

LEONARDO'S PORTRAIT OF MONA LISA DEL GIOCONDO

BY

FRANK ZÖLLNER

“Ma il tempo crudele richiude sulla
figura reale della Gioconda le sue
porte infinite che l'arte sola può
sforzare e dischiudere perchè ci si
mostrino i baleni dell'eternità”.

Il Marzocco, 21 December 1913

L EONARDO da Vinci's portrait of Lisa del Giocondo in the Louvre, the so-called *Mona Lisa* (or “La Gioconda”), is arguably one of the best known images in Western culture (fig. 1). Having said that, there are few other incontestable statements to be made about the painting. Not surprisingly, recent publications on portraiture avoid dealing with the *Mona Lisa*¹, because most problems regarding this portrait must still be considered unresolved². The identification of the sitter, traditionally based on Vasari's description of the painting³, is still a matter of debate, because Vasari had probably never seen the portrait and his account is contradicted by at least one early source, the so-called Anonimo Gaddiano⁴. Moreover, some scholars consider Vasari's reliability challenged by two additional sources, namely by Antonio de Beatis' account of his visit to Leonardo's studio in October 1517⁵ and by some of Enea Irpino's poems, written c. 1525⁶. De Beatis mentions a woman's portrait Leonardo produced for Giuliano de' Medici and Irpino praises Leonardo's portrait of a woman with a black veil. Both sources have

prompted numerous alternative identifications for the Louvre painting⁷. These attempts at alternative identifications and the idealization of *Mona Lisa* have, in many, if not in most cases, distracted scholarly attention from more profound efforts to understand the portrait itself in its historical context.

The most recent alternative identification has been proposed by Carlo Vecce, who believes that the Louvre painting actually depicts Isabella Gualanda⁸. Vecce's hypothesis is far from unassailable, since the reliability of his major sources – the Anonimo Gaddiano, Antonio de Beatis and Ernea Irpino – can be questioned, and he has no new evidence to corroborate his identification⁹. At the same time, the traditional naming of the portrait as *Mona Lisa* has been reinforced by Grazioso Sironi's and Janice Shell's publication of a document, suggesting that Leonardo's painting of “La Joconda” (or “La Honda”) was in Milan as early as 1525¹⁰. Yet the document, extremely valuable for our knowledge of the early provenance of Leonardo's paintings, does not provide conclusive proof for the traditional naming of the

portrait as *Mona Lisa*, and it raises a further question about how the painting passed from Milan in 1525 into the collection of Francis I. at some later date. Moreover, some of the suggestions in this important article need reconsideration: neither the year proposed for the portrait's commission, 1500, nor the interpretation of Lisa's predominantly dark garments as indicative of mourning can be accepted. Finally, the authors' assertion that the sitter's identity would "not matter a great deal"¹¹ is likely to hamper our understanding of the Louvre painting.

In the course of this article, I shall discuss briefly the proposals just mentioned. But chiefly I will present and re-examine the information already known, discuss some new material and concentrate on the following issues: the identity of *Mona Lisa*; reliable information about the sitter and the patron; the precise date, exact circumstances, and most likely motive for the portrait's commission; the domestic environment for which the portrait was created; the pattern of patronage and the tradition of female portraiture in which Lisa's portrait could be placed; and Leonardo's artistic intentions in creating the painting. From what follows, I hope that it will become clear that *Mona Lisa* is the correct identification of the Louvre painting and that our understanding of this portrait can be enhanced considerably with the information discussed.

The evidence

Since the beginning of this century, the *Mona Lisa* has acquired the status of a universal icon stripped of its historical context, which seems both to provoke and to defy scholarly attempts to understand it. Yet the painting remains the portrait of an individual person and it is as such that it has been understood in the history of portraiture. Therefore, one would expect that significant consideration had been dedicated to the identity, social status and biography of both patron and sitter. However, as we have seen above, the identity of the sitter is by now regarded a matter of little importance and the available information has neither been presented in the form it deserves, nor

has it been discussed thoroughly¹². It is, therefore, worth recalling the most important early sources: the so-called Anonimo Gaddiano, Giorgio Vasari and three archival documents of somewhat obscure origin.

The Anonimo Gaddiano, writing around 1540, states that Leonardo "portrayed from life Piero Francesco del Giocondo"¹³. This has led some authors to confuse Piero Francesco with Francesco del Giocondo¹⁴ or to assume that there was in fact a portrait of Piero Francesco, which Vasari had misinterpreted as being a portrait of a joyful woman, "La Gioconda"¹⁵. Consequently, according to a recent article but in earlier contributions as well, the Anonimo Gaddiano is taken to undermine Vasari's reliability¹⁶. On the other hand, others give the Anonimo Gaddiano's report less credence, probably because nothing else was known of Piero Francesco del Giocondo¹⁷. This scepticism towards the Anonimo Gaddiano is strengthened by our second source, Giorgio Vasari, who speaks of a portrait not of Piero Francesco del Giocondo but of *Mona Lisa del Giocondo* and who seems altogether more convincing because of his detailed account of the painting. In fact, he describes the portrait at some length and in great detail, even mentions Lisa's smile, implies that it was done in Leonardo's second Florentine period (i.e. 1500 to 1506) and gives the collection of Francis I. at Fontainebleau as the location of the painting¹⁸. This information seems to be correct because in c. 1542 Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* and other paintings of Italian artists embellished the *Salle des Bains* at Fontainebleau¹⁹. The earliest surviving inventory of the French Royal Collections²⁰ and Cassiano dal Pozzo in 1625 also identify the sitter of the portrait as "La Gioconda"²¹. Vasari's account is again confirmed by at least three of Raphael's early Florentine works of c. 1504 to 1506 (figs. 2-4)²² because they clearly reflect some of the features of Lisa's portrait, which – as we shall see below – Leonardo executed between 1503 and 1506.

The third piece of information stems from the Le Monnier-Vasari edition of 1851, which reports the following biographical data: Francesco di Bar-

tolomeo di Zanobi del Giocondo was born in 1460 and held various Florentine public offices in 1499, 1512 and 1524. Before his marriage to Mona Lisa in 1495 he had already been twice married, in 1491 to Camilla di Mariotto Rucellai and in 1493 to Tommasa di Mariotto Villani. He died in the plague of 1528²³. The editors of the Le Monnier edition fail to give their source, and the information seems to surface here for the first time; up to now its origin has remained obscure.

The fourth piece of historical evidence about Mona Lisa and her husband is first reported by Eugène Müntz, who writes that a daughter of Francesco del Giocondo died on the first of June 1499 and was buried in S. Maria Novella. Müntz indicates the "Libro dei morti" in the Archivio di Stato as his source but admits that he never saw it²⁴.

The fifth item of information can be found in some publications by Giovanni Poggi, though the most important of these, *Il Marzocco* of December 1913, has become difficult to find today²⁵. Poggi indicates the dates for Mona Lisa's birth (1479) and for her marriage (1495) and also provides the full name of her father, Antonmaria di Noldo Gherardini²⁶, who lived in the quarter of S. Spirito and who in 1480 lists among the members of his family his one-year-old daughter Lisa. Poggi gives the "portata del catasto" of 1480 as source for his information²⁷.

Archival research confirms most of the information summarized above and reveals more important data. These data prove the first published source, the Anonimo Gaddiano, who speaks of a portrait of Piero Francesco del Giocondo, to be wrong. In fact, Piero Francesco del Giocondo was Lisa's first son, born on 23 May 1496, namely, fourteen months after her marriage with Francesco del Giocondo²⁸. Thus, Piero Francesco was only seven or eight years old when Leonardo's activity for Giocondo began c. 1503 – hardly the right age for a child of a middle-class background to be portrayed²⁹. Obviously, the Anonimo Gaddiano was mistaken and we can now reconstruct how he erred: most likely, Piero was not the sitter of the portrait but the *source* of information for



FIG. 1. – LEONARDO DA VINCI. *Portrait of Mona Lisa del Giocondo*. Paris, Musée du Louvre. Photo R.M.N.

the Anonimo Gaddiano, who had misunderstood the information that Piero, the first son of Mona Lisa del Giocondo, had given to him. In any case, the documentary evidence discredits the Anonimo Gaddiano, so he can not be taken as a witness for Vasari's unreliability.

Vasari was not only a biographer but also a creative writer and his reliability is therefore more difficult to assess. For example, his story about the musicians who kept Lisa smiling sounds like an appealing literary invention and his description of her facial features is at least partly a mixture of fantasy and literary commonplaces³⁰. However, he did know some details of Lisa's portrait, probably from artists returning from the French court and from members of the Giocondo

family (see below). Both his general knowledge of artistic activities in the first half of the 16th century in Florence and his standard of information about Leonardo's second Florentine period are quite good. For example, his somewhat anecdotal story about Leonardo's complaints that the Signoria had paid him for his work on the *Battle of Anghiari* in small currency (quattrini) finds confirmation in other sources³¹. An equally high degree of accuracy is found in Vasari's account of Raphael's artistic relations with Leonardo³² and in the fact that he did not repeat the Anonimo Gaddiano's earlier confusion about Leonardo's portrait of Piero Francesco del Giocondo. Indeed, Vasari lived in Florence for long periods between 1524 and 1550³³, he frequently stayed in the



FIG. 2. — RAPHAEL. Drawing for a *Portrait of a Young Woman*. Paris, Musée du Louvre. Photo R.M.N.

Medici palace, close to Francesco's home in the Via della Stufa (see below), and he was acquainted with two of Francesco del Giocondo's cousins³⁴. Considering his attempts to gain first-hand information from Florentine citizens, one can assume that he had known both Lisa and her husband Francesco who – according to unpublished documents – died in spring 1539 when he was almost 80 years old³⁵. Lisa herself seems to have lived at least until 1551³⁶. Thus Vasari's description of Lisa's portrait, written before the death of Francis I. in 1547, may well have been based on first-hand information obtained from Lisa and Francesco del Giocondo³⁷.

The biographical data about Francesco del Giocondo as reported in 19th-century Vasari editions stand in need of some emendation. Francesco held four public offices (not three, as has been previously believed), and he may be considered a responsible citizen, albeit not a leading figure in Florentine government (as some scholars have stated)³⁸. He was married three times and had three sons and one daughter³⁹. His first wife Camilla di Mariotto Rucellai bore his first son Bartolommeo in February 1491 (new date 1492). His two sons by Lisa were Piero (or Pietro), the one mentioned by the Anonimo Gaddiano, and Andrea, born on 12 December 1502. Francesco did not die in 1528 but in 1539, two years after having made his testament in 1537 – which is of some significance for Vasari's reliability (see above)⁴⁰. The fourth piece of information about Mona Lisa's daughter's date of death should be corrected from 1 June to 6 June 1499⁴¹. Finally, Poggi's reference to the *catasto* of 1480 is accurate, and, following this source, we get some insight into the economic situation and the social status of Lisa's family. Her father, Antonmaria di Noldo Gherardini, who filed his tax declaration in the quarter of S. Maria Novella, drew a modest income from some small farms and farmlands in the vicinity of Florence. He owned a country house (*casa signorile*) in S. Donato in Poggio, a small village about twenty miles south of Florence, and a house in the city near S. Trinita. However, in 1480 Antonmaria and his family

were compelled to reside in rented accommodation in the quarter of S. Spirito, because their own house in the city was damaged (*rovinata*) and therefore unfit for habitation. We may therefore infer that Antonmaria did not have the necessary means to restore his city property⁴².

The *catasto* of 1498 reveals that, at some point between 1480 and 1498, Antonmaria Gherardini moved his city residence to the Via dei Buon Santi, "popolo" of San Simone, in the quarter of S. Croce. Here again they do not live in their own property, but rent half a house for the discreet sum of 11 florins annually from Lionardo Tomaso di Busini, who lives in the other half of the building. The same tax declaration contains an entry regarding a financial transaction consequent on Lisa's marriage: at the beginning of March 1495 (modern date) Lisa Gherardini marries Francesco del Giocondo, and Antonmaria's dowry for his daughter consists of a piece of farmland near his country house and 170 large gold florins⁴³. Again, this is rather modest, in particular if one considers the importance of a dowry in those days⁴⁴ and compares the amount to the financial agreements for other marriages. For example, in 1504 Maddalena Doni had a dowry of 1400 florins⁴⁵, and Francesco del Giocondo in his testament of 1537 states that the daughter of his son Piero, Cassandra, had a dowry of 1440 florins.

The documents disclose a straightforward Florentine marriage of typical middle-class citizens. Equally typical is the fact that, before the marriage Francesco was acquainted with the Gherardini family: Lisa's father, Antonmaria Gherardini, had married as his second wife Caterina di Mariotto Rucellai, who was the sister of Francesco del Giocondo's second wife, Camilla di Mariotto Rucellai⁴⁶. Despite this connection, the slight economical discrepancy between the Gherardini and the Giocondo families should be noted. Francesco del Giocondo, who is called "civis et mercator florentinus" in the notarial document regarding the marriage, came from a better-off Florentine silk and cloth merchant family⁴⁷ whereas his wife Lisa, whose father is only "civis florentinus" and "sanza esercjzio igniuno" (in

the *catasto* of 1480), had a more modest economic background. In Western societies, slight economic and social disparities between groom and bride are as normal as the circumstances that the husband is older and that he has been married before. Thus, contrary to popular belief, there was nothing peculiar about Lisa's status or her marriage. On the other hand, the rather modest circumstances of the matrimony may allow us to speculate about the personal relationship between Francesco and his wife. Given the importance of marriage and dowry in Renaissance Florence, it is worth noting that Francesco does not seem to have made significant political or economical gains from this marriage. We might even conclude that he married Lisa for genuine affection and that this affection also had some bearing on his decision to have Leonardo portray his wife.

