

1545 Italian Courtesan Clothing

by Baroness Briana Etain MacKorkhill

When we think of Italy, we should remember that in the period we are discussing, it was divided into various duchies, princedoms, Papal states and even a Republic. Such divisiveness contributed to the political intrigue and economic situations that kept such territories in a state of flux and contention with each other. Each state not only vied for economic advantages, but also scrambled for Papal sponsorship and favor.

A new role for women

Against this tumultuous background, there arose a new role a woman could assume, that of the “honest” courtesan. Giovanni Burchard, the chronicler of Alexander VI (Borgia) was perhaps the first to use the phrase “*courtesanae honestae*” making explicit its derivation from the papal curia. He differentiated between them and common prostitutes, offering some piquant accounts of some of the games played at social affairs. And in Rome, according to a document in the *Archivio di Stato Fiorentino* the “honest courtesan” held the first of 3 classes of prostitutes. They were the “regents and goddesses” from nearly the beginning. An honest courtesan was independent, strong-willed, well-educated, liberated and often elevated to be an aristocratic companion. She was frequently fluent in several languages, achieved prominence in the arts – as poets, musicians, etc. – and would use her knowledge of classical literature to enhance her image. She was at once, companion, lover, confidant, and even advisor in matters both political and economic. “Continual dualism of free and yet bound”, best describes the balancing of a courtesan’s life. This, all in a time when women had very little freedom otherwise. There were few options open for their future: wife, nun, washerwoman/maid servant or, now, courtesan.

To become a wife meant a life locked away from the eyes of the world. Noble wives were jealously guarded and the marriages often were loveless, arranged for political alliances to strengthen family standings. Their main duty was to provide children to carry on the family line. Those of poorer families did not even have this option. The dowry value to marry escalated to such a level that in Venice the state finally instituted a ballot lottery system for “women at risk”. This allowed these poorer women an opportunity to have a suitable dowry in order to get married.

Joining a religious order also led to a life locked away from society, usually dedicated to charitable works. From some of the contemporary accounts, the conditions in the religious houses varied so widely that there wasn’t even an assurance that it would be a safe haven for anyone.

A servant’s life was never easy and, depending on what position was obtained, even hazardous. Even being a servant in a noble’s house was no guarantee of fair treatment.

The emergence of a courtesan role

With these other choices emerged the new choice of becoming a courtesan. Now most people automatically think that courtesan equaled prostitute. Not true. Although both accepted money for sexual favors, the similarity ended there. The courtesan was expected to stimulate all the senses not just the erotic ones. They lived in extreme luxury (supported by the generosity of their lovers), were expected to be witty, cultured and possess superior intellect. They were often praised for their beauty and demeanor and were escorted to all the banquets, parties and entertainments that the wealthy and noble class would hold. (A wife would never be allowed to be exposed to such events).

Rome had always had prostitution. Men outnumbered women and female companionship was always in demand. Being the seat of Papal power as well as a wealthy cosmopolitan city, officials, merchants and minor nobles all jockeyed for position. Many entertainments blossomed to provide opportunities for bribes, favors and the like. The new class of courtesans established themselves at the center of that tempest. They were accorded with such a rise of status that they were treated as aristocracy. As this new class became established, they embraced the arts and even political and economic situations with a passion that men began to find equally alluring. Hence, the courtesan became someone who they could rely on for advice and solace.

After 1527, the atmosphere changed in Rome. The clergy, in general, were less tolerant of the courtesan population and many fled to Venice. As a Republic, Venice offered a safe haven for these refugees and the Golden Age of Courtesans began.

Life as a courtesan

A lot of our information comes to us through many extant letters, plays and novellas by writers, historians, even disgruntled ex-lovers. All have slightly different views on their subjects, but together give us a multi-faceted insight on this phenomenon. One of the more fascinating and revealing contemporary works being the account of a fictional courtesan, Nanna, written by Pietro Aretino. In his *Dialogues*, Nanna is trying to decide on the life she wants to give her daughter Pippa, that of a nun, wife or courtesan. She describes her adventures in each category to her friend Antonia and finally decides on courtesan for Pippa. She then starts to instruct Pippa on the various techniques and behavior expected. While Aretino's perspective is rather prejudiced, the details of everyday life, surroundings and even table settings and food served, is wondrous. This major treatise on the courtesan was a social satire written with deliberately peppery and plebian language. Another important series of imaginary letters to sixty courtesans was written by Andrea Calmo. Calmo was one of the founders of commedia d'arte. These letters offer a unique view of a courtesan's life. They also have great importance since they offer a glimpse of plot sketches that were utilized and formulated into some of the first monologues of Pantaloone, the old Venetian merchant foolishly in love with young girls.

