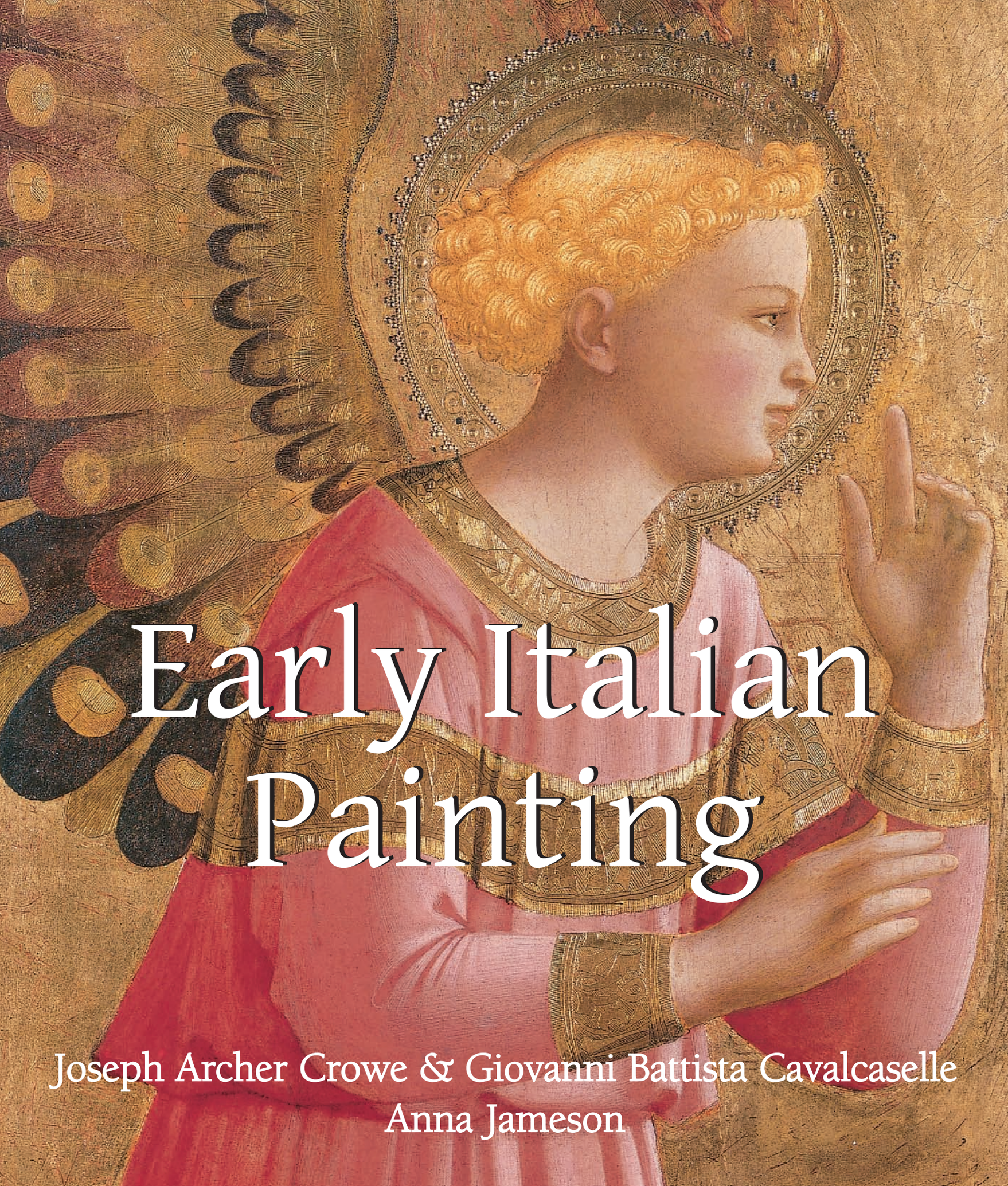

Early Italian Painting

Joseph Archer Crowe & Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle
Anna Jameson

Authors:
Joseph Archer Crowe & Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle
Anna Jameson

Layout:
Baseline Co. Ltd
61A-63A Vo Van Tan Street
4th Floor
District 3, Ho Chi Minh City
Vietnam

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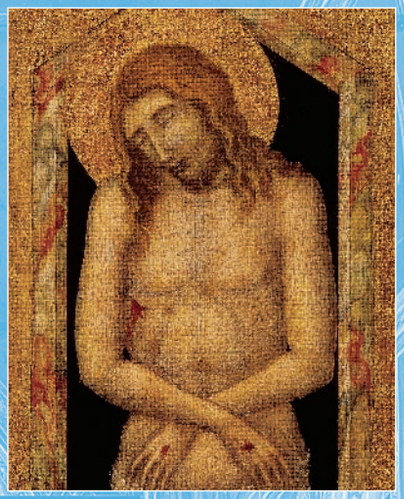

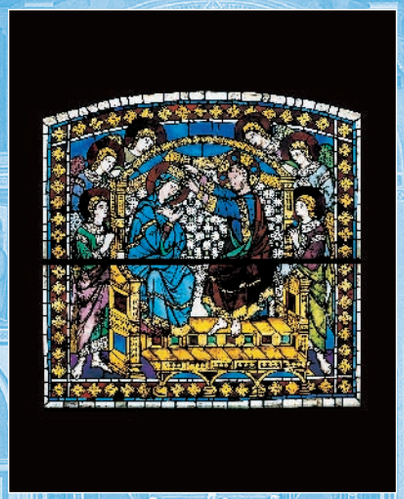

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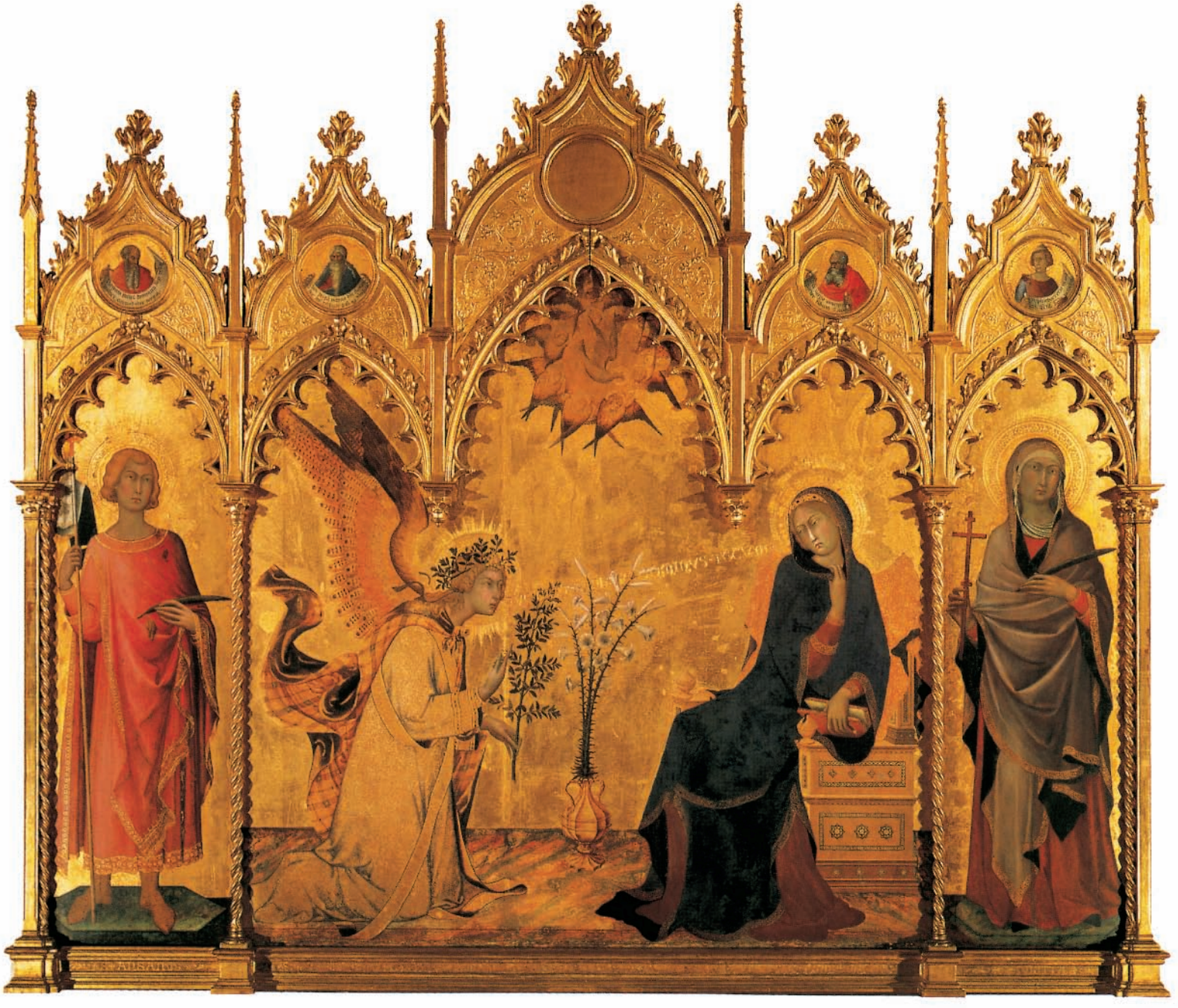
Introduction:
Something about Pictures and Painters

Note from the Editor: The following passages originally constituted sections of two books that delved into the origins, progression, and development of the Italian Renaissance. Both written in 1864 – one by Anna Jameson and the other by Giovanni Cavalcaselle and Joseph Crowe – their original text provides a vivid insight into both the lives of the artists and atmosphere of the time, shedding light on certain works that have since been destroyed or lost, as well as exacting a Victorian critique of artistic technique and form that has since been replaced by a less assertive style of analysis. Nevertheless, despite the interceding period of a tumultuous twentieth century, many of the works remain in the same chapels, Duomos, and galleries referred to by the writers, and the fact that they are still an object of artistic interest to some, and reverence to others, corroborates their timeless appeal.

These 'Memoirs' of the early Italian Painters were first published in the form of detached essays. The intention was to afford young travellers, young art students, and young people in general, some information relating to celebrated artists who have filled the world with their names and their renown; some means of understanding their characters as well as comparing their works; for without knowing what a painter was, as well as who he was, the circumstances around him, his age, and the country in which he lived, we cannot comprehend the grounds of that relative judgment which renders even imperfect works so precious and admirable. These biographical essays were necessarily brief. Since they were first published, the taste for art has broadened significantly; many works have appeared, some beautifully illustrated.Unnumbered reviews, essays, and guidebooks from the pens of accomplished critics and artists have all facilitated the study of art; but the original purpose of this little book as a companion for the young has not been superceded. The author has therefore prepared this edition with great care. The references to examples have been made, wherever it has been possible, to the National Gallery in London; the number of valuable early pictures which were recently added to our collection has rendered these references and descriptions much more intelligible and interesting to the young student than they were a few years ago. Many remarkable pictures have since changed hands; nearly all the arrangements in the Louvre in Paris, in the Florentine Galleries, and in the Galleria dell'Academia in Venice, have been altered since the original publishing.

It was necessary, therefore, to correct the references with some regard to the existing arrangements and the numbering of the pictures in all these famous galleries. Of course it has not been possible in this little work to enter into disputed points of criticism or chronology; but the author has profited from two visits to Italy, and more particularly by the excellent edition of Vasari, who has added several biographies and rendered these Memoirs altogether not only more interesting, but sufficiently accurate, considering their comprehensive

Christ in Majesty, c. 1072-1087.
Fresco.
Basilica of Sant'Angelo in Formis, Capua.



and popular form, ensuring not to mislead the inexperienced student on questions relating to particular pictures and individual artists that remain to be settled.

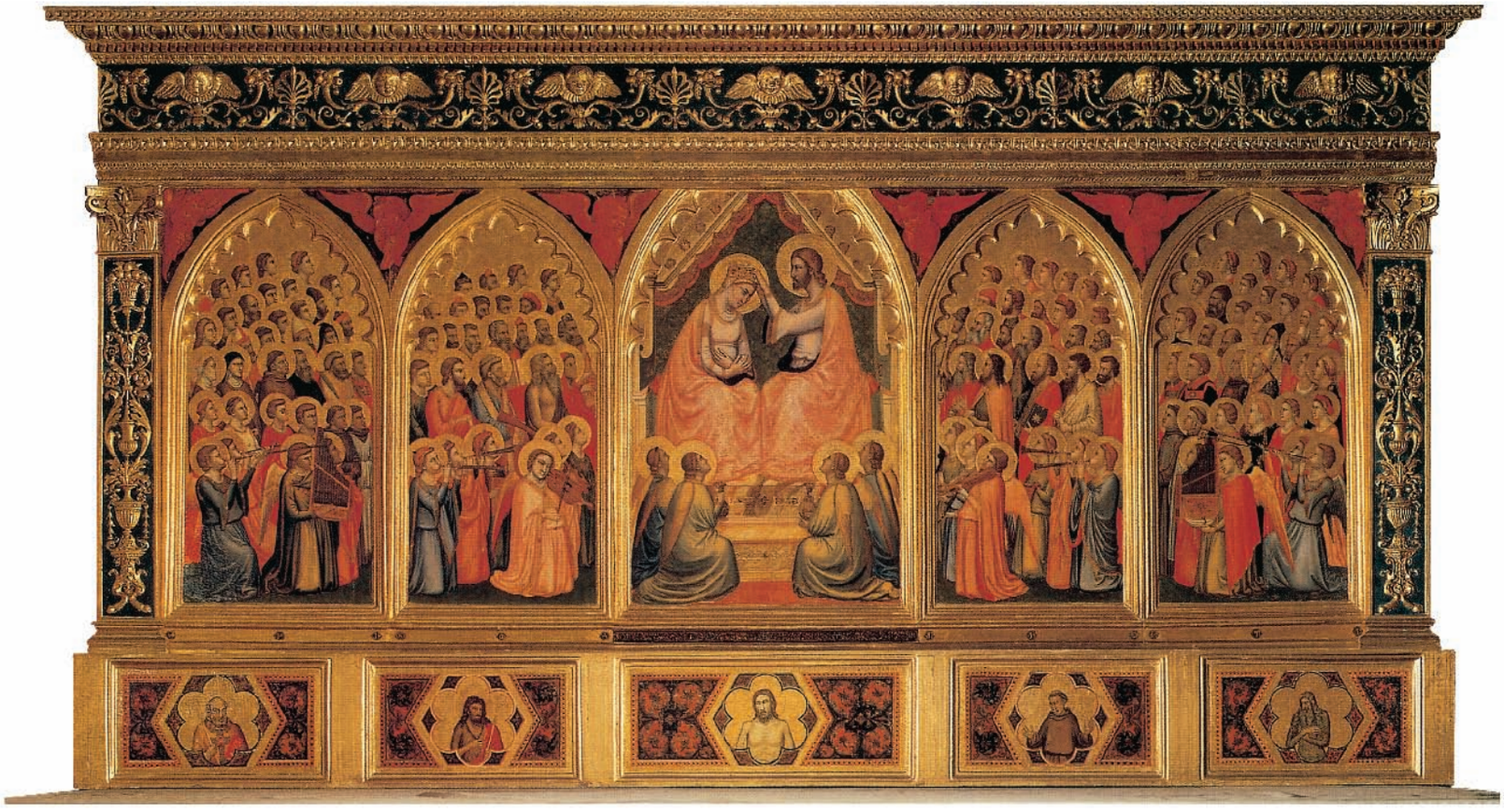
In regard to pictures, let it be remembered that although a knowledge of the name, the character and the country of the painter adds greatly to the pleasure with which we can contemplate a work of art, it is not — it ought not to be — the source of our highest gratification; that must depend on our capacity to understand the work in itself, and have delight in it for its own sake. Our first question, when we stand before a picture should not be "Who painted it?" but "What does it mean?", "What is it about?", "What was in the painter's mind to express when he embodied his thoughts in this form and colour?" We should be able to read a picture as we read a book, but a picture has an advantage over a book in that its significance is not expressed in written or printed words, which are mere arbitrary signs of human invention, but in forms and colours, which belong to the realm of nature. Imagery, whether in painting or sculpture, was a means of imparting instruction, as well as delight, long before the art of writing existed, and painting was brought to a certain degree of perfection and used for the grandest and most important purposes long before we had the art of printing. In those times, to use the expression of one of the old fathers of the Church, "Pictures were the books of the people;" in fact, they had no other; even now, when books are plentiful and cheap, the use of pictures to convey information more rapidly and more accurately than by words is commonplace.

But it is another thing when we have to consider pictures as art, and painting as one of the highest of the fine arts properly so called. Now, people may collect books merely as articles of curiosity and rarity, as specimens of printing and binding, like that collector who Pope describes: "In books, not authors, curious was my lord!" He may like them as furniture to fill his shelves with intricate binding and accredited names, even so may an individual collect pictures for their beauty, their rarity, or their antiquity, or hang them on their walls as mere ornamental furniture. No doubt such collections are a great, allowable source of pleasure to the possessor and to the observer; however, considered as productions of mind addressed to mind, this is not the highest advantage to be derived from pictures. As I have said, we should be able to read a picture as we read a book. A gallery of pictures may be compared with a well-furnished library; I have sometimes thought that it would be a good thing if we could arrange a collection of pictures as we arrange a collection of books. In the ordering of a library with a view to convenience and use, we do not mix all subjects together. We have different compartments for theology, history, biography, poetry, travels, science, romances, and so forth; we might consider pictures in a similar order. Theology, in that case, would comprise all ordained subjects, whether taken from the Holy Scriptures, or having any religious significance; they may be the representation of an event, such as the elevation of the serpent in the wilderness, the raising of Lazarus, the worship of the Magi, or they may be the expression of an idea, such as the dead Christ mourned by his mother and the angels, or those most beautiful and inexhaustible subjects, the human mother nursing her son, and the son honouring in heaven the mother who bore him on earth. Such ideal subjects bear the same relation to religious narratives as the Psalms and prophecies bear to the book of Kings.

In the category of the theological, pictures may be classed as those which represent the effigies and sufferings of the Holy Martyrs who perished for their faith in the early ages of Christianity — the noble Roman soldier St. Sebastian, the Great Doctors and Teachers of the Church such as St. Jerome who made the first translation of the Scriptures into the vulgar

Simone Martini and **Lippo Memmi**,
Altarpiece of *The Annunciation*, 1333.
Tempera on wood, 184 x 210 cm.
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Duccio di Buoninsegna,
Gualino Madonna,
between 1280-1283.
Tempera and gold on wood,
157 x 86 cm.
Galleria Sabauda, Turin.



tongue (thence called the Vulgate), and those personages who became ideal types of Christian virtue. Thus we have the valorous angel Michael, conqueror of the powers of evil; the benign angel Raphael, guardian of the young; the learning and wisdom of St. Catherine, the fortitude of St. Antony, and the chivalrous faith of St. George. Some knowledge of these personages, their characters and actions, historical or legendary, and the manner in which they were represented by various artists for the edification of their respective societies, will add greatly to the interest of a gallery of pictures.

All would range as theology, and nothing is more interesting than to observe the very different manner in which the same scene and subject has been conceived and represented by different artists.

Continuing our parallel between a library and a picture gallery, history would comprise all pictures representing such actions and events as have been recorded by objective writers — classical and modern. Such are *The Family of Darius at the feet of Alexander* (from Grecian history), *The Romans carrying off the Sabine Women* (from Roman history), *The Death of Lord Chatham* (from English history), and so on; portraiture stands in the same relation to historical painting that biography bears to history. Is not the picture of *Ippolito de' Medici* and *Sebastian del Piombo* a piece of biography? What about *Julius the Second*, that resolute old pope or *Julia Gonzaga*? Consider, too, Zurbaran's *Monk* and Rembrandt's *Rabbi*. Understanding the representation of history through art will provide an insight into the emotive character of the times, in a way that words cannot.

Giotto,
Baroncelli Polyptych, 1334.
Paint and gold on wood.
Basilica di Santa Croce, Florence.

ΗΤΟΙΜΑΣΙΑ
ΜΡ ΘΥ
ΙΣ ΧΣ
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ

Poetry would comprise all subjects from poets both ancient and modern. Such are the *Bacchus and Ariadne*, the *Venus and Adonis*, *Mercury teaching Cupid to read*, the *Judgment of Paris* (all taken from the classics); *Erminia and the Shepherds* (from Tasso); the *Rescue of Serena* (from Spenser). These are poetry, regardless of whether each in itself is a poem. Then, correlative with fiction and drama, domestic or romantic, we have the style of painting, called genre, which deals with the scenes and incidents of familiar life, which may be of a very high moral significance, as in the *Marriage a-la-Mode*; or of the lowest, as in the *Woman Peeling Carrots*, or the *Drinking Boors*; whatever the significance, it may be ennobled by the perfect execution. Some modern novels, in which the most commonplace events of everyday life are treated with the most exquisite grace, delicacy, and knowledge of human nature, may be likened to those Dutch pictures in which two misers counting their gold, a lady reading a letter, or a woman bargaining for a fowl, shall be treated with such consummate elegance of execution, and even power of character, that at once, they delight the eye and fancy.

But genre painting was unknown in the early schools of Italian art; the concerts and *conversazioni* of Giorgione and the other Venetians are too poetic to fall under this designation, so I shall say no more of it here. Animal painting, as a special class of art as Rubens, Snyders, and Landseer have made it, was also unknown. At the same time, we must acknowledge that when the old Italians introduced animals into their pictures, they showed themselves capable of excelling in imitative as well as ideal art. What can exceed the little birds on the steps of the throne in Benozzo Gozzoli's *Madonna*, or the fish in Perugino's picture *Raphael and Tobit*, for exquisite truth of nature? To be sure, we cannot say the same of Paolo Uccello's horses, yet it is interesting to observe the first efforts in this way of a school which afterwards produced Andrea Verrocchio's equestrian statue of Colleone and Lionardo's *Battle of the Standard*.

Landscape painting, which may be likened to books of travels and descriptions of scenery, was unknown as a separate class of art until the middle of the sixteenth century; however, some of the early painters, particularly the Venetians, give us a lovely background in their religious scenes. That intense sympathy with natural scenery which we find in the works of Thomson and Wordsworth as poets and Cuyp and Hobbema as painters, seems to have been the growth of modern times.

Lastly, to continue our parallel, we have a scientific class of art as of books. Painting, when called in to illustrate the discoveries and triumphs of science, as in geology, botany, architectural and technological innovations, and the like, may be called scientific art. A collection of this kind of picture, where beauty of treatment is combined with exact truth, might be made very attractive as well as interesting and profitable. Scientific art is chiefly employed in illustrating books, and is the handmaid rather than the priestess and interpreter of nature. But photography has taught us all the beauty and the poetry that may be found in the most literal transcripts of truth; like landscape and portraiture, scientific art will find a place for itself in our galleries in time.

When we know and thoroughly understand the subject of a picture, we may then inquire the name of the painter, the age, the country, the school of art in which he was reared, to which he belonged; hence we may derive the most various delight from the associations connected with this extended knowledge. These Memoirs of famous painters are intended to suggest such comparative and discriminating reflections. I will conclude with a passage written long ago by an almost-forgotten art critic, old Jonathan Richardson:

Christ Pantocrator, 12th century.
Mosaic.
Apse of Monreale Cathedral,
Monreale.

"When one sees an admirable piece of art, it is a part of the entertainment to know to whom to attribute it, and then to know his history; whence else is the custom of putting the author's picture or life at the beginning of a book? When one is considering a picture or a drawing, and at the same time thinks that this was done by him who had many extraordinary endowments of body and mind, but was withal very capricious [Leonardo da Vinci]; who was honoured in life and death, expiring in the arms of one of the greatest princes of that age, Francis I, King of France, who loved him as a friend. Another is of he [Titian] who lived a long and happy life, beloved of Charles V, Emperor, and many others of the first princes of Europe. When one has another in his hand, and thinks this was done by him [Michelangelo] who so excelled in three arts as that any of them in that degree had rendered him worthy of immortality, and one that, moreover, durst contend with his sovereign (one of the haughtiest popes that ever was) upon a slight offered to him, and extricated himself with honour. Another is the work of he [Correggio] who, without any one exterior advantage, by mere strength of genius, had the most sublime imaginations, and executed them accordingly, yet lived and died obscurely. Another we shall consider as the work of he [Annibal Carracci] who restored painting when it was almost sunk; of him whose art made honourable, but, neglecting and despising greatness with a sort of cynical pride, was treated suitably to the figure he gave himself, not his intrinsic merit; which, not having philosophy enough to bear it, broke his heart. Another is done by one [Rubens] who (on the contrary) was a fine gentleman, and lived in great magnificence, and was much honoured by his own and foreign princes; who was a courtier, a statesman, and a painter, and so much all these, that, when he acted in either character, that seemed his business, and the others his diversion. I say, that when one thus reflects, besides the pleasure arising from the beauties and excellencies of the work, the fine ideas it gives us of natural things, the noble way of thinking one finds in it, and the pleasing thoughts it may suggest to us, an additional pleasure results from these reflections.

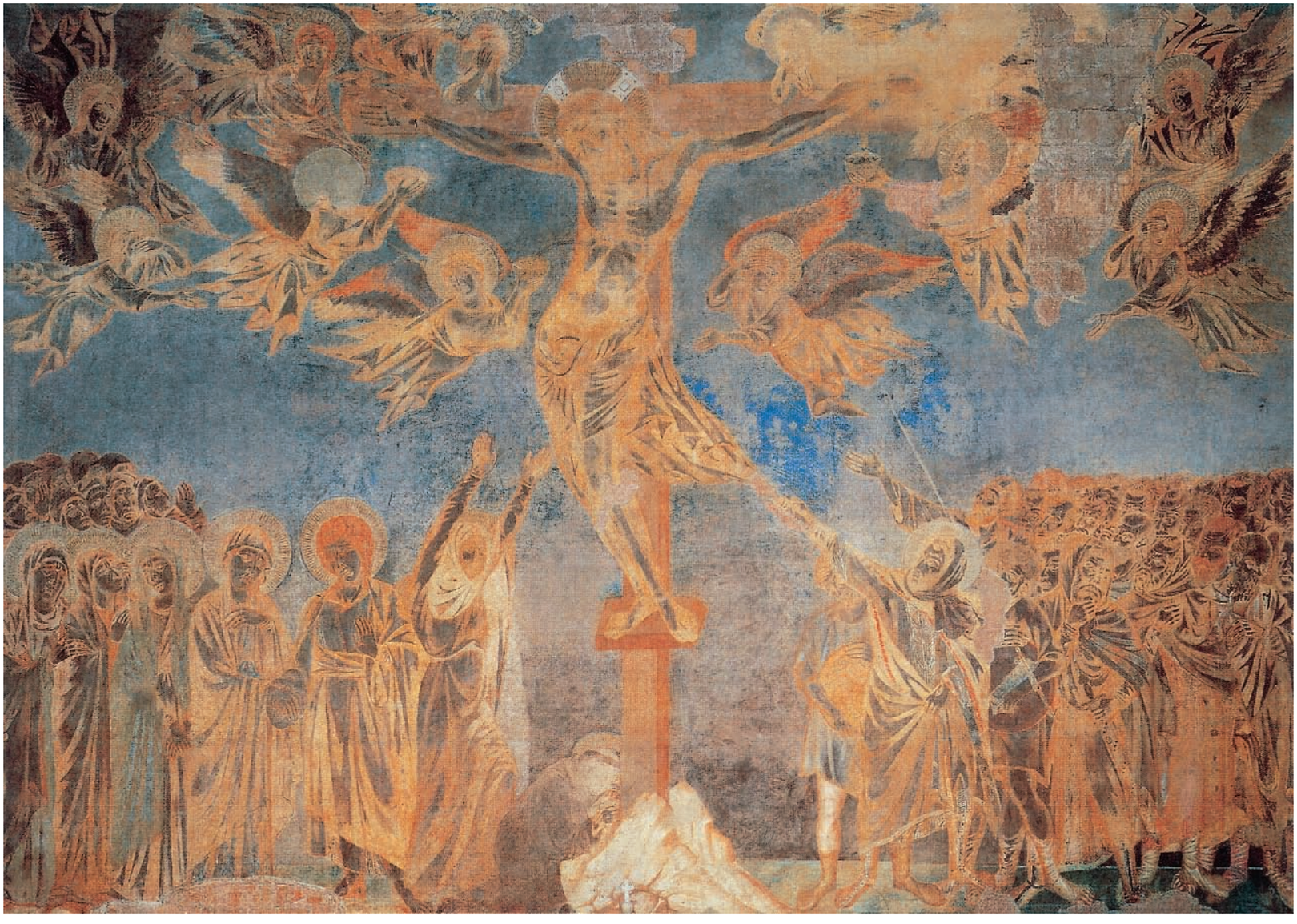
"But, the pleasure! when a connoisseur and lover of art has before him a picture or a drawing of which he can say, this is the hand, there are the thoughts, of him [Raphael] who was one of the politest, best-natured gentlemen that ever was; and beloved and assisted by the greatest wits and the greatest men then in Rome; of him who lived in great fame, honour, and magnificence, and died extremely lamented, and missed a Cardinal's hat only by dying a few months too soon, particularly esteemed and favoured by two popes [Julius II and Leo X], the only ones who filled the chair of St. Peter in his time, and as great men as ever sat there since that apostle, — if at least he ever did; one, in short, who could have been a Leonardo, a Michaelangelo, a Titian, a Correggio, an Annibale, a Rubens, or any other he pleased, but none of them could ever have been a Raphael. And when we compare the hand and manner of one master with another, and those of the same man in different times, when we see the various turns of mind and various excellencies, and, above all, when we observe what is well or ill in their works, as it is a worthy, so it is also a very delightful exercise of our rational faculties."

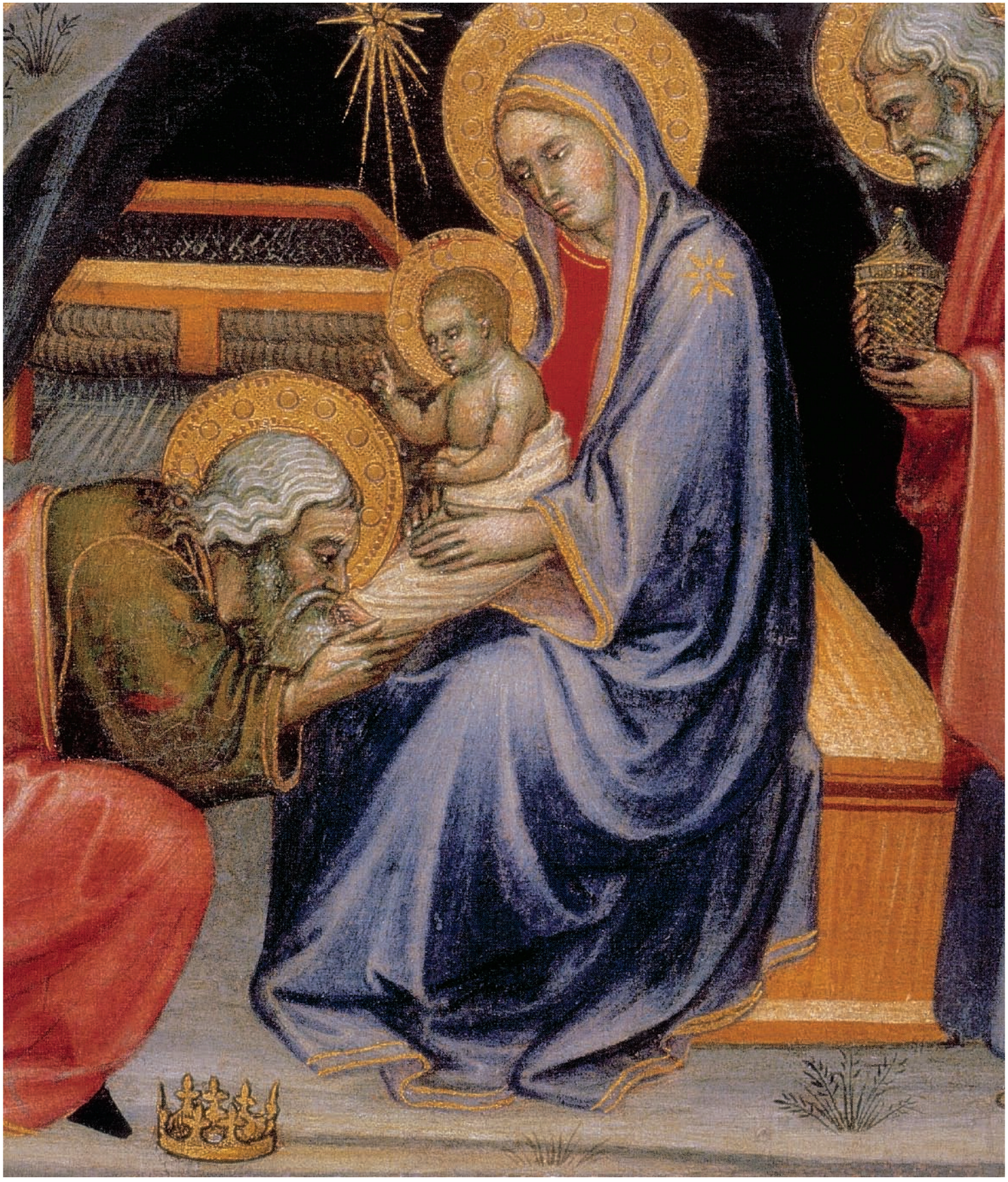
It is to enlarge this sphere of rational pleasure in the contemplation of works of art that the following Memoirs were written. [May, 1859]

Cimabue,
Crucifixion, c. 1280.
Fresco.
Left transept of the Upper Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.

Pietro Lorenzetti,
Christ of Compassion (facing right), between 1340-1345.
Lindenau-Museum, Altenburg.

Duccio di Buoninsegna,
Crevole Madonna, c. 1280.
Tempera on wood.
Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena.





Revival of Art in Siena – Fundamental Difference between Sienese and Florentine Art

Duccio was the first great painter of the pure Sienese school. His career began after that of Cimabue yet earlier than that of Giotto; he occupies in the annals of his country almost as much space as they hold together in the annals of Florence. He reformed the old manner, creating a new one which was long second only to that of Florence, clinging firmly to time-honoured forms of composition and old technical methods of execution. His contemporaries and successors Ugolino, Segna, Simone Martini, the Lorenzetti, and Taddeo di Bartolo did no more in the fourteenth century than follow the wake which marked his track. They hardly improved the system which he galvanised into life.

The Lorenzetti brothers, it is true, assumed and embodied some of the practice of the Florentines, infusing into their grand and admirable works some of the spirit of Giotto. They momentarily cleared the barrier which separated the two great schools of Central Italy. But the effort was short-lived, and Taddeo di Bartolo, at the close of the fourteenth century, was as clearly in the beaten path up to the expansion of his peculiar genius as the 'second rates' of Siena.

Thus confined within a narrow circle, the Sienese remained true to a system of their own, which they corrected in the fullest measure of which they were capable without an abandonment of sacred principles, custom, and prejudice. It was chiefly in technical methods of execution that they followed traditional habits. They had, one would think, the Siculo-Byzantine examples, whose studied and careful execution, whose minute precision of drawing and detail, whose powerful and lively colour and elegant ornament were to be greatly admired. They succeeded in rivalling these models, carrying ornamentation beyond an accessory and making it a principal feature in their pictures. They pursued this path so far that, not merely their draperies, but a nimbus, a gilt background, and the frame, which enlivened the composition, were stamped with the most exquisite designs of leaves and branches, with human heads for flowers or arabesques of a more general form, relieved, coloured, and gilted, with all the delicacy of a tasteful Oriental style. That, in such a pursuit of detail, the essentials of composition and form should not have sunk into complete oblivion is remarkable. The result, however, was a material check to the progress of severe simplicity and grandeur, by which the perfect subordination of each part to the whole, and the grand development which characterised the Florentines, were rendered impossible. That colour should become a special study under these circumstances was natural. Tempera pictures, though brilliant and vigorous in tone, could hardly attain light keys of harmony so long as the old system was maintained. The Sienese adhered to this system with extraordinary persistence; why they did so, when in fresco they followed other methods, is an interesting line of inquiry. For a people of a happy and lively spirit, the Sienese were much more patient as tempera painters than the Florentines. The reason is to be found in their fondness for ornament, which required time and effort to work out. Their rivals, of more simple taste, preferred mastery and breadth of handling. A Florentine altarpiece might be seen at a greater distance, a Sienese panel invited closer attention; however, for this very reason, it demanded more minute finish and more time.

Taddeo di Bartolo,
The Adoration of the Magi (detail),
c. 1404.
Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena.

A system which had the advantage of affording time for finish might be essential; it was certainly practised by the Sienese, and necessarily involved the continuance of the old technical methods. These methods may be summed up in a few words.

They prepared their materials with the care peculiar to the oldest painters, and covered their panel with a cloth to keep the joints together, as the artists of every school did at the time; they primed it with a white ground of gesso on which the drawing was engraved with the minutest attention. The flesh tints were then laid on in one general and dense coat of verde, covering the light parts as well as those intended to be in shadow. Upon this universal ground, they began to model by laying in the lights in a copious stippling and seeking the form by the direction of its lines. Having thus obtained light and shadow by the juxtaposition of the stippling with the original verde, they melted the colours together by working them over and over with excessive labour and patience until the forms had gained a sufficient amount of rounding. This slow process was facilitated by the peculiar capacity for moistness in the original verde. Ruddier tones were now stippled on to the cheeks and lips, meant to highlight the most projecting points, and the whole was finally fused together by transparent glazes. But nothing that the artist could do sufficed to produce any more than a low key of harmony, because the deep verde always reappeared and absorbed too much light to allow for a quality of brightness and clarity. The stippling never succeeded in creating perfect semitones, so a sharp contrast invariably existed between the light, which was too yellow, and the shadow, which remained too green. At first, perhaps, these defects were less visible because of the glazes, but, as in Cimabue's pictures, painted with paler verde on the same principle. Hence, in the altarpieces of Siena, these light and fugitive tints were the first to disappear by abrasion; the surface was left too green in shadow, too red in the lips and cheeks, and too yellow in the highest places. The draperies were produced in another way, where the nature of the colour allowed it, with a general tone strengthened by deeper glazes of the same in shadow, and lighter preparations for the highest lights.

