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Exemplary Equines: Gazes and Gesture of Bovine Animals in Trecento Fresco

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EXEMPLARY EQUINES:
GAZES AND GESTURE OF BOVINE ANIMALS IN TRECENTO FRESCO

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"Let *every creature*

in heaven, on earth,

in the sea and in the depths,

give praise

glory, honor, and blessing

to Him

Who Suffered so much for us

Who has given so many good things,

and [Who] will [continue to] do so for the future"

Saint Francis, *The Second Version of the Letter to the Faithful,* Verse 61.

Acknowledgments

First, to my mother and father, the best teachers a child could have,

To George Gorse, for having a twinkle in his eye as bright as the horses that know Jesus will rise from the dead,

To Corey Tazzara, for being an excellent role model and rekindling a passion for Renaissance texts,

To Juliet Koss, for prompting and pecking at and promoting my studies,

and to Thaddeus Asher Bruno, who will always be my best friend.

I. PROLOGUE

For five and a half weeks in 1999, my parents took me and my brother on a vacation to Italy, tracing my father's roots. The early memories of an impressionable child were forming, and I remember some images from the trip: the meaning of *non toccare,* the gelato flavor s*tracciatella,* and looking at the horses and dogs in the frescos plastered across churches in Italy.

My parent's first question in the arsenal of entertainment for their seven and six year old children was *how many horses can you find in the fresco?* Thaddeus, a year and a half younger than me and my prime competition, was just as keen at finding the animals hidden in the elaborate frescoes. We would count all the horses we could find and report back to our parents, who would occasionally film our responses. This is how they would actually get us to focus on the frescos; in the sweeping search for animals, we would actually engage with the entire paintings, noticing the details. They were slowly planting the first seeds of art history in my brain. I loved finding the horses that looked out at me from their spots in the frescoes, and Thad did as well, they were so much more real to us than the endless tortured faces of Christ!

Growing up in Christian Science Church, my eyes had nothing to grasp onto. Ultimate simplicity and absolutely no representational figures were to be found in every church — not even a crucifix was present. Sometimes I wished I had the frescos of the Italian Catholics. Service would be so much more interesting if I had something to look at, to capture my imagination!

I would return to Italy a second time the summer after my sophomore year in High School, where I developed a more mature love for Italian fresco. This trip, however, was three weeks long, as I had to return home for summer camp for five weeks, where I would spend hours horseback riding. With the next summer I was the Junior Counselor of the stables, and quickly promoted to Riding Counselor for a summer, followed by Riding Director for two years. There I learned something that can only be known through spending hours with horses, personally.

Red would let me put my hands over both her eyes and kiss her nose, but would not hesitate to buck me off if I went in for a jump when her right shoulder was slightly more forward than her left. Godiva bit me *hard, every single time*, when I stood on the right side of her and tightened her girth with a child under ten years old in sight. But once her saddle was off she would come up and nuzzle me apologetically, to which I would respond by grabbing her mane, hoisting myself up bareback, and lying down over her shoulder while she grazed. My favorite expressions I saw on my eight horse herd were when I would return home from time off at midnight, and pop under the fence to kiss them goodnight; their ears would twitch to figure out who was invading their space in the night, and then satisfied soft neighs followed when they realized it was me.

The human-horse relationship has been written about extensively, because it is so compelling. The Western world has not established such a complex relationship with animals as large as horses, and therefore they inhabit as unique place in (some of) our psyches. Though cows could be argued to be as large and intelligent as horses, our human relationship with them has mostly been one way - we use them for milk and meat, and therefore we tend

to emotionally distance ourselves from them — they will be killed anyway. But horses were not used for meat or leather during the time period of this thesis, in fact, the church even intervened and banned the slaughter of horses in Trecento Italy (except for as casualties of war, where horses were seen as partners, equals, in the fight). In the Middle Ages, horses were butchered for food, especially in England. But by the 13th and 14th century in France and Italy, eating horses was considered unsophisticated, even pagan.[1] This practice was actually banned by the Church, and only in times of extreme duress (such as the Black Death), were horses ever consumed. What about this animal affected humans so much that they were protected by the sanctity of the Church?

Horses may seem mysterious, but their codified body language is as nuanced and readable as humans, and I would argue that humans have read horses body language in much the same way across centuries. Their relationship with humans is, and has been, complex and full of codependency. In addition, their sheer size makes their care very time consuming and expensive. This adds to the investment humans humans have in their horses; while a cat may only need a dish and fresh water, the neediness of a horse is great. With constant care, and great financial cost, comes attachment. Horses are undoubtedly animal, but there is something about their natures that pushes them to an interesting level in the psyches of humans. For all these factors, horses occupy a unique space in Western history, and this rank plays out on the frescoed walls across Italy.

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[1] Sailsbury, *The Beast Within*, 43.

A. INTRODUCTION- BEGINNING AT BIRTH: NATIVITY SCENES, GIOTTO, AND A NEW STYLE

I. The Byzantine Style

Religious artwork before 1300 could be read like a code, with easily identifiable narratives that were straightforward and directly symbolic. Artwork had been created in this style for many decades, without much alteration. The Italo-Byzantine style did not seeks to depict humans in a realistic space, or pay heed to accurate perspective, instead focusing on symbols, symmetry, and decorative aspects. In the late medieval tradition of painting there was no focus on proportion, and size hierarchy, where the most important person is the largest, was prevalent. But at the turn of the century, a representational shift begins, and new artists transition from this decorative style.

II. The First Participating Bovine Animals - the Ox and the Ass

One example of the Italo-Byzantine or Late Medieval styles of painting in Italy (13th-14th century) is the Nativity fresco made by an unknown artist in the Upper Church at Assisi, circa 1290-1295 (Figure 1).[2] This fresco, created about ten years before the frescos discussed in the body of this thesis, contains elements of Byzantine artwork, with slight indications of the newer styles that can be found in other areas of the Church. Commonly in Nativity scenes we see the three Magi, from the East, approaching in a courtly manner, with

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[2] The Church of San Francesco at Assisi will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter. Most likely a colleague or predecessor of Giotto would have painted this scene. This is evident stylistically, as size hierarchy (of the Madonna) is utilized here, and is not in any other frescos created by Giotto. Poeschke, *Italian Frescoes*, 68.

humble shepherds watching meekly nearby.[3] In this fresco, the shepherds, being guided by the angels, have discovered the cave where Jesus lies. These followers of the truth look up at the angel, who instructs them from a scroll in their hand. The shepherds' herd gazes at their masters faces inquisitively. Joseph assumes his traditional contemplative and position, while Mary has size hierarchy in the center of the panel, staring out at the viewer, and paying no attention to the Child of God. This painting is not realistic in its space; Mary is very large and floats on a blanket, the Christ Child mysteriously lies on a box inside an indeterminate cave, as the animal heads pop up from nowhere. This is characteristic of the Late Medieval style in Italy, as these figures are not in a real space, and have odd proportion, but are heavily symbolic nevertheless.

The ox and the ass are fixed on Jesus, and both open their mouths in delight. Jesus returns their excited expression. He looks fondly at the ox, with the expression of a new infant. An angel presides over this scene, blessing the entire interaction. These elated animals direct the attention of the viewer to the real focus of the religious scene — the newborn King. These animals serve as symbols, as representatives of the Old and New Testaments.[4] So while these animals are able to see Christ's divine nature, and it is artistically revealed through their expressions, they still hold the benchmarks of symbols, and do not act as independent agents. All the other figures do not have particularly emotional expressions, but through the faces of the ox and the ass, the common viewer could understand the emotion

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[3] This comes directly from the Bible, found in Luke 2:14-16.

[4] They are also fulfillments of the Old Testament prophesy "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib" (Isaiah 1:3). The ass embodies stubbornness, Jews, and the Old Testament (as it will not recognize Christ), while the ox represents Christianity and the New Testament.

that this fresco was trying to demonstrate. The animals are placed here as observers, and they mediate the relationship between nature and Holy Family. The joy at the birth of Christ, the animal emotion of excitement, combined with the divine event, is an engaging aspect of this religious panel. The animal participation channels the viewers' attention from a contemplative state to a joyous, human state of emotion, while representing the different sections of the Bible. However, the sheep in this image are unaware of any of the spiritual elements, and they represent nature here. The ox and the ass are given special treatment — they are not lumped in the same animal category as the unaware sheep, they are distinct participants in the Birth of Christ.

A point of contrast with the fresco above can be found in the Scrovegni Chapel, painted by Giotto, in Padua (Figure 2).[5] In the Nativity we see the ox and the ass, and a tender moment occurs between Mary, a female servant, and Jesus, observed by the two barn animals.

> "Here, as often in Giotto's work, the offering, accepting, and encounter with one another are accompanied by a meeting of eyes that expresses an inner participation. Not the least significant difference between Giotto's version of the Birth of Christ and all its forerunners is this motif of the two women handling the child, which, despite being located on the edge of the painting, attracts our attention, which is further drawn into the picture by the two animals facing inward in front of the crib."[6]

The ox and the ass guide the eye toward the Holy Mother and Child as active participants in this exceptional moment. The use of the ox and ass beside the manger had been part of reli-

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[5] In Chapter One, this chapel will be set in context.

[6] Poeschke, *Italian Frescoes*, 187.

gious iconography since the 11th century.[7] However, its use in fresco becomes even more common in the Trecento, and this "… had been foreshadowed by St. Francis himself when, while celebrating Christmas in a small chapel in the woods near Greccio in 1223, he improvised what was virtually a nativity-play representing the Child of Bethlehem in a manger, with a real ox and ass and the countryfolk as witness."[8] In this pageant, St. Francis reached out to his followers, physically demonstrating that Jesus was born in circumstances that were not uncommon to the Italian peasant, and this event is also depicted on the walls of the Upper Church of Assisi. Just as Jesus taught in parables, or a way of telling stories that were actually understandable to the people, Francis spread the word of God in a way his contemporaries could grasp. This is only one example of why he was said to be an "Imitation of Christ" or *Imitatio Christi*. This humble example extended to the artwork of the time and locale.

> "To dramatize the childhood of Christ in homely terms, so that all could identify themselves with his joys and sufferings, henceforth became the central theme of religious art in the south…From these homely dramatizations of divine love and sacrifice the beasts were not excluded. The ox and the ass, on their knees like Mary and St. Joseph before the Christ Child, warmed the chill stable with their breath, [became] thereafter essential participants in the Nativity story as portrayed in popular art and literature."[9]

This relatable image of barn animals connected the people of the time to the religious narrative. With this act, Francis physically allows the animals to play a spiritual role in the Birth of

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[7] This tradition stems from the Bible verse "She gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger…" (Luke 2:7). Though the ox and the ass are symbols, theses animals were also physically important for Christ's birth, as their warm and close breath helped keep the newborn warm.

[8] Klingender *Animals in Art and Thought,* 444.

[9] Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought*, 444.

Christ. This event is so significant because Francis acts the way art would eventually develop; he includes the ox and the ass as real spiritual participants, and "…in introducing living animals around the Christmas *presepio*…St. Francis effectively removed the dumb beasts out of allegory and symbol. They became, as Bonaventura recorded, fellow creatures of man, sharing the same divine origin and a part of that mystic unity of the universe which [Francis] taught so strongly."[10] The universal message of Divine love for all included animals and recognized their spiritual nature. For Francis and his followers, the symbolic nature of animals transformed into a tangible presence.[11]

Giotto reflects St. Francis's inclusion of nature in religious life in the frescos at Assisi, and later Padua. But his iconography also connects to larger artistic currents at the time. "The new approach to nature, released by St. Francis's teaching, was but one expression of the contemporary culmination of naturalism in gothic art."[12] During this period, animals depicted in artwork gradually became more realistic. "In early gothic art the desire to replace conventional heraldic beast and plant forms by more authentic records is vividly illustrated…" and

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[10] Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought*, 445.

[11] The ox and the ass would continue to appear actively in paintings after this. Horses begin to appear in later in Magi scenes, however. One late example of this is done by Altichiero da Zevio in the Oratory of San Giorgio in Padua, from 1378-84 (Figure 3). His careful composition and situation of figures allows for an even and fluid fresco program. When comparing this scene with scenes of the Adoration of the Magi from 80 years before, the difference in amount of figures is apparent. Though Altichiero would be well-versed in the simplicity of Giotto, he chooses to create a packed scene. Horses have a major presence in this fresco, accompanying their masters to the birth of Christ. All of the horses but one have a riveted gaze on Christ, with their mouths open in excitement. Particularly expressive is the brown horse with the white stripe down his nose — the detail in his expression (one can even see the veins of his face) adds to the real emotion of the birth of Christ. The long white neck of a horse who bends to sniff the ground is also prominent here. This horse stares off into the right of the fresco, serving as an exit point for the eye to move to the next panel in the oratory. Of course these frescoes are make to glorify God and Jesus, but they also take the ease of viewing into heavy consideration.

[12] Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought*, 445.

this trend towards "naturalism," a style and theory of representation based on the accurate depiction of detail, can find its beginnings in Assisi and Padua.[13] Instead of simply representing the bestiary symbols animals had come to represent (for instance, "apocalyptic beasts" of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John on Gothic portals), these animals would come into their own bodies as living, breathing creatures.

III. The Cinema of the Trecento - the Church

The quantity of religious artwork from Italy in the 13th century overwhelms the modern student of art history. Panel after panel of the same theme and relatively similar style makes the artwork repetitive and underwhelming for the untrained modern eye, an eye that has the agency to rapidly see many frescoes from multiple cities. But for the people of the Trecento, religious artworks were undoubtedly exciting, and this visual stimulation could be found most prolifically, of course, in the church. In a society where imagery was not prolific, especially in the households of the lower classes, the churches provided the largest art pieces in every town. "Throughout most of the Middle Ages, the need to have images available to illustrate a narrative could only be satisfied by painting cycles in churches and public buildings, as there were so few books."[14] Therefore, these frescoes were the only images that were seen by a wide audience in the Trecento, and they would have undoubtedly occupied a fixed place in the image memory of the people of the time. "The religious scenes portrayed on the walls of churches were not there for artistic expression, though we may be tempted to think

[13] Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought*, 449.

