DIGNIFYING THE SECULAR ODYSSEY: SALUTATI'S IDEAL AND DEFENSE OF THE ACTIVE CHRISTIAN LIFE

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During the Middle Ages the life of the monastic renunciation became the ideal Christian life. The walls of the cloister offered protection from the evils of the secular life; the monastic rule trained the will by means of ascetic discipline; scholarship and contemplative prayer led the mind and spirit to holy wisdom. To live outside the security of a religious order was to live a kind of risky, peripheral Christianity. Ordinary Christians, who lived in the world without the protective guide of the rule or the wisdom of the contemplative, lived an inferior life, for virtuous secularism was believed impossible. Of course the knightly ideal, pagan and Germanic in origin, survived for those with land and steed, despite perpetual efforts by ecclesiastical leaders to harness the warrior virtues. But laymen outside the fighting class had no ethical ideal. Absent, even from the literature on confession and penitential practice, was the notion that religiously earnest laymen might require a distinctive piety of their own.[1] In his description of the dilemma faced by Peter Abelard and his lover, Heloise, R. W. Southern describes the ethical void they confronted:

> They both despised lust and they both despised marriage as a form of legalized lust. Their age had not yet developed a plausible ethic for the secular life. Outside the monastic ethic there were only fragments of a classical ethic, difficult to combine with the needs of secular activity whether government, or trade, or marriage. Those who lived in the world were bidden so far as possible to be monks, and to make up the balance by supporting monks. Both Abelard and Heloise accepted this teaching. Their states of mind were very different, but in the end they had only one code of conduct to fall back on--the code of monastic Christianity.[2]

The fragments of the classical ethic of which Southern speaks were

revived during the Italian Renaissance. It was in Northern Italy that a more sophisticated, classically inspired laity asserted a new Christian active life ideal. Of course the classical *vita activa* ideal had to be adapted to Christian society, and eloquent Christian apologists who found the ascetic contemplative ideal flawed or deficient had to defend the secular life to Christians accustomed to measuring Christian virtue by the monastic plumb line.

The philosophical debates of the scholastic period helped expose weaknesses in the monastic ideal of renunciation by challenging some of the Platonic premises on which the contemplative ethic was based. Both Aristotelians and nominalists reaffirmed the nobility of the natural order, and nominalists undermined one of the primary purposes of contemplation when they argued that the human intellect cannot penetrate unrevealed spiritual truth.[3]

These ideas emboldened Renaissance humanists, but the Renaissance ideal of the *homo universale* did not take root easily for it was in many ways a direct contradiction of the virtues represented in the three monastic vows. Where the medieval monk vowed celibacy, many Renaissance humanists praised the married life and the benefits of the family. Where the monk relinquished wealth, men like Bruni and Bracciolini taught the virtuous use of money and the positive power of riches. While monks practiced humility through obedience to religious authority, Renaissance humanists sought fame as the just reward for excellence. If by the mid-fifteenth century the merchant, the family man, and the civic official could stand tall beside the tonsured, it was in large part because of the Italian Renaissance humanists.

One of the humanists who played a key part in sanctioning the active life was Coluccio Salutati (1331-1406). Like Cicero, Salutati was both a statesman and a man of letters. What is more important, he was also a Christian, and he defended the *vita activa* as a Christian, not as a Ciceronian.

Educated primarily in Bologna's rhetorical schools where ethical problems were most often dealt with from a Stoic rather than a Christian perspective, Coluccio lacked a real understanding of many basic Christian ideas. His early letters show a respect for academic contemplation and philosophical indifference to the things of the world, as well as confidence that the human will, through the *studia humanitatis*, could be trained for virtuous action. His was an almost Pelagian view of man. Armed with wisdom, he seems to say, man

can choose and live the good.[4]

