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FEMALE PATRONAGE AND THE RISE OF FEMALE SPIRITUALITY IN ITALIAN ART OF THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES.

Volume I.

Two volumes: Volume I - Text.
Volume II - Illustrations.

Cordelia Frances Joan Warr.

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ABSTRACT:
FEMALE PATRONAGE AND THE RISE OF FEMALE SPIRITUALITY IN ITALIAN ART OF THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES.
Cordelia Frances Joan Warr.

This thesis deals with the two partially interlocking aspects of female patronage and female spirituality in Italian art during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. My aim has been to expand the knowledge of this subject not through a detailed examination of one female patron, her spirituality, and how it affected her commissions, but through a number of representative examples in order to show the breadth and diversity of women's influence over art, both active and passive.

I have therefore surveyed previous assumptions on female patronage and the opportunities that existed for it, taking a number of smaller examples so as to lay a base for my later arguments. One of the main problems that emerged was a misunderstanding of the clothes depicted as being worn both by the subjects of the paintings and by the donors, and also the subjective use of clothes in order to put across a message. This aspect also bears on the variety of women's religious experience which underlies the whole of this investigation. It forms a base for my chapters on commissions by and for the Poor Clares and the female Vallombrosan order. Finally, I have looked at two examples of lay female patronage only one of which takes a woman as its subject, and examined the reasons for the choice of subject in relation to the spiritual influences of the commissioner and also the ways in which the direct influence of the patron can be assessed.

My research has indicated that both lay women and nuns were not only capable of paying for ambitious projects but that they could also positively affect their iconography. Women's influence over art during this period, and the impact of their spirituality on it, both actively and passively, has only previously been investigated in a few instances. The aim of this thesis is to provide an overview of the female patronage and female spirituality in art and to show that women's influence over art was present in many spheres of society and was not an exception to the rule.
ABBREVIATIONS.


AB Art Bulletin.

AFH Archivum Franciscanum Historicum.

AFP Analecta Fratrum Praedicatorum.

AH Art History.

AQ Art Quarterly.

ASOFP Analecta Sacri Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum.

BM Burlington Magazine.

BOFP Bullarium Ordinis FF Praedicatorum.

BS Bibliotheca Sanctorum.

DB Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani.

DIP Dizionario degli Istituti di Perfezione.

FF Fonti Francescane.

ZfKg Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte.

NB. It should also be noted that with very few exceptions the notes at the end of the chapters use an abbreviated form to refer to books and articles. These are identified by the name of the author and a date or distinguishing word (see Kaftal) where more than one item by that author has been used. The only exceptions are some where an author has been cited only once in which case the full reference will be found in the relevant chapter note. In all other cases the bibliography should be referred to for a full reference.
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INTRODUCTION.

This thesis looks at two partially inter-related aspects of women in art during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries - women as patrons of art, and women’s spirituality as reflected in the works which they commissioned and the representation of holy women. The recognition in the later Middle Ages of the increasing forces of female spirituality took various forms and came from a number of sources. Women’s enthusiasm to take an active part in the church was shown in the art of the period in the amount of contemporary female saints and beatae who are portrayed, either as single figures, or, more significantly, in cycles of their lives. It is also shown in the number of female patrons who are portrayed on paintings.

From the late thirteenth century there is increasing evidence of women acting as the sole commissioners of devotional works destined for churches, convents or sites used for confraternity meetings. In some cases these commissions were not merely destined for churches and convents but took the form of the churches and convents themselves. Where women undertook this type of commission they would normally be the wives or mothers of powerful men, those who ruled over an entire city, duchy, or even kingdom, and this form of commissioning by powerful women was part of a long tradition whereby religious commissions were connected with the consort of the ruler. As well as
this there were a number of commissions paid for by communities of nuns or by individual nuns who ordered works to embellish their own convents. Finally, during this period a new type of female commissioner was thrown into ever greater relief in the Italian peninsula. These were women of the merchant classes who, most usually on the death of their husbands, found themselves in charge of an amount of surplus money that would enable them, not to endow a complete church, but to contribute towards the building or embellishing of their favourite foundation. The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries also saw a dramatic increase in the numbers of female saints. From accounting for around twelve per cent of saints in previous centuries they come to account for twenty-five per cent and this too is reflected in the art of the period, in commissions both from women and men.\(^3\)

The overlap of female patronage and female spirituality is by no means complete. The rise in known female commissioners and the corresponding rise in female saints does not necessarily imply that women were patrons of art which had women as its subjects, or even art that was concerned with women in some way - for a convent or convent church for example. Women could and did commission works that benefitted men or were intended for male environments.\(^4\) The aspects of female patronage and female spirituality in this thesis should not therefore be understood as occupying entirely the same space. The thesis
does not deal entirely with female patronage, nor does it
deal entirely with female spirituality. However these
two subjects interlock sufficiently to require that certain
influences of female spirituality in art be explored in
order to be able to fully assess female patronage. Indeed
the effects of female spirituality in the art of the period
is an undercurrent in many of the chapters, although only
systematically explored in one.

The choice of subjects for this thesis covers a wide range
both geographically and in terms of the questions posed.
Geographically it spreads from Naples to Trieste while the
issues that it looks at range from the those involved in
investigating both smaller and larger works commissioned by
women patrons, individually or as a group, to women's
spirituality as evidenced by their clothing, the challenges
faced in using this to pinpoint the exact ambient from
which works came and the importance of dress as an
indication of regional and spiritual diversity, and also
its significance in defining patronage.

I have chosen such diverse subjects rather than focus
exclusively on one area for a number of reasons. The first
is the present state of research into female patronage of
art and female spirituality in art during these two
centuries. Whilst there have been a number of historical
studies on women both in relation to religion and law at
this time, little attention has been paid to women's
influence over art, their appearance in it and the reasons for this. I therefore felt it necessary to provide an overview of female patronage and spirituality in art using as large an information base as possible. This was in order to show that women's patronage of art was not merely confined to a few examples but formed an integral part of art patronage during this period. It has too often been the case that powerful women, or even those with a restricted sphere of influence, have been treated in isolation from others, making them seem exceptions proving the rule of women's lack of power. Rather than cover a representative subject in comprehensive detail I aim to show the widespread influence of many types of women in the art of the period, both directly through their patronage, and indirectly through their spirituality. This has necessitated a lack of underlying detail in some places justified in order to fully tackle the breadth of my subject.

The thesis is divided into six chapters. The questions addressed in the first two chapters are the most wide-ranging. The first addresses female patronage in a broad sense and the second female spirituality. They are used to lay a base for the more focused investigations of the third to sixth chapters. The initial chapter looks at a number of works that are believed to have been commissioned by women or for a female ambient. These are often small panel paintings but the examples used also include larger works
such as polyptychs. The chapter looks at the issues involved in examining these works from the point of view of patronage and the means we can use to categorize them given the dearth of documentary information that exists for the period. It pays particular attention to iconography and the possibilities this allows for assessing the ambient from which work came from and its possible commissioner/s. It also looks at mechanisms for patronage and the type of women who would have had the opportunity to become patrons.

Where donor figures are concerned one of the ways of finding out what type of patron was responsible is a close examination of the clothes of that figure. This has previously been an issue containing too many grey areas. Too often simplistic conclusions have been drawn about the social background and identity of those depicted in donor portraits based on an inadequate knowledge of the clothes they are wearing. The dress of women within paintings is also an important gauge of their spirituality in relation to the order to which they may have belonged. Like the dress of donors this has often been misunderstood leading to inaccuracies in interpreting any written information. The reason for these problems in the interpretation of clothing is often due to a lack of knowledge about clothing rules for various types of lay and religious congregations, in conjunction with the complications that arise from regional variations and differences in artistic interpretation. The second chapter therefore examines the
rules of the main orders of this time in relation to dress, in conjunction with the depiction of these clothes, in order to come to a better understanding of how the depiction of clothes can be used in art historical research to clarify questions relating to patronage and spirituality. There is also an appendix relating to this chapter which gives the clothing regulations of a number of religious groups, both lay and enclosed.

The third and fourth chapters deal with patronage in the ambient of two female religious orders - that of the Vallombrosans and the Poor Clares. I have chosen to look at a small number of mostly larger works in order to concentrate on their iconography, often one of the main sources of information about the work. Although the female Vallombrosan order had probably been founded in the eleventh century it enjoyed a flowering of popularity in Tuscany during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The polyptych of the life of Saint Humility originally from the church of San Giovanni Evangelista in Florence forms the focus of my discussion of the patronage from this order. The discussion of patronage for and by the female Vallombrosans relies on the previous two chapters for its conclusions on whether the iconography would have reflected the wishes of the order and also on the probable identification of the donor figure. An appendix to this chapter gives information about the various reconstructions of the Humility polyptych.
The fourth chapter looks at paintings executed for the convent churches of the Poor Clares in Assisi and Trieste. The Poor Clares, as a relatively newly founded order, were still evolving for most of the thirteenth and well into the fourteenth century. Like the Franciscans their history is well documented for most of the early history of the order. This has enabled me to place the works that I examine within a detailed historical framework, using previous studies of Franciscan history and its bearing on the order's use of iconography to inform my own views on how the early history of the Clares affected the iconography in their churches and whether it is possible to tell from this whether or not the nuns themselves could have been directly responsible for it. For the Poor Clares of Assisi the dossal with scenes from the life of Saint Clare in Santa Chiara is explored within the context of the contemporary debate over who should have the spiritual care of the order. In the case of the triptych from Trieste the iconography is once again looked at within an historical context. The information related in Chapter 2 is also used here in order to clarify some of the more puzzling aspects of the iconography. The geographical distance behind these two convents has allowed a comparison between the ways in which two convents of the same order were governed and their very different reactions to this. Both examples have been investigated before but when examined in conjunction with each other the peculiarity of their iconography becomes
clearer and sheds light on the diversity with which the order was run.

The final two chapters deal with types of lay patronage. The examples chosen cover the whole of the fourteenth century and are divided between patronage in Naples and in Padua. In Naples I have looked at the royal patronage of Maria of Hungary in the church of Santa Maria Donna Regina, and Sancia of Majorca in Santa Chiara, while in Padua I have considered the patronage of Fina Buzzacarina. The decoration in the church of Santa Maria Donna Regina in Naples funded by Maria of Hungary and in the Baptistry in Padua funded by Fina Buzzacarina both consist of important fresco cycles and both have been the subject of a number of studies. However in none of these studies has the question of patronage and its effects been thoroughly examined. Using the iconography of the frescoes compared to the written sources together with the information we possess about the lives of the commissioners and the previous mostly stylistic studies of these cycles I have looked closely at the possible influence of the patrons on these cycles and the reasons for their choice of subject matter.

I have relied mainly on a close consideration of the iconography of the works considered. It is for this reason that I have concentrated on larger works as these provide greater scope for this method. This has been used both internally within the works considered and in relation
to selected comparisons. Where documentary evidence has been available this has usually been in the form of hagiographical texts relating to the subject of the paintings. Due to the lack of more than the barest documentation for some of the works which I have considered it has sometimes been necessary to take comparisons from outside the period strictly covered in this thesis.

With regard to female patronage the aim of this thesis is not always to provide absolute proof of women's influence over the art that I have examined but to posit this idea and investigate the iconographical, and hagiographical and other written evidence that supports it. The possibility of women directly controlling the works that they commissioned has often been ignored and my aim has been to show that investigation into female patronage wherever this is a possibility is a valid line of enquiry and should not be easily dismissed. The questions that I have sought to clarify with regard to female spirituality are mainly closely linked to those regarding female patronage but have also, in certain cases, been explored in their own right, as, for example, in some parts of the chapter on religious dress.

To sum up, this thesis does not aim to be a definitive exploration of female patronage and female spirituality during the late Middle Ages but rather to discuss as wide a variety of topics as possible within this subject in order
to place the involvement of women in art, both passively and actively, high on the agenda for further research.
Notes to Introduction.

1. I have used the term *patron* in this thesis regardless of whether it refers to a man or a woman.

2. *Convent* in this thesis has not always been used in its English sense. Where it refers to a male or a female institution will be clear from the context in which it is used.


4. See the examples in Chapter 1.

5. See for example the discussion on the clothes of the possible donor of the Humility polyptych in Chapter 3.

6. See for example the case of Saint Clare of Montefalco discussed in Chapter 2.

7. I have retained the Italian version of all names of churches. Saints names and the names of popes have in general been given in their English form except in cases where this form is very rarely used. I have retained the Italian form of other names except in cases where the the English form of the Italian is extremely common as, for example, Robert of Naples.

8. For the Baptistery in Padua see both Bettini and Delaney 1972. For Santa Maria Donna Regina see Bertaux 1899, Chierici, Bologna and Leone de Castris.

9. See for example Saalman on the Baptistery in Padua who flies in the face of strong evidence supporting the patronage of Fina Buzzacarina.
WOMEN IN ITALIAN ART OF THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES: Questions of Patronage and its Representational Effects.

For women patrons of art as for men the evidence available for the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is very sparse and does not enable us to build up a full picture of the mechanisms of patronage. There are a number of factors that make the exploration of patronage during this period a rocky road to follow, regardless of whether it is male or female patronage that is being investigated. Foremost amongst these is the lack of surviving contractual documentation. Few contracts still exist from this period which can be used to identify both the commissioner and the work commissioned. Those that do can rarely be linked to an extant work. Smaller contracts were likely to be verbal agreements and so many of the works commissioned by individual women may not have ever had any written record of their wishes accompanying it. In fact those contracts that survive are more likely to stipulate the method of payment to the artist, the colours to be used, or the size of the work, as well as the envisaged completion date rather than the subject matter and any particular reasons that there may have been for its selection. It is only during the quattrocento that specifications as to the appearance of the commission with regard to iconography rather than the physical measurements become more common in the documents. The requirements for earlier commissions
appear to have relied entirely on the communication of verbal descriptions. Because of this it is difficult to find a link between the wishes of the patron and the work that s/he commissioned. Certain cases where the patron seems to have had a formative influence on the iconography and general appearance of the work are known either from the rare surviving contracts or by means of deductions made largely from the works themselves where we know something of their provenance, but almost never using the two in conjunction.

Another problem in attempting to identify any direct influence that patrons had on the works that they commissioned, even where the contract survives and we are able to definitely identify the commissioner, is the lack of other material relating to the patron. This can hamper the investigation of smaller works but its greatest impact is probably in relation to female patrons of art. Amongst those women who are known to have been in control of enough funds to enable them to patronize large projects it is rare to find one about whom we possess much personal information. It is partially because of this lack of information that there has been a tendency to concentrate on commissions made by men.

A third check in looking at female patronage of art and its subjects is the complicated legal position of women in Italy at this time. A number of different legal codes
existed throughout the peninsula and the position of women varied according to the legal code in use in a particular area. However it would be generally true to say that women had many fewer legal rights than men. The restrictions placed on women’s legal rights together with the accumulation of patristic and early mediaeval texts on the inferiority of women and their unfitness for anything but the most subordinate positions in society have reinforced the belief that these views and the intent of the laws directly corresponded to the reality of everyday life at all times and in all places. The views of Aristotle later asserted by Saint Thomas Aquinas in his Summa Theologica were that women were the inferiors of men in every way and that there was only one area in which they were not dispensable - that of the procreation and care of children. This view, in stronger or weaker forms, seems to have been universally held and despite the fact that from the point of view of their eternal soul women were theoretically held to be equal with men, this did not impinge in the slightest on their inferiority in this life. These arguments directly affected the current laws in which provision was usually made for women’s supervision by men - be it fathers, husbands or other relatives. In the case where none of these were available the state normally provided a male representative to oversee a woman’s dealings with society in the form of financial and legal transactions.
The effect of taking at face value these strictures regarding the nature of women and of assuming that all laws aiming to ensure women's complete dependence on men were scrupulously put into practice or that no ways could be found around the stated aims of these laws has been in some cases to negate opposing evidence where women are seen to have some power. These views have informed the reading of many works of art that women paid for or in which they are represented as commissioners despite growing evidence which suggests that many laws which aimed either to restrict women's independence or to protect them from their own ignorance by always providing a man to act in their interests could often either be overcome by a careful reading of the wording and were used according to the letter rather than the spirit of the law. The examples of women manoeuvring around various of the Florentine sumptuary laws are well documented. More to the point perhaps for the present argument is the use of a mundualdo in legal codes such as that of Florence - an appointed male, most often a relative, who, in the absence of a husband or father was supposed to act on a woman's behalf and approve any legal transactions which involved her. Although this may appear an extremely restrictive procedure in many cases this was not the reality. In the fifteenth century, for example, Alessandra Strozzi sometimes used a complete stranger provided by the court to fulfill this law. In cases such as this obedience to the letter of the
law seems to have been a mere formality and the power was completely in Alessandra's hands.10

Although it would be wrong, therefore, to assume that lay women were not capable of having a decisive impact on the appearance of the works that they funded, or that they were strictly bound by prohibitive laws, the general effect of these laws must still be born in mind. The amount of legal autonomy that women had changed according to whether they were unmarried, married or widowed. Women's ability to commission works of art therefore depended much more than men's not only on their financial position but also on their legal status. Even though the survival of work commissioned by women becomes more and more common from the thirteenth century onwards the legal power of women was as ever severely curtailed in all the differing legal codes that were in use throughout Italy. This lack of constitutionally backed authority has meant that there has been a tendency to discount the influence women had as patrons at this time in anything other than a purely financial capacity.

One of the ways in which the patronage of lay women of the merchant classes was likely to differ from those of men was in the time of life at which they commissioned a painting.11 The periods of her life when a woman had control over money that was nominally her own were limited. In some cases a woman could not make a will or alienate
property without the consent of her father. However, in Florentine law, there are also instances where the law could in certain cases help the financial position of married women who were not held responsible for the debts of their fathers in the way that men were although this meant that they could not inherit from them in this case. This means that women are less well represented in legal documents of the period but they are nevertheless recorded, albeit in smaller numbers, carrying out various types of financial transaction involving the acquisition and alienation of goods both on their own behalf and on those of their dependants.

Control over their own financial affairs was most likely to lie with widows and this means that it was at this period of their lives that women were most likely to become patrons. Even those who were followers of some of the religious orders remained in control of their own income and were often able to dispose of it as they wished. Lay penitents and tertiaries who continued to live in their own homes whilst following a religious life which included the wearing of a habit were amongst these. As they still lived within lay society it was of course necessary that they should be able to deal financially within it. In some rules for lay penitents there are regulations which instruct the members - male or female - to make a will within three months of their joining the group; the only proviso being the obvious one that they had to have the legal right to so
For women penitents and members of third orders who had a surplus of money but could not spend it on ostentation the alternative seems to have been to give away any excess money through legacies or gifts inter vivos. Examples of this are most common for building projects. Sometimes these favoured women but this is by no means always the case. For example, in Florence on the nineteenth of June 1281 Donna Palmeria, a widow and pinzochera, gave a house to the Dominicans with the intention that it was to be used for the construction of the church of Santa Maria Novella, "stipulanti et recipienti pro capitulo et ecclesia Sancte Marie Novelle de Florentia, in subsidium et accresementum operis et laboris ipsius ecclesie Sancte Marie Novelle". A similar gift was given by a widow and penitent of Florence, Donna Ghita, in the May of 1284. There was also a gift by a Donna Ghilla on October the twenty-second 1292. Both of these women were penitents and gave houses to the Dominicans.

Of course religious commissions by women were not confined to the construction of churches, convents or hospitals or contributions towards such constructions. Women also ordered panel paintings and frescoes. In the case of the wives of rulers these commissions were likely to be large works, possibly a complete fresco cycle, but in the city states of Italy single panel paintings and frescoes were
the rule. Many smaller works contain a donor portrait proclaiming if not the name of the donor then at least the fact that it was ordered by a woman. Unfortunately most often this is the only fact that is recorded.

One document which does record a female patron is that of 1392 for the payment made to Niccolò di Pietro Gerini for the restoration of a work above the door of the cemetery in the Benedictine convent of San Pier Maggiore in Florence. The work is described as "la storia di Christo diposto della crocie". 19 Apart from its placing which is within the conventual buildings the work is said to have originally been ordered by "Drea, figliuola fu Albizo del Riccho degli Albizi". The identity of the commissioner cannot be individualized any more than this but she was probably a member of the community of San Pier Maggiore as the work commissioned was not intended for the church attached to the convent, where a number of people and organizations would have had the right to place paintings, but for part of the claustral appartments where none but the nuns themselves would normally have been granted access. In Florence for those convents under episcopal regulation the cemetery could be entered only by the nuns, a priest in the case of burials (as even in death the nuns could not leave their four walls), and by workmen for the digging of the grave. 20 It is interesting that Drea appears to have commissioned her work from one of the leading Florentine painters of the day. The document refers to the original
artist as "Maso dipintore, grande maestro", the creator of the paintings in the Bardi di Vernio Chapel in Santa Croce towards the end of the first half of the fourteenth century. However it is not known at what point in Maso's career the painting was commissioned and if he had already achieved fame when he worked in San Pier Maggiore. The Albizzi family contributed a great deal to the decoration of San Pier Maggiore. It was probably a member of the family or a group of family members who later paid towards the altarpiece of the church as a contribution is recorded in 1383. The date of the altarpiece, 1370-1371, compared with the probable date of the original work above the door of the cemetery, commissioned by Drea, which was being restored in 1392, and which could have been painted thirty to forty years before the altarpiece, means that it is unlikely that Drea could have had any connection with it, although by no means impossible. However it was common for families to have a history of sending their daughters to a particular convent and another member of the Albizzi family may well have been a nun in San Pier Maggiore at this time. This member of the family could have been a moving force in the commissioning of the altarpiece although the size and expense of the work probably means that it was paid for by male lay members of the family. In the absence of any positive identification of the donor/s, and the fact that a female member both of the Albizzi family and of the convent of San Pier Maggiore had
previously commissioned a work for the convent, the possibilities for influence over art placed in their convent on the part of the nuns, or for the nuns being able actively to attract patronage, should not be overlooked.

The question of family ties in relation to influence over commissions, especially where the commission apparently came from an enclosed nun, is fraught with questions. Even the strictest claustrophobia of nuns did not prevent them keeping in touch with their close family whom they may have influenced or who may have influenced them in decisions relating to convent politics and patronage. It is here perhaps that the distinction between patronage by one or other of the sexes becomes blurred and it may be more useful to look at differences between family groups rather than sexes. The fact that nuns would have had easy access to close family members meant that many were easily able to obtain information about artists, for example, and would have been able to use this information on their own behalf. If Drea was indeed a Benedictine nun then her apparent ability to commission individually and pay for a work means that her vows did not prevent her from having a personal income to dispose of. A lay woman would have been more likely to commission a work that could have been seen by the public. Unfortunately the work referred to in the document is no longer extant. It has been identified with the San Remigio Pieta now in the Uffizi but this seems unlikely not only because of the lack of linking evidence.
but also because a painting in the position described is more likely to have been executed in the medium of fresco as it would probably have been open to the elements. 24

There are many other questions apart from those already touched on surrounding the commissioning of works by individual nuns or convent communities and the ability of these commissioners to influence directly the works that they paid for. Nuns were restricted much more than lay women. Existing rules for many orders assume as little involvement as possible with lay society and severely restrict the ability of nuns to act individually. Within communities of professed nuns it was expected that property should be owned in common. The rule given to the Poor Clares by Urban IV permits the communal ownership of property. 25 However by the sixteenth century it seems to have been common for nuns to be supported individually by their families. They were provided with money which allowed them to supplement the convent diet for example. This was the case later in the fifteenth century for Suora Lena di Bartolomeo Barbadori whose catasto declaration of 1430 confirmed that she received an personal income from her dowry which she used for extra food and for care when ill. 26 This laxity was not a phenomenon which occurred only at this time. Nearer in date to the paintings being examined here is the example of the Poor Clare convent of Monteluce in Perugia. The convent was formally instituted in the July of 1218 and quickly became a very rich.
institutions. There are many examples during the fourteenth century of money being left to members of the convent but few donations were purely religious in character. Some wills testify that certain nuns received a regular allowance from their relations. These wills were often formed in such a manner that the nun in question only benefitted for her lifetime and no money or goods could be received by the convent as a body after her death. From all this it is clear that in certain convents at least money was not a problem to individual members and this financial independence would have allowed the opportunity for individual commissions from nuns as well as from lay women.

The increasing decadence amongst convent communities which appears to grow after the enthusiasm generated by Saints Francis and Dominic in the early fourteenth century had worn off, is complemented in the centuries leading up to Francis and Dominic by a period in which many convents, which were by no means in need of reform, possessed important jurisdictional powers and also ecclesiastical rights. The convent of Santa Giulia in Brescia which was founded in the second half of the eighth century received a number of papally confirmed privileges in bulls from Paul I and Nicholas II of 763 and 1060. These included the right of the abbess to perform confirmations and to consecrate altars. Furthermore these rights were still in force until the thirteenth century. Pope Innocent III had
realized that such practices continued unchecked in a number of convents in 1210 and by no means approved.\textsuperscript{32} They confirm that the nuns, in this convent at least, were probably not confined to the claustral appartments. The privileges of the abbess would have necessitated both being in the church and being amongst the laity in order to exercise them. Included in the insignia of office appertaining to certain abbesses during the early monastic period were some which also belonged to the office of priest and bishop.\textsuperscript{33} Although the power these signified had been encroached upon to a great extent by the fourteenth century examples of altarpieces still exist where the abbess is shown with her staff of office. One such is a polyptych by Andrea da Bologna now in the Pinacoteca Civica in Fermo (Ascoli Piceno). It is signed and dated 1368 and has a central panel of the Virgin and Child enthroned with six scenes to either side arranged in two tiers and a Crucifixion above the central panel.\textsuperscript{34} The two panels to either side of the Virgin and Child are more iconic than narrative and show to the right a kneeling Saint Catherine of Alexandria, her right hand resting on the wheel on which the Emperor Maxentius attempted to have her martyred whilst on the left is a more unusual representation. This shows two male saints who are presenting a group of nuns to the Virgin whilst Jesus gestures towards them with his right hand. There are five nuns in all with the nun nearest the Virgin the tallest of a progressively diminishing line and
holding a crozier marking her out as the abbess.

In fact throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries regulations and usages varied considerably regarding clausura. Boniface VIII's decretal of 1298, *Periculoso*, which was intended to supersede all previous rulings on this subject, imposed very strict rules. However although *Periculoso* went further than previous legislation, like that legislation, it was not universally observed and regulations similar to those which it prescribed, were re-promulgated over two centuries later by the Council of Trent. Previous to Boniface's attempted across the board solution there had been increasing interest in the subject. During the church reform of the eighth to the thirteenth centuries the issue of clausura had been addressed a number of times. The problems which surrounded it were especially bound up with double monasteries and in the twelfth century the Gilbertines had issued prescriptions concerning walls, keys and the introductions of grates which would separate the male and female members of the monastery. Legislation after this became ever more strict but was never universal. It was only in the second half of the twelfth century that a pope intervened in an issue concerning the subject for the first time, and this was a move which concerned a particular order, the Gilbertines. Thus, right up to Boniface's decretal there was room for a considerable amount of freedom on the part of nuns to come and go from the convent and also to use their church freely, without
having to be strictly separated from any members of the laity who also attended services. Because of the lack of universal legislation, even within an order, usages varied not only from order to order but also from area to area, and this would have been the case especially where the nuns were cared for by the local bishop, rather than a representative from the male branch of their order. During this period, for example, the clausura of the Augustinian nuns was still relatively moderate. Despite the fact that the Chapter General held in Paris in 1329 prescribed that the nuns of the order should be kept in strict custody they were in fact able to leave the convent for reasons a lot less grave than those envisaged by the supposedly universal Periculoso of thirty-one years previously. Amongst other things the nuns could leave the convent in order to confess. In some cases Periculoso was found to be impossible to implement due to strong opposition which came either from the nuns themselves or from the laity. Family ties were one reason why it was not strictly observed. It was not unusual for nuns to be called out of the cloister to nurse a sick relative for example.

The different regulations and customs regarding the movements of nuns both within the convent and outside it means that it is often difficult to tell whether works placed in a convent church could ever have been seen by the nuns. For a full understanding of the possibilities it is necessary to reconstruct the architecture of individual
convents and also the way in which they were used. It was still usual in some orders for the nuns to be in the church during the offices rather than completely separated in a choir. Augustinian nuns during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries recited divine office in church in the presence of other people. There was often no separation by means of walls or gates.\(^3^9\) It must also be borne in mind that the question of whether the nuns had free access to altarpieces in their convent churches is not necessarily strictly related to the question of whether or not they could influence the appearance of works in that church. Works within the church attached to a convent were a public statement of faith probably mainly designed to impress visitors and members of the laity and as such may have been planned by one group of people, the nuns, for others to see.

However, with reference to the possibility of the nuns being able to have a good view of their church, even if strictly cloistered, the increasing popularity and importance of the feast of Corpus Christi may be relevant as it emphasized the importance of the host during mass and gave a greater importance to being able to see the altar and therefore any painting placed on it. Although it was not universally instituted until the October of 1317, during the papacy of John XXII, it had been celebrated in various parts of Europe for a considerable time before this and Urban IV had been particularly devoted to the feast.\(^4^0\) It became more
and more fashionable for lay people to attend communion in order to see the body of Christ but the necessity of seeing the host also had to be taken into account in the organisation of the placing of nuns during services. This had been a preoccupation to some extent before the feast was officially promulgated. Corpus Christi had started as a feast that was especially supported by women, who often had a strong sense of eucharistic devotion. The importance of enclosed nuns being able to see the host was an influence on the architecture of some convents at this time although many convent churches were not built specifically for nuns. The convent church of Santa Chiara in Naples had a nuns’ choir that was arranged in such a way as to allow the nuns direct vision of the altar from immediately behind the east wall of the church. However this meant that a large altarpiece was never in place as it would have blocked their view of the celebration of the mass. In order for those convents which separated their nuns from the congregation by means of a separate choir to have visual access to the main altar it would have been necessary to place the choir elsewhere.

In the case of churches attached to monasteries the altarpieces, panel paintings, and frescoes placed within these churches, whilst in many cases not paid for by the monks or friars themselves, may often have had a significant input from them. They could for instance insist upon a particular theme for the paintings to be
placed within their church and could also choose the dedication of chapels which the families or confraternities who later used these same chapels had to respect. This same type of iconographic control on the part of nuns for churches which were attached to convents is much more difficult to gauge. One of the reasons is the difficulties in reconstructing the way in which particular convents were run at this time. Whilst it is safe to assume male control over churches attached to monasteries it is not safe to assume female control over churches attached to convents. However this possibility should never be ruled out as it too often is. As pointed out above the way in which various convents were run is extremely diverse during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and in some cases bears little relation to the regulations which were supposed to bind these convents.

Another reason for being unable to gauge the control of nuns over their convent churches is the lack of knowledge about exactly what type of furnishings these churches originally had. In Florence, for example, for many of the convents which existed during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there is little, if any, record to show what works were originally in them. Some have been completely destroyed, and few have works from this period which can now be associated with them, or have anything remaining in them. Often these last are mere fragments. The convents and their churches which have been destroyed
include San Silvestro and Santa Trinità Vecchia. Of other convent churches now have no early works in them. Amongst these is San Jacopo di Ripoli, a Dominican convent founded in 1292 and for a long time famous for its manuscripts. Of those which do have works which can be related to them these are often very fragmentary. They include San Domenico al Maglio, a Dominican convent founded in the late thirteenth century which still has a fourteenth century Crucifixion in it. Sant'Apollonia, a Benedictine convent founded in 1339 has more works which survive. These include a fresco of Sant'Apollonia from 1410 and a "Coronation of the Virgin" from 1370.

The survival of these works from Sant'Apollonia may not be merely luck but could also be a reflection of the amount of art originally within the convent. Benedictine convents were well known for their wealth. The Benedictine convents in Florence during the fourteenth century numbered at least ten and included the most important and prestigious religious institutions in Florence at this time including San Pier Maggiore and Santa Felicita which also have a number of works surviving from them. Works that come from Santa Felicita include an enthroned Madonna by Taddeo Gaddi, a crucifix by Pacino da Buonaguida and a Madonna and Child by Giovanni del Biondo. There is also the high altarpiece of "The Coronation of the Virgin" commissioned from Niccolò di Pietro Gerini, Spinello Aretino and Lorenzo di Niccolò in 1399 and dated 1401. The works surviving
from Sant'Apollonia contain iconography, that if not planned by the nuns, was at least appropriate to their church and considered appropriate to them. The fresco of Sant'Apollonia of course refers to the dedication of the church while the Coronation of the Virgin is a subject popular in convent churches and can also be seen in the centre of the San Pier Maggiore altarpiece and that of the polyptych by Andrea da Bologna mentioned above.

Another rich Florentine convent from which the altarpiece survives is that of the Poor Clare convent of Monticelli just outside the city. Under the central panel is an inscription which reads, "MCCCCLXXXIII HOP FECERUNT FIERI MONIALES S. CLARE ET RESTAURATUM FUIT MCCXXXII" although whether this refers to mere financial involvement is unclear (Fig. 1). The commission for the high altarpiece of the Benedictine convent of Santa Felicita is recorded as having been taken in chapter and the consent of all the nuns was evidently needed before the convent funds could be spent. Paintings such as these ordered by convent communities give rise to a number of questions regarding the possibility of effective control over the works paid for with the funds of the community some of which have been outlined above. In the case of the Santa Felicita altarpiece for instance it is known that the nuns used male operai to deal with the artists needed to complete the work and this may have prevented any direct involvement of the nuns in the appearance of the altarpiece.
The iconography of the altarpiece for Santa Felicita, for example, is of no help in providing an answer to this question. Most of the saints depicted are male and there is no way of assessing why or by whom they were chosen. Saint Felicity, on the far left of the main tier, is of course the titular saint of the church while Saint Benedict, on the far right of the main tier, refers to the rule followed by the convent. Both would have been obvious choices for the altarpiece but neither can be definitely ascribed to the influence of the nuns. However neither can this possibility be denied out of hand. Although the operai may have been needed to mediate between the nuns and the artists this does not imply that they were employed to do any more than relay instructions. The lack of an apparently individualized iconography or one that stressed women is no proof of a lack of positive interference in the appearance of the altarpiece on the part of the nuns either. It was entirely possible for women to commission a highly personalized iconographic programme without including the representation of women or giving the work an idiosyncratic appearance in any other way.

In the case of works commissioned by a single donor, especially a lay woman, questions regarding possible control over the iconography are less difficult to overcome. However because the works involved were often private these give little information as to whom they were commissioned by other than allowing us to assess the sex of
the commissioner by means of the donor portrait. Examples include a diptych from the Museo di Capodimonte in Naples from the first half of the fifteenth century. It shows to the left a Crucifixion with Saint Mary Magdalen while to the right there is a Virgin and Child accompanied by a kneeling figure who was presumably the commissioner. The diptych would have been a private portable tabernacle. The female donor kneels to the left of the Virgin in the right hand panel and the Christ Child faces towards her raising His hand in blessing. A work similarly devoid of any supplementary information regarding the donor, although painted around a century earlier is attributed to the Master of Citta di Castello and was probably executed in the first years of the fourteenth century. It is a triptych the central panel of which shows a Madonna and Child enthroned with angels and a female figure kneeling at the Virgin's feet to the left side (Figs. 2 & 3). As in the Naples panel the Christ Child reaches out towards the donor in order to bless her.

In some cases accompanying the donor portrait there is also a coat of arms. A triptych by the Master of the Fabriano tabernacle is one such. This shows in the centre a Madonna of Humility with Saints Margaret, John the Evangelist, and two angels. On the side panel to the left are two scenes; at the top is "The Pieta" and below "The mystic marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria". The two mirroring scenes on the right panel are the "Noli me tangere" at the top while at
the base are "Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint Paul in discussion" with to one side a kneeling female donor. Offner points out that the presence of a donor in the right shutter as here is rare. However there are a few precedents showing male donors in a corresponding position. Of the two coats of arms at the base of the tabernacle that on the right belongs to the Francesi della Foresta family while that on the left could belong to either the Strinati or the Barducci. Notwithstanding this the identity of the donor is still unknown and we can only speculate on the possible reasons for the choice of a very heterogenous group of scenes.

Inscriptions on such paintings are relatively rare. Sometimes they do not give us the names of the donor. Where they do this information is often of little use in gaining knowledge of the source from which the commission came. Mere names can very rarely be associated with other information about the donor in the case of smaller commissions. An altarpiece showing the Virgin with a female supplicant at her feet has an inscription at the base recording the date and also the name of the woman who ordered the work. The inscription reads as follows; "Domina Elena fecit fieri hoc opus" and the date is given as 1308 (Fig. 4). The supplicant once again kneels in the position of honour to the left hand side of the Virgin as the spectator views the panel. Nothing more is known of the decisions that lay behind this work and there is nothing
that might enable us to place the family connections of the donor.

Even where a name and a date are given that place the commissioner as part of a well known family, such as the polyptych painted by Giusto de' Menabuoi for Isotta Terzago in 1363 - the commissioner is identified by an inscription giving both her name and the date when the painting was executed - the identity of the commissioner cannot be further delineated by being placed within what is known of that family's history (Fig. 5). The Terzaghi were a wealthy Milanese family but of Isotta's role within them, the source of the finances for the polyptych, the convent of which Isotta presumably formed a part (she is referred to in the inscription as soror ixotta and wears the habit of a nun), or the original site of the work - long since dismembered - nothing is known. Without any further information being available to us about Isotta's life it becomes increasingly difficult to assess the possible importance of the iconography of the reconstructed polyptych to her. Until 1928, the central part, the Madonna from the Schiff Collection in Florence, was believed to be complete in itself. Heavily repainted it nevertheless contained the commissioner, her companion figure and the accompanying inscription and it is possible that the fact that it had been commissioned by a woman prevented any further questions as to the possibility of it being part of a larger work. The identity of the nun who accompanies
Isotta on the other side of the Virgin is unknown. It is presumably Isotta whom we see kneeling to the Virgin's right hand side and in the position of honour but it is not known whether her companion is a relative or a high ranking member of the convent. The original site of the work is unknown but both its format and size suggest an altarpiece, probably in the church attached to the convent where Isotta lived. Most parts of the polyptych have now been identified. The work consisted originally of standing saints to either side of the Madonna and Child. These saints are Paul, Augustine, John the Baptist, Catherine, Anthony Abbot and Thomas Aquinas. Above these saints were probably two half figures of Saints Ambrose and Cecilia.62 Some parts of the work have not been traced; these include six roundels and the two three-quarter length figures of Saints Ambrose and Cecilia, and it is also possible that there may have been other standing saints. Of these only two can be definitely linked to a possible wish on the part of Isotta, these being Saints Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. These two saints were respectively the author of the rule that lay at the base of that followed by the Dominican Second Order and one of the principle theologians of the Dominicans. Together with the clothes that the two women kneeling at the feet of the Virgin wear they give evidence of the Dominican provenance of the polyptych and that Isotta was undoubtedly a Dominican nun.63 However whilst showing a particular Dominican bias the saints do not
appear to show a feminine bias. It is possible, though, that one of the six saints in the roundels is a member of the Second Order of Saint Dominic. The other five are male saints.64

Although most of the paintings mentioned above do not have what appears to be a very individualized iconographic programme one of the criteria often used for placing paintings within a female ambient is the iconography; particularly a preponderance of female saints. The iconography of Isotta Terzago's polyptych, for example, gives few clues as to her personal predilections and there are very few women depicted in it. The inscription gives only her name and the date of completion of the painting. Of the known saints that were chosen for the work - six in the main register, two three-quarter length saints and the six roundel figures - only three are female, one in each register. Only those with a general Dominican importance such as Saints Augustine and Thomas Aquinas can be associated with the possible wishes of the donor and neither has any specific relationship to the female branch of the Order.

Other works known to have a convent provenance are equally disappointing in allowing us to form any hypothesis on an iconography that could be classed as particularly orientated towards women, or planned by women, rather than for them. The case of the altarpiece of Santa Felicita has
already been discussed. Other examples include the altarpiece for the Benedictine convent church of San Pier Maggiore, one of the richest convents in Florence at this time, and that for the Poor Clares of Monticelli, just outside Florence. The San Pier Maggiore altarpiece, has a central "Coronation of the Virgin" to either side of which are tiers of saints. It originally also had a predella consisting of six scenes from the life of Saint Peter while above the main scene were six episodes from the life of Christ. At the very top of the original altarpiece were three pinnacles - a central Trinity with adoring angels to either side.\(^65\) The Monticelli altarpiece shows a central Virgin and Child surrounded by Angels and Saints Catherine of Alexandria and Clare with two standing saints to either side. From left to right these are Lawrence, John the Baptist, Francis and Stephen. The predella consists of five panels of which the central shows the adoration of the Magi while the four side panels each contain three standing saints.\(^66\) The inscription underneath the central panel records the fact that the altarpiece was commissioned by the Poor Clares of Monticelli but the run-of-the-mill iconography gives no indication as to whether they influenced its appearance at all or merely paid out the money owing. While, like the altarpiece paid for by Isotta Terzago and the altarpiece for Santa Felicita, these works show a concern with honouring saints associated with the particular order or convent, in neither case does this
result in a majority of female saints and certainly not in an iconography which can definitely be said to emanate from the nuns themselves rather than from those appointed to act for them.

Nevertheless in works which do contain a large number of female saints this fact has been used to deduce a convent provenance. This is the case with a panel now in the Vatican Pinacoteca attributed to Puccio Capanna (Fig. 6). The panel was probably painted around 1330 and consists of an enthroned Virgin and Child between angels, an Annunciation and female saints, in a typically Umbrian tiered arrangement. The saints are Agnes, Lucy, Mary Magdalen, Margaret, Elizabeth of Hungary, Clare of Assisi and Agatha. The presence of Saint Clare, the founder of the second order of Saint Francis, and Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, popularly thought of as the first Franciscan tertiary, points to a Poor Clare provenance. Agnes was also a popular saint for the Poor Clares, being the namesake of Clare's sister who was for some time the abbess of Monticelli. However the work was originally part of a diptych the other half of which partially survives in the central portion of a Crucifixion now in the Raleigh Museum, North Carolina. This part would originally also have been surrounded by saints in the same way as its companion but there is no way of knowing whether the apparent female bias was originally cancelled out by the presence of saints associated with the Franciscans or whether the female theme was carried on.
A number of other works have been assigned a probable convent provenance on this basis. These include another half of a diptych from the Museo Stibbert in Florence of the first half of the fourteenth century which is divided into two registers showing the Madonna and Child with five saints, four of whom are female. Another panel from the Collezione Cini in Venice showing an enthroned Madonna and Child surrounded by angels with Saints Clare and Francis kneeling to either side has also been given a possible convent provenance because Saint Clare is kneeling in the position of honour to the right of the Virgin.

To say that a preponderance of female saints points towards a convent provenance is, however, not to tackle the main question of whether or not these saints can be taken to represent the choice of the nuns. As discussed above, it is not always possible to discern a female bias in paintings which may have been commissioned by women although this does not necessarily negate the possibility of women choosing the subjects. In some cases paintings with a majority of female subjects may have been commissioned by men for a female audience. One such painting is an ancona by Tommaso da Modena (Fig. 7). It consists of two tiers with a crowning gable and two pinnacles the whole surmounted by a figure of Christ blessing and is just over a metre high. The base shows four standing female saints - Catherine, Agnes, Lucy and Anastasia - while the main tier is divided into three
compartments each containing a scene with the Virgin engaged in various occupations. These are, from left to right - reading, breastfeeding the Christ child, and knitting socks. The iconography seems intended to appeal to, or lecture to, a female audience but in the absence of a donor figure or other evidence it is impossible to say whether the choice of subject was made by a woman or a man.

In the case of altarpieces from convent churches not all are as conservative in their choice of iconography as the altarpieces of San Pier Maggiore or Monticelli discussed above. One such is the polyptych painted by Cecco di Pietro now in the Museo San Matteo in Pisa and originally from the convent of Santa Marta (Fig. 8). The construction of the church and attached convent was completed in 1342 following its authorisation in 1334 by Archibishop Sattarelli so that the Convertite could transfer from the Convento della Misericordia di Spina. The nuns had made a request to move probably because of a lack of clean water on the site of their original convent which was by the ponte della Spina. The polyptych is signed and dated 1386 under the central compartment. It consists of a central Crucifixion scene surrounded by eight half figures of female saints, four to either side, arranged in two tiers. To the left (from left to right and top to bottom) are Saints Barbara, Catherine of Alexandria, Agatha and Ursula, while to the right are Saints Mary Magdalen, Margaret, Martha and Agnes. The five scenes in the predella show a central entombment
and four scenes, one each from the lives of Saints Barbara, Ursula, Mary Magdalen and Margaret, four of the saints featured on the upper registers.\textsuperscript{77} This emphasis on female sanctity is only alleviated in the medallions which crown the polyptych and in the pilasters to the sides. The medallions show in the centre the Redeemer blessing and to either side the four evangelists, while in the pilasters are two male saints and two coats of arms. There has been some disagreement over the identification of the predella scenes which have also been said to show two scenes from the life of Saint Ursula on the left and two scenes from the life of Saint Martha on the right.\textsuperscript{78} This has led to the belief that the polyptych may originally have come from the confraternity of Saint Ursula which in the fourteenth century had its seat in the church of Santa Bibbiena near to Santa Marta. When Santa Bibbiena was suppressed in the fifteenth century it was ceded to the nuns of Santa Marta.\textsuperscript{79} However there is an equal emphasis on the titular saint of the convent church of Santa Marta and it is probable that the almost entirely female cast of saints in the work reflects this provenance. Once again however there is no clue as to whether the iconography was considered suitable for women or suitable by women.

It is perhaps possible to cast more light on this question by looking at a work commissioned by a group of lay women which also contains a large amount of female saints, although is not made up exclusively of them. Groups of
women commissioning paintings were not only nuns but confraternities who necessarily enjoyed greater freedom of movement and therefore of control over their commission. Women forming part of a confraternity were often widows who could use their money jointly, in the same way as male confraternities, to commission paintings for the chapel in which they worshipped. One such is a dossal from the first years of the fourteenth century by Giuliano da Rimini, now in the Gardner Museum in Boston. The subject is a Virgin and Child in the centre while to either side are four saints arranged in two tiers. The bottom tier is composed entirely of female saints. These are, from left to right, Saints Clare of Assisi, Catherine, Agnes and Lucy, all identified by inscriptions placed under the relevant figure. The two outer representations on the top tier show Saint Francis receiving the Stigmata on the left while on the right is Mary Magdalen praying in the wilderness. The inner figures are Saints John the Baptist and John the Evangelist. The inscription below the Virgin identifies the donors as a female confraternity eight of whom are shown kneeling at the feet of the Virgin with their arms outstretched in prayer (Fig. 9). 80

The painting was probably originally placed in the church of San Francesco at Urbania and this would account for the Franciscan bias in the iconography. 81 Its earliest position is not definitely known as by the time of the first reference to the painting in the second half of the
eighteenth century it was already inside the conventual buildings, probably transferred following the redecoration of the church in the baroque style in 1762. Because the original site of the dossal is not recorded it has been suggested that it comes from a convent, perhaps of Poor Clares, but there is no evidence to support this and it seems unlikely in view of the lay dress of the commissioners. In 1816 the dossal was placed in the chapel of San Giovanni Decollato within the church of San Francesco. Although it is not known whether this was because it had been its previous site the fact that Saint John the Baptist is placed in the position of honour on the altarpiece as well as the fact that there are only three male saints portrayed, one of whom, Saint Francis, was probably placed there because of the dedication of the church, makes it likely that this was the first home of the painting. Whatever the solution, the independent action by a group of lay women to commission a dossal commemorating them and including a representation of the members, allied with its unusual iconography, points to both independent financial means and a clear decision as to what the painting should express - a decision moreover that marks it out as a commission from a female source and adds to the probability of the iconography of the Santa Marta altarpiece having been influenced by the nuns whose convent was attached to the church.

Although women's patronage was not consistently aimed
towards women the tradition of commissioning works which would benefit women was exemplified in a number of royal families during this period and was reflected, often less magnificently, in works ordered by women lower down the social scale. In other areas women were more likely to use their power and wealth to benefit others of their sex than to benefit men. They tended, for example, to favour women in their wills.\textsuperscript{84} This may partially have been due to the fact that male members of the family were usually well provided for by their fathers. Women often had only their dowry to dispose of and this was best divided between female relatives and friends. However it may also have been due to the fact that women noticed other women and their actions more than men noticed them and that this led them to be more aware of their own sex and its needs.\textsuperscript{85} This tendency to notice women and to think more about their needs may have repercussions in the art that women commissioned and again strengthens the argument that works with a large number of female saints in them may not only have a convent provenance but also have been directly affected in their iconography by women.

Sometimes, however, women's personal preoccupations were not served by commemorating other women or founding institutions for them. An example is the fresco of "The Tree of Life" in the refectory in Santa Croce, Florence which was painted between 1335 and 1340 (Fig. 10). This was placed in a part of the convent complex that would never
have been open to women. Around the central depiction of Bonaventura's tree are four scenes, three of which are especially suitable for a refectory while below is "The Last Supper", not only applicable to its setting but also referring to the existence of a Franciscan establishment on the site of the Last Supper on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. Although no documentation of any kind relating to the commissioning of the work has survived the donor has been identified as the woman kneeling behind Saint Francis at the foot of the cross whose wish to give something to the order founded by Saint Francis evidently transcended any lesser matters of sex. Where this is the case it is often family concerns that take precedence as noted above in the case of some of the commissions for San Pier Maggiore. There are a number of examples of wives supervising tomb monuments for their deceased husbands for example and the importance of family to certain women can be traced in the patronage of Fina Buzzacarina in Padua. The discussion above has looked almost exclusively at works from the fourteenth century and in doing so has had to deal with the particular problems of that period regarding the lack of detailed documentation. The effect that this lack can have in assessing paintings from the point of view of patronage can be seen in comparison to an ex-voto of the fifteenth century now in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. The reason for the commission is revealed in contemporary events and shows that the nun who ordered its
execution was not sequestered from outside circumstances. The work in question is the "Ex-voto of the Abbess Sara for peace between the Spanish knights" which is dated 1432. Its style identifies it as a work of North-Italian origin and it has been attributed to various artists from that background. The language of the inscriptions which it contains suggests a provenance from Ferrara and this has been confirmed by the historical information found concerning the two knights featured on the painting who have been identified by means of their coats of arms, which are prominently displayed. The inscription records that the work was commissioned by the abbess Sara who seems to have attributed the bloodless outcome of the proposed combat between the two knights in some way to her prayers. She is shown to the left of the composition praying to Saint Francis who is in the act of receiving the stigmata while behind her the two knights embrace. The work is an object lesson in the difficulties involved in tracing the events that surrounded the commissioning of paintings by women, for although the painting itself contains evidence of its commission by a woman the grounds for the commission were only uncovered through tracing the Aragonese knights. Abbess Sara would appear not to exist in extant documents. She was not important enough, or did not have a strong enough connection, to be mentioned in any of the descriptions of the event.

The discussion above outlines a few of the unanswered
questions regarding female patronage and the subjects with which it concerned itself. One of the main stumbling blocks is the lack of documentary evidence and the difficulty in distinguishing, or even assuming that there is, a particularly female or male iconography. Women and men in many cases may have had similar preoccupations and these would have resulted in a similar iconographical structure to their commissions. This chapter does not aim to give a definitive answer to the questions posed but rather to assert that active female patronage, both on the part of lay women and nuns, was possible, and that this possibility should always be seriously considered.
Notes to Chapter 1.

1 Glasser 19-20.

2 Glasser 30.

3 Glasser 31-32. Also Bomford 7.

4 Glasser 31-33 where she notes that even in Raphael’s contract of the 10th December 1500 for an altarpiece for Sant’Agostino in Citta di Castello the painting was to be executed according to the verbal directions of the donor.

5 This is the case with the two lay female patrons I shall be investigating in detail; Queen Maria of Hungary and Fina Buzzacarina. Although both were independently extremely wealthy neither have left much more information behind them than a record of their wills and a reputation for sanctity. See the discussions in Chapters 5 and 6.

6 Osborne 67. Also McLaughlin 78.

7 See the discussion by McLaughlin.

8 This is often the case with regulations regarding nuns some of which are discussed below and in the following chapters.

9 See for example Rainey 224-225.

10 Crabb 51.

11 Riemer 49-53 discusses how the dowry was dealt with in thirteenth century Siena. Dowered women were prohibited from receiving any other inheritance from their father in Siena, as in Florence and many other
Italian cities.

12 Kuehn 203.
13 Kuehn 204.
14 Riemer 120-133 discusses the various uses women in Siena made of their property, usually when widowed.
15 Meersseman 1961, 134. Fra Caro's rule for lay penitents, who were at this time considered as a single group rather than as being attached to particular religious orders such as the Franciscans or Dominicans, insists upon the making of a will in Chapter IX, "Omnes praeterea, quibus de iure facultas affuerit, condant seu faciant testamentum, et de bonis suis infra tres menses post eorum ingressum immediate sequentes ordinent et disponant, ne quemquam illorum contingat decedere intestatum".
18 Meersseman 1961, 211-212.
19 Wilkins 1985, 119-120.
20 Trexler 1971, 95.
21 For the frescoes of Saint Sylvester in the Bardi di Vernio Chapel in Santa Croce see Cole 125-128.
22 See Bomford 156 on the known contribution of the Albizzi to the San Pier Maggiore altarpiece. The payment was for "aiuto alla tavola dell'altare maggiore" which may imply that those who made the
payment did not have complete control over it.

23 It was because of possible problems relating to family politics that in 1517 Florentine convents were not permitted to accept more than two nuns of the same family. See Trexler 1972, 1341-1342. See also Trexler 1971, 96 where he remarks on episcopal legislation of the fourteenth century for Florence and Fiesole. In the constitutions of Fiesole in 1306 relatives within the third degree of consanguinity had been permitted to visit nuns without episcopal license. In the Florentine constitutions of 1310 the same applied to relatives within the second degree of consanguinity.

24 See Marcucci 1965, 86-88 for a summary of the relevant bibliography. Wilkins 1985, 204-205 gives a brief run down of the critical opinion.

25 FF 1304.

26 Bruckner 50.

27 Hohler 179.

28 Hohler 180-181 gives a number of examples and notes the existence of a list of 1383 of what various individual sisters owned.

29 In the case of individual incomes for Franciscan friars in the Veneto during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it has been posited that this money was used for building projects, paintings and smaller works for Franciscan churches. Bourdua 1991,
198. This may have been the case for many religious communities throughout Italy.

30 **Medici** 154-156.

31 **Medici** 162.

32 **Bynum** 1984, 15.

33 **Medici** 154 n.52 says that "Insegne sacerdoti ed episcopali (alba, rochetto, stola, pastorale, croce, pettorale, annello, guanti, mitra) furono ritrovati in tombe di monache di antichi monasteri".

34 **Dania** 4-5. The nuns are being presented to the Virgin by Saints Benedict and Bruno. The narrative panels contain five scenes from the life of John the Baptist and five scenes from the life of John the Evangelist.

35 **DIP** II, 1168-1170.

36 **DIP** I, 174.

37 **Leclercq** 86-87.

38 **Johnson** 84-85.

39 **DIP** I, 174.

40 **Rubin** 176-183.

41 **Rubin** 168-169. Also **Kieckhefer** 170-173.