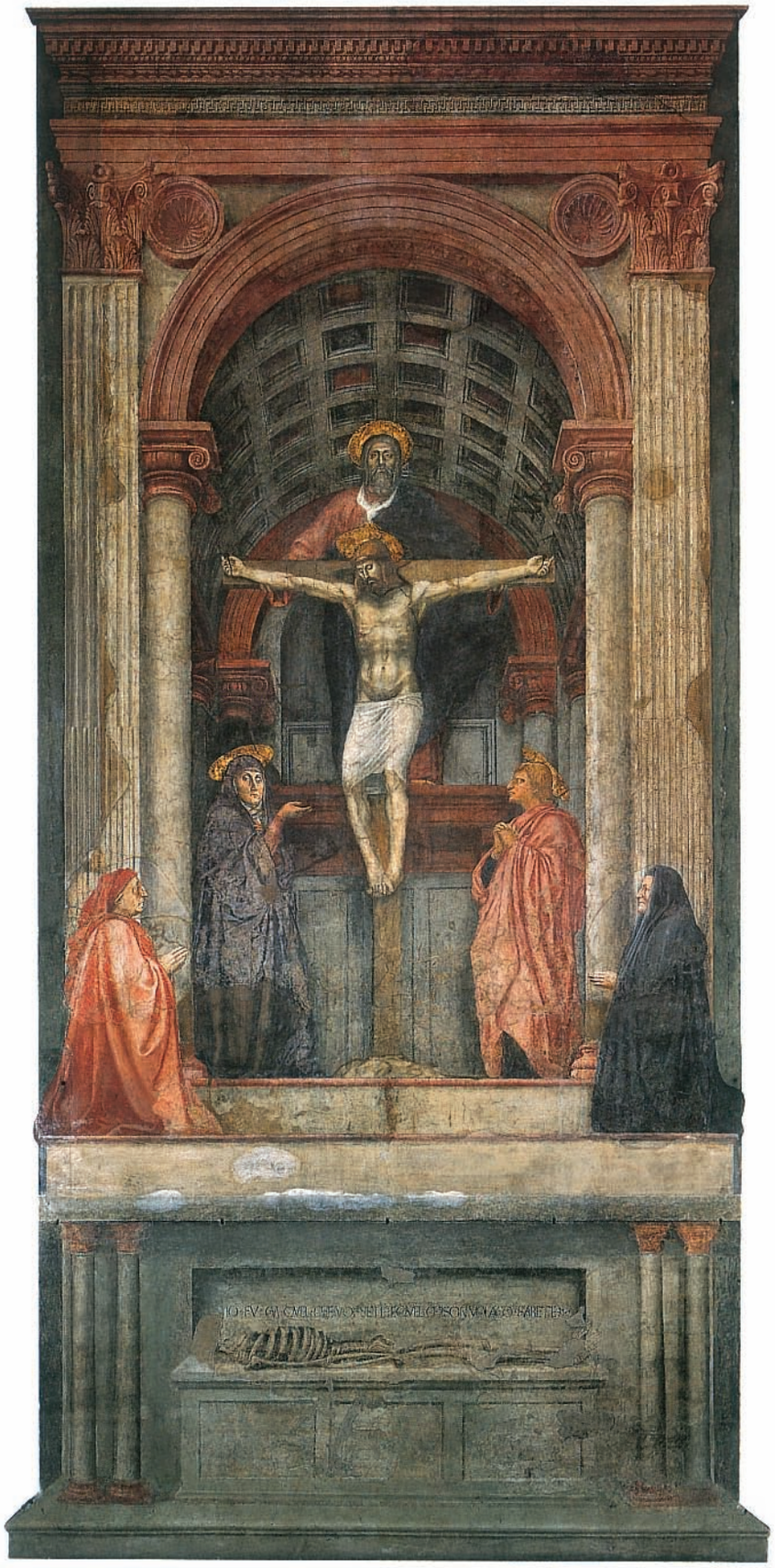
In fresco, the Sienese never covered the white *intonaco* with a general verde tint in the flesh. They merely marked the contours and shadows with a reddish brown of a liquid texture, or with red lines and pale verde shadows, from the beginning, mapping out distinct planes, so that light colour never came over dark. In this way, Simone and the Lorenzetti produced frescoes uniting power with brightness and surface clarity. Rejecting in paintings on the wall the system which enabled them to be detailed, as frescoes need not be seen close-up, they attained great perfection, fusing the lights and semitones into the shadows so that at times they even had the defect of flatness, obtaining relief by means exactly the reverse of those employed in tempera.

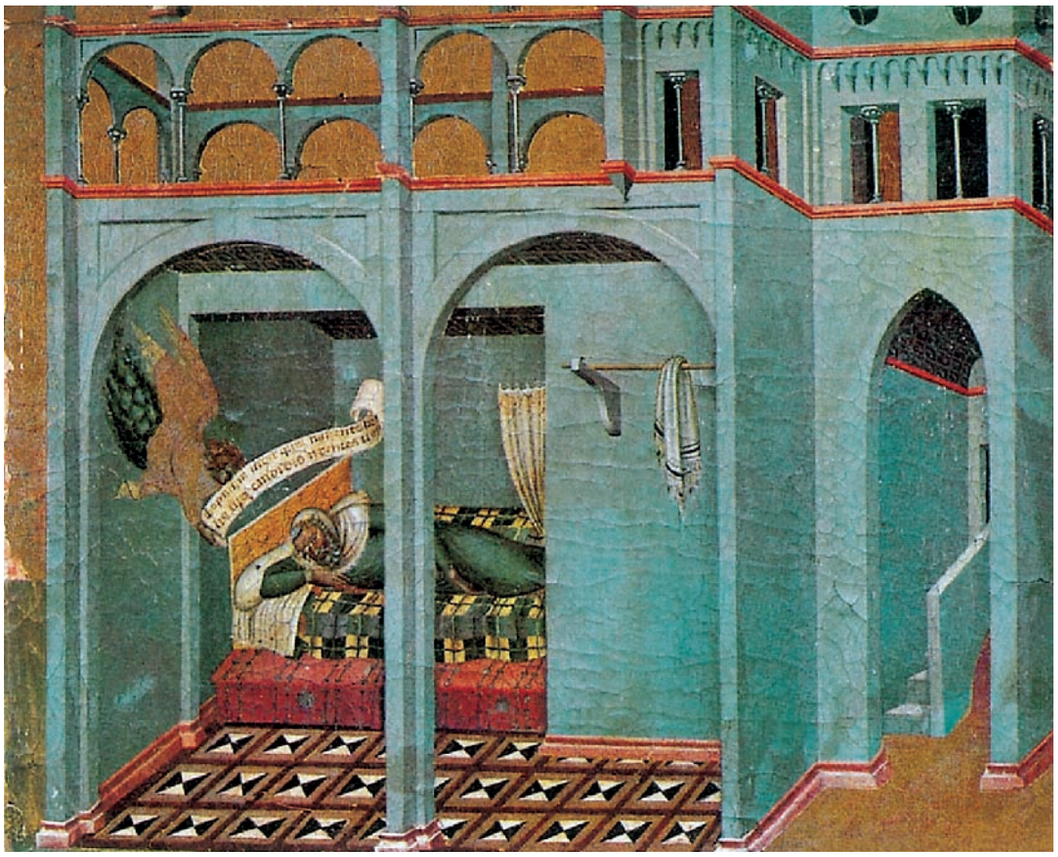
True to the old and typical forms of composition which preceding ages had developed, Sienese painters also preserved that vehemence of action which had been traditional, and failed to appreciate the decorous simplicity of the Florentine revival. Hence, there was an absence of balance in pictures, superfluity or insufficiency in composition as in groups and figures. The intention was too frequently better than the result; movements might be found bold and disposed to exaggeration. A stern, sometimes convulsed expression and forced motion in males contrasted with a languid or affected tenderness and grace in females. Gazing eyes in the first proclaimed fearlessness and masculine passion, muscular forms suggested energy and force. In the second, long parallel lids all but closed over the iris, long narrow heads with slender frames, or round faces on corpulent ones were characteristic. Draperies, otherwise massive and of a fine cast, clung to the shape and exposed its peculiarities.

Maso di Banco,
The Miracle of Saint Sylvester, c. 1340.
Fresco.
Bardi di Vernio Chapel,
Basilica di Santa Croce, Florence.

Tuscan Master,
Crucifixion and Six Scenes from the Passion of the Christ, 1240-1270.
Tempera on wood, 277 x 231 cm.
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Masaccio (Tommaso Cassai),
The Holy Trinity, c. 1428.
Fresco, 667 x 317 cm.
Santa Maria Novella, Florence.





Broken, cramped, and strange action of hands and fingers supplied the place of natural gesture. Thin and pointed in females, the extremities were short, coarse, muscular, and bony in males. Superabundance of character, form, and motion in men was the heirloom of earlier art, affected softness and gentleness in women, a pure Sienese element. In this respect, Cimabue furnished the model which artists of the sister republic exaggerated in imitation.

If it should be inquired which of the painters of Siena most completely displays these general features, one might answer that Simone Martini is their best representative, being an easel painter above all, whilst the Lorenzetti are, as Ghiberti so truly remarked, the dramatic creators of the school, men of great intellect and imbued with the qualities which, in their fullest measure, combined to form the greatness of Giotto. Whilst the latter really incarnated the ideas of the age of Dante, and gave the true feeling and grandeur to a new and youthful art, which Angelico remodelled into religious pathos and Masaccio raised to the grandiose. The Sienese revelled in a medley of coarser elements and affectations of grace and tenderness, re-adorning the old dress with new embellishments, infusing brilliancy into colour and taste into ornament while never rejecting the old types or forms.

Based on solid foundations, the Florentine school advanced rapidly and easily to the perfection of the sixteenth century, being led by its admirable comprehension of the laws of distribution and division of space to the study of perspective, whilst the Sienese remained enchained in the fetters of old custom. Yet, Siena was not without her own essential originality. She rivalled Florence in political independence at least into the fourteenth century; and in an age of uncontrolled passion she stamped art with an unmistakable impression.

Pietro Lorenzetti,
Sobach's Dream (from the predella of the high altar of Santa Maria del Carmine, Siena), 1329.
Tempera on wood, 37 x 44 cm.
Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena.

Her architecture, sculpture, and painting were all her own, as different as her people from those of Florence; and this difference extended not merely to Siena, but to all Umbria. The Florentine were staid and grave, while the Sienese and Umbrian were bright and lively. A barrier, conqured, perhaps, by one painter, parted the masters of the rival republics; to a certain extent, this favoured the originality of Siena, which with less independence might have lost herself in imitation and subsequently failed in the legitimate influence which she wielded in Italy. She remained second to Florence because she created no rival to Giotto, but otherwise she stood on an equal footing and contended with her for the palm of excellence; the Sienese Duccio, Ugolino, and Lorenzetti competing with the Florentines on their own turf, though Siena boasted of no great Florentine within her walls before Spinello and Donatello. Siena, however, may still justly affirm that her influence was, after Giotto's death, more extensive than that of Florence. Orcagna tempered classical grandeur with Sienese gentleness and grace. Traini imbibed lessons from the works, if not from the precepts, of Simone and the Lorenzetti, and combined Florentine with Sienese character. Giovanni da Milano derived from Siena his brilliancy of colour, his grace of motion in females, his finish and breadth in draperies and costume, his minuteness and care in exquisite and precise outlines, betraying, one would think, his contact with Simone. Lorenzo Monaco and Spinello took something also from the same sources and set an example to the many subordinates who were ever ready to receive impressions from wherever they originated. At Pisa, where Sienese painting was always favoured, the local art, though second rate, was but another edition of that of Duccio and his followers. Taddeo di Bartolo reigned supreme in the fourteenth century.

The Sienese, therefore, made an ample return for the profit which they gained from the sculptures of Niccola and Giovanni, though Pisa was not able to take advantage of that return and progress as Siena had done. The grand and exclusive field of Siena's influence, however, was Umbria. Orvieto owed to her all that she yielded in sculpture or painting; Gubbio, Fabriano, and neighbouring cities produced examples that can hardly be distinguished from those of Siena herself. At the close of the fourteenth century, Taddeo di Bartolo contributed mainly to the formation of the school of Perugia which, rising as it were from the ashes of Gubbio and Fabriano, laid the foundation of its greatness and, outliving that of Siena, rivalled in number if not in quality the painters of the fifteenth century in Florence. The school which preceded Perugino was impressed with something of Sienese character, which Perugino himself inherited in more abundance than the Florentine. He was a graceful, sometimes affected and testy, more gentle than severe colourist. Yet, in the fifteenth century, Florence gave more in quality if less in quantity, and towered then as ever over all of Italy; if she found in Siena a rival in the fourteenth, she left her behind in the next age when Ghiberti, Donatello, Brunelleschi, Paolo Uccello, Angelico, Masaccio, and Ghirlandaio showed themselves to be of a different scantling from that of Domenico di Bartolo, Sano di Pietro, Benvenuto di Giovanni, Matteo di Giovanni di Bartolo, Girolamo di Benvenuto, Lorenzo di Pietro (Vecchietta), Francesco di Giorgio, or Jacopo della Quercia.

From its rise in the fourteenth century, the course of Sienese art might have been predicted. Starting on a narrow basis when compared with Giotto's, it was sure to be distanced. Siena bequeathed, however, when she fell, a school to Perugia which took her place and contributed much to the education of the immortal Raphael.

Early Christianity and Art

The early Christians confounded in their horror of heathen idolatry all imitative art and artists; they regarded with decided hostility all images and those who created them as bound to the service of Satan and heathenism. Hence, all visible representations of sacred personages and actions were therefore confined to mystic emblems. Thus, crosses signified redemption; fish, baptism; ships represented the church; serpents, sin or the spirit of evil. When, in the fourth century, the struggle between paganism and Christianity ended in the triumph and dominance of the latter and artistic activity was revived, it was, if not in a new form, in a new spirit through which the old forms were to be gradually moulded and modified. The Christians found the shell of ancient art remaining; traditional handicraft still existed. Certain models of figure and drapery handed down from antiquity, though degenerated and distorted, remained in use, and were applied to illustrate, by direct or symbolic representations the tenets of a purer faith. From the beginning, the figures selected to typify redemption were those of Christ and the Virgin, first separately, and then conjointly as the 'Mother and Infant'. The earliest monuments of Christian art are to be found, nearly effaced, on the walls and ceilings of the catacombs at Rome, to which the early persecuted martyrs of the faith had fled for refuge. The first recorded representation of Christ is in the character of the 'Good Shepherd', and the attributes of Orpheus and Apollo were borrowed to express the character of he who "redeemed souls from hell," and "gathered his people like sheep." In the cemetery of St. Calixtus in Rome, the most ancient dipiction was discovered: a head of Christ. The figure is colossal; the face a long oval; the countenance mild, grave, melancholy; the long hair, parted on the brow and falling in two masses on either shoulder; the beard not thick, but short and divided. Here then, obviously imitated from some traditional description (probably the letter of Lentulus to the Roman Senate, assumed to be a fabrication of the third century), we have the first emergence of the type, the generic character since adhered to in the representations of Christ.

A controversy arose afterwards in the early Christian Church which had a determinately significant influence on art as it subsequently developed. One party, with St. Cyril at its head, maintained that the form of Christ, having been described by the prophet as without any outward comeliness, ought to be represented as utterly hideous and repulsive in painting. Fortunately, as the future success of the faith would prove, the most eloquent and influential among the fathers of the Church, St. Jerome, St. Augustin, St. Ambrose, and St. Bernard, took up the opposing side of the arguement. The pope, Adrian I, also threw his infallibility into the scale, and from the eigth century we find it decided, and later confirmed by a papal bull, that Christ should be represented with all the attributes of divine beauty which art in its then unrefined state could lend him.

Since that time the accepted and traditional type for the representation of Christ has been strictly attended to — a tall, slender figure with a long oval face; a broad, serene, elevated brow; a mild, melancholy, and majestic countenance; the hair ("of the colour of wine or wine lees" — which may mean either a dark rich brown or a golden yellow — have both been adopted)

The Mother of God between two angels, Madonna Della Clemenza, c. 700. Icon with encaustic, 164 cm. Santa Maria in Trastevere, Rome.

The Miracle of the Child Retrieved from the Bottom of the Sea, end of the 6th century.
Fresco.
Lower Church of San Clemente, Rome.

Crucifixion, mid 8th century.
Fresco, 140 x 155 cm.
Teodoto Chapel, Santa Maria Antiqua, Rome.

ŠCA MARIA
LONGINVS
SCS IOANNIS

parted in the front, and flowing down on each side; and a parted beard. The resemblance to his mother — his only earthly parent — was strongly insisted upon by the early ecclesiastical writers and attended to by the earliest painters, which has given something peculiarly refined and even feminine to the most ancient artistic representations of Christ.

The oldest representations of the Virgin Mary now remaining are the sculptures on ancient Christian sarcophagi of about the third and fourth centuries, and a mosaic in the chapel of San Venanzio at Liome, referred to by antiquarians, emanating from the seventh century. Here she is represented as a colossal figure, draped majestically, standing with outspread arms (the ancient posture of prayer) and her eyes raised to heaven; then, after the seventh century succeeding her image in her maternal character: seated on a throne with the infant Christ in her arms. We must bear in mind, once and for all, that from the earliest ages of Christianity, the virgin mother of Christ has been selected as the allegorical embodiment of religion in the abstract sense; to this, her symbolic character must be lended those representations of later times, in which she appears trampling on the dragon, folding her votaries within the skirts of her ample robe, interceding for sinners, and crowned between heaven and earth by the Father and the Son.

Master of Saint Francis, *Crucifixion,* c. 1260-1272. Tempera on wood. National Gallery, London.

In the same manner, traditional heads of St. Peter and St. Paul, roughly sketched, later became the groundwork of the highest dignity and beauty, still retaining that peculiarity of form and character which time and custom had consecrated in the eyes of the devout.

Besides the representations of Christ and the Virgin, some of the characters and incidents of the Old Testament were selected as subjects of art, generally with reference to corresponding characters and incidents in the Gospel. Thus, St. Augustin, in the latter half of the fourth century, tells us that "Abraham offering up his son Isaac" was then a common subject, typical, of course, of the sacrifice of the Son of God; "Moses striking the rock," the Gospel or the water of life; the vine or grapes expressed the sacrament of the Eucharist; Jonah swallowed by the whale and then disgorged signified death and resurrection; Daniel in the lions' den signified redemption. This system of corresponding subjects, of type and anti-type, was later, as we shall see, taken much further.

In the seventh century, painting, as it existed in Europe, may be divided into two great schools or styles — the Western, or Roman, of which the central point was Rome, and which was distinguished, amid great harshness of execution, by a certain dignity of expression and

Master of the Crucifixion,
Crucifixion and Eight Episodes of the Passion of the Christ, end of the 12th century to the beginning of the 13th. Tempera on wood, 250 x 200 cm. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Bonaventura Berlinghieri,
Scenes from the Life of St. Francis,
1235.
Tempera on wood, 160 x 123 cm.
Church of San Francesco, Pescia.

solemnity of feeling; and the Eastern, or Byzantine school, of which was headquartered in Constantinople, and which was distinguished by greater mechanical skill by adherence to the old classical forms, by the use of gilding, and by the mean, vapid, spiritless conception of motive and character.

From the fifth to the ninth century, the most important and interesting remains of pictorial art are the mosaics in the churches and the miniature paintings with which the Bible and Gospel manuscripts were decorated.

But during the tenth and eleventh centuries, Italy fell into a state of complete barbarism and confusion, which almost extinguished the practice of art in any shape; of this period only a few works remain. In the Byzantine Empire, painting still survived; it became, indeed, more and more conventional, but the technical methods were kept up. And so it happened when, in 1204, Constantinople was taken by the Crusaders and the intercourse between the east and west of Europe was resumed, that several Byzantine painters passed into Italy and Germany where they were employed to decorate churches, and taught the practice of their art, their manner of pencilling, mixing and using colours, and gilding ornaments to students who chose to learn them. They brought over the Byzantine types of form and colour, the long lean limbs of the saints, the darkvisaged Madonnas, and the blood-streaming crucifixes;

these patterns were followed more or less imitatively by the native Italian painters who studied under them.

Specimens of this early art remain, and in later times have been diligently sought and collected into museums as curiosities, illustrating the history and progress of art. As such, they are interesting in the highest degree, but it must be confessed that otherwise they are not conventionally attractive. There are some very valuable examples in the Royal Collection of Britain. There is also one in the National Icon Collection of the British Museum, a little Cretan picture of the famous Apothecary Saints, Cosmo and Damian, painted by a certain, Emanuel Tzanes, in the seventeenth century. In the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence, and in the Louvre, a few Greek pictures are preserved as curiosities. The subject is generally the Madonna and Child enthroned, sometimes alone, sometimes with angels or saints ranged on each side. The characteristics in all cases are the same: the figures are stiff with long and meagre extremities, the features are hard and expressionless, and the eyes are long and narrow.

The head of the Virgin is generally declined to the left: the infant Christ is generally clothed and sometimes crowned; two fingers of his right hand are extended in an act of benediction; the left hand holding a globe, a scroll, or a book. With regard to the execution, the ornaments of the throne and borders of the draperies, and frequently the background, are elaborately gilded. The local colours are generally vivid and there is little or no relief; the handling is streaky and the flesh-tints are blackish or greenish. At this time, and for two hundred years afterwards (before the invention of oil painting), pictures were painted either in fresco, an art never totally lost, or on panels of seasoned wood, the colours mixed with water and thickened with egg white or the juice of the young shoots of the fig tree. This last method was styled by the Italians *a colla* or *a tempera*; by the French, *en détrempe*; and in English, in distemper. It is in these manners that all movable pictures were executed prior to 1440.

As it is not the purpose of this book to trace the gradual progress of early art, but rather to give some account of the early artists, and as we know nothing of those who lived in the first half of the thirteenth century except a name and date inscribed on a picture, there is no use dwelling upon them, but only revert to the fact that before the birth of Cimabue (1200-1240) there existed schools of painting in Siena and Pisa, not only under Greek but also Italian instruction. The former city produced Guido, whose *Madonna and Child*, with life-sized figures, signed and dated 1221, and preserved in the Palazzo Pubblica of Siena. It is engraved in Rosini's *Storia della Pittura*, on the same page with a *Madonna* by Cimabue, to which it appears superior in drawing, attitude, expression, and drapery. Pisa produced Giunta da Pisa around the same time, of whom there remain works with the date 1236, one of these is a *Crucifixion*, engraved in Ottley's *Italian School of Design*, and on a smaller scale in Rosini's *Storia della Pittura*, in which the expression of grief in the hovering angels, who are wringing their hands and weeping, is very emotive and striking. Undoubtedly, though, the greatest man of that time, who gave an ingenutive impulse to modern art, was sculptor, Nicola Pisano, whose works date from about 1220 to 1270. Further, it appears that even in Florence a native painter, a certain Maestro Bartolomeo, lived and was employed in 1236. Thus, Cimabue's often-quoted title as 'father of modern painting' cannot be justified, even in his own city of Florence. The facts on which his traditional celebrity has been founded will be elucidated in ensuing sections, as the opening scene must surely begin with none other than Guido.

Scenes from the History of Sylvester and Constantine, 1246.
Fresco.
Church of the Santissimi Quatro Coronati, Rome.

Scenes from the History of Sylvester and Constantine (detail), 1246.
Fresco.
Church of the Santissimi Quatro Coronati, Rome.

Memoirs of the Early Italian Painters

Guido da Siena
13th Century

Typical art in Siena begins, for the historian, with the works of Guido, which deserve all the more to be studied because a literary tourney has been held in respect of his labours and the chief incidents of his life.

The earliest picture connected with Guido is a half-length *Madonna* from the San Domenico of Siena. The Virgin, of tall stature, sits on a large seat and points with her right hand to the infant on her knee, who gives the benediction and grasps a scroll in his left hand. Her round head, a little bent, supported by a slender neck, is disfigured by the clumsiness of its nose, which starts from a projecting angular root, terminating in a broad depression. The arched lines of the brow are but the continuation of a long curved lid extending towards the temple far beyond the outer corner of the eye. The canthus, instead of forming a loop as in nature, is drawn at a drooping angle. The iris is an ellipse, and conveys an unnatural expression of ecstasy. The mouth is indicated by dark strokes, with two black points at the corners. Outlines, red in light, black in shadow, bound the form, which is mapped out in flat tones of enamelled surface with little effort of blending. The hands are thin and inarticulate. The mantle, falling over a close cap to the shoulders and partly covering a red tunic shot with gold, is lined with mazes of angular and meaningless strokes. The nimbus is full of glass stones. The same features, design, and draperies mark the infant Christ, whose ears are of an enormous size.

This painting, if it is, in fact, by Guido, would prove that he lived at the close of the thirteenth century, and the minute description which has just been given is necessary to elucidate a question which has long engrossed critical attention, which involves the rival claims of Siena and Florence to the title of regenerator of Italian art.

Guido is unknown beyond the walls of Siena. He remained a stranger to Vasari and his existence is only certified by an altarpiece bearing his name and the date 1221 on a work labelled *Madonna and Child Enthroned*, which was once in the San Domenico of Siena but is now in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena. The state of the picture and the fashion of the signature both reveal a series of manipulations which excites suspicion. The date is too early for the painting and it exhibits a curious variety of handling in several of its parts.

The subject is the Virgin Mary, sized larger than life and seated on a cushion in an armchair decorated with mosaic patterns. Her head is wrapped in a white cloth which drapes onto the shoulders; a high-waisted red tunic is partly seen beneath a large blue cloak, and both are shot with gold. Her left arm and hand support the infant Christ, who gives the blessing as he sits on her lap while she points, with tapered fingers, to his face as he looks up at her. A clover-patterned arch above the niche of the throne is filled in the spandrels by six figures of winged angels in prayer. In a triangular pediment belonging to the altarpiece but

Guido da Siena,
The Adoration of the Magi (detail),
c. 1270-1280.
Lindenau-Museum, Altenburg.

Guido da Siena,
The Flight to Egypt (detail),
c. 1275-1280.
Gold and tempera on panel,
34 x 46 cm.
Lindenau-Museum, Altenburg.

Guido da Siena,
The Flagellation, c. 1270-1280.
Lindenau-Museum, Altenburg.

hanging apart in the transept of San Domenico, the space is filled with a half length of Christ in benediction between two angels.

The treatment of this picture reveals a Sienese artist of the close of the thirteenth century, who painted all but the head and neck of the Virgin and the flesh parts of the infant Christ.

These are handled in the manner of the Sienese school — of Duccio, Ugolino, or Simone. The variety lies in the spirit, as well as in the technical execution, which not only gives more regularity and nature to the features, but a better and softer run to the outlines. Another advantage displayed in these heads is the comparative lightness and blending and the more pleasant tinge and transparence of the colour. The glaze of the old style has disappeared along with sombre tones and black contours. It has been argued that work like this entitles Guido to a place in art above Cimabue. While the older parts of the picture are below the level of Cimabue, the new parts are above it. The date is apocryphal, having been retouched after some of its letters were obliterated. "We may take it that the altarpiece in its original state was painted by Guido of Siena, between 1270 and 1280, and restored by a later artist of the Sienese school of the fourteenth century."

A patient search has failed to bring any records to light proving the existence of an artist called Guido in the earlier years of the thirteenth century. The name of Guido Gratiani is entered in municipal accounts as the painter of a banner in 1278. He superseded Dietisalvi in 1287, 1290, and 1298 as limner of the books of the Biccherna. He completed *Majesty between St. Peter and St. Paul* in 1295, found in the Palazzo Pubblico of Siena. In 1302, he pilloried twelve forgers in a portrait on the front of the tribunal of Justice. He was one of three sons of Gratiano, and lived in the parish of San Donate in Montanini. He brought up to his profession a son named Bartolommeo, or Meo, who afterwards (1319) worked in Perugia. Guido's brothers, Mino and Guarnieri, or Neri, were also artists. If we concede any value to the inscription on the altarpiece of Guido in San Domenico, we must in turn suppose that the painter is Guido Gratiani and that his work is later than 1221, and dates from the close of the century.

Following this deduction, Siena could not lay claim to a superiority in art during the thirteenth century. Niccola and Giovanni Pisano furnished the chief ornaments of her cathedral, and under the guidance of these and other strangers, the school of which Agnolo and Agostino were afterwards the ornaments arose in 1300. The Sienese rivalled the Florentines after the time of Cimabue.

Duccio, Ugolino, Simone, and Lorenzetti are entitled to well-deserved admiration, but their influence remained second to that of Cimabue and Giotto.

Painting may be said to have followed much the same course at Arezzo as at Lucca, Pisa, and Siena. Crucifixes, portraits of St. Francis, and a few Madonnas were the staple of their production, and these were of a less attractive character than the works of other Italian cities. A small crucifix, of the close of the twelfth century in Santa Maria della Pieve, in which Christ is represented erect and open-eyed; another, of the same character and date in the chapel del Sacramento, contiguous to the Collegiata of Castiglione Aretino; and a third, colossal, of a later period, in San Domenico of Arezzo, in which the feet of Christ are still separate but the body is in a state of contortion, mark the progress of the same decline in Arezzo as elsewhere.

Christ in the Garden of Olives,
12th to 13th century.
Mosaic.
Nave of the St. Mark Basilica,
Venice.

Giovanni Cimabue
1240–1302

Giovanni of Florence, of the noble family of the Cimabue, aka Gualtieri, was born in 1240. At an early age, his parents sent him to study grammar in the school of the convent of Santa Maria Novella, where (as is also related of other innate painters), instead of conning his task, he distracted his teachers by drawing men, horses, and buildings on his schoolbooks; before printing was invented, this spoiling of schoolbooks must have been a rather costly fancy, and no doubt alarmed the professors of Greek and Latin. His parents, wisely yielding to the natural desire of his mind, allowed him to study painting under some Greek artists who had come to Florence to decorate the church of the convent in which he was a scholar. It seems doubtful whether Cimabue did indeed study under the specific painters alluded to by Vasari, but that his masters and models were the Byzantine painters of the time seems to be of no doubt whatsoever. The earliest of his works mentioned by Vasari still exists — a *St. Cecilia*, painted for the altar of that saint, but now preserved in the church of San Stefano. He was later employed by the monks of Vallombrosa, for whom he painted a *Madonna with Angels* on a gold background, now preserved in the Galleria dell'Academia in Florence. He also painted a *Crucifixion* for the church of Santa Croce, still on display, and several pictures for the churches of Pisa to the great contentment of the Pisans. By these and other works, his fame being spread far and near, he was called in the year 1265, when he was only 25-years-old, to finish the frescoes in the church of St. Francis in Assisi, which had been begun by Greek painters and continued by Giunta Pisano.

The decoration of this celebrated church is memorable in the history of painting. It is known that many of the best artists of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were employed there, but only fragments of the earliest pictures exist and the authenticity of those ascribed to Cimabue has been disputed by many. Lanzi, however, and Dr. Kugler agree in attributing him with the paintings on the roof of the nave, representing, in medallions, the figures of Christ, the Madonna, St. John the Baptist, St. Francis, and four magnificent winged and sceptred angels. "In the lower corners of the triangles are represented naked Genii bearing tasteful vases on their heads; out of these grow rich foliage and flowers, on which hang other Genii, who pluck the fruit or lurk in the cups of the flowers."[1] If these are really by the hand of Cimabue, it must be concluded that here lies a great step in advance of the formal monotony of his Greek models. He executed many other pictures in this famous church, "*con diligenza infinita*" from the Old and New Testaments, in which, judging from the remaining fragments, he showed a decided improvement in drawing, in propriety of attitude, and in the expression of life. But still, the figures have only just so much animation and significance as are absolutely necessary to render the story or action intelligible. There is no variety, no expressive imitation of nature.

In his figures of the Virgin he did not improve much on the Byzantine models. The faces are not beautiful, the features are elongated, the extremities weak, the general effect flat. But to his heads of prophets, patriarchs, and apostles, whether introduced into his great pictures of the Madonna or in other sacred subjects, he gave a certain grandeur of expression and largeness of form, or, as Lanzi expresses it, "*un non so che di forte e sublimé*", in which he has

Giotto di Bondone,
Maestà (*Ognissanti Madonna*),
1305-1310.
Tempera on wood, 325 x 204 cm.
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Cimabue,
Saint Francis (detail).
Museo della Porziuncola, Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, Assisi.

Cimabue,
Saint Francis, detail from *The Virgin and Child with Angels and Saint Francis*, c. 1280-1283. Fresco.
Right transept, Lower Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.

[1] Franz Kugler, *Handbook of the History of Painting. The Italian Schools*

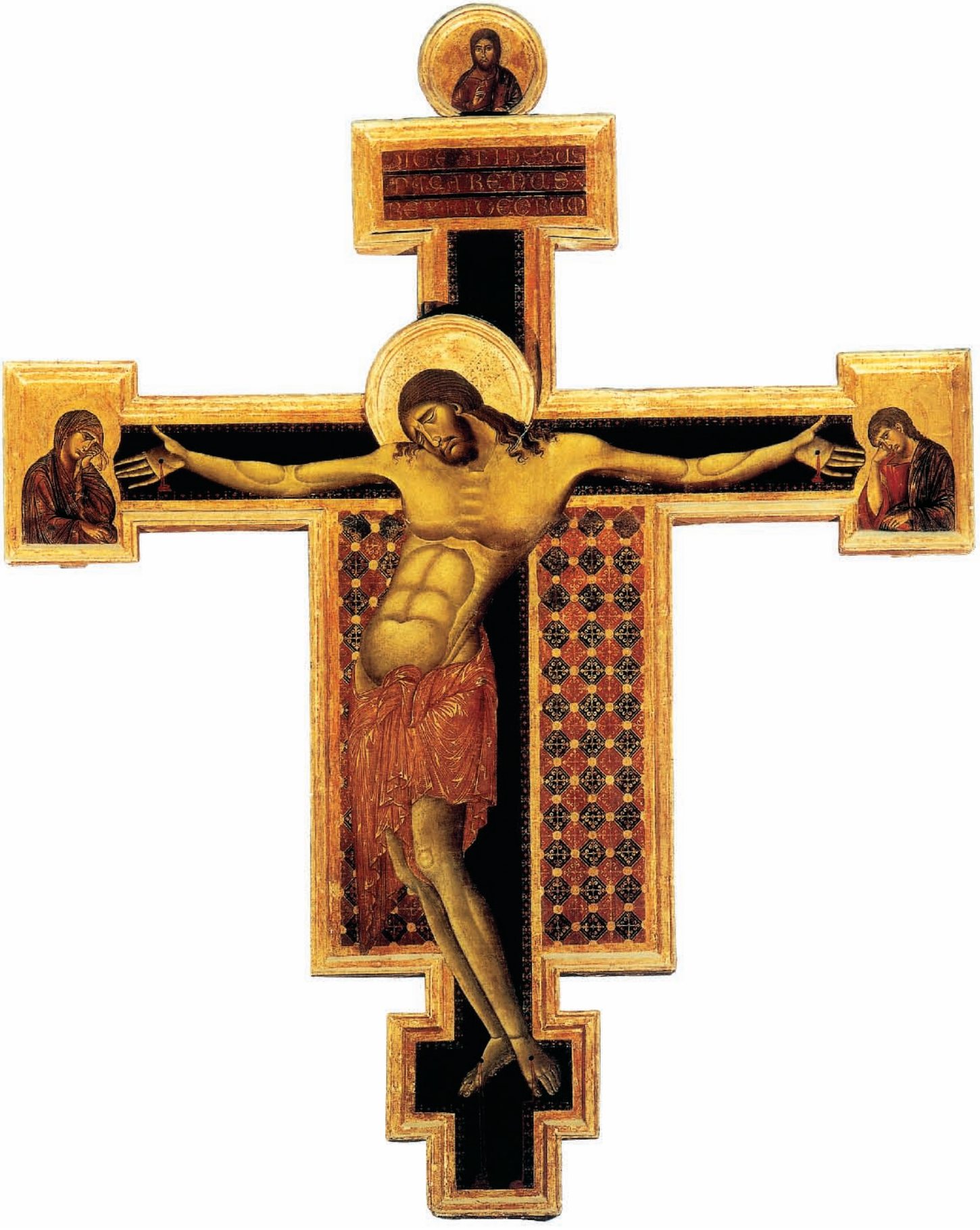
not been greatly surpassed by succeeding painters. This energy of expression — his chief and distinguishing excellence which gave him the superiority over Guido of Siena and others who painted only Madonnas — was in harmony with his personal character. He is described to us as exceedingly haughty and disdainful, of a fiery temperament, proud of his high lineage, his skill in his art, and his various acquirements, for he was well studied in all the literature of his age. If a critic found fault with one of his works when in progress, or if he were himself dissatisfied with it, he would destroy it at once, whatever pains it might have cost him. From these traits of character, and the bent of his genius, which leaned to the grand and terrible rather than the gentle and graceful, he has been styled as the Michelangelo of his time. Vasari recorded of him that he painted a head of St. Francis "after nature", a thing, he says, still unknown at the time. It could not have been a portrait from life, because St. Francis died in 1225. The earliest head 'after nature' which remains was the portrait of Frate Elia, a monk of Assisi, painted by Giunta Pisano around 1235. Perhaps Vasari meant that the San Francesco was the first representation of a sacred personage for which nature had been used as a model.

According to Vasari, all the arts apparently decayed at the same time. Sculpture was restored by Nicola Pisano, architecture by Duccio, mosaics and painting by Florentines taught by Greeks. However, the revival might not only be due to Greeks. There are no records confirming the statement that the Florentine State ever sent for Grecian painters. Similarly, Vasari is wrong in supposing that Cimabue was the descendant of a noble Florentine family. The register of receipts and expenses of the convent of Santa Chiara of Pisa, contains a contract, from which it appears that Giovanni, or Cenni, bore the nickname of Cimabue, and was the son of a certain Pepi and lived in Florence in the parish of St. Ambrose.

Wherever Cimabue was taught, he learnt something more than his immediate precursors. Though he did not raise the standard of art to a very high level, he certainly infused new life into old and worn concepts. He threw a new energy and individuality into the empty forms of the older guildsmen, and he injected some poetry, feeling, and colour upon what could have appeared as a degenerate school of painting. The wonder is not that he clung to the models that first shaped his designs, but the fact that he was able to achieve the advance which gave him repute through utilizing the background and techniques available to him. There are no intrinsically Greek elements in his art, which he simply evolved out of the rough Italian materials which have been examined in the works of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It is impossible to objectively countenance the belief that better skill in painting could have been found amongst the Greeks than amongst the Italians of the age of Cimabue.

It is sufficient that we shall be able to agree with Vasari in thinking that Cimabue was the first Italian who gave an impulse to progress in the arts of drawing and painting at a time when both were in a state of atrophy. It may be that he was not only sensible of the necessity for a change, but proud of having helped to bring it on. We read in the *Purgatorio* how conscious he was of holding the field which Giotto later wrested from him. In light of the commentary regarding his destruction of even slightly criticised works, the apparent admiration of his contemporaries was such that the occurrence of such an action is hard to imagine. Either way, it is definitely in contrast with the popular local anecdote of the region, according to which the *Madonna Rucellai* (a work erroneously ascribed to him for centuries), when finished, was so admired that when taken to its place of exhibition in Santa Maria Novella,

Cimabue,
Saint John the Evangelist,
c. 1301-1302.
Mosaic.
Apse, Cathedral of Pisa, Pisa.



it was carried in procession preceded by a band of trumpeteers, only after the mightiest lords and patricians of Florence had been invited to see it in the painter's rooms. It can now be found in the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence[2].

It is equally difficult to assign a date to the beginning of Cimabue's independent practice as a painter and to say when the *Madonna* of Santa Maria Novella was first placed on the altar, where it continues to stand. "We must be content to accept the fact that, for the time in which it was executed, the *Madonna Rucellai* is a masterpiece."

