FORM, CONTENT AND MEANING IN SEVEN FRANCISCAN ALTARPIECES
OF THE DUGENTO

by

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B.A., University of Western Ontario, 1972

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department
of
Fine Arts

We accept this thesis as conforming to the
required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April, 1974
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Abstract

Although the fresco cycle of the Upper Church, Assisi represents the fullest early illustration of the legend of St. Francis, there is an earlier tradition of Franciscan iconography which is very important, but often overlooked. It is found in a group of painted wooden altarpieces depicting St. Francis and scenes from his legend. Seven such panels survive from the thirteenth century. They are found in Pescia, Pisa, Pistoia, Florence, Assisi, Rome, and Siena. Together with a known eighth altarpiece which is now lost these paintings form an inter-related group. The Pescia panel is perhaps the most important member of the series. It is the only signed and dated example, a work by Bonaventura Berlinghieri from 1235. It also represents the earliest surviving altarpiece of this type. The other five Tuscan panels all follow the gable-shaped design of Pescia I. The two Umbrian examples are of a different shape but their iconography indicates a clear connection with the Tuscan tradition. All of the altarpieces display a large central figure of St. Francis with small scenes to either side. Ranging from 1235 to the 1290's they date from within a decade of the death of Francis to the end of the Dugento.

The seven altarpieces have not to date been thoroughly examined as a group. They have been cited as examples of stylistic trends in dugento art, and the Pescia panel has been researched historically because of its importance as a signed and dated work. The only manner in which all seven altarpieces have been investigated together has been an identification of the subjects represented in their side scenes. But no intensive study of these panels as a group which displays the earliest development of Franciscan iconography.

Nor has there been a successful attempt to correlate the significance of the subject matter to the environment of thirteenth century Franciscan thought in
which they were produced. If the format, function, and iconography of the altarpieces is considered together with early Franciscanism, however, the significance of the art works as exponents of Franciscan doctrine can be suggested.

Several aspects of the paintings are valuable indicators of the doctrines lying behind them. First of all, the physical format of the altarpieces is significant because it represented a new form designed specifically for the illustration of Francis and his life. The physical source of this panel format was the storied crucifix. When this derivation is considered in light of the beliefs of Franciscan Joachimism with respect to the role of Francis as a second Christ, it can be seen that even the design of the panels had thematic implications. Thus a consideration of altarpiece design is important.

What is illustrated in the side scenes can be established through reference to thirteenth century written accounts of the life of St. Francis which served as the sources for the pictorial motifs. The questions then arise as to why particular scenes were repeatedly chosen for representation and why the choice changed in some of the panels. To understand the significance of the events illustrated, the paintings must be considered within their contemporary environment of early Franciscanism. Placed against the background of developments within the Franciscan Order in the thirteenth century, particularly those events immediately following the death of Francis, what is illustrated on the altarpieces takes on a new significance.

The earliest tradition of subject matter stressed posthumous miracles of St. Francis. These miracles can be related to the canonization of Francis, so that it may be concluded that they were designed as exponents of the sanctity of Francis. This emphasis on miracle scenes was replaced in some of the altarpieces by a growing interest in scenes of the life of Francis, so
that by the end of the century no posthumous miracles were included on the panels.

These panels were not the only thirteenth century representations of St. Francis. When the central figures are compared to other Dugento depictions of Francis, however, it appears that the altarpieces belong to a distinct tradition with respect to the way in which Francis was interpreted. The reasons for the type of St. Francis shown on the altarpieces can be appreciated when the significance of the scenes' iconography is considered. But an awareness of other trends in Franciscan thought and literature is also important here. The distinct style and attitude of the central figures can be shown to be a result of the thirteenth century views of Francis as expressed by Franciscan Joachimism.

Within the context of thirteenth century Franciscan doctrines, the storied retables take on a new significance as meaningful and didactic objects. They also occupy an important position as precursors to the legend of St. Francis as it was interpreted in the Assisi frescoes.
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Introduction

Early in the thirteenth century a new art form appeared in Tuscany: the gabled retable depicting a large figure of St. Francis of Assisi surrounded by scenes from his legend. Both the format and subject matter of these altarpieces were unprecedented in Italian art. Seven panels of this tradition survive and are presently located in Pescia, Pisa, Pistoia, Florence, Siena, Assisi, and Rome. Together with an eighth panel which is now lost, they comprise an inter-related and distinct tradition of Franciscan art. The altarpieces range in date from 1235 to the 1290's, and thus represent the earliest illustrations of the Franciscan legend. All seven panels pre-date the fresco cycle of the Upper Church, Assisi which is so often regarded as the significant starting point in a study of Franciscan iconography. But it is instead these dugento altarpieces that reveal the earliest Franciscan attitudes as expressed in art works dedicated to their founder.

Francis died in 1226, was canonized in 1228, and already being represented in the new art form by 1235. The sudden emergence of the St. Francis altarpieces brings several questions to mind. Why was Francis so quickly honoured by being included in no small way on major works of religious art? Why was a new panel format devised specifically for his depiction? What do the scenes represent and why were they chosen? Why was St. Francis characterized in the manner displayed by the central figures? None of these queries have been satisfactorily answered in previous studies of the St. Francis storied retables. The significance of the altarpieces can be appreciated only when they are considered within the context of thirteenth century Franciscan doctrines and attitudes. If they are regarded as visual documents of early Franciscanism, however, their original meanings become considerably clearer. The form, subject matter, and meaning of the panels were closely inter-related.
For example, the early emergence of the altarpieces and the subjects first chosen to be emphasized on these were results of the nature of the Franciscan thought that immediately followed the death of Francis. The subject matter changed during the Dugento according to different attitudes towards Francis as he came to be less of a contemporary phenomenon and more of an historical figure. The format chosen for the panels and the conceptions of the central figures, however, are indicators of another more prophetic Franciscan doctrine which was prevalent throughout the century.

The establishment of both the characteristics and doctrinal significance of the dugento Franciscan altarpieces not only reveals something of their independent importance as the earliest illustrations of the Franciscan Legend, but also establishes them as influential precedents to later and better-known Franciscan painting such as the fresco cycle of Assisi.
NOTES

1 See Appendix I and Plates 1-7.

2 See Appendix I: San Miniato al Tedesco VIII, and Plate 8.

3 See Appendix I.
CHAPTER I: THE FORMAT AND PROTOTYPES OF THE STORIED RETABLE

Pescia I is the earliest extant example of both a gabled dossal and the representation of the saint surrounded by scenes from his life. Other gable-shaped panels and rectangular saint-with-scenes retables both appeared later in the thirteenth century, but their initial combination in the Pescia panel suggests that the entire format was an invention specifically designed for the depiction of St. Francis of Assisi. Of the ten thirteenth and early fourteenth century gabled dossals cited by Garrison, six are of St. Francis and his life. Although designed specifically for the representation of St. Francis, this form of dossal was soon adapted to depict other saints with scenes from their legends, such as that of St. Margaret of Cortona from the early fourteenth century, or that of Mary Magdalen now in the Florence Accademia, from 1280-1285. The earliest storiated altarpieces, however, are of St. Francis.

The precedents for panels depicting a central figure and side compartments are two-fold: the antependium and the storied Crucifix. The antependium [altar-frontal, paliotto] was a stone or metal relief designed for placement on the front face of the altar, and known to have been in use as early as the eighth century. Particularly the metal altar frontals often consisted of a tripartite arrangement with a Redeemer figure in the centre section and scenes from the life of Christ at the sides. Similar compositions painted on wooden panels are known to have been used in Spain as altar-frontals, but it is a matter of debate whether or not early Italian panels of this format, such as the 1215 panel in the Siena Pinacoteca, were originally paliottos. In any event, the format if not the use of the altar-frontal did inspire a group of horizontal rectangular dossals of a central figure with scenes to either side. This type seems to have been popular only in Siena, Florence, Arezzo, and
Assisi-Perugia, with no examples from Pisa or Lucca. The two St. Francis panels from Assisi and Rome belong to this tradition. However, the earliest known horizontal panel which depicts a saint rather than a Christ figure is the St. Zenobius panel from 1240-1250. Thus, although the Assisi and Rome paintings follow the antependium tradition in their shape, the idea of a saint surrounded by scenes seems to derive from the St. Francis gabled dossal which precedes the horizontal saint dossal. This derivation in the case of the St. Francis panels is further enforced by iconographic evidence, as will be seen.

A second precursor to the St. Francis retable is the storied Crucifix, whose importance in this respect is stressed by both Garrison and Hager. The storied Crucifix, depicting a central figure of Christ and small scenes of the passion in the aprons, was strictly a Tuscan panel form. It was most popular from the late twelfth through most of the thirteenth centuries. Not only were both the storied Crucifix and the St. Francis gabled dossal uniquely Tuscan inventions, but also, as Garrison points out, the storied Crucifix itself was most probably used as an actual altarpiece. This increases the likelihood that this type of Crucifix served as a model for the St. Francis dossal. Hager sees the storied retable taking over elements of the storied Crucifix as an actual transference in the case of the Pisan works, where the storied Crucifix ceased to be produced almost as soon as the retable form appeared. The influence can hardly be reduced to such a direct transplant, however, particularly since the number of examples of storied retables is very limited. There are, moreover, strong iconographic reasons to suggest that the development of the St. Francis dossal through the inspiration of the storied Crucifix was a conscious attempt to indicate a parallelism between Christ and St. Francis.

The function of the gabled saint panel was clearly, according to Hager,
that of a retable, that is, a panel to be placed on top of an altar. Unlike a group of panels depicting single figures of saints which were designed for devotional nooks, private patrons, or for suspension on columns, the St. Francis panels have relatively wide bases to accommodate their placement on an altar. The progression from Pescia I to Pisa II and Pistoia III towards a greater emphasis on the horizontal through the lower placement of the gable transversal is seen by Hager as an increased adjustment to the panel's role as an altarpiece. Both Garrison and Hager, however, note that there is a tendency at the end of the Dugento towards an increased verticality of proportions; the Mary Magdalen panel and the Siena St. Francis are examples of this tendency. The determination of the original function of the Santa Croce St. Francis panel presents some difficulty, for it was legendarily originally located on a column of that church. Although Hager mentions this fact without doubting it, he also maintains that the painting was definitely a dossal. The conformity of this panel to the gabled dossal tradition suggests that it was indeed designed for use on an altar; this conclusion is strengthened by the fact there are no documented examples of a panel of this type being designed for suspension on a column.

With regard to the format of the Santa Croce St. Francis retable, however, Hager makes an interesting suggestion. He observes that the unique presence of two rows of scenes below the central figure might be regarded as one of the early forerunners of the predella element of altarpieces. Hager's idea here is well worth consideration, especially since it is within a development of the storied retable tradition that two important examples of later, more developed predella-precursors appear: in Simone Martini's St. Louis of Toulouse altarpiece of 1317 [Naples, Galleria Nazionale], and the Giotto workshop panel of the Stigmatization of St. Francis.
Unlike the paliotto-form panels, gabled dossals of saints do not seem to have gained positions on the high altar until relatively late, but were confined to side or chapel altar. When this type of panel did appear on a high altar, it was generally only in a small church with a single choir.\textsuperscript{25}

The creation of a new Romanesque panel type, the gabled dossal, is in itself an important event, but the fact that this invention seems to be a direct result of the desire to venerate St. Francis in particular makes this phenomenon doubly interesting. The invention of the new art form resulted from the special honours bestowed upon Francis of Assisi in the thirteenth century. An understanding of who St. Francis was and how he was regarded is therefore necessary to appreciate the significance of the art dedicated to him.
NOTES

1. "Gabled dossal" is the term used to describe this type of panel by Edward B. Garrison, Italian Romanesque Panel Painting. An Illustrated Index [Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1949], p. 153. "Gabled" refers to the shape of the panel, and "dossal" designates its use as an altarpiece.

2. Ibid.

3. These are cited by Garrison Italian Romanesque Panel Painting, pp. 154-156, NUMBERS 402-411.

4. Ibid., p. 154, number 403.

5. Ibid., p. 154, number 404.


7. For example, the paliotto in the Duomo, Citta di Castello, reproduced by Hellmut Hager, Die Anfange des italienischen Altarbildes [Munich: Schroll, 1962], plate 70.

8. Garrison Italian Romanesque Panel Painting, p. 139.

9. Classified as a dossal by Garrison Italian Romanesque Panel Painting, p. 140, but as a paliotto by Hager italienische Altarbildes, plate 70.

10. Garrison Italian Romanesque Panel Painting, p. 139.

11. This panel is now located in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Florence. Hager italienische Altarbildes, p. 92 suggests the possibility that a lost earlier saint paliotto once stood on the altar of San Tommaso, Florence.


15. Ibid., p. 197.


17. Ibid., p. 94.

18. Examples of these types of panels are found in Garrison Italian Romanesque Panel Painting, numbers 51-60.
Hager *italianische Altarbildes*, p. 94. This change in proportions is exemplified by a comparison of Pescia I and Pisa II. According to the measurements given by P. Benvenuto Bughetti, *Vita e miracoli di S. Francesco nelle tavole istoriate dei secoli XIII e XIV* [estratto da *Archivum franciscanum historicum*, 1926], Pescia I measures 1.06 m. to the base of the gable and Pisa II 0.91 m. The overall dimensions of the two panels are nearly identical.


Hager *italianische Altarbildes*, p. 95.

see Appendix, Florence IV.

Hager *italianische Altarbildes*, pp. 96-97.

ibid., pp. 94-95.

This phenomenon is discussed with examples by Hater, ibid., pp. 97-98. The placement of horizontal rectangular dossals is discussed on pp. 91-92.
CHAPTER II: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Francis of Assisi was an extreme advocate of both poverty and humility. He was strongly opposed to unnecessary materialism such as rich church decoration. His life of constant self denial was an indication of his strivings for humility. Yet within a decade of his death a new art form was devised for the veneration of this saint. In denial of Francis's ideals his successors elevated him to a semi-divine position and commissioned paintings of Francis for the altars of their churches. To understand what prompted this early emergence of Franciscan art it will be necessary to review briefly the events surrounding the death of Francis, the history of the Order in the thirteenth century, and the literary sources for the legend of St. Francis.

Early History of the Order

Since it was nothing from the actual life of Francis which resulted in art works dedicated to him, but rather the efforts of his successors, a survey of the events of the Saint's life is unnecessary here. A few of Francis's ideals and actions are worth noting, however, in order to better understand the conflicts which later split the Order.

From 1209, when the earliest active followers joined him, Francis envisioned his Order as a group of preachers, propertyless and unlearned, who were to beg or work for their food and live in improvised branch huts. The earliest Rule was based on these ideals, as set down in the Gospels. In the years that followed this earliest phase of Franciscanism, however, the Order expanded remarkably, so that the appointment of provincial ministers and the establishment of more permanent Franciscan centres became necessary. An important event in the development of the Order was Francis's meeting with Cardinal Ugolino in 1217. Francis appointed Ugolino to the position of Protector of the Franciscan Order. While Francis was on missionary journeys
to Syria and Egypt in 1219 Ugolino used his power to make conditions easier for the Order by ordering all prelates to give the friars facilities for preaching and building, and by obtaining privileges for them. Despite the Cardinal's positive intentions, Francis was horrified upon his return to find such contradictions to his ideals as convents being built for his friars. In 1221 Francis stepped down as official head of his Order, for it was obvious to him that the size and nature of the Order now required the organizational powers of a more business-minded leader. Peter Catani was appointed Vicar of the Order and upon his death Elias of Cortona.  

Francis still adhered to his original ideals for the Order, however, and laid them down in the expanded Rule of 1221, the "Regula Prima". But in 1222 demands were made for a new Rule, especially by those friars such as priests and academics. These members objected primarily to the Rule's non-allowance for extensive scholarly interests. Their suggestion that the Friars Minor adopt the Rule of some other existing monastic order was soundly rejected by Francis, who instead drew up another Rule. This Rule was first revised by Ugolino upon Francis' request, then further changed by the ministers at the Chapter of 1223, who insisted on the deletion of demands such as that requiring friars to take nothing with them on their journeys.  

Thus, even this early in the history of the Order, internal divisions were becoming evident. The opposition was one of ideologies, between Francis and one section of friars on the one hand who still maintained the importance of adhering to strict Gospel-based ideals such as absolute poverty, and Ugolino, Elias, and the more academic friars on the other, whose interests lay more in establishing the Friars Minor as a powerful monastic institution. Shortly before his death in 1226, Francis made a final appeal to the friars to uphold his ideals; in his partly autobiographical Testament he warns the brothers against accepting
buildings or privileges and demands that they obey the Rule literally. The future danger for the Order in its increased institutionalization was apparently obvious to Francis, but unfortunately his appeal in the Testament was of little effect in curbing its monastic development.

Immediately following the death of Francis on October 3, 1226, Elias became the dominant figure in the Order. As Vicar, he was the only friar in a position of authority. Elias sent out a letter announcing Francis's death to the various provinces, but the emphasis of the letter was not on the grief felt at the death, but rather on the saintliness of Francis. The miracle of the Stigmatization, which had been kept secret from all but a few friars since its occurrence in 1224, was now publicly proclaimed by Elias. Now that Francis was dead, the privacy of his mystical experiences was public property, and Elias saw its value for the imminent canonization of Francis and thence the glory of the Order. Somehow the sensationalism of Francis's sanctity took precedence over the ideals he had expressed when a man, as if his earthly role could be dismissed now that he had a heavenly one. Although John Parenti, a man still dedicated to poverty and simplicity was elected to the new executive position of Minister General of the Order in 1227, Elias remained very active. He planned, for example, a grand basilica to be erected in Assisi to the glory of Francis. Of great importance to the interests of Elias and his colleagues was the election of Cardinal Ugolino to the papacy in 1227, as Gregory IX. Gregory approved the construction of the basilica, and in 1228 came to Assisi to perform the canonization rites for Francis, lay the foundation stone for the basilica, and appoint a writer to compose an official Life of St. Francis.

Of great significance to the future development of the Order was Gregory's papal bull "Quo elongati" of 1230, in which he declared that the
Testament of Francis was not binding to the friars, because it had been laid down without the consultation of the ministers. This decision solved the problem of Francis's statement in the Testament that the Rule must be observed literally. With the authority of the Testament denied, the Rule could now be changed. An immediate alteration of the Rule allowed friars the use of any property provided it legally belonged to someone else.

The chain of Ministers-General who followed John Parenti, and the type of development which they encouraged became increasingly objectionable to those members of the Order who still sought to follow Francis's ideals and Testament. Friars of this point of view came to be known as the Spiritual faction of the Order, as opposed to the Conventuals. Amongst the Spirituales were some of the friars who had been Francis's closest friends: Leo, Angelo, Ruffino, and others, as well as a substantial number of newer converts who opposed the way in which the Order was being institutionalized. The Spirituales still lived in secluded huts or caves for the most part, and followed a life of preaching and begging; the largest colony of Spirituales was found in the Marches of Ancona in the mid-thirteenth century. John Parenti was replaced as Minister-General in 1232 by Elias of Cortona. Elias's oppressive rule, luxurious living habits, and association with the excommunicated emperor Frederick II were objected to not only by the Spiritual faction, but by the Friars Minor in general. Elias was deposed in 1239 and excommunicated. His successors in office were Albert of Pisa [1239-40] and Haymo of Faversham [1240-44] who were both academics and gave great encouragement to Franciscan scholarship, much to the distress of the Spirituales who remembered Francis's insistence that one must cast off even learning to become dedicated solely to Christ. The next Minister-General, however, Crescentius of Iesi [1244-47], was openly opposed to the Spirituales. He saw them as being a disobedient
faction of the Order who deserved to be punished and repressed to curb their extremism. It was understandably with great joy that the Spirituals greeted the appointment of John of Parma in 1247, for here was finally a Minister-General of their own "party" who wished to see a return to the earlier ideology. John of Parma's term was an extremely successful one in lessening the growing gaps within the Order, achieved mainly through his personal efforts to visit and communicate with all the Franciscan centres. However in 1257, and apparently upon the suggestion of the Pope, he resigned, mainly as a result of his involvement with the scandal of the Eternal Evangel and the desire to clear the Order of the heretical suspicions that the incident had aroused. The Spiritual Minister-General was replaced by the much more moderate John of Fidanza after the occurrence, and the whole of the Spiritual party in general fell into further disrepute because of the extreme Joachimism of a few of its members.

The Literary Sources for the Life of St. Francis

On July 16, 1228, after the Canonization ceremonies at Assisi, Pope Gregory IX commissioned the first official life of St. Francis to be written. It is important to note here that not only was the Saint's history ordered to be written, but it was commissioned by the Pope himself. In no way was this written life story the personal memoirs of an ardent friar, prompted by his fond recollections of Francis. This Life is more appropriately seen as a companion document to the Canonization bull, the written proof of the sanctity of Francis. Likewise, the man chosen to be author of this work, brother Thomas of Celano, was not one of Francis's more intimate acquaintances, but a reputable writer of moderate views, who had not joined the Franciscan Order until 1215. As Moorman points out, the official purpose of Thomas of Celano's Vita Prima is detectable both in its style and content,
especially if it is compared to later writings of a more personal tradition, such as the *Scripta Leonis*. For example, in describing Francis's childhood, Celano concentrates on his delinquency so as to more dramatically emphasize his later conversion, and stories of the miracles and supernatural powers of Francis are stressed far more than more personal descriptions or the facts surrounding the establishment of the Order. The historical accuracy of Celano's *Vita Prima* is not of present concern; the important consideration here is that this literary source is an officially commissioned piece of propaganda designed to emphasize above all the fact that Francis was indeed a saint. The source of the commission is further evident in the prominent role given to Elias in the *Vita Prima*, while other important brothers like Leo, Angelo and Masseo are never mentioned. In light of Elias's role in organizing the future of the Order, it is only natural that an official account of Francis should seek to demonstrate that Francis had intended Elias to assume the dominance that he now had.

Having been a Franciscan for a relatively short time, Celano must have received most of the information for his book from a variety of sources, other friars, and citizens of Assisi. Moorman surmises that this collection of stories obtained by Celano was kept in the library at Assisi. Other slightly later compilations of the life of St. Francis present fuller accounts of events described in Celano I. This suggests that a common source was being drawn upon. Celano's *Vita Prima* was completed some time between 1229 and 1231. Although a few earlier references to events of Francis's life are extant, this work is the earliest complete account which survives, and apparently the earliest one written.

Celano's *Vita Prima* begins with an account of Francis's early life and conversion, followed by a description of his dedication to Poverty, Simplicity,
Humility and Obedience. Then he recounts the Saint's missionary works, a number of stories of his miraculous powers, and a collection of more personal stories. The last section consists of a collection of accounts of miracles occurring after the death of Francis and ascribed to his divine powers. Although few authors take note of this point, this last section of Celano represents more than just a random selection of legends. The miracle stories recounted in I Celano, numbers 127 to 150, in fact represent a recording of the forty miracles which were approved for the canonization of Francis in 1228.

Following the normal canonization procedure, a commission of prelates was appointed by Gregory IX in 1227 to establish the two aspects of Francis's life necessary to prove his worthiness for canonization: the sanctity of his life, and the demonstration of miracles performed through him after his death. The accounts of forty miracles collected by the commission were next examined by the Pope, who came to Assisi in May, 1228 for this purpose. He also interviewed the persons who had actually experienced the miraculous healings. The process then included various consultations and speeches regarding Francis's sanctity amongst the cardinals at Perugia, and resulted in the approval of both Francis's saintly life, and the validity of all forty miracles. At the canonization ceremony on July 16, 1228, Gregory IX read his sermon on the sanctity of Francis, the list of miracles was read out by one of the prelates and Francis was thence proclaimed a saint. The miracles collected by the canonization commission are those listed by Celano in the last section of his Vita Prima.

Although followed by a few minor writings on the life of St. Francis, Celano's Vita Prima was the dominant literary source for the Order from 1228 until 1244. At the Chapter General in Genoa in 1244, however, it was decided —
that a new official Life should be written, and an invitation was extended to all the friars to submit any recollections or stories they possessed about Francis. The official writing which came out of the new material sent in to Assisi from 1245-46 was Thomas of Celano's *Vita Secunda*, of 1247. The nature of this work is quite different from that of the *Vita Prima*; the first part of the later work consists of a more detailed account of Francis's life up to the time of his conversion. The second part is arranged under headings such as the Saint's humility or simplicity, describing through anecdote the character and ideals of Francis. This type of Life would seem to represent the desire of the friars for a more personal account of their founder, as opposed to the official dogmatic one of the *Vita Prima*. Indeed, much of the material submitted for the *Vita Secunda* came from the closest companions of Francis: brothers Leo, Ruffino, and Angelo. Their collection of personal memoirs was also drawn upon by writers other than Celano. Accounts based on this source belong to the more humanistic tradition of literary sources for the life of Francis. Celano is quite explicit in the *Vita Secunda* about the original wishes of St. Francis with regard to matters such as absolute poverty, begging, and the observance of the Rule. These were areas whose interpretation were increasingly dividing the Order. Thus, although commissioned as an "official" and therefore theoretically neutral Life, Celano's second work shows definite Spiritualist sympathies. It has been suggested that this bias accounts for the relative unpopularity of the *Vita Secunda*, for the Minister-General [Crescentius] at that time had more Conventual tendencies. The degree to which this work reflects the policy of the contemporary Order rather than a reliance on Celano's earlier writing, however, is indicated by the fact that Elias, now excommunicated, is not mentioned by name once in the *Vita Secunda*. 
The *Vita Secunda* was apparently regarded as being inadequate due to its lack of miracle stories, for sometime around 1250 Celano was asked by Minister-General John of Parma to record the Saint's miracles. This third work, the *Tractatus de Miraculis*, repeats many of the miracles of the *Vita Prima*, and adds a large number of new miracles which had occurred after the publishing of the earlier work.

In the 1250's, a different type of "unofficial" Franciscan literature appeared as a symptom of the internal problems which were dividing the Order. The *Verba Sancti Francisci* was probably written by Leo and other "Spiritual" friars, for it includes such indiscreet passages as accounts of Francis's conflicts with the clerical ministers. It has been suggested that this work was produced as a protest against the dismissal of John of Parma in 1257. The *Fioretti*, an anonymous compilation of the same period, shows the sympathies of its author by its description of John of Parma as the perfect friar, and the writings of Angelo of Clarenno stress the oppositions within the Order and the hardships of the Spirituals.

Probably because of this rather dangerous trend in Franciscan literature, the Chapter General of 1260 commissioned Minister-General Giovanni Fidanza [St. Bonaventura] to write a moderate and complete life of St. Francis which would replace all others. The result of this assignment was Bonaventura's *Leggenda Majora* published in 1263; upon its appearance it was declared to be the only official biography of Francis, and all other accounts were banned from use. The greater part of the content of the *Leggenda Majora* derives from the works of Thomas of Celano, with a few new additions, but the tone of Bonaventura's work is quite different. His purpose is to present Francis as an uncontroversial and rather removed Saint, so he omits those areas of his life which emphasize either the most personal aspects of Francis, or his
beliefs regarding areas of doctrine which were presently extremely delicate, such as the authority of the Testament. Bonaventura's method of writing is basically an abridgement of Celano, leaving out or adding bits in order to smooth over controversial areas.  

Joachimism and Franciscanism

At this point it is necessary to refer to an area of thirteenth century Franciscan thought and literature which, although never associated with the early representations of St. Francis, is essential for a complete understanding of both their format and iconography. The area in question is the Joachimist movement.