42 See for example **Long** 310 who suggests that the Bardi chapels in Santa Croce, Florence, were paid for by the family but controlled by the Franciscans.

43 The number of convents in Florence rose rapidly during these two centuries. **Trexler** 1972, 1330 estimates that
in the mid-thirteenth century there were probably only five convents active in Florence but by 1336 Giovanni Villani recorded twenty four convents.

San Silvestro was founded in 1308 and Santa Trinità Vecchia, which was a Vallombrosan convent, was founded in 1330. For San Silvestro see Paatz V, 100-101. The church had been destroyed by 1517. For Santa Trinità Vecchia see Paatz V 397-398. Other destroyed convents were Santa Maria delle Neve, Santa Maria Madre, Santa Lucia di Camporeggi, San Barnaba and Santa Margherita delle Romite. For the above convents see Paatz III, 661; III, 614; II, 602-605; I, 330-331 and III,102 respectively. Santa Maria delle Neve had been founded in 1339 for Augustinian nuns and 1383 became a Vallombrosan convent. Santa Maria Madre originally housed Vallombrosans while Santa Lucia di Camporeggi had housed Augustinian nuns from 1285.

Paatz II, 434-441.

Probably around 1292-1297. Paatz II, 2-10. For the Crucifixion see II, 5.

Paatz I, 211-225. For the fresco of Sant’Apollonia from 1410 and "The Coronation of the Virgin" see I, 215.

Santa Felicita had been occupied by Benedictine nuns since 833, Paatz II, 57. Sant’Ambrogio was probably founded in 988, Paatz I, 20. San Pier Maggiore had
been Benedictine since 1067, Paatz IV, 629. Other Benedictine houses in Florence were Santa Maria del Mantignano - a small cloister built in 1370, Paatz III, 654. There was also Santa Maria Urbana, Paatz IV, 78 and Santa Maria Maddalena. This last was under the control of the nuns of Santa Felicita and so was presumably Benedictine, Paatz IV, 87. There were also San Niccolo in Cafaggio and San Matteo founded in 1340 and 1385 respectively. See Paatz IV, 387 and IV, 148.

49 For the church of Santa Felicita see Paatz II, 57-96. For the Crucifix by Pacino see II, 68 & 89-90 n.64. For the "Madonna and Child" by Giovanni del Biondo II, 68-69 & 90 n.65. For the enthroned "Madonna and Child" by Taddeo Gaddi II, 68 & 89 n.60. For "The Coronation of the Virgin" see Marcucci 1965, 109-111.

50 Marcucci 1965, 122-123.

51 The central panel of the altarpiece bears an inscription recording this which reads as follows, "QUESTA TAVOLA FECE FARE EL CAPITOLO CO(N)VE(N)TO DEL M(ON)AST(ER)IO DI SCA FELICITA DEL DE(NAR)O M(ON)AST(ER)IO AL TE(M)PO DELLA BADESSA LORENZA DE' MOZZI A(NN)O D(OMI)NI MCCCCI". See Marcucci 1965, 110.

52 Much of this discussion draws on ideas put forward by Gardner in "Nuns and Altarpieces" (forthcoming)

53 In the main tier of saints to either side of "The Coronation of the Virgin" only one of the eight
portrayed is female, this being the titular saint of the church. All of the twelve saints in the predella are male. For an identification of these saints see Marcucci 1965, 110.

54 Cat. 956.
56 Lane 133.
57 Offner 208 pl.XLVII.
58 Lane 134. Also Garrison 1949, 140 panel n.359. The panel comes from the Museum at Cesi and was previously in the church of Santa Maria in the same town.
59 Saints and angels and arranged in two tiers to either side of the central Madonna and Child. They are identified by Garrison. See note above.
60 Delaney 1976, 22 no.14. At the bottom of the central panel the prominent inscription reads as follows, "justus pinxit/ hoc opus fecit fieri dna soror ixotta fila qdam dni simonis de terzago mccclxiii mesis marci".
61 Bettini 1960, 13.
63 Delaney 1976, 22 following Kaftal identifies her as part of the Second Order of Saint Dominic because of her habit. See Chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion of the habits of the religious orders.
64 The whereabouts of the roundels are unknown and I have
been able to consult only the illustrations provided in the print of the microfilm of Delaney's thesis. From this it would appear that there is also a male Dominican saint to the left of the female saint. It has, however, proved impossible to identify them accurately. See Delaney 1972, 328-335 for a comprehensive bibliography regarding the panels.

65 See Gronau 139-144 & plate III, fig.B.

66 Marcucci 1965, 122-123. Marcucci notes that the predella may have been altered in the sixteenth century and it is not certain that it always belonged to this altarpiece.

67 Volbach inv.170 gives a bibliography. The convent source is posited in the catalogue of an exhibition - Francesco d'Assisi. Storia e Arte, 1982 Milan, 33. An Umbrian convent is suggested, possibly even Santa Chiara at Assisi.

68 Shapley 34.

69 Bisogni 144-145.

70 Bisogni 144.

71 Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale inv.289. See Emiliani 21. The ancona was completed before 1349 when Tommaso went to Treviso.

72 The actual measurements are 115 by 40 cm.

73 Inv. 1602. See Ciardi 1986.

74 Tolaini 180.
Morrona 191-193. Here the author also says that the church, when constructed, was also used by the nuns of Lupeta and that later in 1400 the convent, referred to as Santa Marta della Misericordia di Spina di Pisa, was joined with yet another convent, that of Santa Maria Maddalena di Vico.

"Cecchus Petri de Pisis me fecit A.D.M.CCC.LXXXVI". The painter Cecco di Pietro is documented from 1370 and was dead by 1402. See Carli 84-85.

Carli 84-85. Also Vigni 106. The bottom register of saints are identified by inscriptions placed beneath them but these do not survive for the four saints on the upper register.

Burresi 93 n.36 identifies the two scenes on the left as "Saint Ursula and the Virgins accompanied by Pope Ciriacus in the ship on their arrival at Cologne" and "The Massacre of Saint Ursula and the Virgins by the Huns". On the right she identifies "Saint Martha and her sister Mary Magdalene at the dinner at the house of Simon" followed by "Saint Martha who catching the dragon and leads him by the collar to the gate of Tarascona".

Burresi 93 n.36.

For the inscription see Hendy 110-112 where it is given as, "h EST VERA FRATERNITAS . QUE VIC MUDI CRIM (...) . MARIA . SECUTA . E . ICLITA TENES . REG ."
In Siena in the thirteenth century of the bequests made in men's testaments 63% were made to men and 37% to women. This relationship was almost completely inverted in wills made by women where 35% of the bequests were made to men and 65% to women.

Abels 225-226 notes that with relation to the testimony of Cathars in Languedoc between 1245 and 1247 women were more likely to notice the activities of their own sex.

On the left of "The Tree of Life" are "The Stigmatization of Saint Francis" and "Saint Louis of Toulouse serving a meal to the poor". On the right is "Saint Benedict in his wilderness grotto being rescued from starvation on Easter Day" and below it "Mary Magdalen washes and anoints Christ's feet in the house of the Pharisee". See Borsook 42.

Borsook 42-43. Borsook believes that the woman wears the garb of a Franciscan tertiary. Although she cannot be positively identified as such this is certainly a strong possibility. See the discussion on dress in Chapter 2.

For example a chapel in Santa Croce, Florence,
belonging to the Velluti family probably had its decoration completed under the direction of the widow of Filippo Velluti, as a memorial to her husband. See Long 122-123. For the patronage of Fina Buzzacarina see Chapter 6.

For this and the following see Ragghianti 128-129, figs. 259-261. The work has been attributed to Cecchino da Verona and Antonio degli Orsini amongst others.

Ragghianti relates the following and also gives references - The coats of arms are those of the Aragonese knights Juan Tulsa and Juan Marrada, the first of whom had accused the latter of murdering his slave and challenged him to a duel to the death. This was finally arranged under the auspices of the Marches Niccolo III di Ferrara but on the day the combat was stopped when Juan Tulsa confessed that he had not told the truth about the death of his slave. The episode concluded with the two knights embracing and swearing peace. The date of 1432 on the panel commemorates the year in which the combat was to have taken place. I have unfortunately been unable to see this work.

Ragghianti 128.
THE RELIGIOUS DRESS OF WOMEN IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES: Questions of Identification.

Associated with the questions that surround female patronage in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and the connected question of female spirituality, is that of the dress shown in the paintings of the period that either depict women or were commissioned by lay or religious women. With the rise in the depiction of women, especially saints or beatae who had died after 1200, it is important to be able to categorize their dress as far as possible. Often the dress shown in painted representations differs from descriptions in the life of the saint. Also common is an apparent contradiction between the painted dress of the saint, the order to which they are believed to have belonged, and the regulations stipulating dress for that order where these have survived.

These points are of interest for a number of reasons. Firstly, they provide an idea of acceptable modes of dress for religious women during this period. Secondly, they comment on how rigorously regulations regarding dress were followed in some of the religious orders. With regard to the rise of female spirituality women's dress is an indication of the diversity of the forms it took and the extent to which it was under the control of the church hierarchy.

Accurate identification of dress is also important in the
case of the depiction of female patrons. If clothing is read inaccurately then both the believed provenance of the work and also the reasons for its commission may be mistaken. These questions lie at the base of my investigation into the commissioning of works in churches attached to the convents of the female Vallombrosans in Tuscany, and the patronage of the Poor Clares in Trieste.

The complexity of the issues involved in looking at the representation of female dress during this period has necessitated a chapter of its own which looks at the types of religious dress worn by women and the way that this was affected by the evolution of the new religious orders, the relation of religious dress to lay dress, and the issues involved in drawing conclusions from paintings that may not have been intended as objective evidence. Whilst not concentrating specifically on female patronage this chapter looks at various issues which bear on it and aims to explore the depiction of female spirituality through different types of dress and its representation. In doing so I have found it necessary to look at the dress codes of a number of orders in relation to both pictorial and written evidence as to whether it was obeyed or not.

Dress can be and often is employed as an indication of religious fervour and also of the attachment to a particular religious order. Unfortunately dress in the fourteenth century has not been as popular with historians
of costume as later periods for a number of reasons. Firstly few of the actual clothes of the period have survived as examples and it has often been difficult to identify the names of various pieces of clothing because of this lack of material evidence. It is only during the fourteenth century that clothes begin to become subject to the perpetual changes of cut that have interested historians of fashion. During the thirteenth century similar clothes were used by both sexes. Although male dress began to change rapidly early in the next century women's dress only followed in the late fourteenth century. In fact during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries many clothes were uni-sex.

The earliest sumptuary laws do not seem to have regarded women's clothing, or clothing in general, as their main target. Sumptuary laws were passed in increasing numbers in the fourteenth century but were rare in the period previous to 1300 and did not pay attention to women's clothing when they were promulgated. In the period between 1317 and 1330 five sumptuary laws were passed in Florence and between 1299 and 1400 Venice concerned itself with sumptuary legislation six times. After 1300 sumptuary laws often targeted women's dress in some form but this was more as an offshoot of the main target and it was not until the fifteenth century that this was to become the main object of the legislation. The laws prohibiting certain types of dress that were put into effect during the fourteenth
century often concentrate more on the richness of the cloth than its cut but most obvious is the desire to curb any public display of wealth.\(^8\) This meant laws that dealt with funerals and weddings and which therefore only attacked clothes as a necessary adjunct to this.\(^9\)

Although later preachers such as San Bernardino were to call on women not to spend so much time on cosmetics and beautiful clothes it must be remembered that a woman's clothes were often the property of her father or husband and as such were used to show the wealth of the family.\(^10\) The clothes worn at weddings are a particular example of this and legislation to restrict them marks an attempt to restrict displays of family pride more than feminine vanity.\(^11\)

Sumptuary laws by their nature concentrate on the wealthy and those capable of putting on a display of that wealth.\(^12\) While it is possible to gauge from them a difference in the dress that was allowed between married and unmarried women - married women were often allowed less ornamentation - those with less money to spend or who wished to spend their wealth elsewhere are more difficult to pin down with regard to their favoured type of dress.\(^13\) One such group is middle class widows. Amongst lay female patrons widows must have been a large group as it is only when they attained this state that they would have had a reasonable amount of financial independence. As the commissioners of devotional
works such as the triptych by the Master of Citta di Castello mentioned in the previous chapter, these women would probably dress in a manner that reflected their strong religious beliefs.¹⁴ Even female members of royalty when freed from the bonds imposed by marriage retired out of the public eye and hence out of the need for pomp.¹⁵ Often they retired into a cloistered setting where they lived out the rest of their lives.¹⁶

The same is true of widowed women of the merchant class. On the death of their husbands middle class women who could afford it sometimes took up residence in a nearby convent as paying guests.¹⁷ They did not take vows nor were they obliged to follow the life of the convent but they were a valuable source of income for the nuns.¹⁸ As regards the clothes which they wore history has been less kind in providing documents since the fashion that they followed, if any, was not part of a display culture in the same way as that followed by the women whose clothes were dealt with in state sumptuary laws of the time, or, at the other end of the scale, by the women who made a name for themselves by their pious practices and abstentions from worldly pleasures.¹⁹ The clothes of famous holy women were often made deliberately of the poorest cloth available and patched again and again according to the vitae of these women.²⁰ At both ends of the scale clothing was used as a means of attracting attention.
For obvious reasons those clothes which kept within male ideas of what was respectable were not likely to be commented on. These middle class women may have emulated the dress of the nuns very closely. They are often depicted as so doing, whether as a direct representation or because of a wish expressed in the commission is difficult to tell. 21 A number of members of European ruling families chose to be buried in the clothes of one of the religious orders and/or to be depicted in those clothes in funeral effigies or portraits. One such is King Robert of Naples who in his effigy in the nuns' choir in the church of Santa Chiara is shown in the habit of a Franciscan friar and it is possible that also his mother Maria of Hungary is shown in the habit of the Poor Clares in her tomb in Santa Maria Donna Regina. On a less grand scale, Margherita, wife of Niccolò Cidrini da Rimini, asked in her will of the twenty-eighth of March 1446 that "ejas corpus tempore sui obitus et funeris debere vestirsi panno beretino ad modum Sororum Tertii Ordinis S. Francisci". 22

The devotion accorded to the religious habit per se had grown since the ninth century and was to become very common in the thirteenth century thanks to the Franciscans. All the great orders took part in the custom of giving the habit to those who asked for it when about to die. These included Benedictines, Cistercians, Premonstratensians and Augustinians as well as Franciscans and Dominicans. 23 Clement IV, Nicholas IV and Urban V had further conceded
the remission of the third part of their sins to those who died in the habit of the Minors or who requested that they be buried in it. So it may be that women in donor portraits are shown more as they would like to be seen by God than as they were in fact seen by mortal eyes. Episcopal legislation in early fourteenth century Florence had included detailed instructions on the type of clothing which women were allowed to wear into church and threatened the priest who allowed impious clothes into his church with the deprivation of his benefice. The appearance of sumptuous clothes in church would have been intended to apply equally to the representations of commissioners in paintings for churches and other religious buildings. This, coupled with the basic similarity between various types of clothes during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, leads to a number of possibilities for a lack of clarity between religious and lay commissioners. Further confusion exists between the habits of the various orders who also often dressed similarly to each other. Where women patrons are depicted in a painting it is important to be able to assess whether they were members of the laity or part of a religious order. This question, apart from being more difficult to answer for women than for men, is also more important for women as it may have a direct bearing on the possibility for a woman donor to directly affect the appearance of the work she paid for.

Despite the confusion which can exist for a modern viewer a
clear distinction was obviously intended both between the
dress of nuns and lay women and in the dress of various
members of the convent community. Fully professed nuns,
 novices and lay sisters in convent constitutions were
usually differentiated between in the manner of their
dress. For example Saint Clare in her rule stipulates that
no novice shall be allowed the veil. The Urbanist rule
for the Poor Clares of 1263 goes further and describes the
type of wimple to be used below the veil then going on to
say that nuns should have a black veil over the wimple, if
they are novices then a white veil should be used, but this
is to be of exactly the same cut. Saint Clare herself
does not mention the colour of the veil.

From the first institution of monasticism taking the habit
was intended to set people apart. Saint Basil believed that
simply by looking at the clothes of a monk it should be
possible to tell his mode of life. The fact that clothes
at this time did not have the variety to enable this to be
so was also true to a great extent for women of the
thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The rise in the
numbers of women following a religious life added to the
confusion that could arise. With new female orders, both
lay and monastic, emerging, it must have been difficult to
differentiate between them. However the episcopal
regulations of Fiesole in 1306 made it clear that a nun who
had permission to leave her convent for a legitimate reason
was to do so wearing the garb of that institution and not
to be allowed to change into lay dress implying that nuns' habits were easily distinguishable from the clothes of lay women. 30

In some paintings clothes are used specifically to identify the status of a woman within society as can be seen in frescoes such as "The Last Judgement" in the Campo Santo in Pisa and the Paradise fresco by Nardo di Cione in the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella, Florence where there is a deliberate policy to show the various estates of woman. While virgins are depicted with their heads uncovered and their hair flowing freely, married women always have some type of head-dress which is mainly white with some exceptions for royalty whose heads are often covered in a more elaborate fashion. Nuns are almost always depicted with a black veil where the intent is to differentiate between varying estates. However, even in this type of representation there is room for confusion. It is sometimes the case that a widow is shown with a black headdress very like a nun's veil. A black cloak with a hood was in fact part of mourning costume at this time and is easily confused with a black veil and cloak. 31

The Uses of the Veil.

In paintings where there is no need to differentiate between the callings of those portrayed in it, where, for example, there is only a pair of donors or a single donor, the problem increases. One of the items of dress most
likely to provide trouble is the veil. Normally simple dark veils are associated with nuns. However it is possible for them to be worn by widows or married women. This is the case in a painting by the Maestro dei coniugi Datini now in the Pinacoteca Capitolina in Rome. A woman, her husband and a small child are shown kneeling at the base of the composition. They have been identified as Francesco Datini and his family from the coat of arms shown on the painting which was probably executed around 1400. Datini's wife wears a simple dark veil below which are a white veil and wimple. 32 Records still exist of the clothes worn by Datini's wife Margaret who was very insistent on having a head-dress to match each of her gowns, the majority of which were made of extremely rich and colourful materials. 33 For the purposes of the painting, however, her clothes appear to have been considerably toned down to suit the religious subject and she is shown, not as she would normally have appeared, but how she wished to appear before God.

Veils of various types were used almost universally by women at this time. A nun was veiled on entry to the convent - a sign of her new status as the bride of Christ - and it was also customary for women who married in the world to veil themselves immediately after marriage. Whilst the husband was alive this veiling could have been relatively loose - merely a light covering of the head and sometimes quite ornamental - but on his death a wimple was
often used and this tended to take on the characteristics of a nun's head covering. In fact the similarity in clothes between the state of widowhood and that of monastic life may often have gone further for those of a religious disposition. The novelist Sacchetti describes the change of clothing undergone when a wife becomes a widow saying that she both cuts her hair and clothes herself in black. The cutting of the hair is of course a sine qua non for the traditional religious life. It is envisaged in Saint Clare's rule of 1253 and also the longer rule promulgated by Urban IV for the Poor Clares. Whilst the length of hair cannot be seen under the veil, the practice of cutting the hair for both widows and nuns is an indication of how similar the two states were deemed to be.

Descriptions of the veil in the fourteenth century are often very similar both for nuns and laity. Dante describes the Empress Costanza as having "le sacre bende" taken from her when she was forced to leave her monastery in order to marry. He also notes in the Purgatorio that "bianche bende" are the attributes of widows. The type of veil was subject to many variations in the way that it was worn. The descriptions above do not give an idea of these possibilities and only once mention colour. Some types of veil are easily distinguishable from those worn by nuns. These were often embroidered or decorated with gold and pearls. Differences are also noticeable according to region. The white towel type of loose covering for the head
where the edges of the weave are free leading to a sort of tassel effect is typical of Tuscany but can also be seen in other areas. It is used both in the clothes of lay people and also underneath the black over-veil of nuns where the strands left at the end of the cloth are clearly visible. In some cases the type of veil used by married women, nuns and widows appears to be almost interchangeable. This is not only the case for dark veils but also for simple white veils. The cross by Guariento shows the commissioner wearing a white wimple and veil. Maria dei Bovolini was probably a wealthy widow (Figs. 11 & 12). The covering for her head is a white wimple over which is placed a white veil and this is in fact very similar to the head veil of the commissioner of the Saint Humility altarpiece who has been claimed as a fully professed nun, the Blessed Margaret (Fig. 54). It also very similar to the headcovering depicted as being used by Saint Clare of Montefalco, also a nun, in the frescoes of her life in Santa Croce, Montefalco (Figs. 24 & 25).

The use of a white veil in the donor portrait may or may not be indicative of the lay status of the commissioner. Some orders of nuns did prescribe white veils even for those who were fully professed. These include the Olivetan Oblates. This order was founded in the early fifteenth century by Saint Frances of Rome (1384-1440), and the life of its foundress is shown in the fifteenth century frescoes of her life in the convent of Tor de' Specchi. In the
frescoes Saint Frances is always depicted wearing a simple white veil with no wimple beneath. This simple form of dress is also worn by the other members of the convent as shown in the frescoes. The habit appears to consist of a white veil reaching down over the shoulders and a black dress gathered just below the breast by a cord or belt (Figs. 13-16). Saint Clare of Montefalco (1268-1308), is also shown with a number of her fellow nuns in the mid-fourteenth century frescoes in her chapel in the church of Santa Chiara wearing a dark habit with a white wimple and veil. The convent, although administered by Franciscan friars, followed the rule of Saint Augustine (Figs. 22-25). 43

From these examples both the diversity of form of the white veil and wimple can be seen and, conversely, the similarities. The veil was of course not the only distinctive part of the dress of a nun and it must be examined in conjunction with the other constituent parts of the habit in order to assess the difference both between lay and religious clothes, between the clothes of the various religious orders and also the variations in clothing within a particular order. One of the ways of doing this is to look at paintings where both lay and religious dress can clearly be compared.
Saint Frances of Rome and the Habit of the Olivetan Oblates.

The frescoes depicting the life of Saint Frances of Rome were completed whilst some of the living members of her convent could probably still remember the Saint and her appearance. Although both the frescoes and the foundation of the order are strictly outside the period I have chosen to look at, the surviving clothing regulations followed by the Oblates in conjunction with the frescoes, form a very full testimony rare in the previous two centuries and which will be a useful template against which to judge earlier evidence of religious clothing. They depict Saint Frances, the members of her convent and also some lay women. With regard to the Saint herself the frescoes show very little difference in her clothing at the various stages of her life. The subjects are taken from every period of her life. In all of them Frances wears the same type of clothing. There are only very minor differences in the white veil, which is sometimes shown reaching to the ground. Where the long veil is shown it appears to be formed of two pieces of material one of which is partially used as a cloak (Fig. 13). The upper is a long rectangular piece of cloth placed over the head and falling down over the shoulders almost down to the ground on either side. This leaves the back unprotected and another piece of white cloth is used to cover it. It is unfortunately impossible to tell from the frescoes its shape or how it was attached. The uses of the
longer veil are equally unclear from the testimony of the frescoes. It is mainly seen in episodes where the community is outside the walls of the convent, although this is not always the case, and where they are in contact with priests or male members of other religious orders whereas the short veil is most often in evidence in scenes set within the convent walls (Figs. 13, 15 & 16).45

Some of these alterations in the habit of Frances and her companions appear to be no more than the attempt of the artist to introduce some variety into the composition. This is noticeable in the representation of the Saint curing a man whose arm had been almost completely severed. Both the Saint, her companion, and the injured man are shown twice. In the first part of the episode the two women are wearing long veils whilst in the second they have on the short veils (Fig. 15).

The fact that habits may change according to the activities being undertaken by the nuns should also be borne in mind, although whether an artist would necessarily be faithful to this is another matter. The Augustinians, for example, whose habit was normally black, often wore their white undertunic when in the convent.46 For mass and any other religious office they had always to wear the black habit. Saint Clare of Assisi, in her rule, mentions what parts of the habit the nuns are to wear according to what they are doing at the time.47 This is also the case, again with more
detail, in the Urbanist rule which says that when working the nuns should normally wear a scapular and dispense with their mantles.\textsuperscript{48}

To return to Saint Frances of Rome, the lack of any significant change in Frances’s habit also reflects the fact that at this time the clothes of nuns and those of lay women did not differ significantly. The scene of "Saint Frances resuscitating a child" has a number of lay women amongst the cast (Fig. 16). The mother, whom we see on the left with the child across her knee wears a white veil and a blue/black dress very similar to that of Saint Frances and her companions. There are a number of small differences including the square cut neck-line in contrast to the round neck of the Saint’s dress. There is also a difference in the cut of the sleeves. Those of the mother seem to have a slightly more fashionable cut. The top of her sleeves are puffed. They are also tighter at the wrist where a white shift shows through. Frances’s sleeves are, however, loose at the wrist and there is no fancy cutting at the shoulder. This latter point can be seen in the scene where she cures a man of nine wounds. Here she leans forward and the top of her dress can be seen. Nevertheless the similarities between lay and religious dress are far more striking than their differences especially in the part of the scene where the mother is first seen.

A late fifteenth century written description of the habit
survives which can be used to assess the verismilitude of the frescoes. It forms part of the rule of the Olivetan Oblates. No mention of a written rule was made in the documents of approval for Tor de’ Specchi but this does not bar the possibility of there being one. A number of contemporary sources speak of Frances’s Regola but it is not made clear whether this was verbal or written. The late fifteenth century document probably mirrors the usages of the convent during the life of the Saint. The rule has seventy-three points, three of which refer specifically to the habit, the method of wearing it and its cut. The last two items are those most useful to us in reconstructing the original habit. They confirm that the habit consists of a black over-dress and thus cast an interesting question over the colour that we know see in the frescoes – whether it has become faded or damaged with time, or whether indeed a true black was never even attempted but blue used as a more pictorially user-friendly choice. Other regulations regarding the habit are also relevant when making a comparison with what the frescoes appear to tell us about the habit. Whilst no button is seen at the neck of the habits in the frescoes the neckline depicted is certainly high enough to require one as stipulated by the rule. The frescoes also conform to the rule that the habits should never be worn with folds or pleats.

The habit as described in the rule conforms closely to that shown in the frescoes but fails to take account of the
change in circumstances of Saint Frances from lay woman to Oblate. It may be that the artist was not so much interested in giving a true account of the clothes of the Saint as in testifying to her sanctity and the miracles that she performed. Frances is identified as much by her clothing as by her halo. However I think it more probable that the habit of the Oblates was a reflection of Frances's clothing as a lay woman. This is indicated in the use of a white veil even after the Oblates became an enclosed order.

The example of the frescoes in Tor de' Specchi illustrates a number of points that must be borne in mind when interpreting the remaining visual evidence of how a saint belonging to a particular order and her companions looked. Firstly paintings of this type were not intended to be an accurate record of the clothes of the subject and her companions but rather to be a religious inspiration. It is also possible that the painter would have wanted to produce some sort of artistic unity, especially in a cycle, and an obvious place to impose this unity at the expense of authenticity would be through clothes. It is in some cases possible to check the accuracy of the representation through the use of written dress codes as is the case for Saint Frances's convent. Nevertheless these dress rules, while no doubt clear to contemporaries, are not always so to the modern interpreter, and in some cases only become so in conjunction with the pictorial evidence or vice versa.
For example the existing rule for the Olivetan Oblates gives hardly any indication of the form that the veil was to take nor its colour but since the form of the habit in the frescoes is very close to that described in the rule in all other respects it is almost certainly the case that the frescoes also accurately depict the veil.

* * * * *

The above points can be approximately divided into two areas - those connected with the artist and his depiction of the women in question, and those connected with our knowledge of the various relevant rules on clothing in force at the time. The first area that I shall deal with is that of written clothing regulations for various groups of women, both those within convents and those still in secular society.

Like other aspects of the rule of a particular order, those regarding clothing tended to evolve rather than emerge fully fledged. In some cases clothing usages can be followed through a series of regulations which reacted to needs and abuses as they arose. Often regulations were no more than a codification of practices already in use. This is probably the case for the convent of Tor de' Specchi discussed above. Although the convent was to become enclosed and bound by a specific rule, Frances of Rome had originally organised her society of women to carry out their pious works in the world rather than within convent
walls in 1425: it was not until 1433 that she established Tor de' Specchi in association with the Benedictine monks of Monte Oliveto. The earlier case of Saint Clare of Montefalco is similar. She had originally joined the group of recluses headed by her sister in 1274 but this was only formed into a recognised community of Augustinian nuns sixteen years later.52

This evolution from a group of lay women to an organised community sanctioned by the Church may have meant that the clothes worn by the group were not greatly affected. In Northern Europe the beguines who organised themselves into groups without taking formal vows wore simple clothes which may have had the appearance of a type of habit and in Italy this type of dress could have been continued when a group became organised and accepted by the Church.

The formation of new religious orders, which was at its height during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, provided a number of problems with regard to religious dress. The regulations of the Lateran Council of 1215 forbidding new religious rules, and their reinforcement by the Council of Lyons in 1274, meant that new orders had to take previously formulated rules such as that of Saint Benedict.53 The number of convents increased dramatically in response to these new orders. In the mid-thirteenth century in Florence there may have been five convents but less than a century later twenty-four are listed.54 Whilst
in order to satisfy the regulations of the Lateran Council,
new orders had to take one of the older religious rules
their habits were not prescribed by the same regulation.
The first convents of new female orders may not immediately
have had any clear directive provided on clothing and it
was only later that this was attended to, addressing
firstly practical matters such as warmth and only
secondarily the need to distinguish between one order and
another. This is not to say that the latter was not
important - some clothing regulations are exceptionally
detailed - but rather that it was not an immediate
priority. The art of the period mirrors this evolution and
a number of new habits are depicted belonging not only to
the various orders but also to the various regions into
which those orders had spread.

The Habit of the Poor Clares during the Thirteenth and
Fourteenth Centuries.
The rule which the new female order of the Poor Clares were
given in order to be in line with the Lateran regulations
was that of Saint Benedict. The Benedictine rule was
formulated in the first half of the sixth century whilst
the Saint was in charge of the community at Subiaco.
Although not intended for women it was originally given to
the Poor Clares with very little alteration but with a
forma di vita added by Cardinal Ugolino. The bare bones of
the Benedictine rule are fleshed out and one of the issues
dealt with is dress. Cardinal Ugolino deals with clothes in
a practical manner but by no means one that implies complete uniformity of colour or cut. The area of Benedict’s rule relating to the clothes which the monks should have stipulates two tunics and two cowls together with a scapular and also says that they should sleep fully clothed.\textsuperscript{55} Ugolino’s version is fuller but based on that of Benedict. The nuns should have two tunics and a scapular. A cowl is not mentioned but they are to have a cloak. Mention is also made of the type of cloth that is to be used, although in a general rather than a specific fashion, and also that the habit should be of a length that is consistent with the religious calling of the nuns. Noticeable is not only the lack of any mention of the colour of the habit but also the amount of choice left to the nuns and abbesses as to what should be allowed within particular convents such as that the nuns may wear a scapular \textit{if they want}.

Even the later and much more detailed rule of Urban IV for the Clares left space for significant variations of colour whilst trying to make the actual items of clothing more uniform. The rule formulated by Saint Clare makes very little mention of the dress of the sisters.\textsuperscript{56} This is mainly to stress that the garments should always be poor.\textsuperscript{57} Also mentioned are the number of garments that the sisters may have at any one time.\textsuperscript{58} No details were provided as to the exact type, cut or colour of the clothes from Saint Clare herself. Saint Clare’s \textit{forma di vita} was only
accepted by the Pope at the very end of the Saint's life and then was only in force for the convent at Assisi and possibly a very few others. The question of the habit of the Poor Clares would have been dealt with long before her death as the movement spread very quickly. The number of rules made for the order testifies to the difficulty of keeping it unified. At least five rules had been promulgated by the time of Urban IV's attempt at unification in 1263. This rule was followed by a significant number of convents, although by no means all, and lays down quite detailed instructions as to the clothing of the nuns. A section of the rule is devoted to the clothes of the nuns. This states the number of tonache that each nun may have and the type of material that may be used.

The Urbanist rule stipulates that the habit is to be of a colour that is neither completely white nor completely black giving scope for considerable diversity of colour between shades of brown and grey. It also mentions the cord around the waist. This is to be worn only by fully professed nuns as is the black veil which should be spread over the head and reach down on either side to the shoulders and at the back below the hood of the tunic. A scapular is to be worn over the tunic and the sisters are also to have a cloak. The scapular is very rarely seen in representations of the Poor Clares possibly due to the continuing use of the Ugoline forma di vita which allowed a
choice in the use of the scapular. One of the few examples in which the scapular is included is in the fifteenth century altarpiece of Saint Clare with scenes of her life now in the Galleria Regionale in Messina.

The Urbanist rule also gives a significant amount of attention to the white veil worn by the lay sisters and the novices and which the fully professed sisters wore under their black veil. For the fully professed nuns this veil took the form of either bende, or a piece of cloth arranged in such a way as to cover the forehead, the cheeks, the neck and the throat. For the lay sisters it was a piece of white cloth sufficient to cover the shoulders and the breast. As far as can be judged from the many paintings showing Poor Clares during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries this white veil ordered for the nuns and novices often turned in effect into two veils - one used to cover the neck and forehead and another piece of white cloth lain on top of it and which can be seen showing beneath the black veil of the professed nuns. Where one of these veils is omitted in representations it is almost always the lower veil covering the neck.

The detail of the Urbanist rule and the fact that it was intended to supersede all previous forms of the rule followed by the Poor Clares belies the reality of the case. Not only did the rule not become definitive but pictorial evidence also exists of a number of alterations to the
prescribed habit. This is most clearly shown in regard to the use of the scapular, but there are a number of other examples. Representations of Clare often show her without the wimple covering her throat. This is the case in some, though not all, of the depictions of her at Assisi, and may testify to the form of habit in use at the convent in Assisi both before the promulgation of the Urbanist rule, when Clare was still alive, and afterwards, as the community at Assisi followed Clare's rule, with its vague dress stipulations, rather than that given by Urban IV. It is also possible that it is a reflection of fashion as the use of the wimple becomes more widespread as the fourteenth century continues. In the Santa Chiara dossal in the protomonastero in Assisi, and the Crucifix commissioned by the abbess Benedetta, both works of the late thirteenth century, the wimple covering the throat is not portrayed. It is difficult to find a way of ascertaining whether these representations from Assisi are a reflection of reality and the lack of the restrictions of the Urbanist rule, or more to do with the pictorial expressiveness of a free-flowing white veil as opposed to tight bands placed around the neck. The use of a type of wimple to cover the neck, throat, and forehead, was not unknown in Assisi - it can be seen in Simone Martini's representation of Saint Clare in the Saint Martin Chapel in the Lower Church, although in this case a certain amount of artistic licence has been used for the part of the wimple over the throat, which
instead leaves much of the throat open to view and is more of an addition to the gentle s-curve of the figure than a modest covering (Fig. 17). 65

Whilst the depictions of the habit of the Poor Clares may in some cases follow artistic whim rather than be documentary evidence a number of the rules mention that the habit should be adapted both according to the clemency or inclemency of the weather and also that local custom should be taken into account, thus allowing for differences in dress. This is the case in the Urbanist rule. 66 However this seems to be aimed more towards the material than to the cut of the habit and the garments of which it was made up.

The Poor Clare habit had a number of regional differences. The most striking of these was in the Veneto. In Venetian representations of the fourteenth and fifteenth century a striped mantle is almost universally present - one of the few exceptions being the triptych now in the Museo Civico d'Arte e di Storia in Trieste (Fig. 88). 67 The striped mantle can be seen in the polyptych of the "Coronation of the Virgin" by Paolo Veneziano in the Accademia, Venice in the scene of the "Death of Saint Clare" (Fig. 18). It was evidently still in use, or at least recognisable as appertaining to the Poor Clares three centuries later, as it is depicted in a painting by Leandro Bassano of "The Virgin and Child with Saints Francis and
It was probably common for members of a particular order not to wear the prescribed habit. In the second half of the fifteenth century, for example, the questions sent to monasteries by the Vallombrosan general asked, amongst other things, whether the monks wore the habit of their order. However the use of the striped mantle is so widespread and so well publicized pictorially that it cannot be accounted for merely as disobedience to the rule. Although the striped mantle is usually seen in the Veneto worn by the Poor Clares, it is also (rarely) seen in depictions of the male Franciscans. A late thirteenth century fresco from the Santuario of SS. Vittorio e Corona in Feltre shows Saint Francis with a striped cloak or blanket hanging from his shoulders. Like that of the Clares it is a pale, almost white colour, with dark horizontal stripes, but much smaller and shorter, reaching only to the knees. Although not common in the North West of Italy the striped cloak was known of there for the Poor Clares, as can be seen in a fifteenth century fresco from the church of San Fiorenzo at Mandovi which shows Saint Clare. The regional variation of the striped mantle is difficult to account for although it has been suggested that it is a reflection of penitential clothing in the North East. It is also possible that the striped mantle was originally a reflection of the poverty espoused by the Poor Clares in
their interpretation of the Franciscan ideal. The Urbanist rule for the Clares stipulates that the sisters should sleep clothed and belted.\textsuperscript{72} Blanket, as a type of material, was in fact sometimes used to make clothes for monks and nuns as can be seen from records still surviving from the fourteenth century for the monks of Westminster Abbey.\textsuperscript{73} The mantles that the Poor Clares from the Veneto are shown wearing could have doubled as blankets in the colder region of the Veneto which would account for the stripes which are often shown in fourteenth century depictions of bed covers such as those in the Saint Humility altarpiece in the Uffizi (Fig. 51).\textsuperscript{74} Within the context of female spirituality this diversity of dress shows an aspect of the difficulties encountered in attempting to enforce some type of uniformity within the order.

\textbf{The Habit of the Second Order of Saint Dominic.}

The dress of the Dominican Second Order appears not to be subject to regional changes of the magnitude of those found within the Poor Clares. Like the Poor, Clares the dress regulations of the Dominicans are also well documented and at first sight the problems encountered would appear to be similar in that the Dominicans also had to take a previously existing rule - that of Augustine - and adapt certain parts of it, including dress, for their own needs.

The habit of the Second Order consists of a white tunic with a black cloak and veil. It closely mirrors that of the
male Dominicans which was said to have been given to them by the Virgin who appeared to one of their number, Reginald, and after having cured him of his ills bestowed the habit on him. Although there was a period when the Dominican nuns had neither an official rule or the habit that went with it - it has been suggested that the first Dominican nuns wore a Cistercian habit and indeed the first known rule for Dominican nuns only stipulates white as the colour of the habit - a situation of uncertainty on the scale of the Clares was never to develop. Only the Camaldolese tertiaries had a similar habit at this time - white with a black veil as is evidenced by the representation of the Blessed Gherardesca in a painting now in the Uffizi in Florence.

After the first years spent without any specific rule or habit this vacuum was quickly and efficiently filled. The first known rule for the Dominican Second Order is that formulated for the convent of San Sisto in Rome and this was to be the template for the subsequent rules. The rule is not known in its original form but in that published by Gregory IX in a bull of the 23rd October 1232. Following this was the rule written for the nuns at Montargis probably some time after 1244 by the then Provincial of France Humbert of Romans. After becoming Master General at the General Chapter at Buda in 1254 Humbert was to embark on a more wide-ranging reform of the rule of the Dominican nuns seeking, as the Franciscans and
successive popes were already trying to do for the Second Order of Saint Francis, although with more success, to ensure a uniform rule throughout the order. Having ordered the provincial priors to send to the following Chapter details of the nunneries that they had accepted under their jurisdiction he proceeded to draw up a new set of constitutions with the support of the pope, Alexander IV. These constitutions were published at the 1259 Chapter General and it was at the same time made clear that any convent which did not accept them without question was no longer to be considered part of the order. These measures prevented to a large extent the difference in usages which was the bane of those attempting to govern the Clares.

Each successive rule issued for the female Dominicans provided guidelines on the type of habit that was to be worn by the nuns, the number of tunics permitted and the type of cloth. However there is very little detail regarding the colour of the various items of clothing and the form which the veil was to take both before and after profession, both of which are specifically enumerated in the Urbanist rule for the Clares. It is only Humbert's rule for the sisters of Montargis which stipulates a black cloak and a white tunic. The rule of San Sisto only says that the habit should be white, whilst Humbert's definitive rule of 1259 does not mention colour at all. Otherwise the main point which is insisted on is the scapular, present in all three rules. The Dominican rule seems to presuppose some
previous knowledge about the type of habit in use and it is probable that the lack of detail concerning the habit may be because there was no need to counter different usages as there was throughout the Second Order of Saint Francis. In depictions of Dominican nuns there is a lot less elasticity in the habit than is the case for the Poor Clares. The uniformity of control extended by the male Dominicans juridically over their female counterparts is reflected in the uniformity of their clothes.

A female Dominican commissioner can be seen in a fresco of the early fifteenth century in the church of San Sisto Vecchio in Rome. The fresco, on the left wall of the church near the apse, is divided into three areas, the first two of which show scenes from the life of Saint Catherine of Siena. In the second scene which is of "Christ appearing to Saint Catherine" there is a kneeling nun to the right of Christ who was probably the commissioner of the scenes. Whilst Catherine wears the habit of the Third Order of Saint Dominic which she joined in 1364 or 1365, a white veil and tunic with a black cloak, the nun is differentiated by her black veil accompanied by a white tunic and black cloak. Moving further northwards a number of Dominican tertiaries are represented on a late fourteenth century panel by the Sienese master of the Dominican effigies (Fig. 19). They are all represented in the correct habit of the Dominican tertiaries as described above. Dominicans of the Second Order are relatively rare
in Italian art of the fourteenth century but can be seen in a depiction of the Blessed Margaret of Hungary. There is only one example of the end of the fifteenth century where the habit of the Dominican Second Order is not strictly depicted and this concerns the Blessed Margaret where she is shown wearing a white veil. The general uniformity of the Dominican habit means that it is possible to identify the religious ambient from which certain works were commissioned. This is the case in the polyptych painted by Giusto de' Menabuoi for Isotta Terzago in 1363 discussed in the previous chapter.

**Habit in Relation to Rule and Order.**

Whilst there can be no confusion between the dress of the Poor Clares and that of the Second Order of Saint Dominic there are a number of cases where the dividing line between the habits of various orders is obscured. One such is that of Saint Clare of Montefalco (d.1308). Four frescoed scenes of Clare’s life from the early fourteenth century exist in the church of Santa Croce in Montefalco (Figs. 21-25). The majority of these frescoes show her with a white veil and wearing a dark brown/black habit covered with a scapular. Clare’s convent followed the Augustinian rule but because it was not actually part of the Augustinian order the members were probably not obliged to wear the normal habit of the Augustinians. This presents a different set of problems with regard to the habit of female religious to those explored previously - that of individual convents
living under an approved rule but not forming a part of any particular order. Since distinctive habits are a part of the order to which a convent belonged rather than the rule which it followed there is the possibility for an infinite number of variations in religious dress in convents which grew from lay communities as did that which was governed by Clare of Montefalco.

The Augustinian habit was usually black gathered by a black belt. However white was also used, and the veil could be white or black. An Augustinian writer of the fifteenth century discussing the depictions of Clare of Montefalco mentions that Augustinians at the time that he was writing had a black habit but he gives no further details. The Augustinian habit of the second half of the fourteenth century is also testified to in a panel from a polyptych by Jacopino di Francesco now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna shows "Saint Augustine giving the Rule" (Fig. 20). Kneeling directly in front of the Saint are two male Augustinians and behind them are a number of nuns, presumably fully professed members of the order, and all wearing white veils. Paintings of Saint Clare in Santa Croce from the fifteenth century conform closely to this outline. One of these is "Christ implanting the cross into the heart of Clare" which is in the present nuns' choir. Here Clare wears a habit that is blackish as she does in the funeral casket featuring depictions of the Saint that was executed around 1430. However the earlier fourteenth
century frescoes are not so clear in their depiction of the habit worn by the Saint. Nevertheless the fact that, like the previously discussed frescoes of the life of Saint Frances of Rome, they were executed while the Saint was still within living memory, means that they have a greater claim to accuracy.

Unlike the depictions of Saint Frances of Rome the painters of the four scenes of Clare's life differentiated between the various stages of her life partially with the aid of the clothes that she is depicted as wearing. The first painting of the four that deal with her life and miracles shows the six year old Saint asking her elder sister Joan for permission to enter her reclusorio (Fig. 21). It is the only scene in which Clare's hair is not covered. The Saint is shown with short hair and a plain dark dress which appears to be drawn in in some way at the waist, possibly with a cord although this is not clear because of the position of her arms. In the second scene Clare is clothed differently. The Saint, still a child, sees a vision of the Virgin and Child (Figs. 22 & 23). She is now wearing a white veil, but no wimple to cover her neck, a scapular beneath which her dress can be seen and also a cord around the waist as she was probably wearing in the previous scene. It is only in the two final scenes that her dress becomes uniform (Figs. 24 & 25). Both episodes occur after her community has accepted the Augustinian rule. She is then shown wearing a white wimple and veil,
a cloak, scapular and tunic. However the explanation that Clare’s clothes changed on admittance into the Augustinian order does not fit the iconography of the scenes which also contain two representations of her sister Joan. The second of these, to the right of Clare’s vision of the cross, is damaged at the base, but in the first where Clare asks her sister to admit her to the reclusorio the bottom of Joan’s scapular can be made out as a darker line above the hem of her tunic. Her habit appears to be identical to Clare’s in the years after the acceptance of the Augustinian rule. The habit shown is therefore presumably a general religious garment rather than that appertaining to a specific order.

The cord around Clare’s waist has been claimed as evidence that she belonged to the Franciscan order. Even without the knowledge that her convent followed the Augustinian rule, this would seem unlikely as the Urbanist rule stated that the cord was only to be worn by fully professed nuns and that fully professed nuns were to wear a black veil. However Clare’s case is not as simple as this as although her convent followed the Augustinian rule, it was not jurisdictionally under the care of the male Augustinians. In fact the convent was spiritually guided by the Franciscans. The Saint herself was much influenced by them in a number of ways such as her wish to go out begging for food. In view of the duality of Clare’s religious inspiration and the lack of a habit
designed specifically for her case it is entirely possible that she showed her Franciscan sympathies by wearing a cord around her waist in the mode of the Franciscans themselves. The discussion over Clare's spirituality has been fuelled by various interpretations of her dress as shown in the frescoes in Montefalco and a clarification of the elasticity with which dress rules were followed is essential in examining the sources of her spirituality in relation to the order that she followed.

There are other examples of a mixed type of religious dress such as that of the nuns of Santa Maria delle Fratte in Rome whose rule was changed on the 8th June 1272 from that of the Poor Clares to the Dominican rule. Trouble had broken out between the nuns and the Franciscan friars due to which they were absolved "ab omni vinculo professionis regulae S. Damiani, et transtultit eas ad professionem et Regulam S. Augustini, et Constitutiones Dominarum S. Syxti de Urbe". Their habit which had been "griseum prius" changed to "album ita quod tunicis et mantellis albis de cetero uterentur" but they retained "capuceis griseis et Offitio Curiae Romanae, et clausura perpetua, sicut prius".103 The mention of grey in the description of the original habit, that used when the convent followed the rule of the Poor Clares, points out the variety in colour that the Clare rule allowed even though they are normally depicted in Italy as wearing various shades of brown. The document also shows that it was possible to follow a rule
without conforming to all of its dress regulations.

The proliferation of new orders during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries coupled with the restrictions in styles of clothing and colours considered suitable for monastic dress and at the same time the elasticity used in the interpretation of dress regulations means that it is possible to confuse the habits of many of the smaller orders.

One such order is that of the Servites. The Augustinian rule which was the basis of the Dominican rule was also that of the Servites who were formed during the fourteenth century. There is only one representation of a fourteenth century female Servite blessed extant in Tuscan art of the period this being of the Blessed Juliana Falconieri who was a member of the third order of the Servites and who organized the women of Florence into a convent community.\textsuperscript{104} She is in a black habit with a white wimple and a white lining to her veil in a fifteenth century painting by Giovanni di Paolo in Santa Maria dei Servi in Siena. Female members of third orders were often given the general title of mantellate at this time because of the cloaks that they wore, very similar to mourning cloaks, and which covered the body from head to toe.\textsuperscript{105} However the Servite Third Order habit in this painting seems to be almost identical to that of the female Benedictines who are also shown in paintings dressed in a habit which is black
except for the wimples (where shown) and the lining of the veil.106

Another habit which is almost identical to the black of the Benedictines appears in a panel of the late fourteenth century now in the Accademia in Florence of the Madonna della Misericordia (Fig. 27).107 The panel came from the Augustinian convent of Santa Maria in Candeli at the time of the Napoleonic suppression. This convent is first mentioned as an Augustinian house in 1367 and the panel shows the Virgin, whose mantle is supported by two angels, under which shelter twenty-three nuns and four lay women.108 The nuns are wearing a black habit with a white wimple and veil over which is a black veil. They have been labelled as belonging to the Augustinian order because of the provenance of the panel but there is no inscription or other evidence to support this statement. However it is possible that the panel was painted before the convent is first noted as being Augustinian.109 The habit of the nuns whilst it could certainly be regarded as Augustinian is by no means certainly so. Unfortunately of the other Augustinian cloisters of the fourteenth century in Florence very few can be associated with surviving paintings from the fourteenth century and of these none have representations of Augustinian nuns with which to compare the Madonna della Misericordia.110

A painting from the last years of the fourteenth century
now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna by Simone de' Crocefissi which shows Saint Helen and the Cross poses much the same problem (Fig. 28). At the Saint's feet is a donor in the garb of a nun. She wears a white tunic over which is a black mantle. On her head is a white wimple partially covered by a white cowl and over this a black veil. The subject of the painting has lead to the suggestion that it was commissioned for the convent of Sant'Elena which was Augustinian and only later transferred to the Dominican convent of Sant'Agnese from whence it was taken during the Napoleonic suppression. The nun would therefore be a member of the Augustinian order. The inscription unfortunately gives no clues as to the religious sympathies of the commissioner but the habit does seem to point to the Dominican order because of the white tunic, unusual in representations of the Augustinians. However the possibilities for diversity within the habit of the female Augustinians and the fact that little is known on early regulations regarding their clothing precludes a definite conclusion being drawn. The impossibility of identifying the donors of these paintings by their dress makes it in turn difficult to assess the importance of the subjects for these donors.

The Religious Dress of Lay Penitents.
The examples above give some idea of the complexities involved in identifying the habits of fully professed female members of religious orders. However it was not just
nuns who wore habits. There were also clothing regulations for members of the lay community who wished to lead a more religious life without joining a convent community. With regard to female patronage lay penitents form a particularly important group and some of them may have been in charge of large sums of money, as witnessed by the Refectory fresco in Santa Croce in Florence mentioned in Chapter 1. This makes their dress of particular concern when attempting to identify types of female donor. Tertiaries and lay penitents of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries tended to be drawn from the rising social groups such as the merchant classes who felt uneasy with their new found wealth and may have wished to rid themselves of it during life by means of donating money for the construction of a church or by commissioning a painting.114

An understanding of the clothes of lay penitents is also important for an understanding of female spirituality. The majority of the new female saints were not part of an enclosed order.115 However their lives have often been assessed in relation to a particular order. This has a tendency to by-pass the diversity of women's spirituality and the possibilities for expressing it and is sometimes in opposition to the clothes that they are shown wearing in their representations.

The clothes of lay penitents were prescribed by various
rules throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The state of penitence could either be imposed because of a sin such as adultery or could be taken on voluntarily. In either case the penitents wore the same outer clothes.\textsuperscript{116} With the advent of the Franciscan movement lay penitents became more and more numerous until it became necessary to formulate rules under which visitors checked on their mode of life. These rules included dress regulations which at first did not prescribe a particular colour or cut but which aimed to exclude any type of luxury. Nevertheless the clothes must have been easily recognisable as they were in themselves a sign of profession and originally anyone who donned these clothes was considered to be a penitent even if he or she had not made any vow in the presence of a priest.\textsuperscript{117} Later the voluntary penitents were to adopt a mantle of the same colour as the religious of the church which they frequented. Up until the second half of the thirteenth century however these colour distinctions did not imply that any order had jurisdictional influence over the penitents.\textsuperscript{118}

The first rule of the penitents written between 1221 and 1228 gives dress guidelines for both male and female penitents.\textsuperscript{119} That for the men states that their clothes should be made of cloth \textit{sine colore}. The rules for the women are a little more indicative of colour variations and while their mantle and tunic should be of humble material, it was also possible to have their under tunic (guarnellum)
of black or white. Another concern was that the clothes were not only without ornamentation but that their cut should be as simple as possible. They are specifically warned against crinkles or pleats, the same worries that were to concern the Olivetan Oblates in Rome over two centuries later. Significantly it is the price of the cloth that indicates above all whether it was considered humble enough for the use of the penitents and this would presumably have left a great deal of leeway with respect to the type of cloth purchased. There is a further *get-out* clause which was added to the rules on the dress of women penitents in which they are absolved in certain cases from following the rule regarding the price of the cloth.

By the last decades of the thirteenth century the rules and supervision of the penitents had come under the jurisdiction of the Franciscans and the Dominicans. A rule was formulated by a Franciscan, Fra Caro, in 1284.\(^{120}\) In this rule the habit worn by the penitents is given particular attention.\(^{121}\) The aim was to unify all the different groups of penitents, at least in appearance, with one habit, and originally dealt specifically with the problems in Florence. It can therefore be surmised that there was considerable diversity in lay religious clothing, not only regionally, but within a single city. Chapter III of the rule deals with the habit. However with regard to the dress of the women members it is almost identical to the previous rule.\(^{122}\) Although it was intended to cover
penitents who attended services at both Franciscan and Dominican churches, the following year the Dominicans issued a separate rule for penitents who wished to have a special allegiance to the Dominican order. Chapter II of the rule deals with the habit.123

The Dominican rule for the Third Order, like that for the Second Order, avoided many of the problems that the Franciscans were to encounter by making it clear initially that those who accepted the rule owed allegiance to the Dominicans and were bound by the attached regulations. The rule of Fra Caro allowed for either Franciscans or local bishops to oversee the good conduct of the penitents which necessarily lead to a number of variations. Even the parts of the rule concerning clothes allowed for significant variations according to place, custom and situation ("Circa humilitatem vero panni et pellitiones sororum ipsarum iuxta conditionem cuiuslibet earundem ac loci consuetudinem poterit dispensari").

