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THE EVOLUTION OF THE MEDICI PORTRAIT: FROM BUSINESS TO POLITICS

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THE EVOLUTION OF THE MEDICI PORTRAIT:
FROM BUSINESS TO POLITICS

A Thesis Submitted to the
Office of Graduate Studies
College of Arts and Sciences of
John Carroll University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Arts

By
Mark J. Danford
Spring, 2013

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Introduction

The art patronage of Cosimo “il Vecchio” de' Medici (1389-1464) and Grand Duke Cosimo “il Primo” de' Medici (1519-1574) seemed to be driven by very different ideals. While il Vecchio was driven by business and politics, il Primo was driven by politics and dynastic concerns. In this thesis, I will attempt to reveal the development of the Medici family portrait from the period contemporary to Cosimo il Vecchio during the middle of the Quattrocento until the period contemporary to Duke Cosimo and his sons during the last quarter of the Cinquecento. Furthermore, I shall attempt to argue that there is a strong correlation between the number of portrait types and copies produced during the Quattrocento and Cinquecento and the role of Medici patriarch and his varying strength as either a businessman or a politician. When the Medici bank was at its strongest, portraiture was at its rarest. As Medici success in business decreased, portraiture would flourish. In contrast to that inverse correlation, when politics were the least important, portraiture was at its rarest. As Medici involvement in politics increased, portraiture would blossom as well. It will be shown that when Cosimo “il Vecchio” de' Medici was the Medici patriarch (1434-1464), Medici business strength was at its greatest while Medici portraiture was minimal. On the other end of the spectrum, after Cosimo I de' Medici became the Grand Duke of Tuscany in 1569, Medici political power reached its pinnacle, as did dynastic portraiture.

A few cautionary notes at the outset of this thesis: My intent is not to make any causal claims. Rather, I shall point out some interesting observations and indicate some important cultural considerations. First of all, Cosimo “il Vecchio” spent most of his life in Florence and its environs. Cosimo “il Primo” had a more global perspective and

influence. Secondly, portraiture itself was evolving independently as a genre, from a relatively modest pursuit in the 1400s to a more extensive one in the 1500s. The longer portion of this thesis (Parts one through three) provides a more detailed exploration of the evolution of portraiture prior to 1537 and its connection to business and politics, an examination that has been heretofore far less developed in scholarly texts.

Part One will focus on the portraits or lack of during the lifetimes of Cosimo il Vecchio and his son Piero. While portraiture was rare and a new genre, Medici business prospered and family commissions from leading artists were plentiful up until 1450. It was during this time that many of their commissions were religious in nature and these artworks were often for the benefit of the public. After 1450, the Medici bank began to decline and the political involvement of the Medici family in Florentine affairs increased. This is also the point at which dynastic imagery began to appear within Medici portraits.

Part Two will focus on the portraits during the leadership of Lorenzo il Magnifico between 1470 and 1492. Lorenzo focused more on politics and less on business than either Cosimo or Piero. It was during this time that independent Medici commissions decreased while corporate commissions and portraiture increased. Furthermore, artistic commissions began to be used more often for diplomatic and propagandistic purposes rather than for the benefit of the public.

Part Three will focus on the portraits from 1512, the year the Medici returned to Florence, until 1537, the year Cosimo I became leader of Florence. At this time, the Medici patriarch no longer functioned as a business man and wholly served as a political ruler. With assistance from Raphael, the “state portrait”¹ began to be utilized by the

Medici family. However, no individual family member stayed in power long enough to allow any sort of large portrait campaign to develop.

Part Four of this thesis will focus on the portraits of Cosimo I de' Medici from 1537 until the end of the Cinquecento. The political strength of the Medici grew to a point such that, by 1569, the newly fashioned title of Grand Duke practically gave Cosimo autonomous power over Tuscany. It was during this time that there was a proliferation of Medici portraiture commissioned for propagandistic and dynastic purposes to be distributed locally, regionally, and abroad.

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Part One: The Portraits of Cosimo and Piero (1433-1469)

Cosimo “il Vecchio” de' Medici (1389-1464) was easily the largest financial contributor to the Florentine Renaissance during the Quattrocento, yet he is one of the least understood historical figures of Italy and the Renaissance. Cosimo was a somewhat mysterious and complex individual. In Ernst Gombrich's introduction to a volume of studies on Cosimo, he quoted Montaigne's essay, *On the Inconstancy of our Actions*: “Even good authors are wrong to insist on fashioning a consistent and solid fabric out of us. They choose one general characteristic, and go and arrange and interpret all a man's actions to fit their picture.”² Cosimo or his father, Giovanni di Bicci (1360-1429), was directly involved with such Renaissance commissions as Lorenzo Ghiberti's *Gates of Paradise*, Donatello's *David*, Brunelleschi's *Duomo*, altarpieces by Fra Filippo Lippi, and frescoes by Fra Angelico, to name but a few. However, few historians mention why contemporary portraits of Cosimo or his father were practically nonexistent. Most historians focus on either patronage or politics when writing about the Medici. However, a brief history of the Medici bank is imperative to help understand how the family built their international network almost exclusively on banking. Patronage and politics were ancillary items resulting from their business activity.

Giovanni di Bicci moved his banking headquarters to Florence in 1397 after operating his own branch in Rome since 1394. Over the next few years, the Medici bank would expand into international trade and the manufacturing of wool. Along with the existing branches in Rome and Florence, Giovanni opened bank branches in Naples in 1400 and Venice in 1402. From 1397 to 1420, the bank as a whole made profits of 151,820 florins.³ Much of this profit was due to papal banking activities which had

begun in 1410 with Baldassare Cossa (Anti-Pope John XXIII) and lasted up until the time when Giovanni lost this privilege due to Cossa being deposed by the Council of Constance in 1415.⁴ After Giovanni won over Pope Martin V in 1417, Medici agents exclusively handled the papacy's banking up until the 1440s.⁵ When Giovanni retired in 1420, Cosimo and his brother Lorenzo assumed control of the Medici bank which included highly profitable branches in Florence, Rome, Naples and Venice. After accruing a total profit of 186,382 florins from 1420 until 1435, the Medici were able to expand their mercantile trade as well as open new bank branches in Ancona, Avignon, Basel, Bruges, London, Geneva, and Pisa.⁶ Profits from 1435 to 1450 rose to 290,791 florins from which Cosimo received a 70% payout.⁷

Cosimo's interest was in the running of his bank and promoting the *libertas* (liberty) of Florence. It is possible that rather than promote his own image, Cosimo would have wanted to promote the image of his bank which was the key to his success. As Adrian Randolph, a professor of Italian Medieval & Renaissance Art History at Dartmouth College, observed, it is "unlikely that Cosimo de' Medici intentionally plotted to gain a position of political preeminence, nor did he purposefully develop a faction. Cosimo's enormous wealth and his family's apparent sympathy with the *popolo* rendered him suspect to his fellow oligarchs, who perceived him as a threat."⁸

The animosity toward Cosimo between 1427 and 1433 would likely stem from his key roles in financially assisting the Florentine government. The war with Milan (1422-1428) and the unsuccessful attempt to take Lucca (1429-1430) that brought about a second war with Milan (1430-1433) and required an increased amount of money for the *condottieri* (head mercenaries), therefore caused a drain on Florentine finances. Cosimo

had no public complaints concerning the *catasti* of 1427, 1430, and 1433 which resulted in higher taxes for him and the upper class.⁹ Cosimo also lent large sums of money to Florence in addition to the exorbitant taxes he was already paying. From late 1427 until early 1433, Cosimo's and Lorenzo's loans to the commune through the Officials of the Bank amounted to 155,887 florins or 28% of the total amount borrowed, 561,000 florins.¹⁰

Italian Renaissance historian John Najemy downplays the significance of the members of the opposing party who exiled Cosimo. Najemy stated that "only two had been Bank Officials."¹¹ He fails to mention, however, the most significant member of the opposing party besides Rinaldo degli Albizzi was Palla Strozzi (1372-1462), who was not only a banker, but the richest man in Florence in 1427.¹² One can only imagine the jealousy felt by Strozzi when Cosimo surpassed him in both individual wealth and government financing by the early 1430s. During the same period mentioned above, Palla Strozzi did not show any government loans on the books, and his son Lorenzo lent 34,000 florins or six percent of the total loans compared to Cosimo's 28%. One can only speculate why the Strozzi lent so little compared to the Medici. It seems clear, however, the Medici family over extended themselves and lent disproportionately large sums to their birth city compared to other governments. While the Florentine Republic benefitted, the branch of the Medici bank in Florence operated at a loss from 1428 to 1433.¹³ That same branch was the least profitable of any Medici bank branch between 1420 and 1435.¹⁴

Beginning months before their exile, the Medici placed money in safekeeping with the monks at San Marco and San Miniato al Monte, transferred money from the

Florence branch to the Venice branch of their bank, and sold most of their stock in the *Monte Comune*.¹⁵ These moves indicate that Cosimo anticipated his exile and therefore believed his family's money would be safer elsewhere. By late summer 1433, the level of Medici influence over government finance and foreign policy was so intimidating that "their opponents panicked."¹⁶ Rinaldo degli Albizzi and Palla Strozzi pressured the Gonfalonier of Justice and the Signoria to have Cosimo arrested for sedition, imprisoned in the Palazzo Vecchio, and soon exiled for a period of 20 years.¹⁷

After Cosimo's exile, he was offered support from leaders of Perugia, Bologna, and Padua, as well as from the *condottiere* Micheletto Attendoli who fought for the Florentines in 1431. Cosimo stated in his *Ricordi* that when he was in Venice, "I was received, not as an exile, but as an ambassador...and with such honor and good will that it would be impossible to describe. [The Venetians] expressed sorrow over my misfortune and offered the power of their government and city and resources to provide for my every comfort."¹⁸ Cosimo's financial and political clout on the Italian peninsula was largely unaffected by his expulsion from Florence, and many believed he would soon return to his home and previous headquarters of his bank.¹⁹ Francesco Guicciardini (1483-1540), Italian historian and Florentine politician, stated that Albizzi and Strozzi "did not know how to stay [in power]...The parliament recalled Cosimo and drove out the leaders of the opposing faction. Both disturbances, the one of '33 and the one of '34, had been brought about by the Signoria that came into office at the beginning of September."²⁰

Almost immediately after Cosimo's return in 1434, the Florentine government agreed to pay 50,000 florins on the behalf of Pope Eugenius IV (1431-1447) to then

condottiere and future Duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza (1401-1466), who consequently signed a treaty with Florence.²¹ One can only imagine what Cosimo's true motivation was for facilitating such a transaction, but the future benefits were certainly two-fold: helping both Florentine foreign affairs and the Medici bank. As described by Guicciardini, it appears that the aforementioned transaction would benefit the future of Florentine foreign affairs a bit more than Cosimo's international banking operations.

I speak of Count Francesco's success, and how he acquired the dukedom of Milan with the help of Florence. I will only say that when the Venetians took on the defense of the Milanese state against Count Francesco [1444-1447]...the majority preferred friendship with the Venetians, and want to [sic] help them against the count. But Cosimo thought it was better to favor the count. His view prevailed, whence it came about that Francesco acquired Milan – which proved to be the salvation of Italy. For if he had not, the Venetians would undoubtedly have become masters of Milan and soon of all Italy. This being the case, then, it is clear that Florence and Italy owed their freedom to Cosimo de' Medici.²²

According to Nicolai Rubinstein, historian of Medicean Florence, Cosimo's "success in making his policy prevail in Florence against strong opposition may have helped more than any other event after 1434 to strengthen his prestige at home and abroad."²³

By sheer default, and due to the inability of the other members of the Florentine government, Cosimo had become the unofficial chief ambassador for the Florentine state. Through his bank, Cosimo already had strong business relationships in the city of Venice and the papal curia in Rome. After Francesco Sforza became Duke of Milan in 1450, Cosimo's business ties with Milan would be cemented as well. Up until this point, Cosimo's decisions seemed to be driven by international business and, as a result, both Cosimo and Florence would benefit. Whereas Cosimo had been well known as the

president of the Medici bank for the past 30 years, and he often served as ambassador for Florence, he had not yet resorted to portraiture to promote his personal image locally or abroad.

As a result of his friendship with the Duke of Milan, Cosimo would open a bank branch in Milan in 1452. According to Raymond DeRoover, a noted economic historian of medieval Europe, the new branch “from the very start was an undertaking intended to lend financial support to Francesco...[This was] inconsistent with Cosimo’s business policy which, because of the risks involved, opposed the making of loans to princes, magnates, or high churchmen.”²⁴ This set a bad precedent and appears to have been a turning point for the bank in which “political considerations were often given priority over cool business judgment.”²⁵

Although I argue that Cosimo’s interest was primarily in the operation of his bank and not in the operation of the Florentine government, it seems that neither the Medici nor the city of Florence would have flourished without some sort of mutual respect and consideration. In the course of this thesis, I will offer further evidence concerning how Cosimo provided the republic with much needed money. Furthermore, it can be demonstrated that Cosimo respected the laws of the constitution. For return consideration, the government allowed Cosimo to have a say in banking regulations and foreign policy while respecting his position as an international banker.

By the end of the 1450s, Cosimo continued to pay a significant portion of the taxes collected in Florence as well as carry a significant amount of public debt. In the *catasto* of 1458, Cosimo de' Medici (and his nephew Pierfrancesco) paid 576 florins which was almost five times the assessment of 132 florins for the heirs of Giovanni de'

Benci, the Medici bank's former general manager and formerly the second richest man in Florence.²⁶ Cosimo paid roughly six percent of the total taxes collected that year, and if one adds the assessments of Medici bank managers and employees, this number could easily have been as high as ten percent of the total taxes assessed in Florence.²⁷

As for public debt, the Florentine branch of the Medici bank dealt heavily in the shares of the *Monte Comune*. "On March 25, 1460, it held such shares for a nominal value of 105,950 florins and a market value of only 18,358 florins. These shares were greatly depreciated and were worth only 21% of their nominal value, because interest payments were so irregular and depended so much upon contingencies of war and peace."²⁸ It is not known what the Medici actually paid for shares, but it is likely another act of charity from Cosimo or Piero to the Florentine republic that resulted in losses for their bank.

While Cosimo's role in foreign affairs has already been mentioned, there is the issue of how Cosimo operated inside the Florentine government and within the rules of the constitution.²⁹ As demonstrated below, Cosimo only had an interest in the portion of the government that dealt with finance or banking, and the laws provided that "only lenders to the commune could serve as Bank Officials."³⁰ Najemy demonstrated that Cosimo had a tight grip on government finance. During the three year period before his exile, Cosimo served three times as Bank Official and at least 16 of the other bank officials at any given time were "Medici or known allies, friends, and partisans of Cosimo [who] collectively held a quarter of the ninety-nine seats."³¹ But, it appears that Cosimo was proportionately underrepresented in the government given the amount of money that he and his associates had lent to Florence. Najemy noted that 28% of the

total loans were provided by Cosimo and his brother Lorenzo while an additional 35% were provided by Medici allies and friends.³² So, in other words, while Medici partisans lent almost two-thirds of the total monies borrowed by the government, these same partisans only represented one-fourth of the total bank officials in that same government. After Cosimo's return from exile in 1434, he did not serve again as Bank Official with the *Ufficiali del Monte* or the *Ufficiali del Banco*.³³

Cosimo did serve as Gonfalonier of Justice, the highest political office in Florence, in 1435, 1439, and 1445, and six times as one of the *Dieci di Balía*, but he held high office no more than expected of any leading citizen.³⁴ The only significant power of the *Dieci di Balía* was that it could extend the terms of the *Accoppiatori*. As Rubinstein observed, "its further business was confined to taxation, the *Monte* and military affairs, and what was more, its decisions required the consent of the statutory councils to become law."³⁵

The only other political position Cosimo held was as one of the *Accoppiatori*, the group which created the list of names from which the Signoria (representative branch) was chosen. In his *Ricordi*, Cosimo wrote that the "elections of the Signoria were *a mano*, the *Accoppiatori* could appoint whomsoever they wished, '*quelli vorranno fare a loro piacimento*.'" He himself was *Accoppiatore* for a few months only, from October 1440 to February 1441, in place of his brother Lorenzo who had died."³⁶ Many other Florentine families were represented among the *Accoppiatori*, and there is not enough evidence to say whether the other families were part of the Medici inner circle serving Cosimo's will.³⁷ These families likely made their decisions in alignment with their own needs, or their needs which happened to be in alignment with the needs of Cosimo.

An important point is that Cosimo and his brother Lorenzo rarely served in the *Signoria* or as *Gonfaloniere*, the most powerful political branch and office respectively in the Florentine government. The next most powerful branch was likely the *Accoppiatori* because they often chose the *Signoria a mano* (directly), and Cosimo held this position only once as a fill-in. Cosimo has often been referred to as “the leader of Florence,” yet it seems he only held these positions in the spirit of friendship to his fellow Florentines, and he would decline to serve in any office after 1450 citing illness.³⁸ There were definitely other families represented more than the Medici in the Florentine government. If Cosimo was truly the leader of Florence, one would think that he would have held a title during his lifetime similar to the one bestowed upon him after his death. In his *History of Florence*, Niccolò Machiavelli addressed the subject concerning whether or not Cosimo wanted to be the leader of Florence as follows:

[T]he justice of our cause is wholly founded upon our suspicion that Cosmo designs to make himself prince of the city. And although we entertain this suspicion, and suppose it to be correct, others have it not; but what is worse, they charge us with the very design of which we accuse him. Those actions of Cosmo which lead us to suspect him are, that he lends money indiscriminately, and not to private persons only, but to the public; and not to Florentines only, but to the *condottieri*, the soldiers of fortune. Besides, he assists any citizen who requires magisterial aid; and, by the universal interest he possesses in the city, raises first one friend and then another to higher grades of honor. Therefore, to adduce our reasons for expelling him, would be to say that he is kind, generous, liberal, and beloved by all. Now tell me, what law is there which forbids, disapproves, or condemns men for being pious, liberal, and benevolent?...But let us suppose him put to death, or that being banished, he did not return, I cannot see how the condition of our republic would be ameliorated.³⁹

Despite Machiavelli's predisposition to think Cosimo wanted to be the prince of Florence, he recognized how Cosimo benefitted the city while allowing for the possibility that he did not in fact want to be the ruler of Florence.

The strongest explanation of why I suggest that Cosimo had no desire to serve as the patriarch of Florence is because when he was given opportunities to seize power, he always preferred to follow the letter of the law. Although he still attempted to uncover an ulterior motive on Cosimo's part toward other nobles, Machiavelli acknowledged Cosimo's respect for the constitutional process concerning a property tax that, if levied, would have increased Cosimo's own taxes.

[T]he greatest cause of alarm to the higher classes, and his most favorable opportunity of retaliation, was the revival of the catasto, or property-tax of 1427, so that individual contributions were determined by statute, and not by a set of persons appointed for its regulation.

