

FREE MEN AND WOMEN OF AFRICAN ANCESTRY
IN RENAISSANCE EUROPE

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The contributions to Renaissance society by free (or freed) men and women of African descent demonstrate an amazing range even though their numbers were small, the largest community being in Lisbon where they constituted 2 percent of the population.¹ Information about these men and women is largely anecdotal, so progress in mapping their social roles requires speculation, to which pictorial evidence provides new points of reference.

For former slaves, working one's way up from manual labor was difficult in the face of prejudice, limited access to training, and the restrictions of a traditional class system. Representative lower-skilled jobs in which individuals can be identified include muleteer, porter, cloth preparer, dyer, poultry seller, baker, charcoal seller, blanket-maker, mattress-maker, farmhand, and boatman.² Banding together for mutual benefit required a critical mass possible only in Spain and Portugal where sizable free black communities formed confraternities, as that at Valencia established in 1472 by some forty freedmen.³ The occupation of boatman, filled by freed blacks as well as the enslaved, is one that offers a visual record, especially in Venice.⁴ A view of the Venetian lagoon (see fig. 2), a fragment of a once-larger painting by Vittore Carpaccio, offers a picturesque mixture of white and black gondoliers.⁵ Those working on pleasure boats might also be entertainers, as the black boatmen singing and playing the tambourine to



FIG. 35 Johannes van Doetechum (Flemish, d. 1605) and Lucas van Doetechum (Flemish, active 1554/1572, d. before 1589) after Pieter Bruegel the Elder (Flemish, c. 1525/30–1569), *Two Flemish Peasants*, c. 1564/65. Etching; plate: 13.3 × 18.8 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Andrew W. Mellon Fund (1975.112.35, with the title from the seventeenth-century edition: *t Moye Molletje and Melis Bocke-baert*)

entertain a couple in a small boat in the Lisbon harbor (see fig. 8, no. 47).

The lives of freed blacks in rural areas are even more difficult to quantify. In southern Europe they can be glimpsed through land purchases in Spain or anecdotes in Sicily about individuals who became famous: St. Benedict the Moor (1526–1589) and the Blessed Antonio da Noto (died 1549) were farmworkers (discussed below). Documents from Valencia, Spain, record purchases of small plots of land for subsistence farming by individuals identified as “negre,” some presumably having learned the requisite skills before manumission.⁶ Speculations on the presence of blacks in the rural economy of Flanders in the Spanish Netherlands (now Belgium) take a different path. Slavery was not legal but was tolerated.⁷ In Antwerp, most slaves were therefore the property of recently established Portuguese merchants, as Katharina (no. 55), belonging to João Brandão, the Portuguese factor



FIG. 36 Pieter van der Heyden (Belgian, ca. 1520–ca. 1572) after Pieter Bruegel (Flemish, ca. 1525/30–1569), *The Thin Kitchen*, 1563, detail. Engraving. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (RP-P-1885-A-9290)

in Antwerp, and likely the two black men portrayed in David’s *Adoration of the Kings* (no. 1). There were also enslaved or free seamen off Portuguese ships in the harbor, freed blacks engaged in urban trade, or escaped slaves. In the context of Antwerp, the costume and pendulous earring of *A Head of an African* (no. 56),⁸ engraved in 1522 by Frans Crabbe van Espleghem (ca. 1480–1553), frame him as possibly a seaman off a Portuguese vessel, his wary exoticism a magnet for the artist.

Representations of black Flemish peasants are primarily found in depictions of peasant life by Pieter Bruegel (1525/30–1569) done in Antwerp and Brussels. The implied comic quality of the coarse peasant was surely the appeal to a middle-class purchaser of a series of seventy-two heads of peasants based on Bruegel and etched about 1564–65. Surprisingly, three are black (fig. 35 and no. 58), treated much as the others.⁹ *The Thin Kitchen* (fig. 36) was engraved after a Bruegel

drawing of 1563 along with a companion *The Fat Kitchen*.¹⁰ The impoverished gathered in a rural hovel offer hospitality to the fat man at the door who pulls away. One scrawny farm laborer reaching into the communal bowl is black, identifiable by his short, bristly hair, comparable to the black man’s hair in fig. 35, while the norm for white male peasants was ear-length.¹¹ In *The Fat Kitchen*, obese peasants consume mountains of food while a thin man is kicked out the door. The inscription on *The Thin Kitchen* implicates the viewer as guilty of disregard for the destitute: “Where the thin man stirs the pot, the offering is meager. So I’ll gladly take myself off to the fat kitchen.”¹² Introducing blacks in this ordinary way suggests their presence in reality. Freed blacks in rural Flanders surely came from Antwerp and lacked farming experience. However, recent studies suggest that the Flemish rural economy supported a high proportion of wage-earning laborers versus independent subsistence farmers,¹³ thus an economy that could absorb inexperienced blacks.

Many black men and also women are recorded as skilled artisans.¹⁴ However, the fame of Juan de Pareja (ca. 1610–1670),¹⁵ Veslasquez’s former slave of mixed ancestry who became a painter himself, prompts a search for earlier artists of similar ancestry. In 1564 two black slaves from the Lisbon court, Diego de San Pedro and Juan Carlos, are documented in the Madrid workshop of the Italian medalist and carver of cameos Jacopo da Trezzo (1515–1589).¹⁶ In 1568 they were noted as manumitted and in the workshop *to study*. Before manumission they could perform workshop tasks, but in most places guild regulations restricted artistic instruction and independent practice to free men. Nothing further is known of them.

Considering well-known artists possibly of African descent conveys the challenges of ascertaining racial identity. Andrea Briosco (ca. 1470–1532), an Italian sculptor of the early 1500s, was

nicknamed Riccio (Italian for “hedgehog,” therefore [really] “curly,” bristly). Though not a portraitist, he produced a small self-portrait (fig. 37) featuring his bushy hair, mashed down by a cap.¹⁷ Can his hair and also his “blunt” facial features, as they have been called, be read as evidencing African descent? Leo Planiscig thought so in 1930; to this writer this is an “afro.” “What’s in a name?” applies as well to the Italian painter Francesco known as Torbido (cloudy, veiled) il Moro (the Moor), who lived ca. 1486–1562. His subtle portraits, as *Portrait of a Man, Possibly a Self-Portrait* from 1520 (no. 59),¹⁸ are influenced by Giorgione. The direct gaze, artisan attire, and “cloudy” complexion make it plausible that this



FIG. 37 Andrea Briosco (Riccio), *Self-Portrait*, 1510–15. Bronze, bust: 4.5 × 4 × 3.5 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (KK 5516)

is a self-portrait. Giorgio Vasari introduces the artist variously in his *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters . . .* (Le Vite dei più eccellenti pittori . . . , 1568), as “Francesco Torbido il Moro,” “Francesco il Moro,” or “il Moro.”¹⁹ Francesco’s son-in-law (and assistant) took the name Battista del Moro (of the Moor). Francesco’s father was Marco India. Since geographical texts often identified “India” with Ethiopia, the nickname “India” or “d’India” surely refers to African descent rather than to the subcontinent. Does it matter? It does if the long-term impact of the African presence in European society is to be explored.