In 1369-1370 Salutati was employed in the Roman curia. There he encountered the ideas of Augustine, Petrarch, William of Ockham, and Francesco Bruni. Under these new influences, Coluccio revised his earlier positions somewhat. For example he abandoned the Stoic view that virtue is completely within the individual's capacity, a simple matter of exercising the will. Like Petrarch and Augustine, he realized that the individual is dependent on the grace of God.[5] The lessons of life drove this idea home. In 1371 Salutati's pregnant wife died, just a year after the birth of their first child. Coluccio did not react with Stoic indifference. His despondency ran so deep that he tells of unbearable grief and uncontrollable weeping. Not only was his beloved Caterina dead; his career had come to nothing. He abandoned writing the *De vita associabili*, a work he had intended to refute Petrarch's *Vita solitaria*.[6] His hopes for fortune and fame deflated from disappointing positions in Rome and Lucca, Salutati returned to his home place, Buggiano, and remained there for nineteen months. Familiar and comforting friends and places revived the humanist. He remarried in 1373 and moved to Florence where he served as Chancellor from 1375 to 1406.

As chancellor of Florence Salutati acquired both fame and honor. During his time in office Florence fought the War of the Eight Saints against the Pope, suffered through the Ciompi revolt, and withstood the invasion of Milan's Giangaleazzo Visconti. By 1388, Coluccio's contribution was such that he was described as a "dazzling orator" and "a mirror of all natural and moral philosophy."[7]

Salutati's reputation rested almost entirely on his diplomatic correspondence and support for the Florentine humanist movement, for official duties left little time for serious study and writing. In the late 1380s the humanist made a determined effort to devote more time to studying and writing. As he studied, his ideas about classical and Christian teachings changed, becoming less conventional. Ronald Witt, Salutati's biographer, believes that 1381-1392 was the crucial period for the maturation of Salutati's thought, especially with regard to his position on the action/contemplation debate.[8] The 1390s were certainly the most productive years for the humanist; he completed four significant treatises between 1391 and 1400. The works most pertinent to this study are some of Salutati's letters and two treatises: the *De seculo et religione* of 1381, the

only work completed before the 1390s, and *De nobilitate legum et medicinae*, completed about 1399.

First to be considered is the *De seculo*. The treatise was written to a Camaldolesian monk who took the religious name Jerome. Jerome was considering abandoning his vows and his religious order. Salutati, who believed religious vows as irrevocable as the sacraments, wrote to dissuade Jerome and to convince him to remain firm in his commitment. The treatise is composed of two roughly equal parts. The first reviews the dangers and temptations of the secular life, and the second the advantages of the cloistered life. Here the humanist even uses the old argument that those who live by vows are destined for a greater reward in heaven.[9]

The *De seculo* is an interesting summary of traditional medieval arguments for the contemplative life, but it is not a genuine expression of Salutati's position on the relative merits of action and contemplation. The work was designed to be persuasive, and it has an air of exaggeration about it. The humanist carefully builds a massive wall of age-old arguments specifically designed to buttress the wavering will of the monk Jerome.[10] In short, the *De seculo* is a rhetorical work written for the spiritual direction of a particular monk; it is not a work that reflects Salutati's genuine convictions or the ambiguities which often characterized his thought on this matter. While there must have been moments when his busy career and his family of ten children caused Salutati to envy the quiet retreat of the cloister, there is no indication that he ever seriously considered the contemplative life for himself.[11] When the *De seculo* is placed alongside his other writings, especially later works that are less conventional, it is clear that this, Salutati's first completed treatise, expresses what Ronald Witt has described as "a Christianity not yet internalized."[12]

During the 1390s Salutati refined some of the Stoic concepts he had held for years with Christian insights that helped change his attitude toward the *vita contemplative/vita activa* debate. Some of the changes in the humanist's ideas are evident in his letters. In 1401 Salutati replied to a letter he had received from a friend, Francesco Zaberella. Zaberella had written a letter of consolation to Salutati upon the death of Piero, Salutati's favorite son. In his letter, Zaberella advised Salutati to adopt a Stoic idea about death. Salutati replies that while he once appreciated the Stoic goal of intellectual passivity, he believes such severe indifference is neither

possible nor Christ-like. "We have in our hearts," he writes, "something tender and fragile which has never learned to obey reason."[13] Salutati explains that Christ's love for the world was a passionate affection, that as the lover of mankind, Christ wept over Lazarus and the plight of Jerusalem, his *patria*. He who feels not these passions, asserts the humanist, "is not a man but a tree trunk."[14]

