

The 'Golden Age' of Siennese Painting (1300–1355)

Writing at the very end of the fourteenth century, the Augustinian Hermit Fra Filippo Agazzari characterised the 1320s as a time when 'there was great peace and great abundance of all earthly goods for the city of Siena'.¹ This perception of the period between 1287 and 1355 as one of political stability and economic prosperity for Siena still continues in modern scholarship.² It is also generally recognised that the ruling magistracy of the Nine represented the interests of a tightly knit oligarchy drawn principally from the most prosperous merchant families of the city. Other sections of society were excluded from political power – notably the Tolomei, Piccolomini, Malavolti and Salimbeni families whose wealth and status had been attained through banking and international trade but who were deemed 'noble' and therefore denied membership of the Nine. Members of these families frequently obtained other kinds of lucrative government post, however. In the meantime, yet other sections of Siennese society, such as the notaries and the butchers, felt that their commercial interests were ill-served by the policies of the Nine. These sections of Siennese society periodically rebelled against the regime, as in the insurrections of 1311, 1318, 1328 and, finally, the insurrection of 1355 that brought about the overthrow of the Nine.

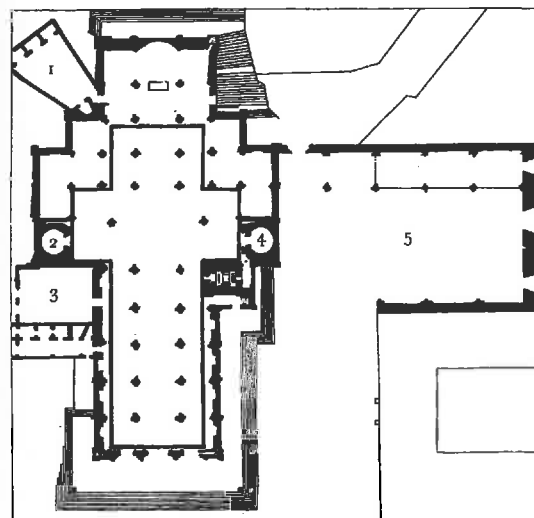
Throughout their long period of office, the Nine also had to weather a variety of external threats. In the early years of the fourteenth century they were engaged in a hard-fought military campaign against the powerful Aldobrandeschi and Pannocchieschi d'Elci families who – through their ownership of a large number of castles in southern Tuscany – were a constant impediment to the Nine extending Siennese rule over the *contado* and maintaining peace and security there. At the same time, as a member of

33 Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *The Good Countryside* (1338–9). Detail of east wall fresco of the Sala della Pace. Siena, Palazzo Pubblico.

the Guelph league, the Nine were expected to provide contingents of knights and foot soldiers to fight the armies of German princes, such as Henry of Luxemburg and Ludwig of Bavaria, who as claimants to the imperial crown offered military support to Ghibelline towns in Tuscany, such as Pisa and Lucca. The long campaign conducted by the Nine to wrest the southern Tuscan town of Massa Marittima from its political allegiance to Pisa and finally, in 1335, make it a subject city of Siena offers a particularly powerful example of this aspect of fourteenth-century Siennese politics.³

In addition the Nine had to deal with a number of major social and economic disasters, especially the failure of the Bonsignori and Tolomei banks in 1298 and 1313,⁴ the drought, food shortages and riots of 1326 and, most seriously of all, the outbreak of the Black Death in 1348. It has been estimated that in that crisis Siena lost at least half its population.⁵ The Siennese chronicler and civil servant Agnolo di Tura recorded with great poignancy that he buried five of his children with his own hands.⁶ The social and economic effects of the Black Death were gravely disruptive for the stability of the city. Added to this, moreover, was a new threat of foreign mercenary companies who preyed upon the city and *contado* and had to be bought off with large sums of money.⁷ The arrival in Siena of the emperor-elect, Charles IV, in 1355 provided the excuse for discontented elements within the city to unite, storm the Palazzo Pubblico and force the Nine and their allies to relinquish control of the government. Thereafter, government became more popular, in terms of social representation, but also much more unstable.

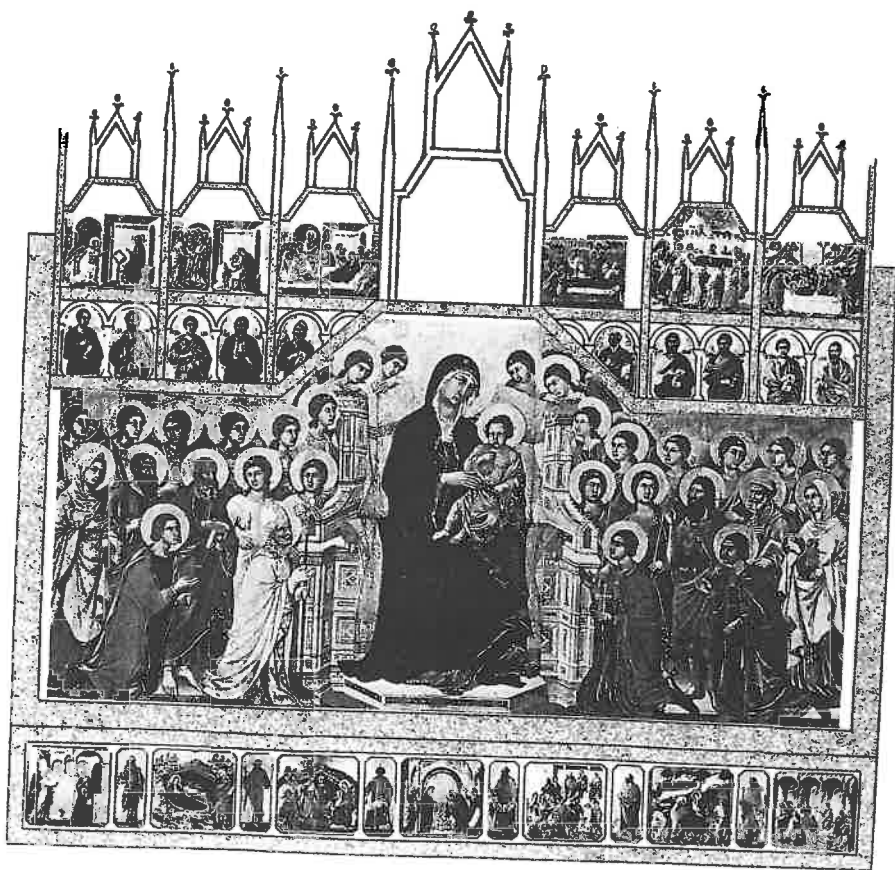
One of the most remarkable achievements of the Nine was their ambitious programme to beautify the city, summed up by the decree issued in 1297 that any new buildings facing the Campo were to be of uniform design.⁸ The Campo itself was paved and provided with a fountain, fed by a complicated system of underground aqueducts. The Nine were also responsible for initiating the paving, widening and straightening of many of the city streets, for rebuilding the monumental Porta Romana, and for creating a public park between the Porta Camollia and the Antiporto.⁹ Their most important act of artistic patronage, however, was the construction of the Palazzo Pubblico, a building that became the enduring symbol of the city and its civic identity (see pl. 1). Built on the foundations of a number of earlier buildings on the south side of the Campo and incorporating a former alleyway, the principal sections of the building were completed by 1310. The tall and imposing Torre del Mangia, the highest tower in the city, was built between 1325 and 1344. Between 1330 and 1342, a major addi-



34 Siena cathedral.
Ground plan of the thirteenth-century cathedral superimposed on the present church.
1 Sacristy
2 Chapel of Saint John the Baptist
3 Piccolomini Library
4 Chapel of the *Madonna del Voto*
5 Duomo Nuovo

tion to the rear of the building was built to accommodate the city prison and above it a large meeting hall for the city's principal council. Finally, as a mark of gratitude for the cessation of the Black Death, an elegant, open-sided chapel was begun in 1352.¹⁰

An ambitious programme of building and embellishment at the cathedral also took place in the first half of the fourteenth century. Beginning in the first decade, with the commission given to Duccio to paint a monumental double-sided altarpiece for the high altar, the campaign continued with the construction of a new baptistery that was literally dug out of the steep hillside below the east end of the cathedral (see pl. 103).¹¹ In 1339, Bishop Donusdeo Malavolti of Siena laid the foundation stone for the proposed 'Duomo Nuovo'. This was to be a huge extension built beyond the south transept of the existing cathedral to form the nave and aisles of a new cathedral (pl. 34). This highly ambitious programme of construction continued throughout the final years of the Nine, only to be abandoned by their successors in 1357 who contented themselves with more modest extensions to the cathedral itself.¹² While the Duomo Nuovo now exists only as one vaulted aisle and the shell of its tall and imposing entrance façade, it still offers a powerful sense of the ambition of Siena's early fourteenth-century civic authorities who, under the leadership of the Nine, tried to build the largest and most magnificent cathedral in Tuscany.



35 Reconstruction of the front face of the *Maestà* (by John White with modifications by Christa Gardner von Teuffel and the author).

