In the last two decades a growing number of cartographic historians have focused attention away from the traditional concerns of their discipline, the record of geographic discovery and the development of mapping technology, to concentrate on the ways in which maps construct, rather than passively register, the situations they represent. The art historian, at home with artifacts whose functions are fundamentally those of persuasion, whose every element is invented and whose makers are assumed to have a fundamental role in the construction of meaning, may not appreciate the significance of this shift. The diversity of critical perspective depends, of course, on our very different expectations for maps and pictures. As the cartographic critics remind us: when maps are understood as providing information, their authority depends on their audience perceiving them as both accurate and objective.

Of the representations studied by art history, topographic images – and city views first in time – are among the most likely to share the informational requirements of modern map making. In the Middle Ages, however, when maps themselves could render topographic facts only approximately, city views were condensed and conventionalized representations in which interpretation overwhelmed information. In this visual tradition cities appear as symbols. They might stand for a specific place or a general ideal, but even when, in the fourteenth century, representations became more precise about building types, individual monuments and details of city life, the location of things was not determined by topography but by the demands of compositional schemes whose aim was the representation of values. In a study that is still fundamental to our knowledge of the representation of cities in the early modern period, Juergen Schulz called these images «moralized geographies» to signify the dominance in them of interpretation over information.

City views that are based on factual information about the location of things and the specificity of their appearance begin to appear in the fifteenth century. These are images constructed from the phenomena of the natural world – volumes in space revealed by light – which is merely
to say that some Renaissance city views share the revolution in visual representation that transforms the arts of this period. But they also have a more specific context in the revival of interest in geography based on Pliny, Strabo and, especially, Ptolemy. Manuscripts of Ptolemy’s *Geography* produced in Florence between 1469 and 1472 introduce — without any justification in the ancient text — a series of map-like images of cities that attempt to trace the true course of city walls and assign position to major monuments based on the topography of the city. Geographic issues were a concern across a range of disciplines in the fifteenth century. Topography is an essential component of the new science of archaeology and geography itself is part of the transformed history written by humanist scholars. Geographic interests were applied to the representation of cities from an early date. Humanist authors reinvent the genre of writing that describes cities by giving new attention to the geographical, the experiential, and the architectural.

1. "View with a Chain," woodcut, ca. 1510, Berlin — Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett


The plan, dated 1474, is contained in a syloge of antique inscriptions. The inscriptions in the plan reflect the identifications of ancient monuments discussed in Flavio Biondo’s *Roma instaurata*, c. 1444–1446.


The first experiments in geometric survey also belong to this period. By 1455 Alberti had codified a system for measuring cities and in the fall of 1502 Leonardo da Vinci – acting as military engineer to Cesare Borgia – used it to produce his famous map of the city of Imola. Though it is not until the middle of the sixteenth century, or later, that a city view was constructed from a measured plan, the kind of topographic accuracy that survey would eventually realize became a goal much earlier. What this meant for the view makers was that interpretive images of cities needed, for the first time, also to be plausible accounts of physical reality if they wished to persuade. Thus constrained, how did the image of the city continue to signify?

The tension between the medieval tradition of moralized geography and the demands of the new visual and scientific culture defines the challenge that confronted the author of the city view that carries the conventional title «View of Florence with a Chain». It is an image that we know from a woodcut version composed of eight sheets that together measure 58 by 146 centimeters, which survives in a single copy preserved in the Berlin Museums (fig. 1). It is attributed to the Florentine Lucantonio degli Uberti and is assigned a date around 1510. The woodcut reproduces an engraving that does not survive but of which we have some knowledge thanks to the preservation up to our days of one of the sheets of which it was composed (fig. 2). The engraving is the work of the Florentine miniaturist, print and map maker Francesco Rosselli (1447–1513). Mention of the Florence engraving appears in a 1527 inventory of the prints and matrices from his workshop. It was executed in the period between 1482, when Rosselli returned to Florence from Hungary, and 1490, when views that depend on it began to appear.

Three other images derive from the engraving and are helpful in reconstructing its appearance. The first of these is a small (86 by 68 mm), rough illustration in the 1490 edition of Giacomo Foresti’s Supplementum Chronicarum, a sort of world history and geography. The next appears in the 1493 edition of Hartmann Schedel’s Liber Chronicarum, published in Nuremberg and called the Nuremberg Chronicle (fig. 3). The third is a painting in the National Gallery in London which was produced in Florence by an artist, perhaps Rosselli himself, who improved and updated the prototype (fig. 4). The painting is assigned a date before 1495 on the basis of the buildings it records.

In the one sheet where it is possible to make a comparison, the woodcut «View with the Chain» copies the Rosselli engraving almost line for line but, for some reason, introduces many errors in the titles that identify monuments (compare fig. 5). The conclusion that the representation of the city was essentially the
same in both prints is supported by the looser copies of the engraving in the Liber Chronicarum and the painting in the National Gallery. The author of the woodcut added the chain that frames the view and, as their absence in the Liber Chronicarum and the National Gallery images argues, some of the figures and landscape in the foreground.

The quality that has always drawn attention to the 'View with a Chain' is the topographic specificity of the scene. The view creates a continuous spatial field that not only accommodates


16 Busse (as note 13), 121.

17 The first edition of the Supplementum was published in 1483 without illustrations. (The Origins of the Italian Veduta, exh. cat., Bell Gallery, Brown University, Providence, R. I 1978, 23–24) The Florence view was given the title 'Florentia Etruriae' in the 1490 Latin edition but 'Firenzea civita di Toschana' in the Italian edition of 1491. (Boffito and Mori [as note 5], 22–23).

18 Ettinger (as note 13), 163.
buildings but is also capable of presenting open ground, public squares, and even the course of newly laid out streets not yet enclosed by the houses that will be built along their sides. Within this matrix, the city’s monuments are ordered in a way that reflects the true relationships among them. Outside the walls the image gives a careful account of the major natural features of the site. Seen from the southwest, the view sets the city against the sheltering wall of the Apennines to its north. The valley of the Mugnone through which the road to Bologna runs makes a dramatic break in the mountains in the upper left hand corner of the print. The towns of Fiesole in the saddle of the adjacent hill and San Domenico farther down the slope are designated with clusters of buildings and identified by inscription. The convents of San Miniato and San Francesco mark the heights that dominate the city from the south. Only in the far distance, between the familiar areas of local terrain on the left and right of the print, do conventional hill forms fill in the horizon. The Arno cuts diagonally through the image, separating the city into its two unequal parts. The river’s firmly canalized course within the walls contrasts sharply with its meandering, flood prone bed in the rest of the valley.

