvicini is seen from behind and from the side, holding his hands piously in prayer towards the holy personages. Completing the painting, in front of Abbot Bonvicini, are two kneeling female saints, Attinia and Greciniana. Early Christian virgin-martyrs of Volterra,³⁴⁵ the young

³⁴⁴ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 264.

³⁴⁵ Umberto Bavoni and Alessandro Furiesi, *Le radici cristiane di Volterra* (Pisa: Pacini, 2009), 97.

women are dressed modestly in red robes and look up towards Christ and the angels with their hands clasped in prayer.

The Camaldolesi:

Founded in the early eleventh century by St. Romuald of Ravenna (c. 950-1027), the Camaldolese Order was originally conceived as a group of like-minded hermits living together in monastic community under the Benedictine Rule. Inspired by the strict austerity of a Venetian hermit named Marinus, Romuald became a hermit in Spain before attracting followers and returning to Italy to found his own hermitage at Camaldoli in the Tuscan countryside.³⁴⁶ Here, Romuald united his new brothers into a joint eremitic-cenobitic life; the men lived in solitude in individual hermit cells, but these cells were all together within the confines of the hermitage property.³⁴⁷ Romuald and his followers at Camaldoli founded several other hermitages on the same model in Italy before the order was approved by Pope Pascal II in 1105.³⁴⁸

As monk-hermits, the Camaldolesi paradoxically emphasized both solitude and community. Living under the Benedictine Rule and led by a “hermit superior,” the brothers alternated their days between strict isolation, silence, and prayer, and communal work.³⁴⁹ This work typically consisted of either study or manual labor.³⁵⁰

The Camaldolesi were particularly involved in the cultivation of the landscape and

³⁴⁶ Ibid.; Peter-Damian Belisle, “Overview of Camaldolese History and Spirituality,” in *The Privilege of Love: Camaldolese Benedictine Spirituality*, ed. Peter-Damian Belisle (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2002): 3-26, 7.

³⁴⁷ Belisle, “Overview of Camaldolese History,” 6.

³⁴⁸ Ibid. 9, note 19.

³⁴⁹ Ibid. 9.

³⁵⁰ G. Cacciamani, “Camaldolesi,” in *Dizionario degli istituti di perfezione*, vol. I: 1718-1728, 1723.

what might be termed landscape architecture or design. The order was known, for example, for opening up and building roads; constructing bridges; regulating waterways; developing artificial lakes; and cultivating both agricultural and forested areas.³⁵¹ The mother-house of Camaldoli, in fact, developed the first forestry code in Italy, and the contemporary order continues to support forestry centers in Arezzo and Pesaro.³⁵²

Education and theological training became increasingly important to the order after its initially strictly eremitical beginnings. In 1253, the order's annual chapter mandated three years of traditional grammar school training; two years of philosophical study; and knowledge of spiritual disciplines and Gregorian song.³⁵³ Brothers were additionally allowed to attend universities for periods of study, and the copying and production of sacred books became important aspects of Camaldolese life. Florence's Camaldolesi at Santa Maria degli Angeli, in particular, became renowned for their manuscript illuminations;³⁵⁴ famed artist and Camaldolese brother Lorenzo Monaco (c. 1370-1425) emerged from this Camaldolese house, as did noted Renaissance humanist, translator of Greek patristic texts, and theologian Ambrogio Traversari (1386-1439). Traversari codified the order's emphasis on enlightened eremiticism, stressing education and labor together with contemplation.³⁵⁵

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Ibid. 1721.

³⁵⁴ Ibid. 1722.

³⁵⁵ William Hyland, "The Climacteric of Late Medieval Camaldolese Spirituality: Ambrogio Traversari, John-Jerome of Prague, and the *Linea salutis heremitarum*," in *Florence and Beyond*:

The Camaldolesi in Volterra:

The Camaldolesi arrived in Volterra in 1113, when they took over the originally Benedictine abbey of San Salvatore. Founded in 1030 by Gunfredo, Bishop of Volterra, and located on the cliff sides of Volterra, just outside the city at the Monte Nibbio, the complex included the two ancient churches of San Giusto and San Clemente.³⁵⁶ The Volterranean brothers established a center of learning and theological training in the fourteenth century, and continued to expand and renovate the Badia from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries.³⁵⁷ The Badia's income and landholdings also increased exponentially throughout the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and included territory in San Gimignano, Montecatini, and Quercia.³⁵⁸ The Badia was unfortunately abandoned in 1861 after centuries of geological encroachment from Volterra's shifting cliffs;³⁵⁹ currently under restoration, the Badia today is an eerie amalgam of crumbled walls and abandoned stones amidst the rocky, grayish-brown landscape that surrounds Volterra.

Culture, Society, and Politics in Renaissance Italy, eds. David Peterson and Daniel Bornstein (Toronto: Center for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008): 107-120, 108 and 118.

³⁵⁶ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 263; Luigi Consortini, *La Badia dei SS. Giusto e Clemente presso Volterra* (Lucca: Tipografia Arcivescovile S. Paolino, 1915), 14-17. The nomenclature of the abbey is varied and confusing; the monastery was originally called the Badia di San Salvatore, but because it encompassed the more ancient foundations of the churches of San Giusto and San Clemente (each housed relics of the respective saint), the entire complex is variously referred to as the Badia di Santi Giusto e Clemente, the Badia di San Giusto, and/or the Badia di San Salvatore. Because the two churches of San Giusto and Clemente were combined into a new church dedicated to both saints by the time Ghirlandaio made his altarpiece, I will refer to the abbey as the Badia di San Giusto e Clemente.

³⁵⁷ Belisle, "Overview of Camaldolese History," 16.

³⁵⁸ Consortini 61.

³⁵⁹ Francesco Lessi, ed., *Volterra e la Val di Cecina* (Milan: Mondadori, 1999), 68.

The Badia's church of San Giusto e Clemente where Ghirlandaio's altarpiece originally hung was basilican in plan, with a central nave and two side aisles.³⁶⁰ Largely Romanesque in style after thirteenth-century renovations, the church had small windows; nave arcades with round arches and columns, quarried from local stone and with simple, floral capitals; and a marble pavement with numerous tomb slabs.³⁶¹ Originally including only three altars, the church had seven by the time Ghirlandaio made his altarpiece for the high altar in the early 1490s. The high altar was surrounded by frescoes on both the walls and the ceiling of the apse, and was well-known for its costly and lavish silver liturgical vessels.³⁶² The other six altars, three in each aisle on either side of the nave, included painted altarpieces. Besides Botticelli's *Coronation of the Virgin with Saints*,³⁶³ which we be discussed presently, it is unclear what other paintings were in San Giusto e Clemente before 1580, when new altarpieces by largely local Volterranean artists were installed.³⁶⁴

Ghirlandaio in Volterra:

The abbot of the Badia at the time of Ghirlandaio's altarpiece was Don Giusto de' Gherardo di Bonvicini.³⁶⁵ Pictured as the bald, pious donor wearing the white cassock of the Camaldolesi on the bottom right corner of the altarpiece, Abbot

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Ibid; Consortini 72-77.

³⁶² Consortini 72.

³⁶³ Sandro Botticelli and Domenico Ghirlandaio and workshop (?), *Coronation of the Virgin with Sts. Giusto of Volterra, Romuald, Clemente, and the Blessed Jacopo Guidi* (c. 1490-92), tempera and oil on panel, Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach.

³⁶⁴ Consortini 72-77.

³⁶⁵ Ibid. 64.

Bonvicini has traditionally been identified as the patron of Ghirlandaio's altarpiece.³⁶⁶

Abbot Bonvicini seems to have specifically commissioned Ghirlandaio after he initiated renovations to the abbey's church in 1489. The abbey had also recently rediscovered the relics of Sts. Attinia and Greciniana in the high altar, and the brothers wanted to honor this seemingly miraculous unearthing in a new high altarpiece.³⁶⁷

How Ghirlandaio came into contact with Abbot Bonvicini is a mystery until one considers the presence of Lorenzo de' Medici in Volterra and its environs in the last quarter of the fifteenth century. Volterra had fallen under Florentine control in 1472, after a particularly bloody and violent siege. Lorenzo de' Medici had himself ordered the Florentine army, led by famed condottiere and duke of Urbino, Federico da Montefeltro, to gain the city and its valuable mineral deposits at any cost. Federico did not disappoint, and his soldiers conquered the city after unprecedented burning, looting, and the massacre of Volterran citizens.³⁶⁸ Florence immediately set up a permanent garrison in the city, and Lorenzo quickly consolidated the precious alum mines of the city under Florentine control. Lorenzo also purchased a run-down hospice for pilgrims on the Via Francigena outside the city, which he then converted into his country villa of Spedaletto. It was here that Lorenzo, in 1489, hired

³⁶⁶ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 263-4; Antonio Paolucci, ed., *La Pinacoteca di Volterra* (Florence: Arti grafiche Giorgi e Gambi, 1989), 146-149; Enzo Carli, *La Pinacoteca di Volterra* (Pisa: Pacini, 1980), 33.

³⁶⁷ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 264.

³⁶⁸ Lessi 21; Alison Brown, "The Language of Empire," in *Florentine Tuscany: Structures and Practices of Power*, eds. William Connell and Andrea Zorzi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 32-47, 42-43.

Ghirlandaio, as well as Botticelli, Perugino, and Filippino Lippi, to paint now-destroyed frescoes in the villa's interior and loggia.³⁶⁹

Abbot Bonvicini likely came into contact with Ghirlandaio during his work at Spedaletto. But in 1485, just a few years before Ghirlandaio and the other Florentine artists arrived at Spedaletto, Lorenzo de' Medici forced Abbot Bonvicini to renounce the abbey and to turn it over to Lorenzo's son, Giovanni, a cardinal and the future Pope Leo X (r. 1513-21).³⁷⁰ While Lorenzo allowed Bonvicini to remain as *procuratore*, or administrator, he lost all financial rights to the abbey's extensive land holdings in the countryside of Volterra. Bonvicini was also required to pay Lorenzo and Giovanni de' Medici 50 gold ducats a year. As in Pisa with Ghirlandaio's paintings for the Gesuati, Lorenzo, now virtual overlord of the Badia, likely recommended the artist to Bonvicini. This is confirmed by Vasari, who said that Ghirlandaio received the Volterra commission from "the magnificent Lorenzo dei Medici, because he then had that abbey *in commenda* for his son Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici, who was then Pope Leo."³⁷¹

Vasari, in fact, relates that Ghirlandaio produced two altarpieces for the Badia di San Giusto e Clemente, stating that Ghirlandaio created "two other panels made in

³⁶⁹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 287-288.

³⁷⁰ Consortini 24; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 264. This process of turning over churches and monasteries to an outside person became increasingly common in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance and was known as "*in commenda*." Anne Leader offers a succinct overview of it in her "Architectural Collaboration in the Early Renaissance: Reforming the Florentine Badia," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 64, no. 2. (June 2005): 204-233.

³⁷¹ "...fece fare il magnifico Lorenzo dei Medici: perciocchè allora aveva quella badia in commenda Giovanni cardinale de' Medici, suo figliuolo, che fu poi papa Leone." Vasari III: 273.

the badia di San Giusto, outside of Volterra, of the order of the Camaldoli.”³⁷² This second alleged Ghirlandaio altarpiece is most likely the *Coronation of the Virgin with Sts. Giusto of Volterra, Romuald, Clemente, and the Blessed Jacopo Guidi* now in Miami Beach (fig. 24). While the work has been attributed by Ronald Lightbown to Botticelli,³⁷³ visual evidence strongly suggests the collaboration between both Ghirlandaio and Botticelli on the work. Both works are almost exactly the same size;³⁷⁴ are lunette-shaped; and include saints particular to the Badia (San Giusto, San Clemente), to the Camaldolese Order (Sts. Romuald and Benedict), and to the city of Volterra (Sts. Attinia and Greciniana and the Beato Jacopo Guidi di Volterra).³⁷⁵ Both paintings are also characterized by a two-part composition of a heavenly scene in the sky above and an earthly scene of land-bound saints below. In the case of the Miami altarpiece, the top scene is the Coronation of the Virgin surrounded by music-making angels, while the bottom shows four saints and a Camaldolese donor-brother. As in Ghirlandaio’s altarpiece, the Miami panel shows two standing saints on the left and right (San Giusto and San Clemente respectively) and two kneeling saints in the middle (St. Romuald and Beato Jacopo), with a bottom-right corner kneeling donor, seen from the waist up and in profile from the left with clasped, praying hands.

Interestingly, Beato Jacopo in the Miami panel turns his head over his left shoulder

³⁷² “Due altre tavole fece nella badia di San Giusto, fuor di Volterra, dell’ordine di Camaldoli...” Ibid.

³⁷³ Lightbown II: 143-44.

³⁷⁴ Ghirlandaio’s altarpiece is 308 by 189 centimeters, while the Bass altarpiece is 270 by 176 cm. See Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 263 and Margarita Russell, *Paintings and Textiles of the Bass Museum of Art: Selections from the Collection* (Miami Beach: Bass Museum of Art, 1990), 14.

³⁷⁵ Beato Jacopo Guidi (d. 1292), originally from the Tuscan city of Certaldo northeast of Volterra, was abbot of the Badia di San Giusto e Clemente from 1268 until 1272. For his extreme humility and piety, he was also the subject of a local cult in Volterra; his relics were housed in the Badia and venerated daily. See Consortini 20 and 64. See also Margarita Russell 16.

and looks out at the viewer in direct imitation of the pose of Ghirlandaio's St. Jerome in his Narni altarpiece and his St. Clement in his San Marco altarpiece.³⁷⁶

Ghirlandaio and Botticelli had long competed and collaborated with one another: in Ognissanti (1480), the Sistine Chapel (1481-2), and the Sala dei Gigli in the Florence's Palazzo Vecchio (1482-3). Given this fact, as well as the presence of both artists at Spedaletto in the late 1480s and early 1490s, it is likely that the two artists were jointly commissioned by Abbot Bonvicini, after Lorenzo de' Medici's recommendation, around 1489/90. Stylistically, it would appear that Ghirlandaio designed the composition of the Miami altarpiece, but that Botticelli and his shop completed most of the painting. The heads of the saints and donor in the Miami painting are not at Ghirlandaio's high level of naturalistic portraiture, nor does their drapery, especially in the kneeling St. Romuald and Beato Jacopo, correspond to the artist's careful modulation of light and shade to achieve dimensionality. The landscape in the background of the panel is additionally hardly Ghirlandaio's typically virtuosic rendering derived from his long-standing inspiration from Netherlandish art. The Miami angels themselves, with their youthful, delicate visages and shoulder-length, curly hair, are also more similar to Botticelli and his shop's depictions than they are to Ghirlandaio's. While some scholars have seen Davide Ghirlandaio's hand in God the Father and in the entire lower half of the Miami altarpiece, the softer color palette and thinner application of paint do not suggest the typically heavier hand of Davide, and, in particular, his greater use of *olio grosso*.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁶ See Chapter 6.

³⁷⁷ Some of this assessment should be tempered by the fact that I have been unable to see the Miami painting in person. The Bass Museum began a multi-year renovation in 2014, and the painting has thus

Regardless of the exact individual hands in the Miami altarpiece, however, it is certainly an authoritative example of the close working relationship among Ghirlandaio, Botticelli, and their workshops.

Message and Meaning in Ghirlandaio's Volterra Altarpiece:

As the high altarpiece for Volterra's Camaldolesi at the Badia di San Giusto e Clemente, Ghirlandaio's *Christ in Glory* was the visual linchpin of the brothers' worship and corporate identity as both citizens of Volterra and as Camaldolese brothers. The choice of saints in the altarpiece is specific to both the church's location within the commune of Volterra and to the brothers' membership in the Camaldolese Order. Sts. Romuald and Benedict refer to both the order's founder and to the saint whose rule governed their daily life. Ghirlandaio emphasizes the importance of Benedict's rule by showing the saint prominently holding an open book with the beginning *incipit* of the Camaldolesi's own interpretation of the Benedictine Rule.³⁷⁸ Benedict's ear of wheat, a traditional symbol of the saint, may also refer specifically to the Camaldolesi's emphasis on manual labor and agricultural cultivation. Romuald's pose of looking down towards Abbot Bonvicini and pointing up towards Christ additionally stresses the continued importance of Romuald's example for the brothers; here, the saint is the way and means towards a vision of Christ for the pious abbot.

been out of view to both ordinary viewers and scholars alike despite my repeated efforts to see it in storage. It should also be noted that the Bass's 1990 catalog states that the painting suffered numerous losses in the mid nineteenth century, and that the work was almost entirely "repainted" in the late 1950s; see Margarita Russell 17. Thus, any definitive consideration of individual hands in the work is, at this time, conjecture at best.

³⁷⁸ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 264.

Sts. Attinia and Greciniana reference both the newly rediscovered relics of the high altar, as well as the beginnings of Christianity in Volterra. Martyred during the reign of the Roman Emperor Diocletian (r. 284-305), both virgins spent their days in prayer and fasting before they were killed for refusing to sacrifice to the pagan Roman gods.³⁷⁹ Ghirlandaio's placement of them in the center of the altarpiece was likely a deliberate visual illustration of the saints' relics interred within the confines of the altar. In its original placement over the high altar, the altarpiece's central elements of the kneeling Attinia and Greciniana would have also mimicked the kneeling poses of the Camaldolese brothers as they gathered around the altar for worship and the reception of the Eucharist. Abbot Bonvicini's own kneeling pose within the right corner beneath St. Greciniana suggests this mirroring even further.

The altarpiece's carefully delineated landscape is certainly in keeping with Ghirlandaio's general interest in landscape. That Ghirlandaio has gilded many portions of this idyllic countryside – in the stone cliffs to the right of St. Benedict; in the undulating, green fields seen between Sts. Attinia and Greciniana; and in the trees and shrubbery that dot the small lake or river – is, however, of particular note. This gilding not only luxuriously enlivens the altarpiece, but it also suggests God's divine creation of the natural world and his continued presence within the beauty of nature. Ghirlandaio makes this explicit by including a small sunburst beneath the cloud of Christ's glory that shoots down over the landscape. Christ here is thus the literal radiating presence that brings divine light and life to the world. While a minor detail in the entire conception of the altarpiece, Ghirlandaio's use of gilding shows the artist

³⁷⁹ Lodovico Falconcini (1524-1602), *Storia dell'antichissima città di Volterra* (Volterra: Tipografia Sborgi, 1876), 113-115; cf. Bavoni and Furiesi 97, 98, and 101.

to be particularly attuned to the specific spirituality of the Camaldolesi; this was, after all, an order that not only worked in landscape cultivation, but also, as monk-hermits, especially valued God's presence in nature.

An earlier presentation drawing by Ghirlandaio now in the Albertina in Vienna³⁸⁰ (fig. 46) shows a much more conventional depiction of *Christ in Glory with Saints*; here, Ghirlandaio depicts Christ in a cloud mandorla surrounded by angels at the top and the saints standing against a fictive wall below. As Cadogan asserts, this was a presentation drawing for the Volterra altarpiece given its lunette shape; its similarly-depicted saints; and its addition of a donor figure identical to Abbot Bonvicini, albeit here kneeling on the left, rather than the right side.³⁸¹ Its highly finished state, including an elaborate frame, suggests that Ghirlandaio showed this drawing to Abbot Bonvicini, and then altered the design of the altarpiece after conversations with his patron. The donor figure of Abbot Bonvicini was, for instance, added later to the drawing,³⁸² and Ghirlandaio clearly changed the entire background and the positions of the saints in the finished altarpiece. These changes make the altarpiece more visually interesting, but they also strengthen the specificity of the painting for the Camaldolesi and their church in Volterra.

Closer inspection of the landscape in the altarpiece also reveals a subtle, but potent nod to Lorenzo de' Medici and his patronage of the altarpiece. In the back middle of the countryside, standing beside the lake next to a galloping cavalcade of

³⁸⁰ Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Christ in Glory with Saints* (c. 1490-1492), pen, brown ink, and brown wash on cream-colored paper, Albertina, Vienna.

³⁸¹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 305.

³⁸² Ibid.

horses, is a giraffe, marked clearly by its tall stature and long neck (fig. 25). Giraffes are clearly not indigenous to Tuscany, but one did arrive in Florence in 1487, when Lorenzo received one as a gift from the Ottoman sultan.³⁸³ That Ghirlandaio includes a leash on his giraffe seems to refer to Lorenzo's pet, which lived in the Medici menagerie and was allegedly the first giraffe seen in Europe since antiquity.³⁸⁴ Ghirlandaio thus demonstrates Lorenzo's presence, symbolized here by his famous giraffe, within the gilded landscape of the Volterra altarpiece, and more broadly within Volterra itself. As in Pisa, Lorenzo likely hoped that Ghirlandaio's altarpiece (and Botticelli's) would discretely assert Medici and Florentine hegemony at the Badia and in Volterra.

The iconography of Ghirlandaio's Volterra altarpiece is ultimately, however, less about Medici and Florentine dominance over Volterra and its Camaldolese Badia. Rather, it suggests through its iconography the ways that art might aid in reconciling opposing, or at the very least, differing parties. The altarpiece prominently includes, for instance, the decidedly local Volterranean saints of Attinia and Greciniana, who were not venerated outside the city, and it also explicitly shows Abbot Bonvicini, despite his diminished status at the abbey, to be the pious donor of the work. As evidenced by the Ghirlandaio's earlier drawing of the altarpiece, the artist also significantly altered the painting's background in a seeming nod towards Camaldolese spirituality. His addition of the Medici giraffe, while referencing Lorenzo and his likely patronage, could also hardly be deemed an overt image of Medici-Florentine control. Finally,

³⁸³ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 264.

³⁸⁴ Erik Ringman, "Audience for a Giraffe: European Expansion and the Quest for the Exotic," *Journal of World History* 17, no. 4 (December 2006): 375-97, 378-83.

that Ghirlandaio's painting is an altarpiece is highly significant, as the altar itself had long been seen as a site of unity and reconciliation for Christians.³⁸⁵

The Volterranean-Camaldolese iconography of the altarpiece, combined with Ghirlandaio's discrete nod to his Medici benefactor, shows the artist to be a careful judge of the needs and desires of his patrons. In the Volterra altarpiece, Ghirlandaio was especially adept at joining the at-times conflicted requirements of different patrons. Ghirlandaio in many ways shows himself to be his own kind of "*maestro della bottega*," an arbiter like his patron Lorenzo the Magnificent, but here one who wisely mediated between the varying tastes and needs of his patrons and viewers.

³⁸⁵ The original Biblical conception comes from St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, in which he urges the divided community not to take communion unless they can resolve their differences together. See I Corinthians 11: 17-34.

Chapter 4: Curtains, Relics, Altarpieces: Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Lucca Cathedral

Like his altarpieces for the Gesuati, Ghirlandaio's altarpiece for Lucca cathedral presents the Madonna and Child enthroned with saints (fig. 3: c. 1480; tempera and gold on panel; Cathedral of San Martino, Lucca). The Virgin sits firmly in the center on a raised antique-style throne, covered at the bottom by a striped carpet. The nude Christ Child stands on a small pillow that rests on his mother's right knee. St. Clement, wearing his papal miter and a pinkish cape tied at the neck with a reflective gem, stands to the left of the throne and looks down at the blessing infant. St. Peter, in front of his papal successor, holds a book and his papal keys, and also looks slightly upwards towards Christ. To the right, in similar standing positions, are Sts. Sebastian and Paul. Sebastian, soldier and plague saint, holds one of his arrows,³⁸⁶ while St. Paul holds the sword of his martyrdom and looks knowingly out at the viewer. Behind the Madonna's throne are two views out towards a blue sky and what appears to be the edge of a bare mountain. Gilded, fictive curtains are also pulled to either side of the throne, behind the saints, but slightly in front of the Virgin and Child.

Despite its traditional theme, the Lucca altarpiece has long been one of Ghirlandaio's most mysterious works. Scholars have dated it to as early as 1473, affirming it as one of Ghirlandaio's earliest panels, or as late as 1487, a mature work

³⁸⁶ On the orders of the Emperor Diocletian, Sebastian (died c. 288) was shot with arrows by his fellow Roman soldiers as punishment for his Christian faith. See Voragine I: 100.

completed after the virtuosities of the Sassetti Chapel.³⁸⁷ Until 2004, when new archival documents were discovered in Lucca, the altarpiece's patron in cathedral canon Pietro Spada had long been unknown.³⁸⁸ And although its iconography is seemingly straightforward –the Virgin and Child with saints – the altarpiece has never been investigated within the context of San Martino, Lucca's cathedral and the site of one of medieval and early modern Europe's most potent miraculous images, the *Volto Santo*.

This chapter considers Ghirlandaio's Lucca altarpiece as an image that reflects, but also critically engages with the visual and sacred culture of Lucca's cathedral. It orients the altarpiece within the renovation schemes of San Martino in the 1470s and 1480s, initiated by cathedral head Domenico Bertini, and asserts the stylistic potency of Ghirlandaio's altarpiece for Lucca's local artists. As an altarpiece commissioned by an individual cathedral canon, the Lucca painting operates in similar ways to Ghirlandaio's altarpieces for private individuals, discussed in Chapter 6. But its placement within the nave of San Martino, the civic and sacred heart of Lucca, conditioned a particular mode of presentation.

³⁸⁷ Solely considering the altarpiece in terms of style, Cadogan dated the altarpiece to 1473-74, making it, in her view, the artist's earliest altarpiece and one of his earliest paintings on panel; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 245. Clara Baracchini and Antonio Caleca suggest 1475; Clara Baracchini and Antonio Caleca, *Il Duomo di Lucca* (Lucca: Libreria Editrice Baroni, 1973), 50. Ernst Steinmann argued for the late 1480s, while Berenson posited 1486; Ernst Steinmann, *Ghirlandajo* (Leipzig: Velhagen and Klasing, 1897), 36, and Berenson, "Alunno di Domenico," 11. Micheletti cited 1487; Micheletti 72.

³⁸⁸ These documents, cited in notes 417 and 419 below, were discovered during the preparation of *Matteo Civitali e il suo tempo: Pittori, scultori e orafi a Lucca nel tardo Quattrocento* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2004).

Lucca, San Martino, and the Volto Santo:

A city of Etruscan and ancient Roman origins,³⁸⁹ Lucca lies in north-western Tuscany, not far from the Ligurian Sea to the west and slightly north of Pisa. An important Lombard and later Ghibelline³⁹⁰ stronghold during the early Middle Ages, Lucca experienced civil strife in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as it waged wars with Pisa and Florence and also contended with homegrown factionalism.³⁹¹ By the fifteenth century, however, the city was relatively stable. Lucca had made peace with Florence in 1433, and the city had a flourishing economy centered primarily on the lucrative silk trade.³⁹² Lucchese merchants were among the most ubiquitous and successful in all of Europe, and particularly so in the Low Countries, where they held a virtual monopoly over the sale of silks to the Burgundian court. Giovanni Arnolfini, of the famed “wedding” portrait by Jan van Eyck,³⁹³ was, for instance, an influential Lucchese merchant-financier who lived and worked primarily in Bruges.³⁹⁴

Lucca supported a small, but vibrant arts community in the fifteenth century. While the city certainly lacked the prestige of larger centers like Florence and Siena, it nonetheless supported several prosperous painters and most notably the famed local

³⁸⁹ M.E. Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca and the Evolution of the Renaissance State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 4.

³⁹⁰ “Ghibelline” was a name given to medieval Italian cities, families, and political factions that were loyal to the Holy Roman Empire. The Guelphs, in contrast, supported the papacy.

³⁹¹ Bratchel, *Medieval Lucca*, 57, 82-84, 121-143.

³⁹² Ibid. 144-145; Idem., *Lucca 1430-1494: The Reconstruction of an Italian City-Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 6, 12; Lisa Monnas, *Merchants, Princes and Painters: Silk Fabrics in Italian and Northern Paintings 1300-1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 5.

³⁹³ Jan van Eyck, *Giovanni Arnolfini and his Wife (Arnolfini Wedding Portrait)* (1434), oil on panel, National Gallery, London.

³⁹⁴ Nuttall, *From Flanders to Florence*, 43-45; Monnas 5.

sculptor Matteo Civitali (1436-1502).³⁹⁵ Lucca was additionally a city that enthusiastically championed “foreign” artists, whether they were from cities as close by as Florence or Pisa, or further afield, such as from the Netherlands or Germany.³⁹⁶ Lucchese patrons, in particular, favored works by northern artists and/or works that imitated or were inspired by northern European painting.³⁹⁷ Ghirlandaio may have been an attractive choice for the altarpiece for Pietro Spada, whose family included important Lucchese merchants and city leaders,³⁹⁸ because of his noted interest in and imitation of Netherlandish painting.

Lucca’s cathedral of San Martino was the city’s most artistically significant space. With foundations from the eighth century, the cathedral was largely constructed in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in the Gothic style.³⁹⁹ Basilican in plan, the church features a central nave with two flanking side aisles, a wide transept, and a small sacristy on the right side of the church before the choir. Notable for its countless works by Civitali, Lucca’s duomo was also famous in the Middle

³⁹⁵ Maurizia Tazartes, “La pittura a Pisa e Lucca nel Quattrocento,” in *La pittura in Italia: Il Quattrocento*, ed. Federico Zeri, 2 vols. (Milan: Electa, 1986), vol. I: 305-314, 308. See also Idem., *Fucina lucchese: Maestri, botteghe, mercanti in una città del Quattrocento* (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2007). Civitali is arguably Lucca’s most important artist. A master of marble, but also wood and terracotta, he produced almost all of his sculptures for Lucchese patrons within the city and its immediate environs. See *Matteo Civitali e il suo tempo*; and Antonio d’Aniello and Maria Teresa Filieri, eds., *Matteo Civitali nella Cattedrale di Lucca: Studi e restauri* (Lucca: Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Lucca, 2011).

³⁹⁶ Riccardo Massagli, “Fra opera e documenti: Alcuni aspetti della cultura artistica lucchese dal 1440 al 1480,” in *Lucca città d’arte e i suoi archivi: Opere d’arte e testimonianze documentarie dal Medioevo al Novecento* (Venice: Marsilio, 2001): 173-210, 174.

³⁹⁷ Tazartes, “La pittura a Pisa e Lucca nel Quattrocento,” 309.

³⁹⁸ Gerardo Mansi, *I patrizi di Lucca: Le antiche famiglie lucchesi ed i loro stemmi* (Lucca: Editrice Titania, 1996), 450-456. Pietro Spada’s father was an “Anziano” of Lucca, the title of an important government office holder, while his grandfather, Giannino Spada, was *gonfalone* in 1385.

³⁹⁹ Baracchini and Caleca 11.

Ages and the Renaissance for its miracle-working statue known as the *Volto Santo*, or “Holy Face” (fig. 26). A life-size, partially gilded wooden crucifix, the *Volto Santo* was believed to have been made by Nicodemus, a disciple of Christ.⁴⁰⁰ As such, it was thought to be a faithful and true likeness of Christ, created by Nicodemus from life.⁴⁰¹ The *Volto Santo* was thus a relic, an object believed to have been touched or created by, or to be a physical part of, a holy person. It was also a miraculous image, capable of divine action and a physical manifestation of divine presence on Earth.⁴⁰² The *Volto Santo* was furthermore a *vera icona*, a “true image” of Christ similar to St. Veronica’s veil or images of the Madonna believed to have been painted by St. Luke.⁴⁰³

Although, according to legend, the crucifix arrived in Lucca in 782, after a long sea voyage from the Holy Land, the image and its cult did not fully emerge until the twelfth century.⁴⁰⁴ Lucca’s position on the famed pilgrimage route, the Via Francigena,⁴⁰⁵ aided the statue’s popularity and the quick dissemination of its cult

⁴⁰⁰ Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 304-5; Holmes, *The Miraculous Image in Renaissance Florence*, 27.

