

Spring 5-15-2015

# Michelangelo and Pope Paul III, 1534-49: Patronage, Collaboration and Construction of Identity in Renaissance Rome

Erin Christine Sutherland  
*Washington University in St. Louis*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/art\\_sci\\_etds](https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/art_sci_etds)



Part of the [Classical Archaeology and Art History Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Sutherland, Erin Christine, "Michelangelo and Pope Paul III, 1534-49: Patronage, Collaboration and Construction of Identity in Renaissance Rome" (2015). *Arts & Sciences Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 451.  
[https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/art\\_sci\\_etds/451](https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/art_sci_etds/451)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Arts & Sciences at Washington University Open Scholarship. It has been accepted for inclusion in Arts & Sciences Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Washington University Open Scholarship. For more information, please contact [digital@wumail.wustl.edu](mailto:digital@wumail.wustl.edu).

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS

Department of Art History & Archaeology

Dissertation Examination Committee:

William E. Wallace, chair

Marisa Bass

Daniel Bornstein

Nathaniel Jones

Angela Miller

Michelangelo and Pope Paul III, 1534-49:

Patronage, Collaboration and Construction of Identity in Renaissance Rome

by

Erin Sutherland

A dissertation presented to the  
Graduate School of Arts & Sciences  
of Washington University in  
partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree  
of Doctor of Philosophy

May 2015

St. Louis, Missouri

©2015, Erin Sutherland

# Table of Contents

List of Figures .....	iv
List of Abbreviations .....	ix
Acknowledgments .....	x
Abstract.....	xii
Introduction .....	1
Chapter 1. Frameworks and Foundations.....	13
1.1 Patronage: Finances and Favors .....	13
1.2 Strategic spending: Patrons as Heroes and Authors .....	17
1.3 Michelangelo and Patronage .....	21
1.4 Michelangelo’s Objectives .....	34
1.5 The Church and Rome prior to 1534.....	34
1.5 Ruins and Relics of the Vatican and Rome .....	37
1.6 Pauline Objectives .....	39
Chapter 2: The <i>Last Judgment</i> .....	41
2.1 Pope Paul III as Patron .....	42
2.2 Artistic Innovations .....	56
2.3 The <i>Last Judgment</i> and Papal Objectives.....	65
2.3.1 Christ’s Celestial and Earthly Kingdoms .....	65
2.3.2 The Vatican: Sacred Capital of Christendom.....	72
2.3.3 The Respublica Christiana .....	102
2.3.4 Reconstructing the Identity of the Church and Defending the Faith .....	107
2.4 Conclusion.....	115
Chapter 3: The Pauline Chapel frescoes:.....	117
3.1 Creating a <i>locus sanctus</i> in the Apostolic Palace .....	117
3.1.1 Connections Between the <i>Last Judgment</i> and the Pauline frescoes.....	120
3.1.2 Behind Closed Doors: The Parva and Pauline Chapels.....	122

3.1.3	A Visit to the Pauline Chapel .....	132
3.1.4	Michelangelo's Frescoed Narratives .....	137
3.2	The Commission:.....	140
3.2.1	Vasari and Mistakes or Changes .....	141
3.2.2	Which Fresco was Painted First? .....	143
3.2.3	The Pairing of Scenes.....	144
3.2.4	Raphael's Tapestries.....	146
3.3	Apostolic Predecessors.....	151
3.4	Paul's Ceremonial Complex.....	159
3.5	Michelangelo's Final Frescoes .....	163
3.6	Rituals and Representations .....	170
3.7	Conclusion.....	183
	Chapter 4: Kid Gloves and Carrots: The Artist's Benefits.....	185
4.1	A Papal Brief, 1 September 1535.....	186
4.1.1	Unprecedented Honors .....	186
4.1.2	Salary and Benefits.....	189
4.1.3	The Artist as Papal <i>Familiar</i> .....	196
4.1.4	Expectations .....	199
4.2	Comparison of Michelangelo to Court Artists .....	200
4.2.1	Contracts and Gentlemen's Agreements .....	204
4.2.2	Money Matters.....	206
4.3	Social Standing of Michelangelo and the Buonarroti.....	207
4.4	Summoned, Slighted and Enticed: Michelangelo and the Popes .....	213
4.5	Social Networks.....	216
4.6	Fellowship of the Aged .....	217
4.6.1	Friendship and Noble Delicacies.....	218
4.7	"For the love of God" .....	224
4.8	Michelangelo Distinguishes Himself From the Setta Sangallesca.....	228
4.9	Artistic legacy.....	233
	Conclusion.....	241

Bibliography .....	245
Figures .....	261
Curriculum Vitae.....	316

# List of Figures

(measurements are given as height x width)

Figure 1: *Last Judgment*, Sistine Chapel, Vatican, fresco, 14 m. x 13.18 m.

Figure 2: *Conversion of Saul*, Pauline Chapel, Vatican, fresco, 6.25 m. x 6.61 m.

Figure 3: *Crucifixion of Peter*, Pauline Chapel, Vatican, fresco, 6.25 m. x 6.62 m.

Figure 4: Partial plan of Apostolic Palace, after Letarouilly

Figure 1.1: Maarten Van Heemskerck, *View of New St. Peter's Basilica*, 1536

Figure 1.2: Giovanni Battista Naldini, *New St. Peter's Basilica under construction, with view of Tegurium*, ca.1563

Figure 2.1: Sketch for Christ and the saints, black chalk, ca. 1534, 34.5 x 29.1 cm. Bayonne , Musée Bonnat, inv. No. 1217, recto.

Figure 2.2: Sketch for the *Last Judgment*, black chalk, retouched later in pen, ca. 1534, 41.7 cm. x 29.7 cm. Florence, Casa Buonarroti, inv. no. 65 F, recto

Figure 2.3: Sistine Chapel ceiling, detail of area above half of chapel closest to the altar, fresco, 1508-12

Figure 2.4: *Ignudo* from Sistine Chapel Ceiling, fresco, 1508-12

Figure 2.5: *Last Judgment*, detail from left side

Figure 2.6: Giotto, *Last Judgment*, Arena Chapel, Padua, west wall, fresco, c.1305

Figure 2.7: *Last Judgment*, detail of central portion of fresco

Figure 2.8: *Last Judgment*, detail of martyrs next to right edge of wall, above second corbel

Figure 2.9: *Last Judgment*, late afternoon without electric lights

Figure 2.10: *Last Judgment*, early evening without electric lights

Figure 2.11: *Last Judgment*, just before sunset without electric lights

Figure 2.12: *Last Judgment*, detail of area near lower left corner

Figure 2.13: Lucas Cranach, *The Papal Ass*, 1545, woodcut

Figure 2.14: Torre Paolina on the Capitoline Hill (now destroyed), photo, 19<sup>th</sup> c.

Figure 2.15: Du Pérac-Lafréry, Map of Rome, 1577, detail of Capitoline area with Torre Paolina, circled in yellow walkway to San Marco circled in blue, Palazzo San Marco circled in purple and the Macel de'Corvi indicated in green. The Church of S. Maria sopra Minerva is at the upper right.

Figure 2.16: Sancta Sanctorum, late 13<sup>th</sup> c.

Figure 2.17: *Coronation of the Virgin*, Santa Maria Maggiore, mosaic, late 13<sup>th</sup> c.

Figure 2.18: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Coronation of the Virgin*, Tornabuoni Chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence, fresco, 1486-90

Figure 2.19: Fra Angelico, *Annunciation*, Diocese Museum, Cortona, tempera on wood panel, 1433

Figure 2.20: Raphael, *Dispute on the Blessed Sacraments* (detail), fresco, 1508-11

Figure 2.21: Filippino Lippi, *Assumption of the Virgin*, Caraffa Chapel, Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, 1489

Figure 2.22: Antonio Lafréry, Map of the Seven Pilgrimage Churches of Rome, 1575

Figure 2.23: Study of Christ, the Virgin and the martyrs in the *Last Judgment*, Uffizi 170s, black chalk, 19.3 x 28.5 cm.

Figure 2.24: *Last Judgment*, left lunette

Figure 2.25: *Last Judgment*, right lunette

Figure 2.26: Filarete, *Ethiopian and Coptic Delegates to Council of Florence* (1438-39) bronze door of St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican

Figure 2.27: Martin Luther and Cranach the Elder, *Passional Christi und Antichristi* (Wittemberg: Grünenb), 1521, woodcut with printed text, Royal Library, Copenhagen, pub. 1521.

Figure 2.28: Martin Luther and Cranach the Elder, *Passional Christi und Antichristi* (Wittemberg: Grünenb), 1521, woodcut with printed text, Royal Library, Copenhagen



- Figure 2.29: Joachim Vadianus, *Das Wolffgesang* (Augsburg: Ulhart), 1522, woodcut with printed text, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek
- Figure 2.30: Anonymous, engraving after Sebastian Werro, drawing of *confessio* of Old St. Peter's, 1581, Bibliothèque Cantonal et Universitaire in Friburg, Switzerland
- Figure 2.31: Stone formerly covering the tomb of the Apostle Paul, n.d., marble, Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls
- Figure 3.1: Pauline Chapel, south wall with Michelangelo, *Conversion of Saul*.
- Figure 3.2: Pauline Chapel, north wall with Michelangelo's, *Crucifixion of Peter*
- Figure 3.3: Partial plan, Apostolic Palace before 1534, Vatican, after Christof Frommel
- Figure 3.4: Anonymous, *Corpus Christi Procession*, before 1650
- Figure 3.5: Francesco Piranesi, *Devotion of the Quarant'Ore in the Pauline Chapel*, 1787, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
- Figure 3.6: Sala Regia, southern wall with entrance to Pauline Chapel
- Figure 3.7: Interior of Pauline Chapel
- Figure 3.8: Antonio Sangallo the Younger, plan of the Pauline Chapel, UA112
- Figure 3.9: Pauline Chapel, vault of the main chapel area
- Figure 3.10: Pauline Chapel, view from center of chapel toward altar. On the left, Lorenzo Sabatini's *Baptism of Paul* (1573) is visible. On the right, Federico Zuccari's *Baptism of the Centurion* (1580-85) is visible
- Figure 3.11: Filarete, *Martyrdom of Paul*, from bronze door at St. Peter's Basilica, 1447
- Figure 3.12: Mosaic in the apse of Old St. Peter's Basilica, colored drawing by Giacomo Grimaldi (Codex. Barb. Lat. 2773 f.158r.-159v.) before demolition by Paul V in 1605
- Figure 3.13: Raphael, *Conversion of Saul*, tapestry (woven in Bruges)
- Figure 3.14: Giorgio Vasari, *Gregory Restoring the Papacy to Rome*, Sala Regia, fresco, 1573
- Figure 3.15: Tiberio Alfarano, Plan of St. Peter's Basilica, engraved in 1590 by Natale Sebenico
- Figure 3.16: Tiberio Alfarano, Detail of Plan of St. Peter's Basilica, engraver unknown, 1590

Figure 3.17: Giacomo Grimaldi (Codex. Barb. Lat. 2773 f.160v.) Ciborium over the main altar, Old St. Peter's Basilica

Figure 3.18: *Crucifixion of Peter*, from the front of the ciborium of Sixtus IV, marble relief, c.1471-84

Figure 3.19: *Beheading of Paul*, from the back of the ciborium of Sixtus IV, marble relief, c.1471-84

Figure 3.20: Eight figures, probably used to frame long reliefs on each side of ciborium of Sixtus IV, marble relief, c.1471-84

Figure 3.21: Reconstruction of ciborium in Old St. Peter's, with relief sculptures in blue. After Antonio Pinelli, ed., *La Basilica di San Pietro in Vaticano* (Modena: F.C. Panini, 2000).

Figure 3.22: Filarete, *Martyrdom of Peter*, from bronze door at St. Peter's Basilica, 1447

Figure 3.23: Giotto, Stefaneschi altarpiece, c.1300, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca, Vatican

Figure 3.24: Sala Regia, view toward papal throne, ceremony 2011

Figure 3.25: Sala Regia, view from papal throne toward Pauline Chapel

Figure 3.26: *Stucchi* figures above an entablature in Sala Regia, Vatican, stucco

Figure 3.27: Étienne Dupérac, engraving showing Pope Pius V conferring title of grand duke of Tuscany on Cosimo I de' Medici, 1570s, detail showing Swiss guards

Figure 3.28: Conclave plan, 1549-50

Figure 3.29: Conclave plan, 1555

Figure 3.30: Lorenzo Sabatini, *Baptism of Paul*, 1573, Pauline Chapel, Vatican, fresco

Figure 3.31: Conclave plan, 1605

Figure 3.32: Conclave plan, 1667, detail

Figure 3.33: Prudentius, *Psychomachia*, (St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 135) f.400r. 23 x 16 cm, parchment, 10<sup>th</sup> century—third quarter of 11<sup>th</sup> century

Figure 3.34 St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican, exterior of north transept.

# List of Abbreviations

ASF: Archivio di stato di Firenze

ASP: Archivio di Stato di Parma

ASV: Archivio Segreto Vaticano

BAV: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

CB: Casa Buonarroti

ARFSP: Archivio della Reverenda Fabbrica di San Pietro

# Acknowledgments

The Graduate School of Arts & Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis has generously granted me fellowships, research funds and teaching opportunities. I appreciate my dissertation committee for asking great questions. Daniel Bornstein deserves an award for copyediting this entire text on a transatlantic flight. Many librarians and archivists helped me, especially Jenny Akins and Gretchen Dalzellhas. Staff at Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica, Archivio della Reverenda Fabbrica di S an Pietro, and Archivio di Stato di Roma assisted my searches. Betha Whitlow has helped obtain and manage images. I have enjoyed many discussions about the Reformation (and proper Neapolitan pizza) with Phil Gavitt at the Good Pie. With the deepest admiration, I thank Alicia Walker for being tough when necessary, but always encouraging and compassionate. I am grateful to Nancy Rubin for kindness and Kathy for wisdom. I am deeply indebted to Bill Wallace for generously sharing his time, his books, and his unparalleled knowledge of Michelangelo. Our visit to the Pauline Chapel and subsequent comparison of notes was my best day of dissertation research. Our long discussions of all things Michelangelo are the fun part of being a scholar; I look forward to many more. Phyllis Erickson supported much of my research abroad. Theresa Huntsman and Sarah McGavran are dear friends and insightful art historians. I thank Lucia Menelli for lively conversations. Athena Fredericks is a tough critic and a cherished workmate. My parents, Tonya, Clifton and Diana have all encouraged me. Cliff Minter has listened to every idea in this dissertation and never once complained.

Erin Sutherland

*Washington University in St. Louis*  
May 2015

Dedicated to Cliff  
for always reminding me why I started

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Michelangelo and Pope Paul III, 1534-49:

Patronage, Collaboration and Construction of Identity in Renaissance Rome

by

Erin Sutherland

Doctor of Philosophy in Art History and Archaeology

Washington University in St. Louis, 2015

Professor William E. Wallace, Chair

For his greatest patron, Pope Paul III Farnese (1534-49), Michelangelo painted the *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel, two monumental frescoes in the Pauline Chapel, and managed the design and reconstruction of St. Peter's Basilica. The pope and artist maintained a harmonious and remarkably productive association for the entirety of Paul's fifteen-year pontificate. The artist's projects at the Vatican defined the most important sacred spaces of Renaissance Rome and helped construct the identity of the papacy at the inception of the Counter-Reformation. At the same time, these are the finest examples of Michelangelo's mature painting and architecture. Following Giorgio Vasari's example though, art historians have paid remarkably little attention to Michelangelo's interactions with his most significant patron. My dissertation examines the relationship between these two men, the significance of these works as an ensemble, and how the projects advanced the multi-faceted agendas of both the artist and his powerful patron.

# Introduction

Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* fresco in the Sistine Chapel, and his frescoes of the *Crucifixion of Peter* and *Conversion of Saul* in the Pauline Chapel are integral to the ceremonial core of the papal palace at the Vatican (figs. 1-3). The sexagenarian artist executed these paintings during a remarkably productive period, in which he collaborated with his most important patron, Pope Paul III (b. Alessandro Farnese in 1468, r. 1534-49). For this same patron, Michelangelo also worked on the most ambitious private residence (the Farnese Palace), the most perfectly articulated urban space (the Capitoline Hill) and the most important church in

the Eternal City (St. Peter's Basilica).<sup>1</sup> As the most comprehensive consideration of the patronage relationship between Michelangelo and Paul to date, this study reconsiders the paintings of the Sistine and Pauline Chapels through the neglected lens of patronage. Examination of Paul's multi-faceted objectives sheds light on the significance of the frescoes. Paul's engagement with Michelangelo on one project after another suggests that the patron was well satisfied. The success of this partnership offers insight into the artist's professional and personal priorities and suggests reasons that other patrons had less success obtaining work from the highly-sought-after artist. My approach to patronage studies is one that returns to the essential tasks of the art historian: formal analysis and interpretation of works of art in the original architectural and historical context.

---

<sup>1</sup> James Ackerman summarizes Michelangelo's work on each of these projects in *The Architecture of Michelangelo: With a Catalogue of Michelangelo's Works* by James Ackerman and John Newman, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); also see Giulio Carlo Argan and Bruno Contardi, *Michelangelo Architect*, trans. Marion L. Grayson (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993). On the Capitoline project, see *ibid.*, 252-263; Marianna Brancia di Apricena, "La committenza edilizia di Paolo III Farnese sul Campidoglio," *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 32 (1997): 409-78; Anna Bedon, *Il Campidoglio: Storia di un monumento civile nella Roma papale* (Milan: Electa, 2008), 106; Arnaldo Bruschi, "Roma Farnesiana. Città e architettura al tempo di Paolo III. Il caso del complesso Capitolina," in *Per Franco Barbieri: Studi di storia dell'arte e dell'architettura*, ed. Elisa Avagnina and Guido Beltramini (Venice: Marsilio, 2004), 131-53. Michelangelo's contribution to the Farnese Palace is primarily the third story and monumental cornice. Ferdinand Henri de Navenne, *Rome et le Palais Farnèse pendant les trois derniers siècles* (Paris: E. Champion, 1923); François-Charles Uginet, François Fossier, and Ecole française de Rome, 2 vols., *Le Palais Farnèse* (Rome: Ecole française de Rome, 1980-1981); Sabine Eiche, "July 1547 in Palazzo Farnese," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 33, no. 2/3 (1989): 395-401; Emanuela Ferretti, "Palazzo Farnese," in *Michelangelo: Architetto a Roma* (Milan: Silvana, 2009): 158-69. For discussion of Michelangelo's work on New St. Peter's Basilica, see: Federico Bellini, *La basilica di San Pietro: da Michelangelo a della Porta*, 2 vols. (Rome: Argos, 2011); Anna Brodini, "San Pietro in Vaticano," in *Michelangelo: Architetto a Roma*, ed. Mauro Mussolin. (Milan: Silvana, 2009): 170-80; Vitale Zanchettin, "Il tamburo della cupola di San Pietro in Vaticano," in *Michelangelo: Architetto a Roma*, 180-99; Ennio Francia, *1506-1606: Storia della costruzione del Nuovo San Pietro* (Rome: De Luca, 1977), 71-87.



In discussing Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, Giorgio Vasari (1511-74) rightfully anticipated that the masterpiece would enrich the legacies of both the artist and patron.

Truly blessed may he be called, and blessed his memories, who has seen this truly stupendous marvel of our age [the *Last Judgment*]! Most happy and most fortunate Paul III, in that God granted that under thy protection should be acquired the renown that the pens of writers shall give to his memory and thine! How highly are thy merits enhanced by his genius! And what good fortune have the craftsmen had in this age from his birth, in that they have seen the veil of every difficulty torn away, and have beheld in the pictures, sculptures and architectural works executed by him all that can be imagined and achieved!<sup>2</sup>

Vasari credits Paul with offering the protection (or support) under which Michelangelo achieved fame. Indeed, the *Last Judgment*, Pauline Chapel frescoes, along with the architectural projects undertaken at the pope's behest, comprise the finest examples of the artist's mature style. No Renaissance artist has a comparably prestigious list of commissions in Rome, or elsewhere in Europe.

Vasari's easily overlooked comment on Paul's role in bolstering Michelangelo's fame warrants consideration. Although Vasari recognizes the patron's contribution to Michelangelo's success, he devotes more of the artist's biography to discussing interactions with Lorenzo de' Medici (1449-1492) and Julius II (r. 1503-13). Emphasis on Lorenzo's cultivation of the young Michelangelo surely relates to Vasari's interest in the artist's development as well as the fact that Vasari enjoyed patronage of the Medici popes, Leo X (r. 1531-21) and Clement VII (r. 1523-25), as well as Duke Cosimo de' Medici. Interest in Julius II is probably due largely to the availability of several written accounts attesting to the contentious relationship between

---

<sup>2</sup> Giorgio Vasari, *The Great Masters*, ed. Michael Sonino, trans. Gaston du C. de Vere (Hong Kong: Beaux Arts Editions, Hugh Lauter Levin, 1986), 274. Subsequent quotes of Vasari's text are taken from a different translation. In this instance, de Vere's translation is clearer.

Michelangelo and Julius.<sup>3</sup> The cooperative relationship between Michelangelo and Paul lacks the salacious appeal of Michelangelo defiantly fleeing Rome to avoid Julius.

In the excerpt of Michelangelo's biography cited above, Vasari suggests that the artist's genius enhanced Paul's merits. In addition to ways in which meaning conveyed by the artist supports Paul's objectives (discussed at length in chapters two and three), Paul's patronage of the artist is often mentioned in the pontiff's biographies as evidence of his munificence and understanding of art.<sup>4</sup> Ludwig Pastor described Paul's support of art.

For Raphael, the unique, Paul III could indeed find no substitute, but on the greatest of all surviving masters, Michael Angelo, he bestowed a higher appreciation and finer opportunities than either of the two preceding popes had done. The pope found it no easy matter to capture the Titans. Shortly after the death of Clement VII, Michael Angelo had returned to Rome, and he wished now, as his biographer Condivi relates, to devote himself to the completion of the monument to Julius II. To undertake other engagements, to entangle himself in a fresh position of dependency, lay so far from his thoughts—he was now on the verge of old age—that, when the news reached him that the new pope wished to give him an appointment in his household, he was terror-struck. He held himself aloof from the court. But Paul III found out the way to reach him, to allay his scruples, and to enlist him in his service.<sup>5</sup>

Pastor follows with a description of the honors and benefits that Paul bestowed on the artist to win his service. The German historian reveals a nineteenth century bias towards Raphael, but grants that Paul “captured” the greatest “Titan” of his day. Significantly, Paul also appreciated

---

<sup>3</sup> Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568* (Florence: Sansoni, 1987), 6:29-30 (hereafter cited as Vasari, *Vite*); Ascanio Condivi, *Vita di Michelangelo Buonarroti*, ed. Giovanni Nencioni (Florence: S.P.E.S., 1998), 26-29 (hereafter cited as Condivi, *Vita*).

<sup>4</sup> J. N. D. Kelly and Michael J. Walsh, *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 261.

<sup>5</sup> Ludwig Pastor, *The History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages: Drawn from the Secret Archives of the Vatican and Other Original Sources*, 5th ed., 40 vols. (St. Louis: Herder, 1938-51), 12:551.

Michelangelo more than either of the Medici popes did, and made the most of the artist's talents by entrusting him with more prestigious projects. Although in historical and modern biographies of the pope, patronage of Michelangelo rightly figures among Paul's accomplishments, the artist's biographers devote little attention to Paul's role in Michelangelo's career. This curious asymmetry initially attracted my attention to the topic.

Michelangelo's interactions with patrons remain, in general, not only understudied but often misunderstood. Some scholars, such as Charles de Tolnay, called attention to the artist's productive and courteous relationship with Paul, but still devoted lengthier consideration to other patronage relationships.<sup>6</sup> Even today, Giorgio Vasari's account of Michelangelo's relationship with Julius II is a primary narrative in the artist's biography. But insofar as he prompted the artist's finest mature works of painting and architecture, Paul was Michelangelo's greatest and most significant patron. The two men maintained a harmonious and productive association for the entirety of Paul's fifteen-year pontificate. Overdue for consideration, the patronal relationship functions as a lens through which we can view the *Last Judgment* and Pauline Chapel frescoes.

In this study, I consider art an active agent, the reception and creation of which yields important benefits for the artist and patron. In some ways, this is not unlike the approach of the anthropologist Alfred Gell, who discusses art in terms of "agency, causation, result[s] and transformation."<sup>7</sup> Gell considers the practical, mediatory role of art in society almost entirely to

---

<sup>6</sup> Charles de Tolnay, *Michelangelo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960; rpt. 1971), 5: 7-8.

<sup>7</sup> Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 6.

the exclusion of interpretation of works of art “as if they were texts.” He strongly opposes the practice of attributing inherent symbolic meaning to works of art, or applying characteristics of language to them. This position is incompatible with the essential art historical practice of interpreting meaning (as intended by the patron or artist, or as perceived by audiences). Despite the opposition of Gell’s premise to much of the current study, his anthropological approach to art rightly calls attention to concerns that guided artists and patrons. Essentially he asks, “what was the purpose of paying for and creating a work of art?”

What did the patron expect to gain from his or her investment? A joint publication by an art historian (Jonathan K. Nelson) and an economist (Richard Zeckhauser) examines the “Patron’s Payoff.”<sup>8</sup> Employing game theory and cost-benefit analysis they construct frameworks for analyzing art patronage to hone in on the patron’s real or desired rewards. Their multi-disciplinary approach encourages art historians to step back from works of art to consider what the most important viewer—the patron—hoped to gain from the investment. Contemporary viewers benefit from the reminder that considerations of “Art for Art’s Sake” or as a commodity do not apply to Renaissance commissions. The projects for which Paul hired Michelangelo were very costly and too intimately identified with the papacy to be approached with anything less than the pope’s closest attention. The messages and meanings that I identify through visual analysis of these projects contribute primarily to the patron’s objectives, not the artist’s.

While the Renaissance patron considered desirable benefits of commissioning art, it

---

<sup>8</sup> Jonathan Katz Nelson and Richard Zeckhauser, *The Patron’s Payoff: Conspicuous Commissions in Italian Renaissance Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

remained the artist's task to produce works that would serve this purpose. Whether he (and they were almost all men at this point) was a painter with a shop, or a renowned master solicited by patrons, the artist needed sufficient motivation to provide work to fulfil the patron's wishes. While financial remuneration was surely the most important consideration for many artists, Michelangelo had additional objectives, which he sometimes prioritized over money. Despite constant fretting about finances, he also walked away from major commissions and gave some valuable works as gifts.<sup>9</sup> What incentives compelled him to continue working for Paul for fifteen years—longer than he worked for any other patron? This dissertation considers the monetary as well as personal, spiritual and social benefits that the artist gained by collaborating with Paul.

In chapter one, I review approaches to patronage studies, developed by numerous scholars, that contribute to this study. Early in the twentieth century, scholarship on the mechanics of patronage—contracts, negotiations, disputes, etc.—gave art historians insights into the practices of a professional artist and shed light on the processes of design and production.

Even excellent studies of this type have limitations for studying Michelangelo's work,

---

<sup>9</sup> Michelangelo would have earned two gold florins a month if he had carved all of the sculptures of the apostles promised to the Consuls of L'Arte della Lana of Florence, but he walked away from the commission to work for Pope Julius II. De Tolnay, *Michelangelo* 1:168-69. In 1507 Michelangelo instructed his brother, Buonarotto, to give Filippo Strozzi a fine dagger designed by the artist as a gift. *Carteggio* 1:35. William E. Wallace identifies the artist's motivation as the strengthening of social relations with the Strozzi clan. At the time, Buonarotto lived in the Strozzi household and was an employee of the family. The artist sent the *Dying Slave* and the *Rebellious Slave* to Roberto Strozzi in Lyon around 1546. He offered the gift in gratitude for care he received at the Strozzi Palace in Rome during two illnesses in 1544 and 1546. On the history of these sculptures, see de Tolnay, *Ibid.*,4:97, and Maria Ruvoldt, "Michelangelo's *Slaves* and the Gift of Liberty," *Renaissance Quarterly* 65, n. 4 (2012): 1029-59.

especially that produced late in his career. Michelangelo did not necessarily follow conventional rules of patronage.<sup>10</sup> His interactions with patrons frequently follow models of friendship or gift exchange. His behavior contributed to the elevation of artists as specialists more akin to humanist gentlemen than craftsmen. An increasing interest in patronage in recent years has prompted innovative and creative research that seeks clearer understanding of patronal strategies and objectives. Much of this recent scholarship, though, focusses so intently on the patron, that it neglects the artist's role. One goal of my study is to consider the contributions and objectives of both parties.

To identify features of Michelangelo's interactions with Paul that made the collaboration successful, it is important to compare it to the artist's prior patronal relationships. To this end, I review pertinent aspects of the artist's previous experiences. This summary also calls attention to frustrations that Michelangelo experienced. Some of the artist's concerns and objectives in working with Paul developed from these previous disappointments with patrons. Interests in his artistic legacy, wealth, social status and professional prestige loom large.

Finally, chapter one offers historical background on the dire situation that Paul faced when he acceded to the papal throne. The Sack of Rome in 1527 left broken infrastructure, widespread destruction and desecration on a nearly unimaginable scale. Recovery was slowed by flood, famine, disease and decimation of the papal treasury. Reformers in the north denied the spiritual and political legitimacy of the papacy. Roman citizens, pushed to the brink, rose up

---

<sup>10</sup> William E. Wallace, "Reversing the Rules: Michelangelo and the Patronage of Sculpture," in *Patronage and Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, ed. Kathleen Christian and David Drogin (Surrey and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 149-67.

to protest the overreaching authority of the papacy that, in part, caused their suffering. Plummeting authority—real and symbolic—brought on, in large part, by his predecessors' unwillingness to address spiritual criticism meant that Paul had to reconstruct the identity of the papacy.

In my second chapter, I consider how the *Last Judgment* contributed to Pauline objectives. First, I address the complicated beginnings of the commission. Clement VII envisioned Michelangelo painting something in the Sistine Chapel, although it is not entirely clear what. I offer reasons for associating the concept and design, as executed, with Paul rather than his predecessor. The viewer's engagement with the image is critical to its success. I identify formal innovations that the artist devised to engage audiences and connect painted space with the physical space of the chapel. The use of light is generally overlooked, due to the artificially even flood of light that is almost always on the fresco when viewers enter the Sistine Chapel now. However, I use photographs and description based on my experience in the chapel with the lights off to suggest how natural lighting enhances the visual impact and meanings of the fresco.

In chapters two and three, lengthy visual analysis dovetails with discussion of meaning in a way that demonstrates how well the artist understood Paul's numerous objectives. The fresco contributes to papal initiatives that redirected the sacred focus of the city from the numerous sites of Rome, across the Tiber to the Vatican. The painting also emphasizes the apostolic foundations of the Church and the devotion of early authorities within the Church. Although the Catholic Church lost significant numbers due to Reformationists in the north and the Church of England splitting off, the fresco suggests that it remained both universal and populous.

Chapter three discusses the *Conversion of Saul* and *Crucifixion of Peter* frescoes in the

Pauline Chapel. Antonio da Sangallo built the chapel for Paul. It extends off the Sala Regia, which is also connected to the Sistine Chapel (fig.4). Together, the structures accommodate a range of papal functions, with each space designed for specific purposes. The Pauline Chapel is referred to as the “pope’s private chapel” although the most important activities held there included the election and elevation of new pontiffs. In this way, the space is associated with the intervention of God (who guides the Cardinal electors) in governance of the Church. The two large narrative frescoes depicting the calling and self-sacrifice of the apostles suggest spiritual models for future popes to emulate. Specific ceremonies enacted in conjunction with conclaves suggest that newly elected popes join the realm of the apostles- which is higher than that of any other Church officials.

The Pauline Chapel was also used for the preservation of the Host, celebration of the Easter Sepulcher and vigil of Forty Hours’ Devotion. These ceremonies, which became increasingly important in the Counter-Reformation, celebrate the sacraments and honor the corporeal presence of Christ in the Catholic liturgy. Michelangelo’s frescoes focus attention on the weight of the apostles, as if their physical forms are present in the chapel. This allusion suggests a tomb-like reliquary chapel of the most precious relics of Rome. In this way, the frescoes suggest that the chapel is a *locus sanctus* within the papal palace.

As is the case with the *Last Judgment*, the frescoes of the Pauline Chapel engage with the physical space of the chapel. Formal devices used by the artist reinforce the significance of the frescoes and create interaction with viewers. Painted figures seem to circulate down steps on one side of the fresco and up steps on the other, as if the chapel space is merely an extension of the image. This suggests that, despite the separation of fifteen centuries, the princes of the apostles remain present at the heart of the papacy. Such imagery affirms the privileged position of the



popes and the curia in relation to the apostles and, by extension, Christ.

Chapter four examines the other side of the patron-artist relationship to discern what Michelangelo gained from collaborations with Paul. In a papal brief dated 1 September 1534, Paul specifies that Michelangelo will earn 1,200 *scudi* per year.<sup>11</sup> The artist obtained the title Chief Architect, Sculptor and Painter to the Apostolic Palace and a position as a papal familiar. In fact, from the beginning, half of the artist's salary was paid in coin, while half derived from earnings from the Passo del Po, a ferry crossing outside of Parma. Splitting wages into cash and the benefice should have served both parties well. In subsequent years, it became evident that the Po ferry brought many frustrations as well as a handsome income. Michelangelo amassed great wealth, but he also said that he refused payment for his work on New St. Peter's Basilica. I consider how this rejection of payment was beneficial to Michelangelo. The money collected by the artist rarely paid for luxury items. Rather, Michelangelo prioritized investing in his family's long-term financial stability and their ability to live in a respectable manner appropriate for Florentine patricians.

Michelangelo's abiding interest in social status contributed to his interactions with patrons. When patrons—Agnolo Doni or Julius II, for example—treated the artist as a craftsman rather than as a highly regarded patrician artist, they encountered difficulties in obtaining commissioned works. To a greater degree than any of the artist's previous patrons, Paul addressed multiple aspects of Michelangelo's objectives, including the artist's professional and social status. Paul also tailored the mechanics of patronage in a way that obfuscated the

---

<sup>11</sup> ASV, Arm. XL, 52, c 31. Lucilla Bardeschi Ciulich, *I contratti di Michelangelo* (Florence: S.P.E.S., 2005), 211-214.

exchange of money for labor. To himself and others, Michelangelo could justify his income from the pope as similar to that paid to retain Humanists and courtiers. The artist's insistence on his patrician status contributed to his achievement of unprecedented fame and fortune and the elevation of the artist in early modern Europe.

# Chapter 1. Frameworks and Foundations

## 1.1 Patronage: Finances and Favors

Recent scholarship on art patronage demonstrates that examining art through the lens of patronage offers new insights on the meaning and social context of much-studied works of art. However, art historians have produced excellent studies devoted to the artistic and social patronage of Cosimo de' Medici, Lorenzo de' Medici, Vittoria Colonna, the Gonzaga, and the Della Rovere.<sup>1</sup> In a thoroughly researched book, Clare Robertson considers the patronage of Cardinal Alesandro Farnese, the grandson of Pope Paul III.<sup>2</sup> Several studies of Pope Paul III as a patron provide evidence of the pontiff's sophisticated use of painting, architecture and ephemeral displays to reinforce associations between the papacy and Rome's imperial rulers. Frederika Jacobs examines fresco projects at Castel Sant'Angelo and the Palazzo della Cancelleria to demonstrate how Paul used monumental frescoes to associate himself with his apostolic

---

<sup>1</sup> Sources that focus on specific patrons include: Ernst H. Gombrich, "The Early Medici as Patrons of Art," in *Italian Renaissance Studies: A Tribute to the Late Cecelia M. Ady*, ed. E. F. Jacob (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1960), 279-311; Francis Ames-Lewis, ed., *Cosimo 'Il Vecchio' de' Medici, 1389-1464* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); Molly Bourne, "Francesco II Gonzaga and Maps as Palace Decoration in Renaissance Mantua," *Imago Mundi* 51 (1999): 51-82; Dale Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); Marjorie Och, "Vittoria Colonna and the Commission for a *Mary Magdalen* by Titian," in *Beyond Isabella: Secular Women Patrons of Art in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Sheryl E. Reiss and David G. Wilkins (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2001), 193-224; Francis W. Kent, *Lorenzo de' Medici and the Art of Magnificence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Clare Robertson, *Il Gran Cardinale: Alessandro Farnese, Patron of the Arts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

namesake and Alexander the Great.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, Jacobs' study demonstrates how Paul used art in these contexts to reinforce images of Roman and papal authority. Helge Gamrath's lengthy study on the Farnese family includes analysis of Paul's use of *magnificenza* (magnificence) in urban planning, processions, festivities and patronage at the Vatican.<sup>4</sup> Debra Murphy-Livingston sheds light on some of the thorny issues of patronage on the Capitoline Hill during Paul's pontificate.<sup>5</sup> She suggests that, although papal bureaucracy commanded tremendous influence over projects on the Capitoline Hill, some of the painted friezes in the Palazzo dei Conservatori demonstrate a deeply entrenched pride, on the part of the Conservators, in the city's republican heritage. In her comprehensive study of the Capitoline Hill, Anna Bedon downplays Paul's influence in Michelangelo's designs for the site.<sup>6</sup> Disentangling the responsibility for the Capitoline site plan and architecture is beyond the scope of this study, but suffice to say that several excellent studies consider the pope's role in the renewal of the Capitoline.<sup>7</sup> The pontiff's

---

<sup>3</sup> Frederika Jacobs, "Studies in the Patronage and Iconography of Pope Paul III" (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1979).

<sup>4</sup> Helge Gamrath, *Farnese: Pomp, Power, and Politics in Renaissance Italy* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2007), 73-90.

<sup>5</sup> Debra Murphy-Livingston "The Fresco Decoration of the Pauline Rooms at the Palazzo dei Conservatori" (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 1993).

<sup>6</sup> Anna Bedon, *Il Campidoglio: Storia di un monumento civile nella Roma papale* (Milan: Electa, 2008), 106. For the view that Paul was of primary importance to the project, see Marianna Brancia di Apricena, "La committenza edilizia di Paolo III Farnese sul Campidoglio." *Römische Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 32 (1997): 411-15.

<sup>7</sup> For the view that Paul (rather than the civic government of Rome) was of primary importance to the project, see Brancia di Apricena, "La committenza edilizia." In 1537 Giovanni Maria della Porta wrote to Francesco Maria della Rovere (Ambassador of the Duke of Urbino) about the pope's desire to move the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius to the Capitoline Hill, despite Michelangelo's protests. This move, which is also attributed to Paul III according to the inscription on the base, was the first step towards the revitalization of the hill. James Ackerman also assigns primary credit for the project to Paul III in *The Architecture of Michelangelo: With a*

reliance on art and ceremony to address political concerns is most notable in his urban planning projects and public displays, including the triumphal entry of Charles V into Rome in 1536.

Although several scholars have examined Paul's patronage of art and architecture, surprisingly little attention has been devoted to close examination of his collaboration with Michelangelo.<sup>8</sup>

This lacuna is surprising considering the importance of the projects entrusted to the artist.

The English term 'patronage' carries multiple meanings, including: the concept of protection; personal ties of obligation; and an exchange of money for goods or services.<sup>9</sup> During the Italian Renaissance, *clientelismo* described patronage as a mechanism of social interaction

---

*Catalogue of Michelangelo's Works* by James Ackerman and John Newman. 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 142. I discuss Paul's other projects on the Capitoline, for a papal palace and walkway connecting that to the Palazzo San Marco, later in this chapter.

<sup>8</sup> In *The Golden Days of the Renaissance in Rome from the Pontificate of Julius II to that of Paul III* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1906), Rodolfo Lanciani discusses the visitor's experience of Rome during these years and devotes chapters to Michelangelo and Pope Paul III. Antonella de Michelis uses the records of Rome's *maestri di strade* to study developments in the organization and planning of the city during Paul's pontificate ("Mapping Farnese Rome: the Urban Planning Process and Projects under Pope Paul III 1534-1549" [Ph.D. diss., Courtauld Institute, 2006]). Guido Rebecchini examines ambassadors' reports on Paul's ceremonial and festive displays to examine the pope's use of visual rhetoric and the immediate responses of a politically-sensitive elite. These sources suggest that Paul was highly attuned to using imagery and ceremony to advance his agendas. Rebecchini argues that festivals consistently referring to the heroic past of Rome were "instrumental in reinforcing a sense of identity and pride that made the ever-diminishing autonomy of civic institutions less painful." See Guido Rebecchini, "After the Medici, the New Rome of Pope Paul III Farnese," *I Tatti Studies* 11 (2007): 168. On the entry of Charles V to Rome, see Bonner Mitchell, *The Majesty of the State: Triumphal Progresses of Foreign Sovereigns in Renaissance Italy (1494-1600)*, Biblioteca dell'Archivum Romanicum, Series I, Storia, Letteratura, Paleografia, vol. 203 (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1986), 159-69.

<sup>9</sup> For discussion of the use and significance of the term 'patronage' as well as the Italian terms *mecenatismo* and *clientelismo*, see Gary Ianziti, "Patronage and the Production of History: The Case of Quattrocento Milan," in *Patronage, Art and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Francis W. Kent and Patricia Simons (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 299-304; Sharon Kettering, "Patronage in Early Modern France," *French Historical Studies* 17, no. 4 (1992): 839-862.

and business relationships. Professionally and politically, individuals depended on a complex network of family, friends and neighbors (*parenti, amici, vicini*) to advance their social, professional and financial interests.<sup>10</sup> Generally, exchange of favors and recommendations offered on one's behalf were critical to one's success. We may think of *clientelismo* as using, in part, non-financial currencies, such as letters of support, obligations for future assistance, and broadly defined loyalty (political patronage).<sup>11</sup> The term *mecenatismo* refers to the funding or purchase of art from the artist (cultural patronage). It is often thought that artists relied mainly on the latter form, although critical examination of individual artists and writers suggests that matters were more complicated, as was certainly the case with Michelangelo and Pope Paul.<sup>12</sup> Personal ties and social obligations often motivated relationships that also included the exchange of money for works of art or courtly duties (such as the writing of a noble family's history).

---

<sup>10</sup> On the political importance of *parenti, amici, vicini*, see Paula C. Clarke, *The Soderini and the Medici: Power and Patronage in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), esp. chap. 5, "Parenti, Amici, Vicini." Also, see Dale Kent, "The Dynamic of Medici Power," in Francis W. Kent and Simons, *Patronage, Art and Society*, 63-77. On Michelangelo's reliance on a network of *parenti, amici, vicini*, see William E. Wallace, *Michelangelo at San Lorenzo: The Genius as Entrepreneur* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 37, 98-100.

<sup>11</sup> On the use of letters of recommendation, see Vincent Ilardi, "Crosses and Carets: Renaissance Patronage and Coded Letters of Recommendation," *The American Historical Review* 92, no. 5 (1987): 1127-1149. Michelangelo carried with him such a letter from Lorenzo de Pier Francesco de' Medici to Cardinal Raffaele Riario on his first trip to Rome in 1496. See Paola Barocchi and Renzo Ristori, *Il carteggio di Michelangelo*, 5 vols. (Florence: Sansoni, 1965-83), 1:1. (hereafter, *Carteggio*).

<sup>12</sup> Ianziti, "Patronage and the Production of History," 300-302.

## 1.2 Strategic spending: Patrons as Heroes and Authors

Just as monographs on Michelangelo tend to focus on his role in designing and executing commissioned works of art, extended studies of significant patrons tend to incorporate artistic commissions as part of a larger narrative of the patron's accomplishments. For example, William and Thomas Roscoe treat patronage projects of Leo X in the Vatican and Florence as straightforward examples of patronal erudition and munificence.<sup>13</sup> Rodolfo Lanciani examines how Pope Paul III enriched the city and contributed to reconstructing Rome as a modern capital with ancient roots.<sup>14</sup> Francis Haskell focuses on the patronage (rather than a broader biography) of several individuals in the seventeenth century.<sup>15</sup> In what some have dubbed the 'hero-patron' model, he treats patrons as artistic protagonists, working to secure artists and have their desired projects executed. More recent scholarship considers how patrons could construct identity, in part, by strategically collecting art, as well as commissioning new works.<sup>16</sup> Each of these examples offers a valuable interpretation of how patrons used art to construct identity and convey meaning, but tends to consider the contributions and motivations of artists as secondary.

---

<sup>13</sup> William Roscoe and Thomas Roscoe, *The Life and Pontificate of Leo the Tenth* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1900).

<sup>14</sup> Rodolfo Lanciani, *The Golden Days of the Renaissance in Rome from the Pontificate of Julius II to that of Paul III* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1906).

<sup>15</sup> Francis Haskell, *Patrons and Painters: A Study in the Relations between Italian Art and Society in the Age of the Baroque*, revised and enlarged ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980).

<sup>16</sup> Dale Kent introduced the study of the "patron's oeuvre" in Dale Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*. For additional analysis based on this model, see Maarten Delbeke, "Individual and Institutional Identity: Galleries of Barberini Projects," in *Art and Identity in Early Modern Rome*, ed. Jill Burke and Michael Bury (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 231-46.

In 1902, Aby Warburg suggested in a study of Florentine portraiture that works of art “owed their making to the mutual understanding between patrons and artists. The works were, from the outset, the results of a negotiation between client and executant.”<sup>17</sup> The success of the patronage relationship between Paul and Michelangelo derives from an exceptional level of mutual understanding and collaboration. The pontiff was remarkably sensitive to the artist’s needs, which he consistently supported. Michelangelo devised innovative images that demonstrate keen perception of Paul’s multi-faceted objectives. Their relationship corresponds to Warburg’s model, but it developed over the course of fifteen years and yielded multiple commissions.

In her exhaustive study on the artistic commissions and collection of Cosimo de’ Medici of Florence, Dale Kent presents a new approach to patronage studies.<sup>18</sup> Rather than studying patterns of behavior among many patrons, she hones in on the collecting and commissioning of art by one individual. Characterizing this body of works as “the patron’s oeuvre,” she examines how Cosimo II Vecchio systematically and consciously constructed his own heroic identity through the acquisition of art. By bringing together the entire body of works, Kent calls attention to recurrent themes that, as an ensemble, form an image of how the patron interpreted and presented his role in the world. Dale Kent’s study is a model for examining a group of artworks with a common patron to draw out recurring themes.

---

<sup>17</sup> Aby Warburg, “Art of Portraiture and the Florentine Bougeoisie,” in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999), 187.

<sup>18</sup> Dale Kent, *Cosimo de’ Medici*.



Part of the inspiration for Kent's model is found in fifteenth-century sources that refer to patrons as "authors" of specific monuments or objects that they commissioned. For example, a prior of San Marco in Florence referred to Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici as the "authors" of the convent's rebuilding.<sup>19</sup> Demonstrating how a patron may self-identify as creator, Dale Kent cites the enormous inscription on Santa Maria Novella in Florence which reads, in translation, "I, Giovanni Rucellai, son of Paolo, made this in the year of our Lord 1470."<sup>20</sup> Certainly Rome was replete with such inscriptions heralding patrons. In the Eternal City, pontifical *impresae* ensured that honor deriving from building or repairing churches, roads, and fountains would long be associated with patrons and their families. Such visual reminders were especially important for popes because the usual means of conferring honor and power onto their relations and descendants were restricted. Throughout my study, I consider numerous factors that complicate attempts to identify either Paul or Michelangelo as sole "author" of the projects under consideration.

Some recent scholarship emphasizes the role of the patron in determining the iconography and appearance of commissioned works. In a collection of essays edited by Ian Verstegen, ten scholars examined how several generations of the Della Rovere family worked to

---

<sup>19</sup> Dale Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 5.

<sup>20</sup> The inscription reads: "IOHANNES ORICELLARIUS PAUL[LI] FIL[IUS] AN[NO] SAL[VATIONIS] MCCCCLXX." Transcribed and trans. Grant Allen, *Florence*, vol. 1. (Boston: L.C. Page & Co., 1902), 44.

construct familial identity through strategic commissions of art and architecture.<sup>21</sup> Verstegen examines how Cardinal Giulio della Rovere (who was elevated to the cardinalate by Paul) strove to balance art patronage with a reform-inspired restraint over a period that included reigns of six popes after Paul III. This delicate balance between magnificent display and piety is a constant influence on art, and a theme that warrants careful consideration. In a collection of essays edited by Jill Burke and Michael Bury focusing on patronage and the formation of identity in Rome, several contributors continue this trend of delving deeply into patronage from multiple perspectives. Addressing the multi-faceted motivations behind papal art commissions, Maarten Delbeke examines how the “double imperative” of promoting the office of the pope as well as supporting personal and familial aspirations played out in the art patronage of Urban VIII (1623-29).<sup>22</sup> In a similar vein, I contend with Paul’s overlapping agendas in relation to Michelangelo’s projects at the Vatican. Frescoes in the Pauline Chapel suggest continuity from the apostolic Church to the modern papacy while the structure commemorates the patron’s munificence and piety. While consideration of layers of meaning and concurrent messages tailored to multiple audiences necessarily creates a complicated interpretation of works of art, the resulting analysis expresses the sophistication of the project as intended by the artist and patron.

---

<sup>21</sup> In the introduction, Ian Verstegen ties together the essays as studies of different Della Rovere agents in different times that return repeatedly to identifications of the family with scholastic-Franciscan origins as a means of identifying the family as “enlightened nobility” in competition with the traditional status of “ancient nobility.” Ian Verstegen, ed., *Patronage and Dynasty: The Rise of the Della Rovere in Renaissance Italy* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2007), xiv.

<sup>22</sup> Delbeke, “Individual and Institutional Identity,” 231-32.

### 1.3 Michelangelo and Patronage

While patronage studies in art history have evolved into a multi-faceted discourse in recent years, studies of Michelangelo's interactions with patrons remain under-explored.<sup>23</sup> Tapping the rich archival resources of the Buonarroti Archives in Florence, Charles de Tolnay presented a well-grounded account of Michelangelo's work with several patrons, but the broad scope of de Tolnay's project necessarily limited the attention he devoted to Michelangelo's individual patrons.<sup>24</sup> Recent studies of Michelangelo's patronage address his interactions with Medici patrons as well as relations with his friends and supporters, notably, the poetess Vittoria Colonna, Marchesa of Pescara (1490-1547) and the nobleman Tommaso de' Cavalieri

---

<sup>23</sup> Excellent studies examining the complexities of art patronage include Francis W. Kent and Simons, eds., *Patronage, Art and Society*; Mary Hollingsworth, *Patronage in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (London: John Murray, 1996); Jonathan Katz Nelson and Richard Zeckhauser, *The Patron's Payoff: Conspicuous Commissions in Italian Renaissance Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel, *Patronage in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981) and Martin Wackernagel, *The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist: Projects and Patrons, Workshop and Art Market*, trans. Alison Luchs (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981).

<sup>24</sup> That Charles de Tolnay emphasizes Michelangelo's interactions with Pope Julius II (and the Della Rovere heirs) over other patrons is demonstrated by the fact that the Sistine Ceiling and the project for Julius' tomb each occupy an entire volume of the five-volume project; all of the artist's projects for Paul are concentrated in the fifth volume, which covers the artist's life from 1534-64. However, de Tolnay recognized that Paul gave Michelangelo unparalleled opportunities to work on important projects and that the two men had genuine affection for each other. Charles de Tolnay, *Michelangelo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960; rpt. 1969-71), 5:6-7.

(d.1587).<sup>25</sup> The subject of Michelangelo's work with Pope Paul III remains, however, understudied.<sup>26</sup>

In many instances, especially late in his career, Michelangelo's relations with patrons did not follow conventional models. William Wallace describes the artist's unconventional arrangements with patrons as "relaxing" or "reversing" the rules of patronage.<sup>27</sup> As a young artist, Michelangelo discovered that, in relations with patrons, artists traditionally had very little power. They had some reasonable expectation that a patron would fulfil the terms of an agreement (paying an agreed-upon fee for a finished work). But patrons could be mercurial, inexplicably losing interest in an artist's project or failing to appreciate a finished masterpiece.

---

<sup>25</sup> Vittoria Colonna was a prominent poetess and longtime friend of Michelangelo. See Sylvia Ferino-Pagden, ed., *Vittoria Colonna Dichterin und Muse Michelangelos* (Wien: Skira, 1997); Vittoria Colonna, *Sonnets for Michelangelo*, ed. and trans. Abigail Brundin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); and idem, *Vittoria Colonna and the Spiritual Poetics of the Italian Reformation* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008). Tommaso de' Cavalieri, a Roman nobleman, enjoyed the artist's friendship for many years late in Michelangelo's life. See Christoph Luitpold Frommel, *Michelangelo und Tommaso dei Cavalieri. Mit der Übertragung von Francesco Diaccetos Panegirico all'Amore* (Amsterdam: Castrum Peregrini, 1979). On Michelangelo's relationships with patrons, see: Charles Burroughs, "Michelangelo at the Campidoglio: Artistic Identity, Patronage, and Manufacture," *Artibus et Historiae* 14, no. 28 (1993): 85-111; Paul Barolsky, "Michelangelo's Marble Faun Revisited," *Artibus et Historiae* 20, no. 40 (1999): 113-16; Erin Sutherland Minter, "Discarded Deity," *Renaissance Studies* 28, no. 3 (Summer 2014):442-58; William E. Wallace, "Manoeuvring for Patronage: Michelangelo's Dagger," *Renaissance Studies* 11, no. 1 (1997): 20-6; idem, "Friends and Relics at San Silvestro in Capite, Rome," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 30, no. 2 (Summer 1999): 419-39; idem, "Clement VII and Michelangelo: An Anatomy of Patronage," in *The Pontificate of Clement VII: History, Politics, Culture*, ed. Kenneth Gouwens and Sheryl E. Reiss (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2005), 189-98.

<sup>26</sup> For a summary of Michelangelo's projects with Paul, see, Clare Robertson, "Phoenix Romanus: Rome, 1534-1565," in *Rome*, ed. Marcia Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 184-245.

<sup>27</sup> William E. Wallace, "Reversing the Rules: Michelangelo and the Patronage of Sculpture," in *Patronage and Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, ed. Kathleen Christian and David Drogin (Surrey and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 159.

Even when payment was not an issue, Michelangelo deeply resented it when patrons failed to recognize his artistic accomplishments or treated him as a mere craftsman.

Negative experiences with his earliest patrons may have caused Michelangelo to prioritize pursuit of his own objectives over upholding patronal agreements. Cardinal Riario, who commissioned the *Bacchus*, Michelangelo's first life-sized sculpture in 1497, gravely disappointed the artist by rejecting the sculpture.<sup>28</sup> This devastating slight stemmed from Riario's unexpected role in drafting Church reforms, not any problem with the sculpture.<sup>29</sup> After upholding his part of the bargain, the young artist expected accolades for his work, and future employment.

The artist's abiding disappointment in the cardinal's rejection, and belief in Riario's foolishness comes through in his biographies written half a century later. Ascanio Condivi and, to a lesser degree, Giorgio Vasari relied on Michelangelo for information concerning his life and career.<sup>30</sup> Ascanio Condivi wrote that the cardinal "little understood or enjoyed statues."<sup>31</sup> With influence from Michelangelo, both Ascanio Condivi and Giorgio Vasari conveyed the artist's

---

<sup>28</sup> Michael Hirst, "Michelangelo in Rome: An Altar-Piece and the 'Bacchus'" *The Burlington Magazine* 123, no. 943 (1981): 581–593.

<sup>29</sup> On the commission and rejection of the sculpture, see Erin Sutherland Minter "Discarded Deity: Rejection of Michelangelo's *Bacchus* and the artist's Response," *Renaissance Studies* 29 no. 3 (2014): 443-58.

<sup>30</sup> Johannes Wilde, *Michelangelo: Six Lectures* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 1-16; Michael Hirst, "Introduction" in Ascanio Condivi, *Vita di Michelangelo Buonarroti*, ed. Giovanni Nencioni (Florence: S.P.E.S., 1998), i-xx; Michael Hirst, "Michelangelo and his first biographers," *Proceedings of the British Academy, Lectures and Memoirs*, 94 (1996) 70-75; Paul Barolsky, *The Faun in the Garden: Michelangelo and the Poetic Origins of Italian Renaissance Art* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 129-137.

<sup>31</sup> Ascanio Condivi, *Life of Michelangelo*, trans. Alice Sedgwick Wohl, ed. Hellmut Wohl, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 20; Condivi, *Vita*, 21.

disappointment with his patron half a century later.<sup>32</sup>

Michelangelo's unfortunate experience with Cardinal Riario probably caused him to mistrust patrons and undermined his sense of obligation in upholding agreements with future patrons. Just on the heels of the *Bacchus* commission, he carved the Vatican *Pietà* (1500-01). In a successful exchange, both patron and artist upheld the terms of a detailed written agreement.<sup>33</sup> Having established his name as a profoundly talented sculptor in Rome, the artist returned to Florence and undertook the *David* (1501). With the giant sculpture still underway, Michelangelo accepted a commission for twelve carved apostles to adorn the Duomo of Florence, which would guarantee income and employment for the next twelve years.<sup>34</sup> Although the terms of the agreement were favorable, the artist had to deal with a bothersome committee of guild officers while more sophisticated connoisseurs recognized his gifts and waited in the wings to employ him. Frustration with the unappreciative bureaucrats probably prompted Michelangelo to break the contract and immediately sign up for more lucrative commissions for the *Doni Tondo*, *Taddei Tondo* and *Pitti Tondo*.<sup>35</sup>

Vasari's account of Michelangelo's interactions with the patron of the *Doni Tondo*, Angelo Doni, demonstrates the foolishness of a patron attempting to cheat the artist out of money

---

<sup>32</sup> Condivi, *Life*, 21-2; Condivi, *Vita*, 19; Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568* (Florence: Sansoni, 1966), 6:15.

<sup>33</sup> Gaetano Milanesi, ed., *Le lettere di Michelangelo Buonarroti pubblicate coi ricordi ed i contratti artistici* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1875), 613-14. The surviving document is not, technically, a contract because Michelangelo did not sign it. Rather, Jacopo Galli signed as guarantor.

<sup>34</sup> Lucilla Bardeschi Ciulich, *I contratti di Michelangelo* (Florence: S.P.E.S., 2005), 5,18-23.

<sup>35</sup> Wallace, "Reversing the Rules,"197.

as if he were bartering at a market stall.<sup>36</sup> According to Vasari, Michelangelo sent the finished painting and a bill for seventy *ducati* to Doni's house. Although he recognized that the painting was worth even more, Doni said that forty *ducati* was enough and sent that amount back with the messenger. Michelangelo indignantly sent the messenger back to retrieve either the painting or one hundred *ducati*. Doni decided that seventy *ducati* would be fair, but the insulted artist demanded one hundred and forty *ducati*. In the end, Doni paid the full amount because he knew that the painting was worth it. Although Vasari's account may not be entirely accurate, it almost certainly reveals that Michelangelo thought Angelo Doni unfairly tried to force him to accept less money than the painting was worth. The message conveyed is essentially that the patron could not be trusted to give the artist what he deserved, but Michelangelo's adamant refusal to accept ill treatment helped him attain fair recompense. Still in his twenties, the artist had already learned some of the problems with patrons.

After completing the *David* in 1504, Michelangelo was summoned to Rome by Julius II, his first papal patron. In 1505, Julius enthusiastically encouraged a grandiose conception for his papal tomb. Michelangelo spent eight months selecting marble in Carrara, but in that time his patron had become distracted by plans to rebuild St. Peter's Basilica. For two days in 1506, Michelangelo waited for an audience with his patron to recover expenses for marble for the pope's tomb; then a guard confirmed that the pope intentionally refused to see him. Indignant at this poor treatment, the artist fled to Florence. Only after much discussion, and assurances of safe passage, did the artist travel to Bologna to meet the pontiff. Although the two men

---

<sup>36</sup> Vasari, *Vite*, 6:22-23. For a reconsideration of Vasari's account, see William E. Wallace, "Doni's Double," *Source* 25, no. 4 (2006): 10-14.

recovered from the disagreement, Condivi and Vasari both describe tense, even violent, clashes between the pope and artist.<sup>37</sup> Charles de Tolnay describes their patronage relationship as abusive (Julius actually struck Michelangelo) and contentious. “With threats and violence and generosity he was able to spur the artist and to get the maximum of achievement out of him. Michelangelo, on the other hand, had a proud and stubborn character and never found an apt reply wanting.”<sup>38</sup> To make matters worse, the artist was treated as an artisan, while Julius honored Bramante with a personal relationship that even included hunting trips.<sup>39</sup>

Shortly after their awkward reunion in Bologna, Julius charged Michelangelo with executing a full-length bronze papal portrait to adorn the façade of San Petronio.<sup>40</sup> With attention diverted from the tomb project, Michelangelo completed the bronze sculpture in 1508. Unfortunately, the people of Bologna destroyed the sculpture three years later.

For four years, from 1508-12, Michelangelo stayed in Rome, painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel for Julius.<sup>41</sup> At the time of the pope’s death in 1513, his monumental tomb remained in the earliest stages of completion. The project, or the “tragedy of the tomb” as Condivi called it, remained unfinished for nearly three decades. During those years, three other popes vied for Michelangelo’s time and talent. Julius’s successors, the Medici Popes Leo X and

---

<sup>37</sup> Condivi, *Vita*, 27-34; Vasari, *Vite*, 6:29-39.

<sup>38</sup> De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 2:6.

<sup>39</sup> De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 2:8. On conflict with Bramante, see Charles Robertson, “Bramante, Michelangelo and the Sistine Ceiling,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 49 (1986): 91–105; rpt. in *Michelangelo: Selected Readings*, ed. William E. Wallace (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999), 195-231.

<sup>40</sup> De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 4:8.

<sup>41</sup> De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 2:3-10.



Clement VII, expected the artist to serve them, working almost exclusively on projects in their native Florence.<sup>42</sup>

Leo hired Michelangelo to construct a façade of the finest marble for the Medici family church of San Lorenzo in Florence.<sup>43</sup> Originally, Michelangelo won the commission for the figures meant to adorn the façade; Baccio d’Agnolo had some oversight of the architecture. Cracks quickly developed in the plan to collaborate. After just a few months, Michelangelo campaigned for greater control over the project. Soon thereafter, Michelangelo wrested control of the façade away from Baccio.<sup>44</sup> As both the artist and patron envisioned a façade of unparalleled magnificence, the complexity and expenses of the project mounted.

In 1519, they agreed on a project to construct the Medici Chapel of San Lorenzo, where the family princes and patriarchs would be interred in grand wall tombs of the artist’s design. This second project required less exorbitant sums from the papal coffers. The following year, Leo cancelled the façade commission, thus shutting down Michelangelo’s architectural career in its infancy. The mountain of marble that the artist had laboriously located, quarried and transported continued to arrive in Florence, a constant reminder of wasted effort.

Leo died of malaria the following year. Despite great efforts (on the artist’s part) and expense (on the patron’s part), the only work Michelangelo completed for Leo was a very small chapel façade inside a courtyard at Castel Sant’Angelo in Rome.

The College of Cardinals bickered and bartered for fifty days before electing an absent

---

<sup>42</sup> De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 2:7-9.

<sup>43</sup> William E. Wallace, *Michelangelo at San Lorenzo*, 9-78.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-10.

Dutchman to ascend the throne. The dour, unyielding Pope Hadrian VI reigned for twenty months. In that time he alienated the cardinals by letting an empty treasury get in the way of distributing favors. He failed to offer the barons of Rome even the empty gestures of honors that maintained harmony in the awkwardly dualistic governance of the city. The Roman people criticized Hadrian's rejection of pageantry and public entertainment. They also dismissed the Dutchman as a foreigner beyond redemption. His unsuccessful approach to Martin Luther was simply to demand punishment and ban objectionable texts (which was impossible to enforce). Hadrian was too busy stamping out dissenting voices in the Church to commission art.<sup>45</sup> He did, though, take the time to issue a *motu proprio* commanding the artist to return to work on Julius's tomb, as the Della Rovere heirs desired.<sup>46</sup>

Around this time, three significantly humbler patrons eagerly awaited completion of a sculpture they commissioned in 1514 for the Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome, the *Risen Christ*.<sup>47</sup> Michelangelo first carved the subject shortly thereafter, but a black vein appeared in the stone, forcing him to abandon the work. In 1518 he ordered a new block of marble, which he carved from 1519 to 1520. His patrons, eager to receive the sculpture in Rome, sent the final payment to Michelangelo in Florence in 1521 without viewing the sculpture.

---

<sup>45</sup> J. N. D. Kelly and Michael J. Walsh, *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 258-59

<sup>46</sup> *Carteggio* 2:355-6, 367; de Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 3:8.

<sup>47</sup> The contract is in Milanese, ed., *Le lettere*, 641. On the commission, see Henry Thode, *Michelangelo und das Ende der Renaissance* (Berlin: G. Grote, 1902), 2:257-72; de Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 3:89-95, 177-180; William E. Wallace, "Miscellanea Curiositae Michelangelae: A Steep Tariff, a Half Dozen Horses, and Yards of Taffeta," *Renaissance Quarterly* 47, no. 2 (1994): 330-50; idem, "Michelangelo's Risen Christ," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 28, no. 4 (1997): 1251-80. The clearest reconstruction of events is in Wallace, 1994.

Michelangelo's assistant Urbano accompanied the sculpture on its long journey to Rome, and put on the finishing touches in the church. Sebastiano del Piombo warned his friend in Florence that Urbano "ruined everything."<sup>48</sup> Michelangelo paid the craftsman responsible for the tabernacle in which the *Christ* was displayed to repair Urbano's wayward efforts, although there was reportedly little to fix. Uncertain about these inconsistently reported interventions, Michelangelo offered to recarve the sculpture if the patrons wished. Speaking for the group, Metello Vari reassured the artist of their total satisfaction. Although payment for the commission was fulfilled before Michelangelo packed the *Risen Christ* for transport, Vari gave Michelangelo a generous and unexpected gift—a horse.<sup>49</sup>

Several aspects of this commission contribute to our understanding of the artist's later interactions with Paul. The contract for the *Risen Christ* yielded 200 *fiorini*, a respectable sum but modest compared to the 705 ½ *fiorini* earned on the statue of Julius in Bologna; 1020 ½ *fiorini* on the Sistine Ceiling; 4063 *fiorini* on the Tomb of Julius II or 2296 *fiorini* for the façade of San Lorenzo.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, Michelangelo probably paid to replace the first, flawed stone. If he had carved a third *Christ*, that would further reduce his profit. His extraordinary offer to Vari—that he would replace the sculpture without even assessing the damage—suggests an eagerness to please the patron, even at significant cost. By comparison, if we believe his biographies, Michelangelo forced Angelo Doni to pay more than the agreed upon price for the Doni Tondo as punishment for undervaluing the work. Although he was willing to make a *third*

---

<sup>48</sup> *Carteggio*, 2:313.

<sup>49</sup> Wallace, "Miscellanea Curiositae," 336-39.

<sup>50</sup> Rab Hatfield, *The Wealth of Michelangelo*, Studi e testi del rinascimento europeo 16 (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2002), 143.

marble sculpture for Vari and his partners, Michelangelo threatened Doni with the opposite extreme—withholding the finished painting. What could have prompted the artist's dramatic *volte-face* when he dealt with the later patrons?

Vari eagerly praised the finished sculpture, even though he could have quibbled over the possibility of damage by Urbano. The patron honestly assessed the merits of the sculpture and was generous with praise. He even offered the artist a valuable and unexpected gift suitable for a gentleman. The convention of gift exchange as an expression of esteem is an important modification of the exchange of art for cash that equated artists with craftsmen. I return to this issue in chapter four, where I discuss benefits Michelangelo derived from collaboration with Paul. The exchange between Michelangelo and his patrons at Santa Maria Sopra Minerva was surely a gratifying interlude from high-pressure commissions for papal patrons.

In 1523, after another contentious conclave, Leo's cousin Giulio de' Medici ascended the throne as Clement VII. The new pope highly esteemed Michelangelo and encouraged renewed progress on the Medici Chapel at San Lorenzo. Soon he greatly expanded the work, and costs, by commissioning Michelangelo to create a reading room for the Laurentian Library and the adjacent vestibule. Clement spent lavishly on these projects for the next four years, but this support could not last.

The Sack of Rome on 6 May 1527 by troops of Charles V, discussed in more detail below, had ramifications for Florence and Michelangelo's relations with patrons. Clement took refuge in the Castel Sant'Angelo, which rendered him not only a prisoner, but also distracted him from Florentine politics. With the pope powerless in Rome, Florentines expelled the Medici and established a Republic. Clement escaped from Rome, but returned to regain control of the city. In short order, he set his mind to toppling the Florentine Republic. After three years of

continued work for his patron, Michelangelo definitively sided with Florence and served as director of Florentine defenses.<sup>51</sup> His fortified walls held up against Clement's forces for many months, but starvation and disease finally toppled the city. After his disloyalty, Michelangelo was afraid to face Clement. But the pope was more concerned with progress on San Lorenzo than punishing the artist.

This seemingly generous patron frustrated the artist with a barrage of requests for progress updates and additional projects. In frequent, sometimes daily, letters from Rome to Florence, Clement VII asked the artist about the new sacristy and library at San Lorenzo and sent requests for papal tombs for himself and Leo X, a crystal cross, a ciborium and a reliquary tribune.<sup>52</sup> Even as he relentlessly pushed the artist to make progress and keep him informed about work on the other San Lorenzo commissions, Clement requested a design for a colossus twenty-five *braccia* high to adorn the Piazza di San Lorenzo. When ignoring the pope's request failed to deter Clement, Michelangelo responded sarcastically, volunteering to design "a much larger seated statue, forty rather than twenty-five *braccia* high, with a barber shop under its rump, a cornucopia for a chimney, a dovecote in the hollow head and bells ringing from the gaping mouth."<sup>53</sup> Lighthearted kidding and witty twists of phrase aside, Michelangelo refused to

---

<sup>51</sup> Ackerman, *Architecture of Michelangelo*, 120-125.

<sup>52</sup> Wallace, "Clement VII and Michelangelo," 191.

<sup>53</sup> Summary of Michelangelo's proposed statue from Wallace, "Clement VII and Michelangelo," 195. The artist continued the letter with a serious request for deliverance from additional burdens conveyed in witty banter seldom addressed to Renaissance popes. "To do or not to do the things that are to be done, which you say are to be done, it is better to let them be done by whoever will do them, for I will have so much to do that I don't wish to do more." Originally phrased: "Del fare o del non fare le chose che s'anno a fare, che voi dite che anno a soprastare, è meglio lasciarle fare a chi l'à fare, ché io arò tanto da fare ch'i' non mi churo più di fare." *Carteggio*, 3:190-191.

consider the pope's request and suggested that he was already so overburdened that he did not wish any more work. The pontiff's impractical requests must have frustrated the artist even more because Clement failed to revive the project for the façade of San Lorenzo, on which Michelangelo worked for four years before Leo cancelled the contract in 1520. Although Julius II, Leo X, and Clement VII demonstrated their esteem for the artist with prestigious commissions and generous pay, the pontiffs may not have treated him with the respect that he considered his due.

Over the course of many decades, a number of powerful individuals tried unsuccessfully to obtain anything from Michelangelo's hands. He repeatedly refused commissions, despite the profitability of such exchanges. Wallace proposes that the artist attempted to live as something of an artist/courtier, outside of the traditional structures of artist-patron relationships. Sometimes his interactions with patrons echo the aristocratic culture of gift exchange<sup>54</sup> In several instances prior to 1534, Michelangelo delayed or refused to deliver works of art to patrons that failed to treat him with the respect and deference due to one of his social station.

Looking back, Michelangelo wrote to his nephew Lionardo, "although I have served three popes, it has been under compulsion."<sup>55</sup> Almost certainly in these relationships, the artist did not have quite the same freedom to dictate terms or refuse requests as readily as he might with other patrons. Although often generous with the Church's treasure, popes tended to be demanding and uncompromising.

---

<sup>54</sup> Wallace, "Reversing the Rules," 158, 157, 161.

<sup>55</sup> Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, 2 May 1548. Ramsden, *Letters* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1963) 2:92. *Carteggio*, 4:299. At this point, Michelangelo had worked for four popes.

Piero Soderini, Gonfalonier of Florence and Michelangelo's loyal supporter, wrote a remarkably prescient letter to the Cardinal of Volterra in 1506:

The bearer of these present [letters] will be Michelangelo, the sculptor, whom we send to please and satisfy his Holiness. We certify that he is an excellent young man, and in his own art without peer in Italy, perhaps also in the universe. We cannot recommend him more emphatically. His nature is such that, with good words and kindness, if these are given him, he will do everything; one has to show him love and treat him kindly, and he will perform things which will make the whole world wonder.<sup>56</sup>

Paul III need not have seen this letter to understand how to treat Michelangelo. Since the reign of Julius II, Paul was the fourth pope to employ the sensitive Florentine. Despite his advanced years, the artist was more productive in the service of Paul than any of his previous patrons at the Vatican.

All too often, studies of artists and patrons characterize commissioned projects as either expressions of the artist's creativity or strategic signposting by the patron. I use an alternative, more holistic model of patronage in which the motivations, contributions, and rewards of both artist and patron are equally considered in the analysis of commissioned works and the terms of agreements. As Aby Warburg noted, successful patronage relationships rely on how effectively each party satisfies the other party's objectives. Paul was sensitive to Michelangelo's need for a kind patron to grant him social and professional honors and treat him with respect. From the time he donned the papal tiara, the pope was determined to have Michelangelo in his service. Unlike most of Michelangelo's previous patrons, Paul never lost interest in Michelangelo's

---

<sup>56</sup> John Addington Symonds, *The Life of Michelangelo Buonarroti* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 1:182.

projects, cut funding or diverted the artist's attention to other work. The complement to this exceptional devotion is the artist's unparalleled body of work for Paul.

