

Saints' Lives and Bible Stories for the Stage:

A BILINGUAL EDITION

ANTONIA PULCI



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Antonia Pulci (1452/54–1501)

Donna colta e pia, anch' ella poetò in materia religiosa, componendo drammi sacri ...per i quali le spetta nella storia letteraria un posto tra i principali quattrocentisti scrittori di rime e rappresentazioni sacre.

A cultivated and pious woman, she too wrote religious poetry, sacred drama, ...for which she deserves a place in literary history among the principal fifteenth-century authors of poetry and *sacre rappresentazioni*.

(Francesco Flamini, 1888)

...era vedova e in casa di sua madre, madonna Jacopa, e del suo fratello Nicolò Tanini, nella superiora parte di quella si aveva religiosamente e poveramente ordinata una cameretta con el suo oratorio e più libri devoti, e in quella, standosi quasi sempre sola, di e notte si esercitava in orazioni e sacre lezioni...

...a widow, in the house of her mother, Madonna Jacopa, and her brother Niccolò Tanini, on the upper floor she had set up a small room, a poor and spiritual place, with an oratory and many devotional books, and there, almost always alone, day and night she dedicated herself to prayer and reading religious works...

(Fra Antonio Dolciati, 19 August 1528)^a

a. In the Florentine calendar the new year began on 25 March, the feast of the Incarnation, and this system prevailed until 1750. In the interest of readability, for the period 1 January through 24 March I have modernized the dates in the text; in the footnotes I provide both the date on the document and the modern equivalent. I have left unchanged dates found in secondary sources, whose validity I have not been able to confirm. I use abbreviations for references to the Florentine institutions most often cited, the Florentine Archivio di Stato (ASF) and Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale (BNCF).

2 *Editor's Introduction*

The Other Voice

Antonia Pulci is, if not the first, certainly one of the first women writers to have sent her work to press, and this is not her only claim to our attention.¹ She belonged to the industrious Florentine merchant class, to a family that rose economically and socially in the fifteenth century, and she married into the noble Pulci family, a trajectory shared by prosperous members of her class; but what is unusual is that she married into a family that included three of the most important literary figures in Florence of the time, Luca, Luigi and Bernardo Pulci (four, if we include, Mariotto Davanzati, the husband of their sister Lisa), and she brought to that brilliant, but financially strapped family, more than the value of her dowry. Somewhere along the way, either at home, in a nearby convent, or at a neighborhood public school, she had learned to read and write in the vernacular, at a level of attainment that was exceptional for any woman at the time, certainly for any of her class.² However, it was probably as a member of her

1. Her published miracle play, the *Rappresentazione di Santa Domitilla*, bears the date 1483 following the title. It was included in the anthology of religious plays published in Florence without indication of date or publisher but attributed to the press of Antonio Miscomini and to the early 1490s. The *Santa Domitilla* is the only play of the collection that is dated, indicating, perhaps, that it was published or slated for publication earlier and then included in the undated collection of plays printed by Antonio Miscomini, who was active in Florence 1481/82–1494. If not the first woman to take her work to press, she shares the distinction only with a learned woman of the upper class, the early humanist writer, Cassandra Fedele, who published her *Oratio pro Bertucio Lamberto* in Modena in 1487 (and again in Venice, 1488; Nuremberg, 1489). I thank Diana Robin for this information. According to Virginia Cox, *Women's Writing in Italy 1400–1650* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2008), it is “an unconscious prejudice that sees publication [by early modern women] as an index of merit” (88), since most prestigious women writers of the upper classes preferred to share their work in manuscript and only with select readers (*passim*). Cox acknowledges that the situation in Florence was quite different from that in the court societies of Italy; yet it is the case that Lucrezia Tornabuoni, Lorenzo de' Medici's mother and Antonia's contemporary, circulated her writing in manuscript.

2. Among Quattrocento Florentine women, only she and Lucrezia Tornabuoni, accomplished authors of vernacular texts, demonstrate such a high level of literacy. For this social class it has been generally thought that the most one finds at the time among women is “semi-literacy,” or “partial literacy,” like that of Margherita Datini and Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi, who dictated and eventually penned letters in the language of their speech, compelled to do so in order to communicate with distant family members. See the discus-

husband's family that she began to compose dramatic verse; and she soon became known in Florence as one of the most prolific writers of *sacre rappresentazioni*, mystery and miracle plays written in *ottava rima*, one of the most popular vernacular genres in Florence in her lifetime. She is the only known secular woman author of *sacre rappresentazioni*, and at least three of her plays appeared in the first printed anthology of Florentine religious drama (circa 1490–95).³ Most of her plays had a second edition during her lifetime and were published again and again throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth century; four have had modern editions. It is an extraordinary success story for a woman of rather humble origins, and it does not end with her literary accomplishments. When she was widowed, she left the social world she knew as a member of the Pulci family but continued her education, studying Latin, reading Scripture, and writing *laude*, religious poems of praise, another of the most popular vernacular literary genres. She became an *ammantellata*, a woman religious living

sion of the limited literacy of women of the Florentine merchant class in Ann Crabb, "If I could write: Margherita Datini and Letter Writing, 1385–1410," *Renaissance Quarterly*, 60:4 (2007), 1170–1206. Judith Bryce, however, has recently shown that this view needs to be revisited and revised, in light of the evidence especially of the many books of devotional readings belonging to women, and evidence of their use, not merely their possession of such books. This and many references to lay women readers, of secular as well as religious texts, suggests that literacy among the women of the Florentine mercantile class was much more widespread than we have acknowledged. See Judith Bryce, "Les livres des Florentines: Reconsidering Women's Literacy in Quattrocento Florence," in *At the Margins: Minority Groups in Premodern Italy*, ed. Stephen J. Milner, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 133–61. It is less surprising in a society in which many women of the mercantile class were readers that literary figures such as Antonia Tanini Pulci and Lucrezia Tornabuoni would emerge.

3. See note 1. The anthology consists of two volumes. Some scholars refer to both volumes as the "Prima raccolta," following Alfredo Cioni, in his *Bibliografia delle sacre rappresentazioni* (Florence: Sansoni Antiquariato, 1961); others, including Anna Maria Testaverde and Anna Maria Evangelista, *Sacre rappresentazioni manoscritte e a stampa conservate nella Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, Inventario* (Florence: Giunta Regionale Toscana Editrice Bibliografica, 1988), call the volume that includes Antonia's plays the "Seconda raccolta." The early bibliographer, Paul Colomb De Batines, *Bibliografia delle antiche rappresentazioni italiane sacre e profane stampate nei secoli XV e XVI* (Florence: La Società Tipografica, 1852), calls it volume 2 of the fifteenth-century *Raccolta*. The distinction is arbitrary. Since recent scholars believe that both volumes were published by Antonio Miscomini, it is often referred to as the Miscomini anthology and that is the term I will use.

