THE UFFIZI DIPTYCH BY PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA:
ITS FORM, ICONOGRAPHY, AND PURPOSE

by
Michelle Kamhi

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PREFACE

This study was originally motivated by an interest in the iconography of the triumphal processions represented on the back of Piero della Francesca's Uffizi diptych, and in the relationship of these panels to the Trionfi of Petrarch. In particular, I hoped to learn whether Federigo da Montefeltro, renowned as much for his enlightened patronage of arts and letters as for being a brilliant general and a virtuous ruler, had himself taken an active role in determining the unusual plan of the diptych and in composing the prominent, classicizing inscriptions under the Triumphs.

Examination of the past literature on the paintings soon revealed that many basic questions about them had not yet been satisfactorily answered. Despite the historical and artistic importance of the diptych, it had never been the subject of a thorough iconographic and stylistic study but had been treated only tangentially in connection with Piero's total oeuvre or other broad topics. The date of execution was not firmly established; and the iconography of the Triumphs had been analyzed only superficially.

An article by Creighton Gilbert in Marsyas, 1941, shed the first light on the genesis of the work. On the
basis of evidence contained in the inscriptions, Professor Gilbert proposed that the diptych had been executed after the death of Federigo's wife Battista Sforza in 1472. Most writers had considered—and continued to consider, until quite recently—that the work was earlier. Nevertheless, it seemed to me that a number of the peculiar aspects of the diptych could be explained by the late date. Any lingering doubts which I had about the terminus post quem of 1472 were dispelled by the publication of Professor Gilbert's new book *Change in Piero della Francesca*, which became available at the time I began writing. The weight of evidence brought to bear by Professor Gilbert as proof that the diptych was painted after the death of Battista Sforza has emboldened me to offer my own hypothesis about the circumstances of the work's commission—which now seem very different from those I anticipated at the outset.

If this paper were to carry a dedication, it would be to Professor Howard Davis, whose lectures on Renaissance painting were my first introduction to the discipline of art history more than ten years ago. His discernment and sensibility have ever since served as an example. My thanks are also due to Mr. David Cast for his kind help with the problems of Latin.
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CHAPTER I

Introduction to the Problem: Historical Setting
and the Plan of the Diptych

The Uffizi diptych\(^1\) by Piero della Francesca (Figures 1 and 2) is a work that well merits close study, both for its artistic excellence and for its connection with one of the noblest humanist courts of the Renaissance. Generally esteemed a masterpiece of portraiture, by one of the greatest painters of all time, the diptych is a fitting monument to two justly renowned Quattrocento figures, Federigo da Montefeltro (1422-1482) and his consort Battista Sforza (1446-1472).

Count and later duke of Urbino, Federigo da Montefeltro --whom Castiglione referred to as "the light of Italy"-- was probably the ablest, and certainly the most virtuous, condottiere of the fifteenth century. He was the builder of a magnificent palace and the founder of a library which could truly be called the finest since antiquity. In his zealous pursuit of learning and a well-ordered life, he was a worthy disciple of one of the worthiest of Italian humanists.\(^2\)

Battista Sforza, Federigo's second wife, was a daughter of Alessandro Sforza, lord of Pesaro, and a niece of the
powerful duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza. Early schooled in classical studies and in the formal duties of court life, she was not yet fourteen years old when she was wed to Federigo. Despite her young age and the burden of bearing eight or nine children in twelve years, she is said to have efficiently administered her husband’s domains in his frequent absences. When she died, at the age of twenty-six, she had earned the admiration of contemporaries and the tribute of a pope for her virtue and intelligence.  

While neither the attribution of the Uffizi diptych to Piero nor the identification of the subjects of the portraits as Federigo da Montefeltro and Battista Sforza appears ever to have been seriously questioned, virtually nothing is known about the genesis of the work.  

No documents relating to the commission of the paintings have as yet been found, nor has any definite reference to them been discovered in the extensive records and correspondence remaining from Federigo’s court at Urbino or in other literature of the period.  

Piero and Urbino

Only one known contemporary document records Piero’s presence in Urbino, and that is in connection with a commission which we know was afterward given to another artist. However, there are several sources which indicate that Piero had a long and fruitful association with the Montefeltro court. Vasari, writing in the mid-sixteenth century, states that Piero had been
employed by Guidobaldo Feltro [sic] the old duke of Urbino, for whom he made many very beautiful pictures with little figures, which have for the most part been ruined on the many occasions when that place has been harassed by wars. Nevertheless, there were preserved there some of his writings on geometry and perspective....?

Vasari's confusion about the "old duke's" name⁸ might be thought to cast some doubt on the accuracy of the rest of his information; yet his statement about Piero's scientific writings is confirmed by a manuscript once in the Urbino library. Entitled Petri Pictoris Burgensis de Quinque Corporibus Regularibus,⁹ this codex bears a dedication which affirms that Piero enjoyed the patronage of the ducal court. The dedication, addressed to Federigo's son Guidobaldo (1472-1508; he succeeded to the dukedom at Federigo's death in 1482), reads, in part:

And as my works owe whatever illustration they possess solely to the brilliant star of your excellent father, the most bright and dazzling orb of our age, it seemed not unbecoming that I should dedicate to your Majesty this little work, on the five regular bodies in mathematics, which I have composed, that, in this extreme fraction of my age, my mind might not become torpidly inactive. Thus may your splendour reflect a light upon its obscurity: and your Highness will not spurn these feeble and worthless fruits, gathered from a field now left fallow, and nearly exhausted by age, from which your distinguished father has drawn its better produce; but will place this in some corner, as a humble handmaid to the numberless books of your own and his copious library, near our other treatise on Perspective, which we wrote in former years.... At all events, it will be a token and memorial of my long-cherished attachment and continual devotion to yourself and your illustrious house.¹⁰

Further testimony to Piero's extended relationship with the court of Urbino is given by Fra Luca Pacioli.
In the dedication of his *Summa* on arithmetic and geometry, Pacioli wrote to Duke Guidobaldo:

Perspective...would certainly be nothing without the aid of geometry, as has been fully demonstrated by Pietro di Franceschi, our contemporary, and the prince of modern painting. During his assiduous service in your Excellency's family, he composed his short treatise on the art of painting and the power of linear perspective, which is now deservedly placed in your library, rich with books in every branch.  

Unfortunately, no copy of Piero's treatise on perspective remains in the collection from Urbino now part of the Vatican library.  

And of the "many pictures" which Vasari says Piero executed for the sovereign of Urbino, only three works survive that are definitely attributed to Piero and linked with the Montefeltro court: the *Flagellation* (Figure 3), the Brera altarpiece (Figure 4), and the Uffizi diptych—all of them undated and undocumented works. Because the diptych is a secular work representing the two sovereigns of Urbino, it is the most obvious link between the brilliant painter and the equally brilliant court, and as such it is often referred to in discussions about Piero and Urbino. In these discussions, the assumption has always been that Federigo commissioned the diptych himself, and that Piero executed the work in Urbino, using live sittings for the portraits of the count and the countess. One of the purposes of the present study is to show that these assumptions—which have no documentary basis and little evidence of any kind but have influenced opinions about Federigo as a patron of the arts and about Piero's activity
and working methods--may be invalid.

The Plan of the Diptych

The over-all plan of the Uffizi diptych seems to be unique among surviving monuments of the history of painting. The two panels of the work are painted on both sides with full pictures: on the front (Figure 1) are the facing profile bust portraits of the count and the countess, set against deep landscape backgrounds; on the back (Figure 2), each ruler is drawn in a triumphal car accompanied by allegorical figures. The triumphal processions, staged on a strange platform of smooth rock, take place high above landscapes similar to those on the obverse. Though the panels are separated by a frame, the landscape backgrounds imply continuity and impart a remarkable unity to the whole, as do the paired inscriptions below the Triumphs.

Very likely the general plan of the diptych was based on the example of contemporary medals. The combination of the profile portraits of the rulers on the obverse with the allegorical scenes on the reverse, while elsewhere unknown in the realm of painting, is characteristic of numismatic art, in the tradition of ancient coins imitated by Quattrocento medallists. Even the representation of a triumphal scene itself had had precedents in medals, again based on antique prototypes. The most distinguished example of the motif in the earlier Quattrocento was the reverse of Pisanello's medal of Alfonso of Aragon, which showed a triumphal chariot bearing a winged figure.
A striking feature of the Uffizi diptych's design—and one which may relate at least in part to the tradition of coins and medals—is the prominence given to the inscriptions under the Triumphs. The inscriptions occupy more than one-third of the total painted surface of the reverse of the diptych. Also striking is the peculiar way in which they are represented. Although the simulation in painting of an antique inscription carved on a marble slab—here decorated along its upper and lower edges with classical moldings of great delicacy and elegance—is not uncommon in the Renaissance, the placement of the "slab" in Piero's Triumphs is very peculiar. Apparently situated in the plane of the picture, it seems to support physically the plateau on which the triumphs are staged, creating an intriguing ambiguity of space and scale. Since the inscriptions were almost certainly painted by Piero himself (though probably not composed by him) and formed an important part of the diptych's over-all plan, it is not illogical to suppose that they may bear upon the iconography of the whole.

The monumental style of the inscriptions, the Triumphs, and the profile portraits make the student dependent on reproductions think that the diptych is larger than it is. Actually, it is rather small, each panel measuring 47 cm. by 33 cm. (approximately 19 in. by 13 in.). Its compact size suggests that it may have been designed to be portable.
Given Piero's stature as an artist, the high quality and integrity of the diptych's design and execution, and the importance of a commission relating to the sovereigns of Urbino, one is justified in expecting that there was an integrity of purpose behind the work. Thus, any theory about the circumstances under which the diptych was planned, commissioned, and executed ought to be compatible with the salient characteristics of the work: its compact size but monumental character; the iconography of the whole, and particularly of the triumphal processions; the prominence and content of the inscriptions. Such a hypothesis will be formulated, after each of the major aspects of the diptych has been examined in detail.
CHAPTER II

The Obverse of the Diptych: The Portraits of Federigo da Montefeltro and Battista Sforza

The images of Federigo da Montefeltro and Battista Sforza on the front of the Uffizi diptych belong to a characteristic type of Quattrocento art, the profile bust portrait. A tradition of profile portraiture had existed in the Trecento in connection with full-length donor figures in religious painting, but not until the fifteenth century were separate, bust-length profile portraits widely used for secular paintings and medals. The precedent of ancient coins and medals lent authority to the genre, as well as an abundance of models for imitation. Yet the profile format must have appealed also by virtue of its intrinsic qualities—the economy and clarity with which the sitter could be defined, primarily by means of one decisive outline; as well as the impression of detachment conveyed by the pose.

While most profile portraiture of the earlier Quattrocento tends toward two-dimensionalism, Piero's Uffizi portraits achieve a balance between the linear qualities inherent in the silhouette and the three-dimensional reality of nature. Rather than the flat, dark backgrounds typical of the earlier panel portraits (see Figure 19, for
example), deep landscape perspectives, inspired by Northern painting, are used. The heads of the count and the countess, set against a limpid sky, are conceived as sculptured forms enveloped by space. The relief of their features is carefully defined by subtle modeling. Nevertheless, the profiles are terminated not by contrasts of color and light alone but by the deliberately traced outlines as well. The bodies of the subjects, which are kept in a strict profile position, are not aggressively modeled and seem somewhat flat in juxtaposition with the recession of the landscape behind them. Moreover, as will be shown, the linear quality of certain elements in the composition is exploited to create a harmonious two-dimensional design. Thus Piero appears to have compromised between the linear and the sculptural possibilities of portraiture—much as the finest work in the coins and medals which probably inspired the format of the diptych is an artful union of draftsmanship and sculpture.

The Portrait of Federigo

The Uffizi portrait of Federigo da Montefeltro is the best-known and perhaps the best-loved of the many images in painting and sculpture which remain of this extraordinary individual. Comparison of Piero’s conception with representations by other artists reveals the extent to which Piero idealized and abstracted the battered features of the count and created an image less
true literally but more expressive of the moral qualities and the character of the man.¹⁰

Most of Federigo's portraits date from the last decade of his life.¹¹ However, one of the several medals made of him during his lifetime represents him when he was still in his forties. This medal (Figure 7), signed by Clemente da Urbino and dated 1468,¹² shows the count wearing a mortier like that in the Uffizi portrait, and a heavily ornamented cuirass. With the cuirass and the profusion of symbols on the reverse of the medal, Clemente tried to create a grand impression, but the flabby features of the count, his bulbous nose and double chin, lack vigor and authority. Even the mortier looks a little undignified, flattened as it is on top—though it is probably a truer replica of the contemporary style than the straighter-sided version depicted by Piero.¹³

Another medal (Figure 8), signed by Gianfrancesco Enzola and dated 1478,¹⁴ confirms the general characteristics recorded by Clemente, although it bears evidence of Federigo's increased age. Here Federigo, in his mid-fifties and now duke of Urbino, is shown hatless and balding, with a fringe of wavy hair unlike either the stiff, wiry border below the hat in the Uffizi portrait or the rolled coif in the medal by Clemente. His skin, scarred and pitted, hangs loosely on his face; his chin disappears into his neck.¹⁵ Much the same likeness is presented in the more-or-less contemporary painting of the duke reading
with his son Guidobaldo at his knee (Figure 9). And the literalness with which objects and materials are rendered in this panel suggests that the portraits may be relied on as factual. The duke’s worn, tired face (Figure 10) is ennobled not by abstraction and idealization of his features but by his contemplative expression.

Compared with such images, the Uffizi portrait by Piero seems quite youthful and vigorous. In fact, the younger appearance of Federigo in the Uffizi painting has sometimes been offered as evidence for dating the diptych—chiefly in comparisons between the Uffizi portrait and the portrait of Federigo by Piero in the Brera altarpiece (Figure 5). The Brera likeness perhaps appears somewhat older than the Uffizi image because the absence of a hat reveals Federigo’s baldness. However, line for line and wrinkle for wrinkle the two heads are virtually identical, and Creighton Gilbert considers that both were made from tracings of one drawing. The apparent identity of these two images not only suggests that the Uffizi diptych was executed around the same time as the Brera altarpiece (i.e., ca. 1472-74) but also sharpens the stylistic contrast between Piero’s vigorous, idealized portrayal of Federigo and the less flattering portraits made just a few years later and earlier by other artists.

Whether one places either head by Piero next to the 1468 medal by Clemente da Urbino or to the later painting
by the workshop of Justus of Ghent, one sees that Federigo's physiognomy has been considerably modified. The profile is elongated above and below the nose, each feature becoming more clearly articulated as a result. Segments of the profile are straightened—the line of the nose below the broken bridge, for example, and the line between the lower lip and the chin—and the forehead and upper lip area are kept closer to the vertical. Modeling plays an important part, particularly in the forceful conception of the Uffizi portrait. Light coming from the right side of the panel illuminates the neck and the side of the cheek and jaw, but the front of the face is in shadow. (The differences in illumination, not commented on by Gilbert, probably account to a large extent for the different effects created by this portrait and the one in the Brera altarpiece, where Federigo's face is brightly lit from the front.\textsuperscript{24}) The skin is drawn more tightly over the sitter's face than in other portraits, and a firm bone structure is implied, especially in the jaw and the eye socket. The nose is finer, less fleshy; the chin is more emphatic. One deep shadow extended down from the corner of the mouth,\textsuperscript{25} a series of lines around the eye, and a few lines on the jaw hint that this face has stood the test of time, while four warts placed on the otherwise smooth cheek persuade us that we have before us a picture of the man as he really looked.
Of all the portraits made of Federigo during his lifetime, the one to which the Uffizi likeness is closest in feeling is a medal by Paolo da Ragusa (Figure 12), a work dated to around 1450. This medal is particularly interesting because it is the only image we have of Federigo before the accident which broke his nose and deprived him of his right eye. The medal shows the same firm bone structure, determined mouth, and prominent chin that characterize the Uffizi portrait; and one simple indentation in the profile at the bridge of the nose would make even this feature coincide. There is no way of knowing from the information now available to us whether the medal by Paolo was an accurate likeness of the count in his youth or whether it too was an idealization. Nor does the comparison made here necessarily indicate that Piero based his portrait of Federigo on one made a generation earlier. However, it does further demonstrate that Piero rejuvenated the image of the great leader in his later years and presented him not in the sagging and weary guise of his other contemporary portraits but with a firm anatomy expressive of moral vigor and resolution.

The Portrait of Battista

In contrast to the abundance of contemporary representations which remain of Federigo da Montefeltro in painting and sculpture, there are very few portraits of his wife, none of which are securely dated within her
lifetime. Nor is it certain that any of these works can be relied on as a faithful likeness. Since Piero's Uffizi painting is the most famous of the portraits, it has occasionally been used as a standard of comparison for the others, even though nothing more is known about its genesis than about theirs.

Most important of the other portraits of Battista is the marble bust by Francesco Laurana in the Museo nazionale (Bargello) in Florence (Figure 13). The simplicity of the countess's costume here presents a marked contrast with her sumptuous attire in the Uffizi portrait. Nonetheless, there are notable similarities between the two representations. The side view of the sculpture (Figure 14) reveals substantially the same silhouette and proportions as the painted likeness. The forehead and the chin are nearly identical in the two works. Unfortunately, the tip of the nose in the Laurana bust is a restoration, preventing any full comparison of this most characteristic segment of the profile; however, the upper part of the nose corresponds closely to that in the Uffizi picture. The chief differences between the two conceptions lie in the mouth and the eyes. Laurana gave to the bust of Battista a rather full, sensuous mouth and half-closed, flat, almond-shaped eyes set under high, arched eyebrows, while the portrait by Piero has a tight, thin mouth and a heavy-lidded, globular eye.
with a short, almost straight brow. These disparities may be explained largely by the stylistic predilections of the two artists. The fuller mouth and Orientalized eyes are characteristic of Laurana's other female heads (see Figures 15 and 16, for example), just as the globular eye is common in Piero's work.\textsuperscript{33} What is interesting is that Laurana's modeling of the face--noticeably broader and less delicate, with a more prominent bone structure, than in his other busts--is borne out by Piero's profile portrait. Despite its apparent flatness at first glance--next to the more vigorously modeled head of Federigo--Battista's cheek is subtly modulated by Piero, at the temple, around the cheekbone, and under the chin, suggesting the same broad, forceful bone structure evident in the Laurana bust.\textsuperscript{34}

This modeling, refined, and assured, removes Piero's work from the more decorative, two-dimensional style of female profile portraiture typical of the preceding decades.\textsuperscript{35} Comparison of the Uffizi portrait with the Portrait of a Lady in the Lehman Collection, New York (Figure 19), for instance--a painting once thought to be another likeness of Battista by Piero\textsuperscript{36}--plainly demonstrates that Piero "constructed" the face in the diptych, rather than limit himself to a primarily linear definition of the profile and the other elements of the design. In the Lehman picture, the pale visage is sharply silhouetted against a dark, flat background; the hands and the headdress are
described in a few simple but elegant curves; modeling is mostly confined to minor areas like the nostril and the eye. Piero's conception is not without its elegant curves—in the neckline of Battista's dress, the outline of her forehead and chin, and the sweep of the fine headdress—but, as we have seen, the surfaces defined by these contours are modulated by shading, and the corporeality of the head is enhanced by the space and atmosphere behind (and, we infer, around) it.37

In its spatial realization, the Uffizi portrait is a close cousin to two female portraits attributed to Antonio Pollaiuolo (Figures 17 and 18).38 Like them, it uses a background of sky to set off the volume of the head, and, like them, it represents a major shift away from the dominantly decorative style of the earlier Quattrocento portraits.

