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## II

### The presentation of self in the Renaissance portrait<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss Italian portraits, especially those of the Renaissance, not from the usual point of view – that of the painters and their individual achievements – but from the point of view of the sitters, not as individuals so much as social types. This does not entail the assumption that paintings mirror physical or even social reality; their relation to the outside world is much more indirect. Portraits need to be regarded as a form of communication, a silent language, a theatre of status, a system of signs representing attitudes and values, and as a means to 'the presentation of self'.

The last phrase is a quotation from the late Erving Goffman, part of the title of one of his books. The book is an analysis of everyday life in terms of performance; a study of the art of 'impression management', as he calls it; an investigation of the various means adopted for the saving, or maintenance or indeed the improvement of 'face'. To achieve these ends it is necessary, but not sufficient, to attend carefully to 'deportment, dress and bearing'. This social 'demeanour' is more effective if supported by what he calls 'front', in other words the definition of the situation for observers by means of what he calls 'setting', 'scenery', 'stage-props' or 'sign-equipment' (Goffman, 1959).

Goffman's views have strong affinities with those of Robert Park, W. I. Thomas, and more generally with the Chicago School of symbolic interactionism whose leading concepts have been employed in this book on a number of occasions (above, p. 7). My recourse to this particular group of sociologists and anthropologists may seem odd in that the symbolic interactionists, and Goffman in particular, were not particularly interested in what is specific to particular societies or periods. However, the extended theatrical metaphor informing their work would seem to be particularly appropriate to Italy, where it was and is important to cut a good figure in public (*fare bella figura*), and to the early modern period, when the old metaphor of the world as a stage seems to have had an even wider currency than usual. There is an obvious affinity between the Goffman view of social life and the one put forward in the many Italian

treatises of manners, notably Castiglione's 'Courtier' with its detailed instructions for creating the illusion of spontaneity, if necessary by careful rehearsal.

Neither Castiglione nor Goffman discuss the painted portrait, but it is not difficult to see the relevance of their approaches to behaviour to the semiotics of this pictorial genre.

Before exploiting any historical source, it is a good methodological principle to put it in context, to ask how and why it came into existence. We have to imagine portraits not as they now hang, in museums and galleries, associated with other 'works of art', but in their original setting, the houses or 'palaces' of the upper classes in a period when 'conspicuous consumption', as it is now called, was not only a pleasure but a duty for families which enjoyed or aspired to high status (above, ch. 10). Palaces, furniture, clothes, and so on were props for the successful presentation of self.

One of these props to identity was the portrait, commissioned to hang in the family residence with the images of the ancestors, genuine and spurious. In early modern Italy, the portrait was associated with the upper classes (with some surviving exceptions, often relatives of the painter). These paintings were for the eyes of the family, their friends and their guests. They were themselves items of conspicuous consumption, increasingly magnificent as the period progressed. They were also a part of what Goffman calls 'personal front'. The painted face made its contribution to social 'face'. The portrait was, or became, a representation of conspicuous consumption (on clothes, curtains, clocks, etc.), and so a document of impression management, with the advantage to the sitter (and the disadvantage to the modern historian), that in this type of document it is possible to control the information available to the spectators with a fair amount of success. Take the case of Federigo da Montefeltro, for example. Seeing him portrayed in profile, notably by Piero della Francesca, one might not be aware that he had lost an eye. Or we can take the rather more complicated case of melancholy. The poetry of the Italian Renaissance suggests that it was fashionable to be melancholy, that the malady was not just an Elizabethan one. Individuals who did not have the fortune to be melancholy by nature might want to present themselves in this light. However, it was not done to appear melancholy in public; there are no instructions for learning this particular kind of body language in Castiglione's *Courtier* or other courtesy-books. It was in private, or to use Goffman's term, 'backstage', that one was supposed to prop one's head on one's hand or stare vacantly into space.





2. G. Bellini, *Doge Leonardo Loredan* (London, National Gallery)

But then how would others know? Here the painted portrait had the advantage of making the private public.

In other words, the painter has the power to adjust the appearance of the sitter to his or her social role. This might seem to rule portraits out of court as a historical source. From the historian's point of view, however, all is not lost. This adjustment of actor to role, which makes portraits rather unreliable records of the mere external appearance of individuals, turns them at the same time into a faithful representation of the values of their age.

One should beware of course of assuming complete consensus between artist and sitter. The portrait was the outcome of a process of 'negotiation' between two parties; it was a 'transaction' in more than the simple financial sense of the term (above, p. 48). Sitters are more or less demanding, artists more or less accommodating. The process of negotiation is rarely documented; an exception is the case of Isabella d'Este complaining about the results, or on another occasion, in middle age, asking Titian to paint her as she had been as a young girl. What the artist thought we do not know. We have to bear in mind the possibility that a painter might take a dislike to a particular sitter; Titian is known to have disliked the art dealer Jacopo Strada, whom he once described as 'one of the most pompous idiots you will ever find', and it has been suggested that he injected into his portrait an element of caricature (as Goya is said to have done in the case of the Spanish royal family). Even Raphael has been described on occasion as the 'cruellest of portrait-painters', with 'his hog pope and fox-and-ferret cardinals'.<sup>2</sup> I would not care to dismiss these suggestions *a priori*. To avoid the obvious dangers of subjectivity and anachronism, however, interpretations of this kind need to be based on a thorough knowledge of the local conventions of portrayal, the current pictorial translations of the language, or rhetoric, of the body, including gesture, posture, and the expression of the face. Apparently trivial details turn out to be clues which help us decode portraits, and something of the wider culture in which they are embedded.