Throughout their evolution the rules described above for lay penitents stress that the clothes worn by them should be as simple and unadorned as possible. It is curious, then, to find that some lay penitents of the fourteenth century are shown in clothes that are not plain but have a pronounced checked pattern running across them. Two examples are known. They are depictions of Margaret of Cortona and Clare of Rimini. Margaret of Cortona is shown
in a painting now in the Museo Diocesano in Cortona and the Blessed Clare of Rimini is depicted during a vision which she received of Christ in a painting in the National Gallery, London (Fig. 29). Margaret of Cortona wears a chequered tunic gathered at the waist by the typical knotted Franciscan cord and a mantle which was probably originally black as allowed in the regulations of Fra Caro (Fig. 62). Similarly dressed is Clare of Rimini whose tunic is also white but with brown squares forming the pattern. Her mantle is made of the same material and her white head-dress resembles more a wimple than a scarf. She also has tied around her waist the Franciscan cord. The panel, which shows a vision of Christ experienced by her, originally formed part of an altarpiece together with scenes of "The Adoration of the Magi" and "The Crucifixion" of which there exists another Riminese version in the Fesch Collection in Ajaccio. There is however one significant change in the habit of the Blessed Clare which is that in the Fesch version Clare wears a white veil and cloak over a brown tunic, once again with the knotted cord around the waist. The reasons for this change in habit are unclear. Stylistically the earlier altarpiece would appear to be that in the Fesch collection. Both, however, are reported as coming from the same place, the Monastero degli Angeli in Rimini. The reason for the change in the habit is therefore unclear unless the later work was intended to replace the earlier work because of the inaccurate and
misleading portrayal of the habit which would have given the impression of a very close bond with the Franciscans. Clare of Rimini was probably not officially part of any order although she was certainly greatly influenced by Franciscan spirituality - her conversion took place on entering a Franciscan church and she later helped the Poor Clares of Regno by begging for them. However the life of Margaret of Cortona, written by her confessor, Giunta Bevegnati, specifically states that she was received into the Third Order of Saint Francis and it therefore seems that this chequered type of habit was not incompatible with the Third Order although it may not have been exclusive to it.

The chequered clothes of these women are not limited to a few representations but are attested to in a number of paintings. However this does not accord with the written evidence. The life of the Blessed Clare does not state that she wore a chequered habit. The fourteenth century life translated and published by Garampi deals with Clare taking up the religious habit in the second chapter but gives no details as to what the habit actually consisted of. In Chapter Three some more details of Clare's clothes are given interspersed amongst information about her penances in which we are told that the top layer of her clothing was white in accordance with the clothes of the other sisters. This may either imply that the part of her clothes which was visible was white, or more probably means
that her mantle was white but in neither case does it conform to many of the representations which we have of her. That the reason for this discrepancy, like that of the striped cloak of the Poor Clares, does not appear to have any written base, does not rob it of its value as a testimony. However, without it being mentioned in any text it is impossible to surmise the reason for it other than that it signifies a penitential habit.

Like the striped Venetian mantle of the Poor Clares the chequered habit is seen within a fairly circumscribed geographical area. Rimini is in fact only around fifty miles from Cortona. Outside this area such a habit is not in evidence even when dealing with one of the women discussed here - Margaret of Cortona - who is shown in a fresco in the crypt of the cathedral of Atri wearing a white veil and wimple with a darker tunic and the characteristic cord around her waist.\textsuperscript{135} The lateness of the fresco and its distance from Cortona may account for this change in the depiction of the habit. Other parts of her habit such as her head-dress are certainly due to regional differences. A binding around the head to hold the veil in place is not uncommon in Riminese art of this period and can be seen for example in "The Birth of the Baptist" by the Master of the Coronation of Urbino now in the Palazzo Venezia in Rome. Another example is the oldest woman amongst a group of people kneeling at the feet of Saint Ursula in a fresco in Sant'Agostino, Fabriano.\textsuperscript{136}
Margaret of Cortona lived before the penitents started to come more and more under the control of the mendicant orders. During her lifetime the role of these two orders was bound up with lay penitents but on a less regulation bound basis. It was probably only with the rise in popularity of voluntary penitency that it was thought necessary to attempt uniformity in dress rather than merely stipulating a poor form of clothing. While Margaret was alive and for some time after regulations may have been put into force only where it was felt that they were needed and on a regional basis. The presence in the manuscript version of the frescoes of other women in the same habit furthers the possibility that Margaret’s clothes were a regional variation (Fig. 61). However this is not the case with Clare of Rimini, the main part of whose life fell after the codification of regulations both for penitents in general by the Franciscans, and for those particularly affiliated to the Dominicans. It would seem that like the striped habit of the Poor Clares regional variations could continue to exist long after attempts had been made to impose uniformity throughout Italy.

In the case of lay penitents it was possible for them to wear a specific habit which yet did not imply a jurisdictional allegiance to any order, and for those associated with a particular order (Dominicans excluded) the habit would certainly not appear to have been noticeable by its uniformity. An example of where the dress
code of a particular order is taken up without any of the concomitant regulations of obedience or observance is for Saint Elizabeth, Queen of Portugal. A document of 1325 says that she will dress herself "cum nodosa chordula, et cum quadam veste, quae videntur esse de habitu et ad instar habitus Sororum seu Monialium Ordinis S. Clare". However it goes on to deny any other tie with the order or that any obedience will be owed to it in consequence of taking the habit; "praetactas vestem et chordulam, ac velum viduitatis, licet instar habitus Ordinis praedicti, non in habitus Religiosum etc. nec caussa obedientiae alicujus Ordinis, Regulae, vel personae, sed solum causa et in signum viduitatis et humilitatis etc. assumere intendimus". 139 This is a clear indication that a religious habit is not necessarily indicative of the form of life of the person shown wearing it and at the same time that many female commissioners shown wearing religious habits may not have fully embraced all aspects of the rule of the order whose habit they wear.

Finally it must be stressed once again that religious dress was a very fluid form of religious expression which was constantly changing. Because of the lack of strict, hierarchical organisation in some forms of women's religious life there was a corresponding lack of control over their clothes. 140 This was the case with the tertiaries, who, because of their mode of life, were impossible to supervise adequately. Conversely, with women
in an enclosed community, it may have been their very lack of visibility which contributed to discrepancies within the habit, probably not within a single house, but between houses, as there would have been little communication amongst them. A lack of any public life for these women also made strict unity in their dress less important than it was for male members of religious orders.


The comparison of the many rules on dress for enclosed nuns and also lay penitents with the depictions of them on panel and in fresco has made clear not only the complexity but also the elasticity of the various rules. However there is still one more factor to discuss which has been touched on briefly in the previous discussion - the unknown effect of the artist on the depiction of dress, both with regard to the cut and colour of clothes. That of colour is the more problematic of the two.

Colour during the early monastic period was not considered important. Saint Benedict's view on this has already been mentioned and Saint Basil mentioned nothing about colour. Whilst particular colours were not so much at issue during the fourteenth century the use or non-use of dyestuffs is often mentioned. The concentration in rules was often focused not on the need to clothe all the sisters of the same order in exactly the same shade but more to buy
material that had not been tainted with costly dyes.\textsuperscript{141} In the case of monks this is noted for example by Saint John Gualbert who wanted his monks to wear un-worked wool which had not been dyed.\textsuperscript{142} However by the end of the Middle Ages colour was to become an important issue. The symbolism of colour was more and more attended to.\textsuperscript{143} Towards the end of the Middle Ages black, which had been in use by many religious orders, became fashionable amongst the laity but it was not only the laity who were subject to fashion in this respect. By the late fifteenth century the Carmelite Prior General from 1452 to 1471 the Blessed John Soreth noted that concerning religious habits that which was looked for was no longer warmth but colour.\textsuperscript{144}

For the earlier part of the period with which we are dealing it is therefore difficult to assess the reasons for differences of colour. It is possible to see the transmutation in the importance of the colour of religious habits during the period from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries in the frescoes in the Sacro Speco at Subiaco which cover Benedictine subjects and range in date through the three centuries. In the later subjects such as that of the "Miracle of the Rain" by an Umbrian painter of the fifteenth century in the Upper Church the Benedictine habit is represented as being virtually black (Fig. 30). The figure of Saint Scholastica has a very dark grey/black habit whilst on on her head is a darker veil, certainly black, which is placed over a white veil. This blackish
habit is also seen in the depiction of the male
Benedictines in the Upper Church. However in the earlier
frescoes in the Lower Church there is a much freer use of
colour possibly indicating that it was of less importance
at this time. Saint Scholastica is shown again in a tondo
in the Lower Church opposite a representation of Saint
Benedict (Fig. 31). This fresco dates from the second half
of the thirteenth century. Whilst her tunic is a very dark
colour similar to that of Saint Benedict and resembling a
dark shade of grey-blue - her mantle is definitely
brown. Another of the early Benedictine women - Saint
Chelidonia, the patron saint of Subiaco - who is depicted
in a thirteenth century fresco in the church, has a white
under-veil covered by a black veil and appears to wear a
black tunic covered by a brown scapular and mantle (Fig.
32). Indeed in some of the frescoes in the Lower Church
the colour of the habits seems to rely more on a sense of
artistic construction than a desire to come anywhere close
to verismilitude. Intended for the use of the Benedictines
there was probably very little need to instruct through
veracity of representation. The depiction of Saint Benedict
ordering Saint Maurus to rescue Saint Placidus in the Lower
Church relies on a chessboard plan of colour arrangement
where Saint Benedict is in the customary dark grey - which
presumably stood in for black being an easier colour to
model - but where Maurus has a grey tunic covered by a
brown scapular and Placidus a brown tunic covered by a grey
scapular (Fig. 33). This type of chessboard colouring also occurs in other episodes with these three saints as protagonists such as the two scenes dealing with Saint Benedict and the poisoned bread (Fig. 34).

From this it can be seen that habit of the Benedictines during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is difficult to ascertain from paintings. Amongst the many female saints and beatae of this period few come from this order.\textsuperscript{147} Benedict himself did not write a rule specifically for women although in his rule formulated at Monte Cassino (Chapter 55) he does state that the monks should not worry about either the material or the colour of the habit. The two women kneeling at the foot of Saint Chelidonia in the lower church at Subiaco were presumably Benedictines and may have been the donors of the fresco and therefore contemporaries of the painter. They do not wear a wimple but a black veil over a white veil. Their tunics appear to be a dark grey and their mantles a darkish brown. They do not appear to wear a scapular nor does their tunic appear to be belted. This is different from both the habit worn by Saint Chelidonia and that by Saint Scholastica in the frescoes in the Upper Church. In the earlier frescoes at Subiaco both the form and the colour of the habit appears to be unimportant giving way to a more uniform portrayal in the fifteenth century which reflects the growing importance of maintaining a distinction between the habits of various orders, and, because of this, enforcing uniformity within
single orders.

The colour of monastic habits within fresco and panel painting is very difficult to judge for its faithfulness to the original not only because of the variations in the colours of the habits and because artistic unity may have required some changes, but also because the colour of monastic dress was by its nature often very difficult to deal with due to its generally dark hues. Where a large number of the congregation were shown together quite significant changes in tone were required in order to differentiate adequately between the various members of that congregation and in some cases this can appear as a complete change of colour. Also the colours themselves did not lend themselves to an interesting artistic representation. In his painting of Saint Clare of Assisi in the Saint Martin Chapel Simone Martini has given Clare’s cloak a green tinge that certainly wasn’t envisaged in Urban IV’s stipulations that the clothes of the habit were to be neither black nor white (Fig. 17). The problems that would be involved in painting a completely black habit are also apparent here in Clare’s veil which now seems to be a deep blue. An artist with the colour sensibility of Simone Martini was obviously not content with showing the plain-ness of Clare’s garments and so pushed their colour to its limits, giving it an effect not unlike shot silk and making even the simplest garments fall as though they were cut for a queen.
Although Clare's veil was certainly black not all blues surviving in the representations of nuns during this period can necessarily be read as poorly surviving black. In the fourteenth century the colours of mourning, apart from black, were also dark blue and green, thus making these colours suitable for religious dress. 148 By the seventeenth century a Bolognese writer describes the habits of the monks of Vallombrosa as being "azzurro". 149 In fourteenth century works the habit of the founder of the Vallombrosan order, Saint John Gualbert, is shown wearing grey or brown although later the monks were to wear the black habit of the Benedictines. 150

The colour difficulties experienced by Simone Martini in the Saint Martin chapel were tackled in a different manner in the Upper Church where the "Farewell of Saint Clare to Saint Francis" is shown (Fig. 36). The artist has had to alter the colour of the habit of various Poor Clares and Saint Francis considerably within the same scene. Nonetheless the habits are all recognisable as being shades of brown and the head-dresses have not been altered from their original black. The problem is more obvious in the scene of "Francis appearing to the friars at Arles" (Fig. 35). The actors in this episode are all friars - seventeen are shown - so that there is no colour relief in the shape of the lay people that were present in the "Farewell of Saint Clare to Saint Francis". The setting of the scene indoors also means that the friars have to be offset
against brown walls and their habits reach across several shades of brown reaching to grey.

There is another possible reason for the variety of shades apparent in the clothing of the friars; this being that various individuals acquired their clothes at different times and therefore that cloths coming from different lots and with slightly varying hues were used. This appears to me to be the less likely explanation as it is probable that religious institutions generally bought the cloth for their habits in bulk, by implication clothing their members in cloth from the same batch. It is also possible that some institutions in Italy followed the custom of the Benedictine monks of Westminster Abbey to whom various items of clothing were regularly handed out at particular times of the year. This custom would have ensured, to some extent, uniformity of hue in the clothes of the members (please see note 73 for Westminster Abbey). The fact that the Upper Church at Assisi was a showpiece for the Conventuals makes it likely that uniformity of habit was important as a response to the individualism often practised by the Spirituals, and that the differences of colour to be seen in the fresco were an artistic device rather than an imitation of real life.

A change in artists may also mean a change in the use of colour. Two artists are considered to be responsible for the early fourteenth century scenes from the life of Clare
of Montefalco in her home town.\textsuperscript{151} The colour of her habit appears to change in these frescoes according to the painter depicting it.\textsuperscript{152} The scene of her death shows her in a habit that is almost black whereas the habit in the three scenes on the right wall is decidedly brown (Figs. 21-25). In the death scene her habit and that of the other nuns of the convent can be compared with that of the two Franciscan friars attending her.\textsuperscript{153} Their habits are a light brown. Just outside the chapel and to the left on what was the nave wall of the thirteenth century church is another figure of Clare in a habit which this time appears to be very dark grey.

Finally the distinction between various types of religious habits has also become problematical over the centuries due to pigmentation changes. Since the cut of lay and religious clothes were often so similar colour can be an important means of indentification. One instance of this is the Crucifixion by Giotto and his workshop now in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich. At the base of the Crucifix to the left is Saint Francis kissing the feet of Christ whilst on the right are two donors - one male and one female. These donors were originally identified as a deacon and a nun.\textsuperscript{154} However the robe of the woman was originally a shade of green which has darkened with time making her identification as a nun unlikely.\textsuperscript{155}

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The variety of clothes shown in the depiction of nuns and tertiaries belonging to the various orders is in fact an indication of the lack of differentiation between types of clothing during this period. This very lack of diversification meant that religious clothes were more generic items than specifically tailored for a particular order. At the beginning of the period clothes for all women were essentially the same in cut, tending to vary more in cloth, colour and ornamentation. Religious dress was merely a simplification of ordinary lay clothes worn with the intention of being as modest as possible. Certain items of clothing were therefore common to all orders - tunic, veil and mantle. It was only a minority of orders who wore an item which would have specifically identified them with that order. Even the knotted cord around the waist of the Poor Clares can be worn without any implication of allegiance to the order. However even where clothes exist which serve to visually identify an order and distinguish it from other existing orders they are not always clear in a painted representation and can be subject to disparate interpretations. In some cases items prescribed in the rule are not seen in paintings or are significantly changed.

Often religious dress is identifiable by colour - the male Franciscans usually in an ash brown and the Dominicans in white and black. However for female orders colour is a particularly fraught area - likely to change according to the availability of cloth, change also being allowed for in
some of the rules; but possibly most important are the metamorphoses effected by the painters whose job it was to represent the nuns and/or their life stories.

Perhaps of overwhelming importance in looking at nuns and other religious women as represented in paintings is the presence of the veil and a correct identification of its components. The veil itself is rarely described in detail in the rules of the various orders. Although it is not possible to say that the black veil is always reserved for the use of fully professed nuns this would generally appear to be the case. It is in the use of the white veil that most caution needs to be exercised as it could be worn by lay women, tertiaries, lay-sisters, novices and, indeed, even by the fully professed nuns of some orders. Especially when investigating donor portraits these possible differentiations should be born in mind. The type of veil is of course also linked to the question of clausura. Even though during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries clausura was not always as strictly imposed in practice as it was recommended in theory the black veil, being a sign of the profession of solemn vows, may help to indicate this state to a certain extent and so have repercussions on the amount of control possible over the commission.

Distinguishing between the items in a painting that are true representations of the clothes of a particular saint, convent or commissioner and those that are intended more as
a general indication of the saint's/nun's humility and faith rests on a number of indicatory points. In the case of paintings concerned with saints these include the proximity of the date of the painting to that of the life of the saint and whether the convent for which the work was executed was that to which the saint/blessed was attached or not. If not the habit may depict that of the particular convent rather than that of the saint herself. Where regional variations exist for certain habits the clothes shown may not be those of the woman depicted but those considered normal for the area in which the representation was executed. In the case of a female commissioner the clothes she is represented in may represent a wish, much like that of dying or being buried in a religious habit, rather than being more objectively representative. The commissioner may, for example, have wished to identify herself in her clothing with the members of the convent for whose church the painting had been ordered.

Whilst the clothing of female saints, religious, and commissioners is not an infallible guideline to their real appearance or the order to which they belonged or were affiliated it is nevertheless important evidence of the way in which they were viewed and as such should be closely considered despite the many uncertainties involved in dealing with it. That the particular colour and form of the habit in certain instances attained a great deal of importance within a painting can be seen from Pietro
Lorenzetti's Carmelite altarpiece of 1329 where both the original striped cloak of the Carmelites and the later plain white cloak are clearly depicted. A close consideration of dress is in fact an integral part of looking at female patronage and female spirituality in painting.
Notes to Chapter 2.

4. Levi-Pisetzky II, 101 notes of the guarnacca that in some wills made by women this item of clothing was bequeathed to men. For other examples see pp. 93, 99.
5. Brundage 343-344.
8. Hughes 74.
9. For example the Venetian law of 1299 limited the number of guests present at a wedding and the clothes which the bride might wear. See Newett 261.
11. Simons 10 notes that when Alessandra Strozzi’s daughter married Marco Parenti she was wearing clothes worth over 400 florins. However Marco was later to have these same clothes unstitched and sold.
12. See for example the Florentine law of 1343 where certain of the richer materials were ordered to be declared and taxed. Hughes 87.
15. When Louis of Thuringia, the husband of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary was away the saint immediately
dressed in old and simple clothes. See Huyskens 1911, 22-23.

16 For example Hedwig, the daughter of Berthold VI of the Andechs retired to the convent founded by her at Trebnitz after the death of her husband in 1238. Hamburger, 116.

17 Trexler 1972, 1335.

18 See Trexler 1971, 97. Florentine Synodal legislation of 1517 dealt with this evidently common practice by decreeing that no married woman, or indeed any lay woman over the age of twelve, might live in a convent unless she was awaiting her profession.

19 Elliott 279ff. A number of clothes worn by saints and saintly women in the fourteenth century have been preserved such as those of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary and Saint Clare of Assisi but these demonstrate the exception rather than the rule being of poor quality and often patched as is stressed in their vitae. See Zylstra-Zweens 6-7.


21 Kaftal Tuscan XXIV.

22 Garampi 136 & n.a.

23 Saggi 66.

24 DIP I, 60.

25 Trexler 1971, 65. Florentine episcopal legislation of
26 Kaftal Tuscan XXVI points out that, "the women associated with the different religious orders are consistently much less clearly differentiated than are the men".

27 FF 1156.
28 FF 1289.
29 DIP I, 50-51.
30 Tresler 1971, 96-97.
31 Origo 1963/1, 275 describes the type of cloak used.
32 The dark veil can also be seen in a fresco by the Maestro dei coniugi Datini in the Pieve di San Pietro at Ripoli. The fresco shows an "Annunciation" and below it a "Pieta". At the base are a married couple with a small child. Unusually the woman is in the position of honour on the left and it is she who commissioned the fresco as can be seen from the remains of an inscription beneath which reads, "Monna Mattea moglie che fu di Ghocco Lupicini". She is thus identified as a widow who has chosen to have her husband shown alongside her in her commission. Monna Mattea is shown wearing a short dark veil, which may originally have been black, over her head in the manner of a fully professed nun. For illustrations of these two works see Bellosi 1983-1984, 45-47.
33 See Origo 1963/1, 167-168.
Zylstra-Zweens 22 points out that the wimple was a favoured head covering for nuns and widows. I have used the word wimple to denote a head covering, normally white, that covers the head and closely frames the face used by either nuns or lay women and which may be covered by a veil, this being a plain piece of cloth hung loosely about the head.

Mentioned by Levi-Pisetzky II, 188.

FF 1156 for Clare's rule of 1253. For the Urbanist rule see FF 1288.


Purgatorio VIII, 73-75. Quoted in Levi-Pisetzky II, 121-122. He also seems to suggest that the veil can be used to indicate the passage from infancy to adulthood. See Dante Purgatorio XXIV, 43. Quoted in Levi-Pisetzky II, 122.

Levi-Pisetzky II, 122.

Levi-Pisetzky II, 115.

See for example the veil which Maria de' Bovolini wears over her wimple. For this type of veil used by a nun see the depiction of Saint Clare by Simone Martini in the Saint Martin Chapel of the Lower Church of San Francesco, Assisi.

See Palluchini 108. Also King 373-374.

See Berengario 38 & n.14, where he says that the
sisters unanimously chose the rule of Augustine. This was in 1290 sixteen years after Clare joined the community of recluses. The life of Clare of Montefalco was compiled by the Frenchman, Berenger de Saint-Affrique, shortly after her death in 1308. Although Berenger had never met Clare and was at first sceptical about her faith, he was to become one of her most devoted followers.

They are dated 1468 under the scene showing "The funeral of Saint Frances".

Examples of the former include "Saint Frances taking the rule of the convent from the Benedictines of Monte Oliveto" and "The Spirit of God Alighting on Saint Frances whilst she takes communion" whilst amongst the latter are "The miracle of the multiplication of the bread", a scene set in the nuns' refectory, and "The Death of Saint Frances". See figs. 13-15.

For example the rule stipulates that the sisters may have short mantles to be used when working. See FF 1156.

The rule of Urban IV says that the sisters should have scapulars without a hood attached and that they should wear these when working or doing anything else for which the wearing of long mantles would be a hindrance. The rule also says that, with the licence
of the abbess, the sisters were also permitted not to wear a scapular. See FF 1289.

49 Lunardi 78-79.

50 For the parts of the rule of the Olivetan Oblates that regard clothes see Appendix 1.

51 BS V, 1021 comments on the consistency of Frances' clothes throughout the fresco cycle and also remarks that they are in fact very little different from the clothes of the borghese romane of the early fifteenth century.

52 Berengario 154.

53 Gutierrez 15.

54 Trexler 1972, 1330'nos. 4 & 5.

55 For the relevant parts of the Benedictine rule and the forma di vita of Cardinal Ugolino see Appendix 1.

56 The "Forma di vita dell'Ordine delle Sorelle Povere di San Damiano" composed by Saint Clare is printed in FF 1151-1172.

57 FF 1157.

58 FF 1156. On entering the convent each sister was to be given three tunics and one cloak but could also use a shorter cloak for convenience whilst working, and more clothes could be used in cold weather.

59 By 1228 there were twenty-three houses in Italy. See Moorman 1968, 39.

60 Fontette 130. These were - the Ugoline rule of 1218-
1219, "Solet annuere" of 13th November 1245 given by Innocent IV (this is in effect that given by Ugolino), the rule of Innocent IV of 6th August 1247, the rule for the monastery of Longchamp approved with the bull of "Religionis augmentum" of 27th July 1263, as well as the rule written by Saint Clare. These last two, however, had only a very limited and specific influence.

61 An Italian version is printed in FF 1281-1312.

62 FF 1288-1298, Chapter IV.

63 FF 1288.

64 FF 1289.

65 Another example of the wimple being used in a very loose manner can be seen in another part of the Lower Church in a fresco by Pietro Lorenzetti where Saint Clare is shown between Saints Catherine of Alexandria and Margaret.

66 FF 1288.

67 Bisogni 135-136. For a discussion of the Trieste triptych see Chapter 4.

68 Magagnato Inv. 440 and p. 35.

69 Bruckner 55.

70 Kaftal North East fig. 386, col. 328. The striped mantle can also be seen in a thirteenth century representation of Saint Anthony of Padua in the church of S. Felice in Cazzano di Tramigna. Kaftal North East
73.

71 Kaftal North West fig.277, cols.201-202.

72 FF 1290.

73 See Harvey for a discussion of the types of cloth used to clothe the monks of Westminster Abbey during the fourteenth century.

74 See also the comments in Appendix 1.

75 Saggi 74-75. Many orders were later to claim the same privilege but for orders such as the Augustinians the documentation only goes back to the fifteenth century when the question of differentiation between the orders was becoming much more important.

76 Fontette 94 & n.30.

77 Kaftal Tuscan 1165.

78 Fontette 96 believes that this version is probably very close to the original. The bull itself is published in the BOFP VII, Supplement, 410-413. For this and the other relevant versions of the Dominican rule for the Second Order see Appendix 1.

79 Brett 9. The rule for the sisters of Montargis is published in Creytens 67-83.

80 Humbert’s own encyclical letter to the nuns following this chapter warns them that he is, "taking care that you might live under one rule and by one profession, and that there should be uniformity in your regular
observances ..... If some do not wish to receive the new form, they will no longer be considered as sisters of the order'. Quoted from Brett 72-73. Humbert's definitive rule is published in ASOPP III, 337-348.

81 Romano 411.

82 Cabibbo 20. Kaftal Tuscan cols.1166.

83 The painting is in the Museo Civico Vetrario in Murano. See Sante 124-125. Also Kaftal Tuscan cols.665-668. The tertiaries represented are as follows - the Blessed Joan of Florence, the Blessed Joan of Orvieto, the Blessed Margaret of Citta di Castello, the Blessed Daniella of Orvieto, and Saint Catherine of Siena.

84 See Kaftal North East col.1232, Kaftal North West col.751, Kaftal Central cols.738-739.

85 See Kaftal Tuscan 667-673. Margaret is represented in a predella from the late fifteenth century in the church of Sant'Agostino in San Gimignano with a white veil.

86 This has been contested elsewhere. See Alonso 1986, 218. However in general only convents who not only followed the Augustinian rule but were also governed by the male branch of the Augustinians had a right to consider themselves part of the order. See DIP 1, 165-166.

87 DIP I, 166.
It is generally accepted that two painters were responsible for the scenes of Clare's life in the chapel in Santa Croce. One painted the scene of her death on the left wall and the other the remaining three scenes on the right wall. It is also probable that the frescoes were completed in two stages. The first stage would have been in 1333, the date of "The Crucifixion" which covers the whole of the east wall and whose date is attested to by the inscription below. The date of a possible second stage is unknown. Various hypotheses have been put forward as to how many of the scenes of Saint Clare were completed during the first campaign and how many during the second. For a summary of these views see Gordon 1979, 240-257.
asking her sister Joan to be accepted into her community of recluses", "The Virgin and Child appear to Clare", "Christ appears to Clare and implants the impression of the cross in her heart", and finally "The Death of Clare". For a discussion of the early iconography of Clare see - Nessi.

97 See Berengario 38 for the acceptance of the rule, 45 for the vision of the cross, and 103 for her death.

98 As Clare sits on her deathbed it is possible to discern the line of the scapular reaching over the upper part of her arm as it had done in the vision of the Virgin and Child.


100 DIP I, 187-188.


102 Berengario 31.

103 Garampi 135 and n.e. This change is confirmed in a bull published by Innocent V of the 3rd May 1276.

104 Kaftal Tuscan col.604.

105 DIP V, 890.

106 Kaftal Tuscan col.1165.

107 See Marcucci 1965, 133-135.

108 Paatz III, 178. See also Busignani 241-242.


110 Augustinian cloisters of the fourteenth century in Florence include Sant'Onofrio di Foligno (Augustinian
from 1316-1390), Santa Caterina al Mugnone, Sant'Elisabetta delle Convertite (Augustinian from 1329 onwards), and San Luca which held Augustinian nuns in the early fourteenth century. See Paatz VI, 464; I, 429; II, 30 and II, 597 respectively.

111 The cowl is very rarely shown in paintings of nuns and in the Urbanist rule for the Poor Clares it is stated that the scapular should not have a hood attached. See FF 1289.

112 Emiliani 29.

113 Kaftal North East cols. 396-397 gives the inscription as follows - Oro te sanctissima crus per Dominum omnipotentem qui pro redencionem umani generis in te afigi voluit ac morte pati dignatus es(t) ut me liberes et eruas de omnibus infirmitatibus et necessitatibus et amgustiis meis - Te ergo questo famulam subveni quam precioso sanguine redimisti et opem tue misericordie ei conferre digneris.

114 Bynum 1987, 18.

115 Vauchez 317 calculates that 50% of the laity canonized in the thirteenth century were women and after 1305 this percentage rises to over 70%. Mentioned by Bynum 1987, 21.

116 Voluntary penitents however did not have to wear the cilicio (hair shirt) under their tunic. See Meersseman 1977, 283-284.
118 Meersseman 1977, 371.
119 Printed in Meersseman 1977, 390ff. See Appendix 1.
120 Meersseman 1977, 394ff.
121 Meersseman 1977, 373.
122 Meersseman 1977, 395.
123 See Appendix 1.
124 The painting of Margaret of Cortona is from the first quarter of the fourteenth century. See Sante 107-109. That of Clare of Rimini may have been painted around 1340. See Davies 69-75.
125 Gordon 1986, 150.
126 Gordon 1986, 151.
127 Gordon 1986, 150.
128 Davies 70.
130 Bevegnati Chap. 1/2. However Vauchez says that this is not certain.
131 For example in the lost series of frescoes of Saint Margaret once in the church of Santa Margherita but recorded in a manuscript in the Biblioteca Comunale in Cortona. Manoscritto n.429. The watercolours of the lost frescoes are dated 1634 and were carried out shortly before the destruction of the church. See Sante 112-113. In the case of the Blessed Clare of Rimini there are representations dating from after the
Fesch altarpiece which continue to give her a chequered habit. For this see Gordon 1986, 151 & 153 nos. 23 & 24.

Vauchez 231 appears to believe that she wore a striped habit but gives no specific reference.

Garampi 7.

Garampi 10-11.

Kaftal Central cols.737-738, fig.870. Her name is inscribed on the background of the fresco.

For illustrations of these two examples see Volpe ills. 297 & 329.

Margaret of Cortona died in 1297. See Sante 72.

The scene is that where Margaret and two other sisters save a man who is about to commit suicide.

Quoted by Garampi 146.


Levi-Pisetzky II, 147-156.

BS VI, 1965, 1031.

DIP I, 55 enumerates some of the colours and their symbolic significance.

DIP I, 55.

On the painter of these frescoes see Cristiani Testi.

Saint Chelidonia (1077-1152) became a hermit around 1092 on a hill two miles North-East of Subiaco. In 1122 she took the Benedictine habit from the bishop of Palestrina and then returned to her life as a hermit
until her death. See BS III, 1179-1181.

147 Weinstein 223. Of the Benedictine saints used by Weinstein and Bell in their study who died in the eleventh and twelfth centuries only 11% were women. This is well below the average of female saints for these years.

148 Levi-Pisetzky II, 188. In 1348 during the plague in Venice the use of clothes of these colours was prohibited because of the depression that it was causing in the city.

149 Fialetti es. 29, "Vesti d'asurro li suoi fratelli, non alterando nel rimanente parte alcuni l'habito Camoldelese; il color a poco a poco alterandosi, hor e tane violato".

150 BS VI, 1031.

151 Gordon 1979 243.

152 Nessi 316-317.

153 Berengario 102-13 describes the moment of Clare's death attended by her brother Fra Francesco and her confessor Fra Tommaso, both Franciscans.

154 Gordon 1989, 530 & n.58.

PATRONAGE WITHIN THE FEMALE VALLOMBROSAN ORDER: Florence and Siena in the Fourteenth Century.

The female Vallombrosan order became popular not in the immediate wake of the foundation of the male order but rather owed its promotion to Saint Humility two centuries later who founded two convents. She had previously been the wife of a wealthy citizen of Faenza and then lived as a recluse. Although she is not universally credited with the foundation of the claustrated form of the order Humility was certainly the most famous of its members.¹ The order had existed for women previously in the form of recluses who were attached to churches administered by the male Vallombrosans. Saint Verdiana of Castelfiorentino was one such.² It is also likely that there were early convent communities attached to the order. In fact the female branch of the order was probably initiated in the twelfth century by the then Abbot General Guido who founded a convent at Cavriglia. The name of the first abbess is also known - Berta - who had previously been a Benedictine nun in the convent of Santa Felicita in Florence. Her presence at Cavriglia was noted in 1145.³ The male Vallombrosan order had been founded by Saint John Gualbert (circa 985-1073), a native of Florence, as an offshoot of the Benedictine order.⁴ As an order the Vallombrosans were at their most popular and numerous in Tuscany, and this may have contributed to the success of the female branch, especially in Saint John Gualbert’s home city of Florence.
After the Vallombrosan convent of Santa Maria della Malta in Faenza was founded in 1266 with Humility at its head, another, adjacent to the church of San Giovanni Evangelista was built in Florence; it was named to commemorate the saint who was Saint Humility's inspiration and was begun circa 1280 - 1281 after Humility had journeyed from Faenza.5

In Florence the female Vallombrosan order enjoyed a brief flowering of popularity in the fourteenth century. Churches and cloisters were built anew to house Vallombrosan nuns and some convents also changed their allegiance. Following the example of San Giovanni Evangelista a number of convents either became Vallombrosan or were founded as such. Santa Maria della Neve, originally Augustinian, became Vallombrosan in 1383 and continued as such until 1435.6 Sant'Orsola, a cloister originally founded in 1309 by a pious woman, became Vallombrosan in 1390, twenty-one years after it had been amalgamated with Santa Maria Madre, a cloister of Vallombrosan nuns first recorded in 1361.7 Santa Maria di' Querceto, founded like Sant'Orsola in 1309, as a small church with an attached cloister, belonged from its inception to Vallombrosan nuns while Santa Trinita Vecchia was Vallombrosan from 1330 onwards.8 Also containing Vallombrosan nuns was the small cloister and chapel of San Michele sul Ponte Trinità situated on the north end of the gothic bridge.9 Elsewhere in Tuscany the convent of Santa Marta in Siena was founded specifically as
a Vallombrosan establishment. It was commenced in the first half of the fourteenth century, either 1328 or 1337, as a refuge for widows who wished to devote the remainder of their lives to God.10

The survival of any works commissioned specifically for these Vallombrosan convents is minimal. For one thing the convent buildings themselves were often in the possession of the nuns for a relatively short time. Apart from frequent changes of allegiance, sometimes not in response to the wishes of the nuns themselves, but in order to facilitate the job of those of the clergy who had to minister to them, convents often moved premises. Unlike the great male mendicant institutions of Santa Maria Novella and Santa Croce which were specifically built for the Dominicans and Franciscans respectively, and have remained uninterrupted in the possession of those same orders until the present day, houses of female religious were subject to change for a variety of reasons. The effects of repeated attacks of the plague in the fourteenth century meant that in many cases convents were constrained to join forces. In the great epidemic of 1348, for example, the Dominican convent of San Jacopo di Ripoli was decimated. The membership of one hundred women was reduced to three: the prioress and two secular sisters. In order to rebuild numbers nuns from other houses were transferred to San Jacopo. Equally when, at the end of the thirteenth century, a membership of sixty was considered too large by the
Florentine government, the nuns were forced to divide into two houses. Unable in many cases to decide their own fate, nuns were moved by whoever had jurisdiction over them. Thus the Poor Clares' convent of Monticelli had to be abandoned in 1527 when the government of Florence decided to strengthen its civic defences in the face of imminent military attack. The first female Vallombrosan house in Florence, San Giovanni Evangelista, was not in fact to survive in its original form for much over two centuries. It was destroyed in 1529 and the nuns then stayed for short periods of time at Santa Caterina and Sant'Antonio. This continuous change must not only have made it difficult for many commissions to survive intact but also have militated against any strong feelings of solidarity amongst the nuns of various orders.

Of the convents cited no works can be ascribed to the majority which were executed during the time that the Vallombrosan nuns had care of them. This is the case with Santa Maria della Neve; Vallombrosan for a period of just over half a century (1383-1435), also with Sant'Orsola (Vallombrosan from 1390), Santa Maria Madre, Santa Maria di'Querceto, and Santa Trinita Vecchia. Apart from the Saint Humility altarpiece and a tradition of other paintings once extant in the church of San Giovanni Evangelista, only the small chapel of San Michele sul Ponte Trinità and the convent of Santa Marta in Siena have any tradition of paintings associated with them during the time...
that the Vallombrosan nuns inhabited them. Vasari relates that Giovanni dal Ponte painted in the chapel of San Michele in the mid-fourteenth century but gives no indication as to the subject matter. The chapel was unfortunately destroyed in the flood of 1557.

**The Fresco in Santa Marta, Siena.**

In Santa Marta in Siena there is a fresco still extant which can be directly associated with the Vallombrosan nuns. The fresco, which is of the late fourteenth century - remnants of a date indicate either 1392 or 1393 - shows in the centre the penitent Saint Jerome, to his left are decaying corpses and he holds in his hand a scroll, while to his right a Vallombrosan nun, hands folded across her chest, is kneeling at his feet (Figs. 37 & 38). The fresco in the convent of Santa Marta is probably one of the earliest representations of the penitent Saint Jerome, which was first introduced in Tuscany around the year 1400. Examples before this are very difficult to find.

The fresco is situated in the church of the convent rather than within the claustral appartments. As it is almost certainly the earliest representation of the subject the question must be asked as to how it was chosen and whether it reflects in any way the preoccupations of the nun who commissioned it. If the nun was a widow as is likely on account of the *raison d'être* of the convent then it is not unlikely that her income was sufficient to finance this
project for herself. Information exists from other sources that nuns were sometimes in possession of a private income: for example in convents such as Monteluce in Perugia.¹⁷

As depicted in Santa Marta the scene has many points of comparison with the iconography of "The Meeting between the Quick and the Dead," popular in frescoes and panel paintings alike during this period. Earlier representations include the frescoes in the Camposanto in Pisa and a predella from the school of Bernardo Daddi now in the Accademia in Florence. In the Pisan "Meeting between the Quick and the Dead," three main elements are distinguishable. To one side are the living, dressed finely and enjoying all the pleasures that life can offer. To the other side are the dead in various more or less gruesome stages of decomposition. Mediating between these two apparently very different worlds is a hermit who holds a scroll elaborating the moral of the representation.¹⁸

These three elements are also distinguishable in a slightly different form in the frescoes in Santa Marta. Again to one side of the fresco are placed the dead, disintegrating with the aid of the worms which crawl over and through them. In the centre Saint Jerome takes the place of the hermit. He too holds a scroll which this time refers specifically to preparation for the Last Judgement rather than merely implying the necessity of it as in the Camposanto frescoes.¹⁹ In contrast to the Camposanto frescoes this
message seems already to have been heeded. Instead of a group of thoughtless young nobles immersed in the enjoyment of this life a solitary nun kneels in prayer. Behind her a dragon bares its teeth as though waiting to snatch her from this life. The utilization of the iconography of "The Meeting between the Quick and the Dead" (to whom Jerome is pointing) has deeper resonances if the events surrounding the foundation of the original Vallombrosan nunnery of Santa Maria della Malta in Faenza and that of the convent in which the fresco is situated are recalled. Although the nun depicted is on the side of Jerome/the hermit which is normally reserved for the living, ie. the opposite side from the corpses of the dead, she has in fact already abjured her worldly pleasures and set herself free from worldly ties. Saint Jerome’s links with the subject of penitence are the basis of this, the widow performing her penance while still alive, like Jerome, in order to escape punishment after death. To be depicted kneeling at the feet of Saint Jerome is particularly apposite for a nun of this branch of the Vallombrosan order who, like Jerome’s disciple Paula, had probably left a family which may have included children in order to follow the religious life.

The Santa Marta fresco is evidence of women’s active role in religion and religious iconography of the time and the tendency for many convents to change allegiance in the immediate aftermath of the foundation of a new female order is, in some cases, further evidence of women’s increased
religious consciousness during this period and their desire to find new ways of expressing it. Certainly women were capable both of finding out about, and reacting very quickly to, new religious trends and foundations; and, it is possible to assume, this capability extended to the field of religious art as in the instance of the fresco in Santa Marta discussed above. If this is the case the motives for the immediate popularity of the Vallombrosan nuns may in part be sought in the early fourteenth century polyptych containing scenes from the life of Saint Humility.

**The Saint Humility Polyptych.**

The polyptych, which originally contained thirteen scenes from the life of the Saint, is mainly in the Uffizi apart from two scenes which are now in the Berlin Dahlem Museum having been acquired in the nineteenth century. It originally came from the church of San Giovanni Evangelista in Florence and its first position appears to have been on the altar beneath which Saint Humility herself was buried in 1311, where it stayed until the destruction of the convent in 1529.²⁰ No documentation survives concerning the commissioning of the altarpiece and there is some controversy about its dating. The two scenes in Berlin depict Humility curing a nun who was suffering from a nasal haemorrhage and Humility miraculously receiving ice in the middle of August (Figs. 50 & 51). Those in Florence, apart from the central figure of the Saint at whose feet is a kneeling female commissioner, show Saint Humility
converting her husband Ugolotto dei Caccianemici, Ugolotto's vestition as a canon of Santa Perpetua, Humility reading aloud to the nuns in the refectory of Santa Perpetua despite the fact that she is illiterate, the Saint leaving the convent of Santa Perpetua guided by Saint John the Evangelist and enabled to cross the nearby river as though it were dry land. Two scenes are devoted to the episode of the Vallombrosan monk who was advised to have his leg amputated but whom Humility was able to cure with the sign of the cross. Saint Humility is also shown arriving at the gates of Florence with two companions and then helping to build the church of San Giovanni Evangelista. In a separate scene she cures a child who had died whilst being brought to its parents in Florence by its nurse. Humility is seen dictating her sermons and finally we are shown her funeral (Figs. 40-49 & 52).

An inscription was originally attached to the painting and is attested to by a number of authors but it would appear that this did not include the year of its execution. A date added to the inscription was first seen on the exhibition of the altarpiece in the Accademia in Florence in 1841 but the source for it is unknown. Not only this but it was also possible to read the Roman numerals as either 1316 or 1341 for neither of which is there any supporting historical evidence. The authorship of the painting has been disputed but it is now generally given to Pietro Lorenzetti or a close follower.21
The lack of any contemporary documentation for the altarpiece or of a firm date leaves its iconography to speak for the thoughts and intentions of those who commissioned it. One of the first problems encountered in reading the iconography of the altarpiece is determining the order in which the scenes were originally placed. By the time of its arrival in the Accademia in 1810 the altarpiece had already been dismembered. The earliest visual evidence is that of the sketch recorded by Carmichael which shows the work before its complete dismemberment (Fig. 39). The sketch was made to form part of the evidence for the Florentine processus of Humility and was executed in 1624. It should be noted that the version published by Carmichael and subsequently is a copy made in the early twentieth century specially for Carmichael's article as the original has since been lost. However later commentators on this sketch and the altarpiece have erroneously stated that the sketch belongs to the eighteenth century processus of Humility. There were in fact at least three separate processi relating to the saint. These included two early seventeenth century ones held respectively in Florence and Faenza. The Florentine investigation was sent to the Sacra Rituum Congregatio on the thirty-first of March 1629 while that from Faenza was sent on the twenty-first of February 1632. However it was not until the early eighteenth century that the case was taken up for a third time and carried to a
successful conclusion. On the ninth of December 1719 the Sacra Rituum Congregatio recommended Humility's case and she was officially canonized on the twenty-seventh of January 1720 by Urban VIII.25

There is also a later and more schematic rendering of the polyptych published by the Bollandists in the Acta Sanctorum.26 By the time of this later version there are some obvious omissions. The Acta Sanctorum diagram shows only twelve scenes surrounding the figure of Humility. There is no longer any scene directly beneath her, but that which should be there, "The cure of the nun with the haemorrhage", secure in its placing as it is larger than any of the other scenes, is included in the list of scenes given with the diagram. The scene that is not mentioned is the first one concerning the Vallombrosan monk where he is advised to have his leg amputated. The combination of these omissions make it certain that this rendering was not faithful to the original.

This type of inaccuracy also occurs in the written sources. The altarpiece is mentioned a number of times by those writing the life of Saint Humility or concerned with the history of the Florentine churches. The scenes are never described in detail but there is normally an acknowledgement of the number of them which varies between twelve and fourteen.27 The majority of authors agree on thirteen thus following the outline of the seventeenth
century sketch and these include eighteenth century sources. 28

The confusion in the documentation of the altarpiece and the scenes contained within it is not just due to the inaccuracy of those recording it. The altarpiece was certainly dismantled before arriving in the Accademia and it is probable that it had been altered in some way considerably before this date as the seventeenth century sketch shows the altarpiece without its predella which includes a roundel containing a representation of Saint John Gualbert (Figs. 55 & 56). By this time the altarpiece was in the church of San Salvi and had already been moved a number of times from its original position. 29 Nevertheless the main body of the altarpiece appears to have been intact as the inscription along the bottom recorded in the sketch is testified to in a number of other places. 30 The complete dismemberment of the work was only to happen later. It is not known exactly when this occurred but it was probably before it entered the Accademia in 1810 after the suppression of San Salvi which had happened two years previously in 1808. 31 By this time the panels now in Berlin had certainly been removed. 32

The cursory nature of the seventeenth century sketch as rendered for Carmichael and also demonstrable inaccuracies such as the dark veil over the head of the figure kneeling at Humility's feet and that only two nuns are seen
approaching the gates of Florence in the seventh scene whereas in the painting there are three, has led some critics to doubt its accuracy with regard to the order of the scenes. Whilst it is true that the scenes have been sketched only with the minimum of detail there is no reason to suppose that the artist deliberately altered their order. Also whilst it may not be possible to rely on the copy made for Carmichael on the matter of the detail within the scenes there is no reason not to do so with regard to the sequence of the scenes. Furthermore the clear depiction of the way in which the scenes are placed around the central figure, which is confused in the diagram given in the Acta Sanctorum, strengthens the argument for the sketch being representative of the original arrangement of the altarpiece.

In order to determine whether the drawing follows the earliest arrangement of the altarpiece it has been compared with the oldest extant version of the life of Humility. The first existing vita of Humility is not securely attributed but has usually been given to Blasio, priest and Vallombrosan monk. It is printed in the Acta Sanctorum in a version witnessed by a notary in 1332. However it is possible that it was composed earlier than this as the life of Humility's disciple, the Blessed Margaret, which was written during her lifetime by a Franciscan, Peter of Florence makes mention of a life of Humility. The life referred to in the vita of the Blessed Margaret must have
been written before 1330: the date of her death at the age of approximately one hundred.\textsuperscript{38} However it may also be referring to a no longer extant life of Humility as it is known from the preface to the life witnessed in 1332 that a number of earlier versions did exist from which it was drawn.\textsuperscript{39} There is also another extant \textit{vita} of the fourteenth century written in 1345 by another Vallombrosan monk, Silvestro Ardenti.\textsuperscript{40} A comparison with the \textit{vita} recorded in 1332 lead Marcucci to the conclusion that the seventeenth century drawing was a faithful representation since she believed it to follow this \textit{vita} with only one exception, that of the "Healing of the Nun with the Haemorrhage" which is a miracle that happened during Humility's time in Santa Maria della Malta in Faenza.\textsuperscript{41}

Humility's life as recorded in the \textit{vita} in the \textit{Acta Sanctorum} is as follows - only the first parts of it are placed within a clear chronological framework: having married Ugolotto dei Caccianemici, Humility then persuaded him to allow her to pursue her religious calling, he being aided in his decision by a severe illness which the doctors had advised him could only be halted by complete celibacy. Ugolotto then took religious vows as did Humility, at which point she took her distinctive name having previously been called Rosanese. Humility became a canoness of Santa Perpetua in Faenza. At this point she was probably approximately twenty-four years old.\textsuperscript{42} During her time in this convent she read to the sisters in the refectory
despite the fact that she was at that time illiterate. She then left Santa Perpetua under the guidance of Saint John the Evangelist and after a short time under the roof of one of her close relative Messer Niccolò during which time she cured the leg of the Vallombrosan monk she became a recluse in a cell built for her outside the church of Sant'Apollinaire. Following this she entered the convent of Santa Maria della Malta in Faenza as abbess. During her time at Santa Maria della Malta she cured the nun of the haemorrhage. Around the year 1280 she left to found a convent in Florence. Her plan had originally been to go to Venice according the vita of 1332 but she received a vision from Saint John the Evangelist ordering her to go to Florence instead. Having arrived in Florence she helped to collect stones for the construction of the new convent and whilst she was doing this she brought the dead child back to life. She died in 1310 and there were a number of miracles at her tomb following her burial. These lead to the translation of her body just under a year later. It is only after this that the Acta Sanctorum life adds the other episodes shown in the altarpiece - Humility dictating her sermons inspired by the Holy Spirit in the shape of a dove and the miracle of the finding of ice in August when the Saint was suffering from a severe fever.

These final two scenes are related in Chapter III of the vita in the Acta Sanctorum which is in fact an appendix following on from the chronological relation of the Saint’s
life in Chapters I and II. It is headed "Supplementum Miraculorum in Vita atque Post Mortem Patratorum". What is not made clear is the exact placement of the miracles in the course of Humility's life. The confusion is evident when this life is compared with the later life recorded by Silvestro Ardenti. Ardenti relies heavily on the life of 1332 in some cases copying it almost verbatim. What has been changed in Ardenti's vita is that those miracles carried out by the Saint while she was alive but added to the Acta Sanctorum version of the life after the main narrative have been placed by Ardenti within his account of her life. Ardenti places both the these miracles before the Saint's move to Florence and while still in the convent of Santa Maria della Malta. In the Supplement to the Acta Sanctorum vita very little clue is given as to where or when these episodes actually occurred.

The Supplement as a whole is prefaced by the following phrase; "Quodam die dum in monasterio praedicto ...". This, of course, refers not to all the miracles in the final chapter but only to the initial one in which Humility miraculously manages to feed the sisters in the convent although there was only one piece of bread in the building. This type of food multiplication miracle was "popular" during the Middle Ages and is told of a number of other holy women including Saint Clare of Assisi and Humility's disciple Margaret of Faenza. However, in which of the previously mentioned convents - that in Florence or that in
Faenza - the miracle took place is not specified. The last mentioned convent before the beginning of this part of the life was that attached to the church of San Giovanni Evangelista in Florence. Whilst many of the scenes in this part of the *vita* are not secured in time or place the third miracle related in the Supplement is stated to have taken place during the time that Humility was still resident in Faenza and from this it is possible to assume that the two previous miracles also referred to the Faentine convent.\(^ {48} \) This would assume that although the account of these miracles may have been assembled after the first two chapters of the life there was still an attempt to place them in chronological order within the final chapter. However the miracles which are recorded after this one point of reference are once more without a specific time or place merely saying that "accidit alio tempore".\(^ {49} \) It is also the Faentine convent that has been most recently mentioned when "The miracle of the ice in August" is reported. This miracle is not prefaced by any clue as to year or place but merely as to season.\(^ {50} \) It is usually believed by later authors to have taken place during the very last illness of the Saint yet no such indication is given in the 1332 *life*.\(^ {51} \) Also it is after this in the *vita* in the *Acta Sanctorum* that the episode where Humility dictates her sermons is mentioned.\(^ {52} \) This is contrary to the order of the scenes in seventeenth century drawing. Nor is any clue given as to where the other miracles which the
Saint performed during her lifetime, and which are related in the Supplement, took place. When Ardenti composed his version of the life he may either have understood that the convent at Faenza was implied or learnt this from another source. Later lives follow Ardenti in placing the "The miracle of the ice" during Humility's time in Faenza. This is the case in Locatelli's version of 1583. Neither does Magnani's life of the Saint published in 1741 place it at the end of Humility's life, as would appear to be the case from the order in the drawing, but: "perfezionato il monastero" of San Giovanni Evangelista, and so possibly as much as twenty-eight years before the death of the saint.

Thus to say that the seventeenth century drawing follows in the main the sequence of the 1332 vita or that it is a chronological depiction of Humility's life is not accurate. In fact the drawing does not even follow the narrative sequence as "The miracle of the ice in August" and "Humility dictating her sermons" are placed the opposite way round in the drawing to the vita. However the fact that the drawing does not follow either the chronological or narrative sequence of the 1332 life does not mean that it is inaccurate. It cannot be ascertained certainly that the altarpiece originally ran in a mainly chronological sequence nor was intended to, or that it was intended to be a faithful representation of the 1332 vita.

While chronology may not have been important, accuracy with
regard to individual episodes in the written sources certainly was. These follow the early known vitae very closely. One such is the scene usually referred to simply as "The funeral of Saint Humility" (Fig. 52). At first glance the depiction of a funeral is the scene most likely to blend into the pattern of the representation of other saints' lives during this period. Almost all show the funeral of the saint in a similar manner with the horizontal saint behind whom are members of the clergy with monks and/or friars. There are also lay people crouching in front of the corpse - mostly women and cripples hoping for a miraculous cure by coming into contact with the clothes or body of the deceased. As such funeral scenes often bear a close relationship to each other both compositionally and iconographically. "The funeral of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary" in Santa Maria Donna Regina in Naples is a single example among many.

However "The funeral of Saint Humility" is not simply that. In other scenes from the altarpiece simultaneous narrative is made extensive use of. When Humility leaves the convent of Santa Perpetua and crosses the river Lamone she is represented three times in the same scene (Fig. 43). Although we only see the Saint once in the funeral scene it is in fact the depiction of two episodes, the first of which can be seen where five friars are peering at a crack on the top of an altar like structure to the left of the centrally depicted main altar. This structure is a simple box tomb.
Its placing to the left of the main altar reveals it to be the original resting place of the Saint who, on the Sunday after her death, was buried in the church she had helped to build to the left of the altar dedicated to Saint John the Evangelist, which, given the dedication of the church, would have been the main altar. Following the first burial there were a number of miracles amongst which oil was noticed seeping from Humility’s tomb and just under a year after her death Humility’s body was translated. It is the oil that the friars are looking at as it flows across the lid of the tomb. The miracle was not discovered by the friars but by one of the nuns, or more probably a serviziale whose job it was to care for the tomb. It is possible that the friars are verifying the miracle as mentioned in the Acta Sanctorum vita and that this therefore shows an episode earlier than that shown in the foreground as with the translation of Humility’s body the seeping of the oil would presumably have ceased. The emission of oil from the tombs of recently deceased saints was a relatively common phenomenon during the Middle Ages, especially for women, and was a recognised sign of sanctity. Other saints of this period of whom this is related include Elizabeth of Hungary, Margaret of Città di Castello and Rose of Viterbo as well as earlier saints such as Catherine of Alexandria.

