

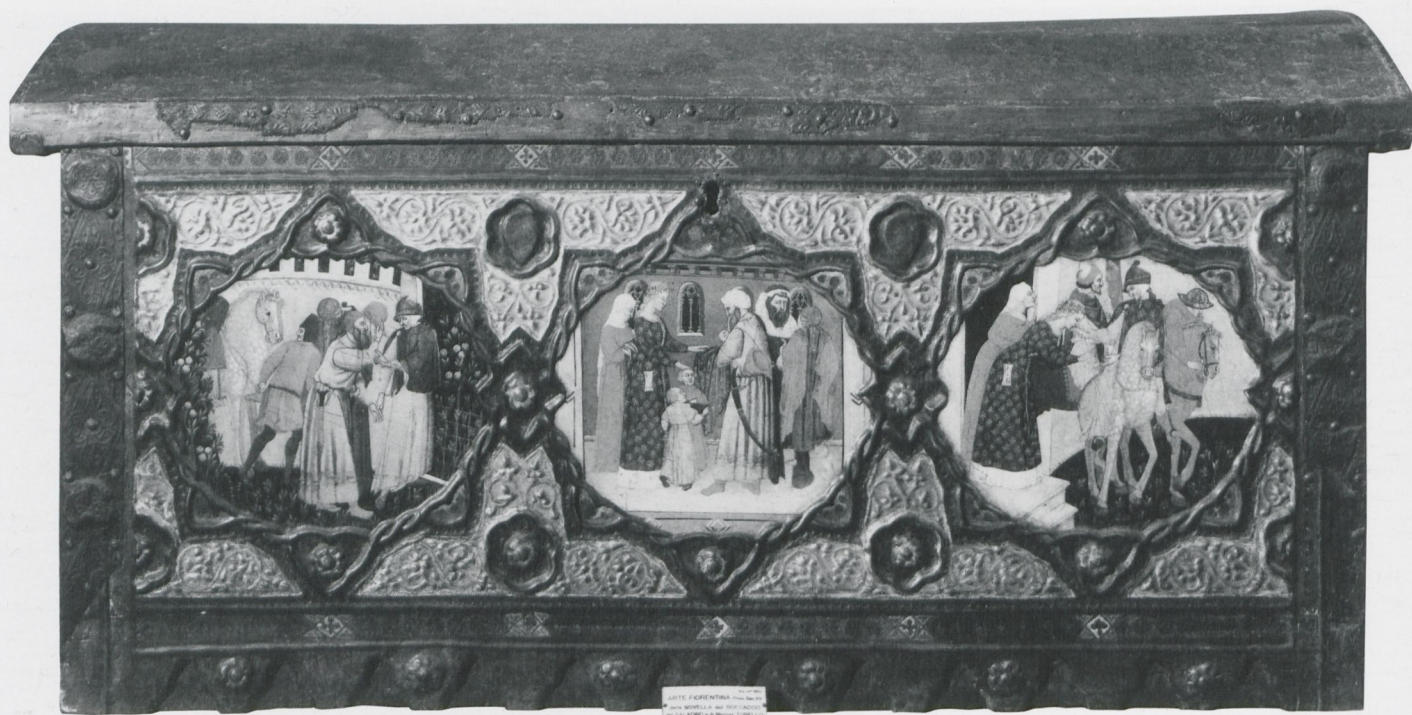


Cassoni istoriati with “Torello and Saladin”: Observations on the Origins of a New Genre of Trecento Art in Florence

In one of the earlier volumes of the *Studies in the History of Art*, Hans Belting remarked, in passing, that the origins of painted marriage chests or *forzieri/cassoni* are to be found in the trecento.¹ No particular *cassone* was mentioned in his paper, delivered in the early 1980s; however, very telling is the fact that Belting's topic was the new role of pictorial narrative in Italian art. Since that time research on Italian Renaissance domestic painting, including the early stage of the genre almost entirely neglected by scholars until now, has taken a new turn. Miklós Boskovits and Everett Fahy have published their lists of works of one of the earliest Florentine painters of *cassoni* and *deschi da parto* (or birth salvers), presently known as the Master of Charles III of Durazzo.² Fahy has shown convincingly that the name piece of a numerous group of domestic panels—a *cassone* front in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, depicting *The Conquest of Naples by Charles III Durazzo*—was produced as early as 1382.³ In several papers and a book concerning mostly unpublished or little-known paintings, I discussed the earliest *cassoni* inspired by mythology and ancient history. I argued that these were painted from c. 1380 through the beginning of the quattrocento, and thus challenged the common and long accepted opinion that classical subjects appeared on domestic panels only in the 1430s.⁴ Also Ellen Callmann,⁵ who previously, like Paul Schubring,⁶ Rai-

mond van Marle,⁷ and Paul F. Watson,⁸ among others, maintained that historiated chests originated in the early fifteenth century, has recently changed her mind, dating some of the earliest preserved *cassoni* before 1400.

The main scope of my inquiry is *cassoni* depicting *The Story of Torello and Saladin* inspired by Boccaccio's *Decameron*, which provides a point of departure for wider observations on the origins of *cassone istoriato*, a new and important genre of early Renaissance panel painting in Florence. One of these chests, in the Bargello, Florence, is the best preserved and most beautiful of the earliest surviving *cassoni*. Whereas for most of the surviving marriage chests only their fronts or side panels have remained, this one is complete. Apart from that, its pendant has also survived. It is important to add that these costly pieces of furniture were invariably made in pairs; the narrative depicted on their long front panels begins on the first chest and concludes on the second.⁹ At the end of marriage ceremonies they were carried in processions (*domumductio*) from the bride's home to that of the spouse and thus presented to the public.¹⁰ Only rarely are both chests (or their detached front panels) preserved or kept in the same collection. Many of them not included in Schubring's monumental catalogue of *cassoni* have remained little known or even unpublished. This is particularly true in the case of the earliest marriage chests.



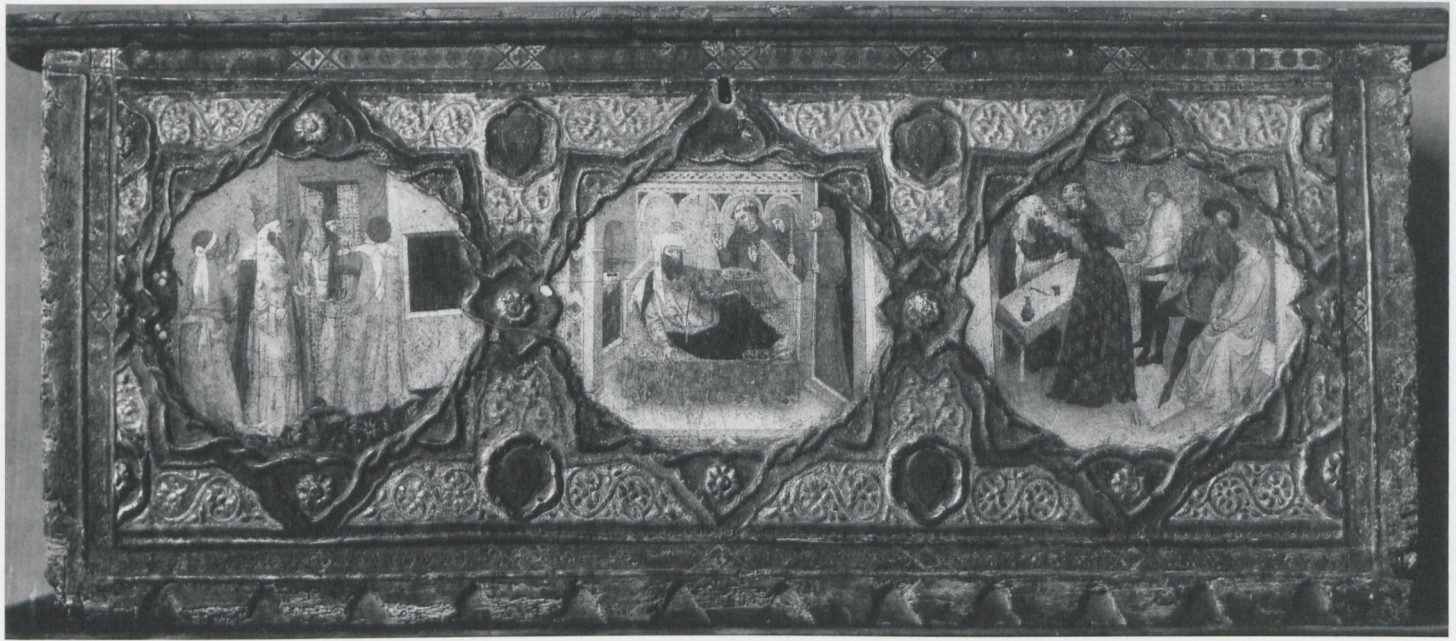
The Bargello *cassone*, now on display in the Sala di Donatello, was housed until 1897 in the famous Florentine hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, which for centuries served as a store for several marriage chests when these went out of fashion (fig. 1).¹¹ It is made of solid wood and covered with a round lid and thus resembles late antique or medieval sarcophagi, especially those preserved in Ravenna. The entire surface of the chest, including its back and the lid, is covered with decoration both painted and in gesso. As in

the case of all *cassoni*, the most elaborate decoration is displayed on the front, which in this case is divided into three almost round compartments containing narrative, multicolored scenes lavishly coated with gilt and bronze gesso or *pastiglia dorata*. The latter creates a quatrefoil-like motif around the paintings. In the upper part of the front, on either side of the middle compartment there are two shields placed among the floral motifs made of gilt gesso which originally bore coats of arms of both husband

1. *The Story of Torello and Saladin*, c. 1385–1390, *cassone*, tempera on wood, and gilt gesso
Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence;
photograph in the Fototeca Berenson, Institut in Florenz

2. *The Story of Torello and Saladin*, c. 1385–1390, *cassone* front, tempera on wood, and gilt gesso
Whereabouts unknown; after a photograph in the Fototeca Berenson, Villa I Tatti, Settignano





3. *The Story of Torello and Saladin*, c. 1385–1390, *cassone*, tempera on wood, and gilt gesso
Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice

and wife. Very characteristic ornamented metal straps wrap around the corners. Remains of such metal decoration, which was also to reinforce the chest, may also be seen on the edges of the lid. The remaining parts of the front are filled with elaborate punchwork and five-petaled rosettes. Both sides and the lid of the *cassone* are adorned with white, slightly yellowish gesso forming figurative roundels surrounded by delicate ornaments, both floral and geometric, with some winged putti among them (see fig. 7). The roundels, which on the lid are hardly legible and quite well preserved on the sides, have a repeating scene of three standing people: a woman between two men wearing tight-fitting tunics and pointed shoes. The back of the *cassone* is adorned quite differently from the rest of it (see fig. 6): this area was only rarely seen and therefore painted with a simple trellis pattern. The lozenges created by diagonal lines are filled with orange and yellow leaflike motifs. Even today one can easily imagine how beautiful this *cassone* must have been when carried in the ceremonial procession through the streets of Florence some six hundred years ago.

The Bargello *cassone* has never been the subject of a separate study, and only its three painted scenes have been briefly discussed by several scholars.¹² Neither Achille

Schiaparelli in his well-known book *La casa fiorentina e i suoi arredi*¹³ nor Paul Schurbring¹⁴ in the first edition of his famous corpus of *cassoni* published in 1915 recognized its subject matter. It was Giacomo de Nicola who three years later demonstrated that it depicts *The Story of Torello and Saladin* as recounted by Boccaccio (*Decameron*, 10.9).¹⁵ De Nicola ascribed it to a painter from the circle of Niccolò and Lorenzo di Pietro Gerini. Since then the chest has been mentioned and reproduced in numerous publications.¹⁶ In 1969 Ferdinando Bologna put forward a hypothesis that the *cassone* was produced not by a Florentine artist in the years c. 1400 (or between 1415 and 1420), as had commonly been believed until then, but precisely in 1407 by an anonymous southern Italian painter for the marriage of Ladislav of Naples and Maria of Enghien.¹⁷ He named the painter the Master of the Siege of Taranto. Even Federico Zeri and John Pope-Hennessy accepted for some time this attribution.¹⁸ Boskovits and Fahy in their aforementioned papers proved without a doubt that the painter of the Bargello *cassone* was a Florentine active at the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and named him the Master of Ladislav Durazzo or the Master of Charles III Durazzo respectively (Charles was the king of Naples until his death in 1386, and his son Ladislav ruled