In this great and important picture, the Virgin is represented in a red tunic and blue mantle, her feet rest on an open-worked stool and she sits on a chair hung with a white drapery flowered in gold and blue, supported by six angels kneeling in threes above each other. A delicately engraved nimbus surrounds her head and that of the infant Christ on her lap, who is dressed in a white tunic and purple mantle shot with gold. A dark-coloured frame surrounds the picture and its gables, which are delicately traced with an ornament and interrupted at intervals by thirty medallions on gold backgrounds, each of which contains the half-figure of a saint. The face of the Madonna is marked by a tender and melancholy expression, the infant is well-shaped and not wanting in animation; the group displays a rare amount of maternal affection. The attitudes of the angels, the movement of the heads, and the elegance with which the hair is wound around the cinctures, falling in locks on the neck, are all pleasing to the eye. The energetic mien of some prophets is striking. There is a certain loss of balance, caused by the weight of the Virgin's head as compared with the slightness of her frame. The features are designed in a way typical to the thirteenth century, softened, as regards the expression of the eye, by closed lids and an exaggeration of elliptical form in the iris. The nose starts from a bony protuberance, and is depressed at the end; the mouth and chin are, as usual, small and prim. In Christ, the same coarse nose is united to a half-open mouth and large, staring eyes, with features which may be considered too masculine and square. The hands of both Virgin and Child are remarkable for the length of the tapered fingers, their wide separation near the palm and the stiffness of their articulations; the feet are quite conventional in shape. In the grouping of the angels, the absence of all true notions of composition is striking. Their frames are slight for the heads, though their movements are more natural and pleasing than those of earlier artists. In the setting of drapery, Cimabue shows no sensible progress, but he softens the hardness of the fine engraved outlines, and he gives the flesh-tints a clear and carefully fused colour, imparting the surfaces with some of the rotundity which they had lost. With him vanish the old contrasts of half tones and shades. He abandons line shadowing for a careful stippling which follows and develops form. He relieves the general verde underlayer with ruddy shadows and warm lights. A flush tinges without staining the cheeks and lips. Unity and harmony are provided by a system of final

Cimabue,
Crucifix, c. 1272. 336 x 267 cm.
Church of San Domenico, Arezzo.

Cimabue,
Saint Francis.
Museo della Porziuncola, Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, Assisi.

[2] Note: It has since been discovered, through the emergence of a contract found in the records of Florence, that the *Madonna Rucellai* of Santa Maria Novella was in fact painted by Duccio in 1285, while the picture subject to the triumphal procession was a certain *Madonna Majesty*, also by Duccio, which was taken from his workshop to the Opera del Duomo in Siena. It has also since been suggested that many of the paintings ascribed to Cimabue were probably Duccio's, who was his contemporary rival. These inconsistencies will be fully explained in successive sections.

glazes, which, having now in part disappeared, exaggerate the paleness of the flesh. The draperies are painted in lively and transparent colours; reds, gently harmonising with the flesh, along with brilliant blues and rosy pinks. In ornamentation, there is more taste and a better subordination than older works.

From the date of this altarpiece, the Florentine school began to expand. Without it the superiority of Cimabue over his predecessors would remain unexplained, the principal link of artistic history in Florence would be lost and Giotto's greatness would be difficult to understand. There are companion pictures to that of Santa Maria Novella – one at the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence, another in the Louvre. For various reasons neither of them gives a totally unequivocal idea of the master.

The altarpiece of Maestà Santa Trinita at the Galleria degli Uffizi may rank high as regards composition and the study of nature, but the old types are obstinately maintained in it, and the colour has been altered from such a variety of causes that the qualities of Cimabue can hardly be traced any longer.

Cimabue here represents the Virgin of more than natural stature, enthroned with the child Christ in the act of benediction on her lap. The chair on which she sits is supported by eight angels, and her feet are on a stool resting on four arches, in which prophets stand. She is perhaps more natural in attitude and head than in the previous example, but Cimabue has not given as much care to her delineation as would be expected. The outlines are coarser, the frame more robust than elsewhere. But a wild energy characterises the two prophets in the central niche.

In the *Madonna and Child in Majesty* in the Louvre, the old ornamented frame, with its twenty-six medallions containing busts of saints, is reminiscent of that of the *Madonna Rucellai* (p. 74), and shares much of its character, though apparently more carelessly executed. Originally in San Francesco in Pisa, this altarpiece may be taken as evidence of the painter's stay in that city, when at the close of his life he held the office of *capo-maestro* of the mosaics of the Duomo. But other pictures by Cimabue in Florentine churches and collections call for notice before we turn to the mosaics of Pisa.

A large crucifix in the sacristy of Santa Croce at Florence is still attributed to him because a similar work of this kind was noted as his by Vasari and Albertini. The antiquated character of the painting may point to the master's early years and explain the pleasure with which the Florentines afterwards witnessed the more attractive art of the *Madonna* of Santa Maria Novella.

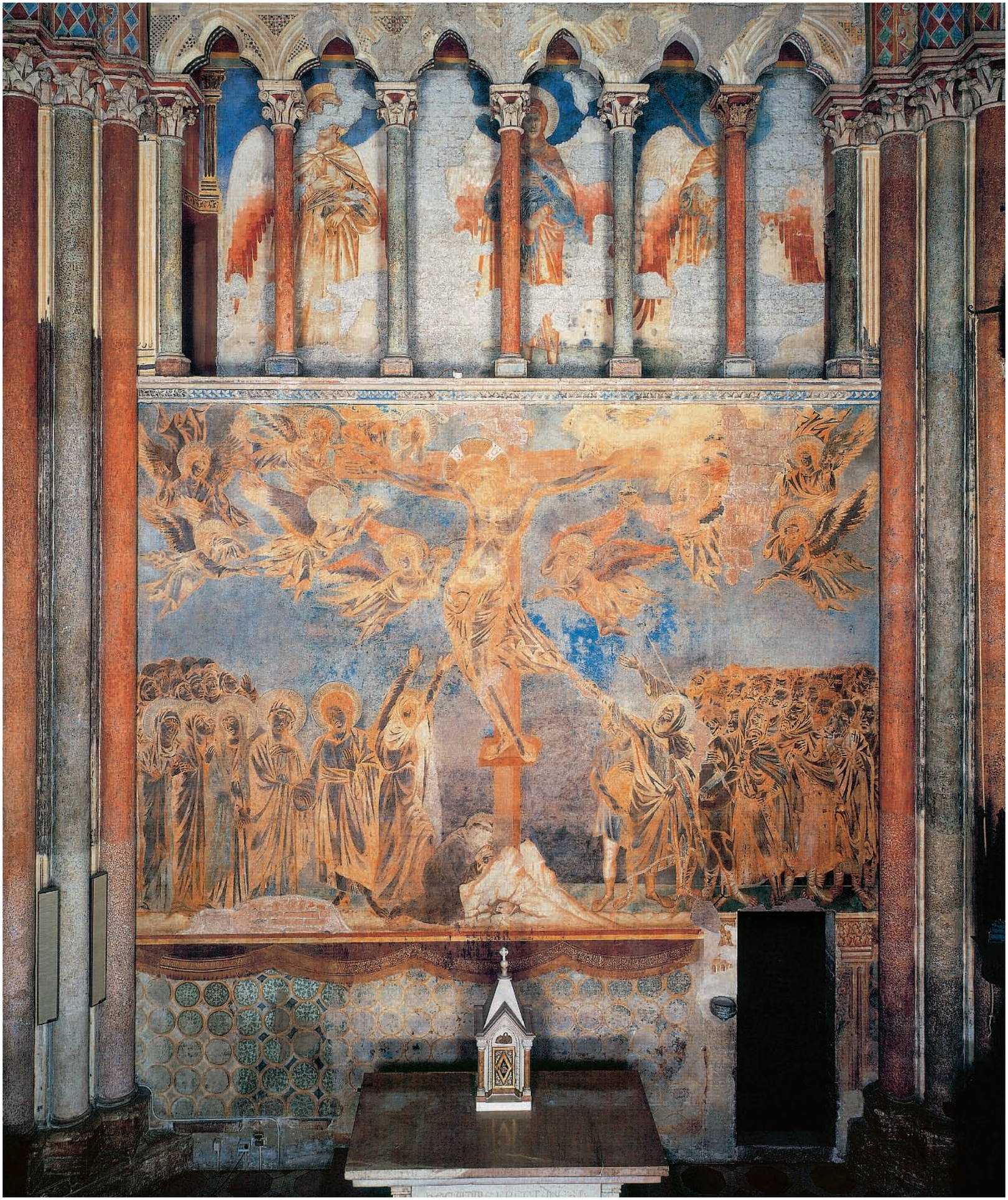
An altarpiece which once stood in a chapel in Santa Croce now forms part of the collection of the National Gallery in London. It represents the Virgin, sized larger than life, with the infant Christ on her knee being adored by six angels. It is a pity that time and accidents should have robbed this piece of many of the characteristics which mark Cimabue's style. But some fragments remain to justify the nomenclature.

The exact time of Cimabue's arrival at Pisa is not known, but the books of the cathedral tell us that he was employed there in May 1301 with Francesco of San Simone, Lapo of Florence, Duccio of Siena, and other painters, in producing the *Majesty*, a large mosaic in the apsis of the Pisan Cathedral. In November of the same year, Cimabue and his partner, Nucchulus Apparecchiati, were contracted to paint an altarpiece with a predella for the brethren of the hospital of Santa Chiara of Pisa; and although it appears that the altarpiece never materialised, the mosaics are still in existence and give a sufficient idea of the master's range of ability. That the Pisans should employ Cimabue to design the mosaics of their

Crucifixion (detail), c. 1130.
Mosaic.
Apse of the Church of San Clemente, Rome

Workshop of Cimabue,
Angel.
West triforium, left transept, Upper Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.

Cimabue (attribution),
The Adoration of the Lamb.
Fresco.
Left transept, Upper Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.



Duomo and, for his sake, supersede their old capo, maestro Francesco, and that the latter should not only yield to Cimabue but also labour in his company, is one of the strongest proofs which can be adduced to show that the Pisans were unable to find a master equal to the Florentine in their own school.

Christ enthroned in Glory between the Virgin and St. John Evangelist, in the apsis of the Duomo of Pisa, was probably the last of Cimabue's labours, as, according to Ciampi, the figure remained unfinished. Unfortunately, the mosaic has suffered excessive damage. In Christ, the feet and other parts; in the Virgin, the face; and in St. John, subordinate portions have been deprived of their original character through restoration. Yet, in the forms and features of these figures, and in the colossal overweight of Christ, the manner of Cimabue can be discerned. He gives Christ a melancholy rather than grim expression, and a certain majestic air of repose in his attitude and features. The head is of circular shape, which had never been lost in Italy since it was first conceived by an artist of the Roman catacombs. The brow is still heavily projected and wrinkled, but the eyes have lost the gaze of the degenerate period and the features are not without regularity and proportion. Thus, Cimabue, who had reformed the type of the Virgin, moulded that of Christ into a more appealing shape. To the bending figure of the Evangelist he also gives a certain languid reverence peculiarly his own. Finally, as a mosaist, he proves himself superior to the artists of the baptistery of Florence, and even to Gaddo Gaddi, whose works at Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome are also evidence of the impulse given to Florentine art. Cimabue's architectural credentials are also certified by the fact that he was employed, in conjunction with Arnolfo Lapi, in the construction of the church of Santa Maria del Fiore, the cathedral of Florence.

Of Cimabue's death, Vasari gives an incorrect account so far as he registers its occurrence in 1300. Pisan records prove his existence in November 1302, of the Pisan year, which would be 1301 of the Florentine reckoning. After that date his artistic trace is lost. It can therefore be deduced that after having lived for more than sixty years in great honour and renown, he died in Florence while engaged on the mosaics of the Duomo of Pisa and was carried from his house in the Via del Cocomero to the church of Santa Maria del Fiore, where he was buried. The following epitaph was inscribed above his tomb:

> *Credidit ut Cimabos picturæ castra tenere;*
> *Sic tenuit vivens — nunc tenet astra Poli.*[3]

It has been recounted that his school of painting in Florence had many pupils; among them, one who was destined to take the scepter from his hand and fill all of Italy with his fame — and who, but for him, would allegedly have kept sheep in the Tuscan valleys all his life — the glorious Giotto, of whom we are to speak presently. His residence and labours at Assisi, where many wall paintings in his style are preserved, cannot reasonably be called into question. But as the study of his works in San Francesco of Assisi involves the whole question of the rise of Giotto, it will be necessary to devote a special chapter to this sanctuary.

Cimabue,
Crucifixion, c. 1280-1283.
Fresco, 690 x 350 cm.
Left transept, Upper Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.

Cimabue,
Crucifixion (detail),
c. 1280-1283.
Fresco, 690 x 350 cm.
Left transept, Upper Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.

Cimabue,
Crucifixion (detail), 1283.
Fresco, 690 x 350 cm.
Left transept, Upper Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.

[3] Translation: "Cimabue thought himself master of the field of painting;
While living he was so — now, he holds his place among the stars of heaven."

Cimabue and the *Rucellai Madonna*

Nowhere does the local patriotism of Florentine writers more powerfully manifest itself than in their accounts of early Tuscan artists. Since the latter half of the fifteenth century there has been a succession of writers who have sought to prove that the whole credit of the revival of the art of painting in Italy belonged to Florence. "It became an axiom with Tuscan historians that every great artist" in Siena or "in northern Italy about whose artistic education they knew little or nothing must have been initiated into the art of painting in Florence," and that every important early picture or fresco that could not be proved to be by an artist of another school was by a Florentine master.

They were not content with hymning the mighty genius of Giotto, for Giotto had contemporaries of other schools, who, though lesser artists, were also innovators. They were anxious to show that, in the 13th century, when all was darkness elsewhere, the new light was already shining in the city by the Arno.

Consequently, at the commencement of the fifteenth century, it became the fashion to magnify Cimabue, to antedate his career and attribute all early Tuscan pictures of merit to him. Cimabue was admirably held as the 'Father of modern painting'. The evidence of contemporary documents and early references to Cimabue do not at all justify the prejudiced statements of patriotic Florentines. The evidence of documents only proves that he helped to execute the much-restored Majestas of the Pisa Duomo and that he painted a picture of St. Chiara at Pisa, a work which has since been lost.

Dante indeed tells us that Cimabue held the field in painting before Giotto; but Dante, exiled though he was, was deeply imbued with Florentinism, and was prone to exaggerate the achievements of his friends and of his friends' friends. If Dante did not know Cimabue personally, as an early tradition relates, he was a friend of Giotto, and both his Florentinism and his friendship with Cimabue's pupil, Giotto, led him no doubt to magnify the importance of the older master's achievement. Dante, like a true Florentine, had a strong prejudice against the Sienese and all of their works. He probably knew little or nothing of the achievement of the few great masters of the Roman proto-Renaissance. Dante's mention of Cimabue proves nothing more than that the artist was the greatest Florentine painter in the years that immediately preceded Giotto's recognition as a great painter, that is, in the concluding years of the thirteenth century.

The early commentators on Dante add but a little personal anecdote as comment upon the poet's brief allusion to the master. Ghiberti, writing a century after Cimabue's death, merely makes a passing mention of him as one of the painters in the Greek manner. It was not until the beginning of the 15th century that the Cimabue legend began to assume definite shape. At the time of the Renaissance, Florentines began to take a deeper interest in the achievements of great Florentines, writing "Lives" of them in imitation of the classical biographers. And as the golden age of Italian art began to wane, the voice of the art critic and the art historian began to appeal to a larger public audience. Florence was eager to show that her sons had led the way in the revival of the art of painting. She soon gained the ear of the civilised world, and persuaded people to take the achievement of the early Florentine painters at her own valuation.

Cimabue (with the collaboration of Giotto),
The Virgin and Child Enthroned,
late 13th century.
Rectory, Castelfiorentino.

Early in the sixteenth century, Albertini provided the first list of Cimabue's works: a heterogeneous catalogue of pictures by various artists, and the writer of the Book of Antonio Billi presented the embryonic Cimabue legend to the world. Out of this material, and the scanty references of earlier writers, Vasari constructed his amazing biography of Cimabue. The earlier of the "Lives" of the Aretine writer, his biographies of Giotto, Duccio, Agostino di Giovanni, and Agnolo di Ventura are full of inaccuracies, improbable anecdotes, and stories which have been proved to be inventions.

But his life of Cimabue is the most unveracious of all of them. He did not even know the painter's name, nor the name of his family, the date of his death, or the dates of his authentic works at Pisa. But to Vasari, his imagination was a very present help in tune of trouble. In his anxiety to exalt his hero by depreciating his contemporaries and predecessors, he began his biography with one of the most astounding of the many extraordinary misrepresentations to be found in his great work:

> The overwhelming flood of evils by which unhappy Italy had been submerged and devastated had not only destroyed whatever could properly be called buildings, but, a still more deplorable consequence, had totally exterminated the artists themselves, when, by the will of God, in the year 1240 Giovanni Cimabue, of the noble family of that name, was born in the city of Florence to give light to the art of painting.

This sentence contains at least four errors upon plain matters of fact. To comment on them is quite unnecessary. As we contemplate Vasari's statement there rises before us the noblest works of the greatest school of architecture that modern Italy produced, the school that arose in Vasari's own Tuscany, but not in Florence. We see Pisa Cathedral, the cathedral of Lucca, and San Michele in that city and the church of San Giovanni Fuorcivita's at Pistoia. I see, too, the noble abbeys of Tuscany built under French influence, St. Galgano in the Valley of the Merse, and St. Antimo near Montalcino. Not only did Tuscany produce great architects in the Middle Ages, but before Cimabue rose to preeminence, there were flourishing schools of painting in Siena, Pisa, and Florence.

Just as Neapolitan writers provided the legendary Simone Napoletano with a list of works which belonged of right to Sienese and Florentine painters, so Vasari and other Florentine writers gave Cimabue, their local hero, a number of works by the great early artists of Rome and Siena. So eager were they to add to his list of pictures that, as we have seen, even Margaritone was laid under contribution.

Just as the *Coronation of King Robert* in San Lorenzo at Naples was filched from Simone Martini and given to a Neapolitan painter by his patriotic fellow countrymen, so, in Florence, a great work of a foreign artist, Duccio di Buoninsegna, was assigned to Cimabue. That the *Rucellai Madonna* was painted by Duccio can be demonstrated both by documentary evidence and by connoisseurship. First, let us consider the documentary evidence for this attribution.

In the Florence Archives there is to be found a copy of an agreement made by Duccio di Buoninsegna on 15 April 1285, with the Rector and officials of the Society of St. Mary Virgin to paint a Madonna for their altar in Santa Maria Novella. The *Rucellai Madonna* is, in all probability, the picture referred to in that document.

Cimabue,
Santa Trinita Madonna,
c. 1260-1280.
Tempera on panel, 385 x 223 cm.
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

The Chapel of the Society of St. Mary was at that time the chapel afterwards known as the Bardi Chapel, which is in the right transept of Santa Maria Novella. When the *Rucellai Madonna* appears in the sixteenth century it is found by Vasari hanging on the wall of the church just outside the Bardi Chapel. How it was that Duccio's picture was removed from its original position to this spot is easily explainable.

In 1335, the Chapel of St. Gregory passed into the hands of the Bardi of Vernio, who redecorated it and no doubt provided it with an altarpiece of their own choosing. Consequently, the *Madonna of the Confraternity of St. Mary Virgin* was moved from the chapel. But as its members continued to meet in the right transept, the picture was placed near its old position on the wall outside the Bardi Chapel, where Vasari saw it. It was subsequently removed into the Rucellai Chapel, and came to be known as the *Rucellai Madonna.*

The two historians of Santa Maria Novella, P. Fineschi, who wrote in 1790, and Mr. Wood Brown, who wrote in 1902, maintain, in defiance of popular opinion, that this picture is a work of Duccio. There is no mention of any work by Cimabue in any of the records of the convent.

But the documentary evidence for this attribution would not suffice were it not supported by connoisseurship. Professor Wickhoff and Dr. J.P. Eichter have both contended that the picture is a work of the Sienese school. Dr. Eichter, in fact, after a careful examination of the altarpiece declared that it in no way differed from Duccio's great Majesties in Siena. The present writers can indeed detect some slight differences in style between the two pictures, but only such as one would expect to find in two works painted by the same artist at a distance of 25 years apart, in a period of rapid development in the art of painting.

In its forms, colour, and technique, the *Rucellai Madonna* is entirely Sienese. The altarpiece at Santa Maria Novella is an early work and thus exhibits the peculiarities of Duccio's early style. Something of a Byzantine stiffness and convention is, of course, to be found in it. In the drawing of the drapery we do not find the same knowledge of the human form, the same freedom that manifests itself in Duccio's last great masterpiece. And whilst the child in this picture differs but little from Duccio's later representations of the infant Christ, the features of the Virgin remind us in some respect of his Byzantine predecessors.

But these differences do not in any way affect our contention that the *Rucellai Madonna* is by Duccio. For in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena is an undoubted early work of the Sienese master, in which these same peculiarities are found. There is, too, a close connection between the *Rucellai Madonna* and the works of some of Duccio's followers, such as Segna di Buonaventura, who, like some of Fra Angelico's pupils, copied in some particulars their master's earlier technique. It would be easy to trace the relationship of the Santa Maria Novella altarpiece to Segna's altarpieces at Castiglione Fiorentino and Citta di Castello, and to the Madonna of Duccio's school, a work is attributed to Cimabue in the National Gallery in London. The angels in the picture in London are of a similar type to those of the Majesties and the infant resembles the representation of the child Christ in the little *Madonna* of Duccio in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena to which we have already alluded.

Cimabue (attribution), *The Virgin Bidding Farewell to the Apostles,* c. 1280-1283. Apse, Upper Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.

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It is easy to account for the Florentine legend of the triumphal procession of the *Rucellai Madonna* from Cimabue's house to Santa Maria Novella. The student of comparative mythology knows that a striking story, true or imaginary, belonging to one culture or society was often borrowed altogether or in part by a neighbouring people. Now, whilst we can find no earlier allusion to this alleged triumphal reception of a Madonna of Cimabue than that written by the author of the *Book of Antonio Billi* — an author who wrote about two and a half centuries after the event is supposed to have taken place — we have unimpeachable evidence that a triumphal reception similar to that described by Vasari was actually given to Duccio's great Siena altarpiece, when on 9 June 1311, it was conveyed from Duccio's house, near the Porta a Stalloregi, to the Siena Duomo.

On that day, a chronicler relates, a public holiday was proclaimed in Siena. All shops and offices were closed. With great pomp, the bishops and clergy of Siena, the priors of the Nine and other officials of the Republic, and a great concourse of citizens bore the noble ancona to its appointed place. The account of this event given by the anonymous chronicler is confirmed by contemporary documents (see Arch, di Stato, Siena, Libro del Camarlingo del Comune, June 1311).

This story of the procession of Duccio's *Maestà* no doubt reached Florence, and was told and retold there. Through the course of time, the name of the Sienese artist was forgotten, but Cimabue's name was kept fresh in men's minds by Dante's eulogy of him. Ultimately, by a quite natural process, the name of the Florentine painter took the place of Duccio's in the traditional narrative. Finally, when, in the time of the Renaissance, the *Rucellai Madonna* was attributed to Cimabue, the transplanted story of the procession of the *Maestà* was naturally attached to that great picture.

Naples affords an analogous example of theft. She also stole the story of the procession of the picture and bestowed it upon her shadowy Simone Napoletano, to whom she also gave such Sienese works as Simone Martini's *Coronation of King Robert*. And local patriotism was even stronger in Florence than in Naples.

We conclude then, that the *Rucellai Madonna* is a work of Duccio, and that to scientific criticism, Cimabue as an artist is an unknown person; further, we believe that Giotto, the real founder of the Florentine school, owed more to Pietro Cavallini and the Roman masters on the one hand and to Nicola and Giovanni Pisano on the other, than to any early Tuscan painters.

If his existence is still to be given the benefit of the doubt, Cimabue had several remarkable contemporaries. The greatest of these, and certainly the greatest artist of his time, was the sculptor Nicola Pisano. The works of this extraordinary genius that have been preserved to our time are so far beyond all contemporary art of the time in knowledge of form, grace, expression, and intention, that if indisputable proof of their authenticity did not exist, they would be inexplicably incredible.

On a comparison of the works of Cimabue and Pisano, it is difficult to conceive that Pisano executed the bas-reliefs of the pulpit in the Cathedral of Pisa, and the scriptural histories which adorn the facade of the Duomo at Orvieto, while Cimabue was painting the frescoes in the church of Assisi. He was the first to leave the stiff monotony of the traditional forms for the study of nature and the antique. The story says that his emulative fancy was excited early by the beautiful antique sarcophagus on which the

Barna da Siena, *The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine*, 1340-1350. Tempera on wood, 138.9 x 111 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

story of *Phaedra and Hippolytus* is sculptured. The body of Beatrice, one hundred years before, was laid in this sarcophagus; she was the mother of the famous Countess Matilda. In the time of Nicola it was inserted into the exterior wall of the Duomo of Pisa; as a youth he looked upon it from day to day, until the grace, life, and movement of the figures struck him — in contrast to the 'barbaric' art of his contemporaries — as nothing less than divine.

Many before him looked upon this marble wonder, but it did not speak to any of them as it spoke to him. He was the first, says Lanzi, to see the light of the work and follow it. There is an engraving after one of his bas-reliefs, a *Deposition from the Cross*, in Ottley's *School of Design*, which should be referred to by the reader who may have not seen his works at Pisa, Florence, Siena, and Orvieto. There are also several of his works engraved in Cicognara's *Storia della Scultura*.

Contemporaries of Cimabue – Gradual Rise of the Art of Florence

If the progress or the decline of painting could be traced by other evidence than that of pictures, we should be able to shed some light on the arts as they were practiced even so far back as the eleventh century in Florence. Unfortunately, records of painters, without knowledge of their works, are comparatively uninteresting, and Florentine mosaics and paintings of the eleventh or twelfth century are no longer preserved.

Fra Jacopo, who decorated some parts of the baptistery of Florence in 1225, has been described by the historian Baldinucci as a pupil of Tafi, to whom Vasari attributes the revival of the art of mosaics in the thirteenth century. But neither Vasari nor Baldinucci are to be trusted on this point, as will be elaborated further; Coppo di Marcovaldo must now be acknowledged as the earliest painter of Florence, whose extant work, executed before the first reform amongst the Florentines, carved his name in history.

Strange to say, Coppo di Marcovaldo is only known by an altarpiece in the church of the Servi in Siena, which once bore the date 1261 and the signature, "Coppus di Florentia". There are written records which show that he painted frescoes in the chapel of San Jacopo, as well as a *Madonna* and a crucifix in the cathedral of Pistoia between 1265 and 1275. But his picture clearly shows the depression from which Florentine art had not yet recovered. The subject represented is the Virgin on her throne with the infant Christ on her lap and two angels in the upper corners of the panel. Though exhibited in Siena, the picture displays Florentine weight and breadth in the development of the figures. The colours of the flesh are darkly embrowned, those of the draperies are without harmony, the surface is rough throughout, and there is no charm of distribution, attitude, features, dress, or ornament.

Coppo di Marcovaldo is not much above the level of Margaritone; however, he is not greatly below that of Tafi, of whom we shall presently observe, born almost at the same time as Cimabue, whom he surpassed in age by nearly twenty years.

According to Vasari, Andrea Tafi was born in 1213; he learnt the practice of mosaics from Appollonius, a Greek whom he served as a journeyman in Venice. Leaving Venice for Florence, both artists were commissioned to decorate the baptistery of Florence; Appollonius

Cimabue,
Madonna, St. Francis and Angels,
end of the 13th century.
Fresco.
Lower Basilica of San Francesco,
Assisi.

not only taught his disciple how to burn mosaic stones, but also how to fix them in stucco. During their joint labours, the two men executed a part of the decoration of the cupola of the baptistery, which comprises the *Powers*, *Thrones*, and *Dominions*, after which Tafi, having improved in skill, completed the 14 feet tall figure of Christ without help. The whole of this decoration Vasari describes as meritorious, considering the period in which it was executed, and sufficient indeed to give Andrea Tafi repute and cause him to be employed with Fra Jacopo of Florence and Gaddo Gaddi in Pisa, but ridiculous in its display of feeble design and feebler execution.

Vasari only suggests the date of Tafi's birth. He supposes that Tafi died, aged 81, in 1294; however, we are now aware that the artist was still living in 1320, when he was placed on the list of painters affiliated to the guild of surgeon apothecaries in Florence under the name of Andrea olim Ricchi, commonly called Tafi. He, therefore, must have been born as late as 1240, perhaps even later, thus making him an exact contemporary of Cimabue. Under these circumstances Baldinucci's theory that Tafi was taught by Fra Jacopo of Florence falls to the ground; equally so, Vasari's theory that the secret of baking and fixing mosaics had been lost in Tuscany and re-imported by a Greek from Venice.

The baptistery of Florence is an octagon, with an octagonal cupola.Under the lantern in the centre of the cupola, two stripes of decoration are set: in one, a ribbon of ornament, the second, a string of eight framings with angels in each of them. Lower down there is less uniformity of spacing. Three sides of the octagon above the tribune are distributed so as to represent a *Christ in Majesty* in the central space, with three compartments on each side of him; to the left, children borne by aged men to heaven; above them, the Virgin with six apostles; and higher still, angels carrying the emblems of the Passion, or blowing the last trumpet. To the right, Satan in his realm; above him the Baptist, with six apostles and angels; and above these again, angels with emblems of the Passion or blowing trumpets. On the five remaining sides of the cupola, the space is divided into four stripes, giving four series of five compositions: (1) Old Testament scenes, from the Creation to the Deluge; (2) Old Testament scenes, with incidents in the life of St. Joseph; (3) the Passion; (4) the life of John the Baptist.

The distribution of the subjects in the baptistery of Florence is probably as old as the twelfth century, but the execution is by numerous artists of different periods, and it would only be possible to trace the hand and the time if the mosaics had been preserved from the destructive effects of age and restoration. Amongst the wreckage we can still distinguish some segments of the cupola of an older and less defective make than others.

Amongst the scenes of the *Creation* there is one representing God with outstretched arms creating the sun and moon, which displays a fair division of proportions. It is better and probably earlier in date than others of the series, yet still inferior to parts of the *Last Judgment* in the tribune. Amongst the scenes of *The Passion* we may single out the *Crucifixion*, in which we find Christ bound to the cross with three nails, contrary to the custom of the thirteenth century which gives a nail to each limb, while other signs make it clear that the work is comparatively modern. It is, therefore, probably consistent with historic truth to affirm that these and some other parts of the mosaic decoration were executed by men under the influence of Giotto's teaching, and we shall find additional reasons for accepting this belief. The later and more advanced Florentine style is also

Cimabue,
The Virgin and Child Enthroned with Two Angels, c. 1300.
Tempera on panel.
Church of Santa Maria dei Servi, Bologna.

apparent in remnants of mosaic work between the windows, in which angels and prophets are depicted in the coloured ornament of the outer porticoes, facing the cathedral and the neighbouring hospital of the Bigallo.

The feeblest, but also the most injured and restored fragment of the mosaic decoration of the baptistery is the *Christ in Majesty*, which Vasari assigns exclusively to Tafi. It is equally remarkable for the largeness and grimness of the head, the deformity of the hands and feet, and the gaudiness of gold streaks in the drapery. Trivially rendered violent action, marks the angels and apostles at the sides of Christ, showing the hand of an artist who clung to the traditions of earlier ages. However, in *Satan and his Realm* we observe the spirit and conception of the Giottesques who liked to represent Hell with a figure of Lucifer sitting on dead bodies and loaded with serpents.

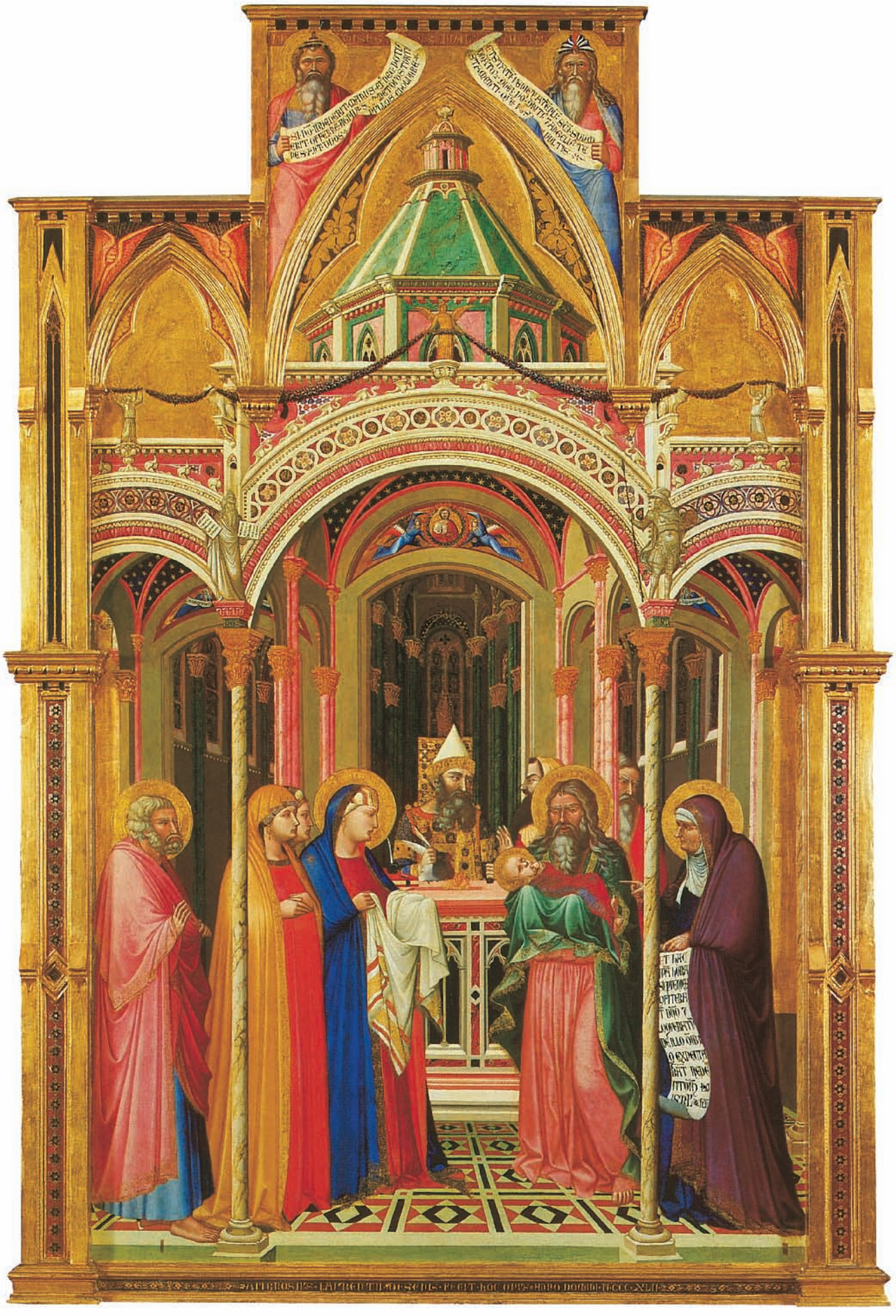
Tafi may be classed as one of the last artists of the period which immediately preceded the revival of Florentine painting. His timid and superstitious ways are described with as much gusto in the *Novelle of Sacchetti* as his grotesque style in the pages of Vasari.

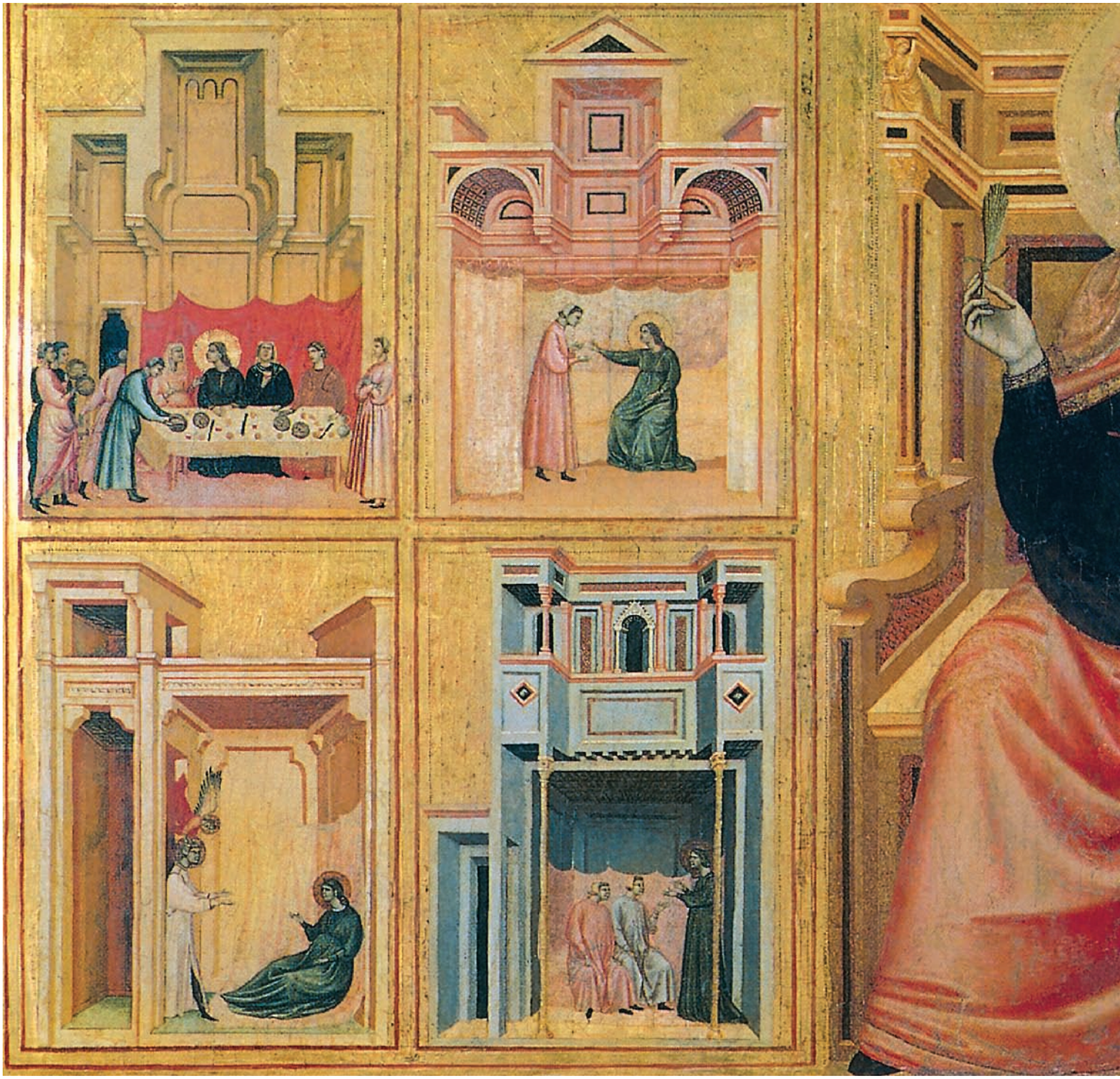
No record has been kept of the works assigned to Tafi at Pisa; no trace of his practice in the execution of pictures has been preserved. His weakness, in contrast with Cimabue, only makes the progress of the greater master the more conspicuous. It seems clear that when art was reduced to the state exemplified in the frescoes and mosaics or the crucifixes and pictures of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in Italy, it had found the lowest level to which it could possibly descend. We have partly traced the reaction in Assisi. There and in Florence, it was chiefly due to the action of the mendicant orders, whose generals were convinced that art in itself was a potent element of influence in attracting the masses to Florence. It led the Dominicans to adorn their convent church with pictures, and in the midst of these operations Cimabue arose and found the first incentives to progress. In Assisi, it led to the supersession of Giunta by Cimabue, and later on to the supersession of Cimabue by Giotto and his numerous disciples.

