

SPIRITUAL FRANCISCANISM AND THE 'VELE' FRESCOES
OF SAN FRANCESCO, ASSISI

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the theological origins of the 'Vele' frescoes in the Lower Church of San Francesco, Assisi. Three of the 'Vele' depict allegorically the Franciscan vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience; the fourth, St. Francis in Glory. Located above the altar, and hence over the tomb of St. Francis, they adorn the most sacred place in the Franciscan community. It is striking, therefore, that the treatment of these themes follows the interpretations of a dissident faction of the Order, the Spiritual Franciscans, rather than those of the orthodox Conventuals, who controlled the basilica. The Spirituals advocated the primacy of the vow of Poverty and criticized the materialism of the Church and of the Conventuals, reinforcing their convictions with Joachimite Apocalyptic prophecies. The Order and the papacy responded by driving the Spirituals underground. Therefore the existence in San Francesco of a fresco cycle that promotes ideas inimical to the established Church poses a problem, one that this study attempts to resolve.

The thesis has two objectives: to establish the Spiritual orientation of the frescoes, and to account for their location and survival in the Lower Church. The first is accomplished through iconographic analysis and examination of Spiritual Franciscan ideology; the second, through

a study of the circumstances surrounding the commissioning of the cycle, in particular the identification of the sponsor, with a determination of his religious affinities and his relations with various ecclesiastical and secular powers.

Robert of Anjou, king of Naples, is seen as the most probable sponsor of the works. A lifelong supporter of the Spirituals, and the principal secular figure in Italy, Robert was the only apparent individual with both the motivation to introduce a heterodox work into the church and the power to compel its acceptance by the Conventuals. The frescoes are viewed as an expression of both his Spiritual sympathies, and opposition to papal policies, the latter stemming from his break with the papacy in 1328.

The Conventuals' acceptance of a cycle which reproved their abandonment of Absolute Poverty is explained in terms of the allegorical nature of the programme; the inherent ambiguity permitted the Conventuals to overlook the intent of the works, and thus avoid the appearance of a public capitulation on a central controversy of their time. For his part, the king could forestall the concerted opposition to the programme that a more unambiguous criticism might have provoked (and also keep intact his vital alliance with Tuscan bankers, many of whom sided with the Conventuals in the dispute over Evangelical Poverty).

The survival of the frescoes after Robert's death is attributed to the Conventuals' unwillingness to antagonize his pro-Spiritual successor, Joanna I, and to the gradual transformation of the Church's attitude towards Apostolic Poverty and Joachimite interpretations of the Apocalypse.

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INTRODUCTION

In the four 'Vele', or vault compartments, over the main altar in the Lower Church of San Francesco at Assisi, appear the well-known frescoes of the Franciscan virtues, Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, together with a depiction of St. Francis in Glory (figures 1-4). They are attributed to Giotto or his school,¹ and are dated somewhere between 1303 and 1334.²

On the face of it there appears to be nothing extraordinary about a fresco programme in the mother church of the Franciscans which presents allegorically³ the three vows of the religious Orders,⁴ or in the location of this programme in the most important position in the basilica, over the altar (figure 5) and hence over the tomb of St. Francis. But special preference has been given to the allegory of Poverty, and to the Glory of St. Francis, which are bisected by the main axis of the nave (Gosebruch, 1969: 162). They are also highlighted by hosts of angels, which surround the principal figures in each scene (de Selincourt, 1905, 70). One would therefore conclude that these paintings promoted concepts of special significance to both the Franciscan community, and to the papacy, which guided the Order's official policy and held the basilica under its direct jurisdiction (Coletti, 1949: 8). Yet one scholar has detected a dissonant note:

One is left puzzled by the frescoes of the choir where an anonymous painter, who is called the Maestro delle Vele, outlines in four compositions the doctrine of intransigent Franciscanism, that is to say, of the Spirituals (Francastel, 1969: 52).⁵

The Spirituals were the outgrowth of a division that appeared in the Order even during the life of St. Francis. By the time of the execution of the 'Vele' frescoes, the rupture was complete: the division was bitter and irreconcilable.

The orthodox Conventuals, supported by the papacy,⁶ were preoccupied with administering the rapidly growing properties of the community. Repelled by the emphasis on worldly goods, the Spirituals sought a return to the Absolute Poverty and simplicity of the saint. For their opposition to official policy, the Spirituals were eventually expelled from the Order, hunted down in remote hermitages, and persecuted, not only by the Inquisition, but by Conventual officials.

During this period, the Spirituals became preoccupied with certain themes, particularly Evangelical Poverty, and Joachimite interpretations of the Apocalypse-- both subjects emphasized in the 'Vele' frescoes. How and why these particular themes came to occupy a place of honour in a church controlled by a faction stridently hostile to the ideas represented will be the focus of this study.

First, I will examine the iconographic and theological background of the paintings of Poverty and the Glorification of St. Francis, in order to elucidate their

Spiritual Franciscan content.⁷ Having established the iconographic heterodoxy of the paintings, I will examine how they came to be placed in such a hostile environment.

I believe that this can be explained through circumstances relating to the sponsorship of the paintings. Their imposition at San Francesco would have been an act of such audacity that it argues for a patron with an unusual combination of qualities: a strong sympathy for Spiritual ideals; considerable political power, sufficient to work his will upon the influential Conventual authorities; and a measure of immunity from papal sanction, such that he could weather the pontiff's outrage. The key to the identification of the patron--and his motives for undertaking the commission--can be found through an examination of the political and ecclesiastical currents of the time.

Finally, I shall consider the Conventuals' reaction to the cycle, in order to account for the acceptance and retention of what must have been an unwelcome addition to their decorative scheme.

CHAPTER I

THE ALLEGORY OF POVERTY: ICONOGRAPHIC AND THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

Little has been written about the iconographic origins of the image of Lady Poverty. James Hall provides one of the few descriptions of her attributes:

Poverty, with Chastity and Obedience make up the three vows of the religious orders. She may then be represented as a young woman, her robe in tatters and patches, barefooted (1974: 250).

Unfortunately, Hall does not cite specific examples of her representation, nor the date of her first appearance in this form. It is possible, therefore, that the Assisan example is an early depiction of her, perhaps even the first.¹ (I have been unable to find an earlier representation.)

Poverty in this fresco constitutes part of a larger theme which, to my knowledge, is also unique in the first half of the 14th Century: the marriage of St. Francis to Lady Poverty.² The earliest known literary source of the subject is an allegorical work, the *Sacrum Commercium*, also known as the *Holy Converse of the Blessed Francis with Lady Poverty*. It was probably written around 1227, and is the first Franciscan document known to have been written after the saint's death in 1226 (Moorman, 1968: 278). To the *Spirituals*, early tracts like the *Sacrum Commercium* were precious records of the early days of the Order, when the

friars lived according to the principles of St. Francis. Because of its glorification of the virtue of poverty, the allegory was always popular among Spirituals. The Spiritual poet Jacopone da Todi,³ and Dante,⁴ a Spiritual supporter,⁵ both made use of the theme in their works.

During the 13th Century, however, it was not the Spirituals alone who preserved and broadcast the legend. For example, St. Bonaventura's *Legenda Maior*, the official life of the saint, completed in 1263, refers to St. Francis's zeal to "espouse" Lady Poverty (1910: 343), and to Poverty as the "Bride" of the saint (Ibid.: 346).⁶

Nevertheless, the conflict in the Order over the definition of poverty, which reached its peak after St. Bonaventura's time, may have caused attitudes towards the theme to change. One would expect that as the gulf widened between Spirituals and Conventuals, the Spirituals would have turned increasingly towards legends like the Mystic Marriage, which supported their view of poverty. There is evidence of this development in the seal of a document of 1334 belonging to the Spiritual leader Angelo Clareno. It bears the imprint of the Mystic Marriage (Kleinschmidt, 1915: 188), suggesting that the theme had taken on a special symbolic meaning for Spirituals harrassed by the Franciscan community and the papacy.

There are other indications, however, that the representation at Assisi comes closer to Spiritual than to Conventual interpretations of Poverty.

First, the fresco programme places greater emphasis upon Poverty than upon the other two virtues.⁷ The *Sacrum Commercium*, which the Spirituals used to defend their position on poverty, perhaps expresses best the supremacy of the vow of poverty in Spiritual Franciscan philosophy:

For she is the Foundation and Guardian of all the Virtues, and holds the Primacy among the Evangelical Counsels. Wherefore let not the other Virtues fear should the rain descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow, threatening destruction; if only they have been founded upon the Rock of Poverty. And justly, for the Son of God, the Lord of Hosts and King of Glory, loved this Virtue with a special love, sought this Virtue, found her, and by her wrought Salvation in the midst of the Earth. Her, in the beginning of His preaching, He placed as a Beacon to lighten those entering the Haven of the Faith, and as chief corner-stone of His house (Anonymous, 1901: 4-5).

Although the *Legenda Maior* of St. Bonaventura includes a chapter on the virtue of poverty, the author devotes much less space to the development of the theme and to the consequent privations which the saint suffered, than does the earlier official biography of the saint, the *Vita Secunda*⁸ of the Spiritual Thomas of Celano. As much attention is given over to the virtues of humility, obedience, piety, love, penitence.

Second, Poverty's haggard, emaciated form in its patched rags was intended as an example to the friars, as is brought out by the presence of the triple-knotted Franciscan cord about her waist. St. Bonaventura would not have recognized such a model, and most of the Ministers who

followed him were less conciliatory than he was. Bonaventura did not approve of the wandering life of utter destitution which St. Francis preached. Father Holzappel has recorded Bonaventura's opinion upon this way of life, for which the Spirituals yearned as the standard for the Order:

'If you say that we should go from house to house like strangers and pilgrims, may God have mercy upon him, who first thought of such foolishness' (1948: 34).

The third point pertains to the way the painting interprets the Christ-like nature of Francis's poverty. In the fresco, Christ himself participates in the marriage ceremony, joining the hands of St. Francis and Lady Poverty. At Poverty's feet we also find an acacia bush, symbol of Christ's crown of thorns (de Selincourt, 1905: 64) and hence an allusion to the Crucifixion. Drawing parallels between the lives of St. Francis and Christ, including their faithfulness to Lady Poverty, was a common practice in orthodox and Spiritual Franciscan writings alike. In his *Legenda Bonaventura* writes, "Oftimes with tears [St. Francis] would recall unto mind the poverty of Christ Jesus, and of His Mother..." (1910: 343). As in this excerpt, the fresco probably makes reference to both Christ and Mary: the acacia thorn at Poverty's feet, as I have mentioned, alludes to Christ, while the lilies above her head may refer to the Annunciation. But the Christological symbol chosen is one specifically connected to the Crucifixion. We search in vain within Bonaventura's chapter on poverty for a precise

relationship between the sufferings on the cross and the life of poverty, beyond a very general statement in which Bonaventura describes St. Francis's desire to give himself up "naked into the arms of the Crucified".

To find examples of Lady Poverty and the Crucifixion directly associated, it is necessary to turn to the early *Sacrum Commercium*, and to the *Divine Comedy* of Dante. Moorman compares two passages from these works. First, the *Sacrum Commercium*:

Alone thou Lady Poverty didst cleave to
the King of Glory when all the chosen and
beloved of him fearfully deserted him...
and on the cross itself, when his body was
bared, his arms stretched out, his hands
and feet pierced, with him thou didst
suffer (Anonymous, 1901: 5, cited in
Moorman, 1968: 279fn).

Dante uses similar imagery in the *Paradiso*:

Nor aught availed her faith and courage
tried, so that, let Mary at the foot remain,
she mounted up where Christ was crucified
(*Paradiso* XI, 11.70-2).

The Spirituals may have possessed a special affection for this allegory because it recalled words from a prayer attributed to St. Francis:⁹

'During thy passion she alone did not
forsake Thee. Mary thy mother stopped at
the foot of the cross, but Poverty mounted
it with Thee and clasped Thee...'
(Anderson, 1921: 460).

Drawing comparisons between the sufferings brought on by want and those of the Cross was also no doubt a way of justifying the pauper's existence which the Spirituals defended. In fact, the *Sacrum Commercium* became important propaganda for

the Spiritual point of view during the dispute over the question of poverty (Cosmo, 1898: 57).

The fourth feature of the Assisan allegory of Poverty which permits one to question its Conventual origin, is the depiction of the surrender of worldly goods. Above the head of Poverty two angels render to God a cloak and money sack, and a palazzo, probably signifying movable and immovable goods respectively. Those who refuse to sacrifice material possessions appear on our right, or on the side occupied by the damned in Last Judgement scenes. Although in the frescoes of Chastity and Obedience the wicked are also placed on the right, these allegories do not touch upon issues as sensitive to the papacy as the whole question of ownership of property. The Roman Church had built an empire upon its professed right to such possession; thus the principle that sacrifice of property was necessary to spiritual salvation was not a comfortable one for her. Probably one of the reasons why St. Bonaventura was called upon to write his *Legenda Maior* was to minimize the attention the *Vita Secunda* had given to St. Francis's insistence upon the unconditional surrender of property (Moorman, 1968: 282-4). Yet the cause of Absolute Poverty which Thomas at Celano advanced emerges clearly in this allegory.

Finally the fresco of Poverty makes the worshipper aware of the physical agonies which accompany those who espouse her, by reference to Christ crucified, by her

pitiful appearance, and yet more graphically by the barking dog and the small boys who torment her with the acacia thorns and with stones. The misery and humiliation borne by St. Francis and those who adopt the poor life is an integral part of the Vita Secunda, but not of the Legenda Maior, as will be discussed in greater detail later. St. Bonaventura's biography of the saint is, in fact, largely a revision of that by Thomas of Celano, with subtle changes in the appropriate places (Moorman, 1968: 286-7).

For the aforementioned reasons, therefore, and because of evidence yet to be introduced, I cannot accept Frederick Antal's explanation for the celebration of Poverty at Assisi. He argues that while the Order had discarded the ideal of Absolute Poverty, it paid lip service to it. Exalting it in the Lower Church did not therefore run contrary to official policies of the Order (1947: 239). I have mentioned that St. Bonaventura played down the subject of Evangelical Poverty in his Life of the saint. Ferdinando Bologna also differs from Antal in his analysis of the attitude of the Church to Absolute Poverty. He points out that the Louis of Toulouse panel of 1317 (figures 8-13), commissioned by Robert of Naples who was at the time anxious to please the pope, is decidedly anti-Spiritual (1969: 166-7). The panel focuses upon St. Louis's humility, obedience, and charity, but nowhere is there a trace of his observance of the poor life, in spite of the fact that the saint was a Spiritual par excellence (Pasztor, 1955: 1-63).

Edith Pasztor comments upon the strange silence of Franciscan officialdom throughout the process of Louis's canonization:

...The Franciscan Order refrained completely from promoting the cause of the canonization of Louis. This is an extraordinary occurrence when one bears in mind that during that period the young Order had only two saints, Francis of Assisi and Antony of Padua. In addition, during that epoque each Order aspired to gain the greatest number of saints possible from among its members (Pasztor, 1955: 23-4).

As Pasztor explains (1965: 26), Louis's affiliation with the Spiritual party probably accounts for this otherwise surprising lack of interest.

Moreover, for the first time in history, the procurator of the procedure of canonization was not chosen from the Order to which the candidate belonged. Pasztor regards this occurrence as the attempt of the anti-Spiritual Minister Gonsalvo of Valboa to avoid giving the Spirituals of Provence an argument for their cause (Ibid.: 31-2). The two Franciscans most eligible to act as procurators, the Spirituals from Marseilles Raimondo Gauffridi and Guglielmo di Cornillon, would have promoted Louis's adherence to the Rule and his imitation of the poverty of Christ. To raise a Franciscan to sainthood on these grounds would have been equivalent to giving the Spirituals official approval (Ibid.).

The Life of St. Louis written by the five procurators in 1305 supports Pasztor's suspicion that the

Order disapproved of the canonization. No attempt was made to use the Life to glorify the Order, or to identify Louis's sanctity with Franciscanism. Instead, the Life resembles pre-Franciscan biographies of saints (Ibid.: 34). Once canonized, however, Louis was upheld as a model Conventual. At the trial of four Spirituals condemned to the stake in 1318, the inquisitor named Louis, among other saints, as an example of a Franciscan who observed the official Rule (Bologna, 1969: 166).

It is significant that another Life of St. Louis written around 1330 (Bologna, 1969: 54) by Paolino da Venezia, close affiliate of Pope John XXII, dwells upon St. Louis's humility, chastity, obedience and devoutness, without mentioning his love of poverty. Paolino based his work primarily upon an earlier biography by an anonymous author who concentrated upon St. Louis's imitation of the poverty of Christ (Pasztor, 1955: 54). Paolino must therefore have deliberately omitted those passages from the earlier Life which dealt with Apostolic Poverty (Ibid.).

Antal dates the 'Vele' paintings in the 1320's (1947: 174), thus placing their execution to within 12 years of the St. Louis altarpiece, and within the pontificate of John XXII, who never wavered in his violent opposition to the Spirituals. If Antal's date for the 'Vele' frescoes is correct, then the two commissions would have been completed during the very peak of the crisis in the Spiritual-Conventual controversy which Pope John's rigid anti-Spiritualism had

precipitated. Given the evidence of the St. Louis panel, the attitude of the Franciscan Order to Louis's canonization, and John XXII's sentiments, Antal's opinion that the Church would have approved the celebration of Poverty at this time seems difficult to sustain.

The St. Louis panel was originally housed in Santa Chiara, Naples (Toynbee, 1929: 222), a church of far less importance in the promotion of papal opinions concerning Franciscan ideals than San Francesco at Assisi. It certainly would have attracted far fewer of the faithful than were drawn in pilgrimage to the burial church of the revered founder of the Order.

Yet Antal adds that it is only because of the isolation of the convent of Assisi that the virtue of Poverty was given such an eminent position:

That is why Poverty could still be officially and circumstantially glorified here--but only here, in these purely monastic surroundings, and in provincial Umbria; and of course only as a specifically Franciscan virtue (1947: 239).

But earlier Antal himself drew attention to the fact that San Francesco was a pilgrimage church, and hence important in advertising the official point of view to the masses (Ibid.). Moreover, the fact that Poverty was upheld "only as a specifically Franciscan virtue" hardly makes it any less significant; Franciscanism was the most popular religious movement of its time. In addition, as the author also points out:

...An Order which really owns no property, and friars who have no personal possessions, who openly declare that they are imitating the life of Christ and the Apostles... are acting socially and ideologically as a subversive force....An Order inspired with so radical a spirit might really make common cause with the lower classes. Above all, such an Order would of necessity extend the ideal of complete poverty to the whole Church, and this the Church, inextricably involved as it was in a monetary economy, could not possibly contemplate for a moment. In fighting against St. Francis' ideals, therefore, the Church was fighting for her very existence (1947: 69).

It is my opinion that a Church "fighting for her very existence" would not make a point of exalting the opposing doctrine.

CHAPTER II

THE ST. FRANCIS IN GLORY: ICONOGRAPHIC AND THEOLOGICAL
BACKGROUND

Situated directly opposite the fresco of Poverty, is the depiction of St. Francis in Glory. I believe the worshipper was meant to associate these two themes; the Glory is thematically distinct from the virtues, and must therefore have been selected for its theological appropriateness to occupy the fourth vault compartment opposite Poverty.¹ Moreover, as I noted earlier, the compositions of Poverty and the Glory are similar, the main subject in each fresco being elevated above a large throng of angels. Each takes place in a rarefied setting: one on a mountaintop, the other in Paradise.

But the Glory is undoubtedly related as well to the more than 160 apocalyptic figures (this is Padre Gerhard Ruf's estimate--1974: 14) which are contained in lozenges within the ornamental bands framing the four 'Veile'.² These converge at the apex of the vault, which contains an apocalyptic Christ in tondo (Crow and Cavalcaselle, 1903, Vol. II: 33-4). It is my opinion that St. Francis appears in the Glory as the Angel of the Sixth Seal of the Apocalypse, and is thus consistent with Spiritual, rather than Conventual belief in the 14th Century.

The vision of the Sixth Seal is described in Revelations as follows:

And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

Saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads (Revelations 7: 2-3).

Among the host which surrounds St. Francis in Glory are six angels playing trumpets, four of whom blow long, impressive instruments. Perhaps these four signify the angels who accompany the Angel of the Sixth Seal. In any case, angels blowing trumpets "announce the Last Judgement, and the day of wrath..." (Hall, 1974: 313). Certainly, no effort has been spared to make the saint look supernatural. Clothed in a dazzling robe, with rays of light emanating from him, he sits upon a magnificent throne surrounded by a heavenly throng. His pose is frontal, his gaze trance-like. In one hand he holds a cross, in the other, a book, which has been variously identified as the Rule (Goad, 1926: 231), or as the Gospel (Troiano and Pompei, n.d.: 53). Above his head hangs a banner, with cross and seven stars.

To discover the exact nature of the apocalyptic references at Assisi, and the role of St. Francis in the Second Coming, it is essential to trace the history of Franciscan apocalyptic thought.

Early in the 13th Century, the Franciscan concept of the Apocalypse took as its point of departure the doctrines of the Benedictine abbot, Joachim of Fiore (d. 1202). The

attraction of the Franciscans, and especially of the Spirituals, to the ideas of Joachim becomes apparent from a study of the abbot's unique historical approach to spiritual evolution.

Joachim divided human history into three periods: that of the Father, governed by the Old Testament; that of the Son, governed by the New; and that of the Spirit, in which material considerations would become irrelevant and temporal powers would give way to a higher Truth. The signs of the approach of the New Age were described as follows:

There would be an appearance of Antichrist, and the Church would become corrupt; but two new religious Orders, living in apostolic poverty, would inaugurate the new era in which there would be no need for authoritative institutions, since men would now live according to the Spirit of God (Moorman, 1968: 115).

Joachim received his inspiration for the two Orders from Revelations:³

And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth (Revelations 11: 3).

To Joachim the two witnesses were the orders of monks and clerics; but to the Franciscans, it was quite evident that they were the two mendicant Orders, the Franciscans and the Dominicans (Tocco, 1884: 450fn). One discovers this Franciscan reinterpretation of Joachim in the Everlasting Gospels, a compendium of his works assembled by the Pisan

Spiritual, Gerard of Borgo San Donnino (who also wrote the introduction). Gerard's title implied a Third Testament, one which would replace the Old and the New of the First and Second periods (Burr, 1976: 10). Those charged with spreading the new Gospels were, of course, the Franciscans. Gerard's obvious heresy was compounded by an even more revolutionary idea.

Gerard's Introduction related Joachim's third Dispensation, which was to supplant the carnal Church, to the coming of the Spiritual Franciscans. The Order now came to have a distinctly Joachimite wing, who looked on themselves as the chosen men of the papal Church (Heer, 1961: 187) [4]

Herein lay the subversive element in Franciscan Joachimite thinking. Joachim implied that the transition from the second to the third state was to take place within the Church, whose authority he never challenged (Reeves, 1969: 396). But among later followers like the Spiritual Franciscans, the necessity of replacing the established Church was clearly stated, and the immediate means well defined. As Marjorie Reeves points out,

...In the concept of the third status, emotions springing from a mystically apprehended faith became crystallized into a faith which was a basis for further action (1969: 129).

It was really only a matter of time before the Joachimites ran into serious trouble with Rome. As Barbara Nolan explains:

The explicitly apocalyptic idealism fostered by prophets and saints, artists and historians during the later twelfth and early thirteenth centuries had become less and less congenial to the

Church as the thirteenth century wore on. Successive sacred commissions had condemned those who dared to temporalize the Church's course into measurable ages and argue that the end of the Last Age was to be spiritually superior to all preceding times....The Church's concern stemmed in part from its need to defend itself against the threat of a millennial Church built in love and wisdom rather than wealth and power (1977: 154).

In spite of the imminent danger, however, Franciscan Joachimism had become popular both within and without the Order by the middle of the 13th Century. It was disseminated, for example, through a well-known work, the *Meditations of the Life of Christ of Pseudo-Bonaventura*⁵ (Jeffery, 1975: 70-1), which had enjoyed a wide circulation throughout the peninsula.

A Joachimite Spiritual, John of Parma, rose to become Minister General of the Friars Minor in 1247. Whereas Joachim had named St. Benedict as the initiator of the Third State, the Spiritual Franciscans now substituted St. Francis, just as they had replaced Joachim's two witnesses, the monks and clerics, with the two preaching Orders (Tocco, 1884: 450). John of Parma is thought to have been the first to recognize in St. Francis the Sixth Angel of the Apocalypse, although the idea first appeared in writing in Gerard of S. Donnino's introduction (Reeves, 1969: 176).

This notion captured the imagination of no less a personage than St. Bonaventura.⁶ The learned Minister General remained very ambivalent in his attitude towards Joachimism; on the one hand, he was responsible for the arrest and banishment of his predecessor, John of Parma, for his

Joachimite beliefs,⁷ while on the other, he himself held the view that St. Francis had come "to prepare the way for the return of Christ" (Ruf, 1974: 231), declaring in the prologue to the *Legenda Maior* that the saint was in fact the Angel of the Sixth Seal (Bonaventura, 1910: 303-4). In so doing, however, "he added fuel to, rather than dampened down, the fires of prophetic expectation which kept the controversy at white heat" (Reeves, 1969: 181). After the condemnation of Gerard's Introduction in 1256, the Spirituals sought in this concession of Bonaventura a protective shield of orthodoxy for their Joachimism.

Because Bonaventura had proclaimed St. Francis as the angel of the Sixth Seal, the Spirituals could claim that belief in the age of perfection which was to follow from the arrival of this angel was legitimate, if only by implication. Their conviction that they were the Chosen of this Age of the Spirit sustained them in their vigorous defense of the original Rule:⁸

...It lay behind their bitter opposition to the growth of the Order in terms of buildings, legacies, and libraries, their passionate devotion to their patched and skimpy habits...(Reeves, 1969: 192).

Some dissidents, "to distinguish themselves from their adversaries [the moderates] voluntarily gave themselves the name of Joachites" (Tocco, 1884: 449). Like the peculiar short habits they also adopted, apocalyptic Joachimite doctrines became for some Spirituals a symbol of defiance of the Pope and the Conventuals. The Rule, as Marjorie Reeves

explains, became the Gospel of this new age of spiritual perfection:

...To some Franciscans the temptation to give the Rule and Testament of St. Francis the immutability and authority of the Third Testament was irresistible ...and it was indeed, in all but name, a third Testament which the Spirituals came to defend with such passion (1969: 177).

As such, it became infallible, and from its commandments "not even the Pope could release them" (Tocco, 1884: 493). Such conviction, of course, "limited the power of the supreme hierarch, [and] opened the way to the most radical theories" (Tocco, 1884: 494)..