⁴⁰¹ Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 305; Jacopo Lazzareschi Cervelli, *Vestito Regis: La vestizione del Volto Santo di Lucca*, trans. Wendell Ricketts (Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi Editore, 2004), 15.

⁴⁰² The statue’s silver shoes, placed on the wooden Christ’s feet on feast days and other special celebrations, legendarily were filled with gold coins after a poor pilgrim prayed in front of the crucifix. Another miracle occurred in the fourteenth century, when a pilgrim who was wrongfully accused of a crime was vindicated after calling on the *Volto Santo*’s aid. See Baracchini and Caleca 14-15, and Stefano Gazzarrini, *Il Volto Santo di Lucca: Storia e leggenda* (Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi Editore, 1997), 9-16.

⁴⁰³ For a discussion of *vere icone*, see Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 208-24.

⁴⁰⁴ Holmes, *The Miraculous Image in Renaissance Florence*, 28; Cervelli 18.

⁴⁰⁵ The Via Francigena (sometimes also called the Via Romea) was the medieval pilgrimage route from Canterbury, through France and northern Italy, to Rome. It originated in the eighth century as a Lombard route from Pavia to Rome, but became associated specifically with pilgrimage in the tenth century. Sigeric (died 994), archbishop of Canterbury, described his journey home from Rome along

throughout Europe. The *Volto Santo* was also actively promoted by both Lucchese merchants abroad and leaders of the Holy Roman Empire.⁴⁰⁶ Dressed in lavish garments and jewels and paraded proudly through the city on feast days, the *Volto Santo* was (and remains) an emblem of Lucca, so much so that it was imprinted on the city's coins and included in the city's crest.⁴⁰⁷

Beginning in 1470, the cathedral's *opera* initiated a large-scale renovation of the church's interior. Organized by San Martino's *operaio* Domenico Bertini (1417-1506) and largely assigned to Civitali and his workshop, the renovation plan called for new sculptures; new sculptural moldings in the nave's arcade; new windows and tracery; a new pavement for the nave's floor; and an elaborate, *tempietto*-style chapel for the *Volto Santo*.⁴⁰⁸ The *opera*, after Bertini's recommendation, also called for uniform altarpieces in the side altars of the nave.⁴⁰⁹ Likely inspired both by the new vogue for square, *all'antica*-framed altarpieces, as well as by the uniform altarpiece schemes of new church interiors,⁴¹⁰ the *opera* specifically asked for altarpieces in "un

the route in 990, detailing 80 different stopping points. See Raffaello Cecchetti, *La Via Francigena: Società e territorio nel cuore della Toscana medievale* (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2012).

⁴⁰⁶ The *Volto Santo* was particularly beloved by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV (1316-1378). See Max Seidel and Romano Silva, *The Power of Images, the Images of Power: Lucca as an Imperial City. Political Iconography*, trans. Mark Roberts (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2007).

⁴⁰⁷ Gazzarrini 17.

⁴⁰⁸ Baracchini and Caleca 43 and 60, note 46; Francesco Caglioti, "Matteo Civitali e i suoi committenti nel Duomo di Lucca," in *Matteo Civitali nella Cattedrale di Lucca*, eds. d'Aniello and Filieri: 21-112.

⁴⁰⁹ E. Ridolfi, *L'arte in Lucca studiata nella sua cattedrale* (Lucca: Arnaldo Forni Editore, 1882), 184-186.

⁴¹⁰ For a discussion of this change in altarpiece design, see Chapter 2.

sol modello e forma.”⁴¹¹ While this request was not officially codified until 1504, the impulse for uniform altarpieces was initiated by Bertini earlier, in the late 1470s and early 1480s.⁴¹²

Ghirlandaio in Lucca:

Ghirlandaio’s Lucca altarpiece emerges from the renovation campaign of the 1470s. Scholars have long surmised that Bertini, as the head of the renovation effort, was Ghirlandaio’s patron.⁴¹³ Bertini was also a well-traveled and sophisticated arts patron and man of the world. A papal diplomat of considerable renown, he served as the pope’s representative in conflict negotiations with Hungary, Venice, Milan, Florence, and Naples, and was apostolic secretary to Popes Sixtus IV and Innocent VIII (r. 1484-92).⁴¹⁴ Bertini may have met Ghirlandaio and Davide when the two painted frescoes for Sixtus IV in the Vatican Library in the mid 1470s.

The iconography of Ghirlandaio’s Lucca altarpiece does not, however, suggest Bertini’s influence. There is no inclusion of Bertini’s name-saint, St. Dominic, nor those of immediate family members, such as his father, Giovanni; his grandfather, Andrea; his brother, Antonio, himself a canon at San Martino; his mother, Caterina; or his wife, Sveva.⁴¹⁵ Only the papal and Roman associations of

⁴¹¹ “...concedettero licenza di far fare le tavole degli altari nelle navi della chiesa di s. Martino, sotto un sol modello e forma, per ornamento di detta chiesa.” Archivio di Stato di Lucca, Riformagioni, 1504, 19 febbraio 1504; Cf. Ridolfi 186.

⁴¹² Gigetta Dalli Regoli, “I pittori nella Lucca di Matteo Civitali: Da Michele Ciampati a Michele Angelo di Pietro,” in *Matteo Civitali e il suo tempo*: 95-141, 101-103.

⁴¹³ Ridolfi 184; Massagli 204; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 245.

⁴¹⁴ Massagli 204, note 13. See also Domenico Corsi, “Bertini, Domenico,” in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Vol. 9 (1967), <[www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/domenico-bertini_\(Dizionario_Biografico\)/>](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/domenico-bertini_(Dizionario_Biografico)/>).

⁴¹⁵ Corsi.

Sts. Clement and Peter in the altarpiece could be connected to Bertini's life as a papal diplomat and secretary. Bertini also seems to have almost exclusively commissioned sculpture – his extensive commissions to Civitali include his and his wife's tomb slab in San Martino, in addition to the countless sculptures of the cathedral renovation that he oversaw.

Newly discovered archival documents verify that Ghirlandaio's patron was not Bertini, as the iconography of the altarpiece has long suggested, but, rather, the cathedral canon Pietro di Lorenzo Spada. On June 12, 1476, the canons Clemente Andrucci and Spada "founded an altar in San Martino dedicated to St. Peter in Chains and to the Conversion of St. Paul."⁴¹⁶ While Andrucci was a co-founder of the altar, he had no patronal rights to the altar itself. Spada and his family were the sole legal patrons, and in the instance of a lack of male heirs to whom to pass on the altar's patronage, it would go to Lucca's Ospedale della Misericordia and the *operaio* of Lucca's church of Santa Croce.⁴¹⁷ While the document does not specify the altar's location within San Martino, its foundation in 1476 strongly suggests that it was one of the newly renovated altars in the side aisles of the nave. As such, it would have been a relatively accessible image for Lucca's citizens and the various pilgrims who visited the cathedral.

A later document confirms Spada's patronage and also provides a firm *terminus ante quem* for the altarpiece's creation. On August 14, 1483, Domenico di

⁴¹⁶ "1476, luglio 12: i sacerdoti lucchesi Clemente del fu Antonio Andrucci e Pietro del fu Lorenzo Spada fondano un altare in San Martino dedicato a san Pietro in Vincoli e alla Conversione di san Paolo." Archivio di Stato di Lucca, *Notari*, parte I, n. 896, c. 218, ser Giovanni da Collodi. Published in *Matteo Civitali e il suo tempo* 569.

⁴¹⁷ "Sono costituiti patroni il maggiore di casa Spada o, venendo a mancare la linea mascolina, l'Ospedale della Misericordia e l'operaio di Santa Croce." Ibid.

Cristoforo del Voglia commissioned local Lucchese painter Vincenzo di Antonio Frediani to make an altarpiece for the church of San Romano. In the contract for the altarpiece, Domenico del Voglia specifically asked that the painting be “comparable of colors and of design to that which is placed in the church of San Martino and which was made by the hand of Domenico del Ghirlandaio of Florence [,] which was made for Father Piero Spada.”⁴¹⁸ Thus, in addition to confirming Spada’s patronage, the document establishes that Ghirlandaio’s altarpiece was made sometime between 1476, when the altar was founded, and 1483, when Frediani created his Ghirlandaio-inspired altarpiece.

Ghirlandaio’s Lucca altarpiece can be more precisely dated to 1479-80, given Ghirlandaio’s movements in the late 1470s and early 1480s, as well as the effect of the altarpiece’s design on Lucchese art after 1480. Ghirlandaio likely received the Lucca commission on his way home from Pisa in 1479, before he arrived in Florence and worked on his Ognissanti *St. Jerome* (1480) and traveled to Rome for the Sistine murals in 1481-1482. Ghirlandaio’s Lucca altarpiece stylistically suggests that it was made after the Pisa paintings, as it shows a more sophisticated background of fenestrated architecture, a greater sense of spatial depth, and more firmly and sculpturally modeled figures.

In addition, after 1480, several Lucchese artists were deeply inspired by Ghirlandaio’s Lucca altarpiece.⁴¹⁹ Many of the altarpieces of Vincenzo Frediani, the

⁴¹⁸ “una taula alla anticha...la dicta taula debba esser al paraghone e di colori e di disegno di una la quale e posta in la chiesa di Sancto Martino la qual fu facta per mano di Domenico del Ghirlandaio di Firenze la quale fece fare prete Piero Spada.” Archivio di Stato di Lucca, *Notari*, parte I, n. 1416, c. 420, ser Lodovico Ghilardi. Published in *Matteo Civitali e il suo tempo* 569.

⁴¹⁹ Massagli 207, note 61.

aforementioned artist commissioned in 1483 to make an altarpiece like Ghirlandaio's, are similar to the Lucca altarpiece in iconography and composition. Frediani's altarpiece, *Virgin and Child with Sts. Peter and Paul* (fig. 27),⁴²⁰ for example, shows the Madonna and Child enthroned with a small rug covering the bottom of the throne and two views out towards the countryside on either side. Gilded, drawn curtains are prominently pulled to either side of the throne, as in Ghirlandaio's altarpiece. Four other altarpieces of Frediani's, created between 1483 and 1498, show almost identical designs.⁴²¹ The Lucchese painter Michele Angelo di Pietro also created altarpieces in the 1490s and first decade of the sixteenth century that mimic Ghirlandaio's Lucca altarpiece.⁴²² Like Frediani, Michele Angelo di Pietro copied the drawn curtains and grouping of standing saints around the throne from Ghirlandaio's panel.

Ghirlandaio's Lucca Altarpiece:

The iconography of Ghirlandaio's Lucca altarpiece is particular to its patrons, Pietro Spada and, to a lesser extent, Clemente Andrucci, and to the altar's dedication. The main panel includes Sts. Peter and Paul, the titular saints of the altar, and, in the

⁴²⁰ Vincenzo Frediani, *Madonna and Child with Sts. Peter and Paul* (c. 1491), tempera and gold on panel transferred to canvas, Museu d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona. See Maurizia Tazartes, "Anagrafe lucchese – I: Vincenzo di Antonio Frediani 'pictor de Luca': il Maestro dell'Immacolata Concezione?", *Ricerche di storia dell'arte* 26 (1985): 4-17.

⁴²¹ These include the *Madonna and Child with Sts. Nicola, Sebastian, Roch, and Martin* (1483-85; Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool); *Madonna and Child with Sts. Eustace, John the Baptist, Mary Magdalene, and Vito* (c. 1495; Sant'Eustachio, Montignoso); *Madonna and Child with Sts. Peter and Andrew* (1497; Sant'Andrea, Tempagnano di Lunata); and *Madonna and Child with Sts. Sebastian, Barbara, Francesco, and Roch* (1496-1498; San Michele, Moriano). For all of these paintings, see Tazartes, *Fucina lucchese*, 53-76, and Idem., "Anagrafe lucchese – I." See also Mauro Natale, "Note sulla pittura lucchese alla fine del Quattrocento," *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 8 (1980): 35-62, 50-51.

⁴²² These panels include the *Madonna and Child with Sts. Augustine, Monica, Nicholas of Tolentino, and Jerome* (1492-96; Museo Nazionale di Villa Guinigi, Lucca) and *Madonna and Child with Sts. Iacopo and Christopher* (1502-1508; San Cristoforo, Lammari). See Tazartes, *Fucina lucchese*, 77-93; and Idem., "Anagrafe lucchese – III: Michele Angelo (del fu Pietro 'Mencherini'): il Maestro del Tondo Lathrop?", *Ricerche di storia dell'arte* 26 (1985): 28-37.

case of St. Peter, also the name-saint of Spada. St. Clement, one of the earliest popes, was the name-saint of Andrucci. The altarpiece's predella, likely painted by Bartolomeo di Giovanni,⁴²³ shows St. Peter's escape from prison, the martyrdom of St. Clement, and the conversion of St. Paul.⁴²⁴ And although it is a traditional attribute of the saint, St. Paul's prominent sword in the main panel additionally references the Spada family: "Spada" means "sword" in Italian, and swords were the main emblem of the family's crest.⁴²⁵

As in his altarpieces for the Gesuati, Ghirlandaio shows a parallelism between the glances and gestures of the holy figures in keeping with the altarpiece's subject of a unified holy gathering of the saints in heaven. Sts. Clement and Sebastian, for example, hold their arms closest to the Madonna's throne crooked at the elbow, while both Sts. Peter and Paul hold books at their sides. The altarpiece's most prominent feature, in a notable departure for Ghirlandaio, is, however, the drawn, lavishly gilded curtains on either side of the Madonna's throne. While the use of painted, fictive curtains was a relatively common device in Renaissance painting, most notably utilized by Fra Angelico in his *San Marco Altarpiece*⁴²⁶ and by Raphael in his *Sistine Madonna*⁴²⁷ (fig. 55), it was not a detail that Ghirlandaio readily used. The Lucca altarpiece has, in fact, the only example of fictive curtains in Ghirlandaio's entire

⁴²³ Pons 12-13.

⁴²⁴ The predella also includes, on the left and the right, smaller vertical panels of Sts. Matthew and Lawrence, and rectangular panels in the center of the Pietà and the martyrdom of St. Sebastian.

⁴²⁵ Mansi 449.

⁴²⁶ See Chapter 2.

⁴²⁷ Raphael, *Madonna and Child with Sts. Sixtus and Barbara and Angels (Sistine Madonna)* (1512), oil on canvas, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden.

autograph *oeuvre* – including his frescoes, panels, drawings, and stained glass.⁴²⁸

Significantly, the fictive curtains were also the principal element taken from Ghirlandaio's Lucca altarpiece by later Lucchese artists. Ghirlandaio's curtains also cover a larger portion of the surface area of the painting, in contrast to those of other artists like Fra Angelico and Raphael.

Like the carpets in his Gesuati altarpieces, the curtains in Ghirlandaio's Lucca panel assert Ghirlandaio's skills in *trompe l'oeil*, as much as they also direct the beholder towards the visual encounter with the Madonna and Child.⁴²⁹ Ghirlandaio particularly emphasizes the material splendor of these curtains. Appearing to be made of reddish-gold silk on the front, with heavier black silk or velvet on the back,⁴³⁰ the curtains display the highly prized "pomegranate" design of brocaded branches of fruit, flowers, and thistles, carefully gilded here in Ghirlandaio's goldsmith's hand.⁴³¹ Originally lit by the flickering of candles on the Spada altar, the altarpiece's effect would have been one of glowing, golden illumination surrounding the Virgin, Child, and saints.

As discussed in Chapter 2, curtains had long been associated with divine kingship, power, and revelation. Curtains with the Madonna, in particular, established her as the new Ark of the Covenant of God – a physical tabernacle for God's presence

⁴²⁸ The only other use of curtains in a painting connected to Ghirlandaio is in Davide Ghirlandaio's *Monticelli Altarpiece*; see Appendix A, entry II.

⁴²⁹ This is furthered by the addition of the striped carpet at the base of the Madonna's throne.

⁴³⁰ The curtains appear to be heavy, as Ghirlandaio has shown a portion of the textile held up somewhat awkwardly in a thin red string behind the heads of Sts. Clement and Sebastian.

⁴³¹ Monnas 258. It is tempting to imagine that the curtains would have especially appealed to Lucca's many silk merchants, who bought and sold textiles with the pomegranate design.

through Christ's gestation in her womb.⁴³² With its centrally placed Madonna, enthroned as Queen of Heaven and here holding, but also displaying, the infant Christ, Ghirlandaio's Lucca altarpiece certainly accords to this understanding of the Mother of God. That Ghirlandaio's Lucca Madonna has a particularly rounded, almost swelling belly beneath her red, jewel-encrusted gown, suggests the Virgin's maternity further.

Curtains commonly veiled miraculous images in a tradition that simultaneously protected but also enhanced the powers of such images.⁴³³ These covering could also be activating agents. When a miraculous image was veiled or covered, its power was dormant and contained. Unveiled, and exposed to the eyes of the faithful, however, its agency and potency was unleashed and accessible. Florence's famed miraculous image, the Virgin of Impruneta, for example, was only considered active and "alive" when it was unveiled and taken in ritual procession to the city.⁴³⁴ Ghirlandaio's fictive curtains seem to evoke this practice, as they are drawn to the side to expose the Madonna and Child to the eyes of the viewer. The drawn curtains suggest that Ghirlandaio's Virgin, Christ Child, and saints are now "active," present and efficacious with respect to the supplications of the beholder in the way of a miraculous image. But unlike the curtains of miraculous images, which must inevitably cover the sacred image, Ghirlandaio's fictive curtains are

⁴³² Eberlein 68-70.

⁴³³ Trexler, "Florentine Religious Experience," 11; Holmes, *The Miraculous Image in Renaissance Florence*, 211-255.

⁴³⁴ Trexler, "Florentine Religious Experience," 42.

permanently open, in a sense perpetually “active,” through the material permanence of his painting.

The protection, containment, and activation of the *Volto Santo* were significantly enhanced in the years immediately surrounding the creation of Ghirlandaio’s Lucca panel. While the crucifix was not covered by a curtain, it had long been adorned with clothing, shoes, and jewels on feast days and special civic occasions.⁴³⁵ This adornment honored the festivity of the day, as much as it also enhanced the visual splendor of the crucifix.⁴³⁶ More critically, it augmented the sacred power of the statue as an active agent of divine provenance and emanation; as the purview of the living, clothing suggested the vitality and humanity of the *Volto Santo*. The ritual dressing of the statue activated it in a similar manner to the unveiling and display of other miraculous images; dressed, the crucifix was now even more life-like and capable of intervening in the lives of the faithful. Since the dressing of the statue only occurred on special occasions, and, in particular, when it was ritually paraded through the streets of Lucca, the adornment also signaled the *Volto Santo*’s power within the greater world: outside the confines of the cathedral, the dressed sculpture could now more actively engage with its devotees.⁴³⁷

⁴³⁵ Cervelli 19-55.

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

⁴³⁷ My thoughts here were influenced by Trexler, “Florentine Religious Experience,” especially 12-18; Victor and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture*; Freedberg 99-135; Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, especially 312-13; and Holmes, *The Miraculous Image in Renaissance Florence*, 166-67.

The sculpture's enshrinement in Civitali's domed chapel (fig. 28), commissioned during San Martino's renovations and completed in 1484,⁴³⁸ furthered the *Volto Santo*'s potency. The octagonal chapel, similar to an ancient Roman, centrally-planned small temple, or *tempietto*, effectively operates as a large reliquary for the sculpture, which is displayed inside on the back wall. The chapel certainly distinguishes the *Volto Santo* as an especially important image within San Martino, and directs pilgrims and visitors to it through its large size and placement within the cathedral's nave.⁴³⁹ The chapel also conditions the viewing of the statue, which is only visible through vertical, lunette-shaped openings covered by metal grills. In this sense, the chapel heightens the cultic effect of the crucifix; it at once conceals, yet reveals the statue, and mediates access to it through Civitali's architecture.

Ghirlandaio's curtains in his Lucca altarpiece operate in a similar manner. They are pulled to the side to reveal the Madonna and Child, and could also presumably conceal the holy pair by being pulled back together. Ghirlandaio's curtains also mediate access, like the carpet below, towards Christ and his mother. As textiles, and especially luxurious ones at that, they additionally adorn and honor the divine,⁴⁴⁰ just like the *Volto Santo*'s own clothing.

⁴³⁸ For the chapel, and its construction and design, see d'Aniello and Filieri, and *Matteo Civitali e il suo tempo*. While the actual construction of Civitali's chapel occurred between 1482 and 1484, Bertini commissioned the work in 1477; Gabriele Donati, "Il <<museo>> dell'artista: Matteo Civitali per il Duomo di Lucca," in *Matteo Civitali nella Cattedrale di Lucca*, eds. d'Aniello and Filieri: 114-326, 220.

⁴³⁹ The enshrinement of miraculous images and relics within chapels more generally accommodated pilgrims and aided in liturgies associated with the objects. See Holmes, *The Miraculous Image in Renaissance Florence*, 215.

⁴⁴⁰ The gold thread of Ghirlandaio's curtains was especially valued in Renaissance Florence; see Rembrandt Duits, "Figured Riches: the Value of Gold Brocades in Fifteenth-Century Florentine Painting," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 62 (1999): 60-92.

There is no concrete evidence that Ghirlandaio was inspired by the *Volto Santo*, its chapel, or the ritual practices associated with it in the design and iconography of his Lucca altarpiece. It is not hard to imagine, however, that Ghirlandaio would have considered the sculpture and its attendant cult in creating a painting for the same sacred space that housed the crucifix. This awareness would have been particularly acute in the years when Ghirlandaio was presumably in Lucca, at the same time that Civitali and his workshop were designing and constructing the *Volto Santo*'s new chapel. Ghirlandaio and his patron, Pietro Spada, certainly would have considered the more diverse viewing audience of the altarpiece; placed over an altar in the nave, the painting would have been visible to an array of Lucca's citizens and to pilgrims from throughout Europe. The extensive gilding on the curtains in the altarpiece is as much a token of Ghirlandaio's skill, as it is evidence of Spada's generosity, piety, and taste, broadcast now to a wide audience.

While the curtains engender a discursive amalgam of allusions, as a fictive, painted device, they ultimately point towards Ghirlandaio's conception of the altarpiece. They showcase Ghirlandaio's skill in imitating other material goods, and they indicate his creativity in evoking real curtains and the sacred practices associated with them. On close inspection, Ghirlandaio's curtains could clearly not be real. They could not be pulled across the picture plane, as they would slip behind the Madonna and Child and catch the throne. The throne, centered between the curtains, is not completely spatially and perspectively correct, as it is both too far behind the curtains and yet too close to them at the same time. While this perhaps simply indicates a

lapse of proper perspective on Ghirlandaio's part,⁴⁴¹ it seems unlikely considering the strength of his previous designs, especially the frescoes of the Chapel of Santa Fina in San Gimignano (c. 1477-78). That the Lucchese artists who were inspired by Ghirlandaio repeat this spatial incongruence in their curtains also signals their use as a creative and allusive device, as opposed to simple illusionism. Ghirlandaio's decision to include the curtains in his Lucca altarpiece, so readily adapted by Lucchese colleagues, shows the artist subtly adjusting familiar iconography to more effectively address local circumstances and the functions of altarpieces as images that evoked the real and imagined, the revealed and concealed.

⁴⁴¹ Cadogan describes the curtains as "destroy[ing] the continuity of illusion and enhance[ing] the two-dimensional effect of the figures silhouetted against it. Individual figures turn into depth, but the space that the pose and bulky figures suggests is counteracted by the decorative effects of drapes and pavement." Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 57.

Chapter 5: Fostering Foundlings: Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for the Ospedale degli Innocenti

On October 23, 1485, Father Francesco Tesori, prior of the Ospedale degli Innocenti, Florence's foundling hospital and orphanage, commissioned Ghirlandaio "to color and paint" an altarpiece for the high altar of the hospital's small church.⁴⁴² Depicting the Adoration of the Magi with smaller background scenes of the Massacre of the Innocents and the Adoration of the Shepherds, Ghirlandaio's Innocenti altarpiece (fig. 8: 1485-89; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Museo degli Innocenti, Florence) also includes a seven-panel predella by Bartolomeo di Giovanni.⁴⁴³ It originally had an elaborate gilded frame and pinnacled tabernacle designed by the Sangallo brothers.⁴⁴⁴ Long one of the artist's most lauded works – Vasari, for instance, referred to the altarpiece as "much praised," and specifically mentioned the

⁴⁴² "Che oggi questo di xxiii d'ottobre 1485 el detto messer Francesco dà e alluoga al sopradetto Domenico...a cholore e dipingere detto piano..." Archivio degli Innocenti, Florence, ser. XIII, no. 8, Giornale dal 1484 al 1489, c. 158. Published in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 352, doc. 26: A.

⁴⁴³ Unlike the other collaborations between Bartolomeo and Ghirlandaio, which remain conjecture at best, Bartolomeo's hand in the predella for the Innocenti altarpiece is certain given the survival of the contract with him. While Ghirlandaio was originally commissioned to make the predella in the 1485 contract, on July 30, 1488, Prior Tesori hired Bartolomeo to make the predella. This contract is especially interesting as it somewhat unusually names the specific "istorie" Bartolomeo was to paint. These include, in the likely original order as stipulated by the contract: the *Annunciation*; *Baptism of Christ*; *Purification of the Virgin*; *Pietà*; *Marriage of the Virgin*; *Martyrdom of St. John*; and *St. Antoninus Consecrating the Church of the Innocenti*. The contract is preserved in the Archivio degli Innocenti, Florence, ser. XIII, no. 8, Giornale dal 1484 al 1489, c. 352 verso, and published in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 352, doc. 26: A. As first pointed out by Berenson in "Alunno di Domenico," Bartolomeo also painted the background scene of the Massacre of the Innocents in the main altarpiece panel.

⁴⁴⁴ The contract for the frame and tabernacle is in the same archival notation as note 443, c. 158 verso, and is also published in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 352, doc. 26: A.

“honest beauty and grace” of the Madonna⁴⁴⁵ – the altarpiece today remains at the Innocenti, displayed in its own gallery in the center’s recently renovated museum.⁴⁴⁶

The altarpiece has often been considered a paradigm with respect to Renaissance contracts, the business of art, and workshop organization due to its particularly rich documentation, preserved in the Innocenti’s archive.⁴⁴⁷ In addition to the contracts for the altarpiece, predella, and frame, there is a contract for the gilding of the altarpiece and frame and extensive payment records to Ghirlandaio, his assistants, and all the other artisans involved in the altarpiece’s production.⁴⁴⁸ While these records are vital to an understanding of the business and production sides of art making, they have often overshadowed a deeper reflection on the iconographical content of Ghirlandaio’s Innocenti altarpiece.

⁴⁴⁵ “Nella chiesa degl’Innocenti fece a tempera una tavola de’ Magi, molto lodata; nella quale sono teste bellissime, d’aria e di fisionomia varie, così di giovani come di vecchi; e particolarmente nella testa della Nostra Donna si conosce quella onesta bellezza e grazia, che nella madre del Figliuol di Dio può esser fatta dall’arte.” Vasari III: 258.

⁴⁴⁶ While the Innocenti is no longer a working orphanage, it continues to operate as an institution in aid of mothers and children. The Istituto degli Innocenti, in conjunction with the regional government of Tuscany and UNICEF, works with foster care, maternal health services, and child protective services, and also operates a research institute on children and families. The Museo degli Innocenti, re-opened in summer 2016 after years of renovation, details the history of the orphanage and houses its original art works.

⁴⁴⁷ See, for instance, Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, 5-8; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 162 and 259-261; Kecks, *Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei*, 343-4; Hannelore Glasser, *Artist Contracts of the Early Renaissance* (New York: Garland, 1977), 27-28, 151-54, and 202-5; and Michelle O’Malley, *The Business of Art*, 40-41, 43, 51-57, 59, 66-68, 199.

⁴⁴⁸ Most of these documents are published in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio* as document 26, pages 351-357. As in many Renaissance payment records, it is interesting to note that many of the parties involved were often paid in olive oil and wine instead of cash; it is particularly noteworthy that the Innocenti’s wine is specifically referred to as being “chianti” from the hospital’s own vineyards and is at times described as “vermiglio” in color.

As discussed by Cadogan in “Michelangelo in the Workshop of Domenico Ghirlandaio,” the Innocenti’s payments to Ghirlandaio also include one of the first references to Michelangelo (referred to as “Micheleangnolo di Lodovico”), confirming his early tenure in the Ghirlandaio workshop.

Integrating Ghirlandaio's Innocenti altarpiece into broader considerations of the history of the hospital, this chapter analyzes the altarpiece as a reflection of notions particular to the Innocenti and its mission, such as age and youth, and abandonment and redemption. In his consideration of the varying audiences at the Innocenti, Ghirlandaio created an altarpiece that would have simultaneously appealed to the orphaned children themselves, to their caretakers, and to the Silk Guild merchants who supported and administered the hospital. The painting's subject of the Magi is an especially appropriate one, in that it references the mercantile activities of the Silk Guild. As Biblical figures whom were particularly revered in Florence and by the Medici, the Magi were also favored emblems for the city's youth more generally.

The Ospedale degli Innocenti:

Founded in 1419, the Ospedale degli Innocenti was an orphanage and maternity hospital dedicated to the care of Florence's abandoned children and indigent mothers. The impetus for the orphanage initially materialized in 1410, after Francesco Datini, the famed "merchant of Prato,"⁴⁴⁹ left a bequest of 1,000 florins for the establishment of a foundling hospital attached to Florence's main hospital of Santa Maria Nuova.⁴⁵⁰ While Datini's generosity was the motivation for the Innocenti's foundation, the hospital also emerged from a culture increasingly drawn

⁴⁴⁹ Coined by Iris Origo in her *The Merchant of Prato, Francesco di Marco Datini* (London: J. Cape, 1957).

⁴⁵⁰ Richard Trexler, "The Foundlings of Florence," *History of Childhood Quarterly* 1, no. 2 (1973): 259-84; Philip Gavitt, *Charity and Children in Renaissance Florence: the Ospedale degli Innocenti, 1410-1536* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), 34; Diana Bullen Presciutti, *Visual Cultures of Foundling Care in Renaissance Italy* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 151-86.

towards civic philanthropy.⁴⁵¹ Certainly the need for charitable institutions had increased in the decades after the devastation of the Black Death, but new conceptions of personal and corporate piety and munificence also encouraged both individuals and cities to support and maintain aid associations for the poor and needy. Such establishments not only helped those in need, but they also brought much desired glory to the individual and city itself. Famed Florentine chancellors Coluccio Salutati (1331-1406) and Leonardo Bruni (1370-1444), for example, called for the Florentine State – and significantly not just the Church – to be responsible for the well-being and assistance of the entire community, rich and poor alike.⁴⁵²

The original Datini bequest was administered by a trust known as the Ceppo Nuovo, a foundation established by Datini in Prato to administer his will.⁴⁵³ In 1419, the Ceppo and Santa Maria Nuova transferred the management of the nascent orphanage to Florence's Arte della Seta, the city's powerful Silk Guild.⁴⁵⁴ The Silk Guild was an attractive new administrator as it was a lay institution, and thus ostensibly free from ecclesiastical oversight and control.⁴⁵⁵ The guild already had

⁴⁵¹ For this idea, see Gavitt; Charles de la Roncière, "L'église et la pauvreté à Florence au XIV^e siècle," in *Recherches et débats: Cahier du Centre Catholique Intellectuels Français. La pauvreté: des sociétés de penurie à la société d'abondance* 49 (1964): 47-66; Richard Trexler, "Charity and Defense of Urban Elites in the Italian Commune," in *The Rich, the Well-Born, and the Powerful*, ed. F. Jaher (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973): 64-109; and Brian Pullan, *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice: the Social Institutions of a Catholic State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971). See also Marvin Becker, *Medieval Italy* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1981), 99-125 and Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*, 209-10.