Among professions depending on formal education or mental agility, there are scattered examples of African-Europeans known today such as the surgeon Mestre António in Oporto or Licentiate Ortiz, a respected lawyer in Granada;²⁰ Portuguese playwright and poet Afonso Álvares (active in the 1530s) whose mother was a black slave and father, a bishop from a noble family;²¹ João de Sá Panasco, court jester and gentleman of the Lisbon court whose wit was his profession (see below); Vicente Lusitano, author of an important book on musical theory;²² but the compelling figures are Juan de Sesa “Latino” (1516/18–1596?) and Giovanni Leone de Medici (1486/88–after 1526), the Moroccan diplomat and writer whose lengthy European sojourn was largely spent in Rome.

Juan de Sesa claimed an African birth, he and his mother being purchased as slaves for Luis Fernández de Córdoba, duke of Sesa. According to his first biographer, Bermúdez de Pedraza in his *Antiquities and Excellent Aspects of Granada* (Granada 1608), Juan accompanied his master’s son Gonzalo to Granada, where the latter attended the Cathedral school. Juan became his study fellow and a top student on his own, concentrating on Latin and then Greek. He followed Gonzalo to the University of Granada, where he became known as Juan Latino, receiving the bachelor degree (1545),

licentiate (1556) and master of arts (1557). Following a competition providing a central motif for the play *The Famous Drama of Juan Latino* (ca. 1610) by Diego Ximénez de Enciso (1585–1633), he gained the chair of grammar and Latin language of the Cathedral school. In demand for private lessons, one of his students was Ana Carleval, the (white) daughter of the duke’s administrator. Their unlikely, secretive courtship and marriage (in 1547?) formed a thread throughout Enciso’s play. It isn’t clear when he was freed; in the play it is at his marriage. Latino published three volumes of poems, one dedicated to Don Juan d’Austria (1547–1578), illegitimate son of Emperor Charles V and half-brother of Philip II of Spain, on the occasion of Don Juan’s military victory over Morisco rebels in 1568–72. In the play, Juan Latino is emotionally undone by the prince’s offer of friendship and commissioning of a portrait of the scholar for display with others of illustrious men. The painting is not identifiable but the episode has the ring of truth. Given the sympathy between them, it is likely that the portrait, if it existed, was a genuine expression of regard and not a document of a black “wonder.”

Juan Latino’s Latin poetry adheres to European traditions, including allusions to the Greco-Roman past, reinforcing a system he fought to join. This approach contrasts with that of his older contemporary al-Hasan al-Wasan, former Moroccan diplomat, pirate captive, and papal gift, known after his baptism by Pope Leo X as Giovanni Leone de Medici, or Leo Africano.²³ The latter’s *Description of Africa*, completed in 1526 in Rome and published in 1550, accommodates the European reader but explores the character of the continent on its own terms.

Many of African heritage sought spiritual commitment and solace in the religious life.²⁴ The priesthood was largely closed to Africans, unless returning to Africa.²⁵ A major issue (along with

prejudice) was lack of education. Although there also were few in the regular monastic orders (for the same reasons), an altarpiece now in Philadelphia may illuminate their situation, at least in Spain. The donor in *Altarpiece with the Preparations for the Crucifixion with an Augustinian Donor* (no. 60), by Luis de Vargas (1502–1568),²⁶ has features consistent with those of African ancestry.²⁷ Donors are rarely depicted in Spanish devotional art; foregrounding this devotional act may be intended to address the ambiguity of his racial identity.²⁸ At the time of the expulsion from Spain in 1492 of the “Moors” (in Spain the meaning was unambiguously Muslims from North Africa, regardless of skin color), those who converted to Christianity could stay. The authorities remained suspicious as many Moriscos were outwardly Christian but Muslims in private. In 1609/10 all Moriscos suspected of remaining Muslim were expelled. Could the Augustinian be addressing such concerns by asserting his Christian commitment? The painting is datable ca. 1565, at a time of Morisco unrest. Vargas was then in Seville, the site of an Augustinian monastery.²⁹ Ironically, racial identity may be foregrounded to undercut its negative impact.

Lack of education would not preclude joining a lay order. Anecdotal evidence suggests that at least in Sicily the third (lay) order of Franciscans offered a sympathetic spiritual home for former slaves. An ascetic life focused on penance permitted disengagement from a difficult world and gave spiritual value to the low self-worth often expressed by slaves. The best-known black Franciscan is Saint Benedict the Moor (Benedetto il Moro, 1526–1589), beatified in 1743 and canonized in 1807, the first black to be so honored.³⁰ Born of Christian slaves on an estate near Messina, Benedict was freed as a child. His work ethic, self-effacement, and capacity to ignore insults impressed a Franciscan hermit who encouraged

him to join the hermitage. He did, and his qualities as a role model were soon recognized. He later joined a friary, the convent of Santa Maria di Gesù near Palermo, becoming a cook, at which task he seemed to have heavenly aid. In spite of his lack of formal qualifications—he was not a priest and could not read—he was enjoined to become the overseer. At his request, he was again made cook, but could not avoid the increasing renown of his sanctity. By his death his veneration was spreading. In 1611 his bones were reinterred in a silver casket financed by Philip III of Spain. There are no reliable images datable to his lifetime, but there are numerous, flamboyant ones from the Iberian peninsula from the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century leading up to his beatification, as this magnificent polychrome statue by José Montes de Oca (no. 80).³¹ However, this is not the dour Franciscan cassock. There is a tendency in the 1700s to gild everything, but it is also true that the heads of painted wooden statues were generally carved separately, as was this one, permitting the uniting of a head and body of different origins. Nevertheless this head fits perfectly.³² On the eve of his beatification, it may have been less the life of penance that the artist celebrated than his magnetism.

As a model of black sanctity, Benedict was preceded by his Sicilian contemporary the Blessed Antonio da Noto (died 1549, his public cult authorized in Sicily in 1599) known as “Antonio etiope.”³³ They are celebrated together as “Ethiopian saints” by Alonso de Sandoval in *The Salvation of Ethiopia* (1627).³⁴ There were three further black Sicilian Franciscan tertiaries called *Antonio etiope* or *Antonio nigro* from the same period, identifying with St. Anthony the Great, whose life as a hermit in Egypt in the third century is the origin of the monastic movement.³⁵ Ironically, these Franciscans were likely unaware of the predominant *image* of black sanctity in the



FIG. 38 Friedrich Hagenauer (German, born 1490–1500; d. after 1546), *Bust of a Young Black Man*, ca. 1530. Maple. Staatliche Münzsammlung, Munich

1500s, that of St. Maurice (Mauritius, Maurizio), a third-century Roman commander from Thebes in Egypt, martyred for his Christian faith in what is now Switzerland, and widely revered in Germany and surrounding lands as a black African, as in this German *St. Maurice and the Theban Legion*, ca. 1515–20 (no. 26),³⁶ though in Italy usually as white.