Joachim of Fiore [1135 to 1202] was a Cistercian monk in Calabria whose prophetic writings, most notably the Liber Concordiae Novi et Veteris Testamenti, and the Exposito in Apocalypsim were very influential on later religious thought. Joachim's view of history consisted basically of a division into three ages. The first age, that of the Father, had been the period of the Old Testament. The second age, that of the Son, was that period which was just then drawing to its close. The third age, of the Holy Spirit, would lead to the Last Judgement and end of the world. Each age was divided into seven shorter periods, and each was marked by the appearance of three great men.

The men of the first age had been Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and those of the second age Zachariah, John the Baptist, and Christ. The great men of the age of the Holy Spirit would be three who were prophesied in the Scriptures: the man clothed in linen in Daniel 12:7, and two angels of the Apocalypse, namely the one with the sickle [Revelation 14:14] and the one having the seal of the Living God [Revelation 7:2] who would be the renovator of the Church and the head of the New Jerusalem. The first age was designated as that of married men, the second of clerics, and the third of spiritual monks.
Joachim prophesied that the Third Age would begin in the year 1260; this transition corresponded to the opening of the seventh seal of the Apocalypse. The third age would be one of peace and complete understanding of the Scriptures, until the return of the Antichrist and Last Judgement. Of great importance in Joachim's writings, however, was the period of transition between the second and third ages, the years from 1200 to 1260. This would be a period of great tribulation, marked by both the appearance of the Antichrist, and the beginnings of new spiritual understanding, corresponding to the opening of the sixth apocalyptic seal. Joachim had already identified the Benedictines as the precursors of the spiritual monks which were to come. But preceding the contemplatives of the Third Age, he envisioned two additional orders of monks as preparing the way, one of hermits praying for the world, and one of preachers mediating between the active and contemplative life. Elsewhere he sees them as an order of laiety and one of clergy, and gives them many scriptural allegories such as the raven and dove sent out by Noah, or the two witnesses of the Apocalypse.

The appearance of the two new mendicant orders of the Franciscans and Dominicans in the early thirteenth century seemed to fulfill precisely the expectations of Joachim, so that both Orders were quick to see themselves in this prophetic role of being sent to save the world for the approaching Age. Joachim's original specification of an active and contemplative order was soon replaced by that of the two active preaching orders. The early entrance into the new mendicant orders of Joachim's ideas is not surprising in light of the fact that the monks of Joachim's small Florentian order had been taught to expect the appearance of the two orders, and went out to hail the new orders as the fulfillment of the prophecy.

A large number of pseudo-Joachist writings appeared around the mid-
thirteenth century which were based upon his works but emphasized above all
the role of the monks heralding the Third Age. Some of these writings have
been attributed to Franciscan authors. The earliest and most important of
these pseudo-Joachist books is the *Super Hieremian*, which must have been in
existence before 1242, since it is quoted in another important work, the
*Scriptum Super Apocalypsim* which was produced by that date. This last work
is not a spurious one, but by the known author of Alexander of Bremen, a
Franciscan. Alexander speaks of the prophetic roles of Dominic and Francis,
but implies that it is the Franciscans who will truly fulfill the prophecy.
And it was indeed within the Franciscan Order rather than the Dominican one
that Joachimism was most popularly held.

These Joachimist writings were all considered to be completely orthodox,
and aroused no suspicions of heresy. The prime example of an extremist
Franciscan-Joachist writer, however, is found in the friar Gerard of Borgo San
the young Franciscan attended the University. Although no copy of the work
survives today, it apparently consisted of a gloss upon three of Joachim of
Fiore's writings, plus a "Liber Introductorius" by Gerard. Some of its con-
tents are known through partial manuscripts and a list of articles drawn up for
the book's condemnation, so that it can be concluded that Gerard's theories
were basically an extension to extremes of Joachim's "pattern-of-threes".
Besides apparently making extremely strong claims for the historical role of St.
Francis, Gerard proclaimed that the writings of Joachim were the Eternal Gospel
of the third age and would replace the authority of the Old and New Testaments.
Such a view is far removed from Joachim's statement that perfect understanding
of the existing gospels would come about in the third age. Gerard interpreted
Joachim himself as being that angel of the Apocalypse who appeared out of heaven
with an open book after the sounding of the sixth trumpet [Revelation 10:1,2]; the book represented Joachim's writings. This heretical work appeared at the University of Paris at an unfortunate time, for the conflict between Seculars and Mendicants there was then at its height. The book was immediately seized by the secular masters, and by William of St. Amour in particular, and used as evidence against the Mendicants. A list of thirty-one objections was drawn up by the Anagni Commission of the seculars, and sent to Pope Alexander IV, who condemned the book in October, 1255. The Eternal Gospel was burned and Gerard spent the remainder of his life in prison. A more serious result for the Spiritual Franciscans was the dismissal of John of Parma as Minister-General in 1257. John of Parma had been a close acquaintance of Gerard's, and his dismissal is generally seen as a direct result of his known Joachimist tendencies, and his rather peripheral involvement with the scandal of Gerard that brought so much disgrace to the Franciscans. It must be noted, however, that only Gerard's writings, and not those of Joachim, were considered heretical at that time.

Indeed, the writings of the next generation of well-respected Franciscan scholars continued to show moderate Joachist views. Among the foremost of these were Peter John Olivi, Bartholomew of Pisa, Ubertino da Casale, and St. Bonaventura himself. It must be explained here that the Spiritual Franciscans in particular had the strongest interest in Joachimism. This was especially because of their devotion to absolute poverty, an ideal which Joachim had emphasized among the characteristics of his prophesied spiritual monks. The Spirituals also had a greater leaning towards mysticism than the Conventuals, so that Joachim's writings had a certain attractiveness. And above all the persecution being suffered by the Spirituals at this time was seen as a fulfillment of Joachim's foreseen period of great hardship. Casting themselves—
in the role of Joachim's tortured holy men, the Spirituals found even greater strength for their beliefs; their mission to reform the Church had been foretold. This belief of the Spiritual Franciscans is most strongly described by Angelo of Clarenno in his Historia Septem Tribulationum of the early fourteenth century. 58

St. Bonaventura was by no means a Spiritual, nor was he a strong follower of Joachimism, for he had in fact repudiated Joachim's view of history in some of his writings. 59 Yet other of his works show a distinct influence of the thinking of Joachim in his vision of a future "status". And in the introduction to his Leggenda Majora Bonaventura makes the distinctly Joachimist claim that St. Francis was the sixth angel of the Apocalypse, marked by the seal of the Living God. 60 This identification refers directly back to Joachim's prophecy that one of the third great men of the third age would be the person foretold as this Apocalyptic angel. St. Francis fits the role physically as well as spiritually, for the marks of the stigmata were interpreted as the seal of the Living God marking the angel. The role of Francis as a sort of "angel of mercy" also suited his ideology; the sixth apocalyptic angel appears just before the angels of the four corners of the earth are to destroy the world, and he bids them to postpone their destruction until those people who were just had been saved. 61 This all seemed to fit Francis extremely well, for he was neither a preacher of doom nor a contemplative by nature, but represented the extremes of altruism in his life. Francis stressed that the mission of his followers was to live "not for themselves alone but for the salvation of souls". 62 St. Bonaventura was not the first writer to state outright that St. Francis was indeed this Apocalyptic angel. It was evidently contained in Gerard's Eternal Evangel of 1255, but it has been suggested that John of Parma was the first to thus identify St. Francis. 63 Ubertino da Casale attributes
the identification to John of Parma. But it is surprising that St. Bonaventure, the moderate, should include this description in his official Vita Majora. It has been suggested by Antal that Bonaventure's inclusion of the dogma represented a conscious "compromise" with the Spirituals. Reeves, however, sees Bonaventure's identification of Francis here as being almost unconscious, as an example of just how closely Franciscan and Joachist thought had become intermingled; "St. Bonaventura was a Joachite malgré lui". In any case, this passage in the Vita Majora is a strong example of how ideas originating in Joachimism had become part of official Franciscan doctrine by about 1260.

The prevalence of more committed Joachist views amongst leading Franciscans is found in the writings of Peter John Olivi and Ubertino da Casale, who were both strongly Spiritualist in their beliefs. Olivi was a teacher and writer in Provence, and his most important work with regard to his Joachite beliefs was the Postilla Super Apocalypsim of Circa 1280. Olivi drew heavily on Joachim's Exposito for this work, as well as referring specifically to Joachim by name, and he described in detail the special role of St. Francis. Amongst the more radical of his followers, Olivi himself was hailed as an Apocalyptic figure of the third age corresponding to St. Paul. This tendency contributed to the later condemnation of Olivi's writings by the Franciscan Chapter General in 1299. Most important to Tuscan Joachimism, however, was Olivi's position for several years after 1287 as lector in Santa Croce, Florence. The most outstanding of Olivi's Italian followers was Ubertino da Casale, head of the Tuscan Spiritualists, and author of the Arbor Vitae Crucifixae. The fifth book of this volume displays most clearly Ubertino's interpretation of Joachim's and Olivi's pattern of history. Ubertino was in fact a lecturer at Santa Croce while Olivi was there, so that his influence
was undoubtedly direct. Less controversial than these Spiritualist oriented writings of Olivi and Ubertino was the fourteenth century Liber de conformitate beati Francisci ad vitam domini Jesu, a work approved by the Chapter General of 1390. Written by the Franciscan Bartholomew of Pisa in 1385, it represents the more moderate stream of Joachistic thought which emphasizes the role of Francis as a second Christ. The entire Liber de conformitate presents an elaborate system of parallels between the lives of Christ and Francis, and sets forth the theme of the Apocalyptic role of St. Francis and his Order.

The idea that St. Francis represented a second Christ is an aspect of thirteenth century Franciscan doctrine which will be of particular importance when considering early Franciscan art. This widespread and completely orthodox idea derived ultimately from Joachimism. As Marjorie Reeves notes,

"it was only Joachim's Trinitarian pattern of threes which made it possible to extend the well-known concors of twos between the Testaments into the future, by making claims for St. Francis that were otherwise well-nigh blasphemous. St. Francis stood on the threshold of the third status as Christ on that of the second, and the parallels which Joachim had found between the first and the second status must now be sought between the second and third."

The identification of Francis as a parallel to Christ was physically suggested by Francis's receiving of the stigmata, the wounds of Christ. And his ideals as displayed by his life style were also very Christ-like. But the doctrinal basis for actually claiming that Francis was a second Christ was Joachim's scheme of Biblical parallels. This pattern of thought pervaded the views of even those Franciscans who outwardly opposed much of Joachim of Fiore's teachings. As Reeves points out,

"It must be emphasized that one did not need to be a committed Joachite to share in this general attitude towards the role of St. Francis and his Order in history."
NOTES

1 For an account of the life of St. Francis, see Paul Sabatier, Vie de S. Francois d'Assise [Paris: Fischbacher, 1894].


3 ibid., pp. 31, 46-52.

4 ibid., p. 52.

5 ibid., pp. 53-61.

6 ibid., pp. 75-80.

For a translation of the Testament, see Sabatier Vie de S. Francois, pp. 389-393.


8 Thomas of Celano [Vita Prima, number 952 states that only Elias and Rufino saw the Stigmata while Francis was alive.

9 Sabatier Vie de S. Francois, pp. 404-405 reproduces in translation the section of the letter dealing with the Stigmatization. He gives as the source of the complete text: Spoelbrach, Speculum Vita B. Francisci, vol. II [Anvers: 1620], pp. 103-106.

10 See Moorman A History of the Franciscan Order, p. 85. John R. Moorman, The Sources for the Life of St. Francis of Assisi [Manchester: University Press, 1940], p. 61 notes that Elias had obtained the site for the basilica even before Gregory had issued the Bull recommencing that such a church be built.

11 Moorman A History of the Franciscan Order, p. 86.


With regard to other early bulls see Moorman, The Sources, p. 60.


15 Moorman A History of the Franciscan Order, pp. 96-104.

16 ibid., p. 105-107.

17 Quoted by Moorman A History of the Franciscan Order.

18 ibid., p. 108.
See Chapter II, "Joachimism and Franciscanism".

Moorman The Sources, p. 61.

ibid, pp. 61-63.

A discussion of the Vita Prima as an interpretation of the life of Francis is provided by Moorman, ibid., p. 63 ff.

ibid., p. 63 and note 3, p. 63.

ibid., p. 65.

ibid., pp. 67-76. The Legend of the Three Companions in particular displays the use of the same source as that of the Vita Prima.

See Moorman, ibid., pp. 67-68 for arguments for a relatively late date. Other authors, including Sabatier have accepted February, 1229 as the completion date of the book on the basis of a fifteenth century manuscript of the work in which that date is given.

These are described by Moorman The Sources, pp. 55-57. They were generally eyewitness accounts of isolated events in the life of Francis.

Part I of the Vita Prima deals with most of Francis' life, Part II with his last two years, and Part III with his canonization and posthumous miracles.

The identity of the miracles is recognized by Pompei Biblioteca Sanctorum, vol. V, p. 1143. Moorman The Sources, p. 64 suggests the source more tentatively.

Pompei, Biblioteca Sanctorum, vol. V, pp. 1090, 1143. More than one miracle story often comprises a single Celano number. Hence the discrepancy between 40 miracles and Celano numbers 127-150.

ibid., pp. 1090-1092.

Gregory's canonization sermon is recorded by Joannis Hyacinthi Sbarale, Bullarium Franciscanum Romanorum Pontificum [Rome: Typis Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1759], pp. 42-44.

Notably the Officium Rhythmicum by Julian of Speyer [c. 1232] and the Legenda Versificata by Henry of Avranches [c. 1232].

Moorman The Sources, p. 89 ff.

This view is held by Moorman, ibid.

Although Bonaventura also drew from this source, the most unabridged versions of the stories collected survive in the Scripta Leonis and the Legend of the Three Companions.
37. See Moorman *The Sources*, pp. 123-127 for a discussion of the *Vita Secunda*.


42. The reasons for the commissioning of Bonaventura's *Leggenda* and the ban on other writings are discussed by Brooke, *ibid.*, and Moorman *The Sources*, pp. 141-142.

43. See Moorman *The Sources*, pp. 142-151 for an analysis of Bonaventura's sources, content and style.


47. Reeves *The Influence of Prophecy*, p. 142 ff.


51. Guido Bondatti *Gioachinismo e francescanesimo nel Dugento* [Assisi: S. Maria degli Angeli, 1924], p. 38.

52. Leff *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, vol. I, p. 79.


54. The most complete list of the articles is recorded by Matthew Paris *Chronica Majora*, vol. VI [London: Longman and Co., 1882], pp. 335-339.

55. Leff *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 79.
John of Parma's views were so close to some of those expounded in the *Eternal Evangel* that he was suspected as the author. See Reeves *The Influence of Prophecy*, p. 63.

ibid., p. 175 ff.

ibid., p. 191.

For specific examples see Reeves, ibid., p. 179.

Leggenda Major, Prologue, number 1.

Revelation 7:2.

Thomas of Celano *Vita Prima*, number 35.

Reeves *The Influence of Prophecy*, p. 176.

ibid., p. 176, note 3.


Reeves *The Influence of Prophecy*, p. 181.

ibid., pp. 196-200.

ibid., p. 200.

ibid.

ibid., pp. 207-209.

ibid., p. 200.


ibid.

Reeves *The Influence of Prophecy*, p. 177.

ibid.
When the quantity of Franciscan literature already in existence in the thirteenth century is considered, it might be expected that the richness and variety of the Franciscan legend would have been reflected in contemporary art. But an examination of the subject matter of the storiated retables reveals that this was not the case. It was not the story of Francis' life which was given preference on the panels, but four particular miracles of healing that occurred after his death. These four miracle illustrations appear in Pescia I, Pisa II, Pistoia III, Assisi VI and Rome VII. In the latter two examples they are the only scenes included, whereas Pescia I combines them with two events from Francis' life, and Pisa II with the illustrations of two additional miracles. Pistoia III differs from the others in that it displays a cycle of four life scenes along with the four miracles; it will therefore be considered apart from the other four miracle panels. But Pescia I, Pisa II, Assisi VI and Rome VII are all representatives of the earliest pictorial tradition of the Franciscan legend. Because of the similarities in their subject matter these paintings will be dealt with as a distinct group with a common thematic emphasis. The repetition of identical subjects throughout these panels also permits an examination of the development and derivation of the specific pictorial motifs used, from their earliest appearance in Pescia I to the latest of the group, Rome VII.

The first two scenes represented on Pescia I are the Stigmatization and the sermon to the birds, events which occurred during the life of Francis. Of the four panels to be discussed here, only Pescia I displays these scenes. The possible reasons for their inclusion and the rather special iconographic tradition to which they belong will be discussed at a later point rather than in connection with the "miracle tradition" paintings. It will here suffice to mention that both events are described in Celano's *Vita Prima* and so are
The Healing of the Deformed Girl

The scene at the bottom left of Pescia I begins the series of miracle portrayals. Although a general decipherment of what is happening in this scene was suggested by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, and described somewhat more accurately by Siren, the specific literary source for this story was not identified until 1926, by Bughetti. The event is described in Thomas of Celano's *Vita Prima*, where it is number 127 and the first miracle described in that section of the book devoted to posthumous miracles. The account in Celano reads as follows:

On the day in which the sacred body of the most blessed Francis was laid to rest like a precious treasure, embalmed more with celestial perfumes than with earthly aromas, a young girl was carried to the sepulchre, who for a year had had a monstrously bent neck, so that her head touched her shoulder and she was unable to look up, excepting sideways. She was placed for a little while with her head under the tomb in which lay the body of the Saint; and immediately, thanks to the most holy man, the neck was straightened up, and her head returned to its proper position, so that the girl, frightened by the sudden change, began to run away crying. A sort of cavity was seen on her shoulder, as a result of the long infirmity.

The way in which Bonaventura Berlinghieri illustrates this story in Pescia I serves as the model for all the following thirteenth century representations of the miracle. The site of the miracle is shown as an altar, surmounted by a round baldacchino, supported by four columns. This type of altar becomes the standard setting for the miracles occurring after Francis' death at his tomb. The altar is perhaps meant to represent the sort of tomb-altar under which the body of St. Francis would have been in the Church of S. Giorgio, Assisi at that time. The specific depiction of the altar in this first scene, however, is different than in the two following ones on the same panel, in that the first altar is shown with a projection extending at right angles from the
mensa. The altar-cloth hangs along the end of this projection, not across
the front of the altar itself as in the next two scenes in which the projec-
tion is omitted. The only writer to have mentioned the uniqueness of this
altar is Bughetti who, although he misreads the spatial structures being
represented in the object, has an interesting suggestion for the reason for
this altar's different style. Because the written account specifically
mentions the fact that this miracle took place on the day of Francis' entomb-
ment, Bughetti surmises that a conscious effort is being made here to illust-
trate the wooden sarcophagus in which the Saint's body was carried to S.
Giorgio that day. Because the other two "tomb miracles" shown on Pescia I
also occurred before the body of St. Francis was transferred from S. Giorgio
to S. Francesco in 1230, Bughetti does not suggest that this "projection"
form of altar is meant specifically to represent the actual form of the S.
Giorgio tomb, nor does he hold that this is an accurate depiction of the
actual wooden sarcophagus. But because the altar projection is shown quite
definitely with a sort of lock-plate, suggesting that it is a lidded structure
like a coffin, the possibility that the artist is here representing the
sarcophagus of St. Francis attached to the altar would therefore seem to be
quite strong. Perhaps he wished to emphasize the idea that the coffin is not
yet under the altar, since this miracle occurred on the same day as the burial.
Or perhaps the artist is visually indicating the fact that the altar which is
the site of all three miracles is also the tomb of Francis; the delineation of
the two parts is omitted from the following two scenes, but the idea is meant
to be understood there as well.

On top of the altar are shown an ampula, a chalice, and a book to clearly
distinguish the structure as an altar. The baldacchino would seem to serve a
similar pictorial purpose. Two Franciscan friars, attendants to the Saint's
tomb, stand behind the altar. Within this one scene two events from the miracle story are represented. The first episode is shown by the figure of the little girl, her head bent to one side, leaning against the front of the altar-tomb. Her mother kneels left of the altar and raises her hands and face in supplication to one of the friars, who extends his right hand down to her and looks at her. Behind the kneeling woman a group of five witnesses to the miracle look on. The result of the miracle is indicated by a second depiction of the mother [in identical clothing] walking away to the far left of the scene, with her healed daughter sitting on her shoulder. Bughetti suggests that the gesture of upraised hands of the right-hand friar, which he reads as a gesture of surprise and wonder, belongs to the second episode of the story.10

The building indicated left of the altar, terminating in a pointed tower, is, like all the buildings in the scenes of the Pescia panel, of the type appearing contemporaneously as backdrops in passion scenes on certain storied crucifixes [for example, Florence, Uffizi, Number 434: Lucca, crucifixes in S. Giulia and S. Michele].11 It is of a type inspired by Byzantine manuscript illuminations.12 The type of rounded baldacchino used in this altarpiece has similar precedents.13 Bughetti holds that the presence of this type of building with a tower is meant to indicate a church throughout the scenes. In the case of the miracle of the deformed girl he suggests that the church building is meant to remind the viewer that the altar is located within a church.14

Bonaventura Berlinghieri has interpreted this miracle quite freely from the Celano text. The architectural setting he has devised is suggested nowhere in the written account, but is derived more from earlier pictorial motifs in scenes such as those of passion cycles. Bonaventura's composition as a whole, however, appears to be his own invention here, based neither on the earlier
specific iconography of a different scene, nor on a particular arrangement of elements specified by the literary source. The little girl is shown with a bent neck, lying against Francis' tomb as described by Celano. But the rest of the story seems to have been reconstructed by the artist according to popular legend, religious custom, or his own imagination. The inclusion of the child's mother, for example, who kneels before the altar then carries her daughter away, is an aspect of the story which undoubtedly derived from popular accounts of the miracle and assumptions by the artist. So also the crowds of onlookers, who might represent the unspecified number of people who brought the deformed girl to the tomb. Or perhaps they serve to represent witnesses to the miracle, confirming its actual occurrence and thus here functioning as a piece of visual propaganda. But the placing of two friars behind the altar-tomb, although also not mentioned in the text, probably derives from the artist's awareness [perhaps specified by patron Franciscans] of ecclesiastical custom; that is, that the actual tomb of Francis was attended to by friars of the Order. 15

When the recurrence of this miracle scene is examined in the panels which follow Pescia I, it is clear that the later artists are following the iconographic pattern of Pescia I, rather than basing their interpretations on the Celano text. In Pisa II, this scene is represented as the top-most one on the left. The basic elements and their disposition are identical to those of the Pescia composition: the architectural background, the altar with projecting tomb under a baldacchino, two attendant friars, the child in front of the tomb, the woman kneeling and carrying the girl away on her shoulder, and the crowd of observers. Thus, the Pisan artist has copied his iconography from Pescia I, or a similar earlier panel. An examination of iconographic details, however, reveals something of the difference in artistic personality between
Berlinghieri and the Pisan artist. To begin with, the second artist is working within a different shape of field than that in which Bonaventura represented the scene. For although Pescia I and Pisa II are of comparable dimensions and both include three scenes to each side, the lower placement of the gable on Pisa II has resulted in fields for the scenes which are reduced in height, and increased in length. The result is a sort of stretching out of all the elements in the Pisa II scenes. In Berlinghieri's version of the miracle of the deformed girl all of the action takes place in front of the rectangle of background architecture. But in the corresponding Pisa II the group of spectators stands left of the building, before a void in the left part of the composition, and the mother is yet to the left of them, walking off the extreme edge of the scene rather than into [or out of] the building. The architecture itself, although of a similar type to that shown in Pescia I, is reduced in size, and the tower extends considerably above the roof line of the horizontal part of the structure. The Pisan artist is apparently more interested in defining actual architectural elements, while Berlinghieri was concerned more with using these features to produce a background pattern on which to set his figures. For not only does Bonaventura make the tower and horizontal roof of his building the same height, but he also extends this roof line to join that of the baldacchino so that the limits of all the architectural elements together form one continuous line defining the rectangle in which the scene occurs. The articulation of the building stops where the baldacchino begins even though the roof extends beyond this, creating a single background plane. This type of arrangement of the architectural elements is seen throughout the Pescia I scenes, but is most evident in this particular composition. In the corresponding Pisa II scene, however, the concept of the architecture is quite different. It neither defines the entire field
nor presents a continuous rectangular outline. The heights of the elements are varied, with the tower rising above the low building, and the baldacchino likewise extending beyond the roof line. Perhaps most notable is the fact that the baldacchino is clearly meant to be located in front of the building, for the building does not stop where the baldacchino begins, but extends behind it and even past it to the right. The greater interest of the Pisan painter in suggesting the spatial position of his objects is further evident when his representation of the tomb-altar is compared to Berlinghieri's. The idea that the sarcophagus part of the structure extends out from the altar is much more clearly indicated in the Pisa version through the use of two different ground lines for tomb and altar. The child leaning against the altar is also easier to read. The details of the three objects on the mensa, and the lock plate [now with a keyhole] are maintained in the Pisa II scene. The proportions of the figures are somewhat different from Bonaventura's, in that they have rather smaller heads and taller bodies, but their poses are essentially the same as in the earlier work. The figures of the onlookers, however, are given more dramatic gestures, and the left-hand friar does not bend down towards the kneeling woman. A rather puzzling new feature in the Pisa II scene is the dress of the two friars; the left one wears what appears to be a light grey tunic over his dark robe, of which the hood and cuffs protrude, while the right friar's garb is exactly reversed in colour. Similar double-coloured robes are depicted throughout the Pisa II scenes, although some of the outer robes [as in scenes three and four] take the form of sleeveless tunics with hoods of the same colour. The reasons for these variations in dress, which appear most markedly in the Pisa II panel, remain unsatisfactorily explained. Bughetti insists that the colour reversals are not merely the caprice of the artist, but that the form of habit with the short tunic over it
might represent the costume of novitiates, since it is always the younger of the two friars that wears this form of robe. This does not entirely explain all the variations in dress, however. It would further appear that a dark habit with light cuffs, hem, and hood [as in scenes two and five] is the form used to indicate St. Francis himself, while the light robe with dark hood is the garb of the senior friar, and the other form of a short dark tunic over a light gown is that of the novitiate. Without the support of a written description of early Franciscan dress, however, this must remain conjecture. Another detail of ecclesiastical ritual which appears in the first Pisa II scene [absent from the Pescia I] is the fact that the friar who is most actively intervening between the altar and supplicant woman wears his hood up over his head, while the other friar does not.  