Duccio's *Maestà*

In 1311, in a ceremony led by the Nine themselves, Duccio's famous painting of the *Maestà* was placed over the high altar of the cathedral.¹³ Possibly replacing an earlier thirteenth-century altarpiece (see pl. 20), it too was removed from the high altar in the sixteenth century, and in the eighteenth century brutally cut up. Modern reconstructions of the altarpiece as a whole reveal, however, that in terms of its scale, architectonic form and



36 Duccio, *Virgin and Christ Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels* (c. 1308–11), the *Maestà*. Tempera on panel, 211 × 425 cm. Siena, Museo del Opera del Duomo.

complexity of design, it must have exerted a remarkable presence in the cathedral interior (pl. 35).¹⁴ Even today, in its present museum setting, the jewel-like colours and burnished gold leaf of *The Virgin and Christ Child enthroned* still evoke something akin to reverence on the part of many modern viewers (pl. 36).

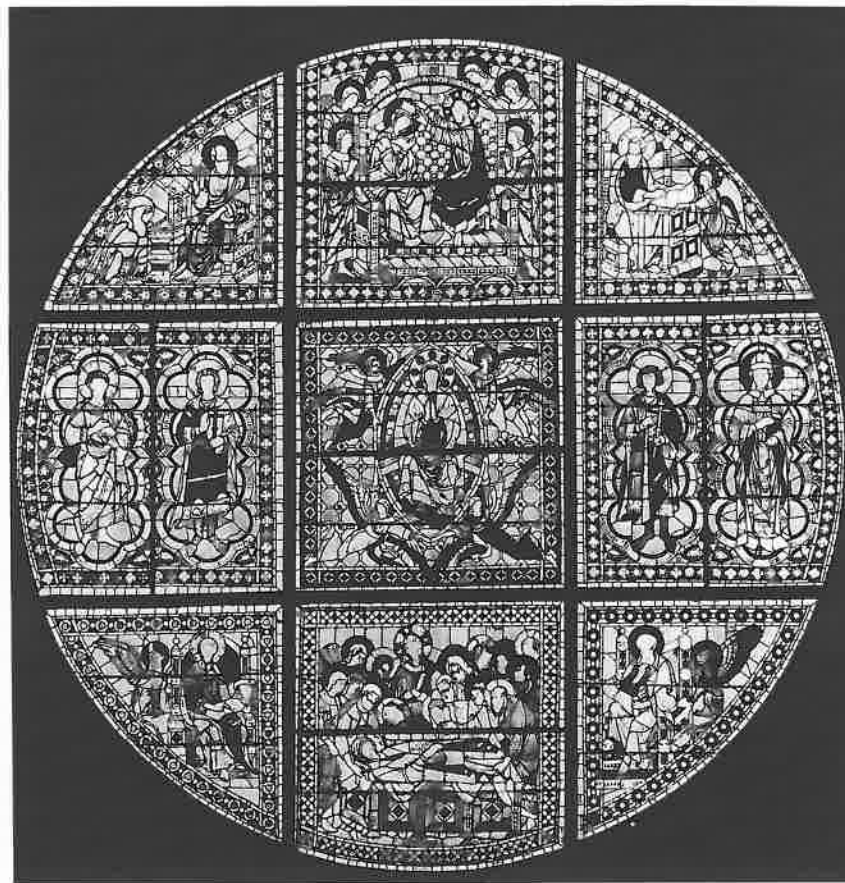
Duccio's innovatory design for a multi-tiered, double-sided altarpiece was highly ambitious for its time, far exceeding anything produced by his thirteenth-century predecessors. Features of its design (such as the sturdy side piers and clusters of pinnacles) were undoubtedly derived from contemporary church architecture (see pl. 19). The principal painting on the front of the altarpiece representing a large number of figures gathered together in an unified space around the Virgin's throne may have been inspired by early Christian mosaics and frescoes of this subject.¹⁵ The back of the altarpiece, however, presents a strikingly different appearance (pl. 38). Comprising an extensive series of small-scale narrative paintings, it has the appearance of an iconostasis, the screen in a Byzantine church that closes off the sanctuary from the rest of the church and on which a large number of painted icons are hung.

Such a comparison is also a convenient reminder of the original liturgical location and function of Duccio's *Maestà*. Designed to embellish the high altar of Siena cathedral, this double-sided altarpiece clearly had two

audiences in mind – those who worshipped in front of it and those who worshipped behind it. On the front of the altarpiece, facing towards the main body of the church, was the monumental representation of the *Maestà* theme, a well-established and popular subject in Siene painting (see pls 22–5). How widely accessible this painting would have been to the public is, however, a debatable point. The chancel of the thirteenth-century cathedral might have been closed off from the rest of the building by a metal-work screen – although the earliest secure documentary evidence for such an arrangement dates to the second half of the fourteenth century.¹⁶ Or the chancel might have been elevated above the rest of the cathedral pavement – thus making the high altar and its altarpiece easily visible to the congregation as a whole.¹⁷

What is certain is that by 1311 the high altar had become the location of a civic cult based on Siena's dedication to the Virgin. A painted inscription along the edge of the step of the Virgin's throne on the *Maestà* begins with the appeal: 'Holy mother of God, be the cause of repose for Siena'.¹⁸ This strongly suggests that Duccio's painting was intended to continue the already venerable Siene tradition of using art as a means of appealing in a direct and emotive way to the Virgin herself. Above the altarpiece would have been the magnificent stained-glass oculus, also attributed to Duccio, commissioned in 1287 and still located on the east wall of the cathedral directly behind the high altar (pl. 37).¹⁹ Showing as its centrepiece the entombment, assumption and coronation of the Virgin, the imagery of this stained glass would have been directly reiterated by the pinnacle panels on the *Maestà* that once again represented – in more extended form – the events associated in Catholic belief with the death of the Virgin (see pl. 35). These, in turn, would have provided visual support for the annual celebrations that took place in Siena on the feast of the assumption and which culminated in the presentation of symbolic tributes to the Virgin in the cathedral.

In short, one of the major achievements of this altarpiece was that, in addition to its overtly religious content, its imagery had marked civic and political dimensions. These were emphasised by the inclusion of four kneeling saints in the foreground of the painting who – as the painted titles on the lower border indicate – represent the early Christian saints, Ansano, Savino, Crescenzo and Victor. Figuring prominently in the early history of the Siene church, these saints were venerated in the cathedral as patron saints of the city. They were already represented (with the exception of Victor) on the stained-glass oculus, but Duccio's altarpiece was the first instance of their inclusion in a *Maestà* painting, portrayed as saintly advo-



37 *The Burial, Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin with the Evangelists and Patron Saints of Siena* (1287). Stained-glass window in the choir of Siena cathedral.

cates for the Siene, appealing on their behalf to their principal patron, the Virgin.

Contrasting with the Marian imagery on the front face of the altarpiece, the narrative paintings on the back of the altarpiece focus on the ministry and Passion of Christ. The design of the altarpiece also enabled Duccio to divide this narrative into three parts: on the predella, an 'introduction' of seven scenes from Christ's ministry; on the principal panel, twenty-six



38 Duccio, *The Passion of Christ* (c. 1308–11). Tempera on panel, 217 × 425 cm. Siena, Museo del Opera del Duomo.

scenes from the Passion of Christ (pl. 38); and on the pinnacle panels, a 'finale' of seven scenes that took place after Christ's resurrection. The nature of this subject matter – with its strong emphasis on Christ's death on the Cross and, by association, with the liturgy of the mass – strongly suggests that a specific audience was intended for this part of the altarpiece. This is likely to have been the cathedral canons, gathered in their choir stalls behind the high altar. It is not hard to imagine how the sight of Duccio's richly varied imagery would have enlivened and supported the canons' daily acts of worship and religious meditation.

The inscription on the Virgin's throne ends: 'and because he painted you thus, of life for Duccio'. Reiterating the sentiment of the inscription on Guido da Siena's San Domenico painting (see pl. 22),²⁰ these words emphasise both the belief in the Virgin's power as a spiritual advocate and the painter's awareness of his own artistic skills. As noted in the previous chapter, by the time the *Maestà* was commissioned, Duccio had already been working as a painter for some thirty years, securing prestigious commissions both within Siena and further afield (see pl. 25).²¹ The altarpiece for the cathedral, nevertheless, represented an extraordinary artistic achievement. Not only did the scale and complexity of this panel painting far exceed anything previously produced by Siennese painters but also the treatment of the *Maestà* theme itself was far more sophisticated than those



39 Duccio, *The Temptation of Christ*, predella panel from the rear face of the *Maestà* (c. 1308–11). Tempera on panel, 43.2 × 46 cm. New York, Frick Collection.



40 Duccio, *Christ with the Elders in the Temple*, predella panel from the front face of the *Maestà* (c. 1308–11). Tempera on panel, 48 × 48 cm. Siena, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo.

of earlier paintings (see pls 22–4). Ambitious in terms of the number of holy figures represented, this *Maestà* painting gives a powerful impression of a company of figures gathered to honour the Virgin and her son in the golden ambience of heaven. The representation of the Virgin and Christ Child repeats the degree of lifelikeness achieved by Duccio in his painting of these figures in the *Rucellai Madonna* (see pl. 25). The representation of the solid marble throne extends this impression even further. Pictorial illusionism is matched, however, with an exquisite use of colour and decorative pattern to convey the splendour and beauty of the court of heaven, as in such details as the cloth of honour draped over the back of the Virgin's throne and the cope of Saint Savino.