The representation of the countryside in the »View with a Chain« is neither atmospheric nor poetic. Its forms are conventional, more like the symbols on Rosselli’s own maps than the hills and trees of contemporary painting. The hills and valley of the view are also different from the isolated landscape vignettes of fifteenth century painting in their seamless continuity with the main subject of the picture, the city proper. The continuity reflects both a political reality and a pictorial ambition. The countryside visible in the view represents the territory ruled from inside the walls. No less than the capital, it is an essential part of the Florentine state. At the same time,

19 Roberto Almagià speaks of the representation of mountains in a six sheet map of Italy that he attributes to Rosselli. (Una grande carta d’ Italia del Secolo}
both city and countryside are seen as topography and inhabited space; the hills and the river are no less part of the geography of the Arno valley than the densely built city at the center of the image.

As a representation of the valley, the »View with a Chain« is a chorography. This is a form of representation named in Ptolemy’s Geography that Jacopo da Scarperia’s translation introduced to the west in the early fifteenth century. Rosselli’s »View« is one of the first attempts to give shape to Ptolemy’s idea. The ancient author presents chorography as a supplement to the more important large scale mapping systems that he describes at length. His instructions to the potential »chorographer« were minimal. Chorography was meant to supply a visual description of a circumscribed place and to concentrate on character rather than measurement. If geography represents the face, or the whole (of the earth), chorography, he wrote, details an eye or an ear. Places as small as harbors, farms, villages, and river courses are appropriate subjects. Chorography, he says, requires an artist. 20

Francesco Rosselli inhabited a world where interest in chorography would have been at home. He created the frontispieces for the manuscripts of the Geography produced in the workshop of the Florentine bookseller Vespasiano da Bisticci between 1469 and 1472, and he was the draughtsman of a distinguished body of maps beginning perhaps as early as the 1480s (fig. 6). 21 He also published a number of city views, none of which survives. The 1527 workshop inventory lists – along with devotional

cesco Rosselli, in: *Imago Mundi* 8, 1951, 27–34. Almagià provides a list of Rosselli’s cartographic production that includes a map of Hungary which


21 R. Almagià, On the Cartographic Work of Francesco Rosselli, in: *Imago Mundi* 8, 1951, 27–34. Almagià provides a list of Rosselli’s cartographic production that includes a map of Hungary which
images, world maps, regional maps, portolan charts, and the view of Florence — views of Pisa, Rome and Constantinople.  

But this is only half the story, the progressive aspect of what is a transitional image. The "View with a Chain" also has a conventional side and reveals the influence of the medieval tradition of city views in a set of distortions that are fundamental to its composition. The focal point of the Florence in the "View with a Chain" is the city's cathedral and especially the newly completed dome (fig. 7). The scale of the dome reflects the hyperbole of contemporary Florentines who imagined it "as tall as a great mountain." Its silhouette subsumes both the nave of the church and the campanile, while the inscription "la cupola"
identifies the whole building. The drum is arbitrarily tall and as a result the lantern rises clear of the circled city walls. The cathedral dome sits immediately above the geometric center of the pictorial field defined by the woodcut’s frame. In a major distortion of topography, it is also represented as positioned at the middle of the city. In reality, a view taken from the Monte Oliveto outside the Porta San Frediano, from which at least the central part of the city appears to be seen, would place the cathedral much closer to the western edge of the city, on the left side of the woodcut, than to the Porta Romana, on the right.

Disregard for topographical fact and the willful creation of a falsely symmetrical city is characteristic of both medieval and Humanist descriptions of Florence. In 1324 the chronicler Giovanni Villani characterized the intersection of the city’s two main streets as «the point of the cross, and the center of the circle of the city.» 24 Leonardo Bruni’s Laudatio Florentinae Urbis of 1403 – 1404 organized Florence, including its territory in the countryside, as a series of concentric rings. 25 A painting of the political structure of the Florentine state in the guild hall of the city’s lawyers and notaries used the same geometric model in 1366. The outermost ring of this very abstract image was a naturalistically represented city wall with towers, gates, a moat and bridges. 26


24 Giovanni Villani, Cronica, Florence 1844, book IX, chapter 257.
26 D. Friedman, Florentine New Towns. Urban Design
7. »View with a chain«, woodcut, ca. 1510, Detail, Berlin – Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett

The point of these abstractions was to represent facts that were not primarily physical. At the center of each of these idealized descriptions, the authors sited an object to represent the institution whose power and intelligence, in their analysis, guided the city. The lawyers and notaries put the arms of the Commune, the Popolo, the Parte Guelfa, and the combined Florentine and Fiesole communities at the center of their emblematic description of the city’s politics. Villani and Bruni each used a building to express this idea. The fourteenth century merchant asserted that the hall of the Wool guild, whose workshops he claimed employed a third of the population, occupied the geometric center of the city. Bruni, the humanist who from 1427 until 1444 served as chancellor of the Republic, placed the city hall, the Palazzo della Signoria, in that position.

Rosselli’s choice of the cathedral seems less arbitrary because Brunelleschi’s dome is, in fact,

*in the Late Middle Ages*, New York 1988, 203–205 and figure 100.


28 Another Jerusalem done in the manner of the View of Florence appears in Hartmann Schedel’s *Liber Chronicarum* of 1493. Since this book also contains an early adaptation of Rosselli’s view of Florence, the «Jerusalem» may well depend on it, too.