[14] Bonsanti, *The Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi*, 10.

of them that way today. Rather, they were didactic. That is, their primary purpose was to provide the faithful, most of whom were unable to read, with easily recognizable and understandable illustrations of the stories of the Bible. Indeed, medieval fresco painting of this type was called the 'Bible of the Poor.'"[15] The frescoes were painted in the most inclusive and easy-to read ways possible. In addition, they also served as another channel to reinforce the message of the priests.

During this period, Mass would have been said in Latin, which very few churchgoers would have been able to understand, but it was considered a powerful sacred language. Where were the minds of the churchgoers during services of the Trecento?

> "During lengthy sermons, the congregation had plenty of time to absorb the messages of peace, humility and joy which the images convey. As they left the Church, their last view would have been two of the most famous Franciscan stories, *The Preaching to the Birds* and the *Miracle of Spring*, immediately below the New Testament scenes of Pentecost and the Ascension in the Upper Church. Perhaps it was these images of hope which lingered on in their hearts and minds."[16]

No doubt the frescoes provided much stimulation, and helped the peached message be retained during these Masses. During church was one of the only times *any* images could be seen, so how did these frescoes resonate with the people of the Trecento, and what techniques did the artists use to communicate the Church's and donor's messages? The importance of the frescoes in the visual canon of the people of the Trecento cannot be underestimated.

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[15] Bonsanti, *The Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi*, 10.

[16] Mizzi, *The Message of St. Francis,* 58.

When looking at frescos, there are many elements that entertain and inform. Perhaps the eye will be caught by a particularly expressive face, or delight in the architectural detail of a building. But amid many similar panels, one can be intrigued by the behavior of certain animals. Animals were much more engrained in life in the Trecento than they are today. Humans and animals shared the same spaces constantly, and this is sometimes depicted in fresco. "Animals were generally conceived of not independently of humans, but in complex relationships with them," as they were used for food, as resources, wartime, and as companion animals.[17] The roles animals played were varied and nuanced, but their inclusion in scenes, not just as symbols of the apostles, increased during Middle Ages.

The frescos of the Trecento began denoting ideas and concepts in a more humanistic way. In the Trecento, animals started becoming part of the fresco settings — as important to the environment as the style of flora in the background. In essence, if humans could be depicted successfully in real spaces, they could have real histories and real emotions. Instead of just being symbols of religious concepts, static and hanging in space, the figures would actually come alive in the imaginations of the people. The narratives were brought to life in contemporary setting, no longer remote, but all around the people absorbing them. What if, instead of just being abstract moral ideas, the characters of the Bible also had visceral stories? Part of creating these real spaces and narratives was the inclusion of animals.

IV. Equine Amici

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[17] Lazzaro, *Reframing the Renaissance,* 197.

Horses were revered animals in the Trecento. Strong, costly, and used in war, they symbolized power and wealth, and "throughout most of the Middle Ages, horses were considered the highest-status animals."[18] Their utility and intelligence afforded them an elevated position in the animal hierarchy of the time. "Most medieval horses were cart or plow horses working unsuspectingly in fields and villages. In the medieval imagination, however, the noble horse was associated with the noble occupation of warfare."[19] The upper classes could also afford horses, and the difference between a lower class worker and a wealthy member of society could be denoted by a horse. Knights and heraldry, with important rank and title, possessed right to ride horses through part of the sorted Medieval class system. Those riding horses in cities would literally and figuratively be above those not on a steed. Horse breeds were also a distinguisher of class, as "Throughout the Middle Ages, horses that had other distinctive traits were particularly valued…dappled horses that derived from the best Spanish breed, and the portrayal of the dappling in the art suggested the high status of the rider."[20] These dappled horses appear numerous times in Trecento artwork, as will be seen throughout this thesis, specifically to indicate pride and luxury of breed.[21]

The people of this time would be well versed in the body language of horses. Because these animals are so large and potentially unruly, understanding their physical cues is knowl-

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[18] Sailsbury, *The Beast Within,* 22.

[19] Sailsbury, *The Beast Within,* 23.

[20] Sailsbury, *The Beast Within,* 23.

[21] They appear in the *Crucifixion* (1320) by Pietro Lorenzetti, the *Crucifixion* (1340) by Lippo Memmi, the *Bearing of the Cross* (1366-67) by Andrea da Firenze, and the *Crucifixion* (1378-84) of Alticherio da Zevio.

edge most people would have possessed. For basic safety, people would have known how to interact with horses, and what their bodies indicated about their dispositions. It is difficult to operate daily life around these animals without picking up on their body cues. Just as most people today understand the basic emotions domesticated dogs communicate, because of their saturation in our daily modern lives, the people of the Trecento would be hard pressed not to understand the body language of horses.[22] In addition, horses were recognized to have animal "temperaments" similar to those of humans, humors, elements in nature. While the ox and ass are beasts of burden, horses have status, and therefore are afford more emotional capability.

Renaissance animal symbolist Simona Cohen has studied animals in the artwork of the early Renaissance in detail. In her "Review Essay, Animal Imagery in Renaissance Art," she compiles a detailed list of animal topics in Renaissance art that have already been researched and written about. Most studies have chronicled how these animals embody certain vices or virtues, and their symbolic nature. This thesis is not on bestiaries, or animal symbols, but on the roles of animals in narrative painting, and participation narratives. In this review, and in my thesis research, I have not found any work that discusses horses as acting with high degrees of agency. The Late Medieval to Renaissance shift is from animal use as symbol to use as a provoker of larger ideas. Nowhere in the scholarship of the Trecento have I unearthed any writing on the possibility that animals could have a larger role in the message of

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[22] Though this is seemingly ahistorical, I would argue that emotions in horses, and they way they manifest them though body language, has changed little since the Trecento, though perhaps the ways humans read these emotions is different. The way these breeds of horses demonstrate emotion has probably remained consistent in its interpretation by humans, at least to the basic degree in which they are depicted in the frescos I will discuss.

artwork through being depicted realistically. Therefore, I would argue that there is a need to probe this gap in the scholarship, and I have chosen to do so through the avenue of the specific roles of horses in these visual scenes. Dogs have already been discussed in this manner, but I would argue that horses are just as important, and more widely depicted in the life of Christ, than dogs.[23] While dogs appear in domestic scenes, or secular settings (as allegories of Faith with figures), they are hardly ever included in the Passion cycle. However, horses are almost always present at the Birth and Crucifixion of Christ. Why are horses included in these scenes in such a copious and consistent way? Horses are not just part of a panorama of contemporary life, but they play specific roles in the sacred narrative. Do any of these animals play a more important role in the frescos than simply being symbols of Christian concepts?

Horses merit a special attention when considering many Trecento panel paintings, as the eye is drawn to them through their position, facial expressions, and movements in the scenes. There are parallels between the expressive treatment of horses, and that of humans, which have not been discussed in relation to the seeds of the Renaissance thus far. While one may first notice the novelty of seeing an animated horse in religious scenes, it must be noted that oftentimes these animals serve as vehicles to direct the attention to the real religious moment at hand. The horse expressions comment emotionally on the religious events happening, and often direct the attention to the divine. Particularly through their facial mannerisms, horses seem to communicate something regarding the divine events. Additionally, hors-

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[23] The significance of dogs and their place in the religious atmosphere will be elaborated upon in Chapter Two. They scarcely appear in scenes from the Life of Christ.

es are often the only beings paying attention to Jesus or God, or are the sole beings who break the "fourth wall" (as if the scene were a staged play) of an image to engage with the viewer. Why are these animals sometimes the most aware and divinely attuned beings?

V. Horses and Humans, Side by Side in Dramatic Treatment

This thesis moves chronologically through seven case studies of horses, in religious artwork of the Trecento in Italy. As artists would have been able to travel for commissions, there is proof that some masters saw each other's work through their frescos completed in towns far from their origins. Therefore, these frescoes are not isolated, even though there was not unified Italy at the time. They are all stylistically connected in some ways, and the seven I will present are unified visual sources.

My discussion begins in Assisi, with the narrative frescoes of the St. Francis cycle, which are seen as fundamental to narrative painting in the late Medieval and Renaissance periods. The Basilica of San Francesco at Assisi has a twofold significance. First, it represents the life of St. Francis, and his teachings, which are uniquely inclusive of all animals and humans, and present a new religious philosophy and theology of nature. Secondly, in the Upper Church, the frescos are largely considered to be the launching point of a new type of religious artwork which departs from the Italo-Byzantine style and demonstrates the first currents of the Renaissance, by placing its characters into a familiar context. The master(s) that created these scenes, perhaps Giotto himself, broke with the former pictorial traditions and, "…aban-

doned the rigid conventions of Byzantine painting, transforming it into a living language that his contemporaries felt they could use with fluent proficiency."[24]

At the magnificent Church of Assisi, both in the Upper and Lower Churches, the images were becoming more and more relatable to contemporary life. As the images became further aligned with the reality of the people, the religious music did as well. The secular songs of the Trecento were often sung in the vernacular language. The preaching of the Franciscans and Dominicans would also begin to be said in the vernacular as well. Therefore, there is a connection between the realistic nature of the frescos, the religious music of the time, and the church doctrine. As precursors to the Renaissance, these images marked a period of distinct and measurable change in the Italian city-states.

Through tracing the horse motif across the Italian peninsula, one can find many instances of these animals visually connecting the viewer to the fresco. Just as I was drawn to these horses as a small child, the people of the Trecento would have found something interesting and attractive about these bovine animals. Something about animals expressing emotion, instead of or along with humans, adds a tinge of engagement that refocuses the frescoes into the imagination of the viewer. In the frescoes discussed in Chapter One, the vibrancy of the animals depicted indicate their new position in the visual storytelling of the narrative of Christ, which would be latched onto and developed throughout the Trecento.

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[24] Bonsanti, *The Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi*, 12.

B. CHAPTER ONE - HUMILITY AND DELIGHT AND UNDERSTANDING: THE WORK OF GIOTTO di BONDONE

I. Giotto at the Dawn of the Trecento

Giotto di Bondone (1266-1337) is the debated master of the frescoes in the Upper Church of Assisi (1297-1300), and his school, assistants, and potentially other masters richly decorated the walls of this monumental mother church of the Franciscan Order. Anticipated by Giotto's predecessors, and exploding with his frescos, a new type of religious artwork captivated the faithful of the Trecento, and still enthralls today. The Assisi frescoes contain something new — a sense of realism and an accessibility to everyday life, called vernacular painting. Thus began the transition from purely symbolic artwork in the Italo-Byzantine tradition, to pictorial scenes that would resonate with their audiences on a more personal level.

Giotto was also the decorator of a private chapel in the northern city of Padua, dedicated to the Virgin of Charity. A wealthy Paduan merchant, Enrico Scrivigni built a chapel (which was decorated around 1305) that adjoined his palace, probably to atone for the sin of usury for himself and his deceased father, Reginaldo.[25] Giotto was still a fairly young painter, but today the frescos are magnificently preserved, and serve as a hallmark of his work. His draftsmanship is in the classical revival style, including no distracting details that are not essential for the progression of his *storie.* His inclusion of animals as part of the everyday world is therefore notable, as they are specifically selected to contribute to the religious message he paints on the walls of the Chapel.

II. The Refreshing Spirit of Francis at Assisi

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[25] Hartt and Wilkins, *History of Italian Renaissance Art,* 95-107.

The Church at Assisi was built to house the relics of St. Francis (1181-1226) who lived and preached in Umbria and Tuscany.[26] Pope Innocent IV consecrated the church on May 25, 1253, while the actual Basilica was probably completed around 1280.[27] Authorship of the frescos in the nave of the Upper Church has been debated, and certainly a school of artists cooperated on their completion.[28] "The first to recognize the extraordinary artistic rank of the Isaac frescos and declare Giotto their artist was Henry Thode (in 1885)," who specifically related the spirit of St. Francis to Giotto's realism.[29] "The later literature has generally followed him, though by no means unanimously, even though the completely new quality of these frescos relative to all earlier medieval wall paintings has never been questioned."[30] For the purposes of this thesis, I will refer to Giotto as the painter of these frescos, though I fully acknowledge that the authorship is debated.[31] Regardless of their authorship, these frescos are indisputably revolutionary. "This can be seen in every respect: the pictorial construction, the spatial structure, the composition of the figures, the narrative style, the gestural language, the physical conception, the treatment of drapery, the high degree of sensitivity to sculptural

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[26] Monti, "Francis as Vernacular Theologian."

[27] Poeschke, *Italian Frescoes*, 40.

[28] More information on the potential dates and authors of these frescos can be found in Stubblebine, *Assisi and the Rise of Vernacular Art,* 64-80.

[29] Poeschke, *Italian Frescoes*, 40.

[30] Poeschke, *Italian Frescoes*, 61.

[31] For further discussion on the attribution of the Assisi panels, see Norman, *Siena, Florence, and Padua*, 83-85.

and material values, and the innovations of painting technique."[32] The discussion of late Duecento to Trecento artwork often commences with these frescos due to their departure from former stylistic and technical practices, and their illumination of a more human aspect that becomes the norm in Italy in the periods after the Trecento. The Franciscans became a reform order of the Duecento that emphasized engaging medieval monasticism with city life. Formerly, the Benedictines emphasized spirituality in nature, away from cities, while Franciscans (and as will be later outlined, the rival Dominicans) engaged with the new city life of the developing trading economies during this transitional time in the late medieval Italian city-states.[33] For Franciscans, nature was still part of life in cities, as one does not need to retreat to nature if its power is recognized and held in daily life.

The frescos in the Nave of the Upper Church were painted circa 1280-1300, and have stylistic and compositional characteristics that make them exceptional for the time.[34] "In late medieval painting generally, figures tend to serve as vehicles of meaning in so far as they can be identified with specific concepts and narratives. Their pictorial function is to stand as reinforcing symbols for those concepts as vivid mnemonics for narratives that are already established."[35] But Giotto's frescos in Assisi contain something new -- an imitation of nature and

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[32] Poeschke, *Italian Frescoes*, 61.