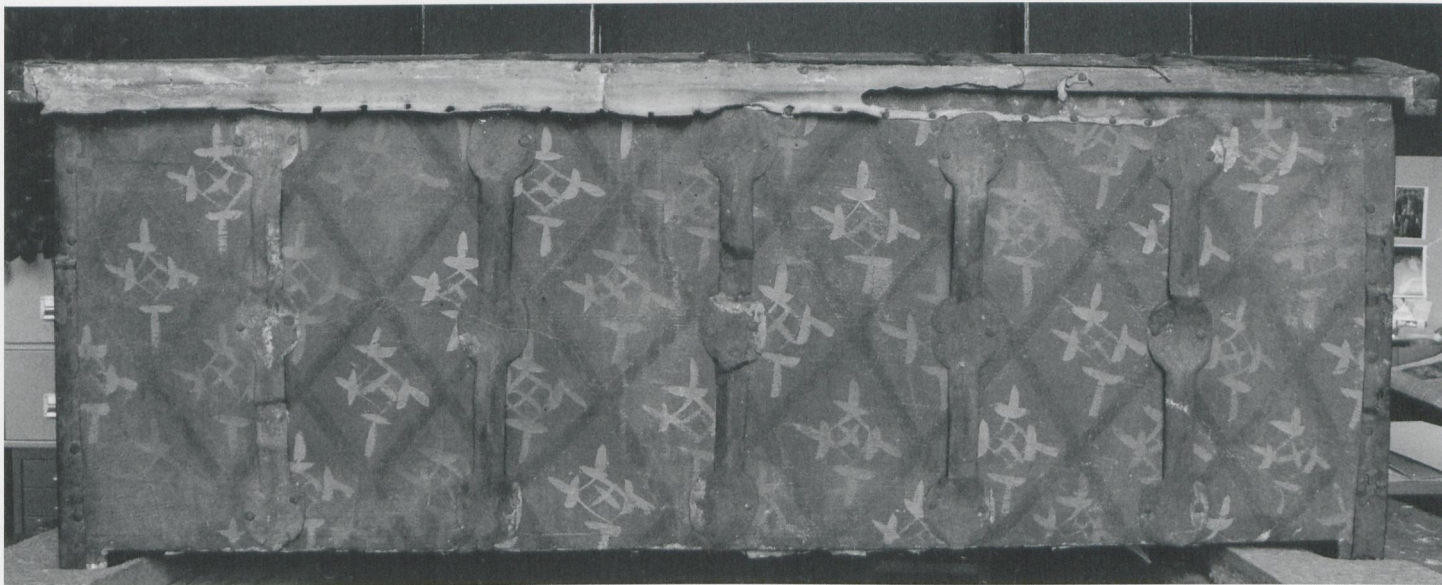
until his death in 1414).¹⁹ Callmann has recently called the painter the Master of Boccaccio and dated the Bargello *cassone* to between 1375 and 1400, without, however, providing any analysis of its style.²⁰ She also noted that there are four more *cassoni* or their fronts with the same first part comprising *The Story of Torello and Saladin* as on the chest in question. Two of them once belonged to private collections in the United States,²¹ and two others are in museums in Florence and Nice. However, the piece in the Stibbert Museum is poor in every aspect and appears to be a nineteenth-century copy, as may also be true (as far as can be judged from the photographs) in the case of the remaining panels.²²

The problem of the pendant of the Bargello *cassone* is even more complicated. In 1919 Tancred Borenius published a *cassone* front (and not the entire chest), then owned by Henry Harris, depicting three final scenes of the story of Torello (fig. 2).²³ It was sold at Sotheby's in 1950, and its present whereabouts are unknown.²⁴ The state of preservation as well as the quality of the panel are good, and it could indeed be considered as the companion of the *cassone* in the Bargello. It was soon afterwards published once again in the catalogue of Florentine painting exhibited in the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1920 and was also reproduced in the second edition of Schubring's *Cassoni*.²⁵ Despite these three publications, it has been constantly con-

fused with another almost completely preserved *cassone* depicting the same scenes, that is, with the last part of the Boccaccio tale (fig. 3). This *cassone* belongs to the Vittorio Cini collection. It was acquired in 1939 from the Fratelli Bacchi and first housed in the Castello di Monselice; it eventually passed to the Palazzo Loredan in Venice.²⁶ Nino Barbantini published it in 1940 (attributing it to the workshop of Niccolò di Pietro and Lorenzo di Nicolò) and then Vittore Branca in his *Boccaccio medievale*.²⁷ Even the most distinguished scholars dealing with domestic painting have tended to list or discuss these two art objects as the same one.²⁸ Not long ago the Cini *cassone* was dated to c. 1430, and the place of its fabrication was proposed as Florence or the "area padana."²⁹

The Cini *cassone* is much damaged. It has lost its original lid and the back, the decoration in gesso on the sides is illegible, and the paintings on the front are also in very poor condition. Of the ornamented metal straps, which once wrapped around the corners, only small pieces have remained. Closer examination of the paintings reveals its slightly inferior artistic quality in comparison with the paintings of both the *cassone* in the Bargello (of which it is almost 7 cm longer) and the Harris front. There is also at least one evident difference between them. While on the former front panels there are only two shields, at one time bearing a coat of arms, on the Cini *cassone* are to be found

4. *Cassone* with metal strapwork and white gesso, c. 1350–1360
Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



5. Back of the *cassone* with metal strapwork, c. 1350–1360
Victoria and Albert Museum, London

6. Back of the *cassone* with *The Story of Torello and Saladin*, c. 1385–1390
Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence;
photograph: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz



as many as four.³⁰ Thus the front of the Cini chest seems to repeat the composition on the Harris front panel. It is worth admitting that among the earliest historiated *cassone* panels there are several instances of almost virtually identical repetitions of the same subject; cases in point include marriage chests produced by the Master of Charles III of Durazzo himself.³¹

Contrary to the majority of early historiated chests, whose subject matters remain

in some cases until now problematic or virtually undeciphered, the scenes depicted on the panels in question appeared to be easy to identify because of the single literary source that had inspired the painter.³² Boccaccio's story of Torello and Saladin is one of the most serene and happily ending of all his tales in the *Decameron*.³³ Boccaccio recounts how Saladin, having heard about preparations for the Third Crusade, traveled incognito to Italy to spy out the situation.



In Lombardy the sultan met Messer Torello, a merchant of Pavia, who kindly entertained him in his home. The merchant and his beautiful wife, Adalieta, even provided the guest with new clothes. Not long after the sultan's departure, Torello also left for the crusade. In the following words Boccaccio describes the moment of the merchant's departure: "On taking leave of his wife, he desired a promise from her: that she should not marry again until one year, one month, and one day had passed after the day of his departure. The lady said: 'I will obey you faithfully in that which you ask of me' . . . having said these words . . . she embraced Messer Torello, weeping, and drawing from her finger a ring, gave it to him, saying: 'If it chance that I die before I see you again, remember me when you look upon this ring.' And he, having taken the ring, mounted his horse."³⁴ During the crusade Torello was captured and made a falconer in Alexandria. He was soon recognized by Saladin, who not only freed him but also, by means of a court necromancer, transferred him miraculously on a bed to Pavia. On that very day his wife was to be remarried against her will. Adalieta recognized her husband during the wedding feast by the ring dropped by him into a cup.

Six painted scenes placed on the front of the Bargello *cassone* and on the Harris panel (as well as on the Cini *cassone*) depict very accurately the most important events of the story. The scenes on the former chest show the first meeting of Torello with the sultan, then Saladin's introduction to Torello's wife and their two sons (see fig. 17), and finally Torello's departure for the crusade while his wife is giving him the ring (see fig. 21). The Harris panel and the Cini chest show the recognition of Torello by the sultan, the miraculous arrival of Torello on a bed to Pavia where he is discovered by the monks in the church of San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro, and finally the reunion of Torello with Adalieta who recognized him by the ring while her second husband-to-be is seated in desperation on the left (see fig. 14). Thus the panels are both entertaining and exemplary, depicting not only scenes of true friendship, so firmly stressed in the story, but also of marital love and wifely fidelity. However, it is obvious that the painter has focused on the latter aspect, love between husband and wife, a very appropriate subject for marriage chests.³⁵ Apart from the ring, which is the key object in the story, the painter introduced a truly marital motif, a floral wreath worn by Adalieta

7. Decoration in white gesso of the side of the *cassone* with *The Story of Torello and Saladin*, c. 1385
Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence; photograph: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

8. *The Garden of Love*, c. 1370, *desco da parto*
Musée de la Chartreuse, Douai; photograph: Bulloz, Paris



9. Goro di Gregorio, sarcophagus of Saint Cerbonius, 1324, marble and polychromy
Duomo, Massa Marittima; photograph: Soprintendenza dei Beni Artistici e Storici, Siena

in all three scenes in which she is represented (see figs. 14, 17, 21). In the trecento and quattrocento the giving of floral wreaths to lovers was very popular; they were considered "messaggeri d'amore."³⁶ Such a motif also appeared on another *cassone* panel by the Master of Charles III Durazzo (see fig. 18). Representation of the Bargello chest with its adventurous, half-exotic tale comprising Saladin's visit to Italy, Torello's participation in the crusade, and the love story with its happy ending must have proved successful for our *cassone* maker since more than one pair of chests depicting it were produced.

Ferdinando Bologna, who ascribed the Bargello *cassone* to a South Italian painter, characterized its style as Hispano-Moorish.³⁷

Indeed not only Saladin but also Torello himself (as pictured on the Cini chest and on the Harris panel) have a strong Moorish appearance. Particularly oriental features are to be seen in the countenance of one of Torello's companions shown in profile in the last compartment of the Bargello chest (see fig. 21). The Moorish aspect of this scene even caused a misinterpretation; it was described as "Saladin leaving Torello's house."³⁸ Clear traces of this specific and to some degree "exotic" style can in fact be found in some murals by both Gaddi and Gerini. Before discussing this problem and the dating of the *cassoni* in question, the earliest (not yet historiated) marriage chests (*forzieri*) as well as some other *cassoni* of the Master of Charles III of Durazzo should be discussed. The former, too, have

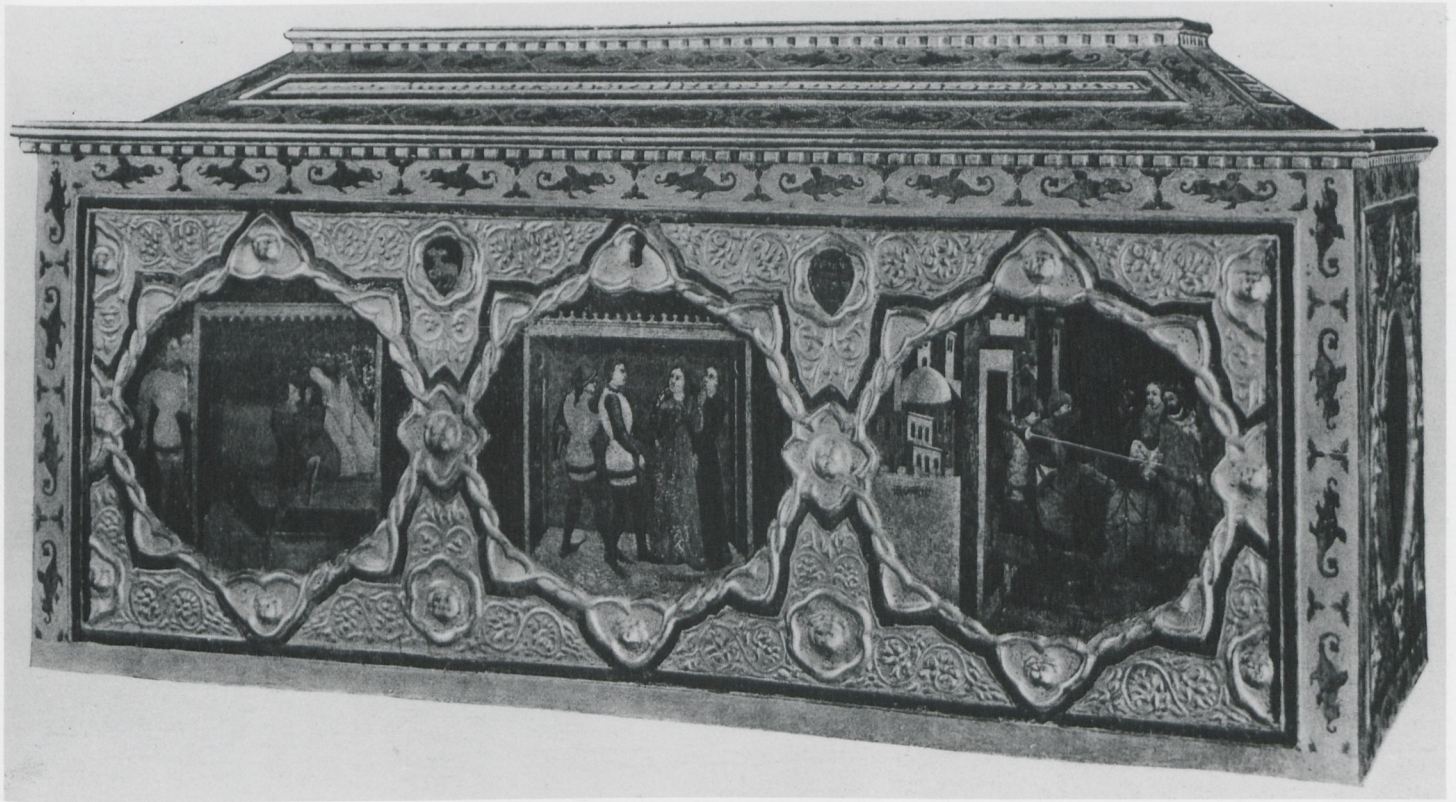


often been dated to the beginning of the fifteenth century.