It is therefore puzzling why, from all the theological material available to it, the Franciscan Community should choose the subject of St. Francis as the Angel of the Sixth Seal for representation at the focal point of the lower basilica. Albeit an orthodox doctrine, it was the one which the opponents of the Conventuals were using to conceal or justify heretical beliefs (Reeves, 1969: 190), and must therefore have caused considerable uneasiness to the authorities and to Conventual friars. Antal, commenting upon the apocalyptic figures in the Lower Church at Assisi, notes that:

The medallions on the ribs in the vaults with the allegories, and also some other ribs of the Lower Church, contain small scenes from the Apocalypse. This much reduced version is probably the last illustration within the sphere of Florentine art^[9] of a theme far too dangerous for the conditions of the fourteenth century (Antal, 1947: 256fn).¹⁰

Moreover, the decorative bands of the 'Vele' frescoes do not contain only the traditional apocalyptic references. One also finds an angel whose raised hands and whose right side reveal the marks of the Stigmata (figure 14). Beda Kleinschmidt recognised this angel as a symbol of St. Francis as the Angel of the Sixth Seal (1915: 184, 203). According to Franciscan Joachimites, the stigmata was the "Seal of the Living God" (Revelations 7:2) which identified this angel.¹¹ Guido Bondatti also concludes:

...The [two] apocalyptic angels bearing the stigmata^[12] painted on the arches of the crossing of the Lower Church of S. Francesco in Assisi, are of evident Joachimite inspiration. It is the Apocalypse represented through Joachimite currents (1924: 163).¹³

The 'Vele' at Assisi provide us not simply with vignettes from the scriptural apocalypse but with a large and elaborate rendering of St. Francis in a role which would immediately make the faithful conscious of explosive issues in Franciscan politics.¹⁴

Since the persecution of Joachimites had accelerated from the time of St. Bonaventura on, one would suspect that it would have been exceedingly perilous to take any position which might remind the Church of the precarious ground on which she stood in the minds of apocalyptic thinkers. Following the condemnation of Gerard of Borgo S. Donnino's Introduction in 1256, "Any friar who was known to be a disciple or admirer of Joachim was now suspected of heresy" (Moorman, 1968: 115)--this in spite of the authority

given some Joachimite ideas in Bonaventurian theology. The dismissal of John of Parma, whom the Spirituals recognized as their leader, marked the commencement of over a century of persecution for the Spiritual Franciscans.¹⁵ The Council of Lyons in 1274, for example, condemned heterodox groups of mendicants known to hold Joachimite views. As these persecutions accelerated, the Spirituals came increasingly to identify the Church with the new Babylon (Reeves, 1969: 209).

Aside from the question of the appropriateness of the apocalyptic St. Francis as a central theme in the decoration of the crossing, there is another consideration which would make the Conventuáls rather unlikely patrons of the 'Veles' frescoes. As I have suggested, the purpose of placing the Glory opposite Poverty and of accentuating the two frescoes served not only to underline their significance but also to promote their contemplation as a unit. The relationship between St. Francis of the Apocalypse and the ideal of Apostolic Poverty is not brought out in Conventual theology. Although Bonaventura did not ignore the virtue of poverty in his passage on Francis as the Angel of the Sixth Seal, he concentrated instead upon penitence, miracles, and the sacred stigmata.

He preached the gospel of peace and salvation unto men, himself an Angel of the true peace, ordained of God to follow in the likeness of the Fore-runner, that, preparing in the desert the way of sublimest Poverty, he might preach repentance by his example and words alike. For, firstly, he was

endowed with the gifts of heavenly grace; next, enriched by the merits of triumphant virtue; filled with the spirit of prophecy and appointed unto angelic ministries; thereafter, wholly set on fire by the kindling of the Seraph, and like the prophet, borne aloft in a chariot of fire; wherefore it is reasonably proven, and clearly apparent from the witness of his whole life, that he came in the spirit and power of Eliás.

In like wise, he is thought to be not unmeetly set forth in the true prophecy of that other friend of the Bridegroom, the Apostle and Evangelist John, under the similitude of the Angel ascending from the sunrising and bearing the seal of the Living God. For at the opening of the sixth seal, I saw, saith John in the Apocalypse, another Angel ascending from the sunrising and bearing the seal of the Living God.

Now that this Angel was indeed that messenger of God, beloved of Christ, our example and the world's wonder, Francis, the servant of God, we may with full assurance conclude, when we consider the heights of lofty saintliness whereunto he attained, and whereby, living among men, he was an imitator of the purity of the Angels, and was also set as an example unto them that do perfectly follow after Christ. That this belief should be faithfully and devoutly held we are convinced by the vocation that he showed to call to weeping and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth, and to set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and cry, by the sign of his penitent's Cross and habit fashioned like unto a Cross. Moreover, it is further confirmed, with unanswerable witness unto its truth, by the seal of the likeness of the living God, to wit, of Christ Crucified, the which was imprinted on his body, not by the power of nature or the skill of art, but rather by the marvellous might of the Spirit of the Living God. (Bonaventura, 1910: 304).

Yet poverty was the central issue in Spiritual interpretations

of the Apocalypse, and in this they followed Joachim, who believed that the spiritual elite would lead exemplary lives "of perfection and poverty" (Antal, 1947: 70). Reeves remarks upon the inseparability of the concept of Absolute Poverty from Spiritual apocalyptic thought.

When the Spirituals spoke of evangelical perfection or evangelical poverty, they meant much more than mere righteous living, and in the phrase status evangelicae perfectionis we catch the echo of Joachim's third status (1969: 176).

Spiritual expectations of the enlightened temporal leader of the Third State--an "Angel Pope" or "holy Emperor" (to use Antal's terminology[1947: 227])--were that he restore the Church to glorious poverty..." (Tocco, 1884: 447).

Insofar as it did not accept Absolute Poverty, the establishment was identified as the fabrication of Antichrist, as Babylon, or as the Carnal Church. The sufferings it inflicted upon 'true believers' were recognized as the calamities visited upon the 'Spiritual Church' before its ultimate triumph. This is the character of the Chronicle of the Seven Tribulations,¹⁶ a history of the Spiritual struggle to uphold St. Francis's ideal of poverty, beginning with the saint himself, and ending in 1323 with Ubertino da Casale. The persecutions of the Spirituals were conceived of as the seven tribulations of the Church of the Spirit, which (according to Joachim's reading of the Revelation of St John) were to commence at the opening of the Sixth Seal (Reeves, 1969: 191). The famous Provençal Spiritual, Peter John Olivi, (1247 -98) also regarded the anguish borne by Spirituals

in the name of poverty as a necessary stage in an ultimately victorious struggle towards a higher spiritual state. In addition, Olivi, like many intransigent Franciscans, looked forward to the Apocalypse as a means of retribution. Felice Tocco admirably summarizes Olivi's outlook.

...Before the triumph the spiritual Church will be harshly opposed by the carnal one, as Christianity was persecuted at the death of the Synagogue....These struggles however must not discourage the faithful followers of the poor use, because they are the future; neither will much time elapse before the terrible judgement is pronounced on the new Babylon (1884: 498-9).

From the study thus far, several conclusions may be drawn about development in the Order after 1256. First, the Spiritual Franciscans held to a much stricter observance of poverty than the community at large, in the belief that they were remaining faithful to the wishes of St. Francis. Second, it was only to Spiritual visionaries that strict observance of the poor life became the key to a higher spiritual existence that St. Francis, as the Angel of the Sixth Seal, was to usher in.¹⁷ Third, because the Spirituels had used Joachimite apocalyptic prophecy to justify their belief in an uncompromising interpretation of poverty and to damn their opponents, one would not expect to find Joachimite apocalyptic subjects, especially in conjunction with an allegory of Poverty, in any place of importance in the major Conventual basilica. Given these conclusions, it is likely that the frescoes of the Glory and of Poverty were of Spiritual, rather

than Conventual, inspiration.

Re-examined in this light, the paintings take on several possible new meanings. If we were to interpret the images according to the teachings of Olivi, who the Spirituals regarded as their 'patron and symbol' (Moorman, 1968: 308), we would see in St. Francis not simply a messenger of Christ, as did St. Bonaventura, but Christ incarnate at His second resurrection. In his *Postilla super Apocalypsum*, Olivi declares that St. Francis is in truth Christ of the Second Coming who brings an epoch of reform and begins the age of the Spirit (Reeves, 1969: 198), and that he "will rise again at the time of the tribulations..." (Tocco, 1884: 496). Christ was to appear a third time at the Last Judgement (Reeves, 1969: 198).

The hieratic pose of St. Francis, who towers above the observer like "an imposing and remote oriental idol" (Previtali, 1967: 98), as well as the banner with cross and seven stars at the top of the picture field¹⁸ and the cross in the saint's hand, become self explanatory if we comprehend him as an apocalyptic Christ figure. This done, the need to debate whether the book in Francis's left hand is the Rule, the Gospel, or the Sealed Book of the Apocalypse vanishes, for it is all these simultaneously. If Francis is Christ, then the Rule is the new Gospel, delivered to man at the opening of the Sixth Seal of the Book of Revelations, which, we are told in Revelations: 5, only Christ has the power to reveal. Hence the following lines in the inscription beneath the fresco

become explicable:

Now an evangelical rule
St Francis prepares for all
A heavenly way of salvation.¹⁹

Although Olivi never claimed that the Rule was the Third Testament, he implied it by finding in St. Francis the embodiment of Christ, and in the preservation of the Rule, the prime mission of all Spirituals. This recognition of the Rule as the New Gospel was professed openly and unequivocally by Olivi's immediate disciples, the Provençal Béguines (Reeves, 1969:203).

To the Spirituals, the message of St. Francis of the Apocalypse was not simply redemption for mankind, but deliverance of the Chosen--that is, the Spirituals--from the enemy, or the Carnal Church. Therefore the opening of the Fifth Seal, depicted in one of the roundels of the enframing bands (figure 15), would probably carry a special significance for Spirituals. The event is described in Revelations as follows:

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:
And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? (Revelations 6: 9-10).

From the Spirituals' point of view, the Glory would signal the triumph of the Church of the Spirit, at which time the perfect state, that of Apostolic Poverty, would become universal. What the two frescoes may portray, then, is the Utopian dream of Spiritual visionaries.

This interpretation of the iconography of the works thus confirms Francastel's opinion that they are of Spiritual origin, although it does not rest upon the evidence she provides. The author bases her conclusion solely upon the appearance of Poverty. Even a Conventual rendition of the Vows would necessarily include Poverty, as it was a Franciscan virtue.

Rather, it is the emphasis given to Poverty over the other two Vows, the uncompromising way in which it is defined, and its connection to the apocalyptic St. Francis that give the 'Vele' decoration its particular Spiritual aura.

Having suggested that the iconographic programme is based upon Spiritual, rather than Conventual, ideology, one must then account for its appearance in the central Church of the Order, over the resting place of the founding saint. It is necessary to search for appropriate conditions under which such a commission could take place.

CHAPTER III

ATTITUDES OF FRANCISCAN OFFICIALDOM TOWARDS THE PRACTICE
OF ABSOLUTE POVERTY AND TOWARDS JOACHIMITE APOCALYPTIC
BELIEFS, 1263-1350.

I will now present a brief history of the attitudes of the church and the administrators of the Order towards the doctrine of Evangelical Poverty and Joachimite apocalyptic prophecies, in order to determine whether at any time during the first half of the 14th Century the Order would have been amenable to a fresco programme like the 'Vele' cycle.

I shall begin with St. Bonaventura and his *Legenda Maior* of 1263, partly because "subsequent painting, in general, derived its literary source from St. Bonaventura's work" (Miller, 1952: 296). In addition, from the time of St. Bonaventura's generalship (1257-74) onward, the trend in official Franciscan policy was to draw attention away from the hardships which St. Francis suffered, and away from the insecure life of the early wandering mendicants. The insistence of a Spiritual minority upon such a way of life posed a threat to the unity of the Order and to the authority of a Church committed to the acquisition of material wealth. The dangers of too strict an observance of poverty was early recognized by the Church and Franciscan moderates.

The ministry of St. Bonaventura in many ways marked the turning point in the development of a more practical and

less idealistic concept of Franciscan poverty. Bonaventura was a believer in austerity and simplicity rather than in abject poverty. To him the divine mission of the Franciscan Order was preaching, with which nothing must interfere, even the saintly but impractical views of St. Francis. To be successful in preaching, the friars must be well prepared by careful study and must command the respect of their audiences. Towards this end Bonaventura addressed himself. He felt that to achieve his goal he must stamp out heresy within the Order. At his direction, proceedings were begun against the former Minister-General, John of Parma, who was tried for heresy because of his Joachimistic leanings and banished forthwith to Greccio. The reaction among Spirituals is recorded by John Moorman:

His fall was a great blow to the Spirituals who looked to him as their leader, and it inevitably put Bonaventura in an unfavourable light in later Spiritual literature (1968: 146).

Moorman summarizes the consequent change in the Order as a result of Bonaventura's policies:

In the days of John of Parma a real effort had been made to accommodate the more intransigent of the friars, and to organize the Order in such a way that those trying to adhere strictly to the primitive ideals of poverty and simplicity might be kept within the fellowship. Under Bonaventura a new plan was adopted. There was to be greater privilege and prestige. The typical friar was to be no longer the wandering evangelist who worked in the fields, tended the sick, slept in barns and churches, a simple, devout, homely soul content to take the lowest

place and be idiota et subditus omnibus, but a member of a religious house, well educated and well trained, a preacher and director of souls, a man whom the community could respect and whose services would be valued (1968: 154).

It is not surprising, therefore, that the scenes in the St. Francis cycle¹ of the Upper Church concentrate primarily upon preaching and upon establishing the authority of the Order, both through papal sanction--there are seven representations of popes²--and through the performance of miracles. We find only one scene, the Renunciation of Worldly Goods, which deals with St. Francis's voluntary life of poverty, and there are no allusions anywhere in the cycle to his consequent suffering. The cycle clearly advertises papal and Conventual notions of what the ideals of the Order should be, rather than those held by the poverello himself. The scenes are selected from episodes recorded in the *Legenda Maior*, in which

The hardships and privations of the early days are considerably mollified to avoid the impression (common among the Paris doctors and others) that the Order had fallen some way from its primitive standards of simplicity and poverty (Ibid.: 287).

Predictably, the Chapter General of 1266 ordered all previous lives of the saint destroyed, including the *Vita Secunda* of Thomas of Celano. Among other controversial subjects, this earlier biography dealt with St. Francis's

...Sufferings over the relaxations and mitigations of his ideals, and was not one which many of the friars wished to be

perpetuated. It was too rigid and uncompromising. It played into the hands of the Spirituals, who were causing such trouble to the authorities (Moorman, 1968:28506).

The Constitutions drawn up at the Chapter at Narbonne in 1260 under Bonaventura's leadership clearly reflect his influence. Although frugality in all material things is recommended, the constitutions make some startling provisions, such as the ruling which permitted permanent employment of servants (Ibid.: 150). Thus the friars would be freed to pursue study, which would prepare them for the service of preaching. Another ruling obliged all friars to adopt a uniform habit, "of an approved colour made from material bought by the guardian of the convent to which they belong" (Ibid.: 149). Although this ensured against liberties being taken by lax friars who wore excessively full habits and/or habits of expensive material, it also left far behind the patched, torn habit worn by St. Francis.

This trend in policy was subject to few reversals during the 13th Century, after Bonaventura's time. Matthew of Aquasparta (Minister-General, 1287-9) accepted Peter John Olivi's doctrine of usus pauper,³ but it appears that Olivi presented him with a moderate version of the doctrine:

If we can trust Ubertino's reporting, the exposition was given in restrained terms. Olivi kept close to the phrases of Exiit qui seminatur,^[4] and took care to delimit the operation of the doctrine (Lambert, 1961b: 158-9).

The Minister-General most sympathetic to the Spiritual cause,

Raymond Gaufridi (1289-95), was forced to resign by Boniface VIII, because of the support he gave to Spiritual friars. The hermit Pope Celestine V, who was favourable to the Spiritual point of view, was persuaded to abdicate in 1294, after five months in office.

Harrassment of Spirituals in Provence, which was continuous from 1290 to 1309, brought matters to a crisis.⁵ In 1309, the Spiritual Arnold of Villanova, Provencal lay supporters of the Spirituals, and a cardinal, possibly Napoleone Orsini, submitted appeals on behalf of the Spirituals to Clement V (Lambert, 1961b: 183). These prompted Clement to launch an investigation into the whole conflict between Spirituals and Conventuals (1309-12), at which time both sides were given a fair hearing.

The proceedings of the ensuing debate are of interest because they show clearly the two major issues which were at the heart of the dispute. The Conventuals, represented by Gonsalvo of Valboa (Minister-General, 1304-13) and four other learned friars, attacked the doctrines of Olivi in an attempt to prove that the Spirituals were supporting a heretic. The Spirituals, represented by Ubertino of Casale and Raymond Gaufridi, focused instead upon how far the Order had deviated from the original Rule, especially from the ideal of poverty.

I have already mentioned that during the proceedings of the canonization of Louis of Toulouse, Gonsalvo probably

suppressed evidence of Louis's practice of Apostolic Poverty by not choosing a Spiritual procurator, and in fact prevented Conventual participation in the process as well.

It is doubtful, therefore, that the Order would wish to draw attention at this time to a subject so controversial as that of Absolute Poverty, or to the Bonaventurian doctrine of the Sixth Seal, which, ostensibly orthodox though it was, might have given Spirituals reason to insist upon the authority of Olivi's teachings. Should Conventuals have envisaged any painting of the vows for the 'Veile' of S. Francesco, it would surely have emphasized obedience, rather than poverty, as is evident from the following description of developments in the Order during the first decade of the 14th Century:

A characteristic superior began to emerge among [the Conventuals], lax where the suppression of abuses of poverty was concerned, rigid to a fault when it came to breaches of obedience by the Spirituals (Lambert, 1961b: 150).

Indeed, the situation for the Spirituals during the 14th Century progressively worsened. As Frederick Antal notes:

Every battle in this dispute over the doctrine of poverty ended in a victory for the official Church, and after every such success the ruling ideas of the Church moved one step nearer to the side of property (1947: 71).⁶

The tension between the two factions reached a climax during the pontificate of John XXII, who succeeded Clement V in 1316. In this year, Michael of Cesena, the new Minister

General, had issued new constitutions in which he ordered all friars to wear a uniform habit. This caused rebellion of Spirituals in Provence, who refused to relinquish their meager garments, prescribed in Olivi's Questions on Evangelical Perfection, and symbolic of their constancy to the vow of poverty. In response, Pope John issued Quorundam Exigit (1317), commanding recalcitrant Spirituals to adopt the standard habit of the Order. In his bull Sancta Romana of 1317, John denounced as heretics the extreme wing of Spirituals, known as fraticelli, or brothers of the poor life. In the following year, four Spirituals were martyred at the stake in Marseilles for practising Evangelical Poverty and for refusing to relinquish the short, patched habits, which had become their badge of defiance of the Order's materialism. As Burr notes, all hope of reconciliation had vanished:

The fires at Marseilles signalled the end of an era in which conventuals and spirituals could cross swords as two more or less legitimate factions within a single order. One faction had now emerged victorious and the other could either knuckle under, get out, or be persecuted....Some of those who had avoided Michael the Monk [Inquisitor of Provence] by abjuring their errors now regretted their weakness, fled from their convents, and became fugitives protected by pious laymen. A letter from Michael to the inquisitor of Tuscany warns of these escapees and suggests that when they are apprehended the authorities should get the names of those who had aided them. The inquisition was beginning to follow a trail which would lead beyond the order to a devout laity.

Thus the pope, the minister general, and the inquisition had acted against the spirituals, but they had not thereby

eliminated the problem. The opposition had become a resistance movement, complete with an underground railroad. The church had given it four martyrs and would soon give it three more when, in October, 1319, the first lay supporters were burned (1976: 82).

The depth of the bitterness between the two groups is revealed by an incident in 1317, when the Conventuals, upon gaining possession of the friary of Narbonne,⁷ dug up Olivi's remains and desecrated his tomb. Olivi had become "a symbol of rebellion and disobedience..." (Moorman, 1968: 313). A papal commission of 1319 passed legislation which:

...In examining Peter John Olivi's teaching, declared as 'far-fetched and sometimes heretical' the idea that St. Francis of Assisi was the angel of the sixth seal and that his doctrine of poverty represented a renewal of Christ's gospel preparatory to the Last Judgement (Nolan, 1977: 154).

The opinions of Bonaventura on this subject were of no consequence to Pope John; they would hardly serve as a deterrent to a pontiff who did not hesitate to annul the decrees of his predecessors.⁸ With Cum Inter Nonnullas of 1323, the belief in Evangelical Poverty, which had been endorsed by Nicholas III in Exiit qui Seminat (1279), was declared heretical. John's attitude towards the vow of Poverty is best expressed in his own words from Quorundam Exigit, 1317: "'Great is poverty, greater is chastity, but the greatest good of all is obedience if it is strictly kept'" (Moorman, 1968: 311). This is hardly the time, therefore, that the Order would devise a pictorial programme in which the vow of Poverty takes precedence over Chastity and

Obedience.

The controversy burned at white heat into the third decade of the 14th Century, which saw the publication of William of Ockham's *Opus Nonaginta Olierum*⁹ which criticized papal dogma on the subject of poverty.

John XXII died in 1334, but the conflict continued under Benedict XII (1334-42), who adopted John's policies towards recalcitrant Spirituals and their interpretation of poverty (Heer, 1961: 280). Opposition to the fraticelli reached its peak in the mid-fourteenth century (Reeves, 1969: 229).

One comes to the conclusion, then, that there was really no time during the first half of the 14th Century that was conducive to the production of the fresco programme being discussed. For the Conventuals to have commissioned them would have been tantamount to admitting defeat.

The unrelenting persecution of the Spirituals, however, may explain why the originator and patron of the compositions chose subjects which found some justification in the doctrines of St. Bonaventura, and veiled his opinions on these subjects in allegory: to clothe the saint himself in rags, for instance, would have been too blatant an attack upon the establishment. Friedrich Heer maintains that the use of allegory was a common practice among the unorthodox, including Dante:

When Dante fights on the inner spiritual plane, when his targets are theological and ecclesiastical, such frankness as was adopted in De Monarchia is impossible. It is then that he clothes his ideas and

opinions in symbols, those artistically devised figures, numbers, word-plays and analogies....This was a technique already elaborated by Provençal poets...and by numerous other heterodox spirits. Nicodemism, minetizzazione, long remained the chief means of expression available to poets and heterodox thinkers in a closed society...used by men who dared not voice openly their opinions on the existing political, ecclesiastical and theological situation...(Heer, 1961: 304).

Allegory may have been used for similar purposes in painting.

Be that as it may, the question remains how the frescoes came to be painted at all. I believe that this problem can be fruitfully examined in terms of the identity of the patron.

CHAPTER IV

THE SPIRITUAL FRANCISCANISM OF ROBERT OF NAPLES AND HIS POWER
AND AUTHORITY IN ITALY AND ASSISIThe Identity of the Patron

Evidence thus far adduced indicates that the 'Vele' frescoes are of Spiritual inspiration, embodying ideas that would have been anathema to the authorities at Assisi.

Their appearance at a focal point of the principal church of the anti-Spiritual faction may be explicated through an examination of the circumstances surrounding their commissioning, in particular the identity of their patron.

Anyone sponsoring these works would necessarily be at once a Spiritual supporter, and a person of considerable power, sufficient to override the inevitable objections, if not resistance, of the Conventual authorities at Assisi.

Galiene Francastel has proposed one such individual: Robert of Anjou, king of Naples. She does not elaborate on this association, however, as the main purpose of her paper is to establish Robert as patron of the St. Martin cycle in the Montefiore Chapel (also located in the Lower Church). Though unsubstantiated, her association of Robert and the 'Vele' frescoes is potentially fruitful, as it may clarify a good deal of the apparent contradiction of Spiritual content in a Conventual setting.

I shall therefore examine in detail Robert's

involvement in the Spiritual Franciscan movement and the nature and extent of his political influence in Italy (and especially at Assisi), in order to determine whether he possessed both the inclination and the capability to introduce such an unorthodox work into San Francesco.

Evidence for the Spiritual Sympathies of Robert of Naples

The first overt signs of Robert's support of the Spiritualls appeared in 1318, when dissidents escaping persecution in Provence fled to Naples. Henceforward, the kingdom became a haven for Spiritual refugees.

In 1323, the king became involved in the controversy over the doctrine of Evangelical Poverty. In that year, Pope John XXI issued a general request for opinions on the orthodoxy of the doctrine, which maintained that Christ and his apostles owned no material goods, either severally or in common. Robert responded with a treatise defending the concept. The Franciscan Order also advanced a brief affirming the orthodoxy of the doctrine. When Pope John issued the bull *Cum Inter Nonnullas*, which condemned the doctrine, the Order submitted without protest. Robert, however, refused to publish the bull within his realm. Defectors from the Order who chose to practise the apostolic life "continued to live undisturbed in the kingdom and to obstinately defend their ideas..." (Léonard, 1954, 321).

Robert also stated his view on poverty in a sermon in honour of St. Louis, which unfortunately is undated.¹ Bologna regards the sermon as an attempt to correct the papal

interpretation of Louis's sanctity expressed in the St. Louis panel of 1317 (1969: 170).² Like the biographies of the saint written during Pope John's pontificate, the panel stresses St. Louis's obedience, humility, and charity, while ignoring his strict observance of poverty. Unlike the bull of Louis's canonization, and the panel in Santa Chiara, which both stress his renunciation of the throne as an act of humility (Ibid.: 166), Robert's sermon describes how Louis renounced the right of succession "'first for the observance of poverty; second for obedience and humility; third for pure virginity and perfect chastity'" (Pasztor, 1955: 71).³ This emphasis upon the vow of poverty also contradicts Pope John's bull *Quorundam Exigit*⁴ of 1317, which gave priority to the vow of obedience. Robert ended by affirming that St. Louis received his final glory in heaven, from which the king's audience was probably meant to infer "that Louis was welcomed in heaven in spite of the fact that others considered the observance of poverty a gesture of rebellion" (Bologna, 1969: 170).

After 1328, the defense of the Franciscan outcasts by the Angevin rulers became more vehement. In that year, Pope John dismissed from office and excommunicated the Franciscan Minister-General, Michael of Cesena. The pope incorrectly suspected that the Minister had plotted with the emperor, Louis of Bavaria,⁵ to overthrow him (Moorman, 1968: 318). Michael reciprocated by accusing the pope of heresy for denying the orthodoxy of the doctrine of Evangelical Poverty.

The Angevin monarchs gave their full support to Michael's rebellion. After the Minister's excommunication, his

secretary, Andreas de Galiano, became Queen Sancia's chaplain; together with Pietro de Cadeneto, another chaplain of the royal family, Andreas was excommunicated because of his Michaelist sympathies (Moorman, 1968: 324-5). King Robert wrote a letter to the pope in defense of Gagliano, and the Queen intervened on behalf of the two friars (Baddeley, 1897: 158: 232, n.6).

Resistance within the Order to Michael's dismissal was very brief.⁶ In Naples, however, the king was still refusing in 1331 to publish bulls relating to the matter (Douie, 1967: 184 n.7), and opposed the papal decision until Pope John's death in 1334.

The resistance at Naples embraced not only the Michaelists, but other Franciscan apostates as well:

In the protection which [Robert] afforded, he did not discriminate closely between the organized resistance of the Order under its General and the irregular mutiny of the Fraticelli... (Lea, 1901, Vol. III: 144).

