The context and function of four exceptions to effigial wall tomb patronage in Quattrocento Florence

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THE CONTEXT AND FUNCTION OF FOUR EXCEPTIONS TO EFFIGIAL WALL TOMB PATRONAGE IN QUATTROCENTO FLORENCE

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

in

The School of Art

by

Katy Gail Richardson
B.G.S., Louisiana State University, 2006
August 2009
To

Mom and Dad,

for unwavering faith, innumerable sacrifices, and unconditional love;

and in honored memory of my dear friend,

Johnnie P. Thibodeaux, Jr. (November 9, 1976–June 17, 2005),

whose life and death inspired the present work
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ABSTRACT

Entitlement to burial in a wall tomb with sculpted effigy, the Florentine tomb-type above all others in honor and prestige, belonged solely to members of the ecclesiastical elite throughout the Trecento and into the Quattrocento, but that changed in the mid-1440s with the inclusion of the most illustrious laymen among those memorialized by this type of monument. This modification of patronage, however, does not signify a major reform that allowed unmitigated access to the tomb-type for all laymen of high repute. On the contrary, eighteen of the twenty-two known effigial wall tombs erected in Florence in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries commemorate individuals of religious prominence, such as popes, cardinals, bishops, saints, beati, and founders of religious houses. The remaining four tombs and their interred—Leonardo Bruni, Carlo Marsuppini, Giuliano Davanzati, and Bernardo Giugni—constitute the subject of this thesis, which aims to understand these exceptions to centuries-old Florentine burial customs from a sociological perspective, viewing them not merely as independent funerary monuments, but as part of a broader and richer context. It examines the biographies of each man, revealing that devotion to the greater good above all else represents the common thread running through the lives of all four. It then analyzes the iconography of their tombs, which memorialize each man’s qualities and accomplishments that made him worthy of Christian salvation as well as perpetual fame. This thesis also explores the function and context of the four tombs as a collective. The visual references to the intellectual, social, and civic aspects of the interred and their lives
evoked the classical past by publicly honoring and commemorating to the highest degree men who exemplified the ideal citizen, in the same manner as their ancient forebears, which the classicizing architectural forms and imagery reinforced. In breaking with tradition to allow the burial of these four men in Florence’s most honorific tomb-type, the state found an effective means of rewarding those whose active civic pride and devoted public service significantly benefitted or glorified Florence, inspiring others to the same and connecting the Republic and her citizens to the ancient past.
INTRODUCTION

In “Social Structure and the Typology of Funerary Monuments in Early Renaissance Florence,” Andrew Butterfield analyzes the design and patronage of Florentine tomb-types of the Trecento and Quattrocento in an effort to provide a better understanding of their formal and stylistic variations over time.¹ Butterfield delineates three fundamental components of sepulchral design that signal a correspondence between social hierarchy and tomb-type: the tomb’s placement on the wall or on the ground; the inclusion of a baldacchino or canopy that surmounts the sarcophagus; and the presence of a sculpted effigy of the deceased.² More monumental and visually prominent than a tomb placed on the ground, a wall tomb commands attention and conveys a greater sense of prestige, thus increasing the extent of posthumous remembrance. The baldacchino and the effigy reflect aspects of funeral ceremonial governed by sumptuary laws, the aim of which was to prevent ostentatious attire and spectacle in the majority of Florence’s public forums.³ These laws specified that entitlement to the complete scope of funerary honors—chief among which were the right to display the deceased’s uncovered body on the bier and the right to erect a canopy over the bier—belonged solely to knights,


² Ibid., 58.

³ Ibid., 61, for the connection between elite funeral ceremonial and tomb design; and 60, for the legal regulation of funerary honors according to social status; see also Helen Ronan, “The Tuscan Wall Tomb, 1250–1400” (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1982), chap. 4; Evelyn Welch, *Art in Renaissance Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 190ff. For a thorough consideration of Florentine sumptuary laws, see Ronald E. Rainey, “Sumptuary Legislation in Renaissance Florence” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1985).
individuals who received a publicly funded burial, and those who held a doctorate in law or medicine. A Florentine who belonged to one of these elite groups possessed the right to burial in a type of tomb that replicated one, but not both, of the aforementioned honors. Such individuals, therefore, could commission a floor tomb that included an effigy or a wall tomb, which provides a cover for the sarcophagus, without an effigy.

The correlation between sepulchral design and social station holds true for all Florentine tomb-types, revealing a hierarchy of funerary monuments, in which honor serves as the principal typological distinction. Occupying the position at the pinnacle of the hierarchy, the wall tomb with sculpted effigy conveyed the highest degree of honor. All extant examples of this tomb-type in Florence from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries commemorate an individual, rather than a family, and include a sculpted effigy of the deceased—adorned in the ceremonial attire of his profession or office and reposed on a bier situated in a niche, which a stone canopy or a segmental pediment surmounts. Although usually placed on the ground and against the wall, some tombs of the type hang on the wall. Entitlement to the effigial wall tomb belonged solely to individuals of the utmost religious renown throughout the Trecento and into the Quattrocento, but that changed in the mid-1440s with the inclusion of the most illustrious laymen among those

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5 Ibid., 55, 58-61. Anne Markham Schulz, The Sculpture of Bernardo Rossellino and His Workshop (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 40, notes “the peculiarly Florentine sense of propriety which required specific types of tombs for different social classes.”


7 Ibid., 54, for the defining characteristics of the effigial wall tomb; the segmental pediment appears only in the fifteenth century.
who received this type of funerary monument.\textsuperscript{8} This modification of effigial wall tomb patronage, however, does not signify a major reform that allowed unmitigated access to the tomb-type for all laymen of high repute. On the contrary, eighteen of the twenty-two known effigial wall tombs erected in Florence in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries commemorate individuals of religious prominence, primarily higher ecclesiastics (popes, cardinals, or bishops), saints, \textit{beati}, and persons responsible for the foundation of religious houses, such as convents or monasteries.\textsuperscript{9} The remaining four tombs and their interred—Leonardo Bruni, Carlo Marsuppini, Giuliano Davanzati, and Bernardo Giugni—constitute the subject of this inquiry, which aims to understand these exceptions to centuries-old Florentine burial customs from a sociological perspective, viewing them not merely as independent funerary monuments, but as part of a broader and richer context. To that end, the opening chapter provides a biographical survey of each man to elucidate what so distinguished them from the rest of Florentine society and justified their burial in the type of tomb traditionally restricted to the ecclesiastical elite, a social group to which they did not belong. In an effort to isolate a common determinant of these exceptions, the second chapter addresses each of the funerary monuments, examining which aspects of the men’s lives that their tombs commemorate and how. That which emerges from the analysis of each tomb’s iconographic content will provide the information necessary to approach the tombs from a wider viewpoint in the final chapter, which explores the function and context of the four funerary monuments as a collective.

\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., 55.

\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., and 55 n. 17.
CHAPTER 1—THE MEN

Leonardo Bruni

The “most important humanist of the early Renaissance,”¹ known to his contemporaries as Leonardo Aretino, originated from the Tuscan town of Arezzo, where his father earned a living as a small grain dealer.² Although of modest extraction, the Aretine built his life and career in Florence, that quintessential Renaissance city now inextricably tied to his enduring fame as Leonardo Bruni, the eminent humanist, historian, and public official.³

Leonardo’s time in Florence commenced in the early 1390s⁴ as a student at the Studio fiorentino (University of Florence), where he took civil law and arts courses, and studied rhetoric under Giovanni Malpaghini da Ravenna, Petrarch’s former secretary who “played a crucial role in the development of the studia humanitatis.”⁵ Despite his initial

¹ Schulz, Rossellino, 32.


⁵ Jonathan Davies, Florence and Its University during the Early Renaissance (Boston: Brill, 1998), provides a systematic and comprehensive study on the structure, function, and context (social, economic,
interest in law, the studia humanitatis—grammar, history, moral philosophy, poetry, and rhetoric—ultimately emerged as the primary area on which he focused his attention, studying under two of the most renowned classical scholars in Florence at the time.  

Bruni learned Latin and studied the texts and history of ancient Rome under the tutelage of the humanist-writer and Florentine chancellor Coluccio Salutati, one of Petrarch’s leading followers, who “had the best library in Tuscany . . . including an extraordinary collection of historical writings” to which he gave his students unrestricted access. The influential Byzantine scholar Manuel Chrysoloras, who accepted the position offered to him by the Studio fiorentino in 1396 to teach Hellenic studies, instructed Bruni in the language and literature of the ancient Greeks. Through the efforts of his lessons under Salutati and Chrysoloras, the fifteenth-century biographer Vespasiano da Bisticci says political, ecclesiastical, and cultural) of the Studio fiorentino; see 92, 117, on Bruni’s coursework at the Studio; and 15-6, 108-9, on Malpaghini; see also Vasoli, “Bruni,” 618. For more on Bruni, law, and the Studio, see Leonardo Bruni, The Humanism of Leonardo Bruni: Selected Texts, ed. and trans. Gordon Griffiths, James Hankins, and David Thompson (Binghamton, New York: MRTS, 1987), 23-4.

6 For Bruni’s preference of the studia humanitatis over law, see Davies, Florence, 117; see also Gene Brucker, Florence: The Golden Age, 1138–1737 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 137; Hankins, introduction to History, xii. For the subjects comprising the studia humanitatis, see Martines, Social World, 8-9; Davies, Florence, 106. For the development of the studia humanitatis at the Studio, see ibid., chap. 6.

7 For Salutati’s library, see Hankins, introduction to History, xii. Ibid., for Bruni’s studies under Salutati; see also Vespasiano, Lives, 358; Martines, Social World, 167; Vasoli, “Bruni,” 618-9; Brucker, Florence, 203.

that Leonardo “gained a greater proficiency in Greek and Latin than any other student of [the] time” and became “one of the first to translate Greek into Latin.”

Coluccio Salutati’s recommendation of his pupil to Pope Innocent VII (reigned 1404–6) helped Bruni to secure employment with the Papal Curia in Rome, where he remained from 1405 to 1415. Innocent VII named Bruni as secretarius apostolicus (Apostolic Secretary) and he continued as such under Gregory XII (reigned 1406–15) and Alexander V (reigned 1409–10). While with the Curia, Bruni also served as a canon of Florence Cathedral, an office from which he resigned in 1409, two years after his appointment. In 1410, the oligarchy-controlled Florentine government elected Bruni to a one-year term as Chancellor of Florence. Only a few months into his chancellorship, he relinquished his position in order to work for John XXIII (reigned 1410–15), during whose papacy Bruni served as secretarius apostolicus once again. All four popes—two of which, technically, were antipopes—held Bruni in high regard, particularly John

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9 Vespasiano, Lives, 358.


11 For Bruni’s employment as secretarius apostolicus, see Bruni, Humanism, 25-35; Martines, Social World, 167; Davies, Florence, 92; see also Vespasiano, Lives, 358-9; Vasoli, “Bruni,” 621-3. Gregory XII reigned November 30, 1406–July 4, 1415 and Alexander V reigned June 26, 1409–May 3, 1410; see Kelley, Popes, 235 and 236, respectively.


XXIII, whom Bruni loyally served until the Council of Constance deposed the pope in 1415. Following John XXIII’s deposition, Bruni moved back to Florence, where he gained citizenship as well as a special tax indulgence (in 1416, with the aid of the Medici) and remained for the duration of his life.

In the years subsequent to his return, Bruni led life as a private citizen and continued his work as a humanist scholar. Between 1417 and 1426, he not only translated ancient texts, such as Aristotle’s *Nichomachean Ethics* (1417), the pseudo-Aristotelian *Economics* (1419–20), Plato’s *Phaedrus* (early 1420s), and some of Plato’s letters (late 1426), but also composed original works. After completing the revisions of the *Parte Guelfa*’s statutes (1420), he wrote *De militia* (*On Knighthood*)—a work of 1421 dedicated to one of the oligarchy leaders, Rinaldo degli Albizzi—followed in the mid-1420s by *Isagogicon moralis disciplinae* (*Introductory Commentary on Moral Instruction*), which he dedicated to the oligarch Galeazzo Ricasoli. Drawing on the

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16 For Bruni’s return to Florence (1415), see Seigel, “‘Civic Humanism,’” 26; Field, “Leonardo Bruni,” 1117; Brucker, *Florence*, 137. For Bruni’s citizenship, see Martines, *Social World*, 168, who states that Bruni’s “powerful friendships” not only helped him to gain citizenship but also a special tax indulgence, for which see also ibid., 120 n. 117, 171, 255; Hankins, introduction to *History*, xii; Field, “Leonardo Bruni,” 1111 n. 8; and p. 15 n. 42 below.

17 Vasoli, “Bruni,” 624; Martines, *Social World*, 168: “After his brief appointment as chancellor at the end of 1410, Bruni did not again accept a civic dignity until late in May 1426.” For the dignity accepted in May 1426, see p. 9 n. 23 below.


19 For the *Parte Guelfa*’s statutes, see Field, “Leonardo Bruni,” 1112, 1118; Vasoli, “Bruni,” 625. For an English translation of the *De militia*, see Bruni, *Humanism*, 107-11, 127-45; for a critical edition of the
breadth of his classical knowledge, Bruni commented upon artistic matters also. In a letter of 1425—written to another of the oligarchy leaders, Niccolò da Uzzano, during the planning of the final set of doors for the Baptistery in Florence—Bruni delineated two qualities that he deemed necessary to sculptural design: “that the eye might be satisfied” and “that it may have import worthy of memory.” Although originally intended as criteria for the assessment of Lorenzo Ghiberti’s *Gates of Paradise*, Bruni’s oft-quoted statement continues to bear significance even today for the insight it offers art historians into some of the artistic values that helped to direct the stylistic evolution of Early Renaissance sculpture.

By the time of the planning of Ghiberti’s doors (1424/25), two opposing parties existed in Florence, with Cosimo de’ Medici and his supporters beginning to present a formidable challenge to the political strength of the oligarchs, led by Rinaldo degli Albizzi and Niccolò da Uzzano. In spite of his tenuous relations with some of the

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20 For Bruni’s letter to Niccolò da Uzzano, see Bennett and Wilkins, *Donatello*, 65, who date the letter to 1425; and Field, “Leonardo Bruni,” 1114 n. 20, who gives 1424 as the letter’s date. Quoted phrases are from Charles Seymour, *Sculpture in Italy, 1400–1500* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1966), 3, 74; the first phrase describes what Bruni referred to as *illustri*, the second describes the term *significanti*, and together these define Bruni’s notion of what sculptors should aim to achieve.

foremost Medici intellectuals and the strength of his connections to various oligarchs, Bruni wisely maintained ties to both parties.\textsuperscript{22} Moreover, the ending of Bruni’s formal employment with the Church in 1415 did not sever his ties to or diminish his influence with high-ranking ecclesiastical figures. During his decade-long career as a Curial official, Bruni undoubtedly cultivated important relationships with powerful figures and developed the ability to handle public affairs with both dignity and effectiveness. For eleven years after the termination of his post at the papal court, he devoted his time and efforts to study and writing, expanding his knowledge of the past in order to understand the present and achieving an ever-increasing degree of fame in the process. The valuable skills he honed during those twenty years of public service and scholarly dedication more than adequately prepared him for the task assigned to him by the Republic in late May 1426, when the Signoria chose him as one of two ambassadors to Pope Martin V, who mediated peace talks between the Florentine embassy and the legates dispatched by the Duke of Milan.\textsuperscript{23} Furthermore, Bruni shared a close friendship with Pope Eugenius IV.
(reigned 1431–47), who resided in Florence during much of his papacy. In 1439, Florentines witnessed firsthand the Church Union (which briefly united the Eastern and Western Churches) thanks in large part to Bruni, apparently a key figure in helping Cosimo de' Medici to persuade the Ecclesiastical Council to leave Ferrara and convene instead in Florence.

The combination of his growing reputation as a virtuoso humanist-scholar, his bipartisan ties, and his important ecclesiastical relationships likely account for the political factions’ view of Bruni—in terms of respectability, political neutrality, and experience—as the optimal man to head the chancellery, an office to which the Signoria elected him in December 1427. For the seventeen years that followed, until his death in 1444, Leonardo Bruni served as Chancellor of the Florentine Republic, an office to which he brought an extraordinary degree of celebrity, erudition, and dignity. The chancellor bore the enormous responsibility of handling the foreign affairs of his state, which placed

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24 For Bruni and Eugenius IV, see Black, Benedetto Accolti, 130. For the residence in Florence of Eugenius IV, see Vespasiano, Lives, 19-29; Najemy, History, 286-90. Eugenius IV reigned March 3, 1431–February 23, 1447; see Kelley, Popes, 241.

25 Najemy, History, 289-90; Field, “Leonardo Bruni,” 1125 n. 61, for the roles of Cosimo and Bruni, respectively, in bringing the Council to Florence; see also Brucker, Florence, 253. Owing to his command of Greek, Bruni played an important role during the Council, further enhancing his fame and bringing honor to Florence (see Black, Benedetto Accolti, 111, 136, 165).

26 Martines, Social World, 165-6. Ibid., 169, states that Bruni was elected in November 1427, but the correct date is December 1427. Now see Field, “Leonardo Bruni,” 1118 n. 37, who reports (based on archival documents) that “Bruni’s election was rejected in the Consiglio del Popolo on 8 December and tabled on 10 December” and that Bruni had commenced his service as chancellor by December 16, 1427; and also Black, Benedetto Accolti, 107-8; Kent, Rise, 227.

27 Bruni died on March 9, 1444 (Vasoli, “Bruni,” 630; Schulz, Rossellino, 32).
him at the very forefront of sociopolitical life in fifteenth-century Florence.\textsuperscript{28} Effectively, that which characterized him as an individual and the way in which others perceived him defined the identity of Florence and determined the kind of role she played on the larger sociopolitical stage. Fulfilling the day-to-day duties of the office necessitated an intelligence level and skill-set beyond that of the average person, to be sure, but more importantly, the primary public relations executive of the state had to personify the character of Florence. His effectiveness hinged on his ability to portray Florence as “the leader of republican liberty in Italy” and to promote “the virtues of an active life in worldly affairs,” inspiring others to pursue the \textit{vita attiva}.\textsuperscript{29} The strength of any republic and its capacity to maintain independence and freedom from tyrannical rule lies in the fervent devotion of its citizens to serving their community and putting country before self, choosing the good of all over the good of one. As the most visible representative of Florence and its way of life, the chancellor needed to be the ultimate exemplification of republican patriotism and civic virtue—the defining attributes of the ideal citizen—and possess the personal dignity that naturally lends itself to recognition and glory.\textsuperscript{30}


\textsuperscript{29} Martines, \textit{Social World}, 272.

