

THE CLOTHES THEMSELVES

Irrrespective of the wearer's social class, gender, or age, Renaissance Florentine outfits were composed of many garments and accessories layered together to form a coherent ensemble that could be altered for comfort, when the weather was warm or turned chilly, by subtracting or adding a layer. In addition to the cut and arrangement of the garments, overall shape and color were also essential aspects of a coherent visual message in this increasingly appearance-conscious urban society. Any attempt to reclaim and understand the many dimensions of historical clothing is, however, prickly with inherent problems. Roland Barthes's semiotic terminology of "technologic," "verbal," and "iconic" elements with regard to clothes can be applied here.¹ Clothing existed in three distinct realms, which all referred to one another, that is: the clothes themselves, writing about the clothes, and the manufactured images of the clothes. The last two realms, however, were by definition quite distant from what would have been the everyday visual reality of dress as seen in the streets of Quattrocento Florence.

The Actual Garments | First of all, we know that the clothes themselves (Barthes's "technologic" element) represented an important part of the material culture of the Renaissance. These clothes are, however, unavailable for analysis. Save for some embroidered ceremonial clerical vestments and eccle-

siastical orphreys, all we have left from fifteenth-century Florence are fragments of fabric. An elegant but sparse selection of very hardy brocade and damask fragments and a few centimeters of carefully wrapped velvets are scattered about in museum textile collections. Other than a shoe or two and the more time-resistant jewelry, the clothing of fifteenth-century Florence is gone.² And so, very few “technologic” artifacts are available for material analysis.

Notwithstanding this void, historians of costume have traditionally written about the vanished clothing of the past with an omniscient eye, describing it in minute authoritative detail, as if they had actually *seen* the garments, and yet omniscience is precisely what we do not have. In general, we must rely upon the two ancillary realms where this clothing has been represented; the written records and works of art that have survived. It is from these sources that the richness of the garments must be gleaned, while these sources themselves present formidable obstacles to understanding the now-vanished second skins of cloth, fur, leather, precious metals, and lace.

Written Clothes | Tailors, patricians, clerics, and legislators alike invented the vocabulary used to refer to the garments they created, wore, wrote about, and passed judgment upon (Barthes’s “verbal” element). Often, the quickly changing clothing styles of the fifteenth century outpaced the written descriptions of them, and those who were forced to put pen to paper in the service of clothes found themselves without adequate words with which to work. The language of public sumptuary legislation lagged woefully behind the quotidian *ricordanze* of private individuals in its description of the clothes, which still must have been a pale second to the actual garments. For example, whereas Rubric LXXI of the Statuta of 1415 mentions only twelve types of garments that tailors made, the family *ricordanze* of the fifteenth century name over twice that many.

Barthes has discussed the problem of reducing a piece of clothing to its oral version, noting that the conversion from material culture into language eliminates the freedom afforded a piece of clothing visually. Language acts to immobilize the perception of the garment at a certain level of intelligibility, that is, it picks out those aspects of the garment that are deemed important to notice (cloth, color, neckline, whether it has gussets or not) and then imposes

those choices on the reader.³ Any student of the communal sumptuary legislation will recognize this conundrum immediately, as the choices made of what to describe rarely give the reader the whole picture of the garment. What can be discerned, however, may be indications of those elements of fashion that were the cause of sumptuary concern, perhaps innovations in style. Chapter 9 looks at these innovations.⁴

Clothing in Artwork | Moving from the written to the visual sources (the “iconic” element) presents challenges. In the visual representation of clothing in the art of this period, there are daunting uncertainties in matching the type of garment pictured with the written descriptions. Because the fashion of the clothes themselves was rarely the primary concern of the artist, not only is the shape of a specific garment difficult to identify using the range of contemporary terminology, but, if there is color, it is too. Certainly, the subtle differences in fabric hue and texture described in written sources, are often impossible to discern in the brush strokes or charcoal lines of the surviving artwork. However, through studying the artwork, it is possible to synthesize a general picture of the dress of the urban population.⁵

OVERALL VISUAL IMPRESSION

Males | Based on pictorial and written sources, the clothes men wore in public in Renaissance Florence appear to have depended on status and occupation. Artisans and shopkeepers dressed themselves in belted tunics and haphazardly fitting hose of undistinguished color, and the *popolo minuto* often wore soft caps called *foggette*, which those of upper rank (the *popolo grasso*) disdainfully eschewed. To call a man of lesser status a *foggettina* (“poor little hatted one”) was a patrician insult.⁶ Figure 8.1 depicts the Florentine *popolo minuto* in a detail from Masaccio’s *St. Peter Healing with His Shadow* in the Brancacci Chapel (1430).

Those who held public office, roughly 5 percent of the urban population, evidently clothed themselves, at least for their portraits, in amply cut, unbelted calf-length mantles and gowns (*cioppe* or *lucchi*) of a plain, rich crimson woolen cloth, usually adding a rolled-up hood (*cappuccio*) of a corresponding color.⁷ The *cappuccio* was a complicated article of clothing fashioned by

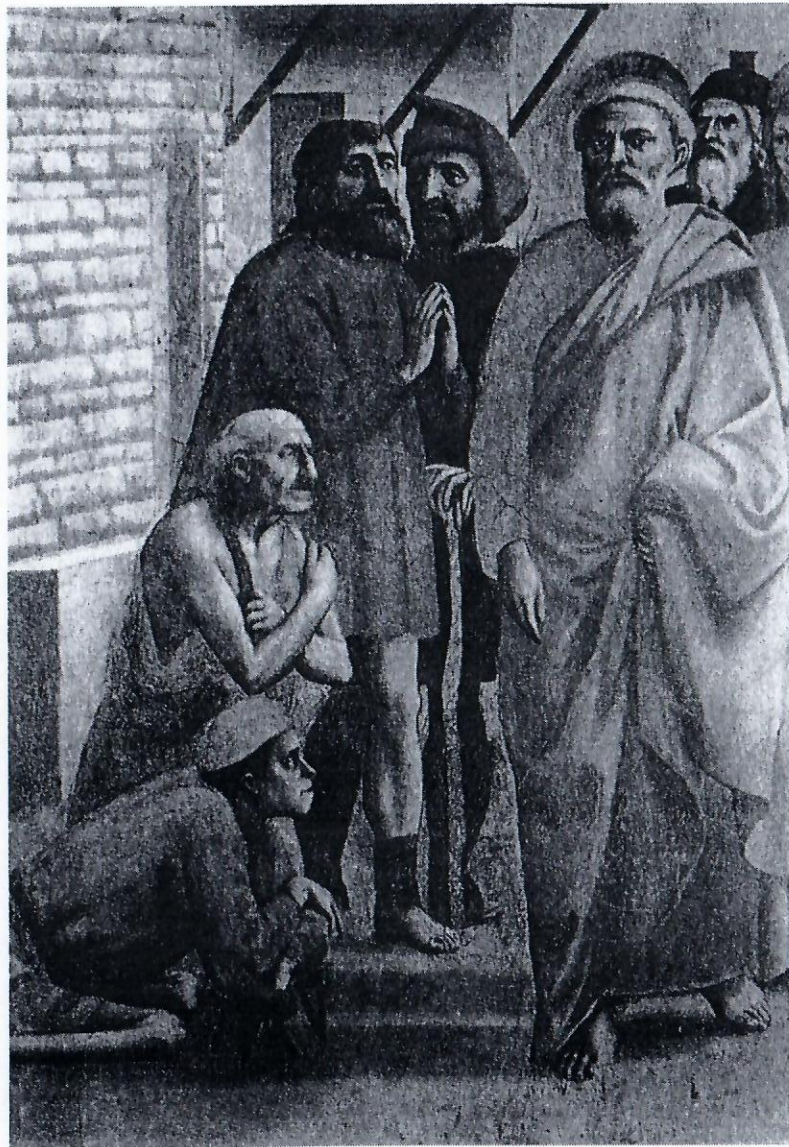


Fig. 8.1. Males of the *popolo minuto*. Detail from Masaccio, *St. Peter Healing with His Shadow* (1430). Brancacci Chapel, Santa Maria del Carmine.

tailors, usually of the same fabric as the *cioppa* or *mantello*, and was worn in a variety of ways, depending on the style and flash of the wearer.⁸ The crimson cloth would be dyed with kermes and well tailored; it was lined with silk in summer, and a fur lining was added in winter.

Vasari tells a story about the Florentine *cappucci*. He writes that Botticelli played a practical joke on a student, one Biagio, who had painted a copy of his life-size tondo of a Madonna and Eight Angels. Botticelli had already brokered its sale for six florins, and the student was bringing the buyer to Botticelli's workshop to see it. As a prank, Botticelli and another student "made several paper hats (like the ones the citizens wore) which they stuck with white wax over the heads of the eight angels that surrounded the Madonna."

When Biagio and the buyer came in, "Biagio looked up and saw his Madonna seated not in the midst of angels but in the middle of the councilors of Florence, all wearing their paper hats! He was just about to roar out in anger and make excuses when he noticed that the man he was with had said nothing at all [being let in on the joke beforehand] and was in fact starting to praise the picture . . . so Biagio kept quiet himself." The student subsequently accompanied the buyer to his house, where he received his six florins for the painting. When he got back to the shop, Botticelli and his other students had removed the hats, "and he found [to his amazement] that the angels he had painted were angels after all."⁹ Apparently, in Renaissance Florence, *cappucci* had the power to transform angels into mere mortals.

The powerful leaders of the Commune wore soled hose, which was either black or matched their cloaks. The narrow-cut shoes with pointed toes fashionable in mid-to-late Quattrocento Florence were generally custom-made, either of calf leather with punched-out or tooled designs or of suede or lined fabric, with a heavier leather sole sewn on the bottom. Records of SS. Annunziata show repeated purchases of "*scarpe di vitello*" for the monks, bought for the amount of around ten soldi a pair in 1492.¹⁰

From the surviving artwork, it appears that Florentines wore little or no jewelry that would have been visible on the street.¹¹ On one Milanese ambassador's practice of sporting many golden chains around his neck, Bracciolini has his fellow humanist Niccolò Niccoli opine, "I say, those other lunatics let themselves be tied with one chain, while he instead is crazier, and not happy with only one."¹² Figure 8.2 shows conservatively dressed members of the

Florentine ruling class in a detail from the *Angel Appearing to Zacharias* by Ghirlandaio in the Tornabuoni Chapel.

