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***The Battle of San Romano* by Paolo Uccello**

**Undergraduate Honors Program Thesis**

**May 2000**

Paolo Uccello was born in Florence in 1397, the son of Dono di Paolo, a barber-surgeon from Pratovecchio (in the Casentino) but a citizen of Florence since 1373.<sup>1</sup> His mother, Antonia di Giovanni Castelli del Beccuto, belonged to one of the most prominent families of the Parish of Santa Maria Maggiore in Florence. In 1407, Paolo appears for the first time as “Pagolo di Dono, garzone di bottega” in the workshop of the sculptor Lorenzo Ghiberti, who was engaged at the time on the North Doors of the Florentine Baptistery. Thus he was apparently trained in the art of sculpture. Seven years later, however, in 1414, Paolo joined the Compagnia di San Luca – the society of painters, dedicated to Saint Luke – and in the following year of 1415, at the age of eighteen, he was admitted to the guild of the Medici e Speziali (Doctors and Pharmacists), which included painters.

From the date of his enrollment in the guild in 1415 to that of his burial in the church of Santo Spirito, December 12, 1475, Uccello had a career as a painter that lasted sixty years. During this time he produced a fairly large number of frescoes and panel paintings (and even supplied designs for two surviving stained glass windows in the Cathedral of Florence). Of the works that have come down to us, the most celebrated are undoubtedly the three large panels representing the Battle of San Romano. These panels are today divided among three different European museums: one in the National Gallery in London (Fig. 1), measuring 182 x 318 cm. (72.8 x 127.2 in.); one in the Uffizi in Florence (Fig. 2), measuring 182 x 322 cm. (72.8 x 128.8 in.); and one in the Louvre, Paris (Fig. 3), measuring 180 x 316 cm. (72 x 126.4 in.). All three are painted in tempera on poplar panels, the most common support for fifteenth-century Italian paintings.<sup>2</sup> Although the panels are undocumented, Uccello’s authorship is certified by his signature, “PAVLI VGIELI OPVS” (the work of Paolo Uccello), on a shield in the lower left corner of the Uffizi panel (Fig. 4).<sup>3</sup> In the following pages Uccello’s *Battle of San Romano* will be examined from several different points of view. My goal is to address all (or at least most) of

the most important issues surrounding these famous panels, to summarize the state of our knowledge on them, and to offer some speculations regarding their original meaning.

### **The Battle and Its Representation**

On the morning of Sunday, June, 1, 1432, the Battle of San Romano took place in the countryside near the tower of San Romano in northern Tuscany, located approximately halfway between Pisa to the west and Florence to the east, circa 30 miles each way (Fig. 5).<sup>4</sup> Here a contingent of Florentines, led by the *condottiere* Niccolò Mauruzi (or Maurucci) da Tolentino, encountered and attacked a somewhat larger army of Sienese soldiers commanded by Bernardino della Ciarda. Significantly, the Sienese were allied with one of Florence's other traditional enemies, the Duchy of Milan, and Bernardino della Ciarda was in the employ of the Milanese duke, Filippo Maria Visconti. The battle went on for most of the day with no decisive outcome. Late in the afternoon, however, Niccolò's troops were reinforced by another contingent of Florentine cavalry and infantry, commanded by Micheletto Attendolo da Cotignola, which surprised the enemy from the rear. The precise outcome of the battle remains in doubt. According to Florentine accounts, including those of such notables as Giovanni Cavalcanti (an important historian), Giovanni Rucellai (builder of the famous palace that bears his name), Benedetto Dei (author of a famous chronicle), and the well-known humanists Leonardo Bruni, Flavio Biondo, Poggio Bracciolini, and Matteo Palmieri, Florence was victorious over Siena.<sup>5</sup> Sienese sources tell a different story. Only four days after the battle, for example, a governmental dispatch to the Sienese ambassador in Perugia attempted to counter "certain lies" put out by the Florentines and insisted on a Sienese rather than a Florentine victory.<sup>6</sup>

From our perspective, we can probably conclude that neither side prevailed at the Battle of San Romano. In any case, it was something of a "nonevent" in the the never-ending history of



skirmishes and squabbles between Florence and Siena, as Peter Paret has recently characterized it.<sup>7</sup> As another recent scholar, Gordon Griffiths, puts it, “The battle of San Romano . . . is hardly one of the world’s best-remembered battles,” adding that Niccolò Machiavelli, “interested though he was in the art of war, makes no mention in his *History of Florence* [1520-25] of this episode . . . , though he does include the names of the two commanders of the Florentine side – Tolentino and Micheletto – in a list of famous commanders of the early fifteenth century.”<sup>8</sup> By Machiavelli’s time, then, about a hundred years after the event, the Battle of San Romano was all but forgotten. Thus it is not surprising that no mid- or late sixteenth-century source was able to identify the subject of Uccello’s paintings, as we shall learn below. From a fifteenth-century Florentine perspective, however, the alleged victory at San Romano played a small but significant role in what amounts to a war of propaganda. As I hope to show later in this paper, this war of propaganda is, in some sense, the real battle that Uccello represented in the *Battle of San Romano*.

Turning to the paintings, we can see that the panel now in London (Fig. 1) shows Niccolò da Tolentino leading his cavalry in from the left. He rides a rearing white horse and holds a baton of command in his right hand. Above him flies a banner displaying several images of his personal device, the *Groppo di Salamone*, or Solomon’s Knot (Fig. 6), a device that also appears on a shield held by a nude youth in Andrea del Castagno’s equestrian portrait of Niccolò (Fig. 7), to be discussed below.<sup>9</sup>

Second in the series is the panel now in the Uffizi (Fig. 2). Here we see two opposing forces. That on the left must consist of Florentines, since a banneret hanging from a trumpet at the rear of the group contains a red cross on a white background (the *Croce del Popolo*, adopted in 1292), one of several traditional Florentine emblems. Fleeing from the battle on the right-hand side of the painting is evidently a group of Sienese soldiers. Their identity may or may not be

signalled by what Starn and Partridge see as “the black and white *balzana* of Siena [which] flies from one trumpet evidently sounding a retreat in the upper right of the Uffizi panel.”<sup>10</sup>

Unfortunately, color reproductions of the painting suggest that Starn and Partridge are mistaken, for the flag they describe seems to contain red as well as black and white. Thus it is unlikely that the Sienese *balzana* appears in the *Battle of San Romano*, and perhaps its absence is justified by the reluctance of the patron to see any explicit emblem of his hated enemies visible. Even if the flag noticed by Starn and Partridge is, after all, a Sienese *balzana*, its extremely small scale and its location in the painting, barely visible in the background, can be read as an insult to Siena. Be that as it may, with or without the *balzana*, contemporary viewers would have known that the fleeing soldiers were Sienese, since Siena was Florence’s foe in the Battle of San Romano.

In all likelihood, the omission of Sienese emblems was a deliberate choice on the part of the patron and his painter, a subtle way of demeaning the enemy. Equally subtle and demeaning are several pictorial devices seen in the Uffizi panel. In contrast to the Florentine soldiers, most of the Sienese are faceless, their heads entirely encased in helmets. Most of them, moreover, are shown either dead on the battlefield and awkwardly posed – note the upthrusting leg of the dead horseman at the right (Fig. 8) – or else they are shown fleeing in confusion and are viewed only from behind. Even their fleeing horses present undignified rear-end views to the eye of the beholder. One of them kicks its hind legs in the air so awkwardly as to appear thoroughly ridiculous (Fig. 9). Perhaps (some might say) this is nothing more than a sign of the artist’s inadequate knowledge of equine anatomy. But it is hard to believe that Uccello was so maladroit, especially when we know that he had a reputation for his skill in portraying animals. According to Cristoforo Landino (1481), Uccello was a “great master of animals” (“gran maestro d’animali”), while Vasari (1568) was of the opinion that “he ever took delight [in representing animals], and in order to paint them well he gave them very great attention, and what is more, he

kept ever in his house painted birds, cats, dogs, and every sort of stange animal . . . .”<sup>11</sup> Nor can it be claimed that Uccello’s knowledge of foreshortening was deficient, for the ground in both the London and Uffizi panels is strewn with expertly foreshortened horses, soldiers, lances, shields, and pieces of armor. In the center of the the Uffizi panel, a Sienese knight on a handsome white horse, struck by the thrust of a Florentine lance, is dehumanized by the radical foreshortening of his body (Fig. 10). Scholars generally identify this figure as Bernardino della Ciarda, the Sienese commander, but in truth he remains completely anonymous in his sealed armor.<sup>12</sup>

Third in the series, the panel now in the Louvre (Fig. 3) shows Florentine cavalry and infantry, led by Micheletto da Cotignola, advancing from right to left and, in conjunction with the Florentines in the London panel, sandwiching the Sienese (of the Uffizi panel) between them. Matching Niccolò da Tolentino on his rearing white horse in the first scene, Micheletto is a heroic, strutting figure on his leaping black steed. Once again, the Florentine contingent is denoted by the red cross on a white field – appearing on two bannerets attached to trumpets and on minuscule shields on the visors of several helmets (Fig. 11) – while Micheletto is identified by three flags that flutter above his head (Fig. 12): two with his coat of arms, described in the language of heraldry as “barry undee, argent and sable,” and a third with his device of “a unicorn sejant or, with a scroll argent.”<sup>13</sup>

The contrast between Florentines and Sienese is telling and can hardly be coincidental. While the Sienese are either anonymous or pictorially denigrated, the Florentines, for the most part, are identifiable, vigorous, and noble in their bearing. Most noble of all is the commanding figure of Niccolò da Tolentino, who looks as though he were posing for an equestrian portrait. Even the trapezoidal plot of grass beneath the feet of his horse gives the impression of serving as a pedestal.

## Early Descriptions and Provenance

Not until the contents of the Medici Palace were inventoried in 1492 do Uccello's three panels depicting the Battle of San Romano appear in a written document. Unfortunately, the surviving inventory is a copy dated 1512, but because it was made on behalf of Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici (grandson of Lorenzo "the Magnificent" and great-great-grandson of Cosimo "the Elder"), it is most likely faithful to the original.<sup>14</sup> After the Medici returned to Florence in 1512 – they had been exiled in 1494, at which time the family palace was sacked and its contents partially auctioned – Lorenzo di Piero published a proclamation on October 5, 1512, ordering anyone owning anything purchased from the auction to return the items to the former proprietors. The copy of the 1492 inventory was made on this occasion, and in it we read for the first time about the San Romano panels. Located "In the large ground-floor chamber, called the chamber of Lorenzo [the Magnificent]" ("Nella camera grande terrena, detta Lachamera di Lorenzo"), they are described as follows: "Six paintings surrounded by gilt frames above the aforementioned wainscoting [*spalliera*] and above the bed [*lettuccio*], 42 *braccia* long and 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> *braccia* high, painted; that is, three of the Rout of San Romano and one of battles of dragons and lions, and one of the story of Paris by the hand of Paolo Uccello and one by the hand of Francesco di Pesello, in which there is a hunt, [valued at] 300 florins."<sup>15</sup>

We learn several valuable things from this statement. It describes six paintings altogether, tells us how they were framed and where in the room they were located (high on the wall above the wainscoting in gilt frames), gives their dimensions (in *braccia*), identifies their subjects, names the artists who painted them, and assigns them a monetary value.<sup>16</sup> Most importantly, the inventory mentions that three of the six paintings depict the "Rout" of San Romano and attributes them to Paolo Uccello. Unfortunately, the other three paintings in the group have vanished without any trace. One was evidently by Francesco di Pesello, better known as

Pesellino (ca. 1422-1457), a noted Florentine painter by whom little has survived; according to the inventory, it represented “a hunt,” that is, presumably, a hunting scene. More interesting are the two other lost panels by Uccello himself. One of these depicted “the story of Paris,” in all probability a scene from the ancient Greek myth of Paris and Helen – possibly the Judgment of Paris. Uccello’s other picture showed “battles of dragons and lions.” Although the painting is lost, we can get some idea of its appearance from several early Italian engravings depicting a *Dragon and Lion Fight*;<sup>17</sup> and from a fifteenth-century engraving, attributed to Baccio Baldini, of *Wild Animals Attacking Horses and Bulls* (Fig. 13). According to Mark Zucker, “There is every likelihood that the [latter] depends, in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, on something similar to Uccello’s lost painting from the Medici Palace . . . .” As Zucker notes, “A link with Uccello is suggested by the radically foreshortened horse at the left in the image, which . . . is similar to a fallen horse in the Uffizi panel” of the *Battle of San Romano*, “while the rearing horse is also close to several by Uccello . . . .”<sup>18</sup>

The next early reference to Uccello’s paintings provides much less information. It comes from an anonymous manuscript in the Biblioteca Nazionale, Florence, known as the Codice (Codex) or Anonimo Magliabechiano. This well-known compilation of extremely brief “lives” of Renaissance artists can be dated, from internal evidence, to the years 1537 to 1542. According to the Anonimo, Uccello “painted the pictures of the jousts in the Medici Palace on Via Larga [Broad Street].”<sup>19</sup> Notwithstanding the vagueness of this reference, it can only refer to the *Battle of San Romano*. As noted above, specific knowledge of the battle was already lost by the mid-sixteenth century, and this loss is reflected in the Anonimo’s description. Either he did not look carefully enough at the paintings to identify them as a battle scene, or he knew them only at second hand. In any case, modern commentators have often observed that Uccello’s paintings resemble a joust as much as a battle; thus the Anonimo’s description is reasonably accurate.