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in lay society, and she commissioned a chapel dedicated to St. Monica in the church of San Gallo, where she wished to be buried. She purchased property just outside the city walls, a house and some connected buildings, and there she assembled a small group of women, who would become the first sisters in the convent of Santa Maria della Misericordia, which she founded.

The *sacre rappresentazioni* that are known to be hers are the *Rappresentazione di Santa Domitilla* (*Play of Saint Domitilla*), the *Rappresentazione di Santa Guglielma* (*Play of Saint Guglielma*), the *Rappresentazione di San Francesco* (*Play of Saint Francis*), the *Rappresentazione del figliuol prodigo* (*Play of the Prodigal Son*), and the *Rappresentazione della distruzione di Saul e il pianto di Davit* (*Play of the Destruction of Saul and the Lament of David*). Antonia also wrote a play based on the Biblical story of Joseph, but it is not clear that either of the surviving plays on that subject is hers, and she may be the author of other plays as well—a *Rappresentazione di Santo Antonio Abate* (*Play of Saint Anthony Abbot*) has often been attributed to her.⁴

The genre of *sacra rappresentazione* flourished in Tuscany, primarily in Florence in the fifteenth century.⁵ The early plays were often performed for religious celebrations in some of the major church-

4. Only the plays that can be securely attributed to Antonia Pulci are included in this volume. The two extant Joseph plays are the *Rappresentazione di Joseph, di Jacob e de' fratelli* and the *Rappresentazione di Joseph, figliuol di Jacob*; the latter and the *Rappresentazione di Santo Antonio Abate* were published in the anthology that contains Antonia Pulci's *Santa Domitilla, Santa Guglielma, and San Francesco* plays, as well as a play written by her husband Bernardo Pulci, the *Rappresentazione di Barlaam e Josafat*; however, unlike the others, these two plays do not include the name of the author.

5. On the Florentine *sacra rappresentazione* much has been written. For some of the most important and useful contributions to its history see Cesare Molinari, *Spettacoli fiorentini del Quattrocento: contributi allo studio delle sacre rappresentazioni* (Venice: Neri Pozza, 1961); Nerida Newbigin, *Feste d'Oltrarno: Plays in Churches in Fifteenth-Century Florence*, 2 vols (Florence: Olschki, 1996); Paola Ventrone, *Gli araldi della commedia: teatro a Firenze nel Rinascimento* (Ospedaletto [Pisa]: Pacini Editore, 1993), "Per una morfologia della sacra rappresentazione fiorentina," in *Teatro e culture della rappresentazione: lo spettacolo in Italia nel Quattrocento*, ed. Raimondo Guarino (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1988), and "La sacra rappresentazione fiorentina: aspetti e problemi," in *Esperienze dello spettacolo religioso nell'Europa del Quattrocento*, ed. M. Chiabò and F. Doglio (Rome: Torre di Orfeo, 1993), 67–99; and the classic study by Alessandro D'Ancona, *Origini del teatro italiano*, 2 vols. (Turin: Loescher, 1971 [rpt. of 2nd ed., 1891]).

es and on public occasions. The most frequent subjects were taken from the Old and New Testament. Toward the end of the century, however, saints' lives became popular subjects of the plays, especially the stories of virgin martyrs, and the genre also admitted romance elements, dangerous adventures, and miraculous interventions, mainly of the Virgin Mary. Antonia Pulci's plays partake of both traditions. She tried her hand at all of these subjects: two of her plays are based on the Old Testament, one on the New Testament, and three are saints' lives, one of which follows the romance tradition. Yet within these well-established parameters, Antonia Pulci's plays display certain characteristics that link them rather closely to her life experiences. She gives considerable emphasis to female characters, she perhaps alludes to members of her family in one play, and she introduces issues that had special appeal to her female readers and audiences, including a very subtle defense of Eve, a prominent feature of the *querelle des femmes* before and after Antonia's time. While the plots of her plays are simple and the stories with one exception quite well-known, her talent lies in their versification and in her ability to enliven the speech of her characters with believable contemporary language and to turn *ottava rima* into an entertaining dramatic form.

Biography

Antonia Pulci, as she is known to modern readers, was born Antonia Tanini, sometime between 1452 and 1454, to Francesco di Antonio di Giannotto Tanini and Jacopa di Torello di Lorenzo Torelli.⁶ Antonia's

6. Information about Antonia's mother is from the notarial document that gave her guardianship of the Tanini children following their father's death in 1467: ASE, Notarile antecosimiano 389, notary Andrea di Agnolo da Terranova, dated September 4, 1467, fols. 81r-83r. This and the detailed information that follows regarding Francesco and his family have been gleaned from the Tanini family's tax declarations in the Florentine State Archives for the Quartiere San Giovanni, Gonfalone Leon d'oro, made over the course of the century from 1427 through 1495: Catasto 78, campioni 1427, fols. 535-36; Catasto 407, campioni 1430, fol. 260; Catasto 497, campioni 1433, fol. 273; Catasto 822, portate 1457, fol. 657; Catasto 924, portate 1469, fol. 564; Catasto 1017, portate 1480, fol. 247 and the copy of the 1480 census in Monte Comune 84, fol. 167; the copy of the 1487 census in Monte Comune 86, fol. 1066r; and the 1495 Decima Repubblicana 28, fol. 229v (the *portate* were the original documents compiled by those making their declaration, the *campioni* were redactions made

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father's family came to Florence from Scarperia, a town located north of Florence in the region known as the Mugello,⁷ and they are first recorded in Florence in the 1427 tax assessment (*catasto*). Jacopa's family was from the Trastevere section of Rome.⁸ Francesco had property in and around Scarperia: farmlands, woods, and, in town, three shops where he traded his produce. There were houses on his farms for the laborers and he had a *casa da signore*, presumably his family's country home, just north of Scarperia on the Palagio road. Wheat was his largest crop, but he also grew spelt and other cereals and forage grasses (*grano, panico, segala, spelta, biada*), and he produced and marketed assorted other foodstuffs as well: walnuts, chestnuts, oil, capons, eggs, meat (unspecified in the records, where it is, however, noted that he owned sheep), and wine. And he sold wood.⁹

In the early years of the century Francesco lived in Florence with his family in a rented house,¹⁰ but, as the century wore on, he began to sell off some of his holdings in Scarperia, primarily the shops,

by the tax assessors). For Antonia I have also consulted the tax records of her husband Bernardo di Jacopo di Francesco de' Pulci, Quartiere Santa Croce, Gonfalone Carro, ASF, Catasto 1002, campioni 1480/81, fols. 64–65. It appears that Antonia was born between 1452 and 1454. Because the ages found in the tax records were recorded at different times of the year, depending upon when the declarations were filed, and because there were sometimes reasons not to be entirely truthful, these documents can only yield approximate figures. Antonia Tanini's name is not found in the Florentine baptismal records (which begin in 1450); she was either overlooked or, perhaps, baptized in or near Scarperia, the town in the Mugello from which her family originated.