## 1.4 Michelangelo's Objectives

Michelangelo's relationships with many of his patrons demonstrate that, for him, money was not the only anticipated or desired reward. He also sought professional prestige, social respect and the creation of an artistic legacy. As a cardinal close to Pope Clement VII, Alessandro Farnese surely noted that the artist responded poorly to being ignored or ordered about. Perhaps when Michelangelo sided with Florence against Clement during the siege of Florence, he showed that his loyalty could not be bought; ideological and personal considerations trumped obligations to his patron. The quality and tone of interaction between artist and patron influenced Michelangelo's productivity. For example, he expected access to his patron. Julius II refused to admit the artist for an audience, which prompted Michelangelo's flight to Florence and caused a rift between the artist and the pope. Although enthusiasm from his patrons was appreciated, over-burdening the artist with projects annoyed him and slowed progress. Patronage studies rarely consider a complex set of objectives on the artist's part. Non-monetary benefits to the artist are difficult to quantify. Yet the success of a patronage relationship, and the possibility of continued collaboration on multiple projects, depended on the artist's satisfaction with the rewards of his labor.

## 1.5 The Church and Rome prior to 1534

The historical context of Rome just before and during Paul's pontificate is critical to our understanding of Michelangelo's projects. Pope Paul's Medici predecessors, Leo X and Clement



VII, failed to halt deep fissures forming throughout the foundations of papal authority. North of the Alps, Martin Luther inspired widespread anti-papal sentiments. His damning rhetoric of 1520 was unequivocal: “Antichrist sits in the temple of God and the Roman court is the synagogue of Satan.”<sup>57</sup> Accusations of widespread corruption and spiritual decay within the curia were rampant in France and the Holy Roman Empire; grave concerns were echoed more cautiously throughout Italy. Protestant reformers formally denounced the Holy See and denied papal primacy in the Ten Theses of Berne in 1528.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, Henry VIII, formerly a defender of the faith, defected from the Roman Catholic Church. Such a blatant rejection of Rome’s bishop as the sacred head of Western Christendom set a dangerous precedent. Christian monarchs in France, Spain, and the Holy Roman Empire openly challenged papal authority in temporal matters.

In the decade prior to Paul’s election, papal authority plummeted. In May 1527, troops sent by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, under the command of the Duke of Bourbon, reached the ancient walls of Rome.<sup>59</sup> In the first wave of attack, the Duke was killed, leaving 20,000 unruly German *Landsknechte*, Spaniards, and Italians bent on violence and booty to sack the Eternal City. As if they sacked the devil’s stronghold – as described by protestant preachers

---

<sup>57</sup> Mandell Creighton, *A History of the Papacy from the Schism to the Sack of Rome* (London: Longmans, 1903-07), 6:149.

<sup>58</sup> John T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 64; Arthur C. Cochrane, *Reformed Confessions of the Sixteenth Century* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 45-50.

<sup>59</sup> On the Sack of Rome see E.R. Chamberlin, *The Sack of Rome* (S. L.: Dorset Press, 1985); André Chastel, *The Sack of Rome, 1527* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983); Luigi Guicciardini, *The Sack of Rome*, trans. and intro by James H. McGregor, (New York: Italica Press, 1993); Kenneth Gouwens, *Remembering the Renaissance: Humanist Narratives of the Sack of Rome* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

– Lutherans destroyed as many churches, altars and relics as possible. The troops raped, pillaged, and tortured priests into uttering blasphemous mockeries of the mass.

Once the envy of Europe's monarchs, Rome became an occupied territory overrun with drunken criminals. For eight months, the ineffectual Pope Clement VII watched marauding soldiers from the battlements of Castel Sant'Angelo. Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, the future Paul III, also holed up in the papal stronghold. While the brutal desecration of Rome continued, Clement escaped to Orvieto on 7 December, 1527. The troops finally left in October, 1528. Romans blamed Clement for the Sack and for failing to protect them. Like open wounds, rubble and charred structures left from the Sack constantly reminded Rome's citizens of the heavy price they had paid for ineffectual papal governance.

Even after returning to Rome, Clement's interference in civic affairs had a negative impact on Rome's inhabitants. He awarded his in-law, Filippo Strozzi, contracts to import grain to the city, but poor crops and international politics made securing grain difficult and unpredictable. The food crisis came to a head after Clement VII's death, during the *interregnum* preceding the election of Pope Paul III.<sup>60</sup> Although promised, the reforms never materialized. The Romans blamed Strozzi for a severe grain shortage in the city and for charging inflated prices. They balked under the heavy burden of papal taxes and suffered the corruption and incompetence of papal officials. Hungry, angry, and indignant Romans gathered at the Capitoline Hill to deliver impassioned speeches decrying mistreatment and the usurpation of civic powers. They agreed on twenty-three demands aimed at correcting abuses and presented

---

<sup>60</sup> Melissa Meriam Bullard, "Grain Supply and Urban Unrest in Renaissance Rome: The Crises of 1533-34," in *Art and Politics in Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Italy, 1250-1500*, ed. C. M. Rosenberg (Indiana: Notre Dame, 1990), 285.

these to the cardinals in conclave.<sup>61</sup>

When Paul ascended to the throne, the city's inhabitants rejoiced to have a Roman in power. His perceived identity as a Roman contrasted with Clement's abiding, and expensive, devotion to Medici interests in Florence. The people of Rome (more accurately, the Roman barons) organized triumphal processions heralding a new golden age.<sup>62</sup>

## 1.5 Ruins and Relics of the Vatican and Rome

In 1506, Pope Julius II laid the foundation stone for a new basilica over St. Peter's tomb. Over the course of a few decades, most of Constantine's fourth-century church was destroyed and the site was turned into a jumble of foundations and piers. To fund the destruction and construction underway, Julius II expanded the sale of indulgences.<sup>63</sup> Today St. Peter's Basilica, with its cyclopean scale and gleaming travertine, overshadows the Sistine Chapel as a stage for papal ceremony. But, as a drawing by Maarten van Heemskerck (1498-1574) from the 1530s indicates (fig. 1.1), the basilica at the beginning of Paul's reign was an uninspiring jumble of ancient and recent building construction. The sacred precinct of St. Peter's lacked the grand, cohesive visual focus to impress pilgrims and important visitors. Paul's plans to reassert the sacred traditions of Rome included solving the fiasco of St. Peter's Basilica.

Pilgrims to Rome trekked through the muddy construction site to visit Peter's tomb, protected by a temporary structure, the *Tegurium* (fig. 1.2). By necessity, liturgical ceremonies

---

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 284.

<sup>62</sup> Rebecchini, "After the Medici," 157-61.

<sup>63</sup> Christof Thoenes, "Renaissance St. Peter's" in *St. Peter's in the Vatican*, ed. William Tronzo (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 83.

took place elsewhere. More importantly, the stalled project drew vehement criticism from church reformers. Martin Luther said that “The revenues of all Christendom are being sucked into this insatiable basilica.”<sup>64</sup> While the faithful were stuck with the cost of construction, the pontiffs seemed incapable of finishing the project. The popes and curia carried on with magnificent ceremonies at the Apostolic Palace while the reconstruction of the basilica faltered. It appeared to observers that the Renaissance popes destroyed a venerated apostolic site to start a church so enormous, it could never be completed. Unfortunately, the physical evidence of destruction, liberal spending and failed leadership were too monumental to go unnoticed. Paul needed to make real progress on the construction of St. Peter’s to demonstrate papal authority and competence. During the next fifteen years, he devoted tremendous energy and resources, as well as the talents of the finest artists, to transforming not just the church but the entire Vatican complex.<sup>65</sup>

In 1534, the infrastructure of Rome still bore the scars from the Sack of Rome. Yet, not unlike today, disorderly topography and ancient ruins intruding on daily life attested to the city’s storied past. Crowds of pilgrims navigated through the maze of streets and alleys.<sup>66</sup> The number of venerable churches, sacred relics, miraculous images, and sites associated with the

---

<sup>64</sup> Quoted from Roland Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Publishers, 2009), 80.

<sup>65</sup> Deoclezio Redig de Campos, *I Palazzi Vaticani* vol. 18 of *Roma Cristiana* (Bologna: Cappelli, 1967), 124-37.

<sup>66</sup> The city continued to draw pilgrims through the century, despite criticism of pompous display lobbed by reformers. In 1554, Andrea Palladio published two separate books for travelers, one on the antiquities of Rome, the other on the churches and relics. Andrea Palladio, *Palladio’s Rome: a translation of Andrea Palladio’s two guidebooks to Rome*, ed. and trans. Vaughan Hart and Peter Hicks (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

early Christian Church exceeded those of any other European city. The route to visit these sights led through an urban labyrinth of ancient and modern ruins. Tucked into the bend on the eastern side of the Tiber, the ancient city seemed vulnerable, tired and remote from the magnificent papal ceremonies conducted at the Vatican. On 8 November, 1534 (less than a month after the papal conclave) Paul appointed Latino Giovenale Manetti as the first *Commissario alla antichita*, in charge of protecting the ancient monuments of the city.<sup>67</sup> Paul devoted attention to some urban improvements, such as straightening the Via del Corso and adding an additional road from the Piazza del Popolo (the Via del Babuino), repairing the city's fortifications and moving the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius from the Lateran to the Capitoline Hill, and entrusting Michelangelo with redesigning the civic space.<sup>68</sup> Even if we take these, and a few other projects into consideration, Paul devoted the vast majority of papal resources to distinguishing the Vatican as the unrivalled spiritual focus of the city. In chapters two and three, I discuss how Paul and Michelangelo establish *loci sancti* at the Vatican.

## 1.6 Pauline Objectives

Pope Paul III engaged Michelangelo on artistic commissions to assert the spiritual authority of the papacy, the primacy of Rome as capital of Christ's kingdom on earth, and the

---

<sup>67</sup> Ludwig Pastor, *The History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages: Drawn from the Secret Archives of the Vatican and Other Original Sources*, 5th ed. (St. Louis: Herder, 1950) 12:538. Manetti was not, however, exclusively devoted to historic preservation. He was also papal private secretary, head of the papal mint and five-time nuncio to the court of France.

<sup>68</sup> Rebecchini, "After the Medici," 161, 169-170. On the fortifications see Arnaldo Bruschi, "Roma Farnesiana. Città e architettura al tempo di Paolo III. Il caso del complesso Capitolina," in *Per Franco Barbieri: Studi di storia dell'arte e dell'architettura*, ed. Elisa Avagnina and Guido Beltramini (Venice: Marsilio, 2004), 183 and Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 12:554-563. Bruschi also discusses the transformation of the Capitoline Hill (pg.133).

ascendancy of the Farnese family. By examining Michelangelo's collaborations with Paul as an ensemble, I bring into focus the themes expressed in multiple projects: links between the papacy and the early Church; an assertion of the divine favor granted to the popes through Christ and the apostles; and Paul's personal and familial legacy. Together, Paul and Michelangelo created a series of *novi loci sancti* that remain among the most sacred and imposing spaces associated with the papacy.

## Chapter 2: The *Last Judgment*

Michelangelo painted the enormous *Last Judgment* fresco in the Sistine Chapel from 1534-42 (fig.1). This chapter considers the success of the commission from the patron's perspective. Along with the Pauline Chapel frescoes, the *Last Judgment* expresses fundamental aspects of Counter-Reformation ideology, even before these concepts were articulated by the Council of Trent (1545-63).<sup>1</sup> Paul's negotiations with Charles V and Francis I were so fraught with conflicts that it took more than a decade to successfully convene a church council. Through art projects in Rome, Paul promoted spiritual and political messages outside the slow, cumbersome machinery of ecclesiastical reform and local or international politics. These projects bridge the gap between the humanist-inspired art of Renaissance Rome and art that embraced tenets of the Counter-Reformation.<sup>2</sup>

What made the fresco worth Paul's investment of money and the inconvenience of having the altar wall of the Sistine Chapel obscured for eight years? How did the fresco influence viewers and convey messages about the papacy and the Church? In what ways does the fresco engage curial audiences and attempt to influence their behavior? I examine how the constellation of subtle and overt messages in the fresco responds to critics of papal authority and

---

<sup>1</sup> On the complex political maneuvers and negotiations involved in calling a council, see Ludwig Pastor, *The History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages: Drawn from the Secret Archives of the Vatican and Other Original Sources*, 5th ed. (St. Louis: Herder, 1950) 12:125-47.

<sup>2</sup> Marcia Hall, *The Sacred Image in the Age of Art: Titian, Tintoretto, Barocci, El Greco, Caravaggio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 97-116. Steven Ostrow, "The Counter-Reformation and the End of the Century," in *Rome*, ed. Marcia Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 246-320; Melinda Schlitt, "Painting, Criticism and Michelangelo's Last Judgment," in *Michelangelo's Last Judgment*, ed. Marcia Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 113-49.

spiritual legitimacy. This chapter suggests how the *Last Judgment* supports Paul's campaign for spiritual reform of the church, including the curia and future pontiffs. The patron also benefitted from the conspicuous display of magnificence as realized by the most prominent artist in Rome in one of the holiest sites of Christendom. I consider the artistic innovations that actively engaged viewers and demonstrated that Paul's magnificence was on par with that of popes Sixtus IV (who commissioned the Sistine Chapel) and Julius II (for whom the artist painted the famous ceiling frescoes). I suggest how Michelangelo's artistic virtuosity and his solutions to formal challenges benefitted Paul. The commission also contributed to Michelangelo's personal and professional success; that aspect of the commission is discussed in chapter four.

## 2.1 Pope Paul III as Patron

Before addressing how the *Last Judgment* fresco contributed to the advancement of Paul's broader objectives, it is necessary to establish why Paul should be identified as the patron most directly responsible for the altar wall. Naming the patron of the *Last Judgment* is neither simple nor straightforward. What criteria are sufficient to call one a patron of this fresco? Generally, a patron forges an agreement with an artist to execute a specific work in a specific location for a set price; has influence on the artist's design and/or the messages conveyed by the work; reviews and approves final models; pays the artist, and ensures the completion of the project. As the protracted commission for the Tomb of Julius II demonstrates, these duties may fall to multiple individuals over the course of the commission. A patron exercises the most direct influence over a project's final appearance by approving the final design, or agreeing to changes as the work is in progress.

According to some scholars, the idea to have Michelangelo paint the altar wall of the



Sistine Chapel first occurred to Julius II while the artist was working on the ceiling frescoes as early as 1508.<sup>3</sup> This hypothesis stems from an interpretation of the *Last Judgment* as the artistic and iconographic culmination of the decorative program begun on the side walls and ceiling.<sup>4</sup> However, no documentary evidence records the artist considering or designing frescoes for the altar wall or entrance wall for Julius II. The fact that the *Last Judgment* dovetails with earlier decorations in the chapel attests to the artist's sensitivity to context and consistent themes in papal art, such as the prominence of Peter. The design of the *Last Judgment* fresco, unveiled twenty-eight years after Julius' death, is probably not based on any direct influence of the Della Rovere pontiff.

Extant evidence pertaining to the commission includes: biographies of the artist written years later by Giorgio Vasari and Ascanio Condivi; two letters; payment records for work completed in the chapel; and a *motu proprio* issued in 1536. For the purpose of identifying the

---

<sup>3</sup> Ann Leader suggests that the *Last Judgment* was the culmination of the decorative program exalting papal primacy begun under Sixtus IV. In her thoroughly researched article she links proposals for the *Last Judgment*, and possibly a *Fall of the Rebel Angels* with themes that thread throughout the projects commissioned in the chapel by Sixtus IV, Julius II, Leo X, Clement VII and Paul III. At the same time, she credits Paul with actually executing the commission. Anne Leader, "Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*: The Culmination of Papal Propaganda in the Sistine Chapel," *Studies in Iconography* 27 (2006): 103-8. While I agree with her identification of papal supremacy as the consistent underlying theme of various projects in the chapel, I think that, formally, the *Last Judgment* marked a purposefully abrupt departure from the decoration of the side and entrance walls.

<sup>4</sup> See Leopold D. Ettlinger and H. Otto Fein, *The Sistine Chapel Before Michelangelo; Religious Imagery and Papal Primacy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 99. In a lecture at the Vatican delivered in 1990, John Shearman suggested that the idea to repaint both end walls was first envisioned by Julius II. Bernadine Barnes offers a clear synopsis of Shearman's argument; see Bernadine Barnes, *Michelangelo's Last Judgment: The Renaissance Response* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 142 n.26. Marcia Hall writes that Julius may have conceived of having Michelangelo paint a *Last Judgment* in the Sistine, but she explicitly identifies Clement VII as first patron of the frescoes; see Marcia Hall, *Michelangelo: The Frescoes of the Sistine Chapel* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2002), 151.

patron and establishing an early chronology of the commission, each of these sources is useful. However, for each we must consider the likelihood of inadvertent or purposeful inaccuracies. No contract specifying the terms of the agreement between patron and artist survives. If such a document ever existed, it would almost certainly be preserved in the Vatican's extensive archives, with another copy among the artist's papers.

In his biography of Michelangelo published in 1550, Vasari introduces the painting campaign as an idea imposed on Michelangelo by his Medici patron, Clement VII. According to the biographer, the papal request for the artist to turn his attention to a new commission prevented Michelangelo from completing work on the sacristy and library of San Lorenzo in Florence. Giorgio Vasari explained:

Michelangelo was about to have the statues finally carved when the pope took it into his head to have him on hand in Rome, being eager to have the *walls of the Sistine Chapel* done by the man who had already painted the ceiling for Julius II. Michelangelo had already started on the drawings when Clement VII died; and this was why the Florentine project, which he had striven so hard to complete, was left unfinished; for the craftsmen working on it were laid off by those who had nothing left to spend. Then came the happy election of the Farnese Pope Paul III, an old friend who, knowing that Michelangelo had a mind to finish the work he had already started in Rome as his own last memorial, had the scaffolding raised and gave orders that the project should proceed.”<sup>5</sup> [italics are mine]

---

<sup>5</sup> “Per che volendo Michele Agnolo far porre in opera le statue, in questo tempo al Papa venne in animo di volerlo appresso di sé, avendo desiderio di fare la facciata della cappella di Sisto, dove egli aveva dipinto la volta a Giulio II. E già dato principio a' disegni, successe la morte di Clemente VII, la quale fu cagione che egli non seguitò l'opera di Fiorenza: la quale con tanto studio cercandosi di finire, pure rimase imperfetta, perché i maestri che per essa lavorarono furono licenziati da chi non poteva più spendere. Successe poi la felicissima creazione di papa Paulo Terzo Farnese, domestico et amico suo, il quale, sapendo che l'animo di Michele Agnolo era di finire la già cominciata opera in Roma da sé medesimo per la ultima sua memoria, fattigli fare i ponti, diede ordine che tale opera si continuasse....” Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568* (Florence: Sansoni, 1966), 6:64-67. Giorgio Vasari, “Life of Michelangelo (1550),” in *Michelangelo: Poems and Letters*, ed. and trans. Anthony Mortimer (London: Penguin, 2007) 176-177.

Here, Anthony Mortimer translates “la facciata della cappella di Sisto” as “the walls of the Sistine Chapel.” However, Vasari’s mention of “la facciata” surely refers to a single wall, perhaps the altar wall.<sup>6</sup> The singular form of “la facciata” is significant because the reference would not describe a painting campaign on both the entrance and altar walls.

In a different version of the artist’s biography published four years later, Ascanio Condivi mentions the commission to paint the altar wall of the Sistine Chapel in relation to both the tomb of Julius II and the Medici projects at San Lorenzo. Again the artist is forced to neglect other projects in order to satisfy Clement VII’s demands. Condivi describes a contract meant to settle matters between the artist and the Duke of Urbino, who was demanding completion of the tomb of Julius II. The agreement (the terms of which correspond to the contract signed 29 April 1532) stipulates that Michelangelo would complete a wall tomb with six figures for Julius.<sup>7</sup> Pope Clement VII, who was eager to see progress on the artist’s work at San Lorenzo in Florence, would be entitled to the artist’s services for four months of the year. Condivi suggests, however, that after the artist served him admirably in Florence, Clement VII forced Michelangelo to neglect the tomb project.

...after he had served four months in Florence, when he returned to Rome [to

---

<sup>6</sup> The term, “facciata,” suggests the “front “ or “façade” of the chapel (although it is more conventionally used to describe the exterior façade), which I take to mean the altar wall. An argument could be made that the “facciata” referred to the entrance wall, but not to both entrance and rear walls.

<sup>7</sup> For the tomb contract of April 1532, see Ernst Steinmann, *Die Sixtinische Kapelle* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1901), 2:748. For a discussion of the third and fourth contracts for the tomb, see E. H. Ramsden, *The Letters of Michelangelo* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1963), 2:251 and Gaetano Milanesi, *Le lettere di Michelangelo Buonarroti pubblicate coi ricordi ed i contratti artistici* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1875), 709, 715. Claudia Echinger-Maurach, *Studien zu Michelangelos Juliusgrabmal II*, 2 vols., *Studien zur Kunstgeschichte*, Bd. 61 (Hildesheim: Olms, 1991).

work on the Tomb of Julius II], the pope sought to employ him in something else and to have him paint the *Day of the Last Judgment*, with the idea that the variety and magnitude of the subject ought to afford the scope for this man to demonstrate his powers and how much they could achieve. Michelangelo, who was conscious of his obligation to the duke of Urbino, evaded this to the extent that he could but, since he could not free himself of it he procrastinated and, while pretending to be at work, as he partly was, on the cartoon, he worked in secret on the statues that were to go on the tomb.<sup>8</sup>

In 1568 Vasari published a revised version of his *Lives* in which the genesis of the *Last Judgment* fresco is retold with some changes. In this version, Michelangelo was busily working on the projects at San Lorenzo in Florence when Clement VII decided that he wanted the artist to paint a *Last Judgment* on the altar wall of the Sistine and a *Fall of the Rebel Angels* on the entrance wall. The artist tried to make sketches and cartoons for these frescoes, but the agents of the Duke of Urbino repeatedly disturbed him with requests to complete the tomb of Julius II. Finally Michelangelo and the Duke reached an agreement, Vasari's description of which corresponds to the contract of April 1532. The artist would work on the tomb of Julius II for eight months each year, then he would serve Clement VII for four months of the year. The arrangement fell through because after working on San Lorenzo for four months, the pope compelled Michelangelo to prepare designs for the painting campaign in the Sistine Chapel

---

<sup>8</sup> "...dopo ch'ebbe servitor i quattro mesi a Fiorenza, tornatosene a Roma, il papa cercò d'occuparlo in altro e fargli dipingere la facciata della Capella de Sisto. E come quello ch'era di buon giudicio, avendo sopra ciò più e più cose pensate, ultimamente si resolve a fargli fare il Giorno dell'estremo giudicio, stimando, per la varietà e grandezza della material, dover dare campo a questo uomo di far prova delle sue forze, quanto potessero. Michelagnolo, che sapeva l'obligio ch'egli aveva col duca d'Urbino, fuggì questa cosa quanto puoté, ma poi che liberar non si poteva, mandava la cosa in lungo e fingendo d'occuparsi, come faceva in parte, nel cartone, secretamente lavorava quelle statue che dovevano andare nella sepoltura." Ascanio Condivi, *Vita di Michelangelo Buonarroti*, ed. Giovanni Nencioni (Florence: S.P.E.S., 1998), 45-6. Ascanio Condivi, *The Life of Michelangelo*, ed. Hellmut Wohl, trans. Alice Sedgewick Wohl, 2nd ed. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 75.

rather than return to work on the Julian Tomb. In 1568, then, Vasari introduces the idea that Michelangelo was to paint both the altar and entrance walls of the Sistine Chapel.<sup>9</sup> Also, he adjusts the chronology a bit by specifying that preparations began on the fresco prior to the 1532 contract with the Della Rovere heirs.

In each of these accounts, Clement is described as the patron of the *Last Judgment* and the author specifies that Michelangelo executed some drawings for the commission at Clement's behest. The biographers indicate that Paul III commanded the artist to continue the project begun by his predecessor. Scholarship on these biographers and their texts however, demonstrates that, broadly speaking, neither Vasari nor Condivi rendered an impartial, precise record of events.<sup>10</sup> Rather, some events seem tailored to support a narrative. For example, a recurrent thread in Vasari's biography is the trope of Michelangelo as the overburdened artist forced by powerful patrons to take on projects against his will. Both Vasari and Condivi suggest that Clement coerced Michelangelo to begin designs for the Sistine Chapel wall fresco(es), and this new burden hindered his work at San Lorenzo in Florence and delayed progress on the tomb of Julius II. In this way, the artist's responsibility for delays is mitigated. It is worth considering the likelihood that Michelangelo suggested a relative chronology of events to his biographers with the idea of justifying incomplete and protracted projects.

Two letters are possibly associated with the commission for the *Last Judgment*. Writing

---

<sup>9</sup> Mortimer's translation of Vasari, 1550, suggests that both the entrance and altar walls were to be painted. But, because I disagree on his translation of the 1550 text, I maintain that the idea of painting both walls was first mentioned by Vasari in 1568.

<sup>10</sup> Wilde, "Michelangelo, Vasari and Condivi," *Six Lectures*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 1-47; Paul Barolsky, *Michelangelo's Nose: A Myth and Its Maker* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), 12-16.

to the artist on 17 July 1533, Sebastiano del Piombo conveyed a message from Clement VII to the effect that the artist should anticipate a papal commission, “de tal cossa che non ve lo sognasti mai” (“for something beyond your wildest dreams”).<sup>11</sup> Johannes Wilde first used this letter to suggest the earliest secure date for the *Last Judgment* commission, 1533.<sup>12</sup> As some scholars have suggested, Clement and the artist could have discussed a painting project in the Sistine Chapel when they met at San Miniato al Tedesco on 22 September 1533.<sup>13</sup> While the scenario is plausible, the evidence remains circumstantial. Furthermore, as discussed in the previous chapter, Clement VII overwhelmed Michelangelo with more requests for work than could possibly be completed. The pope’s desire and intention to have the artist to paint the *Last Judgment*, does not prove that Michelangelo agreed to the commission or did any preparatory work.

A second letter, cited by Redig de Campos as providing the *terminus ad quem* of the commission, dates from 20 February 1534.<sup>14</sup> An agent of the Gonzaga known as Agnello wrote that the pope “ha tanto operato che ha disposito Michelangelo a dipinger in la cappella e che

---

<sup>11</sup> Paola Barocchi and Renzo Ristori, *Il carteggio di Michelangelo*, 5 vols. (Florence: Sansoni, 1965-85), 4:18.

<sup>12</sup> Johannes Wilde, *Italian Drawings in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum: Michelangelo and His Studio* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1953), 99-100. John White and John Shearman pushed the date of the fresco’s conception back farther by linking the image to the Sack of Rome in 1527; see John White and John Shearman, “Raphael’s Tapestries and Their Cartoons,” *The Art Bulletin* 40, no. 3 (1958): 198, n.22.

<sup>13</sup> Steinmann first suggested that this meeting relates to the *Last Judgment* commission. Steinmann, *Sixtinische Kapelle*, 2:475. Michelangelo recorded the encounter with Clement. See Milanese, *Lettere*, 604. Charles de Tolnay accepts the date of Clement’s return from France, 10 December 1533 as the *terminus a quo*. De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 5:99 n.4.

<sup>14</sup> Deoclecio Redig de Campos, *The Last Judgment*, trans. Serge Hughes (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978), 25.

sopra l'altare se farà la resurrectione, sì che giàsi era fatto il tavalato.”<sup>15</sup> This passage has been translated as: “has managed to persuade Michelangelo to paint in the chapel and so above the altar there will be a *Resurrection*, for which the scaffolding is already prepared.”<sup>16</sup> The document prompts two questions. Did Clement wish to have a *Resurrection of Christ* painted on the altar wall?<sup>17</sup> Also, does the mention of scaffolding suggest that laborers would prepare the wall in the near future? Marcia Hall offers a thoroughly documented and well-reasoned argument that the *Resurrection* referred to in the document does not suggest a Resurrection of Christ but a scene of Christ's return to Earth, the Last Judgment.<sup>18</sup> She supports the idea with contemporary texts illustrating keen interest in the physical form that the dead would take when resurrected from the dead by Christ on Judgment Day.

Indeed, the corporeality and attention to various states of regeneration from skeletal remains to flesh visible in the *Last Judgment* justifies the inference that Michelangelo carefully considered the forms beings would take as they rise from their graves. However, similar slippage in terminology between “Resurrection” and “Last Judgment” is not evident in other references to Michelangelo's fresco. Such elaborate justification of the writer's use of

---

<sup>15</sup> The letter is published by Ludwig Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters: Mit Benutzung des päpstlichen Geheim-Archives und vieler anderer Archive* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1886), 4, n.2:567.

<sup>16</sup> Translation by Pierluigi de Vecchi, “Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*,” in *The Sistine Chapel: The Art, the History, and the Restoration*, ed. Carlo Pietrangeli (New York: Harmony Books, 1986), 178.

<sup>17</sup> Charles de Tolnay suggests that Condivi's account of the commission supports the idea that, at one point, Clement VII considered having the Resurrection painted in the chapel. Condivi writes that Clement considered other themes before finally resolving to have the *Last Judgment* painted. De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 5:99-100 n.5.

<sup>18</sup> Marcia Hall, “Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*: Resurrection of the Body and Predestination,” *The Art Bulletin* 58, no. 1 (1976): 85-92.

“Resurrection” to refer to a Last Judgment is superfluous. There are two simpler explanations. First, it is reasonable to believe that Agnello incorrectly identified the subject of the fresco (his letter contains multiple inaccuracies).<sup>19</sup> Or, between an inchoate project for a Resurrection of Christ envisioned by Clement VII and the actual fresco executed for Paul III, the subject matter was changed.

In establishing a chronology of the commission, Agnello’s mention of scaffolding in 1534 may be a red herring. In April 1535, six months after Paul’s election, an otherwise unknown laborer named Pierino del Capitano earned a payment from the papal camerarius for building scaffolding in the Sistine Chapel.<sup>20</sup> What happened to the scaffolding mentioned the previous year? Perhaps the scaffolding mentioned by Agnello was prepared, but was not yet erected in the chapel. From gathering a large amount of raw material to sawing planks and poles, crews must have performed significant labor before assembling the scaffolding in the Sistine. Alternatively, if scaffolding was raised in the chapel in 1534, it may have been taken down for the conclave of 1534, in which Paul was elected. The payment in April 1535 is the earliest secure evidence of preparatory work in the Sistine Chapel. Most likely, with this

---

<sup>19</sup> Steinmann, *Sixtinische Kapelle*, 766. See also de Campos, *Last Judgment*, 28, 36 n.31. Citing the payment made to Perino del Capitano in 1535, Hall recognizes that the “tavolato” mentioned by Agnello was not used for the *Last Judgment*. She writes that “the problem of the identity of the *tavolato* already made at this early date [1534] is unresolved.” Hall, “Resurrection of the Body,” 85 n.1.

<sup>20</sup> The payment is identified as: “pro fabrica pontis et aliis expensis per eum in cappella Sixti in qua dipingit Michelangelus pictor de ordine sua sanctitatis factis.” Steinmann, *Sixtinische Kapelle*, 766. Alternatively, the scaffolding in place in 1534 may have been taken down to accommodate the conclave in which Paul III was elected (in October 1534). Or, as of February 1534, the scaffolding was *prepared* but not *erected*. Designing and constructing the apparatus was a significant project, which included procuring a significant amount of wood and rope. If all of the supplies were gathered (perhaps in a courtyard adjacent to the chapel), that may have prompted Agnello’s comment.



scaffold in place, workers began the laborious task of chipping away earlier frescoes from the wall so that the surface could be prepared for Michelangelo. Redig de Campos used the payment to Capitano to fix the earliest date for this major undertaking.<sup>21</sup> In his biography of Sebastiano del Piombo, Vasari describes the preparation of the wall surface for oil painting under the artist's supervision. After Sebastiano finished the altar wall, Michelangelo protested that "oil painting is a woman's art for lazy and easygoing painters such as Bastiano."<sup>22</sup> Michelangelo ordered the wall surface destroyed and extensive work to prepare the wall as he wished.

The project required bricking up two windows removing the della Rovere coat of arms on the corbel below the painting of Jonah, removal of the three marble cornices, and destruction of all previous paintings on the wall.<sup>23</sup> At Michelangelo's behest, the wall (which previously leaned back about fourteen centimeters at the top) was chiseled away, requiring the removal of approximately sixty-two cubic meters of masonry. As recorded by payments in February 1536, a great quantity of high-quality bricks were ordered and used to reconstruct the wall surface.<sup>24</sup> The altar wall, reconstructed to the artist's specifications, was built such that the top of the wall projects approximately thirty centimeters beyond true vertical from the base of the wall.

Vasari's explanation that the projection of the wall was intended to prevent a build-up of dirt and

---

<sup>21</sup> De Campos, *Last Judgment*, 28-29.

<sup>22</sup> "Il colorire a olio era arte da donna e da persone agiate et infingarde, come fra' Bastiano..." Vasari, *Vite*, 6:102.

<sup>23</sup> For a useful explanation of the work required to prepare the wall for the *Last Judgment*, see Loren Partridge, "Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*: An Interpretation," in Loren Partridge, Gianluigi Colalucci, and Fabrizio Mancinelli, *Michelangelo--the Last Judgment: A Glorious Restoration* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997), 8-19.

<sup>24</sup> See de Campos, *Last Judgment*, 29; Léon Dorez, *La cour du Pape Paul III: D'après les registres de la trésorerie secrète* (Collection F. de Navenne), (Paris: Librairie Ernest Leroux, 1932) 2:25.

grime is not convincing.<sup>25</sup> Obviously smoke rising from incense and candles at the altar would counteract any such benefit.

Some scholars suggest that by having the top of the wall lean out about thirty centimeters beyond the bottom, some kind of visual effect is created to compensate for the great height of the wall. Loren Partridge proposes that the inclination of the wall brings the upper section into the light streaming through windows.<sup>26</sup> This is a reasonable explanation that may be correct, although it is difficult to prove how much more illumination the fresco surface receives due to this modification. Perhaps the inclination of the wall is meant to make the fresco more visible from close range, such as from the position of the pope seated on the throne near the front of the chapel. This second explanation is not any easier to prove than Partridge's, but it is worth considering.

In addition to the biographies, letters and payments for work discussed above, primary evidence for the *Last Judgment* commission includes the *motu proprio* issued by Paul III on 17 November 1536.<sup>27</sup> The document absolves Michelangelo of his obligation to complete the tomb of Julius II for Duke Francisco Maria della Rovere of Urbino. In it, Paul states that Clement ordered Michelangelo to break the previous contract with the duke in order to work in the Sistine Chapel (on the *Last Judgment*). Furthermore, Paul continues, it would be a shame if the great

---

<sup>25</sup> Numerous scholars have questioned this point. See, for example, Loren Partridge, "Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*: An Interpretation," 11.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 146.

<sup>27</sup> ASV, Segr. Stato, Suppl., 2230, cc. 189v.190v. Lucilla Bardeschi Ciulich, *I contratti di Michelangelo* (Florence: S.P.E.S., 2005), 215-219. English translation in de Campos, *Last Judgment*, 1978, 97-99. Notably the *motu proprio* dates after workers started (and perhaps completed) preparation of the entire altar wall for the fresco.

work in the Sistine were not executed, so he commands the artist to complete the work. The purpose of the document is to absolve Michelangelo from all obligations to the della Rovere, so that the artist would not owe them money or a completed tomb. Although Paul nullified Michelangelo's contractual agreement with the della Rovere, he mitigated the affront to the duke by asserting that he simply upheld Clement's agreement with the artist. The usefulness of this account is further attested by its repetition by Michelangelo's biographers, Vasari and Condivi.

Along with textual evidence, preparatory sketches for the *Last Judgment* offer some insights into the design process. Although it is impossible to definitively associate specific drawings with either Clement VII or Paul, we can discern a relative chronology of design ideas for the fresco. A drawing of a seated Christ, surrounded by nude figures seated on clouds in the Musée Bonnat in Bayonne seems to convey the artist's earliest conceptions for the *Last Judgment* (fig. 2.1). The figures exist in an undefined space, suggesting that the artist was not yet developing the composition of the entire altar wall. The male figure below and to the left of Christ bends at the waist and rotates his shoulders to look down, which suggests engagement with figures not yet articulated below. In a drawing at the Casa Buonarroti, Christ is surrounded

by masses of tumbling and grappling figures (fig. 2.2).<sup>28</sup> A nude figure, presumably the Virgin, approaches Christ with outstretched arms, as if pleading on behalf of the dead. At the bottom right, figures of the damned are beaten downwards by athletic nudes.

Alexander Perrig suggests that the rectangular void at the bottom of the drawing corresponds to the large doorframe of the entrance to the Sistine Chapel.<sup>29</sup> The drawing, then, would show plans for the *Last Judgment* in the traditional location chosen for that subject, the entrance wall of the chapel. On the other hand, Bernadine Barnes identifies the void in the drawing with an altarpiece, which would identify the design with a project for the altar wall. She believes that Michelangelo and Clement considered pairing a fresco of the Fall of the Rebel Angels on the entrance wall with a Last Judgment/Resurrection on the altar wall, as Vasari

---

<sup>28</sup> Scholars that date the Bayonne and Casa Buonarroti drawings to Clement's pontificate include Frey, Panofsky, Brinkmann, Goldscheider, von Einem and de Tolnay. For a more detailed summary of proposed dates see de Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 5:182-183. He dates the drawing in Bayonne prior to the Casa Buonarroti drawing. This relative chronology is reasonable, but it is difficult to assign the works to a Clementine project. More recent scholars have followed suit. See Fabrizio Mancinelli, "Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*: Technique and Restoration," in *Glorious Restoration*, 157-58. Bernadine Barnes attributes the aforementioned drawings to the project under Paul's sway. She suggests that a Michelangelo drawing at the Uffizi (Gabinetto disegni e degli stampe 170 S) and two non-autograph drawings (Metropolitan Museum of Art, accession n.67.152; Courtauld Institute Galleries, Witt Collection 4774) show the artist's conception of the fresco for Pope Clement VII. Barnes interprets the prominence of specific martyrs in these drawings as Clement's choice, influenced by familial association with St. Lawrence and specific martyrs whose relics were desecrated in the Sack of Rome. Barnes, *Renaissance Response*, 54-57. On the other hand, the representations of martyrs in these drawings (laboring to raise the instruments of their martyrdoms) are quite similar to the *Last Judgment* fresco. It seems reasonable that the drawings most closely related to the fresco were executed late in the design process. I will return to the question of the Sack of Rome in relation to the fresco elsewhere.

<sup>29</sup> Alexander Perrig, *Michelangelo's Drawing: The Science of Attribution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 53.

claimed.<sup>30</sup> The rising elect emphasized in the Casa Buonarroti drawing (fig. 2.2) would pair with figures of fallen angels on the entrance wall. Barnes surmises that the drawing shows the earliest plan for the fresco campaign, which juxtaposed salvation and damnation on the entrance and altar walls of the chapel. Either Clement or Paul, she concludes, decided at some point to scale back the commission to include only the *Last Judgment* on the altar wall. The abrupt change may coincide with Paul taking on the role of patron, but Barnes admits that such an assertion is impossible to corroborate. Analyses of these preparatory drawings yield some insights into the design process, but attempts to identify specific drawings with either patron are tentative. I will return to discussion of preparatory drawings later.

Despite claims made by Paul III (in the *motu proprio*) and Michelangelo's biographers, there is no clear evidence of what, if any, work was completed on the *Last Judgment* at Clement's behest. Some scholars turn to preparatory sketches in hopes of untangling the design process and patronage, but those efforts are inconclusive. Regardless of the extent to which Michelangelo and Clement developed plans for a commission in the Sistine Chapel, Paul would have his own criteria for costs, speed of execution, location, and what messages he wished to convey. Surely the new patron actively reviewed any plans made for the Clementine project. Some elements of an earlier project may have been retained or adapted as Michelangelo and Paul collaborated to reach a design that met the new patron's objectives. Therefore, we may justifiably consider the *Last Judgment* fresco unveiled in 1541 to be a Pauline commission.

---

<sup>30</sup> Barnes, *Renaissance Response* Press, 1998), 30.

## 2.2 Artistic Innovations

Although, according to Vasari and Condivi, Michelangelo initially resisted working for Pope Paul III, the commission to paint the *Last Judgment* was an unparalleled opportunity. Condivi wrote that after mulling over numerous possibilities Clement “in the end resolved to have him paint the *Day of the Last Judgment*, with the idea that the variety and magnitude of the subject ought to afford the scope for this man to demonstrate his powers and how much he could achieve.”<sup>31</sup> Surely devising the best artistic opportunity for Michelangelo was not the primary consideration of either Clement or Paul. However, from the artist’s perspective, Condivi’s statement rings true. Michelangelo excelled at devising large-scale, audacious projects that broke away from established models (the *David*, *Vatican Pietá*, Tomb of Julius II and Sistine Ceiling demonstrate this). The altar wall was the single largest wall space entrusted to an artist anywhere in Rome, perhaps in Europe.<sup>32</sup> Other very large commissions, such as Luca Signorelli’s San Brizio Chapel at Orvieto and Giotto’s Arena Chapel, included large areas to be painted, but these were sub-divided and distributed across walls, vaults and a fair amount of decorative framing elements.<sup>33</sup> The altar wall of the Sistine was a huge open field covered with a single composition for viewers to take in all at once. Indeed, the concept of using a wall space

---

<sup>31</sup> Condivi, “Life,” 75. “...ultimamente si resolve a fargli fare il Giorno dell’estremo giudizio, stimando, per la varietà e grandezza della material, dover dare campo a questo uomo di far prova delle sue forze, quanto potessero.” Condivi, *Vita*, 45.

<sup>32</sup> The painted area of the altar wall measures c. 46 x 43 feet, or 14 x 13.18 meters; an area of c. 1,940 square feet or c. 180.21 square meters. Partridge, “Interpretation,” 10.

<sup>33</sup> The Strozzi Chapel and Spanish Chapel at Santa Maria Novella in Florence also have large-scale frescoes, but the compositions incorporate framing devices that subdivide the wall area.

on this scale for a single composition did not exist until Michelangelo designed the *Last Judgment*. The Sistine Chapel was the most prestigious ceremonial space in Rome and, with St. Peter's Basilica stalled mid-construction, the chapel served as the *locus sacra* of papal ceremony.

The commission ensured that Michelangelo's fresco would be viewed by elite audiences of high-ranking ecclesiastics, Roman nobles, humanists and ambassadors. As Bernadine Barnes explores in detail, the audiences broadened to include "artists who were allowed into the chapel to copy the work of the master and, later, those who saw reproductions or read descriptions of the fresco."<sup>34</sup> Michelangelo's core audience was knowledgeable in liturgy and papal ceremony as well as art, humanist traditions, and sacred scripture. The corporate body of the *capella papalis*, or Papal Chapel, comprised the pope and about two hundred high-ranking ecclesiastical and secular officials who met at least forty-two times a year and participated in a minimum of twenty-seven masses.<sup>35</sup> These sophisticated viewers were prepared to understand complex messages and subtle allusions to texts, artistic precedents and visual cues. The (sometimes literally) captive audiences had repeated, lengthy opportunities to gaze beyond liturgical

---

<sup>34</sup> Barnes, *Renaissance Response*, 3.

<sup>35</sup> Richard Sherr, "The Singers of the Papal Chapel and Liturgical Ceremonies in the Early Sixteenth Century: Some Documentary Evidence," in *Rome in the Renaissance: The City and the Myth*, ed. P.A. Ramsey, (Binghamton: Center for Medieval & Early Renaissance Studies, 1982), 253.

activities at the altar to examine and contemplate the fresco.<sup>36</sup> Michelangelo had a professional opportunity and an audience that would have rightfully intimidated many lesser artists.

The familiarity of the *Last Judgment* makes Michelangelo's audacious conception of the project easy to take for granted. Formal constraints required creative artistic solutions. Prior to Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, the Sistine Chapel was a visually orderly space. The stacked horizontal layers of the walls were subdivided into individual compositions. Painted architectonic elements—pilasters created a steady rhythm corresponding to the eight bays of the chapel and continuing on the entrance and altar walls. On the lowest horizontal layer, painted draperies supplied simple decoration when Raphael's series of valuable tapestries were not in place.<sup>37</sup> Above an elegantly painted and carved projecting cornice, Quattrocento frescoes illustrating the lives of Christ and Moses formed a continuous circuit around the chapel, adorning the second layer of chapel space.

A larger projecting cornice above these frescoes marked the transition between the painted narratives and the upper level, which is punctuated by pairs of arched windows. Between the windows, full-length portraits of honored popes occupy pairs of fictive niches

---

<sup>36</sup> The term *con clave* (with a key) describes the sequester of cardinals under lock and key during the election process. This effort to force cardinals to make a timely decision derives from the stalemate following the death of Clement IV (1265-1268). After three years of waiting for a new pontiff, civic authorities of Viterbo locked the electors in the papal palace. Gregory X (1272-1276)—elected after the roof was removed, and the food supply threatened—decreed that, in the future, electors would be sequestered *con clave*. In chapter three, I discuss the locations of the tiny temporary rooms (variously called *camere* or *stanze*) constructed to house cardinals at the apostolic palace during each conclave.

<sup>37</sup> John Shearman, *Raphael's Cartoons in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen, and the Tapestries for the Sistine Chapel* (London: Phaidon, 1972).



flanking painted pilasters.<sup>38</sup> Another cornice, broken only by the windows, continued around the chapel walls. At the uppermost level, above this cornice, Michelangelo's lunettes of the Prophets and Sibyls decorated each of the four walls. Fictive and real architectural elements articulate a carefully ordered space. Boldly breaking the visual rhythm and architectonic framework of the chapel, Michelangelo removed the cornices and bricked up the windows of the altar wall to create an enormous unified field. Prior to Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* painting, the altar wall had a painted altarpiece of the *Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin* and frescoes of the *Birth of Christ* and *Finding of Moses*, all by Perugino, as well as portraits of the earliest popes and two of Michelangelo's lunettes. It is astonishing that Michelangelo – certainly with the pope's acquiescence—“erased” these artistically and iconographically significant decorations. Literally, Michelangelo “expropriated” the entire wall for his new work, giving the chapel a wholly new appearance, focus, and meaning.

Rather than an artfully composed design, the *Last Judgment* strikes viewers as a divine apparition. As if the altar wall had simply dissolved, the chapel breaks open to reveal the most highly-charged vision any devout Christian could encounter: the divine rendering of salvation and damnation. In several places along the edge of the fresco, figures are only partially visible. For example, at the right edge of the painting, behind the large cross, the arms and hands of a figure are visible reaching into the composition from the right. The figure, who must be positioned just to the right of the edge of the painting, signals that the scene is larger than what viewers see. In addition to cutting off figures at the edges, Michelangelo eschewed any frame on

---

<sup>38</sup> The pontifical figures on the altar wall may actually have included Christ. See Wilde, *Six Lectures*, 159. On the papal portraits, see Margaret Franklin, “Forgotten Images: Papal Portraits in the Sistine Chapel,” *Arte Cristiana* 84 (1996): 263–69.

the altar wall. Both of these formal devices help eradicate visual boundaries between viewers and the celestial realm. To a much greater degree than is seen in other Renaissance paintings, Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* seems to exist in a space that continues laterally beyond the chapel walls. The visual effect of the painting—that the chapel opens onto a heavenly scene taking place beyond the chapel space—is not unlike that created by Baroque artists in the Seicento.

When Michelangelo painted the Sistine ceiling, over two decades before the altar wall, he used fictive architectural devices to organize the expansive space. The strict framework incorporates a dizzying array of figures and easel-painting-like compositions. There are nine scenes from Genesis interspersed with twenty *ignudi*; four corner pendentives with Old Testament narratives; eight triangular spandrels with the ancestors of Christ; twelve oversized thrones with prophets and sibyls; eight medallions with narratives; twenty-four bronze nudes tucked into awkwardly-shaped voids above spandrels and pendentives for the Genesis narratives (fig. 2.3). The artist's framework of cornices and self-contained compositions offers viewers a way to focus on individual figures or typological groups, such as the enthroned sibyls or Genesis narratives, while ignoring others. For example, the *ignudo* resting on the painted base next to the *Creation of Adam* extends his right arm over the painted mound below Adam, yet the viewer unconsciously overlooks the intrusion (fig. 2.4). Viewers readily examine the fresco in piecemeal fashion, focusing on parts of the whole rather than an all-encompassing iconographic program.

Although the *Creation of Adam* is not surrounded by a picture frame but by painted cornices, it is a *quadro riportato* (composition that looks like an easel painting moved to the ceiling). The flatness of the image is reinforced by the *ignudo's* wrist languidly hanging in front

of it. Each of the scenes from Genesis has a specific orientation from which it can be viewed “correctly,” except the *Separation of Light from Darkness* in which the viewer looks up and sees God from below (*di sotto in su*). Michelangelo painted the *Drunkenness of Noah* first and concluded with the *Separation of Light from Darkness*. It is, then, towards the end of the painting campaign that Michelangelo first created a narrative composition that incorporates the architectural context and the viewer’s position into the design. It is as if a small aperture opened in the ceiling to reveal a glimpse of sacred history. This small scene, in which we see God’s sharply twisted form as he hovers above, pushing apart areas of gray and white sky, foreshadows the *Last Judgment*. There, the interaction of the image with viewers and the architectural setting is more purposeful and essential to the success of the fresco.

During the years between painting the Sistine ceiling and the *Last Judgment* Michelangelo gained confidence and acclaim as an artist, but the stylistic differences between the painting campaigns for the frescoes of the ceiling and the altar wall are surely prompted by the subject matter as well. Expansive temporal and geographical distance separated viewers in the sixteenth century from events described in Genesis. As such, the narratives are presented as revered subjects contained within the artist’s carefully constructed framework of fictive architecture. In contrast, viewers anxiously anticipated the return of Christ, which would directly involve them and all of humanity. Unlike scenes from Genesis, viewers are personally invested in the nature of Christ’s judgment. Will he return as a thunderous punisher or a welcoming lord? Most importantly for the viewer is the question of where he fits in to this eschatological vision—among the saved or the damned? These questions compel visitors to interact with the painting. Further, the dynamic movement of figures and the ambiguity of Christ’s gesture rightfully convey the uncertainty and anxiety that viewers have about Christ’s prophesied return.

Unlike the ceiling frescoes, the *Last Judgment* leaves the viewer on his (or occasionally in the past, her) own to discern a physical and spiritual relationship with the scene.<sup>39</sup> There is no frame to clarify how the *Last Judgment* relates to the viewer's space. Only the low wall below the fresco suggests the physical surface of the wall.<sup>40</sup> Obviously viewers in the sixteenth century, as today, know that the altar wall is a painted surface. But contemporary viewers had a tendency to suspend disbelief and enter into emotional, spiritual and psychological relationships with artworks.<sup>41</sup> By eliminating framing devices, cutting off figures at the edges of the composition, and suggesting physical interaction between the painted realm and the physical chapel, Michelangelo prompts viewers to engage with the fresco as a sacred vision.

The artist took into account how natural light would fall on the altar wall throughout the day to intensify the range of values in the fresco, connect the image to the architectural context and enhance the meaning and visual experience of the fresco. Lighter areas of the fresco (the groups of the elect close to the side walls and just above the second cornice for example) are bathed in more natural light from the chapel windows than figures that remain in shadow (those below the first cornice and near the side walls). How the artist used values in the fresco to enhance the iconography of the painting and incorporate the painting into the viewer's space will

---

<sup>39</sup> On the rare admission of women to the chapel in the Renaissance, see Barnes, *Renaissance Response*, 42-3.

<sup>40</sup> Paul III commissioned Perino de Vaga (1501-1547) to design tapestries to fill in the space below the *Last Judgment*, between the two doors on the altar wall. Cartoons were executed for the project, but, for reasons unknown, tapestries were not executed. See Partridge, "Interpretation," in Partridge, Colaluci, Mancinelli, *Glorious Restoration*, 149-154.

<sup>41</sup> See John Shearman, *Only Connect: Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 46-47 and Charles Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 50-51.

be discussed at greater length below, in relation to Pauline objectives.

Creating convincing recessionary space within the composition posed several challenges. Michelangelo's Florentine predecessors devised effective means of creating space using carefully choreographed one or two-point perspective and foreshortening. Since most of the *Last Judgment* takes place high above the horizon line and few rectilinear forms are present, linear perspective is scarcely employed. It is challenging to create depth in a huge field of blue sky. Michelangelo relied on scale, overlapping and, most prominently, impressive foreshortening and proportion to create depth. For example, at the level of the upper corbel, one figure in green and another in red reach downwards towards a nude figure seen from behind (fig. 2.5). The nude is larger in scale and in sharper focus than the clothed figures, as if he is closer to the viewer. His buttocks are prominent, his head is not visible, and his back and legs are foreshortened, as if he is moving away from the picture plane, towards the clothed figures. The viewer perceives that he is flying. Because of the elongated vertical shape of the fresco, some figures are necessarily located much higher up the picture plane than others.

The challenge for the artist was to make such an arrangement orderly without imposing artificially strict horizontal registers as Giotto had done in the *Last Judgment* at the Arena Chapel (fig. 2.6). Giotto's angels are stacked in a neat series of overlapping rows, as if they are seated on bleachers. However, the haloes are of consistent size, rather than decreasing in scale in the distance. Michelangelo's figures occupying space below the lunettes and above St. Lawrence also occupy a series of recessionary planes, with the figures highest up the vertical axis farthest in the distance. Yet, he avoids the artificial appearance of Giotto's fresco by rendering the figures highest up the central axis on a smaller scale, with reduced detail and darker than the figures lower on the axis. Furthermore, Michelangelo's crowds defy artificial orderliness because

numerous figures are either actively stepping towards or away from the picture plane. For example, the individual to the left of Christ generally identified as St. John the Baptist is stepping forwards; the figure next to him is stepping back (fig. 2.7). Or is the one stepping downward, and the other stepping up, as if navigating stair-like formations of clouds? Surely the figure along the right margin supporting the cross on his back has his right knee bent on a bank of clouds higher up in the sky than the cloud supporting his left foot. These celestial figures navigate an untold number of planes parallel to the picture surface and just as many parallel to the earth. Groupings of figures—such as the apostles surrounding Christ, martyrs and trumpeting angels—construct an organizational framework while dynamic poses imbue the scene with ongoing motion.

Devoid of the rich costumes and accoutrements of the figures ornamenting the chapel's side walls, Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* is a showplace for his incomparable mastery of human forms. The juxtaposition of the ceiling frescoes, completed in 1512, and the altar wall, completed in 1541, demonstrates Michelangelo's increased mastery of the human form as well as dramatic foreshortening. As a highly visible display of the painter's strengths, the fresco ensured that Michelangelo's reputation caught up with his mature style. As descriptions and drawings of the fresco dispersed throughout Europe, Michelangelo secured the artistic legacy that unfinished projects, at San Lorenzo in Florence for example, had not established. "It could be said that beginning in 1541, after the *Last Judgment* was unveiled, Rome was overtaken by Michelangelo fever and he became *the* source to be cited."<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> Hall, *Sacred Image*, 107.

## 2.3 The *Last Judgment* and Papal Objectives

The *Last Judgment* fresco by Michelangelo contributed to the advancement of Paul's broad goals of enhancing papal authority in spiritual and political matters in the Eternal City, Italy and throughout Europe. First, responding to criticisms and challenges to the spiritual legitimacy of the popes, the *Last Judgment* helps to reconstruct an identity of the pope as divinely selected ruler of Christ's Earthly Kingdom. Secondly, the image contributed to Paul's program of restoring the sanctity of Rome and developing the Vatican area as the New Jerusalem. Third, the *Last Judgment* suggests that the Earthly Church under papal authority is universal. The Church extends across and beyond political boundaries of Europe and throughout the known world. Finally, the fresco helps to construct the renewed identity of the Catholic Church as a sacred institution, devoted to the pastoral care of Christians. In addition to asserting the sacred focus of the Church, the *Last Judgment* reinforces the sanctity and legitimacy of Catholic saints, rites and relics. For each of these four complex messages, I identify the historical circumstances that prompted the papal initiative and analyze how the message is conveyed in the image.

### 2.3.1 Christ's Celestial and Earthly Kingdoms

The *Last Judgment* visually reinforces the Catholic tradition that equates Christ's rule in his Heavenly Kingdom surrounded by blessed individuals to the pope ruling Christ's Kingdom on Earth with the assistance of the curia. Addressing Pope Julius II, Giles of Viterbo made the correspondence between heavenly and earthly realms clear. "Behold what the Spirit says: Christ

is head of Heaven, Rome head of Earth; Rome sovereign, Christ Sovereign.”<sup>43</sup> The concept of the pope as Christ’s earthly counterpart was traditional rhetoric in Rome but lost ground amid the rising tide of anti-papal rhetoric among Protestants. The *Last Judgment*, however, visually reinforced an idea conveyed in sermons, that “the papal court was a reflection and image of the heavenly court, and the papal liturgies were a reflection and image of the heavenly liturgies.”<sup>44</sup> The ranks of the papal court, carefully assembled according to station by the papal Masters of Ceremonies, served as a corollary to the celestial hierarchies.<sup>45</sup> While the hierarchy of the papal court reinforced a sense of self-importance among the elect and impressed honored guests, it could also encourage sincere attention to sacred duties. Preachers in the chapel admonished members of the court to look up to their celestial counterparts, and model themselves accordingly.<sup>46</sup> The saints and martyrs in the fresco serve as paradigms of Christian virtue for the chapel audience to emulate. The correspondence of painted models and the chapel audience suggests that devotion to Christ and religious duties would ensure eternal glory for worthy members of the papal court. Indeed, such a message was ascribed to Peter himself.

To the elders among you, I appeal to you as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and the one also who will share in the glory to be revealed. Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve, not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock, and when the chief shepherd appears you will

---

<sup>43</sup> Quoted in Stinger, *Renaissance Rome*, 245.

<sup>44</sup> John W. O’Malley, *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome, Rhetoric, Doctrine and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, c.1450-1521* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1979), 10.

<sup>45</sup> This point is made by O’Malley, *Praise and Blame*, 11 and Barnes, *Renaissance Response*, 47.

<sup>46</sup> Barnes, *Renaissance Response*, 47.



receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.<sup>47</sup>

By encouraging viewers to recognize the honor and responsibility of their role in Christ's earthly kingdom, and reinforcing the prospect of eternal rewards, the fresco promotes modeling one's life after saintly examples. As such, the fresco contributes to Paul's agenda of promoting spiritual reform within the Church. Using art as a didactic tool, Paul encouraged personal reform of the chapel audience as a first step to more universal Church reform.

While orators specifically alluded to correlations between the papal court and the elect surrounding Christ, the chapel audience also interacted with the divine vision through visual cues in the painting. The exclusion of framing elements and the interaction of painted figures with the chapel architecture and space create visual connections between physical and painted space. For example, the figure next to the right edge of the fresco holding a large cross rests the heavy burden on the corbel projecting from the side wall (fig. 2.8). Another figure appears to grip the projecting corbel as he looks down to see struggling figures below. Along the left edge of the fresco, two figures look around the projecting corbel to the scene below.

The dynamic relationship between lighting in the chapel and the pictorial values in the fresco contributes to the suggestion that the image is a continuation of the chapel space. Michelangelo surely recalled how Florentine painters incorporated natural light of the chapel to suggest that a painting existed in an extension of the chapel, where the same natural light that illuminates the viewer also shines on the painted figures. Louis Alexander Waldman demonstrates that Pontormo's *Pietà* in the Capponi Chapel incorporates the natural lighting of

---

<sup>47</sup> 2 Peter 5:1-4.

the site into the values and shadows of the painting.<sup>48</sup> Pontormo, he notes, dissolves the boundaries between real and painted light, real and painted space. In late afternoon, when Christ was taken down from the cross, sunlight most directly shines through the western window and merges with Pontormo's lighting. The viewer, also bathed in western light, enters a temporal unity with the scene. A common euphemism for death in the Renaissance, "ex hac luce migrare" (to migrate out of this light), expresses the synergy of encroaching darkness with the death of Christ pictured above the altar. Spatial, temporal and illuminative continuity created in the Capponi Chapel implies either that the sacred figures have descended to a privileged audience or the fervent devotion of a meditative viewer has temporarily raised him up to the divine realm.<sup>49</sup>

In the *Last Judgment*, Michelangelo similarly uses light to articulate the altar wall as a continuation of chapel space. The opportunity to view the fresco without electric lights demonstrates how effectively Michelangelo exploited anticipated lighting conditions to enrich the meaning of the work (figs. 2.9, 2.10, 2.11). The artist would expect the strongest light to stream through the windows in the upper registers of the side walls.<sup>50</sup> The brightest lit area of the fresco is roughly between the level of the upper cornice and the central cornice on the adjacent walls. Because this area is reserved for Christ, apostles, saints and martyrs, the natural illumination reinforces the heavenly glow of those enjoying Christ's favor. The light emanating from the high windows does not form a solid band across the composition, however. The blessed

---

<sup>48</sup> Louis Alexander Waldeman, "New Light on the Capponi Chapel in S. Felicita," *The Art Bulletin* 84, no. 2 (2002): 301-02.

<sup>49</sup> Waldeman, *Capponi Chapel*, 302.

<sup>50</sup> Deposits removed from the fresco attest to centuries of candle-lit ceremonies taking place in the chapel. While the light cast by lamps and candles must have reached only partway up the height of the composition, I can not determine the visual effect with more precision.

figures closest to the side walls are richly illuminated, but the light diffuses towards the center of the painting. Light touches the wall in a broad chevron shape from the side walls at cornice level downward to include the group of trumpeting angels on the central axis. The lit area, then, includes the figures on both sides that have secured a place among the elect. The natural illumination fades into shadow, without a stark transition. On the right, the angels violently deflecting the advances of the damned are illuminated, but an ominous penumbra enfolds their opponents. Close to the side wall on the left, upward-bound figures remain in shadow. The figure pulling two others upwards with a rosary is fully illuminated. His head casts a shadow onto his left shoulder, as if he is illuminated with light streaming through the chapel windows above and to the left of him (fig. 2.12). The two men being pulled up remain in shadow, suggesting that their salvation is imminent but not yet achieved.<sup>51</sup>

To the right of the trumpeting angels, the distraught figure with a hand concealing half of his face and a serpent biting his thigh is illuminated only from the thighs up. Although the demons encircling his legs make the figure's eminent demise clear, his obvious suffering evokes some compassion. Is he wracked with guilt but powerless to redeem himself? Unable to avoid his gaze, viewers may reflect on whether or not they could avoid the same fate. Although the figure is mostly bathed in the light of the elect, his placement on the right side of the composition indicates that he will suffer eternal torment.

As dusk approaches, the range of values in the fresco becomes more dramatic. Areas below the illuminated chevron fade quickly into shadow, as do the lunettes. The areas below the

---

<sup>51</sup> De Tolnay refers to these two figures as a couple, but I am not convinced that the heavily cloaked figure is a female. I return to discussion of these figures below. De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 5:37.

level of the second cornice and above Christ's raised elbow fade from sight. Michelangelo enhanced this effect by rendering figures in these areas in more muted tones. Viewers perceive the disparity between well-lit, clearly articulated figures and hazier beings as distance in a kind of atmospheric perspective. With ever-fading light filtering softly through the windows, the golden mandorla behind Christ and the Virgin sets them off from the indistinct tangle of bodies around them (figs. 2.10 and 2.11). Restricted to seeing smaller and smaller areas of the fresco, the viewer focuses on the most important figures. The chaos of the apocalyptic vision disappears. The final element visible before darkness envelops the fresco is Christ.

Under varying conditions and at different times of day, multiple overlapping layers of meaning emerge. The phrase, "ex hac luce migrare" (to migrate out of this light), comes to mind at the end of the day, as the image of Christ slowly fades away. As if privileged viewers perceived a spiritual vision of Christ within the chapel space, the Redeemer fades away, returning to his heavenly throne. His migration from this earthly light in the evening also suggests those critical tenets of the faith, the death and ascension of Christ, celebrated on Good Friday and Easter.

The frescoed wall becomes an extension of the viewer's space when the light of the chapel also seems to be the divine light at work on the image. In a letter to the Thessalonians, Paul wrote "Do not be afraid of Judgment. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. You do not belong to the night or the darkness."<sup>52</sup> The divine light that bathes the blessed in the painting is not mere artifice; rather, God's light reaches into the chapel to illuminate the "sons of the day." Michelangelo studied the light of the chapel and used it to reinforce the connection

---

<sup>52</sup> 1 Thessalonians 5:6.

between painted and physical realms, engaging viewers with a multi-faceted vision. Most overtly, though, the fresco visually dominates the chapel with the culmination of Christian prophesy.

The elite audience assembled in the Sistine Chapel would relate to the painting by virtue of the fact that, they too will be judged. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians:

The Lord will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive are left and will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.<sup>53</sup>

Before facing judgment, the living will witness Christ's return and the resurrection of the dead.

The sequence of events specified by Paul suggests that because the painting shows the dead rising up to Christ, then the judgment of the living (in this case, the chapel audience) is imminent. The element of time collapses as the prophesied future appears in the present—bringing Christ's heavenly and earthly kingdoms together. John Shearman suggests that “the more engaged spectator of the fifteenth century not only knew the Gospels better than we do but had been encouraged, as we have not, by sermons and spiritual exercises like *Franciscan Meditations on the Life of Christ* to think, as he read, what it was like to be *there*, and *then*, in that very space and time in which the miracle occurred.”<sup>54</sup> Among the highly learned ecclesiastics of the sixteenth century, such a transitive experience of art would be all the more readily attained.

In the Sistine Chapel, a tradition in which events and people in the chapel space related to the painted images was well established as early as 1484. Correspondence by cardinals and

---

<sup>53</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:16-67.

<sup>54</sup> Shearman, *Only Connect*, 33.

notes by papal Masters of Ceremonies written during papal conclaves suggest a pervasive belief in the auspicious location of certain cells within the chapel.<sup>55</sup> References were made to the increased chances of the cardinal stationed below Signorelli's fresco of *Christ Giving the Keys to St. Peter* being elected pope. Cardinals housed below Signorelli's *Last Acts of Moses* (in which Moses hands the golden rod to Joshua) or nearest to the papal throne also had an improved chance of attaining the tiara. While this particular tradition does not suggest that visitors to the chapel took part in the scenes depicted, it does call attention to the tendency of Renaissance viewers to consider painted images in relation to personal experiences.

### 2.3.2 The Vatican: Sacred capital of Christendom

The fresco of the *Last Judgment* contributes to Paul's broader goals of reinforcing the sanctity of Rome and elevating the Vatican as the most sacred area of the city. Saint Peter's tomb at the Vatican is intimately associated with the divine power granted by Christ to Peter, and through him to the popes. Paul emphasized the importance of the Vatican, which necessarily detracted attention from the Lateran and the densely settled *abitato* area across the river from the Vatican.

Over a century earlier, when Pope Gregory (1370-78) brought the papacy back to Rome from Avignon, he supported the restoration of St. Peter's Basilica, but he focused on rebuilding

---

<sup>55</sup> David S. Chambers, "Papal Conclaves and Prophetic Mystery in the Sistine Chapel," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 41 (1978): 322-326.

the papal palace and basilica at the Lateran.<sup>56</sup> Martin and his successor Eugenius IV (1431-47) promoted the ceremonial importance of the Lateran Basilica, the seat of the pope acting as the Bishop of Rome. According to the Donation of Constantine, the Emperor granted Pope Silvester I (314-31) political authority over Rome and the Papal States as well as ownership of the imperial palace at the Lateran. The bishop's throne at the Lateran was therefore associated with the temporal authority granted by Constantine.

In contrast to his predecessors, Pope Nicholas V (1447-64) focused not on the rights granted to the pope as Bishop of Rome under Constantine, but on the authority granted by Christ to Peter and his successors as head of the apostolic church. This increased interest in pastoral care accompanied a revitalized focus on St. Peter's Basilica and the papal residence at the Vatican.<sup>57</sup> Although Sixtus IV (1471-84) is most celebrated for his construction of the chapel bearing his name at the Vatican, he also raised money during the Holy Year of 1475 to restore the Lateran. Julius II (1503-1513) was deeply entrenched in political and worldly affairs, but he was devoted to realizing Nicholas's dream of enriching the Vatican Palace and rebuilding St.

---

<sup>56</sup> On the importance of the Lateran from the papacy of Martin V until Nicholas V moved the papal residence to the Vatican, see William Westfall, *In This Most Perfect Paradise; Alberti, Nicholas V, and the Invention of Conscious Urban Planning in Rome, 1447-55* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1974), 4-7; 19. For a more detailed history of the construction phases and structural changes made to the palaces through the fourteenth century, see Maria Teresa Gigliozzi, *I palazzi del papa: architettura e ideologia: il Duecento*, Corte dei papi 11 (Rome: Viella, 2003), 45-105. Charles Stinger discusses the symbolic significance of the Lateran and Vatican in "Roman Humanist Images of Rome," in *Roma Capitale (1447-1527)*, ed. Sergio Gensini, Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato, Saggi 29 (Rome: Ministero per i beni culturali e ambientali, Ufficio centrale per i beni archivistici, 1994), 28-33.

<sup>57</sup> A papal palace existed at the Vatican prior to the rule of Nicholas V (in fact there were several papal palaces in the city), but it was badly in need of repairs. In *Roma instaurata*, Flavio Biondo asserted sacred Etruscan origins of an oracular site at the Vatican. Andrea Fulvio, in *Antiquaria urbis* (1513) drew a parallel between the ancient oracle and Peter's successors who exercised universal authority from the site. See Stinger, *Renaissance Rome*, 184.

Peter's Basilica on a scale that would forever dwarf the Lateran. Writing during the pontificate of Julius II, the reform-minded Giles of Viterbo associated the Hill of Sion in Jerusalem with the Vatican Hill in Rome and characterized the papal city as the holy Latin Jerusalem, or *sancta Latina Ierusalem*.<sup>58</sup> John O'Malley summarizes Giles' synthesis of topography and eschatology.

Rome was, in every sense of the word, the focal center of Giles' thought on Church and reform. Around Rome, or more precisely, around the Vatican, or more precisely still, around Saint Peter's basilica the whole rest of the world turned. Rome, corrupt and meretricious though it might be, was the spiritual center of the universe around which all mankind—Christian, Jew, pagan and Turk—soon would be gathered in the great gathering of all peoples, the *plentitudo gentium*, which would be the hallmark for the apocalyptic consummation of history in the tenth age of the world, the fullness of time, the *plentitudo temporis*.<sup>59</sup>

In directing resources for artistic and architectural improvements, Paul demonstrated continued emphasis on the Vatican over the Lateran. The *Last Judgment* fresco contributed to the Farnese pope's effort to promote the identification of the Vatican as the "New Jerusalem." Lofty praise of Rome, however, could not drown out voices critical of the wealth and worldly devotion of Paul's predecessors and many high-ranking officials in the Eternal City. In 1520, Martin Luther described the papacy as the kingdom of Babylon, ruled by the Antichrist.<sup>60</sup> A woodcut of *The Papal Ass* by the Cranach workshop, published in 1523 showed a creature supposedly dredged from the Tiber in 1496 (fig. 2.13). The monster with the head of an ass, body of a woman, dragon-headed tail, a talon, and hooves was interpreted as a divine portent foreshadowing the fall

---

<sup>58</sup> John W. O'Malley, "Giles of Viterbo: A Reformer's Thought on Renaissance Rome," *Renaissance Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (1967): 11.

<sup>59</sup> O'Malley, "Giles of Viterbo," 11.

<sup>60</sup> Martin Luther, "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," 1520, 3.31.



of the papacy.<sup>61</sup> The Tor di Nona, used as a papal prison, and the Castel Sant'Angelo topped by a banner with the petrine keys, were papal strongholds used as framing devices in the print, identifying the place and institution that spawned the devilish creature. The desecration and brutal assault of the citizens and clergy in the Sack of Rome of 1527 suggested to some that divine vengeance had struck the wayward Church.<sup>62</sup> Some humanists reconsidered their lofty rhetoric and declared Rome not the "Caput Mundi" but the "Coda Mundi" or backside of the world.<sup>63</sup> Paul worked to recover the status of Rome as the sacred city of Peter and Paul and, more specifically, to realize the vision of Pope Nicholas V to establish the Vatican as the New Jerusalem.

When Paul III donned the papal tiara 1534, he signaled a change in the sacred topography of Rome by not making the traditional *possesso* or procession in which the pope takes possession of the city and the bishop's throne at the Lateran. This elaborate procession was, in most cases, an occasion to demonstrate papal authority within the city and celebrate the connection between

---

<sup>61</sup> Christiane Andersson, "Popular Imagery in German Reformation Broadsheets," in *Print and Culture in the Renaissance*, ed. Gerald Tyson and Sylvia Wagonheim (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1986), 122-29.

<sup>62</sup> Alfonso de Valdés, secretary to Charles V, suggested that the destruction of the city was God's punishment for rampant corruption and vice in the city and among the clergy. Stinger, *Renaissance Rome*, 323.