One sees in this reply only a hint of how deeply Salutati came to regard the *vita associabili*. He links his love of country and family to Christ's example and the duty of Christian charity. Where ancient authors had argued that it was part of human nature to be involved in a social and political environment, Salutati argued that for the Christian, commitment to the human community is required "by the order of divine law." Matthew 25 clearly states that to be pleasing to Christ and Christ-like the Christian must love and serve his neighbor.[15] Those who neglect the naked, hungry, imprisoned and sick are, according to scripture, clearly in danger of damnation. That Salutati turned the Christian ethic of charity toward God and neighbor into an ethic of civic obligation is evident in a letter of 1404 in which the humanist writes: "We are ordered to love our neighbors as ourselves, and Christ does not command impossible things of us. Who can prevent a truly perfect society and total friendship from existing on this basic belief common to all Christians?"[16] Salutati believed that because of Christ and the grace of God, the human community Aristotle praised could be bypassed in virtue and accomplishment by a Christian community if only Christians would take up their duties. "By embracing charity," writes Salutati, "we observe the plan and rule of the supreme creator. This above all else establishes man beyond man. . . . This beyond every virtue. . . will endure. . . after the end of the world."[17]

Just as Salutati abandoned the dispassionate Stoic notion that virtue lies in intellectual indifference, he also discarded the Stoic view of Fortune for the Augustinian idea of Providence. If God is truly all-powerful and the world is redeemed, the humanist argues, then Fate and Fortune have been subordinated and must by necessity flow from God's providence.[18] Salutati knew that historical time did not have the same quality before the Incarnation as it did afterwards. He assigned to each culture, ancient and Christian, its own character and its own providential place in God's scheme of

things. But he distinguished one from the other. For example, he notes a "decisive elevation in the value or consequences of human action" after the revelation of the Word.[19] Because Christ came, revealed what was required of Christians and provided the grace to carry out the commands, classical ideals cannot be emulated without regard for their religious implications. The Christian who leads a life of virtue must lead a life of Christian virtue. He must live in accordance with God's divine ordinances and rely on the assistance of divine grace.

As he reworked his Stoic views into a more Christian theoretical framework, Salutati began to reconsider his position on the merits of the *vita contemplativa*. In his earlier life he had been willing to accept conventional Christian teachings on the superiority of the contemplative life while he pursued the lesser virtues of Stoicism in the active life of the layman. As his views on Providence developed, Coluccio came to believe that God played an active role in the world by using the lives of Christian individuals. He realized that all human actions relate to God and one's ultimate destination that there can be no distinction between secular and religious ethics in a Christian world.

To defend the active life of Christian virtue, Salutati had to question the exalted position enjoyed by the Christian monks by challenging the goals and motives of the cloistered. The medieval contemplative abandoned the world and entered a cloister for a combination of reasons. First, he believed the world of matter and secular affairs to be a cesspool of unavoidable wickedness where even the most virtuous rarely survive temptation. Secondly, he hoped that by focusing on spiritual and intellectual matters and by devoting long hours to prayer and meditation he might encounter God while yet on earth, or at least acquire a certain holy wisdom. Thirdly, by sacrificing his free will to a rule and living ascetically, the cloistered hoped for a substantial heavenly reward. In the writings of Salutati can be found rebuttals to all three of these reasons for joining a religious order.

