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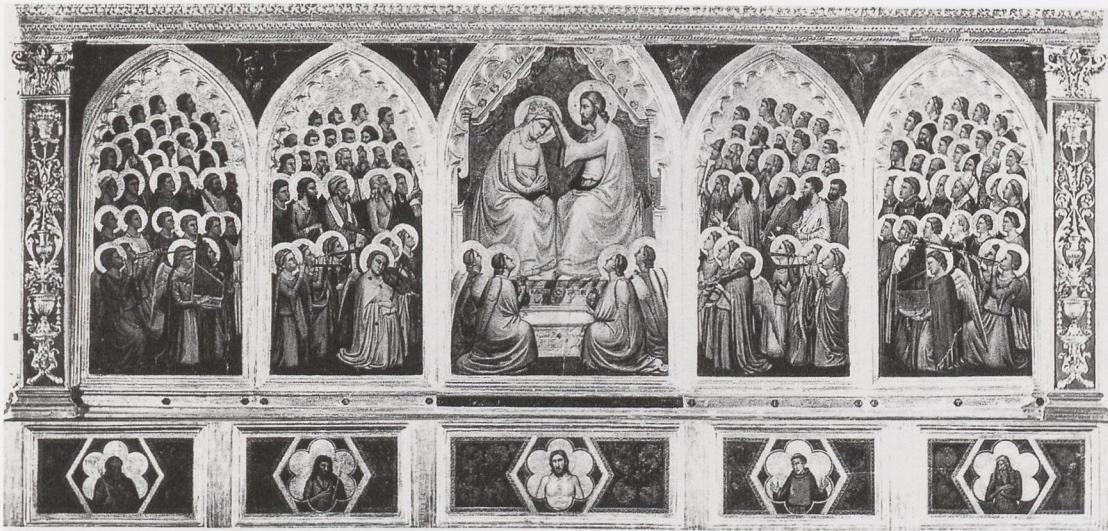
Medium and Imagination: Aesthetic Aspects of Trecento Panel Painting

In his book of artists' lives, written in 1642, Giovanni Baglione reported on a noteworthy instance of aesthetic appreciation for old religious panel paintings from the early era of Italian painting. In order to increase his income, the painter Terenzio da Urbino provided himself with old panels in outdated frames whose painted subjects were scarcely any longer discernible. "These panels," according to Baglione, "he painted over, so that through the use of deft drawing and applied colors he made them look like something. When he had thus painted them, he hung them in smoke and treated them with certain varnishes. In this way he made them look like ancient paintings."¹

Baglione's account of an aesthetic impression primarily enhanced by the age of the painting, thereby evoking a distant, bygone era, is by no means an isolated case. Already in the late sixteenth century (1587), the painter and art theorist Giovanni Battista Armenini had reported, with manifest expression of his displeasure, that it was the custom all over Italy to hang very sooty panels, painted "alla Greca," in oratories and churches as well as in private palaces, in order to encourage devotion ("a muover divotione").² In a similar vein, already in the early quattrocento, the Dominican friar Giovanni Dominici had advised that children should be encouraged not to worship before modern, sumptuously painted images, but instead to pay their devotions to old, smoke-darkened ones.³

It is noteworthy that the aesthetic interest expressed in these testimonies is not directed at the authenticity of a timelessly valid original and its faithful transmission into the present, but much more at the impression of the image's historical "pastness," at their "patina del tempo," as Marco Boschini formulated it in the seventeenth century.⁴

Clearly, signs of age consisted not just of the picture's material deterioration through candle smoke, but above all in their obvious unmodern, old-fashioned style. Vivid evidence for this is offered by the practice, widespread through the Renaissance, of reframing and partially supplementing trecento altarpieces while nonetheless leaving their stylistic features substantially unchanged.⁵ Among the examples are such prominent works as Giotto's *Coronation of the Virgin* from about 1330 in the Baroncelli chapel in Santa Croce, which, in the 1480s, was partially cropped and inserted into a newly made, richly ornamented Renaissance frame (fig. 1).⁶ Another example is a polyptych by Taddeo Gaddi from about 1340, now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York (fig. 2). It was altered by removing the Gothic pointed arches, ornamented gables, and crowning pinnacles, then painting ornamental pilasters between the standing saints and four Evangelists in the spandrels, and finally, fitting the entire painting into a new, heavy tabernacle frame.⁷ The historically reflected awareness of style with which one



1. Giotto, *Coronation of the Virgin*, c. 1330, tempera on panel

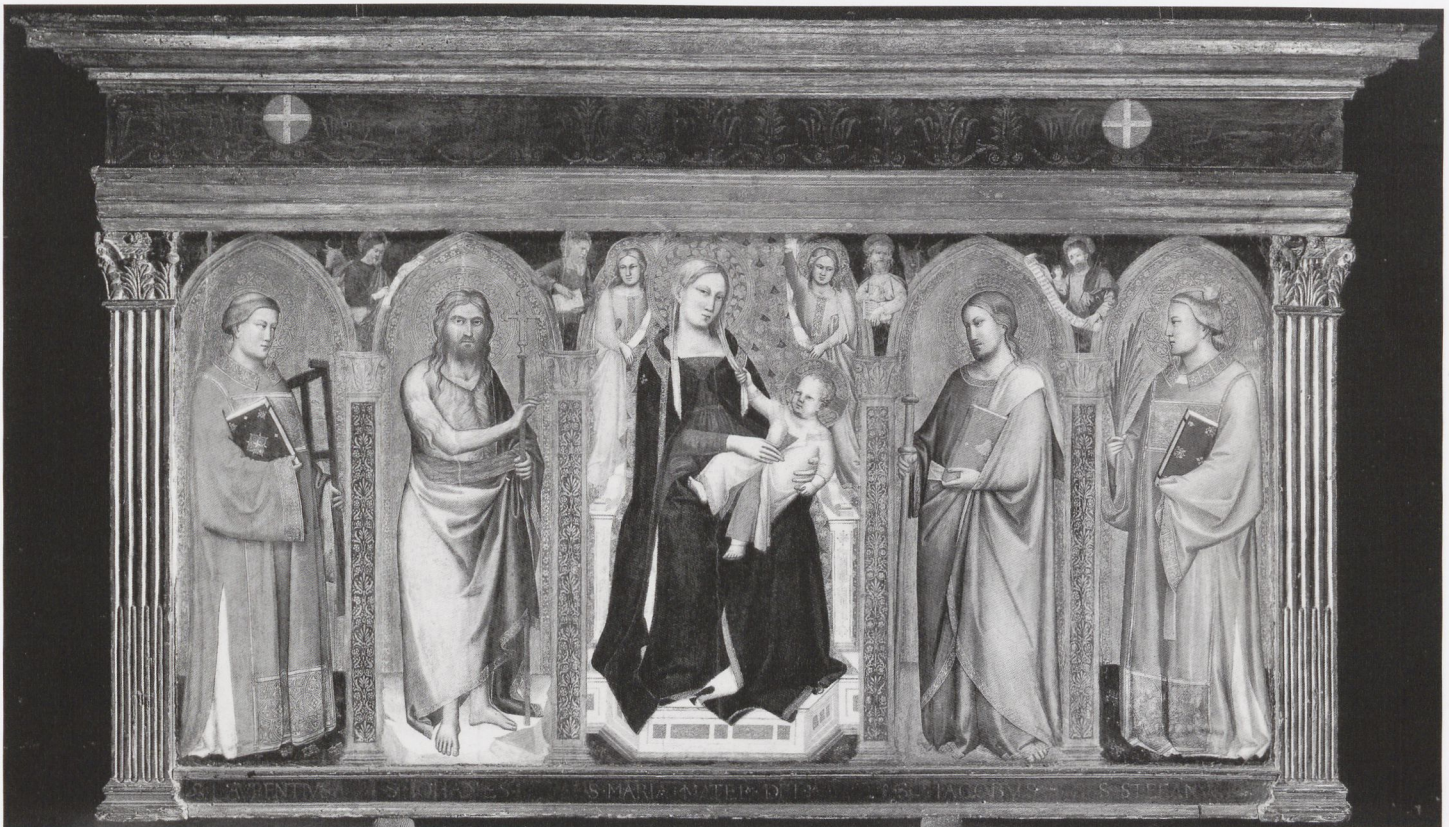
Santa Croce, Florence, Baroncelli chapel; photograph: Technische Universität Berlin, Fotothek

approached works in such instances was documented by the Florentine painter Neri di Bicci, who reported on a similar reworking of an old altarpiece in 1471: "this panel was made in ancient times, with finials and foliate ornaments in the manner used in the old era of Italian painting. And I did it anew, in reframing and adapting it to the usage of

our times. I added pilasters on either side and above an architrave with a frieze and a cornice."⁸

The reasons leading to this retrospective regard for, and preservation of, old paintings within the current context are too numerous and complex to be discussed here.⁹ However, in any case it can be said that the

2. Taddeo Gaddi, *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints*, c. 1340, tempera on panel
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



Lawrence

Jacobus Stephen

3. Sandro Botticelli, *Portrait of a Young Man*, c. 1480, tempera on panel
Private collection



religious aspects, such as the “muover divotione,” through the transmission of an especially revered ancient image, are here combined with genuinely aesthetic aspects: the experiencing of the work in question as a created entity with its own formal existence and artistic reality. We can clearly see this facet in Botticelli’s *Portrait of a Young Man*, now on loan to the National Gallery in Washington (fig. 3): it presents the young man as an art collector and the proud owner of a fragmentary work recognizably originating in the advanced trecento. Its slightly worn gold leaf and several repaired areas clearly indicate its great age. Deprived of its original function as part of a polyptych, it seems that in the late quattrocento it was cropped on all sides so that it could be fitted into a new, modern *tondo* frame and could take on the individual character of a connoisseur’s piece.¹⁰