[33] The Benedictine Order was established by Saint Benedict of Nursia (480-543 AD).

[34] These frescoes "fascinate the most casual viewer with their intensity and forthright popular style," and their straightful style is one of the most notable aspects. Stubblebine, *Assisi and the Rise of Vernacular Art,* 90.

[35] Norman, *Siena, Florence, and Padua*, 88.

life. Thus began the transition from purely symbolic artwork, to pictorial scenes that would resonate with their audiences on a more personal and human level.

These frescos begin representing ideas and concepts in a more humanistic way.[36] The images themselves move beyond obvious symbolism, and the reception by audiences becomes more immediate, and easier to understand. The frescos in the Upper Church have a detailed pictorial background (the most detailed than any beforehand), which places the characters in the scene in a real context.[37] Not only does he pay attention to the way architecture manipulates the size of the series of framed, window views, but he also includes the architecture in the style of the time within his images. Before Giotto, humans seemed to occupy voids, zones that were unrealistic and not grounded in the realities of space. "However, if painted figures could be perceived as occupying spaces — worlds — of their own, then they could be conceived of as individual and expressive vehicles for the very human content and tales that those narratives are supposed to convey; that is to say that they could be identified with the development of meaning and not simply with its repetition."[38] Giotto's spaces capture the imagination because they are relatable — the imagination can be unleashed in an area it recognizes. The viewer would identify with the Saint in their world, not another. These frescoes depict a contemporary saint, who only lived less than a century before (and perhaps the viewers would have heard stories of him passed down from their predecessors). Giotto

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[36] This is part of the classical revival painting style of Late Medieval and Renaissance period. The more secular trading world influenced this change, and this style developed alongside humanism. See Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy,* 227, for further information on this concept.

[37] For more theories on why the background in these frescos make them unique and remarkable, see Poeschke, *Italian Frescoes*, 66.

[38] Norman, *Siena, Florence, and Padua*, 88.

painted humans that lived in the same world as their audience, and through this aspect they are more communicative than their predecessors.

III. Acceptance and Animals - the Life of Saint Francis

St. Francis was quite literally more communicative than his predecessors. He sought to have his followers feel included in their religion. He is considered one of the first vernacular theologians, or theologians who spoke the common language for religious purposes in *lieu* of Latin. St. Francis began a move towards popular understanding of religion through vernacular teaching. A prime example can be found in St. Francis' *Canticle of the Creatures* (1225), which St. Francis asked to remain in Italian (specifically the Umbrian dialect), instead of being translated to Latin.[39] Francis wanted all people to understand his message, not just the religious elite. Therefore, the church was serving the people, and not the other way around.[40] This poem was composed for music, further demonstrating that Francis meant to reach his audience in ways they could understand and would even enjoy, with everyday stories as parables. Francis's *Sermon to the Birds* contains yet another demonstration of his inclusivity. He believed that all spirit was founded in God's love, which was reflected in God's Creation and Nature. "This awareness of the divine presence in nature was expressed in the sermon, one of the most famous, if briefest, ever recorded, which Francis preached near the village of Bevagna, two leagues (four hours on foot) from Assisi, in the presence of Brothers

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[39] Monti,"The Experience of the Spirit in Our Franciscan Tradition."

[40] This was a concept that came in and out of actual practice in the long history of the church in the Duecento and Trecento, but it is one that makes the Franciscans a reform order nonetheless.

Masseo and Angelo in 1216."[41] St. Francis believed that God's message could be received in His entire kingdom, including birds, which are symbols of the spirit and soul. Animals were an integral part of the spiritual world, an idea which made Francis a new type of natural philosopher and religious leader. His theory of finding God's Grace in Nature resonates throughout the imagery at Assisi. Francis demonstrated that animals could hold real religious weight and perhaps even understanding during this period. A famous scene depicted at Assisi is the fresco depicting this sermon, where Francis almost looks like he is "feeding" the birds, with his words as spiritual nourishment. This image lays out the idea that spiritual interaction with nature is quite possible for the Ducento and Trecento worshipper. Francis *Sermon to the Birds* helped bring sentient animals into religious iconography and representation.

IV. St. Francis' Horse

One realistic horse (not a part of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse or depicted with as Pegasus) appears in the Upper Church of Assisi – the steed of St. Francis, in the scene of St. Francis Giving his Mantle to a Poor Man (Figure 4). This image does not depict a scene from the Life of Jesus (as all the other panels in this thesis will be examining), but tells the story of St. Francis himself. The Franciscan tradition promotes the idea that Francis' life had many parallels with Christ's, and this is the concept of *Imitatio Christi*. So, while this fresco is the only one in the thesis that is not a part of the Christ cycle, it still represents an important event in the Franciscan theology.

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[41] Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought,* 442.

In this scene, we find St. Francis just after he has renounced his worldly goods. He gives his former luxurious clothes to a poor man, demonstrating his transition into a religious life of poverty. The fact that Francis rides a horse is an indication of his wealthy position — he was born of high status. Yet he chooses to dismount and give his mantle to a poor man, renouncing his wealthy heritage, indicating his future destiny as a monk (as this fresco happens before the Renunciation of Goods is and an important sign of things to come). In this image, the horse takes up half the panel, with St. Francis in the center, and the poor man on the right. The amount of space left to portray the animal's full body denotes its significance. The landscape also contributes to the division of space. Behind Francis lies a lush hill, and in front of him, a different landscape topped by a convent. This symbolizes that Francis will move forward into a life of poverty and material deprivation. This image also parallels the life of St Martin of Tours (316-397), when he gives his mantle to the poor, which is depicted in a chapel dedicated to him in the Lower Basilica at Assisi.[42]

Unfortunately, the fresco shows signs of damage and repainting, especially around the horse's head, so one must rely on the body position, and not the facial expression of the animal to analyze its role in the scene. Clearly loyal to Francis, the body position of this horse mimics the emotion that St. Francis demonstrates through his act of charity. The bowed head and subservient ears of the horse represent a meek stance. In this moment, St. Francis renounces his wealthy origins for a life following God, and of charity and alms. The horse communicates and represents the visceral tone of the panel. While the figure of St. Francis

[42] This scene of giving the coat to the poor on a road first appears in the Legend of St. Martin, and this would have been an obvious comparison to the viewers of the day. St. Martin is part of the pilgrimage road of Southern France and Toulouse. For more information on the importance of his life, and his frescos in the Lower Church at Assisi, see the dissertation by Hoch, "Simone Martini in the St. Martin Chapel."

physically gives clothes away, the viewer understands the tone of the scene through the emotion expressed by the horse. Here, the horse is domesticated, part of the lower animal world, and it balances out the composition, and encapsulates the emotion of humility, the theme of this section in the Life of Francis. This horse is as humble as Francis, and it is a real part of the significant gesture of giving away the mantle.

This first horse begins to encapsulate some of the pictorial ideas that are developed later in the Trecento. The concepts discussed above are central to tracing the lines of vernacular painting and connection to animals in Trecento fresco that will be developed in the rest of this chapter and expanded in Chapters Two and Three.

V. Excitement from the East

Giotto continued his naturalistic streak in the Scrovegni (or Arena) Chapel, in the northern city of Padua, a trading and university center, completed slightly after the frescos at Assisi, between 1303 and 1305. Built for the wealthy Scrovegni family as their private chapel and final resting place, the church was consecrated on the feast day of the Annunciation, to which it is dedicated — March 25, 1305.[43] This fresco cycle depicts the Life of the Virgin, a subject chosen by Enrico Scrovegni. Unlike the work at Assisi, Giotto is undisputedly the author of these frescos.[44]

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[43] Hartt and Wilkins, *History of Italian Renaissance Art,* 95.

[44] For more information on the attribution, see Poeschke, *Italian Frescoes*, 185.

One of Giotto's earliest recognizable works, this chapel contains many characteristic elements that are important to understanding why Giotto's oeuvre possesses such a unique quality. The inclusion of storytelling through eye glances becomes a major Giottoesque trait, as in "addition to the figures' gestures, and in coordination with them, their gazes communicate very clearly," and takes the viewer on a journey into the world of the characters in the fresco.[45] The Italo-Byzantine mode of static imagery is shattered with these vibrant and emotional portrayals of humans and animals that have real weight and movement.[46]

> "Never before in painting had speaking with the eyes played such an important role in the pictorial narrative; never before was it as varied and nuanced as in the Arena frescos. There are looks that express tension, reverence, admiration, astonishment, joy, hostility, envy, openness, and so on, but there are also introspective, questioning, skeptical, and searching gazes."[47]

This range of emotion merits Giotto the name of the "father of the Renaissance," as his introduction of images that had a more humanistic value, especially through the eyes, are nuanced and frequent.

The emotive nature of Giotto's eyes is not limited to the humans alone, as seen in the Adoration of the Magi (Figure 5). The two camels on the left side of the panel are the most animated beings in the fresco. While every human contemplates the baby Jesus with very serious expressions, these two beasts have distinct expressions of elation and surprise. It cannot be known if Giotto ever saw a camel, because the heads of these animals certainly resemble

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[45] Poeschke, *Italian Frescoes*, 187.

[46] The Duccio *Maesta* altar and Giotto frescoes are classic comparisons from this period on Italo-Byzantine to classical revival style. For a full comparison see Norman, *Siena, Florence, and Padua*, 63-66.

[47] Poeschke, *Italian Frescoes*, 187.

that of a horse, that is to say, their body language aligns more closely with that of horses than camels. For the purposes of continuity, I am acknowledging that these animals are camels, which embody the East, and Orient (where the Magi are from), while affording them the same treatment as horses. The length of the legs of the camels puts their heads on the same plane as Mary, Joseph, and the angel. In fact, one camel looks above the three wise men to directly engage with Mary, the Divine Mother. The ear positions of the animals are indicative of their horse-like tendencies and attitude in the scene. This posture, one ear forward, and one back, indicates listening and attention in horse behavior (Figure 6). Giotto is trying to depict these camels as curious and interested in the Nativity scene. Their eyes, for which Giotto is renowned, are just as important stylistically as their human masters.

Not merely decorative, these animals are included for an emotional reason. Giotto directs the viewer to them through the only human figure not engaging with the Christ Child, a servant who attends to his camel. This tender and realistic feature has importance, as it depicts movement in the scene and highlights the animals' expressions. This feature of the painting is not essential to the *tableau* of the Presentation of Christ to the Magi, yet it adds a humanistic element. The servant boy must tend to his extremely excited animal, who has its mouth open in adoration and exhilaration at seeing the Christ Child. Giotto is known for his simplicity, and this servant boy is the only human in the painting who is not a prime character in the Visitation scene. He is nameless, and of lower class, as he is an attendant. This lowly servant, who witnesses the Christ Child nonetheless, is a subtle interjection of daily life into high holy scenes. This boy also highlights the emotion of the camels, as contemplation is holy, excitement is animal (and therefore human). In this fresco, the multiple levels of Divin-

ity are therefore represented: animal, human, saintly, and Divine. If the viewers of this fresco struggled to relate to the divine conduct of Mary and Joseph and the Magi, they could probably understand the thrill clearly exuded by the camel, and the concern demonstrated by the servant boy. The movement in these beasts engages the viewer and creates a moment unabashedly grounded in daily life.

The second camel's line of sight falls outside the scene, with a look of sheepishness. His outward gaze only draws the viewer in, as he could be addressing anyone outside the scene, possibly the viewer, which will become a reoccurring motif. The artist utilizes the animals as a point of guidance. Their gazes outside the scenes, particularly when they are situated on the margins, allow a smoother transition from one fresco section to the next. The beseeching nature of this animal may hint at the future Crucifixion of Christ. As one camel looks ahead, his face is mirrored by another camel that looks behind, with a slight sense of concern. They physically represent the troublesome future (Crucifixion) and the spiritual present. Therefore, these camels are additionally used to foreshadow the life of Christ and his ultimate sacrifice, while their facial expressions add a tone of realism and joy to an otherwise contemplative and somber fresco.

VI. Bovine Animals That Launch a Motif

One can trace the origins from Giotto of expressive animals that do not just represent concrete conceptual symbols in Trecento fresco. They express emotions that are familiar to the common man, instead of having stoic, ruminative, contemplative faces. These horses are

symbolic as well as narrative; horses and nature are tamed tamed by humans, yet they also have a high animal status, which is made narrative and expressive in these frescoes.

This is but a starting point, though Giotto has created a concrete one at that. Soon, horses will be included in frescos with a variety of action and interaction. Their emotions are expressed through poses, gestures, expressions, and oftentimes they mimic the emotional stances of their human counterparts. With a horse, the largest indication of their emotional stance lies in the ears. As a horse's ears can swivel about 145 degrees; there are a variety of positions and the slightest difference in angling can mean very a different thing. The position of the ears in combination with the other body parts, make horse body language very readable to one who is familiar with them, as the people of the Trecento would have been. Just as human gesture is codified and theorized in art historical studies of the Trecento, I am developing a set of codified gestures for horses, that are quite possibly equally as important as the movements of their human counterparts.[48]

Now the discussion of horses will transition almost exclusively to high-tension Crucifixion scenes, where horse expressions heighten the moment, and add a prophetic element. Their gazes contribute to the beginning moments of the Renaissance, as they embody ideas about animals in nature while directing the viewer in specific ways.

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[48] Donkeys also have an important role to play in these scenes, particularly the Flight into Egypt (representing exile) and Entry into Jerusalem (a signifier of return), and the Palm Sunday. With both of these scenes, donkeys have roles as symbols but also narrative storytellers, carriers of action, and this aligns with the roles of horses in painting. Donkeys usually represent humility, as they are low status animals. This greatly contrasts with the role of the horse, which embody high status, among other noble qualities. Therefore, donkeys will not be discussed in this thesis (excepting the ass present at the Birth of Christ), because they had a different set of characteristics they were associated with throughout the Trecento. The theme of donkeys in Trecento fresco has not been written about in the same manner in which I am conducting my writing. As I have not come across any academic writing in my extensive research of bovine animals in this context, I believe it is a question to be examined by future art historians.