In China, as Goffman reminds us (1956), mandarins used to appear in public with a 'stern and forbidding aspect', whatever their private thoughts, feelings, or character, simply because this was required by their role of dispenser of justice. This stern aspect, on which western travellers remarked, is confirmed by Ming dynasty portraits of officials. Some Italian ruler-portraits are almost equally forbidding, or at least severe; Bellini's doge Leonardo Loredan, for example, or Bronzino's Cosimo de'Medici, which communicates a sense of the *terribilita* appropriate to a prince.



Cosimo looks like a lion, as a ruler should; a comparison which is even more explicit in his bust by Cellini, with lion's heads on his armour (Summers, 1981, ch. 15; Meller, 1963). The art theorist G. P. Lomazzo was quite frank about what was needed. A ruler needs to look grave and majestic in his portrait, 'even if he does not in practice' (*ancora che naturalmente non fosse tale*).<sup>3</sup> More of a problem is Cosimo's wife Eleonora, as presented by the same artist. In her case the severity cannot be explained in the same way. Perhaps she had to look like this to match her husband. Perhaps this is simply a Bronzino expression – but one should not underestimate his range. It may be relevant to add that Eleonora's father, Pedro de Toledo, the King of Spain's viceroy in Naples (above, p. 147), had surprised the high nobility there by his Spanish manners, and notably by the fact that when he gave audience he remained immobile and expressionless, or as one observer put it, like a 'marble statue'.<sup>4</sup> His successors seem to have followed this precedent; an Italian who saw the viceroy carried in a litter in 1591 commented that he was so grave and motionless 'that I should never have known whether he was a man or a figure of wood'.<sup>5</sup> Bronzino's frozen style was peculiarly appropriate for recording this equally frozen behaviour, a case of art imitating life imitating art.

The cultural historian has to learn to read not only changing expressions but also the furnishings of the face; beards, for example. The beards of the clergy are particularly interesting in this respect, since they were a subject of contemporary debate. Beards were a virility symbol in this culture in which – as chapter 8 tried to show – the values of virility were taken very seriously. 'The beard is a sign of manliness... beardlessness is for children, eunuchs, for women'.<sup>6</sup> The celibate clergy posed more of a problem, and we find some with beards, some without. Take the popes, for example. The famous portraits by Raphael and Sebastiano del Piombo shows Julius II and Clement VII with beards, while Leo X is clean-shaven. A contemporary chronicle suggests that the reason that Julius II let his beard grow at Bologna in 1510 was 'to avenge himself' and that 'he did not want to shave it again until he had driven King Louis of France from Italy' (Partridge and Starn, 1980, pp. 43f). Clement VII grew his beard, apparently as a sign of mourning, after the sack of Rome in 1527. Many of the clergy imitated him. The implications of these two stories is that in the West – unlike the Orthodox world – a clerical beard was a marker of a special occasion. This view was challenged by the treatise 'in defence of priest's beards' published by the humanist Giovanni Pietro Pierio Valeriano in 1531, arguing that beards were a sign

of piety, gravity and dignity, while shaving showed effeminacy (Chastel, 1983, pp. 184f). The beards of Paul III and cardinal Bembo, as painted by Titian, are consistent with this view. On the other hand, in the later sixteenth century Carlo Borromeo, beardless himself (as his portrait by Crespi shows) ordered his clergy to shave, and his view seems to have prevailed generally, though not completely. Van Dyck's cardinal Bentivoglio and the Innocent X of Velázquez are obvious examples of seventeenth-century clergy who sport beards, even if they are less thick than those of their sixteenth-century predecessors and so reflect something of a compromise.

Unlike beards, postures do not seem to have been a matter of much controversy, apart from odd remarks on the need to aim at the golden mean between 'the restlessness of monkeys' and that 'statuesque immobility' which so surprised visitors to the viceroy of Naples.<sup>7</sup> Problems of interpretation remain, however, particularly for historians coming from a culture in which the seated position is no longer associated with high social rank, respect is no longer expressed by bowing, and the slouch has replaced the upright position as the norm – even in portraits. For an example of the problems we may take the Titian portrait of pope Paul III with his 'nipoti', one of whom, Ottavio Farnese, is bent almost double, 'cringing' one is tempted to say, in a caricature of obsequiousness. But were the Farnese family really so obtuse as not to notice the caricature? For Vasari, who moved in this circle, testifies in his life of Titian that they were well satisfied with this portrait. It is therefore worth entertaining the hypothesis that a posture which signifies obsequiousness in one period (or culture) may have quite a different significance in another. Like the 'threshold of embarrassment', that useful term coined by the sociologist Norbert Elias (1939, pp. 114f), there is a 'threshold of respect' which may be raised or lowered in the course of time. In the case of Paul III, it is worth bearing in mind the elaborate forms of deference built into papal ritual (below, ch. 12), and especially the fact that he was the one individual in Europe in a position to have his foot regularly kissed in public, even, on occasion, by the emperor. If Charles V could stoop to the pope without shame, Ottavio could perhaps bend without cringing.