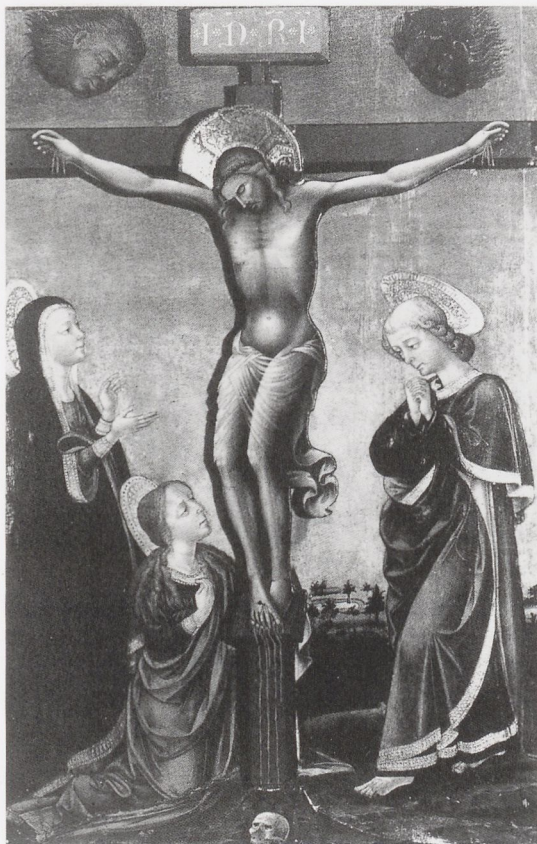
In such cases, the visible, ancient ancestry of these images manifests itself as its own aesthetic category that clings to the image; it is an aura of the image’s concrete existence as an object, able to develop beyond the question of the subject represented or its icono-

graphic implications. What thereby comes to light is a dual character, or double aspect, inherent in the image. The first is that of the image as representation, that is, as a visual rendering of a holy person or religious subject according to the old theological interpretation of the image as “memoriale” or “ricordatio.” The image functions, as it were, as an imaginary screen seeking to place before the eyes the represented persons or events. The second aspect, on the other hand, is that of the image as medium, that is, the image as an item made of wood, covered with colors and gold leaf, in short, as a painting determined by its material existence. To this perspective of the image *qua* medium belongs the perception that the picture’s material condition as well as its artistic style are subjected to the laws of time. The historicity of the image is therefore simultaneously a signal of its material existence.¹¹

Both aspects, that of the image as a mimetically implied representation, and that of the image as a painted surface with its own concrete, material reality, relate to each other in a tense ambivalence. The less the beholder notices the material qualities of the image, the more suggestive will be the imaginary experience and timeless presence of the subject represented. In reverse, the illusion of presence disappears proportionally as the material qualities of the image come into sight. The significance of this interplay for my argument is obvious: the stronger the image is perceived in the sense of its age and historicity, the stronger its physicality and material existence appears to be; and, with that, its import as a medium.

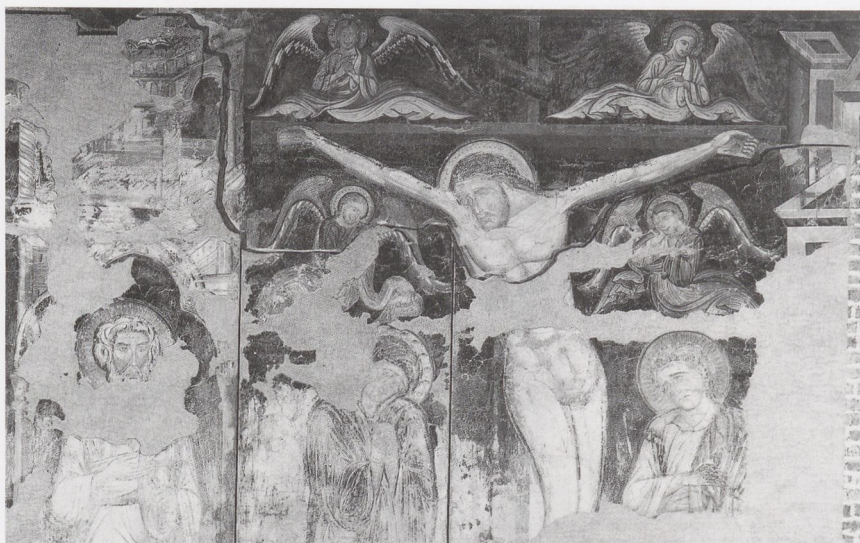
A crucifixion panel, now in the Musée des Augustins in Toulouse, may serve as a clear example (fig. 4).¹² Painted around 1460 by Neri di Bicci, the artist quoted earlier, the panel incorporated in its center an image of the crucified painted by Lorenzo Monaco, a work that dates from the end of the fourteenth century and is therefore more than a half century older. As a silhouetted or “cut-out” panel, whose outer contours exactly correspond to those of the represented figure or object, it belongs to a type of painted cross that was particularly popular around 1400.¹³

Neri di Bicci’s painting introduces the earlier Crucifix into the middle of its composition as if it were a sort of precious



reliquary. His painting with the figures of Mary, John, and Mary Magdalene refers directly to the earlier work with respect to the coherence of its spatial and narrative logic as well as in its emotional tenor of mute compassion; yet it intentionally retains its stylistic distinctness, to be seen in the haloes, hairstyle, and so forth. The thematic emphasis on the represented person of Christ becomes apparent, as it were, in the form of a differentiated, clearly demarcated pictorial object whose greater age along with its more rarefied aura are evident. The eschatological, transhistorical significance is here evoked through the experience of a staged, internalized, measurable past.

If in the previously introduced instances works of the trecento were the objects of a later, aesthetically reflected reworking, so was this aestheticizing type of reflection already in effect during the trecento itself. This is not only true with respect to works on panel. The decoration of the Chapter Hall of the Dominican church of San Nicolò in

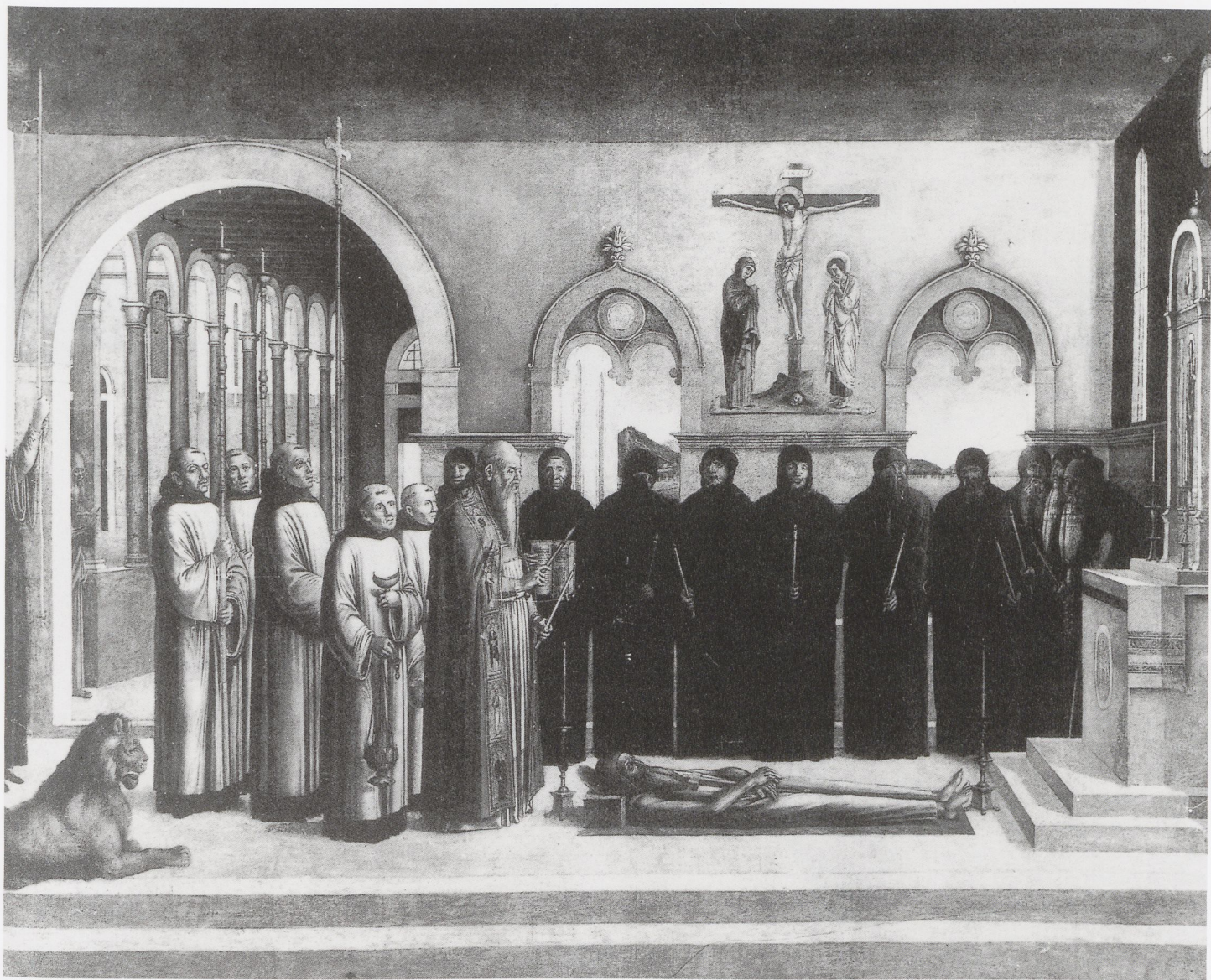


Treviso offers a vivid example. When that room was thoroughly renovated in 1352 and Tommaso da Modena painted in fresco forty monumental portraits of the Dominican order's major representatives on its walls, only the middle portion of the east wall was spared from being repainted; and retained there, as a kind of monumental altarpiece, was the old wall painting of Christ's Crucifixion, flanked by Saints Peter and Paul, which had originated in the late duecento or early trecento (fig. 5). Its style was emphatically different from the modern, engagingly naturalistic manner of Tommaso da Modena. However, that was obviously not a

4. Lorenzo Monaco, *Cut-out Crucifix*, and Neri di Bicci, *The Virgin and Saints John and Mary Magdalen*, late fourteenth century and c. 1460, tempera on panel
Musée des Augustins, Toulouse

5. Anonymous painter from the Veneto, *Crucifixion with Saints Peter and Paul*, late thirteenth to early fourteenth century, fresco
San Nicolò, Treviso, Chapter Hall

6. Anonymous painter, *Crucifixion*, early fourteenth century, with later additions, fresco
Chiaravalle della Colomba, Cistercian abbey



7. Lazzaro Bastiani, *Burial of Saint Jerome*, c. 1460–1470, oil on canvas

Galleria dell'Accademia, Venice; photograph: Technische Universität Berlin, Fotothek

hindrance, but instead, as it seems, rather a reason to leave it on the altar wall.¹⁴

Examples of this kind are numerous. For instance, in a chapel of the Cistercian abbey at Chiaravalle della Colomba (Busseto) near Piacenza, there is, above the altar, a wall painting showing the Crucifixion, which dates from the early trecento and still displays the ancient Cimabuesque type of the Crucified (fig. 6).¹⁵ About a century later, around 1400, thorough changes in the fresco were carried out and numerous secondary figures were added, yet without touching the main portion of the picture consisting of Christ on the cross, Saint John, and the three Marys.