C. CHAPTER TWO - *ISTORIA* AND IMAGINATION

I. Tuscan Fresco and Philosophy

Beginning with the Lower Church at Assisi, painted following Giotto's frescos, the horse motif will be traced in Florence and San Gimignano. As artists in the 13th century often traveled for work, one can follow their threads of influence across the Italian peninsula. The works of Pietro Lorenzetti, Taddeo Gaddi, and Lippo Memmi are recognized for their importance in the cannon of Italian Trecento fresco, and all these artists make the horse a consequential tool in their pictorial narrative. Though the Italian city-states were often fighting among themselves at this time, these artists transcended the boundaries of city loyalty.[49]

These frescos certainly influenced the later writings of Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472), a Renaissance philosopher, and his ideas on the relationship between artwork and the viewer. Alberti penned a widespread treatise on the subject of the arts, which gained notoriety in mid-14th century Florence. *On Painting* (1435) was the first art theoretical writing since the classical era, and fell into the vein of Florentine humanism. Though he wrote after the frescos in this thesis were created, their interpretive schema certainly informed his writing. By examining these frescoes through the lens of Alberti, the innovative use of horses by these painters becomes clearer.

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[49] Despite the city tensions "…those fourteenth century Italian artists who chose to pursue their profession primarily in Siena, Florence or Padua did not necessarily confine their professional activities to a single city. Rather, it seems that their working lives constituted complex patters of geographically dispersed commissions…Furthermore, the close political relations between the various neighboring italian city states, even in the teeth of inter-city political and economic rivalries and outright military hostilities, furnished artists with the kinds of social contact necessary to obtain work" Norman, *Siena, Florence, and Padua,* 46.

II. Renaissance Beginnings: Alberti and the *Istoria*

Animals in the frescos analyzed thus far fall into a pattern of purposefully enticing the viewer. A few years after they were created, Leon Battista Alberti wrote his treatise *On Painting* which outlined how and why an artist should seek to communicate emotional content and message. Alberti advocates for art that moves and touches the viewer, and thinks that an artist can enter the world of the audience through the emotion in a painting.

In Book One, Alberti uses mathematics to analyze the optics of a painting. He demarcates proportions that are pleasing to the eye. After he establishes the rules of optics, he moves to Book Two, where he elaborates on the most successful type of painting. In this book he introduces the concept of the *istoria,* and advises painters on how to create a successful, beautiful, and moving painting. In Book Three he writes about the proper instruction of an artist.

This *istoria* is the real subject of art, the moral story, which animals and persons take part in — it is the message or emotion, and animals and humans help impart this to the audience through specific ways outlined by Alberti. In Alberti's own words, "The *istoria* which merits both praise and admiration will be so agreeably and pleasantly attractive that it will capture the eye of whatever learned of unearned person is looking at it and will move his soul."[50] Alberti directly acknowledges that even an unlearned person can relate to art, proof that the frescos in this thesis could be considered able to touch the souls of those not in the upper echelons of society.

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[50] Alberti, *On Painting,* 75.

John R. Spencer, a noted art historian from Duke University, writes of Alberti's inclusion of the lower classes and desire for universal emotional appeal in the introduction to his translation of *On Painting.* He writes about the type of painting Alberti desired, saying:

> "This art will not only please the beholder but also touch him. It is to be effective, making a direct like between itself and the beholder. At the same time, it is to affect both educated and uneducated. Unlike many theorists from the sixteenth century to our day Alberti does not believe that art is addressed primarily to an elite; it is to reach all levels of society by the universality of its appeal."[51]

This unique perspective is particularly applicable for frescos, which were created for the viewing of the masses that went to church. Though most people could not read, they could learn visually through the frescoes.

Sometimes, it may be difficult to visually communicate the bottom line of an image, especially if this image deals with sacred themes that must preserve serious religiosity. In an otherwise emotionally confusing scene, the artist can use an interlocutor to drive home the *istoria*. Spencer writes that "If, however, the painter feels the dignity limits the emotions transmitted by the figures, Alberti suggests the use of a 'commentator.'"[52] In the frescoes in this thesis, horses take up this role. The animals, specifically the horses, are afforded a special role in fresco, perhaps by their very animal nature. Some of these horses step outside the events to look at the audience and provoke questions of what the scene is really, thematically, about. And Alberti advocates for this type of figure, saying "In an *istoria* I like to see someone who admonishes and points out to us what is happening there; or beacons with his hand

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[51] Alberti, *On Painting*, 26.

[52] Alberti, *On Painting*, 26.

to see; or menaces with an angry face and with flashing eyes, so that no one should come near; or shows some danger or marvelous thing there; or invites us to weep or laugh together with them."[53] Horses frequently fit perfectly into this role.

Being able to represent a figure that invites the viewer into the world of the painting was important for Alberti, and having that world be convincing was also part of his artistic theory. In this notion, one finds the type of philosophy that lays the groundwork for the transition from the late Medieval period to the Renaissance. While having perspective is outlined as being one of the criteria that makes a great painting, "Not only is the perspective construction to form a spatial link between the painting and the observer, but the commentator is to establish the emotional link. The image of man in the microcosm is in contact with man in the reality of the microcosm."[54] This treatise demonstrates that Alberti did consider painting able to connect with reality, and that there was an emphasis on the realistic nature of the people depicted in the painting. If a man could imagine himself in the space of the painting, there would be a heightened emotional link. This treatise places emphasis on creating a visually realistic world that the viewer could connect with. The construction of perspective establishes the physical link, while the commentator is left with the responsibility of the emotional link. Therefore, the painting can achieve success through two avenues — physical and emotional.

But Alberti not only argues for realistic spaces, but also for a realistic and moving depiction of animals. He comments that "…since the *istoria* is the greatest work of the

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[53] Alberti, *On Painting*, 26.

[54] Alberti, *On Painting*, 26.

painter, in which there ought to be copiousness and elegance in all things, we should take care to know how to paint not only a man but also horses, dogs, and all other animals and things worthy of being seen. This is necessary for making our *istoria* very copious, a thing which I have confessed to you is most important."[55] Through a variety of fauna, the painter can create a diverse and realistic scene. Humans and animals in a significant moral action and setting, which we can identify with and learn from, expands the world of church as preaching and worshiping environment. Of import for this thesis is how Alberti includes animals in his concept of how a painter can emotionally move an audience.

Spencer concentrates on Alberti's techniques for heightening the emotion, saying that gesture is one of the most effective ways to make a painting one to life, as has been examined in Giotto's frescoes. "It is for this reason that Alberti encourages the painter to make a study of gestures and the emotions they portray, for only thus — by externals — can we know the workings of the soul. Like Cicero's orator, the painter will evoke the desired emotion in the spectator by a conscious use of gesture."[56] To move beyond the visually obvious, gesture will provide clues to the spiritual meaning of the image. The horses in the frescos use their body language, their gesture, and their facial expressions to express the deeper themes within the paintings.

III. The Wave after Giotto: The Lower Church at Assisi

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[55] Alberti, *On Painting*, 95.

[56] Alberti, *On Painting*, 25.

Moving below the Upper Church fresco cycles at Assisi, one can discover frescos painted slightly later in 1325, by Pietro Lorenzetti (1280-1348). In the Lower Church at Assisi, in the western transept, a rich and elaborate scene plays out (Figure 6). The Lower Church was painted slightly after the frescos in the Upper Church were coming to be, as "… these chapels were built by Cardinal Napoleone Orsini, presumably just before or just after he took up his post as Papal Legate in Umbria in 1300."[57] The decoration of the particular section of interest was done by the Sienese master Pietro Lorenzetti, brother of another esteemed artist, Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Their professional relationship demonstrates how artists of this period were inspired by and interacted with each other. "The intertwining of [Ambrogio's] career with that of his brother Pietro emphasizes that the history of fourteenth century art is not only the story of the growth of given personalities, great or small, but a constant flux of interactions and impingement as infinitely complex as the individuals who contribute to it."[58] It is known that many of these artists came in contact with each other outside of their native cities, which explains why horse motifs of similar style appeared throughout the Italian lands. An example of this exchange orders in the Lower Church, as

> "…the precise ratings and attribution of these ambitions pictorial schemes are the subject of ongoing debate among scholars of fourteenth-century art, what is clear is that between roughly 1315 and 1330 the Lower Church as Assisi was the location for intense artistic activity, with several campaigns of fresco decoration proceeding simultaneously in involving a number of master painters and their workshops. Assisi must have thus presented these painters

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[57] White, *Art and Architecture in Italy 1250-1400,* 374.

[58] White, *Art and Architecture in Italy 1250-1400,* 371.

> with unequalled opportunities both to co-operate and to compete with another."[59]

For this project, Pietro Lorenzetti relocated from Siena to Assisi to complete part of the Lower Church, and brought stylistically Sienese aspects to this other Tuscan town, already becoming a pilgrimage cite at the time.

"In the Lower Church the high altar is placed directly over the tomb of Saint Francis in the crypt below," and therefore the location of the fresco to be analyzed is of supreme religious importance.[60] Though a large section of the Crucifixion scene has been removed from the wall during the building of a second altar, the remaining parts are very well-preserved. The most instantly notable feature is the density and detail of the crowd below the crucified figures. This would have pleased Alberti, as he writes "…the soul is delighted by all copiousness and variety."[61] This fresco is certainly of the vein of Alberti's argument for a diverse image. Alberti thinks the mind is stimulated by new and different images, and therefore thinks scenes filled with diverse and decorative people and animals are the most visually delightful for observers.

Although the focus of the scene is obviously Christ, here the people surrounding the Crucifixion play just as important a role in the storytelling.[62] "The sensitivity with which

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[59] Norman, *Siena, Florence, and Padua,* 37.

[60] Norman, *Siena, Florence, and Padua,* 37.

[61] Alberti, *On Painting,* 75

[62] "These narratives [in the Lower Church] were made by artists who were entranced by the new verism of the St. Francis Legend in the upper church, even exaggerating its colloquial dialogue." Stubblebine, *Assisi and the Rise of Vernacular Art*, 126-27.

Pietro must have studied the Upper Church becomes the basis of a drama of design that far outstrips the sources of its inspiration," creating a rich and detailed image, one of the most skillful of its time.[63] Contained in this image are diverse types of faces, dress, and decoration.[64] Every figure is individual in their details, particularly in their clothing. "In a departure from Giotto, Duccio, and Simone Martini - all of whom strongly influenced Pietro in other respects — these works display a strained expressiveness, seen in exaggerated facial gestures and also in the angular movements of certain figures."[65] This scene brings life and Passion of Christ alive around the altar area of Lower Church and which leads to St. Francis' tomb.

According to art historian John White, "…there is nowhere anything to match the boldness and ambition of this intrusion into the spectator's real world," an idea what would carry forward to the Renaissance.[66] The stylization and detail of the clothes, also a trademark of Lorenzetti, added further believability. This fresco is renowned for its complex composition, and "The narrative breadth of Pietro's Crucifixion exceeds that of the other scenes and indeed all previous depictions of the theme. The number of figures is unparalleled for this time, especially the quantity of horsemen, some of whom are turned in toward the picture

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[63] White, *Art and Architecture in Italy 1250-1400,* 379.

[64] This scene is much more decorative than the Crucifixion scene in the Upper Church, but it also was among the other notable frescoes in the Lower Church, which play out by its side. Therefore, "Pietro's intention was obviously to outdo, in both size and the variety of motifs, the Crucifixion fresco in the northern transept of the lower church." Poeschke, *Italian Frescos,* 127.

[65] Poeschke, *Italian Frescos,* 127.

[66] White, *Art and Architecture in Italy 1250-1400,* 376.

with their backs to the viewer."[67] The foreground of the painting is the most vacant, as the legs of the horses immediately elevate the entire scene closer to the level of the crosses. The first layer of this painting, closest to the viewer (and about three feet over the height of an average person) is entirely composed of calvary. The second tier of the painting is mostly humans, and the third level returns to the motif of mounted men. "With his panoramic, densely populated Golgotha he created the prototype for a large number of succeeding works…" including the high quality and quantity of mounted figures.[68] This is an example of perspective Alberti would approve of, as the space is a microcosm of real life. In addition, the utilization of horses to structure the layers of the painting adds depth in a way not hereto widely depicted. Horses not facing the audience allow for the scene to appear in the round, in a realistic way, rather than as if the scene were being depicted, (cheating out in an unreal manner) on a stage. Painting the backs of the horses showed progression towards the Renaissance ideal of portraying a real space, and this motif had not occurred widely since antiquity.[69]

The presence of so many animals could be due to the fact that Lorenzetti desired to illustrate the wealth and importance of those at the Crucifixion scene. One famous ferrier (someone who cares for the hooves and feet of a horse, including the task of shoeing) and intellectual, Jordanus Rufus, (1239-1257) wrote of the status of horses in a proto-veterinarian

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[67] Poeschke, *Italian Frescos,* 127.

[68] Poeschke, *Italian Frescos,* 127.

[69] For more information on this motif in antiquity, stemming from a remarkable example found in Pompeii, see "The Alexander Mosaic," www.alexandermosaik.de/en.

manual on horse health, and how to prepare equestrians for war. He writes that "no animal is more noble than the horse since it is by horses that princes, magnates and nights are separated from lesser people and because a lord cannot fittingly be seen among private citizens except through the mediation of a horse beneath him."[70] Lorenzetti depicts the wealth, and therefore importance, of those at the Crucifixion scene through his extensive use of horses. In the Christ narrative, engaged horses are particularly present during the major public events of his life. These people are wealthy, and therefore important, as high-status participants in the most popular moments of Christ's life. Here, animals are the most ideologically free participants in a charged scene. They are owned by people of all nationalities, religions, and intentions. As non-partisan participants, these animals are afforded more emotional liberality in their depiction. Painters like Lorenzetti therefore graft specific emotions they wish to depict specifically onto animals. A Roman centurion must be depicted in a cruel way according to the iconographical program, but his animal has more emotional flexibility, stylistically speaking.