29 Donald Weinstein, The Myth of Florence, in: *Floren-
the dominant feature of the Florentine skyline. But the choice is not innocent and the cathedral is not at the center of the View merely because of its size and shape. That, as Susan McKillop was the first to suggest, 27 is the impression that has to be taken from the similarity of the View to an image in Bernhard von Breydenbach’s Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam (fig. 8). The book, published in Mainz in 1486, records a trip taken after 1483 by Breydenbach, Dean of Mainz, and Erhard Reuwich, acting as artist to record the journey. The image is a composite view of the Levant that folds out of the book for a total width of 1260 millimeters and a height of 275. Reuwich’s composition represents the whole eastern shore of the Mediterranean, from Sydon in Lebanon to Alexandria in the Nile delta and from Damascus in the interior to Mecca on the Arabian peninsula. At its center is a panorama of the « Civitas Iherusalem » and in the middle of the circle of the city walls, preceded by the open space of the Temple Mount, is a fairly faithful representation of the octagonal structure of the Dome of the Rock as it stood in the late fifteenth century. It bears the title « Templum Salomonis ».

There is no way to be certain about either the chronological relationship between this image and the « View » or, indeed, whether either directly influenced the other. 38 The simple fact of their similarity, however, says a great deal. Florentines had long conceived of their city as the New Jerusalem. The typological analogy accommodated a broad range of ideas. It was cultivated in the fourteenth century by popular visionaries who prophesied the spiritual renewal of the city, advocated political reform and promised leadership in Italy and territorial empire. Donald Weinstein identifies the period of the Ciompi rebellion in 1378, when calls for renewal had the voice of social protest, as the moment when the myth gained wide circulation. By the mid-fifteenth century, he says, the ideas of Florentine destiny associated with the New Jerusalem had become part of state rhetoric, the support for the consensus upon which Cosimo de’ Medici based his rule. 39 McKillop argues that the Medici claimed a privileged place for themselves within this conception of the city by representing their family as the House of David. 30

As the principal building of the new Holy City, the cathedral was the particular focus of the tradition which makes the Temple of Solomon the type of all churches. The motet Nuper

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rosarium flores that Guillaume Dufay wrote for the dedication of the new building in 1436 seems specifically to invoke the Temple by reproducing in the structure of the music the proportions of the biblical building given in 1 Kings 6:1-20. Less explicit connections are common. In Ghiberti's second set of Baptistry doors (1437–1439) the cathedral stands for the Temple in which Solomon receives the Queen of Sheba. When Florence appeared as the model for the more abstract Heavenly Jerusalem in a manuscript of St. Augustine's City of God illuminated in about 1470, the element that identifies the source of the image is the great octagonal cupola at the center.

Balancing the heroic vision of Florentine destiny embodied in the New Jerusalem theme was an equally well established representation of the city that emphasized very different ideas. It is this tradition that is spelled out as the theme of the «View with a Chain» in the title inscribed in the scroll at the upper edge of the woodcut and, I believe, also of the engraving. «Fiorenza» is a very special form of the name of the city. It is, first of all, vernacular, and its appearance here marks a break in the tradition which had given all previous representations of the city the Latin name Florentia. But «Fiorenza» is not the everyday word familiar from the medieval texts or from modern Italian usage. Villani and the other chroniclers call the city «Firenze». «Fiorenza», which reasserts in the vernacular the coincidence of the ancient name of the city with the Latin words for flowers and flourishing, flores and flores, is reserved for poetic use when the place, Florence, was spoken of with special affection and linked – in celebration or lament – with the ideas of prosperity and peace. The thirteenth century author Chiaro Davanzati begins a poem about the city «Oh, sweet and happy Florentine land, fountain of valor and pleasure, flower among peers, Fiorenza, the wisest know you are queen» to conclude that, because of the factionalism dividing citizens, «Fiorenza non pos' dir, che se' si(f)orita» (I can no longer call you Fiorenza because you are withered).

In the fifteenth-century «Fiorenza» continued to name the peaceful and prosperous city. Within a year of the return of Cosimo de’ Medici from exile, Antonio di Matteo di Meglio wrote these lines: «Viva con gaudio eterno e con letizia/ Fiorenza, eccelsa patria alma fiorentec,/ fatta da Dio potente/ contr’ ogni avverso alla sua libertade». (Live long with eternal joy and happiness, Fiorenza, divine fatherland, forever blossoming, Fortified by God against every threat to its liberty.) In the court of Cosimo’s grandson Lorenzo the connection between the city’s success and nature’s benign fecundity became the theme of by its title: «Ma faccia la Signoria Vostra ommino d’haver una Fiorenza acciò si possi expedere per l’ordine ve lo dico.» (Archivio di Stato di Mantova, Copialettere, b. 2444). L. Nucci, Ritratti di città. Visione e memoria tra Medioevo e Settecento, Venice 1996, 32–33 n. 33. Further on the Gonzaga cycle: J. Schulz, La cartografia tra scienza e arte. Carte e cartografi nel Rinascimento italiano, Modena 1990, 38 and 60–61, nn. 143.

33 The title appears as «FIORENZA» in the woodcut. The orthographic error suggests that this title, too, like so many other distorted inscriptions in the wood-cut, was copied from the engraving. The fact that the Italian edition of Foresti’s Supplementum of 1491 titles the image «Fiorenza città di Toschina» (see note 17) also argues for the presence of this unusual title in the original. When Francesco II Gonzaga had a room in his villa at Gonzaga painted with views of cities he was asked to provide an image of Florence to the painters. The letter, from Teofilo Collenuccio, a member of the court, dated 23 November 1493, seems to refer to a specific image of Florence.
35 F. Flamini, La lirica toscana del Rinascimento anteriore ai tempi del Magnifico, B. Pisa 1891, 109.
36 Agnolo Poliziano, Stanza cominciata per la giostra di
Medici rule. Politian bonded the idea to the city name in a passage acknowledging his patron in the Stanze per la Giosta di Giuliano de Medici (1, 4): «E tu, ben nato Laur, sotto il cui velo / Fiorenza lieta in pace si riposa.» (And you, well augured Lorenzo/Laurel under whose protection happy Fiorenza rests in peace, without fear of the winds, the threatening sky, or a furious Jupiter, gather in the shade of your sacred trunk the humble voices, trembling and fearful; O inspiration and focus of all my desires which take their nourishment from the fragrance of your leaves.)\(^{36}\)

In the late fifteenth century the idea represented by the name «Fiorenza» had a specific meaning: «Fiorenza lieta», the joyous Florence protected by Lorenzo’s Italian peace.