The miracle of the deformed girl appears in both Assisi VI and Rome VII as the upper left-hand scene, but the Assisi VI design is spatially more elaborate than the Pescia I and Pisa II versions. The artist here is again drawing on the established iconography rather than a written account, because of the persistence of the basic elements as devised by Berlinghieri. Thus, the altar-tomb with attendant friars is at the right, the mother first kneels before it while her child rests in front, and is then shown walking off to the left with the healed girl, and a crowd of spectators stands in the centre. The shape of the field is here a square again, closer to the area of the Pescia I, but the Assisi artist's attempts at spatially arranging the objects in his composition are even farther from Berlinghieri's simple rectangular pattern than were those of the Pisan painter. For now the single building with a tower has been replaced by an entire town, presumably on a hill, at the left of the scene. The size of the figures in proportion to that of the picture field have been considerably reduced, and the number of figures increased;
the onlookers now number over twenty, while the two friars behind the altar have increased to about eight. A type of baldacchino is again shown over the altar but it is tall and pointed now, not a semi-dome. It is interesting that the altar-tomb takes a different form in the Assisi scene than in the previous two of the same subject. Rather than being represented as an altar with a projecting front-piece, the structure is indicated here just as a wooden sarcophagus with legs. There is neither an altar cloth nor objects for mass on top as before, but the lock is clearly indicated as fastening the lid of the sarcophagus to its front. Thus, the desire to indicate that this is the coffin in which St. Francis was that day carried to S. Giorgio is even stronger here, and the contrast between this structure and the altars of the other scenes in Assisi VI is even more pronounced. Unlike the artists of the Pescia I and Pisa II, the Assisi VI painter uses the somewhat more advanced technique of the "fore-shortened frontal" construction to suggest the projection of his objects into space, for example in the altar-tomb, the architectural structure behind the tomb, and the buildings of the townscape. This technique, along with the general elaboration of this scene permits the secure dating of this panel after those of Pescia I and Pisa II. 

The corresponding miracle scene on Rome VII, although a much simpler composition than the Assisi VI one, was probably executed later. The basic disposition of the scene continues the established iconography, but some of its details resemble those of Assisi VI so closely as to suggest a direct derivation. The pose and drapery of the exiting woman are nearly identical in the two works, for example, as are those of the left-most observer in both scenes. The pointed style of baldacchino is also maintained in the Rome VII picture, and so is the plain wooden-box type of altar-tomb. The latter is now given two candlesticks on top, however, and a cloth hanging rather curiously
from its lower edge. The type of architecture in the Rome VII scene is much closer to that in Assisi VI than in the two earlier paintings, but the number of buildings is reduced so that one structure replaces the townscape and another stands behind the altar. Both of these buildings are clearly distinguished as churches by the crosses on their roof-tops. The artist's use of "foreshortened frontal" construction added to his increased size of the buildings in proportion to the figures makes them quite convincing as actual architectural structures. The crowd of friars has again been reduced to two, whose gestures are different here. The group of witnesses is now given more prominence in that the left friar seems to be addressing them rather than the woman. This might indicate a certain loss of understanding of the narrative on the part of the artist, with an increased reliance on previous depictions without referral back to the original text. A similar phenomenon occurs in Rome VII's following scene.

The Healing of the Cripple(s)

In Pescia I, the precise identification of the second miracle scene, represented at the upper right, is somewhat more difficult than the first. Crowe and Cavalcaselle\textsuperscript{25} erroneously believed the scene to represent St. Francis distributing alms. Siren\textsuperscript{26} interpreted it quite accurately in recognizing that this is another miracle which took place at the tomb of Francis, but in which the dead Saint miraculously reappears; he also correctly identifies the crowd of kneeling people as cripples, and the man to their right as a pilgrim. But it is again Bughetti\textsuperscript{27} who provides the most satisfactory explanation of exactly what is occurring in this scene. He concludes that Berlinghieri is here representing a combination of miracle stories, recounted in Celano's \textit{Vita Prima}, numbers 128 - 134.\textsuperscript{28}

Number 128:

In the territory of Narni there was a young man with a
twisted tibia, such that he could not walk without the aid of two crutches; he was a beggar, who knew neither his father nor his mother, and for several years was thus wretched. Through the grace of our most blessed father Francis he was freed from the sad malady, and was able to walk of his own accord without a stick, praising and blessing God and his Saint.

Number 129:
A certain Nicolo, citizen of Foligno, numb in his left leg and tormented by strong spasms, had spent so much on doctors to recover his health that he found himself in debt to a greater extent than he wanted or was able to be. Finally, not having found any benefits in their cures, tormented by such acute pains that his continuous cries did not let the neighbours sleep at night, he prayed to God and to St. Francis and had himself carried to the Saint's tomb; and after having spent a night in prayer, he was able to return jubilant to his home with his leg stretched out and without a walking stick.

Number 130:
Another young man who had a lame leg, so that his knee touched his chest and his heel touched his thigh, went to the sepulchre of the blessed Francis, while his father macerated his flesh with a hair shirt and his mother did grave penitence for him, and he immediately recovered his health completely, so that he was able to run through the piazzas completely happy, thanking God and St. Francis.

Number 131:
In the city of Fano there was a cripple whose ulcerated tibias were bent and joined to his body, and the stench of the sores was so great that no one wanted to agree to take him to the hospital. Through the grace of our most blessed father Francis, to whom he appealed for mercy, he soon afterwards was rejoicing at his cure.

Number 132:
A child from Gubbio, with crippled hands, lost for a year the use of all her limbs, and was carried by her nurse, together with an image of wax, to the tomb of the most blessed Father, to obtain the grace of a cure. After staying there for eight days, all her limbs were healthy, and because even more fit for use than usual.

Number 133:
Another young boy, from Monteneri, lay for several days in front of the door to the church in which rested the body of the Saint, not being able to walk or sit, because from the waist down he was deprived of the strength and use
of his limbs. One day he entered the church and touched the tomb, and went out healthy and unharmed. This boy said that while he lay in front of the tomb of the glorious Saint, there appeared to him a young man dressed in the habit of the friar, with some pears in his hand, and he had called him and exhorted him to get up, offering him one; and he took it, answering: "Look, I am a paralytic, I cannot get up." However, he ate the pear and began to extend his hand towards the other one that was offered to him; but invited again by the young man to get up, he did not move, feeling himself paralyzed. But stretching out his hand, the young man drew him towards him, led him outside, and disappeared. The boy, seeing himself cured, took to narrating the whole event in a loud voice.

Number 134:

A woman, from a village called Coccorano, was carried on mats to the sepulchre of the blessed Father, since she was unable to use any of her limbs except for her tongue. Kept there for a while, she arose perfectly cured. Another citizen of Gubbio carried a crippled son of his in a basket to the tomb of the holy Father, and he was made healthy again. He had been so crippled that his shins, joined to his thighs, were all atrophied.

Bughetti thinks that Berlinghieri's second miracle scene must be a loose interpretation of these healing stories. This suggestion is logical, since the stories 128 to 134 do represent that section of the text devoted to cripples healed at Francis' tomb [the unquestionable subject of the painted scene]. Moreover, the order which the artist is following, based on the scenes preceding and immediately following this one, also indicates that this is the part of Celano's text which is being used here. Berlinghieri's dependence on the written descriptions is even less obvious in this scene than in the previous one, however. The setting is again an altar covered by a baldacchino, but the form of the altar does not include the projecting sarcophagus, but is a simple table shape with a cloth hanging down across its front. A second white cloth with a decorative border across its top hangs like a curtain from a horizontal pole behind the altar. Book, chalice and ampula are again placed on the mensa. Three friars are now represented behind the altar, however, and the central one
is meant to be St. Francis himself, as indicated by the halo. The miracle in which the apparition of Francis participates is clearly intended to be that told in Celano number 133, in which he appears at his tomb to a young cripple and offers him pears. The Saint is shown in the process of taking the hand of the boy who kneels closest to the altar, in whose other hand a pear is represented. It is difficult to tell whether or not the two attendant friars, who raise their hands in gestures of wonder are aware of the apparition. The crowd of kneeling figures behind that of the first boy all seem to represent cripples, for the right-most figure is clearly shown with round club feet, and two pairs of crutches are indicated lying along the lower edge of the scene. Bughetti's suggestion that this group of cripples represents in a very general way the number of afflicted people who sought cures at Francis' tomb [as described by Celano, numbers 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 134] would seem to be the most acceptable one. The artist has not particularized the ailments or sex of the cripples as described in the text, but indicates them merely as a crowd of supplicant young men, their lameness indicated as already mentioned. At the far right of the scene are depicted two figures walking away from the altar. These are meant to represent two of the kneeling cripples after they have been cured; their dress and pouches indicated at their sides make them correspond to the boy whose hand St. Francis grasps, and the figure kneeling behind him dressed in red.

The presence of the other figure, standing just right of the kneeling supplicants is more difficult to account for. Bughetti notes that his hat and mantle distinguish him as a pilgrim, but the chestnut branch which he holds and the water bottle hanging from a stick over his shoulder are the attributes of a leper. The artist is apparently making another generalization from the text here; he is indicating the fact that lepers as well as
cripples enjoyed the miraculous healing powers of the dead Saint. That this figure represents one of the lepers healed after Francis' death [as mentioned by Celano, number 146, where, however, the miracle does not occur at the tomb] is a more plausible possibility than Bughetti's other suggestion. He surmises that this leper was suggested by the man described in Celano 131 who had sores on his crippled legs. Thus, this miracle scene, although based on events narrated in the Vita Prima, is again the invention of Bonaventura Berlinghieri [or an earlier artist] in both its composition and its specific content. And it is again the Pescia I interpretation of this scene which is followed in the later St. Francis retables.

A similar miracle scene reoccurs in Pisa II, Assisi VI and Rome VII, but the way in which Bonaventura Berlinghieri's original conception of it is altered and misread is very interesting to follow. On Pisa II this scene is represented at the upper right. Instead of basing the architectural background on Pescia I type arrangements the Pisan artist has repeated his own architectural composition of the upper left scene in exact mirror image. The placement and gestures of the figures likewise reflect those of the first scene. The interest of this artist in thus symmetrically balancing his compositions is again evident in his arrangement of the two lowest scenes on his panel. The form of the altar and objects on the mensa are similar to those in Pescia I, but the Pisan artist omits the central figure of St. Francis. Like the architecture, the positions and gestures of the two attendant friars now echo those in the scene across from it. Not only has St. Francis been omitted in the Pisa II version of the scene, but also the entire pear miracle in which he participated and the large number of supplicant cripples. A single lameness miracle now is represented, for just one figure kneels before the altar, his crutches in front of him. He is then shown walking off to the right.
this shift in subject matter, the dependence of the artist on the Pescia I iconography is still evident because of the retention of specific motifs such as the crutches, the pouch of the cripple, and especially the figure of the pilgrim-leper.\textsuperscript{35} This last figure is depicted almost identically to that of the Pescia I scene, but an even more specific indication of his malady has been added in the form of dark spots on his face and legs. The type of the cripple is considerably different from any of those shown by Berlinghieri, in that he is represented as a relatively older man here, with a beard. Bughetti\textsuperscript{36} suggests that the man is now specifically meant to depict Nicolo da Foligno, described in Celano number 129; this is a logical possibility since Nicolo is one of the two cripples not specifically described as "young" by Celano.

The basic iconography of this scene in Assisi VI follows that of the Pisa composition. Two friars with similar gestures stand behind the altar, a single bearded cripple is shown kneeling with upraised hands then exiting, and the leper figure with the same attributes and red spots stands in the centre. The Assisi VI artist introduces original elements to this scene in his arrangement of the architecture and the type of altar. The buildings are placed to both sides of the composition and are of the foreshortened frontal type shown in the first scene, but are much more crudely executed here [this scene is apparently the work of a second artist\textsuperscript{37}]. A tall, rounded baldacchino with six slender columns rises above a structure behind the altar which suggests a concave apse. A similar smaller baldacchino tops the strange structure at the far left, as a pointed one does the building to the right. The altar is quite elaborately represented with an arcaded base hung with lamps, and the head of a lion decorates its centre front. The mensa is not painted but done entirely in gold leaf, into which a cross, book, chalice, ampulae, and
candlesticks have been outlined with incised dots.

A further transformation of this scene in Rome VII [lower right scene] provides fairly conclusive evidence that this panel was executed after Assisi VI. The arrangement of the composition is roughly the same but again somewhat simplified, with the altar surmounted by a round baldacchino at the left. The collection of buildings at the right of the Assisi scene is replaced by a single architectural structure which is shown in fairly convincing frontal foreshortening to indicate a receding, nave-like space. The altar is not the elaborate type of Assisi VI, but a simple draped one with a cross on top and large candlestocks in front. Two friars again attend the altar, but the one on the left now stands directly in front of the altar rather than beside or behind it, and this friar's gestures are here more explicit as he points directly at the kneeling man. The single figure of a cripple kneeling before the altar with upraised hands is again of the aged, bearded type of Pisa I and Assisi VI. But it is significant that this man is not shown exiting to the right after the miracle, as in the previous three versions, but is replaced by the figure of a young man who stands at the extreme right with crossed arms watching the action at the altar. Because both the general layout and certain iconographic features [in the upper two scenes] common to Assisi VI and Rome VII already indicate a direct connection between them, this figure of the right-most man seems to indicate that Rome VII was almost certainly modelled after the Assisi VI, and not vice versa. For, probably as a result of not understanding the exact subject-matter, the Rome VII artist has completely altered the established iconography for the scene by not representing before-and-after episodes. The figure of the pilgrim-leper, however, is again included in the same pose and with the identical objects as in the previous three versions; the spots indicating his leprosy are not shown in
this case.

The Healing of Bartolomeo da Narni

The third miracle represented on Pescia I [centre right scene] and reproduced on subsequent panels is relatively easy to identify due to the specific nature of its depiction. The story on which it is based is found in the *Vita Prima* number 135 which reads as follows:

Bartolomeo, from the city of Narni, who was extremely poor, after having slept for a while in the shade of a walnut tree, awoke to find himself paralyzed so that he was no longer able to walk: gradually the malady progressed; his leg and foot became thin, bent, and dried up, so that he could feel neither cutting nor scalding. But the true lover of the poor, and father of all miseries, most saintly Francis, appeared to him one night in his sleep and ordered him to betake himself to a bath, where, moved to pity by such misery, he wished to cure him. Upon awaking, and not knowing what to do, he narrated the vision to the bishop of the city, who exorted him to go to the bath, and blessed him. So leaning on a stick, he headed for the indicated place as well as he could, and as he proceeded, all unhappy and exhausted, he heard a voice say to him, "Go with the peace of the Lord; I am with you with regard to that which you have desired." In the vicinity adjoining the bath he lost his way, since it was night, and he again heard the voice advising him that it was not the right way, and it indicated to him the direction. When he had reached and entered the bath, he felt a hand placed on his foot and another on his leg, carefully moving along it. And freed immediately, he leapt out of the water, lauding and blessing the omnipotence of the Creator and of His blessed servant Francis, who had done him such a great favour. For he had been thus crippled for six years, and was a beggar and quite old.

Bonaventura sets this miracle of healing before a solid architectural background of three buildings, shown absolutely frontally as in his other scenes. At the left is the artist's rather peculiar interpretation of the bath, which is shown simply as an area of water [indicated by wave patterns] with some flame-like rock formations at its left edge. The cripple Bartolomeo, wearing only a loin cloth, is seated on these rocks, immersed in the water up to his waist. He supports his crippled leg [which, as Bughetti notes, is represented as being considerably thinner than his healthy one] between
his crutches which he holds to either side of it. St. Francis, bearing halo and stigmata, stands outside the bath but leans over it to grasp Bartolomeo's foot with his left hand and his leg with his right. To the right of the scene the result of the miracle is shown where Bartolomeo, now fully dressed, walks away with his crutches over his shoulder. Berlinghieri's pictorial interpretation of the scene, although based on a knowledge of the written text to the extent of including details such as the exact placement of Francis' hands, is again original here. Aspects not mentioned by the text, but most effective for telling the story visually, are the before-and-after contrasts of Bartolomeo undressed then clothed, and using his crutches then carrying them away. These are additions to the story created either by Bonaventura Berlinghieri or a preceding artist which become part of the standard iconography of the scene.

On Pisa II the miracle of Bartolomeo of Narni again appears in the centre right position. Although the basic arrangement of the scene is the same, with Bartolomeo sitting in the bath at the left, Francis leaning over it, and then the cripple exiting at the far right, the Pisan artist has changed many of the details from the earlier conception. The bath is now conceived of as being located inside a building, as indicated by the brick wall and crenellated top of the rectangle enclosing the water. The crippled man is in almost the identical pose and dress as in the Pescia scene, but he now sits on a sort of bench that is submerged in the water. St. Francis is shown in the same attitude of leaning over to touch the cripple's leg, but the detail of representing this leg as thinner than the healthy one is no longer included. The Pisan artist has chosen to show a completely different background to the scene than that devised by Berlinghieri; he has replaced the row of buildings by a series of hills topped by small plants, suggesting a country setting.  

41 The pose of
Bartolomeo as he walks away with his crutches has also been changed considerab­ly. He turns his head back to the left, raises his left hand, and is shown in a more active attitude of walking. These details together suggest his wonder and happiness at the cure. This pose of Bartolomeo as developed in Pisa II is that which is retained in successive illustrations of the event.

In both Assisi VI and Rome VII the healing of Bartolomeo of Narni is depicted as the lower left-hand scene. The composition in Assisi VI retains the established order from left to right of seated Bartolomeo, Francis touching his leg and foot, then Bartolomeo leaving. But the entire setting has again been greatly altered. The bath is indicated by a crenellated wall as being inside a building, although on a smaller scale here than in the Pisa version, and another small gabled building has been added behind the figure of St. Francis. A large arrangement of buildings topped by a small baldacchino occupies the right-hand section of the scene; Bartolomeo is shown stepping into the doorway of this structure as he leaves. And as a background to the entire composition a rocky landscape sprouting spiky, large-leafed trees has been included as well. Apart from this tendency towards elaboration of the setting [which was also noted in the first miracle scene], the Assisi VI artist has maintained the same iconography as that developed in the Pisa scene. The bending posture of St. Francis is indicated much more actively, however, with a suggestion of the weight being placed on his bent right leg, while the left is extended back. The greater tendency of this artist to indicate bodily forms beneath the drapery, and at the same time stylize the folds into patterns is evident here in the robes of St. Francis and Bartolomeo.

This miracle scene undergoes its most drastic iconographic alteration in
Rome VII, although the interpretation here is still based on that type originating in Pescia I, rather than a literary source. The disposition of the scene is partially reversed here, with Bartolomeo shown exiting off the left edge of the composition; however, the relationship between the other two figures is maintained. This change may represent a desire of the Rome artist to repeat the same pictorial sequence of before-and-after that is indicated in his scene above; similar continuities are evident in Pescia I and Pisa II. The Rome artist's dependence on Assisi VI is again evident in the pose of St. Francis, although it is somewhat more clumsily executed here. The established gestures of the three figures have been maintained, except that the seated Bartolomeo now holds his crutches differently. The most significant change in the scene's iconography, however, is the placing of the bath right inside a building. It is no longer merely the symbolic suggestion of architecture [that is, a crenellated wall] but the representation of an actual structure resembling an arcaded aediculum topped by a railing and dome with cross. The figures of Bartolomeo and Francis are quite convincingly set within this building. The ability of this artist to represent spatial enclosures, as seen in this scene and in the foreshortened structure in the lower right one, is a skill which certainly has not been sufficiently noted. Indeed, the quality of this panel on the whole has been overlooked in the general assumption that it represents merely an inferior copy of Assisi VI. In the Bartolomeo of Narni scene, a second smaller building is depicted at the left of the composition, and a rocky landscape with tree-like forms again forms a backdrop to the whole scene.

The Healing of the Possessed

The last miracle scene common to the four panels is a representation of devils being cast out from possessed persons, again at the tomb of St. Francis.
This identification was recognized as early as 1910, by Salmi, although the tradition begun by Crowe and Cavalcaselle that it represented casting the devils out of Arezzo was propagated by Fachinetti. In Celano's *Vita Prima*, the section devoted to miracles of healing which ends with the story of Bartolomeo of Narni is followed by a short section on those who recovered their sight through the powers of St. Francis, then by an account of the liberation of the possessed, numbers 137 and 138.

Number 137:

There was in Foligno a man named Pietro who, having embarked upon a voyage to visit, both for a votive offering and for advised penitence, the sanctuary of the blessed Archangel Michael, arrived at a spring. Thirsty from the weariness of walking, he drank of that water, and seems to have swallowed demons. And thus possessed for three years, he did things horrible to see and to repeat. Arriving at the tomb of the most holy Father, he felt the furious demons torturing him cruelly, but upon contact with the sepulchre, he was immediately and wonderfully freed, by an obvious and clear miracle.

Number 138:

To a mad woman of Narni, who did and said appalling things, the blessed Francis appeared in a vision, and said to her: "Make a sign of the cross"; and after she answered that she was unable to, he himself marked her with the sign of the cross, and thus put to flight the insanity and demonic exaltation.

Many other men and women, tormented by demons with various tortures and deceived with witchcraft, were delivered from their yoke through the remarkable graces of the glorious Father. But since men of such a type are often the prey of illusions, rapid mention is made of them, and let us pass on to more important miracles.

These events are depicted on Pescia I in the lower right-hand scene. Against an architectural background of three towered buildings, the setting for the miracles is again an altar, very similar to that shown in the second miracle scene of this painting, but with a smaller baldacchino and curtain behind, and with a lamp hanging above. Two Franciscan friars stand beside and behind the altar; the left one touches his companion on the back, who
raises his hands in amazement at the action in front of him. Three possessed people stand at the right of the altar and emit winged black demons from their open mouths. The possessed man, with raised hands, has been identified by Bu-ghetti as Pietro of Foligno, but there is nothing in Berlinghieri's depiction of him to specifically identify him as such. The two other possessed figures are both women with their hands tied in front of them. The one on the right has a bare torso and is accompanied by a man who holds her by the arm. The women's loose hair, nakedness, and enforced sedation are apparently all indications of their wild and dangerous states of mind, but there is nothing which specifically identifies one of them as the woman described by Celano in number 138 [that is, no apparition of St. Francis is shown]. The three possessed people must instead be interpreted as merely representative of the large number referred to generally by Celano. Details such as the woman's nudity and the man accompanying her are Berlinghieri's creations to better convey the import of the scene; the depiction of winged creatures coming out of the figures' mouths is a traditional iconography for the exorcism of devils.

The representation of this class of miracles also appears on Pisa II in the lower right corner. Instead of repeating Berlinghieri's architectural setting, the Pisan artist again reproduces his standard background arrangement which is common to all his "tomb miracle" scenes; in this case the setting is identical [except for the colours] to that of his upper right scene. The interpretation of the legend has, however, again been drawn from Berlinghieri's. The positions and gestures of the two friars are extremely close to those of Pescia I. But the number of figures has been reduced and the scene simplified, as was that of the healing of cripples. Only one figure of a mad person is now included: that of the bare-breasted woman. Her hands are again tied in front of her and her loose hair is shown as being even longer and more disarrayed;
she emits a similar little demon from her mouth. The repulsiveness of her condition is emphasized to a greater degree by her companion, who now holds her at arm's length and looks far more distressed than the figure in the Pescia scene. A new figure stands at the far right; he covers his ears with his hands and grimaces, an attitude which suggests that the possessed woman is producing horrible cries. Bughetti suggests that the Pisan artist is representing a new miracle of exorcism here, described in Celano's Tractatus de Miraculis of 1250, number 153 which describes a young possessed woman who is healed at Francis' tomb. Although the Pisan artist does, as will be shown, use the Tractatus as the source for two other new miracle scenes which he includes on this panel, there is nothing in Tractatus number 153 which would account for the only addition he makes to Berlinghieri's interpretation of the scene [that is, the man covering his ears]. In light of the way in which the Pisa II artist modified the scene of cripples, it would seem more probable that he is again using only the pictorial tradition of the Pescia panel, and not a literary source as the model for the exorcism scene.

It is the Pisa II version of this miracle, in which only one possessed person is shown, that is continued in Assisi VI and Rome VII, where this scene is in the upper right position. In Assisi VI the artist has greatly elaborated the setting, although the basic elements of the scene are the same as those of Pisa II. This tendency has already been noticed in the other Assisi scenes. The painter of the healing of the possessed is the same one responsible for the first miracle scene, as opposed to the second Assisi artist who executed the two bottom scenes. This first artist has again multiplied the number of attendant friars from two to a large crowd, just as he did in scene one. The number of onlookers at the right has likewise been increased from the single man of Pisa II to a large number. The event is again set at an altar, but this is depicted as an elaborate arcaded structure similar to that in the scene.
below, with the objects incised on the gold-leaf mensa. A large building with a doorway and baldacchino has been rendered in beautiful detail behind the altar; further background additions are the tree and house [complete with an occupant looking over the balustrade] at the right of the scene. The artist's dependence on the Pescia-Pisa iconography is evident in the positions and gestures of the two foremost friars, and the bare-breasted woman with her companion who holds her arm [more actively now]. The motif of the man at the far right covering his ears derives from the Pisa II version of the scene. The originality of the Assisi artist, however, is most clearly indicated by his treatment of the figure of the woman, who is no longer merely one of the characters in the narrative but perhaps the most expressive and beautifully rendered figure of the entire panel. Her pose is quite different from that of the earlier illustrations; she does not have her hands tied in front of her, but holds her right arm up as if in acknowledgement of the devil that leaves her. Her extended left arm is held by the attendant. Instead of being shown standing sedately she is extending her right leg and bending the left one under her weight, and she tips her head completely back to emit the tormenting demon. The vitality of this pose is further emphasized by the beautiful treatment of her drapery, which clings smoothly to reveal her legs beneath, and falls in patterns of lively curves between them. A comparison of this figure with that of St. Francis in the Bartolomeo of Narni scene is a clear indication that the latter, although it reveals the designer's similar intentions to depict an active pose beneath drapery, was in fact executed by an assistant of the master.

The most obvious similarity between the exorcism scenes in Rome VII and Assisi VI is the repetition by the Rome artist of the figure of the possessed woman. Although she now faces in the opposite direction and raises her arm even higher, her pose and the handling of the drapery clearly derive from the
Assisi figure. The setting is again less intricate than in the preceding version of the scene; the altar is a simple draped one with a baldacchino behind and candlesticks in front. Architectural structures are again shown at the right, one of them now being a church as indicated by a cross on top. Another strangely narrow building has been added in the centre of the composition. The increased number of figures has also been maintained from the Assisi VI interpretation, although the crowd of friars now appears behind the left principal friar, not the right one. The gestures of the two foremost attendants resemble those of every other version of this scene, but the right friar now turns to look at his colleague rather than the woman. The figure of a man covering his ears has been omitted in the Rome VII panel, but a significant change occurs in the woman's companion. This figure is no longer conceived of as the meek attendant of the Pescia and Pisa scenes, or the anxious-looking companion of the Assisi VI version, but is now an extremely muscular and brutal-looking man who grasps the woman with both hands in a posture of actively restraining her rather than leading her. A second man behind him also holds the woman's arm, further increasing the idea of her physical violence. This change does not seem to derive from any new literary source, but is a development by the Rome VII artist.

**New Miracles on Pisa II**

Besides the four miracles whose iconographies were established in Pescia I, Pisa II includes two new miracles which are unique to this work. The identity of these two miracle scenes, which appear as the bottom two scenes on the left, has been established by Bughetti. They represent incidents which were not recorded in the *Vita Prima*, but were later miracles written down in Celano's *Tractatus de Miraculis* of circa 1250. Pisa II is the only panel which includes miracles derived specifically from the *Tractatus*; Antal is quite mistaken when he states that the *Tractatus* is the iconographical source for all the early
St. Francis retables. The two scenes on the Pisa II panel which are based on this source have been identified by Bughetti as illustrating the miracles described in Tracatus numbers 103 and 193.