The date of the commission

As noted above, the period between 1503 and 1506 as approximate dates for Lisa's portrait are drawn from Vasari's account and from Raphael's early works in Florence. Any later date, such as 1513, can be excluded once one agrees with the traditional identification of the portrait's sitter as Lisa del Giocondo. Documents, however, both for the commission of the painting and for subsequent payments, if any, are lacking and it is likely that a contract never existed for a minor commission such as a private portrait; neither could there have been significant payments, because the painting was never delivered. Despite this lack of direct documentation, the particular circumstances and the date of the commission can be reconstructed by piecing together Vasari's account, documents regarding Francesco's family and the records for Leonardo's activities during his second stay in Florence.

Leonardo's second stay in Florence lasted from April 1500 to May 1506, with an interruption from mid-June 1502 until the end of February or the beginning of March 1503, when he travelled as an architect and engineer with Cesare Borgia.

Recently it has been suggested that Leonardo began Lisa's portrait immediately on his arrival in Florence, that is, in late April 1500⁴⁸. However, this date can be excluded for various reasons: first, on two occasions Padre Pietro da Novellara, answering Isabella d'Este's inquiries if Leonardo had done any paintings recently, gives a detailed account of the paintings present in the painter's studio. In spring of 1501 he describes the *Saint Anne* cartoon and the *Madonna of the Yarnwinder*, but he does not mention another painting which could be identified with Lisa's portrait. On the contrary, he explicitly states that Leonardo had not done anything else⁴⁹. Second, as we have seen above, Vasari had first-hand knowledge of Lisa's portrait and he implies that it was begun in 1503. Third, Raphael's drawings after the *Battle of Anghiari* and the *Leda* reveal an intimate knowledge of Leonardo's works. These drawings as well as three other works from this period, which allude to some features of Lisa's portrait, can be dated between 1504 and 1506. In fact, as can be deduced from a preparatory drawing in the Louvre (fig. 2), in 1504 Raphael experimented with flanking columns. These columns also appear in his *Portrait of a Lady with the Unicorn* (fig. 3) from roughly the same period⁵⁰. Such flanking columns (with almost identical column bases) seem to have been part of an earlier idea for Lisa's portrait (probably in the form of a cartoon) because vertical slices of those columns still appear at both sides of the panel, and early copies of the portrait still show them⁵¹. At some point Leonardo must have decided to paint only those vertical fragments rather than the half columns which are known from Raphael's early Florentine works and from copies of Lisa's portrait⁵². Therefore, one can assume that Raphael was present when Leonardo developed and changed his ideas for the flanking columns between 1504 and 1506. Fourth, in the period from 1500 to 1502, before serving Cesare Borgia, Leonardo would hardly have accepted a portrait commission. He was staying at the SS. Annunziata, accommodated and supported by the Servites while he was at work on the *Saint Anne* cartoon and on the *Madonna of the Yarn-*

winder for Florimon Robertet, treasurer to the king of France. Throughout this time, Isabella d'Este kept hounding him for her portrait, albeit without success. Therefore it seems reasonable to conclude that Leonardo would not have agreed to do a private portrait at this time⁵³. On the basis of this argument we may propose that Leonardo could have begun Lisa's portrait at the end of February or at the beginning of March 1503, after he returned from his travels with Borgia. He must have stopped working on it at the beginning of June 1506, when he left Florence for Milan (though he may have finished the painting later, in particular the background)⁵⁴. The resulting period could have been at the most three years and four months and it probably was even shorter (see below). It does not correspond exactly to the four years mentioned by Vasari, although it is a tolerable inaccuracy, assuming that Vasari calculated a period of four years following Francesco and Lisa, who may have indicated to him 1503 and 1506 as the relevant dates (counting 1503 through 1506 yields four years).

This reconstruction so far is based on incomplete documentation (e.g. Isabella d'Este may have written letters now lost). It can, however, be usefully checked against the only complete set of documents for the period in question: Leonardo's bank account in the Ospedale di S. Maria Nuova⁵⁵. This documentation supports Vasari's information regarding Leonardo's stay with the Servites, because until November 1501 Leonardo did not withdraw any money from his bank account. We may thus infer that Leonardo had no need to draw off his savings, because he was getting room and board from the Servites. However, this situation changed noticeably in March 1503, after he had left Cesare Borgia's service. Indeed, he was probably earning nothing at all, and in this period Isabella d'Este – at least for some time – had even stopped the requests for a portrait. At this point, Leonardo started to withdraw 50 gold florins about every three months. From these frequent withdrawals in spring and summer 1503, one might hypothesize that Leonardo was not very busy in spring 1503, and was therefore willing to

do a private portrait for a Florentine citizen. In fact, his next and much larger commission to follow, the mural of the *Battle of Anghiari*, began officially in October 1503⁵⁶ and the only employment Leonardo seems to have had prior to this date was his survey of the Arno near Pisa in July 1503⁵⁷. Thus the commission for Lisa's portrait could have been agreed on between the end of February or the beginning of March and July 1503. Following this line of thought, one can further conjecture about the reasons why the painting was not finished before Leonardo's departure for Milan in June 1506. With the start of his work on the *Battle of Anghiari*, Leonardo's withdrawals became less frequent and stopped altogether between May 1504 – when the contract was signed and the first substantial payment of 35 gold florins had arrived – and February 1505⁵⁸. Furthermore, from December 1503 onwards, documents about Leonardo's work on the *Battle of Anghiari* become more frequent⁵⁹ and by then he must have been quite busy with the larger commission, leaving less time for Lisa's portrait. Naturally, from October 1503 onwards, he concentrated on the *Battle of Anghiari* as the more important commission which – according to the contract – would secure regular monthly payments of 15 florins for at least a year. Obviously, an individual portrait like Lisa's would yield a much smaller profit, and the prestige of a small private commission could not match his involvement in an ambitious project for the Florentine government. Thus Leonardo had good reason to proceed slowly on Lisa's portrait, leaving it in a state he considered unfinished. Finally, in spring 1506, the legal dispute about additional payments for the *Madonna of the Rocks*⁶⁰ and the prospect of better employment at the French court took him to Milan. When he returned to Florence for brief periods in 1507 and 1513, there was not much point in reassuming work on Lisa's portrait: as so often before, Leonardo had other things on his mind and the probable motive for the commission had lost its validity. For the rest of his life he carried Lisa's portrait with him, just as he did with other paintings⁶¹.



FIG. 3. – RAPHAEL. *Lady With a Unicorn*. Rome, Galleria Borghese. Photo Soprintendenza per i Beni Artistici e Storici, Rome.

Motives for the portrait's commission

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the individual portrait of a middle-class person more often than not had a particular purpose⁶². Unfortunately, in many cases we do not know the circumstances for a portrait's commission because most sitters remain unidentified. But where biographical information is available, one can investigate the circumstances of the portrait's commission, which might explain some of its features. For example, Lisa's daughter's death in June 1499 has been suggested as a possible explanation for her dark veil; according to this suggestion, based on a mistaken interpretation of one source, Lisa's dark veil and dress indicate the state of mourning for her deceased daughter⁶³.



FIG. 4. — RAPHAEL. *Portrait of Maddalena Doni*, Florence, Palazzo Pitti. Photo Soprintendenza per i Beni Artistici e Storici, Florence.

However, the portrait was commissioned in 1503, when the normal period of mourning must have been over (see above). But even if Leonardo had begun the painting in April 1500, when Lisa could have been in mourning, one has to ask whether there would have been much sense in portraying a grieving woman only two months before the end of the usual period of mourning? Other considerations speak against this hypothesis as well: given the high mortality rate for children in the Renaissance, it would not have been customary to go into mourning for a deceased child, nor would one want to commemorate this event with the portrait of a grieving woman. We know of no other Florentine portraits from that period of a mother in mourning for her child, and furthermore, a dark veil does not necessarily indicate mourning⁶⁴.

And Lisa's smile and her low-necked dress would seem to deny it!

Still, examining the circumstances of the commission and looking for a motive for the portrait could be particularly fruitful in our case, because some historical information about patron and sitter is available. Francesco del Giocondo does not give the impression of a man who would arbitrarily express wishes for works of art (such as: "there is this famous painter, let's have him paint my wife!"). Indeed, he was almost certainly unlike Isabella d'Este, who at any possible moment wanted a portrait or, at some point, even a completely different work from Leonardo. For all the documents tell us, Francesco was a dedicated citizen, who fulfilled his public responsibility in some official government functions. He married more or less within his class, and in his third marriage, a woman known to his family. In his testament, he emerges as a person who cares for his family and who seeks to arrange his affairs in an orderly way⁶⁵. Therefore, we can assume that he would commission a portrait for some reason or at least under particular circumstances. Two standard motives for a portrait's commission, namely marriage and death, do not fit the chronology of the painting. Yet, in the period when Leonardo started to paint, in the spring of 1503 — after he had returned again to Florence — there was a suitable moment, because a date in this period happens to coincide with an important event for the Giocondo family: on April 5 1503, Francesco bought a house for his own use in the Via della Stufa, next door to the old family home in the same street⁶⁶. The reason for buying the new asset may have been the opportunity to purchase a house in the neighbourhood of the old property (as was common in Renaissance Florence⁶⁷), but the birth of the third son in December 1502 may also have been an additional motive. In any case, this acquisition must have been an important step for the family because before April 1503, Francesco, his wife and his children had lived in the old house next door, probably together with other members of the family⁶⁸. Not until the spring of 1503, did he have a separate

home for his own family and set up a new household. In Renaissance Florence the establishing of a man's new household quite frequently marked an important occasion to purchase furniture and to commission works of art, since it required a substantial rearrangement of a family's environment⁶⁹. We may, therefore, understand Francesco's acquisition of a new home and his establishing of his own household as relevant circumstances for the commission of Lisa's portrait.

As I have speculated above, Francesco's affection for Lisa may have had something to do with his wish for her portrait. Though this must remain a hypothesis, yet another important event for the Giocondo family could make the commission more understandable. On 12 December 1502, Lisa's second son Andrea was born, thus in the spring of 1503 she was a young mother who had successfully delivered her second son a few months earlier⁷⁰. Lisa's third pregnancy could have provided an additional stimulus for the commission because as an event it was more significant than one would normally expect: two and a half years earlier, in June 1499, Lisa had lost a baby daughter, and roughly ten years earlier, at some point in 1492 or 1493, Francesco's first wife, Camilla di Mariotto Rucellai, had died not long after giving birth to their first son Bartolomeo. At some point in 1494 his second wife, Tommasa di Mariotto Villani, had also died at an unknown date within only a year of the wedding⁷¹. The high mortality of women and children in childbirth in those days and the rather rapid death of his two wives, each within roughly a year after marriage, may justify the assumption that both Camilla and Tommasa had died in the course of delivery or only a few months later. Therefore, the happy outcome of birth was particularly worth commemorating for Francesco del Giocondo, who was painfully aware of the frequently tragic outcome of childbirth.

The establishing of a new household or the birth of a child are worthy motives for a portrait's commission and would fit patterns of patronage in the late 15th and early 16th centuries in Florence. Numerous works of art were commis-

sioned in relation to marriage, pregnancy, birth and fertility. These could have been "cassone"-paintings with secular motives, birth trays, religious paintings with subjects such as the "Holy Family" and also portraits⁷². An allusion to pregnancy or to the importance of fertility and childbirth, for instance, can be found in Botticelli's and Raphael's portraits of pregnant or newly married women. Botticelli's painting shows a pregnant woman, thus alluding to her pregnancy, but also, more generally, to virtue with the column behind the sitter⁷³. Raphael's portrait of *La Gravida* of c. 1506 shows the sitter's condition, but also her being married – indicated by two rings on her left hand – and her piety – displayed by a devotional book under her right hand⁷⁴. In Raphael's *Portrait of Maddalena Strozzi* (married to Agnolo Doni in 1504) of c. 1505-1506, the imagery on the back of the panel alludes to the importance of birth for the founding of a family and stresses also the wish for the conception of a first-born son⁷⁵. Thus, by the beginning of the sixteenth century, fertility, pregnancy, childbirth and motherhood could have been significant themes in individual portraits of women. These themes can be placed within the more general framework of increasing private patronage in Renaissance Florence where one of the major issues of society, the family, played an important role. Consequently, quite a few of the prominent commissions had to do with the social status, economic affairs and fortune of the families involved, as, for example, Michelangelo's *Holy Family*, which was commissioned for the wedding between Agnolo Doni and Maddalena Strozzi in January 1504⁷⁶. Francesco del Giocondo had Leonardo portray his wife in the same period and in exactly the same cultural context. It therefore is not accidental that Lisa's portrait was the model for Raphael's *Portrait of Maddalena Doni* in some formal aspects. In fact, the formal relationship between the two paintings (figs. 1 and 4) is matched by a link between the Giocondo and Doni families; they are both more or less of the same class and Maddalena's brother, Marcello Strozzi, had business connections with Francesco del Giocondo⁷⁷.