As a contemporary of Cimabue, and his friend, Andrea Tafi was ultimately also the greatest worker in mosaic of his time. The assertion of Vasari that he learned his art from the Byzantines, is now discredited, for it appears certain that the mosaic-workers of Italy (the forerunners of painting) excelled the Greek artists then, and for a century or two before. Andrea Tafi died, very old, in 1294; his principal works remain in the Duomo of St. Mark in Venice and in the Baptistery of San Giovanni in Florence. Another famous mosaic-worker, also an intimate friend of Cimabue, was Gaddo Gaddi, remarkable for being the first of a family illustrious in several departments of art and literature. It must be remembered that the mosaic-workers of those times prepared and coloured their own designs, and may, therefore, take rank with the painters.

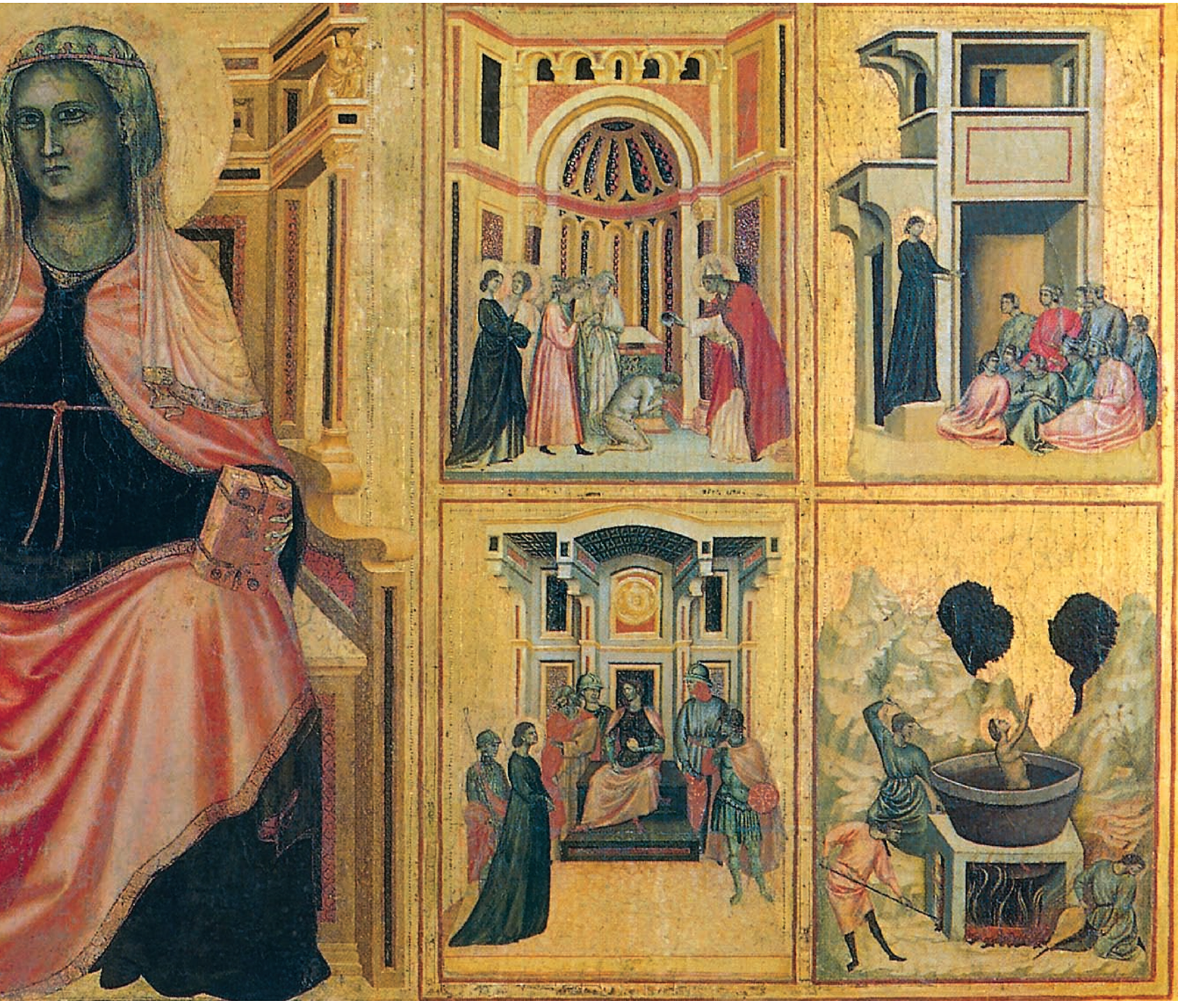
Further, there remain pictures by painters of the Siena school which date before the death of Cimabue, in particular a picture by a certain Maestro Mino, dated 1289, which is said to be pivotal for the invention and greatness of style that followed.

Ambrogio Lorenzetti,
The Presentation in the Temple,
1327-1332.
Tempera on wood panel,
257 x 138 cm.
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.





Master of St. Cecilia,
St. Cecilia Surrounded by Eight Episodes of Her Life, 1304 or later.
Tempera on wood, 85 x 181 cm.
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.



Duccio di Buoninsegna
c. 1255-c. 1318

Another Sienese painter was Duccio, who painted from 1282, twenty years before the death of Cimabue, until around 1339, and "whose influence on the progress of art was unquestionably great." To this painter was allotted, in the year 1308, the task of painting the great altarpiece for the beautiful Cathedral of Siena, dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The high altar then stood in the centre of the church, the panel was painted on both sides, as it was to be seen both from in front o and behind the altar. On one side, Duccio represented the history of Christ in 27 small compartments, beginning with the *Annunciation* and ending with the *Crucifixion*, which forms the largest and principal subject. On the other side of the panel was represented the Madonna and Child enthroned, on each side six prophets and ten adoring angels, and lower down, on each side, five saints — in total 44 figures. When finished, this picture was carried in grand procession, attended by music and rejoicing crowds, to its place in the Cathedral. In 1506, it was removed. The panel was afterwards sawed through into two parts: one side (the *Madonna*) now hangs in the chapel of Sant' Ansano, to the left of the choir; the other (the *Life of Christ*) on the right hand, opposite. They are counted among the most precious monuments of early art. The predella, which was beneath the *Madonna*, contained, as usual, small subjects from the history of the Virgin Mary; these, five in number, are now in the sacristy of the Cathedral. Besides this great altarpiece, only one undoubted picture by Duccio is known to exist. However, as has already been mentioned, he has been linked to many works across northern Italy and has been proposed as an alternative contender to Cimabue for the title of 'Father of modern painting'.

No record of Duccio's birth has been preserved, but a picture is said to exist in the Musée de l'École in Nancy with the painter's signature and the date of 1278. It is vaguely affirmed that his name is in Sienese records of 1282. That he was, in 1285, in Florence is certified by a most interesting contract, from which it appears that he bound himself on 15 April to execute a large altarpiece of the Virgin and Child, and other figures, in a chapel in Santa Maria Novella for the sum of 150 florins. In this record he is called Duccio and Duccius quondam Boninsegna of Siena. In spite of a clause which bound him to pay fifty florins as a fine for not performing his contract, it is not likely that he painted an altarpiece for Santa Maria Novella, for no picture of the kind is known to have existed there and it remains unmentioned by any historian. More conclusive, still, he seems to have been in Siena in October 1285 and to have been paid for the ornament of one of the books of the Biccherna, being apparently appointed to an office which up to that time had been filled by the Sienese Dietisalvi. He continued in that office at least until 1291, in which payments on that account were made to him. In December 1302, he was engaged on a Majesty for the altar of the chapel in the Palazzo Pubblico of Siena, whose size and importance can only be conceived from the sum which he had already received before its completion.

In October 1308, with Jacomo Giliberti Mariscotti as master of the works of the cathedral, Duccio declared himself ready to undertake the picture of the high altar. He promised, on condition of receiving 16 soldi per diem, to devote his whole time to the

Duccio di Buoninsegna, *Madonna Rucellai*, 1285. Tempera and gold on panel, 450 x 290 cm. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Passion of the Christ,* reverse of the *Maestà,* 1308-1311. Tempera on wood, 212 x 425 cm. Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena.

execution of that work, the panels and materials being furnished for his use. He went into harness at once, obtained an advance of fifty livres from Jacomo on 20 December, and diligently proceeded to fulfil his contract. Weeks, months, a year spent in continuous labour had not brought the vast and difficult work to completion, but, on 9 June 1310, it was finished and transported amidst public rejoicings — and within the framework of the aforementioned popular anecdote — from Duccio's shop in the Casa de' Muciatti, outside the gate Stalloreggi, to its place in the cathedral. Business was entirely suspended on this festive occasion; all the shops of Siena were closed. The archbishop headed the procession of clergy and friars; the "Nine" of the government, the officers of the Commune, the menfolk followed with tapers in their hands, and last came the women and children. All marched with great solemnity to the sound of trumpets and ringing of bells, the highest in rank or dignity clustering about the picture, and, undoubtedly, Duccio himself enjoying the popular enthusiasm and clamour. Fifty years before, the same lively and mercurial people had assigned to the Virgin on the high altar of the Duomo the signal "Victory of Monte-Aperto" and devoutly laid their pious and grateful offerings at the feet of the *Madonna delle Grazie*. Now, the victory was forgotten.

The *Virgin*, whose intercession had procured it, was deposed and transferred to a place of less honour; and Duccio became the hero of the hour. He deserved it. On a surface fourteen feet long and seven feet high, he had placed the Virgin, seated with the infant Christ in a vast throne, richly covered with tapestry and ornaments. Four angels reposed, with their heads on their hands, on the triangular back of the throne. Two more at each side held the arms with their hands and a file of six to the right and left formed the main body of the celestial

watchers. In front of these stood saints, while before these again, in adoration of the "Majesty of the Virgin", knelt the four bishops, protectors of Siena. On the front of the hexagonal stool of the throne, Duccio had written the words:

> *MATER . SANCTA . DEI . SIS . CAUSSA . SENIS . REQUIEI . SIS .*
> *DUCIO . VITA . TE . QUIA . DEPINXIT . ITA.*

This was not, however, an altarpiece intended to be seen from one quarter only; it was to be visible from both sides. So having depicted on the one hand the *Maestà*, Duccio divided the surface of the opposite face into 38 parts, devoting two thrown into one to the two principal scenes of the story he intended to illustrate, which was that of the *Passion*. Thus, starting from the left, where on a panel twice as high as its neighbour, he placed *Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem*, and unfolded the whole of the tortuous ordeal down to the meeting of Emmaus. The central composition in the upper course is a crucifix, and in the pediment are 18 scenes illustrative of Christ's history before the *Entrance into Jerusalem*, and after his *Ascension*. Dismembered and sawed in its thickness so that the faces are now parted, the *Maestà* of Duccio was removed from the high altar and placed in one end of the transept, whilst the 26 scenes forming the opposite side are at the end of the other.

This altarpiece, most of which is in good condition, is to Duccio what the Arena Chapel at Padua is to Giotto. It serves not merely to characterise the mariner of the great reformer of the school of Siena, and show what vigour and perfection he introduced, but it

Duccio di Buoninsegna,
Maestà (Madonna with Angels and Saints), 1308-1311.
Tempera on wood, 211 x 426 cm.
Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena.

foreshadows the future as it retraces the past. Continuing an old art whose types and forms he religiously maintained, Duccio set an example from which his successors hardly deviated, which they constantly repeated with only slight modifications, just as the Giottesques, after the death of Giotto, clung to his creations and repeated his forms of composition and spirit of delineation.

In the distribution of the principal scene of his altarpiece, the prominent stature of the Virgin enthroned in the midst of a triple row of angels and saints, Duccio preserved the order which was considered sacred during his time. In a break, however, from the art of his predecessors, he gave the Virgin a regular shape and good proportions.

The drapery of her mantle is simple and well cast and her attitude in the carriage of Christ graceful and easy. The face of the latter is gentle, plump, and regular, the forehead full and the short locks curly. A small mouth and eyes, no longer expressing terror or immobility in their gaze, contrast markedly with previous efforts in Siena. The action of the infant Christ is natural and kindly. The group has more grace than majesty or solemnity, and thus, from the initial rise of the school, its chief peculiarity was apparent. Broad muscular forms, heads generally large in contrast with the frame, round eyes imparting an expression of stern gravity, marked features and massive knotted hair and beards characterise the figures of Peter and Paul as they stand by the Virgin. A wild austerity appears in the features of St. John the Baptist; however face, form, and character are in the mould of the old period. A more rational definition of detail in the articulations and extremities of nude figures than before, and a tendency to smallness in the latter, are noticeable in the principal figures and in the subordinate ones in the pediment.

However, Duccio was better in depicting females as their proportions appear more accurate than those of males. A feminine reserve, a soft feeling in the long narrow faces, in spite of aquiline profiles; gentleness rather than grace makes them pleasing; draperies of good lines, free from angularity, contribute by their arrangement about the head and frame to an elegant ensemble. Large oval heads with hair brushed back and bound by cinctures fling the locks down profusely; a thin neck and slender hands and fingers also betray in Duccio a preference for the consecrated type of angels. Yet even these are graced by softness of features or tenderness of expression; those whose heads may be seen reposing so confidently on the back of the Virgin's throne are also not without charm. A new feeling was thus infused into the antique mould, producing a novel character at times, disclosing the earnestness of the struggle for a change at others. Drawn in with excessive firmness yet with the minutest care, the figures and exquisite tracery of ornament and embroidery reveal Duccio's taste, patience, and anxiety to use none but the very choicest materials. Fused and rounded with the utmost diligence, the tones combine powerful colour with lucid softness; however, the verde underlayer exercises its usual influence, peering through the lights and glazes and altering the general key of harmony. A certain flatness, caused by the absence of sufficient relief, is similarly striking, whilst at the same time, the planes of light and shade remain somewhat detached. Colour was already the best feature of the school founded by Duccio. A characteristic diversity marked the treatment of male and female figures, and ornament was tastefully but abundantly used.

Duccio, again, gave to the 26 scenes of the *Passion*, originally forming the reverse of the altarpiece, a clear impression of life and power and displayed talents of a high order. But, had

Duccio di Buoninsegna, *Maestà*, detail of *The Virgin Bidding Farewell to the Apostles,* c. 1308-1311. Tempera on wood panel. Museo dell'Opera Metropolitana, Siena.

he not exhibited in the exaggerated composition of form, action, and character of the persons represented particularly by the old schools, he would probably have been more highly appreciated. Like all those whom he followed or preceded, he had no great mean to guide him, and the decorous simplicity of the Florentines was out of his character.

In the manuscripts of the twelfth and previous centuries, in the scenes which explain or develop the interest of the crucifixions in early times, in the mosaics of Monreale or the bronze gates of Ravello and St. Raineri at Pisa, the typical compositions which Duccio reproduced can be found. It is in this vain that the leading genius of the school of Siena clung to the traditions which Florence rejected or altered. Duccio's *Christ on the Mount of Olives* is remarkable for the same packed company of apostles as that of the Monreale mosaists, differing from it only by the additional boldness of the attitudes. His *Christ in Limbo* is the old picture of Jesus, preeminent in stature, treading on the prostrate Lucifer, triumphant with the cross and banner as in the *Barberini Exultet* and the *Minerva manuscript* of the twelfth century, drawing the 'sinners' out of Hades, whose gates lie broken on the ground. The only change is in the execution and reflection of nature which marks the heads. In the *Noli me tangere*, again, Christ with the triple cross and banner, erect and colossal, as in the *Capture* of the Upper Church of Assisi, is worthy of attention for its new effort to produce ready action.

The vehemence of the early period is still marked in the *Magdalen*, whose expression is more of grief than longing. Duccio, in fact, repeated the typical episode of the *Barberini Exultet* at the very period when pilgrims to Assisi might admire the conception of the subject which Giotto had left there. Nothing finer was considered to have been produced in the olden time than the *Maries at the Sepulchre*, whether considered in reference to type or to form and action. Duccio could therefore have done no better than to copy it, as he did, representing the angel seated on the tomb and pointing out to the way taken by Christ to the Maries and the Virgin, who in a dramatic and sculptural attitude listen to the words. But, before him, the painters of the crucifixes of St. Marta at Pisa and of Lucca, and those of the Upper Church of Assisi, had set the example. In the *Deposition from the Cross*, where he likewise applied the typical arrangement and distribution known to the painters of the *St. Marta Crucifix*, the founders of the Ravello gates and the sculptors of Pisa and Lucca, Duccio appreciated and did not alter a composition

Duccio di Buoninsegna,
The Temptation of Christ on the Mountain, 1308-1311.
Tempera on wood, 43.2 x 46 cm.
The Frick Collection, New York.

Duccio di Buoninsegna,
Christ in Limbo (reverse side of his *Maestà*), 1308-1311.
Tempera on wood panel,
51 x 53.5 cm.
Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena.

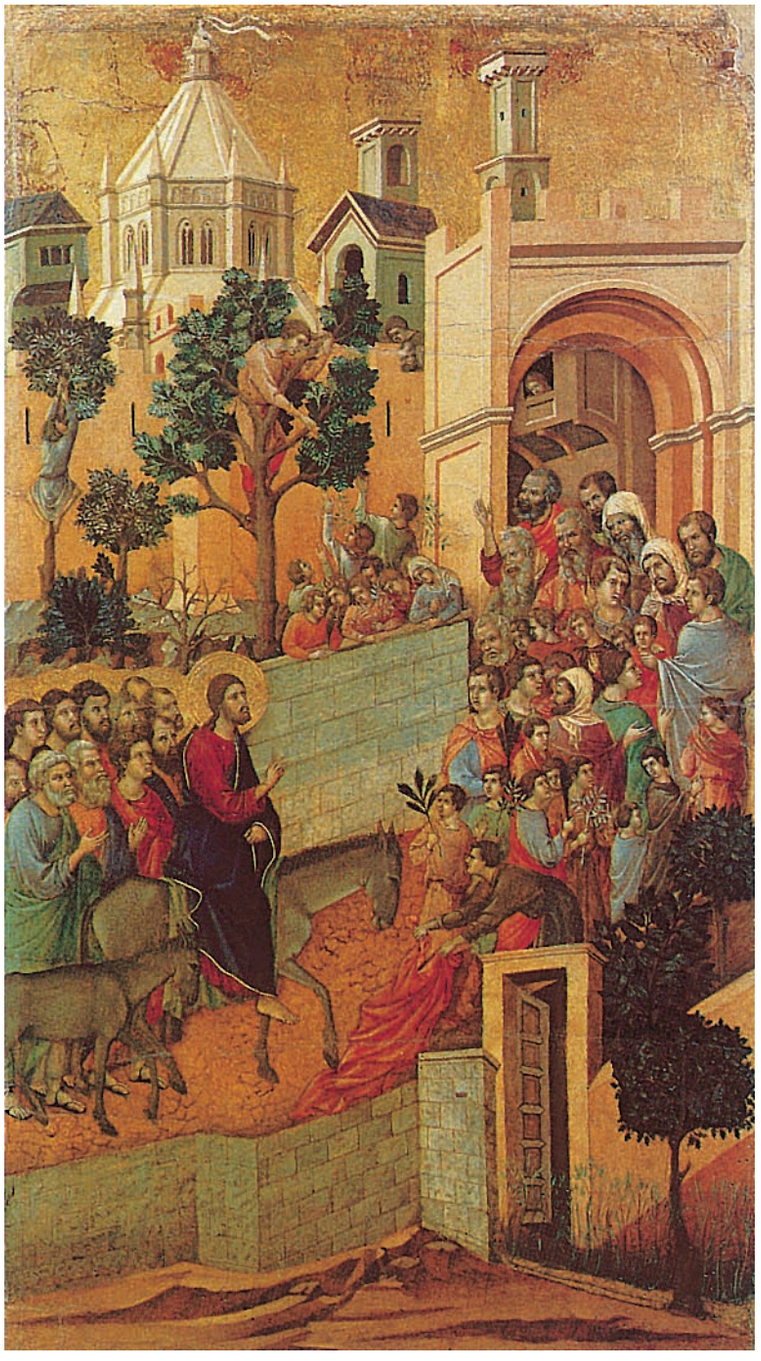
Ambrogio Lorenzetti,
The Effects of Good and Bad Government, 1339.
Fresco.
Palazzo Pubblico, Siena.

marked by dramatic incident and passion, which strangely enough the Giottesques previous to Antonio Veneziano entirely neglected. They preferred, while the Sienese left out, the Pieta: a subject admirably treated by Giotto and the Florentines. Without much nobleness of type or character, the *Christ* of Duccio has features of suffering; but the intelligence of form and anatomy displayed by the painter was great in light of the broader trends of the period. Still, he made no attempt to idealise like Giotto, and contented himself with an imitation of nature's flesh and bone in a somewhat vehement fashion. Similar force and exaggeration may be traced in the *Entombment*, where the passion natural to the mother embracing her son for the last time is rendered in an unusually intense degree.

The *Magdalen*, with her arms outstretched towards heaven, may be studied as the very reverse of that conceived by the Florentines, by Giotto in the *Crucifixion* of the Lower Church in Assisi, or in the *Pieta* of the Arena Chapel. This figure alone, in its force, might demonstrate that in Duccio an intimate study of nature predominated; that physical force came before decorous passion — religious character an accessory. Old types were well presented in their traditional garb, but with something beyond the old imitation of nature, more was not required. That this was the direction of thought in Duccio is shown in a composition where dramatic arrangement is combined with realistic action and a great study of nature in the development of muscular details. St. Peter sits in the midst of a group and warms the soles of his feet at a fire. On the left, a woman points at him with indignant decision, while he shrinks from her objurgations and obviously mutters the denial. The *Entrance into Jerusalem*, a double panel at the left lower angle of the altarpiece, opens the story of the *Passion*, and is a careful imitation of the subject, a tasteful miniature in colour and execution. The last scene of the *Passion*, equal in size to the preceding but occupying the centre of the altarpiece, is the *Crucifixion*, in which Duccio may again be compared with Giotto. Here it is at once clear that the two men were of a different artistic fibre.

The Christ of Duccio is not the caricature which we find in Deodato Orlandi or others of that time, but it also does not have the finely chosen form of Giotto. The body hangs supine on the cross. It is long and awkward in shape as in movement. Suffering is depicted with some realism in a face aged by pain and privation, and the high forehead and brow are contracted by spasms and disfigured with muscular projections. Hair streams wildly about. The figure is lean, long, and withered, outlined with an evident desire to render the anatomy of the nude, and thus sought out in the parts at the expense of the whole. Yet as the other figures possess more or less of the same defects, there is still a unity in the picture. The 14 angels who form a flight, as of birds round the top of the cross, are caught in that strangely powerful action which is ever-present even in the feeblest of the old models. This, in Duccio, is not only characteristic of the movements, but of the features. The nude of the thieves is not to be distinguished from that of Christ, but we may admire the great force and realism of the figures, and Duccio's display of flesh and muscle in them. Below, the action is divided into two principal groups somewhat theatrically arranged. To the left the Virgin with a long and slender form, sinks back into the arms of the Maries and women about her, clutching, as she swoons, at the Evangelist. To the right a multitude of soldiers, and in front the priests and people.

Pietro Lorenzetti,
Birth of the Virgin
(from Siena Cathedral), 1342.
Tempera and gold on wood,
188 x 182 cm.
Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena.



With respect to the 18 panels forming the pediment of this portion of the altarpiece, nothing can be added to that which has already been said. Duccio exhibited in this work alone the energy and power of a man superior to all in his immediate proximity; but, whether we consider the spirit of his composition, or his technical execution, he was not a pioneer because he remained true to old typical forms and to the technical methods that characterised both Cimabue and Deodato Orlandi. More masterly in his work than the former, he gave to Siena a title to claim and hold the position of a school of colour. At once the Giotto and Cimabue of his country, he was the most dramatic artist that Siena had produced, being rivalled in force only by the Lorenzetti and in grace only by Simone. Duccio's career closes in 1320, after which no record of his existence has been found.

The historians of Siena note a *Virgin and Child* by him in St. Donato of Siena, inscribed with the words, *DUCCIUS BONINSEGNE DE SENIS*. However, this picture has disappeared. A fair remnant of his manner, a small altarpiece of the *Crucifixion*, with the *Flagellation* and *Entombment* on the wings, in the *Brotherhood of the Madonna* below the Spedale of Siena, remained long a worthy example of his talent. In conception, composition, forms, types, and spirit, this was a picture reminiscent of the altarpiece of the Duomo and an interesting relic of Duccio. But in October 1860, the sides were removed, the centre was re-gilted and restored; the whole was so remodernised, it became deprived of its historic character and content. Its constituent parts are now shared by various different museums across the world.

The Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena contains two pictures by Duccio. The first of which, a *Virgin with Saints* and attendant scenes, damaged and discoloured in many parts and obliterated in others, is still in his manner; the second, also a *Virgin and Child* amongst saints, in which his style and technique are equally visible. *Christ in Benediction* on the central upper gable exhibits the form and character of another *Christ* in the topmost pinnacle of a complicated altarpiece in the same style, now in the chapel to the right as one enters the Spedale of Siena. This picture bears an inscription on the lower border of the central panel as follows: *DEL TEMPO DI MATTEO DI GIOVANNI*. The forgery, for such it most likely is, will deceive no one who can compare the altarpiece with those of Duccio and knows that Matteo di Giovanni lived between 1420 and 1495.

If Duccio left pictures behind at Pisa, Lucca, or Pistoia they have perished; and though Tolomei notices one of his works, and others are still shown at the latter place, they may be passed over as spurious.

One of Duccio's finest productions, a *Crucifixion*, *Virgin and Child* and attendant episodes, second only in prominence to the altarpiece of the Duomo of Siena, was in the collection of the late Prince Albert at Manchester, and can now be found in the Royal Collections in Hampton Court, near London.

Another picture of interest by Duccio is a triptych now in the National Gallery in London after having been in Pisa and in private collections in Florence. In New York, there is also a *Madonna and Child* in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, while other works ascribed to Duccio, including polyptychs, portable altarpieces, and stained-glass windows adorn numerous museums in Europe, as well as churches in Italy.

Duccio di Buoninsegna,
Entry of Christ into Jerusalem,
1308-1311.
Tempera on wood, 100 x 57 cm.
Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena.

Duccio di Buoninsegna,
Peter's First Denial of Christ before the High Priest Annas (from the back of the *Maestà* formerly on the high altar of Siena cathedral), 1308-1311.
Tempera on wood, 99 x 53.5 cm.
Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena.

Ugolino di Nerio
1280(?)-1349

Contemporary of and patriarch of the Sienese school along with Duccio, is Ugolino, respected by no authentic records, and of who only one picture has an inscription, without a date. Vasari's statement that he died in 1349, and Baldinucci's that he died in 1339, are equally unworthy of credit. It is affirmed that one Ugolino Neri, the grandson of Guido Guarnieri of Siena, lived in Siena in 1317; but another record also immortalises an unknown painter of 1324, Ugolino di Pietro. Additionally, copious evidence of the existence of one Ugolino Veri, a goldsmith, is in the Sienese records of 1329-1357. The latter is clearly not the man whose life Vasari has written, and Milanesi's guess, that Ugolino Neri is the painter alluded to by the *Aretine*, is but a guess. Nor, strange to relate, is it principally in Siena that we must seek the vestiges of an artist who not only followed the old style like Duccio, but who exaggerated it even more than that master. It is in Florence that Ugolino laboured most and there in which his only inscribed picture occupied a place in the church of St. Croce, and that a number of works in his peculiar manner are preserved. Ugolino, during his stay in Florence, was employed by the Franciscans of St. Croce to paint a picture for the high altar of the church, and as Arnolfo did not begin the edifice until 1294, we may assume that Ugolino's work was subsequent to that date. Again, as there is reason to believe that Ugolino executed a *Madonna* on a pilaster of Orsanmichele, as this building was erected by Arnolfo in 1284, and the so-called miracles of that Virgin took place in 1291, some idea as to the period in which Ugolino painted in Florence can be formed.

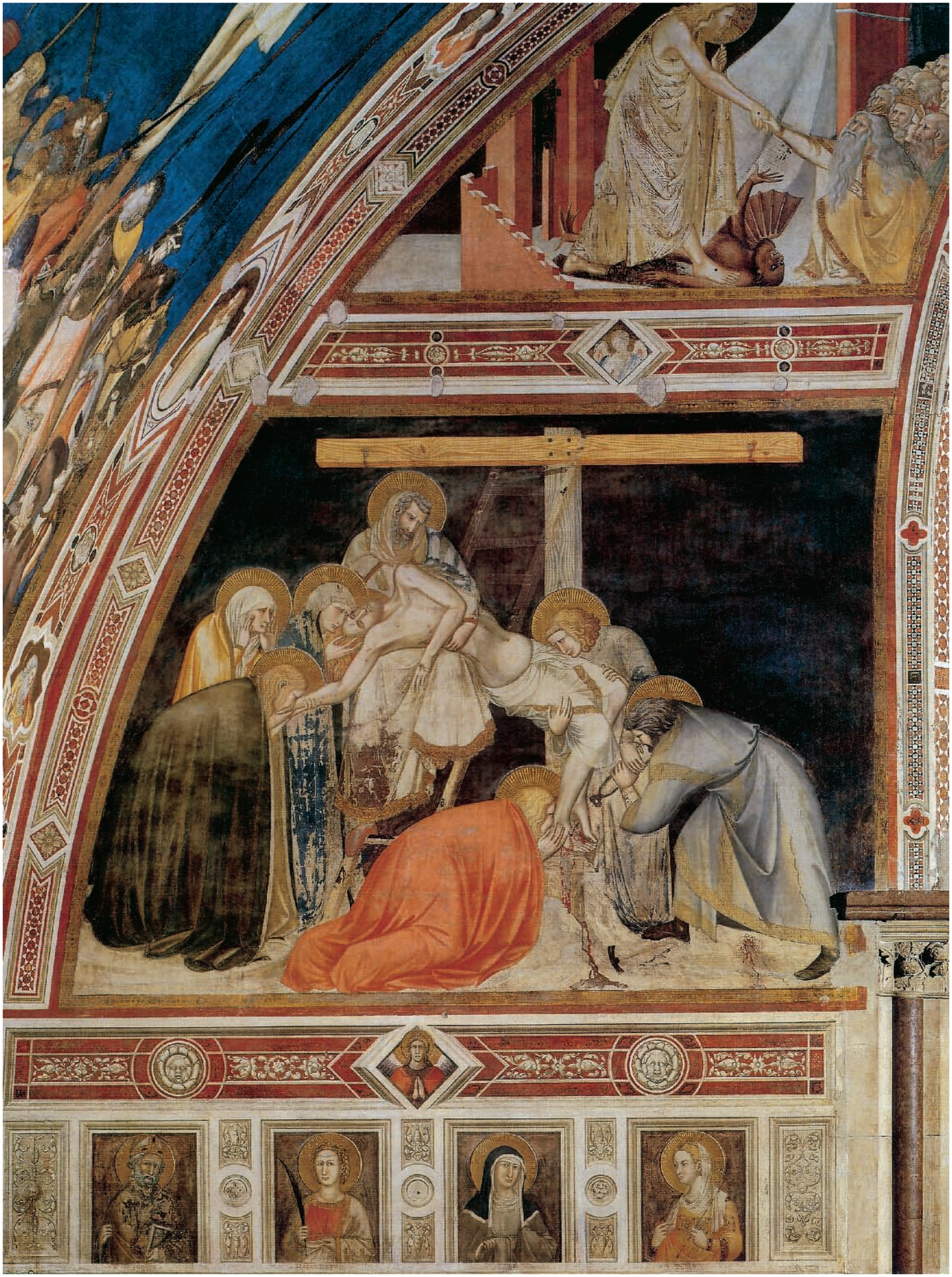
The altarpiece of St. Croce was a truly Sienese production in form, with the *Virgin and Child Enthroned* in the centre, saints and apostles in higher courses, scenes from the *Passion* on the pediment, and the whole work signed *UGOLINO DE SENIS ME PINXIT*. Like most pictures of that time, Ugolino's altarpiece was withdrawn from its place of honour, and stowed away. It remained unheeded for centuries in the dormitory of the convent, where Delia Valle saw it, and, having been sold for a song, found its way in fragments to the Ottley collection, which now constitute some of the eleven panels in the National Gallery in London. Others can also be found in the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Louvre, and in the Church of Misericordia in San Casciano, Italy. In these, a colour and technical execution like those of Duccio, Simone, and other Sienese, may be traced. The figures are long and bony, the movements more vehement and exaggerated than those of Duccio.

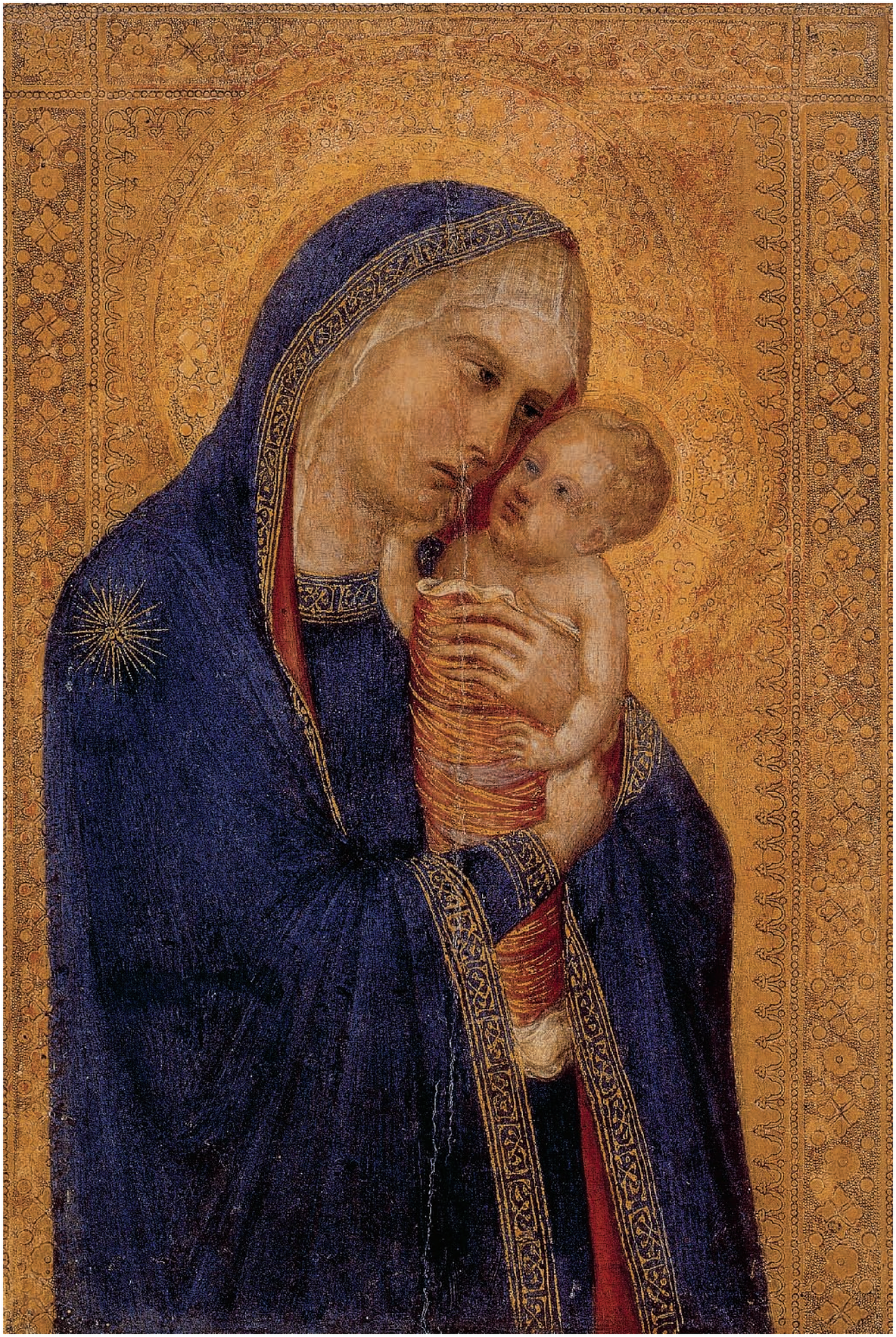
A crucifix at the Servi of Siena, in which Christ has seven feet of stature, is assigned to Stefano Sassetta, a painter of the fifteenth century. It is true, the manner approaches that of Sassetta, yet the painting seems to be of an older time and of a style such as that found in Ugolino.

To him may be assigned the repainted heads of the *Virgin and Child* by Guido in St. Domenico of Siena; the technical style of the restored parts being more reminiscent of his comparative adherence to old methods than of Duccio.

A damaged altarpiece in the Sienese form, with the *Virgin and Child Enthroned* between four saints, Christ and saints in the gable points, the *Ecce Homo* and saints in the pediment, is preserved in the sacristy of St. Croce in Florence, and is like one of his works.

Pietro Lorenzetti,
Descent from the Cross, 1320 or later.
Fresco.
Lower Basilica of San Francesco,
Assisi.





The colossal *Madonna* in the tabernacle of Orsanmichele, with the infant Christ on her knee caressing her and holding a bird, and the glory of eight angels, of whom two in front wave censers, have characteristics of the close of the fourteenth century and something of Sienese peculiarity. Lorenzo Monaco is much more likely to have painted them than Ugolino. Vasari does not pretend that Ugolino produced a *Virgin* on panel at Orsanmichele, but that he executed it on a pilaster — a statement in which he is confirmed by the testimony of Villani.

A *Coronation of the Virgin*, with the usual choirs of angels and saints about the throne, once exhibited in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence under Ugolino's name, was supposed to be the original referred to by Vasari as having been painted for the high altar of Santa Maria Novella. But the style was of a less developed artist, of the time of Agnolo Gaddi.

Vasari finally alludes to a *Crucified Christ*, a *Magdalen* and *Evangelist*, with two pairs of kneeling monks at the sides, executed by Ugolino for the chapel of Ridolfo de' Bardi at St. Croce. No such picture exists there now.

Pietro Lorenzetti,
Virgin and Child (facing left),
between 1340-1345.
Lindenau-Museum, Altenburg.

Ugolino di Nerio,
The Virgin and Child, c. 1315-1320.
Tempera on wood panel, 69 x 47 cm.
Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Segna di Bonaventura
Active c. 1298-1331

Another painter of the early school in Siena who remained partial to the oldest forms, and who is consequently related to Ugolino more so than to Simone or the Lorenzetti, was Segna di Bonaventura, who is said to have finished a picture for the Biccherna in 1305-1306, part of which, along with his signature, can be found in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena. A better, and previously unknown example of this master is a *Majesty*, with the usual garland of angels surrounding the back and arms of the throne, and four miniature donors kneeling in the foreground, in the church of Castiglione Fiorentino, which is no great distance from Arezzo. This picture, in the same form as the *Majesties* of Cimabue and Duccio, bears an inscription hitherto concealed by the beading of a black frame to the following effect:

HOC OPUS PINXIT SEGNA SENENIS.