Number 103:

In the village of Piglio, in the Campagna, on the feast day of St. Francis a woman was hastily performing her work. But she was scolded for it by a noble woman because it was observed by everyone as a divine cult. "I need little time." she said, "to finish my work; if the Lord sees it, then I commit a sin!" Immediately she was gravely punished in the person of her daughter, who was sitting there nearby. The mouth of the girl twisted as far as her ears, and her eyes, pushed almost so they darted right out, were rolled back in a pitiful way. Women hastened from everywhere and, for the innocent young girl, cursed the impiety of the mother. Immediately the latter prostrated herself on the ground, full of sorrow, promising to observe the day as a festival every year, and to give food on it to the poor in remembrance of the Saint. Without delay the torture of the daughter ceased, after which the mother repented of the sin she had committed.55

Number 193:

A noble lady from the castle of Galete suffered with a fistula between her breasts, and afflicted by the stench as well as the pain, had not found any remedy for health. One day she entered the church of the friars to pray and seeing a book that contained the life and miracles of St. Francis, she promptly looked to see what the contents were. Having learned the truth, bathed by tears, she took the book and held it open against the diseased area: "As it says, oh St. Francis, that the things are true written about you on this page, so also may I now be freed through your grace of this sore!" And while she wept and continued in devotion, she soon removed the bandages, and was so completely healed that one was able to find no trace of a scar afterwards.56

The Pisan artist has apparently devised the iconography for these scenes himself, and, as Bughetti notes, his interpretations are somewhat less faithful to Celano's text than were Berlinghieri's innovative illustrations. In the case of the first of the two new miracles, this may be the result of the confusion of more than one story, for the afflicted girl is represented with her eyes hanging far out of her sockets, but with no other facial deformity.
This feature may indicate the influence of two other miracle stories in which people are mentioned who have an eye dislocated from its socket. But the other elements of the illustration seem to derive from miracle 103 in the Tractatus; the young girl is shown seated on a bed-like structure while the mother stands behind and holds out her hands to ask for Francis' mercy. The Saint appears at the right and extends his right hand in a gesture of blessing and holds a book in the left. The scene is set against a background of solid architecture of the same type as that in the other Pisa II scenes.

The composition of the second Tractatus scene, at the bottom left, is based largely on that of the upper left scene. The setting is identical except that a simple draped altar replaces the more complex one of the first miracle. Two friars stand behind and beside the altar but, unlike those of the other three "tomb-miracle" scenes, the hooded friar who is apparently officiating stands farthest away from the supplicant woman, and the other friar indicates him to her. Like the two earlier miracle scenes at the top, this composition is a before-and-after depiction. The woman is first shown standing left of the altar holding the large, sore-marked breast growth that extends outside her robe. Her elaborately decorated mantle indicates her noble rank. At the extreme left the woman is shown again, leaving the scene after having been healed. There is no attempt to illustrate the role of the book in the miracle as it is described by Celano. Although a book is indicated on the meansa, this is not unique to this scene but appears on all of the altars in Pisa II.

The reason for the inclusion of these two new miracle illustrations on the Pisa II altarpiece is unaccountable. Although the original four miracles are retold in the Tractatus, the two additional ones are not located directly before or after them; the original order of the Vita Prima no longer even exists in the Tractatus. These two miracles therefore do not seem to have been chosen, like Berlinghieri's, in a general following of their order in the
text. Neither are these two miracles described as happening in Pisa or its vicinity, so they have apparently not been singled out for specific topical reasons. The Pisan artist was undoubtedly assigned his subject matter on some particular basis, but the significance which the two new scenes may have had is elusive. The order in which the Pisan artist represents the six scenes does not follow their chronology in the Tractatus, nor does he place the two new miracles after the four original ones of Pescia I. Instead he seems to have arranged the scenes roughly on the Pescia I order but in such a way that he can symmetrically balance his entire composition by placing the "tomb-miracle" scenes with their mirror-image settings in the four corners, and the two scenes with divergent settings in the centre.

Deductions: Dependencies and Dating

The miracle scenes on Pescia I are the earliest surviving illustrations of these subjects and may represent the first pictorial interpretations of Celano's text. Whether Bonaventura Berlinghieri was the creator of the original scenes or not, it is the iconography of Pescia I which the subsequent miracle panels follow. Either Pescia I or an unknown earlier painting was the iconographic model from which all other illustrations of the four miracles directly or indirectly were derived.

The size, shape, and number of scenes of Pisa II indicate its close connection to Pescia I. Although it includes two unique miracle scenes, Pisa II is closer than Assisi VI or Rome VII to the Pescia I versions of the four original miracles. These four miracle scenes, however, were considerably simplified from Pescia I to Pisa II. The most significant changes occurred in scenes of the healing of the cripples and the healing of the possessed, where the number of sick people is reduced to a single figure in both scenes.

Both Assisi VI and Rome VII repeat the simplified scenes of Pisa II by
including only one crippled man and one possessed woman. This indicates that Assisi VI and Rome VII are not dependent on Pescia I, but on either Pisa II or an unknown panel with similar scenes. Assisi VI and Rome VII are strongly related in their iconographies [especially noticeable in the healing of the possessed] and their physical formats. However, Assisi VI displays some details of subject matter which are present in Pisa II but absent from Rome VII, such as the man covering his ears in the possessed scene and the healed cripple walking away from the altar. Assisi VI is therefore dependent on Pisa II, and Rome VII on Assisi VI. The chain of iconographic influences among the extant panels is thus Pescia I to Pisa II to Assisi VI to Rome VII.

The date of Pescia I is known to be 1235. Because of its dependence on the Tractatus de Miraculis, Pisa II can be assigned a date after 1250, but probably within the decade of the '50's because of its affinity to Pescia I, and for stylistic reasons. Assisi VI must therefore date from after the 1250's and, because of its stylistic relationship to the school of Giunta Pisano, most probably from at least a decade after Pisa II. This places Rome VII at least in the 1270's, and quite possibly even later in the century due to the relatively advanced architectural and spatial solutions which it displays. These dates would agree with those proposed [without reasons] by Garrison.

The Significance of the Miracle Scenes

That four particular posthumous miracles should be repeatedly chosen out of the wealth of stories about St. Francis for illustration on the storied retables must indicate something about the religious doctrines behind them or the intended purpose of the panels. When the sources of these four miracles is examined, the reasons for their frequent inclusion on the altarpieces becomes clear. Those miracles chosen for depiction on Pescia I and repeated on Pisa II, Assisi VI and Rome VII all derive from that last section of Celano's Vita Prima.
which enumerates the miracles that occurred after the death of Francis. As already noted, the forty miracles there described are those which were collected for the purpose of Francis' canonization. There was therefore a direct link between the canonization procedure and the selection of subject matter for the altarpieces. The Franciscans who commissioned the panels were not interested in illustrations of the life of Francis, but of those events which had proven his sanctity. Such a choice indicates that the storied retables were not designed as visual narratives expounding the events of Francis' career; they were instead visual reminders of the fact that Francis was a saint. As altarpieces they were objects of veneration, and likewise what was represented on them emphasized the attitude towards Francis which most deserved worship: his semi-divine position as a saint.

Like the speedy canonization itself, the commissioning of Celano's Vita Prima, and the erection of the sumptuous Assisi basilica, the production of the early storied retables was a symptom of the desire within the Order to establish and emphasize the sanctity of their founder. These early miracle panels can be seen as belonging to the atmosphere of official Franciscan propaganda which surrounded Francis' canonization. In their emphasis on the canonization miracles, Pescia I, Pisa II, Assisi VI and Rome VII belong to a distinct tradition of Franciscan iconography. But the subject matter of the storied retables changes during the Duecento, and Pistoia III, even though it includes the four miracle scenes, indicates a new development in the illustration of the Franciscan legend.
NOTES

1 All six events which were illustrated on Pescia I were described by Thomas of Celano in his Vita Prima of 1230.


3 Oswald Siren, Toskanische Maler im XIII. Jahrhundert [Berlin: Paul Cassirer, 1922], pp. 79-80.

4 Bughetti Vita e miracoli, p. 11.

5 The same miracle is retold almost verbatim in Celano's Tractatus de Miraculis, number 160. St. Bonaventura does not include it.


7 The body of Francis was placed in S. Giorgio in 1226 and transferred to S. Francesco in 1230.

8 Bughetti Vita e Miracoli, pp. 12-13. Bughetti reads the altar as being represented in a single plane so that he interprets the vertical lines as long legs supporting the mensa, not as the edges of a projection.

9 ibid.

10 ibid., p. 14.

11 Reproduced in Garrison Italian Romanesque Panel Painting.


13 ibid.

14 Bughetti Vita e miracoli, pp. 9-11.

15 Sabatier Vie de S. Francois discusses how the body of Francis was considered so valuable and was so sought after by worshippers that the tomb was constantly guarded.

16 The dimensions of the scene compartments are given by Bughetti Vita e miracoli as Pescia I: 0.33 m. by 0.31 m., Pisa II: 0.29 m. by 0.40 m.

17 Bughetti, ibid., p. 24 again misreads the spatial depiction of the tomb and sees it as floating in the air.
Some of the friar figures on Pistoia III and Assisi VI display similar two-coloured habits.

Bughetti Vita e miracoli, pp. 29-31.


Bughetti Vita e miracoli, p. 64 suggests that this hill town represents Assisi.

This is the term used to describe similar constructions by John White, The Birth and Rebirth of Pictoria Space [Boston: Boston Book and Art Shop, 1967], pp. 26-28.

White, ibid., identifies the reappearance of the foreshortened-frontal as occurring primarily during the era of Cimabue.

See Appensix, Rome VII.


Siren Toskanische Maler, p. 81

Bughetti Vita e miracoli, pp. 15-16.

All of these miracles are retold in slightly abbreviated form in Celano's Tractatus de Miraculis, numbers 161-167. Bonaventura includes none of them.

Translated from the Vita Prima, pp. 147-149.

Bughetti Vita e Miracoli, pp. 15-16.

These crutches are not depicted like those of the following scene. Instead they seem to represent the objects used by crawling cripples with which they dragged themselves along the ground.

Bughetti Vita e miracoli, p. 16, note 1 cites other earlier examples of similar attributes.

ibid., p. 16.

Bughetti, ibid., p. 26 suggests that the large space between the two friars was meant to indicate Francis' invisible presence. This is not a likely suggestion, however, for the entire miracle which involved the active intervention of Francis has been omitted.
Mario Salmi, "Una tavola primitiva nella Chiesa di S. Francesco a Pisa", Rivista d'Arte, VII, 1910, p. 67 misreads the pilgrim-leper as a man who has brought the cripple to the tomb and who has removed his shoes and carries them over his shoulder.


See Appendix, Assisi VI.

Crowe and Cavalcaselle A History of Italian Painting, p. 242, and Facchinetti Iconografia Francescana, p. 23, note 4 identify the scene as Francis "raising a cripple". Bughetti Vita e miracoli, p. 17 gives the specific literary source.

Translated from the Vita Prima, pp. 149-150.

Bughetti Vita e miracoli, p. 17.

Celano's description suggests a country site for the bath in that it gives no place names.

Siren Toskanische Maler, p. 171 is most derogatory in his judgement of the artist of Rome VII.

Salmi "Una tavola primitiva nella Chiesa di S. Francesco a Pisa", p. 70.

Crowe and Cavalcaselle A History of Italian Painting, p. 242.

Facchinetti Iconografia Francescana, p. 23, note 4.

Repeated in Celano's Tractatus de Miraculis, numbers 150-156. Bonaventura reproduces them in part in his section "De miraculis", number 4.

Translated from the Vita Prima, pp. 151-152.


Bughetti Vita e miracoli, p. 18.

Reau Iconographie de l'Art Chretien, vol. I.

Bughetti Vita e miracoli, p. 28.

See Appendix, Assisi VI.

Bughetti Vita e miracoli, p. 25.

Frederick Antal, Florentine Painting and its Social Background [London: Kegan Paul, 1911], p. 147.

56 ibid., pp. 510-511.

57 Bughetti *Vita e miracoli*, p. 25.

58 *Tractatus de Miraculis*, numbers 119, 122.

59 The *Tractatus* numbers following the order of the scenes on the panel are 160, 103, 193, 161-167, 173, 150-156.

60 The same four miracles appear to have been represented on San Miniato al Tedesco VIII [see plate VIII], but in abbreviated form from Pescia I. Their arrangement repeats Pescia I, however, suggesting that the lost panel was produced after Pescia I but before Pisa II.

61 Giunta Pisano was active in the 1250's and 1260's.

62 Garrison *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting*.

63 See Chapter II, "The Literary Sources for the Life of St. Francis".
CHAPTER IV: THE LIFE-CYCLE PANELS

The Pistoia Panel

Although Pistoia III is roughly contemporary with Assisi VI, the scenes of Pistoia III display a new trend in the iconography of the Franciscan legend. The four miracle scenes which were common to the four miracle panels appear at the bottom of Pistoia III with four scenes from the life of Francis above. This arrangement places Pistoia III midway between the earliest "miracle panel" iconography and the fully developed "life-cycle" iconography which will appear in Florence IV and Siena V.

The four original miracle scenes are placed in the lower two compartments on each side. They are depicted in the same order as they were in Pescia I, reading top to bottom, left to right. This order is repeated in the top four scenes. The eight scenes of the panel thus form two separate units in their reading order, the division being between illustrations of Francis' life and of miracles after his death. The iconography of the miracle scenes follows the general pattern established in Pescia I, but due to the absence of some motifs and the addition of others unique to the Pistoia III iconography, it is not possible to determine the particular pictorial source drawn upon by this artist. The basic elements, however, as well as the style and conception of the architectural backgrounds place this panel closer to Pescia I and Pisa II than to Rome VII and Assisi VI.

The arrangement of the first miracle scene, that of the "healing of the deformed girl" repeats the general pattern of all its other versions, with the mother kneeling before the altar at the right, the young girl lying in front of the altar, and the mother leaving at the far left with the healed girl on her shoulders. But there are several features unique to this interpretation of the scene. The architectural background has been reduced to a single narrow building at the extreme left and the group of witnesses to the miracle has
been completely eliminated. The number of friars has been increased to three, however, and a triple baldacchino structure surmounts the altar. This takes the form of a plain wooden sarcophagus of the type which appears in Assisi VI, with two books on its top. The most interesting detail is the portrayal of the girl leaning against the altar; she is here depicted with her shoulder bared and her head lying right against it, an iconographic detail which suggests that the Pistoia III artist [or the panel's commissioners] may have been referring back to the literary account more than was done in other copies of this scene. A new type of gesture is also displayed by the characters in this scene. As she leaves at the left, the mother raises her open right hand and the little girl on her shoulders uplifts both her hands, as if they are marvelling at the miracle that has just occurred.

The second miracle scene depicting the healing of the cripple is of that type established in Pisa II, in which only one cripple and the leper-pilgrim are included. The altar in the Pistoia scene is a draped one, with chalice, book, and ampula on the mensa and a single baldacchino over it. The background architecture is again reduced to a single structure at the far left. A rather interesting transference of attributes occurs between the figures of the two supplicants. The figure of the cripple is shown, both as he kneels and walks away, holding the stick with hanging water bottle which previously was in the hands of the pilgrim figure to distinguish him as a leper. The second figure, who still wears the hat and mantle of the pilgrim, now bears none of the attributes which indicate that he was also a leper, although Bughetti maintains that traces of a chestnut branch in his hand are visible beneath retouchings to the scene. There is no indication of the crutches lying beside the kneeling cripple as they were shown in the other versions of this miracle scene. Three friars again appear behind the altar and display new gestures here. The left-
most friar raises his hands high into the air in an attitude of prayer, while the one next to him holds his left hand, completely covered by the sleeve of his tunic, over his mouth. This last gesture recurs in the fourth miracle scene of this panel.

The lay-out of the third miracle scene, the healing of Bartholomeo of Narni, most closely resembles that of Pescia I. The bath is shown simply as a sort of pond with rocks at the left upon which Bartolomeo sits. A large rectangular building is shown behind the bath. The position of St. Francis, who bends to touch the cripple's leg, is neither the almost perpendicular one of Pisa II nor the active one of Assisi VI and Rome VII but closest to that of Pescia I. The figure of Bartolomeo leaving with his crutches over his shoulder is also most similar to Pescia I in that he walks straight ahead without the backward glance and raised leg shown in the other versions. A slight change occurs in the Pistoia scene where the seated Bartolomeo is represented holding his crutches to either side of his body rather than specifically supporting his crippled leg.

The last of the four miracle depictions is again the healing of the possessed. The direction of the scene on Pistoia III is in reverse to its other four versions, with the altar now located at the right. The form of the baldacchino over the altar is quite different; it is more like an aediculum. The only other architectural element in the scene is a small building at the extreme left. A large number of friars observe the miracle from behind the altar. Those at the left look up and gesture towards the devils being emitted and the friar at the far right displays the covering-the-mouth attitude already described. Left of the altar stands a single possessed woman who now emits two, instead of one, little winged demons. She is not shown bare-breasted this time but again has long, dishevelled hair. Her male companion is shown in a new attitude of placing his arms right around her rather than holding her
arm, and a second onlooker at the extreme left looks up at the devils, his hands raised in surprise.

The four upper scenes of Pistoia III represent, in chronological order, the approbation of the Rule, Francis preaching, the Stigmatization, and the death of Francis. Except for the Stigmatization, these scenes are the earliest extant representations of these events from the earthly life of St. Francis. Their inclusion on a storied retable would seem to indicate a new direction in the thematic emphasis of Franciscan art. The choice of the four events from the Saint's life represented on Pistoia III suggests an interest in that part of Francis' story which was influential on the establishment of the Order. This is indicated by the portrayal first of all of Francis receiving the Pope's permission to form a new Order, followed by a scene of him carrying out the purpose of the Order by preaching. The Stigmatization, an event of a different significance is then included, but notably in chronological sequence. The series ends with a representation of the death of the founder. In its portrayal of events from Francis' life in chronological order ending with a death scene, Pistoia III's iconography resembles the general type of subject matter found in paintings of the life of Christ or Mary, or of other saints on storied retables. It also serves as a basis for the much more elaborate "life-story" iconography of Florence IV.

The story of the approbation of Francis' first rule by Innocent III is recounted in Celano's Vita Prima numbers 32-33. No descriptive details of the event are included there, with regard to specific actions or appearances. The emphasis of the written account is on the good intentions and blessedness of the persons involved. Thus, there is no specific allusion to the text in the Pistoia III artist's portrayal of the scene. His composition is a very simple one, arranged to fit into the triangular compartment at the upper left of the panel. The Pople, wearing ecclesiastical robes, is seated at the right while a
crowd of clerics look on from behind the chair: Francis, depicted here without a halo since this is an event occurring before his death, kneels before Innocent III at the left. The book representing the Rule is held in the hands of the two figures, in the act of being presented to one or the other. No background elements are included.

The identification of the second scene on the left cannot be correlated with any particular passage in Franciscan literature. The drawback of not being able to identify precisely some of the elements of the scene [namely, the structure at the bottom] due to the poor physical condition of the panel further increases the difficulty in interpretation. No similar composition appears in any of the other retables. That the scene represents St. Francis preaching is the most accurate identification that is possible. Francis and two other friars are shown standing on a sort of raised altar or ambo that has a balustrade along the top, a scalloped lower edge, and motifs of eagles decorating its front. Francis, represented without a halo, stands in the centre and raises his open right hand in a gesture similar to that of the panel's large central figure. With his left hand he points down to the ground, while the friars to either side look in towards him. Under the ambo is a structure which appears to be an altar, for it has a book placed on its top. But it is depicted differently from the altars in the other scenes and seems to be marked by dark vertical bands down its centre and side edges. To the far left and right of the scene stand large crowds of people gazing up at the friars: Those on the left are all women wearing long robes and with covered heads, while those on the right are all men in short tunics.

The third of the upper scenes on Pistoia III is a representation of the Stigmatization. Because of its special significance the iconography of this scene will be discussed separately and in relationship to other early Stigmatization illustrations.
The life-cycle scenes on Pistoia III end with a representation of the funeral of St. Francis. Although the events surrounding Francis' funeral are described in the *Vita Prima* numbers 116 to 118, there is nothing in this or any other written account that indicates the dependence of the scene on a literary source. As Bughetti notes, the scene is derived more from representations of Christ's sepulchre or the death of the Virgin. Francis is depicted with halo and stigmata, lying with his hands crossed over his chest on a high bier draped with red cloth. Two friars stand behind the bier, the left one reading from a book and raising his right sleeve to his face, and the right one holding an obliterated object that appears to be a candle. A large crowd of friars in Franciscan habits stands at the right of the scene, displaying various gestures of grief. At the left is a group of clerics in ecclesiastical garb, one of whom holds a censer and an open book which reads: *REQUIEM ETERNAM DONAEI DOMINE*. A friar near the back of this group of clerics raises a leafed branch which Bughetti identifies as the aspergillum. Bughetti also notes that certain traces of paint at the top of the scene are the vestiges of a depiction of St. Francis in glory but these are not discernible today. Such a motif was, however, invariably included on representations of the death of the Virgin, on which this scene seems to be modelled. Moreover, the scene of the funeral of Francis on Florence IV is very similar to that of Pistoia III and includes the image of Francis in glory. It is therefore likely that Pistoia III originally bore the detail which Bughetti suggests.

In its combination of four miracle scenes and four life-cycle scenes Pistoia III can be seen as joining the two streams of early Franciscan iconography. The trend towards life-cycle subject matter was not strictly a subsequent development to the miracle panels, however. Pistoia III derives its miracle scenes' iconography from Pescia I, but is not related to Pisa II, Assisi VI or
Rome VII. The interest in life-cycle scenes was beginning to develop at the same time as the later miracle panels were being produced. Florence IV is dependent on Pistoia III in both details of subject matter and the tradition of life-cycle iconography.

Florence IV

The St. Francis retable in the Bardi Chapel, Santa Croce displays twenty side scenes, and thus represents the most extensive cycle of the legend of St. Francis before the Assisi frescoes. Like those of Pistoia III, the twenty scenes are arranged in chronological order. But the reading order here begins at the upper left, runs top to bottom, then, with the four scenes at the base of the central figure, from top to bottom in the left two and bottom to top in the right two. The reading direction of these four bottom scenes is compositionally indicated by the strong diagonals in the uppermost two compartments. The cycle finishes from the bottom to top of the eight scenes on the panel's right side. Although this panel's iconography does include the depiction of certain miracles after Francis' death, these are not arranged as a separate group of scenes echoing the format of the miracle panels as in Pistoia III, but are intergrated with the other scenes so that the cycle forms a single chronological series. Florence IV therefore represents the earliest continuous life-cycle narrative of the Franciscan legend. It is this type of narrative which is followed in the later Siena V, and in the fresco cycles of the subject in Assisi and in the Bardi Chapel.

The first scene represents an event from Francis' youth, described in the Vita Prima, numbers 12 and 13, in which Francis is locked in a dark room in his parents' house by his father as a result of the latter's disapproval of his son's actions. Francis' mother, however, releases him when her husband leaves the house. In the Florence IV scene the young Francis is represented in a
tunic since the event occurs before his taking up of the habit and with a halo [as he is shown in all the scenes of this panel]. He is depicted at the right emerging from the doorway of a building. His hands are tied to a column outside; the detail that his hands were bound is mentioned specifically in the written account. His mother unties them. To the left stands Francis' father, who extends his hands towards the others in gestures of disapproval. The presence of the father at this scene is either an addition by the artist, or meant to represent the events occurring immediately before or after the action shown at the right, from which he is absent according to the written description. The background to this scene consists of a series of frontally depicted buildings, which are quite similar in both the types of structures shown and their decorative borders to those of Pescia I and Pisa II [and perhaps Pistoia III although the latter is too dirty to distinguish in detail].

Scene two depicts the events described in the *Vita Prima* immediately following the ones shown above, in numbers 14 and 15. Francis renounces his worldly goods before the Bishop and returns to his father all that has been given him. The basic iconographic lay-out for this scene as it is established here becomes the basis for later representations of the event. Francis' parents stand at the left and Francis sits on the lap of the seated Bishop [distinguished by a mitre and red robe] at the right. He covers the naked youth with his mantle, as described by Celano. Between the two groups of figures lie the garments which Francis has taken off and thrown to the ground. This is another detail which accurately follows the text. Both Francis and his father point down at the clothes, while the mother and a standing clerical figure look on from the extreme left and right respectively.

The third scene represents for the first and only time the incident of Francis' first tunic taking the form of a cross. Although this event is
described in Celano's *Vita Prima*, number 22, the artist is apparently basing his illustration on Bonaventura's account, as told in chapter II number 4, where the circumstances surrounding the story are altered so that it occurs in the presence of the Bishop, immediately after Francis' renunciation of worldly goods. The same figures of Bishop and deacon are shown as in the scene above, but reversed and at the left, and both raise their hands in wonder at the occurrence before them. Francis, still clothed in his lay tunic, stands at the right and touches the miraculous habit with a long rod. The habit is depicted as if seen from above, against the background architecture; its hood and sleeves are stretched out so that it approximates the shape of a cross.

The fourth compartment contains another scene unique to Florence IV: Francis at the Porziuncola [the first church used by the early Franciscans as their base]. The specific event being depicted is the story of how upon hearing at Mass at the Porziuncola the text, in which Christ tells his disciples to take neither money, nor two robes, nor shoes on their travels, Francis rids himself of his shoes and walking stick. This event is described by Celano as part of the same story of the cross-shaped habit [Celano number 22], but the literary source for this painted scene again seems to be Bonaventura's version [III, 1]. For not only has the cross-shaped habit event been placed before this one, according to Bonaventura's order of narrative, but Francis is also shown in the Proziuncola scene already wearing his brown habit tied with a rope, an apparel which is a result of this story in Celano's description. The scene consists of the priest behind a high altar in the centre, an ecclesiastical assistant at the left, and Francis kneeling at the right with a group of onlookers behind him. Francis is in the process of removing his right shoe; the left one is already off, on the ground beside him. The priest looks down towards him and holds an open book which bears the words: *SEQUENTIA SANCTI*
The fifth event depicted is the approbation of the Rule; this is the first of those scenes common to both Florence IV and Pistoia III which indicate an iconographic dependence of the former on the latter [or on a similar unknown panel of the same tradition]. The basic arrangement of the Pope seated at the right with other clerics behind and Francis kneeling before him with the book of the Rule between them is the same. The scene has been elaborated somewhat in Florence IV, however. A second friar stands behind Francis, holding his hands prayerfully towards the Pope, and left of him a figure in ecclesiastical robes stands grasping a closed book. The background has also been filled in to resemble those of the panel's other scenes.

Another new subject appears in the sixth scene: the presepio at Greccio. In both Celano's *Vita Prima* [numbers 85, 86] and Bonaventura's *Leggenda* [X, 7] it is described how Francis took part in a Christmas mass at Greccio to which he brought a manger, ox, and ass to recreate Bethlehem. But it is apparently the Celano account which the Bardi Master is using for his source, for this version stresses the fact that Francis served as deacon at the mass and sang from the Gospel. Bonaventura's story does not specifically mention this fact, but dwells more upon the miraculous vision had by an onlooker, in which Francis was seen to waken and hold a child in the manger. Although this is another new scene in Franciscan iconography the event is repeated with variations on Siena V and the Assisi frescoes. The altar, with articles for the mass on top, is represented in the centre of the scene with the celebrant priest in red robes standing behind. In front of the altar is a series of three small hillocks on which rests the child, with the heads of the ox and ass peering over it. Francis stands to the right; he wears deacon's robes and holds an open book in his left hand, a censer in his right. A group of listeners stands to
his right, and three white-robed assistants are at the far left. Although the standard architectural forms fill part of the background, another structure like a shallow arch has been added here over the centre of the scene.