In the case of gesture, which no historian of Italy, of all places, can afford to omit in a study of body language, the evidence is more explicit because contemporaries were aware of its significance and discuss the eloquence of the hands, in particular, in treatises on rhetoric, manners and so on. 'Among all nations', as Vico put it, 'the hand signified power'.<sup>8</sup> Art historians are surely on the right lines when they try to





3. Titian, *Paul III and his nipoti* (Naples, courtesy of Mansell)

match the gestures in early modern paintings to those described in the eleventh book of Quintilian's famous 'Education of the Orator' (Baxandall, 1972; Heinz, 1972). One has of course to remember that Quintilian came from another culture – he was a Spanish Roman of the first century AD – but also that his recommendations were taken seriously in early modern Italy.

Some gestures in portraits are not too difficult to read – the conven-



4. Titian, *Cardinal Pietro Bembo* (Washington, National Gallery)

tional blessing gesture in the portraits of popes, Pius V for example or the conventional gesture of penitence made by fra Gregorio in his portrait by Lotto. Quintilian thought it somewhat excessive, indeed theatrical, for an orator to strike his breast in this way, but by the sixteenth century it had of course become a standard liturgical gesture associated with the *confiteor* at Mass. The outstretched hand, palm upwards, of cardinal Bembo seems to reproduce the gesture recommended by Quintilian for



the beginning of a speech. Bembo had of course written on rhetoric. What more appropriate example of the rhetoric of gesture than the gesture of a rhetorician? More problematic is the hand-on-hip gesture of a number of young noblemen. For us this smacks of swagger, but in sixteenth-century Italy it may have signified no more than a proper sense of superior status, or the 'sprezzatura' or aristocratic negligence recommended by Castiglione in his 'Courtier'.<sup>9</sup> The spreading of the fingers, with the two middle fingers close together (a gesture to be found in portraits by Lotto and Bronzino before it became a hallmark of El Greco) may well seem affected today, but its popularity suggests that this gesture was perceived as a sign of the sitter's elegance, like the crossed legs of young bucks painted by Reynolds and Gainsborough. We shall never know whether this body rhetoric was the painter's or the sitter's; but from the standpoint of this chapter, concerned with the reconstruction of a cultural code, this gap in our knowledge does not matter too much.

The elegantly posed self displayed in these portraits was supported by a number of properties of attributes which identified the sitter socially. The language of objects has to be decoded as well as the language of the body (Castelnuovo, 1973). The problem is that objects spoke more than one language. They were bilingual at the very least. Many of the properties represented in portraits were symbols of status; but some were emblematic, identifying the sitter individually by means of visual puns (laurel for Laura, for example), or pointing some moral. The recurrent motif of a lady with a dog, for example, apart from immortalising a favourite pet, imparts a moral lesson; dogs, as the emblem-books of the time make plain, were symbols of fidelity. The point might be spelled out in the form of the proposition that dog is to master as wife is to husband (or at any rate, should be). The clothes of some of the girls in fifteenth-century Florentine portraits should be read heraldically. The portraits are probably those of brides, who were 'marked' as members of their new family by dresses bearing that family's badge (Klapisch, 1985, pp. 225, 239n).

Here, however, we are more concerned with accessories designed to enhance the sitter in the portrait – as indeed in daily life; with symbols of wealth, status and power, whether actual or merely hoped-for. Rich clothes are obvious status symbols, together with rings and necklaces and gold chains, like the heavy chain around the neck of Titian's Aretino (commemorating a gift to the sitter). 'There is nothing that humbles men more than to be ill-dressed', as one political theorist put it.<sup>10</sup> Another added that 'The clothes of a prince should express majesty, those of an

elderly gentleman gravity, those of a young one elegance, those of a cleric dignified modesty, those of a matron should be decorous, and those of a maiden should be comely and stylish'.<sup>11</sup> The colours of clothes are more problematic. A red gown often signifies that its wearer is a Florentine citizen. In fifteenth-century Italy, black seems to have become fashionable in aristocratic circles, perhaps as a means of distinction from 'the flashy new rich' (Baxandall, 1972, pp. 14f). In the sixteenth century, soldiers were advised never to wear black – and always to wear a plume – so that their identity would not be mistaken.<sup>12</sup> Around 1600, black might in some circles be associated with support for Spain, while Francophiles wore a French style which was more colourful.

Turning to details, gloves held rather than worn by the sitter were a somewhat ambiguous symbol, at least in the case of ladies, where they might well evoke the much-imitated poems of Petrarch on the 'beautiful naked hand' of his beloved, a nice example of the part representing the whole. Veils, not infrequently worn by Italian ladies of the period, may be making a similar point (Mirollo, 1984, chs. 3 and 4). Clocks may be moral symbols, reminders to sitter and spectators alike that time flies and that life is short, but some of them, in their heavy gold casing, are status symbols as well.

The armour to be found in so many aristocratic male portraits of the period is obviously heavy with symbolic significance. It is a sign of valour, still the appropriate virtue for rulers and aristocrats, whether or not they actually fought; Cosimo de' Medici did not, but he allowed or encouraged artists to paint him in armour all the same. Cased in steel, the sitters took on a heroic, epic quality; 'Arma virumque pingo'. The symbolic importance of the armour is particularly obvious in a portrait of Federigo of Urbino, perhaps by the Spaniard Berruguete, perhaps by Justus of Ghent. A portrait of a man in armour reading a book obviously cannot be read literally, as the representation of a moment in the sitter's life, without absurdity, even though Federigo really did fight in battle. Yet the painted figure makes a neat, economical, effective symbol of the combination of arms and letters, the two domains in which the prince, like the courtier, should excel, as Castiglione, writing at the court of Federigo's son, makes abundantly clear. According to Lomazzo, it was only the nobles who had themselves portrayed in arms. It is 'truly ridiculous', he observed, that 'merchants and bankers who have never seen drawn swords' be painted armed and even 'with batons in their hands like generals', rather than with a pen behind their ear and an account-book beside them.<sup>13</sup>