Vasari's description of the *Battle*, published in 1568, is similar to that of the Anonimo but even more imprecise. In his *Life* of Uccello, after describing certain lost works in the Medici Palace ("casa de' Medici"), Vasari states: "and in other canvases he [Uccello] made some displays of men-at-arms of those times, on horseback, with many portraits from life."<sup>20</sup> While there can be little doubt that the pictures in question are those of the *Battle of San Romano*, Vasari's knowledge of them was very sketchy, suggesting that he may have known them only from hearsay or had misremembered what he once had seen, perhaps many years before. He calls them canvases ("tele") rather than panels, professes to see many non-existent "portraits from life," and, by using the expression "displays of men-at-arms," suggests that he was thinking of a joust or a parade, not unlike the Anonimo Magliabechiano had done.<sup>21</sup>

The three panels are mentioned again in a later inventory of the contents of the Palazzo Medici of 1598, which describes them as "Three large antique pictures of jousts, all in one piece, with their gilded frames, fixed high on the wall above the door of the first salon, in [leading into?] the passage to the chapel."<sup>22</sup> In this brief description, the anonymous compiler of the inventory omits Uccello's name but, not unexpectedly, once again identifies the paintings as jousts. He locates the paintings in a room that he calls "the first salon," which seems to be the same room in which they were located in 1492, the one that had served as "the chamber of Lorenzo [the Magnificent]."

In 1659 ownership of the Medici Palace changed hands. It was sold by the Medici to the Riccardi family and today is usually called the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi. Although the palace was now in possession of the Riccardi, a smaller building, located several hundred meters (two full blocks in the modern city) to the north, remained with the Medici. Known as the Casino Mediceo, this had previously been the site of the famous Medici sculpture garden. Here Lorenzo the Magnificent had kept his celebrated collection of classical sculpture, and here the young

Michelangelo, then in his teens, had studied under Lorenzo's protection. When the inheritance of Cardinal Carlo de' Medici was inventoried in 1666, the year of his death, a storeroom in the Casino was found to contain the *Battle of San Romano*, described as "three panel paintings . . . in which there are diverse battles . . . [by] the hand of Paolo Uccello."<sup>23</sup> A note in the margin of the inventory reveals the intention to transfer the panels to the "Guardaroba" – a large depository – of the Uffizi, which then served as the principal office building of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.

During the course of the next century, we hear nothing more of the paintings. Presumably they remained in storage until 1784, when they emerged from the Guardaroba.<sup>24</sup> In that year the central panel (Fig. 2) was put on display in the Uffizi, which in the meantime had assumed its current function as an art museum.<sup>25</sup> The panel in question remains there today. The other two, those now in London and Paris, had a different fate. They were restored (by a painter named Carlo Magni) and returned to the Guardaroba in 1787. In all likelihood, the central panel was regarded as being more important than its companions because it is the one that bears Uccello's signature and therefore had a certain historical value. Clearly, paintings by Uccello were not seen as having any artistic value at the time, and it comes as no surprise to learn that the other two panels were sold at an unknown date after 1787. By 1844 they were in the Giraldi collection in Florence, and in that year were apparently sold to the Florentine dealers Francesco Lombardi and Ugo Baldi. One of them (Fig. 1) came to London when a large portion of the Lombardi-Baldi collection was acquired for the National Gallery in 1857.<sup>26</sup> The other (Fig. 3) passed to the Campana collection in Rome by 1859, was purchased for the Musée Napoléon III in 1861, and entered the Louvre in 1863.<sup>27</sup> Thus by the middle of the nineteenth century the three sections of the *Battle of San Romano* had arrived at their ultimate destinations in three of the principal public collections of Europe.

## Style, Dating, Original Location

As we have seen, in 1492 the three panels of the *Battle of San Romano* were located in a room on the ground floor of the Palazzo Medici, then known as the chamber of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Two related questions now arise: was this their original location and how were they arranged? Neither question can be answered definitively, since the paintings are undocumented, and there are no earlier descriptions of the palace. To some extent, tentative answers depend on how we date the paintings, and our dating, in turn, is to some extent dependent on stylistic analysis.

Scholars have never been able to agree on the dating of the *Battle of San Romano*, though the majority of opinion used to favor the mid-1450s.<sup>28</sup> This seemed logical for two reasons. First, Andrea del Castagno's equestrian portrait of Niccolò da Tolentino (Fig. 14, left), the hero of the battle, was unquestionably painted on a wall of the Cathedral, as a pendant to an earlier equestrian monument by Uccello, in 1455-56. Second, the Palazzo Medici, designed by Michelozzo di Bartolomeo in 1444, was ready for habitation no earlier than the 1450s. At the same time, the lack of a firm chronology for Uccello's surviving works permitted scholars to date the battle scenes more or less wherever they wanted. In fact, there are only three securely dated paintings by Uccello, two of which can be usefully compared with the San Romano panels. One of them is a relatively early work: the *Equestrian Portrait of Sir John Hawkwood*, a fresco on the left wall of the Cathedral, which is documented to 1436 (Fig. 14, right). The other, comparatively late, is the six-part predella of the *Profanation of the Host* in the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino, which is documented to 1466-67 (Fig. 15).<sup>29</sup>

Oddly enough, it can be argued that the *Battle of San Romano* resembles both the Hawkwood monument and the Urbino predella to approximately the same degree. Although the Hawkwood monument is a fresco and the battle scenes are panel paintings, the horses in each are



strikingly similar. Their trappings with convex bosses are comparable, and the tail of Hawkwood's horse is treated almost identically to the tail of Tolentino's white charger in the London panel of the *Battle of San Romano*. On the other hand, similarities between the *Battle of San Romano* and the Urbino predella are just as obvious, notwithstanding differences in scale. Although the battle scenes are large and the predella scenes are tiny, the horses in each are almost identical in form, pattern, and color; the figures with their multi-colored leggings are virtually interchangeable; and the landscape in the background of the Uffizi panel of the *Battle* is comparable to that in the background of the section of the predella illustrating the execution of the repentant woman (Fig. 15, above). From this brief stylistic analysis, I conclude that dating the *Battle of San Romano* strictly on the basis of its visual qualities may well be impossible. Comparing it to the Hawkwood monument, one instinctively wants to place it early in Uccello's career; comparing it with the Urbino predella, one is inclined to place it late.

Looking more closely at the *Battle*, however, we find notable stylistic disparities between the individual panels, suggesting that they were not all painted at the same time. The panel in the Louvre (Fig. 3) is quite distinct in character from those in London and Florence (Figs. 1 and 2). The scale of both the horses and the figures is noticeably larger; the background (largely invisible in reproductions) is entirely different, lacking hills, huntsmen, and soldiers; and the ground has none of the dead bodies, broken lances, shields, or bits and pieces of armor that are such conspicuous features of the London and Florence panels. To my eyes, moreover, the style of the Louvre panel is more sophisticated than that of its companions. Figures and horses in the London and Florence panels read almost like a continuous frieze; in the Louvre panel, the group of horsemen at the right curves subtly inward, while Micheletto da Cotignola and his horse are conceived more three-dimensionally than any of the riders in London or Florence. In addition, the spectator's point of view appears to be thoroughly consistent in the Louvre panel, where we

are positioned rather close to the scene and looking straight at it. By contrast, the spectator of the London and Florence panels seems to see them from two different directions. We clearly look down upon the backgrounds in what amount to bird's-eye views, while simultaneously looking straight at the combatants in the foreground and glimpsing, on occasion, the underbellies of their horses.<sup>30</sup>

Emblematic of the distinctions between the panel in London and the one in the Louvre is the different treatment of the hats worn by Niccolò da Tolentino in the former (Fig. 16, above) and Micheletto da Cotignola in the latter (Fig. 16, below). John O'Grady has identified them as "chaperons," consisting of "a padded ring which fitted the head, and a large crown. The ring was known . . . as a *mazzocchio* and it was covered with stretched fabric, while the crown was a bag of the same material with its mouth sewn inside the top of the ring."<sup>31</sup> As O'Grady noted, Niccolò's chaperon shows a brocade pattern of red plant-forms on a gold background, but the pattern is laid flatly across the surface of the chaperon, possibly with a stencil, in defiance of its three-dimensionality. By contrast, Micheletto's chaperon is brocaded with a pattern of gold flowers and circles on a dark red ground, but here the pattern is foreshortened in response to the underlying volumes.<sup>32</sup>

In view of these observations, only one conclusion is possible: the first two scenes are thoroughly consistent with each other and were designed from the start to go together, while the third scene is a later addition to the series. Indeed, the London and Florence panels form a satisfactory composition when viewed side by side, being more or less symmetrical in the manner of a diptych. This is especially clear with the rearing white horses in the center of each painting – that is, the ones ridden by Niccolò da Tolentino and the soldier identified (or misidentified) as Bernardino della Ciarda. These horses are nearly mirror images of each other, and if we could fold our imaginary diptych, they would almost overlap. Another point worth considering in this

context is the location of Uccello's signature. Had all three panels been executed in a single campaign, one imagines that the signature would have appeared either on the last section of the series (the Louvre panel) or somewhere near the middle of the central section (the Florence panel). Instead, Uccello placed his signature on a shield in the left-hand corner of the Florence panel (Fig. 4), where, as O'Grady noted, it would have appeared "as close as possible" to the center of the first two scenes.<sup>33</sup>

Without exaggerating too much, perhaps one could say that the London and Florence panels reveal an approach that is still somewhat medieval, while the panel in the Louvre fits more convincingly under the heading of the early Renaissance. In my opinion, the Louvre panel is also more classical than its companions, bearing a closer resemblance to such classical battle scenes as the mosaic of the *Battle of Issus*, found in Pompeii and now in the Museo Nazionale, Naples (Fig. 17). This famous Roman copy of a lost Hellenistic painting could not have been familiar to Uccello, since it was only discovered in the eighteenth century. But it has so many fundamental elements in common with the *Battle of San Romano*, especially the Louvre panel, that Uccello must have known – and carefully studied – something similar to it.