After having discussed the precise date and the exact circumstances of the commission for Lisa's portrait, the relationship between the patron and the painter of Lisa's portrait remains to be examined. Some information about Francesco's role as a patron of the visual arts is already given by Vasari who, apart from Lisa's portrait, also mentions a painting of *St. Francis* by Domenico Puligo⁷⁸ and a fresco with a "storia de Martiri" by Antonio di Donnino (or Domino) Mazzieri, both commissioned for Francesco's family chapel in the choir of the SS. Annunziata⁷⁹. Francesco's testament of January 1537 and an inventory from SS. Annunziata of 1521 provide more information. In his testament, Francesco explicitly mentions the decoration for the "capella Martirum" in SS. Annunziata (though without giving the name of the artist)⁸⁰ which suggests that Francesco at some earlier date had transferred the family's burial place from Santa Maria Novella to SS. Annunziata⁸¹. This transfer had probably taken place in 1526 when Puligo painted a new altarpiece for the same chapel, showing Francesco's patron St. Francis of Assisi receiving the stigmata. Indeed, in the same year, the whole chapel seems to have been refurbished⁸², which makes sense at this point, because in 1526, Francesco was about 65 or 66 years old and thus at about the right age to take care of his burial place. Another reason for the new decoration may have been the death of Francesco's third son Andrea, who is documented only until 1524 and mentioned as deceased already in the testament. Thus again, as in the case of Lisa's portrait, we have commissions related to particular family circumstances.

Francesco's rather thoughtful interest in art is confirmed by an inventory of the SS. Annunziata of 1521. This inventory with its roughly eighty entries records the belongings of *maestro* Valerio who had died in January of the same year⁸³. It lists household items such as a bed, a bedstead, blankets, mattresses, carpets, tablecloths etc. and about two dozen small works of art. One carpet, a pitcher, some tablecloths and practically all art works or items of artistic value were given to Francesco. Among these are a cartoon with four

figures, a head of St. Sebastian, a Virgin Mary, a sculpture made of clay with the Madonna and Child, a Mary Magdalen, a Madonna with six saints, one St. John the Evangelist and another St. John with a dead Christ and one St. Michael painted onto the bedstead. The estimated values for the art works are low, mostly between 2 and 15 lira each. Generally, art collecting may have had some of its origins in similar arrangements for the distribution of an estate, though Francesco seems not to have had a collector's approach. As can be inferred from a note at the end of the inventory, *maestro* Valerio owed money to Francesco del Giocondo and the items given to him were supposed to compensate Valerio's debts. Some of the works seem to have been unfinished, and there is even a panel prepared to be painted on ("una tauola dapignersi di braccia 3"). Because of this panel and the unfinished works, one is tempted to assume that *maestro* Valerio had been an artist, but apart from these few unfinished items Valerio's list reads like a typical Florentine inventory of that period. In fact, some twenty small works of art including two crucifixes and a painting on the bedstead could be found in many Florentine homes around 1520⁸⁴. Thus Francesco, apart from his wish to collect some outstanding debts, must have desired the artistic items as a common embellishment for his own household or for the homes of his children (and in fact, two items, a pitcher and a Madonna with six saints, were given to Francesco's daughter⁸⁵). This seems to be fairly reasonable, because Francesco was not a poor man and, therefore, must have been more interested in art than in second-hand household goods such as used mattresses and old furniture. Moreover, the relatively small items could be moved easily.

The historical evidence about Francesco makes him appear to be fairly well-off with slightly above average aspirations as a patron, putting him into the class of more important families such as the Doni or the Strozzi. The inventory, again, shows the down-to-earth nature of his interest in works of art. It further indicates his very close links with the Servites of SS. Annunziata, which becomes interesting if one considers the fact that

Leonardo had stayed with the Servites prior to his commission for Lisa's portrait. The first contact between Leonardo and Francesco del Giocondo may have taken place in the SS. Annunziata.

The setting and content of Lisa's portrait

At the beginning of the 16th century, no work of art was absolutely independent from tradition and from the requirements of its particular commission. As we shall see, Lisa's portrait is no exception to this rule. Thus, her smile and her sitting above a landscape which extends distantly in the background are references to earlier portraits or to other works of art⁸⁶. Lisa's general position recalls Flemish models and in particular the vertical slices of columns at both sides of the panel had precedents in Flemish portraiture⁸⁷. The allusions to Flemish portraiture are obvious, but by 1503 a reference to Flemish art was no novelty⁸⁸. In fact, Flemish paintings were particularly fashionable in the seventies of the 15th century⁸⁹, and in 1503 in Florence Flemish elements in Lisa's portrait probably seemed rather old-fashioned to a contemporary beholder. However, Flemish portraits combined a high degree of realism with piety⁹⁰, and this reference to piety in particular might have been attractive to Florentine patrons in the difficult years after Savonarola's death⁹¹.

Lisa's portrait is considerably larger than its Flemish predecessors and in this it can certainly be considered a novelty. The unusually large dimensions put Leonardo's painting into a class of grand Florentine portraits such as Botticelli's *Giuliano de' Medici* of 1476 or 1478⁹², Piero Pollaiuolo's *Galeazzo Maria Sforza*, painted in Florence in 1471⁹³, Botticelli's so-called *Simonetta Vespucci* with its famous antique cornelian "Apollo and Marsyas" from the Medici collection⁹⁴, and Domenico Ghirlandajo's *Giovanna degli Albizzi*, wife of Lorenzo Tornabuoni⁹⁵. The large dimensions of these portraits commissioned for or by the Medici, Sforza and Tornabuoni reflect the importance of these families and of their households. Francesco del Giocondo's family was somewhat less important by comparison and,

therefore, the rather grand dimensions of his wife's portrait may have been an attempt to approach the social rank of Renaissance Florence's leading families. The large size of *Mona Lisa* may also suggest that Francesco del Giocondo had commissioned this portrait for a particular room in the newly-acquired house. If so, this would be in keeping with the wide-spread practice of commissioning works of art for a specific domestic setting or even for a particular room where the wall-space for a painting was already prepared⁹⁶. Around 1503 in many cases, a portrait's place seems to have been the chamber (*camera*) or the adjacent ante-chamber of a house⁹⁷, where it was surrounded chiefly by religious or devotional imagery⁹⁸. Our knowledge about this kind of environment is still limited, but some preliminary suggestions about the characteristic location for portraits may be made. For example, in the Medici inventory of 1492 men's portraits, sometimes in the company of other men's portraits, could be found in settings together with both religious and secular works of art⁹⁹. Women's portraits, on the other hand, shared the company of portraits (other than their husband's) or other secular paintings to a lesser extent; they are more frequently surrounded by religious works and seem to be hung in more private spaces. This, for example, was the case with the portraits of Alfonsina Orsini (wife of Piero de' Medici) in the Palazzo Medici¹⁰⁰ and of Giovanna degli Albizzi¹⁰¹. The location of women's portraits in an environment often dominated by religious imagery needs more investigation, but it may be one reason why *Mona Lisa* or other examples from the same period are similar to paintings of the Virgin Mary¹⁰². Thus a formal reference to images of the Virgin in a portrait could correspond to a particular domestic setting. More generally, this reference concurs with the moral demands on women, who were expected to make the life of the Virgin Mary normative for their moral conduct.

The representation of morally sound social conduct seems to have been an objective in the portraiture of women. In many portraits of that period inscriptions and attributes symbolize moral



FIG. 5. – LEONARDO DA VINCI. *Portrait of Ginevra de' Benci*. Washington, National Gallery of Art. Photo museum.

demands on women or express individual virtues. Among such symbols were a crystal pitcher (generally for virtue), a rosary (devotion), the prayer book (piety), or more exotic items such as a unicorn (chastity or virginity)¹⁰³. A striking characteristic of Lisa's portrait is the lack of such meaning-laden attributes, and only her hands seem to articulate something like virtue. In fact, by 1503 in Florence hands as such – if not holding something or in a gesture of prayer or devotion – were not a common feature of women's portraits¹⁰⁴. To include them in this painting must have been an intentional allusion to moral demands on women, because exactly this particular way of the right hand resting upon the left was recommended as the appropriate gesture for girls or young women to show their morally sound social conduct¹⁰⁵.

The position of Lisa's hands is not exactly a symbolic expression (comparable to an attribute such as the unicorn) but rather a gesture taken from the requirements in real life. Its *symbolism*, if we want to call it such, is therefore a more *realistic* reference to virtue. The same is true of Lisa's dark veil, which need not have signified mourning¹⁰⁶. Black was not reserved exclusively for cases of grief, and black silk, for example, was the recommended material for the "first nuptial dress"¹⁰⁷. A dark veil, moreover, was a standard garment of every-day use, covering the hair and indicating the wedded state of women and the desired virtues associated with it, such as chastity, devotion and obedience to God. For this reason, until relatively recently, married women were obliged to wear black veils in church. Thus, the veil was a garment closely related to women's social

conduct and to an ideal of virtue – much in the same way as a modest style of dressing was recommended for any virtuous woman¹⁰⁸. We could, therefore, regard the presentation of Lisa's hands, of her dress and of her black veil as a subtle reference to female virtue and social conduct¹⁰⁹.

Still, a black veil in a Florentine portrait is certainly unusual¹¹⁰ and therefore Lisa's veil demands an explanation which goes beyond the general reference to virtue and social conduct. Such an explanation may be found in contemporary fashion; in fact, right at the beginning of the sixteenth century black or dark clothes were *en vogue* and considered a sign of splendor and dignity. This fashion, which originated in Spain, was inaugurated in Italy and most prominently displayed at the wedding of Lucrezia Borgia and Alfonso d'Este in 1502¹¹¹. We can assume that all persons involved in the commission – Leonardo, Francesco del Giocondo and his wife Lisa – had heard of those fashionable and noble black garments. Indeed, in the years preceding his commission for Lisa's portrait, Leonardo had made the acquaintance of both Lucrezia Borgia's brother (Cesare) and Alfonso d'Este's sister (Isabella). Francesco del Giocondo, as a merchant of silk and cloth, would have been aware of recent trends in fashion, and we can also assume that his wife Lisa – as most women – had heard of those fashionable garments. Thus Lisa's black veil and the predominantly black or dark colors of her dress may have been inspired by a fashion inaugurated a year prior to the commission of her portrait. One should perhaps also consider whether Lisa's darkish garments were intended to avoid a then-topical conflict between the regulations for women's dress on the one hand and fashion on the other. In the 15th and 16th centuries, a modest style of dress was recommended for every woman and sumptuary laws strongly suggested modest garments in order to guarantee the morally sound appearance of the female citizenry¹¹². Considering this situation, Lisa's black veil and darkish outfit may have been a compromise between the current requirements for women's dress, a personal wish for expressing her

virtue and her desire to be dressed fashionably. Indeed, in her portrait, Lisa could have looked both fashionable and virtuous. We can accordingly propose that general notions about women's dress and virtue, as well as fashion and possibly her own taste, influenced the appearance of Lisa's portrait.

The painter's aspirations

In modern literature, the unusually high artistic achievements of Leonardo's portrait of Lisa del Giocondo are taken for granted and the painting has been taken as an ideal image or an ideal portrait¹¹³. This may be a valid observation in a formal sense and it certainly is not surprising because many Renaissance portraits are idealized. Lisa's portrait seems, in fact, idealized because her facial features resemble a female type realized by Leonardo in other paintings such as the Louvre *Saint Anne*¹¹⁴. Also the lack of nuptial rings on her left hand¹¹⁵ and the somewhat unreal land-



FIG. 6. – LEONARDO DA VINCI. *Portrait of Ginevra de' Benci*, verso. Washington, National Gallery of Art. Photo museum.

scape background suggest an idealization. Moreover, Leonardo himself recommended painting portraits under the softening effects of twilight and this practice certainly helped to idealize Lisa's features¹¹⁶. However, the particular function of idealizations and of idealized beauty in a woman's portrait created for a particular domestic setting and for the expectations of the patron need still to be examined.

In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, beauty, idealized or not, was closely connected with virtue, and at least in Neo-platonic terms, idealized beauty as a mental concept was even preferable to real beauty¹¹⁷. Thus a beautiful appearance could have been considered a morally significant notion which was connected with virtue. In Leonardo's *Portrait of Ginevra de' Benci* (fig. 5), for example, the motto on the back of the panel reads "VIRTUTEM FORMA DECORAT" (fig. 6), which in the context of the painting can be understood as "beauty embellishes virtue"¹¹⁸. Thus the inscription links the sitter's beauty to virtue which is symbolized by laurel and juniper, painted on the back of the panel¹¹⁹. A similar case is a portrait medal of Giovanna degli Albizzi (Tornabuoni) where beauty and true love are related to chastity¹²⁰. The same link between beauty and the virtue of chastity was celebrated in the *Festa del Paradiso*, organized by Leonardo on the occasion of Gian Galeazzo Sforza's wedding with Isabella d'Aragona¹²¹.