Painted chests and their makers (*forzierinai*) are mentioned in a great number of documents dating from the latter half of the duecento and throughout the trecento.³⁹ What these early pieces of furniture looked like can be discovered from several paintings by Giotto and Simone Martini among others.⁴⁰ All of them have characteristic metal strapwork, which was intended to both reinforce and adorn them, and are therefore referred to as *forzieri*. Five such chests have survived to this day. Two of them, one in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the other in the Palazzo Davanzati in Florence, are covered with a fleurs-de-lis motif made of yellowish gesso on a blue ground.⁴¹ The three remaining, almost identical *forzieri* are decorated with alternating red and blue bands onto which have been applied three repeating figural scenes portraying a lady on horseback, a horseman with a hawk resting on his wrist, and lovers at a fountain placed beneath a tree. The two latter scenes most probably refer to the *Hunt of Love* and the *Garden of Love*.⁴² Two of these

forzieri (as well as those adorned with fleurs-de-lis) bear coats of arms on their fronts, strongly suggesting that they were in all likelihood produced for marriages. One of them is in the Cini collection, Venice; the second is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The third chest, with the coats of arms of two Florentine families, the Capponi and the Larioni, which was once in the Castello di Vincigliata near Florence, is now in a private collection.⁴³ As the three other of these five *forzieri* were housed until the second half of the nineteenth century in the famous Florentine hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, one can be almost certain that they were produced in Florence, not in Siena as is often maintained.⁴⁴ Based on analysis of the clothing, it was convincingly suggested not long ago that the date for the *forzieri* with figural scenes should be placed in the mid-fourteenth century (not later than 1360).⁴⁵ More or less the same dating should most probably be proposed for the chests with the fleurs-de-lis decoration. From a written source it is known that a pair of chests with such a motif were commissioned in 1361 for the marriage of a Florentine couple, Bernardo Nozzi and Bartolommea di Fran-

10. Scenes from the life of Saint Andrew of Ireland, 1389, wooden casket, tempera on wood, and gilt gesso
Church of San Martino a Mensola, near Florence; photograph: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz



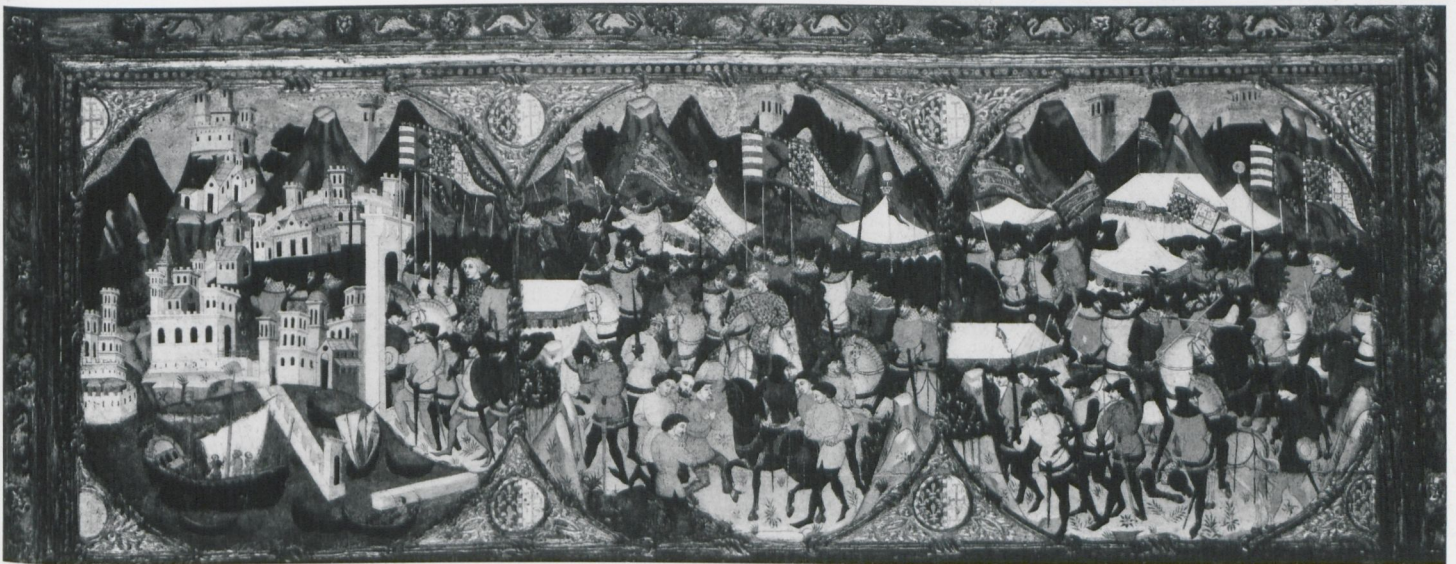
11. *The Story of Lucretia*, 1381, *cassone*, tempera on wood, and gilt gesso
Whereabouts unknown; photograph: after Schubring 1923

12. *The Conquest of Naples by Charles III of Durazzo*, 1382, *cassone* front, tempera on wood, and gilt gesso
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

cesco Becchi.⁴⁶ This type of chest, as well as the other one "con figure" (perhaps similar to that in the Cini collection, fig. 4), were even exported to France, as can be learned from archival sources dating from the third quarter of the trecento.⁴⁷ In a letter dated 1384 and sent from Avignon to Florence, Francesco Datini ordered a pair of chests "of medium size or a little larger, if

you can find them, for a lady, painted on a vermilion or azure ground, according to what you can find. Let them be handsome and showy."⁴⁸

Surprisingly enough, the *cassoni* with *The Story of Torello and Saladin*, commonly dated c. 1400 or even later, have much in common with these five not yet historiated *forzieri*.⁴⁹ Similarities are found not only



in their size (each is c. 140 cm long), their shape, and the metal straps wrapping around their corners and the edges of the lid, but also in the decoration of both the sides and the back (fig. 6). A very simple adornment of the back of the Bargello chest with the lozenges created by diagonal lines, filled with leaflike motifs, is almost identical with the decoration on the backs of *forzieri* in the Metropolitan Museum and in the Victoria and Albert Museum (fig. 5).⁵⁰ As for the sides of the Bargello chest, their central figural roundels are bordered with similar geometrical motifs that frame the fronts and sides of the five *forzieri*. Furthermore, the roundels with gessoed figures—a woman between two men—clearly repeat the same composition on the earliest surviving Florentine *desco da parto*, now in the Musée de la Chartreuse, Douai (fig. 8).⁵¹ The *desco* depicts the *Garden of Love* with three symmetrically placed groups of lovers dancing and playing music around a fountain situated beneath a tree. In the group on the left one of the men holds a falcon on his wrist in an allusion to the *Hunt of Love*; thus the composition resembles the scene by a fountain shown on the Cini *forziere*. The *desco*'s bottom group of figures bear a most striking similarity to the gessoed lovers on the Bargello chest. The clothes of both men and women allow this panel to be dated c. 1370. The gowns of the women resemble those of the female personifications of the Liberal Arts pictured after 1366 by Andrea Bonaiuti in the so-called Spanish chapel, the chapter room of the Dominicans at Santa Maria Novella in Florence.⁵² The *desco*'s men, in turn, wear tight-fitting tunics, low-hanging belts, and shoes with pointed toes which were fashionable in the 1370s and early 1380s.⁵³ Despite the poor state of preservation of the decoration on the sides of the Bargello *cassone*, it is possible to discern that the garments of the men are identical to those of the men on the Douai birth salver. It becomes clear that the gessoed figures on the *cassone* in question could hardly have been produced around 1400 or later. The tight-fitting tunics, low-hanging belts, and pointed shoes are also worn by two men pictured in the last compartment of the Harris front and the Cini *cassone* (see fig. 14).



However, there is one essential difference between the *cassone* depicting Torello and Saladin and the five *forzieri*. Instead of two registers, division by the metal strapwork into six bands, and repeating figural scenes (or fleurs-de-lis motif) in white gesso, the fronts of the former provide the continuous narrative. When and why did this new manner of decoration of *cassone* occur?

An important point of departure for our inquiry regarding historiated chests is not a marriage chest but the wooden sarcophagus or casket of Saint Andrew of Ireland, traditionally (since the nineteenth century) dated 1389, and still housed in its original place in the church of San Martino a Mensola near

13. *Diana's Hunt*, c. 1385, *cassone* front, detail, tempera on wood, and gilt gesso
 Museo Stibbert, Florence;
 photograph: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz



14. *Adalieta Recognizes Her Husband*, c. 1385–1390, detail of figure 3
Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice

Florence (fig. 10).⁵⁴ Its shape with the characteristic gabled lid is the same as the shape of numerous late medieval and early Renaissance sarcophagi made of either marble or bronze. Interesting instances are provided by the sarcophagi of Saint Cerbonius (fig. 9) in the Duomo of Massa Marittima (1324)⁵⁵ and Saint Zenobius in the cathedral of Florence (1430s).⁵⁶ While the front of the former is divided into three narrative compartments, the front of the latter reveals one unified field. Four small rectangular compartments of the Saint Andrew casket, coated with abundant gilt gesso and bearing narrative scenes from the life of the saint, are to be read from left to right. Their somewhat schematic layout, the architecture of the buildings, as well as

the manner of picturing people leave no doubts that this casket was made in the same workshop that produced numerous early domestic paintings. It is enough to compare the scene of the saint's death (see fig. 20) and the last scene of the Bargello chest with the departure of Torello for the crusade in order to recognize striking similarities (see fig. 21). Nearly identical are not only the countenances and poses of one of the men in front of the saint and the woman behind Adalieta, but also the manner of placing the figures in the space.

The *cassone* front in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, acquired in 1906 in Florence, is the name piece for the numerous group of the earliest historiated chests we have been dealing with (figs. 12, 16).⁵⁷ Divided into three sections or compartments by an elaborate gilt gesso—to some degree similar to the Torello and Saladin *cassoni*—it depicts *The Conquest of Naples by Charles III of Durazzo* in June 1381. Its narrative starts on the right side and continues on the left. In the first compartment, Charles of Durazzo's forces rout those of Otto of Brunswick; in the second, Otto's forces surrender; and in the last, Charles of Durazzo enters the city of Naples. The style of the panel, the garments of the protagonists (Charles III and Otto of Brunswick) and their troops, as well as the study of the heraldry and written sources, strongly suggest that it was produced in 1382 in Florence; moreover, a *cassone* from which it derives might even have been intended as a gift from the Signoria of Florence to Charles III.⁵⁸ Thus this *cassone* in all probability did not serve as a wedding chest. Besides, it seems that it had never been sent to Naples, since the deeds of the king disappointed Florentines as early as 1382.⁵⁹ The style of this panel (likewise its lavish gilt gesso) has close connections not only with the paintings of the *cassoni* depicting Torello and Saladin, and with several other marriage chests, but also with those of the Saint Andrew casket.

Perhaps the earliest instance of a surviving historiated marriage chest is that which until the first quarter of this century was housed in the Castello di Vincigliata near Florence (fig. 11); its present whereabouts are unfortunately unknown.⁶⁰ The shape of this

cassone, including its gabled lid, is the same as the shape of both the sarcophagus of Saint Cerbonius (fig. 9) and the Saint Andrew casket (fig. 10).⁶¹ Thus it truly features the form of medieval sarcophagi. However, in this case the elaborate gilt embossing of the front is identical with that on the front panels of the *cassoni* depicting Torello and Saladin. The three compartments present the final part of the *Story of Lucretia*, the most widespread subject matter of early *cassoni*. From the left side to the right are to be read the following scenes: the heroine's rape by Sextus, one of the sons of King Tarquin, her suicide in the presence of both her husband, Collatinus, and Brutus; finally, the escape of King Tarquin from Rome, as recounted by Livy as well as by numerous ancient and medieval authors.⁶² The chest would certainly have possessed a pendant, which must have depicted the first part of the story, that is, scenes of the siege of Ardea and Tarquin's visit with his retinue to Collatinus' and Lucretia's house. The clothing (tight-fitting tunics, low-hanging belts, and pointed shoes) as well as the rigid poses of Brutus and Collatinus are identical to numerous characters on the *cassone* with the *Conquest of Naples by Charles III of Durazzo*. The way of rendering architecture on both panels is nearly identical as well. As for the dating of this *cassone*, the very beginning of the 1380s can most probably be proposed. One of its two coats of arms, which is still legible, depicts a two-headed lamb leaving no doubt that it belonged to the well-known Florentine family of the Alessandrii, who for many centuries were the owners of the Castello di Vinciagliata. It is known that in the spring of 1381 Niccolò degli Alessandrii married Agnoletta Ricasoli.⁶³ Therefore, the chest in question is most probably one of the two *cassoni* commissioned for this particular wedding. In order to be ready for the *domumductio* in the spring of 1381, the chests may have been produced as early as 1380. If this is correct, the Alessandrii *cassone* would indeed be the earliest surviving datable marriage chest. Its tripartite division in gilt gesso was repeated a number of times. There are additional cases apart from the chests depicting the *Story of Torello and Saladin*.

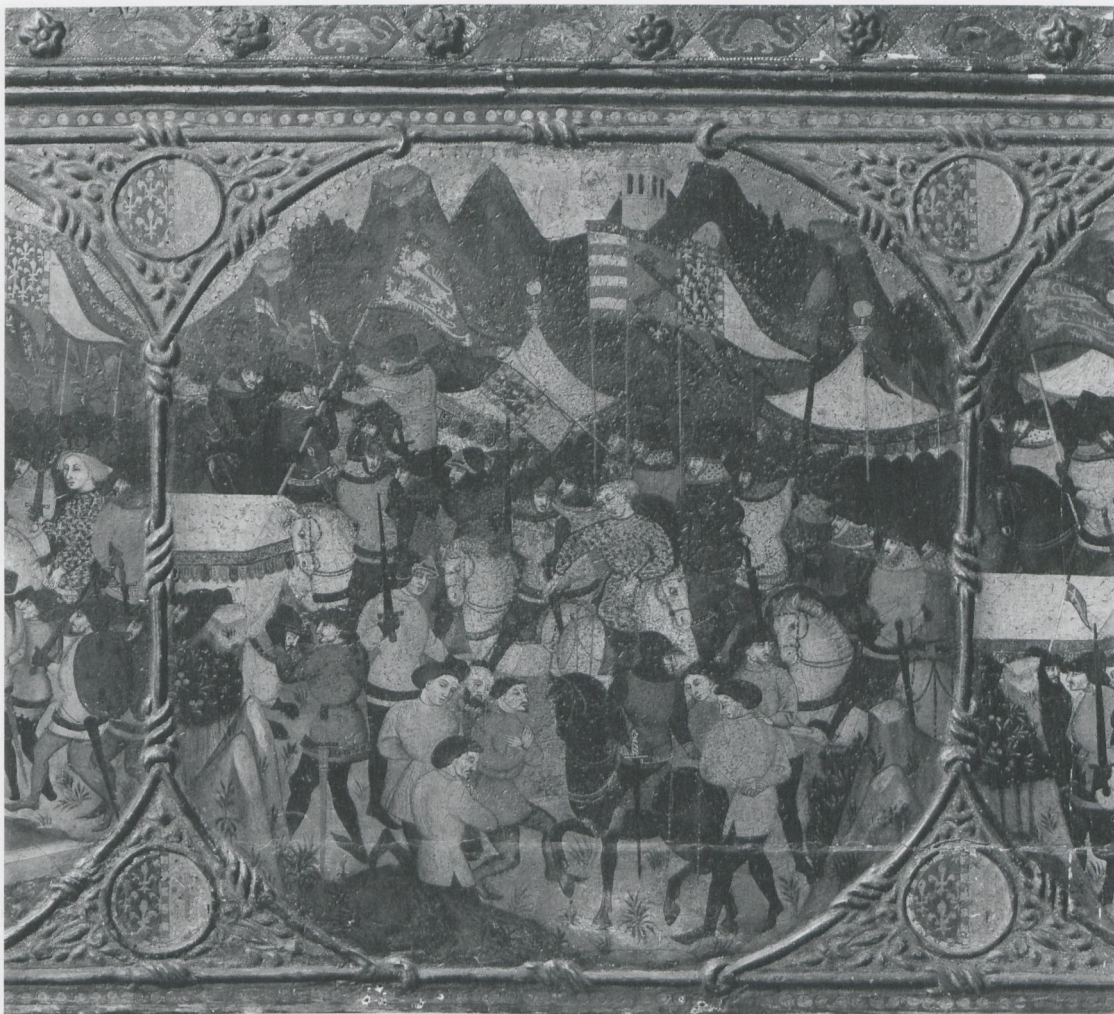
The same gilt *pastiglia* decoration is seen on a little-known and heavily repainted *cas-*



sone front in the Museo Stibbert, Florence, whose three narrative scenes are in all likelihood inspired by Boccaccio's *Diana's Hunt* (fig. 13).⁶⁴ Boccaccio tells how Diana calls her nymphs to bathe in a spring in a valley and then sends them to hunt. The pendant of this panel, which is no longer extant, most probably depicted the final part of the tale when the nymphs rebelled against Diana and prayed to Venus. The latter rewarded them by turning the hunted animals into handsome youths whom they married. The message of the tale is that even the bloody hunt may be brought to a fortunate ending; in other words, it should be read as the *Hunt of Love*.⁶⁵ In the middle compartment, Diana,