5. [?]Berruguete, *Federigo of Urbino with his son* (Urbino, courtesy of Mansell)

The place of books in portraits deserves some amplification. Books symbolised the contemplative life, so they were appropriate furnishings for portraits of the clergy, and they were doubtless provided on occasion for clerics who never studied, like armour and weapons for nobles who never fought. In a society where literacy was more or less restricted to an elite they were also, perhaps, symbols of power, like the letters and papers in the hands or on the desks of some sitters, showing how important and how busy they were. Painters not infrequently identify these books precisely, and it might be of interest to compile a bibliography. Lotto's *fra Gregorio*, for example, holds a work by St Gregory, an appropriate volume of homilies as well as a pun on the sitter's name. Lawyers are shown with the *Corpus of Roman Law*, physicians with the works of Hippocrates and Galen, the tools of their high-status trades. Fashionable young men and women are often to be seen holding the love poems of Petrarch, as in the case of Bronzino's *Laura Battiferri*, a choice doubly appropriate in this case because her name was that of Petrarch's beloved and because she wrote poems herself. It is even possible, in here case and also in that of a young lady painted by Andrea del Sarto, to identify the poems on the open page, allowing allusions which a particular in-group would have appreciated. In the case of another Bronzino sitter, the scholar Ugolino Martelli, there are three books, identifiable as works by Homer, Virgil and Bembo, and the pointing gesture must be intended to remind the spectator that Martelli wrote a commentary on Homer. Similarly, other sitters, like Veronese's *Daniele Barbaro*, point to the titles of their own books, or hold them open, like Bugiardini's *Francesco Guicciardini*. If the gesture strikes some readers as immodest, they should remember the values of the *società spettacolo* (above, p. 10).

Together with books we often find signs of the sitter's artistic interests. Statues, busts, coins and medals are all common in portraits of the period, from Botticelli's *Giuliano de'Medici* and Lotto's *Odoni* to Bronzino's *Martelli* and Titian's *Jacopo Strada* (who appears to be trying to sell something to the spectator). There are also more general signs of wealth, status and power. One is the velvet curtain. Among its most skilled manipulators were Titian, Bronzino, and van Dyck (who painted a number of Italians in Genoa and elsewhere). There is also the classical column, bearing obvious associations with ancient Rome and also with splendid palaces, represented metonymically, a small part for a very large whole. Another dumb yet eloquent symbol of status was the servant, like the black boy in Van Dyck's portrait of *Elena Grimaldi*, a noblewoman of Genoa. It is not difficult to imagine what that severe republican Andrea





6. A. van Dyck, *Elena Grimaldi* (Washington, National Gallery)

Spinola would have thought of that portrait, since he was critical of the fashion for these little page boys or *menini*.<sup>14</sup> The umbrella in this portrait, incidentally, offers more than a splash of colour and protection for the sitter; it has associations with high status because of its use in rituals to cover the most important participant, whether pope, prince, or blessed sacrament (below, ch. 12).

Dogs, horses and birds may all be status symbols on occasion. The hound had obvious associations with the hunt, a sport which was at once manly and aristocratic. These associations are particularly obvious in another of the Genoese van Dycks, the portrait of Anton Giulio Brignole Sale. To look at this magnificent portrait, associating a man and his horse, hound and hawk, one might not think that one was faced with a patrician of recent merchant origins (best known today as writer), rather than a great nobleman of old family and extensive estates. It is one more reminder that the painter was not a camera but a dealer in more than one kind of illusion, social mystification as well as *trompe l'oeil*. One might even talk of the portrait as a piece of mythology in a metaphorical sense (cf. Barthes, 1957), as well as the obvious literal sense typified by Bronzino's representation of the Genoese admiral Andrea Doria as Neptune. One kind of myth served the other.

It might well be useful to draw up an inventory of all the properties represented in Italian portraits of the early modern period, to see how frequently they were associated with one another and with different types of sitter in what might be called pictorial 'formulae', and when and why the conventions were broken. Caravaggio's portrait – if it was his – of the young cardinal Maffeo Barberini, for example, provides the sitter with a vase of flowers. This is unusual, but we should beware of seeing it as effeminate. A generation earlier, an archbishop had inveighed against the representation of flowers (together with animals and birds), in the portraits of churchmen, but for a different reason. He saw these accessories as too worldly.<sup>15</sup>

This chapter has been concerned so far with the portrayal of a system of signs, and a portrait requires the sitter to keep still. It is of course as unrealistic as it is – temporarily – useful to try to halt the march of time in this way. That is the greatest weakness of the so-called 'structuralist' approach to culture, and the reason why it has been discussed relatively little in these pages. It is time to suggest how portraits changed between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, and to see whether or not these changes are associated with developments in other forms of conspicuous consumption or other sign-systems (notably language).