One important point of Ginevra de' Benci's portrait is its representation of virtue on two different levels: the visually more appealing level is the expression of virtue by means of the beauty depicted, but to articulate this link between beauty and virtue more explicitly, Leonardo added (or was asked to add) both the inscription and the attributes on the back of the panel. If Leonardo wanted to eliminate the visually less appealing level of inscriptions or attributes, he had to visualize the beauty of virtue by purely pictorial means. We can, indeed, assume that in 1503 Leonardo's ideas about the art of painting – as for example verbalized in the *Trattato della pittura* – were too sophisticated to condone traditional de-

vices such as inscriptions and conventional attributes. Moreover, in his second Florentine period, Leonardo had an incentive to surpass the achievements of earlier portraiture and to prove his creative powers. After the long interval of relatively steady employment at the Milanese court, he tried to re-establish himself in his hometown where he faced competition from some major artists. In order to re-enter business he may have felt the need to show his talent – as he obviously did with the *Saint Anne* cartoon¹²². Consequently, both Leonardo's style of drawing and his way of drawing figures change dramatically during his second Florentine period¹²³. In a period of transition and new challenges it is therefore likely that Leonardo would attempt to express his particular artistic ambitions in a private portrait. He also had a strong personal interest in physiology and facial expression (physiognomy) which is most impressively documented in his so-called "grotesque heads"¹²⁴. We can imagine that he felt a challenge to exceed the expressive qualities of earlier portraits, both his own and those of other painters. This challenge virtually existed in Domenico Ghirlandajo's *Portrait of Giovanna Tornabuoni* (born degli Albizzi) of 1488, probably the most important example of late 15th-century Florentine portraiture (fig. 7). On Ghirlandajo's panel, which is of almost exactly the same size as *Mona Lisa*, an inscription explicitly states that the portrait's only shortcoming was the unresolvable challenge to depict the moral conduct or virtue and the soul of a person (*mores animumque*):

O art, if thou wert able to depict the conduct and the soul,

*No lovelier painting would exist on earth*¹²⁵.

Ghirlandajo's *Portrait of Giovanna degli Albizzi* was probably known to Leonardo who had contacts with the Albizzi family in 1503¹²⁶, and portraits, being located in the chamber of a house, were to some extent accessible¹²⁷. In any case, the general question whether an artist could or could not render visible heavenly things (such as a soul and its virtue) seems to have been an issue in the 15th century¹²⁸. Leonardo must have felt qualified to

answer this question, because he had a profound anatomical knowledge and because he believed he had understood how the soul would express itself through a person's body and face¹²⁹. With this physiological knowledge, he could respond to the challenge posed by Ghirlandaio's *Portrait of Giovanna degli Albizzi*, trying to demonstrate how painting could imitate both the material appearance of a human person and its immaterial qualities. Thus with Lisa's portrait, Leonardo demonstrated both the highest achievements of painting and the most ambitious aspirations of a painter¹³⁰. Moreover, this demonstration was not a means in itself (as most scholars have it) but conceived to satisfy the main object of women's portraits: the presentation of virtue, in this case created for a domestic setting where virtue should ideally be at home.

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Considering the available information about the Giocondo family, Lisa's portrait need not be regarded a mysterious image that has irreversibly lost its historical context. The circumstances of the portrait's commission do, in fact, fit neatly into the context of Florentine patronage and portraiture at the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th centuries. Lisa's portrait continues – though in a somewhat more sophisticated way than preceding examples – the tradition of female portraiture celebrating female virtue and beauty. Moreover, also a particular type of patronage, situated within the framework of Florentine family matters and linked with the devotional surroundings of the domestic setting, can be assumed for the commission of Lisa's portrait. Finally, Leonardo's very distinct artistic aspirations, at this crucial point in his career in 1503, and his response to the challenge of earlier portraiture, found their way into Lisa's portrait. All these points constitute a perfectly reasonable cultural



FIG. 7. – DOMENICO GHIRLANDAJO. *Portrait of Giovanna degli Albizzi*. Lugano, Collection Thyssen-Bornemisza. Photo Coll.

context for Lisa's portrait. We could, therefore, read this portrait as a typical painting, which only romanticism has taught us to perceive as being enigmatic and transcending human comprehension¹³¹. Consequently, I would like to suggest that a further appreciation of Leonardo's portrait of Lisa del Giocondo should be considered within the historical context which I have tried to outline in this article.

F.Z.

NOTES

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1. E. CASTELNUOVO, *Das Künstlerische Porträt in der Gesellschaft*, Berlin 1988 (first published as "Il significato del ritratto pittorico nella società", *Storia d'Italia*, v. 2, Turin, 1973); C. CIERI VIA, «L'immagine del ritratto. Considerazioni sull'origine del genere e sulla sua evoluzione dal Quattrocento al Cinquecento», *Il ritratto e la memoria. Materiali I*, a cura di A. Gentili, Rome 1989, pp. 45-91 (which contains also a useful discussion of the literature on portraits); L. CAMPBELL, *Renaissance Portraits. European Portrait-Painting in the 14th, 15th and 16th Centuries*, New Haven/London, 1990 (see also the review by C.B. STREHLKE, *The Burlington Magazine*, 133, 1991, pp. 780-781); A. DÜLBERG, *Privatporträts. Geschichte und Ikonologie einer Gattung im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert*, Berlin, 1990; R. BRILLIANT, *Portraiture*. London, 1991.

2. Paris, Louvre, oil on panel, 77 × 53 cm. – See A. de RINALDIS, *Storia dell'opera pittorica di Leonardo da Vinci*, Bologna 1926, pp. 171-182, 259-260; M. SÉRULLAZ, *La Joconde. Léonard de Vinci*, Paris 1947; *Hommage à Léonard de Vinci*, Musée du Louvre, Paris, 1952, pp. 19-29; C. PEDRETTI, *Studi Vinciani*, Genève, 1957, pp. 131-141; R. HUYGHE, *La Joconde*, Fribourg, 1974; R. McMULLEN, *Mona Lisa. The Picture and the Myth*, London, 1975; G. DE LOGU/G. MARINELLI, *Il ritratto nella pittura italiana*, 2 vols., Bergamo, 1975, I, pp. 202-205; *Mona Lisa im 20. Jahrhundert*, Exhibition Catalogue, Duisburg, 1978; D. A. BROWN/K. OBERHUBER, "Monna Vanna and Fornarina: Leonardo and Raphael in Rome", *Essays Presented to Myron P. Gilmore edited by Sergio Bertelli and Gloria Ramakus*, 2 vols., Florence, 1978, II, pp. 25-86; D. STRONG, "The Triumph of Mona Lisa: Science and Allegory and Time", *Leonardo e l'età della ragione*, ed. E. Bellone and P. Rossi, Milan, 1982, pp. 255-278; S. BÉGUIN, *Léonard de Vinci au Louvre*, Paris, 1983, pp. 74-76; P.C. MARANI, *Leonardo. Catalogo completo dei dipinti*, Florence, 1989, pp. 106-109; J. SHELL/G. SIRONI, "Salaì and Leonardo's Legacy", *The Burlington Magazine*, 133, 1991, pp. 95-108.

3. *Leonardo da Vinci. La vita di Giorgio Vasari novamente commentata e illustrata con 200 tavole. A cura di Giovanni Poggi*, Florence, 1919, pp. 34-35.

4. Anonimo Gaddiano, BNF, Codice Magliabechiano XVII, 17, fols. 88r-v and 90r-91v, fol. 91r, also quoted in L.

BELTRAMI, *Documenti e memorie riguardanti la vita e le opere di Leonardo da Vinci*, Milan, 1919, p. 163.

5. Partly published by G. UZIELLI, *Ricerche intorno a Leonardo da Vinci, serie seconda*, Rome, 1884, pp. 459-462. For the full text see L. PASTOR, *Die Reise des Kardinals Luigi d'Aragon durch Deutschland, die Niederlande, Frankreich und Oberitalien, 1517-1518, beschrieben von Antonio de Beatis*, Freiburg [1905], pp. 143-144 (see also note 9).

6. First published by Benedetto CROCE in the *Atti dell'Accademia Pontaniana*, 33, 1903, and again in his *Curiosità storiche*, Naples, 1921 (first edition 1918), pp. 22-29. The first art historian to discuss these poems in relation to *Mona Lisa* was A. VENTURI, *La pittura italiana del cinquecento, I, Storia dell'arte italiana*, IX, 1, Milan, 1925, pp. 39-42.

7. The alternative identifications have been discussed and mostly refuted by McMULLEN, *Mona Lisa*, pp. 42-46; BROWN/OBERHUBER, "Monna Vanna and Fornarina", pp. 62-63, note 19; MARANI, *Leonardo*, pp. 106-109 (who states that most scholars agree with the traditional identification); SHELL/SIRONI, "Salaì and Leonardo's Legacy", pp. 97-98 (who, however, conclude that most scholars believe the Louvre painting is the one mentioned by de Beatis). The strongest alternative candidate is Isabella d'Este, who was portrayed by Leonardo. See BELTRAMI, *Documenti*, nos. 103 and 106; R.S. STITES, *The Sublimations of Leonardo da Vinci*, Washington, 1970, pp. 328-337, and H. TANAKA, "Leonardo's Isabella d'Este. A New Analysis of the *Mona Lisa* in the Louvre", *Istituto Giapponese di Cultura in Roma. Annuario*, 13, 1976-1977, pp. 23-35. However, this identification is contradicted by Isabella's letter of 14 May 1504 (BELTRAMI, *Documenti*, n° 142); and a comparison between *Mona Lisa* and Leonardo's cartoon for a portrait of Isabella in the Louvre (if one agrees with both its attribution to Leonardo and the identification of the sitter as Isabella) shows significant differences, e.g. Lisa's nose is larger than Isabella's and her eyebrows have a different angle. For the cartoon see now *Leonardo & Venezia*, exhibition catalogue, Venice, 1992, pp. 304-305; for an authentic portrait of Isabella see *Splendours of the Gonzaga*, catalogue edited by D. CHAMBERS and J. MARTINEAU, London, 1981, p. 54, no. 49, and p. 160, no. 109 (i.e. the portrait medal by Giancristoforo Romano).

8. C. VECCE, "La Gualanda", *Accademia Leonardi Vinci. Journal of Leonardo Studies*, 3, 1990, pp. 51-72. For a similar suggestion see C. PEDRETTI, *Leonardo. A Study in Chronology and Style*, London, 1973, pp. 136-137.

9. VECCE, "La Gualanda", argues as follows: the painting in the Louvre, known as 'La Gioconda', portrays Isabella Gualanda, a woman from Naples (though the family came from Pisa), who was born c. 1491 and had become a widow shortly before Leonardo painted her in Rome between 1513 and 1515. This identification is based on the poems by Enea Irpino and

on the account of Antonio de Beatis, who, on 10 October 1517 in Amboise, had seen "una certa donna firentina, facta di naturale, ad instantia del quondam magnifico Juliano de Medicis" by Leonardo. On the following day, de Beatis mentions in his diary a portrait of a lady from Lombardy and another portrait of 's[igno]ra Isabella Gualanda' (the complete quotes are provided by VECCE; see also PASTOR, *Die Reise des Kardinals Luigi d'Aragon*, pp. 143-144). There is, however, no evidence that the portrait of Isabella Gualanda was painted by Leonardo; nor can we be sure that it is identical with Leonardo's portrait of a Florentine lady seen by de Beatis a day earlier. Also, why should de Beatis call the supposed portrait of "Signora Gualanda" from Naples "una donna firentina"? One should also remember that de Beatis is not very reliable, because he was mistaken about Leonardo's age and about him being right-handed (see C. GOULD, *Leonardo. The Artist and the Non-Artist*, London, 1975, pp. 110-111). De Beatis may have received misinformation: Giuliano de' Medici was Leonardo's patron before the artist went to France in 1516, and Lisa's husband, Francesco del Giocondo, would have been completely unknown at the French court in 1517. It was therefore appropriate to tell de Beatis that Leonardo had produced the painting for Giuliano de' Medici, whereas any reference to the portrait being commissioned 14 years earlier by an unknown Florentine merchant would have been almost embarrassing. For the questionable reliability of the Anonimo Gaddiano, see below.

10. SHELL/SIRONI, "Salai and Leonardo's Legacy". The interpretation of the document has been challenged by Michael HIRST and Nicolai RUBINSTEIN in a lecture delivered at the Institute of Historical Research, London (February 20, 1992). Prof. Rubinstein believes that 'La Joconda' or 'La Honda' was a Spanish courtesan portrayed by Leonardo. However, there is no evidence that Leonardo ever portrayed any person of that profession and it is difficult to believe that a label like 'La Honda' would necessarily indicate a courtesan. This latest identification is also contradicted by Vasari's account and by Raphael's early works in Florence with their references to Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* (see below).