<sup>63</sup> Charles Stinger, "Roman Humanist Images of Rome," 23.

the pontiff and the Eternal City.<sup>64</sup> Instead, the barons of Rome gathered at the Vatican to celebrate Paul's accession. The following year, Paul had a procession akin to a *possesso* in which he left the Vatican and travelled, with much pomp, to the Lateran.<sup>65</sup> The city of Rome consisted of "sacred sites, scattered at random through the decayed ruins of the ancient city, which divine initiative, not human decision, had chosen to sanctify."<sup>66</sup> It was a hodgepodge of Christian sites in varying states of repair, ruined buildings of ancient Rome, and sites associated with powerful families and confraternities. Pilgrims wandered through a maze of ancient memorials to martyrs, shrines marking miraculous wells and fonts, sacred impressions in stone, miraculous icons and places of martyrdom.

Popular guidebooks listed a seemingly limitless array of relics that included apostolic heads, instruments of martyrdom, tattered clothing from the Virgin and Christ, the rod of Moses and Aaron, and shriveled bits of flesh attributed to a multitude of martyrs and saints.<sup>67</sup> The dilapidated shrines visited by devoted pilgrims and distinguished visitors identified Rome as a

---

<sup>64</sup> Irene Fosi, "Court and City in the Age of the *Possesso* in the Sixteenth Century," in *Court and Politics in Papal Rome, 1492-1700*, ed. Gianvittorio Signorotto and Maria Antonietta Visceglia, Cambridge Studies in Italian History and Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 31-52. Sergio Bertelli, *The King's Body: Sacred Rituals of Power in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001) 130-31; For a description of the celebrations following Paul's election, see Rebecchini, "After the Medici," 157-162; Rodolfo Lanciani, *The Golden Days of the Renaissance in Rome from the Pontificate of Julius II to that of Paul III* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1906), 109-10.

<sup>65</sup> Helge Gamrath, *Farnese: Pomp, Power, and Politics in Renaissance Italy* (Rome: L'erma di Bretschneider, 2007), 74.

<sup>66</sup> Stinger, *Renaissance Rome*, 45.

<sup>67</sup> See Andrea Palladio, "Description of the Churches, Stations of the Cross, Indulgences, and Relics of the Bodies of Saints, in the City of Rome," in *Palladio's Rome: a translation of Andrea Palladio's two guidebooks to Rome*, ed. Vaughan Hart and Peter Hicks (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 76-111.

city of great sanctity where one could see, touch, and derive miraculous benefit from an unmatched multitude of sites and objects. Although efficacious for personal spiritual experiences, most of these sights did not directly relate to the papacy.<sup>68</sup> Moreover, reminders of the grandeur of the pagan empire dominated the cityscape of Rome. Even pilgrims and pious visitors to Rome were distracted by the extant monuments from ancient Rome. The twelfth-century guidebook to Rome, the *Mirabilia Urbis Romae*, comprises a mixture of admiration for ancient monuments with accounts of Christian martyrs persecuted for their faith. The conclusion reads:

These and more temples and palaces of emperors, consuls, senators, prefects were inside this Roman city at the time of the heathen, as we have read in old chronicles, have seen with our own eyes, and have heard the ancient men tell of. In writing we have tried as well as we could to bring back to the human memory how great was their beauty in gold, silver, brass, ivory and precious stones.<sup>69</sup>

Although the broader objective of the *Mirabilia* was to introduce readers to the capital of Christendom, vestiges of Christian history are set among monuments and memories of imperial glory.<sup>70</sup> Andrea Palladio responded to the gradual separation of Rome's dual identities when he published two separate guidebooks to the city in 1554. He describes churches and Christian sites in one, the antiquities of Rome in the other. I propose that Paul's focus on building up the

---

<sup>68</sup> Monuments of papal Rome were not restricted to the Vatican. The Mamertime prison; miraculous chains of Peter at San Pietro in Vincoli; and Peter's head at the Lateran also focused on the papal progenitor. Moreover, the basilicas of Santa Maria Maggiore, San Paolo Fuori le Mura and San Giovanni in Laterano are strongly associated with the papacy.

<sup>69</sup> Francis Morgan Nichols, trans. and ed., *The Marvels of Rome: Mirabilia Urbis Romae*, 2nd ed. (New York: Italica Press, 1986), 46.

<sup>70</sup> That Rome rightfully claims to be the sacred capital of Christendom is suggested by: the Emperor Augustus' vision of the Virgin on the Capitoline Hill; the presence and martyrdom of the apostles Peter and Paul; Helena's transfer of sacred relics to Rome; and Constantine's transfer of imperial authority and dignity to Pope Silvester.

Vatican as the sacred focus of Rome grew out of the muddled identity of the *abitato* and *disabitato* areas of Rome compared to the strong papal identity of the Vatican. While pilgrimage through Rome brought the faithful into contact with the instruments of martyrdom and sacred bones of many martyrs, the sites were widely scattered. Communion of the faithful with the sacred at these sites, moreover, had more to do with admiration of individual saints and martyrs than with papal authority.

In many areas of the city, noble families had enclaves of power including palaces, family chapels and remnants of towers and defensive structures. For example, the Chapel of the Column at Santa Prassede commemorates Cardinal Giovanni Colonna the Younger, who obtained the column from Jerusalem in 1222. The powerful identification of the family with the sacred relic is amply demonstrated by their adopted moniker. At the nearby Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, the apse mosaic includes a portrait of Cardinal Giacomo Colonna. This area of the city, long associated with Colonna power, extended from the Esquiline to the Torre Colonna near the Capitoline, and extended north to the Mausoleum of Augustus and the Porta del Popolo.<sup>71</sup>

Other sacred sites conflated religious and civic associations, with minimal association with the papacy. For example, At the church of Santa Maria in Ara Coeli, atop the Capitoline, the impresa of the senate and people of Rome, “SPQR,” is repeated on numerous surfaces.<sup>72</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup> Anthony Majanlahti. *The Families Who Made Rome: A History and a Guide* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2005), 29-69

<sup>72</sup> The church of Santa Maria in Ara Coeli now standing was built by Franciscans on the old site of Santa Maria in Capitolio. For two views of the site, see drawings by Maarten van Heemskerck, Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, 72D2A, fol. 91v, 92r, 164. See Richard Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile of a City, 312-1308* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980), 286-87.

According to the *Mirabilia*, the church marked the place where Emperor Augustus and the senate had a miraculous vision of the Virgin and Child. Interpreting the vision, the Tibertine sibyl said, “from heaven shall come the king of evermore, and present in the flesh shall judge the world.”<sup>73</sup> Commemorating the miraculous revelation of Christ’s birth to Rome’s civic authorities, the church suggests that the city and her rulers enjoy divine favor. The papacy is largely excluded from the church, while the civic importance of the Capitoline spills into the church.<sup>74</sup> During the Middle Ages and Renaissance, city authorities continued to meet at the ancient center of Rome. The piazza in front of the Palazzo del Senatore, at the top of the hill, was traditionally used by the people of Rome to rise up against tyranny in the form of the barons, as Cola di Rienzo did in 1347, or against the papacy, as Romans did in 1534, when Paul was elected.<sup>75</sup>

We know that Paul sought to mitigate civic control of the hill by building a small palace there to occupy during the summer (fig. 2.14). Steps and an elevated walkway connected the so-called Torre Paolina to the papal residence of the Palazzo Venezia (fig. 2.15).<sup>76</sup> The sanctity of Rome’s civic center became confused with narratives of papal authority such as the Donation of

---

<sup>73</sup> Nichols, *Marvels of Rome*, 17.

<sup>74</sup> There are several large portrait statues of popes in the Church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli, but the focus remains the “SPQR.”

<sup>75</sup> Melissa Meriam Bullard, “Grain Supply and Urban Unrest in Renaissance Rome: The Crises of 1533-34,” in *Art and Politics in Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Italy*, 279-92.

<sup>76</sup> On the Torre Paolina, see David R. Coffin, *The Villa in the Life of Renaissance Rome*, Princeton Monographs in Art and Archaeology 43 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979). For more on the walkway to Palazzo San Marco, see Pastor, *Popes*, 12:582. Financial transactions associated with the project are in Antonino Bertolotti, “Speserie segrete e pubbliche di Papa Paolo III,” *Atti e memorie delle RR. deputazioni di storia patria per le provincie dell’Emilia* 3 (1878): 178,185,187. Digitized by Haithi Trust: <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/njp.32101066155159>; Karl Frey, “Studien zu Michelagnolo Buonarroti und zur Kunst seiner Zeit. III.” *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 30, Beiheft zum Dreissigsten Band (1909): 138, no. 10.

Constantine which ascribe exclusive authority in Rome to the popes. Paul mitigated civic influence by transforming the Capitoline and asserting the sanctity of papal rule at the Vatican.<sup>77</sup> The *Last Judgment*, seen at the locus of papal and ecclesiastic authority, manifests Christ's return to earth. In this way, the Capitoline suggests the arrival of Christ's ministry while the Vatican becomes the focus of future prophesy. Civic authority in Rome is part of the ancient past, while the papacy is inextricably related to the return of Christ in judgment. The *Last Judgment* is not a direct substitute for a specific site in Rome, but it supports Paul's efforts to position the Vatican as the spiritual and ceremonial focus of Rome.

Paul's agenda to make the Vatican the main *locus sancta* of Rome included an effort to elevate the Sistine Chapel to the same sacred status as the Santa Sanctorum (chapel of San Lorenzo in Laterano) and suggest an association between the two spaces. Legend records that the *Acheropita*, or image made not by human hands, was brought to Rome as *spolia* from the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in the first century. The transfer of the image to the Eternal City was later said to bring the sanctity of the Holy Land to Rome.<sup>78</sup> The Chapel of San Lorenzo in Laterano, where the *Acheropita* is kept over the altar, contains an ancient cypress chest, protected by massive iron bars and locks, safeguarding some of the most precious relics in Christendom. It held the heads of Peter and Paul (before these were transferred to the Basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano); heads of Saints Agnes and Prassede; coal from the fire that burned

---

<sup>77</sup> For discussion of papal and civic responsibility for the revitalization of the Capitoline hill, see sources listed in "Introduction," n.1.

<sup>78</sup> Herbert L. Kessler, and Johanna Zacharias, *Rome 1300: On the Path of the Pilgrim* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2000), 61. Similarly, relics of the Passion brought to Rome and kept at Santa Croce were said to bring the sanctity of Jerusalem to Rome, making it the "New Jerusalem."

St. Lawrence, earth and stones from sites in the Holy Lands and wood from the cross. A silver cross-shaped reliquary with gold surface decoration held precious bodily relics of Christ—the umbilicus and foreskin.<sup>79</sup> His sandals were also preserved, as was some of Mary’s milk, hair and her veil. There was bread from the Last Supper, the coat of John the Baptist, St. Matthew’s shoulder and Bartholomew’s chin.<sup>80</sup> Functioning as an oversized reliquary, the chapel is devoted to the protection and veneration of these relics.

The small chapel of the Sancta Sanctorum, built by Pope Nicholas III (1277-80) on the site of an earlier chapel dedicated to Saint Lawrence, has a single groin vault. Stone benches for pope’s attendants line the walls and fragments of ancient stone materials are re-used for a Cosmatesque floor (fig. 2.16). Similarly, the Sistine Chapel has an elaborate Cosmatesque floor; wooden benches line the chapel and tapestries are displayed for especially important

---

<sup>79</sup> This reliquary is now located in the Museo Sacro in a case, just outside of the Sistine Chapel. The current location of the relics is not indicated by the museum catalogue or labels.

<sup>80</sup> Giovanni Maragoni, *Istoria dell’antichissimo oratorio o cappella di San Lorenzo nel patriarchio lateranense comunemente appellate Sancta Sanctorum* (Rome: San Michele, 1747),15; Kessler and Zacharias, *Rome 1300*, 40-41. Palladio suggests that some of these relics, specifically the hair, milk and veil of the Virgin were displayed on Easter in the tabernacle over the altar dedicated to Mary Magdalene in the Basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano. As described in “Description of the Churches, Stations of the Cross, Indulgences, and Relics of the Bodies of Saints, in the City of Rome,” see Palladio, *Palladio’s Rome*, 104.

occasions.<sup>81</sup> The most prominent similarity between the two chapels is that each has a series of papal portraits in architectural frames arranged as a register high on the walls surrounding the chapel space.<sup>82</sup> At the Sancta Sanctorum, the chest of relics, the altar and the *Acheropita* are in a tiny apse extending off the chapel. Icons of Saints Agnes, Lawrence, Stephen, Nicholas, Paul and Peter are rendered in mosaic around the altar. An image of Christ is carried up in the vault by four angels. The area is “transformed into a facsimile of the celestial realm and hence suitable to its contents.”<sup>83</sup> Mosaic representations of Christ and the roman martyrs ascending to heaven demonstrate the eternal spiritual rewards anticipated for the elect. Although these precious relics remained at the Sancta Sanctorum in the sixteenth century, these most popular saints and martyrs are visually present in the *Last Judgment*.

Beyond appearances, there are numerous parallels in the usage of the two chapels. For centuries, the Sancta Sanctorum was attached to the papal palace at the Lateran, just as the

---

<sup>81</sup> Numerous Churches in Rome (particularly those of Constantinian or twelfth century foundations) have Cosmatesque decorations, including the Basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano, Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, and Old St. Peter’s. Additionally, Bramante’s *Tempietto* marking the possible spot of St. Peter’s crucifixion is decorated with Cosmatesque ornament. On the history of Cosmatesque pavements, see Dorothy Glass, “Papal Patronage in the Early Twelfth Century: Notes on the Iconography of Cosmatesque Pavements,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 32 (1969): 386-90. She discusses the Cosmatesque floors of Old St. Peter’s as part of liturgical ceremonies and imperial coronations. Also see the lengthy study, Paloma Pajares Ayuela, *Cosmatesque Ornament: Flat Polychrome Geometric Patterns in Architecture* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001).

<sup>82</sup> The portraits visible now at the Sancta Sanctorum date from a restoration project of the sixteenth century. It is unclear if these paintings replaced similar ones of earlier date. This seems likely, in part, because the continuous band of niche-like openings would look strange if left unoccupied. Also, the row of niches at the Sistine, painted with popes in the fifteenth century, may well have been based on the precedent of the Sancta Sanctorum.

<sup>83</sup> Kessler and Zacharias, *Rome 1300*, 59.



Sistine Chapel is attached to the Vatican Palace.<sup>84</sup> The Sancta Sanctorum was associated with the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin because the procession began and ended there; the Sistine Chapel is also dedicated to the Virgin of the Assumption. At the Sistine Chapel, the *presbyterium*, or area between the altar and the *cancellata*, was often referred to as the *sancta sanctorum*.<sup>85</sup> Access to both chapels was strictly controlled, but the Sistine accommodates a much larger group inside the *presbyterium*, and more on the other side of the *cancellata*. Even though access to the Sancta Sanctorum was limited to very few people, and only the pope could enter the most sacred chapel of relics, the space was strongly identified with civic groups as well as the papacy.<sup>86</sup> The Sistine Chapel, on the other hand, was intimately associated with the papacy (by virtue of its location between Peter's tomb and the Apostolic Palace) and use of the space was overseen by the Papal Master of Ceremonies. By reinforcing parallels between these

---

<sup>84</sup> The Lateran palace fell into disrepair while the popes resided in Avignon. Although Pope Gregory XI (1370-80) returned to Rome in 1377, the Lateran Palace was not renovated until the reign of Eugenius IV (1431-47). In 1537, Paul ordered that, in addition to moving the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius from the Lateran Campo to the Capitoline, the then derelict papal palace would be destroyed. As a cardinal, Alessandro Farnese served as Archpriest of the Lateran Basilica and oversaw several projects to improve the church. However, once he attained the papal tiara, the resources dedicated to improving the Vatican were vastly greater than those spent on the Lateran. Subsequently, the Lateran Basilica, the Baptistery and the Sancta Sanctorum became oddly disconnected elements surrounding the open Lateran Campo. For a brief overview of the fortunes of the Lateran Palace up to Paul's pontificate, see Westfall, *Most Perfect Paradise*, 4-7; Jack Freiberg, *The Lateran in 1600: Christian Concord in Counter Reformation Rome*. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 9.

<sup>85</sup> John Shearman notes that it was not unusual for the altar area of a chapel to be referred to as the Sancta Sanctorum or 'Holy of Holies.' Shearman, *Raphael's Cartoons*, 8 n.48, 9.

<sup>86</sup> The Sancta Sanctorum was strongly associated with the Confraternity of San Salvatore, the canons of which held keys to the sanctuary. Kristin Noreen, "Sacred Memory and Confraternal Space: The Insignia of the Confraternity of the Santissimo Salvatore (Rome)," in *Roma Felix: Formation and Reflections of Medieval Rome*, ed. Éamonn Ó. Carragáin and Carol L. Neuman de Vegvar (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007):162-66.

spaces, the *Last Judgment* brings a sense of the ancient sanctity of the Sancta Sanctorum into the papal context of the Sistine Chapel.

Prior to Paul's pontificate, some religious ceremonies in Rome developed into popular rituals in which civic groups and citizens took part. Romans celebrated the Assumption of the Virgin with elaborate processions and ceremonies that lasted for days. Each year, officials of the Confraternity of the Santissimo Salvatore removed the *Acheropita* (image of Christ not made by human hands) from the Sancta Sanctorum.<sup>87</sup> The sacred image was carried on a circuitous route (that included the Coliseum and Roman Forum) to the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore where it was united with a miraculous image of the Virgin. The medieval mosaic in the apse shows Christ and the Virgin on a double throne, with the Savior placing a crown on the Virgin's head (fig. 2.17). This image celebrates the final reunion of mother and son in heaven. The procession of the *Acheropita* was not planned by Vatican officials and popes rarely participated; more often they celebrated the Assumption in the Sistine Chapel or at the Church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva.<sup>88</sup> Enjoying the opportunities afforded by the public display, elected officials, guilds, confraternities of the civic nobility, and even marginal groups such as women found roles in the procession. As a demonstration of social hierarchy organized around civic associations, the popular celebration challenged carefully articulated messages of papal authority in Rome.

---

<sup>87</sup> The lay confraternity, founded in the thirteenth century by Pietro Colonna, mostly consisted of aristocrats. Kessler and Zacharias, *Rome 1300*, 68-69.

<sup>88</sup> Richard Ingersoll, "The Ritual Use of Public Space in Renaissance Rome," (Ph.D. diss., University of California), 226. In the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the popes often processed to the medieval church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva to give a papal mass, announce a plenary indulgence and give a number of poor girls dowries. Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 41. Kessler and Zacharias, however, suggest that in the Trecento, the pope and curia gathered behind the altar at Santa Maria Maggiore when the icons of Christ and the Virgin reunited there (*Rome 1300*, 142).

Moreover, the ceremony celebrated and sanctified a journey through the ancient city far from the Vatican. In the mid Cinquecento, the papacy took ownership of Assumption celebrations by suppressing popular rituals and emphasizing papal celebrations on that sacred day.<sup>89</sup>

A painting in the Sala Regia, *Pope Paul III leads a triumphal procession from Santa Maria Maggiore* by Taddeo Zuccari, shows the pope in an actual procession that he made on 15 August 1535 (the day of the Assumption).<sup>90</sup> Paul celebrated a thanksgiving mass at Santa Maria Maggiore, then led a procession to the Vatican, where worshippers gathered in the Sistine Chapel, which is dedicated to the Virgin of the Assumption. In this way, Paul engaged with the traditionally civic ceremony at Santa Maria Maggiore but diverted focus to the papacy and the Vatican. This bold act reinforces Paul's effort to bring previously non-papal celebrations under the umbrella of papal devotion and display. Despite strong civic associations prior to Paul's pontificate, the celebration became increasingly associated with the papacy. The civic procession was suppressed in 1566, apparently due to unrest caused by the celebration. With the civic ceremony banned, the ceremonial focus of the feast of the Assumption transferred to the Sistine Chapel.<sup>91</sup> This was done partly because of the chapel's dedication and partly to strengthen the Vatican as the sacred focus of Rome.

In the conch mosaic at Santa Maria Maggiore, Christ and the Virgin are seated on a

---

<sup>89</sup> Ingersoll, "Ritual Use," 224-233. Kessler and Zacharias, *Rome 1300*.

<sup>90</sup> Charles Burroughs, "The *Last Judgment* of Michelangelo: Pictorial Space, Sacred Topography, and the Social World," *Artibus et Historiae* 16, no. 32 (1995): 71-2.

<sup>91</sup> Although the celebration of the Assumption at the Sistine Chapel could not involve the populace to the extent of the procession of the *Acheropita*, once the popular celebration was cancelled, the papal celebration could be considered the "official" celebration of the Assumption in Rome.

double throne in a circle representative of heaven. The event depicted, which immediately follows the Assumption of the Virgin, is Christ raising a crown to her head. Viewers would easily recognize similarities between the mosaic and Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*. In the mosaic, angels hold the heavenly sphere aloft while apostles and saints, as well as one pope, gather below. Echoes of this mosaic are evident in the fresco, where groups of angels intersperse crowds of saints and martyrs. Unlike the other celestial figures in the *Last Judgment*, the Virgin is not rushing towards Christ. Rather, she is seated on a cloud right next to her son, who seems poised midway between sitting and standing. If he sat down, the two figures would rest on the same surface. The implication is that prior to Christ's action of rising in judgment, the two were seated together on a celestial throne, as they are in the mosaic.

Beyond connections with the mosaic at Santa Maria Maggiore, the Virgin's gesture makes the Sistine an appropriate locus of devotions on the Feast of the Assumption by emulating traditional gestures of the Virgin in paintings of her Coronation in heaven.<sup>92</sup> In the *Last Judgment*, the Virgin raises her hands to her chest and crosses her wrists. In the Tornabuoni Chapel in Santa Maria Novella in Florence, Domenico Ghirlandaio painted the Virgin with a similar gesture, seated by her son (fig. 2.18). As Christ raises a crown to her head, she crosses

---

<sup>92</sup> The Assumption of the Virgin is usually represented from the perspective of the viewer on earth, looking up as she floats to the sky. Paintings of the Coronation of the Virgin show her in heaven, among the saints, with Christ. The setting of *Last Judgment* in the Sistine thus corresponds more closely with the Coronation. Charles Burroughs notes that the Virgin in the *Last Judgment* underscores her importance as the Queen of Heaven and relates to the Assumption. Burroughs, "Pictorial Space," 66.

her wrists in front of her chest.<sup>93</sup> This demure posturing suggests humble acceptance of Christ's authority, even as she accepts the position of *Regina Coeli*, Queen of Heaven.

The Virgin's gesture in the *Last Judgment* also has similarities with that seen in some other representations of the Virgin on earth and in heaven.<sup>94</sup> For example, in his *Annunciation* in Cortona, Fra Angelico painted the Virgin with her wrists crossed and raised in front of her chest (fig. 2.19). Here, the gesture suggests acceptance of the divine word.<sup>95</sup> While her gesture in the *Last Judgment* is slightly different—she crosses her wrists as she clasps her veil and looks downward toward the saved—her demurely crossed hands suggest an acceptance of the divine word and will of her son. Her tight grasp of her veil recalls the Virgin seated next to Christ in Raphael's *Dispute on the Blessed Sacrament* in the Stanza della Segnatura (fig. 2.20). In Raphael's fresco, Christ miraculously appears in a celestial vision, attesting to the veracity of transubstantiation. She, and the other holy figures in heaven, bear witness to Christ's majesty. Her reverence attests to his sanctity. The Virgin of the *Last Judgment* grasps her veil in a similar

---

<sup>93</sup> The Virgin has her wrists crossed before her chest in other depictions of her Coronation, including: Botticelli's *Coronation of the Virgin* (San Marco altarpiece), Uffizi, Florence, 1490-92, and Correggio's *Coronation of the Virgin*, Galleria Nazionale, Parma, 1522.

<sup>94</sup> Paintings of the Annunciation in which the Virgin has her hands crossed in front of her include: *Annunciation* by Mariotto Albertinelli, 1503, Uffizi; *Annunciation* by Fra Angelico, 1450-51, San Marco, Florence; *Annunciation* by Fra Angelico, 1440-42, San Marco, Florence; *Virgin of the Annunciation* by Antonello da Messina, Alte Pinakothek, Munich; *Annunciation* by Leonardo da Vinci, 1478-82, Musée du Louvre; *Annunciation* by Melozzo da Forlì, Pantheon, Rome.

<sup>95</sup> That the gesture of crossing one's hands over one's chest indicates a humble acceptance of divine will is also suggested by St. Peter's gesture in Ghirlandaio's fresco of *Christ Calling of the First the Apostles* in the Sistine Chapel. St. Andrew, next to Peter, presses his hands together as if in prayer as Christ announces that Andrew will become an apostle. The Virgin is also represented in this prayer-like pose in representations of the Annunciation.

manner, but she gazes downward and to the left, rather than at her son.<sup>96</sup> That her gesture recalls representations of the Assumption and the Annunciation is appropriate for the Sistine Chapel. These are two of the most important liturgical feasts of the year. These events are not represented anywhere else in the chapel, but Michelangelo conflates the subjects within the *Last Judgment*. These layers of meaning contributed to Paul's effort to make the Sistine Chapel (and, more broadly, the Vatican) the locus of devotions throughout the year.

Additional layers of meaning emerge when we broaden our consideration of the Virgin in a larger visual context. The subject of her attention could be within the painting or in the chapel space. Perhaps she is focused on faithful supplicants in the painting that are ascending to heaven. Or perhaps she is looking beyond the painted surface, toward the worthy individual seated on the papal throne against the side wall of the chapel. Until 1549, that would have been Paul III, patron of the painting. In the nearby Carafa Chapel at Santa Maria sopra Minerva, the Virgin of the Assumption looks down towards Cardinal Oliviero Carafa, painted in the altarpiece of the *Annunciation* by Filippino Lippi (fig. 2.21).<sup>97</sup> There, her gaze directs viewers to the patron. It also suggests that Cardinal Carafa's devotion and piety attract notice from the Virgin. In the Sistine Chapel, the Queen of Heaven looks towards the pontifical throne placed against the side wall. The Virgin's gaze towards the pontifical throne echoes and enhances the ceremonial honors bestowed on the popes. When Pope Paul III occupied the throne, the Virgin's gaze was

---

<sup>96</sup> The attention called to the veil in Michelangelo's fresco reminds viewers of the sacred relic of her veil preserved at the Sancta Sanctorum.

<sup>97</sup> Michelangelo certainly knew this work, as his *Risen Christ* is located in the Church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva. He clearly studied the architectural context prior to beginning the work in 1514.

doubly significant, in that it also acknowledged his munificence as patron of the fresco.<sup>98</sup>

Condivi writes that surrounding Christ are the figures of the blessed who are already resurrected. He specifically mentions the Virgin, the Baptist, the Twelve Apostles (without identifying which figures these are), and saints displaying instruments of their torture: Andrew, Bartholomew and Lawrence.<sup>99</sup> Vasari mentions Adam and the Baptist, suggesting that the former was the father of those who would be judged while the latter laid the foundation of Christian religion.<sup>100</sup> He names the easily identifiable figures of Andrew and Bartholomew and suggests that countless (*infinitissimi*) apostles and saints are gathered. Textual predictions and depictions of the Last Judgment include the Twelve Apostles “sit[ing] on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”<sup>101</sup> As such, viewers of Michelangelo’s *Last Judgment* would expect all of the Twelve Apostles to appear gathered in heaven. However, only a few of the figures in the group immediately surrounding Christ are identifiable. Yet, the descriptions by Vasari and Condivi demonstrate that even these exceptionally keen viewers assumed that all of the expected figures are among the anonymous crowd. It stands to reason that if Michelangelo intended for viewers to recognize an extensive list of specific saints, he would have made the task more

---

<sup>98</sup> Moreover, since the Sistine Chapel is dedicated to the Virgin of the Assumption, and Perugino’s altarpiece of that subject was destroyed to make way for Michelangelo’s fresco, the visual reference to the Assumption and Annunciation in the *Last Judgment* is especially appropriate. For an overview of possible reconstructions of the original altar wall and altar piece, see Shearman, *Raphael’s Cartoons*, 28-9. Redig de Campos interprets her posture as seeking refuge with Christ. He suggests that although she assents to divine justice, with some effort, she can not bear to look at the damned (de Campos, *Last Judgment*, 46).

<sup>99</sup> Condivi, *Vita*, 50.

<sup>100</sup> Presumably, Vasari believed Adam to be the figure to the left of Christ, with the rugged cloak secured around his waist. Vasari, *Vite*, 6:71.

<sup>101</sup> Luke, 22:30. See, for example, Buonamico Buffalmacco’s *Last Judgment* fresco at the Camposanto in Pisa (late 12<sup>th</sup> c.)

approachable. Having a few identifiable figures, such as Peter and Andrew, surrounded by a crowd of anonymous ones easily leads viewers to infer that the other apostles are surely among the elect.<sup>102</sup> Michelangelo understood that viewers perceive images as conforming to their expectations, even if some details are missing. Even Condivi wrote that all of the apostles are present in the fresco when only a few are recognizable.<sup>103</sup> The absence of precise iconography opens up the possibilities of how figures may be identified. Viewers are thus prompted to actively reflect on the image, considering aspects of the lives and legends of the saints that might connect them to figures in the fresco.<sup>104</sup>

Close to Christ are some identifiable saints represented by major sites in Rome. John the Baptist steps forward from the group just to the left of Christ.<sup>105</sup> The rugged clothing that he wore is discernable behind his legs. His large scale is balanced by the figure of Peter on the right side of Christ. The bearded, yet heroically athletic figure extends the keys of the Church towards the Savior. Peter, of course, took over Christ's ministry after the Passion; John the Baptist foretold Christ's appearance. By anointing the Son of God in the River Jordan, the Baptist set in

---

<sup>102</sup> Also, while today it is simple to dissect the fresco and consider each individual figure in photographs, viewing the fresco in the chapel is a more dizzying experience. The fresco is far from the viewer and it is difficult to analyze each figure in a methodical fashion.

<sup>103</sup> On the use of open-ended imagery and encouragement of the "beholder's share" in understanding meaning in artworks, see Shearman, *Only Connect*.

<sup>104</sup> This fresco is not the only work in which Michelangelo prompts active engagement between art and viewers. Lisa Pon has demonstrated how the disjunction between painted texts and images in the lunettes of the side and entrance walls encouraged active consideration by viewers. Lisa Pon, "Writing on Walls: Michelangelo's Lunettes and Inscriptions in the Sistine Chapel," (M.A. thesis, Washington University in St. Louis, 1992); published in an abbreviated form in Lisa Pon, "A Note on the Ancestors of Christ in the Sistine Chapel," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 61, 1998, 254-258.

<sup>105</sup> Condivi identified the figure as John the Baptist; in 1563, Vasari identified him as Adam.



motion the events that began Christ's ministry on Earth.<sup>106</sup> The arrangement of the Baptist, Christ and Peter suggests the temporal span of the world *sub lege* (under the [Judaic] law) and *sub gratia* (under grace). The group can also convey spatial relationships. Charles Burroughs identifies figures in the fresco and suggests that they refer to specific locations in Rome. He suggests that John the Baptist and Peter refer to the most sacred places of Rome—the Basilicas at the Lateran and Vatican. At opposite ends of the city, the Basilicas are linked by the *Via Papalis*, the route travelled by popes in the important *possesso* ceremony.<sup>107</sup> William Wallace suggests a connection between the five “patriarchal” basilicas and the figures of Peter, Paul, the Baptist, Lawrence and Mary clustered around Christ.<sup>108</sup> Alternatively, the pair forms an ensemble with Christ and the Virgin to form a new Deisis group; or, the Baptist, Christ and Peter

---

<sup>106</sup> John 1:2; Mathew 3:4; Mark 1; Luke 3:4.

<sup>107</sup> If we accept that John the Baptist and Peter represent the Basilicas at the Lateran and the Vatican, then perhaps the handsome youth behind the Baptist represents John the Evangelist, to whom, according to Palladio, the Lateran Basilica was also dedicated. Palladio, *Palladio's Rome*, 103. However, while the association of the Evangelist, the Baptist and the large cross at far right may refer to the Lateran and Church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, there were also chapels dedicated to the saints and venerated objects at the old Vatican Baptistery. The dedications were, according to Delno West, in fact copied at the Vatican under Pope Symmachus in the sixth century to elevate the Vatican above the Lateran. Delno C. West, “Medieval Ideas of Apocalyptic Mission and the Early Franciscans in Mexico,” *The Americas* 45, no. 3 (1989): 16-17. Also see Burroughs, “Pictorial Space,” 60. In his continued analysis, Saint Lawrence represents the Compagnia del Sacratissimo Corpo di Cristi, whose members brought the Holy Eucharist to ill and infirm people and sanctified the streets of Rome with their holy processions; St Bartholomew represents the Hospital dedicated to him on the Tiber Island. He suggests that these and five additional saints (those appearing with their instruments of torture at right) are connected to particular crafts or trades.

<sup>108</sup> Wallace proposes that, to devout viewers, the fresco may have prompted recollections of personal experiences visiting Rome's churches. The *Last Judgment*, then, becomes something of a visual toponomy. William E. Wallace, “Nothing Else Happening,” in *Michelangelo's Last Judgment*, ed. Marcia Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 67, and Mayu Fujikawa, “Saints and Salvation in Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*,” M.A. thesis, Washington University, St. Louis, 2001.

together form a new triad echoing the Transfiguration.<sup>109</sup> However one interprets the central arrangement of figures, Christ is clearly surrounded by those most directly associated with his life and earthly mission or with the most important patriarchal basilicas in Rome.

The horse shoe shaped crowd of figures above Christ rushes forward towards the Savior, yet a clear margin of sky around Christ maintains separation. The Virgin leans in close to Christ, entering the golden mandorla. Yet Christ's unparalleled majesty isolates him even from his mother; a layer of drapery keeps the two figures from touching. The special dignity awarded to the Virgin also prevents surrounding figures from touching her, although her right hip is in contact with a relic of the decussate (X-shaped) cross.<sup>110</sup> In the group surrounding Christ, each individual has a different response to Christ, expressed with gestures and interactions with other figures. A woman with covered head next to Christ's left elbow holds her hands up before her face, as if shielding her eyes from the celestial glow. Behind her, a heavily bearded man raises his hand and leans away from Christ. Higher up, a tonsured figure in an orange garment surely represents St. Steven. He was one of the seven deacons of the Church appointed by Peter and the first martyr. In art, Stephen traditionally appears as a tonsured young man, wearing a deacon's dalmatic.

Saint Lawrence is in a prominent position just below the Virgin, her left foot nearly touching him. Lawrence, a deacon, distributed the wealth of the Church to the poor rather than

---

<sup>109</sup> De Campos, *Last Judgment*, 48. Leader, "Culmination of Papal Propaganda," 131. Jack M. Greenstein, "How Glorious the Second Coming of Christ: Michelangelo's 'Last Judgment' and the Transfiguration," *Artibus et Historiae* 10, no. 20 (1989): 33–37.

<sup>110</sup> Similarly, the knife held by Bartholomew very nearly grazes Christ's left leg.

relinquish it to Roman officials.<sup>111</sup> In the fresco, he holds the instrument of his torture, the gridiron on which he was burned. As painted, however, the object lacks the legs that would elevate the grill over hot coals.<sup>112</sup> It looks, in fact, more like a ladder.<sup>113</sup> The object is significant in the context of the fresco because the spiritual struggle for salvation is represented in the fresco by figures grappling to move upwards, toward Christ. The ladder held securely by the fearless martyr suggests that salvation, while attainable, is not easily reached. Charles Burroughs notes that the top of the ladder-like grill touches the Virgin's foot, and suggests that viewers would see a reference to the Church of Santa Maria in Ara Coeli, which is reached by a monumental set of stairs.<sup>114</sup> While such a topographical association for this pair is possible, perhaps the Virgin's association with a ladder could be understood theologically as the ladder through which we approach Christ. In his first sermon on the Assumption of the Virgin, John of Damascus addressed the Virgin:

Just as Jacob saw the ladder bringing together heaven and earth and on it angels coming down and going up, and the truly strong and invulnerable God wrestling

---

<sup>111</sup> Lawrence was martyred during the pontificate of Pope Sixtus I, namesake of the patron of the Chapel, Sixtus IV. Four churches in Rome were dedicated to the popular local martyr, including San Lorenzo Fuori le Mura, one of the seven principle pilgrimage churches. The Church of S. Lorenzo in Damaso was the titular church of Paul III's grandson.

<sup>112</sup> In the preparatory study of the martyrs with the instruments of their torture (Uffizi GDSU no. 170 S, fig. 2.14), St. Lawrence supports a heavy grill on his back. The object has not just the expected four feet at the corners to hold it above hot coals, but on both ends of each rung-like member.

<sup>113</sup> Strangely, the top rung of Lawrence's grill/ladder appears across the eyes of the yellow-veiled figure directly behind him. The tip of the left support of the grill/ladder appears to jab her in the eye. As there is sufficient space for the head to be shown a bit higher, or to either side, and Michelangelo would not create this arrangement haphazardly, perhaps viewers would adduce that the figure represents Saint Lucy, who plucked out her eyes to rebuff a suitor and maintain her vow of chastity.

<sup>114</sup> Charles Burroughs, "Pictorial Space," 62.

mystically with himself, so art thou placed between us, and art become the ladder of God's intercourse with us, of Him who took upon Himself our weakness, uniting us to Himself, and enabling man to see God. Thou hast brought together what was parted. Hence angels descended to Him as their God and Lord, and men, adopting the life of angels, are carried up to heaven.<sup>115</sup>

It is likely that the sophisticated audience of the Sistine Chapel would have been familiar with the idea that the Virgin acted as a spiritual ladder by which the faithful may approach Christ in heaven. The grill/ladder, then, serves as a visual cue suggesting spiritual ascent.

Immediately to the right of Christ, and lower in the sky, is Saint Bartholomew, the Roman martyr whose flayed skin is preserved in a great porphyry tub below the altar of the Church of Saint Bartholomew on Tiber Island.<sup>116</sup> Although the church was not among the seven principal basilicas, it does appear on the print of pilgrims visiting the seven sites by Antonio Lafréry (1575) (fig. 2.22). To the left of the Virgin, the figure turning away from the viewer is likely St. Andrew, Peter's brother and the first apostle to follow Christ.<sup>117</sup> He supports what appears to be the decussate cross on which he was martyred. The arrival of the saint's head in Rome in 1464 was so momentous that Pope Pius II went out as far as Ponte Molle to meet the

---

<sup>115</sup>John of Damascus, *St. John Damascene on Holy Images (pros Tous Diaballontas Tas Hagias Eikonas): Followed by Three Sermons on the Assumption* (London: T. Baker, 1898):161-62.

<sup>116</sup>Since Michelangelo's face was identified in the flayed skin in 1925, the suggestion has rarely been doubted. Francesco La Cava, *Il Volto di Michelangelo scoperto nel Giudizio Finale: Un drama psicologico in un ritratto simbolico* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1925).

<sup>117</sup>It is appropriate that a ladder (or a ladder-like grill), such as that held by Lawrence would lead up to St. Andrew. Voragine writes that St. Andrew converted a young man whose parents believed him to be a sorcerer. The parents put a ladder up to the house where St. Andrew and the convert stayed, but the lord struck them blind so they could not climb the ladder. Many people saw the miracle and were converted. Jacobus Voragine, *Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William G. Ryan, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 1:14.

apostolic relic and the cardinal who carried it from Constantinople.<sup>118</sup> The head, one of Rome's treasures, is kept in one of the four piers at St. Peter's Basilica.<sup>119</sup>

To the right of the central group of elect is a large crowd of figures in myriad different positions. Two figures embrace as others kiss one another. In his first letter to the Thessalonians, Paul told the faithful how they should prepare for the Second Coming of Christ. He exhorted them not to commune with the faithless, but to recognize and honor other believers in Christ, and "salute all the brethren with a holy kiss."<sup>120</sup> Also in letters to the Corinthians, Paul beseeches believers to greet each other with a holy kiss.<sup>121</sup> In Paul's letters, the holy kiss is the means by which Christ's followers (the saved) are identified. The embraces and kisses exchanged among the blessed in Michelangelo's fresco may demonstrate knowledge of this ancient greeting among Christians (whether symbolic or practiced) or a way of marking individuals as blessed. The intimate greetings also suggest one of the great joys that the faithful eagerly anticipate in the afterlife—reuniting with loved ones.

The lower portion of the large group of figures to the right of the *maiestas domini*

---

<sup>118</sup> Palladio, *Palladio's Rome*, 108. Palladio credits the "Principe della Marca," elsewhere known as Bessarion (1403-1472) with bringing the relic. Bessarion was a theologian, scholar and cardinal who served in France as well as Constantinople.

<sup>119</sup> The figure next to Saint Blaise also holds what appears to be a decussate cross, but since Andrew was a very important apostle, one would expect him to be closer to Christ. The figures surrounding Blaise are martyrs, rather than Apostles. Joan Cruz, *Relics* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1984), 106-7.

<sup>120</sup> 1 Thessalonians 5:26.

<sup>121</sup> 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12.

includes martyrs with instruments of their torture.<sup>122</sup> Condivi mentioned St. Sebastian, Blaise and Catherine. The first of these may be identified by the arrows clenched in his hand.

Although Sebastian does not have a bow, his left arm is extended and his right bent as if he is preparing to launch an arrow.<sup>123</sup> As a member of the Praetorian guard, the beloved Roman native, Sebastian, comforted Christians on their way to martyrdom. When the emperor learned of his betrayal, Sebastian was condemned to die, first being shot full of arrows, then cudged to death. The basilica built at his burial site along the Appian Way was among the seven pilgrimage churches of Rome.<sup>124</sup>

To the left of Sebastian, St. Blaise holds the iron-spiked combs used to tear his flesh. Blaise was a bishop of Sebaste in Asia Minor, martyred perhaps in the 4<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>125</sup> In front of Blaise, St. Catherine kneels as she lifts up part of a spiked wheel with her heavily muscled arms. In the fresco, Catherine and Blaise were both repainted to cover her nudity and halt criticism of

---

<sup>122</sup> The bodies of martyrs or saints are first class relics; instruments of martyrdom and saints' possessions are second class relics; objects that come into contact with a first or second class relic become third class relics. Objects associated with the Virgin or Christ are first class relics. Because the bodies of these two individuals were taken up to the heavens, standard first class relics (bones, teeth, etc.) do not exist. A few bodily remains (hair, milk, prepuce) that are said to exist are especially honored.

<sup>123</sup> The absence of the bow calls to mind the artist's drawing of weaponless archers taking aim at a herm. The drawing dates from 1530 and is located at the Royal Library, Windsor.

<sup>124</sup> The two figures with heads covered behind Sebastian may be the brothers that he helped inspire to accept martyrdom rather than renounce their faith.

<sup>125</sup> During the Pontificate of Julius II, the Church of San Biagio was absorbed into the new Palazzo Tribunale. Nicholas Temple suggests that the Palazzo Tribunale expanded the border of the Vatican across the Tiber and nudged the line of papal influence into the *abitato*. Nicholas Temple, *Renovatio Urbis: Architecture, Urbanism, and Ceremony in the Rome of Julius II* (London: Routledge, 2011), 109-111.

their suggestive positioning.<sup>126</sup> In the lower left area of the group, an individual kneels down, leans heavily forward and grasps a long saw blade with both hands. He is likely Simon the Apostle who travelled through Syria and Mesopotamia preaching the gospel. Simon was martyred by being sawn in half. To his left, a figure lifts up a seemingly cumbersome short cross. Redig de Campos identifies him as Dismas, the good thief alluded to in the *Dies Irae*.<sup>127</sup> Although Christ on the cross told Dismas that the thief would join him in Paradise, Dismas was not martyred for his faith. He died as punishment for criminal activity. A more fitting identification for the figure in the fresco is Philip, the Apostle who journeyed to Scythia to preach and was crucified in Hierapolis.<sup>128</sup> The sketch for Christ, the Virgin and the Martyrs at the Uffizi (fig. 2.23) more clearly shows the figure pulling up a Latin cross, albeit upside down; some traditions suggest this is the manner in which Philip was crucified.<sup>129</sup>

At the far right edge of the fresco, a figure on a larger scale than the aforementioned martyrs steadies a large upright cross with his back as he relieves the weight of his burden on the actual cornice of the chapel. Perhaps he is Judas, the Jewish scholar from Jerusalem who, under

---

<sup>126</sup> Daniele da Volterra worked in the Chapel in 1565, mostly painting draperies over figures a tempera. But he chiseled off the head and right arm of Blaise and Catherine's nude figure. Then he repainted Blaise and a dress for Catherine a fresco. De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 5:98 n.2. On the figure of St. Catherine, see, Cynthia Stollhans, "Michelangelo's nude Saint Catherine of Alexandria," *Woman's Art Journal* 19, no. 1 (April 15, 1998): 26-30; Bernadine Barnes, "Aretino, the Public, and the Censorship of the *Last Judgment*," in *Suspended License: Censorship and the Visual Arts*, ed. E. Childs, Seattle and London, University of Washington Press, 1997, 59-84.

<sup>127</sup> De Campos, *Last Judgment*, 46

<sup>128</sup> Voragine, *Golden Legend*, 1:267-68. De Tolnay (*Michelangelo*, 5:41) identifies the figure as Philip.

<sup>129</sup> James Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art*, rev. ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 245.

pressure exerted by Helena on her visit to Jerusalem in 326, showed her where the three crosses from Calvary Hill were buried. Ambrose writes that Judas identified the true cross by reading the attached *titulus*.<sup>130</sup> According to the *Golden Legend*, he then realized that Christ was the Savior. Judas was baptized, given the name Quiriacus and later made bishop of Jerusalem. He was apparently tortured and martyred at the hands of Julian the Apostate.<sup>131</sup> The woman in yellow at the far right edge, perhaps Helena, kisses the cross. Relics of the True Cross are kept in several churches in Rome, the most prominent of which is Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, one of the seven pilgrimage churches and the sacred repository of numerous relics brought to Rome by Helena.<sup>132</sup> The repeated image of the cross in the *Last Judgment* fresco echoes the importance of these relics, and their repositories in the city of Rome. Bernadine Barnes suggests that the repetition of the cross in the fresco may be due to the loss of the precious relic from the altar cross in the Sistine Chapel during the Sack of Rome.<sup>133</sup> The fresco diminishes the loss by restoring the cross to a sacred context and presenting it for the viewer's adoration.

The identifiable figures among these saints and martyrs thus include the Virgin, John the

---

<sup>130</sup> An alternate legend states that the three crosses from Golgotha were found, but the *titulus* (again, read by Judas) was no longer attached. When the True Cross was touched to the body of a dead man, he regained life. That miracle prompted Judas to believe in Christ. See Cruz, *Relics*, 10.

<sup>131</sup> Voragine, *Golden Legend*, 1:282-83. Leo Steinberg may have identified this figure as Judas/Quiriacus in his lecture, "Seven More Observations on Michelangelo's Last Judgment," presented at the 67th College Art Association Conference, (31 Jan.- 3 Feb. 1979). The text of the paper is unavailable; I rely on the recollection of William E. Wallace. De Campos identifies him as Simon the Cyrene (*Last Judgment*, 46). De Tolnay discusses formal similarities with the Belvedere torso and identifies the figure as Dismas (*Michelangelo*, 5:39).

<sup>132</sup> The *titulus* is also at the Church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme. On the relics kept there, see Meredith J. Gill, "Antoniazio Romano and the Recovery of Jerusalem in Late Fifteenth-Century Rome," *Storia dell'Arte* 83 (1995): 28-47.

<sup>133</sup> Barnes, *Renaissance Response*, 56.



Baptist, Peter, Lawrence, Bartholomew, Stephen, Andrew, Sebastian, Blaise, Simon, Catherine, Philip and Quiriacus and perhaps Helen. This group includes representatives of all seven pilgrimage churches as well as other important churches in Rome (San Bartolomeo and San Biagio). These holy personages attract devotion at numerous sites associated with relics which include the True Cross, the Virgin's veil and corporeal relics of the martyrs and saints. In their respective reliquaries, churches and shrines, these objects and individuals evoke adoration and prayer; in the Sistine Chapel they come together as a great multitude in a larger context of Christ-centered devotion. The fresco itself is part of the traditional and spatial context of papal ceremony. In this way, all of the saints and saintly objects represented on the altar wall, and the sites they represent in Rome, contribute to the dignity and sanctity of the Vatican and the papacy.

The focus on sacred relics continues in the two sections that Michelangelo executed first, at the top of the fresco (figs. 2.24 and 2.25). Visually separated from the rest of the fresco, the lunettes contain flying figures bearing the most sacred Christian relics, the instruments of the Passion or the *arma Christi*. De Tolnay referred to the lunette figures as wingless angels or *genii*.<sup>134</sup> One explanation for the visual separation between the lunettes and the rest of the fresco is a tradition governing how relics could be stored and displayed in churches.<sup>135</sup> Because of their

---

<sup>134</sup> De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 6:42. De Campos refers to the figures as angels. He also suggests the possibility that the lunettes were painted at the time of the ceiling and retained when Michelangelo painted the altar wall (*Last Judgment*, 46, 49).

<sup>135</sup> De Campos suggests the possibility that Michelangelo painted the lunettes as part of the ceiling campaign, and simply retained them as part of the *Last Judgment*. He notes that none of the preparatory sketches for the Last Judgment include the lunettes. De Campos, *Last Judgment*, 49. However, the extant sketches are, to my eyes, from early enough in the design phase that the artist may be excused for focusing on the more significant areas of the composition. Moreover, these lunettes do not formally or iconographically relate to the other lunettes, so it would be odd for them to be part of the same decorative campaign.

unparalleled sanctity, relics relating to Christ, the Virgin or the Passion had to be kept separate from all other saintly relics.<sup>136</sup> In the left lunette, several figures strain to carry and grasp the cross as another figure holds the crown of thorns. According to Charles de Tolnay, the dice with which Roman soldiers gambled for Christ's cloak are visible in old engravings, although we can no longer distinguish them in the fresco.<sup>137</sup> In the left lunette, the flying figure close to the central corbel with his right arm extended seems to hold something, perhaps dice or nails, that two other figures are prepared to receive. In the right lunette several figures seem to exert great energy holding onto the column of the flagellation. The ladder with which Christ was lowered from the cross is barely visible.<sup>138</sup> The brilliantly foreshortened angel with golden drapery billowing around him carries a staff. Perhaps this is the shaft of the spear that pierced Christ's side or the stick on which the vinegar-soaked sponge was raised to the suffering Christ.<sup>139</sup> The spear of Longinus was sent to Innocent VIII by the Sultan of Constantinople in 1492. It is one of the most treasured relics in St. Peter's Basilica, where it is kept in one of the four central piers.<sup>140</sup> In the lunettes, precious relics of the Passion of Christ are held aloft and carried towards Christ as he passes judgment.

---

<sup>136</sup> Eugene Dooley, "Church Law on Sacred Relics" (Ph.D. diss., Catholic University of America, 1931), 104.

<sup>137</sup> De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 5:42.

<sup>138</sup> For an image of the faintly visible ladder, see Partridge, "Interpretation," in Partridge, Colaluci, Mancinelli, *Glorious Restoration*, 56.

<sup>139</sup> De Tolnay lists the vinegar-soaked sponge among the visible objects in the right lunette, but I am unable to find the object there (*Michelangelo*, 5:43).

<sup>140</sup> Cruz, *Relics*, 14. While the objects represented in the lunettes are chief among the Passion relics, it is curious that the Veronica and the *titulus* are not among these. Both of these relics were in Rome. On the significance of the *titulus*, see Gill, "Antoniazio Romano," 28-47.

The viewer in the chapel may be able to discern several relics from the Passion in the lunettes, but the column of the Flagellation and the cross are the most easily distinguished. Before the papacy suppressed processions celebrating the Feast of the Assumption in Rome, the preferred route would have included a visit to Santa Prassede where pilgrims viewed a relic purported to be part of the column of the Flagellation.<sup>141</sup> The relic is a mottled black and white piece of stone, approximately sixty-eight centimeters tall, quite unlike the column painted in the *Last Judgment*. Yet, viewers would readily identify both as relics of the Flagellation. Inclusion of the column in the fresco introduced sacred elements of the Assumption celebrations into Sistine Chapel.

The disparity of appearance between the relic at Santa Prassede and the column in the fresco may be explained in two ways. First, the unblemished white surface of the painted column makes a stronger visible impact than a faithful rendering of the column from Santa Prassede would. Secondly, the pure white column, more than the battered and mottled relic, suggests the grandeur of ancient Rome. The prominence of ancient columns in Rome, from simple structural supports to the monumental columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, ensured that columns were the principal identifying markers of antiquity in the Eternal City. In conjunction, the cross and the column signify Christ and ancient Rome, the two sources of papal authority. The fresco reminds chapel visitors that the pope is Christ's Vicar on Earth as well as the Pontifex Maximus.

The *Last Judgment* fresco contributes to papal efforts to elevate the Vatican as the sacred focus of Rome, where ancient and Christian history come together. The *Last Judgment* fresco

---

<sup>141</sup> Kessler and Zacharias, *Rome 1300*, 124.

enriches the papal space with martyrs associated with sacred relics, popular celebrations and churches throughout the city of Rome. Allusions to the Assumption of the Virgin in the painting helped create a space to celebrate the popular holiday within the papal complex, rather than in the streets and churches of Rome. Finally, the *Last Judgment* suggests an intimate link between the Vatican and Christ's divine mission by integrating the painted vision into the physical space.

### 2.3.3 The Respublica Christiana

The third of Paul's major objectives to which the *Last Judgment* contributed was an effort to identify the church under papal control as universal. The Church, in this view, extended across geographical and political boundaries of Europe and throughout the known world. Charles Stinger invokes the writings of Chrysoloras (1355-1415) to describe the spiritual authority of the Church of Rome.

Extensive as Roman imperial jurisdiction and administration, emanating outwards from the capital, had been, it must accede, Chrysoloras insists, to the even greater amplitude of spiritual authority exercised by the Church of Rome. From a yet loftier vantage point, the 'gathering in' to the Temple of the Apostles (St. Peter's Basilica) of so many peoples from such distant lands, speaking so many different languages, fulfills the prophesied vision of the twelve Apostles judging the twelve tribes of Israel. But indeed it transcends even that vision, for from 'Rome the Roman Church judges the whole globe.'<sup>142</sup>

The concept of Rome as the capital of the Christian world, with the pope as reigning monarch, elevated the spiritual authority of the papacy because his authority extended across territories under control of secular rulers. On the other hand, challenges by northern reformers, and northern cities that rejected Rome's authority, constricted the realm of papal influence. Henry VIII's severance of England from the Catholic Church brought the issue of the pope's influence

---

<sup>142</sup> Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 74.

abroad to the fore. Declaring that the pope no longer had spiritual authority over the people of England, Henry pushed back the borders of the pope's spiritual authority.<sup>143</sup>

At the same time, missionaries in the New World, Africa and Asia won converts to the (Catholic) Church. These new frontiers of the *Respublica Cristiana* could potentially contribute new souls to the spiritual coffers of the papacy. In 1541 Vincensius Franciscus praised the absolute authority Paul wielded and the expanse of his spiritual power.

To you...all are obedient; to whom the whole world is steadfast, he subdues Emperors; he is supreme, sacred and mighty, to whom all people, races, and foreign nations venerate this most sacred name; which is divine, a compassionate ruler whose care is sustaining.<sup>144</sup>

Although the standard hyperbole of Renaissance courtiers is at play, the concept that Paul's domain included people of multiple languages and ethnicities is consistent with the success that Catholic missionaries abroad had been building for several decades.<sup>145</sup> The Congolese King Nzinga Nkuwu and his queen converted to Christianity in 1491. On 27 January 1545, St. Francis Xavier sent a letter to Rome celebrating the conversion of ten thousand souls within a single month.<sup>146</sup> St. Ignatius was enthusiastic about the mission to Ethiopia and winning new adherents

---

<sup>143</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, 12:456-68.

<sup>144</sup> Vat. Lat. 3967, 12v.-13r. Translated and quoted by Frederika Herman Jacobs, "The Patronage and Iconography of Pope Paul III (1534-1549)" (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1979), 65 n.17.

<sup>145</sup> Kate Lowe, "Introduction: The black African presence in Renaissance Europe," in *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, ed. T. F Earle and Kate Lowe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 5.

<sup>146</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, 12:117.

to the faith.<sup>147</sup> A mission at Sao Thomé in the Congo even converted the ruling house, under the authority of King Alfonso. The first bishop of Sao Thomé was named in 1534. The pontiff wrote to the king on 17 March 1535, and again on 5 May to bolster the monarch's resolve in introducing Christianity to his people.<sup>148</sup>

In the bull "Sublimus Deus" of 2 June 1537, Paul condemned unjust treatment of native peoples (native Americans and Africans), excommunicating those who enslaved them. The pope insisted that the only way to convert the non-European natives was through preaching and by example. Quoting from the gospels, he urged missionaries to "go teach all nations."<sup>149</sup> Paul encouraged the vast work of Christianizing the Americas. Between 1534 and 1537, new bishoprics were founded at Anteguara and Michocán in Mexico; Cuzco, Peru; Ciudad Real in Guatemala; Ciudad de los Reyes, Peru; Quito, Ecuador; Papayán, New Guinea and Rio de la Plata.<sup>150</sup> Missionaries sought mass conversions in newly Christian territories.

Adherents to the faith from the frontiers of Catholicism were present and visible in Rome. The Church of Santo Stefano Maggiore, founded under Sixtus IV as a hospice for Ethiopian pilgrims, was right next to St. Peter's Basilica. The site became a monastery for black

---

<sup>147</sup> St. Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556) wrote "The Spiritual Exercises" and founded the Jesuit order, both of which Pope Paul III approved. The constitution of the Jesuits specifies the importance of foreign missions, undertaken at the pope's bidding.

<sup>148</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, 12:514.

<sup>149</sup> The bull is "Veritas ipsa" of 2 June 1537. While these bulls seem magnanimous, *a motu proprio* of 8 June 1548 allowed Roman citizens to hold slaves. Nelson H. Minnich, "The Catholic Church and the Pastoral Care of Black Africans in Renaissance Italy," in Earle and Lowe, *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, 281-2. Black Africans from the west coast of Africa were first brought to Portugal as slaves in the 1440s. During the next 100-150 years, the flood of slaves into Europe continued.

<sup>150</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, 12:515.

‘Ethiopian’ monks and friars. The community numbered thirty-eight prior to the Sack of Rome and just under half that immediately after the Sack.<sup>151</sup> The community living at Santo Stefano would have been visible as they went about their lives and attended religious functions at the Vatican. Ethiopia had an established diplomatic embassy to the papacy as early as 1306.<sup>152</sup> The ceremonial visit of Ethiopian and Coptic delegates at the Council of Florence (1438-39) called by Eugenius IV is recorded in Filarete’s bronze relief panel on the doors to St. Peter’s (fig. 2.26). The African representatives are heavily wrapped in layers of drapery, including over their heads. One figure’s garment is marked by horizontal stripes, a popular design of Ethiopian cloth. The geographical extent and expansion of the *Respublica Christiana* to include people of many races was especially evident near the heart of the Church.

In St. John’s vision of the Apocalypse, “There was a great multitude that no one could count, from every tribe, nation, people and language before the throne in front of the Lamb.”<sup>153</sup> In Michelangelo’s *Last Judgment*, two figures are pulled upwards by what now appear to be

---

<sup>151</sup> The term ‘Ethiopian’ was sometimes used by Europeans as a general label for people from Africa, whether or not they originated in Ethiopia. Minnich, “Pastoral Care,” 297. Ethiopia had been Christianized in the fourth century. Kate Lowe notes that Christianity was an important aspect of Ethiopian national identity because it distinguished them from their Muslim neighbors. This Muslim pressure from surrounding nations contributed to the Ethiopian interest in diplomatic links with Rome in the sixteenth century. Kate Lowe, “‘Representing’ Africa: Ambassadors and Princes from Christian Africa to Renaissance Italy and Portugal, 1402-1608,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 17 (2007), 106. For an analysis of the figures that associates them with the prisoners carved for the Tomb of Julius II, see John Turner, “Michelangelo’s Blacks in the *Last Judgment*,” *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 33, no. 1 (Fall 2013): 8–15.

<sup>152</sup> Lowe, “‘Representing’ Africa,” 108.

<sup>153</sup> Revelations 7:9.

rosary beads, but may originally have been a chain.<sup>154</sup> The figure on the left has dark skin and features that identify him as African.<sup>155</sup> Unlike the vast majority of figures on their way to the heavens, the African man is fully covered with a garment and his head is covered as well. This is significant because it identifies him not just as an African but a ‘civilized’ or ‘Europeanized’ African because he is not naked. Europeans commented on the undressed state of people they encountered in Africa and stereotyped Africans as generally going about naked. They associated nakedness (or near nakedness) with the uncivilized, natural state in which they imagined people in Africa to live.<sup>156</sup> Rather, the Christianized African man in the fresco is fully and modestly dressed (perhaps even in liturgical garb).

While the precedent of multiple races being present at the Last Judgment existed prior to Michelangelo’s painting of the subject, the inclusion of non-white Europeans in the scene takes on a new significance against the backdrop of Catholic missionary activity developing around the world under Paul III and his immediate predecessors. Given the challenges to papal authority in Europe, Paul was especially devoted to conveying the expanse of his spiritual realm.

Another way in which the *Last Judgment* fresco suggests the vastness of the realm of Christian souls under the authority of the papacy is with the inclusion of large numbers of individuals. Throughout the areas populated by the saved, Michelangelo suggests that the

---

<sup>154</sup> De Tolnay suggests that the rosary represents prayer as a means of salvation. The figures achieving ascendancy through the rosary beads may advocate the doctrine of justification by faith alone. De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 5:58.

<sup>155</sup> De Tolnay (ibid.), identifies the pair as a “negro couple.” The two have rather different skin tones and facial features, so the figure on the right may not necessarily represent an African.

<sup>156</sup> Kate Lowe, “The Stereotyping of black Africans in Renaissance Europe,” in Earle and Lowe, *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, 20-21.



number of souls gathering around Christ is nearly without limit. In St. John's vision of the Apocalypse 144,000 chosen individuals assemble around the Lamb of God on Mt. Sion.<sup>157</sup> In the fresco, Michelangelo suggests a vision of such magnitude. In small spaces between figures and along the edges of the fresco, the artist inserted faces. Behind the legs of main figures, the Baptist and Peter for example, Michelangelo painted bits of drapery, limbs and faces to suggest secondary figures. Along the upper areas of the groups of saved figures, numerous heads are pressed together in small spaces. The cluster of heads visible just below the left lunette leaves the viewer wondering how the bodies of all of those figures are crammed together so tightly (see fig. 2.24). Throughout the fresco, the artist added figures into otherwise unoccupied spaces, and suggested great crowds by painting numerous heads in small spaces. The message conveyed is that the population of adherents to Christ and, by extension, the Catholic Church under papal authority is inconceivably vast. A testament to the importance placed on the number of adherents to the faith in Europe and beyond is the claim by the first Archbishop of Mexico that he converted one million souls.<sup>158</sup>

#### 2.3.4 Reconstructing the Identity of the Church and Defending the Faith

The fourth Pauline objective to which the *Last Judgment* fresco contributed was the pope's effort to construct a renewed identity of the Catholic Church as a sacred institution devoted to the pastoral care of Christians. In addition to asserting the sacred focus of the Church, the *Last Judgment* reinforces the sanctity and legitimacy of Catholic rites and relics.

In popular prints and fiery speeches, critics characterized the papal court as more

---

<sup>157</sup> Revelations 14:1.

<sup>158</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, 12: 517.

interested in pompous ceremony and self-indulgence than in the teachings of Christ. The entire hierarchy of the Church came under protestant criticism, as demonstrated by the following denunciation by the Protestant pastor Antoine Marcourt, which is representative of the lot.

The pope, and his horde of cardinals, bishops and priests, of monks and other heretical Mass-sayers (and all those who agree with them) are like this: that is, false prophets, damned cheats, apostates, wolves, false-pastors, idolaters, seducers, liars and inexcusable blasphemers, killers of souls, traitors to Christ, of his death and Passion, perjurers, traitors, thieves, rapers of God's honor—more detestable than devils.<sup>159</sup>

In 1521 Martin Luther produced a pamphlet, illustrated with woodcuts by Lucas Cranach the Elder, entitled *The Passional of Christ and the Antichrist*. Traditional *passionals* were small picture books, containing scenes from the life of Christ or the saints, used to prompt pious meditation. In the *Passional of Christ and the Antichrist* pairs of images juxtapose scenes of an unscrupulous, worldly pope with scenes of Christ's life. Two woodcut prints in the *passional* demonstrate how northern reformers contrasted Christ's humility with the pompous ceremonies surrounding the papacy. In the print on the left (fig. 2.27), Christ washes the feet of his Apostle Peter. On the right, the image on the *recto* of the next page (fig. 2.28) shows Peter's successor, the pope, extending his foot to be kissed in adoration. The contrast of Christ's humble mission and papal arrogance could not be starker. The Catholic Church needed to reform its identity by downplaying pompous pageantry and emphasizing its ministry to the faithful.

Some Protestant reformers characterized Catholic ecclesiastics as uneducated, slovenly

---

<sup>159</sup> William G Naphy, ed. *Documents on the Continental Reformation*, Macmillan Documents in History (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1996), 55. Antoine Marcourt (1485-1561) published several pamphlets denouncing the Catholic Church. The text cited is an excerpt from a placard posted in public places throughout France, most significantly on the bedchamber door of King Francis I.

fellows unqualified to preach and uninterested in the spiritual well-being of the faithful. Such criticism is demonstrated in prints that characterize Catholic preachers as wolves that lure in unsuspecting geese, and then devour them. The woodcut on the title page of *Das Wolffgesang* (Ausberg, 1522) shows a wolf enthroned as pope, surrounded by wolves and a cat in the liturgical garb of cardinals, monks and a bishop (fig. 2.29). The lesser clergy play instruments to draw in rosary-toting geese. Higher officials capture the geese in a net, the harsh lines of which lead directly to the ultimate authority, the lupine pope. The image implicates ravenous churchmen at every level of the ecclesiastic hierarchy in a devious ruse to capture and devour trusting believers in search of spiritual guidance.

In 1520 Martin Luther focused criticism directly on the pope for “going about in such a worldly and ostentatious style that neither king nor emperor can approach him.”<sup>160</sup> The fresco of the *Last Judgment* contradicts criticism of worldliness and luxury in the Church by excluding all forms of ceremony and ecclesiastical finery. Paul’s efforts to counter Protestant accusations included projecting a more favorable identity of the Church and papacy. As the backdrop of papal ceremonies, the *Last Judgment* helped to construct this more favorable identity. The souls of the saved and the damned alike are stripped of all worldly refinements and social identifiers. In this Catholic vision of salvation, even the most reverently adored apostles and saints appear unclothed, or nearly so. There is no hint of the elaborately brocaded vestments worn by Church

---

<sup>160</sup> Martin Luther, “To the Christian nobility of the German nation concerning the reform of the Christian estate,” November 1520. This was Luther’s third response to Pope Leo X’s bull *Exsurge Domine* which condemned Luther’s teachings. Reprinted in Denis Janz., ed., *A Reformation Reader: Primary Texts with Introductions*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 102.

officials. The refinements of ceremonies and excessive puffery of the papal court could not be more unlike the scene that unfolds on the altar wall. The papacy, it seems, recognized the irrelevance of magnificent display, even liturgical vestments, in the eyes of the Redeemer. Despite the magnificence of papal pageantry in the Sistine Chapel, the fresco suggests that the Church focused on the human struggle for salvation. After all, the altar wall displays the supernatural culmination of Christ's mission, not a papal ceremony.

Reformers pointed to the vast differences between Christ and his followers on the one hand, and the papacy and Catholic hierarchy on the other. Michelangelo's fresco helps to erode the distinction between these two groups. Among the saints present in the *Last Judgment* are some of the earliest leaders of the Church. Stephen and Lawrence were deacons; Blaise, Simon the Apostle and Quiriacus (née Judas) were bishops; Peter served as Bishop of Rome as well as the first pope. Saints chosen for the fresco exemplify the devoted followers of Christ that built the early Church and helped organize the ecclesiastic hierarchy. They serve as virtuous models for the ecclesiastics gathered in the Sistine Chapel. In this way, modern bishops could be identified with early Christian saints and martyrs rather than wealthy, ceremonial figureheads.

A figure in the lower left-hand corner, barely noticeable from a distance, stands among the dead emerging from the ground. The figure, dressed in a long purple-grey robe with sleeves and a broad cloth collar, extends his right hand above a revived corpse rising from the dead.<sup>161</sup>

---

<sup>161</sup> The garment appears to be a *Vestis talaris*, which had been worn since the 13th c. and was confirmed by the Council of Trent. Bernard J. Ganter, *Clerical Attire: A Historical Synopsis and a Commentary* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1955), 10,19. The figure has been unconvincingly identified as Ezekial, Virgil and Saint Stephen. For these suggestions, see de Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 5:117. Barnes identifies the figure, visible only to those close to the altar, as a monk performing a sacramental ritual. Members of the audience would carry out similar duties. Barnes, *Renaissance Response*, 24.

He has a long grey beard, forked at the end, in the manner favored by both Michelangelo and Paul III. The painted figure wears the tonsure of a monk. The beings surrounding him are wrapped in burial garments, but there is no indication that the monk has died and reanimated like the other figures. He attends to those struggling to rise up to heaven, seemingly too occupied with helping others to seek his own ascension. As a stand-in for church officials, he suggests that despite well-known abuses, the clergy were devoted to the spiritual well-being of the flock. For the ecclesiastical audience gathered in the chapel, he serves as a model of selfless devotion to priestly duties. Identifying with the monk, viewers would be reminded of the essential task of assisting the faithful attain salvation. In this way, the painting addresses one of Paul's objectives, the legitimate spiritual reform of the Church.

The monk's gesture suggests the rite of supreme unction, offered to dying individuals by ordained priests to aid and give perfect spiritual health.<sup>162</sup> At the same time, the act of blessing alludes to the rite of baptism. Some Protestants questioned the legitimacy of some of the sacraments. For example, In June 1524, the city council of Zurich under the advice of Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531), ordered that baptism and supreme unction were opposed to God's word and would be stopped.<sup>163</sup> The devoted monk in the fresco, and the figure he assists, attest to the sanctity and efficacy of Catholic rites.

The elevation of the *arma Christi* in the lunettes of the *Last Judgment* fresco, and the inclusion of relics with the martyrs below, suggests that these objects belong among the realm of

---

<sup>162</sup> Monks were devoted to prayer, rather than pastoral ministry, and were not necessarily ordained priests. The figure in the fresco, surely suggests a broader identification as an individual devoted to the Church.

<sup>163</sup> Naphy, *Continental Reformation*, 42.

the Blessed. In the Sistine Chapel, relics are not simply displayed above the altar in the traditional manner, they are raised to surround Christ in heaven. The inclusion of the *arma Christi* in the *Last Judgment* is important enough for two dozen figures to devote their energy to elevating or bringing the objects to Christ. One figure hoists the column with his head and shoulders while other figures seek to assist by grappling with the object (fig. 2.25). Several muscular figures exert themselves to keep the equally unwieldy cross from falling. One figure supports it with his back, another on his shoulder (fig. 2.24). At the base of the cross, one angel grips the bottom of the cross, as if to prevent its downward movement. The fact that multiple crosses appear in the fresco (or rather, the True Cross and the decussate cross each appear twice) attests to the importance of the cross in Catholic devotion and liturgy. It also suggests that, like apostles and martyrs, these objects warrant inclusion in the sacred space surrounding Christ.

The reverence with which the relics are treated in the fresco is in stark contrast to the derision with which Protestants spoke of relics. John Calvin claimed in his “Treatise against Relics” that if all of the pieces of wood purported to be relics of the True Cross were gathered together, they would “form a whole ship’s cargo.”<sup>164</sup> In response to Pope Paul III’s attempt to call a Church council to deal with Protestant concerns, Luther issued a statement known as the “Smalcald Articles” outlining matters of dispute. On the matter of relics, Luther wrote:

Here so many open lies and foolishness are based on the bones of dogs and horses. Because of such shenanigans—at which even the devil laughs—they should have long ago been condemned, even if there were some good in them.<sup>165</sup>

---

<sup>164</sup> John Calvin, *Treatise on Relics*, trans. Valerian Krasinski (Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1854), 233.

<sup>165</sup> Denis Janz, ed. *A Reformation Reader: Primary Texts with Introductions*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 133.

Corporeal relics of saints, instruments of martyrdom and relics associated with the Passion were equally denounced. These criticisms assert that the relics cherished by Catholics were not even genuine, but pieces of rubbish peddled by charlatans.

The *Last Judgment* responds to criticism of relics by turning to a tradition known by pilgrims and faithful visitors to sacred shrines throughout Rome. In the fresco, the objects of torture held by the martyrs appear to have real weight.<sup>166</sup> Quiriacus, perched on a bank of clouds by the right edge of the fresco, rests a heavy cross on the cornice projecting from the side wall of the chapel (see fig. 2.7). The figure behind him helps hold the heavy object, and a pair of hands jut out from the side wall towards the cross. The object is too heavy for the saint to balance alone, even with the brunt of the burden on the cornice. To the left of Quiriacus, Catherine leans heavily forward as if to hoist the broken wheel upwards or simply hang on to it. To the left of Catherine, Philip grabs a wooden cross that slides downwards, off the cloud. Blaise leans far out as he grasps his long, heavy blade. Although the object is not especially large, it is nonetheless a significant burden for the muscular saint. The weight of these relics, and the effort required to support them, is even more evident in Michelangelo's preliminary studies for the fresco. In a drawing in the Casa Buonarroti (fig. 2.2), Philip struggles to drag his cross upwards, and Lawrence awkwardly supports his heavy grill on his back.