In fact, the fraticelli of Naples were led by Sancia's brother, Philip of Majorca,⁷ who on St. Nicholas's Day, December 6, 1329, delivered a sermon in which he:

[took] the liberty of making a violent attack on John XXIII [and] trie[d] to prove, in contrast to the papal decision, that the state of the Béguins^{8]} and Brothers of the Poor Life^{9]} carry out the evangelical ideal'" (Mollat, n.d.; 181; cited in Léonard, 1954: 322).¹⁰

Heer mentions that at one point the fraticelli regarded Robert as the benevolent secular ruler of the Third Age. Unfortunately, the author does not provide additional

information or indicate his source (1961: 237). There is some basis for Heer's statement in a letter from the Spiritual leader Angelo Clareno to Philip of Majorca, written between 1329 and 1335. In it, Clareno intimated that he looked to King Robert as the possible Savior King of the New Age. Tocco gives the following summary of the passage:

It seemed to [Clareno] the design of Providence [that] not only the Aragonese proved benevolent [to the Spirituals] but also the royalty of Naples, and chiefly Robert, who sometimes was on the point of taking the government of all Italy into his hands (1909: 285-6).

The papacy could hardly ignore the anti-papal propaganda now emanating from Naples, nor the fact that the Queen was intercepting papal dispatches to the Inquisitors in the kingdom, no doubt to prevent the implementation of instructions to punish Franciscan dissidents.¹¹ Papal messages which did reach the Inquisition were usually ignored (Baddeley, 1897: 158), probably because of pressure from the king. The Pope sent agents from Avignon "to spy upon the royal family at Naples" (Ibid.: 231). Finally, Pope John ordered the Franciscan Minister-General Odonis "to correct various heresies flourishing in the realm, and especially to exterminate the Fraticelli" (Ibid.: 233 n. 2). Odonis was quickly "banished [from] the royal presence" (Ibid.: 233), and reinstated at the court in 1333 only after an order from the Pope "to make himself agreeable to the royal people" (Ibid.). The pope's chagrin at the trend of events in Naples emerges in a letter written in reply to the Queen's inquiries

after his health, in which he "pointedly declared that, in spite of his great age, his outward health was good, although his inner man was distressed on account of heresy and schism, so favoured by certain princes" (Baddeley, 1897: 233).

The dispute between the Angevin monarchs and the pope¹² finally culminated in the king joining with the University of Paris and King Philip of France to declare John XXII a heretic. The jubilant fraticelli of Naples named Philip of Majorca as their candidate for the papacy (Léonard, 1954: 333).

There is no question, therefore, that King Robert's sympathies lay with the Franciscan outcasts: the Spirituals, béguins, Michaelists, and fraticelli. This was an unusual position for an Angevin monarch to take. After all, the pope had conceded the kingdom of Naples and Sicily in 1265 to Robert's grandfather, Charles I of Anjou, on condition that he defend papal interests in Italy. In the past, Angevin policies towards the Franciscans had conformed to papal dictates. As one might expect, Charles II, Robert's father, was "bitterly opposed to the Zealots, and did his best to help the Minister-General against them (Douie, 1932: 12 n. 3),¹³ until Pope Clement V began to favour the Spirituals of southern France.¹⁴ Charles then wrote a letter to the Minister-General, Gonsalvo of Valboa, protesting the persecution of Spirituals in Provence.

It was therefore not due to inherited preferences that Robert adopted Spiritual ideas and defended them in the

face of papal opposition. Rather it seems to have been the result of a personal commitment which began to develop in his early childhood, perhaps with the encouragement of his mother, Mary of Hungary, who was "a friend to the Spirituals" (Toynbee, 1929: 66). Robert and his brother Louis received their education, both in Provence and during their captivity in Spain,¹⁵ from Franciscan friars, chief among whom were the Spirituals Francesco Brun and Pietro ScARRIER (Pasztor, 1955: 45-6). The princess became so imbued by Spiritual ideas that they requested Peter John Olivi to visit them in Catalonia (Ibid.: 46). From Olivi's response we may infer that Charles II would not have approved of such a meeting.

It has been told me by a trustworthy person, that your father also has been afraid that you would be turned into Béguins, or to speak more clearly, that you would become obsessed by things divine through the eloquence of my lips (Ehrle, 1887: 539, cited in Toynbee, 1929: 77).

Throughout Robert's life, many of his kinsmen and intimates embraced Spiritual ideologies, and their activities strengthened the Spiritual movement in Naples. Louis of Toulouse entered the Franciscan order in 1296, and surrounded himself with Spiritual companions. Pietro ScARRIER and Francesco Brun, the princes' old tutors, eventually became confessors to King Robert and his second wife, Queen Sancia.

Both of Robert's wives were of Spiritual orientation: the first, Violante, was of the royal house of Aragon, which "lived under the spiritual spell of [the Joachimite] Arnolfo

di Villanova..." (Baddeley, 1897: 232). Through Violante, Robert may have become acquainted with Arnolfo, who visited Naples during his campaign to seek support for the Spiritual cause, and who dedicated his treatise *de Conservanda Juventute* to the King (Baddeley, 1897: 154).

Robert's marriage to Violante's cousin, Sancia of Majorca, in 1304 also helped to reinforce the bond between Naples and the Spirituals. Majorcan royalty was perhaps more profoundly affected by the Spiritual Franciscan movement than any other royal house.¹⁶ Pope John expressed anxiety over the fate of the Majorcan kingdom, whose heirs were relinquishing their worldly possessions to join the Order (Baddeley, 1897: 232). Sancia's elder brother, James, renounced the crown of Majorca to join the Franciscan Order; her nephew Ferrando likewise assumed the habit. Her younger brother, Philip, became a tertiary and a renowned leader of the fraticelli. Following the death of Angelo Clareno, Philip assumed leadership of Clareno's sect, the Brothers of the Poor Life. Inspired by Clareno, Philip "set himself to a recreation of the Franciscan ideal; and for the next few years he led a wandering life, begging his food from door to door, and so fulfilling his own ideal of poverty" (Moorman, 1968: 334). We get a glimpse of his Joachimite views through the proceedings of a deposition brought against his councillor, Adhémar de Mosset. Adhémar was accused of holding the following beliefs: that the period of the New Testament had been replaced by that of the Holy Spirit which began with St.

Francis, whose Rule was to supersede the Gospels; that with the destruction of the carnal Church those who had defended it and had persecuted the members of the Spiritual Church would perish (Reeves, 1969: 220).

Philip's movements were not limited to Naples, for he also "went about parts of Italy attacking the pope and declaring that only those who accepted the way of Absolute Poverty were living in accordance with the Gospel" (Moorman, 1968: 324). Philip probably attracted a great many Franciscan rebels to Naples by his fiery invective against the establishment, and "certainly helped to make Majorca and Naples receptive of Spiritual influence" (Reeves, 1969: 219).

Baddeley suggests that Queen Sancia and Philip were the prime instigators behind Robert's interception of papal letters to Franciscan officials concerning the charges of disobedience brought against the Queen's chaplain, Fra Andrea da Gagliano (1331), and the king's refusal to give the information in them "the desired publicity" (1897: 157-8).

Like her brother, Sancia showed "a well-marked tendency to Joachitic mysticism" (Ibid.: 162). She also dedicated herself to the preservation of the original Rule of St. Francis and did much to encourage the spread of Franciscan heterodoxy in Naples. With regard to the first of these objects, Sancia wrote to two Chapters General: Paris, 1329 (Moorman, 1968: 321), and Perpignan, 1331 (Holzapfel, 1948: 64), urging the friars not to tamper with the Rule. To have acceded to that, of course, the friars would have had to ignore the express

desires of the papacy, which they chose not to do.

Soon after her marriage, the queen sponsored the erection of the convent of Santa Chiara, and ensured that the guardian friar of the convent was a strict observer of the Rule (Spila da Subiaco, 1901: 323). Santa Chiara eventually became the centre for the expression of pro-Spiritual doctrines and for the justification of Angevin autonomy from the papacy.¹⁷

Sancia also founded the convent of Santa Croce, near the royal residence of Castelnuovo, to accommodate nuns from Assisi who were related to St. Clare, the founder of the female branch of the Franciscan Order. The nuns of Santa Croce lived according to the strictest Franciscan Rule of San Damiano, and the convent maintained itself solely upon alms received by mendicant friars (Spila da Subiaco, 1901: 64). Upon Robert's death in 1343, the Queen joined the Order and retired to Santa Croce, where she died in 1345, "a confirmed Fraticellian" (Baddeley, 1897: 158).

Baddeley maintains that after 1328, "...the influence of King Robert's Franciscan friends, and the mystical tendencies of the Majorcan royal family, deepened with him yearly..." (Ibid.: 160). The Majorcans did initiate some of the more radical gestures of the Angevin régime in its defense of the fraticelli against the papacy. It is necessary to point out, however, that political conditions at this time permitted the king to voice his sentiments more freely than before. The political balance had altered, and the king no longer required the help of Avignon to maintain the security of his kingdom.¹⁸

I shall elaborate upon this subject in the following chapter.

It is evident from the preceding discussion that the connections between the Neapolitan court and the Spirituals were many and varied, and were promoted not only by the king, but also by his closest relatives.

Plainly, Robert was temperamentally inclined to envision a commission like the 'Vele' frescoes at Assisi. It is now necessary to determine whether he possessed the political might to flout the established Church and introduce such a revolutionary programme over the tomb of St. Francis.

Robert of Naples: Power and Authority in Italy.

Since the establishment of the dynasty in Italy in 1268, Angevin power had always hinged on the desire of the papacy to maintain political ascendancy in the Italian peninsula. In concert with Urban IV, Louis IX of France had selected his brother Charles of Anjou as papal champion. Charles received the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, formerly part of the Holy Roman Empire, in return for defeating the Emperor Manfred at Benevento (1266) and executing his heir, Conradin (1268). But preservation of papal hegemony demanded that the pontiff's new ally be kept subservient to the Holy See. While Charles was permitted to extend his influence in Tuscany, Piedmont, and Lombardy (see map, figure 23), the pope maintained exclusive control over the papal states, including Romagna and Ferrara (newly acquired in 1278-9), and exacted heavy annual tribute from his Angevin subordinate.

This relationship, however, altered dramatically

during the reign of Charles's grandson Robert (1309-43), as a result of two political events: the transfer of the Curia to Avignon; and the descent of the Emperor Henry VII of Luxembourg into Italy (1310-1313).

Residing in distant Avignon, the pope had little choice but to delegate authority over the temporal affairs of the Church in Italy to his vassal. Thus the King of Naples filled the power vacuum created by the exile of the papacy, and adopted a more active political role in the papal states, especially in the Latium. By virtue of being papal minion, Robert assumed upon coronation the traditional Angevin appointments of papal vicar, senator for life of Rome and leader of the Guelph party¹⁹ (Francastel, 1969: 45). To these Clement added that of Vicar of Romagna (1410) and Ferrara (1313),²⁰ and "cancelled...enormous arrears of tribute due to Avignon" (1310--Baddeley, 1897: 60). This papal generosity was largely prompted by the presence in Italy of Henry VII's imperial armies.

When Henry VII, seeking coronation in Rome, launched his Italian campaign, Guelphic city-states turned to Robert as the strongest ruler in Italy, for protection against Ghibelline²¹ uprisings and imperial aggression. The Tuscan communes dreaded even more than papal intervention the overlordship of German Emperors, who, with their outmoded feudal obligations, would cripple industrial and commercial enterprise. They therefore offered Robert the governorship of their cities, knowing that "Ghibellinism...could not put into the field, at least in

Tuscany, any equivalent champion" (1310--Baddeley, 1897: 68). Florence requested Robert to become signor of its government in 1314,²² and Lucca, Siena, Parma, and Bologna followed suit.

Guelphic régimes in Piedmont and Lombardy looked to the Angevin monarch as the only power capable of checking their Ghibelline foes, who were allied with the Visconti of Milan and the Scala of Verona. Thus Robert received the lucrative signory of Genoa in 1318, holding it until 1335. Brescia granted him overlordship in 1319 (Ibid.: 176 nl).

Following the death of Henry VII in 1313, Clement V pursued his course of favouring the Angevin ruler, and drafted a bull which appointed Robert Vicar-General of the Empire, until such time as a new emperor could be lawfully elected (Ibid.: 124-5). John XXII implemented this bull in 1317 (Partner, 1972: 303). Through this position the king exercised "general suzerainty over virtually the whole peninsula outside the temporal states of the Church" (Pullan, 1973: 30-1); in the latter, however, he was free to intervene as guardian of papal properties.

By 1319, then, only Pisa, Milan, Mantua, Verona and Venice remained outside Robert's jurisdiction (Baddeley, 1897: 138).

It is clear from the foregoing that no other person in Italy during the first half of the Trecento had accumulated power comparable to that of Robert of Anjou. It remains to determine how Angevin political ascendance in Italy affected the commune of Assisi and the convent of San Francesco.

Angevin Influence at Assisi.

Assisi had belonged to the papal state since 1198, when the pope seized the Duchy of Spoleto (of which Assisi was a part--Tanner, 1929a: 11) from its imperial vicar. Since the papacy wished to benefit from the popularity of the Franciscan movement, it attempted to direct the policies of the Order, which required that it maintain a pro-papal régime at Assisi. The pontiff had supervised the activities of San Francesco since its inception; Gregory IX himself had laid the foundation stone in 1228 (Moorman, 1968: 86). The frescoes of the Upper Church advertise the bond between Franciscanism and the papacy. A papal palace was erected adjoining the sacred convent, and the Church deposited in San Francesco "That part of the costly symbols of the wealth and dignity of Rome which Boniface VIII had saved from the spoilers at Anagni..." (Partner, 1972: 310).

Credit for restoring the government of Assisi to papal adherents during the Ghibelline rebellion which began in 1319 belongs to Robert's son Charles, the Duke of Calabria. The turmoil at Assisi formed only part of a larger Ghibelline uprising within the papal states. While Perugian Guelphs were directly responsible for the defeat of the rebel Assisan government in 1322, Charles of Calabria had directed the entire Guelph offensive in central Italy (Caggese, 1930, Vol. II: 667).²³

At Assisi, the rebellion had been directed in particular against San Francesco (Ibid.), not only because it

housed riches helpful in supporting the war, but also no doubt because the church and the treasures stored within it symbolised papal power. By restoring a Guelph régime, the Angevins in effect protected the basilica from further despoliation. The Conventuals would therefore have had good reason to respect the authority of Naples and to feel grateful for the protection the Duke had afforded. This may well have dampened their zeal to resist any Spiritually oriented artistic programmes which the king might have envisaged.

There are indications that both the Franciscan Order and the papacy were loath to appear too critical of unorthodox attitudes prevalent at the court in Naples. I have already mentioned some instances concerning the papacy at the beginning of this chapter. Similarly revealing was the freedom with which Philip of Majorca as a fraticello travelled outside the kingdom of Naples preaching against the pope. Moorman has also noted the delicacy with which the Inquisition handled the trial of Adhémar de Mosset, intimate of Philip of Majorca:

[At] Narbonne...before 1328, forty-nine Béguins were brought before the Inquisition....Among these were men like Ademar de Mosset, the chief magnate of the district of Roussillon in the extreme south of France. Ademar was a close friend of Philip of Majorca and, like him, sympathetic towards the Spirituals. In a long inquiry the bishop asked him a great many questions and finally sent to Avignon a report in which he did his utmost, on religious and political grounds, to get Ademar deposed. The case dragged on for some years, the ecclesiastical authorities trying to steer a course which, while paying due deference to justice, would not involve them in diplomatic difficulties with the Kingdom of Majorca. Eventually Ademar seems to have been acquitted, as he

was later the recipient of an indulgence from the pope (Moorman, 1968: 425-6).

Moorman does not mention the connection between Philip of Majorca and the House of Anjou; I suggest that the decision of the Inquisition rested more upon this affiliation than upon the Majorcan one, as the Angevins played a much more vital role in the preservation of papal supremacy.

Fear of the Angevins probably also deterred the Conventuals from seizing Angelo Clareno, who had taken refuge with the Black Monks at Subiaco in 1318. Although the guardian of the Franciscan convent in Rome had urged the Abbot of Subiaco to surrender Angelo to the authorities "as a disturber of the peace and unity of the Order" (Moorman, 1968: 312), no effort was made to capture the Spiritual leader against the Abbot's will. Douie concludes that:

...the Franciscan authorities probably did not wish to risk a quarrel with one of the most powerful of the Italian abbots, supported as he was by the Pope's most faithful ally, Robert of Naples (1932:67).

Respect for Angevin power and the need for military protection were not the only factors governing Franciscan relations with Naples. Because the Franciscans were not a "possessionate"²⁴ Order, and were therefore without means to secure an independent income, the friars "depended a good deal, for their livelihood, on voluntary contributions" (Moorman, 1968: 353). The Conventuals were not beneath sacrificing principle or waiving rules in order to procure generous donations, as the following example demonstrates:

Various Chapters General regulated the intake of laymen by saying that none should be admitted under the age of eighteen^[25]... and none over forty except members of noble families whom the Order could not afford to offend (Moorman, 1968: 352).

The Angevins had given generously to the convent of San Francesco. In spite of their Spiritual leanings, "Robert and Sancia overwhelmed the basilica with donations (Venturi, 1908: 131). San Francesco received gifts from the Angevin rulers or their kin throughout Robert's reign (Venturi, 1908: 131-3).

That Robert dominated the political scene in Italy, that his son Charles had been instrumental in suppressing the anti-papal rebellion at Assisi and had thereby shielded the basilica from further abuse, and that Robert had established a reputation for his bountiful donations to the church, would have made it difficult indeed for the Franciscan community to oppose him over the content of a fresco programme for the Lower Church. Such opposition is particularly unlikely in light of the attitudes of the papacy and the Franciscans towards Spirituals associated either directly or indirectly with the rulers in Naples.

Perhaps the most convincing testimony to Angevin prestige at San Francesco during this period is the number of frescoes and other decorations in the Lower Church attributed to their patronage. These are: the frescoes of the Montefiore Chapel;²⁷ the windows of the St. Louis Chapel;²⁸ two frescoed altarpieces in the transept, one on the north side of the main altar by Simone Martini,²⁹ the other on the south, by Pietro

Lorenzetti;³⁰ and the binding of a French missal in the sacristy,³¹ which may have belonged originally to St. Bonaventura (Venturi, 1908: 133). I believe that the fresco of St. Francis with Death in the right arm of the west transept may also be an Angevin commission.³²

Venturi has commented upon the preponderance in the Lower Church of fleurs-de-lys (which the Angevins, as a branch of the French royal house, were entitled to employ), and of saints who were venerated at the Angevin court (Ibid.: 131). With the exception of the Lorenzetti altarpiece and the image of St. Francis with Death, all the works mentioned previously depict saints of special significance to the House of Anjou: Sts. Louis of France, Martin, Louis of Toulouse, and Elizabeth.

Taking into account the wealth of paintings in the Lower Church which seem to be associated with the Angevin monarchy, and the sudden appearance of Sienese, as opposed to Florentine and Roman painters, Francastel has concluded that:

in the first quarter of the 14th Century, jurisdiction over Assisi passed, at least partially, out of the hands of the immediate circle of the pope and into those of the king of Naples...which, taking into account the transfer to Avignon, is not surprising... (1969: 52).³³

It is reasonable to believe that Robert, as captain of the Guelph League and papal suzerain, should seek to legitimize his power by promoting the saints associated with his dynasty in a church formerly dominated by the papacy. Moreover, San Francesco was:

...the only church in Italy since the emigration of the Papacy to Avignon, whose

authority was recognised as valid by every city and Italian state, much more so than St. Peter's in Rome, over which local factions fought for control (1969: 44).

Conclusion.

It has been demonstrated that Robert of Naples was the predominant power in Italy in the first half of the 14th Century. That this power extended to Assisi, is shown both by his suppression of the Ghibelline revolt in 1322, and from the profusion of Angevin-related works of art in the Lower Church of San Francesco, most of which date securely within his reign. In addition, it has been shown that Robert was an open supporter of the Spiritual Franciscans, and that the Franciscan community seems to have been reluctant to proceed against Spirituels associated with him. The king therefore possessed both the motive, and the means for commissioning a work of Spiritual Franciscan inspiration like the 'Vele' frescoes. Moreover, if the Angevin chose to intervene in Church affairs counter to papal interests, it would have been difficult for the pope to retaliate, residing as he did in Avignon under the domination of Robert's kinsman, the King of France. The pontiff also found himself without strong allies in Italy save the King of Naples (Baddeley, 1897: 158).

I therefore conclude that Francastel's proposal of Robert of Naples as patron of the 'Vele' frescoes is a valid one; furthermore, I have been unable to discover any other individual during the period of the frescoes' execution who held Spiritual views and also possessed some authority at

Assisi.³⁴

It must not be forgotten, however, that the king of Naples was officially the leader of the papists in Italy, and that the goals of the Spirituals were diametrically opposed to those held by advocates of papal supremacy. It stands to reason, therefore, that the king's boldness in expressing outwardly these heterodox doctrines depended to a great extent upon the fluctuating and complex political relationship between Naples and Avignon. An examination of the interdependence of pope and Angevin would thus aid in dating the 'Vele' decoration by delimiting certain periods when the Angevin felt secure enough to risk commissioning a subversive work. This shall therefore be the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER V

ANGEVIN-PAPAL RELATIONS AND THE COMMISSIONING
OF THE FRESCOES

Thus far I have examined the Spiritual (and therefore subversive and anti-papal) content of the 'Vele' paintings, and have concluded that Robert was their probable sponsor, in that he was both a Spiritual sympathiser and sufficiently powerful to impose them at Assisi.

Identifying Robert as the patron, however, creates a problem: is it reasonable to suppose that a ruler who was allied with the pope throughout much of his career would have commissioned such a provocative fresco cycle, whatever his personal sympathies? The very existence of the frescoes reveals a profound ideological split between their patron and the papacy, one that the sponsor was not loath to advertise. The question then becomes: did relations between Robert and the pontiff ever reach such a pass that the king would have embarked upon an anti-papal campaign, including a subversive fresco cycle?

In this chapter I shall examine Angevin-papal relations, working from the premise that Robert would not have ordered paintings antagonistic to the pontiff at times when he needed papal cooperation; and conversely, that he would have sponsored them only when he was free of this

dependence. I shall try to identify these times of independence in order to discover if Robert's actions during such period(s) were in keeping with sponsorship of an anti-papal fresco.

Periods of Interdependence Between Robert of Anjou and the Papacy

I will deal here principally with the pontificate of John XXII (1316-34), who occupied the papal throne throughout most of Robert's reign, and whose determined efforts to eradicate the Spirituals were responsible for much of the tension which developed between Naples and Avignon.

Robert's rather chequered association with Jacques Duèse (John XXII), began long before the king's coronation. Duèse had tutored the children of Charles II of Anjou (Caggese, 1930, Vol. II: 12), and at the end of the 13th Century had been cleric and familiar to the king. As Duke of Calabria, Robert appointed Duèse his councillor in 1305: in 1308 Jacques served at Naples as chancellor of the realm. He was present at Robert's coronation at Avignon in 1309 (Bologna, 1969: 159). Following his nomination to the position of Cardinal of Porto in 1312, Duèse in his turn "supported tenaciously the rights of King Robert" (Caggese, 1930, Vol. II: 12).

This background of mutual support makes more comprehensible Robert's eagerness to have Duèse elected pope in 1316,¹ in spite of the Cardinal's anti-Spiritual views.

Robert was not unaware of these prejudices; Duèse's testimony at the canonization proceedings of Louis of Toulouse, set in motion by Clement V in 1307, completely ignored Louis's adherence to poor use (Bologna, 1969: 165). Robert's choice, therefore, seems to have been entirely pragmatic. From Duèse's previous performance, Robert must have seen the Cardinal as the candidate who would offer the most generous concessions to Naples. In addition, both the king of France and Robert wanted a pope who was content to remain in Avignon: the former, in order to continue to dictate papal decisions; the latter, to gain freedom to extend his influence in Italy. Angevin partisans now controlled Rome, permitting a free movement of goods between Naples in the south and Florence in the north, a lucrative trade that a pope in Rome might have disrupted. The new French pope preferred to take up residence in Avignon, not caring to deal with the factious Romans. Although Robert and John XXII "developed mutual differences...they were of one mind not to have the Holy See reinstated in Rome" (Baddeley, 1897: 138-9).

With the pope in Avignon, Robert wielded greater power in Italy. Because of this, I believe, Pope John tolerated Robert's attitude towards the Spirituals, in spite of the fact that the king's protection of fraticelli violated a condition that Clement IV had imposed when granting the realm of Naples-Sicily to the House of Anjou. According to the agreement between Clement and Charles, "Neither Charles of Anjou nor his successors shall, under any circumstances

make leagues with the Saracens, schismatics, or with Catholics hostile to the Church of Rome" (Baddeley, 1897: xiii).

Thus, while it was convenient for the French popes to reside in Provence and to use the Angevins as their "political arm" in Italy, "by continuous use this arm gradually acquired a somewhat independent volition" (Baddeley, 1897: 27).

Robert's successful attempt to influence the conclave at the election of John XXII in 1316 was therefore one of political expediency. The king's choice of candidate is revealing: not a cardinal who might prove conciliatory to the Spirituals, such as Napoleone Orsini, but one who, he thought, would best assist him in fulfilling his temporal aspirations. In giving priority to territorial acquisition or security of the kingdom over religious commitment, Robert remained consistent throughout his reign. In spite of the friction between him and John XXII, over the Spiritual Franciscan issue as well as over political strategy,² Robert took pains not to antagonize John beyond endurance at such times as he required papal assistance to realize his political aims.

These periods were as follows: 1) during Robert's campaign for the canonization of his brother, Louis of Toulouse (1309-17); 2) during the Italian invasion of Henry VII of Luxembourg (1310-13), and the consequent period of Ghibelline unrest in northern and central Italy (1313-ca. 1323); and 3) during the threat to Naples of Louis of Bavaria's Italian campaign (1322-28). I doubt that during

any of these periods, Robert would have commissioned a series of frescoes that amounted to an anti-papal tract. Rather, I believe, he would have subordinated his religious convictions to the political demands of his kingdom.

Events Militating Against the Sponsorship of the 'Veile' Frescoes.

1. The Campaign to Canonise Louis of Toulouse.

Royal saints were great assets to dynastic houses, and their value as a means of promoting the notion of spiritually enlightened kingship and the right to rule was not a new discovery: English kings exploited the sainthood of Edward the Confessor; the French, that of St. Louis of France. Likewise, Charles II had eagerly sought the canonisation of his son, Louis of Toulouse, as early as 1300--only three years after the saint's death (Toynbee, 1929: 152).

There are several reasons why Robert would have coveted Louis's canonisation in the first decade of his reign. First, it would have reinforced his right to the crown, which his nephew, Carobert, had contested. In Martini's St. Louis altarpiece, commissioned by Robert in 1317, the saint is depicted crowning his brother; Robert's legitimacy as heir was thus confirmed by the most hallowed member of the House. By this means the king attempted to silence Ghibelline murmurings of his unlawful succession (Ibid.: 221).

Second, the defeat of the Guelph forces led by Robert's brother, Philip of Taranto, at the Battle of

Montecatini in 1315, had shaken Tuscan faith in Angevin leadership. The prestige which would accrue from Louis's sainthood would help to restore that lost confidence; Louis of Toulouse did in fact become the patron saint of the Tuscan Guelph League and thus a symbol of the bond between the Tuscan Guelphs and the Angevin monarchy (Toynbee, 1929: 224-5).

Certain actions of Robert demonstrate that he regarded the canonization as a matter of some urgency. In 1312, the king paid his chaplain 400 gold florins to set up a commission of inquiry into the miracles performed by his brother (Bologna, 1969: 159). Already in 1316, the year before Louis was canonized, Naples was promoting the cult of Louis of Toulouse by celebrating his feast day (Ibid.: 150).