15. *Winged Mercury*, c. 1385, *cassone* panel, detail, tempera on wood, and gilt gesso
National Museum, Cracow, Czartoryski collection

16. *The Conquest of Naples*
by Charles III of Durazzo,
1382, detail of figure 12
Metropolitan Museum of Art,
New York



depicted with a scepter and a crown on her head, has already provided the nymphs with spears, dogs, and falcons (fig. 13). Close resemblances to the *cassoni* depicting the *Story of Torello and Saladin* are to be noted in the way of representing the trees in blossom and in the shape of the crownlike tiara on the heads of both Diana and Saladin (figs. 2, 3). In turn, the manner of depicting the mountains with flattened summits in the background is nearly identical on the panel with the *Conquest of Naples by Charles III of Durazzo* (figs. 12, 16). Given somewhat rigid poses of the goddess and her nymphs, as well as repetitions in portraying them in profile, the Stibbert panel must have been executed soon after it.

At this point something should be said about the earliest *cassone* panels bearing a unified narration spreading over their entire fronts. It is commonly accepted until now

that the tripartite division is a feature of almost all surviving *cassoni* datable before 1410 or even before the 1430s; its disappearance is seen as a far-reaching change of taste.⁶⁶ Two of these fronts reveal particularly numerous analogies with most of the panels discussed so far: the first (now cut into two pieces and heavily repainted) depicts two myths recounted by Ovid in the *Metamorphoses* (*The Theft of Apollo's Cattle by Mercury*, fig. 15, and *The Rape of Europa*, fig. 18) and is in the Czartoryski collection, Cracow;⁶⁷ the second, with the *Youth of Achilles* as told by Statius in his *Achilleid*, is in a private collection in Italy (see fig. 24).⁶⁸ While in the latter the story reads from left to right, in the former it reads in the opposite direction, and thus similarly to the panel in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (fig. 12). As in the case of all the *cassone* panels of the Master of Charles III of

Durazzo, discussed previously, on these panels too the use of elaborate gilt gesso is abundant; it frames the painted surface in both the upper and bottom parts.

In the right portion of the Czartoryski front depicting the theft of Apollo's cattle by Mercury (*Metamorphoses*, 2.678–698), the latter is shown as a slim, winged youth clad in a characteristic tight-fitting tunic with puffed sleeves and shoes with pointed toes (fig. 15).⁶⁹ In this purely medieval depiction of Mercury there are obvious resemblances to the costume (gold tunic, modeled with aquamarine glaze), hairstyle, and pose not only of Charles III of Durazzo on the Metropolitan panel (fig. 16), but also to one of the seated men in the last compartment of the Cini *casone* (fig. 14) and the Harris panel (fig. 2). Some further analogies may be noted between all the latter panels and the left part of the Czartoryski front portraying the *Rape of Europa* as told in *Metamorphoses*, 2.836–861 (fig. 18). Thus all the women in the retinue of Europa wear gowns with numerous buttons almost identical to the gowns worn by Adalieta (figs. 17, 21). Similarities in some cases also occur in the color and pattern of the materials and in the fur hems; and both paintings include wreaths. The mountains with flattened summits represent a motif appearing in both the Metropolitan Museum and the Museo Stibbert (figs. 13, 16) panels.

Much better preserved than the Czartoryski panel is that depicting the *Youth of Achilles* (see fig. 24) comprising scenes from the birth of the hero until his immersion in the Styx.⁷⁰ Apart from the way of rendering the architecture and its color as well as the trees in blossom, another point of comparison with the paintings on the Bargello and the Cini *cassoni* are the color and pattern of the material from which the curtain in the scene of the birth of the hero is made (see fig. 24); it is the same as the material of Adalieta's and Torello's clothes (see fig. 21). These observations strongly suggest that not only the *cassoni* depicting Torello and Saladin with their narrative scenes placed in three compartments, but also panels with the *Youth of Achilles* and with the subjects from the *Metamorphoses* shown on unified fields have a great deal in common with the earliest *cassoni istoriati* executed at the



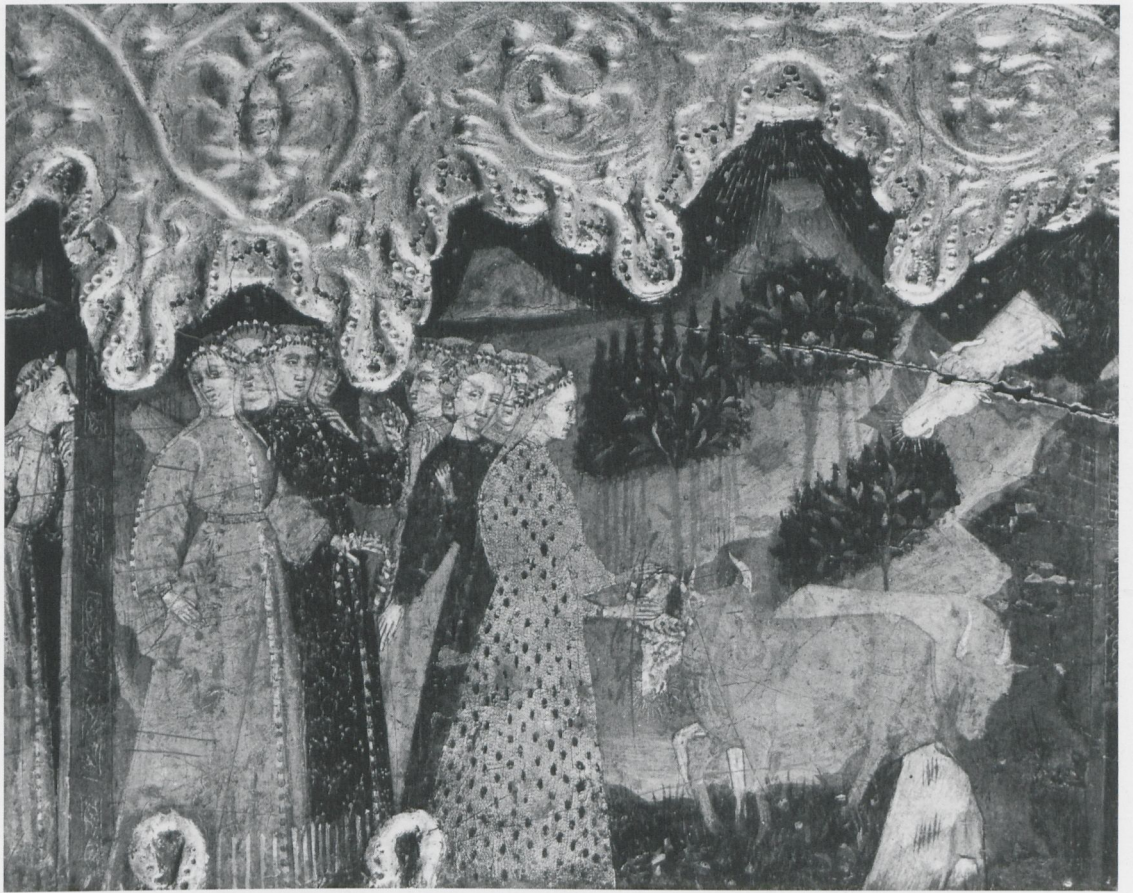
beginning of the 1380s. Further observations on all the panels discussed so far in relation to some dated frescoes may perhaps resolve the issue of their more precise dating.

17. *The Wife of Torello Presenting Saladin with a Change of Garments*, detail of figure 1

Photograph: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

The trecento was a great century for fresco painting. The astonishing achievements of Giotto and his pupils were continued in the later half of the century by the Orcagna brothers, Andrea da Firenze, Agnolo Gaddi, Niccolò di Pietro Gerini, Spinello Aretino, and lesser-known *petits maîtres*.⁷¹ In the last quarter of the fourteenth century, some of them painted numerous cycles with both religious and secular subject matter (the programs of some of these were conceived by the most learned Florentines of that period,

18. *The Rape of Europa*,
c. 1385, *cassone* panel, detail,
tempera on wood, and gilt
gesso
National Museum, Cracow,
Czartoryski collection



such as Coluccio Salutati and Francesco Sacchetti),⁷² whose style and ideas are reflected in the sphere of domestic panel painting.⁷³ When representing secular subjects not previously illustrated, *cassone* painters often adapted compositions or motifs from monumental painting. It has already been noted that the earliest surviving Florentine *desco da parto*, in Douai, dating from c. 1370 (fig. 8), reveals the style and compositions of murals by Andrea da Firenze. Concerning the *cassone* panels discussed here, they seem to show strong resemblances to some frescoes by Spinello Aretino, Agnolo Gaddi, and Niccolò di Pietro Gerini. The two latter, or their workshops, have already been suggested on occasion as being the possible producers of some of the panels mentioned earlier.

Particularly interesting for this investigation is a partially preserved large fresco painted by Niccolò di Pietro Gerini on the facade of the Residence of the Compagnia del Bigallo e della Misericordia in Florence and

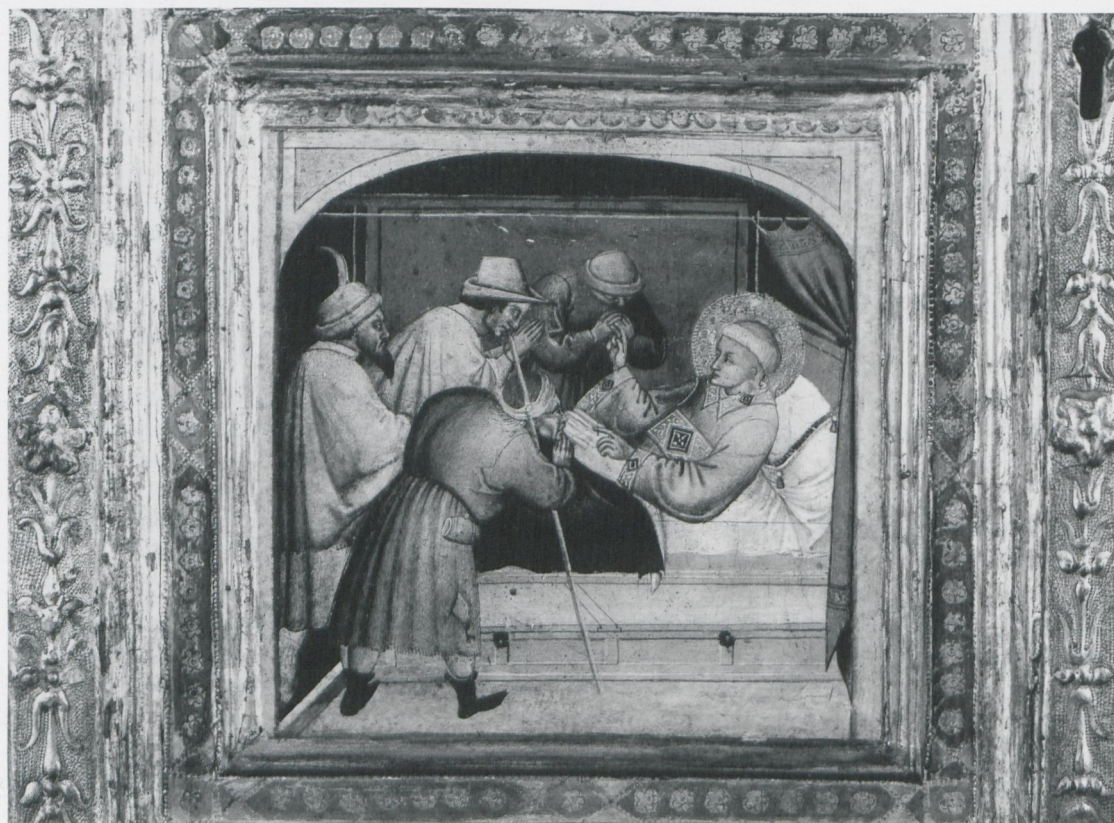
now in the Oratory of the Bigallo (figs. 19, 23).⁷⁴ It depicts *The Return of Lost Children to Their Mothers by the Captains of the Misericordia*. The fresco, known also through a watercolor done in 1777, was completed on 5 July 1386. Some of the figures, both male and female, very much resemble the protagonists of the *cassone* with Torello and Saladin as well as protagonists of other *cassone* panels by the Master of Charles III of Durazzo. Especially striking is the similarity of one of the captains on the left portion of the fresco (fig. 19) to Torello as depicted in the last compartment of the Bargello chest (fig. 21). Not only their anxious countenances, shown in three-quarter view, with characteristic mustaches and long, narrow eyes, but also their poses are nearly identical.⁷⁵ Besides, the faces of the other captains portrayed in the middle portion of the fresco (fig. 23) have oriental-type features resembling numerous soldiers represented on the *cassone* panel with the *Conquest of Naples by Charles III* (fig. 16). In turn, the manner in which Torello

is depicted on horseback appears to be borrowed from some representations of riders composed in frescoes by Agnolo Gaddi and Spinello Aretino at Florence soon after 1385.⁷⁶ A particular similarity may be noted in the portrayal of Torello's horse (fig. 21) and a horse in one of Gaddi's frescoes in Santa Croce, Florence, representing the *Entry of Heraclius into Jerusalem* (fig. 22); both animals are shown in foreshortening and with their left legs raised.⁷⁷