The next event depicted is Francis' sermon to the birds, the iconography of which will be discussed in Chapter V. This is followed by a new scene at the lower left of the panel: Francis preaching before the Sultan of Egypt. The *Vita Prima* does not include this story, but Bonaventura's account does [IX, 7,8]. Most of the written description is devoted to the words of Francis in his attempt to convert the Sultan to Christianity, so that the painted version of the story is primarily an attempt to suggest the setting of the event. Francis is shown at the left holding an open book and raising his hand as he speaks to the Egyptians. A second friar stands behind him; this is a detail specified by the text, which states that brother Illuminato accompanied Francis on this mission. But a third friar is also just visible behind him. The Sultan is seated on a cushioned throne; his large dark beard suggests his eastern nationality, his crown and sceptre his rank. An attendant with a spear stands behind him. In the centre of the scene is a large crowd of Egyptians, all looking attentively towards Francis, some of them raising their hands. Many of the men are turbanned and have long dark or grey beards. Those in the front row [who are the only listeners whose bodies are visible] sit in cross-legged positions as a further indication of their oriental character. The inclusion of the crowd of Egyptians is an elaboration of the written account, which refers to Francis' desire to convert the Sultan's people, but not to the fact that he actually preached to them as well.

The following two scenes are unique to the Bardi altarpiece, occurring no where else in early Franciscan art and it is interesting to speculate upon the possible reasons for the inclusion of these relatively obscure subjects.
Scenes 9 and 10 will be discussed together here because of their literary and topical affinities. Both stories are recounted only in Celano's *Vita Prima*, the first in numbers 77 and 78, followed directly by the second in number 79. Both are presented as examples of Francis' special love for lambs, because of their associations with Christ. The first story tells how Francis and brother Paolo came across a shepherd with a herd of goats that included one lamb. Having compassion for the lamb, which Francis compared to that of Christ, they purchased it through the donation of a passing merchant and placed it in the cloisters of a monastery. The panel representation of the scene is set amid hills to indicate the pastoral site. The shepherd, in tunic and hat, holding his staff, stands at the right with his herd of goats and boars in the foreground. He extends his right hand towards the three friars who stand at the left behind the hill. The right-most one is Francis, who holds the white lamb under his arm.

The second story tells how on another occasion Francis and Paolo encountered a man taking two lambs to market, hung by their feet from a pole over his shoulders. In his compassion for the animals Francis gave the man his new mantle so that he need not sell the lambs, and ordered him to keep the animals but never to harm them. The Bardi artist's representation of this event is based quite accurately on the Celano text; it shows Francis at the left with his companion, in the process of offering the mantle to the peasant at the right. The latter is depicted with the tied lambs over his shoulder as described by the text. The background again consists of hills.

There are three possible explanations for the inclusion of these "sheep" scenes on Florence IV. Their positions on the panel are relatively important ones in that they are immediately next to the altar. When the subject matter is considered with that of some of the other scenes which appear for the first
time on this panel, especially the first two scenes from Francis' youth, Scene II of Francis doing penance, and Scene 14 of Francis among the lepers, it is evident that the iconographical programme of this painting has been designed to emphasize different aspects of the Saint's life than in all earlier altarpieces. For these new scenes illustrate the more human and emotional aspects of Francis' character more than ever before. The underlying theme of the iconography is neither the sanctity of Francis as proven by posthumous miracles [as in the first four panels], nor Francis as founder of the Order [as in the Pistoia III "life" scenes], although events from both of these trends are still included here. That the scenes to be represented were carefully and specifically chosen rather than just based on a single literary account is indicated by the fact that the two "sheep" scenes were deliberately included from the *Vita Prima* at a time when official Franciscan doctrine decreed that only Bonaventura's *Leggenda* was to be used as a biography of the Saint. The addition of more anecdotal scenes would seem to indicate the influence of the Spiritualist type of interest in Francis' life. Perhaps it was on the basis of similar observations that Zimmerman stated [without reasons] his belief that the painter of the Bardi panel was a Spiritual Franciscan. The possibility of Spiritualist influence on the iconography of this painting seems to be a strong one when it is remembered that in the 1280's the church of Santa Croce had strong Spiritualist tendencies during the lectorships of Peter John Olivi and Ubertino of Casale.

Apart from this general tendency in the panel's iconography, there may have been more particular reasons for the specific inclusion of the two "sheep" scenes. It is interesting to note that Bonaventura's account of Francis going before the Sultan includes a section describing Francis' mental preparation for the mission. One of the passages Francis quotes to his companion is
"I send you like sheep into the midst of wolves" [Matthew 10: 16]. Since the two "sheep" scenes are depicted immediately following the one of Francis before the Sultan, a pictorial allusion to Francis' words may have been intended here. Another possibility is that the two stories of Francis saving lambs were chosen for their Joachistic suggestiveness, both in their parallelism of Francis with Christ the Lamb, and in their implications of the Lamb of the Apocalypse and hence Francis' Apocalyptic role. The Joachistic influences on Franciscan art will be discussed in detail in Chapter VI.

The scene following these two depicts another of the more emotional events of Francis' life, and is again unique to Florence IV. The story being shown is an act of penitence by Francis, who had eaten meat during an illness. Both Celano and Bonaventura describe how he repented for this sin. Celano [Vita Prima number 52] says that Francis ordered one of his companions to lead him by a rope around his neck through Assisi to declare his sinfulness. But Bonaventura [VI, 2] describes more specifically that Francis had himself dragged by the rope across the cathedral floor before a crowd of townspeople and friars. The Bardi scene differs from both descriptions in that Francis is shown seated in the centre with a rope around his neck and binding his hands to a column. But the fact that he is depicted having removed his habit, which lies on the ground to the left, and is clad only in his drawers would indicate that it is Bonaventura's account that is being referred to, where this aspect of the story is specifically included. No other friars are shown observing the event, but crowds of townspeople look on from either side, the men on the left and the women on the right as if they are in fact inside a church. The background of two vertical side buildings and a horizontal one between is similar to those of the panel's earlier scenes.

The next scene is the Stigmatization, which will be discussed in Chapter V. This is followed by a scene which again appears here for the first time:
the apparition at Arles, a subject which reappears in the Assisi frescoes with a completely different iconography. The story of this miraculous event is included in the writings of both Celano [Vita Prima, 48] and Bonaventura [IV, 10]. The descriptions are essentially identical; during the meeting of the Chapter at Arles in 1224, from which Francis was absent, Anthony of Padua was delivering a sermon on "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews". As he spoke, one of the friars named Monaldo, who was exceptionally virtuous, saw a vision of Francis with his hands held out forming a cross and blessing the friars, suspended in the air at the entrance to the meeting house. The Bardi illustration of the event depicts it as occurring outside rather than in a room. At the left the grey-haired Anthony stands before the doorway to a building and raises his hands in an attitude of preaching. A large crowd of friars, all clutching books, stand at the right listening to and watching him. In the central space appears the bust of Francis, who faces Anthony. He is not shown with his arms extended as described by the text, but merely holding up his right hand in a gesture of blessing. Bughetti is probably correct in identifying the left-most of the listening friars as Monaldo, since he is the only one who extends his hands and who appears to be regarding Francis rather than Anthony. Although this depiction is the only extant version of the scene preceding the frescoed one at Assisi, the latter is in no way dependent on the panel scene, but is much more accurate to the textual description.

The following scene represents Francis caring for lepers, which is described by Bonaventura in his Chapter II, 6, and is therefore placed rather drastically out of order in the panel's cycle of subjects. Bonaventura's account tells that early in his career Francis stayed with the lepers and lovingly washed their feet and dressed their wounds. This description is followed by the story of how a leper was cured when Francis kissed his infected
lips. The panel illustration is a double one. At the right three men with leprosy, indicated by red spots covering their bodies, are seated on a large bench. Francis bends over beside them in the process of washing the feet of one of them in a basin of water. A towel hangs from his belt. At the left of the scene Francis is shown again, sitting on a bench and holding another leper on his lap. This may represent the episode of Francis kissing the leper for, as Bughetti notes, Francis has one of his hands placed behind the sick man's head, as if to draw it closer to his own. Against the architectural background a cloth hangs from the central baldacchino; Bughetti identifies this object as the towel which Francis has removed in the second part of the story, but it is so strangely knotted and folded as to suggest that it represents some other unidentifiable object.

Next is an illustration of the funeral of St. Francis, which has strong similarities to Pistoia III's version of this scene. The Saint lies with crossed hands on a large bier, his head on a cushion, but facing the other direction now. Groups of friars stand to either side; one at the right holds an open book while another behind the bier swings a censer. At the top of the scene is a small representation of Francis; soul being drawn up to heaven by angels, a feature which was also originally part of the Pistoia III scene. A new addition, however, which links this scene to the one following it is the kneeling figures in front of the bier. These two men and two women are lame or ill people. They raise their hands towards the dead Saint and are shown with malformed legs and crutches beside them. This suggestion that miracles of healing were sought immediately upon Francis' death relates well to the next scene of posthumous miracles.

The representation of healings at Francis' tomb condenses several of the miracles shown on earlier panels into a single scene. The unmistakable
similarities between the elements of this illustration and the miracle portrayals on Pistoia III indicate that the Florence IV artist was basing his composition on Pistoia III or a very similar unknown panel. The altar is in the form of a plain wooden box, as in Pistoia III's scene 5, and the position of the little girl lying in front of it is almost identical to that of the Pistoia III version. The mother is not shown kneeling before the tomb, but walks off at the left with the girl on her shoulders. Two friars stand behind the altar with their hands raised high in the air. This distinctive gesture seems to derive from that of one of the friars in Pistoia III's scene 6. The second healing miracle shown is the exorcism of the possessed. The possessed woman, the man who holds her, and the one behind who holds up his hands in surprise are all nearly identical to the corresponding figures in Pistoia III's scene 8. The head of another man has been placed beside the woman's, however, and the figure of a man in a tunic looking up at the demons with raised hands has been added next to the tomb.

Scene 17 has been identified by Bughetti as representing the canonization of Francis. The canonization ceremony is described in the Vita Prima in great detail in numbers 123 to 126, and in the Leggenda Majora, 15, 7, but it is depicted very simply on Florence IV. The Pope and three cardinals stand behind the altar at the right and a crowd of robed ecclesiastical figures assist at the right. Pope Gregory raises his hand in proclamation. Like that of the presepio scene, the altar is covered by a shallow decorated arch. This is perhaps to indicate the setting within a church, although it is omitted in other of the church scenes. By placing the canonization illustration after the scene of miraculous healings, the artist of Florence IV has deviated from the order of description in the written accounts, but has been historically accurate. The texts tell the story of the canonization then describe the miracles, whereas
the panel indicates that the tomb miracles were those which occurred before the canonization. Scenes 15, 16 and 17 of Florence IV therefore comprise a visual account of the process of which the earlier miracle panels were products. Francis died, the lame arrived, they were healed at his tomb, and Francis was canonized as a result of the miracles.

The three final scenes of Florence IV all illustrate other posthumous miracles. Hence, this section of the paintings cycle represents a validation of the earlier miracle panels' tradition. Two of these scenes are unique to this panel. Scene 18 illustrates Francis appearing in a boat to save it from shipwreck. A number of very similar tales of Francis rescuing shipwrecked sailors are found in Celano's Tractatus [numbers 81 to 87] and Bonaventura's section on miracles, Part IV, so that the exact miracle being depicted is unidentifiable. Bughetti suggests the one described by Bonaventura, IV, number 5, which concerns sailors from Ancona. The boat is set amid a pattern of waves flanked by pointed rocks which represent the shorelines. Francis appears in person at the left and raised his hand in blessing. A crowd of sailors face him, kneeling or extending their hands in supplication.

The following miracle scene has not been identified. It does not correspond to any event described by Celano or Bonaventura and must therefore derive either from a more obscure source or from an oral rather than written tradition. The scene takes place at an altar which is probably the tomb of Francis. Two friars stand behind it. At the left a large number of men emerge from a doorway and approach the altar. They are all naked except for loincloths and each bears a candle. The candles are being presented to one of the friars while the other raises his hands in prayer or invokation. It would appear that the men are performing some rite of penitence at the tomb of Francis, for their nudity is an indication of their penitent state. Bughetti notes that
this illustration corresponds to one of the stories found in the legend of St. Anthony of Padua in which sailors from Venice do penance. It is probably a similar event which occurred at Francis' tomb that is depicted on Florence IV, especially since this scene follows that of shipwrecked sailors. Perhaps the penitent men are meant to represent those same sailors whom Francis rescued in the previous scene.

The last scene on Florence IV is the now-familiar healing of Bartolomeo of Narni. The details of the Florence IV version of this miracle indicate another dependence on Pistoia III. The conception of the bath is similar and the way in which Bartolomeo sits with his crutches far apart then walks straight off the scene without a backward glance are features which had appeared in Pistoia III.

The only preceding storied retable which Florence IV resembles in the details of its scenes is Pistoia III, which in turn was related only to Pescia I. Florence IV can therefore be seen as the result of a second chain of dependencies within the panels. The first ran from Pescia I, to Pisa II to Assisi VI and Rome VII. This second set of iconographic relationships, however, passes from Pescia I to Pistoia III to Florence IV.

The twenty scenes on Florence IV comprise a very interesting and somewhat enigmatic life-cycle. That such a large number of subjects should appear on a storied retable is in itself significant, since the most extensive previous cycle consisted of only eight scenes. Moreover, fourteen of the scenes have no known prototypes and eight of these never appear again in early Franciscan art. The literary sources which were chosen for models for the scenes are also intriguing. Most of the events shown are described by both Celano and Bonaventura, but in four cases Bonaventura alone has been consulted and in two cases Celano. Florence IV must date after 1263 because of the specific
dependence upon Bonaventura's *Leggenda Major*. The panel was therefore executed at a time when all biographies of St. Francis except Bonaventura's had been banned. Yet the Celano text has also been referred to in the subject matter. These facts suggest that the choice of subjects for Florence IV held a special significance for whoever was responsible for their designation, the importance of which was greater than the desire to follow the official policy of the Order. When the subjects of the Celano scenes [9 and 10] are considered along with some of the other new scenes on Florence IV such as the presepio at Greccio, Francis doing penance and Francis among the lepers, it can be concluded that Florence IV displays a much stronger interest in the more anecdotal and unspectacular incidents of Francis' life. The collection of scenes on Florence IV is different from any that precede or follow it. This might indicate that the panel's iconography was determined by Spiritual Franciscans, to whom the ideals Francis displayed in his daily life were more important than the establishment of a powerful monastic Order.  

An inscription at the top of Florence IV provides proof that it was the ideals expressed by Francis' life which were meant to be emphasized in the painting. At the top of the panel's gable a hand is shown emerging from the heavenly spheres and bearing a scroll which reads: HUNC EXAUDITE PERHIBENTEM DOGMATA VITE ["hearken unto this man revealing the principles of life"]. The emphasis of the Florence IV subject matter is thus not only suggested by the choice of scenes, but is also reinforced by the statement at the top. The inscription clearly states that it is the principles of life which are of concern. The categorization of Florence IV as an important life-cycle panel is spelled out on the painting itself. The advice of the inscription is visually carried out by the two angels at the top who point towards the scroll and by the seventeen small busts of Franciscans on the inner border who raise
their hands and heads towards the central figure of Francis. Both the inscription and the small busts are unique to this panel.

Florence IV clearly establishes the direction of iconographic development among the thirteenth century storied retables in that its subject matter displays an increased emphasis on life-cycle rather than posthumous miracle scenes. In this respect it represents a stage of development between Pistoia III and Siena V. Yet the large number of scenes and their thematic uniqueness set Florence IV apart as an unparalleled visual statement of early Franciscan thought.

Siena V

The eight scenes chosen for representation on Siena V indicate yet another development in the depiction of the Franciscan legend, and it is this type of life-cycle which leads directly to that of the frescoes of the Upper Church, Assisi. Every scene on Siena V is included in the official Bonaventura biography and reappears in the Assisi fresco cycle. Unlike those of the previous panels, all the scenes of Siena V illustrate events from Francis' life, with no posthumous miracle illustrations. This series is therefore a true "life-cycle" and far removed from the original miracle panels. The chronological reading order of the subjects begins at the lower left, up the left row of scenes and down the right.

The first scene represents Francis' renunciation of worldly goods, a subject which was also included on Florence IV. Despite the vertical rectangular shape of Siena V's scene compartments which necessitates a new arrangement of the elements in some cases, the basic pattern displayed in the Florence IV version of the scene is maintained here. The bishop is seated at the right holding the young Francis on his lap and wrapping his mantle around the boy's naked body. Francis indicates his clothes which are lying on the ground to
his father, who stands at the left with a group of onlookers behind him. The figure of Francis' mother is not distinguished among the crowd. A tall, elaborate architectural structure with an arced base and baldacchino on top fills the right background.

The second subject represented is Francis before the crucifix in San Damiano. This scene appears here for the first time on a painting, but was represented in stained glass somewhat earlier in the Upper Church, Assisi. The Sienese artist's interpretation, however, is a unique one. The event being depicted is not included in any of Celano's accounts but is found in the Leggenda Major, II, number 1. The story describes how Francis, while praying in the church of San Damiano before his conversion hears the painted crucifix there tell him to repair his church. In Bonaventura's account this incident precedes that of Francis' renunciation of worldly goods, but the Sienese artist has not only reversed this order, but also represented Francis in the crucifix scene already wearing the habit and bearing the marks of the stigmata. The interests of the artist here seem to be in the symbolic significance of the scene rather than an historical illustration of the story. For, besides making those changes just mentioned, he places Francis not in an attitude of prayer but in a dramatic pose which is almost identical to that of the Stigmatization scene, with Francis stretching his arms up towards the crucifix. The most unusual feature of this scene, however, is the conception of the crucifix itself. Quite unlike the faithful rendition of a painted crucifix panel which appears in the Assisi fresco, the crucifix on Siena V is shown as an actual cross bearing a body. The story has been interpreted so as to conceive of the Christ figure as literally coming to life, not just speaking. For not only is this figure represented as an actual body, but it is also shown having removed its right arm from the cross to point down at Francis. This interpretation suggests that the emphasis is intended to be on the intimate
relationship between Christ and Francis. The setting of the scene consists merely of an altar over which the crucifix stands, with a fenestrated wall behind and a tower to the left. These last two elements are perhaps meant to represent the church of San Damiano.

The third scene on Seina V is again a new subject in paintings but one which first appeared in the Assisi stained glass. It depicts the dream of Pope Innocent III, who has a vision of Francis supporting the falling building of the Lateran on his shoulders. It is this event which convinces the Pope that he should accept the Rule of Francis. The story is recounted in the Leggenda Major, III, number 10. The incident is not described by Celano. The iconography here is again unique in that Francis is shown supporting a large tower which has broken off and falls from the structure of the Lateran. This conception of the scene is quite different from the tradition which begins in the stained glass version and is used in the Assisi fresco. In these latter two scenes Francis supports the entire tilting building on his shoulders, a detail which is more accurate to the text than the Siena V interpretation. In front of the elaborate architecture of the Seina V scene Innocent III is depicted lying on a bier-like bed wearing his papal vestments and extending his arms out towards Francis.

The fourth scene of the panel is the sermon to the birds, which will be discussed in Chapter V. It is followed by the scene of the vision of the fiery chariot at the upper right. This is the earliest known illustration of this event, which was described in Celano's Vita Prima, number 47, and in the Leggenda Major, IV, number 4. The story is worth repeating here in order to appreciate how it was first visually interpreted on Siena V. The Celano and Bonaventura descriptions are almost identical, but since other of Siena V's scenes were based solely on the Leggenda Major it was probably this source
which was used.

While still staying in that hut, one Saturday Francis went to Assisi to preach the following day in the cathedral, as was the custom. He lodged for the night in a miserable and squalid little house inside the kitchen-garden of the parsonage, and passed the entire night in prayer. Although distant from his sons in body, he was not in spirit. Around midnight, while some of the friars were sleeping and others awake in prayer a most splendid chariot of fire surmounted by a globe like the sun that changed the night into day was seen to enter through the door of the hut and turn about inside three times. At that miraculous light they all awoke terrified, and not only saw each other's body, but also the innermost part of the spirit, the conscience. They found themselves having a single thought: "God, in the chariot of fire, intends to show us the gentle father, absent in body, present in spirit, transfigured by celestial splendour and love in order that we may follow him with faith, like the true Israelites".38

In front of an architectural background the friars who see the vision are represented all asleep in a rather strange arrangement of lying stacked up horizontally on two beds which are depicted as if seen from above. Some of the friars raise their hands as they are awakened by the apparition. The chariot shown in the sky above is hardly the "extremely splendid chariot of fire" described in the text, but a small rectangular structure of latticed wood with four little wheels on the bottom. It is not surmounted by a sun-like globe, but contains the figure of Francis, of whom the globe was symbolic. The chariot is drawn by two angels who face Francis as he gestures towards them.39

This scene is followed by the Stigmatization, which again will be treated in Chapter V. The seventh subject represented on Siena V is the presepio at Greccio, which also appeared on Florence IV. The iconographic features are now quite different, however, although the central motif of the celebrant standing behind the altar is similar. The setting consists of a tall background structure like an arcaded aediculum represented strictly frontally like all of this artist's buildings. The priest raises his hands and is flanked by only one attendant to either side. Francis does not stand to the side in his role
of deacon, but is shown dressed in his habit kneeling in front of the altar beside the crib. This indicates that it is definitely Bonaventura's account which stresses the vision of Francis with the Christ child that is being referred to. The crib containing the swaddled child is not placed on rocks, but is a more substantial structure with legs and arched sides. The animals look on from the far right.

The last scene of Siena V's cycle is the funeral of Francis. Like the Pistoia III and Florence IV illustrations of this event, the general iconography is based on that of other standard "death of saints" scenes. Francis is laid out on a draped bier, the priest celebrating the funeral ceremony stands at his side, and a crowd of attendants [in this case friars] hold crosses at the rear. A single church-like building is shown in the background.

When the scenes common to both Siena V and the Assisi frescoes are compared it is difficult to accept the claim made by Stubblebine that the former is dependent on the latter. The Siena V interpretations of San Damiano, Innocent's dream, and the fiery chariot bear no resemblance to those of the frescoes. Had the Siena V artist been influenced by a work as important as the Assisi frescoes his solutions to the scenes would certainly have been closer to the more successful ones of Assisi. Stubblebine overlooks the fact that several of the scenes common to Siena V and the fresco cycle also appeared earlier in the Assisi stained glass. This would have been a more likely inspiration for Siena V's iconography than the highly developed fresco compositions. In both its choice of subject matter and its strict adherence to the Bonaventuran source, Siena V can be regarded as an immediate predecessor to the Assisi frescoes, not a derivative work.

**Thematic Developments: Conclusions**

The earliest cycles of scenes on storied retables of St. Francis were
those of posthumous miracles that had been used as evidence for the sanctity of Francis. This tradition first appeared on Pescia I in 1235 and was repeated well into the century, the last surviving example being Rome VII. While this established subject matter was still being used, however, another trend in the iconography of the panels was beginning which suggests a new attitude towards the veneration of St. Francis. This was the development of the life-cycle narrative scenes which indicate that it was no longer just the sanctity of Francis which was to be emphasized in paintings, but also the principles of his life, as the inscription on Florence IV states. A life-cycle series of scenes first appears on Pistoia III, where it was combined with a miracle cycle identical to those of the miracle panels. Florence IV represents the first single chronological cycle which illustrates the life of Francis followed by miracles and his canonization. The iconography of Florence IV, however, is a greatly expanded one, consisting of twenty scenes. Special circumstances seem to have been responsible for the number and subject matter of the Florence IV scenes, for not only are many of the subjects unique, but they were chosen in disregard of the decrees of the Order. The last of the panels, Siena V, displays a true life-cycle in that no posthumous miracles are included in its scenes. It also represents official Franciscan doctrine for its period because all of its scenes were derived from the Bonaventura biography. The use of this source, as well as the choice of subjects on Siena V are repeated in the frescoes of the Upper Church, Assisi. Siena V also dates from the late Duecento, so that it may be seen as a direct precedent to the Assisi cycle on several accounts.

The two subjects included on the retables which have not yet been discussed are the Stigmatization and the sermon to the birds. This is because they do not strictly belong to either the miracle or life-cycle tradition of
iconography, but had special significance in Franciscan art.
NOTES

1 Bughetti Vita e miracoli, p. 36.

2 For example, the Accademia Magdalen panel, or numerous panels of the Madonna enthroned. See Garrison Italian Romanesque Panel Painting.

3 This identification is given by Bughetti Vita e miracoli, p. 34.

4 ibid., p. 35.

5 This apparently indicates that it is the last rites which are being administered.

6 Bughetti Vita e miracoli, p. 35.

7 Also in Bonaventura's Leggenda Major, II, numbers 2-3.

8 ibid., II, number 4.

9 Matthew 10: 9, 10.

10 The inscription indicates that Luke II is being read from. This chapter describes the nativity of Christ. Such a deviation from the Porziuncola story is unexplained, and perhaps represents a confusion with the Greccio story.

11 Bughetti Vita e miracoli, p. 40 suggests that the arch was intended to convey the idea of a grotto.

12 The sources are identified by Bughetti, ibid., p. 46.

13 See Chapter II, "The Literary Sources for the Life of St. Francis".

14 ibid.


16 See Chapter II, "Joachimism and Franciscanism".

17 Bonaventura, Leggenda Major, IX, number 8.

18 Bonaventura omits the detail that it was for eating meat that Francis did penance. He merely states that Francis repented after recovering from a serious illness.

19 Bughetti Vita e Miracoli, p. 48.

20 The Assisi scene is set within a building. Francis appears at the doorway with his arms extended in a cross formation.

21 Also found in the Vita Prima, number 17.
22 Bughetti *Vita e miracoli*, p. 48

23 ibid.

24 Bughetti, ibid., p. 50 also draws this conclusion.

25 ibid., p. 50.

26 ibid., p. 51.

27 ibid., p. 51.

28 Found in the *Legenda Prima* of St. Anthony, according to Bughetti, ibid.

29 Scenes 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19.

30 Scenes 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 14, 18, 19.

31 Scenes 4, 8, 11, 18.

32 Scenes 9 and 10.

33 See Chapter II, "Early History of the Order".

34 Translated by Dr. Malcolm McGregor, Department of Classical Studies, University of British Columbia.


36 ibid., p. 214.

37 The Bonaventura text specifically states that Francis was seen holding the building on his shoulders.

38 Translated from San Bonaventura, *S. Francesco d'Assisi* [Bari: Edizioni Paoline, 1972], pp. 52-53.

39 The Assisi version of the scene depicts horses pulling the chariot rather than angels. This was an allusion to the story of the chariot of Elijah [2Kings: 2, 11] which was drawn by horses.


41 Other paintings done after the Assisi frescoes show a strong similarity to the iconography there. For example, the Stigmatization panel by the Giotto workshop, now in the Louvre.

42 See Appendix, Siena V.
CHAPTER V: THE STIGMATIZATION AND THE SERMON TO THE BIRDS

The two events from the life of Francis chosen for inclusion with the miracle scenes on Pescia I were the Stigmatization and the sermon to the birds. These themes reappear either singly or together on Pistoia III, Florence IV and Siena V. Their appearance on these three later panels is not unusual for, being events from Francis' earthly life, they were included in the life cycle scenes. But that these two particular incidents should be chosen for illustration on the earliest miracle panel, Pescia I, indicates that they held special significance at that time. As in the case of the four original miracle scenes, specific Franciscan doctrines underlie their appearance on Pescia I. The Stigmatization and, to a lesser degree, the sermon to the birds symbolized much more than legendary tales of a Saint.