Narrative skill in the *Maestà* altarpiece covered an impressive range, once embracing some fifty-six scenes drawn from biblical and hagiographic sources. As one art historian has observed, 'compressed within the compass of an altarpiece is the equivalent of an entire programme for the fresco painting of a church'.²² This required not only considerable powers of organisation and design but also a high degree of inventiveness on the part of the painter. The sequential ordering of the narrative on both the front and back was broadly arranged to follow the western convention of reading from left to right. However, the Passion series was arranged in a more complex sequential pattern in order that key religious events, such as Christ's agony in the garden of Gethsemane and the crucifixion, could be afforded greater prominence in the overall scheme (see pl. 38).²³ By comparing narrative scenes from the *Maestà* altarpiece with those by thirteenth-century Sieneese painters such as Guido da Siena and the painter of the Saint Peter altarpiece (see pls 28, 30), it is possible to see how Duccio was both indebted to these early painters and yet exceeded them in naturalism and narrative invention. Thus, in the scene of Christ's temptation by the devil, the desert has been represented as a series of rocky outcrops, similar to the landscape settings of Guido da Siena's altar frontal (pl. 39). Yet, the miniature cities in Duccio's painting have been rendered in a much more detailed and spatially sophisticated form than Guido da Siena's schematic portrayal of the Holy City in his *Entry into Jerusalem*.

A narrative scene from the front predella showing the Virgin and Joseph seeking the young Jesus in the Temple and finding him debating with the elders demonstrates the painter's skill in portraying architecture and interior space (pl. 40). It also raises the interesting question of who exactly painted what on this ambitious altarpiece. Given the complexity of the enterprise, it is generally recognised that although Duccio was in charge of the whole project, he relied on the assistance of other painters to help him

complete the *Maestà*. The small amount of surviving contemporary documentary evidence for the commission of the altarpiece suggests that this was indeed the case. The marked stylistic disjunctions between various parts of the altarpiece point, moreover, to the collaboration of several painters on it. As noted in the introduction, painters were trained to emulate the painting of experienced master-painters and even when fully qualified they frequently co-operated with other painters on major civic commissions. Modern technical investigation of sections from the *Maestà* altarpiece reveals that such collaboration included the execution of particular tasks on a single painting: it appears that there was one painter working on the *Maestà* who was particularly skilled in the precise delineation of architecture. In addition, another painter – presumably Duccio himself – added corrections and final touches to individual paintings.²⁴ Thus, while the *Maestà* is justifiably viewed as Duccio's personal masterpiece, it also illustrates his abilities as the teacher of a younger generation of Sieneese painters and as the manager and co-ordinator of a workshop.

Altarpieces for the City's Churches

Duccio's legacy is most apparent in the history of the Sieneese altarpiece in the first half of the fourteenth century. Although no subsequent altarpiece rivalled the *Maestà* in scale and complexity, it clearly inspired other painters to execute altarpieces that were more ambitious in their design than the relatively simple form of late thirteenth-century altarpieces (see pl. 29). As the head of a successful workshop, Duccio himself contributed a number of innovations. Probably the most striking of these is the altarpiece known by its gallery accession number as Polyptych 28 (pl. 41). While displaying a broadly similar subject to earlier paintings of this type, the format of this altarpiece was more ambitious, comprising a series of five panels framed by carved, gilded and painted mouldings and surmounted by a second tier of gable panels showing three-quarter-length figures of Christ and angels. The analogies between the design of the altarpiece and contemporary architecture would once have been even more apparent when the six tall pinnacles, now lost, were still in place. The provenance of this altarpiece is unknown, but the prominent presence of Saint Dominic on the extreme right-hand panel and of Saint Augustine (whose regulations for the religious life the Dominicans adopted) on the left strongly suggests that the altarpiece was commissioned for a Dominican church – most probably for the high altar of San Domenico in Siena (see pl. 7).²⁵



41 Duccio, *The Virgin and Christ Child with Saints Augustine, Paul, Peter and Dominic* (c. 1305–8). Tempera on panel, 139 × 241 cm. Siena, Pinacoteca Nazionale.

Damage over the centuries – to the extent of the green underpainting used for the painting of flesh tones on the face of the Virgin being clearly visible – still has not obscured the confident representation of the volume of the figures and the softness of the fabrics of their garments; these details strongly suggest that Duccio himself was involved in the design and painting of this altarpiece. On the ground of its relative simplicity of design, it is generally considered to be a slightly earlier painting than the *Maestà* altarpiece. Another altarpiece attributed to Duccio, also in the Pinacoteca and known as Polyptych 47, more closely approaches the ambition of the front face of the *Maestà*. Comprising three tiers and showing a company of twenty-six figures in all, this altarpiece was probably painted for the high altar of the church within the Spedale di Santa Maria della Scala.²⁶

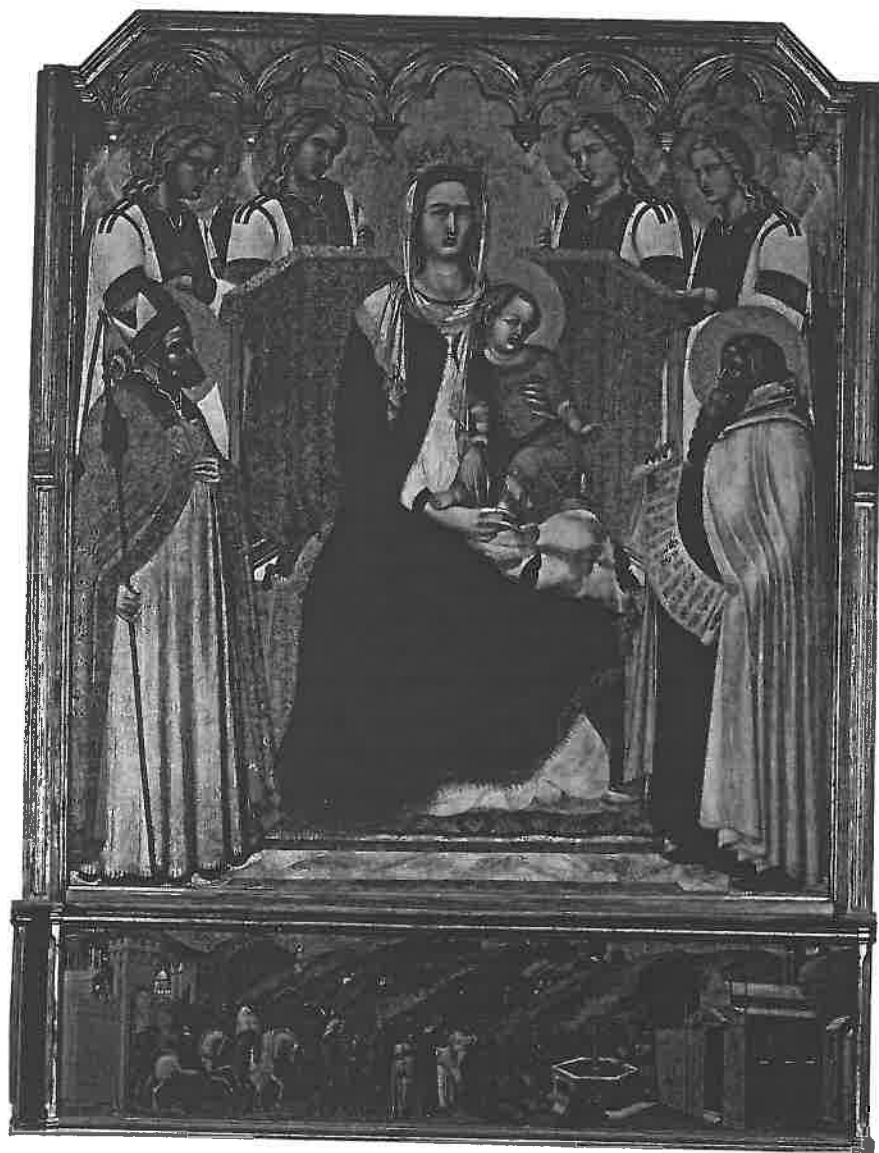
In 1319, eight years after the installation of Duccio's *Maestà* altarpiece, Simone Martini produced a polyptych for the high altar of the Dominican church of Santa Caterina in Pisa. Comprising seven principal panels and four tiers of figures of saints, prophets and angels, it was even more complex than Duccio's altarpiece for the Spedale in Siena. It was also support-



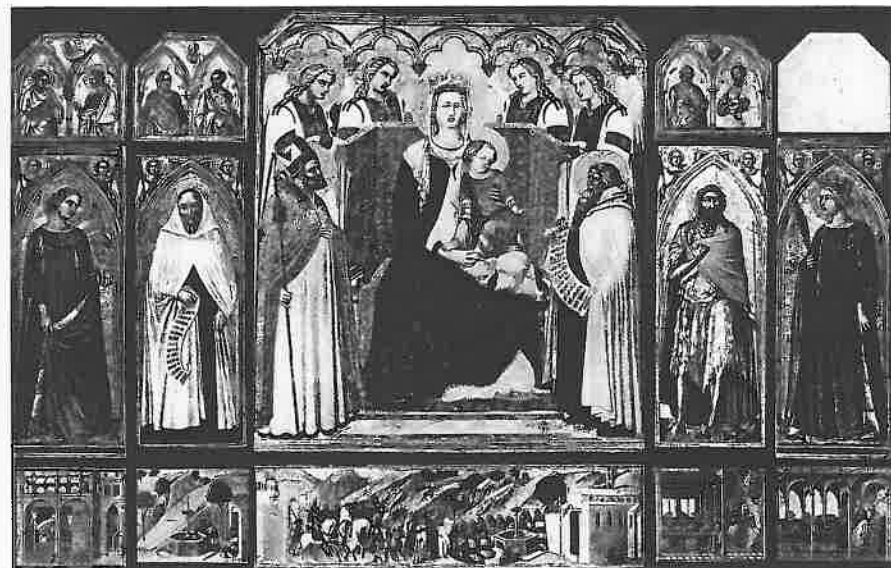
42 Ugolino di Nerio, *The Virgin and Christ Child with Saints Claire, Lawrence, John the Evangelist and Francis* (c. 1310–15). Tempera on panel, 84 × 189 cm. Siena, Pinacoteca Nazionale.