Within our city view, which we can now call by its proper name, «Fiorenza», Florence flowers.\(^{37}\) On the hillsides, the trees are in full leaf. The city seems, literally, to be in season and that season is springtime. In fact, the time of the «Fiorenza» view is more specific. Shadows that fall on the city’s buildings locate the sun low in the sky, to the left of the scene, that is, in the west. The time of day is early evening. But not all west facing walls are illuminated. The facades of the churches of SS. Annunziata and S. Marco, and of the Medici palace, all oriented southwest, are in shadow, the northwest face of the cathedral tribune is lit. Even the front of the church of the Carmine, oriented almost due north, catches the sun. These are extreme lighting conditions. They are compositionally awkward and, significantly, they are replaced by a more conventional southern light in the Hartmann Schedel version of the Fiorenza engraving which was aimed at an international audience who would not have understood their significance. But Rosselli insisted his viewers take note, going so far as to twist the axis of the Carmine out of its true orientation so that the facade of the church could register the light that fell on it during only a few hours of the year.\(^{38}\)

The lighting of the print reproduced a condition that occurs only in the period of time immediately surrounding the summer solstice, which falls on June 21, when the sun reaches its most northerly point. The date offers an explanation for the artist’s choice. June 24 is the feast day of the patron of Florence, John the Baptist. In the fifteenth century this and the three days preceding it was a time when Florentine hegemony in Tuscany was on public display as representatives of the subject towns offered symbolic gifts of candles as tokens of submission and loyalty. The city marshaled its wealth to put on a magnificent show that asserted Florence’s place among Italian states.\(^{39}\) On the evening of the 24th a race, or

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\(^{36}\) This is also the theme of the inscription that Politian provided for the cycle of frescoes commissioned by Lorenzo’s uncle Giovanni Tornabuoni in the main chapel of Santa Maria Novella: AN MCCCLXXX QUO PUL/CHERRIMA CIVITAS OPIBUS VICTO/RIS ARTIBUS AEDIFICIS QUE NO/BLIS COPIA SALUBRITATE PACE/ PER-FRUEBATUR. (A. Chastel, Art et Humanisme à Florence au temps de Laurent le Magnifique, Paris 1959, 16. E. Gusberti, Un Mitto del cinquecento: Lorenzo il Magnifico, in: Bolletino dell’istituto storico italiano per il Medioev., 91, 1989, 192, n. 28.) The word «perfruebat», from «fruebat», to be fruitful, makes the connection. It is emphasized in the composition of the inscription by its placement on a line of its own at the bottom of the framing panel. The location of the fresco, at the bottom right of the right hand wall of the chapel, places the inscription at the entrance to the chapel and almost seems to propose it as the subtitle of the decoration. The inscription is paraphrased in Niccolò Valori’s life of Lorenzo in this form: «Hoc illud fuit tempus, quo omnium maxime Florentia dictur floruisse imperio aceta, et nominata fama, quam per totum terrarum orbem Laurentii sapientia, et auctoritas dilateravit.» (Niccolò Valori, Laurentii Medici Vita in Filippo Villani, Liber di civilta Fiorentina famosis civibus, ed. G. C. Galletti, Florence, 1847, 177.)

\(^{37}\) The author of the London painting corrected this distortion.

Palio, was run along a traditional course through the city streets. In the painting in London that is derived from the «Fiorenza» engraving we can see the horses charging through the open field, called the Prato di Ognisanti, at the beginning of the contest (fig. 9). The chronological specificity of the «Fiorenza» engraving marks a departure from the practice of the preceding centuries. Medieval views, as emblems and didactic images, stand outside time. What happens in the «Fiorenza» engraving is different, too, from modern cartographic usage which has tended toward an abstraction that has literally relegated all narrative elements, including chronology, to the margins. In the 1480's, at the formation of modern geography's traditions, this was not yet the case. A slightly earlier experiment with the compatibility of narrative and topographic record gives some sense of the context in which the concept of time enters the «Fiorenza» view. The «Tavola Strozzi» (fig. 10) represents the city of Naples on 12 July 1465, the day that the Aragonese fleet returned from the victory of Ischia over the Angevin pretender to the throne of Naples. The ships, towing their prizes and flying the pennants that identify King Ferrante, his admiral, the captains of the ships and the men who outfitted them, fill the foreground of the picture as they enter the harbor in a formal parade. The event defines the time, but it is fair to say that the city provides more than the location. For Filippo Strozzi, the Florentine merchant who had made his fortune at the Aragonese court and who commissioned the work, as for Ferrante who received it as a gift, the naval display celebrates the most important aspect of the city, that is, Ferrante's lordship. Seen in this light, the historical event ceases to be the subject of the picture. That honor belongs to Naples itself. Here, history supplements topography by illuminating the political condition of the city.

What, then, can we conclude about Francesco Rosselli's «Fiorenza»? Where, between the representational manipulation of space of medieval city views and the demands for topographic accuracy of the new science of geography, does it stand? Certainly we must acknowledge that it is a transitional image. The distortions that place the cathedral at the center of the city are based on traditional practice. It is probably not coincidental that the theme of the New Jerusalem is the oldest and most conventional of the ideas that give the engraving its meaning. A long history of the representation of the city of Jerusalem lies behind this configuration.