Today it is hard to determine exactly what intentions were operating in such instances and what sort of effects were desired. One possible interpretation might be seen in a painting by Lazzaro Bastiani, done around 1460–1470 for the Scuola di San Girolamo in Venice (fig. 7).¹⁶ It shows the burial ceremony of Saint Jerome, which is transposed into a contemporary, late quattrocento setting. Only a simulated wall painting of the Crucifixion, towering over the ceremonial event, represents a stylistic anachronism inasmuch as it presents stylistic features and a type of Crucifixion that appears to date from the early trecento. It is quite reasonable to assume that this



choice of a retrospective form was semantically used, that is, it referred to a certain, similarly retrospective ideal of early Christian asceticism and authentic imitation of Christ that had always united cloistered communities and lay brotherhoods with the example of Saint Jerome.¹⁷

Retrospective semantics are also encountered, it seems, in some cases of painted crosses of the trecento. A Crucifix panel by Bernardo Daddi in the Accademia in Florence, dating from about 1340, provides an example (fig. 8). Through its addition of the small figures of Mary and Saint John beside the Crucified it falls back, as Richard Offner has shown, upon a long-outdated type that was hardly in use any more by the late duecento (fig. 9).¹⁸ The particular emphasis laid upon

Christ's torments in the iconography of the small scenes at the ends of the Cross, with the Flagellation, the Mocking of Christ, and the Carrying of the Cross, makes it likely that this work formerly belonged to some penitential brotherhood. As Kathleen Arthur has shown, around 1335 the Florentine Confraternità di Gesù Pellegrino, which was established near the church of Santa Maria Novella, had ordered a similarly retardataire Crucifixion panel: "colla donna nostra e con san Giovanni dal lato," as the inventory of 1345 emphasizes.¹⁹

With consideration of such examples we enter into a difficult field that has until now scarcely been systematically researched, and within which hardly any unequivocal assertions are to be encountered. Since György

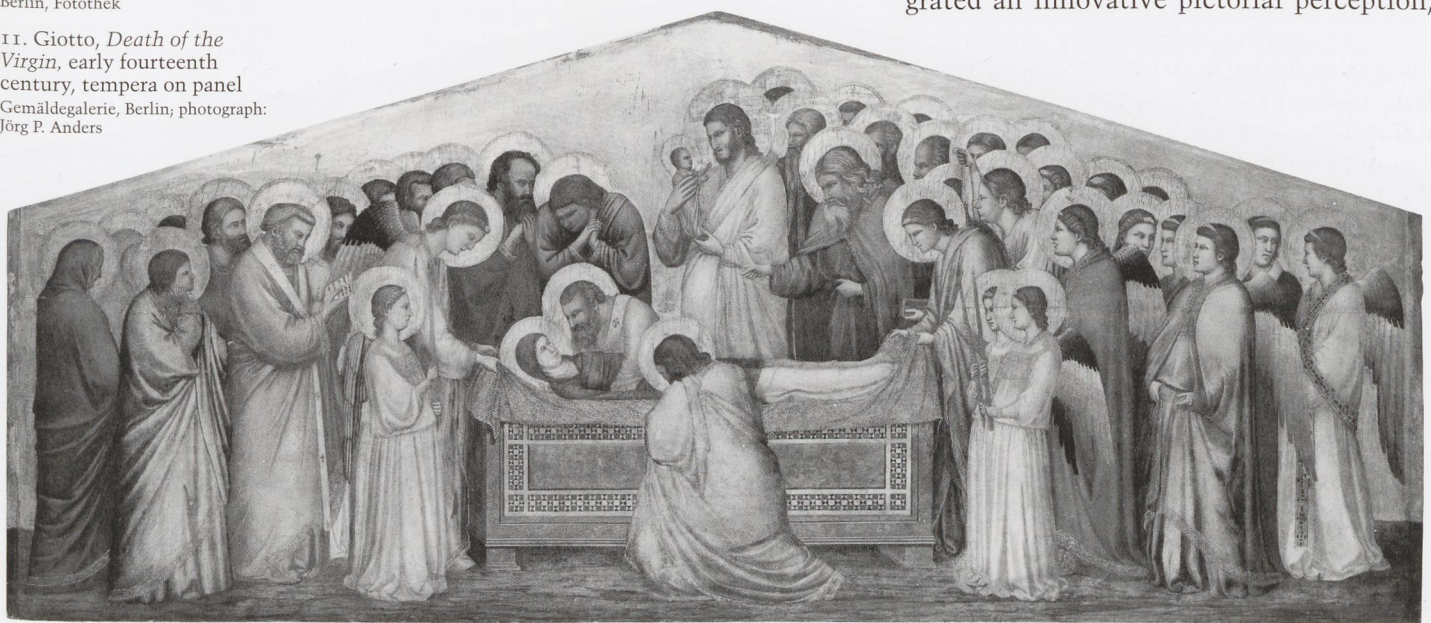
8. Bernardo Daddi, *Crucifix*, c. 1340, tempera on panel
Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence

9. Maestro del Bigallo, *Crucifix*, c. 1245, tempera on panel
Museo del Bigallo, Florence,
photograph: Technische Universität
Berlin, Fotothek



10. Giotto, *Ognissanti Madonna*, early fourteenth century, tempera on panel
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence;
photograph: Technische Universität
Berlin, Fotothek

11. Giotto, *Death of the Virgin*, early fourteenth century, tempera on panel
Gemäldegalerie, Berlin; photograph:
Jörg P. Anders



Gombosi, Frederick Antal, Bruce Cole, Millard Meiss, and others, the literature has repeatedly discussed trecento painting's retrospective tendencies, such as the revival of Byzantinism and the recourse to the forms and types as well as iconographic conventions of the duecento, without however achieving secure groundwork or arriving at unanimous judgments or interpretations.²⁰ What seems, in any case, to be demonstrated by trecento artistic practice is a growing aesthetic reflection regarding historical differences: differences between old-fashioned, former modes of representation on the one side and modern, current ones on the other. It is at the same time a kind of reflection that implies in a new sense the aesthetic availability of those modes.

With which individual claims and institutional authorities such aesthetic options were bound up, and what notions of meaning and taste thereby came to fruition, are extremely variable. Already Dante could speak, in about 1310, with great self-evidence of an antiquated style in painting, which was being overtaken by the "modern" art of Giotto.²¹ Nevertheless, in certain cases, even Giotto himself appears to have made use of altogether traditional types of pictures as a kind of commonly approved convention, in order to form within this framework his modern artistic language. His famous *Ognissanti Madonna* in the Uffizi, created in the early years of the trecento (fig. 10), integrated an innovative pictorial perception,



that is, a new concept of the illusion of space, into an already traditional construction of a gabled panel, a form that reflected the construction of gable-shaped tabernacles housing three-dimensional Madonna statues.²² Similarly, for his *Death of the Virgin* produced at that same time, now in Berlin (fig. 11), he used the traditional form of the flat, gabled dossal which was hardly any longer in use.

Both panels were made for the church of the Humiliati di Ognissanti in Florence²³ and

can be compared with other works created at the same time for the same order: a *Lamentation of Christ* by Lippo di Benivieni (fig. 12) and a dossal with the *Virgin and Child with Four Saints* (fig. 13), both of which are now in the Museo Civico in Pistoia.²⁴ Like the just-mentioned panels of Giotto, both works were created in the first decade of the trecento for the church of the Humiliati in Pistoia; and both works reach back anew to traditional format types. In light of this context, Irene Hueck has speculated "that the

12. Lippo di Benivieni (attr.), *Lamentation of Christ*, c. 1310, tempera on panel Museo Civico, Pistoia; photograph: Aurelio Amendola, Pistoia

13. Master of 1310, *Virgin and Child with Four Saints*, c. 1310, tempera on panel Museo Civico, Pistoia; photograph: Aurelio Amendola, Pistoia





14. Meo da Siena and workshop, *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints* (reverse and front), 1330, tempera on panel

Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt am Main; photograph: Ursula Edelmann, Frankfurt am Main

clerics of the order's community cultivated an obvious predilection for pictorial forms that were currently already antiquated, and that Giotto here sought to comply with the very precise aesthetic standards of his patrons."²⁵

This retrospective aspect of referring to forms of the past, appearing here and in other works, requires a more differentiated discussion than can take place in this context. In such a discussion, many important works would have to be taken into consideration, such as Meo da Siena's dossal of 1330 in the Städelsches Kunstinstitut in Frankfurt, which formerly served as the retable of the main altar in the famous Benedictine abbey of San

Pietro in Perugia (fig. 14).²⁶ The panel's low, elongated design with its schematic lineup of saints within a series of arcades seems, for the 1330s, to be a formal throwback and exactly as *retardataire* as the figural style, with its schematic repetitive pattern of stances and the complete withdrawal of any spatial arrangement. Apparently the panel's archaizing orientation was directly based upon the model of a retable that had been created in c. 1270 in the same city of Perugia, for the Minorite church of San Francesco al Prato (fig. 15).²⁷ Today we know that this work originally had monumental dimensions (about 370 cm wide) and at the time of its production represented a significant

15. Partial reconstruction of proposed back of double-sided altarpiece by the Maestro di San Francesco from San Francesco al Prato, Perugia, c. 1270, tempera on panel