The description of the translation in both of the surviving fourteenth century vitae corresponds with the painted
representation. Both say that the body was first exposed to public view and many women can be seen crowded around the Saint as well as men standing to the right.61 This part of the description is however common to both the first and second burials. What sets the second burial apart from the first is that the Bishop of Florence was present at that of 1311 and indeed a bishop is seen inspecting the body of Humility in the painting while to his right an assistant holds his mitre. While it is mentioned that many prelates were present at the first burial it is only in the second that a bishop is specifically mentioned as being among them.62 The presence of the Bishop in conjunction with Humility's first tomb at the rear left of the painting confirms that what is shown here is actually the translation of the body to the new altar in 1311.63

Not only do individual scenes follow known literary sources very closely but there is an example where the written sequence in the life would have had to have been followed in the polyptych. This is the case in the two scenes containing the episode of the Vallombrosan monk who was advised to have his leg amputated as they form part of one episode. On being exhibited in the Accademia the first of the two scenes where the monk is shown consulting the doctor was placed as the second scene from the left in the top register possibly because it had been interpreted as showing the illness of Humility's husband before he decided to separate from his wife and enter a religious community
That this scene does not represent Ugolotto can be ascertained from the fact that the man lying on the bed is showing his infected leg to the doctor and also because of his tonsure. The reconstruction of 1954 correctly identified and placed the two scenes of the monk of Sant'Apollinaire together but, if the seventeenth century drawing is taken as the benchmark, still misplaced the scenes showing "The crossing of the river Lamone", "The resurrection of the child in Florence", and "The building of the church of San Giovanni Evangelista" (Figs. 43, 47 & 48).

This misplacement was due to the present shape of some of the scenes. A close inspection of the panels of the altarpiece indicates that two of these have been altered. The two scenes in question are those of "The doctor despairing of the cure of the Vallombrosan monk" and "The crossing of the river Lamone", the latter now rectangular and the former gabled. In the drawing it is "The crossing of the river Lamone" that is gabled and the scene with the Vallombrosan monk that is rectangular. Thus far in both of the existing fourteenth century *vitae* it is possible to be secure on the chronological sequence of events as outlined above and it is certainly the case that the drawing is correct when judged from that viewpoint. On close examination "The crossing of the river Lamone" does appear to have a fault in it consistent with the addition of an extra piece to make it rectangular which helps to establish
that at least thus far the drawing is a faithful representation. These verifiable points lead me to believe that the whole of the seventeenth century drawing is in fact accurate in its portrayal of the original order of the scenes.

Nevertheless it is clear that the order in which the scenes are placed in the drawing does not follow that of the earliest known vitae in any strict fashion, as has been claimed. Where there is an absolutely clear chronological succession in the two early vitae - the first six scenes of the polyptych - there is little problem and the altarpiece narrates Humility's early career in the order in which it is said to have taken place. It is in the Supplement to the Acta Sanctorum vita recorded in 1332 that the confusion begins. This supplement, as has already been shown, bears no relation to the order of the scenes in the polyptych. The same argument leads me to the conclusion that Ardenti's life did not influence the altarpiece. Ardenti places all the scenes contained within his vita in a strict chronological sequence which is not followed in the polyptych.

It should be remembered that the desire for accurate chronology is an anachronism in relation both to the vitae of many of the saints and beati at this period, and also their depiction. In some cases the accounts of their lives are arranged relying on the order of a previously executed
investigation into the life and miracles of the prospective saint carried out by local ecclesiastics in order to further the case with the papacy. This took the form of various questions regarding the prospective saint. As such it militated against a purely chronological relation of the life in favour of one that joined together miracles of healing in one section and visions in another. The questions formulated by the investigators normally included an enquiry into the year in which the event happened but often the respondents could not give an accurate answer. It was also common for the vitae of some saints to separate miracles from the main body of the text. This is the case in the life of Margaret of Cortona written by Giunta Bevegnati and approved by Napoleone Orsini eleven years after her death in 1308. Bevegnati gathers together the miracles which were performed by the intercession of the saint both during life and after death in the final chapter in a similar fashion to the final chapter of the Acta Sanctorum life of Humility.

This lack of interest in an accurate chronology is not merely a literary phenomenon but can also be seen in many painted cycles. It has been noted that in mural cycles of the Middle Ages it was unusual for scenes to be placed in a way that was faithful either to their actual chronology or to the order in which those scenes were related in literary sources. However the case of mural painting is significantly different from that of panel painting. In the
former the reason for placing scenes out of their narrative sequence is dependant to a large extent on the type of architecture being dealt with. The crucial moments of the narrative would have been assigned a prominent place and scenes of lesser importance would have been tucked away in poorly lit corners. Although there are parts of the Humility polyptych which are more prominent than others, noticeably the scene directly below the figure of the Saint, which has sparked inquiries as to the reason for its placing, in general the reasons for which narrative sequence was upset in mural painting are not present in the polyptych, which does not even contain tiers of different sizes as did, for example, the San Pier Maggiore Altarpiece.

In general, therefore, it appears that the scenes were not arranged with the aim of providing maximum effect at key points in the Saint's life. Furthermore the strictly chronological sequence of the first six scenes, which accord with both of the earliest known vitae points to the faithful use of a literary source. Leaving aside the question of "The cure of the nun with the haemorrhage", and having already eliminated Ardenti's life from the investigation, the inversion of two of the final scenes from the order which they are placed in the 1332 vita would support the idea that the source used was one of those on which the 1332 vita relied and therefore the possibility that the painting was commissioned before this date.
This would accord with the tradition that the commissioner of the polyptych was Humility's disciple, the Blessed Margaret of Faenza. If she can be positively identified as the kneeling commissioner at the Saint's feet then a date of pre-1330 can be surmised as Margaret died in that year (Figs. 53 & 54). However it has also been suggested that the third abbess of the order in fact ordered the polyptych. Margaret's successor has been named as a member of a Florentine patrician family, Giovanna dei Tornaquinci.74

The information relating to the early members of the Florentine convent is scarce to say the least. However there is some evidence which implies that Margaret probably did not succeed Humility as abbess of San Giovanni Evangelista. A document of the sixth of June 1313, less than three years after the death of the foundress, refers to the abbess of the convent as Giovanna de' Tornaquinci.75 Magnani in his eighteenth century life also cites a document of the fourteenth of March 1282 drawn up by the notary Petrus de Luca which was kept in the archives of San Salvi at the time he wrote and which gave the names of some of the first nuns in the convent of San Giovanni Evangelista amongst whom is a nun called Giovanna.76 Further to this is the evidence provided by one of Margaret's early vitae. Two were written, one during Margaret's lifetime, and both are printed in the Acta Sanctorum.77 That written during Margaret's lifetime was by
Peter of Florence and he begins his narration by stating that the life was composed while Margaret was alive and also by strongly implying that at this time someone else was abbess. The Bollandists also mention that there was a translation of the body of the Blessed Margaret soon after her death in 1330. No definite date can be given to this translation but it was probably in the fourteenth century. Amongst the names given of those who presided over the translation is that of "D. sorori Joannae, abbatissae monasterii S. Joannis Evangelistae," and, if the translation could indeed be placed soon after the death of Margaret then it may be that the Joanna mentioned here is the same Giovanna mentioned by Davidsohn as being abbess of the convent seventeen years before the death of Margaret. The tradition which states that Margaret became abbess of the convent after the death of Humility in fact appears only to go back as far as the seventeenth century biographer of the Saint, Guiducci. Previous to this no mention is found of her presumed position of abbess. Locatelli's publication which relates the lives of many of the saints associated with the Vallombrosan order gives an account of the lives of both Humility and Margaret in which, while it is stated that Margaret was one of those who accomanied Humility to Florence, no mention is made of her ever becoming abbess of San Giovanni Evangelista. It is only in works published after that of Guiducci that the belief that Margaret was the next abbess of San Giovanni
Evangelista becomes current. Magnani, in his "Vite di Santi Beati Venerabili e Servi di Dio della Città di Faenza" published in 1741 informs us that Margaret was "fatta badessa nell'anno 1310 dopo la morte di Sant'Umiltà nell'eta sua ottantesimo". It is in fact unlikely that Margaret would have succeeded Humility as abbess in Florence due to her great age which would probably have prevented her from carrying out her duties adequately. Her exact date of birth is unknown but she was a contemporary of Humility and according to different accounts was either a little older or a little younger than the saint meaning that at her death, believed to be on the 26th August 1330, she was either one hundred or one hundred and ten years of age.

This information in itself does not imply that Margaret could not have been the commissioner of the altarpiece but in conjunction with a number of other pieces of evidence it does seem extremely unlikely that she played any part in it. The identification of Margaret in the donor portrait has been supported by the belief that the central vertical register of the altarpiece was deliberately placed to commemorate the first abbesses of the convents founded by Saint Humility.

This rests on the identification of the nun in the scene below, that of "The healing of the nun with the haemorrhage", as Donna Concordia who was left in charge of
the convent of Santa Maria della Malta when Humility left for Florence (Fig. 51). 84 This, however, is a later addition to the life of Humility. The life of Humility published in the Acta Sanctorum gives the episode of "The healing of the nun with the haemorrhage" only shortly before that of Humility leaving for Faenza. However this vita does not identify the nun whom Humility left in charge of the convent at Faenza as the same who was cured of the haemorrhage shortly before. Not only this but it in fact gives neither nun a name. 85 Rather the nun whom Humility left in charge of the convent is described as the priorissa. It is only in the footnotes provided by the Bollandists that her name is given as Concordia. 86 Neither does Ardenti identify the two nuns as one and the same. 87 Later sources also fail to make this connection. The life of 1583 is one such, as is the anonymous life published in 1722. 88 It is only in the mid-eighteenth century with the life written by Magnani that the two nuns are amalgamated. 89 Whilst the scene of "The curing of the nun with the haemorrhage" was undoubtedly always placed beneath the central figure of Humility because of its size, there can have been no specific desire in doing this to celebrate the first abbesses of the convents founded by Humility as the nun cured was not at this point considered to be the same who later became abbess of the convent of Santa Maria della Malta.

With the argument concerning the wish to commemorate the
first abbesses of the order now appearing to be void it also seems unlikely that the abbess Giovanna was the commissioner. This is not only because she no longer fits into a scheme whereby the convent of San Giovanni Evangelista recalls its links with the first convent in which Humility was abbess but also, and more importantly, because of the clothes worn by the commissioner.

That the figure kneeling at the feet of the Saint is Margaret or indeed even a member of the Vallombrosan order and that the commission therefore came from within the order is by no means certain. Only Carmichael has noted the distinct difference in colour and cut between the clothes of the donor figure and those of the nuns in the rest of the altarpiece. Carmichael believes that the donor is wearing a black cloak and scapular, a blue tunic and a white veil rather than what appears from the rest of the altarpiece to be the habit of the nuns of the order which is a brownish-grey tunic and mantle together with a black veil. He says that the clothes being worn are those of a lay sister but attributes this to an error on the part of the artist rather than signifying that the donor was a lay sister and therefore not the Blessed Margaret. Most authors have followed the identification of the Blessed Margaret for want of further information or proposal. It is only Davidsohn who suggests Giovanna dei Tornaquinci whom he says presided over the translation of the body of Humility in 1311.
Verismilitude in depicting the habits of female orders was probably not a high priority in paintings, except in a few particular cases and that Humility's dress differs from that of her successor is not unprecedented. The Vallombrosan nun in the fresco in Santa Marta in Siena wears a habit that appears to bear little relation to that of the nuns in the Saint Humility polyptych yet her habit is clearly a monastic one and there appears to be no reason to suspect that she did not form part of the order. There is also evidence from both outside and inside Italy showing that the regulations on monastic habits were not always followed by those in a position of power within the community. The Crucifix commissioned by Abbess Benedetta for Santa Chiara at Assisi shows Clare's successor wearing a habit that differs significantly in colour from that of the foundress of the order. Benedetta is wearing a very light brown habit with a veil that appears almost blue whilst Clare is dressed in a much darker brown akin to that of the habit of Saint Francis, who is depicted kissing Christ's foot. The figure of Benedetta has been severely damaged during the centuries but the most recent restoration confirms the difference in her habit from that of Saint Clare. Both however wear a dark veil and whilst the habits of various orders may contain either white or dark veils for fully professed nuns I do not know where both may be found in the same order and in the same house of that order as is claimed from the
evidence of the Saint Humility polyptych.\textsuperscript{96}
It is extremely unlikely that an abbess could be a novice
and a number of regulations during the thirteenth and
fourteenth centuries sought to prevent this happening.\textsuperscript{97}

Carmichael's explanation that the painter has made an error
in his depiction of the commissioner is, as he himself
admits, highly unsatisfactory.\textsuperscript{98} In fact comparison with
other scenes in the altarpiece shows the painter to have
been conversant with convent usages of the time as regards
clothing. A number of scenes in the work show both fully
professed nuns and servizial\textit{i} who would have been those who
were normally employed on any errands outside the
convent.\textsuperscript{99} The clothes worn by these women appear to
conform to all the prescriptions of the Urbanist rule given
to the Poor Clares in 1264 which mention that they should
wear a white cloth on their head, in the manner of a veil,
and that this should be large enough to cover the shoulders
and chest, especially when on business outside the convent.
This type of regulation was probably followed with few
differences for other orders. These women are
differentiated from fully professed nuns not only by their
clothes but also by the role which they performed within
the convent. They are present in "The arrival in Florence",
"The healing of the nun with the haemorrhage" and "The
miracle of the ice in August".

It has been said that one of the figures in the scene of
"The arrival in Florence" is that of the Blessed Margaret who was believed to have come with Humility from Faenza. Unlike the assertion that she became abbess after Humility's death this is attested to amongst the earliest extant sources. In "The arrival in Florence" two women are shown accompanying Humility. One of them is not completely visible as she stands almost directly behind the Saint, but it is clear that she wears a black veil. The other, who can be clearly seen, wears a white veil and is dressed as the serviziali in the other two scenes mentioned. Since the commissioner in the central panel also wears a white veil, and since the figure with the white veil is particularly prominent in "The arrival in Florence" it appears that it is possible to identify them both as the same person - the Blessed Margaret.

However a close examination of the panel showing "The miracle of the ice in August" shows that the differentiation in clothing is not used to point out the presence of the Blessed Margaret in the episode of "The arrival in Florence" but rather to differentiate between serviziali and fully professed nuns. Those wearing white veils are those seen attending to the heavy work of drawing the ice from the well while in "The healing of the nun with the haemorrhage" the lay sister is shown dealing with the effects of the haemorrhage while in both cases the fully professed nuns give moral rather than practical support. Serviziali not only were not subject to the rigours of
enclosure as were fully professed nuns, they were also in almost all cases women of a lower social standing who could not raise the money almost certainly required to enter a convent as a novice but instead served God in more practical ways within the convent. Margaret was probably a fully professed nun, although there is no positive evidence to support this, and if she were only in the position of a serviziale it is extremely unlikely that she would have been able to raise the money to fund such an ambitious altarpiece.

This raises the final problem concerning the identification of the donor - that of whether she is a nun or member of a religious order at all. Although she wears a white veil its form is very different from that of the nuns or serviziali in the other parts of the polyptych and indeed appears to be closer to a wimple. I believe that the clear understanding of the implications of various types of habits within the convent community shown in the remainder of the polyptych absolutely precludes any possibility of a mistake on the part of the painter. Furthermore it seems likely that if the commissioner of the altarpiece had any right to have herself portrayed in the habit of the Vallombrosans she would have done so. It therefore seems clear not only that the commissioner was not a fully professed nun but that she was in fact a lay woman. A closer examination of her dress proves this point. Although it does appear possible that the woman is wearing a
scapular as claimed by Carmichael, the difference of her clothes from any other of the religious women depicted on the polyptych makes it clear that she did not form a part of the convent community. 101

The form of her wimple also tends towards her identification as a lay woman. It is clearly different from both those used by the serviziali in the other parts of the polyptych and also those, albeit black, worn by the nuns in the various scenes. It is, however, also different from the headcoverings used by the married women that we see in some of the scenes, such as Humility's white headcovering at the beginning of the narrative sequence and that worn by the women who bring the dead child to Humility while she is collecting stones to construct San Giovanni Evangelista. The explanation to this final point is probably that these are young married women who therefore wear only a loose headcovering and that the donor is a widow who both because of age and convention wears both a wimple and a veil with which to cover her head more effectively. Married women, whilst expected to cover their heads would not have been subject to the same strictures in dress as widows whose state was often considered to be similar to that of nuns. The reason for the scapular is probably, as Carmichael suggests, that the commissioner was a lay sister, or more accurately lay penitent, who chose to rid herself of excess money and show her devotion by financing this work. 102
Bearing in mind that the commission for the polyptych probably came from a lay source the reason behind the placing of the scene of "The cure of the nun with the haemorrhage" may have been sought for in the wrong place, and could be due to an episode in the life of the commissioner, mirroring an illness of which she had been cured or hoped to be cured by the good offices of the Saint rather than following any wishes expressed by the members of the convent.

The lack of any previously supposed deliberate link between the first heads of the two houses founded by Saint Humility is indicative of a lack of cohesion between member houses of a female order which was not possible between male houses of the same order. At this time individual convents were effectively split from others of the same order by being separately ruled by their male counterparts in the order or by the local bishop. Despite Humility's great independence both of spirit and of action and the fact that she appears to have been actively concerned in the welfare of both convents until the end of her life this type of cohesion was quickly dispensed with after her death. But while the central vertical register of the altarpiece fails to show any solidarity between the convents founded by Humility the individual scenes do evince a strong sense of self-reliance on the part of the Saint and give her her own authority as opposed to that sanctioned by men.
In order to express this, normal patterns of dominance and subordination have been tampered with. Instead of showing man as subordinate to Christ and woman as subordinate to man Humility is put in a position whereby she is directly answerable to God.\textsuperscript{103} The lost pinnacle and predella which have been identified by Cohn as belonging to the Humility altarpiece are still lacking the central pinnacle but it is certain that the pinnacle represented the Saviour blessing.\textsuperscript{104} Thus Humility is literally and figuratively directly below Christ and takes her justification from him without any intermediate human intervention. She has bypassed the normally prescribed hierarchy and, by means of her religious vocation, placed herself on a level with men. This idea is reinforced in the surrounding scenes where Humility is consistently portrayed as responding to divine commands but never to those of men. It is Saint John the Evangelist who orders her to go to Florence where she founds her second convent and also builds a church. It is God in the form of the Holy Spirit who inspires/orders her to dictate her sermons. The direct call of God was a feature common to the lives of a number of women saints and beatae at this time whose spiritual experiences were often directed inwards, partially as a result of the lack of the active vocational opportunities which were only available to men.\textsuperscript{105} However, in the lives of many women saints at this time such visions or voices do not lead to action as they are shown to do in the Humility polyptych. Humility's
life is never seen mediated through the power of men and we are forced to focus on her independent action rather than her submission to the men who are mentioned in the vitae as suggesting and supporting her actions.106

Not only have men been ousted from the depiction of Humility's life but she is also shown deliberately flouting convent regulations by breaking cloister.107 This is depicted in what is chronologically the fourth scene which shows "The crossing of the river Lamone" (Fig. 43). According to the Acta Sanctorum leggenda Humility was divinely inspired to leave the convent of Santa Perpetua in order to seek a more rigorous form of religious life in solitude instead of as part of a community.108 Her desire to leave the convent was known to the other sisters but they were able to sleep soundly in their beds knowing that the convent buildings were surrounded by a high wall and that the doors were securely locked.109 However, with divine help, Humility was able to tackle the walls and open locked doors without difficulty, finally crossing the Lamone on her way to a nearby convent of Poor Clares, as though it were dry land. The way in which this scene has been condensed for the painted version means that Humility's divine justification for the departure from Santa Perpetua is shown while any succeeding male intervention is removed.110 The fact of divine approbation for her actions does not, however, detract from the fact that the Saint is shown in two scenes - "The crossing of
the river Lamone" and "The arrival in Florence" - outside the convent walls. This is less than half a century before the issue of "Periculoso" and at a time when the free movement of nuns was becoming more and more of a problem for those trying to regulate it. Although mentions of nuns at this time are relatively rare in curial records there are a number of records of cases of nuns who left their convents without permission. To depict a fully professed nun outside her convent without proper male supervision is on the one hand a necessary pictorial convention used to allow an easier reading of the narrative, and, from another point of view, a subversive gesture in which the Saint is not shown as answerable to a male hierarchy.

Although Humility's actions include, and are justified by miraculous events, nevertheless for a female saint to deny earthly male jurisdiction was not felt to be, at the least, prudent. Sanctity was shown more by obedience, for if a female religious had the temerity to show by her dress or actions the state of her soul - equal to that of men - the whole pattern and balance of society would be upset. In "The arrival in Florence" Humility shows not by her dress but by her actions the state of her soul. The choice of this particular episode, when others, certainly more indicative of the name of Humility, at least in human affairs, are fairly easily found - her obedience in leaving her cell to head the convent of Santa Maria della Malta for instance - cannot solely be explained by the origination of
the commission in the Florentine rather than the Faentine convent. 113

The extent to which the depiction of the life of Humility emphasizes her independence, and shows the type of her sanctity, can best be appreciated by comparison with other cycles of the early fourteenth century which show the lives of female saints. I have chosen to concentrate on two saints. These are Margaret of Cortona, of whom three cycles are recorded, two of which still survive while the remaining one is preserved in a seventeenth century copy; and Saint Cecilia of whom there is an early fourteenth century Florentine panel containing scenes from her life which is now in the Uffizi (Figs. 57-69). 114 The cycles of Margaret of Cortona are a set of six reliefs which are on her tomb in the church of Santa Margherita in Cortona and which were probably executed towards the beginning of the fourteenth century, an early fourteenth century panel containing a central figure of the Saint surrounded by nine scenes from her life now in the Museo Diocesano in Cortona, and a lost series of frescoes said to have been painted by Buffalmacco and which were also in the original church of Santa Margherita on which the present church now stands. 115 Of the cycles of Margaret of Cortona I shall look most closely at the two which survive in their original form.

These two saints represent two distinct types of sanctity at what may be regarded as opposite ends of the scale.
Margaret was one of the new female saints of this period whose popularity rested mainly on their healing miracles and visionary experiences while Cecilia, as an early Roman martyr, had an experience of Christianity in which she played a far more active role.

The first aspect of the depiction of these saints' lives which I shall examine is that concerning their miracles. Miracles are, in most saints' lives, one of the main ways by which they were recognised as such, and they feature heavily in canonization processes. Those who applied to the papacy for someone's canonization tended to compile a separate liber miraculorum in which they gathered together the greatest possible number of miracles, especially those performed after the death of the person in question. These were not only a sign of what was of importance to those suing for canonization but also a sign of what was of importance to the papacy in proving sanctity. For women, miracles were particularly pronounced as they often had no other outlet through which to impress upon others their sanctity. In the Humility polyptych the miracles and miraculous signs justify actions that, to the society of the time, would otherwise seem inexcusable. These types of event can be divided into three separate areas: miracles of healing, miracles of inspiration, and miracles which appear to work against nature in other fashions. Miracles and supernatural signs are present in ten out of the thirteen narrative scenes in the Humility polyptych. This is in
accordance with the high proportion of miracles in evidence at canonization processes of the period. Only three scenes are without any obvious miraculous content, these being: "Saint Humility converting her husband to the religious life", "Humility assisting as her husband is vested in his religious habit", and "Humility helping with the construction of San Giovanni Evangelista". Thus the altarpiece appears to confirm the popular expectation of sanctity and especially that of female sanctity. 120 The Saint is shown performing a number of healing miracles; including those of the Vallombrosan monk, the Florentine child and the nun suffering from the haemorrhage. However miracles are not stressed in the same way as they are on the tomb reliefs of Margaret of Cortona and in the lost frescoes of Margaret. In many cases the miracles performed by Humility tend towards a negation of male supervisory power which is not the case with Margaret of Cortona.

In order to assess the use of the miracles in these cycles more accurately it is necessary to look at them according to what type of miracle is shown. A sizeable amount of miracles in the cycles of Margaret of Cortona and that of Humility are healing miracles and although a certain number of differences can be pointed to in the way that curative miracles are used in the cycles more obvious are the similarities. The healing miracles used in these cycles are a stabilizing foundation needed to remind those who saw them that the subject did indeed possess the qualities
generally perceived as denoting sanctity. Miracles of healing were particularly important to the cult of Margaret of Cortona who had been regarded by many people in her home town as a mad woman until certain miracles of healing happened which were ascribed to her intercession. ¹²¹

Amongst other holy women Joan of Signa’s reputation was also founded on healing miracles. ¹²² The depiction of a certain number of this type of miracle can therefore be assumed to be a basic need in representations of the lives of the saints, and this was especially so before a formal canonization process had been instituted and successfully carried to conclusion. Miracles attributed to a saint after death were also helpful in this respect. In the reliefs on Margaret’s tomb emphasis has been shifted onto her death and the miracles performed after it. Of the six scenes sculpted underneath the recumbent figure of the saint two concern miracles performed after her death. The miracles after her death show the curing of infirmities. In the first the ill and the lame gather at her tomb while the second shows the exorcism of a demon from a young boy who stands next to the tomb (Figs. 59 & 60). Paintings and reliefs that were executed showing a saint whose cult was already considered to be secure did not need such an emphasis on overt miraculous signs. This can be seen in the Saint Cecilia panel where no healing miracles are shown and only one instance of divine intervention – that where the angel makes Valerian the custodian of Cecilia’s
virginity. Over and above this basic need other aspects of the saint's life could be addressed. It is these aspects that are of most use in detecting any bias on the part of whoever controlled the commission.

In the early fourteenth century panel of Saint Margaret of Cortona the most important aspect of the panel after Margaret's sanctity has been established is her devotion to the Franciscan order (Fig. 62). The panel was probably commissioned by the Franciscans. It is unlikely that it was commissioned by any of Margaret's female adherents for a number of reasons, although in the absence of a donor portrait it is impossible to reach a conclusive decision. Firstly, although Margaret did for a time form part of a community of women dedicated to works of healing, her main supporters and the main promulgators of her cult were the Franciscans. More importantly there is the high visibility of members of the Franciscan order in the panel. Franciscans are shown in five of the nine scenes and are seen to guide the Saint. These scenes are the first one in the sequence to the top left of the panel where Margaret knocks at the door of the Franciscan convent in Cortona asking to be accepted into a penitential life. The scene below this, second in sequence, shows her vestition as a penitent by the Franciscan friars (Fig. 63). In the sixth scene, which is on the right of the panel, Christ reassures the Saint about the fate of the Franciscan friars (Fig. 65). Below this the friars bring her communion in her cell
and in the final scene below the central image Saint Francis appears to the right of her tomb (Fig. 66).\textsuperscript{124} This selection of facts is not entirely indicative of Margaret's activities during life. This, in common with many female saints at this time, contained a large amount of political activity coupled with independent and conspicuous charity work. All traces of this have been erased from the altarpiece and replaced by an emphasis on her dependence on the support of the Franciscan order. The same emphasis on the support of the Franciscan order and Margaret's reverence for it and interest in it can be seen on the tomb reliefs where two episodes concern the order: "The vestition of Margaret" and "The vision of Christ" (Fig. 58).\textsuperscript{125} One of the pivotal scenes in all three cycles is the vestition of Saint Margaret by a Franciscan, underlining her reliance on the order.\textsuperscript{126}

It is here rather than in the healing miracles that a telling comparison can be made between the cycles of Margaret and that of Humility. At only two points in the Humility altarpiece are male religious shown and in neither episode do their actions have a direct bearing on Humility's life. The first scene where this occurs is that of "The vestition of Ugolotto" (Fig. 41). In this case the priest is attending to the needs of Humility's husband rather than the Saint herself. The second scene occurs at the very end of the cycle in the funeral episode (Fig. 52). While Saint Margaret is given inspiration from the
Franciscans Saint Humility gives inspiration to others.

Although the differences pointed out are to some extent a reflection of those present in the written sources - Humility's guidance by male religious is not stressed as much as Margaret's is for instance - they are also a reflection of the choice of episodes made by the commissioners of the cycles. Of necessity a cycle depicting a saint's life could not be as full a testimony as were the written accounts and certain editing decisions had to be made. It is from the comparison of the written and painted accounts that some tentative conclusions can be drawn concerning the influence and interests of the possible commissioners and who they may have been.

Both the commissioners and the placing of the works themselves are evidently of importance in the three cycles showing the life of Saint Margaret. Because there are a number of them which still exist or can be reconstructed there is a rare opportunity in the case of the depiction of the life of a female saint to examine the difference that these variables made on the cycles. The importance of a probable Franciscan provenance for the panel has already been mentioned. With regard to the tomb, the reason for the two larger scenes showing the miracles performed next to the body of the Saint is obviously related to the placing of the reliefs, and the scene of Margaret's death is also appropriate (Figs. 57-60). Margaret's obligations to and
interest in the Franciscan order do not lose out and are shown in two of the six scenes. No specific reference is made to Margaret's political activities, which, although of benefit to Cortona, were probably not approved of to set as an example to other women. 128

Although the cycles described above have had their emphases altered depending on their commissioners and their position, they are similar in an overall duality, however altered in emphasis, stressing on the one hand miracles and on the other Margaret's indebtedness to the Franciscan order which can be attributed in the first place to the need to prove the sanctity of the subject and in the second place to the original position of the cycles, more or less affected by the probable commissioners.

The Saint Humility polyptych is similar in its concentration on divine approval which lies at the base of such paintings. However, while the foundation for this, as in the case of Margaret of Cortona, is laid with miracles of healing, further approbation does not come administered through male clerics but is given directly by God. All reference to the guidance of mortal man has been edited out. It is in this lack of male supervision or male reaction that the Saint Humility altarpiece is unique.

In the case of Humility, after the obligatory miracles of healing, the next most important facts of her life are shown to be supernatural signs which tend to lead her
towards independent action and which are often only visible to the Saint herself. This is the case with the scene containing Saint John the Evangelist where he instructs her to go to Florence (Fig. 46). The tendency is most noticeable in the scene mentioned above but it starts in the very first scene on the altarpiece, that of Humility, Rosanese Negusanti as she then was, persuading her husband to separate in order to lead a religious life (Fig. 40). In order to do this Rosanese would have needed her husband's consent and co-operation. She in fact spent a considerable amount of time endeavouring to persuade Ugolotto to agree to her proposals. However Ugolotto was adamant in his refusal until shortly afterwards he was taken severely ill and having being told that the only chance of life was to live a life of complete continency fled back to his parents at first refusing to even see his wife. Relenting after a while he did allow Rosanese to see him. It was during these visits that he became converted and allowed his wife to follow her vocation. Instead of the second scene showing Humility taking religious vows having gained the permission of her husband to so do, the action concentrates on Ugolotto who is himself depicted in the act of taking religious vows. This alteration of emphasis shows Humility's power of persuasion over her husband rather than his approval of her decision.

It is in this respect that the Humility polyptych, although depicting a contemporary saint, is closer in its conception
to the scenes chosen from the life of Saint Cecilia than those from the life of Saint Margaret. The episodes depicted from the life of Saint Humility seem in many cases to undermine the foundations of mediaeval society. This is also the case with those selected from the life of Saint Cecilia who is for example shown preaching to men in two of the eight narrative scenes. In the first she is preaching before Valerian and his brother Tiberius and in the second she is preaching to a group of assembled men from outside her family circle (Figs. 68 & 69). From a thirteenth century viewpoint preaching by a woman was often connected with heretical sects.\textsuperscript{131} Cecilia is also shown doing a number of other things that were generally unacceptable to thirteenth century society. She rejects her marriage and the place that she is expected to take in society (Fig. 67). Although, as a saint, she is undoubtedly in the right and gains an eternal reward by her martyrdom, yet her martyrdom can also be understood to be the result not just of her Christianity, but also of behaviour that was felt to be seditious in the society of the time. This type of behaviour then, as in the fourteenth century, could not be countenanced by a society trying to keep order in an unstable world. Saint Cecilia's martyrdom is not solely the result of her Christianity but is contributed to by her behaviour as a whole - behaviour which the people of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries would undoubtedly perceive as heretical.
Saint Cecilia's Christianity is vindicated and rewarded by God, yet her seditious behaviour must be punished by men. Saint Humility's activities of this ilk such as preaching, are largely confined to a cloistered setting, yet her rejection of society's normal values is not seen to be condemned, but to be praised in this world, let alone the next! She is efficacious where men are not (in the case of the monk with the gangrenous leg), has a freedom of movement rarely accorded to women, sets down her own views in sermons, and all this is lauded in this world.

Humility's success in ridding herself of her husband and her entrance into a convent life are seen in the panel to be the beginning of more independence of movement and also freedom to make decisions for herself rather than the entrance into a type of prison. The scenes from the life of Saint Clare in the dossal at Assisi specifically centre on the flight of herself and her sister Agnes into the cloister (Figs. 75-83). From then on the dossal shows them solely in a claustral setting. The only exception is the funeral of Saint Clare when the body of the Saint is shown outside the cloister. Saint Humility, on the other hand, is often portrayed in settings that are not claustral. This does not entirely accurately depict the differences in the lives of the two saints. The first few years of the existence of the Poor Clares were probably not spent strictly cloistered, as Jacques de Vitry's description implies. 132 Humility on the other hand undoubtedly spent a
large amount of her long life in the cloister — approximately four years in Santa Perpetua, twelve as a recluse outside Sant'Apollinaire, fourteen in Santa Maria della Malta and thirty in San Giovanni Evangelista. Nevertheless eight of the thirteen scenes show Humility outside a claustral setting.

This emphasis gives the impression that Humility is one of the last of the great abbesses and that her spirituality is one that implies activity rather than the passive meditation which was the hallmark of the male written literary representation of many of the female saints of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and to a certain extent of their actual lives. It is partially this which forms the difference between the Humility altarpiece and the cycles of Margaret of Cortona. Margaret's life is depicted as part of a newly emphasized form of spirituality concentrating not only on healing powers, which had always been popular, but on visionary experiences - of a nature that did not require any immediate action to be taken - and works of piety that did not encroach on the male religious roles which were more and more jealously guarded throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. By contrast Humility is shown as belonging to an earlier age when abbesses were more powerful. In this sense depiction of her life is closer to that of Saint Cecilia in the Santa Cecilia altarpiece.
One of the principle ways in which Humility's power is shown is in a bypassing of male authority. Her justification for this is the visions and messages that she receives from Saint John the Evangelist. During this period visions were sometimes used by nuns and mystics to this end but usually in a passive rather than an active way. Margaret of Cortona's visions included one of this type. However more often her visions supported the respect in which she held the Franciscan order and the priesthood. It was sometimes said of women at this time that they did not submit to priestly prerogatives and, apart from the importance placed on Franciscans in the panel depicting her life, there is also a scene designed to stress Margaret's acceptance of the role of priests during the mass (Fig. 66). In fact men in an approving role are present in five of the nine scenes on the Saint Margaret panel and in two of the scenes on her tomb. The presence of men in such a role has been completely eradicated in the Humility altarpiece.

The stress on Humility's direct divine inspiration in the altarpiece bypassing male mediation leads to the question of who controlled the iconography. The importance of the probable Franciscan destination of the cycles of the life of Saint Margaret has already been noted. The importance of the Humility polyptych coupled with the place which it was to occupy within the church would presumably have meant a significant input from the priests who attended to
services, but also from the nuns. It is this that lead Carmichael to believe that the altarpiece could not have been a lay commission.

It is now impossible to assess what effect the nuns would have had on the iconography of the painting but that they were in a position to keep a strict eye on the painting that had been commissioned is not difficult to believe. There were of course many prohibitions both from the Vallombrosans and the episcopal authorities of Florence, aimed at denying nuns too much freedom of movement. In the last years of Humility's life the papal decretal "Periculosos" gave considerable power to efforts to enforce, maintain and increase the strict claustration of nuns.137 The over-riding concern that if workmen had to enter any part of the church or claustral appartments where it was also possible for nuns to be present was to keep them separated. Florentine and Fiesolan synodal constitutions ratified during the last years of Humility's life allowed men to enter the cloistered parts of the nunnery only very exceptionally.138 However these stringent prohibitions had for the most part been relaxed by the time of the constitutions of Florence of 1517. For example in the trecento it was a punishable offence for a nun to break cloister but by 1517 there was no absolutely clear prohibition against exit.139 This has been considered as tantamount to an admission of failure in the later constitutions, while the more direct orders of the earlier
constitutions suggest that nunneries were easier to manage effectively at the beginning of the fourteenth century. However the earlier legislation may have been a reaction to the independence of female religious at the time rather than a statement that the problem was already contained.

The original attribution of the Saint Humility polyptych to Buonamico Buffalmacco was probably suggested by Vasari's account of his work on frescoes in the church of San Giovanni Evangelista. These frescoes were, according to Vasari, among the first independent works by Buffalmacco and therefore datable to the first years of the fourteenth century. They were probably commenced after the death of Humility and have been given dates of between 1314 and 1317 using other evidence relating to Buffalmacco's recorded works. They are said to have represented stories from the life of Christ.

Vasari relates a number of tricks that Buffalmacco, immortalized for his love of jokes by Boccaccio in the Decameron, played on the sisters of the convent, in all of which, needless to say, he gained the upper hand. However the stories also show the nuns themselves keeping an eye on the progress of the paintings, not only on the efficiency of the painter, but also on his style. Vasari relates that the nuns were in the habit of watching Buffalmacco as he worked. There was obviously some attempt at privacy for Buffalmacco had raised a screen
before his work. Yet the nuns were still able to approach the screen freely and look through it, according to Vasari's account, seemingly without reserve. One of their criticisms was that the faces painted by Buffalmacco were too pale and wan. Likewise, the abbess was also clearly able to send direct orders to Buffalmacco as she did when the nuns were worried by his disreputable dress that only an assistant was at work on the frescoes. These stories, apocryphal though they may be, clearly show Vasari's belief that the nuns were able, and were in a position to directly influence and arrange works in their own church - although strictly speaking the church was outside the claustral appartments and the nuns, presumably, should not have been in it while any men were also present.144 Despite their freedom of movement and right to order the appearance of frescoes as they saw fit the nuns are portrayed by Vasari as somewhat stupid. This, though, is only to be expected, for as foils to Buffalmacco's wit they must take the place usually accorded to the unfortunate Bruno by Boccaccio in the Decameron. Overall though Vasari seems to see no reason why the Donne di Faenza should not take an active part in commissioning and supervising the frescoes in the church which their foundress actively helped to build less than half a century before. Humility herself had supervised and collected funds for the building of a church. Could so much have changed in the half century between the building of the church and the commissioning of the Saint Humility
polyptych that would mean that the nuns were robbed of all their independence of action?

Vasari's perception of the matter cannot be taken at face value. He was writing in the second half of the sixteenth century, over two hundred years after the frescoes had been completed and when, according to Trexler's evaluation of the sources, episcopal legislation indicates that convent discipline in Florence had severely deteriorated from its state at the beginning of the fourteenth century, and he may well have superimposed his observations of contemporary convent life onto the convent life of the beginning of the trecento.

Nevertheless that Vasari's perception was for the greater part mistaken seems to be unlikely. The thirteenth, and to some extent, the early fourteenth centuries were still the period of the great abbesses. It was at this time that the abbess of San Pier Maggiore felt safe enough in her position to deny the request of a pope by refusing entrance to a young woman wishing to enter the convent as a novice, and a time at which the comune of Florence would be loath to enter into a lawsuit against such a powerful institution. Indeed the stricter legislation of this period may reflect more a reaction against the overly independent nuns than a belief that the nuns were adequately contained. Certainly, although the episcopal constitutions of Florence of the early fourteenth century
require that the nuns under the bishop's jurisdiction hire a bursar the abbess herself in many cases seems to have been capable of making financial transactions on their own initiative and behalf. 146

When Humility first arrived in Florence the notarial acts still extant show her receiving donations for the new convent in her own person. For example the donation of all his goods by Umberto del fu Migliore del popolo di San Lorenzo, was made to the Donne di Faenza in the person of Sister Humility. 147 Even at the end of her life it is evident that Humility still kept her eye on her original convent of Santa Maria della Malta at Faenza for in 1307 there is a document attesting to her buying land in the curia of Oriolo near to Faenza. 148

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The popularity of the female Vallombrosan order may be attributable to the relative freedom of its nuns and thus account for the setting up of the many short lived Vallombrosan convents in Tuscany. During the first flowering of an order it was often difficult for the ecclesiastical hierarchy to impose strict order. This would have enabled direct supervision of works such as the fresco in Siena and the frescoes in the destroyed church of San Giovanni Evangelista. In the Humility polyptych the independent power of the Saint is stressed. Two of the miracle scenes specifically show her succeeding where men
have failed. These are the episodes of the monk with the gangrenous leg and also the nun with the haemorrhage (Figs. 44, 45 & 51). Both episodes are emphasized; that of the monk by according him two scenes, and that of the cure of the nun by being larger than the other narrative scenes and centrally placed.

The date of the work is still uncertain but it seems possible that another earlier source was used for the scenes than that published in the Acta Sanctorum. However, when this source was used is not known. The Saint Humility polyptych contrasts significantly with the other extant cycles of the lives of contemporary female saints in Tuscany and Umbria that have survived on panel, as tombs or in frescoes, in that it seems radically to assert her independance, her freedom of movement, and her direct accountability to God. This emphasis is part of female concerns regarding religious experience and as such excludes the ecclesiastical hierarchy who were less concerned with the supernatural (which could also be a manifestation of the devil) and who certainly would not approve of women outside clausura.

For these reasons it is a fitting commission for a woman to make and constitutes part of the evidence for women's increasing interest in forming their own religious experiences. This was sometimes under male guidance and with male approval, but in this case is very nearly in
direct opposition to that guidance, and seems not to regard approval or disapproval by any mortal agency.
Notes to Chapter 3.

1 Tarani 162.

2 Tarani 159-160.

3 Pasztor 1987, 172-173.

4 Butler III, 81-82.

5 Cantagalli 7. Zam-a 74 fixes the journey in the spring of 1281 as he believes that it could not have happened before the Bolognese invasion of November 1280 nor after July 1281 in which month we know that Humility received a donation at Firenze.

6 Paatz III, 661-662.

7 For Sant’Orsola see Paatz IV, 559. For Santa Maria Madre see Paatz III, 614.

8 For Santa Maria di’ Querceto see Paatz IV, 67. For Santa Trinita Vecchia see Paatz V, 397-398.

9 Paatz IV, 192-193.

10 Ridderbos 63 & 101 n.230.

11 Latham 169-170.

12 Pope-Henessey 95.

13 Marcucci 1965, 154.

14 Vasari I, 633.

15 Ridderbos 63.

16 Meiss 1974, 139 n.7 remarks that there are no examples in the Princeton Index of Christian Art.

17 Hohler 179-180.

18 Ridderbos 65-66 where he also gives a translation.

19 Ridderbos 65.
20 Marcucci 1965, 154.

21 Marcucci 1962, 6-7. Marcucci 1965, 156. See also Cohn 12. I have not chosen to discuss further the attribution of the painting as I feel it is not relevant to my argument which deals mainly with aspects of the iconography and its relationship to the written sources, and only briefly considers the possible date. However, in so much as I believe the iconography may point to a date within Pietro Lorenzetti's lifetime (see pp. 157-158), and that, from those critics who believe the work to have stemmed from Pietro's brush, there has been no consensus of opinion as to whether the polyptych should be considered as an early or late work, I consider the iconographical evidence more relevant to the dating of the painting than a further discussion of the stylistic qualities as compared with those of Pietro Lorenzetti's documented works. The possible artists and the stylistic qualities of the painting have been exhaustively discussed elsewhere. The views of various art historians both on the artist and the probable date, based on stylistic analysis, can be followed by consulting the relevant sections of the books and articles cited elsewhere in this chapter.

22 Carmichael 444.
23 Carmichael 438 n.18. See also Cohn 4-5.
24 See for example Cohn 4; Marcucci 1961, 21
and Marcucci 1965, 154.
25 See Magnani 170. Also BS XII, col.818.
26 AASS May VII, 822. The diagram dates from 1688.
27 See Carmichael 436 n.17.
28 See Richa I, 398 and Anonymous 53.
29 For a summary of the movements of the altarpiece and a
description of its component parts see Boskovits 1988,
86.
30 The inscription read "HEC SUNT MIRACULA BEATE
HUMILITATIS PRIME ABBATISSE ET FUNDATRICIS HUIUS
VENERABILIS MONASTERII ET IN ISTO ALTARI EST CORPUS
EIUS". Marcucci 1965, 154.
31 Carmichael 432. See also Boskovits 1988, 86 who thinks
that during the years 1808 to 1810 the altarpiece may
have been held in another Vallombrosan institution in
Florence, that of Santa Verdiana.
32 They were acquired at separate times by the museum.
See Carmichael 436-437. Indeed the gallery officials
in Florence in 1841 were not aware that more than one
panel was missing. For this see Carmichael 439.
33 See for example Cohn 7.
34 For a photo-montage of the altarpiece following the
sketch see Boskovits 1988, 320 fig.137.
35 Cantagalli 7.
AASS May V, 203-222. This volume of the AASS is not continuously paginated. All references to this volume refer to the pages relating to May 22nd, the date on which Humility’s feast is celebrated.

AASS August V, 845-854.

AASS August V, 847 and 848 n.a.

Carmichael 429 n.1. See also AASS May V, 207 para.1, "Cogitis me, Sorores carissimae, S. Humilitatis vitam, Matris vestrae ac meae, diversis voluminibus a diversis diversimode scriptam, in unam volumen prolixitate omissa redigere".

Cantagalli 7.

Marcucci 1962, 11-12. Also Marcucci 1965, 155 - "Il citato disegno ... corrisponde per la massima parte alla successione cronologica dei fatti nella leggenda della Santa".

I have only recorded those episodes directly related to the altarpiece. The actual dates are not always given in the version of Humility’s life in the AASS which however does say that the saint was twenty-four years old when she entered Santa Perpetua. See AASS May V, 208 para.5. However there has been some discussion as to whether the Saint’s date of birth was in 1210 or 1226. The general consensus of opinion, including that of the Bollandists, was that she was born in 1226, married at the age of fifteen, and entered Santa
Perpetua after nine years of marriage. See AASS May VII, 209 n.a.

43 AASS May V, 212 paras. 25-35.

44 See for example the description of the cell which was made for Humility next to the church of Sant'Apollinaire in Faenza. AASS May V, 208 para. 10 tells us that it was "parvum multum, cum fenestrula in ecclesia respondenti, qua videre posset et recipere Sacrosanctae Matris Ecclesiae sacramenta; nec non alteram deforis, unde reciperet eleemosynam, et libere satisfaceret accenditibus, ut quaesivit". Ardenti 18-19 described the cell as "molto piccola, e una piccola fenestra, la quale rispondeva nella chiesa - per la quale potesse guardare e pigliare il sacramento, et un altra di fuori per avere la elemosina, e satisfare quelle persone che andassino a lei".

45 See Ardenti 40-42 for these miracles. Zama 95 places "The miracle of the ice in August" at the very end of Humility's life but unfortunately gives no reason for this.

46 AASS May V, 212 para. 25.

47 Bynum 1987, 234.

48 AASS May V, 213 para. 25, "Alio quoque tempore, cum exercitus Bononiensem esset ad civitatem Faventiae, Abbatissa praedixit Monialibus, quod Bononienses die sequenti debebant venire, et intrare monasterium." See
also AASS May V, 214 n.a.

49 AASS May V, 213 para.27.

50 AASS May V, 213 para.28. Carmichael 436 states that the leggenda in the AASS says that the ice was found in a Florentine August whereas in fact the miracle is only given temporal rather than spatial identification.

51 Zama 95 is amongst those who places this miracle at the end of the Saint’s life.

52 AASS May V, 213 para.30.

53 Locatelli 253-254.

54 Magnani 164.

55 Marcucci 1965, 155. Also Kaftal Tuscan col.496.

56 Other examples include "The verification of the stigmata" in the Upper Church at Assisi and "The funeral of Saint Martin" in the Lower Church.

57 Humility also appears twice when she leaves Santa Maria della Malta and journeys to Florence, and twice when she cures the child in Florence.

58 Both the vita printed in the AASS and that written by Silvestro Ardenti agree on this point. The AASS vita states that Humility was buried "juxta suum altare (ie. the altar dedicated to Saint John the Evangelist) sinistro later, " - AASS May V, 211 para.19. That of Ardenti 53 describes the burial place in an identical manner, "appresso il suo altare, dalla parte sinistra".
The AASS May V, 211 para.20 says that "Coepit interea lapis superpositus tumulo emittere oleum apparentur. Quod altera Sororum attendens, ne foret illusio, coepit tergere saeppe saepius et prudentur. Quod dum quid divinum fore conspexit, ut erat, dixit omnibus accendentibus. Facta extorsione omni experimentia verifice patuit, et ob id de ipsius translatione Florentinis quidam curam dedit." See also Ardenti 55.

For a more complete list and discussion of this phenomenon see Rynum 1987, 391-392 n.85.

AASS May V, 211 para.20, "corpus de loco, ubi erat tumulatum super nunda terra, intergrum extrahetur; populo videndum". Also Ardenti 57, "il suo corpo, cavato del luogo dove era sepulto sopra la nuda terra, e conceduto al popolo poterla vedere".

This being Antonio, Bishop of Florence. The bishop at this time was Antonio Orso, although he is only identified by his first name in the vitae. See Davidsohn 1968, VII, 83. The people present at the first funeral in the AASS May V, 211 para.19 are described as "Praelatorum secularium et religiosorum, ac Clericorum aliorum." Ardenti gives a very similar description where he says that Humility was buried with, "Grandissimo honore di prelati, religiosi, clerici". See Ardenti 53. In the description of the funeral after the translation Bishop Antonio is
specifically mentioned. See AASS May V, 211 para.20, "Antonio Episcopo Florentino" and Ardenti 57, "Antonio Vescovo di Fiorenza".

63 Boskovits 1988, 89 also points out this identification of the final scene.

64 Marcucci 1961, 21.

65 In neither the vita in the AASS nor that of Ardenti is any part of Ugolotto’s body mentioned as being particularly subject to his illness.

66 Both Ardenti and the AASS give the same sequence of events up to and including the curing of the nun with the haemorrhage and all these scenes are said to have taken place in Faenza. See Ardenti 8-31 and AASS May V, 208 para.5 & 210 para.15. For the various reconstructions of the order of the Saint Humility polyptych see Appendix 2.

67 Marcucci 1965, 153 and 1961, 21 notes the alteration of the shape of "The crossing of the river Lamone" and believes that the alteration of the two scenes must have happened during the restoration of 1841 by Francesco Acciai. However there appears to be no certain evidence for this final assertion as there is no contemporary report on the restoration.

68 Vauchez 58-59 notes that from the time of Pope Gregory IX an enquiry into the life and miracles of a saint had to be based on a given forma interragotorii.
There were for example one hundred and fifteen articles on which witnesses were questioned in the processus of Clare of Montefalco in 1319 and these were partially arranged according to types of virtue that she had shown during her life. Alonso 1983, 75.

During the processus of Clare of Assisi in 1253, the year of Clare's death, Sister Benvenuta related how she had lost her voice and Clare had cured her but on being asked could not remember when this took place. See Robeck 188-189.

For an example of this see Lavin's discussion of the order of the scenes in the Baptistery of San Marco in Venice. Lavin 81.

Referred to by Davidsohn 1908, 418-419. The document originally came from the archives of San Salvi where the nuns were eventually transferred after the destruction of San Giovanni Evangelista in 1529.

Magnani 163-164 & 164 n.a.

AASS August V, 847-851.

AASS August V, 847. The opening sentence of the life is as follows, "Rogatus instanter ab abbatissa et monialibus monasterii S. Joannis Evangelistae, ut venerabilem sorore Margaritam de Faventia, cum adhuc
viveret". See also 847 n.a.

79  **AASS** August V, 845.

80 See I. Guiducci, *Vita e Miracoli di Sant'Umiltà de Faenza*, 1632 Florence. I have unfortunately been unable to consult this book. Also AASS August V, 847.

81 For the life of Humility see **Locatelli** 249-256. For that of Margaret 256-258.

82 **Magnani** 181. For the life of Margaret see 175-190. For the life of Humility see 152-171. Magnani often gives references in the margins of his work which allow us to trace the sources of his statements but unfortunately this is not one of them.

83 Magnani 175 gives Margaret's date of birth as either 1220 or 1230.

84 Noted by **Marcucci** 1962, 32. Also Zama 73.

85 For a description of the healing miracle see **AASS** May V, 210 para.15.

86 AASS May V, 212 n.f.

87 **Ardenti** 310-31 & 43-44.

88 Locatelli 252 & 254. Also **Anonymous** 31 where the nun who is cured is identified only as "altra monaca" and 33 where he says that Humility, "dopo raccomandato il Monastero di Faenza alla Priora, parti a piedi scalzo verso la citta di Firenze con tre sole compagne, tutte poveramente vestite".
89 Maganani 162-163 & 172.
90 Carmichael 435.
91 See for example Marcucci 1965, 155. Cohn 13.
92 Davidsohn 1968, VII, 83.
93 See Chapter 2.
94 Harvey 21-22.
95 I have not been able to inspect the Crucifix at close quarters due to its position in the church and so do not know whether this is due to severe paint loss or due to any specific instructions to the painter.
96 For example the Olivetan Oblates formed in the early fifteenth century wore white veils after their profession. For a discussion of their habit see Chapter 2.
97 For example the rule of Saint Clare states that an abbess should not be elected if she is not fully professed. See FF 1159.
98 Carmichael 435.
99 See for example the rule for the Poor Clares FF 1302 and for their dress see FF 1289.
100 AASS May V, 210 para.17 only call those who accompanied Humility to Florence "Quasdam sorores" and does not give any more information as to how many there were nor as to whether they were all fully professed nuns. The Bollandists, AASS May V, 212
n. g identify one of these women as Margaret and give the year of the migration as 1280 but do not give their sources for this assertion. However it was well known that Margaret came from Faenza and it seems logical to assume that she came to Florence with Humility.

101 Carmichael 435. Carmichael's description of the clothes is as follows, "She is wearing a black cloak and scapular, a blue tunic and the white veil of a lay sister".

102 It seems to have been relatively common for well-off widows to join these groups. In the following century Alessandra Strozzi was to take vows in a lay religious order. See Crabb 48.

103 Elliott 280.

104 Meiss 1955, 127-129 places the Saint John to the left and the Saint Matthew to the right both looking at a central figure which would have been the Saviour. However he rejects the idea that the two saints originally formed part of the Humility altarpiece. See also Cohn 3-4.

105 Bynum 1987, 22.

106 Such as her close relative Niccolò who enclosed her in a room in his house after her flight from Santa Perpetua and from where she cured the leg of the Vallombrosan monk. See AASS May V, 208 para.10.
Both Boniface VIII's decretal "Periculoso" and fourteenth century Florentine episcopal regulations forbade the nuns leaving cloister without a licence and then only for a very clear reason. Trexler 1971, 96-97.

AASS May V, 208 para.8, "Superveniente vero nocte predicta, vox quaedam insonuit: Suor Humilitas, surge; meque frequere, dixit".

AASS May V, 208 para.8. Also Ardenti 12.

For example having reached the convent of Poor Clares the abbess of the convent called in male help as she was afraid of scandal and unable to deal with the situation by herself. See AASS May V, 208 para.9.

Pasztor 1984, 37.

Elliott 307-308.

AASS 208 May V, para.13. Marcucci 1961, 25 n.7 mentions a seventeenth century altarpiece from the convent of the Donne di Faenza at Varlungo in which the true chronology of the life of Humility has been re-arranged so that the largest panel - that of "The arrival in Florence" - is centrally placed under the central panel of "The ecstasy of Saint Humility" for emphasis.

For the Saint Cecilia panel see Marcucci 1965, 14-17. For the cycles of Saint Margaret see Sante 110-113.
For details regarding the building, destruction and re-building of the church see Mirri. A summary of the events is given in Belardi 67 and the building of the original church is also referred to by Bardotti Biasion 12. The church was commenced while Margaret was still alive and after her death was carried on under the supervision of the comune. For the disputed date of the tomb see the discussion in Bardotti Biasion especially 10.