The infant Christ, standing, draws together a yellowish veil that covers his mother's head, and with his left hand keeps his own little red mantle around his neck. A certain majesty marks the Virgin's form and proportion.Her face, though of no new type, but oval, broad at the brow and small at the chin, is enlivened by large but regular eyes. Sharp and precise lines confine the parts and mark the details, a wrinkle uniting the brow over a long nose somewhat depressed at the end. A fairly proportioned neck supports the head, whose drapery is covered by the yellow veil. Thin long-fingered hands are an additional peculiarity of the Sienese, thumbs resting on no muscular base and having no apparent bond with the rest of the parts. Aged features, yet plump cheeks and swelling lips, a high round forehead, gazing eyes and a round, balled nose are marked in Christ, whose nude form betrays an incomplete anatomical study by Segna. The toes are lined as if on lifeless blocks in the old style; but the drapery is broad in fold and richly shot with gold lines. The two angels, resting their heads on the back of the throne, now a usual feature in Siena, are here, one of them all but erased. The forms and features of the celestial messengers, of whom six surround the Virgin, are old and ugly, the eyes being large and open, the lower lips overhanging and the necks slender and long.

On the extreme angles of the foreground, St. Gregory, with a diadem and book, is a feeble figure of angular forms, and St. John the Baptist with a protruding lower jaw, stand guardians of four donors whose names are inscribed beneath their kneeling figures: Mona Vanna to the left behind her husband, Goro di Fino, Mona Miglia to the right behind Fina de Bonajuncta. This well-preserved and most interesting example of Segna shows that the master practiced the methods common to Ugolino, whose soft and lustrous surface he equalled.

At the top of the stairs leading into the convent of St. Francesco in Castel Florentine, a not ungraceful *Madonna* in Segna's manner may be seen. There is, however, some affectation of singularity in the Virgin's manner of holding the infant Christ. Her hands are between his legs, and the frame of the Child is unusually large and disproportioned.

A large crucifix in the Abbey of St. Fiora at Arezzo reveals the same hand, and the star-formed panels at the base summit of the cross are like those of the crucifix at the Servi in Siena.

The Master of the Misericordia, *Madonna of Misericordia (Mercy)*, c. 1373.
Tempera on wood, 63 x 34 cm.
Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence.

ADVOCATA·DIVERSITATIS·

ANGELS ON DESCENDS OF CLOUDS

Segna's inscribed works at the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena are four panels representing the *Virgin*, *St. Paul*, *John Evangelist*, *Bernard* and another saint, all painted in the lean character specific to the master, fine in drapery, and not without an intention of grace in the movement of the Virgin. Time has, unfortunately, proved injurious to the surfaces which represent flesh. Originally executed by Segna for the Abbazia di St. Salvatore alia Berardenga, the sword of Saint Paul is signed with the words:

SEGNA ME FECIT.

In the National Gallery of London, there is a well-preserved panel by Segna of the crucifixion which can be seen between the Virgin and St. John.

Two panels in the Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena which represent S.S. Ansano and Galgano, were originally executed by Segna for the Palazzo Pubblico in 1314. According to the catalogue, they are less characteristic of his manner than other unauthenticated productions.

To conclude with other pictures which have the appearance of a continuation with those of Ugolino and Segna, one may notice in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena a *Crucifix* disposed in reference to the figures like that in the abbey of St. Fiora, but also darkened, and slightly damaged, assigned to one Masarello di Giglio. It bears the date 1305, but appears to be of a later time. A *Virgin and Child* of a collection at the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, stated to be by Giglio, a painter of 1249, illustrates the well-known mania of antedating pictures. The style of this work is of the fourteenth century, and reminiscent of Niccola di Segna, of whom we should call attention to the fact tht he is the author of a *Crucifix* in the same gallery, which carries the inscription:

NICHOLAUS SEGNA FECIT HOC OPUS MCCCXLV.

Though the date finds us in the middle of the fourteenth century, the execution and technical method more appropriately belongs to the old Sienese of the thirteenth century. The size of Christ's head is very similar to Ugolino's depiction at the Servi, but it is more erect in terms of figure.

An altarpiece in the sacristy of the church of St. Chiara in Borgo St. Sepolcro, representing the *Resurrection* along with various saints, with a predella containing five scenes from the *Passion*, is executed in a manner not unlike that of Nicholaus Segna. This tends to prove that this artist studied the forms of composition specific to the Lorenzetti brothers. There is mention of another son of Segna, Francesco, who painted a picture for the Loggia of the Palazzo del Comune al Bagno di Petriuolo in 1339.

All these artists (Nicola Pisano, excepted) still worked on in the trammels of Byzantine art. The first painter of his age who totally threw them off and left them far behind, was Giotto.

Cimabue (attribution),
The Fall of Babylon.
Fresco.
Left transept, Upper Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.

Giotto di Bondone
1267-1337

Credette Cimabue nella Pittura
Tener lo campo, ed ora ha Giotto il grido; —
Sicchê la fama di colui oscura.

— Cimabue thought
To lord it over painting's field; and now
The cry is Giotto's, and his name eclips'd.

Carey's *Dante.*

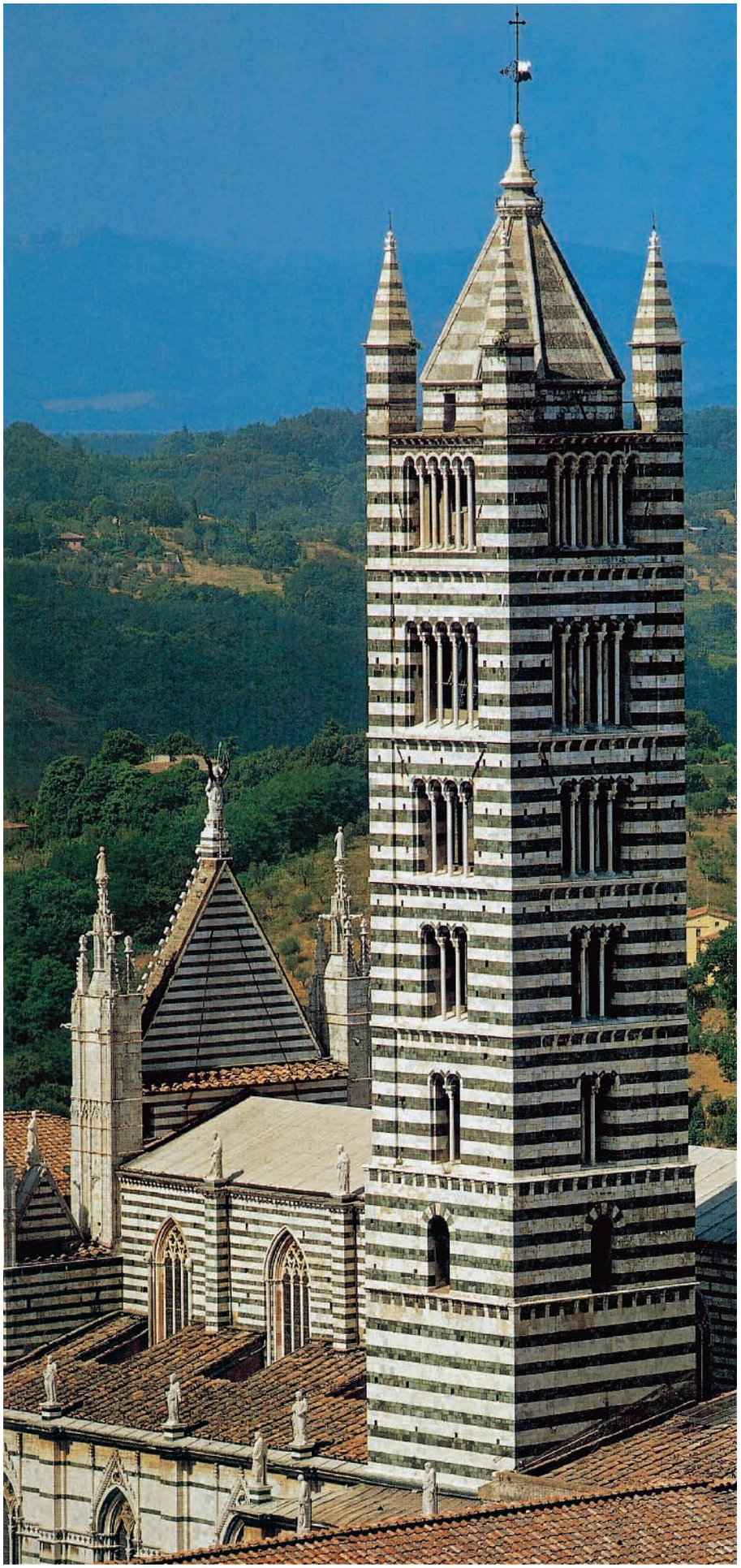
These often-quoted lines, from Dante's *Purgatorio*, are appropriately quoted here, for it is a curious circumstance that, applicable in his own day, six hundred years ago, they should still be so applicable in ours. Open any common history not inclined to revelation and there we still find Cimabue "lording it over painting's field," and placed at the head of a revolution in art, with which, as an artist, he had little or no responsibility. As a man however, he did; for to him, to his quick perception and generous protection of talent in the lowly shepherd-boy — we owe Giotto. No single human being of whom we read has exercised, in any particular department of art, a more immediate, wide, and lasting influence. The total change in the direction and character of art must in all human probability have taken place sooner or later, since all the influences of that wonderful period of regeneration were tending towards it. Then did architecture struggle as it were from the Byzantine into the Gothic forms, like a mighty plant putting forth its rich foliage and shooting up towards the sky; then did the speech of people — the vulgar tongues, as they were called — begin to assume their present structure and become the medium through which beauty, love, action, feeling and thought were to be uttered and immortalised; and then arose Giotto, the instrument through which his own beautiful art was to become one of the great interpreters of the human soul, with all its "infinite" of feelings and faculties, and of human life in all its multifarious aspects. Giotto was the first painter who "held as it were the mirror up to nature." Cimabue's strongest claim to the gratitude of succeeding through the ages is that he bequeathed such a man to his native country and to the world.

Around the year 1289, when Cimabue was already old and at the height of his fame, as he was riding in the valley of Vespignano about fourteen miles from Florence, his attention was attracted by a boy who was herding sheep. While his flocks were feeding around, he appeared intently drawing the figure of one of his sheep as it was quietly grazing before him on a smooth fragment of slate with a bit of pointed stone. Cimabue rode up, and, looking with astonishment at the performance of the untutored boy, asked him if he would go with him and learn. The boy replied, that he was indeed willing if his father were content with the arrangement. His father, a herdsman of the valley by the name of Bondone, gladly consented to the wish of the noble stranger, and Giotto subsequently became Cimabue's apprentice.

This pretty story, which was first related by Lorenzo Ghiberti the sculptor (born 1378), and since by Vasari and a hundred others, luckily rests on evidence as satisfactory as can be given for

Giotto di Bondone,
Stefaneschi Polyptych, c. 1330.
Tempera on panel, 220 x 245 cm.
Pinacoteca Vaticana, The Vatican, Rome.

View of the interior from the apse.
Upper Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.



any events of a vague and distant age, and might as well secure our belief, as well as gratify our fancy; it has been the subject of many pictures, and is introduced in Rogers' *Italy*: —

> — Let us wander thro' the fields
> Where Cimabue found the shepherd-boy
> Tracing his idle fancies on the ground.

Giotto was around twelve or fourteen years old when he was taken into the house of Cimabue. For his instruction in those branches of polite learning necessary to an artist, his protector placed him under the tuition of Brunetto Latini, who was also the pedagogue of Dante. When, at the age of 26, Giotto lost his friend and master, he was already an accomplished man as well as a celebrated painter, and the influence of his large, original mind upon the later works of Cimabue is distinctly traceable.

The first recorded performance of Giotto was a painting on the wall of the Palazzo deli' Podesta, or council-chamber of Florence, in which the portraits of Dante, Brunetto Latini, Corso Donati, and others were introduced. Vasari speaks of these works as the first successful attempts at portraiture in the history of modern art. They were soon afterwards plastered or whitewashed over during the triumph of the enemies of Dante; for ages, though known to exist, they were lost and buried from sight. The hope of recovering these most interesting portraits had long been entertained and various attempts were made at different times without success. Finally, as late as 1840, they were brought to light by the perseverance and enthusiasm of Bezzi and Kirkup, assisted by a subscription among the English and American residents and visitors then in Florence. On comparing the head of Dante painted when he was about thirty, prosperous and distinguished in his native city, with the later portraits of him as an exile, worn, wasted, and embittered by misfortune, disappointment, and wounded pride, the difference of expression is as touching as the identity being featured is unequivocal.

The attention which Giotto seems to have given to all natural forms and appearances in his childhood showed itself in his earlier pictures; he was the first to whom it occurred to group his personages into something like a situation and to give to their attitudes and features the expression adapted to it. Thus, in a very early picture of the *Annunciation*, he gave the Virgin a look of fear; in another, painted some time afterwards, of the *Presentation in the Temple*, he made the infant Christ shrink from the priest and turn to extend his little arms to his mother — the first attempt at that species of grace and naïveté of expression that was later to be carried to perfection by Raphael. These and other works painted in his native city, so astonished his fellow citizens and all who beheld their beauty and novelty, that they seem to have pined for adequate words in which to express the excess of their delight and admiration. They insisted that Giotto's figures beguiled the senses so completely that they were mistaken for realities; a commonplace praise, never merited except by the most mechanical of painters.

In the church of Santa Croce in Florence, Giotto painted a *Coronation of the Virgin* (still seen in the Baroncelli Chapel), replete with choirs of angels and a multitude of saints on either side. In the refectory he painted the *Last Supper*, also still remaining; a grand, solemn, simple composition, which, as a first endeavour to give variety of expression and attitude to a number of persons — all seated, and all but two actuated by a similar feeling — can still be regarded as extraordinary. In a chapel of the church of the Carmine in Florence,

The Campanile du Duomo, 12th and 13th centuries. Siena.

he painted a series of pictures from the life of John the Baptist. These were destroyed by fire in 1771; but, luckily, an English engraver studying in Florence, named Patch, had previously made accurate drawings from them, which he engraved and published. A fragment of the old fresco, containing the heads of two of the Apostles who are bending in grief and devotion over the body of St. John, was once in the collection of a man named Rogers, and is now most likely in the hands of another private collector. It certainly justifies all that has been said of Giotto's power of expression, and, when compared with the remains of earlier art, more than excuses the wonder and enthusiasm of his contemporaries.

Upon hearing of his marvellous skill, pope Boniface VIII invited Giotto to Rome; the story says that the messenger of his Holiness, wishing to have some proof that Giotto was indeed the man he was in search of, desired to see a specimen of his excellence in art, whereupon Giotto, taking up a sheet of paper, traced on it with a single flourish of his hand a circle so perfect that "it was a miracle to see" and seems to have at once converted the pope to a belief of his superiority over all other painters. This story gave rise to the well-known Italian proverb, "*Piu tondo che l'O di Giotto*" (rounder than the 'O' of Giotto), and is something like a story told of one of the Grecian painters.

Giotto went to Rome and there completed many works which raised his fame higher and higher; among them, for the ancient Basilica of St. Peter's, the famous colossal mosaic of the *Navicella*, or the *Barca* as it is sometimes called. It represents a ship containing the Disciples on a tempestuous sea, the winds, personified as demons, rage around it.

Above are the fathers of the Old Testament; on the right stands Christ, raising Peter from the waves. The subject has an allegorical significance, denoting the troubles and triumphs of the Church. This mosaic has often changed its situation, and has been restored again and again, leaving nothing of Giotto's work but the original composition. It is now in the vestibule of St. Peter's at Rome over the arch facing the principal door.

For the same Pope Boniface, Giotto painted the *Institution of the Jubilee of 1300*, which still exists in the portico of the Lateran in Rome.

In Padua, Giotto painted the chapel of the Arena with frescoes inspired by Christ and the Virgin in 50 square compartments. Of this chapel, the late Lady Callcott published an interesting account, illustrated from drawings made by Sir Augustus Callcott. These, however, are superseded by the set of drawings engraved on wood and published by the Arundel Society, which, besides their beauty and conscientious accuracy, have the advantage of being described and commented on by Ruskin. In Padua, Giotto met his friend Dante; the influence of one great genius on another is strongly exemplified in some of his succeeding works and particularly in his next grand performance, the frescoes in the church of Assisi.In the lower church, and immediately over the tomb of St. Francis, Giotto represented the three "vows of the Order" — *Poverty*, *Chastity*, and *Obedience*; and in the fourth compartment, the Saint enthroned and glorified amidst the host of Heaven. The invention of the allegories under which Giotto has represented the vows of the Saint, — his *Marriage with Poverty*, Chastity seated in her rocky fortress and Obedience with the curb and yoke — are ascribed by a tradition to Dante. Giotto also painted, in the Campo Santo at Pisa, the whole *History of Job*, of which only some fragments remain.

By the time Giotto attained his thirtieth year he had reached such hitherto unknown excellence in art; his celebrity was so universal that every city and every small sovereign in

Giotto di Bondone,
St. Francis receiving the Stigmata,
predella: *The Dream of Innocent III; The Pope approving the order's status, Saint Francis preaching the birds*, c. 1295-1300.
Tempera on wood, 313 x 163 cm.
Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Italy contended for the honour of his presence and his pencil, tempting him with the promise of rich rewards. For the Lords of Arezzo, of Rimini and Ravenna, and for the Duke of Milan, he executed many works, almost all of which have been lost. Castruccio Castricani, the warlike tyrant of Lucca, also employed him; but how Giotto was induced to listen to the offers of this enemy of his country has not been explained.

Perhaps Castruccio, as the head of the Ghibelline party, in which Giotto had apparently enrolled himself, appeared in the light of a friend rather than an enemy. Whatever the reason, a picture which Giotto is said to have painted for Castruccio, and in which he introduced the portrait of the tyrant with a falcon on his fist, was long preserved in Lucca. For Guido da Polente, the father of the hapless Francesca di Rimini whose story is so beautifully told by Dante, he painted the interior of a church; for Malatesta di Rimini, the father of Francesca's husband, he painted the portrait of the prince in a boat with his companions and a company of mariners, among which, Vasari tells us, was the figure of a sailor, who, turning around with his hand before his face, is in the act of spitting in the sea, so life-like as to strike beholders with amazement. The latter has perished; but the figure of the thirsty man stooping to drink in one of the frescoes in Assisi still remains to show the kind of excellence through which Giotto excited such admiration in his contemporaries: a power of imitation, a truth in the expression of natural actions, and feelings to which painting had yet reached. This leaning towards the 'actual' and the 'real' has been made a subject of reproach, which will be referred to later.

It is said, but this does not rest on very satisfactory evidence, that Giotto also visited Avignon in the train of Pope Clement V, where he painted the portraits of Petrarch and Laura.

Around 1327, King Robert of Naples, father of Queen Joanna, wrote to his son, Duke of Calabria, then in Florence. He asked him to send, on any terms, the famous painter Giotto, who accordingly travelled to the court of Naples, stopping on his way in several cities where he left specimens of his skill. He also visited Orvieto for the purpose of viewing the sculpture with which the brothers Agostino and Agnolo were adorning the cathedral, and bestowed on it high commendation. There is a *Crucifixion* painted by Giotto in Gaeta, which he completed either on his way to Naples or on his return. In it, he introduced himself kneeling in an attitude of deep devotion and contrition at the foot of the cross: this introduction of portraiture into such a sensitive subject was another innovation, perhaps not so immediately praised as some of his other characteristics. Giotto's feeling for truth and propriety of expression is particularly remarkable in his alteration of the tortuous but popular subject of the crucifix: in the Byzantine school, the sole aim seems to have been to represent physical agony and to render it, by every technique of distortion and exaggeration possible, as terrible and repulsive.

Giotto was the first to soften this painful image by lending an expression of divine resignation, and through greater attention to beauty of form. A crucifixion which he painted became the model for his scholars; it was multiplied by imitation through all of Italy, so much so, that Margaritone, a famous painter of crucifixes in the Greek fashion who had been a friend and contemporary of Cimabue, was so confounded by the introduction of this new method of art, which he partly disdained and partly despaired to imitate in his conservative and old age, took to his bed "*infastidito*" (through vexation), and so apparently died.

But to return to Giotto, whom we left on the road to Naples, King Robert received him with great honour and rejoice; being a monarch of singular accomplishments, and fond of the society of cultivated and distinguished men, he soon found that Giotto was not merely a painter,

Giotto di Bondone,
The Betrayal of Christ, c. 1305.
Fresco, 185 x 200 cm.
Cappella degli Scrovegni all'Arena
(Arena Chapel), Padua.

Giotto di Bondone,
St. Francis Giving his Cloak to a Poor Man, 1296-1299.
Fresco, 270 x 230 cm.
Upper Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.

but a man of the world, a man of various acquirements, whose general reputation for wit and vivacity was not unmerited. He would sometimes visit the painter at his work, and, while watching the rapid progress of his pencil, amused himself with the quaint good sense of his discourse. "If I were you, Giotto," said the king to him one very hot day, "I would leave off work and rest myself." "And so would I, sire," replied the painter, "if I were *you*!" The king, apparently in a playful mood, desired him to paint his kingdom, on which Giotto immediately sketched the figure of an ass with a heavy pack-saddle on its back, smelling with an eager air at another pack-saddle lying on the ground, on which were a crown and sceptre. By this emblem the satirical painter expressed the perceived servility and fickleness of the Neapolitans, and the king at once understood the allusion.

There exists at Naples, in the church of the Incoronata, a series of frescoes representing the Seven Sacraments according to the Roman ritual which were formerly attributed to Giotto but have since been ascribed to a follower of his style and time. The *Sacrament of Marriage* contains many female figures, beautifully designed and grouped, with graceful heads and flowing draperies. This picture is traditionally said to represent the marriage of Joanna of Naples and Louis of Taranto. But Giotto died in 1336, and these famous espousals took place in 1347; a dry date will sometimes confound a very pretty theory. In the *Sacrament of Ordination* there is a group of chanting boys, in which the various expressions of singing are given with truth of imitation, not unworthy of the talent which made Giotto the wonder of his day. His paintings from the Apocalypse in the church of Santa Chiara were whitewashed over,

about three and a half centuries ago, by a certain prior of the convent, because, in the opinion of this philistine, they made 'the church look dark'!

Giotto left Naples around 1328 and returned to his native city with a great increase of wealth and fame. He continued his works with unabated vigour, assisted by his pupils, who attended the most famous school in Italy. Like most of the early Italian artists, he was an architect and sculptor as well as a painter; and his last public work was the exquisitely beautiful *campanile*, or bell-tower, in Florence, for which he made all the designs, even completing the models for the sculpture on the three lower divisions with his own hands. According to Kugler, they form a regular series of subjects illustrating the development of human culture, through religion and laws, "conceived," says the same authority, "with profound wisdom." When the emperor Charles V saw this elegant structure, he exclaimed that it ought to be "kept under glass." In the same allegorical taste, Giotto painted many pictures of the "Virtues and Vices", ingeniously invented and rendered with great attention to natural and appropriate expression. In these and similar representations we distinctly trace the influence of the genius of Dante.

A short time before his death Giotto was invited to Milan by Azzo Visconti. He executed some admirable frescoes in the ancient palace of the dukes of Milan, which have since perished. Finally, having returned to Florence, he soon died — "yielding up his soul to God in the year 1336; and having been," adds Vasari, "no less a good Christian than an excellent painter" he was honourably interred in the church of Santa Maria del Fiore, where his master

Giotto di Bondone,
The Flight to Egypt, 1303-1305.
Fresco, 200 x 185 cm.
Cappella degli Scrovegni all'Arena
(Arena Chapel), Padua.

Cimabue had been laid with similar honours 35 years before. Lorenzo de' Medici would later place his effigy in marble above his tomb.

Giotto left four sons and four daughters, but we are not aware of any of his descendants becoming distinguished in art or otherwise. Before we proceed to give some account of the personal character and influence of Giotto, both as a man and an artist, of which many amusing and interesting traits have been handed down to us, we must turn for a moment to reconsider that revolution in art which originated with him — and immediately seized imagination and sympathy, a concept Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch have all commemorated in verse or as prose; which also, during a whole century, filled Italy and Sicily with disciples formed in the same school and imbued with the same ideas.

All that had been done in painting before Giotto revolved around the imitation of certain existing models and their improvement to a certain point in style of execution was limited by the parameters of preceding example. The Byzantine types predominated, and, more or less modified, a Madonna in the middle accompanied by a couple of lank saints or angels adjoined on each side; saints bearing symbols or with their names written over their heads and texts of scripture proceeding from their mouths. At most a few figures, placed in such a position relatively to each other as sufficed to make a story intelligible, the arrangement being generally traditional and arbitrary; such seems to have been the limit to which painting had advanced prior to 1280.

Giotto, almost from the beginning of his career, not only deviated from the practice of the older painters, but stood in flagrant opposition to them. He not only improved — he changed; he placed himself on entirely new ground. He took up those principles which Nicola Pisano applied to sculpture and went to the same sources, nature and those vestiges of pure antique art which showed him how to look at nature. His residence in Rome while young, and the glowing development of his creative powers, must have had an incalculable influence on his later works. Deficient to the end of his life in a sensitivity to form, he was consequently lacking in the kind of beauty which depends on it; but his feeling for grace and harmony in the disposition of his heads and the arrangement of his groups was exquisite; the longer he practiced his art, the more free and flowing his lines became. But, beyond grace and beauty, he aimed at the expression of natural character and emotion, in order to render intelligible his newly invented scenes of action and his religious allegories. A writer near his time speaks of it as something new and wonderful, that in Giotto's pictures "the personages who are in grief look melancholy, and those who are joyous look gay." For his heads he introduced a new type, exactly reversing the Greek pattern: long-shaped, half-shut eyes, a long, straight nose and a very short chin. The hands are rather delicately, but never accurately, drawn, and he could not design feet well, for which reason we generally find those of his men clothed in shoes or sandals wherever it is possible, and those of his women covered with flowing drapery. The management of his draperies is, indeed, particularly characteristic; distinguished by a certain lengthiness and narrowness in the folds, in which there is much taste and simplicity, though, in point of style, as far from the antique as from the complicated severity of the Byzantine models. It is curious that this peculiar treatment of the drapery, these long perpendicular folds correspond in character with the principles of Gothic architecture. For the stiff, wooden limbs and motionless figures of the Byzantine school, he substituted life, movement, and the look, at least, of flexibility. He seems to have taken his notions of grouping and arrangement from the ancient bas-reliefs; there is a statuesque grace and simplicity in his compositions which reminds us of them. His style of colouring and execution

Giotto di Bondone,
Cycle of the Life of Joachim
(general view), 1303-1305.
Fresco.
Arena Chapel (Cappella degli Scrovegni all'Arena), Padua.

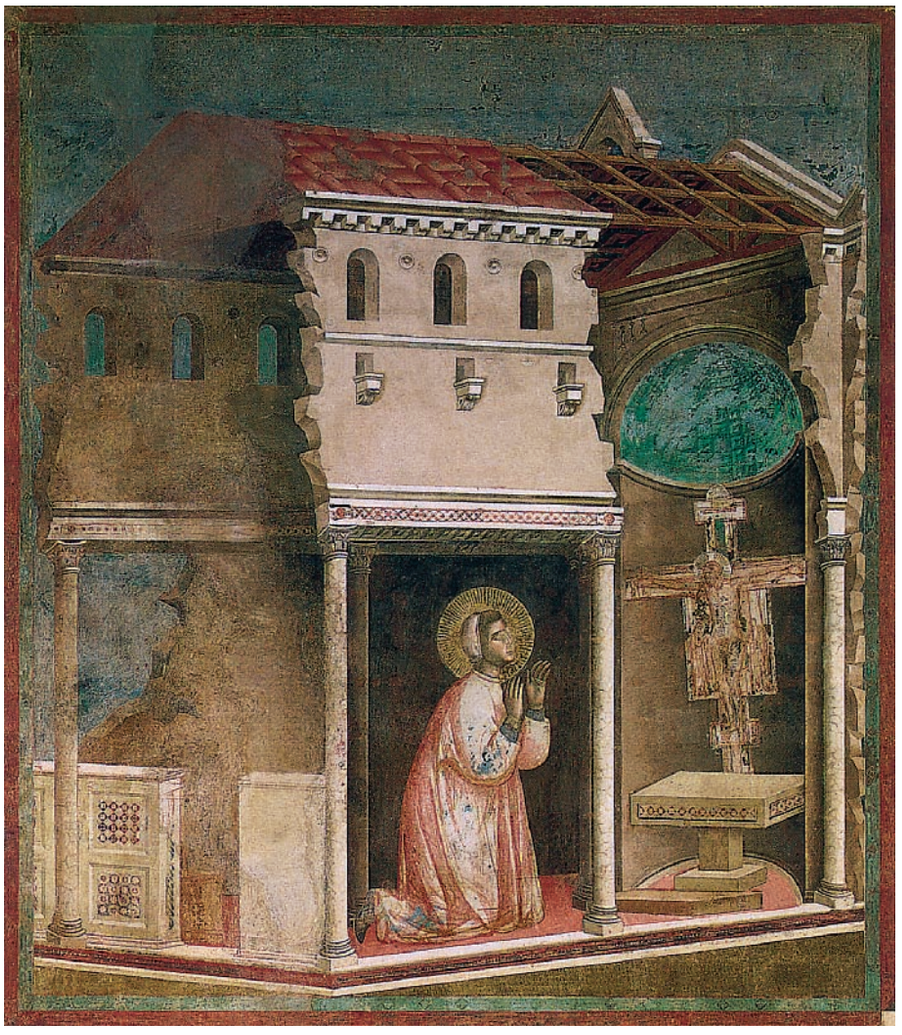
was, like all the rest, an innovation on received methods. His colours were lighter and more roseate than had ever been known, the fluidity by which they were tempered was thinner and easily managed; his frescoes must have been skillfully executed to have stood the ravages of time as well as they have. Their duration is indeed nothing compared to the Egyptian remains, but the latter have been covered from light and air in a dry sandy climate for millennia, while those of Giotto have been exposed to all the vicissitudes of weather and of underground moisture, they have also been whitewashed and ill-treated, yet the fragments which remain have still a surprising freshness.

The only picture in the Louvre attributed to him, a life-size St. Francis, bears his signature yet has been of contested origins. There are two pictures in the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence: the *Ognissanti Madonna* and another *Madonna* with graceful angels. In the Galleria dell'Accademia of the same city, are many small pictures, about a foot in height, which formerly decorated the presses or wardrobes in the sacristy of Santa Croce, representing subjects from the life and acts of Christ and St. Francis. Many that were once kept in the gallery have now been returned to their original locations. One of his finest pictures, a *Lamentation*, can be found at the Arena Chapel in Padue. Those who are curious may also consult the engravings after Giotto in the plates to the *Storia della Pittura* of Rosini; those in D'Agincourt's *Histoire de l'Art par les Monumens*; in Ottley's *Early Italian School*, a copy of which is in the British Museum; and the set of engravings published by the Arundel Society.

Giotto's personal character and disposition played no small part in the revolution he effected. In the union of endowments which seldom meet together in the same individual — extraordinarily inventive and poetical genius with sound, practical, energetic sense, and untiring activity and energy — Giotto resembled Rubens, and only this rare combination could have enabled him to so completely discard all the fetters of the old style, and to have executed the amazing number of works which are with reason attributed to him. His character was as independent in other matters as in his own art. He seems to have had little reverence for received opinions about anything, and was singularly free from the superstitious enthusiasm of the times in which he lived, even if he did invest his powers in embodying that very superstition. Perhaps the very circumstance of his being employed in painting the interiors of churches and monasteries opened to his acute, discerning, and independent mind reflections which took away some of the respect for the mysteries they concealed. There is extant a poem of Giotto's, entitled *A Song against Poverty*, which becomes still more piquant in itself, and expressive of the peculiar turn of Giotto's mind, when we remember that he painted the *Glorification of Poverty* as the Bride of St. Francis and that in those days, songs in praise of poverty were as fashionable as devotion to St. Francis, the "Patriarch of poverty". Giotto was celebrated, too, for his light-hearted temperament, his witty and satirical repartees, and he seems to have been as careful of his worldly goods as he was diligent in acquiring them. Boccaccio relates an anecdote of him, not very important, but as it contains several traits which are divertingly characteristic, it will be provided here:

> Fair and dear ladies! [Note: This is how the novelist of the time addressed his audience] It is a wondrous thing to see how oftentimes nature hath been pleased to hide within the most misshapen forms the most wondrous treasures of soul, which is evident in the persons of two of our fellow-citizens, of whom I shall now briefly discourse to you. Messer Forese da Kabatta, the advocate, being you

Andrea Dibunaiuti,
The Church in Triumph, 1365.
Fresco.
The Chapel of the Spanish, Santa Maria Novella, Florence.

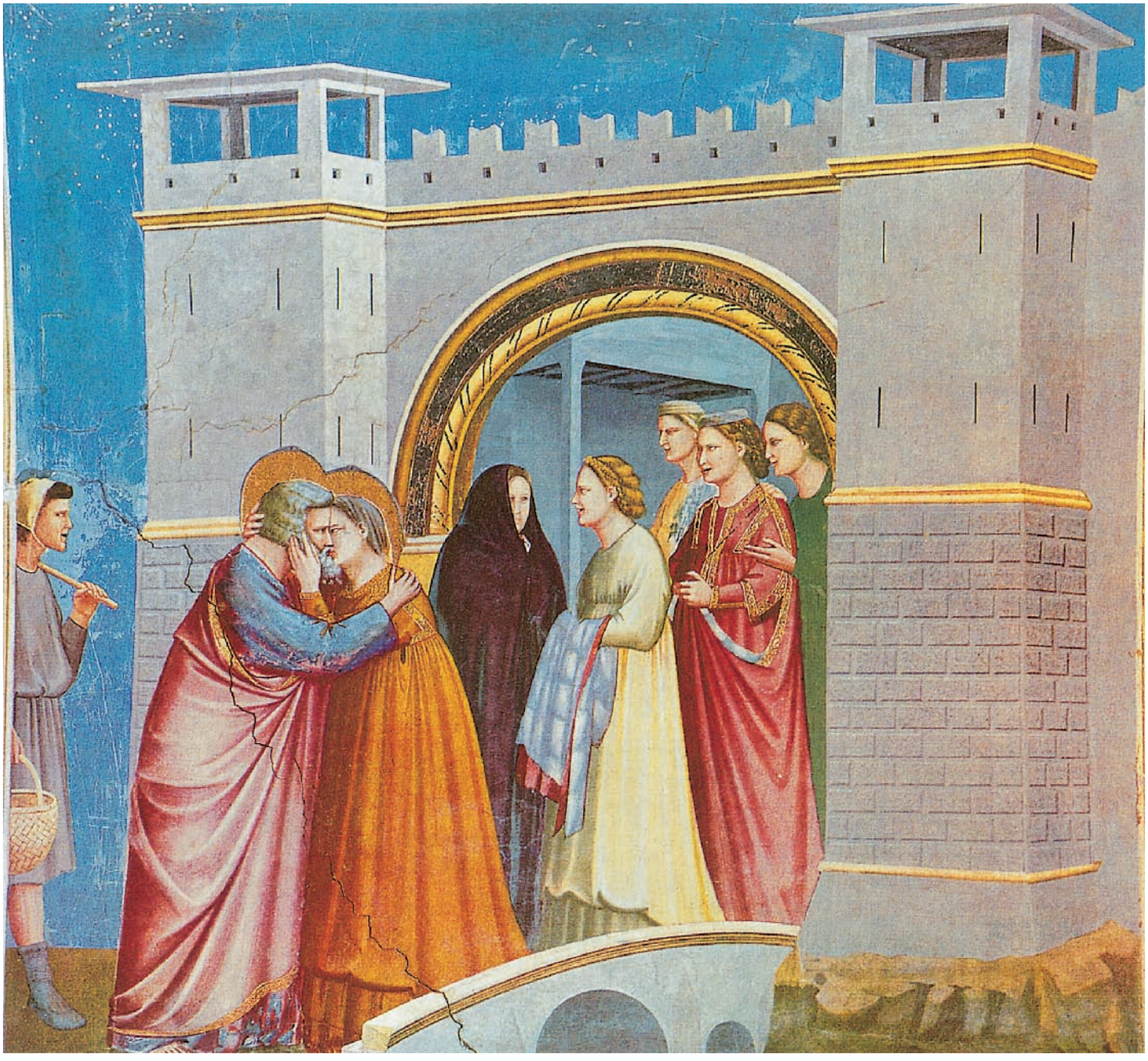


Giotto di Bondone,
Cycle of the Life of St. Francis: The Miracle of the Crucifix, 1297-1299.
Fresco, 270 x 230 cm.
Upper Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.

Giotto di Bondone,
The Demons Chased from Arezzo,
c. 1296. Fresco.
Main Basilica, Cappella degli Scrovegni all'Arena (Arena Chapel), Padua.

personage of the most extraordinary wisdom, and learned in the law above all others, yet was in body mean and deformed, with, thereunto, a flat, currish (*ricagnato*) physiognomy; and Messer Giotto, who was not in face or person one whit better favoured than the said Messer Forese, had a genius of that excellence, that there was nothing which nature (who is the mother of all things) could bring forth, but he with his ready pencil would so wondrously imitate it, that it seemed not only similar, but the same; thus deluding the visual sense of men, so that they deemed that what was only pictured before them did in reality exist. And seeing that through Giotto, art was restored to light which had been for many centuries buried (through fault of those who, in painting, addressed themselves to please the eye of the vulgar, and not to content the understanding of the wise), I esteem him worthy to be placed among those who have made famous and glorious this our city of Florence. Nevertheless, though so great a man in his art, he was but little in person, and, as I have said, ill-favoured enough. Now it happened that Messer Forese and Giotto had possessions in land in Mugello, which is on the road leading from Florence to Bologna, and thither they rode one day on their respective affairs, Messer Forese being mounted on a sorry hired jade, and the

Giotto di Bondone,
Cycle of the Life of St. Francis: Stigmatisation of St. Francis,
1297-1300. Fresco, 270 x 230 cm.
Upper Basilica of San Francesco,
Assisi.