The armies of Europe provided paths to fortune for many of simple birth. The freedman Juan de Mérida, who served in the Spanish army in Flanders, was highly promoted and awarded a patent of nobility for his valor in the 1570s, is the subject of the play *The Valiant Black Man in Flanders* (before 1610) by the Spaniard Andres de Claramonte (d. 1610); there is disagreement as to whether Juan was fictional or real; nevertheless, the linkage of battlefield heroism and promotion is realistic.³⁷

The courts of princes and nobles were fertile ground for upward mobility, not only for those of African descent. Known instances point to former black slaves making use of natural capabilities or artisanal skills, for example Christophle Le More, who rose from stable work to be a personal guard of the Emperor Charles V.³⁸ In like fashion, “Grazzico of Africa, called il Moretto (the little Moor), horseman, page to the knight Prospero” is noted in Medici court records for salaries paid in 1553,³⁹ while a manumitted North African Muslim held an important position in the stable at the court in Lisbon of Catherine of Austria (1507–78).⁴⁰ João de Sá Panasco’s career at her court began as slave and jester, in which role he was known for his wit. However, much of it was self-deprecating and he suffered from jibes. The date of his manumission is unknown, but by 1547 he was a courtier, a

gentleman of the royal household, and the king’s valet. He was awarded a knighthood in the Order of Santiago around 1550.⁴¹ Is he the black man so attired, riding in the foreground of *Chaferiz d’el Rey* (see p. 12 and no. 47)? Black salaried court entertainers were often musicians, usually their occupation before manumission. A black drummer was on the payroll at the Scottish court in 1504 while Johan Diez in Valencia and John Blanke in London were among those who were trumpeters.⁴² The chances are great that the subject of the exquisite *Bust of a Young Black Man* (fig. 38) attributed to the German medalist Friedrich Hagenauer (1490/1500–after 1546) was attached to a court, possibly that of Munich where the artist was active 1525–27.

Some Africans rose high in European courts; there is a long history of “Moors” playing substantial roles in southern Italy and Sicily.⁴³ The rise of the Ethiopian Raymundo de Campani in the 1300s is recounted by Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375) in his *Fates of Illustrious Men (De Casibus Virorum Illustrium)*.⁴⁴ The account is a sidebar to the story of his wife, a former washer woman (white). A black child (*aethiope*) was purchased by Raymundo de Campani, chief cook of Charles, king of Naples (1254–1309). The cook had him baptized, gave him his own name, trained and freed him. At the cook’s death, Raymundo “the Ethiopian” took over his position and, steadfastly loyal, rose in the service of Charles’s successor Robert, king of Naples (1275–1343). From responsibility for the king’s wardrobe, he graduated rapidly to running the palace. The king knighted him, making him lord chamberlain or grand seneschal. At his death he was much regretted. Boccaccio’s venom was directed at the wife and son, whose desire for power—the latter was appointed governor of Sicily—led to disgust and execution.

This narrative provides a model for framing hypothetical identities for Africans of whom there

are portraits consistent with such a context, but no records. The *Portrait of a Black Man* (fig. 39) painted by Jan Mostaert ca. 1520–25 at a period in which Mostaert worked for the court at Mecheln (near Antwerp) of the Archduchess Margaret of Austria (1480–1530), Habsburg governor of the Spanish Netherlands, is well known but puzzling.⁴⁵ The man’s pose is jaunty,⁴⁶ while his clothing suggests a respectable status and involvement in robust activity. He is not wearing the *paltroch* or skirt that gentlemen wore over their hose in public. However his accessories are more refined: he may have dressed up for his portrait. The gold or gilded silver hat badge signals a visit to Our Lady at Halle near Brussels and speaks to piety and current fashion.⁴⁷ The kid gloves are good while the sword is unremarkable; however, his embroidered pouch or purse stands out. Pouches are rarely featured so it may be a gift from a patron. It is decorated with fleurs de lys, the emblematic lily associated chiefly with the royal house of France but also with Margaret herself.⁴⁸ As a child she was betrothed to the heir to the French throne and was educated in France to that end; however, at age thirteen she was sent packing: the French had other plans. She surely had personal items with this motif and no emotional need to keep them. Could the purse be proffered for view as a gift from the duchess? The proposed identification of the black man as Christofle le More, the slave and stable boy who rose to a salaried personal guard for the emperor, may not persuade because the dates and places where Christofle can be documented don’t correlate, but the principle obtains. A court environment remains the strongest candidate for his home.

Efforts to situate the spectacular, previously unpublished, *Portrait of a Wealthy African Man* (see p. 80 and no. 61),⁴⁹ possibly from around 1530–40, again center on the sitter’s clothing, that of a wealthy member of European society—fur-trimmed



FIG. 39 Jan Jansz Mostaert (Netherlandish, ca. 1474?-1552), *Portrait of a Black Man*, ca. 1520-25. Oil on panel, 30 × 20.3 cm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, purchase with the support of the Rembrandt Society, helped by the Prince Bernhard Cultural Foundation, the Mondriaan Foundation, the VSB, the BankGiro Lottery Fund, and the Rijksmuseum (SK-A-4986)

mantel, a gold chain of the type that is often a princely gift, a cap of a type worn indoors by men of high status (or under a hat in the public sphere), decorated with seed pearls. Given its association with Africans, the pendant pearl earring is more likely an ornament retained from youth than an adopted fashion.⁵⁰ A possible clue to the man's identity is provided by a German tapestry of 1548 representing festivities associated with a *Wedding of 1547 at the Court of Duchess Elizabeth of Saxony at Rochlitz* (fig. 40).⁵¹ The elegant gentleman in the portrait looks a lot like the black



FIG. 40 German. *Rochelitz Wedding tapestry*, 1548, detail (formerly P.W. French and Co., New York). Photograph Western Figurative Tapestry Database, Antonio Ratti Textile Center, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

courtier with a sword and a pendant pearl earring who carries a ceremonial torch. Could he be the duchess's chamberlain? Would a black man be so represented if it did not reflect reality?

Portrait of a Moor, attributable to Domenico Tintoretto in the 1590s (no. 65),⁵² raises similar questions. There is agreement that his ancestry must include Africa, but there agreement ends. The rectangular package on the table, its white wrapping closed with a red wax seal, points to his capacity as diplomat or envoy. Indeed, according to one contemporary writer, Domenico Tintoretto's

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studio was one of the two most fashionable in Venice for visiting diplomats to commission portraits marking their stays.⁵³ But whom does he represent? His clothing is not "African"; he may be "European" and represent a court in Sicily, Cyprus, or elsewhere in the Adriatic with significant populations of African descent and diplomatic relations with Venice. This is speculation, but the man's existence invites explanation.