Prior to the attainment of Louis's sainthood it would have been unwise for Robert to draw attention to matters which might implicate him as a critic of the Church. There is evidence that Robert endeavoured to ingratiate himself with the new pope, and the desire to see his brother canonized may well have been one of the motivating forces. Less than two weeks after John XXII's accession in 1316, Robert paid a handsome 25,000 florins to the Curia, part of which went towards a debt outstanding since the reign of Charles II (Caggese, 1930, Vol. II: 14-15). In celebration of the canonization, which John XXII swiftly implemented after his election, Robert commissioned the St. Louis altarpiece (figures 8-13), which in keeping with John XXII's approach to the sanctification, underlined Louis's orthodoxy and ignored

episodes from his life that would have marked him as a Spiritual:

The iconography of the work is based on the text of the bull of sanctification promulgated by John XXII, April 7, 1317. This bull, purposely ignoring that Louis--so inclined to the love and poverty of the dissident Franciscans--had become 'initiator of Christ in poverty', exalts instead of his 'poverty', his 'humility' (the renunciation of the throne, here represented, had been one of the focal points) and praises obedience (Bologna, 1969: caption, plates IV-2 and IV-3).

Bologna describes how the five predella scenes concentrate upon Louis's humility and obedience while omitting references to his fidelity to the vow of poverty (Ibid.: 167-8). The subject of the central scene, for example, is St. Louis Serving the Poor at Table, which focuses upon the saint's humility and compassion. Louis serves the hungry, however, from a silver vessel, an object which he would have spurned in life (Pasztor, 1955: 40-2; and Bologna, 1969: 168).

Pope John had no intention of publicizing Spiritual Franciscan practices, nor of permitting Robert, the papal champion, to become tainted with heterodoxy. With the St. Louis panel, Robert demonstrated his willingness to accept the conditions under which John XXII authorized Louis's sanctification.

2. Henry of Luxembourg's Invasion of Italy

Robert's dependence on the papacy before 1317 arose not only from his desire for the canonisation, but also from the vulnerability of his kingdom during the Italian campaign

of the Holy Roman Emperor, Henry VII of Luxembourg (1310-13), who sought coronation in Rome.

In addition to the renewal of conflicts between Guelphs and Ghibellines that it inevitably caused, Robert had especial reason to fear the imperial presence in Italy. In 1266 his forbears had wrested the Italian kingdom from Manfred, son of the Emperor Frederick II, and had slain Conradin, Frederick's heir. The Empire would therefore naturally regard the Angevins as usurpers. Fear of imperial reprisal was increased by the possibility that Frederick II of Sicily, grandson of Manfred and an old enemy of the Angevins, might make common cause with the Emperor to avenge the injustice of Angevin usurpation (Baddeley, 1897: 60), and to remove the threat of attack from Naples.³ Robert's fear was realized in 1312 when Henry and Frederick signed a treaty (Tanner, et. al., 1929b: 36). Their invasion of Naples was prevented only by Henry's death in 1313.

Moreover, Robert had overextended himself throughout the peninsula prior to Henry's descent into Italy; consequently, "he could only cover ordinary expenses by papal and Florentine loans" (Ibid.: 38), thus increasing his obligations to Avignon.

Nor did the pope's usefulness end with Henry's demise. Robert now saw his way clear to establishing a Guelph monarchy in Italy by eradicating the imperial menace forever. In a letter to the cardinals in 1314, Robert argued for the abolition of the German Empire and for the

appointment of a vicar of imperial property in Italy, undoubtedly with himself in mind (Baddeley, 1897: 133). Clement obliged him in 1314 to the extent that he drafted a bull, naming him imperial vicar in Italy during the vacancy of the empire. John XXII published the bull in 1317.

The relationship between Naples and the papacy was far from one-sided, however. Clement relied upon the king to protect his Italian territories from imperial and Ghibelline aggressions, and "it was mainly through Robert and his Neapolitan officials that he maintained his hold upon the capital and Romagna" (Tanner, et. al., 1929b: 42).

The threat of Ghibelline opposition did not subside with the dispersal of Henry's army, however, and the maintenance of the Angevin-papal alliance remained vital to both parties. Ghibelline forces under the Pisan Uguccione della Faggiuola harassed the Guelphs of Tuscany and finally routed the Guelph-Angevin army at Montecatini in 1315. Ghibelline revolts broke out at Assisi and throughout the papal states in 1319.⁴ Northern Italy remained in a perpetual state of turmoil after 1313, with the Ghibellines finding formidable protagonists in Can Grande della Scala of Verona and Matteo Visconti of Milan. Although the Signory of Genoa was conferred upon Robert in 1319, the Ghibelline faction was not completely defeated until 1323 (Partner, 1972: 308). Robert left Naples in 1319 to accept the Genoese signory, and continued on to Provence and Avignon, where he remained until 1324, directing the Guelph offensive in

northern Italy, in consultation with the papacy (Caggese, 1930, Vol. II: 73).

Of necessity, therefore, Robert remained on intimate terms with John XXII between 1319 and 1324 while they plotted against their common enemies. The pope provided the Angevin with large sums of money in order to wage the war against the Ghibellines (Partner, 1972: 312). It would have been untimely, therefore, for Robert to make an unqualified defense of the Spiritual Franciscans. This circumstance no doubt accounts for the equivocal nature of the king's treatise on Evangelical Poverty of 1323,⁵ which must have been written at Avignon while planning the Guelph offensive with John XXII. Although in the treatise he defended the doctrine as orthodox and a high ideal, Robert carefully exempted the Church from its practice:

'It is acknowledged that the rule of poverty must not be equal for all; it is also acknowledged that if the Church had to live in the world of men, with human needs, means of satisfying them must be considered. But one must not fail to recognise that the ideal of poverty is a high ideal, and that to condemn it...is to speak a little imprudently' (Treatise, quoted in Tocco, 1910: 293; in Bologna, 1969: 202).

Although the advantage in the papal-Angevin relationship lay with the king, "since the whole success of the papal policy in Italy depended upon the support of Robert the Wise" (Douie, 1932: 153 n.2), Robert clearly did not wish to provoke papal hostility at this time. Hence, while Robert "could dare to set forth his own views" (Baddeley, 1897: 155),

even criticising the monastic practice of holding property in common as soiling evangelical perfection⁶ (Caggese, 1930, Vol. II: 124), he did so "in such manner as might preclude acute irritation" (Baddeley, 1897: 155), and announced his willingness to accede to the papal decision on the matter. Robert's refusal to publish the bull *Cum inter Nonnullas* of 1323, which outlawed the practice of Evangelical Poverty, was a necessary measure to protect the many groups of Spirituals who found asylum in the kingdom, and cannot therefore be considered as a direct attempt to antagonise Pope John. There is no evidence, for example, of any efforts at Naples to disseminate anti-papal propaganda, as did occur at a later period when the papal alliance deteriorated.

3. The Italian Campaign of Louis of Bavaria.

No sooner had the Angevin and papal armies overthrown the Visconti of Milan (1322) and the Ghibellines of Genoa (1323), than the Emperor Louis of Bavaria threw his support behind the Ghibellines of Lombardy (1323), rekindling the old struggle between papacy and Empire.

John and Robert had schemed to avoid imperial intervention in Italy by taking advantage of the double election of Frederick of Austria and Louis of Bavaria to the throne of the Empire in 1314. It had been the papal and Angevin intention to prolong the conflict between the two imperial candidates as long as possible (Baddeley, 1897: 178). It was partly to discuss with the pope how this was to be

accomplished, that Robert left Genoa for Avignon in 1319. At the Battle of Muhldorf in 1322, however, Louis defeated his opponent and the march on Rome became inevitable.

In addition, there followed a whole series of unfavourable events which helped to draw the pope and the Angevin together for mutual support. In 1323, Louis "made his first protest in the name of the imperial authority, against the pontifical and Angevin forces who tormented Imperial soil" (Caggese, 1930, Vol. II: 54-5), and brought about the defeat of the Guelphs at the siege of Milan by aiding the Visconti. Guelph troops suffered two terrible defeats by the Ghibellines in 1325, at Altopascio, and Zapolino. In the same year Frederick II of Sicily concluded an agreement with Louis of Bavaria (Léonard, 1954: 307), re-awakening Robert's apprehension that the Empire and Sicily would conspire against Naples, as occurred in 1312-13. Robert's attacks on Sicily in 1325 and 1326, intended to weaken Frederick's troops before they could join the Bavarian, were fruitless (Ibid.: 316). By 1327 the situation for Naples looked black indeed. Sicilian envoys attended Louis's imperial diet at Trent, and Frederick signed a pact with him for offense and defense (Léonard, 1954: 316). In Rome, Sciarra Colonna and Jacopo Savelli had cleared the way for Louis's entry into the city by defeating Neapolitan and Orsini troops. In Piedmont Robert's captain-general had been killed and in Tuscany his French mercenaries rebelled for lack of wages. At this vulnerable time for Robert and his Guelph League, Louis of Bavaria crossed the Alps.

In such perilous straits, the anti-imperial powers united. Communes in Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna rallied to the side of the pope and his Angevin vicar. Robert and Pope John buried their differences and focused their energies upon the impending danger.

Between 1322 and 1328 their efforts against the Bavarian were relentless. They tried unsuccessfully to unseat Louis by conferring the Empire upon the King of France.⁷ John heaped anathemas upon Louis, excommunicating him no less than five times (Baddeley, 1897: 192). In 1327, "the Pope showered letters upon all the governors of provinces, bishops, and influential nobles, urging them to assist Robert in resisting Louis..." (Ibid.: 196-7). Robert, for his part,

fought the chief imperial ally [in Tuscany], Castruccio Castracane;...garrisoned Florence and Siena, whose signorias had been granted him; and relentlessly attacked the imperial army in the Latium, forcing it to leave Rome and retreat to Pisa (Bologna, 1969: 216).

Robert's eagerness to maintain the papal alliance is best observed, however, in his attitude towards the Spiritual Franciscans during this time of crisis. In his attacks upon the papacy, Louis had used Spiritual anti-papal protests to his own political advantage. His notorious Declaration of Sachsenhausen of 1324, had denounced the pope as a heretic for denying the Doctrine of Evangelical Poverty. Many Spirituals therefore took up his cause, and fervently supported the Spiritual anti-pope Nicholas V, whom Louis had elected in Rome on May 12, 1328. Because of his own adherence to the Spiritual point of view, "Robert found himself in an exceedingly

delicate situation" (Léonard, 1943: 321). His solution, for the moment, was to avoid becoming associated in any way with the illegal coronation of Nicholas V, and to prevent the Spirituals within the realm from doing so:

On July 3, to avoid the Friars Minor running in multitudes to Rome during those months of schismatic fanaticism, [the Duke of Calabria] ordered...that 'no member of the Order of Friars Minor could freely leave the Kingdom'...(Caggese, 1930, Vol. II, 124-5).

From Robert's acceptance in 1317 of John XXII's attempts to conceal St. Louis's heterodoxy; from the ambivalence of his tract on poverty in 1323; and finally, from his efforts to disassociate himself and the Spirituals within his realm from the coronation of a Spiritual antipope in 1328; one may conclude that until 1328 Robert remained tractable on the issue of the Spiritual Franciscans, keeping his support and protection of the faction within the confines of his kingdom. The monarch's constant need of papal assistance in one form or another, from his coronation in 1309 to the defeat of Louis in 1328, underlay this approach.⁸

The Break with the Papacy: Conditions Favouring Robert's Commissioning of the 'Vele' Frescoes.

By September 1328, however, the political situation had altered dramatically. The Bavarian had been driven from the Latium; Castruccio Castracane and Galeazzo Visconti, the two most powerful leaders of Ghibellinism in Tuscany and Lombardy, had both died; and Frederick of Sicily, finding a

combined attack on Naples with the imperial forces to be untenable, sailed home in a gale, which decimated his fleet.

For the first time, Robert was liberated from external threat and from the need to perpetuate the papal alliance. It is interesting to observe his reaction to the conflict between the Church and Franciscan dissidents under these circumstances.

Affairs between Pope John and the Franciscans had reached such an impasse by 1328 that the Minister-General, Michael of Cesena, had been deposed and excommunicated.⁹ The Order's protest was short-lived,¹⁰ partly because of the cunning manoeuvres of Pope John, who saw to it that one of his minions, Gerald Odonis, was elected Minister-General in 1329. Dissidents had no choice but to leave the Order and join the ever-expanding underground of Franciscan malcontents.

At the court of Naples, however, "The seeds of revolt lingered longest...." (Douie, 1932: 184). In addition to their customary unobtrusive methods of opposing John XXII's harassment of the Franciscans, by suppressing bulls relating to the controversy of the moment and by protecting persecuted groups,¹¹ the Angevin rulers now protested openly and stridently. In 1329 Philip of Majorca delivered his fiery sermon in Santa Chiara, in which he denounced the pope and the bull *Cum inter Nonnullas* which prohibited Evangelical Poverty (Bologna, 1969: 202). In the same year, Sancia wrote to the Franciscan Chapter-General at Paris begging the friars not to submit to relaxations in the Rule, obviously suspecting that

Pope John's partisans would try to introduce them. The Queen followed this letter with another in similar vein to the Chapter at Perpignan, in 1331.

Relations with the papacy continued to deteriorate. Pope John responded to Angevin hostility by launching an investigation, under Franciscan Minister General Gerald Odonis, into heresies committed within the kingdom. The inquiry charged the royal chaplains Andreas de Gagliano and Pietro de Cadeneto with disobedience to the Church and summoned them to Avignon. Robert expelled Odonis from the court, and sent emissaries to Avignon to defend the friars; Sancia intercepted letters to the Inquisitors concerning the charges.

Finally, John XXII took a step which permanently severed the bond with Naples. In 1332 he sacrificed the Angevin alliance and backed a new protégé, John of Luxembourg, king of Bohemia (and son of Henry VII), whom he hoped would win for him a French kingdom in Lombardy (Partner, 1972: 324). Philip VI of France entered into a pact with King John in 1331, agreeing to support the enterprise in return for Lucca¹² and the kingdom of Arles, which would be ceded to him upon the election of one of King John's relatives as Emperor (Léonard, 1954: 329).¹³ For a number of reasons, Robert could only have construed such a plan as a betrayal. It divested him of his rights and privileges as papal representative in northern Italy, and would have prevented his expansion in the area. Like the French king, the Angevins

had long coveted Arles, which, together with their county of Provence, would have given them complete control over the Rhône. In addition, the proposed kingdom was to include Provence, thereby making Robert "the vassal of his meddlesome cousin the king of France" (Léonard, 1954: 329). The pact signed in 1331 between the papal legate Bertrand de Pouget and John of Bohemia precipitated what would have been unthinkable before the Italian invasion of Louis of Bavaria: an alliance in 1332 between the most powerful Ghibelline tyrants of Lombardy and Emilia-Romagna, and the Guelph cities of Florence, Siena, Perugia and Viterbo, supported by Robert of Naples (Ibid.: 327).¹⁴

The battle at Ferrara, 1333, in which Angevin-Guelph forces engaged the papal army, marked the violent end of the association between pope and Angevin against the Empire and its supporters:

...when Florentine troops bore the arms of Robert of Anjou into battle beside those of the Visconti viper in the campaign of 1333, they showed that the system of alliances which had grown from Charles of Anjou's invasion of 1266 had finally cracked (Partner, 1972: 324).

With the defeat of papal-Bohemian forces, it must have come home to Pope John that, "unsatisfactory as the Angevin army was, the papal army could not survive without it" (Ibid.: 325). Perhaps this realisation lay behind his attempts to propitiate Robert in 1333, by permitting the two excommunicated royal chaplains to be tried by local officials, who absolved them (Douie, 1932: 185), and by instructing

Gerald Odonis, who had caused the charges to be laid against the friars and who had written an unfavourable report concerning the orthodoxy of the court at Naples, "to make himself agreeable" to the Angevin sovereigns (Baddeley, 1897: 233). Although Gerald was reinstated at court in June, the pope's overtures did not improve relations with the Angevins, nor did they prevent Robert's endorsing the condemnation of John XXII by the University of Paris in December, 1333, on the grounds that his interpretation of the Beatific Vision was heretical.

Subsequently, plans were made, under the direction of Napoleone Orsini, to assemble the cardinals for the purpose of deposing Pope John. The University's decision

...was truly manna for the court of Naples where the dissident Minors, who inspired the sovereigns in religious matters, no longer recognised the pope except as 'James of Cahors', destined to be judged by a future council.... The Minors immediately designated...their protector Philip of Majorca as the future pope (Léonard, 1954: 333).

Temporarily, Pope John "purchased peace by political concessions, and wrote humbly to Philip and Robert that he had never positively denied the Beatific Vision..." (Lea, 1901, Vol. III: 594). In 1334, however, Pope John succeeded once again in alienating Naples, by reopening negotiations with Philip VI of France and John of Bohemia. It was decided to place king John's son-in-law, Henry of Bavaria, upon the imperial throne and to confer the kingdom of Arles and Vienne upon Philip. As Léonard explains,

This new project would have freed the Church from the menace posed by an Emperor who was an excommunicate, and an advocate of the Spirituals, and who favoured the convocation of the council which intended to depose Pope John (1954: 334).

The plan never materialised, because of the outcries from Italian governments who wanted no further interference from the emperor, especially one who was related to John of Bohemia and Louis of Bavaria, two great perpetrators of social and political upheaval in Italy.¹⁵ Ambassadors from Naples, Florence and Hungary arrived in Avignon to protest against it, and in private letters to the pope, Robert voiced his strong objections to the programme (Ibid.). Nevertheless, John XXII's willingness to consider the arrangement indicates the degree to which he was indifferent, if not hostile, to the fulfilment of King Robert's political ambitions. The final outrage against Robert and Florence occurred in October, 1334, when as a result of the aforementioned alliance, King Philip decided to purchase Lucca from John of Bohemia. Robert strenuously opposed this transaction, which would have given the French king a foothold in Tuscany. Pope John's policies, therefore, had not only destroyed his alliance with Robert, but increased the tension between the kingdoms of Naples and France.

It appears, therefore, that the serious fracture which appeared during 1329 in the long-standing affiliation between the House of Anjou and the papacy, was not to be mended before the pope's death in December, 1334. The resistance at Naples to papal decisions had gone beyond passive dissent, and in 1329 had broken into open rebellion

with Sancia's appeal to the friars to resist the latest assault upon the ideal of poverty, and with Philip of Majorca's vituperative sermon against John XXII.

In my view, the enmity towards Pope John between 1329 and 1334 originated not only in the new independence of Naples from papal assistance, but also in the radically opposing interpretations of Absolute Poverty held by Robert and the papacy. The Michaelist Rebellion, which directly involved the dispute over Apostolic Poverty,¹⁶ acted as the catalyst which caused these differences to break out into undisguised hostility.

Pro-Spiritual Paintings Commissioned by the Angevins

If Robert were to commission paintings promoting the doctrine of Absolute Poverty, one would expect them to appear after 1328. Bologna has identified two Angevin paintings in Naples as Spiritual manifestos on the subject of poverty, and dates both of them after the break with the papacy in 1329 (1969: 201-3, 236-7).

Evidence that Robert commissioned Spiritual pictorial works reinforces the argument for his patronage of the 'Vele' frescoes in San Francesco. I shall therefore outline Bologna's analysis of the Spiritual context of these paintings.

The first work is the fresco depicting the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes, located in the friars' chapter-room, Santa Chiara (figure 16). It is painted on the Angevin

coat of arms, with a shield bearing the image of the mystic lamb at each corner. Bologna recalls that the distribution of the loaves and fishes is "a prefiguration of the Eucharist", and that the mystic lamb, symbol of Christ's sacrifice to redeem mankind, also alludes to transubstantiation (1969: 20). The subject was therefore appropriate for Santa Chiara, which Robert and Sancia had dedicated to the Eucharist (and which was originally known as the Chiesa del Corpo di Christo--Ibid.).

But the fresco alludes to certain specifically Spiritual principles. The Saviour, larger than life, is shown surrounded by the apostles, the baskets of loaves and fishes, and the poor. St. Peter, symbol of the Church, holds a prominent place on the right, and distributes food to the hungry. Bologna maintains that this detail "contains an obvious reference to the 'ecclesia pauperum'" of the Spirituals, in which material goods were of use only in relieving the suffering of the poor (Bologna, 1969: 201). The presence of Sts. Francis and Clare, kneeling in the foreground on the left and right respectively, leaves no doubt as to the Franciscan context of the fresco.

The rare iconographic detail of the begging sack over St. Francis's shoulder also gives the theme a uniquely Spiritual twist. The sack refers to the begging life of the mendicant, done in imitation of Christ and encouraged by the Spirituals as "a fundamental aspect of 'usus pauper'" (Ibid.). The Spirituals were trying to remain faithful to the Testament

of St. Francis, which stipulated that "'when we have not been paid [with food] for our work, we must have recourse to the table of the Lord, requesting alms from door to door'"

(Bologna, 1969: 201).¹⁷ Bologna reasons that the aim of the fresco

[was] to show Christ and the Apostles as models of evangelical poverty, in the act of sustaining indigents with food not acquired by...money, but furnished miraculously to followers of the poor Christ by Christ himself, exalted in his provident divinity. It also seems to be a response to the argument of those who maintained that if Christ and the Apostles had preached use of goods without affirming right of ownership, they would be tarnished by defending and practising misappropriation. He who preaches refusing property [ie., the begging St. Francis], appropriates nothing illegitimately, but receives and uses what Divine Providence procures for him....The food procured miraculously by Christ is there precisely to show that only Christ as God, not man, has dominion over things (Ibid.: 203).

The author thus presents a convincing interpretation of the painting, perceiving it as a response to the latest furor over Evangelical Poverty created by the deposition of Michael of Cesena. Bologna therefore dates the painting between 1329 and 1332, when he believes the Michaelist protest at Naples was most intense (1969: 203).¹⁸ Moreover, if the painting is a product of the Giotto workshop in Naples, as many scholars believe,¹⁹ then it was probably executed around the time Bologna designates. Giotto arrived in Naples in 1328.²⁰ If Vasari is correct in claiming that Giotto worked first in

Santa Chiara (1927, Vol. I: 75), then the fresco in question would have been painted sometime between 1328 and 1330, as Giotto had already completed another project in Castelnuovo by May, 1331.²¹ In any case, the fresco would have been finished by 1334, when Giotto left Naples for Florence.²²

A series of tempera paintings on linen²³ provides another example of Spiritually-oriented painting commissioned by Robert. The four canvases represent the Madonna and Child with Sts. Clare and Mary Magdalen; the Stigmata of St. Francis; the Flagellation; and the Crucifixion (in which Robert and Sancia are shown kneeling, as donors [figures 17-20]). Bologna points out that the presence of St. Clare and Mary Magdalen indicates that they were done for a church pertaining to the female branch of the Franciscan Order, of which there were two in Naples: Santa Croce and Santa Chiara. Bologna comments that the predominance of scenes from the Passion would at first lead to the conclusion that they originate from Santa Croce, founded by Sancia in 1338 (1969: 236). However, the paintings form only a part of a larger single canvas, the rest of which is lost. Other scenes of unknown subjects therefore accompanied the extant ones.

Elements in the depiction of the Stigmata provide the key to their Spiritual Franciscan orientation, which in turn offers a clue to the provenance of the works.²⁴

Bologna reveals that as the result of a recent cleaning, which removed certain retouches, the figures of St. Francis and brother Leo emerged clothed in habits with "variously

coloured patches, rips and scanty tailoring" (1969: 236), and are thus very similar to that of St. Francis preserved in San Francesco. In the Stigmata, St. Francis's habit has much shorter sleeves and is shorter in length than contemporary, orthodox representations of it. The hood is pointed, like those found in 13th Century paintings of St. Francis by Margaritone and Bonaventura Berlinghieri (Ibid.). These paintings of the habit probably resemble very closely those of the early Franciscans. (Berlinghieri was active during St. Francis's lifetime).

During the 14th Century, however, only the fraticelli wore habits like those which Berlinghieri depicts.²⁵ It was adopted partly to show their fidelity to the teachings of St. Francis, but also as a means of protest. The habits of the fraticelli had become their statement of commitment to Evangelical Poverty, in defiance of papal and Conventual decrees.

The paintings appear to be connected with the group of fraticelli at Naples under Philip of Majorca, who made the friary at Santa Chiara their headquarters (Bologna, 1969: 237). In a letter to Robert exhorting him to expel the fraticelli from Santa Chiara, Pope Clement XII described them as "wearing short tunics without standardised shape and colour and strewn with multicoloured patches" (Ibid.). Therefore, the panels are probably a visual testimony of the beliefs of Philip and his group at Santa Chiara, who were supported by Robert and Sancia. As Philip evidently arrived in Naples in

1329 (Bologna, 1969: 254), or returned there after a lengthy absence,²⁶ the painting must have been done sometime after this date.

In all probability, then, these canvases formed part of the original decoration of Santa Chiara, as did the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes. The location of the two works is significant, when one recalls the traditional function of Santa Chiara:

In Santa Chiara, as Royal Chapel, the most solemn functions of the court and the most important assemblies of the realm took place. Here the barons swore allegiance and homage to the legitimate sovereigns, and thus Joanna I was crowned Queen there in August 29 1344 ...and here also Louis II in 1386 and Ladislaus in 1401... (Spila da Subiaco, 1901: 180).

Santa Chiara was also the burial place of Neapolitan royalty from the time of Robert of Anjou to Ferdinand II, the last of the Bourbons. In addition, the church was "the especial Neapolitan shrine of S. Louis of Toulouse" (Toynbee, 1929:222), who heightened the prestige of the Angevin dynasty. The refectory was once decorated with scenes from his life, and Simone's famous panel of the saint stood on the high altar (Ibid.). Santa Chiara was a suitable location, therefore, for an official declaration of Angevin independence from the papacy. The fact that the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes is represented on the Angevin coat of arms

attributes to the work the value of a public manifesto...an official vindication of the court, which evidently was anxious to take full responsibility, [as it was] the only [power] capable of opposing the

decretals of a pope (Bologna, 1969: 203).

Like the four tempera paintings, the fresco would have served to redress the concessions to Conventualism of the St. Louis altarpiece in the same church, commissioned when Robert was under strong papal influence. Spiritual ideals no longer needed concealment; the Neapolitan centre for the cult of the Spiritual saint, as well as for important state functions, was an appropriate place to advertise the change in official attitude.²⁷

Bologna has identified an additional fresco as being a product of the dispute between the Angevins of Naples and the papacy over the Franciscan observation of poverty. This is the fresco originally in the lunette over the doorway to the chapter room in San Lorenzo, Naples, which represents St. Francis Giving the Rule to the First and Second Orders (figure 21).²⁸ Although it bears no indication such as a crest or a donor which would confirm that it was commissioned by the court, its subject matter relates it to this Angevin-papal conflict, as it is a call to obey not the oft-revised version of the Rule, but the original one which the saint presented to the male and female branches of his Order (Bologna, 1969: 281).

The 'Vele' as a Product of Neapolitan Hostility Towards Avignon.

Robert's championship of the Spiritual cause during the third decade of the 14th Century therefore seems to go beyond mere expression of personal conviction, and becomes a manifestation of anti-papal feeling current in Naples. By

commissioning pro-Spiritual works in Naples and Assisi, Robert was probably responding to a shift in the balance of power between the papacy and the House of Anjou. If this were the case, one could regard the frescoes in the 'Vele' as products of the prevailing political climate, as a statement of Angevin ascendancy in the fluctuating relationship between the two powers. Simone Martini's St. Louis of Toulouse panel is a declaration of papal supremacy supported by a servile and adoring Angevin monarch. The allegory of Poverty and the St. Francis in Glory, on the other hand, can be viewed as an attempt to demonstrate a recently gained independence from papal subjugation.