This law being re-established, and a magistracy created to carry it into effect, the nobility assembled, and went to Cosmo to beg he would rescue them and himself from the power of the plebeians, and restore to the government the reputation which had made himself powerful and then respected. He replied, he was willing to comply with their request, but wished the law to be obtained in the regular manner, by consent of the people, and not by force, of which he would not hear on any account.⁴⁰

Another example of Cosimo's restraint happened a little more than 25 years later. Many leading families became concerned when the councils had been abolished and the elections were being held *a mano* in early 1455. As a result, both local allies and the Duke of Milan on separate occasions had offered Cosimo support so that he could seize

power of the government, but Cosimo refused because he believed such measures were dangerous for both the city and his family.⁴¹

Cosimo de' Medici was highly praised as an altruistic citizen by his contemporary humanists in Florence. It is because of these traits that I further suggest that Cosimo had neither the desire nor the need to have portraits painted. In the Biblioteca Laurenziana in Florence, a codex of writings entitled *Collectiones Cosmianae* was compiled by contemporary humanist, Bartolommeo Scala, and summarized in the 20th century by Allison Brown, freelance translator of scholarly books and essays.⁴² Another contemporary humanist, Leonardo Bruni, described Cosimo as a man who possessed “public political virtues” and further praised him for “defending the liberty of Florence and suffering exile in the interests of his country.”⁴³ In the eulogy *De Laudibus Cosme Parentis Eius Opisculum* written for Cosimo’s son Giovanni in 1463, Niccolò Tignosi referenced Cosimo when he stated that “the greatest and most respected citizen is he who alone can devote himself sedulously to considering how to increase the state and care for its interests in such a way that the whole republic will benefit by it.”⁴⁴ Other humanists describe him as “practical and patriotic...whose task of ruling has a moral rather than a practical purpose.”⁴⁵ Allison Brown adds that “in all the other writings addressed to Cosimo in this period,” he is described as “a portrait of selfless patriotism.”⁴⁶

Cosimo’s patronage covers a span of 50 years. During this time, he nurtured many ground-breaking artists who created the foundation of Renaissance art and established Florence as an international cultural center. Even so, there is no apparent evidence to indicate that Cosimo had his portrait commissioned until just five years before his death. The one contemporary portrait that does exist is often thought to be

commissioned by his son, Piero, and places Cosimo's supposed portrait among a retinue. Dale Kent described Cosimo's personal interests in patronage as "interests he shared with the Florentine *popolo*...[H]is so-called private commissions of art appeared in fact as contributions to and in the public interest...[H]e appears less the tyrannical and power-hungry propagandist of his dynasty's aspirations to rule the city, than the exemplum of the virtues on which Florence was founded and to which its citizens subscribed."⁴⁷

Many present day historians do not speculate on what motivated Cosimo to spend so much money on patronage while others argue to an extreme that suggests Cosimo's patronage was a self-aggrandizing display. Mary Hollingsworth, a teacher of Renaissance patronage, uses the "ubiquitous coats of arms" as the basis of her argument in order to suggest that one of Cosimo's most prominent motivations was self-promotion.⁴⁸ Perhaps, instead, he simply wanted to make the citizens aware of his patronage. Many of the churches which displayed the Medici coat of arms such as the Badia at Fiesole were in outlying areas of Florence. If Cosimo's only motivation was self-promotion, it seems he would have only built or repaired churches inside the wall of Florence, where many more people could have witnessed his patronage. Furthermore, much of Cosimo's patronage inside and outside of Florence involved the building of and providing for ecclesiastical institutions such as monasteries and convents that would never have been seen by non-clerics let alone the general public. Finally, the *palle* were not always represented among Medici commissions. Cosimo and his brother Lorenzo were involved in many corporate building commissions where their role lay hidden even though they paid for a substantial portion of the commission.⁴⁹ Timoteo Maffei, the

Abbot of the Badia at Fiesole, endorsed the display of the *palle*⁵⁰ by commenting that it “would encourage others to emulate Cosimo.”⁵¹

Regardless of tradition, and considering Cosimo’s numerous public building projects and the praise given to him by his contemporaries, one could easily believe that Cosimo would have been given a large state funeral along with a large monument commemorating his life. A number of Cosimo’s contemporaries confirmed his desire to have a simple funeral. Cosimo did not want a large number of priests performing the services or have excessive funerary decorations.⁵² He wanted his body “placed *a terra* and not in a thing of prominence or grandeur.”⁵³ Since Cosimo was not a cleric, *condottiere*, or humanist writer, a state funeral or wall monument commemorating his death would not have been consistent with the Florentine tradition. On the other hand, it can easily be argued that Cosimo’s contributions to the city of Florence far exceeded those of any of these predecessors so that a pompous funeral and monument could be justified. While Cosimo’s floor tomb is “simple,”⁵⁴ he does have the honor of being buried directly below the cupola in front of the main altar of San Lorenzo, the church that Cosimo commissioned Brunelleschi to rebuild. After his death, Cosimo was portrayed in the Republic of Florence’s communal decree of March 1465 as follows:

[he] conferred upon the Florentine republic innumerable benefits in times of both war and peace, and always with absolute piety preserved his *patria*, aiding and augmenting it with his concern for its greatest profit and glory; and up to the very last day of his life he conducted himself in all things as befitted the most excellent man and citizen, governing it with every care and concern and diligence as a *paterfamilias* does his own house with the greatest virtue and benevolence and piety...⁵⁵

What type of funeral and monument would Cosimo have received if he had not requested a simple burial or if his son Piero requested a state funeral from the Signoria? Cosimo's funeral was his last act of humility. Much like his portrait, commissioning a large funerary monument would have been inconsistent with Cosimo's character traits.

The Renaissance portrait began to develop in Florence soon after Cosimo took over management of the Medici bank in 1420. Up until the late 1430s, portraits of Cosimo's Florentine contemporaries would usually appear as part of a retinue in either narrative or religious scenes. The only example of a Medici portrait during this period is the *Sagra* (now destroyed) by Masaccio (1401-1428) which was painted in *terra verde* on a lunette above the cloister door at Santa Maria del Carmine.⁵⁶ Cosimo's father Giovanni di Bicci appeared next to Bartolomeo Valori at a festival among a large group of famous Florentines. The portrait of the two men side by side would later be copied, and the portrait of Giovanni himself would be used for all later extant portraits.⁵⁷ There are numerous portraits in the painting, and it is not known who commissioned the work. It could have been an early example of a corporate commission in which the Medici were involved.

While Cosimo's adversary Palla Strozzi had already commissioned his own portrait to be included in two religious scenes⁵⁸ before Cosimo's return from exile in 1434, Cosimo's portrait may only have been present once in a religious scene before 1459. Francis Ames-Lewis, art historian of Renaissance Italy, raised the possibility that the Berlin tondo, *Adoration of the Magi* by Domenico Veneziano, was a commission by Cosimo de' Medici and further suggested that Cosimo and his sons Piero and Giovanni may possibly be included among the retinue.⁵⁹ His greatest piece of evidence is a letter

written by Domenico Veneziano to Piero di Cosimo de' Medici on April 1, 1438, in which the artist asks Piero to assist him in obtaining Medicean commissions, specifically a “commission for an altarpiece that Cosimo had decided to have made.”⁶⁰ However, Ames-Lewis does not present his argument with great conviction and does express some doubt.

By the late spring or early summer of 1459, Cosimo's son, Piero “il Gottoso” de' Medici (1416-1469) commissioned Fra Angelico's former assistant, Benozzo Gozzoli (1421-1497), to decorate the chapel of the Medici's newly completed palazzo on Via Larga. The chapel was likely the first private chapel in Florence. While the honor of having a chapel inside the home was actually granted to Cosimo by Pope Martin V almost 30 years earlier, the Medici did not exercise this right until they built their new palazzo on Via Larga.⁶¹ Piero (or Cosimo?) likely initiated the decorations of the chapel soon after Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta of Rimini, Galeazzo Maria Sforza of Milan, and Pius II visited Florence, and most of what is known about the uses of the chapel comes from reports connected with their visit to the Medici palace.⁶²

Using a technique which combines *a fresco* (pigments applied in wet plaster) and *a secco* (pigments painted onto dry plaster), Gozzoli adorned the chapel walls with the religious scene, *The Journey of the Magi* (Figure 1). The scene was a contemporary display of the Medici's friends, allies, and bankers.⁶³ Overall, there are about 100 portraits in the procession, and historians have made numerous suggestions regarding the identity of particular individuals. However, there are only about seven or eight portraits on the east wall which are commonly identified, and only one of these portraits seems to be incontestable. Four portraits are on the left side of the east wall in the first line of the

procession, beginning left to right: Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta of Rimini, Galeazzo Maria Sforza of Milan, Cosimo de' Medici, and Piero di Cosimo de' Medici.

Besides the portrait in the third line of the procession of Benozzo Gozzoli whose hat is printed with *Opus Benotti* (Benozzo's work), Piero's portrait is the most conspicuous as the leader of the retinue. The harness on Piero's horse displays the Medici *palle* along with an array of Piero's personal devices, including a ring with a diamond point, peacock feathers, and the motto *semper* (always). Cosimo's dress is simpler and lacks the Medici arms or devices. He rides a mule; this often confuses historians. Yet it is befitting of an elderly man of rank or wealth. If this is Cosimo, it appears he is indicating that he is stepping aside so that Piero can take over the family business and lead the family into the future.⁶⁴

In the second row of the procession, the portraits of Giuliano and Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici are directly below Benozzo's portrait which is directly to the right of Pope Pius II's portrait. Giovanni di Cosimo de' Medici could be the person located directly in front of Piero's horse, or slightly behind and between the portrait heads of Cosimo and Piero. Other suggested portraits include: Carlo de' Medici, illegitimate son of Cosimo; Francesco Sassetti, Deputy Director General of the Medici Bank; Bernardo Giugni, humanist; Dietisalvi Neroni who was later involved in a conspiracy against Piero; and Lucca Pitti, Florentine banker who was also involved in the conspiracy against Piero de' Medici. The three kings who are traditionally Melchior, Balthazar, and Caspar are said to resemble Emperor John VII of the Byzantine Empire, Joseph, Patriarch of Constantinople, and Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici, respectively. However, the curators at the Medici Palace suggest the portrait of Caspar on the east wall is idealized and only

meant to “serve as a metaphor of the Medici lineage” representing “youth, the dawn, spring, and the future.”⁶⁵

If this scene included the first contemporary portraits of Cosimo de' Medici and his family, it would only have been seen by people who had already met Cosimo or people who would soon be meeting him at the *palazzo*. Rather than just promoting Cosimo, the scene promoted Cosimo's friends, allies and bankers to other friends, allies and bankers who visited the Medici palace.⁶⁶ The Medici place themselves among the other members of the retinue as equals. While often suggested to be political in nature, it could have also been commissioned for business purposes. Although some of the figures represented had political relationships with Florence, it seems members identified among the retinue were more likely to have a business relationship with Cosimo than a political relationship with Florence.

A number of individual contemporary portraits on panel are known to have been painted in Florence after 1440 and before Cosimo's death in 1464.⁶⁷ Cosimo and/or his sons are not thought to be the sitters in any of these portraits, yet all of the artists who painted them were commissioned by the Medici to paint other subject matter. These artists include Domenico Veneziano (1410-1461), Fra Filippo Lippi (1406-1469), Paolo Uccello (1397-1475), Fra Angelico (1395-1455), and Andrea del Castagno (1421-1457). While the majority of the sitters are not identified, two male sitters in portraits by Veneziano and Lippi are recognized as the Florentine merchants, Lorenzo di Ranieri Scolari and Michele Olivieri, respectively.⁶⁸ Since these portraits were often commissioned to commemorate a marriage or a birth, a simple reason for the absence of Cosimo's portrait is because neither event occurred for him between 1440 and 1464. But

considering that the above artists were probably readily available to Cosimo, one might assume a portrait of Cosimo would have been painted to commemorate the marriage of Piero in 1444 or the birth of Piero's two sons, Lorenzo in 1449 and Giuliano in 1453.

Sculpted portraits were virtually nonexistent during the first half of the Quattrocento. While no pre-1460 sculpted portrait of Cosimo il Vecchio is thought to exist, there are two specific portraits sculpted by Mino da Fiesole (1429-1484) during the 1450s which represent Cosimo's sons. One is a definitive portrait of Piero de' Medici and the other is most likely Piero's younger brother, *Giovanni di Cosimo de' Medici*, c. 1455. Although these portraits are not considered to be pendants, they have remained in close proximity to each other since their inception.⁶⁹

Piero di Cosimo de' Medici, c. 1453-54 (Figure 2) is the earliest known post-classical marble portrait bust of a contemporary.⁷⁰ This is verified by the two inscriptions on the flush circular areas underneath each arm: "PETRVS COS S AETATIS ANNO XXXVII" (Piero di Cosimo at Age 37) and "OPVS MINI SCVLPTORIS" (Work by Mino the Sculptor).⁷¹ The sitter is elaborately dressed in contemporary brocade featuring Piero's diamond ring impresa which creates the two borders on his garment. A realistic Roman portrait bust likely served as a model even though Mino truncated the entire sculpture including the arms directly below the chest; that is not consistent with ancient prototypes.⁷² While it appears that he has gained weight and slightly aged by 1459, many clear similarities exist between Piero's right facial profile in Benozzo's fresco (Figure 1d) and Mino's sculpture, especially with the shape of Piero's ear, the slope of his nose, and the thinness of his lips. The successors of the Medici bank appear to be all business in

both of Mino's portraits. The sitters demonstrate a sense of alertness while they stare off into the distance with an "active and vigilant" pose.⁷³

Sculpted contemporary portraits of Cosimo il Vecchio are as rare as his painted portrait with only one known possible example, a marble relief now in Berlin (Figure 3). Unlike the case with his painted portrait, there is no argument among scholars concerning the identity of Cosimo. However, there is an argument regarding who sculpted the portrait, whether it is a contemporary or posthumous portrait, and who commissioned the portrait. As he did with painters, Cosimo commissioned the prevailing Florentine sculptors to create a number of works which did not include his portrait bust although these artists sculpted portraits for other patrons. These sculptors include Desiderio da Settignano (c. 1428 or 1430-1464), Donatello (c. 1386-1466), Antonio Rossellino (1427-c.1478/1481) and Andrea del Verrocchio (c.1434-1488).

Depending on the scholar, the relief of *Cosimo de' Medici* (Figure 3) has been attributed to either Antonio Rossellino or Andrea del Verrocchio. There is no record of Verrocchio as an independent artist before 1461, but by 1464 he became one of the family's favorite artists and spent most of his career working on Medici projects.⁷⁴ When the Berlin museum acquired the marble relief in 1842, it was considered a work by Andrea del Verrocchio. They have never completely abandoned this attribution but, they "have since expressed caution" primarily because the work is not mentioned in "the 1496 list of the works Verrocchio executed for the Medici."⁷⁵ The portrait seemed to be mentioned in the 1492 inventory of Lorenzo the Magnificent as a "*testa di marmo della mprompta di Cosimo*," but it is only valued at one florin which is much less than the value given to Mino da Fiesole's busts of Piero and Giovanni of 12 and 25 florins,

respectively.⁷⁶ For these two reasons, art historians often treat this relief as an inferior work, and therefore attribute it to the workshop of Antonio Rossellino instead of Verrocchio.

Although some historians have dated the aforementioned portrait as late as 1469, a majority of scholars currently date it between 1460 and 1465, and suggest it preceded the bronze medal of Cosimo, and therefore served as a model for it and all other posthumous portraits of Cosimo.⁷⁷ This veristic high relief profile of Cosimo expresses an amazing physiognomic detail to suggest that it was sculpted contemporaneously. The detail illustrates a tired and aging Cosimo with sagging skin on the jaw line and neck, blood vessels throbbing on the left temple, circles under the eyes, and furrowed brow. While one might suggest that this is a contemporary portrait of the highest quality and not the portrait mentioned in the 1492 inventory, present research suggests that it is an inferior portrait possibly sculpted posthumously by an unknown sculptor in Rossellino's workshop. This might support an argument that Cosimo had little interest in portraiture. Could not Cosimo or his son Piero have chosen a lesser known artist and assistant to Rossellino such as Verrocchio to sculpt the portrait before 1461?⁷⁸ Either way, if this is a contemporary work, the patron chose an emerging artist rather than a leading contemporary such as Donatello, Mino da Fiesole, or Desiderio da Settignano to sculpt such a portrait.

It also seems plausible that the purpose of the marble relief portrait was to function as a model for the medal of *Cosimo de' Medici* (Figure 4). Adrian Randolph assumes these medals were commissioned by the Medici, but it is also possible that one or both of these medals were commissioned by the Florentine republic to commemorate

the public decree of March 16, 1465 which conferred upon Cosimo the posthumous title, *Pater Patriae*.⁷⁹ This would also explain why this portrait is a profile in relief instead of a portrait bust in the round like other life size contemporary portraits attributed to Verrocchio or Rossellino. If the medal was commissioned by the Florentine Republic and the marble relief portrait served as a model, the relief portrait would have also been commissioned by the Florentine Republic.

The bronze medal is dated between 1465 when Cosimo was honored posthumously by the Florentine Republic and 1469 when Francesco del Chierico copied the obverse of the medal and its inscription to an illuminated manuscript which Piero commissioned.⁸⁰ Both versions of this medal include the profile portrait of Cosimo on the obverse modeled after the marble relief, and Florence holding an orb and olive branch on the reverse. On one version, the obverse is inscribed: “COSMVS MEDICES DECRETO PVBLICO P[ater] P[atriae]” (Cosimo de' Medici, by public decree, father of the country).⁸¹ On the other version, the obverse is inscribed: “MAGNVS COSMVS MEDICES P[ater] P[atriae] P[rinceps]” (the great Cosimo de' Medici, prince, father of the country).⁸² The reverses of both versions are inscribed “PAX LIBERTAS QVE PVBLICA” [peace and public liberty] with “FLORENTIA” [Florence] below the seated figure.⁸³ The second medal mentioned may be from a later date when the minter upgraded Cosimo's posthumous status by adding a word to both Cosimo's name and title: the “great” Cosimo de' Medici, “prince”, father of the country. Adrian Randolph mentioned that these medals are “the only manifestly political works of art produced for the early Medici in which specific individuals were portrayed.”⁸⁴

According to the Medici inventory of 1492, another version of the aforementioned medals was cast in gold, but no example is known to have been preserved.⁸⁵ Its existence is further affirmed by a gilded stucco three dimensional copy of the medal which is inset into Botticelli's painting, *Man Holding Medal of Cosimo de' Medici*, c. 1475 (Figure 5). This is the first of many posthumous paintings modeled after the Berlin marble relief depicting Cosimo's portrait in profile. This work is also an early example of a Medici friend or business associate proclaiming his allegiance to the family by including a portrait of a Medici family member in his commission.⁸⁶ The half-length figure showcases the gold medallion of Cosimo while he intently stares at the viewer. This painting also includes many features which were relatively new to Renaissance portraiture including the deep landscape, inclusion of the sitter's hands, frontal view of the sitter, as well as the use of light and shadow in the facial features.

Shortly after Mino da Fiesole sculpted Piero's and Giovanni's portraits during the 1450s, Cosimo's health began to decline which coincided with the beginning of the Medici bank's decline.⁸⁷ By the time Benozzo Gozzoli painted the Medici chapel in 1459, Piero "il Gottoso" di Cosimo de' Medici (1416-1469) had likely taken over many of the roles of Medici patriarch as indicated by his leading position among the retinue in Gozzoli's fresco. The year the chapel was completed also marks the time when Piero and his brother Giovanni begin to get more involved in politics, which in turn caused them to be less involved with the management of the bank.⁸⁸ In January 1461, Piero had assumed the highest office in the Florentine government, Gonfalonier of Justice, for the standard term of two months.⁸⁹

Besides the previously mentioned marble relief and bronze medal of Cosimo, there are no other portraits of Cosimo, Piero di Cosimo, or Lorenzo di Piero known to be produced from 1460 to Piero's death in 1469. Furthermore, neither Lorenzo de' Medici nor his brother Giuliano are known to have commissioned any portraits until after 1475 and possibly as late as 1478, the year of the Pazzi conspiracy. It is difficult to say whether Piero began to get more heavily involved in politics because the bank was failing or the bank was failing because he began to get more heavily involved in politics. Regardless, Piero's son, Lorenzo would further neglect the operations of the bank, and that paved the way for its eventual bankruptcy. On the other hand, he would become increasingly involved with the political affairs of the Florentine republic and prove to be a talented statesman.⁹⁰

As Randolph pointed out, the Medici rarely commissioned works of art during the Quattrocento "with an explicitly political content in which they refer directly to themselves."⁹¹ The evidence cited above demonstrates that Cosimo had no real interest in running the government of Florence. If this is true, he would have likely had little interest in commissioning his portrait for political propaganda. His agenda was to build up the strength of the Medici bank through international banking. As the bank became more powerful throughout Europe, the Florentines increasingly depended upon Cosimo for foreign affairs, eventually resulting in him becoming the *de facto* ambassador for Florence. Internationally, he relied on the fiscal image of his bank for his family's dynastic continuity. If Cosimo had commissioned his personal portrait as a state gift to a foreign ruler, this may have implied some aspirations for princely rule. However, there is no record of any such portrait. A painted or sculpted portrait was simply not needed by

Cosimo and would not serve any purpose for him. As far as the Medici *stemma* is concerned, Cosimo likely displayed the Medici *palle* similar to present day companies which display their logos on buildings and media in order to promote their companies and their products. Besides his bank, Cosimo promoted “the interests of family, friends, and neighborhood, the state and the church.”⁹² Dale Kent, a noted historian of Cosimo il Vecchio, observed that Cosimo was everything the people of Florence wanted him to be: “a great merchant, a slaker of the thirst of the poor, a preserver of churches and holy places, a patron and protector in this life, and their intercessor, through his ecclesiastical patronage, with the patron saints of the next.”⁹³

As Cosimo’s international business expanded, the Florentine republic began to increasingly depend upon him regarding foreign affairs. By the mid-1450s, this responsibility fell upon Piero, and as politics began to take over, business would begin to decline. It is hard to believe that such astute businessmen as Cosimo and Piero were not completely aware of the transition taking place, even if it were not necessarily a transition they had chosen. While Piero continued to work on the success of the bank, he probably felt a small need for portraiture in the Palazzo Medici to address the burgeoning responsibility of foreign affairs, which included entertaining dignitaries in their palazzo. It appears that, after Cosimo’s death in 1464, the Florentine government commissioned the relief profile portrait of Cosimo for the benefit of domestic stability and international relations. At least that appears a better explanation than thinking that Piero commissioned the portrait for business or political aspirations.