While it was not unknown in the Renaissance for a European nobleman to marry an African woman and bring her to Europe,⁵⁴ children of African descent born in European noble households were usually the offspring of exploitive relationships involving a slave, as in the case of Afonso Alvares noted above and of the most prominent European of the time now widely believed to be of African ancestry, Alessandro de' Medici, duke of Florence (1511-37; nos. 62, 63). His father was either Giulio de' Medici (1478-1534, later Pope Clement VII) or Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici (ruled Florence 1513-19).⁵⁵ Alessandro gained a reputation for tyranny, was assassinated in 1537, and left an official wife (Emperor Charles V's illegitimate daughter Margaret), and illegitimate children.⁵⁶ The question whether his mother was black has long fueled discussion. Contemporaries were generally restrained, but Bernardo Segni, who knew Alessandro, in *History of Florence*, written in 1553-58 (after Alessandro's death; first published in the 1700s), in a passage decrying Alessandro's cruelty, writes that Alessandro was "born of a really vile slave" (*nato d'una vilissima schiava*),⁵⁷ as if these factors were connected.⁵⁸ Then there is a pathetic letter to Alessandro, "to my son," dated 1529 and written by a Simonetta da Collevecchio [village near Rome] asking him to relieve her poverty.⁵⁹ There were innuendoes after his death that his mother was a Moor or black. The only datable written comment susceptible to this reading by a person who had known Alessandro is Segni's

description of Alessandro as "a person in command of his own thoughts [collected], of muscular build, black as to color and with a large nose" (*di persona raccolta, nerbuto, di color nero, e di naso grande*).⁶⁰

The visual evidence is critical. Alessandro commissioned numerous portraits of himself.⁶¹ They usually show his hair and features obscured by a cap or shadows.⁶² However there is one fine portrait in which he is recognizably a "black" man. Bronzino's little *Portrait of Alessandro de' Medici* (no. 62),⁶³ usually dated to after 1553 (the dating of the series of small-scale copies of portraits of Medici family with which it is associated) has the lively precision of a portrait based on a study from life, presumably a celebrated study by Bronzino's teacher Pontormo to which the artist had access: the linear detailing picks out Alessandro's lips as well as of the wiry kinking hair, reflecting the light.⁶⁴

Among Alessandro's children, all illegitimate, the only one of whom there is a generally accepted portrait is Giulia de' Medici (ca. 1535-ca. 1588), in Jacopo Pontormo's portrait *Maria Salviati with Giulia de' Medici*, ca. 1539 (no. 64).⁶⁵ Following the assassination of her father, Giulia, probably the daughter of Alessandro's favorite, the noblewoman Taddea Malespina, became the ward of her father's cousin and successor as duke of Florence, Cosimo de' Medici. The child lived with Cosimo's mother Maria Salviati de' Medici, herself a close cousin of Alessandro. Before Gabrielle Langdon's 1992 publication clarifying the identity, the child in the painting was assumed to be Maria's only child, her son, Cosimo de' Medici.⁶⁶ The bronze medal that Maria holds (now abraded) surely represented Giulia's father, perhaps by Domenico di Polo di Angelo de' Vetri (no. 63).⁶⁷ The gesture signaled that the father was honored in the child, important because Cosimo and his family benefitted from Alessandro's death. In 1550 Giulia married



FIG. 41 Jacob de Gheyn II (Flemish, 1565–1629), *Three Studies of an African Man Wearing a Turban*, 1580–1629. Ink on paper, 19.9 × 31.9 cm. The British Museum, London (1869,0612.594)



FIG. 42 Giuseppe Cesari (also known as Il Cavaliere d'Arpino) (Italian, 1568–1640), *Head of a Bearded African in a Turban*, ca. 1591–93. Black chalk with traces of red chalk, 11 × 9.6 cm. Art market, Germany

Francesco Cantelmo, Count of Alvito and Duke of Popoli. Widowed, in 1559 she married Bernadetto de' Medici, subsequently prince of Ottaviano.⁶⁸ Her descendants thrive today.

Tracking Africans who came to Europe for temporary stays is equally difficult. On the one hand, raids by North African pirates on coastal areas of Spain and Italy were a constant threat. Giorgio Vasari recounts that the Italian painter Fra Filippo Lippi (1406–1469) was captured with friends on an excursion to a beach near Ancona and sent in chains to North Africa but soon ransomed.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, most came for diplomatic purposes, trade, or study. Generally, commercial transactions initiated by Africans—versus by a European entity such as England's "Maroco Company" given a patent by Queen Elizabeth in 1585 to trade for Morocco's "divers Marchandize"⁷⁰—were pursued under the umbrella of diplomacy. The diplomats themselves are addressed in the following essay. Moroccan diplomatic initiatives in The Hague beginning in 1609 were accompanied by commercial deals. Samuel Pallache, a Moroccan Jew who was part of that diplomatic

team, separately negotiated with Dutch partners to sell Moroccan sugar in the Dutch Republic. A study (fig. 41) of a black Muslim working through account books, done in The Hague by Jacques de Gheyn II (1565–1629), probably represents a member of one of these trade groups.⁷¹ In like fashion, the North African (fig. 42) drawn by Cavaliere d'Arpino (Giuseppe Cesari) ca. 1591–93 was likely with a trade group in Rome.

Two principal sites for Africans studying in Europe were Lisbon and Rome. By the 1460s captives from Africa were being trained in Lisbon as interpreters, but training took on a broader purpose in the 1480s with the two sojourns in Lisbon of Prince Kasuta of the Congo.⁷² In 1489 the Portuguese crown established a program to give the prince and his entourage instruction in Catholic theology as well as Portuguese. The program continued until 1538, preparing Congolese students as teachers, religious leaders, and diplomats. The most famous student arrived in 1508, Prince Ndo-adidiki Ne-Kinu a Mumemba (ca. 1494–1531), son of King Afonso of the Congo, baptized as Henrique.⁷³ He was prepared for ordination as a priest (1520)

and in 1521 was consecrated as titular bishop of Utica in North Africa with the intention that he carry out his duties in the Congo. The Portuguese crown blocked subsequent appointments to avoid diluting its power: Henrique was the first black African to be consecrated as a bishop but also the last for more than two hundred years.⁷⁴

The portrayal of Tasfa Seyon, head of the Ethiopian community in Rome, among devotees of the Virgin for the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Rome,⁷⁵ prompts consideration of the growing presence of Ethiopian Christian pilgrims and scholars in Europe, chiefly in Rome.⁷⁶ Three monks attended the general church council at Constance, Switzerland, in 1418. Nevertheless, the major shift in the Ethiopian presence in Europe, primarily in Italy, is associated with the attendance of an Ethiopian delegation and also one from the Egyptian Coptic Church to the ecumenical church council held at Florence in 1439–41, called to repair schisms within Christianity.⁷⁷ The two delegations arrived in Florence and Rome in 1441, famously celebrated on the doors of St. Peter's Basilica (see fig. 43).⁷⁸ Then in 1481, in connection with a delegation to the pope from the Negus (emperor) of Ethiopia, Sixtus IV had repairs done to the church and attached house of Santo Stefano Maggiore (subsequently Santo Stefano degli Abissini [of the Abyssinians] or dei Mori [of the Moors or blacks]) as a residence for Ethiopian pilgrims. In 1511 the German typographer and priest Johann Potken attended services at Santo Stefano and became interested in Ge'ez. A monk taught him the language and showed him an Ethiopian Psalter and other texts in the papal library. Potken's publication of the Psalter in 1513 was the first book to be printed in Ge'ez.⁷⁹ The New Testament then appeared in 1548, edited by Tasfa Seyon (Petrus Etyops, as he identified himself on the title page).⁸⁰

In this same time frame, the first treatise about Africa by an African was published, composed

by an Ethiopian scholar residing in Lisbon from 1527 to 1533. In 1527 the Ethiopian ambassador to Lisbon, Saga za Ab (or Zaga Zabo), arrived in the city, accompanying the returning Portuguese mission to Ethiopia (sent in 1520 and recorded by Francisco Álvares).⁸¹ He became acquainted with the internationally renowned Portuguese humanist Damiano de Góis (1502–1574), who urged him to compose a treatise on Ethiopian Christianity to address European ignorance of its traditions.⁸² Saga za Ab wrote the text in Portuguese, which Góis translated into Latin for an international audience and published it (under his own name to lend it prestige), along with translations of earlier letters from Ethiopian rulers to the pope and to the king of Portugal, as *The Faith, Religious Practices and Customs of Ethiopia under Emperor Prester John (Fides, religio, moresque Aethiopum sub Imperio Precisois Ioannis . . .* [Louvain: ex officina Rutgeri Rescii, 1540]). With these publications, Ethiopia became increasingly part of the European worldview.