⁴⁵² Lucia Sandri, "Gli ospedali di Santa Maria Nuova e degli Innocenti nel Quattrocento," in *Il mercante, l'ospedale, i fanciulli: La donazione di Francesco Datini, Santa Maria Nuova e la fondazione degli Innocenti*, eds. Stefano Filipponi, et al. (Florence: Nardini, 2010), 72-74, 72.

⁴⁵³ Ibid.; Gavitt 45.

⁴⁵⁴ Gavitt 45, 54.

⁴⁵⁵ Sandri 72.

experience with both the care of children and with hospitals. The Silk Guild had been assigned the care of abandoned children by the Florentine government in 1294, and managed both Florence's Ospedale di San Gallo and the Spedale di San Antonio in Lastra a Signa, a village on the Pisan road some 10 miles outside of Florence.⁴⁵⁶

The guild purchased property for the new hospital on land adjacent to Florence's Servite church of Santissima Annunziata, just north of the city's cathedral. The choice of Filippo Brunelleschi – a member of the Silk Guild himself since 1404⁴⁵⁷ – as architect for the new hospital would produce one of the most significant buildings in the history of architecture (fig. 37: 1419-27). The original hospital included two doors on either side of the entrance loggia; a small, single nave church for the orphanage's charges and male staff; two administrative offices; a large central courtyard similar to a monastic cloister; dormitories; and a large hospital ward.⁴⁵⁸ Later additions in the fifteenth century included refectories, a smaller infirmary, kitchens, a reception room for new arrivals, a chapel/lounge for female caretakers (mostly wet nurses, but also nannies),⁴⁵⁹ and an expanded garden with an orchard and

⁴⁵⁶ Attilio Piccini, "Introduzione," in Luca Bellosi, ed., *Il Museo dello Spedale degli Innocenti a Firenze* (Milan: Electa, 1977), 9-64, 9; Gavitt 85; Howard Saalman, *Filippo Brunelleschi: the Buildings* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 34.

⁴⁵⁷ Saalman 38.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid. 50-51; for a plan of Brunelleschi structure c. 1427, see figure 1 in Ibid. 51.

⁴⁵⁹ The use of this room is ambiguous in the documents; it sometimes called a "chiesetta," or chapel (literally, "little church"), while at other times, it is referred to as a "soggiorno delle donne," loosely translated as a room for rest for the hospital's women. It would appear that the room most likely functioned as both a chapel and lounge; the female staff members likely could relax here, but also could take communion or have a small Mass since they would have been segregated from the male staff in the main church.

vineyard.⁴⁶⁰ The entire structure was completed around 1444, and opened for its first charges, with much fanfare, on January 25, 1445.⁴⁶¹

As both an orphanage and maternity hospital for unmarried mothers, the Innocenti served different, but complementary communities. It was at once a medical, charitable, pious, and educational institution, as well as a vital economic force, particularly with respect to its employment of women.⁴⁶² First and foremost, the hospital took in abandoned and orphaned children, who could be left anonymously at the hospital's entrance through a specially-designed font with pulleys. The children were immediately baptized in the hospital's church and then given medical attention; most of the admitted children were only between three-hours and three-weeks old.⁴⁶³ The admitted orphan was then usually sent to a wet nurse in the employ of the Innocenti, but working outside the confines of the hospital; the Innocenti employed many women in the countryside outside Florence, and usually the Innocenti infants spent their first years living with a rural family.⁴⁶⁴ Around the ages of two to four, the toddler was sent back to the hospital, where he or she was then formally put up for adoption. The hospital was quite successful with finding families (and especially so given the high rate of infant mortality in fifteenth-century Florence), and also

⁴⁶⁰ Saalman 53-55; the c. 1449 plan is figure 2, Ibid. 54.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid. 55, 60.

⁴⁶² The staff of the Innocenti in 1483, for instance, included a prior and prioress; two female "doorkeepers" in charge of admitting new charges; three female service personnel (the equivalent of governesses or nannies); 14 wet nurses; a chaplain; a collection agent; a clerk; and a gardener/store keeper. See Archivio degli Innocenti, Florence, Ricordanze B, ser. XII, no. 2, fol. 5v, 17 January 1482 (1483 modern style); cited in Gavitt 168-169. Other staff members included doctors, surgeons, accountants, attorneys, and notaries; Gavitt 153-163.

⁴⁶³ Gavitt 187.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid. 189.

arranged apprenticeships for older children. As an institution sponsored by the Silk Guild, the Innocenti was particularly successful in finding work for its female charges in silk weaving.⁴⁶⁵

The Silk Guild's role at the Innocenti was largely administrative; trustees from the guild's membership were elected for fixed terms, and their duties included financial management, the supervision of the hospital's building program, and the hiring and firing of employees.⁴⁶⁶ The trustees also appointed the hospital superintendant or prior, who worked directly at the orphanage and oversaw all staff on a daily basis.⁴⁶⁷ Father Francesco Tesori, prior from 1483 until his death in 1497 and the patron of Ghirlandaio's altarpiece, was especially dedicated to beautifying the Innocenti, and was considered a man of cultivation and high taste.⁴⁶⁸ In addition to Ghirlandaio's altarpiece, Tesori commissioned architectural renovations to the complex; various liturgical objects and books; and the glazed terracotta roundels of swaddled babies by Andrea della Robbia (c. 1487) for the building's loggia façade.⁴⁶⁹

While the Innocenti's trustees and staff certainly saw their roles primarily as caretakers, they were also keenly aware of their duty, as both Christians and citizens of Florence, to educate and support the orphanage's charges. Innocenti orphans were instructed, for instance, in both the basic tenets of Christianity and in rudimentary lessons derived from the newly emergent humanist pedagogy, which stressed civic

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid. 144.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid. 150-1.

⁴⁶⁸ The Innocenti's *ricordanza*, for example, refers to him as "omnique virtute decoratus;" Piccini 9.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid. 12-13.

formation as much as arithmetic, Latin, and Greek.⁴⁷⁰ Educating the orphans was so important that Prior Tesori even went so far as to endow the position of school master of the hospital's boys in his 1497 will.⁴⁷¹ The importance of instilling an understanding of Florentine family life was equally imperative; staff records from the fifteenth century always refer to the Innocenti as a "family," and as Philip Gavitt puts it, "hospital administrators acted both legally and actually as parents, consciously aiming to develop the participation of children in both civic and domestic life."⁴⁷²

Ghirlandaio and the Ospedale degli Innocenti:

When Prior Tesori commissioned Ghirlandaio to make the Innocenti's high altarpiece, the contract was brokered by Fra Bernardo di Francesco, a Gesuati at San Giusto.⁴⁷³ While the use of a *mezzano*, or broker, was common in Renaissance contracts, Fra Bernardo seems to have been especially involved with the Innocenti altarpiece. The contract specifies, for instance, that Fra Bernardo and Ghirlandaio will together determine the painting's iconography.⁴⁷⁴ This collaboration suggests the continued close ties between Ghirlandaio and the Gesuati, and stresses the Gesuati's work as veritable arbiters of art in fifteenth-century Florence. It is probable that Fra Bernardo and his Gesuati brethren recommended Ghirlandaio to Prior Tesori for the Innocenti altarpiece. Ghirlandaio's family connections to the silk industry may also

⁴⁷⁰ Gavitt 274-302.

⁴⁷¹ Piccini 12.

⁴⁷² Gavitt. 243.

⁴⁷³ See note 443 for the archival notation.

⁴⁷⁴ "...el quale piano à fare buono detto Domenico, cioè à pagare, e à a cholorire e dipingere detto piano, tutto di sua mano in modo come apare uno disegno in charta con quelle figure e modi che in esso apare, e più e meno sechondo che a me frate Bernardo parrà che stia miglio, non uscendo del modo e chomposizione di detto disegno..." Ibid.

have brought him into contact with the hospital; as discussed in Chapter 1, his father was a “*setaiuolo minuto*,” and his grandfather, uncle, and cousin were all members of the Silk Guild.⁴⁷⁵

Since the Innocenti contract was drawn up in October 1485, just as Ghirlandaio was finishing the Sassetti murals, the artist likely worked on the altarpiece in fits and starts between early November 1485, when he received his first payments, and March 1489, when he received a final payment of 21 gold florins.⁴⁷⁶ While the contract stipulated that the altarpiece be done entirely in Ghirlandaio’s hand, the finished painting includes Bartolomeo di Giovanni’s left background scene of the Massacre of the Innocents. Since Bartolomeo was commissioned for the painting’s predella in July 1488, he likely completed the Massacre scene just as Ghirlandaio was finishing up the main panel.⁴⁷⁷

Ghirlandaio’s altarpiece originally sat on the high altar of the Innocenti’s main church, a single-nave, rectangular space located on the left side of the complex. Designed by Brunelleschi and constructed between 1420 and 1424, the fifteenth-century church featured an open-trussed, painted wooden roof; plain, round windows; at least two side altars on either side of the nave; and numerous tomb slabs of hospital

⁴⁷⁵ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 28.

⁴⁷⁶ Archivio degli Innocenti, Florence, ser. CXVII, no. 27, *Entrata e uscita segnato* A, I, Jan. 1484/5-December 30, 1486, c. 225; Archivio degli Innocenti, ser. XIII, no. 8, *Giornale dal 1484 al 1489*, c. 396 verso. Published in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 353-355.

⁴⁷⁷ While Renaissance contracts often stipulate that works be done entirely in the master’s hand, this usually meant that the master should not sub-contract the work to another master or shop; it was assumed by patrons that the master would utilize his own assistants or collaborators. See O’Malley, *The Business of Art*, 5-9, 90-96, and 253.

superintendents in the floor.⁴⁷⁸ The high altar stood on a platform of four steps at the liturgical east end of the church, and included relics, donated by St. Antoninus, of the Holy Innocents.⁴⁷⁹ Ghirlandaio's altarpiece was framed by an extensively gilded structure made by the Sangallo brothers, which, as outlined in the frame's contract, copied the earlier frame of Ghirlandaio's San Giusto altarpiece with its two adoring angels on either side.

The church, officially Santa Maria degli Innocenti, was utilized mainly for the baptisms of admitted children and for Masses for the hospital's male staff and Silk Guild trustees. The necessity of such sacraments for both the Innocenti's charges and staff was deemed so great that, in 1432, the archbishop of Florence required that the church have daily Masses and a full-time priest.⁴⁸⁰ It is important to keep in mind, however, that while the hospital's orphaned boys did attend services, the short length of time that an older child spent in the Innocenti's care limited such visits. As such, the church was primarily a space for the male administrators and staff of the Innocenti; it was the hospital's spiritual heart for the center's caretakers and caregivers, its supporters and sustainers.

⁴⁷⁸ Saalman 40, 80-81; Walter and Elisabeth Paatz, *Die Kirchen von Florenz: Ein Kunstgeschichtliches Handbuch*, 6 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1939-1955), vol. II (1955): 445; Manuel Cardoso Mendes and Giovanni Dallai, "Nuove indagini sullo Spedale degli Innocenti a Firenze," *Commentari: Rivista di critica e storia dell'arte* (Jan.-Sept. 1966): 83-106, 93.

⁴⁷⁹ Presciutti 160. The altar also contained relics of Sts. Eugenius, Crescentius, Abdon, and Sennen.

⁴⁸⁰ Archivio degli Innocenti, Florence, *Liber Artis Portae Sanctae Mariae*, V, 1, fol. 43, 7 December 1432; cf. Gavitt 93, Piccini 9.

Ghirlandaio's *Innocenti* Altarpiece:

One of Ghirlandaio's largest altarpieces,⁴⁸¹ the *Innocenti* altarpiece depicts the Adoration of the Magi accompanied by a sumptuous cavalcade of attendants, angels, and saints. The Madonna sits on a marble dais in the center of the composition, wearing a red-and-blue ensemble tied at the neck with a gem. Holding her right hand up in a gesture of welcome and greeting,⁴⁸² the Virgin holds her left hand around the Christ Child, who sits in her lap and offers his blessing to the assembled Magi. Directly below him, kneeling in adoration and kissing Jesus's small right foot, is the oldest magus, Melchior, who is bald, but with a full, grey beard and long hair. To his right is Balthazar, the bearded middle-aged magus, who holds one hand over his heart and with the other hand grasps a golden vessel, likely containing his gift of frankincense, a resin burned as incense at sacred services. Standing to the Virgin's right is Caspar, the youngest magus. Ghirlandaio depicts him as a particularly attractive youth, with shoulder-length, blond hair, one hand on his hip, and the other proffering a gold-and-glass goblet.

Behind the enthroned Virgin and Child are the ox and ass of the Nativity stable and St. Joseph, who looks down in wonder at the infant Jesus. As he does in his Sassetti altarpiece (see Chapter 6), Ghirlandaio depicts the "stable" here as an antique structure, complete with four Corinthian piers, decorated down the middle with gold floral designs. At the top, in a typical Ghirlandaio vignette, are four youthful angels who hover over blue clouds and hold a section of a musical score in their hands. This

⁴⁸¹ The altarpiece measures 285 by 240 centimeters.

⁴⁸² Described in Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, 61-71.

displays the beginnings of the antiphon “Gloria in excelsis,” traditionally sung at Christmas services. A gilded starburst shines over them at the center, in a clear indication of the Epiphany star which led the Magi to the Holy Family. Two plainly-dressed workers stand behind the stable, appearing to construct brick walls for the open-air structure; likely also painted by Bartolomeo di Giovanni, these figures, along with the antique stable, are a reference to the New Testament replacing the Old, Christianity triumphing over Judaism and ancient Roman religion.⁴⁸³

Surrounding the Magi and Holy Family on the left and right are various members of the Magi’s entourage. Dressed like the Magi themselves in lavish silks and costly fabrics trimmed with gold thread and gems, these figures seem to be a veritable advertisement for the goods that the Silk Guild marketed – goods which supported the very foundations of the Innocenti. While Ghirlandaio certainly revels in the shimmering tones and textures of the fabrics, he is careful to distinguish two figures as more simply dressed. On the left, standing just behind Caspar, is Ghirlandaio himself, looking out at the viewer and wearing only a plain, red tunic. Immediately to Ghirlandaio’s right is Prior Tesori, dressed modestly in black and gently resting his hand on one of the Magi’s followers. Framed by the top portion of St. John the Baptist’s cross below, Ghirlandaio and Tesori appear as humble yet devout witnesses to this gathering of Jew and Gentile, sacred and profane. As discussed in Chapter 1, this anachronistic inclusion of real figures in the holy scene at once memorializes Ghirlandaio and Tesori, and shows them to be mediators between the sacred, depicted in the picture, and the mundane, outside the painting and its gilded frame.

⁴⁸³ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 261.

Completing the foreground of the painting, in front of and next to the kneeling Magi, is perhaps the work's most striking feature: two small, kneeling children, dressed in thin, gauzy white robes who hold their hands up in prayerful supplication. Haloed, and with small droplets of blood glistening on their pale skin, these children are the Holy Innocents themselves, killed by King Herod after the Magi's visit to Bethlehem and referenced in Bartolomeo di Giovanni's background scene on the left of screaming mothers, bloodthirsty soldiers, and dead babies. These Innocents are presented to the Holy Family by two saints: St. John the Baptist, patron saint of Florence, who here points towards the Virgin and looks out at the viewer; and St. John the Evangelist, apostle, evangelist, and patron saint of the Silk Guild. These children are certainly an unusual, but entirely appropriate addition to this adoration; their bleeding wounds even suggest the medical care given to orphans at the Innocenti. The affectionate embrace of St. John the Evangelist suggests the support the Holy Innocents-orphans receive under the patronage of the Silk Guild and the care of the hospital. As Diana Presciutti has argued, Ghirlandaio pictures St. John here as a "surrogate guardian" for the orphaned children.⁴⁸⁴ The juxtaposition of the redeemed Holy Innocents with the Massacre of the Innocents in the background also shows the innocent children as at once imperiled, yet saved.⁴⁸⁵ With St. John as a stand-in for the Silk Guild and its support of the hospital, the altarpiece symbolizes the care the orphaned innocents receive at the Innocenti.

⁴⁸⁴ Presciutti 166.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid. 167-77.

While the young innocents in Ghirlandaio's painting are an eponymous reference to the purpose and activities of the Innocenti, the Magi are also an eminently suitable emblem for the hospital, its staff, and its charges. Although the Magi themselves are only referred to as "magi from the east" in the Bible,⁴⁸⁶ by the fifteenth century, patristic and exegetical tradition had long identified them as kings; as a trio; as three different ages of man (young, middle-aged, and elderly); and as specific, named individuals (Melchior, Balthazar, and Caspar).⁴⁸⁷ As carriers of expensive and luxurious gifts – gold, frankincense, and myrrh – the Magi were agents of exchange and commerce much like the members of the Silk Guild; as bearers of such products, they were an implicit mercantile presence at the manger of the savior and thus rightly the patron saints of merchants.⁴⁸⁸ As non-Jews from an ambiguous "east," the Magi symbolized the legitimacy and credibility of Christianity to all people, whether Jewish or Gentile. Their foreign, and consequently exotic, status was often exploited by artists. Gentile da Fabriano's 1423 altarpiece of the Magi for the Strozzi Chapel in Florence's Santa Trinita, for instance, depicts the Magi and their entourage as turbaned men wearing elaborate Egyptian and Turkish dress, while

⁴⁸⁶ Matthew 2: 1. The Magi only appear in Matthew's Gospel account. "Magi," a Greek word of Persian extraction, is usually translated as "wise men" (as in the English Standard Version), but could also refer to men well-versed in science, philosophy, theology, and especially astrology; hence the Biblical Magi's ability to follow a star to Jerusalem, and the later English derivation of the word "magic" from "magi." For the etymology of the term "magi," see Richard Trexler, *The Journey of the Magi: Meanings in History of a Christian Story* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 11-12.

⁴⁸⁷ Trexler, *The Journey of the Magi*, 9-123; Manuela Beer, et al., eds., *The Magi: Legend, Art and Cult* (Cologne: Museum Schnütgen, 2014), 13-15. See also Voragine I: 78-84.

⁴⁸⁸ Trexler, *The Journey of the Magi*, 4, 76.

fifteenth-century German artists, inspired by medieval legends of ancient Ethiopia, depicted one of the Magi as a black African.⁴⁸⁹

In fifteenth-century Florence, the Magi were particularly beloved. They were admired by Florentine humanists for their special status as learned, pagan astrologers who accepted Christ and Christianity. Marsilio Ficino (1433-99), in a late fifteenth-century sermon, stressed, for instance, that the Magi's astrological learning was a God-given gift that justified the study of pagan philosophical and scientific traditions. For Ficino, the Magi's astrological learning led them to Christianity. In this sense, the Magi were symbols of the reconciliation between Christian and pagan thinking.⁴⁹⁰

Drawn to both the Magi's royal and mercantile status, the Medici also developed a special devotion to the three kings. Cosimo, Piero, and Lorenzo de' Medici all commissioned paintings of the Magi from Florence's leading artists, and Benozzo Gozzoli frescoed the Medici's palace chapel with the Adoration of the Magi.⁴⁹¹ The Medici also supported and were members of the popular Florentine confraternity, the Compagnia de' Magi. Founded in the fourteenth century and supported by the friars of San Marco, the Compagnia de' Magi was a male sodality that organized and performed elaborate, public theatricals of the Magi throughout the

⁴⁸⁹ The seminal study on the black magus is Paul Kaplan, *The Rise of the Black Magus in Western Art* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1983). See also the recently revised *The Image of the Black in Western Art, Vol. 3: From the 'Age of Discovery' to the 'Age of Abolition,'* eds. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2010).

⁴⁹⁰ Marsilio Ficino, "De stella magorum," in *Opera*, eds. Mario Sancierpiano and Paul Oskar Kristeller (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmio, 1959), 572-74. The sermon is thoroughly summarized and analyzed in Stephen Buhler, "Marsilio Ficino's De stella magorum and Renaissance Views of the Magi," *Renaissance Quarterly* 43, no. 2 (Summer 1990): 348-371.

⁴⁹¹ Benozzo Gozzoli, *The Adoration of the Magi* (1459-60), fresco, Palazzo Medici-Riccardi, Florence. Diane Cole Ahl's chapter on the chapel in her *Benozzo Gozzoli*, 81-120, remains the best account of these frescoes. For the Medici and the Magi, see also Rab Hatfield, "The Compagnia de' Magi," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970): 107-161.

fifteenth century.⁴⁹² In the late 1460s, just two decades before Ghirlandaio made his altarpiece for the Innocenti, these Magi-themed festivities included extensive public processions of fantastically-dressed cavalry through the streets of Florence; a large constructed edifice of Herod's palace in the Piazza San Marco; and lavishly decorated "tents" for the Magi in the main neighborhoods of the city.⁴⁹³

Florence's adolescent boys were the principle actors in these spectacles; in the late 1460s, for instance, the youths of the Compagnia de' Magi, ostensibly portraying members of the Magi's entourage, disguised themselves as their own fathers, going so far as, in the words of one observer, to "scarcely be distinguishable from the real."⁴⁹⁴ The youth activities of the Compagnia, like those of other confraternities for adolescents, were more generally tied to creating educated and pious citizens of Florence – an aim remarkably similar to that of the Innocenti's in its pedagogical efforts with the orphans. Children were more broadly perceived as agents of ritual salvation, both political and religious, in Renaissance Florence. They were seen as capable of rejuvenating and reinvigorating the city amidst a demographic aging of the population, a declining birthrate, and the ever-present and often violent factional conflicts.⁴⁹⁵ Youth confraternities like the Compagnia de' Magi and institutions like

⁴⁹² Hatfield, "The Compagnia de' Magi," 108-109.

⁴⁹³ Ibid. 115-117.

⁴⁹⁴ These are the words of Fra Giovanni di Carlo, a Dominican theologian, who described the Magi pageant c. 1466/69. Fra Giovanni di Carlo, *Libri de temporibus suis* (1480-82), Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 5878, fols. 68v-75v, 68v. Cf. Hatfield, "The Compagnia de' Magi," 148-151 as doc. 9b.

⁴⁹⁵ Richard Trexler, "Adolescence and Salvation in the Renaissance," in *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion: Papers from the University of Michigan Conference*, eds. Charles Trinkaus and Heiko Oberman (Leiden: Brill, 1974): 200-64, 260 and 305; and Konrad Eisenbichler, *The Boys of the Archangel Raphael: A Youth Confraternity in Florence, 1411-1785* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).

the Innocenti thus became vital agents in perpetuating the future piety and glory of the city through their education and support of children and adolescents.

The Magi, especially venerated in Florence and particularly so by the city's youth, thus stand at the center of several interrelated themes that are appropriate to the Innocenti and its mission: conversion, faith, and salvation, for both Jew and Gentile, old and young alike. Besides the subject of the Magi more generally, Ghirlandaio includes several details that emphasize these themes. He stresses the Magi's different ages, for instance, not only in their own appearance, but also by varying the ages of their entourage, which includes golden-locked youths and grey-bearded men, in addition to handsomely attired middle-aged gentlemen. The addition of the young Innocents, while certainly germane to the Innocenti, furthers the Epiphany story's message of salvation. This salvation is made manifest in the altarpiece through figures representative of both the city of Florence (St. John the Baptist) and the Silk Guild (St. John the Evangelist).

As the patron saints of merchants, as well as purveyors of goods in their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, the Magi simultaneously give and receive gifts; they offer luxury goods to the Christ Child as a form of homage, but consequently receive the gift of salvation through Christ's holy birth. Ghirlandaio downplays the physical gifts that the Magi offer to Jesus. Caspar's gold goblet almost blends into the cow immediately behind it, while Balthazar discreetly holds his bronze container to his chest. Through the presentation gesture of Sts. John the Baptist and John the Evangelist to the Innocents, however, Ghirlandaio emphasizes that the children are the true gifts being given. The altarpiece suggests not only the preciousness of

children – with the most precious child of all being the Christ Child himself – but also the role the Innocenti played in fostering the special gifts of children.

Ghirlandaio's Innocenti altarpiece thus functions in many ways as a manifesto of the hospital's mission. It is an institution, just like Christ and the Church more broadly, that saves and redeems the most vulnerable. Like the Magi in the painting, it is an organization, supported by the mercantile activities that the Magi typify, that gives and receives gifts: here both from and to its orphaned charges. Through Ghirlandaio's careful hand, the altarpiece is a visual emblem of the Innocenti's aims and charitable objectives, powerfully showcasing the institution's role in saving and supporting Florence's youngest and most needy citizens.

Chapter 6: Memory and Commemoration: Ghirlandaio's Altarpieces for Private Patrons

On July 21, 1491, Lorenzo Tornabuoni sent to the Cistercian church of Cestello in Florence a “beautiful panel with the Visitation that was of the price of 80 ducats by the hand of Domenico Ghirlandaio and sent to decorate the said chapel.”⁴⁹⁶ This panel, Ghirlandaio's altarpiece of the *Visitation with Mary Salome and Mary Jacobi*, was the visual centerpiece of Lorenzo Tornabuoni's memorial chapel in Cestello to his deceased first wife, Giovanna degli Albizzi. Flanked by glittering candelabra and on top of the damask altar cloth that Lorenzo had also donated to the chapel,⁴⁹⁷ Ghirlandaio's altarpiece was a perpetual visual reminder of Lorenzo's largesse. It was also the visual locus for the weekly memorial Masses for Giovanna's soul that Lorenzo had “particularly and specially” endowed for 100 years.⁴⁹⁸

The writer of the late fifteenth-century Cestello account book rightly emphasizes the beauty and decorative splendor of Ghirlandaio's altarpiece, for altarpieces for family altars and chapels were fundamentally visual indices, through

⁴⁹⁶ “A di 21 di luglio 1491 el sopradetto Lorenzo mando a cestello nella sua chappella una bella tavola dipinta cholla visitatione che fu di pregio di duchati ottanta di mano di domenicho grillandaio et detto di mando di ornare detta chapella...” Florence, Archivio di Stato, Compagnie religiose sopresse C. XVIII (Cisterciensi), 417, no. 62, c. 12 recto. Published as document 37 in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 362.

⁴⁹⁷ These are in addition to a predella (now lost), benches, vestments, and a stained glass window that Lorenzo also provided for his chapel; “...predella daltare et panche cholle spalliere e due chandelliere bianchi grandi et due di ferro per tenere in sullaltare per apichare le chandele et etiam detto di la finestra invetrata con una figura di sto laurentio dentrovi fatta da sandro bidello dello studio. E mando detto di una pianeta di domaschino bianco fioriro dalmaticha et tonicello e uno paliotto daltare duna fatta e uno bellissima piuviale dappicciolato domaschino benedictur deus qui retribuatur ei sechondum suum laborem.” Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸ “...si dicessi per spatio danni cento ogni settimana una volta una messa partichularmente et spetialmente pella anima della donna che fu del sopradetto lorenzo tornabuoni cioe pella giovanna figliuola che fu di maso degli albizi la qual messa si chomincio adi 25 di dicembre 1490.” Ibid.

their beauty, of family honor, taste, and identity, as well as family piety and faith.⁴⁹⁹ As sacred images commissioned by individuals for particular familial sacred spaces within larger churches, these altarpieces typify the “fluid and dynamic nexus” of Renaissance patronage described by Patricia Simons and F.W. Kent.⁵⁰⁰ Ghirlandaio’s altarpieces for private patrons, which I define here as altarpieces commissioned by a lay man or woman for a family chapel or altar, are no exception to this nexus of artist, individual patron, and specific church. In his altarpieces for the Florentines Dionigi Fiorini, Francesco Sassetti, Stefano Boni, and Lorenzo and Giovanni Tornabuoni, Ghirlandaio carefully amalgamated his patrons’ desires for personal and familial glory and memory with a concurrent consideration of the liturgies carried out in front of and around these paintings.

Family altars and chapels – specific altars and specific, small architectural spaces endowed by individuals and/or families within larger churches – served several purposes in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. First and foremost, they were semi-private spaces where special Masses could be said in the honor of and for the soul(s) of the patron(s). In this sense, as Robert Gaston has argued, they were primarily liturgical spaces,⁵⁰¹ but it is also essential to consider them as fundamentally eschatological spaces, as the endowed Masses offered within them

⁴⁹⁹ For the literature of Renaissance patronage, see note 20.

⁵⁰⁰ F.W. Kent and Patricia Simons, “Renaissance Patronage: An Introductory Essay,” in *Patronage, Art, and Society*, eds. Kent and Simons: 1-21, 19.

⁵⁰¹ Robert Gaston, “Liturgy and Patronage in San Lorenzo, Florence, 1350-1650,” in *Patronage, Art, and Society*, eds. Kent and Simons: 111-133, 113, 119. This is also echoed by Burke 120-121. Samuel Cohn, Jr. has written persuasively on the importance of endowed Masses in family chapels or at family altars as overt forms of lay control over liturgical practices in the decades after the Black Death; see his *The Cult of Remembrance and the Black Death: Six Renaissance Cities in Central Italy* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), especially 213-232.

were on behalf of the patron's soul.⁵⁰² Lorenzo Tornabuoni, for instance, endowed his Cestello chapel specifically for Masses in honor of his deceased wife, while Francesco Sassetti specified that the Divine Office be said in his chapel in Santa Trinita each morning for "the merit and memory of his soul and of his ancestors."⁵⁰³ Patrons, and even other members of the laity, may additionally have prayed or performed other devotions within family chapels or in front of family altars.⁵⁰⁴

Many family chapels and altars were also burial spaces; the burial tomb, either a sarcophagus or more commonly a slab, was often located in front of the endowed altar or within the space of the family chapel. Florentine wool and linen merchant Dionigi Fiorini's tomb slab, for example, was just underneath the altarpiece he commissioned from Ghirlandaio, and the elaborate tombs of Francesco Sassetti and his wife, Nera, are on either side of Ghirlandaio's altarpiece in the Sassetti Chapel. Burial within the precincts of the church, according to St. Antoninus, brought the deceased into closer communication with the saints honored at the church; increased the chances of the faithful offering prayers for the deceased upon beholding the tomb;

⁵⁰² The contemporary theological idea was that the soul of the patron was, if alive, in need of prayers for salvation, or if dead, presumably in Purgatory and in need of prayers to shorten the duration of that purgatorial stay. See Cohn, Jr. 110-111 and Sharon Strocchia, *Death and Ritual in Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 204-209.

⁵⁰³ "...et dissiderando che perpetualmente vi sia celebrato ogni mactina l'ufitio divino della messa e di fare che per alcuno tempo non possa manchare decta celebratione, per merito e memoria dell'anima sua e de' sua antecessori..." Florence, Archivio di Stato, Notarile Antecosimiano A 381 (Andrea d'Angiolo da Terranuova, 1482-1486), c. 269 verso. Published as document 12 in Borsook and Offerhaus 62.

⁵⁰⁴ There is scant evidence for the participation of patrons at the endowed Masses or for other activities at the altars/chapels, but the donation of benches (as in the case of Lorenzo Tornabuoni at Cestello) does suggest their use by individuals other than the officiating priest(s); see Burke 120-21 and Alison Luchs, *Cestello: A Cistercian Church of the Florentine Renaissance* (New York: Garland, 1977), 42. Funeral and burial Masses performed in the chapels or at the endowed altars were, however, usually attended by, at the very least, the male members of the family; see Strocchia 24.

and ensured that the bodies of the deceased would not be disturbed by demons.⁵⁰⁵

Altarpieces that overlooked burial spaces evoked and participated in these implications of increased heavenly communication, prayerful agency, and protection.