11. SHELL/SIRONI, "Salai and Leonardo's Legacy", p. 99.

12. See for example McMULLEN, *Mona Lisa*, pp. 40-41, who discusses the known information at some length, with some errors and without references to the original sources. PEDRETTI, *Studi Vinciani*, pp. 132-141, discusses only part of the archival sources; the sources given by M. GUERRINI, *Bibliotheca Leonardiana 1493-1989*, 3 vols., Milan 1990, III, pp. 2165-2166, are incomplete; SHELL/SIRONI, "Salai and Leonardo's Legacy", consider the identity of the sitter a minor matter and, therefore, discuss the available evidence only briefly and with some errors (see below, and notes 48 and 63).

13. "Ritrasse dal naturale Piero Francesco del Giocondo". Anonimo Gaddiano, BNF, Cod. Magliabechiano XVII, 17, fol. 91r (BELTRAMI, *Documenti*, p. 162).

14. For example GOULD, *Leonardo*, p. 110; STITES, *Sublimations of Leonardo*, p. 329; BROWN/OBERHUBER, "Monna

Vanna", p. 27; M. KEMP, *Leonardo da Vinci. The Marvellous Works of Nature and Man*, London etc., 1981, p. 286.

15. PEDRETTI, *Studi Vinciani*, p. 134. For a similar view see also VENTURI, *La pittura del Cinquecento*, p. 38.

16. PEDRETTI, *Studi Vinciani*, p. 134; KEMP, *Leonardo da Vinci*, p. 286; VECCE, "La Gualanda", pp. 60-61.

17. For example SHELL/SIRONI, "Salai and Leonardo's Legacy".

18. *Leonardo da Vinci. La vita*, ed. Poggi, pp. 34-35.

19. See Abbé GUILBERT, *Description historique des chateaux, bourg et forest de Fontainebleau*, 2 vols., Paris, 1731, I, pp. 153-159, and L. DIMIER, *Le Primatice*, Paris, 1900, pp. 279-283 (I would like to thank Michael Fritz for this reference).

20. This inventory was produced by Rascas de Bagarris in c. 1625; see S. de RICCI, *Description raisonnée des peintures du Louvre, I. Écoles étrangères. Italie et Espagne*, Paris, 1913, p. IX. The manuscript which supposedly contains the inventory is by Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. latin 8957, fol. 128, which S. de RICCI had published for the first time in the *Revue archéologique*, 35, 1899, p. 342. It consists mostly of drawings after antique monuments and inscriptions from the south of France. However, I could not find the inventory in this manuscript. For the history of the *Mona Lisa* in the French collections see Joseph LAVALLÉE, *Galerie du Musée Napoléon*, 11 vols., Paris, 1804-1828, vol. 11, pp. 7-8 and pl. 29; N. BAILLY, *Inventaire des tableaux du Roy rédigé en 1707 et 1710*, ed. F. Engerand, Paris, 1899, pp. 2-9, no. 1; J. COX-REARICK, *La collection de François I^{er}*, Paris, 1972, pp. 17-18, no. 15; A. BREJON DE LAVERGNÉE, *L'inventaire Le Brun de 1683. La collection des tableaux de Louis XIV*, Paris, 1987, pp. 87-88.

21. Rome, Biblioteca Barberini, ms. LX, no. 64, fols. 192v and 194v, quoted by PEDRETTI, *Studi Vinciani*, p. 135, and VECCE, "La Gualanda", p. 64.

22. See for example Raphael's *Lady with the Unicorn*, oil on canvas, transferred to panel, 65 by 51 cm, Rome, Galleria Borghese; *Portrait of Maddalena Doni*, oil on panel, 65 by 45, 8 cm, Florence, Palazzo Pitti. See also the preparatory drawing for the *Lady with the Unicorn* (Paris, Louvre, no. 3882, 223 by 159 mm) and another drawing influenced by Lisa's portrait in Lille (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille, no. 464, 120 by 101 mm). These drawings are nos. 125 and 103 in E. KNAB/E. MITSCH/K. OBERHUBER, *Raphael. Die Zeichnungen*, Stuttgart, 1983.

23. Giorgio VASARI, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, 15 vols., Florence, 1846-1870, VII, 1851, p. 13: "Francesco di Bartolomeo di Zanobi del Giocondo nacque nel 1460. Fu de' XII Buonomini nel 1499, e de' Priori nel 1512. Approvato nello squittinio del 1524. Morì di pestilenza nel 1528. Ebbe tre moglie, cioè: Camilla di Mariotto Rucellai, sposata nel 1491; Tommasa di Mariotto Villani, nel 1493; e Lisa di Anton Maria di Noldo Gherardini, nel 1495; e questa è la Bella Gioconda ritratta da Leonardo".

24. E. MÜNTZ, *Léonard de Vinci. L'artiste, le penseur, le savant*, Paris, 1899, p. 416, note 1: "1 juin 1499. 'Una fan-

ciulla di Francesco del Giocondo, riposta in Santa Maria Novella'. (Libro dei Morti. Archives d'État de Florence. Communication de M. Al. Carli.)".

25. The fullest account can be found in *Il Marzocco*, 21 December 1913 (anno xviii, no. 51), p. 1: "[...] nata da Anton Maria di Noldo Gherardini abitante nel quartiere di Santo Spirito, popolo di Santa Felicita, via Maggio, il quale nella portata del catasto del 1480 (quartiere di Santa Maria Novella, gonfalone unicorno) dichiarava tra i componenti della sua famiglia questa 'Lisa mia figliola d'età d'anni uno senza principio di dota igniuno'".

26. *Leonardo da Vinci. La Vita*, ed. Poggi, p. 35: "Monna Lisa, figliola di Anton Maria di Noldo Gherardini, abitante a Firenze nel quartiere di S. Spirito, popolo di S. Felicita, via Maggio, era nata nel quartiere di 1479 (cf. *Il Marzocco*, del 21 dic. 1913), e aveva sposato nel 1495 Francesco di Bartolomeo di Zanobi del Giocondo".

27. G. POGGI, "Mona Lisa è Fiorentina", *Raccolta Vinciana*, 9, 1917/1918, p. 171.

28. BNF, Collezione Genealogica Passerini, fasc. 188, no. 26; ASF, Raccolta Sebreondi, fasc. 2608 (del Giocondo); ASF, Cittadinario Fiorentino, Quartiere S. Giovanni, vol. I, c. 11; ASF, Raccolta Ceramelli-Papiani, fasc. 2373.

29. For some exceptions, see DÜLBERG, *Privatporträts*, pp. 43-44.

30. See P. RUBIN, "What Men Saw: Vasari's Life of Leonardo da Vinci and the Image of the Renaissance Artist", *Art History*, 13, 1990, pp. 34-46. I have not been able to consult the latest publication by Paul BAROLSKI on this topic.

31. *Leonardo da Vinci. La vita*, ed. Poggi, p. 37; BELTRAMI, *Documenti*, nos. 153 and 167 (i.e. Codex Atlanticus, fol. 77r).

32. See A. CHASTEL, "Raffaello e Leonardo", *Studi su Raffaello. Atti del congresso internazionale di studi (Urbino-Firenze 6-14 aprile 1984)*, 2 vols., Urbino, 1987, I, pp. 335-343.

33. See W. KALLAB, *Vasaristudien*, Vienna/Leipzig, 1908, pp. 40-87, and K. FREY, *Der literarische Nachlass Giorgio Vasaris*, Munich, 1923, pp. 15-78, 99-100, 174-202.

34. VASARI, *Le vite*, ed. Milanese, IV, 1879, p. 465, mentions Francesco's cousins Giovanguualberto and Nicolò [di Zanobi] del Giocondo. For these members of the family see ASF, Manoscritti, 597 (I), Carte Pucci, fasc. VI, 26. Giovanguualberto was born 20 July 1490; see also ASF, Cittadinario Fiorentino, S. Giovanni, vol. I, c. 11. – For Vasari's long visits in Florence and the relevant dates see KALLAB, *Vasaristudien*, pp. 40-87, and FREY, *Der literarische Nachlass Vasaris*, pp. 15-78, 99-100, 174-202.

35. ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano, 7799, c. 268r-269r, of 22 May 1539 (I wish to thank Gino Corti for a transcription of this document).

36. See ASF, Miscellanea Medicea, 223, c. 234r. This inventory of 1551 of all Florentine households mentions a "La Lisa vedova" in the Borgo la Noce who probably was Lisa del Giocondo, because one of the *casette* owned by the Gio-

condo family in the Via della Stufa faced the Borgo la Noce (see note 68).

37. VASARI started his work on the "Vite" in c. 1540 but had begun to collect biographical information about artists and patrons even earlier. His description of Lisa's portrait was written before 1547, the year Francis I. died. For the relevant dates see KALLAB, *Vasaristudien*, pp. 433-437 and 181-207 (also on Vasari's reliability compared with the Anonimo Gaddiano).

38. Francesco's social and political position in Florence is usually overestimated, for example by K.R. EISSLER, *Leonardo da Vinci. Psychoanalytic Notes on the Enigma*, London, 1962, p. 29; McMULLEN, *Mona Lisa*, p. 40; SHELL/SIRONI, "Salai and Leonardo's Legacy", p. 100. For the political offices in Florence see N. RUBINSTEIN, *The Government of Florence under the Medici (1434-1494)*, Oxford, 1966.

39. The three marriages are confirmed by the *gabella*, the stamp duty on marriage contracts. See BNF, Poligrafo Gargani, no. 287, fasc. 969 (del Giocondo), c. 29-147, c. 69, 72 and 74; BNF, Ms. IV. II, 402 (formerly Cod. 211, Cl. 26 Magliab.), fols. 329, 389 and 407. See also BNF, Collezione Genealogica Passerini, fasc. 188, no. 26; ASF, Manoscritti, 246, Carte Ancise EE, fol. 808v; ASF, Raccolta Sebrigondi, 2608 (del Giocondo).

40. ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano, 21460, c. 72v. This notarial note of 29 January 1536, modern date 1537, refers to the testament and names as universal heirs Francesco's two sons Bartolomeo and Pietro or Piero. The testament itself of the same date, is ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano, 7799, c. 5r-8r.

41. ASF, Ufficiali Magistrato della Grascia, 190 (Libro dei Morti, 1457-1506), c. 281r, 6 June 1499: "una fanciulla di francesco de giocondo riposta santa maria novella". – The wrong date, 1 June 1499, stems from ASF, Arte de' Medici e Speciali, 247, c. 129v.

42. ASF, Catasto, 1009 (Santa Maria Novella, Gonfalone Unicorno, 1480), c. 3r-4v: "Antoniomarja dinoldo gherardini abitta nel popolo dj Santa filjcitte enel quartiere di Santo Spirito enel popolo detto". On c. 4r we find the members of Antonmaria's household: "Antonmarja detto di sopra detta annj 35 senza esercjzio igniuno [...] Lugrezza mja donna detta dannj 29 [...] Lisa mia fig[liou]la detta dannj -1 senza precipio didotta igniuno". For the Florentine catasto see D. HERLIHY/Ch. KLAPISCH-ZUBER, *Les Toscans et leurs familles. Une étude du catasto florentin de 1427*, Paris, 1978, pp. 48-76, for the quarters of Florence, S. COHN, *The Laboring Classes in Renaissance Florence*, New York, 1980, p. 32.

43. ASF, Decima Repubblicana, 20 (S. Maria Novella, Gonfalone Unicorno, 1498), c. 26r-27v, c. 26v: "Beni Alienati [...] Vnpodere posto nel piviere disandonato inpoggio Enel popolo disanmichele a monte chorbolj luogho detto SanSalvestro chonsuoj chonfinj [...] Eldetto lochonsegniato aFrancesco dibartolomeo delgochondo gonfalone leon bianco[.] Elquale gliochonsegnato Jndota. Eperparte didota della lisa mia figliuola. Rogato Bernardo daSa[n]miniato sotto di 6 di marzo 1494 Eperfondo dotale fiorini ---". The tax value of the *podere* is

not given and illegible in the preceding *catasto* of 1480, but it could not have been more than 400 florins. In 1494 Antonmaria Gherardini sold some land off his property in San Donato for 177 florins, probably to have the cash for the dowry. The amount of cash for the dowry is given in ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano, 10584, c. 247v-248r, of 5 March 1494, new date 1495 (I would like to thank Gino Corti for a transcription of this notarial document).

44. See H.C. BUTTERS, *Governors and Government in Early Sixteenth-Century Florence 1502-1519*, Oxford, 1985, pp. 13, 37-38 (with further references).

45. See *Raffaello a Firenze. Dipinti e disegni delle collezioni fiorentine, Firenze, Palazzo Pitti, 11 gennaio 29 aprile 1984*, exhibition catalogue, Florence, 1984, p. 112.

46. He first married Lisa di Giovanni Filippo de Carducci in 1466; see BNF, Poligrafo Gargani, fasc. 935-937 (Gherardini), c. 132 and 134; L. PASSERINI, *Genealogia e storia della famiglia Rucellai*, Florence, 1861, pp. 64-65, and folder no. viii.

47. ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano, 10584, c. 247v-248r, quoted above. For Francesco, his family and professional background see ASF, Archivio Mediceo avanti il Principato, Filza LXXXV, no. 487 (old pagination no. 511); ASF, Raccolta Sebregondi, fasc. 2608 (del Giocondo); G.C. ROMBY, *Descrizioni e rappresentazioni della città di Firenze nel XV secolo*, Florence, 1976, pp. 64-65 (Benedetto Dei's list of the most important families of Florence); G. AIZZI, ed., *Ricordi storici di Filippo di Cino Rinuccini dal 1282 al 1460 colla continuazione di Alamanno e Neri suoi figli fino al 1506*, Florence, 1840, pp. 256-263, 260 (Francesco's acquaintance with Filippo di Neri Rinuccini); E. CASALINI, *La SS. Annunziata di Firenze*, Florence, 1971, p. 34, note 18.

48. SHELL/SIRONI, "Salai and Leonardo's Legacy", pp. 101-102. In support for the date 1500, the authors also argue that the Florentine merchants Raffaele and Bernardino Gherardini, both residents in Milan, had contacts with Pietro di Noldo Gherardini, Lisa's father, and that therefore the Milanese branch of the family could have recommended Leonardo to Francesco or Lisa (*ibid.*, p. 102, note 61). However, Pietro di Noldo was not Lisa's father, neither is there any other evidence for this recommendation. – For the various branches of the Gherardini family see E. GAMURRINI, *Istoria genealogica delle famiglie nobili Toscane et Umbre*, II, Florence, 1671 (reprint Bologna, 1972), pp. 111-118 (however, Gamurrini is not always reliable); ASF, Raccolta Genealogica Ceramelli-Papiani, 2305 ("Gherardini").

49. BELTRAMI, *Documenti*, nos. 106-108. – I assume that the "retrati" of Leonardo's "garzoni" mentioned in the letter cannot be identified with a portrait of Lisa ("retrati" did not necessarily mean "portrait"; see Filippo BALDINUCCI, *Vocabolario toscano dell'arte del disegno* [...], Florence, 1681, p. 137; CAMPBELL, *Renaissance Portraits*, p. 1). For a more recent discussion of the documents in question, for a new transcription and for the *Madonna of the Yarnwinder*, see *Leonardo dopo Milano. La Madonna dei fusi*, ed. A. Vezzosi, Florence, 1982.

50. See above and L. FREEDMAN, "Raphael's Perception of the Mona Lisa", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 114, 1989, pp. 169-182.

51. The fragmentary column shafts have led to the – so far unchallenged – belief that at some point the painting was trimmed by several centimeters at both sides (M. HOURS, "Étude analytique des tableaux de Léonard de Vinci au Laboratoire du Musée du Louvre", *Leonardo. Saggi e ricerche*, Rome, 1954, pp. 13-26, p. 16; E.-G. GÜSE, "Die Mona Lisa Leonardo da Vincis", *Mona Lisa im 20. Jahrhundert*, pp. 13-22, p. 15; KEMP, *Leonardo da Vinci*, p. 266; A. CONTI, *Storia del restauro e della conservazione delle opere d'arte*, Milan, 1988, p. 91). However, a close examination reveals the integrity of the panel. This new evidence seems to support the suggestion that Leonardo painted two versions of *Mona Lisa* (see J.R. EYRE, *Monograph on Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa*, London, 1915, and *id.*, *The Two Mona Lisas*, London, n.d.), yet the possibility of a cartoon version with full columns is more likely. I would like to thank Monsieur Pierre Rosenberg, Madame Cécile Scailliérez and Monsieur Jean Hubert for having discussed this problem with me and for granting the permission to examine the *Mona Lisa* without the frame.

52. Some early copies with columns are: Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, Md., no. 371158 (photo Villa I Tatti); collection of Lord Brownlow (photo Villa I Tatti), present whereabouts unknown; Vernon Collection, New York (photo Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz; see *Time*, 1 July 1957), present whereabouts unknown; *Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. Foreign Catalogue*, 2 vols., Liverpool 1977, I, p. 223, no. 2785; A. CHASTEL, *L'illustre incomprise*, Paris, 1988, pp. 16-17 (two copies with columns in French collections). The most interesting old copy (on panel) is in the collection of the Earl of Wemyss in Gosford House (photo Ideal Studios no. B/2684, National Gallery of Scotland), where columns that have been overpainted are still visible.

53. See BELTRAMI, *Documenti*, nos. 103, 106-108 and 142.

54. These dates are established by a letter from 12 May 1502, where Leonardo is mentioned as being in Florence, and by a withdrawal from his bank account on 4 March 1503, when he had returned (BELTRAMI, *Documenti*, nos. 116 and 123; see also E. SOLMI, *Leonardo*, Florence, 1900, pp. 134-140). However, he may have left Florence much later than May 1502 because Borgia's letter of recommendation for Leonardo dates from 18 August 1502 (BELTRAMI, *Documenti*, no. 117). Most likely, he returned to Florence a few weeks earlier than indicated by the withdrawal of 4 March 1503 because Borgia had left Viterbo in early February and was back in Rome on 26 February 1503 (see *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, XII, 1970, pp. 699-708, 701-703). Thus Leonardo, who probably travelled back with his patron, could have arrived in Florence by mid-February. He received permission to abandon the work on the Battle of Anghiari temporarily (!) on 30 May 1506 (BELTRAMI, *Documenti*, no. 176).

55. For the following reconstruction of Leonardo's financial transactions see BELTRAMI, *Documenti*, nos. 101, 109, 113, 123, 125, 128, 131, 139, 158, 163, 175, 188, 189 and 248.

Most scholars ignore Leonardo's tight financial situation in those years; an exception is M. HERTZFELD, "Leonardo und sein Reiterkampf", *Kritische Berichte*, 7, 1938, pp. 33-65.

56. BELTRAMI, *Documenti*, no. 130. For the *Battle of Anghiari* see J. WILDE, "The Hall of the Great Council of Florence", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 7, 1944, pp. 65-81; C.A. ISERMEYER, "Die Arbeiten Leonardos und Michelangelos für den großen Ratssaal in Florenz", *Studien zur Toskanischen Kunst. Festschrift für L.H. Heydenreich*, Munich, 1964, pp. 83-130; for a new assessment and further references see F. ZÖLLNER, "Rubens Reworks Leonardo: 'The Fight for the Standard'", *Achademia Leonardi Vinci. Journal of Leonardo Studies*, 4, 1991, pp. 177-190, and G. NEPI SCIRÉ, "La Battaglia di Anghiari", *Leonardo & Venezia*, pp. 256-257.

57. BELTRAMI, *Documenti*, nos. 126 and 127.

58. *Ibid.*, nos. 140 and 158.

59. *Ibid.*, nos. 132, 134, 136, 137 (before the contract was signed) and nos. 145, 146, 151, 154, 159, 160, 165 and 166.

60. *Ibid.*, nos. 168-170; G. SIRONI, *Nuovi documenti riguardanti la "Vergine delle Rocce" di Leonardo da Vinci*, Florence, 1981; C. GOULD, "The Newly-discovered Documents Concerning Leonardo's 'Virgin of the Rocks' and their Bearing on the Problem of the two Versions", *Artibus et Historiae*, 2, 1981, (3), pp. 73-76.

61. For some time he must have travelled with his paintings of the *Leda*, *St. Anne*, *St. John*, *St. Jerome* and an *Unidentified portrait* (see SHELL/SIRONI, "Salaï and Leonardo's Legacy") and with other works of art (see J.P. RICHTER, *The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci*, 2 vol., Oxford, 1970, par. 680, i.e. Codex Atlanticus, 324r).

62. This has been discussed recently by DÜLBERG, *Privatporträts*, and also by CAMPBELL, *Renaissance Portraits*, pp. 193-225. See also J.K. LYDECKER, "Il patriziato Fiorentino e la committenza artistica per la casa", *I ceti dirigenti nella Toscana nel Quattrocento*, Florence, 1987, pp. 209-221, 213-215 (on motives for commissions).

63. S. REINACH, "La tristesse de Mona Lisa", *Bulletin des Musées de France* 4, 1909, pp. 17-22; A. SCHIAPARELLI, *Leonardo ritrattista*, Milan, 1921, p. 172; A. PERRIG, "Leonardo: Die Anatomie der Erde", *Jahrbuch der Hamburger Kunstsammlungen*, 25, 1980, pp. 51-80, p. 65; STRONG, "The Triumph of Mona Lisa", p. 268; SHELL/SIRONI, "Salaï and Leonardo's Legacy". The source (discussed by Reinach and Shell/Sironi) is a description of 23 October 1493 of Isabelle d'Este's predominantly dark dress of mourning. However, her veil was white! For the relevant document see A. LUZIO/R. RENIER, *Il lusso di Isabella d'Este*, Rome, 1896, pp. 23-24, also accessible in A. LUZIO/R. RENIER, "Delle relazioni di Isabella d'Este Gonzaga con Ludovico Sforza e Beatrice Sforza", *Archivio storico Lombardo*, ser. 2, 17(7), 1890, pp. 346-399, 382 (see also note 106, and below).

64. See also note 106.

65. ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano, 7799, c. 5r-8r. The stipulations for the members of his household are very precise and diligent, for example: apart from standard provisions for his burial and for the masses to be read after his death, he

gives exact orders how his daughter Ludovica has to take care of his wife Lisa, how the dowry of his granddaughter, Camilla (daughter of Bartolomeo, who apparently was slightly poorer than the daughter of his second son Piero), should be augmented from the money he leaves to his sons and that the maid should be given some money for her eventual marriage.

66. ASF, Decima Repubblica, 178 (S. Giovanni, Leon d'oro, 1504), c. 362r (no. 346): "Una casa consue appartenenze posta nel popolo di Santo Lorenzo di Firenze enela vjy dela stufa alatto dela cassa nostra laquale compero Francesco di Bartolomeo Giocondo di Antonio dorlando palajo [...]. Ladetta cassa tengjamo a nostra abittati[on]e. [...] rogatto Ser Lorenzo di tomaso poginj sotto di 5 Aprile 1503". In the margin we read 'a loro uso'. In September 1504 they bought another house for 382 gold florins which is let to tenants at 13 florins annually. In both deals the notary is Lorenzo di Tommaso Pogini (see ASF, notarile Antecosimiano 17146 and 17147). – The house in the Via della Stufa – a street parallel to Borgo la Noce leading from Piazza San Lorenzo to Via Taddeo – is still mentioned as their home in 1534; see ASF, Decima Granducale, 3629 (S. Giovanni, Leon d'oro, 1534), c. 351v (no. 300). For the Via della Stufa see also D. GUCCERELLI, *Stradario storico biografico della città di Firenze*, Florence, 1929, pp. 465-466; P. BARGELLINI/E. GUARNIERI, *Le strade di Firenze*, 4 vols., Florence, 1977-1978, IV, pp. 144-145 (see also note 68).

67. See J.K. LYDECKER, *The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence*, Ph. D. Thesis, Baltimore 1987, Ann Arbor 1987, pp. 140-141.

68. The old house incorporated three *casette* and was located between the Via della Stufa and the Borgo la Noce. One of these faced the Borgo la Noce. See ASF, Monte comune o delle graticole, Copia del catasto (1480), 82, c. 50r-53v, 53r. In 1480 Francesco, then 20 years old (though the catasto gives his age as 15 to make him tax deductible), lives with his father Bartolomeo (56 years old), his mother Piera (46), his two older brothers Giocondo (23) and Giuliano (officially 18), and with his four sisters Gherardesca (16), Lisa (12), Margheritta (9) and Marietta (3). – I could not find a complete entry in the following 'catasto' of 1498, only a reference which is ASF, Decima Repubblica, 25 (San Giovanni, Leon d'oro, 1498), c. 773.

69. LYDECKER, *The Domestic Setting*, pp. 146-147 and 160; *idem*, "Il patriziato Fiorentino" (quoted in note 62).

70. BNF, Collezione Genealogica Passerini, fasc. 188 (del Giocondo), inserto no. 26; because Passerini is not reliable in some instances, I have checked his information also in ASF, Raccolta Sebregondi, 2608 (del Giocondo), and ASF, Cittadinaro Fiorentino, Quartiere S. Giovanni, vol. I, c. 11.

71. According to the documents quoted above, Francesco married Tommasa Villani in 1493, that is roughly a year after the birth of Bartolomeo (24 February 1492), the first child he had by his first wife Camilla Rucellai. In March 1495 (new date) he married Lisa, thus (calculating a year of mourning) Tommasa, his second wife, cannot have died much later than

late 1493; therefore Camilla must have died roughly a year after the matrimony with Francesco.

72. See for example G. MAZZINI, "Arte e maternità nella rinascenza", *Emporium*, 94, 1941, pp. 82-87; E. CALLMANN, "The Growing Threat to Marital Bliss as Seen in Fifteenth-Century Florentine Paintings", *Studies in Iconography*, 5, 1979, pp. 73-92; J. POPE-HENNESSY/ K. CHRISTIANSEN, *Secular Painting in 15th-Century Tuscany: Birth Trays, Cassone Panels, and Portraits*, New York, 1980 (reprint from *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, Summer 1980; on portraits see pp. 56-63); D. COLE AHL, "Renaissance Birth Salvagers and the Richmond 'Judgement of Solomon'", *Studies in Iconography*, 7-8, 1981-1982, pp. 157-174.