From the various contemporary accounts we glean the names of the most famous courtesans: Beatrice of Ferrara, Imperia of Rome, Angela del Moro, Camilla of Pisa, Tullia d'Aragona, Alessandra of Florence, Gaspara Stampa and, of course, the most famous, Veronica Franco. Each of these remarkable women has a wonderful and interesting personal story.

Many of the portraits that we gather information from depict the popular courtesans of the day. A great majority of the paintings depicting myths, biblical stories, etc. utilized courtesans as their models because a respected noble woman could not and would not pose for a painter, especially when partial or full nudity was to be painted. This explains why so many paintings appear to have the same women in them.

The Dress of the Courtesan

They wore what the nobility wore, most often what their noble patron provided for them. There was no separate dress style for them. The only difference might be a preference toward more flamboyant and showy gowns and many more party or court dresses because they attended them regularly. In later years, sumptuary laws were written (and ignored) to try and restrict what they could wear. Georgina Masson the author of *Courtesans of the Italian Renaissance* wrote that sumptuary laws:

"specifically stated that it was a public shame that prostitutes were to be seen in the streets and churches, and elsewhere, so much bejeweled and well-dressed, that very often noble ladies and women citizens [of Venice], because there is no difference in their attire from that of the above-said women, are confused with them; not only by foreigners, but by the inhabitants [of Venice], who are unable to tell the good from the bad...therefore it is proclaimed that no prostitute may wear, nor have on any part of her person, gold, silver or silk, nor wear necklaces, pearls or jewelled or plain rings, either in their ears or on their hands."

There are even accounts that some courtesans paid the fines gladly for the publicity/notoriety. It was good for business.

Characteristics of style

- Low square or rounded neck. Décolletage very characteristic.
- Tight-fitting bodice now comes down to near waistline and as the century advances, comes to a point in center front, dropping lower and lower. The closings are at the sides or side-back on both sides using spiral lacing to close. Sometimes the bodice is split down the front and laced or tied up. Often when the bodice is open it doesn't quite meet, displaying the camicia through the lacings or ties.
- Full cartridge, box or knife pleated skirts. All were employed equally.
- Sleeves are elaborate and usually full at some point. Many different styles were employed. All offer yet another opportunity to display wealth and prosperity.
- Corsetry, so popular in the northern countries of Europe, begins to be utilized by some. Others choose to merely stiffen their bodices without the extra layer that a corset requires. It is often theorized that because Italy is a more southern location, the extra warmth provided by the corset is unnecessary and hence unwanted.
- A bum roll is often added as a compromise to wearing a farthingale. This allows the

skirts of the gown to be suspended from the roll instead of a farthingale to achieve a desired silhouette. These grow in size toward the end of the century.

- The camicia or chemise is varied as well. Some retain the low square yoke or drawstring-gathered neck popular previously. As the century draws to a close, others assume the higher neck and, later, sport a small ruff at collar and wrists. Closed ruffs never achieve the width or exaggeration of those in the north.
- Fabric is elaborate and rich in both content and pattern. Brocades of silk, linen and wool are common. Cotton also takes its place as a highly prized and utilized material. Embellishment consists of braids, gimps, embroidery, couching, pearls and beading. But the embellishment usually is employed to highlight the richness of the fabric.
- Bold rich colors were favorites, most especially reds and crimsons. Metallic threads were utilized in abundance.
- Lace begins to appear on garments and quickly becomes highly desirable.
- Courtesans often wore men's garments for outings. This style became especially popular in Venice. Short knickers-like pants known as Venetians are often donned.

Many overlook the most important aspect when endeavoring to capture an overall look. That is accessorizing. Accessories complete the garment, turning it from good costuming to "stepping out of a portrait" appropriate clothing. These include:

1. Shoes

- a. Slippers worn indoors
- b. Chopines (pianella) worn outdoors. (High platform shoes.)
- c. Boots (when wearing men's garments)

2. Jewelry ensembles

- a. Necklace – often pearls, precious and semi-precious stones, gold and silver beads. Central pendant fairly prevalent. Very symmetrical in design.
- b. Jeweled girdle – large stones, beads and fine metal work, usually ending in a pomander or large pendant.
- c. Earrings – usually matches the necklace and utilizes the same materials.
- d. Rings – very popular and numerous. Older rings tended to have cabochon stones, latest fashion incorporated the new "faceting" of a stone. Unlike the faceting of today, the table was extremely broad and had very short sides.