To conclude this survey we may ask if, despite the anecdotal nature of the evidence, there are patterns. The educational attainments of a few underscore the lack of education of the many. Making a career at a court offered advantages: while one would always encounter prejudice, one's rise was in the gift of one or another individual (to whom loyalty and ability were invaluable) and not to organizations with self-protective entry rules. Visitors residing for short times in Europe were generally scholars or persons operating under a diplomatic umbrella. They were elite members of their own societies and tended to be in contact with elites in Europe; their immediate impact was great relative to their numbers. However the long-term impact of the African presence on European society lay with the growing numbers of children of mixed ancestry.

1. A.C. de C.M. Saunders, *A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal 1441-1555* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 57; Kate Lowe, introduction to *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, ed. T.F. Earle and K.J.P. Lowe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 5.

2. Jorge Fonesca, "Black Africans in Portugal during Cleynaert's Visit (1533-1538)," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 117; Debra Blumenthal, "La Casa dels Negres: Black African Solidarity in Late Medieval Valencia," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 236; Debra Blumenthal, *Enemies and Familiars, Slavery and Mastery in Fifteenth-Century Valencia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 97, 249-50.

3. Blumenthal, "La Casa," 227, with further bibliography.

4. The black gondoliers of Venice were noted in a guidebook to Venice of 1493, for which see Marino Sanuto, *De origine, situ et magistratibus urbis Venetae over la città di Venetia* (1493-1530), ed. A. Caracciolo Aricò (Milan: Cisalpino-La Goliardica, 1980), 21-22. A free black gondolier and his wife were induced to come to Ferrara to enter the service of Eleonora d'Aragona, who was really only interested in their little girl, for which see Paul Kaplan, "Isabella d'Este and Black African Women," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 135.

5. See further Lowe, "Slaves."

6. Blumenthal, *Enemies and Familiars*, 273.

7. A recent discussion of this is found in Hannah Chappelle Wojciehowski, *Group Identity in the Renaissance World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 141-62, including references to unpublished sources in Antwerp archives. Earlier published studies include Jan Albert Goris, "Slavernij te Antwerpen in de xvi eeuw," *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* 15 (1923): 541-44; Jan Albert Goris, *Étude sur les colonies marchandes méridionales (portugais, espagnols, italiens) à Anvers de 1488 à 1567* (Louvain: Librairie Universitaire, 1925); Pierre Goemare, "Anvers et ses esclaves noires" *Revue générale belge* 99 (1963): 27-36; Hans Pohl, *Die Portugiesen in Antwerpen (1567-1640)* (Wiebaden: Steiner, 1977).

8. Nadine M. Orenstein et al., "Recent Acquisitions," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 57, no. 2 (1999): 27; Jan Piet Filedt Kok and Marieke de Winkel, "Een portret van een zwarte Afrikaanse man door Jan Mostaert," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 53 no. 4 (2005): 399-400.

9. In contrast, the two blacks shown scared almost to death in Bruegel's *Triumph of Death* (Madrid, Prado) are reduced to schematic circular faces with staring eyes outlined by white, for which see Philippe Robert-Jones, *Pieter Bruegel de Oudere* (Paris: Flammarion, 1997), fig. 42.

10. Manfred Sellinck, "The Very Lively and Whimsical Pieter Brueghel: Thoughts on His Iconography and Context," in *Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Drawings and Prints*, ed. Nadine M. Orenstein, exh. cat., New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art (2001), 61, has described the poor in *The Thin Kitchen* as "caricatured without compassion."

11. Traveling troupes of musicians, jugglers, acrobats, mountebanks, and magicians regularly participated at peasant fairs, where they both entertained and fleeced a credulous peasantry. The antics of one such troupe provide the background for Bruegel's drawing from 1564 of *The Fall of the Magician Hermogenes* showing St. James vanquishing the evil magician and his humorous if sometimes demonic followers. One is a black man dressed as a jester or fool gesturing with a puppet of a peasant woman. Even at this scale his profile is individualized. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-T-00-559, for which see *Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Drawings and Prints*, ed. Nadine M. Orenstein, no. 102.

12. For the wider issues of empathy (or lack of) for the marginalized in the Early Modern period, see Tom Nichols, *The Art of Poverty: Irony and Ideal in Sixteenth-Century Beggar Imagery* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

13. Bas J.P. van Bavel, "Rural Wage Labour in the Sixteenth-Century Low Countries: An Assessment of the Importance and Nature of Wage Labour in the Countryside of Holland, Guelders and Flanders," in *Continuity and Change* 21, no. 1 (2006): 37-72.

14. For example, Bermúdez de Pedraza, *Antiquedad y excelencias de Granada* (Granada, 1608), notes among those who were "the honor of the Ethiopian nation," a Catalina de Soto "whose hands of ebony were more esteemed in sewing, embroidering, and drawing than the white hands of a gentlewoman," cited from V.B. Spratlin, *Juan Latino, Slave and Humanist* (New York: Spinner Press, 1938), 5.

15. Stroichitia, "The Image of the Black in Spanish Art," 224-34.

16. Annemarie Jordan, "Images of Empire: Slaves in the Lisbon Household and Court of Catherine of Austria," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 174-75.

17. For Riccio, see Denise Allen with Peta Motture, ed., *Andrea Riccio, Renaissance Master of Bronze* (New York: Frick Collection, 2008), esp. 31-34; Andrea Bacchi and Luciana Giacomelli, ed., *Rinascimento e passione per l'Antico: Andrea Riccio e il suo tempo* (Trento: Museo diocesano tridentino, 2008), 90 (Claudia Kryza-Gersch). That Riccio's self-portraits show him to have the hair and facial features of a black man was first proposed by Leo Planiscig, *Piccoli bronzi italiani del rinascimento* (Milan: Fratelli Treves, 1930), 19; Denise Allen, "Riccio's Bronze Narratives: Context and Development," in New York 2008, 15 for Riccio's features in his *Self-Portrait* as "blunt," and 31-34 for his "narrative self-portraits."

18. Marina Repetto Contaldo, "Francesco Torbido detto il Moro," *Saggi e memorie di storia dell'arte* 14 (Florence: Olschki, 1984), 48.