Much of the visual interest of Battista's portrait derives from her magnificent costume.39 Displayed against her ivory skin and dark green, almost black, overdress, her rich jewels and brocaded sleeve give the spark of life lacking in her face. The carefully wrought hairdo, ribboned, curled, and coiled about her ear; fixed with a jeweled pin; and trailing in a wispy lock below a cluster of intricately draped fabric, is an energetic study of contrasting patterns and textures, a dynamic foil for the impassive countenance of the sitter.
Observations about Battista herself are less easily made than those about the formal qualities of her portrait. While the similarities between the Uffizi likeness and the Laurana bust may reflect her actual appearance, it is equally possible that they result from coincidental affinities of style or that the work of one artist was influenced by the other. Of the two other presumed portraits of the countess, one (Figure 20) is so close in silhouette to the Uffizi profile that it seems to have been based on a tracing of Piero's work. The other (Figure 22) bears so little resemblance to the first three portraits that it does not even seem to represent the same woman.

Several writers have commented on the waxy, lifeless quality of Battista's countenance in the Uffizi panel, and the suggestion has been made that the likeness was based on a death mask. If the Uffizi portrait is posthumous, it may well have been drawn from a mask—or a sketch—made of the dead woman, since death masks were often taken from eminent persons in the Renaissance, and other portraits in painting and on sepulchral monuments are known to have been based on such likenesses of the deceased. It is also thought likely that Laurana's Bargello bust of Battista, which is generally considered to be a posthumous portrait, was based on a death mask. However, it would be a mistake to conclude that the pale and impassive aspect of the portrait by Piero or the
rigidity and the veiled eyes of the bust by Laurana necessarily indicate origins in a dead likeness. Half-closed eyes and a serenity of mien characterize not only Laurana's other portrait busts—which were probably not posthumous\textsuperscript{48}—but his Madonnas as well. And we would certainly disparage Piero's powers as an artist were we to imply that he could not have infused life into a dead likeness taken from a mask had he wished to do so.\textsuperscript{49} We should inquire, therefore, into the stylistic or iconographic motivations behind Piero's portrayal of the countess. True, Battista's visage is remarkably expressionless and lacking in vivacity even for an artist of Piero's customary restraint.\textsuperscript{50} Yet her pallor and passiveness may have been intended as a foil for Federigo's more forceful countenance, in a contrast between femininity and masculinity rather than between death and life.\textsuperscript{51}

The Landscape Backgrounds

The monumental effect of the Uffizi portraits is due in large measure to the deep landscape panoramas behind them. Placed in the immediate foreground, adjacent to the picture plane, the life-size portraits assume colossal proportions in relation to the distant hills dwarfed by perspective. Appropriately, the portrait figures are in sharp focus against the blurred features of the hazy countryside. No middle ground plane intervenes to clarify the spatial relationship between the foreground and the
background, but the figures are visually integrated with
the landscape by means of analogous details of form: the
strand of pearls down the middle of Battista's chest is mimicked in the line of battlements along the crest of a far hill; her jeweled pendant gleaming in the sun echoes the white tower near the edge of the panel; the warts on Federigo's face are like the trees and bushes dotting the fields beyond; and so on.

The basic similarity of the landscape backgrounds in the four panels of the diptych has already been mentioned. However, it should be noted here that the viewpoint for the landscapes behind the portraits is considerably lower than that for the landscapes on the reverse, and the recession is therefore more pronounced. Fewer hills are visible, and the spacing between them is less regular. Thus the overall effect of these landscapes is somewhat more natural than that of the broader panoramas in the Triumphs. Nevertheless, these landscapes, like those, are more fictional than real. Despite their "atmospheric truth," they are topographically improbable, and can be taken only as a symbolic reference to the domains of Urbino.

Though the horizon lines of the two portrait panels coincide, there is a partial break between the landscape forms. The lake behind Federigo does not reappear in Battista's portrait, where the landscape, seemingly unrelieved by water, has a more somber aspect. The reason for the relative discontinuity of these landscapes, as
compared to the more emphatic continuity established between the Triumph panels,\textsuperscript{56} is not clear. Perhaps the distinction has some symbolic value.\textsuperscript{57} Or it may be that the monumental profiles would have seemed too close together if the stretch of landscape between them were more obviously linked.

While the idea of using landscape backgrounds for the portraits was probably drawn from Flemish art,\textsuperscript{58} the way in which the motif was adapted is peculiarly Italian. Not only is the profile format traditional in Italy employed (instead of the three-quarter view found in the Northern prototypes that had juxtaposed the heads of sacred or secular figures with landscape)\textsuperscript{59} but, more significantly, the motif is now put at the service of a secular rather than religious theme.\textsuperscript{60} Whereas the North had developed the compositional device of the high plateau to elevate Christian subjects above the realm of mundane reality, here two sovereigns of this world are shown towering over the land in serene confidence and dignity, their lofty position "a visual symbol of the high estate of man envisaged by the early humanists."\textsuperscript{61}
CHAPTER III

The Reverse of the Diptych: The Triumphs

The Triumphs of Federigo da Montefeltro and Battista Sforza on the reverse of the Uffizi diptych belong to an ancient iconographic genre which attained an extraordinary popularity during the Renaissance. While the origin of the theme of the triumph probably lies in preclassical times, the idea took its characteristic form in Republican Rome, in the festive processions staged in honor of victorious generals. The long and complicated evolution of the motif in art, literature, and ritual from ancient times to the Renaissance cannot possibly be treated here in any detail, but an understanding of the distinctiveness of Piero's Uffizi Triumphs depends on at least a cursory survey of the theme in fifteenth-century Italy.

Triumphs in the Quattrocento

The idea of the triumph was adopted by the Quattrocento as one peculiarly suited to its own taste for display. Far exceeding the bounds of the ancient Roman practice, Italian trionfi were inspired by almost any sort of figure who captured the imagination of the age. Triumphs of mythological, allegorical, historical, biblical, and contemporary figures were depicted in the fine arts and in
literature and were staged in actuality for public processions and festivals. These festivals and street processions were so important in the life of the time that artists and men of letters often took an active role in their arrangement and design. Thus it is quite difficult to determine in many cases where the festivals took their visual ideas from the painters and the poets, and where the imagery in painting and literature was derived from the live processions.

The complexity of the interrelationships in the development of the triumphal theme is demonstrated by the pictorial tradition connected with the Trionfi of Petrarch. These six poems, written in the vernacular, and describing the successive triumphs of Love, Chastity, Death, Fame, Time, and Eternity, are generally acknowledged as a major direct source of inspiration for the theme of the triumph in the Renaissance, particularly for the allegorical triumphs. Petrarch describes the first Triumph (that of Love) in terms specifically related to the ancient triumphal processions:

Vidi un vittorioso e sommo duce
pur com'un di color che 'n Campidoglio
trionfal carro a gran gloria conduce.

I' che gior di tal vista non soglio
per lo secol noioso in ch'i' mi trovo,
voto d'ogni valor, pien d'ogni orgoglio,

... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...

quattro destrier vie più che neve bianchi,
sovr'un carro di foco un garzon crudo
con arco in man e con saette a' fianchi;
nulla temea, però non maglia o scudo, 
ma sugli omeri avea sol due grand'ali 
di color mille, tutto l'altro ignudo;

d'intorno innumerabili mortali, 
parte presi in battaglia e parte occisi, 
parte feriti di pungenti strali.\footnote{7}

The triumphal car and the team of four white horses—the most characteristic features of the ancient Roman triumphs\footnote{8}—are not mentioned in the subsequent Trionfi, however, though Petrarch does occasionally use the word trionfo to refer to the processions. Nevertheless, artists who "illustrated" the poems gave each abstraction its own triumphal car, drawn either by white horses or, more frequently, by appropriately symbolic animals. In the course of the fifteenth century a very distinct iconography developed almost entirely independent of Petrarch's text; by the end of the century, the teams drawing the cars were more or less standardized: unicorns for Chastity, black buffalo for Death, elephants for Fame, stags for Time, the four beasts of the Apocalypse for Eternity.\footnote{9} Not only did the illustrators create concrete images where no specific iconography was suggested by the poet, they also substituted new images in places where the poet himself had given a precise description.\footnote{10} Ultimately, little rapport between the poems and their "illustrations" was perceivable. The extent to which the iconography became fixed apart from Petrarch's text suggests that there was a common prototype, a major work of art or an important event to which subsequent artists inevitably referred. That this prototype
was a live presentation of Petrarch's Trionfi in a pro-
cession or festival is a view held by a number of scholars.11

Pictorial versions of the Trionfi were used both as
illustrations for manuscripts and printed editions of the
poems and independently. Their wide diffusion, either as
a complete series or as single motifs, in the minor arts—
particularly on cassoni and deschi da parto—is well
known.12 With the introduction of engraving and woodcut
printing, the six Trionfi were also circulated in series
of prints,13 much like the famous Planets series in style
and dissemination. Typically, the pictures based loosely
on Petrarch are crowded compositions of many figures
sumptuously dressed in contemporary costumes (Figures
23, 27, and 28). The triumphal cars are generally richly
ornamented and draped. The setting is most commonly
a landscape, which often contributes to the fantastic
effect of the whole.

Reflected in the extravagant and entirely unclassical
trappings of the Petrarchan Trionfi pictures are the real
triumphal processions of the period. For instance, the
triumphal cars are sometimes depicted with a canopy
(Figures 24 and 26), a feature unprecedented in the an-
cient reliefs of imperial triumphs (e.g., Figures 29
and 30) but employed in the apparatus for the most famous
live triumph of the fifteenth century, the procession
staged in 1443 for Alfonso of Aragon's entry into Naples
after the defeat of René of Anjou. Apart from the contemporary written accounts of that celebration which survive, a relatively faithful visual record of the procession adorns the great arch erected for Alfonso at the Castel Nuovo in Naples to commemorate the event (Figure 25). Not only does the idea behind the monument as a whole reflect the influence of antiquity, but the central relief, showing the victorious Alfonso in his triumphal chariot, bears a substantial similarity of style to the *Triumph of Marcus Aurelius* (Figure 29), a relief dating from the second century A.D.

Alfonso's triumph was a pageant of composite inspiration, mixing sacred and profane, pagan and Christian, elements, much of it staged by Florentines resident in Naples. Among the figures represented were the Old Testament Prophets, but the orb and scepter symbolic of dominion over the world were in the hands of the pagan emperor Caesar, whose part in the procession was a prominent one. Addressing Alfonso as the "new Caesar," he intoned a poem to the ruler on the seven virtues necessary for successful governance, while figures of the virtues accompanied a car bearing Fortune. Alfonso's triumph very likely influenced the form of a procession staged at Reggio nell'Emilia ten years later in honor of Borso d'Este, for some of the same elements appear to have been used.
Triumphs of contemporary persons were, on the whole, far less frequent than triumphs of allegorical or historical figures. Rarer still were the triumphs held, true to ancient custom, for victorious generals. In 1472, however, Federigo da Montefeltro was honored with just such a celebration in Florence, as a tribute for having restored the rebellious people of Volterra to the yoke of the Florentine Republic. The celebration, though not always referred to as a true "triumph," was in one significant respect closer to the ancient Roman usage than Alfonso's triumph had been. Whereas Alfonso's triumph in Naples in effect celebrated his dominion over that city (since he had finally defeated the Angevin claim to the throne), the festivities which greeted Federigo in Florence after the battle of Volterra were an expression of gratitude from the citizens for whom he had won victory. Vespasiano relates:

Volterra having been recovered, the Florentines recognised that he had done a deed which was almost impossible considering the difficulties of position and the evil disposition of the people; they realised the danger better after than before the fall of Volterra; also that the place had been taken by his skill and prudence. After the victory the Duke entered Florence with the highest honors: all the citizens went to meet him; he was lodged in the house of the Patriarch [?] with all his following at free cost, and greater honour was never done to any man. They gave him two pieces of gold brocade, and two bowls belonging to the Signoria worth a thousand ducats or more. Afterwards, in memory of the victory, they gave him the Palace of Rusciano with all its appurtenances, and all the chief citizens visited him there. For several days there was feasting in all the lands round Florence, and the Duke was escorted by the leading citizens through their estates.
A somewhat more detailed description is given in Dennis-
toun's *Memoirs of the Dukes of Urbino*:

the populace met Federigo outside the city
gates and escorted him through the streets,
which were draped with tapestries and rich
brocades. In the piazza, he was welcomed
by the magistrates with a complimentary ora-
tion, and at a public banquet received as
appropriate gifts the colours of the repub-
lic, a handsome charger richly caparisoned,
together with a silver helmet, studded with
jewels, and chased in gold by the marvellous
chisel of Pollaiuolo. Besides a substantial
guerdon of lands, houses, brocaded stuffs,
and vases brimming with bullion, conferred
on Federigo, valuable commercial exemptions
were decreed in favour of the subjects of
Urbino, and three days of uninterrupted
festivity scarcely abated the popular re-
joicings.25

In addition to the high public tribute paid him, Federigo
received, soon thereafter, a manuscript of Poggio Braccio-
lino's history of Florence, dedicated to him by the author's
son.26

Federigo's triumph in Florence, one of the most glo-
rious episodes in a life accustomed to praise and honor,27
may be related in more than a general way to the painted
*Triumph* in the Uffizi diptych. Creighton Gilbert has
recently suggested that the painting is, in fact, a ref-
erence to the real event.28 To this theory, which has
much to recommend it, we will return in Chapter V.

**Form and Color in Piero's Uffizi Triumphs**

While the painted *Triumphs* of Federigo da Montefeltro
and Battista Sforza may very well allude to a temporal
event, the world they envisage is one beyond time.29
Transfixed in their passage across a fantastic *paleoscenica di natura*—as Roberto Longhi aptly described it—the count and the countess reign in supreme tranquillity over the silent domains below them. The glassy surface of the lake in Federigo's *Triumph* belies the billowing sails of boats that never moved and never will. The deep landscape with its regular distribution of conical hills existed nowhere in Italy but in the mind of the painter.

Any attempt to recreate verbally the mood and effect of the paintings falls short of Piero's pictorial achievement. But Kenneth Clark's descriptions are well worth quoting for their insight into the quality of the work:

> The Triumphs are the most sparkling...the most Mozartian of all Piero's works.... [They are] like a refreshing spring, light, pure, translucent. Piero has taken the formal, familiar motive of the Triumph, known from a hundred cassone fronts and illustrations to Petrarch, and has persuaded us to accept it, with much of its wearisome symbolism, by sheer pictorial skill.... The Urbino diptych shows Piero as a poet of colour and tone, celebrating, through his art, the ideals of a civilized court.

Another critic, Philip Hendy, emphasizes, more than the coloristic beauty of the paintings, the "fundamental classicism" of their forms. And indeed, if one had to reduce the visual essentials of the work to two brief formulas, one might designate them as "fundamental classicism of form" and "lyricism of color."

In an analysis of Piero's form, comparisons with other Quattrocento representations of Triumphs (Figures 23-28 are irresistible; here, perhaps even more than in their
exquisite coloristic qualities, Piero's paintings stand alone. There is, first, the obvious sparsity of figures and decorative detail in Piero's work, compared to typical Triumphs of the same period. But of greater moment is the principal compositional choice made by the painter; that is, to represent the two processions in a strict profile view. The profile seems so appropriate that one is apt to take it for granted. Yet a deliberate choice it must have been, and one characteristic of the artist's classicism.  

As a glance through any book of Triumphs will show, other artists considered the frontal and three-quarter views no less suitable to the subject than the profile format. In fact, there were, by the 1460s and '70s (when the diptych was probably painted), definite predecessors for all three types.

Not only are the triumphal cars, the draft animals, and the count and the countess seen in strict profile, but most of the secondary figures are presented either in profile or at a perfect right angle to the profile view, in a neat, orthogonal arrangement. One of the most charming aspects of the scenes is that in each of the groups of allegorical figures in the van of the cars, one figure is barely visible because she is seated "with her back to the camera," and all but the back of her head is concealed by the other figures in the group. More will be said about these in connection with the iconography of the paintings.

As with the portraits on the front of the diptych,
the composition of the two Triumphs is conceived as a symmetrical whole, the two panels being in general configuration mirror images of each other. Each triumphal group forms a roughly right triangle, with its right angle parallel to the lower outer corner of the panel (creating an effect of closure), and its acute angle, slightly truncated, pointing toward the inside edge (see the tracing for Figure 2). The converging hypotenuses—like the continuous landscape backgrounds and the simulated marble moldings—serve to link the two panels visually. The smaller figure groups, too, are more or less balanced from panel to panel: one standing figure behind Federigo and four seated allegorical figures in front of him correspond to two standing figures behind Battista and three seated allegorical figures in front of her. The slight variation in arrangement, of course, forestalls monotony, as do certain other asymmetrical details. Federigo's Virtues, for example, are more vivacious than Battista's, and the winged figure behind him projects above the horizon line, while Battista's attendants are contained below the horizon.

As Kenneth Clark notes, there is a splendid movement of color across the two paintings:36

The Duke's Triumph begins with decent splendour. His car is covered with red and yellow draperies, his faldstool is crimson; this passes into the blue and white of the Cardinal Virtues, and so to the exquisite brightness of white horses with red harness against the white lake. With the Duchess's panel we pass into gentle shade. Her dun-colored unicorns are as close in tone to the distant fields as were the
Duke's white horses to the lake, but they are muted and her car has no red and yellow covering; her attendant Virtues are soberly dressed, but the shot orange robe of Faith raises our spirits and prepares us for the last perfect chord, the Duchess's deep crimson, set off by white and grey.  

Clark's description clearly reveals that the distribution of color is quite different in the two paintings, the over-all tonality of Battista's scene being notably more somber than Federigo's. Oddly, however, Clark elsewhere reasons that the "brilliant, spontaneous handling" of the two Triumphs seems to preclude a date of execution after the countess's death.  

Neither he nor any other major writer on Piero appears to have commented explicitly on the asymmetric color of the paintings. Even Creighton Gilbert, who argues strongly on other grounds that the diptych was executed after the death of the countess, notes an "evenness of tone" in the two Triumphs.  

Nevertheless, there is a distinct contrast between the bright, silvery tonality of Federigo's scene and the darker, more earthy quality of Battista's, a contrast affected by the distribution of light as well as color. With the light in the two scenes originating from a single source above and behind the countess, strong shadows are cast over her features and those of her attendants, while Federigo and his group are fully illuminated from the front.  

(It is again characteristic of Piero's "fundamental classicism" that the path of light, and consequently the pattern of shadows, is kept parallel to the picture plane.)
In addition to the marked disparity of light and color, there is, as we have seen, a somewhat greater vivacity of form in the count's ensemble than in his wife's. These differences may have no symbolic significance at all. Or they may have been meant to suggest the passivity and restraint appropriate to woman.\textsuperscript{41} Or they may constitute a pictorial allusion to the fact that Battista was dead and Federigo alive at the time the paintings were executed.\textsuperscript{42}

The asymmetry of tone in the two panels is largely due to the shining lake which occupies about one-third of the landscape behind Federigo but only a tiny corner of that behind Battista. The landscape is otherwise approximately symmetrical, however. The hills and valleys in the distance are distributed with greater regularity here than in the portraits, and seem to have been marked off on a grid receding toward the horizon. Continuity of the landscape across the panels is stressed by the form of the broad hill in the middle distance: this hill, the largest in the two paintings, is divided almost equally by the inner edge of the diptych, to form two right triangles echoing the triangular configuration of the triumphal groups (see the tracing for Figure 2).