While the world is rightly regarded as a "sea of miseries and shipwreck of virtues"[20] says Salutati, it is also the place to which Christ came. The Incarnation proves that God has not abandoned his creation, but is committed to transforming it. In his view of the world, Coluccio finds a true *via media*. He is not like the classical pagan for whom action in this world has only worldly ends,

for Salutati believes that the Kingdom of God has penetrated the human domain. Nor does he take the position that lies one hundred and eighty degrees opposite this one. He does not believe that the world is so corruptibly evil that God in his anger has damned it and is willing to pluck from it only those few who have maintained such a distance from the muck of worldly affairs that they can be cleaned up, purged and made acceptable. Salutati believed that God's redemption plans were not just for individuals but for his entire creation. Those who choose the *vita activa* as Christians, choose to participate in God's providential plans for *transformatio mundi*. Thus Salutati links the *vita activa* of the layman to the City of God and to the Christian citizen, reconciling his deep involvement in human affairs with his Christianity.

But what of the contemplative's quest for holy wisdom, for unity with the divine mind and understanding of spiritual mysteries? Is this not man's highest calling? Salutati thinks not. Like William of Ockham, Salutati believed a great insurmountable distance separates the supernatural realm and the natural world of man. He adopted the fourteenth century notion that man can understand only *res mutabiles*, not *res aeternae*.[21] Thus human attempts to acquire a true foretaste of heavenly beatitude by attempting to know or experience God are vain efforts. For Salutati, contemplation "follows in time" the active life of virtue.[22] Humanity's only link to God in this life is through charity, an act of the will not the intellect. It is charity that ultimately links man to man as well as man to God. "Moral goodness is a quality of man alone," wrote Salutati. "By this goodness mortals ascend beyond themselves . . . and surpass the glory of all angels."[23]

Salutati's preference for the will over the intellect, and thus for action over contemplation, is most fully expressed in the *De nobilitate*. Witt believes that Salutati intended this work to be what the abandoned *De vita associabili* was meant to be, a firm defense for the active life. The *De nobilitate* includes five arguments designed to challenge the position of a Florentine physician who claimed more dignity and greater certitude for medicine than for law. Salutati broadened the argument contrasting the lawyer with the physician to represent the difference between the active life and the speculative life, between the will and the intellect. The lawyer represents the active life, the physician the speculative. With his knowledge of the law, a product of the human conscience and will,

the lawyer serves the entire community, and his eloquence benefits human society. But the physician devotes himself to speculative intellection. He spends his life in the study of natural philosophy, in seclusion, detached from the human community and the satisfactions thereof, pursuing uncertain truths that benefit only the very few. While Salutati agreed from the start to avoid using the term 'contemplation' due to its religious overtones and its theological significance, the implication that his critique of philosophical speculation extends to religious contemplation is ever present, especially in the fourth and fifth arguments.

The fifth and principal argument of the *De nobilitate* involves a discussion of the limitations of the intellect. Aristotle was wrong to argue that human felicity lies in speculation, says Salutati. Man can never know all the truth or have knowledge of God's essence. To place man's happiness in the intellect is to condemn him to frustration. Man will only know God and enjoy God fully in beatitude. Besides, to know (*scire*) is not sufficient to please God; one must also use (*dirigere*) what is known to perform virtuous deeds.[24]

In the fourth argument of the *De nobilitate* Salutati's defense of the law and the active life is based on the number who benefit therefrom. The good produced by speculation is singular, argues Coluccio, and without a universal end, while virtue and eloquence benefit the many. Contrasting his own way of life to the speculative life, Coluccio writes: "I am always busy with activity, aiming at the final goal so that whatever I do is advantageous to me, my family, . . . and what is before everything, my friends and the homeland. I act in such a way as to help the whole of human society by my example and with my works."[25]

The *De nobilitate* might be dismissed as a contrast of mere intellection and active virtue rather than a contrast of the *vita contemplativa* and the *vita activa* except that the same contentions appear elsewhere in Salutati's letters which deal directly with the contemplative or religious life. A letter written by Salutati to a monastic friend shows that the humanist also criticized the selfishness of religious intellection and withdrawal. The tone of the letter indicates that the monk to whom he writes has misunderstood the purpose of the Christian active life led by Salutati. It reads partly as follows:

> Do not ever think that I have toiled for the glory of inane fame, as I see you feel, but out of the desire of knowing and communicating what God has taught, so that I might benefit others and posterity, . . . You, as is the nature of holy rusticity, benefit only yourself; I attempt to be of aid to myself and to others.[26]