In 1317, Robert had acceded to John XXII's anti-Spiritual designs by commissioning the Louis of Toulouse panel, and probably the chapels of Saints Louis and Martin in San Francesco, in which St. Louis is misrepresented as a model Conventual. The predella of the panel records St. Louis's acts of humility, charity, and obedience, but not his observance of poverty. Perhaps the 'Vele' frescoes were intended as a counter-measure to these anti-Spiritual works, and to the priority John XXII gave to Obedience in the bull *Quorundam Exigit*.²⁹ As if to refute Pope John's bull, one of the king's sermons in honour of St. Louis stated that the saint shunned the crown, "'first for the observance of poverty; second for obedience and humility; third for pure virginity and perfect chastity'" (Pasztor, 1955: 69). It occurs to me that the 'Vele' frescoes may well be a translation of the statement

into pictorial form, as they, too, give priority to poverty over the other virtues of Chastity and Obedience.

Availability of Giotto.

Not only was there a great surge of anti-papal sentiment after 1328, which took visual form in paintings at Naples that expressed the Spiritual point of view, but for the first time, Robert had access to Giotto and his workshop. As I have noted,³⁰ the 'Vele' frescoes at Assisi have been attributed to Giotto or a member of his school. Between 1328 and 1333, and at no other time in Robert's career, "there is sundry documentary evidence to show that Giotto was the guest of Robert of Anjou in Naples..." (Martindale and Baccheschi, 1966: 84). The first document recording Giotto's presence in Naples is dated December, 1328 (Morisani, 1947: 140-1), and the last, December, 1333 (Bologna, 1969: 185).

Giotto was appointed Capomaestro of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence, and requested to return to the city, on April 12, 1334 (Ibid.), but his presence in Florence is not confirmed until July, 1334, when the first stone of the campanile of the Duomo was laid (Ibid.: 186). This leaves ample time on the return from Naples to Florence for Giotto to have at least supervised the initial stages of the work at Assisi, perhaps leaving members of his shop at the basilica to complete it. At this time, a Spiritual declaration on poverty and the Apocalypse in a papal church as important as San Francesco would certainly have provided an apt finale to Robert's animosity towards Pope John. One has only to recall

that the king had recently waged war against the papal army and approved the University of Paris's condemnation of John XXII. While 1334 is probably the most likely date for the 'Vele' paintings from the point of view of the painter's movements, and the progressive deterioration of Angevin-papal relations,³¹ the work could have been done at any time between 1329 and 1334. By 1329 the stage was set for Robert's commissioning of the 'Vele' cycle: a permanent rift between the king and the papacy; uncompromising defences of Spiritual ideas in written, oral and pictorial form issuing from the court at Naples; and the availability of the Giotto workshop.³²

The confluence of these conditions reveals Robert as the logical patron of the pro-Spiritual 'Vele' frescoes. These compositions would then add a new dimension to the knowledge of Spiritual works conceived at Naples between 1329 and 1343. They would be the first pictorial expression of Robert's anti-papal attitude to be identified outside the Kingdom of Naples, and within the precincts of a church traditionally under the domination of the Conventuals and the papacy.

CHAPTER VI

ACCEPTANCE AND SURVIVAL OF THE 'VELE' FRESCOES.

If we accept the argument that the 'Vele' frescoes promote Spiritual attitudes towards the Franciscan vows, two questions arise: why should the Conventual authorities have accepted works so critical to their ideas and practices; and, assuming that their acceptance was not wholly voluntary, why should they not have taken the opportunity to expunge them after the end of Robert's reign?

Discussion of the first question should lead to a fuller understanding of the pictorial language adopted for the works. Examination of the second should account for the survival in what must have been a hostile environment.

Acceptance of the 'Vele' Frescoes.

Although Robert exercised considerable influence at Assisi, his power was far from absolute. As the Conventuals also had strong supporters, the king could not have been insensitive to their reaction to his decorative scheme. For example, Robert would have had to consider his relations with the Tuscan merchants and bankers who dominated the Neapolitan economy, the majority of whom supported the papacy and Conventuals in the dispute over Apostolic Poverty.¹ It would therefore have been politic for him to make his point without causing unnecessary furor. As far as is known, communication

between the Neapolitan court and the Conventuals had been amicable, showing a preference for tactics of persuasion rather than opposition. One will recall Sancia's letters to the friars in the 1330's, in which she pleaded with them not to allow further erosion of the principles of their Rule. As an adept statesman, Robert followed the dictates of expediency. In his treatise on poverty, for example, he demonstrated his skill in proclaiming unorthodox ideas without provoking the open opposition of the Church.² One can also observe his pragmatism at work in his shifting posture towards the Holy Roman Empire and its partisans. (In 1314 one finds him advising the cardinals to abolish the Empire;³ in 1322-3, he participated in the scheme to appoint Charles of France as Emperor;⁴ and in 1332 he supported the alliance between the Tuscan communes and the Lombardian Ghibellines against the papal armies under Bertrand de Pouget and John of Luxembourg).⁵

It is therefore not unusual that Robert should seek some mechanism by which he could gain peaceful (if reluctant) acceptance of the frescoes. In planning the pictorial scheme above the altar of the Lower Church, therefore, Robert may well have thought it prudent to incorporate his message in an ambiguous form to allow the Conventuals to save face, and thus forestall an outright confrontation with the Order. By providing ambiguity in the form of allegory, Robert would have given the Conventuals the option of turning a blind eye to the import of the works. A less subtle rendering would have given the Conventuals no choice but to recognise, and thus oppose, the

introduction of a subversive ideology into the very heart of their Order.

As I noted earlier,⁶ the practice of couching controversial material in allegory to avoid scandal or to prevent a confrontation had its precedents in literature. Dante, for example, used it repeatedly in his Divine Comedy. It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that the same useful device was employed in painting.

One has only to contrast the bolder, more explicit presentations of Spiritual subjects at Naples, where Robert exercised direct control, to perceive the effort which had been made at Assisi to mask revolutionary aspects of the 'Vele' paintings. Take, for example, the fresco of St. Francis Giving the Rule (figure 21) from San Lorenzo, Naples, which is concerned with a similar subject to that of the 'Vele' frescoes. The Assisan allegories refer either obliquely or inconspicuously to the original Rule: by stressing Poverty over the other virtues; and by an exhortation relegated to the inscription beneath the Glory that the Rule was inspired in Heaven and must be obeyed.⁷ The viewer is left to make the connection between this passage and the book which St. Francis clasps in the painting above. The lunette from San Lorenzo, however, not only identifies the Rule with an inscription on its open pages, but depicts St. Francis actually placing it into the hands of his followers. As Bologna observes,

The Call to the Rule in S. Lorenzo was also evidently a product of the special Franciscan climate in Naples in the time

of Robert and Sancia: so that it is not concealed in metaphorical references, as basically occurs at Assisi, but is shown positively, in the perceptible ostentation of the text of the regulations: regula et ...minorum fratrum hec est...(1969: 281).⁸

Although the use of allegory may have smoothed the acceptance of the 'Vele' frescoes, it would not have blunted their essential message, for the medieval audience--both lay and ecclesiastical--was well schooled in metaphor, and would not have been slow to perceive disguised meaning. Nor would the public have been unfamiliar with the issues involved in the dispute between the Spirituals and Conventuals, which had been raging since the beginning of the century. Louis of Bavaria and Frederick of Sicily had judged the Spiritual attack on a propertied Church to be of sufficient appeal to base their propaganda war against the papacy upon it (Baddeley, 1897: 186-7). The message would certainly not be lost on the friars, who were confronted by the image of Lady Poverty over the resting place of the poverello, reminding them of how they had compromised his ideal. The disposition of the frescoes placed the worshipping friars in the nave directly opposite the Glorification, which together with the apocalyptic figures, forewarned an age in which persecutors of the Spirituals would perish. Too much had taken place since Bonaventura's time for the image to signify merely his innocuous interpretation of St. Francis's role in the Apocalypse.

The implicit hostility of these works could not but have rankled the Conventuals, and it would be reasonable to

suppose that the officials at San Francesco would have had them removed as soon as circumstances permitted. Why they did not do so is a matter I shall now consider.

The Survival of the 'Vele' Frescoes After 1343

If the Franciscan Allegory of Poverty and the Glory of St. Francis contained subversive messages, as I have proposed, the question remains, why were they not effaced after the death of Robert of Naples, in 1343? I shall offer two reasons: (1) the succession of a pro-Spiritual monarch to the throne of the Kingdom of Naples in 1344; and (2) an eventual change in papal policy regarding Absolute Poverty and Joachimism.

I doubt that the guardian of San Francesco would have risked provoking Robert's like-minded successor by erasing the dead king's commission; furthermore, the papacy itself came to endorse the principles symbolized in the works, transforming subversion into pious orthodoxy, thus adding ecclesiastical to secular protection.

I. The Protection of Naples

Queen Giovanna, Robert's granddaughter and successor, was crowned in 1344. The first seven years of her reign were tumultuous ones, largely because Hungarian relatives coveted her throne. It is unlikely that, regardless of their feelings towards the frescoes, the Conventuals would contemplate altering them before the succession had finally been settled and a clear

Angevin policy towards Franciscan affairs established.

The kingdom regained stability through the Queen's Marriage to the able military leader Louis of Taranto. The realm now benefited greatly from the brilliant statesmanship of Louis's adviser, Niccolo Acciaiuoli. Largely through Acciaiuoli's ingenuity, Naples finally recovered Sicily from the Aragonese in 1355. The pope still placed faith in his alliance with the Angevin kingdom as a means of fulfilling his political designs in Italy, and exercised his influence in its favour. The power of Naples therefore remained formidable, and it is doubtful that the Conventuals would wish to trifle with it.

In secular and religious politics, Giovanna appears to have followed policies consistent with those of her predecessor. She adhered faithfully to the conditions of King Robert's will, even waiving the offer of a papal release from some of its binding obligations, such as the acceptance of councillors named therein (Baddeley, 1897: 332).

There is certainly no evidence of a marked change in attitude towards the Franciscans. On the contrary, Giovanna appears to have been carefully groomed to perpetuate the religious inclinations of Robert and Sancia. Orphaned in early childhood, Giovanna had been raised by Queen Sancia as her own child (Spila da Subiaco, 1901: 54). The Queen had been entrusted with Giovanna's education, and it is likely that the fraticelli with whom the Queen associated also had a hand in this task.⁹ In any case, it is doubtful that Queen Sancia

could have failed to express to Giovanna religious sentiments to which she was so wholeheartedly committed. Until her death in July 1345, Sancia had acted as Giovanna's principal advisor (Spila da Subiaco, 1901: 65), heading the administrative council set up according to the will of the late king.¹⁰

Records from Santa Chiara published by Spila da Subiaco show clearly that Giovanna continued the royal tradition of patronage of this Franciscan convent which Queen Sancia had founded. According to one of these documents (Ibid.: 277), Giovanna took the monastery under her protection in 1345, the year of Sancia's death, which suggests a desire to shield the non-conformist Franciscans who probably still resided there, as it is unlikely that Robert obeyed Benedict XII's order in 1336 to expel them.

Little is known about the fraticelli in Naples in the second half of the 14th Century (Douie, 1932: 211), although the very absence of records may indicate that they existed relatively unmolested by the Inquisition. The following passage from Henry Lea reveals that both King Robert and Giovanna preferred to keep the Inquisition subordinate to the State:

Letters of King Robert in 1334 and 1335 and of Joanna I in 1342 and 1343 show that inquisitors continued to be appointed and to receive the royal exequatur, but they were limited to making fifty arrests each, and record of these was required to be entered in the royal courts; they had no jails, and the royal officials received their prisoners and tortured them when called upon. The Jews appear to be the main object of inquisitorial activity, and this can only have been halting, for in

1344 Clement VI orders his legate at Naples, Aymerico, Cardinal of S. Martino, to punish condignly all apostate Jews, as though there were no Inquisition at work there (1901, Vol. II: 284).

The Inquisition in Naples found the fraticelli exceedingly difficult to prosecute:

...In 1362 there were three inquisitors at Naples....Still, when efforts were to be made against the Fraticelli, Urban V, in 1368, deemed it necessary to send a special inquisitor, Fra Simone del Pozzo, to Naples (Lea, 1901, Vol. II: 284).

For a variety of reasons, which I shall relate later, the efforts of the Inquisition against the fraticelli foundered, not only in Naples but throughout the peninsula. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that Giovanna made any effort to suppress the heretics. The only trial involving the fraticelli in Naples that I have been able to discover occurred in 1362 when Louis of Durazzo was brought to trial for rebellion against the Queen. The fact that he had supported an extreme branch of Michaelist fraticelli was used as evidence against him (Douie, 1932: 211 and Tocco, 1909: 345-6). But Douie suggests that "The process cannot have been intended to be a serious one, for the Archbishop of Naples was endeavouring at the same time to mediate between the queen and Louis..." (Douie, 1932: 211-12 n.9). The outcome of the trial is unknown because of Louis's sudden death in 1362. In the same year as Louis's trial, the Archdeacon of Salerno, a fraticello, was promoted to the see of Trivento. He occupied this position for twenty years, until his death in 1382 (Lea, 1901, Vol. III: 166). Had Giovanna regarded the fraticellian movement as an undesirable one, she

would surely have foreseen the dangers of promoting the Archbishop to such an influential post within her domain, and prevented its occurrence.

From the few references which mention the activities of the fraticelli in the realm during this period, it is apparent that their numbers were significant enough to concern the papacy. As stated earlier, Urban V sent a special inquisitor in 1368 to deal with them. One group of fraticelli who called themselves the fratres fratris Philippi de Maioricis, may have been founded by Queen Sancia's brother Philip, himself a radical fraticello.

Sicily, under the domination of Naples since 1355, was rife with fraticelli and their followers, as Lea relates:

In 1372 Gregory XI was shocked to learn that in Sicily the bones of Fraticelli were venerated as the relics of saints, that chapels and churches were built in their honour, and that on their anniversaries the populace flocked thither with candles to worship them; but it is not likely that his instructions to the inquisitors to put an end to these unseemly manifestations of mistaken piety were successful (1901, Vol. III: 166).

There is evidence of fraticellian settlement throughout the Angevin kingdom after 1378, when the Great Schism "rendered the papacy almost powerless to combat their growing influence (Douie, 1932: 210). Yet Queen Giovanna showed no inclination to cooperate with the Inquisition, or to move independently against the heretics through the secular courts or by utilizing the military. These groups apparently survived into the 15th Century, and according to Lucas Wadding, a Franciscan chronicler of the

18th Century, they continued to multiply (1731: 101, cited in Reeves, 1969: 224). As in other parts of Italy, it seems that at this time the movement was so deeply rooted that it consisted not simply of a group of renegade hermits, but had infiltrated the nobility and secular priesthood. The Observantines,¹¹ who preached in Naples against the fraticelli during the 15th Century, record how fraticellian apocalyptic notions showed up among nobles and clergy:

...A Neapolitan noble...claimed to be the "Emperor of the Christians" and a secular priest...claimed to be Pope (Reeves, 1969: 225).

The political reason for Giovanna's mild attitude towards the fraticelli is not difficult to determine. Like the canonization of St. Louis of Toulouse during Robert's time, her tolerance was no doubt a means of securing the support of her subjects. The tactics of Louis of Durazzo during his rebellion of 1362 confirms this conclusion:

When...Luigi di Durazzo made his abortive attempt at rebellion, he regarded the popularity of the Fraticelli as an element of sufficient importance for him to publicly proclaim sympathy with them, to collect them around him, and have Tommaso of Aquino [the "pope" of one sect of Fraticelli] celebrate mass for him (Lea, 1901, Vol. III: 166).

Although there is insufficient evidence to maintain that Giovanna openly defended the often outlandish claims of the various sects of fraticelli in Naples, her liberality towards them would no doubt prove sufficient to deter the Conventuals of Assisi from meddling with the paintings of Poverty and the Joachimite Glory of St. Francis.

Queen Giovanna died in 1382, but by that time the Franciscan Order itself was undergoing transformations which would alter the attitudes of the friars, and indeed of the whole Establishment, towards Apostolic Poverty and Franciscan Joachimism.

II. The Mood for Church Reform and the Rise of the Observants.

A. The Fourteenth Century: 1. The Fraticelli.

The popularity of the fraticelli not only influenced the politics of the ruling class in Naples, but also led indirectly to massive changes in the Franciscan Order. The 'Veile' frescoes at Assisi may also owe their survival to these changes. It is therefore worthwhile to study the fraticellian movement in greater detail.

During the late 14th Century, the desire for reform among the faithful in Italy was aroused by a combination of factors: the corruption of the clergy; the location of the papacy at Avignon; and finally, the Great Schism. Criticism was often levelled at the hypocrisy of many Franciscans who took the vow of Poverty while seeking every means available to circumvent it.¹² Yet there was no orthodox means by which to implement reform, especially after John XXII's pronouncement that the belief in Evangelical Poverty was heretical. Reformist energies therefore flowed into heretical movements, especially into that of the fraticelli, because it offered the only alternative to internal reform: a shadow Church with its

own priesthood and pope observing strict poverty, from which the abuses of the established Church had supposedly been banished. This church denounced its rival as heretical for accepting the decretals of John XXII.

The papacy's first reaction was to suppress the fraticelli. It exploited every method. At the request of Clement VI, Richard Fitz--Ralf¹³ wrote a treatise¹⁴ condemning the Doctrine of Absolute Poverty and the point of view that John XXII was a heretic. The Inquisition stepped up its arrests and persecutions. Yet all its efforts failed to rid the peninsula of the heresy. As Lea puts it,

...the ardent thirst of poverty and the belief that in it lay the only assured path to salvation were too widely diffused to be repressed (1901, Vol. III: 170).

Support came from all strata: the nobility, the lower classes,¹⁵ and even from certain members of the clergy (Douie, 1932: 210), including some Conventuals.¹⁶ After the dismissal and excommunication of Minister General Michael of Cesena,

...A strong secret sympathy with the Fraticelli...extended not only among the people, but among the friars and occasionally even among the prelates, explaining the ability of the sectaries to maintain their existence from generation to generation in spite of almost unremitting persecution by the Inquisition (Lea, 1901, Vol. III: 159).

The Inquisition was frustrated by the number and political power of its adherents:

It is an interesting proof of the state of public opinion in Italy, that in spite of the thoroughly organized machinery of persecution, men who held Fraticellian doctrines were able to disseminate them almost publicly and to make numerous proselytes (Ibid.: 161-2).

2. The Observants

a. the Endorsement of Evangelical Poverty

The papacy, finally becoming aware that repression in itself was not working, began to change its approach towards asceticism among the Franciscans. The only method left to bring malcontents back into the fold was to accommodate their yearnings for reform. The ideal solution presented itself in the form of a small group of Franciscans which possessed a fervent desire to live in poverty but which decried the excesses of the fraticelli, and above all, wished to remain loyal to the established Church. After one attempt to gain papal acceptance failed in 1355 because of Conventual sabotage,¹⁷ these friars eventually obtained the consent of the Minister General in 1368 to occupy a hermitage at Brugliano. From this point on these zealots, known as the Observants, expanded rapidly, and in 1373, secured the blessing of the pope. At his death in 1390, their leader, Paul de' Trinci, "was already reckoned as a provincial within the Order" (Lea, 1901, Vol. III: 172). Through the Observants, the Church had provided "an organization in which ascetic longings could be safely gratified" (Ibid.: 179). The Observantine movement thus proved disastrous to the fraticelli:

So long as the Friars Minor seemed to be drifting from the Franciscan ideal there was bound to be some sympathy for those who clung tenaciously to it, even though their devotion may have been mixed with less desirable elements. The fact that a large body of the friars were seriously trying to restore something of the

idealism of the early days cut the ground from under the feet of the Fraticelli and led eventually to their extinction (Moorman, 1968: 456).

The success of the Observants in combatting the fraticelli¹⁸ had won for them the allegiance of the pope. Franciscan history was indeed repeating itself:

...The holiness of the new organization won for it the veneration of the people while the unflagging zeal with which it served the Holy See secured for it the favor of the popes precisely as the Mendicant Orders had done in the thirteenth century (Lea, 1901, Vol. III: 173).

The first clear statement of papal support, which was never again retracted, occurred in 1373, when Gregory XI permitted the establishment of ten Observant convents (Moorman, 1968: 372).¹⁹ It is doubtful if after this date the fresco of Poverty at Assisi required the protection of a powerful secular leader. Many Conventuals may have chafed at the favour shown the zealots, but the trend towards strict observance encouraged at this time by the pope and the Minister General would have made alteration or destruction of the painting unlikely.

b. the Acceptance of Elements of Joachimite Ideologies

It now remains to determine how Joachimite iconography²⁰ might have fared during this period. The attitude towards Joachimism was also changing within the Order. As Douie reminds us,

...the foundation of the Observantines, and other reform movements in the Franciscan Order itself, were a return to the ideals of the Spirituals, and were inspired by the memory of their sufferings and loyalty (1932: vii-viii).

These ideals included Joachimite sentiments. Angelo da Clareno became the subject of Observant admiration, chiefly because of his influence upon their first founder, Giovanni della Valle (Ibid.: 261). Most scholars accept Angelo da Clareno as the author of the Seven Tribulations, a Joachimite history of the Spirituals which viewed their sufferings as the trials of the Blessed during the dark days before the renovatio mundi. Even Felice Tocco, who does not accept the ascription to Clareno, describes him as "steeped in apocalyptic ideas" (1909: 285), and as a visionary who saw in the terrible ordeals of the Spirituals "the sign of the end at hand, and of the proximity of world revival" (Ibid.). Certainly the group of Spirituals to which he belonged in the early 1300's held a Joachimistic view of world history (Reeves, 1969: 194, 210).

The veneration for Spirituals of the early 14th Century spread to Conventuals. It is remarkable that as early as 1385, Bartolommeo da Pisa, the Order's proctor, could write his *liber de Conformitate Vite Beati Francisci ad Vitam Domini Jesu Christi*, which praised both Angelo da Clareno, and even Peter John Olivi (Douie, 1932: 262). In 1398 the Order honoured Bartolommeo for this work by presenting him with an original habit of St. Francis. Attitudes had certainly changed from those held during the first half of the Trecento.

B The Fifteenth Century: 1. The Observants.

As the fifteenth Century progressed, the influence of the Observants grew, and advanced from a position in which they were "not merely tolerated but favoured by the papacy" (Douie, 1932: 240). So successful were they in eliminating the fraticellian heresy that in 1426 Martin V appointed two of their leaders, St. John of Capistrano and James of the March, to head the Inquisition in Italy. (Lea, 1901, Vol. III: 174-5). Largely through their work the fraticelli were virtually eradicated by the end of the 15th Century (Ibid.: 175-8).²¹ The pope united the Observants to the Conventuals in 1430 (Douie, 1932: 246), and favoured the Observant point of view in his decrees. This practice led inevitably to ill feeling:

New Observantine houses arose, or those of the Conventuals were reformed and given over to them. It is not to be supposed that the Conventuals submitted quietly to the encroachments and triumphs of the hated ascetics....In 1435 the strife arose to such a pitch in France that Charles VII was obliged to appeal to the Council of Basle, which responded with a decree in favor of the Observantines (Lea, 1901, Vol. III: 172-3).

To a great extent the popularity of the Observantine movement revived the old bitterness of lax Conventuals towards the rigorists,²² with one critical difference: the Church had changed sides and now placed the full weight of its authority behind the rigorist party. Papal support could only bode well for the preservation of a fresco programme which exalted Franciscan poverty (and, as I shall illustrate, Joachimite

doctrines).

2. Joachimism Made Orthodox.

To a great extent, Spiritual, and specifically Joachimist, writings nourished the Observant movement. For example, the library of the famous 15th Century Observant, St. Bernardino of Siena, contained Joachim's *Liber Concordiae*, three works by Peter John Olivi, and one by Ubertino da Casale (Reeves, 1969: 478). St. Bernardino frequently incorporated Joachimite concepts into his sermons.

Douie provides several examples which demonstrate the shift in attitude within the Church towards formerly controversial Joachimite material:

It is characteristic of the new branch of the Franciscan Order towards the Spirituals that in his collection of the opinions of various early commentators on the Rule, Alexander Ariosti gives extracts both from the writings of St. Bonaventura and from those of Ubertino and Olivi. The change in feeling is still more apparent if we compare the chronicle of the German Observantine, Nicholas of Glassberger, written at the end of the fifteenth century, with that of the *Twenty-Four Generals*, written in the middle of the fourteenth, for the later chronicler makes ample allowance for the lofty motives of the Zealots, though he admits that they occasioned grave scandals in the Order, while the earlier one writes with great bitterness, especially against Olivi. Mariano da Firenze, writing almost at the same period as Glassberger, describes with complete impartiality the conflict between the Franciscan Order and John XXII. Even Jacopo della Marchia, the fierce and inveterate enemy of the Fraticelli, was quite ready to acknowledge and rejoice over the fame brought to the Franciscan Order by the learning and the other great qualities with which the founders of the sect had been endowed (1932: 263-64).

Moreover, in a sermon in 1449, John of the March mentioned Ubertino da Casale, Peter John Olivi, and Michael of Cesena among the distinguished personages of Franciscan history (1932 264, n.1).

It is noteworthy that the Church had reinstated Ubertino, of whom even Bartolommeo of Pisa had disapproved at the end of the 14th Century (Douie, 1932: 262). Perhaps this is partly because Ubertino's solution to the rigorist-Conventual conflict corresponded to the Observantine one: to accept the stricter party as "...the most perfect observance of the Rule and declare that of the Community to be a secondary, mitigated form (Lambert, 1961 b: 209). Observantine sympathy with Ubertino's point of view must have overcome distaste for him as an apostate from the Order.

The Church, however, did not absorb Joachimism indiscriminately, but carefully distinguished between heretical and orthodox interpretations. This segregation of Joachite ideas must have taken place by the late 14th Century, when the first evidence appeared that the Church approved of certain Franciscan Joachimites. The greatest wealth of Observantine interpretations of Joachimite doctrines, however, comes from the 15th Century. It is apparent from these examples that Joachimite doctrines were acceptable providing they could not be used to inspire hostility towards the status quo. On the other hand,

...Apocalyptic views held by heretics emphasized the destruction of the Roman Church and the more perfect spreading of

the Gospels by the new order of preachers than by the apostles in the second age (Reeves, 1969: 475).

Insisting upon the supremacy of a Third Testament over the New Testament remained heretical for the same reason. It sought to replace the Scripture upon which the present Church was built. Nicholas of Buldersdorf was condemned in 1446 at the Council of Basle because he professed this belief (Reeves, 1969: 476).

In a sermon from the early 15th Century, St. Bernardino recognized St. Francis as the Angel of the Sixth Seal, but cites St. Bonaventura as his authority (Bondatti, 1924: 161-62), and makes it clear that the Gospel which St. Francis bears is simply the Scripture, and not the Franciscan Rule (Reeves, 1969: 233). In so doing he placed a safe distance between himself and the apocalyptic expectations of the fraticelli (Ibid.).