ed by a predella, which subsequently became a standard feature on Siennese altarpieces. In 1320, Pietro Lorenzetti painted a similar altarpiece for the high altar of the principal parish church of Arezzo. Although reverting to five panels on the main tier, he adopted from the *Maestà* the series of truncated gable panels for the second tier of the altarpiece. He also painted a predella for this altarpiece that is now lost. In the early 1320s Ugolino di Nerio painted a Marian altarpiece of a similar design for the high altar of Santa Croce in Florence, but with a predella of seven narrative paintings of the Passion.²⁷

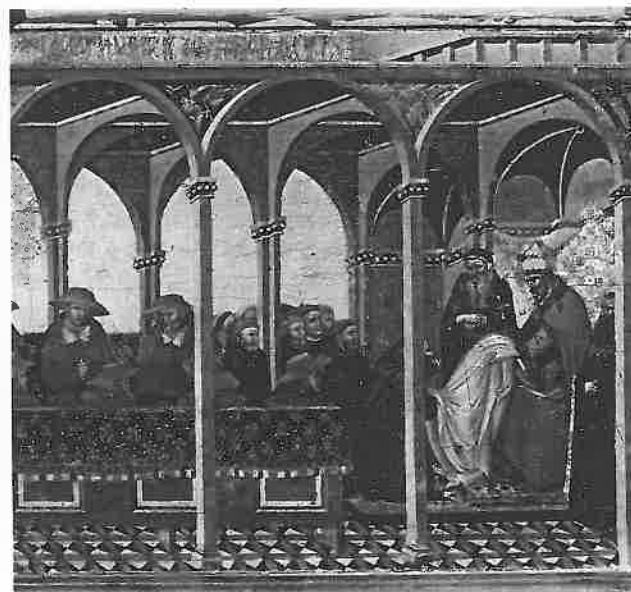
Not all Siennese altarpieces produced in the first half of the fourteenth century followed such complex designs, as several much more modestly conceived examples in Siena's Pinacoteca demonstrate. The *Virgin and Christ Child with Saints Claire, Lawrence, John the Evangelist and Francis* (pl. 42), now divested of its framing elements and pinnacle panels, would once have appeared similar in design to Duccio's altarpiece for San Domenico (see pl. 41). Attributed to Ugolino di Nerio and dated shortly after his ambitious altarpiece for the high altar of Santa Croce, the provenance of



43 Pietro Lorenzetti, *The Virgin and Christ Child enthroned with Saint Nicholas and the Prophet Elijah* (1329), the Carmelite Altarpiece. Tempera on panel, 169 × 148 cm. Siena, Pinacoteca Nazionale.



44 (above)
Reconstruction of the
Carmelite Altarpiece
(by Hayden
Maginnis).



45 Pietro
Lorenzetti, *Pope
Honorius IV award-
ing the White Habit
to the Carmelite
Order*, predella panel
from the Carmelite
Altarpiece (1329).
Tempera on panel,
37.5 × 46 cm. Siena,
Pinacoteca
Nazionale.

this panel painting was the Franciscan Siense convent of Santa Chiara (see pl. 6). The prominent presence of Saints Claire and Francis suggests that the nuns of Santa Chiara may have commissioned the altarpiece.²⁸ More importantly, it shows that well-established Siense painters such as Ugolino, while responding in a highly innovative fashion to prestigious commissions like the high altarpiece for Santa Croce in Florence, nevertheless still produced modestly conceived altarpieces for communities of nuns who presumably lacked the economic resources of their Franciscan brothers.

By contrast, an altarpiece for the Carmelite church of San Niccolò in Siena perhaps rivalled the scale and sophistication of at least the front face of Duccio's *Maestà* for the cathedral. On 26 October 1329 the Council of the Bell debated a request to the Nine by the prior and brothers of the priory of San Niccolò for financial assistance to complete a 'renowned' and 'very beautiful' painting of the Virgin, saints and angels that they had commissioned from the Siense painter Pietro Lorenzetti. The Council voted to grant the Carmelites 50 *lire* towards the total cost of the painting of 150 *lire*. On 29 November this money was handed to the painter, who then completed the altarpiece, placing his name and the date 1329 upon it. Taken from the high altar of San Niccolò two centuries later, the central panel of the altarpiece (pl. 43) and its predella panel were removed to a country church and repainted in order to reflect their new situation. Restored in 1936, the painting was subsequently taken to the Pinacoteca and re-united with two of the side panels of the altarpiece and the rest of the predella. Other parts of the altarpiece have now been identified in two North American art collections.

Modern reconstruction of the Carmelite altarpiece indicates that in its original form it comprised a large central painting of the Virgin and Christ Child enthroned in the company of Saint Nicholas of Bari, the Prophet Elijah and four angels (pl. 44). Like Duccio's *Maestà*, all the figures were shown full-length and gathered in a unified setting (see pl. 35). Framing this large central painting were four side panels showing, from left to right, Saint Agnes, the Prophet Elisha, Saint John the Baptist and Saint Catherine of Alexandria – all on the same scale as the saints on the central panel. Above these side panels were gabled pinnacle panels portraying pairs of apostles – thus again broadly emulating the design of Duccio's *Maestà* (see pls 35, 36). Above these was a further series of six smaller pinnacle panels, each depicting the standing figure of a saint. The predella, meanwhile, comprised a series of five narrative paintings. Instead of taking their subjects from the bible, these five paintings show events from the history of the Carmelite Order. A striking feature of the overall design of this altar-

piece is the very wide central panel on the predella that allowed the painter to depict the consignment of the Carmelite rule in the early thirteenth century in a particularly detailed manner.²⁹

Other mendicant orders, such as the Dominicans at Santa Caterina in Pisa and the Franciscans at Santa Croce in Florence, as already noted, had utilised the talents of Siense painters to provide a form of visual propaganda for the embellishment of their high altars, but the Carmelites at San Niccolò appear to have been particularly ambitious in this respect.³⁰ Pietro Lorenzetti's representation of the Virgin as a crowned queen eminently reflected the Carmelites' long tradition of veneration of the Virgin. The vivaciously portrayed Christ Child, meanwhile, is shown actively gesturing towards the Prophet Elijah: both Elijah and Elisha are portrayed as Carmelite saints, thus emphasising their status as the perceived founders of the Order. Opposite Elijah stands Saint Nicholas of Bari, the titular saint of the church for which the altarpiece was painted. Saint John the Baptist was probably included both as the last of the prophets to foresee the coming of Christ and as the holy man who preached in the wilderness near the river Jordan, where the Carmelites first established themselves as a community of hermits. The two female saints, Agnes and Catherine of Alexandria, were revered as early Christian martyrs and as patron saints of the wool industry, whose powerful guild had close associations with the Carmelite Order and the church of San Niccolò.³¹

The predella offers an extraordinarily detailed and lively representation of the Carmelite Order's foundation legend, as it was being constructed at the time the altarpiece was painted. The order was founded in the mid-twelfth century by a group of Crusaders on Mount Carmel, near to what was believed to be the fountain of Elijah. Here they built a church to the Virgin and – like the Siense in 1260 – made her their patron and protector. Albert, Patriarch of Jerusalem, gave the first official approval of the order some time between 1206 and 1214. This was followed by papal approval from Honorius III in 1226. After the fall of the Latin Empire in 1261, the Carmelites were forced to move to the west. In 1286, Honorius IV changed the Carmelite habit to a plain white cloak – it had previously been striped in memory of Elijah's cloak that, according to the biblical account, had been charred by flames as he was taken into heaven by the fiery chariot. The first predella scene illustrates an apocryphal subject that occurs only in Carmelite literature, that of Sobac, the legendary father of Elijah, dreaming of his son's future association with 'men clad in white raiment'. The second scene portrays the early eremitical life of the Carmelites beside the fountain of Elijah. The central and two final predella

scenes show the awarding and confirming of the rule by Albert, Honorius III and Honorius IV. Much circumstantial detail has been included in these later scenes, such as the city gateway of Acre, the fountain of Elijah and the church of the Virgin on Mount Carmel in the central scene, and the careful distinction made between the striped cloaks of the Carmelites in the second, third and fourth scenes and the white cloak assigned by the pope in the last scene.