If one arranges dated Italian portraits in chronological order, certain changes spring to the eye. Fifteenth-century portraits are relatively plain and unimpressive (from the self-presentation point of view, at least; this is not a comment on the artistic achievements of Antonello da Messina, say, or Botticelli). It was possible to paint the sitter 'warts and all' (as Ghirlandaio painted the merchant Sassetti, although this identification is disputed). Few properties are visible, and only the head and shoulders or at most the top half of the sitter, who is almost seen in profile. Omitting the special case, already mentioned, of Federigo of Urbino, we should not assume too easily that profiles failed to impress fifteenth-century spectators, for the analogy between painted portraits and ancient Roman coins probably carried weight with them. In any case, the portrait was a novelty. In a poem by the fifteenth-century Venetian patrician Leonardo Giustinian, the lover tells his beloved that he has painted her image on a piece of paper 'as if you were one of God's saints'.

Io t'ho dipinta in su una carticella  
Come se fussi una santa di Dio.

Even in the late sixteenth century, according to the archbishop of Bologna, Gabriele Paleotti, infamous people (among whom he included heretics, tyrants, courtesans and actors) should not be portrayed at all.<sup>16</sup>

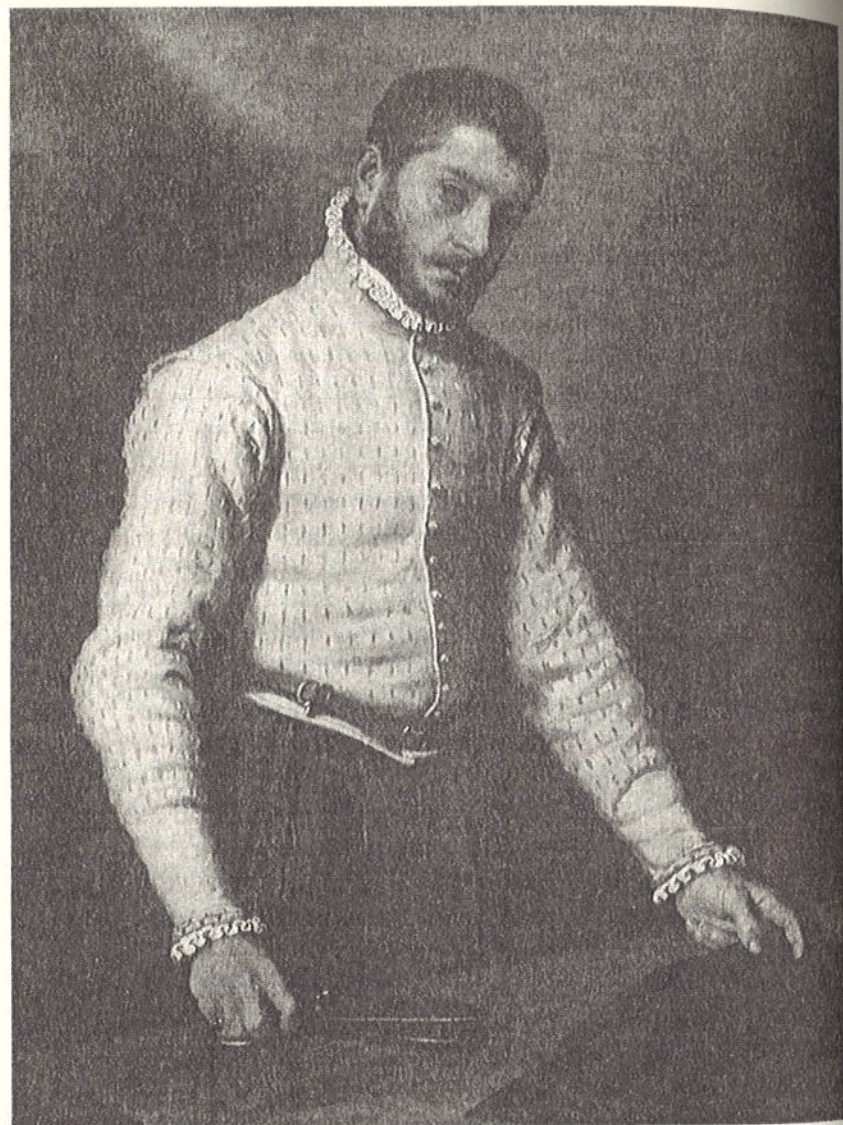
All the same, looking at the portraits in series, one has a sense that people became blasé, that more elaborate means were soon necessary if the spectators were to be impressed by the sitter. Profiles gave way to three-quarter views or full-face. Half-lengths expanded to full-lengths, so that some portraits are considerably larger than the people looking at them. Props multiplied: chairs, tables, curtains, columns, books, papers, clocks, dogs, servants, and so on. By the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, portraits had become very much more impressive and more elaborately formal than they had been in the fifteenth. Why? Explanations of artistic trends are never precisely verifiable, but it makes sense to begin by looking at changes which were taking place in the same milieu at more or less the same time. Buildings too were becoming grander, and consumption generally more conspicuous (above, ch. 11). There is also evidence that modes of address were becoming inflated (ch. 7), and politeness more elaborately ritualised. For some historians, these trends are merely symptoms of a much more massive change which can be summed up in one word; 'refeudalisation', in the sense of the recovery of dominance by the landed nobility, coupled with what might be called 'the fall of the middle class'. They may be right. There were

changes in the balance of power between different social groups in early modern Italy. It is possible that these changes had cultural consequences, although the connexions cannot be demonstrated and I am not sure that merchants, for example, were cultural pace-setters even in fourteenth-century Florence.