The «Fiorenza» engraving moves the city view into the modern era of visual representation with strategies that transfer interpretation away from...
topography to other parts of the image. The first of these is the representation of time. In the «Fiorenza» view time pervades everything. Light marks the calendar. It points to the feast of San Giovanni, which, like the view itself, celebrates the city. The second idea is the simple fact of choosing a new name for the image. The title, «Fiorenza», relocates the principal statement of the view's theme entirely outside the realm of visual representation. The prosperity of the city and the countryside pictured in the view has clarity and resonance because of the widely recognized set of ideas attached to the word. A similar strategy informs the next great Italian city view, Jacopo de' Barbari's Venice of 1500, where the figures of Mercury and Neptune are presented at a scale that separates them from the physical city at the same time as they locate the ideas of sovereignty over the seas and patronage of trade that they represent «at Venice».[4] Because the two classical figures carry the narrative, the rest of the print is free to present the physical facts of the city. The conflict between geography and representation is given a resolution whose problematic nature has only recently been acknowledged. In the fifteenth century there was less concern about the compatibility of the two elements of the equation. The «Fiorenza» view parallels humanist history in being based on fact but formed by rhetoric. In describing cities, humanist authors claimed a special freedom. As Leonardo Bruni wrote in defense of his own description of Florence «History is one thing, panegyric another. History should follow the truth, panegyric goes beyond the truth in its praise.».[4]

The poetic tradition crystallized around the city name Fiorenza and the prophetic one that annointed Florence the New Jerusalem make a strange pairing. The focus on peace and prosperity of the one seems contradicted by the imperialism and asceticism of the other. But both have long histories in the city and both share a belief in its heroic destiny. Unitiing them and
thus broadening the appeal of the »Fiorenza« engraving may have been a very sensible strategy on the part of Rosselli in his attempt to establish one of the first commercial print making businesses. But the two had already been joined as components of the many faceted representational project supported by the Medici. Whether as Fiorenza’s protector or as the new House of David, the Medici made a place for themselves at the heart of both these myths. Both, as the Medici would have put it, honor the city and the family equally. Whether the »Fiorenza« engraving was in some way a Medici project must remain unknown. As the acknowledged rulers of Florence, however, they are the first to benefit from a representation in which the city is the center of an ordered world in which the abundance and benevolence of nature supports the prosperity and achievement of the citizens.\footnote{ }

Whatever their merit, the above remarks apply only to the Fiorenza engraving produced by Francesco Rosselli in the 1480’s. What we see, of course, is a copy, the woodcut of around 1510. Everything that has been said to this point is based on the conclusion that the topographic representation is the same in both prints. The Società Columbaria sheet shows that the upper left section of the woodcut copies the original line for line and the agreement of all the survi-
ving copies (the "View with a Chain", the London painting and the Schedel print) argues that this relationship extends across the print. The modification of the original image is made by additions at the periphery. The chain, missing from the Società Columbaria sheet, is the most obvious insertion. Others, judging by their absence from the London painting and the Schedel illustration, are among the figures in the foreground of the print. The ferryman, his passengers, and the citizens awaiting the ferry on the far shore, because they appear in the London painting and – in the case of the ferryman – in the Schedel print, probably belonged to the "Fiorenza" engraving. Of the new figures, some seem relatively innocent: travellers under the walls and men driving piles in a weir that channels water into the millrace on the near side of the river. Others are more enigmatic. Though modest compared to the great scene of the city itself, the new figures on the perimeter are not small in size. The unusual scale of the print (58 by 146 centimeters) means that these foreground figures are easily legible, as large as any in the standard print repertory of the period. In stark contrast to the nondescript staffage inherited from the engraving, they stand out for their disturbing subject matter as much as the framing chain does for the incongruity of its size and position on the surface of the image.

The meaning of the figures and the chain cannot be established with certainty. Unlike the title "Fiorenza" or the manipulation of the position of the cathedral, the additions of 1510 do not seem to refer to established themes of the city’s mythology.\(^4\) If they refer to anything beyond themselves, they do it in a more circumstantial way. The format of the "View" suggests a possible avenue of interpretation. The distinctive thing about the "View" is the fact that it reproduces the "Fiorenza" engraving so closely. It is almost as if the "View" were a reissue of the original. This happened frequently enough in the later print tradition when a plate was restruck with only a change of title, dedication, and publisher. Here, however, reproduction required the cutting of new matrices. A freer relationship between copy and model, like the one represented by the London painting or Schedel print, is more common. It is almost as if the "View" quotes the fifteenth century image. In this context the additions around the edge could be intended both to isolate the old image and to comment on it. In what follows I propose that their commentary refers to the condition in 1510 of the subject of the print, the city of Florence.

The years between the 1480’s and 1510 saw dramatic changes to the city’s situation. Lorenzo died in 1492 and two years later his son Piero surrendered the city to the army of the French king Charles VIII. The citizens themselves expelled the Medici and established a revolutionary popular government inspired by the preaching of the charismatic Domenican friar, Girolamo Savonarola. In 1498 the tide turned again, Savonarola was excommunicated and soon arrested, tortured, and executed. The successor regime, led, from 1502, by gonfaloniere for life Piero Soderini, mediated between the artisan and Humanistic Historiography, in: *Medievalia et Humanistica 1946, fasc. 4, 52.*

\(^4\) Even the cathedral, the temple of the New Jerusalem, had a Medicean color in the 1480’s. By 1480, the archdiocese was an institution firmly within the system of patronage by which the Medici dominated Florence. As part of their policy of maintaining allies in all public offices, the Medici had partisans on four of the six episcopal thrones of Tuscany in the late fifteenth century. They controlled the archdiocese of Florence from 1462. In the late 1480’s Lorenzo’s son Giovanni, the future Leo X, was a canon of the cathedral. From 1474 until his death in 1508 the arch-bishop of Florence was Rinaldo Orsini, the brother of Lorenzo’s wife Clarissa. Rinaldo never came to Florence but remained in his native city of Rome, representing Medici interests at the papal court. The administration of the Florentine see was left in Lorenzo’s hands. (R. Bizzocchi, *Chiesa e potere nella Toscana del Quattrocento,* Bologna 1987, 211–217.)

\(^4\) Fishermen, of course, belong to a number of pictorial and iconographic traditions. Of some interest to the themes of the Fiorenza view is the connection of fishing, along with hunting and navigation, to the influence of the Moon in the system of judicial astrology. The zodiacal constellation in which the Moon exerts
class that supported the popular cause and patricians who wished to reestablish their traditional hold on government. Under constant threat by the exiled Medici, the republican regime fell in 1512 to Spanish forces who assigned the city to Lorenzo’s son, cardinal Giovanni, elected pope as Leo X in the following year.