Salutati came to believe that to live the monastic life one must abandon earthly duty. While willing to concede that "different people come to God in different ways,"[27] he was no longer willing to recognize the monk as deserving of higher heavenly rewards. When he devised his own hierarchy of virtue, Coluccio actually reversed the medieval view he had espoused in the *De seculo*. On the bottom rung of the ladder connecting the natural sphere with the supernatural sphere he placed those who devoted themselves to the search for knowledge of divine and human things. On the second rung were the virtuous, those who acted on what they knew. On the highest rung were the wise and virtuous orators, those who were not only virtuous themselves, but capable, through compelling words and good conduct, to lead those who are ignorant or neglectful of virtue to perform good deeds. The virtuous orator furthers God's providential transformation of the world, and at the same time, improves the eternal destiny of individuals. Stated simply, Salutati's ethical ideal was the orator whose "eloquence is the embellishment of virtue."[28]

In a letter of 1398, written to a discouraged friend, Peregrino Zambeccari, Chancellor of Bologna, the important elements of Salutati's thought are all present. Zambeccari was considering taking religious vows, and he asked Salutati for advice on the matter. Coluccio argues that the monastic life does not ensure a greater heavenly reward. He emphasizes the will over the intellect, and insists that his friend not abandon his Christian civic duty and his role in God's providential plans for the transformation of this world. Men with superior gifts are called to public service and must fulfill their commitment to God by accepting their duty. In the letter to Zambeccari it is clear that Salutati not only grants moral parity to the *vita activa*, but identifies the monk with the biblical servant who received a talent from his lord, then buried it, earning his lord's displeasure. Select passages from this letter follow:

God has appointed you father of many and, because of blessings, the refuge and friend to many. He has made it so that in your commonwealth you are able to do more than generally anyone else. If you desert these obligations, will God not demand these things of you? You have received a talent; do not bury it but use it. Labor! Make yourself a useful servant! Pay back in kind what was given to you! Perhaps it is not God's will that you convert to another life. It is good and honest to love Mary, but it is better to imitate her. Know, ...that for this purpose we have no need . . . of solitude.

If you provide for and serve and strive for your family and your sons, your relatives and your state (which embraces all), you cannot fail to raise your heart to heavenly things and please God. Indeed, devoted to these things you are perhaps more acceptable since you not only claim for yourself the coexistence of the first cause . . . you work together with that same cause that provides for all.

Do not believe, my Peregrino, that to flee the crowd, to avoid the sight of attractive objects, to shut oneself in a cloister . . . is the way to perfection. If it (the cloister) will not admit . . . external things . . . it is the property of the mind always to think something.[29]

As for the idea that God finds the ascetic life more pleasing, Salutati states bluntly: "Jacob with twelve sons, so many flocks of sheep and two wives and so much wealth and property" was as acceptable to God as the Church's monks.[30] At one point in the letter Salutati reviews the reasons the contemplative life is regarded as the more perfect way. He admits that there is danger in activity of becoming more devoted to the creatures and creation than to the creator. Also, contemplation of God and spiritual matters does help one transcend time, and obtain a sweet foretaste of the pleasures of beatitude. But the *vita contemplativa* is not for everyone. Many times the active life is preferred; it too "opens the path to heaven."[31] If temporal activities, including contemplation and speculation cease with death, and give one only a mild incomplete foretaste of heavenly bliss, why not wait for the superior state to come with death? Besides, argues Salutati, eternal

beatitude will involve more than the intellect, it will also involve the will, for God is to be loved and enjoyed, not simply known. Just as Jacob had to buy and possess Leah before he could acquire Rachel, the Christian must place action before contemplation in this life.[32]

Like Aquinas, Salutati divided the universe into two spheres, the natural and the supernatural. He seems willing to concede that the contemplative life is superior in the life hereafter, but not in the here and now. Besides, concludes Salutati, the purely contemplative life is impossible and undesirable. Just as no active Christian can "entirely lack a contemplative element," no one can be totally "unmindful of the necessities of life in doing nothing for the situation of his fellow men."[33] The contemplative Christian must therefore avoid complete solitude and isolation while the active Christian must keep his actions tied to contemplation. To find favor with God, all Christians must live the mixed life.