7. Scarperia was founded in 1306 by the Florentines to provide protection to their north. See Emanuele Repetti, *Dizionario geografico fisico-storico della Toscana*, 6 vols. (Florence: Allegrini e Mazzoni, 1833–46), 5: 221b–229b.

8. ASF, Notarile antecosimiano 389, cit., fol. 81r: "Domine Iacope vidue, filie Toreli Laurentii Toreli de regione Transtiveri, civitatis romane, et uxori olim Francisci Antonii Gannocti, civis et mercatoris florentini." I have not been able to trace her in Rome; Roman baptismal documents are not available for this period.

9. All the information about the family's property and business has been gleaned from their tax records of 1427, 1430, 1433, 1457, 1469/70, 1480, and 1487 (see above, n6).

10. Francesco rented a house from Niccolò Lottini, according to the *catasto* of 1427; it was probably in the parish of San Simone, which is adjacent the that of Sant'Apollinare, where he would eventually purchase a house. In a notarial document, ASF Notarile antecosimiano 390, fol. 154r, dated 13 January 1470/71, Niccolò's son Aparado di Niccolò Lottini is said to live in the parish of San Simone.

and in 1465 he bought a house in Via de' Leoni,¹¹ in central Florence, very near the grain market, which had moved by the early fifteenth century from Orsanmichele to an area adjacent to Palazzo della Signoria, the central government palace (the area called the Loggia del Grano, just east of the Uffizi). The house, which was located in the parish of Sant'Apollinare, still stands today, next to Palazzo Gondi in what is now Piazza San Firenze (Figure 1).¹² The house and all its belongings are described in detail in the inventory made just after Francesco's death in 1467, in which his widow Jacopa was awarded guardianship of the children.¹³

It was a three-storey house with a courtyard, described in the inventory from top to bottom (see Appendix 1).¹⁴ The top floor had one *camera* (that is, a bed-chamber but also a place for various household activities and for receiving guests) and a terrace. On the main floor was the *sala principale* (a large space that served as living, dining, and reception room), the kitchen, female servant's room (*camera della fante*), the main *camera* and an *anticamera* (a small, elaborately decorated room that followed the *camera*, and, like the *camera*, had various uses). On the ground floor was another *camera*, a male servant's room (*camera del famiglio*), and a courtyard.¹⁵ There was also a

11. Via de' Leoni was a narrow street at the time, but in the seventeenth century it was widened in front of the church of San Firenze, the area which is now Piazza San Firenze.

12. The location is specified in the *catasto* records, ASF. Catasto 924, portate del 1469, Tanini, rede di Francesco d'Antonio, fol. 564r. The Tanini house is discussed by Linda Pellecchia in her article on the Gondi palace, "Untimely Death, Unwilling Heirs: The Early History of Giuliano da Sangallo's Unfinished Palace for Giuliano Gondi," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 47 (2003/1): especially p. 86 and notes 53–55 on pp. 109–10. A small portion of the Tanini house is visible in Pellecchia's figure 3, on p. 81, in figure 9, on p. 87, and it is section V in the plan showing the expansion of the Gondi palace on p. 90.

13. ASF, Notarile antecosimiano 389, fol. 84.

14. My definitions of *camera*, *sala*, and *anticamera*, and my general understanding of the Florentine fifteenth-century household are indebted to Brenda Preyer, whom I thank for her help in translating the inventory of the Tanini household (Appendix 1). I have also consulted her two articles, B. Preyer, "The Florentine *Casa*," and "The *acquaio* (Wall Fountain) and Fireplace in Florence," in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. M. Afimar-Wollheim and F. Dennis (London: V & A Publications, 2006), 34–49 and 284–87.

15. The courtyard, not noted in the inventory, is mentioned in the document of the sale of the property in 1520, cited by Pellecchia ("Untimely Death, Unwilling Heirs," 109n53): "Unum domum cum palcis salis cameris curia et voltis et terrazzo et aliis suis habituris et

cellar (*volta*), which served as a storage room and contained barrels, a copper basin, and a large funnel for filling them. The furnishings and servants' quarters, the several beds and bed-coverings, the seating areas, daybeds with large overhanging backrests (*capellinai*) and built-in all around benches, a writing desk, chests (some gilded and painted), art work, andirons, tables, chairs, silverware, and kitchen utensils clearly indicate that this was the house of a moderately successful merchant. The main *camera* on each floor had an image of the madonna (the artists are not named): the ones upstairs and on the ground floor are not described but were probably painted images, the one in the main *camera* was in relief (most likely marble or terracotta). The *anticamera* contained figured tapestries on the door and on the walls. The Tanini family home had all the necessary comforts and a few luxury items; and, like most families that had moved to the city from the Tuscan countryside, they kept a country house as well.

Antonia's family of origin became the subject of some confusion in the late nineteenth century, when a prominent literary historian, Francesco Flamini, claimed that those who thought she was a Tanini (among them, the bibliographer Paul Colomb de Batines and Alessandro D'Ancona)¹⁶ were incorrect, and he insisted that she belonged rather to the important Florentine Giannotti family.¹⁷ Since that time and until my return to the archival documents has proved otherwise, this incorrect information was accepted and inhibited any attempts, if there were any, to find out more about her.¹⁸ Flamini's er-

pertinentis" (a house with [3] stories, reception rooms, bed-chambers, a court and cellars and a terrace and other rooms and appurtenances).

16. Paul Colomb de Batines, see his *Bibliografia delle antiche rappresentazioni*, 15, and A. D'Ancona, *Origini del teatro italiano*, 1:268.

17. Francesco Flamini, "La vita e le liriche di Bernardo Pulci," *Il Propugnatore*, n.s. 1 (1888), 217–48, and on Antonia, 224–25. On p. 224 he calls her Antonia di Francesco d'Antonio Gianotti, and in a note writes: "Che la moglie di Bernardo fosse dei Tanini è un errore entrato non so come nella storia letteraria, e restatovi poi a lungo" (That the wife of Bernardo was a member of the Tanini family is an error which entered literary history—I know not how—and has long remained there.)