This unadorned uniform of fine red woolen cloth (which changed only slightly during the fifteenth century) must have given the designated leaders of the city a certain generalized egalitarian appearance, an impression they were eager to convey. A letter from one of Cosimo's great-nephews to his father during the Medici exile in Venice in 1434 reveals the outward modesty of the everyday Florentine male dressing practices: "Here everyone dresses very finely, and I often go with Lorenzo ["Il Vecchio," his great uncle] to places where one must cut a distinguished figure, so that at the moment all my *usual* outer garments are of silk"¹³ (emphasis added). Such outward ostentation in dress, while acceptable in the more cosmopolitan milieu of Venice, was not usual or desirable in Florence, which prided itself on its strictly conservative, republican image for men. Stella Mary Newton says that the use of the expensive kermes dyestuff was limited in Venice to silk cloth, however, whereas in Florence, perhaps contradictorily, kermes was also used to dye the finely cut woolen mantles worn routinely by upper-class men in public.

This uniform of sorts also directed all attention, not to the clothes of important men, which were of similar excellent cut and fabric, but rather, to their individual heads.¹⁴ This can dramatically be seen in Figure 8.3, a detail from *The Calling of Saint Peter* by Ghirlandaio from the Sistine Chapel (1481). The ruling group accentuated their faces (and differentiated themselves), by wearing the wide range of headgear for which Florence was famous, from cappucci rolled in individually distinctive ways and berretti bearing personal jewelry—usually brooches—to a noteworthy variety of other caps and hats.¹⁵

Females | Women in Renaissance Florence cut another figure altogether. Over their cotton or linen underblouses, marketplace women, working women in the streets, and the wives of lesser guildsmen all apparently wore simply cut, calf-length linen or woolen gowns or shifts, which modestly covered the body from neck to wrist to calf. Usually, the outfits were belted with generous washable aprons (*grembiali*) to protect clothes from the contamination of the workday. Figure 8.4, a detail from *The Distribution of the Goods of the Church* by Masaccio, from the Brancacci Chapel (ca. 1425), shows females of the popolo minuto thus garbed. These shifts would have been



Fig. 8.2. Males of the ruling class. Detail from Ghirlandaio, *The Angel Appearing to Zacharias* (1486–90). Tornabuoni Chapel.



Fig. 8.3. Individuated male heads. Detail from Ghirlandaio, *The Calling of Saint Peter* (1481). Sistine Chapel, the Vatican, Rome.

either of a natural uncolored cloth or of inexpensive hues, ranging from *rancio di bianco* (a warm white color) to *cilestri di bianco* (a light blue) or even *scarlattini* (a light red). After they became threadbare or torn, working women continued to wear their precious clothes patched. In Figure 8.5, a detail from the *Inventario di un' eredità dei Buonomini* by the School of Ghirlandaio (late fifteenth century), working women are shown huddled in a doorway in patched gowns. Ironically, this image is from the Oratorio del Buonomini di San Martino, a prestigious Florentine wool-finishing firm.

In contrast, when venturing outside the domestic realm (going to or from church, or from one family abode to another), women of the richer merchant families presented themselves in voluminous multilayered draperies of richly woven and dyed cloth. Much of the luxe of an upper-class adult female's layered clothing would not have been visible on the street, however, for she would have wrapped a full-length cloak or mantle around her gowns outside the house (*a fuori*). The only place most Florentines might briefly have glimpsed a rich female in a formal outfit would have been from afar in the



Fig. 8.4. Females of the *popolo minuto*. Detail from Masaccio, *The Distribution of the Goods of the Church* (ca. 1425). Brancacci Chapel.



Fig. 8.5. Women in patched *gamurre*. Detail from School of Ghirlandaio, *Inventario di un' eredità dei Buonomini* (late fifteenth century). Oratorio del Buonomini di San Martino, Florence.

street, on her way to be married, seated in a family loggia or audience on a communal feast day, or, in the last decades of the century, in family chapel frescoes, only partially visible in the filtered light of a couple of the city's churches.¹⁶ Otherwise, such women remained hidden from "common" eyes, eyes for whom they were not outfitted in the first place. Of course, within the privately "public" space of the palazzi of the rich, there would have been opportunity for an insider to gaze to his or her heart's content.¹⁷

On a woman's feet, cloth slippers were often worn "slipped" inside larger wooden clogs for walking in the public streets. Upper-class women also wore clogs with platform soles, called by their fashionable foreign name of *chopine*. These platform clogs could be fabric-covered and embroidered for festive outfits. On their heads, the females of the upper class, like their male counterparts, wore cappucci, but women rarely rolled them up about the head turban-style the way men did. Rather, they were worn as cowls, to shield the face and neck from view. Francesco Barbaro's *De re uxoria* insists that an honorable woman should remain covered and hidden ("coperta e nascosta") when in public view and should avoid meeting the eyes of any man on the street.¹⁸ Certainly, the wearing of an ample cappuccio would have helped her do so. Fashion evidently demanded that cowl match gown. Margherita Datini complained to her husband that if she were to have a new cloak, she had to have a new cowl too, for she could not wear an old piece with a new one.¹⁹

The overall effect of a rich woman in the street, covered from head to foot with expensive cloth, elevated on platform shoes, and always with her servants or kinswomen, appears to have been one of a rather large, sedately moving, imposing mass of fabric.²⁰ Kinswomen also possessed clothing cut from the same cloth, and when worn en masse on the street, this would have heightened the visual impact.²¹ Of course, the figure cut by women of the upper class out in the streets was not what has been preserved in the portraits of the women of the oligarchy, which give us a skewed visual record of the normal appearance of most Renaissance females, poor or rich, an issue looked at in Chapter 10.

MEANINGS

Upper-Body Emphasis | Beside being of grand proportions, clothing for the rich had the luxury of being stylish. Most of the modish differentiation

in these clothes was concentrated either on the head, the neckline, or the sleeves. This emphasized the upper region of the body over the lower, and, by association, the mental over the physical. In men's clothes, all cloth bulk and emphasis was on this upper-body region.²² Headwear for both men and women in Florence was multiform and could be large, creating an impression of height and volume and providing an extension of bodily self, which projected a sense of power. Tall hats for men and bulbous headpieces (*balze*) for women (especially worn for ceremonial rites of passage) enabled both males and females to fill more public space, thereby extending their degree of personal control.

Necklines varied from very high (*alleuto* or *acollato*) for mature, married, or cloistered women to lower, rounded neckline styles for nubile girls, which a sumptuary revision of 1464 set at a sixteenth of a braccio from the "fork of the throat" in front, and an eighth of a braccio in back.²³ The shape of the neckline is not delineated in the written documents, however, bringing to mind Barthes's comments about the imposed choices language makes upon clothes in their written form. What is richly articulated in the literature, however, is the ornamentation sewn on around the neckline. At least twenty different terms referring to baubles and decorations for gowns are recorded in family accounts.²⁴ The Commune frequently updated its sumptuary laws to cope with these decorative innovations.

Finally, at least a dozen different types of sleeves, slashed and puffed, straight and gathered, narrow or full (but always full-length to emphasize arm movements in men and modest reserve in women) are mentioned in the Florentine documents of the time.²⁵ An average pair of men's sleeves required two and a half braccia of cloth, about a yard and a quarter for each arm. For women's sleeves from midcentury on, less fabric was used (only one and a half braccia for a pair of sleeves for a woman), which could indicate that this cloth was to make sleeves in the "new" style thought to be of Spanish court origin—that is, detachable sleeves, smaller and fitted, which tied onto the bodice of a gown with laces and were of contrasting rich fabric.²⁶ These new detachable sleeves then *themselves* came under sumptuary legislation, not because of their fullness, but because of their luxurious cloth, as we shall see in Chapter 9.

Lower-Body Similarity | Whereas the upper portion of Florentine Renaissance dress, especially the hats, necklines, and sleeves, was radically individu-

alized, the lower parts of ensembles for both men and women of all classes were remarkably similar for each gender. Men all wore leg-hugging soled hose of stretchable perpignan cloth, more or less tailored, depending on what they could afford.²⁷ Women all wore gowns with full-length voluminous skirts of varying fabrics, perhaps, as Lawrence Langner has suggested, to inconspicuously accommodate regular pregnancies.²⁸ Alison Lurie writes of the contemporary phenomenon of jeans being worn with everything from plain white T-shirts to tube tops and Armani jackets that clothing that is all the same for a group from the waist down but different from the waist up suggests that "in their lower or physical natures these persons are alike, however dissimilar they may be socially, intellectually or aesthetically."²⁹

The sartorial delineation of rank in Renaissance Florence would seem to bear out Lurie's hypothesis, because although the pursuit of fine cloth, expensive dyestuffs, and dignified, large headgear preoccupied the upper class, the cultural obsession with visualizing honor did not much extend to the nether regions of the ensemble for either gender. Moreover, this subconscious dichotomy between upper and lower body regions was accompanied by a gendered division among craftspeople. Men for the most part clothed the top half of the body, manufacturing hats, caps, cowls, hoods, jewelry, and certainly doublets, but making belts, hose, and slippers was traditionally the domain of women.³⁰

ACTUAL WARDROBES

Layering | Arguably the most characteristic feature of Renaissance dress was its sumptuous layering. When fully outfitted, both men and women wore four layers of clothing, weather permitting. Tailors were able to convey complex visual expressions of luxury by deftly slashing or snipping away fabric at the neck, wrists, elbows, and sides of the garments thus layered, thereby opening windows through which to view the linings, patterns, and contrasting colors beneath; to our twentieth-century eyes, the juxtaposition is sometimes startling. As Quentin Bell has observed, the sumptuous nature of layered clothes, that is, their "conspicuously expensive character," is most enhanced through this cutting away, "so as to show how many things are being worn and what expensive things they are."³¹ Part of the subtlety of the layered effect was, of course, the quick flash of a brilliant lining or

the tease of an exotic fur as the wearer passed in the street. Rich women, as we saw in Chapter 4, added to this effect by bunching up the fabric of their skirts as they walked or stood, thereby revealing an underskirt of contrasting color or trim. Layered, lined, slashed, and bunched up though these ensembles may have been, the distortion of the human body was less pronounced in the clothing of Florence at this time than in the costumes of France, England, Germany, Spain, or even other Italian city-states. It was this practice of wearing layers of garments of thin fabric, one over another, that accounted for a more natural, if slightly enlarged silhouette in the costumes of Florence.