Part Two: Late Quattrocento Portraits (1470-1494)

Lorenzo di Piero “il Magnifico” de' Medici (1449-1492) was more involved in the general operation of the Florentine republic than either his father or grandfather; yet he was never a member of the Signoria and he never held any office dealing directly with the administration of the territory.⁹⁴ However, it is likely that he held more official positions than Cosimo, Piero, and each of their brothers combined. According to Rubinstein, “he was one of the five officials of the *Monte* between 1487 and 1491, and belonged to the commissions of the Seventeen *Riformatori* of 1481-2 and 1490-1; and he was six times one of the Twelve *Procuratori*...He was *Accoppiatore* every other year between 1481 and 1489. He was one of the *Dieci di Balìa* during nearly the whole Pazzi war (1478-80)” and became *Otto di Guardia* shortly before that war began.⁹⁵ Regarding his influence over the government, the ambassador from Milan stated that “whenever Lorenzo notified the Signoria, the *Otto di Pratica*, the *Otto di Balìa*, or any other officials, of his wishes, these were fulfilled.”⁹⁶ Lorenzo appeared to single-handedly control foreign policy for the republic, but he seemed to be motivated solely by the prospect of peace in the Italian peninsula. He bolstered foreign relations by lending a lot of money to foreign rulers. Those loans negatively affected the success of the Medici bank and its international operations because the foreign rulers failed to repay their debt.⁹⁷

Another sign of Lorenzo’s political aspirations was his adoption of the tradition of other leaders on the Italian peninsula by arranging marriages in order to forge political alliances.⁹⁸ Lorenzo aligned himself with one of Rome’s leading families by marrying Clarice Orsini in lieu of following the local tradition of choosing a Florentine wife. He

also arranged the marriage of his daughter to the son of Pope Innocent VIII which helped secure Lorenzo's son, Giovanni (future Pope Leo X), an appointment to cardinal in 1489.

Before the Pazzi conspiracy in 1478, Lorenzo would establish the princely (i.e. Medici) tradition of using art almost exclusively for diplomatic and propagandistic purposes. However, he was not as financially sound as his grandfather. According to the *Ricordi* of Lorenzo the Magnificent, the Medici family had already spent the 663,755 florins on buildings, charities, and taxes between 1434 and 1471.⁹⁹ Although historians have not been able to break this figure down, and it is certain that Cosimo did spend a huge sum of money on patronage, this statement almost seems to be a rationale for Lorenzo to explain why he would not be spending a great deal of money in the future. Instead, Lorenzo involved himself in corporate building commissions within Florence which allowed him to flex his muscle in important areas of the city without spending a great deal of money like his grandfather.¹⁰⁰ Outside the city, "he strengthened ties with other princes and states by giving advice, art objects and by recommending artists."¹⁰¹ These artists did more commissions for the friends, relatives, and associates of Lorenzo than they did for Lorenzo himself.¹⁰² These works include religious scenes, allegorical paintings and individual portraits. During the period from 1460 to 1478, the Medici transitioned from businessmen to politicians, and during these volatile times¹⁰³ individual portraits may have been viewed as hubristic, and causing more damage than good to their already unstable public image. However, these uncertain times did not stop patrons such as Guaspare di Zanobi del Lama from demonstrating their support for the Medici by commissioning religious scenes.

Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510) is among the Florentine Early Renaissance artists who painted religious scenes that included the portraits of the patron along with the artist and those they wished to aggrandize. Now in the Uffizi, the *Adoration of the Magi* was painted as an altarpiece for the now destroyed funerary chapel of Del Lama in Santa Maria Novella.¹⁰⁴ The painting is dated around 1475, the year before the patron was condemned for fraud.¹⁰⁵ Along with Lorenzo de' Medici, Guaspare was a member of the money-changers' guild; he stands in the center of the retinue on the right and peers out at the viewer. Botticelli is represented in that same group standing in the foreground dressed in a yellow robe while also looking out toward the viewer. Cosimo il Vecchio is featured center left of the scene kneeling before Mary, while the remaining four Medici family members form a semi-circle in the center in front of the Virgin and Child. From left to right are Lorenzo, Piero, Giovanni and Giuliano.¹⁰⁶ Cosimo, Piero, and Giovanni posthumously represent the three magi while Lorenzo and Giuliano represent the princes standing before the files of courtiers.¹⁰⁷ It is obvious that Guaspare is honoring the Medici, but no specific connection to the Medici has been made beyond the membership in the money-changers' guild to explain the patron's specific motivation. Mary Hollingsworth suggests the painting is "Lama's desire for social advancement"¹⁰⁸ while Ronald Lightbown suggests that "he was an ardent partisan of the [Medici] family and of their dominance over Florence."¹⁰⁹ One might also propose that Guaspare may have wanted to do a business deal with Lorenzo and the Medici bank, and the painting served as a sign of good faith.

The biggest threat to Lorenzo de' Medici's actual political power and apparent business strength was the Pazzi conspiracy which came to a head during Easter Mass at

Santa Maria del Fiore on April 26, 1478. A rival banking family, the Pazzi, along with the Salviati family and the papacy, plotted to assassinate Lorenzo and his brother, Giuliano. While Lorenzo was only wounded, Giuliano was brutally stabbed to death. To commemorate his survival, Lorenzo had wax votive images of himself, including three life-size wax statues from Verrocchio's workshop, placed at major shrines in Florence and Assisi.¹¹⁰ According to Patricia Rubin, former teacher of Italian Renaissance art, "Lorenzo's direct and indirect deployment of portraiture to commemorate the conspiracy and to consolidate his position as *de facto* ruler of Florence is characteristic of his strategic use of the visual arts."¹¹¹

Most posthumous and/or contemporary Quattrocento portraits of the Medici commissioned after 1478 are believed to have been a response to the conspiracy.¹¹² Many of these portraits were painted by Botticelli who served as a precursor of the Cinquecento court painter. These include the now lost posthumous portraits of Piero¹¹³ and Cosimo which Botticelli painted around 1480 for Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco de' Medici, the head of the other branch of the Medici family and most constant patron of Botticelli from around 1480.¹¹⁴ Besides the *Man Holding a Medal of Cosimo de' Medici* (Figure 5) mentioned earlier, there are at least four or five surviving paintings by Botticelli dated around 1485 which are simply titled *Portrait of a Young Man*. With further research and a slightly later dating, it seems plausible to suggest that one of these sitters could be identified as Lorenzo's son, Piero "il Sfortunato" de' Medici (1472-1503).

Botticelli painted the *Portrait of Giuliano de' Medici* (Figure 6) which served as a prototype to be copied by his workshop. Botticelli set the precedent for future Medici portraitists who painted prototypes with the intent that the portrait be copied and

distributed for propagandistic purposes. While it is likely that the original version was commissioned by Lorenzo soon after his brother's death in 1478, its date and patron are not known for certain.¹¹⁵ Furthermore, it is unknown whether the three known right-profile versions now in Washington, Bergamo, and Berlin were commissioned by Lorenzo to serve as gifts or Medici partisans commissioned as signs of allegiance.¹¹⁶ However, an abundance of scholarly research confirms the identity of the sitter as Giuliano as well as the attribution of all three versions to Botticelli's workshop.¹¹⁷ It has also been shown that all three portraits were created using the same template or cartoon, but there is no consensus as to which portrait served as the prototype.¹¹⁸ Giuliano's physical characteristics in these portraits agree with Poliziano's description in his history of the Pazzi conspiracy. "He was tall of stature, square of body, with large and prominent chest, smooth and muscular arms, strong joints, slender belly, broad thighs, full calves, sparkling brown eyes, keen countenance, dark complexion, abundant hair, dark and long, thrown back on the crown from the forehead."¹¹⁹ Giuliano is turned slightly out of profile so the viewer can barely see his left eyelid. His pronounced downward gaze and prominent features portray a "masklike quality,"¹²⁰ suggesting a posthumous dating and the possibility of the actual use of a death mask as a model for the original version.¹²¹

The Berlin portrait likely preceded the other two and demonstrates the most simplicity among the three versions. In this portrait Giuliano sits in front of a simple blue-green background without any additional iconography. This portrait also demonstrates a simpler use of shadow in the facial features but greater detail in Giuliano's hair and clothing. However, these minor differences compared to other

versions may result from different states of condition, and depend on the amount of inpainting and conservation performed on each particular painting.¹²²

The Bergamo portrait is of the same dimensions (54 x 36 cm) as the Berlin portrait but in a much worse state of conservation. The Bergamo version also lacks the fine detail of the other two portraits; that leads scholars to believe that this version is a studio replica.¹²³ It includes the addition of a simple window which covers half the area of the panel while encompassing Giuliano's head.

The Washington portrait (Figure 6) is roughly 50% larger than the other two versions and includes a turtle dove oddly perched on a dead branch. Herbert Friedman argued that "the turtle dove of the Washington portrait symbolizes Giuliano's eternal mourning for Simonetta Vespucci [who died in 1476] and his eternal constancy to her memory" while others suggest it is a reference to Giuliano's death.¹²⁴ The Washington version shows Giuliano posing directly inside an open window while another window in the background has one of its shutters open "offering an allusion to the hereafter to the world beyond."¹²⁵

During the period Botticelli served as precursor to the Cinquecento court painter, Verrocchio served a similar role for the Medici as court sculptor. While some date Verrocchio's terracotta portrait of Giuliano in Washington after 1478, historians have more recently dated the portrait to 1475, the year of Giuliano's widely publicized *Giostra*.¹²⁶ The only other extant Medici portrait known to be sculpted by Verrocchio contemporaneously is the bronze *Piero de' Medici* now in the Bargello. This portrait is dated c. 1488, the year Verrocchio died. It is agreed that Piero is the sitter along with the

Verrocchio and/or workshop attribution and, since Piero lived until 1503, the bust must have been sculpted contemporaneously.

Verrocchio is also known to have sculpted the portrait of Lorenzo soon after the Pazzi conspiracy. While a number of versions of this portrait are known to exist, only the Washington version (Figure 7) had been thought to be a contemporary sculpture. However, a relatively recent “proposed change of attribution and date” in 1996 that suggests a date after 1512, the year the Medici returned to Florence, has been accepted by the National Gallery.¹²⁷ This type and its versions in Washington, Berlin, and Florence are thought to be derived from the ex-voto effigies developed immediately following the Pazzi conspiracy by wax sculpture specialist Orsino Benintendi with the help of Verrocchio.¹²⁸ Lorenzo is portrayed as an everyday Florentine citizen demonstrating an attitude that one might have after his brother was just brutally murdered. He is shown in headdress called a *cappuccio* with a long piece of cloth called a *becchetto* draped over the right shoulder.¹²⁹ A profile pen and ink drawing c. 1480 by Leonardo da Vinci in the British royal collection has the same headdress, but it is a simple likeness which does not illustrate any of the brutish physiognomic traits present in Verrocchio’s sculpture. The 1553 inventory of the *Guardaroba* mentions “*una testa di terracotta col busto*” of Lorenzo and, since the Washington portrait type clearly served as a model for the slightly idealized portrait of Lorenzo painted by Bronzino in the late 1550s, this bust must be the same type mentioned in the inventory.¹³⁰

Another portrait type by Antonio Pollaiuolo (d. 1498) now in the Narodni Gallery in Prague shows Lorenzo without the headdress but has similar facial features. The Prague portrait likely derived from one of the wax ex-voto effigies or Lorenzo’s death

mask. It later served as a model for the posthumous portrait of Lorenzo by Vasari and Fiammingo.¹³¹

Piero “il Sfortunato” di Lorenzo de' Medici (1472-1503) was only 20 years old when his father died in 1492. Piero is often criticized for a lack of prowess in both politics and business, but in reality he was just “unlucky.” The Medici had been expelled from Florence in 1494 because Piero surrendered to the French without the approval of the *Signoria*. This also resulted in the bankruptcy of the Medici bank. However, the bank had already been in decline for 25 years. With the recent deaths in 1490 of Francesco Sassetti, Medici bank general manager, and Giovanni Tornabuoni, manager of the Rome branch, the bank would have needed to file bankruptcy anyway.¹³²

Portraits of the Medici were virtually nonexistent after Lorenzo’s death in 1492 until the Medici returned to Florence in 1512. There were only a few Medici portraits contemporary to the 1480s. The most well-known Medici portraits of this period were included in a religious scene on the wall of the Sassetti Chapel in Santa Trinità in Florence. The Medici bank’s general manager, Francesco Sassetti, commissioned Domenico Ghirlandaio (1449-1494) in 1483 to paint the scene *The Confirmation of the Rule of the Franciscan Order* (Figure 8).¹³³ Lorenzo stands with Sassetti and his son atop the stairs in the right foreground of the scene while his sons Giuliano, Piero, and Giovanni (in that order) ascend the stairs led by their tutor, Agnolo Poliziano. Shortly before Lorenzo’s death in 1492, his second son Giovanni (1475-1521), later Pope Leo X, was appointed cardinal at the age of 17, while his third son Giuliano (1479-1516), later Duke of Nemours, was only 12 years old. It is said that Lorenzo used to say, “I have

three sons: one is foolish, one is clever, and one is kind,” speaking about Piero, Giovanni, and Giuliano respectively.¹³⁴

Cosimo de' Medici biographer Dale Kent suggests that a lot of what is written about Cosimo concerning “his pretentions to be a princely ruler of Florence” is based on the behavior of his grandson, Lorenzo il Magnifico.¹³⁵ By the time Piero had died in 1469, the republic turned to a 20-year-old Lorenzo for the preservation of their government. This is the point when the Medici’s responsibility for governing Florence began to increase sharply while the success of the bank began to decrease sharply. Lorenzo became a full-time politician while leaving business affairs to his bank managers. It is during Lorenzo’s tenure that the deployment of portraiture as a political tool truly took root and appropriation of civic imagery was pursued through the art of Pollaiuolo.

After the Pazzi conspiracy, except for one or two exceptions during the Cinquecento, Medici portraiture was either used by Florentine citizens or foreign dignitaries to demonstrate allegiance to the Medici, or used by the Medici patriarch for the purpose of political propaganda or dynastic ambition. Then, by the mid Cinquecento, Medici portraiture would become completely politically motivated and produced solely for the purpose of political propaganda or dynastic continuity.

Part Three: Early Cinquecento Portraits (1512-1537)

Appointed cardinal in 1488 at the age of 13, Giovanni di Lorenzo de' Medici (1478-1521) officially received his cardinal insignia in March of 1491. In November of 1494, the cardinal would flee Florence with his older brother, Piero "il Sfortunato" (1472-1503) and his younger brother, Giuliano (1479-1516).¹³⁶ For the next eight years the republic would be strongly influenced by the ideas of Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498) and Niccoló Machiavelli (1469-1527). Instead of attempting to "placate the people" or asking to return as a humble citizen, Piero continuously sought revenge and plotted with Venice, Milan, France or the Papal States against Florence.¹³⁷ A price was put on his head and on the head of his brother Giuliano. Florence passed laws preventing commerce with the Medici. One year after Piero Soderini was elected Gonfalonier for life in 1502, Piero "il Sfortunato" de' Medici drowned in the Garigliano River fleeing from the battle between the French and the Spanish.

Guicciardini said that instead of using "force and violence," the Cardinal Giovanni and Giuliano de' Medici demonstrated "love and benevolence, benefitting the citizens and never offending them in public or private."¹³⁸ They began to extend favors to individual Florentine citizens through the papal court and other means by welcoming all Florentines as their guests when in Rome. The next step for Cardinal Giovanni was forming an alliance through marriage. Instead of looking throughout the peninsula as his father had, Cardinal Giovanni would need to return to the Florentine tradition. In April 1508, the cardinal was able to finalize the marriage of Piero's daughter, Clarissa, to Filippo di Filippo Strozzi, a member of one of the strongest families in Florence.¹³⁹

The final piece of the puzzle for Cardinal Giovanni came with the formation of the Holy League in 1511, allying the papacy with the Holy Roman Empire, Spain, England, and Venice against France. Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici was key in persuading the Holy League to form troops and convince Soderini, the pro-French Gonfalonier, to resign. That act allowed the entire Medici family to return to Florence in full-force beginning on September 1, 1512.¹⁴⁰ The city was first handed over to the Magnificent's youngest son Giuliano di Lorenzo de' Medici (1479-1516), later Duke of Nemours. In April of 1513 Giuliano's older brother, Cardinal Giovanni di Lorenzo de' Medici, became Pope Leo X (1513-1521). The pope almost immediately made his cousin and future Pope Clement VII (1523-1534), Giulio di Giuliano de' Medici (1478-1534), Archbishop of Florence and cardinal. The later Duke of Urbino in 1516, Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici (1492-1519), was made "*Capitano* of the Florentines" as a result of a vote passed in the "*Palagio*" in May of 1514.¹⁴¹ From 1512 until 1534, the Vatican and the city of Florence almost operated exclusively as a group effort of the previously mentioned Medici and a few additional Medici family members.¹⁴²

Along with inheriting the papacy, Leo X would inherit Raffaello (Raphael) Sanzio (1483-1520), Julius II's leading court painter. Raphael's work at the Vatican began in the *Stanze* as a subordinate, but he later was put in charge of all of the papal rooms.¹⁴³ The *Stanza della Segnatura* (1509-12) was the only room of the four to date entirely from Julius's reign, and the only room thought to have been painted entirely by Raphael.¹⁴⁴ The remaining rooms (1512-1517) were painted by Raphael with the assistance of his workshop, and include Medici imagery and symbolism as well as the first portraits of Leo

X.¹⁴⁵ During this period, Raphael had become a master of portraiture in both fresco and easel painting.

Raphael became highly sought after and painted a number of portraits for various Italian patrons while he was in Rome. While Raphael had often depicted Leo X in fresco scenes, the painter is also known for a selection of state portraits depicting Medici sitters. Although these portraits were likely modeled for and painted in Rome, they were destined for other locations in the Italian peninsula including their birth city of Florence. The most widely known examples by Raphael are *Leo X with Cardinals Giulio de' Medici and Luigi de' Rossi* of 1517-1518 (Figure 9); *Giuliano de' Medici, Duke of Nemours* of 1515-1516; and *Lorenzo de' Medici, Duke of Urbino* of 1518. Unlike the Medici portraits of the Quattrocento which maintained the status quo or reaffirmed the family's commercial or political dominance in a time of crisis, these early Cinquecento portraits were politically inspired with the purpose of establishing a Medici regime from the ground up in multiple cities throughout the peninsula and beyond. While the Raphael portraits are similar in type and limited to one version per sitter, these portraits would be copied contemporaneously as well as posthumously.

The papal portrait of *Leo X with Cardinals Giulio de' Medici and Luigi de' Rossi* is dated after July 1, 1517, the day when de' Rossi became cardinal.¹⁴⁶ The painting was commissioned by Leo X¹⁴⁷ in order to be sent to his family in Florence so that it could be displayed in the courtyard of the Palazzo Medici during the wedding celebration in 1518 of Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici.¹⁴⁸ Leo is situated in a three-quarter seated profile and wears the papal vestments and *camauro*. He faces to the left and has the gilded spheres or Medici *palle* on the finial of the chair. It would be futile to attempt to describe this

painting with any more accuracy and enthusiasm than does Vasari, who describes it in his *Vita* of Raphael:

In this the figures appear to be not painted, but in full relief; there is the pile of velvet, with the damask of the Pope's vestments shining and rustling, the fur of the lining soft and natural, and the gold and silk so counterfeited that they do not seem to be in colour, but real gold and silk. There is an illuminated book of parchment, which appears to be more real than reality; and a little bell of wrought silver, which is more beautiful than words can tell. Among other things, also, is a ball of burnished gold on the Pope's chair, wherein are reflected, as if it were a mirror (such is its brightness), the light from the windows, the shoulders of the Pope, and the walls round the room. And all these things are executed with such diligence, that one may believe without any manner of a doubt that no master is able, or is ever likely to be able, to do better.¹⁴⁹

George Hersey, professor emeritus of art history at Yale University, suggested that the “morose” mood portrayed by Leo is “intended as a kind of denial, to his family in Florence, of the sitter's reputation for jollity and high living.”¹⁵⁰ Besides serving as a model for most of the posthumous portraits of Leo, it would also serve as a model for the *Portrait of Clement VII* by Sebastiano del Piombo (c. 1485-1547).

During the three years after Leo became pope, his brother Giuliano first became *Capitano* of the Florentines, then Gonfalonier of the Papal Forces and later, Duke of Nemours.¹⁵¹ Along with promoting his own image, Pope Leo X promoted the image of his upstart brother. Since Giuliano lived at the court of Urbino from 1494 till 1512, he was certainly familiar with Raphael and his work. Since Raphael was now working for Leo in Rome, a portrait of the pope's brother by the master from Urbino was inevitable. Raphael painted the original *Giuliano de' Medici* as a gift from Giuliano to his bride,

Philiberte of Savoy, the aunt of Francis I of France, sometime between the year preceding his marriage in 1515 and his return to Rome and his death in 1516.¹⁵² A number of copies and variants are known, but the example at the Metropolitan Museum of Art is considered to be one of the best copies and is believed to have been painted directly under Raphael's supervision.¹⁵³ In this version, the sitter posed before a green curtain which is pulled aside to offer a view of the Castel Sant'Angelo, only steps from St. Peters. In all likelihood, this painting was painted in Rome, and the landmark in the background both confirms this point as well as the sitter's allegiance to the papacy. Like the third Medici portrait by Raphael mentioned below, Giuliano is portrayed with a beard and stands slightly to the right while looking at the viewer with his eyes slightly shifted to his left.