3. Head covering had varied styles

- a. Veils – transparent, translucent and opaque all were used.
- b. Netted cap, hair net or caul.
- c. Turbans were still quite popular
- d. Elaborately braided hair with strings of pearls or ribbons and/or transparent veiling
- e. Venetian twin horns hair style. This hair style became most popular in the last quarter of the century.
- f. Caps with feathers
- g. "Mens" hats also were often worn.

4. Fans
 - a. flag – fixed square on a dowel.
 - b. feather – often with very full over-sized feathers from exotic birds.

5. Other accessories
 - a. small writing tablet (perhaps wax)
 - b. small book of poetry or prose
 - c. small pouch
 - d. any small items that might suspend from the girdle, (perhaps a rosary, keys, or scissors)

Methodology

In my initial research to start this project, I kept coming across descriptions such as this from Niccolo Martelli to a contemporary and friend Bernardo Buongirolami:

“With the rich and honored lady courtesans, one sees at once what they have to offer, and as it is their métier to give pleasure, they lay great store in doing so. Also because they have not only one lover and they know that any gaffe would cost them dear. The royal way in which they treat you, their graceful manners, their courtesy and the luxury with which they surround you, dressed as they are in crimson and gold, scented, and exquisitely shod – with their compliments – they make you feel another being, a great lord, and while you are with them you do not envy even the inhabitants of heaven”.

I also found references in a 16th century dyers handbook referring to crimson as the most expensive dye, so I knew that my dress would have to be crimson and gold. And as a successful courtesan, also have an abundance of pearls.

While visiting the Medici project online at www.medici.org, I found that one of the memos that they have translated and given a synopsis is one that Eleonora di Toledo sent to Agnolo Bronzino describing what dress she will wear for her upcoming portrait. Here is the translated synopsis and the original Italian excerpt:

Topic:	Costume and Dress p. 63 of 154
Date:	1549 January 20 Modern Reckoning: 1550
From:	Lorenzo Pagni, Sec. Notary
	Location: Poggio a Caliano
To:	Pier Riccio Proposto di Prato, Canon of Florence Cathedral (1538), Maggiordomo (1545)
	Location: Firenze
Synopsis:	Eleonora di Toledo provides explicit instructions regarding attire to be depicted by Agnolo Bronzino in portraits of Prince Francesco and herself, gifts to Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle [presumably at the court of Charles V, possibly in Augsburg at this time]. Francesco’s attire should reflect that worn at Genoa when he had been sent to greet Felipe II of Spain upon his arrival there].

Extract:	<p><i>[...] Parlando con la Duchessa n.ra s.ra [Eleonora di Toledo] per haver il saio di velluto rosso di Don Francesco et una robba di raso del medesimo colore di S. Ecc.a per mandarl'al [Agnolo] Bronzino, come V. S. m'ordinava con la carta sua di questa mattina, hebbi da lej questa risposta in queste o similj parole, cioè, "Come puede il Bronzino hazer el retratto di Franzischillo sin haverlo adelante?" lo replicaj che non sapevo altro che quel che V. S. mi domandava per dar fine a' ritratti che con molta instantia domandava Mons.re d'Aras [Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle]. Allora S. Ecc.a soggiunse ch'io scrivessi alla S. V. facesse intender a detto Bronzino che quanto al Francesco ne pingesse uno di tertio pelo rosso il più saio di Don bello che sapesse et potesse ma che l'accompagnasse con una robba fodrata di martore o zibellinj, non li parendo che questo signore horamaj s'habbi a ritrarre in solo saio, ma in una robba come fu visto a Genova. Et circa alla robba che si domandava da S. Ecc.a, mi dise il medesimo che del saio di Don Francesco, cioè, che il Bronzino ne pintasse una a suo modo di quel colore [...]</i></p>
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Starting out

The first step whenever I decide to recreate something in a portrait is to find that artwork in a digital medium. I will go out on the internet and see if I can find a gif or jpg of it. I was able to find this one rather quickly and right-clicked on the image and saved out the picture to my hard drive.