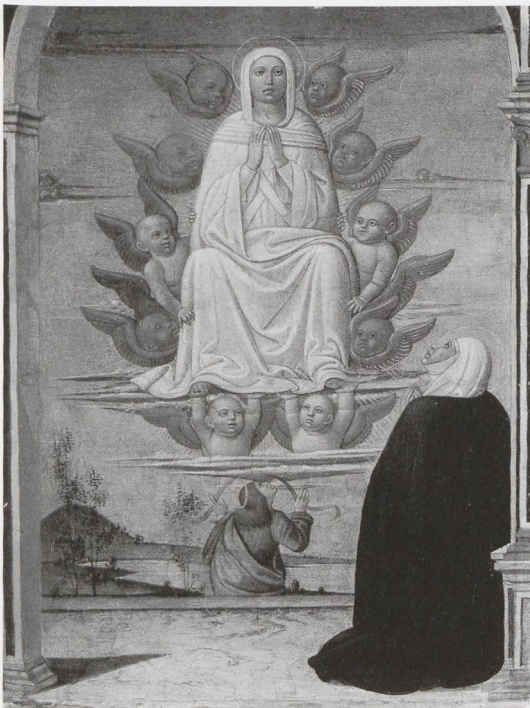
Reconstruction by Dillian Gordon





16. Attributed to Lippo Memmi, *Assumption of the Virgin*, c. 1340, tempera on panel
Alte Pinakothek, Munich

17. Bartolomeo Bulgarini, *Assumption of the Virgin*, c. 1360, tempera on panel
Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena;
photograph: Soprintendenza per i Beni Artistici e Storici per le provincie di Siena e Grosseto



18. Girolamo di Benvenuto, *Assumption of the Virgin*, c. 1510–1515, tempera on panel

Gemäldegalerie, Berlin; photograph: Jörg P. Anders

19. Sienese painter, *Assumption of the Virgin*, first quarter of the fifteenth century, tempera on panel

Gemäldegalerie, Berlin; photograph: Jörg P. Anders



innovation in the history of the Italian painted retable. By this means, it exerted a broad influence on the design of altarpieces in other churches of the region, well into the middle of the fourteenth century.²⁸ The reference of Meo da Siena's painting to this prominent prototype included not only the structure and design of the panel as a whole, but also the figural style. Regarding the motivations behind this retrospective referencing, it is only possible to conjecture. Abbot Ugolino I Vibi, who in 1330 had the panel painted and himself depicted as donor, and all the more his successor, Ugo II Vibi, who took

office in 1331, carried out a thoroughgoing economic and institutional reconsolidation together with a religious redisciplining of the convent. It appears that the retable of the Franciscans, which since the time of its creation evidently possessed a particular prestige in Perugia, was considered by the monastic patrons to represent an old and venerable standard, and as such was associated with the apogee of Franciscan piety in a historical duecento seen from afar. The use of references to it could make visibly manifest their claims to a restoration of religious discipline within their own convent.²⁹

For the moment I do not want to pursue further these retrospective aspects of trecento painting. Instead I should like to develop the argumentation of my central thesis in another direction. As I argued before, panel painting of the trecento was grounded in a new, dual perception of the image: the simultaneous awareness of pictures as represented subject and as representing medium. In other words, at the same time as painting's new mimetic capacities began to expand, also the aesthetic option of emphasizing the painting's physicality and autonomous reality, and with that the visible notion of the image as a medium, developed. An example that brings this point into clearer focus is the Sienese *Assumption of the Virgin*, of c. 1340, in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich (fig. 16).³⁰ The Virgin floats on a seraphic throne of light, surrounded by a circle of angels singing and playing instruments. Above her stretches the starry night sky, like an arched bridge. From that prophets and saints bend forward on both sides, while in the center Christ looks down with outstretched arms to receive the ascending Virgin. Finally, in the gable section above appear the heavens of Paradise, represented as a plateau with wide throne on which the Son crowns his now arrived mother as queen of heaven.

This representation operates by means of a highly complex, polyfocal visual ordering that has as its goal to integrate the structure of spatial illusionism with the outline of a planimetric pictorial organization. The ascending Virgin, presented in a frontal view, is enthroned alone, exactly in the axis of the picture; in scale, she towers over all the other figures. If on the one hand she forms the spatial center of a sequence of angels perspectively encircling her, at the same time she also appears in the center of a planimetrically oriented circular form that extends from above, as defined through the lower margin of the heavenly arch, and from below through the haloed heads of the front-ranking angels. Mary is thus seen in her assumption, logically situated in terms of space and the passage of the event: between above and below, between in front and behind. Yet she appears at the same time to be exempted from any spatially determinable order. This oscillation within the picture's perceptual form is deliberately aimed to



affect the viewer. Through the greatest proximity being given to the figures in the picture's lower section and the greatest distance oppositely to those in the uppermost gable section, the viewer appears to be drawn directly into the event's spatial disposition. Yet the viewer remains aware that in reality the event takes place beyond all visibility and spatial imagination. While viewing the painting and its contrasting interrelation of various optical planes, the viewer is aware

20. Pietro di Giovanni d'Ambrogio, *Assumption of the Virgin*, c. 1430–1440, tempera on panel
Christian Museum, Esztergom



21. Sano di Pietro,
Assumption of the Virgin,
c. 1450, tempera on panel
Staatliches Lindenau-Museum,
Altenburg, photograph: Deutsche
Fotothek, Grossmann

of seeing something that in actuality exceeds any capacity of the human eye.³¹ In this way, the representation accomplishes nothing less than a reflection, realized within the picture itself, upon the problem, repeatedly discussed by theologians, of how to visualize the holy mystery of the Virgin Mary's assumption, in light of the fact that neither the Apostles nor anyone else actually saw that event with their own eyes.³²

Against this backdrop it is indicative that representations of the Assumption of the Virgin were subsequently often combined with the motif of the Donation of the Girdle, in which the Virgin threw her belt to the doubting Apostle Thomas as sign and proof that she was actually taken up into heaven, even though he did not see it. The representation of this theme by Bartolomeo Bulgarini in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, painted about 1360 (fig. 17), is an example of the reception of the Munich picture's composition in reduced form and adds the figure

of Saint Thomas receiving the girdle at the picture's lower edge.³³ As a small figure with his back to the viewer, looking up into the space above, Saint Thomas takes up the same point of view within the picture as that adopted by the viewer outside it. For the latter, Mary is arranged frontally on the foremost pictorial plane and gazes directly at him. In this way, the viewer may experience the paradox of seeing the ascending Virgin, something he never saw and never will.

An early sixteenth-century panel by Girolamo di Benvenuto illustrates this constellation (fig. 18): it depicts Saint Catherine of Siena, who kneels as if on the threshold between the viewer and an imaginary stage, which shows the Virgin Mary as she ascends into heaven.³⁴ As is known, the bifocal structure used to compose the painted image of the Assumption of the Virgin became a standard constant in Sienese painting until well into the quattrocento.³⁵ Examples include



22. Master of the Rebel Angels, *Fall of the Rebel Angels*, c. 1340, tempera on panel

Musée du Louvre, Paris;
photograph: Réunion des Musées Nationaux

23. Bolognese painter, *Triptych*, c. 1370–1380, tempera on panel

Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna



24. Master of the Brancacci Triptych, *Triptych*, c. 1410 (?), tempera on panel
Pinacoteca Vaticana, Rome; photograph: Musei Vaticani

25. Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *Vico l'Abate Madonna*, 1319, tempera on panel
Museo di Arte Sacra, San Casciano Val di Pesa; photograph: Soprintendenza per i Beni Artistici e Storici per le provincie di Siena e Grosseto

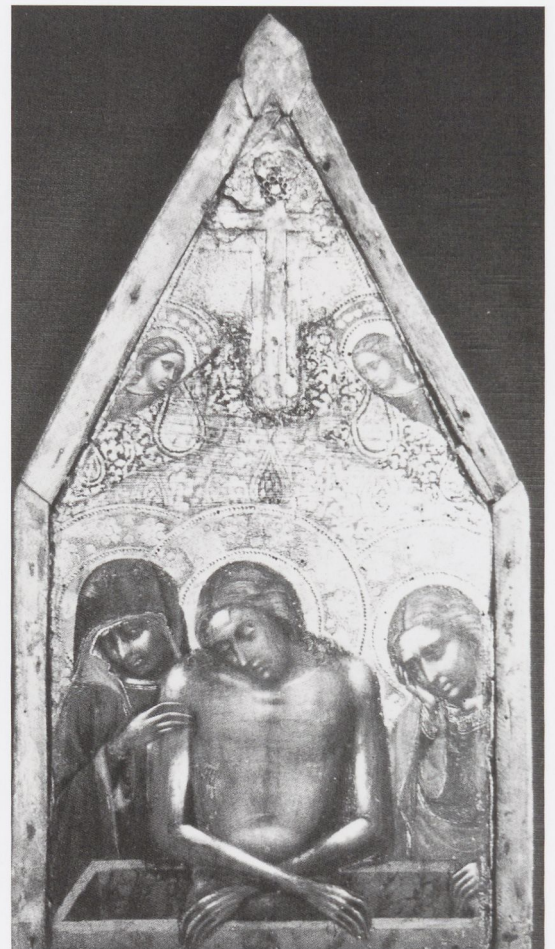
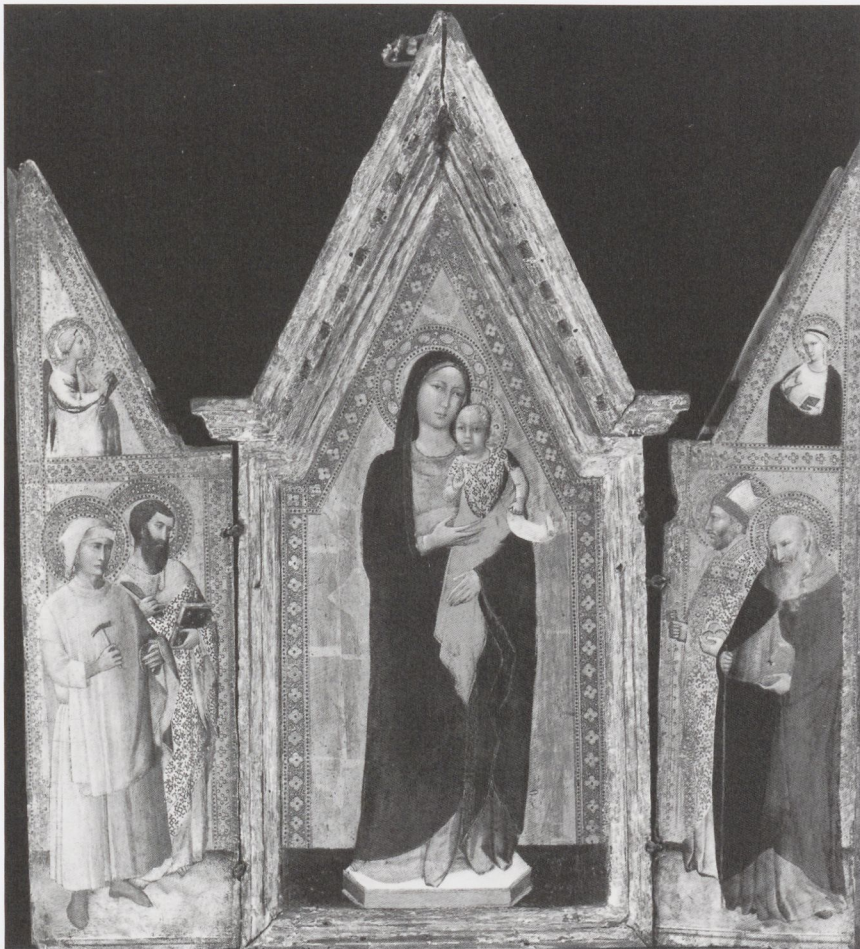
a small panel in Berlin's Gemäldegalerie of the first quarter of the fifteenth century (fig. 19),³⁶ Pietro di Giovanni d'Ambrogio's painting in the Christian Museum in Esztergom, dating from the 1440s (fig. 20),³⁷ and Sano di Pietro's in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg, from c. 1450 (fig. 21).³⁸