How much time passed between the execution of the first two portions of the *Battle of San Romano* and the third? Stylistic analysis alone will not allow us to answer this question, though I suspect that they may be as much as twenty years apart. Support for this hypothesis will be cited below, but here I want to make an obvious point. The most logical date for Uccello's paintings is somewhere around the time of the Battle of San Romano itself, that is to say the 1430's. From a stylistic point of view, I see no reason why we should not date the London and Florence panels to that period.

If the London and Florence panels were in fact painted in the 1430's, then their original location could not possibly have been the Palazzo Medici, which, as we have seen, was only

constructed beginning in 1444. Instead, they must have been made for the former residence of the family, sometimes called the Casa Vecchia ("old house"), which was located further up the Via Larga.<sup>34</sup> The groundplan of the Casa Vecchia is unknown, but a hypothetical reconstruction of it can be made on the basis of surviving portions of the building, and by comparison with contemporary Florentine palaces (of the late fourteenth century) that are still intact.<sup>35</sup> Although this reconstruction is not precise enough to allow us to determine the original location of the *Battle of San Romano*, some conjectures about it can still be made.

The issue is complicated by technical analyses of the panels undertaken since the 1950s.<sup>36</sup> These have shown that the upper corners of all three panels are later additions. In their original state, the panels were cut irregularly in the corners, as well as being higher than they now are. Apparently, they would have terminated in curved shapes to fit into lunettes at the top of the wall, below the vaulting of the room. In fact, it is obvious that the pictures have been trimmed horizontally by a good 60 cm. (about 24 in.) across the top, as we can tell from the cropping of the lances in all three panels, and especially from the cropping of the flags in the first and the third. Curiously, the cuts in the corners are asymmetrical, suggesting that the lunettes were not centralized. All this is difficult to describe, but we can visualize the situation clearly from a measured diagram made by Volker Gebhardt (Fig. 18). Gebhardt's diagram shows that the panel now in the Louvre also had another cut: a rectangular section in the lower left-hand corner measuring 24 x 87 cm. (9.5 x 25 in.). In all likelihood, this cut corresponded to the top of a door, around which the Louvre panel had to be designed. When art historians first noticed that the panels were originally cut in these places, they assumed that the missing sections were filled in at a later date, to accommodate a new location. Although their assumptions were undoubtedly correct, Gebhardt has shown that the fill-ins were probably painted by Uccello himself, which no previous scholar had realized.<sup>37</sup>

From this evidence, I would suggest the following hypothetical scenario. When Uccello received the commission for the *Battle of San Romano*, conjecturally in the mid-1430's, Cosimo de' Medici asked him to paint three panels to fit into three bays below three vaulted sections of a room in the Casa Vecchia; one of the bays contained a door. As usual, the vaults would have rested on bracket capitals made of stone (without supporting shafts). The asymmetrical cuts in the upper corners of the panels can be explained by assuming that each corner of the room had a single capital, half on one wall and half on the other, a common feature of fourteenth-century Florentine palaces. It can also be assumed that the corner capitals were narrower than those located along the walls. If this hypothesis is accepted, the logical conclusion is that the original scheme called for two scenes on one wall (the London and Florence panels) and a third scene on a second wall (the Louvre panel). In other words, the paintings were meant to be arranged around a corner (see my tentative reconstruction in Fig. 19). Since no evidence exists to account for this odd choice, we can only suppose that it was motivated by the size and configuration of the room in the Casa Vecchia.

Having received the commission, Uccello would have prepared the three wooden panels himself or given the job to a carpenter. In either case (according to this hypothesis), three panels suitable for the room in the Casa Vecchia were made. On two of them Uccello proceeded to paint the panels now in London and Florence. Perhaps he also sketched out a general design on the panel now in the Louvre, but, as noted above, the greater sophistication of the Louvre panel suggests that he did not actually paint it at the time. Planned to hang side by side, the London and Florence panels were carefully matched with each other, but the Louvre panel, separated from its companions on a different wall, could be composed according to slightly different principles. We may even speculate that Uccello conceived the figures of the Louvre panel in a larger scale than those in London and Florence to account for the position of a spectator viewing

the scenes in chronological order, from left to right. Standing at the left-hand edge of the London panel – the first scene in the series – the spectator would have seen the Louvre panel from a distance of some six and a half meters (over 20 ft.); perhaps Uccello decided to enlarge the figures there, since they would have seemed smaller when viewed from afar.

At some point, I assume, Uccello ceased working on the Louvre panel (or was told not even to begin painting it). Perhaps this was because Cosimo de' Medici was already thinking about a new palace and realized that the panels might not fit perfectly into a new location. Be that as it may, once the new palace was ready for occupation in the 1450s, I assume that the *Battle of San Romano* was moved to the room that later came to be known as the chamber of Lorenzo the Magnificent. The size, height, and configuration of this room was different from the one in the Casa Vecchia, its east wall being wide enough to accommodate all three panels in a row (Fig. 20, room labeled A, highlighted wall). At this point Uccello would have been asked to finish off the series by painting the Louvre panel; or, having begun it years before, perhaps he only completed his own unfinished work. In either case, Uccello was a different artist in the 1450's than he had been in the 1430's, which explains why the Louvre panel seems more sophisticated in style than its companions. When the job was done, all three pictures would have been installed side by side, above the wainscoting, in an arrangement reconstructed by Gebhardt (Fig. 21). In the new chamber, a door no longer intruded at the bottom of any of the panels and the bracket capitals were higher up on the wall. Thus, according to my hypothesis, Uccello not only painted (or completed) the Louvre panel in the 1450s, but also filled in the rectangular gap in its lower left corner, as well as the upper corners of all three scenes. Finally, I conclude that he trimmed away the curved tops of the original panels, since they contained nothing essential to the story and no longer filled the lunettes above them. The *Battle of San Romano* had now assumed

the arrangement described in the 1492 inventory, and the individual panels had the size and shape that they have today.

### **Speculations on the Meaning of the Battle of San Romano**

In recent decades art historians have become more and more concerned with the “meaning” of the work of art. Rather than simply identifying its subject or explaining its iconography, however, scholars are increasingly interested in understanding what a given work may have meant, or may continue to mean, in the widest possible context. They acknowledge that it has no single or essential meaning, but that it means different things to different people in different times and places; or, for that matter, different things to the *same* person in a single time and place. What the *Battle of San Romano* has meant to the twentieth century is not what it meant to the fifteenth. This is not the proper place for an extended discussion of twentieth-century responses to the *Battle*, but modern artists and writers have certainly understood it in ways unthinkable by Uccello’s contemporaries. Painters from Picasso to Philip Guston have used it as a point of departure for works of their own, revising our sense of its meaning in the process.<sup>38</sup> To one degree or another we cannot help but view the *Battle of San Romano* through the eyes of the Surrealists. As William Rubin points out, André Breton’s *Surrealist Manifesto* (1924) mentions Uccello in the same breath as Max Ernst, André Masson, Man Ray, Giorgio de Chirico, Marcel Duchamp, and Francis Picabia.<sup>39</sup> Elsewhere, in his *Entretiens*, Breton includes Uccello in a list of authors (Swift, Chateaubriand, Hugo, Nerval, etc.) to whom the Surrealist poets recognized a debt;<sup>40</sup> and Uccello became a sort of emblematic subject who inspired fascination on the part of such writers as Jean Cocteau, Antonin Artaud, Robert Desnos, and Philippe Soupault, as well as Breton himself.<sup>41</sup> One wonders whether Uccello would have made such an impact on twentieth-century French artists and poets had the *Battle of San Romano*

remained in its original location. In the Palazzo Medici, or even the Uffizi, the paintings would have been relatively inaccessible. But one of them had been in the Louvre since 1863, and in retrospect it seems that the Surrealists could hardly avoid being drawn to it.

The principal purpose of this concluding section of the paper is not to explore the meaning of the *Battle of San Romano* in modern times, important as that may be, but to speculate on what it might have meant to its original viewers – that is, to contextualize it in Florence, and specifically in the Palazzo Medici, during the fifteenth century. Though there may be no such thing as an average fifteenth-century Florentine viewer, those who would have had access to the Medici Palace or its predecessor, the Casa Vecchia, came (with the exception of servants) from the uppermost classes of society. Mostly, they were members of Florence’s “first families.” Like the Medici themselves, they were wealthy merchants, hard-nosed businessmen, shrewd politicians, and practical-minded government officials. They were scholars and poets, bishops and senior members of religious communities, ambassadors and visiting dignitaries from other Italian towns or foreign lands. As such, they were generally well-educated people who possessed a fairly high degree of visual literacy.

Many of these viewers would have been discriminating enough to discern a number of “meanings” in the *Battle of San Romano*, and all of them would have viewed it with what Michael Baxandall calls “the period eye.”<sup>42</sup> As Baxandall has shown, fifteenth-century Florentines were especially interested in geometry and arithmetic. They may have known less about these things than we do, but they knew their mathematics “absolutely, used it in important matters more often than we do, played games and told jokes with it, bought luxurious books about it, and prided themselves on their prowess in it; it was a relatively much larger part of their formal intellectual equipment.”<sup>43</sup> Thus they were prepared to derive considerable satisfaction from observing Uccello’s radically foreshortened figures; they would have savored the geometrical



forms of his horses and enjoyed the wit with which he deployed dead bodies, broken lances, and other objects on the ground in perspective. Experienced in gauging volumes, they would have noticed (as Baxandall reminds us) that Niccolò da Tolentino's chaperon (Fig. 16, above) is not only "a round hat with a flouncy crown," but also "a compound of cylinder and plump polygonal disc disguised as a hat."<sup>44</sup> Presumably they would also have noticed and perhaps have been amused by a feature of "this most three-dimensional of hats" that has already been described above: the "paradox" of its pattern "behaving as if it were two-dimensional, spreading itself flatly on the picture plane without regard for the object's shape."<sup>45</sup>

It seems obvious, however, that Uccello's paintings would have been viewed principally as sumptuous interior decoration, "fit for a king" and intended to enrich the palace in a manner comparable to tapestries. Although there was no tradition in Florence for making or hanging tapestries, the Medici were well aware that Franco-Flemish tapestries lined the walls of northern European castles, where colder weather imposed their usage. By decorating his palace with Uccello's *Battle of San Romano*, which somewhat resembled tapestries, Cosimo de' Medici must have thought he was behaving like royalty. In fact, true fifteenth-century tapestries often showed battle scenes. Especially popular was the Trojan War,<sup>46</sup> and a tapestry portraying this subject hangs in the background of a room in the Duke of Berry's castle, as depicted by the Limbourg Brothers in the *Très Riches Heures* (Fig. 22). Tapestries were precious and luxurious objects imported from France or Flanders, far more costly than mere paintings. Few Florentine families would have been rich enough to afford them, but no Florentines were richer than the Medici. Indeed, a huge and extremely valuable tapestry of the Duke of Burgundy hunting was preserved in a chest in the very room in which the panels of the *Battle of San Romano* were located – the chamber of Lorenzo the Magnificent – and "would not have looked incongruous beside them when on feast days and festive occasions it was taken out and exhibited."<sup>47</sup> We

should recall, in this context, that one of the other paintings described in the 1492 inventory of the Medici Palace, in conjunction with the *Battle of San Romano*, was “a hunt” (“una chaccia”) by Pesellino.

As noted above, sixteenth-century writers usually misidentified the subject of Uccello’s paintings, which they thought were jousts or “displays” (*mostre*) rather than battles. Even modern commentators describe the panels in similar terms. Thus J. R. Hale, the distinguished historian, speaks of “episodes in a pageant,”<sup>48</sup> while Volker Gebhardt refers to “the fairground pageantry of a renaissance tournament.”<sup>49</sup> The concept would have been familiar to the Medici themselves. The inventory of 1492 describes not only paintings, but quantities of arms and armor displayed around the palace, revealing an obsession with the trappings of chivalry.<sup>50</sup> One of the most famous jousts in all of history was hosted in 1475 by Giuliano de’ Medici, grandson of Cosimo and brother of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Celebrated in Angelo Poliziano’s *Stanze per la giostra del Magnifico Giuliano* (Verses for the joust of Giuliano the Magnificent), the joust of 1475 sheds retrospective light on the joustlike qualities of the *Battle of San Romano*.