Other family chapels and altars served commemorative, rather than strictly burial purposes; the Boni and Tornabuoni chapels in Cestello, for example, were memorial in function since neither chapel contained tombs.⁵⁰⁶ Finally, “family” chapels, like many other parts of the Renaissance church, often had multiple functions and/or audiences. Although the Tornabuoni chapel in Santa Maria Novella, for instance, contained the tombs of patron Giovanni Tornabuoni and some members of his family, it was also the high altar chapel and choir of the entire church. Thus, although Masses were said for Giovanni Tornabuoni and his family at that altar, it was also the main altar – and therefore the site of the celebration of the Mass – for the entire Conventual Dominican congregation of Santa Maria Novella.

As sacred spaces where family identity and memory were explicitly invoked and perpetuated, family chapels and altars shaped both the family’s own, but also the public’s consciousness of that family’s identity. Art in these spaces was a vital form of self-representation and self-definition, as much as it was also a tangible sign of the wealth, prestige, and piety of the family. The special qualities and tasks of altarpieces more generally, discussed in Chapter 2, made altarpieces for family chapels and altars the focal points of such strategies for identity and memory creation. As Giovanni Ciappelli has argued, altarpieces for family altars and chapels, more than other kinds

⁵⁰⁵ St. Antoninus, *Summa theologica pars tertia* (Venice: N. Jenson, 1477), Tit. X, cap. III [available in full digital version from the manuscript preserved in Yale University’s Beinecke Library at galegroup.com]; cf. Gaston 131, n. 87.

⁵⁰⁶ Luchs, *Cestello*, 48, 50.

of individually commissioned images, served both commemorative, but also “expiative” purposes.⁵⁰⁷ The dynamic of this dialectic between the desire for memory maintained and penitence offered through the donation of the altarpiece is at the heart of this chapter.

The choice of subject for the family altarpiece was of the utmost importance for patrons who sought both to memorialize themselves and also to indicate their faith and devoutness. The saints were particularly favored as subjects in family altarpieces through the vehicle of name- or patron-saints. As Peter Brown has effectively shown, the patron saint was seen as an “invisible and intimate friend,” as well as a guardian. Moreover, the patron saint was the embodiment of the individual who honored him, as much as the saintly figure was also an ideal “*patronus* whose intercessions were successful.”⁵⁰⁸

The selection of the artist for the family altarpiece was crucial in articulating family identity and taste. In the case of Ghirlandaio, the lay individuals who employed him for family altarpieces seem to have been keenly attracted to his special style, namely his imitation of Netherlandish painting, in its subjects, settings, and heightened mimesis through the use of oil; and Ghirlandaio’s naturalistic and life-like portraiture. Ghirlandaio’s precise attention to sacred iconography was also likely paramount, as his altarpieces for family altars and chapels present some of his most sophisticated altarpiece imagery. Ghirlandaio’s lay patrons also appear to have

⁵⁰⁷ Giovanni Ciappelli, “Introduction,” in *Art, Memory, and the Family*, eds. Ciappelli and Rubin: 1-13, 3.

⁵⁰⁸ Peter Brown, *The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 6, 50, 41. Italics are Brown’s.

employed him for his connections to the highest and most prosperous levels of Florentine society. For Francesco Sassetti and Giovanni Tornabuoni, Ghirlandaio was, furthermore, something of a family artist, as he not only made the altarpieces and frescoes for their family chapels, but also created portraits and other devotional pictures for them.⁵⁰⁹ Ghirlandaio's oft-noted affability seems to have been especially valued by both men, and particularly so as Tornabuoni and Sassetti were rivals in both the Medici Bank and in religious commissions; as famously discussed by Aby Warburg, Sassetti held a grudge against Tornabuoni for his perceived usurpation of the family's patronage rights at Santa Maria Novella.⁵¹⁰ Ghirlandaio's ability to simultaneously create lauded works of art while also effectively managing the often complex relationships with clients certainly finds its greatest expression in his altarpieces for private patrons.

Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Dionigi Fiorini:

Depicting the Virgin and Child enthroned with Sts. Clement, Dionysius, Dominic, and Thomas Aquinas, Ghirlandaio's altarpiece for the church of San Marco

⁵⁰⁹ These include, for the Sassetti: *Francesco Sassetti and his Son Teodoro* (c. 1485; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York); *A Young Woman (Sassetti Daughter?)* (c. 1485; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York); and *Judith and her Maid* (1489; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Gemäldegalerie, Berlin). For catalog entries for these works, see Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 278-280 and 261.

For the Tornabuoni, Ghirlandaio created the lost/destroyed tomb frescoes in Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome, commissioned by Giovanni Tornabuoni for his wife, Francesca Pitti's, burial chapel (c. 1477-78); possibly for that same chapel the small panel *Meeting of Christ and St. John the Baptist in the Wilderness* (c. 1477-78; tempera on panel; Gemäldegalerie, Berlin); the *Adoration of the Magi* (1487; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence); and *Giovanna degli Albizzi Tornabuoni* (c. 1489-90; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid). Entries for these are Ibid. 285, 246-47, 256-58, and 277-78. Maria dePrano additionally has a work in progress documenting these works, tentatively titled *A Family's Oeuvre: Tornabuoni Art Patronage in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (forthcoming).

⁵¹⁰ Aby Warburg, "Francesco Sassetti's Last Injunctions to his Sons" (1907), in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*: 223-62.

in Florence (fig. 4: c. 1481; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence) builds on the compositions of his Pisa and Lucca altarpieces while anticipating that of San Giusto. As in the Pisa altarpieces, the sacred gathering takes place in an ambiguous indoor-outdoor space backed by a wall with rectangular, colored marble inlays. Here, too, the Madonna's throne is semi-circular, with a antique-style, scallop-shell niche; pilasters with a delicate gold design; and the phrase "AVE GRATIA PLENA" etched along the top edge. The steps leading down from her throne are also covered by a fine, Turkish carpet.⁵¹¹

Unlike the Pisa altarpieces, however, and more similar to that of San Giusto, the San Marco altarpiece includes youthful, lily-clasping angels on either side of the throne. The saints are also gathered in a decidedly horticultural locale: there is an apple or citrus tree behind the wall to the left; two gold vases full of blossoms on top of the wall to either side of the throne; and a flowering, possibly pomegranate, tree to the right. A verdant garden meadow complete with small clusters of tiny flowers is visible underneath the feet of Sts. Dionysius and Thomas Aquinas, standing to either side of the Madonna on the left and right respectively. Sts. Dominic and Clement kneel below, hands clasped in prayer, in a similar manner to Sts. Justus and Zenobius in the San Giusto altarpiece. St. Clement, wearing an elaborate red cope with a lozenge of Moses and the Ten Commandments on the back,⁵¹² turns his head over his left shoulder and looks out at the viewer in the same pose as St. Jerome in the later

⁵¹¹ For the provenance of the carpet, see note 252.

⁵¹² This lozenge is a reference to one of Clement's most famous miracles, when he, led by a lamb and like Moses's sojourn in the wilderness, struck a rock and produced water from it for his companions; this event is depicted in the predella below, and may have had a special relevance, through the lamb imagery, for the patron, who was a wool/linen merchant. See Pons 14, 78.

Narni altarpiece. The painting is completed by a five-panel predella by Bartolomeo di Giovanni consisting of: *Beheading of St. Dionysius*; *Raising of Napoleone Orsini* by *St. Dominic*; *Pietà*; *St. Clement's Vision of the Lamb*; and *School of St. Thomas*.

Patronage and Commission:

Long confused with Davide Ghirlandaio's Monticelli altarpiece,⁵¹³ and then connected to the sixteenth-century Ricci altar in San Marco,⁵¹⁴ a recently discovered document in the *ricordanza* of San Marco links Ghirlandaio's painting with the altar of Dionigi di Chimenti di Domenico Fiorini "lanaiuolo."⁵¹⁵ On Epiphany, January 6, 1481, San Marco's prior, the Pisan Nicolo de' Lanfreducci, granted Dionigi the right to erect an altar under the old pulpit, next to the first rood screen in the public, mixed-sex area of the nave of San Marco.⁵¹⁶ In addition to the right to Masses in his honor at

⁵¹³ See Appendix A, entry II; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 252-53 and 321.

⁵¹⁴ Lisa Venturini, "Riflessioni sulla pala ghirlandaiesca di Rimini," in *Domenico Ghirlandaio 1449-1494*, eds. Prinz and Seidel: 154-64, 154 and 163, notes 1-3; and Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 253. See also Hans Teubner, "San Marco in Florenz: Umbauten vor 1500. Ein Beitrag zum Werk des Michelozzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 23 (1979): 239-272, 249-250.

⁵¹⁵ Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, San Marco, 902, c. 75, verso, M CCC LXXX. The document is published in full in appendix 2 of Everett Fahy, "The Este Predella Panels and Other Works by the Master of the Fiesole Epiphany," *Nuovi Studi* VI-VII, no. 9 (2003): 17-29, 26. Fahy states that Rolf Bagemihl found the document for him, but it was discovered earlier by Wolfgang "Till" Busse, who transcribed it in his dissertation, "Madonna con Santi – Studien zu Domenico Ghirlandaios mariologischen Altarretabeln: Auftraggeber, Kontext und Ikonographie," (Ph.D. diss., University of Cologne, 1999), 183.

⁵¹⁶ "Richordo come a dj vi dj gennaio 1480 [1481 modern style] fu concesso liberamente e dj comune consentimento dj tra Nicholo de Lanfreducej pisano allora priore del conuento dj Sancto Marco dj Firenze dell ordine de fratj predicatorj et de padrj dj consiglio dj detto conuento a Dionigj dj Chimentj dj Domeicho lanaiuolo da Firenze habitante in parochia dj detto conuento quello luogho che e sotto el pergamo uechio doue si cantano nelle solemnita In epistolo e il Vangelio per hedificaruj uno altare..." Ibid.

Since the pulpit in the document is described as where the epistles and the gospel are sung, we can assume it was the pulpit on top of the first rood screen, where the readings were read aloud to the lay congregation; this was also the site of public sermons. See Hood, *Fra Angelico at San Marco*, 2 and 46, and my discussion of the divisions of San Marco's church in Chapter 2.

this altar, Fiorini was also allowed to place a “new panel and ornaments” on the altar and to have a “sepulcher for himself and his descendants” at the bottom of the altar.⁵¹⁷

Fiorini’s full name of Dionigi di Chimenti di Domenico, or “Dionysius, [son] of Clement, [son] of Dominic” in English, accords with the saints depicted in Ghirlandaio’s altarpiece. Ghirlandaio also appears, however, to have been a witness to the altar contract as the same *ricordanza* entry lists “Domenicho dj Thommaso dipintore” as a witness.⁵¹⁸ Vasari confirmed the altarpiece’s location, relating that Ghirlandaio made “another panel...in San Marco, at the tramezzo of the church.”⁵¹⁹

Dionigi di Chimenti di Domenico Fiorini (born 1449/50) was a manufacturer and merchant of wool and linen.⁵²⁰ A resident of the parish of San Marco, Fiorini appears to have been both a successful merchant and citizen; elected consul of the linen guild four times between 1481 and 1492, Fiorini was also prior of Florence

This area of San Marco’s nave, closest to the entrance door out to the Piazza di San Marco, was primarily for the worship of the female laity, but would also have been used by the male laity when sermons were preached. See Flanigan 40-48 and 60.

⁵¹⁷ “...cioe faruj nuova tauola et ornamentj in nelluogho doue era prima uno altro altare el quale al detto conuento si apparteneua et a pie desso una sepultura per se et suoij djscendentj...” See note 516 for the archival citation and Fahy, “The Este Predella Panels,” 26.

⁵¹⁸ “...et in ricordo dicio io fra Nicholas da Pisa sopradetto ho fatto questa nota dj mia propria mano: presentj et testimonj Bendetto dj Nicholo Fiorinj et Domenicho dj Thommaso dipintore et Jacopo dj Domenicho rigattierj.” Ibid.

⁵¹⁹ “...ed in San Marco, al tramezzo della chiesa, un’altra tavola...” Vasari III: 258.

⁵²⁰ Tax records for Fiorini from 1480 describe him as “lanaiuolo” and “linaiuolo.” Since he was elected consul of the linen guild (Arte dei Linaiuoli e Rigattieri) four times throughout the 1480s and 1490s, his primary profession, at least after 1480, would appear to be that of a linen merchant. The witness “Jacopo dj Domenicho,” described as “rigattierj” in the San Marco altar endowment, also points to Fiorini’s linen profession, as rigattieri, or rag makers/merchants, were included in the linen guild; Jacopo di Domenico was likely a colleague of Dionigi’s from the guild. For the tax records, see Florence, Archivio di Stato, Catasto 1018, Campioni, Quartiere San Giovanni, Gonfalone Drago, 1480, fol. 310 r-v, no. 331; cf. F.W. Kent, *Bartolomeo Cederini and His Friends: Letters to an Obscure Florentine* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1991), 30, note 137. The tax record is also transcribed in Busse 184.

from September through October of 1487.⁵²¹ These business and political accomplishments place him at the higher levels of Florentine society, although his endowment of the altar in San Marco is relatively modest in comparison with the elaborate family chapels of Francesco Sassetti and Giovanni Tornabuoni.

Ghirlandaio's growing reputation in Florence, after work in Rome, Pisa, and San Gimignano in the 1470s, likely attracted Fiorini to the artist. In 1481, when Ghirlandaio witnessed the altar-endowment agreement, he was already hard at work on the Sassetti Chapel frescoes and had just completed his murals of the *Last Supper* and *St. Jerome* in Florence's church of Ognissanti. He was also likely already working at San Marco when Fiorini obtained his family altar. Cadogan has persuasively dated Ghirlandaio's San Marco *Last Supper* fresco, painted in the refectory of the convent's guest quarters, to c. 1481-3.⁵²² Ghirlandaio's altarpiece for Fiorini, which shows the oilier texture and heavier finish of Davide, was likely designed and largely completed by Ghirlandaio between approximately January 1481, when Fiorini obtained the altar, and September 1481, when the artist left for Rome. Davide likely finished the altarpiece before he, too, left for Rome to assist his brother in the early fall of 1481.⁵²³

The Fiorini San Marco Altarpiece:

In its selection of saints who were both name-saints for Fiorini and his family, as well as figures specially venerated by San Marco's Observant Dominicans,

⁵²¹ Busse 184; Fahy, "The Este Predella Panels," 25.

⁵²² Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 218-220.

⁵²³ Ibid. 221-225.

Ghirlandaio's San Marco altarpiece unites the familial and ecclesiastic that was so vital in family altarpieces. St. Dominic, Fiorini's grandfather's name-saint, was the eponymous founder of the Dominican Order. The theological writings of the late-fifth- and early-sixth-century St. Dionysius the Areopagite, name-saint of Dionigi, were widely admired by the Dominicans.⁵²⁴ The Dominican St. Thomas Aquinas was (and is) one of the most important Christian theologians from the Scholastic period; Ghirlandaio depicts him appropriately holding an open book that details a section from his *Summa contra Gentiles*, likely chosen by San Marco's Dominicans as a reference to the order's traditional fight against heresy.⁵²⁵ The location of Fiorini's new altar may have also originally been the location of an altar dedicated to St. Thomas Aquinas.⁵²⁶

Ghirlandaio's San Marco altarpiece would have been one of the more public and accessible images in San Marco; unlike Fra Angelico's famed *San Marco Altarpiece* (fig. 21), which was largely only visible to the friars in the choir of the church,⁵²⁷ Ghirlandaio's altarpiece hung over an altar in the mixed-sex, lay area of the

⁵²⁴ St. Dionysius is referred to today as the Pseudo-Dionysius; while the late-antique writings purport to be by the Biblical Dionysius Areopagite, an Athenian man converted by St. Paul in the Book of Acts, they were later discovered to have been written by an anonymous theologian centuries after the scriptural events. Pseudo-Dionysius was believed, however, to be the Biblical Dionysius throughout the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance.

The Dominicans Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas both wrote commentaries on Dionysius; for a discussion of his influence on the Dominican Order and on Fra Angelico's paintings at San Marco, see Georges Didi-Huberman, *Fra Angelico: Dissemblance and Figuration*, trans. Jane Todd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), particularly 50-52.

⁵²⁵ Busse 199-201.

⁵²⁶ Teubner 251 and 257-258, note 57.

⁵²⁷ Flanigan includes an excellent reconstruction of the optics of San Marco as figures 2-4 and 8, pages 41 and 45. While she asserts that the high altarpiece of San Marco would have been visible to the congregation through the doorways of the two rood screens, she notes that "any view...of the high altar through the openings of the *tramezzi* would not have been easily obtained in a crowded church,

church. With this particular viewing in mind, Ghirlandaio includes saints who symbolize both Dominican and Fiorini presence in the sacred garden precinct of the Virgin and Christ Child. The saints here suggest, to the ordinary lay viewer, the particular holiness of both the Dominican Order that governed the church of San Marco, as well as that of the Fiorini family and Dionigi, in particular. Ghirlandaio's addition of the inscription "Dionysius Ariopagita," just above St. Dionysius's shoulders on the background wall, acts as an identification for the saint as much as it calls especial attention to the doubling of Dionysius/Dionigi.

Fiorini's altar was for endowed Masses for his and his family's souls, but it was also located underneath the pulpit where the scriptures were read or sermons were preached to the laity. Ghirlandaio stresses these liturgical activities in the altarpiece. The specifically Dominican saints in the altarpiece – Sts. Dominic and Thomas Aquinas – are shown active in both worship and teaching just as their counterparts at San Marco would have been; St. Dominic kneels and faces the Madonna, his hands clasped in fervent prayer, while St. Thomas Aquinas presents his theological writings as a gift to both the Virgin and Child and also seemingly to the lay beholder outside the picture. While the lay viewer would likely have been neither able to read, nor recognize the Latin writing on St. Thomas Aquinas's book, he or she certainly would have understood the saint's relevance as a theologian and teacher through the proffered, open volume. This is echoed in the predella scene for St. Thomas Aquinas, which shows him teaching to a mixed clerical and lay audience.

where...vision would have been blocked by men and other women standing in front of the choir opening;" Flanigan 60.

Sts. Dionysius and Clement, as non-Dominican saints, are, rather, stand-ins for Fiorini and his father; instead of actively engaging with the divine as Sts. Dominic and Thomas Aquinas do, they look out at the viewer. While these saints are certainly within the presence of the sacred, they are effectively witnesses rather than active participants. As the saintly embodiments of Fiorini, himself buried just below the altar and altarpiece, they serve as reminders of the family's humble piety as much as they also, through their bold glances out towards the beholder, seem to intercede for Fiorini and his family. It is not surprising that the predella stories of martyrdom, resurrection, and miracles echo the burial and eschatological context of the altar. Bartolomeo di Giovanni shows the death of St. Dionysius, but also the resurrection of Napoleone Orsini by St. Dominic. The panel of St. Clement's miraculous procurement of water, as well as the central panel of the *Pietà*, also suggest the Christian paradox of death yet salvation.

Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Francesco Sassetti:

Ghirlandaio's altarpiece of *The Adoration of the Shepherds* (fig. 7: 1483-5; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Santa Trinita, Florence), painted for the burial chapel of Medici banker Francesco Sassetti, is arguably the artist's most visually inventive. The painting combines influence from Hugo van der Goes's *Portinari Altarpiece* (figs. 18 and 19), which arrived in Florence in 1483 to much sensation, with a sophisticated amalgamation of Sassetti family symbols and motifs derived from the antique. In the center of the picture, Ghirlandaio shows the small infant

Christ lying on a bit of straw⁵²⁸ and a portion of his mother's black robe. Above him, and to the left, is the Virgin, who gazes down upon her son and holds her hands in prayer. St. Joseph kneels behind the Madonna, and turns towards the sky to presumably gaze at the star above, or, alternatively, towards the coming cavalcade of the Magi, who ride under a triumphal arch with an inscription honoring the Roman Emperor Pompey⁵²⁹ on the left side of the painting. Above the Magi on the left is a green hillside, where a group of shepherds with their sheep stand stunned as an angel flies overhead. These shepherds are then shown, in continuous narrative, kneeling next to the Christ Child in the right foreground; dressed humbly in brown-and-grey garb with shearling coats, and holding a lamb and a basket, these shepherds look down in wonder and point towards the infant Jesus.

As in the later Innocenti altarpiece, Ghirlandaio's Nativity scene here takes place not in the traditional barn or cave, but, rather, in a dilapidated shelter composed of Corinthian-style piers and a thatched roof. Placed prominently underneath the structure, along with the ox and ass, is the Christ Child's manger, which, in keeping with the antique architecture of the shelter, is not a simple wooden trough, but a classical-style sarcophagus filled with straw. This "manger," directly behind the Christ Child's haloed head, includes an inscription which translates to: "Fulvius, Pompey's augur, falling to the sword before Jerusalem, proclaims, 'My tomb will

⁵²⁸ Some have seen this "straw" as shorn wheat, and thus an allusion to the Eucharist and Christ's physical presence as the Eucharist bread; see Paula Nuttall, "Domenico Ghirlandaio and Northern Art," *Apollo* 143, no. 412 (June 1996): 16-22, 19.

⁵²⁹ The full inscription is, "GN[AIVS] POMPEIO MAGNO HIRCANVS PONT[IFEX] P[OSUIT]," or "The priest Hircanus erected [this arch] in honor of Gnaeus Pompey the Great;" Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 253.

produce a new deity.’”⁵³⁰ Just as the Innocenti altarpiece expressed the idea of the new, Christian order replacing the old, pagan one of the classical world, so, too, does the Sassetti altarpiece suggest the triumph of Christianity over paganism.⁵³¹ This sense of Christian triumph, but here over both Judaism and paganism, is strengthened by the altarpiece’s background views of Jerusalem and Rome.⁵³² Completing the painting in the bottom foreground are several symbolic objects: a small stone, indicative of the Sassetti, whose name means “little stones;” a goldfinch, a traditional emblem of the Passion; and some bricks, representing new building and construction in keeping with the altarpiece’s theme of Christian triumph and the birth of a new order.⁵³³

Francesco Sassetti:

The Sassetti family, with origins in the countryside outside Pisa, had long been an important Florentine family, and particularly so in the thirteenth century when they were some of the city’s most prosperous merchants. While their fortunes had somewhat declined by the time Francesco Sassetti was born in 1421,⁵³⁴ the family was, nonetheless, well-off, with several lucrative properties in Florence and in the

⁵³⁰ The Latin inscription is: “ENSE CADENS SOLYMO POMPEI FULVI[VS]/AVGVVR/NVMEN AIT QVAE ME CONTEG[IT] URNA DABIT.” The translation is from Ibid.

⁵³¹ This idea was first discussed by Fritz Saxl, “The Classical Inscription in Renaissance Art and Politics,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 4 (1940-41): 19-46, 28-29.

⁵³² Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 254.

⁵³³ Peter Porçal, “La cappella Sassetti in Santa Trinita a Firenze: Osservazioni sull’iconografia,” *Antichità viva* 23 (1984): 26-36.

⁵³⁴ The family’s fortunes had waned during the fourteenth century due to their Ghibelline sympathies and the decimation of the Black Death; Warburg, “Francesco Sassetti’s Last Injunction to His Sons,” 254, note 46, and Amanda Lillie, *Florentine Villas in the Fifteenth Century: An Architectural and Social History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 159.

contado.⁵³⁵ Francesco Sassetti (1421-90) was the youngest son of Betta de' Pazzi and Tommaso Sassetti, a successful money changer in the Mercato Nuovo.⁵³⁶ While his older brothers, Federigo and Bartolommeo, only garnered modest fortunes,⁵³⁷ Francesco achieved great success and renown due to his close – and canny – relationships with the Medici. In many ways, the Medici were a surrogate family for Sassetti; his father had died when he was only an infant, and his lack of an extensive inheritance meant that he had to amass his own fortune. Sassetti began to work for the Medici at age 16 in 1437, and quickly rose through the ranks, from junior clerk to manager of the firm's Geneva branch in 1447/48. In 1459, he was appointed assistant to Giovanni de' Medici, the manager of the Florence bank, before Sassetti himself became bank manager in 1463.⁵³⁸ Sassetti was particularly close to Piero and Lorenzo de' Medici. During Piero's long illness before his death in 1469, and then in the early years of Lorenzo's tenure as head of the family business in the 1470s, Sassetti was

⁵³⁵ These included a country estate at Macia near Novoli; two town houses in Florence; a bakery and some shops in Florence; and some other country property; Lillie, *Florentine Villas*, 160.

⁵³⁶ Sassetti's life has been extensively documented and discussed ever since Aby Warburg, at the turn of the twentieth century, first pondered the relationship between his personal life and the iconography of Ghirlandaio's burial chapel for him. See Aby Warburg, "The Art of Portraiture and the Florentine Bourgeoisie. Domenico Ghirlandaio in Santa Trinita: The Portraits of Lorenzo de' Medici and His Household" (1902) and "Francesco Sassetti's Last Injunctions to his Sons" (1907), in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*: 185-221 and 223-62 respectively.

Raymond de Roover chronicled Sassetti's professional trajectory in the Medici bank in *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank, 1397-1494* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968), while Albinia de la Mare discussed Sassetti's famed library in "The Library of Francesco Sassetti (1421-90)," in *Cultural Aspects of the Italian Renaissance: Essays in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller*, ed. Cecil Clough (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976): 160-21.

More purely biographical treatments of him include Borsook and Offerhaus, especially 10-16; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 232-233, and Lillie, *Florentine Villas*, 159-179.

⁵³⁷ Lillie, in particular, discusses the differing fortunes of the Sassetti brothers in *Florentine Villas*, 159-165.

⁵³⁸ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 232.

instrumental as an advisor, manager, and friend, so much so that he was referred to as “nostro ministro,” by Lorenzo de’ Medici.⁵³⁹

Like Lorenzo de’ Medici, Sassetti was passionate about classical culture, the collecting of antiquities, and the new writings and scholarship of Florence’s humanists. Sassetti amassed a large and distinguished library which was especially noted for its works by Cicero, Dante, Latin poets and historians, and Greek historians in Latin translation.⁵⁴⁰ He collected ancient coins, and served as a governing officer for the fledgling universities of both Florence and Pisa.⁵⁴¹ He was also a close friend and patron of the Florentine humanist Bartolomeo Fonzio (1446/9-1513). Sassetti employed Fonzio as both a tutor for his children, as well as an enthusiastic agent for his library. Fonzio also annotated manuscripts for Sassetti, wrote a treatise on ancient numismatics for him, and traveled with Sassetti to Rome to study ancient inscriptions and epigrams.⁵⁴² Eve Borsook and Johannes Offerhaus have persuasively argued for Fonzio’s role as advisor for the artistic program of Ghirlandaio’s chapel for Sassetti.⁵⁴³ As Sassetti’s close friend and humanist advisor, Fonzio almost certainly

⁵³⁹ Raymond de Roover, “The Medici Bank Organization and Management,” *The Journal of Economic History* 6, no. 1 (May 1946): 24-52, 33-35. While Sassetti’s fortunes declined in his later years due to poor management and the economic downturn of the Pazzi Crisis (1478-1482), he remained in the Medici’s favor until his death in 1490. See *Ibid.* and Borsook and Offerhaus 15.

⁵⁴⁰ De La Mare 160.

⁵⁴¹ Borsook and Offerhaus 11.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.* 12; De La Mare 160, 162, 166, and 170.

⁵⁴³ Borsook and Offerhaus 54-56. Their belief that Agnolo Poliziano, arguably the most famous humanist in Florence in the 1470s and 1480s and a close friend of Lorenzo de’ Medici, also aided in the chapel’s decoration is less convincing despite Ghirlandaio’s inclusion of his portrait into the scene of *The Resurrection of the Roman Notary’s Son*. Amanda Lillie’s review of Borsook and Offerhaus in *The Burlington Magazine* 126, no. 974 (May 1984): 293-295, especially 294, is an effective critique.

aided in the chapel's antique inscriptions and in the choice of subjects for the grisailles, which feature imagery from Sassetti's coin collection.

Sassetti married Nera Corsi in 1459 upon returning to Florence from Geneva, and together the couple had 10 children, five boys and five girls.⁵⁴⁴ Ghirlandaio included portraits of most of the Sassetti children in the chapel frescoes, and touchingly altered the subject of one of the frescoes to reference the birth of Sassetti's youngest child, Teodoro II.⁵⁴⁵ Sassetti appears to have been a loving and thoughtful father in addition to a pious and conscientious citizen. His last injunction to his sons calls for the boys to remain prudent and caring, to assist their mother and siblings (even their illegitimate brother), and to carefully maintain the family properties.⁵⁴⁶ At Sassetti's death in 1490, the family had diminished, but still extensive property holdings in Florence and the countryside; most prominent was the family's villa at Montughi, known as La Pietra, outside the hills of Florence.⁵⁴⁷

⁵⁴⁴ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 232-33. Sassetti also had an illegitimate son, Ventura; Warburg, "Francesco Sassetti's Last Injunctions," 227, 236.

⁵⁴⁵ As outlined by Warman Welliver, "Alterations in Ghirlandaio's S. Trinita Frescoes," *Art Quarterly* 32 (1969): 269-281 and then expanded by Borsook and Offerhaus 18-19, the fresco of *The Resurrection of the Roman Notary's Son* was originally *The Apparition of St. Francis at Arles*. Sassetti seems to have requested the more obscure scene of St. Francis posthumously bringing a dead Roman boy back to life as a special reference to his family's changed circumstances; eldest son Teodoro Sassetti had unexpectedly died in 1478, and Teodoro II, named in honor of his deceased brother, was seemingly miraculously born in 1479 after these sad family events.

⁵⁴⁶ This last injunction was found, published, and translated by Warburg in "Francesco Sassetti's Last Injunctions to His Sons," 233-236. Warburg listed its archival citation as Florence, Archivio di Stato, Appendice Carte Bagni, Inserto no. 25. This is no longer traceable, but Borsook and Offerhaus found a fragmentary copy of Sassetti's last injunction in Florence, Archivio di Stato, Carte Stroziane II, no. 76 (Spogli), c. 493-494; it is published as document 24, pg. 67 in Borsook and Offerhaus.

⁵⁴⁷ Lillie, *Florentine Villas*, 180. Lillie includes an extensive account of La Pietra, today home to New York University's campus in Florence, during the lifetime of Sassetti in *Ibid.* 180-253.

The Sassetti Chapel:

Negotiations between Sassetti and the Vallombrosan clerics of Santa Trinita for the chapel located to the right of the high altar began in April 1478.⁵⁴⁸ While the Sassetti had long patronized Santa Maria Novella, Francesco Sassetti had recently lost the family's rights to that church's high altar, and Santa Trinita proved an attractive alternative.⁵⁴⁹ Decoration of the chapel did not begin until the spring of 1480, as the bones of the chapel's previous owners, the Petriboni, had to be properly transferred.⁵⁵⁰ Borsook and Offerhaus assert that Ghirlandaio must have been commissioned by Sassetti to fresco the chapel's walls in 1478, but it is more likely that Ghirlandaio was not hired until 1480, when he had more permanently returned to Florence after extended sojourns in San Gimignano, Rome, Pisa, and Lucca.⁵⁵¹ While

⁵⁴⁸ Borsook and Offerhaus 14.