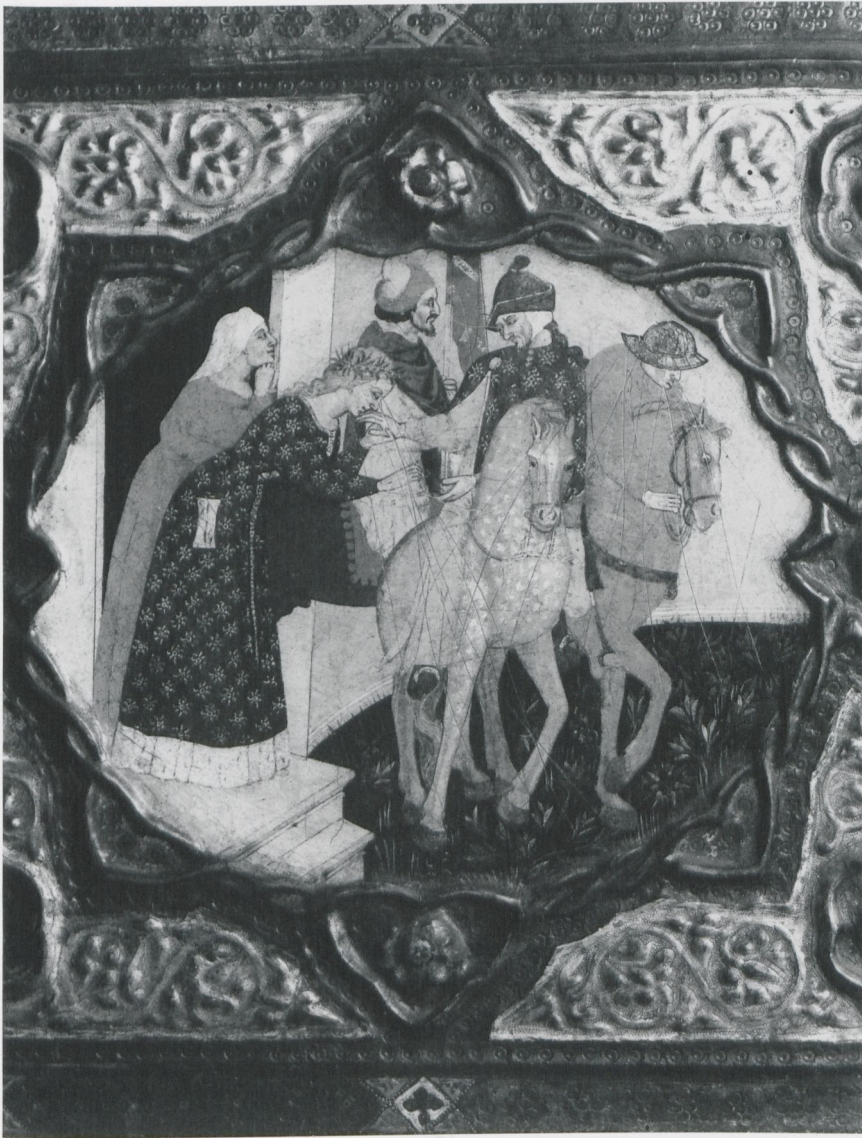
It is worth comparing at this point both the fragments of the *cassone* front in the Czartoryski collection and the panel depicting the *Youth of Achilles* with the Bigallo fresco. At first glance it may be observed that the women on the Czartoryski panel (fig. 18) wear the same type of gowns as some of the women depicted by Gerini (fig. 19). The gowns are characterized by numerous buttons and slightly raised, closely fitting collars. An especially suggestive analogy is to be seen in the garments of one of the women on the left side of the Czartoryski panel and the woman in the fresco pictured from the back. The sleeves of both women are adorned with small buttons, and in their upper part



19. Niccolò di Pietro Gerini, *The Return of Lost Children to Their Mothers by the Captains of the Misericordia*, 1386, fresco, detail
Bigallo, Florence;
photograph: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz



20. *The Death of Saint Andrew of Ireland*, detail of figure 10
Photograph: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz



21. *The Departure of Torello for the Crusade while His Wife Is Giving Him the Ring*, detail of figure 1

Photograph: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

22. Agnolo Gaddi, *The Entry of Heraclius into Jerusalem*, c. 1385, fresco, detail

Choir, Santa Croce, Florence; photograph: Fototeca Berenson, Villa I Tatti, Settignano

there is a characteristic light border. Closer inspection of the panel with Achilles (fig. 24) and the middle portion of the Gerini fresco (fig. 23) also reveals interesting analogies.⁷⁸ The face of Thetis (particularly in the scene of Achilles' fight with a lion), featuring a long, slightly curved nose, is almost identical with the countenance of a woman represented in profile and clad in a dark gown. Close resemblances also occur in the headbands and neck scarves.

Taking into consideration all the analogies between our *cassoni istoriati* and both the *forzieri* adorned with metal straps and the frescoes discussed above, it is possible to conclude that the *cassoni* with Torello and Saladin must have been produced much

earlier than c. 1400. In fact, bearing in mind both the style of the gessoed sides (fig. 7) and the paintings on the front of the Bargello chest, one should date that chest slightly later than the *cassone* portraying the *Story of Lucretia* (formerly in the Castello di Vincigliata; fig. 11) and the panel in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 12) and slightly earlier than the casket of Saint Andrew (figs. 10, 20), thus between 1381/1382 and 1389.

The *cassone* panels in the Czartoryski collection (figs. 15, 18) reveal numerous resemblances to the Gerini frescoes, dated 1386, and to both the panel depicting the *Conquest of Naples by Charles III* (fig. 16), dating from 1382, and the *cassoni* depicting Torello and Saladin. Therefore, the date of the Czartoryski *cassone* should be placed between 1385 and 1390. As for the panel with the *Youth of Achilles* (fig. 24), it must have been executed in the early 1390s or at latest before the end of the trecento. Thus also historiated marriage chests with the paintings spread over their entire fronts appear to have been conceived not in the early fifteenth century, as proposed by Everett Fahy, but some fifteen years earlier. However, this



obviously does not mean that the change from separate compartments to a unified field led to the disappearance of this earlier manner of *cassone* decoration. In fact, the International Gothic courtly style, introduced into Florence during the first decade of the fifteenth century, preferred the convention of dividing *cassone* fronts into three or two compartments and the abundant use of gilt gesso.⁷⁹ Interesting examples of marriage chests adorned in this manner were produced by Giovanni dal Ponte, among others.⁸⁰

Two other *cassone* fronts, produced most probably in the early years of the fifteenth century, are of relevance here. The first, which is still unpublished and rather badly preserved, depicts the *Story of Susanna* (fig. 25).⁸¹ It can perhaps be considered as an instance of the late phase of activity of the Master of Charles III of Durazzo; its present whereabouts are unknown. As in the case of the earliest *cassoni istoriati*, small narrative pictures are coated with elaborate gilt gesso decoration creating three compartments, which in this case have the shape of quatrefoils. Since the panel represents only the first part of the story, concluding with the judgment over the biblical heroine, its pendant most certainly would have presented the final scenes with the stoning of the two elders. Given the slightly undulating line of the clothes of Susanna, the *cassone* seems to belong to the early phase of the Florentine Gothic courtly style.⁸² The importance of this panel lies in that it leaves no doubt as to the presence of biblical subjects among early historiated marriage chests.

The second example is Gherardo Starnina's *cassone* front with the *Battle of the Saracens*, in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg, which has a much more flamboyantly Gothic style (fig. 26).⁸³ It must have been executed soon after the artist's return from Spain in 1401 or 1404 and certainly before his death which occurred between 1409 and 1413.⁸⁴ The scene of the battle, spread over the entire front, is placed into a quatrefoil-like frame which remained fashionable also in the next decades of the quattrocento.⁸⁵

After examining several early *cassoni* produced in Florence from around 1350 through



the first decade of the quattrocento, it is now possible to understand to what degree Giorgio Vasari is a reliable source of information concerning the origins of this genre. In his "Life of Dello Delli," he clearly neglects chronology. He characterizes the youthful Donatello as having assisted Dello Delli in *cassoni* production, fabricating "with his own hand, with stucco, gesso, glue, and pounded brick, some stories and ornaments in low relief, which, being afterwards overlaid with gold, made a beautiful accompaniment for the painted stories."⁸⁶ However, Donatello's date of birth, 1384, precedes his assistance to Dello Delli, who was born in 1404 (a fact established only by modern art history).⁸⁷ There appears to be one missing person in this story, a *cassone* maker living at the turn of the fourteenth century whom Donatello might have assisted. A new read-

23. Niccolò di Pietro Gerini, *The Return of Lost Children to Their Mothers by the Captains of the Misericordia*, 1386, fresco, detail
Bigallo, Florence; photograph: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

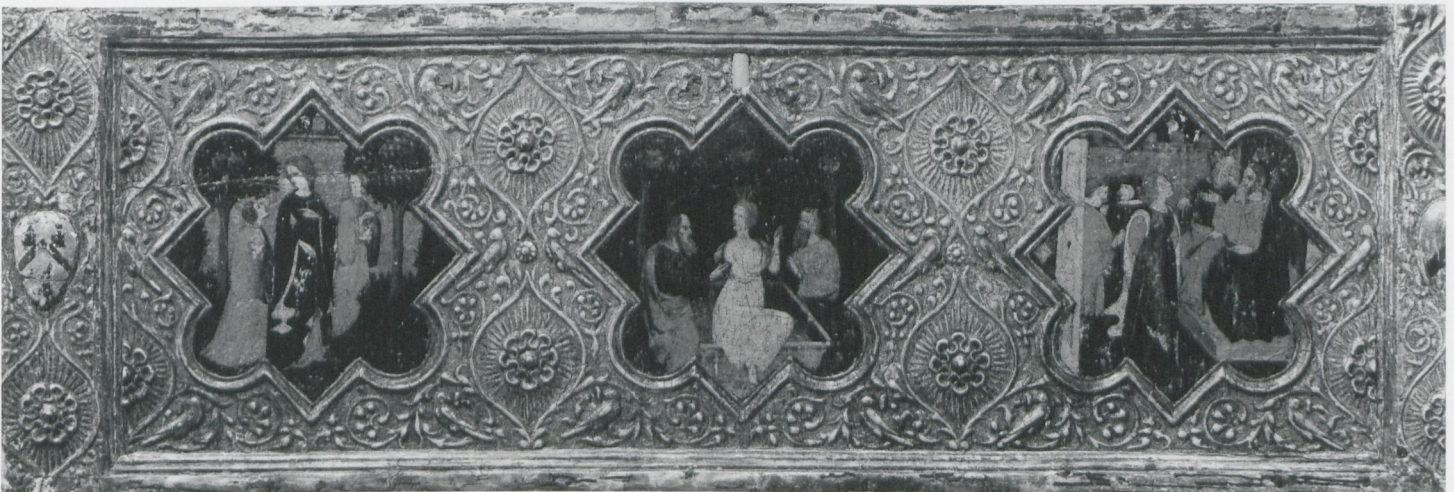


24. *The Youth of Achilles*,
c. 1390, cassone, tempera on
wood, and gilt gesso, detail
Private collection; photograph:
courtesy of Miklós Boskovits

25. *The Story of Susanna*,
c. 1400, tempera on wood,
and gilt gesso
Private collection; photograph:
courtesy of Alberto Bruschi

ing of the "Life of Dello Delli" allows for the conclusion that in the matter of the importance of gilt gesso decoration, the shape of early chests, and variety of subjects depicted on their fronts, Vasari is correct. As for the subjects, he says: "the citizens of those times used to have in their apartments great wooden chests in the form of

sarcophagi, with the covers shaped in various fashions, and there were none that did not have the said chests painted. . . . And the stories that were wrought on the front were for the most part fables taken from Ovid and from other poets, or rather, stories related by the Greek and Latin historians, and likewise chases, jousts, tales of love, and other





26. Gherardo Starnina, *The Battle of the Saracens*, 1405–1410, *cassone* front, tempera on wood
Lindenau-Museum, Altenburg; photograph: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

similar subjects, according to each man's particular pleasure."⁸⁸

In fact, almost all the categories or sorts of "stories" mentioned by Vasari are to be found on the fronts of *cassoni* produced in the last quarter of the fourteenth century and at the beginning of the fifteenth. An excellent example of a love tale is to be seen in the panels depicting Torello and Adalieta. As for chases, one can mention the panel with *Diana's Hunt*, and regarding "stories related by historians" and "fables taken from Ovid and other poets," one should recall the panels representing *The Rape of Europa*, *The Youth of Achilles*, and *The Story of Lucretia*.⁸⁹ Moreover, "other similar subjects" are also present, including scenes of battles and an *exemplum* from the Bible.⁹⁰ Thus late trecento art gave birth to a new artistic genre which astonishingly flourished in the fifteenth century throughout Italy. More than one thousand pieces of various secular domestic panels have survived and are now in a great number of museums all over the world.⁹¹