While the form of the landscape is not topographically true, the rendering of the light over it constitutes a study of atmospheric perspective beyond anything in Piero's other works. In these panels—with their deeper, broader
perspective and hazier atmosphere—even more than in the landscapes on the obverse, Piero shows how much he has absorbed of Flemish attitudes and style, though he has as ever subordinated them to his own lucid sense of structure and form. 43

Notwithstanding the emphatically spatial quality of the landscape, there are strong inducements to reading the composition in two dimensions as well. First, the panels are divided into three horizontal bands: the light band of simulated marble slabs, the darker band of the triumphs set against landscape, and the light band of sky. Then there is the repetition of similar triangular shapes in the foreground and the landscape (see above, pages 30 and 32). Finally, in a number of details Piero links the forms of the triumphal groups (which are parallel to the picture plane) with the forms of the terrain (perpendicular to the picture plane). The farther edge of the foreground plateau, for example, merges with the bottom edge of the platforms of the triumphal cars; the outline of the large hill directly behind Federigo meets the top of his head and is continued in the forearm of the winged figure; a distant road seems to be an extension of the count's scepter; the neckline of the countess's scarlet gown meets the dark outline of a hill, so that her veiled head is surrounded by soft haze.

Similar tensions between surface design and three-dimensional composition have already been noted in the
portraits on the front of the diptych, and of course can be found elsewhere in Piero's work.\textsuperscript{44} In the Triumphs, however, the ambiguity is particularly expressive. For if the scenes are read two-dimensionally, they seem to be like pictures or painted reliefs, bordered along their lower edge by handsomely carved inscriptions but not exceptional in scale or implication. If, on the other hand, they are read in depth, they seem to constitute living monuments to the count and the countess—monuments supported by giant parapets with outsized lettering, and having as their backdrop the world.\textsuperscript{45}

The Iconography of Piero's Uffizi Triumphs\textsuperscript{46}

The major elements of the iconography of the Uffizi Triumphs appear to derive, directly or indirectly, from three well-developed iconographic traditions: Quattrocento representations of Petrarch's allegorical Trionfi, the imagery associated with the triumphs of victorious generals in ancient Rome, and the long medieval tradition of depicting the seven virtues.

Battista's Triumph, more evidently than Federigo's, is dependent in part on the Petrarchan tradition. Fifteenth-century illustrators of Petrarch's Triumph of Chastity usually showed the triumphal car as drawn by unicorns,\textsuperscript{47} the mythological creatures emblematic of chastity; and Piero's unicorns for Battista are undoubtedly meant as symbolic references to her chastity.\textsuperscript{48} Unicorns in the
Petrarchan Trionfi pictures are white or, as in Battista's, roan-colored; Piero's choice of the darker shade is consistent with the somber tonality of Battista's panel.\textsuperscript{49} Creighton Gilbert has suggested that the female figures standing behind Battista also relate to the Petrarchan Trionfi. He believes them to represent Onestà (Honesty) and Vergogna (Shame), the two secondary virtues described as the first pair of attendants to Laura in Petrarch's Triumph of Chastity.\textsuperscript{50}

 Appropriately, Federigo's Triumph contains elements adapted or derived from the ancient Roman iconography for the triumphs of victorious generals, though it is difficult to say whether they were borrowed directly from ancient monuments or descriptions or through an intermediate source such as one of the live or painted fifteenth-century triumphs. The winged figure who crowns Federigo with laurel (or olive) is most probably a personification of Victory.\textsuperscript{51} She has the same position in the triumphal group as the winged figures in the imperial Roman reliefs of Titus and Marcus Aurelius (Figures 29 and 30). And although their stance is not clearly visible, while she is plainly shown standing on a sphere, this attribute is connected with the representation of Victory on a coin of the emperor Augustus.\textsuperscript{52}

 Federigo's white horses also recall the ancient triumphal iconography, but at a distance. Piero, like many illustrators of Petrarch (see Figure 24, for example),
shows a pair of horses instead of the quadriga depicted in Roman art. Even farther removed from antiquity are the flat, four-wheeled triumphal cars of the count and the countess. These plain wagons have nothing in common with the ancient "chariots that used to bear conquering leaders to glorious honor on the Capitol" (cf. Figures 29 and 30). Nor do they resemble the typically ornate Quattrocento fabrications in anything but having four wheels. However, they are similar in their homely simplicity to the car depicted by Pisanello on the reverse of his medal of Alfonso of Aragon, and this similarity has been taken as one of several indications that the form of the diptych was influenced by the work of the great medalist.\textsuperscript{53}

Of all the figures in the Triumphs, it is the seven virtues that most surprise and delight the observer. Not that their inclusion in a triumphal procession was an innovation, however. As we have seen, they had earlier taken part in the live triumphs of Alfonso of Aragon and Borso d'Este.\textsuperscript{54} And prior to the fifteenth century, Dante had envisioned them among the host of allegorical figures in the Triumph of the Church Militant, described in Canto XXIX of the Purgatorio.\textsuperscript{55} But our delight in Piero's virtues depends less on their context than on the novelty of their mien.\textsuperscript{56} It is in comparison with more traditional series of virtues in the arts of the time that their distinctiveness becomes apparent.
Virtue cycles in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italian art are of two main types: in one the figures are seated; in the other they stand. In both types the figures hold symbolic attributes, as do Piero's virtues, but are spatially isolated from one another in compartments or niches, each virtue being allotted approximately equal space in the over-all scheme. Series of both types are very common in painting and sculpture.

The virtues in the Uffizi Triumphs clearly derive from the seated type. The frontal figures of Justice, with the conventional attributes of sword and balance, and Faith, with her cross and chalice, are undisguised quotations from the traditional mode of enthroned virtues. Justice, in fact, so closely resembles Pollaiuolo's Prudence (Figure 33)—a work advanced in form but iconographically conservative— in posture, gesture, and costume that one wonders whether Piero's figure may actually be based on it, "with only the attributes changed to protect the innocent." What is most significant, however, is that Piero abandons the compartmentalized uniformity of conventional virtue series and creates a dynamic motif by ranging the figures in varied postures around the front of the triumphal cars.

Far from being assigned equal space, two of the Uffizi virtues are almost completely suppressed, the backs of their heads barely visible between the heads of their companions. These two figures, whose attributes
are not seen, are nonetheless readily identifiable once the other five virtues have been determined.61 Next to Justice, on Federigo's car, are Prudence—two-faced and holding a mirror and a snake [?]62—and Fortitude, grasping a broken column. Since these are three of the four cardinal virtues, the fourth figure must be Temperance.63 On Battista's car, Charity, holding a white bird identified as a pelican, rides next to Faith; the remaining virtue, then, is Hope.64

The association of the four cardinal virtues with the count and the three theological virtues with his wife also derives from traditional iconographic schemes. Although the frequent references in art and literature to the seven virtues as a group tend to obscure the differences between them, the two classes of virtues had very different origins and are very different in character. First defined by Socrates as forces of the soul which work together to perfect the human being, the cardinal, or "seculan" virtues were adopted into the Christian ethic by St. Ambrose;65 the theological, or "Christian" virtues, on the other hand, were first defined by St. Paul (I.Corr. 13:13).66 This division of virtues was sanctioned by St. Augustine and perpetuated by later theologians.67 A number of theological works written during the Middle Ages treated one or the other group of virtues,68 and the doctrinal division was reflected in the arts, where representations of one of the groups without the other were quite common. Most important for the present discussion, representations of the cardinal virtues were
especially connected with portrayals of rulers: in medieval manuscripts and book covers, medallion busts of Justice, Prudence, Temperance, and Fortitude were frequently depicted around the central figure of a king or a high ecclesiastic as the appropriate symbols of his moral excellence. 69

There are also precedents for the prominence given to Justice in Federigo's triumphal group. One is reminded first of Giotto's Arena Chapel cycle, in which Justice, not Charity, was given the central position in the row of seven virtues. Alfonso of Aragon's triumph, too, stressed Justice as the prime virtue in the maintenance of legitimate power, a principle which would apply equally well to the ruler of Urbino.

While the figure of Justice in Federigo's triumph is most prominent to the observer, it is Fortitude and Prudence who ride in the foremost position on the car (excluding the Cupid who acts as coachman72). The importance thereby implied in these figures is probably related directly to Federigo's personal characteristics. Creighton Gilbert points out that Vespasiano twice refers, in his biography of the duke, to strength and prudence as the salient qualities of the great condottiere. 73

Though a separate iconographic tradition may be less well developed for the theological virtues than for the secular, the appropriateness of associating Faith,
Hope, and Charity with the Countess Battista is still discernible. In the Renaissance, as in our own day still, the maintenance of religion in everyday life was the particular province of women. Even the early humanists, notwithstanding their approval of a classical education for women, held the goal of such education to be essentially different from that for men. More pertinent testimony to this effect could hardly be hoped for than the advice offered by Leonardo Bruni to Battista da Montefeltro, a woman of considerable literary accomplishment, and, interestingly, the grandmother of our own Battista Sforza. In a brief tract dedicated to Battista, prescribing a program of study suitable for woman, Bruni counseled that the "subject peculiarly her own" was the "whole field of religion and morals."

As we have noted earlier, of the three theological virtues in Battista's group, it is Faith who faces the observer in full frontality, but Charity who sits in the forefront of the triumphal car. Since Charity was called by St. Paul the greatest of the virtues, without which all others were nought (I Cor. 13:1-13), it is not surprising that her position in Battista's Triumph is an important one. Moreover, Battista herself had a special reputation for good works and public charity: she was, for instance, involved in the foundation of a monte di pietà in Urbino. The attributes of the Charity figure in Battista's procession do not refer to such
good works, however. Rather than the basket of fruit or the bag of coins—for distribution to the poor—which usually symbolized Misericordia, the worldly aspect of Charity, Battista's Charity wears the flaming heart of divine love, and carries the pelican-in-her-piety, the emblem of Christ's self-sacrificing love for mankind.79 Frequently depicted above the Crucifix of the Savior, the pelican was not commonly associated with figures of Charity in a more general sense; yet here the bird immolating herself to feed her young is made the chief attribute of Love.80 The choice of this attribute can best be understood as a reference not to Battista's public charity but to events in her personal life.

In the first eleven years of her marriage to Federigo, Battista bore him many daughters, but not the son and heir they and their subjects longed for to secure the future of the dynasty and the realm.81 One does not need to depend on contemporary accounts to understand that the hopes of all would have increased before each successive birth, only to be the more cruelly crushed by repeated disappointment. When, at last, Prince Guidobaldo was born, in January of 1472, there was pious thanksgiving and deep rejoicing in the land, with public festivities which lasted until the advent of the Lenten season.82 Six months later, Battista died.83 It was said, in later years, that she had offered her own life in exchange for a son worthy of his
noble father, and that providence had fulfilled the pledge.\cite{note1} To this sacrifice, the pelican of Charity appears to allude—an allusion of the utmost significance in the dating and interpretation of the whole of the diptych.
CHAPTER IV

Dating the Diptych: The Significance of the Inscriptions under the Triumphs

Since concrete historical documents such as a contract or records of payment are lacking for the Uffizi diptych,\(^1\) one must look elsewhere for evidence of the date of execution. As we have seen, there are elements in the iconography of the paintings—particularly in the Triumphs—which indicate that the work was made sometime after the death of Battista Sforza in 1472.\(^2\) Can this date be supported by other evidence as well?

A few writers have judged that the style and technique of the diptych point to a late date. One of the first critics to express this view was Pietro Toesca (writing in 1935), who emphasized the consummate artistry of the work: "All the painter's qualities are here at their highest level; and his technique has never been finer for expressing them."\(^3\) More recently, the suggestion has been made that the paintings were executed not in a mixed oil-tempera medium, as was formerly thought, but in pure oil.\(^4\) The pure oil medium—used by Piero for his Nativity, a work generally dated late in the painter's career—might further support a late date for the diptych.\(^5\) In addition to this possible correspondence
in technique, there are similarities in the style of landscape in the two works. In both the diptych and the Nativity the countryside is viewed in deep perspective, from a high vantage point, and is rendered in considerable detail. 6

Paradoxically, the argument of style has also been used in support of an earlier date for the diptych. Berenson considered that the paintings were executed around 1465-66. 7 Van Marle thought that the portraits typified Piero's very early work. 8 Stylistic arguments, whether for an early or a late date, inevitably rest on shaky foundations, however, because no firm chronology has been established for Piero. Few of his paintings have been securely dated, and of the few that have been dated, none are comparable in subject or format to the entirely secular diptych. 9 Nor, in fact, is any extant work of his comparable to the diptych in these essentials; 10 thus, even if the chronology for all the paintings but the diptych were determined beyond question, there might still be difficulty in fixing the date of the Uffizi panels.

Most scholars have relied on other than stylistic evidence in attempting to date the work; the dates that have been suggested fall into four main groups: 1459-60, 1465-66, ca. 1469, and 1472-73. The earliest of the dates, supported only by Tolnay in recent years, associates the commission of the paintings with the marriage
of Federigo and Battista; but the iconographic arguments on which it depends can apply equally well to a later date. The proposed date of ca. 1469, on the other hand, is related to the only extant document which records that Piero visited Urbino. Crowe and Cavalcaselle assumed that the diptych was executed during this visit. Not many recent writers have fallen into the same pit—that of relying on the one documented visit as if it were necessarily the only visit—yet the date of 1469 does linger on in the literature. The date with the widest currency among writers on Piero has been, until quite recently, 1465-66—largely because of the poem by Ferabò published and interpreted by Adolfo Cinquini in 1906. Despite the numerous flaws in Cinquini's argument, it was accepted uncritically by many subsequent writers, who considered that the diptych was firmly dated to 1465-66 by Cinquini's "documentary" evidence.

Considering the willingness with which Ferabò's poem was relied on for evidence about the Uffizi paintings, it is surprising that the two little poems on the panels themselves—the verse inscriptions below the Triumphs—were long ignored as possible sources of information. Not until 1941—in an article by Creighton Gilbert in Marsyas—were the verses studied in detail. Beautifully and clearly inscribed in Latin capitals, the verses are composed in Sapphic meter. They can be rendered, fairly literally, into English thus:
Under the Triumph of Federigo:

The famous one is drawn in glorious triumph
Whom, equal to the supreme age-old captains,
The fame of his excellence fitly celebrates,
As he holds his scepter.²⁰

Under the Triumph of Battista:

She who preserved²¹ moderation in good fortune,
Adorned with the praise of the deeds
Of her great husband, flies through the mouths
Of all men.²²

Gilbert has shown that Battista’s inscription con-
tains two phrases borrowed from classical literature,
both of which have strong posthumous implications. The
words volitat per ora...virorum [flies through the mouths
of...men], used as a metaphor for Battista’s fame, derive
from these two lines which the Latin poet Ennius wrote
as his epitaph:

Nemo me lacrimis decorat nec funera fletu
Faxit. Cur? volito vivus per ora virum.
[Let no one honor me with tears or on my
ashes weep. Why? I fly alive through
the mouths of men.]²³

Ennius was not very widely read during the fifteenth cen-
tury. However, Cicero, who was universally read, revered,
and imitated by Quattrocento humanists, greatly admired
Ennius and quotes the epitaph in the first book of his
Tusculan Disputations, a philosophical dialogue which ex-
plores the nature of death and pain and expresses the Stoic
view that the happiness of a wise and virtuous man is not
impaired by death or suffering.²⁴

The other classical echo found by Gilbert in Battista’s
inscription is the phrase modum rebus tenuit secundis [who
preserved moderation in good fortune], which derives from a passage in the Aeneid (X. 500-5):

Quo nunc Turnus ovat spolio gaudetque potitus. Nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futurae, Et servare modum, rebus sublata secundis! Turno tempus erit, magno cum optaverit emptum. Intactum Pallanta, et cum spolia ista diemque Oderit....
[Now Turnus exults in the spoil, and blithely girdeth it on. 
Oh spirit of man, so blind unto Fate, to the doom that shall be, 
That knows not self-restraint in the pride of prosperity! 
For Turnus an hour shall come when for wealth untold he would buy 
Pallas unharmed, when his spoils and his day of victory 
Shall be hateful to him!]25

The connection between the lines of Vergil and the inscription for the countess is strengthened by a fourteenth-century Italian version of the Aeneid, in which the verb tenere, used in the inscription, is added to Vergil's servare: "...la mente umana, che non sa quello che le si dee finalmente incontrare, non sa servare ne tenere modo quando è levata in alto."26

The connotations of death in the original contexts of the two borrowed phrases are unmistakable. Book I of the Tusculan Disputations is an inquiry into the nature of death; and the epitaph of Ennius, who was confident that through the fame of his achievements he would attain immortality, is quoted as testimony that death is to be despeded. Likewise, the moral import of the passage from Vergil is plain: when death comes, past glory is as nothing if it has been purchased at the price of virtue.
While it is possible that the borrowed figures of speech were adopted for the inscription with little consideration of their original implications, the likelihood seems much greater that the humanist who composed the verses (which were, it should be remembered, intended for one of the most learned princes of the age) selected quotations suited to the circumstances. If so, then Battista's inscription can be taken to mean that she who was virtuous in life lives on through fame after death.
CHAPTER V

Conclusions: A Hypothesis about the Commission for the Diptych

The most conclusive statement which can be made with assurance about the Uffizi diptych is that it is a work of the highest artistic quality. This impression, far from being dispelled, is increased, by close examination.¹ Both the portraits on the obverse and the Triumphes on the reverse were planned and executed with the utmost care, in a conception whose integrity is unparalleled in the extant portraiture of the period.²

While nothing certain is known about the date of the work, iconographic and literary evidence strongly suggests that the diptych was executed sometime after the death of Battista Sforza in 1472. The exceptional use of the pelican as the chief emblem of Charity; the probability that Federigo's painted Triumph alludes to the real triumph he received in Florence in the early summer of 1472; the difference in color and tone between Federigo's bright Triumph and Battista's more somber one; the classical echoes which appear to imply death and posthumous fame in Battista's inscription—all point to a terminus post quem of July 6, 1472.³ If this terminus is correct, as it seems reasonable to assume, the diptych is then in
part a memorial to the dead countess, and the inscription under her *Triumph*, with its echo of the epitaph of Ennius, is itself in the nature of an epitaph.

Federigo spent the two years immediately following Battista's death mainly at home, where he could see to the care of the infant Guidobaldo and administer the domains from which his military activities had for so long absented him. Most of his art patronage appears to date from these and the subsequent years. The decoration of the palace at Urbino is thought to have progressed rapidly during this period. Justus of Ghent was working in Urbino six months after the countess's death, and by autumn 1474 had completed the *Communion of the Apostles* altarpiece—the cost of which Federigo had partly underwritten, and in which his portrait appears—as well as having supervised work on the portraits of famous men for Federigo's study. Also assigned to this last decade of Federigo's life are not only the other large-scale paintings in which his portrait appears (the portrait with Guidobaldo attributed to Justus, the *Lecture at the Court of Urbino* now in the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle, and Piero's Brera altarpiece) but most of the medals and medallions of him as well. The beautiful marble bust of Battista Sforza by Francesco Laurana, too, we recall, has been attributed to this period. The observation has rightly been made, moreover, that much of Federigo's art patronage after Battista's death was directed toward monuments of
his young heir and memorials of his late wife.\textsuperscript{12} So it
would not be surprising if, among the other commemorative
works, Federigo had ordered the magnificent double por-
trait by Piero.