Men's Ensembles | The garments men wore are best considered using the terms they used in their own family records. Every man began with the *camicia*. This washable layer was full-sleeved, gathered at the neck and wrists, and long enough to be tucked into the tops of the hose, which (more or less) covered every man's legs and could button onto his shoes, if he were wearing them.³² Over this went the constructed upper-body *farsetto*, which gave the male chest definition. Closely tailored and quilted for shape, this garment could be made of many kinds of fabric, from cotton or linen to velvet or brocade. In these two upper-body pieces, along with hose, a man's body was covered, but certainly not completely dressed.

The third essential garment was the tunic, which went by many names even within Florence itself. Tunics included the shorter *giubbia* or *villano* (increasingly and even sometimes scandalously shorter as the century wore on), the slightly longer *cioppa*, *cotta*, the traditional Florentine *lucco*, and the sleeveless *giornea* (originally a military garment).³³ These garments could also be of varying styles—narrow, gathered, pleated, or open in the front—and lined with either fur or silk for winter or summer wear.³⁴ And, finally, men might wear overgowns for warmth, luxe, or simply to cut a dashing figure on the street. Besides the old-fashioned *cottardite*, there were in addition amply cut *mantelli* and *robbe* or *sacchi*. Of all of these various shapes and styles, *mantello* seems to have been used as the generic term, with over twenty different types singled out in the communal statuta for regulation. Figure 8.6 shows two men wearing scarlet woolen mantelli in a detail from Masaccio's 1426 predella panel, part of the *Pisa Polyptych*.



Fig. 8.6. Male *mantelli*. Detail from Masaccio, *Adoration of the Magi*, predella panel of the *Pisa Polyptych* (1426). Gemäldegalerie, Berlin-Dahlem.

Women's Ensembles | Women's outfits, which had as many if not more requisite layers and differentiated garments, were even more specifically articulated. Like men, the women began with the *camicia*, what we would call today (feminizing the garment name) an underblouse rather than an under-shirt. The gendering of a garment name, however, was something that Florentines as a rule did not do, although male and female cuts of a garment were apparently known in Renaissance Italy. For example, art historians have noted the marginal occupations of the women painted by Titian, as attested to in part by their wearing what possibly are "men's" *camicie*, with a decided degree of décolletage.³⁵ In Florence, only a few head ornaments had any gender exclusivity. *Balze*, *selle*, and *corne* were not worn by men, but even a *ghirlanda* could be a wreath sported by a male, and a *berretta* could be worn by a female.

Women's underblouses, whether of fine linen, inexpensive cotton, or a luxurious silk, were of natural unbleached color or pearly white, and visible at every opening of the garments layered over them—at the neckline, poking through the shoulder seams of the attached sleeves, at the wristline of the sleeves, and, after midcentury, often at the elbows. Slashed openings often even ran the entire length of the sleeve. Some bodices were fashioned of two pieces of cloth laced up the front with laces (*lacci*) threaded through eyelets (*maglie*), with the underblouse visible beneath the laces.³⁶

Over a woman's *camicia*, she wore a simply cut, figure-revealing gown, either ankle- or floor-length; perhaps with even a small train (*strascico*) until the first decades of the fifteenth century. For everyday wear at home, this gown was of a modest fabric; a cotton, linen, or thin wool. These equivalents to our modern-day dresses went by a wide variety of names, from the fourteenth-century *gonna*, *gonnella*, or *sottana* to the later fifteenth-century *gamurra* or *cotta*.³⁷ For special occasions, these basic gowns could be of silk or fine wool, as we have seen, and in all but the most domestic of settings, they were worn partially covered with a third layer, the overdress. In the summertime, this would perhaps be a sleeveless *giornea*, often of damask or silk brocade. We know how remarkable it was for anyone who was not a member of the immediate household circle to see a woman in her *gamurra*. Lucrezia Tornabuoni, who had gone to Rome in the spring of 1467 looking for an appropriate match for their son Lorenzo, wrote to her husband Piero in April

that she had been able to see Clarice Orsini "in her *gamurra*," enabling her to better judge the young woman's figure and carriage.³⁸

In the winter, the overdress would have long sleeves, this being the *cioppa*, and could be of silk brocade or cut-and-figured-velvet. It was this third layer of garments on women that displayed the most opulence in terms of surface decoration, bordering, and extravagant sleeves of either generous proportions or rich, contrasting luxury fabric. This is the layer that was most often portrayed in the artwork of fifteenth-century Florence, because the young women usually shown did not yet wear the fourth and final layer, consisting of the *mantello*. This decorative third layer, made of damask or cut velvet, oversewn with additional pearl or metallic embroidery, was the layer that conferred honor upon the wearer (and by extension her family), since it served no utilitarian purpose. Lurie has noted that clothes that have obviously been decorated after the garment was made, whether by embroidery, the application of lace, or the sewing on of appliqués, are the most notable examples of status garments. Fabrics that contrive to combine "large areas of pale, easily soiled plain fabric with elaborate hand decoration" are especially prestigious, she observes.³⁹ With characteristic frankness, Alessandra Strozzi made all this quite clear in a letter to one of her sons about wedding-dress ornaments, saying, "Jewelry is the thing which must be well provided for . . . and if the fabric [of the gown] is not adorned with pearls, one must decorate it with other trifles [*frasche*] for which you lay out a lot, and this expense is just thrown away!"⁴⁰ With all the attention going to the "frasche" on the sumptuous fabrics themselves, little concern was directed to the wearer of the costume. The dazzle of the gold and silver threads reflected back onto the viewer his or her own societal reading. It was the clothes, or even the cloth itself, that people noticed; the social element of this layer were more important than the personal ones.

Out on the street in public view, unless it was unbearably hot, adult women of the upper classes, unlike the men, *did* require the fourth layer of clothing over these three layers, in the form of a cloak, which would be plainer than the opulent third layer and was designed to render the married upper-class woman *nascosta*, or hidden. This cloak went by the name of *mantello*, *lucco*, *sacco*, or *roba*—the same designations used for the male equivalent. Each of these four types of cloak was regulated by communal statute in the Quattrocento, and it is evident that *mantelli* were the most expensive to tailor.⁴¹

Although they may have been expensive and regularly worn, cloaks are not prominent in the pictorial records left by fifteenth-century artists, at least not on the women chosen by Renaissance Florentine society as paradigmatic of the honor of the republic. Married women did not serve as such paradigms. Renaissance artists and patrons focused instead on nubile young women who did not yet wear figure-concealing mantelli. In fact, more than one historian of costume has intimated that the putting on of the mantello acted as a sort of sartorial rite of passage for women, marking their moving from girlhood to womanhood upon marriage.⁴² Most of the mantelli we do see are painted *all'antica* in scenes with religious subjects. The mantello is the preferred garment for the Virgin Mary, saints, and women in Renaissance portrayals of biblical events, but it is not usually shown worn by actual Florentine women. Figure 8.7, a detail from Ghirlandaio's *The Visitation* in the Tornabuoni Chapel (1485–90), shows religious figures wearing mantelli.

Children's Wardrobes | From the adult women, we turn to their children, who have not been singled out for discussion up until now. For the most part, from toddlerhood to puberty, young people simply wore smaller cuts of their parents' layered styles of clothes. The only real difference was the addition of an apron or smock (designated by many garment names, from *grembiale* to *cioppetta*), which protected garments from everyday spills and messes. Figure 8.8, a detail from Ghirlandaio's *The Resurrection of the Boy* in the Sassetti Chapel (1483–86), shows the public costume of an upper-class young girl. In family wardrobes, a child's garments are usually indicated by a diminutive ending on the garment name. Thus, an child-sized overgown becomes a *cioppetta*, *cioppettina*, *ucchetto*, or *lucchetto*; a hood or cowl, a *cappuccetto* or *cappuccino*; a cape, a *mantellino*; at-home togs, *gammurrina*, *gonnellino*, *guarnellino*, or *sacchetto*. Children also had tiny versions of linings (*foderetti*) and of the quilted vest (*farsettino*), and a young girl could have her own little head-dress and belt like her mother's, called a *grillandetta* and a *cintoletta* respectively.⁴³

Children, too, wore the *camicia* (with sometimes heavier *camicie da verno* for winter), but apparently no underpants until they were toilet-trained. Nursemaids, mothers, and older sisters cleaned up after them as best they could.⁴⁴ Their legs and feet were protected, however, by soled *calze*, while



Fig. 8.7. Female *mantelli*. Detail from Ghirlandaio, *The Visitation* (1485–90). Tornabuoni Chapel.