Beginning on the left side of the image, there is a fully painted white horse in the foreground, with its neck bent as it looks outside of the scene, connecting the actions in the image with the fuller program of the fresco cycle (Figure 7). In addition, this animal looks past the architectural archway towards the physical relics of Saint Francis in the Church. Therefore, this horse connects animals and humans in the fresco, and the religious agenda in the Lower Church. This prominent white horse, the only animal with (almost) the entirety of

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[70] Sailsbury, *The Beast Within*, 22.

its body depicted, indicates through its body language that there is something beyond the painting potentially as spiritually relevant for the contemporary history of Christianity. It would have been simple for this horse to stare up at Jesus, but instead Lorenzetti has positioned him to serve as a transitionary figure between the world of the painting (imaginary) and the world of the viewer (tangible, and about to see the relics of a very holy man who lived in that exact spot). Therefore, this white horse is a prime example of a commentator on the *istoria*, as it emphasizes the correlation between the spiritual message in the Crucifixion scene, and the spiritual reality within the basement of the church.

Above this white steed are two other horses, one brown, one white, nuzzling each other (Figure 8). This brown horse must be signaled out for analysis because, with the exception of the white horse depicted below it, it is painted differently than every other horse in the image. Every other horse in this fresco has a long forehead and muzzle, while the brown horses' is slightly smaller. In addition, all the other horses with the same head angle as this one only have one eye depicted, while this brown horse has two very expressive ones (as does the white horse discussed above, the only other exception in a fresco rife with horses). And this is not happenstance — on the second eye of this horse, there is even the detail of eyelashes added, the only time this detail appears on a horse in the entire fresco. This animal also stands out because of its body language — ears back, mouth open, neck crimped — it is in a nudging position, caught in the middle of happy or playful communication. This is the body language of affectionate pestering, or a quick way to communicate a small urgency in horses. This horse seems to tell the listening (through ear position) white horse, something optimistic or delightful. The ultimate message of the Crucifixion is that Christ died for our

sins for redemption, and therefore ultimately this scene is about His love for mankind. "Each figure of compassion and each tender action adds intensity to the next," and the horses help this flow of emotional conversation.[71] A glimpse of this message can be transmitted through this brown horse, who transmits a glimmer of the *istoria.*

The white horse in the forefront of the image, and this brown horse just discussed, are unique to the entire image — no other animals are quite like them physically (body position and detail), and therefore emotionally. However, there is one other visual delight, the black horse located directly above the white horse and below the brown. This fancy creature stands out because of his elaborate gold costume, with the whites of his eyes barely visible — what a stylistic joy! His elaborate dress reiterates the idea that Christ's last moments were witnessed by the wealthy. He sends the message that with a donation to the Church, perhaps one could be in the company of Christ in heaven.

Moving towards the base of the "good thief," one finds two more mounted men discussing the Crucifixion. Both of their horses seem suspicious, looking with darting glances at the Christ figure (Figure 9). Their riders are forlorn and downcast and the man with the golden headdress places his pointer finger pensively on his chin. Just below Jesus, there are three horses that take up the background of this image. The two white horses make eye contact to "talk" with each other, and their head positions allow of a glimpse of the blue background that is otherwise completely unseen in this portion of the painting. Theses white horses create a space that leads the eye to the face of an unadorned man below the cross who

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[71] White, *Art and Architecture in Italy 1250-1400,* 378.

stares directly out at the audience. He is the only figure in the image to do look directly at the viewer, and it can be presumed that it is Lorenzetti himself.[72]

On the right-hand side of the composition, the scene becomes more chaotic and complex, as it is the "damned" side, un-repenting and hellish (Figure 10). A man tries to break the legs of the "bad thief" whilst the red horse next to him cries out. The white horse directly below the "bad thief" also opens his mouth to neigh into the confusion. Five other horses also take on the facial expressions of their riders as they direct the viewer through this complicated and busy section of the fresco. Their large, distinct bodies and facial expressions guide the viewer from element to element, they serve as an optical blueprint.

In this image, the number of horses sets a stylistic precedent since antiquity, and one that Alberti would have appreciated due to its copiousness and diversity. Moving past the chaos of the Crucifixion scene, Lorenzetti communicates the *istoria* through the white horse in the foreground, and the brown horse above it. In addition, they connect the holy relics and space of St. Francis with the historical past of Christ, another example of the *Imitatio Christi.* Though these animals are especially notable, throughout the fresco the horses are use to guide the eye and create perspective, in a manner that would spread throughout the Italian states, due to the influence this image would have had on artists from diverse locals hired to work specifically in Assisi.

IV. Private Chapel, Public Message

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[72] The motif of the artist being the only person to look out at the audience would be developed throughout the Renaissance.

In Florence, at the Baroncelli Chapel in Santa Croce, Lorenzetti's contemporary, Taddeo Gaddi (1290-1366), was also creating a fresco featuring horses (Figure 11). Moving away from Lorenzetti's Crucifixion in the Lower Church at Assisi, one can find connections in Gaddi's oeuvre, as "…Lorenzetti's conspicuous penchant for genre like elements and still-life motifs, which, along with his evocation of a nocturnal mood and the enlivening of a depicted building's upper story with figures, find their closest parallels in the frescoes painted by Taddeo Gaddi around 1330 in the Baroncelli Chapel," positioned in the right transept.[73] Gaddi, born in Florence, was commissioned to paint the chapel in 1327 for the Baroncelli family, a prominent banking family who desired a chapel that would speak of their high place in society. Gaddi was a member of Giotto's workshop for 24 years, and therefore he had carried on the Giottesque techniques and elements in the architecture, drapery, and realism of the Adoration of the Magi fresco, discussed in Chapter One.[74] This chapel is consecrated to the Annunciation to the Virgin, and thus the pictorial program is dedicated to the life of the Virgin. This was the second largest Virgin cycle of the Trecento, the first is the Arena Chapel, analyzed in Chapter One, and elements from the larger chapel can certainly be found in Giotto's pupil's masterpiece in Santa Croce.[75]

This scene of the Adoration of the Magi is relatively small, featuring Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus underneath an architectural awning. "In the Adoration of the Magi on the

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[73] Poeschke, *Italian Frescos,* 129.

[74] White, *Art and Architecture in Italy 1250-1400,* 413.

[75] Stubblebine writes that "Such an art as we see practiced here by Taddeo Gaddi is, it must be admitted, in the vernacular language," Stubblebine, *Assisi and the Rise of Vernacular Art*, 92.

right of the lancet, the only significant parts of the narrative in this zone are the three animals' heads suggesting the waiting entourage of the Magi."[76] The horses are one of the few innovative elements in this otherwise standard Adoration scene (though the architectural detail is notable). The three magi pay homage, holding their gifts, with the eldest one kissing the feet of the baby Jesus, and the other two standing by. One of the wise men knowingly points to the heavens, where God is depicted in a glowing cloud. The horses seem to be in an odd area of the composition, and this is due to the fact that the fresco was close to the altar. "The reason for these compositional adjustments is clear — both frescoes were designed with the knowledge that the altar would be surmounted by a large polyptych. This would inevitably have overlapped these scenes to some extent, and there was a need to retain legibility in the compositions."[77] Therefore, the horses were specifically added to make the scene easier to read for the audience after the space for the polyptych was added. The horses enter the image from the East of the actual chapel, as the wise men are said to have come from the Orient.[78] Therefore, they connect the physical orientation of the space with the pictorial reality

Popping out from the left side of the scene are the three horse heads (only the tip of the third horse's nose is visible, as a chunk of the fresco has gone missing). The third, partially missing horse head is at eye level with baby Jesus, but for now his facial expression will have to be imagined. The middle horse stares out at the viewer, the only figure to break the

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[76] Gardner, "The Decoration of the Baroncelli Chapel in Santa Croce," 98.

[77] Gardner, "The Decoration of the Baroncelli Chapel in Santa Croce," 98.

[78] Matthew 2:9.

fourth wall, which invites the viewer inside the story Gaddi tells. The third horse looks up towards God, actually seeing the divine being in the cloud. These three horses represent the three levels of the painting, the foreground (Jesus and Mary and Joseph), middle ground (the two Magi) and background (God in the heavens). Though these horses could have easily been left out of the painting, they are a visual device to further divide the space within the fresco. One animal is focused on the upper region of the painting and on the Divine, and it is the only being in the painting to actually look at God. The second animal stares into the audience, the human level. The last animal probably looked at Jesus, God's representation on earth. These horses are visual beacons of the Trinity. They look at God the father, the Son Jesus, and out at the viewer, to represent the Holy Spirit all around us. "Examination of the fresco programme in the Baroncelli Chapel has shown its extraordinary unity of conception," and these animals do help organize and unify the visual wholeness of the fresco cycle.[79] It is clear that Gaddi took much care in the composition of these frescoes, and it is reflected in the flow and categorization of space in the fresco of the Visitation of the Magi.

V. A Mounted Warning

A few years later, another horse-heavy Crucifixion scene was being created in the cathedral of San Gimignano (Figure 12). In the Church of Santa Maria Assunta, the Crucifixion is less busy than Lorenzetti's, though it is undoubtedly inspired by his fresco in the Lower Church of Assisi. The Collegiata of Santa Maria Assunta is San Gimignano's main church,

[79] Gardner, "The Decoration of the Baroncelli Chapel in Santa Croce," 110.

directly adjacent to the Pallazo Communale.[80] This Crucifixion fresco is four times as large as the scenes from the Old and New testament lining the walls, and is therefore given the same ratio of prominence as Crucifixion in the transept of San Francesco in Assisi. The decorative borders surrounding these frescos are reminiscent of a weavers pattern, and it has been suggested that therefore the wool weavers guild financed the frescoes. It is known that "the painter of the frescoes was from the immediate circle of Simone Martini," and therefore the most likely candidate is Lippo Memmi, as he was Martini's foremost follower, and brother-in-law.[81] However, the master of these frescoes is still debated.

Horses actually take up a large portion of this fresco in terms of spatial ratio — they even tower above the Virgin Mary and her supporters, who are very small. "It is unusual that both the Pharisee and the centurion are on horses, but this too reveals the closeness to Pietro Lorenzetti, one of whose favorite motifs was the riders facing into the painting, with the hindquarters of their horses toward the viewer."[82] These horses are used in the scene to create a sense of movement and to lead the eye to the different sections of the painting, and are inspired by Lorenzetti's treatment of the animals.

The left side of the scene, as per tradition, is dedicated to redemption, as the "good thief" is carried by angels up to heaven while the Virgin collapses below his body. The colors on this side of the painting are generally light, as moral justice is depicted. But the viewer's eye is taken from the collapsed Mary by the pasty speckled backside of the grey horse in the

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[80] Poeschke, *Italian Frescos,* 310.

[81] Poeschke, *Italian Frescos,* 310.

[82] Poeschke, *Italian Frescos,* 312.

center of the image, which matches the grey and white corpse of Christ figure, viscously being poked by the rider of the white horse. This line of color creates a visual line (also following the spear of the centurion) towards the Virgin Mary, who has collapsed. Here, Jesus is actually depicted to scale — a move away from visual hierarchy and towards the Renaissance notion of realism. Below Jesus, the forward motion of the brown horse on his left adds action to the scene and guides the eye down the crowd of men of the right border of the composition, where the most dramatic figure, the Centurian, is depicted.

The Centurion, with a maroon cloak, rides a dappled pink horse (Figure 13). The expression on this man's face is perhaps the most important of the painting, as it encapsulates the unmistakable idea that Christ's death is very significant. His warning eyes and hand gesture are directed at the Pharisee on the white horse, and this look is driven home to the audience by his steed. The Centurion beckons to Christ, while the Pharisee responds with a blank look. This type of incredibly dramatic gesture is exactly the kind of motion that Alberti advocates for in *On Painting.* This fresco is innovative specifically because of the sweeping and broad gesture of the Centurion, not so easily found in art of this period. He really begs the viewer to *look*, to consider what Christ has done for mankind.

But this spiritual message remains within the painting if it ended with the Centurion. However, his pink horse features heavily in the composition of this fresco, and acts as part of the the *istoria*. This horse stares straight out at the viewer, with his ears cocked in earnest action, and his mouth open. This horse takes up a surprising amount of the composition, and is one of the first figures one's eye is drawn into the scene. The horses ears indicate it is slightly

afraid, and it's eyes are beseeching. This animal is the only being to look out of the painting into the audience, and therefore, it becomes the commentator. Coupled with the expression of the rider, the message is driven home: Christ has shockingly died for our sins.

This Crucifixion differs from many others because of the dramatic mounted Centurion and his prominent and emotionally active horse. Throughout all the chaos of the scene, the message of Christ's death must be appreciated. Nowhere in the art of this times does a horse's gaze play such a dramatic role, and this exemplifies the agency of the animal, and is a direct move away from depicting animals as unlovely or part of the backdrop. It is easily lost in the decorative iconography of the time, and while copiousness, decoration, and variety are valued, it is refreshing to see in stunning simplicity what the power of eye contact from an animal can evoke.

VI. Entering the Kingdom of Heaven…With Money

Horses in Assisi and Florence are essential to telling the story of the Crucifixion. Some unique horses connect the fresco image with the physical reality of the holy spaces they are in. When these horses have less notable positions or facial expressions, they are spacial tools, used to organize the flow of the frescoes. Sometimes, their body language indicates the *istoria* in a clearer manner than their human counterparts can. These special animals are afforded the role of commentators on the scene, and visually entice the audience. The frescos analyzed are already famous because of their use of gesture and decorative nature, and this skill extends to horses. In fact, Lorenzetti, Gaddi, and Memmi all utilize horses to maximize the emotional content able to be represented in a scene.