The next step is to load that image as my background wallpaper on my computer at home and at work. You may wonder why...I work on a computer everyday and seeing the image everyday helps me to analyze it almost subconsciously. This method has worked well for me with my last couple of projects.

Now that I have the image, I can call it up in any of my photo editing programs. I enlarge it so that I can see details. I also sometimes

lighten up the picture so that I can see details that the darkness of the image may cover up. Sometimes I even change the colors a little so that I can increase contrast, another way to extract details that might go unnoticed.

The Gown

The portrait above inspired my dress and set it's date to around 1545-1546. When I discovered the fabric for my dress at Cy Rudnick's, it was settled. It is an Italian red silk and gold metallic

brocade and was moderately easy to work except that it frays extremely easily, so easily in fact that I had to alter what I was going to do with the sleeves and trim. When I went to find trim at Master Andrixos booth at Lilies, nothing really went well with the fabric so I decided to experiment with my kumihimo braiding and instead of a single thread for each bobbin, I loaded four per bobbin. This gave the braid the thickness that I needed to use as trim. When I substituted gold thread for 4 of the bobbins, it turned out to have a lovely spiral effect and complements the fabric wonderfully.

Just like the last time I made this style of dress, there were challenges in the pattern itself. When I had constructed my Tudor style gowns, all the lacings were center back with only one opening. The bodice was cut on the straight of grain at the front and the back was attached through the shoulders in one piece and therefore angled off so that the back was actually cut on the bias. It worked great, because the shoulders never fell off or sagged from the weight of the sleeves. They were stretched by the bias cut and never went any further.

When I examined several books discussing the cut of the bodice for this dress, I discovered to my delight that the shoulders seemed to angle off again. But the huge difference was the back was cut on the straight of the grain and the side back lacing was on either side of center and angled. So the back part had to be a separate piece. Janet Arnold depicts Eleanor of Toledo's funeral dress (1562) in her book *Patterns of Fashion*, and her drawing indicates that the back is a separate piece with the shoulders attached at the top of the back.



While this dress is inspired from a slightly earlier time period, 1545, the side-back lacing would have been approximately the same from examining other painting sources. I drafted my pattern accordingly. After several adjustments and slopers, I settled on the current pattern. It definitely has a canted lacing but not quite as angled as I would have liked due to my body shape. It just didn't work at any steeper pitch. The bodice is fully lined with a matching colored cotton and has a stiff interlining of canvas to help provide extra support for the outer fabric. I have staggered the lacing holes to accommodate the spiral lacing method as was described in Janet Arnold's notes. The lacing rings are closed brass rings hand covered with three-ply embroidery thread. Because embroidery thread has a wider selection of colors than regular sewing thread, I can more closely match my fabric when I need to have the thread show, as in this case.

The skirt is attached to the bodice in this dress. We have examples of both attached and unattached skirts. It was constructed utilizing stacked box pleats that are evenly distributed around the waist.

The cording for the lacing was handmade using a kumihimo disk. Working with the lucet made my hands hurt and I was not pleased with how the lacings turned out. I even tried using finger-braiding but that experiment ended when my hands started cramping up. (I guess I have just enough arthritis from typing for a living that it is not an option.) Then I learned kumihimo braiding from a class at the Northshield Clothiers session. Here was something that created really nice cord and didn't make my hands hurt. So I have started to make all my cording with my portable disk. I realize that in period they would have used a marudai but this is so convenient and transportable and the end result is the same. Because

Venice was one of the premiere trading centers of the world at that time, it is certainly possible that this kind of cording was available to purchase in period.

The placement of the trim is inspired by portraits of the 1530s and 1540s. By placing it on the neckline and on the sleeves, the wonderful pattern in the fabric is highlighted. The sleeves are finestra or strip sleeves mimicking those of the painting done by Agnolo Bronzino. Her strips are joined by ties with cloth aglets - I chose to use large pearls as another chance to flaunt a disregard for the sumptuary laws of 1533. Many courtesans received their “payments” in jewels and pearls. They certainly would have used that bounty to decorate their lavish costumes. Conspicuous consumption was considered a sign of success and prosperity, and expected from a courtesan’s noble patrons.