In attempting to understand the mood which might
have inspired the commission for the work, one quite
naturally turns to the events of Battista's death and its
aftermath.\textsuperscript{13} According to the account related in Dennis-
toun,\textsuperscript{14} the countess's fatal illness began while Federigo
was away on the campaign of Volterra, the battle which
won for him his glorious triumph in Florence.\textsuperscript{15} The
alarming news of her declining condition reached him when
he had already started for home; and, hastening to Gubbio,
where she lay dying, he arrived at her side shortly before
she expired. Letters of condolence poured in from pre-
lates and heads of state, and the funeral was attended
by two thousand mourners, including nearly forty princely
and municipal envoys and hundreds of nobles, and ecclesi-
astics.\textsuperscript{16} Among Federigo's extant correspondence\textsuperscript{17} are
numerous letters acknowledging the sympathy tendered to
him, and expressing his feelings of bereavement. To the
pope he wrote: "For many reasons her death was a grievous
vexation, for she was the beloved consort of my fortunes
and domestic cares, the delight equally of my public and
private hours, so that no greater misfortune could have
befallen me."\textsuperscript{18} In another letter: "I have indeed lost
a wife, the ornament of my house...."\textsuperscript{19} It is the follow-
ing note, however, which seems most to reveal Federigo's mind after Battista's death:

No book lore, no personal experience, could state better than your very elegant letter the vanity of human hopes. Most consolatory has it proved to me, describing so appropriately and feelingly my varied fortune;--the affair of Volterra, the honours with which the distinguished government of Florence has complimented me, and my secret delight while returning homewards to rejoin my circle, my sweet children, my wife, precious above aught else--these all at once transmuted by a death-blow, to me the most calamitous. Most impressively have you set forth my affliction, and the loss I have publicly and privately sustained; by such things may indeed be seen the uncertain issue of earthly events.

It is difficult to reexamine the Uffizi diptych in the light of these moving sentiments without feeling that something is amiss. Although the portraits and the triumphal processions constitute a noble monument to both sovereigns, the verses so handsomely inscribed under the Triumpha strike a jarring note. The proud vaunt of Federigo's inscription: seems inappropriate to his grief. And the meager praise of his beloved countess, whose fame is said to derive not so much from her own virtue as from the deeds of her famous husband, is an ungenerous, if not implicitly deprecating, final tribute; one would think that the paintings were more a monument to Federigo than a commemoration of his consort. Surely this is not the most fitting memorial a bereaved husband could devise for a wife who was eulogized by all of Italy.

This aspect of the work, so different in tone from the other paintings made for Federigo after Battista's
death of Federigo's character, however, if we assume that the diptych was ordered not by him but for him—a lordly gift intended both to congratulate him after his memorable victory at Volterra and triumph in Florence and to console him in his sorrow after the death of his wife. The triumphal scenes, and the inscription under Federigo's Triumph, would have been explicit reminders to him of the great honor paid him by the Florentines; and though Battista had not shared that glorious tribute with him, here in the diptych they would celebrate the moment together in perpetuity. Moreover, the intent of Battista's inscription could then have been, at least in part, to comfort her husband with the assurance that through his great deeds and undertakings her fame lived on.

The donor of so excellent a gift might have been any one of the many rulers whom Federigo had served in past battles or even some member of his own or another court who wished to extol him. But the likeliest candidate of all is perhaps the head of the Florentine state, Lorenzo de' Medici, who had himself selected Federigo to lead the campaign against Volterra. In announcing Federigo's appointment as chief of the allied troops, Lorenzo had praised him thus:

On looking round for a captain worthy of your valour, there has been no difficulty in finding one, who from his earliest years had been signalised, under the eyes of you all, by so many and great feats of arms, that there cannot be a question whom you ought to ask for,
and we to give. In former times it has frequently happened that a safe commander has been discovered after great exertions and amid grievous perils. But, in this menacing war, the skill, gallantry, influence, and good fortune of the Lord of Urbino save us all trouble in searching out a leader for our army.\textsuperscript{30}

If Lorenzo did indeed commission the splendid diptych by Piero, it was a tribute as worthy of the donor as of the recipient.\textsuperscript{31} And it would be pleasant to think that though the diptych has long been uprooted from its rightful place in the palace of Urbino,\textsuperscript{32} it has by a twist of fate found its way back to the place of its origination.
NOTES

[Full bibliographical data is given here only for works not listed in the Bibliography.]

Chapter I

1. The diptych takes its common appellation from its present location in the Uffizi galleries. The work came to Florence around 1630 (the date generally given is 1631, but Cinquini gives 1624) along with other possessions of the Della Rovere family (Baldini, p. 117), the last ducal dynasty of Urbino, which was related, through an ill-fated marriage, to the Medici (Dennistoun, III, 186ff.).

2. About Federigo da Montefeltro (count of Urbino, 1444-82; duke of Urbino, 1474-82) much has been written. The most comprehensive modern biography of him is contained in Dennistoun’s Memoirs of the Dukes of Urbino, a work written over a century ago but still valued for its thoroughness and generally sound historical scholarship. (Caution must be used with this work, however. While much of the material has been confirmed by more recent studies, some of it has been discredited, particularly in the field of art history, where attributions, dating, and esthetic evaluation are very different now from what they were in the mid-nineteenth century.) The major deficiency of Dennistoun’s study is the lack of detailed documentation; there are only a few footnotes, and for the most part the reader must guess which of the many sources listed in the long bibliography (Vol. I, pp. xxi-xxviii) was drawn on for a given piece of information.

Of the numerous contemporary accounts of Federigo, one of the most frequently cited and most readily accessible is the brief biography, dedicated not long after Federigo’s death to his son Guidobaldo, by Vespasiano da Bisticci [also called Fiorentino], the Florentine bookseller who aided Federigo in the formation of his library. (It is interesting to note that Burckhardt’s description of Federigo [I, 63-65] is probably drawn mainly from Vespasiano—whose Lives of Illustrious Men of the XVth Century inspired the great Swiss historian to write his monumental study of the Renaissance. But, ironically, the lack of direct citation in Burckhardt makes his account seem more authoritative and credible than the original by Vespasiano, in which we know to allow for the flattery or
exaggeration a contemporary biographer is susceptible to.

About the library at Urbino, Vespasiano (p. 102) says that Federigo "had in mind to do what no one had done for a thousand years or more; that is, to create the finest library since ancient times." Vespasiano judged that the collection excelled in scope and completeness not only the principal Italian libraries but also the University library at Oxford. His description of the Urbino library is substantially confirmed by the contemporary inventory prepared by the duke's librarian, Federigo Veterano. This inventory, published in the nineteenth century by Guasti, itemizes 772 volumes containing an astonishing variety of works in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and the vernacular.

Significant particulars on the highlights of Federigo's military career are given by Dennistoun (Vol. I, passim). There is no doubt that Federigo was for many years the most sought-after condottiere in Italy, repeatedly engaged by the papal see, the kings of Naples, the city of Florence, the dukes of Milan, and various leagues of Italian powers. He suffered few defeats (Vespasiano and Castiglione are mistaken in claiming that he was never worsted in battle), and on several occasions managed to win victory over great odds. But even more impressive than his skill and prudence in battle was the good faith which he is said to have maintained toward his employers—with a moral rectitude unique among the hired generals of his time. As long as he was under contract, he would scrupulously honor the terms of his agreement, though it more than once involved considerable personal sacrifice. See, for example, Dennistoun, I, 93f. and 128; also 176, where Federigo's good faith is praised by Ferdinand of Naples as the "rarest" of all the virtues. Vespasiano (p. 85) also attests to this element of the duke's character: "All those to whom he gave his word bear witness that he never broke it."

During his adolescence, Federigo spent two years at La Giocosa, the humanist school established by Vittorino da Feltre at the Gonzaga court in Mantua. Biographers of Vittorino mention Federigo as an apt student (Prendilacqua, pp. 48ff. ["Lodovico" is there printed in error for "Federigo"]; and Platina, p. 29). Federigo's reverence for the saintly humanist is evidenced by the inscription on a commemorative portrait installe in the palace of Urbino: "To his saintly teacher Vittorino da Feltre, who by instruction and example taught him human dignity, Federigo [erects this]." The Latin inscription and its Italian translation are given in Platina, tr. by Biasuz, p. 165f.8. On Vittorino, his school at Mantua, and his methods and goals of education, see the excellent study by W. H. Woodward, Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators.

On the ducal palace at Urbino, see the very thorough monograph by Rotondi.
3. On Battista Sforza's character, education, and attainments, see Dennistoun, I, 114-15 and 206-7. There is some confusion about the number of children she bore. In one place, Dennistoun says that eight daughters were born before Guidobaldo, the only son and heir to the duchy (I, 197); in another place, that eight children were born in all (I, 276-77). Of the six daughters described as living past infancy and listed on the family pedigree chart (I, 20), one is identified simply as "Chiara, a nun." Since the daughter named Elisabetta (b. 1461/62) became Sister Chiara when her husband died, one wonders whether there were actually two Sister Chiaras in the family, or whether "Chiara, a nun" was in fact Elisabetta—in which case, the total number of children born to Battista would be less one.

4. The paintings are unsigned and undated. Their attribution to Piero, which goes at least as far back as Dennistoun's time (see his description of the diptych, I, 271-73), presumably rests on tradition as well as on the painter's characteristic style and the superior quality of the work. The names of the sitters do not appear on the paintings. The identification of Federigo is easily made by comparison with the other numerous portraits which record his distinctive features. The woman opposite him must be Battista because the inscriptions (see Chapter IV) identify her as his wife, and it is known that his first wife was rather fat (Dennistoun, I, 105). On other portraits of Federigo and Battista, see above, Chapter II.

5. In 1906 Adolfo Cinquini published a Latin poem by the fifteenth-century humanist Giovanni Andrea Ferabò [Johannes Andreas Ferabos; a Carmelite who apparently spent some time in Urbino] which mentions a portrait by Piero (Pietro Burgensis) of the duke (the general term for ruler or leader princes is used in the poem, but that the reference is to Federigo is fairly probable from the context of other writings in the codex containing the poem). An English translation of the poem is given by Pope-Hennessy, The Portrait, p. 319n8.

Cinquini assumed that the portrait referred to was the one in the Uffizi diptych, and until quite recently few writers questioned the assumption (two notable early exceptions were Pietro Toesca in the Enciclopedia Italiana [1935]; and Creighton Gilbert in Marsyas [1941]). Ferabò's poem was thus widely accepted as a contemporary source relating to the diptych.

At the present time, however, careful scholarship admits the likelihood that Ferabò's poem refers to some other portrait, since the integrity of the diptych as a double portrait would inhibit reference to just one of the sitters. Kenneth Clark, in the second edition of his
[Notes to Chapter I]

monograph on Piero (p. 55), no longer accepts the poem as a definite reference to the Uffizi painting. Pope-Hennessy, who has emphatically affirmed Cinquini's arguments for dating the diptych on the basis of Ferabò's poem (The Portrait, p. 318n3)——and does not even indicate that those arguments have been seriously questioned by other scholars—has been justly criticized for his too hasty judgment (see Hendy, p. 136).

Other aspects of Cinquini's hypothesis and its refutation will be discussed in Chapter IV.

6. The April 8, 1469, entry in an account book of the Confraternity of Corpus Domini states that Giovanni Santi was reimbursed 10 bolognini to cover expenses for "maestro Piero dal Borgo chera venuto a veder la taula [tavola] per farla a conto del la fraternita." The "taula" referred to was later executed by Justus of Ghent; see Marilyn Lavin's study "The Altar of Corpus Domini."


8. Vasari gives "Guidobaldo Feltro" as the name of the "old duke." But "Guidobaldo" was the name of Federigo's son and heir, who was born in 1472, became duke at the age of ten, and died before he was thirty-seven. Thus the phrase "old duke" can hardly refer to him. Vasari, writing almost half a century after the death of Guidobaldo apparently telescoped the young duke and his father. As the subsequent discussion will show, Piero had contact with both men.

9. The manuscript is now in the Vatican (Vat. Urb. lat. 632), where much of the Urbino collection has been housed since the seventeenth century. The work is catalogued in Federigo Veterano's inventory (see above, n. 2) as item 273.

10. It is impossible to determine from this dedication the nature and extent of Piero's relationship with the ducal court. Allowance should probably be made for the fact that exaggerated terms of praise and devotion
were customary in dedicatory notes. It is interesting, though not necessarily significant, that Piero's services as a painter are not mentioned.

11. Quoted by Dennistoun, II, 194.

12. Nor does the work seem to be listed in the fifteenth-century inventory of the ducal library. The treatise is known, however, from manuscripts in other European libraries and has been published in a very fine critical edition by G. Nicco Fasola (Florence, 1942).

13. One of these three works, the Brera altarpiece, lacks the "little figures" mentioned by Vasari (the figures in the Brera painting are close to life size). Millard Meiss's studies on the altarpiece and Marilyn Levin's article on the Flagellation contain much valuable information pertaining to Piero and Urbino.

Two other paintings may perhaps be ascribed to Piero's activity at Urbino. Both are presently in the Galleria nazionale delle Marche, located in the ducal palace at Urbino. One, the Senigallia Madonna (Bianconi, color pl. IV), which is so named because it was formerly in a church outside Senigallia, is definitely attributed to Piero. Since Senigallia was the domain of Giovanni della Rovere, son-in-law of Federigo and father of Guidobaldo's successor (Guidobaldo, lacking a son, named his nephew his heir), the painting could very well have originated in the ducal court and then been transferred to Senigallia. The other painting, variously called Architectural Perspective (Bianconi, pls. 172-73) or Perspective View of an Ideal Town (Clark), is definitely related to the ducal palace, where it originated along with two other panels (now in Berlin and Baltimore) of similar subject but inferior execution. The attribution of this work is uncertain, however. While Kenneth Clark, who thinks it may be a cassone panel (see below, Chap. III, n. 12), has ascribed it to Piero (Piero, 1st ed., p. 209), it has been differently assigned by other writers. See Bianconi, p. 70.

14. A number of other double-portrait "diptychs" remain from the fifteenth century, but none in which the reverse is painted with a full scene as in the Uffizi diptych (Gilbert, Change in Piero, p. 29). The so-called Medici diptych (apparently not originally planned as a diptych) in Zurich, for instance—attributed to Andrea del Castagno, and dated ca. 1450-60—shows only the Medici device on the reverse (see G. Pudelko, "Two Portraits Ascribed to Andrea del Castagno," Burlington Magazine, LXVIII [1936], 235-40). This and other examples of double portraits are discussed by Pope-Hennessy, The Portrait, pp. 24, 37, 40-41; and by Gilbert in his
review in Burlington Magazine, CX^2 (1968), 283.

While the plan of the Uffizi diptych is unique among surviving works, it may not have been unique in its time. In this and other connections, one must bear in mind that many works have been lost. Pope-Hennessy states that the extant private portraits represent only a fraction of the total number executed. "Never are we justified in thinking that the first time a motif appears in paintings known to us is the first time that it occurs" (The Portrait, p. 59).

15. These peculiar rock platforms do not seem to occur elsewhere in Piero's work or in other contemporary paintings. However, almost identical forms can be found in the foreground of some of the engravings attributed to Maso Finiguerra and dated ca. 1460 (Florentine Picture Chronicle, esp. pls. 62 and 63). Other fifteenth-century engravings show a similarly "eroded" edge in their foreground; most striking of all for its resemblance in this odd feature to the Uffizi paintings is a Florentine engraving (dated ca. 1470-90) for Petrarch's Triumph of Love (Figure 28, below), where not only the subject matter of the picture but also the placement of the inscription, very much like that in the diptych, reinforces the analogy of the unusual landscape form.

16. The influence of medals—and coins—on the Uffizi diptych is discussed by several recent writers: Carandente, p. 74; Pope-Hennessy, The Portrait, pp. 158 and 209; and Gilbert, Change in Piero, p. 29. See also below, Chapter II, n. 1.

17. A commemorative art form inspired by ancient coins, medals achieved tremendous popularity and their finest artistic development during the fifteenth century. Quattrocento medals typically (though not invariably) had a profile portrait on the obverse, and a symbolic device or an allegorical or historical scene on the reverse. In addition to an inscription on the obverse identifying the person in the portrait, there would generally be a motto on the reverse, amplifying the scene or symbols shown there and further describing the individual being commemorated. On the origins of Renaissance medals, see Hill, Medals of the Renaissance, pp. 9 ff.; on the special characteristics of Italian medals, pp. 12 ff.

18. On the similarity between the diptych Triumphs and Pisanello's medal of Alfonso, see Carandente, p. 74; and Tolnay, p. 15.

19. It is unfortunate that photographs of the panels
are often cropped along the bottom edge and part or all of the lower frieze is thus lost (see Bianconi, pls. 148-49, for example).

20. The frequent simulation of the form, and sometimes the content, of ancient inscriptions in Renaissance painting was of course an expression of the age's passion for antiquity (on this fascinating subject, see Fritz Saxl's "The Classical Inscription in Renaissance Art and Politics"). Another example in Piero's own work is the "signature," inscribed in Roman capitals similar to those of the Triumphs' inscriptions, on the base of Pilate's throne in the Flagellation. But that inscription is an integral part of the main painted scene, whereas the inscriptions of the Triumphs are conceived almost as trompe l'oeil elements, on a different level of reality from the scenes above them. (on the effect created, see above, pp. 33-34). An analogous relationship is found in the fifteenth-century portraits set behind simulated inscribed parapets. On the use of this motif, and its possible posthumous implications, in Italian painting, see R. Hatfield, "Five Early Renaissance Portraits," Art Bulletin, XLVII (1965), 316, 321n12, 327. A unique Northern use of the motif in the fifteenth century is in Jan van Eyck's Tymotheos portrait (Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting, 1, 196; and Hatfield, p. 327n32).

The bust-length figures behind parapets, however, do not suggest an ambiguity of scale like that created between the inscription and the large figural groups and vast landscape in Piero's Triumphs. And while the Florentine engraving of the Triumph of Love discussed above, n. 15, closely resembles the Uffizi Triumphs in its general format, its inscribed panel is not developed as a three-dimensional object to anywhere near the same extent.

21. Most writers appear to accept the inscriptions as part of the original work, executed by Piero at the same time as the rest of the diptych. Clark notes the similarity between the lettering of these inscriptions and Piero's signatures in other paintings, and says that they "seem to be from his own hand" (Piero, 2d ed., p. 227). Carandente's suggestion (p. 132n152) that the inscriptions were added or changed after the death of the countess lacks concrete evidence. (The paintings have apparently never been subjected to laboratory tests. The only pentimento which has been observed in the diptych is the redrawing of the back line of Federigo's neck on the obverse--readily visible to the naked eye.)

The iconographic relationship of the inscriptions to the program of the diptych was first considered in depth by Creighton Gilbert in Marsyas (1941). The suggestion made there (p. 47), that a humanist devised the
plan of the work and composed the inscriptions for it, is highly reasonable. The question will be dealt with more fully in Chapters IV and V.

22. The main portraits are about life size, which was not unusual in the portraiture of the period (most of the paintings of similar format which are illustrated in Pope-Hennessy, The Portrait, for example, have similar dimensions). However, the Triumphs are very small; when one subtracts the area of the inscriptions, each scene occupies an area of about 12 in. by 13 in.

23. The present frame—which is not hinged—gives no clue here, as it is not the original frame.

Chapter II

1. The various modes of Renaissance portraiture, and the influences of ancient Roman art upon them, are analyzed by Pope-Hennessy in The Portrait in the Renaissance. Roman numismatic portraits are judged to have particularly inspired the use of the profile format in ruler portraiture (pp. 155-57). Many Quattrocento portraits of course used the three-quarter pose rather than the profile, but Pope-Hennessy believes the three-quarter type to be dependent on the "collective portraits" widely introduced into contemporary frescoes (p. 23), whereas the profile type is thought by him to be independent (with few exceptions) of the larger works and group portraits (p. 35). There is an interesting discussion of the impact of profile portraiture on the style of sculptured busts of the period in the same author's Italian Renaissance Sculpture, pp. 61 f.