On the other hand, a painting of almost *any* battle could just as easily have served to gratify the need of the Medici to associate themselves with the romance of knighthood. What other needs might the *Battle of San Romano* have fulfilled? For one thing, it provided an occasion to display emblems specific to the family of the patron. While no overt Medici devices appear in the *Battle*, references to at least two of them can be detected in the London and Florence panels. Directly in front of Niccolò da Tolentino in the former, a knight wears a helmet surmounted by three large plumes, to which Uccello calls our attention by silhouetting them against the slope of a hill and pointing Niccolò’s baton in their direction. Thus it seems that Uccello wanted us to notice them, and my guess is that they stand for the well-known Medici insignia of three feathers (Fig. 23).<sup>51</sup> More prominent than the plumes are the circular gold ornaments on the trappings of

the horses in the London panel, and the over-sized oranges in the upper left and right corners of the London panel, which reappear at the upper left of the panel in Florence. As various scholars have observed, these striking decorative elements are almost certainly allusions to the golden balls – the famous *palle* – of the Medici coat of arms (Fig. 24).<sup>52</sup> In addition, it has gone unnoticed that a feature of Casa Vecchia, the old Medici palace, was a so-called “orto cum melarancis,” or garden with orange trees.<sup>53</sup> Whether or not the actual fruit was meant to allude to the *palle*, Uccello’s painted orange trees would inevitably recall the real ones in the garden; for us they provide another reason to place the original location of the London and Florence panels (but not the Louvre panel, which lacks the orange trees) in the Casa Vecchia.

According to my reconstruction of the circumstances surrounding Uccello’s commission, the *Battle of San Romano* was painted in the 1430s. As we have seen, the battle itself, which took place on June 1, 1432, was regarded by contemporary Florentines as a notable victory over the Republic of Siena. The “heroes” of the battle, Niccolò da Tolentino and Micheletto da Cotignola, were made honorary citizens of Florence in September and October, 1432, and presented with gifts: pennants, shields, helmets, and brocaded vestments, possibly including the brocaded chaperons that they wear in Uccello’s paintings.<sup>54</sup> Then, on September 7, 1433, Cosimo de’ Medici was imprisoned in the Palazzo della Signoria, accused of having exploited the ongoing war effort against another enemy, the city of Lucca, and having “given ‘untold loans and payments to soldiers’ such as Niccolò da Tolentino with a view to making himself a tyrant.”<sup>55</sup> In his own memoirs Cosimo tells how he notified Tolentino of his arrest on September 7, calling him “my very good friend”; and how, on the following day, Tolentino “brought his forces to the gates of Florence ‘intending to resort to force to bring about my release’ and desisted only when he realized that this might provoke Cosimo’s captors to put him to death.”<sup>56</sup> Instead, Cosimo was banished for what was meant to be a ten-year period of exile on October 3.

During Cosimo's exile, Florence was controlled by his great enemy, Rinaldo degli Albizzi, who sent Tolentino into battle against the Duchy of Milan. Tolentino was captured on August 28, 1434, and, while being transferred to a fortress a few months later, fell from his horse and died – an event possibly planned to dispose of one of Cosimo's closest allies. In the meantime, the Medicean political party prevailed in Florence and, on October 6, Cosimo returned triumphantly to town, took immediate control of the city, and sent his enemies into exile: Rinaldo degli Albizzi, Felice Brancacci (patron of Masaccio), and Palla Strozzi (the wealthiest man in Florence and famous patron of Gentile da Fabriano and Fra Angelico). Niccolò da Tolentino's funeral took place in Florence on March 20, 1435, with Pope Eugenius IV presiding, and one would like to imagine that Paolo Uccello was present at the ceremony, thinking of his commission for the *Battle of San Romano*.

Twenty years later, on October 19, 1455, Andrea del Castagno was hired by the authorities of the Cathedral of Florence to commemorate Tolentino with an equestrian portrait in fresco (Figs. 7 and 14, left),<sup>57</sup> and given Cosimo de' Medici's close relationship with Tolentino, we may speculate that he had something to do with the commission. Although there is no documentary evidence to support this conjecture, Cosimo may well have remembered his old friend and ally on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of his death. At about the same time, according to my hypothetical reconstruction of the events, the London and Florence panels of the *Battle of San Romano* were transferred to the new Medici Palace, and the Louvre panel was either completed or newly painted. Assuming that the latter was indeed executed in the mid-1450's, one final conjecture may now be made. The year 1454 was not only the twentieth anniversary of Niccolò da Tolentino's death, but also the twentieth anniversary of the death of Averardo de' Medici, a first cousin of Cosimo. Perhaps it is no coincidence that Averardo had been a close friend, confidant, financial backer, and possibly even lover of Micheletto da Cotignola, the hero

of the Louvre panel of the *Battle of San Romano*.<sup>58</sup>

In conclusion, I wish to return to the chamber of Lorenzo the Magnificent and make one final speculation about the meaning of its contents. As noted above, the inventory of 1492 describes several paintings in the room other than the *Battle of San Romano*, none of which survives. There was a hunting scene (“una chaccia”) by Pesellino and, by Uccello, a “story of Paris” and a panel representing “battles of dragons and lions.” I have nothing to add about the “hunt” or the “story of Paris,” but the scene with “battles of lions and dragons” invites us to draw a connection with the *Battle of San Romano*, if only because both of them concerned battles. More importantly, lions were symbols of the city of Florence.<sup>59</sup> In Uccello’s lost painting, their combat with dragons may well have implied a battle between Florence and the deadliest of its enemies in the first half of the fifteenth century: the Duchy of Milan, whose ruling family, the Visconti, used a serpent devouring a child as its coat of arms. To be sure, the Visconti serpent is portrayed as a snake – a *biscia*, or viper – rather than a dragon, but the Latin word *draco* carries both meanings. It may be recalled that the Sienese at San Romano were allied with the Milanese, and that the Sienese commander, Bernardino della Ciarda, had been hired by Filippo Maria Visconti. Perhaps, then, along with his *Battle of San Romano*, Uccello’s painting of lions and dragons participated in the “war of propaganda” mentioned at the beginning of this paper.<sup>60</sup>

## Endnotes

1. For a detailed chronology of Uccello's life and career, see Borsi, 15-43.
2. Dunkerton et al., 152.
3. For a post-modern interpretation of the shield, see Starn and Partridge. Uccello's signature calls for some comment, especially the unusual spelling of his name with a G rather than a C. A variant of this signature (with the name spelled VGIELLI) appears in his only other signed work, the *Equestrian Portrait of Sir John Hawkwood*, a fresco in the Cathedral of Florence (Fig. 14, right). In both cases the letter G resembles a C with a swirl. No other inscriptions with unequivocal letters G appear in Uccello's work. The inscription on the Hawkwood monument, however, contains three unequivocal C's (in the words ACVTVS, BRITANNICVS, and CAVTISSIMVS), and all three of them are without the swirl. Hence the spelling VGIELI cannot be doubted. It may also be noted that in even in modern Tuscan pronunciation, "c's" occasionally become "g's."
4. Among numerous accounts of the battle, the one followed here is that of Starn and Partridge, 50, which is based on a journal written by a contemporary Florentine, Luca degli Albizzi. See also the long description in the *Istorie Fiorentine* (1600) of the sixteenth-century Florentine historian Scipione Ammirato (1531-1601), translated by Horne, 126-127.
5. For references to these and other fifteenth-century sources, see Borsi, 308.
6. Starn and Partridge, 50, summarizing an unpublished dispatch in the Sienese state archives; for other references to Sienese accounts, see Borsi, 308.

7. Paret, 20.
8. Griffiths, 313.
9. For the origins of the device, which Niccolò apparently acquired as a sign of honor after a battle early in his career, see Horne, 129.
10. Starn and Partridge, 37-38.
11. Landino's words are quoted by Salmi, 29; for the passage from Vasari, see De Vere, Vol. 1, 284, translating from Vasari-Milanesi, Vol. 2, 208 (" . . . alcune storie di animali, de' quali sempre si dilettò, e per fargli bene vi mise grandissimo studio; e, che è più, tenne sempre per casa dipinti uccelli, gatti, cani e d'ogni sorte di animali strani . . . ").
12. No early account of the battle describes Bernardino as having been unhorsed, wounded, or captured. Even so, the painting routinely appears with such titles as the *Unhorsing of Bernardino della Ciarda* (Pope-Hennessy, 153), the *Unsaddling of Bernardino della Ciarda, Captain of the Sienese Troops* ("disarcionamento di Bernardino della Ciarda, capitano delle truppe senesi"; Padoa Rizzo, 66), *Bernardino della Ciarda Unhorsed* (Borsi, passim), etc.
13. Pope-Hennessy, 153. None of the other flags, banners, or shields in the three panels bear identifiable arms, but Horne, 133, presumes that they show the insignia of various Florentine squadrons.
14. For a recent discussion and evaluation of this remarkable document, see Beck.

15. Translated by the author in collaboration with Prof. Mark Zucker. For the original passage, see slightly variant transcriptions (with occasional errors) in Vasari-Milanesi, Vol. 2, 208; Horne, 137; Pope-Hennessy, 152; Beck, 127; and elsewhere. I have used Beck's recent transcription, which reads: "Sei quadri chorniciati atorno e messi [sic] d'oro sopra la detta spalliera et sopra al lettuccio, di braccia 42 lunghi e alti braccia iii 1/2 dipinti c[i]oè tre della Rotta di San Romano e uno di battaglie di draghi et lioni, et uno della Storia di Paris di mano di Pagholo Uccello e uno di man di Francesco di Pesello, entrovi una chaccia, f. 300."

16. I am unable to comment on all of this information. For example, it would be useful to know approximately how much 300 florins, the value placed on the six panels, were worth in the late fifteenth century. Apparently this was a considerable sum of money, but a full discussion of the matter would take too much time and space.

17. For this composition, see Zucker 1999, 130-131 (reproducing one of the engraved versions and giving references to others).

18. Zucker 1993, 244-245; see also Salmi, 31, linking the foreshortened horse in the engraving to Uccello. A related engraving by Baldini, the *Pattern Plate of Beasts and Birds Hunting and Fighting* (Zucker 1993, 242-243), prominently includes a dragon battling a lion among its various motifs.

19. Author's translation from Frey, 100: "Dipinse e quadrij delle giostre nel palazzo de Medicj nella uia Largha."



20. Author's translation with the assistance of Prof. Mark Zucker from Vasari-Milanesi, Vol. 2, 208: "e nell'altre tele fece alcune mostre d'uomini d'arme a cavallo di quei tempi, con assai ritratti di naturale."
21. It may be noted that the standard English edition of the *Lives* mistranslates the phrase "mostre d'uomini d'arme" as "studies of men-at-arms" (Vasari-De Vere, Vol. 1, 284). In Renaissance Italian, however, the expression was specifically used to describe men at parade; I believe that my translation ("displays of men-at-arms") best captures the spirit of Vasari's words and am grateful to Prof. Linda Carroll of Newcomb College (Tulane University) for her help in understanding them.
22. Author's translation with the assistance of Prof. Mark Zucker from Horne, 138 (or Pope-Hennessy, 152): "3 quadri grandi di giostre antichi tutti in uno pezzo, con lor corniciette dorate, apicchati almuro sopra alla porta del primo salone, nell'andito della cappella."
23. Meloni Trkulja, 108: "Trè Quadri in tavola . . . entrovi Battaglie Diverse . . . mano di Paolo Uccelli."
24. Ibid., 109.
25. Horne, 116, notes that an earlier inventory of the Uffizi Gallery, dated 1769, makes no mention of the paintings.
26. Davies, 529; also Appendix I, 565-567.