Horses also inject the idea of wealth into these frescos, and through this, the idea that the wealthy can be saved. This is reinforced by the dappled breed of some of these horses, which signifies their prestige. They can serve as another type of "donor portrait," reminding the wealthy that with a donation they, too, can be a part of Christ's world in the next life. Among all the animals that those in the Trecento surrounded themselves with, horses are selected to be present at these scenes because they fundamentally differ from other animals in their protected place in society.[83]

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[83] It is also important to note the discrepancies in Biblical history and Biblical pictorial history. In Palestine during the time of Jesus, donkeys were considered the most appropriate saddle animal, and horses were only used in war or for decorative ceremonial purposes. So while it is written that Jesus rode donkeys in the Bible, this is due to the fact that it was the practical animal for transportation for his time, not because he was particularly humble (though obviously I am not attacking the true humility of Jesus). In Europe, donkeys were considered lower status animals not appropriate for those of rank to ride, but in Jesus' day and location this was not the case. One example of donkeys being used instead of horses occurs in Genesis, when Abraham, a very wealthy man, chooses to ride a donkey for practical purposes. "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him" (Genesis 22:3). In the book of Judges one finds that riding a the donkey is mentioned as a mark of high status. "And after him arose Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years. And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havothjair unto this day, which are in the land of Gilead" (Judges 3-4). The sons of the chief man in Israel, each of them being the ruler over a city, rode donkeys, not horses. Here were see that riding a donkey is not a mark of humility, but instead a source of prestige, just as horses later would be in Europe. This is another reason I do not discuss them, but again, this would prove an interesting topic for future scholars.

D. CHAPTER THREE - ANDREA, ALTICHIERO, AQUINAS

I. Equines and Aquinas

Andrea da Bonaiuto (1343-1377), sometimes called da Firenze, most famously decorated the Spanish Chapel in Florence. His contemporary, Altichiero da Zevio (1330-1390), was working in Padua around the same time. They both had a penchant for epic Crucifixion scenes, which would not be complete without the inclusion of horses. Taking inspiration from Pietro Lorenzetti's Crucifixion fresco in the Lower Church at Assisi, they created unique scenes that utilized horses as visual cues. These animals connect the pictorial story and are earmarks of interconnection.

Da Firenze was commissioned to paint the main Chapter House, on the west side of Santa Maria Novella, at the head of the cloister. It is precisely positioned to parallel the altar in the church. This space was built around 1350, and used as a meeting place for the monks of the Dominican order. The patron was the Florentine merchant Buonamico de' Guidalotti, along with his brother, Branca.[84] The frescos in this space were undertaken in January of 1366, which was more than ten years after the death of Buonamico de' Guidalotti, and therefore he did not have much iconographical input. A detailed program of complex symbols plays out on the four walls and vaulted ceiling of the Chapter House. "The Dominicans… strove to engage the populace by delivering sermons in the vernacular rather than in Latin, commissioned what might be called sermons in paint on the walls of their new churches," these images preaching their ideals in the most inclusive visual manner.[85]

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[84] Poeschke, *Italian Frescos,* 362.

[85] Meiss, *The Great Age of Fresco,* 13.

On the other walls of the Chapter House, there are scenes from the Life of Saint Peter Martyr, The Church as the Path to Salvation, and Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274). Aquinas was a priest in the Dominican Order himself, and he studied Aristotle intently, and Christianized Aristotelian thought. The frescos of Saint Thomas Aquinas are a testament to his important role in the theology of the Dominican Order and the Church. He was the author of the *Summa Theologiae*, the major church doctrine of late Middle Ages and Scholasticism, and the Church is still based on Thomistic doctrines. The intention in both The Church as the Path to Salvation, and the Saint Thomas Aquinas frescos, are to make the viewer aware of the Dominican order and its prominent role in the salvation of the people, featuring another animal as an allegory for the faithful — the numerous black and white dogs representing the back and white habit of the monks. These dogs (canes domini) are the embodiments of the Dominican Order, depicted as symbols of the monks physically defending the Church and the Faith from heretics, here depicted as wolves. These animals are given visual allegorical power by da Firenze; they directly represent the spirituality and moral fortitude of the Dominican Order.

In Padua, Altichiero da Zevio (1330-1390), a Veronese painter, was creating a comparable Crucifixion scene for the Saint James Chapel, begun in 1372.[86] Mostly dedicated to the life of this Saint, the Crucifixion scene is on the altar wall. Altichiero was already in Padua working on other private commissions when he was commissioned to create these frescoes. The five-domed Basilica of Saint Anthony, where this fresco still delights pilgrims, was built from about 1238-1310, in Romanesque-Gothic style which is characteristic of

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[86] Poeschke, *Italian Frescos,* 418.

Byzantine eastern influence on Venice and Padua. In the right hand side isle, the transept ends in the Chapel of St. James. This Romanesque-Gothic area was completed in the 1370's by Andriolo de Santi, one of the most renowned Venetian architects, and Altichiero painted his frescos in harmony with the architecture.[87]

The hierarchical order of the universe was an oft discussed topic in late Medieval and pre-Renaissance Italy. The Italian Renaissance Neo-Platonic philosopher Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499) held the belief that "The whole universe is a *divinum* animal; it is enlivened and its various hierarchies are interconnected with each other by a divine influence emanating from God, penetrating the heavens, descending through the elements, and coming to an end in matter."[88] Ficino claims that nature is teeming with souls, that they belong to the elements, to humans, and to animals. God is the ultimate source of spirit, but after humans die, their spiritual nature continues on to other elements and animals. Therefore, though horses are not as spiritual as the human animal, they do possess a level of spirituality emanating from God. For Ficino, animals most certainly did have souls, and spiritual ones at that. In fact, a horse could have had the soul of a human in a previous life, or vice versa, as the spiritual nature of souls continues in a cyclic nature through all animals and people. As the servants of men, but also as independent agents, these animals have an essential visual and spiritual role in these fresco cycles, which is aggregated by their sentient and sometimes spiritual nature.

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[87] Norman, *Siena, Florence, and Padua*, 212.

[88] **Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism,* 132. In the original Latin: "*…divinus influxes, ex Deo manans, per coelos peretrans, descendent per elementa, in inferium material designees*…."**

II. God Flows Through All

The Chapter House in Santa Maria Novella was built for and by the Dominicans, who were very devoted to the teachings of Thomas Aquinas. "Among the newly founded orders, the Dominicans and Franciscans were particularly astute in their exploration of art for the promotion of their collective identities and ideologies," and this is evident in the Chapter House. Fittingly, three out of the four walls directly deal with specifically Dominican theology, as it is a major commission and statement of their tenets.[89] On the walls of the Chapter House, there are many references to Aquinas's teachings in the book *Summa Theologia* (1230). His teachings are inclusive of animals, and he has much to say about the hierarchies of the animal and human worlds, particularly about the Divine to Natural in the order of things. His theology starts from the natural world being the earth, to plants, then animals, followed by humans, and finally up to to saints, then angels, and ultimately God. He believed that "It is necessary…for God to be present in all things, and intimately so."[90] This parallels Saint Francis' teachings, that the animal kingdom is part of the kingdom of heaven. This passage emphasizes the fact that horses and other animals were creatures of God, and had God's presence within them. Aquinas did distinguish between animals and humans, and reasoned that animals had two parts of their soul. Therefore, they understood part of the spiritual world, though not all of it. Aquinas argues that "Lower beings's souls have a dual type of being; one, material, whereby they resemble other material things; another, immaterial, where-

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[89] Norman, *Siena, Florence, and Padua,* 36.

[90] Aquinas, *An Aquinas Reader,* 63.

by they share something in common with higher substances."[91] During the time period in which this fresco was made, animals would have been considered to have at least a bit of their soul be connected with God. Humans possess reason and have free will, whereas animals are instinctual, yet they still have agency over some of their actions. Therefore, they could be considered quasi-spiritual beings, which is a step up from mindless brutes of the natural world. If God is omnipotent, then he controls the animal world as well as the human world, and therefore horses would be an appropriate visual representation of spirituality.

Beyond just objects in nature or allegories of characteristics, the horses in these frescoes are able to take on a more sophisticated role. As an ever present guide, "God is therefore the cause of everything's action because he gives to everything its power to act, preserves its existence, and puts it into action and because by his power every other power acts."[92] God would be seen as directing every action in nature, including the Crucifixion, and da Firenze had the doctrinal license to depict this in his fresco. Aquinas' teachings, just as Francis', are inclusive of the all Creation, again demonstrating a broader religious view of the time — spirituality is extended to all.

III. Hoofed Guides Through Calgary

The full Crucifixion scene, painted from1366-67 over the entrance to the Chapter House of Santa Maria Novella lies at the top of the North wall, while the left bottom portion is devoted to the bearing of the Cross, as the right illustrates the Ascension (Figure 14). This

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[91] Aquinas, *An Aquinas Reader,* 216.

[92] Aquinas, *An Aquinas Reader,* 332.

Crucifixion covers the entire upper wall, with three scenes of Golgotha; "A type encountered here for the first time in Florentine wall painting, and one which ultimately derives from Sienese examples such as the Crucifixion frescos in the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi and in the Collegiata of San Gimignano."[93] There is a continuous narrative here, as three separate scenes are all tied together on one wall in the full salvation sequence: it includes the Road to Calvary, Crucifixion, and Christ in Limbo (releasing the souls) on the lower right. The entire North Wall, which one looks at directly upon entering the space, breaks for a small alcove which contains with a carved stone crucifix.

On the left side, the Bearing of the Cross is painted (Figure 15). The procession through Jerusalem on the ground lies below the tiny humans peeking out of the pink building, standing on the balconies and murmuring at the parade of humans below, which demonstrates both drama and perspective. The rest of the line snakes up and behind this hilly town, disappearing into the edge of the fresco. The diversity of types of people in this fresco is notable, and a relatively new visual idea, as noted in Chapter Two. Through hats, dress, and facial hair, one can distinguish Jews, Pharisees, and Romans, all twisting and winding their way up the fresco. Beginning in the archway that the procession goes through, a pair of brown and red horses march above Mary Magdalene and the Virgin Mary (Figure 16). Horses' heads are physically larger than their human counterparts, and this allows for their eyes, and therefore glances, to be particularly easy to trace from a distance. As the viewer stands in front of this impressive and sprawling scene, the large eyes of the horses are easier to grasp onto than those of the humans, sheerly because of their size. These horses visually cue the onlooker,

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[93] Poesckhe, *Italian Frescoes,* 363.

and with their eyes they move the gaze of the audience. They are not simply part of the virtues and vices, or allegories, or even a decorative part of nature — they are given the position of directors within the painting, carrying the human figures through the scene while commenting on it. With their eyes and body language, they are the conductors of the visual symphony.

The right angle formed by Jesus' cross perfectly frames the heads of two other horses, very noticeable in this prime location. These horses are the inverse coloring of the two behind them. As a complement that forms a pattern, this switch helps carry the eye through the scene. If one horse looks at the two horses by the gate, and the riders on them, the natural progression moves to the other horses and their riders, directly above Jesus. The two figures riding these horses are a Jewish Pharisee (elder left) and Judas (younger with hat and parted black beard). They turn to each other and seem to whisper, which refers to Judas receiving the 20 pieces of silver to betray Christ. The ears of their horses are alert and slightly suspicious, and their eyes glance forward, as their noses lean in towards each other. They seem to be conspiring, "whispering," which is another anti-Jewish theme. These horses seem to personify their scheming riders. The white horse has its ears turned in and forward, an indication of confidence and security, but its head is down and its eyes dart sideways, indicating that it is alert, knowing, and prepared. This horse seems to understand something about the events that are about to happen, something that even Jesus may be unsure about, as he glances backwards with a look uncertainty at the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene (who gestures to children, representing the future), and young St. John the Evangelist with hands clenched in emotion.

Moving with the crowd, one finds the three hind quarters of horses, in sequence, obviously stylistically borrowed from Lorenzetti's Crucifixion at Assisi, down to their dappled white coloring and foot positioning. These horse rumps also help establish the spacing of this oddly lumped crowd. They create a more vacant space which Andrea da Firenze uses to then re-establish the procession up the wall. The rest of the procession does not include horses, as they are not necessary for the visual space of the fresco. Therefore, horses are utilized here to help establish the panoramic perspective, and guide the eye through the fresco up to the pinnacle of the wall — a suffering Christ on the Cross.

IV. Crowded and Captivating: The Crucifixion in the Chapter House

The Road to Calgary leads up to the Crucifixion in a continuous narrative, which the horses in this scene perpetuate. Packed with visual information, emotion, and people, the Crucifixion scene of the Chapter House spans the entire wall above the altar, and some of the same figures and their horses reappear here, which connects it to the fresco below in a teaching moment. The terse emotion of this scene is clearly painted. One way to focus a study on this fresco is through examining the horse motif (there are a total of 30 horses), and letting some of these animals be the visual guides throughout the fresco.

Three horses are clustered to the right — and they are white, red, and grey, (the red horse can be found by following the large red flag of his rider). These animals engage critically with each other, their intense eyes and slightly fearful ears indicate the intensity of the moment, which their riders add to with their apparent discussion (Figure 17). Their ears divert to the shocked position, swiveled to the side and back, which heightens the emotional

aspect of this fresco — even the animals are concerned. These horses are afforded a notable space in the painting, as it would have been an easy choice to delegate the space they take up to some other decorative aspect. These horses additionally aid in the perspective of the piece. With their ability to add height to human figures, da Firenze has positioned them mainly in the background, so that their riders' expressions can be seen as well, and this creates a copious scene.

Underneath the "good thief" and slightly to the right, we find two familiar characters on horses: Judas and the Pharisee. The horses are looking at each other in seeming conversation, in the same position they can be found in during the Road to Calgary scene, only this time depicted from the front. Through the horse motif, it is easier to identify the two men riding these horses as the same as appeared in the scene below.

To the right of them there is a brown horse below them represented from behind, but he completely turns around his entire neck to look at the audience. This is a very specific choice on da Firenze's part — depicting the horse this way looks almost unnatural. Its entire body follows the architectural curve framing the altar arch, and is easy to follow, as the color palette separates it from the pastel colors of the loyal followers on its left. Its daring gaze moves out towards the viewer, forming a bridge between our world and the world of the Crucifixion. Much attention has been paid to hum as that participate in scenes in this manner, but here a horse is given just as much gestural power. In addition, this horse allows for an easy visual jump to the white horse above it, with the exact same angle of neck and almost the same expression.