Ribbons tie the sleeves to the bodice and they are finished with metal aglets or points. By the use of ties, a bodice might have several sleeves that could be worn with it and also gave the wearer the option to remove the sleeves if desired. I have placed a single stitch in each bow knot so that they will not come undone, often a period practice.

Partlet

When I first encountered this portrait by Agnolo Bronzino, I was struck by the elegance of the collar of this partlet. I personally don’t like something right at my throat, the main reason why I don’t go past 1550 because I would most likely have to wear a full ruff. This one, though, is open at the throat and yet rises up to frame the face. Using a semi-transparent fabric would also present a welcome challenge. I was hooked.



Once the portrait was analyzed for the first time, I started making my list of things that I would need in order to complete the partlet portion of the project. I determined that I would need:

1. needlelace for the points around the collar
2. bobbin lace for the edging of the opening up to the collar
3. small cording ties for the collar.
4. milliner’s wire for the frame work
5. and most importantly the correct weight and type of fabric.

Needlelace portion

I learned needlelace from Ly. Marianna de Fiorenza at a RUSH session a couple of years ago but had never made a large project before. This was a perfect opportunity to do just that. I started the Punta in Aria needlelace in August 2005. For this mini-project, I decided to try some 4-inch wide extra heavy drapery interface lining, similar to the weight of buckram, as my backing. This is commonly used to strengthen and support the tops of curtains. I could get it in any length and it would hold up to a lot of transport and flexibility.

I determined what pattern I would use from one of my lace books and sized it as I wanted it to be using graph paper. I purchased some heavy duty tracing paper and traced my pattern onto it and then turned it over so that the pen ink would not transfer to my lace.

I then started couching down my base DMC #10 cotton cording using regular sewing thread. It took about 32 hours to get the base cording couched down. Next I used DMC #30 thread to start covering the base cord and make the lace. The smaller size thread worked really well for this. I worked the bottom of the lace first. When I got to the points I decided to add a pearl at the top of each point. I tried to get pictures of this in progress but white on white did not come out well and I didn't realize it until the lace was complete. The needlelace part of this project was easy to transport and I worked on it whenever I could. It took about 106 hours to get 30 inches done. I will be making more of this for future projects.

Bobbin Lace portion

I started the bobbin lace at about the same time. It was not as transportable so it went a little slower. I used a basic ground pattern because this dress' time period is about 1545 and I wanted to keep it within simple geometric patterns. I also didn't want it to be very wide because it was just to be used to finish the edge. I needed about 72 inches. It took about 66 hours to complete the lace. I considered pearling the lace but time was an issue. I may go back and do so later.

Ties portion

I handmade the decorative ties extending from the partlet collar using the kumihimo braiding technique as with the cording for the dress lacings. I used the same thread as I used for the bobbin lace.

Partlet Fabric and Pattern portion

I knew that I would need to get the above portions started early and then I could turn my attention to the actual body of the partlet. I originally wanted a semi-transparent silk with small stripes in the fabric.

The only silk I found was at Cy Rudnick's and it was \$25 a yard at 36" wide. I felt that I would need 2 yards with the fabric that narrow. I was tempted and if it had been exactly perfect, I might have gone for it, but the stripes were way too close together. They were only about a quarter of an inch apart. I wanted them to be more like an inch apart. So I left there and decided to try Home Fabrics. There I found exactly what I had envisioned.

What I eventually found is not silk, unfortunately, but it certainly approximates a silk organza and has that wonderful semi-transparent nature to it and the stripes are exactly one inch apart with a single gold thread on either side of the white stripe. The best part was that the fabric was \$6.95 a yard and 110 inches wide. I only had to purchase 1 yard and I still have enough to make another partlet.

The pattern is taken from a historical pattern (see layout) where only the collar is fitted the rest is straight squares of fabric. I cut mine to be extra long on both the front and back to be sure that it did not come out of the dress. The shoulder seams were sewn on the machine for the initial seam and then hand stitched using a French seam stitch so that the seam allowances on the shoulders were protected from fraying and presented a finished look. The hems were finished by a blind hemstitch on the rest of the piece.