Fig. 8.8. Public costume of an upper-class young girl. Detail from Ghirlandaio, *The Resurrection of the Boy* (1483–86). Sassetti Chapel, Santa Trinita.

cuffie, berrette, or cappelline covered little heads.⁴⁵ Like their parents, they had nightgowns, some lined. In other words, almost every type of garment had its childish counterpart, with the exception of garments with specifically adult functions.⁴⁶

Size of Wardrobes | Since a person's ensemble consisted of sumptuous layering, many different pieces made up a personal wardrobe. We know from inventories of family goods that the members of a household possessed multiple garments, with some interchangeable pieces listed separately (often sleeves, or one sleeve, linings, and belts), probably because they had been made separately. Adult wardrobes tended to be composed of some twenty to twenty-five pieces of clothing, not including linens. The wardrobes of growing children were understandably less extravagant, numbering between ten to twelve garments per child on average.⁴⁷ Antonio Pucci was unique in having noticeably fewer garments, but this military man did have a wide array of military gear and accoutrements, including six helmets, two of which were decorated with pearls, two with silver, and all with various figurative designs.⁴⁸ At the other end, sartorially speaking, was Lorenzo di Piero di Lorenzo de' Medici, the nominal head of the Florentine state, who had at least fifty garments of more than seventeen different types made for himself in a single year, and some seventeen separate linings, as well as placing fifteen orders for headgear, leg and footwear, and undergarments. He also had four garments embroidered and more than a dozen pieces of military-type gear crafted for him between July 18, 1515, and August 17, 1516.⁴⁹

MATERIALS

Cloth | Renaissance Florentines combined velvets with silks, and lined brocades with satins, silks, and furs of many kinds. The most expensive silk brocades and cut and figured, multi-pile velvets were those colored with crimson and violet dyestuffs.⁵⁰ A wide array of woolens was also available to citizens, from fine English wool cloth (finished in Florence in the Convento di San Martino) to the relatively inexpensive stretchable perpignan jersey used for hose, with many grades in between.⁵¹ Washable cotton, linen, and cotton/linen combinations, from plain *guarnello* to the worked *boccaccio*, were used not only for personal linens and underclothes but also for children's

garments, at-home wear, and the clothing of servants and slaves. Alberti had advised in *Della famiglia* that everyone in the household be appropriately dressed; servants and slaves wearing clothing that bespoke their humble, but well-integrated, familial role.⁵²

Furs | But there was much more to a garment than simply its fabric. In fact, in the complex ensembles of the upper class of fifteenth-century Florence, which offered ample opportunity for fabric patterning, furs, and jewelry, the basic fabric was only one element in a whole palette of fashion choices. Fur was considered essential for both warmth and luxury, and the ruling and professional classes wore a wide range of furs as both linings and trims. A government prior's cioppa needed a hint of fur trim for show and a fur lining for substance. These linings were constructed as independent garments, which could be used or left off as the weather or occasion required. By far the most commonly used furs were squirrel, rabbit, and dormouse (a large European rodent), but over twenty types of fur pelts were available in Florence by the mid 1500s, including fox, wildcat, ermine, sable, lynx, four species of wolf, three species of hare, and the European polecat.⁵³ The prized gray fur of the European variety of the large squirrel (originally native to Siberia, Russia, and Bulgaria) was called *vai*.⁵⁴ Renaissance Florentines made good use of this European fur source, employing at least four parts of the squirrel pelt to trim or line their clothing and headgear. The cuts were the *dossi*, or backs; the *pancie*, or soft white underbelly furs, which were smaller and therefore more expensive; the *teste*, or heads; and the *chodioni*, or rumps. Robert Delort has noted, however, the popularity of this fur, strong throughout the Middle Ages, waned after 1430, when marten and ermine were added to consumers' choices. After midcentury in Italy, the ratio of fur to cloth in an ensemble began to favor cloth, furs being relegated to linings and accent trims.⁵⁵ (See Table 8.1 for furs.)

Favored for heavier winter linings were the thick fur of the marten (*martore*), fox (*golpe*), and even polecat (*puzzole*). All were available locally. The more exotic and expensive imported ermine (*ermelline*), lynx (*lupi cerveri*), and sable (*zibelline*) furs were normally saved for trimmings.⁵⁶ The decorative use of foreign furs imported from the area of Russia dropped off after midcentury, when the capture of Constantinople in 1453 by the Turks closed supply lines

TABLE 8.1

Pelts Used for Lining, Borders, and Sleeves in Fifteenth-Century Florence

<i>Ermelline</i> (ermine); strictly regulated by sumptuary legislation, imported through Constantinople until 1453 from the area of Russia
<i>Gatto selvatico</i> (wildcat); imported from Spain, used for trim
<i>Golpe</i> , or <i>volpe</i> (fox); available locally
— <i>fianchi</i> (flanks)
<i>Lattizi</i> (literally “sucklings”); juvenile ermine?
— <i>nel filetto da pie</i> (in filets by the foot)
— <i>nel filetto di pancie da pie</i> (in filets of underbelly fur by the foot)
<i>Lupi cervieri</i> (lynx); exotic fur used for trim, imported from Russia
<i>Martore</i> (marten); available locally, thick brown fur used for winter linings
— <i>bianchi</i> (winter white coat)
— <i>nel filleti</i> (in filets)
— <i>nostrali</i> (family-owned, privately skinned furs)
— <i>uno chollarino</i> (a fur collar)
<i>Pelle</i> ; generic, locally available fur used for linings, often <i>coniglio</i> (rabbit) or even <i>ghiro</i> (dormouse)
— <i>bianche</i> (white)
— <i>nere</i> (black)
<i>Puzzole</i> (pole cat) European relative of the North American skunk, available locally, used for linings
<i>Vaio</i> (large European squirrel); available locally, most commonly used fur, usually gray, also in red.
— <i>chodioni di vai</i> (rumps)
— <i>dossi di vai</i> (backs)
— <i>dossi di vai rossi</i> (red fur backs)
— <i>pancie di vai</i> (underbelly, usually white fur)
— <i>teste di vai</i> (heads)
<i>Zampe</i> (paws); of many different creatures used
— <i>bianche</i> (white, most prized)
<i>Zibelline</i> (sable); used for trim; strictly controlled by sumptuary laws, much like ermine and lynx, and also imported from the area of Russia

from the East.⁵⁷ But the Italians still got wildcat (*gatto selvatico*) imported from Spain, and pushed clothiers to find other ways to accent outfits in compensation. Eventually, tailors began to use figured silks in place of increasingly hard-to-get exotic furs.⁵⁸ Figure 8.9 shows a young Sienese man wearing a pet ferret as an ostentatious living fur in a detail from Domenico di Bartolo's *Pope Celestinus III Grants the Privilege of Independence to the Spedale* (1443).

CLOTHING COLORS

Color in clothes differentiated the great from the near great, as we saw in Chapter 5. The most intensely colored cloth used the most expensive dyes—and crimson, scarlet, red violets, blue violets, and purples, carried with them the association with luxury. Dyers also used less costly dyestuffs to produce a wide range of other hues. From brazilwood (*verzino*) they got vermillion; from woad (*guado*), orchil (*oricello*), and madder (*robbia*), reds, blues, and greens.⁵⁹ Indigo (*indaco*) produced a dark blue, and the fumes of sulfurous acid created pearly white silk. Florentines then bordered, faced, and lined these rich hues with strikingly contrasting colors; gold with turquoise, black and gold with white, green with crimson, tawny yellow with red violet, scarlet with ashen gray, achieving combinations of gowns and linings of bold juxtaposition. Bodices of gowns often contrasted wildly with attached sleeves; a purple bodice could be worn with red and green striped sleeves. (See Table 8.2 for clothing color combinations.)

Symbolism | By the fifteenth century, however, whatever rigid symbolism had been associated with color had been overlaid by marketplace considerations. For the most part, Florentine society eschewed the traditional literary and ecclesiastical associations such as those used earlier by Dante in his *Divina comedia*, where the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity had been matched in the costumes of characters by the colors of white, green, and red.⁶⁰ Although in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, a handful of minor poets (among them Niccolò da Correggio, the Genoese Federico Fregoso, Venetian Mario Equicola, and Mantuan Pellegrino Moretto) wrote treatises themselves or collected rustic folk poems on the meanings of color, flowers, (and even fabrics), they intended these verses as simple “diverti-



Fig. 8.9. Young Sienese fop (with ferret). Detail from Domenico di Bartolo, *Pope Celestinus III Grants the Privilege of Independence to the Spedale* (1443). Spedale di S. Maria della Scala, Pellegrinaio, Siena.

TABLE 8.2
Fifteenth-Century Florentine Overgowns and Linings

GOWN	GOWN FABRIC	LINING FABRIC	AMOUNT IN BRACCIA*
vesta	brocatello bigio (gray brocade)	taffetta pagonazo (<i>di chermisi</i>) (blue violet taffetta)	3 1/2 lbs**
saio	broccato (brocade color unknown)	taffetta pagonazo (<i>di grana</i>) (blue violet taffetta)	3 lbs
saio	broccato ricio (brocade w/ gold)	raso pagonazo (blue violet silk)	16 braccia
saio	panno cotonato (<i>biancho</i>) (white cotton)	raso shiadata (faded blue silk)	2/3 pezze***
saio	raso biancho (white silk)	teletta d'oro (<i>tirato</i>) (spun gold tissue)	17 1/2 braccia
saio	raso tane, velluto tane (tan silk, tan velvet)	raso pagonazo (<i>alluciolato</i>) (violet blue silk with raised gold threads)	12 3/4 braccia
saio	teletta d'oro (spun gold tissue)	raso bianco (white silk)	16 braccia
saio	teletta d'oro (spun gold tissue)	domasco turchino (turquoise blue damask)	16 braccia
saio	teletta d'oro (spun gold tissue)	raso verde (green silk)	16 braccia
saio	teletta d'oro, velluto nero (spun gold tissue, black velvet)	panno biancho (white cloth)	14 braccia

*A braccio is approximately a yard in length.

**Taffeta was sold by the pound (12 ounces to the Florentine pound).

***A pezza is approximately 36 braccia in length.

menti.”⁶¹ Moretto satirizes any notion of stable associations with hue: “The color green reduced to nothingness / Shows that red has little certainty / and the will of black is crazy / White shows longing and its will spent / While yellow has hope on the ascent / Tan covers up foolish wisdom / As morel scorns death for affection.”⁶²

Even fabrics themselves came in for scrutiny in the folk poetry of the end of the fifteenth century. In a collection of anonymous works transcribed by Sanudo, we find what Vittorio Cian calls “poor poetry becoming almost an art in the service of industry”: “Brocade conveys honor, velvet humility / satin, the highest grace / shot silk, fraud or instability / damask, a natural roughness / samite and sendals show simplicity/taffeta, talent and subtle levity / serge reveals meanness in all / wool and tabby, danger will befall.”⁶³

Uniforms | Only in uniforms—political, ecclesiastical, or social—was color frozen in a symbolic way, uniforms being the terminus ad quem of style.⁶⁴ While at the northern courts, young men in the service of a patron sported his colors, in Florence, a showing of family colors could be seen at maschere, Carnivale, weddings, and communal feast days. In addition, members of lay religious confraternities apparently moved as one in matching hooded robes of symbolic color (white sackcloth denoting humble flagellants, or *compagnie dei disciplinati*; black, burial groups such as the Compagnia de’ Neri), with the hoods of both admitting only a “finger of light” out of which to see. Their belts were cords of hemp knotted several times; the disciplinati carrying ropes to whip themselves. Emblems worn on shoulder, sleeve, or cap identified the Florentine confraternities; gold crosses on circular black fields for the Compagnia di San Zanobi, yellow crosses on red backgrounds for the Compagnia di Santa Maria delle Laudi, caps with angel-and-dove insignia for the Compagnia della Santissima Annunziata.⁶⁵