The pictorial strategy of combining different perspectival spaces into a unified visual order did not remain limited to the theme of the Assumption. The Sieneese *Fall of the Rebel Angels* from about 1340 in the Louvre (fig. 22), which can be viewed as closely related to the Munich panel, offers a striking example.³⁹ It aims at nothing less than a visualization of the Christian conception of the world order. Various levels define the echelon of different conceived spaces: the over-large figure of God is placed at the very top, in the gable, floating in an immeasurable sphere, while directly beneath him the chairs for the holy council of angels stretch back into the distance in an impressive depth-recession; underneath, in striking visual contrast, is shown an abstractly maintained stripe of heaven, while, finally, the expelled angels fall to earth in a whirling spiral.

What connects the *Fall of the Rebel Angels* (fig. 22) and the *Assumption of the Virgin* (fig. 16) is the paradox of the perceptual situation into which the viewer is transposed, since both panels show something endlessly distant or even things unseeable in a system of mimetic representation. If the individual pictorial spaces proffer a clearly measurable logic of perspective, they nonetheless relate to each other in an aperspectival and incommensurable way. What is made concrete for the viewer by means of this insoluble interplay is the relativity of his own vision: that is, the viewer's experience that the relation between physical perception and actual dimensions is dissociated and ambiguous.

A fundamental problematic within the historical development of pictures is hereby addressed. The stronger the image constitutes itself as a perspectival illustration of actuality, in the sense of a "naturalization of the





sacred" (Robert Scribner),⁴⁰ the less it is capable of opening up a view into a higher, metapictorial reality. It can thus be understood that the tension created by these two divergent demands on the painted image required solutions by means of an aesthetic practice that raised the media-grounded status of pictorial representation in itself to a productive moment of artistic expression.

The variety of solutions that arose from this testify to the importance given to this aspect of pictorial development in the trecento. Only a few examples and remarks must suffice, such as a Bolognese triptych in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna, dating from about 1370–1380 (fig. 23),⁴¹ or a work created somewhat later, now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana in Rome (fig. 24).⁴² Both place the Madonna and Child in an extremely close-up section of the panel, thus bringing them suggestively nearer to the viewer, into an almost intimate close-

ness. Yet at the same time, the imaginary nature of this nearness is made evident through the forced contrast in scale to the angels and saints flanking the Madonna and Child. Thus the picture status of the panel is consciously maintained.⁴³

To such examples can be added Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Madonna* panel of 1319 from Vico l'Abate (fig. 25).⁴⁴ The spatial and figurative composition reverts to a strong planimetric system of design, within which symmetry, frontality, and decorative forms parallel to the picture plane predominate. The represented throne and the outer object-like form of the picture panel appear almost to have coalesced, so that the image's reality adopts a suggestive ambivalence between the impression of presence and that of representation.⁴⁵

A devotional triptych by Naddo Ceccarelli, dating from the middle of the trecento and now in the Chrysler Museum in Nor-

26. Naddo Ceccarelli, *Triptych*, middle of the fourteenth century, tempera on panel
Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Virginia

27. Barnaba da Modena, *Man of Sorrows between the Virgin and Saint John*, c. 1370, tempera on panel
Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino; author photograph



28. Detail of figure 27
Author photograph

29. Pacino di Bonaguida,
Beato Chiarito Tabernacle,
c. 1340, tempera on panel
J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles



folk (fig. 26), demonstrates another variant of this picture-immanent reflection upon reality.⁴⁶ In its center panel, it simulates a three-dimensional statuette raised on a pedestal, and in this way indicates within the picture the ambivalent status of the Virgin's presence.

Again another form of delineating different levels of reality within the picture is demonstrated by a panel of the *Imago Pietatis* by Barnaba da Modena, now in the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche in Urbino (figs. 27, 28).⁴⁷ With the relief Crucifix that was formerly attached to the upper gabled field, appearing upon the punched ornamental gold leaf as a kind of precious object, this representation offered two diverse forms of Christ's manifestation within the same picture: once, though only painted, as if tangibly near; and again, although actually tangible, only as a small-format preciousity.

Within the sequence of such examples, finally, may be placed the so-called *Beato Chiarito Tabernacle* by Pacino di Bonaguida, created around 1340 and now in the Getty Museum (fig. 29).⁴⁸ Its central section, showing the Communion of the Apostles (fig. 30), is not painted but uses relief figures set

against an ornamented gold ground, by this means evidently aiming at imitation of a precious work by a goldsmith (fig. 31). This picture's particular aesthetic corresponds to the message of the theme represented, the Communion of the Apostles. The figures of the kneeling Apostles float in front of or around the similarly floating Christ, from whose navel long tubes lead to the mouths of the Apostles. These tubes remind us of the liturgical accessories called *fistulae*, eucharistic straws used during the Middle Ages to receive the Eucharist.⁴⁹ The Apostles here receive in a literal sense the true body of Christ, contrary to the usual iconography, which has Jesus distributing the bread to them with his own hands. The disposition of the rows of *fistulae*, similar in appearance to an aureole or glory, suggests the paradoxical conception of a spiritual emanation coming from Christ's corporeal body.⁵⁰

In the picture's central axis, one of the eucharistic straws extends beyond the gold ground downward into a small section with painted scenes at the base, where a priest is shown offering the host to Beato Chiarito (fig. 32). The central idea of the representation is thereby made clear: it is about the

concept of transubstantiation, that is, the miraculous transformation of the consecrated host into the true body of Christ in the mass. This is also referred to by the flanking scenes to the left and right showing eucharistic visions experienced by Beato Chiarito during the elevation of the host. On the left (fig. 33), he sees grain springing from the host, while on the right (fig. 34) he sees a small figure of the blessing Christ in the radiating light of the host, exactly in the form that the external viewer sees Christ's blessing figure in the field of the large central panel.⁵¹

It is not possible to discuss this image and its iconographic complexity in detail here. However, its central intention, visualizing the eucharistic transformation, is clear enough. What this picture thereby attempts is nothing less than to evoke in the sight of the viewer the unity of a higher, invisible reality and a visible, earthly reality. In this sense, from time immemorial the moment of the Eucharist's transubstantiation was interpreted as a unification of the visible with the invisible. Gregory the Great, for example, adopts in his *Dialogues* a clear position on this: "Which believer could doubt that exactly in the hour of sacrifice the heavens open themselves up at the sound of the priest's voice? The most lowly is bound to the most exalted, the earthly joins with the heavenly, visible and invisible become one."⁵² It is this demand, to experience the invisible within the visible, that the *Chiarito Tabernacle* attempts to satisfy by means of its special aesthetics of materials. This aspect connects it, all significant differences aside, to works such as the *Siene Assumption of the Virgin* in Munich.

In all of this, the theologically grounded understanding that, with the help of pictures, the invisible can be presented to vision is itself not new. Since Saint Augustine, the medieval exegetical tradition had ordained that meditation upon pictures in this sense was a material medium for the path of recognition that led believers upward from the visible to the invisible, "per visibilia ad invisibilia."⁵³ A much-cited statement on art, attributed in the Middle Ages to Gregory the Great (but in reality inserted in one of his letters only around the middle of the eighth century), explicitly recommended



30. Pacino di Bonaguida, *Beato Chiarito Tabernacle*, detail, central panel, c. 1340, tempera on panel
J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

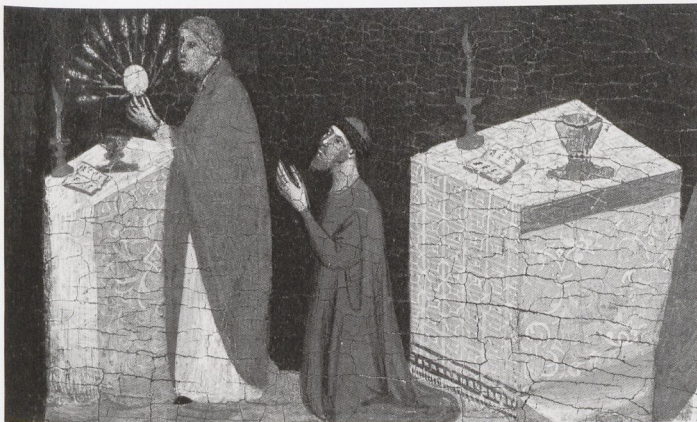
31. Anonymous goldsmith from Trier, *Reliquary of the Holy Cross*, reverse, detail, c. 1220, metalwork
 Saint Matthias, Trier, treasury, photograph: Technische Universität Berlin, Fotothek