The Framework for the Collar

I spent many an hour analyzing the collar. Once I was able to enlarge the picture, it became quite apparent that there was a wire framework within the collar. (see enlarged detail) Once I got the collar cut out and sewn together (I did use the sewing machine for that) I turned my attention to the actual framework. I had some milliner's wire from a previous project. It did give me some grief because it had been in a tight circle for so long that it didn't want to lie flat but I finally coerced it. I built the frame for the inside of the collar and interwove the wires to give it more stability. The verticals are aligned with the stripes and the frame was quite a challenge, but it was fun to finally get the look I wanted. Once I determined that the frame would fit within the collar well, I sewed one side of the collar to the body of the partlet and then inserted the frame into the collar. I made sure that there was enough space so that I could blind hem the inside of the collar to secure the framework within the collar. Finally, I tacked the vertical wires in place so that they don't lose their position or shape.

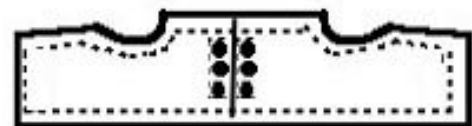
To finish the partlet, I attached the decorative cording to the collar on each side and attached cording to the front opening. The below the armpit side fabric ties were then added. Then I attached the bobbin lace to the inside and outside edge of the front opening. Lastly I sewed on the needlelace.

Camicia

The camicia or chemise was constructed for a previous project. It has extra full sleeves with pleated cuffs. The camicia could have been made of linen, silk or cotton. In one of Calmo's "letters" written to a courtesan by the name of Madame Lucida, he describes his belongings, bragging to her that one of his dressing gowns is made of such fine cotton as to fit in a nutshell.

Small corset

The small corset that accompanies this garment has been adapted for my use. I cannot wear a full corset any more due to medical conditions. However, I have constructed this one to provide the support so necessary for the overall look of the garment. With this development, I will now be able to wear this and other "court" dresses more often.



Underdrawers

The underdrawers are from a previous project. Actually one of the first large projects I ever made (read 18 plus years ago). They are constructed from a cotton muslin that approximates a linen weave that would have been used. I intended to replace these with some made just for this project but ran out of time. (See example of a set from Venice).



Shoes

The slippers are a very short-cut black velvet. I ordered them from Pillaged Village. Because of foot health problems, I don't often make shoes. I also had plans to make chopines but didn't want to rush their construction. I would not have worn them much at all because of the foot problems.

Jewelry

No gown is complete without appropriate jewelry. By this time, jewelry is now coordinated for a particular gown or color of gown. I have completed my ensemble with a suitable suite of jewelry. The pearl necklace with the pendant pearl accompanies the long rope of large pearls. I made my earrings from some drop pearls and I have included various rings to coordinate with the rest of the ensemble. My pearl and gold girdle belt with elaborate pearl tassel completes this ensemble. Veronica Franco was said to have had a rope of 51 pearls that were confiscated under one of the sumptuary laws. (She did file suit against her cook when a prayer book and other small valuables turned up missing. The complete details are well documented in the Venetian court documents of the time.)

Headwear

I have experimented with a period-inspired coronet to wear with this dress. This one actually opens at the back so that it can be fitted around my arranged braids. Something that was inspired from several portraits in *Moda a Firenze*. Head coverings by this time varied widely, from elaborate turbans to more minimal efforts like perhaps a hair net or transparent veil. Hair became the central focus and was elaborately crimped, curled and braided often incorporating strings of pearls and gems.

Miscellaneous accessories

I have also acquired a feather fan to complete the effect. Cosmetics were lavishly used as well as perfume. Many period sermons were delivered against the evils of such things saying that women should be content with what God had given them.

Selected Resources

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Visual References

Portrait of a Noblewoman, Agnolo Bronzino, 1544-45.
This is the dress that inspired the whole project. Note the partlet, sleeve construction, pleated skirt.



Portrait Of A Woman, Bernadino Licinio, 1530s
Note the two part sleeves and the low square neckline. Also note the rich crimson color and it's paring with gold. Her skirt is evenly pleated.

Portrait of a Young Girl, Agnolo Bronzino, 1541-45.
Note the sleeves and the fit of the bodice. Also characteristic of the time is the low wide neckline. Jewelry matches the gown.



Bia deMedici, Agnolo Bronzino, 1542.

Note the full box pleated skirt. She also has a metal girdle of braided and has no discernible head covering.



1533

...rtlet and jeweled belt. Her pearl necklace with a ...d. She has a beautiful turban style headdress on. Her

Eleanora di Toledo, Agnolo Bronzino, 1550's.

It also appears that the sleeves are made similar to her black couchwork carried through onto the sleeves. At the left side pearl points for the ends of her ribbons.