The obvious weight of the relics is evidence of their legitimate sanctity. At sacred sites throughout Rome, including the apostle's tomb at St. Peter's Basilica, pilgrims had access to the blessed relics. Above the tomb, a platform was raised higher than the surrounding floor,

---

<sup>166</sup> Burroughs calls attention to the evident exertion of the martyrs. He suggests that the figures reenact their martyrdoms and/or their movements are associated with routine actions of various laborers in Renaissance Rome. Burroughs, "Pictorial Space," 65.

creating a void over the tomb, with a grate or *fenestrella* (fig. 2.30). Twin sets of steps extended up to the platform, where popes celebrated Mass below the baldacchino. The *fenestrella* ensured that the sacred relics were secure but not entirely sealed off from the faithful. Gregory of Tours, writing in the sixth century, suggests that a visitor to Peter's tomb would be allowed to approach the *fenestrella* to ask for whatever he requires.

If he wishes to carry away a holy token, a piece of cloth weighed in a scale is hung within; and then, watching and fasting, he makes urgent prayer that the Apostle's virtue further his request. And if his faith prevail, when the cloth is raised from the tomb, wonderful to tell, it is so imbued with holy virtue it weighs more than it did before.<sup>167</sup>

The tradition of lowering cloth into tombs was so prevalent that the tomb of Paul at St. Paul's Outside the Walls had a marble slab with several holes cut out specifically so that pilgrims could obtain contact relics from the site (fig. 2.31).<sup>168</sup> The tradition was prevalent at many sites throughout Rome, so visitors in the Sistine Chapel would surely know of the tradition. As Gregory explains, the weight of the contact relics was physical evidence of sanctity. The relics represented in the *Last Judgment* are so imbued with sanctity that they are weighed down, forcing muscular saints to struggle with the heavy burdens. Michelangelo anticipated the shared experiences of viewers, some of whom surely clutched strips of cloth sanctified and weighed at Rome's most venerated tombs. For these viewers, the weight of relics in the fresco was a visual testament to the legitimacy of these most venerated objects

---

<sup>167</sup> Gregory of Tours quoted in Stephen Llamia, "Souvenir, Synaesthesia, and the Sepulchrum Domini: Sensory Stimuli as Memory Stratagems," in *Memory and the Medieval Tomb*, ed. Elizabeth Valdez del Alamo and Carol Stamatis Pendergast (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2000), 25.

<sup>168</sup> Contact relics are created when an object that touches a sacred relic becomes imbued with the sanctity of the relic. They were especially prized by pilgrims that visited sacred shrines.



## 2.4 Conclusion

Perhaps Pope Clement VII hoped to have Michelangelo paint a monumental fresco in the Sistine Chapel. However, Pope Paul III was the impetus behind the *Last Judgment* as executed in the papal chapel. He successfully engaged the artist and he must have approved of the project before Michelangelo began work. Paul was a sophisticated and ambitious patron of art. The pope was determined to have Michelangelo contribute to the major renovation, expansion and artistic enrichment underway at the Apostolic Palace. Because the image of the fresco is so familiar, it can be challenging to recognize the technical obstacles Michelangelo faced. The wall, of an unprecedented scale, is an awkwardly elongated rectangle topped by lunettes, with uneven lighting. Rather than a single ideal viewpoint, viewers encounter the image from oblique angles, from a close distance and from the opposite end of the chapel. Michelangelo had to create the wall fresco in a space already richly decorated with paintings by Quattrocento masters and the artist's own ceiling frescoes. Apparently with Paul's support, Michelangelo defied the organizational framework of the chapel in favor of an unfettered vision of Christ's return in a single, huge composition. Successful engagement of viewers with the fresco makes this image an even more effective tool of papal propaganda. The artist's thoughtful integration of the chapel's natural lighting enhances formal and iconographic aspects of the work.

The *Last Judgment* incorporates many overlapping messages intended for different audiences. The fresco supports Paul's efforts to reassert the sanctity of Rome. Most of the city's shrines, relics, venerable churches and religious communities had been destroyed and defiled in the Sack of 1527. The fresco, in a sense, restores those holy sites. It also has a more specific objective of reorienting the sacred focus of pilgrims on St. Peter's and the Vatican. Prominent

figures include some of Rome's most cherished saints. It is as if all of the blessed saints of Rome are gathered together within the papal complex. The *Last Judgment* also constitutes a thoughtful response to several specific criticisms of the Church made by reformers. Many of the leaders of the early Church appear—reminding viewers of the spiritual foundations of the much-criticized current curia. The heavenly image of Christ surrounded by his earliest supporters is an analogue of the pope and ecclesiastic hierarchy assembled in the chapel. Connections between the two suggest that Christ's Heavenly Kingdom and His Earthly Kingdom- ruled by Peter's successors- come together at this *locus sacra*.

# Chapter 3: The Pauline Chapel Frescoes:

## 3.1 Creating a *locus sanctus* in the Apostolic Palace

At the behest of Pope Paul III, Michelangelo painted the final frescoes of his oeuvre, the *Conversion of Saul* and the *Crucifixion of Peter* in the Pauline Chapel from 1542 to 1550 (figs. 2 and 3; figs. 3.1 and 3.2 *in situ*).<sup>1</sup> Paul was deeply concerned with promoting the sanctity and legitimacy of the papacy. The Sistine and Pauline Chapels, along with the adjacent Sala Regia, comprise elements in Paul's ambitious program to use art to create *loci sancti* within the ceremonial core of the Apostolic Palace. The Farnese Pope also wanted to create a physical legacy of ceremonial spaces to enrich the Vatican and demonstrate his engagement with accomplished artists. The Pauline Chapel, like the Parva Chapel before it, was used for some of the ceremonies most intimately identified with the dignity, authority and continuity of the papal office. From the perspective of papal history, the most important events to take place first in the Parva, then in Pauline Chapel were associated with the transition from one pope to the next.<sup>2</sup> The ceremonies and procedures of papal conclaves relate in many ways to Michelangelo's

---

<sup>1</sup> The *Conversion of Saul* is sometimes called the *Conversion of Paul*. Acts 13:9 states "Then Saul, (who also *is called* Paul), filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him." The apostle was known by both names.

<sup>2</sup> The deceased Pope Paul IV was briefly laid in state in the Pauline Chapel before he was buried, probably so that the body would not be desecrated by the same crowds that decapitated the bronze sculpture of the pope on the Capitoline and dragged it into the Tiber. Usually papal corpses in less danger of abuse were kept in the Sistine Chapel or St. Peter's Basilica for a few days to allow mourners to pay their respects. Marc Dykmans, *L'oeuvre de Patrizi Piccolomini ou cérémonie papale de la première renaissance*, Studi e Testi 293 (Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1980), 1:227-37. Kuntz discusses sources relating to the death and burial of the popes. Margaret Kuntz, "The Cappella Paolina: Before and After Michelangelo" (Ph.D., Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 1997), 104-110.

frescoes, so I will return to discussion of these events in conjunction with analysis of the images. In this chapter, I consider how the frescoes relate to their architectural context and the ceremonies held in the chapel.

Michelangelo's Pauline frescoes have been largely neglected by art historians because of their inaccessibility and some unfavorable assessments of the work.<sup>3</sup> Writing in the 1580s, Gian Paolo Lomazzo suggested that Michelangelo's mastery of composition and form peaked with the sibyls and prophets in the Sistine Chapel and declined with the *Last Judgment*. To Lomazzo, the Pauline Chapel demonstrated a third manner of Michelangelo's style, inferior to the previous two.<sup>4</sup> This judgment of the Pauline frescoes as lesser accomplishments relative to the master's previous works, and perhaps even products of eroded capabilities, remained dominant for centuries.

Leo Steinberg suggests that, unlike the celebrated unveiling of the Sistine ceiling frescoes and the *Last Judgment*, a "cold reception" of the Pauline Frescoes prompted "embarrassed silence" for most of their history.<sup>5</sup> Bernadine Barnes notes that although a complex set of factors contributes to the number of reproductions made of works of art, the smaller quantity of

---

<sup>3</sup> While the bibliography of scholarship devoted to Michelangelo is vast, relatively few scholars have considered the Pauline Chapel at length. The construction of the façade of New St. Peter's cut off access from the basilica to the chapel. As the pope's private chapel, the space is generally difficult for scholars to access. In the early twentieth century, specifically after a restoration campaign in 1933-34, scholars reconsidered the works. On the assessments of quality and style of the paintings, see de Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 5:145-146; Leo Steinberg, *Michelangelo's Last Paintings: The Conversion of St. Paul and the Crucifixion of St. Peter in the Cappella Paolina, Vatican Palace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 17-21.

<sup>4</sup> Gian Paolo Lomazzo, *Idea del tempio della pittura* (Milan: Paolo Gottardo Pontio, 1590), 53.

<sup>5</sup> Steinberg, *Michelangelo's Last Paintings*, 17.

drawings and prints after the Pauline frescoes in comparison to the Sistine frescoes suggests less excitement surrounding the Pauline Chapel paintings in the Cinquecento and Seicento.<sup>6</sup> Critical assessment changed little by the late nineteenth century when Charles Perkins wrote that “In the frescoes of the Pauline Chapel [Michelangelo] became the mannered shadow of his former self. We shall not pause to search for veins of gold in this lump of quartz.”<sup>7</sup> Max Dvořák assessed the frescoes in a more favorable light in the early twentieth century.<sup>8</sup> Following a conservation campaign completed in 1934, Fritz Baumgart and Biagio Biagetti published a comprehensive study of the Pauline Chapel frescoes, including the paintings by Lorenzo Sabbatini and Federico Zuccari that flank Michelangelo’s frescoes.<sup>9</sup> The text includes documents, payment records, stylistic analysis and technical studies of the paintings as well as a report on recent restorations. Margaret Kuntz has published excellent studies on the ceremonial uses and decoration of the chapel, but her focus is largely on the chapel after Michelangelo’s fresco campaign.

A cleaning and conservation campaign undertaken in 2008-9 necessitates reappraisal of Michelangelo’s paintings. A veil of grime, varnish and questionable restorations has been removed, revealing some new details of the paintings and giving the works a starkly clean appearance. Some of the figures, particularly those in the sky over Saul, are in a poor state of preservation, largely due to water damage. Much like the Sistine ceiling frescoes and *Last*

---

<sup>6</sup> Bernadine Barnes, *Michelangelo in Print* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), 112-17.

<sup>7</sup> Perkins, Charles. *Raphael and Michelangelo: A Critical and Biographical Essay* (Boston: J. R. Osgood and Company, 1878), 278.

<sup>8</sup> Max Dvořák, *Geschichte der italienischen Kunst* (Munich: Piper, 1928), 2:128.

<sup>9</sup> Fritz Baumgart and Biagio Biagetti, *Gli affreschi di Michelangelo e di L. Sabbatini e F. Zuccari nella Cappella Paolina in Vaticano* (Vatican City: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1934), 16.

*Judgment*, the paintings in the Pauline Chapel warrant analysis with fresh eyes following cleaning and conservation. In this study, formal analysis of the paintings dovetails with historical accounts of papal ceremonies to examine how multiple meanings of the paintings would be evident to different audiences, under various circumstances.

### 3.1.1 Connections Between the *Last Judgment* and the Pauline frescoes

Some of the themes and objectives conveyed by the *Last Judgment* fresco in the Sistine Chapel are also expressed in the Pauline Chapel frescoes. The *Last Judgment* suggests spiritual transformation (most obviously with the figures rising from their graves), a theme that is repeated in the image of Saul's Christian conversion. The direct intervention of Christ is evident as he presides in judgment in the Sistine and again as he hurls a flash of light and a thunder clap upon Saul in the Pauline Chapel. Also, Christ is the unseen catalyst of the Petrine narrative, because his appearance to the apostle on the Via Sacra convinced Peter to return to Rome for crucifixion.

Both the *Last Judgment* and the Pauline frescoes help establish the Sistine and Pauline chapels as sacred spaces linking the Apostolic Palace with St. Peter's Basilica. Although the popes had numerous important relics at their disposal, neither the Sistine or Pauline Chapel is

associated with saintly interment, elaborate reliquaries or a sacred site.<sup>10</sup> The frescoes however, make the sacred present through visual representation that engages with the viewer. Just as the *Last Judgment* suggests the presence of the *arma Christi* in the Sistine Chapel, the bodies of the apostles are visually present in the Pauline Chapel. Visual manifestation of relics and holy figures sanctifies the spaces in much the same way as tombs and reliquaries do at St. Peter's Basilica. The three frescoes blur conventional boundaries between the viewer's space and painted space. Sacred figures from Christian history and prophecy merge into the Vatican chapels as the threshold between representation and actuality becomes permeable. I examine this active relationship in greater detail later in this chapter.

It is notable, given the location of these chapels in the Apostolic Palace, that neither the *Last Judgment* nor the Pauline frescoes directly portray papal ceremony or papal history. Such blatant displays of magnificence and temporal authority are restricted to the Sala Regia; Michelangelo's frescoes for Paul III are devoted to spiritual and metaphysical aspects of the Catholic Church. Although the frescoes are restricted to scenes of the early Church and *Last Judgment*, it would be impossible for viewers to dissociate the images from the papacy. The chapels are part of the Apostolic Palace adjacent to the Sala Regia. This arrangement of structures within the palace ensures that viewers of the paintings first proceed through the enormous reception hall filled with imagery reinforcing papal supremacy and touting the deference of political rulers to papal authority. The magnificent scale of the room and focus on

---

<sup>10</sup> The Chapel of Nicholas V, adjacent to the papal apartment, also apparently lacked a major relic. Although it was a temporary presence, a relic of the True Cross was brought to the Sistine Chapel and placed on the altar for the celebration of Easter Mass. André Chastel, *The Sack of Rome, 1527* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983), 103. The altar cross, present for all liturgical ceremonies, may have contained a piece of the True Cross as well.

the papal throne impress visitors as the trappings of a powerful ruler. The Sala Regia signals to visitors that they have entered the papal palace, as distinct from the basilica.

### 3.1.2 Behind Closed Doors: The Parva and Pauline Chapels

Pope Paul III's dramatic architectural and artistic projects at the Apostolic Palace involved the reconstruction of the Sala Regia, construction of the Pauline Chapel and destruction of the Parva Chapel to make way for a new ceremonial entrance to the complex.<sup>11</sup> Prior to Paul's architectural interventions, the Parva Chapel, decorated with frescoes by Fra Angelico, opened off of the east side of the Sala Regia (fig. 3.3).<sup>12</sup> The Pauline Chapel took the place of the Parva, and the ceremonies traditionally held in the earlier chapel were transferred to the new structure during the patron's pontificate or shortly thereafter. The uses of the Parva Chapel suggest how Paul anticipated the new chapel would function. Specifically, the earlier space was used as the Singers' Chapel, Sacrament Chapel and site of conclave proceedings. As a space for the preservation and adoration of the Eucharist, the Pauline Chapel functioned as a sepulcher of Christ nestled within the Apostolic Palace. Paul's successors introduced additional ceremonies

---

<sup>11</sup> The construction of the Pauline was completed near the end of 1539 and dedicated on the Feast of St. Paul's Conversion, 25 January 1540. The Parva Chapel, also referred to as the "cappella sancti Nicolai," was used during twelve conclaves (that of Calixtus III in 1455 through that of Paul III in 1543). On the history of the Parva Chapel, see de Campos, *Palazzi Vaticani*, 37-41; 128-131. Note that the "Cappella di Niccolò V," located on the *piano superiore* of the papal palace and painted by Fra Angelico and Benozzo Gozzoli between 1447 and 1450, was sometimes referred to as the "cappella parva superiore." On this and the idea that the Parva Chapel may have served as a reception room, see Westfall, *This Most Perfect Paradise*, 131-32. In this dissertation "Parva Chapel" always refers to the small chapel adjacent to the Sala Regia.

<sup>12</sup> The Parva Chapel was, unfortunately, destroyed in order to make room to rebuild the Scala Maesciallo on a grander scale. The Scala Maesciallo connects the Sala Regia to the Benediction Loggia of St. Peter's and serves as the ceremonial approach to the Sala Regia from the east. Kuntz, "Before and After Michelangelo," 4.



and feasts celebrated in the chapel, but these were also focused on devotion to the Eucharist.<sup>13</sup>

Devotion to the Host, during and outside of the sacrament of communion, attracted increased attention during the sixteenth century.<sup>14</sup> This was partly a response to reformers who questioned transubstantiation, the feast of Corpus Christi and adoration of the sanctified Host.<sup>15</sup> The Host, miraculously transformed into the body of Christ during mass in the Sistine Chapel, was stored and displayed in the Parva Chapel on various occasions.<sup>16</sup> Several distinct, yet related, Eucharistic traditions have been celebrated in the Parva and Pauline Chapels, most significantly: reservation of the Host on Maundy Thursday; Deposition on Good Friday, Elevation of the Host on Easter; the Easter Sepulcher; Forty Hours vigils and the Feast of Corpus Christi. The celebrations are complementary and involve some overlap in meaning and form.

On Holy Thursday the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper was celebrated in the Sistine Chapel. Because consecration of the Host does not occur on Good Friday, a priest

---

<sup>13</sup> Here the term Eucharist refers to the bread (or wafer) consecrated during mass. The wine is also part of the Eucharist, although the treatment and preservation of the consecrated liquid received less attention during the middle ages and Renaissance. The term Host is generally used to suggest the bread or wafer, rather than the wine; the Sacrament refers to both the wine and bread, although sometimes the word refers just to the bread. See Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 48.

<sup>14</sup> Henry Outram Evennett, *The Spirit of the Counter-Reformation: The Birkbeck Lectures in Ecclesiastical History Given in the University of Cambridge in May 1951* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 38-9.

<sup>15</sup> The Council of Trent identified a list of ten “articles of heretics” on the Eucharist at the Council meeting of 3 February 1547. These specify claims made about the Eucharist by reformers that the Church denounced. Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation: Incarnation and Liturgy* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 217.

<sup>16</sup> Margaret Kuntz, “Designed for Ceremony: The Cappella Paolina at the Vatican Palace,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 62, no. 2 (2003): 250 n.7. For evidence of the Pauline’s use for the Reserved Host in 1538, Kuntz cites Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (B.A.V.), Vat. Lat. 5634, 249r; for 1539, B.A.V., Barb. Lat. 2799, 542-543r; and for 1540, *Ibid.*, 582 r.

reserved it after Mass on Thursday for use the next day in the celebration of the Presanctified Host.<sup>17</sup> Giacomo Volaterrano, papal secretary to Sixtus IV, recorded the reservation of the Eucharist in the Parva Chapel during Holy Week 1481.<sup>18</sup> The Pauline was used for this purpose in 1539, when it must have been in an incomplete but useable state.<sup>19</sup> On Good Friday, a ceremonial procession carried the Host back to the Sistine Chapel for the Mass of the Presanctified Host. Following ceremonies in the Sistine, the pope carried the *corpus verum* back to the Sacrament Chapel (the Parva or the Pauline) where he “entombed” the Host in the tabernacle.<sup>20</sup> Contemporary diarists describe Pope Paul III depositing the Host in a “sepulchrum” in the Pauline chapel during Holy Week.<sup>21</sup> The source is not clear about whether this event occurred on Maundy Thursday (for the mass of the Presanctified Host) or Holy Friday (as the *Depositio*). Technically, it would be incorrect to suggest that the Host from Holy Thursday is “entombed” because it commemorates the institution of the Eucharist, not the Passion of Christ. However, in the sense that the Eucharist always represents the body of Christ,

---

<sup>17</sup> On the liturgy of the Presanctified Host, see Darwell Stone, *The Reserved Sacrament*, 2nd ed., rev. and enl. (London: Milwaukee: R. Scott, 1918). The celebration on Good Friday in which the Presanctified Host is used is technically not a mass because there is no consecration of the Host. Nevertheless, the service is often referred to as the Mass of the Presanctified Host.

<sup>18</sup> Gaetano Moroni, *Dizionario di erudizione storico-ecclesiastica da S. Pietro sino ai nostri giorno* (Venice, 1840), 8: 295.

<sup>19</sup> B.A.V., Barb. Lat., 2799, 542v (cited by Kuntz, “Designed for Ceremony,” 87, n. 140).

<sup>20</sup> B.A.V., Barb. Lat., 2799, 542v (cited by Kuntz, “Before and After Michelangelo,” 87, n. 140).

<sup>21</sup> “Quibus maxime feriis acerbissimam Christi Domini necem recolit Christ. Resp., sepulchrum ad vaticanas aedes invexit.” *Alphonsus Ciaconio, Vitae Pontificum et Cardinlium...* (Rome: Typis Vaticanis, 1677), 3:131. The passage is reprinted, with the following comment, by Moroni: “L’uso di fare il sepolcro nella Cappella Paolina, fu introdotto dal fondatore della Cappella medesima Paolo III.” Gaetano Moroni, *Dizionario*, 8: 294.

the receptacle always signifies a sepulcher. For this study, it is more important to note that the Eucharist was stored in the Pauline Chapel, in a container that represented the sepulcher of Christ.

On Easter, the pope removed the Host from the sepulcher, signaling Christ's ascension. Technically, Pope Paul IV sanctioned the extralitururgical ceremony of the Easter Sepulcher in 1556, but the idea of "entombing" the Host from Good Friday until Easter was firmly established much earlier.<sup>22</sup> From the thirteenth century, Christ's burial and resurrection (reenacted with the *Depositio* and *Elevatio*) on Good Friday and Easter were celebrated throughout the Low Countries, Germany, England, France and Italy with similar "entombments" of the Host.<sup>23</sup>

The Feast of Corpus Christi, sanctioned by Urban IV in 1264, was widely celebrated by the fourteenth century. It began with a dream by Juliana of Liège, in which Christ himself lamented that a single feast was missing from the liturgical calendar.<sup>24</sup> The saintly Juliana campaigned for the institution of a feast to serve as the apogee of the Eucharistic devotion that inspired several celebrations throughout the liturgical year. A local bishop supported the institution of a movable feast dedicated to the Eucharist, but the initiative faltered under his successor. The feast of Corpus Christi first won the support of Bishop Hugh of St. Cher, then Jacques Pantaléon. When he later ascended to the papal throne as Urban IV in 1261, he

---

<sup>22</sup> *Decreta Authentica Sacrorum Rituum* (1990), 5:433, cited by Karl Young, "The Dramatic Associations of the Easter Sepulchre," *University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature* 10 (1920):15-16. Young suggests that although the sacrament reserved on Holy Thursday is celebrated as the Eucharist, not as the body of Christ after the Passion, the reservation of the Host for the *Missa Praesantificatorum* was among the "formative antecedents" of the *Depositio* and *Elevatio*, which developed later in the liturgy.

<sup>23</sup> Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 294.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 164-85.

worked to make the feast universal.<sup>25</sup> But, it took more than papal intent to make the feast part of the standard liturgy. The impetus to observe the celebration spread more effectively through less formal means: by way of Cistercian houses, personal connections among clergy and trade routes.<sup>26</sup>

By the early fourteenth century, communities throughout Europe celebrated the Feast of Corpus Christi after the octave of Pentecost, in early summer. Church leaders used the feast as an opportunity for public preaching on the sacraments, especially Communion. Processions of the Corpus Christi, which transported the *corpus verum* through city streets across Europe, echoed elements of Palm Sunday processions popular in the Middle Ages. From the fourteenth century, secular civic authorities generally controlled Corpus Christi processions, using the event to display and reinforce their authority within the urban environment.<sup>27</sup> An important element of the processions was the opportunity for large crowds to see the Host displayed in a monstrance, carried by a high-ranking Church official. Honored civic authorities carried a richly ornate baldacchino over the Eucharist. Although it was not a sacrament that could generate grace like *manducatio per gustum* (eating by taste), *manducatio per visum* (eating by sight) was a means by which the faithful gained spiritual communion with Christ. Theologians debated the relative rewards of eating and viewing the Host, but the general populace was highly motivated to see the Eucharist.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Urban IV's bull "Transitorius" of 1264 marked the first institution of a universal feast by a reigning pope.

<sup>26</sup> Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 179-81.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 243-71.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

In 1486 Johannes Burchard, who worked as a papal master of ceremonies from 1483 to 1506, regularly recorded the Corpus Christi processions of Pope Julius II in Rome. Seated below a baldacchino, the pope carried the Host from the Apostolic Palace to Castel Sant' Angelo before returning to St. Peter's.<sup>29</sup> In 1581, the pilgrim to Rome, Gregory Martin, witnessed (or at least described) a similar procession by Gregory XIII. According to Martin, preparations of the ceremonial path from the palace to Castel Sant' Angelo and back to St. Peter's began a fortnight in advance. Tall poles lined the route; these were topped with a canvas canopy like a long, winding baldacchino. An image of the Corpus Christi celebration made before the construction of Bernini's colonnade in the 1650s shows the processional route leading out of the Apostolic Palace and returning to St. Peter's Basilica. (fig. 3.4).

In the morning, pilgrims walked along the covered route. For the main event, numerous clergy and officials preceded the consecrated Host and the pope, according to an elaborate schema of rank, making the urban procession a grand display of papal and ecclesiastical authority. They advanced in pairs, carrying lit candles. After returning to St. Peter's, the pope processed to "his Chapel and aultur [sic]," which may have been the Sistine Chapel or Pauline Chapel, where he or a cardinal sung Mass.<sup>30</sup> During the fifteenth century, part of the celebration

---

<sup>29</sup> Johann Burchard, "Johannis Burckardi Liber notarum ab anno MCCCCLXXXIII usque ad annum MDVI," *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* new edition, 32, pt 1. (Castello: S. Lapi, 1907), 154-55. Note multiple spellings of Burchard's name. The spelling in the text is most common, but the Latin variant is necessary to locate the above source.

<sup>30</sup> Gregory Martin, *Roma Sancta (1581)*, ed. George Bruner Parks (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1969), 87-88.

of the Feast of Corpus Christi included the veneration of the Eucharist in the Parva Chapel.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, Paul III almost certainly intended for the Eucharist to be venerated in the Pauline Chapel on Corpus Christi. It is safe to conclude that at the time the Pauline was constructed and decorated, the patron also intended the space to preserve the Host that was consecrated in the Sistine Chapel on Holy Thursday, and function as a sepulchral space to preserve the Eucharist from Good Friday through Easter. Pinpointing which festivities Paul III expected to celebrate in the chapel is not possible, but clearly he anticipated its use as the sacrament chapel of the Apostolic Palace.

The Forty Hours, a vigil of continuous prayers said in devotion to the Eucharist begins on the first Sunday of Advent (which ranges from 27 November to 3 December). Gian Antonio Belotti, preaching at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Milan in 1527, encouraged the faithful to spend forty hours in prayer to the Eucharist at the end of Lent. By 1537 all of the city's churches took turns adoring the Blessed Sacrament, so that the vigil was continuous.<sup>32</sup> A brief from Paul III dated 28 March 1539 to the Vicar General of the Archbishop of Milan specifies that the pope approves of continuous devotions before the body of Christ lasting for forty

---

<sup>31</sup> Franz Ehrle, *Der vaticanische Palast in seiner Entwicklung bis zur Mitte des XV. Jahrhunderts*, Studi e documenti per la storia del palazzo apostolico vaticano (Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1935), 2:120.

<sup>32</sup> Godefridus J. C. Snoek, *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist: a Mutual Relationship*, Studies in the History of Christian Thought 63 (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1995), 63.

hours.<sup>33</sup> In the letter, Paul enumerated partial and plenary indulgences granted to those who participate in the prayers and vigil during the Forty Hours. Gregory Martin described Forty Hours vigils taking place in the churches of various confraternities in Rome by 1577-8.<sup>34</sup> However, Margaret Kuntz suggests that it was introduced in Rome by Philip Neri in 1550, during the pontificate of Julius III (1550-1555) and first celebrated as a continuous prayer in 1592 (under Clement VIII, 1592-1605).<sup>35</sup>

Certainly Paul was familiar with (and supported) the Forty Hours vigils observed in Milan since 1539. Since other intended uses of the Pauline Chapel (to hold the Reserved Sacrament, for example) emphasize increasingly elaborate ceremonies devoted to the Eucharist, perhaps Paul considered using the new chapel for the Forty Hours. Although documents do not definitively prove whether or not Paul III intended using the chapel for this purpose, it is likely that he did. If Paul did not envision such a ritual taking place in the Pauline Chapel, then the institution of the Forty Hours there by Julius III demonstrates how the chapel was strongly identified as the papal space for devotions to the Eucharist and the *sepulchrum domini*. A print by Francesco Piranesi shows Pope Pius IV in the Pauline Chapel during the Forty Hours in 1787 (fig. 3.5). The arrangement of candles before the altar is so numerous that a blinding light shines

---

<sup>33</sup> The letter, in the Archiepiscopal Archives of Milan, was quoted at length in Aristide Sala, *Documenti circa la vita e le gesta di San Carlo Borromeo* (Milan: Z. Brasca, 1857) 4:9. Translated and quoted in Herbert Thurston, "The Quarant'Ore," *The Month: A Catholic Magazine and Review* (1896): 186. By the seventeenth century, elaborate set-like apparatuses enhanced the dramatic celebrations in churches throughout Rome and much of Europe, see Mark S. Weil, "The Devotion of the Forty Hours and Roman Baroque Illusions," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 37 (1974): 218–248.

<sup>34</sup> Martin, *Roma Sancta*, 64.

<sup>35</sup> Margaret Kuntz, "Mimesis, Ceremony, Praxis: The Cappella Paolina as the Holy Sepulcher," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 54 (2009): 67.

forth from the tabernacle containing the sacrament. Although the ceremony shown took place after Paul's death, it offers an idea of how the chapel functions as a liturgical space.<sup>36</sup>

The chapel was not for the pope alone; engagement of pilgrims and devotees with the Pauline Chapel is significant. The fact that pilgrims flocked to the site validated and reinforced its identity as a *locus sanctus*.<sup>37</sup> By permitting the public to enter the palace on certain occasions and glimpse activities in the chapel, Paul created a site worthy of veneration. The fact that very little was actually visible to believers only fueled an intense desire for visitors to see it. The council of Mainz ruled in 1451 that exhibition of the Divine Sacrament must be diminished "lest the people's devotion cool down due to frequent viewing of it."<sup>38</sup> The great English novelist Charles Dickens wrote of his visit:

On Thursday, we went to see the pope convey the Sacrament from the Sistine Chapel, to deposit it in the Cappella Paolina, another chapel in the Vatican;--a ceremony emblematical of the entombment of the Savior before His resurrection. We waited in a great gallery [the Sala Regia] with a great crowd of people (three-fourths of them English) for an hour or so, while they were chaunting [sic] the Misere, in the Sistine Chapel again. Both chapels opened out of the gallery; and the general attention was concentrated on the occasional opening and shutting of the door of the chapel for which the pope was ultimately bound. None of these openings disclosed anything more tremendous than a man on a ladder, lighting a great quantity of candles; but at each and every opening, there was a terrific rush made at this ladder and this man...a new chaunt, announced the approach of his Holiness.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> Kuntz discusses Piranesi's print as evidence that the Forty Hours decorations used after the sixteenth century were influenced by designs for Easter Sepulcher decorations. *Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>37</sup> Trexler, *Public Life*, 99.

<sup>38</sup> Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 292.

<sup>39</sup> Charles Dickens, *American Notes and Pictures from Italy*, rpt. (London: Macmillan, 1903), 351.



Dickens goes on to describe the long procession of choristers and priests mournfully chanting as they slowly proceeded to the Pauline Chapel. Finally the pope appeared below a white canopy, carrying the Sacrament. He made his way to the Pauline Chapel, the door shut and the pilgrims rushed off. Although Dickens was more taken with the theatrics than the sanctity of the event, it is apparent that the Pauline Chapel was well-established as a *locus sanctus* which great crowds struggled to glimpse, even when only a sacristan was lighting candles. The presence of the Eucharist, dramatic entry by the pope and his retinue and surging crowds all contributed to the perceived sanctity of the site.

Even when the chapel was not actively in use, its presence in the Apostolic Palace imbued the grand ceremonial spaces of the palace with a sanctity that may otherwise have been absent. When the consecrated Host remained in the tabernacle in the chapel, the space functioned as the sepulcher of Christ. All activities in the palace, especially the Sala Regia and Sistine Chapel, took place in proximity to the sepulcher. As established with the Parva Chapel, preservation of the Host within the papal domicile demonstrated the sanctity of the place and the resident popes. Peter and Paul are visually present in the chapel frescoes, making the space function as something of a shrine to them, even though their relics and places of martyrdom are elsewhere.<sup>40</sup> The mingled spiritual presence of the apostles and Christ makes the chapel function like something of an architectural reliquary within the papal palace.

The Pauline Chapel was not simply a ceremonial space; it was also used for the daily activities of the papal household. Popes used the Pauline Chapel for private devotions and

---

<sup>40</sup> The importance of place is discussed at length in Philipp Fehl, "Michelangelo's *Crucifixion of St. Peter*: Notes on the Identification of the Locale of the Action," *The Art Bulletin* 53, no. 3 (1971): 327-43.

prayer. The singers of the Papal Chapel met there daily for practice and congregated there prior to singing in the Sistine Chapel.<sup>41</sup> As an architectural frame for the performance of papal ritual, the Pauline Chapel easily took the place of the Parva Chapel. Margaret Kuntz notes that the similar dimensions of the Parva and Pauline chapels meant that ceremonies could continue in the new space without revision. Liturgical furnishings from the Parva Chapel were reinstalled in the Pauline Chapel. The measure was frugal, but it also emphasized the continuation of papal tradition in the new space.<sup>42</sup> Kuntz suggests that rituals from the Parva could easily transfer to the Pauline because the new chapel was also adjacent to the Sala Regia. The new configuration of spaces ensured that the access to the Benediction Loggia, Sistine Chapel and St. Peter's Basilica, so critical to the functioning of the Cappella Parva, remained unimpeded.<sup>43</sup>

### 3.1.3 A Visit to the Pauline Chapel

Michelangelo's paintings adorning the Pauline Chapel are considered in greater detail later in this chapter, but a brief description of the space as encountered by visitors will help orient the reader. In order to reach the Pauline Chapel, one must first ascend one of two ceremonial staircases, either the Scala Regia or the Scala del Maresciallo, to reach the Sala Regia (fig. 4). The entrance of the Pauline Chapel is on the southern end of the Sala Regia, opposite

---

<sup>41</sup> The Singers' constitution of 1545 establishes rules for their attendance in the Pauline. The rules essentially continued those established for the Parva Chapel. Richard Sherr, "The Singers of the Papal Chapel and Liturgical Ceremonies in the Early Sixteenth Century: Some Documentary Evidence," in *Rome in the Renaissance: The City and the Myth*, ed. P.A. Ramsey, (Binghamton: Center for Medieval & Early Renaissance Studies, 1982), 250-21.

<sup>42</sup> Kuntz, "Designed for Ceremony," 235-36.

<sup>43</sup> Margaret Kuntz, "Maderno's Building Procedures at New St. Peter's: Why the Facade First?" *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* 68, no. 1 (2005): 46-47.

the papal throne on the northern wall. The grand portal to the Pauline Chapel consists of two monolithic marble columns; a frieze inscribed “Paulus III Pont[ifex] Ma[ximus]” and a triangular pediment (fig. 3.6). The inscription guaranteed Paul’s permanent identification with the chapel. Florentine citizens commonly attached their coats of arms to buildings, shrines and portable objects, including the baldachin covering the Corpus Christi. The proximity of their insignia to the blessed substance conferred honor on a family.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, the inscription over the door to the chapel perpetually associates Paul with the sacred activities celebrated within the space.

Approaching the Pauline, one may glimpse a bit of the interior through the lattice-like panels and oval openings in the large wooden doors. These openings are high enough off the floor to make it difficult to see activities unfolding in the chapel. A heavy curtain on the inside of the chapel makes absolute privacy possible, if the occasion warrants. If anything, curious visitors may see the elaborate ceiling and parts of the wall frescoes. The openings in the doors, then, *suggest* that viewers may glimpse more inside the sacred chamber than is actually possible.<sup>45</sup> This implied visibility is similar to that created by a choir screen, such as the one in the Sistine Chapel. Grates covering openings over the tomb of St. Peter in the attached basilica or numerous other tombs and sacred sites throughout the city also limit visibility. *Cancellate*, or grates over openings to sacred tombs or relics, offer visitors the sense of proximity or visual

---

<sup>44</sup> Trexler, *Public Life*, 92-93.

<sup>45</sup> Sangallo originally intended to have two openings, covered by grates, one on each side of the door to the Pauline. Kuntz, “Before and After Michelangelo,” 39. See Antonio Sangallo drawing UA1234r, Uffizi, Florence.

connection with sacred objects even though only a dark void is actually visible.<sup>46</sup> The entrance doors to the Pauline Chapel, then, call to mind the sacred sepulchers and ancient martyr shrines ubiquitous around Rome. As the Sacrament Chapel, the Pauline functions as a sacred vessel or shrine.

Stepping into the Pauline Chapel, one notices that although the architectural vocabulary and elevation are similar to that of the Sala Regia, the space is smaller. The high ceiling creates the illusion of a large space, although the footprint of the structure is smaller than the adjacent Sala Regia (fig. 3.7). The chapel is comprised of a vaulted, rectangular space (with Michelangelo's frescoes on the long side walls) and a smaller altar area or chancel extending from the short side opposite the entrance door (fig. 3.8). At the highest point, the vault is 2.45 meters lower than the vault in the Sala Regia, the great span of which is 18 meters above the floor.<sup>47</sup> The width of the space, 9.82 meters at the socle zone, is about one meter narrower than the Sala Regia. Measured between the faces of the pilasters, the body of the chapel is 16.97 meters long.<sup>48</sup> At just under 5 meters in length, the altar chancel is not unlike a smaller chapel

---

<sup>46</sup> Margaret Kuntz notes that grated openings traditionally flanked sites of venerated objects or relics. She suggests that grated openings flanking the door that Sangallo planned, but subsequently abandoned (visible in UA1234r) would have suggested a formal link to funerary sites. Indeed, the intended openings would have reinforced this allusion, but the wooden doors also convey the idea. Kuntz, "Designed for Ceremony," 242.

<sup>47</sup> Margaret Kuntz, "Before and After Michelangelo," 35; Bernice Davidson, "The Decoration of the Sala Regia Under Pope Paul III," *The Art Bulletin* 58, no. 3 (1976): 398 n.5.

<sup>48</sup> This measurement is based on the 76 *palmi* indicated by Sangallo on drawing UA 1125. Kuntz, "Designed for Ceremony," 251 n.27.

projecting off of the nave, which is approximately 17 meters long.<sup>49</sup> By comparison, the length of the Sala Regia is 33.75 meters (the width is 11.85 meters).<sup>50</sup> While the footprint of the Pauline is less expansive than other areas of the Palazzo Apostolico, the vault and the elongated proportions create an illusion of space that dwarfs visitors.

As in the Sala Regia, the walls of the Pauline Chapel are articulated as a socle zone (2.9 meters high) surmounted by a tall register of fresco compositions framed by compound pilasters. Michelangelo's fresco of the *Crucifixion of Peter* on the west wall looms on the right as visitors enter the chapel. Flanking the composition are tall rectangular frescoes by Federico Zuccaro showing the *Baptism of Cornelius, the Centurion* on the left and the *Fall of Simon Magus* on the right. On the east wall, Michelangelo's *Conversion of Saul* is flanked by two frescoes by Lorenzo Sabatini: *The Baptism of Saul* on the left and *Paul Preaching in Athens* on the right. In the corners of the chapel, stucco figures holding torches aloft project into the space.<sup>51</sup> Above the frescoes, a heavy architrave supports a cove vault decorated with deeply carved stucco designs, gilt frames surrounding painted roundels and painted pendentives.<sup>52</sup> A large thermal window

---

<sup>49</sup> Kuntz "Before and After Michelangelo," 35, gives the measurement as 4.9148 meters based on the 22 *palmi* specified for the space on Sangallo's plan, UA 1125. The same drawing gives the length of the body of the Pauline, measured from the faces of the pilasters above the socle zone as 76 *palmi* (16.97 meters).

<sup>50</sup> Davidson, "Decoration of the Sala Regia," 398 n.5.

<sup>51</sup> Two pairs of winged males are in the corners by the entrance wall, pairs of winged females are close to the altar chancel. The males hold golden palms as well as torches.

<sup>52</sup> Sangallo designed a cove vault merged with lateral groin vaults. On the challenging parameters that prompted the design, see Kuntz, "Designed for Ceremony," 238-40. On the intended and executed decorative program (beyond Michelangelo's frescoes), see Margaret Kuntz, "Pope Gregory XIII, Cardinal Sirleto, and Federico Zuccaro: The Program for the Altar Chancel of the Cappella Paolina in the Vatican Palace," *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 35 (2008): 87-112.

arches above the architrave on the west wall; the corresponding window on the east wall was blocked when the façade of New St. Peter's Basilica and the Benediction Loggia were constructed around 1610-13.<sup>53</sup> At the apex of the vault, a heavily framed illusionistic fresco by Federico Zuccaro shows Paul in adoration of the trinity (fig. 3.9).<sup>54</sup> The decoration of the vault does not capture the viewer's attention for long because the colors are less saturated and the compositions are not as dynamic as those on the side walls.

While the frescoed side walls command the attention of art historians, the sacred focus of the chapel is the altar opposite the entrance, where the consecrated Host is stored in the Sacrament Tabernacle (fig. 3.10).<sup>55</sup> Because the altar area is narrower than the rest of the chapel, and the vault is lower, the two spaces seem like independent volumes pressed together. Because the larger chapel space leads to the smaller chapel area, the visual focus and attention of visitors is directed towards the spiritual focus of the chapel, the altar. Once lit by a window on the altar wall, the chancel area is now illuminated by a lantern constructed above the vault.<sup>56</sup> The side walls of the altar area are sometimes decorated with tapestries, below which a door on the east wall leads to a tiny sacristy; a door on the west wall leads to a small hallway. Standing at the altar, one has an uninterrupted line of sight out the main door of the chapel, across the Sala Regia

---

<sup>53</sup> For the progression of work on the façade and Benediction loggia, and how these projects relate to the Pauline Chapel, see Kuntz, "Maderno's Building Procedures," especially 53-9.

<sup>54</sup> On the decoration of the vault, see Kuntz, "Frederico Zuccari, Gregory XIII, and the Vault Frescoes," 221-29.

<sup>55</sup> On the decoration of the altar area, see Kuntz, "Pope Gregory XIII, Cardinal Sirleto, and Federico Zuccaro," 87-112.

<sup>56</sup> The altar wall was moved (adding nearly three meters to the space) during the construction of Maderno's façade for New St. Peter's Basilica. Kuntz, "Maderno's Building Procedures," 50.

to the papal throne. This axis connects the sacred and secular points of papal authority.<sup>57</sup> The decorations of the Sala Regia and the chapel reiterate this duality, with scenes of worldly authority in the larger hall and sacred scenes in the chapel. Because frescoes in the spaces are painted with similar tonal ranges, and the architectural vocabulary is consistent, the Sala Regia and Pauline Chapel give the impression of a unified project carried out under the aegis of a single patron.<sup>58</sup> The artists working in the Pauline Chapel after Michelangelo, and those that worked in the Sala Regia into the 1570s, deserve credit for executing works that harmonize with the two largest and most famous frescoes of the ensemble, the *Conversion of Saul* and the *Crucifixion of Peter*.

### 3.1.4 Michelangelo's Frescoed Narratives

Saul of Tarsus sought to rid Judaism of Christian influence first by dragging believers to prison during persecutions in Jerusalem. Then, according to Acts 9:1-19, he set out for Damascus intent on suppressing the cult further. Michelangelo shows the moment during this journey in which a light flashed from heaven, knocking Saul from his horse. A powerful voice demanded, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" Saul asked who was speaking; the voice answered that it was Jesus. Saul was then instructed to go to Damascus, but being struck blind,

---

<sup>57</sup> Kuntz, "Designed for Ceremony," 233-36.

<sup>58</sup> Additional frescoes, commissioned by Gregory XIII, were painted in the chapel by Lorenzo Sabbatini (1573-76) and Federico Zuccari in two campaigns (1580-81 and 1583-85). For studies of the decorations in the Sala Regia, see Loren Partridge and Randolph Starn, "Triumphalism and the Sala Regia in the Vatican," in *All the World's a Stage... : Art and Pageantry in the Renaissance and Baroque*, Papers in Art History from the Pennsylvania State University v. 6 (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University, 1990): 22-81; and Davidson, "Decoration of the Sala Regia."

he required the guidance of his companions. For three sightless days, he neither ate nor drank. In Damascus, Ananias, whom God had instructed, laid his hands on Saul. When Ananias touched Saul's eyes, the Holy Spirit filled the blind man and something like scales fell from his eyes. Augmenting the biblical account, the *Golden Legend* gives Christ's instruction to Saul "Take upon yourself the depths of my humility and rid your eyes of the scales of pride."<sup>59</sup> No longer sightless, he was baptized and began to preach in the name of Christ. The fresco foreshadows events, many years later, when Paul will be blindfolded with his follower Plantilla's veil, beheaded and fall to the ground as a martyr.<sup>60</sup> In the bronze relief of Paul's martyrdom cast in 1447 for St. Peter's Basilica, Filarete depicts Paul blindfolded just prior to his execution (fig. 3.11). Although Michelangelo's fresco emphasizes the moment when Saul undergoes spiritual conversion, his helpless, prostrate position suggests death and his blindness foreshadows the covering of his eyes before martyrdom. The scene in Michelangelo's fresco demonstrates Christ's direct involvement with selecting a worthy man to spread the Word and guide the faithful and reminds viewers how the apostles suffered for their faith. I will return to the fresco for more extensive analysis.

On the opposite side of the chapel, facing the painting of Saul, Michelangelo painted the *Crucifixion of Peter* head- down as described by Eusebius (*Church History*, III, 1.2).<sup>61</sup> Prior to this martyrdom scene, Peter had been arrested and imprisoned in Rome with Paul. The two

---

<sup>59</sup> Jacobus Voragine, *Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William G. Ryan. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993)1:119.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 353.

<sup>61</sup> The manner of Peter's martyrdom is also discussed in Voragine, *Golden Legend*, 1: 347.



apostles converted and baptized their jailors, Processus and Martinian; the new Christians, in turn, set the prisoners free.<sup>62</sup> Voragine cites Pope Leo I and Pope Linus as sources on Peter's martyrdom, which he recounts as follows: urged by his followers, Peter headed out of the city in search of safety.<sup>63</sup> On the road from Rome, he met Christ walking into the city and asked, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered, "To Rome, to be crucified again." When Peter exclaimed that he would join his lord, Christ ascended to heaven.<sup>64</sup> The apostle realized that it was his own execution that was foretold, and returned to accept his fate. Nero's men arrested Peter, planning to crucify him. But the humble apostle insisted that he was unworthy to be executed in the same fashion as Jesus, so he was crucified upside-down.<sup>65</sup> Michelangelo's fresco shows Peter nailed to the cross while brawny figures prepare to heft the wooden beam into a hole in the ground. The narrative suggests that the first pope, and the model for his successors to follow, was a true martyr chosen by Christ. Not only was he willing to die for his love of the Lord, but he did so with humility. As the *locus sanctus* of Peter's tomb, and probably his execution, the Vatican was a tangible link to the apostle's relics and, by extension, to Christ. The scenes Michelangelo painted in the Pauline Chapel reinforce a web of connections linking

---

<sup>62</sup> Processus and Martinian were later arrested, beaten and beheaded under Nero's authority. Their relics are now found in one of the seven privileged altars in St. Peter's Basilica. See Louise Rice, *The Altars and Altarpieces of New St. Peter's: Outfitting the Basilica, 1621-1666* (Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 18-19.

<sup>63</sup> Voragine, *Golden Legend*, 1:345.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, cites Leo and Marcellus as sources.

<sup>65</sup> In addition to Voragine (as cited above), other church historians recorded Peter's crucifixion upside-down. See, for example, Bartolomeo Platina, *Lives of the Popes*, ed. and trans. by Anthony D'Elia, Vol. 1, I Tatti Renaissance Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 35. These events should not be confused with Peter's imprisonment in Jerusalem by Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12: 6-19). As Raphael depicted in the Stanza d'Eliodoro (Apostolic Palace, Vatican), an angel freed the apostle from that prison.

the sacred events, places and figures of the early church in Rome with those of the Renaissance popes.

### 3.2 The Commission:

Even before the *Last Judgment* was unveiled, Paul III conceived the plan to have Michelangelo paint the Pauline Chapel.<sup>66</sup> The artist, though, was reluctant to begin the project, probably due to pressure to finish the tomb of Julius II, which would have been his moral (as well as legal) obligation as soon as the *Last Judgment* was completed. In a letter to Luigi del Riccio written in October or November of 1542, Michelangelo complained that Messer Pier Giovanni (Pier Giovanni Aliotti, Master of the Wardrobe of Paul III) constantly urged him to begin painting the chapel.<sup>67</sup> Michelangelo insisted to del Riccio, by way of explanation, that the *arriccato* (base plaster) was not even dry. Furthermore (and surely more to the point) the artist awaited ratification of an agreement with Guidobaldo, the Duke of Urbino concerning his obligations for the tomb of Julius II. With typical exaggeration, Michelangelo suggested that he was unable to live at all, let alone paint—only death or the pope could release him from his miserable circumstances. The awaited agreement would have permitted other artists to carve the unexecuted sculptures of the tomb if Michelangelo would supply the *Moses*. In a subsequent

---

<sup>66</sup> A letter from Cardinal Alessandro Farnese to the bishop of Senigallia (Marco Vigerio) dated 12 October 1541 suggests that the pope intended to have Michelangelo paint “sua nova cappella” which certainly refers to the Pauline Chapel; cited in Baumgart and Biagetti, *Gli affreschi di Michelangelo*, 72, number 16. The bishop played a role in the negotiations with the Duke of Urbino that permitted the artist to entrust others with finishing the sculptures for the tomb of Julius II. On the negotiations for the tomb, see E. H. Ramsden, *The Letters of Michelangelo* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1963), 2:251-52.

<sup>67</sup> *Carteggio*, 4:148.

letter from November 1542, the artist informed del Riccio that since the ratification from the Duke of Urbino had not arrived, he would not drag himself to the Apostolic Palace to paint but stay at home to work on three remaining figures for the tomb. If the pope wanted him, the artist boldly suggested, a papal ambassador could be sent, presumably to summon him to the Vatican.<sup>68</sup> Negotiations on the contract for the tomb dragged on. The agreement ultimately stipulated that Michelangelo would carve the sculptures of *Rachel* and *Leah* while an assistant, Raffaello da Montelupo, would complete the remaining parts of the tomb. An agreement was reached that allowed Michelangelo to begin work in the Pauline Chapel in 1542 and to deliver the two final sculptures (along with the *Moses*) to San Pietro in Vincoli for the completion of the tomb meant to be in March 1544 (although it was actually finished in early 1545).<sup>69</sup> It seems that both Paul and the duke managed to secure the artist's services, even though the burden on the artist (then in his sixties) must have been heavy. On 16 November 1542, work began in earnest on the pope's frescoes; Michelangelo's assistant Urbino (Francesco da Bernardino Amadori, d.1556) received the first of many payments for his work helping the artist in the Pauline Chapel.<sup>70</sup>

### 3.2.1 Vasari and Mistakes or Changes

The two scenes depicted in the chapel form an unusual ensemble in that one would

---

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 4:158.

<sup>69</sup> Ramsden (*Letters* 2:252), puts the completion date at the beginning of 1545; Hatfield (*Wealth*, 134) suggests it was finished by 1547.

<sup>70</sup> On 16 November 1542 eight *scudi* were paid to Urbino for grinding colors for "la cappella nova san Paolo." Archivio di Stato di Roma, Camerale 1, Tesoria segreta, reg. 1290 c.6. Excerpts from this source are published in Corbo, *Documenti*, 120.

expect both apostles to be shown either receiving their missions or at their martyrdom. The incongruence between the scenes is further complicated by Giorgio Vasari's accounts of the commission. In the 1550 edition of *The Lives of the Artists*, Vasari writes that after Michelangelo finished the *Last Judgment*, Pope Paul III had the artist paint the Pauline Chapel with *Christ Delivering the Keys to Peter* and the *Conversion of Saul*. This selection of scenes would create a more obvious typological pair than the *Crucifixion of Peter* and the *Conversion of Saul*. In the second edition of the *Lives*, published in 1568, Vasari revised his earlier statement to correctly identify the *Crucifixion of Peter* as the pendant to the *Conversion of Saul*. Whether the inconsistency arose from a simple mistake or from a change in the decorative program is a thorny question, but perhaps one that need not be resolved in the present study.

The scenario that justifies Vasari's mistake is this: the original plan included the *Delivery of the Keys* but Michelangelo painted the *Conversion of Saul* first. Vasari's information on the subjects dated from early in the commission, prior to a change of plan that substituted the *Crucifixion* fresco for the *Delivery of the Keys*. If Vasari composed the first edition of the *Lives* around 1543-47, as Johannes Wilde suggests, then his information could have been based on a plan devised between late 1542 and July 1545 (when a papal visit to the chapel suggests the first painting, presumably the *Conversion of Saul* was finished).<sup>71</sup> Vasari's information would have been outdated by the time he composed the *Lives*, because the *Crucifixion* would have been started in 1545. But perhaps the selection of scenes was not widely known until the works were unveiled together around 1549-50. The alternative scenario is that Vasari was simply mistaken

---

<sup>71</sup> Johannes Wilde, "Michelangelo, Vasari and Condivi," in *Michelangelo: Six Lectures* by Johannes Wilde (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 3.

and the Crucifixion scene was planned from the beginning of the commission. Is it, then, more likely that the artist and patron agreed to a major change in the decorative program partway through a commission or that Vasari was misinformed? In my opinion, the iconographical program which includes the *Crucifixion of Peter* and the *Calling of Saul* is so thoughtfully integrated into the significance of the chapel and the ceremonies conducted therein that it suggests a sophistication born of planning the scenes as an ensemble from the beginning, rather than a last-minute substitution.

### 3.2.2 Which Fresco was Painted First?

Vasari's error concerning the selection of scenes overlaps with the issue of which fresco was painted first. Because, if Vasari correctly identified the planned program as the Delivery of the Keys as part of an ensemble that was revised after the first painting was begun, then the fresco of Saul was painted first. Charles de Tolnay suggests that the first program (with the *Delivery of the Keys* and the *Conversion*) was devised by Paul, but after painting the *Conversion of Saul*, Michelangelo revised the plan to include the *Crucifixion*.<sup>72</sup> De Tolnay argues that stylistic similarities between the *Last Judgment* and the *Conversion* indicate that the fresco of Saul was painted prior to that of Peter.<sup>73</sup> In direct opposition to de Tolnay, Herbert von Einem cites stylistic similarities between the *Crucifixion of Peter* and the *Last Judgment* as evidence that Michelangelo began with the Petrine fresco.<sup>74</sup> Stylistic analysis on a different front

---

<sup>72</sup> De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 5:135 n.1.

<sup>73</sup> Leo Steinberg reached the same conclusion based on style. Steinberg, *Michelangelo's Last Paintings*, 15.

<sup>74</sup> Herbert von Einem, *Michelangelo* (London: Methuen, 1973), 179.

prompted Creighton Gilbert to affirm von Einem's argument that the *Crucifixion* preceded the *Conversion* fresco. Gilbert hypothesizes that increased interest in coloration and Venetian painterliness in the fresco of Saul links that fresco to Michelangelo's interest in Titian's work when the Venetian artist arrived in Rome in 1545.<sup>75</sup> Contrary to that argument, Leo Steinberg suggests that the *Conversion* was painted first. In direct contradiction to von Einem's analysis, Steinberg suggests that stylistic similarities with the *Last Judgment*, as well as the magnified scale of figures and evidence for a change of program after 1546 identify the *Conversion* as the first painting in the chapel.<sup>76</sup> William Wallace agrees with de Tolnay's and Steinberg's conclusion that Michelangelo began with the *Conversion*. His assertion is based on the practice common among artists to begin work on the areas of a painting project that receive the most natural light. In the Pauline, the east wall, where Michelangelo painted the *Conversion*, has better lighting than the west wall.<sup>77</sup> The debate concerning the progression of work demonstrates the lack of documentation as well as how stylistic analysis of the frescoes varies, even among renowned art historians.

### 3.2.3 The Pairing of Scenes

Viewers may reasonably expect that the *Conversion of Saul*, in which Christ charges Saul with his apostolic mission, would be paired with *Christ Giving the Keys to Peter* rather than the

---

<sup>75</sup> Creighton Gilbert, "The Usefulness of Comparisons Between the Parts and the Set: The Case of the Cappella Paolina," in *España Entre el Mediterráneo y el Atlántico, Granada, 1973: Actas del XXIII Congreso Internacional de Historia del Arte* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, Departamento de Historia del Arte, 1976), 530.

<sup>76</sup> Steinberg, *Michelangelo's Last Paintings*, 15.

<sup>77</sup> William E. Wallace, "Narrative and Religious Expression in Michelangelo's Pauline Chapel," *Artibus et Historiae* 10, no. 19 (1989): 108.

*Crucifixion of Peter*. This, along with Vasari's incorrect description of the program, has prompted some of the theories that the intended frescoes for the Pauline included the *Keys* rather than *Crucifixion*, but the decorative program changed after Michelangelo began the *Conversion*. Creighton Gilbert points out that, even if (contrary to his stylistic analysis) one believes that the *Conversion* was painted first, and the Petrine fresco was revised, that theory does not explain the final juxtaposition of scenes.<sup>78</sup> It merely delays the conception to a later point in the project. According to Gilbert, the *Crucifixion* and *Conversion* form a thematic pair if we consider them in relation to the widely circulated text, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* by Gulielmus Durandus (c.1220-96). On the question of art in churches, Durandus suggests that when Christ is between the two Princes of the Apostles, Peter (representing mortality) should be on his left, and Paul (representing immortality) should be on his right. Christ, present in the Eucharist, the altar, and probably a crucifix on the altar, would then properly be between the apostles in the Pauline Chapel. The *Crucifixion of Peter* on Christ's left readily suggests mortality; The *Conversion of Saul* on Christ's right represents immortality because Saul is called by the Savior after the resurrection.<sup>79</sup> Durandus based his text, in part, on a sermon by Pope Innocent III, who refurbished the apse mosaics in Old Saint Peter's Basilica wherein the apostles occupied these same positions relative to Christ (fig. 3.12).<sup>80</sup> I will return to discuss the apsidal mosaic in more detail, but the placement of the figures is important to Gilbert's argument and to the question of the pairing of scenes. By relating the apostles in their relative positions to Christ, which is

---

<sup>78</sup> Gilbert, "Usefulness of Comparisons," 525.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 527.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 526.

readily borne out by the martyrdom of Peter and supernatural calling of Paul, Gilbert suggests a compelling justification for the pairing of these two scenes.<sup>81</sup>

### 3.2.4 Raphael's Tapestries

The fabulously expensive tapestries designed by Raphael and hung in the Sistine Chapel on the most important occasions reiterate the importance of Peter and Paul in the construction of papal identity. The scenes are devoted to the miracles and ministries of Peter and Paul, including the *Conversion of Saul* but not the *Crucifixion of Peter*. The narratives hung on the side walls closest to the altar depict the *Conversion of Saul* and *Christ Giving the Keys to Peter*.<sup>82</sup> Thus, the scenes that Vasari expected to see in the Pauline were juxtaposed in the Sistine. The selection of narratives depicted in the tapestries sheds little light on the pairing of narratives in the Pauline. Perhaps the arrangement of the tapestries (with Peter on the proper left and Saul on the proper right of the altar) suggests that, even if the narratives depicted are different in the Sistine and Pauline chapels, traditions influencing the position of Petrine and Pauline subjects

---

<sup>81</sup> Durandus also notes that these relative positions are consistent with the heads of the apostles which flank the cross on papal seals. The papal seals, affixed to bulls, letters and other important documents, function as the physical evidence of papal authority. Perhaps, then, the positions of the apostles and the Corpus Christi in the Pauline Chapel demonstrate the authority of the papacy, or represent the very office of the pope.

<sup>82</sup> On the reconstruction of the locations of the tapestries, see John Shearman, *Raphael's Cartoons in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen, and the Tapestries for the Sistine Chapel* (London: Phaidon, 1972), 20-44; figs. 1 and 2.



(on the left and right of Christ) influenced the decorative schemes in both chapels.<sup>83</sup> Because Raphael's tapestry of the *Conversion of Saul* (fig. 3.13) was such a celebrated example of the scene, and located so close to the Pauline Chapel, Michelangelo must have anticipated viewers comparing his fresco with Raphael's tapestry of the same scene. He considered and reappraised the tapestry, considering how his own depiction of the apostle's conversion would compare to Raphael's. Michelangelo disparaged and disliked Raphael. In a letter written in 1542, Michelangelo claimed that the Tomb of Julius was unfinished because, out of jealousy, Bramante and Raphael sowed discord between Pope Julius II and Michelangelo in an effort to ruin him.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, everything that Raphael knew of art was learned from Michelangelo. Such antipathy and sense of superiority towards the younger artist surely weighed on Michelangelo as he planned an image sure to be compared to the tapestry of the *Conversion of Saul*. A brief visual comparison of the works is in order.

In Raphael's image, Christ, visible from the waist up, occupies more of the composition than Christ in Michelangelo's fresco. A putto grasps the Redeemer around the waist as if clinging to a diving falcon. Christ, surrounded by clouds and golden rays of light, gestures towards Saul with an outstretched arm. The rays of light surrounding him shine outwards like

---

<sup>83</sup> Innocent VIII (1484-92) clarified the question of "whose left and right" when he specified that left and right are defined with respect to the object or image in question (the altar or crucifix) not the spectator. *Liber caeremoniarum* MS. Compiled by Johannes Burchard and Agostino Patrizi in 1488. Bibl. Vat., Vat. Lat. 4738 ff. cxxiv, r., cxxxvii, v. Excerpt and discussion in Shearman, *Raphael's Cartoons*, 39. Shearman notes the numerous examples of works with such an arrangement, including the Pauline Chapel. He also mentions Burchard's comment on the impropriety of such an arrangement (because Peter belongs at Christ's right hand).

<sup>84</sup> *Carteggio*, 506.

the golden rays of a monstrance that surround and project from the Eucharist.<sup>85</sup> Rather than surround Christ with a seemingly tangible light as Raphael does, Michelangelo creates an intensely bright burst of light and surrounds Christ with angelic figures. These nudes radiate from Christ like the spokes of a wheel. In this way, Michelangelo distinguishes his mode of representing supernatural elements from Raphael's.

Raphael gives physical, nearly tangible, form to divine light while Michelangelo evokes the natural intangibility of light. Raphael surrounds Christ with clinging winged putti; Michelangelo eschews supernatural appendages such as wings in favor of naturalistic human figures translated to the heavenly realm.<sup>86</sup> Raphael's Saul lies supine on the ground, extending both palms toward Christ. He is younger than in Michelangelo's fresco and his eyes are open. Some figures on foot and horseback rush towards him, as others shield themselves or run away. Saul's companions hasten from lower right to upper left. That compositional movement from right to left crosses the line implied by Christ's gesture, which connects Christ's outstretched

---

<sup>85</sup> The function of the Pauline Chapel as repository for the Eucharist would make this allusion appropriate for the fresco, but would be contrary to Michelangelo's style.

<sup>86</sup> Stylistically, the heavenly figures in Michelangelo's *Conversion of Saul* have slimmer proportions and less bulky musculature than the men relegated to the earth below. A concise explanation for this is elusive. However, the angelic figures retain strictly human features. Lengthy analysis of Raphael's image is beyond the scope of this study. Heinrich Wölfflin (*Classic Art: An Introduction to the Italian Renaissance*, 5th ed. (New York: Phaidon Publishers; distributed by Garden City Books, 1994) 199-201 suggests that Michelangelo's conception leaves "the Raphael tapestries far behind" because rather than Saul staring up at Christ, as in the tapestry, Michelangelo's Saul is blinded as the Voice of Heaven echoes in his head. The formal rearrangement of the figures essentially changes their interaction. Christian K. Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), 89-96, interprets Michelangelo's frescoes as continuing themes present in Raphael's tapestries. He suggests that Raphael's representations of Peter express the *vita activa* (active life), physical experience and earthly vision; those of Paul express the *vita contemplativa* (contemplative life), incorporeal experience and spiritual vision.

hand with Saul. The bright form surrounding Christ, however, acts as a boundary, diminishing communion between the two figures.

In comparison, numerous heavenly figures rush towards Michelangelo's Christ, as others recoil away from Saul. The force of light and implied sound that projects from Christ's hand reverberates through the painting as figures scatter away from the frightful apparition. Like ripples spreading out from a stone dropped in water, Saul's companions leave a calm void, with the apostle in the center. Only the figure in yellow interacts directly with Saul.

Raphael's Saul is a smooth-cheeked young man, as the biblical narrative suggests. In Michelangelo's fresco, Saul is older, with a long gray beard, not unlike the artist and the patron. Michelangelo and Pope Paul III were both bearded elderly men, aged 67 and 74, respectively, when the Pauline Chapel commission began. Each had been working and living in Rome and the Vatican for many decades, making them veterans of the frequently-changing papal court. Michelangelo's comments in letters written in the 1540s demonstrate that he identified himself as an old man.<sup>87</sup> In Daniele da Volterra's bronze portrait bust of the artist, the bags under the eyes, flattened nose, indented lower cheeks and forked beard are similar to Saul in the painting. Sebastiano del Piombo's portrait of Pope Paul III shows the pontiff with gray hair and a forked beard similar to Saul's in the fresco.<sup>88</sup> The elderly patron would be easily associated with his apostolic namesake in his eponymous chapel. After all, Pope Paul III had also been divinely chosen, albeit elected through a papal conclave. Viewers would surely recognize similarities between the painting and its progenitors. The fresco, however, does not function as a portrait of

---

<sup>87</sup> *Carteggio*, 4:179, 203, for example.

<sup>88</sup> The similarity should not be over-estimated as portraits of Julius II and Julius III also show popes with forked beards and general similarities to Saul in the Pauline Chapel.

either man. Rather, by suggesting visual comparisons, it prompts viewers to consider parallels between the apostle and the artist and/or patron. Popes are generally middle aged or elderly. Perhaps the aged protagonist in the painting was meant to facilitate viewers projecting themselves into the work.

By discarding Raphael's vision of Saul in favor of depicting an elderly man, Michelangelo expands the significance of the fresco beyond the biblical narrative. Strictly speaking, Raphael shows the abrupt end of a Roman soldier's career (even though Saul was not a Roman soldier). Viewers know that Saul will go on to support Christ's earthly mission, but the scene is finite. Michelangelo's fresco obviously suggests the divine interruption of Saul's journey to Damascus, but the figure on the ground calls to mind Paul, the aged apostle who helps build the Church of Rome. The fresco suggests the young convert; the mature apostle; and the martyr in Rome. Michelangelo conveys the totality of Paul's apostolic mission in a single narrative image.

A significant difference between Michelangelo's fresco and Raphael's tapestry design is the engagement with the viewer's space in the fresco versus Raphael's contained composition. In the tapestry, the figures run across a flat ground plane that recedes gently into the distance. The figures move right to left, except Paul, who halts the momentum by falling to the ground. The right and left sides of the composition cut off some figures, but the top and bottom edges enclose the scene without cropping. The pink-clad figure in the front is close to the picture plane but his bent left leg appears parallel to the picture plane, rather than extending into the viewer's space. Therefore Raphael's composition suggests movement into and out of the frame on the sides, but not at the top or bottom. The figure closest to the viewer, in pink, is up against the picture plane but does not project into the viewer's space or suggest space below the frame. In

comparison, many figures extend beyond the frame in Michelangelo's *Calling of Saul*. Since viewers instinctively enter two dimensional works of art from the foreground, or bottom edge of the composition, the articulation of that boundary as impermeable (as Raphael suggests) or permeable (as Michelangelo suggests) governs how viewers relate to the composition.

Michelangelo's Saul has his eyes closed as if the real impact of Christ's gesture is within him. In the tapestry, Saul looks at Christ as if he is about to receive a message.<sup>89</sup> The fresco suggests a more mystical, spiritual conversion of the soul, while the tapestry suggests more direct instruction from Christ. The comparison of Michelangelo's *Conversion of Saul* with Raphael's tapestry design of the same subject calls attention to the compositional elements that help viewers engage with the fresco.

### 3.3 Apostolic Predecessors

In planning the decorative scheme for his chapel, Pope Paul III chose representations not just of his namesake, but of both Princes of the Apostles. The presence, in life and death, of both apostles was essential to making Rome the most sacred city in Europe. Tertullian wrote (c.200) that from the Eternal City comes forth the authority of the apostles themselves because they poured their doctrine as well as their blood into the Church in Rome.<sup>90</sup> Together Peter and Paul guided Christian communities and established the structural hierarchy of the Church in Rome. In his letter to the Corinthians written in the first century, Clement called Peter and Paul the pillars

---

<sup>89</sup> For more on this, see Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary*, 94.

<sup>90</sup> Tertullian, *De Praescriptione haereticorum*, Centre Traditio Literarum Occidentalum, Library of Latin Texts, series A, electronic database for the western Latin tradition (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), ch.36, line 9. <http://clt.brepolis.net.libproxy.wustl.edu/llta/pages/Toc.aspx>

who, entrusted by Christ, set up the Church.<sup>91</sup> Erasmus echoed the idea that papal authority derived from Christ and was conveyed through both apostles when he referred to Pope Julius II as “Julius the high priest of the Christian religion, the Vicar of Christ, the successor of Peter and Paul.”<sup>92</sup> The ongoing role of the apostles as guides or protectors of the papacy is demonstrated in Giorgio Vasari’s fresco of *Gregory Restoring the Papacy to Rome* in the Sala Regia (fig. 3.14). In the fresco, Peter and Paul fly miraculously above Pope Gregory XI in front of St. Peter’s Basilica, guiding him to return the papacy from Avignon to its rightful location, the city sanctified by their martyrdoms. Raphael’s fresco, *The Expulsion of Attila* in the Stanza d’Eliodoro (1513-14) in the Apostolic Palace shows the two apostles helping to repulse the Hun army from Italy.<sup>93</sup> In these frescoes the apostles together ensure the security and autonomy of the popes in Rome.

Papal ceremonies, repeated for centuries, reiterated the importance of both apostles in establishing the authority of the popes in Rome. The traditional rituals that accompanied the accession of a new pope included a ceremony at the Lateran in which the new pontiff was seated in several different chairs. According to Censius Camerarius (1192), the pope first sat on a

---

<sup>91</sup> Trans. John Keith, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 9, ed. by Allan Menzies (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1896.), rev. and ed. for New Advent by Kevin Knight. <<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1010.htm>>.

<sup>92</sup> “Christianae religionis antistitem, Christi vices gerentem, Petri et Pauli successorum.” Erasmus, *Dialogus, cui titulus Ciceronianus* (Paris, 1528) fol. 115 r., cited in Shearman, *Raphael’s Cartoons*, 16 n. 95. The *Summi Pontifici*, as displayed at Saint Peter’s Basilica, does not suggest that St. Paul served as a pope.

<sup>93</sup> Although legend suggests that the Huns turned back from Italy near Ravenna, the painting shows what may be the Coliseum and an aqueduct in the background. An unnamed pope on horseback raises his arm to deflect the marauders.

marble seat on the porch of the basilica and threw coins to the crowd.<sup>94</sup> Then, the pope entered the basilica where two porphyry thrones (*sedes porphyreticae*) were placed before the Chapel of San Silvestro.<sup>95</sup> According to Censius, once the pontiff sat in the first chair, he was presented with the *ferula*, keys to the basilica, and a belt with a purple bag containing musk and twelve precious seals.<sup>96</sup> He received the cardinals at his feet, and accepted from them the kiss of peace. In the ceremony, he “must seat himself on those two chairs, so that it seems that he is lying between two biers—that is, as though he were reclining between the pre-eminence of Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and the preaching of Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles.”<sup>97</sup> The throne to the right of the entrance was meant to represent Peter while that to the left represented Paul. The ceremony suggests that the pope takes possession of the apostles’ thrones, in so doing, he takes up their authority and follows them in leading the Church. Lying down between the thrones, as

---

<sup>94</sup> Camerarius, “Ordo Romanus,” quoted in Bertelli, *King’s Body*, 179.

<sup>95</sup> Paravicini-Bagliani argues that the thrones were, in fact, made of rosso antico. I refer to them as porphyry because that was the popular belief of their material, which was significant for their imperial connotations. Paravicini-Bagliani, *The Pope’s Body*, trans. David S. Peterson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 45. Also see Sergio Bertelli, *The King’s Body: Sacred Rituals of Power in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 181.

<sup>96</sup> The *ferula*, or staff, was symbolizes the scepter given to Pope Silvester by Constantine. Irene Fosi, “Court and City in the Age of the *Possesso* in the Sixteenth Century,” in *Court and Politics in Papal Rome, 1492-1700*, ed. Gianvittorio Signorotto and Maria Antonietta Visceglia, Cambridge Studies in Italian History and Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 37.