\textsuperscript{30} The concepts of republican patriotism and civic virtue reflect a fusion of sociopolitical, historical, and moral ideas. They are part of the vocabulary of the intellectual republicanism of Quattrocento Florence, which historian Hans Baron called “civic humanism”—a term that refers to the ideology that arose from the melding of the medieval commitment to civic participation, the Trecento humanist devotion to the study and writing of letters, and the Quattrocento humanist preoccupation with classical learning. The literature on civic humanism is vast, but must begin with the seminal study of Hans Baron, \textit{The Crisis of Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny}, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955); see also ibid., \textit{In Search of Florentine Civic Humanism: Essays on the Transition from Medieval to Modern Thought}, 2 vols. (Princeton:
serve as the Republic’s chancellor, then, was an honor that the Signoria granted only to one deemed capable of words and actions in private as well as in public that, in turn, would bestow honor on Florence. Bruni filled other prestigious government offices simultaneous to his chancellorship, including three terms (1439–41) as a member of the Dieci di Balìa (Ten of War) and a term as a Prior (1443). Throughout his four decades of public service, first to the Church and then to the Florentine state, Bruni not only acted but also counseled others to act with wisdom, circumspection, and honor.

In addition to the widespread respect he earned as a papal and civic official, Bruni achieved international renown as the leading humanist, scholar, translator, and historian of his time. Specifically owing to this renown, Bruni matriculated in both the Arte della Lana (Guild of Domestic Wool Merchants and Manufacturers) and the Arte della Seta (Guild of Silk Weavers and Metal Sculptors) in early 1434 and 1443, respectively. He neither made nor sold wool or silk and, therefore, his admittance into these resulted solely from his prestigious standing in the community. He seems not to have traded in cloth


31 Vespasiano, *Lives*, 362, 365; Bruni’s first appointment to the Ten of War came on June 1, 1439, the second on May 1, 1440, and the third in June 1441, for all of which see Martines, *Social World*, 171-2, 176. Ibid., 172-3, for the functions and prestige of the Ten of War—an appointment to which was “more highly coveted than a seat in other magistracy”—as well as the other government posts Bruni held; and 174-5, for Bruni’s term in the Priorate, “Florence’s chief executive body,” which began on September 1, 1443.


33 Martines, *Social World*, 169, 255. Guild records (cited by ibid., 255 n. 55) indicate that, despite the fact that he did not make or sell either wool or silk, Bruni gained membership in these guilds because of his fame, eloquence, and position as chancellor.
either, but a decade earlier (March 30, 1425), he had enrolled in the Arte di Calimala (Guild of Merchants and Refiners of Imported Cloth) nonetheless.\textsuperscript{34} Sometime before 1429, Bruni also had matriculated in the Arte dei Giudici e Notai (Guild of Judges and Lawyers/Notaries) as a judge, which “denotes that he may have been a doctor of law, for most judges in the guild possessed degrees either in civil or canon law.”\textsuperscript{35} That Bruni belonged to four of the seven major guilds in Florence, three of which bore no relation to his profession, reflects the high esteem with which his fellow Florentines regarded him as a public official and as a scholar.

In 1435, Bruni completed—and dedicated to Pope Eugenius IV—his translation of Aristotle’s \textit{Politics}, the subject of which, in Bruni’s own words, “is concerned with public life, and is suitable for eloquence.”\textsuperscript{36} Around 1440, about four years after writing biographies of Dante and Petrarch in Italian (1436)—which he composed “to demonstrate the capacity of the vernacular to express serious philosophical, literary and historical ideas”\textsuperscript{37}—Bruni produced \textit{Commentarius rerum Graecarum}, a commentary on Xenophon’s \textit{Hellenica}, in the preface of which he identifies Xenophon as his “guide to

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 169, who suggests that Bruni’s entrance into the Calimala was a political move, for membership in one of the seven \textit{arti maggiori} (major guilds) was “the first step in political mobility for a ‘new’ man.” Bruni entered the Calimala, the guild in charge of Florence’s Baptistery, in the same year (1425) as his letter to Niccolò da Uzzano, in which he wrote about the stylistic qualities that the Baptistery’s final set of doors should possess.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid. Alison Wright, \textit{The Pollaiuolo Brothers: The Arts of Florence and Rome} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 117, also notes Bruni’s membership in the Arte dei Giudici e Notai. See also p. 22 n. 71 below.

\textsuperscript{36} Seigel, “‘Civic Humanism,’” 27. Vespasiano, \textit{Lives}, 235, claims that Bruni used for his translation Palla di Nofri degli Strozzi’s personal copy of the \textit{Politics}.

\textsuperscript{37} Black, \textit{Benedetto Accolti}, 51, according to whom, “At the end of his life, Bruni [took] . . . particular interest in defending the merits of the vernacular”; and Najemy, \textit{History}, 210-1, 222. On Bruni’s defense of the vernacular, see Baron, \textit{Crisis}, vol. 1, 303-6.
military caution.” A significant amount of modern scholarship on the humanism of Leonardo Bruni centers on the discussion of him as either a “civic humanist” or a “professional rhetorician.” The civic nature of so much of Bruni’s work gave rise to the former rubric, while proponents of the latter designation argue that “Bruni approached [such work] as part of his campaign for the rhetorical culture of the studia humanitatis” and that “his concern for civic life was the concern of a practising orator.” The present author has no desire to argue for one definition or the other—in truth, both are valid—but rather wishes to illuminate that which the scholarly debate overshadows: though many of Bruni’s works contain moral lessons pertinent to civic life, he gained immense fame amongst his contemporaries not as a political commentator but as an historian. Indeed, Bruni’s humanist career opened and closed with historical writings. His first major work, the Laudatio Florentinae Urbis (Panegyric of the City of Florence) (1400/01), praises Florentines and their republican city, and in Rerum suo tempore gestarum commentarius (An Account of the Events of His Own Time), written in the last years of his life, Bruni comments on Florentine history for the period from 1378 to 1440. In the four

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38 Field, “Leonardo Bruni,” 1126, 1127 n. 67. Martines, Social World, 335, states that Bruni dedicated his Commentarius rerum Graecarum—which he dates to 1439—to Agnolo di Jacopo Acciaiuoli.

39 For an excellent introduction to this debate, see Seigel, “‘Civic Humanism,’” 3-48. Also, see the literature cited on pp. 11-12 n. 30 above.

40 Ibid., 27.

41 Baron, Crisis, vol. 1, 178-89, asserts that Bruni wrote the Laudatio after 1402; Seigel, “‘Civic Humanism,’” 9-28, rejects Baron’s dating and argues convincingly in favor of the traditional date of 1400/01. Seigel provides an excellent summary of Baron’s argument for the post–1402 dating, which space does not permit the explanation of here. A new edition and English translation of Bruni’s Rerum suo tempore gestarum commentarius is included in Leonardo Bruni, History of the Florentine People, Volume 3, Books IX–XII, ed. and trans. James Hankins with D. J. W. Bradley (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).
intervening decades, Bruni devoted himself to the composition of *Historiae florentini populi*, which traces the history of Florence and her people from its genesis up to the dawn of the Quattrocento. In the introduction to his translation of the first four books of Bruni’s masterwork, James Hankins articulates the significance of the humanist’s accomplishment in a single sentence: “If boldness of conception, originality, style, and influence are any criteria of excellence, the *History of the Florentine People* . . . deserves to be considered the greatest historical work of the Italian Renaissance.”

**Carlo Marsuppini**

Carlo Marsuppini, commonly referred to in his day as Carlo Aretino after his native town of Arezzo, earned a place in history as one of the leading humanists of the first half of the fifteenth century and as a key figure in the recovery and dissemination of the knowledge and culture of classical antiquity. Born in 1398 in either Arezzo or Genoa, Carlo grew up and spent the majority of his life in Florence, where he became a renowned scholar, poet, orator, and public official. His father, Gregorio Marsuppini, a member of an Aretine family of noble origin and a prominent doctor of canon and civil

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42 Hankins, introduction to *History*, xvi. Bruni completed the first of the twelve books of his *History of the Florentine People* in 1416, at which point the Signoria asked him to finish the work and granted him a tax exemption in exchange for doing so. Bruni wrote his *History* in phases over the next twenty-six years, copies of which circulated prior to the entire work’s official publication by the Florentine Signoria in 1442. For the dates of completion dates of each phase, see ibid., x–xi.


44 Paolo Viti, “Marsuppini, Carlo,” in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 2008), vol. 71, 14; Arezzo and Genoa were the hometowns of his father and mother, respectively. For the most recent account of Carlo Marsuppini’s life, see ibid., 14-20. For a contemporary biography, see Vespasiano, *Lives*, 369-70.
law (University of Bologna, 1389), served King Charles VI of France for many years, first as his secretary and later as Governor of Genoa. Sometime after France lost control of Genoa (1409), Gregorio returned to Tuscany with his family, took up residence in Florence and Arezzo, and turned his attention to business. Proving himself adroit in financial matters, he not only rented rather than owned houses in both cities, which minimized his tax obligations, but also invested in the businesses and banking firms of some of the foremost men in Florence, thereby amassing a substantial fortune and establishing important connections among the elite of Florentine society. Carlo exhibited his father’s business acumen later in his life, as evidenced by his tax report of 1453, which indicates that he “was a partner in . . . a wholesale silk business and three wool companies, two of which processed and sold wool imported from Spain.”

Gregorio achieved tremendous prestige and success, as well as social and economic solidity, because of the wisdom and prudence with which he conducted himself, in private as in public affairs, which set an excellent example for his son, who emulated his father’s virtue in his own life.

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46 Martines, *Social World*, 127-8. Florence granted citizenship to Gregorio, Michele di Conte Marsuppini (cousin), and their descendants, for the role that Michele played in foiling Mariotto Griffolini’s plot (1431) to resist the Florentine domination of Arezzo; see Black, *Benedetto Accolti*, 74 (citing Giuseppe Zippel, “Carlo Marsuppini da Arezzo,” in his *Storia e cultura del rinascimento italiano* [Padua, 1979], 199-200), and 127; Viti, “Marsuppini,” 14.

The need for money and social mobility did not motivate Carlo’s educational and career choices, as he belonged to a wealthy and highly respected upper-class family with connections in Arezzo, Florence, and abroad. This endowed him with the socioeconomic resources necessary for the study, in the words of his father, of “poetry, philosophy, Greek, and Latin . . . branches of knowledge which bring honor rather than money.”

Carlo received his education in Florence, immersing himself in the *studia humanitatis* under the auspices of such renowned humanists as Giovanni Malpaghini da Ravenna and Guarino Guarini da Verona. Carlo studied Latin as a pupil of Malpaghini, Petrarch’s former secretary, who also taught Bruni. Studying with Guarino, who “taught privately in Florence from March 1410 to July 1414,” Carlo learned Greek and Latin, and developed a mastery of classical literature. He continued to read and study voraciously in the succeeding years, which further enhanced his learning and “brought him to the attention of . . . the Greek scholar Ambrogio Traversari and Niccolò Niccoli, the leader of the Latin revival after Salutati’s death,” who became two of his closest friends. He participated in the multifarious discussions of the Florentine intelligentsia, such as those that regularly took place at Santa Maria degli Angeli—the Camaldolese convent of

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48 Ibid., 221-2.


50 Davies, *Florence*, 82.


52 Rabil, Jr., *Knowledge*, 98.
Traversari. Their personal relationship perhaps explains why Carlo was the private tutor of Cosimo’s sons, Piero and Giovanni, as well as Cosimo’s brother Lorenzo, even though he did not need the income such a position provided. In fact, when the threat of the plague prompted Cosimo to take his family to the Veneto (1430), Carlo and Niccoli both accompanied them. Carlo was named as an ambassador to Rome, along with Lorenzo de’ Medici, on the occasion of Eugenius IV’s election as pope (March 1431), which speaks to the degree of distinction he enjoyed even before his public career really began. That he returned to Florence in June 1431 with many Greek and Latin codices that Cosimo acquired for Traversari—known from an extant letter from Traversari to Niccoli—demonstrates the tight bond shared between the Medici and the three humanists. Carlo devoted himself primarily to a life of assiduous study until his early thirties, during which time he produced two Greek-to-Latin translations, one interlinear and the other in hexameter, of the pseudo-Homeric Batrachomyomachia (ca. 1429–30)—dedicated to the humanist poet

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54 Ibid., 127, 221, 229, 326, 332-3.
55 Davies, Florence, 83; Viti, “Marsuppini,” 14; Black, Benedetto Accolti, 72.
56 Viti, “Marsuppini,” 14; Vespasiano, Lives, 369; Rabil, Jr., Knowledge, 98.
57 Rabil, Jr., Knowledge, 98, states that Carlo accompanied Lorenzo di Giovanni de’ Medici to Rome; Viti, “Marsuppini,” 14, reports that it was Cosimo’s son, Piero de’ Medici.
Giovannni Marrasio—which remained unpublished until 1474 and represent the first known Latin translations of the work. “Recognized as the best read man in Florence,” according to Vespasiano da Bisticci, Carlo’s impressive command of multiple disciplines “won [him] the regard of all men of learning.”

That “humanism envisaged a course of study and a certain kind of citizen,” is the basic premise of the humanist program as described by the distinguished scholar Lauro Martines. That is, a humanistic education cultivated precise and persuasive expression of thought in speech and writing through the study of grammar, rhetoric, and poetry, and instilled moral values through the study of ethics, history, and philosophy, thus producing a learned and principled man, a man best prepared for “a life of study and public service.” Accordingly, Carlo was the consummate exemplar of that which a humanistic education could produce. His many years of extensive study and learning provided him with an extraordinary breadth and depth of knowledge, but he left behind only a handful of original compositions and translations. For that reason, general modern knowledge of Marsuppini extends not much further than his service as a civic official in the last nine years of his life. The true measure of a person’s education, however, lies not in how

59 Ibid., 16; Rabil, Jr., Knowledge, 99; Federico Condello, review of Batraciomachia. Volgarizzamento del 1456 di Aurelio Simmaco de Iacobiti, by Marcello Marinucci, Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2004.10.13, http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/bmcr/2004/2004-10-13.html (accessed February 9, 2009), reports that Marsuppini produced both a hexametric and an interlinear translation, and also that the work was published in Brescia in 1474. See also Vespasiano, Lives, 370; Davies, Florence, 112.

60 Vespasiano, Lives, 370.

61 Ibid., 369.

62 Lauro Martines, Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 92.

63 Ibid., 199.
much knowledge he accumulates or publishes but rather in how he shares his knowledge with others. In that light, then, Carlo Marsuppini deserves to be extolled as much, if not more, for the role he played long before his days as a civic official because of the formative and far-reaching influence he had as a humanist educator at the Studio fiorentino.

In the fall of 1431, political factionalism and bickering amongst the Florentine literati intersected with administration of the Studio, out of which came Marsuppini’s first teaching appointment. When the Signoria, on October 11, 1431, nullified the teaching contracts approved the previous July, the task of making new appointments fell to the new group of ufficiali dello studio—one of whom was Lorenzo di Giovanni de’ Medici—and a controversy ignited in the wake of their failure to reappoint Francesco Filelfo, who had begun teaching at the Studio in 1429.64 Although he was a brilliant and highly respected humanist, Filelfo had the unfortunate affliction of speaking too loudly and too strongly against members and supporters of the Medici, Carlo Marsuppini in particular. Vespasiano contends that Filelfo’s constant polemics against Marsuppini resulted from his jealousy of Carlo, who was garnering increasing attention from the public lectures he gave.65 Filelfo’s closeness to prominent members of the oligarch faction did not help his cause in 1431, when a pro-Medici board of ufficiali took office. Cancelling his contract

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64 Davies, *Florence*, 83-4, 84 n. 30. Ibid., 84 n. 20, reports that “Filelfo’s contract had been approved in July 1431.” The ufficiali dello studio, the Studio administrators who served a one-year term of office, made teaching appointments, which the Signoria had to approve. For the election, term length, and functions of the ufficiali dello studio, see ibid., 10-19.

was controversial enough, but the fact that the *ufficiali* appointed Marsuppini as his replacement made matters much worse. Appointed as professor of rhetoric, poetry, Greek, ethics, and philosophy, Marsuppini served as such from October 23 until December 24 of 1431, when Filelfo’s powerful oligarch supporters succeeded in having him reinstated. The tensions and polemics continued until 1434, when Cosimo’s return from exile in Venice forced Filelfo and his oligarch supporters into exile. In October of 1434, the new group of *ufficiali dello studio*—one of whom, once again, was Lorenzo de’ Medici—took office and reappointed Marsuppini to teach at the Studio, where he continued to serve as a professor of poetry, rhetoric, and civil law “intermittently until his death in 1453.” In the course of the entire fifteenth century, “Marsuppini was one of the few Florentines . . . to acquire a ‘universal’ humanist chair at the Studio: he lectured on Greek and Latin literature, rhetoric, poetry, and moral philosophy, and possibly on the speculative branches of philosophy as well.” In addition to teaching humanist subjects, he lectured on the law. Although no extant documentation specifically confirms that Marsuppini was a lawyer, some scholars refer to him as such. Both the reference to him in early sources as *Messer* (a designation indicating one’s status as a lawyer) and his active involvement in the *Arte dei Giudici e Notai*—he “sat among the judges in the

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68 Davies, *Florence*, 112. For Marsuppini as a teacher at the *Studio*, see ibid., Appendix IV, 178; Brown, *Bartolomeo Scala*, 8-11.


70 For example, see Brown, *Bartolomeo Scala*, 10.
[guild’s] consulate‖ many times throughout the 1430s and 1440s—seem to indicate that he was, in fact, a lawyer. Further indirect evidence that he practiced law comes from a statement made by one of his most well-known students, Cristoforo Landino, in whose opinion Marsuppini was “solving the riddles of Roman law and loosing the bonds of criminals fettered on unproven charges.” At any rate, Marsuppini’s lectures on the law had a formative impact both on his students and on legal theory. One of his pupils, Giovanni degli Acconciati, lauded his venerable preceptor as “the most learned of all the men I have ever known in civil law . . . [restoring legal texts] just as Petrarch first recalled the Latin language.”

Although renowned for his erudition, Marsuppini generated only a handful of translations and original compositions, a circumstance explained in part by his admitted lack of desire to write. Marsuppini felt that his duties as a professor at the Studio and his public activities as a civic official took precedence over such private activities as writing. Still, he did translate and compose some literary works, including the aforementioned translations of the pseudo-Homeric Batrachomyomachia. While

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71 In citing the extant records of payments made to teachers at the Studio, Davies, Florence, Appendix IV, 178, provides the one documented payment made to Marsuppini (dated February 29, 1451) and refers to him as Messer Carlo di Messer Gregorio Marsuppini da Arezzo. For Marsuppini’s guild activity, see Martines, Social World, 327, and 265; also see p. 13 n. 35 above.

72 Quoted from the translation provided by Brown, Bartolomeo Scala, 10 (citing Landino’s Carmina omnia as the source of the statement).

73 Quoted from Davies, Florence, 119; Davies’ translation is taken from Brown, Bartolomeo Scala, 10. Ibid., for the idea that Marsuppini “combined [legal] theory with practice.”