Clergy | Clergy, of course, wore the distinctive habits (*sacchi*) of their particular order, the Franciscans of Santa Croce garbed in mean fabric and going unshod in imitation of Saint Francis and his symbolic renunciation of the world.⁶⁶ Other orders spent more on clothes and, in fact, came under sumptuary criticism from their own Church administration. Archbishop Antoninus of Florence voiced concern about the trend toward luxurious clothing

among friars in the text of his episcopal constitution in 1455. He reminded clergy that all elements of their vestments were to be humble; not be open in front, too short, or trailing on the ground. Their tonsure should also be modest, being the sign that set them apart from secular society. And, finally, jewelry, fur, silk, and fashionable doublets should have no place in their wardrobes. Any infraction of these restrictions resulted in a five-lire fine and the loss of the outlawed item.⁶⁷ From the domestic records of SS. Annunziata, it would seem that Antoninus's dicta notwithstanding, some friars even slept in furs. By midcentury, the clergymen at Santissima Annunziata had leather shoes, woolen or woolen-jersey vestments (*rascia* or *perpignan* cloth) that were woad-dyed (which produced a *negro finissimo*), and nightshirts of fine linen, wool, and even fur (*guardacuori di bisiello, di panno di peluzo bianco, di pelle bianche*).⁶⁸

The Ruling Oligarchy | In appearance-conscious Florence, members of the merchant oligarchy were anxious to eschew the limitations of uniform and the implied agreement to act in accordance with the rules of the group.⁶⁹ At the same time, they were also eager to embrace parameters set by the group as long as these allowed for a subtle individual expressiveness. The wearing of the crimson *cioppe* by politically active men was their way of showing themselves to be simultaneously both of and *not* of the group. Individual style, distinctive headwear, color of hose, mode of wearing the cloak, and mode of draping the *cappuccio* all individuated the "uniform" of the crimson *cioppa*.

To assign an overlying text to the color red, however, is to do an injustice to the complexities of Florentine society. Red, besides being the color of luxury, had at times also been associated with usury and with the shedding of blood. Red could mark prostitutes and in some places had identified Jews.⁷⁰ What one *might* notice to distinguish the deep crimson red of the priors' clothes of Florence from these other reds was a subtle modulation in hue. Whereas the red of blood, marking the usurer, prostitute, or Jewish "outsider," has often been associated with aggressive passions (like love, anger, and sex), Lurie argues that a saturated crimson color seems "to suggest a capacity for passion that, though deep and strong, is currently satisfied or dormant."⁷¹

Black | The color, or "non-color," of black, on the other hand, while today considered the height of elegance and dignity, did not yet read this way in

fifteenth-century Florence. Very few overgarments (outside of certain ecclesiastical uniforms) were made of black cloth, and *morello di grana*, the most expensive dense black dye for either wool or silk, was only about half as expensive as *chermisi* and so lacked any special monetary cachet. Black was not considered a color, but rather an absence of color, and in Venice, so inappropriate for a communal official that special permission had to be obtained to wear it while in office.⁷² It would not be until Leonora of Aragon married Ercole d'Este of Ferrara in 1473, followed by the wedding of Isabella of Aragon to Gian Galeazzo Sforza of Milan, that Italians connected the color black with wealth and refinement. When Lucrezia Borgia married into the house of Este in 1502, bringing with her some thirty black gowns (eleven of which were black velvet), the color would finally become the *sine qua non* of fashionable court elites.⁷³ The associations of black that *did* appear in early Renaissance Florence, however, and that still persist, are gloom, guilt, and death. Black garments made up the habits of nuns and the wardrobes of widows, along with the "widow's mark" of a horizontal black stripe on their unbleached linen veils. But just as often, we are likely to see a widow's cloak made of *monachina* (a dull hue of dark brown-red) or yardage distributed for funerary wear simply designated as "dark."⁷⁴

Family Colors | Families seem to have favored certain colors, and family members on occasion dressed "all of a piece."⁷⁵ For example, in 1461, Marco Parenti, his wife Caterina, and their son Piero all had tawny, gold-colored *cioppe* of *mostanolione* made by the sarto Antonio d'Agnolo. Three years later, father and son dressed alike in sleeveless overgowns of scarlet. Still later, Caterina and her daughters Marietta and Lisa each ordered blue violet woolen gowns of *rascia pagonaza* with silk sleeves.⁷⁶ Also scattered throughout their family logbooks are at least twelve gowns and overgowns of blue and white, in addition to all of the trousseau garments Caterina initially brought to the family. The blues were either *azurre* or *allexandrino* and in more than one case also *fiorito* (flowered). Two of the most lavish of these blue and whites were in the trousseaux of Caterina's oldest daughters, Ghostanza and Marietta. Ghostanza's gown is described as "a gown of white silk from the Levant, with sleeves of damask interwoven with blue and white," while Marietta's was "a summer gown of blue satin silk with white flowered silk sleeves."⁷⁷

Needless to say, these color combinations were not serendipitous and may

even have visually harked back to their roots on their Strozzi grandmother's (née Macinghi) side. The blue and white express neither the gold of the Strozzi impresa (three crescent moons) nor the gold and black of the Parenti imprese (wolf, rampart, or bear). A generation before, Alessandra Strozzi had assembled her daughter's trousseau of all blue-and-white garments, which Caterina then in turn continued to use for her own daughters' trousseaux. Perhaps the colors were part of a subtle feminine discourse between generations; a female legacy of color (as Klapisch-Zuber has suggested for another mother and daughter, who both came to their marriages with gowns of *limonato* yellow).⁷⁸ The Parenti young women, dressed in blue and white, however, would have carried a more overt color symbolism. Blue, traditionally signifying loyalty and the Virgin Mary, and white, purity.⁷⁹

Polychromes | There was a wide range of colors available in Florence, including a noticeable attempt to describe polychromes or in-between colors. Florentines showed a penchant for changeable subtlety, and differentiated between many shades of basic hues, with their dark golden yellow (*mostano-lione*), speckled (*spolverezata*), marble (*marmorini*), and smoky gray blue (*sbia-dato*) colors.⁸⁰ They also developed the "shot" silk (*cangiante*), available in satin, brocade, and taffeta. But other colors were even more elusive, especially the color *pavonazzo*, on which there is still no consensus; it has been variously identified as peacock blue, peahen brown, red violet, blue violet, purple, and even "between blue and black."⁸¹

WRITTEN COLORS

In fact, the entire issue of color names presents difficulties. Hues of woolen cloth could have beautiful, associative names; *gherofanato di cilestrino* (carnation pink) and *rosa secca di turchino* (old Turkish rose) are both recorded in lists of dyestuffs. But wool manufacturers tended toward the conservative, preferring to reflect closely the specific dyestuff used. Wools are listed laconically as *chermisi*, *grana*, *rosato*, and the like. Exotic names for silk proliferated, however, as silk fabric eclipsed Italian woolens in the international luxury trade. Merchants attempted to lure customers to their wares with imaginative names such as "pink sapphire" (*rosa di zaffrone*), "gladiolus" (*giaggiolino*), and "peach

blossom" (*persichino*).⁸² These names, however, were not most often what was recorded in the contemporary family records of garment colors. There, we see more utilitarian designations for hue: *rosa*, *rosina*, *bianco*, and *tane* being common. Matching these two forms of discourse on color, written with very different purposes in mind, can be an educated guess at best. On the other end of this descriptive tradition, silk color names could also border on the rustic (names perhaps muttered by dyers), with the barnyard overtones of geese and chickens emerging in such names as "goose dung" (*schizzo d'oca*) and "foot of the capon" (*pie di cappone*). Such names recall the proximity of city and countryside and the realities of the lives of the *tinori* themselves (working *sottoposti* for the silk merchants), in the time when the Via Ricasoli was the Via del Cocomero.⁸³

By the first decade of the seventeenth century, the Florentine silk industry had grown to specialize in serving the European elite, and with this direction, the names for silk blossomed luxuriously. Reds ranged from the beautiful—"angel wing" (*penna d'angelo*), "cherry" (*rosso ciliegia*), and "flicker" (*la fiammetta*)—to the grotesque—"wounded" (*incarnato*), "lung" (*il pulmone*), and even "tick" (*zecca*). Over twenty-nine names for red are known to have been used in the trade as early as 1629. Names for greens flourished with even more—some thirty-three different hues, from "parrot green" (*verde pappagallo*) and "festivity" (*festichino*) to "laurel" (*verde lauro*). Even "bad" greens had designations: "toad green" (*verde botta*) and "mossy green" (*verde della boraccina*). Blues, yellows, violets, blacks and whites all followed with their own elaboration.

Fashionable Names | But it was the neutral, dark, and gray colors to which silk merchants first gave evocative, and therefore undoubtedly fashionable, designations. In these names, allusions to interior mood and exterior place expanded color beyond Barthes's "technologic" aspect to a new psychological dimension, where fanciful connections could be made through the Barthean "verbal" aspect of clothing. For example, neutrals and darks are transformed from the negative fifteenth-century names of "dark" (*scuro*), "cinders" (*cenerito*), gray (*bigio*), and purplish black (*morello*) to the imaginative terms of the seventeenth century. "Smoke" (*fumo*), "felt" (*feltro*), and "throat of the dove" (*gorgia di piccione*) became refined names for grays; "shadow of the umbrella"

(*scuro d'ombrello*), "dry leaf" (*foglia secca*), and "clove" (*garofano*), sophisticated browns. Neutral color names now collected the fashionable into an elite of international cognoscenti with silks called "Egyptian earth" (*terra d'Egitto*) and even "mud of Paris" (*fango di Parigi*).⁸⁴

In the course of the Quattrocento, silks eclipsed woollens in the international marketplace, fashions became more fitted, and tunics shorter, and in spite of their inherent conservatism in dress, Florentines seem to have become increasingly caught up in display and ornamentation, especially for women of the elite. Chapter 9 turns to the Commune's reaction to these clothes, both morally and legally, in its sumptuary legislation and the development of special units who policed fashion. For the first time in European history, it was here in Quattrocento Florence that "fashion" was fully articulated and became the most widely available form of conspicuous consumption.