Like the originals of the previously mentioned Medici portraits by Raphael, the *Portrait of Lorenzo de' Medici, Duke of Urbino* (1492-1519), has many copies and is mentioned by Vasari as being in the possession of the heirs of Ottaviano de' Medici.¹⁵⁴ A portrait which previously sold at a Christie's auction for \$37.2 million is thought to be the original listed among Cosimo I's collection in his *guardaroba* (wardrobe).¹⁵⁵ Like the Giuliano portrait, the Lorenzo portrait shows reworking in the area around the sitter's hat, and focuses on the detail of the sitter's clothing more so than the sitter's facial features or personality traits. A copy of this portrait was part of the Ira Spanierman collection that sold at Christie's. The Lorenzo portrait demonstrates a much finer detail in the intricacies of the clothing and the foreshortening of the sitter's right hand, suggesting an autograph work by Raphael. The Spanierman portrait is more like a five-eighth-length portrait rather than a three-quarter-length portrait. James Beck, art

historian who specialized in Italian Renaissance, suggested that this painting is too small (97 x 79 cm) to be the original portrait by Raphael from 1518 which was a “large, standing, three-quarter-length ‘state portrait’, comparable to Raphael’s portrait of Leo X.”¹⁵⁶

Unfortunately for the Medici, what could have been was no more. By 1521, the three leading members of the family -- Giuliano, Lorenzo, and Leo X -- had died within nine years after their return to Florence. However, Raphael’s portraits would live on and serve as models for the posthumous depictions of these three men. Furthermore, a similar style of portraiture would be used for contemporary depictions of future Medici family members. Unlike the more conservative Medici portraits of the Quattrocento, the state portrait style of the Cinquecento accentuates social rank and position by featuring an elaborately dressed half-length to full-length figure.¹⁵⁷

For the most part, the Medici popes concurrently ruled Florence and the Papal States between 1512 and 1534.¹⁵⁸ After the death of Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici in 1519, there was not a legitimate Medici family member left to rule Florence. It was at this time that a distant cousin, Ottaviano di Lorenzo di Barnadetto de' Medici (1482-1546), along with Cardinal Silvio Passerini (1469-1529), served as a stopgap¹⁵⁹ to care for the city as well as foster Alessandro de' Medici (1510-1537) and Ippolito de' Medici (1511-1535), the young illegitimate sons of Lorenzo di Piero¹⁶⁰ and Giuliano di Lorenzo, respectively. During the period between 1519 and 1521, Leo X and Cardinal Giulio, later Pope Clement VII (1523-1534), clearly realized that Medici continuity was uncertain. Therefore, they shifted Medici portraiture to the posthumous portrayals of recently

deceased and past family members paired with the use of Medici symbolism and/or allegorical imagery to solidify their political claim on Florence.

The first of these posthumous paintings commissioned to depict a Medici sitter “in a world of mythical Antiquity” was a fresco painted between 1519 and 1521 inside the Medici villa at Poggio a Caiano.¹⁶¹ In the main hall of the villa, Andrea del Sarto (1486-1530) painted the *Tribute to Caesar* which illustrates Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici as Caesar. Caesar wears a crown of laurel, the symbol of Medici continuity. The fresco as described by Vasari “is in chiaroscuro” with “a magnificent perspective-view and a very masterly flight of steps, which formed the ascent to the throne of Caesar. And these steps he adorned with very well-designed statues, not being content with having proved the beauty of his genius in the variety of figures that are carrying on their backs all those different animals.”¹⁶² Del Sarto was supposed to continue working on the apparent finished work, but because of Leo X's death work had stopped in 1521.¹⁶³

The most significant example of Medici portraiture comes from the period after the death of Lorenzo in 1519 and before the death of Leo X in 1521. The pope and Cardinal Giulio needed a portrait which stressed the political and dynastic power of the Medici over Florence while concurrently ruling Rome. The commissioning of this portrait by Goro da Pistoia, Secretary to the Medici, attaches the remaining members of the family to their most revered family patriarch, *Pater Patriae* (Father of the Fatherland).¹⁶⁴ Jacopo Carucci da Pontormo (1494-1557) painted the *Portrait of Cosimo de' Medici* (Figure 10) to represent the past, present, and future of the Medici dynasty. In many ways, this portrait ties together most precedents and antecedents of Medici

portraiture. The three main elements of the portrait of Cosimo are the conservative image of Cosimo himself, the laurel, and the *broncone* or family tree (see Appendix A).

If one did not recognize the portrait of Cosimo de' Medici from the limited Quattrocento examples, his identity is confirmed by the inscription on the back of his seat: "COSM MEDICES P P P." Pontormo likely had access to the marble relief of Cosimo now in Berlin, but the prevailing literature suggests the posthumous medals from 1465 to 1469 likely served as models.¹⁶⁵ Cosimo is illustrated in three-quarter-length from directly above the knees. The sitter wears a fine red robe and hat and leans against the chair in a reserved manner almost halfway between standing and sitting. While his head is in full left profile, Cosimo turns his body inward to the left so the viewer can see both of his arms and shoulders. This portrait illustrates a humanistic homage to Cosimo while also focusing on Medici strength.

Janet Cox-Rearick, art historian specializing in Medici patronage, suggested that laurel emphasized the Medici family's return to Florence in 1512.¹⁶⁶ Laurel wreaths were used to represent a military victory in ancient Rome as illustrated by the laurel crown worn by Caesar (Lorenzo) in the *Tribute to Caesar*. It will also be demonstrated later in this thesis how Duke Cosimo I de' Medici used laurel in an early copy of his portrait in armor (Figure 19) to represent dynastic continuity.¹⁶⁷

The meaning of the Medici *broncone* with its laurel leaves is universally agreed upon by historians to symbolize the Medici family tree in the *Portrait of Cosimo de' Medici* (Figure 10). However, there is some difference of opinion as to who and/or what the branches represent. Historians commonly attribute the cut-off branch to the side of the family "who no longer ruled"¹⁶⁸ or "became extinct."¹⁶⁹ The flourishing branch is

said to refer the side of the family still in power. It is often suggested to represent Alessandro, Ippolito, or even Cosimo I who were ten years old, nine years old, and one year old respectively in 1520, the suspected year in which this painting was likely commissioned.¹⁷⁰

Ironically, none of the historians suggest that the flourishing branch represents Ottaviano de' Medici. He was the distant cousin who was involved in the commission of the portrait as well as the person who owned the painting until he passed it on to his son.¹⁷¹ Politically, he was the most active Medici family member in Florence after the death of Lorenzo from 1519 until 1527, then after 1530 Alessandro di Lorenzo de' Medici (1510-1537) assumed control.¹⁷² The contemporaries who descended from the other branch of the family were Pierfrancesco “il Giovane” de' Medici (1487-1525) and his two sons, Lorenzino (1514-1548)¹⁷³ and Giuliano (1520-1588). One might suggest that the flourishing branch represents the aforementioned Medici while the cut-off branch represents the younger Medici members previously thought to represent the flourishing branch.

Apparently, the main branch of Cosimo il Vecchio was cut off after the death of Lorenzo di Piero. While Alessandro and Ippolito stem from the cadet branch of Cosimo, they were too young at the time to rule Florence. Therefore, Cosimo il Vecchio's branch remained in a stage of dormancy waiting to sprout. A simple view of the painting clearly shows that the cut-off branch is the larger of the two branches stemming from the main trunk which represents Giovanni di Bicci. Therefore, it is only logical that the larger branch represents Cosimo il Vecchio while the smaller flourishing branch represents Cosimo il Vecchio's younger brother, Lorenzo (1395-1440). The scroll on the

flourishing branch reads: “VNO AVVLSO NO[n] DEFIC[it] ALTER” which is translated differently by various scholars, but they all fail to apply the literal pretext in Virgil’s poem.¹⁷⁴ The above quotation and its previous four lines were taken from the complete translation of the *Aeneid* by Theodore Williams and reads as follows:

But he who plucks this burgeoned, leafy gold;
For this hath beauteous Proserpine ordained
Her chosen gift to be. Whene'er it is culled,
A branch out-leafing in like golden gleam,
A second wonder-stem, fails not to spring.¹⁷⁵

In other words, whenever one has a branch that has been plucked of all of its leaves (or fruit), one can “cull” that branch and it will sprout another branch (if not two or three) as long as you have another flourishing branch to support its growth. The basic premise of pruning supports this argument. Pruning is done not only to remove dead branches, but it is also done to create new growth, especially when the branch is cut a few inches or more beyond its base. If they meant for this branch to be extinct, as art historian John Sparrow had suggested, a pruner would have cut the branch at its base where it meets the trunk. As a result, one might suggest that the flourishing branch represents the younger branch and Ottaviano de' Medici (1484-1546) while the larger cut-off branch waiting to sprout represents the older branch and Alessandro de' Medici (1510-1537) or Ippolito de' Medici (1511-1535).

Pontormo’s portrait painting of Cosimo would serve as a prototype for different artists who would use different mediums including prints, drawings, paintings, frescoes, and sculptures during the 200 years following the painting’s inception. It is also said that Pontormo planned to paint a portrait of Piero de' Medici to serve as a pendant, “but that it

was never executed” and only studies have survived.¹⁷⁶ However, it seems Ottaviano de' Medici commissioned Vasari to paint the *Portrait of Lorenzo il Magnifico* (now in the Uffizi) in 1533 to serve as a pendant for Pontormo's portrait of Cosimo which was in his collection at that time.¹⁷⁷ While Pontormo practically had a monopoly on portrait painting in Florence during the 1520s and 1530s, Medici portraiture was relatively limited compared to the total number of portraits that Pontormo had executed. Vasari tells us that Clement VII commissioned Pontormo around 1525 to paint the now lost portraits of Alessandro (b. 1510) and Ippolito (b. 1511). After completing these portraits, Pontormo did not work for the Medici again until after 1531.¹⁷⁸ It is said that “during the republic (1527-30), he involved himself in projects of overtly anti-Medicean sympathies.”¹⁷⁹

After Leo X's death in 1521, Cardinal Giulio continued his position as Archbishop of Florence for another two years until he became Pope Clement VII (1523-1534). From 1523 until the sack of Rome in 1527, Clement would rule Rome while concurrently ruling Florence with the assistance of Ottaviano and Cardinal Passerini. On May 6, 1527, Pope Clement VII fled from St. Peters to Castel San Angelo in Rome and, in less than a fortnight, Ottaviano, Alessandro and Ippolito were fleeing Florence as well. Shortly thereafter on June 1, Niccoló Capponi became Gonfalonier for life of the third republic of Florence and the Medici family were once again officially expelled from the city. However, the republic and the expulsion were relatively short-lived. By June 1529, the Treaty of Barcelona between Clement VII and Charles V allowed for the reinstatement of the Medici in the summer of 1530. Charles V had ordained that Alessandro di Lorenzo de' Medici (1510-1537) was to be “capo” (head) of the city of

Florence. Alessandro was formally established as Duke of Florence on April 27, 1532. That appointment was solidified after the death of Clement VII when Charles V's daughter, Margherita of Austria, was betrothed to Duke Alessandro.¹⁸⁰

Alessandro de' Medici was Duke of Florence for only five years. During this short term, he had only a limited number of portraits commissioned. While there are only two significant examples representing Alessandro while he was duke, they are both a first in Medici portraiture, and significantly contribute to expanding the message the family would convey in later Cinquecento portraiture. These portraits are the earliest extant paintings to portray a contemporary Medici sitter as either a soldier or humanist.

Giorgio Vasari's (1511-1574) full-length *Portrait of Alessandro de' Medici* (Figure 11) is the first painted portrait depicting a Medici sitter in armor. In the background, the artist illustrated the aftermath of the siege of Florence which took place in 1530. "He is seated, to demonstrate that he has taken possession of his duchy, and he holds the golden baton of power to rule as prince and to command as captain."¹⁸¹ Lorne Campbell goes into great detail to describe the extensive imagery and symbolism in this painting.¹⁸²

After the death of Clement VII in September 1534, "Alessandro had [Pontormo] informed that he wished to have his portrait taken by him in a large picture. And Jacopo, for the sake of convenience, executed his portrait for the time being in a little [now lost] picture of the size of a sheet of half-folio."¹⁸³ In the fall 1534 or the spring of 1535, Pontormo then painted the similar but larger *Portrait of Alessandro de' Medici* (Figure 12) which is now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art.¹⁸⁴ Alessandro's clothing shows that he is mourning the death of his uncle. This is the first portrait to portray a Medici

contemporary as a humanist. Alessandro is depicted as a melancholic intellectual who uses a stylus in order to make a metal point drawing of a woman. It has been suggested that it may be a reference to a love poem by Petrarch, “who wrote sonnets about a metal point drawing he owned of his beloved Laura.”¹⁸⁵ Could Alessandro have been drawing a portrait of Signora Taddea Malespina, the sister of the Marchesa di Massa who was the recipient of the painting?

Part Four: The Portraits of Cosimo I (1537-1574)

While Alessandro had the backing of Charles V from beyond the city gates, there was definitely a lack of cohesion among the Medici family inside Florence. The two most likely heirs¹⁸⁶ to the ducal crown had made assassination attempts on Alessandro's life. Ippolito (d. 1535) had failed and paid with his life. Lorenzino succeeded in 1537. However, he fled the city, basically surrendering any hereditary claim to the duchy.¹⁸⁷ The following excerpt from a biography of Francesco Guicciardini (1483-1540) best describes the transition from Alessandro to Cosimo I de' Medici (1519-1574) in 1537.

Although Lorenzino had committed tyrannicide in the finest classical or humanist tradition, he fled the city without proclaiming the death of Alessandro, and his lack of courage following his impulsive crime enabled the Medici forces to maintain control of the city... Therefore, a handful of citizens led by Guicciardini decided to invest Cosimo, the son of the Medici condottiere Giovanni delle Bande Nere with the position in order to avoid the foreign regency that would be imposed upon them if Giulio, the four-year old son of the slain Alessandro were allowed to succeed his father. Guicciardini's biographer believes that the choice of Cosimo was motivated primarily by Guicciardini's hope that he might be able to exert some power over the younger man... One of the major provisions in the agreement that legalized Cosimo's rise to power was that he served simply as head of the Florentine Republic rather than Duke of Florence. Even this vernal fiction was destroyed by Cosimo, however, who eventually used the power of the emperor to confirm Florence as a hereditary Medici state. In return for this, of course, Cosimo was forced to bargain away much of the traditional liberty the Florentines had enjoyed in foreign affairs. The city became a satellite state of the Spanish Empire, in a game that required only their presence but not their active participation.¹⁸⁸

In 1539, Cosimo would strengthen his bond with Charles V and the Spanish by marrying Eleonora di Toledo (1522-1562), the daughter of the Spanish viceroy of Naples.

There are few extant painted portraits of Cosimo which date from the 1530s. Among these paintings, the sitter as well the portraitist is often disputed. One exception is a portrait by the son of the famous Florentine painter, Domenico del Ghirlandaio (1449-1494). Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio (1483-1561) painted the *Cosimo de' Medici at Age Twelve* (not illustrated) in 1531. This oil portrait traditionally hangs on the wall in room 35 (*La Tribuna*) at the Uffizi Gallery among other iconic Medici portraits such as Pontormo's *Cosimo il Vecchio* (Figure 10) and Bronzino's *Bia de' Medici* (Figure 15) and *Portrait of Cosimo I* (Figure 16). Cosimo is clearly identified in the Uffizi portrait by the crescent-like symbol in the upper right corner of the painting which bears the words "Medi Cosmos." Ghirlandaio follows the style of Raphael's state portrait which focuses on the detail of the sitter's clothing and his inscrutable facial expression, "*né lieto, né mesto*" (neither happy nor sad).¹⁸⁹ Cosimo demonstrates a sense of constraint which is seen in most of the Medici family portraits painted during the 1540s and 1550s. Art historian S. J. Freedberg told us that "the very attitudes of body that the sitters take intensify the sense of a constraint: their behavior is according to a precisely controlled personal *maniera*, of which the high artifice serves as a mask for passion or as an armour against it."¹⁹⁰

As stated earlier in this thesis, Pontormo practically had a monopoly on Florentine portraiture during the 1530s. Consequently, most of the portraits from the latter part of this decade in which Cosimo is considered to be the sitter are thought to be by the hand of Pontormo. The painting in which both the artist and the sitter is most often affirmed is the *Profile Portrait of Cosimo de' Medici* in the Galleria Palatina at the Palazzo Pitti. The museum dates this painting to the year 1537, the year Cosimo assumed power. This

small wood panel is 12 inches by 18 inches and painted using thin layers of paint, which may indicate that the painting was executed hurriedly.¹⁹¹ This is also the first official political portrait documenting a Medici family patriarch at the relative moment he assumes office. Since the head is in perfect left profile, which is not common at this time, it seems logical that the portrait served as a model for medals and relief sculptures to commemorate the new duke. The painting's *pentimenti* are consistent with Pontormo's drawing that preceded it (now in the Gabineto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi), but it has been suggested that the painting could have been executed with the assistance of a member of Pontormo's workshop.¹⁹²

Unlike the previous portrait, Pontormo's *Portrait of a Halberdier* (Figure 13) is thought to portray a younger Cosimo, but the portrait has been disputed regarding both the sitter and artist. A catalogue of a 2004-2005 exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art stated that "this portrait of a youth carrying a pole arm is listed in the inventory of the estate of Riccardo Riccardi [d. 1612] as a picture of the young Cosimo I de Medici."¹⁹³ However, Vasari points to a different sitter by stating, "At the time of the siege of Florence, [Pontormo] also portrayed Francesco Guardi in the costume of a soldier."¹⁹⁴ If this is the same painting described by Vasari, it would have been painted around 1530. Gabrielle Langdon claims it was painted by Pontormo in 1537 and "shows [Cosimo] dressed as a soldier – probably in homage to his father – ready to defend Florence, symbolized by the fortress behind him."¹⁹⁵

Pontormo was allowed more artistic license than his contemporaries and, therefore, he was able to paint more realistic portraits during the 1530s than the court painters who succeeded him during the 1540s. As Cosimo gained strength politically,

artists who grew up during the period of the pre-1512 government became ill-suited for the tasks of painting a dynastic image because of their inability to acclimate themselves to the new political and social structure of the duchy.¹⁹⁶ From 1540 to 1545, Cosimo would begin to surround himself with court artists such as Bronzino and Bandinelli who could follow his plan. “A document that records the court rolls from as early as 1540 indicates only three artists on the court payroll for that year: Bronzino, at six *scudi* per month; the painter Francesco Bachiacca, also at six *scudi*; and Ridolfo di Domenico Ghirlandaio, at three *scudi*.¹⁹⁷ Pontormo continued to work for the Medici after 1540. However, his commissions shifted from portraiture to church projects within Florence and Medici villas outside Florence while Medici portraiture shifted to Bronzino.¹⁹⁸

Agnolo Cosimo di Mariano Bronzino (1503-1572) arguably made a greater impact on Medici portraiture than any other. During his teenage years, he began his work in the conservative shop of Raffaellino del Garbo. By 1519, Bronzino moved on to become the pupil of Pontormo. While Bronzino was only ten years younger than Pontormo, they became as close as father and son and their relationship continued until Pontormo’s death.¹⁹⁹ While Bronzino developed his own artistic style, he also adopted many of the components of style characteristic of Pontormo. According to Vasari, “Agnolo, then, having been many years with Pontormo, as has been told, caught his manner so well, and so imitated his works, that their pictures have been taken very often one for the other, so similar they were for a time.”²⁰⁰ Bronzino’s independent career began around 1530 and although he returned to Florence from Pesaro in 1532, there are no significant works to his credit relating to the Medici until after Cosimo I was named “*capo e primario del governo della città e del dominio*.”²⁰¹ Bronzino would become the

official court painter for the Medici. Over the next few decades, he would paint numerous portraits of Duke Cosimo I, the Duchess Eleonora, and the Medici children.

While Medici portraits by Bronzino are typically political in nature, there are some exceptions. The first portrait painting commissioned by the Medici from Bronzino was *Cosimo I as Orpheus*, c. 1539 (Figure 14).²⁰² Bronzino uses artistic license which allows him to personally show off his talent and curry favor with Cosimo and his wife, Eleonora di Toledo (1522-1562). This allegorical painting likely served as a wedding present to Eleonora, and it was never meant to have been shown to the public for dynastic or state purposes. It carries personal erotic connotations that would never be repeated in any of Cosimo's future portraits.²⁰³ Cosimo is portrayed as Orpheus, the mythological musician of antiquity and great lover who has been traditionally suggested to also play the role of peacemaker.²⁰⁴ Cosimo sits in a position modeled after the *Belvedere Torso*, which references "Hercules, who as a figure long identified with the Republic of Florence, was adopted emblematically by Cosimo on his accession in 1537."²⁰⁵ This portrait, along with an official portrait of *Eleonora of Toledo* painted shortly after their wedding, placed the artist in the favor of Eleonora and resulted in many commissions from the Medici after 1540.