73. Sandro Botticelli, *Portrait of Smeralda Brandini*, tempera on panel, 65,7 by 41 cm, London, Victoria and Albert Museum. See R. LIGHTBOWN, *Sandro Botticelli*, 2 vols., London, 1978, cat. no. B15; C. CANEVA, *Botticelli. Catalogo completo dei dipinti*, Florence, 1990, pp. 43 and 56.

74. *Portrait of a Woman*, the co-called 'Gravida', oil (?) on panel, 66,8 × 52,7 cm, Florence, Palazzo Pitti. – See Raffaello a Firenze, pp. 99-104; S. FERINO PAGDEN/ A. Antonietta ZANCAN, *Raffaello. Catalogo completo*, Florence, 1989, p. 54.

75. See E. RIDOLFI, "Di alcuni ritratti delle Gallerie Fiorentine", *Archivio storico dell'arte*, 4, 1891, pp. 423-455, 423-433; *Raffaello a Firenze*, pp. 105-118; STRONG, "The Triumph of Mona Lisa", p. 260; A. CECCHI, "Agnolo e Maddalena Doni committenti di Raffaello", *Studi su Raffaello*, ed. M.S. Hamoud and M.L. Strocchi, 2 vols., Urbino, 1987, I, pp. 429-439; DÜLBERG, *Privatporträts*, pp. 79-80.

76. See G. POGGI, *Kunstchronik*, 18, 1907, col. 299; C. de TOLNAY, *Michelangelo*, 2nd ed., 5 vols., 1947-1960, I (The Youth of Michelangelo), 1947, pp. 162-168; A. HAYUM, "Michelangelo's 'Doni Tondo': Holy Family and Family Myth", *Studies in Iconography*, 8, 1981/1982, pp. 209-251, in particular p. 225, note 21.

77. ASF, Archivio Mediceo avanti il Principato, filza LXXXV, no. 487 (old pagination c. 511).

78. VASARI, *Le vite*, ed. Milanese, IV, 1879, p. 466. For the date see the document published by G.A. GARDNER, *The Paintings of Domenico Puligo*, Ph. D. thesis, Ohio State University 1986, Ann Arbor 1987, pp. 9, 395-396, 398-399, and doc. 7.

79. VASARI, *Le vite*, ed. Milanese, V, 1880, p. 200. See also Pellegrino TONINI, *Il santuario della Santissima Annunziata di Firenze*, Florence, 1876, pp. 175-176.

80. ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano, 7799, c. 5r-v, c. 5r. Mazzieri's fresco was commissioned by Bartolomeo for his father Francesco (per dictum testatorem). The 'capella Martirum' had been redecorated very recently (novissime), that is in 1536. The commission, therefore, may have been connected to Francesco's testament.

81. MÜNTZ, *Léonard de Vinci*, p. 416, who believed S. Maria Novella to be the burial place of Francesco's family. This chapel was founded by Francesco's grandfather Zanobi di Jacopo del Giocondo in 1388 (see ASF, Raccolta Ceramelli-Papiani, no. 2373, and ASF, Manoscritti, 625, 'Sepoltuario

Rosselli', II, c. 1279), the other one in the SS. Annunziata by Zanobi's son Domenico di Zanobi del Giocondo in 1444 (see B.L. BROWN, *The Tribuna of SS. Annunziata in Florence*, Ph. D. thesis, Evanston (Ill.), 1978, Ann Arbor 1980, p. 28).

82. See ASF, Conventi Soppressi, 119, no. 59, c. 17v: "Franco. di Barto. del Giocodo Coduce la 4 Capella in ordine a mano destra e fece far' la tavola dipintovi S. Franc". Quoted after GARDNER, *Domenico Puligo*, p. 395. See also ASF, Manoscritti, 625, "Sepoltuario Rosselli", c. 1279, no. 16: "Capella della Famiglia del Giocondo col suo Monumento [...]. La condusse Francesco di Bartolomeo del Giocondo per se, e suoi Descendenti. ad onore di Dio, e di Maria Vergine, sotto nome della quale è eretta, e di Francesco d'Ascesi l'anno...". – This manuscript by Cosimo Rosselli is from 1657. See also TONINI, *Il santuario*, pp. 175-176.

83. ASF, Corporazioni religiose soppresse, 119, vol. 52, ricordanze B (1510-1519), c. 107v-108r. I would like to thank David Franklin to whom I owe the knowledge of this document (this is the volume Tonini, *Il santuario*, must have used).

84. LYDECKER, *The Domestic Setting*, in particular pp. 61-70, where some inventories are given. One should, however, note that 20 works of art in an inventory of only 80 entries are quite a lot. In comparable inventories of c. 200 entries one finds about 10 to 20 works of art. See, for example, ASF, Pupilli avanti il principato, 183, c. 175r-177v (estate of Leonardo di Bernardo Dei, December 1506); *ibid.*, 190, c. 680r-686r (Raffaello di Zanobi del Giocondo, August 1528). – See also P. THORNTON, *The Italian Renaissance Interior 1400-1600*, London, 1991, pp. 261-268.

85. ASF, Corporazioni religiose soppresse, 119, vol. 52, ricordanze B (1510-1519), c. 107v and 108r: "Uno vaso dalabastro dorato cola croce disopra ebbe la figliuola di Francesco del Giocondo [...] Uno quadretto di noce dorato dentro una nostra donna con 6 santi alla figliuola di Francesco del Giocondo per lire 3".

86. Ch. de TOLNAY, "Remarques sur la Joconde", *Revue des arts*, 2, 1952, pp. 18-26; McMULLEN, *Mona Lisa*, pp. 72-86, 91-94. – The motif of sitting high above a landscape can be found in Piero della Francesca's portraits of Federigo da Montefeltre and Battista Sforza or in Botticelli's *Portrait of a Young Man with a Medal* (Florence, Uffizi). As examples for rocks in the landscape background and for a high horizon see Filippo Lippi's *Madonnas with Child* (Munich, Alte Pinakothek, and Florence, Uffizi). For the gesture of Lisa's hands see also Filippo Lippi's double *Portrait of a man and a woman* in New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. For rocky mountains in a blue haze see Leonardo's *Madonna with the Carnation* (Munich, Alte Pinakothek). – For possible interpretations of the landscape see PERRIG, "Anatomie der Erde" (quoted above, note 63), and STRONG, "The Triumph of Mona Lisa", in particular pp. 261-268 (quoted above, note 2).

87. For Flemish elements in Lisa's portrait see TOLNAY, "Remarques sur la Joconde", pp. 18-26; McMULLEN, *Mona Lisa*, pp. 72-73; STRONG, "The Triumph of Mona Lisa", p. 257.

88. For Flemish portraits in Florence see L. CAMPBELL, "Memlinc and the Followers of Verrocchio", *The Burlington Magazine*, 125, 1983, pp. 675-676; *Id.*, *Renaissance Portraits*, pp. 231-234; M. ROHLMANN, *Auftragskunst und Sammlerbild. Altniederländische Tafelmalerei im Florenz des Quattrocento*, Ph. D. thesis, Cologne, 1990.

89. *Ibid.*

90. Michelangelo made this point, though with a negative intention; see Francisco de HOLLANDA, *Vier Gespräche über die Malerei*, ed. J. de Vasconcellos, Vienna, 1899, p. 29 (fol. 104).

91. For a similar argument see M.B. HALL, 'Savonarola's Preaching and the Patronage of Art', *Christianity and the Renaissance*, edited by T. Verdon and J. Henderson, Syracuse (N.Y.), 1990, pp. 493-522.

92. Washington, National Gallery of Art, 75,6 by 52,6 cm.

93. Florence, Uffizi, 65 by 42 cm.

94. Frankfurt, Städelsches Kunstinstitut, 82 by 54 cm. For the paintings from Botticelli and from his school see LIGHTBOWN, *Botticelli*, I, pp. 30-32, 116-117, nos. B20 and C3.

95. For this painting see below, note 125. Other large portraits prior to or contemporary with the *Mona Lisa* are: Lorenzo di Credi (?), *Portrait of a Woman*, Forlì, Museo civico, 75 by 54 cm (probably Florentine and close to the concept of *Mona Lisa*; see G. VIROLI, *La Pinacoteca Civica di Forlì*, Forlì 1980, p. 258); GIORGIONE, *Portrait of Antonio Broccardo* (?), Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts, 72,5 by 54 cm (see K. GARAS, *Italian Renaissance Portraits*, Budapest 1974, no. 4); Piero di Cosimo, *Portrait of a Woman as Maria Magdalena*, Rome, Galleria Nazionale, 72 by 53 cm (see DE LOGU/MARINELLI, *Il ritratto nella pittura italiana*, I, p. 252, as quoted above, note 2).

96. M. WACKERNAGEL, *The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist*, Princeton, 1981 (first German edition 1938), pp. 153-180, 167; LYDECKER, *The Domestic Setting*, p. 177 (on religious art). See also A. SCHIAPARELLI, *La casa fiorentina e i suoi arredi nei secoli XIV^e e XV^e*, Florence, 1980 (Reprint 1983), pp. 134-194, and THORNTON, *Renaissance Interior*, pp. 261-268. – For the size of paintings see also T. PUTTFARREN, *Maßstabsfragen*, Hamburg, 1971, pp. 104-105.

97. LYDECKER, *The Domestic Setting*, pp. 65-67, 165-175 and 177; Lydecker's view is partly based on the Medici inventory of 1492, published by E. MÜNTZ, *Les collections des Médicis au XV^e siècle*, Paris/London 1888, pp. 58-96. See also LYDECKER, "Il patriziato Fiorentino", pp. 217-220 (on the 'camera'); SCHIAPARELLI, *La casa fiorentina*, pp. 179-191 (on portraits); THORNTON, *Renaissance Interior*, pp. 284-300 (on the distribution of rooms) and pp. 265-266 (on portraits).

98. LYDECKER, *The Domestic Setting*, pp. 175-183.

99. MÜNTZ, *Les collections des Médicis*, pp. 60, 63-64, 84-85 (fols. 6r, 12r, 14r, 16v and 38r). For a recent discussion of this environment see W.A. BULST, "Uso e trasformazione del Palazzo Mediceo fino ai Riccardi", *Il Palazzo Mediceo Riccardi di Firenze*, ed. G. Cherubini/G. Fanelli, Florence, 1990, pp. 98-129, and V. GEBHARDT, *Paolo Uccello's 'Reiterschlacht*

von San Romano', Frankfurt, 1991, pp. 121-132. Portraits of men seem to have been displayed with more sensitivity to political or social representation. See W.A. BULST, "Die ursprüngliche innere Aufteilung des Palazzo Medici in Florenz", *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 14, 1970, pp. 369-392, 390-92. For male portraits in a more secular environment see also ASF, Pupilli avanti il Principato, 190, c. 956r-962, 962r, portrait of Gismondo Martelli (March 1529); *ibid.*, 177, c. 142r-144r, 143r, portrait of Zanobi Brancacci (August 1480). The same is still true in 1557 for Bronzino's *Portrait of Ugolino di Luigi Martelli* (see LYDECKER, *The Domestic Setting*, pp. 67 and 204-205). This is, of course, a preliminary thought about the location of portraits.

100. MÜNTZ, *Les collections des Médicis*, p. 87 (fols. 47v-48r).

101. LYDECKER, *The Domestic Setting*, p. 63, note 84; the portrait hung in the "Camera del palcho d'oro" together with a "Nostra Donna e San Giovanni" and a painting showing "santo Antonio da Padova". See also ASF, Pupilli avanti il Principato, 184, c. 25r-v, "testa di donna di pocho pregio" together with "Ghiesu grande", "San Gerolamo" and "San Bernardino".

102. See McMULLEN, *Mona Lisa*, pp. 56-57, who, however, believes that the portrait was originally conceived as a religious painting.

103. See for example Sebastiano Mainardi's *Portrait of a Woman in Berlin* (*Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der Gemälde*, Berlin, 1931, no. 86); Domenico Ghirlandajo's *Giovanna degli Albizzi* in Lugano (see below); Raphael's portraits in Florence (Pitti Palace) and Rome (Villa Borghese), already mentioned.

104. See J. BURCKHARDT, "Das Porträt in der italienischen Malerei", *Jacob Burckhardt-Gesamtausgabe*, 14 vols., Berlin/Leipzig, 1930-1933, XII, 1930, pp. 141-291, 245-246; J. LIPMAN, "The Florentine Profile Portrait in the Quattrocento", *The Art Bulletin*, 18, 1936, pp. 54-102. – Exceptions are two portraits by Filippo Lippi, one in Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, and in New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Also Leonardo's *Portrait of Ginevra de' Benci* (Washington, National Gallery, see below) originally showed the sitter's hands.

105. *Decor puellarum*, Venice 1461, c. 52r-v: "lo bello costume de la mane sie non toccare mai ni si: ni altri: ni ninna parte del corpo: saluo per summa necessita cum tutta la honesta che se puol: & cosi stando et andando sempre cum la man dextra sopra la sinistra: al mezo del cenzer uostro dauanti: et manzando et beuando cum quella grauita che conuene a tutte le donne uirtuose". See also McMULLEN, *Mona Lisa*, p. 76, and M. BARASCH, *Giotto and the Language of Gesture*, Cambridge/London, 1987 etc., pp. 49-51 and 91-95.