NINE

SUMPTUARY LEGISLATION AND THE "FASHION POLICE"

SOCIETAL ORDER

The strict external ordering of garments using sumptuary restrictions for policing who was allowed to wear what seems to have been most rigid where hierarchy did not rest on birthright; where it was literally believed that clothes made (or could make) the man.¹ The colors, shapes, and dimensions of the garments worn by the inhabitants of Renaissance Florence displayed a complex and multivalent vestimentary code, which expressed their values and beliefs. Simply put, clothing made social place a visual reality. Filarete (ca. 1400–ca. 1469) expressed his concerns regarding the appropriate clothes in his *Libro architetonico*, writing that in fifteenth-century society, the idea was widely accepted that a person's rank (or *qualità*) in society should be reflected not only in the structure of his abode but also in his mode of dress; larger and finer homes and clothing defined "larger and finer" men.² *Il libro del sarto*, a compilation of clothing styles and patterns printed in Venice in the 1580s, took this notion into the pictorial realm, attempting to illustrate some sort of natural sartorial hierarchy. Here, all "respectable" ranks of society were represented, from mounted knights to high-born women. Paulo Getrevi writes that in this first printed visualization of Italian high society, "every costume marks the single person of the scene in

24. Molho, "Tamquam vere mortua," pp. 32-33.

25. Ibid., pp. 21-22. Deposits had to be left in longer, and upon maturation, the new beneficiary received only from one-half to two-thirds of the sum due from the initial deposit.

26. Ibid., pp. 19-26. The litany of ailments and deformities of a number of these young women who had been set to marry but were later confined to a convent is horrifying.

27. Ibid., pp. 13, 15-17. See also Molho, *Marriage Alliance*, p. 307, where he notes that the decision of whether or not to send a girl to a convent was generally made earlier than whether to enroll her in the Monte.

28. BL, acq. e doni, 229, 2, fols. 2V, 30R, 54R, 76R, 77RV, 78V, 80V, 81RV, 92R, 120R.

29. Each period of residence had lasted about a year and a half. Ibid., 229, 2, fols. 28R, 30R, 32R, 71V, 72R.

30. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "Le chiavi fiorentine di barbablù l'apprendimento della lettura a Firenze nel XV secolo," *Quaderni storici* 57 (1984): 777-90, notes that girls housed for varying lengths of time (*in serbanza*) at the discretion of their families would have spiritual and domestic training (sewing, for example) and could receive a basic vernacular education. See also Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy. Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600* (Baltimore, 1989), pp. 44, 93-102.

31. Her father, in fact, married his third wife, Antonia Sassetti, in the same year. The Sassetti were one of the leading ancient families named in the records that grouped around the Cavalcanti during the civil disorders of 1304. By 1469, Francesco Sassetti was the general manager of the Medici Bank. In 1483, his daughter Sibilla had married Alessandro Pucci, son of war hero Antonio Pucci. See Borsook and Offerhaus, *Sassetti and Ghirlandaio at Santa Trinita*, pp. 15-37.

32. BL, acq. e doni, 229, 2, fols. 80V-81R.

33. Santa Margherita, or Saint Margaret, was the patron saint of childless women, which perhaps was the reason this doll had been included in the mother's trousseau as a sort of fertility totem, to be then handed down to the marrying daughter. See Klapisch-Zuber, "Holy Dolls," in *Women, Family*, pp. 311-18.

34. BL, acq. e doni, 229, 2, fols. 81RV, 82R.

35. Brucker's figures on numbers are close to Trexler's, he calculating that by 1500, there were thirty-seven convents in the city and seventeen more within a four-mile radius. Thirteen different orders were represented, including three orders of tertiaries (Franciscan, Dominican, and Servite). See Brucker, "Monasteries," pp. 44, 47-48.

36. Molho, "Tamquam vere mortua," p. 24.

37. Trexler, *Women of Renaissance Florence*, pp. 12-13.

38. BL, acq. e doni, 229, 2, fols. 77RV.

39. Molho posits that Maria had "health problems" from an early age, for as a baby she was no sooner sent off to a wet nurse than brought back home, and she was then

consigned to Santa Felicita before the age of six. Molho, *Marriage Alliance*, p. 175. However, once there, Maria did survive for at least eight more years, as her father's contributions to the convent on her behalf as late as 1514 attest.

40. As many of these girls of "good" families were infirm and might even be malformed, their being out of sight would be especially important for appearance-conscious Florentines of the upper class.

41. Brucker writes that Santa Felicita was atypical of Florentine houses in the early Quattrocento, being one of the wealthiest of the convents within the city walls of Florence with a population of thirty sisters, and property that had been worth 9,200 florins in the Catasto of 1427. By 1478, the number of nuns had dropped to only twenty-four, part of a convent population that totaled forty-six, counting "ten servants, five priests, three acolytes (*chierici*), . . . a factor . . . [and] three boarders" (Brucker, "Monasteries, Friaries," pp. 53-54). Brucker further notes that the nuns should have been able to live "quite comfortably" in this convent, because they had income and sustenance from fifteen houses, four city shops, and eighteen farms in the surrounding countryside.

42. Vasaio, "Tessuto della virtù," p. 55, writes that the color *grigio* indicates an intermediate state of virginity, between the white of a bride, and the black of widowhood.

43. Ibid., p. 55. The phrase used is "humilità e la mortificazione."

44. See Trexler, *Women of Renaissance Florence*, pp. 13, 18.

45. St. Roch, or San Rocco, was a fourteenth-century healer from Montpellier who nursed the sick (while ill himself), in northern Italy during the Plague of 1348. He was often pictured with his dog.

46. Molho, "Tamquam vere mortua," p. 25.

47. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, p. 188, n.2.

48. BL, acq. e doni, 229, 2, fols. 77RV.

49. Klapisch-Zuber, "Le 'zane' della sposa," pp. 14-15.

50. BL, acq. e doni, 229, 2, fol. 11R.

51. Ibid., 229, 2, fols. 2V, 5V for the initial listing of these trousseau items.

52. Ibid., 229, 2, fols. 3V, 81R.

CHAPTER 8. THE CLOTHES THEMSELVES

1. See Introduction for a discussion of Barthes's "Fashion System."

2. The Museo del tessuto in Prato, part of the Istituto tecnico industriale statale Tullio Buzzi, has an important collection of textile fragments from this time period, originating in Lorian Bertini's private collection of 612 pieces, which came from the Florentine antiquarian Giuseppe Salvadori, a late nineteenth-century textile collector. The Guggenheim Collection at the Museo civico Correr in Venice and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London both hold Italian textile examples, mostly silk brocade and cut-and-figured velvet. The British Museum in London, the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, and

the Museo degli argenti and Palazzo Medici Riccardi in Florence all have jewelry collections. The costume collection at the Palazzo Pitti has a couple of mid sixteenth-century gowns, and the Palazzo Davanzati shows a wooden zoccolo. The Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art also has a fourteenth-century *poulaine* (a stylishly narrow shoe of Polish origin).

3. Barthes, *Fashion System*, pp. 12-15.

4. Barthes further notes that language singles out certain elements to stress their importance, which works to divide the garment into discreet mental fragments. By the end of the fifteenth century, the clothes themselves became fragmented; pieces are held casually together by loosening ties and lacings.

5. Useful as visual sources are the Florentines Masolino, Masaccio, Uccello, Fra Angelico and Fra Filippo Lippi, who all included both upper-class and lower-ranking citizens in contemporary dress in their work. Domenico Veneziano, Gozzoli, and Piero della Francesca also inserted well-dressed Florentines into their religious scenes, and others, including Baldovinetti, Pollaiuolo, Botticelli, Ghirlandaio, and Perugino painted individuals garbed in contemporary dress. Holy figures are often depicted wearing fashionable details in their classical garb, such as the exotic silk striped scarves and shawls that originated in Damascus. Predella panels of altarpieces, and the interstices and backgrounds of religious subjects include representations of the general dress of the urban population, with the wretched occasionally included, often receiving charity from the rich.

Another source for local costume is a fifteenth-century illuminated manuscript of the *Aeneid* in the Biblioteca riccardiana in Florence (Scuola fiorentina del Sec. XV, Cod. 492) illustrated by an unknown artist with images of urban women dressed in festive costume. For fashionable attire in this folkloric category see the many wedding chest (*cassone*) and birth tray (*descho da parto*) paintings. A cassone painting by Giovanni di Ser Giovanni, known as "lo Scheggia," portrayed a Florentine marriage ceremony. Marco Parenti himself commissioned this artist for 26 lire in 1451 to paint a wooden tabernacle he had built to house a Virgin Mary. ASE, Carte strozz., 2d ser., 17 bis, fol. 28V. Two cassoni decorated by "lo Scheggia" are displayed in the Palazzo Davanzati in Florence.

6. See, e.g., Najemy, "Audiant omnes artes," p. 91.

7. On the issue of the lack of cinched-in belts on men's exterior mantles and cloaks in Florence, even Alberti, in his *Libri della famiglia*, is clear on how belting ruins good fabric (bk. 3, p. 225). But more compelling than concern for good cloth was the need for fifteenth-century costume to provide an unbroken sweep of line, focusing attention on the head and arms of the upper-rank Florentine male, with no distracting waistline treatment (as seen on the *cioppe* of the Sienese).

8. Polidori-Calamandrei, *Vesti delle donne fiorentine nel Quattrocento*, p. 92.

9. Vasari, *Lives of the Artists*, p. 228.

10. ASE, Conv. soppr., N. 119, filza 857, fols. 6S, 142S. Filze 855 and 857 (1447-92) are

both abundant sources for the vestments and personal clothing of the friars of Santissima Annunziata. I thank Samuel Y. Edgerton Jr. for alerting me to this source.