Similar to his predecessors of the Quattrocento and Cinquecento, Cosimo did not launch a significant portrait campaign during his first five years in a position of power. Initially, the young Cosimo would experience struggles with Republican opposition, who had rekindled hope after the assassination of Alessandro in January of 1537. But after his victory at the battle of Montemurlo in August of 1537 and his marriage to Eleonora in

1539, Cosimo began to gain political strength.²⁰⁶ Cosimo I was eventually represented in a state portrait by Bronzino in 1542 but, surprisingly, he is not the main sitter.

The *Portrait of Bia de' Medici* (Figure 15) posthumously portrays the five- or six-year-old illegitimate daughter of Cosimo I as she would have appeared at the time of commission, which was likely shortly after her death in 1542. Unlike most of the later dynastic portraits by Bronzino, the subject in this fine example of portraiture lacks the plasticity of other sitters and the background is painted using the rare lapis lazuli pigment. Bia wears an elegant white dress while her neck and ears are adorned with fine white pearls. The focal point of the painting is a medal depicting Cosimo I by Domenico di Polo de' Vetrei (c. 1480-1547) that hangs around Bia's neck. The portrait of Cosimo on the obverse of the medal (Figure 15a) was modeled after the previously mentioned *Profile Portrait of Cosimo [I] de' Medici*, (c. 1537) by Pontormo. The medal's reverse commemorates Cosimo's rise to power in 1537.²⁰⁷ This portrait within a portrait recalls the *Portrait of a Man Holding Medal of Cosimo [il Vecchio] de' Medici* (Figure 5) by Botticelli. However, instead of being portrayed posthumously like his great-great-great grandfather, Cosimo I is portrayed contemporaneously. Maurice Brock suggested that "since dynastic continuity was by that time assured, the duke would have had no reason to commission a portrait of his natural daughter...unless it was as a keepsake after her premature demise."²⁰⁸ However, one might suggest that dynastic continuity was far from assured in 1542, since Cosimo only had one son, the one-year old Francesco (b. 1541).

Events of 1543 marked the beginning of Cosimo's dynastic portrait campaign which would flourish well into the following century. Cosimo I had increased territorial strength and autonomy for the duchy in May of 1543 when he convinced Charles V to

withdraw Spanish troops from the military forts of Florence, Livorno, and Pisa, hence resulting in the military control of Tuscany being handed from the emperor to the duke.²⁰⁹ Also in 1543, the likelihood of dynastic continuity had increased with the birth of Cosimo's second son, Giovanni. As Cosimo gained political strength, his portraits would be copied. By the 1560s, his portrait campaign would expand to include copies of his ancestors and ducal successors as well. The portraits that feature Cosimo I would include three types of painted portraits.

Part 4.1 The Type I Portrait of Cosimo

Cosimo's inaugural dynastic painted portrait is Bronzino's half-length *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor*, 1543 (Figure 16). The iconic portrait of Cosimo recalls Titian's portraits, *Charles V with Drawn Sword* (Figure 17), known only from copies, and *Francesco Maria della Rovere* (Figure 18), now in the Uffizi. Similar to the portrait of Cosimo I, both of Titian's portraits from the previous decade illustrate a stoic subject who is dressed in fine armor and ready to lead. Robert Simon argues convincingly that Cosimo was portrayed as a peaceful leader not yet battle proven.²¹⁰ Since Cosimo was still early in his duchy and continued to be subordinate to Charles V, he probably did not want to convey a bold image of military strength. Cosimo's hand rests on his helmet in a passive manner while Francesco and Charles hold a baton and a sword, respectively, being portrayed as seasoned military leaders. Under the influence of Duke Cosimo, Bronzino perfected the rules of Mannerism by treating most of his sitters as still-lives. According to Maurice Brock, the *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor* served as the

model for the first typology of male dynastic portraiture in which *regola* (rule) dominates over *licenza* (license).²¹¹

After the prototype of Cosimo's portrait in armor had been completed by Bronzino, more than 25 versions (See Appendix B) and numerous copies by the artist or his workshop were produced from 1545 up until the late 1550s. These portraits were used for political purposes such as domestic propaganda or international diplomacy. They are known to have been sent as "diplomatic gifts or tokens of friendship and esteem" to Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle, Bishop of Arras and advisor to Charles V; Paolo Giovio, Bishop of Nocera and renowned portrait collector; Catherine de' Medici, queen of France; Pope Paul III; Pope Julius III and many others.²¹² While many versions have been said to be by the hand of Bronzino,²¹³ only one version is universally agreed upon to be the prototype described by Vasari in his *Vita di Bronzino*.²¹⁴

The portrait of Cosimo I in the *Tribuna* of the Uffizi is the original version of the *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor* (Figure 16). The half-length prototype was painted in 1543 and is without any *impresa* or imagery beyond the sitter and his armor to serve as a model for all versions to follow. Cosimo's right hand docilely rests on his helmet, demonstrating that he has settled into his duchy while still being subject to Charles V. His abnormally long and skinny fingers touch the right edge of the panel while his elbow and helmet are cut off by the painting's bottom edge. Cosimo's body is turned slightly toward the left, but his head turns to his right to partially hide the fact that he was cross-eyed. The opaque appearance of the face, hands, and detail of the armour as well as the visible *pentimenti* along the shoulder have led historians to believe that this portrait is the original by Bronzino. According to Robert Simon who wrote his

dissertation concerning Duke Cosimo's portrait, the Uffizi portrait can only be considered the prototype for versions of an equal or lesser format such as a half-length or bust portrait.²¹⁵ Copies in Madrid (Appendix B No. 14) and the Galleria Palatina (Appendix B No. 16) are similar to the Uffizi prototype, aside from the background of green drapery with slightly different folds. The Palatina copy also includes the addition of the Order of the Golden Fleece which will be more prevalent in larger and later versions. The Poznan (Appendix B No. 12) and Christie's (Appendix B No. 29) copies appear to be replicas of the Uffizi prototype.

The *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor*, 1545 (Figure 19) in Sydney has a background similar to the Uffizi prototype, right down to the color and the folds of the drapery. Aside from his additional facial hair, Cosimo's dress, pose, and physical features are all similar to the Uffizi portrait. While the sitter is the same size in the Sydney three-quarter-length version as the half-length prototype in the Uffizi, the Sydney painting is about 20% larger in order to include additional armor and the Medici *broncone*. Rather than representing a new Medici patriarch or his rise to power as in Pontormo's portrait of Cosimo il Vecchio (Figure 10), the *broncone* now represents the dynastic continuity guaranteed by Cosimo's children. The trunk of the *broncone* bears the inscription: "*COS/MVS/MEDICES · DVX/FLOR.*" Similar to other original three-quarter-length versions, *pentimenti* are present in areas outside the perimeter of the "half-length zone" in the Sydney "prototype."²¹⁶

The provenance of this painting traces it back to 1551 when it was in the portrait collection of Paolo Giovio.²¹⁷ This may explain the sitter's name inscribed in the painting, a common addition to the portraits in Giovio's collection but rarely included in

the other versions of *Cosimo I in Armor*. Since it was in Giovio's collection, we can further ascertain that Tobias Stimmer used the Sydney version as a model for his engraving of *Cosimo I* in Giovio's *Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium* (Praise of Men Illustrious for Courage in War).²¹⁸ Simon convincingly argues that the Sydney portrait is an autograph version from Bronzino and that it was previously owned by Paolo Giovio. However, it is not so clear that this version is the prototype for the other three-quarter-length versions of the *Portrait of Cosimo I in Armor*.

While Simon had suggested that the Sydney portrait served as the prototype for other three-quarter-length versions,²¹⁹ there are no extant copies or replicas of the Sydney portrait. Furthermore, none of the larger examples listed among his 28 versions have details outside the half-length zone (Figures 20a, 21a, 23) that remotely match the Sydney portrait (Figure 19a). General characteristics in the three-quarter-length zone of the larger portraits of Cosimo such as dimensions, background, and symbolism vary widely among the different versions. The conservation of the next three-quarter-length version kept it from being deaccessioned after the beautiful portrait of Cosimo had been fully revealed.

The *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor* (Figure 20) in Toledo is larger than any of the previously mentioned versions and likely comes from a later date as well. The sitter continues to remain the same size, but now the background becomes deeper and the frame around the sitter becomes larger. "A portrait of the duke with a green taffeta curtain is noted in the 1553 inventory of the duke's guardaroba."²²⁰ The Toledo portrait is attributed to Bronzino's workshop but according to a former director of the Uffizi, it is "really quite good" and "could be by Bronzino."²²¹ One can argue that the artist had a

considerable hand in its production because of the strong relief quality of the eyeballs. Similar to other three-quarter-length versions dating after 1546, the sitter in the Toledo portrait has a thicker beard and wears the badge of the Order of the Golden Fleece. However, it has recently been dated before 1546 because the conservation report stated that the Golden Fleece was added after the painting was completed.²²² The area where the armor is added to the bottom part of the three-quarter-length zone (Figure 20a) is seamless. The Toledo version illustrates a finer attention to the detail of the additional armor than any of the larger versions of *Cosimo I in Armor*. While the tree trunk is in the same position and relatively the same size in the Toledo version as the Sydney version, the Toledo portrait lacks the inscription as well as the natural detail of the Sydney tree trunk. The *broncone* in the Toledo version had been reworked to become a flourishing olive branch in lieu of the sparse laurel branch in the Sydney version.²²³ Since the original intent of the laurel was continuity and the Medici family had become more established by 1545, the laurel branch had changed to an olive branch intended to convey an image of “peaceful intent and intellectual involvement.”²²⁴

The *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor* (Figure 21) in New York is attributed to Bronzino's workshop and is likely the earliest extant three-quarter-length version. Areas of the armor from the Uffizi prototype were reworked masterfully, especially the underneath of the forearm, illustrating the reflection of the red material with the addition of a small inscription, “C M.” The head and face appear to be the same as the Uffizi version although the hairline seems to slightly recede in the New York version. This portrait lacks the *broncone* and the Golden Fleece usually present in larger versions. Therefore, it was probably painted before 29 July, 1545, the date Cosimo

received the badge of the Order of the Golden Fleece from Charles V.²²⁵ The bottom of the “three-quarter-length zone”²²⁶ (Figure 21a) uses two types of woven materials. A red cloth hides part of the helmet and the armor near Cosimo’s waist while a table cloth utilizes the space where the tree trunk sits in the Sydney portrait. The ornamental border on the left side of the painting and the tassels which hang from the drapes in the background recall another Metropolitan painting, *Portrait of a Man* (Figure 22) by Francesco Salviati (1510-1564).²²⁷ Could Francesco Salviati have painted this three-quarter-length copy of Bronzino’s half-length version before 1545? It is possible because Salviati worked for the duke from 1543 to 1554, and he is also known to have painted individual portraits of the Medici family during that time.²²⁸ A cleaning and full restoration of the New York version of Cosimo in armor could reveal more, including a better view of the sitter’s foreshortened left hand which is barely visible on the right side of the helmet.

The original half-length *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor* (Figure 16) was intended to serve as a model to establish Cosimo as a magnanimous leader. While it seems logical that the three-quarter-length version may have preceded the half-length version, there is no evidence to support it. Furthermore, there is no evidence that the Uffizi version has been cut. Vasari mentions nothing about the original portrait beyond the sitter and his armor.²²⁹ Only the half-length Uffizi version portrays Cosimo without the Golden Fleece and with a thin beard. Aside from minor adjustments, Cosimo’s armor and physical appearance within the half-length zone would remain constant in all subsequent half-length and three-quarter-length versions. If Cosimo wanted to expand his image as a leader or imply dynastic continuity, he could have customized the three-

quarter-length zone as he saw fit depending on the recipient of the portrait. *Cosimo I in Armor* was the only portrait type used for propaganda until the development of a second type of portrait in 1560.

Part 4.2 The Type II Portrait of Cosimo

After the death of Charles V in 1558 and the triumph in Siena followed by the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559, Cosimo's Duchy was expanded to include 12 towns: Florence, Fiesole, Siena, Arezzo, Pisa, Cortona, Volterra, Pistoria, Borgo San Sepolcro, Montepulciano, Prado, and Livorno.²³⁰ After territorial consolidation, Cosimo's official state portrait illustrated a benevolent leader instead of a battle ready condottiere. Vasari mentions that "Bronzino executed the portrait of the Duke when his Excellency was come to the age of forty."²³¹

In the second type of male portraiture, Bronzino replaces Cosimo's military armor with civilian dress while maintaining the same pose used in the first type, although Cosimo does appear a bit more relaxed. Like *Cosimo I in Armor*, the different versions of *Cosimo I de' Medici at Age 40* (Figures 24, 25, 26) are similar in regard to physical features, dress, and pose while their dimensions, accessories, or background vary. Cosimo's beard had filled out, his hairline had slightly receded, and Cosimo had gained a few pounds since he first sat for Bronzino in 1543. Although the right hand is still a bit elongated, the manneristic plasticity has diminished in the second type to give the hand a more natural appearance. This portrait is only known by copies which are based on six versions. None of the 40 known specimens are believed to be by the hand of Bronzino.²³² The second type of portrait comes in three different sizes: a half-length version cut off at

the waist, a bust version cut off below the sternum, and another bust version cut off above the sternum.

The finest example of the type II *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici* is the version cut off at the waist and now in Rome (Figure 24). This half-length version was listed in the 1833 *Inventario Fidecommisso* of the Borghese Gallery as a “Ritratto di Cosimo de' Medici, di Cristoforo Allori,” later considered to be by Bronzino and finally attributed to Bronzino's workshop.²³³ While Cosimo's clothing is less extravagant than other state portraits, the detail of the clothing illustrated by the artist recalls Raphael's Medici state portraits representing *Giuliano de' Medici, Duke of Nemours* and *Lorenzo de' Medici, Duke of Urbino*. The Borghese portrait seems to master the complexity of the foreshortening of the sitter's left hand as well as the detail of the sitter's clothing better than other half-length versions.

Another well documented half-length version of *Cosimo I de' Medici* is the type II portrait in Turin (Figure 25). Similar to the Rome version, the Turin portrait is attributed to Bronzino's workshop and subtly features the Order of the Golden Fleece on Cosimo's midriff. The illustration of the left hand seems to have been abandoned and simply painted into the shadows. Besides the handkerchief which is also present in the Borghese portrait, the Turin portrait has the addition of a ring on the right index finger. The Turin portrait is inscribed: “COSMVS MED FLOR ET SENARVM DVX II.” This inscription along the top of the painting is often present after 1560 on copies of Medici portraits which are also part of a series.

Most of the type II portraits including the versions in Rome and Turin cannot be definitively attributed to a particular artist or date. However, the *Portrait of Cosimo I de'*

Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany (Figure 26) can be properly classified because of its inscription along with its specific dimensions. This version, now in the chapel of the Palazzo Pitti, has the same inscription along the top of the painting as the Turin portrait. Cristofano dell'Altissimo (c. 1525-1605) painted “the *illustres* of the Medici house” between 1562 and 1565 in the same format including size as that requested by Paolo Giovio.²³⁴ Each of the 17 portraits is painted on a similar size panel (56/61 x 41/44 cm), and the sitter is consistently depicted from the shoulders up with his or her name inscribed in gold lettering along the top of the painting.²³⁵ Even though the Palazzo Pitti continues to describe Cosimo as the Duke of Tuscany in the painting’s title, he was not to receive this title until at least four years after this portrait was painted. This might lead one to believe that the painting was once dated after 1569 instead of its current dating of before 1565.

Part 4.3 The Type III Portrait of Cosimo

The last contemporary *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici* (Figure 27) attributed to Bronzino was likely developed around 1569 before Cosimo I became Grand Duke of Tuscany.²³⁶ The dating of the type III state portrait of Cosimo can be inferred for two reasons: Cosimo’s age appears to have advanced at least eight to ten years since his portrait at age 40, and there are not any grand ducal regalia present in this portrait. Cosimo’s beard is fuller and his hair recedes much more than in his previous portrait types. Cosimo no longer appears to be cross-eyed as he looks more directly at the viewer. Also, the Order of Golden Fleece is more prominently displayed in this type than any of the type I or type II versions. Cosimo holds a handkerchief in his left hand and his

arm rests in the same manner as the sitter's right arm in the type II portrait. The type III portraits vary in size while the sitter's bust portion of the paintings remains relatively the same as it does in the first two types. There are only five known versions²³⁷ of this type. An attribution to Bronzino for the unknown prototype or any of the extant versions seems less plausible than the attributions given to the examples from the first or second type.

Attributed to Alessandro Allori (1535-1607), the finest and largest (116 x 90 cm) version (Figure 27) of the third type sold at Christie's New York in the beginning of 2000.²³⁸ The bottom portion of the Christie's extended half-length version includes the addition of the handle of a sword and a portion of the sitter's right hand not present in smaller versions. Unlike the simple ribbon used in the previous types, the Golden Fleece hangs from a jewel-encrusted chain which is elaborately displayed around Cosimo's shoulders.

Unlike the type I portrait of Cosimo I, larger versions of both the type II and type III portrait were likely commissioned before the smaller versions. Furthermore, the finest example of each type also happens to have the largest dimensions. Beginning with the first type, each succeeding type had fewer versions and a lesser number of copies. Furthermore, each succeeding type has more elements in common with the other versions of the same type.

From the last quarter of the Cinquecento to the early years of the Seicento, the idea of Medici dynastic portraiture had reinforced the establishment and continuity of the newly acquired title, Grand Duke of Tuscany. A pivotal painted portrait from the Aulica Series is the portrait of *Cosimo I de' Medici* (Figure 28) by Giovanni Battista Naldini (1537-1591). This posthumous portrait painted in 1585 is the first dated portrait of

Cosimo with grand ducal regalia and likely served as the model for future grand ducal portraits of Cosimo and his sons.²³⁹ The sitter's physiognomic features appear to be derived from Cosimo's type II and type III portrait. The subject in this three-quarter-length portrait is seated and slightly faces to the viewer's left. This portrait features regalia such as the scepter and crown with the Florentine *giglio* (symbol of the lily) and the sitter being clothed in grand-ducal vestments. In the upper right corner, this painting features the Uffizi, the government offices which Cosimo commissioned Giorgio Vasari to design in 1560.²⁴⁰

Part 4.4 Cosimo il Vecchio and Cosimo I in the Palazzo Vecchio

The number of versions and copies likely decreased with each successive portrait type of Cosimo because the duke's patronage shifted from painted portraits to architecture and outdoor sculptures during the 1560s and 1570s. It was during this time that the duke's dynastic image was to be combined with the city of Florence, its people, and its history as a republic. In the case of the Palazzo Vecchio, Cosimo would commission Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574) to combine portraiture and architecture to illustrate this ideal. The entire palazzo project is too grand to develop here. Instead, our focus will be upon on the dynastic portraits of Cosimo il Vecchio and Cosimo I in order to demonstrate how Cosimo I used his family's history to attach his ancestors, himself, and his children directly to the Florentine tradition.

The narrative histories in the Apartment of Leo X on the first floor (1558-1563) of the Palazzo portray the history of Cosimo's family while pairing each patriarch of the Medici family with the deity who is portrayed in the room on the second floor (1556-59)

directly above.²⁴¹ The Room of Cosimo il Vecchio illustrates *Cosimo the Elder Returns from Exile* (1434) in the center of the ceiling. Surrounding the center scene of the ceiling, there are three narratives designed by Ammannati from the life of Cosimo: *Cosimo Surrounded by Artists and Men of Letters* above the *Portrait of Lorenzo de' Medici*, Cosimo's brother; *Cosimo Exiled from Florence* (1433) above the *Portrait of Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici*, Cosimo's father; and *Brunelleschi and Ghiberti Present to Cosimo their Model of the Church of San Lorenzo* (after 1421) above the *Portrait of Giovanni de' Medici* (1421-1463), Cosimo's second son.²⁴²

The room dedicated to Cosimo I on the first floor is paired with the room dedicated to Ceres on the second floor. Vasari relates the figure of Ceres "who created agriculture and the tools to work the earth" to Cosimo "who promoted the reclamation and cultivation of the marshland between Pisa and Livorno."²⁴³ The Room of Cosimo I has a large painting in the center of the ceiling to commemorate *Cosimo's Victory at Montemurlo* in 1537. In the same room, Vasari painted four ceiling *tondi* or roundels: *Duke Cosimo I de' Medici with His Architects, Engineers, and Sculptors* above the *Portrait of Francesco de' Medici*, Cosimo's eldest son; *Cosimo de' Medici is Elected Duke of Florence* above the *Double Portrait of Don Giovanni and Don Garzia de' Medici*, two of Cosimo's sons; *Cosimo Sends Reinforcements to Serravalle* above the *Portrait of Pietro de' Medici*, Cosimo's son; and *Cosimo Inspects the Fortifications on the Island of Elba* above the *Portrait of Eleanor of Toledo*, Cosimo's wife.²⁴⁴ Cosimo's room also has a series of paintings on the walls beginning from the wall adjoining the Room of Leo X and moving from left to right: *The Baptism of Francesco I* (1541), *The Capture of Porto Ercole* (1555), and *Restoration of the Castle of Florence* (1543); on the

next wall, *Francesco de' Medici Visits Spain* (or *Cosimo Meets the Emperor in Genoa*) (1543), *The Defeat of the Turks at Piombino* (1555), and *Duke Cosimo Receives the Order of the Golden Fleece in the Cathedral* (1545); on the next wall, *Cosimo I Enters Siena* (1557) and *The Birth of Francesco I* (1541); and on the final wall, *Eleanor of Toledo Leaves Naples* (1539), *The Route of Valdichiana* (1554), and *Eleanor of Toledo Arrives at Poggio a Caiano* (1539).²⁴⁵

The other rooms in the Apartment of Leo X are dedicated to other members of the Medici family, but examples of il Vecchio and Primo's portrait are still present. In the Chapel of Leo X, full-length portraits of *Cosimo Pater Patriae as St. Cosmas* and *Duke Cosimo as St. Damian* face one another with each sitter holding a book and a palm branch. Acting as pendants, these portraits link the banking dynasty of the Quattrocento to the political dynasty of the Cinquecento. On the window wall of the Room of Leo X, the full-figure portraits of *Cosimo I de' Medici* and *Alessandro de' Medici* portray the duke and his predecessor as classical military leaders who are protectors of their Cinquecento contemporaries.