Giotto di Bondone,
Anna and Joachim Meet at the Golden Gate, 1303-1305.
Fresco, 185 x 200 cm.
Cappella degli Scrovegni all'Arena (Arena Chapel), Padua.

other in no better case. It was summer, and the rain came on suddenly and furiously, and they hastened to take shelter in the house of a peasant thereabouts who was known to them; but the storm still prevailing, they, considering that they must of necessity return to Florence the same day, borrowed from the peasant two old, wornout pilgrim-cloaks and two rusty old hats, and so they set forth. They had not proceeded very far when they found themselves wet through with the rain, and all bespattered with the mud; but after a while, the weather clearing in some small degree, they took heart, and from being silent they began to discourse of various matters. Messer Forese, having listened a while to Giotto, who was, in truth, a man most eloquent and lively in speech, could not help casting on him a glance as he rode alongside, and considering him from head to foot thus wet, ragged, and splashed all over, and thus mounted and accoutered, and not taking his own appearance into account, he laughed aloud. 'O Giotto,' said he, jeeringly, 'if a stranger were now to meet us, could he, looking on you, believe it possible that you were the greatest painter in the whole world?' 'Certainly,' quoth Giotto, with a side glance at his companion, 'certainly; if looking upon your worship he could believe it possible that you knew your ABC!' Whereupon Messer Forese could not but confess that he had been paid in his own coin.

This is one of many humorous repartees which tradition has preserved, and an instance of that readiness of wit — that *prontezza* — for which Giotto was admired; in fact he seems to have presented in himself, in the union of depth and liveliness, of poetic fancy and worldly sense, of independent spirit and polished suavity; an epitome of the national character of the Florentines, such as Sismondi has drawn it. We learn, from the hyperboles used by Boccaccio, the sort of rapturous surprise which Giotto's imitation of life caused in his imaginative contemporaries, and which assuredly they would be far from exciting now; the unceremonious description of his person becomes more amusing when we recollect that Boccaccio must have lived in personal interaction with the painter, as did Petrarch and Dante. When Giotto died, in 1336, his friend Dante had been dead three years; Petrarch was 32, and Boccaccio 23-years-old. When Petrarch died, in 1374, he left his friend Francesco da Carrara, Lord of Padua, a *Madonna* painted by Giotto, as a most precious legacy, "a wonderful piece of work, of which the ignorant might overlook the beauties, but which the learned must regard with amazement." All writers who approach the ancient glories of Florence, from Villani down to Sismondi, count Giotto in the roll of her greatest men. Antiquarians and connoisseurs in art search out and study the relics which remain to us, and recognise in them the dawn of that splendour which reached its zenith in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Visitors to Florence can look up to the Campanile with a feeling of wonder and delight, contemplating who the man must have been that conceived and executed a work so noble and supremely elegant; while, to the philosophic observer, Giotto appears as one of those few intuitively-endowed beings whose development springs from a source within — one of those unconscious instruments in the hand of destiny, who, in seeking their own profit and delight through the expansion of their own faculties, make unawares a step forward in human culture, lend a new impulse to human aspirations, and, just like the "bright morning star, day's harbinger", may be submerged in the succeeding radiance, but never forgotten.

Giotto di Bondone (?),
The Demons Chased from Arezzo,
1297-1299.
Fresco, 270 x 230 cm.
Upper Basilica of San Francesco,
Assisi.

Pietro Cavallini
1259–c. 1330

Vasari affirms that Pietro Cavallini is the author of the mosaics in the tribune of Santa Maria-in-Trastevere. If this is true, he deserves high rank amongst the painters of his time, who preserved the style of the Cosmati and the traditions of the Roman school, combined with new Tuscan elements.

The birth of Pietro Cavallini has not been recorded. He was an artist of talent, and it would appear, extensively employed in Rome when Giotto visited the city. Vasari writes of his labours in many parts of Italy, but nothing is certain as to this except that he was employed at a good salary by King Robert of Naples in 1308. Unfortunately for Cavallini's fame, his works in Southern Italy have perished, but we may still assign to him with some propriety a mosaic in San Crisogono in Rome, representing, on a large scale, the Virgin enthroned with the infant Christ in benediction, supported by St. James holding a book, and St. Chrysogonus, in a warrior's dress, grasping a sword.

A slightly Byzantine character, more noticeable than in Santa Maria-in-Trastevere, would place this mosaic amongst the earlier works of the master. The Virgin, of a majestic presence, still displays feeble lower parts and an overproportioned head. Her eyes are somewhat large and open. The child's head is regular and its attitude natural. The figures generally are long and well draped, and the colour pleasant.

Of the paintings in this church assigned to Cavallini by Vasari, not a trace remains, but there are still vestiges of frescoes in the church of Santa Maria-in-Trastevere, which, though damaged by time, are in the style of the mosaics of the tribune.

Above a door, to the right inside the entrance, is a half figure of the Virgin with the infant Christ holding an orb and giving a blessing. This group is of less intricacy than the mosaics in design, and whilst the large head, slender neck, and defective hands of the Virgin betray a certain feebleness, the marked outlines, angular draperies, and absence of relief by shadow prove that Cavallini was more skilled in mosaics than in painting. Another Virgin with a puny Christ in her arms, a little less defective than the foregoing, but much repainted in the draperies, may be noticed near the chief portal. In the porch outside are two frescoes, one of which represents the *Annunciation* with a figure of a prophet, the second depicts the same subject, with the addition of God sending the infant Christ bearing a cross to the Virgin.

Cavallini, here, is a follower of the Roman school, and an eminent master. It must have been fortunate for Giotto that, on his arrival, he should have found such a man ready to assist him. It was only natural that Cavallini, having helped a stranger in the mosaics of the old basilica of San Pietro, should subconsciously adopt something of that stranger's style. It is clear, as Vasari states, that Cavallini was Giotto's disciple and "mixed his manner with that of the Greeks." After taking instruction in Rome he adopted, at least in mosaics, something of the Florentine manner. But he went still further, and in adorning the arches of San Paolo-fuorile-Mura, he was content to carry out the designs of Giotto even after Giotto left Rome.

On the arch of the tribune, the Virgin and Child enthroned and guarded by two angels are also represented in mosaic with the symbol of St. John Evangelist. On the opposite side,

Pietro Cavallini,
Seraphims, c. 1293.
Fresco.
Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome.

Pietro Cavallini,
Stories from the Life of the Virgin,
c. 1291. Mosaic.
Santa Maria in Trastevere, Rome.

Coppo di Marcovaldo,
The Prophets and a Stage of Hell,
13th century.
Mosaic.
The Baptistery, Florence.

SCA ANNA
MR CV
HVMANI GENERIS SATOR ET QVI PARCERE LAPSIS
ISTIT VIS QVACVLAS VETERIS RVBIGINIS AVFER

Pope Benedict XI in prayer (1303-1305) is presented by St. John the Baptist with the symbol of St. Mark the Evangelist. The medallion in the centre of the arch, representing Christ in prayer with the book, is held aloft by two Giottesque angels in fine attitudes; the symbols of the Evangelists Luke and Matthew being depicted at each side in the more modern Florentine manner. The figures of St. Benedict and St. John the Baptist, as well as that of Christ in the medallion of the arch, are modernised; but the rest of the mosaic shows that in 1305, only a few years after the departure of Giotto from Rome, an artist, probably Cavallini, was found willing and able to carry out a Giottesque design.

Had Vasari claimed that Cavallini painted the apsis of San Giorgio-in-Velabro, the subject of which is Christ standing on the orb with the Virgin, St. George on horseback, St. Peter and St. Sebastian at his sides, he would not have been far from the truth. This work indeed seems like a repetition of an older mosaic in the same place, yet the execution betrays something of a Giottesque manner, while the types and slender forms of the saints around Christ are reminiscent of the mosaics of Santa Maria-in-Trastevere. This much-damaged and restored painting, of which the lower half is renewed, was ordered by Cardinal Gaetano Stefaneschi sometime after 1295. It has in fact been ascribed to Giotto himself.

Vasari places Cavallini in Florence and names him as the painter of the *Annunciation* fresco in the church of San Marco. This painting is very different in character from the paintings and mosaics of Rome. The Virgin sits on the right of an interior on a cushioned bench. Before her is the bending figure of the angel with a vase of lilies in front and traces of a kneeling person behind him. Above, God's omnipresence is represented by the dove of the Holy Ghost, whose ray alone illuminates the Virgin's forehead.

This much-damaged and repainted fresco may have been executed by a painter of the fourteenth century. It recalls Angelico, though it may possibly be of an earlier period. The stature and forms of the figures are not without elegance; however, the half-closed eyes, the small mouth and chin, and the absence of feeling betray a less-developed artist. If anything can be assigned to Cavallini in San Marco it is, therefore, not the *Annunciation*. On the wall to the left, inside the portal of the church, a comparatively recent scraping has brought to light the head of a saint facing the spectators. Other fragments of similar work have been found on the wall to the right, and these may be remnants of Cavallini's labour.

A spectacular *Annunciation* at the Santissima Annunziata in the Servi of Florence is a repetition, as regards the subject, of the fresco of San Marco, and so seldom visible to profane eyes that the absence of an opinion may be excused. Richardson notes this particularity, that the Virgin swoons away at the apparition of the angel. A third *Annunciation* of San Basilio, which undoubtedly perished in the demolition of that church in 1785, completes the series of Cavallini paintings in Florence to which Vasari alludes. Continuing his journey through Italy, Cavallini, according to Vasari, painted a *Crucifixion* and other incidents of the *Passion of the Christ* in the north transept of the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi. But the biographer here seems to confound Pietro Cavallini with Pietro Lorenzetti. That he put the materials of Cavallini's life together slightly haphazardly is sufficiently corroborated in Orvieto, where he assigns him the frescoes of the chapel of the Santissimo Corporate, which are in fact signed by their author, Ugolino di Prete Ilario.

The only disciple of Cavallini, according to Vasari, is Giovanni da Pistoia, who will be delegated a few lines at the appropriate time.

Giotto di Bondone,
The Last Judgment, 1303-1306.
Fresco, 1000 x 840 cm.
Cappella degli Scrovegni all'Arena
(Arena Chapel), Padua.

The Campo Santo

Like the Cathedral at Assisi, The Campo Santo of Pisa was an arena in which the best artists of the time were summoned to exercise their powers; but the influence of the frescoes in the Campo Santo on the progress and development of art was yet more direct and important than that of the paintings in the church of Assisi. One of the most extraordinary and interesting monuments of the Middle Ages, the Campo Santo, once a cemetery though no longer used as such, is an open space of about a 120 metres in length and 35 metres in breadth, enclosed with high walls and an arcade like the cloisters of a monastery or cathedral. On the east side is a large chapel, and on the north two smaller chapels, where prayers and masses are celebrated for the repose of the dead. The open space was filled with earth brought from the Holy Land by the merchant-ships of Pisa, which traded with the Levant in the days of its commercial splendour. This open space, once sown with graves, is now covered with green turf. At the four corners were four tall cypress-trees; their dark, monumental, spiral forms contrasting with a lowly cross in the centre, around which ivy or another creeping plant had wound a luxuriant bower.

The Gothic arcade was designed and built around 1283 by Giovanni Pisano, son of the great Nicola Pisano already mentioned. This arcade, on the side next to the burial ground, is pierced by 62 windows of elegant tracery divided from each other by slender pilasters; upwards of 600 sepulchral monuments of the nobles and citizens of Pisa are ranged along the marble pavements, and mingled with them are some antique remains of great beauty that the Pisans in former times brought from the Greek Isles. Here, also, is the famous sarcophagus which first inspired the genius of Nicola Pisano, and in which had been deposited the body of Beatrice, mother of the famous Countess Matilda. The walls opposite the windows were painted in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with scriptural subjects. Prior to World War II, most of these were half ruined by time, neglect, and moisture; some only present fragments, an arm here, a head there, and the best preserved are faded, discoloured, ghastly in appearance, and solemn in subject[4]. The whole atmosphere of this place, particularly to those who wander through its long arcades at dusk when the cypresses assume a blacker hue and the figures on the pictured walls look dim and spectral through the gloom, is moving. In its silence and solitude, something inexpressibly strange, dreamy, solemn, almost dark can be sensed, and the associations connected with its history enchant the imagination. Seen in the broad glare of noon, the place and the pictures lose something of their mystic power and that which last night haunted us as a vision can be examined, studied, and criticised with a colder eye.

Cathedral, baptistery, and campanile. Campo dei Miracoli, Pisa, Italy.

Romanesque Campo Santo of Pisa. Photograph by Juergen Schonnop.

[4] Note: After a stray Allied bomb fragment started a fire in July 1944, nearly all sculptures and sarcophagi were destroyed, the roof's lead structure was crippled and the frescoes severely compromised. Restoration work was begun after the end of the war, which has resulted in many of the frescoes, far from their original quality, being gradually reinserted to their original positions on the interior and exterior walls of the cemetery.

The building of the Campo Santo was scarcely finished when the best painters of the time were summoned to paint the walls around the interior with appropriate subjects. This was a project of many years which was continued at intervals through two centuries. Hence, we have a series of illustrations of the progress of art during its first development, of the religious influences of the age, and even of the dress and manners of the people, which are exhibited in some of these most extraordinary compositions. To comprehend them with appropriate insight we must first consider the purpose of the locality — a place sacred to the dead. It was to remind those who came to meditate within its precincts of the providence of God towards men, as exemplified in scriptural history. The great sacrifice which brought redemption, the troubles of human life, inevitable death, resurrection, the last judgment, and of the final destinies which await the souls of the just and the unjust. This was the general intention of the design.

On the left, upon entering, can be found the troubles of life represented in the history of Job, the biblical archetype of suffering, faith, and patience. This compartment was painted by Giotto, but few fragments remain. On the north wall opposite is the history of God's dealings with man, first, the "creation of the universe and of mankind", followed by the whole series of events from "The Fall" and the "Expulsion from Paradise", down to David and Solomon, including the history of the patriarchs Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. Additionally represented are the story of the Israelites, Moses and Aaron, and ending with the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon. These were all painted by Benozzo Gozzoli. The east wall featured the history of Christ, now almost totally effaced. On the south wall followed the "Triumph of Death", the "Future Life", the "Last Judgment", and the "Punishment of the Wicked"; these were painted by Andrea Orcagna. "Paradise" and the "Blessedness of the Just" were to have followed, but these were never executed; and, at a later period, the legends of the patron saints of Pisa, St. Ranieri, St. Efeso, and St. Potito were painted on this portion of the wall. To understand the religious significance of these decorations of the Campo Santo, the subjects must be approached in this order.

Deodato di Orlando,
Virgin and Child Enthroned between Two Archangels, between 1290-1300.
Lindenau-Museum, Altenburg.

Nicola Pisano,
Crucifixion, c. 1260.
Marble relief.
The Baptistery, Pisa.

Arcade of the Campo Santo of Pisa.
Photograph by Wieslaw Jarek.

Andrea Orcagna
c. 1308-1368

When Andrea Orcagna was summoned to Pisa around 1350 to continue the paintings on the walls of the Campo Santo, he selected subjects which harmonised peculiarly with the destination of these sacred precincts, they were to represent in four great compartments what the Italians call "*I quattro novissimi*", the four last or latest things — Death, Judgment, Hell or Purgatory, and Paradise; but only three were completed.

The first is styled the *Triumph of Death* (*Il Trionfo della Morte*). It is full of poetry and abounding in ideas then new in pictorial art. On the right is a festive company of ladies and cavaliers, who, according to their falcons and dogs, appear to have returned from a hunt. They are seated, splendidly attired, under orange trees with rich carpets spread at their feet. A troubadour and singing-girl amuse them with flattering songs; cherubs flutter around them and wave their torches. All the pleasures of sense and joys of earth are united here. On the left Death approaches with rapid flight — a fearful-looking woman with wild streaming hair, claws instead of nails, large bat wings, and indestructible wire-woven drapery. She swings a scythe in her hand, and is on the point of mowing down the joys of the company. (This female impersonation of Death is supposed to be borrowed from Petrarch, whose *Trionfo della Morte* was written around this time.) A host of corpses closely pressed together lie at her feet; based on their insignia they are almost all recognised as the former rulers of the world: kings, queens, cardinals, bishops, princes, warriors, etc. Their souls rise out of them in the form of newborn infants as angels and demons prepare to receive them; the souls of the pious fold their hands in prayer, while those of the condemned shrink back in horror. The angels are peculiarly yet happily conceived with bird-like forms and variegated plumage; the demons have the semblance of beasts of prey or of disgusting reptiles and fight amongst themselves. On the right, the angels ascend to heaven with those they have saved while the demons drag their prey to a fiery mountain, visible on the left, and hurl the souls down into the flames. Next to these corpses is a crowd of beggars and cripples, who call upon Death to end their sorrows with outstretched arms; but she heeds not their prayer, and has already passed them in her flight. A rock separates this scene from another, in which a second hunting-party is represented descending the mountain by a hollow path, here again are richly-attired princes and dames on horses splendidly caparisoned, and a train of hunters with falcons and dogs. The path has led them to three open sepulchers in the left corner of the picture; in them lie the bodies of three princes, in different stages of decay. Close by, in extreme old age and supported on crutches, stands the old hermit St. Macarius, who, turning to the princes, points down to this bitter "*Memento mori*". They look on with apparent indifference while one of them holds his nose, as if incommoded by the horrible stench. One queenly lady alone, deeply moved, rests her head on her hand, her countenance full of a pensive sorrow. On the mountain heights are several hermits, who, in contrast to the followers of the joys of the world, have attained, in a life of contemplation and abstinence, a state of tranquil blessedness. One of them milks a deer, squirrels sporting round him; another sits and reads; and a third looks down into the valley where the remains of the mighty are rotting away. Traditionally, among the personages in these pictures are many portraits of the artist's contemporaries.

Andrea di Cione Orcagna, *Strozzi Altarpiece,* 1354-1357. Tempera on wood, 160 x 296 cm. Santa Maria Novella, Florence.

The second representation is the *Last Judgment*. Above, in the centre, Christ and the Virgin are enthroned in separate glories. He turns to the left, towards the condemned, while he uncovers the wound in his side, and raises his right arm with a menacing gesture, his countenance full of majestic wrath. The Virgin, on the right of her son, is the picture of heavenly mercy as she appealingly looks toward Christ, pressing her hand to the bosom which nourished him in a plea for sinners. On either side are arranged the prophets of the Old Testament, the apostles, and other saints — severe, solemn, dignified figures. Angels, holding the instruments of the *Passion*, hover over Christ and the Virgin; under them is a group of archangels. First, the archangel Michael, as the "Angel of Judgment" stands in the midst, holding a scroll in each hand; immediately before him another archangel, supposed to represent Raphael, the "guardian angel of humanity", cowers down, shuddering, while two others sound the awful trumpets of doom. Lower down is the earth, where men are seen rising from their graves; armed angels directing them to the right and left. Here, King Solomon, who, while rising, seems doubtful to which side he should turn; here a hypocritical monk, who an angel draws back by the hair from the path to heaven; and a youth in a lively and rich costume, who another angel leads away to Paradise. There is a wonderful and even aggressive power of expression in some of the heads; it is said that among them are many portraits of contemporaries, but unfortunately no circumstantial indications as to particular figures have been transmitted. The attitudes of Christ and the Virgin were later borrowed by Michelangelo in his celebrated *Last Judgment*; but, notwithstanding the perfection of his forms, he stands below the dignified grandeur of the old master. Later painters also borrowed from his arrangement of the patriarchs and apostles — particularly Fra Bartolomeo and Raphael.

The third representation, directly succeeding the foregoing, is *Hell*. It is said to have been executed from Andrea's design by his brother Bernardo. Over all, it is less calculated than the preceding representations in execution, and even in composition. Here the imagination of the painter, unrestrained by any just rules of taste, degenerates into the monstrous and shocking, and some would argue even the grotesque and ludicrous. Hell is represented as a great rocky caldron, divided into four compartments rising one above the other. In the midst sits Satan, a fearful armed giant, himself a fiery furnace whose body emits flames to different places and in which sinners are consumed or crushed. In other parts the condemned are seen spitted like fowls, roasted and basted by demons, with other scenes of atrocity too horrible and sickening for description. The lower part of the picture was crudely painted over and altered according to the taste of the sixteenth century.

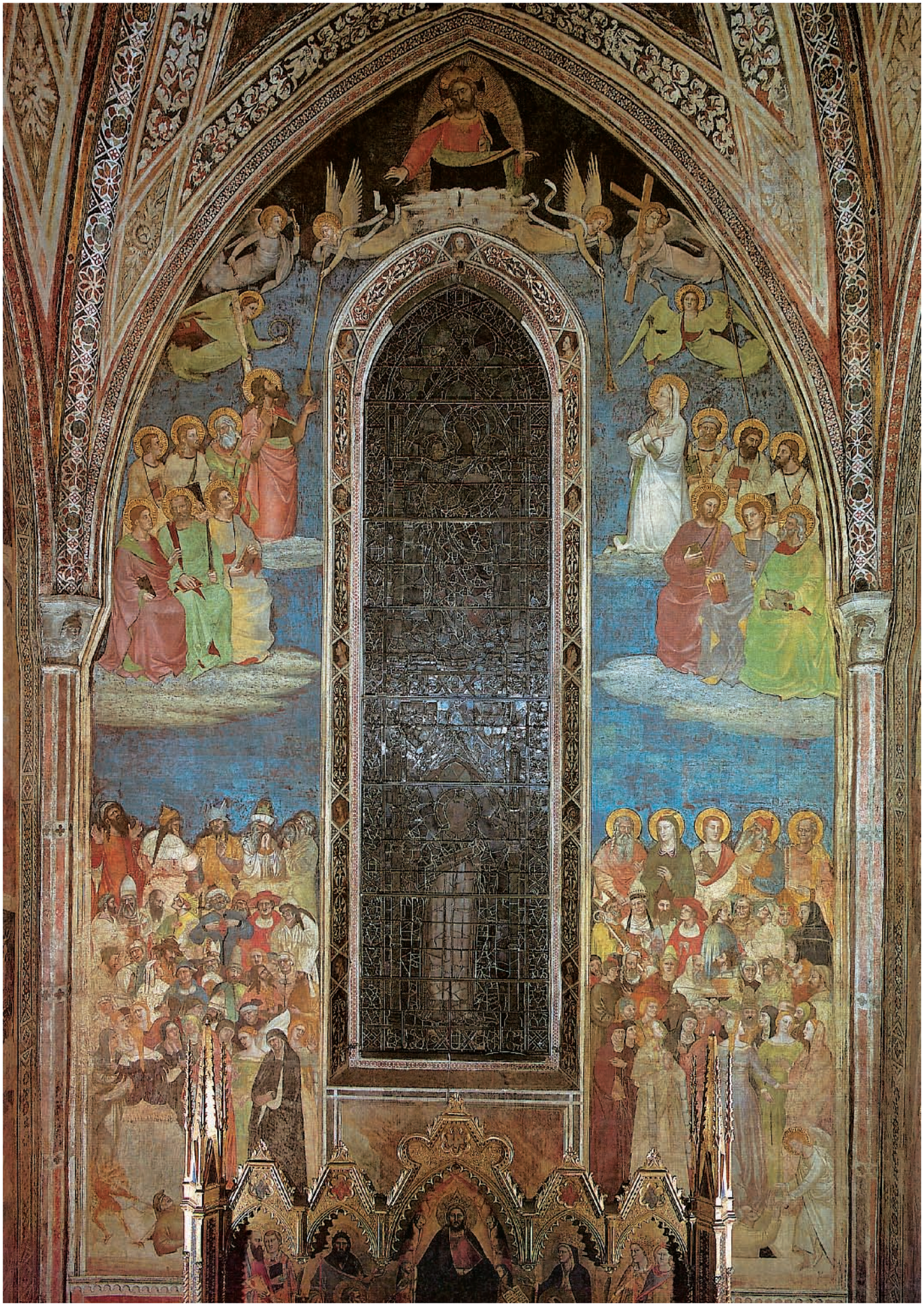
Andrea Orcagna was the son of a goldsmith in Florence. The goldsmiths of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were generally excellent designers and frequently became painters, as, for example, Francia, Verrochio, Andrea del Sarto. Andrea Orcagna apparently learned design under the tuition of his father. Rosini places his birth prior to 1310, which corresponds with the fact that by 1332 he had already acquired so much celebrity that he was called upon to continue the decoration of the Campo Santo at Pisa.

Andrea Orcagna was also a sculptor. He executed, in 1359, the exquisitely designed and elaborate tabernacle which the Florentines dedicated in the Orsanmichele church; it is still there today. Not less consummate as an architect than as a sculptor and painter, he designed and built the graceful and beautiful portico in the Piazza del Gran Duca in Florence, called the *Loggia dei Lanzi*, and which, according to his design, was to have been continued all round the Piazza, but the municipality could not afford the expense, the funds having been expended in war with the Pisans. It remains this way, as Andrea died before the work could be completed.

Pietro Lorenzetti,
The Virgin and Child between Saint Nicholas and the Prophet Elijah,
detail from the *Pala del Carmine*, 1329.
Tempera on wood, 169 x 148 cm.
Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena.

Andrea di Cione Orcagna,
Tabernacle of the Virgin, 1348-1359.
Tempera on wood.
Orsanmichele, Florence.

Andrea di Cione Orcagna,
Christ in Glory among Saints,
1354-1357.
Fresco and tempera on wood panel.
Cappella Strozzi, Santa Maria Novella, Florence.



Taddeo Gaddi
c. 1300–1366

We should now return to the pupils of Giotto. The third alluded to Taddeo Gaddi; he was Giotto's favourite scholar, as well as his godson. His pictures are considered to be the most important works of the fourteenth century. They resemble the manner of Giotto in the feeling for truth, nature, and simplicity; however, we also find improved execution in them, exhibiting even more beauty, largeness, and grandeur of style.

His pictures are numerous, several are in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence and the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, one can be seen in the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art in New York. In the National Gallery in London, are two large panels which probably formed the two wings of a central piece (an "Enthroned Madonna," or a "Coronation of the Virgin"), filled with figures of saints who appear to be in attendance of some grand ceremony or important personage, all the heads are finely distinguished in character. Also, an altarpiece dedicated to John the Baptist, which represents the baptism of Christ with subjects from the history of St. John below. These are just a few examples of the style of Taddeo's work which are worthy of study.

There are four small pictures which he painted to be found in the Louvre, and four grander ones in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin. Between Taddeo Gaddi and Simone Martini there existed an ardent friendship and a mutual admiration, which did honour to both. He was, like many of the old painters, a skilful architect and built the *Ponte Vecchio* (Old Bridge) in Florence, which is still standing and famous for the goldsmiths' shops which line it on either side. After Giotto, there was no name more celebrated in his time than that of Taddeo Gaddi.

Gaddi died in 1366, leaving behind two sons, Agnolo and Giovanni, who were also both painters. Another of Giotto's most famous followers was Tommaso di Stefano (aka Maso di Banco), nicknamed Giottino, or "the little Giotto", for the success with which he emulated his master. He was of a thoughtful, rather melancholy temperament and seems to have focused all the tenderness of his nature into a small picture of the dead Christ lamented by his mother, the other Maries, and Nicodemus, which exists in the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence.

Taddeo Gaddi,
Scenes from the Life of the Virgin,
1328-1330.
Fresco.
Baroncelli Chapel, Basilica di Santa Croce, Florence.

Simone Martini, also called Simone Memmi

c. 1284–1344

Simone Memmi, usually called Simone Martini, was a painter in Siena, of whom very few works remain. However, the friendship of Petrarch has rendered his name illustrious. Simone Memmi was employed in Avignon when it was the seat of the popes (c.1340); there he painted the portrait of Laura and presented it to Petrarch, who rewarded him with two Sonnets — and allegorical immortality. Simone also painted a famous picture on the wall of the Spanish chapel in the church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, which remains visible today. It represents the Church, militant and triumphant, with a great number of figures, among which are the portraits of Cimabue, Petrarch, and Laura. He also painted in the Campo Santo; his pictures there were among the finest in expression and in grouping. They represented, on the south wall over the door, the *Assumption of the Virgin Mary* — that is, her ascension into heaven — a subject often chosen in those times to express the hope in a future life; and the history of St. Ranieri, a native of Pisa, who, for his pious life and ascribed 'miracles', was held in great respect by his countrymen, the Pisans.

Simone Memmi also painted, in conjunction with Ambrogio Lorenzetti, another Sienese painter, some very extraordinary frescoes in the Palazzo Pubblico of Siena. In Naples, in the church of San Lorenzo, is also a very interesting picture representing St. Louis of Anjou, Bishop of Toulouse, crowning his brother Robert as King of Naples, while he is himself crowned by two angels. Simone was certainly one of the most remarkable and interesting painters of his time, and quite independent of the influence of Giotto. He died around 1344.

Petrarch, sighing through 200 sonnets, sings the charms of Laura, and soaring high in realms of fancy, imagines her in paradise, whence "Simon" brings her likeness down to earth, convincing humble mortals of her celestial beauty and giving her all but voice and intellect. It is in humble prose that Simone, the great but affected delineator of female beauty, one day retraced, with art more perishable than the rhyme of Petrarch, the charms which were the joy and torment of the poet's life. Yet Petrarch, when content to let the muses slumber and drop the classic contrasts of Pygmalion and Polycletus, gave Simone his proper place amongst the artists of his country. "I bequeathe," he said in his will, "my picture of the Virgin by the noble painter Giotto, whose beauty, unintelligible to the ignorant, is a wonder to the masters of the art"; and in his letters, "I have known two painters, talented both, and excellent, Giotto of Florence, whose fame amongst the moderns is great, and Simone of Siena."

Simone, second only to Giotto, and famous still after the Florentine was consigned to the grave, was born in 1284, and was son to one Martino. He married, in 1324, Giovanna, the daughter of Memmo di Filipuccio, a painter. His relation by marriage to Lippo, Giovanna's brother, contributed to the error of Vasari, who calls him Memmi, while no excuse exists for the assertion that Simone was a disciple of Giotto. Without pretending to deny that the two greatest painters of their age were acquainted with each other, without contradicting the assertion that Simone visited Rome, one may assume that Vasari erred in saying that he was Giotto's pupil. Simone is obviously the follower of the purely Sienese manner improved by Duccio; this is clear from the earliest of all his frescoes.

Duccio di Buoninsegna,
The Coronation of the Virgin,
c. 1287-1288.
Stained glass.
Apse, Cathedral of Siena, Siena.

Cimabue,
Stories from Genesis of Joseph, Christ and Saint John the Baptist.
Mosaics.
Dome of the Baptistery, Florence.

DAN IEL
POTESTATES
ARCANG

The hall of the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena is adorned with a wall picture enclosed in a border of medallions and shields, bearing the arms of the Commune and people. It is a vast piece whose total appearance leaves the impression of a tapestry or of a magnified miniature. The Virgin, wearing a diadem over her veil of blue, sits on a throne and gracefully calls attention by a gesture of her right hand to the infant Christ standing on her knee and supported on her left arm. Her ample dress, minutely engraved with golden arabesques, luxuriously and somewhat studiously clothes a form more feminine and elegant than regal. A certain affectation clings to her and is perceptible in the movement of the frame, as well as in the action of a beautiful hand.

The guardians of her throne, angels and saints, are grouped by her side. On her right St. Catherine looks up at her, next to her, St. John the Baptist with worn features and straggling wavy locks, then St. Agnes with her head affectedly bent, and carrying the Lamb, the Archangel Michael. A female with a burning heart and St. Peter holding the keys stand foremost, whilst, in the same order, an angel and six saints form a more distant rank.

To the left, a female saint also in a diadem, St. John the Evangelist, St. Mary Magdalen, the Archangel Gabriel, a third female saint, and the Apostle Paul with his sword stand similarly in front of an angel and six others. Sts Paul, Peter, the two St. Johns and four of those in rear carry the poles of a canopy which hangs over the group.

At the Virgin's feet, two angels kneel with a flower offering. St. Crescentius and St. Victor are on their knees on one side, St. Savinus and St. Ansanus on the other. In a medallion in the centre of the upper frame, Christ stands in the act of benediction between Isaac, Moses, David, and Jacob, in similar ornamental spaces. The four Evangelists are at the corners, three prophets in each of the vertical sides. At the centre of the lower frame a double-headed figure with an octagonal nimbus, in the sides of which the seven cardinal virtues are depicted, holds up a scroll with one hand on which the Decalogue is written, and with the other a scroll also on which are the seven sacraments. In two small medallions on each hand are the two sides of the Sienese coin with the inscriptions: *SENA VETUS CIVITAS VIRGINIS*, and *ALPHA ET OMEGA, PRINCIPIUM ET FINIS*. In the centre of a second border, below the first and interrupted by two medallions, one of which is adorned with a Virgin and Child between two angels with candelabra, is the following, partially obliterated:

MILLE TRECENTO QUINDICI VOL . . .
ET DELIA AVIA OGNI BEL FIOR SPINTO . . .
ET JUNO GIA GIRDAVA I' MI RIVAL . . .
S. A. MAN DI. SYMONE . . . .

St. Jerome and St. Gregory on one side of the double-headed figure in the principal border and St. Augustine and a saint, whose form cannot be traced, form the total of the piece.

This is an interesting fresco not merely because it is certainly by Simone, but because it seems to have been deemed necessary in Simone's own time to cut out and to renew eight of the heads of the principal figures. The life-size apostles and saints in the *Majesty*; the *St. Peter and Archangels* characterised by the attitudes and draperies which distinguish them in later pictures by Simone; the eight renewed heads, displaying perhaps more affectation of grace

Agnolo Gaddi,
The Virgin and Child Surrounded by Angels, Saint Benedict, Saint Peter, Saint John the Baptist, and Saint Minias.
Tempera on wood panel,
222 x 290 cm.
Palazzo Pitti, Florence.

Simone Martini,
Madonna of the Sign.
Tempera, 30.5 x 21.5 cm.
The Hermitage, St. Petersburg.

Lippo Memmi,
Saint Mary Magdalene (detail),
c. 1325.
Oil on canvas.
Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon.

than the older ones, particularly the *St. Catherine* and her companion with the diadem; all these figures are executed by one man, and point to the natural conclusion that Simone was obliged to restore a work which he had originally completed. The Virgin and infant Christ, of unusually slender frame, are the finest part of the picture. The head of the former in its tenderness and regularity, and that of the latter, in the form which remained characteristic not merely of Simone, but up to Taddeo di Bartolo, are pleasing and an improvement on those of Duccio.

Simone conceived the infant Christ plump and round-cheeked, with a pouting lip, vast forehead, short curly locks, and a glance more threatening than kind. He clothed him in a rich dress, and thus brought the art to a point where it seems to claim admiration more by richness and abundance of ornament than by simplicity or beauty of shape and features. The graceful female saints reveal the tendency common to Duccio and Simone, to contrast the stern gravity of males with an excessive tenderness in the other sex. A careful execution marks every portion of the work, whose colour can hardly be criticised. The composition, too, has the defects of Duccio and is distributed without the perfect balance of the Florentines. It betrays a wish, or the necessity under which the artist laboured, of preserving old forms of arrangement, dictated no doubt by custom.

Many writers have ventured to doubt the originality of this fresco, and assume that Mino was the author, who is recorded not only to have painted in 1293 and 1303, but to have decorated the council-hall of the Palazzo Pubblico of Siena in 1289 with a *Virgin Mary and Saints*, for which he received 27 livres. The smallness of the price might have suggested the possibility of an error; for Simone received the same sum exactly in 1321 for the mere repainting of eight heads. That Mino is not the painter of the *Majesty* in the present council-hall is clear on many grounds, which we will now explain.

Prior to 1288, an edifice on the public square of Siena was used as an excise office for oil and salt, and being inhabited in the upper stories by the authorities of the mint, or Bolgano, was called the Palazzo del Bolgano. In 1288, as appears from the records of the Consigli della Campagna and of the Biccherna, it was resolved that the Palazzo del Bolgano should be transformed into the Palazzo Pubblico, and that for that purpose contiguous houses should be purchased and appropriated.

Between 1288 and 1297 the necessary steps were taken for this purpose, and in 1297 the edifice was rebuilt and enlarged, especially in that part which is occupied by the present council-hall. Mino therefore, when he painted the *Virgin and Saints* in 1289, and Guido Gratiani, when he likewise executed a *Madonna* in the Palazzo Pubblico in 1295, did not labour in or for the present council-hall, for the obvious reason that it was not yet in existence. It is also in the records that the commune of Siena held council umtil 1284 in the old Palazzo del Bolgano, where Mino's *Virgin* existed without a doubt. Tizio, whose manuscript *History of Siena* is still extant, further declares that the Sala del Consiglio, in which the *Majesty* is depicted, was finished in 1299. Nevertheless, even at that time, that it remained without its present pictorial decorations is clear from the traces which still exist, proving that important changes were made at an even later date.

That these occurred around 1311 is authoritatively stated in the records of Siena. Anyone who now chooses to examine the wall on which Simone's fresco was painted in 1315, will remark that it had undergone repairs and alterations before that fresco was executed.

Simone Martini,
Madonna of Misericordia (Mercy),
14th century.
Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena.

Agnolo Gaddi,
The Beheading of Khosrau and the Return of Heraclius to Jerusalem,
c. 1385.
Fresco.
The Choir Chapel, Basilica di Santa Croce, Florence.

Beneath the intonaco on which the lower border is painted, there are marks, to the right, of an opening three quarters of a metre in breadth, walled up and originally forming an arch, in part extending within the lower edge of the fresco. Another opening, about one and a quarter metres in breadth, had been likewise filled in and extended to a spot above the inner border of Simone's fresco, cutting with its curve the inscription beneath the feet of the *Madonna* and taking in part of the medallion of St. Gregory.

The inscription of Simone is on the newly walled space; and thus, everything points to the fact that Simone painted the fresco in 1315. It is distinctly recorded that in 1321 he was paid 26 livres for the reconditioning of the *Majesty*. Critics have inquired how it could be that in six years a fresco should require repair. Many causes might have rendered such a course necessary, amongst them chiefly the effect of moisture upon the fresco, and an eruption of salt on the lime of the intonaco. Gaye lays great emphasis on a petition of 1316 for the rescue, from the effects of fire and smoke, of paintings in the Sala or "*curtem domus*," in which the Podesta lived and took his meals. He assumes that the hall alluded to here is the Sala del Consiglio; but it is now known that the Podesta inhabited quite a different part of the building, and it is not likely that he should dwell or eat in a hall where the chief magistrates met to deliberate and dispense justice.

There is no doubt that before 1315 Simone was an artist of considerable powers and name, not only in Siena but throughout Italy. The Sienese master portrayed Robert of Naples who, as Duke of Calabria had been in command in central Italy during the early part of the fourteenth century. After the death of Louis, bishop of Toulouse, Simone depicted Robert crowning his brother; and the picture, of life-size figures, is still at Naples, though no longer in the church of St. Lorenzo Maggiore but at the Museo di Capodimonte. One can assume, however, that this interesting piece, which bears no date, was executed some years after the incident which it illustrates. Records of certain authenticity declare how, in 1320, Father Petrus,

a friar in St. Catherine of Pisa, requested a picture to be painted by Simone for the high altar of his church. The work, authenticated by the master's signature, was disassembled after the retirement of the Dominicans from St. Catherine of Pisa; but its parts are preserved and, independently of the poetic praise of Petrarch, they would suffice to establish the lasting fame of Simone.

In a course of seven compartments he represents the Virgin and Child (the latter clutching at the bosom of the Virgin's dress), between saints. An upper course dividing each panel into two niches is devoted to archangels and apostles. The gable points are decorated with a central figure of Christ holding the gospel in the act of benediction, and six prophets. The centre of the pediment, divided into three parts, is filled with an *Ecce Homo* between the Virgin and St. Mark, whilst in twelve similar spaces, equally divided at the sides, stand various male and female saints.