27. Horne, 116; Pope-Hennessy, 152; Borsi, 310.
28. See Pope-Hennessy, 153, for references to previous scholarship on the question of dating.
29. All monographs on Uccello describe, illustrate, and cite pertinent literature on these works; see, for example, Pope-Hennessy or Borsi.
30. Some (but not all) of these points have been made by previous writers (e.g., O'Grady, 102-103; Joannides, 214; Gebhardt, 184). But O'Grady was not inclined to draw conclusions from his observations, and Gebhardt's conclusions are different from mine. I do, however, agree with Joannides' statement that "the figure drawing in the Paris panel is considerably more accomplished than in the Florence and London panels, and . . . has none of their discrepancies in scale; assuming progress in these respects on Uccello's part, it is likely to be the latest of the three."
31. O'Grady, 99.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid., 103.
34. For the Casa Vecchia, see Saalman and Mattox.
35. Ibid., 337-339 and Fig. 13.

36. For what follows from here until the end of the present section of the paper, I have made my hypotheses and drawn my conclusions from the very complicated evidence presented by several scholars (Baldini, Parronchi, Davies, Joannides, and Gebhardt), whose own arguments, hypotheses, and conclusions differ not only from mine, but from each other's. Gebhardt's study, the most recent in the series, successfully refutes some of the conclusions of its predecessors but, in my view, is not convincing in every respect.

37. Gebhardt, 181-82.

38. Cf. Picasso's *Guernica* (1937) and Guston's *The Street* (1977), both of which evoke the *Battle of San Romano* according to Hughes, 108 and 398 (illustrated pls. 71 and 256).

39. Rubin, 64.

40. Russo, 167.

41. Ibid., 168.

42. Baxandall, chap. II.

43. Ibid., 101.

44. Ibid., 89.

45. Ibid.

46. See Souchal, 45-57, nos. 7-11.

47. Dunkerton et al., 90.

48. Hale, 155.

49. Gebhardt, 185.

50. I owe this observation to Professor James Beck of Columbia University, who has studied the entire inventory. Unfortunately, I am familiar only with excerpts from this important document.

51. Cox-Rearick, 48, and Dunkerton et al., 282, also note that the plumes may allude to the Medici feathers; according to Cox-Rearick, moreover, the roses on the hedge are also Medici emblems. For early Medici devices in general, see Ames-Lewis; for later ones as well, Cox-Rearick, *passim*.

52. E.g., Ames-Lewis, 128; Cox-Rearick, 48; and Dunkerton et al., 282. It may be noted that orange trees alluding to the *palle* appear in the background of other paintings commissioned by the Medici, such as Fra Angelico's San Marco Altarpiece, Benozzo Gozzoli's *Journey of the Magi* (in the chapel of the Palazzo), and Botticelli's *Primavera*; for other examples, see Ames-Lewis, 128.

53. Saalman and Mattox, 341.
54. Starn and Partridge, 57, who do not, however, make mention of the chaperons.
55. Griffiths, 315, quoting from Giovanni Cavalcanti's *Istorie Fiorentine*.
56. Ibid., quoting from Cosimo's *Ricordi*.
57. Horster, 182-83.
58. See especially Starn and Partridge, 54-55, for the relationship between Averardo de' Medici and Micheletto da Cotignola.
59. See Zucker 1993, 245, for some illuminating remarks on this subject.
60. See above, 3.

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1. Paolo Uccello, *Battle of San Romano*. London, National Gallery.