Ancient coins were, as one would expect, enthusiastically collected during the Renaissance--Petrarch, Cyriac of Ancona, and Alfonso of Aragon were among the many who shared an admiration for these most complete, and most plentiful, of the remaining monuments of antiquity (Hill, Medals of the Renaissance, p. 14).

2. The essential simplicity of the profile mode is noted by Pope-Hennessy: "a recognizable transcription of the features can be achieved more easily in profile than in any other way" (The Portrait, p. 35).

3. As Pope-Hennessy points out, Masaccio had early demonstrated that the profile could be represented realistically (three-dimensionally), yet other artists for
decades after him treated profile portraiture in a mainly decorative vein (ibid.).

4. For the juxtaposition of portrait figures and distant landscape, Meiss cites such Northern prototypes as the Rolin Madonna of Jan van Eyck (Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting, Vol. II, figs. 244-45) and, "still more relevant," the Brueghel triptych of Rogier van der Weyden (ibid., fig. 333), in which no architecture intervenes between the figures and the landscape ("Highlands in the Lowlands," pp. 305 and 314n76); it should be noted however, that while the example in the Rolin Madonna is a true portrait, the figures in the Brueghel triptych are sacred rather than secular. See also below, nn. 52 and 58-61.

5. Pope-Hennessy extols Piero's "unerring sense for the cubic volume of the head" (The Portrait, p. 160).

6. See above, p. 16, for example.

7. See above, p. 5.

8. All the known portraits of Federigo are listed by Lavalleye, Les primitifs flamands, VII, 112-14.

9. In 1450, during a tournament celebrating his appointment as captain-general of the Milanese forces by Francesco Sforza, Federigo received a glancing blow which shattered his nose and knocked out his right eye (Dennistoun, I, 95).

It is said that Federigo afterward insisted on being portrayed in profile to conceal his bad eye. I have not been able to trace the original source of this assertion; however, Mr. David Cast has kindly pointed out an interesting classical analogy, in Pliny (Natural History xxxv. 90): "Apelles....painted a portrait of King Antigonos, who was blind of one eye; being the first to devise a means of concealing the infirmity by presenting a profile, so that the absence of the eye would be attributed merely to the position of the sitter, not to a natural defect, for he gave only the part of the face which could be shown uninjured."

Though all the extant major portraits of Federigo depict his left profile, two small images show him in profile from the right, but with the injured eye restored. One is the likeness on the reverse of the Uffizi diptych, where the symmetry of the program and design of the two panels may have necessitated representing this view of the count from the right. The other right profile of the ruler is in the dedication miniature (Figure 11, below) of Cristoforo Landino's Disputationes Camulenses (MS. Vat. Urb. Lat. 508), dedicated to Federigo by the author and probably executed in Florence around 1475. (Federigo's letter thanking Landino for the book is printed by Paolo Alatri, ed.,
Lettere di stato e d'arte [1470-1480], No. 87.) The miniature is attributed to the Florentine workshop of Francesco and Antonio del Cherico (Lavalleye, Les primitifs flamands, VII, 113). It is interesting to note that the defect which artists—and perhaps Federigo himself—were apparently loath to record for posterity all the more prompted the admiration of Pope Pius II: "This captain of ours with his single eye sees everything" (cited by Dennistoun, I, 126).

10. Kenneth Clark, writing of Federigo's profile—"an outline of magnificent character and force"—comments that the weird broken nose makes him look like "some sacred bird" and we feel that his face was almost a work of art before Piero began to paint him" but that the illusion is dispelled by comparison with other portraits (Piero, 1st ed., p. 39).

11. As the discussion in Chapter IV will show, the two dates most frequently suggested for the Uffizi diptych are ca. 1465 and ca. 1472-73. For the purposes of comparison, therefore, it is most illuminating to examine portraits of Federigo which are definitely dated around these two periods.

12. Hill, Corpus, No. 304. Clemente da Urbino is described as "an obscure and mediocre artist" (idem, Medals of the Renaissance, p. 57) whose only authenticated work is the medal of Federigo (Corpus, I, 75). Fabriczy (p. 98) considers that the Clemente medal is "apparently the most faithful portrait of the prince"—a judgment probably based on the fact that the likeness is totally unappealing and is therefore not likely to have involved flattering idealization.

13. Cf., for example, the mortiers worn by members of the Gonzaga court in Mantegna's Camera degli Sposi frescoes in the ducal palace, Mantua (R. Cipriani, All the Paintings of Mantegna, tr. by P. Colacicchi [New York, 1963]. II, pls. 83, 87, 89, and 93). The form of these hats is closer to that in Clemente's medal than to Piero's depiction.

14. Hill, Corpus, No. 295. The medal is known only from a leather impression, probably used on a book binding, in the Vatican Library. The signature on the reverse reads IO • FR • PARMENSIS, one of the several variants used by Enzola of Parma.

15. Piero's treatment of the duke's hair is probably stylized rather than realistic. It occurs in no
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other major portrait of Federigo—except for the likeness in the Brera altarpiece, by Piero (it also appears in the dedication miniature discussed in n. 9, above)—but recurs frequently in Piero’s work: the angel on the left in the Senigallia Madonna, the head of the Boston Hercules, the sleeping soldiers in the Resurrection, to name just a few.

16. It is possible that damage to the leather impression (see above, n. 14) is partially responsible for the scarred and wrinkled appearance of the duke. Even with metal impressions and casts the variation from specimen to specimen can be enormous, as Hill makes clear in the introduction to the Corpus. A distressing demonstration of such variation, and of the consequent need for caution in dealing with medals, is provided by two specimens of the famous medal of Federigo by Sperandio Savelli. (Goethe extolled this medal above all others of its time, though our own age prefers the restraint of Pisanello to the "swagger" of Sperandio [see Hill, Medals of the Renaissance, p. 55].) The specimen of Sperandio’s medal reproduced in Fabriczy (pl. XVII, 6) differs so vastly from the one reproduced in Hill (Corpus, pl. 71, No. 389) that at first glance they seem to be two different works. The former presents a smooth surface, with rounder features (the nose appears quite bulbous), and almost no skin texture or details; in the latter, the face is wrinkled and pitted. The medal is discussed only peripherally here because it is not definitely dated within Federigo’s lifetime.

17. The painting is variously attributed to the Flemish painter Justus of Ghent and/or assistants such as the Spaniard Pedro Berruguete (Lavalleye, Juste de Gand, Peintre de Frédéric, p. 145, emphatically assigns the work to Justus; idem, Les primitifs flamands, VII, 121, seems to admit the possibility of workshop participation; and in the Galleria nazionale delle Marche, Urbino, where the painting is now hung, it is ascribed to Pedro Berruguete). The work is datable to around 1477 by the apparent age of the young prince, who was born in 1472 and is taken for about five years old in this portrait (idem, Juste de Gand, p. 146).

18. The gentle, paternal face of the duke and the pale, delicate countenance of the prince are almost overwhelmed by the ponderous trappings of this state portrait—which was hung among the portraits of famous men in Federigo’s study in the ducal palace at Urbino (ibid.). Federigo is shown in a full suit of plate armor, with his helmet and lance displayed prominently at his side. Over the armor, he wears the ermine-trimmed scarlet mantle and the golden collar-chain of the Order of the Ermine, and the garter of
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the renowned English chivalric order. (On Federigo's installation into these two orders--both received him in 1474--see Dennistoun, I, 212-14) Little Guidobaldo, the heir apparent, is richly dressed in a formal robe of state and, with grave mien, holds the ducal scepter, while his father is absorbed in reading one of the great volumes from his much-prized library.

19. Meiss states that the date of the Uffizi diptych is bound up with that of the Brera altarpiece, because "Federigo is represented in both, and he appears older in the Brera panel. If one can rely upon such differences--and in the case of late Quattrocento portraits made by the same master there is good reason to do so--the diptych must have been made several years before the altarpiece" ("Ovum struthionis," p. 97n21). Much the same argument is repeated by Bianconi, p. 54.

20. Not everyone sees the pictures in the same way, however. At least one impartial observer has felt that if there is a difference in age, it is the Brera likeness which seems younger. And one recent writer has observed that Federigo "looks little older" in the Brera painting than in the Uffizi portrait (Hendy, p. 154). In any case, Gilbert appropriately points out that Federigo is bald on the reverse of the Uffizi diptych (Change in Piero, p. 92).

21. The source of light, the modeling of the head, and the background against which the head is set are sufficiently different in the two paintings to markedly alter the effect of the portraits. But the main outlines of the profile and the other features of the head appear to be identical in both works. The costumes, too, contribute to quite different effects.

22. Change in Piero, pp. 91-92. Gilbert's judgment is based on the study of detail reproductions, not on direct examination of the originals. His observations nevertheless appear to be valid. (Proportional calculations based on the known dimensions of the paintings and on measurements made from reproductions indicate that the two heads are almost--perhaps exactly--the same size, which is about life size.) As Gilbert mentions, it is well known that Piero more than once used repeated tracings of a drawing. The device is fairly common in his frescoes (Clark, Piero, 1st ed., p. 29; Bianconi, p. 20).

23. Gilbert (Abid.) thinks it unlikely that Piero would have used the same drawing for the two portraits unless they were made within a few years of each other. The terminus post quem for the Brera altarpiece is generally agreed on as July 6, 1472, the date of Battista
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Sforza's death (see Meiss, "Ovum struthionis," esp. p. 101; for a different view, Hendy, pp. 147 ff.). Meiss's proposed terminus ante quem of autumn 1474, though questioned by some writers, still seems probable. While his argument—that Federigo wears none of the insignia of honor he received in 1474 (see above, n. 18)—may be fallacious (other late portraits of the duke lack the insignia [Lavalleye, Les primitifs flamands, VII, 114]), Marilyn Lavin proposes new evidence for the same terminus. A marble relief medallion of the duke which appears to be a copy of the Brera portrait by Piero was installed on the façade of the church of San Francesco in Mercatello sul Metauro in October 1474 (Lavin, "Flagellation," p. 337n85).

24. See above, n. 21.

25. Gilbert attributes the line of this shadow, which is not emphasized in the Brera portrait, to an accident in tracing (Change in Piero, p. 92); but it seems more deliberate than accidental.

26. Hill, Corpus, No. 47. The work is signed but not dated. Hill assigns a date of 1450 because of the appearance of the duke (since his nose does not look broken, the medal is thought to antedate his accident [see above, n. 9]). Fabriczy (p. 98) states that the inscription on the reverse—designating Federigo as REGIUS CAPITANEUS GENERALIS [royal captain-general; i.e., captain-general of the Neapolitan forces]—also fixes the date roughly in this year, because this title was conferred on Federigo only in 1450. He further suggests that the medal was executed at Naples [perhaps as a gift for Federigo?] along with one of Alfonso which is similar in style, size, and inscription. As related by Dennistoun, however (pp. 95-97), Federigo's accident seems to have preceded his appointment as captain-general.

27. The few remaining portraits of Battista are discussed by Lavalleye (Les primitifs flamands, VII, 9), who judges, with reason, that it is impossible to fix her iconography. See below, nn. 39 and 40.

28. Valentiner, for example, in discussing Francesco Laurana's portrait bust of Battista, wrote that comparison with Piero's portrait "proves that Laurana secured a good likeness...." (p. 284).

29. The bust, which bears the name of Battista in the original inscription across the base (DIVA BAPTISTA SPORTIA • VRB • RG •) is neither signed, dated, nor documented. Its attribution to Francesco Laurana is widely
30. See above, p. 16.

31. All too few multiple views of works of sculpture are available to researchers. While frontal views of Laurana's Battista are readily available, side views are difficult to find in photograph and slide collections. Side views of each work are provided in Holfs' monograph on Laurana, but the reproductions are of poor quality. Fortunately, the Kennedys' Four Portrait Busts contains some fine photographs of side as well as frontal views.

32. The tips of the noses of all of Laurana's portrait busts were damaged and have been restored (Valentiner, p. 298).

33. The same delineation of eyes can be observed in the soldiers and Christ in the Resurrection (Bianconi, pl. 122) and the women in the Proof of the Cross, Arezzo (ibid., pl. 93), among others. The form of the mouth, on the other hand, does not seem to be characteristic of Piero's style. Perhaps it reflects the actual appearance of the countess.

34. The modeling is discernible only in good reproductions. Both Clark's and Longhi's monographs on Piero contain fair black-and-white reproductions of this painting. Clark's color plate (1st ed., color pl. V) shows the modeling better, though the over-all color seems too yellowish.

35. See above, nn. 3 and 5; and Pope-Hennessy, The Portrait, pp. 36 ff. Female portraiture in Italy was dominated by the profile format until very late in the Quattrocento (ibid., p. 41).

36. An eighteenth-century inscription of the back of the panel reads: "Ritratto di Battista Sforza moglie de Federigo duca d'Urbino. Mori 1473. dallo mano di Piero della Francesca" (cited by Lipman, p. 115). Perhaps that identification was prompted by the similarity between the outline of the lady's forehead and nose and the Uffizi profile. In any case, the attribution to Piero is no longer taken seriously (the death date for Battista in the inscription is also incorrect). Lipman assigns the painting to the Master of the Castello Nativitv and dates it, on the basis of costume and style, ca. 1455 (pp. 120 and 125)—which would preclude its
being a portrait of Battista, who was then only nine years old. Pope-Hennessy, who concurs with Lipman, discusses the two-dimensional quality of the painting (The Portrait, p. 36). On other possible attributions, see Carli, pp. 66-67.

37. See above, n. 4, and below, n. 59.

38. These paintings have in the past been variously attributed to Domenico Veneziano, Antonio Pollaiuolo, Andrea del Verrocchio, Piero della Francesca, and Desiderio da Settignano! (Crutwell, "Three Mysterious Profiles," pp. 312 ff.) Pope-Hennessy considers that they are by A. Pollaiuolo and that, among extant contemporary works (but see above, Chapter I, n. 14), they show important innovations toward greater realism of form and a first attempt at more lifelike expression (The Portrait, p. 144). He dates the Berlin painting (Figure 17) in the late 1460s, "possibly earlier," and the Poldi-Pezzoli panel (Figure 18) around 1470.

39. Elaborate dress, common in the female portrait-ure (as in the actual fashions) of the time, may not have been typical of Battista. Dennistoun (I, 207) writes: "Though gifted with beauty of a high caste [cf. below, n. 40], simple dress and manners were her delight, and it was only on state occasions that, indulging her husband's taste rather than her own fancy, she displayed such magnificent attire as is represented in the [Uffizi portrait]." But the source of this report is not given. It is elsewhere stated that Battista, a Franciscan lay sister, was buried in Franciscan garb (Lavin, "Altar of Corpus Domini," pp. 9 and 19)—not in the sumptuous attire which one might expect for a woman of wealth and position.

40. She is reputed to have been of tiny stature (Dennistoun, I, 115)—in marked contrast to Federigo's first wife, Gentile, "of whom nothing is known beyond the excessive stoutness of her person" (ibid., p. 105). Ruth Kennedy, who states that Laurana based his bust of Battista on a death mask (no source is given for this information, and other writers are less emphatic; see below, n. 41), writes: "The cast of her face told Laurana that she had not been beautiful..."—a statement which seems to be based more on speculation than on factual knowledge.

41. This portrait, a marble relief plaque now in the Museo civico, Pesaro, has been attributed to Francesco Laurana (A. Venturi, Storia dell'Arte italiana, VI [Milan, 1908], 1044; Valentinier, p. 280; Lavalleye, Les primitifs flamands, VII, 9), though not without some doubt. This
work resembles Piero's portrait of Battista more closely than it does Laurana's bust, however, not only in its generally homely quality but in the line of the profile, which seems to be an exact duplicate of the Uffizi profile (this similarity does not appear to have been noted by other writers).

Moreover, the Pesaro plaque of Battista is a pendant to a facing profile of Federigo which very closely duplicates Piero's Brera portrait of the count. Federigo (see Figure 21, below) is shown in left profile, hatless, in a suit of plate armor, the only substantial difference between this portrait and the Brera likeness being in the texture of the hair. The Pesaro relief of Federigo is almost identical to the medallion at Mercatello sul Metauro illustrated and discussed by Marilyn Lavin in her article on Piero's Flagellation (see above, n. 23). A third relief of Federigo, in the Bargello in Florence (illustrated in Lavalleye, Juste de Gand, Berruguete, No. 89), reproduces the same likeness in a cruder style, with some peculiar changes in the details of the armor which suggest that the sculptor was working from other copies of Piero's work, rather than from the original. On other reliefs of Federigo, see idem, Les primitifs flamands, VII, 113.

Venturi (op. cit.), who mentions that Laurana's Bargello bust is thought to have been based on a death mask, considers that in both of Laurana's portraits of Battista "the funereal character is accentuated."

42. A stone relief plaque, in the form of a cameo, this work is in the Galleria nazionale delle Marche in Urbino. It has been attributed to Francesco di Giorgio. The vivacious expression and delicate features of this head recall neither Piero's nor Laurana's portraits of Battista. Unlike the Uffizi portrait and Laurana's bas-relief, this work shows the left profile, which is far more common in female portraits of the period (the use of the right profile for Battista in the paired portraits probably was dictated by the avoidance of Federigo's in-jured right profile; see above, n. 9).

43. A. Venturi's comment (Piero, p. 56) that Battista's face resembles the "waxen mask of a dead woman" has been cited by a number of writers. Clark (Piero, 2d ed., p. 227) states that the portrait does not appear to have been done from life. Hendy (p. 137) suggests that a death mask was used. On the possible use of a death mask as a basis for other portraits of Battista, see above, nn. 40 and 41.

44. On this question, see above, Chapter IV.

45. Pope-Hennessy (The Portrait, pp. 8-9 and 72)
discusses the practice of making masks or drawings to record the features of the deceased. (The death mask of San Bernardino of Siena--one of the most important of the extant examples--is illustrated in Iris Origo, The World of San Bernardino [New York, 1962], pl. XXXII.)

46. While death masks had been used in the Middle Ages only for sepulchral portraiture, the Renaissance also employed them in recreating likenesses which would give the impression of having been made from life (Pope-Hennessy, The Portrait, pp. 8-9, 40, and 72). A striking example of a "reconstructed" portrait, based not on a death mask but on a sketch of the dead man, is Ghirlandaio's Old Man and His Grandson, in the Louvre. The painting shows the same almost morbid attention to detail as the sketch in faithfully depicting the skin disorder of the old man, but it transforms the lifeless visage of the corpse into a warm expression of tenderness and affection for the little boy (ibid., p. 56).

47. Above, nn. 29, 40, and 41.


49. Cf. above, n. 46.

50. Cf. the numerous female heads in the Arezzo cycle, for example.

51. Clark (Piero, 2d ed., p. 56) suggests that Battista's pallor may allude to her feminine qualities.

52. These "analogous details," which recall the work of Jan van Eyck--the Rolin Madonna, for example--and are evidence of the strong Northern influence in the diptych, are mentioned by Longhi (pp. 91-92) and Clark (Piero, 1st ed., pp. 38-39), among others.

53. The form of Battista's necklace is rather unusual in having an extra fillet of pearls down the center of the main U-shaped strand. Little Guidobaldo wears a similar necklace in the portrait attributed to Justus of Ghent (Figure 9, below).