74 Field, Origins, 79; Rabil, Jr., Knowledge, 99 n. 10: “Marsuppini confessed that he had little desire of publishing his works. He may well . . . have feared publishing them”; Viti, “Marsuppini,” 16, cites a letter written by Marsuppini to Giovanni Aurispa (Giovanni Aurispa, Carteggio, ed. R. Sabbadini [Rome, 1931], 112), in which the former declared “una sua riluttanza a scrivere.” Martines, Social World, 97, describes Giovanni Aurispa as an “itinerant humanist.”
traveling with the Medici to avoid the plague in 1430, he produced the first Latin translation of Isocrates’ oration *Ad Nicoclem*, which he dedicated to Galeazzo Roberto Malatesta, whose court in Rimini they visited during the trip.\(^75\) At the request of Pope Nicholas V (reigned 1447–55), Marsuppini translated, and dedicated to the pope, books one and nine of the *Iliad* (1452), which also was the first Latin translation of the Greek work.\(^76\) The consolatory letter he wrote in Latin to his dear friends Cosimo and Lorenzo de’ Medici upon the death of their mother (1433), one of his only extant works of prose, demonstrates Marsuppini’s eloquence as well as the extent of his learning, for the letter includes an abundance of references to both classical and Christian writers.\(^77\) He was most distinguished for his sophisticated poetic compositions, which abound with classical and mythological references, but very few survive.\(^78\) Of his extant verse, *Carmen de nobiltate*—dedicated to Poggio Bracciolini, another important exponent of humanism in the Quattrocento—is of particular interest both for the insight it offers into Marsuppini’s thoughts on nobility and for the fact that it “is in the First Asclepiaden meter,” a meter

\(^{75}\) Viti, “Marsuppini,” 17. For Marsuppini’s trip with the Medici in 1430, see p. 18 n. 56 above.

\(^{76}\) Viti, “Marsuppini,” 17; Vespasiano, *Lives*, 370; Martines, *Social World*, 260; Davies, *Florence*, 112. Rabil, Jr., *Knowledge*, 99 (citing Zippel [as in n. 49 above], 12) reports that Marsuppini’s translation of the *Iliad* “was the project above all others which led to his contemporaries’ high estimate of him as a poet.” Nicholas V reigned March 6, 1447–March 24, 1455; see Kelley, *Popes*, 244.


that is “rare and difficult.”

A few years prior to his death, Marsuppini, together with Giannozzo Manetti, drafted the statutes of the Library of the Duomo, which the Arte della Lana commissioned from the two humanists in 1451.

Not a prolific author but distinguished nonetheless for his supreme erudition and integrity, Carlo earned the high regard of popes, emperors, and rulers alike. Pope Eugenius IV named Marsuppini as an honorary secretarius apostolicus in 1441, an appointment that Pope Nicholas V renewed in 1452, the same year in which Emperor Frederick III visited Florence and offered to confer on him knighthood, the title of Count Palatine, or the poet laureate’s crown, but Carlo declined to accept any of the dignities.

Martines relates yet another preferment offered to but refused by Marsuppini: “Even Francesco Sforza invited [Marsuppini] to honor the Milanese court by residence there, not because the Duke had the least interest in the civilization of the ancient world, but because one aspect of the competition between Italian courts was the recruitment of outstanding humanists.” The honor Marsuppini did not refuse, however, came on April 5, 1444, when the Signoria voted unanimously to appoint him as Chancellor of the Republic upon the death of Leonardo Bruni, an office he held until his own death on

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79 Rabil, Jr., Knowledge, 99; the poem is not dated, but Rabil, Jr. posits “that it was written prior to 23 September 1440.” Ibid., 102-9, provides the Latin version of Carmen de nobiltate as well as an English translation, the latter of which “is in poetic form but does not attempt to reproduce the meter.”

80 Viti, “Marsuppini,” 15.

81 Martines, Social World, 260; Viti, “Marsuppini,” 15; see also Vespasiano, Lives, 370.

82 Martines, Social World, 260.
April 24, 1453.\textsuperscript{83} Like Coluccio Salutati and Leonardo Bruni before him, Marsuppini carried out the duties of the chancellor’s office in such a manner as to heighten the reputation of Florence, particularly by the eloquence of his diplomatic correspondence.\textsuperscript{84} Even while chancellor, Marsuppini agreed to reprise his professorial role at the \textit{Studio} in 1451, a testimony not only to the esteem with which his fellow Florentines regarded him but also to his dedication to them.\textsuperscript{85} A letter written early in the summer of 1453 by Donato Acciaiuoli, one of Marsuppini’s most famous students, eloquently expresses the magnitude of the loss felt by Florence’s intellectual community upon the eminent humanist’s death:

How much Latin literature and all the liberal arts have lost through his death is . . . easily understood. For the long-slumbering Latin language was awakened by Carlo and called forth to light: now he is dead, and one must think that it not only went back to sleep but almost died with him. I do not see what the young and studious can now hope for. Our general is now dead, and there is no one left who can instruct those who would continue in his program of training, no one left who can properly lead the troops. For who among our men can even begin to approach Carlo in expounding orators or explaining poets? Who has his sharpness of intellect, his depth of memory, or his great breadth of knowledge?\textsuperscript{86}

Carlo’s relationship with the Medici may have helped him to obtain his appointment to the \textit{Studio} or to the chancellery,\textsuperscript{87} but the historical record paints a portrait

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., 127, 130, 260; Viti, “Marsuppini,” 15. For Marsuppini’s service as chancellor, see Black, \textit{Benedetto Accolti}, 110-2, 119-20, 125, 127, 136, 138-45, 155, 158-9, 178 n. 211.

\textsuperscript{84} Martines, \textit{Social World}, 130; Viti, “Marsuppini,” 15; Vespasiano, \textit{Lives}, 370.

\textsuperscript{85} For Marsuppini’s \textit{Studio} appointment in 1451, see Davies, \textit{Florence}, 127; Field, \textit{Origins}, 79-80, 81.

\textsuperscript{86} This translation is taken from Field, \textit{Origins}, 87 (citing MS, Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, fondo Magliabechiano VIII 1390, fol. 82; F. Fossi, \textit{Monumenta ad Alamanni Rinuccini vitam contexendam} [Florence, 1791], 48-49n.; and C. Marchesi, \textit{Scritti minori di filologia e di letteratura} [Florence, 1978], 12-13). Acciaiuoli wrote this letter to Iacopo Ammannati (see Field, \textit{Origins}, 86).

\textsuperscript{87} Viti, “Marsuppini,” 15.
of a man of tremendous character, a man with a genuine passion for learning and for passing his knowledge on to others, a man supremely loyal to both his friends and his adoptive state. Marsuppini “might have produced a rich harvest,” in Vespasiano’s estimation, “if he had given himself entirely to letters and spent less time over other works.”\textsuperscript{88} For more than two decades, however, the gifted scholar chose to devote himself to something that, in fact, did produce a rich harvest no less important or influential than a body of literature. As a teacher, he had a hand in shaping the minds of men who became some of the most brilliant Florentine humanists of the second half of the Quattrocento. His greatest legacy, therefore, lies in the names of his students—Donato Acciaiuoli, Cristoforo Landino, Bartolomeo Scala, Tommaso Pontano, Niccolò della Luna, Alamanno Riniucini, and Matteo Palmieri—who carried the intellectual torch from one generation to the next.\textsuperscript{89}

\textbf{Giuliano Davanzati}

Chroniclers’ praise of Giuliano Davanzati as a “worthy Florentine citizen and jurist” (Feo Belcari) and “a citizen of the highest reputation” (Niccolò Machiavelli) speaks to the substantial degree of esteem in which his fellow Florentines held him.\textsuperscript{90}

\begin{footnotes}

89 Martines, \textit{Social World}, 127, 342, 348; Davies, \textit{Florence}, 112; Field, \textit{Origins}, 75, 81, 206, 233-4; see also Rabil, Jr., \textit{Knowledge}, 182-9, on Landino; Brown, \textit{Bartolomeo Scala}, especially 8-11, 258-60, for Scala as Marsuppini’s student.

\end{footnotes}
Giuliano belonged to a patrician Florentine family of moderate wealth, which first entered the communal government in 1320, sat in the Signoria “during the 1378–82 corporatist guild regime,” and became Medici partisans in the fifteenth century.\textsuperscript{91} Giuliano, a doctor of law, furthered his own social status through his active involvement in manifold realms of Quattrocento Florentine society.

After studying civil law in Padua from 1409 to 1412 and lecturing at the University of Bologna from 1415 to 1417, where he also served as rector (1416), Giuliano returned to Florence and embarked on a public career as a university educator and administrator, politician, and diplomat.\textsuperscript{92} His doctorate afforded him the privilege of joining the college of doctors of canon and civil law—the board of examiners for doctoral candidates—at the Studio fiorentino.\textsuperscript{93} In addition to teaching and performing his duties as a member of the college, Giuliano held elected administrative positions at the Studio.\textsuperscript{94} The Signoria elected him to a one-year term as one of the five ufficiali dello studio—the men responsible for the management of the Studio—in 1430 and again in 1445.\textsuperscript{95} The

\textsuperscript{91} For the social status and political participation of the Davanzati family, see Padgett and Ansell, “Robust Action,” 1281, 1291; see also ibid., Appendix B, Table B1, 1314-6. For Giuliano’s political association with the Medici, see Kent, Rise, 63 n. 7, 184, 258, 352.

\textsuperscript{92} Barducci, “Davanzati,” 107.

\textsuperscript{93} The college of doctors of canon and civil law was one of the three faculties comprising the Studio’s “teaching body,” according to Davies, Florence, 27. Ibid., 40-1, reports that extant documents provide no information regarding the method by which an individual gained membership of the college. Holding a doctorate, whether a teacher at the Studio or not, thus remains the only known prerequisite for membership. For the authority of the college, see ibid., 25, 39.

\textsuperscript{94} Davies, Florence, 41 n. 205, lists Davanzati among the “members of the college of doctors of canon and civil law . . . known to have taught at the Studio.” For the known duties performed by Davanzati as a member of the college, see ibid., Appendix III, 166.

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., 87 n. 59, 89 n. 61. For the office of the ufficiali dello studio, see p. 20 n. 64 above.
college of doctors of canon and civil law, on January 26, 1433, appointed Giuliano as its prior—the post charged with overseeing the college on a rotating three-month-term basis.96 In his illuminating study, *Florence and Its University during the Early Renaissance*, Jonathan Davies asserts that the *Studio* provided a forum for members as well as supporters of the Medici family to promote the *studia humanitatis*, and lists Davanzati among the Medici partisans “with known humanist interests” who served as *ufficiali dello studio* during the period from 1434 to 1473.97 By way of explaining Davanzati’s inclusion in the list, Davies notes that “he was a keen reader of classical literature, borrowing copies of Cicero’s *Philippics* and Servius on Virgil,” although he produced no works of his own.98 Davies further asserts that the power struggles between the oligarch and Medici factions extended to the *Studio*. He points to the involvement in the factional struggles of eleven of the men who served as *ufficiali dello studio* between 1426 and 1434, seven of whom belonged to or supported the Medici family—including Giuliano Davanzati—and the other four of whom were prominent oligarchs exiled in 1434 when the Medici faction emerged triumphant as the dominant political force.99

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96 Ibid., 42 n. 210. The college elected its prior “from among its members” (ibid., 42), and therefore, Davanzati’s appointment as prior provides evidence for his membership of the college.

97 Ibid., 110-6. For the list of *ufficiali dello studio* “with known humanist interests,” see ibid., 115. On Davies’ study, see p. 4 n. 5 above.

98 Ibid., 118 (citing Arnaldo della Torre, *Storia dell’Accademia Platonica di Firenze* [Florence: Carnesecchi e Figli, 1902], 290 n. 1).

99 Davies, *Florence*, 80-2, esp. 81 n. 19, for the list of the *ufficiali* connected to the Medici, and 81 n. 20, for the list of the oligarch *ufficiali*. The Marsuppini/Filelfo controversy that occurred in the early 1430s is another example of the factional struggles playing out at the *Studio* (see pp. 20-1 above).
Contemporaneously with the legal and intellectual pursuits of his career at the Studio, Giuliano Davanzati filled important government posts and contributed to Florentine diplomatic efforts, earning significant distinction along the way. He held the position of accoppiatore for five years (1434–39), which granted him a considerable amount of political authority, as the accoppiatori were the officials who “prepare[d] the election bags for every two-month drawing of the Signoria.”

One such drawing of the Signoria, for the term of March–April of 1436, resulted in the appointment of Davanzati as gonfaloniere di giustizia (standard-bearer of justice), the most prominent communal office to which a Florentine citizen could aspire. On March 25, 1436, midway through his service as gonfaloniere di giustizia, Pope Eugenius IV personally knighted Davanzati at the conclusion of the consecration ceremony of Santa Maria del Fiore, conferring on him the Order of the Golden Spur—the highest chivalric order.

According to Feo Belcari, who witnessed the event, “The distinguished podestà of Florence gave [Davanzati] the spurs, the great lord of Rimini, [Sigismondo] Malatesta, tied the sword

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100 Davies, *Florence*, 87 n. 59, 89 n. 61, for the dates of Davanzati’s terms of service as an accoppiatore; and 87, for the accoppiatori’s preparation of the election bags. Ibid., 87-90, 127-30, demonstrates that a correlation exists between the list of the accoppiatori and that of the ufficiali dello studio, namely that the same names populate both lists and the compositional changes of both over time occurred in tandem with the shift of political power from one regime to the other. Similarly, Najemy, *History*, 282, reports that “eight of the nine accoppiatori of 1434–9 were from the inner circle of the Medici partisans,” and lists Davanzati among them. See Rubinstein, *Government*, 30-52, for the office of the accoppiatori.


102 Barducci, “Davanzati,” 108. For the date of Santa Maria del Fiore’s consecration by Pope Eugenius IV, see Marica S. Tacconi, *Cathedral and Civic Ritual in Late Medieval and Renaissance Florence: The Service Books of Santa Maria del Fiore* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 3. Machiavelli, *History of Florence*, 224-5, also writes of the event: “The usual ceremonies of consecration having been completed, the pope, to show his affection for the city, conferred the honour of knighthood upon Giuliano Davanzati, their Gonfalonier of Justice, and a citizen of the highest reputation.”
around his waist, and the Holy Father pinned the precious decoration onto his chest.”

Machiavelli, in his *History of Florence*, records that “the Signory [sic], not to appear less gracious than the pope, granted to the new[ly] created knight the government of Pisa for one year.”

The government of Florence further demonstrated its esteem for Davanzati by dispatching him as an ambassador for both peacemaking and public relations missions. Of the former type, his earliest deputation seems to have occurred in July of 1421, when he was one of two representatives sent to Milan in an attempt to convince Filippo Maria Visconti to end his aggressiveness toward Genoa.

Then, in 1438, he traveled to Venice as one of the Florentine legates sent to negotiate a peace treaty between the Serenissima and the Visconti, although the delegation’s efforts proved futile.

Two of the public relations embassies of which Davanzati was a part deserve mention, for he received prestigious dignities during both. When sent on behalf of

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105 The other ambassador was Astorre Gherardini Gianni. Brucker, *Civic World*, 433-4; see also Barducci, “Davanzati,” 107.

106 Ibid. Cosimo de’ Medici, while an ambassador to Ferrara, received a letter from his brother Lorenzo de’ Medici on behalf of the *Dieci di Balìa* (Ten of War), in which he wrote, “To-day [sic] Messer Giuliano Davanzati has been named ambassador to Venice by the Signori and the Colleges, and they have sent for him to Pisa.” Lorenzo dated his letter January 29, 1437 (which would be 1438 in modern dating). For the letter, translated in its entirety, see Janet Ross, *Lives of the Early Medici as Told in Their Correspondence* (London: Chatto, 1910), [http://www.archive.org/details/livesofearlymedi00rossuoft](http://www.archive.org/details/livesofearlymedi00rossuoft) (accessed October 21, 2008), 35-6.
Florence to offer congratulations to Albert II on his election as Holy Roman Emperor in 1438, the *imperatore* granted the title of Count Palatine to both Davanzati and Bernardo Giugni.  

Later, in 1442, when deputed, again with Giugni, to greet King Alfonso upon his return to Naples, the king endowed Davanzati with the right to include the royal arm on his *stemma* (coat of arms). The *Signoria* and it Colleges, on July 18, 1444, elected Davanzati as one of the five members of the *Opera di Palazzo*, the committee of men responsible for administering the renovation of the Palazzo Vecchio. In 1445, the year prior to his death (1446), Davanzati received what proved to be the last political assignment of his active public career, which was his election as one of the *Otto di Guardia* (Eight on Security), the magistracy charged with overseeing the city’s internal safety.

Throughout his life, at the *Studio fiorentino* and in politics, Davanzati prospered in the numerous offices and duties entrusted to him. He, like Leonardo Bruni, consistently exercised prudence and restraint with regard to war and matters of public finance, a testament to his concern for the welfare of his *patria* (fatherland). A place of importance in the history of Florence justifiably belongs to Giuliano Davanzati not only for his nearly three decades of supremely dedicated public service but also for the ways in which that service aided the Republic of Florence and its institutions.

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107 Barducci, “Davanzati,” 107. See p. 33 nn. 119-20 below, regarding the details of this embassy.


Bernardo Giugni

The annals of history likewise remember Bernardo Giugni, perhaps to an even greater extent than Giuliano Davanzati, as a man and citizen deserving of acclaim. In recording the biographies of illustrious fifteenth-century men, Vespasiano da Bisticci wrote of Bernardo: “Whoever may write his Life will find therein many things worthy of praise, which entitle him to a place amongst the most worthy citizens Florence ever produced.”111 Scholars have lauded Giugni as “an eminent citizen,”112 “celebrated for his prudence,”113 and have noted that his family “belonged to the oldest Guelph plebeian families [which] took part in the administration at its beginning.”114 Indeed, the Giugni first entered the Priorate—the branch of the Florentine government akin to a city council—in 1291, which marked the family’s well-established elite social standing.115

Bernardo Giugni, born in Florence on November 19, 1396, became a jurist, a scholar of Latin, and an important civic official and diplomat.116 Like Davanzati, he

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115 Padgett and Ansell, “Robust Action,” Appendix B, Table B1, 1314-6; Horner and Horner, Walks, 311.

116 For Giugni’s date of birth, see Zaccaria, “Giugni,” 689 (citing Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Tratte, 80, f. 69r); Shelley E. Zuraw, “The Public Commemorative Monument: Mino da Fiesole’s Tombs in the
twice earned appointment as an *ufficiale dello studio*, first in 1428 and again in 1440, after which he, too, served more than one term as an *accoppiatore* (1443–44 and 1465).\(^{117}\) In yet another parallel with Davanzati, Giugni’s name also appears in Davies’ aforementioned list of the seven men with known ties to the Medici party who occupied the post of *accoppiatore* during the period 1426–34.\(^{118}\) Giugni’s sociopolitical prestige and reputation extended beyond the Medici and Florence as well. That Holy Roman Emperor Albert II\(^{119}\) bestowed on Giugni the honorific title of Count Palatine in 1438 indicates the great degree of favor he enjoyed even early on in his public career.\(^{120}\) He gained further recognition in 1447 while representing Florence at Ferrara—the location of the conference, called for by Pope Nicholas V, aimed at securing some form of peace between Florence, Milan, Naples, and Venice—where he received designation as a Knight of the Golden Spur.\(^{121}\) On the basis of the assertions set forth by Leonardo Bruni in his *De militia* (1421), distinction as a knight both confirmed and highlighted Giugni’s,

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117 Davies, *Florence*, 88 n. 61. For the office of the *ufficiali dello studio*, see p. 20 n. 64 above.