2. Paolo Uccello, *Battle of San Romano*. Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi.

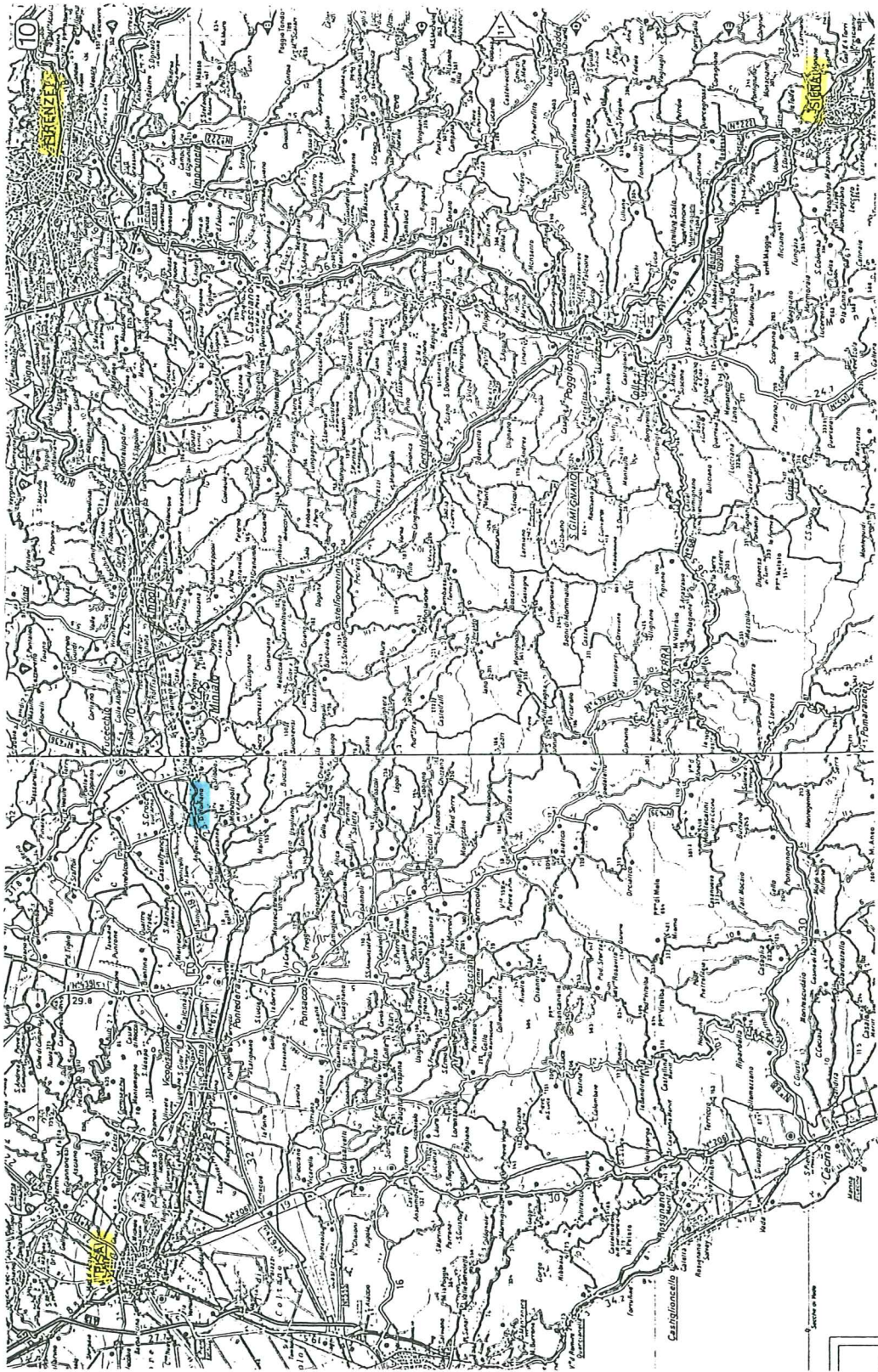


3. Paolo Uccello, *Battle of San Romano*. Paris, Musée du Louvre.



4. Paolo Uccello, *Battle of San Romano*. Detail of Florence panel.





5. Map of northern Tuscany with Pisa, Florence, and Siena highlighted in yellow, and San Romano highlighted in blue.

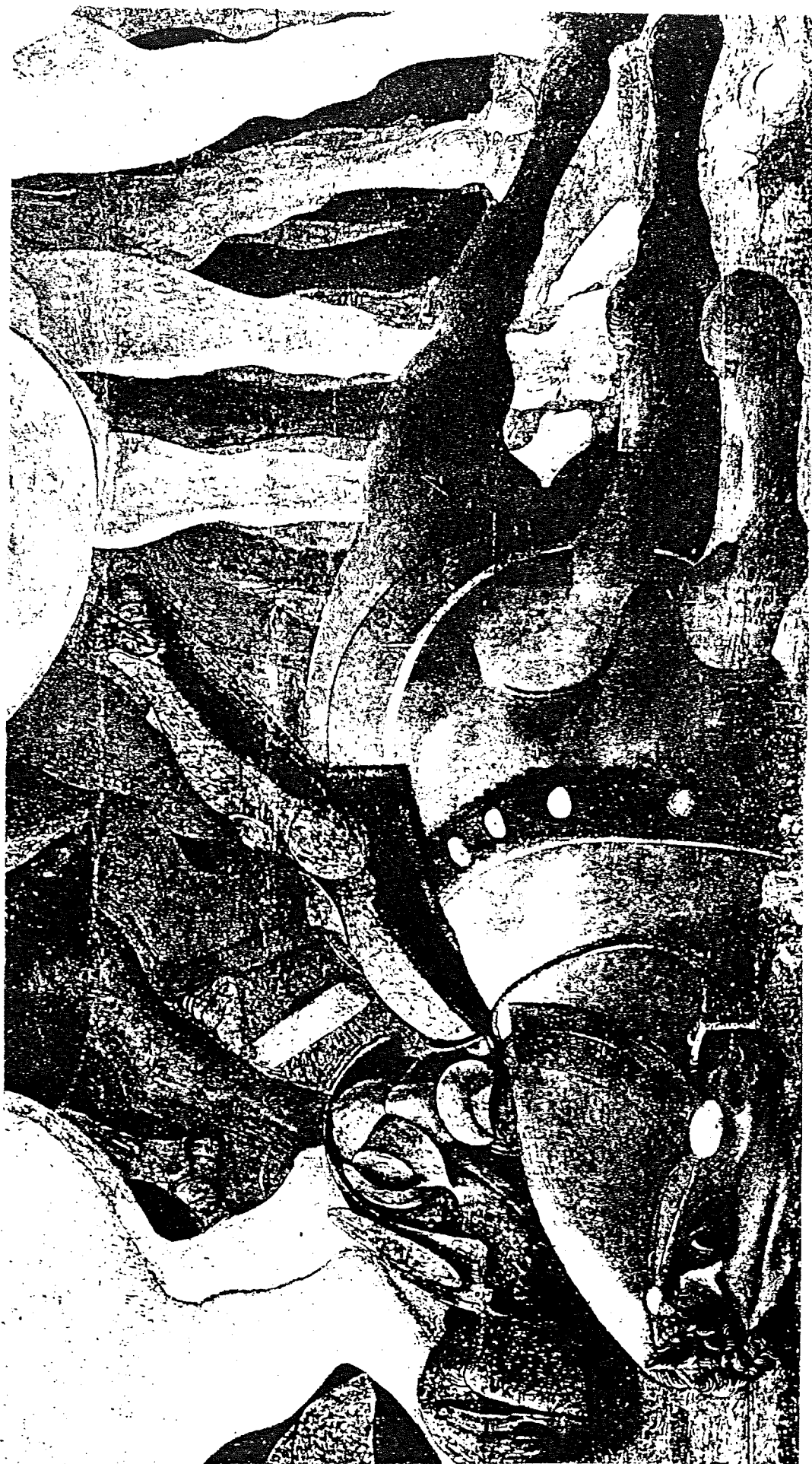


6. Paolo Uccello, *Battle of San Romano*. Detail of London panel.



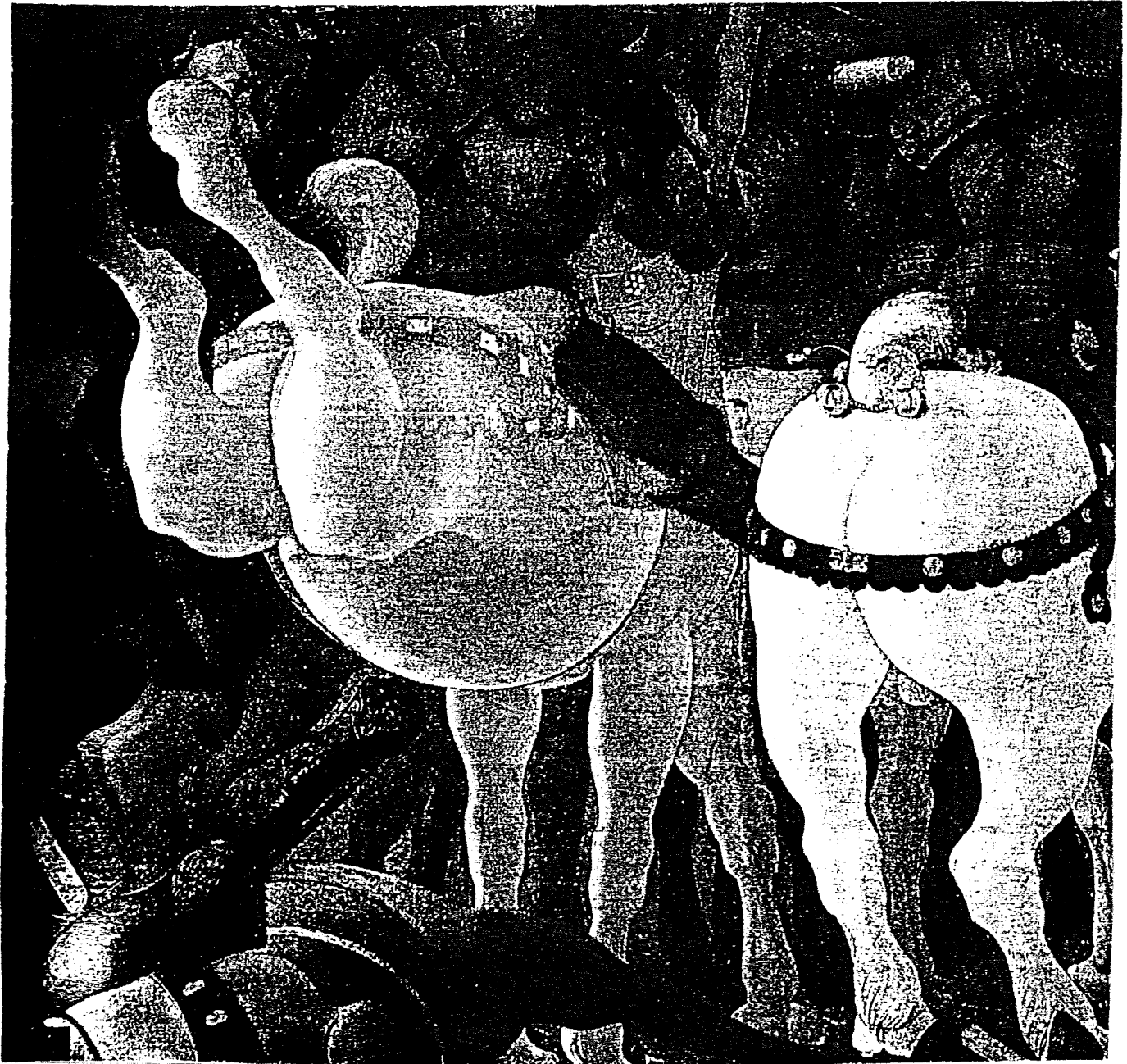


7. Andrea del Castagno, *Equestrian Portrait of Niccolò da Tolentino*, detail. Florence, Cathedral.



8. Paolo Uccello, *Battle of San Romano*. Detail of Florence panel.





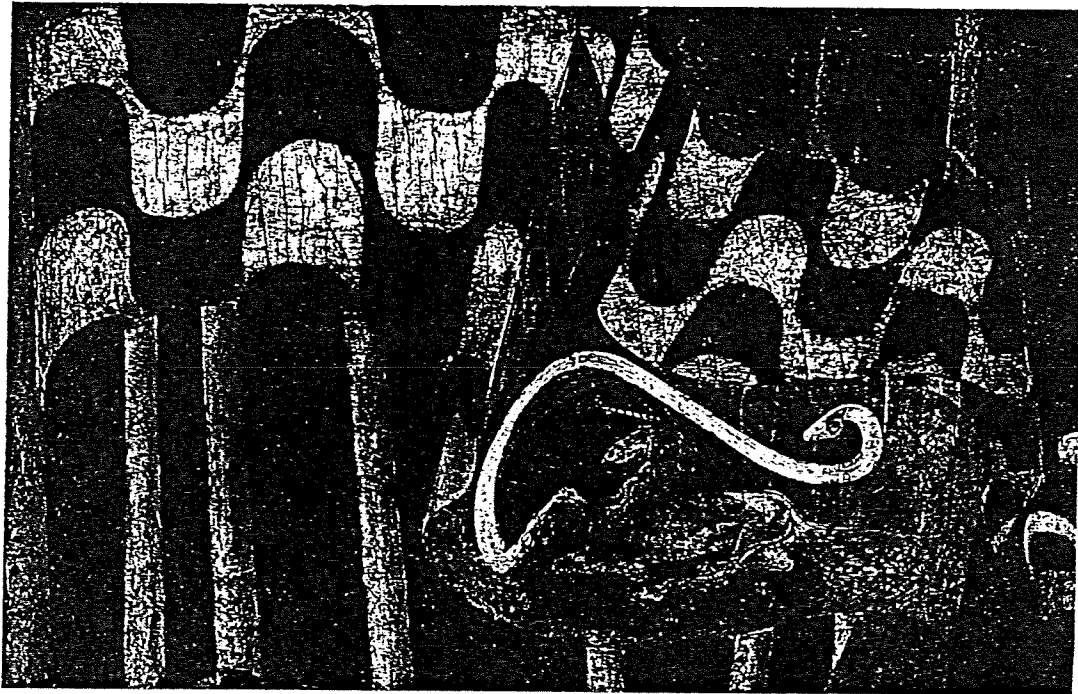
9. Paolo Uccello, *Battle of San Romano*. Detail of Florence panel.



10. Paolo Uccello, *Battle of San Romano*. Detail of Florence panel.



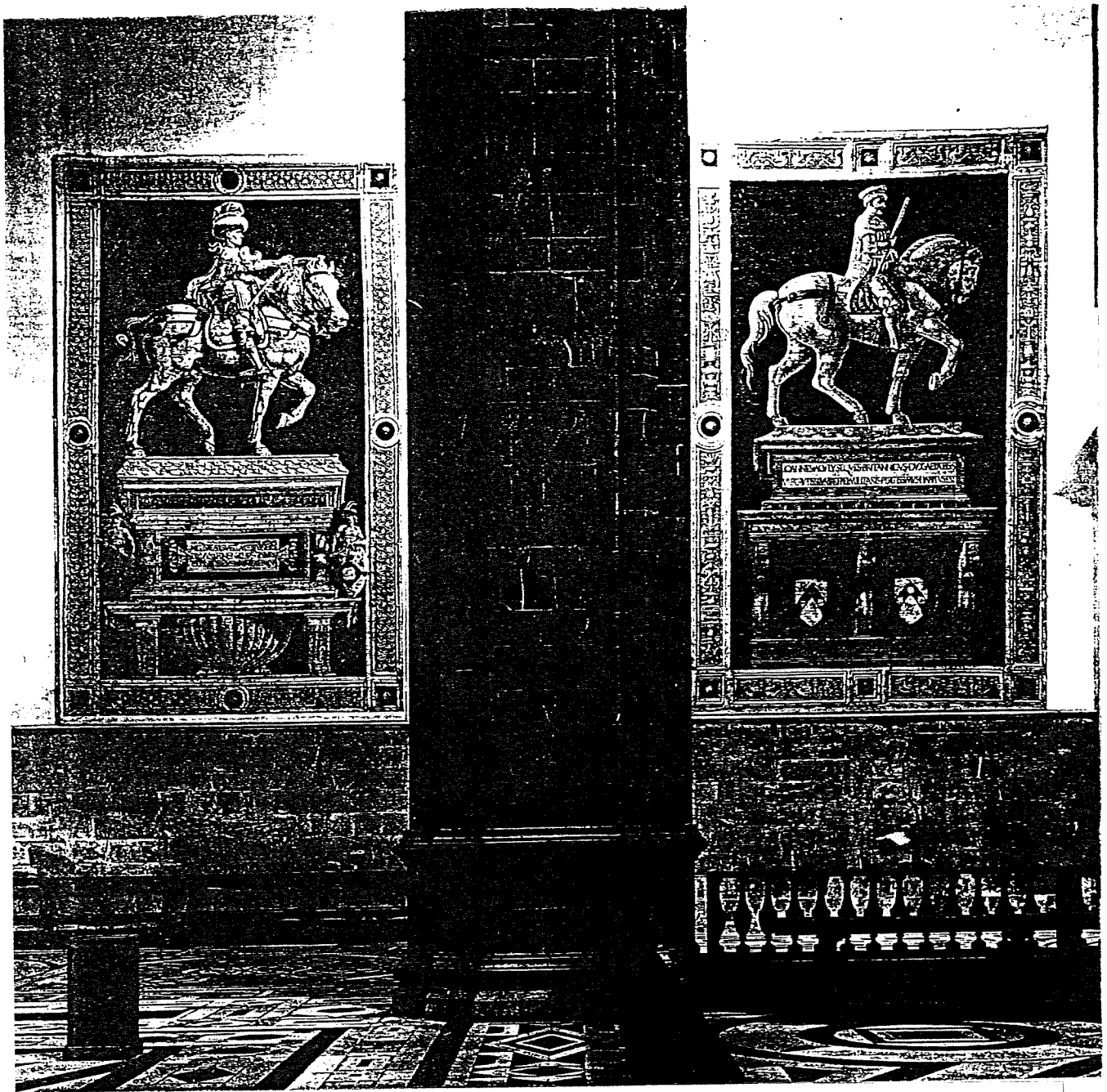
11. Paolo Uccello, *Battle of San Romano*. Detail of Paris panel.



12. Paolo Uccello, *Battle of San Romano*. Detail of Paris panel.



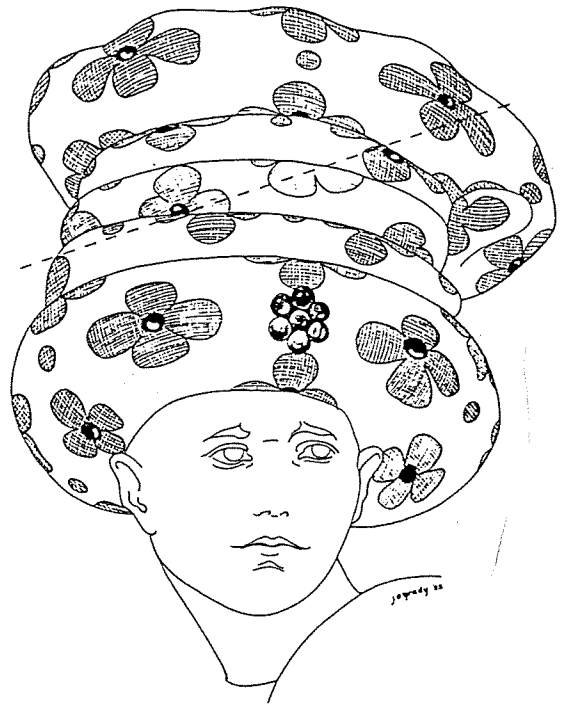
13. Attributed to Baccio Baldini, *Wild Animals Attacking Horses and Bulls*, engraving. Paris, Musée du Louvre.