Graceful as the Madonna appears with the infant Christ on her knee, the female saints at the sides are still more so. Nothing more elegant has been produced by Simone than the slender and bending figure of the *Magdalen* delicately holding the ointment cup in the tips of her veiled fingers, and nothing finer than the red drapery lined with green and falling from her gently inclined head. Finer still, and majestic as well as graceful, is the *St. Catherine*, whose fair proportions, regular soft features and natural attitude are not surpassed in any subsequent effort of the master. Her gentle motion and tender air, enhanced by a diadem and veil covering her chestnut hair, a pale yellow dress spangled with delicate gold tracery, and her fine, regular hands, one of which plays with a book, are truly impressive.

Amongst the saints, *St. Peter Martyr* in the Dominican dress with a cicatrix on his head and *St. Dominic* with the lily and gospel are fine. *St. John Evangelist*, youthful and beardless, is an improvement on the old type, whilst *the Baptist*, with his straggling locks and beard, his meagre and emaciated face and form, is but a repetition of a well-known model. The *Archangels*

Lorenzo Monaco,
Scenes from the Life of St. Onuphrius, c. 1420.
Tempera on wood, 26 x 58 cm.
Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence.

in the upper course are striking for their long and lean shape; *Christ*, in the central pinnacle, is given a thin frame. A youthful face, broad at the cheeks with hair clinging to the head until it falls on the shoulders with a lock on the forehead are also noticeable. The draperies are fine and simple, and the type expresses a soft tenderness without the weight or gravitas of Giotto. The *Ecce Homo* of the pediment is likewise impressive, still soft in character, though of sharp profiled features. *St. Agnes*, in her yellow dress shadowed in red, is one of Simone's usual graceful females.

This picture does not allow the spectator to forget that Simone was imperfect at expressing the idea of relief, but the tones are the most powerful, and at the same time the lightest that he ever produced on panel.

Whilst Simone was thus sending a prime example of his talent to the Dominicans of Pisa in 1320, he executed a similar commission around the same time for another Dominican convent. It is on record that Trasmundo, the predicant bishop of Savona, encouraged an altarpiece which represented himself kneeling before the Virgin with attendant saints to be painted by Simone for the high altar of St. Domenico of Orvieto. The picture itself, now in the Fabbricieria of the cathedral without its pediment or pinnacles, is inscribed:

. . . N DE SENIS ME PYNX.T . . . . D. MCCCXX. . . .

The peculiar grace of the school is conspicuous at a high standard in this piece, which illustrates Simone's care in rendering figures on a small scale on panel. The affectation of attitude and action so marked in larger productions is not apparent, and nothing can exceed the minuteness with which the hair outlines and the details of locks and beard are realised. The dresses, in strong primary harmonies, are of the best kind, and the colour, though slightly abraded in the flesh-tints, is admirably fused in verde, leaving still, however, a sense of flatness and general lowness of key.

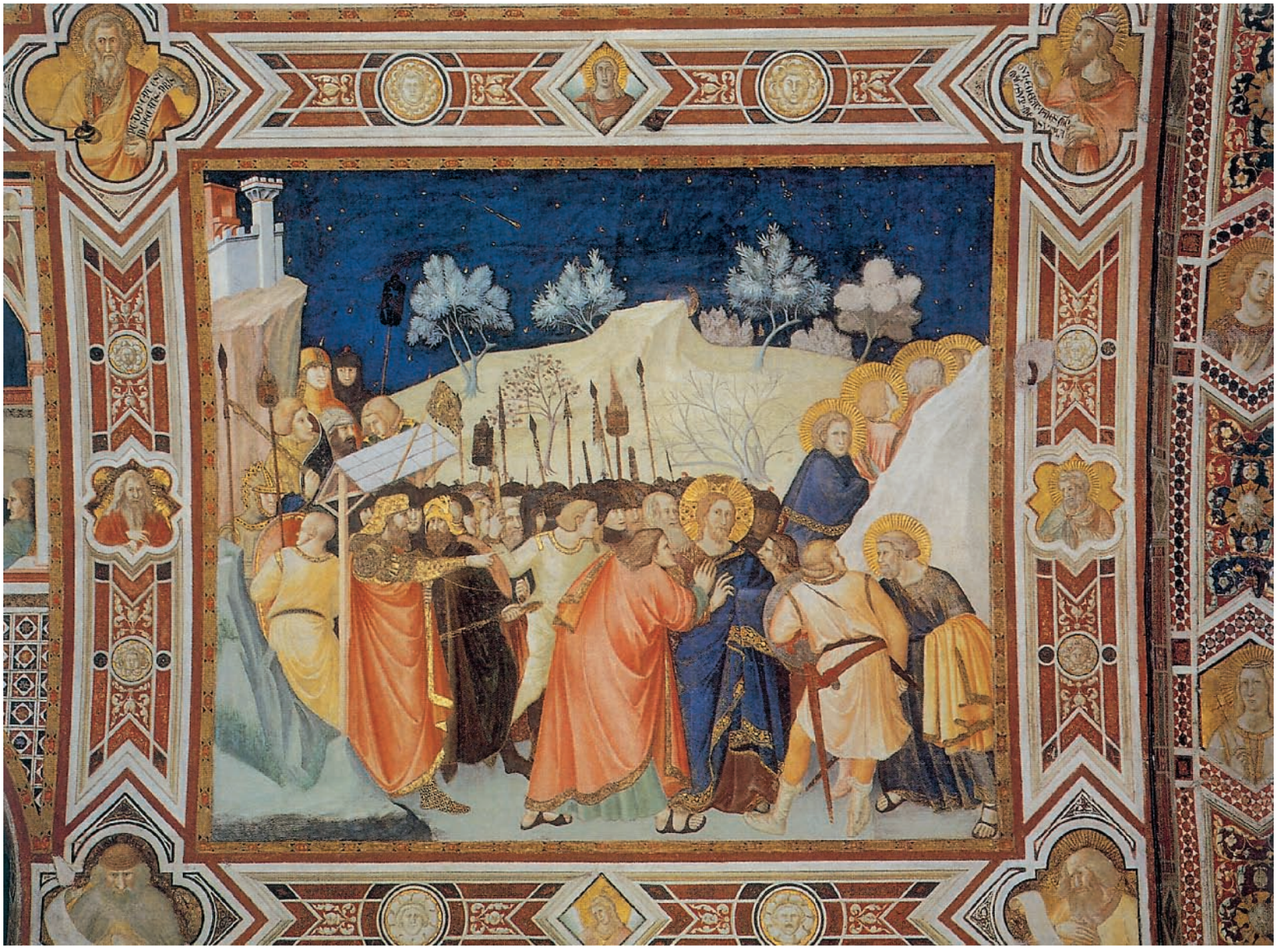
Nor was this the only picture which the master produced for Orvieto, a city as remarkable for the possession of great Sienese examples in architecture, sculpture, and painting, as Assisi had been for Florentine works. Another *Virgin and Child*, under a trefoil arch at whose sides two angels are depicted in medallions, while Christ is placed in benediction between a blue cherub and a red seraph in three triangular pinnacles fill an altarpiece by Simone which remained in the sacristy of the Chiesa de' Gesuiti at Orvieto until it was transferred to the Opera del Duomo. Eventually acknowledged as a work of the master, and unauthenticated by a signature, this *Madonna* belongs to the same period as that previously mentioned, and is equally as fine.

Less compelling because of the damage it has sustained is a third altarpiece of the *Virgin and Saints* by Simone, purchased from a church at Orvieto by the Cavaliere Mazzocchi of the same city. Simone displays his feeling for tenderness and grace in the attitude of the infant Christ patting the chin of the Virgin and striving to take a flower from her right hand.

It is not in Orvieto, however, but rather in Assisi that we find Simone executing frescoes. To the former city the master perhaps sent his altarpieces from Siena. In Assisi, though, he laboured in person; it was not unnatural that a man of his talent and fame to take some pride

Altichiero da Zevio,
Introduction of the Knight from the Cavalli Family to the Virgin,
before 1384.
Fresco.
Sant'Anastasia, Verona.

Pietro Lorenzetti,
The Entry of Christ into Jerusalem,
c. 1320.
Fresco.
Lower Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.



Pietro Lorenzetti,
The Arrest of Christ, c. 1320.
Fresco.
Lower Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.

in rivalling the greatest Florentines on their own turf, and of breaking a lance with Giotto. There, much more than in Avignon, Simone sought to lavish on his work all the exquisite finish and freshness of power which he possessed; and in the frescoes which he executed for Cardinal Gentile in the great basilica, his figures, and chiefly those which represent saints in the thickness of the window of the chapel, are finished with the type of minute detail already conspicuous in the altarpieces of Orvieto.

It may be necessary to premise, however, that Vasari, in a few observations which he makes in the life of Giotto with respect to the pupils of that master, pretends that Cardinal Gentile ordered of Puccio Capanna the frescoes which decorate his chapel of St. Martin in Assisi. The blunder of confounding a purely Sienese work, the finest of its kind, with those of a direct disciple of Giotto is hardly conceivable, but not the less evident; for although no records justify the belief that Simone painted this chapel and no mention is made of the time in which this occurred, the style of Simone is so indelibly impressed upon the pictures that little doubt can possibly exist as to the identity of the author.

It must have been Simone, therefore, who decorated the whole of the chapel with scenes from the legend of St. Martin, filling not merely the forepart which is arched; but the inner portion, which has a groined ceiling, with ten subjects; the lunette above the entrance with the consecration of Gentile, and the sides of the windows with figures of saints. As guardians of the sanctity of the place, eight holy personages stand in niches in the vaulting of the pointed entrance. In a double course, beginning at the base of the side to the left of the entrance, the incidents of St. Martin's life are depicted.

In the first of these, St. Martin on horseback saws at his cloak whose skirt is held by a beggar on the left. The drawing of the horse, outlined and shaded with a preparation of brown, and the nude of the stiff beggar remain. Nor can it be concealed that in the hard form, defective outline and unready action of the figure, Simone showed more anxiety to study natural developments of flesh and muscle than a 'noble' form. A crudely realistic anatomy, not a grand conception of shape and proportion, is the result.

Next, the saint appears smiling in sleep and sees a vision of Christ. Simone had already changed to some extent since he painted the *Christ in Benediction* in the Sala del Consiglio at Siena. He gives the *Christ* in Assisi a simple and regular form, a soft expression, without muscular protuberances of brow or an angular and depressed nose. He makes a closer approach to the types which Giotto had left in the transept of the basilica, and creates one more distinct from his own and Duccio's previous conceptions. In this sense Vasari was right, if he intended to affirm that Giotto extended some of his influence to the Sienese master, though ultimately he had no authority or evidence for stating that Simone was Giotto's pupil.

In the left side of the third fresco, where St. Martin refuses the donation, Julian wears the antique Roman costume and affects a certain classicism. The movements of the fingers of the hand, stretched forth and holding the baton, is the caricature of defects which became conspicuous later in the followers of Michelangelo, and is characteristic in Agostino di Federigo. It would seem, indeed, as if false classicism clung more or less to the Sienese school from its very beginning. It is also curious to note the link between the same old painters rendering types characteristic of the declining Byzantine Italian manner, and the mannerisms of the Michaelangelesque imitators of the sixteenth century. A wasp-like shape

Simone Martini,
The Dream of St. Martin, c. 1317.
Fresco, 65 x 200 cm.
Lower Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi.

given to the joints of the fingers by Simone, shows a conventionalism hardly to be expected in so early an artist.

The sequel of the interview with Julian is told differently from the narrative in the common legend in the next picture. St. Martin receives the sword from the Caesar, while an attendant buckles spurs on his feet and a third holds a hat on a pole. This almost colourless scene is laid in an interior; the figures have similar peculiarities to the previous ones. It may also be remarked that the proportions of distant and nearer figures are not maintained; some heads are large and coarse while others have relative profiles. Also, in general, the choice of costumes is more imaginative than 'appropriate'. Taking the second course in the same order as the first, we find a damaged representation of the *Resurrection of Christ*, at whose sides St. Martin, two grieving females, and other spectators kneel. The next fresco is sufficiently well preserved to display regular forms in their natural shape, and pleasant features with a gentle expression.

The saint, in vestments, sits in thought as if pondering the words of a kneeling servant reading to him from a book. An attendant strives to attract his attention by touching his shoulder. Valentinian in the next scene kneels at the feet of the saint, who motions him to rise; the group thus formed is powerful in action and expression. Passing by the vision of two angels to St. Martin at the altar, which forms the subject of the next compartment, the eye is arrested by the solemn episode of the saint's death, on a bench surrounded by kneeling monks. One of them takes the hand of the corpse, whilst another looks at it grievingly while the clergy read a funeral service at the head. In the upper spaces, four angels carry the soul to heaven. Simone clearly remains true to the old styles, presenting in the angel's features a contrast of the strongest kind with other figures of the same class in the vision of Christ to the sleeping saint.

The last fresco of the series shows St. Martin recumbent on a tomb, in a church filled with clergy and people singing the funeral service. At the head a relic presented by a bishop is embraced by one of the bystanders. At the feet the priests and congregation stand. Cardinal Gentile in the lunette above the door, in frock and cowl, his red hat lying on a balustrade in the Gothic church which forms the background, is raised from his kneeling position by St. Martin. Natural movement marks this well-arranged group; Simone shows that he excelled in portraiture, keeping art at a higher level when he had but two figures and a simple action to delineate, than when struggling with the difficulties of a more complicated subject. Fine draperies and lightness of colour give an additional charm to the scene. The half-lengths in the sides of the windows, separated from each other by an ornament and the arms of Cardinal Gentile, are the finest that Simone ever executed. They were finished with great care and impressed with a stamp of natural detail and force, unusually combined in his works. The designs of the coloured glass in the windows represent St. Martin in episcopals and the Cardinal kneeling, the name *GENTILIS CARDINAL* being inscribed beneath.

The spectator reluctantly admits, after carefully studying the decorations of the chapel, that Simone did not attain the perfect laws of equilibrium in composition, and that he was thus unaware of, or indifferent to, a maxim which peculiarly distinguished the great Florentines of his time. The subjects maintain their interest because of their comparative realism; many figures, if viewed and analysed separately, show a certain study of nature. A coarse vigour of expression in some type cast in the old and consecrated mould, contrasts

with more pleasant and natural features in others. It could be said that Simone did not have that consistent equality and unity of power which Giotto possessed. His style was a series of contradictions. In single figures or portraits he excelled; in action and incident he was frequently hesitant and exaggerated. Enough original colour remains to show that in technical execution he was adept, but he is still liable to fault and, as usual, gives but slight relief to his picture by light and shade.

Though Vasari affirms that Puccio painted a chapel evidently by Simone, he admits the presence of the latter in Assisi, when stating, truly in this instance, that he began certain figures of the Virgin, Louis of France, and other saints by the altar of St. Elizabeth in then southern transept of the Lower Church. These half-lengths, eight in number, found low down in the end of the transept to the right of the door leading into the Cappella Orsini and partly on the western corner, are all of high artistic quality. Though they are damaged or abraded, they are well coloured in a beautifully fused rosy yellow tone. Simone's usual flatness and absence of relief prevail, but the most remarkable feature in the paintings is the exquisite drawing of the light-red outlines, and the details of hair, beard, and ornament in the dress and nimbus. Each of the latter is stamped with a new pattern; one with a garland of flowers, another with human heads as blossoms to a tracery of roses, a third with oak leaves, a fourth with suns and moons. Simone illustrated in these figures the Oriental taste exclusively in fashion of Siena, and the careful attention in secondary paths of art which made Sienese painters forget the great maxims of composition.

At what precise period Simone laboured at Assisi is uncertain, but published Sienese records confirm, at least, such an account as the following.

In 1321 he repaired the fresco of the Sala del Consiglio at Siena, and painted a *Virgin*, *Saints*, and a *Crucifixion* above the altar in the chapel of the Signori Nove. During 1322,

Lippo Memmi,
The Maésta, 1317.
Fresco.
Palazzo del Podestà, San Gimignano.

Lorenzo Monaco,
The Coronation of the Virgin, 1414.
Tempera on panel, 450 x 350 cm.
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Simone Martini,
The Annunciation, 1333.
Tempera on panel, 184 x 210 cm.
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

he decorated the *Loggia* of the Palazzo Pubblico, and he painted a St. Christopher in the Biccherna and a shield of arms for the Podesta. After his marriage in 1324, he painted (between 1325-1326) a picture for the Palace of the Capitano del Popolo, and later in the same year (September 1326) he seems to have put in order or repaired some of the city's possessions in Arcidosso, Castello del Piano, and Scanzano, being provided by the government with expenses to hire a horse and the service of an infantry soldier.

Simone evidently kept a regular bottega, and did not seem to mind accommodating orders for such things as lilies of gold, lions for the arms of the Commune or people, and ornamental works in general.

In 1328, he painted in the Sala del Consiglio a fresco representing the equestrian figure of Guidoriccio Fogliani de' Ricci, the victorious general of Montemassi and Sasso Forte, which might just be the first secular painting of the epoch. Siena thus boasts at the present time two frescoes by Simone. Of pictures by the master it might have been said hitherto until recently that his native city possessed no confirmed paiting by the master, although there is now a *Madonna with Child* in the Pinacoteca Nazionale. There is also, however, another picture, fine enough to be his, of the *Beato Agostino Novello* and incidents from his life, high up in the choir of the church of St. Agostino. Should it be a question of whether he or Lippo painted it, one might affirm that, if it is by the latter, it is the best he ever produced, and one in which he successfully equalled his great relative. Full of animation and of bold movement in the figures, the incidental scenes are quite characteristic of Simone's style, and the whole work is coloured in the softest and most harmonious manner.

The year 1329 still saw Simone busy in Siena painting in August two angels for the altar of the chapel of the Signori Nove, and decorating buildings for the Commune in Siena and in l'Ansedonia. Starting in 1329 and continuing into 1330 he painted a figure in the Concistoro de' Nove. From 1331 through 1332 he worked occasionally in the Palazzo Pubblico, in Arcidosso, and Castel del Piano; he also executed the pedestal of a cross in the chapel of the Nove during this time.

Simone Martini,
Guidoriccio da Fogliano, c. 1328.
Fresco, 340 x 968 cm.
Palazzo Pubblico, Siena.

In 1333, with the assistance of Lippo, Simone completed the *Annunciation* for the altar of St. Ansano in the Duomo, which is now preserved in the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence.The name of Lippo joins that of Simone in the inscription, yet the presence of two hands cannot be traced in the picture itself, and apparently the ornamental part, which is superabundant and began at this time to take an exaggerated place in Sienese pictures, was by Simone's brother-in-law. This is indeed proved by the record, which states that in 1333 Lippo had 70 florins of gold for adorning "the columns and nimbuses of the altarpiece of San Sano." Tizio relates, and Ghiberti confirms, that Simone adorned the front of a space on the square of the Paparoni in Siena with a fresco which, according to the former, depicted the Virgin and Child with saints, and according to the latter, the "Coronation of the Virgin". Above the door of the Opera del Duomo, adds Ghiberti, a Virgin and Child, with angels flying and supporting a flag besides many saints, was also by Simone. On the front of a palace facing the Duomo, if we believe Delia Valle, he painted the Virgin and Christ on a common throne, surrounded by a glory of angels, and guarded below by four saints in niches. An inscription beneath the fresco was obliterated with the exception of the words *ANNO DOMINI 1335.* Ghiberti also alludes to two frescoes on the front of the Spedale at Siena, which, like the previous, have perished. One representing the "Marriage of the Virgin", the other "how she is visited by many dames and virgins, with ornaments of houses and figures."

The Naples picture, whose signature has already been transcribed in these pages, decorates an altar in the church of St. Lorenzo Maggiore, and is enclosed in a frame adorned with the fleur-de-lis. St. Louis, archbishop of Toulouse, as large as life, sits in gentle majesty with the mitre on his head and a crosier in his right hand, while his left holds a crown over the head of his kneeling brother, Robert of Naples. The colour is abraded throughout, and nothing is left but the engraved outline and the preparation.

It may be noticed that up until 1335 Simone seems very constantly to have resided in Siena, and that there is no indication of his presence at any distance from his native city except in Assisi. Ghiberti alludes to no pictures in Rome or Florence, and the remains in the

Simone Martini,
Guidoriccio da Fogliano (detail),
c. 1328.
Fresco, 340 x 968 cm.
Palazzo Pubblico, Siena.

former capital do not confirm the assertion of Vasari that Simone painted there. The *Virgin and Child* in the portico of St. Peter and a *St. Paul and St. Peter* in the Vatican are no longer discoverable. The *Virgin and Child* is indeed said to exist in the chapel of the Madonna della Bocciata in the Grotte of the Vatican, but it is so ruined that no one can tell whether it is truly by Simone's hand.

An altarpiece executed for the Dominicans of St. Catherine has been noticed in Pisa; this, however, had been commissioned in Siena. In the Museo of Pisa a figure of St. Nicholas enthroned discloses some characteristic features of Simone, though its execution and old type might point to the lesser talent of Lippo. The frescoes assigned to Simone in the Campo Santo were obviously by another hand.

Above the architrave, inside the eastern gate of that burial place, vestiges are preserved of an *Assumption of the Virgin.* The Madonna, with her hands united in prayer, is carried to heaven in an elliptical glory, held by Christ and supported by twelve angels in groups of three. The painting, altered by time and repainting, is Sienese, but less professional in execution than that of even Lippo Memmi, and therefore neither by him nor by Simone. It is also different in manner from the series in the Campo Santo attributed to the same hand. Yet Vasari enthusiastically, and some would say incomprehensibly, praises it. There is little in the way of conclusive evidence with which to ascribe to Simone, as Vasari has, the three upper frescoes of the series devoted to the legend of St. Raineri. They illustrate the earliest incidents in the career of the Pisan saint.

Raineri is represented in the first fresco to the left, arrested in the middle of a dance of men and women by a matron who, singling him out of a crowd, calls upon him to follow the example of the good and pious Beato Alberto. Here is a characteristic circular dance of females like those of Lorenzetti in Siena, and others at Santa Maria Novella; a man in a hood, looking on, resembles the so-called Cimabue in the fresco of the Cappellone. In the next episode, the saint, kneeling at the feet of Alberto, receives the rays of the Holy Ghost which, in the shape of a dove, hovers over him. Finally Raineri, kneeling between a nimbed personage and a female, receives a blessing from Christ, who appears to him in a church. In the second grand compartment, Raineri's journey aboard a ship to the Holy Land, and his miraculously ill-scented freight are represented. Several persons stand about an open case, one of them looking into it and holding his nose, whilst he shades his eyes with his hand; another starting back with a gesture of disgust and holding his nostrils; the saint, with a natural movement and soft expression of countenance, commenting on 'the miracle' and, as it were, explaining that worldly goods stink in the nostrils of God. On the land to which the vessel is sailing, Christ again appears to Raineri, who, further on, distributes alms and assumes the garb of a pilgrim. Finally, the Virgin, surrounded by six angels, makes her appearance on a throne. The third fresco is devoted to five different incidents: the temptation of St. Raineri by Lucifer, the devil retiring and appearing in the air with the form of the pilgrim in his arms, then heaving a stone at him as he stands in prayer. The saint is then seen taming two lionesses and kneeling before the vision of Christ, between Moses and Elias and a glory of angels. Lastly, Raineri, at the door of the monastery, asks for rest and hospitality, and afterwards distributes his alms.

These greatly damaged frescoes are by a painter of Simone's school and spirit, imitating at least his mode of composition but making little approach to his perfection of execution.

Jacobello Alberegno,
Madonna of Misericordia (Mercy),
c. 1394.
Tempera on wood.
Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence.

A repetition of the same heads, figures, and action, a perpetual recurrence of the same conventionally drawn features, such as half-closed drowsy eyes, low foreheads, brows bridging the nose, and beards of a pointed shape, reveal a painter of little aspiration to versatility. A vulgar nature is depicted in the nudes; broken attitudes are indicated by straight or angular lines; the easy flow of drapery conspicuous in the Sienese has disappeared. An equally distributed tone of melancholy overspreads a thick and rough surface; opacity has taken the place of Simone's liveliness and vigour. The yellowish flesh tints, shadowed in red, are defective in relief; the draperies of undecided tones are copiously adorned with arabesques of the same colour, and the drawing is brash, mechanical, and coarse.

Damaged by time and by attempts at restoration, the series is remarkable for the total absence of all Simone's qualities; and if it should appear that the compositions were originally his, the execution will surely be found to have been that of a later painter. Fortunately for the endurance of our respect for him, evidence proves conclusively enough that the frescoes of St. Raineri at Pisa were only commenced thirty years after Simone's death. The book of receipts and expenditure of the Campo Santo contains details of a payment to the painter Andrea di Florentia of 529 livres ten pence by Pisa: the balance of a sum due to him for painting the story of the Beato Raineri. It seems that this Andrea, a Florentine, was commissioned to execute these stories by Piero Gambacorta; he bore the title *pictor opere*, lived in a house in close proximity to the works upon which he had to labour, and was paid on 13 October 1377 (1378 in the Pisan style).

Three years later, the series still incomplete, a message was sent to Genoa to Barnaba da Modena, requesting him to come and finish it; Barnaba came, but he seems to have added little or nothing to the work of Andrea; the series was successfully brought to conclusion in 1386 by Antonio Veneziano. Judging the three upper frescoes of St. Raineri at the Campo Santo artistically, they would appear to have been executed by a painter taught in the Sienese rather than the Florentine school, yet Andrea is described as being from Florence. It is not Andrea Orcagna that is involved here, as there is proof that he was dead in 1376. But the choice must lie between the following, whose names are on the roll of Florentine artists or in other records of the fourteenth century.

Andrea Ferri, 1347 and 1357; Andrea del Passano, 1363; Andrea Bonaiuti, 1374; Andrea di Mito, 1377-1415; Andrea di Puccino, 1367; Andrea di Currado, 1379; and Andrea Ristori, 1353, 1391, called, in his funeral inscription at Santa Maria Novella, Andrea Ristori de Mugello. If this Andrea was connected with the di Cioni (Orcagna brothers) through Ristori, the brother of Orcagna, another link between Sienese and Florentine painters might be traced. It may be interesting to see whether Florence has ever yielded an example presupposing that combination.

Simone is said by Vasari to have painted the chapterhouse of the convent of St. Spirito in Florence, as well as the chapterhouse of Santa Maria Novella, better known as the Cappellone degli Spagnoli. The time when the frescoes of St. Spirito were painted has already been identified to be between 1339 and 1346, when Simone was absent from Italy. One of the subjects which decorated the chapterhouse was exactly the same as that which now adorns the Cappellone of Santa Maria Novella. Following Vasari's train of thought in the life of Simone, one may see that he assigned the frescoes of St. Spirito,

Gentile da Fabriano, *Adoration of the Magi*, 1423. Tempera on wood, 303 x 282 cm. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

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the Cappellone, and those of the Campo Santo to one hand, because they all had a Sienese character, and preserved a reminiscence of Simone Martini's style. The Dominicans dictated to the painter whom they employed in the Cappellone degli Spagnoli the subjects that he was to depict; he endeavoured to demonstrate in one vast picture a theory which found many opponents in the fourteenth, and more so in later, centuries. He illustrated the idea that Paradise is to be attained through unconditional temporal and spiritual devotion to the Church, and especially by adhering to the doctrines enforced by the founders of the Inquisition.

To the left of the picture on the eastern wall of the chapel, the militant Church is symbolised by St. Maria del Fiore on the original model of Arnolfo. In front of it, Pope Benedict XI on a terraced throne presides over a cardinal, a bishop, an emperor, a king, and a prince occupying chairs at each side of him. The flock of the Church before them is expressed by sheep on an altar, the irrefragable truth of Church doctrine by groups at the sides including monks, nuns, knights, and dames in prayer or in thought before a preaching bishop; and numbers of persons of various classes or conditions, of diverse ages and sex. Here the painter had, it was said, introduced Cimabue in profile wearing the hood and short mantle, and Arnolfo, Petrarch, and Laura with a burning heart. Yet we may inquire what inducement the Dominicans could have to immortalise a poet who had written that the Pope, the Emperor, the bishop, and the prince "had abdicated their station by an inglorious retreat to the Rhone and Danube" while they were still, in fact, enthroned close by and triumphantly. Rather, if Simone were the painter of the picture, how he could have obtained the portrait of a lady whom he had not yet seen.

But the triumph of the Church owed its accomplishment to St. Dominic, who, accordingly, appears in the centre foreground directing the onslaught of his order, in the shape of black and white dogs, upon the wolves who would rob the Church of its lambs. To the right again he reasons with heretics and preaches to unbelievers. Above this series of groups expressing the triumph and the power of the militant Church and St. Dominic, others are intended to show the happiness awaiting those who practice obedience to their doctrines. To the right, a dance of three females is timed to the cymbals of a playing girl, and another more rotund female moves to the sound of a pipe, in the presence of four persons of both sexes seated with viols, falcons, and dogs. The latter group, in front of a hill overshadowed by trees, recalls to mind the spirit of a similar scene in the so-called Orcagna fresco at Pisa; the former is also similar to the dances in the wall paintings of Lorenzetti at Siena. Next to these groups signifying the harmlessness of human pleasure when innocent and recreational, St. Dominic again appears confessing a knight. Once more he appears pointing out to a group whose consciences he has set at rest by confession, the road to Paradise lying up a path and through a gateway at which St. Peter stands, inviting a procession of saints to enter after receiving garlands from angels in waiting. Behind the gate, Paradise lies open, peopled by the happy of all ages and sexes, presided over in the upper centre by Christ, enthroned under the guard of angels and attended by the Virgin Mary.

This enormous work, of three or four hundred figures, all of life-size, is symmetrically distributed into groups, with a fair amount of unity amongst themselves. The painter's talent as a colourist must not be hastily denied, because the whole piece is so altered by restoration

Lorenzo Monaco,
Adoration of the Magi, 1421-1422.
Tempera on wood, 115 x 170 cm.
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Altichiero da Zevio,
Crucifixion, 1376-1379.
Fresco, 840 x 280 cm.
San Giacomo Chapel, Basilica of
St. Anthony, Padua.

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that only a few parts remain from which the original aspect can be judged. Still, one may note a great semblance with the Raineri series in Pisa; the same melancholy yellow tones, the same dresses embroidered with traceries of the colour of the surrounding items. Shadowed with a dark wine-red, the same heads and figures of uniform character hardly relieved by spare red shadow; similar disproportional nudes with coarse outlines and extremities. Christ in glory has a lean form, the straight and broken outlines, tight draperies, and the broad head specific to Sienese painters. There is some individuality in the lower foreground figures, some grace in the dances, some noble and gentle faces in the groups, and some elegance in the angels of the Paradise; but there is little display of vigour, and the characteristics of the painter of the Pisa series are more apparent than those of Simone Martini.

On the north wall, the space above the arch leading into the choir is filled with a *Crucifixion* in the style described by Vasari as peculiar to that of St. Spirito. In the left foreground, Christ carries his cross, turning as he does so to cast a glance of compassion at the Virgin and Maries threatened by a guard. Headed by soldiers on foot and horseback, the procession moves on a road turning in serpentine folds through Jerusalem and onwards to Golgotha, in the centre of which Christ is crucified and wailed by the usual flight of vehement angels whilst the crowd below insult him; the Virgin faints and the Magdalen, with outstretched arms, shrieks by the side of a soldier bending from his horse towards her. The good thief smiles in his dying moments, and his soul is already in the arms of angels taking it to Paradise. The impenitent dies tormented by a devil and tortured by an executioner, who breaks his leg with a staff, while two imps await his soul to carry it off to Hades. The soldiers are dicing for the garment to the right, while a sentinel close by threatens the crowd. On the right-hand foreground, Christ has descended into Limbo, trodden down Lucifer under the gates of the infernal region, and gives his hand to Adam, who heads a group behind which stands a mass of the condemned.

In this subject, as well as in the rest of the vast picture, one who has studied the Sienese school may find the spirit of its painters and its often-confused overcharge of figures. In each group, the action, movement, and forms are Sienese, but in the *Limbo* the composition is actually that of Duccio and such as he arranged it on the models of older times; the attitudes and types are those which Taddeo di Bartolo preserved at the close of the fourteenth century. The nimbuses are stamped and adorned in the Sienese fashion, in relief upon the intonaco and gilt where the restorer did not daub them with a yellow colour.

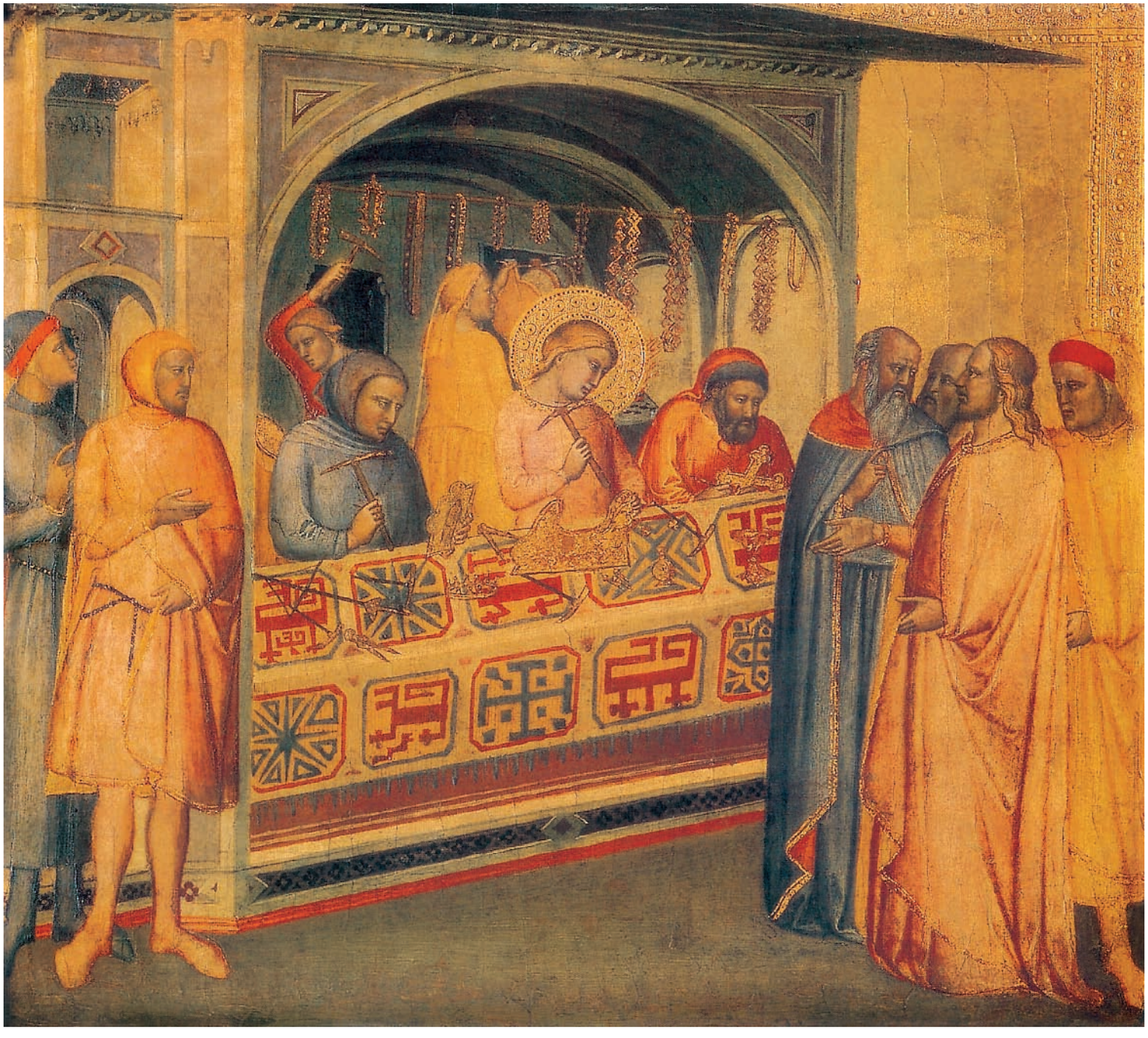
The painter of the whole of this work is the same who began the series of St. Raineri in Pisa. If Andrea of Florence executed the latter, he also completed the former, but he is of the Sienese school.

In the fourth wall, described in previous pages, it has been observed that the types, character, and stature of the figures had something foreign to the Florentine school and akin to the Sienese, and that they might be by Andrea. This may be considered a fair assumption on a close inspection of the whole, and thus it would appear that with the exception of three parts of the ceiling which are by another hand, a painter, Sienese by education but Florentine by birth and not Simone Martini, was employed by the Dominicans of Santa Maria Novella.

Simone therefore painted no great work in Florence. The altarpiece which, according to Vasari, he furnished for the Gondi Chapel, may have been sent from Siena, and the drawing

The Third Master,
History of Samuel, 1231.
Fresco.
Santa Maria Cathedral, Anagni.

SAMVEL



of a crucifixion clearly in his style, now preserved at the Galleria degli Uffizi, is a relic that we may easily conceive to have been transported there from abroad. In conclusion, if it is conceded that Simone painted miniatures, as some infer from the sonnet of Petrarch, a *Virgil* with pictorial ornaments in the Ambrosiana at Milan may be considered impressed with his peculiar style more than any other work of the kind.

In Siena, Simone's industry and acknowledged talent enabled him to earn a significant amount of money, which was invested in the purchase of houses in the town and land in the neighbouring country of Vico. Being childless, he saved, not for himself, but for his nephews and nieces, the children of Donato, to whom he left a great part of his property by will. But, in spite of his prosperity in Siena and of the ties which bound him to his native place, he was induced to leave it in February 1338/1339, and to settle with his wife and Donato at the papal court of Avignon. There, he made the acquaintance of the poet of Vaucluse, that of Laura, whose likeness he drew, and at the same time he carried on certain law proceedings for the Dominicans of Siena. Amongst the old records of the convent of St. Domenico of Siena, one of the year 1339 is preserved, in which Simone and his brother are legally empowered by Andrea Marcovaldi, rector of the church of St. Angeli, to receive and express objections to certain apostolic letters in matters evidently pending at the court of Avignon. They are authorised to discuss the place where, and the judges to whom, these cases are to be submitted, and in general to do all that may be requisite and customary. It is characteristic of the slow justice in the papal court that the matter was still pending in 1344.