Weinstein 141-147. See also Vauchez 39-67.

Vauchez 41-42.

Vauchez 42-43 gives the example of the bull of canonization for Homobonus of Cremona from 1199 where an important position is given to miracles as sign of sanctity.

Weinstein 228-229.

Weinstein 142-143 notes that supernatural power was of over-riding importance in the formation of a public cult.

Butler I, 396-399.

Butler IV, 374-375.

Marcucci 1965, 15. For a discussion of this phenomenon in the cycles of the life of Saint Francis see Stern.

See Sante 109-113. For an alternative identification of "The vision of Christ" see
Bardotti Biasion 12 where it is said to be a vision in which Christ promises Margaret that he will protect her son who had become a Franciscan friar. Some alternative identifications of the episodes have been proposed by Kaftal Tuscan cols.668-671. He suggests that the scene where Saint receives communion in her cell could instead be that where the parish priest gives her an unconsecrated host and he identifies "The vision of Christ" as a vision which the Saint received in 1288 when Christ promised Margaret that he would protect the Franciscan order. I believe that the former scene does in fact depict Margaret having communion brought to her when she was too ill to attend church. This would fit in with the rest of the scenes selected in showing her veneration for priests and the Franciscan order. The latter scene has also been identified as Christ absolving Margaret of her sins through the intervention of Saint Francis. The identification of the scene as one involving Margaret’s son was made in relation to the tomb of the Saint rather than this painting. A comparison of the composition of the painted and sculpted scene makes it clear that they both relate to the same subject. In the relief on the tomb it is not clear that the figure kneeling behind Christ is not Saint Francis as none of the figures have haloes by
which to distinguish them. However in the panel Saint Margaret is always depicted with a halo. The scene is very damaged but there is no sign of a halo on the kneeling friar to the right of the composition as there would have been if the figure were intended to represent Saint Francis. Nevertheless if the figure on the right is intended to represent Margaret's son the scene bears no direct relation with any part of the vita written by her confessor, Guinta Bevegnati. It seems more likely that it refers to one of the numerous occasions on which Christ promised Margaret to care for the friars who in turn cared for her.

125 Possible sources for the vision are Bevegnati Chapter VI, 19 & Chapter VIII, 24.
126 Bevegnati Chapter I, 1.
127 Sante 111.
128 For a discussion of the tomb see Bardotti Biasion 6-12. Margaret's political activity included achieving peace between Cortona and the neighbouring Bishop of Arezzo. See Bevegnati Chapter VIII, 17. Also RS VIII, col. 762.
129 Elliott 287.
130 AASS May V, 207 para.4.
131 Bolton 1978, 80.
133 Bynum 1987, 22-23.
134 Bynum 1987, 227-229 discusses this with reference to eucharistic practices.


136 Bynum 1984, 121. Kieckhefer 170-173 points out that eucharistic mysticism was much more common for women than for men.

137 Trexler 1971, 92.

138 Trexler 1971, 94-95.

139 Trexler 1971, 97-98 notes that during the trecento in Florence neither the abbess or the nuns were allowed to leave the convent without episcopal licence. If this were obtained they might leave only in their convent habit, in company, and with a pre-fixed time of return.

140 Marcucci 1962, 13.

141 Vasari I, 503-505; "Buffalmacco dunque fra le prime opere che fece, lavoro in Firenze nell monastero delle donne di Faenza." He goes on to say that "...tutta la chiesa [e] di sua mano; e fra l'altre storie che vi fece della vita di Christo...".

142 Bellosi 1974, 123. The decoration is recorded by both Boccaccio and Ghiberti. Boccaccio Decameron, Day 8-3, 911 says that "essi lavoravono nel monistero delle donne di Faenza". The people referred to are Bruno and Buffalmacco. Ghiberti 35, only comments that "Bonamico fu eccellentissimo maestro, ebbe l'arte da natura,
durava poca fatica nelle opere sue. Dipinse nel monastero delle donne di Faenza ...".

143 Bocaccio 8-6, 934-944; 8-9, 976-983 and 9-3, 1047-1054.

144 Filipiak 81.

145 Lungo 36-38. For further information on the importance of San Pier Maggiore at this time see King 375 & n.8.

146 Trexler 1971, 99.

147 Zama 79 notes that there are a number of notarial documents regarding donations made to the donne di Faenza.

148 Zama 63-64.
PATRONAGE FOR AND BY THE POOR CLARES: The Protomonastery of Santa Chiara and the Convent of Santa Maria della Cella in Trieste.

Early Franciscan rules concerning the use of decoration in their churches often appear more honoured in the breach than the observance. The original poverty of the Franciscans soon gave way under an increasing number of donations which enabled them to build and decorate sumptuous churches.\(^1\) Amongst these were San Francesco at Assisi and Santa Croce in Florence.\(^2\) For the Poor Clares, whose attachment to poverty could not even be sustained during the lifetime of Saint Clare, and whose recruits tended to be from the aristocracy, the pull towards using donations for decorative programmes may have been irresistible.\(^3\)

Franciscan legislation frequently directed against excessive use of decoration in the houses of the order. For example the constitutions of the General Chapter of Vienna forbade the use of costly ornamentation, as did those of Narbonne in 1260, "in picturis, coelaturis, fenestris, columnis et huiusmodi aut superfluitas in longitudine, latitudine et altitudine", and the infringement of these rules was not let by unheeded.\(^4\) The regulations made by these chapters were not merely preventative measures but were in direct response to the increasing rifts in the order concerning the observance of Saint Francis' rule.
Neither the regulations nor the controversies can have gone past the Poor Clares un-noticed despite their imposed claustration. Until 1263 the visitors and chaplains of all the houses of Poor Clares then in existence were expected to be members of the Franciscan order and this meant that new information would have been passed to the Clares. It is probable also that rules passed in Franciscan chapters would have been considered applicable to the convent churches of the Poor Clares. The rule composed by Clare states that the sisters are obliged to obey the successors of Saint Francis. In the years after 1263, during the fight over who should have the responsibility for the order, ears must have been strained for every legislative nuance as new regulations could alter the running and life of the convents. For the Poor Clares at Assisi the great double basilica of San Francesco on the other side of the town was being decorated in these years and it contained elements often in direct opposition to contemporary legislation.

The Protomonastery of Santa Chiara, Assisi.

In Assisi, because of the Clares' closeness to the Franciscans, not only geographically but also in relation to the Franciscans' care of them, changes in the rules and lifestyle of the Franciscans would have been closely followed. Due to the privilege of poverty the house at Assisi was one of very few which was guaranteed both the spiritual and temporal care of the friars. Awareness of
changes in the rules regarding the care of the Clares, as well as of the continuing debate about decoration within Franciscan churches, would have increased the import of what was commissioned for the convent in Assisi in these years. Amongst the Spiritual Franciscans Ubertino da Casale was particularly vocal in speaking out against excessive ornamentation in churches. As part of the Spiritual movement he wished to return to simply following the regulations set out in Francis' Rule and Testament.

Clare's wish had always been for the closest possible ties with the Franciscans and particularly with their early way of life as exemplified by Saint Francis. This is testified to in her will and in the rule which she composed and which was ratified shortly before her death, both of which stress a mode of life, which, given the restrictions of an enclosed order, follows that of Saint Francis as closely as possible. This closeness is underlined both at the beginning and the end of Clare's rule. At the beginning of the rule Clare stresses that the forma di vita of the order was given by Francis, and at the very end of the rule she insists on the closeness of the Franciscans and Clares by stating that the protector assigned to the Clares should be one and the same as that assigned to the Franciscans. Saint Clare's testament also continually mentions Saint Francis, especially near the beginning where she says that it was the wish of Francis that the friars should always look after the Clares in the same way as they would care
for themselves. In fact it is Saint Francis, rather than Saint Clare who is seen as the leader of the Poor Clares and it is his rule that Clare wishes to pledge obedience to.

Certain aspects of Clare’s repeated statements of allegiance to Francis after his death were similar to those of the Spiritual Franciscans. After the death of Saint Francis both felt it probable that their original aspirations would be eroded and wanted to stop attempts to moderate in any way their vows of poverty. However, in the case of the Clares there was a choice to be made. If they kept to a life of as strict a poverty as possible it would become extremely difficult for the Franciscans to care for them as it would increase their workload. Those who formed part of the Spiritual faction within the Franciscan order were unlikely to want to care for the Clares as this would interfere with their mission as wandering preachers. More amenable in this respect were Franciscans who were less strict in their observance. For the Poor Clares this meant renouncing the strict interpretation of their vow of poverty.

A number of other factors also contributed towards the loss of strict poverty. These included the very popularity of the order which made it necessary to be sure of a fixed income, and the continuing push of the papacy towards instituting a more traditional monastic life for the Clares based closely on the Benedictine order. In fact a strict
interpretation of poverty seems to have been given up even by the first Clares, the sisters of San Damiano, after Clare's death. Clare's body, like that of Francis, was soon to be housed in a magnificent church with attached convent and although the emulation of Saint Francis by Saint Clare was continued after their deaths it was in a very different manner to Clare's emulation of Saint Francis in life. The activity immediately following the death of both saints was very similar. Both had their bodies transported to Assisi for safety and were canonized very quickly after their deaths.15 In both cases this was also followed by an ambitious building programme intended to enhance the reputation of the order and to bring pilgrims to Assisi.

In many ways the building programme continues the theme of Saint Clare following as far as possible Saint Francis, for it is possible to regard the church of Santa Chiara as a reflection of San Francesco.16 The arrangements for the site and funding of Santa Chiara were organized between a number of parties.17 The nuns wished to follow the body of Saint Clare inside the walls of Assisi, and, like the Franciscans over twenty years earlier they would have needed both a convent in which they could be housed and, given the importance of Saint Clare, a church in which the body of the Saint could be placed. As such San Giorgio, the initial resting place of both Saint Francis and Saint Clare, could only be regarded as temporary accommodation.18
The building of the new church was probably partially funded by the *comune* of Assisi, in whose interest it would have been to attract pilgrims to the new church.\textsuperscript{19} Thus the commune, the Franciscans and the nuns all emerge as possible contenders for who had a stake in the control over the commissions for the new *protomonastero*. It is normal for the nuns to be omitted from consideration of this for, despite their obvious interest in the building and decoration of the place that they were to inhabit, the supposed rigours of clausura appear to preclude the possibility of their participation. It is, in fact, extremely unlikely that they were able to play a large role in the building of the church as the few surviving documents relating to bequests made to the nuns show.\textsuperscript{20}

The church was intended primarily as a focal point for visiting pilgrims.\textsuperscript{21} Santa Chiara was begun in 1257 by which time the Lower Church at Assisi was completed together with some of its fresco decoration, while the Upper Church was still under construction.\textsuperscript{22} Its architectural similarity to the upper basilica of San Francesco may be due to a number of reasons - either the desire on the part of the Poor Clares and the civic authorities to associate the building and its inhabitants as closely with Saint Francis and his order as was possible, or a lack of funding which would have lead to the employment of less able architects unable to resist the
influence of the masters so recently at work in San Francesco. For the Poor Clares the building would have reflected Clare's wish that the Franciscans and the Clares should be as close as possible, while for the civic authorities the reasoning may have been along more financial lines. The more impressive and the closer in plan to San Francesco that the church was, the more pilgrims it would attract, and hence more trade.

In fact the protomonastero of Santa Chiara has been characterized by later critics in terms which assume both imitation of and inferiority to the basilica of San Francesco. The church is deemed to follow the designs and plans of the Franciscans for their basilica with almost slavish accuracy, the only difference presumably being a lack of the lavish funding which was accorded to San Francesco. However with regard to the fabric of the church more likely is a deliberate mirroring of some aspects of San Francesco without the attendant implication of the use of less able architects. There are a number of significant differences in the architecture which point to this conclusion. Whereas San Francesco appears to take its inspiration from Northern Gothic architecture the church of Santa Chiara shows a number of Roman influences. This would imply a deliberate policy of echoing San Francesco rather than the end being achieved by default. In this way the architectural form of Santa Chiara was used to show an awareness of the foundations of the
The decoration of Santa Chiara has been understood similarly to the architecture, as comprising secondary works dependant on those within San Francesco. The underlying assumption of the early twentieth century critics of Santa Chiara seems to be that those in charge of the decoration wanted something as close as possible to that in San Francesco but could not afford to employ the same calibre of artists. In fact the frescoes, despite the fact that they are severely damaged and some have been completely lost, and bearing in mind the telescoping of space from a double basilica to a single church, do show a similarity of concept in their choice of subject matter. Like the vaults in the Lower Church of San Francesco those in Santa Chiara show allegorical scenes. They are not direct copies, for each group of frescoes are tailored according to their setting. Those in San Francesco show subjects intended to glorify Francis including "The Marriage with Lady Poverty" and the "Glorification of Saint Francis", while those in Santa Chiara show pairs of female saints, intended to glorify the first members of the Poor Clares. They include Saint Clare and her sister the Blessed Agnes, surrounded by adoring angels (Fig. 70). The idea that these scenes were meant to complement in some way those in San Francesco is supported by the close association in style between the two sets of vault paintings and also the similarity in placing: those in San
Francesco are in the vault above the apse, and therefore above the main altar while those in Santa Chiara are also above the main altar. Equally, the paintings which grace the walls of the nave and transepts in Santa Chiara show a close association in their subject matter with those of the upper church of San Francesco. Cimabue's Apocalypse scenes in the left transept of San Francesco culminating in the Judging Christ above the altar have been scaled down in Santa Chiara to the Last Judgement on the right wall of the left transept of Santa Chiara.

Both churches also contain Old and New Testament cycles. Those in the upper church of San Francesco are situated in two levels on the upper zone of the walls of the nave: on the right wall scenes from the Old Testament running from the "Creation of the World" to the "Brothers of Joseph in Egypt", and on the left wall scenes from the New Testament running from the "Annunciation" to "Pentecost". The Old and New Testament scenes in Santa Chiara are placed not on the left and right walls of the nave but in the transepts and contain abbreviated versions of the cycles in San Francesco. The cycle of the life of Saint Clare, which now exists only in two scenes in the right transept is, like the Saint Francis cycle in the nave of the upper church, on the lowest level of frescoed scenes (Figs. 73 & 74). That these scenes were placed in a position corresponding to those in the upper church, and further that their style seems to be derived from these frescoes in
some manner, further supports the idea of a conscious desire to reflect the glory of San Francesco on the part of those who commissioned the frescoes.

However none of this can be definitely assigned to the influence of the nuns who were attached to the church, despite the fact that the ethos of the architecture and the decorations would have been sympathetic to their wishes to remain as close as possible to the Franciscans. For evidence of the direct influence of the nuns we must look to smaller works - the panel paintings of the period still extant in Santa Chiara - some of which show a very personalized iconography.

One such work is the dossal, now hanging in the right transept and which contains scenes of the life of Saint Clare to either side of a central icon. It was probably originally placed on the main altar. The dossal, whose inscription, placed under the feet of the central figure of Saint Clare, dates it as being painted during the papacy of Martin IV, is not among the first of the panels commissioned for the new convent church. In fact it is the Crucifix, now hanging above the high altar, which must have been one of the earliest commissions for the new church three of whose altars, one in each transept and the high altar, were consecrated on the 6th September 1265 in the presence of the papal curia, and it was probably already in situ at that time.
The Benedetta Crucifix.

The importance of the commissioning nun is immediately apparent in this Crucifix (Fig. 71). It was ordered by the abbess Benedetta in the years immediately following Clare’s canonization. At the foot of the cross, or more accurately to either side of Christ’s feet are the two tiny figures of Saint Clare and the abbess Benedetta, her immediate successor, while a slightly larger and more central figure of Saint Francis is shown kissing the wound in Christ’s right foot (Fig. 72). The inscription at the foot of the cross reads: "Domina Benedicta post Sanctam Clar(am) prima Abbatissa me fec(it) fieri," and the painting was probably executed directly under the supervision of the said abbess before her death in 1260. She is shown kneeling to the left of the panel her hands raised in prayer. By this time, although less than a decade after the death of their foundress, the Poor Clares of Santa Chiara were already used to financial dealings, to an extent which was more than Clare’s rule envisaged, and there are records of legacies made to the nuns which would appear to have been accepted despite the Privilegium Paupertatis granted to the convent. This early negation of the hard won privilege of poverty may be a result of the popularity of the order leading to more bequests and more novices entering the convent. Only a far from strict interpretation of Clare’s wish for poverty would have allowed the Crucifix. It is specifically stated to have been ordered by
Benedetta herself, implying not only that she paid for it but also that it was an independent commission carried out not with communal funds but with individual wealth. Benedetta is portrayed as a powerful woman in her own right and not as part of a community of women practising the strictest poverty. She is probably the same nun who was abbess in 1227 in Siena and from 1240 to 1248 at Vallegloria in Spello and had therefore had wide experience of running a convent before being in charge of the convent at Assisi.37

Allied to the wish to have herself commemorated as a powerful woman is the parallel desire to show the lineage of the order. While Clare is shown on the same scale as Benedetta, although haloed, Saint Francis is depicted twice the size of the women and also has the privilege of embracing Christ's foot. Francis' imitation of Christ and Clare's of Francis is inherent in this hierarchy. Francis himself is shown with the stigmata while Saint Clare, although not imitating the sufferings of Christ in any physical manner can be understood to be doing so mentally. In a letter to the Blesses Agnes of Prague she had told her to seek to imitate Christ on the cross by meditating on his sufferings.38

Despite Benedetta's ability to pay for and have herself depicted on a cross of this importance her understanding of the role of the Poor Clares was not as a separate order
founded by Saint Clare but as an integral part of that founded by Saint Francis. As such the cross continues the theme that we have found throughout the erection and decoration of Santa Chiara. It is this belief which is also evinced in the Saint Clare panel, using the scenes from the Saint's life to present the point in a similar way to that in which Saint Francis' life was used in art in order to direct the attention of the viewer towards various aspects of the Franciscan order.

The Saint Clare Dossal.
The iconography of the life of Saint Francis in the Upper Church of San Francesco shows a desire to emphasize papal recognition of the Saint and his Order. This has been seen as part of a changing iconography of Saint Francis tailored according to the altering perception of his works and the needs of the order which he founded.\textsuperscript{39} According to this theory the earlier historiated dossals are seen to be emphasizing his sanctity by means of the depiction of miracles: the main proof of sanctity for the laity. These dossals show the changing perception of Saint Francis and the nature of his sanctity but they are also used in order to alter perceptions. Thus Saint Francis develops from a miracle worker to someone whose importance lies in his simple humanity, and finally to a saviour of the established church holding up Saint John Lateran in the fresco cycle of the upper church at Assisi.\textsuperscript{40} Always in these examples it is considered to be the Franciscans
themselves who choose the iconography and thus direct the way in which we should view Saint Francis. 41

In the case of a female order the ability to control the iconography employed in the works placed in their own churches cannot be assumed as it can for works placed in the churches of a male order. However, neither can it be assumed that such control was never possible. 42 In the case of Saint Francis there is a lack of direct evidence despite which it is possible to gauge the extent and purpose of Franciscan intervention because of the number of cycles of his life which survive. The dugento cycle of the life of Saint Clare on the Saint Clare dossal presents what appears to be an unsurmountable problem in using this type of methodology in that it is the only complete extant cycle of the Saint of the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries. 43 This makes it more difficult to discern any bias in the choice of episodes from Clare's life and thus more difficult to decide on the possible influence of the nuns and indeed what aspects were intended to be emphasized. However, it is possible to use a number of other sources in order to arrive at a tentative conclusion regarding the reason for the commission of the Saint Clare dossal and its possible dating.

Similarly to the documentary sources posited for the life of Saint Francis in the Upper Church there are sources which can be used as comparisons in order to assess the
emphasis and impact of the dossal. Clare herself left two statements of her wishes for her order: her Rule and her Testament. There is also a life, probably composed by Thomas of Celano, which would have represented the official Church view. Further to this there is the history of the Poor Clares during this period which may help in ascertaining their wishes for the order as opposed to those of the Franciscans and/or the papacy.

The written life of Saint Clare shows her as a typical female saint - typical in the sense of what the Church would have liked to be typical. She follows Francis in that hers is the second order set up by him yet is separated from all his popular concepts of religious participation by the fact of her femininity and the claustration that inevitably followed. The enclosure may well not have been by choice. Francis is described as having Clare perpetually imprisoned in San Damiano and the inference of these emotive words is clear. Jacques de Vitry described the earliest Poor Clares around Assisi in words which imply that enclosure was not considered in the earliest years. The ideal was not to be a female order attached to the Franciscans but actually to be part of Saint Francis' order living as far as possible as their male counterparts did. When Cardinal Ugolino imposed the strict claustration of the Benedictines on Clare's new order it is more than likely that this is not what she had originally envisaged. Clare's desire for an active religious career was shown later in her life when
she expressed a wish to be martyred for her faith. This is evidence not only of her desire to escape the bonds of clausturation but also of the still living wish to be as like Saint Francis as possible. The imposition of clausturation placed a barrier between the Poor Clares and the Franciscans and made them not part of the Franciscan order but instead dependent on it. Indeed clausturation imposed the type of saintly female life that Celano was later to celebrate but which the dossal subtly changes.

Dossals may well have been developed partly in response to the increasing participation of the papacy in the cult of the saints and also new regulations regarding the celebration of the mass. The new legislation bringing canonization solely within the power of the pope may also have contributed to a more concentrated focus on female sanctity. The efforts of the papacy during the first half of the thirteenth century were directed towards an increasing popularization of religion and this popularization needed above all to include women since it was women who were considered to be at most risk from heretical sects. This was the problem which Saint Dominic had originally set himself to address and which the popes of the time (especially Innocent III) attempted to tackle by allowing organisations such as beguinages in the north of Europe, and by recognising female sanctity more readily, thus bringing it within the power of the Church. Women such as Clare and Margaret of Cortona were set up as
examples and the emphases of their lives altered in order to show women what was expected of them within the Catholic church. Dossals/altarpieces could be used as propaganda tools by those who understood the power of such images, setting up an accepted/acceptable, and harmless, ideal of female sanctity for women to follow. In this way the exceptionally full and influential religious life of Margaret of Cortona is made harmless in her altarpiece at Cortona (Fig. 62). It is against this background that the Saint Clare dossal was executed (Fig. 75). This was the wider significance but the Saint Clare dossal was also made for a very specific church and its intended position and date may be crucial in reading/understanding its iconography.

Reference has already been made to the conflicts between the triangle formed of the Poor Clares, the Franciscans and the papacy during this period. The dossal was executed at a point in the history of the Poor Clares when they were being batted between the pillar of the Franciscan order and the post of the papacy on the question of who was to be responsible for their spiritual and material welfare. Despite the lack of any source for the inscribed date at the base of the panel it has been generally believed to be the correct one and the panel is therefore dated in the middle of Martin IV's pontificate: 1283. At this time, thirty years after Clare's death and with the expansion of both the Franciscans and the Poor Clares, there had
recently been a great deal of tension within the Franciscan Order as Saint Francis' way of life was no longer practicable for so many followers. Decisions were constantly being added to about the forms of life applicable for the male branch of the order and the splits were already widening.

The main problem to affect the Poor Clares as an order was the constant struggle between the papacy and the Franciscans as to who should have the spiritual care of the Clares, and in the case of the protomonastero presumably also the material care. The problem had already appeared in Clare's lifetime. In her rule she had specifically stated that the visitor to the Clares to give them spiritual advice would always be a Franciscan, and this was supported by successive popes.\(^{56}\) By placing this in what she hoped would be, and in fact eventually was, a papally approved rule Clare obviously hoped to ensure the continuing ties of her order to that of the Franciscans - ties which to her were as important as her vow of poverty. Poverty for the whole order had already been forcibly abandoned and problems with jurisdiction meant that many houses under the name of the Poor Clares followed what were in fact different rules.\(^{57}\) If they were also to have different protectors then the order would be fragmented beyond recognition. However during Clare's lifetime an indissoluble link with the Franciscans which would have the effect of drawing all the Clares together despite any
differences in the rule was an ambition not yet lost. Of course the privilege of following Clare's own rule only applied in Santa Chiara itself but papal approval and the wishes of successive popes regarding the question of Franciscan responsibility for the Poor Clares as a whole underline Clare's wishes in this respect.

Making the Franciscans accept responsibility for the Clares was no easy task. In 1228 the Dominicans had succeeded in getting rid of responsibility for their second order and it is probable that many Franciscans wanted to do the same.\textsuperscript{58} The papacy however was keen to keep the two orders together. The year previous to the splitting of the male and female Dominicans Gregory IX had officially committed the care and the rule of the Poor Clares to the Minister General of the Franciscans. The drain on the friars' time was considerable however and many objected to being forced to stay in one place rather than fulfill what they considered to be their duty as itinerant preachers. The friars continued to object more and more strongly. By 1261 at the accession of Urban IV they were asking to be completely absolved of their responsibilities towards the Clares. Although this was in the end avoided certain compromises had to be made.

The Saint Clare dossal is a strong statement of the Clares' wish to remain close to the Franciscans and also to obey the wishes of the pope, using the life of Saint Clare to make
this point. It is a statement not of Clare's original wish to follow Saint Francis' form of monasticism but of the more realisable desire to remain in close contact with the Franciscans by the means of being governed by them. Sixty to seventy years after Clare's original vocation the ideal of mendicant poverty and work had been torn from the Poor Clares much quicker than the Francisans let go of it. As women, the Clares had no choice but to accept enclosure and in the end it was all that Clare could do, and that as a dying request, to gain the privilege of poverty for her own convent. The Franciscan form of monasticism would no longer have been dreamt of among the Poor Clares, and it is not this form of monasticism that the dossal stresses, rather it is the close link between the Franciscans and the Clares.\textsuperscript{59} This is present in the scenes both to the left and right of the central figure of Clare - those of "Saint Francis receiving Clare at the Porziuncula" and "The vestition of Saint Clare" on the left hand side, while on the right "The vestition of Saint Agnes", all of which contain Saint Francis, and the presence of the Franciscans at "The Funeral of Saint Clare" (Figs. 77, 79, 80 & 83).

By this time very few convents, amongst which was Santa Chiara in Assisi, still retained the privilege of poverty which is often seen as lying at the base of Clare's rule.\textsuperscript{60} However despite the Benedictine base of the rule imposed by Cardinal Ugolino it may be that the nuns themselves were still determined that all vestiges of Clare's original
wishes should not be lost. The only realisable aim that they still cherished was to be part of the Franciscan order and this view must have been especially dearly held at the protomonastero. The Franciscans tried repeatedly to reject these responsibilities, which the pope, who wanted to see the Poor Clares properly supervised, was trying to impose upon them. In attempting to retain the services of the Franciscans as far as possible it would have been necessary to rid themselves of very strict poverty which had the effect of making the task of the Franciscans more onerous. The iconography of the Saint Clare dossal can be viewed as a response to the strife within what the nuns may well have liked to consider as a single order. 61

As such the date of the dossal within the papacy of Martin IV does not at first seem to have any particular significance, coming as it did after the main battles to do with the care of the Poor Clares had been fought. There appears to be only one document which shows this Pope acting in relation to the Poor Clares. This is a bull of the seventeenth of November 1281 directed to the Poor Clares of Assisi in which Martin IV confirms all the privileges of the convent. It is a repeat of a bull issued by Nicholas III on the second of May 1278. 62 The commissioning of the dossal therefore came at a time when no severe problems had arisen between the Poor Clares and the Franciscans for over a decade. The period between 1272 and 1297 was one of quiet after the repeated attempts of the Franciscans to rid
themselves of the care of the Poor Clares.\textsuperscript{63} The repeat of the bull of 1278 confirming the privileges of the convent at Assisi may have given the impression of a new era of stability for the convent, in which they were not in danger of losing the care of the Franciscans, and so prompted the commission of a dossal emphasizing Saint Clare's wishes for the order and the way in which these were bound up with both Franciscans and papacy.

Although Saint Francis is depicted a number of times on the dossal no similarity is shown in their ways of life. Clare is seen almost exclusively within an ecclesiastical/monastic environment by which Saint Francis is not bound. Those scenes which do include the intrusion of lay people are distinguished by violence: Clare clinging to the altar when Ser Monaldo arrives to take her back to her parents, Agnes being dragged kicking and screaming down the hill by her relatives who pay no heed to the pain they inflict by their blows (Figs. 79 & 80).\textsuperscript{64} In this respect the panel shows deference to the rule of Ugolino and the desire of Francis - it imposes on Clare's life a wish for enclosure that was not part of her original vocation. Within forty years of her death there was no longer any question of an existence which breached the convent walls in any respect. This aspect is underlined in the dossal rather than fought against. The two scenes which show miracles performed by Saint Clare are not those which have any significance to the outside world, such as her repelling
of the Saracens from San Damiano and hence from Assisi. Nor do they show any miracles of healing for the townspeople of Assisi. On the contrary they emphasize the communal life of the nuns and the desire for enclosure. The miracle which allowed Clare’s sister Agnes to join her and thus escape from a worldly life underlines, along with the other uppermost scene, showing Clare’s escape from the world, a desire for complete enclosure. In these cases facts are not actually tampered with, yet it is not entirely true to the spirit of the order.

To this extent the Saint Clare dossal is indicative of the accepted male pressures which had forced Clare to agree to enclosure from the earliest years of the order. With the death of their founder any fight for a more active life was extinguished and even the dearly bought privilege of poverty was clearly not binding. Like the Franciscans, whose circumvention of the rules we now take for granted, the Poor Clares were obviously able to follow the same course to a certain degree. The rules of poverty and strict enclosure, in the case of Benedetta, were no bridle to being personally able to commission works of art or specifying certain details of the iconography. It is worth remembering that even in the earliest years of the order rules as to the financial means of those women who entered the order were having to be imposed. Like the Franciscans who quickly lost their lay aspect and turned into a clerical order, the Poor Clares quickly lost their poverty, not
necessarily through laxity but through the imposition of the rule of Ugolino. This meant that they had to survive in the same way as did traditional convents; by demanding an entrance dowry. The effect of this was to quickly turn the order into an aristocratic one similar to the Benedictines, and indeed in the early years of the order many houses of Benedictines did change allegiance to the rule of the Clares.66 Saint Clare herself, although from a noble family, had given away all her belongings on the instruction of Saint Francis, but even allowing for the privilege of poverty this must have been impracticable for a succession of applicants from powerful families who were keen for their daughters to enter the most prestigious house of a new religious order but not for them to undergo the hardships attendant upon this.

Although in its espousal of enclosure the dossal follows an accepted formula for the protection of nuns, other parts of it do not have such a predictable nature. The episodes shown on the sides of the dossal differ significantly from the usual points to be emphasized during a canonization process during this period from the point of view of miraculous powers. However they are faithful to Clare's canonization process. It was usual for at least seventy per cent of the testimonies in a processus to concern miracles, particularly curative, and this is generally followed in painted versions of saints lives.67 In Clare's case this drops to ten per cent.68 This is reflected on the dossal.
Not so much as one curative miracle is shown there.

In the few other extant depictions of scenes from Clare's life a far greater emphasis on miracles appears to be shown and this corresponds to the public's expectation of sanctity. Two surviving panels show one of her most dramatic miracles - repelling the Saracens of the Imperial army by holding aloft a pyx she carries on the walls of San Damiano.\(^69\) This can be seen for example in a thirteenth century Sienese panel.\(^70\) That the Saint Clare dossal, intended as it was for the protomonastero in Assisi, in a church the building of which had been partially funded by the comune, should not show an event of such importance for the peace of the town seems strange. Indeed such a lack of miracles in so early an altarpiece makes the omission stranger as normally the movement is in the opposite direction.\(^71\)

The other miracle that is to be found more than once in extant scenes from Clare's life is that of Innocent IV ordering her to bless the bread which then became imprinted with the sign of the cross.\(^72\) This too is missing from the Saint Clare dossal but there is present another miracle concerning bread which is that of the multiplication of the loaf (Fig. 81). This appears to have been a very popular type of miracle in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and is reported of Saint Catherine of Siena amongst others.\(^73\) However, given the bias of the other scenes on the
dossal with their emphasis on Clare’s closeness to the Franciscans and especially to Francis himself the scene probably has a more pointed reference than being a mere "Christ-like" miracle. It shows an episode from the life of Saint Clare when only a single loaf was brought to the Poor Clares of San Damiano by the Franciscans whose job it was to look after their material needs. Saint Clare, nothing daunted, started to distribute it fairly. Thomas of Celano relates that, "And by divine grace the small piece of bread multiplied in the hands of her who broke it so that a large portion was provided for each member of the community". While the miracle of the crossed loaves originated as a sign of obedience to Innocent IV this miracle is a divine justification of having the Franciscans to care for the house at Assisi. However it also touches on the issue of poverty in that it shows the Franciscans caring temporally for the Poor Clares but by this time this was no longer an important issue at Assisi for the Clares had already some possessions.

Throughout the dossal the approval of Clare’s way of life both by Franciscans and other male members of the Church is stressed, as well as their willingness to help her achieve her goal. The bishop recognises Clare’s humility and Francis recognises and accepts her religious vocation. Her relatives are brought to accept the strength of this and also that of her sister Agnes. Finally there is divine recognition and that of the combined Franciscan order and
The Curia.

The main emphasis is on Clare's vocation and five of the eight episodes refer to this. This does not have its only significance in showing Clare's perceived commitment to the religious life. This would presumably already have been taken as "given". What it also brings out is the intimate involvement of Saint Francis in the formation of the Poor Clares, something that is also stressed by Clare in her Testament. Saint Francis' presence in the dossal is in contrast to the presence of Saint Clare in cycles of the life of Saint Francis. The Saint Francis dossal by Bonaventura Berlinghieri and the Bardi Saint Francis dossal do not show Saint Clare once despite there being twenty scenes in the Bardi dossal. This is similar throughout all scenes of the life of Saint Francis. Even in the great fresco cycle on the Upper Church of San Francesco only one of the twenty-six scenes shows Saint Clare, as she and her sisters lament over the body of Saint Francis as it is carried past San Damiano on the way to Assisi. The prominence accorded to Saint Francis in the Saint Clare dossal must have had a recognisable significance, just as Saint Clare being omitted in the cycles of Saint Francis was significant.

In other cycles of female saints it is normal for their inspiration for and desire to enter the religious life to be depicted in relation to a male protagonist. Saint
Catherine of Siena is mystically married to Christ, Saint Humility receives instructions for the founding of a new convent in a vision, Margaret of Cortona is persuaded to seek help from the Franciscans after a supernatural experience. The distinction in the Saint Clare dossal is that here it is a living person who inspires Clare with the desire for the religious life. This is the reverse of the normal increased emphasis on divine inspiration when the life of a saint is translated into pictorial terms.

Clare's decisions in following her religious life have been seen to be given sanction in the dossal by being followed by miracles. These can be seen as a pattern of action and response implying that all Clare's actions are sanctioned by God and so meaning that the dossal follows the normal pictorial method of showing sanctity. However when compared to a few other examples of this nature miracles in the Saint Clare dossal appear to be distinctly lacking. Rather the explicit sanction is that of living male religious. It is this sanction which takes up four scenes of the dossal and part of a fifth. Presumably at the time of this commission miracles were not what needed to be stressed. If Saint Clare and her order followed the Franciscans in iconographical changes as well as in their building and fresco programme then the Saint Clare dossal must represent a point at which the immediate need to stress sanctity had passed away just as the early Saint Francis panels progress away from his depiction as a miracle worker. Like Francis,
Clare was quickly canonized and the overwhelming need for miracles to prove her sanctity thus dispensed with at an early stage. What was needed was rather to present approval and assimilation within a stable ecclesiastical structure in a similar way to that in which the Franciscans used the frescoes of the upper church at Assisi to show papal approval.  

The male approval and recognition of Clare's sanctity is further emphasised by the first scene of Clare receiving the palm from Bishop Guido of Assisi who recognises her faith and humility (Fig. 76). In the final scene the Pope, cardinals and Franciscans assembled for her funeral complete the cycle with a further mortal recognition of her unquestioned sanctity (Fig. 83). Thus the holiness of Clare's life and by extension that of her order, is proclaimed on three levels - by God, by Francis and by the established Church. The fourth and fifth scenes located on the uppermost tier of the dossal show the highest approval; that of God. In the first of these two scenes Clare is protected by her sacred surroundings from the wrath of her family, while in the second she performs her first miracle when her sister Agnes becomes too heavy to be dragged back to her parents in Assisi. In this way both Clare's vocation and her form of life are confirmed by God. In the fifth scene, showing the attempted abduction of Agnes and her vestition, Francis is connected with and echoes God's will by himself accepting Agnes into the religious life (Figs.
The approval of Clare by the established church is evident on the two lowest scenes of the dossal (Figs. 76 & 83). By inference this approval covers the whole of her religious life - from the recognition by Bishop Guido to her funeral service. Again in the second of these pairs of scenes, comprising the lowest tier of the dossal, a Franciscan presence is in evidence. Although Saint Francis is no longer alive the Franciscans are still shown to be closely involved with the functioning of Clare's order - an order instituted by Francis himself and thus closely entwined with the Franciscans and following their precepts. Their presence in this scene is not, though, an overwhelming one for it is the curia who make up the majority of the crowd. The Franciscans are there to support the actions of the Pope and cardinals who take up the majority of the standing space. This final scene joins together the approval of the two parts of the church who had been separated in previous scenes. It also shows the two groups to whom Clare had promised obedience and joins them as they were not joined in reality. Approval by Bishop Guido and Francis in the first two scenes is both amplified and compressed in the ultimate scene to approval and recognition of Clare by the whole of the Franciscan order and the whole of the Curia.

The central icon of Clare herself shows her as a virgin rather than as the foundress of an order, holding a book to denote
this. The absence of any reference to Clare's rule may seem puzzling as it was "the only rule by a female monastic to find papal approval in this era". Jeryldene Wood suggests that this omission is due to the overwhelming force of the iconographical tradition whereby women saints are denoted as either virgins or martyrs. However, bearing in mind the emphases in the surrounding eight scenes on Saint Francis' institution of the order and its following as far as possible a Franciscan way of life, it is possible to view the omission of the attribute of the founder of an order rather as a deliberate choice than as an almost subconscious deference to hagiographical tradition. Clare's importance to her order was not being underestimated or sublimated in order to bow to popular restrictionist views on the role of women in religious life. Despite the restrictions of liturgical classifications many married women and widows were recognised for their sanctity during this period and were depicted as such. Saint Humility was both married and popularly credited as the foundress of an order and was so shown in her altarpiece in Florence less than a century later. The effect of representing Clare without a book is to point to her desire to be part of Saint Francis' order and not the founder of a new order with a separate identity. That this was in all probability a deliberate choice is evidenced by panels containing figures of Saint Clare in Northern Italian painting of the fourteenth century. Here it is noticeable that the
overwhelming majority of the representations show Saint Clare holding the rule.\textsuperscript{81} Thus despite her proximity in many cases to a representation of Saint Francis she is separated from him by being pictured as the foundress of an order in her own right not necessarily dependent or even affiliated to the Franciscan order. As an iconographic attribute the tendency of the rule would be to denote leadership and the foundation of a new type of religious life.

In fact the importance of Clare's rule is not its rarity in being a rule written by a female monastic for women. Its importance lies in showing the attempts of Clare to return as far as feasibly possible to the original form of life given to her by Saint Francis and in her testament she states that it is to all intents and purposes that given by Francis.\textsuperscript{82} The rule was prepared by Clare not for its own sake but in response to the pressures being put on the Poor Clares by the burgeoning Franciscan order on the one hand and by Cardinal Ugolino's wish to impose what was basically a Benedictine rule on the other. Both seemed to militate against Clare's original intentions to follow Saint Francis as closely as possible. The fact that it was not written until she was nearing her death emphasises that Clare only wrote it when it became clear that there was no other choice if there was to be any chance of the convent continuing as she wished it to. As a response to the events of the previous forty years the rule of Saint Clare is necessarily modified from her original expectations and
intentions. She had realised that enclosure could not be avoided but there were still items which she was prepared to fight for and believed had a chance of carrying out. These are mostly items which would lead her closer to the Franciscan order. They represent a compromise with the power of the papacy but at the same time follow the Franciscan order as closely as possible. Clare's insistence on poverty was the basic tenet of her identification with the Franciscan way of life. On this fundamental point she would not bow even to the authority of the pope.

It is Clare's single minded perseverance in order to win the right of poverty for her own convent that is seized upon by historians of the order, often to the detriment of other aspects within the rule accepted by Innocent IV at the end of her life. Clare wished her nuns to work as Saint Francis had wished his friars to work as far as was possible. She echoes Saint Francis in her statement of obedience to the papacy. Finally she stresses how closely the two orders should be bound together with the Franciscans always providing spiritual support for the Poor Clares. On this final point she was at one with the papacy but not with the Franciscans. The Franciscan commitment to looking after the Poor Clares both spiritually and materially had early on become a source of problems and there is evidence that even Saint Francis later in life wished to avoid the Poor Clares.83
Saint Clare's rule appears as a balancing act between gaining papal approval - successive popes had wished to see the Franciscans accept responsibility for the Clares - and following Saint Francis' original rule as much as possible. It is this balancing act between the church and papacy on one hand, and the Franciscan order on the other, that the Saint Clare dossal exemplifies. The panel extols, perpetuates and propagandizes her last wishes for the order. A book denoting her as a foundress is inappropriate as neither she nor her original followers saw her as the foundress of a distinct order.

Although there is no donor portrait, nor any other documentation which can give us any knowledge of the commissioner/s, the iconography of the dossal as a whole points to some participation on the part of the Poor Clares, in whose interests it would have been to see both papacy and the Franciscans acting together to provide for their wellbeing - both spiritual and physical. The earlier Crucifix commissioned by the abbess Benedetta implies that it was possible for the Clares to pay for important works which would be placed prominently in their church. Furthermore, the emphasis on Francis and the Franciscans on a dossal dedicated to the life of Saint Clare, something that does not occur inversely on representations of the life of Saint Francis, is a strong indication of the wishes of the Poor Clares at this time. This was also the wish of the papacy.
The Saint Clare Triptych in Trieste.

The statement of what the nuns in the protomonastero saw as their role within the order and their struggle for the fulfillment of this role is complemented by another work which comes from the convent of San Cipriano in Trieste. This is the Saint Clare triptych now in the Museo Civico d'Arte e di Storia (Figs. 84-92). The triptych is immediately noticeable for its idiosyncratic iconography and its combination of panels executed at different times although all within the first half of the fourteenth century. It was for a long time unknown and only came to light in the mid-nineteenth century. Previous to this it had been within the claustral apartments of the nuns and so had been unknown to the public. 84

The central panel of the triptych contains thirty-six narrative scenes arranged in six rows of six and running from left to right and from top to bottom (Figs. 84 & 85). The first thirty-four of these scenes show episodes from the life of Christ and the Virgin ranging from "The Annunciation" to "The Ascension" and "The death of the Virgin", while the final two scenes are of "The death of Saint Clare" and "The stigmatisation of Saint Francis" (Figs. 86 & 87). 85 All were once adorned with inscriptions announcing their subject matter but some of these have now been either completely or partially lost. 86 The wings of the panel are of a later date and are each divided into three tiers on their inner sides (Figs. 88-92). 87 That on
the left shows, from top to bottom, Saints John the Evangelist and John the Baptist in the act of presenting the soul of Saint Clare to God, who appears at the top of the panel to gather her into heaven (Fig. 91). All three saints are identified by an inscription, although that of Saint Clare is partially destroyed. Below, in the middle register are Saints Giustus and Servulus, and on the bottom register Saints Lazarus and Apollinaris. Again, all these four saints are identified by an inscription.

The right wing of the triptych is similarly divided into three registers. The bottom tier is taken up by three female saints once more identifiable by their inscriptions as Saints Barbara, Catherine and Margaret (Fig. 90). Above is a scene which is generally referred to as "La sottomissione delle Clarisse al Vescovo" but whose inscriptions do not help in a secure identification of the scene in which a palm is being given by a haloed bishop to a group of four kneeling women dressed in lay clothes (Fig. 89). Only the head of one of these women can be seen but of the others the one who is reaching up her hand to take the palm proffered by the bishop wears a deep blue garment. Immediately behind her is a woman dressed in orange while the figure at the back is dressed in grey. It is only this final figure who wears any type of head-covering, a translucent white scarf worn loosely over her head and shoulders. The other women merely have a plain band around their heads. Behind them stand two larger
saints, on the same scale as the bishop. These two saints are identified as Clare and Agnes, once again by means of the inscriptions placed above their haloes. The bishop however cannot be named. His inscription has been partially obliterated and only the remains of the word Episcopus can now be made out. This runs vertically downwards on the left hand side of his halo. On the other side of the halo is a vertical patch where the surface of the paint has been completely removed. It is possible that this part of the scene once carried the name of the bishop. However if this is the case no trace has been left. A number of interpretations have been advanced for the scene which will be discussed later. The top tier is divided vertically into two. On the left is a half length figure of the dead Christ against a background of the cross while on the right is the Madonna della Misericordia who protects with her mantle a group of praying nuns (Fig. 88). The wings when closed show on the left Saint Christopher and on the right Saint Sergius, both against a red ground which contrasts with the rich gold ground of the inner triptych (Fig. 92).

The convent of San Cipriano is now Benedictine but had not been part of the Benedictine order from its foundation. At some point towards the end of the thirteenth century the already existing convent had become part of the Poor Clares only to change allegiance in the following century. Since the triptych had been unknown for so long there existed no
records of it through the centuries and it was consequently found difficult to date it accurately. In fact, many of the attempts to date it have rested on an explanation of its iconography in tandem with what little historical information now exists about the convent during the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The convent was probably founded by the wishes of a certain Donna Albuina and its eventual formation is mentioned in a document of 1265 where Albuina gives some of her property to her brother. However the official recognition of the community did not come until thirteen years later in a document of the tenth of July 1278 in which Bishop Arlongo of Trieste formally instituted the convent. In the fourteenth century it was known as Santa Maria della Cella and it certainly belonged to the Poor Clares by 1282 as there exists from the February of that year a bull from Pope Martin IV in which the convent is referred to as "ordinis sancte Clare" and where the pope gives the protection of it to the Decano di Concordia. The last document in which the convent is referred to as belonging to the Poor Clares is from 1352. By 1367 the name and the allegiance of the convent was changed according to a chronicle from the second half of the eighteenth century compiled from the archives of the convent in which it is stated that, "In luogo S. Maria della Cella Nuova il titolo del convento camparisce cangiato in - Monastero della Cella dell'Ordine di S. Benedetto".
The documents which refer to the convent are scarce and do not enable us to reconstruct completely the events which may have led to the change of allegiance of the convent in the mid-fourteenth century. Nevertheless it is clear from what does survive that following the institution of the convent by permission of the bishop of Trieste subsequent relations with the incumbent were not of such a friendly nature and in 1301 Boniface VIII was forced to forbid the bishop to interfere with the running of the convent. The bishop had apparently forced his way into the convent, expelled the Franciscans, whose job it was to look after the nuns, and substituted two secular clerics, all of which flouted the rules under which the Poor Clares lived. In 1309 there were still difficulties between the new bishop Rodolfo and the nuns. In the April of that year the bishop appealed to Clement V against certain letters regarding the convent, sent from the papal legate to the Bishop of Città Nuova and to the Prior of SS. Martiri in Trieste since they were prejudicial to the bishops of Trieste and to the church of Trieste. Nevertheless by 1340 the bishop had evidently regained the right to at least some power over the convent as there exists a document from that year in which the then bishop, Fra Pace da Vedano, allowed the convent to sell a house.

In looking for a particularly Triestine significance to the iconography of the triptych the central scene of the right wing has been related to the events described above
involving the relationship of the convent with the bishop. The central register of the right wing is certainly the part that attracts the eye first as it is the only narrative scene which the wings contain. The scene is generally explained as relating to the renewal of friendly relations between the bishop and the convent at some time between the letter of Boniface VII of 1309 and 1340, when the then bishop gave the convent permission to sell a house. This was most likely to have occurred during the episcopate of Fra Guglielmo who was nominated bishop in 1327, arriving in Trieste in 1328, and dying in 1330, as he was the only Franciscan bishop of Trieste during this period and therefore the one most likely to effect a reconciliation.\(^9^9\)

The apparent problem with this interpretation is that of the clothes of the women kneeling in front of the haloed bishop which are certainly not those of the Poor Clares. However it has been contended that the kneeling women are the commissioners of the wings which they ordered shortly before entering the convent and that therefore they are still shown in lay dress rather than in a religious habit. Walcher-Casotti further suggests that the nuns from the convent named in a document of 1334 were the same who, during the episcopate of Fra Guglielmo, commissioned the wings, since their names coincide to a large extent with those of the female saints on the wings.\(^1^0^0\) This though cannot be proved and the female saints shown on the
triptych, although not always together, were very popular in a number of paintings commissioned by women or for women during this period. Catherine and Agnes are depicted together in an ancona by Tommaso da Modena in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna (inv. 289), while Saints Catherine of Alexandria, Agnes, Margaret and Barbara are shown on a polyptych by Cecco di Pietro now in the Museo di San Matteo in Pisa which was originally from a convent of convertite in Pisa dedicated to Santa Marta.¹⁰¹

Only one author has attempted to link the scene to a general framework within the order believing it to represent the episode from the life of Saint Clare when she is presented on Palm Sunday with a palm by the bishop of Assisi.¹⁰² This is based on the supposed similarities between this and the corresponding scene in the Saint Clare dossal at Assisi. In this case the only reason for the placing of the kneeling women in the scene would be that they wished to identify themselves more closely with the life of the foundress of the order. Indeed this seems to be likely if, as Walcher-Casotti believes, the women donors represented here were shortly to enter the convent. The scene then mirrors the corresponding point in the life of the founder of their order, as Saint Clare received the palm shortly before fleeing from the parental home to join Saint Francis and herself become a nun.¹⁰³ The use of the scene would also be appropriate as the palm could signify chastity.¹⁰⁴
However this explanation fails to take into account that the Bishop of Assisi at the time that Saint Clare received the palm was not later canonized. This though is not a stumbling block to the interpretation of the scene as it is not uncommon at this period to find examples of people who were not officially saints being represented as such. It is also true that the Saint labelled Agnes in the centre of the scene is probably not the Agnes who was the younger sister of Saint Clare, and who was in fact never canonized, but rather the early Roman martyr, as can be seen by means of the difference of her clothes compared with those of Saint Clare. Whereas Saint Clare is clearly wearing a grey monastic habit with a black veil Saint Agnes has a bright blue tunic and a red cloak. Also, the life attributed to Thomas of Celano does not mention the presence of Agnes at the ceremony although it would seem a reasonable assumption that she was present amongst the others.

A further complication is the type of vegetation that the bishop holds in his right hand in this scene. The distribution of palms on Palm Sunday was not universal and could be substituted for olives which are sometimes shown in the representations of Christ entering Jerusalem. The piece of vegetation that the bishop presents to the kneeling women is a branch with small leaves on it and appears to be an olive as it bears no resemblance to the other palms shown on the wings as the attributes of the various martyrs depicted. Both are appropriate to Palm
Sunday and the words in Celano's life have been translated both as palm or olive.\textsuperscript{109} The olive would be appropriate in this context for reasons other than its use on Palm Sunday as it symbolises peace and is also used as the symbol of Saint Agnes.\textsuperscript{110} The two plants seem to have been almost interchangeable as can be seen by comparing the vegetation held by the bishop in the Trieste triptych with that held by the bishop in the Saint Clare dossal at Assisi. That in Assisi is very similar to that in Trieste and there can be no doubt as to the type of plant shown in the Saint Clare dossal as it is described as a \textit{palma} in the inscription which can still be made out underneath the scene.

Nevertheless an intended distinction between representing the palm or the olive may give further resonances to the scene. The use of the palm would not only be true to the legend of Saint Clare but the palm could also be used as a symbol of chastity and was a sign of the church's triumph over death, the reason for which martyrs are usually depicted holding a palm. It may be that it is partially in this context that the palm is shown here - as a reminder to both viewers and commissioners of their faith in this particular tenet of the Christian church in the face of the advancing plague.\textsuperscript{111} Apart from the enormous ravages wreaked by the epidemic of 1348 the plague returned to Trieste a number of times before the end of the fourteenth century and there were at least seven outbreaks before 1361.\textsuperscript{112} A second serious epidemic after that of 1348 is
known to have affected the area - Friuli, Trieste and Istria - during the year 1360. This is attested to by records in the "Libri delle Cere" of the cathedral of San Giusto in Trieste which records, amongst other items, the amount of candles that were to be used at the funerals of various citizens. During the summer of 1360 there is a significant rise in these funerals. It may be during the time of these repeated outbreaks of plague that the wings of the altarpiece were commissioned rather than having any association with the troubles between the convent and the bishop of Trieste. The two female saints in the scene of "La Sottomissione" are also known for their efficacy against illness and Saint Christopher, also present on the altarpiece, was venerated as a protector against all types of illness.

Other parts of the wings also seem to point to some type of causative association with the threat of the plague. The Madonna della Misericordia's protecting cloak, a symbol which enjoyed an unprecedented popularity during the plague ridden fourteenth century, was believed to be efficacious against attacks of plague. Against the background of the recurring instances of the plague during these years and the particular significance of many of the saints as protectors from illness, especially the two female saints in the central panel of the right hand wing this scene may not in fact refer specifically to the convent but rather be a general prayer offered in the hope of protection against
the illness by a group of women. However any connection with the plague would assume a later date for the wings of at least the mid-century after the first great outbreak of plague. This appears unlikely as it was soon after mid-century that the convent changed to the Benedictine rule.

The majority of the male saints in the altarpiece were particularly venerated in Trieste and have no specific relationship with any contemporary events. Giustus and Servulus were patron saints of the city while the saint on the reverse of the right wing, Saint Sergius, appears with the halberd of Trieste in his hand. Saints Lazarus and Apollinaris were also associated with Trieste. Both are shown in the garments of deacons. Little is known of Lazarus who is said to have been martyred in Trieste in the second or third century. Saint Apollinaris was also said to have been a deacon martyred during the reign of the emperor Caracalla.

The uncertainty regarding the significance that can be placed on the iconography of the wings, or, even if a historical basis is proved, the date at which it took place, has made the dating of the triptych problematical. Any connection with the plague assumes a date near to the change of order while if the scene of "La Sottomissione" deals with the renewal of friendly relations between the bishop and the nuns a much earlier date is implied - any point between 1309 and 1340. On a purely stylistic basis
the wings have been placed as belonging to the early work of Paolo Veneziano. This would support a date during the episcopate of Fra Guglielmo and so makes this explanation seem the most likely.\textsuperscript{119} In this case the central panel could have been executed within a short time of the completion of the wings. It was probably originally a dossal existing in its own right.\textsuperscript{120} It is generally considered to have been painted early in the fourteenth century.\textsuperscript{121} Despite the possibility of the two parts of the triptych being executed within a fairly short time of each other there are a number of striking differences between them. These are not only stylistic but iconographical, in the representation of Saint Clare.\textsuperscript{122}

The emphasis placed on the possible significance of "La Sottomissione" has overshadowed any discussion of the habit worn by Saint Clare in the various parts of the triptych and the light that this may shed on the relationship between the wings and the central panel or between the various sections of the wings. The connection between the habit worn by Clare and those worn by the nuns sheltering under the Madonna della Misericordia has also received little attention. The importance attached to Clare herself can be seen throughout the triptych. In the central panel the scene showing her death is compared with that of the Virgin by being placed next to the compartment containing that scene in a painting that is compositionally very similar. The Virgin lies across the central foreground
surrounded by the apostles who are crowded to the left and right. Saint Clare also lies across the central foreground of the following panel. She is accompanied by a number of her sister nuns who, like the apostles, are placed to either side. Both are shown at the moment when their soul is collected from them. Christ, accompanied by angels, comes down and is about to gather up the soul of the Virgin while in the next panel it is the Virgin herself, also accompanied by angels, who gathers up the soul of Clare in a white cloth (Fig. 86).