In 1563, Vasari began to work on the *Sala Grande del Cinquecento*, also known as the Grand Salon. The salon was dedicated to the celebration of the Florentine republic and to the battles that helped preserve it. The walls have six large frescoes that illustrate the military battles and victories over Siena and Pisa. The compartmental ceiling consists of 39 small paintings that depict the *Great Episodes from the life of Cosimo I*. In the center of the ceiling, the large *tondo* is "the key and conclusion to the histories in this room"²⁴⁶ and the culmination of the decorations in the entire Palazzo Vecchio.

In the *Apotheosis of Duke Cosimo I de' Medici*, 1565 (Figure 29), the duke boldly portrays himself as *Divus Augustus* encircled by the *stemma* (coat of arms) of the Florentine guilds. The eight priors of the Signoria who originally elected him as the “legitimate successor” of the duchy are also represented.²⁴⁷ This painting is clearly political propaganda instigated by Cosimo who wished to connect with Republican tradition as well as gain support from the *popolo*²⁴⁸ in order to obtain a grander title. Cosimo is being crowned with the *corona civica* by “Fiorenza in the mythological guise of Flora” while Cosimo’s previous crown of the Florentine duchy is being removed into the background.²⁴⁹ It is widely accepted that this painting parallels the moment that Cosimo abdicates the duchy in 1564 to his son Francesco with the moment Octavian abdicated his powers to the Senate in 27 B.C.²⁵⁰ However, while Octavian would be appointed Emperor Augustus almost immediately following his abdication, Cosimo would have to wait five years after his abdication in 1564 before he gained the title of Grand Duke of Tuscany, and he would never gain the previously sought-after title of King.²⁵¹

Like their patron, Vasari and Bronzino were shrewd propagandists, “both in what [they] publicized, and what [they] suppressed.”²⁵² With the help of his court painters, Cosimo I de' Medici was able to legitimize and perpetuate the Medici grand duchy for 200 years.²⁵³ The proliferation and promulgation of the painted portraits of the Medici patriarchs helped contribute to the family’s success during the Cinquecento. This began with the Medici popes, their iconographers, and portraitists and continued with Cosimo I and portraitists such as Pontormo, Bronzino, and Vasari. Based on the instructions from Cosimo and his iconographers, the artists illustrated the dynastic continuity of the Medici

family while affirming the strength of the Florentine government over which Cosimo reigned. The portraits could be used as political gifts to other heads of state in order to help establish the duchy's international strength while the narratives inside the Palazzo Vecchio could provide political propaganda to the Florentines and confirm the presence of a strong central government. On August 27, 1569, Pope Pius V would grant Cosimo the title Grand Duke of Tuscany. After Cosimo's death in 1574, his son Francesco (1541-1587) would inherit this title and continue the Medici dynasty.

Conclusion

When the Medici bank was at its height during the 1450s, Medici portraiture was in its infancy. The contemporary portraits of Cosimo “il Vecchio” de' Medici numbered no more than one. Domestically, Cosimo had a major stake in the city of Florence. Along with the expansion of the international operations of the bank, Cosimo also became more involved with the international affairs of the Florentine Republic. It was during this time that Cosimo's sons, Piero and Giovanni, began to secure their own positions in Florence and the rest of the Italian peninsula. As demonstrated by the sculpted portraits by Mino da Fiesole and the narrative scene by Benozzo Gozzoli, the Medici first used portraiture paired with narrative in an attempt to assure dynastic continuity.

During the second half of the Quattrocento, the fiscal strength of the Medici bank decreased while the family's political strength increased. Beginning with Cosimo, the number of portraits representing each successive Medici patriarch had steadily increased. Each corresponding sitter had become less involved in the management of his family's bank and more involved in politics. After the Pazzi Conspiracy in 1478, Lorenzo il Magnifico became more politically secure than any of his predecessors. As a result, the portraits of Piero's sons, Lorenzo and Giuliano, had become even more likely to be commissioned for political purposes.

After the death of Lorenzo il Magnifico de' Medici, his son Piero “il Sfortunato” (the Unlucky) de' Medici assumed the responsibilities of the Medici patriarch. He only remained in power from 1492 until 1494. After Piero's exile from Florence, the Medici

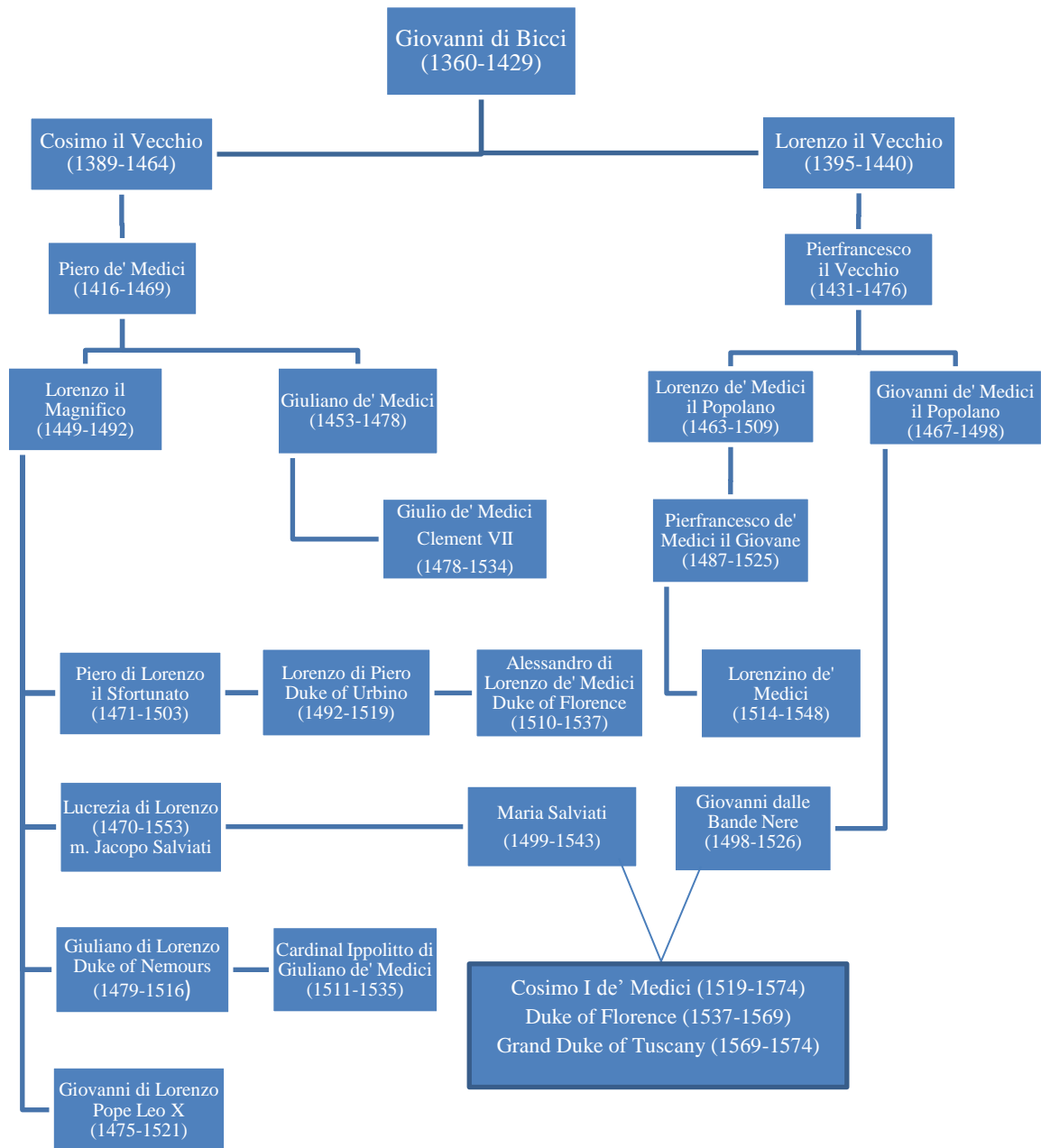
bank went into bankruptcy. There were not many contemporary portraits of Piero because he was not in a position of power for a significant amount of time.

For the same reason there are not many portraits of Piero il Sfortunato, state portraiture never really blossomed during the early Cinquecento because no specific Medici patriarch held power long enough to establish a strict portrait campaign with any particular artist. Giuliano di Lorenzo (1513-1516) and Lorenzo di Piero (1516-1519) were the *capi* of Florence for only three years each while Alessandro (1532-1537) was duke for only five years. Leo X (1513-1521) and Clement VII (1523-1534) were only able to cast their papal influence over Florence for eight years each. Contemporary portraits of all the aforementioned Medici exist. However, there are only one or two types for each sitter, and each type has a finite number of alternate versions or copies.

Political portraiture had begun in 1537 with a simple profile of Cosimo by Pontormo. Cosimo was in power for six years before his official state image, *Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor* (Figure 16), was painted by Bronzino in 1543. Based on the art historical evidence recapitulated in this thesis, copies of his portrait in armor were not produced until 1545. Within five years, dynastic portraiture first began to flourish for a contemporary Medici patriarch and his direct descendants. As time progressed, painted portrait types of Cosimo I expanded to include a type II portrait c. 1560, and a type III portrait c. 1569.²⁵⁴ During the 1560s, Cosimo fused his and his family's dynastic image with the city of Florence and its *popolo*. This is represented in Vasari's decorations in the Palazzo Vecchio and would be further affirmed by the outdoor portrait sculptures commissioned from the 1570s up until the end of the Cinquecento.

In this thesis I have attempted to demonstrate how portraiture, business, and politics evolved within the Medici family, focusing primarily on the period leading up to 1537, a period not much explored in scholarly works. Initially, Duke Cosimo I de' Medici did not have his portrait commissioned any more than his Cinquecento predecessors. As Cosimo's political strength and time in office increased, opportunities and occasions for the execution of portraits had also increased. As a result of the abundance of portraits of Cosimo I, most of the scholarly research had focused on the period after he became duke in 1537. Unanswered questions still remain concerning what purposes Medici portraiture served from 1450 until 1537. Many of these questions could be answered in a series of future monographs focusing on the political role of each Medici patriarch from Cosimo "il Vecchio" (1389-1464) to Duke Alessandro (1510-1537) and how each of these patriarchs conducted business with contemporary artists.

Appendix A



A limited family tree focusing on the Medici patriarch of the late quattrocento/early cinquecento as well as how Cosimo I descended from both branches of the family tree and became the hereditary duke of Florence. Illustrated by Mark Danford.

Appendix B*

(The paintings are listed in order of increasing size; with selected bibliography)

1. **Uffizi, Florence, Inv. 1890, No.855.** Tin, 15.8 by 12.2 cm.
2. **Villa Medicea di Poggio Imperiale, Florence, Inv. E. 3495 (Inv. P.I.19).** Canvas, 21.5 by 17 cm.
3. **Brussels, with Robert Finck (1967).** Panel, 24.1 by 17.8 cm.
4. **New York, A.A.A. Sale (1917).** Panel, 38.1 by 29.2 cm.
5. **New York, A.A.A. Sale (1924).** Unknown Support, 38.1 by 29.2 cm.
6. **South Walsham (Norwich), with The Masque (1961).** Unknown Support, 40.6 by 29.2 cm.
7. **New York, with Lilienfeld Galleries (c.1950).** Panel, 41.9 by 31.8 cm.
8. **Uffizi, Florence, Inv. dep. no.28.** Panel, 71 by 57 cm. By Bronzino, the earliest of the portraits in armour and the prototype of those in half-length format.
9. **Paris, Palais Galliera Sale (1975).** Panel, 71 by 59 cm.
10. **Paris, Galerie Georges Petit Sale (1904).** Panel, 73 by 58 cm.
11. **Rome, Coll. Prince Sforza Ruspoli.** Panel, 74 by 57 cm.
12. **Muzeum Narodowe, Poznan, Inv. MNP M05.** Panel, 74.5 by 58 cm.
13. **New York, Coll. Frederick Richmond.** Panel, 75.2 by 62.2 cm.
14. **Castagnola (Lugano), Coll. Thyssen-Bornemisza.** Panel, 76.5 by 59 cm.
15. **London, Sotheby's Sale (1939).** Canvas, 77.5 by 57.2 cm.
16. **Galleria Palatina (Palazzo Pitti), Florence, No.403.** Panel, 77.5 by 60.2 cm.
17. **London, Sotheby's Sale (1957).** Panel, 81.9 by 67.3 cm.
18. **Versailles, Despinoy Sale (1850).** Panel, 83 by 65 cm.
19. **Private Collection.** Panel, 86 by 67 cm. Prov.: Paolo Giovio, Florence and Borgovico, Como. [Now in New South Wales]
20. **Gemäldegaleri Alte Meister, Schloss Wilhelmshöhe, Kassel, No.GK834.** Panel, 94.8 by 65.2 cm.
21. **Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, No.08.262.** Panel, 95.9 by 70.5 cm.
22. **London, Christie's Sale (1906).** Panel, 99.1 by 76.2 cm.
23. **Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo (Ohio), No.13.232.** Panel, 101.6 by 77.8 cm.
24. **Uffizi, Florence, Inv. 1890, No.8739 (old exhibition No.1613).** Panel, 105 by 87 cm. [Now in the Museo degli Argenti]
25. **St. John's College, Annapolis (Maryland).** Panel, 110.5 by 80.6 cm.
26. **Pinacoteca Nazionale, Lucca, Inv. 70.** Panel, 181 by 103 cm.
- 27 and 28 (?). **Florence, Coll. Marchese Pucci (1911).** Support and dimensions unknown. (539)
- [29. **Sold at Christie's London 12/13/00 Sale 6405 Lot 80** Panel, 73 by 58.5 cm. From the Anhalt Ducal collections. Half-length without *impresa*.]

*Robert Simon, "Portrait of Cosimo I in Armour," *The Burlington Magazine* 125, no. 966 (September 1983): 539.

Notes

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- ¹ Marianna Jenkins, *The State Portrait: Its Origin and Evolution* (New York: The College Art Association of America, 1947).
- ² Dale Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 369.; Francis Ames-Lewis, *Cosimo 'il Vecchio' de' Medici, 1389-1464*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 1-2. (*The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, tr. D.M. Frame (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), ii. I.)
- ³ Raymond De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 47.
- ⁴ John M. Najemy, *A History of Florence 1200-1575* (Singapore: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 264.; Adrian W. B. Randolph, *Engaging Symbols: Gender, Politics, and Public Art in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 79.
- ⁵ Najemy, 246.
- ⁶ Mary Hollingsworth, *Patronage in Renaissance Italy: From 1400 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 1994), 48.; De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, 55.; Najemy, 264-265.
- ⁷ De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, 69.; Najemy, 265.
- ⁸ Randolph, 80.
- ⁹ De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, 24.
- ¹⁰ Najemy, 265. Taken from the records of 34 non-consecutive months for which records survive covering the period between November 1427 through 1428 and December 1430 to early 1433.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 266.
- ¹² De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, 28.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 55.
- ¹⁴ Tim Parks, *Medici Money: Banking, Metaphysics, and Art in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (London: Profile Books Ltd., 2005), 94.; De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, 55. This does not include the Naples branch which closed in 1425.
- ¹⁵ De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, 28.; Najemy, 273.
- ¹⁶ Najemy, 270-273.
- ¹⁷ Francesco Guicciardini, *The History of Florence*, trans. Mario Domandi (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 3.; Randolph, 80.
- ¹⁸ Najemy, 275.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*
- ²⁰ Guicciardini, 3-4.
- ²¹ Najemy, 288.
- ²² Guicciardini, 6-7.
- ²³ Nicolai Rubinstein, *The Government of Florence under the Medici* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 149.
- ²⁴ De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, 372.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 372.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 29-31.; Najemy, 311.
- ²⁷ De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, 29-31. I took a conservative average based on the total number of households multiplied by an average tax paid then dividing the Medici tax paid of 576 by the total tax paid. This does not factor in those who did not pay their taxes which would actually increase the Medici's share.
- ²⁸ De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, 236.
- ²⁹ Randolph, 125. "Despite his dominant position in Florentine politics Cosimo basically worked with the constitutional structures established by the pre-1434 regime."
- ³⁰ Najemy, 265.
- ³¹ *Ibid.* "Their names are known for [the periods] from November 1427 through 1428 and ... from December 1430 to early 1433: eighty-one citizens sat as Bank Officials in these two periods."
- ³² *Ibid.*, 266.
- ³³ Rubinstein, 272-362.

³⁴ Ibid., 146-147. According to Rubinstein, "during the same period, Domenico di Leonardo Buoninsegni was three times, Bernardo di Bartolomeo Gherardi and Manno di Giovanni di Temperano Manni were four times Gonfalonier of Justice. Luca Pitti was three times Gonfalonier between 1448 and 1458, and Ugolino di Niccoló Martelli between 1449 and 1458. Bernardo Gherardi was again Gonfalonier in 1459."

³⁵ Ibid., 81.

³⁶ Ibid., 55.(Fabroni, *Cosmi vita*, ii, p. 103.)

³⁷ Ibid., 56. "We find such men among the *Accoppiatori*; however, most of them belong to established families, some of considerable wealth, such as Acciaiuoli, the Capponi, the Guicciardini, and the Ridolfi. The Medici are only one of the families which profited from the special treatment afforded by the *Accoppiatori* to their relatives. But without more evidence to go on, they appear as 'representatives' of the inner circle of the régime rather than as tools used by Cosimo."

³⁸ Ibid., 148.

³⁹ Niccoló Machiavelli, *History of Florence and of the Affairs of Italy* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), 192-193. Machiavelli wrote this book between 1520 and 1525 at the request of Clement VII. He writes in the present tense leading us to believe that he was a contemporary of il Vecchio. However, Machiavelli was born five years after il Vecchio's death.

⁴⁰ Machiavelli, 312.

⁴¹ Rubinstein, 101-102. "A letter from Cosimo de' Medici written after Neri died at the end of 1454 mentions a plan to use 'extreme remedies' being mooted by leading Mediceans. Cosimo disapproved of it, both on account of such measures not being necessary and of their being dangerous for the city and the régime. Much the same suggestion, combined with an offer of help, was made to Cosimo by the envoy of the Duke of Milan, a few weeks after the councils had abolished in February 1455, elections *a mano*; to which Cosmo replied in the same vein that the situation in Florence was 'not as dangerous as he understood was believed' in Milan.," Machiavelli, 311. "[I]n the year 1455, Neri being dead, and the opposition party extinct, the government found a difficulty in resuming its authority. Cosmo's friends became anxious to abate his power. To restrain the disposition, Cosmo had the choice of two alternatives, either forcibly to assume the government, with the partisans he possessed, and drive out the others, or to allow the matter to take its course, and let his friends see they were not depriving him of power, but rather themselves. He chose the latter; for he well knew that at all events the purses being filled with the names of his own friends, he incurred no risk, and could take the government into his own hands whenever he found occasion."

⁴² Allison M. Brown, "The Humanist Portrait of Cosimo de' Medici, Pater Patriae," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 24, no.3/4 (July-December, 1961): 186-221.

⁴³ Ibid., 188-189.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 197-198. (Laur. MS. Plut. 54, 10, ff. 60v-73v)

⁴⁵ Ibid., 187,196.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 189.

⁴⁷ Kent, 374.

⁴⁸ Hollingsworth, 50-55.

⁴⁹ Francis Ames-Lewis,ed., *Cosimo Il Vecchio de Medici, 1389-1464*, "Fraternal Piety and Family Power" (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992),195-196.

⁵⁰ *Palle* literally translates to mean "balls" which refers to the red medical balls present on the Medici coat of arms. Many Medicean historians simply refer to the coat of arms as "*palle*" or the Medici *palle*.

⁵¹ Ibid., 55.