19. Giorgio Vasari, in his *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors and Architects* (Florence, 1568) (*Le Vite*), part 3 cites the artist as "Francesco il Moro" in the life of Giovan Francesco Caroto; "Francesco Torbido detto (called) il Moro" in connection with Liberale da Verona; and in his own life, "Francesco Torbido detto il Moro" and then simply "Francesco" or usually "il Moro." There is no standard for assessing nicknames or sobriquets. When a lay Franciscan references "Benedetto il moro" or "Antonio il nigro," he is distinguishing among Benedicts or Anthonys. Lodovico Sforza (1452-1508), duke of Milan, was often called il Moro—at his birth his mother was struck by his slightly olive color and called him Mauro (Latin for Moor but also a normal name [Maurice]), so that a Latin document of 1461 records his mother's votive gift for the recovery from illness of her son "Ludovicus Maurus." There is no imputation of African ancestry. He made jocular allusions to it and, as an adult, added the profile of an African to his coat of arms. When humanists referred to their colleague Sir Thomas More as "Niger" or "il Moro" it was a scholarly joke. See Luisa Giordano, *Ludovicus Dux* (Vigevano: Diakronia, 1995), 110-15; Elizabeth McGrath, "Ludovico il Moro and His Moors," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 65 (2002): 67-94, offering many possibilities for the choice of nickname, followed by Kaplan 2010, 105-6; Michele Caffi, "Bianca Maria Visconte-Sforza Duchessa di Milano a Sant'Antonio di Padova," *Archivio storico Lombardo* 13, 403 [1883], 410-11; *Il Moro d'Heliseo Heivodo*

inglese [Il Moro by Ellis Heywood (an Englishman)], Florence 1556 (a dialogue in memory of Sir Thomas More); P. Parker, "What's in a Name: and More," *Sederi XI: Revista de la sociedad Española de Estudios Renacentistas Inglese* (2002): 101-49.

20. Saunders, *Social History*, 146; Bermúdez de Pedraza, *Antiquities and Excellent Aspects of Granada* (Granada 1608), as cited by Spratlin, *Juan Latino*, 5.

21. On Alvares see T.F. Earle, "Black Africans versus Jews: Religious and Racial Tension in a Portuguese Saint's Play," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 345-60.

22. See Lowe, "Slaves."

23. Sebastian del Piombo's *Portrait of a Humanist*, ca. 1520, in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, inv. 1961.9.38, has been discussed as possibly a portrait of Giovanne Leone, for which see *Sebastiano del Piombo, 1485-1547*, Palazzo di Venezia, Rome; Kulturforum (Berlin, 2008), no. 36. There are too many unknowns for conclusions.

24. Nelson H. Minnich, "The Catholic Church and the Pastoral Care of Black Africans in Renaissance Italy," in *Black Africans*, 280-302; see Kate Lowe, "Black Africans' Religious and Cultural Assimilation to, or Appropriation of, Catholicism in Italy, 1470-1520," *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme* 31 no. 2 (2008): 69-88.

25. For issues of ordination and membership in lay versus regular orders, see Minnich, "Catholic Church," 293-99.

26. W.R. Valentiner, *Catalogue of a Collection of Paintings and Some Art Objects: German, French, Spanish, and English Paintings and Art Object: Modern Paintings*, vol. 3, ed. John G. Johnson. (Philadelphia, 1914), no. 805; Henri Marceau, *Johnson Collection: Two Hundred and Eighty-eight Reproductions* (Philadelphia, 1953), 226.

27. Noted by Valentiner, *Catalogue . . . John G. Johnson*. My thanks to Mario Valdes for alerting me to this.

28. The manifestation of this in the commissioning of a work of devotional art including a portrait of oneself as donor—as in the case of the *Altarpiece with the Coronation of the Virgin and Black Donor* in Esztergom, Keresztesy Museum, attributed to David Ghirlandai—is incontrovertibly an act of agency of a free man whose soul is his own, an indication of significant financial resources and therefore worldly success of which the donor might justly be proud. Lowe 2008; Paul Kaplan, introduction, *Image of the Black . . . II*, part 2 (2010), 28-29 (ill.).

29. In examining the painting, Carl Strehlke observed what appear to be remains of a red heart on the donor's chest. Further conversations with Jon Sedl indicate that this could be fruitful to pursue. Efforts to discover a list of friars in the Augustinian monastery in Seville in the 1560s were not successful.

30. The facts of Benedict's life are hard to confirm. Giovanna Fiume, "Antonio Etiope e Benedetto il Moro: il Santo scavuzzo e il Nigro eremita," in *Francescanesimo e Cultura a Noto, Atti del convegno Internazionale di studi*, Noti 2003, ed. Diego Ciccarelli and Simona Sarzana (Palermo, 2005), 67-100; Alessandro dell'Aira, "La fortuna iberica di San Benedetto da Palermo," in *Atti dell'Accademia di Scienze Lettere e Arti di Palermo* 12 (1993), 51-91. Minnich, "The Catholic Church," 298-99; Giovanna Fiume, "Saint Benedict the Moor, from Sicily to the New World," in Margaret Cormack, ed., *Saints and Their Cults in the Atlantic World* (Charleston: University of South Carolina Press, 2007), 16-51; Victor Stoichita, "The Image of the Black in Spanish Art: Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., eds., *The Image of the Black in Western Art, 3: From the 'Age of Discovery' to the Age of Abolition*, part 1: *Artists of the Renaissance and Baroque* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), 212-16.

31. *The Mystery of Faith*, exh. cat. (London: The Matthiesen Gallery and Coll and Cortes Gallery, 2009), no. 18 (Morales); Andrea Gates, "A Layman's Vade Mecum to Creating a Spanish Polychrome Sculpture," in *The Mystery of Faith*, 36-44; Victor Stoichita, "The Image of the Black in Spanish Art: Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries."

32. For the construction of *St. Benedict the Moor*, see Gates, "A Layman's Vade Mecum to Creating a Spanish Polychrome Sculpture."

33. Antonio was described in a Spanish 1611 publication as "un Negro . . . tambien Moro," as a black African who converted from Islam. A. Daça, *Quarta parte de la chronica general del nuestro Serafico Padre San Francisco y su Apostolica Orden* (Valadolid, 1611) III, 156. For him, see Fiume "Antonio Etiope e Benedetto il Moro"; Didier Lahon, "Santos Negros" in *Os Negros em Portugal-sécs. Xv a Xix* (Lisbon, 1999), 136-39; Diogo do Rosário, *Flos Sanctorum*, vol. 3 (Lisbon, 1869-70); S. Bono, *Corsari nel Mediterraneo. Cristiani e musulmani fra Guerra, schiavitù e commercio* (Milan, 1993); C. Avolio, *La schiavitù domestica in Sicilia nel secolo XVI* (Florence, 1888); Stroichita "Image of the Black in Spanish Art," 209, 212.

34. See Stroichita "Image of the Black in Spanish Art," 212.

35. Fiume, "Antonio Etiope e Benedetto il Moro," 73.

36. See Gude Suckale-Redlefsen and Robert Suckale, *Mauritius: Der heilige Mohr/The Black Saint Maurice* (Houston: Menil Foundation, 1987), no. 139; Peter C. Sutton et al. *Reclaimed Paintings from the Collection of Jacques Goudstikker*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 104-7, no. 8; and for comparison, Jean Devisse, "A Sanctified Black: Maurice," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art, 2: From the Early Christian Era to the 'Age of Discovery'*, part 1: *From the Demonic Threat to the Incarnation of Sainthood*, ed. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 150-94.