118 See p. 29 n. 100 above. For Giugni’s political association with the Medici, see Black, *Benedetto Accolti*, 102-3.

119 Zaccaria, “Giugni,” 689-90, reports that Albert II conferred on Giugni the title of Count Palatine; Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 459, states that it was Emperor Frederick III, which cannot be correct, as he was not crowned emperor until 1452.

120 According to Zaccaria, “Giugni,” 689-90, the embassy took place in October of 1438, which differs from the 1439 date given by Barducci, “Davanzati,” 107. The former seems more plausible given that Albert II was elected in 1438.

121 For the Florentine embassy to Ferrara, see Vespasiano, *Lives*, 327. For the political circumstances surrounding the event, see Machiavelli, *History of Florence*, 272-3. For Giugni’s knighthood, see Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 459, 474 n. 49; Butterfield, “Social Structure,” 57-8.
as well as Davanzati’s, elite status in Florentine society and their supreme dedication to serving the Republic. In light of the fact that in the fifteenth century the Florentine government granted knighthood to a mere fifty or so citizens, the conferment of the highest order of knighthood on both men in prestigious public ceremonies indeed constituted a signal honor. Moreover, the manner in which they were knighted—Davanzati by Pope Eugenius IV during the consecration of Florence’s venerable Cathedral, Giugni by Pope Nicholas V during a peace conference—draws attention to the interconnection between the Church and the State.

The Republic’s extraordinary valuation of Bernardo find its explanation in the morally upright and dignified manner in which he conducted himself, particularly in fulfilling the civic duties and offices delegated to him. The government of Florence deputed Giugni, together with Giuliano Davanzati, to greet King Alfonso upon his return to Naples in 1442. Vespasiano relates that “Bernardo was often obliged to restrain his companion [Davanzati], who was somewhat of a hothead and carried away by passion”—a testimony to the prudence and temperance with which Giugni handled such affairs. Such virtues explain why his native state chose him as its representative on so many important occasions. In February of 1452, for example, Florence appointed as its ambassadors Giugni, Giannozzo Manetti, and Carlo Pandolfini, the three of whom were

122 Butterfield, “Social Structure,” 64, briefly summarizes the main arguments made by Bruni in his De militia.
123 Ibid.
to escort Frederick III, the emperor-elect, to Rome for his coronation.\textsuperscript{126} He also exercised patience and commitment as a Florentine emissary, devoting years of his life not only to procuring peace and stability throughout the Italian peninsula but also to maintaining it.\textsuperscript{127} The image of Bernardo Giugni rendered by the historical record reveals a man of integrity who steadfastly adhered to a high standard of professionalism and ethics, which perhaps motivated the Florentines to select him as the ambassador to Milan upon the death of Duke Francesco Sforza in 1466.\textsuperscript{128} Bernardo spent a number of months in Milan, during which he seems to have played such a significant and stabilizing role that the Milanese were loath to see him go.\textsuperscript{129} His virtuous character preceded him always, garnering the respect and graciousness of rulers, governments, and other entities outside of Florence. This no doubt reflected well on Florence and contributed to his ability to discharge his ambassadorial assignments with success. Bernardo’s election as gonfaloniere di giustizia (May–June 1451)—fifteen years after Davanzati’s term in that most prestigious of civic offices—provided yet another important public outlet for his individual merits to benefit the Republic of Florence.\textsuperscript{130}

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\textsuperscript{126} Martines, \textit{Social World}, 188.
\textsuperscript{127} See Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 474 n. 49, who notes: “Giugni was actively involved in the negotiations of 1451–54 related to the Italian League and the Peace of Lodi.”
\textsuperscript{128} Vespasiano, \textit{Lives}, 330; Zaccaria, “Giugni,” 693.
\textsuperscript{129} Vespasiano, 330.
\textsuperscript{130} Zaccaria, “Giugni,” 691 (citing Archivio di Stato di Firenze, \textit{Tratte}, 57, f. 184r); Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 459. For the office of gonfaloniere di giustizia and its importance, see p. 29 n. 101 above.
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CHAPTER 2—THE TOMBS

The biographies presented in the previous chapter revealed that Leonardo Bruni, Carlo Marsuppini, Giuliano Davanzati, and Bernardo Giugni achieved significant renown for a myriad of public and private accomplishments. Moreover, they ethically fulfilled the responsibilities of the offices they held and the duties entrusted to them, which made them sources of pride and respect for Florence. The moral fiber and successes of these men account for the high esteem in which their contemporaries held them and justify the distinguished way in which history remembers them. The fact remains, however, that nary a saint or beato can be found among them and not a single one of the four founded a convent, monastery, or religious house of any sort, nor did any of them rise through the ranks of the Church hierarchy to become a bishop, cardinal, or pope. Their lack of membership in one of these groups should have precluded their burial in an effigial wall tomb, as Florence traditionally reserved its most honorific tomb-type for the Church elite.¹ Focusing on the iconography of the funerary monuments erected in honor of these four men—all monumental wall tombs that include a sculpted effigy—the present chapter seeks to identify the specific aspects of their lives deemed by their contemporaries as most worthy of remembrance. The aim of this examination is to narrow the range of commonalities between these men in order to address in the final chapter the explanation of their burial in a tomb-type exclusive to a social group to which they did not belong, in a time and place where even death did not blur the lines of division between the classes.

Tomb of Leonardo Bruni

The first break with the Florentine tradition of reserving the effigial wall tomb for persons of religious eminence came in the mid-fifteenth century with the Tomb of Leonardo Bruni (fig. 1), which the sculptor Bernardo Rossellino began ca. 1446 and completed ca. 1451. Although he expressed in his will the desire for a humble burial in a floor tomb in the Basilica di Santa Croce, the Florentine state decided to honor him with a monumental marble wall tomb instead, located in the sixth bay of the Franciscan church’s right aisle. Whether they rise from the ground (fig. 2) or hang on the wall (fig. 3), effigial wall tombs in Florence that predate the Bruni Tomb project outward from the surface plane of the wall. Rossellino, instead, wed the structure of the Bruni Tomb to that of the church by constructing the monument as an arched rectangular niche recessed into the wall, with the architectural frame as the only protruding element. The semicircular arch that surmounts the niche springs from fluted Corinthian pilasters rising from the monument’s base, the front of which contains a frieze carved in relief that depicts putti and garlands, as well as a tondo in the center encircling a lion mask. Two objects, each in the form of a lion skin and paw, rest on the base of the monument and

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2 Ibid., 56, for the Bruni Tomb as “the first effigial wall tomb for a layperson in fifteenth-century Florence.” For the most thorough treatment of the Bruni Tomb, see Schulz, Rossellino, 32-51, 99-104. No documentation on the tomb is extant; the proposed commission and completion dates rely on circumstantial evidence and comparison to other firmly dated works (ibid., 10, 33-4). For briefer discussions of the Bruni Tomb, see Erwin Panofsky, Tomb Sculpture: Its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini, ed. H. W. Janson (New York: Abrams, 1964), 74, 76, 77; John Pope-Hennessy, Italian Renaissance Sculpture (1958; repr., New York: Vintage Books, 1985), 36-8, 278-9; Seymour, Sculpture in Italy, 13, 121, 122, 123, 140, 143, 149; and Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 452-77.

Figure 1. Bernardo Rossellino, Tomb of Leonardo Bruni, Florence, Santa Croce
Figure 2. Donatello and Michelozzo, Tomb of Baldassare Coscia (Antipope John XXIII), Florence, Baptistery
Figure 3. Tino da Camaino, Tomb of Bishop Tedice Aliotti, Florence, Santa Maria Novella (right wall of transept)
support the sarcophagus, on top of which stand two Roman eagles that bear the weight of 
the bier. The Latin epitaph, inscribed on a rectangular tablet supported by two flying 
Victories, decorates the front of the sarcophagus. Three slabs of red marble inset into the 
back wall of the niche provide the background for the recumbent marble effigy of Bruni, 
which lies on the *drapo* covering the bier, and in the lunette above the niche, two angels 
adoré a relief of the Madonna and Blessing Child enframed in a tondo. The garlands 
cascading down the sides of the arch originate from the wreath, held aloft by two putti at 
the apex of the monument, which surrounds Bruni’s coat of arms.

As Leonardo Bruni died, on March 9, 1444, while serving as Chancellor of 
Florence, he received a publicly funded funeral with full honors. Not only prominent 
Florentine statesmen attended his obsequies but also many eminent prelates, owing to the 
residence of Pope Eugenius IV in Florence at the time of Bruni’s death. Florentine law 
specified that only “knights, doctors of law and medicine, and persons buried at public 
expense” could receive the highest degree of funerary honors, which included the display 
of the corpse “exposed or uncovered on the bier.” In order to indicate his membership in

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4 Butterfield, “Social Structure,” 60 n. 37, describes the *drapo* as “an honorific funerary cloth that was . . . restricted to the elite.”

5 Schulz, Rossellino, 32, gives the dates of Bruni’s death and burial (March 12, 1444), and reports that the Commune of Arezzo donated forty florins toward the funeral costs. The Florentine Republic gave 
funeraries at public expense only to civic officials who died in office; see Martines, *Social World*, 239-45, 
who discusses the costs and civic elements of state funerals given in the Quattrocento for the four 
humanists who died in public office: see 241-2, for Bruni’s funeral, the total cost of which is unknown; 
and 242, for Marsuppini’s funeral. See Sharon T. Strocchia, *Death and Ritual in Renaissance Florence* 
(Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 155-9, for the civic significance of Bruni’s funeral.

241-2).

one of the elite classes entitled to such an honor, the deceased customarily wore the ceremonial attire attendant to his rank, profession, or office.\(^8\) Bruni’s “rust-colored silk” toga thus denoted his status as a humanist chancellor.\(^9\) A copy of Bruni’s *Historiae florentini populi* lay upon his chest during the funeral in recognition of his magnum opus, the primary source of his widespread and enduring fame.\(^10\) In a more general sense, the book perhaps also functioned as a celebration of his eloquence.\(^11\) Vespasiano relates that in accordance with “ancient custom,” Giannozzo Manetti delivered the funeral oration for Bruni, which culminated in the placement of a laurel wreath upon the great humanist’s head.\(^12\) In ancient Greece, an honorific crown (*stephanos*) of laurel—the plant associated in mythology with Apollo and his sanctuary at Delphi—was awarded to the winner in each event of the Pythian Games, the Pan-Hellenic games in honor of Apollo held every four years at Delphi beginning in 586 BC.\(^13\) Although of no intrinsic worth, the laurel wreath held social value for an athletic victor, as he became a hero among his people and conferred great honor upon his city. As one of the attributes of Apollo, the “god of poetic

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\(^8\) Ibid., 55, 60. For the import of dress in the preceding centuries, see Ronan, “Tuscan Wall Tomb,” 12.


\(^10\) Ibid., 32, 35; Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 458; Hankins, introduction to *History*, x.


\(^12\) Vespasiano, *Lives*, 378, states that the ancient practices of delivering a funeral oration and crowning the deceased with laurel were revived for Bruni’s funeral by decree of the *Signoria*. This was not, however, the first instance in which these customs were revived, as both were part of the state funeral held in honor of Coluccio Salutati—who also died (1406) while in office as Chancellor of Florence—the format of which was the antecedent of Bruni’s and Marsuppini’s funerals; see Strocchia, *Death and Ritual*, 108-16; also Martines, *Social World*, 241. For Giannozzo Manetti’s funeral oration, see Bruni, *Epistolarum*, vol. 1, lxxxix-cxiv.

and musical inspiration,‖ the laurel wreath signified victory not only in athletic but also in intellectual competitions, which explains why poets and other men of learning, such as philosophers and rhetoricians, also received the crown of laurel as a prize for winning their contests. For the ancient Romans, too, the laurel wreath symbolized victory, but victory of a military rather than an athletic or intellectual type. A successful general wore a crown of laurel as he led his troops into the Forum during the procession that occurred when the Roman Senate voted an official triumph, which often included the erection of a triumphal arch to commemorate in perpetuity that which the honorific procession celebrated: an outstanding military conquest. Emblematic of victory in a variety of contexts and employed as such by cultures across the ages, the laurel wreath bestows significant honor on the individual whose head it crowns and the social group to which he belongs—whether athletes, scholars, or soldiers—as well as the city, nation, or institution he represents. The laurel wreath and book, then, reinforced visually what Manetti expressed verbally in the funeral oration: praise of Bruni for his intellectual gifts, literary

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15 For poetic contests, see Woolf, Ancient Civilizations, 323. The association of the laurel wreath, symbol of victory, with Apollo (god of poetry) explains why university graduates as well as other types of learned men in ancient Greece became known as laureates upon completion of their studies or as a reward for winning an intellectual contest. This ancient tradition of awarding the laurel wreath to successful scholars continued in Europe during the Middle Ages, when the term laureate referred to the university degree one earned. For example, poet laureate was the title conferred on an individual who earned a royal degree in rhetoric—a title that refers also to an officially designated State poet in such countries as the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada. The tradition continues in some modern academic settings, such as the laurel wreath given to undergraduates who have completed their senior thesis at Reed College in Portland, Oregon.

accomplishments, and devotion to his adoptive city, which brought honor and fame to him, the class of humanists to which he belonged, and the Republic of Florence.

As a replication in stone of the funerary image of Bruni just described, the effigy on his tomb (fig. 4) corroborates the literary account of his appearance during his funeral and confers perpetual honor on Bruni for his private scholarship and public service. In addition to its historical value and honorific purpose, the effigy functions emblematically, striking a harmonious balance between the themes it symbolizes. It refers to the finite nature of human life by depicting Bruni in the peaceful slumber of death, his facial features betraying his age, while simultaneously emphasizing the ability of man to emerge victorious over death. One of the humanists’ fundamental beliefs was that the studia humanitatis promoted clarity of thought, which produced moral character and the ability to speak and write expressively and persuasively. Virtue and eloquence, in turn, yielded literal and figurative apotheosis, as a moral life on earth won eternal life in heaven, and eloquent language, spoken and written, secured eternal fame on earth. In her discussion of the Bruni Tomb, Anne Markham Schulz suggests that the book resting upon

Figure 4. Bernardo Rossellino, Tomb of Leonardo Bruni, effigy and bier
the effigy’s chest represents “a life devoted to poetry, history, literature and philosophy” and, moreover, that the iconography of Renaissance sepulchers of learned men correlates with that of “Roman sarcophagi of poets, philosophers and rhetoricians” in that both include the motif of the book as a symbol of erudition.\textsuperscript{17} As previously explained, the laurel wreath crowning the effigy’s head expresses everlasting acknowledgment of Bruni’s intellectual triumphs and ensuing fame. The presence of the book and laurel wreath on the effigy thus signify the virtue and eloquence Bruni achieved through the lifelong pursuit of knowledge and truth, for which he earned the well-deserved reward of spiritual and secular immortality.

Apollonian references and triumphant motifs appear elsewhere on the Bruni Tomb. Carved in beautiful classical lettering on a rectangular tablet on the front of the sarcophagus, for example, the Latin epitaph (fig. 5) explicitly mentions the Muses, the mythological followers of Apollo. Fittingly, Carlo Marsuppini—who shared much in common with Bruni and was esteemed for his skills as a poet—authored the epitaph, the translation of which reads: “After Leonardo departed from life, history is in mourning and eloquence is dumb, and it is said that the Muses, Greek and Latin alike, cannot restrain their tears.”\textsuperscript{18} As the ancients viewed the Muses and their leader Apollo as

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\item[	extsuperscript{17}] Schulz, Rossellino, 35 n. 17 (citing Henri-Irénée Marrou, Musikos Aner: Étude sur les scènes de la vie intellectuelle figurant sur les monuments funéraires romains [Grenoble: Didier et Richard, 1938], 191f), states: “As a symbol of a life devoted to poetry, history, literature and philosophy, the book corresponds to the \textit{volumen} in Roman sarcophagi of poets, philosophers and rhetoricians.” According to Schulz, Rossellino, 35, “Books were a common feature of tombs and tomb slabs and by the later fifteenth century had come to symbolize the humanist’s dedication to letters” (see Henriette s’Jacob, Idealism and Realism: A Study of Sepulchral Symbolism [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1954], 206).
\item[	extsuperscript{18}] Frederick Hartt and David G. Wilkins, History of Italian Renaissance Art: Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, 5\textsuperscript{th} ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2003), 289. For epitaph in Latin, see Appendix.
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“givers of inspiration,”\textsuperscript{19} then perhaps Marsuppini composed the epitaph with the intention of metaphorically likening Bruni to Apollo. As an historian, Bruni pioneered the tripartite division of history still in use today. Rather than viewing history within an entirely Christian framework as medieval scholars had, he followed the ancient method of evidentiary analysis and evaluation of important people and events. This, together with the numerous works of prose and translations of ancient texts that he generated, exhibited the extensive knowledge and skills he possessed, which not only stimulated the creative activity and devoted scholarship of other humanists but also provided stellar testimony to the advantages of the humanist program of learning he so vigorously championed. His exceptional ability to draw effective analogies between the past and present in ways that would guide his audience toward ideas and choices that benefitted Florence and her citizens made him a valuable and respected sociopolitical voice and brought an unprecedented level of celebrity and erudition to the office of chancellor.

\textsuperscript{19} Bober and Rubinstein, \textit{Renaissance Artists}, 71.
Marsuppini appropriately paid homage to Bruni’s intellectual triumphs and widespread influence by composing an epitaph that seems to imply that when Bruni died, Florentines and humanists alike lost their leader, their “giver of inspiration”—in effect, they lost their Apollo. Speculative interpretation of Marsuppini’s intended meaning aside, the epitaph is unusual in that it mentions Bruni’s first name, but no other personal information, such as the date of his death or his profession. Instead, it poetically expresses the magnitude of the cultural and intellectual void left by his death using mythological references and philosophical language, thus presenting an antique-inspired memorial of that which made the eminent man worthy of remembrance beyond the boundaries of his earthly existence.

The placement of the humanistic epitaph on the front of the sarcophagus entombing Bruni’s remains strengthens the theme illustrated by the marble version of his lifeless body: the inevitable mortality of humanity. Concomitantly, it obliquely conveys the ways in which Bruni figuratively overcame death, a message affirmed by the winged figures steadying the slab on which the epitaph is inscribed—personifications of Victory—and strengthened by the sculpted book and laurel wreath.

According to the book of Genesis, “the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.” Although the physical body ceases to exist at the death knell, decomposing back into the earth from which God made it, a man’s time on earth is not in vain if he led a life in imitation of Christ—that is, if he behaved honorably and conducted his life with

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20 Schulz, Rossellino, 36 n. 25.