32. Pacino di Bonaguida, *Beato Chiarito Tabernacle*, detail, *Beato Chiarito Receives the Host*, c. 1340, tempera on panel
 J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

33. Pacino di Bonaguida, *Beato Chiarito Tabernacle*, detail, *Eucharistic Vision of Beato Chiarito*, c. 1340, tempera on panel
 J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

34. Pacino di Bonaguida, *Beato Chiarito Tabernacle*, detail, *Eucharistic Vision of Beato Chiarito*, c. 1340, tempera on panel
 J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles



such a religious usage of pictures, because we can, as the author in the name of the church father put it, in this way show the invisible via the visible: "per visibilia invisibilia demonstramus."⁵⁴

What is new in the examples discussed here is thus not the theological concept of a visual actualization of transcendence, but rather the consequences for the aesthetic strategies derived from it. The Sienese depictions of the *Fall of the Rebel Angels* (fig. 22) or the *Assumption of the Virgin* (fig. 16), as well as the *Beato Chiarito Tabernacle* (fig. 29), are all works that, using different means, generate an aesthetic reflection upon the reality they set before one's eyes. These representations summon the picture's immanent reflexivity, which is grounded in the depiction itself, through the distinction between reality and pictorial perception, experienced as a visual discontinuity. In sum, one could say that in such paintings the image thematizes its own function as visual membrane between the here-and-now and the beyond, in the sense of a mediation of the invisible presence of transcendence. The dissociation between image and metapictorial apparition, which is produced by discontinuities between the pictorial spaces, their perspective and relative scale, and so forth, maintains the viewer's awareness that the representation's meaning is fulfilled only with the expansion of the inner imagination. In other words, it is the representation of the opposing forces of illusion and distance that involves the viewer in a new way in the picture's system of communication.

The point of departure for this discussion was that in the artistic practice of the trecento one may recognize a new kind of awareness of the historicity of aesthetic modes: a growing reflection upon the existing differences between older, traditional and newer, current conventions of representation. In this process it becomes apparent that, beyond the customary aspect of religious function—the actualization of what is represented and the devotional practice rooted within it (*recordatio, memoria, veneratio*)—genuinely aesthetic considerations increasingly came to the fore: the perception of the image as medium, that is, as consisting of a wood panel covered with pigments and gold leaf, or as a painting determined by its materiality and artistic style.

Both aspects—of the image as an implicitly mimetic representation and as a created picture with an independent concrete material reality—exist in an ambivalent, opposing relationship. The same ambivalence is increasingly generated within an aesthetic practice that elevated reflection about representation and the medium status of the

picture to a productive artistic moment. Very clearly, these representational strategies attest to a situation that involved a deliberated unity of perspectival illusion and aperspectival pictorial logic, thereby visualizing the paradox inherent in a “naturalization of the sacred.” It was not by accident, after all, that this aesthetic option of bringing the picture to bear in all its materiality and its own reality developed simultaneously with, and complementarily to, the genesis of a mimetic, rationalized notion of representation that would ultimately find its theoretical basis in Alberti. As painting in the age of Giotto was increasingly understood to be capable of mastering reality with the power of its illusionism, at the same time all the stronger grew a counterbalancing demand to reveal its genuine poetic surplus value as existing exactly in the difference between reality and image. Not least of all, therein lay the actual epoch-making significance of painting in the time of Giotto, which was responsible for the unfolding of a new pictorial aesthetic in the early modern period.⁵⁵

NOTES

I express my thanks to Julia Bernard for translating this text into English and to Victor M. Schmidt for his helpful suggestions and improvements.

1. “. . . tavole vecchie, e cornici all’antica lavorate, dal fumo annegrite, e da tarli corrose, ove fosse stata qualche figura, benchè grossolana, e mal condotta. Ed egli sopra vi dipingeva, e per via di qualche buon disegno, tanto pestava co’ colori, che da qualche cosa le faceva apparire, e, dopo esser dipinte, le appiccava al fumo, e con certi vernici miste con colori che sopra loro dava, faceale parere immagini per tratto di centinaia d’anni al tempo avanzate.” Giovanni Baglione, *Le vite de’ pittori, scultori, architetti, ed intagliatori* (Rome, 1642), 3d ed. (Naples, 1733), 149–150.

2. “. . . pitture delle Sacre Imagini, le quali erano la maggior parte quadretti di certe figure fatte alla Greca, goffissime, dispiacevoli, e tutte affumicate, le quali ad ogni altra cosa parevano esservi state poste, fuori che à muover divotione, overo à fare ornamento.” Giovanni Battista Armenini, *Dei veri precetti della pittura* (Ravenna, 1587), 188–189.

3. Giovanni Dominici, *Regola del governo di cura familiare*, ed. Donato Salvi (Florence, 1860), 133; for an English translation, see Creighton E. Gilbert, *Italian Art, 1400–1500. Sources and Documents* (Evanston, Ill., 1992), 146.

4. “Tute le cose el Tempo discoverze;/ Questa xe cosa chiara, e la savemo;/ ma la Pitura, contra lu medemo,/ D’un velo trasparente el la coverse,// . . . Cusi intravien aponto ala Pitura:/ La Patina del tempo fa do efeti,/ I colori vien sempre più perfeti,/ E in mazor stima l’istessa fatura.” Marco Boschini, *La Carta del Navegar pitoresco* (Venice, 1660), ed. Anna Pallucchini (Venice and Rome, 1966), 25–26; see also Alessandro Conti, *Storia del restauro e della conservazione delle opere d’arte* (Milan, 1988), 87–88 and 98.

5. For discussion of this practice and the relevant material, see Conti 1988, 15–27; Cecilia Filippini, “Riquadrature e ‘restauri’ di polittici trecenteschi o pale d’altare nella seconda metà del Quattrocento,” in *Maestri e botteghe. Pittura a Firenze alla fine del Quattrocento*, ed. Mina Gregori, Antonio Paolucci, and Cristina Acidini Luchinat (Milan, 1993), 199–218; Cathleen Hoeniger, *The Renovation of Paintings in Tuscany, 1250–1500* (Cambridge, 1995), 101–126.

6. For the original appearance and setting, see Federico Zeri, “Due appunti su Giotto,” *Paragone* 8.85 (1957), 75–87; Julian Gardner, “The Decoration of the Baroncelli Chapel in Santa Croce,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 34 (1971), 89–114, especially 104–106; Conti 1988, 15; Hoeniger 1995, 107–112. For questions of dating and attribution, see Giovanni Previtali, *Giotto e la sua bottega* (Milan, 1967), 128 and 376; Gardner 1971, 106–110; Miklós Boskovits, in *Giotto. Bilancio critico di sessant’anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tertuferi [exh. cat., Galleria dell’Accademia] (Florence, 2000), 187–191, cat. 27.

7. Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings, Florentine School. A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1971), 39–40; Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, Mo., 1982), 150–151; Hoeniger 1995, 101–102.

8. “. . . la quale tavola fu glijà fatta antichamente chon civori e fogliami sechondo s’usavano a quello anticho tempo, ed io la fe’ rachonc[i]are e ridurre a l’uso d’ogidi, c[i]oè cholonne da llato e di sopra architrave, freg[i]o e chronic[i]one.” Neri di Bicci, *Le Ricordanze* (10 marzo 1453–24 aprile 1475), ed. Bruno Santi (Pisa, 1976), 382–383; Hoeniger 1995, 106. For the practice of such *adornamenti* in the workshop of Neri di Bicci, see Anabel Thomas, *The Painter’s Practice in Renaissance Tuscany* (Cambridge, 1995), 109–131.

9. See Giovanni Previtali, *La fortuna dei primitivi. Dal Vasari ai neoclassici* (Turin, 1964). For some special aspects, see Anabel Thomas, “Restoration or Renovation: Remuneration and Expectation in Renaissance *acconciatura*,” in *Studies in the History of Painting Restoration*, ed. Christine Sitwell and Sarah Staniforth (London, 1998), 1–14. There is hardly any detailed research focusing on the diverse modes of retrospective repairing, reusing, adapting, or imitating older art in early modern times; see the preliminary study of Klaus Graf, “Retrospektive Tendenzen in der bildenden Kunst vom 14. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert,” in *Mundus in imagine. Bildersprache und Lebenswelten im Mittelalter. Festgabe für Klaus Schreiner*, ed. Andrea Löther, Ulrich Meier, Norbert Schnitzler, Gerd Schwerhoff, and Gabriela Signori (Munich, 1996), 389–420.

10. Richard Stapleford, “Botticelli’s Portrait of a Young Man Holding a Trecento Medallion,” *Burlington Magazine* 129 (1987), 428–436. The trecento fragment is generally attributed to the Sienese painter Bartolomeo Bulgarini. On the controversy raised by the issue of whether its insertion in the portrait was done by Botticelli himself or was the result of a later intervention, see Keith Christiansen, “Letter to the Editor: Botticelli’s Portrait of a Young Man with a Trecento Medallion,” *Burlington Magazine* 129 (1987), 744; and Judith Steinhoff-Morrison, “Bartolomeo Bulgarini and Sienese Painting of the Mid-Fourteenth Century” (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1990), 354–357, cat. 6.

11. This dual character of the image was, from the start, crucial for all theological debates about its function and legitimate use. See Walter Dürig, *Imago. Ein Beitrag zur Terminologie und Theologie der römischen Liturgie* (Munich, 1952); Kurt Bauch, “Imago,” in *Studien zur Kunstgeschichte* (Berlin, 1967), 1–20; Massimo Cacciari, “Die Ikone,” in *Bildlichkeit. Internationale Beiträge zur Poetik*, ed. Volker Bohn (Frankfurt, 1990), 385–429, which is a revised version of the first chapter of his book *Icone della legge* (Milan, 1985). For the historical development of such debates, see Hans Belting, *Bild*

und Kult. *Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich, 1990).

12. Toulouse, Musée des Augustins, 113.5 × 75 cm, inv. no. RO-401. See Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 170–171; Maria Laura Testi Cristiani, "'Circostanze avignonesi.' Il crocifisso double-face del cardinale Godin a Tolosa, 1," *Critica d'arte* 55.4 (1990), 42–61, especially 52.