54. See above, p. 5.

55. From a geologic point of view, the numerous low, broad hills sharply isolated on the flat plains are unrealistic. On the generalized, imaginary character of this landscape, see L. Venturi, p. 97; Tolinay, pp. 15 f.; Feudale, pp. 72 ff.; and Clark, Piero, 1st ed., p. 36.
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56. See p. 32.

57. It is possible that the most prominent features in the landscapes—the fortifications behind Battista and the lake with boats behind Federigo—have a particular symbolism which relates to the sitters. Perhaps a pun on the name Sforza was intended by the fortezze behind Battista, for instance. Similarly, the boats behind Federigo might have been considered as symbols of Fortune and as such appropriate to the prosperous leader. These suggestions are offered only tentatively, however. (On a visual pun in the Sassetti Tombs, see Saxl, p. 28.)

58. See above, nn. 4 and 52. Such Northern influences could have come to Piero directly (he was probably in contact with Justus of Ghent at Urbino, for example; see Lavin, "The Altar of Corpus Domini," pp. 19 ff.), or through Italian intermediaries like Domenico Veneziano (Meiss, "'Highlands' in the Lowlands," p. 300). Loughi (p. 89) also sees the influence of the Siennese landscape tradition—such works as Simone Martini's Guidoriccio fresco.

59. As Clark (Piero, 1st ed., p. 38), Tolnay (p. 14), and others have noted, the profile view arrests the movement into depth. By placing the horizon line at the level of the neck, Piero minimized the conflict between the profile and the landscape: "the heads are detached against the neutral background of limpid sky" (Tolnay).


61. Ibid.

Chapter III

1. The etymology of the term "triumph" points to the preclassical origins of the theme. The Latin form triumphus (Old Latin: triumpus) derives, probably through Etruscan, from the Greek triaombos, the name for the processions of Dionysos, a god of non-Greek origin (Webster's New International Dictionary, 2d ed., s. v. triumph, n., I; J. G. Frazer, The New Golden Bough, ed. by T. H. Gaster [New York, 1957], p. 351).

2. The triumph in Republican Rome was the highest honor granted to a victorious general; in the Empire, the right extended to the emperor. In principle, a triumph was
granted only to a high-ranking leader (dictator, consul, or praetor) who had successfully concluded a war—against a foreign, not civil, enemy—in which at least five thousand of the foe were slain and by which Rome's boundaries would be extended (conditions that made no secret of Rome's expansionist policy). The general would wait outside the city walls until the senate voted him the right to retain his imperium when he entered, without which power he would not be entitled to a triumph. The triumph itself was a solemn procession, through the city streets—garlanded for the occasion—from the Campus Martius to the Capitol. Led by the magistrates and the senate, the cavalcade included trumpeters, the battle spoils, sacrificial animals, and prisoners of war. The triumphator, who wore the purple and gold robes of the Capitoline Jupiter (Strong [p. 64] states that for the duration of the celebration the triumphator was Jupiter), was crowned with laurel and rode on a distinctive form of chariot, drawn by four horses. (Encyclopaedia Britannica, s.v. Triumph.)


4. Ibid., pp. 402, 418, 419, 420.

5. The first of the poems was begun ca. 1338, and apparently Petrarch did not originally plan it to form part of a series, but simply added the other poems as their themes moved him. Appropriately, he completed the Triumph of Eternity (Petrarch's own titles for the poems were in Latin, though the poems were written in Italian) shortly before he died, in 1374. (Wilkins, pp. 22-23, 31-12, 47-48, 80, 86-87, 118-19, and 244.) The poems were brought together in their present order after his death.

Petrarch's admiration for antiquity is evident in the many figures from classical history and literature listed among the victors and the vanquished in the successive Trionfi—and of course in the motif of the triumph itself—but the principal theme of the poems is not pagan. In essence, the Trionfi are allegories of Petrarch's personal spiritual evolution (and, by extension, that of all men), a record of his progress through his love of Laura to a realization of God and the peace of eternity. (the poems are thus similar in theme to the Divine Comedy; Petrarch also uses the terza rima form of Dante). Love's triumph is for Petrarch his psychological bondage to Laura; Chastity is Laura herself, stalwart against Love's onslaught; Death is the victor who snatches Laura from the world, beyond the sight of the poet. Only Fame and Time are described in less personal terms, unrelated to the poet's lady, and these (especially the Triumph of Fame, a catalogue of illustrious names relieved
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only by the perception and pithiness of some of the poet’s epigrammatic descriptions) are the most tedious of the six poems. Eternity, which undoes the destruction of Death and Time, offers for Petrarch the final promise of seeing Laura again in heaven,—the last two lines of the poem being: "se fu beato chi lo vide in terra; or che fia dunque a ri-
vederla in cielo!" (Petrarch, Trionfi, ed. by Lecaldano, pp. 5-8 and 100; Carandente, pp. 33 ff.)

A well-annotated edition of the poems is that by Carlo Calcatera.

6. Like many other "classical" ideas, the triumphal theme had not died out during the Middle Ages, but received new life in the Renaissance (Carandente, pp. 12 ff.). On the importance of Petrarch in the revival of the theme, see Bertini Calosso, pp. 114-15; and A. Venturi, "Les triomphes," pp. 82 ff.

7. Trionfo d'Amore, I, lines 13-18 and 22-30. The translation by Ernst Hatch Wilkins reads:

A leader conquering and supreme I saw,
Such as triumphal chariots used to bear
To glorious honor on the Capitol.
Never had I beheld a sight like this—
Thanks to the sorry age in which I live,
Bereft of valor, and o'erfilled with pride—

Four steeds I saw, whiter than whitest snow,
And on a fiery car a cruel youth
With bow in hand and arrows at his side
No fear had he, nor armor wore, nor shield,
But on his shoulders he had two great wings
Of a thousand hues; his body all was bare.
And round about were mortals beyond count:
Some of them were but captives, some were slain,
And some were wounded by his pungent arrows.

8. See above, n. 1.

9. Guerry, pp. 82 ff. Bertini Calosso (p. 115) gives a somewhat different series; he states that Fame is drawn by horses, and that Eternity, unhitched, moves freely through space. As a scanning of the illustrations in Carandente readily shows, both writers are correct: the iconography is not entirely invariable. On elephants as the team for Fame, see Schorr, p. 107. On the iconography for the Triumph of Chastity, see below, n. 47.

10. Guerry, p. 82.

11. Considering the popularity of Petrarch’s poems (see Carandente, p. 114) and of allegorical triumphs in the festivals (Burckhardt, pp. 401-25 passim), it seems
entirely likely that the six allegories of Petrarch were at some time included in a public procession, even if no record of such an event remains. See Schorr, p. 107; Guerry, pp. 83-85; Carandente, pp. 46 ff.

12. Cassoni—the large trousseau chests which were an important part of a bride's dowry—were often decorated by first-rate artists. The two lovely cassone panels of Triumphs of Petrarch by Pesellino in the Gardner Museum, Boston, for example, belong to the "minor arts" only in that they were subordinated to the role of decorating an article of furniture. Piero himself may have made paintings for this purpose (see above, Chapter I, n. 13). A number of cassone panels illustrating triumphs are reproduced in Carandente; a comprehensive survey of cassoni in general was published by Schubring in 1915; and the article by E. H. Gombrich entitled "Apollonio di Giovanni: A Florentine Cassone Workshop Seen Through the Eyes of a Humanist Poet," in Norm and Form: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance [London, 1966], pp. 11-28, gives much interesting information concerning cassoni in general, as well as on the ones produced by the Apollonio workshop.

Deschi da parto were trays—frequently decorated—on which gifts were presented to the mother of a new-born child. One of the most interesting remaining examples of this class of objects is the desco (now in the collection of the New York Historical Society) ordered by Cosimo de' Medici in celebration of the birth of his grandson Lorenzo (the Magnificent); prophetically, the desco depicts a Triumph of Fame (Carandente, p. 54 and pi. IV).


14. For descriptions of Alfonso's entry, see Burckhardt, II, 417; Croce, pp. 5-6; and Carandente, pp. 13 ff. and 117n28.

15. Both Antonio da Parma (Panormita) and Lorenzo Valla describe the event in their biographies of Alfonso (cited by Carandente, p. 118n31).

16. The Castel Nuovo arch is discussed by Carandente (p. 18), who also cites (p. 118n31) contemporary manuscripts with miniatures representing Alfonso's triumph.

17. Carandente, p. 18.

18. Triumphs and street processions were especially popular among the Florentines, some of whom apparently became professional directors of such festivities and exercised their skills in other parts of Italy (Burckhardt, II, 402).

19. See above, n. 14. One is of course reminded of the seven virtues in the Uffizi Triumphs (see above, pp. 36 ff.).
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The sonnet "Caesar" recited to the "new Caesar" was written by a Florentine poet, Piero de' Ricci, and is quoted here (from Croce, pp. 5-6):

Eccelso Re, o Cesare novello,
Giustizia con Fortezza e Temperanza,
Prudentia, Fede, Carità e Speranza,
ti farà trionfar sopr'ogni bello.

Se queste donne terrai in tu'ostello,
quella sedia fia fatta per tua stanza;
ma, ricórdasi a te, tu sarai sanza,
se di Giustizia torcessi 'l suggello.

E la Ventura, che ti porge il crino,
non ti dar tutto a lei, ch'ell'è fallace,
ché me, che trionfai, misse in dechino.

El mondo vedi che mutazion face
Che sia voltabil, tienlo per destino:
e questo vuole Iddio perchè li piace.
Alfonso, Re di pace,

Iddio t'esalti e dia prosperitate,
salvando al mio Firenze libertate.

It is not clear whether the seven virtues rode on a car with Fortune (Carandente, p. 117n28) or rode separately on horseback (Bürckhardt, II, 417). Cf. Croce, p. 5. In addition to this group, four virtues [presumably the four cardinal virtues] appeared again at the end of the procession, on top of a large tower, from which they addressed the king with a song (Bürckhardt, II, 417). A recollection of this part of the triumph may be the four virtue figures in niches near the top of the Castel Nuovo arch.

20. According to the description by Bürckhardt (II, 411-13), Borso's "triumph" in 1453—which was not in celebration of a military victory— included, among other things, figures of Caesar and the seven virtues. But see also ibid., p. 412n1, which appears to question the accuracy of the account.

21. Gilbert, Change in Piero, p. 95.

22. Ibid.

23. The episode of Volterra is related by Vespasiano, pp. 92 ff., and in Dennistoun, I, 198 ff. The town of Volterra, a "satellite" of Florence, was in rebellion against the exploitation of her rich mineral mines by Florentine capitalists. Lorenzo de' Medici urged that an expedition be organized to quell the uprising, and Federigo was selected to lead the Florentine forces against the well-fortified hill town. The siege lasted more than three weeks, perhaps protracted by Federigo's reluctance to
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take part in a civil conflict which he hoped could be settled peacefully. When the walls had been breached, a peaceable surrender was negotiated in exchange for a pledge that the townspeople and their property would be spared; but by a series of blunders not fully understood the takeover by the Florentine troops turned into a bloody sack. Federigo is generally acquitted of any guilt in this affair; it is said that he made every effort to arrest the vicious plunder and that he personally tried to save some of the most helpless victims from the ravaging soldiers. In any case, his return to Florence after the battle was, in the words of Dennistoun, "a triumphal pageant," which must have presented the greatest contrast with the ignoble events he had just witnessed.

24. Pp. 94-95. Vespasiano reports (p. 93) that Federigo had asked no pay from the Florentines for the engagement "because he wished them to understand that he was serving them for goodwill and not for gold." If it is true that Federigo served without salary, the extraordinary welcome offered him on his return to Florence becomes even more understandable.


26. Since Poggio died in 1459, Dennistoun (p. 203) is mistaken in thinking that Poggio made the dedication himself. The manuscript (item 457 in Federigo Veterano's inventory [see Bibliography, under "Guasti"]) contains, according to Gilbert (Change in Piero, p. 95), a frontispiece showing a figure in profile on horseback, riding before a miniature representation of Volterra; though the figure does not resemble Federigo, the Montefeltro arms appear on the horse's blanket, and the capture of Volterra is mentioned in the preface.

27. See Federigo's own comments on the event, above, p. 52.

28. Stressing that triumphs of contemporary figures were performed or depicted only rarely during the fifteenth century, Gilbert points out that the few remaining images of such triumphs (with the exception of two dedication miniatures) are connected with actual celebrations. Since this evidence appears to indicate a pattern, Gilbert judges it unlikely that Federigo would have commissioned the painted Triumphs unless there had first been a real one (Change in Piero, p. 96).

29. L. Venturi (p. 9) writes: "Piero's art is a monument of contemplative beauty. In it life goes
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imperturbably on as if time had never been; in it, indeed, life and death seem to merge into another sphere of existence transcending them both."

30. P. 93.

31. See above, Chapter II, n. 55.


34. "Classicism" is here used in a purely stylistic sense, divorced from chronological or general cultural connotations. Piero's Triumphs in the Uffizi diptych have more in common with archaic Greek art (for example, the chariot scenes on a sixth-century B.C. Cyprian sarcophagus (found at Amathous, Cyprus) in the Metropolitan Museum (C. S. 3 74, 51. 2453) than with the imperial Roman triumphs in Figures 29 and 30.

35. See Chapter IV.

36. There are color plates of both Triumphs in L. Venturi's Piero della Francesca and in Carandente (pls. XIX-XXI). Clark (Piero, 1st ed., frontispiece) has a good color reproduction of Federigo's Triumph.


39. Change in Piero, p. 31. Gilbert, like Clark, thinks that his "evenness of tone" presents a difficulty for dating the painting after Battista's death; but he notes that the combination of a living portrait and a posthumous portrait in a homogeneous context can be observed in other contemporary works. See also above, Chapter II, n. 46, for an example of a painting which represents a deceased individual with a living member of his family.

40. The illumination here is the reverse of that on the front of the diptych. Cf. above, p. 12.

41. See above, p. 18.

42. This question will be discussed further in Chapters IV and V.
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43. Feudale, pp. 72 ff; Toesca, p. 211.

44. See above, p. 9; also Clark's analysis of the decorative aspects of Piero's Arezzo frescoes (Piero, 1st ed., pp. 29-30).

45. The arrangement bears a definite resemblance to many of the elaborate sepulchral monuments of the Quattrocento. In Bernardo Rossellino's Bruni Monument (Pope-Hennessy, Italian Renaissance Sculpture, Fig. 60), for instance, the base, bearing a central panel beautifully inscribed in Latin and decorated with classical friezes, supports an effigy of Bruni sculptured in the round—much as the inscribed panel in the Triumphs seem to support the more three-dimensional triumphal groups.

46. Charmed by the pictorial brilliance of the Triumphs but uninspired by their conventional subject matter, most past writers—withstanding the notable exception of Creighton Gilbert—have been content with very cursory observations about the iconography. The paintings have generally been described as "Triumphs of the duke and duchess of Urbino," despite the fact that Battista Sforza never lived to be duchess of Urbino (as Gilbert correctly points out ["The Renaissance Portrait," p. 282n7]). Similarly, the particular identifications offered for the allegorical figures have frequently been incomplete or incorrect, and they have rarely been supported by explanations or citations which would indicate that they were arrived at after careful study. Behind the prevailing superficiality has probably been the sentiment—expressed by Kenneth Clark (see above, p. 28)—that the symbolism and allegory of the paintings are clichés redeemed only by Piero's exquisite style. To some extent, such an opinion is justified, but a work of great esthetic and historical value always merits closer scrutiny.

47. Van Marle (Iconographie, II, 122) is mistaken in stating that the car of Chastity is always drawn by unicorns. For at least one exception to that dictum, see Figure 24, where horses are depicted.

48. There has been some confusion over this point in the literature. John Sparrow (p. 61n5) seems to imply that chastity is always synonymous with virginity, which is of course not true: "chastity" can mean "virginity" or "celibacy" but it can also mean "abstention from unlawful sexual intercourse" (Webster's New International Dictionary, 2d ed., s.v. "chastity," I). Thus Battista, though a natural wife, could be praised for her chastity—but not for her virginity.
49. See above, pp. 31-32. It would be interesting to know whether the color of the unicorns carries any specific symbolic significance. Reference works such as Ripa and Ter- vardent do not discriminate between brown unicorns and white, however.

50. Gilbert, Changes in Piero, p. 93. Other identifications have been offered for these figures--none of them convincing. The suggestion that the maiden dressed in white is Hope (Carandente, p. 74; Hendy, p. 140) is unacceptable because the symmetry of the two Triumphs seems to require that the three theological virtues be seated together at the front of the car and that some other allegorical or attendant figures--comparable to the winged Victory behind Federigo--be placed behind Battista. (It should be noted here that the two figures behind the countess are rather crowded into the space and do not give the impression of being firmly placed on the triumphal car; is it possible that they were afterthoughts in the composition? [cf. above, Chapter I, n. 21]). Dennistoun's proposal (I, 272) that the "bright maiden" is Truth lacks concrete evidence.

Various suggestions have been made for the matronly attendant to Battista. Dennistoun notes her "semi-monastic" dress and considers that she may be a nun (I, 272-73). However, the costume does not seem to correspond to that of the contemporary Clarissan sisters (the female counterparts of the Franciscans), the order with which Battista was most closely associated (see above, Chapter II, n. 39). The figure of St. Clare in Piero's Perugia altarpiece is shown wearing a black hood. But perhaps the order had more than one habit. The information in Tiron is inconclusive.

Carandente's suggestion (p. 74) that the matronly figure is Chastity (Pudicizia) cannot be completely rejected. One might expect, however, that the two attendants would be related to each other in some way. Furthermore, Battista herself probably represented Chastity, just as Laura in the Petrarcan Trionfi was identified with Chastity (see above, n. 5; also Gilbert, loc. cit).

51. She has been variously identified in the literature as Fame (Clark, Mather, Pope-Hennessy); Victory (Carandente, Dennistoun, Longhi, Van Marle, and A. Venturi); and Fortune (Hendy). The writers do not give reasons for their identifications. The identification as Fame was probably prompted less by the figure's attributes than by a presumed connection between the painting and the Triumphs of Petrarch. Since Battista's Triumph is related to the Petrarcan Chastity pictures, one might expect Federigo's Triumph to derive from the Petrarcan iconography also. Of the six allegories of Petrarch, that of Fame is closest in spirit to the painting commemorating the great condottiere Federigo; and, as in some Petrarcan Triumphs of Fame, Federigo's car is drawn by white horses.

Tervarent lists three types of spherical attributes, the distinctions between which do not seem to have been clearly drawn in the iconography of the Renaissance. S.V. Sphere, he cites the sphere as an attribute of "l'Ocassio" (Chance, Opportunity), Fortune, and Opinion; in general terms, it is
described as a "symbol of the universe or the attribute of anything which is considered universal" (ibid.). S.v. Globe terrestre ("The earth is like a ball, which is not supported by any prop"), Tervarent cites the globe as associated with Fame. The two Italian Renaissance examples mentioned by him represent Fame seated on a globe; but the figure of Fame in the desco da parto cited above, n. 12, stands on a globe or sphere of sorts. This "globe," however, unlike the smaller sphere under the winged figure behind Federigo, has trumpets protruding from it. Since the trumpet was Fame's most common attribute in early Renaissance Triumphs (see Carandente, pp. 24 ff.; also Ripa, s.v. Fama), its absence from Federigo's Triumph seems to weaken, if not entirely to preclude, the identification of Federigo's winged genius as Fame. S.v. Boule, Tervarent notes that the ancients showed Fortune standing on a ball or leaning a rudder against one. He further observes that they probably saw this attribute as a "symbol of the instability inherent in Fortune. However, the Renaissance also considered it an image of the world, which Fortune dominated."