While in the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance, numerous small historiated caskets, either sculpted or painted, were produced all over Europe, only in Florence (and subsequently in Siena⁹² as well as other cities of Italy⁹³) were there large historiated marriage chests adorned mostly with secular subjects.⁹⁴ What is the reason for this phenomenon? Frederick Antal suggested that it

was caused by the demand for secular art in Florence, a demand that resulted from the conflict between the middle class and the aristocratic outlook.⁹⁵ Brucia Witthoft argued that "wedding chests developed their elaborate decoration as a result of their substitution for display of the dowry itself."⁹⁶ From Hans Belting's observations one can deduce a hypothesis that historiated chests came into being because of the new role of pictorial narrative in trecento Italian painting: "The intention of pictures is the same as that of the texts; they also served for instruction."⁹⁷ Indeed most of the paintings of *cassone* fronts are not only entertaining but also exemplary. All three women protagonists of the panels discussed here—Adalieta, Lucretia, and Susanna—were seen as *exempla* to be followed.⁹⁸ A host of other heroines as well as heroes were to be found in contemporary and ancient literary sources; the latter were accessible through countless *volgarizzamenti* and *cantari*.⁹⁹ In fact, historiated chests should be seen as visualized literature either popular or humanistic.¹⁰⁰ However, apart from the lessons the pictorial narrative was intended to teach, there might also have been other reasons for its appearance. The most expensive parts of chests were those coated with gilt gesso.¹⁰¹ The painted parts were much less costly. Thus patrons' concern with economy, despite the increasing wealth in Tuscany in the second half of the trecento, could be one more factor in the origins of *cassone istoriato*.¹⁰²

NOTES

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1. Hans Belting, "The New Role of Narrative in Public Painting of the Trecento: *Historia* and *Allegory*," in *Pictorial Narrative in Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. Herbert L. Kessler and Marianna Shreve Simpson, *Studies in the History of Art* 16 (Washington, 1985), 151–168. The variety of names for the marriage chests produced throughout the Renaissance were studied by Paul Schubring, *Cassoni. Truhen und Truhenbilder der italienischen Frührenaissance. Ein Beitrag zur Profanmalerei im Quattrocento*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1923; 1st ed., 1915), 1:13–18; Attilio Schiaparelli, *La casa fiorentina e i suoi arredi nei secoli XIV e XV*, ed. Maria Sframeli and Laura Pagnotta, 2 vols. (Florence, 1983; reprinted from the 1st ed., 1908), 1:254–301; Peter Thornton, "Cassoni, forzieri, goffani e cassette: Terminology and Its Problems," *Apollo* 120 (October 1984), 246–251; Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "Les coffres de mariage et les plateaux d'accouchée à Florence: Archive, ethnologie, iconographie," in *À travers l'image. Lectures iconographiques et sens de l'oeuvre*, ed. Sylvie Deswaerte-Rosa (Paris, 1994), 309–323.

2. Miklós Boskovits, "Il Maestro di Incisa Scapaccino e alcuni problemi di pittura tardogotica in Italia," *Paragone* 42, no. 501 (1991, published 1994), 35–53, especially 38 and 46–48. Boskovits' first name for the painter was the Maestro di Cracovia; in this article he called him the Maestro di Ladislao Durazzo. Everett Fahy, "Florence and Naples: A Cassone Panel in the Metropolitan Museum of Art," in *Hommage à Michel Laclotte. Études sur la peinture du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance* (Milan, 1994), 231–243. It was Fahy who coined the present name for the painter, which will also be used in this essay. For another name given to this anonymous artist, see note 17 below.

3. Fahy 1994, 231–242. However, one can hardly accept his identification of this anonymous painter with the Master of San Martino a Mensola, whom he further identifies with Francesco di Michele.

4. Jerzy Miziołek, *Soggetti classici sui cassoni fiorentini alla vigilia del Rinascimento* (Warsaw, 1996); Miziołek, "The Story of Lucretia on an Early Renaissance Cassone at the National Museum in Warsaw," *Bulletin du Musée National de Varsovie* 35 (1994), 31–52; Miziołek, "Florentina libertas. La 'Storia di Lucrezia romana e la cacciata del tiranno' sui cassoni del primo Rinascimento," *Prospettiva*

83–84 (1996), 159–176; Miziołek, "La storia di Achille su due cassoni fiorentini dell'ultimo Trecento," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 41 (1997), 33–67. See also Miziołek, "Europa and the Winged Mercury on Two Cassone Panels from the Czartoryski Collection," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 56 (1993), 63–74.

5. Ellen Callmann, "Cassone," in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (London, 1996), 6:1–5; Callmann, "Subjects from Boccaccio in Italian Painting, 1375–1525," *Studi sul Boccaccio* 23 (1995), 19–34. See also Ellen Callmann, "The Growing Threat to Marital Bliss as Seen in Fifteenth-Century Florentine Paintings," *Studies in Iconography* 5 (1979), 73–92.

6. Schubring 1915. In fact, some early *cassoni* were dated by him c. 1400.

7. Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, 19 vols. (The Hague, 1923–1938), 9:92.

8. Paul F. Watson, "Virtù and Voluptas in Cassone Painting" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1970). See also Brucia Witthoft, "Marriage Rituals and Marriage Chests in Quattrocento Florence," *Artibus et Historiae* 5–6 (1982), 43–59; Jennifer Klein Morrison, "Apollonio di Giovanni's Aeneid Cassoni and the Virgil Commentators," *Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin* (1992), 25–47. Klapisch-Zuber 1994, 310: "la plus grande vogue des coffres décorés de peintures—*de storie*— sur leur partie antérieure se situe au XVe siècle. Les coffres du XIVe siècle sont d'abord de simple bois peint; vers la fin du siècle apparaissent des motifs héraldiques, floraux ou géométriques."

9. That in Florence *cassoni* were invariably given in pairs is demonstrated by the material gathered in John Kent Lydecker, "The Domestic Setting of the Art in Renaissance Florence" (Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1987), 263–316 (appendices). For trecento archival sources, see Carlo Carnesecchi, "Spese matrimoniali nel 1361," *Rivista d'arte* 5 (1907), 35–40; see also Miziołek 1996 (*Soggetti classici*), 19. One should keep in mind that numerous chests now on display in museums all over the world were made (or redone) in the nineteenth century to accommodate original *cassone* panels; see Ellen Callmann, "William Blundell Spence and the Transformations of Renaissance Cassoni," *Burlington Magazine* 141 (1999), 338–348. Among the panels discussed in this essay there are no *spalliere* or backrests; historiated panels of that kind appeared only in the second quarter of the quattrocento; compare Ellen Callmann, "Apollonio di Giovanni and Painting for the Early Renaissance Room," *Antichità viva* 27.3–4 (1988), 5–18; Anne B. Barriault, *Spalliera Paintings of Renaissance Tuscany: Fables of Poets for Patrician Homes* (University Park, Pa., 1994).

10. Max Seidel, "Hochzeitsikonographie im Trecento," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 38 (1994), 1–47. See also

Witthoft 1982; Brucia Witthoft, "Riti nuziali e la loro iconografia," in *Storia del matrimonio*, ed. Michela De Giorgio and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber (Rome and Bari, 1996), 119–148; Miziołek 1996 (*Soggetti classici*), 19–23.

11. Schiaparelli 1983, 1:264, 270; Giacomo de Nicola, "Notes on the Museo Nazionale of Florence—VI," *Burlington Magazine* 32 (1918), 170. Interesting material from the archives concerning placing marriage chests in the Badia and in the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova is gathered by Carlo Carneseccchi, "Un fiorentino del secolo XV e le sue ricordanze," *Archivio storico italiano*, series 5, 4 (1889), 145–173. See also Lydecker 1987, chapters 4 and 5 and appendices for preservation of *cassoni* or their detached fronts in Florentine houses.

12. De Nicola 1918, 169–170; Watson 1970, 47–48, 105–106, 257–258; Ferdinando Bologna, *I pittori alla corte angioina di Napoli 1266–1414* (Rome, 1969), 344–345; Callmann 1979, 78; Callmann 1995, 20, 54–55.

13. Schiaparelli 1983, 1:270–271.

14. Schubring 1915, no. 18; he interpreted the narrative as the story of Mattabruna which was one of the subjects represented on some of the Embriachi's caskets. See Julius von Schlosser, "Die Werkstatt der Embriachi in Venedig," *Wiener Jahrbuch* 20 (1899), 265–267, pl. xxxvii. In the second edition of his corpus, Schubring accepted De Nicola's interpretation.

15. De Nicola 1918, 169–170.

16. See among others Van Marle 1923–1938, 9:95–96, fig. 60; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento* (Turin, 1951), 939; Frederick Antal, *Florentine Painting and Its Social Background* (London, 1948), 367; Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron*, ed. Vittore Branca, vol. 3 (Florence, 1966), fig. on pages 928–929; *Lorenzo Ghiberti. Materia e ragionamenti* (Florence, 1978), 301, no. H.vi (with dating 1395–1410); Paul F. Watson, "A Preliminary List of Subjects from Boccaccio in Italian Painting, 1400–1550," *Studi sul Boccaccio* 15 (1985–1986), 152 (Florentine, c. 1415); Vittore Branca, "Interpretazioni visuali del *Decameron*," *Studi sul Boccaccio* 15 (1985–1986), 103 ("forse ancora del Trecento"); Bruce Cole, *Italian Art 1250–1550. The Relation of Renaissance Art to Life and Society* (New York, 1987), 20–21, figs. 15–16; Anna Maria Massinelli, *Il mobile toscano* (Milan, 1993), 24, pl. x; Fahy 1994, 238 and note 23; Bruna Tomasello, *Il Museo del Bargello. Guida alle collezioni* (Florence, 1995), 78, fig. on page 87. See also Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance. A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places: Florentine School* (London, 1963), 214, who ascribed it to a distant follower of Maso di Banco (the same opinion in the 1932 edition of this book, 238).

17. Bologna 1969, 344–346, with the opinion that the Bargello *cassone* is the companion piece to the panel in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 12 in this essay) depicting the siege of a city identified by him as Taranto, hence he called the painter the Master of

the Siege of Taranto. Afterwards the captured city was identified as Naples; compare notes 2, 19, and 57. See also Ferdinando Bologna, *Il soffitto della Sala Magna allo Steri di Palermo* (Palermo, 1975), 123.

18. A letter dated 16 February 1970 to the Vittorio Cini collection, now in the files of the Museo Cini in the Palazzo Loredan, Venice. See also Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Painting in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), 232; Pope-Hennessy and Christiansen 1980, 13.

19. Boskovits 1991 (1994), who very convincingly writes: "il suo (The Master of Ladislav Durazzo) repertorio figurativo e le stesse peculiarità morfologiche dei suoi dipinti si rivelano fermamente radicati nelle tradizioni della bottega oragnesca"; Fahy 1994. See also Miziołek 1993; Miziołek 1994; Miziołek 1996 (*Soggetti classici*); Miziołek 1996 ("*Florentina libertas*"); Miziołek 1997 ("*La storia di Achille*").

20. Callmann 1995, 20, 54–55; Callmann 1996, 1, fig. 1.

21. One of them, formerly owned by J. Dabissi, was sold in New York in 1923. See Callmann 1995, 54, no. 76; see also no. 77 concerning another panel once owned by Mrs. H. Hinman, New York, which was sold in 1960 at French & Co. In the Berenson Library at Villa I Tatti, Settignano, there is a photograph of the latter described by Bernard Berenson as a fake.

22. The panel in the Museo Stibbert is reproduced in *Il Museo Stibbert a Firenze*, ed. Giuseppe Cantelli, 2 vols. (Milan, 1974), 1:42, 2:fig. 13. See also Callmann 1979, 78, fig. 6. Already Schubring 1923, no. 19, was of the opinion that this panel is a modern copy of the Bargello panel. Of the same opinion are Boskovits 1991 (1994), 47, and Fahy 1994, 242, note 21.

23. Tancred Borenius, "The Oldest Illustration of the *Decameron* Reconstructed," *Burlington Magazine* 35 (1919), 12, pl. 5.

24. Sotheby's, London: Henry Harris collection [sale cat., 24–25 October 1950], 28, lot 163; Fahy 1994, note 23.

25. Schubring 1923, 420–421, pl. cxci, 903. *Florentine Painting before 1500* [exh. cat., Burlington Fine Arts Club] (London, 1920), 16, no. 3.

26. Information from the files of the Cini collection.

27. Nino Barbantini, *Il Castello di Monselice* (Venice, 1940), pl. 190, with a long caption; Vittore Branca, *Boccaccio medievale e nuovi studi sul Decameron* (Florence, 1992; 1st ed., 1956), figs. 46–47; Giovanni Boccaccio 1966, figs. on pages 933, 935.

28. Fahy 1994, 242, note 23; Callmann 1995, 20, 25, 54–55, no. 78.

29. Walter Angelelli and Andrea G. De Marchi, *Pittura dal Duecento al primo Cinquecento nelle fotografie di Girolamo Bombelli* (Milan, 1991), 35, no. 44, with a long caption full of errors.