13. For such panel paintings compare Margrit Lisner, *Holzkruzifixe in Florenz und in der Toskana von der Zeit um 1300 bis zum frühen Cinquecento* (Munich, 1970), 11–12; Friedrich Kobler and Karl-August Wirth, "Figurentafel," in *Reallexikon der Deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 8 (Munich, 1987), 950–1012, especially 959–965; Carl Brandon Strehlke, "Fra Angelico and Early Florentine Renaissance Painting in the John G. Johnson Collection," *Bulletin of the Philadelphia Museum of Art* 88, no. 376 (1993), 4–26.

14. For the history of the Chapter Hall and its decoration, see Robert Gibbs, *Tomaso da Modena. Painting in Emilia and the March of Treviso, 1340–80* (Cambridge, 1989), 50–87 and 257–267. For the old *Crucifixion* painting on the east wall, which is dated differently around 1260 or 1304–1305, and which was extensively damaged only in the Second World War (1944), see Michele Muraro, "Aspetti dell'arte gotica nel Veneto dal Duecento fino a Tomaso da Modena," in *L'Occhio di Tomaso*, ed. Robert Gibbs (Treviso, 1981), 371–415, especially 372–374; Gibbs 1989, 64–65; and Robert Gibbs, "Treviso," in *La pittura nel Veneto. Il Trecento*, ed. Mauro Lucco, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:178–246, especially 180.

15. Daniele Benati, "Pittura del Trecento in Emilia Romagna," in *La pittura in Italia. Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:192–232, especially 192.

16. Sandra Moschini Marconi, *Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia. Opera d'arte dei secoli XIV e XV* (Rome, 1955), 53; Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio* (New Haven and London, 1988), 49, 270–271.

17. Millard Meiss, "Scholarship and Penitence in the Early Renaissance: The Image of Saint Jerome," *Pantheon* 32 (1974), 134–140; Eugene F. Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1985), especially 68–83; Christiane Wiebel, *Askese und Endlichkeitsdemut in der italienischen Renaissance. Ikonologische Studien zum Bild des heiligen Hieronymus* (Weinheim, 1988).

18. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting, Section III*, vol. 5 (New York, 1947), 131–135; Luisa Marcucci, *Gallerie Nazionali di Firenze. I dipinti toscani del secolo XIV* (Rome, 1965), 42–43, cat. 18.

19. Kathleen Giles Arthur, "Cult Objects and Artistic Patronage of the Fourteenth-Century Flagellant Confraternity of Gesù Pellegrino," in *Christianity and the Renaissance. Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, ed.

Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (Syracuse and New York, 1990), 336–360, especially 340–343. For an analogous case, the retrospective choice of a cult image by the Confraternity of the Battuti Bianchi in Lucca, see Max Seidel, "Spurensuche in Lucca. Die Wiederentdeckung eines mittelalterlichen Kultbildes," *Pantheon* 55 (1997), 13–23, especially 14.

20. György Gombosi, *Spinello Aretino. Eine stilgeschichtliche Studie über die florentinischen Maler des ausgehenden XIV. Jahrhunderts* (Budapest, 1926); Frederick Antal, *Florentine Painting and Its Social Background* (London, 1947); Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951); Bruce Cole, "Old in New in the Early Trecento," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 17 (1973), 229–240; Henk W. van Os, "The Black Death and Sienese Painting," *Art History* 4 (1981), 237–249; Henk W. van Os, "Tradition and Innovation in Some Altarpieces by Bartolo di Fredi," *Art Bulletin* 67 (1985), 50–66. See most recently, with further discussion, Diana Norman, "Change and Continuity: Art and Religion after the Black Death," in *Interpretative Essays*, vol. 1 of *Siena, Florence and Padua. Art, Society and Religion 1280–1400*, ed. Diana Norman (New Haven and London, 1995), 177–195.

21. *Purgatorio* 2.93–95: "Credette Cimabue nella pittura/ tener lo campo, e ora ha Giotto il grido,/si che la fama di colui è scura." Dante Alighieri, *La Divina Commedia*, ed. Natalino Sapegno, vol. 2. *Purgatorio* (Florence, 1979), 124. Compare Cennino Cennini's later remark that "Giotto rimutò l'arte del dipignere di greco in latino, e ridusse al moderno." Cennino Cennini, *Il libro dell'arte o trattato della pittura*, ed. Fernando Tempestini (Milan, 1975), 30 (chapter 1). For related testimonies, for example, Petrarch and Boccaccio, and the underlying concepts, see Erwin Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art* (New York, 1969), 1–41.

22. Klaus Krüger, *Der frühe Bildkult des Franziskus in Italien. Gestalt- und Funktionswandel des Tafelbildes im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1992), 98–99 and 172.

23. Irene Hueck, "Le opere di Giotto per la chiesa di Ognissanti," in *La Madonna d'Ognissanti di Giotto restaurata*, Gli Uffizi. Studi e ricerche 8 (Florence, 1992), 37–50.

24. See *Museo Civico di Pistoia. Catalogo delle collezioni*, ed. Maria Cecilia Mazzi (Florence, 1982), 95–98.

25. "... possiamo presumere che i chierici dell'ordine avessero una certa predilezione per questa forma già un po' antiquata di dossale e che Giotto si sia adeguato ad una commissione ben precisa." Hueck 1992, 48.

26. See Jochen Sander and Bodo Brinkmann, *Gemälde der romanischen Schulen vor 1800 im Städel* (Frankfurt am Main, 1997), 36 and pls. 4–5; Julian Gardner, "The Altarpiece by Meo da Siena for San Pietro at Perugia. Tradition versus Innovation," *Städel-Jahrbuch* 16 (1997), 7–34; and Dillian Gordon,

"Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century Umbrian Double-Sided Altarpieces: Form and Function," in this volume.

27. See most recently Laurence B. Kanter and Pia Palladino, "Master of Saint Francis," in *The Treasury of Saint Francis of Assisi*, ed. Giovanni Morello and Laurence B. Kanter [exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art] (New York, 1999), 70–75, with further references. The basic study for the reconstruction, function, and former location of this retable is Dillian Gordon, "A Perugian Provenance for the Franciscan Double-Sided Altarpiece by the Maestro di San Francesco," *Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982), 70–77; see also her essay in this volume.

28. Gordon 1982. See also Dillian Gordon, "The So-called Paciano Master and the Franciscans in Perugia," *Apollo* 143.3 (1996), 33–39; Gardner 1997, 14; Klaus Krüger, "Selbstdarstellung im Konflikt. Zur Repräsentation der Bettelorden im Medium der Kunst," in *Die Repräsentation der Gruppen. Texte, Bilder, Objekte*, ed. Otto Gerhard Oexle and Andrea von Hülsen-Esch (Göttingen, 1998), 127–186, especially 178–180; and Dillian Gordon in this volume.

29. For the history of the abbey in the years around 1330 and the relevant work of monastic reconsolidation, including artistic patronage, see Luigi Brunamonti Tarulli, "Appunti storici intorno ai monaci benedettini di S. Pietro in Perugia fino ai primi del secolo XV," *Bollettino della Reale Deputazione di Storia patria per l'Umbria* 12 (1906), 385–466; Mario Montanari, *Mille anni della chiesa di San Pietro in Perugia e del suo patrimonio* (Foligno, 1966), especially 33–40; Ugolino Nicolini, "L'Abbazia di San Pietro nel secolo XIV e la sua influenza sulla vita sociale e politica a Perugia," in *Convegno storico per il Millennio dell'Abbazia di San Pietro in Perugia* (Perugia, 1967), 122–157; Pietro Elli, *Cronotassi degli Abbati del Monastero di San Pietro in Perugia conforme alla Cronaca ms. dell'Abbate D. Mauro Bini († 1849)* (Perugia, 1994), 63–64. A close insight into the economic and religious life during these years is given by the documents published in *Liber Contractuum (1331–32) dell'Abbazia Benedettina di San Pietro in Perugia*, ed. Costanzo Tabarelli (Perugia, 1967). For the close personal relationships that connected the Perugian convents of San Pietro and San Francesco al Prato, see the references given by Attilio Bartoli Langeli, "La famiglia Coppoli nella società Perugina del Duecento," in *Francescanesimo e società cittadina. L'esempio di Perugia* (Perugia, 1979), 45–112, especially 65–67; and by Brunamonti Tarulli 1906, 420, 438–443. For the altarpiece, its dating, physical state, and historical context, see now Dillian Gordon in this volume.

30. Henk W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), 164–167; Rolf Kultzen, *Alte Pinakothek München. Katalog V: Italienische Malerei* (Munich, 1975), 102–104.

31. The perceptual ambivalence of the angel's circle is, in this context, clearly related to its iconographic implications of the *musica perennis* that binds the earthly sound of beauty to transcendental symbolism. This concept is inherent, for instance, in descriptions in Dante's *Paradiso*, 1.76–84, 4.26–42, or 23.109–120: "Così la circolata melodia/ si sigillava, e tutti li altri lumi/ facean sonare il nome di Maria.// Lo real manto di tutti i volumi/ del mondo, che più ferve e più s'avviva/ nell'alito di Dio e nei costumi,// avea sopra di noi l'interna riva/ tanto distante, che la sua pervenza,/ là dov'io era, ancor non appariva:// però non ebber li occhi miei potenza/ di seguitar la coronata fiamma/ che si levò appresso sua semenza." Dante Alighieri, *La Divina Commedia*, ed. Natalino Sapegno, vol. 3, *Paradiso* (Florence, 1980), 293–294. For a discussion of these concepts, see Reinhold Hammerstein, *Die Musik der Engel. Untersuchungen zur Musikanschauung des Mittelalters* (Bern and Munich, 1962), 91–99, 178–191.