The Sermon to the Birds

The account of the preaching to the birds is found in Celano's *Vita Prima*, number 58, which reads in part:

... the most blessed father Francis was crossing the Spoleto valley. He arrived at a place near Bevagna, where there was gathered a large number of birds of every species, doves, rooks, and that type called "sparks". Seeing them, the Servant of God, who was filled with such fervour that he felt compassion and affection even for the lesser and unreasoning creatures, quickly ran to them, leaving his companions on the road. And he approached them, seeing that they awaited him, and greeted them according to his custom; but astounded that the birds did not take to their wings to flee as they usually did, full of joy, he humbly begged them to hear the word of God. And among other things he said this: "My winged brothers, you must praise your Creator much, and love him always, because he has given you plumage to clothe you, and feathers to fly, and everything that you have need of. God has made you noble amongst the other creatures, and allowed you to dwell in the clearness of the air; you neither sow nor reap, yet He protects you and governs you without any concern on your part." At these words, the birds - as both he himself and the friars who found themselves with him recounted - miraculously gave signs of their exultation following their nature, stretching out their necks, extending their wings, opening their beaks, and looking at him. And he passed and repassed through the midst of them, grazing their heads and bodies with his tunic. In conclusion he blessed them and, making the sign of the cross, gave them permission to fly
elsewhere. Then the blessed Father recommenced his walk with his companions, rejoicing and thanking God, who is worshipped by all the creatures with devoted confession.¹

Like other scenes of Pescia I, the iconography for the sermon to the birds establishes the basic pattern followed in most successive early versions of the scene. The setting consists of a building at the left which is very similar to that shown in the Stigmatization scene above, and a series of tall peaked hillocks at the right. On these are perched about fifteen birds among clumps of flowering vegetation and shrubs that sprout up along the hill tops. The birds are of various sizes and markings, as described in Celano's text, and they all face towards Francis who stands to the left. Diverging somewhat from the written account, Berlinghieri represents two friars directly behind Francis, rather than showing him alone with the birds. St. Francis is depicted with a halo and the marks of the stigmata. He faces the birds and raises his left hand towards them, and he holds a closed book under his right arm. One of his companions raises his hands in amazement.

The other storied retables which include a representation of the sermon to the birds are Florence IV and Siena V, where it is placed in chronological order among the life-cycle scenes. The Florence IV version of the scene appears second from the bottom in the left-hand row of scenes on the panel. The iconography here seems to be based only in part upon the Pescia I tradition. The group at the left of St. Francis followed by two friars is similar except that Francis' hand gestures are reversed and the friar who raised his hands in the Pescia scene now holds a book. But no buildings are included, and the conception of the birds and their perch is quite different. Rather than sitting on a hillside they are all arranged on a single strange tree with short, tufted branches up the right side of its trunk and four extremely long branches extending horizontally to the left. The birds sit in regular rows along these
branches, all facing towards Francis, with tufts of vegetation separating them. A fifth row sits on the ground below the branches. One detail of this representation of the sermon to the birds scene indicates that the Bardi St. Francis Master is being somewhat more faithful to the literary account of the event than was Berlinghieri; one of the rows of birds is depicted with all its members lifting their wings in the demonstration of joy described by Celano.

In Siena V the sermon to the birds, which is the upper left scene on the panel, is set on a hillside. Two trees are depicted on the top of the hill, but these are not inhabited by birds; the birds are now all represented on the ground over the entire side of the hill. The feature of the birds sitting on the ground had appeared in two representations of the scene which are probably earlier than the Siena one: the thirteenth century stained glass window in the Upper Church at Assisi, and an early fresco of the subject in the Lower Church. It is this tradition which is later followed in the fresco of the sermon to the birds in the Upper Church. Francis is depicted alone at the left of the Siena scene, extending his right hand toward the birds, some of which are shown again lifting their wings. A large variety of bird species are represented, and it is interesting to note that these include three large birds at the bottom which appear to be birds of prey.

The story of the sermon to the birds conveys something of the miraculous powers of Francis, but of a very different type than that of the posthumous healings that occurred at the Saint's tomb. This incident instead stresses one of the more appealing aspects of Francis' character: his rapport with nature. It is therefore quite possible that the sermon to the birds was illustrated on Pesciá I because of its popular attractiveness. It introduces an element of human interest that counter-balances the emphasis on Francis' sanctity expressed by all the other scenes on the panel. When the preaching to the birds was included in the fresco cycle of the Upper Church, Assisi at the end of the
century, it seems to have been for similar reasons of popular appear that it was given a position of special importance. But there are certain features of the Pescia I version which indicate that this earliest representation of Francis' sermon to the birds held symbolic as well as popular significance. The sermon to the birds was an incident which took place before Francis' Stigmatization, yet it is placed after the Stigmatization scene on Pescia I. And Francis bears both the marks of the stigmata and a halo as he preaches to the birds. When the same subject is included in a series of life-cycle scenes on Florence IV Francis is represented with historical accuracy as not having the stigmata wounds. The inaccuracy of the Pescia scene indicates that it was not the historical account which was of major concern. The emphasis placed on the stigmata suggests that the sermon to the birds was singled out for inclusion on Pescia I as a symbolically important scene. That this event held more than an historical and popular significance for the early Franciscans is indicated even more strongly by its illustration on Siena V, where Francis is shown not only with the marks of the stigmata, but also preaching to very strange types of birds. The significance of these birds and the underlying symbolism of depictions of the sermon to the birds on Pescia I and Siena V can be related to doctrines of Franciscan Joachimism. The ways in which Joachistic beliefs found expression in the storied retables will be examined shortly.

The Stigmatization

The story of the Stigmatization is first related in Thomas of Celano's Vita Prima, numbers 94-95.

Number 94:

While staying at the hermitage which is called La Verna after the place in which it was situated, two years before his death he saw in a divine vision a man standing above him, with his hands stretched out and his feet together, with six wings like a seraphim nailed to the cross; two wings were raised above his head, two were extended for flying, and the two last ones covered his entire
body. At such a sight the blessed servant of the Most High was filled with admiration, but did not know how to understand the significance of the vision. He was overcome with joy by the gentle love on the face of the Seraphim, which imparted to it inestimable beauty, but was terrified upon consideration of the cross to which he was nailed, and of the bitterness of his passion. He felt, as it is said, sad and happy at the same time, and joy and sadness alternated within him. At the same time he forced himself to understand the significance of the vision, and his whole spirit was agitated by this effort. He did not succeed in understanding anything precisely, and remained preoccupied with the singularity of the apparition, when there began to appear on his hands and feet the marks of nails, like on the man he had seen crucified above him just before.

Number 95:

His hands and feet were pierced right in the centre by nails, the heads of which were visible on the palms and upper part of the feet, while the points came out on the other sides; the marks on the palms were round, and pointed at the backs, and a piece of flesh appeared in the form of the point of a nail, bent over, extending out of the flesh. In this way also were impressed the marks of nails on his feet, in relief on the other flesh. His right side had a long wound, as if pierced by a lance, which issued blood with which his tunic and drawers were often bathed . . .

The remainder of number 95 describes how the marks of the stigmata were seen by a few of the friars, and how the stigmata represented an honour greater than that shown to any other man.

It is significant that the scene representing the Stigmatization on Pescia I is placed out of chronological order among the scenes to be given the important first position at the upper left. It was the single most important event from Francis' life with regard to his sanctity; representing God's demonstration of Francis' special position. The iconography of the Stigmatization used by Bonaventura Berlinghieri sets out the general pattern which is followed in all early Italian depictions of the miracle. The setting consists of a series of flower-covered hillocks, with a three-branched tree at their base, suggesting the actual site of the event on Mount La Verna. A large building with double doors and steps leading up to it, which Bughetti identifies
as a church, appears at the left of the scene, and a smaller building is at the far right. Francis kneels at the base of the rocky hill, holding his hands up to the level of his face, and looking up in the direction of the apparition. He has a halo, and the round marks of the stigmata are on his hands and feet, but there is no indication of the side wound. In the upper right corner of the scene the vision of the Seraphim is represented. A series of blue semi-circular bands above it indicate the spheres of heaven from which it descends. Berlinghieri's depiction of the Seraphim is relatively accurate to the textual description [unlike some later interpretations]. Among the six wings in the positions described in the written account the face of a man is shown, looking straight ahead rather than down at Francis. To either side his extended hands are depicted: and, below the wings, his feet, all marked like those of St. Francis. The artist has deviated from Celano's description, however, in two significant ways. First of all, he has omitted the cross to which the seraphic man was described as being nailed. This omission de-emphasizes the identification of the Seraphim with Christ specifically. And secondly, Berlinghieri [or his prototype] seems to have been the creator of an iconographic feature which becomes standard in nearly all later representations of the Stigmatization: the rays which emanate from the Seraphim to the figure of St. Francis. No such rays are visible in the Pescia I scene today, and only one author has made the observation that they almost certainly were originally there. The evidence for their intended presence is the formation of the hills in Berlinghieri's scene. A channel which is certainly not merely part of the artist's construction of the landscape has been left cutting through the rocks in a path that leads directly from the Seraphim to the head of Francis. When it is also noted that those representations of the Stigmatization which seem to be based on Berlinghieri's [for example the thirteenth century Berlinghieri-school panel of the Stigmatization in the Uffizi] include
rays of light extending from the Seraphim to Francis' head, it must be concluded that similar rays were originally depicted on Pescia I. These emanated from the Seraphim along the area left blank in order that they might better stand out, to the halo of Francis. Thus, it can be assumed that this iconographic feature of the Stigmatization originally appeared in Bonaventura Berlinghieri's composition.

The Stigmatization is represented on Pistoia III among the four scenes depicting events from the life of St. Francis. It is here placed in chronological order with the other scenes, so that it occupies the upper right position, which is a triangular compartment. Perhaps partially due to the physical shape of the scene, the composition of the Pistoia scene is somewhat different from that of Pescia I. The setting is a triangular arrangement of rocks, with trees at the extreme left and right of the scene. The representation of buildings has been reduced to two small domed structures which are set into the rocks to the right of Francis. The Saint, wearing a halo, faces left in this representation, again kneeling and looking at the Seraphim who now appears almost across from him and turned towards him. The Seraphim is very small, without a cross, and with only two pairs of wings, the pair above the head having been omitted. Three rays of light extend from the Seraphim to Francis' raised hands; the marks of the stigmata are indicated on Francis' hands and feet.

A Stigmatization scene is also included on Florence IV where it is again placed in its chronological position among the scenes so that it appears at the base of the central figure. This version of the scene is extremely similar to the Stigmatization panel in the Uffizi, a fact which has led some scholars to attribute both paintings to the same artist. That the two paintings are related and probably from the same workshop is certain, but there are no
features which definitely suggest which representation is the earlier of the two. The general lay-out of the Florence IV scene is roughly similar to that of Pescia I, with a small building at the far left and a series of hills from which sprout plants and a three-branched tree forming the main backdrop. But Francis no longer kneels among the rocks, but on a rectangle of inlaid stone pavement in front of the building. This feature also appears in the Uffizi panel. St. Francis is again shown kneeling and facing towards the right, but his exact posture is different from that of the Pescia figure's. Only one of his feet is visible and he now extends his hands up and to either side rather than holding them in the rather prayerful position of Pescia I. The Seraphim is represented in the upper right, descending from the spheres. It has no cross and is very similar to the Pescia vision, except that the head of the man now bears a halo and he looks slightly downwards towards Francis. Three wide rays join the figure of the Seraphim to Francis' halo.

The most radical iconographic change in the thirteenth century representations of the Stigmatization is seen in Siena V. The scene is again in its relative chronological position in the panel's cycle, located second from the top at the right. It's new features are apparently not the inventions of the artist of Siena V, but derive from two earlier versions of the Stigmatization which are found on two sets of reliquary shutters, Siena Pinacoteca numbers 4 and 5. Like Siena V, these two works are attributed to the school of Guido da Siena, and the number 4 shutters have been accepted as a painting by Guido himself. Whether or not this attribution be correct, Siena number 4 does display the most fully and carefully executed version of the Guidesque Stigmatization iconography. It was therefore probably the original scene from which similar compositions derived. The distinguishing features of the Guidesque Stigmatization as it appears on the shutters and Siena V are the pose
of Francis and the precise form of landscape. Francis is shown kneeling, but turned so that his back is almost towards the viewer and his head in profile. The most distinctive detail is that he raises his hands high above his head, towards the Seraphim that appears directly above him. On Siena V this pose has been made even more active by showing Francis in what has been described as a "half-running, half-genuflecting" position. The uniquely Guidesque setting for the Stigmatization, in both the shutter and altarpiece representations, consists of a large rocky hill to the right on top of which stands a single building with a domed roof and a large arched doorway. The most peculiar aspect of the landscape, however, is the depiction of three small bears on the hillside, two of which eat berries from the vegetation while the other lies inside a small cave at the lower right. These bears are quite distinctive in the number 4 shutters, but rather hard to discern in the Siena V scene where their activities are less precisely indicated. No specific iconographic significance for the bears has been discovered, although it has been suggested that they may either indicate the remoteness of the site of the Stigmatization or serve as an example of the charm over animals which Francis possessed. The Seraphim of Siena V is represented with a halo and nailed to the cross. He looks down at St. Francis, and five rays of light emanate from the Seraphim's feet to Francis' head and marked hands.

In considering the development of the representation of the Stigmatization throughout the thirteenth century it is significant that the non-textual feature of the rays from Seraphim to Francis, perhaps devised by Bonaventura Berlinghieri, is an iconographic detail which becomes an integral part of Stigmatization scenes, not only on these panels, but throughout centuries of later depictions. It has been suggested by some authors that Berlinghieri's arrangement of the scene derives from representations of Christ in the Garden
Gethsemane, and that this pictorial source was chosen to emphasize the parallels between Christ and Francis. There are no specific iconographic features to suggest such a derivation however, and surely the general similarity of the two types of scenes can simply be accounted for by the presence of like elements in the stories: a hilly setting, a praying figure, and a heavenly apparition. The claim that the Stigmatization is specifically based on "Agony in the Garden" scenes is only a possibility.

The miracle of the Stigmatization was the single most significant piece of evidence for the Franciscans to demonstrate the certain sanctity of their founder. Although the event occurred on September 17, 1224 it was revealed only to a few close comrades by Francis at that time. Immediately after the Saint's death, however, it was the Stigmatization above all else upon which Elias seized as proof of Francis' holiness, and this was the event he emphatically publicized in his letter which announced the death of Francis in 1226. Before the Canonization procedure of 1228, Pope Gregory IV was reluctant to accept the certainty of the miracle of the Stigmatization [specifically of the side wound], although this fact would not have prevented the canonization in light of the host of other demonstratable miracles ascribed to Francis. But during this period of doubt Francis appeared to Gregory in a dream and showed him his bleeding wound; the event is described by Bonaventura, Miracula, i, 2. After this vision Gregory accepted the actuality of the Stigmatization, included it both with the other miracles which had been verified for the Canonization and in liturgical chants which he composed, and in later years defended its reality in Papal Bulls directed against certain sects who denied it [for example, in the Bull "Confessor Domim" of 1237].

The fact of Francis' Stigmatization was thus not only established as a reality among members of the Order, but was also given official sanction by the Pope.
The inclusion of the Stigmatization scene on Pescia I is therefore in accordance with the thematic emphasis of the four scenes illustrating the canonization miracles. Even more than the posthumous miracles, the verification of this event was evidence of Francis' especially holy nature. But the Stigmatization held a much greater significance for the early Franciscans in that it placed Francis in a very special position as a parallel to Christ. And those aspects of the Stigmatization which are emphasized on Pescia I indicate that it's symbolism functioned at yet a third level of interpretation. Both this third significance and the identification of Francis with Christ were results of Franciscan Joachistic thought. In order to understand the full implications of representations of the Stigmatization, it is therefore necessary to examine the ways in which Joachimism was influential on early Franciscan art.
NOTES

1 Translated from the *Vita Prima*, pp. 67-69.


3 Reproduced by Facchinetti *Iconografia Francescana*. Attributed to an unknown artist of the late thirteenth century.

4 It is one of the two frescoes placed out of chronological order. For a discussion of the significance of its position, see John White, *Art and Architecture in Italy 1250-1400* [Hammondsworth: Pelican, 1966].

5 Translated from the *Vita Prima*, pp. 105-106.

6 Bughetti *Vita e miracoli*, p. 9.

7 The tendency to increasingly represent the Seraphim with the body of Christ is seen in the fourteenth century, e.g., the Stigmatization panel in the Louvre from the school of Giotto.

8 Siren *Toskanische Maler* gives a complete misinterpretation of the meaning of the scene based on the assumption that no rays were ever included.

9 Plate 12.

10 Bughetti *Vita e miracoli*, p. 35 suggests that the upper pair of wings was originally included, but has been scratched off.


12 Reproduced by Stubblebine *Guido da Siena*.

13 *ibid.*, pp. 69-71.

14 John White, "The Date of 'The Legend of St. Francis' at Assisi", *Burlington Magazine*, October 1956, p. 344.

15 Stubblebine *Guido da Siena*, p. 22.

16 See illustrations in Facchinetti *Iconografia Francescana*.


18 See Chapter II, note.

19 See Chapter II, "Early History of the Order".

21 Sabatier *Vie de S. Francis d'Assise*, pp. 408, 411.

22 ibid., p. 407.
CHAPTER VI: JOACHISTIC INFLUENCE ON THE STORIED RETABLES

That Franciscan Joachimism was influential on early Franciscan art is indicated by the form, content and central figures of the storied retables. As discussed in Chapter II, Joachistic thought was widespread in the thirteenth century, particularly among Spiritual Franciscans. But some aspects of this doctrine were accepted even by Franciscans who were not professed Joachites. The two ideas of particular significance to art which were accepted as orthodox Franciscan doctrines in the Dugento were the identification of St. Francis as the sixth angel of the Apocalypse, and the designation of Francis as a second Christ. The latter claim could be made without heretical implications when Francis was considered within the context of Joachim's patterns of parallel figures in the three historical ages. Francis' position in the third age corresponded to Christ's in the second.

The identification of St. Francis with Christ is manifested in the very format chosen for the representation of Francis and his legend. As Garrison and Hager point out, the gabled, storied retable which was devised specifically for the depiction of St. Francis is based on the format of the storied crucifix. The deliberate choice of the crucifix as a model for the St. Francis altarpiece indicates that doctrinal reasons lay behind it. The intention was to suggest the parallelism between Christ and Francis through the similarities between the panels designed for their veneration. This much has been pointed out by Garrison, but what has been overlooked is the fact that it was Joachistic doctrine which was responsible for the parallels which were drawn between Christ and Francis. Once the presence of Joachistic doctrines have been recognized in the physical form and arrangement of the Franciscan altarpieces, it is then reasonable to expect manifestations of underlying Joachist thought in other aspects of the storied retables. However,
it is first necessary to establish the probability of Joachicism playing a major role in the retables by showing that it was an important influence on other early Franciscan art. The prevalence of Joachistic views in thirteenth century Franciscan literature has already been noted. The evidence that Joachimism was also reflected in various ways in early Franciscan art can be shown through three separate phenomena: an ancient legend connecting Joachim of Fiore himself with a portrait of St. Francis, a strong connection with Joachimism in the iconography of early thirteenth century English manuscripts illustrating the Franciscan legend, and a specific Joachistic allusion in one of Cimabue's frescoes in the Upper Church, Assisi.

As early as the mid-thirteenth century the beginnings of a legend were being written down which claimed that Joachim of Fiore had not only foretold the coming of the two Mendicant Orders, but had also actually drawn, or ordered to be drawn, pictures of the future Friars. By the fourteenth century this legend had developed into the story that Joachim had overseen the production of the two mosaics in St. Mark's, Venice which depict Sts. Francis [with the stigmata] and Dominic. This claim appears for one or both of the two Saints in a number of fourteenth century writings, including Bartholomew of Pisa's De Conformitate, and the legend itself was depicted in a seventeenth century fresco in the church of Ognissanti, Florence. Whatever the origins of this interesting story may have been, the significant point for our purposes is the fact that there was an association in certain trends of Franciscan thought between Joachim's prophecy of the Franciscan Order and early pictorial renderings of the Saint; that is, a direct connection between portraits of St. Francis and Joachimism.

The relationship between Joachimism and thirteenth century English
depictions of Francis preaching to the birds was noted and examined by the late F. D. Klingender, who pointed out that early English versions of this scene were based not only on Thomas of Celano's account of the event, but also on an unofficial Life of St. Francis written by Roger of Wendover. This account alters the circumstances surrounding Francis' sermon to the birds, and specifically adds that the birds were sitting among carrion. The birds in the English illustrations, therefore, are represented as birds of prey. A prime example of this phenomenon is a drawing from the 1240's by Matthew Paris of Francis preaching to such birds. The drawing illustrates the passage from Roger of Wendover's account, but Matthew Paris has also included the Celano text on a scroll. The changes in the Roger of Wendover text with regard to this story are apparently due to his desire to parallel the event with two other ones described in Revelation. The first was Revelation 19: 17-18, in which an apocalyptic angel summons "all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven to feed upon the flesh of kings", and the second in Revelation 18:1-2, where another angel declares that fallen Babylon has become "a cage of every unclean and hateful bird". The Roger of Wendover text is likening Rome [to which the setting of the sermon to the birds has been transferred] to the apocalyptic Babylon, and Francis to an apocalyptic angel.

The basis for such an allusion was Joachimism, which is known to have reached England by this time. The parallels between the Franciscan and apocalyptic stories were made not only in the Roger of Wendover text, but are evident in the similarities of composition among the manuscript illustrations themselves of the two events. The figure of St. Francis preaching to the birds corresponds to that of the angel of Revelation 19 in the layout of the scenes. Thus, in this case, Franciscan iconography seems to
have been strongly influenced by that of Apocalypse manuscripts due to the thematic parallels derived from Joachistic doctrine.

A second example of this phenomenon in English representations of St. Francis, and one which Klingender did not discuss, occurs in Matthew Paris' representation of the Stigmatization. Like the Sermon to the Birds, this scene appears to have derived much of its iconography from Apocalyptic manuscript illuminations. Matthew Paris' version of the Stigmatization is strikingly different from Italian representations of the subject; it depicts Francis [untonsured] lying asleep bearing the marks of the stigmata. The large six-winged seraphim, nailed to a cross, stands beside him. The motif of Francis lying on an undulating piece of ground with his head supported by his right hand and his eyes closed immediately brings to mind contemporary English manuscript drawings illustrating the Apocalyptic revelation of St. John on the island of Patmos. And Matthew Paris' seraphim displays the feature of having sections of its wings covered with eyes. This characteristic is not included in any of the written descriptions of Francis' vision, but it is part of the description of the apocalyptic beasts surrounding the lamb, [Revelation 4:6-8], the second of which is in the form of a seraphic six-winged angel. Thus, Matthew Paris' illustration of the Stigmatization is a second example of the use of Apocalyptic imagery as an iconographic source, not merely for reasons of convenience, but undoubtedly as a result of the thematic connections being made between the subjects which derived from Joachimism.

Klingender's major oversight in his discussion of the apocalyptic overtones of English illustrations of Francis' sermon to the birds was his assumption that the Italians, by contrast, were interested only in an unsymbolic representation of the life of St. Francis. It is likely that in
Italy, where Joachimism first arose and flourished, that this trend in thought should also be reflected in Franciscan art when it so markedly did in England. Understandably, the Italian Joachistic influence on Franciscan iconography took a different form from the English, for the English Franciscan imagery was based almost uniquely on the Anglo-French tradition of illustrated Apocalypse manuscripts of the thirteenth century.

That Apocalyptic allusions deriving from Joachimism were present in thirteenth century Italian Franciscan art can be demonstrated by one of Cimabue's frescoes in the Upper Church, Assisi. The fresco in question is the central scene on the end of the left transept wall. It is part of Cimabue's Apocalypse cycle decorating the choir and transepts. Whether or not the idea of an Apocalyptic cycle was in any way suggested by the apocalyptic role of Franciscanism as derived from the writings of Joachim of Fiore is a matter for speculation. But it is certainly significant that of the five scenes from Revelation chosen for depiction, one of them was that of the angel who had the seal of the Living God descending from the east. Since the written Life by Bonaventura which identified this same angel as St. Francis himself was the official account at the time this fresco was executed, and it was St. Bonaventura's descriptions which inspired other parts of Cimabue's choir iconography, there can be little doubt that the prominent depiction of the descending angel is a direct reference to the Joachistic identification of St. Francis.

In light of the above evidence that Joachistic thought was associated with and reflected in Franciscan art in the thirteenth century, it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that Franciscan Joachimism may also have been influential on the iconography of the early storied retables. Since the format of the retables was designed to suggest a Joachistic parallel [Christ
and St. Francis] the possibility of other manifestations is very strong.

Underlying Joachistic themes may in part account for the choice of certain scenes which appear on the altarpieces. Joachistic reasons for the inclusion of scenes 9 and 10 of Francis rescuing sheep on Florence IV have already been mentioned. If the program of Florence IV was designed by Spiritualist Franciscans, as suggested, it is even more probable that ideas from Joachimism prompted the choice of scenes 9 and 10. The sermon to the birds and the Stigmatization also lend themselves to Joachistic interpretation. The inclusion of these subjects on Pescia I was undoubtedly a result of the special significance they held, aspects of which were discussed in Chapter V. In addition to the reasons already suggested for their importance, however, the sermon to the birds and the Stigmatization convey a symbolism relating to Joachistic thought. Although the scenes of the sermon to the birds on Pescia I and Florence IV do not bear the striking resemblance to illustrations of Apocalyptic events that the English versions of the subject did, similar thinking may explain the importance given the scene at least on Pescia I, where it was not part of a life-cycle. It is possible that a text such as that by Roger of Wendover which suggested the Apocalyptic parallelism of the sermon to the birds was being alluded to in the early Italian illustrations of the event. The Pescia I sermon to the birds depicts Francis bearing the stigmata marks although historically the sermon occurred before the Stigmatization. As will be discussed in greater detail shortly, it was the marks of the stigmata which specifically identified Francis as an Apocalyptic angel, so that his un-historical representation with them in the Pescia I scene may indicate that Joachistic implications were intended.

In the Siena V version of the sermon to the birds, however, the
Joachistic symbolism resembles that of the English interpretations, for the scene displays the peculiarity common in the English versions of Francis preaching to large birds of prey. This is an allusion to the idea being illustrated in the English scenes that the sermon to the birds was an event parallel to the Apocalyptic angel summoning the fowls to feed upon flesh. That the sermon to the birds held Apocalyptic significance in Italy as well as in England by the end of the Dugento is therefore a certainty.