<sup>97</sup> Translation in Paravicini-Bagliani, *Pope’s Body*, 43. “Qui siquidem electus in illis duabus sedis debet, ac si videatur inter duos lectos jacere.” Quoted in Bertelli, *King’s Body*, 181 n. 12. Neither the author of the *Codex caeremonialis* of 1437, nor Paris de Grassis discusses the part of the ceremony that takes place on the second throne. See Giovanni Battista Gattico, ed. *Acta selecta caeremonialia sanctae romanae ecclesiae: ex variis mss. codicibus et diariis saeculi XV. XVI. XVII* (Rome: Barbiellini, 1753), 97, 384. Bertelli attributes their silence to decorum. The rite of the second throne involved a deacon tasked with verifying that the pope had suitable male anatomy under his pontifical robes.

if on a funerary bier or even an altar, suggests that the pontiff is simultaneously mortal and of a blessed body. The heads of Peter and Paul, enshrined in golden reliquaries in the altar baldacchino at the crossing, are on axis with the bishop's throne at the Lateran, reiterating the sacred connection among the apostles and the popes. While the Lateran functioned as the seat of the Bishops of Rome, popes occupied the Vatican as Vicars of Christ and leaders of the Universal Church. The venerable monuments and decorations of Old St. Peter's Basilica also attested to the dual heritage of the papacy from both Peter and Paul.

The high altar of St. Peter's Basilica was often said, from the 12<sup>th</sup> through the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, to cover the relics of both Peter and Paul. Petrus Mallius wrote in the second half of the twelfth century that the *confessio* at St. Peter's contained the bodies of both saints.<sup>98</sup> The Papal master of ceremonies, Paris de Grassis, sometimes referred to St. Peter's Basilica as "Basilicum Apostolarum Petri et Pauli."<sup>99</sup> When Tiberio Alfarano drew a detailed plan and wrote a description of St. Peter's Basilica in 1590, he indicated that the tomb contained both apostles (figs. 3.15 and 3.16). The detail of the plan describes the altar at the crossing as "Altare maggiore di SS. Pietro et Paolo Apostoli dove sono sepolti i loro corpi." In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when Giacomo Grimaldi made extensive drawings and descriptions of the basilica prior to its destruction, he also indicated that the high altar of St. Peter's marked the interment of both Peter and Paul.<sup>100</sup>

---

<sup>98</sup> For more on sources that identify the tomb as containing Peter and Paul and others that refer only to Peter, see Paravicini-Bagliani, *Pope's Body*, 49.

<sup>99</sup> Paris de Grassis, *Ordo romanus*, cited in Shearman, *Raphael's Cartoons*, 74 n. 168.

<sup>100</sup> Giacomo Grimaldi, *Descrizione della basilica antica di S. Pietro in Vaticano: Codice barberini latino 2733*, ed. Reto Niggli (Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1972), 160 r.



Archaeological evidence from beneath the altar at St. Peter's Basilica includes a marble urn containing two small caskets, each labeled "Sancti Petri et Sancti Pauli." The tiny fragments inside may be contact relics, rather than bodily relics. A porphyry slab known as the "altar of the division of bones of the apostles" is supposedly the surface on which Pope Sylvester (314-35) divided the bodily relics of Peter and Paul. Half of each apostle went to the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, the other halves were interred at St. Peter's (except the heads, which are both at the Lateran).<sup>101</sup> Although more sources refer only to Peter's relics below the main altar of Old St. Peter's, and the name of the basilica demonstrates his pre-eminence at the site, a parallel tradition associating the site with both apostles demonstrates the role of both martyrs in establishing pontifical authority.

The Pauline Chapel, designed and constructed to fit into an already complex group of structures, occupies a space between St. Peter's Basilica and the Apostolic Palace where nothing of great spiritual significance occurred. The site boasted no martyrdoms, tombs or venerable traditions. Yet the new structure became a *locus sanctus*, intimately tied to the papacy and woven into the ceremonial topography of the Vatican. The chapel developed a sacred identity through multiple means: decorations that emulate the mosaics and sculptures near St. Peter's tomb; ceremonies that associate the chapel with the apostles' tomb; processions of the papacy to the Pauline; and public pilgrimage to the Pauline. The chapel is designed as something of an analogue of the apostolic tomb in the adjacent basilica, yet the character of the chapel is more

---

<sup>101</sup> Engelbert Kirschbaum, *The Tombs of St. Peter & St. Paul* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1959), 207-212. On the alternative tradition that the apostles were interred together at San Sebastiano on the Via Ostiensis, then translated to their respective basilicas (but the bodies were not divided), see Henry Chadwick, "St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome: The Problem of the Memoria Apostolorum ad Catacumbas," *Journal of Theological Studies* 8, no. 1 (1957): 31-52.

private and intimately tied to the person of the reigning pope. Also, the chapel introduces a strong emphasis on the body of Christ and Eucharistic devotion.

Under Pope Sixtus IV (1471-84) the *confessio* of St. Peter's was enriched with a new ciborium in the form of a grand canopy decorated with a frieze of marble reliefs (fig. 3.17).<sup>102</sup> The narrative scenes depict both ministry and martyrdom: *Crucifixion of Peter*, *Beheading of Paul*, *Fall of Simon Magus*, *Christ giving the Keys to Peter*, and *Peter Healing the Lame Man*. Each side of the ciborium was decorated with a central narrative panel framed by two standing figures in arches (figs. 3.18-3.21). Although the individual scenes are not a series of events from a continuous narrative, consistent style and composition create a unified decorative program. Other pairings of Petrine and Pauline narratives at the Vatican include the bronze doors of the basilica (1433-45) cast by Filarete (figs. 3.11 and 3.22), and Giotto's Stefaneschi altarpiece (c.1330) (fig. 3.23) which adorned the main altar. In these works, the narrative scenes are restricted to the crucifixion of Peter and the decollation of Paul, rather than including scenes of their apostolic missions. The focus, then, is on martyrdom and the sacred relics of the apostles.<sup>103</sup> By contrast, Raphael's tapestries, displayed in the Sistine Chapel on special occasions, include images of the apostles ministering to the faithful (*Paul Preaching at Athens*) and performing miracles (*Healing of the Lame Man*). The tapestries effectively associate Peter

---

<sup>102</sup> Parts of the ciborium, including smaller, non-narrative relief panels that frame the narrative scenes, may have been executed for Pius II (1458-1464). Vittorio Lanzani, "Ubi Petrus': The *Confessio* of St. Peter's from the Earliest Times," in *Pilgrims to Peter's Tomb*, ed. Giovanni Morello (Milan: Electa, 1999), 56.

<sup>103</sup> Examples of famous pairs of portrait-like representations of the apostles include the bust-length paintings kept over the apostolic tomb at St. Peter's Basilica and the sculptures of Peter with the keys and Paul with a sword in front of St. Peter's. See Danilo Mazzoleni, "I poveri a San Pietro," in *Petros eni Pietros è qui* (Vatican City: Edindustria, 2006), 156-59.

and Paul with modern popes by calling attention to the role played by the apostles in leading the Church.

The reliefs on the ciborium in Old St. Peter's include representations of Peter's martyrdom, as well as scenes from his life. The attention on his ministry alludes to the spiritual authority and activities of the popes; the scenes of martyrdom call attention to the sacrifice made by Peter, Paul, and subsequent popes. This dual depiction of the apostles leading Christ's ministry and dying for their faith conveys the singular importance of the high altar. It is an altar so sacred that only popes can say Mass there. At the same time, it marks the traditional burial place of Peter. Under the ciborium, the identity and authority of the pope and the apostles are conflated. The reliefs reinforce the duality of service to Christ in life and in death. The Pauline Chapel is also a *locus sanctus* enriched by dualities of ministry and martyrdom as well as apostolic and papal authority. The ciborium sculptures must have been on Michelangelo's mind as he designed the Pauline frescoes. Indeed, comparison of the sculptural and painted compositions reveals some similarities of style, gesture and costume that demonstrate Michelangelo's purposeful references to the reliefs. .

The high-relief sculpture panels are carved in an elegant classicized style, perhaps by Paolo Romano.<sup>104</sup> There are some similarities between the uniforms of Roman soldiers on the reliefs and those in Michelangelo's *Crucifixion of Peter*. Also, the bearded man descending the stairs on the right side of the *Crucifixion of Peter* fresco has his arms crossed over his chest in a

---

<sup>104</sup>Johannes Röll, "The Ciborium of Sixtus IV," in *Sisto IV: Le arti a Roma nel primo rinascimento. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi*, ed. Fabio Benzi and Claudio Crescentini. (Rome: Associazione Culturale Shakespeare and Company 2, 2000): 385-97.

manner similar to one of the smaller relief figures from the ciborium.<sup>105</sup> In both the sculpture and the fresco, Saul is represented as an older, bearded man. In the fresco, however, this is anachronistic because Saul was a young man when he took his fateful trip to Damascus. While some details of dress and gesture may be common to both the reliefs and the frescoes, it would not be consistent with Michelangelo's working methods for him to closely emulate the work of other artists. Rather than a direct, formal relationship between the sculptures and the paintings, the decoration of the Pauline Chapel suggests a conscious desire to emulate the character and significance of the *locus sanctus* at the heart of St. Peter's Basilica. Most obviously, the pairing of narrative scenes of the apostles in life and death on the ciborium and in the chapel frescoes is similar.

While the paired narrative reliefs over the ciborium call attention to the lives and martyrdoms of the apostles, their heavenly status and affiliation with Christ is suggested in the conch above. The mosaic in the apse of St. Peter's (destroyed in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century) emphasized the sacred association of the apostles with Christ, who sits enthroned between them (fig. 3.12). On the register below, in a realm between the celestial and worldly, Pope Innocent III and an allegorical figure of the Roman Church attend to the lamb of Christ. Innocent appears not as a traditional donor figure holding a model building, but as a representative of the office of the papacy.<sup>106</sup> Together, the Church and the pope mediate between the apostles and Christ above and the faithful in the earthly realm below. The mosaic, then, presents an image of the sacred ties binding Christ, apostles, the Church of Rome and the Papacy. Before Old St. Peter's was torn

---

<sup>105</sup> Von Einem, *Michelangelo*, 185.

<sup>106</sup> Richard Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile of a City, 312-1308* (Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1986), 206.

down, the apse mosaic, ciborium and tomb of the apostles articulated a *locus sanctus* that linked Christ and the foundations of the papacy with every occupant of Peter's Chair. One function of Old St. Peter's Basilica, which was to some extent altered in the new structure, was that of a massive mausoleum of popes and cardinals. Carol Richardson writes that Old St. Peter's functioned primarily as the shrine of St. Peter; secondarily as a covered cemetery for burials *ad sanctos*; and only thirdly operated as a site of the liturgical expression of the papacy.<sup>107</sup> While the basilica celebrated the apostolic foundations of the papacy and a history of illustrious occupants in Peter's throne, the Pauline Chapel emphasizes spiritual connections among God, Christ, the Princes of the Apostles and the current pope or the office of the papacy.

### 3.4 Paul's Ceremonial Complex

The significance of Michelangelo's frescoes is intimately tied to the architectural context and functions of the Pauline Chapel. Pope Paul III rebuilt the ceremonial core of the Apostolic Palace around the grand reception hall, the Sala Regia (figs. 3.24-3.25). Apparently Nicholas III (1277-1280) built the original Sala Regia, perhaps as a formal reception space of appropriate scale for ceremonies that would accompany his hard-won position as ruler of the Papal States.<sup>108</sup> During the late 1530s Paul entrusted Antonio Sangallo the Younger with a major renovation of the space that included the construction of higher walls and replacement of the old wooden ceiling with an impressive barrel vault. Perino del Vaga and Daniele da Volterra executed an

---

<sup>107</sup> Carol M. Richardson, *Reclaiming Rome: Cardinals in the Fifteenth Century*, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History v. 173 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2009), 321.

<sup>108</sup> Partridge and Starn, "Triumphalism and the Sala Regia," 27. Julius II (1503-1513) renovated the space in 1507.

elaborate design of stuccoes on the ceiling and the walls of the chamber.<sup>109</sup> A central lozenge on the ceiling is decorated with the *stemma* and motto of Paul III; these elements are repeated throughout the elaborate design. The wall stuccoes depict angels and classical victories holding lilies and additional *stemme* of the patron. Figures that recline on pediments and door frames in the Sala demonstrate Michelangelo's stylistic influence on the artists working in the Sala Regia, or perhaps even his role as a consultant for some of the designs of *stucchi* (fig. 3.26).<sup>110</sup> Frescoes in the Sala, executed under the patronage of Pius IV (1559-65), Pius V (1566-72), and Gregory XIII (1572-85), show historical rulers who defended the Church and others who benefitted the Church through tributes or military victories.<sup>111</sup>

The Sala Regia was used to receive "Christian emperors and kings [who] publicly render obedience to the Roman Pontiff, the pope, the visible leader of the Holy Church and Christ's Vicar on earth."<sup>112</sup> Every surface of the imposingly large hall is richly decorated with deeply carved, ornate *stucchi* and oversized frescoes. The space has no liturgical function. But, just as monarchs and emperors had throne rooms, the popes needed a place to receive distinguished, and devoted, visitors. Grand doorways connect the space to: the Sistine Chapel and the Scala Regia

---

<sup>109</sup> Davidson cites drawings at the Uffizi (UA1234 r. and v. and UA 714) as evidence that Sangallo came up with the designs for the stucchi. Davidson, "Decoration of the Sala Regia," 399.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 414.

<sup>111</sup> This characterization of scenes is based on Vasari's description of the room, as suggested by Davidson (*Ibid.*, 419). On the political significance of the fresco decoration of the Sala Regia, see Jan L. de Jong, "Intended Effects and Undesirable Responses: Political Propaganda in Sixteenth-Century Monumental Painting in Italy," in *Selling and Rejecting Politics in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Martin Gosman and Joop W. Koopmans (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 48-57.

<sup>112</sup> The anonymous, undated manuscript (BAV Vat. Lat. 7031 f.280) is quoted by Davidson, "Decoration of the Sala Regia," 418.

on the west wall; the passage to the Benediction Loggia, Scala Maresciallo and Sala Ducale on the east wall; and the Pauline Chapel on the south wall (see fig. 3.6). On the north wall of the Sala Regia, below an oversized Serlian window, a papal throne dominates attention as the focal point of the space.<sup>113</sup> The throne, raised on several steps, is situated on the long axis of the Sala, directly across from the entrance to the Pauline Chapel. An engraving by Étienne Dupérac (fig. 3.27) shows a ceremony in which Pope Pius V conferred the title of Grand Duke of Tuscany on Cosimo I de' Medici (1519-1574). The image shows how a large audience assembles in the chamber and the pope is seated on an elevated throne to receive obeisance from Christian rulers.<sup>114</sup> The ceremony with Pius V and Duke Cosimo is an example of the type of non-liturgical stagecraft for which the Sala was designed. In the Sala Regia, the pope is enthroned not simply as a spiritual leader but as the ruler of the Church and the Papal States.<sup>115</sup> While the Sala Regia is a grandiose setting for papal audiences and processions that celebrate and reinforce the temporal power of the papacy, the adjacent Pauline Chapel is a sacred space in which papal authority manifests itself in relation to the apostles, Christ, and God.

Construction of the Pauline Chapel was completed in a remarkably brief span; work

---

<sup>113</sup> The windows now have clear, glass but payment records demonstrate that they were originally fitted with both clear and yellow glass. ASR, Camerale 1, *Fabbriche* 1510, fol. 75v. Cited by Davidson, "Decoration of the Sala Regia," 407 n.62. Above the cornice on the north wall an additional, large lunette-shaped window contributes to the illumination of the room.

<sup>114</sup> The engraving probably dates to the early 1570s. Three of the largest wall frescoes, and some of the smaller ones, remained unfinished at that time. The large Medici coat of arms represented on the left wall, and the inscription framed on the right wall, are clearly Dupérac's inventions.

<sup>115</sup> The Papal States were taken up as part of the new Kingdom of Italy in 1870, essentially removing the popes from temporal power (except within Vatican City and a few properties over which the popes retain political control).

began in March 1538 and the dedication ceremony took place on 25 January 1540. A mass for the Feast of All Souls was celebrated in the chapel on 2 November 1538. The reason why Mass was celebrated in the unfinished chapel is unclear, but it does indicate that the structure was nearing completion at that time.<sup>116</sup> Conclave plans, which record the precise locations of the *celle* in which individual cardinals resided, as well as locations of the cardinals' activities, give some indication of how the Pauline Chapel functioned during conclaves.<sup>117</sup> The conclave plan of 1549-50 does not indicate any activities occurring in the Pauline Chapel, although the space is labeled (fig. 3.28). The cardinals' *celle* were in the Sistine Chapel, and no other space is marked for the *scrutino* (counting of votes). The Parva Chapel, where conclave activities were previously held in 1534 for Pope Paul III, is not drawn on the plan. So the Pauline may well have been used for important administrative and religious functions during the conclave of 1549-50. On the conclave plan of 1555, the Pauline Chapel is specifically labeled as the location for the *scrutino* (fig. 3.29).<sup>118</sup> Forty-two cardinals attended the conclave in 1549-50; the number climbed to sixty-seven by 1670. In 1669 and 1689, with the dramatic increase in the number of Cardinals, the *scrutino* was held in the Sistine Chapel, as it has been ever since. The Pauline Chapel was furnished with nine altars. The expansion of the College of Cardinals after the Cinquecento may have been a factor in the decision to use the Sistine Chapel for the *scrutino* and

---

<sup>116</sup> BAV Vat. Lat. 12308, 602r cited by Christoph Luitpold Frommel, "Antonio da Sangallo's Cappella Paolina: ein Beitrag zur Baugeschichte des Vatikanischen Palastes," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 27, no. 1 (1964):7, nn.23-35. On the construction history of the Pauline, see Kuntz, "Designed for Ceremony," 243-46, and Frommel, as above.

<sup>117</sup> Franz Ehrle and Hermann Egger, *Die Conclavepläne: Beiträge zu ihrer Entwicklungsgeschichte* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1933).

<sup>118</sup> See *Ibid.*, tav. 1.



the Pauline for altars.<sup>119</sup>

### 3.5 Michelangelo's Final Frescoes

The frescoes of the *Conversion* and *Crucifixion* (figs. 3.1 and 3.2) are monumental, nearly square compositions, measuring 6.25 meters wide and 6.61 meters high.<sup>120</sup> Each of the painted fields is framed by composite pilasters on the sides, a hefty ornate entablature on the top and a simple projecting socle on the bottom. The frescoes are arranged above a *basimento* level so the lower edges of the frescoes are about 2.9 meters above floor level.<sup>121</sup> Because the frescoes are well above eye level, viewers effectively see the paintings from a worm's eye view. From the central axis of the chapel, both of the paintings appear at an uncomfortably sharp angle. The narrow chapel is too small to allow viewers to step back far enough from either painting to take in the entire composition. William Wallace describes the viewer's perception of "successive parts of an unfolding narrative" seen "from a number of different viewpoints, mostly oblique."<sup>122</sup> Indeed the viewer's physical relationship to the paintings is awkward, and the artist made the boundary between painted space and physical space more ambiguous.

Both of the compositions include figures that are cut off by framing devices at the lower edge, creating the illusion that the figures exist just behind the slightly projecting *basimento* wall.

---

<sup>119</sup> Conclave plans show that in 1555, 1565, 1590, and 1605 the Pauline Chapel was used for the *scrutino*. For plans, see *Ibid.*, tav. 3,4,12,15.

<sup>120</sup> The *Conversion of Saul* measures 6.25m high, 6.61m wide. The *Crucifixion of Peter* measures 6.25m high, 6.62m wide. De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 5:138, 143.

<sup>121</sup> Kuntz notes that in the drawing UA 1091, Sangallo gives the height of the socle as 13 *palmi*. Kuntz, "Designed for Ceremony," 252 n. 62. I calculate this to equal 3.38 meters, or roughly 11 feet.

<sup>122</sup> Wallace, "Narrative and Religious Expression," 107.

Because viewers encounter the frescoes from nearly three meters below, Michelangelo devised a way to reduce the perceived distance between viewers and the frescoes. The figures cut off by the bottom edge of the frescoes navigate steps that descend from painted space into the physical space of the chapel. In each painting, a high horizon line and figures cut off by the bottom edge creates the impression that the ground plane tilts dramatically downward towards the viewer. The illusion of real space is convincing, but Michelangelo disregarded some rules of perspective to suggest a more ambiguous boundary between painted space and physical space.

The *Crucifixion of Peter* fresco is visually dominated by the large diagonal lines of the cross and the sweeping contours of the apostle's body. The beams of the cross create a strong diagonal, and it is rotated in space (so it is not parallel to the picture plane), creating a visually unstable compositional line. The effect is pronounced when we compare the fresco to the *Crucifixion of Peter* relief from the ciborium of Old St. Peter's (fig. 3.18). In the sculpture, the crossbeam suggests an immovable object, parallel to the ground plane. The cross is seen straight on, without any rotation. Comparison to the sturdy and heavily anchored object in the relief panel makes the instability of the painted cross immediately evident. The base of the cross, meant to be inserted into the ground, is presently unsupported and perched on a steep slope.<sup>123</sup> The figures that hold the cross exert force that would tilt Peter's feet higher up, but the executioners do not support the object sufficiently to prevent it from slipping off the rounded edge of earth at the lower edge of the composition. Philipp Fehl described the figures as turning

---

<sup>123</sup> This is not a point that Michelangelo would overlook. Note, for example, the hand of the angel carefully supporting the base of the cross in the left lunette of the *Last Judgment*. In the same work, the large cross halfway up the fresco on the right edge is carefully supported on the projecting corbel of the side wall. I discuss the significance of support for the weight of these crosses in chapter two.

the cross to insert it into the hole in the ground. I think they are dragging the cross along the ground. Either way, the cross remains tenuously perched on the edge of the hill and insecurely grasped by the executioners.<sup>124</sup>

In Michelangelo's fresco, Peter's left hand, left arm, muscular shoulders and right arm create a heavy arc. His left shoulder is barely supported by the cross; his right shoulder stretches taut under the weight of his torso. The apostle's legs, bent at the knees, also form a downward curve. Formally, the heavy body is a dramatic departure from traditional representations. Other depictions of this scene, such as that from the ciborium of Old St. Peter's (fig. 3.18), seem to portray Peter as an inverted crucifix, a frozen figure attached to a stationary object.

Michelangelo creates a chaotic, dynamic scene that conveys the brutal act of crucifixion.

Peter's body is pulled down by its own weight and scarcely seems supported by the cross. Rather than being securely nailed to the wood, Peter is inadequately attached and awkwardly positioned on the cross. In the Pauline Chapel, Peter's arms are not stretched out full length, so his hands are fairly close to his torso. His knees are bent and slip from the wooden surface of the cross, reinforcing the idea that he is not securely bound. The distance between the nails securing his feet and the crossbeam is not long enough to enable him to straighten his legs. Also, the crossbeam is too short to allow for the full extension of his arms. The result is a body that is not convincingly attached to the instrument of martyrdom, but seems to be sliding off.

Earlier representations of the crucifixion of Peter show the apostle with arms stretched out in straight lines, perpendicular to the body. For example, in the relief from the ciborium (fig. 3.18), the Apostle's figure precisely conforms to the vertical and horizontal members of the

---

<sup>124</sup> Philipp Fehl, "Identification of the Locale," 340.

cross, without any suggestion of the effects of gravity.<sup>125</sup> The figure is held so rigidly in place that the body is inseparable from the cross. Michelangelo's stark break with conventional representations of the scene creates a more dynamic narrative image focused on the agonizing steps involved in carrying out Peter's martyrdom. Here, in the moments leading up to Peter's death, the weight of the body emphasizes his historical, physical presence in this sacred space. Emphasis on the effects of gravity creates a tangible image and reinforces the association of the Vatican with the historical person of Peter. As discussed in chapter two, Michelangelo emphasized the weight of relics in the *Last Judgment* as physical, visual proof of their sanctity. The *Crucifixion* fresco uses realistic physical properties to suggest the very real and physical presence of Peter.

Movement and gestures throughout the *Crucifixion of Peter* reinforce a sense of flux and disrupt boundaries between the painting and viewer. Navigating rough-hewn steps, figures move up on the left side of the composition and down on the right side. The group of women descending on the right is cut off by the lower edge of the fresco, giving the appearance that they continue their movement downwards and forwards. The soldiers are also cut off by the frame as they climb up the Montorio hill.<sup>126</sup> The movement implied by these groups engages the viewer as a participant in a circular procession that leads up to and away from the chapel space with the viewer standing in the pathway. This sense that the painted scene includes the viewer makes the

---

<sup>125</sup> The other important representations of the scene at Old St. Peter's depict a similarly rigid body solidly attached to a perfectly upright cross. See, for example, Filarete's bronze relief of the subject, from the central door of the basilica (fig. 3.22), and the left panel of the front of Giotto's Stefaneschi triptych (fig. 3.23).

<sup>126</sup> Fehl, "Identification of the Locale," 329.

conventionally impermeable boundary of the picture plane more nebulous.<sup>127</sup> Soldiers on horseback move into the composition from the upper left corner; the helmeted soldier gestures with a right hand towards Peter, reinforcing the diagonal line of the short beam of the cross. A group of men and women entering the composition at the upper right corner step up to the crucifixion scene as if they have just reached the crest after ascending the unseen back of the hill. The groups of figures create patterns of movement in the composition: towards and away from the foreground; between higher and lower levels of ground; and in a circle around the central group. The overall sense of movement and instability in the composition suggests that Michelangelo has captured a moment in a continuing action.

The fresco of the *Conversion of Saul* shows an instantaneous flash of divine light and noise that scatters earthbound creatures in confusion and draws blessed figures towards Christ. Strong foreshortening indicates that Christ flies forward towards the picture plane and down as he casts a flash of light onto Saul with his right hand and points to the city of Damascus with his left. Michelangelo surrounds Christ with a soft yellow, as if light emanates from his body. Representing an instantaneous flash of divine light requires a creative artistic solution. Rather than a distinct bolt of lightning, we see a ragged ribbon of light—immaterial yet, like a shockwave, powerful enough to scatter a crowd and knock a man off his horse. The divine light creates a line from Christ's palm to Saul's face. The response of the soldiers covering their ears, running away and stumbling demonstrates the physical force exerted by the light. Saul's horse, frightened and intent on escape, rears up but turns his head back towards his master and the

---

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 540.

viewer.<sup>128</sup>

Saul collapses to the ground, with his right arm bent as if to hold himself up and his left arm above his head, perhaps in a defensive gesture. His right hip and bent right leg are on the green-gold dirt of the hill, his left leg tucked behind him. With his left leg apparently pushing off the ground and the placement of his right hand pressing firmly on the ground below the shoulder, Saul's effort rotates his torso toward the picture plane rather than raising him up. The line created by the right arm of Saul's companion in yellow, the apostle's torso, the red drapery below him and his right leg and foot form a downward arc. The companion holds Saul under the right shoulder and below the left arm as he pushes himself up and forward with his right leg.<sup>129</sup> Perhaps he is helping to support Saul, but it looks as if the effort may pull up Saul's right shoulder, thus contributing to the figure's forward rotation and instability.

A heavy shadow along the lower edge of the fresco reinforces the impression that the ground below the Apostle drops off just in front of him. The earth surrounding him is articulated with few surface details, thus setting the apostle apart from the chaos all around him. One

---

<sup>128</sup> The fresco currently includes the first version of the horse's head painted by Michelangelo. A second version, removed in 1953, showed a slightly more natural twist of the horse's neck. Charles de Tolnay considers both heads to be autograph, thus the artist's own final version has been removed. De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 5:142 n.12; figs. 66 and 67. In both versions the head is turned back sharply. In photographs of the fresco published between the 1950s and end of the century, we see the artist's second version (now removed). In this, the reins appear broken at the bit (in de Tolnay's images, for example). The broken reins reinforce the violent action of the rearing horse. The horse's head we see now can appear, at a glance, to be turned somewhat away from the viewer, so that the ear seen against the sky would be the right ear. That position seems less awkward. However, looking closer, we see that the ear against the sky is the left ear. Now the horse's right eye is almost entirely missing, which makes it harder to see how dramatically the head twists back and to the right. .

<sup>129</sup> Von Einem suggests that the "companion bending lovingly over Paul is a new invention, like the way the blessed help each other like guiding angels in the *Last Judgment*." Von Einem, *Michelangelo*, 183.

perceives Saul's body as unsteadily balanced on a painted precipice at the intersection of painted space and the chapel interior. Two figures, cut off at the bottom edge of the fresco, climb up steps on the left. The figure with the bright yellow helmet hanging across his back is close to Saul, yet his feet are on a much lower surface. The soldier to his right, with a white helmet on his back, must be climbing up from yet a lower level. Their action of climbing rough-hewn steps past Saul reinforces the sharp drop-off of the ground just in front of the apostle. These figures are up against the picture plane, as if they have just stepped into the painting from the viewer's space. Suggesting that the boundary between the painting and the chapel is permeable, these figures bridge the gap between viewers and the divine scene.

This interaction with the viewer's space is more evident when we compare the fresco to the conventional use of space in Lorenzo Sabbatini's *Baptism of Paul* (fig. 3.30), painted in 1573, just to the right of *Michelangelo's Conversion of Saul*. In Sabbatini's composition, the figures are at the bottom of a set of steps, with a small strip of flat foreground between them and the frame. There is some movement among the figures in the foreground, but not towards the picture plane. The gracefully posed figures stand firmly on the painted ground, as if they are aware of an invisible barrier preventing them from moving any closer to the viewer.

By contrast, in both of Michelangelo's Pauline frescoes, secondary figures cut off at the bottom of the compositions emphasize the absence of foreground as they move freely across an ambiguous boundary between painted space and the chapel. In the crucifixion scene, the heavy, ill-supported cross and Peter's scarcely attached body are both on the brink of tumbling off of the rocky hill into the viewer's space. In the *Conversion of Saul*, the apostle flounders at the edge of a precipice. Encountering the paintings from below, the viewer is automatically unsettled by the downward motion in the paintings and the lack of definite boundaries along their bottom edges..

Michelangelo reconsidered artistic models and judiciously used formal devices to integrate viewers into the paintings and position the apostles' bodies on the brink of descent into the chapel space. In this, Michelangelo departs from the company of his contemporaries and anticipates the dramatic engagement with viewers sought by Baroque painters.

### 3.6 Rituals and Representations

The ceremonial and liturgical use of the Pauline Chapel is critical to how Michelangelo's frescoes would have been understood by viewers. The frescoes were not completed until 1550, the year after Paul's death. The artist's ongoing work in the chapel would have interfered with liturgical use of the space. Scant documentary evidence of ceremonies in the chapel exists from the period.<sup>130</sup> However, it is possible to estimate with some certainty how Paul and Michelangelo expected the chapel to function because it would be used for the same purposes as the Parva Chapel which it essentially replaced. The ceremonies associated with papal conclaves, practice of the Sistine choir, private papal devotions, celebration of the Corpus Christi and preservation of the sacrament that were once associated with the Parva Chapel were held in the Pauline Chapel from the second half of the Cinquecento onwards.<sup>131</sup>

The ceremonial functions of the Pauline Chapel determined the circumstances under which viewers encountered the frescoes and certainly influenced the conception and design of the artworks. Like the Parva Chapel, the Pauline was used for several purposes during papal conclaves. Even outside of conclave, the chapel remained strongly identified with the selection

---

<sup>130</sup> Kuntz, "Designed for Ceremony."

<sup>131</sup> Kuntz, "Before and After Michelangelo," 6-9.



and elevation of Peter's successors. Conclave procedures followed regulations and traditions that changed remarkably little during the early modern period.<sup>132</sup> Beginning in 1455, papal elections were held within the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican. Cardinals slept in small private *celle* constructed in the Cappella Maior (then, the Sistine Chapel after its construction under Sixtus IV). They conducted meetings and gathered for discussions in the Sala Regia and used the Parva Chapel for religious services and the actual tallying of votes (the *scrutino*).<sup>133</sup> Conclaves opened following a ten day period after the death of a pope. Beginning with the conclave of 1555, the Pauline Chapel was used for some of these important rituals, as recorded on the conclave plan (fig. 3.29). The cardinals gathered in the Pauline Chapel where a sacristan read papal bulls regarding conclave procedures. Then, he said a Mass of the Holy Spirit. After Mass, cardinals cast ballots into the chalice as the first *scrutino* was carried out. The conclave plan of 1605 shows the gathering of cardinals in the Pauline Chapel for this purpose at the upper left-hand corner (fig. 3.31).<sup>134</sup> The assembled cardinals sat in prescribed positions on benches

---

<sup>132</sup> On changing and consistent aspects of papal coronation rituals, see Bernhard Schimmelpfennig, "Papal Coronations in Avignon," in *Coronations: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual*, ed. János M. Bak (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 181-84. The first set of rules for elections was promulgated in a bull in 1274 by Gregory X. Kuntz, "Before and After Michelangelo," 96. Sources on papal elections include Ceremonials (texts describing prescribed ceremonies) of Patrizi Piccolomini (1435-95) which are published as Dykmans, *L'ouvre de Patrizi Piccolomini* and Joannes-Baptista Gatticus, *Acta selecta caeremonialia sanctae romanae ecclesiae ex variis M.S.S. codicibus et diariis saeculi XV, XVI, XVII, aucta et illustrata pluribus aliis monumentis nondum editis*, 2 vols. (Rome: Laurentii Barbiellini, 1753).

<sup>133</sup> Kuntz, "Before and After Michelangelo," 94.

<sup>134</sup> Paolo Alaleone recorded the events of the conclave, specifying that the cardinals held the *scrutino* in the Pauline Chapel. Gatticus, *Acta selecta*, 348.

along the long walls of the chapel, below Michelangelo's frescoes.<sup>135</sup> Between the chapel and the chancel, the cardinal bishop, cardinal presbyter and cardinal deacon sat at a table where they read votes out loud. A successful election required a two-thirds majority vote.

The cardinals were protected by the Swiss guards and sequestered in the Apostolic Palace, but they were well aware of anxious crowds gathering around the Vatican, waiting and praying for the speedy election of a pope. The group of four women cut off by the bottom edge of the *Crucifixion of Peter* evokes the uneasy crowd outside.<sup>136</sup> On the left side of the group, an old woman turns to look at Peter as she gestures toward the assembled cardinals with an outstretched index finger, as if urging the cardinals to elect a worthy successor. Another woman holds up a cloth, perhaps to blot her tears shed for Peter as two other women look directly into the chapel with impatient and anxious expressions. The alternating gazes into and out of the crucifixion scene draw painted and physical space together.<sup>137</sup> The woman raising the cloth reminds viewers of the relic of the Veronica, or veil imprinted with Christ's face, safeguarded in St. Peter's Basilica, as well as the cloth used by priests to elevate the Host. Similarly, in Michelangelo's Vatican *Pietà*, Mary supports Christ's body with a cloth-covered hand, once

---

<sup>135</sup> Cardinal bishops and presbyters sat on the evangelist side (below the *Crucifixion*) and the cardinal deacons on the epistle side (below the *Conversion*). Noted in 1484, see *ibid.*, 286. Cardinal bishops and presbyters rank higher than cardinal deacons.

<sup>136</sup> Impatient and potentially dangerous crowds were a constant concern during conclaves. Even with the substantial protection provided by Swiss guards, crowds sometimes successfully broke into the Apostolic Palace. When Paul III was seated on the altar in the Parva Chapel immediately after his election, an impatient crowd broke in. He ran into the sacristy for safety. *Ibid.*, 328.

<sup>137</sup> William Wallace notes how their alternating gazes toward and away from the viewer engage our attention and direct our gaze. Wallace, "Narrative and Religious Expression," 117. Kenneth Clark likened these figures to a Greek chorus, serving as intermediaries between the tragedy and viewer. Kenneth Clark, "Michelangelo Pittore," *Apollo* 80 (1964): 445.

again calling attention to the sanctity of Christ's body.

The distinctive style of halberd carried by the Swiss guards posted throughout the Vatican is strikingly similar to the weapon held by the hooded man at the back of the *Crucifixion*. In the print of the conclave in 1667, the halberds of Swiss guards are visible in two small scenes of accession ceremonies (fig. 3.32). The weapons remain virtually unchanged, and equally recognizable, today. While the figure in the fresco is not meant to represent a Swiss guard, the weapon visually links historical and contemporary events that occurred in nearly the same space. The halberd functions as a kind of shorthand for "soldier," leaving the viewer to differentiate between malevolent Roman footsoldiers and valiant Swiss guards. Connections between the painting and viewers are enhanced by the inclusion of details that weave together the biblical narrative and the conclave.

Leon Battista Alberti noted the natural inclination of viewers of paintings, to "cry with those who cry, laugh with those who laugh, we grieve with those who suffer."<sup>138</sup> The patron must have hoped that his successors would perceive the power of God's call, which Saul experiences dramatically in the Pauline fresco. They should also sense Peter's strength as he embraces martyrdom. Stepping into the chapel, the viewer confronts Peter's defiant expression. It seems as if Peter demands, to know "Would you turn back to Rome to be crucified?" Viewers receptive to the psychic states of these protagonists would find a stern warning that while Christ entrusted the Church to his followers, the blessed duty comes with a price of personal sacrifice.

Philipp Fehl convincingly argued that the place of the action in the *Crucifixion of Peter* is

---

<sup>138</sup> Leon Battista Alberti, *Leon Battista Alberti: On Painting: A New Translation and Critical Edition*, edited and translated by Rocco Sinisgalli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 61.

the Montorio, or “golden hill” near the Vatican where a popular tradition located Peter’s martyrdom.<sup>139</sup> Bramante’s Tempietto marks the spot where pilgrims could kneel down and reach into the hole where the cross was planted, touching, and even taking, the golden sand sanctified by the martyr’s blood.<sup>140</sup> The figure clad in red below the cross is digging the hole into which the cross will be placed, but he also evokes this tradition at the Tempietto as he lowers his arm deep into the hole. Fehl remarks that the figures climbing steps on the left side of the fresco and descending at the right are like the unending stream of pilgrims that journey up and down the Montorio to visit the site of Peter’s martyrdom. The twin staircases also evoke the stairs by which pilgrim reach the sacred ground below the Tempietto.<sup>141</sup> While these observations are well-founded, these features also suggest the site of the apostolic tomb at Old St. Peter’s Basilica (see fig. 3. 22). Because the original tomb is covered by a series of constructions, the altar is raised high above the actual tomb. From the nave, two flights of steps flanked the *fenestrella*, granting access to the ciborium. Two additional staircases lead down from the nave to the crypt. So the pair of staircases in Michelangelo’s fresco also evoke an association with the tomb at Old St. Peter’s. Rather than the Tempietto and St. Peter’s tomb forming mutually exclusive associations, this duality may have simply offered layers of meaning that associated the painted scene with sacred sites known to the viewer.

The figure in red that Fehl associates with a pilgrim reaching into the golden earth at the

---

<sup>139</sup> Fehl, “Identification of the Locale,” 329-33.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 330.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 140.

Tempietto also suggests a link to the shrine of St. Peter at the Vatican Basilica.<sup>142</sup> As discussed in chapter two in relation to the weight of relics portrayed in the *Last Judgment*, it was possible to lower a piece of cloth through the *fenestrella* into the space between the altar and the tomb.<sup>143</sup> The cloth came into contact with the holy relics and was imbued with sanctity. By lowering cloth into the dark void behind the grill, pilgrims came as close to touching the apostle as possible. The red-clad figure foreshadows the pilgrims that, centuries after the crucifixion of Peter, would reach out towards his sacred remains. The way in which the kneeling man seems oblivious to the torture taking place above him suggests a disconnect between him and the surrounding scene. His relationship to the dramatic martyrdom is spatial but not temporal. Unaffected by the chaotic scene of martyrdom, he calmly and purposefully reaches into the hole. His disjunction from the scene allows us to see him as a pilgrim that, like us, gathers sand at the Tempietto or lowers a contact relic into Peter's tomb. In this way, he does not represent a single figure in a historical moment, but he stands in for all pilgrims seeking interaction with Peter's martyrdom and his relics. It is the physical presence of Peter at the Vatican that makes the site the *locus* of papal authority, where visitors adore his relics and cardinals gather to elect his successors.

In conclave proceedings and in Michelangelo's frescoes, divine intervention was a powerful force guiding human experience. At any time during a conclave, the Holy Spirit could intercede directly in the election process by causing an elector to announce the name of the rightful pope. Elections "per viam Spiritus Sancti" then proceeded with a unanimous vote of

---

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 130.

<sup>143</sup> Kirschbaum, *Tombs of Peter & Paul*, 158-61.

affirmation.<sup>144</sup> The involvement of the Holy Spirit in the conclave manifests first in the Mass of the Holy Spirit with which every conclave begins. On the left side of the conclave plan of 1605 (fig. 3.31) is a representation of this mass in the Pauline Chapel. The Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, descends into the chapel to guide the cardinal electors. Similarly, Michelangelo's *Conversion of Saul* shows Christ choosing the apostle that will preach to the Gentiles and help guide the Church. Saul's experience, as depicted by Michelangelo, echoes the conclave in several ways. Saul is identified by divine will, which initiates his transformation, although he can not immediately begin his sacred mission. Ananias receives God's word, identifying Saul, whom he must find. Saul receives ritual blessing, which restores his sight before he undergoes baptism symbolizing his rebirth in the Holy Spirit. In conclaves, the Holy Spirit may choose a worthy leader of the Church, but the other cardinals must (with divine guidance) identify the blessed individual. Herbert von Einem suggests that, in Michelangelo's fresco, Saul is no longer an historical figure but becomes a symbol of man's encounter with God.<sup>145</sup> In the *Conversion of Saul*, God's intervention blesses the fledgling Church with a worthy leader. The Mass of the Holy Spirit, celebrated at the beginning of each conclave, invites similar divine assistance .

Once the cardinal electors achieved a successful election, the pope-elect received the fisherman's ring, announced by what name he would be called, and signed documents

---

<sup>144</sup> Josephus Catalanus, *Sacrarum caeremoniarum sive rituum ecclesiasticorum sanctae romanae ecclesiae libri tres* (Rome: Antonii de Rubeis, 1750), 63 cited by Kuntz, "Before and After Michelangelo," 153 n. 34.

<sup>145</sup> Von Einem, *Michelangelo*, 181.

confirming his election.<sup>146</sup> Then he was led away to change into sacred garments reserved for pontiffs.<sup>147</sup> The plan of the conclave of 1555 (fig. 3.29) identifies (“N”) the small sacristy opening off of the chancel of the Pauline as the place where the new pope was vested. Returning to the Chapel where the cardinals waited, the new pope was seated *on the altar*. The tradition seems incredible, but there are several accounts in papal Ceremonials, as well as other sources, to substantiate the claim.<sup>148</sup> In this elevated position, the pope received the first obeisance of the cardinals who kissed his feet, hands and knees. This adoration of the pope’s corporeal form suggests that the body of the pope has become something greater than human. Paris de Grassis described the pope as “the highest pontiff, he is in truth considered greater than any other

---

<sup>146</sup> Dykmans, *Patrizi Piccolomini*, 1:49.

<sup>147</sup> On traditions of pontifical dress, see Bernard Berthod, “From Papal Red to Cardinal Purple” in *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture*, ed. Stewart Gordon (New York: Palgrave, 2001) 315-22.

<sup>148</sup> Numerous newly elected popes are recorded as sitting on the altar. For example, see Gatticus, *Acta Selecta*, (Clement VII) 325; (Paul III) 330, (Pius V) 336 “...& sic vestitus sedit supra altare Capelle paulinae & Rmi omnes iverunt ed obedintiam osculando pedem, manum & faciem;” Gregory XIII in 1575: “sacris paratibus, hoc est amictu, alba, cingulo, stola, pluviali, & mitra; & positus ad sedenum super altare, ubi recepit Cardinales omnes ad osculum pedi, manus, & ortis...” In 1559 Pius IV was also seated on the altar in this manner. BAV., Vat. lat. 12309, 354r-v. Quoted by Kuntz, “Before and After Michelangelo,” 154 n.41. Patrizi Piccolomini’s Ceremonial may clarify whether the new pope sat in front of or on the altar in the Parva Chapel. In precise order: the pope sat on a throne in front of the altar to sign necessary documents; his name was announced to the crowds; he changed into pontifical robes in the sacristy; he reentered the chapel; finally, he sat on the altar to receive obeisance of the cardinals. In a small vignette on the conclave plan of 1605, the pope is seated in front of the altar; the cardinal in front of him bows down and seems to hold out a piece of paper. These details suggest the signing of documents before the new pope changes robes in the sacristy. However, he is shown with the papal tiara and the scene is labelled “Ultima adoratione che si fa del nuovo Pontifice in conclave” (the last adoration that they give of the new pope in conclave), which suggests the obeisance of the cardinals after the pope dresses in the sacristy. It does not necessarily prove that popes no longer sat on the altar, but may show a conflation of events or some variation of the prescribed order.

man...as the Vicar of Christ he is above the human condition.”<sup>149</sup> In some records of conclaves in the seventeenth century and later, the new popes sat enthroned *in front of* the altar in the Pauline Chapel, then *on* the altar in St. Peter’s Basilica where the cardinals paid homage to him again. This is where we see Leo XI in 1605 (figure 3.31; next to the right edge, half way up the sheet); Clement IX in 1667 (fig. 3.32) and Innocent VII in 1689 (the image used for Clement IX was reused for Innocent VII).<sup>150</sup>

Accounts written during the Cinquecento confirm that in both the Pauline Chapel, and the Parva Chapel before that, new pontiffs sat on the altar for the first obeisance from the cardinals. Since Paul III and his immediate predecessor sat on the altar in the Parva Chapel, we may assume that Paul expected the tradition to continue. Seated on the altar, popes occupied a throne of incomparable authority. In the Pauline Chapel, this throne was on axis with the papal throne in the Sala Regia, the two representing the seats of spiritual and temporal authority.<sup>151</sup> According to tradition, “it is the altar that designates a gift as victim, that signifies its offering to God and its acceptance by him.”<sup>152</sup> In the Gospel of Matthew, we find reference to “the altar that sanctifies the gift [of a sacrifice].”<sup>153</sup> A new pope’s ascension to the altar confirms God’s approval of his election.

Spiritual transformation manifests in the pontiff’s new vestments, pontifical name and

---

<sup>149</sup> Quoted by Paravicini-Bagliani, *The Pope’s Body*, 129-130.

<sup>150</sup> Ehrle and Egger, *Conclavepläne*, Tav. XV, XX.

<sup>151</sup> Kuntz, “Designed for Ceremony,” 236.

<sup>152</sup> J. B. O’Connell, *Church Building and Furnishing: The Church’s Way; a Study in Liturgical Law* (London: Burns and Oates, 1955), 139.

<sup>153</sup> Matthew 23:19.



position on the sacred altar as a Vicar of Christ, above the human condition. Transformation is echoed in the consecrated Host which is preserved, protected and adored in the tabernacle behind the pope. Through the miracle of transubstantiation, the Holy Spirit changes a common wafer into the true body of Christ.<sup>154</sup> Seated on the altar, popes were displayed like the sacrament, visibly unaltered but spiritually changed. The *Conversion of Saul* fresco engages with this dialogue of transformation in the chapel. Although Saul started on his way to Damascus as a persecutor of Christians, God intervened to convert him, physically and spiritually. His three days of blindness without food prior to full spiritual rebirth emulates the paradigm of transformation, Christ's entombment and resurrection. The theme of transformation in the fresco thus echoes the elevation of popes in the chapel and the transubstantiation of the reserved sacrament.

Following election and the signing of documents, a newly-elected pope donned the *cappa rubea*, or the papal mantle to signify full election to Peter's chair. Gregory VII (1075-85) wrote that "only the pope may use the red cope as a sign of imperial authority and martyrdom."<sup>155</sup> The red cloak symbolizes Christ's martyrdom and a scarlet or purple one (which may be a variation of "*rubea*") suggests the mantle that soldiers hung on Christ's shoulders when they mocked him. "Immantation" (robing) of the pope in a cloak of imperial purple signified his dual identity as "a

---

<sup>154</sup> Miracles such as the Mass at Bolsena, in which the Eucharistic wafer bled, demonstrated that the sanctified Host indeed transformed to the physical body of Christ through transubstantiation.

<sup>155</sup> Translated by Paravicini-Bagliani, *Pope's Body*, 88.

royal priest and imperial bishop.”<sup>156</sup> Guillaume Durand wrote in the *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* in 1286 that, while popes wore a red mantle on the outside, underneath they wore white, symbolic of purity and charity.<sup>157</sup> Pius II (1458-64) recalled donning the “white tunic of Christ” at his election.<sup>158</sup> It was considered appropriate that white should be the color of the garment touching the pope’s skin. Although the garb worn by Saul in Michelangelo’s fresco is clearly more appropriate for travelling on horseback than ascending the papal throne, there are subtle visual connections between the apostle’s clothing and the vestments of a newly elected pope. The collar of Saul’s tunic reveals a white undergarment. Although his tights are dirtied from travel, they may have been white earlier in the journey. His knee-length belted tunic is a lavender-pink color. On the ground below him and fluttering around his left side, framing him, is a rich red cloak that may well prompt comparison to the critical sign of papal authority, the *cappa rubea*.

The purple mantle creates a visual connection between Saul in the fresco and a new pontiff on the altar. More importantly, like Saul, the new pontiff was divinely chosen; like Peter, he willingly sacrificed himself for Christ and the Church. Peter’s followers convinced him to flee Rome for his safety. Yet, meeting Christ on the road from Rome, the devoted apostle turned back to be crucified. The fresco in the Pauline chapel shows the apostle’s willing sacrifice and lack of arrogance. A newly elected pope on the altar evoked comparison with his predecessor

---

<sup>156</sup> As described in the anonymous treatise, “Descriptio sanctuarii Lateranensis ecclesiae,” written in the eleventh century. Ian Stewart Robinson, *The Papacy 1073-1198: Continuity and Innovation* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 23-4.

<sup>157</sup> Guillaume Durand, *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* (Venice, 1586), original dated 1286, 3.19.18, translated excerpt in Richardson, *Reclaiming Rome*, 123.

<sup>158</sup> “Pii Comentariorum,” 106, quoted by Paravicini-Bagliani, *Pope’s Body*, 82.

Peter by willingly, and modestly, giving up his own life to serve the Church.

Herbert Von Einem suggests that the painting of Saul also demonstrates humility. In the biblical narrative, Saul does not fall from horseback. Rather, the tradition that he was cast off of his horse developed in representations of his conversion from the twelfth century (fig. 3.33). The imagery incorporated iconography from Prudentius' *Psychomachia* (written in the early 5<sup>th</sup> century), which was often illustrated in the middle ages. *Superbia* (Pride) appeared on horseback attacking *Humilitas* (Humility) and other virtues as he fell into a great pit dug by *Fraus* (Deceit). Perhaps Saul was knocked off his horse as Damascus came into sight because *Superbia* leads to disaster.<sup>159</sup> In this way, argues von Einem, the *Conversion of Saul* fresco may be seen as a symbolic warning against the sin of Pride.

In a curious tradition, a newly elected pope riding from the Vatican to the Lateran to take possession of the episcopal seat of the Bishop of Rome was in danger of being knocked off his horse by the *popolo romano*. This was especially a problem when the area traversed by the pope was controlled by families that rivalled his own. Whether rowdy crowds necessarily thought of this as an act of humbling the new pontiff, *per se*, is uncertain. Surely, being knocked off his horse would remind a pontiff that his authority within the city had limits. The pope's vulnerability in the *posse* evokes the tradition of generals in Roman triumphal processions of an attendant holding a laurel wreath over the triumphator's head while repeating, *Respice post te!*

---

<sup>159</sup> Von Einem (*Michelangelo*, 179) does not offer an image of this scene, and I have not found an example.

*Memento se hominem esse*, “Look back: remember that thou art a man.”<sup>160</sup> Ancient and papal ceremonies imposed some modesty to prevent abuse of power and squelch excessive pride. Michelangelo’s image of Saul knocked to the ground was, for a newly elected pontiff, an admonition to eschew arrogance as well as a reminder of real challenges he would face.

As the new pontiff sat on the altar, he occupied a spiritual throne as Christ’s Vicar on earth. Directly in his line of sight across the Sala Regia was the temporal throne of the papacy.<sup>161</sup> He gazed across this architectural and decorative framework celebrating the dual realms of temporal and spiritual power under his command. As the church historian Cyril Pocknee explains, “the altar came to be regarded as the throne of Christ to which reverence was paid.”<sup>162</sup> Considering the altar as the throne of Christ perhaps explains the tradition of seating the Vicar of Christ in that elevated position.

Enthronement as such could easily convince a pope that the majesty he enjoyed was personal, rather than that of the sacred office. Rites of papal coronation traditionally included *momento mori* elements such as flax tapers that were lit and dropped to remind the pope of the transience of power. Also, a cardinal applied ashes to his forehead.<sup>163</sup> Enthroned on the altar, the pope saw the *Calling of Saul* on his right, the temporal throne directly ahead, and the

---

<sup>160</sup> Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, translated by Temple Chevallier, *A Translation of the Epistles of Clement of Rome, Polycarp and Ignatius; and the Apologies of Justin Martyr and Tertullian*, 2nd ed. (London: Francis & John Rivington, 1851), 319.

<sup>161</sup> Kuntz, “Designed for Ceremony,” 236.

<sup>162</sup> Cyril E. Pocknee, *The Christian Altar in History and Today* (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1963), 55.

<sup>163</sup> Securely identifying the years these traditions were carried out and whether the events occurred in the Conclave Chapel or St. Peter’s is a challenge. The rituals, though suggest a broader tendency to evoke *momento mori* at ceremonies of papal succession. Schimmelpfennig, “Papal Coronations in Avignon,” 187-88; Paravicini-Bagliani, *Pope’s Body*, 30-39.

*Crucifixion of Peter* on his left. As episodic visions, these elements may be analogous to the election, reign and death of a pope. While crucifixion, as Peter suffered, was an unlikely scenario in the Cinquecento, the life of the pope had been under threat as recently as 1527, during the Sack of Rome. The fresco suggests the level of spiritual commitment to which Peter's successors should aspire.

Paul must have hoped that the frescoes would encourage electors to select worthy successors and stir popes to follow apostolic examples of faith and personal sacrifice. The mechanics of the coronation ceremony and formal emphasis on the bodies of the apostles in the frescoes evoke a comparison between the pontiff enthroned on the altar and the Princes of the Apostles represented on the side walls. Raised on the altar, the pope approached the physical, as well as spiritual, level of the apostles. Ceremonial kisses to his hands and feet directed attention to his physical body, while the flax and ash ceremonies suggested his mortality. In the frescoes, downward arcing contours of the apostles' bodies emphasize their corporeality and anticipate death and burial. Such parallels suggest a relationship among the pope and apostles borne out by his elevation to the line of papal successors.

### 3.7 Conclusion

Just as the Pauline Chapel bridges the space between the Apostolic Palace and St. Peter's Basilica, Michelangelo's frescoes in the chapel bridge the gap between viewers and the apostolic founders of the Church. The frescoes evoke comparisons with the ciborium over the apostle's tomb at the basilica, and with the mosaics in the conch. These associations with the paired narratives of the frescoes suggest a formal connection to the carvings on the ciborium over the altar of the apostle(s) at St. Peter's Basilica. The grouping of Christ, represented by the

sacrament in the Pauline tabernacle, with the two apostles evokes comparison with the mosaic in the conch at the basilica. Stairs flanking the hill in the *Crucifixion* fresco remind viewers of the stairs to each side of the ciborium. In these ways, the Pauline Chapel evokes comparison with the apostolic tomb and functions as a *locus sanctus*.

Visual emphasis on the bodies of the apostles suggests that the chapel functions as a reliquary or tomb of the apostles. As the sacrament chapel, the space functions as a tomb of Christ. With the paintings, the space becomes a *locus sanctus* enshrining the body of Christ as well as those of the apostles, within the papal residence. Such spatial proximity of the modern popes with their apostolic predecessors (or representations thereof) helped strengthen the association between the papacy and its sacred foundations. Formal techniques with which Michelangelo suggested connections between viewers and the painted subjects contribute to the sense that, at this *locus sancta*, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Princes of the Apostles, popes and the cardinals interact to guide the Church. Michelangelo's technical innovations, such as cropping figures at the lower edge of the frescoes and tilting the ground towards the viewer, suggest that the picture plane is permeable. The dissolution of the boundary between the chapel and the painted scenes combines with the appearance that Peter (and the cross) are slipping downwards while Paul has collapsed on a sloping precipice. These formal features give the impression that the apostles' bodies are on the brink of slipping into the chapel space, making it a *locus sanctus* containing the blessed apostles within the Apostolic Palace.

## Chapter 4: Kid Gloves and Carrots: The Artist's Benefits

“I received many benefits from His Holiness and hoped to receive still more,”

Michelangelo wrote to his nephew Lionardo in Florence in 1549, lamenting the death of Pope Paul III. Although Michelangelo worked for nine different popes, he produced the most work during the fifteen years of Paul's pontificate, 1534-49. During this period, the remarkably productive artist created several of the most acclaimed painted and architectural works with which he, or his patron, is associated. The previous two chapters examine how the *Last Judgment* and the frescoes of the Pauline Chapel contributed to Pauline objectives. This chapter considers how Michelangelo benefitted from collaboration with the pope and how their patronal relationship functioned from the artist's perspective.

The material is loosely organized around financial, social, spiritual and professional objectives—although much of the material has resonance for multiple aspects of the artist's life. For example, the artist's position as Supreme Architect, Sculptor and Painter to the Apostolic Palace influenced his professional status as well as his personal standing within the social hierarchy of Rome. As we consider this patronal relationship from the artist's perspective, some benefits of the collaboration are quantifiable, such as the artist's salary. Other benefits, such as enhanced family status, are qualitative. Before turning to Michelangelo's objectives, it is worth considering the nature of Michelangelo's employment with Pope Paul III. The specific terms of agreement are enumerated in the document marking the beginning of the patronal relationship between Paul and Michelangelo, a papal brief dated 1 September 1535. To help identify the ways in which the arrangements between the pope and the artist diverged from traditional models

of patronage, I compare the terms of the papal brief to what other artists secured through contracts or as court artists. This is followed by consideration of Michelangelo's benefits as they pertain to his professional, personal and familial status as well as his spiritual well-being.

## 4.1 A Papal Brief, 1 September 1535

A short document, written in the formal Latin of Vatican records, begins the paper trail of *motu proprio*, payment records, and letters that attest to interaction between Paul and Michelangelo.<sup>1</sup> The brief appoints the artist Supreme Architect, Sculptor and Painter to the Apostolic Palace, with an annual salary of 1,200 *scudi* for life.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, it appoints the artist a *familiar*, or member of the pontifical household. He was to have all honors and benefits commensurate with this position (these benefits are not specified). The document mentions that Michelangelo will paint the *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel. It is worth examining each of the above elements to discern Michelangelo's responsibilities and rewards. The papal brief is not a contract, which would entail a detailed description of work expected of the artist as well as signatures by the pope (or an agent on his behalf), the artist and witnesses. Rather, it is a statement of the pope's esteem of the artist, followed by the list of benefits due to Michelangelo and a general description of what Paul expected from the artist.

### 4.1.1 Unprecedented Honors

This is the first known use of the title "Supreme Architect, Sculptor and Painter to the

---

<sup>1</sup> Lucilla Bardeschi Ciulich, *I contratti di Michelangelo* (Florence: S.P.E.S., 2005), 211-14.

<sup>2</sup> ASV, Arm. XL, 52, c 31.



Apostolic Palace.” Paul’s willingness to create a new position demonstrates his eagerness to secure the artist’s service and his recognition that Michelangelo’s boundless talent could be applied to projects in each of these fields.<sup>3</sup> The new appointment provided an opportunity for the artist and patron to negotiate what the job would entail. Use of the term “supreme” in Michelangelo’s job title implies that he was the most esteemed artist of the palace. As such, it would be reasonable to expect him to oversee the work of other artists engaged on projects throughout the palace and to act as something of an artistic advisor to the pope. A court painter often exercised authority over one or more workshops of artists and craftsmen working on projects throughout the palace. Despite the number of ongoing projects at the Vatican, there is no evidence that Michelangelo oversaw artists engaged with any works of art (other than assistants on his own projects). During the first eight years of the artist’s work for Paul he seems to have worked exclusively on the *Last Judgment*. He never completed sculptural projects for Paul, and he was responsible for no architectural work until 1546. We may justifiably question why the Supreme Architect of the Apostolic Palace would not work on the design of the Pauline Chapel or the redesign of the Sala Regia, arguably the most important architectural work undertaken at the palace during Paul’s papacy.

Antonio da Sangallo the Younger, architect of St. Peter’s Basilica, provided designs for these projects. He was employed by the Reverenda Fabbrica di San Pietro (hereafter, the

---

<sup>3</sup> By comparison, Antonio da Sangallo the Younger was called “architetto principale della Fabbrica di San Pietro.” ARFSP, Arm.24,F,4, f.8. Following the death of Baldassare Peruzzi in 1537, Giacomo Melegghino, a high-ranking bookkeeper at the RFSP during Paul III’s pontificate, received the title of “architetto di San Pietro.” Melegghino also received the rank of “familiare e abituale commensuale nostro.” That title designated him a member of the papal household. At times, St. Peter’s had four working architects, but one head architect. No individual was designated as the pope’s architect, painter and sculptor before Michelangelo.

Fabbrica) which is bureaucratically and financially separate from the Apostolic Palace.<sup>4</sup>

Although the engagement of Sangallo on building of the Pauline Chapel and Sala Regia seems to contradict Michelangelo's job title, Paul's reasons must have been eminently practical. Sangallo was concurrently working on the Farnese Palace and he apparently functioned as Paul's go-to architect. Sangallo's work with the Fabbrica put him in contact with a large staff of supervisors, suppliers and craftsmen. He would also be well-informed about any survey work completed in the area (in planning the basilica) and should have successfully planned for the Pauline Chapel and Sala Regia to fit into the planned construction of the basilica.<sup>5</sup>

The title Supreme Artist, Architect and Sculptor to the Apostolic Palace specifies these positions not to describe Michelangelo's anticipated duties for the pope, but rather to emphasize the breadth of his talents. An excerpt of the papal brief of 1 September 1535, reads "The excellence of your capabilities both in sculpture and in painting as well as in every kind of architecture, with which you amply decorate our generation, not only equaling the ancients but, there being combined in you all those arts which singly rendered them famous, nearly surpassing them...."<sup>6</sup> Rather than overburden Michelangelo with myriad simultaneous projects, Paul took measures to not distract the artist with too many tasks or unnecessary concerns.

---

<sup>4</sup> See Cardinal Francesco Marchisano, "La Basilica di San Pietro e La Fabbrica di San Pietro," in *Petros eni Pietros è qui* (Vatican City: Edinidustria, 2006), 13-14; Fausto Piola Caselli, "Public Finances and the Arts of Rome: The Fabbrica of St. Peter's in the 17th Century," in *Economic History and the Arts*, ed. by Michael North, 53-66 (Cologne: Böhlau, 1996), 53-62.

<sup>5</sup> In fact, it seems that Sangallo's plan, which was supported by the "setta Sangallesca" after Antonio's death, may have necessitated destruction of the Pauline Chapel, and perhaps also the Sala Regia and the Sistine Chapel. See *Carteggio* 4:251. I return to this question later in this chapter.

<sup>6</sup> Translation by Rab Hatfield, *The Wealth of Michelangelo*, Studi e testi del rinascimento europeo 16 (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2002), 160-61.

Mention of the Apostolic Palace in Michelangelo's title suggests that the position would include any work on (or in) the structures to the north of St. Peter's Basilica that comprise the papal residence, as well as administrative and reception halls and chapels.<sup>7</sup> These buildings include the Sala Regia, Sistine Chapel, Pauline Chapel, and the Belvedere as well as the papal apartments. Construction, repairs and improvements of these structures generally fell under the administration of the Camera Apostolica.<sup>8</sup> The phrase "apostolic palace" conveys the physical parameters of structures under the artist's purview. Perhaps the phrase also suggests that Michelangelo served the pope personally. The mention of the apostolic palace may have a similar function to naming Michelangelo as a familiar, that is, it conveys a personal intimacy between the pope and the artist.

#### 4.1.2 Salary and Benefits

The salary of 1,200 *scudi* per year for life promised in the papal brief would be a very generous salary for any artist in the early to mid-Cinquecento. During this period a Florentine florin (*fiorino*) was roughly equivalent to a ducat (*ducato*) and a Roman scudo (*scudo*).<sup>9</sup> A

---

<sup>7</sup> Specifically, these would be the structures surrounding the following courtyards: Cortile di San Damaso; Cortile del Maresciallo; Cortile Borgia; Cortile di Belvedere.

<sup>8</sup> For a brief overview of the functions of the Camera Apostolica, which was "originally responsible for all the revenue and temporal holdings of the Holy See," see Francis Blouin, et al., *Vatican Archives: An Inventory and Guide to Historical Documents of the Holy See* (Ann Arbor: Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, 2003), 106-107 .

<sup>9</sup> The denominations are roughly interchangeable. When discussing a specific document or source, I use the terms that appear in that source. When distinctions between currencies are necessary, I address them in the text. For a discussion of the values of currencies, see Hatfield xx-xxv; Carlo M. Cipolla, *Money in Sixteenth-Century Florence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989). 1-27; Richard A. Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980); *Ibid.*, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 609-614.

skilled stone carver could live a decent life on fifty or sixty *scudi* per year. Fragmentary records show that Leo X put Michelangelo on a fairly consistent monthly salary (*provvisione*) of 25 *fiorini* per month for work on the Medici Chapel at San Lorenzo in Florence during 1520-1521.<sup>10</sup> Leo's death caused some financial and organizational interruption of work, but in 1524 Clement VII wished to offer the artist a satisfactory salary. Michelangelo suggested that fifteen *ducati* per month would suffice. Giovanfrancesco Fattuci (d. 1559), Chaplain of the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence and the artist's friend, replied that the amount suggested was shameful. Michelangelo was granted a salary of fifty *ducati* per month, plus expenses, for the works at San Lorenzo.<sup>11</sup> By comparison, Charles V granted Titian a pension of 100 *ducati* per year in 1541; in 1548, he doubled this amount, but this was still far less than Michelangelo's regular stipend.<sup>12</sup> In 1536 the Fabbrica di San Pietro paid Antonio da Sangallo the Younger 300 *fiorini* as *capomaestro* of St. Peter's.<sup>13</sup> Two decades earlier, Raphael earned 300 *fiorini* per year

---

<sup>10</sup>William E. Wallace, *Michelangelo at San Lorenzo: The Genius as Entrepreneur* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 77.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 104, 227 n. 185, 86. For Fattucci's letter, see *Carteggio* 3:222. Payments are recorded in Paola Barocchi and Lucilla Bardeschi Ciulich, eds, *I ricordi di Michelangelo* (Florence: Sansoni, 1970), 158-60, 212.

<sup>12</sup> On Titian's pay, including his income from a "corn privilege" see Margot Wittkower and Rudolf Wittkower, *Born Under Saturn; the Character and Conduct of Artists: A Documented History from Antiquity to the French Revolution* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963), 266. For Brunelleschi's pay, *Ibid.*, 409. On Sangallo's pay, see Wallace, *Michelangelo at San Lorenzo*, 227 n., 190 citing Ackerman, "Architectural Practice," 5.

<sup>13</sup> Karl Frey, "Zur Baugeschichte des St. Peter: Mitteilungen aus der Reverendissima Fabbrica di S. Pietro (Fortsetzung)." *Jahrbuch der königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 33, Beiheft zum Dreiunddreißigsten Band (1913): 16. For more on Sangallo's pay, see Wallace, *Michelangelo at San Lorenzo*, 227 n., 190 citing Ackerman, "Architectural Practice," 5. Rab Hatfield suggests that no other architect in the sixteenth century earned as much as Michelangelo. He juxtaposes Michelangelo's pay with that of these and other individuals. Hatfield, *Wealth*, 164.

(promised for the rest of his life), plus he expected to receive additional, unspecified amounts.<sup>14</sup> These few examples demonstrate that Paul's support of Michelangelo was exceptionally generous.

Michelangelo's salary is specified as 1,200 *scudi* annually, half of which would be paid as a monthly *provvisione* of 50 *scudi* from the papal *datarius*.<sup>15</sup> Of that, 25 would be gold *scudi*, half *scudi di moneta*. Rab Hatfield calculates that the *scudi di moneta* were worth ten elevenths as much as gold *scudi*.<sup>16</sup> Thus the artist's regular monthly *provvisione* amounted to 47.80 *ducats*. The other half of his pay would derive from revenues from the Passo del Po river crossing at Piacenza, which the pope expected to yield 600 *ducats* annually. The income during Michelangelo's first year as beneficiary of the Po ferry totaled 615 *ducats*. The papal paymaster

---

<sup>14</sup> In a letter from 1514 Raphael wrote "His Holiness has promised me, for managing the building of St. Peter's, a provision of 300 guilders, which I am to receive as long as I live; I am also sure that I shall receive more." Raphael Sanzio, *Tutti gli scritti*, ed. Ettore Camesasca (Milan: Rizzoli, 1956), 33, quoted and translated in Martin Warnke, *The Court Artist: On the Ancestry of the Modern Artist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 146. A guilder should be understood as equivalent to a *fiorino*.

<sup>15</sup> The Datary collected fees associated with venal offices and other papal income. It functioned as something of a private treasury for the popes, from which they could draw funds for "pensions, gifts, alms, building projects, patronage interests, and household and military expenditures." Blouin, *Vatican Archives*, 143. The pope alone had oversight of the Datary, making transactions through that office less widely known than payments through the camera apostolica, which involved multiple officials. Funds spent on the support of papal families and favorites generally came from the Datary. Jean Delumeau, *Vie économique et sociale de Rome dans la seconde moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1957), 2: 770-74; Barbara McClung Hallman, *Italian Cardinals, Reform, and the Church as Property*, Publications of the UCLA Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies 22 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 148; Peter Partner, "Papal Financial Policy in the Renaissance and Counter-Reformation," *Past & Present* 88 (1980): 47; Anthony D. Wright, *The Early Modern Papacy: From the Council of Trent to the French Revolution, 1564-1789*, Longman History of the Papacy (Harlow, England; New York: Longman, 2000), 235-37.

<sup>16</sup> Hatfield, *Wealth*, 160-61.

(*computista*), Jacopo Meleghino, received this amount and paid it to the artist on 8 September 1536.<sup>17</sup> Subsequently, though, Michelangelo had to hire an agent to be on site in Piacenza to collect the toll and remit payment to him in Rome. The artist leased the ferry to Francesco Durante da Piacenza and had Agostino da Lodi deposit payments to the bank of Tommaso Cavalcante and Giovanni Giraldi in Rome.<sup>18</sup> These arrangements reduced Michelangelo's income from the Passo to 550 gold *scudi del sole* per year.<sup>19</sup> Despite Paul's repeated efforts to minimize concerns that distracted the artist from painting, the Po ferry caused Michelangelo a good deal of consternation.

In 1538, a rival ferry service started on the other side of the river.<sup>20</sup> After Cardinal Alessandro Farnese intervened on Paul's behalf (twice), the rival ferry was shut down.<sup>21</sup> The following year, the pope stepped in to prevent the municipality of Piacenza from confiscating the revenues of the ferry. The city was located within the Papal States, so there was some disagreement as to whether the revenues of the ferry belonged to the city or the papacy. Paul's

---

<sup>17</sup> Karl Frey, "Studien zu Michelagnolo Buonarroti und zur Kunst seiner Zeit. III." *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 30, Beiheft zum Dreissigsten Band (1909): 140. Meleghino worked as *computista* or paymaster of the Fabbrica. Two years later, he is named as an "architetto di San Pietro." At the time, Antonio da Sangallo was co-architect. Frey, "Zur Baugeschichte des St. Peter," (1913): 20. On the duties of officials heading the Fabbrica, see James Ackerman, "Architectural Practice in the Italian Renaissance," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 13, no. 3 (1954): 5.

<sup>18</sup> Barocchi and Ciulich, *Ricordi*, 279-284. For additional discussion of this income, see E. H. Ramsden, *The Letters of Michelangelo* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1963), 2:299; Hatfield, *Wealth*, 161-64.

<sup>19</sup> Ciulich, *Carteggio*, 4:73. *Scudi del sole* were monies of account, that is, units of currency used for accounting but not minted. See Cipolla, *Money in Florence*, 27-35.

<sup>20</sup> Hatfield, *Wealth*, 161; Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:266.

<sup>21</sup> Letter Cardinal Alessandro Farnese to Cardinal Giovan Maria del Monte dated 19 September 1538. Archivio di Stato di Parma b.18, doc. 3r.

will took precedence and the municipality yielded. Amid much criticism, the pope carved Parma and Piacenza from the Papal States in 1545, making these possessions of the Farnese family. Agents of the newly created Duke of Parma and Piacenza, Pier Luigi Farnese, promptly confiscated the Po ferry as ducal property. Although income from the ferry may have been due to Pier Luigi, Paul insisted that it remain in Michelangelo's hands.<sup>22</sup> In April of the next year, Baldassare and Niccolò Pusterli claimed a hereditary right to the revenues. Pier Luigi supported their claim. In both cases, Paul intervened to protect Michelangelo's claim to the Passo. In 1547 Ferrante Gonzaga overthrew Pier Luigi, taking possession of Piacenza and the Passo del Po.<sup>23</sup> At that time, Michelangelo definitively lost possession of the benefice.