21 Holy Bible, Gen. 2:7 NIV; see also, Gen. 3:19.
a concern for the common good—for God promises to reward his faithful servants with imperishable bodies upon resurrection, after which they will go on to reside with him in heaven for eternity.\textsuperscript{22} The sarcophagus containing Bruni’s body, then, serves as a reminder that man’s natural body is doomed to expire. Counterbalancing the despair that arises from contemplating such a fate, the imagery above the sarcophagus urges the living not to grieve but to hope, for “death will be swallowed up in victory.”\textsuperscript{23} Beneath the bier on which the effigy lies in repose, two eagles with wings spread open (fig. 6) stand atop

![Figure 6. Bernardo Rossellino, Tomb of Leonardo Bruni, eagles beneath the bier](image)

\textsuperscript{22} Holy Bible, 1 Cor. 15:35-58.

\textsuperscript{23} Holy Bible, 1 Cor. 15:54.
the sarcophagus in a manner suggestive of impending flight. They appear poised for the moment when “the trumpet call of God” signals the resurrection, at which point they will raise up Bruni’s defunct body to heaven for its transformation into his immortal body.\footnote{Holy Bible, 1 Thess. 5:16. For the symbolism of the eagle, see Eugénie Strong, \textit{Apotheosis and Afterlife} (London: Constable, 1915), \url{http://www.archive.org/details/apotheosisafterl00strouoft} (accessed December 18, 2008), 181-87.}

Until that day arrives, the eagles stand alert, seeming to keep a protective watch over the sleeping Bruni. In a sense, they embody the manner in which Saint Paul instructed the Corinthians to wait for Christ’s return, visually encouraging the living to “be on [their] guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong [and] do everything in love.”\footnote{Holy Bible, 1 Cor. 16:13-14.}

In \textit{Apotheosis and Afterlife}, Eugénie Strong refers to the eagle as “the bird of Jupiter, symbol at once of Empire and of Apotheosis,”\footnote{Strong, \textit{Apotheosis}, 72. See Bober and Rubinstein, \textit{Renaissance Artists}, 51, for the eagle as an attribute of Jupiter; and 52, for the eagle as the disguise in which Jupiter pursued Ganymede.} and notes that ancient Romans viewed the eagle as the “vehicle of the soul in its ascent to the celestial sphere.”\footnote{Strong, \textit{Apotheosis}, 68. Schulz, \textit{Rossellino}, 36, also notes that the eagle serves this purpose in ancient Roman funerary art: “As the means by which the soul was believed transported to heaven, the eagle carries on its outstretched wings a bust-length image of the defunct or a full-length figure seated sidesaddle on Roman sarcophagi.”} In support of this reading of the eagles on the Bruni Tomb, Schulz points to a line from the closing of Manetti’s funeral oration: “. . . your soul, now free and crowned with that divine laurel, will fly from this tempestuous earthly sea to heaven, the eternal refuge of the Blessed Spirits.”\footnote{Ibid., 36.} Devoid of any figure sculpture, the empty space of the middle third of the Bruni Tomb, between the effigy and the lunette, perhaps offers a spatial...
allusion to Bruni’s journey from the mortal, earthly realm to the immortal, heavenly realm. Appropriately, the Madonna and Child flanked by adoring angels appear in the lunette above this space (fig. 7), as if awaiting Bruni’s arrival on the wings of the eagles, there to protect him from the moment of his death until his delivery to heaven. There, the Virgin assumes the eagles’ protective role, interceding on Bruni’s behalf during his judgment before Christ.\textsuperscript{29} Since the late thirteenth century, Roman Catholic doctrine has held that at the moment of death an individual faces the Particular Judgment—God’s instant assessment of the deceased’s earthly life—the outcome of which determines whether he will proceed directly to heaven, receive delayed entry by way of purgatory (the place where souls remain until they have expiated their sins, after which they can proceed to heaven), or be sent directly to hell.\textsuperscript{30} Christians thus implore venerated saints

\textsuperscript{29} Ronan, “Tuscan Wall Tomb,” 61.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 60-1, provides a brief overview of the idea of intercession, its origin and significance, as well as examples of the saints favored as intercessors in a funerary context.
for their intercessory help in acquiring redemption, in the form of either direct admission to heaven (the obvious preference) or the quick release of the soul from purgatory. The Christian belief “that Christ is particularly attentive to his mother’s requests” explains her popularity as an intercessor, which is evident from the prevalence with which she appears on sepulchers, a practice traceable to the early days of Christianity when painted images of her appear in the catacombs. The blessing gesture of the Christ Child (fig. 8), who

Figure 8. Bernardo Rossellino, Tomb of Leonardo Bruni, Madonna and Child

appears in the lunette of the Bruni Tomb with his mother, suggests that the intercession of the Virgin succeeded in helping Bruni to win a favorable evaluation during the Particular Judgment, earning the immediate salvation of his soul. In addition to the Particular

31 Ibid., 61, cites the Virgin’s primacy with Christ as the reason that she is so highly regarded as an intercessor. On depictions of the Virgin in the catacombs, see Schulz, Rossellino, 36.
Judgment, Christians subscribe to the belief that God will deliver his Final Judgment on humankind when the world comes to an end, and all those still living or in purgatory whom God deems worthy on Judgment Day will ascend to eternal life in heaven.\(^{32}\) In this light, then, the recumbent effigy represents the death of Bruni’s earthly body and the eagles beneath the bier signal the imminent departure of Bruni’s soul on its journey from the earthly to the celestial sphere (to which the empty space of the niche alludes), where the Virgin accompanies him to meet his Maker for the Particular Judgment and aids him in winning Christ’s Blessing. With the salvation of his soul assured, the lifeless shell of his earthly body contained within the sarcophagus rests in peaceful anticipation of the Day of Reckoning, when God will raise up his body and breathe into it new and everlasting life before reuniting it with his redeemed soul in heaven.

As previously discussed, the epitaph implies a comparison between Bruni and Apollo, which the laurel wreath crowning the effigy’s head seems to confirm, as it is an attribute of Apollo. These and other motifs, taken together, therefore refer to the figurative immortality—eternal fame among the living—Bruni earned as a reward for his earthly triumphs. Another iconographical element equates Bruni with a second mythological figure, according to Schulz, who sees the lion skins that serve as the feet of the sarcophagus (fig. 9) as a reference to Hercules, the mortal hero whose virtue earned him literal immortality.\(^{33}\) The notion that Hercules’ attribute, the lion skin, “enabled

\(^{32}\) Ronan, “Tuscan Wall Tomb,” 63. Christians share their belief in the Last Judgment with both Jews and Muslims.

\(^{33}\) Schulz, Rossellino, 35.
[him] to oppose luxuria,” derives from the humanist Coluccio Salutati, Bruni’s former teacher and his predecessor as chancellor. Based on the idea set forth by Salutati, Schulz contends that the lion skins beneath the sarcophagus suggest that “Bruni possessed the virtue of Hercules, and that, like Hercules who was apotheosized as a reward for his virtue, Bruni would be resurrected to eternal life in heaven.” Schulz cites Roman sarcophagi in support of her argument, for there, too, the appearance of Hercules’ attributes indicated that the deceased would attain immortality. Dynamic in nature, symbols and their meanings change and evolve over time. The present author, therefore, does not dispute the validity of Schulz’s statement that the original function of the lion as a symbolic motif—to protect the tomb—fell into oblivion between antiquity and the Renaissance, during which time it became nothing more than a decorative image.

34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid., 35-6. For the medieval function of the lion on tombs, see Ronan, “Tuscan Wall Tomb,” 55-6.
Consideration should, however, be given to the fact that the restoration of the lion’s protective role on a sepulcher is no less likely than the restitution of its function as a symbol of literal immortality if Renaissance humanists rediscovered such knowledge in the course of their extensive study of ancient literature and art. That the lions depicted on the Bruni Tomb convey not one meaning or the other but both remains a plausible possibility, though proper exploration of this falls outside the purview of this study.

In addition to the feet of the sarcophagus, the Bruni Tomb includes two other representations of the lion. Surrounded by a garland wreath made of oak leaves, Bruni’s coat of arms (fig. 10)—a crowned rampant lion emblazoned on a red-and-gold lozenged shield—caps the monument, and a roundel containing a lion mask (fig. 11) decorates the center of the frieze on the base, which is the Marzocco, the insegna of the Florentine Republic.37 The fact that Bruni chose the lion as his personal emblem lends credence to the possibility that the repetition of the lion motif on his tomb offers a clever reference to his first name—Leo, a diminutive form of the name Leonardo, means “lion” in Latin.38 While the coat of arms commemorates Leonardo Bruni as a private citizen, the Marzocco commemorates him as a devoted public servant. Although paying homage to an individual constituted the primary purpose of commissioning a tomb in his honor, it also demonstrated the magnanimity of and brought honor to the patron,39 which explains why “the use of a tomb, and the praise of an individual to celebrate the achievements of an

37 Schulz, Rossellino, 36; and 99, for identification of the wreath’s leaves as oak.

38 That the lion was “intended as a pun on the name Leonardo” is a suggestion made by Howard Saalman to Anne Markham Schulz (ibid., 35 n. 21).

Figure 10. Bernardo Rossellino, Tomb of Leonardo Bruni, coat of arms

Figure 11. Bernardo Rossellino, Tomb of Leonardo Bruni, *Marzocco*
entire family, was a common occurrence.”40 The Marzocco, then, adorns the Bruni Tomb as a tribute not only to Bruni for the significant role he played as a high-ranking civic official in Florence for so many years, but also to the Florentine Republic for its patronage of the tomb in his honor.41

The Bruni Tomb thus conveys meaning on multiple levels. Each iconographical element in itself signifies an idea related to physical life or death, to secular fame or spiritual redemption, but only when considered collectively do the various messages of the parts crystallize into the larger message of the whole. The encirclement of Bruni’s coat of arms, the Marzocco, and the Madonna and Child in the lunette creates a rhythmic uniformity along the central vertical axis. This, together with the enframement of the monument by a classicizing semicircular arch—an echo of the ancient Roman triumphal arches—visually ties together the various components of the tomb and reinforces the relationships between them, thereby strengthening the broader thematic thrust of the Bruni Tomb: triumph, both in life and in death. The Apollonian and Herculean imagery and references, as well as the architectural form and other triumphant motifs of the monument, allude to the manners in which ancient Greeks and Romans paid tribute to their heroes. By employing these motifs and forms for Bruni’s tomb, the Florentine state was appropriating a classical set of values that had likened the victorious to mythological gods and heroes, and using it to honor its most distinguished citizen. At the same time,

40 Welch, Art in Renaissance Italy, 193.

41 Schulz, Rossellino, 36-7, states that while the precise intention of the Marzocco is unknown, it “refers [either] to Bruni’s service to the Commune or the Commune’s service to him in erecting his tomb.”
the borrowing of classical symbols and ideals served as a means of connecting fifteenth-century Florentine society with that of the ancients, just as Bruni did in his writings. Most Florentines likely understood the iconography of the Bruni Tomb as a memorial to one of its leading lights, one who deserved remembrance and Christian salvation. Only the most knowledgeable and sophisticated would have seen it as a monument at once and equally Christian and pagan, a monument as much to ideas and learning as to a man, a monument that speaks as well of his spiritual redemption for leading a moral life on earth as of the perpetual fame on earth he earned for liberating his mind and attaining the virtues so highly prized by humanists. This esoteric monument, harmonious in form and content, perfectly accomplishes the task of commemorating Leonardo Bruni, for its greatness, like that of Bruni himself, lies in the almost imperceptible boundaries between public and private, secular and Christian, civic and humanist.\(^42\)

**Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini**

Appointed as Chancellor of Florence upon the death of Leonardo Bruni in the spring of 1444, Carlo Marsuppini served the Republic in that capacity until his own death on April 24, 1453. That he died while holding public office earned him, like his predecessor, the privilege of a state funeral with full honors, which occurred on April 27

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\(^42\) An important question that must remain unexplained in this thesis is the identity of the specific individual (or individuals) who devised the iconography of the Bruni Tomb. Schulz, *Rossellino*, 36, posits “a humanist, perhaps Carlo Marsuppini,” a plausible suggestion considering that Marsuppini was not only a widely respected humanist and classical scholar noted for his extensive multi-disciplinary learning, but also the current chancellor and a very close, longtime friend of Cosimo de’ Medici (the unofficial ruler of Florence).
at a cost to the state of 1,500 florins. The Florentine government delegated the planning of the ceremonies to a five-person committee comprising Giannozzo Manetti, Ugolino Martelli, Piero di Cosimo de’ Medici, Matteo Palmieri, and Niccolò Soderini, all of whom were politically active members of the Medici regime. The political and institutional entities to which the flags and banners flown during the funeral procession belonged—the French king, the papacy, the Duke of Milan, the Republic of Florence, the Commune of Arezzo, the Parte Guelfa, the Studio fiorentino, the Arte dei Giudici e Notai—attest to the extent of Carlo’s connections and to his international renown.

Among the Florentine luminaries who took part in the ceremonies were the Dodici Buonomini (Twelve Good Men) and the Sedici Gonfalonieri (Sixteen Standard-bearers), the two councils comprising the Collegi (Colleges) that, together with the Signoria, formed the executive branch of Florence’s government. In addition to the political constituent of the affair, the identity of the men chosen to plan the ceremonies demonstrates the social nature of the ritual, for Giannozzo Manetti and Matteo Palmieri were friends and fellow humanists, and Piero de’ Medici was Cosimo’s son, tutored in his youth by Carlo. Marsuppini’s former students, Matteo Palmieri and Alamanno Rinuccini, infused intellectual character into the ceremony, just as Manetti had done at

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43 See p. 41 n. 5 above; and Viti, “Marsuppini,” 15. The 1,500 florins expended by the Republic for the obsequies in honor of Marsuppini was an enormous amount of money by any standard in Quattrocento Florence, but particularly so for a state funeral, as evidenced by comparison to the 200-250 florins spent for the funeral of its first humanist chancellor, Coluccio Salutati (Martines, Social World, 241-2). The cost of Bruni’s funeral is unknown, preventing comparison.

44 The information regarding Marsuppini’s funeral, including its cost, planning, and attendees, is from Martines, Social World, 242.
Bruni’s funeral, by commemorating the late chancellor according to “ancient custom.”

In recognition of the esteemed humanist’s devotion to learning and service to the end of his life, Palmieri delivered a funeral oration and, particularly appropriate given Marsuppini’s reputation as a poet, Rinuccini placed upon his former teacher’s head the poet’s crown of laurel.

“The order of the Signoria,” Desiderio da Settignano—a sculptor to whom Schulz attributed the execution of some elements of Bruni’s funerary monument—received the commission to construct a monumental wall tomb in commemoration of Carlo Marsuppini, which the Medici and Martelli families seemingly financed, at least in part.

Although lacking archival documentation regarding the commission and construction of the tomb, circumstantial evidence suggests that Desiderio worked on the project ca. 1454–59. Located in the Basilica di Santa Croce, the Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini (fig. 12) faces that of Leonardo Bruni from the sixth bay of the church’s left aisle. Not only

45 Vespasiano, Lives, 378. See also p. 42 n. 12 above.

46 Vespasiano, Lives, 417; Viti, “Marsuppini,” 15.


48 Marc Bormand, Beatrice Paolozzi, and Nicholas Penny, eds., Desiderio da Settignano: Sculptor of Renaissance Florence (Milan: 5 Continents Press, 2007), 118. For the most recent bibliography on Desiderio da Settignano and his oeuvre, see ibid., 251-71. For a modern biography on Desiderio, see Anne Markham Schulz, “Desiderio da Settignano,” in Dizionario biografico degli Italiani (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1991), vol. 39, 385-90. For the elements of the Bruni Tomb attributed to Desiderio, who apprenticed in the Rossellino workshop, see Schulz, Rossellino, 34, 43, 45, 46, 50. Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 473 n. 37, notes “the important role played by Piero [di Cosimo] de’ Medici in the funeral and the commemoration of Carlo Marsuppini” and rightly points out that “Piero’s involvement signals . . . the public and civic nature of the entire process.” For the civic significance of Marsuppini’s funeral, see Strocchia, Death and Ritual, 159-61.

49 Bormand, Paolozzi, and Penny, Desiderio, 118.

50 Ibid.
Figure 12 Desiderio da Settignano, Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini, Florence, Santa Croce
their close proximity but also their compositional parallels visually link the successive chancellors’ tombs.

Following the method of construction established by his former master, Desiderio created an arched rectangular niche recessed into the wall, thereby joining the structure of the Marsuppini Tomb to that of the church. Here, too, a dark marble plinth topped by one in white marble with a decorative frieze forms the two-level basement on which rests the monument’s architectural frame—comprised of fluted Corinthian pilasters that support a complete entablature, from which springs a semicircular arch that surmounts the niche. The frieze decorating the basement’s uppermost plinth contains a sphinx carved in high relief on each corner and a classicizing vase overflowing with fruit, flowers, and leaves at the center. Additionally, the frieze includes two beribboned garlands of fruit and foliage, with each of the swags suspended between the ribbons fluttering from the sphinxes’ hair on one side and the floral tendrils growing out of the vase on the other. Putti bearing shields with the Marsuppini coat of arms stand atop the plinth in front of the pilasters, set into the niche between which is a white marble platform faced with a frieze of, alternately, floral motifs and classicizing vases that contain vegetal bouquets. On the platform rests the sarcophagus, supported under each corner by a lion’s paw, the tops of which metamorphose into large acanthus leaves that cover the rounded corners at the bottom of the coffin, and the stalks that extend from the leaves form arabesques at the upper corners. Acanthus stalks grow upward and outward onto the face of the sarcophagus as well, with two, one on each side, undulating toward the center of the field, where they terminate in arabesques on either side of the rectangular tabula.
*ansata*—an inscriptive tablet having dovetail, or V-shaped, handles on both sides—which bears an epitaph in Latin. The part of the acanthus stalk that forms the interior arc of these arabesques enwraps the lateral protrusions of the tablet. Appearing to provide the deeply undercut *tabula ansata* with additional support are outstretched wings attached to a scallop shell, centrally located on the platform just below the sarcophagus. On the flat-topped sarcophagus lid—the steeply pitched sides of which Desiderio decorated with a pattern of imbricated (i.e., overlapping) half-round disks—stands the bier, covered by an ornate *drapo*, on which lies the laurel-crowned effigy of Marsuppini, depicted wearing a classical toga and holding a book against his chest. A low relief of the Madonna and Child flanked by adoring angels fills the semicircular space of the lunette, below which four inlaid panels of deep red marble adorn the back wall of the niche. The arabesque handles of the lampstand crowning the monument anchor the garlands of fruit and leaves—now supported in their descent by winged male youths standing atop the cornice on either side of the arch—which enframe the entire marble structure. Ironically, distinguishing Desiderio’s most celebrated sculpture from the Bruni Tomb, perhaps more than any other feature, is one not carved in marble but painted on the wall surrounding the monument, and it lay hidden beneath thin layers of plaster until discovered by chance in 1996–7. Restoration of the wall brought to light a sophisticated *trompe l’oeil* scene,

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51 Andrew Butterfield, *The Sculptures of Andrea del Verrocchio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 207, reports that the decorative pattern carved on the sarcophagus lid is “an all’antica motif.”