⁵² Kent, 376.

⁵³ Francis Ames-Lewis,ed., *Cosimo Il Vecchio de Medici, 1389-1464*, 256. (ASF *Carte Stroziane*, ser. III, filza 178, c. 48: Bartolomeo Scala wrote that Cosimo wished to be 'buried *in terra*, not in any lofty monument you shall embellish elsewhere. '; Guicciardini, 11.

⁵⁴ Due to materials such as porphyry and the mathematical intricacy applied by Verrocchio, many scholars would argue against the simplicity of Cosimo's tomb.

⁵⁵ Kent, 376. "cum summa atque amplissima beneficia in rem publicam florentinum bello et pace contulerit, semperque patrium suam omni pietate conservaverit, adieverit, auxerit eique magno usui et glorie fuerit,

atque usque ad supremum vite diem ipsam in omnibus que summum virum ac civem optimum decent, non secus ac pater familias propriam domum omni cura, studio, diligentiaque gubernarit pro eius maximis virtutibus beneficia et pietas...,” ASF, Provv. Reg., 155m., 261v-263v, published McKillop, “Dante and *Lumen Christi*,” 291-301, especially 292. See also Brown, “Humanist Portrait of Cosimo.”

⁵⁶ Karla Langedijk, *The Portraits of the Medici* (Firenze: Studio per Edizioni Scelte, 1981), 2: 999.

⁵⁷ Ibid. After Masaccio, *Portrait of Giovanni di Bicci de Medici*, Florence, Uffizi, Inv. 1890, no. 469.

Tempera on wood, arch 73 x 75 cm Inscr. on separate « predella »: Johanes Bicci de Medicis. Bust three-quarters to left, dressed in red. In the Guardaroba inventory of 1553 as: «...uno mezzo tondo pittovi Giovanni de’ Medici, con cornice dorata. » “The unusual form is the result of a cutting away of a figure on the left, the shoulder of which is still visible.”

⁵⁸ Fra Angelico, *Deposition from the Cross*, c. 1432-1434. Museo di San Marco. Original Altarpiece for the Sacristy in Santa Trinita; Gentile da Fabriano, *Adoration of the Magi*, c. 1420. Uffizi. Original Altarpiece for the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Trinita.

⁵⁹ Francis Ames-Lewis, “Veneziano and the Medici,” *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, 21. Bd. (1979): 67-90. Ames-Lewis suggested that “three portraits in the tondo can be linked with the presence in Ferrara in 1438 of Cosimo de’ Medici and his two sons.”

⁶⁰ Ibid., 67.

⁶¹ Hollingsworth, 48-49.

⁶² Francis Ames-Lewis, ed., *Cosimo Il Vecchio de Medici, 1389-1464*, 228.

⁶³ Ibid., 223-242; Diane Cole Ahl, *Benozzo Gozzoli* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 88-110.; Langedijk, *The Portraits of the Medici*.; Author’s recording from Laboratorio di Lorenzo Consultazione Multimedia, Palazzo Medici Riccardi, Florence. Recorded on 7/31/2012.

⁶⁴ Author’s recording from Laboratorio di Lorenzo Consultazione Multimedia, Palazzo Medici Riccardi, Florence. Recorded on 7/31/2012.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Kent, 374. “All the permanent images of the Magi commissioned by the Medici in Cosimo’s lifetime were essentially for private or domestic contemplation.”

⁶⁷ Keith Christiansen and Stefan Weppelman, ed., *The Renaissance Portrait: From Donatello to Bellini* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), 90-98; Rab Hatfield, “Five Early Renaissance Portraits,” *The Art Bulletin* 47, no. 3 (September 1965): 315-334.

⁶⁸ Christiansen, 96.; Fra Filippo Lippi, *Portrait of a Woman and a Man at a Casement*, c. 1440-1444.

Metropolitan Museum of Art; <http://collection.chrysler.org> Attributed to Domenico Veneziano, *Portrait of Michele Oliveri*, c. 1440-1455. Chrysler Museum of Art.

⁶⁹ Both portraits currently reside in the Bargello; Christiansen, 13-15. Both Sculptures were eventually over doors in the Palazzo Medici; Langedijk, 2:1004-1005. The inventory of the estate of Lorenzo il Magnifico, 1492, lists: «Una testa di marmo sopra l’uscio dell’ anticamera di ritievo rirratta al natural di Giovanni di Cosimo de’ Medici » It seems that the busts of Piero and of Giovanni remained closely together through the age ages since, as late as the 18th century, they were together in the corridoio of the Uffizi (see Piero no. 12); Langedijk, 2:1337. In the estate of Lorenzo il Magnifico, 1492, as: « Una testa di marmo sopra l’uscio dell’anticamera della imprompta di Piero di Cosimo»

⁷⁰ Langedijk, 1:17-18.; Christiansen, 166-168.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Langedijk, 1:17-18.

⁷³ Christiansen, 13-15.

⁷⁴ Andrew Butterfield, *The Sculptures of Andrea del Verrocchio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 4.

⁷⁵ Christiansen, 165.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 166. (Spallanzani and Gaeta Bertela 1992, pp.17,27,72). “This remarkable difference suggests that the marble portrait of Cosimo was a modest work not unlike the relief in Berlin.” (Langedijk 1981-87, vol. 1 [1981], p.17, 396; Caglioti in Florence 1992a, p.40).

⁷⁷ Christiansen, 166.

⁷⁸ Butterfield, 12-18. The author suggests the possibility of Verrocchio working for Rossellino's workshop as early as the late 1450s on the lunette detail of the *Lavabo* in San Lorenzo in Florence. The author also mentions the lack of physiognomic detail in Rossellino's portraits of Chellini and Palmieri compared to the portrait of Francesco Sassetti from 1464 which he attributes to Verrocchio.

⁷⁹ Langedijk, 1:15. "The title of honour *Pater Patriae* mentioned on both of the [medals] date them after 16 March 1465 and makes it probable that the conferring of that title was the reason for the striking of the medal."

⁸⁰ John Graham Pollard, *Renaissance Medals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1:297. According to Pollard, it was in a manuscript of Cicero.; Christiansen, 164. According to Christiansen it was on the page of the manuscript of Aristotle's works. (Biblioteca Laurenziana, Florence, MS Plut. 71,7; Langedijk 1981-87, vol. 1 [1981], pp. 15-16, 390-91, no. 15).

⁸¹ Pollard, 297.

⁸² Ibid., 296.

⁸³ Ibid., 296-298.

⁸⁴ Randolph, 85.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 89. The 1492 inventory of the Palazzo Medici records 'una medaglia sciolta, d'oro, schulto la testa di Cosimo.'

⁸⁶ Francis Ames-Lewis, ed., *The Early Medici and their Artists* (East Sussex: Birbeck College, University of London Department of History of Art, 1995), 170. Research has uncovered no member of the immediate family who could be identified with the sitter. Ronald Lightbown suggested that the sitter could be a godson of Cosimo. It is also possible that the sitter is simply a partisan of the Medici, proclaiming his allegiance to the family.; Randolph, 100. Randolph stated that "some art historians have suggested that the painting portrays the medalist – variously identified as Niccolò Fiorentino, Cristoforo di Geremia, and Bertoldo di Giovanni – proudly presenting his work."

⁸⁷ According to Kent, 371. "In the mid-1450s...Raymond de Roover located the beginning of its decline precisely in this period, coinciding closely with the decline of Cosimo's health and powers." (See De Roover, *Rise and Decline*; Rubinstein, *Government of Florence*; Clarke, *Power and Patronage*)

⁸⁸ As De Roover stated, 361. "Occupied with affairs of state, Piero di Cosimo had little time to devote to the management of the Medici bank and had to leave the conduct of business to his ministro, Francesco di Tommaso Sassetti (1421-1490). Sassetti had been called to Florence in 1459 to help Giovanni di Cosimo (1421-1463) in the discharge of his duties as general manager. Upon Giovanni's death, the whole burden fell upon Sassetti."

⁸⁹ Rubinstein, 144.

⁹⁰ De Roover, 361.; According to Randolph, 101. "Lorenzo spent his entire life in preparation to take over the family business of banking and politics. During his subsequent twenty-three years in power, he was to demonstrate more talent for the latter than for the former."

⁹¹ Randolph, 83.

⁹² Kent, 370.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Rubinstein, 253.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 260 The ambassador wrote this in a letter shortly after Lorenzo's death.

⁹⁷ De Roover, 363-364. According to Machiavelli, "because of his mismanagement of his agents (*il disordine de suoi ministri*) who conducted the business as if they were princes and not merely private persons, much of his wealth was lost in places abroad; as a result, the State had to support him with large sums of money."

⁹⁸ Hollingsworth, 80.

⁹⁹ Hollingsworth, 50.; De Roover, 371.

¹⁰⁰ Francis Ames-Lewis, ed., *The Early Medici and their Artists*, 24.

¹⁰¹ Kurt W. Forster, "The Political Ideology and History in the Portraits of Cosimo I de' Medici," (*Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 15. Bd. H. 1), 1971: 65-104.

¹⁰² Francis Ames-Lewis, ed., *The Early Medici and their Artists*, 170.

- ¹⁰³ 1464 – The death of Cosimo; 1466 – The Diotisalvi Neroni conspiracy; 1469 – The death of Piero; 1470 – Bernardo Nardi conspiracy; 1472 – Revolt in Volterra; and in 1478 – The Pazzi Conspiracy
- ¹⁰⁴ Lightbown, 65-66.
- ¹⁰⁵ Hollingsworth, 76-77.
- ¹⁰⁶ Lightbown, 68.; Francis Ames-Lewis, ed., *The Early Medici and their Artists*, 170-171.; Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, & Architects*, 3:249-250.
- ¹⁰⁷ Lightbown, 68.; Vasari, 3:249-250.
- ¹⁰⁸ Hollingsworth, 76-77.
- ¹⁰⁹ Lightbown, 65-66.
- ¹¹⁰ Butterfield, 5.; Christiansen, 9-10.
- ¹¹¹ Christiansen, "Understanding Renaissance Portraiture," 9-10.
- ¹¹² Langedijk, 1:27.
- ¹¹³ *Portrait of Piero de' Medici*, c. 1478 Panel, 51x37 cm Destroyed [formerly Museo Civico Gaetano Filangieri, Naples]
- ¹¹⁴ Lightbown, 58. There is evidence that Botticelli did paint posthumous portraits of the senior line of the Medici, an inventory of 1560 records in the apartments of Duke Cosimo I de' Medici in Palazzo Vecchio 'a portrait of Cosimo il Vecchio by the hand of Sandro Botticelli, in a gilt frame.'
- ¹¹⁵ Christiansen, 175-177.
- ¹¹⁶ Ibid. (Zollner 2005, p.63)
- ¹¹⁷ Ibid. "It should be noted that there is a fourth portrait in the series, previously in Milan and now in American private collection [see Vertova 1991], which does not date from the fifteenth century and is often considered a forgery."; Langedijk, 1:33. Botticelli's portrait has survived in several versions, one of which gives a profile to the left (Crespi collection, Milan).
- ¹¹⁸ Ibid. "It been assumed (See details regarding the glazes used for the flesh tone) that the Berlin painting preceded the other two (Boskovits in Boskovits and Brown 2003, pp.170-75). Yet, it must be noted that in the Washington variant, with its larger format, the artist appears to have been especially concerned with emphasizing the figure's sculptural qualities. Of course, it is not impossible that the larger Washington portrait, with its more complex iconography, was the prototype for the series, even though the Berlin portrait was invested with more detailed treatment. It is also conceivable that the original was an unknown work that served as the pattern for all three."
- ¹¹⁹ Lightbown, 60-61. (see Poliziano 1958, p.63)
- ¹²⁰ Christiansen, 175-177.
- ¹²¹ Langedijk, 1:33.; National Gallery of Art Curatorial File 1952.5.56 (Exhibition description of painting)
- ¹²² Christiansen, 175.
- ¹²³ National Gallery of Art Curatorial File 1952.5.56 (Exhibition description of painting)
- ¹²⁴ Lightbown, 65.
- ¹²⁵ Christiansen, 175-177.
- ¹²⁶ Langedijk, 1:34; National Gallery of Art Curatorial File 1937.1.127 (Exhibition description of sculpture); Christiansen 172-173. Giuliano was 22 years old. "This event, recorded in many letters...inspired Angelo Poliziano, among others, to write his *Stanze per la Giostra del Magnifico Giuliano* (Stanzas on the Tournament [or joust] of the Magnificent Giuliano)."
- ¹²⁷ National Gallery of Art Curatorial File 1943.4.92 - Proposed change of attribution and date, 1996.
- ¹²⁸ Ibid., Proposed change of attribution and date, 1996. (Vasari-Milanesi 3, pp. 373-375) According to Vasari, "Verrocchio provided 'aiuto ed ordine' (help and supervision) to the wax sculpture specialist Orsino Benintendi." Vasari explains that these ex-voto effigies, known as voti, customarily employed wax casts from nature for the faces, hands and feet. In Verrocchio's 1495 list of works produced for the Medici, 20 portrait masks of Lorenzo made from nature are mentioned 'Ventj maschere ritratte al naturale' (Seymour 1971, p. 175).
- ¹²⁹ Ibid.
- ¹³⁰ Langedijk, 1:29.
- ¹³¹ Ibid., 1:30.
- ¹³² De Roover, 369-370.; Hollingsworth, 80-84.

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- ¹³³ Langedijk, 1:35. "Giovanni received the tonsure on 1 June 1483, so in view of the fact that the fresco still shows him without it, taken in conjunction with the ages of the children, it was probably painted in the first half of 1483."
- ¹³⁴ De Roover, 369-370.
- ¹³⁵ Ibid.
- ¹³⁶ Guicciardini, 292-307.
- ¹³⁷ Ibid. For the period between 1494 and 1508.
- ¹³⁸ Ibid., 295-297.
- ¹³⁹ Ibid, 298.
- ¹⁴⁰ Lucca Landucci, *A Florentine Diary: From 1450 to 1516* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons LTD, 1927), 260.; Hollingsworth, 92.
- ¹⁴¹ Lucca Landucci, 278.
- ¹⁴² There are numerous sources about the Medici and these highly confusing times regarding which Medici did what. From 1512 to 1519 See Najemy, 341-345; Guicciardini, 293-307; Lucca Landucci, 259-288.; Hollingsworth, 92. After 1519 See Sparrow, 164. "On Lorenzo's death in 1519, the only living legitimate male member of his branch of family, descended through the male line, was his uncle Giovanni, second son of il Magnifico. Giovanni could not himself assume the government of Florence, having become Pope (with the title of Leo X) six years before; and Lorenzo's reputed son Alessandro was only seven or eight years old; the Pope therefore entrusted the government of the city to Lorenzo's first cousin (once removed), Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, natural son of il Magnifico's brother Giuliano. Giulio, when he himself became Pope (with the title of Clement VII) in 1523, exercised power over Florence through Cardinal Silvio Passerini, whom he put in charge of two Medici youths who had claims to the succession- Alessandro, now a boy of eleven or twelve, and his cousin Ippolito."
- ¹⁴³ John Pope-Hennessy, *Raphael* (New York: New York University Press, 1970), 92-94.
- ¹⁴⁴ George Hersey, *High Renaissance Art in St. Peter's and the Vatican* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 130.
- ¹⁴⁵ John Pope-Hennessy, *Raphael* (New York: New York University Press, 1970), 115. Before Julius died, Raphael was commissioned for the fresco scenes in the next room of the Stanze, the *Stanza d'Eliodoro* (Papal Audience Chamber). Although Della Rovere symbolism can be seen throughout the room, Medici symbolism is also introduced into this room. Leo the Great is represented by "Pope Leo X, who chose to make his first formal appearance in Rome on the feast of St. Leo, 11 April 1513" on horseback. George Hersey, *High Renaissance Art in St. Peter's and the Vatican* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 152. While the *Segnatura* and *Eliodoro* rooms focus on a variety of subjects from different periods, the *Stanza dell'Incendio* (1514-1517) focuses exclusively on popes named Leo from the half-century 800-849.; Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty and Destiny In Medici Art*, 30. During this time, Pope Leo X also commissioned Raphael to design the tapestries which were to be hung in the Sistine Chapel. Each tapestry contains a border intended to look like a bronze relief which tells a story of the Medici family and their return to Florence as well as Leo's entrance into Rome. In these tapestries, "laurel is used emblematically with other Leonine *imprese* to underscore the theme of Return."; Langedijk, 1:43-44.
- ¹⁴⁶ Langedijk, 1:42-44.
- ¹⁴⁷ Vasari, 4: 231-232. "For this work the Pope was pleased to reward him very richly; and the picture is still to be seen in Florence, in the guardaroba of the Duke." The papal portrait along with the portraits of Lorenzo and Giuliano were known to be in the possession of Ottaviano de' Medici (1484-1546) before the duke acquired it.
- ¹⁴⁸ Janet Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty and Destiny In Medici Art*, 244-245.
- ¹⁴⁹ Vasari, 4:232.
- ¹⁵⁰ Hersey, 50-52.
- ¹⁵¹ Metropolitan Museum of Art Curatorial File 49.4.12; Also see note 141.
- ¹⁵² Metropolitan Museum of Art Curatorial File 49.4.12.
- ¹⁵³ Ibid. There are two copies in the Uffizi: one by Alessandro Allori and another by Pietro Candido (Serie Aulica) as well as another copy in Florence by dell'Altissimo at Poggio Imperiale. (Langedijk 1047-8)
- ¹⁵⁴ Vasari, 4:232.; Langedijk, 1:57.

¹⁵⁵ <http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/paintings/raffaello-sanzio-called-raphael-portrait-of-lorenzo-4942823-details.aspx> From the Ira Spanierman collection, Christie's, London Sale 7413/Lot 91 July 5, 2007.

¹⁵⁶ James H. Beck, "Raphael and Medici State Portraits," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 38, no. 2 (1975): 128.

¹⁵⁷ Beck, 127-144; Konrad Oberhuber, "Raphael and the State Portrait-II: The Portrait of Lorenzo de' Medici," *Burlington Magazine* 113, no. 821 (August, 1971): 436-443. See these two references regarding the early cinquecento "State Portrait."

¹⁵⁸ During the first year (1512), Julius II held the papacy. During the period of 1522 to 1523, Adrian VI held the papacy. While Clement held the Papacy from 1523 until 1534, he lost control of Florence from 1527 until 1530 for reasons stemming from the Sack of Rome

¹⁵⁹ See note 141. Cardinal Passerini likely handled politics while Ottaviano likely handled the art commissions.

¹⁶⁰ It has also been suggested that Alessandro was the illegitimate son of Clement VII but this is still only speculation and more research is needed to validate such a claim.

¹⁶¹ Forster, 69.

¹⁶² Vasari, 5:103-104.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 1:68.; Vasari, 7:162.

¹⁶⁵ Christiansen, 166. "Pontormo... chose to represent him not in pure profile but in a view that is closer to that of the Berlin relief than it is to the silhouette presented in the medal (although the latter is generally regarded in the literature as the model for the painting; see most recently pollard 2007, vol. 1, p296). Apparently, Pontormo had access to that type transmitted in the marble portrait, confirming both the direct ties between the Berlin relief and early Medici patronage and its value as a historical document."

¹⁶⁶ See note 150.

¹⁶⁷ Hall, 190. The laurel bush was also an *impresa* of Lorenzo "il Magnifico" with the motto 'Ita ut virtus.'

¹⁶⁸ Janet Cox-Rearick, *The Drawings of Pontormo* (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1981) 1:149. Cox-Rearick suggests the cut-off branch represents Lorenzo di Piero's death in 1519. "Lorenzino was descended from Cosimo il Vecchio in a direct line through Piero il Gottoso, Lorenzo il Magnifico, and his father, Piero. The laurel branch at the left of the painting is the Medici *broncone*, its flourishing right side representing the line of family then in power, the other side signifying the side of the family who no longer ruled."

¹⁶⁹ John Sparrow, "Pontormo's Cosimo II Vecchio, A New Dating," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 30 (1967): 167-169. Sparrow argues against Cox-Rearick and suggests that the cut-off branch represents the death of Alessandro in 1537. "First, a laurel-branch signifying a family (or side of a family) 'who no longer ruled' should surely be a *withered* branch cut off quick. Second, there was not in fact in existence in 1518-19 (or in 1513 for that matter) as a glance at the family tree will show a branch or 'side' of the Medici family that 'no longer ruled' and that could therefore have been represented appropriately either by a withered or by a cut-off branch of laurel: Lorenzo continued the succession of the only branch of the family that had ever wielded power in Florence... The line of Cosimo il Vecchio became extinct with the murder of Alessandro. This quotation, then, while inappropriate to the circumstances of Lorenzo's rule, might very well have served as a motto for Cosimo I, at or soon after his accession to power in 1537."

¹⁷⁰ Langedijk, 1:387. The new branch may stand for the person of the young Ippolito (Winner), or for the future Cosimo I, son of Maria Salviati and Giovanni delle Bande Nere, born on 13 July 1519.; Cox-Rearick, *The Drawings of Pontormo*.; Sparrow.