⁵⁴⁹ Much has been made of Sassetti's loss of patronage rights at Santa Maria Novella since he wrote in his last injunctions of "the animosity and rudeness of the friars of that place (they insulted us by removing our arms from the high altar, and also the painting);" Warburg, "Francesco Sassetti's Last Injunctions," 238 [Warburg's translation; the original Italian reads, "per la asprezza et stranzia de' frati di dicto luogho che come sapete ci anno facto villania et levate via l'arme nostre dell'altare maggiore et la tavola"; Ibid. 235-6]. Cadogan, following conclusions first reached by Patricia Simons, notes, however, that Sassetti had merely been remiss in his payment of the altar's endowment at Santa Maria Novella, and the friars thus rightly sold the endowment to the wealthier and cagier Giovanni Tornabuoni; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 233 and 239, and Patricia Simons, "Patronage in the Tornaquinci Chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence," in *Patronage, Art, and Society*, eds. Kent and Simons: 221-50, 225.

⁵⁵⁰ Borsook and Offerhaus 18.

⁵⁵¹ Borsook and Offerhaus (pgs. 17-20) believed that since the death and birth of the two Teodoros occurred in 1478-9, the drawing by Ghirlandaio of the *Apparition of St. Francis at Arles* (pen and brown ink on cream-colored paper; Istituto Nazionale per la Grafica, Rome) must have been made in 1478 prior to these events. But Ghirlandaio certainly could have produced an initial series of composition drawings for Sassetti with the more traditional Franciscan scene at Arles in 1480, after these family events and when he was more likely hired given his peripatetic movements. After verbal consultation with his patron, Ghirlandaio then altered the subject of the fresco before beginning the murals in the spring/summer of 1480. It is also unlikely that Sassetti would have commissioned an artist for the chapel before negotiations for its transfer of ownership had concluded, and before the previous tenants' remains had been removed in 1480. Cadogan more appropriately posits that the chapel was planned by Sassetti (and likely Fonzio) in 1478-9, but not properly begun by Ghirlandaio until 1482, when he returned from Rome; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 235.

Ghirlandaio and his workshop began working on the chapel's frescoes in earnest in 1482, after the artist returned from working on the Sistine Chapel in Rome.⁵⁵² The altarpiece was produced towards the end of the chapel's completion, between 1483 and 1485.⁵⁵³

The completed chapel, long one of the most celebrated works of the entire Italian Renaissance and certainly Ghirlandaio's masterpiece, is a three-walled, rib-vaulted space with a plain altar table, raised slightly on a stone platform, in front of the middle of the back wall.⁵⁵⁴ Ghirlandaio's altarpiece remains *in situ* on the altar, still in its original, *all'antica* gilded frame. On either side of the altarpiece are frescoed portraits of Sassetti and his wife, kneeling and in profile, with their hands clasped in devotion towards the Nativity scene of the altarpiece. Sassetti and his wife's tombs, made of black porphyry and traditionally attributed to Giuliano da Sangallo, rest in lunette-shaped, marble niches on the right and left walls respectively. The chapel's frescoes include: scenes from the life of St. Francis, the name-saint of Francesco Sassetti, on the chapel's back and side walls; four Roman sibyls in the severies of the vault; a depiction of the Emperor Augustus and the Tiburtine Sibyl; the Old Testament king, prophet, and poet David, whose shield showcases the

⁵⁵² Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 235.

⁵⁵³ These dates can be given with certainty, as the Portinari altarpiece, which, as previously mentioned, clearly inspired Ghirlandaio, arrived in Florence in May 1483; and Masses began in the completed chapel in December 1485. The altarpiece's painted date of "MCCCCCLXXXV" (1485) also confirms its completion. Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 254.

⁵⁵⁴ This altar was donated in 1897 by Sassetti's descendent, Count Luigi Sassetti; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 253.

Sassetti arms, over the chapel's entrance; and grisailles with scenes from Sassetti's ancient Roman coin collection in the spandrels around the tombs.⁵⁵⁵

The Sassetti Altarpiece:

The chapel's varied iconography – St. Francis; the Nativity; and ancient Roman prophecy, mythology and numismatics, in addition to its famed portraits – evokes its patron and the chapel's function as a burial and memorial space.⁵⁵⁶ The altarpiece, in turn, echoes and expands many of these themes. The painting first makes a particular statement in its subject of the Adoration of the Shepherds, for unlike the more commonly depicted, worldly Magi, the shepherds were lowly commoners. Presumably illiterate and impoverished given their modest profession, the shepherds represent the universality of Christian revelation and salvation – revelation and salvation that is available to Gentile and Jew, high and low alike. Ghirlandaio emphasizes this lowliness in the simple clothing of the shepherds, which is in obvious contrast to the sumptuous attire of the arriving Magi and their entourage on the left of the painting. As a wealthy banker, Sassetti likely appreciated the foil of the humility and poverty of the shepherds amidst the visual and material splendor of his chapel.⁵⁵⁷

As long remarked, the altarpiece's subject is the same as Hugo van der Goes's *Adoration of the Shepherds* painted for Tommaso Portinari and displayed, to much

⁵⁵⁵ Borsook and Offerhaus, and Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio* 93-101 and 230-236, are the most thorough accounts of the chapel.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁷ Nonetheless, the shepherds were privileged, in that they were the first witnesses to the angelic messengers of Christ's birth.

renown,⁵⁵⁸ in Florence at Santa Maria Nuova in 1483 (figs. 18 and 19). It is not surprising that Ghirlandaio, who had long admired and imitated Netherlandish art, would copy the general composition, subject, and meticulous realism of van der Goes's painting.⁵⁵⁹ But Sassetti himself also likely desired an altarpiece that could emulate, and hopefully supersede, Portinari's painting. Sassetti had spent many years in Geneva, and likely was both familiar with and a collector himself of Netherlandish painting.⁵⁶⁰ In addition, Portinari was a rival banker of Sassetti's in the Medici bank's Bruges branch.⁵⁶¹ After the fanfare of the Portinari triptych, it would not be unexpected for Sassetti to want his own altarpiece to arouse similar sentiments through its careful emulation of northern painting, but here filtered through the decidedly Florentine hand of Ghirlandaio. The detail and heightened realism of Netherlandish painting, achieved through the use of oil paint, was also perceived more generally by fifteenth-century Florentines as especially devout and pious. As

⁵⁵⁸ Bianca Hatfield-Strens, "L'arrivo del trittico Portinari a Firenze," *Commentari* 21 (1968): 314-19.

⁵⁵⁹ As in the Portinari altarpiece, Ghirlandaio places the Madonna at the center-left and the shepherds, kneeling and standing in a triangular group of three, to the right. Like van der Goes, Ghirlandaio also includes a still-life of objects in the foreground in front of the Holy Family; while these objects include two vases of flowers and a tied shaft of wheat in the Portinari triptych, in Ghirlandaio it is a rock, a goldfinch, and some bricks. For a comparison of the two paintings, see Nuttall, "Domenico Ghirlandaio and Northern Art," 19-20. Nuttall notes that "[a]lthough Ghirlandaio retains the key elements of Van der Goes's composition, its austerity and high-charged emotion are eschewed, and what he apparently saw as infelicities of design are corrected....the sobriety of the Netherlandish Virgin's dress is alleviated by the traditional Florentine red underdress, and the facial expression is one of devout motherhood rather than melancholic devotion. The shepherds, coarse rustics in Van der Goes, are more refined types in Ghirlandaio. More tellingly, Ghirlandaio retains the triangular form of their grouping, but unlike Van der Goes, whose triangle teeters dramatically on one of its points, giving momentum to the shepherds' entry, he sets his triangle, with greater stability, on one of its sides"; Ibid. 19.

⁵⁶⁰ Like Giovanni Tornabuoni and other wealthy Florentine art patrons, Sassetti likely collected Netherlandish paintings on cloth and paper, which were the most popular forms of northern art for the Florentine elite; Nuttall, *From Flanders to Florence*, 120-121. Nuttall also reports that Sassetti may have acquired and then sold Netherlandish paintings to his friends in Florence; she argues that he was the likely agent for good friend Antonio Pucci's two Netherlandish paintings; Ibid. 121.

⁵⁶¹ De Roover's "The Medici Bank Organization and Management" outlines much of Portinari's role.

Paula Nuttall asserts, Netherlandish style was seen as “a direct and edifying style, which should prompt an empathetic spiritual response,” and especially so through the painstaking depiction of blood, tears, and wounds.⁵⁶² While Ghirlandaio’s Sassetti altarpiece does not include such bodily details, his fastidious attention in the altarpiece to the depiction of hands, faces, and the varying textures of hair, fabric, straw, and stone certainly adds to the immediacy and lifelikeness of his holy Nativity scene.

The altarpiece’s more general subject of the Nativity, like the fresco above it of the *Resurrection of the Roman Notary’s Son* (fig. 9), suggests birth and new life; as the birth specifically of Jesus Christ, it also heralds the eternal salvation that comes from Christ’s birth. These ideas of resurrection, new life, and salvation are appropriate given the burial context of the chapel, its use as a space for memorial Masses, and the recent death and birth of Teodoro and Teodoro II Sassetti respectively. The chapel’s burial function is also evoked in the altarpiece through the sarcophagus-manger of Christ. While its antique design and inscription suggest the previously discussed triumph of Christianity over paganism, the duality of the manger as a tomb/receptacle for new life more strongly signifies the central paradox of Christianity: that in birth, there is death from original sin; in death, there is new life in the salvation of Christ.⁵⁶³ With Sassetti and his wife buried in their own sarcophagus-like tombs to either side of the altarpiece, a potent visual equivalency emerges

⁵⁶² Nuttall, *From Flanders to Florence*, 231.

⁵⁶³ This idea was first suggested to me by Alfred Acres in the fall of 2008, when I was fortunate enough to have him as my undergraduate senior thesis advisor. He discusses it at length in his *Renaissance Invention and the Haunted Infancy*, 31-125. Ghirlandaio’s Sassetti altarpiece is specifically considered in 98-100.

between the iconography of the altarpiece and the sculpted tombs of the chapel. Just as Ghirlandaio shows Christ's manger to be at once a vessel of life and death, so, too, are the similarly-designed tombs of Sassetti and Nera sites of both death – here, in the physically interned bodies of the deceased – and new life – in the mystery of eternal life after death, as well as the eventual resurrection of the body promised to Christian believers.

Ghirlandaio's donor portraits of Sassetti and Nera, painted in fresco on the walls on either side of the altarpiece, suggest this duality even further. Sassetti and Nera may be deceased, but their corporeal presence – and the memory of that presence – lives on through Ghirlandaio's life-like portraits. In this way, Ghirlandaio amalgamates, through his imagery, both the paradoxes of Christian belief and the paradoxes of art: that through the naturalistic, but ultimately lifeless form of art, the artist can “make the absent present” and “represent[t] the dead to the living.”⁵⁶⁴ As Cadogan aptly puts it, the donor portraits “claim a reality that is somewhere between the fictive world of the narratives and the real presence of the altarpiece on the table, yet is part of the reality that is the viewer's experience of the chapel.”⁵⁶⁵ In this light, the fictive reality of the portraits participates in the transformed reality that is the site of the altar and its liturgy of the Eucharist – that the true presence of the divine in heaven is now physically present at the altar table, as here the absent Sassetti and Nera seem to be physically present through the naturalism of Ghirlandaio's art.

⁵⁶⁴ Alberti, *On Painting*, 60.

⁵⁶⁵ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 236. Nuttall also notes that the portraits function like the two side wings of a Netherlandish triptych, and are similar to the votive portraits in the side wings of the Portinari altarpiece; Nuttall, “Domenico Ghirlandaio and Northern Art,” 20.

The inscription of the manger-sarcophagus augments this sense of birth-death in its insistence that the tomb of the Emperor Pompey's augur, Fulvius, will also be the site of a birth, in this case of a "new deity." In this way, the inscription serves several purposes. It alerts the viewer, however superficially, to Sassetti's (and Ghirlandaio's) interest in and proficiency with antique culture; this is also reflected in the mythological and ancient-Roman iconography of the chapel. As discussed previously and argued by many scholars, the inscription, along with the antique architecture of the triumphal arch and Corinthian piers depicted in the altarpiece, also conjures the triumph of Christianity. In thinking more carefully about the exact meaning of the inscription – that the death of a pagan prophet will lead to the birth of a new deity, Jesus Christ – what emerges is not exactly the triumph of Christianity over ancient Roman religion. Rather, it is the fulfillment and sublimation of that paganism within Christianity. In other words, out of the classical beauty of ancient Rome's tomb will emerge God Incarnate himself. This reading, which suggests that classical learning ultimately leads to Christian truth, is in keeping with the aims of the Florentine humanists whom Sassetti so admired and cultivated. The classical world here is a vehicle not just to indicate Sassetti's antiquarian passions and knowledge, but also a sophisticated means by which to show the reconciliation between the ancient past and contemporary present, or as Warburg put it, "to establish antiquity in its rightful position...in the antechamber of the Christian edifice."⁵⁶⁶ That this reconciliation is most overtly illustrated by Ghirlandaio in the chapel's altarpiece is certainly no accident, for the altar itself was the ultimate site of reconciliation for the Christian believer.

⁵⁶⁶ Warburg, "Francesco Sassetti's Last Injunctions," 247.

Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Lorenzo Tornabuoni:

Ghirlandaio's altarpiece of *The Visitation* (fig. 12: 1491; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Musée du Louvre, Paris) was painted for the chapel of Lorenzo Tornabuoni in Florence's Cistercian church of Cestello (now Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi). The Virgin, dressed in a dark blue mantle, stands in the center of the picture and bends over slightly towards St. Elizabeth, who kneels in reverence to her younger relative and the holy child she carries in her womb. St. Elizabeth reaches her hands out and clutches the Madonna's mantle in a poignant gesture that is at once awestruck, overwhelmed, and fearful in the knowledge of her cousin's divine pregnancy. To the left and right of the Virgin and St. Elizabeth stand Mary Jacobi and Mary Salome, witnesses of the crucifixion and resurrection and traditionally believed to be relatives of the Virgin Mary and the mothers of the apostles James the Lesser and James and John respectively.⁵⁶⁷ Mary Jacobi, on the left, looks off to the left and holds her left hand at her side, around her especially rounded, perhaps pregnant⁵⁶⁸ stomach. Mary Salome, on the right, seems to walk into the painting, with only her right leg visible and her robes fluttering to the right, outside the picture. With her hands clasped in prayer, she humbly looks down to the holy cousins. Behind the women is the lower portion of what appears to be a triumphal arch; there is an arched opening in the center with a view out towards Rome,⁵⁶⁹ and sides with colored-marble panels and a scallop-shell cornice. As in the Fiorini altarpiece, Ghirlandaio added

⁵⁶⁷ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 263.

⁵⁶⁸ Kecks, *Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei*, 355.

⁵⁶⁹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 263.

identifying inscriptions for Mary Jacobi and Mary Salome on the entablature of the arch behind the women's heads; Ghirlandaio also included the date of 1491 ("MCCCCLXXXI") on the bottom right portion of the arch.

Lorenzo and Giovanna degli Albizzi Tornabuoni:

Lorenzo Tornabuoni (1468-97) was the son of Francesca Pitti and Giovanni Tornabuoni, Ghirlandaio's great patron in Santa Maria Novella, scion of the Medici Bank, and the brother-in-law of Piero de' Medici and uncle of Lorenzo de' Medici; Lorenzo Tornabuoni was, in fact, named after his older, "magnificent" cousin.⁵⁷⁰ Lorenzo Tornabuoni spent the early part of his childhood in Rome, where his father was manager of that city's Medici Bank branch.⁵⁷¹ He received a classical, humanist education, first from Martino della Commedia and then from Agnolo Poliziano.⁵⁷² Lorenzo appears to have especially excelled in arithmetic and in Greek; a mathematical tract by Giovanni di Bernardo Banchegli was dedicated to him, and Poliziano dedicated his poem *Ambra* to his pupil in 1485.⁵⁷³ In 1483/4, Lorenzo furthered his education by attending the universities in Florence and Pisa.⁵⁷⁴ He then appears to have become an assistant in his father's banking activities, although he was never formally employed by the Medici Bank.

⁵⁷⁰ Giovanni Tornabuoni's sister, Lucrezia, married Piero de' Medici in 1444, and gave birth to Lorenzo de' Medici in 1449; Gert Jan van der Sman, *Lorenzo and Giovanna: Timeless Art and Fleeting Lives in Renaissance Florence*, trans. Diane Webb (Florence: Mandragora, 2010), 11.

⁵⁷¹ Ibid. 12.

⁵⁷² Ibid. 16-18.

⁵⁷³ Ibid. 18. The handwritten mathematical tract, the *Compendio di arithmetica*, is preserved in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid. 19.

Lorenzo married Giovanna degli Albizzi (1468-88) in 1486. The daughter of Caterina Soderini and Maso di Luca degli Albizzi, Giovanna was the eighth of twelve sisters.⁵⁷⁵ Praised for her beauty and purity, Giovanna was likely educated at the Florentine school of Annalena Malatesta, a widow who operated an academy and finishing school for patrician girls in the Oltrarno.⁵⁷⁶ Lorenzo and Giovanna's wedding was a three-day extravaganza in which the whole of Florence seems to have participated. A great crowd watched as Giovanna was led in splendor from her parents' home to the Palazzo Tornabuoni; a public banquet was celebrated for the newlyweds in what is now the Piazza Antinori; and a jousting tournament was held in the couple's honor.⁵⁷⁷ The newly married couple split their time between the Palazzo Tornabuoni in Florence and the family's country villa at Chiasso Macerelli. In 1487, just one year after their marriage, Giovanna gave birth to a son, named Giovanni after his grandfather, but affectionately referred to as "Giovannino," or "little John."⁵⁷⁸

Tragedy, however, struck the couple in October 1488, when Giovanna died while pregnant with her second child. Buried in Santa Maria Novella near the Tornabuoni's high altar chapel, Giovanna's death appears to have been widely mourned, with large donations of candles for her funeral Mass and with both Poliziano and Lorenzo himself writing her funeral epitaphs.⁵⁷⁹ In addition to the

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid. 26; as van der Sman points out, the chance of a couple having twelve girls in a row is 1 in 4,000; Ibid. 25.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid. 26-29.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid. 35-42.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid. 45, 91.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid. 102; Lorenzo's poem asserts that, "The Graces gave her wits and Venus beauty,/The goddess Diana granted her a chaste heart:/...Much loved by the people during her life,/Now cherished by the

memorial Masses he endowed at both Santa Maria Novella and Cestello, Lorenzo commissioned several works of art, all from the hand of Ghirlandaio, to honor Giovanna. These include Ghirlandaio's celebrated posthumous panel portrait of Giovanna now in the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid (fig. 48),⁵⁸⁰ and the inclusion of Giovanna's portrait in the frescoes of the Tornabuoni Chapel in Santa Maria Novella.⁵⁸¹

Lorenzo Tornabuoni's Memorial Chapel for Giovanna in Cestello:

While Ghirlandaio's portraits of Giovanna memorialize her physical likeness for posterity, and through their imagery evoke her purity, piety, and beauty, the memorial chapel that Lorenzo endowed in Cestello honors the salvation of Giovanna's soul. Lorenzo acquired the rights to the chapel, the fourth on the left side of the nave, in 1489, just a year after Giovanna's demise.⁵⁸² Cestello, officially Santa Maria Maddalena di Cestello, was founded in the late thirteenth century, and originally housed a Cistercian congregation of nuns under the auspices of the Badia di

highest God." Translated from the Latin in Ibid. The original poem is at the end of Naldo Naldi's nuptial poem for the couple, the *Nuptiale Carmen ad Laurentium Tornabonium Iohannis filium iuvenem primum* (Florence, 1486), now in a private collection, but accessed by van der Sman.

⁵⁸⁰ Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Giovanna degli Albizzi Tornabuoni* (c. 1489-90), tempera and possibly oil on panel, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid.

For recent accounts of this famed portrait, see Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 277-78; van der Sman, *Lorenzo and Giovanna*, 103-105; Patricia Simons, "Giovanna and Ginevra: Portraits for the Tornabuoni Family by Ghirlandaio and Botticelli," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 14/15 (2011-2012): 103-35; and van der Sman, *Ghirlandaio y el Renacimiento en Florencia* (Madrid: Fundación Colección Museo Thyssen- Bornemisza, 2010).

⁵⁸¹ Specifically in the mural of *The Visitation*, and as argued by Simons in "Giovanna and Ginevra," possibly also into the fresco of *The Birth of John the Baptist*.

⁵⁸² "1489...Lorenzo di Giovanni Tornabuoni fece fare la 4.a cappella dalla parte del Chiostro; spese ducati 64." Florence, Archivio di Stato, Compagnie Religiose Soppresse C.XVIII (Cisterciensi) 396, no. 18(T), 60r. Published as document 13 in Luchs, *Cestello*, 337-360, 348.

Settimo.⁵⁸³ In 1442, the nuns were transferred to another convent, and the monastery became the Florentine base for Settimo's monks and for new Florentine Cistercians.⁵⁸⁴ The monks commenced a large-scale renovation campaign at Cestello in the early 1480s, with construction of the nave's chapels beginning in 1488.⁵⁸⁵ While there are now minor architectural differences between the chapels after subsequent centuries of renovation, each chapel, including those of both Lorenzo Tornabuoni and Stefano Boni (discussed below), originally featured a sail vault; an arched window on the back wall; a continuous cornice at entablature level; *pietra serena* entrance arches with pilasters; and an altar with an altarpiece.⁵⁸⁶

The construction of Lorenzo's chapel did not begin until August 8, 1490, and was finished on March 1, 1491.⁵⁸⁷ Lorenzo spent lavishly on the chapel, donating, as previously discussed, not only Ghirlandaio's altarpiece, but also candelabras, an altar cloth, a predella (now lost), benches, vestments, and a stained glass window of St. Lawrence, Lorenzo's name-saint.⁵⁸⁸ Since Giovanna was buried in Santa Maria Novella (as Lorenzo himself would be six years later), the chapel was a decidedly commemorative, rather than burial space. It was a space solely for the perpetuation of Giovanna's memory, and not for the physical internment of her body.

⁵⁸³ Luchs, *Cestello*, 3-5.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid. 5.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid. 16.

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid. 20.

⁵⁸⁷ "A di otto dagosto 1490 el nobile Lorenzo di giovanni tornabuoni ordine e chiese che gli fussi murata una chapella nella nostra chiesa di cestello e a di primo di marzo 1490 [1491] fu finito di tutto circa el murare e spese ducati sessanta quatro o circa..." See citation in note 497.

⁵⁸⁸ Ghirlandaio likely designed this window, which was made by the same glass artisan as the Tornabuoni Chapel windows; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 281.

Cestello likely appealed to Lorenzo for both practical and personal reasons. The ready availability and new construction of the chapels were likely attractive to him, as they likely also were to Stefano Boni, discussed below. Unlike Lorenzo's father's chapel in Santa Maria Novella, where he had to contend with the needs of the church's Dominicans at the high altar and with the ramifications of previous patronage from the Sassetti and Ricci families, Lorenzo had a completely clean slate at Cestello. Family connections may have also drawn Lorenzo to the church. Two of Giovanna's Albizzi relatives were monks at Cestello,⁵⁸⁹ and, as surmised by Luchs, Lorenzo's beloved cousin and namesake, Lorenzo de' Medici, may have also encouraged his friends and relatives to invest in the church's renovations.⁵⁹⁰

The Cestello Tornabuoni Altarpiece:

The subject of the Visitation was obviously one that Lorenzo Tornabuoni specially associated with Giovanna. His deceased wife is pictured in the same scene in the Tornabuoni Chapel in Santa Maria Novella (fig. 29), and the story's themes of maternity and pregnancy have clear parallels with Giovanna's own life and death. Unlike the Santa Maria Novella *Visitation*, however, Ghirlandaio's Cestello *Visitation* is much more intimate and emotional.⁵⁹¹ In the Santa Maria Novella version, the Virgin and St. Elizabeth merely stand and touch hands and arms; their muted embrace is relatively formal and composed. It is also a sacred moment that is witnessed by

⁵⁸⁹ Luchs, *Cestello*, 56.

⁵⁹⁰ Lorenzo de' Medici was involved in urban and architectural renewal in the area around Cestello, and he also donated candles to the church; Luchs, *Cestello*, 58-59.

⁵⁹¹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 262.

eight other women and several bystanders dressed in contemporary fashion, and one that takes place amidst the bustle of a composite, contemporary Renaissance city.

In the Cestello *Visitation*, by contrast, Mary and St. Elizabeth are much more expressive and tactile; the Virgin places her hands on her elder cousin's shoulders, seemingly to steady her in her shock and awe, while St. Elizabeth kneels in humility, grasping the Virgin's cloak, and looking up at her in wonder. Ghirlandaio here also reduces the number of spectators to just two (Mary Salome and Mary Jacobi) and places the sacred action within a tighter and more shallow composition, with the figures pushed up almost to the edge of the foreground. In the square format of the altarpiece, this Visitation is presented more closely and directly for the beholder. The overall effect is one of heightened feeling, as well as more intimate and direct encounter.

Certainly these effects are more appropriate to the space of the memorial chapel of the deceased Giovanna. Unlike his family's chapel in Santa Maria Novella, which showcased the Tornabuoni lineage and accomplishments,⁵⁹² Lorenzo's Cestello chapel sought to commemorate and uplift a beloved and widely mourned wife and mother. In Cestello, that commemoration is better served by the greater emotional intensity of Ghirlandaio's figures, the painting's more intimate setting, and the inclusion of Mary's relatives in Mary Salome and Mary Jacobi. As Cadogan writes, the altarpiece "represents the extended maternal family of the child Jesus, an

⁵⁹² See Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 66-90 and 236-243; and Simons, "Portraiture and Patronage in Quattrocento Florence with a Special Reference to the Tornaquinci and their Chapel in S. Maria Novella" (PhD diss., University of Melbourne, 1985).

appropriate and even touching theme in a chapel dedicated to the memory of Lorenzo's wife and the mother of his heir."⁵⁹³

Ghirlandaio was also well-aware of the different potential of narrative frescoes and altarpiece paintings. As an altarpiece – an image that served primarily as a threshold to heaven through its visualization of the divine presence contained at the altar – Ghirlandaio's Cestello *Visitation* shows this sacred moment occurring not within a broad, temporal, and narrative sequence as in his Visitation mural, but, rather, as occurring almost out-of-time, in a shallow space in front of an architectural setting. The effect of Ghirlandaio's Visitation mural is one of the sacred occurring within the orderly and recognizable atmosphere of the contemporary present. The effect of the Visitation altarpiece is, rather, of the sacred taking place within a decidedly more "timeless" atmosphere. This atmosphere is one composed of indistinct, but harmonious, triumphal architecture, with a view towards Rome, the "eternal" city of Christendom's past, present, and future.

The altarpiece's background view towards Rome is, of course, not an indication of the setting of the historical Visitation, but, rather, a reference to Rome as the New Jerusalem. This reference establishes Rome's contemporary status as a holy city. It also recalls the apocalyptic vision of St. John of the New Jerusalem as the heavenly Jerusalem.⁵⁹⁴ Rome, in this way, becomes a celestial city, a "heaven on earth;" it is a city as much of the Christian present as it is of the heavenly future. As in the Sassetti altarpiece, Ghirlandaio's painted architecture augments the evocation of time; here, Rome and the triumphal arch are indications of the classical world as

⁵⁹³ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 263.

⁵⁹⁴ This vision is contained in Revelation 21.

much as they also show the sublimation of that classical world into the triumphal, Christian present. This blending of time past, present, and future is certainly appropriate within the space of a memorial chapel, where Masses were said in the present, in the memory of the “past” Giovanna, for the future salvation of her soul.

The presence of the readily identifiable Mary Jacobi and Mary Salome also enhances the sense of the fluidity of time in the altarpiece; both figures were not present at the historical Visitation, but were present at the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, just as the Virgin was. They here thus not only strengthen the decidedly female and maternal character of the altarpiece, but they also further the sense of time past (the Biblical events), time present (now contained in the altarpiece), and time future (the resurrection of the body, the Last Judgment, and the eternal triumph of the Christian believer). Like the manger-sarcophagus of Christ in the Sassetti altarpiece, the two Marys additionally give a circular sense of life-death appropriate to the chapel’s function; the Visitation is a moment of life begun through the Christ Child in the Virgin’s womb, but Ghirlandaio foreshadows the death of this unborn child through the presence of two witnesses to the crucifixion.

Ghirlandaio’s Altarpiece for Stefano Boni:

With warm, golden light falling evenly across their bodies, Sts. James, Stephen, and Peter stand tall amidst a background of three sculpted niches in the Boni altarpiece, also painted for Cestello (fig. 14: c. 1491-92; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Galleria dell’Accademia, Florence). On the far left, St. James (San Jacopo, Iacopo, or Giacomo in Italian), the apostle and venerated saint of Santiago de Compostela in Spain, wears a carnelian-and-goldenrod mantle; he looks down to the

right and holds a book and his pilgrim's staff. In the center of the picture is St. Stephen, who, in the same manner as the larger Pisa altarpiece, grasps a gilded martyr's palm and book and wears a richly-decorated chasuble trimmed with gold. In a contrasting gesture to St. James, St. Stephen looks upwards, seemingly towards some otherworldly vision outside the picture's frame. St. Peter completes the painting on the right, and looks knowingly and calmly out at the viewer. As in the Lucca altarpiece, he wears a gold-and-black mantle and holds a large key and book. The sculpted niches behind each saint consist of a scallop-shell top; a continuous cornice decorated with gilded, grass-like vegetation; and a lower portion of colored marble panels. Pilasters with gilded floral and vegetal designs frame the sides of each niche. At the saints' feet is a tiled floor of white, orange, and black marble.

Stefano Boni:

Stefano di Piero di Jacopo Boni commissioned Ghirlandaio to make an altarpiece for his chapel in Cestello sometime after April 1492, when he obtained the patronage rights to the fourth chapel on the right side of the nave.⁵⁹⁵ Boni was a silk merchant and banker who lived in the vicinity of Santa Maria Maggiore;⁵⁹⁶ Boni must have been close with his neighbors in the parish as he requested the chapel in Cestello right next to that of his own neighbor, Filippo Mascalzoni.⁵⁹⁷ Like Dionigi Fiorini,

⁵⁹⁵ "A di 20 di marzo 1491 [1492]. stefano d'jacopo boni mi chiese una chappella nella chiesa di cestello di firenze..." Florence, Archivio di Stato, Compagnie religiose soppresse, C.XVIII (Cisterciensi), 428, no. 96, fol. 15r. Published as document 2 in Luchs, *Cestello*, 246-82, 259.

⁵⁹⁶ Luchs, *Cestello*, 173, note 49; Bernacchioni 96.

⁵⁹⁷ "...io glie ne promessi una allato a quella di filippo maschalzoni verso la maggiore..." Luch, *Cestello*, 173, note. 49.

Boni served a term as Florentine prior, from July-August 1491.⁵⁹⁸ Also like Fiorini, he appears to have been successful at his chosen field; Boni was clearly wealthy enough to endow an entire chapel, but he also sold a large number of silks to the Cistercians at Cestello and owned property in the countryside at Settimo, near the Cistercian's Tuscan mother-house just outside Florence.⁵⁹⁹ While Boni's family had traditionally patronized their parish church of Santa Maria Maggiore and Santa Maria Novella (where, specifically, most of the family was buried),⁶⁰⁰ Stefano Boni appears to have endowed his chapel in Cestello in order to have his own personal space for memorial Masses. This must have been important for Boni, as even after he sold the rights to the chapel in 1513, he still endowed Masses at Cestello in his and his son, Jacopo's, honor.⁶⁰¹

Boni may have encountered Ghirlandaio through the artist's connections to the Silk Guild (see Chapters 1 and 5), or perhaps from Ghirlandaio's work at Santa Maria Novella. More likely, Boni came into contact with Ghirlandaio directly at Cestello. Ghirlandaio had painted murals and works on panel at Cestello's mother-house, the Badia di Settimo, in the late 1470s and in 1487,⁶⁰² and he had also painted

⁵⁹⁸ Ildefonso di San Luigi, ed., *Delizie degli eruditi toscani: Pubblicate e di osservazioni storiche e critiche accresciute da fr. Ildefonso di San Luigi*, 24 vols. (Florence: Gaetano Cambiagi, 1770-1789), volume 21 (1785): 68-69.