In its original state, Pietro Lorenzetti's altarpiece must have constituted an unusually self-confident statement about the Carmelite Order, their identity and their spiritual concerns. The skill of the painter contributed greatly to this effect. A well-established painter, notably of tender images of the Virgin and Christ Child for churches in the Sieneese *contado* and further afield, Pietro Lorenzetti had also had the experience of working on at least one and perhaps two large-scale fresco cycles for the Franciscan Order.³² In the principal painting of the Carmelite altarpiece, he furnished his patrons with a series of composed figures who appear as if gathered within a credible space marked out by the marble pavement and the draped throne. The extensive use of white – which, as indicated, was a particularly significant colour for the Carmelites – added a striking luminosity to the painting's appearance. The predella scenes likewise show great assurance in the way the figures were disposed in depth, within a range of architectural and landscape settings. In a scene such as *Pope Honorius IV awarding the White Habit* (pl. 45) the sophisticated treatment of the architecture is, for example, reminiscent of the *Christ with the Elders* from the front predella of the *Maestà* altarpiece (see pl. 40) but, in terms of its figural composition, it is more ambitious. The predella also provides clear evidence of the painter's interest in conveying a range of human emotions and a variety of naturalistic details. Thus the quiet, contemplative activities of the early Carmelites around Elijah's well in the second scene provide a striking contrast to the energy and curiosity of the crowd issuing out of the gateway of Acre to witness Albert's consignment of the rule in the central scene. Similarly, in the *Dream of Sobac* a black and white towel hangs over a rail to the right of the bed alcove, while in the *Fountain of Elijah*, two delicate glasses of water stand on the rim of the basin and draw attention to the water splashing down from the fountain into the basin itself.

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Civic Art in the Palazzo Pubblico

In his Carmelite altarpiece Pietro Lorenzetti approached something of the grandeur and narrative inventiveness of Duccio's *Maestà* altarpiece. For his representation of the Virgin as the crowned Queen of Heaven he may have found inspiration in another imposing early fourteenth-century Sieneese painting of the *Maestà* theme. Painted by Simone Martini in fresco on the east wall of the principal council hall of the Palazzo Pubblico (pl. 46), this *Maestà* painting provides a striking example of the adaptation of the principal subject of Duccio's altarpiece for an ostensibly secular setting. While copying the subject matter of the earlier *Maestà* – to the extent of showing Saints Ansano, Savino, Crescenzo and Victor as kneeling petitioners before the Virgin's throne – Simone Martini introduced other details

46 The Sala del Mappamondo (formerly known as the Sala del Consiglio). Siena, Palazzo Pubblico.



that gave the painting a much more worldly and courtly air (pl. 47, and see pl. 36). Overall, the impression given by the painting is of an intricately worked textile hanging on the wall. The expansive canopy held by four of the saints over the Virgin and assembled company is strongly reminiscent of those used for ceremonial entries and processions in honour of illustrious visitors to Siena at that time.³³ Duccio's solid, architectonic marble throne has been transformed into an intricately worked, gilded throne that owed its inspiration to contemporary architecture and metalwork. In order to convey the magnificence and splendour of the court of heaven, Simone Martini added other kinds of ornamentation such as a piece of glass for the brooch pinning together the edges of the Virgin's mantle and moulded, gilded plasterwork on the haloes of the saints.³⁴

THE SALA DEL CONSIGLIO

This highly imaginative and essentially 'courtly' re-working of the *Maestà* theme raises several interesting questions regarding Simone Martini's early training, not least whether he might previously have worked at the south Italian court of the King of Naples.³⁵ Undoubtedly, however, the location and original function of the painting also influenced his treatment of the subject. The painting takes up the whole of the east wall of what was then known as the Sala del Consiglio (the 'room of the council', pl. 48). It was called this because it was the meeting room for the city's principal legislative body of the Council of the Bell. Under the chairmanship of the Podestà, this council made up of some 300 citizens met weekly to debate and vote on government business brought to the council's attention by the Nine and other groups of magistrates. Attendants would thus have been acutely aware of Simone's majestic image of the Virgin, the city's principal patron saint and protector, presiding over them and over their collective proceedings. Indeed, it appears that the Podestà was seated directly below the painting, thus replicating the ceremonial position of the Virgin herself, who faced the members of the Council.

Several details in the painting confirm that this *Maestà* was intended to inspire Siena's councillors. Firstly, the Christ Child is portrayed not as a baby – as in Duccio's *Maestà* (see pl. 36) – but as a child, standing on his mother's knee (pl. 47). With his right hand he blesses the assembled company and in his left he holds a scroll that is made of real paper stuck to the surface of the wall – just as many official Siennese government documents were then beginning to be written on paper rather than on parchment. On it is written the biblical text: 'Love justice, you who rule the earth', an



47 Simone Martini, *The Maestà* (c. 1315). Fresco, 836 × 977 cm. East wall of the Sala del Mappamondo. Siena, Palazzo Pubblico.

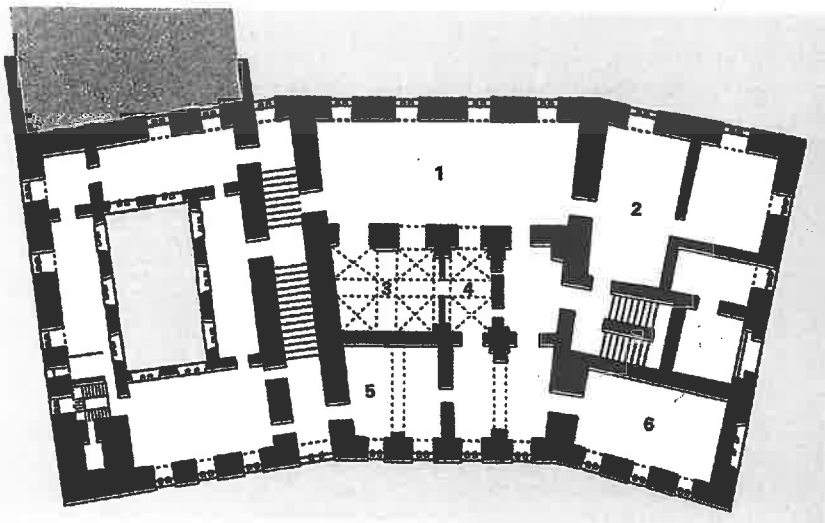


Plate 48 Plan of the first floor of the Palazzo Pubblico

- 1 Sala del Mappamondo (formerly known as the Sala del Consiglio)
- 2 Sala della Pace (formerly known as the Sala dei Nove)
- 3 Cappella dei Signori
- 4 Anticappella (formerly an ante-chamber to an earlier Sala del Concistoro)
- 5 Sala di Balia
- 6 Sala del Concistoro

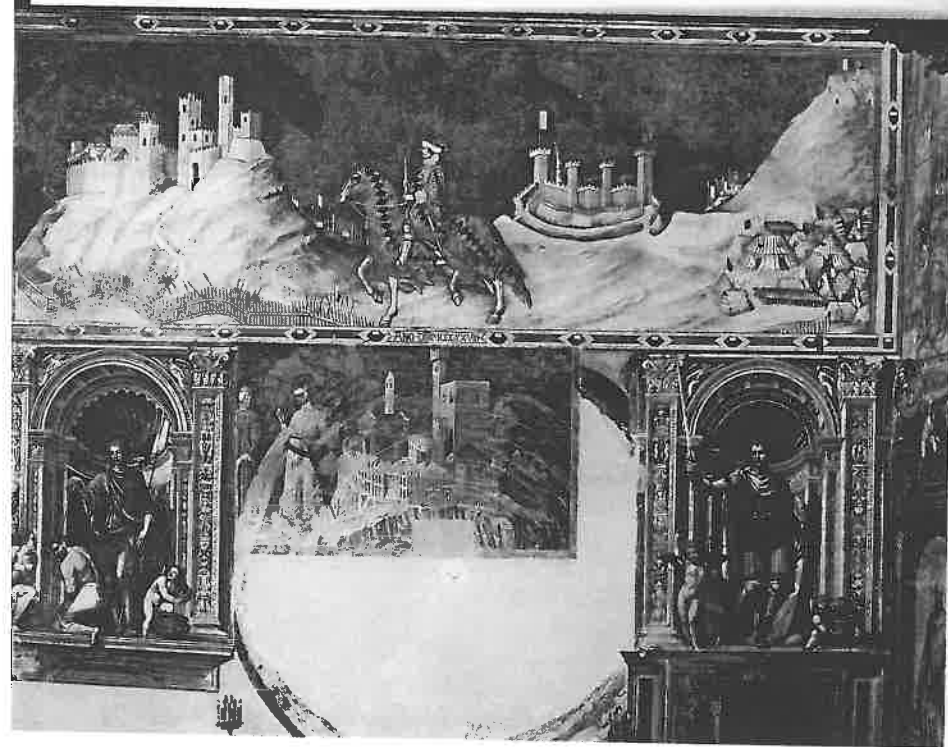
appropriate injunction to the painting's original audience of the Council of the Bell.

Simone's painting also includes in the foreground the four patron saints of Siena. Painted inscriptions along the edges of the steps leading to the Virgin's throne strongly re-iterate the impression given by the pose of the figures that they are meant to be seen as involved in a dialogue with the Virgin. The inscription begins with the words: 'My beloved ones, take heed that I will make the devotees of your honest prayers content as you desire'. This opening suggests that the Virgin is responding to a collective petition to her made by the four saints, which was probably once written on the scrolls held by the figures, the words of which are now lost but whose faint outlines can be seen on some of the scrolls.³⁶ The rest of the Virgin's response indicates clearly that although she delights in 'good counsel' – an apt sentiment for this setting – she will not support or favour those who

despise or deceive her land. The use of the word *terra* (land) twice is particularly significant because it emphasises the idea of territorial ownership and the Virgin's close links with this political concept in the minds of the Sieneze.