The scene of the Stigmatization, however, bore even stronger Joachistic implications in its illustration on the storied retables, beginning with the Pescia I version of the scene. The Stigmatization was not only the most important miracle which proved to the early Franciscans the holiness of their founder, but was also the evidence which made possible the identification of Francis as the sixth angel of the Apocalypse. The marks of the stigmata were believed to be the marks of the Living God which distinguished the Apocalyptic angel. Furthermore, the fact that these marks took the form of Christ's wounds reinforced the parallelism between Francis and Christ. Within the context of Franciscan Joachimism the Stigmatization therefore held dual significance in that it both identified Francis as the Apocalyptic angel foretold by Joachism and placed the Saint as the parallel figure to Christ in the third age. That this type of symbolism was intended in the retable illustrations of the Stigmatization is indicated by the details of its earliest interpretation on Pescia I. The two significant ways in which Berlinghieri's depiction of the event varies from its written description are the omission of a cross from the seraphic vision and the addition of rays linking the Seraphim to Francis. Both of these alterations suggest that it was not the fact that Francis saw a vision of Christ that was meant to be emphasized in the painting. The omission of the cross de-emphasizes the
idea that the vision represented Christ, while the presence of rays indicates a direct metaphysical relationship between Francis and the Seraphim. It is hence the transference of the stigmata marks from a vision whose angelic qualities are stressed that the Pescia I scene was intended to communicate. Francis sees and is associated with an angel. This strongly suggests that it was Francis' identity with the Apocalyptic angel which was of importance in the Pescia I interpretation of the Stigmatization, and perhaps in those other versions of the scene which repeated the features of Berlinghieri's illustration.

Francis' stigmata marks are emphasized in other parts of the storied retables apart from the Stigmatization scenes. Siena V is unique in that it portrays Francis bearing the wounds in all five of the scenes which occurred before the Stigmatization. The suggestiveness of this feature is particularly strong in Seina V's depiction of the crucifix at San Damiano, where Francis raises his marked hands towards the crucified Christ who extends his wounded hand down towards Francis. This scene therefore emphasizes the similarities between Christ and Francis, and illustrates in a single combination of gestures the whole pattern of thought which prompted the design of the storied retables: the symbolism of the crucifix panel as a reminder of Francis' special position.

The marks of the stigmata are emphasized on all of the storied retables in the prominence they are given on the central figures of St. Francis. The whole conception of the large central figures does, in fact, indicate that it was Joachistic thought which influenced their distinctive style and type. In order to suggest that these figures display a Joachistic interpretation of Francis it will be necessary to first establish that the conception of the Saint on the storied retables represents a tradition quite different
from that of other thirteenth century depictions of St. Francis.

Traditions of Thirteenth Century Portrayals of St. Francis

Although the St. Francis storied retable was the first art form to depict the Saint with scenes, it was not the only, nor even the earliest thirteenth century representation of St. Francis. The other types of early portrayals, however, seem to belong to quite different pictorial traditions than the altarpieces, and therefore illustrate by contrast that the central figures on the storied retables composed a distinctive type of representation.

What is generally regarded as the oldest extant depiction of St. Francis is a fresco in the chapel of St. Gregory at Sacro Speco, Subiaco, which represents Francis standing full length. Beside this fresco is another of Pope Gregory IX dedicating a chapel which includes an inscription stating that the painting was executed in the second year of Gregory's pontificate [that is, 1228]. Because the artist of the Francis fresco appears to be the same one as that of the adjacent Gregory, the date 1228 can be assigned to the former as well, assuming that both frescoes were executed together.

Dates even earlier than this, however, have been suggested due to the nature of Francis' portrayal; he is shown without a halo or the stigmata, and an inscription at the top reads FR FRACISCU [instead of SAN]. These features would indicate that the painting was completed before Francis' canonization, and has led some authors to accept the legend that it was executed upon an actual visit of Francis to the monastery in 1218, or else that it was at least done before the miracle of the stigmatization of 1224. But the acceptance of such an early date is in no way necessary; the painting can be assigned the more reliable date of early 1228, before the July canonization. This still makes the fresco the earliest extant portrayal of the Saint. The aspect of this representation which is most important to the
present discussion, however, is the "type" of this Francis. He is shown with his hood off-centre and covering his head. No tonsure is visible and he has a rough beard and moustache. The whole face has a sketchy quality to it, and with its simple features, large, direct eyes, and smooth skin, conveys a benign, almost smiling impression. The gestures of Francis are also noteworthy; with his right hand he gestures towards a scroll with the inscription PAX HUIC DOMUI, which he holds out at his side in his left hand.

A second early thirteenth century fresco of St. Francis, located in S. Francesco, Greccio also depicts Francis in such a way as to emphasize his more human qualities, although in this case he is depicted with a halo and inscription which identifies him as a saint. Nothing in his attitude stresses his semi-divine status, however, for he is represented kneeling in profile, and weeping. The circumstances surrounding this unusual depiction of St. Francis have hardly been given the attention such a unique portrayal of the Saint deserves, but for present purposes it will suffice to point out that this fresco, like the Subiaco one, belongs to quite a different tradition than that of the St. Francis retables.

Perhaps the earliest panel painting of St. Francis is an early duecento piece in the Louvre which depicts a single figure of the Saint in full length. Because of iconographical affinities with the Subiaco fresco it has been assigned a date shortly after the former and attributed to the Roman school, probably coming from the workshop of the Subiaco artist. The general stance of the figure, the arrangement of the hood over the head, and the friendly frankness of the facial expression are all quite close to the Subiaco representations, but there are important differences which place the Louvre panel in what could be called the second tradition of St. Francis
portraits. The sanctity of Francis is now made quite clear; not only is he
given a halo and inscription "S. FRANCISCUS", but the marks of the stigmata
are given considerable prominence. Whereas the Subiaco figure held out his
right hand to point out the scroll which he held in his left, the Louvre St.
Francis holds up his right hand, palm outwards, to display the wound of the
stigmata there. The marks on his feet are likewise clearly indicated and
an opening in his habit reveals the wound in his side. Contributing to the
idea that Francis is not only holy, but a second Christ is the inscription
on the book which he holds in his left hand; it reads, in shortened form:
"Spiritus Domini super me; propter quod unxit me, praedicare captivis remis-
sionem et caecis visum".33 This text derives from Luke IV: 18-19, where the
words [originally found in Isaiah 61] are spoken by Christ. Their appearance
here therefore emphasizes the view that St. Francis was a second Christ. The
general "type" of the Louvre St. Francis, that is, a single full-length
figure which displays the stigmata but which retains a certain warmth of
expression, has several thirteenth century examples.34 The most significant
group of such representations is the large number of small rectangular panels
produced by Margaritone d'Arezzo and his workshop. Seven such paintings
exist, the majority of them being signed, and they were produced roughly
between 1260 and 1280.35 Although by no means identical, they all have
certain similarities in that they depict a full-length figure of St. Francis
of rather squat proportions. The stance is very similar to that of the
Subiaco and Louvre representations, with one leg slightly bent, the other
bearing the weight, and the cowl is likewise shown over the head. The Saint
holds a book [usually closed] in his left hand, and either displays the stig-
mata on the palm of his right as in the Louvre work, or holds a cross in it.
The stigmata on the hands and feet are clearly indicated, but the side wound
is not shown. Most notable for purposes of comparison, however, is the way in which the Saint's face is depicted; his head is generally turned slightly to one side, with his eyes looking in the opposite direction. The eyes are large, the nose long, and the lips relatively full, so that combined with the proportionately large size of the head, the face conveys an almost winsome expression. This is particularly strong in the panels in the Vatican Pinacoteca, Montpulciano, Siena and Ganghereto. In their juxtaposition of a very human portrayal of Francis with the attributes which mark his sanctity, the Margaritone d'Arezzo panels belong to the same spirit of interpretation as the Louvre St. Francis painting.

The latest major duecento examples of this tradition for the representation of St. Francis are two paintings from the school of Cimabue. The first of these, which is attributed to Cimabue himself, is a standing figure of St. Francis which is included in the fresco of an enthroned Madonna and Child in the right transept of the Lower Church, Assisi. The stance of the figure is similar to those discussed above but the hood is not over the head, so that the tonsure is completely exposed. All of the stigmata marks, including the side wound, are shown, and the Saint is depicted with a halo. He again holds a closed book in his left hand, but also now places his right hand upon it. The face, although much more modelled and less naively depicted than the Margaritone versions still bears an almost smiling expression with the eyes focused slightly to one side. The second Cimabue-school representation of St. Francis, from about 1284-95, is a panel painting located in the Museo of Santa Maria degli Angeli, Assisi, which seems to be based directly on the Cimabue fresco. The posture and attributes of the Saint are almost identical, although the face of the panel portrait is somewhat more homely-looking, with its protruding ears and less developed
modelling.

The Central Figures on the Storied Retables

When any of the above thirteenth century depictions of St. Francis are compared to the central figures of the storied retables, it appears that quite a different conception of the Saint underlies the latter. The central St. Francis of the Pescia altarpiece has been variously described as "rigid and hieratic", "visionary and uncorporeal", "ascetic", "strange and forbidding", "austere and gloomy". None of these terms would apply to the depictions of Francis just described, but the Pescia I St. Francis and those which follow on the other storied retables do convey such qualities.

Since the Pescia I figure is the earliest and perhaps most extreme of the "ascetic" interpretations of the Saint, it will be given prime consideration. Some of its features are similar to those of the Louvre-to-Cimabue trend of portraits; the figure is a full-length standing one, with halo, and stigmata marks on the hands and feet. The Saint holds up his right hand, palm outwards, to display the stigmata, and holds a book in his left hand. He is dressed in the Franciscan habit, and shown with a tonsure and short beard. But here the similarities end.

Of the single-figure representations, the Louvre painting is probably the nearest in date to Pescia I, and is also done in the same medium of tempera on panel. Hence an effective contrast is possible. The proportions of Bonaventura Berlinghieri’s figure are quite different from that of the Louvre St. Francis, for it is extremely tall with a small, thin face and elongated hands. The stance is also markedly different. Whereas the Louvre figure stands in a slight contrapposto position with the shape of the bent leg defined beneath the drapery and the feet pointing out to either side, the Pescia I stands perfectly erect and with no indication of bodily
forms beneath the habit. The wide expanse of evenly fluted drapery almost seems to be self-supporting, as the frailty of the Saint's exposed members hardly suggest a weighty body beneath. The position of the feet, pointing straight down, further adds to the insubstantial, "floating" impression of the figure. These features can hardly be attributed solely to the style and technique of the artist, for Berlinghieri's small figures in the side scenes are shown actively walking and kneeling on the ground, with bodily forms indicated under the drapery. It was instead by deliberate choice that the central figure was depicted in this "uncorporeal" way.

The face of the Pescià I St. Francis compared to that of the Louvre figure is also strikingly non-human. The long, thin proportions have been further de-humanized by a geometric schematization; the ears are triangular patterns, the forehead is divided by a series of white lines, dark semi-circles underlie the eyes and prominent dark lines run from the Saint's ears to the ends of his drooping moustache, giving the impression of sunken cheeks. The eyes are small and gaze fixedly beyond the viewer, quite unlike the frank looks of the Subiaco and Louvre figures. But Berlinghieri's small figures [except for three of the figures of St. Francis himself], do not display this austerity of expression.

Throughout the St. Francis retables, it is the Pescià I type of representation that is followed, with some modifications, in the central figures, and not the Subiaco-to-Cimabue traditions. The faces of the six other central Saint figures [with the exception of the Siena V] all display a similar geometric division of the face by hard lines, the most extreme cases being those of the Pisa II and Pistoia III. The lines are softer on Assisi VI, Rome VII, and Florence IV, but still outline the sunken cheeks of the emaciated face, which takes on an increasingly sharp appearance in these three cases due to
the emphatically pointed chin and thin cheeks. In the later Siena \( V \)
central figure the facial lines have been considerably naturalized but the
face is still a rigid one with wrinkled brow and bony cheeks. All of the
central figures exhibit frowning mouths emphasized by their drooping moustaches and they generally stare fixedly straight ahead. This type of expression is quite different from that of Margaritone's happy little Saints, or of the humanized Cimabue figures.

After the floating column of drapery of the Pescia I figure, the underlying forms of the central figures are increasingly indicated, and the feet take on a rather more natural stance. The robes of the Pisa II St. Francis, for example, are arranged in uneven U-shaped folds as a slight indication of his bent left leg. The attitude of having one leg forward is suggested quite well by the drapery of the Assisi VI and Rome VII figures. The artist of Florence IV has indicated both of the Saint's underlying legs, and placed the feet in a more active position with the Saint's right foot in profile.

The stern, staring central figures of the St. Francis retables, however, clearly represent quite a different concept of the Saint than that which inspired the other single-figure representations already mentioned. The "ascetic" type characterization is not confined to the storied retables. It also appears in the small figure of St. Francis on the Berlinghieri-school diptych in the Uffizi, and in the panel painting of the Saint in Santa Maria degli Angeli, among others. But all of the storied retable figures are depicted in this general spirit, and the type itself seems to originate with this panel form in Pescia I. The reasons for this type of portrayal in the altarpiece appear to be twofold.

First of all, the St. Francis retable was devised specifically for the worship of the new saint. Whereas early single-figure depictions of
Francis like that at Subiaco, appear to belong to the "Erinnerungsdarstellung" tradition as Hager suggests, inspired by actual memories of Francis' visit, the retable representations belonged to that frenzy of propaganda following Francis' death that was aimed at firmly establishing his sanctity. The close connection between the iconography of the side scenes and the canonization procedure has already been noted. Thus, it is quite logical that in panels designed for such "saint-worship" purposes, Francis should be represented in such a way as to emphasize his otherworldliness and play down his human qualities; a similar tendency has already been noted in the compilation of Thomas of Celano's *Vita Prima*.

The second explanation for their type lies in thirteenth century Joachistic-Franciscan thought. The facial expressions and gestures of the central St. Francis figures have strong Apocalyptic implications in that they immediately suggest the figure of the Last Judgement Christ. The Christ of the Baptistery mosaic, Florence, and the enthroned Christ on a panel painting in Trevignano, exemplify the two iconographic traditions for such figures. In their harsh, strictly frontal stares, the St. Francis figures are very similar to the Baptistery type of Apocalyptic Christ, but the gestures are paralleled by the "blessing-type" Christ, for example, the smaller Last Judgement Baptistery Christ who stands above the large judging Christ, and by the enthroned Trevignano figure. This type of Christ holds his right hand, palm out, in front of his chest in a gesture of blessing, and holds a book in his left. These hand positions are echoed in the St. Francis figures, where the Saint holds up his right hand either palm out to display the stigmata [as in Pescia I, Pisa II, and Pistoia III], in a blessing gesture [Florence IV], or holding a cross [Assisi VI, Rome VII and Siena V]. A book is always held in the left hand. It is also
significant that the only type of Christ figure that is depicted explicitly displaying his wounds is the Apocalyptic Christ, as exemplified by the large judging Christ in the Baptistery.

Another iconographic association which the central St. Francis figures have with the **Last Judgement** is the presence of angels above the central figure. Two angels appear at the tops of the Pescia I, Pisa II, and Florence IV, while a whole host of angels flanking a blessing Christ top Siena V. On Pescia I, these angels are represented frontally, wearing elaborately decorated gowns. Their identical poses reflect that of St. Francis, in that they hold up their right palms and grasp rods in their left. In the Pisa II version they turn towards the centre, pointing towards Francis with their outermost hands and holding the rods in their others. On Florence IV the angels extend both their open hands towards the centre, where a scroll is held by a heavenly hand.

Before their appearance on the storied retables this type of angel, particularly the original Pescia I type holding a rod, seems to have had two preceding iconographical uses in Italian art: in Last Judgement scenes, and on the cimasa panels of painted wooden crucifixes. In the Florence Baptistery mosaic, for example, the hierarchy of angels is depicted in a register above the large Judging Christ, beginning with the six-winged seraphim directly to either side of the blessing Christ. The next class of angels to the right of the seraphim are of that type seen in the Pescia I and Pisa II retables, holding rods in their left hands and indicating Christ with their right. They are identified by an inscription on the mosaic as DOMI NATIONES. The representation of this type of angel at the tops of crucifixes, as on that by Berlinghiero Berlinghieri in the Pinacoteca, Lucca, where the angels are almost identical to those depicted by the
younger Berlinghieri on the Pescia panel, is also related to Last Judgement iconography. The tradition of representing either a Last Judgement Christ with angels [as seen in Pisan Crucifix number 20\textsuperscript{55}], or a scene of The Ascension of the Virgin [as in Pisan Crucifix number 15]\textsuperscript{56} was often reduced to just angel figures, or Mary flanked by angels.\textsuperscript{57} That similar angels should be depicted above the figure of St. Francis would suggest that either yet another formal parallel between the painted crucifix and the St. Francis retable is being made to further emphasize the thematic parallel, or that an allusion to Francis' Apocalyptic role is being made, or both.

On Siena V, the allusion to a Last Judgement Christ iconography is even more specific in that the angels depicted surround the actual figure of a blessing Christ. The Pescia I was apparently the first panel painting to portray such angels apart from the Crucifixes.\textsuperscript{58}

In considering the distinctive features which characterize the type of St. Francis represented in the central figures of the storied retables, it would appear that a double allusion is being made. First of all, the very fact that a large vertical figure is shown between the side scenes, that Francis prominently displays those marks which most identify him with the crucified Christ, and that he is shown under a pair of angels, suggest parallels with the Christ figures on painted wooden Crucifixes. And secondly, the facial expression of the Saint, his hand gestures [including, again, his display of the stigmata marks], and the iconographic significance of the angels, all relate to the representation of the Apocalyptic Christ. In both areas of reference, the possibility that Joachistic trends of thought were in part responsible for this mode of depiction of St. Francis is quite strong. The iconographic features reminiscent of Crucifix figures serve to point out even more patently that the St. Francis retable was consciously
based on that art form for thematic purposes, and that the basis for the Christ-St. Francis parallel lay in the patterns of religious history set down in Joachistic writings. The apparent allusions of the central St. Francis figures to Last Judgement iconography are perhaps an even more direct reference to the role of Francis as derived from the Franciscan interpretation of Joachimism. The two facts that St. Francis was identified as a specific angel of the Apocalypse [the stigmata marks being the outstanding basis for such an identification], and that he appears on the storied retable looking like an Apocalyptic Christ and displaying the stigmata, may certainly have been related. This is not to suggest that the figures were designed explicitly to illustrate Joachistic ideas, but rather that an Apocalyptic identification and depiction of Francis, which ultimately derived from Joachimism, was considerably more widespread in the thirteenth century even among non-Joachite Franciscans than is generally acknowledged. Just as this trend in thought appears to have manifested itself in thirteenth century English Franciscan art through the derivation of the motifs for certain Franciscan stories from Apocalypse illustrations, similar thought in Italy resulted in the conceptions of St. Francis which are displayed in the central figures on the thirteenth century storied retables.
CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSIONS

The seven Franciscan altarpieces from Pescia I to Siena VII comprise a distinct group of paintings with related and inter-dependent subject matter. The tradition they represent together is the earliest body of illustrations of the Franciscan legend. After examining exactly what was depicted on each of the altarpieces, however, it is possible to suggest an iconographic development within the Dugento. The subjects from the Franciscan legend which were chosen for representation on the earlier panels were primarily posthumous miracles. These were combined with scenes from the life of Francis as the century progressed, and eventually omitted entirely as the altarpieces increasingly emphasized life-cycle scenes. Reasons underlying the choice and changes of scenes can also be suggested. The four miracles included on all the earlier panels were specifically those which comprised part of the list of miracles collected for the canonization of Francis. That they were the subjects chosen for representation on the first altarpieces dedicated to Francis indicates that the intention of the art works was to emphasize Francis' proven sanctity. The change to iconographies based on scenes from Francis' life suggests that the attitude of stressing the canonization was being replaced by one in which Francis was regarded more as an historical figure. This change may be accounted for either as part of a more general movement in the Dugento which increasingly humanized religious art [for example, the switch from the Christus triumphans to the Christus patiens on the painted crucifixes], or perhaps as the decreased necessity to celebrate Francis' sanctity. Within the life-cycle panels themselves some of the changes in subject matter can be explained by the decision by the Franciscan Order to acknowledge only Bonaventura's Leggenda Major as the official biography of Francis.

The physical shape and arrangement of the new panel type devised for the
St. Francis retables can also be related to Franciscan doctrine. Because the panel type was based on the storied crucifix, the physical similarity of the panels implied a parallelism between the figures of Christ and Francis. The conception of Francis as an "alter Christus" was an important doctrine within the Order, and one which derived from the view of history expounded by Joachimism. Hence, both subject matter and format of the retables can be explained to a large degree by attitudes within thirteenth century Franciscanism.

Franciscan applications of Joachistic themes also manifested themselves in the style used for the portrayal of Francis on the retables. The stern, hieratic Francis figures seem to indicate the interpretation of the Saint which gave him an apocalyptic role based in Joachimism. Throughout the Dugento the artistic conception of Francis on the altarpieces did not significantly change.

All of the connections which can be made among Franciscan doctrine, the subject matter of the retables, their physical lay-out, and their style serve to demonstrate how closely these works of art reflected the thinking of their times. The choice of scenes was especially carefully planned, so that the subjects emphasized only those aspects of St. Francis that were thought to be significant by the Franciscans who designed the iconographic programmes. The scenes on the altarpieces did not represent a random choice of appealing stories about Francis for the pleasure of the viewers. They were instead deliberately chosen to illustrate specific doctrines about Francis. Even the shape of some of the panels and the type of the central figures reflected definite ways in which the Saint was to be venerated. This suggests a great deal about the function of the storied retables as didactic religious objects.

A detailed examination of the iconography of the early Franciscan altarpieces is also valuable in a consideration of the Assisi frescoes of the Legend of St. Francis. The nave frescoes of the life of St. Francis represent
an extremely important movement in the development of trecento painting. Because the storied retables comprise the only body of earlier Franciscan subject matter, they must be given consideration for an understanding of the significance of the subjects chosen in the Assisi Legend of St. Francis. The Assisi frescoes do not represent an unprecedented life-cycle of Francis. Their innovative subject matter can be fully appreciated only when they are seen as a stage in the tradition begun in the storied retables. In the choice of subjects and their dogmatic implications the fresco cycle is far removed from the first miracle panels, but follows quote naturally from the iconography of Siena VII, the latest of the panels. In addition to contributing to an awareness of the general import of the subject choices, a comparison of scenes common to the frescoes and the retables could indicate specific changes in interpretation.

The seven storied retables of St. Francis represent an important tradition in dugento art in three major respects: as examples of the rise and earliest development of Franciscan iconography, as exponents of thirteenth century Franciscan doctrines, and as precursors to the Assisi frescoes.
NOTES

1 Garrison Italian Romanesque Panel Painting, p. 153.
2 Hager Italianische Altarbilder, p. 96.
4 See Chapter II, "Joachimism and Franciscanism".
5 ibid.
6 Reeves The Influences of Prophecy, p. 72.
7 These are enumerated by Reeves, ibid., p. 73.
8 Guido Bondatti Gioachimism e francescanesimo, pp. 163-164.
9 The sources of the legend are discussed by Reeves The Influence of Prophecy, pp. 100-101.
11 The Roger of Wendover account reads: "Francis found crows, kites, magpies, and many other fouls that foly in the midst of heaven sitting among carrion in the suburb, and called out to them ...". Translated by Klingender, ibid., p. 15.
12 Reproduced by Klingender, ibid., figure b.
14 Klingender "St. Francis and the Birds", p. 15, note 2 lists thirteenth century English illustrations of the sermon to the birds, to be compared to the Apocalyptic illustrations reproduced in his article.
15 Drawing reproduced by M. R. James, "The Drawings of Matthew Paris", The Walpole Society, XIV, 1925-26, pp. 11-26, plate XI.
16 See, for example this scene in M. R. James, The Trinity College Apocalypse [London: The Roxburghe Club, 1909].

Nicholson, ibid., p. 6 suggests that the subject matter is a reflection of the emphasis in Bonaventura's account upon the idea of Francis' special devotion to angels and above all to St. Michael.


See Chapter IV, "Florence IV".

Reeves *The Influence of Prophecy*.

See Chapter V "The Stigmatization" for a translation of Celano's description of the Stigmatization.

See Plate 13.


Authors who accept an early date for the fresco include Facchinetti and Hager.

A greeting used by Francis - "The peace of God be with you".

Reproduced by Facchinetti *Iconografia Francescana*.

See Plate 14.


ibid., p. 130.

See Facchinetti *Iconografia Francescana*.

Garrison *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting*, pp. 50-52, numbers 51, 54, 55, 57, 58, 60.

Reproduced by Nicholson *Cimabue*.

Garrison *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting*, p. 50, number 53.

ibid.

Bughetti *Vita e miracoli*.

Siren *Toskanische Maler*.

D'Aucona *Les Primitifs Italiens*. 


Pescia I dates from 1235. Offner "An Unknown St. Francis" dates the Louvre panel at about 1230.

Garrison *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting*, p. 97, number 243. See Plate 15.

ibid., p. 50, number 52. See Plate 14.

See Facchinetti *Iconografia Francescana*.

Hager *italianische Altarbildes*, p. 90.

See Chapter I, "The Literary Sources for the Life of St. Francis".

See Mario Salmi, "I. Mosaici del '=Bel San Giovanni' e la pittura del Secolo XIII a Firenze", *Dedalo*, XI, 1930-31, pp. 543-569.

Reproduced by Hager *italianische Altarbildes*.

The cimasa panel is the uppermost, rectangular component of the crucifix.

"Nations" were an order of archangel. See Davidson *A Dictionary of Angels*.


Garrison *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting*, p. 201, number 521.

Garrison *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting*.

Evelyn Sandberg-Vavala, *La Croce Dipinta* [Verona: Apollo, 1929].

Similar angels appear at the tops of Madonna and Child panels near the end of the century.
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Plate 14

Plate 15
APPENDIX I

Pescia I

Pescia, San Francesco, third altar on the right from the entrance

tempera on wood, a gabled dossal
height: 1.60 m., width: 1.23 m. [Garrison]

signed and dated at the base: A.D. M.C.C.X.X.X.V.
BONAVETURA BERLIGERI ...

six side scenes:
left [top to bottom]: the Stigmatization, the sermon to the birds,
healing the deformed girl
right [top to bottom]: healing cripples, healing Bartolomeo da Narni,
healing the possessed

The panel was restored in 1910 by Professor De Pray from Florence, who
"consolidated" the colours and freed the original frame from the baroque orna­
ment that covered it [Nucci]. The 1910 restoration is the only documented one,
but the central figure's halo was at one time redone, an addition which covered
up the point of the hood [Sinibaldi and Brunetti]. The painting has suffered
some damage through peeling and scratching, especially in the lower two scenes,
but is generally in an excellent state of preservation. It retains its
original frame.

Ansaldi maintains that hinge marks are visible on the sides of the
panel's frames, which indicate to him that the painting originally formed part
of a triptych, possibly with shutters. The only other writer to comment upon
this is Garrison, who reports that no hinge marks are perceptible on the
panel today, and suggests that Ansaldi was perhaps misled by remnants of nails
or rings which once served for the painting's suspension. Hager's observations
on the use for which the panel was designed further decrease the probability
that the panel was originally a tabernacle.