11. This did not mean that the men did not *own* jewelry, which may have been reserved for display when traveling abroad. In addition to mostly rings and belts, and an occasional gold necklace, chain, or string of coral, many men of the upper class had modest gem collections of unfaceted cabochon stones such as emeralds, garnets, rubies, sapphires, spinels, and a few diamonds and pearls. Other men owned decorative helmets, armor, and swords, some of which were adorned with other precious and semi-precious metals, such as silver, bronze or copper. See Rainey, "Sumptuary Legislation," 1:53, 55, concerning sumptuary restrictions on ornamentation for men. Only knights, judges, and physicians were unrestricted in their wearing of gemstones, pearls, silver threads in belts, and enameled jewelry.

For the extraordinary collections of the Medici (and men of their social circle, such as Niccolò Niccoli), which included antique engraved gemstones, and may, in fact, have sparked an interest in the engraver's art of *niello*, see O. M. Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the British Museum* (London, 1915); Museo Mediceo di Firenze, *Il tesoro di Lorenzo il Magnifico*, vol. 1: *Le gemme* (Florence, 1972); and Antonio Morassi, *Art Treasures of the Medici* (Greenwich, Conn., 1963).

12. "'Caeteri stulti' inquit 'unica catena se vinciri patiuntur, huius autem insania tanta est, ut non sit una catena contentus.'" Poggio Bracciolini, *Facezie*, ed. Marcello Ciccuto (Milan, 1983), CCLIV, p. 386, under the rubric "Catenis veriis collum cingens stultior aestimatur."

13. Quoted in Kent, *Rise of the Medici*, p. 308. ASE, MAP, filza V, nos. 697, 700, 699.

14. When the important men of the city were not holding office, various colors other than the crimson of the prior's cioppa were worn, but generally these hues were in the same area of the color spectrum: other reds, red browns, red violets, and hues considered to be noncolors, that is, purple and black.

15. There were at least eight basic types of headgear for males, from hoods and cowls to hats, berets, and caps of all sorts, and even turbans—all of which seemed to have been publicly acceptable individual variations here. See Strocchia, *Death and Ritual*, pp. 39-41, on hats and headwear in funerary dress.

16. This, of course, leaves out those who actually worked in the houses of the rich families of Florence or as personal servants to these women.

17. See Goldthwaite, "Florentine Palace," pp. 988-89, 1005, 1011, on the serious ramifications for women's freedom as wealthy families retreated into more privately controlled homes.

18. Barbaro, *De re uxoria*, pp. 44-47.

19. "Lettere di Margherita Datini a Francesco di Marco," ed. Rosati, p. 140. In a letter dated Apr. 14, 1398, Margherita writes in part to her husband, "see if you can find a way that I can have a little [reddish brown cloth] for a hood, because I don't want a new cloak

and an old hood" ("vedi se v'avesi il modo ch'io ne potesi avere uno pocho [of monachino cloth] per uno chapuccio, ch'io non vorrei il mantello nuovo e 'l chapuccio vecchio").

20. Women of the middling to lower rank, from wives of lesser guildsmen like Brucker's Lusanna ("valde formosa et pulcra") to independent entrepreneurs such as the "pidocchiosa rigattiera" we saw in Chapter 2, would have been much more visually available. See Brucker, *Giovanni and Lusanna*, pp. 15, 25.

21. Diane Owen Hughes, "Sumptuary Law and Social Relations in Renaissance Italy," in *Disputes and Settlements*, ed. John Bossy (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 87-88, has noted that kinswomen did have gowns cut from the same fabric, or decorated with a similar design. See also Robert C. Davis "The Geography of Gender in the Renaissance," in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. id. and Judith C. Brown (New York, 1998), pp. 31-37, on these imposing female masses in the streets of Venice.

22. Langner, *Importance of Wearing Clothes*, pp. 98-99. In contrast, for women, while necklines were ornamented and headwear decorative, most of the cloth bulk was at waist level (this would include trailing sleeves) or below. Treatises on female decorum advise women to keep their arms down and close to their bodies at all times.

23. E. Polidori-Calamandrei, *Vesti delle donne fiorentine nel Quattrocento*, p. 64. A sixteenth of a braccio would be about three centimeters. See Hughes, "Sumptuary Laws," p. 83.

24. See Glossary for these various ornaments.

25. Flugel, *Psychology*, pp. 46-49. The styling of a sleeve could also create an exotic or "foreign" look to a woman's ensemble.

26. ASF, Carte strozz., 2d ser., 17 bis, fol. 19R. In this record, the one and a half braccia of cloth is a *broccato d'oro di chermisi*, costing 9 florins per braccio. The separate sleeves were tied on with laces, which were strung through eyelets pierced along the sleeve holes of the dress bodice.

27. Usually particolored hose were worn to distinguish juveniles, such as in the Venetian Compagnie delle Calze for young men, rather than adults. In the northern court cities, men's hose were often particolored as part of court livery, with the vestimentary code tagging the members of one group or another. In Mantua, the male members of the Gonzaga court all wore one leg white, the other crimson. For hose of the Compagnie delle Calze, see Newton, *Dress of the Venetians*, p. 104. For Gonzaga court dress, see the frescoes of Mantegna in the Palazzo ducale, Camera degli sposi, in Mantua.

28. Langner, *Importance of Wearing Clothes*, pp. 59-60.

29. Lurie, *Language of Clothes*, p. 17.

30. Women did also make headgear (we have noted a Sandra Mazzochiaia), but most often only cuffie, which were worn in the private sphere, either as nightcaps or under cappucci or helmets.

31. Bell, *On Human Finery*, p. 31.

32. Shoes were not regularly worn in mild weather, however, Florentines instead favoring soled hose. In a letter of October 14, 1438, from Contessina de' Bardi to her son Piero de' Medici (who, along with his brother Giovanni was visiting his uncle Lorenzo), she writes that they should both order shoes while there and notes that Giovanni himself has hose along with him, but that she will send his brother "a pair of his oldest hose, which button onto the shoes" (ASF, MAP, filza XVI, no. 8).

33. In the fifteenth century, the tunic worn under the mantello was often quite short and was worn by *giovane*, who have been pictured in farsetto and hose. The newly briefer tunic would not, however, have been worn by the important adult males of the city's upper class in public. In fact, once the boy of an important family attained puberty, no such figure-hugging outfit would have been proper public attire.

34. In fact, the most expensive garment to make was apparently the villano, for which tailors could get 1 florin 1 lira 15 soldi, if it was of the heaviest silk samite (*sciamoto*) and pleated all around.

35. Emma Mellencamp, "A Note on the Costume of Titian's Flora," *Art Bulletin* 51 (June 1969): 174-77, refutes Burckhardt's speculation that these pictures of young women in their camicie were wedding pictures. See also Carole Collier Frick, "Dal giardino dei bei fiori," *Carte Italiane: A Journal of Italian Studies* 8 (1986-87): 37-52.

36. See Ghirlandaio's *Birth of the Virgin*, Tornabuoni Chapel, for this style of bodice on female servants.

37. See Levi-Pisetzky, *Costume e la moda*, p. 184. Polidori-Calamandrei identifies all basic gowns as either a *gamurra* or a *cotta*, all overgowns as either a *cioppa* or a *giornea*, and the cloaks worn over the entire ensemble as *mantelli* (with the exception of one *sopravesta*). The only other clothing term used is *guarnello*, which is identified as a gown with an old-fashioned shape to the skirt, that is, an extra, turned-under flounce between the waist and the knees, *all'antica*. See Polidori-Calamandrei, *Vesti delle donne fiorentine nel Quattrocento*, tables 1-32. Here, I have avoided simplifying the number of garment names because many more terms for pieces of clothing appear in the contemporary Florentine sources.

38. See *Tre lettere di Lucrezia Tornabuoni a Piero de' Medici ed altre lettere di vari concernenti al matrimonio di Lorenzo il Magnifico con Clarice Orsini* (Florence, 1859).

39. Lurie, *Language of Clothes*, p. 205.

40. "Le gioie sono cose di che la potrai bene fornire; che so costa arai chi ti servira: si che di queste ne gliene farai carestia. E s'e panni non s'adornano con perle bisogna adornalli con dell' altre frasche che si spende assai ed e gittata via la spesa." Quoted in Polidori-Calamandrei, *Vesti delle donne fiorentine nel Quattrocento*, p. 71.

41. The cost for making a mantello ranged from 5 lire 1 soldo down to 1 lira 2 soldi.

42. The precise age or circumstance of this transition has been a source of scholarly disagreement, but it was definitely after the age of ten and before the first pregnancy, or upon taking vows, if in a convent. See Rainey, "Sumptuary Legislation," 1:284-85, for

references to Dominici, *Regola del governo*, p. 235 and Polidori-Calamandrei, *Vesti delle donne fiorentine nel Quattrocento*, p. 49.

43. ASF, Pupilli, Reg. 160, fols. 430R-36R, a clothing inventory with many names of children's garments.

44. See, e.g., the detail from the Masaccio fresco in the Brancacci Chapel on the cover of Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber's *Tuscans and Their Families*.

45. Ghirlandaio's well-known mid fifteenth-century *Portrait of an Old Man with a Child* in the Louvre shows a berretto on a male child looking up at his grandfather.

46. A few garments and linens associated with pregnancy carried a *da parto* designation, including mantles (*mantili da parto*, *mantiletti da parto*, and *mantiluzzi da parto*), and large sheets (*lenzuole da parto*). ASF, Pupilli, Reg. 160, fols. 430V, 432V, 433RV, 435V.

47. Linens included not only the washable camicie, of which many individuals seem to have had about five to ten, but also nightgowns, nightcaps, and headscarves, which were also worn at night or when working around the house. Middle-class households often possessed dozens of these caps and scarves, along with the requisite towels, napkins, and bedlinens.

48. Helmets had a unicorn, a leopard, a moor, and two with family crests. Pucci only had about fifteen garments, including hats, stockings and belts, whereas his brother Piero had more than twice that many clothes, with thirty-three garments. See Merkel, "Beni della famiglia di Puccio Pucci," pp. 173-75, 183-85.

49. ASF, MAP, CCCXXII, fols. 1R-6R, 30R-32V.

50. Taking care of these fabrics was critical. Soiled brocades were soaked overnight in warm white wine or vinegar, and grease spots on silk were rubbed with fuller's earth moistened with lye. If all attempts at cleaning failed, stained fabrics were simply "turned," that is, taken apart and re sewn inside out. Worn-out gold or silver brocades or tissues were burned to recover the precious metal. Rachel Kemper, *Costume* (New York, 1977), p. 69.