The process by which the Church rendered acceptable Ubertino's Arbor Vitae provides another example of how the establishment assimilated previously heretical treatises. By the 15th Century this tract was considered among "the old and tried manuals of devotion" (Douie, 1932: 264). But the parts of it which criticized the papacy were omitted):

...The fifth book, containing the author's Joachimite speculations is considerably mutilated, the eighth chapter being generally altogether omitted, perhaps because of the language used with regard to Boniface VIII and Benedictus XI (Ibid.).

The success of the Observants depended primarily upon their ability to harmonize the practice of poverty and

Joachimite apocalyptic belief with existing Church dogma. The Joachimite themes of the 'Vele' frescoes, therefore, now became innocuous through the Church's reinterpretation of the doctrines expressed there. The Church had sanctioned both the way of poverty, and the identification of St. Francis as the Angel of the Sixth Seal. Apocalyptic predictions once used as evidence against the established Church were now employed to cast a favourable light upon its future and to reaffirm its authority. This idea was fully exploited in the Church's offensive against the Protestants during the Reformation.

C. The Sixteenth Century: Joachimism and Church Reform

Both the outcry of devout Catholics against abuses practised by the clergy, and the accusations of Protestant reformers increased the urgency of Church reform during the 16th Century. Probably in response to this need, Leo X subordinated the Conventuals to the Observants (Lea, 1901, Vol. III: 173). Luther's theses were posted at Wittenberg in the same year, and they may have played a part in Leo's decision. Clement VII (1523-34) carried the policy to extremes by officially creating a reformist branch of the reformist branch, appropriately called the Minori Osservanti Riformati (Spila da Subiaco, 1901: 342).²³ The ascetics were therefore clearly ascendant during this century, for the Church's need to purify itself had intensified. One would expect that in such an age the Catholic authorities would wish to highlight such traditions as the Franciscan vow of poverty.

Joachimite themes, as I have suggested, took on a new significance in the verbal battle between Catholics and Protestants.²⁴ Both sides resorted to Joachimite prophecies, often giving contradictory interpretations to the imagery. According to the Protestant Giacompo Brocardo,

The Pope is...Antichrist and the Church of Rome the Babylonish Woman. The bottomless pit is the Inquisition and the locusts which rise from it, the Jesuits. The seven Angels with trumpets stand for things spoken by the new prophets, such as Joachim, Savonarola, and Luther, while the Angel with the Eternal Evangel is the preaching touching the Lord's Second Coming foretold by Joachim...(Reeves, 1969: 498).

The Jesuit St. Osorius, however,

...Hailed [St. Ignatius] as the Fifth Angel of the Apocalypse...at the sound of whose trumpet there fell a great star from heaven. The star is Luther and the army of locusts which fights for him is the whole pernicious sect of Protestant heretics (Ibid.: 107).

The Church, in turn, sanctioned this reading of apocalyptic events:

This identification was officially adopted at the Council of Tatra in 1602, where Loyola was again referred to as the Fifth Angel of the Apocalypse (Ibid.).

Once held principally by the Franciscans, Joachimite ideas were now appropriated by other Orders, principally the Jesuits, who were new recruits in the struggle against the Protestants. Many saw the Jesuits as the

...new evangelical men [of St. Vincent's prophecy] who, succeeding to the place forfeited by the Franciscans and Dominicans for their sins, would live in true evangelical simplicity, proclaiming the Gospel throughout the world before the Second Advent (Ibid.: 277).

Joachimite prophecies thus ran the gamut from heresy in the 14th Century to orthodoxy in the 15th to weaponry against heresy in the 16th Century. One further aspect of orthodox apocalyptic thought of the Reformation period reveals how completely the Church came full circle. Ironically, many Churchmen began to perceive Catholicism as a persecuted body, just as the Spiritual rebels had thought of their group in the 14th Century. Consequently, Catholic apocalyptic predictions promised better times in an Age of Gold "in which all dissentient heretic voices will be silenced" (Reeves, 1969: 471). The writing of Bartholomew Holzhauser, a 17th Century commentator on the Apocalypse, echoes the longing of the Spirituals for release from present tribulations in a future Age of Perfection. Reeves summarizes his view:

For the present the calamities, the depredations of the heretics,...and the pestilences of war must be borne. God in his goodness had always sent consolations and in this age there were four: the Society of Jesus, the work of the Council of Trent, the spread of the Catholic faith through new worlds, and the provision of Catholic emperors such as Ferdinand II. But the real renovatio must await the descent of the angel amictus nube, the great monarch, and the holy pontiff to come. Then would be accomplished the unity of a Catholic Christendom which was the dream of so many...(Ibid.: 472).

It is apparent, then, that once it was accepted by the papacy, Joachimism was never again regarded as a threat to Church authority, but rather became part of its verbal arsenal. The same may be said of the concept of Apostolic Poverty. One

can conclude, therefore, that from the time of the incorporation of these doctrines into Church dogma, the subversive nature of the 'Vele' frescoes ceased to exist, and with it the motivation to alter them.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis, I attempt to explain the presence in San Francesco, Assisi, of a fresco cycle that from iconographic evidence appears to have been of Spiritual Franciscan inspiration. As such, it would have been repugnant to the authorities under whose jurisdiction the basilica lay, making its location and survival something of a mystery. Having linked the frescoes to the heretical Spiritual Franciscan vision of an ecclesia pauperum, I have endeavoured to throw light on the problem of their existence through an examination of Church and secular politics of the early Trecento.

For I believe that the anomaly of their appearance in the most hallowed place of the Franciscans can best be explained through examination of circumstances surrounding their sponsorship. I conclude that they are the product not only of the profound split within the Franciscan Order, but of a division in a wider political relationship--that is, between their probable sponsor, King Robert of Naples, and Pope John XXII. A lifelong supporter of the Spirituels, Robert broke his 20-year alliance with the papacy in 1329, after which he was free to give full reign to his sympathies, which had hitherto been muted in the interests of maintaining papal support. A pro-Spiritual commission at Assisi could simultaneously express his long suppressed personal convictions and declare his

independence of and opposition to the pontiff.

Robert's sponsorship of works promoting Spiritual ideas was not unprecedented: in the period following his break with the pope, he commissioned overt Spiritual works at Naples. The more circumspect handling of the subjects at San Francesco marks the difference between Robert's absolute monarchy in Naples and his more limited authority at Assisi. The Conventuals' acceptance of the frescoes was facilitated by the use of allegory, the ambiguity of which enabled Franciscan officials to overlook elements critical of the Order and the Church.

The argument for Robert's patronage of the 'Vele' cycle is further enhanced by the fact that Giotto and his workshop, who are thought to have carried out the commission, were in the king's employ between 1328 and 1334. Giotto's Neapolitan sojourn therefore falls within the period of Robert's anti-papal activity. Robert's Spiritual leanings, coupled with his antipathy towards the pope and the presence of the author of the frescoes, coincided at one historical juncture to provide us with all the conditions for the appearance of the frescoes: the motivation, the opportunity, and the instrument.

The frescoes of the 'Vele' as analysed in this study add to our knowledge of the obscure subject of Spiritual iconography. Their appearance at such a renowned place of pilgrimage leads to the possibility that they formed part of, or even nurtured, a pictorial tradition among the Spirituals,

as one might surmise from the adoption of the theme of the Marriage of St. Francis to Lady Poverty on a seal used by Angelo Clàreno in 1334.

One would expect that such a tradition would have flourished not only under the auspices of Robert of Naples, but also under those of pro-Spiritual rulers in Majorca, Sicily, Aragon and Bavaria. Although Bologna has initiated research on the figurative language of the Spirituals in his definitive work on Neapolitan painting during the Angevin era, the question of its formation and development in Europe has yet to be undertaken as a subject in its own right.



Figure 1. Allegory of Poverty. Giotto or his School. Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi. Ca. 1329-1334.



Figure 2. Allegory of Chastity. Giotto or his School. Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi. Ca. 1329-1334.



Figure 3. Allegory of Obedience. Giotto or his School.
Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi. Ca. 1329-1334.

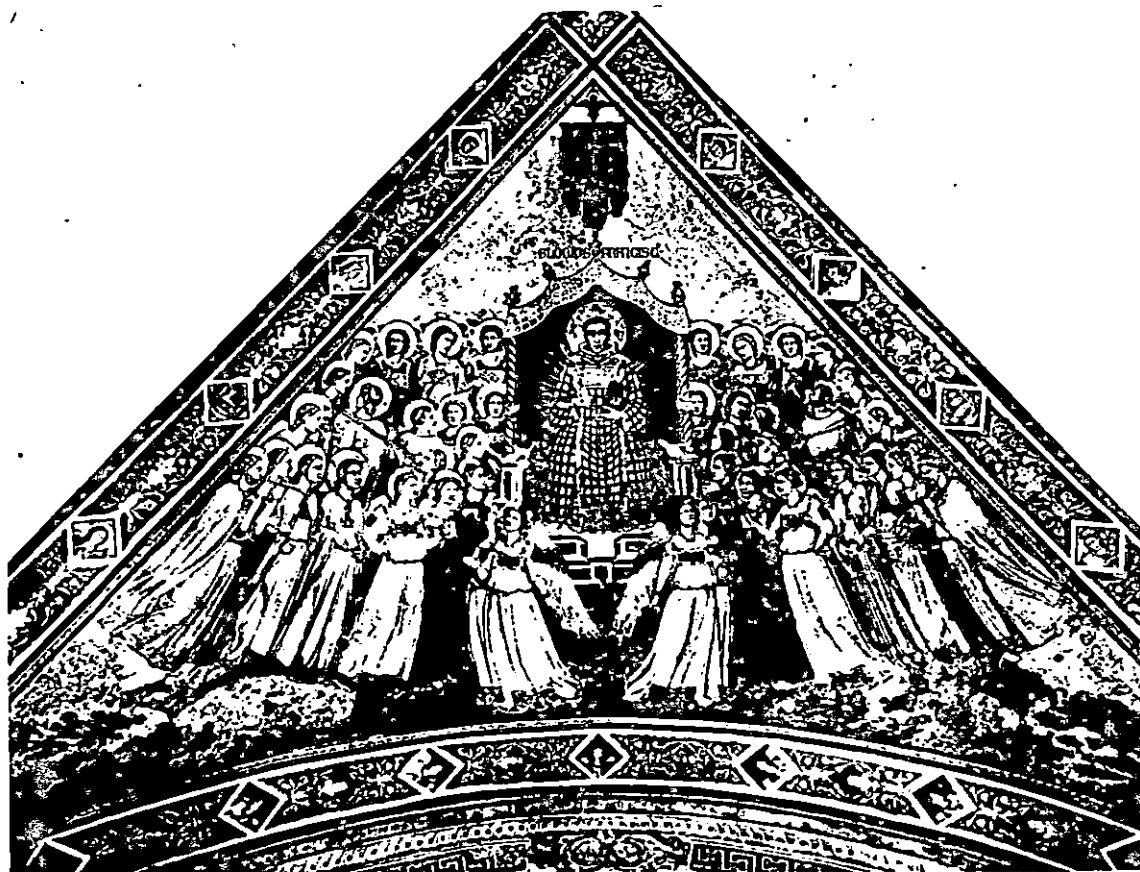


Figure 4. St. Francis in Glory. Giotto or his School. Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi. Ca. 1329-1334.

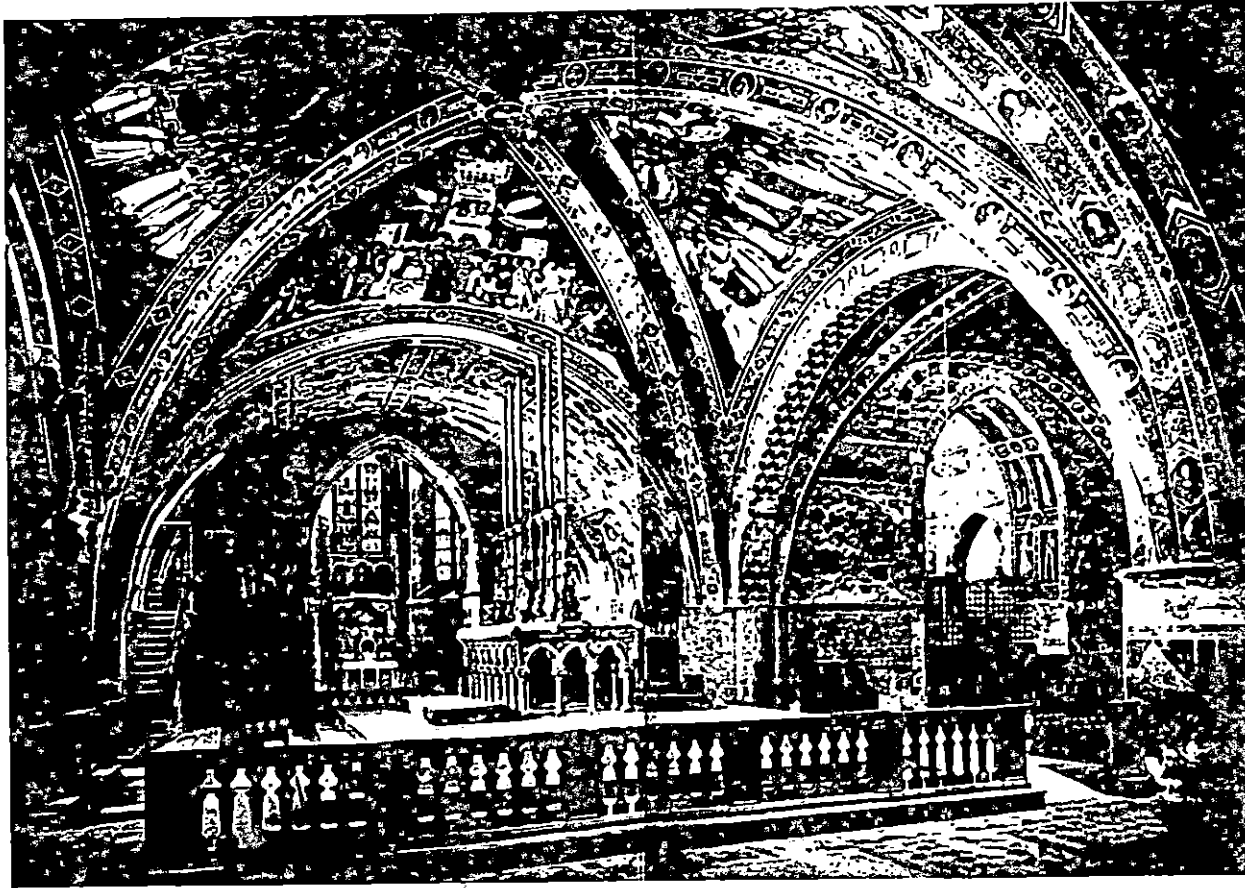


Figure 5. The Franciscan Allegories and St. Francis in Glory. Giotto or his School. Crossing, Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi. Ca. 1329-1334.



Figure 6a. Chastity. Giotto and his School. Bardi Chapel, Santa Croce, Florence. Ca. 1317-1325.



Figure 6b. Obedience. Giotto and his School. Bardi Chapel, Santa Croce, Florence. Ca. 1317-1325.



Figure 7. The Three Franciscan Vows, and St. Francis in Glory.- Puccio Capanna. Vault of Choir, San Francesco, Pistoia. Ca. 1340-1343.



Figure 8. Altarpiece of St. Louis of Toulouse with Scenes from his Life. Simone Martini. Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, Napoli. 1317.



Figure 9. St. Louis Accepts the Bishopric of Toulouse and Requests to be Received into the Franciscan Order. Predella panel, Altarpiece of St. Louis of Toulouse (figure 8).



Figure 10. St. Louis's Public Profession of the Franciscan Vows and Acceptance of the Bishopric of Toulouse. Predella panel, Altarpiece of St. Louis of Toulouse (figure 8).



Figure 11. St. Louis Serving the Poor at Table. Predella panel, Altarpiece of St. Louis of Toulouse (figure 8).



Figure 12. The Death of St. Louis of Toulouse. Predella panel, Altarpiece of St. Louis of Toulouse (figure 8).



Figure 13. St. Louis Saves the Life of a Child. Predella panel, Altarpiece of St. Louis of Toulouse (figure 8).



Figure 14. Figure Symbolizing St. Francis as the Angel of the Sixth Seal. Giotto or his School. Lozenge from the border framing the 'Vele' Frescoes, Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi. Ca. 1329-1334.

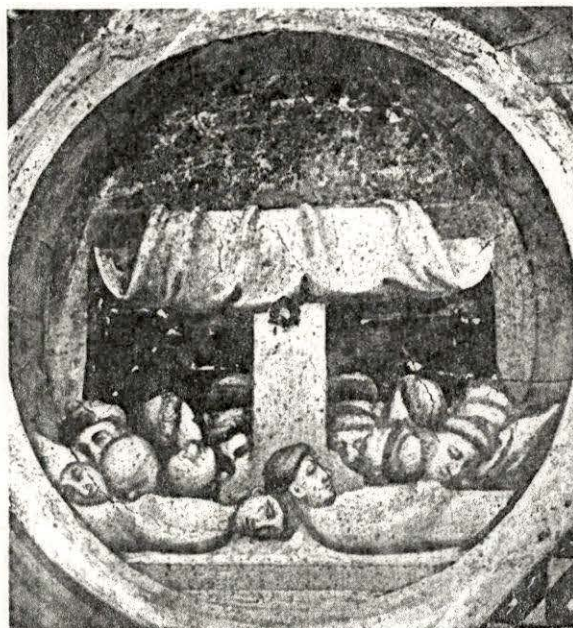


Figure 15. The Vision of the Fifth Seal. Giotto or his School. Roundel from the border framing the 'Vele' frescoes, Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi. Ca. 1329-1334.



Figure 16. Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes. Giotto or his School? Chapter house, Santa Chiara, Naples. Ca. 1329-1334?



Figure 17. Madonna and Child. Tempera on linen. Maestro delle Tempere Francescane. Museo del Duomo, Salerno. Ca. 1329-1343.



Figure 18. Stigmata of St. Francis. Tempera on linen.
Maestro delle Tempere Francescane. Museo del Duomo,
Salerno. Ca. 1329-1343.



Figure 19. Flagellation of Christ. Tempera on linen.
Maestro delle Tempere Francescane. Museo del Duomo,
Salerno. Ca. 1329-1343.



Figure 20. Crucifixion of Christ. Tempera on linen.
Maestro delle Tempere Francescane. Museo del Duomo,
Salerno. Ca. 1329-1343.



Figure 21. St. Francis Gives the Rule to the First and Second Orders of his Religion. Pietro Orimano? Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, Napoli. Ca. 1329-1343.



Figure 22. St. Louis of Toulouse. Roberto Odorisio? Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence. Ca. 1328-1343.



Figure 23. Map. Italy Under Charles of Anjou, ca. 1270.

FOOTNOTES

Introduction

1. Giorgio Vasari's attribution of the 'Vele' frescoes to Giotto (1927, Vol. I: 69) has been accepted by Joseph Crowe and Giovanni Cavalcaselle (1903, Vol. II; 30-1), Beda Kleinschmidt (1915: 184-90), and Martin Gosebruch (1958: 290-1).
Others, however, believe the works to be the product of Giotto's pupils (for example: Venturi, 1906: 19-34; Van Marle, 1924, Vol. III: 201; Toesca, 1951: 612-13; Previtali, 1967: 98-105; Bologna, 1969: 217). They describe the principal contributor variously as the Maestro delle Vele, the Maestro delle Virtu Francescane, the Parente di Giotto, or the Maestro oblungo.
2. The Terminus post quem for the decoration of the crossing has been narrowed to the period 1303-7: first, because of technical proof that the right transept decoration preceded that of the crossing (Maginnis, 1975: 515); and second, because there is also stylistic evidence that the St. Nicholas Chapel in the right transept was not begun before 1303-4 (Gardner, 1969: 301), but was completed by 1307 (Meiss, 1960: 3-4).
The 'Vele' frescoes are dated some time in the first half of the Trecento; the latest date I have encountered is that of Martin Gosebruch, who believes the frescoes were painted after 1334, during Cardinal Jacopo Stefaneschi's period in office as Cardinal Protector (1334-43).
3. The word "allegory" had a more precise meaning in literature of the Middle Ages, being a specific literary form comprised of several different modes, each with its own set of rules. It is possible that allegories in painting adhered to forms similar to the literary ones. When they appear in this text, however, the term "allegory" and its derivatives are used with the more general modern meaning as given in the Concise Oxford Dictionary: "Narrative description of a subject under guise of another suggestively similar..." (1964: 32).
4. The subject of the Vows, however, does not seem to have been a particularly popular one in the first half of the

14th Century. I have been able to find only two other renditions: one in the vault of the Bardi Chapel (ca. 1317-25-see figure 6), Santa Croce, Florence, and the other in the choir of San Francesco, Pistoia (painted between 1340 [Chiappelli, 1929: 216] and 1343 [Crowe and Cavalcaselle, 1903: 149]--see figure 7). In the Bardi Chapel, only two virtues, Chastity and Obedience, remain. The fresco of Poverty and that in the fourth vault compartment are so badly damaged as to be unrecognizable. The later example at Pistoia is in much better condition, and here a Glorification of St. Francis does accompany the three virtues. Introduction of the subject, however, may have been inspired by the Glorification at Assisi. At Pistoia and in the Bardi Chapel the allegories do not take on the importance that they assume at Assisi, being restricted to half-figures within medallions.

5. This and all other quotations from sources in Italian and French were translated by me, and therefore are my responsibility.
6. With the exception of Pope Celestine, who in any case held office for less than a year. Clement V also took up the cause of Spirituals in Provence, but apparently with little effect upon the general strength of the Conventuals, because a pro-Conventual Minister General Gonsalvus of Valboa (1304-13) remained in power during most of Clement's period in office (1305-14).
7. There are inscriptions beneath the allegories, but these in themselves are inconclusive. See Appendix I.

Chapter I.

1. The Bardi Chapel version may have been earlier (depending on when one dates the allegories in the Chapel and at Assisi), but Poverty, like Chastity in the vault near the entrance and Obedience over the left wall, probably appeared there only as a half-figure. The Bardi Chapel would have offered no prototype, however, for the special arrangement of the vows and the Glorification of St. Francis adopted at Assisi. Had the Bardi family wished Giotto to introduce a programme with emphasis upon Poverty and the Glorification, as at Assisi, it is unlikely that the artist would have chosen to place the two most important themes in neighbouring vaults, thus creating an unbalanced composition and sacrificing a dramatic alignment along the east-west axis.

2. Millard Meiss states that the theme of the Marriage of St. Francis to Poverty first appeared in the fourteenth century at Assisi (1951: 109), but he provides no precise date for the fresco. Nevertheless, I have been unable to locate any other example of this subject in the first half of the 14th Century. To my knowledge, the following are the only representations of the subject from the second half of the 14th Century and beginning of the 15th:
 - (a) left panel, Rinuccini altarpiece, by Giovanni del Biondo. Dated 1379. The panel contains a full-length St. Francis and a tiny figure of Poverty who hovers over the saint's right hand and accepts the ring (Rinuccini Chapel, Santa Croce, Florence. Referred to in Thode, 1885: 486).
 - (b) a panel by O. Nelli, b. 1375, d. 1444 (Vatican Picture Gallery, #196. Listed in Kaftal, 1952: 393 pt.1).
 - (c) the well-known panel by Sassetta. Dated 1437-44 (Musée Condé, Chantilly. Listed in Kaftal, 1952: 393 pt.1).
 - (d) Vasari mentions the following fresco by Lorenzo di Bicci (Van Marle points out that Vasari lists works as by Lorenzo di Bicci that are actually by his son, Bicci di Lorenzo, whose paintings with one exception were done after 1423 [Van Marle, 1927, Vol. IX: 4]):

By his hand is the tabernacle in fresco which is beside the nunnery of Foligno and the Madonna and saints over the door of the church of that nunnery, among them being a St. Francis espousing Poverty (Vasari, 1927, Vol. I: 196).

I find no description of this painting in Van Marle's extensive section on Bicci di Lorenzo, and no other work I have consulted on the subject indicates that

it still exists. Therefore I assume that if the painter did the work it must have been destroyed.

3. Jacopone describes in verse how "Francis and Poverty meet each other in a wood and are espoused..." (Toesca, 1951: 614).
4. In the Divine Comedy. Paradiso XI, II. 58-78.
5. For a very full treatment of Dante's Spiritual Franciscanism see Cosmo, 1898: 49-82.
6. Dante probably consulted the *Legenda Maior* before writing his verses on the Mystic Marriage, as his imagery is very similar to that of St. Bonaventura.
 I can discover no evidence that the representation of the Marriage to Poverty at Assisi derives from the description in the Divine Comedy. I agree with Beda Kleinschmidt's opinion that both versions probably developed out of the same earlier sources of the legend (1915, Vol. II: 191). Kleinschmidt refuted Giulio Salvadori's argument (Salvadori, 1911) that the 'Vele' frescoes in the Lower Church were inspired by Dante's writings (Kleinschmidt, 1915, Vol. II: 195-8), while several scholars have accepted Salvadori's view (Toesca, 1951: 614; Gosebruch, 1967: 172; Moorman, 1968: 279). I have been unable to obtain Salvadori's article, but according to Kleinschmidt's summary of the study (*Ibid.*: 192-5, 197), the connections Salvadori makes between Dante's thought and details of the fresco are intriguing but tenuous. According to Kleinschmidt, the iconography is closer to Bonaventura's imagery than to Dante's (*Ibid.*: 195-8). I incline to this view, although I believe that the frescoes diverge from Bonaventura's ideas in several important ways that are characteristic of the split between Spiritual and Conventual ideologies.
7. In the choir of San Francesco, Pistoia, the arrangement of the four themes was not that employed in the Bardi Chapel, but the one adopted at Assisi, with Poverty opposite the Glory. Unfortunately, I cannot determine from the photograph I possess of these choir vaults at Pistoia whether or not they follow the Assisan plan of alligning Poverty and the Glorification along the nave axis and of locating the Glorification opposite the worshipper.
8. St. Bonaventura's *Legenda* was written to replace this biography (Moorman, 1968: 284), because of circumstances upon which I shall elaborate later.

9. In a note to his translation of this prayer, Montgomery Carmichael expresses doubt as to whether the prayer was actually written by St. Francis himself (1901: 192). The earliest known version of it appears in Ubertino da Casale's *Arbor Vitae Crucifixae* of 1305. The author's identity is perhaps unimportant to this argument, however, for Carmichael himself concedes,
- ...Whether written by St. Francis or not, there can be no doubt that when he prayed, he often prayed in this fashion. It most faithfully reflects his spirit and ideas... (Ibid.: 193-4).

The Dante scholar Umberto Cosmo is of the opinion that the source of the mystic marriage of St. Francis to Lady Poverty was the immediate circle of St. Francis (1898: 54). In any case, the Spirituals of the 14th Century may well have believed that St. Francis or one of his first followers authored the prayer.