30. It is interesting to note that one of the *cassone* fronts with the first three scenes of *The Story of Torello and Saladin* , listed by Callmann 1995, 54 and fig. 12, also bears four shields. Formerly it was owned by Mrs. H. Hinman in New York; its present location is unknown (see note 21).
31. Excellent instances of such repetitions of the same subject in the workshop run by the Master of Charles III of Durazzo are *cassoni* depicting *The Story of Lucretia* produced c. 1400; see Miziołek 1996 (*"Florentina libertas"*), 159–176. Compare Callmann 1995, 25–26. There certainly existed in the workshop a ready stock of patterns for the rendering of people, animals, cities, and so forth. For the problem of multiple originals in the history of art, see *Retaining the Original: Multiple Originals, Copies, and Reproductions* , Studies in the History of Art 20 (Washington, 1989).
32. Some early *cassoni* whose subjects remain undeciphered are reproduced in *Catalogo della pittura italiana dal '300 al '700* , ed. Michele Cinotti (Milan, 1985), 177 (ascribed to "Cerchia di Agnolo Gaddi"); Federico Zeri, review of Claus Michael Kauffmann, *Catalogue of Foreign Paintings in the Victoria and Albert Museum before 1800* (London, 1973), in *Antologia di belle arti* 7–8 (1978), 317–321, fig. on page 318.
33. For interesting discussions on this tale, see Luigi Russo, *Letture critiche del Decameron* (Rome and Bari, 1973), 291–314; Giorgio Cavallini, *La decima giornata del "Decameron"* (Rome, 1980), 147–174; Franco Fido, *Il regime delle simmetrie imperfette. Studi sul "Decameron"* (Milan, 1988), 11–35. For subjects from the *Decameron* in Italian art, see Millard Meiss, "The First Fully Illustrated 'Decameron,'" in *Essays in the History of Art Presented to Rudolf Wittkower* , ed. Douglas Fraser, Howard Hibbard, and Milton J. Lewine (London, 1967), 56–61; Jill M. Ricketts, *Visualizing Boccaccio. Studies on Illustrations of 'The Decameron' from Giotto to Pasolini* (Cambridge, 1997). For illustrations of the Torello story in some illuminated manuscripts, see Giovanni Boccaccio 1966, figs. on pages 912, 917. Further bibliography concerning the *Decameron* is conveniently assembled in Joseph P. Consoli, *Giovanni Boccaccio. An Annotated Bibliography* (New York and London, 1992), 81–236.
34. Quoted after De Nicola 1918, 170.
35. For interesting comments, see Borenus 1919, 12; Callmann 1995, 20.
36. See Rosita Levi-Pisetzky, *Storia del costume* , vol. 2: *Il Trecento e il Quattrocento* (Milan, 1964), 126–128; Miziołek 1993, 73.
37. Bologna 1969, 344–346; Bologna 1975, 123. See also Pierluigi Leone de Castris, *Arte di corte nella Napoli Angioina da Carlo I a Roberto il Saggio (1266–1343)* (Florence, 1986), 83, 91, 97; Leone de Castris, "Il 'Maestro di Penna' uno e due ed altri problemi di pittura primo-quattrocentesca a Napoli," in *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Raffaello Causa* (Naples, 1988), 55. The latter speculated that
- the artist was trained in Florence in the circle of Agnolo Gaddi, Niccolò di Pietro Gerini, and Niccolò di Tommaso, then worked in Spain and finally in Naples.
38. Callmann 1995, 54; however, earlier Callmann read this scene correctly (see Callmann 1979, 78).
39. Numerous archival documents are referred to in Schiaparelli 1983, 1:254–301; Schubring 1923, 16–19. See also Lorenzo Ghiberti 1978, 298–299, with bibliography.
40. Interesting material is gathered in Schubring 1923, 1:figs. 1–10; Peter Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance Interior 1400–1600* (London, 1992), figs. 176, 224. For observations concerning metal straps, see Schiaparelli 1983, 1:254–262.
41. *Il Museo di Palazzo Davanzati a Firenze* , ed. Luciano Berti (Milan, 1972), fig. 48; Maddalena Trionfi Honorati in *Capolavori e Restauri* (Florence, 1986), 323–324, no. 20; Giuseppe Cantelli, "L'arredo: La dimensione privata dell'abitare," in *L'architettura civile in Toscana. Il Medioevo* , ed. Amerigo Restucci (Milan, 1995), 482–485, figs. 43–46. See also Schiaparelli 1983, 1:260.
42. Paul F. Watson, *The Garden of Love in Tuscan Art of the Early Renaissance* (Philadelphia, 1979), 37–38.
43. Schubring 1923, nos. 16–17. The chest formerly in the Castello di Vincigliata was reproduced in Giacomo Wannenes, *Mobili d'Italia. Gotico, Rinascimento, Barocco. Storia, stili, mercato* (Milan, 1988), fig. 24 and pl. on page 66; Sframeli and Pagnotta in Schiaparelli 1983, 2:pl. 147b, date it from the beginning of the fifteenth century. All three chests are reproduced by Cantelli 1995, 485, figs. 46–49, who dates them c. 1330. For the *forziere* in the Victoria and Albert Museum, see Peter Young, Jo Darrah, Jennifer Pilc, and James Yorke, "A Siense Cassone at the Victoria and Albert Museum," *The Conservator* 15 (1991), 45–52. See also Watson 1979, 37–38, fig. 16. In one of the chapters ("How to do caskets or chests") of his treatise *Il Libro dell'arte* , Cennini describes that kind of decoration in gesso in detail; see Cennino Cennini, *The Craftsman's Handbook, "Il Libro dell'arte" of Cennino d'Andrea Cennini* (New York, 1960), 109–110.
44. Recently all these *forzieri* were referred to as having been produced in Siena; see Trionfi Honorati 1986, no. 20; Young et al. 1991, 45–52; see also *Dipinti Toscani e oggetti d'arte della Collezione Vittorio Cini* , ed. Federico Zeri, Mauro Natale, and Alessandra Mottola Molfino (Venice, 1984), 61.
45. Zeri et al. 1984, 58–61, no. 32, pl. 7, with a dating c. 1350 as suggested by Luciano Bellosi and Maddalena Trionfi Honorati. I believe that all these five *forzieri* with metal straps may have been produced in the same workshop.
46. The document is published and discussed by Carnesecchi 1907, 35–40. For further information on this widespread type of *forziere* in trecento Florence, see Schiaparelli 1983, 1:260–265; some *forzieri* of

that sort are mentioned even at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

47. In 1370, three chests adorned with fleurs-de-lis were delivered from Florence to Marseilles. As early as 1363, among chests exported to France are mentioned *forzieri* with figures; see R. Brun, "Notes sur le commerce des objets d'art en France et principalement à Avignon à la fin du XIVe siècle," *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 95 (1934), 327–346.

48. Quoted from Iris Origo, *The Merchant of Prato. Francesco di Marco Datini* (Harmondsworth, 1992), 41. Besides, as early as 1390, an old *forziere* with figures is mentioned in a Florentine archival source; see Schiaparelli 1983, 1:265. Perhaps it was similar to the chest housed in the Cini collection (fig. 4 in this essay).

49. There is at least one more early *cassone* with ornamented metal straps wrapping around the corners and edges of its round lid, and thus very similar to the Bargello chest; its present location is unknown, but it is reproduced in Miziołek 1996 (*Soggetti classici*), pl. 28.

50. The back of the Victoria and Albert Museum *forziere* is reproduced in Young et al. 1991, figs. 2–3. I am grateful to Charles Little and Mechthild Baumeister for the opportunity to examine the Metropolitan *forziere*, which is now under conservation.

51. Cecilia de Carli, *I deschi da parto e la pittura del primo Rinascimento toscano* (Turin, 1997), 62–65, no. 1, with further bibliography. The dating of c. 1380 suggested in this book is hardly acceptable; compare Watson 1979, 61–62, fig. 51; Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, *The Art and Ritual of Childbirth in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven and London, 1999), 65, fig. 46. Luciano Bellosi (oral communication) believes that this *desco* might have been painted by Andrea Bonaiuti himself; the artist was active until 1379. In the photographic archives of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence (under the heading "Kunstgewerbe"), there is a photograph depicting two gessoed sides of a *cassone* nearly identical to the decoration on the sides of the Bargello *cassone*.

52. Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *Corpus of Florentine Painting, Section IV*, vol. 6 (Florence, 1979), 27–31, pls. I–II.

53. Luciano Bellosi worked out the method of dating late medieval and early Renaissance Italian paintings based on a detailed study of fashion; see his *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della Morte* (Turin, 1974), 41–54, with further bibliography. See also Luciano Bellosi, "Limbourg, precursori di van Eyck? Nuove osservazioni su 'Mesi' di Chantilly," *Prospettiva* 1 (1975), 24–34; Bellosi, "La mostra di Arezzo," *Prospettiva* 3 (1975), 55–60; Bellosi, "Moda e cronologia. Gli affreschi della Basilica inferiore di Assisi," *Prospettiva* 10 (1977), 21–31; Bellosi, "Moda e cronologia. Per la pittura del primo Trecento," *Prospettiva* 11 (1977), 12–27. See also Pisetzký 1964. While the pointed shoes occur until the end of the trecento, the tight-fitting tunics and low-fitting belts

are characteristic for the 1370s and are no longer in use at the beginning of the next decade.

54. G. F. Baroni, *La parrocchia di San Martino a Mensola* (Florence, 1866), 22–24; Giuseppe Raspini, *San Martino a Mensola. La chiesa, il museo, il monastero* (Florence, 1977), 55–57; Boskovits 1991 (1994), 37, fig. 17b; Fahy 1994, 239, fig. 234; see also George Kaftal, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 46–48; Massinelli 1993, pls. 1–3. Richard Fremantle, "Some Additions to a Late Trecento Florentine: The Master of San Martino a Mensola," *Antichità viva* 12.1 (1973), 3–13, especially 3–4, figs. 1–2, with a dating to c. 1385. The *cassone* measures 59 × 127 cm.

55. Marco Pierini, *L'arca di San Cerbone* (Massa Marittima, 1995); Catherine King, "Effigies: Human and Divine," in *Siena, Florence, and Padua. Art, Society, and Religion 1280–1400*, vol. 2: *Case Studies*, ed. Diana Norman (New Haven and London, 1995), 120–121, fig. 145.

56. Richard Krautheimer, *Lorenzo Ghiberti* (Princeton, 1956), pls. 76–77; *Lorenzo Ghiberti* 1978, 415–416, no. 1.XV; for further examples of sarcophagi with the same shape, see no. 1.XX.

57. Fahy 1994, 231–243, with bibliography in the notes. The panel is excellently illustrated in John Pope-Hennessy and Keith Christiansen, "Secular Painting in Fifteenth Century Tuscany: Birth Trays, Cassone Panels, and Portraits," *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 38.1 (1980), pls. 13–17. Previously the painting was identified as the taking of Salerno in 1077 by Robert Guiscard and ascribed to a South Italian or even to a Burgundian artist; see Schubring 1923, no. 794. It was Harry B. Wehle, *A Catalogue of Italian, Spanish, and Byzantine Painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1940), 19, who identified the protagonist of the panel as Charles III. His ideas have been accepted among others by Pope-Hennessy and Christiansen 1980, 13, 20–22, as well as by Boskovits 1991 (1994), 37–38. Katharine Baetjer, *European Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art by Artists Born before 1865. A Summary Catalogue* (New York, 1995), 16, dates the panel to the beginning of the fifteenth century.

58. For the study of heraldry, see Fahy 1994, 231–242; for observations on two letters written to Charles III by Coluccio Salutati in 1381 and 1382, in which the great chancellor of Florence refers very precisely to the deeds of the king depicted in the panel, see Miziołek 1996 (*Florentina libertas*), 165–166 and note 56.

59. For the matter of Florence as an ally of Charles III, see *La Cronaca di Bindino da Travale 1315–1416*, ed. Vittorio Lusini (Siena, 1900), 10–14; Marchionne di Coppo Stefani, *Cronaca fiorentina*, in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores: Raccolta degli storici italiani* 30.1 (Bologna, 1955), 433–443. See also S. Fodale, "Carlo III d'Angio Durazzo," in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 20 (Rome 1977), 235–239; Fahy 1994, 231–242; Miziołek 1996 (*Soggetti classici*), 36–37.