This white horse is ridden by St. Peter Martyr in all black, who prays and calls out to Christ (Figure 18). It is no coincidence that Peter, already distinguished by the color of his attire, halo, and gesture, rides a white horse (symbolizing purity) that stares directly at the viewer in a sly manner. His rider may be desperately praying, but this horse knows something about the events unfolding. This horse aids the direction of narrative, and augments the viewer's experience of the painting through being a white static figure — and one of two figures (besides the brown horse outlined above) that actually stares the viewer in the face. In all the chaos, this animal confronts the viewer with its gaze, and seems to beg the question; what do *you*, the viewer, think about all of this?

Here, on the right side of the painting, one can see the three hind quarters of the horses, including one that is a dapple grey. Its visual parallels with that of Lorenzetti's Crucifixion scene are obvious, as da Firenze has carried on this visual horse motif. The two behinds of the horses align with the lower portion of the fresco, which also punctuates the frescoes and directs gazes and attention, while framing the tableau. This subtly connects the top half of the fresco with the lower portion of Jesus on the Road to Calgary. The exact same horse motif presents itself twice in the same fresco, a testament to its importance in the visual canon of the time period, and its utilization as a point of narrative connection.

The rest of the fresco has very distinct pockets of action and emotion that flow seamlessly through directive use of horses' gesture and glances. First, an active white horse, who practically jumps on a group of mourning Jews (Figure 19). The Roman solider mounted on this horse has his arm raised, brandishing a sword. The tension and drama in this image adds action to this already fluid Crucifixion scene. The people below cower away, in a large

concentration of movement. But right above this turbulent scene there is a calm conversation going on between two men on their horses. These horses push their muzzles together, with their ears perky and alert and their eyes shooting glances at the action around them. They do not seem to notice the people about to be killed to their lower left, but instead observe the man to their right, as perhaps they represent the secular world of unbelievers, underneath the "bad thief" whose soul is to be carried to hell. The final pocket of action depicts casting lots for Christ's cloak, though they find that it is seamless and can not be divided or torn, which is a miracle. As the men hold Christ's shirt and gesture about the fate of his belongings, a grey horse without a rider looks on intently. This animal seems as invested in the outcome of the gambling and sin as the Romans, demonstrating the removal of animals as simply symbols in paintings, and bushing the boundaries representation. The horses here act of their own accord, and have souls — perhaps even dark ones. A soldier on a horse looks down with curiosity on the whole scene, as does his animal. This red horse, engaged with the drawing of lots, tops off a whole visual chain of diverse horses. At the very edge of the right side of this fresco, red, black, white, and brown horses form the border, all looking in different directions. This adds a variety of figures, while preserving the unity of action. The lowest horse stretches its brown neck to the right and looks outside of the painting, inviting the imagination to consider what could be happening outside of the fresco scene, and providing a visual lead-in to the Triumph of the Church fresco on the next wall. All of these horses augment the formation of the visual sections of this fresco, and da Firenze can tell a vivid story through portraying a variety of people, and utilizing horses to frame the humans in an effective way.

The horses here provide a motif for the eye to latch onto, for movement around the dense Crucifixion scene. If all of the humans were removed from this scene, the emotional message would still be imparted through the horses, as they often mimic the temperament of their riders. They contribute to the visual sermon of the Dominicans, as the two horses that look at the audience create a bridge between the contemplative nature to the Chapter House and the chaotic moments of Christ's last moments.

V. Padua, Pilgrimage, Painter

Moving north to Padua, we find other horses that are treated in the same manner. At the right of the nave in the Basilica of Saint Anthony of Padua is the Chapel of Saint James, where frescos by Altichiero were created from about 1376-79 (Figure 20). Saint Anthony himself was a friar of the Franciscan Order, and the patron saint of lost children and lost things, and he is buried in this Church, which created an important pilgrimage site, that remains massively popular today. Altichiero's frescos in this prominent spot are very much focused around and inspired by the architecture of the Basilica.

> "Obviously, being commissioned to work in Padua provided Altichero with the opportunity to study, at first hand and in some detail, Giotto's fresco cycle painted some 60 years earlier…Yet Altichero also brought with him other pictorial skills and aptitudes obtained independently in Verona while working within the courtly culture of the Scaligeri regime…The relationship between the Paduan work of Giotto and Altichiero thus provides a fitting symbol of the complex implications of the fact that fourteenth-century Sienese, Florentine and Paduan painters worked in a variety of locations."[94]

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[94] Norman, *Siena, Florence, and Padua*, 47.

This Crucifixion scene utilizes the architectural arcades to frame the three clear panels. "In general, the high degree of balance among all the elements is one of the outstanding traits of Altichiero's pictorial compositions," and this fresco is in keeping with his style.[95] Altichiero utilizes symmetry through his portrayal of horses as well. There is a balanced perspective between the architecture, setting, and people, like a procession down the nave. Though there are a handful of horses in this composition, three white horses are used to visually frame the frescos. They form a triad that orients the eye in an otherwise packed image, and serve as a point of reference. The two most visually direct horses can be found in the center and the one of the right fresco (Figure 21). These two horses look out at the viewer, again breaking the fourth wall; they are unique from their human counterparts, who stay present in the scene, which pushes them into the role of commentators on the scene. These animals create a visual entryway into the complicated world of the last moments of Christ.

The horses also allow for a wider perspective in this fresco as well. While most figures in the foreground turn sideways or away from the viewer "…only among the riders who close in the picture at the rear are there a few figures facing forward, providing not only a wider variety of views, but also an emphasis on the connection and interaction between the figures in the front and rear zones of the pictorial space."[96] All horses in the left section gaze left, in the center they look forward, and on the right the horse looks right; they arrange the space in a pleasing way, smoothing out an otherwise explosive scene.

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[95] Poeschke, *Italian Frescoes,* 419.

[96] Poeschke, *Italian Frescoes,* 420.

> "The horsemen that extend the figures upward over the pictorial surface also carry the design on into space and start the work completed but the unusually realistic architectural coulisses upon either wing. The culvert in the foreground counter-balances the thrust into the distance by implying the extension of the landscape forwards into the spectator's world as well as out to either side,…"

and another distinct example of this is the small dog that crouches next to the sewer, a realistic detail that extends this scene to its audience's context.[97] Through this arrangement, Altichiero serves the visual needs of his audience, and he invites them into the painting, as art historians White and Joachim Poesche describe above.

Another method the artist uses to relate the image to its audience is through the visual reference to donors who helped build the church."The deliberation and number of the portraits are unique within the fourteenth century, when the record of faces was still generalized and limited to the appearance of donors usually of subsidiary scale,…" which makes this fresco especially attached to the reality of those looking at it in the Trecento.[98] Not only was Altichiero portraying horses in a way that draws the audience into the scene, but also using real life people as a reference point for those who would have been praying in the chapel. Bonifacio Lupi, a political man in Padua and *condottiere*, was the patron, and there are specific portraits of him and his family in this fresco.[99] In addition, the wealth that the horses represent are an indication of the status of the donors.

Eight horses look at the audience in total, in all three of the sections, with similar facial expressions. They are uniquely the beings that look at the audience, serving as arrest-

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[97] White, *Art and Architecture in Italy 1250-1400*, 575.

[98] Plant,"Portraits and Politics in Late Trecento Padua," 408.

[99] Plant,"Portraits and Politics in Late Trecento Padua," 408.

ing totems of the narrative. As the years of the Trecento advance, the frescos become more realistic in their depiction of space and human interaction and this is a classic example (three children and a dog are even present in this scene). But horses looking at the audience remain a constant, perhaps due to their capability to provoke the viewer into really considering the implications of the Crucifixion, and the spirituality of the holy place they were currently standing, next to the incredible Saint Anthony.

VI. What an Oratory Really Has to Say

Between 1375 and 1387, Altichiero and his assistants decorated the Oratory of St. George, the patron saint of Christian Knights, in Padua.[100] The Oratory was built separately, behind the Church discussed above and to the southwest, but much later they were connected. This space was semi-private and used for mass by important citizens. In this building Altichiero mimicked the symmetry of the architecture with his frescoes, as previously mentioned.

There are eight horses in this scene, and three look towards the viewer, most notably the white horse (Figure 22). This horse peers out from under the cross, on the left, is the most important and apparent link to the audience, and its color and positioning becomes one of the first elements the eye is drawn to when looking at the fresco. At eye level with the people standing in front of it, it immediately grabs attention and leads the viewer into the scene. It neighs, with its ears forward in the position of attention and curiosity. It does not look upset about the Crucified like the humans surrounding it, instead, the horse takes on an exuberant

[100] Edwards, "Parallelism in the Frescoes in the Oratory," 53.

facial expression. While everyone else mourns, this horse, seemingly unconcerned, looks out at the audience. Therefore, this horse adds a lighter aspect that no one else does. Not even the angels can communicate this tone, with their worried hands. This happiness and inspiration of Christ rising from the sea in the future is grafted onto the horse. While the humans express somber spirituality, the horse is afforded the special position of having a spiritual foresight of the stunning events to come.

The line of his nose also connects to Mary Magdalene, the only one praying while mourning, not just gesturing, at Jesus. Therefore, the horse helps direct the viewer, in a very packed scene, to the most important aspects of the painting. Like Mary, the viewer should be kneeling and praying before Christ, but also considering how this monumental sacrifice absolved mankind of sin, which is in fact quite a joyous theme. The white horse breaks the dark tensions in the painting, looking with earnestness at the viewer. Altichiero slips this reoccurring horse motif into his frescos, while painting it with a unique demeanor. This animal is different from the surrounding human figures, and therefore serves as a point of contemplation and focus for the viewer.

VIII. The End of a Productive Century

There is a definite shift to more crowded scenes at the end of the 14th century. Horses are one way to incorporate more people into a painting, as they add valuable perspective due to their height and diversity of figure. The horses in these frescos still lead and direct the eye, becoming a landmark motif that viewers would have become familiar with but the end of the Trecento. Like the artists before them, horses are used to transport the viewer into the paint-

ing. Far more relatable for a middle or lower class person than a saint, disciple, or Pharisee, horses continue the spiritual program in a clearer, everyday manner. Their presence in these frescos speaks to the average viewer and they are able to communicate much emotional content. Horses are slightly spiritual animals, as outlined by Thomas Aquinas, and also maintain a noble status. Horses, through their sheer might, can provide warning and protection to their human owners, which places them in the role of an animal comrade. As such, horses sometimes express premonition about Jesus's death, and may appear wise. They are allowed to embody a larger message or emotion, while the fresco still can spiritually appropriate contemplation through human figures. If everyone is somber, sad, or violent during the death of Jesus, horses are left to communicate the real message of Jesus — salvation. "For God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him," and the horses remind the onlooker of this joyous message in the midst of the chaos of the Crucifixion scene.[101] For as essential it is that Jesus died, the power of his life lies in the fact that he rose again.

[101] John 3:17.

E. CONCLUSION - AND THEY SHALL TELL THEE

Frescos of the Trecento are praised for indicating the beginnings of the Renaissance in various ways. Art historians frequently cite gesture, eyes, human emotion, perspective, and realistic environment as hallmarks that indicate the forward momentum in artistic style that explodes in the Italian Renaissance. All of these characteristics are, of course, valid. However, I have argued that horses have a larger role to play in this development than previously examined.

These animals are not placed into the most important moments in Christ's life by happenstance. In some cases, they represent a connection to nature. In other instances, they tell viewers that if they donate to the church, they too can be the part of the wealthy surrounding Christ (in the afterlife). Sometimes they are afforded the stylistic and emotional liberty of expressing premonition. Physically, they can arrange the painting into a readable path. Their placement, gestures, and eyes are just as important to the narrative storytelling as their human counterparts. While much attention has been paid to the gesture, decoration, and eye movements of humans in these frescos, horses have been left out of the conversation, until now.

As the contemporary person's daily life does not involve contact with horses, it can be hard to imagine how integrated these animals and their gestures would have been in the everyday lives of those living in the Trecento. But the viewers of these frescos would not have seen the animals as an abstract motif, as we might today, but a direct representation of something that they came in contact with every day. There is no mention of horses anywhere in the Gospel (this probably due to the fact that horses were not widely used in Jerusalem,

and outlined in a footnote in the Conclusion of Chapter Two). The artists did not have to include them from a Biblical perspective, but made the stylistic choice to make them a reoccurring and central part of the Crucifixion, and sometimes Magi scenes. Horses are essential characters in imparting of the message of Christ. And perhaps, with contemplation, these animals revealed a greater truth about God and the Divine Universe. As it is written in the Book of Job: "Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee."[102] These bovine beast have done exactly that — revealed the true message of Christ through their contribution to vernacular painting in the Trecento. Just as the Franciscans and Dominicans sought to make the church accessible though their reforms, the trajectory of Italian art would become more and more realistic and involved in people's actual world. This would flourish in the Italian Renaissance, where all the society would dramatically change.[103] The steeds of the Trecento would be a theme developed in later paintings of the Renaissance, and their profound beginnings in the Trecento is a motif to be remembered. My seven year old self certainly did.

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[102] Job, 12:7.

[103] Burkhart, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, and Najemy, *A History of Florence*, are two excellent sources for further study of the Renaissance.

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Figure 1. Unknown, Italian, The Nativity. 1290s. Fresco. The Upper Church, Assisi.

From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed November 25, 2013).

Figure 2. Giotto di Bondone. Scenes from the Life of Christ: 1. Nativity: Birth of Jesus. 1304-06. Fresco, 200 x 185 cm. Capella Scrovegni (Arena), Padua. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed November 25, 2013).

Figure 3. Altichiero da Zevio. Scenes from the Life of Christ: Adoration of the Magi 1378-84. Fresco, 1169 x 1000 cm. Oratorio di San Giorgio, Padua. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 4. Giotto di Bondone. The Legend of St. Francis: 2. St Francis Giving his Mantle to a Poor Man. 1297-99. Fresco, 270 x 230 cm. The Upper Church, Assisi. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed November 25, 2013).

Figure 5. Giotto di Bondone. Scenes from the Life of Christ: 2. Adoration of the Magi. 1304-06. Fresco, 200 x 185 cm. Capella Scrovegni (Arena), Padua. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed November 25, 2013).