18. Among modern scholars only Eletto Palandri has disagreed with Flamini. He argues that Bernardo Pulci's dedication of his *Passione di Cristo* to Annalena de' Tanini, a nun in the convent of the Murate, is evidence that Antonia belonged to the Tanini family. See E. Palandri, "Rappresentazioni sanfrancescane," *Studi francescani*, 23 (1926), 420.

ror is easy to explain. The earliest tax records and even some notarial documents list Francesco as “Francesco di Antonio di Giannotto dalla Scarperia,” some as “Francesco di Antonio Giannotti,” transforming the given name of Francesco’s grandfather into the Latin genitive, the frequent path to an Italian surname. However, by the mid-fifteenth century, when the family surname was finally established and used with regularity in fiscal and notarial documents, it was to Francesco’s great-grandfather Tanino Bozzi that the family turned. Perhaps it was in order to clarify the family’s link to cousins who had also come to Florence from Scarperia and who also descended from this ancestor.¹⁹ In fact, archival documents reveal that the two Tanini families in Florence remained in close contact throughout the fifteenth century: Agostino di Lotto Tanini, a paternal cousin, is one of the executors named in Antonia’s will. Shortly after Francesco’s death in 1467, his heirs filed their tax declaration as “Tanini, eredi di Francesco d’Antonio” (Tanini, heirs of Francesco d’Antonio), and Francesco’s elaborate floor tomb in the church of Santa Croce, still visible today (Figure 2) bears the inscription: “Sep[ulchrum] Francisco Antonii Iannocti de Taninis mercatori ex vrbe in patriam redvcto Ivlivs patri benemerenti fecit. Obiit anno salvtis 1467 die 23 avgvsti” (Tomb made [paid for] by Giulio for his worthy father Francesco di Antonio di Giannotto Tanini, merchant, brought home [to Florence] from the city [of Rome]. He died on 23 August in the year of salvation 1467).

In the many records left during his lifetime and even shortly after his death Francesco does not use a surname, only a string of patronymics, his father, grandfather, and great grandfather, and sometimes their provenance.²⁰ Francesco died intestate and in the docu-

19. Listed in the same tax district (*gonfalone*) as the family of Francesco d’Antonio Tanini is that of Lotto di Tanino Tanini and his wife Nanna, their sons Agostino, Lorenzo, and Girolamo, ASE, Catasto of 1480, 1015. San Giovanni, Leon d’Oro. Judith Bryce has noted that members of this Tanini family worked for the Medici bank: Lotto di Tanino Tanini became the manager of the Venice branch in 1436, and his son Lorenzo di Lotto Tanini worked in the branch in Bruges: see J. Bryce, “Adjusting the Canon for Later Fifteenth-century Florence: the Case of Antonia Pulci,” in *The Renaissance Theatre. Texts, Performance, Design*, ed. Christopher Cairns (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 1999), 1: 135.

20. According to David Herlihy, Francesco was the most popular baptismal name among Florentine men scrutinized for office between 1450 and 1500, even surpassing Giovanni, the name of Florence’s patron saint; and Antonio was the most popular name for a man in the

ment, dated 4 September 1467, which gave his widow guardianship of their children (she was named *curatrice* of Antonia, who was between the ages of 12 and 14, and no longer considered a child, and *tutrice* of the younger children), Jacopa is said to be “uxori olim Francisci Antonii Gannocti, civis et mercatoris florentini.”²¹ From 1469 on, however, the family is listed in Florentine tax records and in other notarial documents as Tanini, and Antonia uses that surname in the three redactions of her will filed in 1501.²²

Having ascertained that Tanini was the family name, I have found many documents that refer to Francesco's family and to his daughter Antonia, or “Antonina,” as her father called her when he first registered her name among the *bocche* (list of household members) in his 1457 tax declaration, and as her brother Niccolò referred to her in his tax declaration of 1469 (’Ntonina).

From the archival records, primarily the tax declarations (*catasti*), I have been able to sketch a fairly detailed picture of the

1427 Catasto (4,767 occurrences; Francesco was seventh then, occurring 1,442 times): see David Herlihy, “Tuscan Names, 1200–1530,” *Renaissance Quarterly*, 41:4, 1988, 573n and 575. Francesco must have found it necessary to use a third patronymic and, often, the indication of the family's place of origin to distinguish himself from others named Francesco di Antonio. On Florentine surnames see Anthony Molho, “Names, Memory, Public Identity in Late Medieval Florence,” in Giovanni Capelli and Patricia Rubin, eds. *Art, Memory and Family in Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 238–50. There is also a brief discussion of surnames in Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, “The Name ‘Remade’: The Transmission of Given Names in Florence in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries,” in *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 283–309, especially 285–86. This study was originally published as “Le nom ‘refait’: La transmission des prénoms à Florence (XIV–XVIe siècles),” *L'Homme*, 20:4 (1980), 77–104.

21. ASF, Notarile antecosimiano 389, notary Andrea di Agnolo da Terranova, dated September 4, 1467, fol. 81r.

22. ASF, Notarile antecosimiano 9535, *protocolli del notaio* 1499–1506. In the entry for “suora m[onn]a Antonia di Francesco Tanini,” there are copies of the three versions of her will, dated 19 July, 16 August, and 2 September 1501, (notary 379: Giovanni di Domenico di Bartolo da Tizzana). The first two wills refer to her as “Antonina vedova di Bernardo di Jacopo de’ Pulci e figlia di Francesco di Antonio de’ Tanini,” while the third introduces an error referring to her father as “Francesco di Piero de’ Tanini.” The wills are on fols. 66r–67v, 70v, and 72v–74r.

growth of Antonia's family.²³ Francesco's name first appears in the 1427 *catasto*; he was nineteen-years old, unmarried, and living with his mother, Monna Tita, of forty-three, and his nineteen-year old sister Gita. By 1430 Francesco was also supporting his one-year old natural child, Giulio, who was born in Rome. In 1447 he married Jacopa, also from Rome and younger than Giulio, when she was about fifteen years old and he thirty-nine. The couple had their first child, a daughter, Girolama, the following year, 1448. Antonia was the next born, sometime between 1452 and 1454, and there followed Niccolò in 1461, Costanza in 1463, and Cornelia in 1464.²⁴ In that same year Francesco had a second illegitimate child, Lisabetta. The next year, 1465, Jacopa bore another daughter, whom they named Tita (after his mother who had died sometime before 1457),²⁵ and in 1466, the year before Francesco's death, their last daughter, Lucrezia, was born.