52 Informed by observations made during his work on the restoration carried out in 1996–7, Christopher Weeks, “The Restoration of Desiderio da Settignano’s Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini in S. Croce, Florence,” *The Burlington Magazine* 141, no. 1161 (December 1999): 732-8, discusses “the artistic character of Desiderio’s conception of the monument.” The question of the artist responsible for the wall painting seemingly remains a mystery, but Desiderio’s connections to Neri di Bicci and Antonio del Pollaiuolo
“clearly [intended as] part of the original conception of the monument,” consisting of an azure wall enframed by decorative molding and crowned by a cornice that mimics—in black, white, and several hues of gray—some of the ornamental patterns carved in relief on the marble entablature below. Cascading downward from the small ornamental ball fictively attached to the basilica’s ceiling are fur-lined damask curtains, fastened to intonaco hooks located about a quarter of the way down the wall on each side to hold them open, forming an illusionistic baldacchino over the entire monument.

Given the many parallels between the lives, deaths, and posthumous commemorations of Leonardo Bruni and Carlo Marsuppini, the monuments erected by the state in their honor presumably share the same general function and a number of the same themes, a supposition strengthened by the tombs’ propinquity in space and design. Iconographical analysis of the Marsuppini Tomb, therefore, relies upon the evidence presented in the foregoing examination of Bruni’s funerary monument for those elements of composition mutual to both.

Clad in a classical toga with a book upon his chest, the laurel-crowned effigy of Marsuppini (fig. 13) lying on a bier in a covered niche reproduces in marble the humanist chancellor’s appearance as he lay in state during the funeral, thus preserving a partial record of the historical event, while simultaneously conveying to posterity the degree of honor he earned in his earthly life. Despite the wrinkles of his brow, the creases that

have led to the mention of their names in relation to this question (see ibid., 737 n. 15). Ibid., 736 n. 12, notes that the reader interested in the restoration’s more technical aspects should see Cristina Danti, Annamaria Giusti, Maria Rosa Lanfranchi, and Christopher Weeks, “Scultura e affresco: novità dal restauro del monumento Marsuppini,” OPD Restauro 10 (1998): 36-56.

frame his mouth, and the skin beneath his jaw that has lost the elasticity of youth, Marsuppini seems not nearly old enough to have left this world, for the deep marks inevitably etched by time had yet to appear upon his face. Neither had time taken its toll on his hands, those parts of the human body that, strangely, tend to reveal one’s age long before the face. Desiderio’s portrayal of Marsuppini, though it embodies the essence of resting in peace, suggests that the great humanist drifted into the serenity of eternal sleep far too soon. Indeed, a mere fifty-five years passed between his first breath and his last, a reminder of the unpredictability of death and the swiftness with which it can arrive at one’s door.

As Bruni’s *Historiae florentini populi* had nine years earlier, a book lay upon Marsuppini’s chest during his funeral, but sources do not indicate if it was a specific book
or one of his own compositions, though the latter seems unlikely given that Marsuppini produced very few literary works. In Trecento Tuscany, some doctors of law and medicine went to the grave “with a manuscript on their breast,”\textsuperscript{54} and Schulz notes that “as a symbol of a life devoted to poetry, history, literature and philosophy, the book corresponds to the \textit{volumen} in Roman sarcophagi of poets, philosophers and rhetoricians.”\textsuperscript{55} That Marsuppini was a distinguished classical scholar and humanist educator, who taught civil law as well, suggests that the book placed on his chest during the funeral served as a motif emblematic of his erudition, an interpretation strengthened by the laurel wreath placed on his head by Rinuccini. As a highly esteemed poet and a key figure in the revival of ancient knowledge, Carlo Marsuppini was worthy of the laurel wreath, a mark of distinction for having excelled in the pursuits of his earthly life. Both it and the book appear on his effigy in recognition of his intellectual achievements and the character with which he fulfilled his civic responsibilities, bestowing perpetual honor and renown on him, as well as the class of humanists to which he belonged, and glorifying the Republic he served so faithfully. Emblematic of the virtue and eloquence born from devoted study and considered by humanists as the requisite skills for effective public service, the book and laurel wreath together represent the acclaim Marsuppini achieved in his earthly life through active concern for the common weal, as well as through learning that never ceased and teaching that never failed to inspire.

\textsuperscript{54} Ronan, “Tuscan Wall Tomb,” 12. The Tuscan practice of burying lawyers and doctors with a manuscript perhaps inspired, at least in part, the use of a book for the commemoration of humanist scholars, which would have been an easily made and understood iconographical adaption.

\textsuperscript{55} Schulz, \textit{Rossellino}, 35 n. 17.
As a depiction of the final image of Marsuppini’s mortal flesh before its return to the dust of the earth, the effigy reminds the living of the inexorability of human life. The laurel wreath and book not only confer honor and fame on Marsuppini in perpetuity for his virtue and eloquence, thereby rewarding him with secular immortality, but also allude to the power man possesses to overcome death literally, for those who think, speak, and act with integrity and selflessness earn God’s promised gift of immortal existence in heaven. The effigial ensemble thus signifies Marsuppini’s victory, even in death, as the path that led him to earthly distinction also led him to life eternal.

Elegantly inscribed on a rectangular *tabula ansata* at the center of the sarcophagus, the Latin epitaph (fig. 14), as that on the Bruni Tomb, mentions no more

![Figure 14. Desiderio da Settignano, Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini, epitaph](image)

personal information than Marsuppini’s first name. Rather, its words are devoted to conveying the enormity not only of his life but also of his death: “Stay and see the marbles which enshrine a great sage, one for whose mind there was not world enough. Carlo, the great glory of his age, knew all that nature, the heavens and human conduct have to tell. O Roman and Greek Muses, now unloose your hair. Alas, the fame and
splendor of your choir is dead.” The reference to the Muses, as with the epitaph on Bruni’s sarcophagus, perhaps serves as an allegorical means of comparing Marsuppini to Apollo. The Apollonian association seems no less appropriate for Marsuppini than for Bruni, even though the two men played different roles in the intellectual life of Quattrocento Florence. Leonardo Bruni was a “giver of inspiration” through his highly acclaimed and influential literary works, and although Marsuppini did not produce a vast body of literature, he acquired an impressive breadth and depth of knowledge from a lifetime of dedicated study. For two decades, he disseminated that knowledge from behind a lectern at the Studio, where he used his words rather than his pen to exhort his students, as well as the prelates and political figures who attended his lectures, to devote themselves to the studia humanitatis, the by-products of which were moral character and persuasive expression in speech and writing. Marsuppini’s own virtue and eloquence

56 Hartt and Wilkins, *History of Art*, 336-7; Pope-Hennessy, *Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, 287. The authorship of the epitaph on Marsuppini’s tomb remains anonymous. Borond, Paolozzi, and Penny, *Desiderio*, 118 (citing Anne Markham Schulz, “Glosses on the career of Desiderio da Settignano,” in *Verrocchio and Late Quattrocento Italian Sculpture*, ed. Steven Bule, Alan Phipps Darr, Fiorella Superbi Gioffredi [Florence: Le Lettere, 1992], 179-81; and ibid., “Desiderio da Settignano,” 388), mention two letters written to Piero de’ Medici, one by Antonio Martelli (June 7, 1459) and the other by Francesco Griffolini (July 19, 1459), regarding “the choice of epitaph to be inscribed on Marsuppini’s sarcophagus.” Although they do not provide the name of the epitaph’s author, these letters shed light on the identity of the men involved in the process of the tomb’s design. Ibid., report that “…the text inscribed on the tablet, despite the elegance of the characters, is not centered or uniform, thus suggesting that the letter-cutter was obliged to adapt the epitaph to a space that had not been planned for those verses.” For epitaph in Latin, see Appendix.

57 Lending credence to the possibility that the epitaphs on the tombs of Bruni and Marsuppini convey a similar meaning is the fact that the latter authored the epitaph inscribed on the former’s sarcophagus. Moreover, Piero de’ Medici was the son of Cosimo, the unofficial ruler of Florence who was among Marsuppini’s closest friends, and the state commissioned both chancellors’ tombs. This suggests that those who planned Marsuppini’s tomb were aware of the meaning he intended the Bruni epitaph to convey.

58 Bober and Rubinstein, *Renaissance Artists*, 71; see also pp. 45-7 above.

brought him widespread esteem as a humanist educator and as chancellor, making him a “giver of inspiration” to a generation of scholars and citizens. When Death extinguished one of the last “great light[s]”\(^60\) of the Florentine intelligentsia who blazed the intellectual trails of the first half of the Quattrocento, not only humanists but all Florentines lost their “general,”\(^61\) as Donato Acciaiuoli referred to him, and the Republic once again lost “the fame and splendor of [its] choir.” Owing to its location on the sarcophagus containing Marsuppini’s physical remains, the epitaph reinforces the theme conveyed by the effigy—the unavoidable fate of corporeal mortality. Simultaneously, it confirms the implied message of the laurel wreath and book, for its poetic words, which speak to his wisdom and erudition, memorialize that which made Marsuppini worthy of remembrance long after the expiration of his earthly body, thus ensuring his figurative triumph over death.

Every man, though he eventually must face his corporeal end, has the opportunity for literal immortality as well. “I tell you the truth,” Christ states in the Gospel of John, “whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”\(^62\) Christ atoned for the sins of humankind by suffering the Crucifixion, thereby securing the salvation of all those who trust in the redemptive power of his sacrifice. Service, charity, and good deeds, in and of themselves, do not save from one from eternal damnation. Rather, they reflect the

\(^60\) Field, *Origins*, 79.

\(^61\) Ibid., 87; see also p. 25 above.

\(^62\) Holy Bible, John 5:24; see also John 3:17-18.
believer’s faith and his desire to follow the altruistic example set forth by Christ as a way of expressing gratitude for his Maker’s merciful gift of salvation. Saint Paul communicates this message in a letter written to his fellow Christians in Rome—the whole of which comprises the book of Romans—in which he declares, “To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, [God] will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.”

Scholars, prelates, and political figures alike attended Marsuppini’s lectures, but despite his popularity and wealth, he remained committed to his calling of learning and teaching, even while serving as chancellor. In this way, he demonstrated his contentedness with giving higher priority to the greater good, and such passionate dedication is the basis of greatness in teaching, serving, or any other work done in one’s time on earth. In using his talents and abilities selflessly and acting with integrity, Marsuppini invested in his eternal heritage. The winged shell (fig. 15) beneath his sarcophagus, like the eagles on the Bruni Tomb, may represent the vehicle by which his soul, upon death, will ascend to heaven, and his body, at the End of Days, will rise into

Figure 15. Desiderio da Settignano, Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini, winged shell

63 Holy Bible, Romans 2:7-8.
the celestial realm for its reunion with his soul, becoming imperishable. As the sea mollusk travels the globe, drifting from one point to the next along the ocean currents, the scallop shell encasing it serves as a means of protecting the organism, just as it did for Venus, whom Botticelli (fig. 16) depicted emerging from and delivered to shore by the scallop shell. Strong notes that “the soul was thought [by ancient Romans] to take on wings at the moment of separation from the body.” Alluding to the themes of birth, protected travels, and resurrection, the winged shell seems emblematic of “the human journey through life.” On the Marsuppini Tomb, therefore, the scallop shell with

Figure 16. Sandro Botticelli, Birth of Venus, Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi

64 Strong, Apotheosis, 263 n. 58.
outstretched wings may symbolize a protected journey from physical life into death and from death into spiritual life, a journey to which the empty space between the effigy and lunette perhaps alludes.

At the moment of death, the winged shell presumably delivered Marsuppini’s soul to heaven—symbolized by the semicircular space above the geometrically divided back wall of the niche—where the Virgin Mary, who appears with the Christ Child and two adoring angels (fig. 17), assumed guardianship of his soul. The Virgin’s smiling face seems to offer confirmation that her intercession on Marsuppini’s behalf during the Particular Judgment aided him in securing the immediate entrance of his soul into heaven.

“A time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear [my] voice,” Christ declared, “and . . . those who have done good will rise to live.” Until that time when Marsuppini’s lifeless body will “rise to live” again, the sphinxes (fig. 18) at the corners of the basement frieze, whose wings seem to support the weight of the entire monument, presumably act as guardians of Marsuppini’s mortal remains, just as they did on ancient Greek tombs. Famously, the Great Sphinx of Giza stands guard over the pyramid entombing the Egyptian pharaoh Khafre (ca. 2555–2532 BC). A sphinx, by definition,

its website, “Saving Graves is a non-profit volunteer organization made up of cemetery preservation advocates working to increase public awareness and activism in preserving, protecting and restoring endangered and forgotten cemeteries worldwide.”


67 The ancient Greeks depicted the sphinx on tombs, as they believed it would prevent the disturbance of the dead, according to Woolf, Ancient Civilizations, 347.

68 Ibid., 25.
Figure 17. Desiderio da Settignano, Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini, lunette with relief of Madonna and Child flanked by adoring angels

Figure 18. Desiderio da Settignano, Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini, sphinxes at corners of basement frieze
is a hybrid creature with the body of a lion, the wings of an eagle, and the head and breast of a human female. On the Marsuppini Tomb, however, their hindquarters are not leonine but reptilian, as they have the tail of a serpent. The image of the snake, in general, signifies “death (because the snake sheds its skin)” and “regeneration (the skin’s renewal).” The snake frequently appears in Greek mythology as a symbol of protection or regeneration. Great-granddaughter of Medusa and Poseidon, the Sphinx appears in Sophocles’ mythological story, *Oedipus the King*, in which she stood guard at the gates of the Greek city of Thebes, killing any passerby who answered her riddle incorrectly. Oedipus eventually came along and solved the riddle, vanquishing the Sphinx and earning him enormous admiration for his exceptional intellect. The sphinxes carved on Marsuppini’s tomb, then, perhaps not only serve a protective function but also commemorate him as a classical scholar. Similarly, the lions’ paws (fig. 19) on which the sarcophagus rests, in addition to their usual protective purpose, may also be a

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69 Ibid., 428. The regenerative nature of snakes made them “a widespread symbol of healing in the ancient world” (ibid., 429).

70 Ibid., offers several examples of the snake’s appearance in mythology: “Creatures of the depths of the earth and sea, snakes and water-serpents (Greek *drakones*), had both positive and negative associations for the Greeks. Asklepios, god of healing, and his daughter Health were always accompanied by snakes, which had links with agricultural fertility in the cult of Demeter. A serpent-like dragon guarded the golden fleece . . . and the apples of the Hesperides, and the snakes of Athen[a]’s aegis had a similarly protective function.” I would like to thank Justin Walsh for taking the time to answer my questions regarding the inclusion of a serpent’s tail on a sphinx, and for reminding me of the snake’s association with Asklepios and its regenerative symbolism.

71 The Sphinx was the child of Echidna—daughter of Chrysaor and granddaughter of Medusa and Poseidon—who was half-woman, half-snake (Vanessa James, *The Genealogy of Greek Mythology* [New York: Gotham Books, 2003], 9, 11). The serpent-like tail of the sphinxes on the Marsuppini Tomb, therefore, perhaps serves as means of referring to the mythological Sphinx.

72 Woolf, *Ancient Civilizations*, 349. “What goes on four legs in the morning, then two legs, then three?” This was the Sphinx’s riddle, the answer to which “was ‘man,’ who crawls as a baby, walks upright in his prime, and hobbles with a stick in old age.”
reference to Florence, thereby memorializing Marsuppini’s years of public service to the
Republic. With the inclusion of the putti, bearing shields emblazoned with the
Marsuppini coat of arms (fig. 20)—comprised of three eight-point stars, one at each
corner, and a set of six overlapping mountains in a pyramidal arrangement at the center—
his tomb also commemorates him as a private citizen. While the central motif on the
shield is of uncertain meaning, the eight-point star plausibly refers to Marsuppini’s
membership of the Arte dei Giudici e Notai, the emblem of which was the eight-point
Golden Star (fig. 21).

Emphasizing and perpetuating the honor inherent in the rituals surrounding death
concerned Early Renaissance Florentines as much as historical remembrance and
Christian redemption of the deceased, as illustrated by the fact that sumptuary laws
Figure 20. Desiderio da Settignano, Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini, putti bearing the Marsuppini coat of arms

Figure 21. Stemma of the Arte dei Giudici e Notai, on the tabernacle that belonged to the guild
delineated the number and variety of funerary honors accorded to an individual based on his social station, and in turn, his tomb memorialized those honors. The inclusion of an effigy on a tomb, for example, reflects the deceased’s right to have displayed on the bier his uncovered corpse, dressed in the ceremonial regalia of his rank, profession, or office, in order to show that he belonged to one of the elite classes permitted to enjoy such an honor. Likewise, the placement of an *archa* (“a temporary honorific canopy”) over the bier during the obsequies explains the presence of a *baldacchino* or arched canopy over the sarcophagus.

The illusionistic *baldacchino* (fig. 22) painted on the wall surrounding the sculpted monument of Desiderio...

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73 For the rituals of death and their emphasis on Tuscan wall tombs in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, see Ronan, “Tuscan Wall Tomb,” 6-26, 57, 58-9. On this topic in general, see Strocchia, *Death and Ritual*.


edifice of the Marsuppini Tomb, therefore, refers to the funerary honor bestowed on Marsuppini of having the bier, on which lay his uncovered corpse, placed beneath an archa during his funeral. The similitude between the decorative patterns of the painted damask curtains and the sculpted drapo that covers the bier lends credibility to the notion that the fictive canopy represents the funerary archa, and thus possesses historical value and confers infinite honor on Marsuppini. The answer to the question of its iconographic function varies among scholars, with some postulating that the canopy specifically signifies “the celestial Jerusalem which the blessed has reached.” More generally, the depiction of a canopy over tombs as well as altars and thrones was a common practice in Europe “from the time of Alexander the Great,” and it “represented the cosmos and signified the presence of universal authority, be it sacral or imperial.”

Like the laurel wreath worn by a victorious general or emperor during the procession celebrating a military conquest in ancient Rome, the triumphal arch erected in commemoration of such also symbolized victory. The enframement of the entire monument by a classicizing semicircular arch that echoes the form of a triumphal arch, therefore, articulates and strengthens the theme of triumph—public and private, secular and spiritual, figurative and literal—that runs throughout the Marsuppini Tomb. Virtuous

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76 Philippe Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Knopf, 1981), 248. Karl Lehmann, “The Dome of Heaven,” *The Art Bulletin* 27, no. 1 (March 1945): 1-27, has shown that “the canopy as a symbol of heaven was . . . a common central element in the decoration of ancient ceilings” (p. 2); and Butterfield, *Verrocchio*, 39-40 (citing E. Smith, *The Dome* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950]), reports that “since remotest antiquity, the dome has been a symbol of heaven, and when it is placed over a tomb it is a sign of the special importance of the deceased.”