Chapter II

1. Because of the absence of extant examples, it is impossible to determine whether or not it was customary to combine the three Franciscan allegories with the Glorification of the saint for this type of vault decoration. If the Glory was once present in the Bardi Chapel, it has long since disappeared. The Pistoian frescoes, while including a Glory, probably follow Assisan ones chronologically, and thus may imitate their prototypes (see Chapter 1, n.7).
2. The apse of the choir located just behind the allegories once contained apocalyptic subjects, and may have formed part of the same commission as the 'Vele' decoration. According to Vasari, the apse held a "Heavenly Glory" with a crucifixion at its centre and a border of angels "holding one of those churches of which St. John the Evangelist writes in the Apocalypse" (Vasari, 1927, Vol. I: 96).
3. Noted by Tocco, 1884: 450.
4. Frederick Heer pinpoints the origin of the Joachimite party among Franciscans "when in 1241 the abbot of the Order founded by Joachim fled to the Franciscan convent at Pisa, fearing the destruction of his own house by Frederick II" (1961: 236). But contact may have occurred before this time, as David Jeffery mentions a commentary on Isaiah of 1240 by an English friar, Brother Aymon, which contains Joachimite ideas (1975:70).
5. Thought to have been John de Caulibus of San Gimignano (Moorman, 1968: 261).
6. See passage from the *Legenda Maior*, 25-6.
7. Dante placed both St. Bonaventura and Joachim in Paradise (*Paradiso* XII, ll. 139-4). Heer believes that Dante's visions of Heaven were based upon Spiritual Joachimite ideas:

Dante's constructive purpose was to set Christendom on the right road to the apocalypse. In the 'last days' the Church would be refashioned into a Church of the spirit. Beatrice, symbol of light, and the incarnation of this Joachimite-Franciscan vision of a spiritual Church, proclaims its victory by her triumphal entry into Paradise. On earth this new spring-time, the 'second Easter' of mankind

(to use Dante's own expression) is ushered in by the descent into Italy of the Emperor Henry VII (1961: 303).

Harold Goad reminds us, however, that St. Bonaventura, persecutor of the Joachimites, also appears in Dante's *Paradiso*, and that therefore Dante valued above all other considerations of a reconciliation between the factions (1926: 253). But Dante compels Bonaventura to admit Joachim's gift of prophecy, so his motive may have been one of revenge rather than desire to proclaim the need for harmony between the warring factions of the Order. In Canto XI of the *Paradiso*, Dante not only admires St. Francis's philosophy concerning poverty, but heaps scorn upon lax members of the Order.

Some truly, boding evil likelihood,
cleave closely to the Shepherd, but so few
that scanty cloth could furnish every hood
(*Paradiso* XI, ll. 130-2).

In Canto XXII, St. Benedict voices similar sentiments:
Peter made his beginning without gold
or silver, I with fast and orison,
and Francis humbly set about his fold.
And scanning the beginning of each one,
and then where it has wandered, thou wilt see
how white has been converted into dun (ll. 88-93).

8. It is an interesting phenomenon that apocalyptic beliefs tend to flourish among oppressed peoples, as for example among the Jews, who "developed the form with vivid imagery, to bolster up the courage of their people and convince them that they would emerge victorious (Sill, 1975: 4).
9. It should be borne in mind that Antal dates the vault decoration in the 1320's (1947: 174).
10. Frederick Antal's statement is a little misleading in that other representations of scenes from the Apocalypse outside Florentine art do appear during the 14th Century, so it was probably only in certain contexts that apocalyptic references would prove disconcerting to the Church. Raimond Van Marle records examples of apocalyptic representations (Vol. VI, 1925: 64) in the Peruzzi Chapel, Santa Croce, Florence; in the apse of the baptistry, Padua; above the chancel arch in Santa Maria in Porto Fuori, Ravenna; on the right side of the nave in the Abbey of Pomposa, Ferrara; and in the sacristy of S. Domenico, Fabriano. In addition, there is a panel in the Erbach von Furstenau collection which bears apocalyptic scenes (information on this panel is available in Von Furstenau, 1937). Most noteworthy among these examples is the series of 16 scenes from the Apocalypse in the Abbey of Pomposa at Ferrara. But on

these frescoes Van Marle does conclude that such development of illustrations from the Apocalypse is very rare..." (Vol. IV, 1924: 492).

It is revealing that of all the examples which Van Marle cites, only one is found in a Franciscan church: the visions of St. John on Patmos in the Peruzzi Chapel. Moreover, there was an active group of Spirituals at Santa Croce during the late 13th and early 14th Centuries (Antal, 1947: 70). Ubertino da Casale resided there, and Peter John Olivi served as lector at the convent in 1287 (Reeves, 1969: 200). Spirituals remained at Santa Croce until 1312, when harassment became such that Spirituals from Florence, and Siena

...endeavoured...to occupy the monasteries where they were in the majority--at Carmignano near Siena; they were however expelled, imprisoned and excommunicated (Antal, 1947: 71).

Perhaps members of the Peruzzi family were among the laity influenced by this group. Two influential banking families of Siena, the Tolomei and Piccolomini, were Spiritual adherents (Larner, 1971: 59), so although bankers depended upon a healthy mercantile system, they were not necessarily hostile to Spiritual Franciscan principles. See Chapter III, n.6.

11. The passage from St. Bonaventura's *Legenda Maior* which I quote later (23-4) expresses this belief.
12. One angel is marked on only one hand, and has no wound on the side. According to Kleinschmidt, this representation may refer instead to Revelations 14: 9 (1915: 184).
13. Bondatti must have overlooked Beda Kleinschmidt's work on the apocalyptic figures, for he continues:

I note that this fact has escaped...art scholars who, even if they describe these apocalyptic angels, ignore however the Joachimite legend with which it is connected (1924: 163 n.2).

To my knowledge, however, no scholar since the publication of Bondatti's work has commented upon Joachimite ideas in the 'Vele' paintings. Yet neither Kleinschmidt nor Bondatti entertained the possibility that these ideas could have come from the Spirituals. Martin Gosebruch makes only a passing reference to Kleinschmidt's interpretation of the angel exhibiting the Stigmata (1969: 162).
14. There are apocalyptic scenes in the left transept of the Upper Church by Cimabue (completed by 1296--Van Marle, 1923, Vol. I: 461), but no attempt was made to link them to specifically Franciscan scenes.

15. Tocco suspects that "The charge against John on the basis of his Joachimite leanings was probably an excuse to bring down the head of the Spirituals" (1884: 481). In any case, its effects were twofold: Joachimism became suspect in the eyes of the Church; and the Spirituals clung more tenaciously to their Joachimite prophecies, which became more radical during the 14th Century as the punitive measures of the Church increased.
16. This work is usually attributed to Angelo Clareno, but Tocco believes that it was probably written by a succession of Spiritual authors, the first of whom may have been a companion of St. Francis (1884: 420).
17. The Conventual Alexander of Bremen, although emphasizing voluntary poverty as the prime quality of the new Jerusalem in his *Expositio in Apocalypsim* (Reeves, 1969: 178), is not really exceptional in that his work was written before 1256. The condemnation in this year of Gerard's Introduction to the Everlasting Gospels imposed an inflexible ideological barrier between the Spirituals and Conventuals. Because Friar Alexander's work was not declared heretical (*Ibid.*)--although from the author's wording there appears to be some uncertainty about this --Marjorie Reeves concludes that "when treated moderately, the Joachimist role of the two new Orders could be assimilated without difficulty" (*Ibid.*: 168). But if the *Expositio* was not called into question, perhaps it would have been had it been written after 1256.
18. Henry Thode suggests that the origin of this motif might be a poem by Jacopone da Todi, entitled *O Francesco Poverello*, which contains the following lines:
 O Francis, the pauper, the new patriarch,
 You carry a new banner marked with the cross
 (cited in Thode, 1885: 497).
19. See Appendix I.

Chapter III

1. Thought to have been painted anywhere from ca. 1291 to ca. 1350 (Martindale and Baccheschi, 1966: 90).
2. Including the one originally appearing in the severely damaged scene of the Canonization.
3. The doctrine "which claimed that restriction in use was as integral a part of Franciscan poverty as the renunciation of dominion" (Lambert, 1961b: 150). Gregory IX's bull of 1230, Quo Elongati, required the renunciation of dominion, but not of use.
4. Exit proscribed only dominion over property. However, it did include a general warning about the Franciscan use of material goods (Lambert, 1961b: 153). Nevertheless, the extent of use is left to the discretion of provincial ministers.
5. I cannot agree with Harold Goad's suggestion that the 'Vele' frescoes were commissioned during this period, under the generalship of Giovanni di Muro (1296-1304--1926; 230). Having forced Raymond Gaufridi's resignation, Pope Boniface had sought, and obtained in Giovanni, a Minister "of austere life but totally out of sympathy with the Spirituals" (Moorman, 1968: 196). He fulfilled the Pope's expectations by harshly suppressing the Spirituals of Provence. At the Council of Lyons in 1299, Giovanni condemned Olivi's writings and ordered them burnt (Tocco, 1884: 504). During his generalship,
 - ...more than three hundred of Olivi's followers were punished either for refusing to surrender copies of his books or for pressing the teaching about usus pauper beyond the point to which it was legitimate to go. Some were imprisoned, others condemned to exile or to expulsion from the Order (Moorman, 1968: 197).
 Giovanni maintained that Franciscan bishops need not observe 'poor use', as Peter John Olivi had insisted (Pasztor, 1955: 25). Needless to say, the Minister gave no support to the Angevin application for Louis of Toulouse's canonization (Ibid.: 26).
 - Goad's conclusion may have been influenced by Vasari, who asserts that Giotto
 - ...proceeded to Assisi...whither he was summoned by Fra Giovanni di Mura della Marca, at that time general of the friars of St. Francis (Vasari, 1927, Vol. I: 68).

Vasari adds that after painting in the Upper Church, Giotto began works in the Lower Church, decorating ...the upper part of the walls beside the high altar, and all four sections of the vaulting over the spot where the body of St. Francis lies... (Vasari, 1927, Vol. I: 69).

Goad may also have been influenced by the earlier research of Crowe and Cavalcaselle, who accepts Vasari's statement that Giovanni di Muro summoned Giotto to Assisi (1903: 30). However, Vasari is not noted for the accuracy of his information of 14th Century painting, including that of the Lower Church of San Francesco. For instance, he attributes to Puccio Capanna the frescoes in the St. Martin Chapel by Simone Martini (Ibid.: 83), and to Cimabue, the Crucifixion in the south transept by Pietro Lorenzetti (Ibid.: 126).

6. The author also raises another interesting point, that the conflict between Spirituals and Conventuals was part of a continuous class war. The Order received large bequests from the wealthy, especially in the form of land, and many who wished to benefit from these holdings were attracted into the Order (1947: 71). Antal therefore suggests an alliance between the upper middle class and the Conventuals. On the other hand:

The adherents of the Spirituals were chiefly the lower sections of the population who in this period of the rise and victory of the upper bourgeoisie looked to the future for the realisation of their hopes, or at least felt that the champions of a propertyless Church were in some way akin to themselves (Ibid.: 70).

Hans Baron also recognizes the economic element in the Franciscan movement, although he describes it less precisely.

The Franciscan demand for evangelical poverty developed among the citizens into an early intellectual reaction against an age in process of becoming capitalist (1938: 4).

Yet the movement was really not so clear-cut as that, and often extended beyond the boundaries of class. The reaction Baron mentions did not appear exclusively among the lower classes, but also among those who stood to profit most by the advance of capitalism. As John Larner observes,

Unfortunately for system-builders, human beings are much more complex than their immediate class interests, and among the patrons and supporters of the Spirituals one finds such wealthy and

powerful figures as the Sieneese banking families of the Tolomei and Piccolomini, King Frederick II of Sicily, and that arch-ally of the Florentine plutocracy, King Robert of Naples and his wife Sancia (1971: 59).

7. Siezed by the Spirituals after Pope Clement's death in 1314 (Douie, 1967: 611).
8. Pope John legalized the alteration of rulings of one pope by another in Quia Nonnunquam, 1322 (Moorman, 1968: 315-16).
9. Probably written in 1333 (Moorman, 1968: 324).

Chapter IV

1. The sermon, however, must have been written after 1317, the year of St. Louis's canonization.
2. See Chapter 1, 10-13).
3. Edith Pasztor has left us in no doubt as to St. Louis's total conversion to Spiritual Franciscanism. Pasztor uses as her chief sources the reports of two of St. Louis's Spiritual companions, Francesco Brun and Guglielmo di Cornillon. The saint's desire to refuse the temporal privileges of the Bishopric of Toulouse; his humble dress; his refusal to use vessels of precious metals but only those made of the rudest materials; his begging for alms; and his death through neglect of his physical well-being are all carefully documented by the author (1955: 17-18; 41-42). Pasztor also cites the Florentine History of Ricordano Malispini (a contemporary of St. Louis), who describes the saint as a "'Fraticello of the poor life'" (Ibid.: 59).
4. See Chapter III, 37, for the appropriate passage from the bull.
5. The Emperor's Italian campaign as it relates to papal and Angevin politics will be studied in the next chapter.
6. The Chapter General in Bologna, 1328, "defied the papal wishes and re-elected Michael" (Moorman, 1968: 319). By 1329, however, when another Chapter was held at Paris, the Order had submitted:

Those who attended did what they were told; they endorsed the papal declarations about evangelical poverty; they deposed Michael as a heretic; and they elected as the Minister General Gerald Odonis...who was known to be a safe man, a close friend of John XXII, and a supporter of those who desired further relaxations in the daily life of the friars. (Ibid.: 321).

7. Opinions vary as to the date of Philip's arrival in Naples. Baddeley claims that he headed the group of Spirituals at Castelnuovo, the royal residence, in the 1320's (1897: 154). Douie places him there as early as 1318 (1932: 153 n.2); and Bologna states that he did not arrive until 1329 (1969: 254). Perhaps the prince took up residence in Naples at two different times.

8. "A pejorative term...applied to tertiaries and others of either sex associated with Olivi and other Spiritual Franciscans, chiefly in the Franciscan province of Provence, with exaggerated views on the place of poverty..." (Lambert, 1977: 381).
9. A Spiritual sect, led by Angelo Clareno.
10. Tocco believes that the ideas in this sermon were inspired by Philip's famous mentor, Angelo Clareno (1909: 286), leader of the Brothers of the Poor Life, who had settlements in Naples as well as in Rome and the March of Ancona (Douie, 1932: 210). Tocco refers to a letter from Angelo to Philip in which the former accuses Pope John of heresy and recalls that St. Francis "prophesied a Pope who thought evil of the life of the rule of Christ..." (1909: 286).
11. One case of such interference occurred in 1331 (Baddeley, 1897: 232 n. 6). There may have been other similar occurrences that have not been recorded.
12. I shall discuss this subject at greater length in the following chapter.
13. In 1304, Charles II surrendered to the Inquisitor Fra Liberato, leader of the Spiritual sect, the Poor Hermits of Pope Celestine, along with several other members of the group. The Inquisitor at this time was Tommaso d'Aversa, "a Dominican fanatic, who in 1291, for speaking ill of the stigmata of St. Francis, was suspended from preaching by Nicholas IV" (Tocco, 1909: 253).

Tocco relates the treatment the friars received at the hands of Tommaso:

Perhaps the fame and sanctity of Brother Liberato dissuaded him from taking action against him; on the contrary he seems to have advised him to flee the kingdom; but against the others he was inexorable. And of the accused before his tribunal at Frosolone, no one was spared every attempt, from flattery to torture, to obtain confessions from them that they had fallen into heresy, and had made common cause with the Lombards of brother Dolcino. Two of the more fiery ones, brother Tommaso and brother Vincenzo, underwent such cruel torments that they finally died; after flogging the others in the streets, Tommaso expelled them from the kingdom, branded with the cross of heretics (Ibid.: 253-54).

14. Clement's tolerance of the Spirituals was no doubt governed by the opinions of the French king, which had hardened during the king's earlier quarrel with Pope Boniface VIII. Philip and members of the powerful Roman Colonna family had defended the Spirituals against Boniface's attacks. Clement quickly restored rights to the Colonna which Boniface had confiscated, and assumed a conciliatory attitude towards the Spirituals.
15. The princes' father, Charles II of Anjou, had been captured by the Aragonese fleet in 1284, during the War of Vespers which had begun in 1282 when Sicily rebelled against the Angevin regime. Peter III of Aragon came to the aid of the Sicilians, hoping to gain the island for himself. By agreement in the Treaty of Campo Franco, 1288, Charles was freed on condition that he surrender as hostages his three sons, Louis, Robert, and Raymond Berenger.

Baddeley attributes the Spiritual sympathies of Louis and Robert to the intervention of the royal family of Aragon, which had taken the princes as hostages to Catalonia, where they remained from 1288 to 1295 (1897: 154). The house of Aragon had come under the influence of Arnold of Villanova, who "had thrown all the solemn weight of his wide reputation as devout and fearless philosopher into his sympathy for the persecuted Spiritual Franciscans..." (Ibid.).

It does not appear, however, that the Aragonese rulers made any attempt to indoctrinate the Angevin prisoners. According to Margaret Toynbee's thorough research into the life and canonization process of Louis of Toulouse, every effort was made to conceal from Philip II of Aragon Louis's reception in 1294 of the tonsure and four minor orders. Toynbee offers one plausible explanation for this secrecy:

...It was a generally accepted principle that hostages must be handed over in the same condition as that in which they had been received...(1929: 85).

Philip was undoubtedly aware of Charles's disapproval of the Franciscan zealots, and of the jeopardy to royal dynasties of their members' renouncing society and taking the oath of celibacy. The only influence which the Catalonian captivity seems to have had on the development of Louis's Spiritual Franciscanism was the fortuitous provincial Chapter held at Barcelona in 1294, at which time Louis had a lengthy discussion with the pro-Spiritual minister, Raymond Gaufridi (Toynbee, 1929: 76). This meeting may have cemented a friendship which was to last until Louis's death in 1297.

16. Lambert suggests that the predominant influence upon the house of Majorca may have been Sancia's mother, Queen Esclarmonde de Foix (1901b: 180-81).
17. Certain frescoes, which I shall describe in the next chapter, concern themselves with these themes. Philip of Majorca's sermon against John XXII was also delivered there.
18. It is possible that the popularity of the fraticelli in the kingdom had already reached a point at which it became politically expedient to favour them in order to secure the support of the populace. Their strength among the masses is implicit in the attitude of sovereigns:
 To Louis [of Bavaria, the Spirituals] had become an important political weapon, and to Robert they were also of political advantage, since, by freely favouring them, he prevented their strengthening the hand of his other foe, Frederick, King of Sicily (Baddeley, 158).
19. The term Guelph was "Originally the name of a German party [Welf] formed in the twelfth century, but adopted in Italy afterward to designate the party composed mostly of artisans, merchants, and guild members who favored the pope" (Hartt, 1969: 600).
20. Even though John XXII terminated Angevin control of Ferrara in 1317 (Partner, 1972: 309), and of Romagna in 1320 (Ibid.: 310), the fact that the papacy would countenance surrendering direct control over the very basis of its temporal power, the papal states, bespeaks the dependence on the Angevin for realization of its political aims in Italy.
21. "Ghibelline" is derived from the 12th Century German word "Waiblingen", and was used in Italy "to designate the party composed of the feudal nobility and their supporters who were attached to the Emperor" (Hartt, 1969: 599).
22. Florence renewed the Angevin signory for three years in 1318 (Baddeley, 1897: 176 n.1), and again in 1325 (Ibid.: 193).
23. Robert was in Genoa and Provence from 1319 to 1324. During his absence, Charles assumed leadership of the Guelph armies. Arduino Colasanti, however, states that Assisi was at war with Perugia from 1322 to 1326, and therefore rejects this period for the execution of the St. Martin Chapel frescoes in San Francesco and instead dates them 1318-20 (1332: 662). All references I have

- consulted, however, affirm that the revolt commenced in 1319. In any case, Assisi was clearly under the control of the Church by 1326, as Charles of Calabria paid a visit to the commune in that year, en route to Florence to assume the signory (Caggese, 1930, Vol. II: 88).
24. This is Moorman's term (1968: 353).
 25. The age limit was lowered to fourteen in 1318 (Moorman, 1968: 352).
 26. Such recognition of the basilica was no doubt expected of Robert, as under Charles II St. Francis had become the chief patron saint of the Angevin monarchy, and of the Guelph party (Larner, 1971: 108-9).
 27. Dated anywhere from 1317 to 1339 (Gozzoli and Contini, 1970: 91-2). There are several different reasons for attributing the decoration of the Montefiore Chapel to Angevin patronage.

Agnes Gosche was the first scholar to propose that Robert of Naples influenced the decoration of the chapel. She concluded that the scene of the Investiture of St. Martin faithfully recorded the knighting ceremony as practised at the French court (Gosche, 1899: n.p., in Van Marle, 1924, Vol. II: 204, n.2). Recording this French courtly ritual would have been of little interest to any leader in Italy save the king of Naples.

Although Cardinal Gentile Montefiore had provided the actual funds for the decoration of the chapel and was buried there (Bologna, 1969: 152), the work was not begun before his death in 1312. Gosche argued that Robert's interest in the chapel centred upon his desire to commemorate the Cardinal, to whom he was indebted for securing the Hungarian succession for the House of Anjou. This act of diplomacy also removed the only other contender for the crown of Naples: Carobert, son of Charles II's rightful heir Charles Martel (who died in 1296), who was sent to Hungary to assume the crown of St. Stephen. Robert thereby received clear title to the Italian kingdom (Gosche, 1899: 35, in Bologna, 1969: 150).

In my view, however, the purpose behind the frescoes was not merely commemorative. The subject chosen for representation was the life of St. Martin, who was not only the protector of Gentile Montefiore's cardinalate (de Rinaldis, 1936: 50), but also a patron saint of the French monarchy since the Merovingian period. The saint had retained this position under the Capetians, sharing it with S. Denis, patron saint of Paris (Francastel, 1969: 42). The association of St. Martin with the French monarchy was well established; in the 12th Century, for example, Roger II of Sicily apparently introduced the saint's image into the Capella Palatina to pay tribute

to his ally, the king of France (Kitzinger, 1976: 310-11). St. Martin, then, symbolised the continuity of the Capetian dynasty, of which the Angevins were a branch. Moreover, the frescoes celebrate the victory of the Church and its secular representative, the French monarchy, over their arch enemy the Holy Roman Emperor, by portraying the Emperor in a state of subservience to St. Martin. This victory was of special significance to the House of Anjou, which had deprived the Hohenstaufens of their southern Italian kingdom in 1260. In addition, the invasion of the German Emperor Henry VII of Luxembourg (1310-13) had recently posed a threat to Angevin territories; ascendancy over the Empire was of vital importance to the survival of the Neapolitan monarchy. In fact, Robert had written to the papal consistory in 1814 recommending the abolition of the Empire (Baddeley, 1897: 133).

The life of St. Martin seems to have been a popular pictorial subject in Naples, for there are records of two cycles: one in San Pietro a Maiella, which apparently imitated some of the scenes in the Montefiore Chapel in San Francesco, Assisi (Toesca, 1951: 69 n.21b), and one in a garden chapel of Castelnuovo, the royal palace (Morisani, 1947: 144 n.9--both were probably completed by the middle of the 14th Century; record of payment for the cycle in Castelnuovo is dated September 12, 1334). An image of St. Martin dividing the cloak, which also imitates that of the Montefiore Chapel, is found in an illuminated Bible commissioned by the Neapolitan courtier Niccolò d'Alife, ca. 1340 (Malines, Bibliotheque du Grand Seminaire, illustrated in Bologna, 1969: plate VI-65).

Among the most convincing evidence for Angevin intervention in the Montefiore Chapel frescoes is the representation of the saints in the soffit of the entrance to the chapel. Although many of the eight saints depicted are Franciscan, several are also connected with the Capetian or Angevin dynasties: Sts. Louis of Toulouse, Louis of France, Elizabeth of Hungary, and Mary Magdalen.

The appearance of Louis of Toulouse not only provides a terminus post quem for the chapel frescoes of 1317, the date of the canonization, but also reveals why the frescoes were not underway before this date, that is, shortly after the death of the Cardinal in 1312. It stands to reason that Robert should wish to delay the project until the official canonization of St. Louis, in order to honour him here as a saint. As Louis's canonization took place after Montefiore's death, the Cardinal could not possibly have dictated his appearance in the fresco programme. As I pointed out earlier (see Chapter I: 11-13), the Conventuals were not anxious to advertise Louis's sanctity. One can only conclude, therefore, that King Robert must have been responsible for it, as indeed he was for the St. Louis altarpiece of 1317 which also

celebrates the canonization:

Louis IX of France, who also appears in the chapel windows, symbolised the legitimacy of French power, and in a very specific way, that of Angevin rule in Naples: through his negotiations with Pope Urban IV, Charles I of Anjou received the kingdom of Sicily and Naples as a papal fief. The two Sts. Louis appear side by side against a blue background with gold fleurs-de-lys, underlining their connection to the French royal house.

Elizabeth of Hungary was a member of the royal family of Hungary, to which the Angevins of Naples were related.

Mary Magdalen was also the object of special veneration at the court of Naples (Bologna, 1969: 158).

28. Dated after 1317 (because of the depiction of St. Louis of Toulouse). Cardinal Montefiore was the donor of the Chapel decoration, together with that of the Chapel of St. Martin (or Montefiore Chapel) directly across the nave from it. The two chapels, one dedicated to St. Martin and the other to St. Louis of France, must originally have formed a grandiose statement of French royal power. The original frescoes, presumably illustrating scenes from the life of St. Louis, were replaced in the 16th Century by Dono Doni's cycle of the life of St. Stephen. The original windows still remain, however, and Capetian and Angevin saints dominate the design. St. Louis of Toulouse is depicted here, while St. Louis of France appears twice. Both saints and the donor, Cardinal Montefiore, are represented against the familiar fleurs-de-lys background found in the St. Martin Chapel (see n.27). Thus "the iconographic programme of the glass continues and in fact confirms the...celebration of the house of Anjou...begun in the soffit and glass of the Chapel of St. Martin" (Gozzoli, 1970: 105).

29. Dated ca. 1318 (Gozzoli, 1970: 94). The work consists of a Madonna and Child with Sts. Louis IX of France and Elizabeth, near the access to the Chapel of St. Mary Magdalen, and at right angles to this group on the entrance wall to the Chapel of St. Nicholas of Bari, a series of five saints, which from the left are: Sts. Francis, Louis of Toulouse, Elizabeth, Clare, and an unknown saint.

Several factors connect this work with the court of Anjou: the presence of Sts. Louis of France, Louis of Toulouse and Elizabeth; the fleur-de-lys on the sceptre of St. Elizabeth, which the Christ Child appears to bless; and the fact that the altar was dedicated to St. Elizabeth (Vasari, 1963, Vol. I: 133--see n.2).

In addition, the background of the fresco of the Madonna and Child is stamped with a woven pattern as if in imitation of French tapestry. The only other fresco I can locate with a simulated woven background of this

sort is a Madonna and Child in S. Lorenzo, Naples, located in the lunette over the door to the cloister. (Ottavio Morisani dates it sometime in the second half of the 14th Century--1947: 56). The cultivation of French courtly tradition at Naples no doubt encouraged the production of works like these. At Assisi, such a design would provide a suitable backdrop for a work which draws attention to the French-papal alliance through the Christ Child's benediction of the fleur-de-lys, and through the preponderance of French dynastic saints.