So many daughters and only one legitimate son made life difficult for Jacopa after Francesco's death, even though the family had made considerable economic progress over the years. As their legal guardian, Jacopa accepted the obligation of assuring the children of their inheritance, which in the case of the daughters meant providing their dowries; Niccolò, their legitimate son, was his father's only heir.²⁶ The eighteenth-century historian, Giuseppe Richa, who included a brief biography of Antonia Tanini in his history of Florentine religious

23. The names and approximate ages of family members have been gleaned from the archival documents mentioned above, n6.

24. Florence, Archivio dell'Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, Battesimi. In the database of baptisms there is a record, dated 19 January 1463/64, for a Cornelia Antonia di Francesco d'Antonio, registered as belonging to the parish (*popolo*) of San Simone, very likely this girl, since Francesco had not yet bought his house in the parish of Sant'Apollinare and was renting a house that belonged to Niccolò Lottini, whose residence was in the parish of San Simone, a church just up the street from Sant'Apollinare in the direction of Santa Croce (see above, n10).

25. On the Florentine practice of naming a child after a recently deceased sibling or other relative, known as "to remake" (*rifare*) the deceased, see Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "The Name 'Remade,'" 299–303.

26. ASF, Notarile antecosimiano 389, fols 81r–88v and 92r.

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institutions, claims that four of the Tanini women married, one in Pisa and three in Florence.²⁷

Antonia's older sister Girolama, married a Florentine, Roberto Visdomini, sometime before 1467, with a dowry that included a house just north of Scarperia;²⁸ she died in 1468. In 1475 Jacopa, then a widow, wrote to Clarice Orsini, the wife of Lorenzo de' Medici, thanking her for all she and the Medici family had done for her "poor daughters" ("queste mie povere fanciulle"), which almost certainly meant helping her to place in appropriate marriages and convents some of the daughters who were still with her at home (see Figures 3a and 3b and Appendix 2).²⁹ Clarice Orsini was betrothed to Lorenzo in 1468, and their marriage took place on the second of June, 1469. Antonia and Bernardo Pulci married in 1470, shortly after Clarice's arrival in Florence, and Lorenzo's young wife may well have been a party to that arrangement and perhaps intervened on behalf of Cornelia and Lucrezia as well. In 1475, when Jacopa wrote to thank Clarice for helping her daughters, Costanza would have been twelve, Cornelia eleven, Tita ten, and Lucrezia nine. Francesco's illegitimate daughter Lisabetta would also have been eleven. Clarice may have helped place Cornelia, Lucrezia, and Lisabetta, since only Costanza and Tita were still listed as belonging to their brother's household in 1480, and Tita still in 1487. In 1470 when Antonia married there were yet five daughters

27. Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie storiche delle chiese fiorentine* (Florence: Stamperia di Pietro Gaetano Viviani, 1757), vol. 5: 249–57, 263–64 (10 vols., 1754–62). On pp. 249–50, Richa, citing from a work by a contemporary and friend of Antonia's, fra Antonio Dolciati, writes: "Francesco Tanini Cittadino Fiorentino ebbe per Moglie Donna Iacopa da Roma, dalla quale nacque un Figlio mastio per nome Niccolò, che ancor oggi vive, ed ebbe sei Figliole femmine, delle quali ne furono maritate tre in Firenze, ed una in Pisa con Persone di eguale condizione. Una di queste tre si chiamò Antonia, la quale fu moglie di Bernardo de' Pulci Gentiluomo Fiorentino, con cui visse in somma pace anni 17, dopo dei quali Bernardo passò ad altra vita..." (Francesco Tanini, a Florentine citizen, married lady Jacopa from Rome, who gave birth to a son named Niccolò, who is still alive, and six daughters, three of whom married in Florence and one in Pisa to persons of equal social condition. One of these three was named Antonia, who was the wife of Bernardo de' Pulci, a Florentine gentleman with whom she lived contentedly for seventeen years, and then Bernardo passed on to another life...).

28. ASF, *Catasto* 924, the 1469 *portate* of the heirs of Francesco d'Antonio Tanini, 564r.

29. ASF, Medici Avanti Principato (MAP), LXXX, fol. 132r-v. The text and my English translation are provided in Appendix 2.

to take care of, and we know that one more would marry in Florence and another in Pisa. One of the three remaining sisters must be Suor Annalena de' Tanini, who professed at the prestigious Benedictine convent of Santissima Annunziata, known as "Le Murate,"³⁰ and to whom Bernardo Pulci dedicated a poem on the Passion of Christ.³¹

30. "Le Murate" (lit., "the walled women"), situated on the Via Ghibellina, was one of the oldest and most prestigious convents in Florence. It was also one of the largest, which at the end of the fifteenth century housed around two hundred women. On this convent, see Sandra Weddle, "Women in wolves' mouths': Nuns' Reputations, Enclosure and Architecture at the Convent of Le Murate in Florence," in *Architecture and the Politics of Gender in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Hellen Hills (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 115–29, and "Enclosing Le Murate: The Ideology of Enclosure and the Architecture of a Florentine Convent, 1390–1597" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, May 1997), which includes an edition of the convent's Chronicle (translation forthcoming in this series). See also Kate (K. J. P.) Lowe, "Female Strategies for Success in a Male-ordered World: the Benedictine Convent of Le Murate in Florence in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," *Studies in Church History*, 27 (1990), 209–21, and her study of the convent's chronicle, *Nuns' Chronicles and Convent Culture in Renaissance and Counter-Reformation Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Sharon Strocchia in *Nuns and Nunneries in Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2009) discusses the Murate throughout, and she has studied specific aspects of convent life at the Murate in her articles "Naming a Nun: Spiritual Exemplars and Corporate Identity in Florentine Convents, 1450–1530" in *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence*, ed. William J. Connell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 215–40, especially, 230–34, and "Taken into Custody: Girls and Convent Guardianship in Renaissance Florence," *Renaissance Studies* 17.2 (2003), 177–200, especially, 191–92. See also Richa, *Notizie storiche*, 2: 79–112.