The provenance of the central part of the Trieste triptych is signalled by a single episode from the life of Clare. Coupled with the fact that the completed triptych came to light in the convent that was previously that of Santa Maria della Cella this has led to the belief that not only the wings but also the central panel were commissioned for the convent in Trieste. Its dating in the first years of the fourteenth century would coincide perfectly with the period during which the present convent of San Cipriano appertained to the Poor Clares.

However the habit worn by Clare and her companions in the central panel bears no relation to that worn by Clare in the wings, although both parts of the triptych were executed while the convent formed part of the order. Nothing certain is known of the actual habit worn by the members of the convent at this time. Although the
foundation of the convent was provided for in 1265, as mentioned above, it was not until its official recognition in the document of 1278 that a particular habit was stipulated. This states that the nuns should wear a habit of black and white, "habitum habeant nigrum sive album". The bishop also reserved his right to confirm the election of the abbess in this document, "sit in arbitrio ispsarum sororum de eligenda sibi Abbatissa quacumque, et de quocumque loco voluerint, confirmationem vero ipsius Abatisse in Nobis reservamus". The document, whilst proving that the community was in existence at this time, does not however mention which rule, if any, the members followed. From the fact that a black and white habit was given to the members of the convent the inference has been drawn that it was initially Benedictine, as it was to become later in the fourteenth century.\textsuperscript{123} Although the arrangements for the spiritual care of the nuns given in this document do not contradict this - Benedictine nuns were normally under the care of the local bishop who would probably have appointed secular clergy to attend to them, in this case "Sacerdotibus Capituli Ecclesie Tergestine" - it seems strange that the rule they were to follow is not stated here as it is in the later documents of the fourteenth century when it is certain that the convent did follow the Benedictine rule.\textsuperscript{124}

By the time of the document of 1282 the convent already formed part of the order of the Poor Clares but whether the
nuns had changed their habit to that stipulated for the order which they had just joined is unknown. It seems unlikely, however, that they had changed from being Benedictine. Although the habit originally given to them by the bishop would coincide with that normally worn by the Benedictines and although there are a number of examples of Benedictine convents changing to the rule of the Poor Clares, this change seems exceptionally precipitous. More likely is that the convent started as a group of lay women under no particular rule and that these women eventually asked for some type of official recognition. Bishop Arlongo's document of 1278 records that the foundation was made at the request of the nuns rather than imposed from above; "nosto et Capituli Ecclesie Tergestine assensu fundatum, ad petitionem D. Lucie, et aliarum Sororum Deo". The change from what was only a semi-religious community to one placed under the jurisdiction of the bishop and finally to the community receiving a regular rule mirrors other examples of this period. One such was the famous Poor Clare convent of Monteluce in Perugia which in little more than a year was turned from a community of religious women into one of Cardinal Ugolino's first foundations of Poor Clares, complete with the imposition of clausura that this implied. A similar type of move from a semi-religious community to one bound by a particular rule happened in the convent to which Saint Clare of Montefalco belonged. Joan, the elder sister of Saint Clare of Montefalco, requested a
rule from the local bishop, in this case a specific rule was asked for but not one that made the sisters part of a recognised order. This may be closer to the case in Trieste as the nuns are referred to in Bishop Arlongo’s document as subject to his authority which was most likely to happen in convents which did not form part of a specific order.

This type of evolution may have had repercussions regarding the habit that the nuns wore. For the sisters of Monteluice the general regulations regarding the dress of the Poor Clares as formulated by Cardinal Ugolino would have presumably have been followed but in the case of the community to which Clare of Montefalco belonged no regulations regarding dress are mentioned and from the frescoes in Clare’s church of Santa Croce in Montefalco the sisters seem to have worn a habit influenced by the Franciscan ideal but otherwise merely conforming generally to the idea of a monastic habit. In the case of the nuns of Santa Maria della Cella the habit may originally have been chosen very arbitrarily with little thought of it as something distinguishing different orders of nuns one from the other but with a wider distinction in mind - that of nuns from laity. When the convent became part of the Poor Clares it is not certain that the habit would have changed along with the allegiance of the convent.

That this was the case is supported by the depiction of the
nuns sheltering under the Madonna della Misericordia. The black and white habit referred to by Bishop Arlongo is seen in five of these nuns. Since the wings can be dated before the change in affiliation of the convent to the Benedictine rule it cannot refer to the newly acquired rule of the convent and recent restorations have not discovered any overpainting. Neither however is it the normally recognised habit of the Poor Clares. It has been suggested that the nuns were not intended to represent the contemporary members of the convent but instead to commemorate the founding members in the original habit given to them by the bishop of Trieste and which, like the habit of Clare of Montefalco, was probably only intended to denote that they were nuns rather than give an indication of any particular religious order.130

However the question of the habit worn by the nuns sheltering under the Madonna della Misericordia cannot be taken in isolation. It is bound up with the other representations of nuns on the altarpiece as a whole. Despite the probable difference in date of the central panel and the wings all parts of the triptych were demonstrably executed for a convent of Poor Clares. There is also the question of the nun under the Madonna della Misericordia who is not wearing the black and white habit. Instead she wears a grey tunic and cloak. The woman is undoubtedly a nun as she wears the distinctive white wimple covered by a black veil that is worn by the other women
surrounding her and she obviously forms part of this group. The difference in her habit from those of the other nuns may be explained by her position within the convent and her habit could have been intended to signify her office as abbess. However I know of no other representation of a group of nuns in which the abbess is pointed out to the viewer by such means. More likely, where any distinction is required, is that she holds a staff of office as in a polyptych by Andrea da Bologna now in the Pinacoteca Civica in Fermo (Ascoli Piceno), or merely that she is placed in a more prominent position. This is the case in a painting in the Museo Nazionale in Palermo from the Badia di Santo Spirito in Agrigento which shows the Annunciation with the Trinity above while at the base between the Angel Gabriel and the Virgin are a number of kneeling nuns. Here the nun separated from the others and placed nearest to the Virgin is presumably the abbess or possibly the giver of the main donation towards the cost of the painting. There is no difference in clothing between her and her companions (Figs. 93 &94). 131 The nun wearing the grey habit in Trieste is certainly occupying that position of honour to the right of the Virgin but what relation this bears to her role within the convent cannot be ascertained.

More important from the point of view of the entire triptych is that this nun is strongly identified with the other figures of Saint Clare on the wings by means of her habit. Saint Clare is shown on the wings twice. In both
examples she is easily identified by an inscription and in both examples she is wearing a habit that is not easily compatible with that which we normally associate with the Poor Clares. The grey of the habit, which is not usual in representations of Clare or her followers is, however, by no means at odds with the dress codes as laid out in the rule of Urban IV nor any of the earlier guidelines formed by either Cardinal Ugolino or Saint Clare herself.132 Nevertheless, the distinctive cord around the waist cannot be seen although both in the representation of the nun and that of Clare below her there does appear to be some type of fastening around the waist. It is not possible to tell whether this is a knotted cord. It may be that with the clear labelling of the Saint it was not felt necessary to show the cord in a prominent position, as was the case in some other paintings of the period, and this coincides with the lack of distinctive attributes attached to the other female saints on the wings.

From the striking similarity between the habit which Clare is wearing in the wings and that of the nun on the top register of the right wing there seems to be a conscious policy on behalf of the commissioners to associate the nuns with the figure of the Saint by means of the habit and to imply that the nun sheltering under the Madonna della Misericordia was a member of the Poor Clares. However, there are still two major questions to be resolved about the representation of the habit in this triptych. The first of
these is the use of the black and white habit by the other five nuns under the Madonna della Misericordia and the second is the habit used in the central panel. The use of a habit which did not completely comply with the rules then in force for the Poor Clares is not without precedent and there is evidence of this from the province of Padua as late as 1358 when the definitive rule of Urban IV, which was very detailed as to forms of dress, had been in force for nearly a century. The habit of the Poor Clares in the Province of Padua was evidently varied at this point and Francesco Pisano, Minister of the province of Padua, had to send out a decree making it clear how the Poor Clares who were under his jurisdiction should dress themselves. Particularly stressed was that the nuns should not wear cloth that was coloured or dyed. Although it can be surmised from this that the nuns were using habits made from coloured and dyed cloth - hence the need for the injunction - there is no mention of exactly how they were transgressing the rules. Transgression though appears to have been a fairly common occurrence and it may be that in the wings of the triptych this transgression has been captured in paint.

The second point is the relationship both between the habit of the nuns in the wings and of Clare with the Poor Clares in the central panel who are shown wearing the typical striped mantle of the Veneto. In "The death of Saint Clare" the dying Clare's mantle cannot be seen but the half figure
of her soul as it is collected by the Virgin has a horizontally striped cloak as have the four nuns surrounding the dying Saint. In almost all representations of the Poor Clares in this area during the fourteenth century the mantle is striped. These stripes may sometimes vary in thickness or numbers or their grouping, and the base colour of the cloak may also vary according to the painting in question, but there are in fact only a very few exceptions to the striped mantle.\textsuperscript{134} The difference in habits between that of Clare in the central panel and in the wings is difficult to account for if both parts of the triptych come from the same convent and were painted within a relatively short distance of time. The Trieste triptych is one of only two examples in which Saint Clare is shown wearing a plain mantle in representations coming from the Veneto during this period. This exception to the rule, added to the fact that the use of the striped mantle must have been known to the commissioners because of the central panel points to a particular reason for the linking of the habit of Clare in the wings with one of the nuns under the Madonna della Misericordia.\textsuperscript{135} Because of this they are unlikely to represent the founders of the convent and are sometimes identified as the commissioners of the wings although this honour is more usually given to the the women kneeling to receive the palm in the central scene of the right wing which seems more likely due to their prominence in the layout of the wings.\textsuperscript{136}
In view of the wish to associate these nuns with the figure of Saint Clare below them it seems most likely that the nuns represented were the contemporary members of the convent and that the commission was part of a collaboration between the lay women shown in the scene below who were shortly to join the convent, and the existing nuns. As with many other convents of Poor Clares at the time, above all in the Veneto, the habit worn in Trieste does not appear to have been in line with that stipulated in the Urbanist rule. The exact meaning of the scene with the bishop is still unclear but it seems that it does in some way refer to the renewal of friendly relations with the convent and that it may have been intended to mirror closely the life of Saint Clare, the orchestration of whose entrance into the religious life was probably aided by the bishop of Assisi without whose consent Francis did nothing. This makes the scene particularly apposite as a commemoration of the reconciliation as it illustrates co-operation between Franciscans and bishop. The difference in the habit of the Poor Clares in the wings and the central part of the triptych is difficult to account for although there is a possibility, which cannot be substantiated, that the central part of the triptych was either not originally intended for the convent of Santa Maria della Cella, or was ordered from outside Trieste and was not subject to the detailed supervision that was clearly the case with the wings.
These examples of paintings from two convents of Poor Clares are evidence of the various problems that could assail nuns due to the necessity of providing for their spiritual and temporal well-being using male clerics who were imposed on them from above. They often seem to have had little effective recourse to higher authorities in the pursuance of their rights or wishes. In the case of the Poor Clares the definitive solution obtained by the Dominicans was never fully realized. Despite many attempts over a number of years it did not prove possible either to impose a single rule for Poor Clare convents or to organize a unified system of spiritual and temporal care over the convents. This lack of uniformity even extended to the habits used by the nuns. Both the Saint Clare dossal in Assisi and the triptych in Trieste illustrate different reactions, by the women involved, to the problems posed in providing supervision and protection for the nuns. One underlines the wish for a closer connection with the Franciscans while that in Trieste demonstrates the attainment of a *modus vivendi* that incorporated a number of points not present in the rule of the Poor Clares, both with regard to the power of the local bishop and also their form of dress. The heterogenous nature of the Poor Clares and the impact this had on the form of life in the two convents discussed is reflected in the paintings.
Notes to Chapter 4.

1 Long 54 notes that papal indulgences were frequently used by the order from the 1240s onwards in order to encourage contributions towards their support. In order to raise the money to build San Francesco Gregory IX allowed Brother Elias to collect gifts from all over the world. The land for the church was given by a citizen of Assisi, Simone di Puccio on the 28th March 1228. See Fratini 12-14.

2 San Francesco was started within two years of the Saint’s death and by 1330 was far enough advanced for the body of the Saint to be translated from the church of San Giorgio. See Fratini 25. Both the church and the decoration that it contained were the subject of much controversy within the order. Fratini 24. Santa Croce had been a small church established by the Franciscans in 1221, but by 1252 a much more impressive structure was planned. See Long 10-11.

3 For example the Florentine convent of Monticelli frequently received legacies from wealthy citizens and the convent housed daughters of of the most important Florentine families. See Long 33-34. Although the convent was destroyed in the early sixteenth century a number of impressive works are known which came from it. These include "The Tree of Life" attributed to Pacino da Buonaguida and now in the Accademia in Florence, as well as the altarpiece from the church attached to the
convent and a number of smaller scenes probably from another work. The latter two are now housed in the Uffizi. For the last three items see Marcucci 1965, 18-21, 122-123 & 135-136.

4 Smart 3-5. Quotation taken from Smart.

5 Moorman 1968, 215. The rule published by Urban IV on the 18th October 1263 was the first which allowed the Cardinal Protector to appoint chaplains who were not part of the Franciscan order.

6 FF 1155.

7 Smart 4. Also Zocca 1936, 88-90. An early fresco cycle of the life of Saint Francis still exists, in a damaged form, in the Lower Church. It probably dates from the middle of the thirteenth century.

8 The privilege was renewed by Gregory IX in 1228 and is printed in an Italian version in FF 1266-1267. It had originally been obtained for the sisters of San Damiano from Innocent III by Saint Francis. See Moorman 1968, 35 and 205.

9 Smart 5-6.

10 Robinson 438-439. Also Ranft 127.

11 See FF 1154 and 1171. An Italian version of the rule of Saint Clare is published in FF 1152-1172.

12 Saint Clare’s testament is published in FF 1173-1182. For Clare’s statement that it was Francis’ wish that the friars should always look after the Clares see
1177.

13 Brooke 277.


15 Saint Clare died on the 11th August 1253. She was canonized on the 26th September 1255. Saint Francis died in 1226 and was canonised in 1228. See FF XVII-XXIV for a chronological table of the main events.

16 Meier 173.

17 The church of San Giorgio was owned by the canons of the Cathedral Chapter of San Rufino who allowed the plans to go ahead after a substantial payment had been made to them. The move was approved by Alexander IV and also by the rector of the Duchy of Spoleto. See Grohmann 70-71.

18 Grohmann 70.

19 Robeck 136 notes that the exchange of San Damiano for San Giorgio, around which the new convent complex of Santa Chiara was built, was ratified by a bull of Alexander IV in 1259 after an agreement was reached between the nuns, the chapter of San Rufino, and the civil authorities. Meier 172 puts forward the idea of a significant contribution by the civic authorities.

20 Meier 172.

21 Meier 169-170.

22 Zocca 1936, 190.

23 Zocca 1954, 61. Also Todini 276.
24 See Grohmann 70-71 who, whilst admitting that the structure of the church of Santa Chiara refers clearly to that of San Francesco, maintains that it is not a mere copy but contains many aspects which give it considerable individuality. He also posits the idea that the reason for not using a double church structure was in order to allow San Francesco its primacy.

25 For a detailed discussion of the architecture of Santa Chiara and its relationship to that of San Francesco see Meier 157-165.

26 Zocca 1936, 190. See also Meier 151. Bruzelius 83 suggests that the church was conceived "as a pendant" to San Francesco. From the point of view of its placing within the town this would make perfect sense as the two churches face towards each other from opposite sides of the town, and both are built on the slopes of the hill at the top of which is Assisi.

27 Siren 120-122.

28 See Boskovits 1968. For a description of the scenes in the vault of Santa Chiara see Zocca 1936, 194-195. In each part of the crossing vault are two paired saints. For example with Saint Clare are the Virgin and Child. Clare's sister Agnes is paired with her early Christian namesake.

in Santa Chiara.

30 For a description of the Old and New Testament Cycles in Santa Chiara see Zocca 1936, 191-194. There were probably originally six scenes from the New Testament, one of which, possibly "The Nativity", has been completely destroyed. They are in the right transept. The Old Testament cycle was formed of nine scenes and was placed in the left transept. It was probably the first to be completed at the turn of the century.

31 For a description of the remaining scenes of the life of Saint Clare see Zocca 1936, 192-193. The two remaining frescoes are "The funeral of Saint Clare" and "The funeral Procession of Saint Clare". They were executed during the first half of the fourteenth century and were probably the last of the three cycles to be completed. Kaftal Tuscan cols.272-278, indentifies the two scenes as "The death of Saint Clare" and "The funeral of Saint Clare". The apparent narrative movement of the frescoes would support this. Celano's life also relates that there were a large number of priests at Clare's death present at the request of the Saint. See FF 1250. However the large number of mitred church officials present means that the fresco is more likely to represent the visit of Innocent IV only a few days before Clare's death. See FF 1248.
Gardner, "Nuns and Altarpieces". Forthcoming.

Garrison 1949, 151, n.393.

Bihl 667-670. See also Zocca 1936, 190-191.

Zocca 1936, 200 believes that the style indicates that it was painted after 1260. Todini 376-377 believes that it was painted before 1260, also because of its style, and points out that Benedetta is not portrayed as a Blessed as thought before the panel was cleaned and that there is therefore no objection to a date before Benedetta's death. Garrison 1949, 207, panel n.542, also noted that Benedetta was not portrayed as a Blessed but still dated the panel to five years after her death. Nevertheless in view of the fact that the inscription clearly states that Benedetta had the panel made it would seem likely that at least plans were made for it before her death, and that, if executed after her death it was done so from her instructions only a very short time afterwards. This is a view shared by Casolini 1950, 76.

Moorman 1968, 205 n.4. Regarding the privilege of poverty, the important phrase when Gregory IX renewed the privilege in 1228 is that no one can force them to accept property: it is protective rather than prohibitive. See for example Meier 172 & n.145.

BS II, cols. 1089-1090. Casolini 1950, 75 notes that Benedetta carries a bag in her hands but does not
discuss its significance although it is possible that it could refer to the alms on which the Clares originally lived.

38 The letter is published in FF 1193-1195.

39 Moorman 1942-1943, 353.

40 The fresco cycle in the Upper Church at Assisi features Pope Gregory IX prominently. He is seen in the fresco showing "The canonization of Saint Francis" as well as in "Gregory IX's vision of Saint Francis supporting the Church". This emphasis on the papacy and the papal curia would have been read as a direct snub to the Spirituals who did not regard Gregory IX in a friendly light due to his relaxation of what they regarded as essential Franciscan tenets. See Smart 4-5.

41 For the way in which scenes were selected according to the message that it was considered necessary to emphasise at the time see Stern.

42 See the discussions in Chapters 2 and 3.


44 Robeck 172-178.

45 Casolini 1976, 24-25. This life is also published in FF 1209-1264. Celano is not universally accepted as
the author of this life - FF 1208. However it is undeniable that the life was written at the instigation of the pope and presents a version of Clare's life that was acceptable to the church authorities.

47 Moorman 1968, 36. See also Ranft 126.
48 Brooke 208.
49 Bolton 1983, 90.
50 Moorman 1968, 36.
51 Saint Francis had also wished to be martyred. This is mentioned by Thomas of Celano both in the Vita Prima and the Vita Seconda. See FF 247 & 450. We are also told of it in the Leggenda Maggiore. See FF 595-597.
52 Wood 302.
53 See the discussion on this perception in Chapter 3.
54 See Pasztor 1984, 52-54 for the original aims of Saint Dominic in setting up the convent at Prouille. For Innocent III and his treatment of the beguines see Bolton 1978, 253-273.
55 See the discussion on Margaret's iconography in Chapter 3.
57 Brooke 276.
59 Wood 317 - "The Santa Chiara dossal is exceptional
among thirteenth century paintings because it does place the founders together”.

60 Moorman 1968, 205.
61 Robinson 438.
62 Robinson 422-433.
63 See the documents printed in Lazzeri.
64 For these episodes see FF 1218 & 1233-1236.
65 Moorman 1968, 206.
66 Moorman 1968, 39.
67 For a table showing the number of testimonies on miracles as opposed to those on the life of prospective saints in canonization processes during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries see Vauchez 585. The Bardi Saint Francis dossal for example contains a large number of miracles, as did the fourteenth century frescoes of Saint Margaret in Cortona.
68 Vauchez 585. The only other canonization process of the period in which this happened was that of Saint Dominic.
69 For the relation of this episode in the life see FF 1231-1232.
70 Torriti 18. See also Kaftal Tuscan cols.272-274.
71 The omission of this miracle at first seems analogous to the omission of a similar scene from the life of Saint Margaret of Cortona discussed in the previous chapter. However the fact that it was later used
elsewhere and also that the monstrance with which Clare repelled the Saracens was to become a popular attribute of the Saint in many representations leads me to believe that the reason for the omission here is not a mixture of the political together with a wish to make Clare appear harmless in her role as a nun but is more likely to be a result of other intentions on the part of the commissioners.

72 For the miracle of Clare blessing the bread at the order of Innocent IV see FF 937-938. This miracle forms part of the episodes related in the Fioretti and is not told in Celano’s life of Saint Clare.

73 Food miracles of this nature were also carried out by Humility and Margaret of Faenza. See Bynum 1987, 234.

74 Casolini 1976, 47. See also FF 1225-1226.

75 Robeck 173-174. Also Brooke 286.

76 Wood 314.

77 Smart 5.

78 For this episode in the life see FF 1216-1217.

79 This is related in FF 1252-1253.

80 Wood 310 & 320.

81 Bisogni 138.

82 Robeck 174.


84 Garrison 1949, 148 panel no. 388 gives a list of the scenes contained but omits to
mention that the first scene is "The Annunciation".

85 Walcher-Casotti 3.

86 Paolucci 1934 gives the inscriptions that have survived.

87 Garrison 1949, 148 panel no.388 gives 1325-1335 as the probable dates of the central part of the triptych and 1335-1345 as the dates for the wings. However, considerations regarding the history of the convent may imply an earlier date.

88 Saint Margaret, on the right, appears once to have been standing on her traditional attribute, the dragon, although the bottom right of the panel has been very badly damaged and only a tail and a wing are apparent, reaching up into the centre of the panel. Saint Catherine’s wheel is not apparent although she does hold the palm of martyrdom, while Saint Barbara merely holds a simple red cross rather than the tower that is her normal attribute.

89 The three female saints on the register below all have their names divided into two and placed on either side of their haloes.

90 I am indebted to Dottoressa Bravar, Direttrice of the Museo Civico for allowing me to see the triptych during restoration in the summer of 1993.

91 Kandler n.337. See also Pillon 23.

92 Kandler n.379.
Kandler n. 397.
Pillon 28.
Walcher-Casotti 12.
Kandler n. 487. See also Walcher-Casotti 9.
Walcher-Casotti 10. For the document see Kandler n. 530.
Kandler n. 681. There has been a question as to whether this convent is the same as that referred to in the earlier documents as in 1340 it is called "Conventus Monasterii Sanctae Marie nove Celle Tergestine" where in previous documents it had been "Sancte Marie Celle Tergesti" (Kandler n. 638). However it seems that both allude to the same convent. For a discussion of this see Walcher-Casotti 11-12. Also Ruaro-Loseri 26-27.
The document is printed in Kandler n. 638. Walcher-Casotti 14-15 discusses the relation of this document to the saints in the triptych. There are twelve nuns named in the document, four of whom carry the names of the saints on the wings. These are Catherine, Clare, Margaret and Agnes. This leaves only one female saint unaccounted for - Saint Barbara.
See Carli 84-85.
Coletti 135.
FF 1126-1127. According to the leggenda Clare had been
ordered by Francis to go to church with the rest of the people on Palm Sunday and to flee the following night.

104 Hall 231-232.

105 The bishop has been identified as Guido II. See Casolini 1976, 35. Also FF 1217.

106 See Kaftal Tuscan XXIX-XXXII for a discussion on some examples in Tuscany.

107 Bisogni 158.

108 Hall 228.

109 See Casolini 1976, 34 and FF 1217 who use "palm". Also Robeck 34 who uses "olive".

110 Hall 228.

111 Hall 231-232.

112 Ruardo-Loseri 29.

113 Brischi 28-29.

114 Ruardo-Loseri 29.

115 Hall 325-326.

116 Walcher-Casotti 44 n.15.

117 See BS VII, 1156.

118 See BS II, 249.

119 Paolo Veneziano was dead before the September of 1362. Moschini Marconi 15. For a summary of those who subscribed to the view that the panels were commissioned during the episcopate of Fra Guglielmo see Walcher-Casotti 43 nos.11, 12, 13, 14.
120 Garrison 1949, 148 n.388.
121 Morassi 87. Also Paolucci 457.
122 Walcher-Casotti 16.
123 See Ruaro-Loseri 25.
124 Walcher-Casotti 12 notes that after 1367 the convent is referred to as "S. Benedicti de la Cella de Tergesto".
125 Pillon 24.
126 Hohler 164-165.
127 See Chapter 2.
128 Parisse 156 remarks that "Il est trop facile de croire qu'on pouvait distinguer les differents ordres par le vetement de leurs membres".
129 See the case of the nuns of Santa Maria delle Fratte referred to in Chapter 2.
130 Walcher-Casotti 15.
131 Inv. 16.
132 See discussion in Chapter 2.
133 See Walcher-Casotti 47 no.54. The relevant part of the decree reads, "Cum regula dicat quod sorores non portent pannos coloratos, mandat et praecipit saepedictus minister, quod nulla soror deinceps portet pannum coloratum vel tinctum aut de lana tinctum factum". Quotation taken from Walcher Casotti.
134 See Bisogni 137-138.
135 Walcher-Casotti 5.
Walcher-Casotti 15. Belting 66 remarks that the Clares could identify themselves with the nuns under the Madonna's cloak implying that these nuns were intended to be representative of the Clares.

Robeck 33. See also FF 709 in "The Legend of the Three Companions".
ROYAL PATRONAGE IN NAPLES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE
FOURTEENTH CENTURY: Queen Maria of Hungary and Sancia of
Majorca.

The fourteenth century in Naples was to see the foundation
of a number of religious institutions by female members of
the royal family over four generations. Patronage was not
limited to money for the foundations themselves but also
included a clear concern with their specific use, their
administration, and in some cases their embellishment. For
the women member of the royal family however, personal
involvement in the institutions to which they contributed
was usual and tended towards the benefit of women. At the
start of the century Maria of Hungary, wife of Charles II
of Anjou, gave money towards a number of religious
institutions. These comprised both male and female houses
but the majority of the money benefitted convents. These
included San Pietro a Castello and Santa Maria Donna
Regina, Dominican and Franciscan respectively, both of
which were later to be handsomely provided for in her
will.¹ Her daughter-in-law Sancia of Majorca who married
Maria’s third son Robert in 1304 was to become even more
deeply involved in foundations built for women. Apart from
the monastery of Santa Chiara, founded in 1310 and for
which she cherished a lifelong affection, there were in
addition Santa Maria Maddalena and Santa Maria Egiziaca
both of which grew to contain large numbers of converted
women.² In the following generation Sancia’s niece Margaret
of Durazzo was to found the monastery of Santa Marta, also a female institution, while towards the end of the century Joan I also contributed towards a number of establishments, the most famous of which is the church of the Incoronata. However as the monarch her patronage was dissimilar in its intent from that of the women of the preceding three generations showing itself in a concern for political stability rather than echoing more personal and religious concerns.

Queen Maria of Hungary and the church of Santa Maria Donna Regina.
The first and most extensively preserved of these foundations was the church of Santa Maria Donna Regina. Having been severely damaged in the earthquake of 1293 the expenses of the reconstruction programme were undertaken by Maria of Hungary. Although there is no evidence of the manner in which Maria's patronage was obtained: whether it was requested by the nuns themselves as was to happen during the reign of her great-great-grand-daughter Joan II, or whether it was offered by the queen without any petition being necessary: we know that by 1298 the rebuilding of the living quarters of the nuns was underway. In that year Maria's treasurer is recorded as paying forty ounces of gold to finance work on the dormitory.

The church itself was commenced in the first years of the
fourteenth century. There is now nothing surviving of the previous church appertaining to the monastery and so it is impossible to discern to what extent the new church followed the plan of the old. Presumably the ground plan bears a strong resemblance to that of the previous church in consequence of the lack of capacity to contain a larger edifice. The seventeenth/eighteenth century church which obviated the need for that commissioned by Maria of Hungary was only able to be built due to the demolition of old buildings which had hemmed in the nuns since the thirteenth century. No records concerning the building of the church survive previous to 1307 on the occasion of the selling of some Greek wine, the proceeds of which were to go towards the work. By this time the construction process was evidently underway.

All the records extant on the construction process mention Maria as herself placing people in command of the work, and all the money expended would also seem to be hers. She was certainly in possession of a substantial private income which she seems to have been able to employ without the necessity of any reference to higher authority. Caggese mentions that independently of the yield obtained from numerous castles, she also benefited from an annual allowance of three thousand ounces of gold. There is also evidence to suggest that the queen had a strong sense of what was at her personal disposal. Additionally the extant records concerning her involvement with Santa Maria Donna
Regina give no clue as to the involvement of either her husband or, after the death of Charles II, her son and the necessity on their part either to confirm or reiterate Maria's own commands as was to happen later with her daughter-in-law's involvement in the complex of Santa Chiara.  

From 1307 onwards there are other pieces of evidence regarding Maria's expenditure on the church. In 1308 the abbess, Agnese Caracciolo, declared that she had received other sums for the building of the church from the Queen's treasurer, Anselotto di Lumiriaco. Later in 1314 it appears that brother Ubertino da Cremona was specifically ordered by Maria to oversee the work at Donna Regina, "de mandato excell. domine Marie Jerusalem Sicilia et Ungarie Regine".

The exact date of the completion of the church is not known. However the first indulgences granted are recorded and indicate its realization or near realization. The "Platea" of the monastery which purports to contain a record of the main events in its history states that in 1316 John XXII gave large indulgences to all the faithful who on the principal feasts of the year and on the particular feasts of the convent visited the church of Donna Regina. The "Platea", however, contains frequent errors of transcription. Certainly the church was functioning by 1318 from which year there exists a breve
from John XXII directed to the Minister General of the Franciscans, and in which permission is given to increase the number of friars acting as priests for the monastery from four to six.\textsuperscript{16}

The evidence for the direct involvement of the queen in supervising both the financing and the administration of the monastery has given rise to a number of speculations regarding the question of the atypical internal structure of the church as evidenced in the placing of the nuns' choir, and whether this construction is in any way owing to Maria's influence. The building is one of relatively few examples from this period in Italy of a convent church which was built in the first instance for women rather than being previously monastic and then converted to accommodate the somewhat different liturgical requirements of nuns. The choir is placed on supporting arches directly above the ground floor of the church and occupies the complete width of the church for two thirds of the church's length: effectively splitting the church in two and in Italy a unique arrangement when carried to these lengths.\textsuperscript{17}

The plans of convent churches in Italy exhibit a great deal of elasticity, partially due to their very diverse origins. Generously endowed convents such as Santa Chiara at Assisi and Santa Chiara in Naples were the exception rather than the rule and the take-over of churches previously appertaining to male orders militated against a specific
architectural addressal of the liturgical needs of female religious. In those cases where a convent church had been taken over from a pre-existing monastery the choir was often formed from a room that adjoined the church rather than being within the main body of the church.\textsuperscript{18} This is also the case in a number of churches from this period that were originally intended for convent use.\textsuperscript{19}

However in Santa Maria Donna Regina the choir is not only within the main body of the church but takes a position of precedence. A number of hypotheses regarding the practical reasons for the unusual arrangement of Santa Maria Donna Regina and the chronology of its institution have been put forward. The arrangement of the choir has been attributed to lack of space resulting firstly in the choir being placed in the main body of the church and secondly in its unusually large extent.\textsuperscript{20} However to place a gallery within the main body of the church for the nuns, although not on so large a scale, was a solution by no means unknown elsewhere in Italy and by the second half of the thirteenth century it was becoming a fairly common solution. This can be seen for example in Santa Chiara at Anagni.\textsuperscript{21} In the context of Santa Maria Donna Regina this seems to have overflowed and the gallery been extended to cover three-quarters of the nave. It is this extension which makes it unique within Italy.

The extent of the forethought involved in the positioning
of the choir is a matter of some dissent. It has been argued that the location of the choir was not even considered until the church was underway, a proposition that seems unlikely in view of its destined application. 22 A church specifically intended as the focus of the devotions of female religious would have had from its conception a place for these religious. 23 The rationale behind the concept that the positioning of the choir was an afterthought is the evidence extant in the fabric of the church which shows that there was an "extension" to the area of the choir which was certainly not in the original plan. This can easily be confirmed by reference to the blocked third window on the north wall. The window would have had to have been obstructed in order to facilitate the erection of the extension of the choir. According to this view the choir would have been built with the "extension" first. The date of this alteration can be ascertained by referral to the tomb of Maria of Hungary, erected between 1324 and 1326 by order of her son King Robert and which was placed in the church to which she had given so much support. 24 The tomb contains a model of the church which Maria financed and which is shown being presented to the Virgin by an angel. This church model depicts the third window as already blocked and thus dates this part of the choir as before 1326. 25

This information does not enable us to pinpoint whether the "extension" was built before the rest of the choir or
afterwards, merely that it was thought of after the final windows of the apse had been put in place. Nevertheless it seems more likely that this part of the choir represents not the beginning of the choir's construction but is an amplification of a choir already planned and that it was carried out shortly after the church was completed. The two front capitals of the upper gallery do in fact appear to be later in date than the rest although this may only indicate repairs carried out later in the history of the church. More decisive information comes from the frescoes of the prophets, patriarchs and apostles executed between the windows of the lateral walls. These are agreed to be the earliest frescoes in the church and were probably started before the death of Maria of Hungary in 1323. They appear to have been altered from an originally strictly symmetrical pattern in order to accommodate the extension. This may have affected in particular the figures of Saints Stephen and Lawrence which are just above the balustrade of the nuns' choir and which are different from the other figures both because of their style and because they do not follow the pattern of a figure from the Old Testament coupled with a figure from the New (Fig. 95). This makes it more likely that the "extension" is in fact truly that, built after and not before the rest of the choir in order to accommodate more nuns, rather than the beginning of a nuns' choir not previously envisaged as it is very unlikely that frescoes would have been commenced
until the fabric of the church was complete and the
alteration of their symmetrical pattern therefore indicates
the reaction to an alteration carried out after the rest of
the edifice was complete rather than one carried out at a
point when only half of the church had been built and the
frescoes could not have been started. It also means that
the extension is not a considerably later addition but was
added during the period in which the church was being
decorated as although the figures of Saint Stephen and
Saint Lawrence are different from the other frescoes in the
apse yet they still form part of a coherent decorative
plan. 30

The construction of this unique choir may well owe a lot to
the enforced restrictions of space. Nonetheless the
subsequent arrangement of the frescoes for which it is so
well adapted point to a plan thought out in advance of the
building of the main body of the church. As previously
mentioned the place of a choir for the nuns must always
have been in the minds of those concerned with the new
church, constituting as it did the place of worship for its
only guaranteed regular users. The construction of the
majority of the choir with the pillars of three equally
spaced aisles underneath for support makes it unlikely that
any other position was initially envisaged for it. Without
this arrangement of the choir the majority of the fresco
cycle contained within the church would not have been
viable.
In fact although direct and close precedents for such a solution to the accommodation of both nuns and laity in one church do not readily appear in Italy there do seem to be a number of closer parallels in northern Europe. It should be remembered that the kingdom of Naples was atypical of the Italian peninsula in a number of ways, most obvious of which was that it was the largest singly ruled stretch of Italy, and, despite vicissitudes in the fate of its ruling family was at this point much more stable than any of the smaller kingdoms or dukedoms further north. Members of the ruling family married into those of Northern Europe and were thus more closely attached to and had more in common with them than with their neighbour states. Maria of Hungary in particular had connections with many of the leading women religious patrons of the day. Four of her aunts were saints or blessed. 31 Also within these northern dynasties there was a tradition of patronage by women for women which had not developed to such an extent in Italy. 32 Both the endowment and the actual building and planning of Santa Maria Donna Regina fit more easily into this tradition than that of Italy north of the Neapolitan kingdom and it is from this ambient that the closest precursors to the plan of the church can be found. Indeed the solution to the division of laity and female religious which appears to be closest to that of Santa Maria Donna Regina comes mainly from German speaking regions. 33 It is in these regions also that Maria's direct predecessors and
relatives such as Agnes of Prague, Hedwig of Silesia and Elizabeth of Thuringia carried out their patronage.\textsuperscript{34}

The Cistercian convent of Chelmno in Poland is very similar in its layout to that of Santa Maria Donna Regina. It is a hall structure with the nuns' choir placed in the same manner as that of Santa Maria Donna Regina and also filling three-quarters of the nave. The space below the choir which is set aside for the laity is, like Santa Maria, ill-lit in comparison with the choir, also like Santa Maria the choir contains a series of paintings: scenes from the Song of Songs and episodes from the life of Christ, finally both have a polygonal choir. The nuns who inhabited the convent at Chelmno came originally from Trebnitz, a Cistercian convent founded by Maria's great-great aunt Hedwig of Silesia.\textsuperscript{35} However the church itself is contemporary with Santa Maria Donna Regina and so neither can directly have influenced the other.\textsuperscript{36} Nevertheless the solution of a tribune above the nave used to form the nuns' choir in the lengths to which it is carried in Santa Maria Donna Regina is probably of North European origin and as such likely to be tied in some manner to the direct influence of Maria of Hungary herself.

The additional part of the choir was therefore not in fact the start of a choir that had only been an afterthought, but an addition to a choir formed within a Northern European tradition and which in Italy constituted the original
outcome of the dual dilemma of numbers versus capacity. It is likely that as a direct consequence of the patronage of Maria of Hungary there was a significant increase in entrants to the monastery which would have necessitated the larger choir. This was also the case later in the century with the foundations supported by Sancia of Majorca, especially those of Santa Chiara and Santa Maria Maddalena. In 1317 John XXII allowed an increase in the number of nuns at Santa Chiara from one hundred to one hundred and twenty and in the donation made by Sancia in 1342 the number was finally fixed at two hundred. The institution of Santa Maria Maddalena is also reported as having to support a rapid increase in numbers so much so that in 1342 the number of converted had reached three hundred and forty. This induced Sancia to found another monastery for converted women under the title of Santa Maria Egiziaca.

In the case of Donna Regina other evidence also points to an increase in the nuns during the last years of the construction of the church. In a bull of the 10th August 1318 the Pope granted an increase in the number of priests attending the monastery from four to six. Also in this year John XXII granted that two nuns from another cloister in Campania should be sent to teach singing to the young sisters and the novices. The increase in papal indulgences and bulls during these years indicates a fairly rapid increase in the needs of the monastery and would
account for an addition to the choir being needed so soon after the church was completed.

The request for the extra teaching nuns was made specifically by the Queen and corresponds with the other information that survives about her patronage of Santa Maria Donna Regina, that she was personally involved not only in its reconstruction but in the everyday needs of the nuns. It has been suggested that with regard to the placing of the choir such a project could not have gone ahead without the express consent of the Queen. Although any documents there may have been appertaining to this project are not preserved in the Angevin registers the almost contemporary experience of Maria's daughter-in-law Sancia with the church of Santa Chiara - of which the foundation stone was laid in 1310 - may give an indication of the amount of involvement possible in an enterprise of this kind. Although the foundation stone was laid by both Robert and Sancia the majority of the administration of the royal patronage seems to have been done by Sancia. So much so, that the church and monastery, originally referred to as having been jointly inaugurated by the King and Queen, in later documents is almost without exception said to have been instituted by Sancia without mention of Robert's role. The Pope himself was to remonstrate with Sancia's zeal in this respect remarking that regarding Santa Chiara, "non compiunt somnium oculi mentis tuae". Sancia's interest in Santa Chiara did not stop merely at donations;
she was also very much involved in the running of the monastery. In a breve of the 14th November 1342 Clement VI left it to the pleasure of the Queen to place or remove the guardian of Santa Chiara. 45

Sancia's activity on behalf of Santa Chiara is entirely consistent with the little we know of the endeavours of Maria with regard to Santa Maria Donna Regina. As mentioned above, apart from grants of money and land to the monastery of Donna Regina, she also took an interest in the day to day running of the monastery. Furthermore there was a tradition amongst the nuns which spoke of her additional generosity towards, and interest in, the lives of the nuns and this was continued by writers right up to the twentieth century who persevered in crediting the name of the church to the wish to commemorate Maria's patronage in spite of evidence to the contrary. 46 At the beginning of the eighteenth century the nuns enumerated the things which they believed they had received due to Maria's generosity. 47 Within this list we read that Maria "dalli fondamenti fe' redificare alla Reale una Magnifica chiesa con il suo Coro adornandoli di vaghe piture". There was also a tradition that Maria spent the last years of her life as a nun in Santa Maria Donna Regina or that she took the vows and habit of the third order and was allowed to follow the services of the monastery as her daughter-in-law was later to do with Santa Chiara. 48 The list compiled by the nuns just mentioned states that the life of the Queen
was all but completely joined to them, save only for the pull of affairs of state.\textsuperscript{49}

Whilst the above cannot be positively substantiated the evidence of Maria’s will shows that she favoured Santa Maria Donna Regina above all other institutions privileged by her patronage.\textsuperscript{50} Maria died on the 25th March 1323, five to six years after the fabric of the church she had commissioned had been completed and was to be buried inside the church.\textsuperscript{51} The majority of writers to have cited her will and the provisions made in it have stated that the document is still extant leading to a number of more or less incorrect statements such as that which asserts that it was following Maria’s wish that Tino da Camaino was called to Naples to erect her tomb.\textsuperscript{52} Only Caggese seems positively to have identified the document in question as a record only of the execution of the will compiled in 1326 three years after the death of the Queen.\textsuperscript{53} Notwithstanding that the document cannot be regarded as a direct statement of Maria’s wishes it is still useful as a record of the importance attached to Santa Maria Donna Regina by the Queen. She appears to have made a number of conspicuous legacies to the abbess, Agnese Caracciolo, incumbent of the post since at least 1308.\textsuperscript{54} Many of the churches and monasteries of Naples received special legacies but to only three churches did Maria make large gifts of precious objects which included a statuette of her son Saint Louis of Toulouse made of precious metals.\textsuperscript{55} These were Santa
Maria Donna Regina, the basilica of Montevergine and San Pietro a Castello; the last of these being dear to Maria by means of the connection with her sister Elizabeth of Hungary who had been a nun there. Finally most of the money in the will was destined for Donna Regina - no less than three hundred ounces of gold to be spent on the acquisition of land.56

Judging from the architectural evidence and that provided by her bequests, at the heart of the Queen's concerns appears to have been provision for the nuns. The manner in which the edifice was planned undoubtedly gives the nuns advantages of light, visibility - especially with regard to the frescoes - and provided them with an equal amount of space as that available to the lay congregation. The lay congregation itself cannot have been insignificant as along the walls of the nave were placed wall tombs which incorporated the names of important Neapolitan families.57 The most obvious aspect in which the nuns were the central focus of the church is in its decoration. The frescoes in the church were for the most part visible only to the nuns. This applies not only to those placed within the area of the nuns choir, which are the majority, but also to a large part of the frescoes in the apse of tiers of coupled prophets separated by palm trees. Only members of the lay congregation seated under the first of the four sets of supporting arches running longitudinally down the church would have been able to view a significant number of the
prophets. But even to these fortunates only around fifty per cent was visible. Moreover the lighting available to them was restrictive to visibility. Since the greater part of the choir was planned during the initial stages of the church and since the frescoes actually contained within the area of the choir would always have been in the same place in relation to the nuns it would appear that the nuns were always intended to be the main beneficiaries of the decoration of the church.

The frescoes would have been the main focus of the nuns when in the church for despite the device of dividing the nave horizontally the space required by the nuns' choir meant that the altar was not visible to them. As such the frescoes take on a special significance as objects of contemplation and this may have influenced the exceptional amount of detail that they incorporate.\(^5^8\)

With the frescoes as with the building there is no documentation which records their patronage.\(^5^9\) Whilst the list previously mentioned compiled by the nuns credits Maria with the commission it is generally agreed that the chronology of their execution would not have allowed her direct supervision, certainly not for those executed last. However a number of critics have posited the idea that Maria was involved in the earliest stages of the fresco decoration or even that the group of artists at work in the church was bound by a long term contract which would have
been made out while the Queen was still alive. This would account for what many see as archaic tendencies present in the frescoes.\textsuperscript{60} It has also been proposed that the lack of any provisions for the building or decoration of the church in the record of the implementation of Maria's will, although the well-being of the nuns was in other ways generously provided for, suggests that a complete sum for this had been set aside before the will was made.\textsuperscript{61} Some have even gone so far as to propose that the frescoes as a whole were completed within Maria's lifetime, thereby giving her the ultimate responsibility for them.\textsuperscript{62} Thus even the last of the frescoes, those depicting the life of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, Maria's great aunt, would have been paid for directly by the endowments of the Queen and following her specific choice of subject.\textsuperscript{63} Nonetheless, it seems unlikely that the frescoes could have been carried out contemporaneously with the church itself. The question of the dating of the frescoes does, nevertheless, bear directly on their possible patronage, and to what extent they can be attributed to the sway of Maria's religious predilections.

Dating the majority of the frescoes before Maria's death has not gained general credence and the most likely dating for the frescoes is between 1320 and 1340, although some have advanced the date of commencement to around 1316 and even added a corresponding completion date of circa 1330.\textsuperscript{64} With the exception of the paired prophets in the
apse of the church and some much repaired angels which decorate the triumphal arch the remaining frescoes are placed entirely within the nuns' choir. These consist of a "Last Judgement" on the facade wall with a unique representation of the Apocalyptical "Woman clothed with the Sun" placed above it. On the two side walls, to the north is a Passion cycle which consists of seventeen paintings ranging from "The Last Supper" to "The Pentecost". Fifteen of these are placed in a rectangle of three rows of five while the final two subjects of "The Ascension" and "The Pentecost" are placed on the window blocked to make way for the additional part of the choir. Below the main part of the Passion cycle are five paintings depicting the life of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary. On the opposite wall are considerably damaged cycles of the lives of two early Christian virgin martyrs - Saints Catherine and Agnes.

Although the dating of the frescoes as a whole is not always agreed upon, the relative order of their completion is generally accepted. The frescoes of the apse were completed first.65 As mediaeval churches were normally constructed from apse to facade wall the first surface primed for frescoes would have been that on which the prophets and patriarchs were placed and they may even have been started before the final completion of the church.66 The archaic style of this part of the decoration bears this out and has also lead to the suggestion that it was the commission of the ageing Queen deliberately choosing a
conservative style that she would have been familiar with.\(^{67}\) The frescoes within the bounds of the choir are more difficult to separate but the cycle of the life of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary was the last to reach completion.\(^{68}\) Within these bounds the lower part of "The Last Judgement" is presumably to be dated after 1332 due to the portraits it is purported to contain, amongst others of Maria of Hungary and Philip of Taranto, the latter only dying in that year (Fig. 96).\(^{69}\) The frescoes as a whole are strongly influenced by Cavallini, some critics have even attributed the earlier frescoes to the master himself.\(^{70}\) However, while the attribution to Cavallini cannot be borne out the strong links in style throughout the church bear witness to a project carried out within a relatively short space of time and almost certainly started within the lifetime of Maria of Hungary.

That the frescoes were completed while the memory of Maria was still alive is evident from the numerous examples of her coat-of-arms placed throughout the church both spatially and chronologically. The first to be executed was probably that sculpted high on the centre of the facade to greet the lay entrant to the church and affirm the Queen’s patronage of the building he was about to pass into.\(^{71}\) Given the date of the completion of the church this would have been realized well within Maria’s lifetime and marks the prelude to a number of similar statements in fresco which affirm the lasting influence of the Queen during all
stages of the decorative programme. The arms of the Queen placed within the church are visible on the cross-vaults above the nave which support the choir. Here the red and white stripes of Hungary alternate with the lilies of the Angevins to form Maria’s personal crest. The alternate arms of France and Hungary are also in evidence immediately below the fresco of "The Woman clothed with the Sun" on the facade wall, contained within a row of painted lozenge shapes. The execution of both of the above could possibly be placed within the lifetime of the Queen. However the last example, which shows only the red and white stripes of the Hungarian royal family was almost certainly done after Maria’s death. It is to be found on the walled-up window on the north side of the choir and immediately below the two final scenes of the Passion cycle. On this base are the busts of three people, possibly saints of the Hungarian royal line - Stephen, Ladislau and Elizabeth (Fig. 97). While this aspect admittedly does not show Maria’s personal coat-of-arms, but that of the family of her birth, the choice of these saints cannot have been purely chance and they tend towards a celebration of the concerns of the rebuild of the church. They show, in fact, an ongoing concern with her devotional character consistent with that shown throughout the frescoes.

Maria’s religious sympathies, like those of Sancia of Majorca, were unrepentantly Franciscan. She even appears to wear the Franciscan habit on the effigy on her tomb.
probably influenced her children, especially Louis and Robert. It may also have been she who was chiefly concerned in the matter of their Franciscan entourage while in captivity. Her fervent Franciscanism incorporated within it devotion to her ancestor Elizabeth of Hungary, herself strongly attached to the Franciscan order. It is this concern for family which is reflected even in those frescoes completed after her death. A third aspect of Maria's concerns in her patronage places a bias on female foundations, as mentioned above. The Dominican convent of San Pietro a Castello to which she contributed around the turn of the century also had a family tie - it was to be the home of her sister Elizabeth of Hungary. All three facets were to be emphasized in the choir of Santa Maria Donna Regina.

The last of the fresco series to be completed, that of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, is the section which most fully expresses these concerns dealing as it does with the Franciscans, the Hungarian royal family, and the problems surrounding the female vocation. Both Robert of Anjou and Sancia of Naples have been claimed as the commissioners of the life of Saint Elizabeth. Robert's direct intervention seems unlikely in view of their position while the claims of Sancia appear to stem solely from her relation to the Saint rather than any known devotion to her. The only Italian cycle of the life of Saint Elizabeth known in this period is that in Donna Regina and there are very few
individual representations or scenes. All of which leads to the conclusion that Maria introduced detailed knowledge of the cult of Elizabeth to Naples and that whoever finally supervised or commissioned the frescoes it is from her that the idea originally stemmed.

The promotion of family saints was to become a particular Hungarian concern, and moreover, one peculiarly associated with women. If not saintly themselves female members of the royal family kept the memory of those who were alive and to a large extent this meant being in charge of their representation — a powerful propaganda tool as witnessed by Simone Martini's "Saint Louis of Toulouse" panel. This responsibility was to be exemplified later on in the century in Hungary during the reign of Maria's great-grandson Louis the Great (1342-1382). The Queen mother, Elizabeth, wife of Maria's grandson Carobert, was not saintly in the manner of many princesses associated with the Hungarian royal line. However she appears to have regarded it as her job to promote religion using her patronage to achieve this end. In tandem with this she also promoted the saints connected with the Hungarian royal family. Klaniczay considers her responsible for the representation of the family saints during the last decades of Carobert's reign and believes that she continued this activity during the reign of her son.

These concerns were also present in Maria of Hungary's
project in Santa Maria Donna Regina. As previously mentioned the cycle of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary bears particular reference to this being both a dynastic concern and one that promotes the female vocation. A third strand may also be separated, that of women's particular duty to tend to the religious needs both of themselves and of others, in Elizabeth's case notably her husband. The narration of her life in "The Golden Legend" relates that her husband,

"because he might not entend personally to these things, he gave full power to his wife in all that should be to the honour or to the health of their souls".83

This emphasizes the one area of her life where Elizabeth possessed unlimited power, and that not only for herself. It is consonant with a general trend visible during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in which female sanctity came to the fore. This was most evident in royal or titled circles where women virtually obtained equality with men.84

The cycle itself has been presumed to have its base in "The Golden Legend". Bertaux goes so far as to say that this, and the stories of Saint Catherine and Saint Agnes, are not only inspired by "The Golden Legend" but are literal transcriptions of it.85 There are, however, a number of other sources from which the subjects of the paintings in the cycle could have been drawn. A great many accounts of
Elizabeth’s life were written shortly after her death and "The Golden Legend" relies on some of these. The first of these were the documents drawn up in preparation for her canonization process which was successfully completed with Gregory IX’s bull of canonization, "Gloriosus in majestate sua" of the first of June 1235 only four years after her death. They include the "Summa Vitae" of her confessor, Conrad of Marburg. Following this was the "Libellus de Dictis Quattor Ancillarum" which contains the testimonies of Elizabeth’s four companions given during the process of canonization. After the translation of Elizabeth’s body on the first of May 1236 Cesarius of Heisterbach wrote his version of the saint’s life which relied heavily on the "Libellus de Dictis Quattor Ancillarum". Towards the end of the century another life was written by the Dominican Dietrich of Apolda who started his version in 1289 and finished it around 1297. This version was widely circulated. These are the main sources of the life of Saint Elizabeth but there are also a number of other sources from the thirteenth century which contain less detail. The possible relationship of the frescoes and the written sources is a complex one and needs to be examined in more detail than has hitherto been the case. Some of the sources were by their nature not widely circulated and many were reliant on one another. I have therefore chosen to concentrate on those most likely to have been known in a number of places. The "Libellus", although basically a
testimonial compiled for the process of canonization is important as the basis of a number of other lives. Cesarius of Heisterbach's life, although reliant on the "Libellus" was more widely diffused and that of Dietrich of Apolda whilst much later was probably the most well known version and contains a number of differences from the "Libellus" and the life written by Cesarius.

The five frescoes contain multiple scenes from Elizabeth's life - as many as twenty-five. Some are now so damaged that they are unidentifiable. Most of the first scene has been destroyed leaving only the upper parts to give any clue as to their subject (Fig. 98). The scene was originally divided into two registers in common with the rest of the cycle and of the lower register only the top of the episode to the far right can still be made out. Most authors have made no attempt to place any of these scenes but some have recognised in the right hand loggia "The miracle of the flowers" where Saint Elizabeth was met by her disapproving father-in-law while carrying food for the poor in her dress. When questioned on what she was carrying she replied that she was holding flowers and miraculously the food was transformed. The only other painting from the life of Saint Elizabeth known in Italy in the fourteenth century shows this scene. There are a number of objections to the depiction of the miracle of the flowers in this case. Firstly it militates against the hypothesis that the sole literary source of the frescoes is Jacopo da Voragine's
version in "The Golden Legend" since it does not mention this particular miracle. Also, the miracle, which in the well known later versions of the legend took place after Elizabeth's marriage, seen in the second fresco, is placed out of chronological sequence. However it will be seen from an examination of the rest of the cycle that neither of these objections can be sustained and complete reliance on Jacopo's version would have been impossible.