⁵⁹⁹ Luchs, *Cestello*, 56-57.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid. 47; Bernacchioni 96; J. Russell Sale, *Filippo Lippi's Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella* (New York: Garland, 1979), 103-105.

⁶⁰¹ "Ricordo come questo di 7 di Aprile Stefano Boni...siche siamo obligati a pregare per l'anima di decto stephano boni et sua figlioli..." Fol. 30v of archival notation in note 596 (page 277 of Luchs, *Cestello*).

⁶⁰² These included three, now lost, panels of Sts. Benedict, Gregory, and Nicholas, and frescoes on the façade of the church's choir chapel, of which only some fragments of the Annunciation on the spandrels survive. See Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 207-8 and 286.

portions of Cestello's own high altar chapel in the early 1480s.⁶⁰³ Ghirlandaio had already completed and installed his altarpiece for Lorenzo Tornabuoni's own chapel at Cestello in July 1491.⁶⁰⁴ Boni was likely drawn to Ghirlandaio as much for the convenience of his presence at Cestello, as he was by his fruitful and prominent associations with the Tornabuoni, one of Florence's wealthiest and most connected families.

The Boni Altarpiece:

Ghirlandaio's Boni altarpiece has often been seen as an afterthought in the artist's *oeuvre*; many scholars have attributed the work to the workshop or to Sebastiano Mainardi,⁶⁰⁵ with Alison Luchs going as far as to term it the "least imaginative and most purely utilitarian art work from Cestello."⁶⁰⁶ While the subject, iconography, and composition are certainly simplified in contrast to the complexity of the Sassetti, Innocenti, and Narni altarpieces, the painting's seemingly unremarkable depiction of Boni's three name-saints is more than suitable for the context of a memorial chapel. Within a space where Boni and his family's memory were actively evoked and perpetuated through the Masses said in his honor, Ghirlandaio's altarpiece provides its own perpetual presence of the Boni through its delineation of the name-saints of Stefano Boni, his father Piero Boni, and his grandfather and son,

⁶⁰³ As reported by Luchs from a mid-17th-century chronicle of Settimo, Davide and Ghirlandaio painted, in fresco, a *baldacchino* with two angels on the walls around Cestello's marble tabernacle of the Holy Sacrament; Luchs, *Cestello*, 343; see also Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 286.

⁶⁰⁴ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 262.

⁶⁰⁵ These include Fahy, *Some Followers of Domenico Ghirlandajo*, 215; Luchs, *Cestello*, 95; and Kecks, *Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei*, 409. Cadogan asserted, however, that the work's "subtle and dignified design...reflects the subdued idealism and monumentality of Ghirlandaio's late style;" Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 269. The recent restoration of the work (2014), which now showcases an elegant and delicate modeling and diffusion of light, confirms Cadogan's assessment.

⁶⁰⁶ Luchs, *Cestello*, 95.

Jacopo. That the three figures are at once apostles (James and Peter), martyrs (James, Peter, and Stephen), and popes (Peter) also connects Boni and his family with some of the most important saints in Christian history.

The background of the sculpted niches associates Ghirlandaio's painted saints with statues, like those, for instance, at Orsanmichele in Florence, which stand in front of similarly-designed niches. Ghirlandaio's scallop-shell niches are almost identical, in particular, to Verrocchio's Orsanmichele niche for his bronze statue of St. Thomas (fig. 30: 1467-83). Ghirlandaio seems to have been directly inspired by the sculptures of Orsanmichele in the Boni altarpiece, not just in the niches, but also in his delineation of the saints' bodies. Ghiberti's bronze St. Stephen (1425-8), for instance, is remarkably similar to Ghirlandaio's Stephen, with both figures holding their right hand up, in front of their stomachs, and holding a book in their left hand. Like many Renaissance artists, Ghirlandaio may have been responding to the contemporary *paragone*, or comparison, between painting and sculpture. Ghirlandaio's three figures in the Boni altarpiece, however, significantly stand outside the niches behind them; they appear, in a sense, more capable of life and movement than their sculptural counterparts, who conversely remain contained in their niches.⁶⁰⁷

Ghirlandaio's Altarpiece for Giovanni Tornabuoni:

Ghirlandaio's altarpiece for the high altar and Tornabuoni chapel of Santa Maria Novella was both the last work the artist created before his death in 1494, and the last artwork commissioned by Giovanni Tornabuoni for his family's lavishly

⁶⁰⁷ While the foot of St. Thomas hovers slightly over the edge of the niche in Verrocchio's *Christ and St. Thomas*, it is hardly the full independence of the niches of Ghirlandaio's figures.

decorated chapel. The altarpiece ensemble was originally composed of four sides. The front and back had large square panels, and the two sides contained slim vertical panels. A predella, long lost, completed the bottom of each side.⁶⁰⁸ Vasari reported that the altarpiece was also crowned by a tabernacle for the Eucharist;⁶⁰⁹ eighteenth-century engravings of the altarpiece show an *all'antica* frame, surmounted by a lunette which contained the sacrament tabernacle, flanked by candelabra.⁶¹⁰

The main, front panel of the altarpiece (fig. 11: c. 1490-94; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Alte Pinakothek, Munich) shows the Madonna breastfeeding the Christ Child in a fiery-orange aureole in the sky, surrounded by seraphim and two full-bodied, winged angels. Behind the Mother and Child is a landscape of green hills, craggy outcrops, and churches and castles similar to that of the Volterra altarpiece. Below the Virgin are four saints. St. Dominic, dressed in his recognizable black habit, kneels on the left, holding and pointing to an open book which reads, “Blessed Dominic taught us learning and wisdom,” a section from the liturgy of Pentecost.⁶¹¹

St. Michael the Archangel – winged, wearing armor, and carrying a sword and an orb topped with a small red cross – stands behind St. Dominic on the left and looks

⁶⁰⁸ Christian von Holst, “Domenico Ghirlandaio: L’altare maggiore di Santa Maria Novella a Firenze ricostruito,” *Antichità viva* 8, no. 3 (1969): 36-41; Takuma Ito, “Domenico Ghirlandaio’s Santa Maria Novella Altarpiece: A Reconstruction,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 56, no. 2 (2014): 170-191.

⁶⁰⁹ “E quando poi Domenico fece la tavola dell’altare, nell’ornamento dorato, sotto un arco, per fine di quella tavola, fece mettere il tabernacolo del Sacramento, bellissimo...” Vasari III: 262.

⁶¹⁰ Holst 36-38; Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 267. The altarpiece was dismantled and its panels sold to various collections at the turn of the nineteenth century. The current altar is from 1804.

⁶¹¹ Tobias Leuker, “Heiligenlob in Text und Bild: Der Hl. Dominikus und Ghirlandaio’s Pala für Santa Maria Novella,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 54, no. 3 (2010-2012): 425-44, 426. The original Latin reads, “DISCIPLINAM ET SAPIENTIA[M] DOCVIT EOS BEATVS DOMINICVS.”

up towards the Christ Child. On the right, standing and pointing up towards the Virgin and Child, is St. John the Baptist, patron saint of Florence and, along with the Madonna, the subject of the chapel's frescoes. St. Thomas, kneeling and holding his hand piously over his heart on the right as he looks up to the heavenly apparition, completes the iconography of the main panel. While the saint has long been identified as St. John the Evangelist,⁶¹² Takuma Ito has recently published a late eighteenth-century description of the altarpiece that describes the figure as St. Thomas.⁶¹³ This identification is corroborated by the description's account of the altarpiece's long lost predella as including a scene not of St. John the Evangelist, but of St. Thomas verifying the wounds of Christ.⁶¹⁴ Ghirlandaio's depiction of St. John the Evangelist in the chapel's vault as elderly and white-bearded, and not with brown hair and youthful as in the altarpiece, would seem to confirm this new identification, as does the chapel's dedication to the Coronation and Assumption of the Virgin, a feast specially associated with Thomas.⁶¹⁵

⁶¹² Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 264 and 267-268; Kecks, *Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei*, 323-25.

⁶¹³ "Descritta la cappella diremo qualche cosa dell'altare, e degli ornamenti di quello. La tavola fu dipinta a tempera parimente da esso Domenico ed è rappresentata l'Assunzione di Maria con vari santi, cioè S. Michele Arcangelo, S. Giovanni Batista, S. Domenico e S. Tommaso Apostolo..." Florence, Archivio storico del convento Santa Maria Novella, I.A. 40, "Monumenti della chiesa di Santa Maria Novella illustrati con annotazioni e dati in luce dal P. Vincenzio Fineschi," tom. 1, fol. 38r-39v, 38r. Published in Ito 190-191, 190.

⁶¹⁴ "...sotto S. Tommaso quando questo Apostolo pone il ditto nel costato del Redentore." Ibid. fol. 38v. The other predella panels, which went around the entire four sides of the originally double-sided, cube-shaped altarpiece, are described in the same document, and linked, by Ito, to surviving works in Ito 176-182.

⁶¹⁵ St. Thomas figured prominently in the legend of the Assumption as it was believed that the Virgin threw down her girdle to the saint upon ascending to heaven. A thriving cult surrounded the relic of this girdle preserved in Prato, a city just to the west of Florence and under its dominion in the fifteenth century. Given the Tornabuoni Chapel's dedication, it is not surprising that one of its stained-glass windows, designed by Ghirlandaio, shows St. Thomas receiving the sacred girdle. For the window, see Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 282-84. For the sacred girdle and artistic depictions of it, see

The vertical side panels of the altarpiece, originally six in total, show standing saints in front of scallop-shell niches in the same manner as the Boni altarpiece. On the left and right of the main panel were St. Lawrence (fig. 31: c. 1493-94; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Alte Pinakothek, Munich) and his traditional companion, St. Stephen (fig. 32: c. 1493-94; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest). On the left and right side of the altarpiece's box-like structure were Sts. Antoninus (c. 1493-94; tempera and possibly oil on panel; formerly Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin)⁶¹⁶ and Catherine of Siena (fig. 33: c. 1493-94; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Alte Pinakothek, Munich). Flanking the square back panel of *The Resurrection of Christ*, largely completed by Davide and Benedetto Ghirlandaio (fig. 34: c. 1494; tempera and oil on panel; Staatliche Museen, Berlin),⁶¹⁷ were Sts. Peter Martyr (fig. 35: c. 1493-94; tempera and possibly oil on panel; Magnani Collection, Reggio Emilia) and Vincent Ferrer (c. 1493-94; tempera and possibly oil on panel; formerly Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin).⁶¹⁸

Giovanni Tornabuoni:

Giovan Battista Tornabuoni (1428-97), known as Giovanni, was the eighth and youngest child of Nanna Guicciardini and Francesco Tornabuoni.⁶¹⁹ The Tornabuoni were a branch of a larger family *consorteria* known as the Tornaquinci.

Brendan Cassidy, "A Relic, Some Pictures and the Mothers of Florence in the Late Fourteenth Century," *Gesta* 30, no. 2 (1991): 91-99.

⁶¹⁶ This panel, along with that of St. Vincent Ferrer, was destroyed in 1945 during the Allied bombing of Berlin.

⁶¹⁷ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 268.

⁶¹⁸ Holst was the first to reconstruct the altarpiece's original appearance. Ito amends Holst's reconstruction slightly, based upon new archival discoveries.

⁶¹⁹ Van der Sman, *Lorenzo and Giovanna*, 220.

Like many noble families in medieval Florence, the Tornabuoni branch had changed their family name in the fourteenth century after legislation barred the nobility from certain public privileges.⁶²⁰ The Tornaquinci had long been one of the wealthiest families in Florence due to their work in the city's lucrative wool trade. Francesco Tornabuoni continued the family tradition as a successful wool and fabric merchant, in addition to holding several important public offices.⁶²¹ Giovanni Tornabuoni followed his father's success, beginning to work in the Medici Bank at age 15 in 1443, and quickly rising through the ranks in the firm's Rome branch.⁶²² While Giovanni did not become Rome branch manager until 1465,⁶²³ his family connections to the Medici through his sister's marriage ensured his professional weight and importance.

Giovanni married Francesca Pitti in 1467, and along with their son Lorenzo, the couple also had a daughter, Ludovica (1476-1511). The family lived primarily in Rome, where Giovanni, in addition to working at the Medici Bank, also served as Depository General of the Apostolic Chamber of the papacy and was a member of the

⁶²⁰ So-called "magnate" families – families of high social standing, wealth, and/or nobility – were barred from holding the highest public offices, among other restrictions, in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries after the Florentine "*popolo*" gained power. Many of these magnate families therefore broke off into smaller branches and renamed themselves in order to gain *popolo* status. The Tornaquinci *consorteria*, for instance, included, in addition to the Tornabuoni "founded" by Giovanni Tornabuoni's grandfather Simone in 1393, the Popoleschi, Cardinali, Iacopi, Giachinotti, and Marabottini families. Simons was the first to outline the Tornaquinci *consorteria* in her dissertation, "Portraiture and Patronage in Quattrocento Florence," 107-233. See also van der Sman, *Lorenzo and Giovanna*, 9-11.

⁶²¹ Van der Sman, *Lorenzo and Giovanna*, 11.

⁶²² Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 238.

⁶²³ Ibid.

prestigious, Vatican-connected Confraternity of Santo Spirito in Sassia.⁶²⁴ Like his rival Francesco Sassetti, Giovanni surrounded himself with humanists, including Matteo Palmieri and Francesco Gaddi; he also served as one of Lorenzo de' Medici's agents for manuscripts, gems, and classical sculpture in Rome.⁶²⁵

While pregnant with her third child, Francesca Tornabuoni died in September 1477. Just as his son would do decades later for his own wife, Giovanni commissioned a memorial chapel for his deceased wife, in Rome's Dominican church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva.⁶²⁶ And just as Lorenzo Tornabuoni would hire Ghirlandaio to execute works for his wife's memorial chapel, so, too, did Giovanni. He commissioned Ghirlandaio to paint now-lost frescoes of the lives of the Virgin and St. John the Baptist around Francesca's tomb, fragments of which have been attributed to Verrocchio.⁶²⁷ Giovanni may have encountered Ghirlandaio during the artist's earlier work in the Vatican Library in 1475-76, or perhaps through Ghirlandaio-family friend, Verrocchio.

The Tornabuoni Chapel:

After Francesca's death, Giovanni moved more or less permanently back to Florence in the early 1480s. On September 1, 1485, Giovanni commissioned Ghirlandaio and Davide to fresco the three walls of the high altar chapel of Santa

⁶²⁴ Van der Sman, *Lorenzo and Giovanna*, 12.

⁶²⁵ Ibid. 13.

⁶²⁶ Ibid. 16.

⁶²⁷ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 285. Vasari first described these now lost/destroyed frescoes as, "...volle anco che Domenico dipignesse tutta la faccia, dove ell'era sepolta, ed, oltre a questo, vi facesse una piccola tavoletta a tempera. Laonde in quella parete fece Donna; le quali veramente gli furono allora molto lodate." Vasari III: 259-60. While Vasari describes the patron of the chapel as "Francesco Tornabuoni," he has long been identified as Giovanni Tornabuoni (Vasari likely confused Giovanni's patronymic of Francesco – his father's name – with his first name).

Maria Novella.⁶²⁸ The Tornaquinci had long patronized the church,⁶²⁹ and Giovanni gave generous donations of wax, vestments, and Masses to Santa Maria Novella after his return to Florence.⁶³⁰ The contract for the chapel explicitly states that the frescoes were to be “an act of piety and love of God, to the exaltation of his [the Tornabuoni] house and family and the enhancement of said church and chapel.”⁶³¹ Giovanni initially did not have full patronage, nor burial rights to the space in 1485; he merely had patronage of the chapel’s walls. As Rab Hatfield posits, Giovanni likely hoped to impress the friars with the sumptuousness of the frescoes as a means to secure broader patronage rights for himself and his family in the high altar chapel.⁶³² Regardless of his exact intentions, in October 1486, Giovanni successfully gained patronage rights to the entire chapel, its altar, and walls in his name and that of the

⁶²⁸ For the contract, see note 97.

⁶²⁹ According to a seventeenth-century chronicle of Santa Maria Novella, a Jacopo Tornaquinci donated a small church in his vineyard to the Dominicans on property that would eventually become Santa Maria Novella in 1221; Simons, “Patronage in the Tornaquinci Chapel,” 222-224. While the historical validity of this claim is dubious, as Simons asserts, “[t]he point is that from at least the Trecento to the Cinquecento...the *consorteria* believed itself to have been ‘padroni’ of the original benefice, donors to the Dominicans and thereafter practitioners of a ‘singular reverence to that church and those friars.’” Ibid. 224.

⁶³⁰ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 239.

⁶³¹ Chambers translation 173. The original Latin reads, “...dictam cappellam suis propriis sumptibus ac intuitu pietatis et amore Die decorare ac nobilibus et egregiis et exquisitis et ornatis pitturis ornare proposuerit in exaltationem sue domus ac familie et ornatum ac decorem dicte ecclesie et caplle prefate.” Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 350.

⁶³² Rab Hatfield, “Giovanni Tornabuoni, i fratelli Ghirlandaio e l a cappella maggiore di Santa Maria Novella,” in *Domenico Ghirlandaio 1449-1494*, eds. Prinz and Seidel: 112-17, 113.

entire Tornaquinci *consorteria*.⁶³³ He specifically set aside money – a lavish 500 gold florins – for the chapel’s altarpiece in his 1490 will.⁶³⁴

Frescoed between the fall of 1485 and December 1490, the Tornabuoni Chapel features 25 murals of the lives of St. John the Baptist and the Virgin, with images of Giovanni and his wife, as well as Sts. Dominic and Peter Martyr.⁶³⁵ Ghirlandaio also designed the chapel’s three large stained-glass windows with further images of the Virgin and various saints,⁶³⁶ and Giovanni provided for choir stalls, embroideries, candlesticks, tombs, and memorial Masses for the space.⁶³⁷ Ghirlandaio likely began work on the altarpiece sometime in 1491, after Giovanni Tornabuoni had set aside funds for it in his will and after Ghirlandaio had completed the frescoes of the chapel. The altarpiece was installed by April 1494, some three months after Ghirlandaio’s death, when a “Lorenzo clerico” was paid to cover the painting with a curtain.⁶³⁸ As most recent scholars have argued,⁶³⁹ the fineness of modeling; careful attention to the background landscape; and delicacy of the figures’ drapery folds in

⁶³³ Florence, Archivio di Stato, Notarile antecosimiano 13186, Ser Iacopo Iacopi, 1481-87, cc. 192 v.-193 v. Published as document 28 in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 357-358.

⁶³⁴ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 266.

⁶³⁵ Ibid. 67-90 and 236-243 remains the best account of the frescoes of the Tornabuoni Chapel.

⁶³⁶ Ibid. 282-84. See also Frank Martin, “Domenico del Ghirlandaio delineavit? Osservazioni sulle vetrate della cappella Tornabuoni,” in *Domenico Ghirlandaio 1449-1494*, eds. Prinz and Seidel: 118-40.

⁶³⁷ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 239. The tombs, traces of which were found after the 1966 flood, included those of Giovanni, his parents, and his daughter-in-law, Giovanna degli Albizzi.

⁶³⁸ Ibid. 267.

⁶³⁹ Ibid. 268; Kecks, *Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei*, 323-24; Cornelia Syre, *Alte Pinakothek: Italienische Malerei* (Munich: Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, 2007), 108; Rolf Kuntzen, “Ghirlandaio, Domenico,” in *Alte Pinakothek Munich*, trans. Kevin Perryman (Munich: Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, 1986): 222-23.

the main panel point to its largely autograph status. The back panel, however, shows the decidedly oilier palette of Davide and Benedetto, as well as an awkwardness in the poses of the figures that is more typical of their work.⁶⁴⁰ Given the number of commissions that the Ghirlandaio workshop had on its plate in the 1490s – work in Pisa, Pistoia, and Volterra; the prestigious Rimini altarpiece for the noble Malatesta family;⁶⁴¹ and the Cestello and Santa Maria Novella altarpieces – Ghirlandaio likely turned over most of the painting of the altarpiece’s side panels and predella to workshop members and associates. Ghirlandaio had also likely only completed the main panel and perhaps some of the side panels before his death in January 1494.

As in the Sassetti Chapel, the iconography of the Tornabuoni Chapel unites personal and pious concerns, particularly in the space’s numerous family portraits.⁶⁴² Unlike the Sassetti Chapel, which was a space solely for memorial Masses for Sassetti and his family, however, the Tornabuoni Chapel was also the choir chapel for Santa Maria Novella’s Dominican friars. Its main liturgical use was thus not for special Masses for the Tornabuoni, but, rather, for the daily celebration of the Mass for the Conventual Dominicans. Furthermore, the late fifteenth-century viewing – or more appropriately, restriction of viewing – of the Tornabuoni Chapel readily identified it as a space only for the church’s Dominicans. As first outlined by Marcia Hall, fifteenth-century Santa Maria Novella was divided at the fourth bay of the nave

⁶⁴⁰ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 268; Kecks, *Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei*, 324. Benedetto had returned to Florence from France, where he worked almost exclusively in oil, in 1493.

⁶⁴¹ See Appendix A, entry VI.

⁶⁴² Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 87-90 and 241-243; Simons, “Patronage in Quattrocento Florence,” 234-327; Alessandro Salucci, *Il Ghirlandaio a Santa Maria Novella la Cappella Tornabuoni: Un percorso tra storia e teologia* (Florence: Edifir, 2012), 8, 19; Hatfield, “Giovanni Tornabuoni,” 115-117.

by a large stone *ponte*, or *tramezzo*.⁶⁴³ This largely prohibited the laity from entering and, more importantly, even seeing, the choir and transept area of the church. As discussed in Chapter 2, the choir area may have been open to the laity at certain times, but for the most part it was restricted to the Dominicans and to individuals with chapels in the choir and transept, like the Tornabuoni.

In addition to the restrictions of the nave *ponte*, there were also further walls around the high altar chapel. The only view into the chapel was through an opening on the high altar side,⁶⁴⁴ and this view was only possible for individuals with access to the choir/transept in the first place. Covered in front by the two solid walls of the high altar chapel, and then behind the massive stone *ponte* of the nave, Ghirlandaio's altarpiece, and most of his frescoes, were thus not visible to anyone outside the choir chapel.⁶⁴⁵ The Tornabuoni Chapel was therefore very much a restricted, hybrid space: a burial and memorial site for the Tornabuoni, but also the high altar choir of the church. The imagery of the chapel was thus primarily seen not by the Tornabuoni or their fellow lay citizens, but, rather, by the Dominican friars who saw and heard the liturgies around its altar.

The Santa Maria Novella Tornabuoni Altarpiece:

The altarpiece's multi-sided design and selection of imagery particular to both the Dominicans and the Tornabuoni demonstrates Ghirlandaio's keen awareness of the dual audiences of his work. First and foremost, the altarpiece's multi-paneled

⁶⁴³ Hall, "The *Ponte* in Santa Maria Novella," 159.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid. 162.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid. 163-64. Hall notes that the altarpiece would only have been visible to "someone standing on the church's axis at a time when the central door of the *ponte* was open." Ibid. 164.

structure presented imagery from every angle to the Dominicans who would have gathered around the altar in the two-tiered choir stalls of the chapel.⁶⁴⁶ For the Dominicans behind the altar, their view was of *The Resurrection of Christ* (fig. 34) – the most triumphant subject of Christianity, and as appropriate for the Tornabuoni’s burial and memorial chapel as it was for the Dominicans in its promise of salvation. Like the friars sitting on the sides of the chapel, who would have looked at *St. Antoninus* and *St. Catherine of Siena* (fig. 33), friars seated in the back saw two important Dominican saints, *St. Peter Martyr* (fig. 35) and *St. Vincent Ferrer*. It is no coincidence that these panels were placed in view of the Dominicans, for each saint was a significant exemplar, teacher, and model for the friars. The panels of *St. Lawrence* and *St. Stephen* (figs. 31 and 32) – more generally venerated saints from the earliest days of Christianity, and in Lawrence, the name saint of Lorenzo Tornabuoni – are suitably placed in the more “public” view of the altarpiece on either side of the main, front panel.

The saints depicted in the main panel (fig. 11) – Dominic, Michael, John the Baptist, and Thomas – continue the imagery of the chapel’s frescoes while also again appealing to the chapel’s different beholders. St. Dominic is certainly eminently suitable for the main panel of the altarpiece as he was the founder of the Dominican Order. Ghirlandaio emphasizes St. Dominic as an exemplar and teacher for the friars by having the saint emphatically point to a text, and by having that text explicitly identify Dominic as an instiller of “learning and wisdom.” As outlined by Tobias Leuker, this Pentecost text boldly replaces the original “Christ” with “Dominic.” The text thus suggests that Dominic was a kind of *alter Christus* as Dominic, like Christ,

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid. 163.

was an effective facilitator of sacred knowledge.⁶⁴⁷ That the text is from the liturgy of Pentecost is also significant, for that feast honored the apostles' miraculous ability to speak in the tongues of many nations and thus to preach to many different peoples. As a day that emphasized evangelism and Christian mission – two particular focuses of the Dominicans in their quest to combat heresy – Pentecost was a fitting reference.⁶⁴⁸

St. Michael the Archangel, long symbolic of the Church Militant,⁶⁴⁹ augments the notion of the Dominican combat against heresy. As a warrior-angel of the Christian End Times, St. Michael also strengthens the salvific message of the altarpiece's back panel of *The Resurrection*. St. Thomas, as previously discussed, is a reference to the chapel's dedication to the Assumption; his presence also continues the imagery of the chapel's fresco of the *Coronation of the Virgin* (at the top on the back wall) and the stained-glass window of *St. Thomas Receiving the Virgin's Girdle*. St. John the Baptist is the subject of the chapel's frescoes, the patron saint of Florence, and the name-saint of Giovanni Tornabuoni. The Baptist's gesture in the altarpiece of pointing upwards towards the Virgin and Child indicates his particular role as an intercessor; it also stresses his status as a means or way towards the divine as a prophet and forerunner of Christ.

⁶⁴⁷ Leuker 426-429 and 436.

⁶⁴⁸ Leuker notes that the text selection, which was almost certainly chosen by one of Santa Maria Novella's friars, is similar in language to St. Antoninus's life of St. Dominic, of which there was a copy in Santa Maria Novella's library; Leuker 428-429. This is not surprising, given St. Antoninus's importance for Florentine Dominicans in particular, and for the saint's own "presence" in one of the side panels of the altarpiece.

⁶⁴⁹ This derives from the Book of Daniel 12, when Daniel has a vision of Michael as a warrior-prince fighting the Antichrist, and from the Book of Revelation 12, when St. John has a vision of Michael and the other angels fighting against the great dragon of the Apocalypse. Jacobus de Voragine also asserted that Michael "will kill the Antichrist with great power...at the sound of the voice of the archangel Michael the dead will rise, and it is he who will present the cross, the nails, the spear and the crown of thorns at the Day of Judgment." Voragine II: 201.

Ghirlandaio's Madonna in the altarpiece is a specific type of Madonna: the *Madonna lactans*, or breastfeeding Madonna.⁶⁵⁰ This depiction of the Madonna and Child, popular in Tuscany since the fourteenth century, stressed the Virgin's maternity and the humanity of Christ, who, as a helpless, human infant, was in need of the physical nourishment only his human mother could provide.⁶⁵¹ The Madonna's breast milk was seen as conveying both physical and spiritual sustenance, for the Madonna, as the mother of Christ, was the *Sedie sapientiae*, or throne of wisdom.⁶⁵² The *Madonna lactans* was also connected to the classical image of *Caritas*, or Charity, traditionally depicted as a nursing woman.⁶⁵³

Several popular Tuscan miraculous images depicted the *Madonna lactans*, and the image was thus especially associated with the potency and efficacy of the Virgin

⁶⁵⁰ Kecks (*Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei* 324), Cadogan (*Domenico Ghirlandaio* 267), Leuker (434), and Syre have all identified the Santa Maria Novella Madonna as the Woman of the Apocalypse, a traditional association of the Virgin with the Book of Revelation's description (in chapter 12: 1-6) of a woman "clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars" (12:1, English Standard Version). This description does not match Ghirlandaio's depiction at all, nor is the Woman of the Apocalypse, although she is later described as pregnant, ever breastfeeding. The assertions of the above scholars also rely on a matching of the Madonna/Woman of the Apocalypse with St. John the Evangelist, who is, in fact, St. Thomas in the altarpiece.

⁶⁵¹ The classic treatment of the *Madonna lactans* is Victor Lasareff, "Studies in the Iconography of the Virgin," *The Art Bulletin* 20 (1938): 26-65; and Margaret Miles, "The Virgin's Bare Breast: Female Nudity and Religious Meaning in Tuscan Early Renaissance Culture," in *The Female Body in Western Culture*, ed. Susan Suleiman (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986): 193-208. A study of the theme in Quattrocento Florence is Megan Holmes, "Disrobing the Virgin: The *Madonna lactans* in Fifteenth-Century Florentine Art," in *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, eds. Geraldine Johnson and Sara Grieco (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997): 167-95. See also Simons, "The Social and Religious Context of Iconographic Oddity: Breastfeeding in Ghirlandaio's *Birth of the Virgin*," in *Medieval and Renaissance Lactations: Images, Rhetorics, Practices*, ed. Jutta Sperling (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2013): 213-33; and Antonia Fondaras, "'Our Mother the Holy Wisdom of God': Nursing in Botticelli's Bardi Altarpiece," *Storia dell'arte* 111, no. 3 (2005): 7-34.

⁶⁵² Simons, "The Social and Religious Context of Iconographic Oddity," 227. Breast milk was, furthermore, believed to imbue the character of the bearer onto the nursing infant; see Ibid. 223-25 and Holmes, "Disrobing the Virgin," 187-91.

⁶⁵³ Simons, "The Social and Religious Context of Iconographic Oddity," 222-23.

contained and propagated through her images.⁶⁵⁴ In Florence, a miraculous *Madonna lactans* was particularly venerated at Santa Maria Novella itself, in a late fourteenth-century fresco on an exterior wall of the church in the cemetery (fig. 36). A cult developed around this image in 1472 – only two decades before Ghirlandaio began work on his altarpiece – after a young boy reported that the Madonna spoke to him from the fresco. An oratory, known as the Cappella della Pura, was then constructed around the image, and a youth confraternity dedicated to the image was founded in 1476.⁶⁵⁵ The cult was evidently quite popular, for the confraternity and the friars were almost immediately involved in litigation concerning the proper distribution of funds generated from donations to the image.⁶⁵⁶

As in his Lucca altarpiece, where Ghirlandaio may have utilized curtains in thinking about that city's miraculous *Volto Santo*, the choice of the *Madonna lactans* in the Santa Maria Novella altarpiece is almost certainly tied to the church's miraculous image of the same subject. The Santa Maria Novella altarpiece is also the only instance in which Ghirlandaio depicts the *Madonna lactans*. The connection between Ghirlandaio's altarpiece and the miraculous image is furthered by the fact that Ghirlandaio's *Madonna lactans* is stylistically similar to the *Madonna lactans* of the miraculous fresco. Although the infant Jesus of the fresco is actually suckling, both images show the Virgin holding the Christ Child to the right, with her right hand

⁶⁵⁴ The Tuscan miraculous *Madonna lactans* images included a late fourteenth-century fresco in Santa Maria Forisportae in Pistoia, and a late fourteenth-century panel attributed to Lorenzo di Niccolò Gerini in Santa Maria delle Grazie in Stia; another image of the, albeit non-breastfeeding, Virgin in San Giovanni Valdarno was deemed miraculous after an elderly woman, who had been left with her infant grandson, was able to nurse him after praying before the painting. See Holmes, "Disrobing the Virgin," 191-93.