Figure 5. Giotto di Bondone. Scenes from the Life of Christ: 2. Adoration of the Magi (detail). 1304-06. Fresco, 200 x 185 cm. Capella Scrovegni (Arena), Padua. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed November 25, 2013).

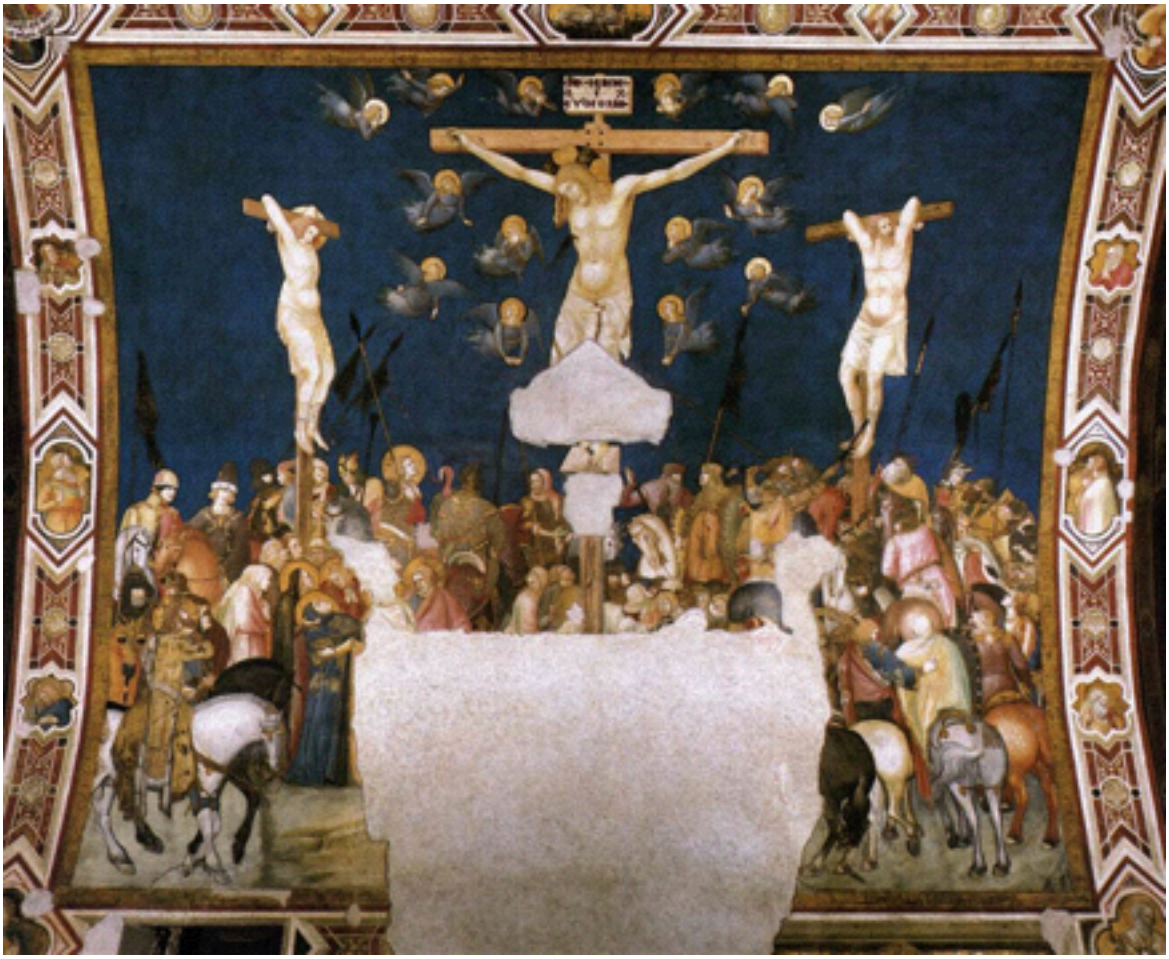

Figure 6. Pietro Lorenzetti. Crucifixion. 1320. Fresco, 200 x 185 cm. Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 7. Pietro Lorenzetti. Crucifixion (detail). 1320. Fresco, 200 x 185 cm. Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 8. Pietro Lorenzetti. Crucifixion (detail). 1320. Fresco, 200 x 185 cm. Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 9. Pietro Lorenzetti. Crucifixion (detail). 1320. Fresco, 200 x 185 cm. Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

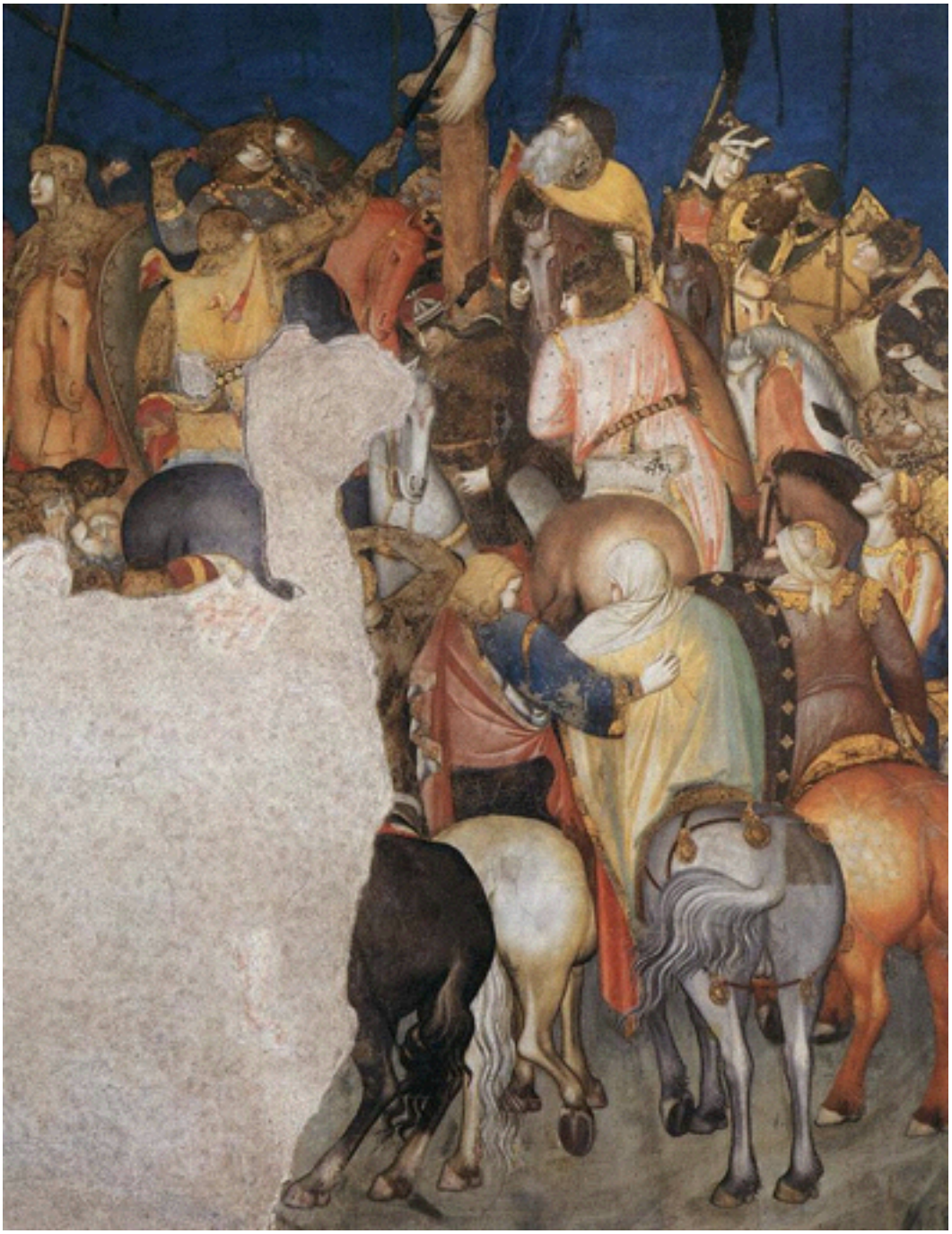

Figure 10. Pietro Lorenzetti. Crucifixion (detail). 1320. Fresco, 200 x 185 cm. Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 11. Taddeo Gaddi. Adoration of the Magi. 1330. Fresco, 924 x 1300 cm. Cappella Baroncelli, Santa Croce, Florence. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 12. Lippo Memmi. Crucifixion. 1340. Fresco, 1070 x 1200 cm. Collegiata Santa Maria Assunta, San Gimignano. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 13. Lippo Memmi. Crucifixion (detail). 1340. Fresco, 1070 x 1200 cm. Collegiata Santa Maria Assunta, San Gimignano. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 14. Andrea da Firenze. Bearing of the Cross, Crucifixion, Descent into Hell (north wall). 1366-67. Fresco, 1311 x 800 cm. Cappellone degli Spagnoli, Santa Maria Novella, Florence. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 15. Andrea da Firenze. Bearing of the Cross. 1366-67. Fresco, 944 x 640 cm. Cappellone degli Spagnoli, Santa Maria Novella, Florence. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 16. Andrea da Firenze. Bearing of the Cross. 1366-67. Fresco, 942 x 1200 cm. Cappellone degli Spagnoli, Santa Maria Novella, Florence. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 17. Andrea da Firenze. Crucifixion (detail). 1366-67. Fresco, 903 x 729 cm. Cappellone degli Spagnoli, Santa Maria Novella, Florence. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

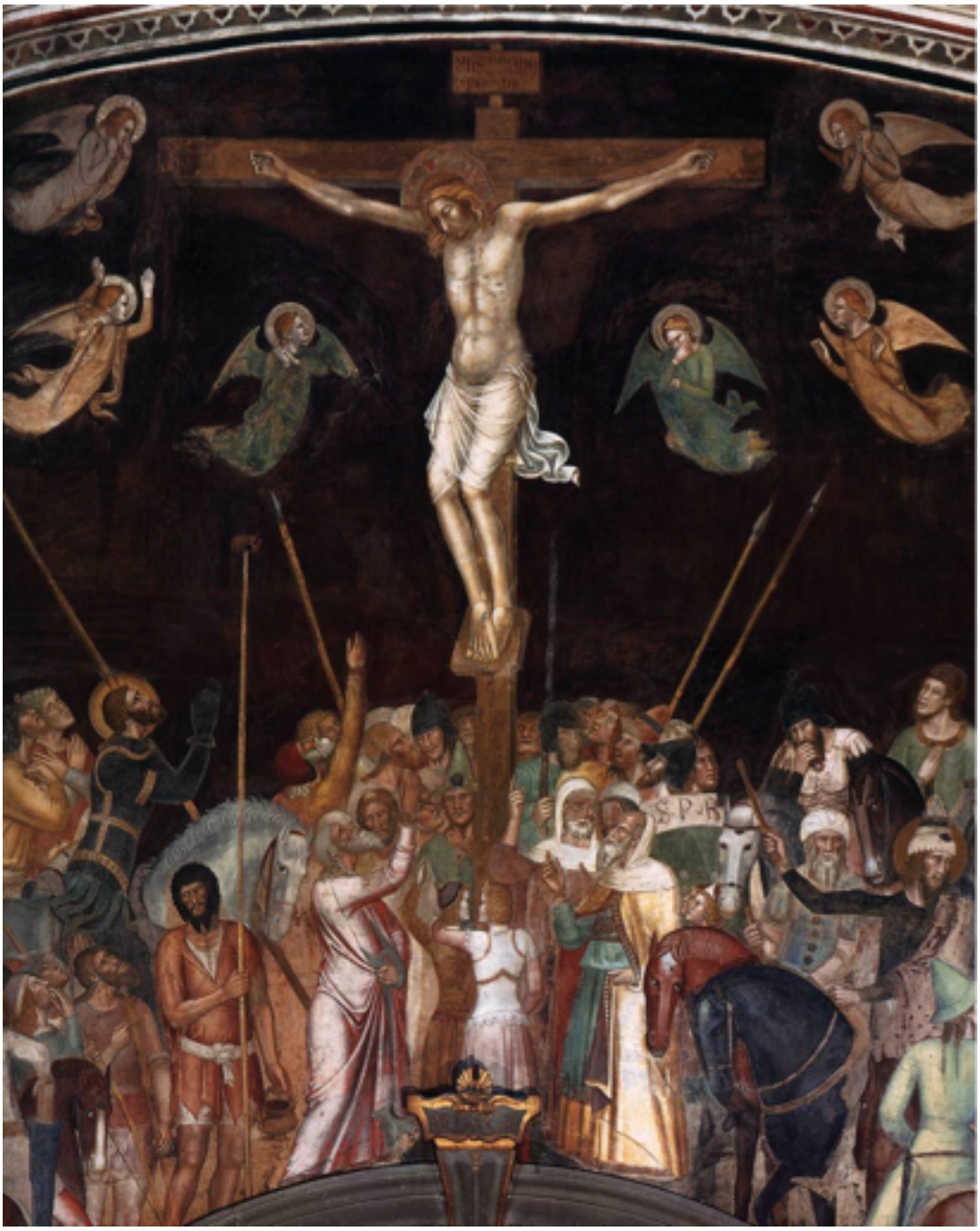

Figure 18. Andrea da Firenze. Crucifixion (detail). 1366-67. Fresco, 1100 x 1336 cm. Cappellone degli Spagnoli, Santa Maria Novella, Florence. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 19. Andrea da Firenze. Crucifixion (detail). 1366-67. Fresco, 919 x 759 cm. Cappellone degli Spagnoli, Santa Maria Novella, Florence. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 20. Altichiero da Zevio. Crucifixion. 1376-79. Fresco, 2160 x 3462 cm. Basilica di Sant'Antonio, Padua. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 21. Altichiero da Zevio. Crucifixion (detail). 1376-79. Fresco, 720 x 1154 cm. Basilica di Sant'Antonio, Padua. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).

Figure 22. Altichiero da Zevio. Crucifixion. 1378-84. Fresco, 1100 x 1222 cm. Oratorio di San Giorgio, Padua. From: The Web Gallery of Art, (accessed December 28, 2013).