14. Interior of Cathedral of Florence with Andrea del Castagno's *Equestrian Portrait of Niccolò da Tolentino* (left) and Paolo Uccello's *Equestrian Portrait of Sir John Hawkwood* (right).

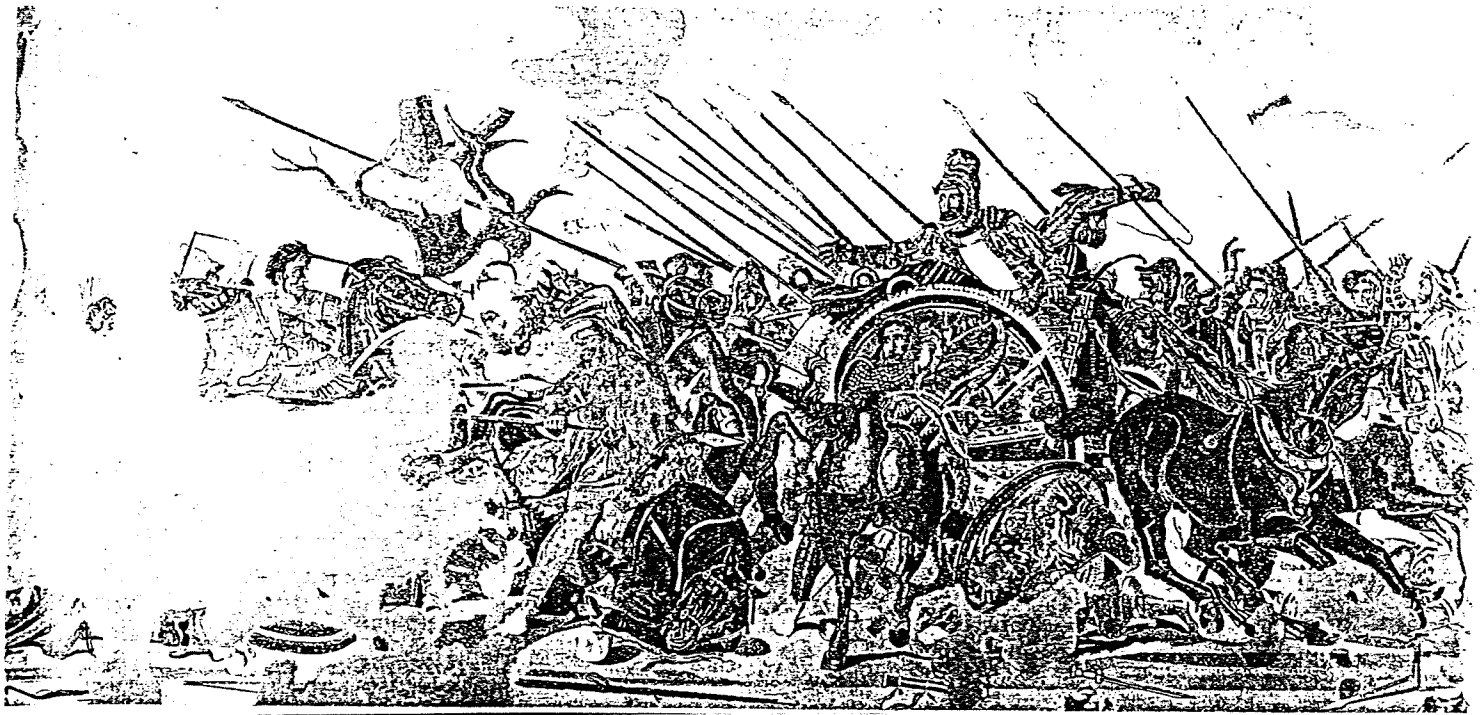


15. Paolo Uccello, *The Execution of the Repentant Woman* (above) and *The Jew and His Family Burned* (below), from the predella of *The Profanation of the Host*. Urbino, Galleria Nazionale delle Marche.

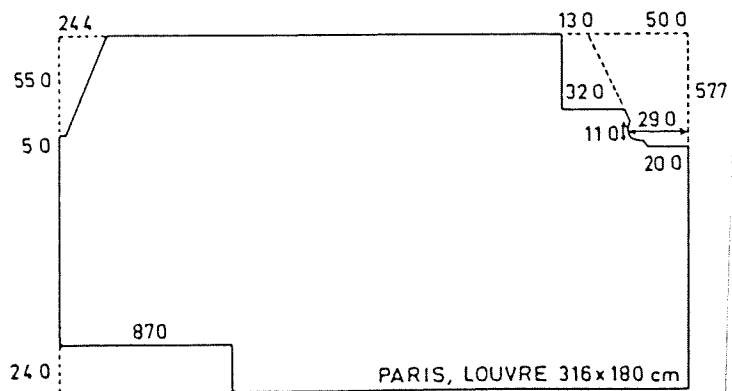
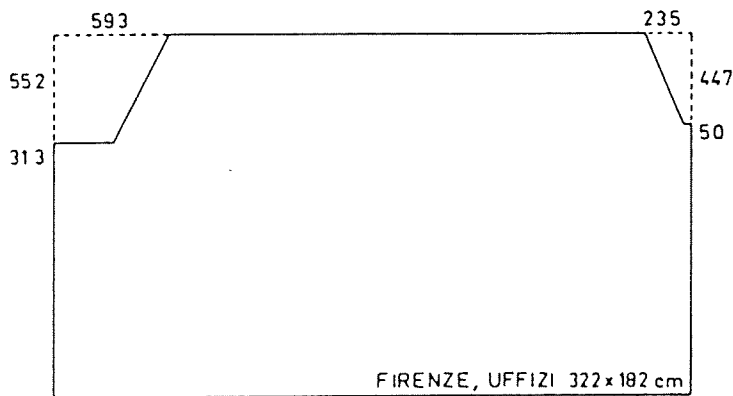
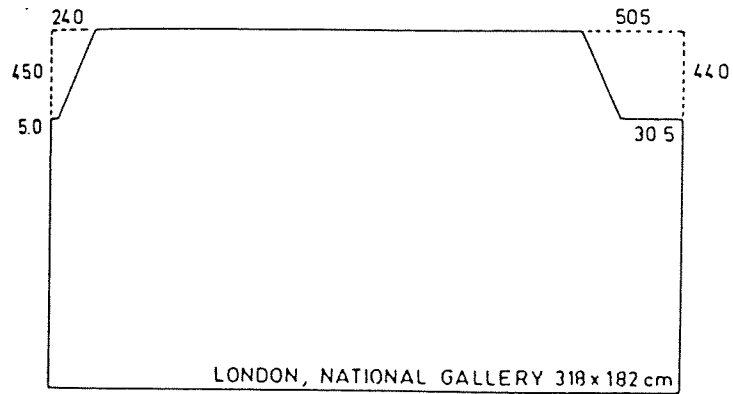


16. Paolo Uccello, details of Niccolò da Tolentino (above) and Micheletto da Cotignola (below), from the London and Paris panels of the *Battle of San Romano*. Drawings after John O'Grady.