Throughout the letters demonstrating the pope's attempts to protect Michelangelo's financial interests, Paul makes it clear that every effort should be made to prevent the artist's worry or distraction from his work. In 1539 this was clearly explained by the pontiff that "he did not wish Michelangelo to be distracted from the work which he wished him to undertake."<sup>24</sup> In recompense for the loss of revenue from the ferry, Paul named Michelangelo Civil Notary in the

---

<sup>22</sup> Letter to Signor Legato sent on behalf of Paul III, 13 December 1539. Archivio di Stato di Parma, Fondo Buonarroti 2. Translated excerpt in Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:267.

<sup>23</sup> Hatfield suggests that "finally, in September of 1547, Pier Luigi Farnese died, and his family lost control of Piacenza to the Emperor Charles V" (*Wealth*, 162). Pastor, however, details the drawn-out scheming and political machinations of Ferrante Gonzaga, and assent of Charles V, that resulted in assassins stabbing Pier Luigi and throwing his bleeding body from a citadel window into a trench (*Popes*, 12: 372). The distinction is important because it demonstrates why Paul had no power to recover the ferry for Michelangelo when it was confiscated in 1547.

<sup>24</sup> Letter quoted and translated by Ramsden (*Letters*, 2:267), source not indicated.

Chancellery of Rimini, a post which he retained for nearly seven years.<sup>25</sup>

Returning to the terms of the papal brief and the division of the *provvisione* into cash and the benefice (the Po ferry/notary post of Rimini), we must ask what motivated the patron to divide the benefits in this fashion and what motivated the artist to accept this arrangement. Rab Hatfield suggests that the annual sum of 1200 *ducati* may have been a bit steep for the pope's budget.<sup>26</sup> By splitting the artist's pay between a *provvisione* and a benefice, the pope only had to pay out 600 *scudi* in cash annually. There was an inherent risk involved in collecting the projected sum from the benefice, as Michelangelo discovered. Converting half of Michelangelo's contracted pay into income from the benefice transferred the expense and risk of collecting payments from the Passo del Po to the artist. Based on previous income from the source, the Datary could calculate the likelihood of receiving full payments (600 *ducati* annually). Knowing the projected risk, or the chances of not receiving full payments, the Datary could use a simple risk-benefit analysis to place a value on the Po ferry benefice in the near future. With a clear disadvantage, the artist would have no way to calculate how much of the *provvisione* he could reasonably expect to receive. Surely, both the pontiff and the artist calculated non-monetary benefits of the artist holding the benefice. For the papacy, there was a real financial benefit to replacing half of the artist's contracted pay with the income of the Passo

---

<sup>25</sup> Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:268. Rab Hatfield refers to the post as the Office of the Notariate of the Romagna. This earned Michelangelo 22 ducats a month until August 1555, bringing his earnings to 837.60 ducats a year (rather than the 1200 ducats promised him). Hatfield, *Wealth*, 164.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 160. Although 1,200 ducats was a good deal of money, it is a pittance compared to the 375,425 *scudi* received by Ottavio and Orazio Farnese during Paul's pontificate. See Helge Gamrath, *Farnese: Pomp, Power, and Politics in Renaissance Italy* (Rome: L'erma di Bretschneider, 2007), Annexe 2.



del Po.

The papal brief of 1 September 1535, sheds some light on additional motivations. The amount of 1200 *scudi* is promised for the artist's life so that he would pursue and complete the work undertaken for the pope. By awarding the benefice, the pope had some assurance that after his death, Michelangelo would still earn a good income. Less altruistically, the arrangement also would obligate the artist to finish any project begun for Paul even if the *provisione* would be discontinued by a future pontiff. Paul was well aware that projects for previous popes languished under their successors. Martin Warnke notes that patrons sometimes awarded benefices to artists to prevent their projects from falling to the wayside in the event of their death.<sup>27</sup> Paul had the foresight to safeguard his artistic legacy by awarding Michelangelo the Passo del Po in lieu of a straightforward payment scheme.

A benefice provided a steady income that would hopefully last throughout the artist's lifetime. Perhaps the relatively unimportant Passo del Po, located well beyond the walls of Rome, would remain in the artist's possession without attracting attention from future popes. Furthermore, the benefice or annuity would continue to pay if the artist became ill or too feeble to work. The elderly artist should have gained financial security with the Passo del Po; instead it became a frequent source of consternation. The payment scheme set up for Michelangelo helped secure the completion of Pauline projects in the event that the artist outlived Paul, and it demonstrates an effort to give Michelangelo financial stability for the remainder of his life.<sup>28</sup> In these ways, it was mutually beneficial to the patron and artist.

---

<sup>27</sup> Warnke, *Court Artist*, 133.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. Warnke describes several accounts of court artists paid salaries despite age, infirmity and blindness.

### 4.1.3 The Artist as Papal *Familiar*

The papal brief of 1 September 1535 identifies Michelangelo as a member of the *familias papalis*. The title of courtly *familiar*, or individual subject to a master's authority and maintained at his expense, emerged at the court of Charles of Anjou in the thirteenth century to honor bankers, lawyers, physicians or merchants with whom the king had a personal link.<sup>29</sup> *Familiares* generally enjoyed special protection, a salary, free board at the palace, and access to the court. When Giotto worked for the royal court at Naples from 1329 to 1333, he was honored as “*familiares et fidelis*” of King Robert and given meals and a bed at the palace.<sup>30</sup> These honors apparently impressed the Florentines, who called the artist “*expertus et famosus*” when he returned to his native city. At that time, the governing body of the signory appointed Giotto “cathedral and city builder.”<sup>31</sup> Thus appointed for life with a guaranteed salary, Giotto enjoyed some of the benefits associated with court artists even though civic patrons usually made shorter-term appointments. This sharp rise in Giotto's prestige in the eyes of his fellow Florentines, seems to be based on the honors bestowed onto him by King Robert. Occasional records from courts throughout Europe demonstrate that it was not uncommon for painters to be included among the humanists and secretaries named as *familiares*.<sup>32</sup> At courts throughout Europe, artists

---

<sup>29</sup> *The Catholic Encyclopedia; an International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church* (New York: Encyclopedia Press, 1913), 5:781; Warnke, *Court Artist*, 9.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* Warnke considers Giotto's professional advancement a step away from the guild system to that of the court artist.

<sup>32</sup> Warnke cites numerous examples (*Ibid.*, 20). Documents record the following painters as *familiares* at the Burgundian court: Jean d'Arbois (in 1373), Jean de Beaumetz (from 1376), Jan van Asselt (from 1365), Melchior (in 1384).

who enjoyed a supposedly personal relationship with a sovereign or lord achieved a social honor normally reserved for individuals of noble birth.

A number of artists pushed towards social status significantly higher than that of mere artisans or craftsmen, with some approaching noble status, and a few attaining such honors. In 1444 Lorenzo Ghiberti was awarded civic office in Florence, for which his noble lineage made him eligible. But his illegitimate birth prompted objections, forcing him to file a lawsuit asserting his rights.<sup>33</sup> Gentile Bellini received a noble title of “Count Palatine” in Venice in 1469; that same year Mantegna earned the title and the right to bear the Gonzaga coat of arms in Mantua.<sup>34</sup> We know of eighteen artists that attained noble status by the end of the Quattrocento.<sup>35</sup>

Lorenzo de’Medici made the bronze sculptor and medalist Bertoldo da Giovanni his *familiaris*.<sup>36</sup> Although he does not specifically term him a *familiaris*, Ascanio Condivi’s description of Michelangelo’s tenure in the home of Lorenzo de’Medici, in which the artist enjoyed a good room and sat the master’s table, makes it sound like he enjoyed the privileges of one.<sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Giovanne Gaye, *Carteggio inedito d’artisti dei secoli XIV, XV, XVI* (Florence: G. Molini, 1839), 1:148-55.

<sup>34</sup> Warnke, *Court Artist*, 57, 158.

<sup>35</sup> Warnke compiles a list of all artists known to have reached noble status from the thirteenth through the eighteenth centuries (Ibid., 168-174).

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 20-21. Emperor Charles IV appointed Nikolaus Wurmser *familiaris* (in 1357). A decade later, he granted his familiar, *Pictor imperatoris* Master Theodoric immunity from tax. Some artists attained titles of nobility from their princely patrons, for example: Gentile Bellini attained this in Venice (1469), Andrea Mantegna in Mantua (1469), Pietro da Milano in Naples (1458).

<sup>37</sup> Ascanio Condivi, *Vita di Michelangelo Buonarroti*, ed. Giovanni Nencioni (Florence: S.P.E.S., 1998), 12-13.

By all of them, Michelangelo was treated affectionately and encouraged in his honorable pursuit, but above all by the Magnificent, who would send for him many times a day and would show him his jewels, carnelians, medals, and similar things of great value, as he knew the boy had high intelligence and judgment.<sup>38</sup>

Living in the master's home, eating at his table and enjoying multiple, daily interactions with him readily identifies Michelangelo as a *familiar* in the Medici home.<sup>39</sup> The accuracy of Condivi's account is less important to the present study than the fact that Condivi, writing six decades after the young artist's residence in the Medici palace, took pains to describe how closely the artist sat to Il Magnifico at family meals and how frequent their interactions were. The honor of sharing a table with Il Magnifico contributes to Condivi's construction of the biography of an exceptional artist.<sup>40</sup>

In a system similar to that of royal courts, the papal *famiglia* was comprised of the members of the pontiff's house that attended to his private affairs. In the thirteenth century, the popes maintained about 250 individuals as familiars and poor retainers. In 1555, Paul IV had 421 familiars (plus their 313 servants) as well as 247 horses.<sup>41</sup> Not every *familiar* in his household necessarily lived in the Apostolic Palace or other papal palaces, but many certainly

---

<sup>38</sup> "Dai quali tutti Michelagnolo molto era accarezzato e acceso all'onorato suo studio, ma sopra tutti dal Magnifico, il quale spesse volte il giorno lo facevo chiamare, mostrandogli sue gioie, corniole, medaglie e cose simiglianti di molto pregio, come quell che lo conosceva d'ingegno e di iudicio." Condivi, *Vita*, 12-13. Trans. Condivi, *Life*, 13.

<sup>39</sup> On the importance of Michelangelo's time in the Medici household, as it pertains to his subsequent career, see Wallace, "Reversing the Rules," 154.

<sup>40</sup> To some extent, Michelangelo's intimacy with the Medici is a construct of memory. See Paul Barolsky and William E. Wallace. "The Myth of Michelangelo and Il Magnifico," *Source: Notes in the History of Art*, 12, n. 3, 1993, 16-21.

<sup>41</sup> J. Deshusses, "Familiers des évêques," in *Dictionnaire de droit canonique*, vol.5, ed. R. Naz (Paris, 1953) col.809-10, quoted by Eila Williamson, "Alexander Rait, *Familiar* of the Pope, d. 1479," *Innes Review* 52, no. Spring (2001): 29.

did.<sup>42</sup> Michelangelo did not live in the papal palace and there is no evidence that he received board, clothing or other benefits in addition to his pay from Paul III.<sup>43</sup> Warnke applies the title “purveyor to the court” to a number of artists that enjoyed all of the privileges and benefits of court artists, but resided outside of the patron’s house, including Albrecht Dürer, Raphael, Titian, Rubens, Tiepolo and Michelangelo. With such arrangements, he asserts, “some of the most famous artists were able to exploit their court connections to secure their domestic independence.”<sup>44</sup> Indeed, during his years working for Paul, Michelangelo lived in a respectable home in the Macel de’ Corvi near the column of Trajan.<sup>45</sup> For Michelangelo, the position of papal *familiar* may have been important mostly because it offered an official title of social status, in addition to the professional title of Supreme Architect, Sculptor and Painter to the Apostolic Palace.

#### 4.1.4 Expectations

The papal brief of 1 September 1535 specifically mentions that Michelangelo is expected to paint the *Last Judgment* on the altar wall of the Sistine Chapel and perhaps do other, unspecified, work. The pope promises payment

---

<sup>42</sup> In 1534 Paul III issued an order that all curial officeholders were “true and undoubted familiars” even if they lived outside of the papal palace. Hallman, *Italian Cardinals*, 20.

<sup>43</sup> Michelangelo probably ate most meals at his own residence, but likely joined Paul at the table on occasion. See Chapter 4, note 112 below.

<sup>44</sup> Warnke, *Court Artist*, 71. Warnke does not specify which of Michelangelo’s patronage relationships fall into this category.

<sup>45</sup> On the house at Macel de’ Corvi, see Hatfield, *Wealth*, 98-103; Ramsden, *Letters*, 2: xxiv-xxv.

in order to remunerate you and satisfy your toil and excellence in doing this and other works in the palace, if there be need, the income and proceeds of 1200 *scudi* of gold annually for life, in accord with our promise through [our] agents, in order that you pursue and complete the work you have begun and that you serve us if we will wish in any other work.<sup>46</sup>

There is no evidence that Michelangelo worked on any other projects in the Apostolic Palace while he painted the *Last Judgment*.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps the suggestion that Michelangelo would do other work for Paul III does not indicate that he would carry out multiple works concurrently, but that upon completion of the fresco in the Sistine Chapel, additional projects would follow. This form of ongoing employment in which an artist fulfills a series of projects according to the patron's wishes, without additional negotiations of terms, is a common arrangement for court artists.

## 4.2 Comparison of Michelangelo to Court Artists

The title of Supreme Painter, Sculptor and Architect to the Apostolic Palace did not exist before Michelangelo's appointment to the post. However, during the Renaissance, some artists served popes in positions analogous to artists at courts of the nobility. In the fourteenth century, Matteo Giovannetti worked for the papal court at Avignon, presumably serving in a similar

---

<sup>46</sup> "...ad laborem et virtutem tuam in hoc et caeteris operibus in Palatio nostro a te , si opus fuerit, faciendis, remunerandos et satisfaciendos introitum et redditum mille et ducentorum scutorum auri annuatim ad vitam tuam promiserimus, prout etiam promittimus per presentes, Nos, ut dictum opus a te inchoari coeptum prosequaris et perficias et, si quo alio in opere voluerimus..." ASV, Arm XL, 52, c31 r. Transcribed by Ciulich, *Contratti*, 211. My thanks to George Pepe for the translation.

<sup>47</sup> According to Vasari, the artist designed a bridge that would link the Farnese Palace and Farnese Villa across the Tiber. While there is no evidence of a design for the project, it is likely that the pope would request such a thing from Michelangelo. As part of the same project, the artist probably consulted Paul on the significance and restoration of the *Farnese Bull* when that was recovered at the Thermae Antoninanae, as Vasari suggests. Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568* (Florence: Sansoni, 1966), 4:80-1.

capacity to numerous artists maintained at courts throughout Europe.<sup>48</sup> With the title *pictor papae*, Giovannetti oversaw the work of fifteen artists employed at the court.<sup>49</sup> His duty to supervise artists of lesser status was shared by many court artists throughout Europe who managed multiple projects of varying scale and importance for their patrons. In this way, Michelangelo's employment diverged from the model of the court artist. While Michelangelo served Pope Paul III, he did not act as a master artist, overseeing works executed by others. He did, however, act as something of an artistic advisor to the pope, offering his opinion on the merits of other artists or projects.<sup>50</sup> For example, Michelangelo apparently sent a six-part report on the architectural flaws perpetrated by Antonio da Sangallo in the design of Palazzo Farnese.<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup> Matteo Giovanetti (active 1322-68/9) worked as *pictor papae* at Avignon. He painted frescoes in several chambers and chapels at the papal palace in Avignon. Robert Gibbs, "Matteo Giovanetti," in *The Oxford Companion to Western Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t118/e1696>.

<sup>49</sup> Warnke, *Court Artist*, 13.

<sup>50</sup> In 1545, Paul requested Michelangelo's input regarding the proposed Vatican fortifications designed by Antonio da Sangallo and contested by the military commander Giovanni Francesco da Montemellino. Michelangelo criticized the plan proposed by Sangallo, recommended changes to the plans and suggested hiring Jacopo Castriotto for the project. See Giulio Carlo Argan and Bruno Contardi, *Michelangelo Architect*, trans. Marion L. Grayson (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993), 336; James Ackerman, *The Architecture of Michelangelo: With a Catalogue of Michelangelo's Works by James Ackerman and John Newman*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 324-25. Perino del Vaga may have consulted Michelangelo on the design and construction of the *stucchi* above the door lintels in the Pauline Chapel, according to Bernice Davidson, "The Decoration of the Sala Regia Under Pope Paul III," *The Art Bulletin* 58, no. 3 (1976): 414.

<sup>51</sup> Gaetano Milanesi, ed., *Le lettere di Michelangelo Buonarroti pubblicate coi ricordi ed i contratti artistici* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1875), 500-1. Milanesi notes that although the handwriting of the letter is consistent with the artist's, the style differs from Michelangelo's other letters, and the words are not strictly Tuscan. Symonds agrees with these inconsistencies but accepts that either the artist wrote the letter or he endorsed it by copying it and sending it to the pope. John Addington Symonds, *The Life of Michelangelo Buonarroti* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 2:205.

Because Michelangelo was a papal familiar and maintained an amicable relationship with Paul, it would be natural for him (he would be socially obligated) to offer advice upon his patron's request.

In addition to overseeing projects undertaken throughout the palace, court artists commonly attended to their patrons' other artistic needs, such as designing ceremonial livery, ephemeral decorations for processions and household objects. Although by no means representative of typical court artists, Leonardo da Vinci demonstrated the multi-faceted relationship of an artist at court when he sought patronage from Duke Lodovico Sforza of Milan in 1481. In a letter to the Duke, Leonardo asserted that his abilities ranged from hydraulic engineering and weaponry to sculpture and painting.<sup>52</sup> For Pope Paul III, Michelangelo painted three frescoes and acted as chief architect of the Farnese Palace and New St Peter's Basilica. During these years, he also redesigned the façades of the Senator's Palace and Governor's Palace

---

<sup>52</sup> Elizabeth Basye Gilmore Holt, *A Documentary History of Art* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1957), 273-75.



and the Palazzo Nuovo along with the central piazza on the Capitoline Hill.<sup>53</sup> Paul consulted Michelangelo on the construction of walls and fortifications of Rome and the Borgo.<sup>54</sup>

Michelangelo served Paul in several capacities from 1534-49, including as painter, architect and artistic advisor. Such flexibility of duties is consistent with expectations for court artists.

As far as we know, Michelangelo did not receive a bonus or gift when he completed the *Last Judgment*, or at any other time he served Paul. This is contrary to the model of the court artist who generally expected extra pay when he or she completed an important work. For example, Bernini received an exorbitant bonus of 10,000 *scudi* from Pope Urban VIII when he finished the baldacchino in St. Peter's Basilica.<sup>55</sup> In many court patronage contexts, artists ostensibly offered their work as gifts and patrons responded with generous gifts in return. The practice may seem like an exercise in semantics or a shell game, but by couching their livelihood in the honorable terms used by humanist courtiers (i.e. generous gifts or tributes given freely), artists interacted with patrons in fundamentally different ways than craftsmen or shop-owners

---

<sup>53</sup> Work on the Capitoline Hill was a joint initiative of the papacy and the government of the city of Rome. The integration and overlap of these entities makes disentangling responsibility for the project a formidable endeavor, well beyond the scope of this dissertation. James Ackerman, "Marcus Aurelius on the Capitoline Hill," *Renaissance News* 10 (1957): 69–75; Renato Bonelli, "La Piazza Capitolina," in *Michelangiolo Architetto*, Paolo Portoghesi et al., 425–96. Argan and Contardi, *Michelangelo Architect*, 252-63; Charles Burroughs, "Michelangelo at the Campidoglio: Artistic Identity, Patronage, and Manufacture," *Artibus et Historiae* 14, no. 28 (1993): 85–111; Marianna Brancia di Apricena, "La committenza edilizia di Paolo III Farnese sul Campidoglio," *Römisches Jahrbuch Der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 32 (1997): 409–478; Anna Bedon, *Il Campidoglio: Storia di un monumento civile nella Roma papale* (Milan: Electa, 2008); *Ibid.*, "Piazza del Campidoglio," in *Michelangelo: Architetto a Roma*, ed. Mauro Mussolin (Milan: Silvana, 2009).

<sup>54</sup> Oronzo Brunetti, "Michelangelo e le fortificazioni del borgo," in Mussolin, *Architetto a Roma* (Milan: Silvana, 2009), 118-23; Guido Rebecchini, "Michelangelo e le mura di Roma," *Ibid.*, 114-17.

<sup>55</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, 465.

could. The system moved artists further from the system of guilds or private workshops toward roles as distinguished courtiers. In the Renaissance, manual labor for pay distinguished the lower classes from upper classes. Producing works of art was not necessarily undignified, but selling those works associated one with mere craftsmen. As a few artists earned unprecedented esteem and social status, patrons and artists developed new ways of fitting elite artists into social structures. Although Michelangelo drew a steady salary from the papal Datary, there is no evidence that he received any bonuses from Paul outside of these regular payments. Despite the absence (as far as we know) of these gifts, gift culture does inform our understanding of other aspects of the relationship between these two men, to which I will return.

Condivi describes an arrangement proposed by the Doge of Venice, in which Michelangelo would be paid an allowance of 600 crowns a year merely to reside in the city and honor it with his presence.<sup>56</sup> He would receive additional remuneration for any works of art produced. Condivi specifies that such an arrangement would be unusual and offered only to individuals of “singular, outstanding talent, like that of Homer.”<sup>57</sup> Although Paul never offered Michelangelo bonuses for works completed, the artist still earned roughly twice the base allowance offered by the Venetians.

#### 4.2.1 Contracts and Gentlemen’s Agreements

The papal brief from 1 September 1535 is not, it should be reiterated, a contract. Typically, a contract for a painting such as the *Last Judgment* would include an indication of

---

<sup>56</sup> Condivi, *Vita*, 55.

<sup>57</sup> Condivi, *Life*, 61.

what materials would be used and identify the party responsible for payment for materials.<sup>58</sup> Contracts, moreover, generally concluded by naming individuals who guaranteed the payment for the work and with the names of witnesses. The signatures of notaries typically made contracts legally binding.<sup>59</sup> The papal brief which marks the beginning of Michelangelo's collaboration with Paul concentrates on the honors and benefits awarded to the artist, not the specific work to be completed in exchange.<sup>60</sup> William Wallace notes the "remarkable and unprecedented" absence of contracts for most of Michelangelo's commissioned works.<sup>61</sup> The lack of firm deadlines, budgets and preliminary studies that the artist first enjoyed while working for Julius II further freed him from constraints. Deviating from tradition, such arrangements protected the artist's independence and associated his patron-client relationships with the aristocratic culture of gift exchange.<sup>62</sup> Traditional contracts do not remain for any of the works that Michelangelo completed for Paul. Rather, the papal brief from September 1535 enumerated the honors, title and financial benefits that the artist enjoyed for the remainder of Paul's pontificate. Only cursory mention is made of the *Last Judgment* fresco and 'other works' that may be requested in the Apostolic Palace. Michelangelo was free from excessive restraints that a detailed contract may have imposed, and he produced more for Paul than for any other patron. Rather than a

---

<sup>58</sup> Michelle O'Malley, *The Business of Art: Contracts and the Commissioning Process in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 8.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 9. See, for example, Michelangelo's contracts for the Vatican Pietà and statues for the Piccolomini altar in the Duomo, Siena. Ciulich, *Contratti*, 5-6; 8-11.

<sup>60</sup> The absence of contracts for any of Paul's projects is in keeping with the pattern Michelangelo followed with his other papal patrons Julius II, Clement VII and Leo X.

<sup>61</sup> Wallace, "Reversing the Rules," 158.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

binding contract, social obligations and personal benefits impelled Michelangelo to produce masterpieces for Paul.

#### 4.2.2 Money Matters

Although Michelangelo did not receive the full amount of 1,200 *ducati* for each year he worked for Paul, he still earned an impressive salary greatly exceeding that of other artists. As chief architect of St. Peter's Michelangelo's predecessors Baldassare Peruzzi and Antonio da Sangallo each earned 300 *ducati* annually.<sup>63</sup> Despite having cash on hand and a steady income from investments in real estate and the Monte delle Fede in Rome, Michelangelo insisted that, at the age of seventy-three, he needed to maintain a steady income.<sup>64</sup> He wrote to his nephew Lionardo in 1548:

I had, as I wrote to you several times, a desire to secure an income in Florence, in order to be able to live here without having to work, because I'm an old man and unable to do so any more; but for a month now I've lost the desire. I'll consider other means of livelihood. I hope God will help me.<sup>65</sup>

By this time, Michelangelo was the *de facto* owner of the house at Macel de Corvi (worth

---

<sup>63</sup> For Paul's briefs appointing the architects, see Pastor, *Popes*, 12:651-2.

<sup>64</sup> The Monte delle Fede is a system of financing papal debt. Individuals deposited funds in the Monte and earned interest. See Delumeau, *Vie économique*, 789-93.

<sup>65</sup> *Carteggio*, 4:306. Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, dated 29 December 1548. Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:95.

perhaps 1348 *fiorini*) so he did not have ongoing housing costs.<sup>66</sup> He had enough money (nearly 3000 *fiorini*) to purchase a large estate in Chianti in 1549.<sup>67</sup> Surely the artist could have gotten by financially without working for Paul, but he preferred to continue enriching himself and his family with wealth and property. Financial interests probably contributed to Michelangelo accepting back-to-back, or even overlapping, projects from Paul, a patron whose enthusiasm and respect for the artist guaranteed support. Stores of wealth, however, were less important to Michelangelo than the honor and respect that money could, for all practical purposes, buy in Florence.

### 4.3 Social Standing of Michelangelo and the Buonarroti

Michelangelo's family had a respectable patrician lineage which included generations of ancestors that served in the government of Florence. He was even related, by a complex series of links going back two generations, to the Medici family.<sup>68</sup> William Wallace asserts that Vasari and Condivi omitted this seemingly important aspect of the Buonarroti lineage because by the 1550s "Michelangelo was firmly convinced of his social superiority to the Medici. He was a

---

<sup>66</sup> Michelangelo had possession of the house at Macel de' Corvi, near the church of Santa Maria del Loreto, from perhaps 1513. It had room to house the artist and some assistants, plus a large workshop, and a garden large enough to accommodate grape vines and several fruit trees as well as hens, a rooster, and a cat. On ownership of the house, see Hatfield, *Wealth*, 98-103. On the garden and animal residents, see *Carteggio*, 4:13, 20, 25, 32, 40-42, 54. The façade of the house, moved and reconstructed on the Janiculum Hill in 1902, is in a refined classical style. Quite close to the Palazzo Venezia and the Capitoline Hill, the house was just a short distance from Paul's part-time residence on the Capitoline Hill (see fig. 2.15).

<sup>67</sup> Purchase price, taxes and fees amounted to 2,786 *fiorini*. Hatfield, *Wealth*, 107.

<sup>68</sup> William E. Wallace, "Michel Angelus Bonarotus Patritius Florentinus," in *Innovation and Tradition: Essays on Renaissance Art and Culture*, ed. Tag Andersson and Roy Eriksen, (Rome: Edizioni Kappa, 2000), 60.

patrician of older, nobler stock than the Medici, who, after all, were a comparatively new family.”<sup>69</sup> Indeed Michelangelo traced his lineage back to Beatrice, sister of Emperor Henry II and mother of Matilda of Canossa. Countess Matilda supported Pope Gregory VII during the Investiture Controversy and upon her death willed her extensive lands to the papacy. The artist reminded his nephew Lionardo, and others, of these illustrious roots.<sup>70</sup> Although there is no confirmation that any such familial connection to Canossa existed, he fervently believed the family legend. As the patriarch of the family, it was Michelangelo’s duty to ensure that the Buonarroti lived in a manner appropriate to their station and that the family line would continue. Although Michelangelo deposited great wealth in the family coffers, he depended on Lionardo to socially represent the family in Florence and beget an heir.

In 1548 Michelangelo repeatedly advised Lionardo on the purchase of real estate in Florence. “As regards the house in Via de’ Servi, and the other one, I give you permission to do whatever you think best and to please yourself, provided you get a sound proposition and take something imposing, and don’t be particular as to the money.”<sup>71</sup> The artist was determined that his young relatives not undermine his arduous efforts to cultivate the identity of the Buonarroti as an honorable patrician family. His letters to relations repeatedly convey the message that money should be used to ensure that the family maintained a respectable appearance.

In numerous letters, Michelangelo rebuked Lionardo for behavior unbecoming of a Buonarroti. In 1540 he wrote to Lionardo and his brothers to remind them of their station. “You

---

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>70</sup> Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence. *Carteggio*, 4:288.

<sup>71</sup> Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, dated 28 April 1548, *Carteggio*, 4:306. Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:95.

have enough to enable you to keep a good servant and live like men of honor, if you are united in peace together.”<sup>72</sup> Michelangelo seems more concerned about his relatives living honorably than comfortably. The following year, he advised Lionardo to put off travelling to Rome for a while. “You must wait until Lent, when I’ll send for you and will send you money to equip yourself, [so] that you do not come here like a nobody.”<sup>73</sup> Presumably the money would be used to ensure that the young man was properly dressed and arrived at Michelangelo’s home looking like a gentleman. The artist also maintained a dignified appearance. In one instance, Lionardo sent his crotchety uncle three shirts only to be rebuked. “I have received three shirts together with your letter, and am very surprised that you should have sent them to me, as they’re so coarse that there’s not a peasant in Rome wouldn’t be ashamed to wear them.”<sup>74</sup> Although Lionardo must have thought the shirts fine enough for his uncle, the artist dismissed them as unacceptable even to those well beneath his station.

Michelangelo maintained appearances in Rome, but the stature and visible presence of the Buonarrotti in Florence remained one of his chief concerns. In 1547 he wrote to Lionardo,

“About a year ago a book by a Florentine chronicler came into my hands in which I found a Buonarroto Simoni, who was a member of the Signoria several times, about two hundred years ago, if I remember rightly. And then a Simone

---

<sup>72</sup> “Voi avete tanto, che, se state uniti in pace insieme.” Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, dated 13 November 1540. *Carteggio*, 4:114; Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:7.

<sup>73</sup> “Bisogna indugiare a questa quaresima, che io manderò per te e manderòti danari che tu ti metta a ordine, che tu non venga qua com’una bestia.” *Carteggio*, 4:117. Ramsden, *Letters* 2:9.

<sup>74</sup> “Lionardo, i’ ò ricevuto con la tua lettera tre camice, e so(n)mi molto meravigliato me l’abbiate mandate, perché son sì grosse che qua non è contadino nessuno che non si vergogniassi a portarle.” Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, 10 or 17 July 1540. *Carteggio*, 4:128. Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:5.

Buonarrotto and then a Michele di Buonarroto Simone and then a Francesco Buonarroti. I did not find Lionardo, the father of our Ludovico, who was a member of the Signoria, because it did not come down as late as that.”<sup>75</sup>

Eligibility and membership in the Signoria distinguished the family as old and patrician, but this lineage alone did not ensure social prestige. For that they needed tangible signs of distinction.

Michelangelo understood this and explained it to his nephew. “It is my experience that it is only in virtue of landed property that families establish themselves in Florence. So make up your mind to the best of your ability [as to what property to purchase], for whatever you do, you’ll be doing it for yourselves.”<sup>76</sup> Property served as a source of rental income suitable for gentlemen as well as a tangible asset and visual testament to their success. Benefits of an urban presence could even outweigh uncomfortable drawbacks. Earlier that month, the artist advised on the possible purchase of the Corsi property in Florence.

It seems to me that one shouldn’t take these old homes, because when the repairs have to be undertaken one nearly always finds so much wrong with them that it would be better to build a new one altogether. Again, I don’t like it, because it is unhealthy owing to dampness on the ground floor... Nevertheless, as it is in an imposing position, I do not say definitely that you shouldn’t take it.<sup>77</sup>

For Michelangelo, the wealth earned working for Paul did not buy luxurious objects or a lavish lifestyle. Rather, money enabled the display of goods and property appropriate to his ancient, patrician family.

It seems that some Florentines may have thought the Buonarroti were putting on airs or

---

<sup>75</sup> Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, 3 December 1547. *Carteggio*, 4:283. Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:84.

<sup>76</sup> Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, 15 October 1547. *Carteggio*, 4:278. Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:81.

<sup>77</sup> Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, 1 October 1547. *Carteggio*, 4:277. Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:80-81.



attempting to procure a wife for Lionardo above their station. Michelangelo must have been responding to comments to that effect when he wrote to Lionardo, “But there is no reason for people to say that you apparently want to ennoble yourself, because it is well known that we are old Florentine citizens and as noble as any other family.”<sup>78</sup> With absolute conviction in his distinguished lineage, Michelangelo was determined that Lionardo find a wife from a sufficiently respectable family. From the artist’s first mention of marriage to Lionardo, it took eight years to find a suitable bride.

Florentine families constantly jockeyed for social status. Favorable marriages were critical for establishing social ties necessary if a family hoped to maintain and elevate social position. John Padgett recently analyzed historical data from Florentine marriages from 1282-1494.<sup>79</sup> He suggests that the social dimensions of wealth, political affiliation and power, and lineage of the family were surprisingly independent of each other. Families that excelled in one dimension tended to reinforce that distinction by networking with comparable families. For example, the wealthiest families tended to prioritize wealth in securing marriages. Traditionally, though, marriages could be arranged to mitigate great imbalances in the prestige a family enjoyed in different social dimensions. Poor but ancient families could secure connections to a wealthy family that lacked a well-established lineage.

Michelangelo considered his lineage to be ancient and the family enjoyed moderate wealth from his work. In recommending potential brides, the artist wrote that Lionardo, “need

---

<sup>78</sup> Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, 1 February 1549. *Carteggio*, 4:310-11. Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:98.

<sup>79</sup> John F. Padgett, “Open Elite? Social Mobility, Marriage, and Family in Florence, 1282–1494,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 63, no. 2 (2010): 357–411.

not be particular about the dowry, but only about a nice disposition, a sound constitution and noble birth. If you were to marry someone well brought up, in good health and well born, but penniless, you should consider that you do so as an act of charity.”<sup>80</sup> The following year, the artist reiterated that Lionardo should find “someone with a sound constitution and well brought up and related to people of good repute; and if the other things that must be sought in matters like this are all right, do not consider the dowry.”<sup>81</sup> Michelangelo’s priorities are clearly the continuation of the family line and an allegiance with an old respectable family comparable (or superior) to the Buonarroti. Emphasis on lineage is consistent with what Michelangelo considered most important about the Buonarroti family—not political power or enormous wealth but an old, Florentine patrician lineage.

Lionardo finally found a suitable bride from a well-established Florentine lineage, Cassandra Ridolfi. Cassandra’s father, Lorenzo Ridolfi, was sometime Apostolic Secretary and her uncle was Cardinal Niccolò Ridolfi, patron of Michelangelo’s bust of Brutus.<sup>82</sup> The factors that contributed to the match are complex and difficult to identify precisely, but surely the wealth and prominence that the Buonarroti enjoyed with Michelangelo as *paterfamilias* helped Lionardo secure such a prestigious match. Cassandra’s father and uncle must have been aware of Michelangelo’s fame in Rome, and the unparalleled position he enjoyed at the papal court.

---

<sup>80</sup> Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, 28 February 1551. *Carteggio*, 4:130. Ramsden, *Letters*, 2: 130.

<sup>81</sup> Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, 24 June 1552. *Carteggio*, 4:140. Ramsden, *Letters* 2:137.

<sup>82</sup> Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:142 n.1. Michelangelo also noted in a letter to Lionardo that Cassandra’s mother was a member of the Benino family. Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:140.

## 4.4 Summoned, Slighted and Enticed: Michelangelo and the Popes

According to Condivi, the newly elected Pope Paul attempted to hire Michelangelo but the artist evaded him. Tiring of the game, the pontiff called at the artist's house (with eight or ten cardinals in tow) to convince the artist to serve him.<sup>83</sup> Although the account would be unbelievable if it were any other artist, with Michelangelo we can not rule out such an event. A pontiff calling upon an artist would be contrary to established protocol for business conducted between parties of unequal social status. Such a remarkable gesture would demonstrate that Paul understood a fundamental rule of dealing with Michelangelo: regardless of a patron's status, the artist would not respond as well to threatening summonses as he would to the papal retinue visiting him.

Vasari writes that in 1503, when Julius II won the papacy, Michelangelo was "summoned with great courtesy" by the pope.<sup>84</sup> However, less courtesy was shown some years later. When Michelangelo paid workmen in Rome for marble for the pontiff's tomb, he expected to be reimbursed quickly. After waiting for a long period at the apostolic palace to speak with Julius, it became clear that Michelangelo would not gain entrance. When one of the footmen said that he had orders not to admit Michelangelo, the indignant artist left, saying that if the pope wanted him, he (the artist) would be somewhere else.<sup>85</sup>

---

<sup>83</sup> Condivi, *Vita*, 46.

<sup>84</sup> Vasari, *Lives*, 432.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 435.

According to Vasari, Michelangelo headed to Florence, stopping to rest at Poggibonsi. There, five papal couriers caught up with him. Ordered to convey the artist to Julius, they urged Michelangelo to go with them back to the papal palace. The artist refused but sent a message, apologizing for not returning to the pope's presence as ordered. When he reached Florence, the artist found that additional messengers had already ordered the Signoria to send Michelangelo to the pope.<sup>86</sup> Piero Soderini, Gonfaloniere of Florence and Michelangelo's friend, persuaded the artist to go as a Florentine ambassador to meet Julius in Bologna. There, the pope asked him, "Rather than coming to meet Us, you have waited for Us to come to meet you?"<sup>87</sup> With this question, Julius conveyed his annoyance that he had travelled farther than the artist. Clearly, the pope considered it the artist's duty to wait patiently at the Vatican and return promptly when summoned. Traditionally, clients and petitioners waited for audiences at the homes of their patrons to appeal for favors or conduct business. Julius expected the artist to follow the customary role of a client serving at his patron's convenience.

Perhaps Paul's arrival at Michelangelo's house shows an elevation of the artist's status during the years since Julius' reign, and/or Paul's effort to treat the artist with more respect. If Vasari's account is true, then Paul approached the artist at home either to force him into service or to demonstrate a level of social respect that would not generally be extended to an artist by a patron. Tradition dictated that important men conducted business at the time and location of their choosing, generally in a semi-public space at their residences. Petitioners complied by appearing at the appointed place when summoned. The meeting of artist and patron at the

---

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 436.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 437.

artist's house in 1534 may have been the first of many of Paul's efforts to acknowledge Michelangelo's social status and demonstrate his respect for the artist. And Paul's gesture succeeded in enlisting the artist's service.

The artist had for decades cultivated relationships with patrons at the top of the social ladder and at the Vatican. Paul had been a cardinal for several decades, and he enjoyed close relationships with the Medici popes. If indeed he had waited for decades to hire Michelangelo, then surely he had noticed how the artist interacted with other papal patrons. As Wallace describes, Michelangelo attempted to live as a sort of artist/courtier, blurring the distinctions between artist and patron and between professional and personal obligations.<sup>88</sup>

Vasari wrote a remarkable account of Paul's interactions with Michelangelo:

The pope respected Michelangelo's talent and bore him so much love and reverence that he sought only to please him, as was evident when His Holiness wanted to place his coat of arms under the figure of Jonah in the chapel where the coat of arms of Julius II had originally been placed; when Michelangelo was asked about it, he did not wish to put it there to avoid doing an injustice to either Julius or Clement, declaring that it was not a good idea, and His Holiness remained satisfied with this so that he would not offend Michelangelo.<sup>89</sup>

Such deference and accommodation of the artist's wishes demonstrates that Paul was willing to change his mind about what he wanted based on the artist's objections. Whether Michelangelo convinced Paul that adding his coat of arms to the *Last Judgment* fresco was a bad idea, or if Paul simply wanted to respect Michelangelo's wishes is unclear. The story, though, contributes

---

<sup>88</sup> Wallace, "Reversing the Rules," 161.

<sup>89</sup> Vasari, *Life*, 460. "...avendo rispetto alla virtù di quell'uomo, al quale portava tanto amore e riverenza che non cercava se non piacergli; come ne aparve segno, che desiderando Sua Santità che sotto il Iona di Cappella, ove era prima l'arme di papa Giulio II, mettervi la sua, essendone ricerco, per non fare torto a Giulio e a Clemente non ve la volse pore, dicendo non istare bene, e ne restò Sua Santità soddisfatto per non gli dispiacere..." Vasari, *Vita*, 4:68-69.

to the heroic *Vita* of the artist, by suggesting that even the Vicar of Christ deferred to Michelangelo's will and judgment.

## 4.5 Social Networks

Although their paths may not have crossed in Florence, Paul and Michelangelo shared the experience of Lorenzo de' Medici's humanist circle during the late Quattrocento.<sup>90</sup> Both Paul and Michelangelo were well acquainted with Giovanni and Giulio, the Medici cousins who ruled as Popes Leo X and Clement VII. Paul rose to the cardinalate in 1493. He was present in Rome when Michelangelo carved the Vatican *Pietà* and later painted the Sistine Ceiling. As a cardinal, he crowned Leo X pope in 1513 and joined Clement VII at Castel Sant' Angelo during the Siege of Rome in 1527. Clement VII's enthusiastic patronage of Michelangelo, who was busily working on the Medici tombs at San Lorenzo in Florence, would have been well-known at the papal court in Rome. Surely Alessandro Farnese, the future Paul III, was aware of Michelangelo's work for the Medici popes. Michelangelo and the future pope both had strong ties with the Medici and other highly educated Florentines. These overlapping social networks and a common background in Florentine humanism would have been significant bonds linking Paul and Michelangelo.

---

<sup>90</sup> Between 1487 and 1489, Alessandro Farnese studied with Pomponio Leto at the home of Lorenzo de' Medici in Florence. Then he studied in Pisa, but remained in regular contact with his Florentine associates. Subsequently, Lorenzo de' Medici wrote a letter of recommendation for one of the positions of Apostolic secretary. Michelangelo stayed at the Medici Palace probably from 1490-92.

## 4.6 Fellowship of the Aged

Before Paul's accession to the throne in 1534, Michelangelo felt that he was in decline. In 1533, he suggested that his future "will be short, since I am an old man."<sup>91</sup> At the age of fifty-eight, Michelangelo was indeed, according to his contemporaries, past his prime. Around the age of sixty-five or seventy, men were considered elderly.<sup>92</sup> Seven years Michelangelo's senior, Paul was elderly at the time of his accession, even among the gerontocracy of the Church.<sup>93</sup> Of the previous ten popes, the average age at election had been forty-seven and a half. In the century before Paul's election, only one pope had been older at the time of election (Pius III was seventy-two years old at his election in 1503). Between 1564 and 1789 popes were usually in their fifties and sixties when elected.<sup>94</sup> Age, and the common experiences it entails, forged a powerful bond between the artist and patron. They could commiserate about aches and pains as well as the frustrations of ambitious patriarchs, guiding younger members of their families in the ongoing negotiation of social and financial prominence. The pope's family enjoyed much greater opportunities for wealth and power, but the Pope and artist each devoted a great deal of attention to patriarchal duties.

---

<sup>91</sup> Ramsden, *Letters*, 1:193.

<sup>92</sup> Georges Duby, Dominique Barthélemy, and Charles de La Roncière, "Portraits: Tuscan Nobles on the Eve of the Renaissance," in *Revelations of the Medieval World*, ed. Georges Duby, *A History of Private Life 2* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1988), 228.

<sup>93</sup> On numerous occasions, men with papal connections and few qualifications were named cardinals while still in their twenties. But within the curia, elder cardinals generally had higher status.

<sup>94</sup> Wright, *Early Modern Papacy*, 53.

#### 4.6.1 Friendship and Noble Delicacies

There is ample evidence of the mutual respect and personal affinity that Michelangelo and Paul had for one another. The term friendship may even apply, despite the imbalance of power between an artist and a pope. On multiple occasions, Michelangelo shared with Paul gifts of food and wine sent from Florence to the artist in Rome. In June 1547, Michelangelo received forty flasks of Trebbiano from Lionardo, ten of which he gave to the pope.<sup>95</sup> Perhaps with this gift of the Tuscan wine, Michelangelo demonstrated an understanding of Paul's personal experiences and called attention to their shared background. Paul studied in Pisa as well as Florence; he spent much of his youth in Tuscany. Surely if Paul desired Tuscan wine or cheese, he could have procured them with the help of papal messengers, ambassadors and visitors. Michelangelo also shared the cherished Tuscan Trebbiano wine, marzolino cheese and fruit sent to him with his Florentine friend Luigi del Riccio.<sup>96</sup> In that case, the personal connection between the friends was based, at least in part, on their shared identity as Florentines in Rome. In the Cinquecento, an artist and a pope could never be considered equal in terms of power or prestige, but by calling attention to the Tuscan lineage and experiences held in common, Michelangelo reinforced their personal relationship.

The artist also sent Paul pears grown on Buonarroti land near Florence. In a letter to Lionardo written on 2 May 1548, Michelangelo acknowledges receipt of eighty-six pears, thirty-

---

<sup>95</sup> Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, 18 June 1547. *Carteggio*, 4:270.

<sup>96</sup> Wallace, *The Man, the Artist and His Times*, 202; Paola Barocchi, Kathleen Loach Bramanti, and Renzo Ristori, *Il carteggio indiretto di Michelangelo* (Florence: S.P.E.S., 1988), 2:13,14,15-16.



three of which he sent to Paul.<sup>97</sup> The pope “thought them excellent and was very grateful for them.”<sup>98</sup> From at least the sixth century, perishable, non-essential fruits were readily identified with the upper classes and their enjoyment of fine food for pleasure rather than sustenance.<sup>99</sup> Pears in particular, with their delicate, easily bruised skin, exemplified the refined tastes of the elite classes. One especially prized and perishable variety of the fruit even earned the appellation “patrician pear.”<sup>100</sup> Because fruits grow on branches high above the ground, they were considered higher, and more noble, than the rustic cabbages and low-growing vegetables that sustained the peasant classes. Pears, by this analogy of nature and society, were properly consumed by high-born individuals.

Fruit trees require more space to grow than short vegetable plants do and they yield produce for only a brief period each year. Only land owners with a large amount of property could afford to devote the necessary resources to fruit trees. Wealthy urbanites generally owned one or more properties in the country where they could grow pears and other fruit for pleasure. Successful growing required years of cultivation and a good deal of experience. During the years 1489-94 Lorenzo de’ Medici spent a great deal of time overseeing design and construction of a villa at Agnano which included extensive gardens. In June 1489 Girolamo Pilli informed Lorenzo that “wild boars have devastated a field of grain near the hermitage where we planted

---

<sup>97</sup> *Carteggio*, 4:299.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*; Ramsden, *Letters* 2:91.

<sup>99</sup> Massimo Montanari, *Cheese, Pears, & History in a Proverb*, translated by Beth Archer Brombert (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 37-38.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

the cherry and apple trees.”<sup>101</sup> In addition to his close involvement with every aspect of construction at Agnano, Lorenzo made frequent visits to Poggio where he began a new villa and gardens around 1490.<sup>102</sup> The subject of cultivation at the villas, which he oversaw in person and with the help of numerous letters, was surely a topic of conversation at the Medici Palace in Florence where Michelangelo lived in 1489-90. Perhaps at that time, the young artist made note of the Il Magnifico’s interest in cultivating fruit at suburban villas.

A fifteenth century story about a peasant, Zuco Padella, who stole peaches from the tree of a wealthy landowner, Lippo Ghisilieri’s, demonstrates the sharp distinctions between peasant fare and noble foods.<sup>103</sup> Lippo was so determined to halt Zuco’s nightly thieving expeditions on his property that he dug an enormous ditch surrounding a peach tree and hid in the branches. After Zuco arrived and fell into the ditch, Lippo poured boiling water over him. The vicious attack was accompanied by a belittling message: “You thought to fool Lippo, but he has won out over you! A thousand bloodsuckers upon you! Next time leave the fruit of my peers alone and eat your own, which are turnips, garlic, leeks, onions, and shallots with sorghum bread.”<sup>104</sup> Beyond the simple issue of theft, Zuco’s infraction was that he transgressed strict rules concerning appropriate food for his social station. Lippo’s identification of the pilfered peaches with his peer group suggests that, within the sanctioned class, shared foods could reinforce fellowship.

---

<sup>101</sup> Francis W. Kent, *Lorenzo de’ Medici and the Art of Magnificence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 132.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>103</sup> Sabadino degli Aretini of Bologna wrote the story in the fifteenth century. Montanari, *Cheese*, 77.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

During the sixteenth century the Florentine Giovan Vettorino Soderini wrote a *Treatise on Trees*, in which he discussed varieties of pears originating in foreign lands that can be cultivated in Italy.<sup>105</sup> Noting the months in which different types of pears ripened, Soderini suggested how to work the soil, choose the best orientation and graft trees. The primary objective of the grower was to extend the growing season by cultivating several varieties, each of which ripened at a different time. With years of cultivation, understanding of advanced techniques and careful selection of pear varieties, a landowner could enjoy pears from May through October.<sup>106</sup> The most prized fruit, and the pears that most effectively demonstrated careful cultivation, would be those produced during the beginning and end of the season. The thirty-three pears Michelangelo offered to his patron must have arrived in April because the artist's letter acknowledging their receipt in Rome is dated the second of May. This esteemed fruit, surely among the first harvested in the spring of 1548, demonstrated the artist's successful cultivation of the land, and his ability to extend the growing season on his suburban property. It was just the type of gift to be given to one's closest *vicini* and friends.

Michelangelo's gifts to Paul demonstrate to us, and would remind the recipient, what the patron and artist had in common: years spent in Tuscany; and a noble appreciation of the luxurious fruits that the upper class cultivated at their villas. These offerings are more consistent with the gifts exchanged by lords, courtiers and nobles in the tradition of *clientelismo*, or social patronage, than with the currency of *mecenatismo*, such as the works of art and cash that

---

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 40-41.

characterized traditional art patronage.<sup>107</sup> By interacting with Paul in a manner consistent with *clientelismo* or friendship, Michelangelo emphasized his patrician roots more than his artistic occupation. This is similar to the artist's interactions with other patrons (especially those after 1534), which William Wallace identifies as more characteristic of the aristocratic culture of gift exchange than with traditional patterns of artist-patron relationships.<sup>108</sup> The artist's comment to Lionardo concerning the pears given to the pope, "he thought them excellent and was very grateful for them," indicates that Paul graciously accepted the artist's gesture. In the *motu proprio* of 1549, in which Michelangelo is named supreme architect of St. Peter's, Paul refers to the artist as "our beloved son, Michel Angelo Buonarroti, a Florentine citizen, a member of our household, and our frequent dining companion."<sup>109</sup> There is no reason to question Paul's characterization of their relationship as quite personal. Michelangelo interacted socially in a manner more consistent with his patrician identity than his artistic one.

In 1543 he instructed Lionardo "When you write to me, do not put 'Michelangelo Simoni' nor 'sculptor' on the outside. It is sufficient to say 'Michelangelo Buonarroti,' as that's

---

<sup>107</sup> On this distinction, see my chapter 1, n.9.

<sup>108</sup> Wallace, "Reversing the Rules," 161. Michelangelo's "commission" for the reliquary balcony at San Lorenzo in Florence, designed at the request of Piero Soderini, is similarly characterized by a "complicated interplay of friendship and favor, founded on long-standing acquaintance, mutual respect and reciprocal obligations." Wallace, "Friends and Relics," 428.

<sup>109</sup> "Motu proprio etc. Cum dilectus filius Michael Angelus Bonarottus) civis florentius familiaris continuus commensalis..." Ernst Steinmann and Heinrich Pogatcher, "Dokumente und Forschungen zu Michelangelo," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 29 (1906): 400. Ramsden's translation (*Letters*, 2:308) includes the phrase "our regular dining-companion" because, in princely and papal courts, an individual named as "familiaris continuus commensalis" regularly joined his patron at the table.

how I'm known here, and inform the priest of this likewise."<sup>110</sup> By 1543, the artist insisted on using the patrician family name "Buonarroti," rather than affirm his identity as a sculptor. Letters addressed to either 'Michelangelo Simoni' or 'Michelangelo sculptor' would surely reach him, but he clearly preferred the use of his surname. Lionardo also learned that his uncle resented being identified with other hands-on crafts. "You sent me a brass rule, as if I were a builder or a carpenter and had to carry it around with me. I was ashamed to have it in the house and gave it away."<sup>111</sup> Perhaps the brass rule suggested the manual labor of a builder, but Michelangelo considered his duties as supreme architect of St. Peter's Basilica more respectable. Or maybe he rejected being identified by his profession, considering his family name more noble. Although Paul reportedly forced Michelangelo to undertake the *Last Judgment* and St. Peter's Basilica, at times he was more sensitive to the artist's social aspirations than Lionardo.

Michelangelo conveyed a sense of mutual respect and personal intimacy when he lamented the passing of the pope in a letter to his nephew.

In reply to your last letter, it is true that the death of the pope has been a great sorrow to me and a loss no less, because I received many benefits from His Holiness and hoped to receive still more. But it has pleased God that it should be thus and we must be resigned. He died a beautiful death and was conscious to the last. May God have mercy on his soul. I think that's all concerning this.

The letter suggests sincere sadness at the loss of a personal relationship with the aged pontiff. Specific knowledge of the pope's state (a beautiful death, conscious to the last) suggests that Michelangelo was present at the pontiff's bedside. Perhaps the artist exaggerated his proximity

---

<sup>110</sup> Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, 14 April 1543. *Carteggio*, 4:166. Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:33.

<sup>111</sup> Letter from Michelangelo in Rome to Lionardo in Florence, 3 September, 1547. *Carteggio*, 4:274. Ramsden, *Letters*, 79.

to the pope's deathbed, but he demonstrates a sincere connection with Paul at the pope's death.

Gleaning evidence from reports sent hastily from Rome by ambassadors and cardinals, Pastor confirms that Paul's mind remained unclouded in the days preceding his death.<sup>112</sup> On 5 November 1549 he developed a fever and a chill. Two days later, Cardinal Farnese ordered the gates of Rome closed and Castel Sant'Angelo secured in anticipation of the pope's death. On the 8<sup>th</sup> he turned to family affairs, dictating a brief ordering Camillo Orsini to deliver Parma to Ottavio Farnese. On the 9<sup>th</sup>, Paul called (an unspecified number of) cardinals to his bedside to commend the affairs of the Church. It was not until the early morning of the following day that Paul succumbed to fever. Once the gates of Rome closed, word of the pope's serious illness would have swept through Rome. Paul's family, friends and associates gathered around his sick bed at the Quirinale palace, just a short walk from Michelangelo's home at Macel de' Corvi. Although Michelangelo could have heard the manner of the pope's death from associates at the papal court, Paul would probably desire a final audience with the artist. Just as the pope gave statements concerning the Church and his family, he probably wished to confirm Michelangelo's duties to finish the paintings in the Pauline Chapel and ensure proper construction of St. Peter's Basilica. These projects ensured Paul's legacy; their completion must have concerned the dying pontiff. A visit with Paul in the final days of the pontiff's life would only serve to enhance Michelangelo's prestige at court, and help guarantee his position as papal architect.

## 4.7 “For the love of God”

Michelangelo's work at the Vatican for Paul strikes viewers as intensely focused on the

---

<sup>112</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, 12:452.

presence of the Redeemer and the apostles. Because the images so effectively engage the viewer in a personal dialogue with Christ and the saints, scholars have made the reasonable assumption that Michelangelo was spiritually engaged with the images emerging from his brush. The images are so richly imbued with layers of meaning that the artist must have spent a great deal of time contemplating sin, salvation and the lives of Christian martyrs. The *Last Judgment*, in particular, has struck numerous scholars as a manifestation of Michelangelo's spiritual anxiety, personal beliefs or psychological issues. Charles De Tolnay suggests that "the state of beatitude [of the artist's late work] is here always transfigured by the torment which he had to endure to reach it."<sup>113</sup> Redig de Campos suggests that: "in making one of the most dramatic and moving medieval Christian themes his own, Michelangelo looked beyond the mist and confusion of his times to a renewed Church."<sup>114</sup> Leo Steinberg proposes an even more dramatically artist-centered reading: "Christ's glance and gesture direct themselves point blank at the wretched likeness of Michelangelo's self—the whole cosmic drama collapses on his destiny."<sup>115</sup> In order to subscribe to these suggestions we must assume that the artist exercised remarkable freedom of self-expression in the papal chapel, or that he went to great lengths to veil such suggestions from the patron and viewers. If we correctly ascribe some level of the artist's personal views in the work it is only because those views corresponded to the spiritual messages the patron desired. Perhaps by reading the artist in the fresco, we identify implicit evidence for thinking of the

---

<sup>113</sup> De Tolnay, *Michelangelo*, 5:93 (cf. 5:109-110).

<sup>114</sup> Redig de Campos, *Michelangelo: The Last Judgment*, trans. Serge Hughes (Garden City: Doubleday, 1978), 68.

<sup>115</sup> Leo Steinberg, "The Line of Fate in Michelangelo's Painting," *Critical Inquiry* 6, no. 3 (1980): 435.

fresco as a joint creation between artist and patron.

It is possible, even likely, that the artist perceived some spiritual rewards for his execution of the *Last Judgment* and the Pauline Chapel frescoes, but there is little evidence to suggest how, specifically, he imagined the commissions would help him. Michelangelo's own words on the construction of New St. Peter's Basilica, on the other hand, make his ideas on the benefits from that work much clearer. It is reasonable to consider the benefits of the project, on which he worked for the remainder of his life, in conjunction with Paul because the terms of the arrangement worked out between these two individuals remained largely unchanged. In 1557 Michelangelo wrote to his nephew Lionardo to explain why he had not returned to Florence.

I always had this proviso in mind, that I should not leave here until I had brought the fabric of St. Peter's to a stage at which my design could not be spoilt or altered nor an occasion given to thieves and robbers to return there to thieve and to rob as they are wont, and as they are waiting to do. I have always been, and am, thus diligent, because many people believe, as I do myself, that I was put there by God. But I have not yet reached the said age of the said fabric owing to a lack of money and men. Because I am an old man and have no-one to leave in my place, I have not wished to abandon it, and also because I serve for the love of God, in whom is all my hope.<sup>116</sup>

The letter makes clear that Michelangelo perceived some spiritual obligation to ensure that St. Peter's would be finished appropriately. Presumably fulfilling this responsibility would bring some spiritual reward to the aged artist. While serving "for the love of God" offers a motivation for Michelangelo, the phrase also suggests labor done as a tribute to God, without financial reward. The artist's refusal to accept pay for working on the basilica is widely recognized, in part because both Vasari and Condivi specifically write that Michelangelo was not

---

<sup>116</sup> Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:177.



paid for this work.<sup>117</sup>

It would have been more accurate to say that he was not compensated *by the Fabbrica of the Basilica*. The letter to Lionardo cited above dates to 1557, a decade after Michelangelo started working at St. Peter's Basilica for Paul, but the statement is also true for the earlier period. At no point was Michelangelo paid a salary by the Fabbrica. Throughout Paul's pontificate (and afterwards) the artist continued to draw roughly 600 *scudi* annually from the papal Datary. This arrangement began when he started painting the *Last Judgment*, and it simply continued as he worked on the Pauline Chapel paintings. Presumably his income from the Datary would have been 600 *scudi* per year whether or not he took on the additional responsibility as architect of St. Peter's. So although Michelangelo was well-paid by the Datary, he was not compensated specifically for his work on St. Peter's Basilica.

The Fabbrica, which independently managed all of the income and expenses associated with construction of the basilica, paid previous architects for their labor. Records kept by the Fabbrica show payments made to Giuliano da Sangallo from 1514-18 and Antonio da Sangallo

---

<sup>117</sup> Condivi, *Vita*, 59; Vasari, *Vita*, 78. For the suggestion that the legend of Michelangelo working for the love of God was not necessarily believed but accepted, see Horst Bredekamp, *Michelangelo: Fünf Essays* (Berlin: Verlag Klaus Wagenbach, 2009).

from 1529-34 in compensation for their work as architects of St. Peter's.<sup>118</sup> As Vasari recounted, the *motu proprio* appointing Michelangelo chief architect of St. Peter's specified that he received no compensation but served for the "love of God."<sup>119</sup> The artist's refusal to accept pay for St. Peter's is well known, but his motivations for this deserve further consideration.

## 4.8 Michelangelo Distinguishes Himself From the Setta Sangallesca

What benefits could the artist gain by refusing additional income from the Fabbrica? His use of newfound wealth to enhance the social prestige of the Buonarroti family is well documented; rejecting funds for his work at St. Peter's seems to undermine this effort. This move, however, would have quickly established his legitimacy and authority in his new role as architect, making the daunting project more manageable. Michelangelo was determined to rein in abuses of power and excess spending, but the "setta Sangallesca" staunchly defended their

---

<sup>118</sup> Summarized in the catalog of the archives: ARFSP Arm.24, F, 2. Giuliano da Sangallo: Architetto della Fabbrica di San Pietro "ducati 450 per sua provisione di mesi 18 comincata di genajo 1514 e finite q. di giugno 1515, a ducati 25 al mese come appare nel conto di Simone Ricasoli e Bernardo Binni." And "ducati 450...conto aprobatto della penna di nostro signore Papa Leone X di questo 27 marzo 1518 a conto della provisione." On Antonio da Sangallo ARFSP Arm. 24, F, 8. "Fin del mese di Aprile 1529 viene chiamato Architetto Principale della Fabbrica," "provisioni e saldi vari del 1529." Arm. 1, F, 45. "conti rigarandati la sua provisione dal Maggio 1532 al Marzo 1533. Resta creditore della Fabbrica della sua provisione di mesi undici, cioé aprile-dicembre 1533 e gennaio – febbraio 1534, que li sono *scudi* 275."

<sup>119</sup> Vasari, *Vite*, 6:78. The *Motu proprio* reads, "...ipsamque fabricam seu illius formam, nullo premio nullave mercede, sibi a nobis sepe sepius oblate, accepta, sed ex eius mera charitate et singulari devotione, quam ad ipsam basilicam gerit..." Lucilla Bardeschi Ciulich, *I contratti di Michelangelo* (Florence: S.P.E.S., 2005), 278.

long-held authority and ill-gotten rewards.<sup>120</sup> Also, the deputies remained loyal to Sangallo's vision for the basilica, as specified in the expensive, highly detailed model constructed by Antonio da Labacco under the former architect's direction. Michelangelo's alterations to the Sangallo plan prompted staunch resistance from the setta Sangallesca. For some time, conflicting views and personal antagonism continued to draw factional lines among those working on the basilica.<sup>121</sup>

Michelangelo was able to take over control of the project, revise the plan, dismiss uncompromising officials and reign in spending only because Paul granted him unprecedented authority over the Fabbrica and supported his decisions when the officers of the Fabbrica registered complaints. Paul's trust in Michelangelo, and his willingness to favor the artist's wishes over those of the setta Sangallesca, may derive in part from the artist's insistence that he worked for "the love of God" rather than for money. With that demonstration of pious devotion and selfless interest in the construction of the basilica, Michelangelo set himself apart from Sangallo and the setta Sangallesca who took in substantial sums, even as the project languished.

Spurned members of the Fabbrica, Giovanni Arberino and Antonio de' Massimi, lament Paul's unwavering support of Michelangelo in letters written to Monsignor Achinto in Trent. They report that Michelangelo's trusted deputy Giovanni Battista de Alfonsis, who replaced Sangallo's employee Antonio Labacco, rudely informed them that only Michelangelo's orders

---

<sup>120</sup> For more on the conflict between Michelangelo and the "Sangallo Sect," see Argan and Contardi, *Michelangelo Architect*, 322.

<sup>121</sup> On 4 September 1548, three members of the "Sangallo Sect" detailed their grievances in a letter to Pope Paul III. They claimed ill treatment at the hands of Michelangelo's trusted servant Urbino. ARFSP Arm 53, B, 134 (f. 49v, 50 r.). Ciulich, *Contratti*, 272-73.

would be followed in St. Peter's Basilica.<sup>122</sup> When Arberino and Massimi complained to Paul, the pontiff tried to mollify them with assurances that Michelangelo's will extended to architectural affairs, while they retained administrative authority. The pope felt that Labacco's dismissal should be accepted "per amor di Michelangelo."<sup>123</sup> But, since the deputies insisted on knowing Michelangelo's plan for the Basilica, Paul asked the aged architect to appear before them. They were forewarned that he must be treated with kid gloves (*con qualche morbidezza*).

During the tense meeting that followed, Michelangelo accused members of the setta Sangallesca of using their position for personal gain by selling travertine to the Fabbrica at inflated prices.<sup>124</sup> Despite protestations to the contrary, Antonio de' Massimi was in fact using this scheme for personal gain.<sup>125</sup> Michelangelo said that work could continue on sections of Sangallo's plan without changing anything on the outside (*alla scorsa di fuora*).<sup>126</sup> The meeting ended without any resolution of the conflict or any real concessions on Michelangelo's part.

In a subsequent letter to Archinto, Arberino and Massimo described a meeting with the pope and Michelangelo at Castel Sant'Angelo on 11 March in which the pope emphasized his trust in Michelangelo's "rare virtue not only in painting and sculpture but also in architecture" (*rare virtu sue non solo della pittura et scultura ma della architectura*) assured the defeat of the

---

<sup>122</sup> ARFSP II, Arm. 129, fols. 33-37v. Reprinted in Howard Saalman, "Michelangelo at St. Peter's: The Arberino Correspondence," *The Art Bulletin* 60, no. 3 (1978): 490-91.

<sup>123</sup> Saalman, "Arberino Correspondence," 491.

<sup>124</sup> See Karl Frey, "Zur Baugeschichte des St. Peter: Mitteilungen aus der reverendissima Fabbrica di S. Pietro (Fortsetzung und Schluß)," *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 37 Beiheft zum siebenunddreiszigsten Band (1916): docs. 577, 643.

<sup>125</sup> Michelangelo's accusations, made during a tense meeting among the artist, the pope and the deputies of the Fabbrica, are discussed in Saalman, "Arberino Correspondence," 485.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

setta Sangallesca.<sup>127</sup> Although deputies of the setta Sangallesca insisted that they could not work without knowing exactly what Michelangelo planned to do with the basilica, Paul dismissed their protests by assuring them that Michelangelo had explained the plans to him and he (Paul) was satisfied. Arberino and Massimo said that, according to rumors, Michelangelo planned to reduce the scale of the basilica, that it would be dubbed the “piciolo tempio” of San Pietrino.<sup>128</sup> Revising the structures already in place would mean that a hundred thousand *scudi* of previous construction would be wasted. To their dismay, Paul countered that it would be a bargain to throw away one hundred thousand *ducati* to save three hundred thousand. Surely financial considerations contributed to Paul’s unwavering support of Michelangelo over the setta Sangallesca.

Michelangelo’s insistence that he would not profit from his work on St. Peter’s is in stark contrast to the mismanagement of the setta Sangallesca. The artist’s decision to work without financial reward (from the Fabbrica), laboring for the love of God, suggested selfless motivations and a noble character. This put him in a loftier position than as an architect for hire. It also distinguished him as morally superior to his predecessors by characterizing his labor as a sacred offering or tribute. Michelangelo’s insistence that he worked “for the love of God” suggests pure motivations and, presumably, spiritual rewards. Working “for the love of God” probably helped Michelangelo secure unwavering support from his patron when conflicts arose with the setta Sangallesca. Michelangelo used the phrase “for the love of God,” years earlier in another letter

---

<sup>127</sup> ARFSP 11, Arm. 129, fols. 46v-51; transcribed in Saalman, “Arberino Correspondence,” 491-92.

<sup>128</sup> Letter from Giovanni Arberino and Antonio de’ Massimi to Mons. Archinto in Bologna dated 27 March 1547. AFSP 2, Arm. 129, fols. 46v-51. Reprinted by Howard Saalman, “Arberino Correspondence,” 491-92.

to Lionardo. “I have received the roll of rascia which I think excellent, but it would have been better had you given it to some poor person for the love of God.”<sup>129</sup> In this earlier case, he suggests that he would gladly forego material benefits out of spiritual devotion. Numerous sources attest to the belief in spiritual reward achieved through charitable work performed “for the love of God.” For example, Maestro Bandino di Maestro Giovanni Banducci, a doctor contracted to the Hospital of the Innocents in Florence in 1445 refused payment, saying that he worked solely “for the love of God and the salvation of his own soul.”<sup>130</sup> Leonardo di Lorenzo Morelli (1475-1539), a wealthy Florentine patrician silk merchant, commissioned the Morelli altarpiece from Andrea del Sarto as well as other works in the church of S. Lucia at Settimello. He paid for work on tombs in the portico of the church and built a tabernacle there to St. Lucy “at the request of the priests and the people of the parish.”<sup>131</sup> The phrase, “for the love of God,” evoked a tradition of munificence and patronage with spiritual purposes.

Michelangelo followed the common belief that charity could contribute to the salvation of one’s soul. Writing to Lionardo in 1547, Michelangelo requested that his nephew give fifty *fiorini* to needy Florentines “for the love of God, partly for the soul of Buonarroto, your father,

---

<sup>129</sup> Letter dated 22 June 1549. *Carteggio*, 2:330. “Lionardo, io ebbe il ruotolo della rascia. Parmi che sia molto bella, ma era meglio che tu l’avessi data, per l’amor di Dio, a qualche povera persona.” Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:110.

<sup>130</sup> John Henderson, *The Renaissance Hospital: Healing the Body and Healing the Soul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 221.

<sup>131</sup> The record of the payment reads “per il tabernacholo di Santa Lucia e per le sepulture quivi appiè; le quali ho fatte per l’amor di dio alla chiesa alla champagne e al popolo.” ASF, Gherardi-Piccolomini 140, fol. 54. Quoted in John Kent Lydecker, “The Patron, Date, and Original Location of Andrea del Sarto’s Tobias Altar-Piece,” *The Burlington Magazine* 127, no. 987 (1985): 351 n., 21.

and partly for mine.”<sup>132</sup> When Michelangelo, as architect of St. Peter’s Basilica, eschewed compensation from the Fabbrica, he probably believed that his efforts contributed in a direct and meaningful way to the salvation of his soul. As his letters and poetry written from the 1540s on attest, he was deeply concerned with personal salvation. According to Condivi and Vasari, Michelangelo insisted that the *motu proprio* dated 2 January 1547 specify that he worked without remuneration, for the love of God.<sup>133</sup> The inclusion of this provision in the document (despite the fact that Michelangelo continued to receive payments from the papal Datary) would make Michelangelo’s labor “for the love of God” true, for all practical purposes. In this way, work on New St. Peter’s Basilica was an opportunity for the artist to give his services in the name of God with the hope that some divine reward would follow.

Paul’s backing was absolutely necessary for Michelangelo to wield the authority needed to make drastic changes in design and construction of the basilica. Spiritual considerations surely motivated the artist, but he may have also anticipated the practical benefits of refusing pay from the Fabbrica. Throughout his papacy, especially during the later part, Paul demonstrated unwavering support of Michelangelo. Previously, construction of New St. Peter’s Basilica involved multiple architects and administrators working with the lead architect, but Paul granted Michelangelo nearly complete independence from such collaboration.

## 4.9 Artistic Legacy

As we have seen, Michelangelo’s sincere belief in the nobility of his lineage occupied

---

<sup>132</sup> Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:79. *Carteggio*, 4:274.

<sup>133</sup> Condivi, *Vita*, 59; Vasari, *Vite*, 6:78.

much of his attention, and certainly influenced his interactions with patrons. Yet he was also proud of his artistic accomplishments. A brief exchange between Michelangelo and a friend, described by Vasari, gives an indication of the artist's interest in a legacy. "A priest, a friend of his, said: 'It's a pity you haven't taken a wife, for you would have had many children and bequeathed to them many honorable works.' Michelangelo answered: 'I have too much a wife in this art that has always afflicted me, and the works I shall leave behind will be my children, even if they are nothing, they will live for a long time.'" <sup>134</sup>

Despite decades of work on various projects, Michelangelo had not, at the time of Paul's election, completed many projects in recent years. Several of his finest works—the Vatican Pietà, David and the Sistine ceiling frescoes—were finished early in the sixteenth century. At nearly sixty years old in 1534, Michelangelo had several projects that remained incomplete. Most troubling to the artist was that the "tragedy of the Tomb [of Julius II]" remained unresolved, the tomb unfinished. <sup>135</sup> What the artist had first envisioned as a monumental tomb with forty life-size figures was reined-in and delayed for decades, causing Michelangelo significant anxiety and frustration. The project to construct the façade of the Church of San Lorenzo in Florence, annulled by Leo X after years of labor, struck Michelangelo as an "enormous insult." <sup>136</sup> The project for the New Sacristy at San Lorenzo in Florence continued, scaled-back from original designs, only to remain incomplete. Since the unveiling of the Sistine Ceiling, the artist had not undertaken any other fresco project. Although Michelangelo probably

---

<sup>134</sup> Vasari, *Lives*, 479.

<sup>135</sup> Condivi dubbed the commission the "tragedy of the tomb."