The political tenor of the painting's imagery is continued in more overt fashion in the painted embellishment that frames the *Maestà* and in the detail of the canopy within the painting. The restoration of the 1980s has revealed that the edges of the canopy were decorated with a sequence of heraldic devices: the civic insignia of the black and white shield of the Sieneze Commune (the *balzana*) and the gold lion on a red field of the Popolo (the party of the people) alternate with the coat-of-arms of the Angevin dynasties of Naples and France. The close political association of Siena (under the leadership of the Nine) with the Guelph party (under the leadership of Robert of Anjou, King of Naples) was thus made explicit. On the broad painted borders the decoration similarly combines religious imagery of saints and prophets with the civic emblems of the *balzana* and the lion of the Popolo. The large number of sacred texts displayed by the prophets, evangelists and doctors of the Church, together with the Janus-like personification of the old and new law, further validated the council's principal task of making written records of the city's laws. Finally, embedded in the wall below the wide, lower border are painted replicas of the city's principal seal – depicting, appropriately, the enthroned Virgin and Christ Child flanked by two angels – and that of the seal of the Capitano del Popolo (Captain of the People).

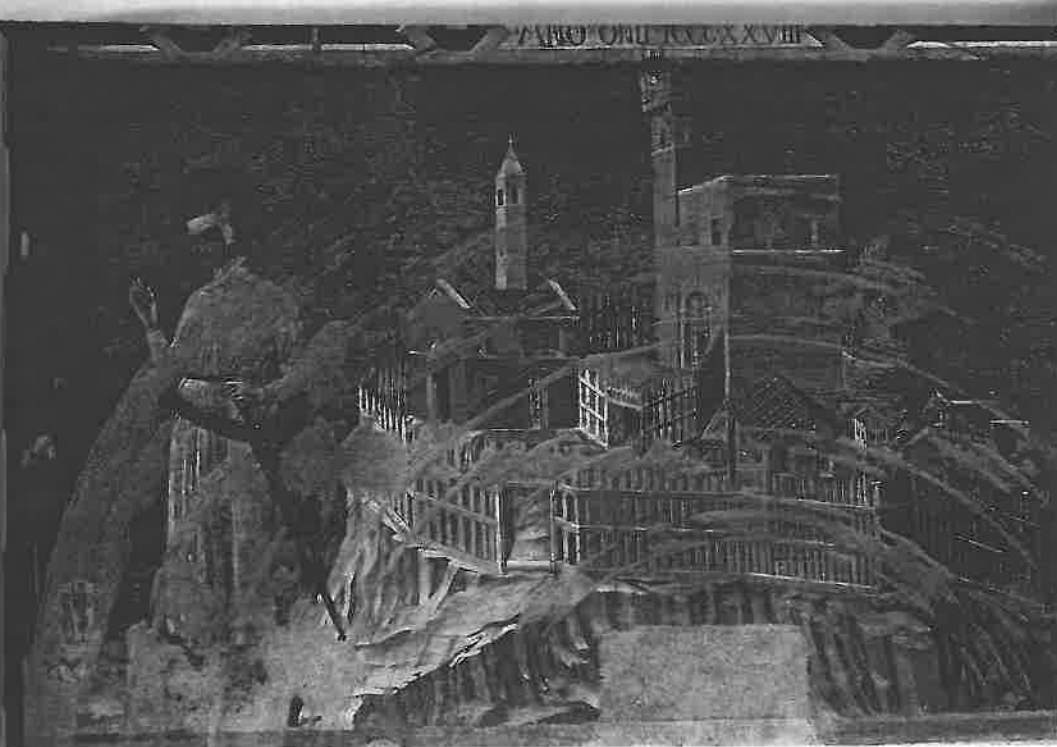
Directly opposite Simone Martini's highly inventive and politicised treatment of the popular *Maestà* theme are the remains of two more paintings that arguably belong to the fourteenth-century embellishment of the Sala del Consiglio (pl. 49). Situated above and between two sixteenth-century paintings of Saints Ansano and Victor, these paintings are known as *Guidoriccio da Fogliano at the Siege of Montemassi* – a painting that extends the entire width of the upper part of the wall – and the *Submission of a Castle* – much smaller and located below it. The surface of the latter bears the scars of gouges caused by the rotation of a large painting, probably on canvas, depicting a map of the world – thus earning the room its later name of the Sala del Mappamondo. Until 1981 only the *Guidoriccio* had been visible, the *Submission* having been hidden under layers of whitewash. The *Guidoriccio* was conventionally attributed to Simone Martini and the date of 1328 painted on the lower border regarded as close to the date of the painting's execution.³⁷ Based on Sieneze sources dating from the sixteenth century onwards, the subject of the painting had been



49 West wall of the Sala del Mappamondo showing the frescoes of *Guidoriccio da Fogliano at the Siege of Montemassi*, *The Submission of a Castle*, *Saint Ansano* and *Saint Victor*. Siena, Palazzo Pubblico.

identified as a commemoration of Guidoriccio da Fogliano, who as the leader of the Sienese army captured the fortress of Montemassi in 1328 for the Sienese. There appeared therefore to be persuasive symmetry in the early fourteenth-century decoration of the Sala del Consiglio. On one wall was represented the Virgin, the city's principal patron, 'queen' and governor, and on the other appeared the embodiment of the city's military power and prowess.³⁸ The two paintings also suggested that Simone Martini's talents as a painter extended beyond depicting holy figures in a particularly elegant and refined manner to include the portrayal of the distinctive appearance of Guidoriccio himself, together with details of late medieval warfare, such as the military camp on the extreme right of the painting.

In 1977, however, an American art historian raised a number of questions about the traditional attribution and dating of this painting. Intense and often controversial debate ensued and continues – it has been argued that this painting is not in fact by Simone Martini or, indeed, fourteenth-



50 *The Submission of a Castle* (c. 1314–33). Fresco, 223 × 378 cm. West wall of the Sala del Mappamondo. Siena, Palazzo Pubblico.

century at all.³⁹ The controversy has been further complicated by the discovery of the painting of the *Submission of a Castle* (pl. 50). Recovered as a direct result of the detailed physical investigation of the west wall prompted by the speculation surrounding the *Guidoriccio*, the original dimensions of the painting have clearly been reduced both by the painting of the *Guidoriccio* and, to the left, by the early sixteenth-century *Saint Ansano*. Its date, authorship and precise subject have also been the subject of a wide range of views.⁴⁰ Scholars who wish to maintain the 1328 date for the *Guidoriccio* tend to date the *Submission of a Castle* to the second decade of the fourteenth century and attribute it to Duccio or to another Sienese painter, Memmo di Filippuccio, or even to Simone Martini himself. Proponents of this early dating suggest that it portrays the submission to Siena of another southern Tuscan town, Giuncarico, in 1314. By contrast, scholars who challenge the conventional attribution and dating of the *Guidoriccio* tend to propose a later dating for the painting of the

Submission of a Castle, linking it with payments made in 1331 by the Sienese treasury to Simone Martini for visiting and executing a painting of Arcidosso, yet another recently conquered town in southern Tuscany.

The evidence for the existence of the *Mappamondo* has also been drawn into this debate.⁴¹ The fourteenth-century chronicle by Agnolo di Tura reports the commission of this painting from Ambrogio Lorenzetti in 1345, and in 1393 the treasury paid three painters for its restoration. What is not clear is the precise nature of this painting's imagery. Generally described in written accounts of it as a 'map of the world', it could have represented any one of a range of types of maps used by medieval cartographers. Intriguingly, however, three eighteenth-century Sienese historians described the painting as by then in a fragmentary state but as representing a topographical map of 'the state of Siena'. If this were the case, the *Mappamondo* would have continued the theme of the *Submission of a Castle* already painted on the west wall of the Sala del Consiglio. It would also have acted as a highly effective piece of civic propaganda for Siena and its political identity as a territorial state.⁴²

With these uncertainties surrounding the dating and authorship of these paintings, what sense can be made of the decoration of this important hall between its completion in about 1305 and 1345 when the *Mappamondo* was installed on its west wall? A resolution by the Council of the Bell in 1314 that Giuncarico (a small town in southern Tuscany taken from the Pannocchieschi d'Elci that year) be painted as part of an existing series of castles suggests that the intention of the government was that the walls of the council hall should be painted with commemorations of Siena's conquest and rule over its subject territories. Given the subject of the *Submission of a Castle*, it is likely that this recently recovered fresco was part of this series.⁴³ The two open gateways provide a strong visual clue to this effect. The two figures to the left of the painting – both dressed in costumes denoting high social status – appear to be negotiating this change of control, just as government appointees were entrusted by the Nine to accept the ownership of newly acquired subject towns and castles.