Accounts regarding the panel's original location are quite confused. The
oldest allusion to it is contained in an inscription from 1614 located on the
front of the Mainardi altar, over which the panel is still located. The
inscription tells how a member of the Mainardi family indicated in his will that this new altar should be built in place of the previous Mainardi one, and that only the ancient and venerated image of St. Francis should be retained. The Mainardi altar was at that time the first altar on the right of the nave, we are informed by another seventeenth century source. [See Garrison] It was moved to its present location between 1715 and 1720 [Garrison]. The painting being referred to in the inscription is definitely the Berlinghieri panel, for a seventeenth century chronicler writing soon afterwards cites the date and signature of the Francis panel on the Mainardi altar. [Garrison] But exactly how long it had been in the church at Pescia before 1614 is another problem. A well-propagated legend, quoted by Matteo Ansaldi, Bughetti, and Sinibaldi and Brunetti is that the panel was obtained by ancestors of Matteo Mainardi in Florence, and that Matteo gave it to the church in 1494. Garrison traces back this legend and finds it to have originated in Anzilotti's writing of 1846, in which no source is cited, and hence seen as probable fiction by Garrison. Both Bughetti and Sinibaldi-Brunetti find the 1494 date suspicious because of the fact that the Mainardi had reportedly had an altar in San Francesco since 1295, so that the panel would more logically have been obtained at that time. Sinibaldi and Brunetti find further strength for this objection in their erroneous belief that the Mainardi altar had stood in its present location, third on the right, since 1295. But the 1295 date itself, propagated by Ansaldi, Bughetti, and Sinibaldi-Brunetti, is a piece of misinformation, as Garrison demonstrates. The 1295 figure was first introduced by Giuseppes Ansaldi in 1879. Since it appears in no earlier source, Garrison assumes that it is a misreading of the date 1235 which appears in an important, but generally ignored document by Lucas Wadding, a Franciscan annalist writing in 1625. Wadding records that the Mainardi family erected an altar in San Francesco in
the year 1235. Trusting that Wadding had access to reliable documents, Garrison conjectures that the Berlinghieri panel was commissioned along with the Mainardi altar in 1235, and thus the painting has always been in San Francesco, Pescia. Garrison, however, is also aware of the possibility that Wadding obtained his 1235 date from the panel itself, and not from an historical record. Hager accepts Garrison's hypothesis as being correct, and sees Garrison's hesitation as being unnecessary, preferring to think that Wadding had access to now-gone evidence. The problem Garrison suggests, however, must be seen as a substantial one in the absence of any pre-seventeenth century documentation, so that the existence of the St. Francis panel in the Pescia church since 1235 can by no means be accepted as a proven fact.

This panel is the only signed extant work by the Lucchese artist Bonaventura Berlinghieri. It was discovered in the nineteenth century. The account of this re-exposure is related by Michele Ridolfi, who was art director for the duchy of Lucca at that time. In 1624 a painting on canvas by Alessandro Bardelli da Uzzano was placed over the Berlinghieri panel, so that only the central figure of St. Francis was exposed through an opening in the centre of the canvas [Garrison]. As this apparently covered the signature but left legible the original date, the identity of the artist of the St. Francis was soon forgotten, and the work was generally referred to as a painting by Margaritone d'Arezzo from 1235. In the 1840's Gaetano Milanesi and Giovanni Pini of the Florentine Accademia and Galleria respectively, were investigating works of art throughout Tuscany in preparation for a new edition of Vasari's Lives, and discovered the hidden scenes and signature on the Pescia panel. The examination of the panel was then turned over to Ridolfi, who had the seventeenth century canvas removed, and a drawing made of the Francis painting. It is not clear whether or not the canvas was permanently removed at that time, for Bughetti reports that Biagi still speaks of the cloth covering in 1901,
but Garrison quite rightly sees this as a misreading of Biagi, and suggests that the canvas was not replaced over the panel after Ridolfi's initial removal of it. Sinibaldi and Brunetti reproduce Bughetti's view on this matter. Bardelli's canvas was at any rate in a new location by 1911, behind the high altar. [Ansaldi] As late as 1908 there was confusion over Bardelli's role in the painting, when Lazzareschi claimed that the side scenes of the St. Francis panel were by Alessandro Bardelli, who he thought was perhaps the restorer of the central figure. Bughetti disputes this view, not realizing that Lazzareschi, who had never seen the actual painting, was confusing the canvas painting with the side scenes.

Pisa II

Pisa, San Francesco, Agostini Chapel [first chapel left of cappella maggiore]

tempera on wood, a gabled dossal, truncated at the top height: 1.63 m., width: 1.29 m. [Garrison]

six side scenes:
left [top to bottom]: healing the deformed girl, healing the punished daughter, healing the noblewoman
right [top to bottom]: healing the lame man, healing Bartolomeo da Narni, healing the possessed

Only minor restorations have been carried out on the panel. Salmi states that it underwent either a cleaning or a raising of its colours in the late nineteenth century. A large area at the upper left has been badly damaged and filled in. Three horizontal cracks run the width of the panel at the joints of the back supporting planks. The original frame is missing. A cusped frame added in 1910 [Salmi] was later removed. The point of the central figure's hood, which originally extended to the right, has been covered over by a newer gold halo [Bughetti].

The earliest reference to this work is by Vasari, who, in his account of the life of Cimabue, records:
... S. Francesco di Pisa, loro convento, a fare in una
tavola un S. Francesco che fu da que'popoli tenuto cosa
rarissima, conoscendosi in esso un certo que'piu di bonta,
e nell'aria della testa e nelle pieghie de'panni, che nella
maniera greca nonera stata usata in fin'allora da chi aveva
alcuna cosa lavorato, non pur in Pisa, ma in tutta Italia.

Although Vasari's attribution to Cimabue may be dismissed as legendary, his
reference does allow the assumption that the panel he speaks of is indeed the
one found in the same church today. Sinibaldi and Brunetti, however, object
that it is quite possible that Cimabue actually did have a St. Francis panel
in the church, which is today lost. But the fact that a St. Francis painting
in San Francesco, Pisa is referred to continuously from Vasari's time on would
seem to strengthen the identification of the present panel with that mentioned
by Vasari. Several other sixteenth century sources [Il Libro d'Antonio Billi,
Magliabechiano, Gelli] refer to a painting of St. Francis in the Pisa church,
and give it the traditional attribution to Cimabue. Reference to the panel is
found in the Pisa convent's diary, under March 7, 1631, where it is recorded
that the painting was carried through the city in a procession during an
epidemic. [Sinibaldi and Brunetti] In the eighteenth century, Titi records
the panel as being on the altar of the Seta chapel, near the Sacristy, but
covered over except for the central figure by a seventeenth century work by
Paulignani. Titi also reports that the older panel is said to be by Cimabue.
The fact that the St. Francis painting was covered by another had been
mentioned as early as 1728 by Mariottini, who more specifically states that
Francis was visible only from the bust up. In 1859 the panel was removed
from the church of San Francesco and progressively transported to numerous
places until being returned to San Francesco at some point between 1878 and
1910, after which it was placed on the altar of the Agostini chapel, free of
its previous covering, where it is seen today.

The last writer to accept the traditional attribution to Cimabue was
Lanzi in 1809. Da Morrora suggested Giunta Pisano in 1793, and was agreed with by Serri. Crowe and Cavalcaselle attribute the work to Margaritone d'Arezzo, as does Wackernagel. Siren identifies the artist as Ugolino di Tedice. Of those writers who put no name to the artist, but identify him with other works, Vitzhum and Volbach see the same artist as being responsible for the St. Francis panel and the Crucifix of San Pierino, as did Siren, but do not accept the author as Ugolio. Toesca thinks the panel to be by the same artist as the Rome and Assisi St. Francis paintings. And Sandberg-Vavala attributes the painting to the same master who executed the Panziano altarpiece and the Madonna and Child in the Ryerson Collection, Chicago. Garrisoni and Sini-baldì-Bruñetti maintain an unknown Pisan artist who had displayed a certain stylistic relationship to the works of Giunta Pisano.

The matter of the painting's date can be fixed somewhat more specifically. By showing that some of the panel's scenes are based on events described only in Thomas of Celano's *Tractatus de Miraculis* of 1250, Bughetti notes that the work must date from after the middle of the century. This internal evidence has been accepted as conclusive by D'Ancona, Garrison and Oertel. Hager still dates the panel 1240-1250. If stylistic affinities with Giunta Pisano [active in the second quarter of the Duecento] are maintained, however, it is reasonable to place the St. Francis panel relatively close to mid-century, that is, between 1250 and 1260.

**Pistoia III**

Pistoia, Museo Civico

tempera on wood, a gabled dossal
height: 1.62 m., width: 1.36 m. [Garrison]

eight side scenes:
left [top to bottom]: approbation of the Rule, Francis preaching, healing the deformed girl, healing the lame man
right [top to bottom]: Stigmatization, funeral of Francis, healing Bartolomeo da Narni, healing the possessed
The panel is in a poor state of preservation. Extensive restoration was carried out in 1612. At the base of the panel it is recorded that: Restaurato a di XX di dicembre anno MDCXII. At this time the habit of the central figure was repainted, the scenes were extensively retouched throughout, the gold was renewed, and a new internal decorative border was painted in. The outer border of the frame appears to be the original one, however. The panel is also extremely dirty today. An upper addition which turned the panel into a rectangle was also added, but later removed. [Bughetti]

The panel was obtained by the museum in 1915; before this it was located in the church of San Francesco, Pistoia, on the altar of the Bracciolini Chapel, the first chapel to the right of the main altar. It was on the altar until the end of the nineteenth century, at which time it was moved to the Sacristy of the same church until being taken over by the Museo Civico. [Lazzareschi, Bughetti] The panel's presence in the church of San Francesco can be traced back with certainty only to the eighteenth century, when it is mentioned in a description of the church. [Bughetti] It was at that time located inside a tabernacle and flanked by paintings of Sts. Clare and Elizabeth. No earlier sources which refer to the painting have been discovered, so that it is impossible to conjecture whether or not the panel was designed for this church. However the fact that the permanent building of San Francesco, Pistoia was not begun until 1294 would suggest that it was not.

The date and origin of this panel are difficult to ascertain, especially since the original style is hard to distinguish beneath the extensive restoration. For iconographic reasons, however, it can be placed between the Pisa panel and that of Santa Croce, Florence. It can therefore be dated approximately in the third quarter of the thirteenth century. Venturi dates it between the Assisi and Santa Croce panels. Lazzareschi errs in seeing this
panel as being dependant on the Florence one. Sandberg-Vavala remarks that the condition of the panel is too poor to attribute it to a particular artist or workshop, but sees it more generally as by a follower of Bonaventura Berlinghieri. Garrison pinpoints the date to 1265-1275 [without explanation], and assigns the work to a Tuscan artist related to Meliore. Hager repeats Garrison's dates. Some confusion resulted from Cavalcaselle's attribution of this painting to Lippo Memmi, an error which resulted from an indistinction between the St. Francis panel and a later one in the capella maggiore. [Bughetti] A second false attribution was Chiti's claim [1910] that the painter was Francesco Desideri, who was the artist of the paintings which once flanked the St. Francis panel. [Bughetti]

Florence IV

Florence, Santa Croce, Bardi Chapel

tempera on wood, a gabled dossal
height: 2.34 m., width: 1.27 m. [Garrison]

twenty side scenes:
left [top to bottom]: Francis released by his mother, his renunciation of worldly goods, the cross-shaped tunic, at the Porziuncola, the approbation of the Rule, the presepio at Greccio, the sermon to the birds, preaching before the Sultan
base [upper left to upper right]: the sheep among goats, saving two sheep, Stigmatization, Francis doing penance
right [bottom to top]: the apparition at Arles, Francis among the lepers, the funeral of Francis, healing the deformed girl and the possessed, the canonization, saving the shipwrecked, being paid tribute, healing Bartolomeo da Narni

The panel remains essentially in its original state, without any retouchings except for the filling in of two cracks the length of the panel on either side of the central figure, and a few patches within the scenes. It was cleaned in 1953, a thick layer of varnish and dirt being removed. [Baldini] Although partially hit by the Arno flood of 1967, the painting suffered no damage from it. [Baldini] The original frame of the panel is missing, and new backing has been added.
This painting is also mentioned by Vasari in 1568. Citing Cimabue's works in Santa Croce, Vasari says:

fece in una tavola in campo d'oro un S. Francesco, e lo ratrasse, il che fu cosa nuova in que'tempi, di naturale, come seppe il meglio, et intorno a esso tutte l'istoire della vita sua in venti quadretti piene di figure picciole in campo d'oro.

Although Vasari's attribution cannot be taken seriously, nor can his claim that the portrait was done from life, there can be no doubt that the panel he describes is the same one that is still in Santa Croce. Moreover, several other documents are available which enable the painting's location there to be traced back even further. It is recorded in the "Sepultario" of Santa Croce that in 1595 the panel was transferred, with considerable ceremony, to the Bardi Chapel from its previous location on the column of the Tedaldi family [which was the fourth column on the left nave from the transept]. [Bughetti] This transference was apparently in keeping with a request made by Bartolo Tedaldi in his will; he wished an altar to St. Francis to be erected at the family column, but since this would disrupt the lay-out of the church, his descendants compromised by placing the painting, believed to be by Cimabue, in the Bardi Chapel which was already dedicated to the Saint. [Sinabaldi and Brunetti] A seventeenth century document records, somewhat less reliably the earlier history of the panel. [Bori] This document, dated 1624, states that the will of the above-mentioned Bartolo Tedaldi had been drawn up in the year 1471. The panel was therefore in Santa Croce prior to that date, although Bartolo's request with regard to its placement was not realized, until over a century later. The same seventeenth century writer also records a legend as to the painting's origin; it was reportedly commissioned by one earlier Bartolo Tedaldi, who was an ardent admirer of St. Francis. He lived inside a wooden box from which he ordered the panel to be painted. Thus this
legend upholds the idea that the St. Francis panel was from its origin intended for the Tedaldi, and presumably for their devotional spot in Santa Croce. The truth of this cannot be proven, but the early founding of the Franciscan church in Florence certainly allows for its possibility.

A large number of authors have been suggested for this painting. Until the middle of the nineteenth century Vasari's attribution to Cimabue was generally accepted. [See Sinibaldi and Brunetti] Cavalcaselle and Thode suggested Margaritone d'Arezzo. Venturi, Lazzareschi, and Wackernagel named no artist but stressed his Byzantine background. The most prominent recent tendency has been to identify the author of this painting with the artist responsible for a group of paintings first defined by Siren and attributed by him to Barone Berlinghieri, brother of Bonaventura. The group of related paintings has been variously rearranged to suit the stylistic judgements of several writers, [Vitzhum and Udbach, Toesca, Sandberg-Vavala, Salmi] but the attribution to Barone Berlinghieri has been rejected. Cases have been made for both a Lucchese and Florentine origin of the artist, while Salmi has accounted for the presence of both styles in the work by suggesting that the artist was Lucchese, but had worked in Florence and was influenced by the Baptistery mosaics there. In many of its stylistic formulae the painting bears a certain resemblance to the Lucchese-Berlinghieri school, but that which is distinctly Florentine at this date is the tendency towards an increased attempt at suggesting volume, seen in the Santa Croce panel in the articulation of the central figure's legs beneath his habit. [Salmi, Sandberg-Vavala] The panel is generally assigned now to the anonymous "Bardi St. Francis Master".

In dating the panel, a "terminus post quem" was established by Bughetti for iconographic reasons. The dependence of some of the scenes on St. Bonaventura's Leggenda Maior of 1263 places the painting after this date.
Garrison, Hager, Baldini, and Borsook, however, date the panel between 1250 and 1260.

**Siena V**

Siena, Pinacoteca, number 313

tempera on wood, a gabled dossal
height: 2.32 m., width: 1.13 m. [Garrison]

eight side scenes:
left [bottom to top]: the renunciation of worldly goods, the crucifix of San Damiano, the dream of Innocent II, the sermon to the birds
right [top to bottom]: the chariot of fire, the Stigmatization, the presepio at Greccio, the funeral of Francis

The panel has undergone considerable restoration. It was cleaned and restored in 1931 but was still retouched beyond recognition in 1949. [Garrison] Seventeenth century additions such as cusped decoration of the arches, the rays emanating from the wounds of the central figure, and the book held by the redeemer figure were removed with this restoration. In 1969 the colours were renewed and all other retouchings were removed. This left numerous blank areas which were restored to be recognizably non-original. The original frame was also uncovered in 1969. [Donato] The panel has suffered some cracking at the joints of the backing planks.

The panel was previously located in the church of San Francesco in Colle Val d’Elsa, from which it was acquired by the Siena gallery in 1866. [Bughetti] No earlier references to it have been discovered.

It is generally accepted that the artist responsible for this panel was a late follower of Guido da Siena. [Misciatelli and Lusini, Bughetti, Garrison, Sandberg-Vavala, Stubblebine]. Much of the architecture and the central figure reflect Guidesque formulae, [Stubblebine] and the Stigmatization scene is modelled after the unique interpretation of this scene found in another work which is extremely close to, if not actually by Guido. [Siena Pinacoteca Number 4] But the verticality of the panel's proportions place it
fairly late in the Duecento [Hager], as does the rather refined modelling. [Stubblebine] Garrison, Sandberg-Vavala, and Hager date the panel 1290-1300. Stubblebine places it in the first decade of the fourteenth century.

Assisi VI

Assisi, San Francesco, Museo presently in Rome, Istituto Centrale del Restauro

tempera on wood, a horizontal rectangular dossal height: 0.96 m., width: 1.375 m. [Garrison]

four side scenes:
left [top to bottom]: healing the deformed girl, healing Bartolomeo da Narni
right [top to bottom]: healing the possessed, healing the lame man

Small areas of the scenes have been damaged and repainted. The panel is presently being cleaned extensively. The inner frame appears to be original but a second newer frame has been added around it.

Venturi first suggested that this panel originally served as an altar frontal in San Francesco, Assisi. Lazzareschi and Siren agreed with him, but Siren points out that its dimensions are too small for it to have been on the high altar over the Saint's grave. He suggests an original location on a smaller side altar in the southern transept of the Upper Church, although he presents no reasons for favouring this site. Fratini, however, is convinced that the panel decorated one side of Francis' tomb-altar, and even suggests that the Rome St. Francis panel hung on the other side. Bughetti doubts that the Assisi painting was ever intended as a paliotto at all. This view is also shared by Garrison and Hager. The only piece of early written evidence which may refer to the Assisi panel is reproduced by Hager; a seventeenth century writing by Boverio describes a panel of St. Francis located above an altar just before the stairs leading up to the Upper Church. Because this author stresses the facts that the panel is very old and the figure of St. Francis is quite conspicuous, Hager believes him to be referring to the painting in
question, and further suggests that the location Boverio describes was the original site of the panel, since it was close to the tomb-altar. Hager suggests that the panel would have been transferred to the Sacristy when that side altar [no longer extant] was removed sometime after the seventeenth century. Since Boverio does not mention the fact that the figure of St. Francis is surrounded by four side scenes, the identification of his panel with the present one cannot even be firmly asserted. The possibility of other representations of the saint in the basilica is extremely high, since the entire building was dedicated to him and housed his tomb.

Cavalcaselle and Siren attribute the panel to Giunta Pisano, and thus to the early thirteenth century. Siren sees the likelihood of this attribution being increased by the fact that Giunta produced a painted Crucifix for the Upper Church at Assisi in 1236. Venturi and Lazzareschi assign the work to a Byzantine master of the second half of the Dugento. Garrison suggests an Umbrian, Giuntesque artist, and a date of 1265-1275. Hager repeats this date. Iconographically, the panel can be firmly placed after Pescia I and probably after Pisa II.

Rome VI

Rome, Pinacoteca Vaticana, number 23

tempera on wood, a horizontal rectangular dossal
height: 0.67 m., width: 0.865 m. [Garrison]

four side scenes:
left [top to bottom]: healing the deformed girl, healing Bartolomeo da Narni
right [top to bottom]: healing the possessed, healing the lame man

Siren, Bughetti, and Garrison all point out that the gold background has been completely restored. This restoration covered the point of the hood of the central figure. [Bughetti] As Bughetti and Garrison suggest, the scenes have been considerably repainted, particularly the lower right one. The date
of these restorations is not recorded. The panel appears to have been cut slightly at the edges and the frame has been removed entirely.

Because of this panel's relatively small size, there is less debate as to whether or not it may have served originally as a paliotto. Siren, Garrison, and Hager all agree that it was designed as a retabel, although Frantini suggested that the Assisi and Rome paintings both originally served as frontals on Francis' tomb-altar, despite their differences in size. There have been no other suggestions as to the panel's original placement; it has not been identified with any work mentioned in earlier sources.

Because of this panel's similarity to that of Assisi, Thode assigns them both to the same artist. Siren, however, observes the two paintings are stylistically quite different. The similarity in format leads Bughetti to conclude that the Rome picture was executed either immediately before or immediately after the Assisi one. Garrison and Hager assign it to the fourth quarter of the thirteenth century. Siren holds that it cannot be dated before the end of the century on the basis of technical grounds which he does not explain. Facchetti attributes the panel to Margaritone d'Arezzo. Garrison suggests a north Umbrian origin.

**San Miniato al Tedesco VIII**

formerly in San Miniato al Tedesco, San Francesco now lost, but recorded in an engraving by Boverio

tempera on wood, a gabled dossal

six side scenes:
left [top to bottom]: the Stigmatization, healing the deformed girl, healing the lame boy [?]
right [top to bottom]: the sermon to the birds, healing the possessed, healing Bartolomeo da Narni

On the upper part of the engraved painting Boverio has written the name of the church in which it was located, and at the base is the date 1228. As
Bughetti points out, the authenticity of this date is extremely dubious, for Boverio does not represent it in Roman numerals, in which a thirteenth century date would undoubtedly have been written. It is unlikely that Boverio would have transposed the numerals, for in copying the Pescia altarpiece he has faithfully reproduced the A.D.M.C.C.X.X.X.V. Thus the 1228 has every indication of having been added at a later date. It is not a matter of Boverio including a date which he had found elsewhere, either, for in the text of his book he clearly states that the painting, believed to have been my Margaritone, has the date 1228 at its base. Both Hager and Oertel accept the authenticity of the 1228 date, however. Hager further holds that the absence of a halo on the central figure proves that the painting was executed before the saint's canonization in 1228.
Specific Attributes of the Central Figures

Quite apart from the nature and significance of the "type" of St. Francis represented in the centre of the retables, these figures display certain iconographic features which should be mentioned both for their role in establishing the pictorial attributes of the Saint, and for peculiarities of iconography which the various panels display.

All of the central Francis figures are shown with a halo, to indicate the friar's status as a saint. The haloes of Pisa II, Assisi VI and Siena V are elaborately decorated by patterns incised on the gold background. The halo of the Pistoia III figure is unique in that it protrudes in relatively high relief behind the head of the Saint, being rather similar in this respect to the haloes of many Crucifix figures.

The attribute established for St. Francis in these early retable representations which becomes the Saint's distinguishing feature is the marks of the Stigmata. On the Pescia figure, these are indicated as large reddish circles on the hands and feet; the marks are similarly shown on the Assisi and Rome panels and are large black dots on Florence IV. Those of Pisa II and Pistoia III are considerably smaller. The only figure of the seven retables that displays the side wound is that of Siena V, where it appears through an opening in the habit on the Saint's right chest.

St. Francis is shown barefoot in all of the panels, and wearing the hooded Franciscan habit. The colour of the habit varies, however; it is dark brown on Pescia I, Pisa II, Pistoia III, and Florence IV, deep blue on Assisi VI and Rome VII, and grey on Siena V. In the thirteenth century, the brown or grey habit was the type generally worn by the Friars Minor, but a blue robe apparently did exist for use only on special festival days. The depiction of
St. Francis in this blue habit seems to be a feature unique to Assisi VI and Rome VII in Franciscan art; in the single miracle scene in which St. Francis himself appears [the healing of Bartholomew of Narni], Francis is again depicted in blue on these two panels. All seven of the central figures on the retables are shown with a knotted rope belt around the waist and hanging down the front; this was a distinctive part of the Franciscan habit. The tying of the rope into three knots which signified the three Franciscan virtues of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience was apparently not an established custom yet in the thirteenth century, for although the Pescia, Pisa, Sta. Croce, and Rome figures are all shown with three knots in their cords, the Pistoia and Siena ones each have four, and that of Assisi six.

The central figures are shown either with their hoods partially or completely covering their heads [Pescia I, Pisa II, Rome VII, Florence IV], or with bare heads [Pistoia III, Assisi VI, Siena V]. The position of the cowl does not seem to have any great iconographic significance here. It is very interesting to note, however, that those figures which display their cowls all originally had long, pointed hoods similar to that of the Florence St. Francis. On Pescia I, Pisa II, and Rome VII these points have been apinted over in gold to make the hood appear as a simple, rounded one. Pointed hoods are still visible on the small friar figures in the side scenes, however. But on Pistoia III, where the central figure is bare-headed, the great majority of the pointed hoods worn by the small figures have been methodically scratched away to round them off. Most of these retouchings have been noted by Bughetti, but neither he nor any other author offers an explanation for this procedure. The careful painting over of just the points of St. Francis' hoods was doubtless the result of a seventeenth century dispute amongst the various factions of the Franciscan Order over the original style of the Franciscan cowl. The Pescia I's
central figure, for example, is known to have still displayed a pointed hood in 1632, when Zaccaria Boverio made an engraving of it to use as evidence for the argument for the original pointed form of the cowl. Paintings displaying such hoods located in Conventual Franciscan churches, where the rounded hood was favoured, were probably retouched to conform to the convents' beliefs as the dispute continued. The exception is the unaltered panel of Sta. Croce, Florence, a Conventual church. The central St. Francis figures display two types of actions of their right hands; the earlier form is that seen in Pescia I, Pisa II, Pistoia III, and Florence IV where Francis holds his hand with the palm out in front of his chest to display the stigmata. In the case of Florence IV this position is combined with a gesture of blessing. The second attitude for the right hand as displayed by the Assisi VI, Rome VII, and Siena V figures consists of Francis holding a small cross in front of his chest as a symbol of his imitation of Christ; the stigmata marks are visible on the back of his hand. It is this second position of holding a cross in which St. Francis is most often depicted in later art where he is not shown actively participating in an event.

All of the central figures of the seven retables hold a book in their left hands. In Assisi VI and Rome VII, the book is open, and the words on the pages of the Assisi one read: "Si vis perfectus esse, vade, vende omnia quae habes et da pauperibus". These are originally the words of Christ, found in Matthew 19:21, but were also spoken by Francis in reply to Bernard of Quintavalle, who wished to become his disciple, and they are recorded by Thomas of Celano in his two Lives. The central figure of Rome VII, a painting which appears to be based on Assisi VI in several other respects, holds an open book in a similar position but the pages in this case are blank, although ruled. The reason for this feature is unclear. The books held up by the other
five central figures are all closed, and there is some dispute over the intended identity of these volumes. It has been suggested that the closed book represents the book of the Rule, but Bughetti objects that it is probably an Evangelicum or other Biblical text signifying Francis' role as a preacher. The reason given by Bughetti for rejecting the Rule identification is that throughout the scenes of Pescia I, for example, other friars have a similar book before them on the altars, a feature which Bughetti sees as suggesting the Biblical nature of the volume. This line of reasoning, however, could also be used to support the identification of the book as the Rule, for in the scenes of the Approbation of the Rule on Pistoia III and Florence IV the book which represents the Rule is again similar to the one held by the central figure in each case. It would thus seem impossible to reach a definite conclusion about this attribute of the central figure.

One aspect of these portrayals of St. Francis on which a relatively large amount has been written is whether or not they represent attempts at actual portraiture of the Saint. The reference point for such discussions is a short description by Thomas of Celano of Francis' physical appearance. Any attempts at conclusions on this matter are obviously of little avail. The faces of all the figures belong to a rather severe and stylized "type" rather than suggesting the attempt to represent the portrait of an actual man. The only features which might be said to be in accord with the known appearance of Francis are the beard and tonsure, which are shown on all seven panels, and which were mentioned by Celano. The constant representation of the Saint with bare feet is both a symbol of his devotion to poverty, and an indication of his actual habits of dress.