

Thesis Completed (Abstract)

Domenico Angelo Zanrè. “*Quant'è bella giovinezza: Youth and the Medici in Later Quattrocento Florence.*” Master of Arts, The University of Hull, UK, November 1994.

Youth has always been an exceptionally traumatic period in the process of human development. This study examines the problems that upper-class young men confronted in *Quattrocento* Florence, and looks at the various ways in which the *giovani* interacted with society. Particular attention is paid to the relationship that was deliberately fostered by the Medici family between themselves and these young Florentine men; the reasons for this *amicizia*, and its resulting consequences, form an integral part of the discussion.

The first chapter offers a definition of who the *giovani* were. Also contained within this section is an evaluation of fifteenth-century attitudes towards youth – how young men were perceived by other members of the community, and the extent to which these views were justified.

The role of the *giovani* in the city's equestrian games is the subject of the second chapter. These jousts were of tremendous importance for Florentine youth; this chapter assesses how the Medici utilised these visual spectacles to advance their own programme of image-making, and to promote a personal cult of youth.

The third chapter focuses upon young men's participation – and its subsequent implications – in Florentine confraternal institutions. A comparison is made with the role played by their younger brothers, followed by a discussion concerning Medicean involvement in these organisations.

Giovani were specifically excluded from government service. Chapter Four examines the reasons for this, and compares the situation in Florence vis-à-vis under-age political representation with that of Venice. Young men did succeed in obtaining political offices; this was due mainly to the intervention of the Medici.

The conclusion proposes that Medicean involvement in the lives of the *giovani* was indeed extensive, and that the relationship that existed between them was not only mutually beneficial but immensely important.

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Acknowledgements

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III The Institutionalization of Youth: the Boys' Companies and the Adult Confraternities in Medicean Florence

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