<sup>136</sup> On the project for the façade, and its cancellation, see Wallace, *San Lorenzo*, 9-74.



would have liked time to finish work on the Julius Tomb and at San Lorenzo, Paul's patronage did prompt some of the artist's finest work, including the *Last Judgment*, Pauline Chapel frescoes and St. Peter's Basilica. Indeed, to embark on the most productive fifteen years of his career, Michelangelo desperately needed a patron that would be generous with praise, honor, and funding without imposing excessively on his personal or artistic freedom. Any artist would delight in such a patron, but few could expect to find one.

An artist could not wish for more prestigious commissions than these. With Paul's patronage, Michelangelo created masterpieces at the spiritual heart of the Church. Numerous would-be patrons failed to secure any work by the artist's hand, but Paul offered irresistible opportunities. As a mature artist, Michelangelo had the rare opportunity to execute one masterpiece alongside another masterpiece from early in his career. Vasari wrote:

When it was unveiled, Michelangelo proved not only that he had triumphed over the first artisans who had worked in the chapel, but that he also wished to triumph over himself in the vault that he had made so famous, and since the *Last Judgment* was by far superior to that, Michelangelo surpassed even himself.<sup>137</sup>

Certainly the ceiling frescoes completed two decades previously made a name for the artist, but the *Last Judgment* was an opportunity to demonstrate his skill as a mature artist. The juxtaposition of the frescoes was his chance to demonstrate that, after his meteoric rise to artistic fame at the beginning of the Cinquecento, the trajectory continued unabated. As the enormous backdrop to every function in the chapel, the *Last Judgment* dominates the space. It even pulls attention away from the ceiling. The eschatological subject is the fulfillment of Christ's mission and the spiritual focus of all believers.

---

<sup>137</sup> Vasari, *Lives*, 462.

Although he completed no other frescoes in the intervening years, Michelangelo's later style is vastly different from the earlier work. The ceiling frescoes incorporate elaborate compositional devices in order to create a comprehensible arrangement. Yet, overwhelmed viewers tend to take in bits of the composition, focusing on one framed narrative or major figure at a time, without appreciating the whole. The complex system of overlapping and adjoining elements gives the impression of an elegant system just barely reigning in chaos. Michelangelo's technical bravura demonstrates an artistic appreciation for classical sculpture and mastery of the human body. The viewer's impression is that a remarkably accomplished artist imaginatively has reconceived biblical narratives and woven them together with monumental figures, classically-inspired nudes and fictive bronze roundels. Michelangelo's artistic ambition is undeniable, but the frescoes do not readily prompt spiritual engagement with viewers.

The *Last Judgment* reveals unparalleled mastery of the human body and every manner of foreshortening. Each figure participates actively, revealing his or her individual experience of the event. There are no repeated or "filler" figures. Despite the overcrowding of heaven and the range of figures—from martyrs and angels to sinners and demons—the overall organization is readily comprehensible. The fresco achieves striking immediacy as it engages with viewers and the chapel space. All of Michelangelo's artistic innovations contribute to the intensity of the spiritual drama. Compositional lines and gestures repeatedly return the viewer's gaze to Christ, ensuring that spiritual considerations remain the focus of attention. With the *Last Judgment*, Michelangelo ensured that part of his artistic legacy would be the sophistication and intensity of his religious imagery.

The Pauline Chapel frescoes engage the privileged members of the Curia and the pope in

divine events marking the foundation of the papacy and spiritual mission of the Church. The scenes remind conclavists of the ultimate examples of sacrifice and divine grace.

Michelangelo's frescoes are powerful visual reminders of the models to which the cardinals and elected pontiffs should aspire. In this way, the artist contributed to guiding conclavists to vote their conscience and be guided by the holy spirit, rather than act for personal gain or factional allegiance. The artist endowed the ceremonial core of the Vatican with sanctity. He eschewed the trappings of pompous ceremony and earthly distinction in favor of Christological devotion and the spiritual rewards of exemplary Christians.

Today, the Pauline frescoes are largely out of view. The inaccessibility of the space has certainly contributed to the dearth of scholarship on the frescoes, especially in comparison to those in the Sistine Chapel. The images have played less of a role in Michelangelo's artistic legacy than *the Last Judgment*. The *Last Judgment* was known throughout Europe by visitors' accounts, but more importantly from prints of the fresco made immediately after its completion.<sup>138</sup> Michelangelo's contemporaries anticipated and received the Pauline Chapel frescoes with less enthusiasm than the Sistine works. Fewer prints were produced due to the expectation of a less robust market for the images.<sup>139</sup> Yet, there are a number of full-composition images and single-figure studies. More importantly, the frescoes immediately became an integral part of conclave proceedings and papal devotion as well as a site of popular

---

<sup>138</sup> Bernadine Barnes, *Michelangelo in Print: Reproductions as Response in the Sixteenth Century* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), 99-112.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 112-17. Also, the compositions in the Pauline Chapel are designed to function in a narrow space, with viewers approaching from oblique angles focusing on smaller sections of the frescoes at once. For this reason, the images do not function as intended if they are reproduced in small prints. See Wallace, "Narrative and Religious Expression," 107-21.

pilgrimage.

New St. Peter's Basilica is Michelangelo's crowning achievement in Rome. Frequently, the entire basilica is informally referred to as his project. Yet the design and construction of this incomparable edifice is rightfully associated with numerous artists and architects working over the course of more than a century and a half. Bramante, Raphael, Antonio da Sangallo, Baldassare Peruzzi, Giacomo della Porta, Carlo Maderno, Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Michelangelo all contributed in various capacities.<sup>140</sup> Michelangelo corrected structural flaws in Sangallo's construction, reined in spending and simplified the design to a Greek cross similar to Bramante's original conception. His contribution is most evident in the crossing, the dome and the articulation of the exterior surface. Maderno subsequently extended the central axis, making the plan a Latin cross. For viewers close to the church, the long nave and Maderno's hulking façade obscure the view of Michelangelo's exquisitely refined dome. As conceived, the dome continued the engaged vertical pilasters on the basilica's exterior. The synergy of the exterior elements and the dome is now best appreciated from the largely inaccessible back side, behind the facade (fig. 3.34). The dome is not exactly constructed according to Michelangelo's design because Giacomo della Porta raised the profile making it visible throughout the city.<sup>141</sup> Michelangelo's drawings show a semi-circular dome, but the external vocabulary is consistent with what we see now.

Michelangelo's work on St. Peter's Basilica was an opportunity to endow the Catholic Church with a distinguished physical focus --a marvel of engineering and architecture that

---

<sup>140</sup> For sources on New St. Peter's Basilica, see above p. 2 n.1.

<sup>141</sup> Argan and Contardi, *Michelangelo Architect*, 226-27.

surpassed the work of any Renaissance architect. The project may also have saved his artistic legacy by preventing the destruction of a section of the Apostolic Palace. Furthermore, it established an additional field—architecture—in which the artist could emerge as preeminent. The artist's words suggest that he considered part of his legacy as rescuing the project for New St. Peter's from incompetent bunglers. In a letter to Bartolommeo Ferratini, Michelangelo praised Bramante's design for its clarity, luminosity and detachment from the Apostolic Palace. Although Michelangelo thoroughly disliked Bramante, he judged the original design without prejudice. By contrast, the artist sharply criticizes Sangallo's plan.

He, with that outer ambulatory of his, in the first place takes away all the light from Bramante's plan; and not only this, but does so when it has no light of its own, and so many dark lurking places above and below that they afford ample opportunity for innumerable rascalities, such as the hiding of exiles, the coining of base money, the raping of nuns and other rascalities...when the said church closes, it would need twenty-five men to seek out those who remained hidden inside...Then there would be this other drawback—that by surrounding the said composition of Bramante's with the addition shown in the model, the Pauline Chapel, the Offices of the Piombo, the Ruota and many other buildings would have to be demolished; *nor do I think that the Sistine Chapel would survive intact.*<sup>142</sup> (emphasis added)

Following his signature, Michelangelo reiterates a critical point: "If Sangallo's model is adhered to, it also follows that all that has been done in my time may be pulled down, which would be a great loss." The artist's concern for the preservation of his artistic legacy is evident, as is the grief that such a loss would cause. Given the opportunity to redesign the basilica, Michelangelo ensured the survival of his artistic legacy.

Beyond simply securing the opportunity to redesign the basilica and the pope's backing when Michelangelo had conflicts with the setta Sangallesca, Michelangelo secured

---

<sup>142</sup> Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:69.

unprecedented assurance that his design for the basilica would be followed after his death. In 1547 Paul appointed Michelangelo Supreme Architect of St. Peter's Basilica. Two years later, Paul issued a *motu proprio* confirming important aspects of the project. Michelangelo had redesigned and improved the Basilica

without accepting the reward or fee which we have repeatedly offered to him, but has done so because of the unfeigned affection and single-minded devotion which he has for that church...We ratify and confirm the matters aforementioned, desirous that they be respected and put into effect in perpetuity...we hereby approve and confirm the aforementioned new design and alteration, and all and several demolitions and constructions of whatever kind are caused to be done in the said fabric by the same Michelangelo or on his orders...these conditions, together with the model or plan for or in respect of the said fabric, drawn up and submitted by the same Michel Angelo, are to be observed and carried out in perpetuity, so that they may not be changed, re-fashioned or altered."<sup>143</sup>

The remainder of the document praises Michelangelo's work and gives additional assurances that he should be free from oversight, criticism or constraints in his capacity as sole authority over the construction of the basilica, which is granted for the remainder of his life. Such a forceful statement of respect and authority from a patron may be unprecedented. The intent of the document was to give Michelangelo every assurance that he would not have to yield in any way to the *setta Sangallesca* and that his plan for St. Peter's would be executed as he intended, thus ensuring that the basilica would be an important part of his artistic legacy.

---

<sup>143</sup> Ramsden, *Letters*, 2:308.

## 5. Conclusion

Over the course of six and a half decades, Michelangelo worked for nine popes. But he produced the greatest number of significant masterpieces during a fifteen year period, for Pope Paul III. This remarkable partnership yielded two of the artist's three major fresco cycles and most of his architectural output, including his most prestigious project, New St. Peter's Basilica. If we hope to understand how Michelangelo's other patronage relationships functioned—or did not—then his interactions with Paul comprise a successful case study against which to compare them. The subject of art patronage can easily become one-sided, with an emphasis on the patron's direction or on the artist's conception. I attempt to balance this equation by considering how this this patronal collaboration benefitted each party. In order to continue a successful relationship, each of the two parties must be satisfied with the arrangement. The artist is responsible for ensuring that the patron finds the collaboration worthwhile and vice-versa. I maintain that the finished work of art is created primarily for the patron's benefit, not the artist's personal expression. As such, the lengthy analysis of the significance of the *Last Judgment* and the Pauline frescoes in chapters two and three primarily addresses the patron's objectives. Chapter four examines how the artist benefitted from Paul's patronage.

Michelangelo worked diligently to produce one masterpiece after another for Pope Paul III. To understand the artist's perspective on this collaboration, I identified his most pressing personal and professional objectives. Michelangelo sought social advancement of the Buonarroti family, wealth, recognition of his patrician status, recognition of his artistic accomplishments and abilities, latitude to manage projects as he saw fit, and courteous interactions with his patrons. Paul tailored a patronal arrangement to meet these needs as much as possible. At the

beginning of their professional relationship, Paul created a new position at the Vatican for Michelangelo, “Supreme Architect, Sculptor and Painter to the Apostolic Palace.” Working for Paul, Michelangelo did not fit the traditional role of a court artist, and he was not treated as one. The *motu proprio* appointing the artist to his tailor-made post waxed poetic about Michelangelo’s abilities and specified his rewards, but the work requested in exchange is just briefly mentioned. The regular payments from the Datary are more reminiscent of the appointments of courtiers than contracts for artists. The artist could earn a handsome salary and maintain that he worked on St. Peter’s only for “the love of God.” The artist’s benefits included the title, a position as papal *familiar*, a generous cash salary, and lifetime rights to revenues from the Po river ferry.

Paul anticipated ways to avoid pitfalls that encumbered projects for other papal patrons. He accommodated Michelangelo’s fragile ego, avoided over-burdening him, and paid him generously. Paul squelched conflicts with Michelangelo’s professional rivals, and engaged him only with the most prestigious projects. When adversaries working on St. Peter’s Basilica complained about Michelangelo, Paul gave the artist more authority over the project. Michelangelo’s cash salary was guaranteed for life (although a future pope could revoke it). The benefice of the Po ferry, though, should have ensured a continued income for the artist. That funding would help guarantee that the artist would finish any project underway at the time of Paul’s death.

Paul and Michelangelo enjoyed a warm personal relationship, characterized by gifts of delectable early-season pears, Tuscan marzolino cheese and Trebbiano wine. Popular gifts among patricians, these were signals of social status as well as shared delicacies. These tokens of friendship would remind the papal recipient of delicacies enjoyed as a youth at the table of



Lorenzo Il Magnifico de' Medici. Although they likely never met at the Medici benefactor's palace, both Paul and Michelangelo spent time there in the 1490s. The men continued to navigate in overlapping social circles in Florence and Rome for more than three decades before they collaborated on art projects. Moreover, by 1534, Paul and Michelangelo were sixty-six and fifty-nine years old, respectively. This distinguished them as mature men with shared experiences in Florence and Rome during the age of Medici rulers. Personal connections and diverse benefits characterize the remarkably successful relationship at the heart of this study.

Using patronage as a lens through which to view some of Michelangelo's works yields insights into the significance of the *Last Judgment* and Pauline frescoes individually and as an ensemble within the ceremonial context of the Apostolic Palace. Just as identifying Michelangelo's objectives helped clarify why Paul succeeded as Michelangelo's patron, recognizing Paul's goals brings the meaning of the frescoes into sharper focus.

The pontiff had to respond to Protestant criticism of the Church; the frescoes helped construct an identity of the Church contradicting Protestant accusations. In the face of virulent denigration, Michelangelo's frescoes helped construct an identity of the Church as a product of apostolic and saintly design, blessed with Christ's favor. Despite Protestant groups splintering off of Catholic territories, Paul cultivated an identity of the Universal Church expanding to incorporate as many souls as possible. The *Last Judgment* is a visual testament to the legitimacy of relics. The frescoes in the Pauline Chapel blur the distinctions between the apostles and the papacy in favor of one eternal Church devoted to ministry and self-sacrifice. The frescoes prompt legitimate spiritual reform of the Church, and enhance the authority of the papacy.

With Michelangelo's monumental frescoes at the Vatican, Paul continued and expanded efforts to assert the Vatican as the sacred focus of Rome. The frescoes articulate *loci sancti*

within the Apostolic Palace. With more liturgical celebrations and pilgrimages to the Vatican, the Church could control the form and tenor of religious life in Rome. With the artist's manipulation of painted space, viewers become part of apostolic narratives. As cardinals cast ballots during conclaves, the frescoes would silently urge them to identify someone chosen by the Holy Spirit and prepared to make sacrifices for the Church. Daily devotions of the papal household would also be spiritually engaging with Michelangelo's apostolic figures framing the chapel space. Paul's interest in fostering legitimate spiritual reform among the clergy finds visual form in the Pauline frescoes.

Surely elements of sincere friendship as well as mutual respect and trust defined the uncommon relationship between Paul and Michelangelo. Paul's efforts to treat the artist with honor befitting his social station as well as his professional accomplishments paid off more than could have been predicted, given the artist's age and frequent difficulties with patrons. The rewards for Paul's treatment, which include the *Last Judgment*, Pauline Chapel frescoes and St. Peter's Basilica, make him Michelangelo's most successful and important patron.

# Bibliography

- Ackerman, James. "Architectural Practice in the Italian Renaissance." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 13, no. 3 (1954): 3–11.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Marcus Aurelius on the Capitoline Hill." *Renaissance News* 10 (1957): 69–75.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Planning of Renaissance Rome, 1450-1580." In *Rome in the Renaissance: The City and the Myth*, edited by P.A. Ramsey, 3–18. Binghamton: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Architecture of Michelangelo: With a Catalogue of Michelangelo's Works* by James Ackerman and John Newman. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.
- Alberti, Leon Battista. *On Painting and On Sculpture. The Latin Texts of De pictura and De statua*. Translated by Cecil Grayson. London: Phaidon, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*. Translated and edited by Joseph Rykwert, Robert Tavernor and Neil Leach. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998.
- Ames-Lewis, Francis, ed. *Cosimo 'Il Vecchio' de' Medici, 1389-1464*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.
- Andersson, Christiane. "Popular Imagery in German Reformation Broadsheets." In *Print and Culture in the Renaissance*, edited by Gerald Tyson and Sylvia Wagonheim, 120–50. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1986.
- Aretino, Pietro. *The Works of Pietro Aretino*. Translated and edited by Samuel Putnam. Chicago: Pascal Covici, 1926.
- Argan, Giulio Carlo, and Bruno Contardi. *Michelangelo Architect*. Translated by Marion L. Grayson. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993.
- Ayuela, Paloma Pajares. *Cosmatesque Ornament: Flat Polychrome Geometric Patterns in Architecture*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2001.
- Bainton, Roland Herbert. *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther*. Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Publishers, 2009.
- Bambach Cappel, Carmen. "Michelangelo's Cartoon for the 'Crucifixion of St. Peter' Reconsidered." *Master Drawings* 25 (1987): 131–42.
- Barbieri, Franco, and Lionello Puppi. "Catalogo delle opere architettoniche di Michelangiolo." In *Michelangiolo Architetto*, edited by Paolo Portoghesi et al., 813–976.

- Barnes, Bernadine. "A Lost *Modello* for Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*." *Master Drawings* 26 (1988): 239–48.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Metaphorical Painting: Michelangelo, Dante, and the *Last Judgment*." *The Art Bulletin* 77 (1995): 65–81.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Aretino, the Public, and the Censorship of Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*." In *Suspended License: Censorship and the Visual Arts*, edited by Elizabeth C. Childs, 59–84. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Michelangelo's Last Judgment: The Renaissance Response*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Michelangelo in Print: Reproductions as Response in the Sixteenth Century*. Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2010.
- Barocchi, Paola, and Renzo Ristori. *Il carteggio di Michelangelo*. 5 vols. Florence: Sansoni, 1965-1985.
- Barocchi, Paola, and Lucilla Bardeschi Ciulich, eds. *I ricordi di Michelangelo*. Florence: Sansoni, 1970.
- Barocchi, Paola, Kathleen Loach Bramanti, and Renzo Ristori, eds. *Il carteggio indiretto di Michelangelo*. 2 vols. Florence: S.P.E.S., 1988.
- Barolsky, Paul. *Michelangelo's Nose: A Myth and Its Maker*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Faun in the Garden: Michelangelo and the Poetic Origins of Italian Renaissance Art*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Michelangelo's Marble Faun Revisited." *Artibus et Historiae* 20 (1999): 113–16.
- Barolsky, Paul, and William E. Wallace. "The Myth of Michelangelo and Il Magnifico." *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 12, no. 3 (1993): 16–21.
- Baumgart, Fritz, and Biagio Biagetti. *Gli affreschi di Michelangelo e di L. Sabbatini e F. Zuccari: Nella cappella paolina in Vaticano*. Vatican City: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1934.
- Bedon, Anna. *Il Campidoglio: Storia di un monumento civile nella Roma papale*. Milan: Electa, 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Piazza del Campidoglio." In *Michelangelo: Architetto a Roma*, ed. Mauro Mussolin, 128–37. Milan: Silvana, 2009.

- Bellini, Federico. *La Basilica di San Pietro. Da Michelangelo a della Porta*. 2 vols. Rome: Argos, 2011.
- Bertelli, Sergio. *The King's Body: Sacred Rituals of Power in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001.
- Berthod, Bernard. "From Papal Red to Cardinal Purple." In *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture*, edited by Stewart Gordon, 315–22. New York: Palgrave, 2001.
- Bertolotti, Antonino. "Speserie segrete e pubbliche di Papa Paolo III." *Atti e memorie delle RR. deputazioni di storia patria per le provincie dell'Emilia* 3 (1878):169-212.
- Bettini, Sergio. "La Piazza Capitolina." In *Michelangiolo Architetto*, edited by Paolo Portoghesi, 425–96.
- Beveridge, Henry, trans. and ed. *The Necessity of Reforming the Church: Presented to the Imperial Diet at Spires, A.D. 1544: To which is Added, A Paternal Admonition by Pope Paul III. To the Emperor Charles V. and Remarks on the Paternal Admonition*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1844.
- Bireley, Robert. *The Refashioning of Catholicism, 1450-1700: A Reassessment of the Counter Reformation*. Houndmills: Macmillan, 1999.
- Blouin, Francis X., et al. *Vatican Archives: An Inventory and Guide to Historical Documents of the Holy See*. Ann Arbor: Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, 2003.
- Bonelli, Renato. "La Piazza Capitolina." In Portoghesi and Zevi, *Michelangiolo Architetto*, 425–96.
- Bourne, Molly. "Francesco II Gonzaga and Maps as Palace Decoration in Renaissance Mantua." *Imago Mundi* 51 (1999): 51–82.
- Bredenkamp, Horst. *Michelangelo: Fünf Essays*. Berlin: Verlag Klaus Wagenbach, 2009.
- Bruschi, Arnaldo. "Roma Farnesiana. Città e architettura al tempo di Paolo III. Il caso del complesso Capitolina." In *Per Franco Barbieri: studi di storia dell'arte e dell'architettura*, edited by Elisa Avagnina and Guido Beltramini, 131–53. Venice: Marsilio, 2004.
- Branca di Apricena, Marianna. "La Committenza Edilizia di Paolo III Farnese sul Campidoglio." *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 32 (1997/1998): 409–78.
- Brodini, Anna. "San Pietro in Vaticano." In *Michelangelo: Architetto a Roma*, edited by Mauro Mussolin, 170–80. Milan: Silvana, 2009.
- Brothers, Cammy. *Michelangelo, Drawing, and the Invention of Architecture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.

- Brundin, Abigail. *Vittoria Colonna and the Spiritual Poetics of the Italian Reformation*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008.
- Brunetti, Oronzo. "Michelangelo e le fortificazioni del borgo." In *Michelangelo: Architetto a Roma*, 118–23. Milan: Silvana, 2009.
- Bruschi, Arnaldo. "Roma Farnesiana. Città e architettura al tempo di Paolo III. Il caso del complesso Capitolina." In *Per Franco Barbieri: studi di storia dell'arte e dell'architettura*, edited by Elisa Avagnina and Guido Beltramini, 131–53. Venice: Marsilio, 2004.
- Bruscoli, Francesco Guido. *Papal Banking in Renaissance Rome: Benvenuto Olivieri and Paul III, 1534-49*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007.
- Buddensieg, Tilmann. "Zum Statuenprogramm im Kapitolsplan Paul III." *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 32 (1969): 177–228.
- Bullard, Melissa Meriam. "Grain Supply and Urban Unrest in Renaissance Rome: The Crises of 1533-34." In *Art and Politics in Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Italy, 1250-1500*, edited by Charles M. Rosenberg, 279–92. Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press, 1990.
- Buonarroti, Michelangelo. *Complete Poems and Selected Letters of Michelangelo*. Robert Linscott, ed. and Creighton Gilbert, trans. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Michelangelo: Poems and Letters*. Translated and edited by Anthony Mortimer. London: Penguin, 2007.
- Burchard, Johann. *Johannis Burackardi Liber notarum ab anno MCCCCLXXXIII usque ad annum MDVI*. Edited by Enrico Celani. *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, vol. 32, pt. 1. Castello, Italy: S. Lapi, 1907.
- Burke, Peter. *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Burroughs, Charles. "Michelangelo at the Campidoglio: Artistic Identity, Patronage, and Manufacture." *Artibus et Historiae* 14 (1993): 85–111.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The *Last Judgment* of Michelangelo: Pictorial Space, Sacred Topography, and the Social World." *Artibus et Historiae* 16 (1995): 55–89.
- Calvin, John and Pope Paul III. *The Necessity of Reforming the Church: Presented to the Imperial Diet at Spires, A.D. 1544 : To which is Added, A Paternal Admonition by Pope Paul III. to the Emperor Charles V. and Remarks on the Paternal Admonition* [Supplex exhortatio]. Translated and edited by Henry Beveridge. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1844.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *Treatise on Relics*. Translated by Valerian Krasinski. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1854.
- Campbell, Stephen J. “‘Fare una Cosa Morta Parer Viva’: Michelangelo, Rosso, and the (Un)Divinity of Art.” *The Art Bulletin* 84, no. 4 (2002): 596–620.
- De Campos, Deoclezio Redig. *Michelangelo: The Frescoes of the Pauline Chapel in the Vatican*. Milan: A. Pizzi, 1951.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *I Palazzi Vaticani*. Roma Cristiana, vol. 18. Bologna: Cappelli, 1967.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Michelangelo: The Last Judgment*. Translated by Serge Hughes. Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, 1978.
- Canova, Lorenzo. “The Jubilee of Paul III and Julius III: The Last Splendors of the Roman Renaissance.” In *Rejoice!: 700 Years of Art for the Papal Jubilee*, edited by Maurizio Calvesi and Lorenzo Canova, 81–91. New York: Rizzoli, 1999.
- Carruthers, Mary J. *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Caselli, Fausto Piola. “Public Finances and the Arts of Rome: The Fabbrica of St. Peter’s in the 17th Century.” In *Economic History and the Arts*, edited by Michael North, 53–66. Cologne: Böhlau, 1996.
- Catalanus, Josephus. *Sacrarum caeremoniarum sive rituum ecclesiasticorum sanctae romanae ecclesiae libri tres*. Rome: Typis Antonii de Rubeis, 1750.
- The Catholic Encyclopedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church*. 14 vols. New York: Encyclopedia Press, 1913.
- Chadwick, Henry. “St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome: The Problem of the Memoria Apostolorum ad Catacumbas.” *Journal of Theological Studies* 8 (1957): 31–52.
- Chamberlin, Eric Russel. *The Sack of Rome*. New York: Dorset Press, 1985.
- Chambers, David S. *Patrons and Artists in the Italian Renaissance*. History in Depth. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1971.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Papal Conclaves and Prophetic Mystery in the Sistine Chapel.” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 41 (1978): 322–6.
- Chastel, André. *Sack of Rome, 1527*. Translated by Beth Archer. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983.

- Cipolla, Carlo M. *Money, Prices, and Civilization in the Mediterranean World, Fifth to Seventeenth Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Money in Sixteenth-Century Florence*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.
- Ciulich, Lucilla Bardeschi. *I contratti di Michelangelo*. Florence: S.P.E.S., 2005.
- Clark, Kenneth. "Michelangelo Pittore." *Apollo* 80 (1964): 436–45.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Artist Grows Old*. Rede Lecture 1970. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.
- Clarke, Paula C. *The Soderini and the Medici: Power and Patronage in Fifteenth-Century Florence*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.
- Cochrane, Arthur C. *Reformed Confessions of the Sixteenth Century*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003.
- Coffin, David R. *The Villa in the Life of Renaissance Rome*. Princeton Monographs in Art and Archaeology 43. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979.
- Colonna, Vittoria. *Sonnets for Michelangelo*. Translated and edited by Abigail Brundin. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- Condivi, Ascanio. *Vita di Michelangelo Buonarroti*. Edited by Giovanni Nencioni. Florence: S.P.E.S., 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Life of Michelangelo." Translated by Alice Sedgwick Wohl. Edited by Hellmut Wohl. 2nd ed. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999.
- Corbo, Anna Maria. "Documenti romani su Michelangelo." *Commentari* 16 (1965): 98-157.
- Creighton, Mandell. *A History of the Papacy from the Schism to the Sack of Rome*. Vol. 6. London: Longmans, 1907.
- Cruz, Joan. *Relics*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1984.
- D'Amico, John. *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome: Humanists and Churchmen on the Eve of the Reformation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983.
- Dandalet, Thomas James. "Financing New St. Peter's: 1506-1700." In *Sankt Peter in Rom 1506-2006. Beiträge der Internationalen Tagung vom 22-25 February 2006 in Bonn.*, edited by Georg Satzinger and Sebastian Schütze, 41–48. Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2008.
- Davidson, Bernice. "The Decoration of the Sala Regia Under Pope Paul III." *The Art Bulletin* 58 (1976): 395–423.



- Delbeke, Maarten. "Individual and Institutional Identity: Galleries of Barberini Projects." In *Art and Identity in Early Modern Rome*, edited by Jill Burke and Michael Bury, 231-46. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008.
- Delph, Ronald. "Polishing the Papal Image in the Counter-Reformation: The Case of Agostino Steuco." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 23 (1992): 35-47.
- Delumeau, Jean. *Vie économique et sociale de Rome dans la seconde moitié du XVIe siècle*. Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome. 2 vols. Paris: E. de Boccard, 1957.
- DeLuca, Maurizio, ed. *The Pauline Chapel*. Vatican City: Edizioni Musei Vaticani, 2013.
- \_\_\_\_\_. DeLuca, Maurizio. "The Restoration of the Pauline Chapel." In *The Pauline Chapel*, edited by Maurizio DeLuca, 43-46.
- Dempsey, Charles. "Mythic Inventions in Counter-Reformation Painting." In *Rome in the Renaissance: The City and the Myth*, ed. P.A. Ramsey, 237-248. Binghamton: Center for Medieval & Early Renaissance Studies, 1982.
- De Santi, Angelo. *L'orazione della Quarant'Ore e i tempi di calamità e di guerra*. Milan: Civiltà Cattolica, 1919.
- Dickens, Charles. *American Notes and Pictures from Italy*. Reprint. London: Macmillan, 1903.
- Dickinson, Gladys. *Du Bellay in Rome*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960.
- Dooley, Eugene. "Church Law on Sacred Relics." Ph.D. diss., Catholic University of America, 1931
- Dorez, Léon. *La cour du Pape Paul III: D'après les registres de la Trésorerie Secrete (Collection F. De Navenne)*. 2 vols. Paris: Librairie Ernest Leroux, 1932.
- de La Roncière, Charles. "Tuscan Notables on the Eve of the Renaissance." In *Revelations of the Medieval World*, edited by Georges Duby, 157-310. A History of Private Life 2. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Dudley, Donald Reynolds. *Urbs Roma: A Source Book of Classical Texts on the City and its Monuments*. London: Phaidon, 1967.
- Dvořák, Max. *Geschichte der Italienischen Kunst*. Munich: Piper, 1928.
- Dykmans, Marc. *L'oeuvre de Patrizi Piccolomini ou cérémonial papal de la première renaissance*. 2 vols. Studi e Testi 293. Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1980.

- Echinger-Maurach, Claudia. *Studien zu Michelangelos Juliusgrabmal*. 2 vols. Studien zur Kunstgeschichte, Bd. 61. Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1991.
- Edwards, Jr., Mark U. *Printing, Propoganda, and Martin Luther*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005.
- Eiche, Sabine. "July 1547 in Palazzo Farnese." *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 33, no. 2/3 (1989): 395–401.
- Einem, Herbert von. *Michelangelo*. London: Methuen, 1973.
- Ehrle, Franz. *Der Vaticanische Palast in seiner Entwicklung bis zur Mitte des XV. Jahrhunderts*. Studi e documenti per la storia del palazzo apostolico vaticano 2. Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1935.
- Ehrle, Franz, and Hermann Egger. *Dei Conclavepläne: Beitræge zu Ihrer Entwicklungsgeschichte*. Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1933.
- Eiche, Sabine. "July 1547 in Palazzo Farnese." *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 33, no. 2/3 (1989): 395–401.
- Elam, Caroline. "Lorenzo de' Medici's Sculpture Garden." *Mitteilungen Des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 36, no. 1 (1992): 41–84.
- Escher, Konrad. "Zur Geschichte des Grabmals Pauls III in St. Peter in Rom." *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 32 (1909): 302–20.
- Ettliger, Leopold D., and H. Otto Fein. *The Sistine Chapel before Michelangelo: Religious Imagery and Papal Primacy*. Oxford-Warburg Studies. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965.
- Evennett, Henry Outram. *The Spirit of the Counter-Reformation: The Birkbeck Lectures in Ecclesiastical History Given in the University of Cambridge in May 1951, by the Late H. Outram Evennett*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1968.
- Fagiolo, Marcello, and Maria Luisa Madonna, eds. *Roma 1300-1875: L'arte degli anni santi*. Milan: Mondadori, 1984.
- Fehl, Philipp. "Michelangelo's *Crucifixion of St. Peter*: Notes on the Identification of the Locale of the Action." *The Art Bulletin* 53 (1971): 327–43.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Placement of the Equestrian Statue of Marcus Aurelius in the Middle Ages." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 37 (1974): 362–7.
- Ferino-Pagden, Sylvia, ed. *Vittoria Colonna: Dichterin und Muse Michelanaglelos*. Vienna: Skira, 1997.

- Ferretti, Emanuela. "Palazzo Farnese." In *Michelangelo: Architetto a Roma*, 158-169. Milan: Silvana, 2009.
- Forcellino, Antonio. *1545: Gli ultimi giorni del rinascimento*. Rome: Gius, Laterza & Figli, 2008.
- Fosi, Irene. "Court and City in the Age of the *Possesso* in the Sixteenth Century." In *Court and Politics in Papal Rome, 1492-1700*, edited by Gianvittorio Signorotto and Maria Antonietta Visceglia, 31–52. Cambridge Studies in Italian History and Culture. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Francia, Ennio. *1506-1606: Storia della costruzione del Nuovo San Pietro*. Rome: De Luca, 1977.
- Franklin, Margaret. "Forgotten Images: Papal Portraits in the Sistine Chapel." *Arte Cristiana* 84 (1996): 263–9.
- Freiberg, Jack. *The Lateran in 1600: Christian Concord in Counter Reformation Rome*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Frey, Karl. "Studien zu Michelagnolo Buonarroti und zur Kunst seiner Zeit. III." *Jahrbuch der königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 30 (1909): 103–80.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Zur Baugeschichte des St. Peter: Mitteilungen aus der Reverendissima Fabbrica di S. Pietro (Fortsetzung)." *Jahrbuch der königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 33 (1913): 1–153.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Zur Baugeschichte des St. Peter: Mitteilungen aus der Reverendissima Fabbrica di S. Pietro (Fortsetzung und Schluß)." *Jahrbuch der königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 37 (1916): 22–136.
- Friedlaender, Walter F. *Mannerism and Anti-mannerism in Italian Painting*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1957.
- Frommel, Christoph Luitpold. "Antonio da Sangallo's Cappella Paolina: Ein Beitrag zur Baugeschichte des Vatikanischen Palastes." *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 27 (1964): 1–42.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Michelangelo und Tommaso dei Cavalieri. Mit der Übertragung von Francesco Diaccetos Panegirico all'amore*. Amsterdam: Castrum Perigrini, 1979.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2007.
- Frugoni, Arsenio, ed. *Carteggio umanistico di Alessandro Farnese*. Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1950.

- Fujikawa, Mayu. "Saints and Salvation in Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*," M.A. thesis, Washington University, St. Louis, 2001
- Fusco, Laurie S., and Gino Corti. *Lorenzo de' Medici: Collector and Antiquarian*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Gallo, Marco. "Note sul cosiddetto ciborio di Sisto IV: Documenti e precisazioni." In *Sisto IV: Le arti a Roma nel primo rinascimento*, edited by Fabio Benzi and Claudio Crescentini, 342–51. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi. Rome: Associazione Culturale Shakespeare and Company 2, 2000.
- Gamrath, Helge. *Farnese: Pomp, Power, and Politics in Renaissance Italy*. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2007.
- Ganter, Bernard J. *Clerical Attire: A Historical Synopsis and a Commentary*. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1955.
- Gattico, Giovanni Battista. *Acta Selecta Caeremonialia Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae ex Variis M.S.S. Codicibus et Diariis Saeculi XV, XVI, XVII, Aucta et Illustrata Pluribus aliis Monumentis nondum editis*. 2 vols. Rome: Laurentii Barbiellini, 1753.
- Gaye, Johann Wilhelm. *Carteggio inedito d'artisti dei secoli XIV, XV, XVI*. Florence: G. Molini, 1839.
- Gell, Alfred. *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*. Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press, 1998.
- Gibbs, Robert. "Matteo Giovanetti." *The Oxford Companion to Western Art*. *Oxford Art Online*. Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t118/e1696>.
- Gigliozzi, Maria Teresa. *I palazzi del papa: architettura e ideologia: il Duecento*. Corte dei papi 11. Rome: Viella, 2003.
- Gilbert, Creighton. "The Usefulness of Comparisons Between the Parts and the Set: The Case of the Cappella Paolina." In *España entre el Mediterráneo y el Atlántico, Granada, 1973: Actas del XXIII Congreso Internacional de Historia del Arte*, 519–31. Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1976.
- Gill, Meredith Jane "Antoniazio Romano and the Recovery of Jerusalem in Late Fifteenth-Century Rome." *Storia dell'Arte* 83 (1995): 28–47.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Augustine in the Italian Renaissance: Art and Philosophy from Petrarch to Michelangelo*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

- Glass, Dorothy. "Papal Patronage in the Early Twelfth Century: Notes on the Iconography of Cosmatesque Pavements." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 32 (1969): 386–90.
- Goldthwaite, Richard A. *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009.
- Gombrich, Ernst H. "The Early Medici as Patrons of Art." In *Italian Renaissance Studies: A Tribute to the Late Cecelia M. Ady*, edited by Ernest Fraser Jacob, 279–311. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1960.
- Goodson, Caroline. "Majesty and Mortality: Attitudes towards the Corpse in Papal Funeral Ceremonies." In *Roman Bodies: Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century*, edited by Andrew Hopkins and Maria Wyke, 143–154. London: British School at Rome, 2005.
- Gouwens, Kenneth Veld. "Redefinition and Reorientation: The Curial Humanist Response to the 1527 Sack of Rome." PhD diss., Stanford University, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Remembering the Renaissance: Humanist Narratives of the Sack of Rome*. Leiden: Brill, 1998.
- Greenstein, Jack M. "How Glorious the Second Coming of Christ: Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* and the Transfiguration." *Artibus et Historiae* 10 (1989): 33–57.
- Grimaldi, Giacomo. *Descrizione della basilica antica di S. Pietro in Vaticano: Codice barberini latino 2733*. Edited by Reto Niggli. Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1972.
- Guicciardini, Luigi. *The Sack of Rome*. Translated and introduction by James H. McGregor. New York: Italica Press, 1993.
- Hall, James. *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art*. Rev. ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1979.
- Hall, Marcia. "Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*: Resurrection of the Body and Predestination." *The Art Bulletin* 58 (1976): 85–92.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Michelangelo: The Frescoes of Sistine Chapel*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Introduction." In *Michelangelo's Last Judgment*, edited by Marcia Hall, 1–50. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Sacred Image in the Age of Art: Titian, Tintoretto, Barocci, El Greco, Caravaggio*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011.

- Hallman, Barbara McClung. *Italian Cardinals, Reform, and the Church as Property*. Publications of the UCLA Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies 22. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.
- Hankins, James. "The Popes and Humanism." In *Rome Reborn: The Vatican Library and Renaissance Culture*, edited by Anthony Grafton, 47–86. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.
- Hart, Vaughn and Peter Hicks, trans. and eds. *Palladio's Rome: A Translation of Andrea Palladio's two guidebooks to Rome*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Haskell, Francis. *Patrons and Painters: A Study in the Relations between Italian Art and Society in the Age of the Baroque*. Rev. ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.
- Hatfield, Rab. *The Wealth of Michelangelo*. Studi e Testi del Rinascimento Europeo 16. Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2002.
- Henderson, John. *The Renaissance Hospital: Healing the Body and Healing the Soul*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Hirn, Yrjö. *The Sacred Shrine: A Study of the Poetry and Art of the Catholic Church*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1957.
- Hirst, Michael. "Michelangelo in Rome: An Altar-Piece and the 'Bacchus.'" *The Burlington Magazine* 123, no. 943 (1981): 581–93.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Michelangelo and His First Biographers." *Proceedings of the British Academy* 94 (1996): 63–84.
- Hollingsworth, Mary. *Patronage in Sixteenth-Century Italy*. London: John Murray, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Cardinal's Hat: Money, Ambition and Housekeeping in a Renaissance Court*. London: Profile, 2004.
- Holt, Elizabeth Basye Gilmore. *A Documentary History of Art*. Vol. 2. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1957.
- Howe, Eunice, ed. and trans. *Andrea Palladio: The Churches of Rome*. Binghamton: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1991.
- Hudon, William V. "The Papacy in the Age of Reform, 1513-1644." In *Early Modern Catholicism: Essays in Honour of John W. O'Malley, S.J.*, edited by Kathleen M. Comerford and Hilmar M. Pabel, 46–66. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001.
- Hughes, Anthony. *Michelangelo*. London: Phaidon Press, 1997.

- Ianziti, Gary. "Patronage and the Production of History: The Case of Quattrocento Milan." In *Patronage, Art and Society in Renaissance Italy*, edited by Francis W. Kent and Patricia Simons, 299-311, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Llamia, Stephen. "Souvenir, Synaesthesia, and the Sepulchrum Domini: Sensory Stimuli as Memory Stratagems." In *Memory and the Medieval Tomb*, ed Elizabeth Valdez del Alamo and Carol Stamatis Pendergast, 19–41. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2000.
- Ilardi, Vincent. "Crosses and Carets: Renaissance Patronage and Coded Letters of Recommendation." *The American Historical Review* 92, no. 5 (1987): 1127–1149.
- Ingersoll, Richard. *The Ritual Use of Public Space in Renaissance Rome*. Ph.D. diss., University of California, 1985.
- Jacobs, Frederika Herman. "The Patronage and Iconography of Pope Paul III (1534-1549)." PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1979.
- Jackson, F. J. Foakes. "Evidence for the Martyrdom of Peter and Paul in Rome." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 46 (1927): 74–8.
- James of Viterbo. *On Christian Government. De Regimine Christiano*. Edited, translated, and introduction by R.W. Dyson. Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 1995.
- Janz, Denis, ed. *A Reformation Reader: Primary Texts with Introductions*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008.
- Joannides, Paul. "'Primitivism' in the Late Drawings of Michelangelo: The Master's Construction of an Old-Age Style." In *Michelangelo Drawings*, edited by Craig Hugh Smyth, 45–61. Studies in the History of Art 33. Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1992.
- John of Damascus. *St. John Damascene on Holy Images (pros Tous Diaballontas Tas Hagias Eikonas): Followed by Three Sermons on the Assumption*. Translated by Mary H. Allies. London: T. Baker, 1898.
- Jong, Jan L. de "Intended Effects and Undesirable Responses: Political Propoganda in Sixteenth-Century Monumental Painting in Italy." In *Selling and Rejecting Politics in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Martin Gosman and Joop W. Koopmans, 48–57. Leuven: Peeters, 2007.
- Karmon, David. *The Ruin of the Eternal City: Antiquity and Preservation in Renaissance Rome*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Keith, John, trans. *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. 9. Edited by Allan Menzies. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1896. Rev. and ed. for New Advent by Kevin Knight. <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1010.htm>.

- Kelly, J. N. D., and Michael J. Walsh. *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes*. Rev. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Kempers, Bram. *Painting, Power and Patronage: The Rise of the Professional Artist in the Italian Renaissance*. Translated by Beverley Jackson. London: Penguin, 1987.
- Kent, Dale. "The Dynamic of Medici Power." In *Patronage, Art and Society in Renaissance Italy*, edited by Francis W. Kent and Patricia Simons, 63–77. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Friendship, Love, and Trust in Renaissance Florence*. The Bernard Berenson Lectures on the Italian Renaissance. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.
- Kent, Francis W. *Lorenzo de' Medici and the Art of Magnificence*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.
- Kent, Francis W. and Patricia Simon, eds. *Patronage, Art and Society in Renaissance Italy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Kessler, Herbert L., and Johanna Zacharias. *Rome 1300: On the Path of the Pilgrim*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- Kettering, Sharon. "Patronage in Early Modern France." *French Historical Studies* 17, no. 4 (1992): 839–62.
- Kirk, Terry. "Framing St. Peter's: Urban Planning in Fascist Rome." *The Art Bulletin* 88, no. 4 (2006): 756–76.
- Kirschbaum, Engelbert. *The Tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1959.
- Kleinbub, Christian K. *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011.
- Krautheimer, Richard. *Rome: Profile of a City, 312-1308*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.
- Kris, Ernst and Otto Kurz. *Legend, Myth, and Magic in the Image of the Artist: A Historical Experiment*. Translated by Alastair Lang. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.
- Kuntz, Margaret. "The Cappella Paolina: Before and After Michelangelo." PhD diss., Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Frederico Zuccari, Gregory XIII, and the Vault Frescoes of the Cappella Paolina." *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 32 (1997-1998): 221–9.



- \_\_\_\_\_. "Designed for Ceremony: The Cappella Paolina at the Vatican Palace." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 62 (2003): 228–55.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Ceremonial Ensemble: Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* and the Cappella Paolina Frescoes." In *Michelangelo's Last Judgment*, edited by Marcia Hall, 150–82. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Maderno's Building Procedures at New St. Peter's: Why the Facade First?" *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 68 (2005): 41–60.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Pope Gregory XIII, Cardinal Sirleto, and Federico Zuccaro: The Program for the Altar Chancel of the Cappella Paolina in the Vatican Palace." *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 35 (2008): 87–112.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Mimesis, Ceremony, Praxis: The Cappella Paolina as the Holy Sepulcher." *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 54 (2009): 61–82.
- LaBreche, Ben. "Patronage, Friendship, and Sincerity in Bacon and Spenser." *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 50, no. 1 (2010): 83–108.
- La Cava, Francesco. *Il volto di Michelangelo scoperto nel Giudizio Finale: Un drama psicologico in un ritratto simbolico*. Bologna: Zanichelli, 1925.
- Lanciani, Rodolfo. *The Golden Days of the Renaissance in Rome from the Pontificate of Julius II to that of Paul III*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1906.
- Lanzani, Vittorio. "'Ubi Petrus': The Confessio of St. Peter's from the Earliest Times." In *Pilgrims to Peter's Tomb*, edited by Giovanni Morello, 35–59. Milan: Electa, 1999.
- Lavin, Irving. "The Campidoglio and Sixteenth-Century Stage Design." In *Michelangelo: Selected Scholarship in English. Vol. 4: Tomb of Julius II and Other Works in Rome*, edited by William E. Wallace, 244–51. New York: Garland Publishing, 1995.
- Leader, Anne. "Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*: The Culmination of Papal Propaganda in the Sistine Chapel." *Studies in Iconography* 27 (2006): 103–56.
- Lestocquoy, J., ed. *Correspondance des nonces en France Carpi et Ferrerio 1535-40 et legations de Carpi et de Farnese*. Rome: Presses de l'Universite Gregorienne, 1961.
- Lewine, Carol F. *The Sistine Chapel Walls and the Roman Liturgy*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993.
- Liebert, Robert S. *Michelangelo, a Psychoanalytic Study of His Life and Images*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983.
- Lomazzo, Gian Paolo. *Idea del tempio della pittura*. Milan: Paolo Gottardo Pontio, 1590.

- Lowe, Kate. "‘Representing’ Africa: Ambassadors and Princes from Christian Africa to Renaissance Italy and Portugal, 1402-1608." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 17 (2007): 101–28.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Introduction: The Black African Presence in Renaissance Europe." In *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, edited by T. F. Earle and Kate Lowe, 1–14. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Stereotyping of Black Africans in Renaissance Europe." In *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, edited by T. F. Earle and Kate Lowe, 17–47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- De Luca, Maurizio, et.al., *The Pauline Chapel*. Vatican City: Edizioni Musei Vaticani, 2013.
- Lucas, Henry S. "Survival of the Catholic Faith in the Sixteenth Century." *The Catholic Historical Review* 29, no. 1 (1943): 25–52.
- Lydecker, John Kent. "The Patron, Date, and Original Location of Andrea Del Sarto's Tobias Altar-Piece." *The Burlington Magazine* 127 (1985): 349–53, 355.
- Lytle, Guy Fitch, and Stephen Orgel. *Patronage in the Renaissance*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981.
- Mack, Charles. "Nicholas the Fifth and the Rebuilding of Rome: Reality and Legacy." In *Light on the Eternal City: Observations and Discoveries in the Art and Architecture of Rome*, edited by Helmut Hager and Susan Scott Munshower, vol. 2, 12–29. Dexter, Michigan: Thomson-Shore, 1987.
- Majanlahti, Anthony. *The Families Who Made Rome: A History and a Guide*. London: Chatto & Windus, 2005.
- Marchisano, Francesco Cardinal. "La Basilica di San Pietro e la Fabbrica di San Pietro." In *Petros eni Pietros è qui*, edited by Braccio di Carlo Magno, 13–14. Vatican City: Edinidustria, 2006.
- Mancinelli, Fabrizio. "Michelangelo's Last Judgment: Technique and Restoration." In Partridge, Mancinelli and Colalucci, *A Glorious Restoration*, 157–86.
- Martin, Gregory. *Roma Sancta (1581)*. Edited by George Bruner Parks. Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1969.
- Martin, John Jeffries. "Renovatio and Reform in Early Modern Italy." In *Heresy, Culture and Religion in Early Modern Italy: Contexts and Contestations*, edited by Ronald K. Delph, Michelle M. Fontaine and John Jeffries Martin, 1–20. Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2006.

- Mayer, Thomas. "The Historical and Religious Circumstances of the *Last Judgment*." In *Michelangelo's Last Judgment*, edited by Marcia Hall, 76–94. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Mazzoleni, Danilo. "I poveri a San Pietro." In *Petros eni Pietros è qui*, edited by Braccio di Carlo Magno, 148–172. Vatican City: Edindustria, 2006.
- McNeill, John T. *The History and Character of Calvinism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967.
- Michelis, Antonella de. "Mapping Farnese Rome: The Urban Planning Process and Projects Under Pope Paul III 1534-1549." PhD diss., Courtauld Institute, 2006.
- Milanesi, Gaetano, ed. *Le lettere di Michelangelo Buonarroti pubblicate coi ricordi ed i contratti artistici*. Florence: Le Monnier, 1875.
- Minnich, Nelson H. "The Catholic Church and the Pastoral Care of Black Africans in Renaissance Italy." In *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, edited by T. F. Earle and Kate Lowe, 280–302. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Mitchell, Bonner. *The Majesty of the State: Triumphal Progresses of Foreign Sovereigns in Renaissance Italy (1494-1600)*. Biblioteca dell'Archivum Romanicum. Series I, Storia, Letteratura, Paleografia, vol. 203. Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1986.
- Montanari, Massimo. *Cheese, Pears, & History in a Proverb*. Translated by Beth Archer Brombert. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.
- Moroni, Gaetano. *Dizionario di erudizione storico-ecclesiastica da S. Pietro sino ai nostri giorno*. Venice, 1840.
- Morrogh, Andrew. "The Medici Chapel: The Designs for the Central Tomb." In *Michelangelo Drawings*, edited by Craig Hugh Smith, 143-62. Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1992.
- Murphy-Livingston, Debra Lyn. "The Fresco Decoration of the Pauline Rooms in the Palazzo dei Conservatori." PhD diss., Boston University, 1993.
- Mussolin, Mauro, ed. *Michelangelo: Architetto a Roma*. Milan: Silvana, 2009.
- Nagel, Alexander. "Gifts for Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna." *The Art Bulletin* 79, no. 4 (1997): 647–668.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Art as Gift: Liberal Art and Religious Reform in the Renaissance." In *Negotiating the Gift: Pre-Modern Figurations of Exchange*, edited by Gadi Algazi, Valentin Groebner and Bernhard Jussen, 319–60. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Controversy of Renaissance Art*. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011.
- Naphy, William G, ed. *Documents on the Continental Reformation*. Macmillan Documents in History. Houndmills, UK: Macmillan, 1996.
- Navenne, Ferdinand Henri de. *Rome et le Palais Farnèse pendant les trois derniers siècles*. Paris: E. Champion, 1923.
- Nelson, Jonathan Katz and Richard Zeckhauser. *The Patron's Payoff: Conspicuous Commissions in Italian Renaissance Art*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.
- Nesselrath, Arnold. "A Masterpiece Blackened by Thousands of Candles." In *The Pauline Chapel*, edited by Maurizio DeLuca et al., 23–30.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Restoration Project for the Pauline Chapel." In *The Pauline Chapel*, edited by Maurizio DeLuca et al., 31–42.
- Nichols, Francis Morgan, trans. and ed. *The Marvels of Rome: Mirabilia Urbis Romae*. 2nd ed. New York: Italica Press, 1986.
- Nogara, Bartolomeo. "Studi e providenze per gli afreschi di Michelangelo nelle Cappelle Sistine e Paolina." *Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archaeologia* 9 (n.d.): 167–99.
- Noreen, Kristin. "Sacred Memory and Confraternal Space: The Insignia of the Confraternity of the Santissimo Salvatore (Rome)." In *Roma Felix : Formation and Reflections of Medieval Rome*, edited by Éamonn Ó Carragáin and Carol L. Neuman de Vegvar, 159–87. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007.
- Nova, Alessandro. "Hat Michelangelo ein Altarbild für die Cappella Paolina geplant?" In *Michelangelo als Zeichner. Akten des Internationalen Kolloquiums Wien, Albertina-Museum, 19.-20. November 2010*, edited by Claudia Echinger-Maurach, Achim Gnann, Joachim Poeschke, 365–91. Münster: Rhema-Verlag, 2013.
- Och, Marjorie. "Vittoria Colonna and the Commission for a *Mary Magdalen* by Titian." In *Beyond Isabella: Secular Women Patrons of Art in Renaissance Italy*, edited by Sheryl E. Reiss and David G. Wilkins, 193–224. Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2001.
- O'Connell, J. B. *Church Building and Furnishing, the Church's Way: A Study in Liturgical Law*. London: Burns and Oates, 1955.
- O'Malley, John W. "Giles of Viterbo: A Reformer's Thought on Renaissance Rome." *Renaissance Quarterly* 20 (1967): 1–11.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome: Rhetoric, Doctrine, and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, c. 1450-1521*. Duke Monographs in Medieval and Renaissance Studies 3. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1979.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *A History of the Popes: From Peter to the Present*. Lanham, MD: Sheed & Ward, 2010.
- O'Malley, Michelle. *The Business of Art: Contracts and the Commissioning Process in Renaissance Italy*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.
- Orbaan, J. A. F. "Zur Baugeschichte Der Peterskuppel." *Jahrbuch der königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 38 (1917): 189–207.
- Ostrow, Steven. "The Counter-Reformation and the End of the Century." In *Rome*, edited by Marcia Hall, 246–320. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Padgett, John F. "Open Elite? Social Mobility, Marriage, and Family in Florence, 1282–1494." *Renaissance Quarterly* 63, no. 2 (2010): 357–411.
- Palladio, Andrea. *Palladio's Rome: a translation of Andrea Palladio's two guidebooks to Rome*. Translated and edited by Vaughan Hart and Peter Hicks. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Paolucci, Antonio. "The Last Exertion of Michelangelo the Painter." In *The Pauline Chapel*, edited by Maurizio DeLuca et al., 17–22.
- Paravicini-Bagliani, Agostino. *The Pope's Body*. Translated by David S. Peterson. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Partner, Peter. *Renaissance Rome, 1500-1559: A Portrait of a Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Papal Financial Policy in the Renaissance and Counter-Reformation." *Past & Present* 88 (1980): 17–62.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Pope's Men: The Papal Civil Service in the Renaissance*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.
- Partridge, Loren "Divinity and Dynasty at Caprarola: Perfect History in the Room of Farnese Deeds." *The Art Bulletin* 60, no. 3 (1978): 494–530.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Michelangelo's Last Judgment: An Interpretation." In Partridge, Mancinelli and Colalucci, *Glorious Restoration*, 8–154.
- Partridge, Loren, and Randolph Starn. "Triumphalism and the Sala Regia in the Vatican." In *All the World's a Stage... ": Art and Pageantry in the Renaissance and Baroque*, edited by Barbara Wisch and Susan Scott Munshower, 22–81. University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1990.

- Partridge, Loren, Gianluigi Colalucci, and Fabrizio Mancinelli. *Michelangelo—the Last Judgment: A Glorious Restoration*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997.
- Pastor, Ludwig von. *Geschichte der Päpste seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters: Mit Benutzung des päpstlichen Geheim-Archives und vieler anderer Archive*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1886
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages: Drawn from the Secret Archives of the Vatican and Other Original Sources*. 5th ed. 40 vols. St. Louis, MO: Herder, 1938-61.
- Pattenden, Miles. "Governor and Government in Sixteenth-Century Rome." *Papers of the British School at Rome* 77 (2009): 257–272.
- Pecchiai, Pio. *Il Campidoglio nel cinquecento: Sulla scorta dei documenti*. Rome: N. Ruffolo, 1950.
- Pennington, Kenneth. *Pope and Bishops: The Papal Monarchy in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984.
- Perkins, Charles. *Raphael and Michelangelo: A Critical and Biographical Essay*. Boston: J. R. Osgood and Company, 1878.
- Perrig, Alexander. *Michelangelo's Drawings: The Science of Attribution*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.
- Pinelli, Antonio, ed. *La basilica di San Pietro in Vaticano*. Modena: F.C. Panini, 2000.
- Platina, Bartolomeo. *Lives of the Popes*. Translated and edited by Anthony D'Elia. Vol. 1. I Tatti Renaissance Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008.
- Pocknee, Cyril E. *The Christian Altar in History and Today*. London: A. R. Mowbray, 1963.
- Pollak, Oskar. "Ausgewählte Akten zur Geschichte der römischen Peterskirche (1535-1621)." *Jahrbuch der königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 36 (1915): 21–117.
- Pon, Lisa. "Writing on Walls: Michelangelo's Lunettes and Inscriptions in the Sistine Chapel." Master's thesis, Washington University in St. Louis, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Note on the Ancestors of Christ in the Sistine Chapel." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 61 (1998): 254–8.
- Portoghesi, Paolo, et al. *Michelangiolo Architetto*. Collana Storica di Architettura 6. Turin: Einaudi, 1964.
- Ramsden, E. H. *The Letters of Michelangelo*. 2 vols. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1963.

- Rebecchini, Guido. "After the Medici, the New Rome of Pope Paul III Farnese." *I Tatti Studies* 11 (2007): 147–200.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Michelangelo e le mura di Roma." In *Michelangelo: Architetto a Roma*, edited by Mauro Mussolin, 114–117. Milan: Silvana, 2009.
- Reiss, Sheryl E. "Cardinal Giulio de' Medici as Patron of Art 1513-23." PhD diss., Princeton University, 1992.
- Sheryl E. Reiss and David G. Wilkins, *Beyond Isabella: Secular Women Patrons of Art in Renaissance Italy*. Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2001.
- Richardson, Carol M. *Reclaiming Rome: Cardinals in the Fifteenth Century*. Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 173. Leiden: Brill, 2009.
- Rice, Louise. *The Altars and Altarpieces of New St. Peter's: Outfitting the Basilica, 1621-1666*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Robertson, Charles. "Bramante, Michelangelo and the Sistine Ceiling." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 49 (1986): 91–105; rpt. in *Michelangelo: Selected Readings*, edited by William E. Wallace, 195-231. New York: Garland Publishing, 1999,.
- Robertson, Clare. *Il Gran Cardinale: Alessandro Farnese, Patron of the Arts*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "New documents for the tomb of Paul III." *Romisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 34 (2004), 201–220.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Phoenix Romanus: Rome, 1534-1565." In *Rome*, edited by Marcia Hall, 184–245. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Patronage Rivalries: Cardinals Odoardo Farnese and Pietro Aldobrandi." In *Art and Identity in Early Modern Rome*, edited by Jill Burke and Michael Bury, 95–112. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008.
- Robinson, Ian Stewart. *The Papacy 1073-1198: Continuity and Innovation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Röll, Johannes. "The Ciborium of Sixtus IV." In *Sisto IV: Le arti a Roma nel primo rinascimento. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi*, edited by Fabio Benzi and Claudio Crescentini, 385–97. Rome: Associazione Culturale Shakespeare and Company 2, 2000.
- Roscoe, William, and Thomas Roscoe. *The Life and Pontificate of Leo the Tenth*. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1900.

- Rubin, Miri. *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Russo, Laura. *Santa Maria in Aracoeli*. Rome: Elio de Rosa, 2007.
- Ruvoldt, Maria. "Michelangelo's Slaves and the Gift of Liberty." *Renaissance Quarterly* 65, no. 4 (2012): 1029–59.
- Saalman, Howard. "Michelangelo at St. Peter's: The Arberino Correspondence." *The Art Bulletin* 60 (1978): 483–93.
- Sala, Aristide. *Documenti circa la vita e le gesta di San Carlo Borromeo*. Milan: Z. Brasca, 1857.
- Sandström, Sven. "The Sistine Chapel Ceiling." In *Levels of Unreality: Studies in the Structure and Construction in Italian Mural Painting of the Renaissance*, edited by Sven Sandstrom, 173–86, 189–91, 253, 256–60. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Levels of Unreality: Studies in Structure and Construction in Italian Mural Painting during the Renaissance*. Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, new series 4. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1963.
- Sanuto, Marino. *I diarii di Marino Sanuto*. Bologna: Forni, 1969.
- Sanzio, Raphael. *Tutti gli scritti*. Edited by Ettore Camesasca. Milan: Rizzoli, 1956.
- Schiavo, Armando. *La vita e le opere architettoniche di Michelangelo*. Roma: La Libreria dello Stato, 1953.
- Schimmelpfennig, Bernhard. "Papal Coronations in Avignon." In *Coronations: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual*, edited by János M. Bak, 179–96. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
- Schlitt, Melinda. "Painting, Criticism, and Michelangelo's Last Judgment in the Age of the Counter-Reformation." In *Michelangelo's Last Judgment*, edited by Marcia Hall, 113–149. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Schraven, Minou. "Majesty and Mortality: Attitudes towards the Corpse in Papal Funeral Ceremonies." In *Roman Bodies: Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century*, edited by Andrew Hopkins and Maria Wyke, 143–56. London: British School at Rome, 2005.
- Shearman, John. *Raphael's Cartoons in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen, and the Tapestries for the Sistine Chapel*. London: Phaidon, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Only Connect: Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992.



- Sherr, Richard. "The Singers of the Papal Chapel and Liturgical Ceremonies in the Early Sixteenth Century: Some Documentary Evidence." In *Rome in the Renaissance: The City and the Myth*, edited by P.A. Ramsey, 237–48. Binghamton: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1982.
- Shrimplin-Evangelidis, Valerie. "Sun-Symbolism and Cosmology in Michelangelo's Last Judgment." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 21 (1990): 607–44.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Hell in Michelangelo's 'Last Judgment'." *Artibus et Historiae* 15 (1994): 83–107.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sun Symbolism and Cosmology in Michelangelo's Last Judgment*. Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies 46. Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2000.
- Simoncini, Giorgio. *Roma: La trasformazione urbana nel Cinquecento. Topografia e urbanistica da Giulio II a Clement VIII, vol. 2*. Florence: L. S. Olschki, 2008.
- Simons, Patricia. "Envy and the Other Vices in Michelangelo's Last Judgment." *Source* 33, no. 2 (2014): 13–20.
- Snoek, Godefridus J. C. *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist: A Mutual Relationship*. Studies in the History of Christian Thought 63. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995.
- Soderini, Giovanni Vittorio. *Trattato della coltivazione delle viti e del frutto che se ne può cavare*. Milan: Società Tipografica de' Classici Italiani, 1806.
- Soussloff, Catherine. "Imitatio Buonarroti." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 20 (1989): 581–602.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Absolute Artist: The Historiography of a Concept*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997.
- Spear, Richard E. "Scrambling for Scudi: Notes on Painters' Earnings in Early Baroque Rome." *The Art Bulletin* 85, no. 2 (2003): 310–20.
- Steinberg, Leo. *Michelangelo's Last Paintings: The Conversion of St. Paul and the Crucifixion of St. Peter in the Cappella Paolina, Vatican Palace*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Michelangelo's Last Judgment as Merciful Heresy." *Art in America* 63 (1975): 48–63.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Corner of the Last Judgment." *Daedalus* 109 (1980): 207–73.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Line of Fate in Michelangelo's Painting." *Critical Inquiry* 6 (1980): 411–454.
- Steinmann, Ernst. *Die Sixtinische Kapelle*. 2 vols. Munich: Bruckman, 1901-1905.
- Steinmann, Ernst, and Heinrich Pogatcher. "Dokumente und Forschungen zu Michelangelo." *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 29 (1906): 387–424, 486–517.

- Stinger, Charles. *The Renaissance in Rome*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Campidoglio as the Locus of *Renovatio Imperii* in Renaissance Rome." In *Art and Politics in Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Italy, 1250-1500*, edited by Charles M. Rosenberg, 135–156. South Bend, IN: Notre Dame, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Roman Humanist Images of Rome." In *Roma Capitale (1447-1527)*, edited by Sergio Gensini, 15–38. Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato. Saggi 29. Rome: Ministero per i beni culturali e ambientali, Ufficio centrale per i beni archivistici, 1994.
- Stollhans, Cynthia. "Michelangelo's Nude Saint Catherine of Alexandria." *Woman's Art Journal* 19 (1998): 26–30.
- Stone, Darwell. *The Reserved Sacrament*. 2nd ed. London: R. Scott, 1918.
- Summers, David. "Michelangelo on Architecture." *The Art Bulletin* 54 (1972): 146–57.
- Symonds, John Addington. *The Life of Michelangelo Buonarroti, Based on Studies in the Archives of the Buonarroti Family at Florence*. 3rd. ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002.
- Temple, Nicholas. *Renovatio Urbis: Architecture, Urbanism, and Ceremony in the Rome of Julius II*. London: Routledge, 2011.
- Tertullian, *De Praescriptione haereticorum*. Centre Traditio Literarum Occidentalum, Library of Latin Texts, series A, electronic database for the western Latin tradition. Turnhout: Brepols, 2010. <http://clt.brepolis.net.libproxy.wustl.edu/llta/pages/Toc.aspx>
- Thode, Henry. *Michelangelo und das ende der Renaissance*. 3 vols. Berlin: G. Grote, 1902.
- Thoenes, Christof. "Renaissance St. Peter's." In *St. Peter's in the Vatican*, edited by William Tronzo, 64–92. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Thurston, Herbert. "The Quarant'Ore." *The Month: A Catholic Magazine and Review* (1896): 180–97.
- De Tolnay, Charles. *Michelangelo*. 5 vols. Princeton, 1943-1960, rpt. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1969-71.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Michelangelo's Pietà Composition for Vittoria Colonna." *Record of the Princeton University Art Museum* 12, no.2 (1953): 44–62.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna." In *Sixteenth-Century Italian Art*, edited by Michael Wayne Cole, 306–323. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.

- Traina, Mario. "Quel malizioso Ganimede 'purgato.' A proposito del 'Giudizio Universale' di Michelangelo e di una medaglia del Grechetto per Papa Farnese." *Medaglia* 7 (1977): 6–13.
- Trevor-Roper, Hugh. *Princes and Artists: Patronage and Ideology at Four Habsburg Courts, 1517-1633*. New York: Harper & Row, 1976.
- Trexler, Richard. *Public Life in Renaissance Italy*. New York: Academic Press, 1980.
- Turner, John. "Michelangelo's Blacks in the *Last Judgment*." *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 33, no. 1 (2013): 8–15.
- Uginet, François-Charles, and François Fossier, eds. *Le Palais Farnèse*. 3 vols. Rome: École française de Rome, 1980.
- Vasari, Giorgio. *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*. 6 vols. Florence: Sansoni, 1966-87.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Great Masters*. Edited by Michael Sonino. Translated by Gaston du C. de Vere. Hong Kong: Beaux Arts Editions, Hugh Lauter Levin, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Lives of the Artists*. Translated by Julia C. Bondanella and Peter Bondanella. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Life of Michelangelo (1550)." In *Michelangelo: Poems and Letters*, translated and edited by Anthony Mortimer, 149–85. London: Penguin, 2007.
- De Vecchi, Pierluigi. "Michelangelo's Last Judgment." In *The Sistine Chapel: The Art, the History, and the Restoration*, edited by Carlo Pietrangeli, 176–217. New York: Harmony Books, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Michelangelo: The Vatican Frescoes*. New York: Abbeville Press, 1996.
- Verstegen, Ian F., ed. *Patronage and Dynasty: The Rise of the Della Rovere in Renaissance Italy*. Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies 77. Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2007.
- Voragine, Jacobus de. *Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*. 2 vols. Translated by William G. Ryan. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Wackernagel, Martin. *The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist: Projects and Patrons, Workshop and Art Market*. Translated by Alison Luchs. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981.
- Wallace, William E. "Narrative and Religious Expression in Michelangelo's Pauline Chapel." *Artibus et Historiae* 10 (1989): 107–21.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *Michelangelo at San Lorenzo: the Genius as Entrepreneur*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Miscellanea Curiositae Michelangelae: A Steep Tariff, a Half Dozen Horses, and Yards of Taffeta." *Renaissance Quarterly* 47, no. 2 (1994): 330–50.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Manoeuvring for Patronage: Michelangelo's Dagger." *Renaissance Studies* 11 (1997): 20–6.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Friends and Relics at San Silvestro in Capite, Rome." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 30 (1999): 419–39.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Michel Angelus Bonarotus Patritius Florentinus." In *Innovation and Tradition: Essays on Renaissance Art and Culture*, edited by Dag T. Andersson and Roy Eriksen, 60–74. Rome: Edizioni Kappa, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Clement VII and Michelangelo: An Anatomy of Patronage." In *The Pontificate of Clement VII: History, Politics, Culture*, edited by Kenneth Veld Gouwens and Sheryl E. Reiss, 189–198. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Nothing Else Happening." In *Michelangelo's Last Judgment*, edited by Marcia Hall, 51–75. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Doni's Double." *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 25 (2006): 10–15.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Reversing the Rules: Michelangelo and the Patronage of Sculpture." In *Patronage and Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, edited by Kathleen Christian and David Drogin, 149–167. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Michelangelo: The Man, the Artist and His Times*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Florence under the Medici Pontificates, 1513-1537." In *Artistic Centers of the Renaissance: Florence*, edited by Francis Ames-Lewis, 290–329. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Wandel, Lee Palmer. *The Eucharist in the Reformation: Incarnation and Liturgy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Warnke, Martin. *The Court Artist: On the Ancestry of the Modern Artist*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Warburg, Aby. "Art of Portraiture and the Florentine Bourgeoisie." In *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, Edited by Aby Warburg, translated by David Britt, 185–221. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999.

- Weil, Mark S. "The Devotion of the Forty Hours and Roman Baroque Illusions." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 37 (1974): 218–48.
- West, Delno C. "Medieval Ideas of Apocalyptic Mission and the Early Franciscans in Mexico." *The Americas* 45 (1989): 293–313.
- Westfall, William. *In This Most Perfect Paradise: Alberti, Nicholas V, and the Invention of Conscious Urban Planning in Rome, 1447-55*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1974.
- White, John, and John Shearman. "Raphael's Tapestries and Their Cartoons." *The Art Bulletin* 40, no. 3 (1958): 193–221.
- Wilde, Johannes. *Italian Drawings in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum: Michelangelo and His Studio*. London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1953.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Michelangelo: Six Lectures*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978.
- Williamson, Eila. "Alexander Rait, Familiar of the Pope, d. 1479." *Innes Review* 52 (2001): 29–41.
- Wittkower, Rudolf, and Margot Wittkower. *Born Under Saturn: The Character and Conduct of Artists, a Documented History from Antiquity to the French Revolution*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963.
- Wölfflin, Heinrich. *Classic Art: An Introduction to the Italian Renaissance*. 5th ed. New York: Phaidon, 1994.
- Wright, Anthony D. *The Early Modern Papacy: From the Council of Trent to the French Revolution, 1564-1789*. Longman History of the Papacy. Harlow, England ; New York: Longman, 2000.
- Young, Karl. "The Dramatic Associations of the Easter Sepulchre." *University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature* 10 (1920): 5–130.
- Zanchettin, Vitale. "Un disegno sconosciuto di Michelangelo per l'architrave del tamburo della Cupola di San Pietro in Vaticano." *Römische Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 37 (2006): 10–55.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Le verità della pietra. Michelangelo e la costruzione in travertino di San Pietro." In *Sankt Peter in Rom 1506-2006*, edited by George Satzinger and Sebastian Schütze, 159–174. Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Il tamburo della cupola di San Pietro in Vaticano." In *Michelangelo: Architetto a Roma*, edited by Mauro Mussolin, 180–99. Milan: Silvano Editoriale, 2009.

Zöllner, Frank, Christof Thoenes and Thomas Pöpper. *Michelangelo 1475-1564: Complete Works*. Translated by Karen Mcdermott. Cologne: Taschen Books, 2007.





Figure 1. *Last Judgment*, Sistine Chapel, Vatican,  
fresco, 14 x 13.18 m.





Figure 2. Michelangelo, *Conversion of Saul*,  
Pauline Chapel, Vatican,  
fresco, 6.25 x 6.61 m.



Figure 3. Michelangelo, *Crucifixion of Peter*,  
Pauline Chapel, Vatican,  
fresco, 6.25 x 6.62 m.