The additions to the «Fiorenza» image in the «View with a Chain» register a reaction to these events in a wide variety of ways. In the lower right corner of the woodcut is the largest of the new figures (fig. 11). An artist, drawing the circle of the city’s wall, sits on a promontory that has long been identified with the site from which the view of the city was taken. By the mid sixteenth century, the artist’s presence would have been understood as a conventional assertion of the authenticity of the image, «taken from life».46 In 1510, however, this figure was not yet a fixed convention47 and, I believe, still able to hold multiple meanings. The first indication that this might be the case is the dissonant character of the patch of ground on which this viewmaker sits. Everywhere else sun bathed hillside dotted with heavily leaved trees surround the city. In this corner, shadow and rocky precipices dominate. The only signs of vegetation are some scrubby bushes and a tree so drastically cut back that only its trunk and the stumps of a few branches survive. The tree may be truncated to reveal the view as an assertion of veracity that «acknowledges» (rather than eliminates) pictorially awkward facts,48 but in early sixteenth century Florence the tree stump is a sign that had a more familiar meaning.

its strongest influence, its house, is Cancer, which is the sign of the summer solstice. An illustration of the planet, the constellation and fishermen appears in an illuminated De Sphaera from the mid fifteenth century in the Biblioteca Estense in Modena (MS Lat. 209, fols 99v–107r illustrated in Circa 1492, Art in the Age of Exploration, ed. J. A. Levenson, New Haven and London 1991, 216.). Were there any evidence that the Rosselli’s engraving included the figures of the fisherman, this interpretation would demand serious consideration. It is, of course, possible that the craftsman of the woodcut copy appended the fishermen to supplement the established theme of the engraving rather than to add the new material about which I speculate below. In that case, other elements new in the woodcut – the chain and the carcass of the horse – would require an explanation that at this moment is difficult to imagine.

46 Nuti (as note 11), 113–115 and (as note 20), 23.

47 A sheet in an atlas in the Museo Correr, Venice offers a predecessor to the daughtsmen in the «View with a Chain» with a very different significance than the figures of the sixteenth century tradition. In a corner outside the polygonal field of the map proper is the miniature figure of the chart maker at his draughting table. The figure certainly represents the map maker, Pietro Vesconte, who is named and the map dated, 1518, in an adjacent inscription. But it cannot claim that the very abstract portolan was taken from life. It is a portrait of the artist, more like the figures that peer out from the sides of fifteenth century pictures (for example the head of Benozzo Gozzoli in the crowd behind Cosimo and Piero de Medici in the Medici Palace chapel frescoes) than the witness that testifies to the veracity of later topographic views. Reproduced in The History of Cartography, I, Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean, eds. J. B. Harley and D. Woodward, Chicago 1987, plate 31, and p. 434.


49 J. Cox Rearick, Dynasty and Destiny in Medici Art: Pontormo, Leo X, and the Two Coïtoses, Princeton 1984 has made a comprehensive analysis of the
When the Medici returned to Florence in 1512 they described their restoration as a renewal in a biological sense. The favorite metaphor for this was the laurel tree, which had been Lorenzo's personal device. In Poliziano's Stanze the tree, Laura, stands for the man and on the reverse of a 1490 portrait medal a laurel shelter the figure of Florentia (fig. 12). Lorenzo himself had emphasized the regenerative abilities of the plant, which is capable of growing from an apparently dead root, when he used it along with the Vergilian slogan »Le tems revient« as part of an impressa claiming the return of the Golden Age in his time. In 1513 Lorenzo's grandson gave his Carnival company the name »Broncone«, or, in Vasari's words, »the dry branch which puts forth new leaves.« In the same period the decoration of the great hall at the Medici Villa at Poggio a Caiano featured a fresco of the rustic gods Vertumno and Pomona overrun by laurel branches regenerated from the stumps of old trees. In the context of this imagery of renewal the bare tree trunk in the »View with a Chain« is rich with possibility. Without the leaves that are part of the device proper, it is plausibly the dormant laurel. Stripped bare but still full of the potential for life, it reads as the sign of the bad times that the idea of Medicean Florence experienced during the period of exile.

The other area where the »View with the Chain« differs from its engraved model is the left foreground of the picture (figs. 13 and 14). The landscape of the river bank is cluttered by boulders swept by the force of the current and by dead trees whose fallen trunks look like the bones of prehistoric animals. Within the river two men hold the ends of a net. Their activity is the centerpiece of human action in the »View«. A crowd rushes to the spot. One man holds the garments of the bathers. Two others raise their arms in gestures of excitement. A man kneels to pick up objects, perhaps just rocks; a youth, or anyway a small figure, holds something wrapped in a cloth. The subject of this scene is an enigma. Its figures are too animated for fishermen, yet nothing more is substantiated by the information on the sheet. We cannot know with certainty what was intended by this small drama but the history of Florence during the Medici exile offers an episode that accounts for much of what we see.

At 2:30 on the afternoon of May 23, 1498 Savonarola was hanged and burned in the Piazza della Signoria. For eight years he had led a broad ethical and religious revival in the city that included among its participants Mediceans as well as their enemies and since 1494 he had been the inspiration for the popular party that dominated city discovery, based on the authority of the sixth century Byzantine author Giovanni Lido, that the sacred name of the city of Rome was Flora, or, alternately, Florentia. N. Rubinstein, Il Poliziano e la questione delle origini di Firenze, in: Il Poliziano e il suo tempo. Atti del IV Convegno internazionale di studi sul Rinascimento, Florence 1954, 101–116.
54 In a Latin epigram written before the Pazzi conspiracy of 1478, Politian had described Lorenzo's contribution to Florentine culture in these terms. »Ante erat inimisi, Laurens, tua patria truncus; Nunc habet ecce suum, te tribuente, caput.« Greene, p. 164. Angelo Ambrogini Poliziano, Prose volgari ineditate e poesie latine e greche edite e inedithe, ed. 1. del Lungo, Florence 1957, 117.
55 Lorenzo de' Medici even called the friar to administer his last rites. R. Ridolfi, Vita di Girolamo
politics. Even after his execution, the friar retained many supporters. One of the stories preserved by them concerns the preacher’s remains and that of the two friars who died with him. As they burned, the corpses aroused strong feelings. Some stoned the bodies hanging from the gallows, others looked on in reverence. Aware of their potential as relics, the government had the ashes carted to the river. Despite the guard and the crowd of hostile witnesses, children and adults risked attack to gain possession of some piece of the martyrs. The most powerful of the relics according to Giovanni Francesco Pico, nephew of the philosopher, was something believed to be Savonarola’s heart. It was seen floating in the river two days after the execution by a group gathered near the city’s mills (in the View, just to the right of the area titled «Sardigna») and it was retrieved from the water by a young boy who, delivering it to his mother, preserved it to perform miracles.16