32. Still in the late sixteenth century, the theological debate about the "esatta ripresentazione di tanto misterio" did not come to an end, as is well shown by the correspondence of 1583 between the papal secretary Silvio Antoniano and the Bolognese cardinal and art theorist Gabriele Paleotti; see Paolo Cordi, *Ricerca sulla teorica delle arti figurative nella Riforma Cattolica*, 2d ed. (Bologna, 1984), 91–100; and Martin Seidel, *Venezianische Malerei zur Zeit der Gegenreformation. Kirchliche Programmschriften und künstlerische Bildkonzepte bei Tizian, Tintoretto, Veronese und Palma il Giovane* (Münster, 1996), 129–130. For the whole context of theological exegesis, see Martin Jugie, *La mort et l'assomption de la Sainte Vierge. Étude historico-doctrinale* (Vatican City, 1954); Van Os 1969, 147–156. A recent survey of the diverse aspects is given by Anton Ziegenaus, "Leibliche Aufnahme Mariens in den Himmel," in *Marienlexikon*, ed. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1988–1994), 1:276–286; and Horst Bürkle, Theodor Maas-Ewerd, Achim Masser, and Ulrike Liebl, "Himmelfahrt Mariae," in *Marienlexikon* 1988–1994, 3:199–208 (with further literature). For the long-standing tradition of this bifocal mode of visual representation up to the seventeenth century and for a further discussion of its varied aesthetic implications, see Klaus Krüger, "Malerei als Poesie der Ferne im Cinquecento," in *Imagination und Wirklichkeit. Zum Verhältnis von mentalen und realen Bildern in der Kunst der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Klaus Krüger and Alessandro Nova (Mainz, 2000), 99–121.

33. Pietro Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena. I dipinti*, new ed. (Genoa, 1990), 91–93, no. 61; Steinhoff-Morrison 1990, 603–613, cat. 51.

34. *The Complete Catalogue of the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin* (New York, 1986), 400 (inv. no. 1071). It is remarkable that Girolamo used here the old formula of the Assumption, in contrast to his altarpiece of the Assumption in the Musei riuniti of Montalcino, which dates from about the same time. See Victor M. Schmidt, "Bemerkungen zu zwei toskanischen

Tafelbildern der Renaissance im Stadel," *Städels-Jahrbuch* 16 (1997), 201–226, especially 215 and 217.

35. The basic study is Van Os 1969, 157–185.

36. Miklós Boskovits, *Gemäldegalerie Berlin. Katalog der Gemälde: Frühe italienische Malerei* (Berlin, 1987), 153–155.

37. Van Os 1969, 177–185; András Musci, *Gothische und Renaissance Tafelbilder im christlichen Museum von Esztergom (13.–16. Jht.)* (Esztergom, 1990), 12; *Christian Museum, Esztergom*, ed. Pál Cséfalvay (Budapest, 1993), 233.

38. Robert Oertel, *Frühe italienische Malerei in Altenburg. Beschreibender Katalog der Gemälde des 13. bis 16. Jahrhunderts im Staatlichen Lindenau-Museum* (Berlin, 1961), 99.

39. Michel Laclotte, "Le Maître des Anges Rebelles," *Paragone* 20, no. 237 (1969), 3–14; Joseph Polzer, "The 'Master of the Rebel Angels' Reconsidered," *Art Bulletin* 63 (1981), 563–584; Elisabeth Mognetti and Marianne Lonjon, "Le panneau doubleface du Maître des Anges Rebelles. Recherches sur l'image et la forme," in *Hommage à Michel Laclotte. Études sur la peinture du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance* (Rome, 1994), 35–49; *Italie. Peintures des musées de la région Centre* (Paris, 1996), 31–36, cat. 3.

40. Robert W. Scribner, "Vom Sakralbild zur sinnlichen Schau. Sinnliche Wahrnehmung und das Visuelle bei der Objektivierung des Frauenkörpers in Deutschland im 16. Jahrhundert," in *Gepeinigt, begehrt, vergessen. Symbolik und Sozialbezug des Körpers im späten Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Klaus Schreiner and Norbert Schnitzler (Munich, 1992), 309–336, especially 312.

41. Massimo Ferretti, "Anonimo pittore bolognese del Trecento. Madonna col Bambino e angeli," in *Pittura bolognese del '300. Scritti di Francesco Arcangeli* (Bologna, 1978), 224–225; *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna. Catalogo generale delle opere esposte* (Bologna, 1987), 36.

42. Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, *Il Trecento. Firenze e Siena*, vol. 2 of *Catalogo della Pinacoteca Vaticana* (Vatican City, 1987), 43, suggests a date of c. 1380–1385, with an attribution to the Siense painter Niccolò di Buonaccorso. Andrea De Marchi in *Fioritura tardogotica nelle Marche*, ed. Paolo Dal Poggetto (Milan, 1998), 254, dates the work c. 1410.

43. Of course, the impression of intimate nearness is intensified by the iconographic choice of the Glykophilousa type, and the picture status of the Vatican panel is clearly demarcated by means of its implied reference to a much older icon of the Madonna; see De Marchi 1998, 254.

44. Today located in the Museo di Arte Sacra in San Casciano; see Laura Neagle Temple, "Osservazioni sulla Madonna di Vico l'Abate di Ambrogio Lorenzetti," in *Studi in onore di Matteo Marangoni* (Florence, 1957), 146–151; George Rowley, *Ambrogio Lorenzetti* (Princeton, 1958), 27–35; Eve Borsook, *Ambrogio Lorenzetti* (Florence, 1966), 3–4 and 26;

Rosanna Caterina Proto Pisani, *Il Museo di Arte Sacra a San Casciano Val di Pesa* (Florence, 1992), 34–35.

45. For a more profound discussion of these aspects, see Cole 1973, 234–240, and Klaus Krüger, "Mimesis als Bildlichkeit des Scheins. Zur Fiktionalität religiöser Bildkunst im Trecento," in *Künstlerischer Austausch. Artistic Exchange. Akten des XXVIII. Internationalen Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte, Berlin, 15.–20. Juli 1992*, 3 vols., ed. Thomas W. Gaethgens (Berlin, 1993), 2:423–436, especially 426–427.

46. Jefferson C. Harrison, *The Chrysler Museum. Handbook of the European and American Collections. Selected Paintings, Sculpture and Drawings* (Norfolk, Va., 1991), 2, cat. 1.

47. Pietro Zampetti, *Il Palazzo Ducale di Urbino e la Galleria Nazionale delle Marche* (Urbino, 1951), 12.

48. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting, Section III*, vol. 6 (New York, 1956), 141–148; John White, *Art and Architecture in Italy 1250 to 1400*, 2d ed. (Harmondsworth, 1987), 402. For Beato Chiarito, see Scipione de Paoli, "Chiarito di Firenze, beato," in *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 13 vols. (Rome, 1961–1970), 3:1229–1230. The original location of the triptych was the convent of Santa Maria Regina Coeli of the Augustinian nuns, later called the Convento di Chiarito, in Via San Gallo in Florence; see Offner 1956, 148.

49. Joseph Braun, *Das christliche Altargerät in seinem Sein und in seiner Entwicklung* (Munich, 1932), 247–264.

50. For the iconography of the Communion of the Apostles, see Dominique Rigaux, *À la table du seigneur. L'Eucharistie chez les Primitifs italiens (1250–1497)* (Paris, 1989), 59–74, 182–190, with special reference to the *Chiarito Tabernacle*, 183–184. For the aesthetic tradition of gold-leafed aureoles, compare Lois Heidmann Shelton, "Gold in Altarpieces of the Early Italian Renaissance: A Theological and Art Historical Analysis of Its Meaning and of the Reasons for Its Disappearance" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1987), 23–37 and passim. The motif of genuflection, shown by the Apostles, is commonly associated with the eucharist and its reception; see Kassius Hallinger, "Kultgebärde und Eucharistie," *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 19 (1978), 29–41, especially 33–40.

51. The important role of eucharistic visions in the life of Beato Chiarito is well documented in his *vita*; see Antonio Maria Raconesi, "De Beato Chiarito: Vita et Miracula," *Acta sanctorum*, Maii Tomus 6 (Paris and Rome, 1866), 160–164, especially 161: ". . . cum aliquando ministraret sacrificio Missae, visus est ei splendidus radius, progrediens ab Hostia sacrosancta, et pectus suum percutiens. . . assistens Missae, cui serviebat in praedicta ecclesia, vidit quod, Sacerdote Hostiam supra calicem efferente, atque dicente, Per ipsum, et in ipso, et cum ipso est

tibi Deo Patri Omnipotenti omnis honor et gloria; videt, inquam ab Hostia sacra egredi quasdam spicas triticeas, et calicem vino supereffluere."

52. "Quis enim fidelium habere dubium possit, in ipsa immolationis hora ad sacerdotis vocem coelos aperiri, in illo Jesu Christi mysterio angelorum chorus adesse, summis ima sociari, terrena coelestibus jungi, unumque ex visibilibus atque invisibilibus fieri?" (*Dialogorum libri IV*, chapter lviii). The text is found in *Patrologiae cursus completus*, Series latina, ed. Jean-Paul Migne, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844–1890), 77:425–428. The passage was widely diffused in the Middle Ages; see Martinus Gerbert, *De cantu et musica sacra*, vol. 2 (St. Blasien, 1774), 91.

53. Ernst Benz, "Christliche Mystik und christliche Kunst," *Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 12 (1934), 22–48; Sixten Ringbom, "Devotional Images and Imaginative Devotions. Notes on the Place of Art in Late Medieval Private Piety," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 73 (1969), 159–170; David Freedberg, *The Power of Images. Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago, 1989), 161–191.

54. Gregorius Magnus, *Registrum Epistularum Libri VIII–XIV*, ed. Dag Norberg, *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*, vol. 140A (Turnhout, 1982), 1110–1111. Thomas Sternberg, "Vertrauter und leichter ist der Blick auf das Bild," in . . . *kein Bildnis machen. Kunst und Theologie im Gespräch*, ed. Christoph Dohmen and Thomas Sternberg (Würzburg, 1987), 25–57, especially 49–50; Conrad Rudolph, *The "Things of Greater Importance." Bernard of Clairvaux's Apologia and the Medieval Attitude toward Art* (Philadelphia, 1990), 107–108. For a historical evaluation of this statement, see, most recently, Herbert Kessler, "Real Absence: Early Medieval Art and the Metamorphosis of Vision," in *Morfologie sociali e culturali in Europa fra tarda antichità e alto medioevo*, *Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo* 45 (Spoleto, 1998), 1157–1211, especially 1174–1186.

55. For a more detailed analysis of this topic and its varied effects on pictorial aesthetics in early modern times, see Klaus Krüger, *Das Bild als Schleier des Unsichtbaren. Ästhetische Illusion in der Kunst der frühen Neuzeit in Italien* (Munich, 2001).