31. Bernardo Pulci, *Passione del nostro Signor Gesù Cristo*, published posthumously, undated and without indication of the publisher, but in Florence, probably by Antonio Miscomini, ca. 1489–90. The dedication (fols. 1r–4r) begins: "Bernardo Pulci fiorentino alla devota in Christi suora Annalena de Tanini nel monasterio delle Murate" (1r). (Bernardo Pulci, Florentine, to Sister Annalena de' Tanini, vowed to Christ, in the convent of the Murate). Bernardo mentions having attended Suor Annalena's religious profession, which would seem to indicate that she was Antonia's very close relative, probably her sister: "...contempla che gli è morto colui al quale tu fusti desponsata e, essendo io presente, dal suo vicario lo anello e la corona virginala ricevesti ..." (fol. 2r) (...consider well that he died, the one to whom you were espoused, and, in my presence, from his vicar you received the ring and virginal crown...). Don Eletto Palandri suggests that this Annalena Tanini might have been "figlia d'una cugina carnale di lei [Antonia]," the daughter of a female cousin and blood relative of Antonia's ("Rappresentazioni francescane," 420). Palandri's was just a speculation, which seems to me unlikely. If she were the daughter of a female cousin, one who was presumably married, it seems little likely that the daughter's surname would be Tanini;

In the same letter to Clarice Orsini, Jacopa asked for assistance in settling her dispute with the city over taxes, which she claimed were imposed on property that was not hers. After Francesco's death it cannot have been easy for Jacopa to care for her large family, but she had taken on the responsibility of guardianship and she seems to have successfully enlisted the help of a powerful Medici connection, Lorenzo de' Medici's wife, an Orsini and a Roman like herself.³² Jacopa's son Niccolò, Francesco's heir, was only six at his father's death; Giulio, Francesco's illegitimate son, then in his late thirties, remained close to the family;³³ he served as one of the administrators and a guarantor (*fudeiussore*) of the inheritance, and for a while also as Jacopa's *mundualdus*, or legal representative.³⁴ Giulio paid for his father's elegant tomb in Santa Croce.

Francesco made deposits in the Florentine dowry fund for his daughters. Luigi Pulci, in a letter written to Lorenzo de' Medici on 27 February 1471, asks his patron to help his brother Bernardo who was having a problem getting Antonia's dowry from the Monte, the Florentine dowry investment fund.³⁵ Costanza and Tita are listed in

and I find no girl who fits the description among the offspring of the other Tanini family in Florence at the time.

32. The Roman connection, however, was probably not the primary reason Jacopa turned to Clarice for help. As Judith Bryce has pointed out, the Tanini family had long had Medici connections: there were Tanini family members who worked for the Medici bank in their Venice and Bruges branches. See above, n19.

33. He is listed among the *bocche* in their 1469 tax declarations.

34. ASF, Notarile antecosimiano 389, fols. 81r and 86r. At first her *mundualdus* was Francesco di Ranieri Tosigni, but two months later Giulio took on that responsibility (fol. 88v). In Florence at the time women had to have male representatives for any legal act.

35. Luigi Pulci, *Letter XVII*, 27 February 1470/71, published in Pulci, *Morgante e lettere*, ed. Domenico De Robertis (Florence: Sansoni, 1962), 964: "Il mio povero Bernardo so che ha bisogno d'aiuto da te al Monte per la sua dote." (I know that my poor Bernardo needs your help at the Monte for his dowry). The Florentine Monte delle doti has been studied by Julius Kirshner and Anthony Molho: see J. Kirshner, "Pursuing honor while avoiding sin: the Monte delle doti of Florence," *Studi Senesi*, 87 (1977), 175–256; J. Kirshner and A. Molho, "The Dowry Fund and the Marriage Market in Early Quattrocento Florence," *Journal of Modern History* 50 (1978), 403–38, and Anthony Molho, *Marriage Alliance in Late Medieval Florence* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994). The problems one might encounter in attempting to collect a Monte dowry are discussed by Julius Kirshner in "The Morning After: Collecting Monte Dowries in Renaissance Florence" in *From Florence to the*

the family's 1480 tax records as having each a dowry of one thousand florins, quite a good dowry at that time (Lorenzo de' Medici listed his daughters in the same years as having dowries of one thousand florins).³⁶ The dowry Antonia brought to her marriage with Bernardo Pulci must have been the same; it was returned to her after her husband's death, but not immediately, according to Fra Antonio Dolciati, Antonia's friend and early biographer.³⁷ Dolciati wrote that it took several years following Bernardo's death for Antonia to recover her dowry, with which, he claims, she paid for the house and property that would be the site of Santa Maria della Misericordia, the convent she founded.³⁸

Mediterranean and Beyond: Essays in Honor of Anthony Molho, ed. Diogo Ramada Curto, Eric R. Dursteler, Julius Kirshner and Francesca Trivellato (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2009), 29–61. It is likely that Bernardo's problem was owing to his family's financial difficulties, to which the brothers allude in their 1470 tax declaration, Catasto 911, fols. 499r–500v (their account books were still in the hands of the creditors of Luca Pulci and their financial advisers, 500r).

36. ASF, Catasto 1016, portate 1480 San Giovanni, Leon d'Oro, fol. 474v. Lorenzo claims dowries for his four daughters of one thousand two hundred *fiorini di sigillo*, the equivalent of one thousand *fiorini d'oro larghi* (see Guid'Antonio Zanetti, *Nuova raccolta delle monete e zecchi d'Italia* (Bologna: Per L. dalla Volpe, 1775–89), especially the section intitled "Del fiorino di sigillo della repubblica fiorentina." Parte prima, 249–74). Lorenzo was surely not truthful but wanting to underplay his family's extravagance for the public record.

37. On Antonio Dolciati (6 Sept. 1476–1530), see the entry, written by Raffaella Zaccaria, in the *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 40 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana Treccani, 1991), 433–35. In the "Pistola de l'auctore," dated 1528, the dedication of his treatise on the Augustinian Rule, *De tribus regulis S. Augustini* or *Esposizione della Regula di S. Agostino* (Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, ms. Gaddi 132, fols. 2r–4v), Dolciati remembers Antonia fondly and describes her life as a widow and founder of the Augustinian convent of which he was governor. I have transcribed and translated the "Pistola" in Appendix 3.

38. Bernardo in his will, dated 7 February 1487/88 (ASF, Notarile antecosimiano 7220, ser Antonio di Niccolò Ferrini, fasc. 8, fols. 13r–14r), bequeathed to Antonia one thousand two hundred *fiorini di sigillo*, the exact amount, it seems, of her dowry (13v). Giuseppe Baccini, in his study of the Pulci brothers, discusses Bernardo's will, but he does not mention the money; he writes that Bernardo made Antonia his universal heir and left her three properties in the Mugello, called Il Palagio, Vignamore and another referred to as "a Montici," which she sold to Piero di Francesco Bettini in 1490 for a thousand florins ("I poeti fratelli Pulci nel Mugello e il *Driadeo d'amore*," *Giotto* 2 [1903]: 358). Baccini cites as his source Bettini's tax declaration of 1495, so perhaps he had not seen the will. These properties may have been given to her in lieu of her dowry money. Dolciati writes ("Pistola de l'auctore," fol. 3v)

The noble Pulci family was in serious financial difficulty at the time of Bernardo's marriage to Antonia. Bernardo's father Jacopo first and then his brother Luca had led them into debt, to the point that in late 1464 or early 1465, the brothers had to leave Florence for their country estate in the Mugello because of this disgrace.³⁹ Bernardo, Luca, and Luigi Pulci were well-known members of the cultural elite, all writers, and closely associated with the Medicis. Lucrezia Tornabuoni, the wife of Piero de' Medici, and Lorenzo's mother, was especially fond of Luigi, who dedicated his poem, the *Morgante*, to her, claiming that it was at her instigation that he undertook the project.⁴⁰ All three Pulci brothers wrote verse in praise of the Medicis, especially Lorenzo, and they successfully interceded with Lorenzo for their return to Florence in 1466 and employment. Luca made more bad investments and died in disgrace in 1470.⁴¹ Bernardo and Luigi shared responsibility for the family their brother left behind, a pregnant wife,

that Antonia, when she reacquired her dowry, bought with it the house and property that would become her convent of Santa Maria della Misericordia. The convent was sold in 1558 for 800 *scudi*, according to Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie istoriche*, 5: 255.