⁶⁵⁵ Holmes, *The Miraculous Image*, 85.

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid.

over the child's waist and left hand around his back. The Christ Child in both images rests on a small pillow. Both Madonnas wear red dresses and dark-blue mantles, which completely cover the Virgin's knees. The equivalency in subject and style suggests the direct inspiration Ghirlandaio received from the miraculous mural.

Ghirlandaio, the friars, and the Tornabuoni likely favored the subject because it had become a veritable emblem of Santa Maria Novella itself, the sanctity and power of the friars who administered the church, and the patrons who supported it. The "activation" of the miraculous fresco in Santa Maria Novella was, at its essence, a sign that the Madonna specially favored the church, for she chose to manifest herself in an image within its precincts. As the high altarpiece of the church, Ghirlandaio's painting was the ideal medium to re-present that miraculous presence through its repetition of the sacred subject. Placed over the altar with its relics and the Eucharist, Ghirlandaio's altarpiece was a further indication of divine presence: first and foremost through its depiction of the Virgin, Christ, and the saints, but more specifically through its depiction of the Virgin as breastfeeding, as in the miraculous fresco.

Conclusion:

In 1873, the American writer Henry James (1843-1916) encountered Ghirlandaio's Innocenti altarpiece at the Ospedale while on holiday in Florence.

James observed:

[A] patient artist whom I saw the other day copying the finest of Ghirlandaios – a beautiful Adoration of the Kings at the Hospital of the Innocenti...It hangs in an obscure chapel, far aloft, behind an altar, and though now and then a stray tourist wanders in and puzzles a while over the vaguely-glowing forms, the picture is never really seen and enjoyed. I found an aged Frenchman of modest mien perched on a little platform beneath it, behind a great hedge of altar-candlesticks, with an admirable copy all completed...The original is gorgeous with colour and bewildering with decorative detail, but not a gleam of the painter's crimson was wanting, not a curl in his gold arabesques. It seemed to me that if I had copied a Ghirlandaio in such conditions I would at least maintain for my own credit that he was the first painter in the world. "Very good of its kind," said the weary old man with a shrug of reply for my raptures; "but oh, how far short of Raphael!"⁶⁵⁷

This assessment of Ghirlandaio's Innocenti painting – "very good of its kind" – is emblematic of the general scholarly treatment of Ghirlandaio's altarpieces: beautiful, but largely afterthoughts in Ghirlandaio's *oeuvre*. This study has shown, however, that Ghirlandaio's altarpieces express the singular extent and depth of the artist's engagement with sacred iconography; the care and attention he brought to the

⁶⁵⁷ Henry James, *Henry James on Italy: Selections from Italian Hours* (New York: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1988), 185.

needs and desires of patrons; his careful understanding of the intricacies of diverse liturgical and devotional practices; and his painstaking preparation in planning and developing his altarpieces. Ghirlandaio's altarpieces furthermore demonstrate the artist's exceptional comprehension of the purpose and function of the altarpiece as a particular type of sacred image: an art object that visualizes the divine presence at the altar, and one that serves as a visual threshold to the sacred transcendence that occurs at the altar through its liturgies.

A monographic art-historical approach is often considered old-fashioned in an era of scholarship increasingly focused on critical theory. But in reexamining Ghirlandaio and a specific set of images he made, this study fundamentally underscores the continued richness that the approach offers by revealing a more complex and exceptional artist than has been previously understood. Ghirlandaio was certainly not the only fifteenth-century artist to consider the ramifications of the altar for the design and iconography of his altarpieces. But his altarpieces show him to have been an extraordinarily perceptive and careful creator of such pictures – an innovator and inventor of the form, rather than simply an acclaimed portraitist and muralist, as has long been acknowledged.

Michael Baxandall famously called fifteenth-century painting “the deposit of a social relationship.”⁶⁵⁸ Ghirlandaio's altarpieces are an especially vibrant deposit, demonstrating collaborative and dynamic social relationships with a wide spectrum of patrons, clerics, beholders, and in some cases, as in his Volterra altarpiece, with other artists. Patrons seem to have been drawn to Ghirlandaio for his noted efficiency and professionalism, but moreover for his particular style: his iconographic specificity;

⁶⁵⁸ Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, 1.

careful attention to detail; virtuosic naturalism, especially in portraiture; and his rich and bold handling of color.

As paradigms of the fifteenth-century altarpiece more broadly, Ghirlandaio's altarpieces engender larger reconsiderations of the altarpieces of his contemporaries. The altarpieces of Filippino Lippi and Botticelli, produced contemporaneously with Ghirlandaio's, and also in the chaotic late 1490s after the artist's death, are ripe for reinterpretation, and especially so given those artists' traditional associations with Savonarola. The distinctions between sculpted and painted altarpieces also deserve renewed attention, and particularly given the contemporary *paragone* between sculpture and painting and the increased fear of idolatry that sculpture provoked. This is acutely true for Ghirlandaio's pupil, Michelangelo, whose famed sculpture of the *Pietà*,⁶⁵⁹ for example, effectively functioned as an altarpiece for a French cardinal's tomb. The glazed terracotta altarpieces of the della Robbia family, some of which were recently exhibited in Washington and Boston,⁶⁶⁰ also invite reexamination within precise sacred and liturgical, rather than only technical, contexts.

Ghirlandaio's success in working in and sending altarpieces to cities in the Florentine *contado*, and even further afield, as in Narni, additionally leads to new notions of center and periphery in the Italian Renaissance. In the case of Ghirlandaio, he ingeniously responded to local circumstances, whether visual, cultic, or political, while often still serving, however discretely, at the behest of Florentine authorities like the Medici. Finally, the contextual circumstances of many altarpieces continue to

⁶⁵⁹ Michelangelo, *Pietà* (1498-99), marble, St. Peter's, the Vatican, Rome.

⁶⁶⁰ "Della Robbia: Sculpting with Color in Renaissance Florence," National Gallery of Art (February 5-June 4, 2017) and Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (August 9-December 4, 2016).

warrant investigation, and most crucially in light of this study's emphasis on the specificities and diversity of the liturgy and the viewing conditions of altarpieces.

Cadogan has eloquently described Ghirlandaio's frescoes as "the foremost example of early Renaissance art, in which naturalism and classicism, empiricism and idealism, illusion and decoration are held in a precious, fleeting equilibrium."⁶⁶¹ In Ghirlandaio's altarpieces we see a different, but no less potent equilibrium: a timeless evocation of the invisible made visible, the ineffable made effable, and the heavenly merged with the earthly.

⁶⁶¹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 90.

Appendix A: Altarpieces of the Ghirlandaio Workshop

This appendix catalogs the altarpieces largely produced by the Ghirlandaio workshop. Each entry includes the title; approximate date; medium; and current location, followed by a brief description of the altarpiece and its attribution to the workshop. A single footnote with the most relevant literature is offered at the end of each entry.

I: *Deposition*

c. 1480

Tempera and possibly oil on panel

Badia di San Salvatore, Settimo (Florence)

This painting has been connected with Ghirlandaio's work in the Badia di Settimo (see Chapter 6), and may have been for an altar on the church's *tramezzo*. According to Cadogan, the work "shows all the hallmarks of Davide Ghirlandaio's style: the taut profiles, schematic volumes and modeling, and the pasty surfaces."⁶⁶²

II: *Madonna and Child with Sts. Clare, Paul, Francis, and Catherine of Alexandria (Monticelli Altarpiece)*

1483

Tempera and possibly oil on panel

Gemäldegalerie, Berlin

This altarpiece was commissioned from both Ghirlandaio and Davide in the spring of 1483 by the Clarissan nuns at the convent of Monticelli outside Florence. The work's composition, with the Madonna and Child enthroned in the center and the saints positioned in groups of two to the left and right, is similar to the earlier Pisa and Lucca altarpieces; as in the Lucca altarpiece, this work also includes drawn curtains on either side of the holy figures.

Although the work was commissioned from both brothers, the completed painting shows Davide's "wooden version," in the words of Cadogan (*Domenico Ghirlandaio* 155). Cadogan goes on to assert that, "[t]he heads in the Berlin painting...show the same broad foreheads, taut mouths, and pinched cheeks that are seen in works of lesser quality documented to the workshop in the late 1470s. The handling of paint is also broader and less sensitive to variations of shape and texture of surfaces than autograph works by Domenico" (*Domenico Ghirlandaio* 155-56). She suggests that the altarpiece was likely based on a composition of Ghirlandaio's, but painted by Davide.⁶⁶³

⁶⁶² Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 321-22.

⁶⁶³ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 155-156 and 321; Roberta Lapucci, "Dai conventi soppressi ai Musei di Berlino: storia di otto tavole fiorentine del XV e XVI secolo," *Paragone* 487 (1990): 76-81. Payment documents for the work are in Florence, Archivio di Stato, Corporazioni religiose soppresse dal governo francese 98 (Santa Maria a Monticelli di Firenze, Monache francescane), 53 (Debitori e

III: *Madonna and Child with Sts. Blaise, Giovanni Gualberto, Benedict, and Anthony Abbot* (Fig. 53)

c. 1485

Tempera on panel

Museo d'Arte Sacra dell'Abbazia di Vallombrosa, Reggello

This panel, long in the Uffizi Gallery's storage facilities, was recently restored (2004-2005) and returned to the Abbey of Vallombrosa in 2006. It was likely commissioned by Don Biagio Milanese, a prominent abbot of Vallombrosa from 1480-1513/4, as indicated by the presence of his name saint, St. Blaise/San Biagio. Ghirlandaio likely received the commission sometime in the mid 1480s; he may have come in contact with Don Milanese during his work on the Sassetti Chapel in the Vallombrosan Santa Trinita, and Ghirlandaio and Davide also worked in the Vallombrosan Abbey of Passignano in the mid 1470s.

While the work's composition is similar to Ghirlandaio's earlier altarpieces, such as the Pisa, San Giusto, and San Marco altarpieces, the flatter modeling and more schematic faces of the figures strongly indicate Davide's hand; the work is especially similar in coloring and design to Davide's contemporaneous *Monticelli Altarpiece* (see Appendix A, entry II).⁶⁶⁴

IV: *Coronation of the Virgin with Franciscan Saints*

Late 1480s to early 1490s

Tempera and possibly oil on panel

Pinacoteca Comunale, Città di Castello.

This panel, present in Città di Castello's Franciscan convent of Santa Cecilia in the nineteenth century, is a smaller version of the Narni altarpiece; as in the larger, mostly-autograph Narni painting, the Virgin is crowned by Christ in a heavenly aureole of light, surrounded by music-making angels, while below her a group of Franciscan saints kneels and stands in adoration. Unlike the Narni painting, however, this version shows a background of light blue sky.

The panel's flat modeling, lack of surface or textural details in clothing and facial features, and generally schematized presentation all indicate the production of Ghirlandaio's workshop.⁶⁶⁵

creditori, 1476-94), c. 133 left-c. 133 right. Published as document 20 in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 347.

⁶⁶⁴ Lisa Venturini, "Tre tabernacoli di Sebastiano Mainardi," *Kermes* 5, no. 15 (September-December 1992): 41-48; Anna Padoa Rizzo, *Iconografia di San Giovanni Gualberto* (Pisa: Ospedaletto, 2002); Caterina Caneva, ed., *Il Ghirlandaio di Vallombrosa: Un restauro difficile, un ritorno trionfale* (Florence: Edifir, 2006).

⁶⁶⁵ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 269-70; Francesco Mancini, *Pinacoteca comunale di Città di Castello: I dipinti* (Perugia: Regione Umbria (Electa), 1987): 168-69.

V: *Madonna and Child with Sts. Louis of Toulouse and John the Evangelist with Two Donors*

1486

Tempera and possibly oil on panel

St. Louis Art Museum, St. Louis

This painting, previously in the Foresti Collection in Carpi, has been tentatively identified as that mentioned by Vasari as “al signore di Carpi dipinse una tavola” (III: 273). Since the Carpi were members of the Pio family, Everett Fahy has suggested that the donor may be Lodovica Pio, an aunt of Lorenzo de’ Medici’s in Florence, and her husband, Bernardo Morelli; the two were married in 1486, the same year inscribed in the altarpiece, and perhaps commissioned the work as a celebration of their nuptials. The St. Louis Museum now identifies the donors as “Ludovico Folchi and his wife Tommasa,” but does not offer any explanation for this identification.

Long identified as a work from the circle of Ghirlandaio, the St. Louis Museum attributes the work to Davide. Cadogan counters that Ghirlandaio may have painted the donor portraits (although “the quality of execution does not rise to the level of the master:” *Domenico Ghirlandaio* 328), but the rest of the work was done by the workshop.⁶⁶⁶

VI: *God the Father, Sts. Sebastian, Vincent Ferrer, and Roch with Members of the Malatesta Family*

Predella: *St. Vincent Rescues a Child; St. Vincent Heals a Lame Man; St. Vincent Resurrects a Man*

c. 1493-96

Tempera and oil on panel

Pinacoteca Comunale, Rimini

This three-part altarpiece, crowned with a lunette of God the Father, followed by a square main panel with three saints and donors, and completed with a three-panel predella, was commissioned from Ghirlandaio by Elisabetta Malatesta in late 1493 for a chapel in Rimini’s San Domenico. While Ghirlandaio likely designed the general composition of the altarpiece, which is similar in format to the autograph Cestello *Visitation*, his death in January 1494 prevented him from beginning to paint the work.

The panel shows the heavier use of oil typical of Davide, and the decidedly elongated and unrealistic portraits of the noble Malatesta family – Elisabetta Aldobrandini Malatesta, Violante Bentivoglio Malatesta, Pandolfo IV Malatesta, and Carlo Malatesta – are clearly not from Ghirlandaio’s hand. A 1496 legal document, first published by Hannelore Glasser in 1977, establishes that Davide, likely heavily assisted by the workshop in the chaos after Ghirlandaio’s death, did, in fact, paint

⁶⁶⁶ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 327-28; “The Madonna and Child with Sts. Louis of Toulouse and Thomas with donors Ludovico Folchi and his wife Tommasa,” *Saint Louis Art Museum* <<http://www.slam.org:8080/emuseum/view/objects/asitem/search/@/0?t:state:flow=6dc039c3-fd60-4957-b9df-2e44bb395e6f>>.

most of the work. Elisabetta Malatesta had refused to pay Davide the full, original amount of the contract (130 florins) because she considered the altarpiece to be of low quality; Davide sued her for breach of contract, but only won 10 florins back because the judge deemed the work not to be up to Ghirlandaio's standard.⁶⁶⁷

VII: *St. Lucy and Tommaso Cortesi*

1494

Tempera and possibly oil on panel

Santa Maria Novella, Florence

This painting, inscribed with Tommaso Cortesi's name, was for his altar in Santa Maria Novella, possibly on the nave *ponte*, or perhaps on an altar in the side aisles of the nave. A seventeenth-century payment record from the church confirms the painting as for "F. Tommaso Cortesi." This document also asserts that the painting was done by Davide in 1494, after Ghirlandaio's death. Davide may have been assisted by Benedetto.⁶⁶⁸

⁶⁶⁷ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 270-73; Fahy, *Some Followers of Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 65-69; Glasser, *Artist's Contracts*, 197-99, 301-7; Venturini, "Riflessioni sulla pala ghirlandaiesca di Rimini," in *Domenico Ghirlandaio 1449-1494*, eds. Prinz and Seidel: 154-64. The litigation document is Florence, Archivio di Stato, Notarile antecosimiano 5251 (Donato di Tommaso Ciampelli, 1496-98), no. 14. Published as document 45 in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 377-378.

⁶⁶⁸ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 324. The payment record is Florence, Archivio di Stato, Corporazioni religiose soppresse dal governo francese, 102, filza 91 (Registro de libri di memorie di ent[ra]ta e di usc[it]a, giornali...), c. CXXV.

Appendix B: Ghirlandaio's Lost/Destroyed Altarpieces

This appendix catalogs Ghirlandaio's lost and/or destroyed altarpieces. Each entry includes the title/subject (if known); approximate date; medium (if known); former location; and destruction date, if applicable, followed by a brief account of the painting. A single footnote with the most relevant literature is offered at the end of each entry.

I: Altarpiece for a chapel in the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence
c. 1483

A document from the deliberations of the Operai del Palazzo Vecchio states that Ghirlandaio was commissioned for an altarpiece on May 20, 1483. The document furthermore asserts that the subject and specifics of the painting would be directed by Lorenzo de' Medici.

No trace of this painting exists, suggesting that Ghirlandaio never executed it. But, as Cadogan asserts, "it seems unlikely that such a prestigious commission should not have been undertaken" (*Domenico Ghirlandaio* 286).⁶⁶⁹

II: *Virgin and Child with St. John the Evangelist and St. Philip*
c. 1487-88
Santi Jacopo e Filippo, Lecceto (Lastra a Signa)

A contract and some payment documents from the church of Sts. Jacopo and Filippo at the Augustinian monastery of Lecceto assert that Filippo Strozzi, a prominent Florentine citizen, commissioned Ghirlandaio to make an altarpiece for the high altar of the church sometime in 1487. Ghirlandaio received 40 florins for the work. No trace of the painting survives.⁶⁷⁰

III: *St. Peter*
1488
Santa Maria dell'Assunta, Stia

The account book of the Florentine hospital of Santa Maria Nuova (see Chapter 5) records a payment to Ghirlandaio for an altarpiece depicting St. Peter and

⁶⁶⁹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 286 (entry 60). The archival citation is Florence, Archivio di Stato, Deliberazioni dei Signori e Collegi, Deliberazioni di ordinaria autorità 95 (1482-83), c. 55 v. Published as document 21 in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 348.

⁶⁷⁰ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 286 (entry 63); Eve Borsook, "Documenti relativi alle cappelle di Lecceto e delle selve di Filippo Strozzi," *Antichità viva* 9, no. 3 (1970): 3-20. The documents are Florence, Archivio di Stato, Carte Stroziane, V, 44 (c. 25 left) and 36 (c. 369 left). Published as document 31 in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 359.

“certe altre cose” on July 11, 1488. The altarpiece was to be sent to the hospital’s parish church in Stia, Santa Maria Assunta. No trace survives of the painting.⁶⁷¹

IV: *Madonna and Child with Sts. Francis and Bonaventure*

1490-92

Tempera on panel

Formerly Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin (Destroyed 1945)

The painting, of which black-and-white photographs still survive, depicted the Madonna and Child enthroned in a scallop-shell niche and flanked by the standing St. Francis and St. Bonaventure on the left and right respectively. The altarpiece was commissioned in August 1490 by the Franciscans of the church of San Francesco di Palco, near Prato. The altarpiece was for the high altar, and according to the contract, was to include Sts. Anthony of Padua and Bernardino in addition to Bonaventure and Francis, as well as a predella with seven saints. The panel was cut before it was exhibited in Berlin, hence the lack of Sts. Anthony and Bernardino.⁶⁷²

V: *Madonna and Child with Sts. John the Evangelist, Francis, Jerome, and John the Baptist*

1494-96

Tempera and oil on panel

Formerly Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin (Destroyed 1945)

Like the *Madonna and Child with Sts. Francis and Bonaventure* (see Appendix B, entry IV), photographs still survive of this work. It depicts the Madonna and the Christ Child in a colorful aureole in the sky, surrounded by seraphim. Below them, amidst a typical Ghirlandaio landscape of meandering streams and green hills, are the kneeling Sts. Francis and Jerome. St. John the Evangelist and St. John the Baptist stand behind them on the left and right respectively.

This altarpiece was originally on the high altar of the Observant Franciscan San Francesco in San Casciano Val di Pesa. The convent was only founded in 1492; Ghirlandaio likely designed the work, but it was completed by his workshop after his death.

⁶⁷¹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 286 (entry 64). The document is Florence, Archivio di Stato, Santa Maria Nuova 5818 (Debitori e creditori, 1440-90), c. 266 right, c. 538 left and right, and c. 2. Published as document 32 in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 359.

⁶⁷² Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 273-4; Venturini, “Tre tabernacoli di Sebastiano Mainardi;” Venturini, “Un ipotesi per la ‘Pala del Palco’ di Domenico e Davide Ghirlandaio,” in *La Toscana al tempo di Lorenzo il Magnifico: Atti del convegno*, 1992, ed. Riccardo Fubini, 3 vols. (Pisa: Pacini, 1996): vol I: 297-303. The relevant archival documents are: 1) Prato, Archivio del Stato, Ceppi 2332, Filza di lettere, istrumenti, ecc., decreti e altri fogli contanti dall’anno 1400 al 75 mesi per ordine nell’anno 1758, armadio 2, no. 8, con repertorio delle cose più notabili c. 154 r. [N.B.: No longer traceable] 2) Prato, Archivio del Stato, Ceppi 413 (Libro debitori e creditori segnato H, 11486-98, c. 184 left. 3) Archivio del Stato, Ceppi 645 (Giornale segnato A, 1492-98) 4) Prato, Archivio del Stato, Comune 106 (Deliberazioni, 1491-96). All published as document 40 in Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 371-2.

Bibliography

- Acres, Alfred, "The Columba Altarpiece and the Time of the World," *The Art Bulletin* 80, no. 3 (September 1998): 422-51.
- , *Renaissance Invention and the Haunted Infancy* (Turnhout/London: Brepols/Harvey Miller, 2013).
- Ahl, Diane Cole, *Benozzo Gozzoli* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).
- , "An Unpublished Frieze in Pisa and the Workshop of Benozzo Gozzoli," in *Benozzo Gozzoli Viaggio attraverso un secolo*, eds. Enrico Castelnuovo and Alessandra Malquori (Pisa: Pacini, 2003): 175-181.
- , *Fra Angelico* (London: Phaidon, 2008).
- Alberti, Leon Battista, *On Painting*, ed. Martin Kemp, trans. Cecil Grayson (London: Penguin Books, 2004).
- Albertini, Francesco degli, *Opusculum de mirabilibus novae urbis Romae*, ed. August Schmarsow (London: British Library Historical Print Editions, 2011).
- Ames-Lewis, Francis, "Drapery 'Pattern'-Drawings in Ghirlandaio's Workshop and Ghirlandaio's Early Apprenticeship," *The Art Bulletin* 63, no. 1 (March 1981): 49-62.
- , *The Intellectual Life of the Early Renaissance Artist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).
- Aniello, Antonio d' and Maria Teresa Filieri, eds., *Matteo Civitali nella Cattedrale di Lucca: Studi e restauri* (Lucca: Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Lucca, 2011).
- Antoninus, St., *Summa theologiae pars tertia* (Venice: N. Jenson, 1477).
- Anthony of Padua, *I sermoni*, trans. Giordano Tollardo (Padua: Messaggero, 2002).
- Bambach, Carmen, *Drawing and Painting in the Italian Renaissance Workshop: Theory and Practice, 1300-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
- Baracchini, Clara and Antonio Caleca, *Il Duomo di Lucca* (Lucca: Libreria Editrice Baroni, 1973).
- Barolsky, Paul, "The Visionary Experience of Renaissance Art," *Word and Image* 11 (1995): 174-81.

- , "The History of Italian Renaissance Art Re-envisioned," *Word and Image* 12 (1996): 243-50.
- , "Naturalism and the Visionary Art of the Early Renaissance," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 129 (1997): 57-64.
- , "Michelangelo, Ghirlandaio, and the Artifice of Biography," *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 31, no. 2 (Winter 2012): 31-32.
- Bavoni, Umberto and Alessandro Furiesi, *Le radici cristiane di Volterra* (Pisa: Pacini, 2009).
- Baxandall, Michael, *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).
- , *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972).
- Becherucci, Luisa, ed., *I musei di Santa Croce e di Santo Spirito a Firenze* (Milan: Electa, 1983).
- Becker, Marvin, *Medieval Italy* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1981).
- Beer, Manuela, et al., eds., *The Magi: Legend, Art and Cult* (Cologne: Museum Schnütgen, 2014).
- Belcari, Feo, *Vita del B. Giovanni Colombini da Siena*, ed. P. Oderigo Rainaldi (Rome: Tipografia Salviucci, 1843).
- Belisle, Peter-Damian, ed., *The Privilege of Love: Camaldolese Benedictine Spirituality* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2002).
- Bellini-Pietri, Augusto, "Di due tavole del Ghirlandaio nel Museo Civico di Pisa," *Bollettino d'arte* 3 (1909): 326-29.
- Bellosi, Luca, ed., *Il Museo dello Spedale degli Innocenti a Firenze* (Milan: Electa, 1977).
- Belting, Hans, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
- Bendettucci, Fabio, ed., *Il Libro di Antonio Billi* (Rome: De Rubeis, 1991).
- Bensi, Paolo, "Gli arnesi dell'arte: I gesuati di San Giusto alle Mura e pittura del rinascimento a Firenze," *Studi di storia delle arti* 3 (1980-1981): 33-47.

- Benucci, Michele, et al., *Ghirlandaio: La pala di Narni* (Terni: Provincia di Terni, 2004).
- Berenson, Bernard, "Alunno di Domenico," *The Burlington Magazine* 1, no. 1 (March 1903): 2, 6-7, 10-13, 16-21.
- *The Italian Painters of the Renaissance* (London: Phaidon, 1952).
- Bernacchioni, Annamaria, ed., *Ghirlandaio: Una famiglia di pittori del Rinascimento tra Firenze e Scandicci* (Florence: Edizioni Polistampa, 2010).
- Bernardino of Siena, *Le prediche volgari*, ed. Luciano Banchi, 3 vols. (Siena: Tipografia editrice all'insegna di S. Bernardino, 1880-1886).
- , *Le Prediche Volgar*, ed. C. Cannarozzi, 2 vols. (Pistoia: 1934).
- , *Prediche volgari: sul campo di Siena 1427*, ed. Carlo Delcorno, 2 vols. (Milan: Rusconi, 1989).
- Bindman, David and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., eds., *The Image of the Black in Western Art, Vol. 3: From the 'Age of Discovery' to the 'Age of Abolition,'* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2010).
- Blunt, Hugh, *Great Penitents* (New York: Macmillan, 1921).
- Borsook, Eve, *The Mural Painters of Tuscany: From Cimabue to Andrea del Sarto* (London: Phaidon, 1960).
- , "Cults and Imagery at Sant' Ambrogio in Florence," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 25, no. 2 (1981): 147-202.
- and Johannes Offerhaus, *Francesco Sassetti and Ghirlandaio at Santa Trinita, Florence: History and Legend in a Renaissance Chapel* (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1981).
- and Fiorella Gioffredi Superbi, eds., *Italian Altarpieces 1250-1550: Function and Design* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).
- Bossy, John, "The Mass as a Social Institution 1200-1700," *Past and Present* 100 (August 1983): 29-61.
- Bourdua, Louise and Anne Dunlop, eds. *Art and the Augustinian Order in Early Renaissance Italy* (Aldershot.: Ashgate, 2007).
- Bradshaw, Paul and Maxwell Johnson, *The Eucharistic Liturgies: Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2012).

- Bratchel, M.E., *Lucca 1430-1494: The Reconstruction of an Italian City-Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).
- , *Medieval Lucca and the Evolution of the Renaissance State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- Braun, Joseph, *Der christliche Altar in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 2 vols. (Munich: Karl Widmann, 1924).
- Brown, Alison, "The Language of Empire," in *Florentine Tuscany: Structures and Practices of Power*, eds. William Connell and Andrea Zorzi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 32-47.
- Brown, Katherine, *The Painter's Reflection: Self-Portraiture in Renaissance Venice, 1458-1625* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2000).
- Brown, Patricia Fortini, *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).
- Brown, Peter, *The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).
- Brucker, Gene, *Renaissance Florence* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1969).
- Buhler, Stephen, "Marsilio Ficino's De stella magorum and Renaissance Views of the Magi," *Renaissance Quarterly* 43, no. 2 (Summer 1990): 348-71.
- Bullard, Melissa, *Lorenzo il Magnifico: Image and Anxiety, Politics and Finance* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1994).
- Buonanno, Lorenzo, "Stone Mediators: Sculpted Altarpieces in Early Renaissance Venice," (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2014).
- Burckhardt, Jacob, *The Altarpiece in Renaissance Italy*, ed. and trans. Peter Humfrey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
- Burke, Jill, *Changing Patrons: Social Identity and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Florence* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004).
- Burrese, Mariagiulia, ed., *Nel secolo di Lorenzo: restauri di opere d'arte del Quattrocento* (Pisa: Pacini, 1993).
- Busse, Wolfgang, "Madonna con Santi – Studien zu Domenico Ghirlandaio's mariologischen Altarretabeln: Auftraggeber, Kontext und Ikonographie," (Ph.d. diss., University of Cologne, 1999).

- Butterfield, Andrew, *The Sculptures of Andrea del Verrocchio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).
- and Caroline Elam, "Desiderio da Settignano's Tabernacle of the Sacrament," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 43, no. 2/3 (1999): 333-57.
- Bynum, Caroline Walker, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).
- , *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Zone Books, 2011).
- Cadogan, Jean, "Michelangelo in the Workshop of Domenico Ghirlandaio," *The Burlington Magazine* 135, no. 1078 (January 1993): 30-31.
- , *Domenico Ghirlandaio: Artist and Artisan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).
- , "An 'Huomo di Chonto:' Reconsidering the Social Status of Domenico Ghirlandaio and his Family," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 77 (2014): 27-46.
- , "Benozzo Gozzoli, Filippo de' Medici, and the Old Testament Murals in the Campo Santo in Pisa (1468-84)," Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting, Berlin, Germany, 27 March 2015.
- Camille, Michael, *The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image-making in Medieval Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
- Campbell, Stephen and Stephen Milner, eds., *Italian Renaissance Cities: Cultural Translation and Artistic Exchange* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
- Caneva, Caterina, ed., *Il Ghirlandaio di Vallombrosa: un restauro difficile, un ritorno trionfale* (Florence: Edifir, 2006).
- Cannon, Joanna, *Religious Poverty, Visual Riches; Art in the Dominican Churches of Central Italy in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).
- Carli, Enzo, *Il museo di Pisa* (Pisa: Pacini, 1974).
- , *La Pinacoteca di Volterra* (Pisa: Pacini, 1980).
- , *La pittura a Pisa: Dalle origini alla 'bella maniera'* (Pisa: Pacini, 1994).

- Carruthers, Mary, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- Caspary, Hans, "Das Sakraments-Tabernakel in Italien bis zum Konzil von Trient" (Ph.D. diss., Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, 1964).
- Cassidy, Brendan, "A Relic, Some Pictures and the Mothers of Florence in the Late Fourteenth Century," *Gesta* 30, no. 2 (1991): 91-99.
- Castellaneta, Carlo, *L'opera completa del Perugino* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1969).
- Cecchetti, Raffaello, *La Via Francigena: Società e territorio nel cuore della Toscana medievale* (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2012).
- Cennini, Cennino, *The Craftsman's Handbook*, trans. David Thompson, Jr. (New York: Dover, 1954).
- Centofanti, L. Tanfani, *Notizie di artisti tratte dai documenti pisani* (Pisa: Enrico Spoerri Editore, 1897).
- Cervelli, Jacopo Lazzareschi, *Regis: La vestizione del Volto Santo di Lucca*, trans. Wendell Ricketts (Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi Editore, 2004).
- Chambers, David, *Patrons and Artists in the Italian Renaissance* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971).
- Chastel, André, *La Pala ou le retable italien des origines à 1500* (Paris: L. Levi, 1993).
- Ciappelli, Giovanni and Patricia Rubin, eds., *Art, Memory, and Family in Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- Cobianchi, Roberto, "The Practice of Confession and Franciscan Observant Churches: New Architectural Arrangements in Early Renaissance Italy," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 69 (2006): 289-304.
- , *Lo temperato uso dele cose: la committenza dell'Osservanza francescana nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2013).
- Cohn, Samuel Jr., *The Cult of Remembrance and the Black Death: Six Renaissance Cities in Central Italy* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).
- Cole, Bruce, *The Renaissance Artist at Work: From Pisano to Titian* (New York: Harper and Row, 1983).