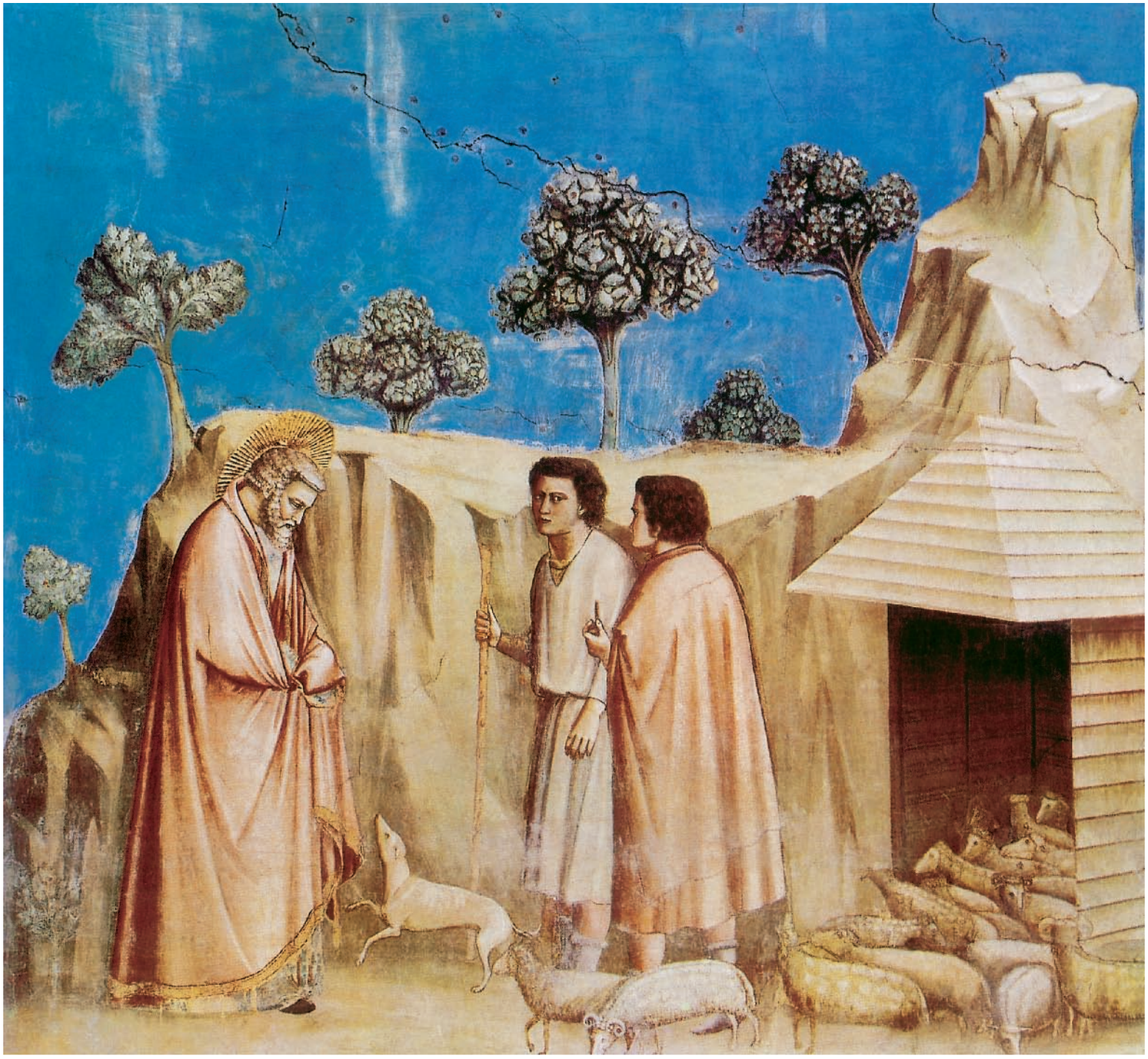
Of Simone's artistic works at Avignon little or nothing has been hitherto known, and from the time of Vasari to that of Delia Valle, and up to the present moment, it has remained unknown whether he decorated two of the principal chapels and other parts of the palace of the Popes with frescoes that still exist. A correspondent of Padre Delia Valle, in the last century, informed him that the portico of the Cathedral of Avignon was decorated by Simone "about 1349", at the request of Cardinal Annibale Ceccano. St. George was to be seen on horseback killing the dragon; and a young lady in green, kneeling at the side, was generally taken for the beautiful Laura. Beneath the frescoes were verses assigned to Petrarch as follows:

Miles in arma ferox bello captare triumphum
Et solitas justas pilo transfigere fauces
Serpentis tetrum spirantis pectore fumum
Occultas extingue faces in bella Georgi.

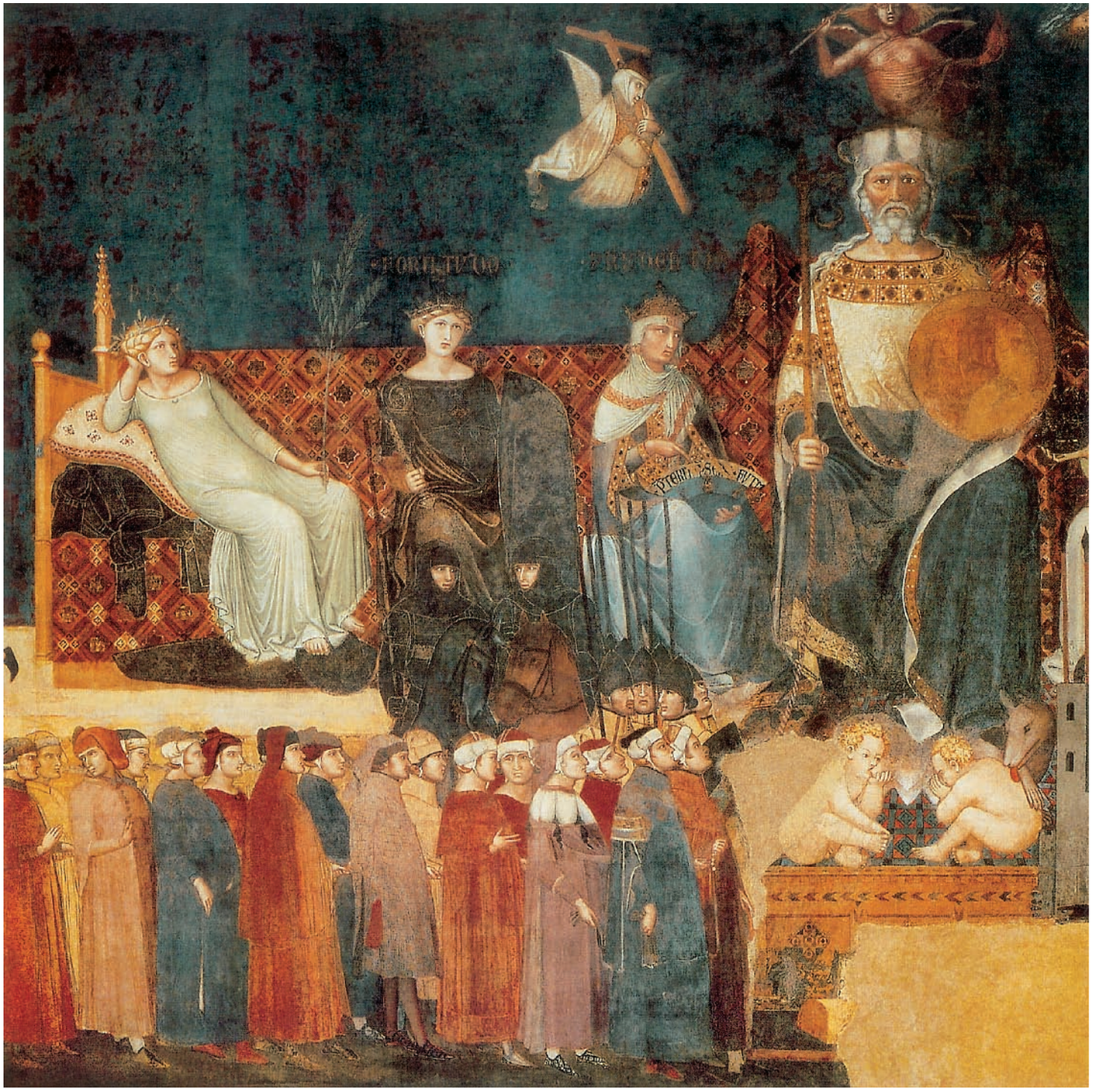
Were the date of 1349 altered to 1339, when Simone lived in Avignon, one might grant that Cardinal Ceccano, who lived there until 1350 as bishop of Frascati, could have employed him.

The *St. George* has perished, probably from exposure. However, the column of the porch, the lunette of the architrave of the entrance, and the pediment above it, are still adorned with frescoes. In the lunette, the Virgin sits enthroned, holding the infant Christ with bare arms and shoulders on her knee. The patron, perhaps Monsignor Ceccano, though he is not in cardinal's robes, kneels to the left at the Virgin's feet, and is introduced

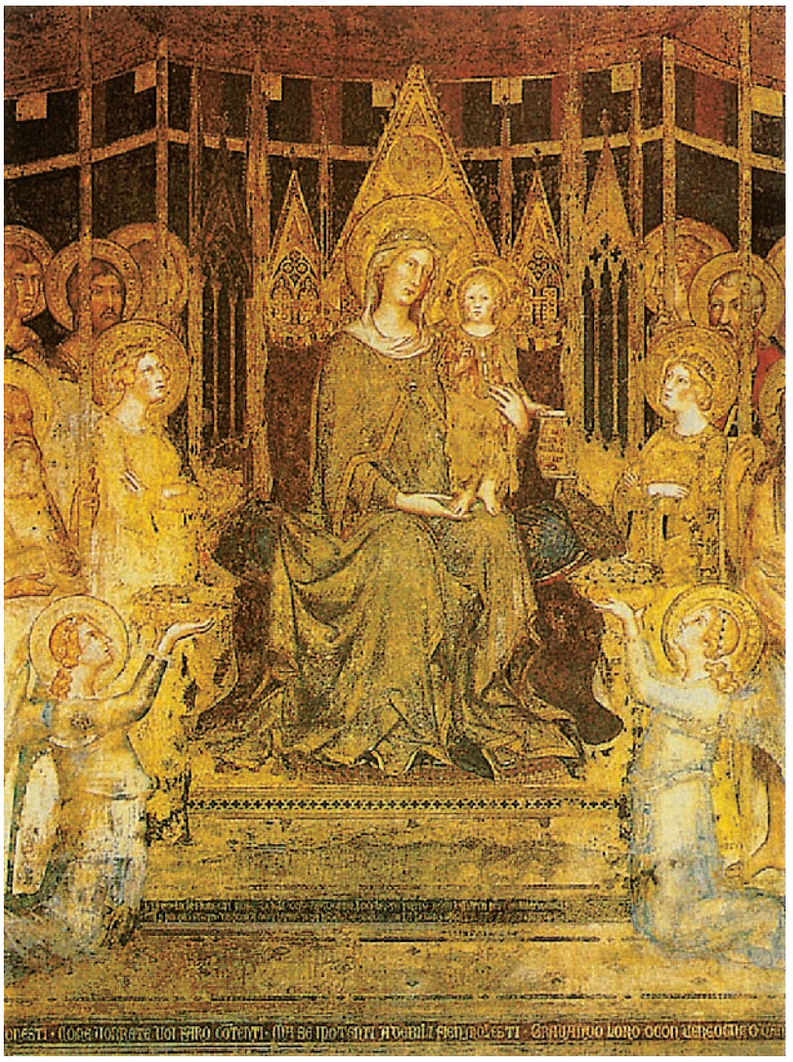
Taddeo Gaddi,
Saint Eligius in the Goldsmith's Shop,
c. 1365.
Tempera on panel, 35 x 39 cm.
Museo del Prado, Madrid.



Giotto di Bondone,
Joachim Takes Refuge in the Wilderness,
c. 1303-1305. Fresco, 185 x 200 cm.
Arena Chapel (Cappella degli Scrovegni
all'Arena), Padua.



Ambrogio Lorenzetti,
Allegory of Good Government
(detail), 1339.
Fresco.
Palazzo Pubblico, Siena.



by one of the angels at her side; a harmonious and graceful composition. In the vaulting of the recess of the lunette six heads of angels are beautifully parted by an elegant ornament. In a triangle above the lunette, Christ sits in benediction between six angels floating in space and airing their draperies in the wind. This undoubted production of Simone shows him to have laboured here in his prime, free from the fetters of the old style as far as it was possible for a Sienese painter to be so, and graceful if not severe in the rendering of form.

Besides the portico of the cathedral, Simone adorned the hall of the consistory in the Papal Palace with frescoes, but this sacred room was a dormitory for the *enfans de troupe* for a long time. Of four groined ceilings cut by the usual diagonals, one triangular section alone is clear of whitewash and contains 18 prophets in rows above a sibyl in each of the angles. The life-size figures, bearing scrolls in their hands, conversing or in pensive silence, are now and then affected in movement; but Simone varied the gravity and angularity of the types of the old epoch by an occasional approach to the more harmonic suggestions of nature.

Simone Martini,
Maestà, 1317.
Fresco.
Palazzo Pubblico, San Gimignano.

Giovanni del Biondo,
The Virgin of the Apocalypse with Saints and Angels, c. 1391.
Tempera and gold on wood,
75.4 x 43.4 cm.
Pinacoteca Vaticana, The Vatican.

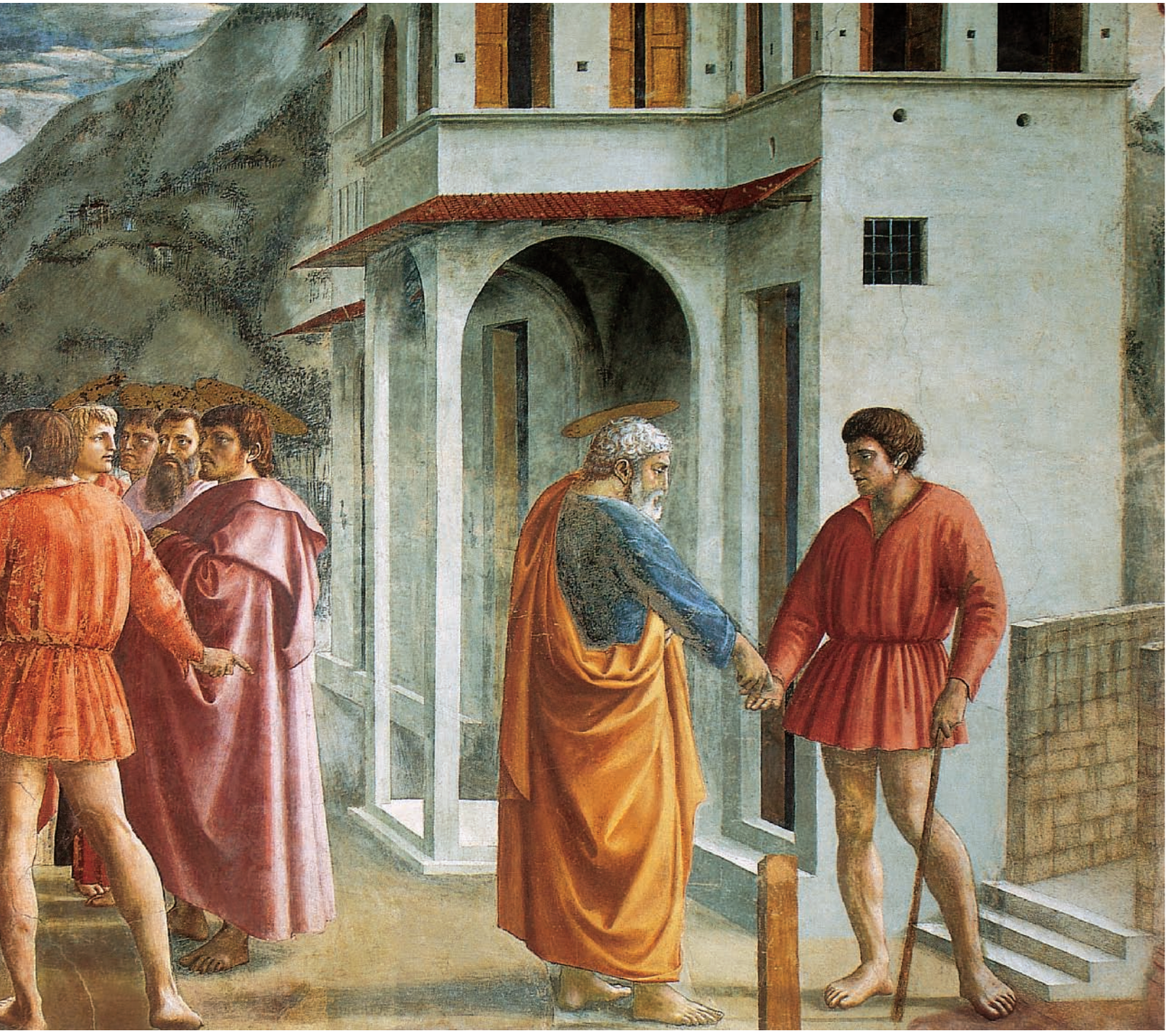
Two chapels formed part of the palace of Avignon; one, on the ground floor called the Saint-Jean chapel, a second, exactly above it and of the same shape, called the Saint-Martiale chapel. Both occupied a square tower of immense thickness, illuminated by three windows with sloping and very deep embrasures, painted throughout; Saint-Jean's chapel with scenes from the life of St. John the Baptist and other saints, and that of the Saint-Martial with incidents from the legends of Sts Marcel, Stephen, Peter, and Valerian.

The first subjects which strike the visitor on entering the papal chapel are the birth of St. John the Baptist and his presentation to Zachariah, in the highest course to the left of the wall facing the entrance. The upper part of the lunette on that side is bare, but in the sloping embrasure a division is filled with groups of people, the two foremost of which, females in profile, are interesting for their costumes and as evidently being portraits. Beneath the *Birth*, St. John may be seen preaching in the wilderness in a red dress, which is a modern addition, with traces of an audience behind him and of figures in the slope of the window observing the sermon. Of these, two heads are preserved; one, of a listener, who alludes to St. John by pointing backwards at him with his thumb, which was a vulgar gesture often used by the Sienese painters. In the left-hand side of the lunette, to the left of the entrance, there are traces of St. John baptizing Christ, of Christ in prayer on the Mount of Olives, and of God appearing to him in a glory of angels. In the upper spaces of the window recess are vestiges of apostles. The left side of the lunette, where numerous figures were once grouped together, is almost obliterated. The *Dance of the Daughter of Herodias* forms the lower course to the left of the window. Throwing her figure and head back, and timing her step with the jerking motion of her hands, whose palms are all but folded on the wrist, Salome is one of the strangest examples of affectation in Sienese art. Behind a table to the left, Herod and his two guests are still visible. These two figures wear ludicrous long horned caps, and their profiles are almost caricatures. A total absence of perspective in the walls, roof, and table give the picture a highly unrealistic aspect. Students may here compare the result obtained by Simone, for he undoubtedly is the author of this work, with that of Giotto in the Peruzzi Chapel at St. Croce of Florence; the contrast will strike them as a revealing and powerful one.

The wall to the right of the entrance is decorated with subjects taken from the life of another saint. In the lower course to the left of the window, Christ, erect with a double-edged sword issuing from his mouth, dressed in a white tunic and holding keys, imposes his right hand on the kneeling figure of a long-haired and bearded saint in prayer before him. A natural, simple attitude and action, and a tender, humble mildness in the face distinguish this figure of Christ. The distance of trees and landscape extends to the recess of the window, above which is the *Call of James and John*, the *Sons of Zebedee*, with the *Resurrection of Tabitha* beneath it to the right. Behind the rising Tabitha, one of a group of females raises her hands in wonder above her head; an action common in the art of Simone, repeated from the Cappella St. Martino in Assisi and derived from Duccio, who introduced it into his *Entombment* in the picture of the Duomo in Siena. The spirit which dictated this movement is in fact as essentially Sienese as the composition of these scenes generally, and is reminiscent not only of Simone's own productions in Assisi and in the picture of St. Lorenzo Maggiore in Naples, but of those of the whole school. The series

Simone dei Crocifissi, *Nativity*, 1370-1380. Tempera on wood, 47 x 25 cm. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Masaccio (Tommaso Cassai),
The Tribute Money, c. 1428.
Fresco, 255 x 598 cm.
Brancacci Chapel, Santa Maria della Carmine, Florence.



is continued in the right side of the wall facing the entrance. In the lower course, Christ, erect and gentle rather than majestic, faces the recess in which vestiges of only trees remain, and appears to be in the act of speaking. Two angels stand behind him, the nearest in front view, pointing across his chest to Christ, who is conspicuous in his long thin shape and closed draperies, and remarkable for the crisp button curls of his hair; the farthest, in profile, shrugging his shoulders and bowing with protruding elbows in the affected attitude of a dancing-master. While the first of these forms may be seen repeated in the Sienese school up until Taddeo di Bartolo, the second is one of the pure bits of affectation peculiar to Simone.

The *Crucifixion* decorates the lunette above the entrance, but the principal figure is almost devoid of colour and can only be criticised with regards to outline. Erect on the cross, and not dead or hanging, Christ converses as it were with St. John Evangelist, who stands open-mouthed beneath to the right, incognizant of the grief of the Virgin on the opposite side. The whole composition is, as usual, slightly wanting in the great Florentine laws of distribution.

No doubt can exist as to the painter of these frescoes. Here laboured the same Simone who painted the ceiling of the hall of the consistory and the porch of the cathedral of Avignon. That he worked with his assistants is natural, and no doubt his brother Donato was one of those who helped him. Of colour in general, these damaged frescoes give little inkling, and they can only justify a guarded opinion. Yet it is obvious from the remains that the system of execution was Simone's, whose characteristic flatness of yellowish warm flesh-tones can be traced here and there.

The next level of the tower is the Saint-Martial chapel, in the same form and similarly painted throughout, in courses resting on a feigned architectural skirting.

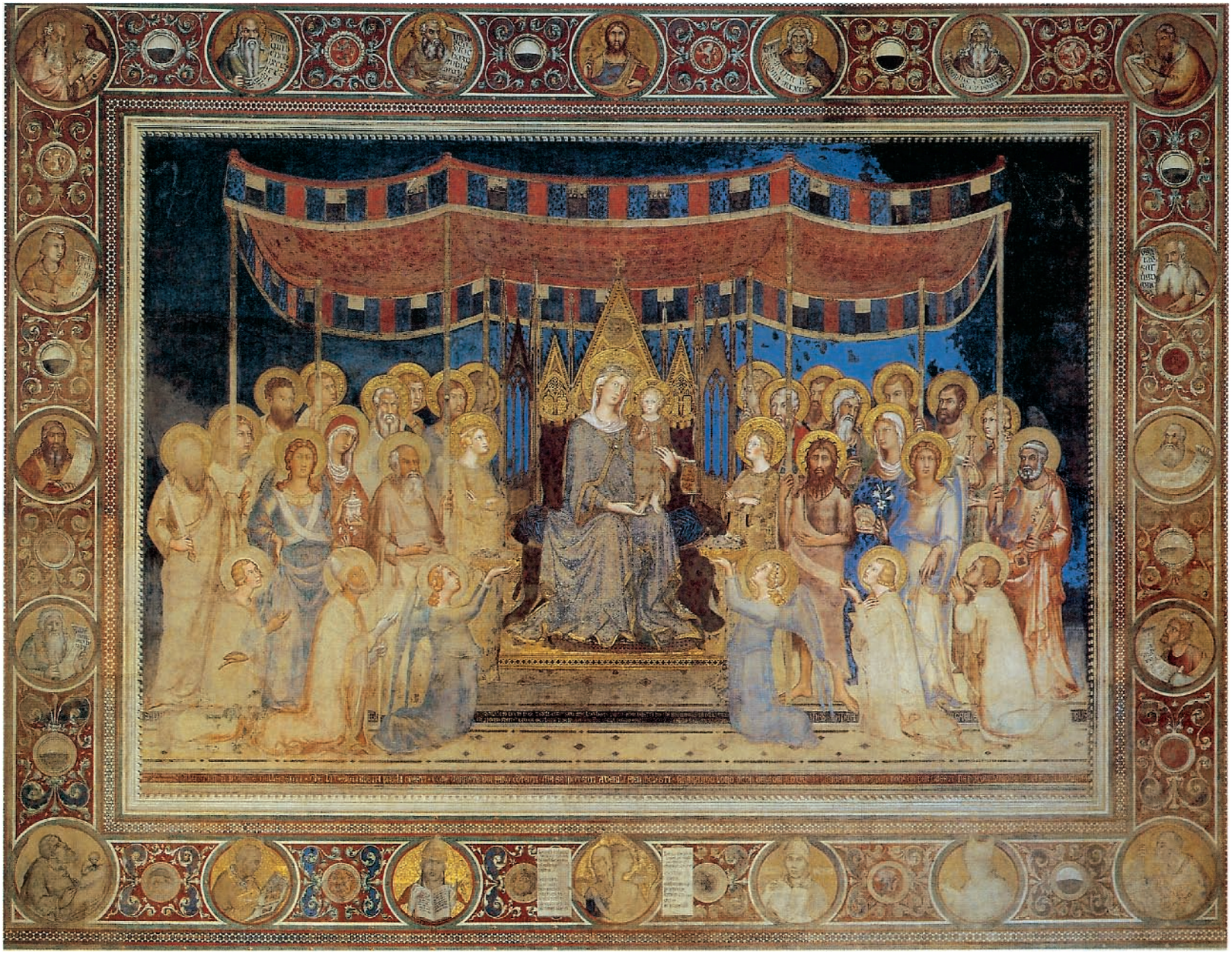
The centre of the ceiling is a medallion of Christ, in part discoloured but regular in form. The figures in the triangles are damaged and difficult to distinguish, but in one of them Christ appears amongst angels to St. Peter, attended by a group of saints of whom one bears the name "S. Martiale." Close by, this saint, as a bishop, kneels before St. Peter and his suite, and on a lower corner he touches with a cross the form of one entitled "St. Austelinus", lying sick in a bed.

In the next space, a religious ceremony seems to take place in a church. Choristers sing hymns while St. Martial casts a devil out of a female kneeling before him. Next, St. Martial gives his benediction to a different kneeling figure and, lower down, performs the rite of baptism.

In the third triangle, an idol on a column is defended by an imp against two angels who overthrow the image, and below, St. Martial is surrounded by kneeling and converted idolaters. Next, the saint is on his knees before Christ and the twelve apostles, and in the distance he distributes alms or cures the sick.

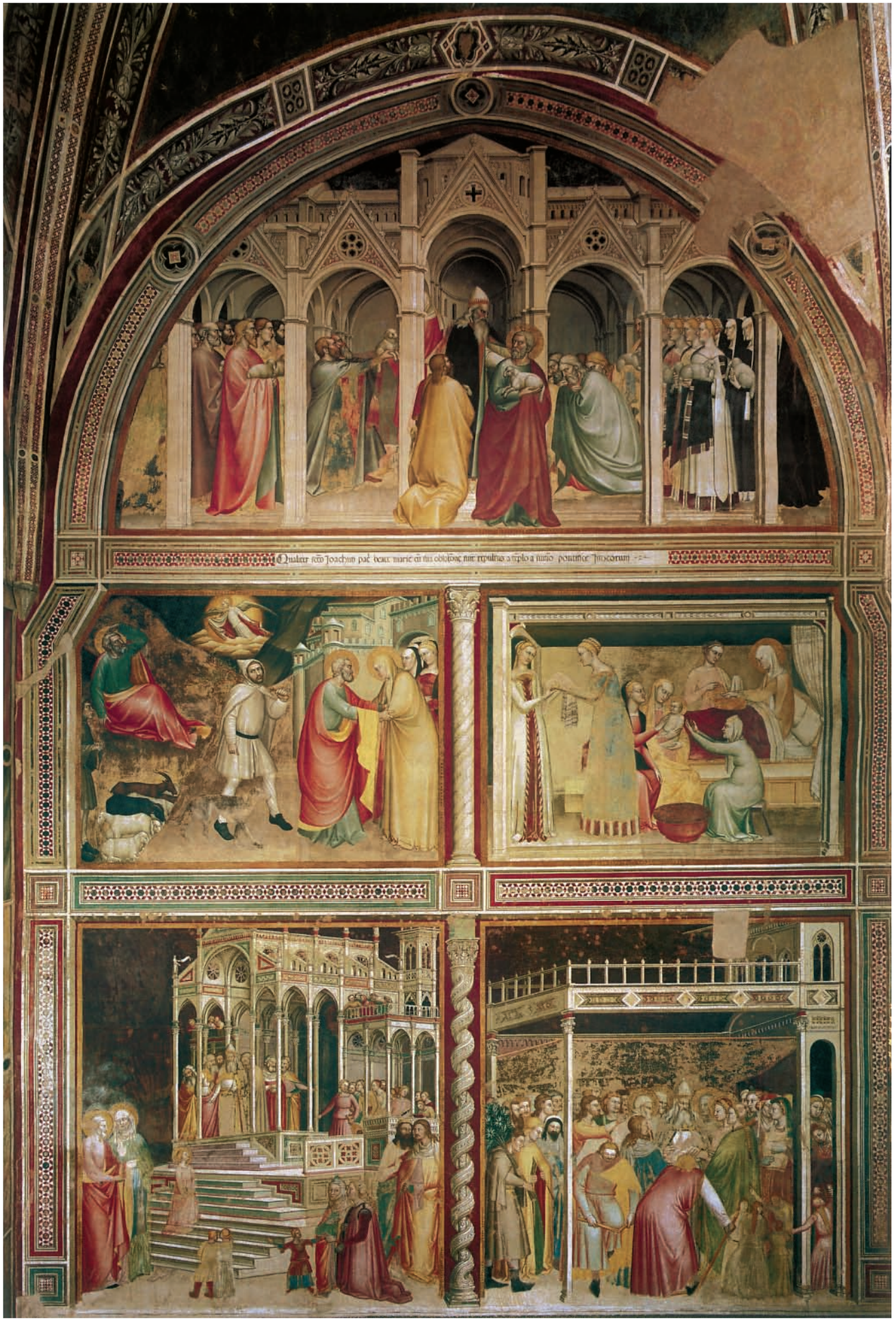
The last section, filled with an equal number of incidents, shows the spectator Christ amongst the apostles, St. Martial amidst other saints, preaching with a model of a castle in his hands, while lower down, St. Peter baptises the saint. In a neighbouring episode, Christ, again supported by the apostles, places his hands on the same saint, the whole being completed by a figure in the foreground in the act of drawing a net out of water.

Giotto di Bondone,
The Lamentation of Christ, 1303-1305.
Fresco, c. 185 x 200 cm.
Cappella degli Scrovegni all'Arena
(Arena Chapel), Padua.



Simone Martini,
La Maestà, 1315.
Fresco, 763 x 970 cm.
Palazzo Pubblico, Siena.

Giovanni da Milano,
Scenes from the Life of the Virgin, 1365.
Fresco.
Rinuccini Chapel, Basilica di Santa Croce, Florence.


Qualiter ecce Joachim pat beate marie ei⁹ nis obliõe nre repulsus a templo a sumo pontifice ihc⁹ rum

To these complicated and multifarious subjects on the ceilings are added others, equally numerous, on the walls, from which it can be concluded that the chapel was dedicated to Sts Martiale, Peter, Paul, Stephen, and Valerian; a fact not gleaned merely by its current name, which was previously the chapel of the Holy Inquisition. In character and execution, the frescoes, though of a less developed character to the rest in Avignon, are of the same class as those in the lower chapel and are therefore by Simone and his school, and not by Giotto.

Avignon boasts no other frescoes of the master. No pictures by him or his followers exist from which to judge the effect produced by the Sienese on the art of France. The school of Dijon arose close by, but, there, the Flemings had the upper hand; and one single picture, originally in Avignon[5], betrays a mixture of the Flemish and Italian style of Simone. It is a piece remarkable for softness of character and care in execution, but with little vigour of conception or movement, and flat in general tone.

It was, however, impossible for Simone to live in Avignon for as many years as he did without painting many pictures on panel. Two years before his death, he completed the interesting *Christ Discovered in the Temple*, which now adorns the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool and which bears the inscription:

SIMON DE SENIS ME PINXIT SUB ANNO MCCCXLII

Simone seldom lavished more care on nimbuses and embroideries, while on the other hand he seldom produced figures so short or so superabundantly laden with drapery as here.

The trustees of the Koninklijk Museum in Antwerp bought in Dijon, in 1826, a very pretty, good-conditioned, and characteristic little work of this time containing the *Annunciation*, the *Crucifixion*, and *Deposition from the Cross*[6].

Simone died in Avignon in July 1344, in full possession of his faculties, having had time to make a will in June in which he left his house and furniture in Siena to his wife Johanna, and the rest of his property to his nephews and nieces.

Johanna, in the brown garb of the widows of the time, returned to Siena almost immediately after his death with Donato. In evidence she gave on a trial between the heirs of Simone and Donato in 1355 (Donato, having expired just a few years later than Simone, in August 1347), she declared that her husband had died in Avignon. Masses and vigils for his soul were said and held in Siena on 4 August.

Donato, who obviously painted in company of Simone in Avignon, has not left any pictures behind; and hence it may be supposed that he was considered a second-rate artist.

A picture, which seems to have been executed by a follower or assistant of Simone, was once in London in the hands of a Mr. Donnadieu, representing a Virgin and Child, on a gold background with a garland of little half-figures in medallions, inscribed:

[5] Now believed to be in a private collection.

[6] Now at the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp (KMSKA).

Lippo Memmi or Barna da Siena, *Vallombrosan Saints,* c. 1325. Tempera on wood. Lindenau-Museum, Altenburg.

This painting, quite in Simone's style and method, discloses his care and minuteness. Yet it is strange that no trace of this Ceccharelli should have been found elsewhere.

In the Alte Pinakotek in Munich, a *Virgin* ascending to heaven in the midst of a choir of angels with Christ between four prophets above her, a *Coronation* in the upper gable, female saints in dead colour on the sides, and an *Annunciation* in the pinnacles like that of the Antwerp picture, may be seen under the name of Gentile da Fabriano. It very much resembles the work of Naddus Ceccharelli and Lippo Memmi, being copiously adorned with tracery and gold.

A large, life-size Virgin ascending amongst angels, with five prophets at each side of the arch of the niche, painted flatly but damaged by varnishes, reflects this character, and may be seen in the Pinacoteca Nazionale Siena, where, likewise, a *Virgin and Child* amongst angels, in the same style, may be studied. These two pictures, however, are under the name Lorenzetti.

In the Campo Santo, Pietro Lorenzetti painted the *Hermits in the Wilderness*; they are represented as dwelling in caves and chapels upon rocks and mountains. Some of the hermits are studying, others meditating, others tempted by demons in various horrible or alluring forms, for such was the common perception that deranged fancies haunted a solitary and unnatural existence. As the laws of perspective were then unknown, the various groups of hermits and their dwellings are represented one above another, and all of the same size, much like the figures on a China plate. It is, however, very interesting, and Lorenzetti repeated these scenes on a smaller scale in a picture now located in the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence.

Antonio Veneziano also painted in the Campo Santo around 1387; and showed himself superior to all who had preceded him in feeling and grace, though possibly inferior to Andrea Orcagna in sublimity. Spinello Aretino was employed next, around 1390. He painted the story of St. Ephesus. Spinello seems to have been a man of genius, but of a most unregulated mind. Vasari tells a story of him which shows at once the vehemence of his imagination and its often obscene manifestations. He painted a picture of the Fallen Angels, in which he had laboured hard to render the figure of Satan as terrible, deformed, and revolting as possible. The image, as he worked upon it, became fixed in his mind, and apparently haunted him in sleep. He dreamed that the Prince of Hell appeared before him under the horrible form in which he had arranged him, and demanded why he should be thus treated, and by what authority the painter had represented him so abominably hideous. Spinello awoke in terror; soon afterwards he became distracted with the potential implications of these apparitions, and so died, around the year 1410.

Lippo Memmi or Barna da Siena,
St. John the Baptist, c. 1325.
Lindenau-Museum, Altenburg.

Conclusion

Only a few of the most prominent names among the multitude of painters who flourished from 1200 to 1400 have been mentioned here: the conclusion will take a general view of the progress of the art itself, and the purposes to which it was applied.

The progress made in painting was predominantly achieved by carrying out the principles of Giotto in expression and in imitation. Taddeo Gaddi and Simone excelled in the first; the imitation of form and of natural objects was evolved by Stefano Fiorentino, so much so that he was styled by his contemporaries as "*Il Scimia della Natura*", or "the Ape of Nature". Giottino, the son of this Stefano, and others, improved in colour, in softness of execution, and in the means and technology of the art; but oil-painting was not yet invented, and linear perspective was unknown. Engraving on copper, cutting in wood, and printing, were the inventions of the next century. Portraits were seldom painted, and were only ever of very distinguished persons, introduced into larger compositions. The imitation of natural scenery, that is, landscape painting, as a branch of art now so familiar a source of pleasure, was as yet unthought-of. When landscape was introduced into pictures as a background or accessory, it was merely to indicate the scene of the story: a rock represented a desert; some laconic trees, much like upside-down brooms, indicated a wood; a bluish space, sometimes with fishes in it, signified, rather than represented, a river or a sea. Yet in the midst of this simplicity, this imperfect execution and limited range of power, how exquisitely beautiful are some of the remains of this early time! The simple, genuine grace and lofty, earnest feeling that marks these works have provided modern painters with examples of emotive excellence to be understood and techniques which the great Raphael himself did not disdain to study and even copy.

The purposes to which painting was applied during this embryonic period were almost wholly of a religious character. No sooner was a church erected, than the walls were covered with representations of sacred subjects, either from scriptural history or the legends of saints. Devout individuals or families built and consecrated chapels; and then, at great cost, employed painters either to decorate the walls or to paint pictures for the altars. The Madonna and Child, or the Crucifixion of Christ were the favourite subjects; the donor of the picture or founder of the chapel was often represented on his knees in a corner of the picture, and sometimes (as a more obvious expression of humility) in a most diminutive size, out of all proportion to the other figures. Where the object was to commemorate the dead, or to express both the grief and devotion of the survivors, the subject was generally a "Deposition from the Cross" — that is, Christ taken down from the cross and lying in the arms of his afflicted mother. The doors of the sacristies, and of the presses in which the priests' vestments were kept, were often covered with small pictures of scriptural subjects, as were the chests in which the utensils for the Holy Sacrament were deposited. Almost all the small moveable pictures of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that have come down to us are either the borders or small compartments cut out from the broken-up altarpieces of chapels and oratories, or from the panels of doors, the covers of chests, or other pieces of ecclesiastical furniture. In those days, the idea of having pictures of any kind, far less pictures representing the most awful scenes and mysteries of Christianity hung as mere ornaments upon the walls of a room, had never occurred to anyone.

Bernardo Daddi,
Triptych with the Virgin in Majesty Surrounded by Angels and Saints,
1338. Tempera and goldleaf on panel, 42.5 x 87.5 cm.
Courtauld Institute Art Gallery, London.

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Oscillating between the majesty of the Greco-Byzantine tradition and the modernity predicted by Giotto, *Early Italian Painting* addresses the first important aesthetic movement that would lead to the Renaissance, the Italian Primitives. Trying new mediums and techniques, these revolutionary artists no longer painted frescoes on walls, but created the first mobile paintings on wooden panels. The visages of the figures were painted to shock the spectator in order to emphasise the divinity of the character being represented. The bright gold leafed backgrounds were used to highlight the godliness of the subject. The elegance of both line and colour were combined to reinforce specific symbolic choices. Ultimately the Early Italian artists wished to make the invisible – visible. In this magnificent book, the authors emphasise the importance that the rivalry between the Sienese and Florentine schools played in the evolution of art history. The reader, in the course of these forgotten masterworks, will discover how the sacred began to take a more human form, opening a discrete but definitive door through the use of anthropomorphism, a technique that would be cherished by the Renaissance.