37. Stoichitia, "Image of the Black in Spanish Art," 220-25 (supposes Juan de Mérida to be fictional); Jeremy Lawrence, "Black Africans in Spanish Literature," in Earle and Lowe 2005, 77 (supposes Juan de Mérida to be real).

38. Ernst van den Boogaart, "Christophle le More. Lijkwacht van Karl V?" in *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 53, no. 4 (2005), 420-21.

39. Cited from Lowe, "Stereotyping," in Lowe and Earle 2005, 33.

40. Jordan, "Images of Empire," 169. She freed all the slaves in her household at her death, but their subsequent paths are unknown (ibid. 172).

41. A. C. de C. M. Saunders, "The Life and Humour of João De Sá Panasco, O Negro, Former Slave, Court Jester, and Gentleman of the Portuguese Royal Household," in F.W. Hodcroft et al., ed., *Medieval and Renaissance Studies in Honour of P.E. Russell* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981). Saunders, *A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal*, 82-83; Jordan "Images of Empire," 169.

42. Blanke may have come to England in the entourage of Catherine of Aragon in 1501 but was free by 1511, when his salary is listed among those of musicians at Henry VIII's court. Blumenthal, *Enemies and Familiars*, 241. See Lowe, "Slavery."

43. Paul Kaplan, "Black Africans in Hohenstaufen Iconography," *Gesta* 26 (1987): 29-36.

44. Giovanni Boccaccio, *De casibus virorum illustrium*, ed. Pier Giorgio Ricci, in *Tutte le opere di Giovanni Boccaccio*, ed. Vittore Branca (Milan: Aldo Mondadori Editore, 1983), book 9, chap. 25; Philine Helas, "Schwarz unter Weissen: Zur Repräsentation von Afrikanern in der italienischen Kunst des 15. Jahrhunderts," in *Fremde in der Stadt: Ordnungen, Repräsentationen und soziale Praktiken (13.-15. Jahrhundert)*, ed. Peter Bell et al. (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2010), 305-7; Devisse and Mollat (1979) 2010, 167-68.

45. Filedt Kok and de Winkel, "Een portret," 381-411; Boogaart 2005; Amsterdam 2008, no. 72 (Schreuder).

46. See Joaneath Spicer, "The Renaissance Elbow," in *A Cultural History of Gesture* ed. Herman Roodenburgh (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 84-128.

47. Filedt Kok and de Winkel, "Een portret," 382; Yvonne Hackenbroch, *Enseignes: Renaissance Hat Jewels* (Florence: Scelte, 1996), 239, 245.

48. For Margaret, see Dagmar Eichberger, ed., *Women of Distinction: Margaret of York/Margaret of Austria* (Mecheln 2005), with literature.

49. My great thanks to Til-Holger Bochert for drawing my attention to this.

50. Marin Sanuto, *I diarii*, ed. R. Fulin et al., 58 vols. (Venice 1879-1903), 40: 425-26, cited from Lowe, "Introduction," 24.

51. See Otto von Falke, "Kunstgewerbemuseum: Norddeutsche und Französische Bildteppiche," in *Amtliche Berichte aus den Königl. Kunstsammlungen*, XXXVI/7 (1915), col. 126-31. My thanks to Elizabeth Cleland for bringing the tapestry to my attention and to Maro Valdes for identifying this publication on it. As Falke notes, the designer drew on elements of earlier engravings by Heinrich Aldegrever including *Two Torch-Bearers* dated 1538 (H. 161) from a series of Wedding Dancers. All that was adapted for the black courtier is the cut of his mantel. In 1547 Elisabeth von Sachsen (1502-1557) hosted the wedding of one of her court ladies, linking the von Wendt and von Saldern families.

52. Paola Rossi, *I ritratti del Tintoretto* (Venice: Alfieri, Edizioni D'Arte, 1974), 147.

53. Carlo Ridolfi, *Le Maraviglie dell'arte, ovvero le vite de gl'illustri pittori veneti . . .* (Venice, 1648), 266.

54. For Salam-Casais d'Ysaguier, see Hans Werner DeBrunner, *Presence and Prestige: Africans in Europe, A History of Africans in Europe before 1918* (Basel: Basler Africa Bibliographien, 1979), 23.

55. Officially, Lorenzo was said to be his father. This is the line taken by Paolo Giovio (1482-1553) in his *In Praise of Men Illustrious for Their Military Virtues (Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium*, Florence, 1554), book 6, chap. 16. A Vatican document supporting Alessandro's appointment as duke of Florence in 1529 acknowledged him as the pope's son, for which see John Brackett, "Race and Rulership: Alessandro de' Medici, first Medici Duke of Florence," in Earle and Lowe, *Black Africans*, 309.

56. There is no biography of the duke. John Brackett anticipates completing his in 2012.

57. Bernardo Segni, *Storie Fiorentine* (Livorno: G. Masi, 1830), vol. 1: 418.

58. Elsewhere he identifies her name as Anna. Segni, *Storie Fiorentine*, vol. 1, 163.

59. The evidentiary value of this is bolstered by a graffito aimed at the duke in 1535: "Hail to Alessandro of Colle Vecchio."

60. Segni, *Storie Fiorentine*, vol. 2, 422.

61. For groups of these portraits see Karla Langedijk, *Portraits of the Medici: Fifteenth-Eighteenth Centuries*. 3 vols. (Florence: Studio per Edizioni Scelte, 1981), extensive but not complete; Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Pontormo, Bronzino, and the Medici: The Transformation of the Renaissance Portrait in Florence*. exh. cat. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2004); Brackett, "Race and Rulership"; Massimo Firpo and Salvatore Lo Re, "Gliocchi Assurri di Alessandro de' Medici: Note su una copia di un celebre ritratto di Iacopo Pontormo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 49, no. 3 (2005), 413-26.

62. Of portraits that cannot now be located but that would be pertinent, the most important is what appears to be a mid-1500s half-length figure set against a light background so that the character of the hair is completely clear: consulted on ARTstor but the image is from Fondazione Federico Zeri—Universita di Bologna, Photo Archive, entry number 37224, inv. 85994.

63. Selected references: Langedijk, *Portraits of the Medici*, no. 1.6; Joaneath Spicer, "Pontormo's Maria Salviati with Giulia de' Medici: Is This the Earliest Portrait of a Child of African Descent in European Art?" *The Walters Members Magazine* 54, no. 3 (Summer 2001): 5; John Brackett, "Race and Rulership: Alessandro de' Medici, First Duke of Florence, 1529-1537" in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 311; Massimo Firpo and Salvatore Lo Re, "Gliocchi Assurri di Alessandro de' Medici. Note su una copia di un celebre ritratto di Iacopo Pontormo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 49, no. 3 (2005): 419-20; Francesca DeLuca, *Santi Poeti Navigatori*, exh. cat. (Florence: Galleria Degli Uffizi, 2009): 72; Carlo Falciani and Antonio Natali, eds. *Bronzino: Artist and Poet at the Court of the Medici*, exh. cat., Florence: Palazzo Strozzi (Mandragora: Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi, 2010), no. 17f (Giordani).