39. On the Pulci family, see Guglielmo Volpi, "Luigi Pulci. Studio biografico." *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* 22 (1893), 1–63; Carlo Carnesecchi, "Per la biografia di Luigi Pulci," *Archivio storico italiano* 17 (1896): 371–79; Paolo Orvieto, "Luigi Pulci" in *Storia della letteratura italiana* (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1996), 3: 405–55; and Stefano Carrai, *Le Muse dei Pulci* (Naples: Guida, 1985). Little has been written specifically on Bernardo's life aside from Francesco Flamini's "La vita e le liriche di Bernardo Pulci" (see above, n17); some details have been added by Giuseppe Baccini in "I poeti fratelli Pulci nel Mugello," and Armando Verde has provided several letters and other new documents regarding Bernardo's years as provveditore of the Studio in Pisa in *Lo Studio fiorentino 1473–1503 ricerche e documenti*, 5 vols. (Florence: Olschki, 1973–94), 2: 752 and 4, pt. 2: 468, 725–26, and *passim*.

40. The poem, a humorous epic-chivalric poem in twenty-eight cantari of narrative octaves, was, according to the wishes of Lucrezia Tornabuoni, to celebrate Charlemagne, the legendary re-founder of Florence following the city's destruction by the Goths. However, for most of the poem, Pulci makes fun of Charlemagne (Carlo Magno), an old fool easily duped by the traitor Gano and given to irrational judgments.

41. Stefano Carrai, in *Le Muse dei Pulci*, corrects a number of inaccuracies in the literature on the Pulci family. He cites (p. 9, n.10) the research of Paola Benazzi, who in her dissertation on Luca Pulci, directed by Domenico De Robertis (Florence, Facoltà di Lettere, 1972–73), casts doubt on the legend that Luca died in debtors' prison (*le Stinche*), since his name does not appear in the official list of prisoners in those years.

a son and a daughter; Bernardo and Antonia cared for Luca's son Raffaello.⁴²

While there may have been other reasons for Antonia's betrothal to Bernardo, her dowry and his great financial need precisely at this time must have played a role. The couple may have met before their marriage was arranged. Both families had holdings along the Sieve River in the Mugello and both lived in central Florence.⁴³ Antonia and Bernardo seem to have been well suited to one another. Both held strong religious sentiments; and Antonia's intelligence and high degree of literacy must have appealed to Bernardo, who at the time of their marriage was already a well respected writer. He was known in Florence in his youth for his lyric poetry, for his translation with commentary of Virgil's *Eclogues*, and later for religious verse.⁴⁴ Certainly for Antonia's family her marriage into the old nobility represented an important social advancement.⁴⁵ The couple married in 1470 when Antonia was seventeen or eighteen years old, Bernardo thirty-two.

42. ASF, Catasto 911, Santa Croce, Carro, campioni 1469, fol. 499, the entry for the heirs of Jacopo Pulci and Catasto 1002, Santa Croce, Carro, campioni 1480, Part I, fols. 64–65, the entry for Bernardo di Jacopo di Francesco de' Pulci, and Part II, fol. 309, the entry for Luigi di Jacopo di Francesco de' Pulci. In 1480 Bernardo indicated that Raffaello was sixteen years old and was working at the shop of a relative in the silk industry.

43. Members of the family of Jacopo Nasi may also have provided a connection between the Pulci and the Tanini families: Gerolamo di Lotto Tanini, Antonia's cousin, was married to Lena di Jacopo Nasi, and Lena's brother Giovanni rented a house in Florence to the Pulci brothers, which they mention in their 1451 tax declaration (see Gaetano Volpi, "Luigi Pulci. Studio biografico," 5).

44. Bernardo first published Virgil's eclogues with the Miscomini press on 28 February 1481/82, however, the translation is thought to have been made much earlier, before 1465, according to Paolo Orvieto (P. Orvieto, "Lorenzo de' Medici e l'umanesimo toscano del secondo Quattrocento," in *Storia della letteratura italiana*, [Salerno Editrice], 3: 318); before 1464 according to Susanna Villari ("Una bucolica 'Elegantissimamente composta': Il volgarizzamento delle egloghe virgiliane di Bernardo Pulci," in *Filologia umanistica per Gianvito Resta*, ed. Vincenzo Fera and Giacomo Ferrau [Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1997], 3: 1878). See also Emilio Giorgi "Le più antiche bucoliche volgari," *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* 66 (1915), 140–41. The first known editions of Bernardo's religious verse are from 1489–90.

45. The family had earlier arranged the marriage of the eldest daughter, Girolama, to a member of the noble Visdomini family.

Antonia and Bernardo were childless, and in a letter written to Lorenzo de' Medici in 1473 Bernardo appealed for help to convince his reluctant brother Luigi to marry, since he and his wife had no hope of having children.⁴⁶ In Bernardo's tax records of 1480 he wrote that his wife Antonia had been ill for seven years. This is possibly true but perhaps exaggerated, since such statements were often a ploy for getting one's taxes reduced. If Antonia was ill, she was not too indisposed to write: the first edition of her *Play of Saint Domitilla* bears the date 1483 following the title (see Figure 4).⁴⁷

A Family of Writers

Nothing is known of Antonia's early education, but she would have learned at least the rudiments of reading and writing in the vernacular at home from her mother Jacopa, who was literate, as we know from her autograph letter to Clarice Orsini (Figure 3 and Appendix 2).⁴⁸ Her verse dramas demonstrate a high level of literacy and of literary achievement, which she most likely acquired in the Pulci household; she wrote in a genre practiced as well by her husband, and the language of at least one of her plays seems indebted to the chivalric poetry of Bernardo's brothers. In the Pulci household Antonia would have had access to texts unlikely to have belonged to her own family; no books are mentioned in the inventory of their home (Appendix 1).