Savonarola, Rome 1952, 1: 76. Ridolfi describes a relatively indulgent attitude on Lorenzo’s part, whether for political reasons or because he valued the fame the distinguished friar brought the city. Ibid, chapter 6 «Il frate e il Magnifico. La predicazione sul Genesi», 66–80. Whatever Lorenzo’s reaction to Savonarola’s sermon’s against political tyranny, he maintained his support for the distinguished preacher as Prior of the Medici-endowed San Marco and later as Vicar General of the independent Tuscan Dominican Congregation. (D. Weinstein, Savonarola and Florence, Prophecy and Patriotism in the Renaissance, Princeton 1970, 101 111.) Many members of Lorenzo’s philosophical and literary circle followed Savonarola’s preaching both before Lorenzo’s death and, especially, after. (Ibid, chapter 6, Savonarola and the Laurentians, 185–226.)

56 Giovanni Francesco Pico (della Mirandola), Vita R. B. Fr. Hieronymi Savonarolae, Paris 1674, 95–96 and 420–424. Giovanni Francesco, the nephew of Giovanni Pico, said that he possessed a piece of this relic himself. «Sed et biduo post eius obitum, dum molemundo ad Arni ripam puer quidam insisteret, rapi perspexit a fluvio quamdam, quasi pilam orbicularem puricoam, usulata, actumque, ab his qui aderant, magna subsanatione acclamatum est, Hieronymi cor illud esse, quibus puer (ita enim antea pater, persecutionem veritus, statuerat facienda) verbis consentiebat, mente vero adversabatur. Atque hac dissimulatione quasi clypeo tutus, cor de Arni fluctibus sublatum in sinu reposuit, et ad genricem detulit, quod postea Porphetae cor esse, quemadmodum impii illi nescientes acclamaverant, miraculis multis quae decursu operis enarrabatur proditum.»
The scene in the woodcut does not reproduce the story exactly as it was told by Giovanni Francesco. The author does not, for example, speak of the net which, in the interpretation proposed here, is being used to collect relics. But such a thing might well be the invention of the artist, challenged to give dramatic form to events that, in the literary version, did not have visual impact. What is important about Pico’s account is its success in creating a myth. Pico may have had personal reasons for doing this – he says that the woman who held the heart gave him part of it – but that is less relevant than the fact the episode is taken up by subsequent authors and reproduced in many lives of the martyred friar. It became a story with wide currency and had political as well as a religious significance. In the “View with a Chain” it could evoke the deep divisions that rent Florentine society during the time of the republic.57

57 After 1498, Savonarola’s considerable following naturally opposed the regime that had carried out his execution, however much they supported the republican constitution, formed under the friar, on which it was based. The Medecins may have imagined an opportunity in this factional division. Despite Savonarola’s constant criticism of Medici policy before 1494 there had never been an absolute split between the two groups (see above, note 55). The wish of the friar’s political party, the Fiagnoni, to come to terms with the Medecins is illustrated by...
To the left of the group of "Fishermen" is the most grisly member of the expanded population of the "View," the carcass of a horse being eaten by birds. The role of this horse—and of those below the city wall as well—is only understandable by recalling that the London painting testifies were present in the "Fiorenza" engraving. There, race horses ran the Palio to celebrate the festival of San Giovanni. The horses of the "View with a Chain" are a pack animal, a palfrey whose good bourgeois rider sits sidesaddle, and a corpse. While the others barely demand attention, the corpse is surprising and unsettling. It must be he that is the focus of this little tale of metamorphosis. If so, he might be one of the race horses, or barbari, by which Lorenzo de Medici fed his public reputation and facilitated his circulation among the nobility of Italy. Lorenzo was intimately involved with the stable and the animals. Politian told Lorenzo's biographer Niccolo Valori that when one particularly famous horse named Morello, was ill or exhausted from a race, lying on the floor of his stall, he would accept food only from Lorenzo and was cheered by his master's mere presence. For anyone aware of this intimacy, the corpse and the scavengers would have had a powerful resonance. What the figures of the bare stage of "Sardigna" can represent, then, are the losses that Florence had suffered since the composition of the original "Fiorenza": the deaths of Lorenzo and Savonarola.

Finally we come to the chain that frames the revised view of Florence and gives its name to the woodcut. It has been an object of curiosity since Heinrich Brockhaus began discussing the View in the seminars of the German Art Historical Institute in Florence in 1901. Brockhaus, not knowing of the engraving, dated the woodcut itself to the fifteenth century and connected the chain with the Alberti coat of arms loosely suggesting an attribution to the theoretician of map making. That interpretation makes less sense, of course, for an image of the early sixteenth century. The later date offers another possibility. The chain can be read as defining the city's momentary condition. Like defeated soldiers in a long tradition of images of triumph or the hero conquered by love in Politian's Stanze per la Giostra, the city is displayed in chains.

The "View with a Chain" is nothing if not a partisan image. The chain, the truncated laurel, the artist exposed on the barren hillside, the

the amnesty for the Medieances for which they successfully argued in 1495. (L. Polizzotto, The Elect Nation: The Savonarolan Movement in Florence 1494-1545, Oxford 1994, 48.) On their side, the Medieances attempted to integrate those who remained loyal to the friar into the regime that followed 1512. (Ibid., 242.) Distinguished Piagnoni held office under the Medici restoration in the hope of steering the new government toward moderation and republicanism. (Ibid., 251.) Even though the alliance failed, the hopes on both sides might explain the Savonarolan imagery in the "View with a Chain." Savonarola's embrace of the New Jerusalem myth after 1494 would have made Rosselli's print a congressional vehicle for rallying his followers. (Weinstein [as note 53], chapter 4, "Florence the New Jerusalem," especially 142-147 and 167-168.)