77 Butterfield, “Social Structure,” 60, who states that this ancient meaning of the canopy “was still very much alive in Renaissance Italy.”
and eloquent, highly intelligent, and wholeheartedly committed to learning, teaching, and serving, Carlo Marsuppini stood out like a beacon of light among his contemporaries as a man worthy of imitation and remembrance. In the Gospel of Matthew, Christ instructed man to be a light that illuminates the world around him, helping others: “You are a light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

Perhaps, then, the lampstand (fig. 23) crowning

Figure 23. Desiderio da Settignano, Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini, lampstand

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78 Holy Bible, Matt. 5:14-16.
Marsuppini’s tomb represents the illumination of mind and spirit that results from the pursuit of knowledge and truth, and its flames, as Marsuppini himself, burn eternal. Surmounting the architectural frame of the monument, the sculpted lampstand, the flames of which extend into the painted background, serves the practical purpose of connecting the sculpted and painted compositions. Sculpture, painting, and architecture thus come together in this one splendid monument, immortalizing the elegant style of a young artist, the portrait of a man who triumphed over death, and the ideals of the intellectual and civic institutions to which the deceased devoted his earthly life.

**Tomb of Giuliano Davanzati**

The third chapel on the left in the Florentine church of Santa Trinita houses the least studied of the four tombs under consideration here: the Tomb of Giuliano Davanzati (fig. 24), credit for the execution of which most likely belongs to the sculptor Andrea Guardi. Not widely known, Andrea di Francesco Guardi was a native of Florence active primarily in Pisa and the surrounding area on Italy’s west coast from the 1440s–1470s. Heavily influenced by the multitude of ancient Roman sarcophagi found in Pisa’s Duomo and Campo Santo, Guardi developed a “strong attachment to the

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Figure 24. Andrea Guardi, Tomb of Giuliano Davanzati, Florence, Santa Trinita
Antique.”⁸¹ Not surprisingly, then, the sculptor became especially known for his restoration work on antique sarcophagi.⁸² Without extant documentation on the commission and construction of the Davanzati Tomb, attribution of the project to Andrea Guardi must rely on circumstantial evidence, such as the fact that both Guardi and Davanzati worked in Pisa, the latter as governor of the city on behalf of Florence during the second quinquennium of the 1430s. Moreover, “it is possible,” according to Charles Seymour, “that Guardi began as an actual member of Bernardo Rossellino’s shop at the time of the Bruni Monument,”⁸³ the commission for which Rossellino likely did not receive until “the end of 1446.”⁸⁴ Alternatively, Guardi perhaps began in the workshop of Donatello and Michelozzo, with whom he seemingly worked in Naples for the two decades prior to the establishment of his own bottega (workshop) in Pisa in 1442.⁸⁵ The question of whether Guardi worked on projects in Naples under Donatello and Michelozzo and/or on the Bruni Tomb under Rossellino must remain unanswered here. The influence of the Bruni Tomb on the Davanzati Tomb or vice versa, however, is a

⁸¹ Seymour, Sculpture in Italy, 143.
⁸³ Seymour, Sculpture in Italy, 143.
⁸⁴ Schulz, Rossellino, 34. For the dating of the Bruni Tomb, see p. 37 n. 2 above.
plausible possibility, for the niche of the latter is comparable to that of the former “in proportions and shape.”

Like Rossellino and Desiderio, Guardi joined the structure of Davanzati’s funerary monument to that of the deceased’s family chapel by creating a recessed semicircular-arched niche that encloses a marble sarcophagus, supported by two lions’ heads, one under each corner, which rest on the fluted platform protruding from the wall. Two additional lions’ heads, each with a ring in its mouth, flanking a depiction of the Good Shepherd with three sheep—all carved in high relief and set against a strigilated background—decorate the face of the reused Early Christian sarcophagus. A fifteenth-century addition to the sarcophagus, the lid, which bears a dedicatory inscription on its lip, reveals a sculpted effigy of Davanzati, above the head and below the feet of which rest shields emblazoned with a rampant lion. A round arch springing from fluted Corinthian pilasters forms the illusionistic architectural façade of the niche, the rear wall of which, also painted entirely in fresco, contains two rectangular panels framed by fluted Corinthian pilasters, above which is a frieze of beribboned garlands with a putto face at the center and a bucra
tium on each side. Appearing to float weightlessly in the frescoed

86 Schulz, Rossellino, 38, though her phrase “almost identical” overstates the case. Ibid., refers to the Davanzati Tomb as “probably slightly earlier” than the Bruni Tomb, which lends credence to the notion that the former could have influenced the latter, a topic that deserves further exploration. For the measurements of the Bruni Tomb, see ibid., 100.

87 For the provenance of the Davanzati sarcophagus, see Oy-Marra, “Davanzati-Grabmal,” 19 n. 16.
lunette are three-quarter-length angels facing one another from either side of a semicircular space, the central scene of which is no longer visible.\textsuperscript{88}

The burial of Giuliano Davanzati in an Early Christian sarcophagus (fig. 25)

Figure 25. Andrea Guardi, Tomb of Giuliano Davanzati, sarcophagus

follows the medieval practice of reusing antique sarcophagi as a means by which to mark one’s funerary monument as special,\textsuperscript{89} a distinction enhanced by Andrea Guardi’s addenda to the sepulcher. The modification of the sarcophagus to include the lid—the back and sides of which are steeply pitched and decorated with the same \textit{all’antica}

\textsuperscript{88} That the motif of the Madonna and Child adored by angels appears with such frequency in the lunette above tombs suggests that the same motif once filled the central portion of the Davanzati Tomb’s lunette. For a discussion of the Davanzati Tomb’s lunette, see Oy-Marra, “Davanzati-Grabmal,” 5-10. For the popularity of the Madonna and Child motif on Tuscan tombs of the Trecento and Quattrocento, see Ronan, “Tuscan Wall Tomb,” 60-1.

\textsuperscript{89} Ibid., 27.
pattern of imbricated half-round disks that appears on the lid of Marsuppini’s sarcophagus—allowed for the addition of an effigy and an epitaph. The sculpted effigy, which presumably depicts Giuliano as he appeared during his funeral, and its placement beneath the arch of the niche refer to the funerary honors granted to him based on his social status. Unlike the epitaphs on the Bruni and Marsuppini tombs, that inscribed on Davanzati’s sarcophagus (fig. 26) includes his full name—Giuliano, son of Niccolò, of the Davanzati family (IVLIANI·NICHOLAI·DEDAVANZATIS)—as well as the year of his death (1444), although the latter is incorrect, as he did not die until January 12, 1446. 90 The epitaph also mentions Giuliano’s profession as a doctor of law (DOCTORIS) and his designation as a knight (MILITIS), and thus highlights personal achievements that permitted his inclusion in the most prestigious of Florentine social groups and afforded him the opportunity to use his expertise to support and promote the interests of Florence both at home and abroad. Together, the effigy and epitaph serve as

90 For the year of his death, see Barducci, “Davanzati,” 108. Dated January 3, 1446, just nine days prior to his death, Davanzati’s extant testament includes his wish for burial, without pomp, in his family’s chapel in Santa Trinita, but it does not refer to his sarcophagus (Oy-Marra, “Davanzati-Grabmal,” Appendix, 19, provides the part of Davanzati’s testament, in Latin, pertaining to his posthumous commemoration). Based on the premise that the formal language of the Davanzati Tomb’s painted architectural scheme cannot have been conceived prior to 1440, ibid., 3-4, asserts that Giuliano acquired the sarcophagus and commissioned its modifications while he was still alive. Oy-Marra’s supposition, if correct, may account for the discrepancy between the date inscribed on the tomb and that of his death. Perhaps, for instance, Davanzati experienced a serious illness in 1444, which prompted him to arrange for his burial. Such a situation would explain the inscription of the year 1444 on his sarcophagus despite the fact that he did not die until two years later. For epitaph in Latin, see Appendix.
a means of memorializing the historical event of Davanzati’s death and funeral, while simultaneously commemorating those triumphs of his earthly life that demonstrated his concern for the intellectual and political welfare of the community. As such, they confer perpetual honor on the deceased, his family, the order of knights to which he belonged, and the Republic he served without cessation or complaint.

“I am the good shepherd,” Christ declares in the Gospel of John, “and I lay down my life for the sheep.”91 “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me,” he continues, “[and] I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.”92 In his death by Crucifixion, he atoned for the sins of all men, whether living, dead, or not yet born. In his time on earth, Christ was a teacher who, by his word and deeds, shown light upon the path to goodness, showing man how best to lead one’s mortal life. Saint Peter, too, uses the shepherd and his sheep as a metaphor for the proper way to lead and serve others. “Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care,” instructs Saint Peter, “not because you must, but because you are willing . . . not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”93 The lesson to take from these biblical passages is that Christ is the shepherd and the whole of humanity comprises his flock of sheep. Likewise, Saint Peter exhorts those chosen as leaders of any kind to serve willingly without regard for self, just as a good shepherd does for his sheep. As a

91 Holy Bible, John 10:14, 15.
93 Holy Bible, 1 Pet. 5:2-4.
prominent political and diplomatic figure in Florence for nearly three decades, Giuliano Davanzati fulfilled his responsibilities as a public servant with concern for the well-being of the flock that constituted his community. An exemplary man and leader, Davanzati was worthy of imitation and posthumous remembrance. More importantly, he was worthy of immortal existence on the shores of Paradise, which is the trophy awarded to those who lead a life on earth in accordance with that of Christ.

Carved in high relief on the front of Davanzati’s sarcophagus is a panel depicting two sheep looking up at a beardless man wearing a short tunic and carrying a sheep on his shoulders (fig. 27). As the man represents Christ as a shepherd, the sheep symbolize his flock of Christian followers, which explains the designation of the motif as the Good Shepherd. The motif, however, finds an analogue in ancient Greek art, an example being the well-known *Moskophoros* (fig. 28), which depicts a young, beardless man carrying a calf on his shoulders. The Good Shepherd panel located on the front of Davanzati’s sarcophagus, therefore, resonates with meaning, personal and civic, Christian and classical.

According to Christian belief, the Old Testament prophet Isaiah foretold the coming of Christ and the price he would pay for humankind, predicting that Christ would

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95 “Found in fragments on the Athenian Acropolis,” the *Moskophoros* (or *Calf-bearer*) dates to ca. 560 BC, according to Fred S. Kleiner and Christin J. Mamiya, *Gardner’s Art through the Ages: The Western Perspective*, vol. 1, 12th ed. (Belmont, California: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006), 99. Nigel Spivey, *Understanding Greek Sculpture: Ancient Meanings, Modern Readings* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1996), 94, reports that “the motif of man carrying a calf or sheep on his shoulders is known from other [ancient Greek] sanctuaries—many simple bronze versions of such a figure have been recovered from a sanctuary of Hermes at Viannos, in Crete, and an unfinished colossal ‘Ram-bearer’ has been found on the island of Thasos.”
Figure 27. Tomb of Giuliano Davanzati, Good Shepherd panel on sarcophagus face

Figure 28. *Moskophoros*, Athens, Greece, Acropolis Museum
be “led like a lamb to the slaughter.”96 Ancient Israelites would have understood Isaiah’s analogy, for they were to make amends for their sins by sacrificing two lambs in the temple each day, one in the morning and one in the evening.97 While the divine Christ is the Good Shepherd who guides his flock, the human Christ is the Lamb of God whose Crucifixion was the final sacrifice. Just as Christ descended to earth as the Lamb, so he will return one day to conquer evil and to judge all men, after which he will summon the faithful to their eternal destiny in heaven, where he will reign supreme as the triumphant Lion, the King of the celestial realm.98 For this reason, the leonine imagery that appears in several places on the Davanzati Tomb perhaps bears a Christian significance. As discussed in the previous two analyses, the presence of lions or leonine motifs in a funerary context often serves a protective function. The lions’ heads on the front of and beneath the sarcophagus (fig. 29), then, act as the guardians of Davanzati’s physical

Figure 29. Andrea Guardi, Tomb of Giuliano Davanzati, lions’ heads on and beneath left side of sarcophagus

96 Holy Bible, Isa. 53:7.
98 Holy Bible, Rev. 5:5-6.
remains until Judgment Day, when his body will reunite with soul and become immortal. Concomitantly, they also may represent the *Marzocco*, as does the lion’s head contained in a roundel on the basement frieze of the Bruni Tomb. In addition to the lions’ heads that decorate the front of the sarcophagus and support it from below, the Davanzati Tomb includes another representation of the lion. Emblazoned on the two shields reclining against each end of the sarcophagus lid is a rampant lion (fig. 30). Comparison to the heraldry located on the exterior of the Palazzo Davanzati in Florence (fig. 31) confirms that the shields on the tomb are the Davanzati coat of arms. A metaphor for the Triumphant Christ, an emblem of the deceased and his family, and “an ancient symbol for the conquest of death,” the lion thus commemorates Davanzati as a private citizen

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who belonged to an ancient and noble family and as a steadfast public servant whose literal and figurative triumph over death is secure.

Although frescoed rather than carved in marble, and therefore less ornate and monumental, the resemblance of the basic format of Davanzati’s funerary monument—a semicircular-arched niche with classicizing architectural elements enclosing a sarcophagus, on top of which lies an effigy of the deceased—to that of the Bruni and Marsuppini tombs suggests a similarity of meaning. Here, too, the form of the trompe l’oeil architectural frame possesses the essence of a triumphal arch, and thus might indeed constitute a means of extolling Davanzati’s lifelong contributions to his patria. Surmounting the sarcophagus with its various symbols of victory, the illusionistic triumphal arch assures all who stand before the Tomb of Giuliano Davanzati that the interred led an earthly life worth celebrating, a life that brought honor to his Maker, his family, and his native Florence.
Tomb of Bernardo Giugni

The fourth and final effigial wall tomb constructed in Florence during the fifteenth century for an individual not normally entitled to such an honor, the Tomb of Bernardo Giugni (fig. 32) occupies the west wall of the Florentine Badia’s right transept, as it has since the seventeenth-century reconstruction of the church.\(^\text{100}\) Begun ca. 1464 and completed ca. 1468,\(^\text{101}\) the Giugni Tomb represents one of the most celebrated works in the oeuvre of its creator, Mino da Fiesole, yet another sculptor who purportedly apprenticed in the Rossellino workshop.\(^\text{102}\) As inscribed in the upper right corner of the sarcophagus face, Bernardo Giugni died in 1466—on July 5, to be more precise—although extant documentation suggests that he initiated the plans for his burial “sometime in the 1440s.”\(^\text{103}\) Unlike the sculptors of the previous three tombs, Mino did not construct Giugni’s funerary monument as a canopied niche that contains the

\(^\text{100}\) Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 452, 456 (citing Alessandro Guidotti, “Vicende storico-artistiche della Badia fiorentina,” in La Badia fiorentina [Florence: Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze, 1982], 105-7). Initially built on the east side of the church that Arnolfo di Cambio designed ca. 1285, Giugni’s tomb moved to its current location during the rebuilding of the church in the seventeenth century.

\(^\text{101}\) Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 452. Ibid. (citing Giovanni Poggi, “Mino da Fiesole e la Badia fiorentina,” Miscellanea d’Arte 1 [May–June 1903], 103), reports that “a single contemporary account from the now-displaced archive of the Badia exists for Bernardo Giugni’s tomb: in 1468, Ugolino Giugni, Bernardo’s brother and the bishop of Volterra, paid 20 lire 12 soldi to Mino di Giovanni for work he had done on the tomb.” Ibid., 472 n. 6, notes that “in Florentine documents, Mino da Fiesole is typically named Mino da [sic] Giovanni, identifying the artist as the son of Giovanni di Mino.”

\(^\text{102}\) Mino’s authorship is secure, as he signed the work in the tondo at the center of the lunette (Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 462). Mino’s apprenticeship in the Rossellino workshop is an idea put forth by Seymour, Sculpture in Italy, 139; Schulz, Rossellino, 11, acknowledges this possibility based on Mino’s age, period of activity, and reliance on Antonio Rossellino and Desiderio da Settignano, but points out that “no work from the Rossellino shop . . . even remotely resembles [Mino’s] in style.”

\(^\text{103}\) Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 452. Ibid., 472 n. 6 (citing Francesco Gori, “Vespasiano Bisticci, vite di 7 uomini illustri . . . ,” Florence, Biblioteca Marucelliana, ms. A76, fol. 63), says that “sometime in the 1440s [Bernardo] tried to make arrangements for his tomb to be placed near the high altar of the Badia.”
Figure 32. Mino da Fiesole, Tomb of Bernardo Giugni, Florence, Badia
sarcophagus and bier; instead, the structure is set against and protrudes from the church wall.

Resting on either side of the monument’s base is a scroll volute between a pair of narrow fluted pilasters topped by corbels, on which rests a straight entablature with a fluted frieze that includes a *stemma* at each end. Crowning the monument is a semicircular lunette, at the center of which a tondo with a dark ground provides the background for a white marble profile portrait of the deceased carved in *mezzo rilievo*. The classicizing architectural façade enframes a rectangular field divided into two sections. The upper section consists of three inlaid panels of deep red marble and, in white marble, a high-relief figure of Justice, who stands on a projecting platform in front of the central panel, holding scales in her left hand and a sword in her right. In front of the lower section’s dark background, two volutes rest on the monument’s base and support the sarcophagus, the lid of which resembles a mansard roof, in that each sloping side has a steeper bottom part and a shallower top part. A pattern of imbricated half-round disks decorates the lid’s bottom part, while two circular motifs flanking a Greek cross ornament its otherwise plain top part. On the sarcophagus lid stand two additional volutes that bear the weight of the bier, recumbent on which is an effigy of the deceased with a toga clothing his body and a sword resting on his chest. The Latin epitaph, inscribed on a rectangular *tabula ansata* and held aloft by two putti, adorns the front of the sarcophagus.

Noting the similitude between the projecting scroll volutes set between the pair of pilasters on either side of the Giugni Tomb (fig. 33) and those found on the *cathedra* in
the Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal in Florence’s San Miniato (fig. 34), Zuraw asserts that the architectural format of the latter resembles a chair-type referred to as a
Moreover, Zuraw contends, “In the context of the Giugni Tomb, the chairlike form surely was intended to suggest the public throne of justice” because “from a seated position . . . the gonfaloniere [di giustizia] presided over the Signoria and . . . received

tronetto.\textsuperscript{104}  

visiting dignitaries."\(^{105}\) The ancient Romans, too, associated justice with a chair, which they referred to as the *sella curulis* (curule chair), “a portable ivory throne.”\(^{106}\) Reserved for “consuls, praetors, and curule aediles,”\(^{107}\) the *sella curulis* (fig. 35) was one of the insignias of higher magistrates.\(^{108}\) Not only representative of justice and civic administration, the seat or throne of justice also carries Christian meaning. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,” according to Saint Paul, “that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.”\(^{109}\) The architectural format of the Giugni Tomb thus celebrates the virtue

\[\text{Figure 35. Example of a sella curulis} \]

\(^{105}\) Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 460, 474 nn. 62-5, 475 n. 66.