Given these many associations, one cannot readily make an unqualified identification of the figure. The possibility exists that the figure has a composite significance.

52. Ripa (s.v. Vittoria, 7) describes the figure on the coin as a woman on a globe, with wings open to fly; holding a laurel crown in one hand (and, unlike the figure behind Federigo, an imperial standard in the other).

53. See above, Chapter I, n. 18. It is possible, however, that Piero arrived at the form independently, through his own "innate classicism."

54. See above, p. 25.

55. Dante's imagery for the Triumph of the Church, which constitutes one of the major uses of the triumphal theme in Italian literature, is discussed by Carandente, pp. 28-30.

56. In his beautiful description of the Triumphs, Longhi (p. 94) likened the virtue figures, unselfconsciously perched on the edges of the triumphal cars, to peasant girls returning from the fields.

57. In addition to the examples illustrated here--Ambrogio Lorenzetti's virtues (1339) ranged around the imposing figure of Good Government, in the Palazzo Pubblico, Siena (Figure 32, below); and the monumental virtues (1469) originally painted for the Tribunale di Mercantanzia, Florence, by the Pollaiuoli and Sandro Botticelli (Figure 33 shows only one of the series, Prudence, now in the Uffizi)--suffice it to mention these two sculptural examples: the enthroned virtues in quatrefoil relief panels on Andrea Pisano's bronze doors (1336) for the south entrance to the Baptistry, Florence; and the virtue relief panels surrounding the recumbent effigy of the pope on the bronze tomb monument (1493) for Sixtus IV by Antonio Pollaiuolo (Rome, Museo Petriano). Other examples abound.

58. The example illustrated here (Figure 31), from the
tomb of John XXIII by Michelozzo and Donatello (ca. 1419), includes only the theological virtues. Figures of the cardinal virtues, set in classifying niches very like those on the tomb of John XXIII, appear on the triumphal arch of Alfonso of Aragon (see above, n. 19). Standing figures of all seven virtues, in comparable niches, are ranged across the wall just above and behind the effigy of Doge Niccolò Tron in his tomb monument (ca. 1480) in the church of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari in Venice (see Pincus, pp. 252n29 and 253, and fig. 1).

A prime example of the use of the standing type in painting is in Giotto's virtue cycle (ca. 1305) for the Arena Chapel, Padua. Five of the seven virtues there are shown "standing" (Hope actually soars heavenward rather than stands); but significantly, Justice, placed centrally in the group, is represented as enthroned instead of standing (see the following note).

59. The arrangement remains essentially static even when one of the virtues is "featured" in the composition, as in the case of the Justice figure in Giotto's Arena Chapel frescoes, mentioned in the preceding note. More often it is Charity, the principal Christian virtue, who is singled out for prominence (see below, n. 77). In the Lorenzetti fresco (above, n. 57), for example, Caritas floats above the head of Good Government in the center of the virtue group. Faith and Hope also hover in the air, to either side of Good Government, while the "secular" virtues are seated along with other virtues, on a continuous bench with no partitions between them. Even here, however, an effect of spatial compartments is created by the regularity of the groupings.

60. When one has looked at many virtue series from the same period, the similarities between Piero's Justice and Pollajuolo's Prudence are striking. The most distinctive parallel is in the mass of drapery slung across the wide lap and draped over the left shoulder--though the folds are treated differently in the two works.

61. The familiarity of fifteenth-century observers with complete virtue cycles would, I think, have insured their interpolating the two almost missing virtues--just as modern writers have been inclined to note the presence of "cardinal and theological virtues" even when they have not known which figure represented which virtue. Thus Gilbert's iconographic interpretation of the suppression of two of the virtues may be an overstatement of the case. The suppression can be adequately explained on formal grounds alone. Cf. Gilbert, Change in Piero, pp. 93-94.

62. Gilbert (ibid., p. 98) notes the snake--a common attribute of Prudence ("Be thou wise as serpents" [Matt. 10:16])--but it is not readily visible in reproductions. Prudence has here lost one of her frequent
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three heads, and is equipped only for the past and the future. For other examples of two-headed Prudence figures, see Panofsky, "Titian's Allegory of Prudence," p. 15ln18; also Gilbert, Change in Piero, p. 98.

63. See above, n. 61.

64. On the figure of Charity, see above, pp. 40 ff., and below, n. 79; on the identification of Hope, see above, nn. 50 and 61.


67. Ibid.

68. Somewhat surprisingly, the cardinal, or secular, virtues—despite their pagan origin—seem to have concerned medieval theologians more than the theological, or specifically Christian, virtues; if one can judge from the treatises noted by Rosamond Tuve, pp. 264-77 passim.

69. On the association of the cardinal virtues with ruling figures, see Katzenellenbogen, p. 30; also figs. 32 and 33. The examples there are drawn from Northern medieval art, but that the convention applied to Italian art as well and extended into the Renaissance is evidenced by the cardinal virtues on the triumphal arch of Alfonso of Aragon (see above, n. 19). Other instances can undoubtably be adduced. As Debra Pincus (p. 252n28) and Creighton Gilbert (Change in Piero, p. 97) have both indicated, there is a great need for a systematic study of virtue iconography in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

70. See above, nn. 58 and 59; and below, n. 77.

71. In the sonnet recited to Alfonso by the figure of Caesar during the triumphal procession (see above, n. 19), the king was especially warned against the violation of justice: "...ma ricórdasi a te, tu sarai sanza, se di Giustizia torcessi 'l suggello."

72. Tolnay (p. 15) interprets the Cupid figures as evidence that the diptych was painted for the marriage of Federigo and Battista. However, it would have been appropriate for Love to guide the cars of the couple (see Hendy, p. 139) at any time thereafter as well.

73. Change in Piero, p. 98. The two passages in Vespasiano are "...no other united as he did, in his own person the soldier and the man of letters, or knew how to make intellect augment the force of battalions" and
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"In arms, his first profession, he was the most active leader of his time, combining strength with the most consummate prudence...." (Renaissance Princes, Popes, and Prelates, pp. 63, 84.)

74. See above, n. 68.

75. On this illustrious forebear of Battista Sforza, see Dennistoun, I, 35-37; and Woodward, pp. 119-20. It is interesting to note that Battista da Montefeltro was not only the grandmother of Battista Sforza but also the aunt of Federigo; thus, the couple were cousins.

76. The tract, entitled De studiis et literis, and dated around 1405, is translated by Woodward (for the phrases quoted, see p. 127).

77. Charity, "the mother of all virtues," was frequently given a central or otherwise prominent position in virtue cycles. Numerous examples from medieval art are cited by Katzenellenbogen, pp. 57-74 passim. An example from Trecento painting has already been mentioned here (n. 59, above); and another, from Quattrocento sculpture, is offered by the theological virtues of the tomb of John XXIII (Figure 31, below).


79. In accordance with the theological definition of the dual aspects of Charity—love of God (Amor) and love of one's fellow man (Misericordia)—a dual iconography was developed during the Trecento for representing allegorical figures of Charity. The attributes which symbolized the Misericordia aspect were generally either aims for the poor (in the form of fruit, money, grain, clothing, etc.) or children suckling at the breast of Charity (or simply gathered about her). The attribute of Amor was most often a heart or a flame; sometimes the flame issued from Charity's head, sometimes the heart itself was aflame. Trecento artists ordinarily represented both aspects of Charity in one figure—Giotto's Charity, for example, holds a bowl of fruit and grain, and proffers her heart to God; in addition, the symbolic flame is depicted behind her head—and their iconographic conventions continued well into the fifteenth century. (For more detailed information on the development of Charity iconography, and for numerous examples of the various motifs, see the excellent study by Robert Freyhan, on which the foregoing summary is
The symbolism of the pelican was explained in the medieval bestiaries:
"The Pelican is excessively devoted to its children. But when these have been born and begin to grow up, they flap their parents in the face with their wings, and the parents, striking back, kill them. Three days afterward the mother pierces her breast, opens her side, and lays herself across her young, pouring out her blood over the dead bodies. This brings them to life again.
"In the same way, Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the originator and maker of all created things, begets us and calls us into being out of nothing. We, on the contrary, strike him in the face. As the prophet Isaiah says: 'I have borne children and exalted them and truly they have scorned me.' We have struck him in the face by devoting ourselves to the creation rather than the creator.
"That was why he ascended into the height of the cross, and, his side having been pierced, there came from it blood and water for our salvation and eternal life" (The Bestiary: A Book of Beasts, tr. from a twelfth-century Latin bestiary by T. H. White; pp. 132-33).

80. The pelican as an attribute of Charity does not seem to occur at all in Trecento art (see the preceding note) and has been observed in only three works of Quattrocento art other than the Uffizi Triumphs. Two of these instances occur in the two sets of "Tarocchi cards of Mantegna" (these two groups of engravings do not constitute true Tarocchi sets, nor are they definitely related to Mantegna; see Hind, I, 221 ff.)--cited by Gilbert, Change in Piero, pp. 97-98. The third case is a Milanese cassone (Schubring, pl. CLV, No. 726), which Gilbert appears to have overlooked. The "Tarocchi" sets, though different in execution, are virtually identical in iconography, and the cassone seems to be closely related to them. All three works represent the virtues with conventional attributes and, in addition, with symbolic animals at their feet. At the feet of Charity is the pelican feeding her young. Charity's other attributes in the engravings are a bag of money (or corn?), not represented for Battista's Charity; and flames issuing from her heart, as they do in the Charity of Battista. While the pelican is only a secondary attribute in the "Tarocchi" engravings and the cassone, however, it is the principal attribute in the Triumph of Battista.

The significance of the pelican emblem is fully explored by Gilbert (op. cit.), who finds further evidence (pp. 99-101) for its posthumous implications in the diptych, in the four fifteenth-century medals which employ the device of the pelican-in-her-piety on their reverse.
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81. Dennistoun, I, 197. The papal see, which would eventually absorb the domains of Urbino (upon the extinction of the Della Rovere line in the seventeenth century; see above, Chapter I, n. 1), was already making inroads on the minor principalities east of the Apennines (Ibid., pp. 186 ff.).

82. Ibid., p. 198.

83. The date of her death was July 6, 1472; the cause of death "fever and headache" (as described by Federigo in a letter to the magistrates of Siena, a long-time ally of Urbino). Ibid., p. 204.

84. The statement was made in the eulogy of Guidobaldo (d. 1508) by his former preceptor Odasio (Ibid., I, 197; and II, 79). The question of whether the assertion is absolutely true need not concern us here. Hendy (pp. 147 ff.) is highly critical of art historical arguments based on the "legend" of Guidobaldo's birth and the death of the countess (he seems particularly to disparage Meiss's interpretation of the Brera altarpiece [in Ovum struthionis and later articles], though he refers to him only with the blanket phrase "serious modern critics"). Hendy's criticism misses the essential point, however. What matters is that the "legend" was thought to be true. Indeed, Battista's premature death following so soon after the much-desired birth of a son would almost inevitably have suggested a causal relation between the two events. As Gilbert (Change in Piero, p. 99) comments, the episode has a "classic fatality."

Chapter IV

1. See above, p. 2.

2. See above, esp. pp. 40 ff.

3. P. 211 (translation mine).

4. Few writers make any mention of the medium in which the diptych was executed. Crowe and Cavalcaselle (p. 17) state that the panels are painted in the "mixed medium improved by Francesca." However, Hendy (pp. 140-41) judges that the surface quality of the diptych is like that of the Nativity, which gas chromatography has shown to be painted completely in oil.
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5. See the preceding note. The date of the Nativity (Figure 6) has been fairly unanimously fixed around 1475 or later, not only because of the generally strong Flemish qualities of the work (a number of writers hold that Flemish influence on Piero's work increased in his later years; see, for example, Clark, Piero, 2d ed., p. 29) but also because of specific similarities to Hugo van der Goes' Portinari altarpiece, which was painted around 1474-76. Piero may have seen a sketch of that great work through Justus of Ghent, who was working in Urbino in 1473-74 (see Lavin, "Altar of Corpus Domini," p. 22).

6. The very deep perspective contrasts with Piero's earlier landscape backgrounds, such as those in the Baptism, the Triumph of Constantine, and even the Venice St. Jerome. On the probable Flemish influence on the landscape, see above, pp. 20 and 33.

7. In his Central Italian Painters (1897; 1909), Berenson gives the date as 1465; in Italian Pictures of the Renaissance (1932) as between 1465 and 1466. Presumably, his chronology was based on judgments of style.

8. Van Marle (The Development of the Italian Schools, XI, 27-28) compared the style of the portraits to the fresco of Sigismondo Malatesta at Rimini (dated 1451); but his statement that the profiles are treated in a "non-plastic manner...with effects of surface rather than those of relief" does not seem to be very reliable. Cf. above, pp. 8-9, 12, and 15-16.

9. All the known documents relating to Piero are reviewed by Baldini, pp. 95 ff.; and by Bianconi, pp. 33-34. The few documents which we have for his extant paintings relate either to frescoes or to large altarpieces—all of them religious in theme and very different in character from the Uffizi diptych, which not only is much smaller in scale but is intended for a secular purpose. Moreover, the documented works are from the earlier part of his career, and two of them spanned fifteen-year periods from their original commission to their probable completion, so that it is difficult to know which parts of the work represent an earlier, which a later, phase. One of Piero's small panels, the Berlin St. Jerome, bears an inscription with Piero's name and the date, but this, too, is from a point early in his career; furthermore, much of the work was undoubtedly executed by assistants, and few critics accept the inscription as authentic (Bianconi, pp. 39-40). Some agreement has been reached among critics as to the dating of undocumented works by other means, but the pro-
posed dates are still the subject of debate (see, for example, Hendy pp. 147 ff., where the generally accepted date of ca. 1472-74 for the Brera altarpiece is called into question). To a considerable extent, the chronologies that have been constructed for Piero have been colored by preconceived notions about his intellectual and artistic development. For example, Clark's ideas about Piero's "loss of pictorial appetite" in his later years (Piero, 2d ed., p. 67) may well reflect Clark's own esthetic preferences and his feelings about Art versus Mathematics more than they do Piero's evolution.

The uncertain status of Piero's chronology is emphasized by Gilbert in Change in Piero (esp. pp. 2 ff.), where new dates are proposed for a number of works.

10. The only other extant secular painting surely by Piero is the Hercules fresco (Bianconi, pl. 126) in the Gardner Museum, Boston—a standing, almost nude figure. The bust portraits of the count and the countess of Urbino, with the tiny Triumphs on their reverse, are unique in Piero's extant work.

11. See above, Chapter III, n. 72; also Van Marle, The Development of the Italian Schools, XI, 28. The marriage of the couple took place on February 10, 1460 (not in 1459 as some writers have implied); their betrothal, in November of 1459 (Dennistoun, I, 115).

12. See above, Chapter I, n. 6.


14. See, for example, ChasteI, p. 279, where the date of 1469 is repeated without question or explanation.

15. See above, Chapter I, n. 5.

16. In addition to the questionable assumption that the poem referred to the diptych, Cinquini's arguments for dating the poem to 1466 (which gave the terminus ante quem for the paintings) are very dubious. See Gibert's refutation in Marsyas.

17. In the first edition of his monograph on Piero (p. 206), Clark wrote that the diptych could be dated in 1465 "with some certainty"—a view which has been revised in the second edition (p. 55). Pope-Hennessy (The Portrait, p. 318n8), however, continues to report: "It is established by A. Cinquini... that the panels were in evidence in 1466, when a poem on them was written by the Carmelite Ferabos..." For a summary of the recent opin-
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ions on the poem by Ferabò, see Gilbert, "The Renaissance Portrait," p. 282.

18. On the style and quality of the inscriptions, see above, Chapter I, n. 21.

19. The use of this meter was not uncommon in the Renaissance (see Burckhardt, I, 241, 267).

20. The translation is taken from Gilbert, "New Evidence," p. 44, except that "glorious" is here substituted for Gilbert's "a notable" and "excellence" for his "prowess."

21. The proper translation for the verb tenuit has been much disputed. In Gilbert's original 1941 study in Marasas, he used the past tense, which he considered as evidence that the inscriptions, and the diptych, were made after the death of the countess. The Latin verb can be rendered into English either in the simple past tense or in the present perfect, however. See Meiss, "Ovum struthionis," p. 97n21; and Sparrow, p. 614. As both of these writers indicate, the appropriate English tense can be determined only from the context. Meiss decides in favor of the present perfect tense because he judges that Federigo looks several years younger in the diptych than in the Brera altarpiece, and that therefore the diptych was painted while Battista was still living. For a refutation of this argument, see above, p. 11. Sparrow does not really prove that Gilbert's translation is wrong, only that it is not necessarily right. But, as will be shown, other aspects of Gilbert's analysis support the reading of the verb in the past tense.

22. The translation given here is a composite of the versions suggested by Bianconi (p. 65), Gilbert, and Meiss (see preceding note). The contrast between this inscription and Federigo's is marked (see Gilbert, Change in Piero, pp. 101-2). Aside from different tenses (the simple present tense is used for Federigo), the praise of the countess is sparing in comparison with the grand terms used for Federigo. She has been restrained in times of good fortune is all that we are told of her virtues; she is on the lips of all men because of the deeds of her great husband (the phrase "adorned...husband" is to be read as modifying the main verb "flies" rather than the subordinate verb "preserved," as the translation in Bianconi more clearly shows). On this contrast, see above, pp. 52-53.

23. Cicero Tusculan Disputations I. xv. 34-35. The
first line of the translation is by J. E. King; the second line is Gilbert's rendering (except that Gilbert's erroneous reading of the last word as *vivum* is here corrected according to Sparrow, p. 616).

24. On the philosophy of the Tuscan Disputations, see the Introduction to the King translation. Cicero's importance to the Renaissance humanists, not only as a model of style but as a moral preceptor (in the words of Erasmus: "not only for the divine felicity of his style but [for] the sanctity of his heart and morals" [quoted by King in his Introduction, pp. xxix]), was enormous. His _dictum virtutis laus omnis in actione consistat_ [the value of all virtue consists in action], quoted by Vittorino da Feltre (the great humanist whose court school at Mantua was attended by Federigo da Montefeltro; see above, Chapter I, n. 2), can be taken as a guiding principle of the humanist scholars and educators (see Woodward, esp. pp. x, 110; also the article by Hans Baron, "Cicero and the Roman Civic Spirit").

The early Renaissance humanists, themselves eclectic in their philosophical views, were not disturbed by the inconsistencies in Cicero's thought, and from him they learned about several different schools of Greek philosophy (Kristeller, "The Humanist Movement," in Renaissance Thought, p. 19; also _ibid_, "The Moral Thought of Renaissance Humanism," in Renaissance Thought II: Papers on Humanism and the Arts [New York, Harper Torchbooks, 1965], p. 37).

25. Translated by Arthur S. Way (London, 1930). Vergil, like Cicero, enjoyed a very high esteem in the Renaissance, the more so because his writings had long been given a Christian interpretation by theologians. In the education treatise dedicated to Baptista da Montefeltro (see above, p. 40), which was one of the most important humanist tracts on education, Leonardo Bruni wrote: "Vergil...surpasses...all philosophers in displaying the inner secrets of Nature and of the Soul.... Nor can we deny a certain inspiration to a poet who, on the eve of the Redeemer's birth, could speak of "The Virgin's return," and "the Divine offspring sent down from on high" (Woodward, pp. 129-30).