There is, however, an alternative explanation of changes in the presentation of sitters in Italian portraits, an explanation which is microsocial rather than macrosocial, modest rather than ambitious, and a good deal easier to document than its rival, though the two theories are better seen as complementary than contradictory. According to the alternative theory, the grander manner in which noble sitters came to be portrayed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was in part at least a response to the democratisation of the portrait. There is evidence that some ordinary people, craftsmen and shopkeepers, were beginning to have their portraits painted, to the extreme annoyance of observers higher in the social scale. 'It is the disgrace of our age', wrote Pietro Aretino – himself a shoemaker's son who had risen socially – 'that it tolerates the painted portraits even of tailors and butchers'.<sup>17</sup> The painting of a tailor by Morone, now in the National Gallery, London, suggests that Aretino was reacting against a real trend. Portraits of craftsmen and shopkeepers are rare now, but they had fewer chances of survival than portraits of aristocrats. A few years after Aretino, the artists and art theorist Lomazzo made a similar point. 'Whereas in the time of the Romans, only princes and victorious generals were portrayed, now the art of portraiture from life has become so vulgarised (*divulgata*), that virtually all its dignity is lost'.<sup>18</sup> When the very existence of a portrait was a sign of the high status of the sitter, the portrait itself could afford to be simple, but as soon as portraits became commonplace, a new means of differentiation had to be employed by those who wanted to stand out.

In the eighteenth century, on the other hand, what we see in the work of Ceruti, Longhi, fra Galgario, and others, is the reverse trend, a move towards increasing simplicity and informality. Expressions became less stiff, and it was at last possible to represent even a doge with human emotions. Smiles become more frequent in eighteenth-century portraits (they should probably be read as signs of affability rather than amusement). One eighteenth-century pope told the painter to make him look gentle, because he was the people's pastor (*Fa dolce: sono pastore dei popoli*). Quoted by Andrieux, 1962, preface). It became possible for painters to portray cardinals in undress uniform, and gentlemen taking snuff, or in the act of reading, spectacles on nose, rather than posing



7. Morone, *Tailor* (London, National Gallery)

elegantly beside a book, as had been the custom. The Longhis and others painted family groups. There was a rise of domestic props such as teacups, fans, screens, harpsichords and children, particularly in female portraits, which seem to have become more common (in the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century, the numbers of male and female portraits seem to have been about equal; in Italy at the same time, the preponderance is overwhelmingly male). One might talk of the rise of 'naturalism', but it would be more accurate to speak in terms of an alternative convention, a rhetoric of the natural and the domestic. These changes coincide with an increasing informality of speech (ch. 7), an increasing distrust of ritual (ch. 16), and a trend towards more relaxed behaviour in upper-class society, a trend which is more obvious in the cases of France and England but is also noticeable in parts of Italy. Some anonymous Venetian verses of 1768 describe the unconventional habits of some noblewomen, including sitting 'a la sultana', in other words with one leg over the other (Molmenti, 1906-8, vol. 3, 331-2). In the case of this trend towards informality (unlike its converse), it is hard to offer anything but a macrosocial explanation.

The wheel seems to have come full circle, but the rise of informality, like that of formality, suggests that portraits can tell us something important about society in general as well as about a particular sitter. This is not to reaffirm the view, rejected earlier, that the painter is a mirror or camera. On the contrary, he (or occasionally she, as in the case of Sofonisba Anguisciola), is a rhetorician. The point is that the rules of rhetoric changed as the wider culture changed, so that they too must be studied as a historical source. Historians not only can but must use portraits and other paintings as part of their evidence, because images often communicate what is not put into words. Yet this evidence cannot be interpreted until the paintings are replaced in their frames, the frames of the culture and society of their time.



- 10 ACG, fondo Brignole Sale, ms. 106B, s.v. 'Palazzo Publico'.
- 11 G. Gigli, *Diario romano (1608-70)*, ed. G. Ricciotti (Rome, 1958), entry for 8 April 1655.
- 12 R. Lassels, *A Voyage of Italy* (Paris, 1670), p. 442.
- 13 J. Evelyn, *Diary*, ed. E. S. de Beer (6 vols., Oxford, 1955), vol. 2, pp. 174, 236, 471. Evelyn was in Italy in 1644-5.
- 14 G. Burnet, *Some Letters* (Amsterdam, 1686), pp. 178, 146.
- 15 H. Bavinck, *Wegzeiger* (Rome, 1625), in *Documenti sul barocco in Roma*, ed. J. A. F. Orbaan (Rome, 1920), p. 14, note.
- 16 G. Gualdo Priorato, *Relatione di Milano* (Milan, 1666), p. 131.
- 17 P. Skippon, 'An Account of a Journey' in *A Collection of Voyages*, ed. A. and J. Churchill (6 vols., London, 1732), vol. 6, pp. 567, 639.
- 18 G. Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey* (London, 1615), p. 259.
- 19 G. C. Capaccio, 'Napoli' (written c. 1607), *Archivio Storico per le Province Napolitane* 7 (1882), p. 534.
- 20 'Discorse contra carnevale' (written c. 1607) in *La commedia dell'arte e la società barocca*, ed. F. Taviani (Rome, 1970), especially p. 81.
- 21 G. Burnet, *Letters*, p. 185.
- 22 Soldani, *Satire*, pp. 104, 188-9.
- 23 'Rengo di Senatore' in *Paolo V e la Repubblica Veneziana*, ed. E. Cornet (Venice, 1859), p. 313.
- 24 A. Cutolo, 'Un diario inedito del doge Leonardo Donà', *Nuova Antologia* 1953, pp. 270-81.
- 25 A. Spinola, *Scritti scelti*, ed. C. Bitossi (Genoa, 1981), is a good introduction to the man and his ideas; but the remarks summarised above come from his unpublished reflections (cited above, note 9), s.v. 'Carozze', 'Essequie Private', 'Palazze Private', 'Parsimonia', 'Simie di Principi', 'Svizzeri', etc.
- 26 Gigli, *Diario romano* (see note 11 above), p. 323.
- 27 T. De Santis, *Storia del Tumulto di Napoli* (Leiden, 1652), p. 64.
- 28 B. Arditì, *Diario*, ed. R. Cantagalli (Florence, 1970), pp. 109, 217.
- 29 T. Rinuccini, *Le usanze fiorentine*, ed. P. Fanfani (Florence, 1863).
- 30 G. B. Agucchi, 'Passaggio del cardinale Pietro Aldobrandini nel Genovesato', *Giornale Ligustico* 4 (1877), p. 273; B. Paschetti, *Del conservare la sanità* (Genoa, 1602), p. 114.
- 31 T. Campanella, *De Monarchia Hispanica* (Amsterdam, 1640), ch. 14; G. C. Capaccio, 'Napoli' (see note 19 above), p. 534; and an anonymous report quoted in Villari (1967), pp. 165-6.
- 32 G. Lomellino, 'Relatione della Repubblica di Genova', in Genoa, ACG, ms. 120, p. 173.
- 33 G. Priuli, *Diarii*, ed. A. Segre and R. Cessi (3 vols., Città di Castello and Bologna, 1912-37), vol. 3, p. 50.