¹⁷¹ Vasari, 7:162.

¹⁷² Ibid., 7:162-169. Cardinal Giulio (future Clement VII) spent the majority of his time in Rome. Also see note 141 and 165. Ottaviano is listed on the Medici family tree on the side of Cosimo 'il Vecchio' because of his marriage to Francesca Salviati. This leads me to believe that he probably descended from the Lorenzo 'il Vecchio' branch of the family.

¹⁷³ Lorenzo aka Lorenzaccio is credited with murdering Alessandro in 1537 and may have had a claim to the duchy had he not fled the city after the incident.

¹⁷⁴ Langedijk, 1:387. The motto: «When one branch is broken off, the other is not deficient », may refer to different family situations.; Salvatore Nigro, *Pontormo: Painting and Frescoes* (New York: Henry N. Abrams, Inc., 1994), 140. “WHEN ONE IS TORN OFF, THERE IS NO LACK OF ANOTHER” Most historians use Langedijk’s translation from the *Aeneid* but the branch was actually withdrawn or culled (AVVLSO) and not “broken off” or “torn off.” This point is corroborated by simply reading the poem or viewing the painting itself.

¹⁷⁵ Virgil, *Aeneid*, tr. Theodore C. Williams (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1910), 6:139-143.

¹⁷⁶ Cox-Rearick, *The Drawings of Pontormo*, 1:150. Five studies have survived.

¹⁷⁷ Forster, 67-68.; Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Pontormo, Bronzini, and the Medici* (Philadelphia: Publishing Department of Philadelphia Museum of Art 2004), 58.

¹⁷⁸ Vasari, 7:169.; Joseph Rishel, “Medici Portraits,” *Bulletin Philadelphia Museum of Art* 81, no. 548 (Fall 1985): 12.

¹⁷⁹ Rishel, 12.

¹⁸⁰ Strehlke, 7.; Najemy, 454.

¹⁸¹ Lorne Campbell, *Renaissance Portraits: European Portrait-Painting in the 14th, 15th, and 16th Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 129-132.

¹⁸² Ibid. “Vasari wrote a letter in which he explained the meaning of his picture. Having been permitted to paint ‘an invention according to my caprice’, he felt obliged to send a written account of the iconography. The duke’s armour is the prince’s mirror, ‘such that his people may be able, in the actions of their lives, to reflect themselves in him’; he is fully armed to show that he is prepared, for love of his country, to defend all public and private causes. The ruins behind him refer to the siege of Florence in 1530, while he faces a view of the city in serene prosperity. The round seat, without beginning or end, shows that his reign is perpetual. It has three legs, three being the perfect number, and they are his people, who have no limbs: they need none, as they are guided by their ruler. The chair legs end in lions’ paws referring to the lion of Florence. The mask, bridled by bands, stands for Volubility, and shows that the unstable populace is kept under control from the fortress and by the love that the people bear to the duke. The red drapery represents the blood shed by the enemies of the Medici family; the part covering Alessandro’s leg shows that the Medici themselves have shed blood. The dead branch of laurel sprouting forth a new, straight shoot is the Medici dynasty regenerated in the person of Alessandro. The flaming helmet, placed on the ground, is eternal peace, proceeding from the prince’s head by his good government and overwhelming his people with joy and love. Vasari was realistic enough to admit that ‘because of the obscurity of the thing, many would not understand it’. He therefore appended six lines of explanatory Latin verse which a friend had composed.”

¹⁸³ Vasari, 7: 173-174.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.; Rishel, 12. “Vasari stated that Pontormo executed the duke’s portrait at about the time he was coloring *Venus and Cupid* in the fall 1534 or the spring of 1535.”

¹⁸⁵ Philadelphia Museum of Art Curatorial File Inv. No. 2086

¹⁸⁶ The most likely heirs to the ducal crown (see appendix A) were Cardinal Ippolito di Giuliano di Lorenzo de’ Medici (1511-1535), five generations from Giovanni di Bicci on Lorenzo il Vecchio’s side of the family and Lorenzino di Pierfrancesco ‘il Giovane’ de’ Medici (1514-1548), five generations from Giovanni di Bicci on Cosimo il Vecchio’s side of the family. Alessandro himself was either five or six generations from Giovanni di Bicci on Cosimo il Vecchio’s side depending on whether his father was Clement VII or Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino.

¹⁸⁷ Rishel, 12-13. (See Benedetto Varchi) “In a written confession dated June 1535, the bishop [Giovanni Battista Cibo] confirmed that Ippolito had asked him to kill Alessandro some months before in Rome...Only two months after the discovery of the gunpowder plot Ippolito was dead, supposedly poisoned by one of Alessandro’s agents. With his main adversary out of the picture, the duke had no trouble retaining power. However, within a year and a half, on the night of Epiphany in 1537, Alessandro was murdered by his distant cousin Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco de’ Medici, known as Lorenzino... Lorenzo was protected for a time by Alessandro’s half-sister Caterina, queen of France, and it was ten years before Cosimo’s henchmen avenged the murder by killing him in Venice.”

¹⁸⁸ Peter Bondanella, *Francesco Guicciardini* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1976), 24.

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- ¹⁸⁹ Gabrielle Langdon, *Medici Women: Portraits of Power, Love, and Betrayal from the Court of Duke Cosimo I* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 37. As described by Florentine historian, Benedetto Varchi (c.1502-1565).
- ¹⁹⁰ S. J. Freedberg, *Painting in Italy 1500 to 1600* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1983), 432.
- ¹⁹¹ Currently in restoration at Opificio delle Pietre Dure. Contact giuliana.innocenti@beniclturale.it for analisi chimiche.
- ¹⁹² Strehlke, 126.
- ¹⁹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁹⁴ Christina Acidini Luchinat, *The Medici, Michelangelo, and the Art of the Late Renaissance Florence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 35.
- ¹⁹⁵ Langdon, 34.
- ¹⁹⁶ Forster, 100-101. Addressing Michelangelo and Pontormo.
- ¹⁹⁷ Phillip Jacks, ed., *Vasari's Florence: Artists and Literati at the Medicean Court* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998): 44.
- ¹⁹⁸ Vasari, 7:176-182.
- ¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 10:3.
- ²⁰⁰ Ibid.
- ²⁰¹ Henk Th. Van Veen, *Cosimo I de' Medici and His Self-representation in Florentine Art and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1.
- ²⁰² Philadelphia Museum of Art Curatorial File 1950-86-1
- ²⁰³ Maurice Brock, *Bronzino* (Paris: Flammarion, 2002), 171-174, 308-309. However, Bronzino does paint an allegorical painting of Cosimo I's son, Giovanni as *St. John the Baptist*, 1560-1561. ; Strehlke, 130-132.
- ²⁰⁴ Rishel, 17-20.
- ²⁰⁵ Ibid., 22.
- ²⁰⁶ Strehlke, 130-132.
- ²⁰⁷ Carlo Falciani and Antonio Natali, eds., *Bronzino* (Firenze: Mandragora, 2010), 132, 200.
- ²⁰⁸ Brock, 78.
- ²⁰⁹ Robert Simon, "Portrait of Cosimo I in Armour," *The Burlington Magazine* 125, no. 966 (September 1983): 535.
- ²¹⁰ Ibid. "He carries no offensive weaponry and appears bare-headed; the gesture of his hand resting on the helmet is passive in nature. ...Cosimo achieved an important political victory by non-military means...presents a man capable of battle, but triumphing through peaceful means...For Cosimo, the omission of a sword perhaps acknowledging subordination to the Emperor...For whereas Titian leaves no doubt as to Charles's power and his ability to use it, Bronzino seems to portray his subject as fearful as he is fearsome."
- ²¹¹ Brock, 156. The reference to "First Typology" and "*regola* (rule) over *licenza* (license)" is found in other texts but commonly referred to by Brock.
- ²¹² Falciani, 92.
- ²¹³ Simon, "Portrait of Cosimo I in Armour," 528. Critics cited the half-length example in the Pitti (No.16) as autograph, while in their respective monographs on Bronzino Schulze considered the version at Kassel (No.20) primary and McComb held the variant in the Metropolitan Museum in New York (No.21) to be the most likely archetype. Gamba, in 1925, had meanwhile introduced as '*prototipo originale*' the half-length version now exhibited in the Tribuna of the Uffizi (No.8), that had recently been recovered from the Medici villa at Castello...In the broadest survey so far, Karla Langedijk's *The portraits of the Medici*, 13 versions of the portrait are listed, of which three (Nos. 12, 16, and 20) are considered autograph.
- ²¹⁴ Vasari, 10:6. "The Lord Duke, having seen from these and other works the excellence of this painter, and that it was his particular and peculiar field to portray from life with the greatest diligence that could be imagined, caused him to paint a portrait of himself, at that time a young man, fully clad in bright armour, and with one hand upon his helmet." For information regarding the prototype see Baccheschi; Brock; Falciani; Langedijk; Pilliod, *Pontormo Bronzino Allori*; Strehlke; Simon, "Portrait of Cosimo I in Armour" or "Blessed Be the Hand of Bronzino: Portrait of Cosimo I in Armour."
- ²¹⁵ Simon, "Portrait of Cosimo I in Armour," 531.

²¹⁶ Simon, "Portrait of Cosimo I in Armour," 531-532.

²¹⁷ Linda Susan Klinger, *The Portrait Collection of Paolo Giovio* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International. Ph.D diss., Princeton University, January 1991), 535-36. According to a letter dated 30th of July 1546 from Paolo Giovio in Rome to Pier Francesco Riccio in Florence, Bronzino began working on a portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in 1545. He praises the work of Bronzino's *Portrait of Cosimo I in armour* and asks the majordomo to thank the duke. Signor mio Honorando. Il mirabile ritratto di sua eccellenza e piaciuto summamente alli galonhuomini di questa Corte, et giudicato finissimo da pittori, Dil che mi trouo obligato molto al signor Duca, ausando vostra signori ache nelle tre parti delle quarto mi ha rappresentato l'effigio del brauissimo signor Giouanni suo Padre. Della quale ane ho freschissima memoria quanto huomo che uiua Et benedetta sia la mano di Bronzino qual mi pare che auanzi quella del Pontorni suo maestro. Et cosi vostra signoria ne ringratiera in mio nome sua excellenza Hauero ben anche caro intender se'l Donj con la sua diligenza hauera fatto piantar la stampa, et se gli sara speranza che costi si stampa la vita del magnanimo Leone. Così resto baciando la mano a vostra signoria Di Roma il xxx di luglio 1546 D.V.S.; Simon, "Blessed Be the Hand of Bronzino: Portrait of Cosimo I in Armour," 387-388.; For provenance see <http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/78.1996/>

²¹⁸ Simon, "Portrait of Cosimo I in Armour," 528.; Giovio, (Basel, 1575).

²¹⁹ Simon, "Portrait of Cosimo I in Armour," 531-532.

²²⁰ Toledo Museum of Art Curatorial File 1913.232; Langedijk, 1:413.

²²¹ Toledo Museum of Art Curatorial File 1913.232. According to Luciano Berti, former Director of the Uffizi as documented by memo from TMA curator, Mr. Hutton for documentary file.

²²² Ibid. According to the Conservation Report, "An incised line along the perimeter of the Knight of the Order of the Golden Fleece ribbon was uncovered during cleaning." The ribbon is transparent and clearly painted over the completed armor "to bring the portrait up to date."

²²³ Ibid. "A pentimento is discernible in the top olive branch area."

²²⁴ See notes 175-182 regarding Medici laurel; Regarding olive branch: See Toledo Museum of Art Curatorial File 1913.232 (Memo 7/25/00 from Giancarlo Fiorenza, assistant curator of European paintings at TMA to Dr. Fredericksen at the Getty); Simon, "Portrait of Cosimo I in Armour," 534.

²²⁵ Metropolitan Museum of Art Curatorial File 08.262

²²⁶ The three-quarter-length zone refers to the expanded area of the painting which is outside the frame of the Uffizi prototype including the additional areas on all four sides of the painting but usually focusing on the bottom and the right side of the painting.

²²⁷ Metropolitan Museum of Art Curatorial File 08.262

²²⁸ Vasari, 8:173-184.

²²⁹ See Note 217.

²³⁰ Falciani, 142. Forster, 82. restoring – if not exactly in territory, at least in number – the *dodice prime colonie degli Etrusci*.

²³¹ Vasari, 10:9.

²³² Brock, 159.; Baccheschi, 103-104.

²³³ Falciani, 142.

²³⁴ Falciani, 144.

²³⁵ Langedijk, 1:108.

²³⁶ Patrizia Vezzosi, *Ti Presento la Famiglia Medici* (Firenze: Alinea Editrice, 2009), 40. The grand ducal crown of Tuscany was awarded to Cosimo by Pope Pius V on 27 August 1569.; Langedijk, 1:419-420. Langedijk mentions a version by Bronzino's workshop and three copies.

²³⁷ <http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/inv1890/scheda.asp#> A fifth version not mentioned by Langedijk (See note 244) is listed in the Uffizi 1890 Inventory No. 5150.

²³⁸ <http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/lot/circle-of-angelo-di-cosimo-allori-il-1710735-details.aspx?pos=121&intObjectID=1710735&sid=> (Sale 9318/Lot 183)

²³⁹ Langedijk, 1:431.

²⁴⁰ Vezzosi, 40.

²⁴¹ Freedberg, 450-1.; Kirwin. 105.

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- ²⁴² Alessandro Cecchi, *Palazzo Vecchio: Guide to the Building, the Apartments, and the Collection* (Boston: Sandak, 1992), 64.
- ²⁴³ Antonio Paolucci, *The Apartments of Cosimo in Palazzo Vecchio* (Firenze: Casa Editrice Le Lettere, 1991), 63.
- ²⁴⁴ Vasari, 10: 209-220; Forster, 69-91.; Kirwin, 105-122. See Vasari, Forster, Kirwin or Paolucci for additional information regarding the narratives at the Palazzo Vecchio.
- ²⁴⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁴⁶ Luchinat, *The Medici, Michelangelo, and the Art of Late Renaissance Florence*, 41. As described by Vasari.
- ²⁴⁷ Phillip Jacks, ed., *Vasari's Florence: Artists and Literati at the Medicean Court* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 210. Jacks indicated that the eight balusters between the triads of shields around the perimeter of the painting as being the eight priors of Signoria.; Forster, 98.
- ²⁴⁸ Jacks, 206. "the insignia of the Popolo – a red cross on white field – on the shield positioned beneath the foot of the duke, flanked by the *stemmi* of Florence and the Comune."
- ²⁴⁹ Ibid., 214.
- ²⁵⁰ Ibid., 210. "Scholars have often noted that Cosimo had himself portrayed here as Octavian Augustus, and at a precise historical moment. In 27 B.C., having defeated his rivals at Actium [in 31 B.C.], Augustus restituted the special powers conferred by the Senate and the people of Rome, retaining only his position as consul. The senate thereupon bestowed on him the oak crown, honoring his civic services in saving the lives of his fellow Romans."
- ²⁵¹ Ibid., 15. Regarding Cosimo's desire to be king between 1564 and 1569. See Vezzosi in note 244 regarding Cosimo's title of Grand Duke.
- ²⁵² Patricia Lee Rubin, *Giorgio Vasari: Art and History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 200.
- ²⁵³ Gian Gastone de' Medici died in 1737 which ended the line of Medici grand dukes.
- ²⁵⁴ Brock, 158. The reference to "First Typology" is found in other texts but commonly referred to by Brock.; Also See Langedijk or Simon.

Illustrations



Figure 1. Benozzo Gozzoli, *The Journey of the Magi*, 1459. Palazzo Medici, Florence.



Figure 1a. East Wall



Figure 1b. Cosimo Figure 1c. Lorenzo, Giuliano, Pius II, and artist Figure 1d. Piero



Figure 2. Mino da Fiesole, *Piero di Cosimo de' Medici*. c. 1453-1454. Marble. Museo Bargello, Florence. Inv. Marmi 1879, no. 75. (Photo by Mark Danford)



Figure 4. Florentine 15th Century, *Cosimo de' Medici*, c. 1465-1469. Bronze Medal, Diameter 7.8 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. 1957.14.840.a



Figure 3. Workshop of Antonio Rossellino, *Cosimo de' Medici*, c. 1460-1465. Marble relief, 36 x 32 cm. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Inv. No. 124.



Figure 5. Botticelli, *Portrait of a Man Holding Medal of Cosimo de' Medici*, c. 1475. Tempera on panel. Gilded stucco for the Medal. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.



Figure 6. Botticelli, *Giuliano de' Medici*, c. 1478-1480. Tempera on panel, 75.5 x 52.5 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.



Figure 8. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *The Confirmation of the Rule of the Franciscan Order (Detail)*, c. 1483. Fresco. Sassetti Chapel, Santa Trinità, Florence.



Figure 7. Florentine 15th or 16th Century (After Verrocchio), *Lorenzo de' Medici*, 1478/1521. Painted terracotta. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. (Photo by Mark Danford)



Figure 9. Raphael, *Leo X with Cardinals Giulio di' Medici and Luigi de' Rossi*, 1518. Tempera on Wood, 154 x 119 cm. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.



Figure 10. Pontormo, *Portrait of Cosimo de' Medici*, c. 1519-1521. Oil on panel, 90 x 72 cm. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. Inv. 1890, no. 3574.



Figure 12. Pontormo, *Portrait of Alessandro de' Medici*, 1534-1535. Oil on panel, 101.3 x 81.9 cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art. (Photo by Mark Danford)



Figure 11. Giorgio Vasari, *Portrait of Alessandro de' Medici*, 1533-1534. Oil on panel. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.



Figure 13. Pontormo, *Portrait of a Halberdier*, c. 1529-30 or c. 1537. Oil on panel transferred to canvas, 92 x 72 cm. J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles. (Photo by Mark Danford)



Figure 14. Bronzino, *Cosimo I as Orpheus*, c. 1537-1539. Oil on Wood, 93.7 x 76.4 cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art. (Photo by Mark Danford)



Figure 15. Bronzino, *Portrait of Bia de' Medici (Wearing a Medal of Cosimo I)*, c. 1542. Tempera on panel, 63 x 48 cm. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.



Figure 15a. Bronzino, *Portrait of Bia de' Medici (Detail of medal obverse)*, c. 1542. Tempera on panel. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence



Figure 16. Bronzino, *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor*, c. 1543. Tempera on Panel, 74 x 58 cm. Tribuna della Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. Inv. 1890, no. 855



Figure 17. After Titian, *Portrait of Emperor Charles V in with Drawn Sword*, c. 1600-1605. Oil on canvas, 119 × 62 cm. Private collection, England.



Figure 19. Bronzino. *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor*, 1545. Oil on panel. 86 x 67cm. Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney. 78.1996.



Figure 18. Titian, *Portrait of Francesco Maria della Rovere*, 1536-1538. Oil on canvas, 114 x 100 cm. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.



Figure 20. Workshop of Bronzino, *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor*, 1545. Oil on wood, 101 x 77 cm. The Toledo Museum of Art. (Photo by Mark Danford)



Figure 21. Workshop of Bronzino, *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor*, c. 1545. Oil on wood, 95.9 x 70.5 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 22. Francesco Salviati, *Portrait of a Man*. Oil on Canvas, 123 x 93 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 19a. Bronzino, *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor* (Detail), 1545. Oil or tempera on Panel. Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney. 78.1996



Figure 20a. Workshop of Bronzino, *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor* (Detail), 1545. Oil on panel. The Toledo Museum of Art. (Photo by Mark Danford)



Figure 21a. Workshop of Bronzino, *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor* (Detail), c. 1545. Oil on panel. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. (Photo by Mark Danford)



Figure 23. Workshop of Bronzino, *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici in Armor* (Detail), c. 1545. Oil or tempera on panel. Gemäldegaleri Alte Meister, Kassel, Germany.



Figure 24. Workshop of Bronzino, *Cosimo I de' Medici* (at age 40), c. 1560. Oil on panel, 84 x 66 cm. Galleria Borghese, Rome.



Figure 26. Cristofano dell'Altissimo (after Bronzino), *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany*, c. 1562-1565. Oil on panel, 58 x 44 cm. Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti, Florence.



Figure 25. Workshop of Bronzino, *Cosimo I de' Medici* (at age 40), c. 1560. Oil on panel, 82 x 68 cm. Galleria Sabauda, Turin.



Figure 27. Alessandro Allori (after Bronzino), *Portrait of Cosimo de' Medici I*, c. Late 16th/Early 17th Century. Oil on panel, 116 x 90 cm. Sold Christie's New York on 1/27/2000. (Sale 9318/Lot 183)



Figure 28. Giovanni Battista Naldini, *Cosimo I de' Medici* (as Grand Duke), 1585. Oil on canvas, 140 x 216 cm. Galleria degli Uffizi, Serie Aulica, Florence.



Figure 29. Vasari, *Apotheosis of Duke Cosimo de' Medici*, c. 1565. Oil on Wood. Sala Grande del Cinquecento in the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence. (Photo by Mark Danford)

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