\(^{107}\) Shelton, *As the Romans Did*, 96 n. 101.

\(^{108}\) Ward, Heichelheim, and Yeo, *History of the Roman People*, 74. According to ibid., “the praetor’s ordinary duties may have been primarily the administration of justice within the city. . . . allow[ing] the consuls to give their undivided attention to military and foreign affairs,” while the role of curule aediles was “to help with the burdens of municipal administration.”

\(^{109}\) Holy Bible, 1 Cor. 5:10. For other examples of biblical references to the throne or seat of justice, see Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 460-1, 475 nn. 68-70.
exemplified by Bernardo Giugni as both a private citizen and a public servant. Using an artistic vocabulary emblematic of justice and authority that communicates meaning in civic, antique, and religious terms, the Giugni Tomb obliquely expresses the ways in which the interred figuratively and literally overcame death.

Reinforcing the theme of justice established by the monument’s architectural form is the personification of Justice (fig. 36), depicted with her traditional attributes of scales
and a sword.\textsuperscript{110} Analogous in pose and size to the figure of Minerva—the Virgin goddess of war and peace, wisdom, and the arts\textsuperscript{111}—carved in \textit{alto rilievo} on a wall in the Forum Transitorium in Rome (fig. 37), the personification of Justice on Giugni’s tomb highlights Mino’s knowledge and use of the antique.\textsuperscript{112} The formal correspondence between the two reliefs suggests that they bear a similarity of meaning. According to Zuraw, “Justice, 

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure37.jpg}
\caption{Relief of Minerva, Rome, Forum Transitorium}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., 459.

\textsuperscript{111} James, \textit{Genealogy of Greek Mythology}, 14. See also Bober and Rubinstein, \textit{Renaissance Artists}, 80-1.

\textsuperscript{112} Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 459, who says that the figure of Minerva in the Forum Transitorium would have been “visible to Mino in the [Q]attrocento.” Worth noting here is that the sword held by Justice is analogous to the spear, one of Minerva’s attributes, which the goddess perhaps once held in her now-missing right hand.
as defined in the Renaissance, was an active virtue, and wisdom a contemplative virtue, or, put another way, wisdom was directed toward knowledge of God, justice toward civic action.113 Perhaps, then, Mino’s seeming quotation of the antique relief of Minerva for his figure of Justice served as a means of representing the classical and Christian conceptions of justice simultaneously. In this light, she embodies not only the ancient Roman understanding of justice as the intersection of wisdom and the *summum bonum* (the highest good),114 but also the Christian consideration of justice as one of the principal virtues to which man should aspire.

The sword held by Justice is one of two swords illustrated on the Giugni Tomb. The other appears upon the chest of the effigy (fig. 38). As one of the symbols of

![Figure 38. Mino da Fiesole, Tomb of Bernardo Giugni, effigy with sword resting upon his chest](image)

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113 Ibid., 460.

114 For a discussion of the Greek philosopher Epicurus and the *summum bonum*, see Shelton, *As the Romans Did*, 427.
knighthood,\textsuperscript{115} Giugni’s sword refers to his designation as a Knight of the Golden Spur. Concomitantly, it further enhances the broader themes of justice and active civic virtue communicated by the iconographic program of Giugni’s funerary monument.

As discussed in the analyses of the Bruni and Marsuppini tombs, the appearance of the Madonna and Child in a funerary context seems to serve as a means of assuring the living of the deceased’s salvation. The Madonna and Child, however, are conspicuously absent from the Giugni Tomb, the lunette of which contains only a profile portrait bust of Bernardo (fig. 39). The replacement of the Madonna and Child with a depiction of

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure39.jpg}
\caption{Mino da Fiesole, Tomb of Bernardo Giugni, profile portrait in the lunette}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{115} Butterfield, “Social Structure,” 65.
Giugni at the climax of his corporeal life was perhaps intentional, the purpose being to convey that the words and deeds of Bernardo’s earthly life alone suffice to ensure his Christian redemption.

The loyalty and constancy with which Giugni served the *res publica* (common wealth)\(^{116}\)—as a jurist, as a civic official, as a knight, and as *gonfaloniere di giustizia*—earned the high esteem of his contemporaries. Such virtues, which won him enduring fame on earth long after he drew his last breath, are the same virtues that assure his eternal destiny, both of his soul at the Particular Judgment and of his body at the Last Judgment. In the book of Ephesians, Saint Paul encourages Christian believers “to live a life worthy of the calling [each has] received. . . . be[ing] completely humble and gentle” and “mak[ing] every effort to keep the unity . . . through the bond of peace.”\(^{117}\) Giugni certainly met the standards set forth by Saint Paul, who in the same epistle penned the following exhortation: “Serve wholeheartedly . . . because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does.” Bernardo Giugni was the ultimate exemplum of wholehearted service and integrity, which made him not only a highly respected citizen and representative of Florence but also a man worthy of Christian redemption, as explicitly conveyed by the epitaph inscribed on the front of the sarcophagus (fig. 40): “To Bernardo Giugni, Florentine Knight, always a founder of

\(^{116}\) Ward, Heichelheim, and Yeo, *History of the Roman People*, 59, note that the term *res publica*, in modern usage, refers to a type of government, but for the ancient Romans, it meant the “common wealth” or “public thing.”

\(^{117}\) Holy Bible, Eph. 4:1-4.
concord and a truly popular citizen. The pious brothers put up this to their brother who well merited it both for himself and for the state.**118

Figure 40. Mino da Fiesole, Tomb of Bernardo Giugni, epitaph

118 Zuraw, “Public Commemorative Monument,” 474 n. 48, who acknowledges Eva Nylander for her assistance with the translation of the epitaph. For epitaph in Latin, see Appendix.
CONCLUSION

The Common Denominator

Throughout the entire fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth centuries in Florence, not a single wall tomb with a sculpted effigy memorializes anyone other than members of the Church elite, as Florentines traditionally restricted its patronage to that prestigious class of individuals. The four examples considered by this study mark the only deviations from an otherwise consistent pattern of effigial wall tomb patronage in Florence across a two-hundred-year span of time, which speaks to the deep sense of tradition that characterizes Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Florentine society. Even the four exceptions to the custom of strictly reserving the effigial wall tomb for the Church elite reflect the city’s traditional nature, as honor—individual and social, earned and bestowed—represents one of the most fundamental aspects of the Florentine identity in that period. That an exception to the customary rules of effigial wall tomb entitlement occurred only four times in two centuries, and then only for laymen of the highest esteem, who led principled lives of dedicated service to others, affirms the Florentine reverence both for tradition and for those few who merited exemption from the rules of that tradition.

To understand why Leonardo Bruni, Carlo Marsuppini, Giuliano Davanzati, and Bernardo Giugni merited such an honor, this study commenced with biographical examinations of each man, which illustrated myriad ways in which they earned considerable distinction in their own lifetimes and beyond. The succeeding
iconographical analyses of their funerary monuments narrowed the focus and illuminated the specific reasons that justified the burial honors granted to them. As private memorials, their funerary monuments commemorate the virtues and triumphs of their earthly lives that made them worthy of Christian salvation as well as perpetual honor and fame. While each tomb conveys meaning in slightly different ways than the others, all four of them communicate the same multi-dimensional themes of virtue, triumph, and immortality. Although their tombs commemorate a variety of individual-specific themes and achievements, they seem to share an underlying purpose, suggested by those elements given greater prominence or emphasis. Bruni’s *Historiae florentini populi* represents the first humanist history of the city, the symbol of which, the *Marzocco*, adorns the center of the frieze on the basement. On Marsuppini’s tomb, the book resting on the effigy’s chest, though generic, likely refers to his erudition and the decades he spent teaching at the *Studio fiorentino*. In addition to the proliferation of lions (symbol of Florence), the inscription on the rim of Davanzati’s sarcophagus makes explicit reference to his knighthood, as does the sword held by Giugni’s effigy. A personification of Justice, bearing scales and a sword, occupies the central panel of the aedicula above and behind the effigy, symbolizing the justice Giugni dispensed in his term as the *gonfaloniere di giustizia*. All of these elements refer to the different ways in which the men’s concern for the common good was beneficial to and reflected well on Florence, the Republic that these four men devoted their lives to serving.

Informed by the historical estimation of these individuals, as well as by the personal and public themes conveyed by their tombs, this concluding chapter can now
consider these funerary monuments as a group, addressing the question of their collective function as part of the broader context in which they were created. These exceptions to the venerable norms of effigial wall tomb patronage did not occur because the interred all shared a profession, a title, an intellectual disposition, or a political association. Such parallels exist among some, but not all, of the men. Rather, the common thread running through the lives of all four, that which defined them as men, as citizens, and as public servants, was the use of their honor and fame, accrued from individual merit, not for self-serving purposes but for the greater good. Bruni devoted more years of his life to writing his Historiae florentini populi—which abounds with civic exhortations—than he did to any other job or literary work. As preceptors of the arts and law at the Studio, Marsuppini and Davanzati had a direct hand in promoting the learning that produced the next generation of Florentines dedicated to an active intellectual and civic life. As Vespasiano put it, “Florence would have been happy had all her citizens been like [Giugni],”¹ who never ceased striving for peace, despite the fact that those efforts took him far from his home and family for extended periods of time.² Nearly every story recounted about these men in the annals of history attests to their consistent placement of the good of all above the good of one. Despite any affinities or personal ties to a political faction or an intellectual circle, overall, their words and deeds indicate their desire to stay above the sociopolitical fray as much as possible, content to advise and mediate such

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¹ Vespasiano, Lives, 326.
² Ibid., 326-30, devotes almost all of Giugni’s biography to extolling his subject’s commitment to peace, a topic he concludes by stating: “. . . it is enough to record that Messer Bernardo in will and deed always strove for the honour and benefit of his city” (p. 330).
issues instead. Guided by integrity and wisdom, they actively pursued, and encouraged others to pursue, those things that would benefit the community and maintain their political freedom. Given that the common denominator among Bruni, Marsuppini, Davanzati, and Giugni was their devotion to the greater good above all else, then there was no more appropriate way to reward them than by permitting their burial in the tomb-type above all others in honor and prestige.

From the consideration of these men and their funerary monuments, both independently and as a group, the recurrent themes all seem to point to a collective function of these four exceptions to the norms of effigial wall tomb patronage. The individual in possession of a virtuous character, whose exemplary public service, charity, and piety demonstrated a principal concern for community above self, constituted the definition of both the ideal Christian and the ideal citizen, one who thus deserved not only spiritual redemption but also enduring secular fame, thereby attaining both literal and figurative immortality. This integration of Christian and civic virtues originated not from the celebrated humanist intellectuals of the Renaissance but from Florentine Dominican preachers, whose tradition of civic preaching dates to the thirteenth century. Daniel R. Lesnick has recently examined the civic tradition of Dominican preaching, focusing on the sermons given by Giovanni Dominici during his time as a friar at Santa Martines, Social World, 242. The Marsuppini/Filelfo controversy at the Studio in the early 1430s is an exception, though not so much because of Marsuppini’s actions as because the feuding oligarch and Medici factions had such direct involvement in the whole affair.

Maria Novella, the principal Dominican church in Florence.\textsuperscript{5} Lesnick reports that, in an Ash Wednesday sermon delivered by Dominici in 1406, the friar “explicitly linked being a man, being a Christian, and being a Florentine.”\textsuperscript{6} At the conclusion of that same sermon, Dominici cautioned his listeners: “Therefore, whoever wants to counsel well in all things must forget himself and place all his concerns with the common good.”\textsuperscript{7} A similar message was promoted a century earlier by another Dominican, Friar Remigio de’ Girolami, who declared, in his \textit{De bono communi} (1301–2), “If you are not a citizen, you are not a man, because man is ‘by nature a civil animal.’”\textsuperscript{8} The Florentine humanists of the Quattrocento, then, shared with the Florentine Dominican preachers a strong belief in the necessity of active civic participation and service to others before self. The long history of this civic tradition in Florence thus lends support to the idea that the exceptions to the norms of effigial wall tomb entitlement were made for the four tombs of concern here because their interred exemplified the ideal man, citizen, and Christian. The praiseworthy virtues of the citizen and the Christian are the same, in that the possession of virtue lends itself to goodness, selflessness, and service to others, and in turn, the

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., 208-25.
\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., 219-20.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., 220.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., 212.  Ibid., 212-3, nicely summarizes the thrust of Remigio’s beliefs about the connection between man, citizen, and Christian: “Because man has a natural and rational need for the community and because the purpose of the community is to be an area of self-sufficiency in which individual virtue can be more easily attained, it follows that the well-being of the community is more important than that of the individual. Without the community the individual could not exist, and the Christian could not spiritually aid others and earn salvation.”
goodwill of a virtuous man assures both his spiritual redemption and his perpetual earthly renown.

The dawn of widespread interest in the ancient past revived more than the value of “man as the measure of all things.”\(^9\) Indeed, throughout the fifteenth century, Florentines increasingly turned to the artistic and literary vestiges of classical antiquity in an effort to gain a better understanding of the civilization from which they believed their city and its people descended.\(^10\) As the knowledge of antiquity’s material culture deepened, quotations of classical art increased as well. Another collective function of the four tombs, therefore, lies in their artistic connection to ancient Greece and Rome. The visual references to the intellectual, social, and civic aspects of the interred and their earthly lives evoked the classical past by publicly honoring and commemorating to the highest degree those men who exemplified the ideal citizen, in the same manner as their ancient forebears, which the classicizing architectural forms and imagery reinforced. The illustration of traditional values and forms all’antica within a classical architectural frame reminiscent of an ancient Roman triumphal arch transformed the effigial wall tomb into a powerful visual expression of civic ideals and an assertion of the ancient Roman heritage claimed by Florence and her citizens.

In breaking with tradition to allow the burial of Leonardo Bruni, Carlo Marsuppini, Giuliano Davanzati, and Bernardo Giugni in Florence’s most honorific type of funerary monument, the state found an effective means of rewarding those whose

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\(^9\) Credit for this famous statement belongs to the Greek philosopher Protagoras (ca. 480–410 BC).

\(^10\) Butterfield, “Social Structure,” 64.
active civic pride and devoted public service significantly benefitted or glorified Florence, inspiring others to the same, and connecting the Republic and her citizens to the ancient past. Independently and collectively, these funerary monuments and the lives of the men they entomb reflect the complex web of artistic, intellectual, civic, cultural, and political interconnections, at the center of which lay Christianity, which characterized life in Renaissance Florence. The commingling of past and present, secular and divine, tradition and innovation, public and private, civic and religious, corporeal and spiritual into a monumental and harmonious whole in the fifteenth-century effigial wall tomb, beginning with that of Leonardo Bruni, not only reflects the intricately knitted nature of Florentine society but also demonstrates how, to paraphrase Butterfield,\textsuperscript{11} the classical, the Christian, and the civic could be combined to stimulate cultural change and kindle artistic innovation in Renaissance Florence.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 66.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX: LATIN EPITAPHS

Provided below is the Latin epitaph, as inscribed, for each tomb considered by this study.

Tomb of Leonardo Bruni:

POSTQVAM LEONARDVS EVITA MIGRAVIT
HISTORIA LVGET ELOQVENTIA MVTA EST
FERTVRQVE MVSAS TVM GRAECAS TVM
LATINAS LACRIMAS TENERE NO[n] POTVISSE

Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini:

SISTE VIDES MAGNVM QVAE SERVANT MARMORA VATEM
I INGENIO CVIVS NON SATIS ORBIS ERAT
QVAE NATVRA POLVS QVAE MOS FERAT OMNIA NOVIT
KAROLVS AETATIS GLORIA MAGNA SVAE
AVSONIAE 7GRAIAE CRINES NVNC SOLVITE MVSAE
OCCIDIT HEV VESTRI FAMA DECVS QVE CHORI

Tomb of Giuliano Davanzati:

DNI·IVLIANI·NICOLAI·DEDAVANZATIS·MILITIS·ET·DOCTORIS·ANO·1444

Tomb of Bernardo Giugni:

DS
BERNARDO·IVNIO·EQ[ui]·FLOR[enti]·PV[bl]·
CO[n]CORDIAE·SE[m]·AVCTORI·ET·CIVI
VERE·POPVLARI·PII·FRATRES·ERATRI·DE
SE·DEQ·REP[ubli]·OPT[im]·MERITO·POSVERVNT
VITA

Katy Gail Richardson was born in September 1978, in Lake Charles, Louisiana, and lived in the nearby town of Sulphur until 1991. Early in the summer of that year, she moved with her family to Indonesia, which gave her the opportunity to combine formal schooling with the diverse experiences inherent in living and traveling abroad. Whether in Singapore or Australia, Kuala Lumpur or on the beach of Krakatau, the distinctive beauty in the lives of the people and the places where she found herself became part of the fabric of her life. By learning the language and embracing the culture of Indonesia, she opened herself to a vastly different world totally apart from her own background, instilling in her a deep appreciation of history and its representations in every culture.

Returning to the United States in 1994, she completed her final two years of high school in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, after which she enrolled at Louisiana State University. Lacking direction and focus several years into her college career, she made the difficult decision to take time away from her studies. She spent the next five years traveling as often as possible while working, first as a sales representative in Baton Rouge and Manhattan and then as a personal assistant to a film producer in Los Angeles.

In January 2004, Katy moved back to Baton Rouge to complete the education she had put on hold at Louisiana State University, from which she earned a Bachelor of General Studies—with minors in history, sociology, and psychology—in May 2006. Midway through her undergraduate studies, a caring professor became aware of her genuine love of foreign travel and languages, as well as her curiosity and enthusiasm
about the material culture of civilizations past and present, and pointed out that her interests and goals seemed well-suited to the field of art history. Heeding that counsel in her senior year, she took four art history courses and enjoyed them all, but the two that covered Italian Renaissance painting captured her heart. By choosing a flexible undergraduate degree path that allowed her to study multiple branches of learning concerned with the culture and ideas of humanity, Katy discovered a field she loves wholeheartedly and gained a broader perspective from which to approach the history of art. Her willingness to take an unconventional path, both personally and academically, through her first decade of adulthood allowed her to receive an education outside of the classroom that ultimately proved invaluable to her within it. With ease and conviction, she thus decided to embark on the journey through graduate school to obtain the credentials requisite to a career in academia. In August 2009, she achieved the first milestone along the way to that goal by earning her Master of Arts in art history, with a specialization in the Italian Renaissance, from Louisiana State University. Having come to treasure the tombs of Renaissance Italy, particularly those constructed in Florence and Rome, she hopes to have the opportunity to study them in greater depth while pursuing a doctorate in the near future.

Katy possesses a basic understanding of German, a reading knowledge of French and Spanish, and an ever-improving command of Italian. Although her skills are now less sharp due to a lack of practice in recent years, she was once fluent in Bahasa Indonesia, the version of Malay spoken in Indonesia. In addition, she recently began studying Latin.