30. Dated as early as the second decade of the 14th Century (Meiss, 1970: 70), and as late as 1339 (Weigelt, 1974: 36-7). Giuseppe Gerola has confirmed that the coats of arms depicted in the "predella" of the frescoed altarpiece are those of Walter VI of Brienne, Duke of Athens (1941: 335-6), kinsman of Robert of Naples.
31. The binding bears fleurs-de-lys and the images of Sts. Francis and Louis of Toulouse and has been attributed by Venturi to Angevin patronage (1908: 133).
32. Probably painted after 1307 but before the latest date assigned to the Franciscan Virtues of the crossing, as it is located between the St. Nicholas Chapel and the crossing (see Introduction, n. 1). Antal has described this painting by the Giotto school as "The earliest example of a death allegory in Florentine monumental art..." (1947: 246). Angevin patronage may account for this sudden appearance of the theme in Tuscan painting. Bologna has demonstrated that the allegory of Death (in the form of the Three Living and the Three Dead) first appeared in Italy during the mid 13th Century, in the southern kingdom of Frederick II (1969: 44). The theme would therefore have been a familiar one in the kingdom of Naples.
33. While it is an interesting observation that this supposed shift in patronage points to Angevin intervention, it does not take into account Robert's having engaged Giotto at Naples between 1329 and 1334, nor for Simone Martini's sojourn in Avignon during the 1340's when the artist completed a commission for at least one member of the Curia, Cardinal Napoleone Orsini. The author does not mention that the 'Vele' paintings, which she attributes to Robert's patronage, have now been unanimously declared the work of the Giotto school.

The success of the medieval painter depended at least to some extent upon his ability to adapt himself to the needs of individual patrons. Simone undertook commissions from the Sienese commune, from Robert of Naples, and from Petrarch. The political messages which these patrons wished to publicize conflicted in various ways. The

Giotto workshop painted the pro-Spiritual "Vele" frescoes as well as the Stefaneschi altarpiece which Bologna claims is an anti-Spiritual work (1969: 215-6--see Appendix II, n. 1).

34. See Appendix II.

Chapter V

1. A letter of a procurator of James II of Aragon, written in 1316, reveals that Duèse's election to the papacy "had been desired and skilfully arranged by Robert himself" (Bologna, 1969: 159. The letter is published in Tabacco, G., *La Casa di Francia nell'Azione Politica di Giovanni XXII*. Roma. 1953. 40-1).
2. For example: only a year after his accession, and a few months after granting Robert the papal vicariate (July 16, 1317), "the pope bitterly complained that since then he had done nothing to exercise it, and had constantly asked for money" (Partner, 1972: 304).
3. Naples had invaded Sicily in 1298 in an unsuccessful effort to restore it to the Angevin kingdom. Other attempts by Robert in 1314, 1322, 1325 and 1326 also failed (Baddeley, 1897: 187; Léonard, 1954: 275, 307 316).
4. In addition to Robert's disinclination to sponsor anti-papal works, there is a further reason why the frescoes could not have been initiated during this period: between 1319 and 1322 the Ghibellines occupied Assisi and controlled the basilica.
5. See Chapter IV, 41.
6. The allegory of Poverty at Assisi also seems to rebuke monastic communal ownership; among those who reject Lady Poverty is a monk "covering his chest with his hand as if to protect himself..." (Van Marle, 1924, Vol. III: 202). The similarity between this episode and the passage in Robert's treatise strengthens the argument for his patronage of the paintings in the 'Vele'.
7. For this purpose Charles the Fair divorced Blanche of Bourbon and married Maria of Luxembourg, daughter of Emperor Henry VII. The scheme got as far as Maria's coronation, and a solemn ceremony at Avignon "to parcel out the Empire to Charles and Italy to Robert" (Baddeley, 1897: 187). The plan was thwarted by Maria's death in 1323).
8. Robert's one act of defiance within this entire period, was his refusal to publish *Cum inter Nonnullas*. But it is an isolated case within a long period of compliance with the papacy; it affected only the kingdom of Naples; and, as I have mentioned (70), it was probably intended more to protect the Spirituals in the kingdom than to provoke John XXII. These facts plus the absence from

1309- to 1328 of anti-papal propaganda, either written or pictorial, and of paintings which relate specifically to Spiritual doctrines, make it unlikely that Robert would have conceived the programme for the 'Vele' during this period.

9. See Chapter IV, 42.
10. See Chapter IV, 43.
11. Shortly after Michael's excommunication in June, 1328, Sancia appointed his secretary, Andreas de Gagliano, as her chaplain. Douie notes that "There was...a band of Michaelists settled within the boundaries of the kingdom who subsisted on the bounty of the Queen" (1932: 211).
12. Lucca capitulated to the Bohemian in 1331.
13. During this period, Louis of Bavaria was attempting a reconciliation with the papacy, for which he was willing to relinquish the imperial crown.
14. Since the Emperor Louis's campaign, Ghibelline and Guelph ties had apparently become increasingly less important, the communes becoming weary of acting as pawns in the manoeuvres between pope and emperor (Léonard, 1954: 327). Azzone Visconti had become reconciled with the pope in 1330, thereby achieving papal endorsement for his imperial vicariate in Milan.
15. Henry of Luxembourg was John of Bohemia's son-in-law and Louis of Bavaria's cousin.
16. Although John XXII gave other reasons for excommunicating Michael of Cesena, it is possible that the pope never really forgot that in 1322 the friars under Michael at the General Chapter in Perugia had defended the orthodoxy of Evangelical Poverty. Earlier, I noted how promptly after his excommunication Michael attacked the pope for condemning the doctrine (see Chapter IV, 42).
17. Gregory IX declared the Testament invalid in Quo Elongati of 1230 (Antal, 1947: 69).
18. Bologna focusses on this period because of Philip of Majorca's speech in 1329, and three papal letters: one in 1331 lamenting Robert's refusal to publish Cum inter Nonnullas (1323), and two in 1332, admonishing the Angevin sovereigns to refrain from opposing him and from succumbing to the devil (1969: 202-3)

19. Crowe and Cavalcaselle were the first to recognise it as the work of Giotto, "or that of a disciple painting under his superintendence, with Giotto's composition and design before him" (1903: 94). Their attribution was affirmed by Erbach von Furstenau (1905: 1), Raimond Van Marle (1925, Vol. V.: 318), Giovanni Previtali (1967: 345), and Bologna (1969: 201).
20. The first appearance in Angevin records of payments to Giotto occurs in December, 1328. Morisani publishes this entry (1947: 140-1).
21. The record of payment specifying works in Castelnuovo is published in Morisani, 1947: 141.
22. Giotto was appointed Capomaestro of the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, Florence, in April, 1334. The foundation of the Campanile for the Duomo, designed by Giotto, took place in July, 1334. Previtali (1967: 152), and Morisani (1947: 140-2), publish the relevant documents.
23. These are the earliest extant paintings on linen from Italy (Bologna, 1969: 237). A document in the Vatican mentions paintings on linen by Giotto, which are now lost, so the technique probably reached Naples via the Giotto workshop (Ibid.: 238).
24. The painting also introduces an unusual lighting technique. The saint is enveloped in a glowing aura which is introduced not to give the illusion of space and depth, as in Taddeo Gaddi's Annunciation to the Shepherds in the Baroncelli Chapel (Santa Croce, Florence), but to heighten the expressive value of the painting, to convey a sense of the miraculous.
25. Even by the end of the 13th Century, paintings reveal that "the friars were then wearing habits much fuller and of better cloth with long sleeves to cover the hands, and a large capuce" (Moorman, 1968: 185).
26. See Chapter IV, n. 7.
27. Francastel has concluded that the Montefiore Chapel frescoes were executed after the Neapolitan defeat of Louis of Bavaria (1969: 47, 52). I find this unlikely, given the anti-papal trend, and the appearance of pro-Spiritual works in Naples at this time. Bologna draws attention to the habits which are worn by the Franciscan saints depicted over the archway (which include St. Louis). They are full, orthodox garments, in keeping with the Franciscan constitutions of 1316, and John XXII's Quorundam Exigit of 1317 (1969: 168). The same copious habit, with long sleeves over the wrists, appears

on St. Louis in Simone's panel of 1317 for Santa Chiara in Naples. Both these representations of the habit contrast with that of St. Francis in the Stigmata just described. Moreover, at a time when the Angevin ruler was so tenaciously defending the Spirituals, he would hardly wish to associate himself with Cardinal Montefiore, who had written a treatise against the fraticelli (Douie, 1932: 34), and whom the anonymous Spiritual author of the Liber de Flore (ca. 1304-5) had described as sinking into "the sea of worldly delights" (Douie, 1932: 34).

28. Bologna also adds a panel depicting Louis of Toulouse from Aix en Provence (Musée Granet, figure 22) to the list of works commissioned after 1329 (1969: 212). The author claims that as a result of the Spiritual movement in Naples during this period, the cult of St. Louis intensified. Part of his evidence includes the fact that Robert ordered a crown made for the head of St. Louis (buried in Marseilles). But the author associates the Aix panel with the Spiritual resistance at Naples precisely because it is a simplified version of Simone's panel of 1317, omitting the crown which angels are about to place over the mitre in the earlier panel (Ibid.).

On the one hand, then, the author finds the manufacture of a jewelled crown for St. Louis to be evidence of a resurging Spiritual cult of St. Louis, while on the other he attributes its absence in the panel to Spiritual activities at Naples after 1329.

Robert's commissioning of a jewelled crown for his brother saint, who as a devout Spiritual shunned the use of precious objects, reveals an apparent inconsistency in the king's attitude towards material goods. Robert never permitted his sympathies for the Spirituals to jeopardise his political security or prominence. If a jewelled crown increased the deification of St. Louis, this in turn would inevitably have enhanced the prestige of the House of Anjou.

Furthermore, Robert did not seem to place the ornamentation of sacred objects in the same category as that of objects intended for profane or daily use. For example, the Angevins donated expensive and elaborately embroidered oriental draperies and an ornate binding for a missal to San Francesco in Assisi (Venturi, 1908: 131-3--see also Chapter IV, 56. To an extent, at least, this was probably expected of an Angevin Guelph leader, as I have pointed out--Ibid.). Yet following his visit to Naples in 1341, Petrarch described the simple, even austere manner of life followed by Robert and Sancia, in marked contrast to the extravagances which went on around them at court (In Baddeley, 1897: 262).

While endorsing the radical view of 'poor use'

advocated by the Spirituals, with regard to relics and the older, medieval attitude which looked upon "light and luminous objects, no less than musical consonance, [as conveying] an insight into the perfection of the cosmos, and a divination of the Creator" (Von Simpson, 1956: 51). Hence, such an object would be deemed ultimately suitable to adorn the head of a saint who sacrificed his earthly crown for a heavenly one. This philosophy towards light, and materials which reflect it, would also account for the seeming incongruity in the use of gold background for the fresco of Poverty at Assisi. The inherent virtue of gold was only defiled when employed to obtain material comforts. Perhaps this is best illustrated in the fresco of Poverty: among the individuals shown spurning an angel's invitation to espouse Poverty, is a man clutching a bag of gold to himself (thus abusing it). He and the others appear on the right, the place reserved for the damned in Last Judgement scenes.

Finally, the Spiritual Franciscan movement among the laity was characterised by inconsistencies of various kinds, even by what we might term hypocrisy. As John Larner indicates, the Spirituals found supporters among members of the moneyed classes, even among bankers, who continued to participate in the monetary system which the Spirituals condemned (1971: 59). Robert is a case in point: he administered a vast kingdom, in concert with the merchant republic of Florence, whose bankers financed his various political projects.

29. See Chapter III, 37.
30. See Chapter I, n.1.
31. Gosebruch also settles upon 1334 for the execution of the frescoes, though for different reasons from those I have presented. His argument for the patronage of Jacopo Stefaneschi depends upon the cardinal's appointment as Protector of the Franciscan Order in 1334. In the event that Robert did work through Stefaneschi in order to introduce the work in San Francesco, (and I believe this possible though not necessary to its realisation), 1334 would be the most convenient date for this to occur.
32. I cannot, therefore, support Francastel's dating of the works to sometime before 1325 (1969: 53-3), because only after 1329 did these conditions prevail.

Chapter VI

1. In his chapter entitled Religious Sentiment, Antal discusses in detail the alliance between the upper bourgeoisie and the papacy (1947: 65-91).
2. See Chapter V, 69-70.
3. See Chapter V, 67-68.
4. See Chapter V, 72.
5. See Chapter V, 75-76.
6. See Chapter III, 38-39.
7. See Appendix I.
8. Bologna, however, does not associate the Franciscan allegories in San Francesco with the Spiritual movement. He has accepted Gosebruch's designation of Cardinal Stefaneschi as the sponsor of the works (1969: 217), and has pointed out that the Cardinal was a papal apologist and a Guelph by tradition (see Appendix II). Bologna seems to consider that the metaphorical treatment of the subject of the Rule in these frescoes makes them acceptable as orthodox works. The author has apparently not linked the prominence afforded the subject of Poverty; the Joachimite nature of the connection between St. Francis and the Apocalypse; nor the various other details outlined earlier (Chapters I and II); with Spiritual thought.
9. In his index, St. Clair Baddeley mentions that Sancia and the Franciscans educated Giovanna, but gives no further information on the subject. One can only infer that he had seen evidence of this but for one reason or another has omitted it from his work.
10. According to Brian Pullan it was partly to protect the fraticelli that Robert "took precautions to forestall intervention in the Kingdom after his death by a papal legate armed with full powers" (1973: 47). No doubt the Council formed part of this plan. In spite of the king's efforts, Cardinal-Legate Aymerico did arrive in Naples in 1344 (Baddeley, 1897: 307), but was withdrawn by the pope after he had governed as regent for only 10 months (Ibid.: 332). The Cardinal was removed at Giovanna's behest (Ibid.).
11. See 101-2.

12. The following account from Perugia reveals the derision with which the Conventuals were sometimes treated at this time:
 At Perugia, in 1368, the magistrates were induced to throw many of the Fraticelli into prison, but to so little purpose that the people persisted in regarding them as the true children of St. Francis and in giving them shelter, while the Franciscans were despised on account of the laxity of their observance, the luxury of their houses, the costliness of their vestments, and the profusion of their table. They were ridiculed and insulted in the streets until they scarce dared to venture in public; if one chanced to let the collar of his shirt show above his gown, someone would pull up the linen and ask the jeering crowd if this was the austerity of St. Francis (Lea, 1901, Vol. III: 166).
13. Archbishop of Armagh.
14. De Pauperie Salvatoris, written between 1350 and 1356.
15. Largely because of the Fraticellian sympathies of the lower classes during the Ciompi Revolt of 1378 (Tocco, 1909: 412-20), the influence of the fraticelli ...was so dreaded by the commune that in 1382 the heresy laws of Frederick II were solemnly re-enacted (Douie, 1932: 226).
Fraticello Michael da Calci was burnt at the stake there in 1389.
16. The Conventual party itself seems to have been divided into those who secretly sympathized or protected the fraticelli "when it could be done without too much risk" (Lea, 1901, III: 170), and those who violently opposed the sectaries. The fate of two fraticelli, who were cruelly tortured to death by Conventuals at Narni in 1354, shows how bitter the enmity could be. Reeves attributes the spread of Joachimism in the late 14th Century partly to the former group within the party:
 ...The main centre of Joachimist inspiration lay among the Franciscans, not only, as one would expect, in the heretical groups of Beguins and Fraticelli deriving from the Spiritual Franciscans, but also in orthodox Franciscan circles (1969: 224).
17. Lea describes this unfortunate occurrence:
 In 1350 Gentile of Spoleto obtained from Clement VI authorization for some

houses of stricter observance..The wrath of the Conventuals was excited. The innovators were accused of adopting the short and narrow gowns which had been the distinguishing mark of the dreaded Olivists. In the General Chapter of 1353, the General Farignano was urged to exterminate them...(1901, Vol. III: 170-1).

Farignano did not give his consent to such action, but did procur evidence that the group was admitting fraticelli, and thereby convinced Innocent VI to revoke the privileges of the hermits in 1355 (Ibid.).

18. The plight of the fraticelli of Perugia is a case in point. In 1374 when all other methods of checking the influence of the heretics had failed, certain orthodox Catholics prevailed upon Paolo de' Trinci, head of the Observants, to deal with them. Paolo, in the course of a disputation with the fraticelli, succeeded in winning the populace to his side, and the fraticelli were banished (Douie, 1932: 217). It is interesting that in Lea's version of this story, the Conventuals summoned Paolo (1901, Vol. III: 166). If this is true, it is perhaps one of the rare cases of cooperation between the lax party and the Observants. On the whole the former was as antagonistic to the Observants as to the fraticelli. In the case of the Perugian Conventuals, however, their decision could have been born of desperation, as they were the focus of ridicule by fraticellian sympathizers. If the Conventuals of Perugia did appeal to the Observants in spite of rivalry, it would indicate the effectiveness of the Observants in quelling Franciscan heresy.
19. The trend of the Church towards asceticism can be detected even earlier in events outside the Order; in 1367, Urban V approved the Order of Jesuats, "...an order of lay brethren under the Augustinian Rule, vowed to poverty and devoted to the care of the sick..." (Lea, 1901, Vol. III: 171).
20. ie., in the 'Vele' frescoes: the St. Francis in Glory and the apocalyptic symbols in medallions contained within the decorative bands framing the four paintings.
21. Among the fraticelli, the identity of Antichrist often corresponded to their newest or most threatening enemy. In this period, for instance, it was the Observant, St. Bernardino of Siena, among others. (Douie, 1932: 241n.4).
22. On this subject Lea remarks:
 ...There never was a time, even when it

was the most useful weapon in the hands of the Holy See, when the Conventuals would not, had they been able, have treated it as inhumanly as they had treated the followers of Angelo and Olivi and Michele da Cesena (1901; Vol. III: 180).

It was fortunate for the Observants that they received papal protection.

23. The sequence of administrations at Santa Chiara in Naples illustrates the zeal of the papacy to reform the Franciscan Order during the 16th Century. The Conventuals occupied the convent until 1568. The Observants took over the convent only to be expelled in 1596, and were replaced by Riformati in 1598 (Spila da Subiaco, 1901: 342-6).

24. Reeves notes that during the Renaissance Joachim's popularity grew until "he ranked with the Sibyls and Merlin as one of the great prophets" (1969: 96). The distinguished position to which the abbot had been elevated is apparent from a representation of him on the title-page of a Venetian edition of Telesphorus's *Libellus*, which appeared in 1516:

He sits at his desk, books around him,
pen poised, hand lifted to ear in order to
catch the divine oracles, a devout and
inspired figure (Ibid.).

The Church maintained the close association between mendicity and Joachimism down to the 17th Century, when Joachim was portrayed in the Church of the Ognissanti in Florence between Sts. Francis and Dominic. Above his head a scroll reads: "posseder...la ricca povertà" (Bondatti, 1924: 163).

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Appendix I

These are the Latin inscriptions appearing below each scene of the 'Veile'. I have used the version supplied by Martin Gosebruch (1969: 177-85), who has filled in illegible passages, using supplementary sources, such as a 16th Century transcription set down by the friar Ludovico da Pietralunga. From translations made for me I can find nothing to contradict my conclusions concerning the allegories. I am indebted to Ted Bennett of the Classics Department, University of Victoria, for providing the English translation which appears here, and to Professor H. Huxley for his assistance in clearing up some of the more obscure passages.

Poverty.

(Paupertas) sic contempnitur
 dum spernit mundi gaudia
 veste vili contegitur
 querit celi solatia
 Compungitur duris sentibus
 mundi carens devitiis
 rosis plena virentibus
 (celestibus letitiis)

Poverty is thus despised
 While she scorns the joys
 of the world
 is covered with poor clothes
 she seeks the consolation of
 heaven
 she is pricked by hard thorns
 full of blooming roses
 (heavenly joys).

(Franciscum semper adiuu)
 ant
 celestis spes et caritas
 et angeli coadiuvant
 ut placeat necessitas
 Hanc sponsam Christus
 tribuit

Heavenly hope and charity
 are always helping St Francis
 and the angels also assist
 in order that necessity should
 be pleasing
 Christ gives this bride
 to St. Francis to guard

Francisco ut custodiat
nam annis eam re (spuit)
.....

for all reject her.

Chastity

.....e
Castitatis oranti
pro victoria corone
datur capital (caritas)
Ad hanc querens actingere
honestate se tegat;
loco datur pertingere
si fortitudo protegat;
Dum castitas protegitur
per virtuosa munera;
Nam contra hostes tegitur
per passi Christi vulnera;

...of chastity praying
for the victory of a crown
a capital (?) is given (to
Charity)
Seeking to approach her
one should cover oneself with
honesty;
she is permitted to reach from
the place
if bravery protects (her).
This while, chastity is protected
by her virtuous gifts;
for against her enemies she is
covered
by the wounds that Christ
suffered.

Defendit penitentia
castigando se crebrius,
mortis reminiscencia
dum mentem pulsat sepius
Fratres sorores advocat
et continentes coniuges
cunctos ad eam provocat
Franciscus.....

Penitence defends (her)
by punishing himself
repeatedly.
the remembrance of death,
the while,
strikes the mind often.
St. Francis calls brothers
and sisters
and calls forth continent
spouses
all of them to her (Chastity).

Obedience

Virtus obedientie
iugo Christi perficitur,
cuius iugo decentie
obediens efficitur
Aspectum hunc mortificat
set viventis sunt opera,
linguam silens clarificat
corde scrutatur opera
Comitatur Prudentia

The virtue of obedience
is perfected by the yoke of
Christ.
by whose yoke of propriety
one is made obedient.
She mortifies this that we see
but her works are of one who is
alive.
Silent she clarifies language

futuraque prospicere

she scrutinizes works with her
heart
Prudence is her companion.
she knows how to foresee the
future

scit simul ac praesentia;
in retro iam deficere
Quasi per sexti circulum
agenda cuncta regulat
et per virtutis speculum
obedientie frenulat
Se deflectit humilitas
presumptionis nescia
culius in manu claritas
virtutum sistis con(scia)

at the same time as the present;
now (she knows how) to withdraw
into the background.
Just as through the circle of a
compass (?)
She measures all things requiring
to be done
and through the mirror of virtue
obedience reigns
humility is kneeling
ignorant of presumption
in whose hand is brightness
you present yourself conscious of
of virtues.

St. Francis in Glory

...ator renovat
iam norman evangelicam
Franciscus cunctis
preparat
viam salutis celicam
Paupertatem dum reparat
castitatem angelicam
obediendo comparat
trinitatem deificam,

...renews
now an evangelical rule
St. Francis prepares for all
a heavenly way of salvation.
While he acquires poverty,
angelic chastity
by being obedient he obtains
the deified trinity.

ornatus his virtutibus
ascendit regnaturus,
hiis cumulatus fructibus
procedit iam securus
Cum angelorum cetibus
et Christo profecturus
formam quam tradit fratribus

(sit quisque secuturus)

Embellished with these virtues
he has ascended to reign.
Filled with these fruits
he now goes forward secure
with hosts of angels
and with Christ about to set out
the form which he hands down
to the brothers,
let each one be ready to follow
(him).

Appendix II

Martin Gosebruch maintains that Cardinal Jacopo Stefaneschi ordered the 'Vele' paintings after becoming Cardinal Protector of the Order in 1334 (1958: 290). He bases his conclusion primarily upon his identification of a figure dressed in red (the colour of cardinals' vestments) kneeling on the left of the Allegory of Obedience (Ibid.: 288-9), and upon the fact that Stefaneschi had employed Giotto on two other occasions: to do the Navicella mosaic of 1312-13 (Bologna, 1969: 215), and the Stefaneschi polyptych (ca. 1320-30--Martindale and Baccheschi, 1966: 120). Bologna, however, offers sound arguments that both these works were intended to affirm the supreme authority of the pope (1969: 215-6). It is improbable that the Cardinal, a scion of a staunch Guelph family and advocate of papal supremacy (Ibid.: 215), would have been responsible for the Franciscan Virtues at Assisi, especially in view of Bologna's analysis of the Stefaneschi polyptych as an anti-Spiritual declaration, intended to counter Louis of Bavaria's attempt to humiliate John XXII by electing a Spiritual Franciscan anti-pope in 1328 (Ibid.: 216).¹ During the debate of 1322-3 over the question of Evangelical Poverty, Stefaneschi in fact submitted a brief to the papacy opposing the Spiritual point of view (Antal, 1947: 161).

I can therefore see no reason why Cardinal Stefaneschi should have become involved in the 'Vele' commission unless

perhaps Robert of Naples wanted his cooperation as Cardinal Protector to expedite the work.

Robert had had prior dealings with the Stefaneschi family, which might have enabled him to press the Cardinal into service. In 1324, Robert had appointed the Cardinal's brother, Giovanni, as his royal vicar in Rome (Martinelli, 1971: 396 n.29). A second appointment of a Stefaneschi to this position occurred in 1330 under conditions which suggest that Cardinal Stefaneschi may have procured it by means of what today would be called influence peddling (Bologna, 1969: 214). Guglielmo di Eboli had been granted the vicariate in 1329; in 1330, Robert suddenly replaced him with Francesco di Paolo di Pietro Stefaneschi, (Ibid.--I have been unable to discover precisely how Cardinal Jacopo and Francesco Stefaneschi were related).

A quid pro quo for these services--cooperation in the matter of the Assisi frescoes, for example--is a possibility. It is not inconceivable that the Cardinal, as a high-ranking member of the Franciscan bureaucracy, should act as official donor of the pictorial complex in order to push more effectively for the execution of the work.

The proposals of Francastel and Gosebruch for the patron of the Franciscan Virtues and Glorification in the Lower Church may therefore not be entirely incompatible. Nevertheless, in the light of evidence both for Robert's dedication to the Spiritual cause and for his ability to affect secular and religious government at Assisi, I believe

that the king provided the motivation for the works, whether or not Cardinal Stefaneschi served as intermediary. Although Jacopo Stefaneschi was an influential figure in the Franciscan community, there are no data which link him in any way with the Spiritual movement. In fact, all the evidence points in the opposite direction: that he was a conservative member of the ecclesiastical establishment and defender of the absolute authority of the pontiff against anti-papal movements like Spiritual Franciscanism, which leaves Robert as the prime candidate for the conception and sponsorship of the works.

1. Bologna's interpretation depends upon his identification of the pope kneeling to the right of St. Peter Enthroned as Nicholas I, who "for the first time maintain[ed] the supreme authority of the papacy in the Church..." (1969: 215-16). The pope's name would also in this case allude to Nicholas V, the title which designated Louis of Bavaria's anti-pope. The faithful would thus be called upon by way of this parallel to contrast Nicholas V to a legitimate and supposedly superior bearer of this papal title. The saint standing to the right of the throne is St. Nicholas of Bari, an important clue to the identity of the pope whom the saint introduces to St. Peter. Thus the work employs a clever play on words not uncommon to altarpieces in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance. Bologna suggests that the book that the pope offers to St. Peter is a codex containing the decretals of Pseudo-Isidorus "which the medieval Church saw, as in the 'Donation of Constantine', one of the sources for the juridical justification for the primacy conferred upon it by Christ and by St. Peter" (Ibid.: 216). Such a reading seems entirely appropriate for a polyptych which was destined for the main altar of St. Peter's.

In my opinion, Gosebruch's analysis is less satisfactory, because it does not take into account the setting of the panel. According to this author the unidentified pope is St. Peter Muroli (Celestine V), and the book offered St. Peter is Stefaneschi's *Opus Metricus* in which the Cardinal recorded the biography of Pope Celestine (1958: 290). A

work which focussed upon the minor accomplishment of a cardinal, and upon a pope who took no interest in temporal affairs and whom the Church would willingly have forgotten after urging his abdication, hardly seems suitable for the high altar of St. Peter's, which was the seat of papal power.

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FRESCOES OF SAN FRANCESCO, ASSISI

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