The representation of Savonarola's "martyrdom" calls attention to yet another potential theme of the Fiorenza engraving. I have interpreted the focus given the facade of the church of the Carmine as a device to measure time but it is also possible that the distortions were intended to call attention to the church itself. In the late fifteenth century, an image of the church might well have brought to mind the cult of the 10,000 Martyrs installed there in 1482 by Lorenzo de Medici. The feast was celebrated on June 22 so that the special light marks its date as much as the feast of San Giovanni. Richard Trexler, who drew attention to the new cult, associates it with the attempts on the life of Lorenzo in 1478 and 1481 and argues that Lorenzo began to think of himself as one who had almost given up his life for the state. The Savonarolans, who had good reason to think of the friar in the same terms, were among the most active in supporting the new cult. (Richard Trexler, Lorenzo de' Medici and Savonarola, Martyrs for Florence, in: Renaissance Quarterly 21, no. 3, 1968, 293-308.)

58 Biagio Buonaccorsi, Diario de'successi piu importanti seguiti in Italia, e particolarmente in Fiorenza dall'anno 1498 in fino all'anno 1512. Con la vita del magnifico Lorenzo de'Medici il vecchio scritta da Niccolo Valori patrizio Fiorentino, Florence 1568, 38-39. For the dating of Valori's biography see N. Rubinstein, The Formation of the Posthumous Image of Lorenzo de' Medici, in: Oxford, China and
discarded corpse of a (race)horse, and the men who fish for relics of the city's abandoned prophet all present a critical interpretation of the condition of Florence in the early sixteenth century. Probably produced in Venice, possibly commissioned by Mediceans in exile, the View can plausibly be read as protesting the captivity of the city at the hands of the republican usurpers and lamenting the passage of the Laurentian spring, the «Fiorenza (lieta)» that was the subject of the original engraving.

The artist of the woodcut «View with a Chain» faced a very different task of representation than his predecessor. He did not have to construct the complex record of the physical city or compose the image that gave it symbolic meaning. By reproducing verbatim the image of the city created for the «Fiorenza» engraving he was able to step back from the appropriated representation to comment on the present condition of the city. One of the results of this strategy is that, in the «View with a Chain», interpretation expands without any further impact on the topographic record. The technique inaugurated so modestly in Rosselli's engraving by the cartouche that spelled out a title heavily freighted with thematic associations is here extended by a range of figural devices all of which bear meaning and none of which demand any distortion of topography. The artist, lower right, sets the tone. The barren ground there and on the «Sardigna» is as much the landscape of Florence after the fall as the blossoming hillsides and well built city are of Fiorenza (lieta). On the river bank, outside the city walls, events from the years since the Medici expulsion create a composite narrative that fleshes out the post-lapsarian history. The impossibly scaled chain and lock are perhaps the most obviously symbolic supplements to the topographic record. Incongruous as part of a perspective picture, the series of links is also a pattern and thus a border, a commonplace of fifteenth century woodcut prints. All the elements that add new meaning to the woodcut transformation of the Fiorenza engraving are plausible, if improbable, participants in a scene that has been reconceived almost as a narrative. The artist observes, the enigmatic figures enact their dramas, the chain seals the secret. The city, untouched by the polemic raging at its periphery, remains the Fiorenza (lieta) of Florentine imagination and Rosselli's chorography of the 1480's.


59 To cite one example, the enemy soldiers that follow the triumphal car of the figure of Florence in Vasari's 1555 – 1561 painting on the ceiling of the Salone del Cinquecento in the Palazzo Vecchio that celebrates the defeat of Pisa in 1529 are restrained, and marked, by chains.

60 Angelo Poliziano, Stanze cominciate per la giostra di Giuliano de' Medici, ed. V. Pernicone, Turin 1954, 65 (book 1, stanza 10). After Giuliano falls in love, Venus says: Ma'l bel lullo ch'a' noi stato e ribello e sol di Delia ha seguito el trionfo o dirieto all'orme del suo buon fratello vien catenato innanzi al mio trionfo... 61 Boffito and Mori (as note 3), 20 note that the misspelled titles identifying buildings in the «View with a Chain» conform to Venetian linguistic usage by softening «ch» forms to «c», by omitting concluding vowels and writing «el» for «il». Both Rosselli and Lucantionio degli Uberti are documented as active in north Italy in the first decade of the sixteenth century, Schulz (as note 14), 19, n. 33, reports that Lucantionio is recorded at Verona in 1503 – 1504 and at Venice 1516 – 1520. Rosselli is documented in Venice in 1504 (Armstrong [as note 15], 74, n. 58) and again in 1508, when he attended a lecture given by Luca Pacioli (Ibid, n. 63).
Das Porträt im Frühwerk Adolph von Menzels


Daneben erweist sich Menzels Bildnis aber auch ganz den gängigen Darstellungsmodi verpflichtet, die in den 1840er Jahren, so Richard Hamanns Formulierung, »die repräsentative Mensendarstellung freier und harmonischer« auffaßte und die Figuren mehr mit dem Hintergrund zu verbinden und sie »mehr mit ihrem Milieu« zu erfassen trachtete.\(^1\)

Das Porträt von Clara Ilgner ist nicht Menzels einziges ganzfiguriges Bildnis – exemplarisch sei eine Bleistiftzeichnung von 1841 angeführt, die den mit Menzel befreundeten Maler Eduard Magnus darstellt (Abb. 2) –, doch ist es das einzige, das so dezidiert auf seinen repräsentativen Charakter angelegt wurde. Gemeinhin ist dieser Sachverhalt damit erklärt worden, dass Menzel dem Porträt keine künstlerische Bedeutung zuerkannt habe, alle Bildnisse von seiner Hand infolgedessen ausschließlich dem persönlichen Lebensumfeld entstammten und lediglich die Funktion privater Erinnerungsbilder erfüllten; »der ehrgeizige Menzel« habe sich – so die gängige Interpretation – schon frühzeitig als Historienmaler ausgeben\(^1\) und für den offiziellen Sektor das Historienbild als ranghöchste Gattung favorisiert.


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2 Richard Hamann, Die deutsche Malerei vom Ro-


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