- 34 G. Cavalcanti, *Istorie fiorentine*, ed. G. di Pino (Milan, 1944), p. 25.
- 35 G. Lercari (?) *Le discordie e guerre civili dei Genovesi*, ed. A. Olivieri (Genoa, 1857), p. 17.
- 36 L. B. Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, ed. R. Romano and A. Tenenti (Turin, 1969), pp. 195ff; G. Morelli, *Ricordi*, ed. V. Branca (Florence, 1956), p. 241.
- 37 ASV, Testamenti, Z. Contarini (500 masses, 1600); G. da Lezze (300 masses, 1642); D. Contarini (1,000 masses, 1674); N. Venier (1,000 masses, 1688); F. Corner (3,000 masses, 1706).

# 11 The presentation of self in the Renaissance portrait

- 1 This essay owes obvious debts to earlier general studies of Italian portraits, notably to Hill (1925), Pope-Hennessy (1966), and Castelfnuovo (1973), as well as to monographs on individual painters, including Hope (1980), and Hirst (1981), who notes the wealth of evidence for 'a study still unwritten: the sociology of Renaissance portraiture' (p. 94n).
- 2 The remark by Titian is quoted in Hope (1980), p. 160; the description of Raphael, by Vernon Lee, c. 1898, is quoted in Ormond (1970), p. 53.
- 3 G. P. Lomazzo, *Trattato dell'arte della pittura* (1583; repr., ed. R. P. Ciardi, Florence, 1974), Book 6, ch. 51.
- 4 F. Caraffa, 'Memorie', *Archivio Storico per le Province Napolitane* 5 (1880), pp. 242-61.
- 5 T. Boccalini, *La bilancia politica* (3 vols., Châtellaine 1678), vol. 1, p. 215.
- 6 G. Bonifacio, *L'arte de' cenni* (Vicenza, 1616), p. 78.
- 7 S. Guazzo, *La civil conversatione* (Venice, 1575), book 2, f. 43 recto.
- 8 G. B. Vico, *Scienza Nuova* (1744), paragraph 1027.
- 9 Some contemporaries disapproved; according to Bonifacio, *L'arte de' cenni* (see note 6 above), 'Tenir le mani alla cintola, ò al fianco... è atto d'ocio e di pigrizia' (p. 306).
- 10 G. Botero, *Ragione di stato* (Venice, 1589), Book 5, ch. 4.
- 11 Boccalini, *Bilancia*, p. 196.
- 12 B. Pellicciari, *Avvertimenti militari* (Modena, 1600), p. 5.
- 13 Lomazzo, *Trattato*, Book 6, ch. 51.
- 14 A. Spinola, 'Ricordi Politici', ACG, fondo Brignole Sale, ms. 106B, s.v. 'Simie di Principi'.
- 15 G. Paleotti, *Discorso intorno alle immagini sacre e profane*, (1582), Book 2, ch. 20.
- 16 *ibid.*
- 17 Aretino to Leoni (1545) in *Lettere sull'arte*, ed. E. Camesasca (3 vols., Milan, 1957-60), vol. 2, no. 237.
- 18 Lomazzo, *Trattato*, Book 6, ch. 51.