In Salutati's letter to Zambeccari, softened somewhat beneath an affirmation of both contemplation and action, is a clear defense of the *vita activa* for Christians. The ideas presented represent a culmination of intellectual trends. His wide knowledge of scripture and Christian tradition, including his acquaintance with nominalism, gave Coluccio the intellectual assurance he needed to defy convention. His classical training gave him historical perspective and an appreciation of what men can accomplish if wisely directed. His family life and his position as chancellor of Florence heightened his sense of responsibility and obligation to others, and through them, to God. For Petrarch, the religious and the secular were in a state of perpetual tension. Salutati's crucial contribution was to integrate them, to reunite the City of God and the City of Man by reclaiming the virtuous active life for the layman. Coluccio was an eloquent apologist for the Christian man of action, and he was one of the first European thinkers to argue that the Christian citizen is morally equal, even superior, to the cleric or the monk. The consequences of the ethical reversal to which Salutati contributed have yet to come to full fruition. Religious men of action still work to carry out God's redemptive plans. One cannot help but ponder what Salutati would have to say about the Protestant idea of the calling, the religious arguments used by German peasants in the Revolt of 1524, or even the liberation theology.

NOTES

[1]Scholars who note the absence of a Christian lay ethic include: Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform, 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 53. R. W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 158.

[2]R. W. Southern, *Medieval Humanism* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1970), 95.

[3]Heiko Oberman, "Some Notes on the Theology of Nominalism with Attention to its Relation to the Renaissance," *Harvard Theological Review* 53 (1960): 47-69. Salutati has been closely linked with Aquinian and nominalist thought. For more on how he was influenced by the philosophers, see Ronald G. Witt, *Hercules at the Crossroads: The Life, Works, and Thought of Coluccio Salutati*, Duke Monographs in Medieval and Renaissance Studies, no. 6 (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1983), 345; (Hereafter, Witt, *Hercules*); Eugenio Garin, ed., *De nobilitate legum et medicinae, Edizione nazionale dei classici del verecundia pensiero italiano*, Vol. I (Florence: Vallechi 1947), introduction and pages 182-196, notes 362-365. (Hereafter *De nobilitate*) Berthold Ullman has done much research on the contents of Salutati's personal library. See B. L. Ullman, *The Humanism of Coluccio Salutati* (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1963). Ullman says Salutati used Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* and the *Commentary of Eustrachius* in his *De nobilitate* (pp. 261, 228). He possessed and quoted Iohannes Scotus' *Quaestiones* (p. 233). See also Charles Trinkaus, "The Religious Thought of the Humanists and Reformers: Anticipation or Autonomy?" *Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion: Papers from the University of Michigan Conference Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought* 10 (1974) Leiden: 348, fn 1.

[4]Coluccio Salutati, *Epistolario di Coluccio Salutati*, 5 vols. (Rome: Forzani E. C. Tipografi Del Senato, 1891-1911) 3:517, 651-652; 1:65, 122. (Hereafter *Epist.*) See also *De nobilitate.* sc. 5, 36; Ullman, *The Humanism of Coluccio Salutati*, 72, 74; Robert A. Bonnell, "An Early Humanist View of the Active and Contemplative Life," *Italica*, 43 (1966): 233.

[5]*De nobilitate*, sc. 3, 115. For more on the role of the will in Salutati's thought see Charles Trinkaus, *In Our Image and Likeness: Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought* 2 vols., (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1970), 1: Chapter 2; Euguenio Garin, *Italian Humanism: Philosophical and Civic Life in the Renaissance*, trans. Peter Munz (New York: Harper and Row, Publisher, 1965) 29 36.