Curiously, an earlier passage (vv. 457-91) from the very same episode of the *Aeneid* is figured on the wood inlaid paneling (now in the Metropolitan Museum) from the ducal study at Gubbio (see Dennistoun's description, I, 165). Apparently neither Gilbert nor any other writer has noted this correspondence between the intersia inscription and the diptych verse—a correspondence which one suspects was more than coincidental, though the precise explanation remains to be found.

26. Gilbert (Change in Piero, p. 101) gives the following translation: "The human mind knows not what it will meet at the last, and so when raised to the heights cannot keep or hold moderation." The lines are from _I Fatti d'Enna_, a prose abridgment in Italian of the _Aeneid_, by Fra Guido da Pisa, which was very popular during the fifteenth century. The footnote to the passage in the Marenduzzo edition states that *servare* and
tenere modo are equivalent phrases meaning "to maintain moderation"--which seems to imply that both forms of the phrase were commonly used. If so, the writer of Battista's inscription could have made the substitution of tenere independently, without reference to the Fatti d'Enesa. In any case the allusion to Vergil is certain. As Gilbert points out, the passage in Vergil is so characteristic that it is cited for the use of modum in a contemporary dictionary. Examples of the use of tenere modum in Cicero's writings are cited in Lewis and Short's Latin Dictionary, but not in combination with the phrase rebus secundis as in the Aeneid passage. The full implications of tenere or servare modum--related to the principle of the golden mean expressed in Aristotle's Ethics--would not have been missed by Federigo, who devoted assiduous study to the works of the Greek philosopher (see Vespasiano, p. 99; also below, n. 28).

Gilbert (ibid., pp. 93-94 and 101-2) discusses the relationship of the ideal of moderation to the Triumph of Chastity theme of Battista's panel.

27. While no writer appears to doubt that the inscription contains a deliberate echo of the epitaph of Ennius, the suggestion has been made that the metaphor would apply as well to the fame of a living person as to that of a dead one. Sparrow (pp. 614-15) says that Ennius' phrase volito vivu per ora virum "was a commonplace for widespread and enduring fame" (no citation is given in support of this statement); and adds that the substitution of cuncta [all] for Ennius' poetically more effective vivu [alive] indicates that Battista was still living at the time the inscription was written. This argument, though plausible, ignores the emphasis put on the quotation by Cicero. He cites Ennius' epitaph not merely as evidence of fame but as evidence of the power of fame over death. Since familiarity with the epitaph is more likely to have occurred through Cicero's work than through Ennius' original, Cicero's context must be taken into consideration.

As noted by Gilbert (Change in Piero, p. 102), the chastity-death-fame sequence which seems to be implicit in Battista's Triumph corresponds to the sequence in the popular Petrarchan Trionfi.

28. This point is central to the interpretation of the inscriptions. Whoever composed the verses would have known that they would be read, and judged, by the great Federigo. If the count commissioned the diptych himself, one expects that he would have approved the inscriptions before they were painted onto the panels. Even if he did not commission the work (on this point, see above, pp. 4-5, 51ff) his reputation for learning was known to all, and it is
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difficult to imagine that the unknown humanist versifier who composed the inscriptions--be he ever so mediocre in poetic inspiration--would not have taken care to devise texts which would please the count.

In this connection it is worth stressing that Federigo's reputation for learning was no myth. That his humanism and zeal for knowledge and wisdom were genuine there is abundant evidence. The humanist pope Pius II testifies that Federigo was "able and eloquent" and "well read" (Commentaries, pp. 148, 190-91). And Federigo's own letters show that the books so eagerly sought after for his library--no mere status symbol--were as eagerly read (see the interesting testimony of his letters requesting and acknowledging commentaries on Aristotle's Ethics and Politics from Donato Acciaiuoli; Nos. 92 and 100 in Lettere di stato e d'arte [1470-1480], ed. by Paolo Alatri [Storia e Letteratura, 21; Rome, 1949]). Another interesting form of evidence is the inventory of his household at Urbino, which included four teachers, four transcribers of manuscripts (besides many employed abroad), and five readers whose job it was to read aloud to the ruler during mealtimes (Dennistoun, I, 142-43).

29. On the phrase-gathering methods of study, and "mosaic style" of composition, used by the Renaissance humanists, see Bolgar, pp. 266, 269, 271, 272, and 274.

If one can argue the case of Battista's inscription by analogy, it is pertinent to adduce two cases (cited by Saxl, p. 25) in which Renaissance "epitaphs" were based on a comparable ancient Roman text: both the commemorative inscription on the Hawkwood monument by Paolo Uccello (the inscription was composed by Bartolomeo di ser Benedetto Fortini; according to Carli, p. 50) and the epitaph by Francesco Barbaro for another famous condottiere, Gattamelata, used phrases from the eulogy for Quintus Fabius Maximus.

Chapter V

1. This study has of necessity been based on photographic reproductions, rather than on the original. For this reason, judgments about the finer points of color, brushwork, and surface condition have generally been avoided. The available color slides reveal a breathtaking finesse of execution--particularly in the Triumphs, whose brilliance of light and color have already been commented upon (above, pp. 28 ff.); but even among the color slides, there is a distressing variation in tone from one reproduction to
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another. From the accessible materials, however, it would appear that the high reputation of the diptych is more than justified, as much of the foregoing discussion has attempted to show.

To only one passage in the entire work can a charge of carelessness perhaps be imputed: in the portrait of Federigo there is an inexplicable brown shape behind his back, in the lower right corner of the panel (other writers have not commented on this apparent anomaly). The form is unarticulated, and does not seem to be part of the landscape background. It could indicate some change in the plan of the painting, or perhaps a later tampering with the panel.

2. In addition to the comments made in Chapter I. (pp. 5 ff., and n. 14) on the unique character of the diptych's plan, it should be noted here that most, if not all, of the remaining Quattrocento double portraits which antedate the Uffizi diptych represent male members of a family. Husband-and-wife portraits were apparently far rarer in Italy than in the North during the fifteenth century. The symmetrical arrangement of the Uffizi portraits, both viewed in strict profile, was also not entirely routine for the period. The Medici diptych cited above (Chap. I, n. 14) represents the two subjects in approximate three-quarter views, but each is at a slightly different angle to the picture plane. While that work is several decades earlier than Piero's, and probably was not originally planned as a diptych, a later double portrait which was planned as a unit shows one sitter in profile, the other in three-quarter view; that is, Piero di Cosimo's portraits (dated ca. 1490-1500) of Giuliano da Sangallo and his father, Francesco Giamberti. Interestingly, the profile view for the father, who had died in 1486, may have had posthumous implications. On this work, see Pope-Hennessy, The Portrait, p. 37.

The use of strict profile views and similar landscape backgrounds in all four paintings of the diptych establishes a unity between both sides of the diptych as well as between the panels on each side.


5. When Luciano Laurana, the architect charged with overseeing the construction of the palace, left Urbino in 1472, the major part of the edifice built by Federigo had been raised. Much of the decoration dates from the years
following, until the death of Federigo in 1462. On this "Third Phase" of the palace’s fabrication, see the chapter in P. Rotondi’s The Ducal Palace of Urbino: Its Architecture and Decoration (London, 1969; this work is an abridged English version of the author’s original Italian monograph on the palace).

6. The earliest document of the Urbino Confraternity of Corpus Domini which mentions Justus is dated February 12, 1473; the final payment to him for the altarpiece, October 25, 1474 (Lavin, "Altar of Corpus Domini," p. 10).

7. Ibid., p. 18n.

8. Lavallée (Les primitifs flamands, VII, 69) assigns the first stage of work on the portraits of famous men to the period 1473-74; on the basis of changes made after July, 1474, to include Federigo’s new titles of honor.

9. On the portrait with Guidobaldo, see above, Chapter II, nn. 17-18; on the Windsor picture (dated ca. 1479–80), which also includes a portrait of the young prince, see Lavallée, Juste de Gand, peintre de Frédéric, pp. 149–50; on the Brera, or Montefeltro, altarpiece, above, Chapter II, n. 23; also the recent article by M. Lavin, cited in n. 4 of this chapter.

10. See Lavallée, Les primitifs flamands, VII, 112–14. The list of Federigo’s known portraits given there misses one important work: Federigo is depicted—along with an infant, probably Guidobaldo—to the right of the cross in the bronze relief of the Deposition (formerly in the Oratorio di S. Croce in Urbino, and now in the church of Santa Maria del Carmine in Venice) attributed to Francesco di Giorgio; on this relief, dated to ca. 1474–1475 by the age of the child, see Allen Stuart Weller, Francesco di Giorgio, 1439–1501, pp. 135 ff.; and John Shearman, "The Logic and Realism of Piero della Francesca," in Festschrift Ulrich Middeldorf, ed. by A, Kosegarten and P. Tigler (Berlin, 1968), p. 185.

111. See above, Chapter II, n. 29.


13. The tragic speed with which the countess’s demise followed the birth of the couple’s only son has already been noted above, pp. 41-42. See also below, n. 18.

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15. See above, pp. 26-27.


17. A few excerpts from some of the letters are given in English by Dennistoun. The original Latin of those letters, as well as of numerous others, is published by P. Alatri, Lettere di stato e d'arte (1470-1480) (Storia e Letteratura, 21 [Rome, 1949]). Alatri also notes where several of the letters to which Federigo's respond may be found. It has not been possible, within the limits of this study, to delve into this extensive correspondence, where much useful material undoubtedly lies hidden. Two of the letters, for example—No. 73, to a friend; and No. 79, to Bartolomeo Scala—are notes thanking the recipient simultaneously for his congratulations on the victory at Volterra and his condolences on the death of Battista.

18. Dennistoun, I, 205-6; for the original Latin of this letter to Sixtus IV, see P. Alatri, Lettere di stato e d'arte, No. 4. There is a touching reference elsewhere in the same letter to the congratulatory note Federigo had received from Sixtus only a few months earlier, after the birth of Guidobaldo.

19. The full letter is cited in English by Dennistoun (I, 204-5), who suggests that it may have been intended for the king of Naples or the duke of Milan. However, Alatri, who gives the Latin text, (Lettere di stato e d'arte, No. 37) thinks that it was for Doge Niccolò Tron (cf. ibid., No. 71, which Alatri proposes may be another redaction of the same letter).

20. Dennistoun (I, 205), who gives the English excerpt cited here, mistakenly suggested that the letter was addressed to the secretary of the duke of Milan. The full Latin text is published in Alatri, Lettere di stato e d'arte, No. 74, where the recipient is given as Niccolò Bendido (or Bendedel), a Ferrarese man of letters who was an ambassador and secretary of the Este court.

21. The relevance of the inscriptions to a valid interpretation of the paintings has been discussed above, pp. 6-7 and 45-48.

22. The praise contained in Federigo's verse would have been rather immodest self-evaluation at any time, much less after the tragic loss of his wife—which, to quote his own words, exemplified for him "the uncertain issue of earthly events." Cf. below, n. 26.

23. See above, Chapter IV, n. 22.
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24. Dennistoun, I, 206; and P. Alatri, Lettere di stato e d'arte, No. 71, testify to the abundant panegyrics offered up to Battista's memory.

It is instructive to contrast the rather cryptic encomium for Battista in the diptych with the magnificent tribute which Federigo paid his former teacher Vittorino da Feltre (above, Chapter I, n. 2).

25. These other works (reviewed above, p. 50) are either religious in subject or are portraits in which Federigo is depicted absorbed in humanist pursuits. Even in the famous portrait with Guidobaldo, a state portrait in which the duke is shown in full regalia with all the trappings of his various positions and titles of honor, he is engrossed in the book before him, and the pride of his station is softened by his meditative attitude.

26. The apparent boastfulness of Federigo's inscription seems more characteristic of his archenemy Sigismondo Malatesta than of the lord of Urbino. It contrasts sharply with the more modest spirit of the inscription (dated 1476) around the ceiling of the duke's study in the palace at Urbino. While the study was a manifest expression of Federigo's "humanist enthusiasm" (Rotondi, The Ducal Palace, p. 77), his inscription there gives only his official titles of identification—duke of Urbino, count of Montefeltro, captain-general, gonfaloniere, etc.—and adds no laudatory epithets of any kind.

The inscription carved around the wall of the grand courtyard of the palace, on the other hand, is comparable in tone to the diptych inscription; significantly, however, it was set there not by Federigo but by his son Guidobaldo. It reads: "Federigo, duke of Urbino and count of Montefeltro and Castel Durante, Gonfaloniere of the Holy Roman Church, and head of the Italian Confederacy, raised this palace from its foundations, to the glory of himself and his heirs; he who repeatedly went out to war, six times entered the field against the enemy, eight times routed them, and victorious in every encounter, enlarged the sway of his dominion. His justice, his clemency, his liberality and his religion equaled and adorned, in times of peace, his victories."

27. For letters referring to both events, see above, n. 17.

28. There was some precedent in ancient Roman custom for Battista's partaking of her husband's triumph. Ancient authors described the triumphator as surrounded during the celebration by other members of his family; also, images of apotheosis, which borrowed from the iconography of the triumphs, showed the emperor with members of his family (Strong, p. 69). The Uffizi Triumphs further recall the idea of apotheosis in the elevation of the triumphs high above the landscape backgrounds.

29. The suggestion has been made recently (Lavin,
"Piero della Francesca’s Flagellation," that Piero’s Flagellation was commissioned not by Federigo himself but by his nephew Ottaviano Ubaldini, the close contemporary whom Federigo appointed as Guidobaldo’s regent during his minority. While the identification of a portrait of Ottaviano in the Flagellation—on which the theory of the patronage for that work largely hinges—is not at all convincing, evidence is cited which shows that Ottaviano may well have been a patron of painting (ibid., 336-78).

Wherever the commission for the diptych originated—whether in Urbino or elsewhere—the work may or may not have been executed in Urbino. As we have seen above (pp. 9 ff.), the portraits of Federigo and Battista differ quite markedly from likenesses by other artists, and it is entirely possible that Piero executed the paintings without ever having held live sittings. The likenesses could have been based on medals or sketches sent to the artist, or perhaps on a drawing or painting he himself had made at an earlier date.

30. Quoted by Dennistoun, I, 199.

31. While Lorenzo was skilled poet in his own right, he might easily have given the task of composing the inscriptions to one of the many humanists in his circle. One wonders, however, whether he would have been really satisfied with the job which was done. The verses in the inscriptions do not excel in either wit or poetry, although the quality of the paintings themselves more than compensates for this deficiency.

Despite Lorenzo’s brilliant reputation as a patron of the arts, relatively little is actually known about his patronage activities (see E. H. Gombrich, “The Early Medici as Patrons of Art,” in Norm and Form: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance [London, 1966], pp. 52 ff.). Thus the suggestion that he ordered the Uffizi diptych to send as a gift to the ruler of Urbino can be offered only tentatively here. In any case, though the patron for the painting may elude us, there is ample reason to believe that it was not Federigo.

32. Rotondi (The Ducal Palace, pp. 54-55) offers a highly plausible theory on where the diptych was hung in the palace. He suggests that the work was displayed in the window-like opening in the wall between the audience room and the small adjoining chamber called the chapel of Guidobaldo II (ibid., fig. 195). That the small chamber was built in the time of Federigo is evidenced by the architraves over the doorway, which bear his initials. Though the little chamber was later transformed into a
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chapel, in Federigo's day it was apparently used as a kind of "sancta sanctorum" for documents and important family heirlooms. If the diptych was hung there (the present dimensions of the opening are not indicative, as the opening was enlarged and given its present frame when the adjoining room was converted into a chapel), the portraits could have been displayed on the "public" side of the opening, toward the audience room, while the Triumphs, with their smaller scale and greater detail, might have been viewed from the more intimate confines of the adjoining private chamber.
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FIGURE 1. Piero della Francesca. Uffizi diptych, obverse: (left) Battista Sforza and (right) Federigo da Montefeltro. Florence, Uffizi Galleries. [University Prints]
CLARVS INSIGNI VEHITVR TRIUMPHO
QVEM PAREM SVMIS VCIBVS PERHENNIS
FAMA VIRTVTM CELEBRAT DECENTER
SCEPTRA TENENTEM

QVEMODVM REIVS TENVIT SECVNDIS
CONIVGIS MAGNI DECORATA REIVM
LAVDE GESTARVM VOLITAT PER ORA
CVNCTA VIRORVM


FIGURE 5. Detail of Figure 4. Federigo da Monte-
faitro. [Clark, Piero, 1st ed., pl. 141]

FIGURE 7. Clemente da Urbino. 1468 Medal of Federigo da Montefeltro. [Hill, Corpus, No. 304, pl. 48]
FIGURE 8. Gianfrancesco Enzola of Parma. 1478 Medal of Federigo da Montefeltro. [Hill, Corpus, No. 295, pl. 47]

FIGURE 9. Justus of Ghent and/or Pedro Berruguete (?). Federigo da Montefeltro and his son Guidobaldo. Urbino, Galleria nazionale delle Marche.
FIGURE 10. Detail of Figure 9. Federigo da Montefeltro. [Lavalleye, Les primitifs flamands, VII, pl. CXCII]

FIGURE 12. Paolo da Ragusa. Medal of Federigo da Montefeltro. [Hill, Corpus, No. 47, pl. 12]
FIGURE 13. Francesco Laurana. Battista Sforza (marble bust). Florence, Museo nazionale, Bargello. [Valentiner, fig. 7]

FIGURE 14. Side view of Figure 13. [Kennedy, pl. 8]


FIGURE 19. Master of the Castello Nativity (attrib.). Portrait of a Lady. New York, Lehman Collection. [Lipman, fig. 3]
Figure 20. Francesco Laurana [?]. Battista Sforza (marble relief). Pesaro, Museo Civico. [A. Venturi, Storia dell'Arte italiana, Vol. VI, fig. 712]

Figure 21. Francesco di Giorgio [?]. Federigo da Montefeltro. Pesaro, Museo Civico. [A. Venturi, Storia dell'Arte italiana, Vol. VI, fig. 713]

FIGURE 23. Master of the cassoni (?). Triumphs of Love, Chastity, and Death, after Petrarch (painted chest). London, Victoria and Albert Museum. [Carandente, fig. 58]
FIGURE 24. Workshop of the Master of the Vitae Imperatorum. Triumph of Chastity (miniature, cod. Barb. Lat. 3943). Vatican Library. [Carandente, fig. 46]

FIGURE 25. Triumphal Arch of Alfonso of Aragon (left), with Triumphal Procession of Alfonso (detail below). Naples, Castel Nuovo. [Burckhardt, Vol. I, fig. 111; II, fig. 2]
Magadala and Battle Baldini. Left to right, top to bottom: Triumphs of Love, Chastity, Death, Fame, Time, and Eternity, after Petrarch. (engravings, 2d series) Vienna, Albertina. [Carandente, figs. 29-34]
FIGURE 28. Francesco Rosselli. (after Sandro Botticelli). 
**Triumphs of Love and Chastity, after Petrarch** (engravings). 
London, British Museum. [Carandente, figs. 35, 36]
FIGURE 29. Triumph of Marcus Aurelius (relief, 2d cent. A.D.).
Rome, Musei Capitolini, Palazzo dei Conservatori.
[Carandente, fig. 6]
FIGURE 30. Triumphal Procession (relief, 1st cent. A. D.). Rome, Arch of Titus. [University Prints]

FIGURE 31. Michelozzo and Donatello. Faith, Hope, and Charity: Detail of Tomb of Baldassare Coscia (Antipope John XXIII). Florence, Baptistery. [University Prints]