51. See Hidetoshi Hoshino's work on the Florentine wool industry, e.g., *Arte della lana*, p. 289ff., for the wide range of woolen fabrics exported to the papal court. Woolen clothes were cleaned by washing them with homemade lye soap in tepid or cold water. Kemper, *Costume*, p. 69.

52. Alberti, *Libri della famiglia*, bk. 3, pp. 246-47. Care of washables ranged from boiling hardy linen to hand-scrubbing cotton.

53. Pegolotti's *La pratica della mercatura*, ch. 74, lists twenty-one different furs available by the early fourteenth century. Francesco Balducci Pegolotti, *La pratica della mercatura*, ed. Allan Evans (Cambridge, Mass., 1936; reprint, 1970), p. 298.

54. This squirrel fur could also be found in red.

55. Delort, *Commerce des fourrures*, 1:484.

56. Levi-Pisetzky, *Costume e la moda*, p. 195, cites an overgown of "broccato d'oro foderate de lupi cerveri" mentioned in a 1489 letter to the duke of Ferrara.

57. Herald, *Renaissance Dress*, p. 69.

58. Delort, *Commerce des fourrures*, 1:401, sees the opposite, writing that the development of new types of fabric diminished the market for fur. Care of fur included brushing the pelts with fine oils and then storing them in chests or between presses of cypress wood, with layers of bay leaves or pine needles. In addition, to keep away fleas from one's person at home, a shaggy lounging robe, or "fleacoat," was left draped over a chest to attract the bugs. Out in the street, a "flea fur" could be part of one's ensemble, carried or draped on one's arm to attract fleas off the wearer. See Kemper, *Costume*, pp. 69-70. In other Renaissance cities, upper-class fops even carried about small lap animals for the purpose (see Fig. 8.9). Of course, a Florentine male would never have been pictured with such an ostentation or have been wearing such a fancy, belted-in villano or lucco.

59. Woad alone made sky blue (*cilestrino*), a gray blue (*sbiadato*), clear blue (*azzurrino*), a mossy gray green (*muschino*), and the finest black (*negro finissimo*).

60. Levi-Pisetzky, *Costume e la moda*, pp. 64-65.

61. Vittorio Cian, *Del significato dei colori e dei fiori nel Rinascimento italiano* (Turin, 1894), pp. 8-28.

62. Pellegrino Moretto, late fourteenth-early fifteenth-century Mantua, quoted in Cian, *Del significato*, p. 15. My translation.

63. Anonymous, late fifteenth-century Venice, quoted in Cian, *Del significato*, p. 36. My translation.

64. See Laver's discussion of the "fossilization" of fashion in servants' livery, military or guards' uniforms, and the dress of waiters in restaurants. James Laver, *Dress: How and Why Fashions in Men's and Women's Clothes Have Changed During the Past Two Hundred Years* (London, 1966), p. 24.

65. Ronald F. E. Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence* (New York, 1982), pp. 51, 82-84.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

67. "Le veste non siano aperte e non troppo corte, ma almeno siano per infino ad mezza ghanba. I capucci foderati di vaio overo di seta non si portino, se non per quegli che per dignità il possono portare. . . e che non portino anello ne cintole d'oro o d'ariento o di seta se non costituiti in dignità sotto pena di lire V e di perdere le dette cose prohibite." Quoted in Rainey, "Sumptuary Legislation," 2:595.

68. ASF, Conv. soppr., N. 119, filze 855 and 857, dating from 1447 to 1492. The friars wore at least sixteen different types of black, gray, and white fabric in their vestments, which consisted of a layered ensemble similar to secular dress. One of the nightshirts (*guardacuoire*) of fur was for "uno frater infermo."

69. Langner, *Importance of Wearing Clothes*, p. 132, for his discussion of the implications of uniforms.

70. In Renaissance Rome, prostitutes and Jews were made to wear red gowns; in thirteenth and fourteenth-century Recanati, Jews wore a red circle; in Viterbo in 1450,

Jews again needed a circle of red cloth on their outer clothing. Hughes, "Distinguishing Signs," p. 163. Frederic C. Lane, *Venice: A Maritime Republic* (Baltimore, 1973), p. 300, notes that Jews were required to wear scarlet headwear in Venice, and that this applied even to Jewish physicians, who were highly esteemed by the Venetians.

71. Lurie, *Language of Clothes*, p. 196.

72. Newton, *Dress of Venetians*, p. 21, notes that the *togati* who sat in the deliberative chambers of government in Venice were not allowed to enter clothed in black, unless they were in deep mourning, when they might also wear a beard as a sign of grief.

73. Beltrami, *La guardaroba*, pp. 49–57.

74. Luzio and Renier, "Il lusso," pp. 459–60, noted that when Leonora of Aragon died in 1493, her daughters Beatrice and Isabella d'Este wore sleeved gowns and overgowns of brown wool (*panno bruno*) and covered their heads with veils (*scuffie*) of brown silk. Their one nod to fashion was that their veils were "non gialli ne greggi, ma pur bianchi" (not of unbleached cloth, but pure white), probably of the finest Rheims linen. See also the logbook of Antonio d'Agnolo, sarto, ASF, Conv. soppr., N. 102, filza 83, fol. 28v, on widows' clothing.

75. Records of a court case from the *Mercanzia* for 1456 mention eight "family" garments all alike ("8 giornee di taffetta di grana frangiate et soppanate per famigli") for which a silk dealer is attempting to get paid. ASF, Mercanzia, Reg. 288, fols. 112V, 113R.

76. ASF, Carte strozz., 2d ser., 17 bis, fols. 54R, 55V, 68V.

77. *Ibid.*, fols. 1R, 2R, 14R, 54R, 60V, 68V, 72RV, 76V: "una gamurra di saia bianco di levante maniche di domaschino allexandrino e bianche tragittato" (fol. 68V) and "una cotta di zetani raso allexandrino con maniche raso bianco e fiorito" (fol. 72R).

78. See Klapisch-Zuber, "Le 'zane' della sposa," p. 21.

79. For the Parenti family imprese, see *I blasoni delle famiglie toscane, conservati nella raccolta Ceramelli-Papiani*, ed. Piero Marchi (Florence, 1992), pp. 283, 311, 315. For the Strozzi, see Jacopo Gelli, *Divise-mottie e imprese di famiglie e personaggi italiani* (1916; 2d ed., Milan, 1928), pp. 378–79.

80. The color of dark golden yellow was called *mostanolione* by Florentines, but can also be found as *fulvo*, *tane*, *lionato*, and *pelo di liono*. The dark colors of black, brown, and purple could be termed *morello*, *nero*, *persi*, *monachino*, *bruschini*, *pavonazzo*, or *verzino*, among others.

81. See Newton, *Dress of Venetians*, app. C, pp. 178ff. I read *pavonazzo* as dark blue violet, based on the fact that gowns of this hue listed in family logbooks are usually expensive formal overgowns, for which overly bright, dull, or homely hues would not have been appropriate.

82. See Gargioli, *L'Arte della seta*, p. 159, for these fifteenth-century silk names.

83. *Ibid.*, dialogue 2, "Tintore del sete," pp. 149ff.

84. Here we also find "rotten olive" (*oliva fradicia*), a truly negative color name among the beautiful.

CHAPTER 9. SUMPTUARY LEGISLATION AND THE "FASHION POLICE"

1. Besides Florence, at least fourteen other Italian cities had sumptuary legislation at the end of the fourteenth century. They were Genoa, Rome, Bologna, Milan, Venice, Mantua, Padua, Lucca, Perugia, Gubbio, Pistoia, Siena, Treviso, and Saluzzo. Polidori-Calamandrei, *Vesti delle donne fiorentine nel Quattrocento*, pp. 20–21.

2. The primary area of concern in Filarete's work was, of course, architecture. See discussion of Filarete in John Onians, *Bearers of Meaning: The Classical Orders in Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance* (Princeton, N.J., 1988), chapter 11, p. 165.

3. Getreivi, "Il Libro del sarto e i paradigmi del moderno," in *Il libro del sarto*, p. 20. This book of clothing illustrations, patterns, and instructions for men, women, horses, and tents (currently housed in the Biblioteca Querini-Stampalia in Venice), the first printed book devoted to the creation of fashionable attire, was the work of at least three Milanese tailors in the 1570s. Cesare Vecellio's *Habiti antichi et moderni* (Venice, 1598) further diffused fashionable styles, but it is clear that Vecellio was frustrated in his attempts to display definitive regional styles of dress in fashionable attire. By the late Cinquecento, these subtle provincial differences in attire had largely been retired to the realm of folk costume, while the "fashionable" in every region dressed more and more alike.

4. Villani, *Cronica*, bk. 9, ch. 150, pp. 226–29: "ma per gli forti ordini tutte si rimasono degli di traggi; e per non potere avere panni intagliati, vollono panni divisati e istrangi i più ch'esse poteano avere, mandandogli a fare infino in Fiandra e in Brabante, non guardando a costo."

5. Rainey, "Sumptuary Legislation," 2:648.

6. Early communal sumptuary laws inevitably carried the rubric *ornamenta mulierum*.

7. Rainey, "Sumptuary Legislation," 1:45–48. At the outset, this tax was 50 lire, half of what the fine would be for not having paid it. By 1376, the annual tax was from 10 to 50 gold florins (*ibid.*, 201–4).

8. Catherine Kovesi Killerby, "Practical Problems in the Enforcement of Italian Sumptuary Law, 1200–1500," in *Crime, Society and the Law in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Trevor Dean and K. J. P. Lowe (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 112–13. The tagging of offending garments was again attempted in 1356.

9. Hughes, "Sumptuary Law," pp. 73–74, writes that "a popular presence is unmistakable" in these early laws, which were "designed less to keep down the upstart than to fetter the aristocrat."

10. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, pp. 75–76.

11. Hughes, "Sumptuary Law," pp. 90–91, notes that in Siena and Venice, sumptuary restrictions could actually be lifted for communal occasions.

12. See Ronald Rainey, "Dressing Down the Dressed-Up: Reproving Feminine Attire in Renaissance Florence," in *Renaissance Society and Culture*, ed. John Monfasani and Ronald G. Musto (New York, 1991), p. 219.