[6]Despondency may not be the only reason Salutati abandoned this work. In all likelihood, he had not formulated the basis of a Christian argument for the *vita activa* at this time, and he knew his Ciceronian arguments were too weak to stand up to Christian tradition. The fact that the *De vita associabili* was never finished is not necessarily an indication, as Hans Baron argues, that Salutati abandoned the ideas he once held. He abandoned many works he intended to complete including plays, *De laboribus herculis*, and *De gloria*. For Baron's argument see Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (Princeton, N.J.: University Press, 1966), 107-114. See also Revilo P. Oliver, Review of B. L. Ullman's edition of Salutati's *De seculo et religione*, *Speculum*, 34 (1959): 134, fn 14.

[7]*Epist.*, 2:85. Witt, *Hercules*, 13.

[8]Ibid., 350.

[9]"To all Christians sowing in good soil a thirty-fold fruit is reserved, to clerics, a sixty-fold, to the religious, indeed a hundred fold." Coluccio Salutati, *De seculo et religione*, ed. B. L. Ullman (Florence; Leo S. Olschki, 1957), 163 (Hereafter *De seculo*); Charles Trinkaus, "Humanist Treatises on the Status of the Religious: Patrarch, Salutati, Valla," *Studies in the Renaissance*, vol. 11 (New York: The Renaissance Society of America, 1964), 33.

[10]Ullman, *The Humanism of Coluccio Salutati*, 20; Witt, *Hercules*, 206-207.

[11]Witt notes that Salutati troubled himself very little over family concerns, but left such matters to his wife, Piera. But the troubled climate in Florence in 1381 may have prompted some sympathy for the life of withdrawal. Witt, *Hercules*, 206-207.

[12]Ibid., 427. Alfred von Martin stands alone in believing the *De seculo* a genuine expression of preference for the *vita contemplativa*. See *Mittelalterliche Welt-und Lebensanscheauung im Spiegel der Schriften Collucio Salutatis* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg,

1913).

[13]*Epist.*, 3:468; Witt, *Hercules*, 356.

[14]Coluccio Salutati, "Letter to Peregrino Zambeccari," Benjamin G. Kohl, Ronald G. Witt and Elizabeth B. Wells, eds., *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978), 112.

[15]Ibid.

[16]*Epist.*, 4:20; Witt, *Hercules*, 344-345.

[17]*Epist.*, 1:247-248; Trinkaus, *In Our Image*, 75-76.

[18]Coluccio Salutati, *De fato et fortuna*, B.A.V., Fondo urbinate latino, Achivo di stato of Florence, Tr. II, 1, fol. 9; Witt, *Hercules*, 320.

[19]Ibid., 241.

[20]*De seculo*, Book 1; *Epist.*, 330; Bonnell "An Early Humanist View," 232.

[21]Marvin Becker, *Florence in Transition, Studies in the rise of the Territorial State*, vol. 2 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), 189.

[22]*De nobilitate*, 36; Trinkaus, *In Our Image*, 68; Bonnell, "An Early Humanist View," 232.

[23]*De nobilitate*, 202; Trinkaus, *In Our Image*, 69. On page 198 of *De nobilitate* Salutati writes: "Certainly it is the active life whose principle is the will, not the speculative [life], which is perfected by the intellect, which pertains to that true happiness and in that very beatitude the act of the will which is joy is nobler and more beautiful than the act of the intellect, which can be called contemplation or vision."

[24]*De nobilitate*, 164-166, 36; Witt, *Hercules*, 336.

[25]*De nobilitate*, 180; Witt, *Hercules*, 336.

[26]*Epist.* 2:542, Trinkaus, *In Our Image*, 54.

[27]*Epist.* 2:453; Witt, *Hercules*, 347-348.

[28]*Epist.* 1:76; Witt, *Hercules*, 68-70.

[29]The complete letter to Zambeccari can be found in: *Epist.*, 3:285-308; Kohl, *The Earthly Republica*, 93-114. Notes 30-33 refer to pages in Kohl.

[30]Ibid., 109.

[31]Ibid., 111.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Ibid.