Bernardo, after his return to Florence from the Mugello in 1466, traveled to Sicily (1466), and, after his marriage to Antonia, to Camerino (1472) and to Rome (1474), perhaps on business for the Medici family. He was named *camerario*, a financial administrator, for the Mugello region in 1477, and in 1481 he was appointed *Provveditore degli Ufficiali*, the administrative officer of the Studio, the Florentine

46. The letter, dated 27 October 1473, is published in *Lettere di Luigi Pulci a Lorenzo il Magnifico e ad altri*, ed. Salvatore Bongi, second edition, enlarged (Lucca: Tipografia Guasti, 1886), 176–80. Luigi married Lucrezia degli Albizi, probably in 1473 (see D. De Robertis, *Morgante e lettere*, liii).

47. The date follows the title of the play only in the undated Miscomini anthology. See above, n1.

48. She might have been educated in a local convent or attended a neighborhood public school, but I have found no documentation for this.

University, a position he held until his death in 1488.⁴⁹ The *Provveditore* was the representative in Pisa of the five officials of the Studio, who resided in Florence. He handled the hiring of professors, kept accounts, and reported the day to day business in Pisa to the officials, personally and by letter. Armando Verde, who studied the Florentine Studio, speculates that, as Bernardo's wife, Antonia may have attended university lectures.⁵⁰

Among Bernardo's literary works is at least one *sacra rappresentazione*, the *Rappresentazione di Barlaam e Josafat* (*Play of Barlaam and Josafat*), also published in the early Miscomini anthology.⁵¹ There, it follows Antonia's Saint Domitilla play and precedes her Saint Guglielma; other plays too have been attributed to Bernardo.⁵² Besides

49. F. Flamini, "La vita e le liriche di B. Pulci," 231–40.

50. A. Verde, *Lo Studio fiorentino*, 3, pt. 1: 76–77. Verde (see above, n39) cites many documents regarding Bernardo's position as *Provveditore degli Ufficiali* of the Studio in Florence and Pisa (1481–88). Verde, in vol. 4, pt.2, includes many letters to and from Bernardo in his capacity as *Provveditore*. Francesco Flamini, "Vita e liriche di Bernardo Pulci," in notes on 235–39, published three of Bernardo's letters to the officials of the Studio.

51. His is probably the *Rappresentazione di Barlaam e Josafat* that was performed by the Compagnia della Purificazione at San Marco in 1474. See Nerida Newbiggin, "'Word Made Flesh': The *Rappresentazioni* of Mysteries and Miracles in Fifteenth-Century Florence," in *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, ed. Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994; rpt. of 1990), 368, and her *Feste doltrarno: Plays in Churches in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (Florence: Olschki, 1996), 1, 142. On this play see also Georges Ulysse, "Un Couple d'écritains: les sacre rappresentazioni de Bernardo et Antonia Pulci," in *Les femmes écrivains en Italie au Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance*, ed. G. Ulysse (Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l'Université de Provence, 1994), 177–96; Sophie Stallini, "Du religieux au politique: la *Sacra Rappresentazione* chez Antonia et Bernardo Pulci," *Arzanà. Cahier de littérature médiévale italienne*, 11 (2005), (special issue *La poésie politique dans l'Italie médiévale*, ed. Anna Fontes Baratto, Marina Marietti and Claude Perrus), 327–76; and Gianni Cicali, "L'occultamento del principe. Lorenzo il Magnifico e il *Barlaam e Josafat* di Bernardo Pulci," *Quaderni d'Italianistica* 27:2 (2006), 57–70.

52. Often the anonymous *Rappresentazione dell'Angelo Raffaello e Tobia*. Antonia alludes to the story of Tobia in her *Rappresentazione di Santa Guglielma* (oct. 27, lines 5–6), and in Antonia's parish church of Sant'Apollinare (San Pulinare) the story was depicted in the decoration of the Sacchetti Chapel (Richa, *Notizie istoriche*, 2, 119: "entrando a man ritta viene tavola antica dell'Arcangiolo Raffaello con istoriette di Tobbia dipinte nella predella." (as you enter on the right hand side you come upon an ancient painting of the Archangel Raphael, and in small on the predella episodes of the story of Tobias).

his lyric poetry and his vernacular edition of Virgil's eclogues, he was also the author of religious poems on the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, on the life of the Virgin Mary, and on Mary Magdalen.⁵³

As Domenico De Robertis has written, "the Muses were at home in the Pulci household ("le Muse dai Pulci ci stavano a casa").⁵⁴ Of the brothers, Luigi (1432–1484) is the most famous. His romance epic, *Il Morgante*, the story in *ottava rima* of Orlando, his adventures with the giant Morgante, and his death at Roncisvalle, is Luigi Pulci's undisputed masterpiece; and he also wrote sonnets, many varieties of popular poetry, parodies, a novella, and, following a career of humorous sacrilegious verse, an apparently sincere poem of confession.⁵⁵ Luigi collaborated with his brother Luca on another narrative poem of adventure, entitled *Ciriffo calvaneo*. Luca Pulci (1431–1470), the eldest of the brothers, was also known for his *Pistole*, an imitation in *terzine* (tercets) of Ovid's *Heroides*, and the *Driadeo d'Amore*, a mythological poem that tells the story of the origin of the two rivers in the Mugello region, the Sieve and the Lora, at whose confluence lay the Pulci family's country home known as "Il Palagio." Lisa, one of the two Pulci sisters, in 1452 married the poet Mariotto di Arrigo Davanzati (before 1406–after 1470), known for his *canzoni*, sonnets, and a *capitolo in terza rima* on friendship that he entered in the Certame Coronario, the celebrated Florentine poetry contest held in 1441; and their son Bartolomeo is known to have versified a famous Florentine short story, the *Grasso legnaiuolo* (The Fat Woodcarver). Only Costanza, who in 1453 married Tedice di Ludovico Villani, has left no evidence of literary activity. As a member of the Pulci family Antonia was surrounded by writers and very likely encouraged by them, or at least by Bernardo. The family's connection to the Medici, and especially to Lucrezia Tornabuoni (1425–1482), Lorenzo's mother and the

53. The *Passione di Cristo*, the *Resurrezione di Cristo*, *Il pianto di Maria Maddalena*, and the *Vita della gloriosa Vergine Maria*. There is a brief discussion of these poems in F. Flamini, "Vita e liriche," 244–46. For the *Passione*, dedicated to a Tanini nun, undoubtedly Antonia's sister, see above, n31.

54. Domenico De Robertis, *Pulci Morgante e lettere* (Florence: Sansoni, 1962), L.

55. There is an excellent English translation: *Morgante. The Epic Adventures of Orlando and His Giant Friend Morgante*, trans. Joseph Tusiani, introduction and notes by Edoardo A. Lebrano (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998).