## 12 Sacred rulers, royal priests

- 1 N. Machiavelli, *Il principe* [written c. 1513], ch. 11. Of course one pope, Julius II, made war in person, and the early modern popes spent a considerable proportion of their revenue on military expenses; a record 62% in 1569, falling to 24% in 1657 and then rising again (Rietbergen, 1983), p. 203.
- 2 M. de Montaigne, *Journal*, ed. M. Rat (Paris, 1955), pp. 97-8. This section of the journal was written by Montaigne's secretary; hence the references to him in the third person.
- 3 C. Marcellus, *Sacrae Ceremoniae* (Venice, 1516), is a useful general account.
- 4 P. Skippon, 'An Account of a Journey' in *A Collection of Voyages*, ed. A. and J. Churchill (6 vols., London, 1732), vol. 6, p. 671.
- 5 C. Cartari, *La rosa d'oro* (Rome, 1681); A. Baldassari, *La rosa d'oro* (Venice, 1709). An example of a late medieval golden rose survives in the Cluny museum at Paris.
- 6 P. P. Vergerio, *Ceremonie della settimana santa* (Rome, 1552).
- 7 B. Bonfadino, *Le cerimonie che usano i sommi pontefici ad aprir la porta santa* (Rome, 1600); F. Sestini, *Il maestro di camera* (Bracciano, 1628), ch. 28.
- 8 See, for example, ASR, Camerale II, Ceremoniali, busta 2, fasc. 2, which deals with the early 17th century.
- 9 P. Alaleone, 'Diario' in Orbaan (1910), pp. 21f.
- 10 Skippon, 'Journey', p. 684.
- 11 S. Infessura, *Diario*, ed. O. Tommasini (Rome, 1890), p. 66.
- 12 P. de Grassis, *Le due spedizioni militari di Giulio II*, ed. L. Frati (Bologna, 1886); *De ingressu summi pontificis Leonis X* (Florence, 1793); F. Toletano, *La triomphante intrata della S. di papa Paulo III in la nobile città di Piacenza* (no place, 1538).
- 13 ASR, Camerale II, Ceremoniali, busta 2, 'Memoriale della Ceremonie di Corte' (1685), pp. 1-4.
- 14 For a general account, see A. Rocca, *De canonizatione sanctorum* (Rome, 1610).
- 15 Skippon, 'Journey', p. 684.
- 16 There is a detailed account of Sixtus IV's funeral in J. Burchardus, *Liber notarum* (Rome, 1906), pp. 13f. On the 17th century, Martini (1970), pp. 189f, and the analysis, still unpublished, by Professor Olga Berendson.
- 17 A useful general account in F. Incoli, *Compendio* (Rome, 1667). Details on individual conclaves in Pastor. An unusual inside story of the 1458 conclave is presented in the memoirs of Pius II. Details on the 1667 conclave in the contemporary *Relatione delle cerimonie fatte dentro e fuori del conclave nell'elezione del sommo pontefice Clemente IX*. Papal coronations seem to have attracted less interest from historians of the early modern period than royal ones have done. Useful brief accounts can be found in Pastor, but are no substitute for monographs. I should like to thank Professor B. Schimmelpfennig for sending me his unpublished paper, 'Papstkrönungen in Avignon'.

- 18 Two occasions are described in detail in F. Albertonio, *Ragguaglio della cavalcata di nostro signore Gregorio XIV* (Rome, 1590); and in the anonymous *Relatione della solennissima cavalcata... nell'andare a pigliare il possesso* (Rome, 1655).
- 19 J. Moore, *A View of Society and Manners in Italy* (3 vols., Dublin 1781), vol. 1, letter 38.
- 20 J. Evelyn, *Diary*, ed. E. S. de Beer (5 vols., Oxford, 1955), vol. 2, p. 281.
- 21 G. Bonifacio, *L'arte dei cenni* (Vicenza, 1616), p. 216.
- 22 Vividly described in the anonymous account, cited above, of the inauguration of Clement VII.
- 23 Burchardus, *Liber notarum* (see note 16 above), P. de Grassis, 'Diarium' (covering the reigns of Julius II and Leo X) remains largely unpublished, but there are a number of copies of the manuscript. I consulted the one in Florence (BNF, ms. II III 144). On him, see Bishop (1892); I should like to thank Sir Richard Southern for drawing my attention to this underrated scholar. In the British Museum there are manuscript copies of the diaries of Burchardus, Martinelli, Firmano, Mucanzio and Alaleone (Add. mss., 8440-60).
- 24 Vivid examples in vol. 1, f. 156 verso and f. 249 recto.
- 25 Grassis, *Diarium*, 1, f. 114 recto.
- 26 Grassis, *Diarium*, 1, f. 417 recto.
- 27 Grassis, *Diarium*, 2, f. 52 recto.
- 28 Grassis, *Diarium*, 2, f. 40 et seq. There are significant discrepancies between this Roman view of what took place and the Venetian view reported in M. Sanudo, *Diarii*, ed. F. Stefani et al. (58 vols., Venice 1879-1903), vol. 10, pp. 9f.
- 29 P. de Grassis, *Il diario di Leone X* (Rome, 1884), p. xi. The work of Patrizi is reprinted and analysed in M. Dykmans, *L'oeuvre de Patrizi Piccolomini* (2 vols., Vatican City, 1980-2).
- 30 P. Alaleone, 'Diarium', B L, Add. mss. 8452, ff. 6 recto, 48 verso.
- 31 Reproduced in Incoli, *Compendio*. Similar Latin forms are still in use in the fellowship elections of some Cambridge colleges.
- 32 C. Du Molinet, *Historia summorum pontificum a Martino V ad Innocentium XI per eorum numismata* (Paris, 1679), a work which seems to have been inspired by the famous 'medallic histories' of Louis XIII and Louis XIV.
- 33 I should like to thank Ralph Giesey, Gábor Klaniczay and Peter Rietbergen for their helpful comments on the penultimate version of this paper.

## 13 Carnival of Venice

- 1 J. F. Reynard, *Carneval de Venise* (1699); M. Cuno, *Carneval von Venedig* (1723); R. Tickell, *The Carnival of Venice* (1781).
- 2 M. Misson, *Nouveau voyage d'Italie* (The Hague, 1691), pp. 182f. Misson was in Venice in 1688.