- Consortini, Luigi, *La Badia dei SS. Giusto e Clemente presso Volterra* (Lucca: Tipografia Arcivescovile S. Paolino, 1915).
- Cooper, Donal, "Franciscan Choir Enclosures and the Function of Double-Sided Altarpieces in Pre-Tridentine Umbria," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 64 (2001): 1-54.
- Cornelison, Sally and Scott Montgomery, eds., *Images, Relics, and Devotional Practices in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006).
- Corsi, Domenico, "Bertini, Domenico," in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Vol. 9 (1967), <[www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/domenico-bertini_\(Dizionario_Biografico\)/>](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/domenico-bertini_(Dizionario_Biografico)/>).
- Cranston, Jodi, *The Poetics of Portraiture in the Italian Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- Cresti, Carlo, *Altari controriformati in Toscana: Architettura e arredi* (Florence: A. Pontecorboli, 1996).
- Crowe, Joseph and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, *Storia della pittura in Italia*, 11 vols. (Florence: LeMonnier, 1886-1908).
- Crum, Roger, Crum, "Facing the Closed Doors to Reception? Speculations on Foreign Exchange, Liturgical Diversity, and the 'Failure' of the Portinari Altarpiece," *Art Journal* 57, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 5-13.
- Davies, J.G., ed., *A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1972).
- Derbes, Anne and Amy Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," in *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)*, ed. Helen Evans (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004): 449-61.
- Didi-Huberman, Georges, *Fra Angelico: Dissemblance and Figuration*, trans. Jane Todd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).
- Duits, Rembrandt, "Figured Riches: the Value of Gold Brocades in Fifteenth-Century Florentine Painting," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 62 (1999): 60-92.
- Eberlein, Johann, "The Curtain in Raphael's Sistine Madonna," *The Art Bulletin* 65, no. 1 (March 1983): 61-77.

- Echols, Mary Tuck, "The Coronation of the Virgin in Fifteenth Century Italian Art" (Ph.D. diss., The University of Virginia, 1976).
- Ehresmann, Donald, "Some Observations on the Role of Liturgy in the Early Winged Altarpiece," *The Art Bulletin* 64, no. 3 (September 1982): 359-69.
- Eisenbichler, Konrad, *The Boys of the Archangel Raphael: A Youth Confraternity in Florence, 1411-1785* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).
- Fahy, Everett, "Bartolomeo di Giovanni Reconsidered," *Apollo* 97 (1973): 462-69.
- , *Some Followers of Domenico Ghirlandajo* (New York: Garland, 1976).
- , "Ghirlandaio and Michelangelo," in *Studies in Late Medieval and Renaissance Painting in Honor of Millard Meiss*, eds. Irving Lavin and John Plummer, 2 vols. (New York: New York University Press, 1977), vol. I: 152-57.
- , "The Este Predella Panels and Other Works by the Master of the Fiesole Epiphany," *Nuovi Studi* VI-VII, no. 9 (2003): 17-29.
- Falconcini, Lodovico, *Storia dell'antichissima città di Volterra* (Volterra: Tipografia Sborgi, 1876).
- Ficino, Marsilio, "De stella magorum," in *Opera*, eds. Mario Sancierpriano and Paul Oskar Kristeller (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1959), 572-74.
- Filipponi, Stefano, et al., eds., *Il mercante, l'ospedale, i fanciulli: La donazione di Francesco Datini, Santa Maria Nuova e la fondazione degli Innonceti* (Florence: Nardini, 2010).
- Flanigan, Theresa, "Ocular Chastity: Optical Theory, Architectural Barriers, and the Gaze in the Renaissance Church of San Marco in Florence," in *Beyond the Text: Franciscan Art and the Construction of Religion*, eds. Xavier Seubert and Oleg Bychkov (St. Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2013): 40-60.
- Fondaras, Antonia, "'Our Mother the Holy Wisdom of God:' Nursing in Botticelli's Bardi Altarpiece," *Storia dell'arte* 111, no. 3 (2005): 7-34.
- , "Decorating the House of Wisdom: Four Altarpieces from the Church of Santo Spirito in Florence (1485-1500)" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 2011).

- Fonzio, L. di, "La Mariologia di Sant'Antonio," in *S. Antonio dottore della chiesa* (Vatican City: 1947): 85-172.
- Franklin, David, *Painting in Renaissance Florence, 1500-1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).
- Freedberg, David, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).
- Gardner, Julian, "The Franciscan Iconography of the Coronation of the Virgin before Bellini," in *Essays in Honour of John White*, eds. Helen Weston and David Davies (London: University College London, 1990): 63-68.
- Garfagnini, G.C., ed., *Lorenzo il Magnifico e il suo mondo: convegno internazionale di studi, Firenze 9-13 giugno 1992* (Florence: Leo Olschki, 1994).
- Gavitt, Philip, *Charity and Children in Renaissance Florence: the Ospedale degli Innocenti, 1410-1536* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990).
- Gazzarrini, Stefano, *Il Volto Santo di Lucca: Storia e leggenda* (Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi Editore, 1997).
- Gill, Meredith, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- Glasser, Hannelore, *Artist Contracts of the Early Renaissance* (New York: Garland, 1977).
- Goffen, Rona, "Nostra Conversatio in Caelis Est: Observations on the *Sacra Conversazione* in the Trecento," *The Art Bulletin* 61, no. 2 (June 1979): 198-222.
- , *Spirituality in Conflict: Saint Francis and Giotto's Bardi Chapel* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988).
- , *Piety and Patronage in Renaissance Venice: Bellini, Titian, and the Franciscans*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).
- Goldthwaite, Richard, *Wealth and Demand for Art in Italy 1300-1600* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).
- Grinder-Hansen, Poul, ed., *Image and Altar 800-1300* (Copenhagen: National Museum of Denmark, 2007).

- Hager, Hellmut, *Die Anfänge des italienischen Altarbildes: Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte des toskanischen Hochaltarretabels* (Munich: Anton Schroll and Co., 1962).
- Hahn, Cynthia, "Narrative on the Golden Altar of Sant' Ambrogio in Milan: Presentation and Reception," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 53 (1999): 167-87.
- , *Strange Beauty: Issues in the Making and Meaning of Reliquaries, 400-c. 1204* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012).
- Hall, Marcia, "The Ponte in Santa Maria Novella: The Problem of the Rood Screen in Italy," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 37 (1974): 157-73
- , "The Italian Rood Screen: Some Implications for Liturgy and Function," in *Essays Presented to Myron P. Gilmore*, eds. Sergio Bertelli and Gloria Ramakus, 2 vols. (Florence: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1978): vol. II: 213-218.
- , "The Tramezzo in the Italian Renaissance, Revisited," in *Thresholds of the Sacred: Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical, and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screens, East and West*, ed. Sharon Gerstel (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2006): 215-32.
- , *The Sacred Image in the Age of Art: Titian, Tintoretto, Barocci, El Greco, Caravaggio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).
- Hamburger, Jeffrey and Anne-Marie Bouché, eds., *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).
- Harper, John, *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy: From the Tenth to the Eighteenth Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).
- Hatfield, Rab, "The Compagnia de' Magi," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970): 107-61.
- Hatfield-Strens, Bianca, "L'arrivo del trittico Portinari a Firenze," *Commentari* 21 (1968): 314-19.
- Hegarty, Melinda, "Laurentian Patronage in the Palazzo Vecchio: the Frescoes of the Sala dei Gigli," *The Art Bulletin* 78, no. 2 (June 1996): 264-85.
- Henderson, John, *Piety and Charity in Late Medieval Florence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

- Herbermann, Charles, et al., eds., *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols. (New York: Robert Appleton and Company, 1907/Encyclopedia Press, 1913).
- Holmes, Megan, "Disrobing the Virgin: The *Madonna lactans* in Fifteenth-Century Florentine Art," in *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, eds. Geraldine Johnson and Sara Grieco (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997): 167-95.
- , *The Miraculous Image in Renaissance Florence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).
- Holst, Christian von, "Domenico Ghirlandaio: L'altare maggiore di Santa Maria Novella a Firenze ricostruito," *Antichità viva* 8, no. 3 (1969): 36-41.
- Hood, William, *Fra Angelico at San Marco* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).
- Hornik, Heidi, *Michele Tosini and the Ghirlandaio Workshop in Cinquecento Florence* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2009).
- House, Adrian, *Francis of Assisi: A Revolutionary Life* (New York: HiddenSpring, 2001).
- Howard, Peter, "Painters and the Visual Art of Preaching: The *Exemplum* of the Fifteenth-Century Frescoes in the Sistine Chapel," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 13 (2010): 33-77.
- Humfrey, Peter and Martin Kemp, eds., *The Altarpiece in the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- , *Carpaccio* (London: Chaucer, 2005).
- Hyland, William, "The Climacteric of Late Medieval Camaldolese Spirituality: Ambrogio Traversari, John-Jerome of Prague, and the *Linea salutis heremitarum*," in *Florence and Beyond: Culture, Society, and Politics in Renaissance Italy*, eds. David Peterson and Daniel Bornstein (Toronto: Center for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008): 107-20.
- Iconografia di San Benedetto nella pittura della Toscana: immagini e aspetti culturali fino al XVI secolo* (Florence: Centro d'incontro della Certosa di Firenze, 1982).
- Israëls, Machtelt, ed., *Sassetta: The Borgo San Sepolcro Altarpiece*, 2 vols. (Florence: Villa I Tatti, 2009).

- Ito, Takuma, "Domenico Ghirlandaio's Santa Maria Novella Altarpiece: A Reconstruction," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 56, no. 2 (2014): 170-191.
- James, Henry, *Henry James on Italy: Selections from Italian Hours* (New York: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1988), 185.
- Jungmann, Joseph, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development*, trans. Francis Brumer, 2 vols. (Westminster, Maryland: Christian Classics, 1986).
- Kaplan, Paul, *The Rise of the Black Magus in Western Art* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1983).
- Kecks, Ronald, *Domenico Ghirlandaio und die Malerei der Florentiner Renaissance* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2000).
- Kemp, Martin, "From 'Mimesis' to 'Fantasia': The Quattrocento Vocabulary of Creation, Inspiration, and Genius in the Visual Arts," *Viator* 8 (1977): 347-398.
- Kennedy, Ruth, *Alessio Baldovinetti: A Critical and Historical Study* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1938).
- Kent, F.W. and Patricia Simon, eds., *Patronage, Art, and Society in Renaissance Italy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).
- , *Bartolomeo Cederini and His Friends: Letters to an Obscure Florentine* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1991).
- , *Lorenzo de' Medici and the Art of Magnificence* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).
- Kim, David Young, "Lotto's Carpets: Materiality, Textiles, and Composition in Renaissance Painting," *The Art Bulletin* 98, no. 2 (June 2016): 181-212.
- Klapisch-Zuber, Christiane, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).
- Koch, Linda, "The Portrayal of Female Sainthood in Renaissance San Gimignano: Ghirlandaio's Frescoes of Santa Fina's Legend," *Artibus et Historiae* 19, no. 38 (1998): 143-70.
- Kroesen, Justin, and Victor Schmidt, eds., *The Altar and its Environment 1150-1400* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009).

- Kuehe, Thomas, *Emancipation in Late Medieval Florence* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1982).
- Kultzen, Rolf, "Ghirlandaio, Domenico," in *Alte Pinakothek Munich*, trans. Kevin Perryman (Munich: Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, 1986).
- Küppers, Paul, *Die Tafelbilder des Domenico Ghirlandajo* (Strassburg: J.H. Heitz, 1916).
- Kurz, Otto, "A Group of Florentine Drawings for an Altar," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 18, no. 1/2 (January-June 1955): 35-53.
- Lane, Barbara, *The Altar and the Altarpiece: Sacramental Themes in Early Netherlandish Painting* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984).
- Lasareff, Victor, "Studies in the Iconography of the Virgin," *The Art Bulletin* 20 (1938): 26-65.
- Leader, Anne, "Architectural Collaboration in the Early Renaissance: Reforming the Florentine Badia," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 64, no. 2. (June 2005): 204-33.
- Lesnick, Daniel, *Preaching in Medieval Florence: The Social World of Franciscan and Dominican Spirituality* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1989).
- Lessi, Francesco, ed., *Volterra e la Val di Cecina* (Milan: Mondadori, 1999).
- Lessing, Julius, *Alt orientalische Teppichmuster, nach Bildern und Originalen des XV-XVI Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: E. Wasmuth, 1877).
- Leuker, Tobias, "Heiligenlob in Text und Bild: Der Hl. Dominikus und Ghirlandaio's Pala für Santa Maria Novella," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 54, no. 3 (2010-2012): 425-44.
- Lightbown, Ronald, *Botticelli*, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).
- Lillie, Amanda, "Review: *Francesco Sassetti and Ghirlandaio at Santa Trinita, Florence: History and legend in a Renaissance Chapel* by Eve Borsook and Johannes Offerhaus," *The Burlington Magazine* 126, no. 974 (May 1984): 293-295.
- , *Florentine Villas in the Fifteenth Century: An Architectural and Social History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

- Lowe, Kate, "Lorenzo's 'Presence' at Churches, Convents and Shrines in and outside Florence", in *Lorenzo the Magnificent: Culture and Politics*, eds. Michael Mallett and Nicholas Mann (London: Warburg Institute, 1996): 23-36.
- Luchs, Alison, *Cestello: A Cistercian Church of the Florentine Renaissance* (New York: Garland, 1977).
- , "Stained Glass above Renaissance Altars: Figural Windows in Italian Church Architecture from Brunelleschi to Bramante," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 48 (1985): 177-234.
- Mallett, Michael, "Pisa and Florence in the Fifteenth Century: Aspects of the Period of the First Florentine Domination," in *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein (London: Faber and Faber, 1968): 403-41.
- Manacorda, Daniele and Francesco Mancini, eds., *Museo della città in Palazzo Erolia a Narni* (Prato: Giunti, 2012).
- Mansi, Gerardo, *I patrizi di Lucca: Le antiche famiglie lucchesi ed i loro stemmi* (Lucca: Editrice Titania, 1996).
- Mare, Albinia de la, "The Library of Francesco Sassetti (1421-90)," in *Cultural Aspects of the Italian Renaissance: Essays in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller*, ed. Cecil Clough (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976): 160-21.
- Masetti, Anna Rosa, *Pisa storia urbana: piante e vedute dalle origini al secolo XX* (Pisa: La Giuntina, 1964).
- Massagli, Riccardo, "Fra opera e documenti: Alcuni aspetti della cultura artistica lucchese dal 1440 al 1480," in *Lucca città d'arte e i suoi archivi: Opere d'arte e testimonianze documentarie dal Medioevo al Novecento* (Venice: Marsilio, 2001): 173-210.
- Matteo Civitali e il suo tempo: Pittori, scultori e orafi a Lucca nel tardo Quattrocento* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2004).
- Melion, Walter and K.A.E. Enenkel, eds., *Meditatio: Refashioning the Self: Theory and Practice in Late Medieval and Early Modern Intellectual Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).
- Mendes, Manuel Cardoso and Giovanni Dallai, "Nuove indagini sullo Spedale degli Innocenti a Firenze," *Commentari: Rivista di critica e storia dell'arte* (Jan.-Sept. 1966): 83-106.

- Merlo, Grado, *In the Name of St. Francis: History of the Friars Minor and Franciscanism until the Early Sixteenth Century*, trans. Raphael Bonnano, eds. Robert Karris and Jean Francois Giodet-Calogeras (St. Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute, 2009).
- Merzenich, Christoph, "Carpentry and Painting in Florentine Altarpieces of the First Half of the 15th Century," *Mededelingen van het Nederlands Instituut te Rome* 55 (1996): 111-41.
- Micheletti, Emma, *Domenico Ghirlandaio* (Florence: Scala, 1990).
- Migne, J.P., ed., *Patrologia Latina*, 221 volumes (Paris: Apud Garnier Fratres, 1844-91).
- Milanesi, Gaetano, ed., *Documenti per la storia dell' arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena: Onorato Porri, 1854-56).
- Miles, Margaret, *Image as Insight: Visual Understanding in Western Christianity and Secular Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985).
- , "The Virgin's Bare Breast: Female Nudity and Religious Meaning in Tuscan Early Renaissance Culture," in *The Female Body in Western Culture*, ed. Susan Suleiman (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986): 193-208.
- Mills, John, "Carpets in Paintings: the 'Bellini,' 'Keyhole,' or 'Re-Entrant' Rugs," *Hali* 13 (1991): 86-103.
- Monnas, Lisa, *Merchants, Princes and Painters: Silk Fabrics in Italian and Northern Paintings 1300-1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).
- Moorman, John, *A History of the Franciscan Order from its Origins to the Year 1517* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968).
- Morolli, Gabriele, et al., eds., *L'Architettura di Lorenzo il Magnifico* (Florence: Silvana, 1992).
- Mussolin, Mauro, "Forme in fieri: I modelli architettonici nella progettazione di Michelangelo," in *Michelangelo e il disegno di architettura*, ed. Caroline Elam (Venice: Marsilio, 2006): 94-111.
- Nagel, Alexander, *The Controversy of Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).
- , *Medieval Modern: Art out of Time* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2012).

- and Christopher Wood, "Interventions: Toward a New Model of Renaissance Anachronism," *The Art Bulletin* 87, no. 3 (September 2005): 403-15.
- , *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010).
- Natale, Mauro, "Note sulla pittura lucchese alla fine del Quattrocento," *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 8 (1980): 35-62.
- Nethersole, Scott, *Devotion by Design: Italian Altarpieces before 1500* (London: National Gallery of Art, 2011).
- Newbery, Thomas, et al., *Italian Renaissance Frames* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1990).
- Nimmo, Duncan, and *Division in the Medieval Franciscan Order: from St. Francis to the Foundation of the Capuchins* (Rome: Capuchin Historical Institute, 1987).
- Nuttall, Paula, "Domenico Ghirlandaio and Northern Art," *Apollo* 143, no. 412 (June 1996): 16-22.
- , *From Flanders to Florence: The Impact of Netherlandish Painting, 1400-1500* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).
- O'Malley, Michelle, *The Business of Art: Contracts and the Commissioning Process in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).
- , "Altarpieces and Agency: The Altarpiece of the Society of the Purification and its 'Invisible Skein of Relations,'" *Art History* 28, no. 4 (September 2005): 417-441.
- , *Painting under Pressure: Fame, Reputation and Demand in Renaissance Florence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).
- Origo, Iris, *The Merchant of Prato, Francesco di Marco Datini* (London: J. Cape, 1957).
- Os, Henk van, *Sienese Altarpieces, 1215-1460: Form, Content, Function*, 2 vols. (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1984/1990).
- , "Painting in a House of Glass: the Altarpieces of Pienza," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 17, no. 1 (1987): 23-38.
- Paatz, Walter and Elisabeth, *Die Kirchen von Florenz: Ein Kunstgeschichtliches Handbuch*, 6 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1939-1955).

- Paolucci, Antonio, ed., *La Pinacoteca di Volterra* (Florence: Arti grafiche Giorgi e Gambi, 1989).
- Pelliccia, Guerrino and Giancarlo Rocca, eds., *Dizionario degli istituti di perfezione*, 9 vols. (Rome: Edizioni paoline, 1974/1983).
- Ploeg, Kees van der, "How Liturgical is the Medieval Altarpiece?" in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor Schmidt (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2002): 103-21.
- Poeschke, Joachim, *Italian Mosaics, 300-1300*, trans. Russell Stockman (New York: Abbeville Publishers, 2010).
- Pon, Lisa, *Raphael, Dürer, Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Italian Renaissance Print* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).
- Pons, Nicoletta, ed., *Bartolomeo di Giovanni: Associate of Ghirlandaio and Botticelli* (Florence: Pagliai Polistampa, 2004).
- Porçal, Peter, "La cappella Sassetti in Santa Trinita a Firenze: Osservazioni sull'iconografia," *Antichità viva* 23 (1984): 26-36.
- Powell, Christine and Zoe Allen, *Italian Renaissance Frames at the V&A* (Amsterdam: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2010).
- Prinz, Wolfram and Max Seidel, eds., *Domenico Ghirlandaio 1449-1494: Atti di convegno internazionale Firenze, 16-18 ottobre 1994* (Florence: Centro Di, 1996).
- Presciutti, Diana Bullen, *Visual Cultures of Foundling Care in Renaissance Italy* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015).
- Pullan, Brian, *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice: the Social Institutions of a Catholic State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).
- Radke, Gary, ed., *Leonardo da Vinci and the Art of Sculpture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).
- Raguin, Virginia Chieffo, *Stained Glass: Radiant Art* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2013).
- Rebecchini, Guido, "Beyond Florence's Walls: A List of Evaluations of Buildings to be Demolished during 1529 to 1530," *Getty Research Journal* 3 (2011): 163-68.

- Richa, Giuseppe, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine*, 10 vols. (Florence: Pietro Gaetano Viviani, 1754-62).
- Ridolfi, E., *L'arte in Lucca studiata nella sua cattedrale* (Lucca: Arnaldo Forni Editore, 1882).
- Ringman, Erik, "Audience for a Giraffe: European Expansion and the Quest for the Exotic," *Journal of World History* 17, no. 4 (December 2006): 375-97.
- Rogers, Mary, ed., *Fashioning Identities in Renaissance Art* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000).
- Rohlmann, Michael, *Domenico Ghirlandaio, Künstlerische Konstruktion von Identität im Florenz der Renaissance* (Weimar: VDG, 2003).
- Roncière, Charles de la, "L'église et la pauvreté à Florence au XIVe siècle," in *Recherches et débats: Cahier du Centre Catholique Intellectuels Français. La pauvreté: des sociétés de penurie à la société d'abondance* 49 (1964): 47-66.
- Roover, Raymond de, "The Medici Bank Organization and Management," *The Journal of Economic History* 6, no. 1 (May 1946): 24-52.
- , *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank, 1397-1494* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968).
- Rosenauer, Artur, "Domenico Ghirlandaio e bottega: Organizzazione del lavoro per il ciclo di affreschi a S. Maria Novella," in *Tecnica e stile: Esempi di pittura murale del rinascimento italiano*, eds. Eve Borsook and Fiorella Gioffredi Superbi, 2 vols. (Milan: Silvana, 1986), vol. I: 25-30.
- , "Ghirlandaio e Michelangelo: Problemi di bottega e metodi di lavoro," in *Michelangelo: La cappella sistina: Atti del convegno internazionale*, ed. Kathleen Weil-Garris Brandt (Novara: Istituto Geografico De Agostini, 1996): 115-17.
- Rubin, Miri, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- Rubin, Patricia, *Giorgio Vasari: Art and History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).
- , *Image and Identity in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).
- Ruda, Jeffrey, "A 1434 Building Programme for San Lorenzo in Florence," *The Burlington Magazine* 120, no. 903 (June 1978): 358-61.

- Rumohr, Carl Friedrich von, *Italienische Forschungen*, 3 vols. (Berlin: Nicolai'sche buchhandlung, 1827-31).
- Russell, Francis, "Towards a Reassessment of Perugino's Lost Fresco of the 'Adoration of the Magi' at San Giusto alle Mura," *The Burlington Magazine* 116, no. 860 (November 1974): 646-52.
- Russell, Margarita, *Paintings and Textiles of the Bass Museum of Art: Selections from the Collection* (Miami Beach: Bass Museum of Art, 1990).
- Saalman, Howard, *Filippo Brunelleschi: the Buildings* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993).
- Sale, J. Russell, *Filippo Lippi's Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella* (New York: Garland, 1979).
- Salucci, Alessandro, *Il Ghirlandaio a Santa Maria Novella la Cappella Tornabuoni: Un percorso tra storia e teologia* (Florence: Edifir, 2012).
- San Luigi, Ildefonso de, *Delizie degli eruditi toscani: pubblicate e di osservazioni storiche e critiche accresciute da fr. Ildefonso di San Luigi*, 24 vols. (Florence: Gaetano Cambiagi, 1770-1789).
- Sander, Jochen, ed., *Kult Bild: Das Altar- und Andachtsbild von Duccio bis Perugino* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2006).
- Santi, Giovanni, *La vita e le gesta di Federico di Montefeltro, Duca d'Urbino*, ed. Luigi Michelini Tocci, 2 vols. (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1985).
- Saxl, Fritz, "The Classical Inscription in Renaissance Art and Politics," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 4 (1940-41): 19-46.
- Schmidt, Victor, "Filippo Brunelleschi e il problema della tavola d'altare," *Arte Cristiana* 80 (Nov-Dec. 1992): 451-61.
- , "Curtains, Revelatio, and Pictorial Reality in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy," in *Weaving, Veiling, and Dressing: Textiles and their Metaphors in the Late Middle Ages*, eds. Kathryn Rudy and Barbara Baert (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007): 191-213.
- Seidel, Max and Romano Silva, *The Power of Images, the Images of Power: Lucca as an Imperial City. Political Iconography*, trans. Mark Roberts (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2007).

Simons, Patricia, "Portraiture and Patronage in Quattrocento Florence with a Special Reference to the Tornaquinci and their Chapel in S. Maria Novella" (PhD diss., University of Melbourne, 1985).

-----"Giovanna and Ginevra: Portraits for the Tornabuoni Family by Ghirlandaio and Botticelli," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 14/15 (2011-2012): 103-35.

-----, "The Social and Religious Context of Iconographic Oddity: Breastfeeding in Ghirlandaio's *Birth of the Virgin*," in *Medieval and Renaissance Lactations: Images, Rhetorics, Practices*, ed. Jutta Sperling (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2013): 213-33.

Sinding-Larsen, Staale, *Iconography and Ritual: A Study of Analytical Perspectives* (Oslo: Universitet Sforlag et As, 1984).

Sirén, Osvald, *A Descriptive Catalog of the Pictures in the Jarves Collection belonging to Yale University* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1916).

Sman, Gert Jan van der, *Lorenzo and Giovanna: Timeless Art and Fleeting Lives in Renaissance Florence*, trans. Diane Webb (Florence: Mandragora, 2010).

-----, *Ghirlandaio y el Renacimiento en Florencia* (Madrid: Fundación Colección Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, 2010).

Spencer, John, "Ut Rhetorica Pictura: A Study in Quattrocento Theory of Painting," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 20 (1957): 26-44.

Stefaniak, Regina, "Replicating Mysteries of the Passion: Rosso's *Dead Christ with Angels*," *Renaissance Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (Winter 1992): 677-737.

Steinmann, Ernst, *Ghirlandajo* (Leipzig: Velhagen and Klasing, 1897).

Stollhans, Cynthia, *St. Catherine of Alexandria in Renaissance Roman Art: Case Studies in Patronage* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2014).

Strocchia, Sharon, *Death and Ritual in Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

Syre, Cornelia, *Alte Pinakothek: Italienische Malerei* (Munich: Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, 2007).

Tazartes, Maurizia, "Anagrafe lucchese – I: Vincenzo di Antonio Frediani 'pictor de Luca:' il Maestro dell'Immacolata Concezione?", *Ricerche di storia dell'arte* 26 (1985): 4-17.

- , "Anagrafe lucchese – III: Michele Angelo (del fu Pietro 'Mencherini'): il Maestro del Tondo Lathrop?", *Ricerche di storia dell'arte* 26 (1985): 28-37.
- , "La pittura a Pisa e Lucca nel Quattrocento," in *La pittura in Italia: Il Quattrocento*, ed. Federico Zeri, 2 vols. (Milan: Electa, 1986), vol. I: 305-14.
- , *Fucina lucchese: Maestri, botteghe, mercanti in una città del Quattrocento* (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2007).
- Teubner, Hans, "San Marco in Florenz: Umbauten vor 1500. Ein Beitrag zum Werk des Michelozzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 23 (1979): 239-272.
- Teuffel, Christa Gardner von, *From Duccio's Maestà to Raphael's Transfiguration: Italian Altarpieces and their Settings* (London: Pindar Press, 2005).
- Thomas, Anabel, *The Painter's Practice in Renaissance Tuscany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
- , *Art and Piety in the Female Religious Communities of Renaissance Italy: Iconography, Space, and the Religious Woman's Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- Thunø, Erik, *Image and Relic: Mediating the Sacred in Early Medieval Rome* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2002).
- and Søren Kaspersen, eds., *Decorating the Lord's Table: On the Dynamics between Image and Altar in the Middle Ages* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2006).
- Tolaini, Emilio, *Pisa* (Rome: Edizione Laterza, 1992).
- Tolnay, Charles de, *History and Technique of Old Master Drawings: A Handbook* (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1983).
- Trevisan, Luca, ed., *Renaissance Intarsia: Masterpieces of Wood Inlay* (New York: Abbeville Press, 2012).
- Trexler, Richard, "Charity and Defense of Urban Elites in the Italian Commune," in *The Rich, the Well-Born, and the Powerful*, ed. F. Jaher (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973): 64-109.
- , "The Foundlings of Florence," *History of Childhood Quarterly* 1, no. 2 (1973): 259-84.

- , "Adolescence and Salvation in the Renaissance," in *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion: Papers from the University of Michigan Conference*, eds. Charles Trinkaus and Heiko Oberman (Leiden: Brill, 1974): 200-64
- , *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Academic Press, 1980).
- , "Florentine Religious Experience: the Sacred Image," in *Church and Community 1200-1600: Studies in the History of Florence and New Spain* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1988): 37-74.
- , *The Journey of the Magi: Meanings in History of a Christian Story* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).
- Turner, Victor, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969).
- and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978).
- Ubertino da Casale, *Arbor vitae crucifixae Christi* (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1961).
- Uccelli, Giovan Battista, *Il convento di S. Giusto alle Mura e i Gesuati* (Florence: Tipografia delle Murate, 1865).
- Varchi, Benedetto, *Storia Fiorentina*, ed. Lelio Arbib, 3 vols. (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2003).
- Vasari, Giorgio, *Le vite più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence: G.C. Sansoni, 1906).
- , *The Lives of the Artists*, trans. Julia and Peter Bondanella (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- Venchi, Innocenzo, et al., *Fra Angelico and the Chapel of Nicholas V* (Vatican City: Edizioni Musei Vaticani, 1999).
- Venturini, Lisa, "Tre tabernacoli di Sebastiano Mainardi," *Kermes* V, no. 15 (September-December 1992): 41-48.
- Voragine, Jacobus de, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

- Warburg, Aby, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, trans. David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999).
- Weissman, Ronald, *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Academic Press, 1982).
- Welch, Evelyn, *Art and Society in Renaissance Italy 1350-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- Welliver, Warman, "Alterations in Ghirlandaio's S. Trinita Frescoes," *Art Quarterly* 32 (1969): 269-81.
- Williams, Beth, "Altarpieces, Liturgy, and Devotion," *Speculum* 79, no. 2 (April 2004): 341-406.
- Woods-Marsden, Joanna, *Renaissance Self-Portraiture: The Visual Construction of Identity and Social Status of the Artist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).