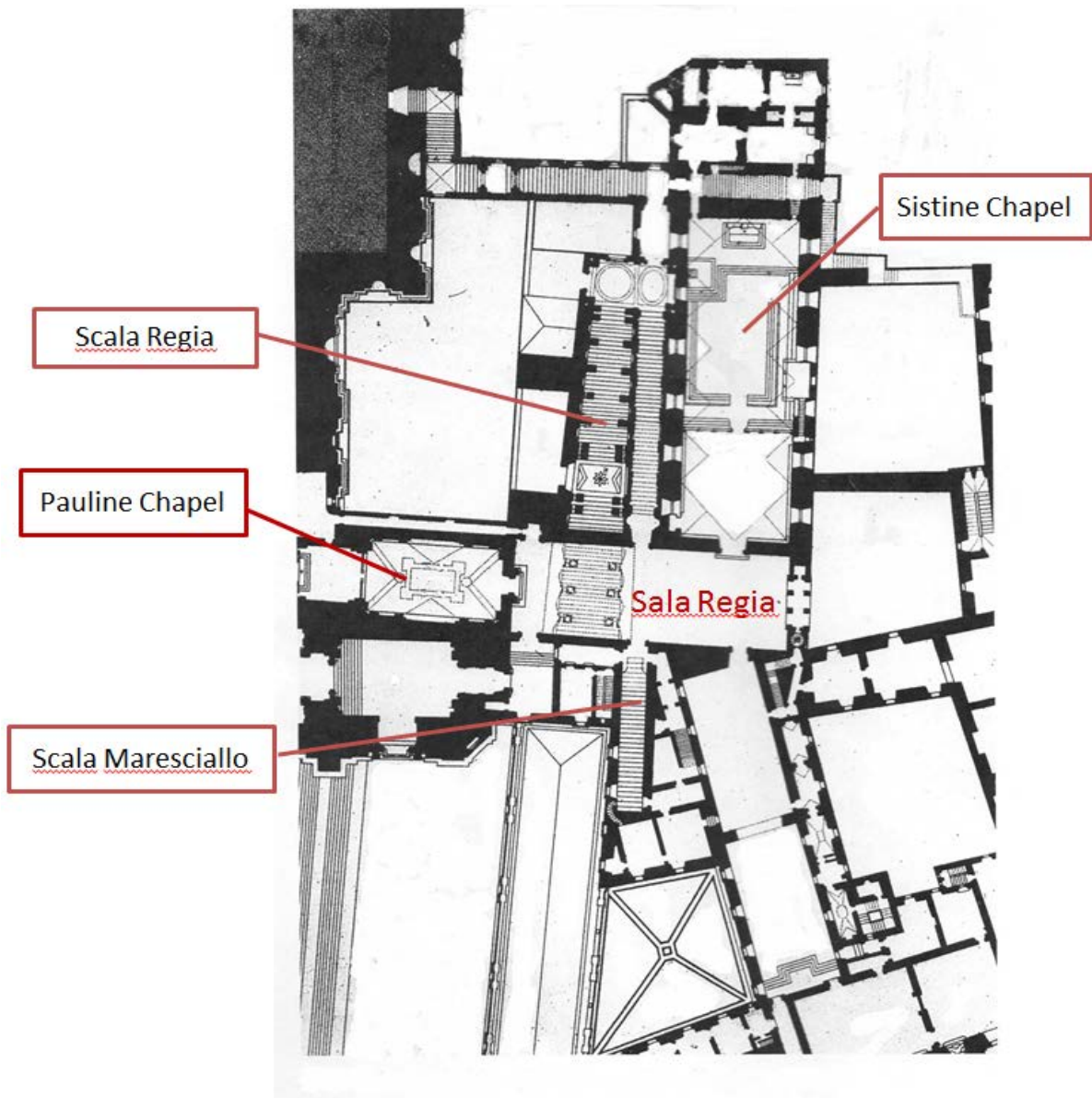


Figure 4. Partial plan of Apostolic Palace, after Letarouilly

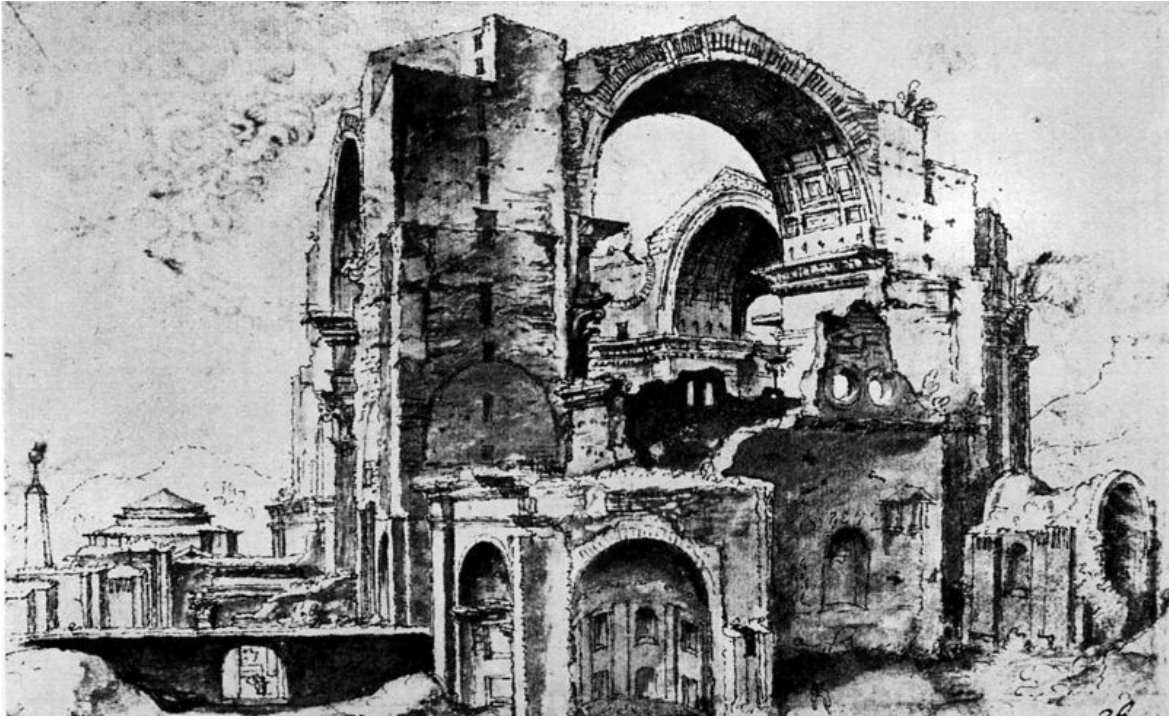


Figure 1.1. Maarten Van Heemskerck, *View of New St. Peter's Basilica*, 1536



Figure 1.2. Giovanni Battista Naldini, *New St. Peter's Basilica under construction, with view of Tegurium*, ca.1563



Figure 2.1. Sketch for Christ and the saints,  
black chalk, ca. 1534, 34.5 x 29.1 cm.  
Bayonne, Musée Bonnat, inv. No. 1217, recto



Figure 2.2. Sketch for the *Last Judgment*,  
black chalk, retouched later in pen,  
ca. 1534, 41.7 x 29.7 cm.  
Florence, Casa Buonarroti,  
inv. No. 65 F, recto



Figure 2.3. Sistine Chapel ceiling,  
Detail of area closest to the altar wall, 1508-12

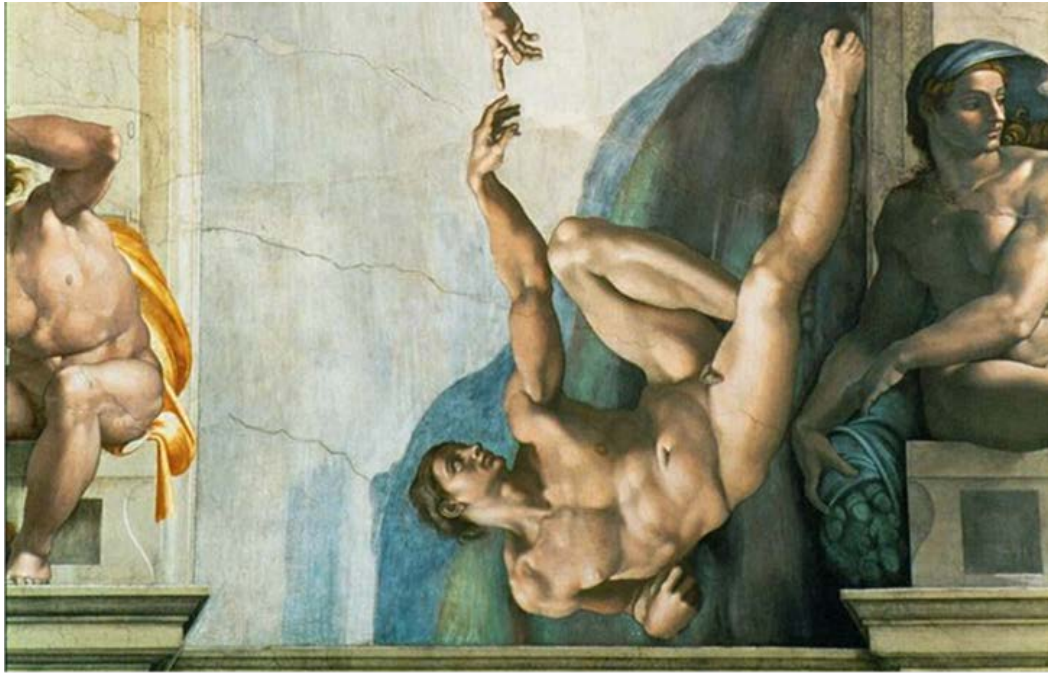


Figure 2.4. *Ignudo* from Sistine Chapel Ceiling, fresco, 1508-12



Figure 2.5. *Last Judgment*, detail from left side



Figure 2.6. Giotto, *Last Judgment*, Arena Chapel, Padua., west wall, c.1305





Figure 2.7. *Last Judgment*, detail of central portion of fresco



Figure 2.8. *Last Judgment*,  
detail of martyrs next to right edge of wall, above second corbel



Figure 2.9. *Last Judgment*, late afternoon without electric lights



Figure 2.10. *Last Judgment*, early evening without electric lights



Figure 2.11. *Last Judgment*, just before sunset without electric lights



Figure 2.12. *Last Judgment*, detail of lower left corner



Figure 2.13. Lucas Cranach,  
*The Papal Ass*, 1545, woodcut



Figure 2.14. Torre Paolina on the Capitoline Hill,  
Photo, 19<sup>th</sup> century

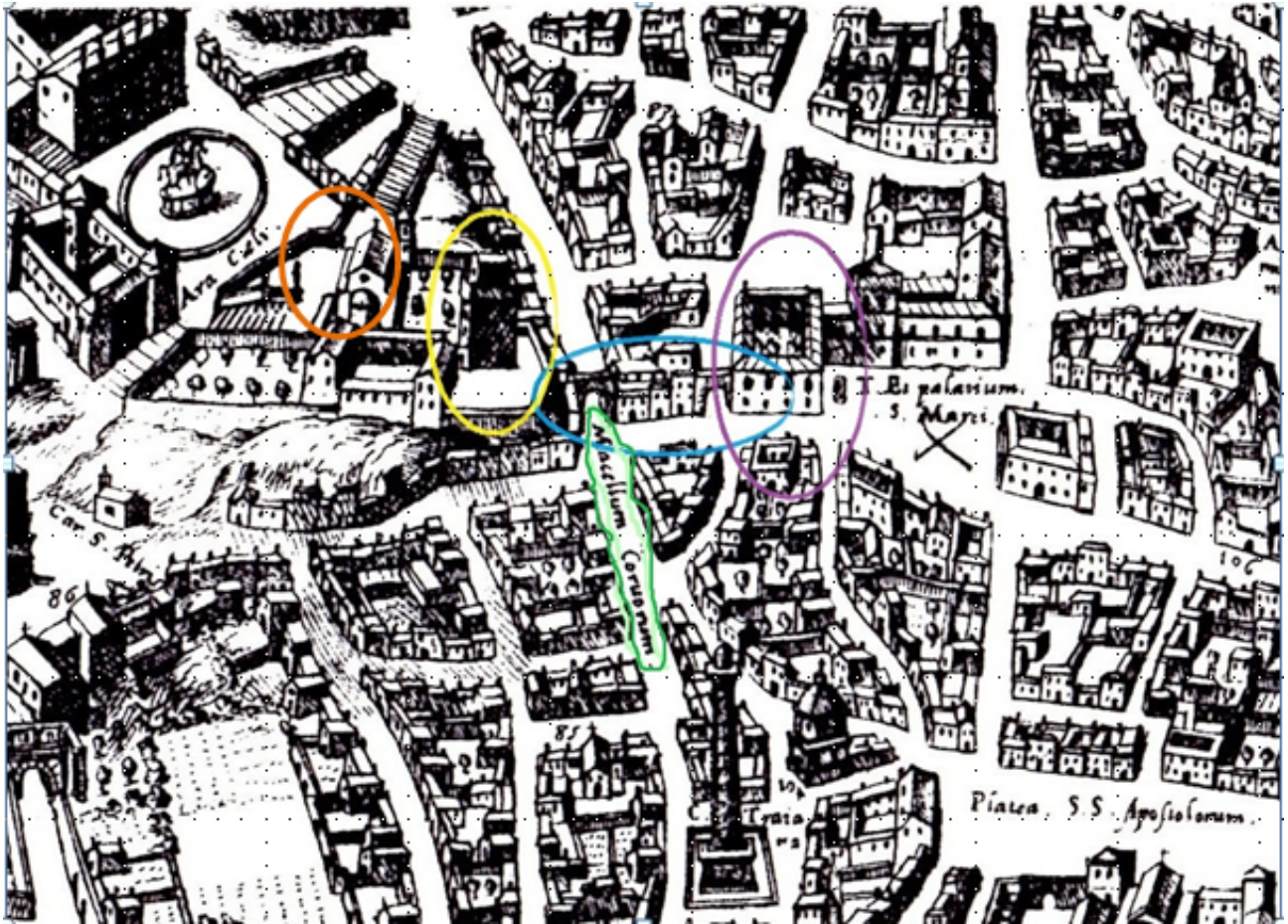


Figure 2.15. Map of Rome, by Du Pérac-Lafriéry, 1577, detail of Capitoline area with Santa Maria in Ara Coelli (circled in orange); Torre Paolina (circled in yellow); walkway to San Marco (circled in blue); Palazzo San Marco (circled in purple); and the Macel de' Corvi indicated in green.

The Church of S. Maria Sopra Minerva is at the upper right.



Figure 2.16. View of apse, Santa Sanctorum, 13<sup>th</sup> century



Figure 2.17. *Virgin and Christ Enthroned*, Santa Maria Maggiore, mosaic



Figure 2.18.  
Domenico Ghirlandaio,  
*Coronation of the Virgin*,  
Tornabuoni Chapel,  
Santa Maria Novella,  
Florence, fresco, 1486-90



Figure 2.19. Fra Angelico,  
*Annunciation*,  
Diocese Museum, Cortona,  
tempera on wood panel, 1433

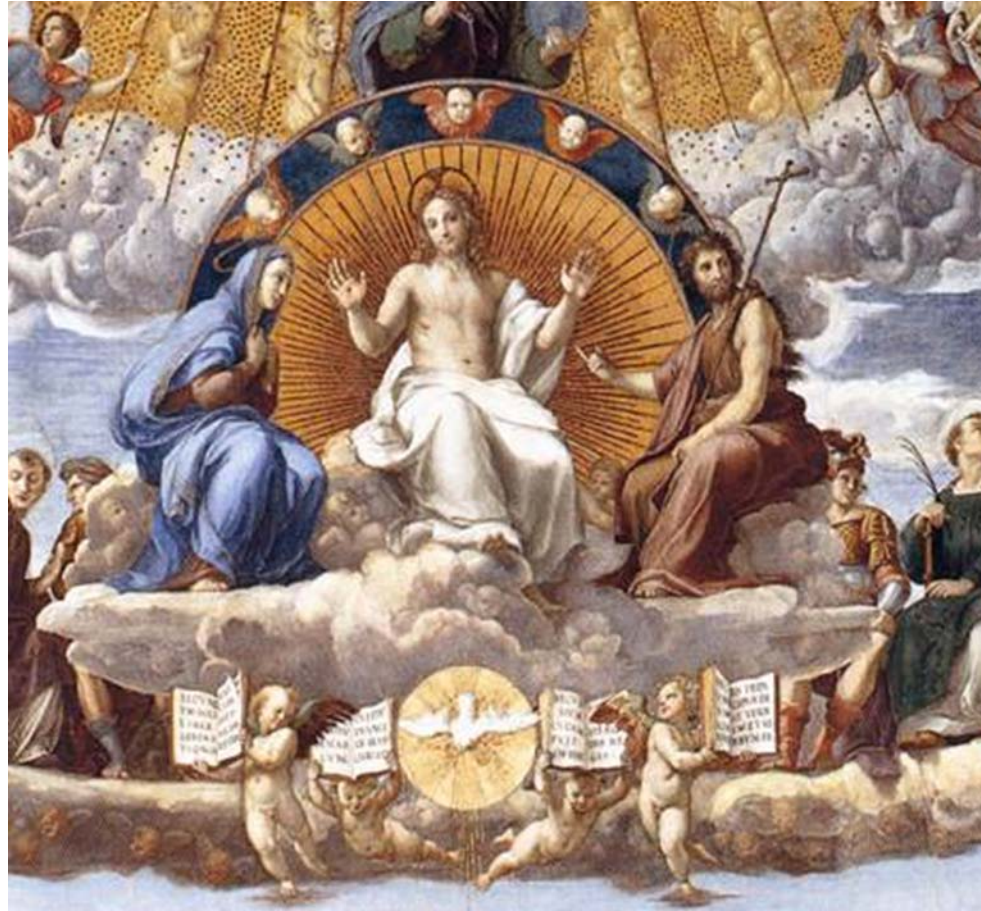


Figure 2.20. Raphael, *Dispute on the Blessed Sacraments* (detail), fresco, 1508-11



Figure 2.21. Filippino Lippi, *Assumption of the Virgin*, Caraffa Chapel, Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, Rome



Figure 2.22. Antonio Lafréry, Map of the Seven Pilgrimage Churches of Rome, 1575

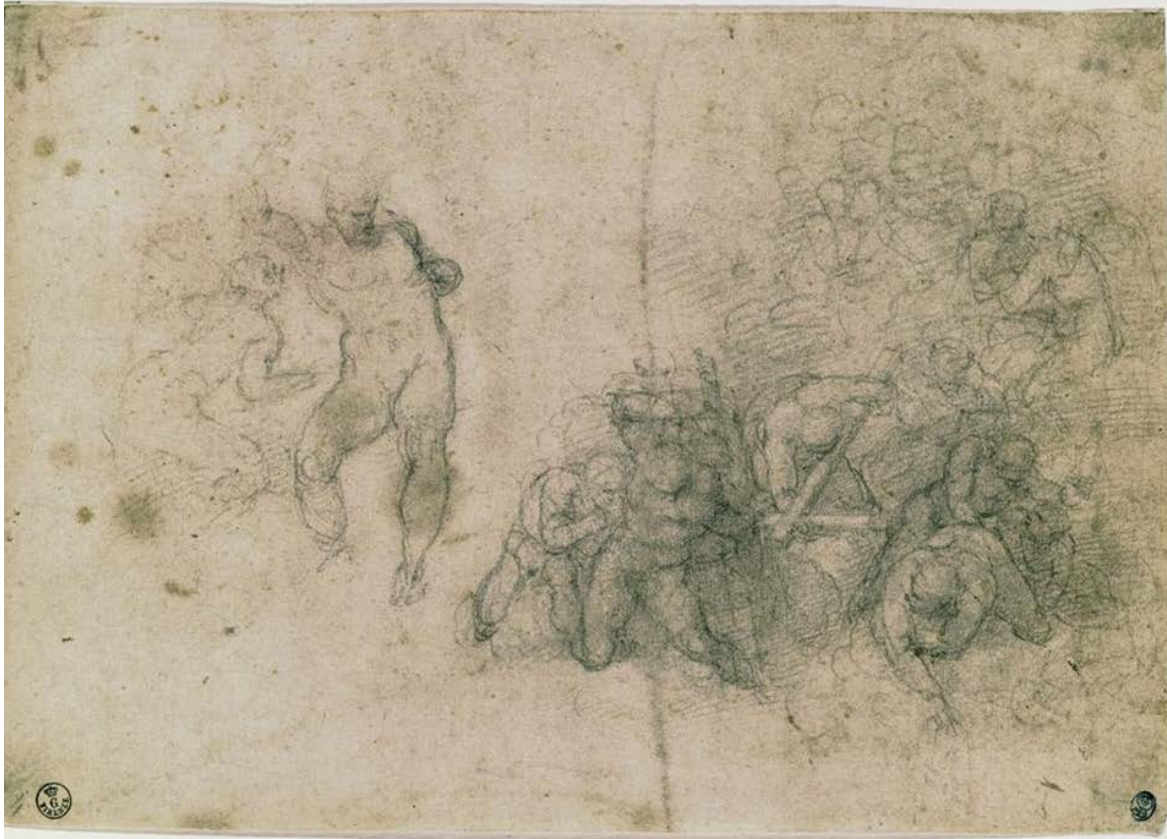


Figure 2.23. Michelangelo, Study for martyrs in the *Last Judgment*, Uffizi 170s

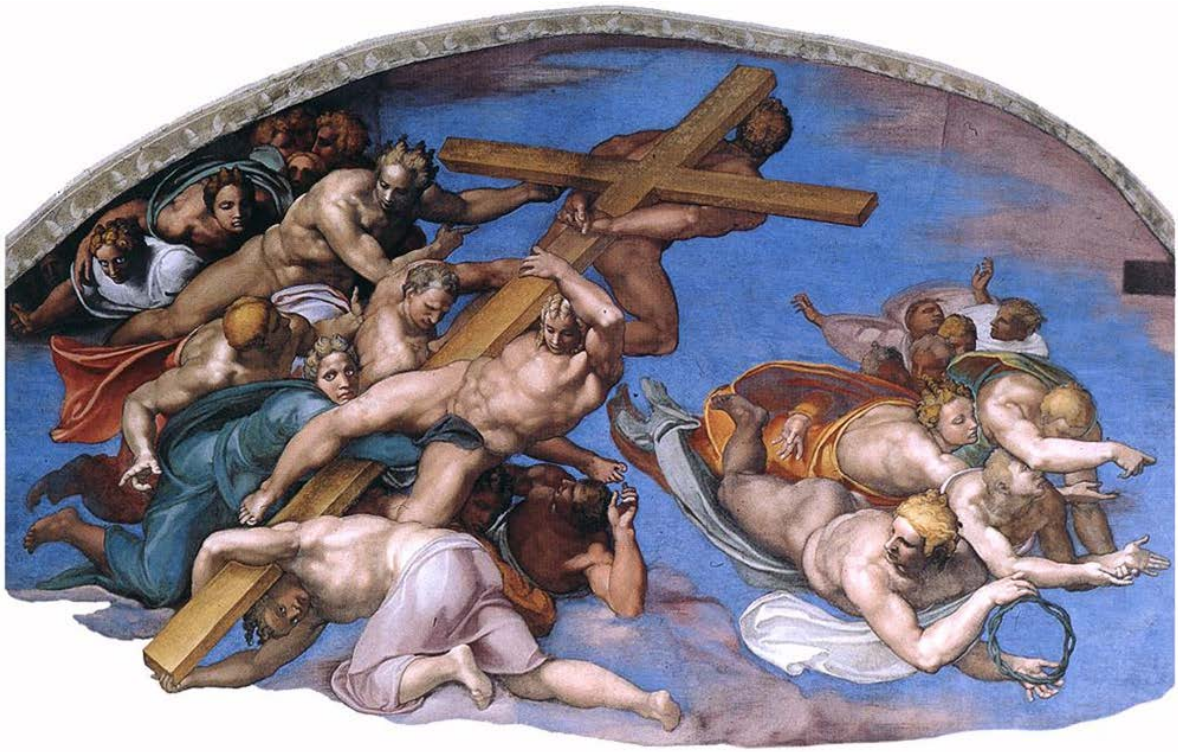


Figure 2.24. *Last Judgment*, left lunette



Figure 2.25. *Last Judgment*, right lunette

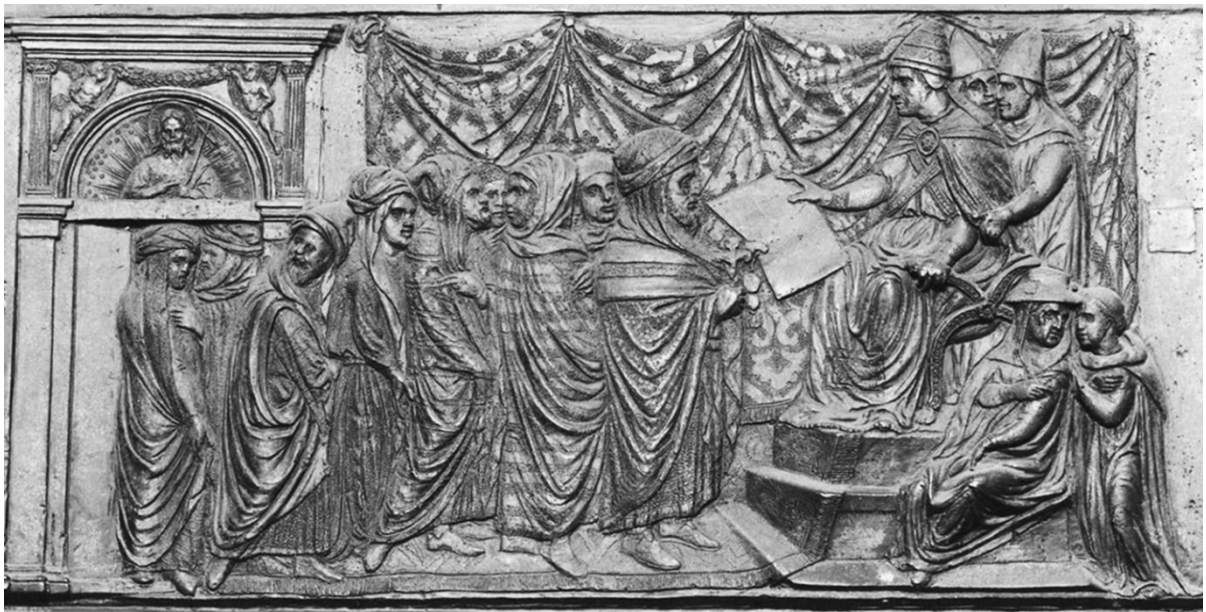


Figure 2.26. Filarete *Ethiopian and Coptic Delegates to Council of Florence* (1438-39)  
detail of bronze door of St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican





Figures 2.27. and 2.28. Pages from *Passional of Christ and the Antichrist*, with woodcuts by Lucas Cranach, pub. 1521



Figure 2.29. Title page of  
*Das Wolffgesang*, Ausberg, 1522

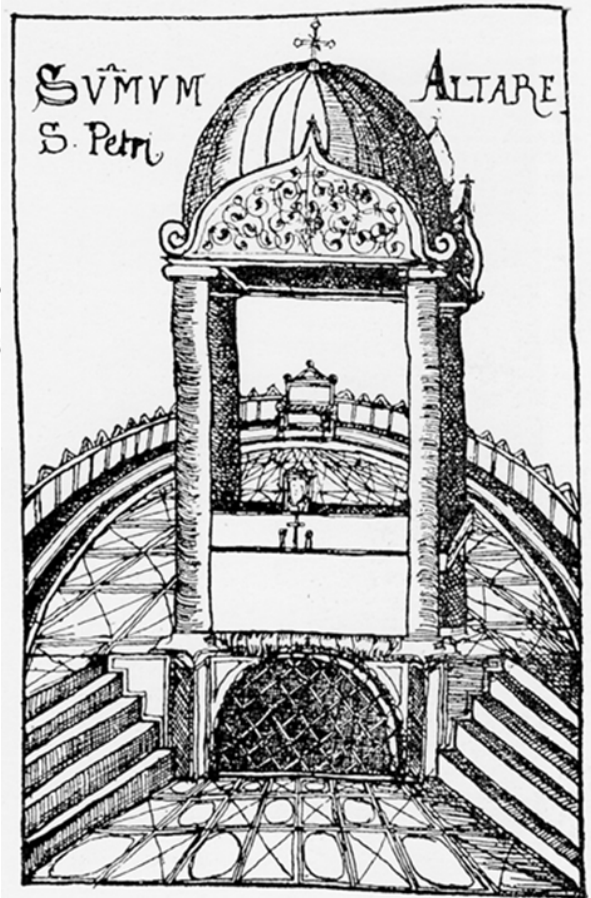


Figure 2.30. Print showing *confessio*  
over the altar at Old St. Peter's Basilica, 1581



Figure 2.31. Stone formerly over the tomb of St. Paul  
at the Basilica of St. Paul's Outside the Walls



Figure 3.1. Pauline Chapel, south wall with Michelangelo's *Conversion of Saul*



Figure 3.2. Pauline Chapel, north wall with Michelangelo's *Crucifixion of Peter*

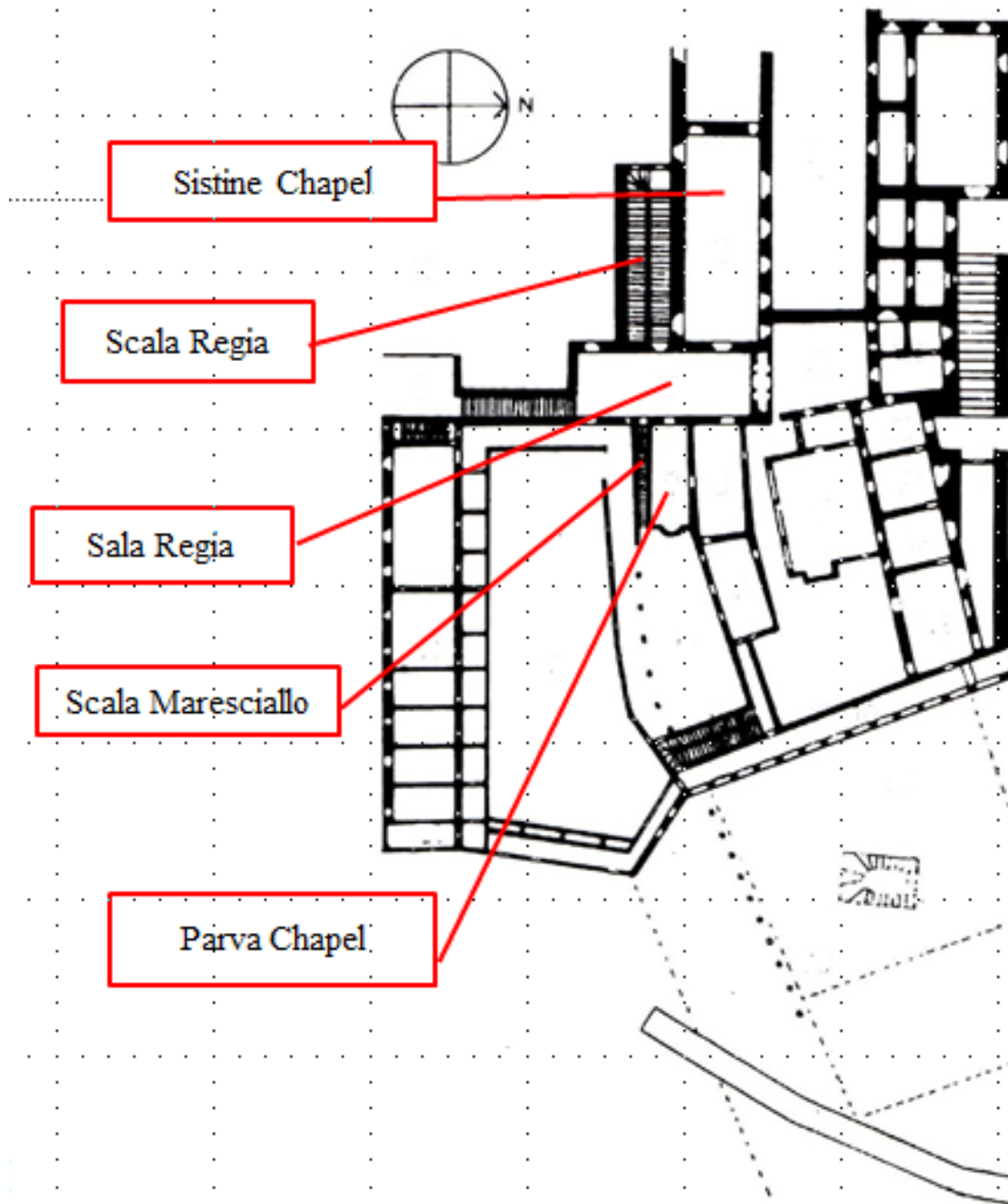


Figure 3.3. Partial plan, Apostolic Palace before 1534, Vatican, after Christof Frommel

Figure 3.5. Francesco Piranesi,  
*Devotion of the Quarant' Ore*  
*in the Pauline Chapel,*  
1787, Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
New York

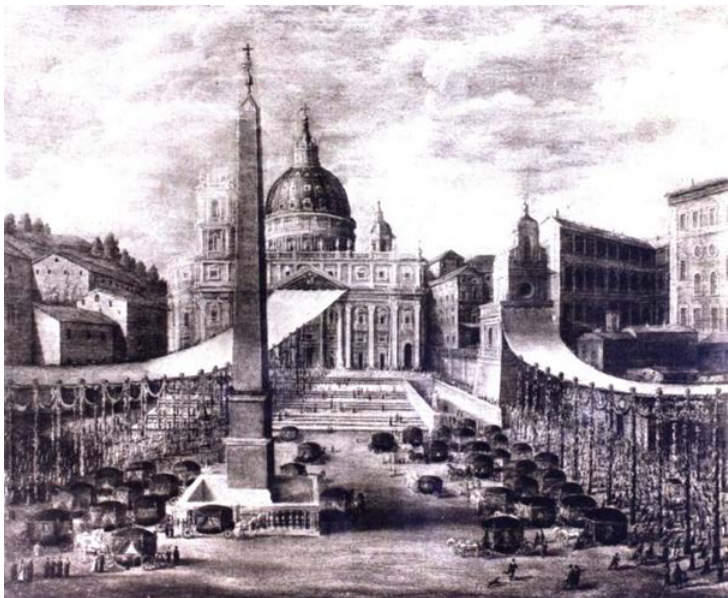


Figure 3.4. Anonymous,  
*Corpus Christi Procession*, before 1650



Figure 3.6. Sala Reggia, southern wall with entrance to Pauline Chapel



Figure 3.7. Interior of Pauline Chapel

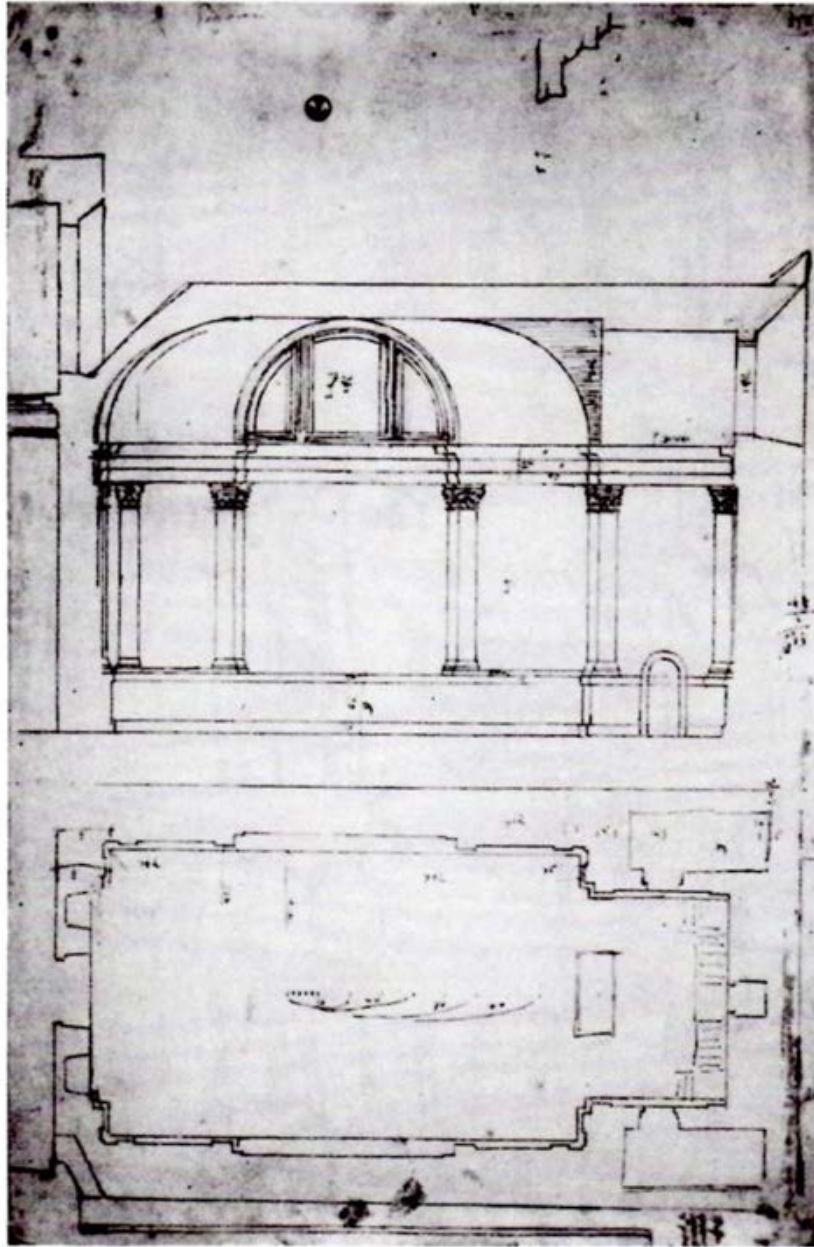


Figure 3.8. Antonio Sangallo the Younger, plan of the Pauline Chapel, UA1125





Figure 3.9. Pauline Chapel, vault of the main chapel area



Figure 3.10. Pauline Chapel, view from center of chapel toward altar.  
On the left, Lorenzo Sabatini's *Baptism of Paul* (1573) is visible.  
On the right, Federico Zuccari's *Baptism of the Centurion* (1580-85) is visible.

3.11. Filarete,  
*Martyrdom of Paul*,  
 from bronze door  
 at St. Peter's Basilica, 1447

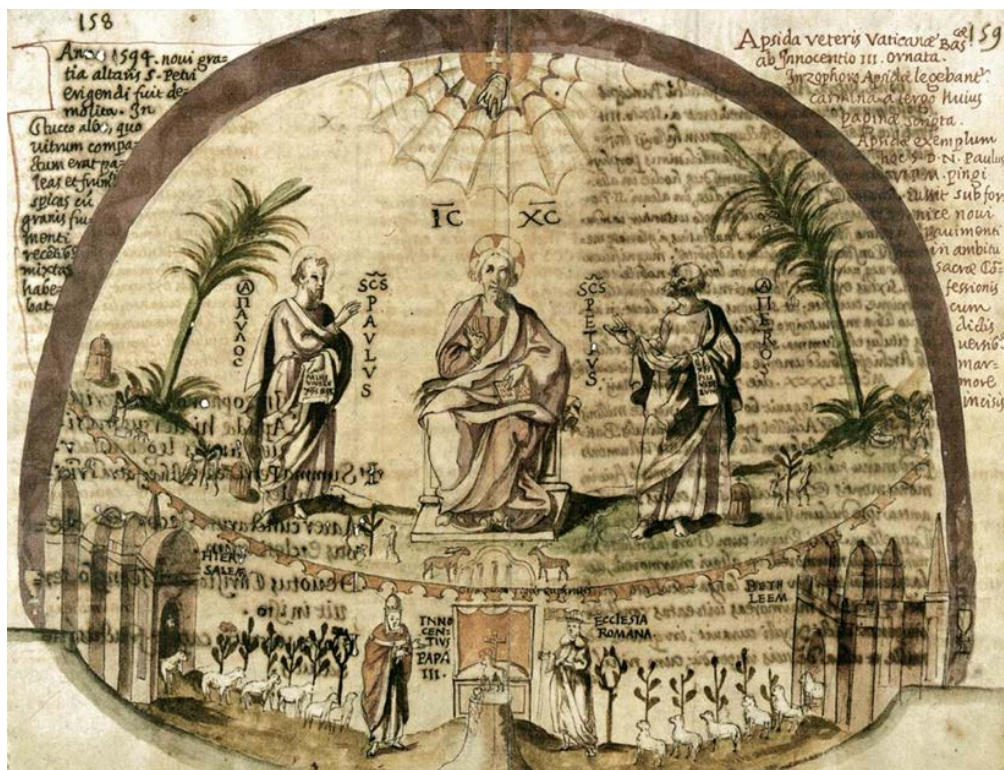


Figure 3.12. Mosaic in the apse of Old St. Peter's Basilica, colored drawing by Giacomo Grimaldi (Codex Barb. Lat. 2773 f.158 recto and 159 verso) before demolition by Paul V in 1605



Figure 3.13. Raphael, *Conversion of Saul*, tapestry (woven in Bruges)



Figure 3.14 Giorgio Vasari, *Gregory Restoring the Papacy to Rome*, Sala Regia, fresco, 1573

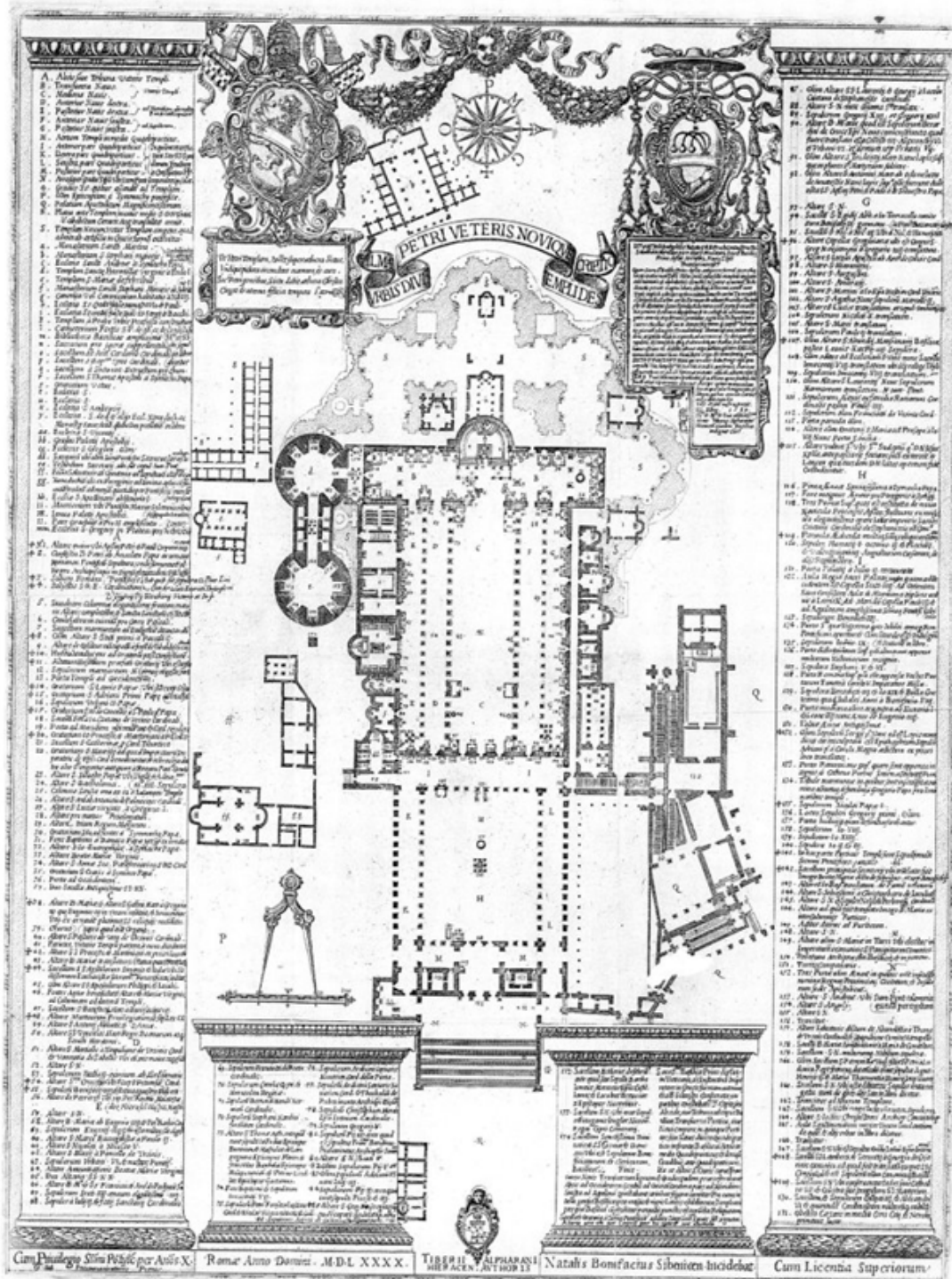


Figure 3.15. Tiberio Alfarano, Plan of St. Peter's Basilica, engraved in 1590 by Natale Sebenico

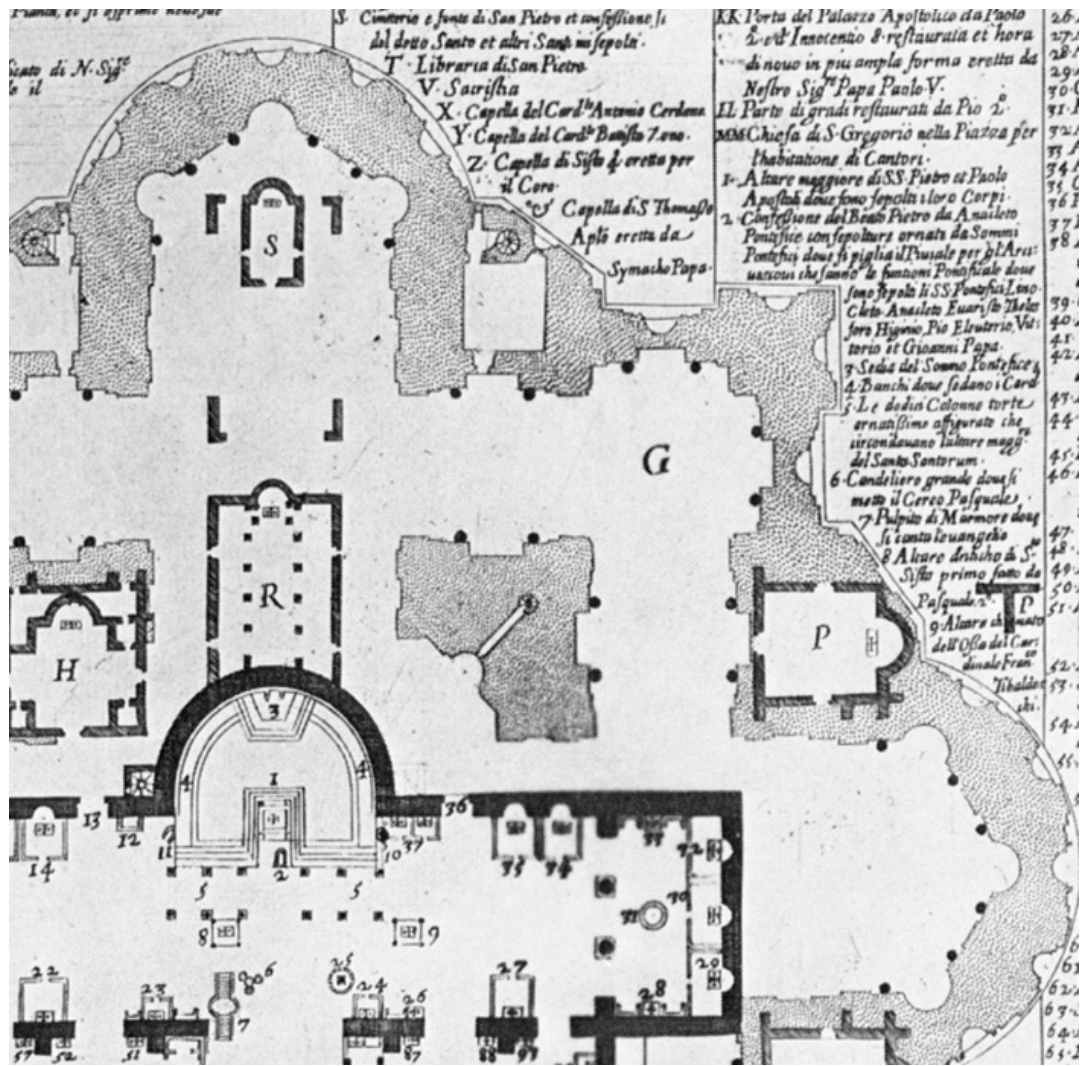


Figure 3.16. Tiberio Alfarano, Detail of Plan of St. Peter's Basilica, engraver unknown, 1590

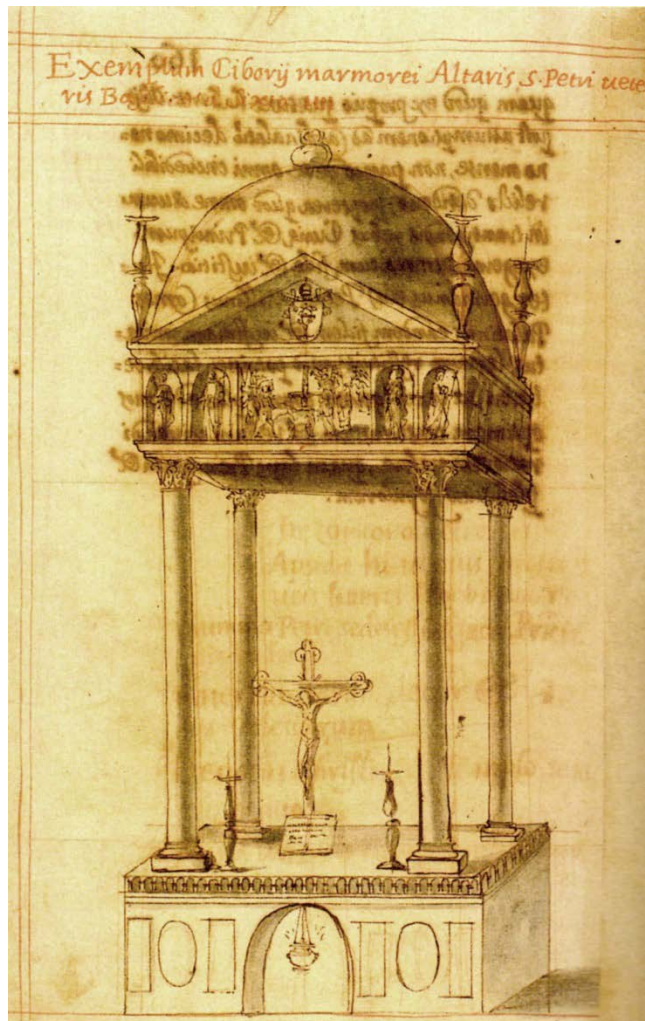


Figure 3.17. Giacomo Grimaldi (Codex. Barb. Lat. 2773 f.160v.)  
Ciborium over the main altar, Old St. Peter's Basilica





Figure 3.18. *Crucifixion of Peter*, from the front of the *ciborium* of Sixtus IV, marble relief, c.1471-84



Figure 3.19. *Beheading of Paul*, from the back of the *ciborium* of Sixtus IV, marble relief, c.1471-84



Figure 3.20. Eight figures, probably used to frame long reliefs on each side of *ciborium* of Sixtus IV, marble relief, c.1471-84

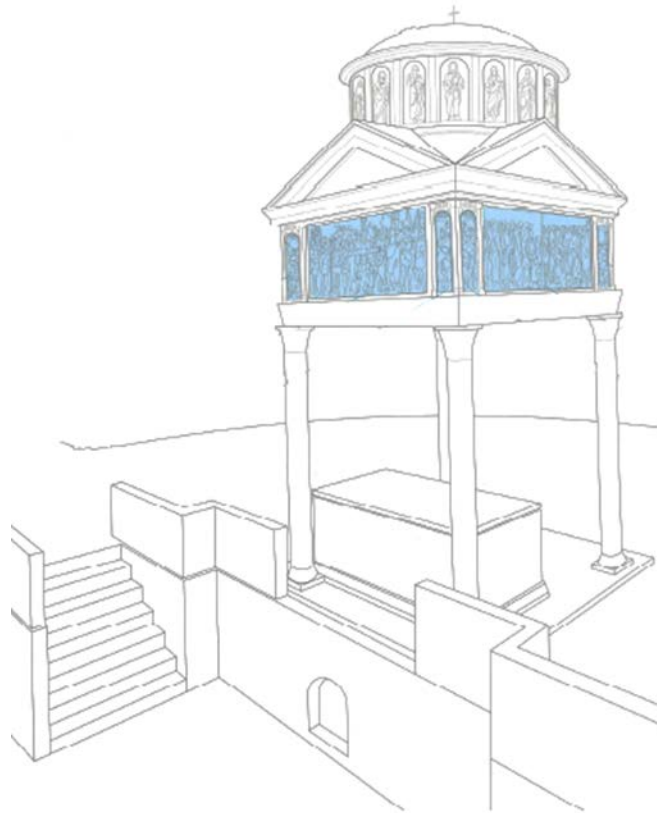


Figure 3.21. Reconstruction of ciborium in Old St. Peter's,  
with relief sculptures in blue.  
After Antonio Pinelli, ed., *La Basilica di San Pietro in Vaticano*  
(Modena: F.C. Panini, 2000)



Figure 3.23. Giotto, Stefaneschi altarpiece, c.1300, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca, Vatican



Figure 3.22. Filarete, *Martyrdom of Peter*,  
from bronze door at St. Peter's Basilica, 1447



Figure 3.24. Sala Regia, view toward papal throne, ceremony 2011



Figure 3.25. Sala Regia, view from papal throne toward Pauline Chapel



Figure 3.26. *Stucchi* figures above an entablature in Sala Regia, Vatican, stucco



Figure 3.27. Étienne Dupérac, engraving showing Pope Pius V conferring title of grand duke of Tuscany on Cosimo I de' Medici, 1570s



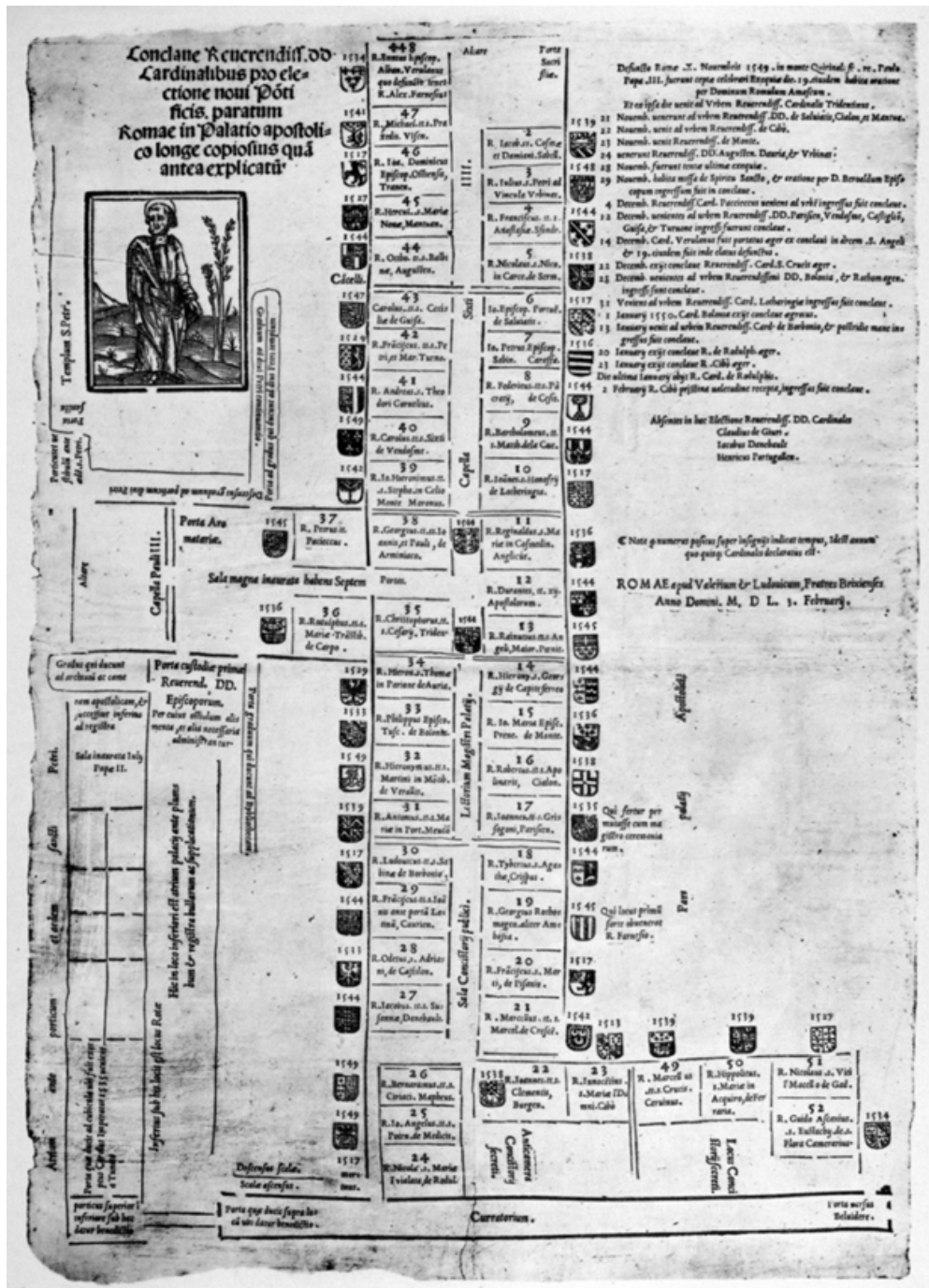


Figure 3.28. Plan of Conclave 1549-50

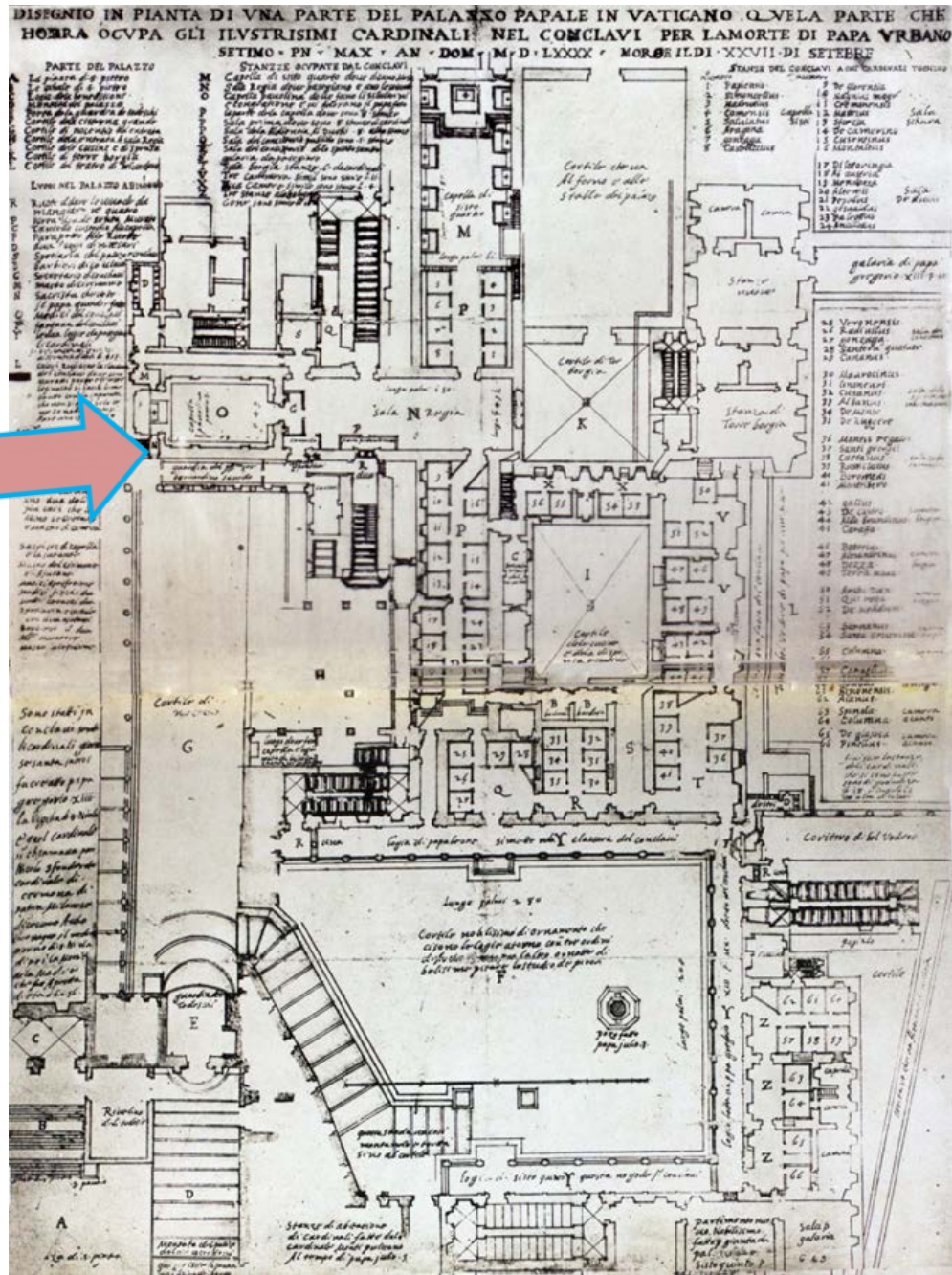


Figure 3.29. Conclave plan, 1555 (arrow points to small sacristy)



Figure 3.30. Lorenzo Sabatini, *Baptism of Paul*, 1573,  
Pauline Chapel, Vatican, fresco

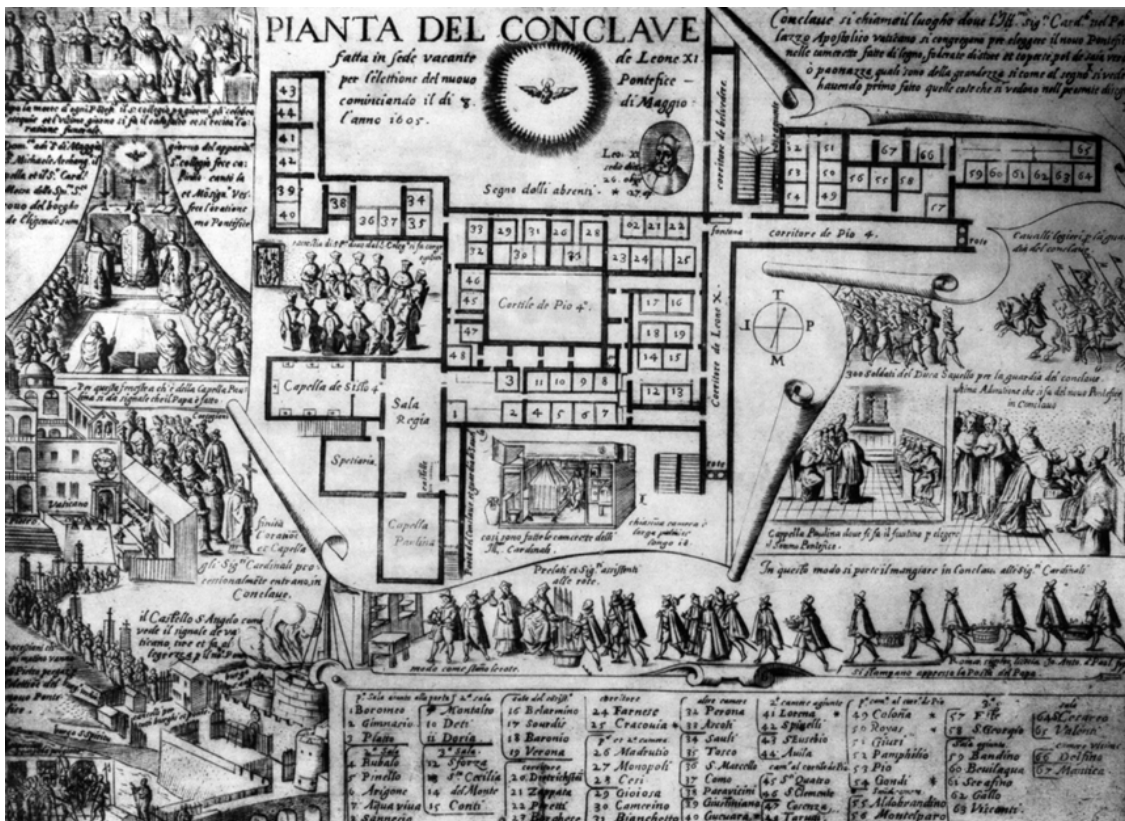


Figure 3.31. Conclave plan, 1605



Figure 3.32.  
Detail of conclave print, 1667

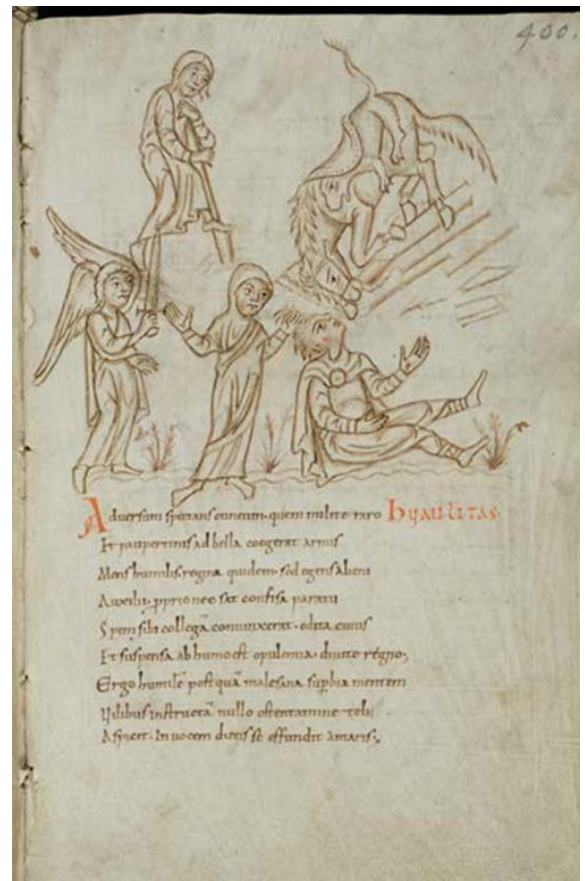


Figure 3.33. Prudentius, *Psychomachia*,  
(St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 135) folio 400, recto  
23 x 16 cm, parchment, 10<sup>th</sup> century—third quarter of 11<sup>th</sup> century



Figure 3.34. St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican, exterior of north transept

**Erin Sutherland**

Washington University in St. Louis, One Brookings Dr., Box 1189, St. Louis ,  
Missouri 63130-4899. Phone: 314-644-1033  
Email: ecsuther@wustl.edu

---

**Education**

**Washington University.** St. Louis, Missouri

PhD, Art History and Archaeology; 2006- expected date of graduation:  
Spring 2015.

Dissertation: "Michelangelo and Pope Paul III, 1534-49: Patronage,  
Collaboration and Construction of Identity in Renaissance Rome."

**University of Colorado.** Boulder, Colorado.

Master of Arts, Art History; May 2004.

Thesis: "The Many Lives of the *Farnese Bull*."

**Mary Washington College.** Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Bachelor of Arts, Art History; May 2000.

**Professional Experience**

**Washington University in St. Louis.** St. Louis, Missouri

Spring 2013. Graduate Teaching Assistant. Introduction to Modern Art,  
Architecture and Design. Responsible for planning group discussions,  
conducting bi-weekly discussions/ lectures and grading for 15 students.

Summer 2012, spring 2013. Guest lecturer, Introduction to Western Art.  
Lectured on medieval and Renaissance painting techniques. Gave hands-  
on demonstrations of gold leaf, tempera and fresco materials.

Spring 2012. Graduate Teaching Assistant.  
Introduction to Modern Art Architecture and Design.

Summer 2011. Instructor of Record. Introduction to Asian Art.  
Responsible for all aspects of the course.

Fall 2007, fall 2008, fall 2009, fall 2012. Graduate Teaching Assistant.  
Art History Survey. Responsible for planning group discussions,  
conducting bi-weekly discussion sections/lectures and grading for 5-20  
students.

## **Erin Sutherland**

Spring 2008, spring 2009, spring 2010. Graduate Teaching Assistant. Introduction to Asian Art. Planned group discussions and lectures on Indian, Chinese and Japanese art and archaeology.

### **Studio of Dr. Alan John Pascuzzi.** Florence, Italy

May 2008. Study and studio practice in traditional fresco, gold leaf and tempera technique.

### **St. Louis Art Museum.** St. Louis, Missouri

Spring 2007. Graduate Internship, Curatorial Department. Produced a report on the provenance, condition, significance and artistic context of a monumental, Trecento crucifix in the permanent collection.

### **Front Range Community College.** Longmont, Colorado

Spring 2005. Lecturer (10 classes). Humanities course.  
Summer 2004. Instructor. Humanities course.  
Fall 2004. Lecturer (10 classes). Humanities course.

### **The University of Colorado.** Boulder, Colorado

Spring 2004. Grader. American Art History  
Provided written feedback on student exams and essays.

August 2002-May 2003. Lead Teaching Assistant. Art History Survey  
Coordinated efforts among four TAs to produce syllabi, assignments, exams and developed grading standards for a class of 400+ students.

August 2001- May 2002. Graduate Teaching Assistant. Art History Survey  
Provided feedback to student exams and essays. Conducted lecture-tours in the Denver Art Museum. Wrote exams and designed writing assignments.

### **Denver Art Museum.** Denver, Colorado

Fall 2000-Summer 2001. Volunteer in Development Department



## **Erin Sutherland**

### **The Westmorland Davis Memorial Foundation, Inc.** Leesburg, Virginia

Summer, 2000. Independent Consultant.  
Examined permanent art collection, including paintings, works on paper, bronze and marble sculptures. Prepared reports for the Board of Trustees detailing the significance, state of preservation and recommended storage and handling of objects in collection.

### **National Museum of Women in the Arts.** Washington, DC

January – May 2000. Intern, curatorial department.  
Worked with Jordana Pomeroy, Associate Curator to write and edit NEA grant application materials and proposals for corporate sponsorship.  
Worked with Dr. Pomeroy organizing an exhibition, “Gardener’s Delight,” NMWA, May 18- August 20, 2000. Took active role in arranging all aspects of exhibition.

### **Mary Washington College Galleries.** Fredericksburg, Virginia

1997-2000. Assistant, curatorial department.  
Installed exhibitions, handled, photographed and transported artworks.  
Worked with registrar, cataloging permanent collection.  
Wrote, edited and reviewed wall text for an exhibition on Phyllis Ridderhof Martin.

### **Honors and Awards**

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>2012</b>      | Pollard-Stein Award for Excellence in Teaching in the Department of Art History and Archaeology, Washington University |
| <b>2011-2012</b> | Washington University Dissertation Fellowship  |
| <b>2010</b>      | Washington University Summer Research Fellowship   |
| <b>2006-2009</b> | Washington University Graduate Fellowship.   |
| <b>2009</b>      | Washington University Pre-Dissertation Research Grant  |
| <b>2008</b>      | Washington University Summer Research Fellowship   |
| <b>2007</b>      | Washington University Summer Research Fellowship   |

## Erin Sutherland

- 2004** Dante Society, Colomba Marcantonio Memorial Scholarship for research at the American Academy of Rome library.
- 2003** Professional Development Grant, University of Colorado
- 2001-2003** University of Colorado Graduate Fellowship.
- 1999** Dean's List, Mary Washington College.
- 1998** Recipient of Barbara Diane Hall Scholarship for students of art history.

### Conferences and Publications

“Virtuous Prelates, Burdensome Relics and a Sliver of Gold in the *Last Judgment*,” in *Michelangelo in the Twenty-first Century* (working title), edited by Tammara Smithers, accepted for publication by Brill press.

“Discarded Deity: The Rejection of Michelangelo’s *Bacchus* and the Artist’s Response.” *Renaissance Studies* 28 (June 2014): 443-58.

“Responding to Dissidents: The *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel”  
Paper presented at Sixteenth Century Society Conference, Cincinnati. October, 2012.

“Michelangelo’s *Bacchus*: Rejection and the Artist’s Response”  
Paper presented at the 45<sup>th</sup> annual Graduate Student Seminar, The Art Institute Chicago. April 9, 2010.

“The Bastard, the *Bacchus* and the Banker: Rome, 1497”  
Newberry Library Center for Renaissance Studies Graduate Student Conference. Jan 21-23, 2010.

“Harriet Hosmer’s *Oenone*,” invited speaker, public gallery lecture, Mildred Lane Kemper art Museum. June 18, 2008.

“Harriet Hosmer’s *Oenone*: Pragmatism and Pathos for an American Aesthetic,” Essay published on the website of Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum. June, 2008.

“Carpaccio’s *Dead Christ*: Enigmatic Narrative and Spiritual Topography,” Paper presented at the Midwest Art History Society Annual Conference, Chicago. February 15, 2008.

“The Many Lives of the *Farnese Bull*,” Paper presented at the Art History Graduate Student Symposium, University of Colorado at Boulder. April 22, 2004.

**Erin Sutherland**

“Capturing the Nineteenth Century American Zeitgeist: Harriet Hosmer’s *Beatrice Cenci*,” Paper presented at the Denver Art Museum Student Symposium of Art & Art History. April 5, 2003.