The top half of the larger scene at the lower right of the fresco has also been tentatively identified as Elizabeth giving alms to a group of virgins in a chapel. A number of sources comment on Elizabeth's generosity during her youth. These include "The Golden Legend", the "Libellus de Dictis Quattor Ancilliarum", Cesarius of Heisterbach and Dietrich of Apolda. However the damage undergone by the fresco means that is now impossible to give a positive identification.

From the second fresco onwards there are scenes that can certainly be identified with particular episodes from the life of the Saint rather than general comments on her virtues. This fresco shows in the main lower section "Saint Elizabeth's marriage to Louis, the Landgrave of Thuringia" (Fig. 99). Although an important scene in the cycle it does not help in placing the source of the frescoes as it is mentioned in virtually all the lives of Elizabeth. However the smaller scenes above this are more helpful.
They show four episodes from the youth of the saint before her marriage. She is shown to the left praying in front of a small church with her eyes fixed on an open book and following this are two scenes where she appears to be playing with her companions. The last of the four upper scenes shows the Saint leading them towards an unknown destination which has been identified by Kaftal as the cemetery, an episode not mentioned in "The Golden Legend", where Elizabeth's companions are not named and never specifically referred to.97

This last episode in the upper scene is not the only one which cannot be identified with the help of "The Golden Legend". The third scene, although it can be held to be a general episode from Elizabeth's youth, can more accurately be identified, I believe, with the help of sources other than "The Golden Legend". Both Elizabeth and her companions appear to be kneeling, and this is specifically referred to by a number of other early authors on the life of the saint. These sources include the "Libellus de Dictis Quattor Ancillarum" and the life by Cesarius. Both the "Libellus" and Cesarius relate that Elizabeth frequently used white lies during her childhood in order to pray as much as she wanted to, as otherwise her companions would have stopped her. One of the deceptions used to this end was to suggest to her companions that they should measure each other to see who was the tallest amongst them. In this way Elizabeth was able to make many genuflections without
anyone objecting. The painted scene is recognisable not only by the fact that Elizabeth is seen to be genuflecting but also because both in the two sources just cited and in the fresco it follows on very closely from the same two episodes.

These two episodes relate that during the Saint's childhood she almost lived in the church and that she often opened a psalter when there although she had not yet learnt how to read. The second episode describes how even when playing games Elizabeth always sought to honour God. They are present both in the "Libellus" and in Cesarius and even their details have been faithfully translated into paint. The first shows Elizabeth kneeling at the entrance to the chapel with an open book before her while the second shows her and her companions in a ring exactly as the game had been described in the written versions of her legend. These two scenes are also related in "The Golden Legend" with the same detail. However the lack of the third scene means that although this may have been used as a source for the frescoes it was certainly not the only source. Of the four scenes only one is mentioned by Dietrich of Apolda, this being the first but given that the sources of all the other identifiable scenes can be accounted for by the "Libellus" or Cesarius it seems unlikely that Dietrich of Apolda was used here. It is also noticeable that the description of Elizabeth kneeling outside the church and opening a psalter is very close to the description by Cesarius, the
"Libellus" and Jacopo da Voragine but is changed considerably in Dietrich of Apolda's version which does not mention the psalter. 101

The central painting contains scenes which have had a number of different interpretations placed on them (Figs. 100 & 101). 102 The first episode in the lower section is that of "Elizabeth receiving the discipline from her maid next to the marital bed" which is mentioned in the Golden Legend. 103 It is also contained in the "Libellus" and in Cesarius's version of the life. 104 The "Libellus" describes it as follows, "Absente autem marito in vigiliis genuumflectionibus, verberibus et orationibus multas noctes deducebat". 105 The beating was obviously a habit even when Elizabeth's husband was not absent as the "Libellus" also tells us that, "Item surgens a viro in secreta camera fecit se fortiter verberari per manus ancillarum". 106 The later life by Dietrich of Apolda also mentions this practice. 107

The smaller upper scenes in this painting are generally said to be, at the far left, Elizabeth placing her crown before a crucifix, giving food to a beggar in the centre (although this has been interpreted differently, see below), and on the right whilst at table with her husband but not eating for fear that the food had not been obtained
by fair means. "The Golden Legend" can be used to account for these scenes although once again there are no specific details that can be used to associate the painted versions with specific written episodes.\textsuperscript{108} At this point however to the objection about "The Golden Legend" is also added one against both the "Libellus" and Cesarius who no longer seem to be as definitive as in previous scenes.\textsuperscript{109}

The other scenes in this section are much more difficult to place. They have been identified as "Elizabeth giving a letter to a messenger to announce the birth of their first son to her husband", whilst in the loggia above "Louis returns only to encounter his mother who berates her daughter-in-law for receiving beggars in her bed-chamber" (a beggar is seen to the left of the scene). The message may also be one addressed to Elizabeth which tells of her husband's death from fever while on the way to the Holy Land. If it is, it departs from the written sources as we are told that Elizabeth was given the news through her mother-in-law who had been in turn informed by messengers who came from the Holy Land.\textsuperscript{110} The final scene to the bottom right has been said to be that of Elizabeth urging her husband to join the crusades or alternatively Louis' brother Henry in the act of turning Elizabeth and her newly born son out of their home although in fact none of the early lives name Henry as the perpetrator of this act.\textsuperscript{111} The man holds a dagger while Elizabeth gestures towards the child in what appears to be an attempt to obtain mercy.
None of these suggestions are, however, compatible with the account in "The Golden Legend", nor indeed with any of the other lives being considered.

The problem of incompatibility becomes more tangled in the fourth of the five frescoes (Fig. 102). This again has been badly damaged in the course of the years. Nonetheless a number of attempts have been made to identify the scenes contained within it. In the lower register most critics agree that "The miracle of the dress" is shown to the left, followed by that of "The miraculous finding of fish". Of these only "The miracle of the dress" is related in "The Golden Legend", as it is in the "Libellus", by Cesarius and also by Dietrich of Apolda. In this case the general consensus of opinion about the scene is not mistaken in attributing the source to Jacopo da Voragine but rather in the actual identification of the subject which nevertheless I believe to be present in Voragine. A close inspection of the scene reveals that rather than Elizabeth giving a dress to the woman in front of her she is in actual fact emptying a bag of grain which can clearly be seen pouring down into that held open by the woman. However this helps little with the identification of the source as the episode is not only related in "The Golden Legend" but also in the "Libellus", by Cesarius and by Dietrich of Apolda. Jacopo da Voragine tells us that,

"On a time when her husband the landgrave was gone to the
court of the emperor .... she assembled in a garner all the wheat of the year, and administered part to every each that came from all parts, and that time was great dearth in the country". 114

The other versions do not differ significantly. 115 "The miracle of the fish" has, however been identified correctly as the remains of the fish can still be seen on the plate that Elizabeth is holding.

Neither this miracle nor "The miracle of the flowers" is found in the lives that I have so far considered as possible sources for the frescoes. Although there are many parts of the cycle that can only be linked generally rather than specifically with the sources considered these two pose more particular problems, especially as "The miracle of the fish" can be positively identified. There is however a mid-thirteenth century life of the Saint which does include both "The miracle of the flowers" and that of the finding of the fish. "The miracle of the flowers" is otherwise known only in a fifteenth century version of the Saint's life. 116

The thirteenth century life was written by a Franciscan friar in Tuscany and was composed independently from the "Libellus" and from all other known sources that had been written up to this time. 117 The possible relationship with the frescoes is unclear but the placing of the miracle of the flowers, usually said to have happened after Elizabeth had married Louis here becomes clear as it is one of the
very first things described in the life before the author mentions her travelling to Thuringia. The life is very much shorter than any of those I have considered previously and by no means all the episodes represented in the frescoes are described or even mentioned, so that if the scenes showing these two miracles have been correctly identified and this is the only pre-fifteenth century source containing them, then it cannot have been the only life to be used in composing the frescoes.

The scenes of the upper register of the fourth scene are generally identified as Elizabeth's profession of obedience to Conrad of Marburg which is followed by the saint receiving a vision of Christ both of which are mentioned by Voragine in "The Golden Legend". These episodes are also related in the "Libellus", and by Cesarius of Heisterbach. With regard to the chronology, the scene of Elizabeth receiving a vision of Christ is very much out of sequence. Both "The Golden Legend", the "Libellus", Cesarius of Heisterbach and Dietrich of Apolda all refer to this as happening after Elizabeth has been turned out of the castle at Wartburg following the death of her husband which is depicted in the fifth and final fresco. There can be little doubt as to the correct identification of the vision as it is the only apparition of Christ which is related in most versions of Elizabeth's life. The depiction is in fact very close to some of the written descriptions where Elizabeth is seen by her companion to be
looking out of the window and when she later describes the experience Elizabeth says that she saw "Jesum dominum meum inclinantem se ad me". Only "The Golden Legend" and Dietrich of Apolda omit the detail of the open window through which Elizabeth receives the vision. This lack of strict chronological correctness is apparent to a greater or lesser degree throughout the cycle and may be both a result of the uses of differing sources for the construction of the cycle and the lack of importance which was placed on a correct sequential rendering as the frescoes were probably intended as aids to meditation in the way that the author of the main source of the Passion cycle placed above, the pseudo-Bonaventura, recommended the female readers of his work to meditate on the life and passion of Christ.

The final painting containing the death and exequies of Saint Elizabeth at the far right of the bottom register also shows five separate episodes along the top register (Fig. 103). The very first of these is unanimously considered to show Henry of Thuringia expelling his sister-in-law and her companions from the castle at Wartburg. The episode is related in the "Libellus", Cesarius, Jacopo da Voragine and Dietrich of Apolda although all agree that Elizabeth was evicted by some of her dead husband's vassals rather than by his brother. The ensuing scenes have been identified as follows - Elizabeth journeying with her companions from Wartburg to Eisenbach, spinning in a pig
sty where she has taken shelter with her companions
(however no pigs are evident in the fresco), collapsed in
front of a Franciscan church where she asks the friars to
thank God for her distress and rising from a bog into which
she had fallen all of which can be pinpointed in "The
Golden Legend" as well as the other vitae although the
scenes are by no means accurate transcriptions.125 The
bottom left scene shows Elizabeth washing the feet of the
poor in the hospital that she herself founded and can also
be related to a number of sources including Jacopo da
Voragine, the "Libellus", Cesarius and Dietrich of
Apolda.126 Finally the episode at the bottom right of the
fifth fresco is that of Elizabeth's funeral which is
mentioned by all the sources.

The complexity of the organisation of the frescoes and the
damage that they have suffered from both fire and
earthquake since they were completed means that it is now
impossible to give them all their correct places in the
life of Saint Elizabeth. From an examination of the written
sources most likely to have been widely known it seems
certain that no one source was used as a basis for them.
The cult of Saint Elizabeth was probably brought to Naples
by Maria of Hungary and it is significant that there are no
other cycles of the life of the Saint in Italy during the
fourteenth century. We know that Maria owned two books with
Elizabeth's life because in her will she made a bequest of,

"Libros duos continentes vitam beate Elisabete..."
These were received by Nicolao di Lupino Carpetas. In a period when books were still explicitly commissioned for their original owners it is unlikely that Maria was in possession of two copies of exactly the same book, much less that she would leave two identical volumes to the same person. The description of these books as lives of Saint Elizabeth without any reference to other contents may mean that neither of them was the version penned by Jacopo da Voragine. Although books such as the pseudo-Bonaventura’s "Meditations on the Life of Christ" exist in copies containing only the part concerning the Passion it is unlikely that Maria would have possessed Jacopo da Voragine’s enormous work without any of his other saints’ lives attached. The books mentioned in the will therefore provide two other possible sources for the frescoes in Donna Regina. In fact the presence of so many unidentifiable details in the frescoes has lead to suggestions that despite their agreed dating after the death of Maria it was she who originally proposed them. The combination of subject matter unique in Italy in this century allied with such saturated iconography unfamiliar even to those well acquainted with Jacopo da Voragine’s version makes the genesis of the frescoes likely to lie with Maria and it is possible that those scenes that remain unidentified owe their inclusion to Maria’s own personal knowledge of Elizabeth’s life brought with her from Hungary, rather than relying on known written sources, and
though she may not have directly influenced the frescoes it is possible that before her death she acquainted others with the stories she had learnt as a child. While she can not be held directly responsible it is certainly her religious taste and formation that is in evidence in these frescoes.

Nicolao de Lupino Carpetas also received a number of other books by the terms of Maria's will. These included one containing various sermons, one with sermons on the Virgin and also, "librum unum meditationum passionis Christi in gallicum", the subject of the frescoes placed immediately above those of Saint Elizabeth. Despite their more conventional subject matter the iconography of these frescoes is far from common. Like the stories from the life of Saint Elizabeth, the Passion series contains many scenes in each separate painting with the exception of the final two - "The Ascension" and "The Pentecost" - executed over the blocked third window of the choir extension. The sheer number of scenes shown within these paintings leads to the expectation of a reasonably strict adherence to a written source. This can be found in the pseudo-Bonaventura's "Meditations on the Passion of Christ", probably written during the second half of the thirteenth century. It makes much of Christ's appearances after his resurrection showing as many as fourteen; the number enumerated by Bonaventura. Due to damage to the frescoes not all are identifiable and it is also possible that only thirteen of
Christ's appearances have been depicted; as related by Jacopo da Voragine.\textsuperscript{133} All were probably originally labelled although only fractions of the inscriptions can now be made out.\textsuperscript{134} While a composite of these two sources may have been used in other parts of the cycle one part stands out in sharp relief due to its strict adherence to Bonaventura's text. This is the ninth scene showing "Jesus nailed to the Cross" and which conforms in every detail to Bonaventura's text where Christ ascends the cross on two steps following which his right hand is the first to be nailed to the cross (Fig. 104).\textsuperscript{135}

The origin of the Passion scenes may date to the lifetime of Maria of Hungary. Bertaux believed them to be the first paintings to be executed within the confines of the choir.\textsuperscript{136} Bologna, however, thinks that the top scenes which include those of "The Last Supper" still show the influence of the master of the first paintings in Donna Regina - the prophets and patriarchs.\textsuperscript{137} As Maria also owned a book on the subject her influence may well have been brought to bear in the choice of the subject and even in its close adherence to the text. The choice of subject makes evident a regard for themes specifically tailored for the benefit of the nuns as the "Meditations" was addressed to a nun.\textsuperscript{138}

The connection with Maria's collection of books continues with the lives of Saint Catherine of Alexandria and Saint Agnes on the opposite wall of the choir (Figs. 105 & 106).
The record of the carrying out of the terms of Maria's will mentions a, "Vitam sanctorum et miracula beate virginis similiter in gallico scripta". 139

These paintings have also been said to follow closely the relation of the legends as given by Jacopo da Voragine. However, they are too damaged to allow a definitive exploration of their iconography and its antecedents. 140 At least three of the scenes of the life of Saint Catherine are now illegible. Whilst the life of Saint Catherine was a common theme in Italian painting during this period, that of Saint Agnes had a standing similar to that of Saint Elizabeth in the field of the visual arts. 141 From fourteenth century Italy only one other cycle of the life of Saint Agnes survives. 142 Despite the singularity of the Saint Agnes cycle the links to Maria of Hungary are not so strong as in the frescoes on the opposite wall. Nevertheless they do show a deep consideration for the concerns of the nuns. The three female saints Elizabeth, Agnes and Catherine are also shown together in the predella of a triptych from the Pinacoteca in Perugia which originally came from a convent of Poor Clares. 143

"The Last Judgement" on the facade wall demonstrates an interest in Angevin and Hungarian dynastic concerns rather than with the inhabitants of the convent (Fig. 96). As mentioned above a number of members of the royal family have been recognised in the group of the elect. Among these
is Saint Louis of Toulouse who is identified by an inscription. His canonization had been proclaimed on the 7th April 1317. Saint Louis is not the only member of the Neapolitan royal family to have been recognized in the group of elect in the left hand section of "The Last Judgement". Also suggested as members are Maria of Hungary herself and her husband Charles II, identifiable by the crowns that they wear decorated with lilies. These are followed by Prince Philip of Taranto, his wife, and Violante of Aragon the first wife of Robert of Anjou. The identification of the above has meant that the fresco cannot be dated before 1332 unless it is accepted that some of the figures or the lower parts of the fresco were added at a later date. If the identification of the Queen herself is correct then this part of the cycle at least must have been executed after her death although this is still not conclusive evidence that "The Last Judgement" was not planned by her during her lifetime. It is in any case by no means an unusual subject for the facade wall.

The precise importance of these frescoes for the Poor Clares is unclear but what is clear in all the frescoes so far discussed is that they were both by their physical place and their subject matter intended for the benefit of the nuns. Frescoes on the walls of the ground floor nave seem never to have been intended, and lack of light would always have militated against them. Thus from its conception the church was built to give maximum prestige to
The uppermost fresco on the facade wall of the choir shows an apparently unique representation of "The Woman clothed with the Sun". This is now hardly visible because of the subsequent lowering of the roof in the sixteenth century. It also stresses by its appearance the importance of the nuns in the scheme of frescoes. A similar representation was later placed in the new convent church giving rise to speculation that the painting in Santa Maria Donna Regina was put there as a replacement for an older portrayal in the church destroyed by the earthquake of 1293. The reflection of Byzantine influence discernible in the iconography may date the origin of this subject within the monastery back to the ties between Donna Regina and Constantinople during the eighth century when the daughter of the duke of Constantinople was said to have entered the Neapolitan monastery. That a subject which had only been visible to the nuns during the use of the fourteenth century church should have been repeated in the replacement church makes it likely that the repetition was requested by the nuns themselves and that this was the same sequence of events that occurred in the transference of the subject to the church paid for by Maria of Hungary. It may also be that the nuns had a say in other parts of the decoration, particularly as Maria was popularly believed to have lived amongst them during her final years.
As shown above the evidence available in both church architecture and decoration points without exception to a deep and consistent concern with the main recipients of these two elements - the nuns. Not only are the frescoes visible almost exclusively to the nuns but the selection of their subject matter is also peculiarly adapted to female viewers. Much of this subject matter is unusual in an Italian context and some can also be associated with books originally owned by Maria of Hungary thus identifying her with the original stimulus for the frescoes.

The idea that the final cycle to be completed, that of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, was commissioned by Sancia of Majorca, has been suggested because of her blood relationship with the Saint. Elizabeth was Sancia's great-aunt, the same relationship as that of Maria of Hungary to Elizabeth. Chronologically the frescoes would fall within her life at Naples. However nothing is known of any personal devotion towards Elizabeth as can be shown with Maria, although she could have been influenced in this by her mother-in-law. In either case origin of the frescoes would still lie with Maria who during her childhood would have been in a much better position to gain information about Elizabeth's life and miracles.

Queen Sancia of Majorca and the church of Santa Chiara. During the years in which Santa Maria Donna Regina was being worked on her daughter-in-law Sancia of Majorca was
fully occupied with her own projects all of which were Franciscan in character. Her devotion to the Franciscans sprang initially from her own family. In a letter to the Franciscan Chapter General she notes that all of her close relations were devoted to the order and that similarly to Saint Louis of Toulouse her eldest brother had also renounced the throne in order to join the Franciscans.156 Her desire to enter a convent of Poor Clares sprang from well before the time when she was finally able to fulfill the ambition after the death of her husband.157 During her marriage she was permitted by the Pope to have two Poor Clares in attendance on her at all times.158 In 1317 she even went as far as to ask for a divorce from Robert in order to enter a convent.159 This was not to be but Sancia compensated by devoting her time and money to the Franciscan cause. Some of the programmes which she supported were joint ventures with her husband. Sancia and Robert, as titular rulers of the Holy Land, supported the Franciscan houses of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and the foundation on Mount Sion, whilst others appear to have been maintained solely by her.160 Those houses that she promoted in Naples were often the subject of ambitious rebuilding and enlargement projects such as that of Santa Maria Maddalena where the adjacent church and hospital were removed in order to make way for new buildings. Foundations that were created by Sancia include the convent of Santa Croce near to Castelnuovo.161 However the complex that
absorbed the majority of Sancia's time was the monastery and church of Santa Chiara. Although founded jointly by Sancia and Robert it was shortly to become almost entirely Sancia's concern with Robert merely confirming decisions that the Queen had already put into action. These included provisions for every part of the monastery from arranging adequate space to compiling the constitutions. Sancia's efforts on behalf of the monastery were so great that by the time of an edict of the fifteenth of January 1337 we find a reference to the convent of Santa Chiara which she founded.\textsuperscript{162}

As in Santa Maria Donna Regina the position of the nuns' choir is both unusual and also attempts to give precedence to the nuns, from a liturgical point of view, within the bounds of the necessary separation of nuns from laity. The choir is placed immediately behind the main altar and three grated openings allow a direct view to the altar.\textsuperscript{163} The implementation of an unimpeded view of the altar for the nuns is extremely unusual and its placement may reflect the wishes of Sancia herself who was known to have a particular devotion to the eucharist. The site of the choir in fact allows the nuns to view the elevation of the host. The church itself was originally dedicated to the body of Christ.\textsuperscript{164}

Of the frescoes which once adorned the church and monastery of Santa Chiara in the fourteenth century virtually nothing
survives. Vasari reports that King Robert called Giotto to Naples and that he worked in Santa Chiara but no details remain. What has endured is a fresco of "The Enthroned Saviour with six standing saints" from the refectory of the friars. The fresco also contains four smaller figures, two kneeling to either side of Christ. These have been identified as, from left to right, Charles of Calabria and Robert of Anjou, while to Christ's left side are Sancia and Joan, Charles' daughter (Figs. 107 & 108). It presents a statement on the succession which had become problematical after the death of Charles of Calabria in 1328. Charles was Robert's only son from his first marriage with Violante of Aragon while that with Sancia remained without issue. Charles' marriage with Marie de Valois had only produced two daughters and one son of whom only the daughters survived. The elder of these Joan, two years old at the death of her father, was therefore heir to the throne. A triple problem existed. The first aspect was that Joan would probably not have reached her majority at the death of her grandfather who was already forty-eight at the time of her birth. As the kingdom of Naples was a papal fief power would then theoretically revert to the pope, a solution by no means attractive to the King. Secondly Robert's elder brother Charles Martel, first son of Maria of Hungary, who had become king of Hungary and died in 1295 had a surviving son and grandson both of whom were in possession of a strong claim to the Neapolitan throne
through an unbroken male line. Last and by no means least were all the problems normally attached to a female monarch. That of finding a suitable husband was to carry with it only misfortune and unrest. 169

Robert attempted to avert these problems by a number of means. Shortly before his death Joan married Andrew of Hungary, younger son of the king of Hungary, thus theoretically solving the problem of the Hungarian claim to the throne. He also set up a regency council that was to be headed by Sancia and which was aimed to offset the pope's power over the realm. His testament, made on the sixteenth of January 1343, four days before his death, underlined these aims. 170 Nonetheless he must have been aware of how easily his carefully laid plans could be overturned. The fresco in Santa Chiara sets out to affirm the plans for the succession.

The date of the fresco appears to be from the troubled years when the difficulties surrounding Joan's succession occupied the court due both to its style and iconography. Bologna compares it with the final frescoes in Santa Maria Donna Regina dating it in the first years of the 1340s. He also ascribes its commission to Robert of Anjou. Charles of Calabria's lack of crown would be due to his death before inheriting the kingdom of Naples and that on the head of Joan signifies that she is Robert's official heir. Following this theory the dating is also supported because
of the apparent age of Joan in the fresco. A date after Robert's death in 1343 is rejected due to her positioning behind Sancia, surely not acceptable to Joan if she herself had commissioned the fresco. 171

A third possibility, which is not considered by Bologna is that the fresco could have been commissioned by Sancia, most probably at the beginning of Joan's reign. The line of descent is still stressed while Sancia's inclusion does not rely merely on her position as Robert's wife but also on her independent political power as head of the regency council. As such she enjoyed a great deal of political power. 172 Joan, still a minor, would be rightly placed behind her mentor. Sancia's proximity to her granddaughter in the fresco echoed that in the affairs of the realm. Later in her reign Joan frequently referred to Sancia very affectionately in documents of state thus testifying to her influence. 173 The fresco carries no reference to Andrew of Hungary, Joan's husband. His supporters were keen to see him assume political power, his claim to which was not dependent solely on his marriage to the young queen but also as grandson of Charles II's eldest son Carobert. Queen Sancia, however, was strongly opposed to any claim on behalf of Andrew and would have undoubtedly excluded him from any representation of the Neapolitan royal family. 174

The location of the fresco, within the walls of the complex
of Santa Chiara, is significant in the context of the political activity of the early years of Joan's reign. Sancia's influence over the Franciscans in Naples was very strong and she supported the Spiritual party to the considerable annoyance of the Pope. Her assistance was such that by 1333 he had to move to restore control of the Neapolitan houses of Poor Clares into the hands of the Minister General. Sancia was to continue to defy the Pope in this matter and at her death a Spiritual Franciscan was still in charge of Santa Chiara, one who had been very much supported by Sancia during her lifetime. These circumstances, in conjunction with the struggle against papal claims over Naples at the beginning of Joan's reign, make the choice of Santa Chiara very much a proclamation of independence from papal authority and at the same time a denial of any Hungarian claims; both at this time becoming stronger. In the years 1343 to 1344 Elizabeth of Hungary, mother of Andrew undertook a journey to Naples in order to support her son's claims to the throne in the face of opposition from Sancia and other members of the regency council. En route she made a pilgrimage to the Vatican where she presented a number of costly items amongst which was an altarcloth showing all the dynastic saints of the Hungarian and Neapolitan royal houses. The bestowal of these gifts was not simply an example of the wish to further the cult of family saints but also emblematic of the wish to enlist the support of the Pope against the
exclusionist policy of the regency council. Queen Elizabeth must have hoped that Clement VI would use the position of the kingdom of Naples as a papal fief to aid her ambitions for her son. Hence the appearance of both Angevin and Hungarian saints on the altarcloth.

The fresco in Santa Chiara records Sancia's defiance. Its location in a fraticelli stronghold reflects Sancia's defiance of papal policy manifest even following her withdrawal from the world. The visit made by Elizabeth of Hungary to Naples in July 1343 helped to remove the influence of the regency council and augment the power of her son; subsequently Clement VI was to proclaim the council null and void. This removed Sancia from power and coincided with her decision to renounce the world. She did so in the January of 1344 shortly after the Pope's proclamation in the last months of 1343 and by entering Santa Chiara underlined her opposition (179).

* * * * *

Sancia's employment of her powers of patronage emphasizes a diversification in the uses of female benefaction in Naples during the first half of the fourteenth century. Opening with a devotion to family saints and especially a concern with benefitting women through architecture and subjects specifically appropriate to their devotions it quickly developed into a political statement while still retaining its female character. This transition can be seen partly as
a reaction to the affairs of state of the time and the increasing use made by the royal families of Europe in employing their saints and their religious predilections in temporal dynastic affairs. At the same time the initial aspiration to help women was never lost sight of in Naples. The ambitions of Maria of Hungary and Sancia of Majorca were threefold: to promote Franciscanism, to further the cause of their family interests and to assist the female religious vocation. Their position at the centre of Neapolitan power and politics enabled them to do this effectively, gaining important concessions and privileges for their chosen projects; while lack of permanent temporal political power left them time to exercise their influence through a religious medium. With the next generation headed by a queen matters changed their aspect. Joan's patronage, most notably of the church of the Incoronata, was overwhelmingly political in character and the stormy climate of the years of her reign prevented any consistency on this front. However the tradition of female patronage allied with concern for dynastic remembrance died hard and when, during the following century, Santa Maria Donna Regina was again damaged by earthquake the nuns immediately applied to the reigning queen, Joan II, who granted them funds for repairs on the condition that all the sculpted royal coats of arms that had been placed in the church during the time of Maria of Hungary were to repainted, thus enforcing the alliance of female patronage with dynastic concerns.
Notes to Chapter 5.

1 For a record of Maria's will see Minieri Riccio 200-206.

2 Spilo 59. By 1342 the number of converted in Santa Maria Maddalena had reached three hundred and forty. Spilo suggests that Santa Maria Egiziaca was in fact endowed by Sancia partially to take the overflow from the quickly growing convent of La Maddalena. Santa Chiara itself was also an exceptionally large convent. In 1318 there were one hundred and twenty religious within its walls and this number was to grow during the next century. For information on the numbers of the nuns see Andrea 57-58.

3 For Santa Marta see Napoli e Dintorni, Touring Club Italiano, 1976 Milan, 40.

4 Venditti 791 comments that Giovanna's donations to the church were no doubt partially motivated by her wish to ingratiate herself with the Church after having been found innocent of the murder of her first husband Andrew of Hungary by the papal tribunal at Avignon.

5 Leone de Castris 286. Carelli 15. Also Chierici 12. This was recorded in the Registro Angioino of 1294.

6 Bertaux 1899, 17. Also Carelli 17 and 63 n.34. The Queen stipulated that part of the money must be used to clean the coats of arms within the church.

7 Bertaux 1899, 12. See also Carelli 16 and 63n.28 where she cites the earlier sources for this information.
8 Carelli 15.

9 Mormone 10-11 comments on the presumed lack of ground space for the new church.

10 Bertaux 1899, 12-13. Also Leone de Castris 286.

11 Caqqese I, 641.

12 See for example the documents concerning donations to Santa Chiara in Spilo, eg. 261 document of the 6th June 1313 in which Robert gives to Sancia an annual income from various cities with permission to use it for her work on Santa Chiara.

13 Chierici 17.

14 Bertaux 1899, 12 n.4. Also Chierici 38.

15 The "Platea" is printed by Bertaux 1899, 157-162 from a copy of the original made in the early eighteenth century and states 161, "Nell’anno dopo 1316 il Santissimo Pontefice Giovanni XXII concede a tutti li fidelis Cristiani dell’uno e l’altro sesso, quali Confessati e Communicati havessero visitata la nostra Chiesa di S. Maria D. Regina nelli giorni della Nativita, Resorrettione, e Pentecoste del Signore et in tutte le festivita della Santissima Vergine e di Santa Chiara un anno d’Indulgenza".

16 Bertaux 1899, 12. Also Chierici 17. The bull is from the 10th August. See also Leone de Castris 286 where he also points out that the oldest tomb in the church dated from 1321 by which time it must have been fully
functioning.

17 Chierici 44. Even in the case of upper and lower churches Chierici points out that they were completely separated rather than just partially so.

18 Bruzelius 86.

19 For example Santa Chiara at Assisi and Santa Chiara in Naples. See the discussion of the arrangements of these churches see the article by Bruzelius.

20 Mormone 10.

21 Bruzelius 86.

22 See Bertaux 1899, 30.

23 Chierici 40.

24 Carelli 45.

25 Bertaux 1899, 29. For an opposing view see Carelli 40. I have unfortunately been unable to obtain an photograph of this detail.

26 Chierici 38.

27 I would like to thank Julian Gardner for pointing this out to me.

28 Leone de Castris 287.

29 Bertaux 1899, 38–39 points out the iconographical differences. Leone de Castris 288 notes the stylistic differences.

30 For a discussion of the styles of the various painters active in Donna Regina see Leone de Castris 288–289.

31 These were Saint Margaret, and the Blessed Constance,
Yolande and Cunegond daughters of Bela IV. See Klaniczay fig: 6.1 which illustrates the relationships of the holy women in these European dynasties. See also Vauchez 211-212.

32 Hamburger 114.

33 Hamburger 113. See also Grassi 135 where she notes the German preference for a tribune which was placed above the nave and which she believes would have enabled the religious to see the altar without themselves being seen. Mormone 10 also mentions northern influence as a possible precedent for Santa Maria Donna Regina.

34 Hamburger 115.

35 Hamburger 116.

36 Hamburger 113-114. Although the community was founded c.1266 the church was not built before the first decade of the fourteenth century.

37 Spilo 56.

38 Spilo 59.

39 Bertaux 1899, 12.


41 Chierici 40.

42 Musto 185.

43 See for example Spilo 270 the document of the 15th January 1337.

44 Spilo 56.

45 Spilo 326.
See Ozzola 125. Bertaux 1899, 4-5 discusses the origins of the name of the church as does Carelli 13 and 61 n.1.

Bertaux 1899, 167 prints this list.

Bertaux 1899, 13 believes it to be unlikely that the queen took full vows as she kept the titles of Queen of Sicily and Jerusalem up until the end of her life. He thinks it more likely that she took the vows of the third order and was allowed to follow the life of the nuns while retaining her lay status. Also Carelli 13 & 61 n.2 where she enumerates earlier sources for this belief.

Bertaux 1899, 167 where the list states that Maria lived "quasi indivisible fra loro (ie. the nuns) essa Regina, con dette RR. Monache, di giorno e talvolta di notte, quando li suoi Regii affari ne davano l'addito".

Bertaux 1899, 14.

Carelli 45.

Amongst these are Carelli 72 n.5 and Hetherington 80 n.16.

Caggesse I, 658 n.4.

Bertaux 1899, 14. See also Minieri Riccio 115.

Minieri Riccio 115, "ymaginem beati Lodoici Regis de argento cum capite et dyademate de auro tenentem in una manu reliquias suas et in alia manu baculum Regalem
extimatem velare incias decem".

56 Minieri Riccio 122, "Johanni de Cervinaria genreali procuratori Monasterii sancte Marie de dompna Regina de Neapoli et conventus eiusdem monasteri pro emendis possessionibus ad opus eiusdem monasterii secundum quod dicta domina Regina in dicto suo ultimo disposuit testamento unc. trecentas".

57 Bertaux 1899, 37.

58 Bruzelius 87 believes that they "should be considered as providing a visual pattern for prayer and meditation that may have taken place as a visual accompaniment to hearing the service".

59 Bertaux 1899, 117.

60 Hetherington 75 believes that the Queen ordered the first frescoes in the church. Leone de Castris 286 proposes the long term contract thus implying the Queen's iconographic control after her death.

61 Hetherington 80 n.16.

62 Carelli 33. Bologna 135-136 and 144 n.125 has suggested that the prophets were carried out while the Queen was alive together with at least the plan for the Last Judgement and the Saint Catherine and Passion cycles. Excluded from the first campaign would be the "The incredulity of Saint Thomas", "The Ascension" and "The Pentecost".

63 Hoch 288 and 294 n.46.
Bertaux 1899, 114 bases this dating on the presumed date of the completion of the fabric of the church as a starting point and a consideration of the clothes shown in the frescoes which he believes gives a terminus ante quem of 1340. Hetherington 73 concurs on the date for the commencement of the frescoes. Leone de Castris 287, 289 places the start of the decoration between 1318 and 1320 and believes that they were completed by the mid 1330s. Mormone 21 has advanced a completion date of around 1330.

Leone de Castris 287.

Bertaux 1899, 30.

Bologna 134-135.

Bologna 104. See also Leone de Castris 289.

Bertaux 1899, 60. See also Chierici 96. Also Bologna 116.

Bertaux 1906, 132-133 rejects Cavallini’s personal intervention in the frescoes on both chronological and stylistic grounds but does see his influence in some of the frescoes. Chierici 86-96 discusses whether Cavallini’s known movements during these years would have allowed him to take a part in the execution of the frescoes. He concludes that chronologically this would have been possible. Bologna 132-135 also denies the presence of Cavallini. Leone de Castris 286-287 denies the possibility of Cavallini working on any
part of the frescoes in person. See also Leone de Castris 291 n.1 where he gives a bibliography of those who have either supported or denied the Cavallini proposition.

71 Bertaux 1899, 28-29.

72 Hetherington 75-77 believes the fresco of "The Woman clothed with the Sun" which is immediately above this row of lozenges to be the last part of the decoration of the church to be directly supervised by Cavallini whom he believes would have returned to Rome in 1325 for the facade mosaic of San Paolo.

73 Carelli 40.

74 Chierici 116.

75 Robert was later to be buried in Santa Chiara in the Franciscan habit. Not only was he buried in a Franciscan habit but the part of his tomb visible from the nuns' choir is a recumbent sculptural portrait figure in which he appears as a Franciscan.

76 Toynbee 34.

77 Although it is not certain that Elizabeth ever actually became a member of the Franciscan tertiaries she was certainly closely connected with the order. See Vauchez 433-434.

78 Bertaux 1899, 11.

79 Venditti 212.

80 Kaftal Tuscan cols.337-340. The only other known
fourteenth century Italian scene from the life of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary is a fresco in Perugia which can be dated to around 1330. It shows "The Miracle of the Roses". However, there are other single representations of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary which can be related to Naples. One of these is a triptych now in the Kress Collection in Coral Gables and which has been attributed to Lippo Vanni. See Bologna 287 and VII, 4-5. To the right of a central Virgin and Child is the three-quarter length figure of Saint Elizabeth. The central panel shows two donor figures who have been identified as Queen Elizabeth Lokietkowna of Hungary and her son Andrew, husband of Joan I of Naples. The commissioning of the painting can be dated to 1343-1344 when Elizabeth journeyed to Naples. Elizabeth would have undoubtedly have been aware of the life of her thirteenth century namesake, particularly as she was queen of the country of the Saint's birth. However, both this painting, and Elizabeth's direct involvement with the kingdom of Naples, come too late to have had any possibility of influencing the frescoes in Santa Maria Donna Regina. There are a number of earlier instances of single figure representations of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary in central Italy: in the Bardi chapel for instance. However these cannot satisfactorily be used to
demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the life of the Saint before that which can be seen in Santa Maria Donna Regina.

81 Klaniczay 118 ff. See also Vauchez 211-213.
82 Klaniczay 119. See also 116-117 for her use of the depiction of Hungarian saints for propaganda purposes. Also mentioned by Vauchez 213.
83 Voragine III, 219. The translation of Voragine used here is that of William Caxton's 1483 edition. In the fifteenth century there were a considerable number of editions of the Legenda Aurea produced in Europe and no one edition can claim to be definitive. Caxton's can, however, claim to be a full translation, of which there were only two in English, as it contains all the saints in the standard Latin editions. See Reames, S.L., The Legenda Aurea: A Reexamination of its Paradoxical History, 1985 Wisconsin, 4. Although Caxton included all of the saints in the standard Latin editions, he did abridge some of the lives as well as relying on an earlier English edition and a French translation. Because of this his version cannot be used unreservedly. I have therefore also used an earlier and fuller Latin edition to supplement that of Caxton. This is an edition of 1481 now in the British Library (IB 1253) and which will be referred to as Legenda.
was unfortunately unable to consult any earlier Latin version. A systematic study of the early Latin manuscript versions of the Legenda has, in any case, not yet been carried out, making it difficult to choose a version that may have been known to Maria of Hungary or any of the court circle in Naples. Where possible I have quoted Caxton's English edition. When this has omitted a passage present in the Latin version I have instead quoted the Latin. The Latin version of the quotation in the text can be found in the *Legenda* Chapter CCLXXXI.

84 **Weinstein** 220-222.

85 **Bertaux 1899**, 50, 78 where he also denies the influence of any German chronicle.

86 A summary of these sources is given by **Henniges** 244-250.

87 Weinrich gives a chronological summary of the Saint's life pp.315-316. See also **BS IV**, 1110-1121.

88 **Huyskens 1908/2**, 79. See also **BS IV**, 1117.

89 **BS IV**, 1117. The "Libellus" is printed in **Huyskens 1911**, 1-86.

90 The life by Cesarius of Heisterbach is printed in **Huyskens 1908/1**, 1-59.

91 Dietrich's life of Saint Elizabeth is published in **Basnage** 113-152.

92 **Chierici 76** and **Bertaux 1899**, 50 both say that they
are unidentifiable. The details of this story are only known in much later versions from the fifteenth century.

93 This scene is recognised as such in Donna Regina by Gallino 342. Kaftal also puts this idea forward. See Kaftal Central col.381.

94 Kaftal Central col.381, n.5.

95 Voragine III 214. Huyskens 1911, 13. Also Huyskens 1908/1, 22 and Basnage 120.

96 See for example Basnage 121-122. Voragine III 215. Also Huyskens 1908/1, 24.

97 Kaftal Central col.381, n.4.

98 The "Libellus" relates the scene as follows, (Elizabeth) "dixit alicui puellule: Mensuremus nos, que nostrum sit longior; et sic propter plures genuflexiones faciendas ad terram." This ref. Huyskens 1911, 12. Cesarius' version is very similar, "Et cum votum sine verecundia persolvere non'posset, dicebat alicui puellarum: Procidamus in terram et consideremus, qui ex nobis longior sit. Et sic propter plures genuflexiones faciendas as terram se prosternens, pluribus se commensuravit, sicut ipsa postea confessa est, tali typo vota sua persolvens et notam hypochrisis fugens." This ref. Huyskens 1908/1, 22.

99 See Huyskens 1911, 11-12. Also Huyskens 1908/1, 21-22.
100 Voragine III, 214.

101 For Dietrich of Apolda’s version see Basnag 120.

102 For various views on the identification of the scenes: Chierici 77; Bertaux 1899, 51; Gallino 342; Kaftal Central cols.384-388.

103 Caxton’s translation does not mention this practice. See Voragine III, 216 where we only learn that "She arose oft by night for to make her prayers". However the Latin version I have used does include this. See Legenda Chapter CCLXXX.

104 Huyskens 1911, 22. Huyskens 1908/1, 28.

105 Cesarius’ version is very similar: "Absente vero marito in vigilis, in verberibus et castigacionibus multis noctis deducebat". See Huyskens 1908/1, 28.

106 Once again Cesarius gives a very similar version: "Quae sepe surgens de lecto marito in secreciorum locum secedens manibus ancillarum fortiter et sine misericordia verberari se fecit sicque ad lectum rediit". See Huyskens 1908/1, 28.

107 Basnag 123, "Fecit se in secreto cubiculo per ancillarum manus graviter saepissime verberari".

108 Voragine III, 216 tells us that, "She arose oft by night for to make her prayers" and 218 that, "And though she did great abstinence, yet she was liberal to the poor, so that she might not suffer that had any miseries, but gave to them all largely". The scene to
the far right is related as, "She did so great abstinence, that at the table of her husband ..... she would not eat but bread. For master Conrad defended her that she should not touch the meats of her husband of which she did not have a whole conscience". See Voragine III, 217-218.


110 Basnage 133. Neither the "Libellus" nor Cesarius give details of how Elizabeth heard of the death of her husband.

111 Kaftal Central col.394, n.17 suggests the latter, while the former is supported by Chierici 77 and Gallino 342.

112 Gallino 342 and Kaftal Central col.392, n.16 are the only authors to recognise the finding of the fish.

113 Voragine III, 218, "She gave on a time to a poor woman a right good vesture, and when this poor woman saw that she had so noble a gift, she had so great joy that she fell down as dead". Also Huyskens 1911, 31. Huyskens 1908/1, 33. Basnage 130.


115 The "Libellus" relates it as follows, "Item tempore generalis famis et caristie lantgravio profecto ad curiam Cremonensem omnen annonem de suis grangiiis
specialibus collectam in pauperum elemosinas expendit multis tentem dans singulis diebus, quantum necessitati opus erat". This ref. Huyskens 1911, 27. For Cesarius' version see Huyskens 1908/1, 31. Dietrich of Apolda's version is slightly longer but gives the same details. See Basnage 129.

116 Lemmens 14-20. For the miracle of the flowers 15 and for that of the fish 16-17.

117 Lemmens 14, 19.

118 The references for Elizabeth's profession to Conrad are as follows: Voragine III, 216; Huyskens 1911, 17; Huyskens 1908/1, 26. Those for the Saint receiving a vision of Christ are as follows: Voragine III, 224; Huyskens 1911, 36; Huyskens 1908/1, 36.

119 An exception to this is the thirteenth century life containing the miracle of the roses published by Lemmens which gives this vision on 16 and another appearance of Christ on 17.

120 Huyskens 1911, 36.

121 See Voragine III, 224; Huyskens 1911, 36; Huyskens 1908/1, 36; and Basnage 134-135.

122 Bonaventura 2.

123 See Chierici 77; Bertaux 1899, 51; Gallino 342.

124 Huyskens 1911, 33; Huyskens 1908/1, 34; Voragine III, 220; Basnage 133-134.

125 The reference to the respective episodes are as
follows - Voragine III, 220, 220, 220-221; Huyskens 1911, 33, 33-34, 35; Huyskens 1908/1, 34, 34, 36; Basnage 134, 134, 134. In the first of these episodes neither Jacopo da Voragine nor Dietrich of Apolda mention the fact that there are pigs in the place where Elizabeth takes shelter, and in none of the versions is Elizabeth’s spinning directly associated with this episode although we are told elsewhere that she spun her own cloth.

126 See Voragine III, 225; Huyskens 1911, 51-52; Huyskens 1908/1, 38, 40; and Basnage 140.

127 Minieri Riccio 106.

128 Fischer 176 n.117.

129 Carelli 41.

130 Minieri Riccio 106.

131 Bonaventura xxii.

132 Bonaventura 350-374.

133 Voragine I, 66-86.

134 Bertaux 1899, 44 & 47-48 gives those parts of the inscriptions visible at the turn of the century.

135 Bertaux 1906, 129-130 notes the singularity of this iconography and knows only two similar renditions of the scene. Bonaventura 333-335.

136 Bertaux 1899, 115.

137 Bologna 134-136. Leone de Castris 287 however believes that there is a break in continuity between the
prophets and apostles of the apse and the Last Judgement and the Passion scenes.

138 Bonaventura xxvii.
139 Minieri Riccio 102.
140 Bertaux 1899, 78.
141 Bertaux 1899, 62.
142 Kaftal Tuscan cols.8-12. The other cycle of Saint Agnes is in the Bardini Museum, Florence. It is a late Orcagnesque predella.
143 Bertaux 1899, 62-63. See also Leone de Castris 289. For a description of the triptych itself see Santi 127-128.
144 Bertaux 1899, 43.
145 Martindale 194.
146 Chierici 82. Also Carelli 38-39.
147 Bertaux 1899, 60-61 also tentatively identifies other members of the royal family amongst the elect.
148 Carelli 69 n.35.
149 Bertaux 1899, 37.
150 Mormone 11.
151 Hetherington 75ff.
152 Bertaux 1899, 44.
153 Chierici 86.
154 Ferrante 65-66.
155 Musto 181.
156 Musto 182-183. The letter was first written on the
tenth of June 1316 and later incorporated into a letter to the Chapter General in Assisi in 1334.

157 Spilo 64. Also Musto 189.

158 Spilo 51. Permission was first gained from Clement V in 1311. Sancia requested that the number be doubled in 1338 and this was granted by Benedict XII.

159 Musto 185-186.

160 Spilo 59. Also Musto 192.

161 Spilo 58.

162 Bertaux 1898, 166.

163 Bruzelius 87 discusses the ramifications of this arrangement.

164 Bruzelius 88 notes the favoured viewing position of the nuns. See also Andrea 43-44 on the dedication of the church.

165 Vasari I, 389-391.

166 Bologna 130-132.

167 Leonard 315-316.

168 Leonard 342.

169 Leonard 315-469 gives a comprehensive exposition of the situation and its ramifications.

170 Leonard 335.

171 Bologna 131.

172 Leonard 335. Also Baddeley 282.

173 See for example Spilo 176, document of the 16th January 1344.
174 Musto 188.

175 Musto 192.

176 Musto 198-199. This was Robert of Mileto.

177 Klaniczay 116-117.

178 Leonard 343.

179 Spilo 64. See also Musto 189. In a letter of the 14th November 1343 she obtained permission from the pope to enter the convent and on the 20th January 1344 put this permission into action.
PAINTING IN LATE FOURTEENTH CENTURY PADUA: The Patronage of Fina Buzzacarina.

The patronage of Fina Buzzacarina in commissioning the frescoes in the Baptistery in Padua in the 1370s is an example of how a large public work could be used to express very personal concerns. In this aspect it is almost a pendant to the use of iconography made earlier in the century by Enrico Scrovegni in the Arena Chapel where it is repentance for his father's usury that is highlighted.¹ However, in common with the cases previously examined there is a dearth of historical information which would directly link the usury of Reginaldo Scrovegni to the cycle in the Arena Chapel, and would directly link Fina's concerns with her largest commission - the Baptistery. Chroniclers subsequently tell us that Enrico endowed the chapel in order to expiate his father's sin.² We also know from contemporary sources that he was a member of the Cavalieri Gaudenti, who also contributed to the commissioning of the chapel.³ However there is still nothing which unequivocally states that in order to atone for his father's sin Enrico himself felt it necessary to do more than donate money, in short that he also felt it necessary to advertise his family's shortcomings on the walls of the chapel itself and in doing so to change the normal chronology of the scenes leading up to and including the passion of Christ. Consequently it is still more difficult to be sure just why and if scenes were tailored and emphases adjusted at the
time of the execution of the frescoes.

Within the parameters imposed by these restrictions in the evidence available, the effect of Fina Buzzacarina on the work which she commissioned is correspondingly difficult to pinpoint. The fresco cycle within the Baptistery in Padua, generally agreed to have been commissioned by her, may enable us to point to some more ways in which women's roles and preoccupations were translated into a more public arena than that of their private lives.

The Paduan Baptistery was completed by Giusto de' Menabuoi probably before 1378. The evidence of the commissioning of the cycle of frescoes by Fina Buzzacarina rests on a number of points. Most authors who have commented on the frescoes have agreed that she is the donor although there is no contemporary documentary evidence. The most obvious iconographical evidence is that of her representation on the left of the votive fresco placed over the original entrance to the Baptistery from the Cathedral (Fig. 109). Here she kneels to the left of the Virgin and Child (as we look at the fresco) and is presented to them by John the Baptist (Fig. 110). Fina's position on the left of the fresco is the position of honour and the traditional one for the figure of a single donor. Fina is therefore shown here as solely responsible for the frescoes in the Baptistery.

This, however, does not give any clue as to the dating of
the frescoes with reference to the point in her life at which they were commenced. They are not specifically mentioned in her will and this has lead some critics to the belief that the frescoes had at least been financially provided for well before her death on the fourth of October 1378, and indeed that the greater part of Giusto's work was finished at this point. However the interpretation of that part of Fina's will which deals with her provisions for the Baptistery has not been unanimous. The will itself states that:

"Item reliquit Capelle predicte solum ad ornatum et pro ornamento ipsius Capelle et altaris in ea existentis totum suum argentum et omnia eius Vestimenta quod et que repertum fuerit dictam testitricem tempore obitus sui habere" (My italics).

Saalman believes that this part of the will refers to provision for ornamentation in the shape of the actual frescoes which would therefore not have been started until after her demise. This would in turn place the true responsibility for the fresco cycle on Fina's husband, Francesco da Carrara, who was named as her executor in the will while her son Francesco Novello was her universal heir. Francesco il Vecchio was specifically given responsibility for her tomb. However this clause of the will could also be interpreted as providing only for the furnishings necessary to the liturgical functions of the
Baptistery as previously enumerated in her will and this seems to be the most likely explanation.\textsuperscript{10} The supposition is strengthened by the fact that the provision comes immediately after Fina's orders for the employment of two priests to celebrate daily masses and pray for her soul. Indeed the money realized from the sale of the clothes and silver found in her possession at her death may not have been sufficient to cover the complete cost of Giusto's work in the Baptistery. Kohl suggests that it was merely to be used to complete the work.\textsuperscript{11} It is possible that Fina's reclamation in 1376 of the loan of ten thousand ducats to Florence in 1371 was made in order to cover in part the expenses incurred by the Baptistery decoration already underway.\textsuperscript{12} Both Meneghesso and Bettini assume that the decoration had been agreed upon previous to the completion of the codicil of the will dated September the twenty-second 1378 as no specific mention is made of the frescoes or the artist.\textsuperscript{13} Giusto de' Menabuoi was known to have had another large fresco commission in the years immediately following Fina's death whilst Francesco il Vecchio was occupied in his war against Venice which he saw as a personal vendetta after his humiliation and that of his son at the end of the previous war with Venice in 1373.\textsuperscript{14} A contemporary chronicler described Francesco at that time as not being able to sleep for thinking of how he could destroy the Venetians.\textsuperscript{15} This new war with Venice broke out in the June of 1378 a few months before his wife's death
and from then until his final defeat and capture in 1388 Francesco il Vecchio was almost permanently at war.\textsuperscript{16}

It was certainly possible for Giusto to have painted the frescoes in the Baptistery before Fina's death and indeed this appears to have been the most likely time. He was probably born in Florence and had previously worked in Milan but by 1370 he was present in Padua having become one of the favoured artists at the Carrara court after the death of Guariento in 1369.\textsuperscript{17} His first Paduan work was in the Cortellieri Chapel in the church of the Eremitani.\textsuperscript{18} The work was in commemoration of Tebaldo di Niccolò Cortelliero, a Paduan judge who had died in Rome on the twentieth of August 1370. Although married he left as his main heir his widowed mother Traversina Cortelliero, and it was she who probably commissioned the frescoes.\textsuperscript{19} It would appear from this that Giusto was accustomed to female patrons - his first securely datable work is an "Enthroned Madonna" commissioned by Isotta Terzago in 1363.\textsuperscript{20} The first contemporary document which mentions Giusto as being in Padua is that of the thirteenth of October 1373 in which he received sixty ducats for the painting of a "Madonna in trono con santi" in the capella mortuaria of Enrico Spisser.\textsuperscript{21} By the twenty-sixth of April 1375 Giusto was referred to as a citizen of Padua by the dispensation of Francesco il Vecchio.\textsuperscript{22} During the years normally cited for the completion of the Baptistery frescoes he was living near to the Duomo.\textsuperscript{23} He was already there by the
tenth of January 1375 and on the eighteenth of August 1377 bought a house in the same area.\textsuperscript{24} Delaney believes that the style of the Baptistery points to a date somewhere between Giusto’s execution of the Spisser Chapel in the Eremitani and the Belludi Chapel in the Santo, ie. between 1373 and 1382. The Spisser Chapel was provided for in a will of September 9th 1373.\textsuperscript{25} However only fragments of it now exist.\textsuperscript{26} The Belludi chapel contains a dedicatory plaque set into the lower right corner of "The Crucifixion of Saint Philip" which says that the altar was consecrated on September 22nd 1382. Whether the frescoes were completed by this date is uncertain but most critics agree that they were painted by Giusto de' Menabuoi and give a date of circa 1382.\textsuperscript{27} Stylistically they appear to be later than the Baptistery frescoes and so these latter can be dated within the lifetime of Fina Buzzacarina; not only did she commission them in this case but also would have had the opportunity to oversee their execution.\textsuperscript{28}

The Baptistery itself is exceptional in being one of the largest fresco cycles commissioned by a woman during this period - it contains both Old and New Testament cycles - and placed in full public view. Fina Buzzacarina was the wife of the ruler of Padua, Francesco il Vecchio da Carrara and possibly more exceptional is that the cycle was commissioned while Fina's husband was still alive.\textsuperscript{29} It is noticeable that among other private female patrons their commissions generally appear to be carried out after the
death of a husband. A few examples from the early fifteenth century both concern the commissions of widows. The widow of a Stoldo di Lorenzo of Florence, Donna Villana, commissioned the tomb of her namesake the Beata Villana, which was erected in Santa Maria Novella between 1451 and 1452, while at around the same time the widow of the condottiere Baldaccio d'Anghiari founded a convent of Dominican nuns on a piece of property that she owned in the neighbourhood of Santo Spirito. Fina Buzzacarina, however, as the wife of the ruler of Padua, and as a member by birth of one of the most important Paduan families may have had more financial power in her own right than the women in the examples just cited, since in the merchant classes a lack of complete financial independence even after the death of a husband is conspicuous.