Two inscriptions, one painted in the lower outer border of the *Maestà* and the other incised into the wall just below it, strongly suggest that 'Symone' (presumably Simone Martini) was responsible for painting the *Maestà* and that it was completed by June 1315 (see pl. 47). This date is supported by payments to Simone in June, October and December 1315. Another payment in 1321 provides evidence that the same painter, his assistants and apprentices, were paid for materials and work on 'repairing' the

painting; and technical examination of the *Maestà* has revealed that several of the heads of key figures in the painting have been repainted and their haloes made more elaborate.⁴⁴ Thus, by the second decade of the fourteenth century the Sala del Consiglio had been graced with this painted celebration of Siena's spiritual patron and protector. The painted dialogue in the painting, with its expression of concern about those who 'harm the weak' and who 'despise' and 'deceive' the Virgin's 'land', continues and further validates the theme of territorial acquisition already begun in the earlier paintings of subject castles. The introduction of Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Mappamondo* in 1345 would then have offered an elaboration of this theme – particularly if it did indeed focus on Siena and its surrounding towns and castles.

Whether the *Guidoriccio* painting was also part of this programme remains a matter of debate. Its subject – the commemoration of a famous victory over a town acquired as part of the Nine's systematic policy of territorial acquisition in southern Tuscany – would have complemented the documented paintings of subject castles. Payments made to a 'master Simone' between 1330 and 1331 for paintings of Montemassi, Sassoforte, Arcidosso and Castel del Piano, provide further circumstantial evidence that a painting of Montemassi could have been executed by Simone Martini, albeit some years after the date of the conquest of Montemassi in 1328.⁴⁵ Certain technical and stylistic details of the painting itself bear comparison with other paintings attributed to Simone (see pls 54, 55).⁴⁶ Yet in other respects the quality of the *Guidoriccio* compares unfavourably with these.⁴⁷ The painting could, however, have been painted by another fourteenth-century painter, such as Simone Martini's brother-in-law, Lippo Memmi, who as a close collaborator (see pl. 58) exhibited many of the characteristics of Simone's style and technique.⁴⁸

On the other hand, there remain a number of unresolved questions concerning possible anachronisms in the use of heraldry and the type of costume and fortification portrayed in the painting. The most recent technical reports on the painting provide contradictory evidence regarding the precise date of its execution.⁴⁹ Whether these can both be accounted for by the long history of the *Guidoriccio* and the various repairs it has undergone over the centuries is difficult to say. Only by removing it from the wall and determining whether or not there are earlier paintings beneath it can such questions really be answered.⁵⁰ If such an investigation were able to prove the *Guidoriccio* a genuine example of a fourteenth-century painting, executed during the rule of the Nine, then it would be possible to claim that

this monumental fresco – particularly when viewed in close conjunction to the *Mappamondo* – once presented a powerful image of Siena's claims to military might and control over the surrounding countryside.

THE SALA DEI NOVE

Some years before executing the *Mappamondo* for the Sala del Consiglio, Ambrogio Lorenzetti had been commissioned to paint a much more extensive scheme of decoration for the adjacent council room (pl. 51). Now known as the Sala della Pace (the Room of Peace, after one of its painted figures), at the time of the commission it was called the Sala dei Nove, after the Nine themselves, who used it as their meeting room (see pl. 48). The painted decoration should therefore be understood both as an expression of Siena's civic ideals for the members of the city magistracy who met there to formulate government policy and as a means of impressing the numerous foreign dignitaries who were received in this room.⁵¹

Payments by the city treasury to Ambrogio Lorenzetti between February 1338 and May 1339⁵² suggest a sustained, well-organised campaign of painting in the Sala dei Nove, an impression borne out by the paintings themselves. Each wall (other than the south window wall) displays a large painting framed by broad painted borders that contain coats-of-arms, allegorical figures and long, detailed inscriptions that describe and explain the painting's subject matter. These texts, written in Italian, together with the numerous Latin names given to many of the painted figures, clearly show that the pictorial scheme was intended to have a serious, didactic purpose for those who originally used the room. Since the text below the painting on the east wall begins with the instruction: 'turn your eyes to behold her, you who are governing . . .', it is reasonable to conclude that it was primarily addressed to the Nine themselves.

On the north wall is a large mural painting composed entirely of figures (pl. 52). Rather in the manner of a family tree that identifies individual members and plots their relationship to one another, this painting was intended to demonstrate what to the late medieval mind, at least, constituted good government. As the inscriptions below the painting, and the Latin titles within it, indicate, on the left-hand side of the painting are grouped Wisdom, Justice and Concord and, on the right appear the nine Christian Virtues of peace, fortitude, prudence, magnanimity, temperance, justice, faith, hope and charity – all of which were regarded in late medieval political thought as desirable qualities for the practice of good government. While these figures express broad political ideals, other details in the



51 The Sala della Pace (formerly known as the Sala dei Nove). Siena, Palazzo Pubblico.

painting refer to specific aspects of Siena's own government. Thus, the nine Virtues are grouped about a bearded figure whose black and white robes represent the colour and design of the Siennese *balzana*. The imagery on his gold shield once replicated that of the city's civic seal, while the initials around his head and the wolf and suckling twins at his feet add further weight to the interpretation that he is intended to embody the communal government of Siena. Given a quasi-religious appearance by virtue of his close association with the Christian Virtues, this embodiment of the commune is also surrounded with details that allude to the more practical aspects of government – for example, although now somewhat obscured by a patch of damage, two knights present him with a miniature castle, a magistrate offers the keys of a city, and soldiers on horseback supervise several bound captives. The theme of territorial conquest begun in the paintings in the Sala del Consiglio (see pls 49, 50) was thus reiterated in this more erudite painting for the Sala dei Nove.

Linking the two sides of the painting is a procession of twenty-four men who carry a rope from the figure of Concord to the figure of Commune, thus relating the qualities of wisdom, justice and concord directly with this



52 Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *The Good Government* (1338–9). Fresco, width 774 cm. North wall of the Sala della Pace. Siena, Palazzo Pubblico.

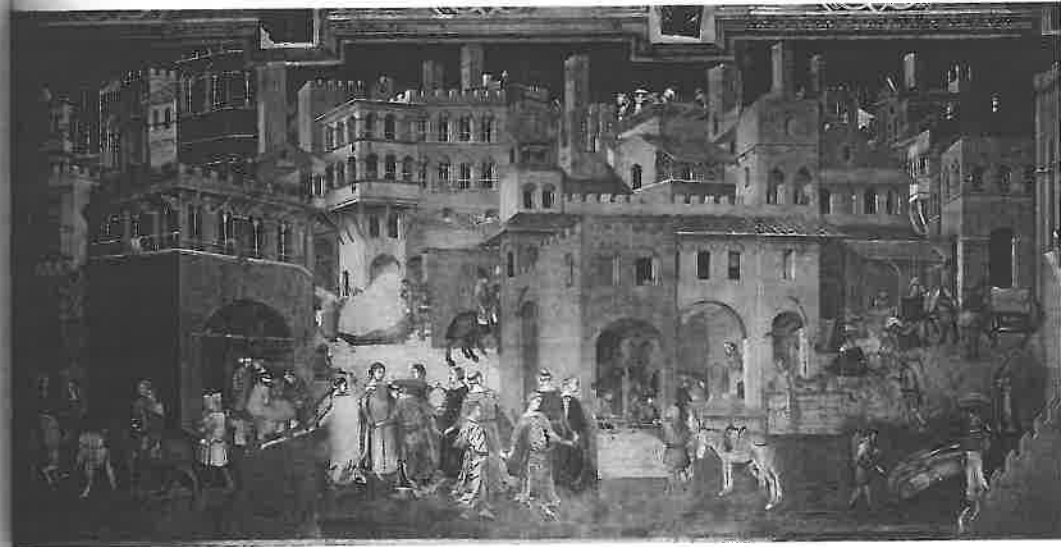
embodiment of Siennese government. While the identity of these figures is a matter of debate,⁵³ they act as a striking demonstration of Ambrogio Lorenzetti's remarkable capacity to portray a range of ages and different facial characteristics. They also convey vividly that Siena's government was not merely a matter of abstract, universal values but involved the active participation of the citizens themselves – even if only those drawn from a particular social group.