64. In contrast, Pontormo's *Portrait of Alessandro de' Medici* in the Art Institute of Chicago dated to 1534-35, seemingly based on the same model, adds a black hat. Pontormo's style is more painterly than Bronzino's, so Alessandro's features are less precisely articulated; however the heavy use of shadow and hat are unusual for the artist in this period. Giorgio Vasari, who also made a politically careful portrait of Alessandro, records that about this time Pontormo painted a little head of Alessandro (as a model for the portrait now in Philadelphia [*Pontormo*, no. 26]), that was a "very good likeness" and was executed with "such diligence and care that the works of the miniaturists do not in any way come up to it." It has been proposed that the Chicago painting is this work, but Vasari's comparison to the diligence of miniaturists indicates that the likeness was precise, which the Chicago painting is not. Since copies are almost never more life-like than their models, I suggest that Bronzino's copy for the 1550s series reflects the lost original by his teacher Pontormo, which, according to Vasari, was in the Medici's *guardaroba* in the Palazzo Vecchio at the time the copies were made.

65. Selected references: Langedijk, *Portraits of the Medici*, 431, no. 87.5; J. Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty and Destiny in Medici Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 236-37, 260; P. Costamagna and A. Fabre, *Les portraits florentins du début du XVI siècle à l'avènement de Cosimo I: Catalogue raisonné d'Albertinelli à Pontormo*, 5 vols. (Paris: Musée du Louvre, 1986), vol. 2, 374-77; Gabrielle Langdon, "Pontormo and Medici lineages: Maria Salviati, Alessandro, Giulia and Giulio de Medici," *Racar, revue d'art canadienne*, 19 (1992), 20-40; P. Costamagna, *Pontormo* (Milan: Electra, 1994), 90, 285, no. 77; C. Falciani, "Maria Salviati ritratta dal Pontormo," in Antonia Natali and Alessandro Cecchi, eds. *Rosso e Pontormo: Fierezza e solitudine* (Soresina: Gruppo Vé Gé, 1995), 120-22; Elizabeth Cropper, *Pontormo: Portrait of a Halberdier* (Los Angeles: Getty Museum, 1997), 3; Spicer, "Pontormo's Maria Salviati," 4-6; E. Pilliod, *Pontormo, Bronzino, Allori: A Genealogy of Florentine Art* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 236; David Allen Brown et al. *Virtue and Beauty: Leonardo's "Ginevra de' Benci" and Renaissance Portraits of Women*, exh. cat., Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), no. 40 (Cropper); C. Acidini Luchinat et al., *The Medici, Michelangelo and the Art of Late Renaissance Florence*, exh. cat., Palazzo Strozzi; Detroit Institute of Arts; Art Institute of Chicago (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), no. 33 (Costamagna); Antonio Pinelli, *La bellezza impura: Arte e politica nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Rome: Laerza & Figli, 2004), 129, 132, 136-37; Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Pontormo, Bronzino,*

and the Medici: The Transformation of the Renaissance Portrait in Florence, exh. cat. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2004), no. 30; Morten Steen Hansen and Joaneath Spicer, ed., *Masterpieces of Italian Painting: The Walters Art Museum* (London: The Walters Art Museum in Association with D Giles, 2005), 96-99 (Spicer); Gabrielle Langdon, *Medici Women: Portraits of Power, Love, and Betrayal from the Court of Duke Cosimo I* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 32-47. The existence of a child only became clear in 1937 when nineteenth-century overpaint was removed. See Spicer, "Pontormo's Maria Salviati," for a photograph of the painting prior to cleaning.

66. The original identification was published by Langdon in 1992. In 2002 Costamagna returned to the identification of the child as Cosimo, declining even to cite articles by Langdon or Spicer.

67. John Graham Pollard, *Renaissance Medals: The Collections of the National Gallery of Art*, 2 vols. (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2007), no. 361.

68. Langdon, *Medici Women*, 121-36, has proposed that Alessandro Allori's 1559 *Portrait of a Woman* (Museo degli Uffizi) represents her. Falciani and Natali, *Bronzino*, no. VII.3 (Simone Giordani) and others identify her as Ortensia de' Bardi.

69. Jacques Heers, *The Barbary Corsairs: Warfare in the Mediterranean 1480-1580* (London, 2003). On Vasari's story about Filippo Lippi, see Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite de' piu eccellenti pittori scultori ed architettori*, annotated by Gaetano Milanesi (Florence, 1906), 2: 615 n. 1, where the commentary treats it as a fable.

70. George Cawston and Augustus Henry Keane, *The Early Chartered Companies (A.D. 1296-1858)* (London: Edward Arnold, 1887), 96, 236.

71. For Quasim's account of his visit, see Nabil Matar, *In the Lands of the Christians: Arabic Travel Writing in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

72. DeBrunner, *Presence and Prestige*, 41-45, with references. Kate Lowe, "'Representing' Africa: Ambassadors and Princes from Christian Africa to Renaissance Italy and Portugal, 1402-1608," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 17 (2007), 101-28. See further Lowe, "Ambassadors."

73. Teobaldo Filesì, "Enrico, figlio del re del congo, primo vescovo dell'Africa near (1518)," *Euntes Docete* 19 (1966): 365-85; Teobaldo Filesì, *Le relazione tra il regno del Congo e la Sede Apostolica nel XVI secolo* (Como 1968); Minnich, "The Catholic Church," 294-5; Kaplan 2010, 158-59, with further references.

74. He had expected to lead a Congolese embassy to the pope in 1512/13, which, however, never took place due to Portuguese reluctance to allow the measure of independence that such an embassy entailed.

75. See Paul Kaplan, "Italy, 1490-1700," in Bindman and Gates, *Image of the Black in Western Art, 3: from the Age of Discovery' to the Age of Absolution*, part 1: *Artists of the Renaissance and Baroque* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2010), 149, ill.

76. P. Mauro de Leonessa, *Santo Stefano Maggiore degli Abissini e le Relazione Romano-Etiopiche* (Vatican City: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1929); Peter Mark, *Africans in European Eyes: The Portrayal of Black Africans in Fourteenth and Fifteenth-Century Europe* (Syracuse: Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, 1974), 22; DeBrunner, *Presence and Prestige*, 50-52.

77. On the council, see Salvatore Tedeschi, "Etiopie e copti al concilio di Firenze," *Annuario historiae conciliorum* 21 (1989): 380-97. Joseph Gill, *The Council of Florence* (New York: AMS Press, 1982); Minnich, "The Catholic Church," 281 n.1. On the movement of Ethiopian monks within Italy, see Kaplan, "Isabella d'Este," 138.

78. Robert Glass, "Filarete at the Papal Court: Sculpture, Ceremony, and the Antique in Early Renaissance Rome" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2011), 183-224 (on the doors).

79. Linda Phyllis Austern et al., ed., *Psalms in the Early Modern World* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 4-6; J. M. Harden, *An Introduction to Ethiopic Christian Literature* (New York: Macmillan, 1926).

80. Harden, *Ethiopic Christian Literature*, 43.

81. *Verdadera informaçam das terras do Preste Joam das Indias* (Lisbon, 1540).

82. Elizabeth Feist Hirsch, *Damião de Gois: The Life and Thought of a Portuguese Humanist, 1502-1574* (The Hague: Nijhof, 1967), 147-51.