Fina's financial position would have been more than adequate for her purposes. She appears to have been a wealthy woman in her own right, and in many instances able to control her resources without recourse to her husband for help or permission. This command over those resources held in her name was probably also enjoyed by other women members of the Paduan aristocracy. Caterina dei Francesi di Staggia, the wife of Bonifacio Lupi - often sent on missions in the service of Francesco da Carrara - used both money and land in her own name to finance the family hospital in Florence, amongst other works. Fina's use of her finances, however, often appears to have had a much more
personal significance than that of her contemporaries. During her marriage she built up, by means of legacies from various members of her family, and also by her own dealings, considerable personal wealth. On the thirty-first of January 1361 her father Pataro, who was to die later in the year, made a gift to her of almost 6,000 lire with which she enlarged her holdings of land in the areas of Arzercavalli and Monte Casale. After the death of her father Fina also received from him half of the tithes of Arzere. In the following year her uncle Salione, canon of the cathedral chapter, died, leaving her the profits from various pieces of land that he owned. Indeed by 1371 Fina was in a position to lend the sum of ten thousand ducats to the Florentines. She appears to have been interested in putting together a large land-holding and dealt financially with her husband and brother in order to to this, leading to the supposition that her finances were largely separate from those of Francesco il Vecchio. However when the war between Padua and Venice broke out in 1372 this activity stopped and Fina had to concentrate on her religious commissions within Padua.33

Fina was no stranger to artistic patronage and the Baptistery is by no means her only claim to this fame. Her activities were various but all appear to have been religiously based. She is known to have provided the money for the construction of the chapel dedicated to San Ludovico within the church of San Benedetto Vecchio. This
is recorded in an inscription which still exists within the church although the edifice was badly bombed during the Second World War on the eleventh of March 1944 and the chapel itself is no longer in existence. The dedication informs us that the chapel was, "constructed by the illustrious and generous lady Fina Buzzacarina". San Benedetto Vecchio had a personal association for Fina. Founded in 1195 as a Benedictine monastery it had by 1300 passed to the Benedictine nuns while the monks removed to San Benedetto Novello which was being constructed during the years 1262-1267. Fina's sister Ursula had become a Benedictine nun in San Benedetto Vecchio where she took the name of Anna and was to become abbess of the convent, a post which she held from 1355 to 1396. She is in fact recorded as such on the inscription just mentioned where we are told that it was she who ordered the decoration of the San Ludovico chapel which was completed in the August of 1394. It may be that Anna was in fact only carrying out Fina’s expressed wishes regarding the chapel. At her death Fina left to the convent various of her goods and these may have been used by Anna to commission the frescoes. Her will records a legacy specifically for the decoration of the chapel in the church of the convent where her sister was abbess. It gives no mention of the subject matter of the frescoes, if that had already been decided on or discussed.

The decoration in fact consisted of Apocalypse frescoes.
They are traditionally held to have been commenced by Giusto de' Menabuoi although completed after his death. Bettini claims that the arch of the chapel was Giusto's last work. Giusto was certainly dead by the nineteenth of May 1391, the date on which his heirs are referred to in a Paduan document, although the decoration of the chapel itself was not completed until 1394. It is significant that this Apocalypse cycle was very similar to that previously executed in the Baptistery and it is tempting to speculate that not only had Fina left money for the decoration of the chapel to be overseen by her sister but had also requested a subject matter that was personal to her. The frescoes in the chapel did not keep to the order of the text and Bettini suggests that this was to point to the hope of human resurrection.

Fina did not confine herself to the construction of this chapel but is popularly credited with founding the church of Santa Maria dei Servi in 1372. It would seem however that the plans for the foundation and probably its funding came from her husband. It is likely, though, that the tradition of the foundation by Fina herself was based on her supervision of the construction and its financial aspects as the years from 1372 onwards were just those when Francesco was becoming more and more embroiled in his war with Venice. In her supervision of her husband's commission she was acting as did the wife of Bonifacio Lupi during this period. Lupi was often absent from Padua during
the frequent periods of war and was also used by Francesco da Carrara as an ambassador, notably to the Hungarian court, when Francesco was attempting to cement an alliance with Andrew of Hungary in the face of the increasing power and hostility of Venice. During these absences Lupi's wife, Caterina dei Francesi di Staggia, supervised the work being carried out on the San Felice chapel. In a document of the thirty-first of October 1392 dealing with the completion of the donation to the Servites Fina was mentioned but this part of document was later cancelled. Although Santa Maria dei Servi was commenced during Fina's lifetime it was not finished until around 1390, twelve years after her death. In 1392 Fina's son, Francesco Novello, entrusted the church to the Servites, hence its name. The choice of the site of the new church is significant. It was placed on the location of the destroyed house of Niccolò da Carrara. Niccolò da Carrara, Francesco il Vecchio's grandfather, had fled Padua in July 1327 having betrayed the city. His palace was burnt to the ground in revenge. It has been suggested that the construction of Santa Maria dei Servi was planned as an act of expiation for his betrayal of Padua and as a votive offering for the prosperity of the principality. Alternatively the timing of the building rather than its placing within the city may be the important factor. One of Fina's daughters, Caterina, was married in 1372, the most probable date of the beginning of the work, to the Conte
Stefano di Veglia.

In fact both the chapel of San Ludovico and the church of Santa Maria dei Servi appear to have personal and familial importance to Fina herself either through her sister or her daughters. The Baptistery may have been similarly familially inspired. As the patron of the Baptistery frescoes the question arises as to how much power Fina had over their content and appearance. She evidently had a great affection for the Baptistery. In her will she specifically requested that her burial place be near to the Duomo of Padua, in the place which used to be called the Capella Santi Joanni, and which was now known as the Baptistery:

"apud Ecclesiam maiorem sive domi di Padua in loco vocato Capella s. Johannis baptiste quo hodie appellatur Baptisterium". 52

This was carried out and she was buried in a wall tomb under her votive fresco above the western entrance door to the Baptistery. 53 There have been some voices of dissension over the original position of Fina's tomb. 54 Wall tombs of the type in which Fina was buried were well known in Padua and can be seen for example in the Capella San Giacomo in the Santo. 55 Burials within Baptisteries had been prohibited by the Council of Auxerre in 578 but this does not appear to have stopped the practice during the mediaeval period. In fact burials in the Florentine
Baptistery continued until the early fifteenth century. There was also an example very close to Padua in the Baptistery of San Marco in Venice. This had first been put into use and decorated in the first half of the fourteenth century and contained the tomb of the commissioner of the mosaics there, Andrea Dandolo. Given the rivalry of Venice and Padua at this time a desire to use the commission for the Baptistery in Padua to rival the splendour of that in Venice may have been a contributory factor in its planning. 56

A number of other provisions in Fina's last testament underline the importance of the Baptistery to her. She not only planned that she be buried inside the Baptistery but also made arrangements for the type of tomb to be constructed, for the endowment of the chapel which was to include the employment of two priests for services, and also for the ornamentation of the chapel. 57 The choice of the Baptistery as a final resting place was made in preference to siting the tomb at any of the other places that had been recipients of her patronage.

Indeed the chief recipient of her benefaction was the Baptistery. The extensive cycle of frescoes within it consists of a dome showing the elect in Paradise with in the centre a half figure of Christ blessing. Directly below, in the lowest part of the dome, is the Creation and other episodes from Genesis which form one tier. The
subjects selected here, which stretch from "The Creation of the World" to "Joseph being sold to merchants by his brothers", are a fairly usual choice. In the pendentives which join the dome to the wall of the Baptistery are the four Evangelists seated at desks while below them are their symbols and to either side of each of them two prophets holding scrolls. The walls of the Baptistery are covered with scenes from the lives of Saint John the Baptist, Mary, and Christ: thirty-three in all. These range from "The Presentation of Mary in the Temple" to "The Transfiguration".

In the apse are scenes of the Apocalypse while the altarpiece, also by Giusto de' Menabuoi, has a central panel showing the Virgin and Child. The side panels of the polyptych show twelve scenes from the life of the Baptist some of which are repeats of the subject matter of the frescoes on the south wall. This includes the central pinnacle of "John baptizing Christ" and "The Angel appearing to Zaccarias". Both the arms of Fina Buzzacarina and Francesco il Vecchio appear on the base of the altarpiece, to the right and the left respectively. However there is no documentation to allow a secure dating. Delaney believes that the altarpiece was painted entirely by Giusto, and must have been conceived, if not actually painted, after the frescoes.

The frescoes however give a number of clues as to the
possible chain of events in their execution and thus to their dating. Immediately apparent is the great emphasis there is on Fina Buzzacarina herself in the frescoes. She is usually identified in the votive fresco while all the letters of her Christian name are sculpted on the brackets below.\(^{62}\) She is shown being presented to the Virgin by John the Baptist while the other saints who surround the Virgin also express their approbation. The other saints chosen are Massimo, Bishop of Padua; John the Evangelist; Daniel; Fidenzio and Prosdocimus. Daniel and Prosdocimus were particularly venerated in Padua and can be seen on the majority of the coins minted during the reign of Francesco il Vecchio.\(^{63}\) On the left are an unidentified Franciscan, Anthony and Francis, and on the right three virgin martyrs, the second being Giustina and the third Apollonia (Fig. 111).\(^{64}\) It has been suggested that the Baptist was Fina’s patron saint, but his prominence here can more easily be explained by the dedication of the building.\(^{65}\) Many of the saints are local (as are those on the base of the predella of the altarpiece). Francis and Apollonia are not. Delaney suggests that Apollonia was Fina’s protector, or that possibly the innermost virgin martyr may have been Fina’s name saint. In this fresco she is shown on a slightly smaller scale than the Virgin and saints whereas in the scene of "The Birth of John the Baptist" she is on the same scale as that of the other participants.

Fina’s appearance in "The Birth of John the Baptist" is
very rarely mentioned yet her distinctive profile and the unashamedly fourteenth century dress of herself and her companions as opposed to that of the biblical characters assures the accuracy of this identification (Fig. 112). Fina is shown standing at the far right of the fresco with three female attendants aligned beside her. She does not only observe but actively participates in the scene. The far right of the three midwives at the front of the composition turns the upper half of her body away from the preparation of the bath to which she has previously been attending in order to present the newly-born John the Baptist to Fina's gaze. One of Fina's female companions also gestures towards John while Fina herself acknowledges this mark of favour by raising her hand towards her heart. The scene recalls that of "The Birth of the Virgin" painted by Ghirlandaio in the Tornabuoni chapel in Santa Maria Novella Florence, over one hundred years later in 1486 (Fig. 113). Here the baby Mary is presented in much the same way to a young girl who has been identified as Giovanna Tornabuoni, one of the handmaidens turning deliberately towards the group of people so manifestly from the fifteenth century. The deliberate placing of this gesture in the Baptistery fresco can be more fully appreciated when it is compared with the same scene in the Baptistery altarpiece (Fig. 114). The scene here is arranged very similarly, with Elizabeth lying on the same type of two-tiered bed and the arches behind her. Her
attendants again include Mary, recognisable by her halo and the pink of her dress, and one visitor even brings her the same gift of a chicken, eaten by those feeling weak and a common adjunct in scenes of "The Birth of the Baptist" and "The Birth of the Virgin". There are however only two maids concerned with the bathing of Jesus probably due to the constriction of space in the altarpiece. Their actions serve to underline the communication there is with Fina in the fresco. Instead of turning to the right they face each other, due to the lack of the spectators to the right who, however, are present in the fresco. The placing of this particular episode within a very comprehensive Biblical scheme is prominent as the uppermost central fresco on the north side of the Baptistery. This prominence is to a large extent due to its importance for the function of the building that it is placed inside. "The Birth of the Baptist" has a double association with the Baptistery. Not only was John the first Baptist, but the scene of his nativity and subsequent bathing - in this case at the centre front of the fresco - would have echoes for the onlookers of the actual baptisms taking place in the central font. Indeed, the bathing of the baby is an antecedent or antetype of Baptism. Thus the scene is linked on a number of levels with the use to which the building in which it was placed was put.

The two scenes which feature Fina are both placed prominently within the Baptistery. However it has been
claimed that the two representations of Fina just discussed are not the only examples of portraiture in the Baptistery frescoes and that there is evidence of the intervention of her husband. Amongst the frescoes on the lowest tier the presence of Francesco il Vecchio has been recognised. According to Margaret Plant both Fina and her husband Francesco il Vecchio are present in the crowd in the scene of "Christ before Pilate" although why their portraits should be placed here is not clear (Fig. 115). The positioning of this fresco is on the east side of the Baptistery, the bottom scene within the left hand arch; a very obscure position with the general scheme and extremely badly lit. It is difficult to envisage why such a scene should have been chosen for the only painted image of Padua's rulers in the Baptistery. One possible explanation would be that the frescoes were in fact unfinished at the time of Fina's demise and that, as executor of the will Francesco continued the supervision. Due to the nature of fresco painting this may have been on the lower registers. Wishing the Baptistery to be a monument both to himself and his wife, and yet with a limited number of uncompleted subjects to have the portraits placed in, they were placed in the rendering of "Christ before Pilate". This theory assumes that the money provided for the ornamentation of the Baptistery in Fina's will was in fact intended for the completion of the frescoes and not any more transient furniture, as is contended by Saalman.
Francesco il Vecchio's claims as a patron are not slight. During his reign over Padua he had commissioned a number of works in the Reggia - the royal palace. Unlike those commissions which we can associate with Fina however, those of Francesco appear to have been basically secular. They include a "battle room" which held paintings boasting of his family's achievements in battle, and also many other decorated rooms with subjects that had a more classical theme.\textsuperscript{69} It was during his reign that Petrarch took up permanent residence in Padua in 1367 and devised the scheme for the "Sala Virorum Illustrium", possibly as a response to Francesco da Carrara's express desire.\textsuperscript{70} This seems to be indicated in the dedicatory preface of the work as completed after Petrarch's death by his literary executor Lombardo della Seta.\textsuperscript{71} The frescoes, now destroyed, were probably executed between 1367 and 1379.\textsuperscript{72} However, as previously mentioned he was very much occupied with his vendetta against Venice, almost to the exclusion of all else, at the time of Fina's death and it seems unlikely that he would have interfered with an already commenced fresco cycle whose subject matter had been planned by his wife, nor allow himself to be relegated to what must be considered an inferior position.

The placing of these portraits within a subject of this nature also seems strange. Court portraiture within a religious context was not, it would seem, an unthought of plan in the Padua of the late fourteenth century although
the real birth of this type of portraiture was not to happen until the Florence of the next century. The presence of court portraiture within a religious cycle has been postulated in the case of the San Felice Chapel in Sant’ Antonio which was directly contemporaneous with the work on the Baptistery. The frescoes show, amongst others, scenes from the life of Saint James and were completed between 1372 and 1379. The three frescoes beneath the lunette in the eastern wall show Saint James appearing to King Ramiro in a dream and promising the King victory in battle, following this is the council in which the King imparts the substance of the dream to the elders, and on the right the Saint intervenes in the battle thus ensuring victory for Ramiro. The central fresco of "The Council of Ramiro" contains a number of portraits of contemporary Paduans including the donor, Bonifacio Lupi di Soragna - also present in the donor portrait on the western wall with his wife Caterina - Francesco il Vecchio and Louis the Great of Hungary. Also present is Petrarch seated on the right of the King and possibly the importer of the idea of portraiture into Padua. The scenes from the life of the Saint are made pertinent to contemporary Padua, the war with Venice, the alliance with Hungary, and Bonifacio Lupi’s part in this. Thus these early examples of court portraiture are used for almost propaganda reasons. They place victory for the Paduan-Hungarian alliance on the plane of a religious victory aided by God.
This is by no means the case in the Baptistry version of "Christ before Pilate". Here Jesus is shown surrounded by the enemies who have called for his execution, as Pilate washes his hands of responsibility for the death of the Messiah. Any royal portraiture in this context would merely serve to show a guilty conscience and the inexplicable desire of the patrons to associate themselves with the Jews who killed Christ. It seems unlikely that either Francesco il Vecchio or Fina would have used the Baptistry cycle in such a way. There are, however, a number of other scenes in the Baptistry in which portraits have been suggested. These include "The Resurrection of Lazarus" on the bottom right of the north wall, and "The Miracles of Christ" immediately above it. The subjects suggested are Francesco da Carrara, Petrarch, Fina and her sister Ursula the abbess of San Benedetto. 77 Both scenes show a number of people in the crowd dressed in contemporary costume. Those in "The Resurrection of Lazarus" appear to be overwhelmingly men amongst which two profiles in the centre of the composition are prominent as being less damaged than the other figures and also those most obviously in contemporary costume (Fig. 116). 78 "The Miracles of Christ" has not undergone so much damage and it is therefore easier to judge the possibility of portraits in this scene (Fig. 117). These are most likely to be amongst the rows of spectators to the left of Christ (as we look at the fresco). They include one woman who is dressed in the clothes of a nun with a white wimple
and black habit and veil (Fig. 118). This is the only contender for the supposed portrait of the abbess of San Benedetto, not only in the Baptistery, but elsewhere, and her identification must therefore remain tentative resting as it does more on the presence of other members of the family in the fresco than on any possibility of recognising her in her own right. The practice of placing contemporary figures almost as members of the chorus in frescoes at this time is widespread and especially popular within Padua itself as can be seen from the previously mentioned frescoes in the San Felice chapel. However merely because there is a clear difference shown in the frescoes between biblical and contemporary dress this should not be taken to imply that all, or indeed any, of those figures in lay dress are intended to be portraits. Whilst Ursula is an obvious choice for a portrait in a series of frescoes commissioned by a member of her family nuns are also present in other frescoes in Padua. There are for example a number in the scene of "The funeral of Saint Lucy" in the Oratorio di San Giorgio. There is no evidence that these are intended as portraits but their presence is nearly as surprising as they are dressed in contemporary garb. Although they are not so anachronistic as the nun who is a witness to Christ's miracles they are nevertheless an indication that non-specific contemporary figures could be placed in frescoes during this period.

With regard to the portrait of Fina which has been
identified in this scene the problems of recognition should not be so great as there are two undisputed frescoes of her by the same artist and in the same cycle. However both of these show Fina in profile and so the comparison is not so easily made. The identification of her husband in these frescoes is also difficult. Although Francesco's portrait has been recognised in a number of works in Padua these differ widely in their representation of his features and were in many cases executed after his death. 79 What does seem clear is the presence of a dark beard, also possessed by his son. 80 This cursory knowledge is of little help in the case of these two frescoes without other supporting evidence such as the use of the Carrara insignia which is used on a figure identified as Francesco in the scene of "The Martyrdom of Saint George" in the Oratorio di San Giorgio. 81 What is certain though is that the fashionable use of portraits in a narrative context during the latter half of the fourteenth century in Padua is a long way from the clear expression of intention that is found in a donor portrait. The recognition of Francesco in some of the scenes in the chapel of San Felice for example has not sparked off any discussion concerning his possible patronage of that chapel and this is not only because documents exist to identify the donors but also because they are clearly represented in a specific donor portrait in the chapel itself. The use of portraits within biblical scenes or those portraying the lives of saints can better
be considered as an intellectual game unless there is any more concrete political or historical reason for their identification.

However, one further piece of evidence exists for Francesco's involvement in the frescoes. This is that Fina's device/coat of arms only appears in one place, that being the right base of the polyptych. The carriage and the helmet surmounted by a horned devil, which are evident, for example, along the bottom of the dome and in the pendentives, are those of Francesco il Vecchio. If these do represent Francesco il Vecchio's participation in the cycle then they could be evidence of it at a fairly early stage in its execution, probably before the frescoes showing Fina if they were carried out contemporaneously with the rest of the frescoes. It may also be that the frescoes as they exist today are not seen entirely as they were completed by Giusto de' Menabuoi. After the demise of Francesco Novello and the Venetian occupation of Padua at the beginning of the fifteenth century it has been suggested that not only the tombs of Fina Buzzacarina and Francesco il Vecchio were removed by the Venetians but that there was possibly also a general destruction and painting out of any Carrara emblems. There is a record of this in the Cathedral. However the early Carrara tombs in the church of the Eremitani were left undisturbed. The importance of the Cathedral may have dictated action here rather than in the Eremitani church, and its proximity to
the Baptistery means emblems there may also have undergone the same fate. It is probable that Francesco's emblems rather than Fina's were the objects of these actions and the possibility of more Carrara emblems in the Baptistery than are extant makes Francesco il Vecchio's participation in the Baptistery even more likely. However the perpetration of any such action as this has been disputed and the changes in the Baptistery, such as the removal of Fina's tomb to be replaced with a fresco of John the Baptist, attributed to the activities of a Paduan fraternity: that of San Giovanni rather than to any Venetian action. 86 According to this scenario Francesco il Vecchio's tomb would also have been removed at this time in order to make way for the tombs of the members of the fraternity. 87 Although the exact position of Francesco's tomb within the Baptistery is disputed it was undoubtedly freestanding, set on marble columns on the backs of griffins and lions. 88 Saalman suggests that Francesco was buried in this manner rather than being placed in the existing sarcophagus of his wife because of Francesco Novello's wish for maximum splendour, possibly for political reasons. A freestanding tomb would have left Fina in a subordinate position. This presupposes that previous to this Fina's domination of the Baptistery was evident, as it is today, since the removal of Francesco's tomb.

In the actual frescoed scenes, the original decoration of the Baptistery, it is still Fina who dominates. The
presence of her emblems does not seem necessary as with the central positioning of her portraits her presence is the most influential in the Baptistery despite the placing of Francesco il Vecchio's tomb in the middle of the Baptistery and indeed the emblems may have been placed at the same time as Francesco's tomb, on the instructions of Francesco Novello, in order to shift emphasis away from Fina. 89

Fina's portraits are not the only striking part of the scheme. There are also a number of unusual iconographical changes which point towards her direct involvement. Prominent among these is the inclusion of Mary in the scenes surrounding "The Birth of the Baptist". Mary is shown helping Elizabeth at the birth. She is placed standing next to Elizabeth at the head of the bed and her presence is accentuated by the striking pink of her dress. Mary's inclusion here is not particularly uncommon. What is exceptional is that it is not the Virgin who holds the baby but a handmaiden at the bath. Mary's presence in "The Naming of the Baptist", where it is she who is shown taking the infant John to his father Zaccharias to be named, is very unusual. 90 In the case of "The Birth of the Baptist", Luke, the only gospel which gives an account of John's birth relates that the Virgin left the house of Elizabeth and Zaccarias before John's birth. 91 Other sources, however, say that she was present. These include Saint Ambrose and the Venerable Bede. 92 Jacopo da Voragine also describes the Virgin's treatment of the baby John as does
Pseudo-Bonaventura in his "Meditations on the Life of Christ" where he relates that,

"When the time had come Elizabeth gave birth to the son whom Our Lady lifted from the ground and diligently cared for as was necessary". 93

Bonaventura does not accord the Virgin so prominent a role in "The Naming of the Baptist" as is shown in Giusto's fresco. 94 In fact it is only the anonymous "Patrum" translated into Italian by Domenico Cavalca that seems to assert that Mary also brought John to Zaccharias to be named. 95

In another unusual scene, that of "The Calling of Matthew", Delaney sees Fina's particular influence, or at the least, family influence channeled through her (Fig. 119). 96 The scene does not occur in Giotto's series in the Arena Chapel and yet in the Baptistery it is accorded a prominent position as the central scene on the south wall while at the same time two important scenes included in the Arena Chapel sequence are omitted. These are "The Cleansing of the Temple" and "The Pact of Judas". Delaney suggests that since Saint Matthew was the patron saint of money lenders, called away from the tax collectors' table in order to follow Jesus, this is in fact a reference to two of Fina's forbears - Fulcone and Salione - who, according to da Nono, were notorious usurers. 97 The omission of the two scenes that Enrico Scrovegni used in order to expiate his father's
sin and the inclusion of one in which the money lender's activities are turned to good changes the reference to usury in the Baptistry into a message of redemption rather than Scrovegni's foretaste of hell.

If "The Calling of Matthew" can be read in a similar way to the "Pact of Judas" in the Arena Chapel - an expiation of family sin - then what importance should be attached to the presence of Fina and the Virgin Mary in "The Birth of the Baptist"? In "The Calling of Matthew" there is no obvious link with Fina's usurious ancestors, just as there is no obvious link with Reginaldo Scrovegni in "The Pact of Judas". Nevertheless the inference is there attested to by da Nono's statement of Scrovegni's intentions in building the chapel and his condemnation of the Buzzacarini. By contrast, in "The Birth of the Baptist" the direct link with Fina is made explicit, especially as she is not just a bystander but participates in the scene. No one else but Fina could have ordered this arrangement of the scene. The presence of "The Calling of Matthew" and its companion "The Calling of Peter and Andrew" show an awareness of family continuity stretching back to the previous century (Fig. 120). Since both Scrovegni and Fina Buzzacarina seem to have adjusted their fresco cycles for personal reasons perhaps the changes in the scenes of "The Birth of the Baptist" and the "Naming of the Baptist" can be accounted for in this way too.
Coming from one of the most important families in Padua, Fina Buzzacarina was married on the seventh of May 1345 to Francesco il Vecchio after his father's succession. It was a political alliance made in order to strengthen their standing, win the sympathy of the Paduan population and the alliance of a powerful local family. At this time Francesco was twenty years old. Fina's birthdate is unknown. She was the grand-daughter of Dusio Buzzacarini whose assistance to the Carrara went back to the time when they were first elected rulers of Padua in 1318. After the assassination of his father on the nineteenth of December 1350 Francesco da Carrara ruled Padua with his uncle Giacomo but jealousy over Francesco's military successes coupled with the fact that Francesco did not yet have any heirs led Giacomo to plot an assassination attempt in 1355 in order to seize power for himself and his heirs. Giacomo and his wife Margherita Gonzaga at this point already had a son. The attempt failed, Giacomo was thrown into prison and Margherita and her young son sent back to Mantua. However the problem of the succession remained until the twenty-ninth of May 1359, when Fina gave birth to their first son, Francesco Novello, fourteen years after her marriage. After this she had no more children although there had previously been daughters; Gigliola, Caterina and Lieta. Fina's anxiety over the succession must have been great, particularly in the light of the assassination attempt and her husband's increasing neglect. He had a
number of illegitimate children, the first of whom was probably Conte da Carrara, his son by Giustina Maconia, who may have been born before Francesco Novello. In 1370 another illegitimate son, Stefano, was born, thus providing a continuing source of sadness and worry for Fina. With her perceived success in marriage largely dependent on the birth of a healthy male child her prayers for Francesco Novello must have been constant. On him depended possibly the marriage itself. The "Coronation Book" of Charles V of France executed around 1365 contains a section on the coronation of his wife, Jeanne de Bourbon, in which the main subject of the text, and the main end of the ceremony was to ask for her success in providing heirs to the kingdom. The French Queen had virtually no political or constitutional importance except to provide heirs, and this section of the Coronation Book shows the importance of that single aim. The situation in France at this time was very similar to that Fina had found herself in only a few years previously. In 1364, after fourteen years of marriage Charles V and Jeanne de Bourbon had as yet no living heir and this book emphasises the importance of that heir as the Baptistry emphasises the importance of Francesco Novello. The conclusion of Francesco il Vecchio's war with Venice in 1373 would have been yet another source of worry, for when Venice imposed a peace settlement on Francesco they forced the young Francesco Novello to recognise publicly before the Senate and the Doge that all
responsibility for the war fell on Padua. Francesco Novello's safe return cannot have been at all certain bearing in mind the fate of Count Ugolino and his children recorded in Dante's "Inferno", and, at the beginning of the next century, the fate of Francesco Novello and his sons at the hands of the Venetian Republic. Having been forced to cede Padua to the Venetians towards the end of 1405, Francesco il Novello and his son Francesco gave themselves up into the hands of the Venetians reaching Venice on the twenty-third of November where they were imprisoned. On the seventeenth of January 1406, following a decision by the Senate, Francesco Novello was strangled in prison, a fate that was to be shared a few days later by his sons.

With the worry about an heir that had preceded the birth of Francesco Novello and the continuing anxiety about his well being the decoration of the Baptistery would have been an appropriate thank offering for his safe delivery and prayer for his future safety. This would also support the dating of the start of the frescoes on stylistic grounds of shortly after 1373 when Francesco Novello returned from Venice where he had journeyed with Petrarch. Fina Buzzacarina's manipulation of Giusto's "Birth of the Baptist" focuses on the preoccupation with her son's safety. The two female patrons already cited both showed in their choice of a memorial a general awareness of the types of commission it would be appropriate for them to support, but apart from the use of Donna Villana's namesake there is
no personal or intimate tie. However, in the "Birth of the Baptist" this is much more sharply focused. The scene is particularly apposite for Fina as Saint Elizabeth had been barren for many years before conceiving the Baptist, as Fina, although not barren, had been married for fourteen years before the birth of her son. In this context the gesture of the midwife in showing John to Fina and Fina placing her hand on her heart is comprehensible as a personal sign of favour to a devout mother. The uncommon placing of Mary at the head of Elizabeth's bed rather than caring for and holding the infant Baptist may have been done so as to avoid any too obvious mark of favour from the Virgin herself which could have made Fina look too proud. Also, if Fina is substituted for Saint Elizabeth in the bed at the back left of the room an acknowledgement of the Virgin's help as an intercessor in Fina's prayers for the birth of a son may be detected.

The scene in which Fina chose to have herself represented is indicative of her role within society in that she has restricted herself to events within the sphere of the family. Although this is shown in a very public manner her main preoccupation is private and part of an ever repeating generational cycle. She is part of a scene consisting almost solely of women but in which the centre of attention is a boy - John the Baptist.
The attendants of Fina, all richly dressed, may be more than paid companions. Numbering three, they are, like Fina, clearly part of the fourteenth century rather than the biblical era, set apart not only physically but also by their dress. They probably represent Fina's eldest children, joining their mother in giving thanks for the advent of Francesco Novello. Since the figure of Fina herself is presumably a contemporary portrait by Giusto de' Menabuoi the daughters could also be portraits dating from the years 1375 to 1378 when the Baptistery frescoes were probably painted. Although none of them have the same marked features as Fina they are all dressed richly with gold trimmed cloaks and lines of buttons down the complete length of their dresses and sleeves. The lack of any attempt at portraiture, as there most certainly is with Fina, may be due to the fact that two of the daughters were (probably) no longer resident in Padua at the time that the frescoes were executed. Caterina had married the Conte Stefano di Veglia in 1372. At the time of Fina's death Caterina's husband was still living as Fina's will states that if Caterina should become a widow and wishes to return to Padua she is to receive a house in the "contrada S. Urbano". The will also mentions a second daughter, Gigliola, as having married, she is referred to as the "duchessa di Sassonia", and Fina also makes the same provision for her housing as her sister in the event of her becoming a widow. Only the third daughter was still
unmarried at the time of her mother's death. By the terms of Fina's will Lieta was to receive a dowry of six thousand ducats and also a house with a garden. The presence of the Virgin taking the infant John to be named by his father cannot be explained with so close a reference to the personal experiences of Fina Buzzacarina but her presence indicates her importance for Fina with regard to the birth of her son since it is also the Virgin she chose to have present at John's birth and by extension at that of her own son.

Fina Buzzacarina's patronage in Padua was used to demonstrate her interests. Whilst she was obviously a very religious woman - many early authors are content to mention only this with regard to her character and achievements - this does not appear to be the sole criterion by which she chose the recipients of her benefaction. Most appear to have been intensely personal choices and closely related to her family and these concerns were to be mirrored in her will of 1378 in which the legacies for her daughters no longer living in Padua had to be specially permitted by her husband. Fina's changes to the cycle in the Baptistry - in "The Birth of the Baptist", "The Naming of the Baptist", and "The Calling of Matthew", are all closely related to her family interests. That the Baptistry frescoes are her most ambitious commission is a reflection of the significance they held for her, a sign of what she conceived her role to be. They show her influence on the
cycle to have been at least as great as Enrico Scrovegni's on the Arena Chapel. Even if she was not able to personally supervise Giusto de' Menabuoi's painting Fina had a strong influence on the content and evidently made sure that her orders were followed. Aided by her important position in Padua Fina Buzzacarina was able to commission a fresco cycle pointed towards her individual needs. Those needs are encapsulated and her hopes summarized in "The Birth of the Baptist". The Baptistery forms a fitting end to a lifetime of religious patronage and its concentration on childbirth is a uniquely expressed female preoccupation from an exceptional female patron.
Notes to Chapter 6.

1. Schlegel 182-203.

2. Schlegel 182-183.

3. Rough 24-25.


5. Delaney 1972, 370-372 again gives a run down of critical opinion. He notes that among those who give an opinion as to the donor only Toesca assigns this role to Francesco il Vecchio.


7. Kohl 24. Also Saalman 391. It is Kohl who includes "tempore". The will is preserved in the Archivio di Stato, Padua, Notarile 35 cc.94-99. It is printed by both Kohl (24-26) and Saalman (390-394). Kohl gives the fuller and more accurate version and includes "tempore" in the above clause, which Saalman had omitted.

8. Saalman 382.


15. DB XX, 651-652.
16 DB XX, 652-654.

17 Kohl, 13. See also Delaney 1972, 1-2.

18 Kohl, 13. However this information does not come from contemporary witnesses.

19 Kohl, 14. Also Delaney 1972, 64 who suggests Tebaldo himself as the person who commissioned the work.


21 Kohl, 23.

22 Kohl, 14.

23 Delaney 1972, 370ff.

24 Kohl, 18.


26 Delaney 1972, 90-91.


30 Wackernagel 44 & 225.

31 See Hyde 150-153. Also Ross 198-201 where the harsh financial restrictions often placed on prospective widows by their husbands in their testaments are described.

32 Bourdua 1992, 471.

33 Kohl, 16.

34 Checci 517.

35 Bettini 1944, 102.
Puppi 96. Toffanin 42.

Simioni 672. Also Bellinati 239. According to Kohl Anna was abbess from 1367 onwards: Kohl 19.

Bettini 1944, 102.

Simioni 672.

Kohl 19. Also 25 where he gives the relevant part of the testament as follows: "Item reliquit uni capella posite in ecclesia Sancti Benedicti de Padua, que vocatur Sanctus Ludovicus, pro ea doctanda, redditus possessionis dicte testatricis posite penes Sanctum Spiritum de Padua, pro anima sua."

Bettini 1944, 102-103. However Delaney 1972 does not mention these works. See Delaney 1972, 259-296 for Delaney’s views on Giusto’s last works.

Kohl 22.

Bettini 1944, 103.

However Bertazzo 32 points out that the act of donation of 1392 on the part of Fina’s son Francesco Novello states that the church was constructed following the wish of Francesco il Vecchio, "nundum consecrate et olim constructe et edifficate in proprio territorio, per magnificum et potentem dominum Franciscum Seniorem de Carraria".

Bertazzo 17 posits the idea of Fina’s active support for the foundation of the church.

Bourdúa 1992, 471.
47 On the role of Caterina in the commissioning of this see Mardersteig 269.

48 Bertazzo 17 & 39 doc.9.

49 Puppi 139 gives 1393 as the date of the donation. For the question of the dating of the document of donation see Bertazzo 31-36.

50 Bellinati 239.

51 Vasoin 176.

52 Saalman 376-394.

53 Saalman 376, 381. Also Delaney 1972, 113 & n.22.

54 Delaney 1972, 109 n.14 for a summary.

55 Saalman 376 n.4.

56 Krautheimer 28-30. For the Baptistery in San Marco see Demus 78-79.

57 Saalman 381 gives the relevant part of the testament as follows: "una sepultura honorabilis secundum condecentiam suam consideratis conditionibus magnifici nati sui domini Francesci dj Carrara et actentis et respectibus dicte testatrixis".

58 Delaney 1972, 132-133.

59 Delaney 1972, 378-379 for a run down of critical opinion of the authorship.

60 Delaney 1972, 377-380.

61 Delaney 1972, 237. Most critics, although disagreeing on the authorship, do not place the altarpiece much later than 1372.
63 See Rizzoli 71-78.
64 Delaney 1972, 242.
65 Delaney 1972, 243. Also Bettini 1960, 37.
66 Micheletti 40.
67 Origo 1963/1, 178 where Margherita Datini writes to her husband that, "The doctor says my disease is from weakness more than from anything else, and has told me to eat pounded chicken".
68 Plant 1987, 190.
69 Plant 1987, 181-188.
70 Delaney 1972, 71. Also Mommsen 95-116.
71 Mommsen 96.
72 Mommsen 98-99.
74 Plant 1981, 408.
75 Plant 1981, 409.
77 Spiazzi 1992, 133-134.
78 The scene has been considerably damaged along with many of those in the lower register and it is difficult now to make out any of the details.
79 Plant 1981, 414 and n.37 discusses the differing identifications of portraits of Francesco il Vecchio by various writers.
80 See Mardersteig 277 where he identifies Francesco il
Vecchio and Francesco Novello in Altichiero's "Saint Lucy before the Judge" in the Oratorio do San Giorgio. Also Plant 1981, 414 & fig. 8 where she identifies the two to the left side of "The Council of Ramiro" in the San Felice Chapel. The Oratorio di San Giorgio was painted in the early 1380s and so both "portraits" would have been completed within the lifetime of the subject. Whilst the beard is common to both, that of Altichiero shows both father and son with much longer faces.

81 Plant 1981, 414 n.38.
82 Delaney 1972, 113. However amongst the additions made to the Baptistery before the frescoes were painted a small door was put into the right of the north wall and a sacristy, the lavabo of which has monograms identical to those on the consoles of Fina's sarcophagus.

84 Saalman 377.
85 Saalman 382 & n.32.
86 Saalman 383.
87 Saalman 384.
88 Saalman 382.
89 Delaney 1972, 108-109. See also Saalman 379-381 for a discussion of the exact placing of the tomb, which, however, he still maintains to have been freestanding.
Delaney 1972, 111-112 also discusses the placing of the tomb and like Saalman maintains that there was no cessation of the function of baptism. Unlike Saalman though he does not place a freestanding tomb in front of the altar but above the font. Both interpretations may indicate a decision to overshadow Fina's manifest influence.

92 Delaney 1972, 232.
93 Bonaventura 24.
94 Bonaventura 25.
95 Delaney 1972, 232.
96 Delaney 1972, 207-208.
97 Hyde 151.
98 Hyde 151. Also Schlegel 182.
99 Hyde 152.
100 Kohl 14.
101 DB XX, 649.
102 Kohl 14-15.
103 Kohl 16.
104 March according to Kohl 16.
105 Kohl 14-16. Vasoin facing p.25. Also Saalman 393.
106 DB XX, 652.
107 Richter Sherman 103-107.
108 Dante, "Inferno", Canto 33:30-90.
109 DD XX, 660.
110 Cittadella I 335-337.
112 Spiazzi 1992, 131.
113 Vasoin 176. Also Bellinati 289.
114 Kohl 25.
115 Kohl 18-19.
CONCLUSION.

This thesis has considered a number of aspects relating to female patronage and female spirituality in the art of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. A summing up of the points discussed in the various sections has been given at the end of the relevant chapters and it remains to draw the separate strands together and evaluate their importance.

Firstly, it seems appropriate to draw attention to the disparateness of the works investigated and of the women who controlled and/or inspired them. Female patrons were not the exception to the rule but were present in all strata of society. The influence of women on the art of this period spans a wide variety of interests. Women appear to have been active in patronage from the most ambitious fresco cycles of the fourteenth century to small, private tabernacles.

However, it is not always easy to tell from the iconography of the works that I have investigated that they were commissioned by women, and other means of proof are too often unavailable. Because of this lack of iconographical individuality in many of the works discussed that either were financed by women, or where there is the possibility that this was so, it has been common to avoid the question of what possible influence, other than financial, these women could have had. In this context it is as well to remember that while the life experience of women may have
been significantly different from that of men during these centuries, both were brought up in the same society and with the same values. In many cases this may have resulted in works commissioned and actively influenced by women which yet do not have a particularly feminine bias. Nevertheless the women patrons discussed did look after their own interests, which in some cases are highly personalized, although not necessarily in an obviously gender based way.

In a society where men were often absorbed in matters relating to politics or trade it was women who had charge of the side of life relating to religion. This was not only the case with royalty, the case of Louis of Thuringia and Elizabeth of Hungary has already been mentioned, but also applied to the merchant classes. Women's influence over religious commissions should not therefore be underestimated: even in cases where it is their husband's money that they were spending!

The interests expressed in the works that I have discussed are intimately related to the type of spirituality experienced by women during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It is important to be able to place the works in this context and to realize that the variety of the commissions investigated is commensurate with the variety of religious experience in women's lives.

It is also important to recognise that legislation, of
whatever type, that excludes women from positions of power with regard to the commissioning of works of art, or indeed from exercising power in any other context, is not evidence of their efficacy - a number of examples have been given throughout the thesis. It is instead too often evidence that they were not. Many women obtained power that was not strictly legally theirs and many, no doubt, knew how to circumvent the rules for their own benefit. All of which should be borne in mind when assessing the possibilities of women influencing art.

The aim of this thesis has been to expand the knowledge of women's power over art during this period both through active patronage and more passively, through the many religious women who were represented in frescoes and panel paintings, and the influence of their spirituality on art in a number of other ways. It is possible that more questions have been asked than answers given but I hope that I have proved that these questions are worth asking. Women were a real force in the art of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and their possible influence should always be seriously considered.
APPENDIX 1: Extracts from Religious Rules Regarding Dress.

Extracts from the Rule of the Olivetan Oblates.
(From Lunardi 87-94).

54: Item, nulla se vesta o calsi alcuna cosa di nuovo senza licentia della presidente: chi fa altramente li sia levata la dicta cosa e siali data una disciplina dalla superiore per spatio de uno miserere.

64: Item, li vestimenti siano in questo modo: di sotto puotono la gonna biancha; di sopra la gonna nera e cente con cengoli neri; li panni per amantare siano di lino, cioe lenzola e panni listati et altri panni da capo, e tanto quelli di lana quanto l’altri siano di panno grosso non pomposo.

66: Item, nello cengere della gonna non sia piu larga da pede che dicioto palmi e da capo sia tanto alta e stretta che copra parte della canna, per modo che sia bisogno fareve uno bottone da uno delli lati. Item, li panni da capo e da amantare non se piechino e se ve fossino pieche siano levate prima che se puortino. Item, sopra lo sopriggetto non sia posto alcuno panno. Item, sia legato lo capo in tal modo che non sia veduta se non doi deta della fronte. Item, de omne tempo nulla vagia se non calsata. Chi fa contra alcuna delle sporaditte cose, per omne fiata deiuni doi di pani et acqua in terra.
54: Item, no one is to wear any new clothes or shoes without the permission of the president; whoever breaks this rule will have the offending item removed and will be given a penitence to perform by the president which will last for the time it takes to say the miserere.

64: Item, the clothes worn will be as follows - the first layer of clothing will be a white tunic over which will be placed a black tunic gathered with a black belt.\(^1\) The cloth used for cloaks will be of linen, that is - the main part of the mantle and edged cloth and other cloth to cover the head. Both the clothes made of linen and the others will be of cloth that is coarse and not ostentatious.\(^2\)

66: Item, that in belting the black tunic folds should not be made. Item, that the said tunic should not be wider than eighteen palms at the hem, and that at the neck it should be so high and tight that it covers part of the throat in such a fashion as makes it necessary to place a button at one side. Item, that the cloth used to cover the head and as a mantle should not have pleats and if there are pleats then these should be taken out before the clothes are worn. Item, that no other cloth is worn above the outer clothes. Item, that the head is covered in such a way that it is only possible to see two fingers' width of the forehead. Item, that whatever the weather nobody should go out if not wearing shoes. Whosoever disobeys any of the above rules,
for every infringement they will fast for two days on bread and water (eaten on the ground).

* * * * *

1 The word gonna does not have its modern meaning of skirt. In this context it is a garment that covers the whole body and I have therefore translated it as tunic. The word may be a derivative of gonella which, during the fourteenth century, had been used to denote a garment fitting closely at the waist and then becoming more ample towards the feet. The garment also had tight fitting arms. Other words used to describe this type of garment were tunica or gamurra. For more information on this see Levi-Pisetzky II, 93.

2 Lenzola is also a word that had a wider meaning at this time than its modern one of a covering for a bed. It was a large piece of cloth which could be used for a number of purposes. I have therefore translated it as referring to the main part of the mantle. Originally many monastic communities would have used their cloaks as sheets or blankets. Early representations of the Poor Clares, in the Saint Clare dossal at Assisi for example, show the members of the first Clare convent wearing a mantle that was not specially cut or stitched but was literally a large rectangular sheet of material. The use of an unfitted piece of material as a cloak is also attested to by the frescoes in Tor de' Specchi.
Extracts from the Rule of Saint Benedict.
(From Salvi 84-85).

Sufficit enim monacho duas tunichas et duas cucullas propter noctes et lavare ipsas res ... et scapulare propter opera. Abb as autem de mansura provideat ut non sint curta ipsa vestimenta utentibus eis sed mensurata.

Vestiti dormiant (monachi) et cincti cingulis aut funibus.

* * * * *

It is sufficient for each monk to have two tunics and two cowls in order that they can be worn at night and washed.... and a scapular for each monk. The abbot will, moreover, provide for measuring and ensure that the clothes that they possess (ie. the monks) are not short but of a suitable length (measured).

The monks are to sleep (fully) dressed and belt ed with a belt or at least with a cord.
Extracts from the *Forma di Vita* of Ugolino for the Poor Clares.

(From Salvi 84-85).

De indumentis autem hoc observetur, ut unaquaeque duas tunicas habeat et mantellum, praeter cilicium, vel stamineum si habuerint sive saccum habeant. Scapularia de levi et religioso panno vel stamineas si voluerint, amplitudinis et longitudinis congruentis, sicut unius cuiusque qualitas exiget, vel mensura, quibus induantur, cum laborant, vel tale aliquid agunt quod pallia gestare non possent. Si tamen illa simul habere voluerint cum mantellis, vel etiam iacere cum ipsis, minime prohibentur, possunt et sine ipsis esse aliquando, si visum fuerit Abbatissae, quod praeter calorem nimiun, vel aliquid aliud eis grave multum fuerint ad portandum.

* * * * *

With regards to clothing the following should be observed - everyone is to have two tunics and one mantle, over and above a hair shirt or shirt made of linsey-woolsey, if they have it, or sackcloth. The scapular should be of light/religious cloth or linsey-woolsey if they want, of a suitable width and length, as the quality and dimensions of each requires, which is to be worn when they are working, or when they are doing anything else that does not permit of wearing a cloak. If, however, they want to wear it at the same time as the cloak, or even to sleep with it, they are by no means forbidden (to do so). They may also,
from time to time, not wear it, if this seems proper to the abbess, due to great heat, or any other reason for which it would be oppressive to wear it.
Extracts from the Rule of San Sisto for the Second Order of Saint Dominic.

(From BOP VIII, 410-411).

Vestes autem sint albe, quibus utemini, et non sint nimis subtiles, vel etiam delicate .... Sufficiat autem moniali, habere duas tunicas, et duas camisias grossas usque ad genu, cum pellicio competenti. Tunica non descendat ultra calaneum, ne per humum defluat indecenter. Duos habere mantellos Soror poterit (si domus ejus voluerit tolerare) alterem tamen cum pellibus, et scapulare, ac calceamenta necessaria, et etiam duo vela. Super stramina et laneis Soror iacebit in una veste lanea, et camisia, si voluerit, semper cincta.

* * * * *

Moreover the clothes which they employ should be white, and should not be of an extremely fine weave, nor yet luxurious... It is sufficient for each nun to have two tunics and two coarse shirts reaching to the knee, together with a suitable tunic made of skins.¹ The tunic should not descend below the heel nor flow on the ground in an unsightly manner. A sister may have two mantles (if her convent will allow it), one of the two with fur, and a scapular, and the necessary footwear, and two veils. A sister should sleep on a straw mattress covered with wool wearing a wool tunic, and a shirt, if she so wishes, always belted.
A *pellicio* in this context is probably a leather garment with some skin still attached. This is likely to have implied lambskin which was easily available and relatively cheap. Around 1230 Gregory IX had ruled that the use of the skins of wild beasts was unlawful for monks. See Harvey 20.
Extract from Humbert of Romans' Rule for the Sisters of Montargis.

(From Creytens 72).

Vestes laneas, honestas et albas et non nimis preciosas
diferent sorores, preter mantellum quod debet essere
nigrum. Pelliceum vero inter duas tunicas habeant, quod
aliquantulum tunicis brevius sit. Lintheamina in infirmaria
non habeantur, nisi priorissa cum aliqua propter gravem
infirmitatem iudicaverit dispensandum. Pelliceis et
coopertorius silvestribus sorores non utantur. Tunice usque
ad talos, scapularia vero sine quibus non vadant, sint
tunicis breviora. Tunicas, caligas et soccos habeant
sorores ut necesse fuerit, et facultas permiserit.

* * * * *

The sisters are to be distinguished by clothes of wool
which are white and respectable and not of very much value:
in addition to this the mantle must be black. They will
have a leather tunic between two cloth tunics, which is to
be a little shorter than the tunics. Anything made of linen
is not allowed into the infirmary, unless the prioress
judges it necessary to allow a dispensation for someone who
is gravely ill. Pitches and bed covers made from the skins
of wild animals will not be used by the sisters. The tunic
should reach to the ankles, and the scapular, without which
the sisters must not go about, should be shorter than the
tunic. The sisters should have tunics, shoes and socks as
it becomes necessary and means permit.
Extract from Humbert of Romans' Rule of 1259 for the Second Order of Saint Dominic.
(From ASOFP 341).


* * * * *

The sisters will be distinguished by wool clothes which are white, respectable and not of very much value, and in the mantle utility should be observed. They are allowed a leather tunic between two cloth tunics, which is to be a small amount shorter than the cloth tunics. Nothing made of linen is to be allowed except perhaps in the infirmary if the prioress judges a dispensation necessary for someone who is gravely ill. The sisters will not use leather tunics or bedcovers made from wild beasts. The tunic should reach to the ankles, and the scapular, without which the sisters must not go about, should be shorter than the tunic. The sisters will have shoes, robes, nightcaps and veils as it is necessary and circumstances permit: they are not allowed gloves.
Extract from Fra Caro's Rule for the Penitents.
(From Meerssman 1977, 390 ff.).

Sorores vero de eiusdem pretii et humilitatis panno clamyde induantur et tunica, vel saltem cum clamyde habeant guarnellum sive placentinum album vel nigrum, aut paludellum lineam amplum sine, crispaturis, cuius brachii pretium non excedat XII Ravennates.

De quo tamen pretio et de pellitionibus ipsarum dispensari poterit secundum condicionem mulieris et loci consuetudinem.

Bursas de corio et corrigas simplices sine serico consutas et non alias habere liceat, et alia vana ornamenta visitatoris arbitrio deponant.

* * * * *

The sisters will wear a cloak and tunic of the same humble material/cloth and price, failing this with the cloak they will have a guarnellum or placentium which will be white or black, or otherwise a cloak of linen which should be generously cut but without pleats.¹ The price of the material should not exceed XII Ravennates per brachium.²

They may dispense with this price and with the skins/wool according to the circumstances of the women and the customs of the place.

It is permitted to have purses of leather and simple belts sewn without silk but not others; other vain ornaments may be removed by the visitor.
The tunic was a garment that fitted fairly closely around the body and arms but became more ample towards the feet. See Levi-Pisetzky II, 93. The clamyde was originally a semi-circular cloak for soldiers. See Levi-Pisetzky I, 29. Paludellum is related to pallium and refers to some type of cloak. A guarnellum was a very simple type of dress used in the house or by the lower classes. It came into use during the thirteenth century and was usually made of a light cotton. Its colour was almost always white. See Levi-Pisetzky II, 99-100. It is unclear from the context exactly what the difference was between these garments at the time at which the rule was made. It is possible that the alternatives relate to different price ranges and the cloth price given at the end is merely an upper limit.

A brachium was a traditional unit of measurement relating to an arm's length and differed slightly from region to region.
Extracts from the Dominican Rule for the Penitents.
(From Meersseman 1977, 401 ff.).

5: Omnes autem, tam fratres quam sorores dicte fraternitas induantur panno albo et nigro, qui nec in colore nec in valore nimiam pretiositam pretendat, sicut decet honestatem servorem Christi.

6: Mantellum sit de nigro, et fraturum capucia similiter sint de nigro; tunice vero sint de albo, quarum manice protendantur usque ad pugnum et sint clausae.

7: Corrigias de corio tantum habeant, quibus sorores cingantur sub tunica. In bursis et calceamentis et ceteris omnem mundanam resecent vanitatem. Velo vero sororum et binde sint alba de panni lineo vel canapino.

5: Everyone, both brothers and sisters of the said fraternity, is to wear cloth which is black and white, and which neither in colour or in value makes any claims to being costly, as is fitting to the humble servant of Christ.

6: The mantle is to be of black, and the brothers will also have a hood which is to be black; the tunics are to be white with sleeves which reach to the fist and are closed at that point.

7: They will have strips of leather of such a size that the sisters can use them as a belt under the tunic. With regard to purses and footwear and other such things they are to
avoid all worldly vanity. The sisters will have veils and wimples which are white and made of linen or hemp.
APPENDIX 2: The Humility Polyptych and its Various Reconstructions.

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The order of the scenes as shown in the copy of the seventeenth century drawing published by Carmichael.

1. Humility decides to separate from her husband.
2. Ugolotto takes the religious habit.
3. The Saint reads in the refectory of Santa Perpetua.
4. Humility leaves Santa Perpetua and crosses the Lamone.
5. A Vallombrosan monk refuses to have his leg amputated.
6. Humility cures the Vallombrosan monk.
7. Humility and her companions arrive in Florence.
8. Humility resuscitates a dead child.
9. The Saint helping to build San Giovanni Evangelista.
10. Humility dictating her sermons.
11. The miracle of the ice in August.
12. The funeral of the Saint.
13. Humility cures a nun of a haemorrhage.

* * * * *
The order of the scenes as originally shown in the Uffizi:
1. Humility decides to separate from her husband.
2. A Vallombrosan monk refuses to have his leg amputated.
3. Ugolotto takes the religious habit.
4. The Saint reads in the refectory of Santa Perpetua.
5. Humility leaves Santa Perpetua and crosses the Lamone.
6. Humility cures the Vallombrosan monk.
7. Humility and her companions arrive in Florence.
8. The Saint helping to build San Giovanni Evangelista.
9. Humility resuscitates a dead child.
10. Humility dictating her sermons.
11. The funeral of the Saint.
12. & 13 are the panels in Berlin.

The order of the scenes as now shown in the Uffizi:
1. Humility decides to separate from her husband.
2. Ugolotto takes the religious habit.
3. The Saint reads in the refectory of Santa Perpetua.
4. A Vallombrosan monk refuses to have his leg amputated.
5. Humility cures the Vallombrosan monk.
6. Humility leaves Santa Perpetua and crosses the Lamone.
7. Humility and her companions arrive in Florence.
8. The Saint helping to build San Giovanni Evangelista.
9. Humility resuscitates a dead child.
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11. The funeral of the Saint.
12. & 13 are the panels in Berlin.
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