106. The evidence about women's veils is inconsistent because the veil, as any other garment, was subject to changes of fashion and because women often deviated from dress regulations. Although the black veil could have been a garment of mourning, it also was mandatory for married women and a simple reference to their dignity. In Florence, women were

allowed to go without a veil for two or three years after their marriage (this may be the reason why Maddalena Doni in Raphael's portrait is without a veil). See R. LEVI PISETZKY, *Storia del costume in Italia*, 5 vols., Milan, 1964-1969, V, 1966, pp. 89, 94 and 261; E. POLIDORI CALAMANDREI, *Le vesti delle donne Fiorentine nel Quattrocento*, Florence, 1924, p. 80; E. BIRBARI, *Dress in Italian Painting 1460-1500*, London, 1975, pp. 9-10; LUZIO/RENIER, "Delle relazioni di Isabella d'Este", p. 382 (quoted above note 63). – For the tradition and meaning of the veil in Christian culture see *Wetzer und Welte's Kirchenlexikon*, II, Freiburg 1883, col. 1216-1217.

107. "primo vestimento nuptiale". *Decor puellarum*, c. 4r.

108. *Ibid.*, cc. 43r-v and 49r-v.

109. For a more general interpretation of *Mona Lisa* as a portrait of virtue see STRONG, "The Triumph of *Mona Lisa*". However, it seems unlikely that the *loggia* in which Lisa is sitting should be a significant element in the painting's meaning of a "triumph of virtue over time". – See also Pierre DAN, *Le Trésor des merveilles de la maison royale de Fontainebleau* [...], Paris, 1642, p. 136, who emphasizes Lisa's virtue.

110. There are some portraits with black hair covering, such as Hans Memling's *Maria Portinari*, and his *Portrait of a Young Woman*, both Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and a portrait of an unknown woman in Rome, Musei Capitolini (unpublished). See also the co-called *Cassone Adimari*, where the wife has a black hair covering (Florence, Galleria dell'Accademia; see LEVI PISETZKY, *Storia del costume*, II, pls. 229-230).

111. See G. BUTAZZI, "Elementi "Italiani" nella moda sullo scorcio tra il XV e il XVI secolo", *Tessuti serici italiani 1450-1530*, Exhibition Catalogue, Milan, 1983, pp. 56-63, 58; *Anziehungskräfte. Variété de la mode 1786-1986*, Exhibition Catalogue, Munich (Stadtmuseum), 1987, pp. 498-503. – Also Lodovico ARIOSTO, *Orlando furioso*, XLII, 93-94, praises the virtuous grace of black garments.

112. *Decor puellarum*, cc. 43r-v and 49r-v; H. FLOERKE, *Die Moden der italienischen Renaissance*, Munich, 1917, 21-32; POLIDORI CALAMANDREI, *Le vesti delle donne Fiorentine*, pp. 21-32; LEVI PISETZKY, *Storia del costume*, II, pp. 468-473, III, pp. 265-279.

113. See for example A.-Ch. COPPIER, "La 'Joconde' est elle le portrait de 'Mona Lisa'", *Les arts*, 13, 1914-16, pp. 1-9, 9; D.A. BROWN, "Leonardo and the Idealized Portrait in Milan", *Arte Lombarda*, 67, 1983/1984, pp. 102-116, 103-104, 116.

114. E.H. GOMBRICH, "Ideal and Type in Renaissance Painting"; *Id.*, *New Light on Old Masters*, Oxford, 1986, pp. 89-124, 112-114.

115. Most portraits of married women show rings on the sitter's left hand. Some exceptions to this rule are: Lorenzo di Credi, *Costanza de' Medici*, London, National Gallery (see G. dalli REGOLI, *Lorenzo di Credi*, Milan, 1966, no. 43); Botticelli, *Smeralda Brandini* (see above, note 73); Parmigianino, *Camilla Gonzaga*, Madrid, Prado, inv. no. 280; Bronzino, *Eleonora di Toledo*, Florence, Uffizi (see A. EMILIANI, *Il Bron-*

zino, Busto Arsizio 1960, text to pl. 56). Traditions regarding nuptial rings in Renaissance Italy seem to have been different from today's; see C. KLAPISCH-ZUBER, *Women, Family and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, Chicago/London, 1985, pp. 213-246.

116. LEONARDO, *Trattato della pittura*, ed. Ludwig, nos. 93 and 138 (Codex Urbinas, fols. 41v-42r and 51r; ed. McMahon, p. 70). On the increasing importance of light and shade for Leonardo's works after 1500 see Z. ZAREMBA FILIPCZAK, "New Light on *Mona Lisa*: Leonardo's Optical Knowledge and His Choice of Lighting", *The Art Bulletin*, 59, 1977, pp. 518-523; M. RZEPINSKA, "Light and Shadow in the Late Writings of Leonardo da Vinci", *Raccolta Vinciana*, 19, 1962, pp. 259-266; J. SHEARMAN, "Leonardo's Colour and Chiaroscuro", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 25, 1962, pp. 13-24; K. WEIL GARRIS POSNER, *Leonardo and Central Italian Art: 1515-1550*, New York, 1974; A. NAGEL, Leonardo, *sfumato* and the Crisis of Naturalism", *RESS. Journal of Anthropology and Aesthetics* (in print).

117. See GOMBRICH, *Ideal and Type*, pp. 89-92; Marsilio FICINO, *Über die Liebe oder Platons Gastmahl (Commentarium in convivium Platonis de amore)*, Hamburg, 1984, p. 136-143 (v. 3, 1335). For the beauty of the body and the virtues of the soul see also the *Opere del Cardinale Pietro Bembo*, 4 vols., Venice, 1729, II, p. 39 (i.e. *Degli Asolani*, 1503, book 2). – More generally on beauty in portraits of women see E. CROPPER, "On Beautiful Women. Parmigianino, Petrarchismo and the Vernacular Style", *The Art Bulletin*, 58, 1976, pp. 374-394, 389-390 (on Lisa).

118. Washington, National Gallery of Art, oil and tempera on panel, 38,3 by 36,7 cm; see MARANI, *Leonardo*, pp. 36-38; J. FLETCHER, "Bernardo Bembo and Leonardo's Portrait of Ginevra Benci", *The Burlington Magazine*, 131, 1989, pp. 811-816; and *Circa 1492. Art in the Age of Exploration*, Washington D.C., 1991, pp. 269-270 (M. KEMP).

119. DÜLBERG, *Privatporträts*, pp. 123-124, and no. 166.

120. *Ibid.*, 141-142.

121. *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.

122. *Leonardo da Vinci. La vita*, ed. Poggi, pp. 30-31.

123. See F. ZÖLLNER, "Die Bedeutung von Codex Huygens und Codex Urbinas für die Proportions- und Bewegungsstudien Leonardos da Vinci", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 52, 1989, pp. 334-352, 351-352.

124. See E.H. GOMBRICH, "Leonardo's Grotesque Heads", *Leonardo. Saggi e Ricerche*, Rome, 1954, pp. 197-219 (reprinted in E.H. GOMBRICH, *The Heritage of Apelles*, Oxford, 1976, pp. 57-75); F. CAROLI, *Leonardo. Studi di Fisiognomica*, Milan, 1991.

125. Lugano, Collection Thyssen-Bornemisza, tempera on panel, 77 by 49 cm. For the inscription see Valerius MARTIAL, *Epigr.*, X, no. 32: "Ars utinam mores animumque effingere posses [sic]/ pulchrior in terris nulla tabella foret". In the original text the verb is "posset". For the translation see J. POPE-HENNESSY, *The Portrait in the Renaissance*, London-New York, 1966, p. 28, and P. HENDY, *Some Italian Renaissance-Pictures in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection*, Lugano, 1964, pp. 43-48; J. LAUTS, *Ghirlandajo*, Vienna, 1943, p. 42,

no. 103. – The original context of the painting's epigram is death and commemoration, because Martial speaks of the portrait of Marcus Antonius Primus who in his old age looks back at a picture of his youth and is not afraid of dying (MARTIAL, *Epigr.* X, nos. 23 and 32). – For the location of the portrait see above and LYDECKER, *The Domestic Setting*, p. 63; and ASF, Pupilli avanti il principato, 181, fols. 141r-150r, fol. 148r-v: in 1497, nine years after her death, Giovanna's portrait was located next to her husband's room. The inventory suggests that this "camera del palco d'oro" with her portrait may have been her personal room before she died.

126. BELTRAMI, *Documenti*, no. 126.

127. For access to private chambers see LYDECKER, *The Domestic Setting*, pp. 170-171, and, more in general, THORNTON, *Renaissance Interior*, pp. 284-300.

128. See Donatello's *Bust of a Youth*, Florence, Bargello (discussed by R. WITTKOWER, "A Symbol of Platonic Love in a Portrait Bust by Donatello", *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 1, 1937/38, pp. 260-261); Albrecht Dürer's *Portraits of Melanchton and Erasmus*; and Neroccio de' Landi's *Portrait of a Lady*, National Gallery of Art, Washington (G. COOR, *Neroccio de' Landi*, Princeton, 1961, pp. 57-61). This portrait's inscription makes the point that a mortal can not achieve the same as a God. This is a reference to Petrarch's famous sonnet about a portrait of Laura, where the poet praises Simone Martini's achievement of having depicted Laura's heavenly beauty not on earth but in paradise (*Le rime di Francesco Petrarca di su gli originali, commentate da Giosuè Carducci e Severino Ferrari*, Florence, 1829, pp. 120-121, no. LXXVII). Leonardo knew Petrarch's "canzoniere" (see E. SOLMI, *Scritti vinciani*, Florence, 1976, pp. 229, no. CXLV). – Also G. SAVONAROLA,

Prediche sopra Ezechiele, Rome, 1955, no. 28, pp. 374-375, doubted a painter's ability to paint the real beauty of the soul. For similar doubts see ARISTOTLE, *Politics*, 1340a; M. BAXANDALL, *Giotto and the Orators*, Oxford, 1971, p. 83; CAMPBELL, *Renaissance Portraits*, p. 27, and my forthcoming publication *Bewegung und Ausdruck bei Leonardo da Vinci*.

129. For his belief in the soul's power to express itself in the visual appearance of a person see LEONARDO, *Trattato della pittura*, ed. Ludwig nos. 108 and 499 (Codex Urbinas, fol. 44r-v; ed. McMahon, pp. 437, 86). See also RICHTER, *The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci*, quoted above, note 61, no. 837, i.e. W. 19115r); DANTE, *Il convivio*, 3.8. (DANTE, *Opere Minori*, ed. Chiappelli/Fenzi, Turin 1986, pp. 179-183), and KEMP, *Leonardo da Vinci*, p. 267. – For the physiological arguments see M. KEMP, "Il concetto dell'anima in Leonardo's Early Skull Studies", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 34, 1971, pp. 115-134; M. PRADO, "Memory, Imagination, Figuration: Leonardo da Vinci and the Painter's Mind", *Images of Memory. On Remembering and Representation*, ed. S. Kuchler/W. Melion, Washington/London, 1991, pp. 47-73, and F. ZÖLLNER, "Ogni pittore dipinge sé. Leonardo da Vinci and automimesis", *Der Künstler über sich in seinem Werk*, ed. M. Winner, Weinheim, 1992, pp. 137-160.

130. See also similar suggestions by POPE-HENNESSY, *The Portrait in the Renaissance*, p. 108, quoted above, note 125.

131. See G. BOAS, "The Mona Lisa in the History of Taste", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 1, 1940, pp. 207-224; E. HÜTTINGER, "Leonardo-Kult. Materialien zu einem Thema des Fin de Siècle", *Mona Lisa im 20. Jahrhundert*, pp. 41-55, quoted above, note 2; CHASTEL, *L'illustre incomprie*, quoted above, note 52.

RÉSUMÉ. *Le portrait de Lisa del Giocondo par Léonard.*

Cet article comporte d'abord une discussion sur les plus récentes interprétations données au *Portrait de Mona Lisa* de Léonard, puis un nouvel examen des informations sur Mona Lisa et son époux Francesco del Giocondo, suivi d'une discussion sur les documents inédits concernant la famille Giocondo. L'interprétation de ces documents indique que ce portrait représente effectivement Mona Lisa et permet de le considérer dans le contexte spécifique de la culture florentine du début du XVI^e siècle. L'auteur a cherché à préciser la date, les circonstances et les motivations de la commande en liaison avec certains événements dans la vie de la famille Giocondo, tels que l'acquisition d'une nouvelle maison entraînant un nouveau train de vie, la naissance du second fils de Lisa... Il a également tenté de rattacher cette commande au mécénat propre à l'époque et a reconstitué le cadre domestique où ce portrait, de particulièrement grande taille, allait s'insérer. Dans un tel cadre dominaient des préoccupations de piété qui se retrouvent dans les portraits de femmes peints à la fin du XV^e et au début du XVI^e siècle, qui mettent en relief les vertus féminines de bonne conduite morale. L'auteur a enfin voulu établir un rapport entre l'objectif de ce portrait – faire entrer dans une maison bourgeoise la vertu et la beauté de la vertu – et les ambitions propres à Léonard en tant que peintre dans les années 1500-1506.