60. Schubring 1923, no. 21 (with dating c. 1400); Miziołek 1996 ("Florentina libertas"), 160–161, fig. 2. Callmann 1979, 84, and note 23 is of the opinion that the chest is an "early North Italian panel of uncertain identification"; compare, however, Callmann 1995, 25, note 14, suggesting that only the main panel is original and the rest of the chest is nineteenth century.
61. It is interesting to note that a motif in common on the sarcophagus of Saint Cerbonius, the *cassone* with *The Story of Lucretia*, and the *cassone* panel in the Metropolitan Museum of Art are fantastic creatures represented on their borders. Similar creatures are to be found also on a small casket, dated from the mid-fourteenth century, in the cathedral of Todi; see Elisabetta Cioni, *Sculture e smalto nell'oreficeria senese dei secoli XIII e XIV* (Florence, 1998), 450–460, pl. XII, figs. 117–120.
62. Given the fact that in the middle compartment depicting the suicide of Lucretia there are present only Collatinus and Brutus, its literary source must have been first of all Livy's *Ab urbe condita*, 1.57–59; see Livy, book 1, with an English trans. by B. O. Foster, Loeb Classical Library (London, 1919), 196–209. For Livy in the vernacular available at that time in Italy, see Gino Fogolari, "La prima decada di Livio illustrata nel Trecento a Venezia," *L'arte* 10 (1907), 330–345. For further possible literary sources of this panel, see Miziołek 1996 ("Florentina libertas"), 159–160; Cristelle L. Baskins, *Cassone Painting. Humanism and Gender in Modern Italy* (Oxford, 1998), 128–159.
63. For the two-headed lamb of the Alessandrii, see De Nicola 1918, 170; Vittorio Spredi, *Enciclopedia storico-nobiliare italiana*, vol. 5.1 (Bologna, 1981), 352–353; Miziołek 1996 ("Florentina libertas"), 161, who argues that the second coat of arms of this *cassone* depicting a lion (mentioned by Lucy Baxter, *The Castle of Vincigliata* [Florence, 1897], 155) might have been that of the Ricasoli family. See also Francesca Baldry, *John Temple Leader e il Castello di Vincigliata* (Florence, 1997), 168, fig. 92.
64. Schubring 1923, no. 20 (c. 1400?, with an observation that it might be a fake); Watson 1985–1986, 153, lists it as Neapolitan and dates it c. 1415; Callmann 1979, 89 and note 3; Callmann 1995, 35 (ascribed to the Boccaccio Master, active between 1375 and 1400); Boskovits 1991, 47 (as Florentine by the Master of Ladislav Durazzo); *Diana's Hunt: Caccia di Diana. Boccaccio's First Fiction* (Philadelphia, 1991), ed. and trans. Anthony K. Cassel and Victoria Kirkham, 92, note 38 (with doubts that the panel depicts *Diana's Hunt*). Its reproduction was first published in *Museo Stibbert* 1974, 42, no. 165, pl. 12 (described as the "Mito di Diana" and dated to the fifteenth century) and recently by Jerzy Miziołek, "Meleagro, Diana e Atteone su un cassone fiorentino nel Museo Nazionale di Varsavia," *Bulletin du Musée National de Varsovie* 37 (1996), 15–65, especially 23–25, figs. 6–7.
65. There are some other *cassoni* with hunt scenes produced at the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; see Callmann 1979, 74–76; Miziołek 1996 ("Meleagro, Diana e Atteone"), 15–66.
66. Pope-Hennessy and Christiansen 1980, 13; Fahy 1994, 240. Federico Zeri in his several publications dated some of the early *cassone* panels with unified fields to 1410; see Federico Zeri with the assistance of Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings. A Catalogue of the Metropolitan Museum of Art: Florentine School* (New York, 1971), 60–61; Zeri 1973, 318.
67. Miziołek 1993, 63–74. There are at least two *cassoni* with identical decoration in gilt gesso as on that in the Czartoryski collection; one of them is reproduced in Schubring 1923, no. 96, the other in Miziołek 1996 (*Soggetti classici*), pl. 28; the whereabouts of both are unknown. It is highly interesting that the latter is adorned with metal straps on its corners and the edges of the lid as well as with gessoed roundels with figures; thus it reveals many features in common with the Bargello *cassone*.
68. *The Holford Collection in Dorchester House*, ed. Robert Benson, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1927), 2:45, no. 208; Sotheby's, *Fine Old Master Paintings* [sale cat.] (London, 1980), 16 April, lot 219. For full publication of this panel, see Miziołek 1997, 33–67.
69. For the medieval and early Renaissance iconography of Mercury, see Fritz Saxl, "'Rinascimento dell'antichità.' Studien zu den Arbeiten Aby Warburgs," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 43 (1922), 220–272, especially 252–254; Jean Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods* (New York, 1961), 198–201; Miziołek 1993, 68–69, with further bibliography.
70. The companion piece of this panel representing the final part of the story is housed in the Museo Stibbert, Florence; see Miziołek 1997. See also Giuseppe Cantelli, "I depositi del Museo Stibbert," in *Il Museo Stibbert a Firenze*, ed. Lionello G. Boccia, vol. 4 (Milan, 1976), no. 109, fig. 141.
71. For the most complete study of Florentine painting in the last quarter of the trecento, see Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975).
72. Werner Cohn, "Franco Sacchetti und das ikonographische Programm der Gewölbmalerei von Orsanmichele," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 8 (1958), 65–77; Lucia Battaglia Ricci, *Palazzo Vecchio e dintorni. Studio su Franco Sacchetti e le fabbriche di Firenze* (Rome, 1990), 32–53; Roberto Guerrini, "Effigies procerum. Modelli antichi (Virgilio, Floro, *De viris illustribus*), negli epigrammi del Salutati per Palazzo Vecchio a Firenze," *Athenaeum* 81 (1993), 201–212.
73. For dependence of some early domestic panels on frescoes, see Paul F. Watson and Victoria Kirkham, "Amore e virtù: Two Salvors Depicting Boccaccio's 'Comedia delle ninfe fiorentine,'" *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 10 (1975), 35–50.
74. Howard Saalman, *The Bigallo. The Oratory and Residence of the Compagnia del Bigallo e della*

Misericordia in Florence (New York, 1969), 10–13, 19, pls. 5–6; Hanna Kiel, *Il Museo del Bigallo a Firenze* (Milan, 1977), 120–121, 125, figs. 42–46; Boskovits 1975, 406, pl. 98. According to an archival source referred to by all these scholars, the fresco, which is rather badly preserved and repainted, was executed by Gerini and Ambrogio di Baldese. However, Boskovits believes that “la parte oggi visibile spetta . . . interamente al Gerini.”

75. For interesting observations on Gerini's style, see Richard Offner, *Studies in Florentine Painting. The Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1927), 83–95. See also Boskovits 1975, 99–101, 402–415; Richard Fremantle, *Florentine Gothic Painters from Giotto to Masaccio. A Guide to Painting in and Near Florence 1300–1450* (London, 1975), 313–314.

76. See Spinello Aretino's fresco in the sacristy of San Miniato al Monte depicting *Saint Benedict Leaving His Home*, reproduced in Fremantle 1975, fig. 718; Miziołek 1997, 46–48, fig. 17.

77. Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 25, fig. 33; *Il complesso monumentale di Santa Croce. La basilica, le cappelle, i chiostri*, ed. Umberto Baldini and Bruno Nardini (Florence, 1983), pls. on 206–207.

78. When writing one of my earlier studies (Miziołek 1997), I did not notice close connections between the Bigallo fresco and the panel in question. In that paper, however, there are some more analogies between this panel and some other late trecento Florentine frescoes.

79. For the International Gothic style in Florence, see Jeanne van Waadeniojen, “A Proposal for Starnina: Exit the Maestro del Bambino Vispo?” *Burlington Magazine* 116 (1974), 82–91; Van Waadeniojen, *Starnina e il Gotico Internazionale a Firenze* (Florence, 1983); Andrew Martindale, “Italian Art and the International Gothic Style,” *Apollo* 76 (June 1962), 277–282.

80. See, for example, his recently published *cassone* depicting an undeciphered subject: Federico Zeri and Andrea G. de Marchi, *La Spezia, Museo Civico Amedeo Lia. Dipinti* (La Spezia, 1997), no. 7.

81. I am most grateful to Alberto Bruschi for photographs of this panel.

82. Already in the mid-1390s Lorenzo Monaco introduced such undulating lines of clothes in some of his paintings; see Miklós Boskovits, “Mariotto di Nardo e la formazione del linguaggio tardo-gotico a Firenze negli anni intorno al 1400,” *Antichità viva* 7.6 (1968), 21–31, fig. 4. Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 180, fig. 230. Federico Zeri, “Investigations into the Early Period of Lorenzo Monaco,” in *Giorno per giorno nella pittura. Scritti sull'arte Toscana dal Trecento al primo Cinquecento* (Milan, 1991), 113–114, fig. 173.

83. For Starnina after his return from Spain, see *Letà di Masaccio. Il primo Quattrocento a Firenze*, ed. Luciano Berti and Antonio Paolucci (Milan, 1990), 25–27, 264. For the *cassone* in Altenburg, see Van Marle 1927, 99–100, fig. 62; Mario Salmi, “Un'opera

giovanile di Dello Delli,” *Rivista d'arte*, series 2.1 (1929), 104–110, fig. 1; Robert Oertel, *Frühe italienische Malerei in Altenburg* (Berlin, 1961), 136–137, pl. 52. See also Fahy 1994, 240.

84. Van Waadeniojen 1974, 82–91. It is worth adding that, for example, Giovanni Toscani's *cassone* in the Bargello dated to the third decade of the fifteenth century is an instance of a considerable change in format in comparison with all the *cassoni* discussed in this essay since it is 180 cm long. For Toscani's chest, see Luciano Bellosi, “Il Maestro della Crocifissione Griggs: Giovanni Toscani,” *Paragone* 17, no. 193 (1966), 52–54, fig. 30 a–b.

85. The identical frame is to be found in a *cassone* panel depicting *The Story of Judith*; see Mario Salmi, “Aggiunte al Tre e al Quattrocento fiorentino,” *Rivista d'arte* 16 (1934), 168–186, fig. 4.

86. Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, trans. Gaston Du C. de Vere (New York, 1979) 320–322.

87. Adele Condorelli, “Precisazioni su Dello Delli e su Nicola Fiorentino,” *Commentari* 19 (1968), 197–211; Condorelli, “I contributi di Mario Salmi su Dello Dello ed il retablo della cattedrale vecchia di Salamanca,” in Mario Salmi, *storico dell'arte e umanista* (Spoleto, 1991), 141–149; Giuseppe Fiocco, “Il mito di Dello Delli,” in *Arte in Europa. Scritti di Storia dell'arte in onore di Edoardo Arslan*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1966), 1:341–349.

88. Vasari 1971, 321.

89. For further observations concerning subject matter on the early *cassoni*, see Miziołek 1996 (*Soggetti classici*). Among the earliest *cassoni istoriati* are two almost identical representations of *The Triumph of Fame* (the whereabouts of both are unknown). One of them is reproduced in Mina Gregori, “Biennale Internazionale dell'Antiquariato, Firenze: Dipinti e sculture,” *Arte illustrata* 2 (1969), 110; the other in Dorothy C. Shorr, “Some Notes on the Iconography of Petrarch's Triumph of Fame,” *Art Bulletin* 20 (1938), 100–107. See also Rosa Prieto Gilday, “Politics as Usual. Depictions of Petrarch's Triumph of Fame in Early Renaissance Florence” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1996), cat. 6, fig. 4, with wrong dating. There is an early chest (c. 1390), presently housed in the Bargello, depicting *The Expedition of the Argonauts*, reproduced in Schiaparelli 1983, 2:pl. 156a. All three are ascribed by Boskovits and Fahy to the Master of Charles III (or Ladislav) Durazzo. It appears that none of them is by him but rather by another Florentine anonymous painter active at the turn of the fourteenth century; see Jerzy Miziołek, “The Origins of Cassone Painting in Florence,” in *Center 19. Record of Activities and Research Reports, June 1998–May 1999*, National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (Washington, 1999), 100–104.

90. For subjects from the Bible in *cassone* painting, see Marianne Haraszti-Takács, “Fifteenth-Century Painted Furniture with Scenes from the Story of Esther,” *Jewish Art* 15 (1989), 14–25; Cristelle L.

- Baskins, "La festa di Susanna: Virtue on Trial in Renaissance Sacred Drama and Painted Wedding Chests," *Art History* 14 (1991), 329-344; Jerzy Miziołek, "The Queen of Sheba and Solomon on Some Early Renaissance *Cassone* Panels a *pastiglia dorata*," *Antichità viva* 36.4 (1997), 6-23.
91. Schubring 1923 gathered 959 panels, including not only *cassone* panels but also *spalliere* and *deschi da parto*; his corpus could be increased by at least two hundred pieces, many of the paintings remaining unpublished as yet.
92. In Siena the first *cassoni istoriati* appeared only at the end of the second quarter of the fifteenth century. There is no modern study on them; see Schubring 1923, 1:97-99, 130-139; Piero Misciatelli, "Cassoni senesi," *La Diana* 4 (1929), 117-126; see also Callmann 1996, 4. An interesting *cassone a pastiglia dorata* with three small painted christological scenes, dating from the second decade of the fifteenth century, in the Thyssen collection, is reproduced and discussed in Gaudenz Freuler, "Manifestatori delle cose miracolose." *Arte italiana del '300 e '400 da collezioni in Svizzera e nel Liechtenstein* (Einsiedeln, 1991), 86-89, no. 28; this chest was most probably produced for a bishop or a priest.
93. *Cassone* painting in northern Italy (Bologna, Milan, Verona, Vicenza, Venice) became fashionable only in the second half of the quattrocento. The standard study on it remains Schubring 1923, 146-178. See also my forthcoming book, "Italian Renaissance Domestic Paintings from the Lanckoronski Collection, Cracow."
94. For Northern European caskets, see Heinrich Kohlhaussen, *Minnekästchen im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1928); *Teche, pissidi, cofani e forzieri dall'Alto Medioevo al Barocco*, ed. Pietro Lorenzelli and Alberto Veca (Bergamo, 1984); and Raymond Koechlin, *Ivoires gothiques français* (Paris, 1924). For Italian caskets or *forzierini*, see Johannes W. Pommeranz, *Pastigliakästchen. Ein Beitrag zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte der italienischen Renaissance* (Münster, 1995).
95. Antal 1948, 363-373.
96. Witthoft 1982, 51-52.
97. Belting 1985, 151-168, especially 165.
98. For the problem of *exempla* in medieval and Renaissance Italian art and literature, see Frederic C. Tubach, "Exempla in the Decline," *Traditio* 18 (1962), 407-417; Carlo Delcorno, *Exemplum e letteratura tra Medioevo e Rinascimento* (Bologna, 1989), with previous bibliography; John D. Lyons, *Exemplum: The Rhetoric of Example in Early Modern France and Italy* (Princeton, 1989).
99. For *volgarizzamenti* see, among others, *Volgarizzamenti dal Due e Trecento*, ed. Cesare Segre (Turin, 1980); Bodo Guthmüller, "Die volgarizzamenti," in *Die italienische Literatur im Zeitalter Dantes*, ed. August Buck (Heidelberg, 1989), 201-254, 333-338, with bibliography; and Paul A. Gehl, *A Moral Art: Grammar, Society, and Culture in Trecento Florence* (Ithaca, 1993). For *cantari*, see Francesco A. Ugolini, *I cantari d'argomento classico* (Geneva and Florence, 1933).
100. For the matter of *cassone* painting, *volgarizzamenti*, *cantari*, and humanistic literature, see Miziołek 1996 (*Soggetti classici*), 115-120, with further bibliography; Miziołek 1997 ("Storia di Achille"); Baskins 1998, 1-25. See also Callmann 1979, 73-92.
101. For gilt gesso, the production of *cassoni a pastiglia dorata*, and their costs, see Cennini 1960, 109-110 (chapter CLXX); Daniel V. Thompson, *The Materials and Techniques of Medieval Painting* (New York, 1956), 31-33 and 194; David Bomford, Jill Dunkerton, Dillian Gordon, and Ashok Roy, *Art in the Making: Italian Painting before 1400* (London, 1990), 44-48; Thornton 1991, 100-101, 196; Christoph Merzenich, "Dorature a policromie delle parti architettoniche nelle tavole d'altare toscane fra Trecento e Quattrocento," *Kermes* 9 [26] (1996), 51-71; Miziołek 1997 ("The Queen of Sheba"), 6-23. For splendor in medieval painting, see Victor M. Schmidt, "The Lunette-Shaped Panel and Some Characteristics of Panel Painting," in this volume.
102. For increasing wealth in Italy and the growing sophistication in interior decoration and furnishing, see Richard A. Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy, 1300-1600* (Baltimore and London, 1993).