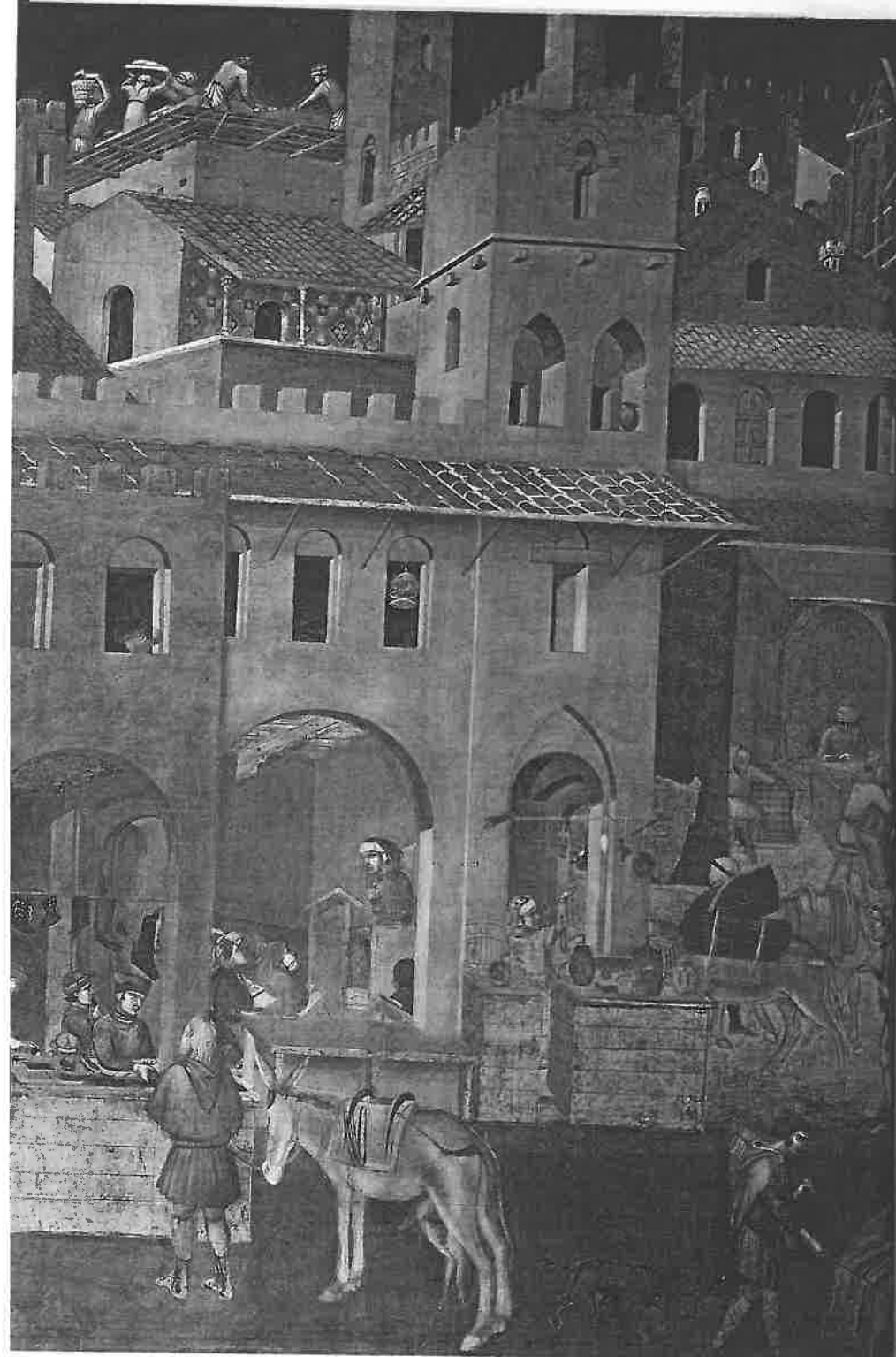
On the east wall of the room, to the right of the *Good Government*, is a painting that appears at first sight to be much less complex in meaning and content. Painted across the entire expanse of a wall measuring a little over fourteen metres in length, it shows a hilltop city and a panoramic view of the countryside surrounding it (pls 51, 53, 33). Hailed as one of the earliest landscape paintings in western art, it has been suggested that the painting represents an accurate impression of fourteenth-century Siena itself and the countryside lying to the south and west of the city. A number of details, such as the she-wolf over the city gateway, the striped bell-tower of the domed church on the extreme left and the name of the Siennese port of Talamone by the expanse of water on the extreme right, all provide circumstantial evidence that such an association was intended. However,

just as in the case of the *Good Government* on the north wall, this painting was intended to have a wider application and meaning. Over the gateway of the city appears a figure representing Security whose text and miniature gallows clearly allude to the practice of justice – a sentiment given added support by the text below the painting. It is also clear from the latter text that this painting should be understood as a demonstration of the concrete benefits of just and peaceful government.

The sheer range of human activity that Ambrogio Lorenzetti incorporated into this painting has fascinated generations of viewers.⁵⁴ Within the city it is possible to identify a wedding procession, a game of dice in a tavern, a purchase being made at a shoemaker's shop, a lecture being given by a teacher and, high on the skyline, builders working on scaffolding. In the countryside, meanwhile, are scenes of ploughing, sowing and threshing, hunting and fishing. While thus appearing to offer a compellingly realistic view of Siena and its *contado*, the painting contains certain illogicalities, however. The agricultural activities associated with the months of spring, summer and autumn – such as sowing, threshing and hunting – have

53 Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *The Well-governed City* (1338–9). Detail of the east wall fresco of *The Well-governed City and Countryside* in the Sala della Pace. Siena, Palazzo Pubblico.





all been represented simultaneously in the countryside (see pl. 33). The painting thus has a symbolic dimension as well – a point which is made clear in the painted border that displays a sequence of personifications of the annual seasons, the planets and branches of late medieval scholarship.

Ambrogio Lorenzetti's treatment of space and light added a further layer of symbolic meaning to the painting. The open space in the city, where the dancers gracefully perform, acts as the centre of the pictorial space for the entire painting – every detail of the buildings and the natural features in the countryside appearing to recede from that point. Similarly, the distribution of the shadows in the painting suggests that the principal source of light for the scene is the city itself.⁵⁵ Elsewhere in the room, by contrast, the paintings appear as if lit by the window on the south wall. Since there was a well-developed Sienese tradition of equating Siena with Jerusalem – and therefore interpreting it as a divinely blessed city – it may well be that Ambrogio Lorenzetti deliberately sought to convey precisely this message in his idealised depiction of Siena and its *contado*.

The painting on the opposite west wall is now in very poor condition having once been an exterior wall and thus prone to damp. Its subject provides the antithesis of the paintings on the north and east walls and depicts the consequences of bad government. On the right appears a sequence of seated figures who mirror Commune and the Virtues on the north wall. Now representing Tyranny surrounded by the Vices and presiding over a bound figure of Justice, they act as a compelling demonstration of the vicious behaviour associated with tyrannical government. The pertinence of the imagery for the Sienese themselves is conveyed by such telling details as the robe of Division being in the black and white colours of the *balzana* and the warning tone of the message in the inscription below the painting. On the left appears a city in a state of disrepair and anarchy that contains only scenes of violence and preparation for war. The countryside, presided over by a personification of Fear, presents a barren landscape of ruin and devastation. Further contributing to the strong sense of contrast between this badly governed city and its prosperous counterpart on the opposite wall, the space within the badly governed city appears cramped and confined with abrupt shifts between light and shade.

In many respects the paintings of the Sala dei Nove sum up the achievements and aspirations of the Nine as a ruling magistracy. Their painted imagery presents a sophisticated pictorial argument for the benefits of legitimate government by a recognised council rather than the tyrannical rule of a single individual. Many of the details within the paintings arguably had particular pertinence to the Nine themselves. It is significant, for example,

that the traditional number of seven Christian Virtues has been increased by two to make nine. Many of the details in the *Well-governed City and Countryside* relate to the civic legislation of the Nine for facilitating trade and commerce in the city, encouraging the production of food in the countryside and maintaining roads and bridges there. The bleak picture of civic unrest on the west wall would also have had a particular relevance for the Nine, who during their period of government were confronted with threats to their political authority both from factions within Siena itself and from outside powers such as Ghibelline Pisa, which in 1332 laid waste to Siennese territory to within a few kilometres of Siena itself.⁵⁶

Below the painting on the north wall, Ambrogio Lorenzetti proudly placed his name in Roman capitals, thus drawing attention to his responsibility for the extraordinary achievement involved (see pl. 52). Although relying on well-established pictorial conventions for portraying the sophisticated concepts that his paintings were designed to convey, he introduced a dazzling array of details and features that went beyond what had been achieved before in Siennese art. A notable example of this occurs in his portrayal of Peace in the *Good Government*, where the contours of her body are visible beneath the folds of her robe – a highly imaginative representation of the female form that probably owed its inspiration to Ambrogio's awareness of antique sculpted reliefs. Elsewhere in the room, he portrayed many well-observed naturalistic details, such as the caged bird and terracotta pots of herbs and flowers at the open windows of the well-governed city (see detail of pl. 53, p. 102) and, in a medallion on the west wall, snowflakes and a snowball.⁵⁷ By such means, a programmatic depiction of a late medieval understanding of what constituted the best form of government was given an immediacy and veracity that must have been deeply compelling for the paintings' original audience of the magistracy of the Nine and their close political associates.

Paintings for the Friars

A painting that is often cited in the debate over Simone Martini's role in the *Submission of a Castle* and the *Guidoriccio* is the arresting image of the Blessed Agostino Novello surrounded by four of his posthumous miracles (pl. 54).⁵⁸ This unusual panel painting originally came from Sant'Agostino, the principal church of the mendicant order of Augustinian Hermits in Siena (see pl. 6). Once assumed to be a conventional altarpiece, it appears in fact to have been part of the painted embellishment of the



54 Simone Martini, *The Blessed Agostino Novello and Scenes of his Miracles* (1320s). Tempera on panel, 200 × 256 cm. Siena, Pinacoteca Nazionale.

shrine of this revered local man. It was designed to stand behind Agostino Novello's tomb chest – which was itself painted with scenes from his life – and the entire edifice was probably located at the end of the north aisle of the church, just in front of the choir screen and therefore in an easily accessible part of the church.

Agostino Novello was an important contemporary figure for the fourteenth-century Augustinian Hermits of Siena. An able jurist and Prior General, in 1300 he chose to retire to the rural Augustinian hermitage of San Leonardo al Lago, a few kilometres west of Siena. After his death and burial there in 1309, the Augustinian Hermits were clearly determined to honour the memory of their former Prior General – just as the Dominicans had with Ambrogio Sansedoni in 1287. They therefore translated his