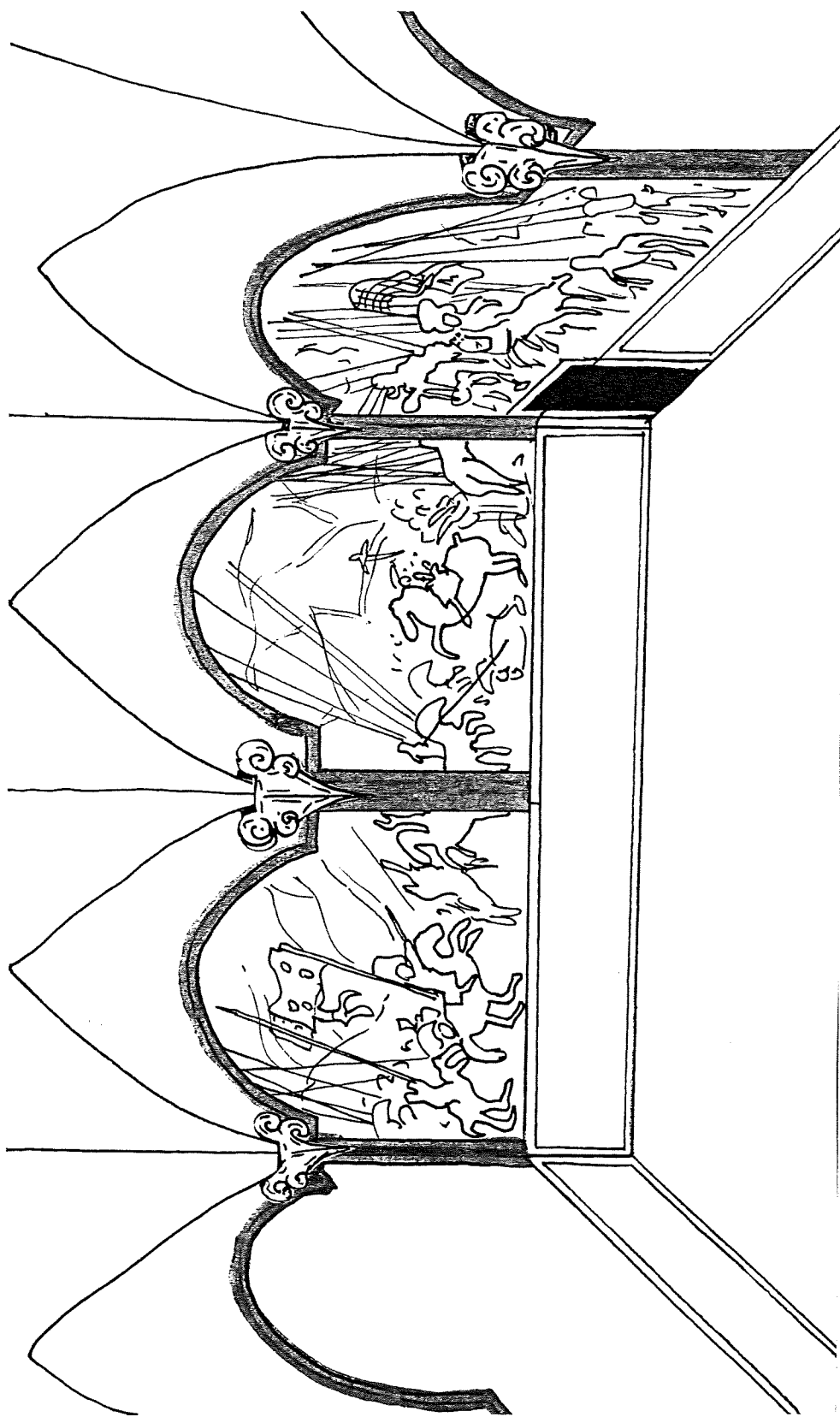




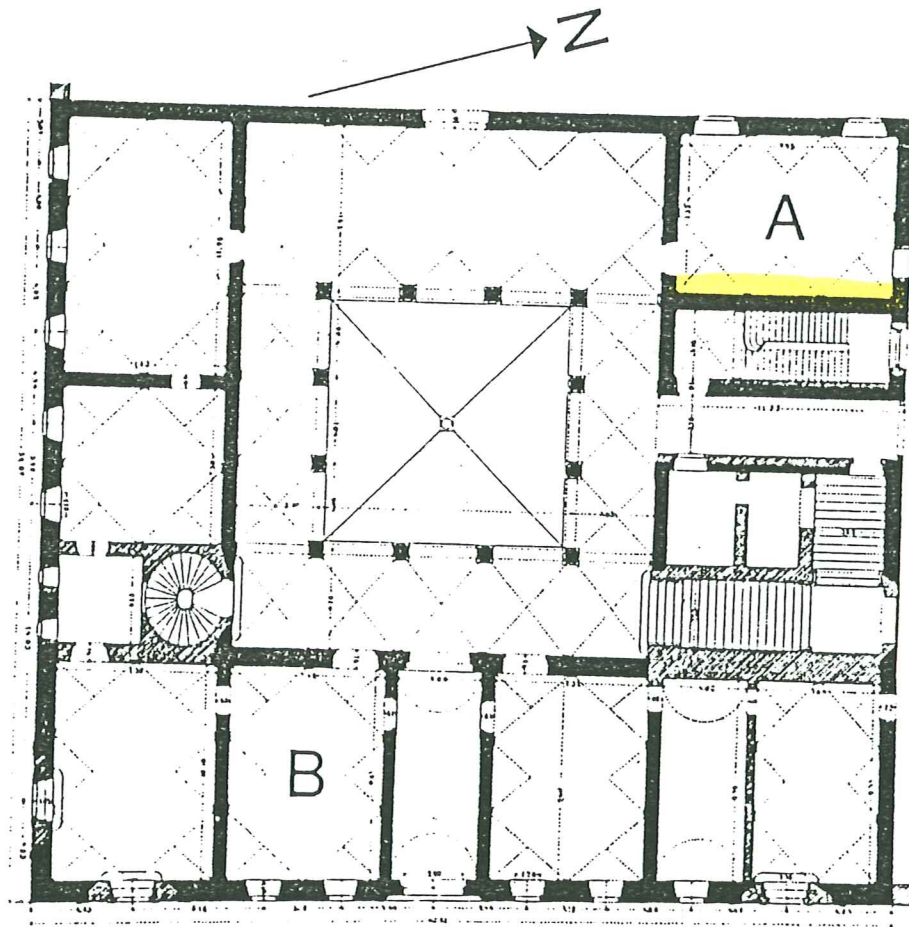
17. *Battle of Issus*, Roman mosaic. Naples, Museo Nazionale.



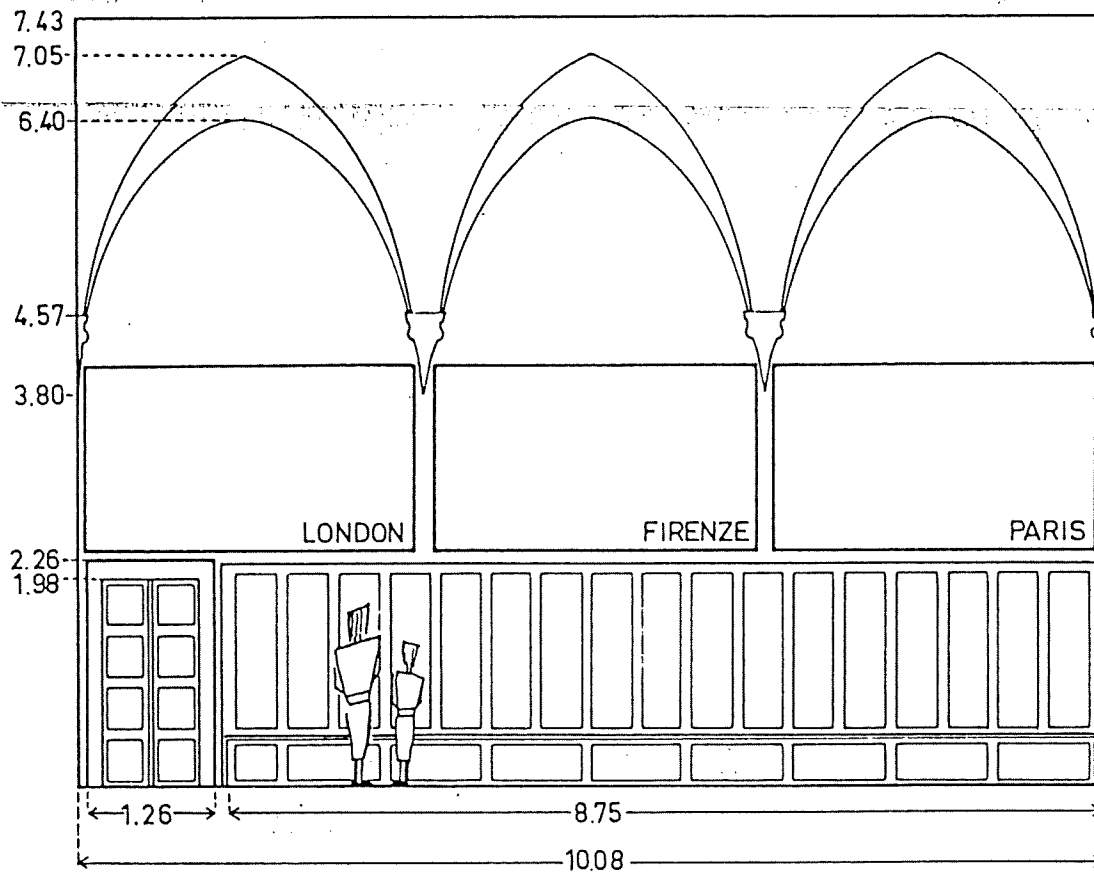
18. Diagram of London, Florence, and Paris panels of the *Battle of San Romano* showing later additions. Drawings after Volker Gebhardt.



19. Reconstruction of room in the old Medici palace showing the hypothetical original arrangement of the *Battle of San Romano*. Drawing by Gabriele Chiocca.



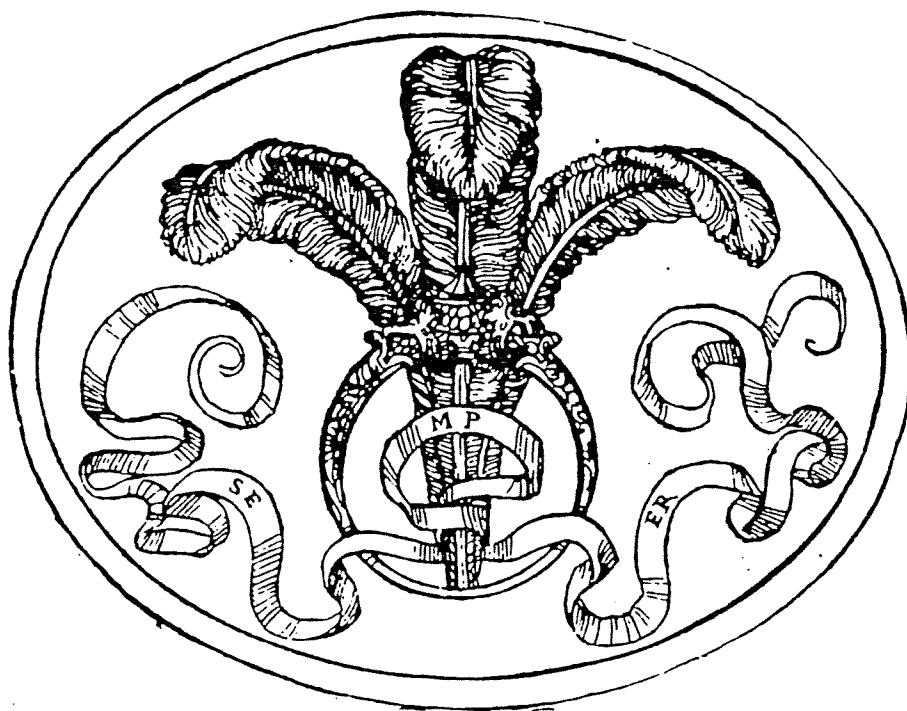
20. Groundplan of Palazzo Medici-Riccardi, Florence.



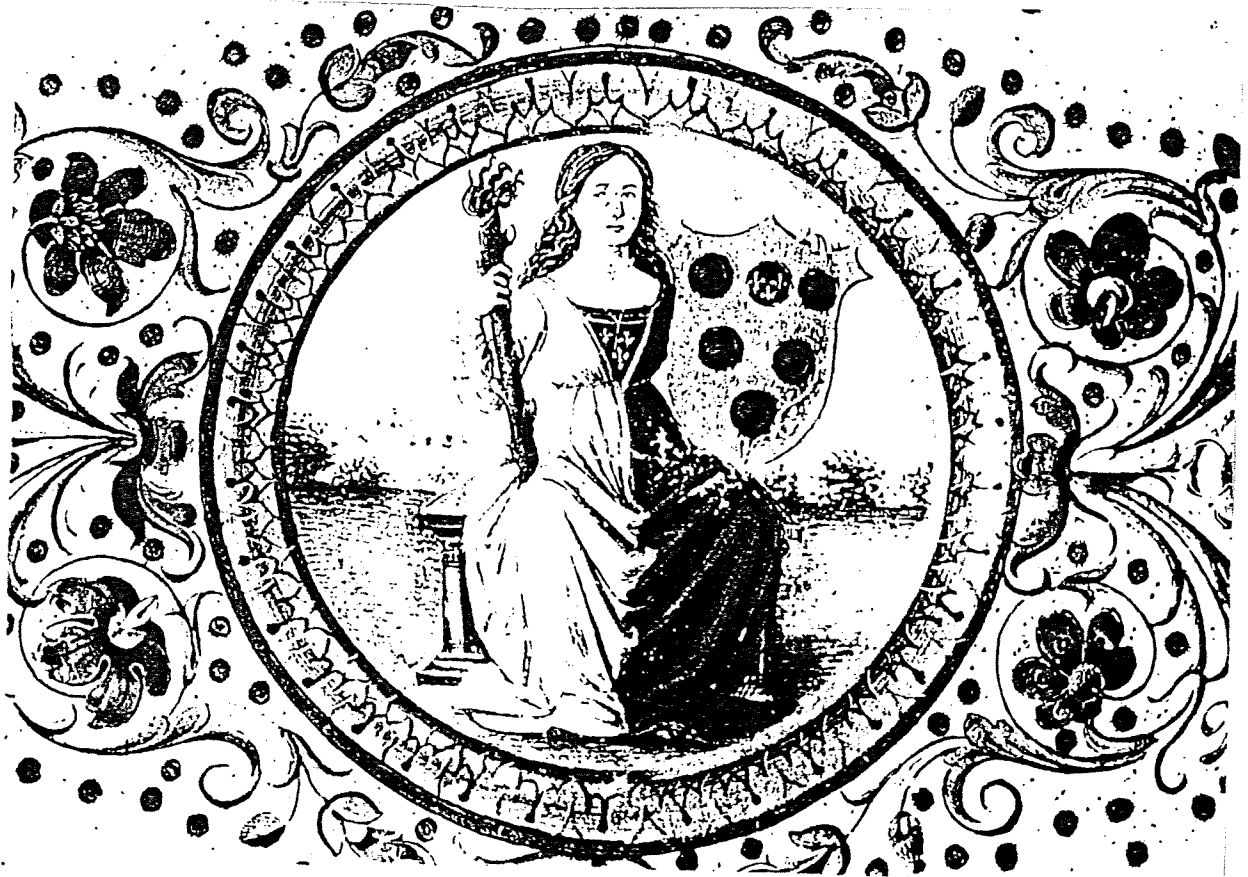
21. Diagram of London, Florence, and Paris panels of the *Battle of San Romano* as they appeared in the Chamber of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Drawing after Volker Gebhardt.



22. Limbourg Brothers, *January*, from the calendar of *Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*.  
Chantilly, Musée Condé.



23. *Impresa* of the Medici, from Paolo Giovio, *Dialogo dell'impresie*.



24. Personification of Florence with the Medici coat of arms, from a manuscript of Piero di Lorenzo de' Medici. Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana.