



16.18

Antonio Fantuzzi after  
Primaticcio, design for a  
frame, 1542. Engraving

depicted ruler – though the putti, fruit, and garlands more generally align the ornaments with the themes of natural fecundity that Serlio, too, was exploring, and that seem to have held particular appeal to Francis himself.

Primaticcio's grandest undertaking of the 1540s was the decoration of the Galerie d'Ulysse, a 492-foot-long barrel-vaulted space that he covered with frescoes and stuccoes. Tragically, it was destroyed in 1738, and we would know little about its appearance had Fontainebleau not also become one of Europe's major centers of printmaking. Primaticcio's team included reproductive engravers who made the same kind of things that Marcantonio Raimondi had produced with Raphael in Rome decades before (see figs. 13.11–13.12). The team also, however, included painter-etchers in the mold of Parmigianino, such as Primaticcio's fellow Bolognese Antonio Fantuzzi. Several of Fantuzzi's etchings after Fontainebleau paintings include the *stucco* framework along with the central image itself, physically minimalizing the narrative content (fig. 16.18). And at least one 1544 Mignon etching after a passage in Primaticcio's Alexander cycle omits the painting that its figures frame altogether, leaving a blank oval in the center of the page.

been in Francis's employ for a full decade before committing suicide. Serlio's interests, however, harmonized well with those of Rosso's major collaborator and successor, Francesco Primaticcio (1504–1570), a painter and stucco-maker from Serlio's own home town of Bologna. Primaticcio, like Serlio, believed that a serious interest in and knowledge of antiquity need not preclude the artist from developing a distinctive modern manner. Between trips to Rome, where he made casts after famous ancient statues for the French king's collection, Primaticcio produced several of the century's most unusual large-scale cycles of decorations on classical themes. Characteristic are those for a room occupied by Francis's mistress, where a series of paintings depict episodes from the life of Alexander the Great (fig. 16.17). Though these are frescoes, the gilded *stucco* frames and the flanking figures that hold them suggest that the pictures are actually portable canvasses, a variation on the devices Raphael and Giulio Romano had used in the Vatican's Hall of Constantine. What sets Primaticcio's works apart from anything Roman, however, is the small scale of the painted scenes relative to the *stucco* figures that "hold" them. These subsidiary characters, who have no specific identity, evoke the *ignudi* Michelangelo had used to frame the scenes in the Sistine Chapel, except that they are truly three-dimensional and sometimes female instead of male. The change probably seemed appropriate to the function of the space – both men and women play a "supporting" role to the

## The City Square

Prints like Fantuzzi's ensured that artists and patrons, even those who never left Italy, were well aware of what Francis was commissioning. Young painters and sculptors from the north, moreover, passed through Fontainebleau on their way to pursue studies in Italy and told others about what they had seen there. Diplomats traveled back and forth as well, and key families intermarried: Francis's son Henry, who would become king upon his father's death in 1547, was married to Catherine de' Medici, a cousin of Duke Cosimo.

When Benvenuto Cellini, accused of embezzlement and on the run, arrived in Florence in 1545, Cosimo saw an opportunity to bring an apparent favorite of the French court into his own employ. Cellini had been abroad for the preceding five years. Francis I had hired him on account of his skills with precious metals, and Cellini had produced for his royal patron a lifesize figure of Jupiter in the form of a silver candlestick and an (apparently uncommissioned) gold, enamel, and ebony saltcellar, with recumbent personifications of the Earth, the Sea, and their domains. While in France, moreover, Cellini had also taken inspiration from Primaticcio and begun to attempt architectural decorations featuring large, high-relief nude figures. One that survives is Cellini's massive personification of Fontainebleau itself, the reclining nymph of



16.19

Benvenuto Cellini, *Nymph of Fontainebleau*, 1542.  
Bronze. Musée du Louvre,  
Paris



RIGHT

16.20

Benvenuto Cellini, *Perseus and Medusa*, 1545–54.  
Bronze, originally with gilding, on ornamented  
marble pedestal with  
bronze statuettes of Jupiter  
(right) and Danäe and  
baby Perseus (left), height  
including base 18' (5.5 m).  
Loggia dei Lanzi, Florence

FAR RIGHT

16.21

Benvenuto Cellini, *Perseus and Medusa*, 1545–54, from  
the southwest. Loggia dei  
Lanzi, Florence. The photo,  
taken before the monument  
was disassembled for  
restoration, shows the  
statuettes of *Minerva*  
(left) and *Mercury* (right)  
in its base and, in the  
background, Baccio  
Bandinelli's *Hercules  
and Cacus*.





the fountain after which the residence was named (fig. 16.19). Collaborating with the expert founders whom Primaticcio had helped assemble, Cellini assisted in the casting of the bronze conceived as an “overdoor” to surmount the main entrance to the chateau. The goldsmith was no fan of the Medici, but on returning to Italy, where he was known only for coins, medals, and some small precious works he had produced in Rome, he recognized that Duke Cosimo had much to offer him, beginning with the opportunity to carry out a bronze that would exceed even his French works in scale.

Cosimo commissioned Cellini to make a large bronze statue of *Perseus* (figs. 16.20–16.21), the Greek hero who beheaded the gorgon Medusa. The duke wished to further beautify the main Florentine piazza in front of the former city hall where he now lived; at the same time, he was concerned to escape the public censure that had greeted Baccio Bandinelli’s *Hercules and Cacus* a decade earlier (see fig. 15.14). Cellini, for his part, embraced the opportunity to position a statue antagonistically in relation to a rival he despised. Bandinelli worked primarily in marble, and he presented himself as Michelangelo’s heir in Florence. Cellini had to make the most of what had become, under Michelangelo’s influence, a less prestigious (though still far more expensive) material, bronze. One of his strategies was to add elements to the commission, including an elaborately carved marble base, showing that he could work in materials other than metal. More than this, though, he used his assigned site and subject matter to diminish Bandinelli’s earlier monument. The way the Loggia dei Lanzi framed the *Perseus* might have encouraged the artist to conceive it with a primarily frontal view in mind, but Cellini extended his figure’s left arm forward in space, breaking the plane of the stage and reaching out into the piazza. This made the statue more interesting when seen from an angle, but it also placed the head of Medusa directly in Hercules’ line of sight. Suddenly it seemed as if Bandinelli’s statue was scowling enviously at Cellini’s, or worse, that the Medusa head had petrified Hercules, turning him into stone (see fig. 16.21).

The poets around Varchi chimed in, writing sonnets that described the relationship between the two sculptures in just this way, implying that the bronze of Cellini’s *Perseus* now seemed alive when compared to the colorless marble in which Bandinelli worked. The painter Bronzino wrote a pair of especially clever poems, reminding viewers that Perseus’s conception occurred when Jupiter descended as a shower of gold and impregnated Danae, so Perseus’s generation began and ended in the form of liquid metal. The abundant blood that fell from the neck of Cellini’s Medusa reinforced this impression, too, and the poets in his audience could well have known

that when Ovid described Perseus holding the head of Medusa aloft, he described the hero turning his enemies into “stone without blood.”

Contemporaries report that poets attached their satires to the statues themselves, turning the piazza into a kind of public extension of the academy. The mythological characters that the dukes of Florence had begun to assemble there invited this impression, and Cellini embraced it, too. Perhaps with an eye to the way that Primaticcio (and Rosso before him) had supplemented every significant narrative scene with a rich gathering of additional characters, Cellini decorated the base of *Perseus* not only with symbols of fertility but also with small statuettes depicting Mercury and Minerva, the god and goddess respectively of eloquence and wisdom. All of this softened the piazza’s belligerent atmosphere, with its series of killers (David, Judith, Hercules, Perseus), all standing before a palace from which the Medici had expelled the city’s Republican government.

### The Shaping of Venetian Public Space

The decoration of the piazza kept Florence current with urbanistic trends throughout the peninsula. Serlio’s *Five Books on Architecture* appeared in several installments between 1537 and 1551. Like Alberti’s work *De re*

#### 16.22

Jacopo Sansovino, Zecca (mint), Venice, 1535–47. Sansovino received the commission for the building in 1536, and by 1547 he had overseen the completion of a roofed two-storey structure. The third floor was added between 1558 and 1566. The photo also shows, on the right, the south facade of Sansovino’s adjacent Library of San Marco.





*aedificatoria* from the 1450s, they sought to adapt the prescriptions of the architect Vitruvius and the “rules” of ancient architecture to modern use. Thanks to these books, patrons and connoisseurs widely appreciated the subtleties of much new building: in this respect, architecture, like painting, was becoming a “literate” art. We see this, notably, in Venice, where the Florentine expatriate Jacopo Sansovino (1486–1570), having fled Rome after the Sack of 1527, had become the city’s *proto*, or chief superintendent of building. In 1535 Sansovino won the competition to design the city’s *Zecca*, or mint, originally a two-storey building facing the canal (fig. 16.22). His design married the open loggias of Venetian palace architecture with Serlian rustication, binding its arcades and columns with projecting straps of rough stone. The building adapted the characteristic openness of the Venetian palace facade, but it stood out for its classical geometry, its central Italian materials, and its Roman ornament. It also illustrated a principle of architectural invention that Serlio had articulated in his writings, namely that the decoration of a building should accord with its type: the heavy stone announced that the contents of this building required defense and protection.

What additionally occupied Sansovino through the 1540s was the building adjoining the mint to the north and east (fig. 16.24). The new structure was to house government officials as well as to provide space for shops and offices; above was a grand library known as the Marciana (after San Marco), the main interior feature of which

was a large, airy, brightly lit reading room that looked onto the Ducal Palace. Of at least as much concern to Sansovino, though, was the building’s exterior, which gave definition to two connecting squares: the Piazza San Marco and the smaller piazza that opened onto the harbor. Here, as with the mint, Sansovino adopted a classicizing Roman vocabulary, one that moved away from the Gothic and Byzantine look that had long characterized Venetian building. The most prominent feature of both the ground storey and the *piano nobile* is a row of columns supporting a thick entablature. The statues that terminate the vertical elements relieve the sense of weight, as does the second architectural register over which the first is laid: arches at ground level, like the smaller supports above, appear to help with the heavy lifting, giving the impression that the most monumental columns are as decorative as they are functional. (The combination in each bay of an arch flanked by two lower rectangular openings forms a motif called a *serliana*, after the architect Serlio.)

Sansovino’s son Francesco later reported that Jacopo had intended to extend a uniform facade around the entire piazza. In the event, the building was finished only at the end of the century, but the repetition of the motifs down its length still regularized the space before it. No single modern building anywhere had provided a sense of order and regularity to such an immense open environment. For its corner, Sansovino designed a soaring brick bell tower, and added a loggia to a ground level that would look across to where the basilica and the ducal

## 16.23

Jacopo Sansovino, *loggetta*,  
1537–45. Piazza San Marco,  
Venice







palace met. With its three grand window bays (originally open) and its sculpted marble reliefs, this entrance to the building resembled the top half of a triumphal arch (fig. 16.23). Between 1541 and 1546, Sansovino furnished the structure with four nearly lifesize bronze statues. The figures of Mercury and Minerva represent eloquence and wisdom, virtues that they would here bring to the council that met in the palace they face. The pairing would have reminded educated viewers of ancient and modern literary academies; it cannot be accidental that the structure they ornamented stood next to the Marciana, the great state library. Sansovino's third figure, Apollo, originally held a lyre, suggesting that here, too, the world of learning has come to serve that of politics: the supervisor of Parnassus and inventor of lyric brings harmony to the state. Rounding out the group was a figure of Peace, who melts weapons with a torch, an allusion to the source of the metals often used for public bronze sculpture that advertises the fact that the Venetian Republic (like the Florentine duke in the same years) was devoting its bronze and its casters' skills to art rather than war. Sansovino's imagery suited an official space that hosted public rituals, and the statues he made signaled a broader exchange between

ambitious sculptors in different cities. His Peace may have derived from the verso of a medal Cellini made in Rome. And Cellini himself, as we have seen, would include bronze figures of Mercury and Minerva in his *Perseus* for the loggia of the Palazzo (see fig. 16.20).

### Urbanism in Genoa

Florence and Venice were not the only cities to attend to their large urban spaces in these years. In Genoa in 1549, a group of families that had become wealthy through banking and the alum trade petitioned the city's republican government to allow the construction of an elegant new street. The plan required that the poorer people living in the area be expelled from thirty-eight houses and also called for the expropriation of gardens and a small piazza. Despite formal protests on behalf of these residents, the government consented, allowing a wide sunlit space (fig. 16.25) to replace the harbor city's dark medieval alleyways. Rather than paying for the project itself, the government auctioned off the lots, which in the end went primarily to just four powerful clans. Demolitions for the Strada Nuova ("new road") or Via Aurea ("golden

### 16.24

Jacopo Sansovino, library of San Marco, Venice. Begun by Sansovino in 1537, it was completed by Vincenzo Scamozzi in 1591.



16.25  
 “Strada Nuova” (today  
 Via Garibaldi), Genoa,  
 begun 1550



street”) began in the 1550s, and the new property owners only succeeded in erecting their palaces (the Palazzo Podestà, the Palazzo Bianco, and the Palazzo Doria) in the 1560s or later. By contrast to contemporary urbanistic projects elsewhere, moreover, the street gave prominence to no single governmental building. The absence of a ducal palace, a great basilica, or any other colossal structure associated with local authority, however, did not make the project any less political.

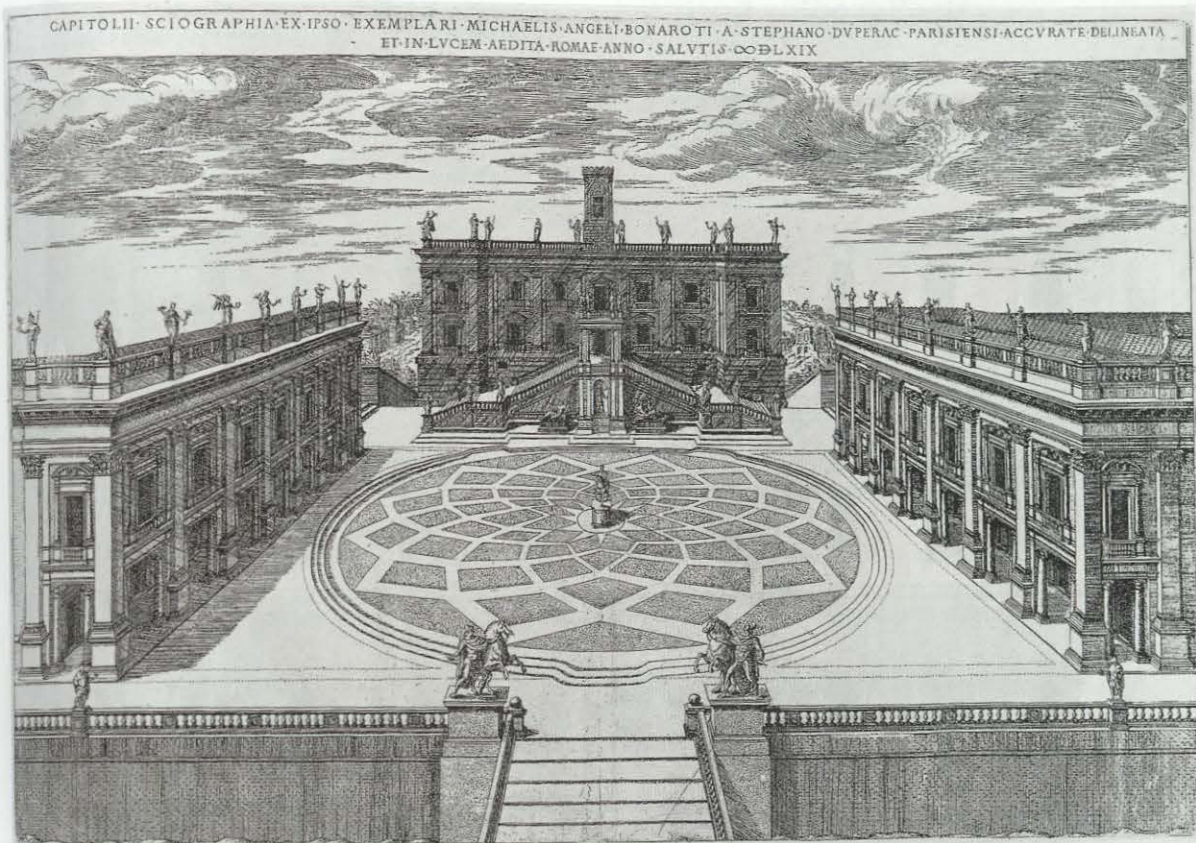
We have seen the way in which a power center could form around a wealthy clan in Florence, the Medici; the same thing happened in Venice, Rome, and other cities. The conventional response of governments combating this was to establish a central, neutral space to which all other neighborhoods were at least nominally subordinate. The Genoese government, by contrast, allowed the families who controlled it to engineer an actual neighborhood that would display their local rank, even as it promoted an image of collaboration and civic harmony.

#### Rome: The Capitoline Hill

The most significant of all public spaces newly conceived in these years may have been the Campidoglio (fig. 16.27). Paul III had initiated the project after realizing that the

triumphal procession he had hosted for Emperor Charles V in 1536 had no suitable terminus. Though Cellini, Sansovino, and the other artists involved in the transformation of urban piazzas in the 1530s had left Rome before work there got much under way, Michelangelo’s involvement with the project and the prints publicizing his designs ensured its extensive fame. The renovations began, as we saw in the last chapter, with the transfer of the ancient bronze *Marcus Aurelius*, Europe’s most famous equestrian monument, to the center of the square in front of the palace where the city’s Senate met. Over the decade beginning in 1537, Michelangelo developed a plan for reshaping the entire piazza, with symmetrical buildings on either side of a patterned pavement and a renovated and regularized Senate building used as a backdrop. (The buildings were not completed for over a century, and the oval pavement, with its spinning labyrinth design, was only laid in the form Michelangelo intended in the twentieth century.) Like Sansovino’s Marciana (see fig. 16.24), Michelangelo’s design included commercial and office space, housing stalls for Roman guilds in an open loggia. And like the Piazza della Signoria in Florence, it included an extensive sculptural program: the artist intended to import the colossal ancient “Dioscuri,” or Horse-Tamers, from the Quirinal hill across town. Michelangelo,





16.26

Étienne Dupérac, engraving after Michelangelo's project for the Campidoglio, 1569.

14 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (37.1 x 54 cm).

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

like many at the time, probably believed that the Dioscuri were ancient portraits of Alexander the Great, an identification that would not have been lost on Pope Paul III, whom we saw celebrating the same ruler in the Castel Sant'Angelo (see fig. 16.8).

A subsequent Pope spared Michelangelo the impracticality of moving the Dioscuri when he allowed use of two other, newly discovered colossal figures with horses. And the history of the square's statuary reminds us that the Campidoglio, like the Strada Nuova in Genoa, may best be regarded as a product of collective patronage, developed over time. Michelangelo oversaw the building of the staircase on the Senate Palace facade beginning in 1544, and he would have seen at least the start of the new facade that builders began adding to the Palazzo dei Conservatori on the right in the early 1560s. Most scholars who refer to "Michelangelo's" design for the space, however, have in mind not the site left on Paul III's and Michelangelo's own deaths (1549 and 1564 respectively), but a later etching produced by Étienne Dupérac (fig. 16.26). Even at the time of the print's publication in 1569, moreover, the space lacked many of the etching's most distinguishing features. The building on the left only went up in the seventeenth century, and it was the Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini in the twentieth century



16.27

Michelangelo, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Campidoglio

who oversaw the laying of the remarkable pavement, with its star-like shapes inscribed in a large oval.

Still, the presence of the *Marcus Aurelius* alone, standing before the remodeled Senate, would have been enough to make the Campidoglio a landmark in a city that had few real "designed" squares. The only space like it in Rome was the piazza in front of the Farnese Palace, where the gigantic stronghold of the Pope's own family continued to take shape: the death of Antonio da





ABOVE  
**16.28**  
 Antonio da Sangallo the Younger and Michelangelo, Palazzo Farnese, Rome, begun 1517, seen across the Piazza Farnese



**16.29**  
 Antonio da Sangallo the Younger and Michelangelo, courtyard of the Palazzo Farnese, Rome

Sangallo the Younger in 1546 left Michelangelo with the responsibility of finalizing the design: he oversaw the construction of the third storey and the massive cornice (fig. 16.28), and the completion of the courtyard. Sangallo's building already constituted a Florentine rejoinder to the Roman formula of Bramante and Raphael, although the medium is now largely brick rather than the stone preferred in Florence. Like Raphael's Palazzo Pandolfini (see fig. 13.20), Sangallo's design provided for rusticated corners and a monumental entryway. In the courtyard (fig. 16.29), he had adopted the Roman principle of articulating three storeys with the classical orders in their proper sequence. Here the theme of the arch with an engaged column recalls Bramante at the Belvedere courtyard (see fig. 12.45), and Sangallo's massive L-shaped corner piers visually reinforce the integrity of each side of the courtyard as a semi-independent facade. Michelangelo closed in what had originally been an open arcade on the *piano nobile*, and he designed a third storey where clustered Corinthian pilasters replace engaged columns, and massive windows with segmental pediments almost eliminate the presence of the wall.

Michelangelo's design for the twin palaces of the Campidoglio presents a striking and deliberate contrast with the massive planar facade of the Farnese's private



base. The open loggia of their ground floor expresses the public nature of the Campidoglio buildings. In the *piano nobile*, Michelangelo has almost completely omitted the wall, filling each bay with dominating tabernacle windows. (At the Palazzo Farnese, this effect was confined to the private inner courtyard.) More impressive than the containing wall are the massive, sculptural pilasters. Michelangelo here made the first notable use of an idea Raphael may have invented while architect at St. Peter's, that of the "giant order," where columns or pilasters (here Corinthian) rise through two storeys. He interlaced this with a second Ionic order that rises to the height of the lower storey, its minor status wittily underscored by the sculptural treatment of the Ionic capitals, with their clownishly grotesque masks. The hierarchy of orders here, and the forms of ornament, parallel the ascent from "low" literary genres like comedy or satire to more serious and refined modes like tragedy or epic: architecture, too, allowed comparisons to literature.

## Painting without Poetry

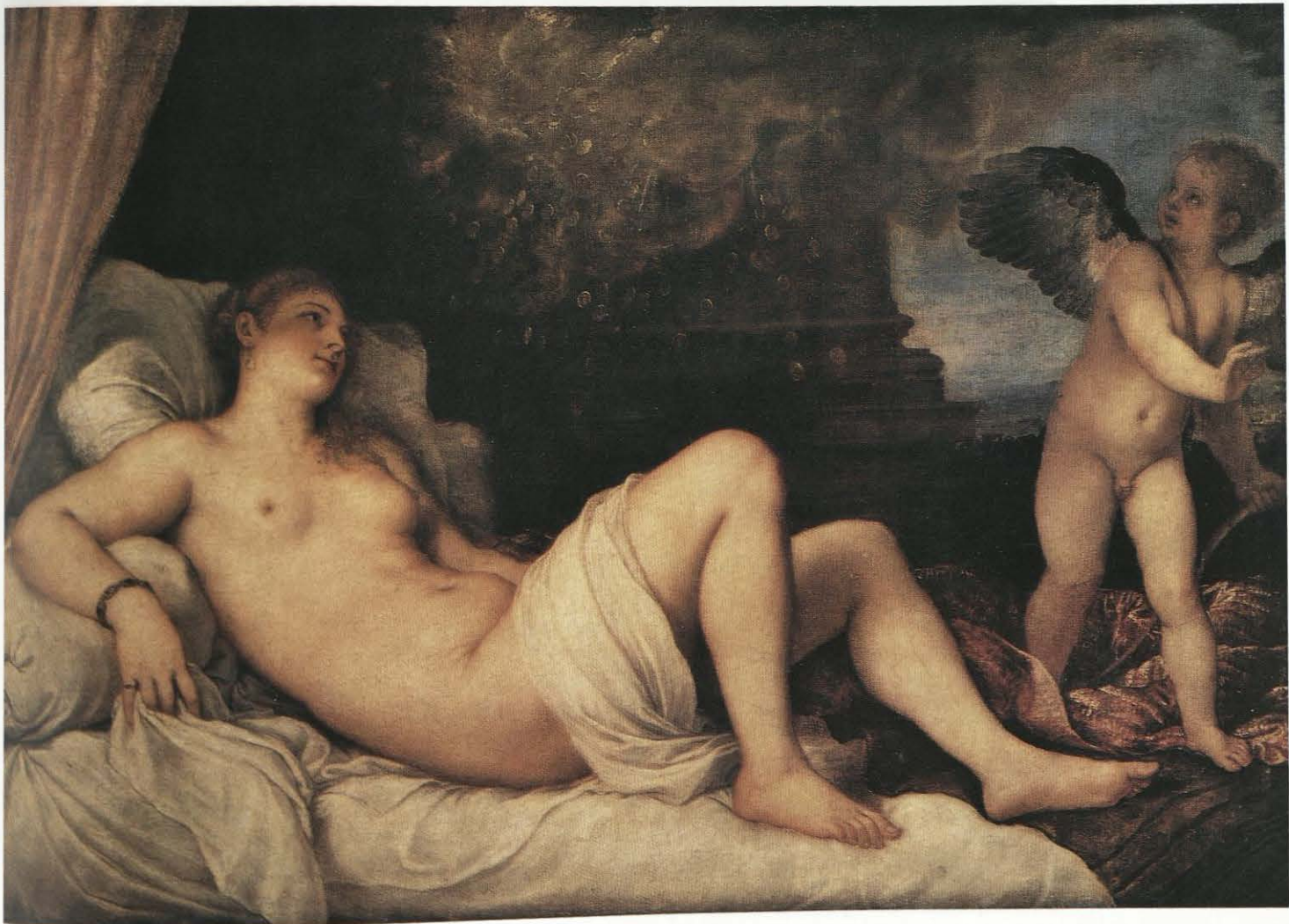
### Titian between Pope and Emperor

The simultaneous rise of the urbanistic projects in Florence, Venice, and Genoa, among other cities, suggests the attention that Rome was once again managing to attract, more than a decade after the Sack. Nor was the renewed interest in the Holy City limited to architects and sculptors. One artist who saw an opportunity in Paul III and his family was the painter Titian (1488/90–1576).

In 1543, Titian traveled to Bologna to meet the Pope, and three years later he made his only known trip to Rome, where he completed a *Danäe* for the pontiff's grandson, Cardinal Alessandro Farnese (fig. 16.30). Titian depicts an episode from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in which the princess Danäe, imprisoned by her father, receives the god Jupiter as a lover in the form of a shower of gold. The idea of focusing the picture on a nude woman, placed at

#### 16.30

Titian, *Danäe*, 1544–45. Oil on canvas, 47 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 67 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (120 x 172 cm). Capodimonte Museum, Naples





## 16.31

Titian, *Pope Paul III with His Grandsons Alessandro and Ottavio Farnese*, 1546. Oil on canvas, 6'6¼" x 5'8½" (2 x 1.74 m). Capodimonte Museum, Naples



the bottom left of the picture, looks like a variation on the artist's *Venus of Urbino* (see fig. 15.3), and an underdrawing suggests that Titian's original composition was closer still to his earlier work. If in that painting Titian aimed at turning paint into flesh, however, here he produces something much cooler, starting with a palette in which golds and browns replace reds and in which the only moment of intense color is a glimpse of the heavens through the window. The tonality suited the theme – Jupiter impregnates Danäe by transforming himself into a rain of gold (in Titian's invention, gold coins imprinted with thunderbolts) – though the pale nude and the metallic surfaces that surround her give the whole composition a more sculptural effect. This may respond to the Roman milieu, but it also nods to Michelangelo, with whom Titian would have found himself newly in competition. Danäe's pose evokes that of the Medici Chapel allegories, and the presence of Cupid, who seems to personify the

eros that the *Venus of Urbino* radiated, suggests Titian's knowledge of the *Venus and Cupid* that Michelangelo had designed for Pontormo (see fig. 16.14).

That Titian's approach to the Danäe represented a calculated pictorial choice becomes clear from another major painting he made for the Farnese in Rome, a 1546 portrait of Cardinal Alessandro, his brother Ottavio, and their grandfather Paul III (fig. 16.31). In stark contrast to the *Danäe*, but picking up on Raphael's example in his earlier "dynastic" portrait of Leo X and his cardinal relatives (see fig. 13.30), Titian painted this picture almost entirely in blends of red, the color that identified the cardinal's office. The portrait seems to make the status of the two brothers legible not only in poses, one upright and addressing the viewer, the other bowing in response to the Pope, but also in their pictorial intensity: Ottavio conforms to the curtain behind him while Titian's patron Alessandro, though set further back in



space, paradoxically projects more. The color also links the elder Alessandro more closely to his grandfather, with whom he shared a birth name and whose path into the clergy he followed.

Titian's visit to Rome had an impact on his other great portrait of the late 1540s, completed two years later, showing the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V on horseback (fig. 16.32). Few patrons had thought much about equestrian monuments in the decades after the collapse of Leonardo's project for Ludovico Sforza in 1499, but the new prominence that Michelangelo gave the *Marcus Aurelius* turned attention back to the theme, and not just as a subject for sculpture. After Charles achieved an important victory over united Protestant forces at the city of Mühlberg in Saxony, Titian painted a portrait of him

at the battle. The artist, who was by this point also trying to cultivate a relationship with Charles's son and heir Philip II, had taken the trouble of traveling over the Alps to meet the emperor in Augsburg, and he thought carefully about the scene. He stripped down the composition to its most basic elements – omitting the attendants who actually carried Charles into battle, any landmarks identifying the site, any action suggesting a fight – in order to make a more timeless image. At the same time, he maintained a sharp specificity: there is no history here, but there is no allegory either. No one had ever produced an independent equestrian painting of this kind, and if it brought the thoughts of Titian or Charles to the *Marcus Aurelius* of the Campidoglio, the comparison would have been apposite. Not only did Charles claim



## 16.32

Titian, *Emperor Charles V at the Battle of Mühlberg*, 1548. Oil on canvas, 10'10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 9'1<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (3.32 x 2.79 m). Museo del Prado, Madrid



## 16.33

Agnolo Bronzino, *Cosimo I de' Medici*, c. 1545. Oil on panel, 27 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 22 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (71 x 57 cm). Uffizi Gallery, Florence

succession to the ancient Roman imperial throne, but he had also fought at Mühlberg in the name of the Roman Catholic faith.

## Bronzino's State Portraits

The continental fame of Charles V's portraits could require other painters, too, to set aside their poetic inclinations. Bronzino's skill at imparting elegance and grace to the human body, along with his judicious subordination of ornament to figure, help explain why he outstripped Salviati as the chief portraitist of the Medici court. By sharp contrast with the earlier portrait of Cosimo as Orpheus (see fig. 15.19), however, his later state portrait exaggerated the maturity of a sitter who was still in his twenties, and invested him with the authority of a soldier and commander (fig. 16.33). Presumably at Cosimo's instruction, Bronzino based the portrait on a woodcut by Giovanni Britto of Charles V (fig. 16.34), this itself based on a now lost original by Titian; all three pictures depicted their subject in armor and with an imperious bearing. Cosimo was the feudal subject of the emperor, who had helped place him on the Florentine throne. By the middle of the 1540s, however, Cosimo had negotiated substantial autonomy, reducing the number of Spanish troops within his territories. The political situation required a subordination of inven-



## 16.34

Giovanni Britto after Titian, *Emperor Charles V*, c. 1535–40. Woodcut, 19 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 13 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (49.5 x 35.2 cm). Davison Art Center, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut



tion to other interests, above all Cosimo's desire to stage an equivocal relation to imperial authority; by recycling Titian's model, Cosimo could at once emulate and displace his protector and overlord. It is telling that when Bronzino was commanded to provide further portraits, the painter's proposal to make "more beautiful" works was overruled: Cosimo had settled on an official likeness and deemed that replicas of it alone should circulate.

By contrast, the state portrait of Cosimo's wife Duchess Eleonora allowed Bronzino to display the transforming power of his art (fig. 16.35). The artist invested an extraordinary level of care in his depiction of the duchess's sumptuous dress, itself an "art object" that would have many times exceeded in value the picture itself: it is as if he wants us to compare the art of painting with that of embroidery. At the same time, the duchess is more than a match for her costume. Her face, set off by a halo-like radiance in the background, draws our attention with its icy perfection, its bold stare, and a composure tinged with irony; clearly, these are all qualities that she has imparted to her two-year-old son Giovanni, already a cardinal in the making. The air of unreality—note how the hand seems to drift into the frontal plane of the painting with no objective except its own display—evokes not only the power of art to fascinate and to dominate, but also the otherworldly authority of the cult image. The intense blue of the landscape background comes from the extensive use of ultramarine, the same expensive pigment once reserved for paintings of the Vir-



gin. In pursuing forms of absolute and charismatic rule, sixteenth-century potentates were complicit with those artists who would turn qualities previously associated with the sacred image to new purposes.

### Michelangelo: The Pauline Chapel

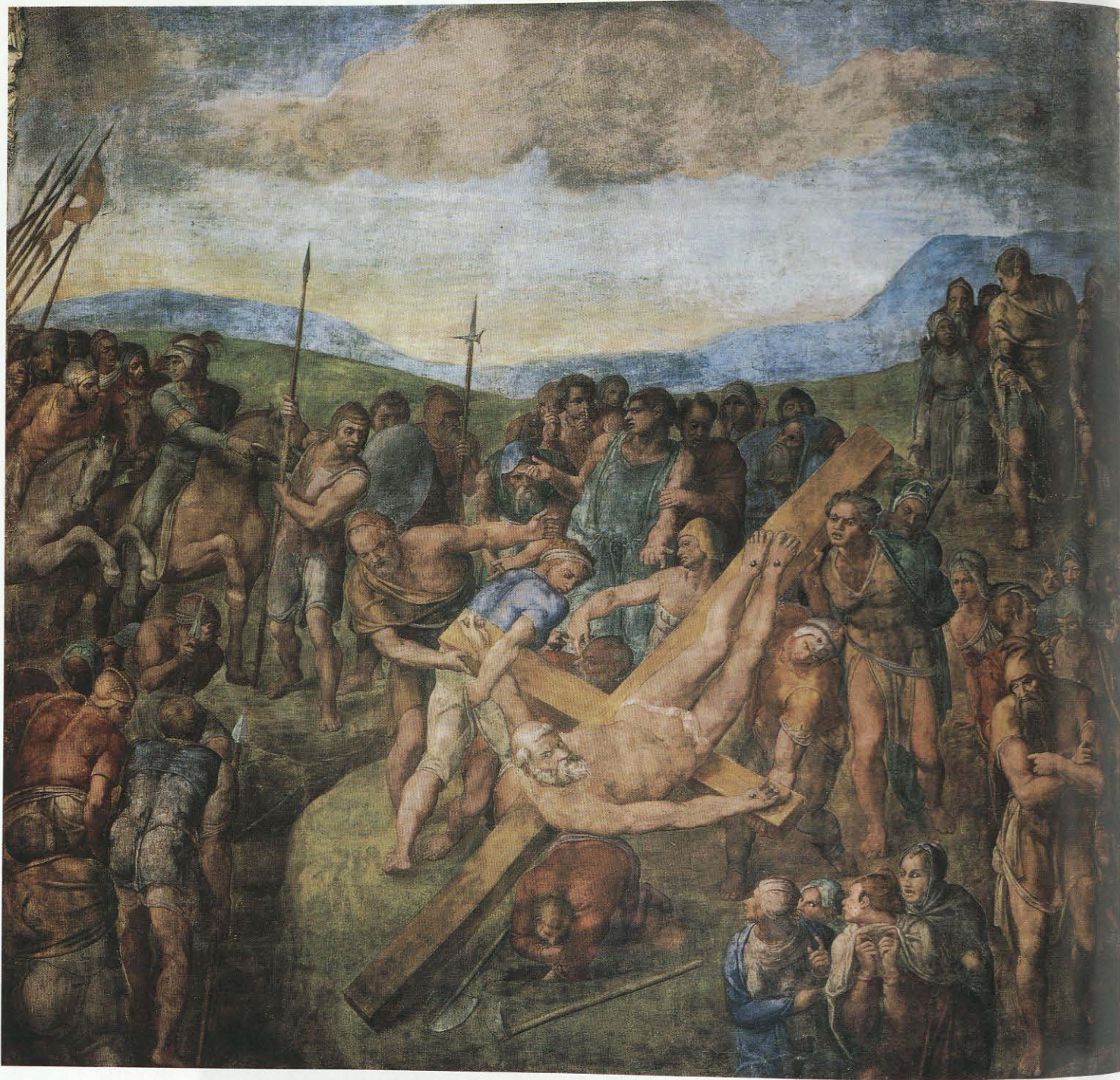
In the Vatican in 1546, Michelangelo began decorating the chapel that Antonio da Sangallo the Younger had built some eight years before. The “Pauline Chapel,” as it is called after its patron, was to serve as a space where Paul III could meditate on the consecrated bread and wine of the Eucharist, and as a place for the conclave to meet when a new Pope was to be elected – two reminders of the death that awaited the seventy-eight-year-old patron in the

not distant future. On the left-hand wall, a defiant Peter lifts his head from the Cross on which he is being crucified and rotates to stare directly at the viewer; the saint turns in precisely the opposite direction to the Cross itself, which laborers lift into the newly dug hole (fig. 16.36). The sloping ground alludes to the nearby hilltop on which Peter was believed to have been executed, the site where Bramante had built his *Tempietto* (see fig. 12.24). More generally, though, the composition recalls that of the *Last Judgment* (see fig. 15.29), completed just five years before in the Sistine Chapel next door, with figures rising on the left and descending on the right. The presiding agents in this case are the Roman commanders, whose horses seem to know more than they do: one looks away, and the other starts violently, as their riders comment on what they see.



16.35  
Agnolo Bronzino, *Eleonora di Toledo and Her Son, Giovanni*, c. 1545. Oil on panel, 45 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 37 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (115 x 96 cm). Uffizi Gallery, Florence



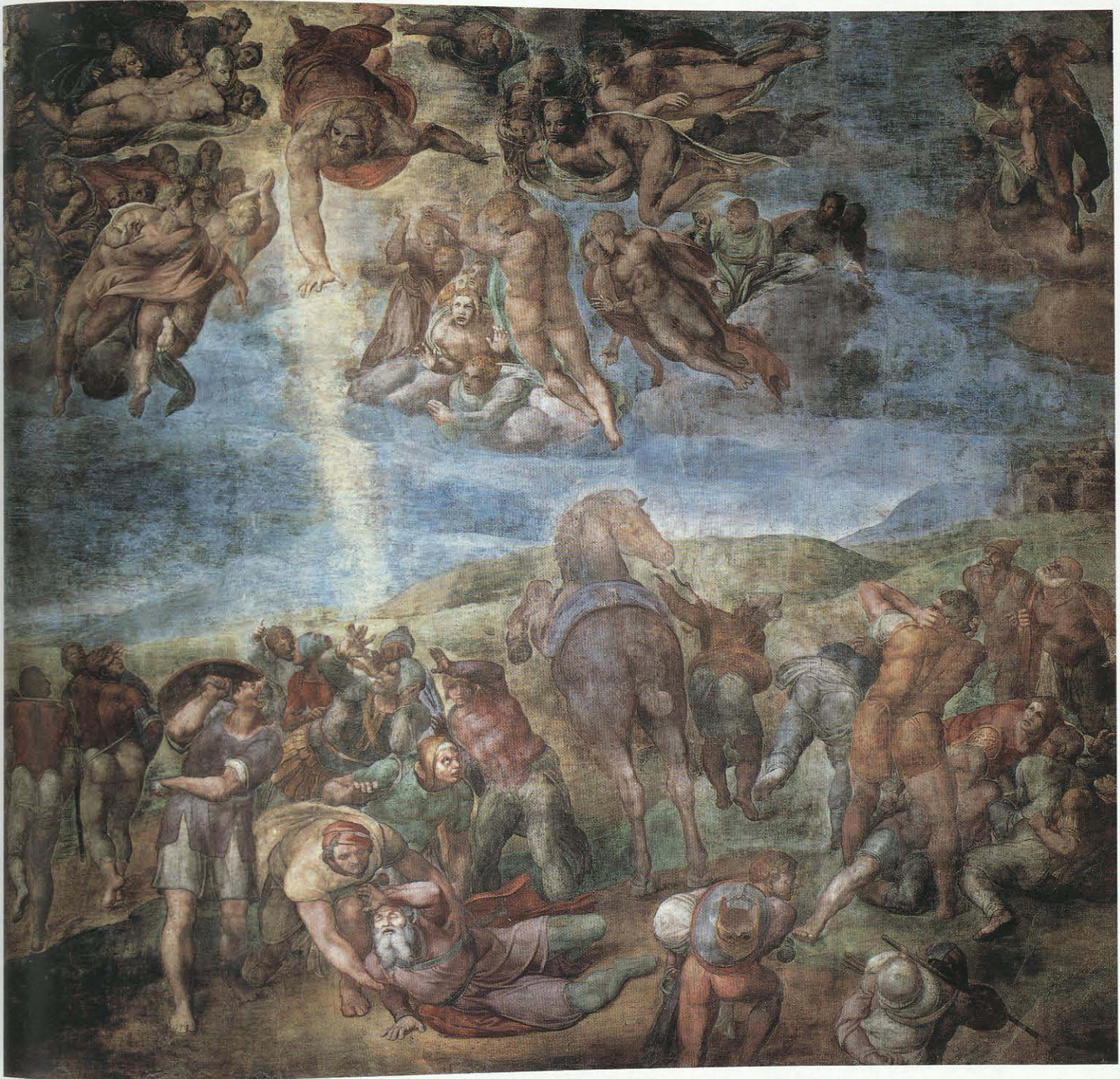


**16.36**  
 Michelangelo, *The  
 Crucifixion of St. Peter*,  
 c. 1545–50. Fresco. Pauline  
 Chapel, Vatican

Peter had requested an upside-down crucifixion, a reminder that by contrast to Christ, who was “erect, upright, and high,” the descendants of Adam were fallen and deserved to be closer to the ground. The scene opposite shows the more noble Paul, the Pope’s namesake, at the moment of his conversion, when he was knocked from his horse (fig. 16.37). According to the Acts of the Apostles, “a light from heaven shined round about him./And fall-

ing on the ground, he heard a voice saying to him: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” Michelangelo has Christ himself appear above, foreshortened so dramatically that he seems to tear out of the picture, while surrounding angels honor him. Just as the crucifixion of Peter showed an act of humility, this was also a humbling; though here, too, the painter invested the meaning of the scene in the twisting pose of its protagonist, an embodiment of the





“conversion” (“turning away”) to which those devoted to the saint attributed particular significance. Gone from both pictures are the literary inventions that, to many eyes, had compromised Michelangelo’s earlier sacred paintings. And we can only imagine that the painter, who was not much younger than the Pope and who was focused enough on his own death to be designing a tomb sculpture, would have been as concerned as his patron to

purify his painting of what contemporary critics of the Sistine *Last Judgment* had come to perceive as errors.

There is a sense that Michelangelo here is trying to rethink the conventions of sacred narrative: in their uneasy, disjunctive qualities, the two frescoes distance themselves from the seductions and allure of “poetical” forms of painting as we have surveyed them above and in previous chapters.

16.37

Michelangelo, *The Conversion of St. Paul*, c. 1542–45. Fresco. Pauline Chapel, Vatican







# 17

1550—1560  
*Disegno | Colore*

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### Titian and Rome

Contemporaries of Titian attached much significance to his trip to Rome in 1545, and it is likely that the artist did as well. The presence of Venice's greatest painter in the city dominated by the followers of Michelangelo and Raphael brought rival traditions into confrontation. Titian's *Danäe* (see fig. 16.30) had openly provoked discussion: in fact, no work of the mid sixteenth century seems more attuned to the central topics and controversies governing the contemporary critical discourse about art. First, the painting is a bid to turn a poem into an image, and to intensify the marvel and allure of Ovid's language in the *Metamorphoses* through the immediate sensuous appeal of paint. Second, Titian based his heroine on a nude figure of Leda by Michelangelo, one closely related to the sculpted figure of Night in the Medici Chapel (see fig. 15.12). Michelangelo, for his part, had based both of his figures on an ancient sarcophagus relief of the same subject, so Titian's imitation would have solicited a by now familiar comparison between painting and sculpture (the *paragone*). And third, the challenge to Michelangelo would have fanned the flames of a rising dispute about the artistic values of Venice as opposed to those dominant in Rome and Florence.

What had until this point been a general recognition and appreciation of regional differences now turned into a vigorous controversy. In 1550, the Tuscan painter-courtier Giorgio Vasari published the first edition of his *Lives of the Most Excellent Italian Architects, Painters, and Sculptors*, which vaunted the supremacy of the Florentine and Roman traditions grounded in *disegno* – the Italian word for “drawing” that also carried the sense of “design” – creating art not just by copying nature but by following a process of trained judgment and mental synthesis. A century of elevated claims for *disegno* had reached the point where the Florentine writer Anton Francesco Doni could remark in his 1549 dialogue *Disegno* that “Disegno is nothing other than divine speculation, which produces an excellent art; you cannot execute anything in sculpture or painting without the guide of this speculation and design.” Such definitions, which prioritized intellectual conception over the description of optical experience, implied an ideal of perfection abstracted from what the

eye could perceive in nature. In the same spirit, Vasari regarded the likes of Giorgione, Pordenone, and Titian as artists who worked intuitively, directly on the canvas, without the premeditation involved in *disegno*. As he saw it, painters in the Venetian tradition sought primarily to represent superficial appearances in nature through blended color, *chiaroscuro*, and brushwork, designating these effects collectively with the term *colore* (or *colorito*, which corresponds not just to the English word “color” but also to “paint” and its handling). In his second edition of the *Lives* Vasari would report that Michelangelo himself, on seeing Titian's *Danäe*, had praised its *colorito* and its *maniera* (style) and had commented “that it was a pity that in Venice men did not learn to draw well from the beginning, and that those painters did not pursue a better method in their studies.” Vasari drives home the point: “And in fact this is true, for the reason that he who has not drawn much nor studied the choicest ancient and modern works, cannot work well from memory by himself or improve the things that he copies from life, giving them the grace and perfection wherein art goes beyond the scope of nature, which generally produces some parts that are not beautiful.”

The Venetian Ludovico Dolce responded to Vasari in 1557 with a spirited publication entitled *Aretino*, after the poet and satirist Pietro Aretino (1492–1556). In Dolce's dialogue, Aretino appears as a semi-fictional character through whom Dolce voices his own views. Aretino made for a fitting mouthpiece not only because he came from Vasari's own home town (the name Pietro Aretino literally means “Peter the Aretine,” i.e. “Peter from Arezzo”), but also because the historical Aretino had opportunistically denounced Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* on the grounds of decorum in a widely circulated letter. Dolce's publication does not mention Vasari by name, but its author makes the object of his attack unmistakable in the praise of Titian by the character “Aretino” and his devastating critique of Michelangelo. Dolce cleverly avoided charges of regional bias by including an enthusiastic encomium of Raphael, and by casting Titian as the equal and successor of Michelangelo's great rival. He thus associated Titian with an artist held to be the equivalent of the poet Petrarch – for the pleasurable grace of his work, and for what Dolce called the “beauties of propriety” – and opposed him to Michelangelo, whose



pursuit of difficulty, intellectual complexity, and disquieting energy identified him with Dante. (We have seen that Michelangelo solicited this kind of identification in the *Last Judgment*, but Dolce turns it against him.)

Michelangelo, according to “Aretino,” excelled in only one limited aspect of art: “making a nude body muscular and elaborated, with foreshortenings and bold movements that show off in detail every artistic problem.” “He does not take into account those distinctions between the ages and the sexes,” however, “which Raphael handles so admirably,” so that “the man who sees a single figure by Michelangelo has seen them all.” By contrast, Dolce praised Titian for his masterly union of *disegno* and *colore*: the *Assumption* (see fig. 13.49) combines “the grandeur and awesomeness (*terribilità*) of Michelangelo, the charm and loveliness of Raphael and the *colorito* proper to nature.”

### Titian and the Hapsburgs

Notwithstanding Dolce’s astute characterization of Titian’s painting, the works from the 1550s and after might make us wonder about the extent to which the artist appreciated the identification with Raphael, or “nature,” or the “beauty of propriety.” Titian’s mode of execution increasingly emphasized the brushstroke, the *colore* of pictorial substance, a priority that not all admired. His own greatest advocate, the real-life satirist Aretino, had sent a 1545 portrait of himself by Titian to Duke Cosimo de’ Medici, remarking in a letter that undoubtedly Titian would have finished the portrait more carefully if Aretino had paid him more (fig. 17.1). This may have been no more than the characteristically unsparing wit of the satirist, but the Medici court requested no paintings from Titian. Philip II, the young king of Spain, who had sat for a portrait by the artist in 1550, expressed misgivings about the loose and apparently hasty execution that was increasingly manifest even in the official portraits Titian was supplying to the Hapsburg rulers of Europe. Philip wrote of one portrait that if there had been more time, he would have had Titian do the picture over again. The king’s aunt, Mary of Hungary, was more appreciative, but she counseled one recipient of a portrait by Titian that the artist’s works “do not bear being looked at too closely.”

In 1553 Titian made another version of his *Danäe* (fig. 17.2), apparently as an unsolicited gift for Philip II, which suggests that he paid little heed to such criticisms. The tonality of the earlier Farnese version (see fig. 16.30), with its blues and golden flesh tones, has given way to a darker and warmer palette. The turbulent storm clouds that engulf the reds and whites of Danäe’s bedchamber also envelop the landscape beyond; the effulgence of gold breaks forth at the point where the swirling grays meet the



rich reds. Titian takes the principle of dramatically contrasting light and color further by offsetting Danäe’s pale flesh with that of a dark-skinned older maidservant who rushes forth to collect the “shower of gold” in the form of falling coins. Her effort to catch the coins, which heightens the implication of prostitution, strikes a note of erotic satire that Aretino would have enjoyed. Along with the sense of wonder and marvel, Titian has intensified the eroticism of the subject, above all in the rapturous gaze of the heroine and the omission of the drapery that covered her lower body in the earlier version.

The king was evidently impressed: over the following decade, Titian supplied the Spanish court with a series of mythological pictures, which he referred to as his *poesie* (literally, “poems,” but also implying “fables” or “myths”). *Venus and Adonis* (fig. 17.3), which followed in 1554, takes its subject matter from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, but it is clear that Titian did not consider himself

17.1

Titian, *Pietro Aretino*,  
c. 1545. Oil on canvas,  
39 x 30 1/2" (98 x 78 cm).  
Galleria Palatina, Palazzo  
Pitti, Florence



17.2

Titian, *Danaë*, 1553. Oil on canvas, 3'11 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 5'7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.2 x 1.72 m). Museo del Prado, Madrid



17.3

Titian, *Venus and Adonis*, 1554. Oil on canvas, 4'5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 7'2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.36 x 2.2 m). Museo del Prado, Madrid







by any means to be an illustrator of the poem. The action depicted – where Venus struggles in vain to prevent her young lover from setting out on a boar hunt that will lead to his death – never occurs in Ovid: Titian conceived it as a point when an erotic idyll took a tragic turn, so that he could contrast Adonis's fatally headstrong nature with the pathos of a lovelorn Venus suddenly rendered powerless. *Venus and Adonis* is Titian's poem, in which like Ovid before him he lays claim to the license to retell a

familiar ancient myth using the characteristic figures and effects that distinguished his art. Once again, soft gleaming skin is offset by a somber physical setting that appears to fill with shadows; the turbulent sky and the restless dogs strike a note of unease. Again, Titian engages in the *paragone* with sculpture, Michelangelo, and *disegno* by modeling his Venus on an ancient relief known as the "Bed of Polykleitos" (fig. 17.4). Adonis, moreover, suggests an adaptation of one of Michelangelo's muscular male figures, albeit invested with a new delicacy. Dolce, in fact, praised Adonis for his androgyny (he also saw Venus as masculine in her actions). The drama of the painting lies in Adonis's attempt to break free of Venus: he rejects love as an effeminizing force, yet this rejection and the attempt to take up masculine pursuits, such as hunting, have fatal consequences.

Although one letter from Titian suggests that in devising the subject matter he observed no principle other than variety – "because the figure of Danäe... is seen entirely from the front, I have chosen in this *poesia* [i.e. *Venus and Adonis*] to vary the appearance and show the opposite side" – the combination of eroticism with

17.4

Roman relief; the so-called  
"Bed of Polykleitos."



17.5

Titian, *The Rape of Europa*,  
1559. Oil on canvas, 6'1"  
x 6'9" (1.85 x 2.05 m).  
Isabella Stewart Gardner  
Museum, Boston



darker emotions and insinuated violence is characteristic of the entire series. Writers like Dolce and Aretino had characterized Titian in terms of Raphael's majestic grace and charm, but in these and other works from the period it is as if Titian was resisting such an interpretation. The most impressive painting from the series is the *Rape of Europa* (fig. 17.5) of 1559. Europa, a princess of Sidon, has mounted a beautiful white bull that she and her companions encountered at the shore. The bull, who was none other than the lovesick god Jupiter, suddenly made for the sea, to bear her away to the island of Crete. Again, the best-known account is in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, but Titian re-casts the fable with his own repertoire of poetic effects. Again, he renders a female in a state of subjection; her powerful body has a three-dimensional volume but also a softly yielding texture. Titian realizes the setting, on the other hand, through vigorous brushwork that seems to dissolve as much as describe forms: the landscape acquires the same hazy quality as the flaming sky. This is art about art, which invites each viewer to experience anew Titian's virtuosic performance as painter: Europa's windblown scarf draws particular attention to the vigorous dragging of brilliant pigment across the can-

vas. Again, Titian has chosen to depict a pivotal moment in the story, focusing on Europa's terrifying experience: snatched away from home and family, she is also in real danger of sliding to another terrible fate in the dark sea below. As a Venetian, Titian would have been specially attuned to the lore of the sea and its lurking perils; he here makes visible the local fear of the deep in the form of two monstrous fish that show spines and fangs in the foaming waters. Finally, Titian raises the possibility that Europa's fear might be giving way to another emotion: the band of shadow across her face makes us conscious of her rolling eyes and the direction of her glance. She seems to have noticed the airborne cupids, hovering little spirits of love. The fact that a third cupid actually rides upon – and thus has mastered – one of the threatening sea creatures reinforces the idea that love will dispel fear.

### Tintoretto's Challenge to Titian

Titian's works at mid century suggest that the painter may have embraced the identification of Venetian painting with *colore*, while still alluding to the tradition of *disegno*, as if to suggest that he has assimilated and sur-

#### 17.6

Tintoretto, *St. Mark Rescuing the Slave*, 1548. Oil on canvas, 13'7" x 17'10" (4.16 x 5.44 m). Galleria del'Accademia, Venice







17.7  
Tintoretto, *The  
Presentation of the Virgin  
in the Temple*, 1553–56. Oil  
on canvas, 14'1" x 15'9"  
(4.29 x 4.8 m). Madonna  
dell'Orto, Venice

passed it. The young Venetian painter Jacopo Robusti (1518–1594), who acquired the nickname Tintoretto – “little dyer” – adopted a forcefully different approach. Tintoretto appears to have been an estranged pupil of Titian who in 1548 announced his challenge to the older artist’s dominance of the Venetian art world with his *St. Mark Rescuing the Slave* (fig. 17.6). Tintoretto produced the large canvas for the meeting hall of the Scuola Grande di San Marco, one of the most powerful of the Venetian confraternities. It appears that the Scuola at first rejected the painting, although its officers subsequently changed their mind and commissioned Tintoretto to provide additional works for the series.

The officers may have found the novelty of Tintoretto’s approach disquieting. This is recognizably a work by a painter trained in Venice: the rich color recalls the turn-of-the-century work of the Bellini, and the vigorous brushwork is a characteristic device of younger painters influenced by Titian. Yet the blustering energy of the composition, accentuated by asymmetry, an apparently haphazard play of light and shadow, and a lack of balance, indicates that Tintoretto also had an eye on Michelangelo.

A group of figures to the left clusters around the foreshortened body of a naked man – a Christian slave who had defied pagan authorities in his devotion to St. Mark and was miraculously preserved from torture and execution. Even more startling in its foreshortening is the figure of St. Mark who, unseen by the crowd, descends from above, his feet incongruously turned toward the viewer, his face barely visible. The figures seated under the throne recall Michelangelo’s Medici Chapel allegories, which Tintoretto appears to have known from small clay replicas. Both the man clutching the column and the woman with the child take inspiration from Raphael’s Stanza d’Eliodoro (see fig. 13.6), but the resulting formulation would never be mistaken for a work of central Italian art. Tintoretto is renewing Venetian tradition, and aggressively, even irreverently, claiming a place for himself within it, by more blatantly insisting on the reconciliation of *disegno* and *colore*.

In his *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* (fig. 17.7), originally a set of organ shutters for the Venetian church of the Madonna dell’Orto, Tintoretto produced a composition that looks as if it might have been designed



17.8

Agnolo Bronzino, *Joseph with his Brothers* (fragment of a modello for the tapestry *Joseph Recounting His Dream of the Sun, Moon, and Stars*), c. 1548. Black chalk on off-white paper, 18<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 13" (46.2 x 33.1 cm). Ashmolean Museum, Oxford



by a Roman or a Florentine. Statuesque women with elaborate hairstyles again recall Raphael in the Stanza d'Eliodoro (see fig. 13.6) or Bronzino in the Chapel of Eleonora of Toledo (see figs. 16.4–16.6); the painted architecture indicates that Tintoretto had some knowledge of frescoes by Francesco Salviati in Florence (see fig. 16.3) or Daniele da Volterra (see figs. 17.20 and 17.23) in Rome; and the boldly foreshortened limbs of the foreground figures were a specialty of Michelangelo's followers. Yet in other respects the painting is uncharacteristic of those central Italian artists. Especially in the ascending column of male figures, there is a conspicuous working of paint on canvas: the differential play of light and shade across the groups of figures betrays a characteristically Venetian attention to optical and atmospheric effects. Later

biographers would contend that Tintoretto composed his paintings by shaping wax figures – the same technique that central Italian designers would use to imitate Michelangelo. Yet, here, in an unusual touch, Tintoretto has decorated the steps of the temple with gold leaf, an anachronistic note that would have evoked the sparkle and gleam of old Venetian mosaics.

## Design and Production: Florence and Rome

### Tapestry and Goldsmithery

The artists of the Medici and papal courts demonstrated a self-consciousness about the centrality of design not just in their painting and sculpture, but in their involvement in the decorative arts. In Florence by 1554, the most prestigious and magnificent ducal commission to date was nearing completion: a series of twenty large tapestries devoted to the story of the Biblical hero Joseph, eleventh son of Jacob. Joseph, who survived his jealous siblings' attempts to get rid of him, rose to power as minister of the king of Egypt, and was finally reconciled with his humiliated family, is a characteristic substitute for the more familiar boy hero David, who in Florence by this time would have awakened too many republican ghosts. The Medici, as we saw with Leo X, had previously ordered their tapestries from the manufacturing centers of the Netherlands, especially Brussels and Antwerp. Buyers sought Flemish tapestries for their decorative profusion of naturalistic detail, for florid landscapes with animals and birds. Bishop Ricasoli, Cosimo I's agent at the imperial court in Brussels, even proposed that in sending designs abroad the duke should have the background spaces left blank, because the Flemish could supply these elements.

Now, though, Cosimo had the tapestries woven in Florence by two masters he had poached from the court of Ferrara, Nicholas Karcher and Jakob Rost. Cosimo's Florentine designers occasionally emulated the detailed landscape effects of Flemish painting, but tended in general to emphasize the idealized, sculptural body so typical of Florentine and Roman art. Bronzino's highly finished model drawing for one of the tapestries survives (fig. 17.8): in this early episode, Joseph explains his dream of future greatness to his father Jacob, while his brothers plot against him. Unlike Raphael, who had treated tapestry according to the conventions of mural painting, with bodies arrayed in deep space, Bronzino arranges his figures in relief-like formations: absent are both the architectural environments of the Raphael school and the landscapes of the Flemish. The drawing





17-9

Perino del Vaga, Francesco Salviati, Giovanni Bernardi, Manno Sbarri, the "Farnese Casket," 1546–60. Capodimonte Museum, Naples

suggests that Bronzino may have wanted the tapestries to stand as exemplars of *disegno*, the sign of a local and not an imported product. In its high degree of finish, his sheet recalls the presentation drawings of Michelangelo (see fig. 16.9), which had set a new standard of technical perfection. Bronzino had made a trip to Rome in 1548 and almost certainly called upon the older artist, but he could also have examined some of the drawings that Michelangelo had made for Florentine recipients. As Michelangelo had with the groups in the upper zones of the *Last Judgment* (see fig. 15.28), Bronzino creates pictorial volume largely through the sculptural quality of the figures rather than through scale or perspective.

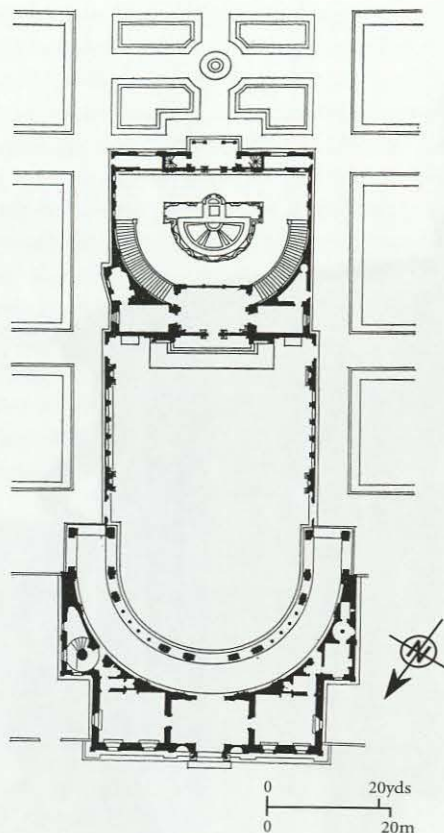
Equally elaborate, although more intimate in scale, was the spectacular jeweled casket produced for Cardinal Alessandro Farnese between 1546 and 1560 (fig. 17.9). This work, of staggering craftsmanship and expense, appears to have been made for no other reason than to inspire wonder. Again, the work involved the coordination of

Florentine painter-designers with a team of specialized craftsmen. The former included Perino del Vaga, who designed several of the miniature narratives – epic or historical battle scenes ironically jewel-like in size, and incised onto crystals by the gem cutter Giovanni Bernardi. The crystals were ready by 1546, and Francesco Salviati (see fig. 16.3) then provided designs for the silver-gilt metalwork, which was executed in the following years by yet another Florentine, Manno Sbarri. The effect of multiple orders of representation – crystal *historie* framed by garlands with *ignudi* on fields of lapis lazuli, herms and seated figures at the corners, broken pediments in which naked boys play with birds, a melancholy philosopher surmounting the lid, while the whole rests on legs in the form of sphinxes – follows the same principles as much larger artistic ensembles, from illuminated manuscripts, to fresco cycles (see Perino in the Sala Paolina, fig. 16.8), to fountains and villa architecture. Together, they thereby manifest the flexibility and adaptability of



## 17.10

Plan of the Villa Giulia,  
Rome, designed 1550  
by Giorgio Vasari with  
contributions by Jacopo da  
Vignola and Bartolomeo  
Ammanati



## 17.11

Jacopo da Vignola, Casino.  
Street facade. Villa Giulia,  
Rome



the decorative repertoire associated with the tradition of *disegno*. In some respects, the casket suggests a miniaturization of themes from Michelangelo's Sistine Ceiling (see fig. 12.31) or Medici Chapel (see fig. 15.11), now turned to the ends of an aesthetic of precious refinement and exquisite detail. As the images on the crystals suggest, the designers understood such effects of miniaturization and preciousity to be entirely antique in their inspiration.

## Architecture of the Vasari Circle

Architectural projects demonstrate the same pursuit of variety, coordinating ornament on a small scale with a larger and more complex ensemble. Design, as well as production, was frequently a collaborative enterprise. Thus in 1550, when Pope Julius III decided to build a new pleasure villa on the slopes of the Pincian Hill in Rome, he placed the Florentine painter-architect Vasari in charge of the overall plan (fig. 17.10), while assigning individual sections of the design to the architect Giacomo Vignola (1507–1573) and the sculptor/architect Bartolomeo Ammanati (1511–1592); Michelangelo served as a consultant. One entered the complex through a building known as the Casino (“little house,” although it is far from little), designed by Vignola (fig. 17.11). The imposing but austere street facade, reminiscent of the Palazzo Farnese (see fig. 16.28) with its rusticated portal and quoins, offers little hint



of the opulent variety within. In a startling contrast to the outer facade, the block-like form of the Casino mutates into a huge curved recess (hemicycle) on the inner face (fig. 17.12). The triple portal is recapitulated as a triumphal arch-like form, repeated with the capricious slicing off of one bay at each end of the facade. Further surprises await the visitor as he or she ascends through a series of terraced gardens and ramps: the centerpiece (fig. 17.13) is Ammanati's "Nymphaeum" (a feature of ancient Roman villas, conceived as a haunt for local nature spirits or nymphs). From across the courtyard, this appears to be a one-storey structure with a central loggia in the form of a serliana; only on arrival there does it become evident that this is really the uppermost of several storeys, which descend with an abrupt shift in ground level. The horizontal axis that has structured the whole approach suddenly intersects with a vertical one – the Nymphaeum bids the visitor to look down, as if into the depths of the earth. The descending stairs lead to statues of river gods and dank fountains with herms in the form of nymphs, until a path rises again, opening onto the hill through the gardens.

For all of its diversity, the villa complex is really a set of variations on two themes: the hemicycle and the triple arch. Vasari and his collaborators here create a connoisseur's architecture for those conversant with the recent Roman buildings of Michelangelo, Bramante, and Raphael.



ABOVE

17.12

Jacopo da Vignola, Casino.  
Garden facade. Villa Giulia,  
Rome

LEFT

17.13

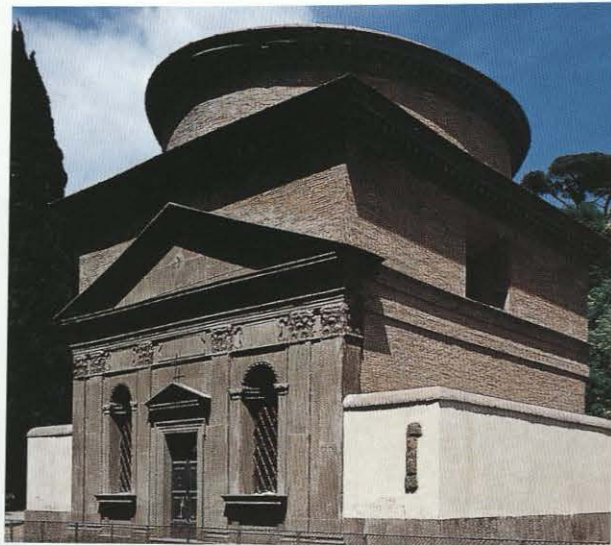
Bartolomeo Ammanati and  
associates, Nymphaeum,  
1551–55. Villa Giulia, Rome





17.14

Jacopo da Vignola,  
Sant'Andrea in Via  
Flaminia, 1550–54



BELOW

17.15

Giorgio Vasari, courtyard  
of the Uffizi, Florence,  
begun 1559



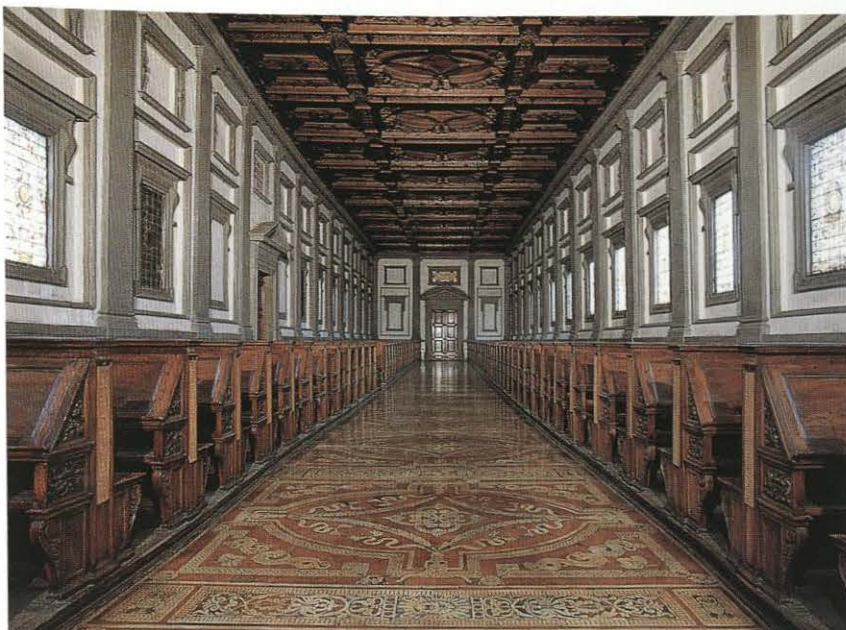
Vignola did likewise nearby in the small church of Sant'Andrea in Via Flaminia (fig. 17.14), which demonstrates how much novelty was possible even while rules and canonical models were followed. This building, too, was commissioned by Julius III, in fulfillment of a vow he made while being held captive during the Sack of Rome of 1527; it belongs to an ongoing program of restoring the city, and of bringing back through architecture the glory days of the Pope's namesake Julius II. The church is a curious mutation of the Pantheon, whereby a cube and oval dome, the latter probably a response to Michelangelo's "labyrinth" design for the Capitoline complex (see figs. 16.26–16.27), now replaces the combination of cylinder with hemisphere. Again, the building reflects the current taste for miniaturization, since the scale follows that of another Renaissance centrally planned structure, the Tempietto of Bramante (see fig. 12.24). The oval also reflects the attractions of centrally planned structures while conceding to a longitudinal design that church ceremony required.

Vasari moved back to Florence in 1554 and took over the administration of most of the Medici court's artistic commissions, including an extensive remodeling of the Palazzo Vecchio (the former Palazzo dei Priori, now the ducal palace) and a series of historical and topographical frescoes celebrating the role of the Medici family in the history of the city. In 1559, he undertook what may be his best architectural work, when Cosimo decided to re-house all the civic and guild offices formerly based in the Palazzo and elsewhere in a new building that would occupy the adjacent space leading to the river. Already in 1546, extensive demolition had cleared space between the old city hall and the Arno; before Vasari took over the project for the new office block ("Uffizi"), another architect had proposed a massive portico-lined piazza with a circular mausoleum for Cosimo in the center. Vasari's scheme was less obviously centered on the glorification of the duke, and more on the city itself. In fact, it deliberately preserved some of the site's venerable older buildings, such as the great Gothic Loggia dei Lanzi, which the earlier proposal would have sacrificed. Vasari's building sought to convey principles of efficient administration, of sobriety and order, more than ornamental complexity: it amounts to a monumental street or a long and narrow piazza, lined with two massive porticoes (fig. 17.15). The "facades" that enclose Vasari's courtyard show his Roman experience, and in particular a debt to Bramante's Palazzo Caprini (see fig. 13.19). The combination of gray *pietra serena* and white *stucco*, on the other hand, along with the architectural vocabulary (decorative consoles, doubled columns, the square windows of the mezzanine), aim for a more local look, one that gestures to Brunelleschi and especially to Michelangelo. Lest



anyone miss the reference, Cosimo subsequently had the sculptor Vincenzo Danti add a ducal portrait, flanked by two recumbent allegories, a direct reference to the two tombs in Michelangelo's New Sacristy (see fig. 15.11). Cosimo and his successors could have stood in the window behind the statue to survey activities taking place below; an identical window on the other side provided a view of the Oltrarno.

Shortly after his arrival in Florence, Vasari had summoned the sculptor-architect Ammanati from Rome to assist him with various projects. In 1559, the same year that Vasari began work on the Uffizi, Cosimo had Ammanati attend to the completion of a grand library that Michelangelo had begun in San Lorenzo while working on the Medici Chapel. Initiated by Pope Clement VII as a repository for the book collection that the Medici had begun assembling in the fifteenth century, the library would consist principally of two adjoining spaces. In the reading room (fig. 17.16), permanent desks extended from the walls; the visitor would move to whichever one held a book of interest, rather than moving the book itself. Large windows ensured sufficient illumination during daylight hours, and the elimination of columns of the sort that defined the San Marco library also limited the casting of shadows on reading surfaces. To enter this room, the visitor passed through a generous vestibule defined by an oversized set of curving stairs that seemed to flow downward from the library proper (fig. 17.17). This was the first project Michelangelo had ever taken on that involved no figural works at all, and his drawings show him imagining the architectural elements almost as human bodies, their abstract profiles turning into faces (fig. 17.18). He treated the structural members, moreover, as sculpted objects, virtual figures: the columns, rather



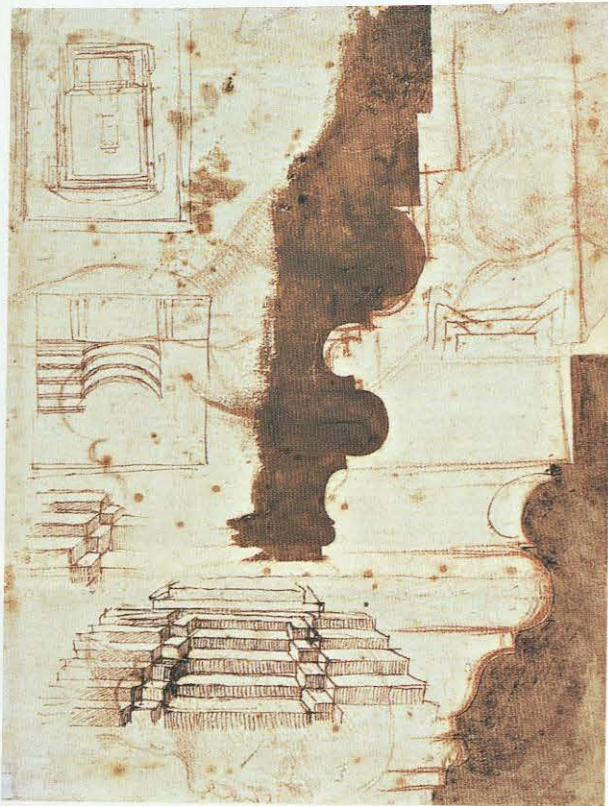
RIGHT, ABOVE  
**17.16**  
 Michelangelo, Laurentian  
 Library Reading Room,  
 1523–59. San Lorenzo,  
 Florence

RIGHT  
**17.17**  
 Vestibule of the Laurentian  
 Library, initially designed  
 by Michelangelo, 1524–34,  
 completed by Bartolomeo  
 Ammanati, 1559. San  
 Lorenzo, Florence



## 17.18

Michelangelo, sketches  
for the staircase of the  
Laurentian Library, 1525.  
Pen, red chalk, black chalk,  
and wash, 15½ x 11"  
(39.5 x 28 cm). Casa  
Buonarroti, Florence



than supporting an entablature, occupy niches; consoles, removed from their traditional function, protrude decoratively from the wall (fig. 17.19).

Ammanati, seeing through this vision, could take advantage not only of the drawings Michelangelo had left, but also of an elaborate wax model the earlier architect had given him. The rooms, nevertheless, belong as much to the artistic world of the 1550s and 1560s as they do to Michelangelo's earlier Florentine period. The close visual connections between the Laurentian Library and the Uffizi show Duke Cosimo attempting to transform Michelangelo's manner into a more widely applicable Florentine architectural idiom. What Michelangelo, working for other Medici patrons, had developed for a largely private space in the heart of the family precinct now became a conspicuous "state style": the Uffizi extended from the city's central civic square, and Cosimo would open the Laurentian Library to the public as well. The idea, no doubt, was to subordinate individual architectural personalities to a shared agenda, though the reality was not always so harmonious. While the Uffizi was under way, Ammanati criticized Vasari's initial design, and proposed to have the building terminate in a serliana. Vasari quietly absorbed this feature into his structure.

## 17.19

Michelangelo, Laurentian  
Library, wall of vestibule





## Interpreting Michelangelo

### Daniele da Volterra

The assimilation of Michelangelo and Raphael into a courtly art characterized by ornamental grace, learned allusions to artistic tradition, and a complex orchestration of “main subject” with copious framing elements, was only one way in which artists positioned themselves in relation to their elderly and legendary model. Among Michelangelo’s favored younger followers was Daniele da Volterra (c. 1509–1566), who had established himself in Rome as an assistant to Perino del Vaga. The year after Perino’s death in 1548, Daniele completed a chapel for the noble Roman widow Elena Orsini at the church of Santissima Trinità dei Monti. The principal subject of the chapel’s side walls was Helen, Orsini’s name saint; they focused on Helen’s recovery of the True Cross (the cross on which Christ was crucified), which helps explain the decision to feature the Cross on the altar wall. Daniele’s monumental fresco of the *Deposition* (fig. 17.20), his most famous painting, is the only part of his decorations that now survives. As Michelangelo had done when producing a Passion picture for Vittoria Colonna (see fig. 16.10), Daniele made the Virgin the real protagonist of his scene. Many Catholic churchmen thought the Virgin’s swoon, or *spasimo*, lacked decorum, arguing that Mary could never have displayed such public and irrational displays of emotion. Despite this the painting became one of the most admired works of religious art in Rome, and was regarded as an exemplary instance of the imitation of Michelangelo. Even the severe reformer Pope Pius V signalled his approval by seeking to have the fresco detached and moved to the Vatican. For Elena, however, the Virgin, like the patron herself, was a maternal exemplar of devotion.

Daniele made some concessions in the picture to the current taste for ornamental elaboration: the heads of the women take up the idealized female profiles with elaborately dressed hair that Bronzino and Salviati, too, liked to paint (compare, for example, fig. 16.3). Ultimately, though, these motifs derived from Michelangelo, and most of Daniele’s adaptations from his still-living idol were even more direct. Despite the centrality of female characters, Daniele composed his picture from heroic and statuesque bodies, many with foreshortened limbs that recall the Sistine *Last Judgment* (see fig. 15.29) or Pauline Chapel (see figs. 16.36–16.37). And in what, in its day, was perhaps the most astonishing part of his work, Daniele added to the lower zone of the chapel’s entrance a pair of stucco reliefs, now known only through drawings after them (figs. 17.21–17.22), which commented on his own work. In one, Michelangelo himself appears, his

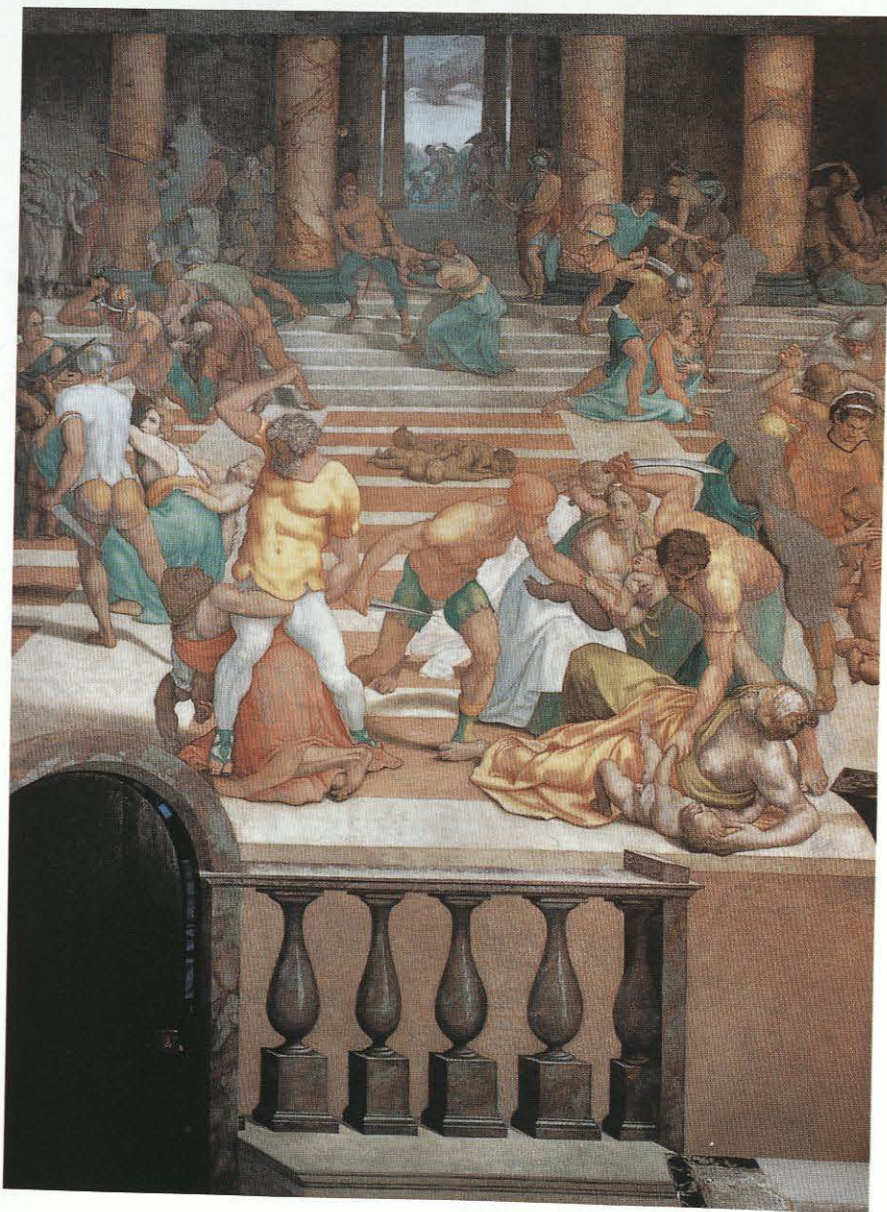
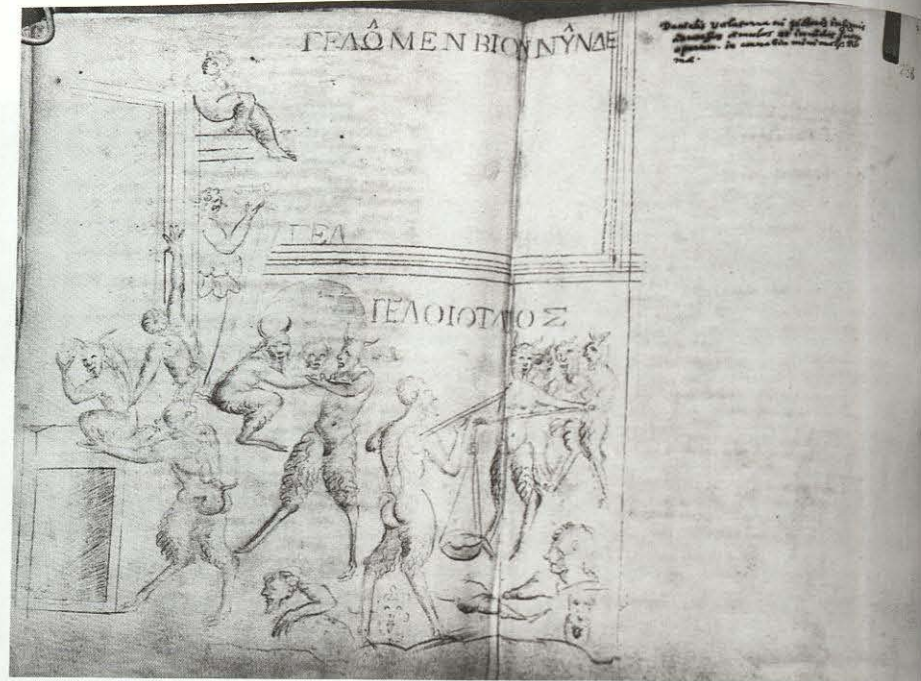


back to the viewer and his identity only revealed by the reflection of his face in a mirror. A Greek inscription above this read “know thyself,” encouraging artists to look inside and find their own way of painting. Another figure, representing Daniele’s late friend and mentor Sebastiano del Piombo, holds a pair of compasses; an inscription below him reads: “My advice to all consists of nothing.” The other stucco was more extraordinary still. It showed a group of satyrs inside Daniele’s chapel, taking the bodies he had painted out of his altarpiece and assessing them, verifying that they were justly proportioned and showed proper “gravity.” The satyr often functioned in the Renaissance as a figure of “satire”;

#### 17.20

Daniele da Volterra,  
*Deposition*, 1548. Fresco.  
Orsini Chapel, Santissima  
Trinità dei Monti, Rome





the joke here seems to be that when detractors came to make light of what Daniele had painted, they would in fact find nothing they could mock. The painter's self-consciousness about working in the "sculptural" mode of Michelangelo and Sebastiano del Piombo, along with the suggestion that his painting consists of measurable, three-dimensional bodies rather than of brushstrokes on a surface, align him in a bizarrely extreme way with the partisans of *disegno*.

Nearby, in the chapel of Lucrezia della Rovere, Daniele completed in 1553 a cycle on the Life of the Virgin that again made his theoretical and polemical identification with Michelangelo evident. (This chapel contained the *Presentation of the Virgin* fresco, now heavily damaged, which served as the model for Tintoretto's version

ABOVE LEFT AND RIGHT

17.21 and 17.22

Anonymous drawings after Daniele da Volterra's lost stuccoes for the Orsini Chapel. Ink on wash on paper. MS 1564, fols 787v and 285v–286r. Biblioteca Angelica, Rome

LEFT

17.23

Daniele da Volterra, *Massacre of the Innocents*. Fresco. Della Rovere Chapel, Santissima Trinità dei Monti, Rome





discussed earlier; see fig. 17.7.) Michelangelo, in his letter on the *paragone* to Benedetto Varchi (see p. 476), had asserted that sculpture was superior to painting, and that painting became the more excellent the more it strove to be like sculpture. In the *Massacre of the Innocents* (fig. 17.23) Daniele created a deep perspectival space in which a series of statuesque groups enact the extremely violent subject: robust women struggle with powerful gladiator-like soldiers; and the opening in an illusionistic balustrade creates the impression that such violence might spill over into the beholder's own space.

#### Pellegrino Tibaldi

Another artist who strongly identified with Michelangelo was the painter/architect Pellegrino Tibaldi (1527–1596). After assisting his teacher Perino del Vaga with the decoration of the Castel Sant'Angelo, Tibaldi executed a

number of works in Bologna for the prelate Giovanni Poggi, who had been elevated to the rank of cardinal in 1551. Among these commissions was a narrative cycle on the story of the Greek hero Ulysses in two rooms of Poggi's palace (fig. 17.24). Poggi probably expected a work that would have the multilayered visual excitement of the Sala Paolina (see fig. 16.8), and Tibaldi certainly complied. The larger room, known as the Sala, has elaborate framing elements in the form of stucco herms and garlands and painted grotesques. The four gesticulating nudes in the corners are variants of the Sistine *ignudi*, although their depiction *di sotto in sù*, presenting their legs and lower bodies to the viewer, undercuts the heroic character of the originals. Tibaldi, moreover, has exaggerated their athletic poses so that they assume an almost frenzied air, echoing the furiously energetic actions of the giants and gods in the narrative scenes: the Cyclops Polyphemus, being blinded by Ulysses at the center and, in the

17.24  
Pellegrino Tibaldi, vault  
frescoes in the Sala di  
Ulisse, 1554–55. Palazzo  
Poggi, Bologna







adjacent scene, vainly trying to prevent the escape of the Greeks; the suitably stormy wind god Aeolus; and the sea god Neptune, whose enmity toward Ulysses keeps the hero wandering at sea for ten years. Like Daniele, Tibaldi approaches Michelangelo with an unexpected degree of humor: in one scene from the stanza, a Greek warrior (modeled on a damned soul from the Sistine *Last Judgment*) shushes the viewer while others set about stealing some traumatized-looking cattle (fig. 17.25). In another, the shipwrecked hero kicks his legs helplessly while the nymph Ino hauls him to shore with her veil (fig. 17.26).

If Daniele satirized the critics he expected to fault him for continuing to paint in the manner of Michelangelo and Sebastiano del Piombo, Tibaldi constructs a more highbrow and allusive parody. To begin, he makes fun of the heroic epics of antiquity, by showing how little the deeds of Ulysses correspond with the ideals of exemplary conduct that ancient and modern critics often claimed for them. Pellegrino probably also sought to remind viewers of the much-loved poem *Orlando Furioso*, composed in 1518 by the Ferrarese courtier Ludovico Ariosto (1474–1533), and revised and republished several times. The *Orlando* was itself an epic, in the genre of the ancients Homer and Virgil, but it often portrayed its heroic characters in ironic terms. Moreover, Ariosto drew heavily in his subject matter on non-classical material, namely the Italian, French, and Spanish romances of chivalry. Using the precepts of Aristotle's *Poetics*, critics had faulted Ariosto for the moral ambiguity of his heroes, and the constant interruption of episodes that drifted from the main plot, several of which had to do with sorcery, monsters, and other marvels. Tibaldi's choice of magical and marvelous episodes from Homer's *Odyssey*, and his pointed neglect of the main plot (Ulysses' homecoming to Ithaca), shows that he aligned his artifice with Ariosto's. Ariosto came from a city close to Poggi's home town of Bologna, and the painter may have been especially interested in the poet as the literary manifestation of a regional identity that he himself embraced as a painter. Tibaldi's contemporaries aligned him with the *grazia* and exquisite coloring of Correggio and the "Lombard" tradition. As with Ariosto, so too with Michelangelo: Tibaldi seems to flaunt those very aspects of Michelangelo's art that had become controversial, and would become even more so.

## Out of Italy

A considerable number of the works we have discussed in this and the preceding chapter were for patrons and destinations in other European centers. Cosimo had sent both Bronzino's original altarpiece for the Chapel

of Eleonora (see fig. 16.37) and his *Allegory* (see fig. 16.13) to France; this, like the flow of paintings to Augsburg or Madrid from Titian's workshop, is symptomatic of a wider demand for Italian art and luxury products throughout Europe, especially at the courts. Italian artists themselves circulated as highly valued cultural property: we have already seen that the French court became a destination for Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea del Sarto, Rosso Fiorentino, and Benvenuto Cellini, and this trend would continue, becoming increasingly pronounced in Hapsburg territories; Tibaldi would join the Spanish court in Madrid in 1586.

## Sofonisba Anguissola

One of the most celebrated emigrants to the Spanish court was Sofonisba Anguissola (c. 1532–1625), who joined the household of Queen Isabella of Valois in 1559 and remained for twelve years. Anguissola's access to the inner circles of Europe's most powerful court was facilitated by the fact that she was herself the daughter of a Cremonese aristocrat who had encouraged his son and six daughters to pursue their abilities as painters, classical scholars, and musicians. Social advantage combined with genuine talent undoubtedly helped the young Sofonisba to capture the attention of Italian elites (and the friendship of Michelangelo) in ways that other woman artists could not. Tintoretto, for instance, taught his daughter Marietta Robusti to paint, but it is not possible to identify a single work from her hand.

Among Sofonisba's earliest secure pictures is a signed and dated self-portrait now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (fig. 17.27). Painted on a panel of nearly 7 x 5 inches, the picture shows the sitter looking out at the viewer and displaying a book, which bears the words "Sophonisba Anguissola virgo" ("The maiden/virgin Sophonisba Anguissola") and the assertion "Se ipsam fecit 1554" ("She made this herself in 1554") or "She made herself in 1554". No man painting a self-portrait would ever have thought to mention his marital status in the inscription, and Sofonisba may have done so to alert viewers to her independence, though describing herself as a "virgo" also declared her chastity and thus her virtue. The picture celebrates both her physical beauty and the ability of her hand to capture this image. Small and portable, the picture seems designed as something the owner could take from place to place and reveal as a marvel, as much a rarity and curiosity as an unusual shell or fossil, and exactly the kind of thing that women in this period were not expected to create.

A second self-portrait, probably from about a year later, shows the artist at the easel, completing a picture of the Virgin and Child (fig. 17.28). In fact, no independent

OPPOSITE, ABOVE

17.25

Pellegrino Tibaldi, *Ulysses and his Men Steal the Cattle of Helios*, 1554–55. Stanza di Ulisse, Palazzo Poggi, Bologna

OPPOSITE, BELOW

17.26

Tibaldi, *Ulysses and Ino*, 1554–55. Stanza di Ulisse, Palazzo Poggi, Bologna





ABOVE LEFT

17.27

Sofonisba Anguissola, *Self-Portrait*, 1554. Oil on panel, 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (17 x 12 cm). Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

ABOVE RIGHT

17.28

Sofonisba Anguissola, *Self-Portrait, Painting the Virgin and Child*. Oil on canvas, 26 x 22<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" (66.1 x 57.1 cm). Museum Zamek, Lancut



images of the Madonna from these years by Sofonisba are known, which suggests that the painting was not meant to characterize her art so much as to say something about her as an artist. Perhaps there is a pun here on the idea of the “virgo,” the self-characterization she simply declared in the earlier work. If Michelangelo could claim something like “divine” status, and if he and others regarded the production of Christ’s image as an act of particular devotion, Sofonisba had advantages. Her brush in this picture touches Christ’s arm, suggesting that he is the one she is now painting, though of course the Christ *in* the depicted picture was generated by a different “virgo,” his mother Mary. Could Sofonisba be comparing the miraculous birth with her own art?

A later self-portrait, now in Siena, shows Sofonisba on the easel rather than in front of it, in the form of a panel being painted by the man who was in fact her teacher, Bernardino Campi (fig. 17.29). The juxtaposition of the hand that paints the picture with the hand the picture shows underscores the joke, forcing the viewer to reflect on just whose “hand” is at issue here. The image of Sofonisba is physically larger than that of Campi; her head is also higher than his, and she occupies the center

of the picture, pushing him to the margin. This leaves no doubt about who the painting’s true subject is, though it is unlikely that the arrangement was meant exactly to diminish Campi. Indeed, Sofonisba could well have been happy to be regarded as Campi’s “creation”; just as Daniele da Volterra advertised his descent from Michelangelo and Sebastiano del Piombo, Sofonisba cleverly shows that she has learned how to make a Campi painting, which is to say that she has become the perfect product of his shop, part of his genealogy, and a master of his style. Campi was among the leading painters of the region, and in an age when the capacity to imitate was regarded as a virtue, such a demonstration as this would have impressed anyone.

Each of these individual pictures is engaging, but they are also remarkable as a group. No other Italian artist had devoted such attention to self-portraiture: Sofonisba made more self-portraits before the age of twenty-five than most Renaissance painters did in their entire lives. In part, this was a result of limited choices. Ambitious art in mid century Italy was still predominantly an art of the body, and training in *disegno* required study from the nude, whether from posed models or ancient statues. As



a woman, Sofonisba would not have been permitted to undertake such exercises; this closed off one path to her. Such an explanation of subject, however, only goes so far, for making self-portraits like this also had the advantage of taking her outside the patronage system and giving her some control over what she did. Although the works adhere to a basic template – face and body made before a mirror (or, after a point, reproduced from memory), then supplemented with a set of unexpected attributes – the results show the variety that was a hallmark of the virtuoso. In reflecting on Sofonisba's limited repertory, we should recall that Michelangelo, too, eschewed the "universality" of earlier generations in favor of a narrow range of subjects, and that male painters were also beginning to

specialize, working in a single genre rather than seeking to master them all.

Sofonisba's painting also professed her attachment to an artistic tradition that had little investment in debates about *disegno* and *colore*. Although she certainly made drawings in the preparation of portraits, the self-portrait with Campi makes the claim that these artists painted directly from life, with no intermediate "design" stage. Her *Chess Players* (fig. 17.30), for example, a work much admired by Vasari, shows a lively and informal grouping of three of her gifted sisters with their chaperone. The gentle modeling of the faces, the fresh and clear color, and the atmospheric background are characteristic of an increasingly self-conscious Lombard tradition developing in the



## 17.29

Sofonisba Anguissola,  
*Bernardino Campi Painting*  
*Sofonisba Anguissola*, late  
 1550s. Oil on canvas, 43<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>  
 x 43<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (111 x 110 cm).  
 Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena





ABOVE

17-30

Sofonisba Anguissola,  
*Chess Players*, 1555. Oil on  
canvas, 27<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 37" (70 x 94  
cm). Museum Narodowe,  
Poznan, Poland

RIGHT

17-31

Sofonisba Anguissola,  
*Massimiliano Stampa*  
(*Third Marchese of*  
*Soncino*), 1557. Oil on  
canvas, 53<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 28<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (136.8  
x 71.5 cm). Walters Art  
Gallery, Baltimore



wake of Correggio, Pordenone, and Lorenzo Lotto (compare, for example, fig. 14.21 and fig. 15.10). Lotto, despite being born in Venice, worked a great deal in cities of the western Veneto and adopted the characteristic brilliant color and textural softness that would distinguish the Lombards; Dolce's *Aretino* (see p. 496) was openly contemptuous of Lotto and his use of brilliant and unusual hues in his Carmine altarpiece (see fig. 14.21). Pellegrino Tibaldi, for all his Roman training, was also associated with "Lombard" color. Lombard painters demonstrated a particular attention to naturalistic description: *Chess Players* shows a self-consciousness about Lombard proficiency not just in portraiture but also in landscape, and it adapts the portrait mode in which Sofonisba regularly worked to the emerging category of "genre painting," subjects from everyday life.

Anguissola's portrait of the Marquess Massimiliano Stampa from 1557 (fig. 17.31) is more indicative of the kind of work that helped establish her as a court portraitist. A Florentine like Bronzino would have shown the subject totally immersed in the act of posing for his social role; Anguissola, however, has caught the tension between the vulnerability of a nine-year-old and the adult formality of the pose and setting (the child had just inherited his title from his recently deceased father). Like Bronzino, she follows the practice of showing a figure clad in black against a field of brilliant color; the fall of shadow against the white marble, which gives the frail figure a dimension of volume and corporeality, is a characteristic touch of her own, while the sleeping dog seems less a princely attribute than an acknowledgment of the world of childhood concerns.

### The Leoni

Among the Italian sculptors who came to work for the Spanish court in the same years, the most distinguished were, like Sofonisba, specialists in portraiture: the Aretine Leone Leoni (1509–1590) and his son Pompeo (1533–1608). Leone had been a successful goldsmith in Rome until a bloody street fight landed him in the dock. He narrowly escaped having his hands amputated in punishment and ended up instead being sentenced to a term as a galley slave. Andrea Doria (see figs. 15.20–15.21) intervened to have him freed, and the 1541 medal Leone produced in gratitude is a characteristic early work (figs. 17.32 and 17.33): it shows a portrait of Doria on one side and a self-portrait of Leone on the other, surrounded by a chain that both recalls his period of bondage and attests devotion to his liberator.

In 1542, through Doria's offices, Leone Leoni came under the protectorship of Ferrante Gonzaga, imperial governor of Milan, where he served a period as die-



RIGHT AND BELOW

17.32 and 17.33

Leone Leoni, *Medal of  
Andrea Doria*, obverse(right) and reverse (below),  
1541. Cast bronze, diameter1 1/8" (4.2 cm). British  
Museum, London

master for the city's mint. Following the example of Cellini in Florence, however, Leone and Pompeo began to devote themselves to objects on a more monumental scale, most of them likenesses of the imperial family. Among the most remarkable is a work from the early 1550s showing Charles V and Furor (fig. 17.34). The idea for the sculpture derived from the verso of a Cellini medal Leone knew from Rome, showing a Virgilian allegory in which the wrath or chaos associated with war sits bound on a pile of arms, which a figure of Peace prepares to incinerate. Leone was particularly proud of his own composition's base, which showed a shield, a helmet, a trumpet, and various weapons crushed together with the torch that would destroy them. Atop this sits Furor, chained and twisted into a tortuous pose with a vein bursting and disconcertingly physical beads of sweat falling across his forehead. Standing over this personification, however, is not the Peace we might have expected but rather the emperor himself, Charles V. The armor he wears is removable, giving the patron the option of displaying the image of himself as he might appear on the battlefield or as an implausibly beautiful nude (fig. 17.35). The idea of allowing the emperor to "dispose" of his armor suited the principal conceit of the work: that a ruler who promoted peace had no need of battlegear. It also made Charles, like the Doria of Bronzino's earlier portrait (see fig. 15.21), look more divine than mortal.

Our earlier comparison of Michelangelo and Titian suggested an association of sculpture with *disegno*, and though the overly minute detail of even the largest Leoni statues shows that he never quite abandoned the decorative sensibilities of goldsmithery, his late work asserted

17.34

Leone Leoni, *Charles V and  
Furor*, 1550–55. Bronze,

height 5'8 1/4" (1.73 m).

Museo del Prado, Madrid







17-35

Leone Leoni, *Charles V and Furor*, 1550-55, with armor removed. Bronze, height 5'8½" (1.73 m). Museo del Prado, Madrid





17-36

Leone Leoni, Casa degli  
Omenoni, 1565–67. Milan

his possession of an abstract “design” that let him shift scale and material. While living in Milan, Leone even designed his own house (fig. 17.36), with bound prisoners on the facade and a copy of the *Marcus Aurelius* in the courtyard in direct emulation of Michelangelo’s Julius tomb (see fig. 13.38) and Campidoglio project (see figs. 16.26–16.27).

Still, numerous works by Leoni – an artist based in the north and employed by Titian’s patrons – caution against an easy identification of sculpture with *disegno*. The *Charles V and Furor*, for example, is not colorless: much of it is the color of the very things it depicts. Leoni’s representation of bronze weapons in bronze, in fact, amplifies the work’s central idea, for if Peace melts weapons, so does the patron of metal sculptures: Charles has had Leoni take materials that could have been used to produce real armor and weapons and turn them instead into art.

At least on one occasion, moreover, Pompeo Leoni did something Michelangelo would never have considered, creating a fully polychromed silver portrait head of Charles’s son Philip II (fig. 17.37). By the late seventeenth century, this had been fitted into the top of an actual suit of armor, and that may have been its purpose from the beginning. The effect of encountering such a thing in the palace of the Spanish court would have been to make it seem as though the king had stepped out of a portrait by Titian and into the room.



17-37

Pompeo Leoni, *Head of  
Philip II*. Polychromed  
silver, height 4'9½" (1.46  
m). Kunsthistorisches  
Museum, Vienna



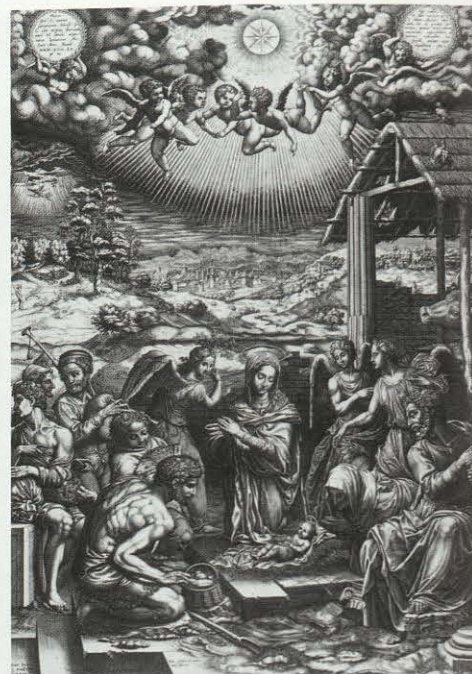
17-38

Giorgio Ghisi, *Adoration of the Shepherds*, after Bronzino, 1553. Engraving printed from two plates, 25 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 17 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (65.2 x 44.2 cm). Yale University Art Gallery

### Giorgio Ghisi and Cornelis Cort

Not all artistic migrants from Italy went to the European courts. The Mantuan engraver Giorgio Ghisi (c. 1520–1582) had drawn attention in the previous decade with an ambitious print, on ten separate plates, after Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*. By transferring to the Antwerp-based publishing house of Hieronymus Cock in 1550, Ghisi could target his engravings after famous Italian masters more directly at markets outside of Italy. For Cock he produced five prints, including a *School of Athens* and *Disputa* after Raphael, along with a less well-known *Adoration of the Shepherds* after a Bronzino painting made for private devotion. Each of these large printed images stretched across two plates; in the case of the Bronzino, the print is identical in size with the original picture.

Ghisi's translation of *The School of Athens* (see fig. 12.50) into black and white required a process of editing and adaptation (fig. 17.39). So as not to detract from the individual characterizations of the figures, he simplified elements of the architectural setting, omitting the coffering of the vault and the squaring of the floor. And clearly either Ghisi or his publisher was concerned about how the Raphael composition, with its range of unlabelled characters and extracted from its original context, would be understood. A large tablet to the left supplies an entirely new iconographic interpretation, one far removed from anything that Raphael had in mind: "Paul in Athens, brought by the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers to the Areopagus, standing in the middle of the hill. Taking the opportunity from an altar he had seen, he teaches of the one great, true God, unknown to them. He censures idolatry and exhorts them to repentance. He also teaches of both the day of Last Judgment and the resurrection of the dead through the reborn Christ. Acts XVII." Raphael's Plato has now been re-cast as St. Paul, and the earlier depiction of ancient philosophy



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17-39

Giorgio Ghisi, *The School of Athens*, after Raphael. Engraving, 20 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 32 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (52.6 x 82.4 cm). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston







has become a confrontation between the Christian and pagan worlds. Such a re-baptism of the fresco reflects the confessional upheavals of post-Reformation Europe, but it would also have enhanced the marketability of the print to evangelical Protestants as well as to Catholics.

Ghisi excelled in the handling of light and dark, modulating his line to render subtle transitions of shadow in his version (fig. 17.38) of Bronzino's *Adoration*. A problem he had to confront was the relative sparseness of the upper part of Bronzino's composition, where an airborne circle of angels hovers in front of a heavenly efflorescence. Lacking the resources of color, which had enabled Bronzino to take an effectively restrained approach, Ghisi decided to garnish the design with additional clouds and with angels bearing inscriptions in praise of the Virgin; pointed, hard-edged rays of light replace Bronzino's heavenly glow. In addition, Ghisi enriched the background landscape with more abundant trees and a panorama of distant cities, integrating Tuscan *disegno* with the most admired qualities of Netherlandish painting.

These prints might give the impression that where a painter relied simply on color, the engraver had to make a "reproduction" that actually involved changes to the design. Cock clearly understood the *disegno/coloro* debate, however, and a generation later, he and the engravers in his employ would seek out paintings distinguished by their virtuoso handling of pigments. It was from Cock's printing house that the engraver Cornelis Cort (c. 1533–1578) set out in the following decade for Italy, where he formed an association with Titian that resulted in the publication of several remarkable engravings. By varying the pressure of the burin as it cut into the plate, Cort produced an image with constantly swelling and tapering forms that seemed to achieve what was scarcely thought



possible: the Netherlandish artist Domenicus Lampsonius wrote to Titian that Cort, with the virtuosic grace and fluidity of his line, had not only succeeded in rendering the painter's *disegno* and *invenzione*, but also captured the effects of *colorito*. Titian's *Annunciation* for the church of San Salvador in Venice (1560–62) was the painter's most assertive demonstration of the values of *colorito*, where forms appear constructed from a riot of painted strokes (fig. 17.40). Inevitably, Cort's translation into black line tends to make forms firmer and more resolved, but the engraver worked against the limits of the medium to achieve a tonal variety of rich blacks, silvery grays, and gleaming whites that is truly painterly in its range (fig. 17.41). From this point forward, the resources of printmaking were no longer to be reserved for the artists who professed the supremacy of *disegno*.

ABOVE LEFT

17.40

Titian, *The Annunciation*,  
c. 1560–62. Oil on canvas,  
13'2" x 7'7". (4.03 x 2.35  
m). San Salvador, Venice

ABOVE RIGHT

17.41

Cornelis Cort, after Titian,  
*Annunciation*, published  
c. 1566 by Antoine  
Lafréry. Engraving, 16<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>  
x 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (41.5 x 27.6 cm).  
Fitzwilliam Museum,  
University of Cambridge







# 18

1560—1570  
*Decorum, Order, and Reform*

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## 18

1560–1570

*Decorum, Order, and Reform***Alessandro Moretto and Giovanni Moroni: Reform Tendencies on the Eve of Trent**

Around 1560 Giovanni Battista Moroni (c. 1520–1578), an artist mainly active in the Lombard towns of Bergamo and Brescia, produced a portrait of a man in prayer before the Virgin Mary (fig. 18.1). We have seen earlier instances of religious painting that included the patron's image alongside the Virgin and the saints. All have been paintings for churches, votive images and altarpieces that provided a public commemoration of the patrons' devotion, and reminded viewers to pray for them after death (see figs. 4.16 and 6.10). Moroni's painting is something different. He probably made it for a private setting, where it would have served not just as a devotional image but also as a family portrait. The unusual prominence of the patron, moreover, and the disparity in scale between

## 18.1

Giovanni Battista Moroni,  
*Man Praying before the  
Virgin*, c. 1560. Oil on  
canvas, 23½ x 25½" (60 x  
65 cm). Samuel H. Kress  
Collection, National  
Gallery of Art,  
Washington, D.C.



the man and the Virgin, suggests that there is something else at stake here: a demonstration and promotion of the kind of experience associated with prayer before religious images themselves. The very minimal architectural setting suggests that the man is physically close to the object of his devotion, while her scale relative to his implies that this is not the Virgin *per se*, nor even an apparition, but rather a *work of art* representing the Virgin – it is as though the man is looking at an under-lifesized polychrome sculpture. As they appear to take on animate living form in the course of the man's devotions, the Virgin and Child also address the viewer of the painting with their gaze, making that viewer part of the same devotional exchange.

Moroni's painting underscored the value of the image as a means of communication with the divine. He produced the work at a time when church paintings and sculptures were being destroyed throughout much of Protestant Europe. The artist would have been aware that the Catholic Church, in response to Protestant attacks, was not only defending the use of images but also prescribing new guidelines on how a proper Christian picture ought to look. Moroni had been employed by the Cardinal Bishop of Trent and was in that city on two occasions, 1548 and 1551, when a great Council convened by Paul III and devoted to the reform of the Catholic Church was in session. The artist would not have been surprised by the decrees from the Council approved in 1563 by Pope Pius IV (r. 1559–65). These resolved questions of orthodox Catholic belief in the face of Protestant opposition. They affirmed the observance of the cult of the Virgin, as well as of the saints and their relics. While many Protestants regarded the bread and wine consumed at communion as mere symbols of Christ, the Council made it mandatory for Catholics to believe that the Eucharist was the "real presence" of Jesus Christ, and that salvation was to be obtained not just (as most Protestants believed) from Christ's grace, but through individual works. The articles from the Council also covered the reform of clerical discipline, which bound priests and bishops to a more rigorous professional conduct and a more austere style of life, as well as to proper pastoral care of the laity. Bishops were also enjoined to be vigilant regarding the character of the images placed in churches: "No image shall be set



up that suggests false doctrine or that may furnish the uneducated with an occasion for dangerous error.”

The Council of Trent provided a centralized and coordinated system of regulation, establishing standards of belief and practice for a Church that was now global in its reach, with Catholic missions active in Mexico, Peru, India, China, and Japan. Institutional reform of the Catholic Church, however, did not begin with the Council of Trent; bishops had initiated changes at the local level decades earlier. Moroni's formation as an artist took place in such an atmosphere of local reform. He had been trained by the Brescian artist Alessandro Moretto (1490/98–1554), who since the 1520s had aimed for clarity and directness in the representation of Christian doctrine. Brescia in Lombardy was one of a number of provincial cities where new religious orders devoted to charity and preaching began to establish communities in the 1520s and 1530s, and where there was a corresponding rise of lay confraternal organizations. The confraternities for which Moretto and his colleagues supplied altarpieces actively promoted devotion to the Eucharist and the practice of charitable works. One of Moretto's last paintings was his *Christ with an Angel* for the altar of the Confraternity of the Holy Cross in the cathedral of Brescia (fig. 18.2). As with Moroni's picture, Moretto's image of the suffering Christ has a visionary quality, intensifying elements of the everyday world and combining these with startling manifestations of the otherworldly. Christ, slumped on a staircase, stares accusingly at the beholder. His body is represented with a level of naturalistic description unmatched by any painter in Venice or Rome at that moment. Yet its livid, silvery hue forms a strange, unearthly harmony with the bluish robe held by the weeping angel and with the rose-colored stairs. It is a beautiful effect, but the element of implied violence and suffering makes the painting deeply unsettling. The picture asks the viewer to unravel the meaning of the vision, which relates to any number of the widely read printed devotional texts about personal prayer and meditation on Christ's Passion. The reddish stairway might be the way to heaven opened up through the shedding of Christ's blood; the robe exhorts the beholder to seek spiritual union with Christ by following the instruction in Paul's Letter to the Romans 13:14: "Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ." The painting emphasizes the concreteness and accessibility of the divine, the possibility of personal union with Christ through penance, faith, and imitation.

Moroni, in his image of c. 1560, thus responds not just to the new demand for orthodoxy in religious painting, but also to an established Lombard tradition that prioritized the availability of the divine to the human beholder and a quiet, decorously restrained emotional character. It



18.2

Alessandro Moretto, *Christ with an Angel*, c. 1560. Oil on canvas, 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (2.14 x 1.25 m). Pinacoteca Tosio Martinengo, Brescia

is this quality, the legacy of an earlier reformist spirit in art, that would disappear as various writers on art after Trent began to elaborate upon the Council's spare prescriptions regulating the image. The sense of unmediated communication between the sacred and the individual would give way to an imagery that tended instead to stress the mediation of priests and submission to the authority of the Church. As the clergy became more preoccupied with conformity, it viewed the reformist spirit that inspired Moretto and Moroni – the same spirit that guided Vittoria Colonna and Michelangelo – as suspect, tainted even with Protestant ideas.

### Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, Twenty Years Later

Whatever he knew about the articles emerging from the Council of Trent, Moroni would certainly have been aware of the ongoing controversy around Michelangelo's





**18.3**  
Martino Rota after  
Michelangelo, *Last  
Judgment*, 1569. Engraving,  
12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (32.2 x 23.4  
cm). Fitzwilliam Museum,  
University of Cambridge

OPPOSITE  
**18.4**  
Martino Rota, *Last  
Judgment*, 1576. Engraving,  
12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (32.2 x 23.2  
cm). Fitzwilliam Museum,  
University of Cambridge

Sistine *Last Judgment*. From the time of its completion in 1541, Michelangelo's followers had had to defend the fresco from a mounting chorus of disapproval, even calls for its destruction. Most attacks targeted the nudity of the figures and the lack of appropriate dignity in the poses; others criticized the artist's "errors" in scriptural interpretation. The Council itself debated an appropriate response, finally ruling that the "offending parts" should be painted over. Daniele da Volterra (c. 1509–1566) was given the task of adding loincloths to many of the figures shortly after Michelangelo died in 1564. By this time, the example set by the *Last Judgment* had become a pressing issue for clerics and art theorists throughout Italy, who, in the wake of the Tridentine ruling, sought to set down rules on the nature and purpose of Christian art. Artists found themselves in a position of needing to demonstrate their adherence to

these while at the same time showing their understanding of the mastery that the *Last Judgment* seemed to exemplify. One way they did this was to produce alternative versions of the painting. Moroni would paint a piously corrected version of Michelangelo's design for a rural church near Bergamo in 1577. Previously, in 1569, Martino Rota (c. 1520–1583) had produced an engraving that tightened and clarified the composition of Michelangelo's fresco (fig. 18.3), and some years later he made an alternative *Last Judgment* that went even further, making the various saints and Old Testament figures recognizable and assigning them an appropriate place in a heavenly hierarchy unmistakably dominated by Christ (fig. 18.4). In 1570, the young Cretan painter who would be known as El Greco (1541–1614) arrived in Rome from Venice and offered to paint an entirely new version of the *Last Judgment* for the Sistine Chapel.

The year of Michelangelo's death, 1564, saw the publication of the lengthiest and most intellectually distinguished of the attacks on the *Last Judgment*, a text "On the Errors of Painters Concerning History" by the priest and literary theorist Giovanni Andrea Gilio. Composed in dialogue form, the work employed a strict theory of pictorial genre and decorum to criticize a number of contemporary works of painting in Rome. Gilio was far from opposed to the idea of art as a cultivated liberal pursuit, or art that demonstrated license and virtuosity, provided those qualities manifested themselves in the appropriate places. He described one category of "poetic" painting, characterized by landscape, fables, and grotesque ornament, and represented in the dialogue by Raphael's Chigi frescoes (see fig. 13.1), which he found especially suitable for villas, the purpose of which was to provide recreation and enjoyment. A second category, a "mixed" mode that would comprise such works as Perino's Sala Paolina (see fig. 16.8), could also appear in secular contexts: this was a kind of mythologized history that, following the practice of epic poets and dramatists, combined past events with allegories and other poetic fictions, along with fantastic architecture and ornamental garlands. Strictly "historical" painting, however, which for Gilio meant primarily the representation of sacred scripture, was a far more serious matter. This kind of painting was not mere ornament or diversion but an instrument for making truth visible. It had to be clear, easily understood by both the learned and the unlearned, and could not deviate in any particular from authoritative texts or established pictorial conventions. Michelangelo, according to Gilio's speaker, erred greatly by incorporating figures such as Minos and Charon, inventions that came from the poets Dante and Virgil rather than from scriptural sources. The painter emphasized the display of his art over scriptural truth, leading him to unacceptable innovations, such as showing





OPVS A MARTINO ROTA INVENTVM FEREQ. EXCVIPTVM. ANSELMVS BOETIVS DE BOODT  
RVDOLPHI II. ROMAN. IMP. MEDICVS SIBI ET. AMICIS PERFICI CVRAVIT. Cum Pri. Sac. Cors. Mai. 1611. 9



Christ beardless and angels without wings. Particularly scandalous was the nudity of all the figures, which evoked the depraved sensuality of pagan art. The gesticulations, kisses, and ambiguous couplings of Michelangelo's naked saints, finally, was undignified, even unintentionally comical. The speakers of the dialogue judged the variety of poses, long seen by more sympathetic viewers as proof of Michelangelo's copious powers of invention, as if they were real acts performed by contemporary beings: their deportment might be suitable for laborers in the marketplace or for performers at a fairground, but not for the protagonists of sacred history and not for such a dignified setting.

Gilio's dialogue was the first substantial text on the arts to spell out what the decrees from the Council of Trent might mean in practice. Its power lay in the theorist's ability to boil down the essential conflicts that the reform of art might raise. In the introduction to the dialogue, for example, the author asserted that "modern painters today, when they have to make some work, have as their first intent to twist the head, the arms, or the legs of their figures." Such artists, he worried, "think little about the subject of their story, if they consider it at all." The charge may sound extreme, but real contemporary practices reveal that it was not entirely unfounded. The very year in which Gilio was writing, the sculptor

18.5  
Alessandro Vittoria,  
altar in the Montefeltre  
Chapel, 1564. Marble. San  
Francesco della Vigna,  
Venice







ABOVE LEFT

18.6

Paolo Veronese, *Alessandro Vittoria*, c. 1570. Oil on canvas, 43 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 32 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (110.5 x 81.9 cm). Gwyn Andrews Fund, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

ABOVE RIGHT

18.7

Alessandro Vittoria, *Marsyas / St. Sebastian*, 1566. Bronze, height 21 $\frac{5}{8}$ " (54.9 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Alessandro Vittoria was putting the finishing touches to a marble *St. Sebastian* for an altar in the church of San Francesco della Vigna in Venice (fig. 18.5). Paolo Veronese's later portrait of the artist shows him holding a wax or clay model for the figure – revealing that he did indeed compose it by bending the head, arms, and legs into the composition he wanted (fig. 18.6). After making a bronze cast from this model (fig. 18.7), moreover, Vittoria wrote that it need not be taken as a Sebastian; it would work equally well as a Marsyas. Viewers could determine an appropriate “story,” that is, sometime after the artist settled his invention. The remark implicitly draws attention to the fact that Vittoria's original marble figure omitted the arrows that conventionally identified the saint, just as the would-be bronze Marsyas omitted Apollo, the god who tied Marsyas to a tree in order to flay him after defeating him in a music contest. Vitto-

ria's sensibility, as Gilio would have recognized, depended heavily on the example of Michelangelo, who was apt, as we have seen, to omit identifying information about the characters in his paintings and sculptures, instead focusing attention especially on the represented bodies and their poses.

## The Jesuits and the Reform of Church Architecture

Gilio dedicated his dialogue to Cardinal Alessandro Farnese (1520–1589; see p. 487), the most lavish patron of the age, and the nephew of Paul III, who had commissioned Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*. In fact, most of the works Gilio discussed in the dialogue had Farnese patrons or decorated Farnese properties. Gilio judged the moment



wisely, since Alessandro's patronage in the 1560s shows him turning away from the secular interests evident in his earlier commissions from Titian and concerning himself increasingly with the responsibilities of a prince of the Church.

A chief example of the cardinal's reformist inclination was his support for the *Compagnia di Gesù*, or Jesuits, an order of preachers and missionaries devoted to guiding the spiritual life of the laity. Founded in 1534 by the Spanish ex-soldier Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556), the order had been confirmed by Paul III in 1540; it organized itself on a military model, with a "general" reporting directly to the Pope and a central command in Rome. This eventually allowed it to operate a network active throughout Europe, Asia, and the Americas; it also affected the building of new Jesuit churches in any location, for all were supervised from Rome by a single Jesuit architect-in-chief, Giovanni Tristano.

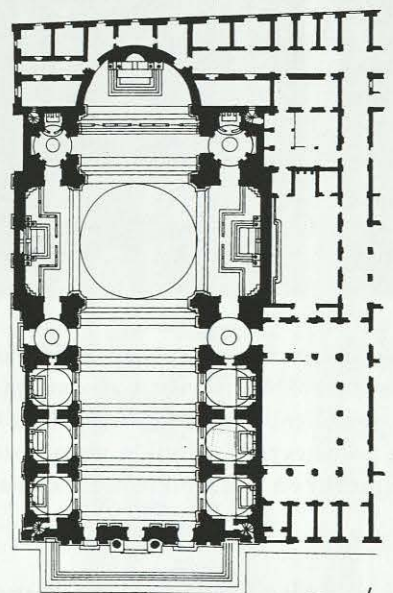
The rapid growth of the order required the construction of new accommodations and a new mother church in Rome. The church, dedicated to the name of Jesus and referred to simply as the *Gesù*, distinguished itself immediately from the other buildings on its scale, the old basilicas on the outskirts of Rome, by its location

in the heart of the city. Ignatius had initially envisioned a simple box-like form, one in which Roman residents could gather to hear sermons by Jesuit preachers, but soon after Alessandro agreed to finance the building in 1561, it became clear that the cardinal intended to impose his own requirements on the design. He wanted a vaulted rather than a wooden ceiling, despite the Jesuits' concern that this would result in poor acoustics, and, notwithstanding the restrictions of its downtown site, an imposing facade that would open onto a piazza, as did the nearby Farnese palace. The Jesuits consequently discarded the design they had previously approved in favor of a proposal by Farnese's own favorite architect Jacopo da Vignola (1507–1573), who began collaborating with Tristano in 1563.

The enormous, aisle-less interior of Vignola's *Gesù* was designed to accommodate the vast urban crowds that were now being encouraged to attend the regular services (fig. 18.8). Vignola unified the space by constricting the transepts to the width of the chapels, eliminating the deep choir that had traditionally housed the clergy during communal celebrations of the Mass. At the same time, he maintained a clear hierarchical distinction between the domain of the laity in the nave and the self-

RIGHT  
18.8  
Plan of the *Gesù*, Rome, as executed under Jacopo da Vignola. Completed 1568

FAR RIGHT  
18.9  
Jacopo da Vignola, project for the facade of the *Gesù*. Engraving



0 20yds  
0 20m







18.10  
Giacomo della Porta,  
facade of the Gesù,  
Rome, begun 1568

contained side chapels. A semi-dome and stage-like elevation distinguished the high altar, which was designed so that the elevation of the Eucharist would be visible from nearly every point in the church. The magnificent domed crossing provided a zone of transition between laity and the celebrant. Cardinal Farnese never fulfilled his intention to have the apse decorated with mosaics, which would have revived the sober grandeur of Rome's early Christian basilicas.

Vignola advertised his ideas for the facade in an engraving (fig. 18.9). Here, though, Farnese overruled him, instead approving a design by Giacomo della Porta, Michelangelo's successor as architect in chief at St. Peter's. Vignola had proposed a refined design with overlapping triumphal-arch motifs in the lower storey, rich ornamental relief, and abundant sculpture in the round. Porta's simpler and bolder (and more Michelangelo-like) composition layers the facade so that the central portions become increasingly three-dimensional (fig. 18.10). The main door with its segmental pediment and the monogram of the Society of Jesus is framed by a tabernacle with a triangular pediment, which is in turn compressed within a gigantic tabernacle crowned by a segmental pediment. The ingeniously organized inner tabernacle gives

particular prominence to the name of the patron FARNESIUS within the longer inscription.

The Gesù became the official model for Jesuit churches throughout the world, and it influenced the grandiose new churches that other Counter-Reformation orders built subsequently in central Rome – the Chiesa Nuova of the Oratorians, begun in 1575, the church of Sant'Andrea della Valle for the Theatines, begun in 1591. All of these churches would originally have had far more sober interiors than their present appearance suggests: the dazzling effects produced by *stucco*, gilding, and illusionistic ceiling decorations were added in the following century, by which time the Church had decided that it had paid its debt to reformist austerity and simplicity.

## Princes of the Church and Their Villas

### Villa Farnese

Cardinals' villas became pre-eminent spaces for formulating and testing principles of decorum. Their very purpose was to provide conditions of privileged leisure,





ABOVE

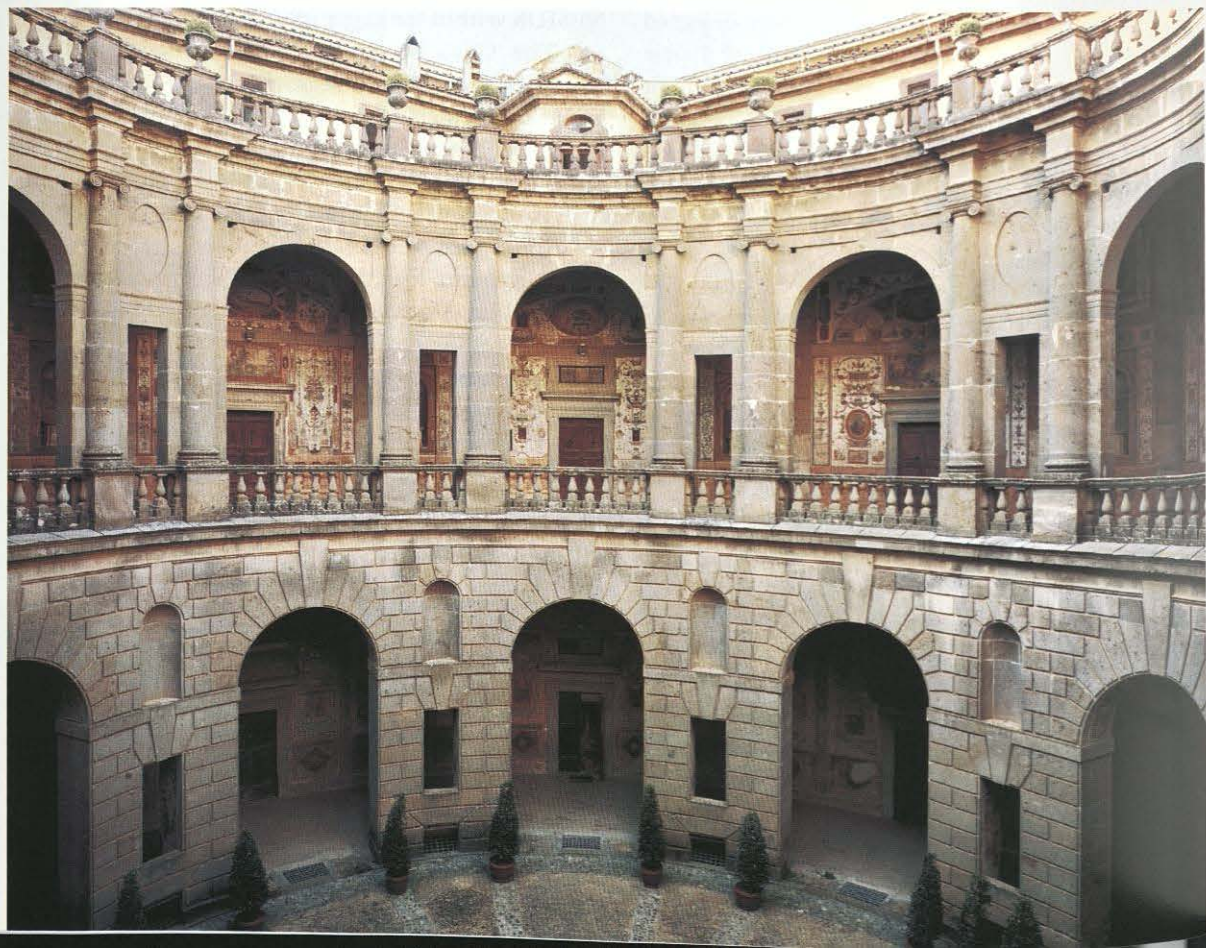
18.11

Jacopo da Vignola, Villa  
Farnese, Caprarola, begun  
1559

RIGHT

18.12

Jacopo da Vignola,  
courtyard of Villa Farnese,  
begun 1559







18.13

Taddeo Zuccaro, *The Council of Trent*, 1562–63. Fresco. Anticamera del Consiglio, Villa Farnese, Caprarola

and as Gilio's dialogue shows, this brought with it a more permissive attitude regarding the kind of art one could have there. But did this permissiveness have limits? Some of the elaborately programmatic decorations devised for the villas of catholic prelates during the 1560s suggest that it did. Alessandro Farnese's palatial retreat at Caprarola not far from Rome (fig. 18.11), designed by Vignola from 1555, suggests a royal citadel more than a country residence, and it provided the keystone for subsequent urban planning in the town. The massive, bastioned pentagonal structure owes its form to a fortress abandoned during the course of construction in the 1530s. Vignola's adaptation of this foundation shows how flexible and unfixed the design of villas could be, providing an opportu-

nity for experimentation with new architectural forms: he added grand flights of steps based on those in Bramante's Villa Belvedere in the Vatican (see fig. 12.45) and an open Ionic loggia modeled on one at the Villa Chigi. The circular courtyard (fig. 18.12), which superimposes a *piano nobile* with paired columns on a rusticated ground floor, is a princely elaboration upon Bramante's Palazzo Caprini.

The Villa Farnese was no longer expressing the virtues of a simple life on the land. The brothers Taddeo and Federico Zuccaro's painted decorations for the building regulated the various functions of the interior spaces, proclaiming a kind of exemplary order. The public rooms have frescoes depicting the history of the Farnese family



and the life of Paul III (fig. 18.13). In the private apartments, themes from ancient history and myth express the purpose each room served – allegories of dreams in the bedroom, the mythical invention of clothing, textiles and purple dye in the dressing room. In the study, or “Chamber of Solitude,” ancient sages and Christian hermits surround a painting of Christ preaching. In an additional space for meditation, the “Chamber of Penitence,” the chief subject is the *Elevation of the Cross*. The life of princely magnificence evoked here was increasingly questionable for a man of the Church, but at least it was an orderly one.

### The Casino of Pius IV

Back in Rome, the much smaller papal retreat known as the Casino of Pius IV also represents the new preoccupation with orthodoxy, while continuing to emulate ancient Roman luxury and grandeur (fig. 18.14). Designed by Pirro Ligorio (c. 1510–1583) for a site near the Belvedere in the Vatican, the Casino is an imaginative reconstruction of a country villa owned and described by the Roman writer Pliny the Younger, the same source that Raphael had drawn on for the Villa Madama (see figs. 13.22–13.23). Raphael had composed his own design around the central courtyard’s circular form, for he shared Bramante’s sense of this shape’s perfection. Pliny, however, had described an

oval courtyard, and Ligorio made this the principal feature of his own design. Following Pliny’s idea of laying out the dwelling as a collection of distinct structures, Ligorio aligned the main residential building and a smaller building known as the *loggetta* on the short axis of the oval: an entrance portico opens at either end of the long axis (fig. 18.15). Directly at the center of the oval is a fountain; a second fountain, overlooking a fishpond, is the main feature of the *loggetta*’s garden facade, its three bays containing statues of seated divinities flanked by caryatids in the form of satyrs. The facade of the Casino proper had stucco reliefs of mythological subjects, including Apollo, the Muses, and Aesculapius, the god of medicine. The subjects celebrated the site as a place where the cultivation of the arts, in harmony with the forces of nature, nurtured mental and spiritual health.

Inside, by contrast, a different category of imagery gives the building an “inner” meaning. Here, painted subjects by the Zuccaro brothers, Santi di Tito, and Federico Barocci mainly draw from the Bible. The facade’s mythic themes of time, nature, and the health of the body give way to the eternal truths of the soul, the redemption of human nature through the Incarnation, and the spiritual healing of baptism. The principle of prefiguration, one that we have otherwise seen guiding sacred spaces like the Sistine Chapel, takes on a new role here. Visitors may enjoy the pagan subjects, along with nature itself, once

RIGHT

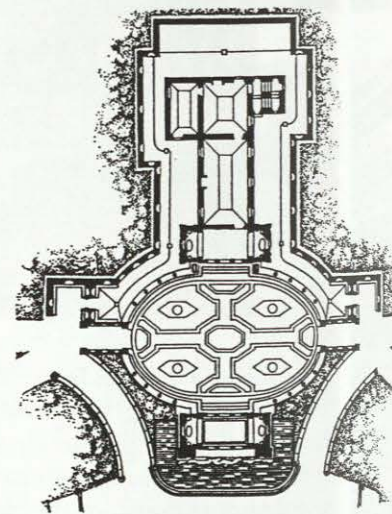
18.14

Pirro Ligorio, Casino of Pius IV, Vatican, 1558–62.  
General view

FAR RIGHT

18.15

Pirro Ligorio, Casino of Pius IV, Vatican, 1558–62.  
Plan







these take up their function and their assigned “place,” on the outer surface surrounding a core of truth.

### Villa Lante

For many sixteenth-century villas, the concern with order extended from the architecture and its decorations to the often extensive adjoining gardens. These were typically built over many years, drastically modified by subsequent owners, allowed to go to ruin in periods of hardship, and reconstructed, sometimes centuries later, as funds became available, so that it is often impossible to talk about the “original” form of a particular garden, or of a single program that guided the construction of its various parts. For example, among the most striking features today of the lower portion of Villa Lante at Bagnaia at Viterbo, north of Rome (fig. 18.16), are the stars into which boxwood hedges have been shaped, yet we know from various sources that boxwood was seldom used to make patterns of this sort in the sixteenth century. The coat of arms held up by the boys at the center of the fountain is that of Cardinal Alessandro Montalto, who took possession of the property in 1590. Yet an engraving of 1596 shows that Montalto’s fountain originally lacked the nude boys, and other evidence reveals that the whole arrangement replaced an earlier configuration, probably in place by 1578, that centered not on a heraldic device but on a “guglia sudante,” literally, a “sweating obelisk” (fig. 18.17). Similarly, the garden today includes a shady area with tall trees on the hill above the villa, though the sixteenth-century images suggest that the vegetation was originally much more contained.

The patron responsible for the general layout of the site and for most of the waterworks was Cardinal Gianfrancesco Gambara, the Bishop of Viterbo, who began building in 1568, probably with Vignola as his chief architect. Located on a hillside just outside of Viterbo, the ancient city in the region of Latium that was the center



of Gambara’s bishopric, the Villa Lante’s gardens would have provided a place of summer respite, offering cooler temperatures and fresh air, and putting a cautious distance between the cardinal and the urban centers that were occasionally menaced by plague and malaria. The hillside arrangement, typical of Italian gardens in the period, made it possible to observe large parts of the site from a single point of view, whether that was from the palace itself or from the summit above. Most importantly, the hill allowed for complicated constructions involving running water, the motif around which every great Renaissance garden was built. To carry these out, Gambara brought in Tommaso Ghinucci, recruiting the engineer from Ippolito d’Este’s villa at Tivoli near Rome, where he had designed a series of spectacular fountains (fig. 18.18).

The origin of water from inside the earth and its movement through the greenery, like the plants’ own

TOP

18.16

Villa Lante, Bagnaia. The photograph shows the way the lower garden looks today; compare fig. 18.17.

ABOVE

18.17

Raffaellino da Reggio, fresco in the loggia of the Villa Lante at Bagnaia. The painting dates to the mid 1570s, and presumably shows the villa’s gardens as they appeared at that time.



18.18

Tommaso Ghinucci,  
Pirro Ligorio, and others,  
fountains in the garden of  
the Villa d'Este, Tivoli



changes in color, form, and scent through the seasons, reminded beholders that the prime material for the garden was nature in process, or what medieval writers had designated *natura naturans* (literally, “nature natur-ing”). The “art” of the garden always stood in dialogue with nature’s own creative forces, making nature and its transformation into a sort of theater. Introducing exotic plants into places they had not been found previously, separating them from the rest of the world by containing walls, and arranging them in the square modules into which Bagnaia, like most gardens, was divided, drew attention to the gardener’s ability to harness, encourage, or discipline the unruly inclinations that nature otherwise seemed to show. The water staircase (fig. 18.19) that descended through the first section of the upper part of

the garden, with a pattern of stone that both directed the flow and seemed to imitate the eddies that a series of waterfalls would produce, demonstrated that art, responding to nature, could simultaneously aspire to control and to imitation. At a few key points of interest, nevertheless – points announced by architectural ensembles that stopped the wanderer and commanded attention – nature’s laws seemed actually to be broken, or reversed, as the forces of gravity were used, paradoxically, to spray water up into the air. At the Fountain of the Lights (fig. 18.20), water emerged from some 160 jets; its theater-like shape would have left no doubt that the movements one witnessed had the status of a spectacle.

The sculptures in the garden, at Bagnaia as elsewhere, have for the most part to do with water: even the shrimp





**18.19**  
 Villa Lante, Bagnaia:  
 Water staircase



BELOW LEFT  
**18.20**  
 Villa Lante, Bagnaia:  
 Fountain of Lights



BELOW RIGHT  
**18.21**  
 Villa Lante, Bagnaia:  
 Gambara emblem, from the  
 loggia on the upper terrace



18.22

Villa Lante, Bagnaia:  
Fountain with Pegasus and  
the Muses



(*gambero*), a pun on the patron's name, is a water creature (fig. 18.21). Most often, these sculptures draw attention to water's own movements, performances that the designers themselves orchestrated. River gods, personifications of streams and rivers, were meant actually to embody the streams they guided. Throughout the garden, masks with human faces appeared to exhale water, so that the liquid came to represent something else – in this case, breath – making the water itself, no less than the fountain's stones, a material from which the artist could shape figures. In a now-lost sculpture, a fat Bacchus reclining on a colossal basket regurgitated a spray of water, as if wine, into the air. On the north-west side of the grounds, greeting visitors who arrived through the gate just below, was a statue of the winged horse Pegasus (fig. 18.22), rearing to strike a rock with his hoof. It was this gesture, as we already saw with Andrea Mantegna's painting for Isabella d'Este (see

fig. 11.4), that created the Hippocrene fountain on Mount Helicon, the waters of which were sacred to the Muses and said to inspire poets. The Muses surrounding Pegasus and his pool suggest that Bagnaia is itself a new Helicon, an ideal place for the composition of literature.

### Villas in the Veneto: Andrea Palladio

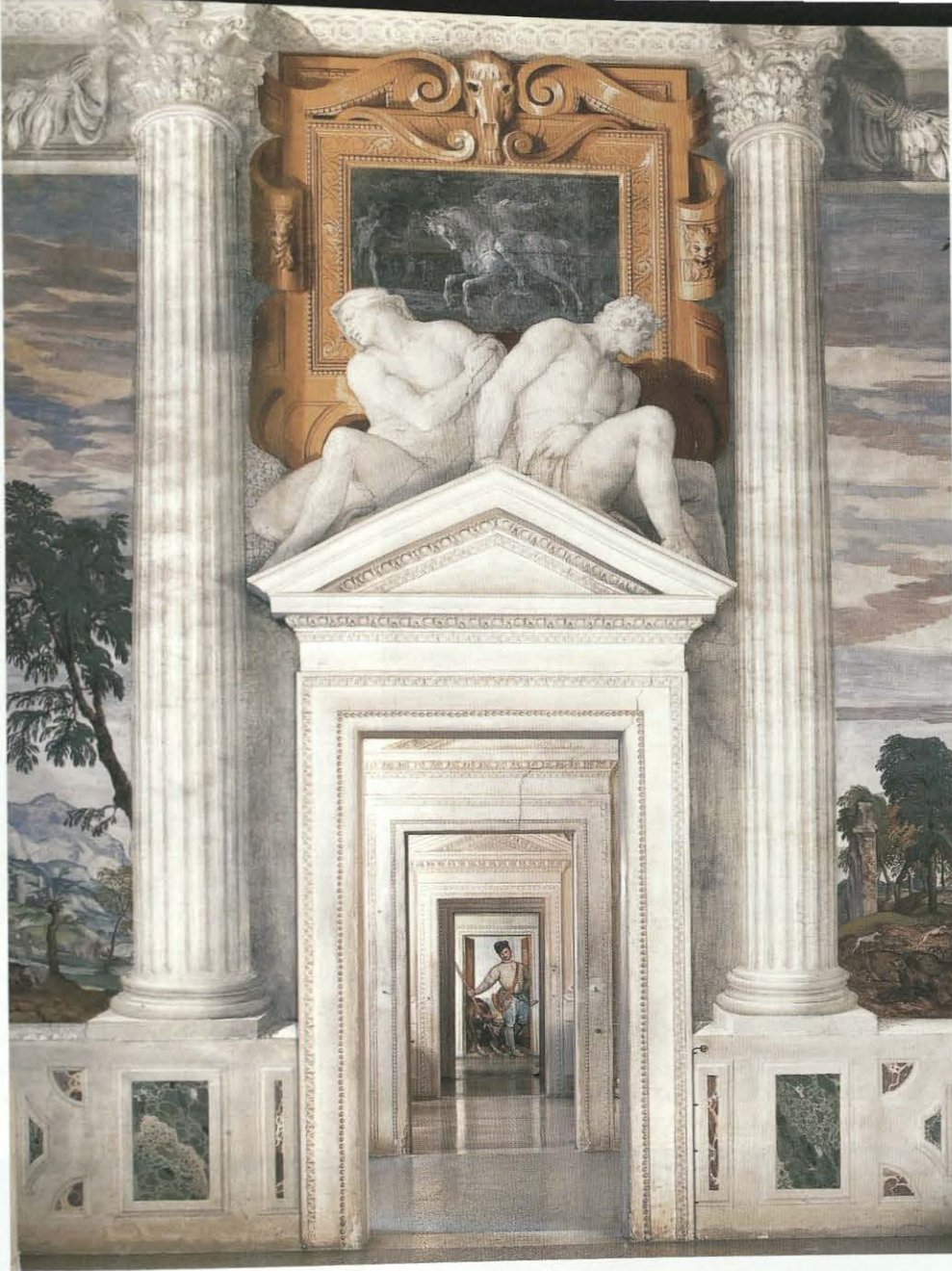
It was the Veneto that saw the most intense villa-building activity in all of Italy. Encouraged by new legislation that promoted land reclamation and supported the activity of private developers in the mainland, aristocratic families long based in Venice itself increasingly turned from Mediterranean trade to agriculture. Unlike the grand rural palaces of cardinals and the Roman nobility, Venetian villas were more often than not working farmhouses

18.23

Andrea Palladio, Villa  
Barbaro, Maser, 1549–58







18.24

Paolo Veronese, frescoes  
from the Villa Barbaro:  
View through a series of  
real doorways toward a  
fictive one, 1560–61

as much as places for rest, entertainment, and luxurious display. By 1570, prospective builders could consult Andrea Palladio's *Four Books of Architecture*: first published in Venice that year, they formed an accessible and beautifully illustrated guide to ancient principles as adapted to modern needs. Palladio (1508–1580) wrote as a practicing architect and as an authority on Roman architecture old and new; his woodcuts include Bramante's Tempietto (see fig. 12.24) and Palazzo Caprini (see fig. 13.19). In book II, which deals with domestic architecture, he illustrated many of his own recent villa designs. Hence such works as his Villa Barbaro at Maser (fig. 18.23), designed and built 1549–58, acquired an enormous influence across Europe and eventually North America.

The most distinctive element of the Villa Barbaro formula is its hierarchical arrangement of five elements: a classical pediment and four engaged Ionic columns dis-

tinguish a stately central residential block. Symmetrical arcades link this on either side to a pair of pavilions that house kitchens, a winery, stables, and storage for feed and implements, each surmounted by a dovecote with a sundial. The Barbaro wanted to be close to the work on their estate, and their building lacks the elaborate entranceways we sometimes see in the region around Rome. At the same time, the aesthetics of classical pastoral and once again the example of Pliny the Younger mediated their relationship to the countryside. The main residence has the equivalent of a *piano nobile*, the decorations of which take it worlds away from the practicalities of life on the land. Here, illusionistic frescoes by Paolo Veronese (1528–1588) dissolve walls and ceilings into views onto imaginary landscapes. Servants, children, and huntsmen appear through opening doors (fig. 18.24). In galleries distinctly reminiscent of Mantegna and Giulio Romano's





most famous ceiling frescoes, richly attired ladies regard the viewer while the gods Diana, Ceres, and Bacchus appear as guarantors of agricultural fertility and abundance (fig. 18.25).

Daniele Barbaro was an authority on the ancient architectural writer Vitruvius, having published a thick, learned translation and commentary. Palladio had provided the illustrations for this, and Barbaro's patronage of the villa was part of a broader working relationship with the architect, with whom he shared a commitment to promoting a modern adaptation of ancient Roman ideas. The two had traveled to Rome together in 1554, when Palladio was preparing a guide to the antiquities of the city. In his *Four Books* Palladio justified many of his own architectural novelties by arguing from the practice of the ancients. Commenting on his incorporation of the ancient temple form in domestic buildings like the Villa Barbaro, Palladio admitted that the principal reason was to add "grandeur and magnificence," but he added that the ancient temple front probably in turn derived from the architecture of private houses. Although he normally respected the orders and characteristic forms of ancient architecture – as Michelangelo, for example, did not – he regarded them as elements to be used and adapted to

LEFT

18.25

Paolo Veronese, Ceiling of the Sala Olimpica, after 1559. Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser

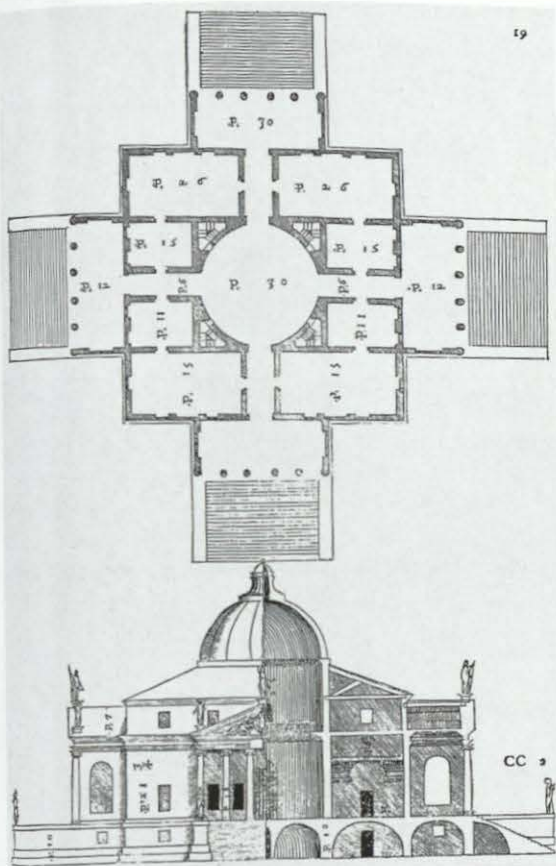
BELOW

18.26

Andrea Palladio, Villa Rotunda, 1565–80, Vicenza







modern circumstances. This is above all the case with the Villa Rotonda (1565–80) (figs. 18.26–18.27) at Vicenza, his most famous and his most extravagant design, one built (like most of the villas discussed in this chapter) for an official of the papal court, Paolo Almerigo, who retired to Vicenza in 1566.

In the world of secular architecture, the building might seem a response to Bramante's Tempietto (see fig. 12.24) – or Vignola's Sant'Andrea, which Palladio also admired (see fig. 17.14). Palladio has subjected the house to the rigors and refinements of the centralized plan, going so far as to incorporate a dome. The name Villa Rotonda was bestowed by Almerigo himself, and it draws attention to the origins of the design in the church of Santa Maria Rotonda, the Renaissance name for the Pantheon in Rome. Each of the four facades has an identical Ionic portico on the *piano nobile*, and each also has its own flight of steps. The four temple fronts establish axes that intersect on the interior in the magnificent domed salone.

This time, there is no pretence of architecture dedicated to the lifestyle of gentleman farmers; Palladio indeed hesitated to call the building a villa in his *Four Books*, where it appears with urban dwellings (and indeed, with its proximity to downtown Vicenza it might be more fittingly compared to Giulio Romano's Palazzo del Tè in Mantua; see fig. 15.4). Yet he took pains to point out that the natural landscape was the motivating principle of his

design: "The site is one of the most agreeable and pleasant that can be found, because it is on a hillock with gentle approaches, and it is surrounded by other charming hills that give the effect of a huge theatre, and they are all cultivated and rich in delicious fruit and excellent vineyards. And because it enjoys the most lovely views on all sides, some screened, others more distant, and others reaching the horizon, loggias were made on each face." He does not need to state that the villa itself, with its own curved profile, provided a grand climax to the great "theater" of the landscape, especially when approached from below.

### The "Sacro Bosco" at Bomarzo

The one country estate that went far beyond the bounds of convention in these years was that built by Vicino Orsini, a professional soldier who, after a period as a prisoner of war, withdrew from all military and courtly service to spend his last three decades in seclusion. Orsini had close ties to the Farnese: the future Pope Paul III, while still a cardinal, had personally intervened to secure his inheritance, and Orsini had subsequently married into that family. Bomarzo, the town Orsini ruled in the province of Viterbo, was only about ten miles from the Farnese villa at Caprarola.

In 1552, Orsini had begun developing what he later referred to as his "boschetto," or "little woods," outside of town. The shady setting distinguished this from many gardens, and the ornaments it included were striking in a central Italian context both for being carved out of the living, volcanic rock that lay under the site and for being polychromed. Still, much here was conventional: attached to a residence and constructed on a slope along a waterway, the boschetto's first major features included fountains, a statue of a river god, and a Nymphaeum, imagery familiar from the Villa Giulia (see figs. 17.11–17.13) and suited to the function of the site as a place of retreat. A statue of Pegasus rearing, beating his hooves, and causing the Hippocrene waters to flow, announced Orsini's attachment to literature, and his personal letters are filled with references to ancient myths and modern poetry, as well as with requests for new books.

Renaissance marriages were typically arranged with an eye to political advantage, and Orsini's was no exception. His wife Giulia was the daughter of Galeazzo Farnese, the duke of the nearby town of Latera. Nevertheless, Orsini seems to have been particularly besotted with Giulia, and when she died in 1564, he began entirely to re-conceive the landscape he had been shaping. At a level above the one on which he had primarily been building, he constructed a temple at the center of an open field (fig. 18.24). The *cella*, centrally planned and

18.27

Andrea Palladio, Villa Rotonda, Vicenza, 1565–80, as shown in Book 2, page 19 of Palladio's *Four Books of Architecture*.





ABOVE

18.28

Pirro Ligorio and others,  
Tempio, Villa Orsini,  
Bomarzo

RIGHT

18.29

Pirro Ligorio and others,  
Villa Orsini, Bomarzo.  
Statue of Cerberus, by  
Simon Moschino (?)







domed, evokes funerary structures, while the coffering of the *pronaos* (the porch-like vestibule) is ornamented with the three-petaled *fleurs-de-lys*, heraldic emblems of Giulia's family. Surrounding the building are sculptures of funerary vases on pedestals bearing skulls and crossbones. Though there is no tomb, the whole comes across as a kind of classicizing cenotaph and *memento mori*.

The temple was the first thing that would have greeted the visitor from what Orsini designated as a new entrance. From there, the visitor would have descended a staircase, only to be greeted by Cerberus, the three-headed hound that guarded the Underworld (fig. 18.29). It was as though entering further into the woods was entering an Underworld, and the statue that presided over the large open court on the second level showed Proserpina, the goddess abducted by Pluto to live with him in Hades. Pluto is there, too, and one level below this Orsini had his sculptors carve an actual mouth of hell in the mountainside, inscribing it "every thought flees" (*ogni pensiero vola*) in a paraphrase of the poet Dante (fig. 18.30).

More unsettling still is the way that death, in the redesigned park, seems to be a consuming force. Frag-



ments of statues and buildings litter the ground. A bench seems to sink into the earth. A tower, the tallest structure into which the visitor can enter, leans precariously, as though it might at any moment topple, bringing those inside down with it (fig. 18.31). At one point, the ground itself opens to expose what looks like an empty tomb, waiting for new occupants. Other sculptures, meanwhile,

ABOVE

18.30

Pirro Ligorio and others,  
Villa Orsini, Bomarzo,  
*Hell's Mouth* by Simone  
Moscino (?)

LEFT

18.31

Pirro Ligorio and others,  
Villa Orsini, Bomarzo,  
Leaning Tower



18.32

Pirro Ligorio and others,  
Villa Orsini, Bomarzo,  
Lower Garden with *Pegasus*  
and other sculptures



suggest that this force of death is nothing other than Nature itself, conceived as an all-powerful, fertile, yet devouring goddess. Here, the creative energies that brought the garden into being are wild, sexual, and feminine. Opposite the court with Proserpina and Cerberus is a lioness with a cub at her side: a medieval tradition held that lions were born dead and that their mothers breathed life back into them. Beside the family of lions is a siren, a nude female upper torso with twin tails that split at the bottom, suggesting monstrous birth. Most disturbing of all is a sculpture Orsini seems to have added shortly after 1570, showing an orifice filled with spiky teeth, opening just beside the pool of water that surrounded Pegasus (fig. 18.32). There is no more vivid image of the earth's threat to consume those who live above, and an uncanny occlusion of form makes it hard to tell just what body part is opening here.

One might ask, in the end, whether the complex Orsini built was really a villa at all. Certainly his writings distance him from the courtly practices on which villa life conventionally depended. At one point, he remarks that he far preferred living in the woods to being “immersed in the falsehoods and ambitions of the courts, especially those in Rome.” On another occasion, he thanked a friend for sending him some fruit, then added that such

foods were “too delicate for a citizen of the woods, as I am.” The woods, for Orsini, became a kind of alternative to a certain type of cultivation, a controlled space of non-civility that freed him from the rules, artistic and otherwise, being applied elsewhere.

## Bologna, Florence, and Rome in the Time of Pius IV and Pius V

Pius IV did not focus his attentions exclusively on Rome. In 1563, working through Pierdonato Cesi, his legate to Bologna, the Pope sponsored the creation of a new aqueduct system (the “Aqua Pia”) for that city, culminating in a colossal fountain in the city's main square. Cesi left a description of the work's program, explaining its central figure (fig. 18.33):

[Neptune] holds the trident in his right hand, just as if to strike a blow, and he compresses the winds to such an extent that he frees the people who are subject to his sovereignty from fear of any tumult or agitation. Histories truly give credence, moreover, that dolphins are by nature favorably disposed toward human wit, so that it is believable that



children play with them.... No one will deny that play is a sign of greatest leisure and tranquility. Although the sirens are considered by some people as seductresses, they are used by others, not inappropriately, to signify the sweet persuasions of rhetoric.... And in truth, since our Sirens press out their breasts, they visibly indicate that they do not excel so much in the pleasing quality of their voices, but also bring forth something more material from themselves.

The point of the whole composition, Cesi added at the end, was to show the praise due to Pius, and the statue of Neptune itself was ornamented with the Pope's coat of arms. It may come as a surprise that a prelate in 1563 was so comfortable commissioning monumental and possibly seductive images of pagan gods and sirens for such an open urban space. Cesi remarked, nevertheless, that the program could be "rendered without controversy in that place," which is to say that the statue, though public, did not decorate the kind of setting that required more cautious approaches. The *Neptune*, Cesi argued, offered a demonstration of decorum, not a breach of it.

The artist who initially conceived the sculpture was the Sicilian architect Tommaso Laureti, but to carry it out the Bolognese summoned two artists from Florence, a caster named Zanobi Portigiani and a promising young Fleming named Giambologna (1529–1608). Initially the two worked together, but a quarrel led them to break off work and return to Florence. By the time Duke Cosimo ordered Giambologna to return to Bologna, now alone, to oversee the casting of the figures, Pius IV had died. His successor, a former Dominican and Inquisitor General, took the name Pius V (r. 1566–72). Pius V, though Lombard by birth, had still closer relations to Florence than his predecessor, and he allowed the continuation of the fountain. Still, he held very different ideas about the arts than his predecessor, and public nudes on antiquarian themes were the furthest things from his own patronage. Pius V disapproved in particular of the way his namesake had decorated his dwelling at the Vatican, the Casino (see fig. 18.14). As pontiff, he stripped the papal retreat of its antiquities and sent many of them as gifts to the Medici. The sculptures that had been assembled by Julius II in the Vatican's Villa Belvedere narrowly escaped the same fate;



18-33  
Tommaso Laureti and  
Giambologna, Neptune  
Fountain, 1563–65. Bronze.  
Piazza Maggiore, Bologna



Pius spared them only on condition that they no longer be accessible to visitors. Work on Bramante's Belvedere continued, but Pius had its theater dismantled in 1566. Yet for his own artistic commissions in the Vatican – a series of small chapels dedicated to St. Stephen, St. Michael, and St. Peter Martyr – the Pope recruited one of Cosimo's key employees, the painter, architect, and writer Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574).

As an artist and as an author, Vasari had during the 1560s proved himself competent to address the needs of a reforming Church, even as he sought to defend the legacy of Michelangelo and the artistic values of the early sixteenth century. Both of these aims were in line with the policies of his Medici employers, who were anxious to maintain good relations with the papacy and to promote their own association with the great Florentine artist, who had opposed their rule. For such an important enterprise, Vasari revised his 1550 *Lives of the Artists* in collaboration with literary specialists close to the Medici court. Finally published in 1568, the new, longer *Lives* included a greatly enlarged version of his biography of Michelangelo, in which Vasari insisted on the Sistine *Last Judgment* as a great work of Christian art and as a testimony to the religious conviction of the artist who had painted it. The fresco, according to Vasari, was no less than the image of the “true judgment” and the “true resurrection” of the body, approved by God himself “so that [people] will see what fate does when supreme intellects descend to earth infused with grace and with divine wisdom.” Nonetheless, several of the changes he made to his 1550 *Lives* show his awareness of a new climate of orthodoxy. In his 1550 life of Donatello, for instance, Vasari referred to reports that the artist had refused confession and communion on his deathbed. For the 1568 edition, he cut the passage and replaced it with an alternative deathbed scene in which the artist performs a pious act of charity to a poor servant.

#### Educational Reform in Florence: The Accademia del Disegno

While working on the *Lives*, Vasari helped spearhead the founding of an organization devoted to centralization and regulation, aims that paralleled and sometimes reinforced those of Catholic reform. The Accademia del Disegno, instituted in Florence in 1563, provided a new kind of corporate association for artists, who had previously met under the auspices of guilds and confraternities. Part of its purpose was to make artists aware of the intellectual basis of their profession by providing lectures on literary and artistic theory, mathematics and perspective, and human anatomy. Most of all, though, it reorganized the system of the arts, bringing together

practitioners of the three fields Vasari regarded as having their foundation in *disegno* (see chapter 17): painting, architecture, and sculpture. This established a clear hierarchy, enforced by membership rules, that still lingers today, between these three arts and the other excluded crafts – goldsmithery, weaving, ceramics – that we have seen play such vital roles in the preceding decades.

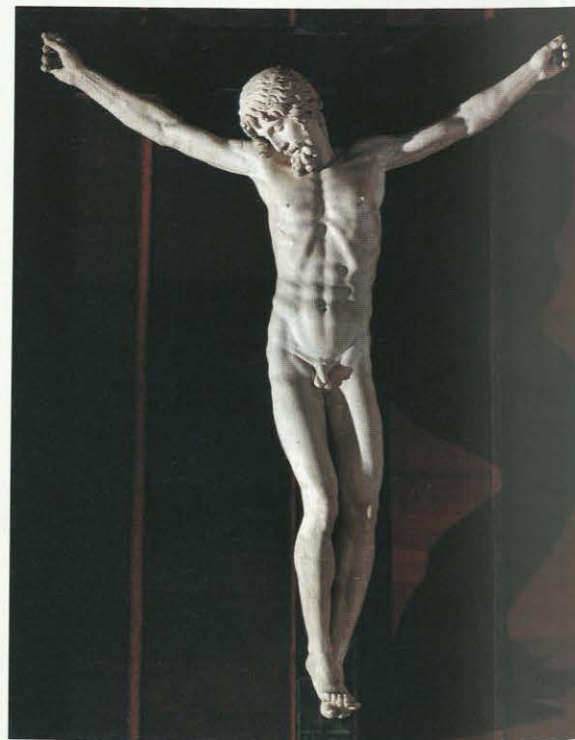
The Academy had two official “heads,” Duke Cosimo and Michelangelo. The latter was a paradoxical choice, since Michelangelo's sensibilities at this point were if anything anti-Florentine. His political dissent was nullified after his death in Rome in 1564, when the Florentines succeeded in smuggling his body back to Florence for a state funeral to which the artist would never have consented. The role that the duke and his artistic overlord gave Michelangelo allowed that, Gilio's critique notwithstanding (see p. 526), he would continue to provide the primary model for the way modern art should look.

The cult of Michelangelo that the Academy encouraged is especially apparent in sculptures from the period. Before 1563, it was possible for sculptors to identify themselves pointedly as Florentine without explicitly taking Michelangelo as a model. A good example is the marble crucifix that Benvenuto Cellini (1500–1571) signed and dated in 1562 (fig. 18.34). The sculptor had been at work on the piece for nearly eight years, having conceived it initially as the central motif of the tomb he planned for himself. When he first took up the chisel, he did so as much as anything out of a sense of rivalry with Baccio

#### 18.34

Benvenuto Cellini, *Crucifix*, signed and dated 1562.

Black and white marble, height 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (1.85 m) (figure 4'9" (1.45 m)). Monastery of San Lorenzo el Real, Escorial, Spain





## REACTIONS TO VASARI

Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artists* is the single most important art-historical text of the Renaissance. Running to nearly 3,000 pages in its 1568 edition, it provided a wealth of information and opinions on craftsmen and designers of whom no other biographies survive. It organized the history of Italian art into three distinct periods that underlie those still used today, and it articulated some of the central concerns of sixteenth-century artists, positing the central theoretical principle of *disegno* ("design"), the notion that every artwork should have a conceptual basis, that it should correspond to an idea in an individual artist's head. The *Lives* has exerted an almost unavoidable influence on art and writing, one that makes itself felt even now.

Yet the documented sixteenth-century response to Vasari's *Lives* was almost uniformly hostile. In Florence itself, contemporaries lamented the fact that a foreigner (Vasari came from Arezzo and had built his career in Rome) was defining what Italian art should be, and they resented his lack of regard for leading workshops and local eminences. Artisans who specialized in crafts other than painting, sculpture, and architecture attacked Vasari's reduction of "art" to a limited group of media. Outside of Florence, readers objected to Vasari's

promotion of central Italian artists above all others, and pointed especially to his misunderstanding of north Italian painting.

In the end, then, the *Lives* gave rise to a series of anti-Vasarian undertakings. In Cremona in 1584, Alessandro Lamo published a discourse on sculpture and painting to defend the honor and reputation of his home territories, which he claimed Vasari had "defrauded." The painter Doménikos Theotokópoulos, called "El Greco" because he had come from Crete, wrote in the margins of his copy of the *Lives*, commenting that the author did not understand what he was talking about when he discussed the "Greek" style. The Carracci in Bologna were even more damning, strewing their copy of the *Lives* with remarks like "He lies through his teeth," "It's not true!," "Oh presumptuous and ignorant Vasari, listen to what he says." The closest thing to a sixteenth-century imitation of Vasari is the collection of artists' biographies that the Fleming Karel van Mander published in 1604, in which the author rejected both Vasari's hierarchy of the arts and his canon. When north Italian painters of the late sixteenth century began thinking of their own art in opposition to the central Italian tradition, the legacy of the *Lives* played a significant role in that orientation.

Bandinelli, who had been making his own tomb, with its own marble statue of the dead Christ, across town. By 1560, though, Cellini's sense of purpose had changed. For one thing, he had just completed successive prison terms for assault and for sodomy, and he had come to conclude that he might stand to gain political advantage by offering the work to Duke Cosimo rather than using it to celebrate himself. He had also become particularly attached to the subject, and the many poems he wrote on the image of the Crucified Christ, and on the spiritual significance of carving such an object, suggest that

he was as caught up as anyone with a new Reformation sensibility. Cellini claims to have based his composition on a vision he had had, and his superimposition of the luminous white body of Christ on the deep black marble Crucifix creates a kind of aura that captures this origin. He, no less than Moroni, was aiming for an imagery that allowed for an intense meditative experience (*see fig. 18.1*). He also compared his labors on the Crucifix to Christ's own sufferings, suggesting that no one might become closer to Christ than a Christian artist.





**18.35**  
Vincenzo Danti, *Honor Triumphant over Deceit*, 1561. Marble, height 6'2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.9 m). Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence

OPPOSITE

**18.36**  
Giambologna, *Samson and a Philistine*, c. 1569. Marble, 6'10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (2.1 m). Victoria and Albert Museum, London

All of this, though, distanced Cellini's approach from that of Michelangelo. The appeal of combining white and black marbles, as Cellini did here, may have seemed obvious to an artist who had spent most of his career as a goldsmith or to a patron who was collecting works made in hard colored stones, but it was entirely antithetical to Michelangelo's principles: sculptures had to consist of white Carrara marble alone, and they had to be made in a single piece. Though the basic idea of placing a figure of Christ above a tomb depended on Michelangelo's Florence *Pietà* (see fig. 11.51), Cellini's testament explicitly refers to an earlier precedent, namely the crucifix that Brunelleschi (see fig. 4.5) had made at the beginning of the Quattrocento. In the place he had initially hoped his

sculpture might be displayed, the Florentine church of Santa Maria Novella, it would have hung close to Brunelleschi's work, making the comparison inevitable.

As Vasari assumed control of the Florentine cultural scene, though, and especially in the years immediately after the founding of the Academy, a different idea of the "Florentine" emerged. Cosimo sent the Crucifix as a diplomatic gift to Spain, Cellini received no more major commissions, and the artists who took his place vied with one another to be his true successor. A good example of the new mentality is the marble allegory of *Honor Triumphant over Deceit* (fig. 18.35), which Vincenzo Danti (1530–1576) made for the duke's chamberlain Sforza Almeni in the early part of the decade. The monolithic carving is an ingenious variation on the *Victory* that Michelangelo had left behind when he permanently abandoned Florence in the 1530s (see fig. 14.12). The two characters included are nearly the same, with a curly-haired youth standing over a bent, bearded old man, and Danti's victor, like Michelangelo's, pulls a kind of binding over his right shoulder. Once he had announced this point of reference, though, nearly every compositional move Danti made reversed Michelangelo's original: Michelangelo's upper figure turns his torso inward, Danti's outward; Michelangelo's figure looks to the right, Danti's to the left; Michelangelo's figure pulls his left arm up and away from the victim below, Danti's presses down on it. Danti even went so far as to flip his lower figure upside down. Michelangelo's defenders imagined that he had achieved variety in the *Last Judgment* by bending each successive figure he designed in a novel way. Danti's imitation here looks like an attempt to live up to its model by repeating not just Michelangelo's forms but his artistic process.

Danti's strategy here, imitating work that dated to Michelangelo's Florentine period, was characteristic of Medicean court sculpture in these years. It is the same approach that the young Giambologna took when, having returned to Florence from working on the fountain in Bologna (see fig. 18.33), he began trying to establish his own local reputation. The greatest marble Michelangelo failed to complete before his definitive move to Rome in 1532 was the *Samson and a Philistine* he was making as a pendant to his *David* (see fig. 12.3). Every sculptor knew what the *Samson* looked like, since copies after one of his models survived. Giambologna must have been a particularly keen student of the model, for he is shown holding what is probably his own copy after it in a later portrait drawing, and he took just this subject as the centerpiece of a marble fountain that stood for a time in a Medici garden (fig. 18.36). The choice may initially be surprising for its seeming lack of decorum: Samson has no obvious connection either to water or to gardens. Perhaps Giambologna



bologna expected viewers to associate the streams of water that the fountain would have shot into the air with the breath the Philistine expels as Samson twists him into a tortured pose. This act of twisting the figure, at least, must have been the aspect of the subject that most interested Giambologna, since it was an act closely associated with Michelangelo's own process of invention. This only demonstrates, though, that the very things that troubled clerics like Gilio – Christian subjects shown as nudes and put to the ends of demonstrating art above all else – could find a home when the context itself was not a sacred one, and when they were kept out of the public eye.

Danti and Giambologna were both members of the new Academy in Florence, and it is not surprising that major works like these were both made for the ducal court. One of the things the Academy provided was a centralized work force that could be mobilized, either for discrete projects such as these or for large collaborative undertakings: a towering catafalque with painted episodes from the life of Michelangelo, prepared for his funeral in 1564; a multi-media tomb for the artist in Santa Croce celebrating the three arts of *disegno* in which he had been foremost; the triumphal decorations placed throughout the city for the marriage in 1565 of Francesco de' Medici with Joanna of Austria, daughter of Emperor Ferdinand I; the re-decoration of the council hall for which Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci had designed their battle scenes (see fig. 11.16).

### The Florentine Church Interior

The collaborative academic project most directly related to the new Catholic Reformation ideals was the renovation from 1565 onward of the two great mendicant churches of Florence, that of the Dominicans at Santa Maria Novella and that of the Franciscans at Santa Croce. In accordance with the prescriptions of the Council of Trent, the interiors were reorganized to provide full visibility of the high altar and to focus the devotion of the laity on the sacrament of the Eucharist. The large architectural barriers, or "rood screens," that had for centuries separated the congregations from the altar were demolished, and fourteenth- and fifteenth-century frescoes were removed from the walls. (Portions of Masaccio's *Trinity*, see fig. 4.18, survived in Santa Maria Novella only because Vasari covered it with a large altar, which was removed in the nineteenth century.) For Santa Croce, Vasari replaced the main altarpiece in the church with a large ciborium, a kind of urn or reliquary container for the Eucharist, thus making the body of Christ visually central.

The new uniformity required a redesigning of the family chapels in the naves, many of the chapels dating back to the 1300s. Acting in the name of the government,







ABOVE  
**18.37**  
 North side aisle of Santa Croce, with tabernacle altars designed by Vasari, 1565–72

ABOVE RIGHT  
**18.38**  
 Giorgio Vasari, *Incredulity of St. Thomas*, 1569. Oil on panel. Guidacci Chapel, Santa Croce, Florence

OPPOSITE  
**18.39**  
 Agnolo Bronzino, *The Martyrdom of St. Lawrence*, 1565–69. Fresco. San Lorenzo, Florence

Vasari had these stripped of their tombs and their private family devotional imagery. Families who retained their rights as patrons were required to pay for new altarpieces with standardized tabernacle frames, and patrons old and new were given no say in the subject of the replacement pictures (fig. 18.37). Most of the altarpieces in Santa Maria Novella and all of those in Santa Croce follow a program centered on the life of Christ, once again reinforcing the doctrine of the Eucharist. If all of these look like Counter-Reformatory transformations, nevertheless, Vasari's own *Incredulity of St. Thomas* (fig. 18.38), exe-



cuted in 1569 for the Guidacci Chapel in Santa Croce, shows that the Academy's notion of religious painting entailed no radical break with the past. The torsion of Christ's body manages to show an academic command of anatomy without relying on extensive nudity, and there is little to distract from the central narrative, which the Apostles observe with appropriate gravity. A figure on the staircase, modeled on the "Apollo Belvedere," adds a discreet classicizing ornament appropriate to the dignity of sacred history. Nonetheless, this is a work firmly within the Florentine tradition, characterized by firm *disegno* and a decorative approach to color. The sober architectural setting, in particular, advertises "Florentineness," recalling the tradition of Brunelleschi, of Michelangelo, and of Vasari's own design for the Uffizi (see fig. 17.15).

In sponsoring the renovation of the two churches, Duke Cosimo was acting in the name of Pius V and of the Council of Trent, but it is clear that this suited the interests of his own administration as well. Putting artists







OPPOSITE, ABOVE

18.40

Giorgio Vasari and workshop, central section of the ceiling of the Salone del Cinquecento, as redecorated by Vasari, 1567. Palazzo dei Priori, Florence. In the center, Cosimo I de' Medici is crowned by a personification of Florence.

OPPOSITE, BELOW LEFT

18.41

Giorgio Vasari and workshop, ceiling of the Salone del Cinquecento (detail): Allegory of the Casentino region

OPPOSITE, BELOW RIGHT

18.42

Giorgio Vasari and workshop, ceiling of the Salone del Cinquecento (detail): Allegory of the Chianti region

to work in this way was an imposition of normalization and control, at once blurring the differences between the city's once independent and competing workshops and subordinating the old family oligarchy that had governed the pre-Medicean Republic. Cosimo's enthusiastic promotion of reform, which included banning books listed on the papal Index and licensing the capital punishment of heretics he had previously protected, brought political benefits: in 1569, the Pope elevated Cosimo to the rank of Grand Duke of Tuscany. Bronzino's last great painting, the *Martyrdom of St. Lawrence* (fig. 18.39), a fresco for the church of San Lorenzo, has been seen as a celebration of Cosimo's coronation – Lawrence the martyr receives a ducal crown, rather than the standard martyr's crown of laurel.

In style, the work is strikingly different from the new mendicant altarpieces, one of which was executed by Bronzino himself. Other works the artist produced in the 1560s decorously avoided nudity and complexity of design, yet the *St. Lawrence* did exactly the opposite: it showed a carnival of naked figures, few of them manifesting the behavior expected at a scene of execution, with the saint himself cheerfully in dialogue with the Roman prefect ordering his death. Bronzino may have regarded the location of the fresco, on a wall easily visible from the nave of the church, as an opportunity to make a final statement about his vision of painting. San Lorenzo had been a major center of the Academy's early activities; it was the church most closely associated with Michelangelo, and the wall with Bronzino's mural looked over the space that had hosted Michelangelo's elaborate funeral rituals. It was just a few steps from the ill-fated fresco cycle by Bronzino's teacher Pontormo (see fig. 14.14).

"Errors" that Gilio's dialogue had enumerated in Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* are openly indulged here: nudes with contorted poses abound, the angels lack wings, statues of pagan gods provide poetic amplification of the martyr's virtues, and a series of allegorical personifications mingle with the crowd, contravening any insistence that poetic fictions have no place in the representation of sacred history. While Faith, Hope, Charity, and Fortitude, the clothed women in the center foreground, seem to enjoy the spectacle of the saint's roasting, the other Virtues, who are more challenging to identify since they form part of the Roman tyrant's entourage, appear troubled by the miscarriage of Justice. These include the figure of Justice himself, who appears with an axe and a sword, and the figures of Temperance and Prudence seated beneath the throne. Not only does the imagery present difficulties of interpretation, it is also formally complex, and its frieze-like design constantly pulls the viewer's attention away from the clear communication

of the story – in this respect, too, the fresco follows precisely the things in Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* that had provoked the most controversy. In the left background Bronzino painted a self-portrait in the company of his teacher Pontormo and his student Alessandro Allori, suggesting that Bronzino conceived the work as a defense of the family workshop tradition that the Academy was suppressing. The fresco takes a stance of ironic dissent against not only the Reformist critique of Michelangelo, but also the artistic policies of the Medici regime.

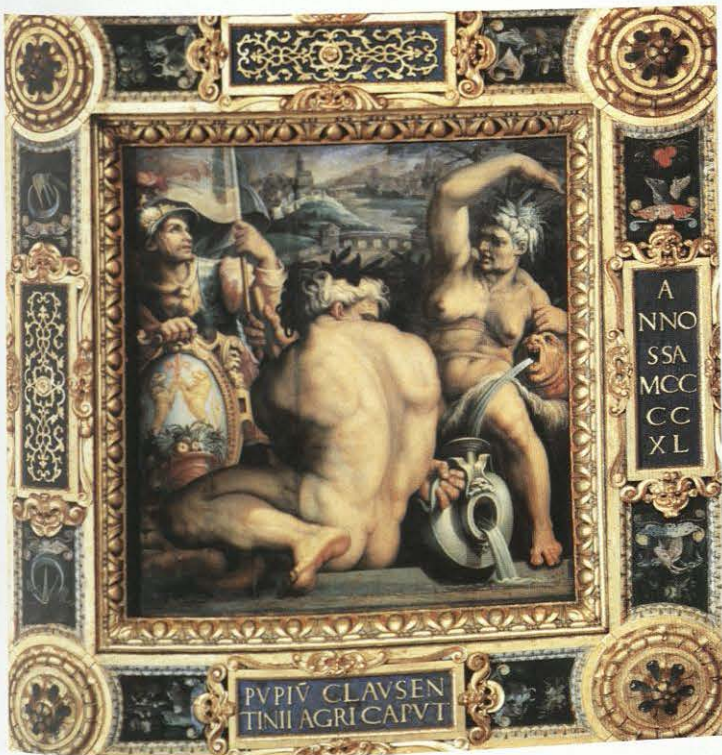
## The Arts in Transition

Historians sometimes refer to the period this chapter has covered as the "Counter-Reformation," characterizing it in terms of a response to Protestant challenges coming from the north while also distinguishing it from the more varied "Catholic Reformation" led by figures as varied as Savonarola and Vittoria Colonna. Although it may be useful to connect the arts to these centralizing impulses, this is not to say that the Counter-Reformation resulted in anything like a coherent style or a uniform subject matter. The Lombard tradition of Moretto and Moroni served the ends of reform, but then so did Vasari and his Florentine followers. The reformers were more intent to prescribe what Christian art should *not* be than to lay down any strict guidelines about what it should look like.

Although many historians, moreover, have seen the Counter-Reformation as the single most important force in Italian culture during the later sixteenth century, the movement was in fact a symptom of a deeper and more widespread European preoccupation with order, hierarchy, and systematization. The concern is apparent in the debates among writers and critics concerning genre and decorum. Patrons and artists would now consider every work in terms of the type or kind to which it belonged; the orthodox would observe the rules of the genre in question.

The preoccupation with systems is characteristic of a society increasingly founded on centrally organized bureaucratic states: there can be no better emblem of this than Vasari's *Uffizi* (see fig. 17.15), a monument to the new administrative apparatus created by Duke Cosimo to consolidate his control over Tuscany. In Vasari's ceiling of the Salone del Cinquecento (see fig. 11.16), completed by 1567, Tuscany is represented as a grid-like arrangement of allegorical figures each highlighting the natural features of a subject town or region, with Cosimo enthroned at the center (fig. 18.40). The designation of regions by river gods suggests that Medici power percolates through the domain like streams emanating from a single source.











# 19

## 1570—1580

### *Art, the People, and the Counter-Reformation Church*

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**Two Reforming Archbishops****Bologna: Gabriele Paleotti**

Perhaps the most important effect of Catholic reform in the visual arts was the importance that it gave to the idea of ordinary viewers. The Church took a new interest in the experience of the laity: artisans and unskilled workers of modest means as well as the urban and rural poor. In the eyes of the bishops and religious orders who led Catholic reform, such audiences required constant guidance and supervision. The decrees that originated from the Council of Trent in 1563 had emphasized the responsibility of the clergy to “instruct” those in its charge, and from the middle of the century, clerical writings on the arts had distinguished two audiences for paintings and sculptures: the literate, whom the writings of heretics and dissidents threatened to seduce, and the illiterate, whom the wrong kind of religious images could lead into error or temptation. Church authorities conceived ordinary Catholics as fundamentally dependent on images, as beholders before they were readers. The bishop of Bologna, Gabriele Paleotti (1522–1597; archbishop in 1582), wrote that images served to “move men to proper obedience and subjection to God, or to penitence, or to voluntary suffering, or to charity, or to disdain of the world, or other similar virtues all of which are instruments to unite men with God, which is the true and principal end that is expected of these images.” The image of “the people” became a central concern in the later decades of the sixteenth century, both as the primary audience of religious art and as its subject. Social catastrophes of the 1570s, including plague and famine, only reinforced the newly conceived relationship between the Church and the people, and art and architecture assumed a crucial role in making visible this redefinition of Christian community.

Paleotti was one of several local bishops who sought to impose a “top-down” reorganization of the religious life of the Catholic laity, through careful monitoring of parish clergy and of confraternities, and through new measures for the religious education of the young. Beginning around 1578, the bishop sought to compile a vast treatise on the proper use of images, which underlined their pedagogical and disciplinary function. Paleotti

decried not just the contamination of sacred by “profane” art, but profane art in general; he reserved particular censure for the long-established practice of private patrons who had their portraits and coats of arms displayed in chapels and altarpieces. In the course of hundreds of pages of the treatise, which he never managed to finish, Paleotti had little to say about the stylistic and theoretical questions that had preoccupied Vasari, Dolce (see p. 496), and others. He called for painters to design their works not for rich patrons and art-loving connoisseurs, but for the expanded “public” of Christian art: images should be clear and intelligible; they should inspire reverence, but also hope and joy rather than despondency and fear.

The choice to formulate the treatise as a “discourse” rather than a dialogue, combined with Paleotti’s position as final arbiter on the actual church decoration that took place in his jurisdiction, make his book now read like a collection of rules, imposed from the top down on practicing painters and their patrons. The reality, however, was more complex. Paleotti opted to publish the first editions of his treatise in Italian rather than Latin, making them accessible to a broad audience, and essentially inviting painters to respond directly to his ideas, rather than depend on mediation or regulation from the clergy. Before publishing the book, moreover, Paleotti circulated drafts to and invited comments from a few artists whose work he particularly admired, among them the painter Prospero Fontana (1512–1597). Fontana’s most distinguished painting from the years just before Paleotti began writing, his 1576 *St. Alexius Distributing Alms* (fig. 19.1) for the Orsi Chapel in the church of San Giacomo Maggiore, Bologna, exemplifies the clarity and legibility that Paleotti’s discourse would in turn advocate. Most ordinary viewers would not have been familiar with the painting’s fourth-century main character, the son of a wealthy Roman who abandoned his family and distributed his possessions to the poor, but no one could have missed the picture’s lesson: it places Alexius on the iconic central axis and isolates his gesture of handing money to a beggar. Fontana identifies the saint he portrays entirely through that saint’s act of charity, the central virtue that the post-Tridentine Church was promoting. The humble characters that surround Alexius, moreover, project an audience for the picture itself that would





19.1  
Prospero Fontana,  
*St. Alexius Distributing  
Alms*, 1576. Oil on canvas.  
Orsi Chapel, San Giacomo  
Maggiore, Bologna

include Bologna's most destitute churchgoers. Though Fontana had worked with the Florentine Perino del Vaga earlier in his career, finally, there is little here that draws attention to individual manner; content takes precedence over style.

Yet for all of that, this is not a painting that ignores the interests of its aristocratic donor, the scion of one of Bologna's oldest noble families. The chapel took its name from Alessio Orsi, who had provided for its decoration in his will. The dedication of the altar and the choice of protagonists for the painting may have reflected a shared new fascination with Rome's earliest Christian

community, but both depended more than anything on the fact that Alexius was Orsi's name saint. While the chapel does not include a conventional donor portrait or anything else to suggest that the Orsi family derived special benefits from its wealth, the face of St. Alexius, with his distinctive long black beard, appears to be Orsi's own. Fontana's point was that Orsi, in leaving money for a chapel, followed Alexius's own model of charity, that giving money to the church was the equivalent of giving alms to the poor. Yet in sanctifying its patron, the painting re-inscribed the kind of privileged societal differences that Paleotti wanted pictures to work against.



**Milan: Carlo Borromeo**

Paleotti probably began his treatise after reading the book *Directions on Church Building and Decoration* published in 1577 by Archbishop Carlo Borromeo of Milan (1538–1584). Borromeo, the nephew of Pius IV, had provided a model of rigorous centralization and charismatic leadership that would be widely influential beyond his own archdiocese. He imposed sweeping reforms of the parish clergy and religious orders and tightened clerical control on confraternities throughout Lombardy. By 1580, Milan rivaled Rome in its quantity of new religious building, in its commissions for sacred art, and in the great collective religious festivals and processions that Borromeo personally led. The city had become a sacred theater, and Borromeo himself came to be seen as a living saint (he was officially canonized in 1610). His near-assassination in 1569 by some members of the clergy opposed to his reforms gave him a martyr-like status. In 1576, while walking barefoot in a procession in honor of the Milanese relic of a holy nail believed to have been used in the Crucifixion, copious bleeding from his injured foot made him even more potent an exemplar of the “imitation of Christ.” The cult

of the Nail did more than reaffirm the centrality of relics to Catholic devotion, in the face of Protestant attacks: in Milan in 1576 it formed part of a great collective ritual of crisis, in which the archbishop guided the entire community in acts of penance designed to avert the wrath of God against the city. The devastating plague of 1576–77, when he worked tirelessly among the sick despite the risk of contagion, allowed Borromeo to appear as the advocate of the people, the one who could solicit both grace from God and charity from the rich on their behalf.

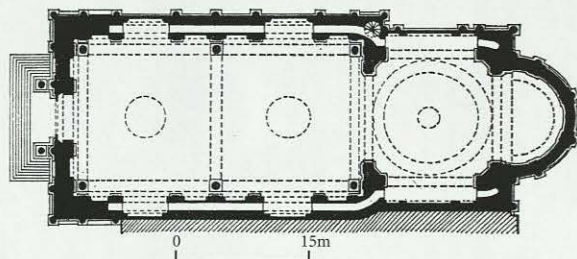
Borromeo’s concern with the visual arts is most evident in his treatise on church building and decoration. Much of what he writes on design is familiar from Alberti’s *Ten Books on Architecture* and Palladio’s *Four Books of Architecture*: places of worship should be magnificent and impressive to inspire respect for the institution of the Church; they should be set apart from other buildings and raised on steps; they should be appropriately decorated using the classical orders. However, Borromeo sharply differentiated himself from the humanist tradition by insisting on the precedence of early Christian basilicas as models. He wrote that churches must be cruciform in plan, and he pronounced circular plans to be pagan. The altar had to be fully visible from all points in the church, and the Blessed Sacrament housed there in a ciborium. He required large windows with clear (as opposed to stained) glass so that congregants could see the ceremony. He provided meticulous specifications about benches, rails, confessionals, candlesticks, and other apparatus.

Like many of the treatises we have discussed, Borromeo’s *Directions* codified existing practice as much as it called for anything new. We have already seen the basic elements of Borromeo’s ideal church in Giacomo Vignola’s design for the Gesù in Rome (see figs 18.8–18.10), and in fact the Jesuits built their church in Milan, San Fedele, according to similar principles under Borromeo’s supervision in 1569. The painter-architect Pellegrino Tibaldi (1527–1596) had initially proposed a centralized plan based on a domed Greek cross: at Borromeo’s behest, and following the acquisition of a larger site to build on, Tibaldi substituted a longitudinal design with two cubic bays for the nave and a domed choir (figs. 19.2–19.3). The elimination of aisles produces an effect of unity and visibility: clergy wishing to reach the four shallow nave chapels could do so by means of concealed corridors connecting these with the choir. Tibaldi achieved a monumental effect with a giant Corinthian order on tall bases (reminiscent of Bramante’s original scheme for St. Peter’s, Rome; see fig. 12.25), which unifies the nave elevation with the choir and the apse. Six free-standing columns gave further definition to the nave, articulating the main proportional divisions of the interior without impeding the flow of space or the churchgoer’s view across it.

RIGHT

19.2

Pellegrino Tibaldi, San Fedele, Milan, begun 1567.  
Plan



BELOW

19.3

Pellegrino Tibaldi, San Fedele, Milan, Interior







19.4  
Galeazzo Alessi, Santa  
Maria presso San Celso,  
Milan, begun 1570

Whereas San Fedele reflects the common means and ends of Milanese and Roman church building, another great project of the Borromean era in Milan seems more free in its embrace of architectural invention. In 1570, Galeazzo Alessi, a wide-ranging architect who had worked on – among other things – a series of grand residential projects, designed a spectacular facade for the fifteenth-century church of Santa Maria presso San Celso (fig. 19.4). As executed over the following decade under Martino Bassi, its differences from a contemporary Roman church like the Gesù are striking. There is no monumental Corinthian order imposing a dominant vertical orientation: when pilasters and columns appear, they do so only as part of an encrustation of ornament that also includes reliefs and a program of figurative sculpture devoted to the life of the Virgin. There is a sense, as in palace design, of several stacked horizontal tiers: an upper and lower facade echo each other in their dominant elements, separated by a kind of mezzanine

with reliefs of the Nativity, the Adoration of the Magi, and the Presentation, along with statues of angels and sibyls. A vertical accent appears – but only as a secondary theme – in the central doorway flanked by paired colored marble columns, picked up above in the paired columns and caryatids framing a great arched window. Santa Maria housed an important miraculous image, and the splendor and novelty of the facade helped to promote the cult and to attract people to the church. Alessi's design shows that notwithstanding Borromeo's concern with rules and uniformity, architects could still exercise considerable freedom of invention, and that for the Milanese clergy and patrons it was sometimes more important to have a local and distinctive building than one that adopted the sobriety of the Gesù or San Fedele.

In the figural arts, Borromeo favored viscerally emotional, lifelike scenes. Religious painting in Borromeo's Milan began to explore effects of melodrama, reworking



RIGHT

19.5

Antonio Campi,  
*Decapitation of St. John the Baptist*, 1570. Oil on  
 canvas, 9'5¼" x 6'3½"  
 (2.88 x 1.92 m). San Paolo  
 Converso, Milan

standard themes in order to magnify effects of pathos and violence. Among the most noteworthy painters active in the city were the brothers Campi from Cremona, who made altarpieces for religious houses favored by the archbishop. (Borromeo owned works by Giulio and Antonio Campi and kept an *Agony in the Garden* by Giulio before him as he lay dying in 1584.) Antonio's (c. 1522–1587) *Decapitation of St. John the Baptist*, painted for an altar in the convent church of San Paolo Converso, is unprecedented in its suspense-filled narration of the subject (fig. 19.5). As John extends his neck, his eyes well up with tears: a salver waits in readiness on the floor nearby. John looks toward the opening door of the prison, where



the gloating figure of Herodias enters alongside her smiling daughter Salome. The expressions and motivations of all the dramatis personae are revealed by torch and candlelight. The gloomy interior is almost monochromatic, except that the green tunic of the dandyish courtier who commands his death offsets John's livid flesh; the red sleeves of Herodias provide the other touch of color, drawing attention to her sudden intrusion into the cell.

In *Christ Nailed to the Cross* from 1577 (fig. 19.6), Antonio's younger brother Vincenzo (1536–1591) produced a harrowing image of physical torture. Like their Venetian predecessors, the Campi questioned the absolute supremacy of the Tuscan-Roman models advocated by Vasari; they sought to develop a new idiom of sacred art by studying the great figures of the local artistic past. Vincenzo here modeled his composition on the fresco of the same subject by Pordenone in the cathedral of his home town of Cremona, where Christ's foreshortened body seems to defy the picture plane itself (see fig. 14.27), but there is a marked difference of effect. Christ's open-mouthed stare, which at once expresses pain, tenderness, and reproach, addresses the viewer with an extraordinary intimacy, intensifying his or her involvement with the image.



## Venice in the 1570s

### Veronese on Trial

Publications like Borromeo's and Paoletti's ensured that the place of artistic invention in the depiction of sacred history would remain a controversial issue. Nowhere do we see this better than in Venice, where Paolo Veronese (1528–1588) found himself under investigation by the Inquisition in July 1573. The occasion was the commission of a *Last Supper* (fig. 19.7) for the refectory of the Dominican convent at Santi Giovanni e Paolo. Veronese's painting compressed the Biblical episode into the central arch of a great loggia in the style of Jacopo Sansovino (see fig. 16.23), against a prospect of marble buildings in a shimmering light that recalls the atmosphere of Venice and its canals. The *Last Supper* appears to be part of a great feast or celebration, in which sumptuously attired revelers participate along with soldiers, a dwarf, a black page, a man with a parrot, dogs, and other characters from the painter's festive repertoire.

The Inquisition took notice. They first gave Veronese the option of changing the dog in the foreground into a figure of the Magdalene, thus implicitly converting the picture into the episode (Luke 7:36) where Christ encounters a repentant prostitute while feasting in the house of a Pharisee. Veronese provoked them by argu-

ing quite correctly, on the basis of pictorial decorum, that the Magdalene had no place in a *Last Supper*. At his trial, the inquisitors grilled Veronese about the inclusion of curiosities such as a man with a nosebleed and the clown with the bird. A question about the presence of "armed men dressed as Germans" attempted to attach the taint of heresy to the artist, or to allege that he was profaning the dignity of sacred painting. "Do you not know that in Germany and other places infected with heresy it is customary with various pictures full of scurrilousness and similar inventions to mock, vituperate and scorn the things of the Holy Catholic Church in order to teach bad doctrines to foolish and ignorant people?" The question once again raises the specter of "the people," easily corruptible and led astray by images, even though a convent refectory was a setting likely to have a more restricted audience.

Veronese admitted that it was inappropriate to include "clowns, drunkards, Germans, dwarfs and similar vulgarities" in a *Last Supper*. He had painted them, he said, to add ornament to the picture. But he qualified this admission by stating that he was only doing what his "superiors" in the art of painting had done. In the Pope's chapel, he stated, Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* (see fig. 15.29) had included Christ, St. Peter, St. John, and "even the Virgin Mary" all naked "in different postures with little reverence." Ironically, the inquisitors

OPPOSITE, BELOW

19.6

Vincenzo Campi, *Christ Nailed to the Cross*, 1577. Oil on canvas, 6'10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 4'7" (2.1 x 1.41 m). Museo del Prado, Madrid

19.7

Paolo Veronese, *Feast in the House of Levi*, 1573. Oil on canvas, 18' x 42' (5.5 x 12.8 m). Galleria dell'Accademia, Venice





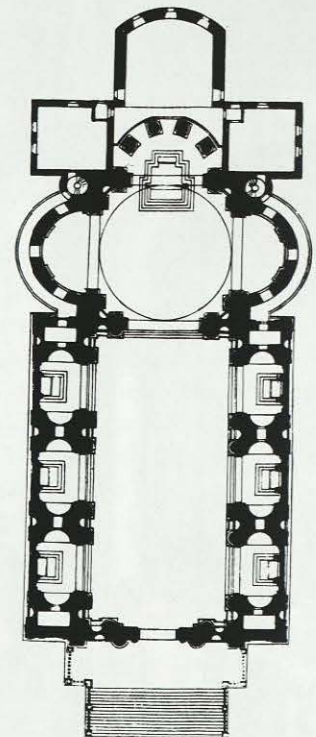
ignored the false description and defended Michelangelo, claiming that garments were not necessary in a *Last Judgment* and asserting that “in those figures there is nothing that is not spiritual.” They gave Veronese three months to make changes in the painting, but he or the friars instead resorted to the expedient of simply re-baptizing it. Henceforth, it would go under the title *Feast in the House of Levi*, the episode (Mark 2:13–22) where a wealthy man in the company of “publicans and tax collectors” entertained Christ.

Veronese’s painting is decidedly unconventional within the tradition of Last Supper imagery, but there is no indication that the friars of Santi Giovanni e Paolo found the painting unacceptable. Rather, the trial of Veronese indicates that in Venice, the prevailing standards of decorum differed from those of a Paleotti or a Borromeo or the Tridentine decrees. Veronese’s approach responded to a particularly Venetian self-image, of the Republic founded on magnificence and luxury, famous for its carnivals and courtesans; he intentionally valorized such an image by making it the setting for events in the life of Christ. Yet more might be at stake in Veronese’s decision to include buffoons and “vulgar” curiosities for the sake of ornament. Perhaps he meant to evoke a negative stereotype that attached to poets as well as painters – that both were practitioners of low and vulgar entertainment, like acrobats and fairground performers. We have seen that one of the speakers in Gilio’s dialogue (see p. 526) had derided Michelangelo’s *Last Judgment* because its figures engaged in behavior more suitable to a marketplace or a carnival than to a chapel. By playfully insinuating that painting is just a low form of entertainment, Veronese ridiculed not only the humanist assertion of painting’s edifying character, but also the Counter-Reformation attempt to turn painting into an instrument of moral and doctrinal instruction.

to be magnificent, a further ornament to a city conceived as a great ceremonial space for the celebration of the Serene Republic’s power and dignity. Every year on the third Sunday in July, the doge would lead a grand procession across the lagoon on a massive floating causeway to commemorate the Senate’s vow. A prohibition against private burials, memorials, and chapels further underlined the public nature of the church.

Although Daniele Barbaro (see p. 540) had pressed for a centralized and domed structure, the design Palladio delivered in 1577 adopted a longitudinal solution, and in many respects attended closely to the formula recently adopted by the Jesuits in Rome and Milan (fig. 19.8). Some of the senators had wanted Il Redentore to be a Jesuit foundation with a college, but the body ultimately resorted to the less expensive option of placing the new church in the care of a community of Capuchin friars. The Capuchins, founded in 1529, followed a severe version of the Franciscan rule and counted among the exemplary religious orders in the epoch of Catholic reform (Barocci belonged to a lay branch of the Order). Like the Jesuits, who had found themselves the vehicle for Farnese ambitions in Rome a few decades earlier, the friars themselves were less than comfortable with the grandeur and sumptuousness of Palladio’s church, which they saw as going against the ascetic and purist spirit of their rule. One of the friars protested that such “grandeur and magnificence” was neither “instigated nor wanted”

19.8  
Andrea Palladio, Il  
Redentore, begun 1577.  
Plan



### Palladio’s Redentore

At its height, the great plague of 1575–76 carried off four hundred people a day in the city of Venice; overall more than 25 per cent of the population died. As was the case in Milan and throughout Italy, the local population regarded the epidemic as an instance of God’s wrath, requiring large-scale collective efforts of penance and appeasement. In 1576, the Venetian Senate voted in favor of the construction of a great new church, to be known as Il Redentore (The Redeemer) and to be located on the island of the Giudecca. The Senate commissioned the Redentore in fulfillment of a vow, thanking God for the divine favor he showed in stopping the plague. The state, the doge, and individual members of the government all committed huge sums, intending the building

OPPOSITE, TOP  
19.9  
Andrea Palladio,  
Il Redentore. Interior

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM  
19.10  
Andrea Palladio,  
Il Redentore. Facade





by the congregation, but that it was rather “a work of the Serene Dominion, which is made for their devotion and vow.”

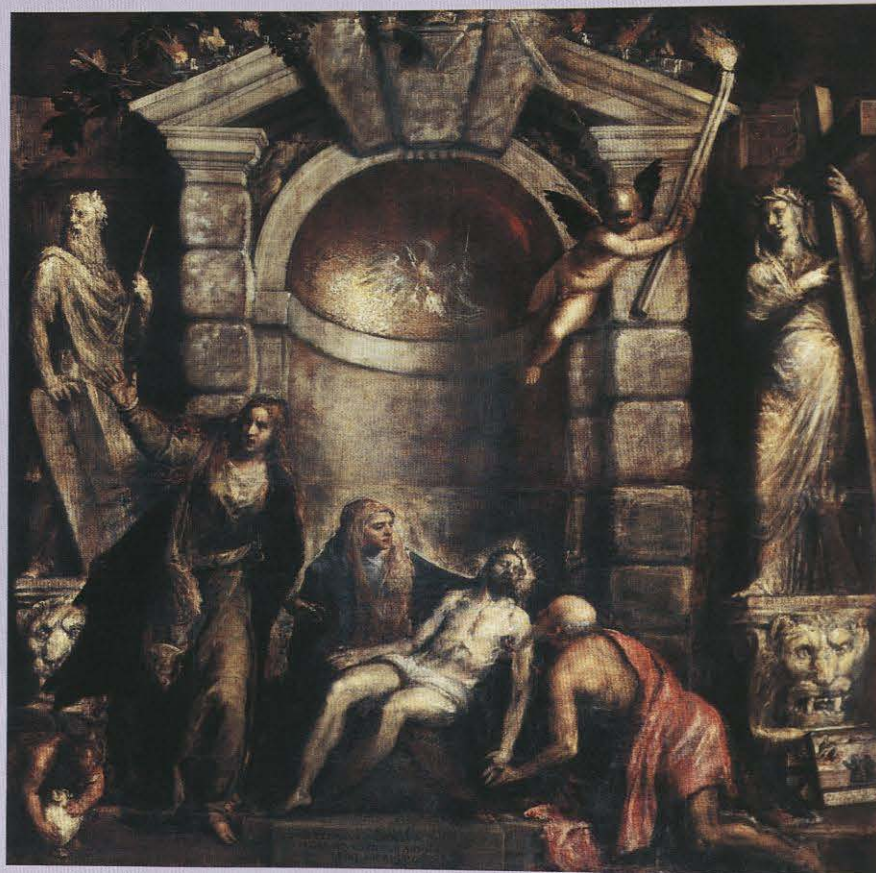
As with the Gesù in Rome (*see fig. 18.4*) and San Fedele in Milan (*see fig. 19.2*), the built church has no aisles; a series of three chapels joined by corridors flank the nave on each side (*fig. 19.9*). Instead of the Gesù’s shallow transepts and choir, Palladio’s design has three apses of identical dimensions framing the central dome. For the first time in Venice all of the altars follow a standardized design, in the manner of the recently renovated Santa Croce in Florence and the Gesù. The apse does not consist of a wall but of a screen of columns opening into the presbytery, which housed the church’s resident clergy during services: the opening up of the wall at this point gives the interior a sense of physical lightness, of expansion rather than constriction.

The facade of the church suggests an architectural equivalent of musical polyphony (*fig. 19.10*). Several variations on the motif of the pedimented facade appear simultaneously in a rich and complex fusion of interpenetrating layers. The ultimate source of the design is Vignola’s church of Sant’Andrea in Via Flaminia (*see fig. 17.14*), one of only two modern buildings admired





## EX-VOTOS



19.11

Titian, *Pietà*, c. 1576.  
Oil on canvas, 12'4 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x  
11'4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (3.78 x 3.47 m).  
Galleria dell'Accademia,  
Venice

19.12

Titian, *Pietà*. Detail of  
ex-voto



In times of great suffering, individuals, families, and whole communities prayed to specific saints for intervention, promising to bear witness afterward and give thanks for divine aid with some tangible gift. The object that resulted, called an “ex-voto” (literally, “from the vow”), was frequently small in scale and simply rendered, though some were more elaborate. In cases of recovery from an injury, the donor might depict the tragedy itself or the afflicted body part: the goldsmith Benvenuto Cellini, for example, was briefly blinded by a splinter; when his sight returned, he presented a golden eyeball to the Roman church of Santa Lucia (St. Lucy, patron of vision). Like most Renaissance ex-votos, this does not survive, though modern silver depictions of hearts, arms, and other body parts drape chapels in

many functioning churches. When Domenico da Corella described Fra Angelico’s paintings as “angelic,” he was referring specifically to the doors that the friar artist had painted for a cabinet containing silver ex-votos.

The cabinet originally ornamented the shrine dedicated to the miracle-working image of the Virgin in Florence’s Santissima Annunziata, the church that, through the sixteenth century, contained a dazzling collection of full-scale wax effigies. Most would have been by artisans whose names are not known to us, but occasionally, wealthier patrons called on more distinguished artists to make more striking works. After Lorenzo the Magnificent escaped an assassination attempt, for example, he had Andrea del Verrocchio produce a wax for the Annunziata, along with two others



for additional churches. Though these, too, are all now lost, they represented one of the most common forms that Renaissance ex-votos took, that of portraits. Not all votive portraits were three-dimensional, moveable objects, meant for placement in the company of a holy image. Just as often, in fact, the image was part of a larger painting. Piero della Francesca's portrayal of Sigismondo Malatesta venerating St. Sigismund shows a conventional arrangement of this type (see fig. 7.17), even if the exact circumstances of its making are unknown. Titian's Pesaro altarpiece, commissioned in gratitude for military victory, is another (see fig. 14.25). Perhaps the most sophisticated painted ex-voto of the Renaissance is a canvas Titian was preparing for his own tomb when he died (fig. 19.11). In addition to a penitent, grieving Magdalen, this includes the aged, barely clothed St. Jerome (who somewhat resembles the artist in his advanced years) praying before what appears to be a sculpted Pietà come to life in a niche. Behind the kneeling saint, leaning against the pedestal of a statue of Faith, is a painted ex-voto, showing an actual portrait of Titian, this time in the company of his son, praying before a second image of the Virgin (fig. 19.12). With this double gesture, the artist seems to be soliciting aid no less than giving thanks, hoping to ward off the plague that ultimately killed him and to be graced with salvation after his death.

The most dramatic Renaissance ex-votos are the churches that communities erected after the passing of various public emergencies. The monumental staircase that runs up the Capitoline Hill to the church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli in Rome, next to the seat of the government, was built after the Black Death in 1348, in the belief that the Virgin has driven away disease. During a plague of 1459, similarly, Ludovico II Gonzaga asked the plague saint Sebastian for help, and when the epidemic subsided, he commissioned Leon Battista Alberti to build the church of San Sebastiano in Mantua. The Venetian church of Il Redentore (see figs. 19.9–19.10) resulted from a comparable vow, this time on the part of the Venetian Senate, to erect a great basilica if Christ would save the city from an epidemic.

by Palladio in his guidebook to Rome (the other was Bramante's *Tempietto*, fig. 12.24, which as we saw had itself inspired Vignola's centralized design). The combination of a domed cubic volume fronted by a pedimented portico with a high attic is indebted to Vignola: Palladio adapted this to the more spatially complex form of the church, in order to reflect its interior divisions. Thus the engaged Corinthian columns of the portico correspond to the giant order of the nave, while the pilasters framing the chapels match the minor order that supports a second lower pediment, subordinated to and interwoven with the first. Another minor pediment appears above the main entrance, and segments of a fourth appear in an additional layer of facade that rises beyond the attic. The inventiveness and originality of the design suggest a desire to compete with Rome, not to comply with that city's norms.

## Three Confraternities

### Venice: The Scuola Grande di San Rocco

The plague also left its mark in the artistic commissions of one of the city's greatest confraternities, the Scuola di San Rocco. The confraternity's titular saint Roch, who had miraculously recovered from plague, was venerated throughout Europe as a protector against the disease. Like other Scuole Grandi, San Rocco functioned as an elite club for non-noble citizens; membership was a sign of prestige, and wealthy members were preferred (among them Titian, who had painted an allegedly miraculous *Christ Carrying the Cross* for the neighboring church of San Rocco in 1510). The purpose of the group, however, was charitable activity for the poor and the sick, and this shaped the confraternity's approach to the decoration of its property. The Scuola's Meeting House was among the largest and most imposing in the city. In two campaigns, from 1564 until 1567, and again from 1575 to 1588, Tintoretto decorated the principal interiors of this building with a remarkable series of fifty-two canvasses. It is the largest ensemble of work by a single painter to survive from the Renaissance, and it also includes one of the largest paintings on canvas ever made – the colossal *Crucifixion* (1565; fig. 19.13), which covers an entire wall of the Sala dell'Albergo (Boardroom). Tintoretto clearly sought to make the San Rocco series into a monument to himself and to his art, and he went to extraordinary lengths to ensure that he alone would fulfill the commissions. The 1564 competition held to select an artist required painters to prepare a design for a ceiling panel showing the apotheosis of St. Roch. Tintoretto prevailed against Federico Zuccaro and Veronese by making a finished painting and





**19.13**  
Tintoretto, *Crucifixion*,  
1565. Oil on canvas, 17'7" x  
40'2" (5.36 x 12.3 m). Sala  
dell'Albergo, Scuola Grande  
di San Rocco, Venice

contriving to have it installed in situ. What decided the outcome following such a blatant flouting of the rules was the painter's offer of the canvas as a gift to the Scuola, in place of claiming a fee. On other occasions in the following years Tintoretto would again resort to the expedient of gift giving, or would lower his prices so as to undercut any competition. By such means he overcame resistance among some of the Scuola's high-ranking members, who openly disliked the artist's pushy entrepreneurism and his idiosyncratic, tumultuous style.

The paintings in the Sala Superiore (Upper Hall), which Tintoretto began to contribute in 1576, follow a loose typological program with Old Testament scenes of miraculous salvation depicted on the ceiling, and episodes from the life of Christ (including the Resurrection and Ascension) on the walls. Both series share a common emphasis on the themes of food (*Israelites Gathering Manna*, *Adam and Eve with the Forbidden Fruit*, *Elijah Fed by the Angel*, *Passover*, *Christ Multiplying the Loaves and Fishes*, *Temptation of Christ*, *Last Supper*) and of healing or deliverance (*Jonah and the Whale*, *Sacrifice of Isaac*, *Daniel in the Lion's Den*, *Raising of Lazarus*, *Pool of Bethesda*). The cycle thus not only unfolds the general theme of Christian salvation and its Old Testament prefiguration, but also reflects more local preoccupations: the Scuola's care for the poor and the sick, the invocation of saintly intercession during a time of sickness. The charitable work of the Scuola is clearly signaled in the appearance of two "plague saints," Sebastian and Roch, and the central ceiling canvas, the largest in the room, depicts the episode of the Brazen Serpent (fig. 19.14). In Numbers 21, God punished the Israelites who "spoke

against God and against Moses" by sending a plague of venomous reptiles; they killed and wounded many of the Israelites until Moses set up a talismanic image of a bronze serpent on a cruciform pole, the sight of which cured the afflicted. Viewed from underneath, as if we were looking from the base of a steep slope, the piling up of lifeless and dying bodies is horrifying, like the sight of the damned in a *Last Judgment*: Tintoretto is aiming to recapture Michelangelo's effects of awe and terror (see fig. 15.29), though the apocalyptic theme also responds to the Venetian belief that their own plague was a form of divine judgment.

Moses, seen through a halo of angelic light, directs the Israelites to look toward the image of their salvation, as does a woman who gestures dramatically from the center of the composition. Above, Tintoretto has added the figure of God with a glory of angels. As in the Sistine *Last Judgment*, the artist shows the divine figures on a larger scale, as if they are closer to us, even flying just above our heads. What is distinctly non-Michelangelesque is Tintoretto's organization of the pictorial space into flickering patches of light and dark, as though it were a stormy sky with light breaking through at intervals. The illumination is in large part independent of the grouping of figures, thus enhancing the sense that we encounter them not on a stage but under real conditions: the motion of bodies works as a kind of counterpoint to the dynamic play of light and dark. God is almost completely engulfed in shadow, an effect that would be unthinkable in Florence or Rome; the motif may have added to the artist's controversial reputation in Venice.



19.14

Tintoretto, *The Brazen  
Serpent*, c. 1577. Oil on  
canvas, 27'7" x 17'1" (8.4  
x 5.2 m). Sala Superiore,  
Scuola Grande di San  
Rocco, Venice





RIGHT

**19.15**

Tintoretto, *Moses Striking the Rock*, 1577. Oil on canvas, 18' x 17'1" (5.5 x 5.2 m). Sala Superiore, Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Venice

**19.16**

Tintoretto, *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1578–81. Oil on canvas, 17'9" x 14'11" (5.42 x 4.55 m). Sala Superiore, Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Venice

Equally dizzying in its effect is the nearby ceiling canvas of *Moses Striking the Rock* (fig. 19.15), where great arcs of gushing water, barely caught in the pitchers and basins of the thirsting Israelites, seem to cascade in the beholder's direction. Here again the looming figure of God outstrips all the others in scale: it is as though we are looking through transparent media – water, the crystalline sphere that bears the figure of God – at a flaring sky with a great commotion of figures and horses beyond. The brushwork is even more rapid and more cursory. Such speedy execution adds to the overall sense of energy and movement, of the flickering transience of light, but in Tintoretto's case it also had an economic and ideological dimension. Painting quickly, and often as here with a restricted range of color, enabled Tintoretto to maximize his output and to lower his costs. Such a practice reinforced the image of Tintoretto, the self-styled "little dyer," as an entrepreneurial craft worker without the humanist pretensions of a Titian or a Vasari, and this could have suited the needs of the confraternity at



this moment. Both Catholic reformers and the Senate itself had criticized the Scuole for their expenditures on buildings, paintings, feasts, and ceremonies with funds that should have gone to the charitable support of the poor. Tintoretto's low costs, the plebeian values that attached to his name, and his "impoverished" technique would all have allowed the Scuola to cultivate the appearance of humility and sacred indigence.

If this was how Tintoretto's technique was understood, it did not compromise his reputation as an extraordinarily gifted artist, widely appreciated by fellow painters such as the Carracci in Bologna, and – especially after Titian's death in 1576 – sought out by the Gonzaga, Philip II of Spain, and Emperor Rudolf II in Prague, just the kind of courtly clients who collected paintings by the older artist. His success was more than a matter of his pricing strategy (as Vasari cynically implied): it lay in his power of invention, his capacity utterly to transform and revitalize a standard pictorial subject. This can be seen especially in the Marian subjects for the Scuola di San Rocco. *The Adoration of the Shepherds* (fig. 19.16) lends an uncompromisingly humble setting – the dank cowshed with its roof partly missing – a sense of hierarchical dignity. Even while reclining on straw in a hayloft, the Virgin majestically unveils the shining infant before two stately midwives (one of them, with breast bare, apparently serving also as a wet nurse). Through the beams of the roof, angels appear along with more of the crystalline substance through which Tintoretto evokes divine light. He conceives the picture as an incongruous royal presence in an unexpected setting, a point he makes by having a peacock walk among the farm animals





19.17

Tintoretto, *Annunciation*,  
1583–87. Oil on canvas,  
13'10" x 17'11" (4.22 x 5.45  
cm). Sala Terrena, Scuola  
Grande di San Rocco,  
Venice

and racked implements. The shepherds, bearing their humble gifts in baskets, occupy this lower zone, pointedly closer to us.

The same apparent desire to recognize but also integrate social hierarchies is also manifest in the *Annunciation* (fig. 19.17), executed a few years later for the lower floor of the Scuola. Once again the painter has used architectural elements to enrich the internal space of the picture: through an open doorway flanked by a ruined classical column, the angel Gabriel thrusts himself into the bedchamber of the astonished Virgin. Equally mindful of physical and earthly boundaries, a stream of Cupid-like child angels enters through the square window above the door, following the flight of the Holy Spirit. The space outside vividly captures the clutter of a carpenter's yard, where a surprisingly young St. Joseph is hard at work. The particulars of the setting deliberately send mixed signals: the scene of manual labor, the physical decay of the doorway, and the broken rope chair within all address the Scuola's need to keep the image of deserving poverty before their eyes. At the same time, the carved and gilt wooden ceiling, like the canopied bed, suggests that this is more than an ordinary carpenter's home.

#### Arezzo: The Confraternity of the Misericordia

Federico Barocci (c. 1526–1612) had been forced to abandon his promising career in Rome following a severe illness in the late 1560s; he had returned to his native Urbino, where he would continue to live and work for another forty years. Although Urbino was not a major artistic center like Rome or Florence, and although his illness allowed him to work only at the slowest pace, Barocci would prove to be among the most successful, most sought after, and most influential artists of the later sixteenth century. The painter was famous for his devotion: he produced only a single surviving picture on a secular theme in his lifetime. He developed a signature style that appealed to the proponents of Catholic reform, yet he also dedicated himself to self-consciously artistic ends, melding an ideal grace and formal refinement reminiscent of his fellow Urbinate Raphael with a softness of texture and effects of shimmering light and color that show close study of Correggio and of Andrea del Sarto. In fact, Barocci can be credited with a rediscovery and popularization of Correggio that would continue well into the seventeenth century. Barocci recognized that





ABOVE LEFT  
**19.18**  
 Federico Barocci, *Madonna del Popolo*, 1576–79. Oil on panel, 11'8" x 8'3" (3.59 x 2.52 m). Uffizi Gallery, Florence

ABOVE RIGHT  
**19.19**  
 Federico Barocci, study for the *Madonna del Popolo*. Black and red chalk, heightened with white chalk, with touches of yellow and pink pastel on blue paper. Yale University Art Gallery

Correggio's communicative power lay in the allure of his tender figures, their softly modeled flesh and florid harmonies of complementary colors. Barocci's own color is more artificial, with forms veiled in a haze of pastel hues. Smiles and delicate intimacy pervade their interactions, and even the adults seem to retain the fleshiness and rounded proportions of children. Where academic art theory and practice had come to turn on the dichotomy of (Tuscan) drawing and (Venetian) color, Barocci showed how Correggio constituted a "third way." Drawing still precedes color in establishing a sense of solid three-dimensional form, but it pursues effects of *sfumato* rather than the strong silhouettes of Bronzino's or Vasari's statuesque figures. Color has an ornamental and arbitrary character, as in Tuscan art, but it is richer and more intense, reinforcing the fleshy solidity of the figures. Sometimes Barocci even made drawings in oil, confounding the distinction between *disegno* and *colore* altogether.



In 1575 the confraternity of the Misericordia hired Barocci to provide an altarpiece for the church of Santa Maria della Pieve in Arezzo. Arezzo was Vasari's home town, and the confraternity had in fact originally awarded him the commission. The choice to go with Barocci rather than a Vasari follower after the older artist's death in 1574 represented a deliberate rejection of the academic values of Florentine painting, with its programmatic imitation of canonical art and its assertion of *disegno* over *colore*. This would have an impact in Florence itself, indicating a sense that the Vasarian formulas had exhausted themselves. When the work known as the *Madonna del Popolo* (*Our Lady of the People*) (fig. 19.18) was installed in 1579, the leading Florentine artists traveled to Arezzo to study it, and the duke invited Barocci to the Medici court.

Barocci began all of his works with an exhaustive process of preparatory drawing, and this painting was no exception. After working out a large compositional study (fig. 19.20), he made a series of more focused drawings of key characters. He conceived the poses of the infant at the lower left and the blind hurdy-gurdy player at the lower right as nudes (fig. 19.21) before clothing them in the final painting; both enact complicated twists worthy of Michelangelo. Barocci probably worked out the posture of the Virgin in the same way, perhaps even studying from a nude male model. Many of the drawings bear evidence of squaring, which the painter would use to transfer figures or parts of figures to the panel. They also



show a remarkable range of media: the study now in Chicago includes pen, wash, white heightening, and various chalks (fig. 19.19); many sheets employ the relatively new medium of pastel crayon, a mixture of pigment and gum arabic applied "dry" to the page. Pastel allowed the artist to adhere to the principle that painting began with *disegno*, while also permitting him to think about color and even about *sfumato* effects right from the outset.

The confraternity had proposed that Barocci paint "the mystery of the Misericordia," probably expecting him to show the Virgin protecting confraternity members under the folds of her mantle (compare Fra Bartolomeo's image, fig. 13.40). Barocci replied that such a subject was "ill suited to the making of a beautiful painting," and suggested another Marian theme – an *Annunciation*, *Visitation*, or *Assumption*. In the end, however, Barocci departed from all of these standard subjects – and thus from the insistence on the part of Counter-Reformation writers that religious painting not include anything "unusual" – in favor of something almost entirely new. He retained the theme of the Virgin's protection of her devotees; it is still possible, in fact, to read his Virgin as a *Misericordia* type, extending her arms to encompass her followers beneath. At the same time, Barocci focused the picture on Christ by showing the Virgin interceding with her son, who makes a gesture of blessing while the Holy Spirit descends. The lower zone characterizes "the people" who receive that blessing: an elegantly attired woman with two children, two other more modestly dressed mothers (one of whom receives alms from a child), a naked and crippled man, a blind musician. The group in profile to the right and in the background may include members of the confraternity, but the main focus is on those who benefit from



LEFT

19.21

Federico Barocci, study for the *Madonna del Popolo*. Black chalk with white heightening and pink pastel on blue paper, 11 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 16 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (29.3 x 42 cm). Uffizi Gallery, Florence

ABOVE

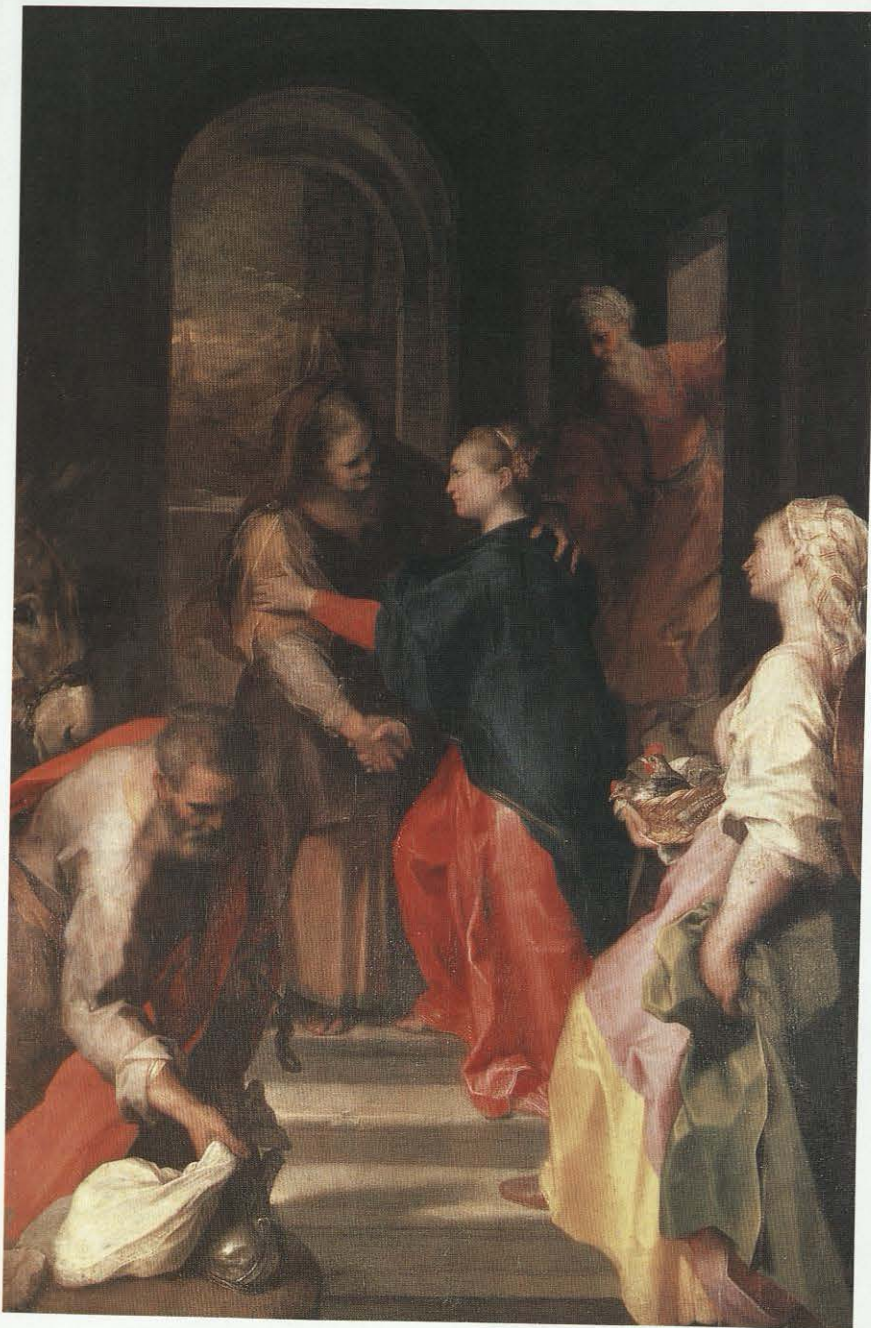
19.20

Federico Barocci, study for the *Madonna del Popolo*. Black chalk with white heightening and pink pastel on paper, 21 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 15" (55 x 38.3 cm.) Private Collection, Chicago



the confraternity's charity and ministry of prayer. The painting acknowledges its patron but also seems directed at a wider public, to whom it gently advocates pious acts and good works. The allure of Barocci's invention rests in large part in the anecdotal presentation of its "characters" – while the mother to the left directs her little boy to pray to the Virgin, the child seems more captivated by the street musician. The reassuring message is that such innocent pleasure in human art, far from offering vain distraction, is blameless and even blessed by the Virgin and Christ.

19.22  
 Federico Barocci, *Visitation*,  
 1583–86. Oil on canvas,  
 9'4¼" x 6'1½" (2.85 x 1.87  
 m). Chiesa Nuova, Rome



Barocci enjoyed enormous renown in the wake of this commission, with demand for his works in Milan, Rome, and other centers. Perhaps the ultimate endorsement came from the report that the saintly founder of the Oratorian Order, Filippo Neri – widely revered before his death and subsequent canonization – passed hours in Rome's Chiesa Nuova before Barocci's *Visitation*, in a mood of quiet contemplative rapture that the painting itself seems to set (fig. 19.22). The episode in Luke's Gospel, where the pregnant Mary is greeted by her cousin Elizabeth, whose own unborn child John "leaps in her womb," had long been a subject for altarpieces. Previous treatments tended to abstract the encounter from a narrative context, sometimes presenting the two women in the anachronistic company of Christian saints. Barocci has envisioned the scene taking place in a modest household near Urbino, whose famous ducal palace can be seen in the landscape beyond the arch. He has added the figures of the women's husbands, unmentioned in the Gospel account, and found roles for them to perform: Joachim leans out of a doorway to observe the exchange while Joseph fetches a sack. Finally, he has introduced another unnamed character, the woman with the straw hat and basket of chickens, who seems to share in the joyous intimacy of the two women. Her role is to provide a model for the same kind of empathetic involvement on the part of the beholder, whether Filippo Neri or the ordinary congregants who came to worship at the Chiesa Nuova. The case of Barocci indicates that the call for a reform of religious art could spur artistic initiative and entrepreneurship, and that the most successful solutions were devised by artists entirely independently of the prescriptions of a critic like Giovanni Andrea Gilio (see p. 526) or an influential bishop like Paleotti.

### Rome: The Oratory of the Gonfalone

The Confraternity of the Gonfalone (the Banner) was the oldest in Rome, dating back to the 1260s. Like the Venetian Scuole Grandi, it had long drawn its membership from among the great Roman families, and it prided itself on its public rituals. For much of the confraternity's history, these had included the performance every Good Friday of a "Passion Play," a dramatic representation of the torture, death, and resurrection of Christ. But like many other organizations of its kind, the Gonfalone found itself increasingly forced to adapt to a more authoritarian spirit within the Church. After its Passion Play of 1539 worked audience members to such a zealous hysteria that they sought to murder the actors playing the Jews and then to attack actual Jews in the city, the Pope prohibited further performances. Deprived of the traditional rituals that gave it visibility, the confrater-





nity needed to find a means of expressing its traditional rights and prerogatives. It expanded on another of its traditions. On the day before Good Friday (referred to in English as “Maundy Thursday,” or Holy Thursday), the brotherhood ceremonially enacted its charitable duties by providing twelve poor people with a feast in its oratory, and washing their feet in imitation of Christ’s humble ministry to his Apostles at the Last Supper. After the suspension of its Passion Play, the brotherhood followed the ceremony with a torchlight procession from the Oratory to the Pauline Chapel, where other leading confraternities joined them. Afterwards at St. Peter’s, the group venerated the most sacred of the basilica’s relics: the veil on which Christ’s face had left a miraculous image when Veronica wiped it during the ascent to Calvary and the spear with which the Roman centurion Longinus had pierced Christ’s side while he hung on the cross. The procession drew a great deal of attention because of the bloody acts of self-flagellation performed by a number of its members, a return to the ritual action that had originally defined the company, even before it began placing emphasis on the Passion Play. Carlo Borromeo, a mem-

ber of the Gonfalone before he became archbishop of Milan and a famous exponent of self-flagellation, gave a major impetus to the practice by drawing up a general rule for flagellant confraternities that Pope Gregory XIII adopted in 1572.

Between 1569 and 1576 the company had its Oratory decorated by a team of artists that another illustrious member, Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, personally sponsored (fig. 19.23). The decoration includes an image of the Madonna della Misericordia: like Barocci’s patrons in Arezzo (see fig. 19.18), the confraternity was devoted to the Virgin and took inspiration from her gesture of looking after the community. The dominant character in the imagery, however, is not Mary but Christ, a feature that points to the group’s close identification – through the flagellations of Holy Thursday and the defunct Good Friday play – with the Passion. This emphasis on Christ’s suffering and death did not preclude an exuberant, even festive atmosphere. The fictive architectural scheme refers to the so-called Solomonic Columns at St. Peter’s, as well as to their citation by Raphael in the *Healing of the Lame Man* tapestry design for the Sistine Chapel (see fig. 13.15).

19.23  
Federico Zuccaro, frescoes  
in the Oratory of the  
Gonfalone, Rome:  
Entrance wall



19.24  
Federico Zuccaro,  
*Flagellation of Christ*, 1573  
(detail). Fresco. Oratory of  
the Gonfalone, Rome



Solomon himself, modeled on the figure of Hesiod from Raphael's *Parnassus* (see fig. 12.52), appears above the image of the Madonna della Misericordia on the entrance wall, flanked by equally Raphaelesque groups of prophets and sibyls. The decoration manages to profess the confraternity's service to the ordinary laity of Rome, even as it adopts the ornamented idiom of the Vatican and of Roman palace decoration that would have made the confraternity's aristocratic members feel at home.

Two scenes of the scourging of Christ that flank the entrance evoke the more popular spectacle of the Holy Thursday procession. In the *Flagellation of Christ* from 1573 (fig. 19.24), Federico Zuccaro (c. 1542–1609) produced an inventive re-working of a fresco of the same subject designed by Michelangelo and executed by Sebastiano del Piombo in 1516 (see fig. 13.29). The reference to the earlier work is striking, given that Gilio, in his treatise addressed to Alessandro Farnese (see p. 526), had criticized that fresco for being too graceful and insufficiently violent: Zuccaro imitates the bloodlessness of the origi-

nal, along with the idealized muscular body of Christ and the athletic movements of the torturers. The artist and his confraternal audience subordinated scruples about the decorum of Passion imagery (compare the more violent treatment in fig. 19.6 by Vincenzo Campi, who followed Pordenone) to ideals of beauty and ornament that were fundamental to Roman tradition and hence to their very identity. All of this shows why Zuccaro came to be the most authoritative representative after Vasari of what can be called the “academic” tradition, basing his work on an imitation of antiquity, Raphael, and the great artists of the early sixteenth century. This was the tradition that the Farnese and the more elite confraternity members favored.

But Zuccaro's stylistic commitment to academic values did not make him indifferent to more present concerns with orthodoxy, historical accuracy, and doctrinally effective images. The short column to which Christ is tethered resembled the supposed actual column of the Flagellation, housed in the Roman church of San Prassede



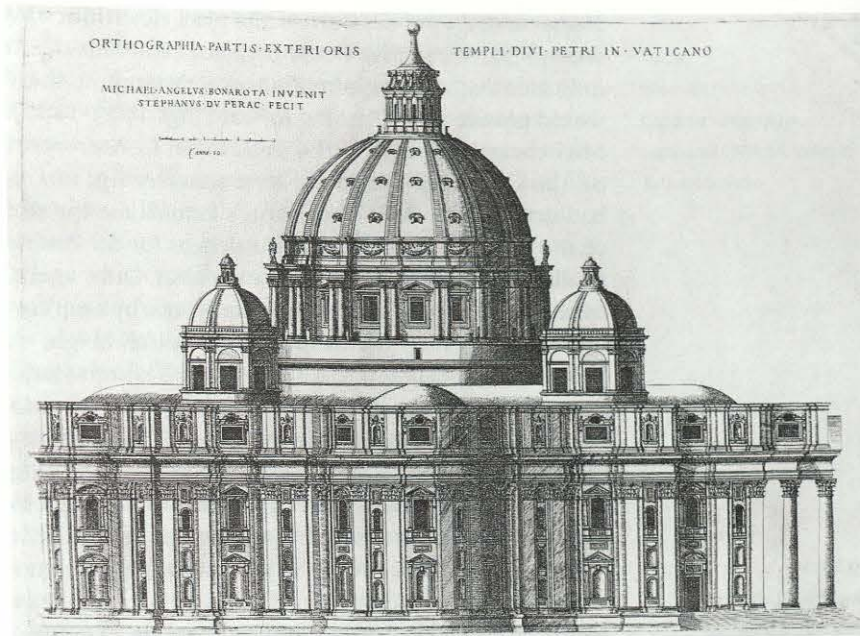
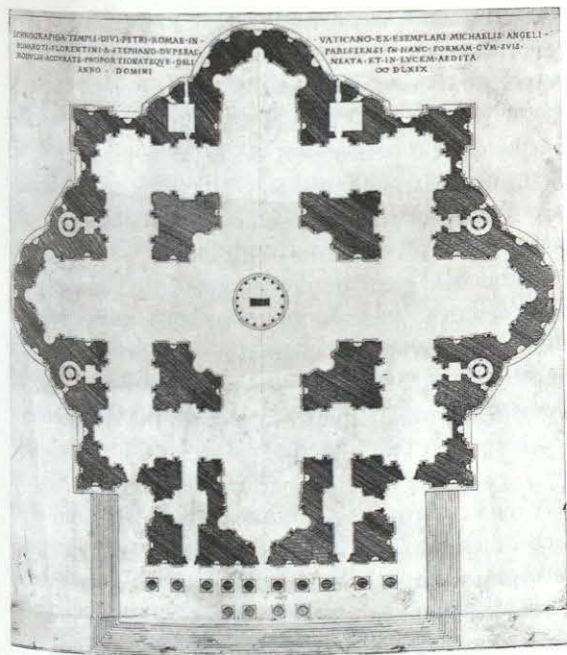
since the thirteenth century but never before depicted in representations of the subject. Zuccaro's attention to "authenticity" here reflects a more general interest in promoting the cult of relics in the face of Protestant attacks, as well as an increasing concern on the part of Catholic reformers with "true" material and documentary records of the Passion and the early Church.

## Architecture and Urbanism in Counter-Reformation Rome

### New St. Peter's

The greatest monument to the mass culture of reformed Catholicism is the new basilica of St. Peter's. For decades after the death of Bramante (see figs. 12.25–12.28), work on it had barely progressed. Such calamities as the 1527 Sack of the city (see p. 434) and frequent shortages of money interfered with building, and successive popes constantly revised the design – sometimes destroying newly built fabric – as Raphael, Baldassare Peruzzi, and Antonio da Sangallo the Younger debated the legacy of Bramante's conception. The board of works in charge of building St. Peter's had become a corrupt, self-sustaining bureaucracy.

Still, the appointment of Michelangelo as architect in chief in 1546 had helped establish a certain consensus as to the direction the building should take. Pope Pius V had forbidden Vignola, who took over as architect in 1567 following the brief tenure of Pirro Ligorio, from modifying Michelangelo's designs in any respect. Étienne



LEFT  
**19.27**  
Étienne Dupérac after Michelangelo, groundplan for St. Peter's, after 1569. Engraving. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

TOP  
**19.25**  
Étienne Dupérac after Michelangelo, south elevation of St. Peter's, 1569. Etching with engraving, 13<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 18<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (33.8 x 46.1 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

ABOVE  
**19.26**  
Étienne Dupérac after Michelangelo, section of St. Peter's, 1569. Etching with engraving, 13<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 18<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (33.7 x 47.6 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



Dupérac's 1569 publication of the plan, elevation, and section that Michelangelo had prepared before his death indicated that, changes in regime notwithstanding, these would provide a model going forward (figs. 19.25–19.27). Michelangelo's design of the Palazzo dei Conservatori on the Capitoline Hill, as we have seen (see fig. 16.27), had utterly transformed Bramante's formula for the use of the orders in a facade, and his designs for St. Peter's similarly returned to Bramante's early ideas. Once again, Michelangelo dealt with the problem of scale by employing the "giant order" that responded to the full height of the building rather than to a single storey. Though Carlo Borromeo had written that only the facade of a church should get ornaments in noble materials, the rest remaining unadorned, and though new large basilicas following the model of the Gesù did exactly that, Michelangelo followed Sangallo in stretching classical embellishment around the entire exterior. Michelangelo's perimeter facade is both richer than Sangallo's, in the variety of bay widths and window forms, and more unified (see fig. 19.25). There is a more emphatic verticality, a result of the giant Corinthian pilasters that rise to a massive entablature and a tall attic storey in which pilasters continue

## 19.28

Dome of St. Peter's,  
1588–90, as executed  
under the direction of  
Domenico Fontana and  
Giacomo Porta



their vertical ascent. The progression upward continues in the paired columns of the drum and the ribs of the pointed dome, a deliberate quotation of Brunelleschi's double-shell Florentine cupola (see fig. 4.6). Large tabernacle windows and niches visually minimize the amount of wall between the pilasters, which give the impression of "supporting" the entire structure; gigantic rectangular openings appear in the attic. Michelangelo also played with organic or anthropomorphic effects, treating the perimeter facade as a skin or elastic membrane. As the wall turns a corner, it gives the sense that the pilasters have momentarily gathered together, like a flexed muscle or joint.

If Michelangelo dramatically rethought Sangallo's ideas for the elevation of the basilica, he saved his most severe ridicule for Sangallo's model (see fig. 15.27). In a letter to the Board of St. Peter's, Michelangelo claimed that its darkness and its multiplication of spaces would simply create hiding places for all manner of sordid and illicit activity. Sangallo, he wrote, had "taken all the light from Bramante's design," and Michelangelo presented himself as the restorer of his former rival's intentions. Because he departed from business as usual in his supervision of the works, ignoring the numerous functionaries or accusing them of corruption, Michelangelo encountered much resistance: he hence adopted a strategy to which Tintoretto would resort some years later, of refusing any official payment for his work and presenting it as a pious gift. (In reality, the Pope matched Michelangelo's gift with lucrative reciprocal gifts.)

Michelangelo's plan sheared away Sangallo's nave, apse passageways, and corner pavilions, resulting once more in a centralized plan, now with bolder and smoother contours (see fig. 19.27). Rather than a cross set in a square, it now resembles a square turned on one corner: that corner opens the single point of entrance to the church, and would ultimately receive a great portico with a pediment. Although the plan resembles Bramante's early centralizing designs, it also considerably simplifies its supposed model: Michelangelo has reduced the subdivision of the interior space, keeping only the four great piers that support the dome. There were practical gains here, in that light now permeated the interior, while the quantity of masonry was reduced and the costs of building were considerably lowered. Perhaps the most significant effect is the emergence of a conception of architecture defined by the visitor's ability to grasp the interior space in its entirety. As pilgrims join the vast crowds who assemble there, they can experience membership of the Church as a great community, an organization defined by "the people" who constitute it. Thus Michelangelo's design lent itself to the architectural self-expression of the post-Tridentine Church.





Following Vignola's death in 1573, Giacomo della Porta (c. 1533–1602) took over his post as chief architect for the building. Porta would oversee the construction of a modified version of Michelangelo's dome in 1588–91 (fig. 19.28), but his first endeavors centered on the decoration of the completed portions of the interior. At the behest of Gregory XIII, Porta outfitted a magnificent chapel under the dome of the north transept: the Cappella Gregoriana, dedicated to the Pope's namesake St. Gregory Nazianzenus, whose relics were installed under the altar in 1578 (fig. 19.29). On the same occasion, the authorities installed the miraculous icon of the Madonna del Soccorso ("Mary, Help of Christians") in the great altar tabernacle, adorned with ancient Roman columns from the Temple of Romulus. The incorporation of the icon made clear that St. Peter's was to be a church for the devotion and spiritual benefit of all Christian people, rather than elite patrons and donor families, who received no special rights in the basilica. It also signals not only the Catholic Church's approval of religious images, but the special status of older and more spiritually potent objects. No other paintings ornamented the chapel: it is faced entirely with colored marble in emulation of the Pantheon.

### Streets, Squares, and Fountains

Pope Gregory had declared 1575 to be a Jubilee Year: he summoned faithful Catholics from across Europe to visit Rome and receive indulgences. To obtain these, pilgrims

arriving in the holy city were expected to make repeat visits to the seven most historically significant Roman basilicas. Gregory thus initiated a project of opening new streets connecting the sites between which the masses of people would move, though the only such avenue completed in his lifetime was the street now called the Via Merulana, linking the church of Santa Maria Maggiore to San Giovanni in Laterano (the cathedral of Rome), beside which stood one of the two major papal residences in the city. What no doubt would have impressed later visitors more than the streets were the new fountains that Gregory used to mark the piazzas that framed churches and that served as the crucial nodal points for passage through the city. Fountains were important public works, since they provided fresh water for residents and pilgrims; they also demonstrated princely providence on the part of the Pope. Gregory was from Bologna and would have known the monumental fountain of Neptune erected there by Giambologna (see fig. 18.33); he also very likely knew of a second Neptune fountain in the Piazza della Signoria in Florence, completed in 1575 by Bartolomeo Ammanati (1511–1592) with a heroic male nude in marble at its center and surrounding figures in bronze (fig. 19.30), a grand climax to the outdoor gallery that began with Michelangelo's *David* (see fig. 12.3).

Realizing waterworks like this was no small feat. Whereas villa owners often took the presence of water into account when choosing where to build, in Rome the only major current was the Tiber. Areas distant from the river had once been served by a series of aqueducts, but by the Renaissance the only one of these that still worked was the Acqua Vergine (the ancient Aqua Virgo); it approached Rome from the mountains to the east, then

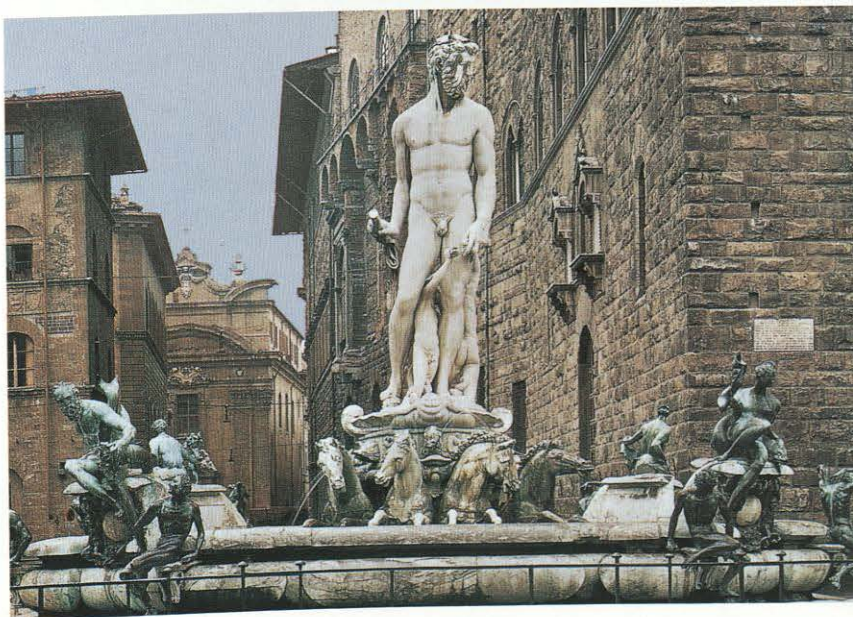
LEFT

19.29

Giacomo della Porta,  
Cappella Gregoriana,  
completed 1578. St. Peter's,  
Vatican. Interior

19.30

Bartolomeo Ammanati,  
Fountain of Neptune,  
1560–75. White and  
colored marbles, with  
bronze. Piazza della  
Signoria, Florence

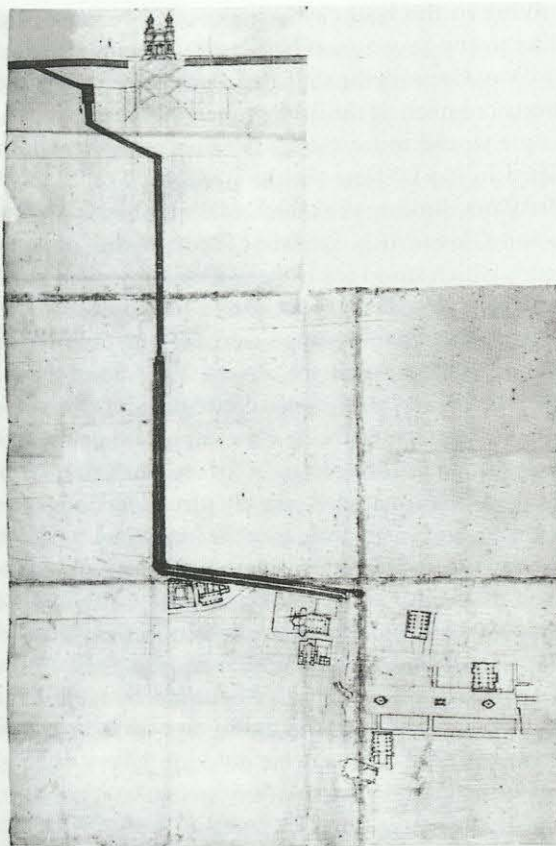




**19.31**

Giacomo della Porta,  
project for the Acqua  
Vergine, c. 1570. Vatican  
Library, Rome.

The drawing is oriented  
with east at the top and  
shows the water line that  
already came into the city  
from the Porta del Popolo  
(upper left). The extension  
that runs down the center  
of the page, below the  
church of Santa Trinita al  
Monte, corresponds to the  
present-day Via Condotti  
("street of the conduits").  
Lower down on the page,  
the aqueduct turns south,  
leading past the church  
of Sant'Agostino and  
into the Piazza Navona  
(lower right).



detoured around a set of hills to enter the city from the north, skirting the Pincian Hill and terminating at the Trevi Fountain. The Pope's plans involved expanding this, and he gave the task to Giacomo della Porta, the architect and engineer who had designed the facade for the Gesù (see figs. 18.5–18.7) and the Cappella Gregoriana (see fig. 19.29), as well as building bridges and repairing the city's sewer system. A surviving drawing (fig. 19.31) indicates that one of Porta's extensions of the system departed from what is today the Piazza di Spagna, ran under what is now the Via Condotti (the Street of the Conduits), turned at the Borghese Palace to run south along the side of Sant'Agostino, and ultimately fed the Piazza Navona.

What could not be missed were the ten new fountains Porta added to the squares connected by his waterworks. Most of these consist of large, simple, but finely worked stone basins, low to the ground so as not to distract from the weak jets that the limited water pressure allowed. A few, though, were more elaborate and could rival the monumental fountains already being created for Florence and Bologna. Pilgrims entering the Piazza del Popolo from the northern gate of the city would have been greeted by an impressive marble construction, built in 1573, in the traditional Tuscan form of a candelabrum, with a large basin at ground level and a smaller one higher up on the "stem." (The upper portion, ornamented with Pope Gregory's heraldic device of the dragon, can still be

**19.32**

Giovanni Battista Falda,  
view of Giacomo della  
Porta's fountain in  
Piazza Colonna, Rome.  
Etching, 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"  
(18.4 x 28.5 cm).

OPPOSITE, ABOVE

**19.33**

Giacomo della Porta and  
Taddeo Landini, Fountain  
in the Piazza Mattei,  
called the Fountain of the  
Tortoises, 1581–84, with  
later additions

OPPOSITE, BELOW

**19.34**

Jacopo Bassano, *Parable  
of the Sower*, 1564 (?). Oil  
on canvas, 4'6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 4'2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"  
(1.39 x 1.29 m). Thyssen  
Museum, Madrid





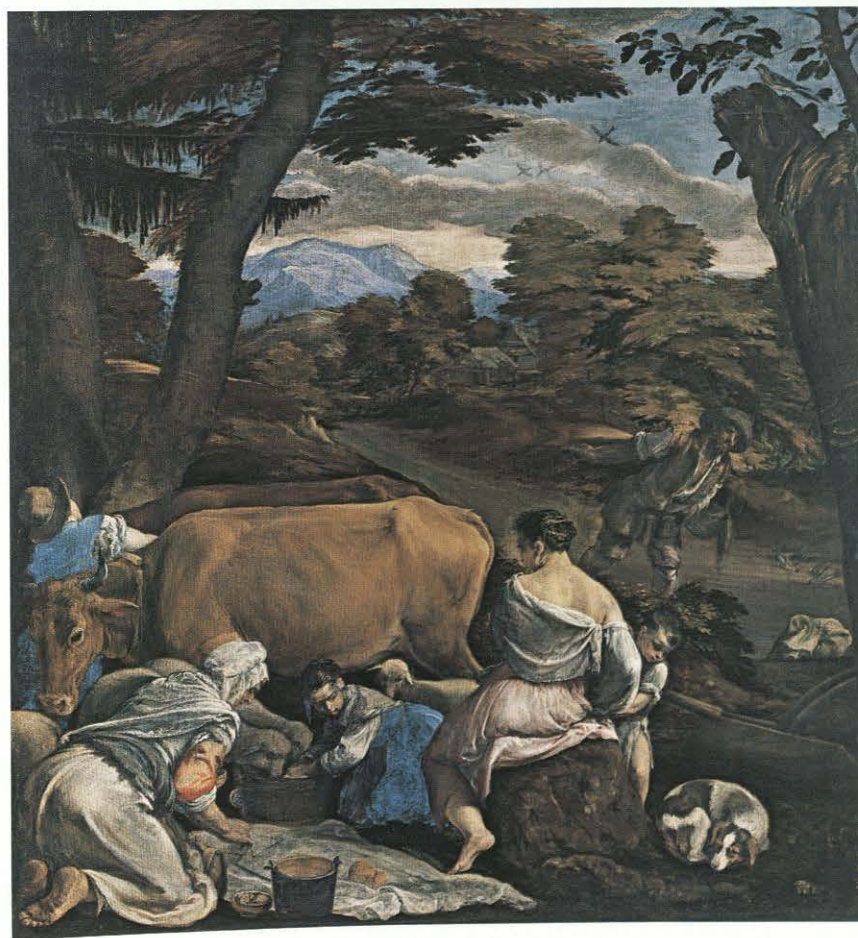
seen beside the Palazzo Borghese.) This was followed by the fountains in the Piazza della Rotonda (in front of the Pantheon) and Piazza Navona in 1575, and in the Piazza Colonna in 1576–77 (fig. 19.32).

Most charming of all, however, is the last major fountain undertaken under Pope Gregory, the Fontana delle Tartarughe, or Fountain of the Tortoises (fig. 19.33), now named for the bronze animals added to the structure in the seventeenth century. In its earliest form, collaboratively created by Porta and the Florentine Taddeo Landini in 1581–84, its truly distinctive feature would have been the four nude boys with dolphins, the first three-dimensional figures to appear on a Roman fountain since antiquity. The figures in fact comprise two types, virtual mirror images of one another, each of which is repeated once, giving passers-by the impression that they are seeing a single figure reflected and rotated in space, and inviting inspection from all sides. Porta planned the fountain for a communal location on the Piazza Giudea, at the entrance to the Roman ghetto (the walled sector where Jews were ordered to live, established under Pope Paul IV in 1555). The Mattei, an old aristocratic clan who owned several properties near the piazza, managed to persuade the civic authorities to erect it closer to their three main family palaces, in return for a commitment to pave and police the area. This was effectively an act of privatization aimed at enhancing the family's prestige within their ancestral neighborhood. They, like Gregory himself, wanted to be perceived as benefactors who brought clean water, law and order, and artistic distinction to the city.

## The Image of the People

### The Rise of Genre Painting

At a time when the Church increasingly promoted the idea that religious art should address the greater number of the Christian people, a new image of “the people” was beginning to emerge in art made for elite secular patrons. Depictions of the laboring poor had appeared in Christian art during the previous two centuries, especially north of the Alps. The Portinari altarpiece by the Flemish Hugo van der Goes (see fig. 9.2), with its unidealizing portrayal of the shepherds who adore the Christ child, is typical. Such imagery had long been a stimulus to painters in Italy, but in the late sixteenth century it gave rise to new forms of artistic specialization. One such specialist was Jacopo Bassano (c. 1510–1592), the head of a successful family workshop in the town of Bassano del Grappa near Venice. Jacopo painted altarpieces for local churches as well as for Venice itself, but he was best known for canvases like the one generally called *Parable of the Sower*





(fig. 19.32). A cluster of figures, mainly women and children, huddle in the corner of a field: a man and a young girl attend to sheep and cattle, while an older woman sets out bread and milk on a white cloth. A younger woman with braided hair turns away in a delicate *contrapposto*, displaying her bare foot and shoulder to the viewer. Beyond her, a careworn figure scatters seed on the ground, some of which birds devour.

Early viewers, seeing the image, may have thought about a story told by Christ (Matthew 13:3–23; Mark 4:3–20; Luke 8:5–15), in which the seed eaten by birds served as a simile for the word of God that Satan snatched away from its recipients, while that which grew into corn represented the fruitful word that entered the hearts of those who attended to it. Yet there is rather little in the painting to reinforce that understanding: it is as if Jacopo wanted to encourage the association with the Gospel passages, yet also prevent the simple conclusion that he was illustrating scriptural parable. The reference to scripture, in other words, amounts to a poetic allusion; the momentary resonance with the word of God suggests that everyday life may possess a richer and deeper significance than might at first be apparent. The figures who dominate the foreground have nothing to do with the parable told by Christ, yet they are hardly insignificant to the composition – they are, effectively, its subject. Jacopo has focused on their absorption in the actions they perform, and on a lack of

self-consciousness with regard to the fact of being looked at. Their turning away from the beholder reinforces their quiet autonomy. Perhaps, the painting suggests, the fruits of the sower in this instance are not the spiritual gifts promised in the Gospel, but the more simple and mundane ones of bread, fertility, and family.

In the 1570s and 1580s, Vincenzo Campi painted several versions of a much sought-after series of market scenes: one set decorated the dining room of a Fugger castle in Augsburg. Here, the depiction of market stall proprietors is more confrontational as well as more comical, at least at first sight. There is no scriptural pretext: instead, the pictures would have allowed audiences to find comedy in labor and the laboring classes. In *The Fishsellers* (fig. 19.35), a suntanned man spoons beans into his mouth while talking with a smiling woman. Distracted from feeding her child, she also fails to notice that a crayfish has bitten the infant. Perhaps Campi meant this as social satire, as a comic meditation on vulgarity, gluttony, lust, distraction, and negligence: an author named Gabriele Faerno of Cremona had dedicated a book of moral fables to Carlo Borromeo in 1567, which presented the story of a boy bitten by a scorpion as a cautionary allegory about discriminating right from wrong. If the painting reminded viewers of this fable, however, it could also have emptied it of moral significance, turning the story into a random everyday event. A moralizing reading

## 19.35

Vincenzo Campi, *The Fishsellers*, c. 1580. Oil on canvas, 4'9" x 7<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (1.45 x 2.17 m). Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan





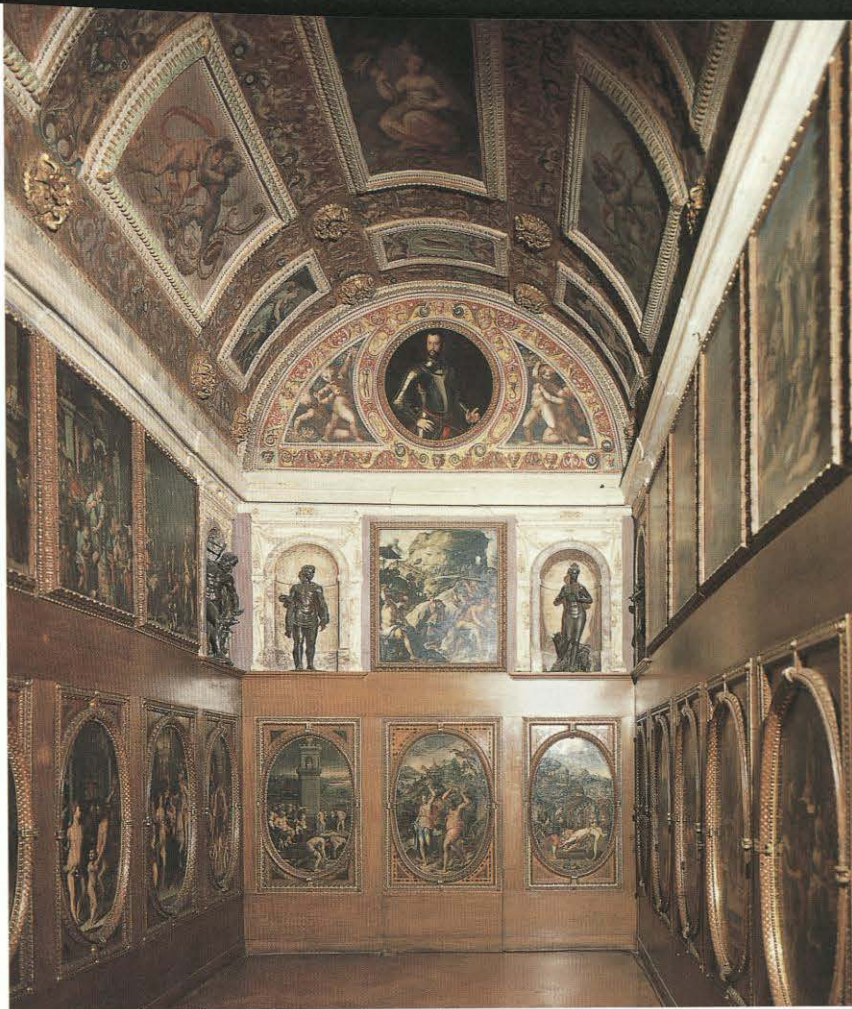
seems inadequate to the experience of the composition as a whole, which displays Campi's ambition to provide a copious spectacle of the natural and social world in their surprising coexistence. Here, the mundane world of the market is also a showcase for marvelous, even monstrous creatures of the deep.

### The Universe of Labor in the *Studiolo* of Francesco I

Campi's paintings responded to a rising "culture of curiosity" among elite European viewers who took a learned interest – grounded in their reading of Roman writers like Pliny the Elder and Lucretius – in the diversity of the natural world, and increasingly also in the human social order. Human society now meant not just the different classes and occupations of the contemporary city and country, but the wider world and the diverse peoples of which Europeans had become newly conscious. The *studiolo*, which had housed marvels of art and nature along with books, was now turning into the more elaborate spaces for collecting to which the name "Museum" was sometimes applied. Those who assembled classical antiquities, modern works of art, and preserved specimens of plant and animal life, installed them all together as if in an attempt to represent the diversity of the world in miniature.

The most remarkable of the *studioli* constructed in the 1570s was the one put together by the Florentine Grand Duke Francesco de' Medici. This assembly, as it happened, was short-lived, and its dismantling in the early 1580s has presented challenges for attempts at reconstruction (fig. 19.36), but it is clear from the surviving architecture and from contemporary letters that the space was to reflect the order of nature, each of its walls being dedicated to one of the four elements (fire, air, earth, and water). For paired niches at the top of each wall, the best sculptors in central Italy had made bronze statuettes showing deities who presided over that element: the "Fire" wall, for example, included the sun god Apollo and the master smith Vulcan; the "Earth" wall included Pluto, god of the Underworld, and the Earth goddess Ops. Below the sculptures were cabinets containing rare artifacts, both natural and artificial, that could be associated with the same element. These cabinets, in turn, had doors and overdoors decorated with paintings, many of them landscapes, linking the contents to the geographical site of their recovery, to a classical myth about their origin, or to a "place" in a classical text that discussed the substance or object. On the "Water" wall, for example, over the cabinet containing amber, is Santi di Tito's depiction of the *Fall of Phaeton* (see also fig. 16.9): according to Ovid, the tears of Phaeton's sisters, mourning at his death, turned into amber.

Such mythological themes had been typical of the decoration of the princely *studiolo* for more than a



ABOVE  
19.36  
*Studiolo* of Francesco I, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence. General view of reconstructed room, 1556–61

LEFT  
19.37  
Johannes Stradanus, *The Alchemist's Studio*, c. 1571. Oil on slate, 46 x 33½" (117 x 85 cm). *Studiolo* of Francesco I, Palazzo dei Priori, Florence









century, but what is surprising here is the appearance of several scenes depicting industrial labor and craft workshops: alchemists, glassblowers, a wool factory, a gunpowder factory, a bronze foundry, sometimes very contemporary in appearance: in one scene the Grand Duke actively participates in the work of the alchemists (fig. 19.35), as he did in reality; in another, he supervises glassblowers and goldsmiths (he himself had invented a method for making fake precious stones). The cabinet with the wool factory would have contained asphalt and chemical salts used in the preparation of wool; the cabinet with the alchemists contained mercury and other substances used in the laboratory, along with precious samples of the alchemist's art. The emphasis on craft and on industry signals the new importance to rulers of a culture of experiment and technological discovery that begins in the workshop of the artisan.

For the cabinet containing pearls, Alessandro Allori (1535–1607) contributed *The Banquet of Cleopatra*, a story recorded in Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*: in order to impress the Roman general Mark Antony with her enormous wealth, the Egyptian queen dissolves a priceless pearl in vinegar and drinks it. The story would have fascinated the Grand Duke, a practitioner of alchemy and a collector of recipes for the transformation and even fabrication of precious substances. On the wall over the same cabinet containing pearls appears *The Pearl Fishers* (fig. 19.38), also by Allori; the picture adapts the monumental bodies

of Michelangelo's *Battle of Cascina* cartoon (see fig. 12.12) into exquisitely ornamental figures in order to illustrate Pliny's description of pearl collecting in the ninth book of his *Natural History*, but the result can also be seen as a fanciful genre scene, an evocation of exotic lands now linked to Europe by trade and discovery.

Two of the paintings on facing walls show how the room stands as a kind of miniaturized representation of the world and everything in it. The Earth wall features a painting of native labor at the Potosi Mines in Peru, with the arrival of a Hapsburg administrator (Francesco was married into the Hapsburg family through his first wife Joanna of Austria) (fig. 19.39). The Air wall has a depiction of diamond mining by slaves at Bisnagar in India (fig. 19.40). The global, even "cosmic" imagery follows the practice of playing on the name of Cosimo, Francesco's father. Yet for all of its differences from earlier *studioli*, with their emphasis on the liberal arts, the short-lived Medici *studiolo* was fundamentally an image of consolidation, announcing the ruler's literal and figurative oversight of everything that happened in the world around him. The *studiolo* allowed Francesco to meditate on the diversity of the natural world, but fittingly enough, given its location next to the Great Council Hall in the Ducal Palace (which had formerly housed the government of a free republic), it also offered a metaphor of rule.

ABOVE LEFT

19.39

Jacopo Zucchi, *The Mines of Potosi*, 1570–71. Oil on panel, 45 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 33 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (116 x 86 cm). *Studiolo* of Francesco I, Palazzo dei Priori, Florence

ABOVE RIGHT

19.40

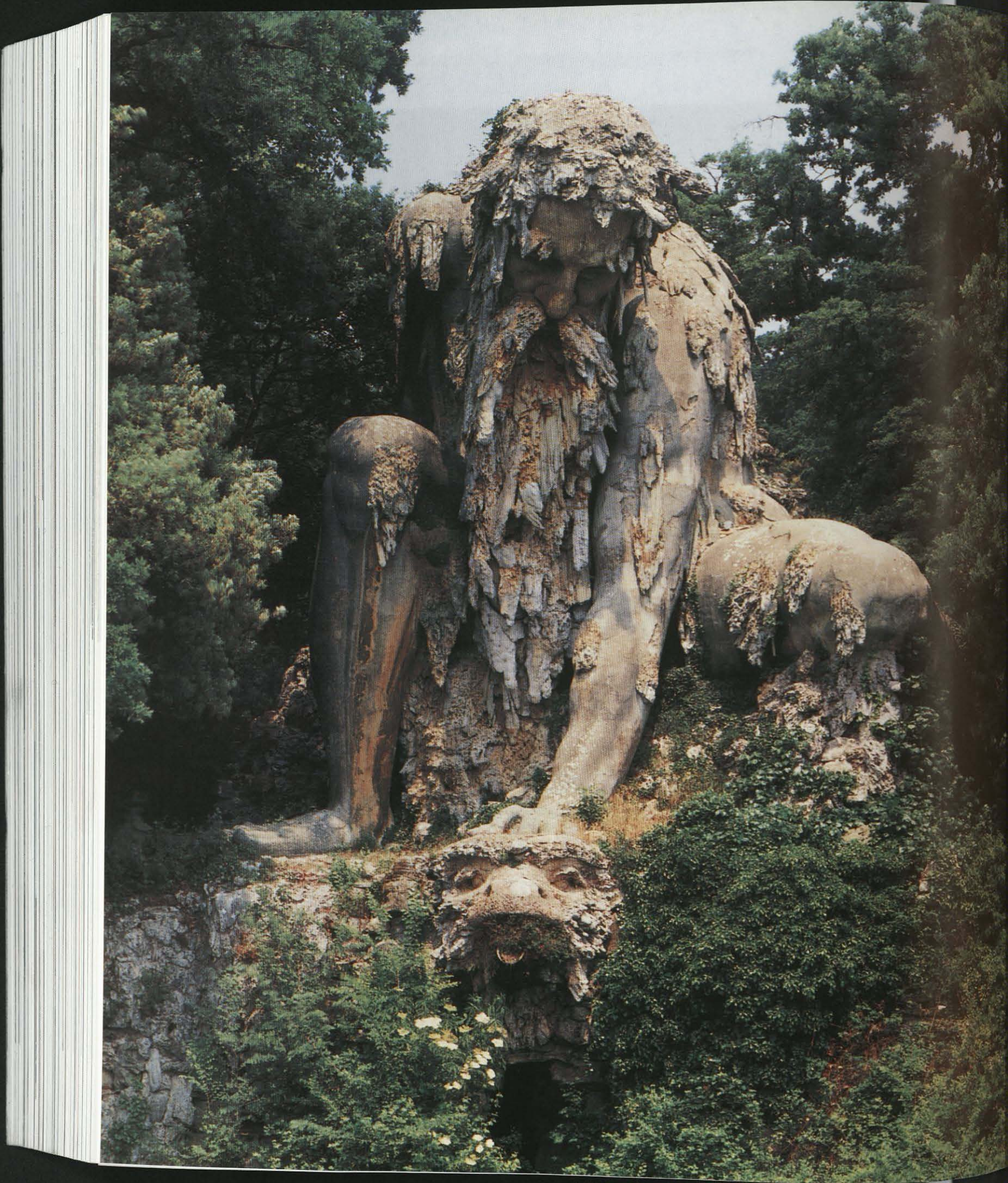
Maso di San Friano, *The Diamond Mines of Bisnagar*, 1570–71. Oil on panel, 45 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 33 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (116 x 86 cm). *Studiolo* of Francesco I, Palazzo dei Priori, Florence

OPPOSITE

19.38

Alessandro Allori, *The Pearl Fishers*, 1570–72. Oil on slate, 45 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 33 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (116 x 86 cm). *Studiolo* of Francesco I, Palazzo dei Priori, Florence







# 20

1580—1590  
*A Sense of Place*

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# 20

1580–1590

## *A Sense of Place*

The previous chapters' discussion of the Counter-Reformation has returned repeatedly to the issue of decorum: the requirement, increasingly enforced by the Church, that artists approach their assignments with a sense of suitability and fittingness. The ceiling of a church required a different decorative approach from that of a palace, and the "extras" one could insert in an image of a wedding festival differed from those that belonged in a Last Supper. Often, the question of decorum turned on one of place, or rather of keeping things in their *proper* place. We should not, however, think of such considerations merely as a restriction. By the 1580s, artists and patrons were thinking through the relationship of art to place in creative ways.

### Gardens and Grottos

20.1

Giambologna, *The Appenine*, 1580–83. Villa Medici (now Demidoff) at Pratolino

Consider the towering marvel that Giambologna (1529–1608) built, beginning in 1580, on the hill by a pond behind the Medici Villa at Pratolino, just north of Florence. The *Appenine* (fig. 20.1) is a work that produces astonishment, even bafflement: is this a building or a sculpture?



In fact, it is both. An entrance in the back led to a series of chambers distributed over multiple floors, which served as a retreat for Grand Duke Francesco de' Medici and his duchess: one could even sit in the head and fish from the eyeholes while looking out over the park. At the same time, the structure was also a figure, a personification of a mountain. This evoked the literary culture that all villas favored: it recalled the poet Virgil's description of the Titan Atlas ("fallen snow mantles his shoulders, while rivers plunge down the aged chin and his rough beard is stiff with ice"); and it emulated the legendary statues of the ancients, especially the colossus that, according to Pliny the Elder, the sculptor Deinocrates (*fl.* 370 BCE) proposed to carve from a mountain. Most obviously, though, it was an enormous, three-dimensional toponym, an embodiment of the actual location in which the visitor walked. The *Appenine* seemed to be made not from a quarried block, but from the hill itself. Constructed by attaching various types of mineral and stone to an architectural core, it encouraged the visitor to draw comparisons between the rising form of the giant and the origins of the real hill on which it was encountered, as well as between the massive strength the giant seemed to expend – pressing out water that turned into the pond before him – and the still bigger living force, unseen beneath the ground, that provided the garden's actual streams.

The visitor to the garden might at first be amazed by the figure, but the statue presents itself as nothing more than an aspect of nature. The sculpture attuned the viewer to a sense of animate life that runs through the whole park. In this respect, the *Appenine* was entirely characteristic of garden sculpture and the way this encouraged those who looked upon it to reflect on where they were. Gardens might evoke a variety of distant worlds – the Garden of Eden, or the Islamic gardens of Spain, known from travel accounts – but they drew especially on ancient Greek and Roman literature. Architectural forms reflected structures described in ancient sources, and statues showed ancient gods. Even the engineering was an antiquarian exercise, since the conception of the waterworks themselves was nearly contemporary with the earliest translations of Hero of Alexandria's *Pneumatics*, the fundamental ancient study of hydrology, probably written in the second century BCE. By the end of the 1580s, visitors to gardens like those at Pra-





Florence c. 1580

This map, based on Stefano Bonsignore's 1584 engraving (here ghosted), highlights some of the major sites of recent artistic activity in Florence.

tolino, the Villa Lante at Bagnaia (see figs. 18.16–18.17), or the Villa d'Este at Tivoli (see fig. 18.18) could have looked there for modern illustrations of Hero, or of the new vernacular literature that attempted to outdo him: Agostino Ramelli's 1588 book, entitled *Diverse and Ingenious Machines*, included scores of ideas for how to make water defy the pull of gravity (fig. 20.3).

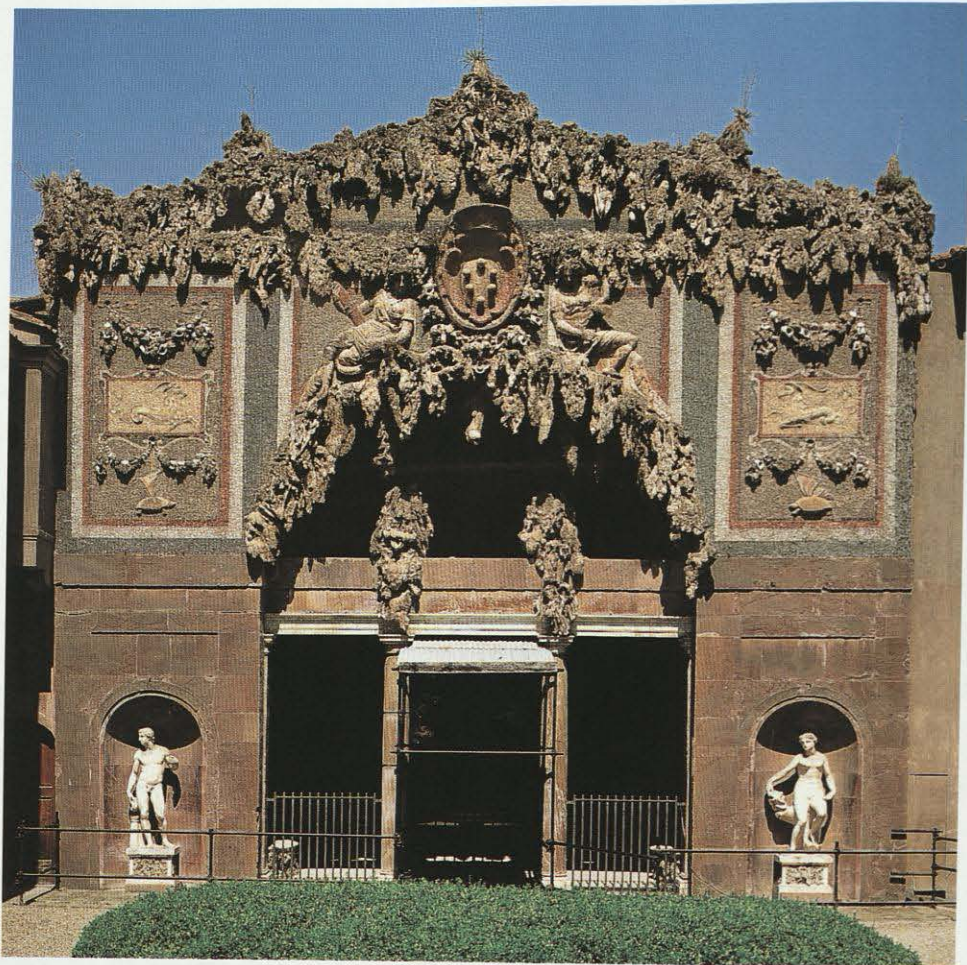
In the garden, an evocation of ancient locale and an engagement with the immediate natural world regularly coincided. Nowhere is this more explicit than in the genre of garden architecture known as the grotto (from the Italian *grotta*, meaning “cave”), one of the best-preserved examples of which is the one Bernardo Buontalenti (c. 1536–1608) built in the Boboli Gardens behind the Pitti Palace in Florence beginning in 1583 (fig. 20.2). With their dripping water and their representations of mud oozing from walls and ceilings and congealing into rock formations, grottos gave the impression that the visitor was walking into the womb of the earth, seeing first-hand how contemporary scientists understood nature to operate: the earth was a massive living force that “gave birth” to plants, minerals, and animals.

All grottos consisted of imagery geared to the depiction of what happened in a subterranean world that villa owners or visitors would otherwise never see. The ornamentation of the Buontalenti grotto furthermore drew specific connections between natural creation and human art, incorporating into the walls of the first chamber four of the unfinished *Slaves* that Michelangelo had left in his Florentine studio on his death in 1564 (fig. 20.5). In their new role, the partially formed figures would have seemed to have been created by nature itself, as if Michelangelo had been magically attuned to what a “naturally” generated human form might look like, or as if a statue by him was merely the completion of a work that nature herself had begun. By the time Giambologna's *Venus* (fig. 20.4) was added to the innermost chamber of the grotto in 1592, the grotto included a series of painted and modeled pastoral scenes as well as Vincenzo de' Rossi's *Theseus and Helen*, a work the sculptor had made in Rome years before. Together, the images designated the grotto not only as a site of generation, but also a place for love, recalling, for example, the grotto where Hercules and Omphale dallied in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (2:315).



20.2

Bernardo Buontalenti,  
Grotta Grande ("Great  
Grotto"), 1583–88. Boboli  
Gardens, Florence



OPPOSITE

20.5

Bernardo Buontalenti,  
Grotta Grande,  
1583–88. Interior of  
the first chamber, with  
Michelangelo's *Slaves* (now  
copies), embedded in the  
walls. Boboli Gardens,  
Florence

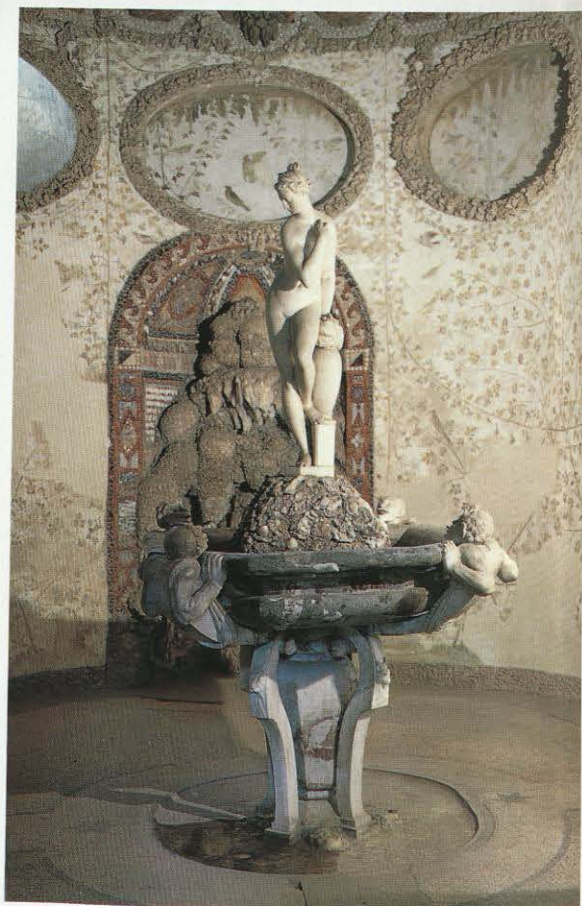
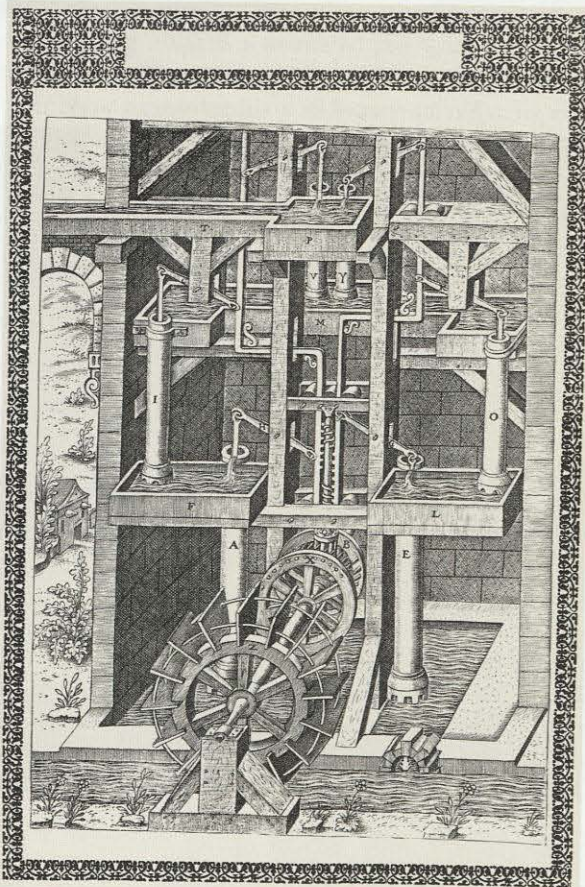
BELOW

20.4

Giambologna, *Venus of the  
Grotticella*, 1592. Grotta  
Grande, Boboli Gardens,  
Florence

20.3

Agostino Ramelli, plate  
from *Diverse and Ingenious  
Machines*, 1588. Device for  
raising water. Engraving









## The Bolognese New Wave

### The Carracci Canon

One consequence of the *disegno/colore* debate was a heightened awareness of styles of painting found in various cities and of the differences between them. The chauvinism that Giorgio Vasari demonstrated in his *Lives of the Artists*, which presented the modern Florentine manner as the culmination of all art history, provoked a backlash across the northern part of the Italian peninsula, as writers added angry marginalia to their copies of Vasari's books or even wrote rebuttals. Nowhere did artists devote more attention to the implications place might have for the way one painted than in Bologna, where the Carracci family in the 1580s founded an academy that at once emulated and opposed its Florentine predecessor.

When we refer to the Carracci, we typically mean three people: Ludovico, his younger cousin Agostino, and Agostino's younger brother Annibale. Ludovico (1555–1619), the son of a butcher, seems to have begun his education as a painter in 1567, one year before Vasari published the second, definitive edition of the *Lives*. Ludovico's teacher was Prospero Fontana (see fig. 19.1), a painter who had served as Vasari's assistant, and who represented precisely the approach that Ludovico would eventually turn against. After about a decade in the Fontana shop, when Ludovico was in his early twenties, he began traveling. He went first to Florence, to see for himself what Vasari was

#### 20.6

Ludovico Carracci,  
*Annunciation*, 1583. Oil  
on canvas, 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 7'3"  
(1.83 x 2.21 m). Pinacoteca  
Nazionale, Bologna



writing about, then to Parma, Venice, and Mantua before returning to Bologna. That path would have introduced him to many of the leading figures of his time, yet it was curious in one obvious respect: it omitted Rome, the city where the followers of Michelangelo and Raphael reigned, the center of Italy's antiquarian culture, and the primary destination of nearly all other painters who had undertaken study travels in the preceding decades.

By the early 1580s, Ludovico was back in Bologna, where he established the independent family business he would refer to as an "academy." His insistence on this term – an unusual description to use in conjunction with a for-profit enterprise unconnected to any literary society or state institution – suggests he had Florence on his mind. The education that the Carracci academy espoused aimed at formulating an alternative to Florentine and, by extension, Roman, principles. Ludovico understood his challenge to the dominance of Vasari, Fontana, and Zuccaro as a reform of art; he also clearly considered this reform to align with the interests of reformers like archbishops Gabriele Paleotti and Carlo Borromeo (see pp. 556 and 558). In his religious paintings he pursued clarity of communication and avoided flourishes of *difficoltà* and *maniera*. Paleotti would very likely have approved of the *Annunciation* that Ludovico painted in 1583 for a Blessed Sacrament Confraternity (fig. 20.6), where, at the behest of Paleotti, rooms had been set aside for the instruction of local children in Christian doctrine. The picture is direct and simple: the Virgin adopts an exemplary attitude of devotion, and both she and the angel Gabriel seem to share a quiet joyfulness at the unfolding of the mystery of the Incarnation. There is little to distract the viewer in the plain domestic interior of the Virgin's house. The painting's direct appeal to understanding and to sentiment relies on Ludovico's careful study of earlier art in northern Italy: in particular, he imitates Correggio's soft modeling of the flesh and gentle palette, but in its old-fashioned Albertian perspective the painting also evokes the artistic world of the previous century, to the point of being deliberately archaic. Knowing audiences would have associated such archaism both with pious simplicity and with a rejection of the sophistications of "modern" art.

Ludovico and his two talented cousins sought to base their reform on earlier moments in the formulation of the "modern manner": Correggio was important to them, but so was Raphael and his Roman workshop. Already in 1579, Agostino Carracci (1557–1602) – who would emerge as the most accomplished Italian engraver of his generation – had dedicated to Paleotti a large print (on seven sheets) of the *Adoration of the Magi* (fig. 20.7), based on a design by Raphael's associate Baldassare Peruzzi: it is as if, aware of the archbishop's interest in the reform of religious art, the





20.7

Agostino Carracci after  
Baldassare Peruzzi,  
*Adoration of the Magi*,  
1579. Engraving, composite  
image on seven sheets.  
Fitzwilliam Museum,  
University of Cambridge

Carracci themselves were attempting to steer the cleric's sense of acceptable artistic performance toward an ideal drawn from the past that they themselves embraced.

Ludovico served as a mentor in these years to his cousins, who in the course of the decade became his chief collaborators. When Ludovico sent Annibale Carracci (1560–1609) on his own study trip in 1580 or 1581, the youth went to Parma and to Venice, as Ludovico had before him, but now skipped not only Rome but Florence as well. What did Ludovico hope Annibale would learn on these travels? A painting like the c. 1585 *Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine* allows some inferences (fig. 20.8).

The strong modeling of the figures, the sense that faces have been built up through *chiaroscuro* against a base of brown middle tones, demonstrate a solid understanding of the means Leonardo da Vinci had developed in Milan for creating sculptural effects (compare, for example, fig. 10.39). The *sfumatura* that envelops the figures – they are surrounded, indeed, by clouds, bodies of air – might likewise have come from Leonardo, but the mystic rather than naturalistic quality this lends the picture sooner evokes Correggio's work in Parma (see fig. 14.19), an impression reinforced by the softness, the youthful tenderness, of the whole group. Where Annibale





ABOVE  
**20.8**  
 Annibale Carracci, *The Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine*, c. 1585. Oil on canvas, 5'3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 3'10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" (1.62 x 1.18 m). Capodimonte Museum, Naples

RIGHT  
**20.9**  
 Annibale Carracci, study of a hunchback, mid 1580s. Red chalk on cream paper, 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" x 8<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (26.4 x 22.5 cm). The Duke of Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth

departs both from Leonardo and from Correggio is in his attention to surfaces, especially textiles. The crossed velvet panels that form the borders of the angel's robe have a tactility worthy of Titian; Annibale differentiates this sharply from the silk of the robe itself, from the gold and pearls in Catherine's crown, and from the elaborate brocade she wears. The painting shows the artist mastering the means of the best painters from the north Italian tradition, and bringing them all together in a single picture. The very pursuit of such a synthesis amounted to an anti-Vasarian position, for it called into question the idea that in the wake of Michelangelo, one could learn all one needed from a single artist or in a single place.

#### Art from Life in the Carracci Academy

This is not to say that the Carracci rejected the principle of *disegno*. On the contrary, they proved to be some of the most avid draftsmen of the sixteenth century. They embraced drawing, however, not so much because it served as a vehicle for translating ideas into compositions as because it allowed the study of the world around

them. Whereas earlier masters had often taught drawing by having students copy other drawings, or prints, or fragments of ancient statuary, the Carracci emphasized the study of the live model. This allowed students not only to learn the look of real bodies – atypical and unidealized forms (fig. 20.9) alien to most earlier artworks – but also to understand the way the anatomy of those bodies operated, to grasp the complexity of even casual poses and gestures from everyday life. Sometimes Annibale made drawings of figures from unusual angles, to practice foreshortening. Other times, he produced what appear to be portrait drawings, studies of faces – though in nearly all of these cases, the faces are of lower- to middle-class subjects whose names have not come down to us. Many of these portraits Annibale probably made by leaving the studio and traveling around the city with paper and chalk in hand. Drawings of landscapes confirm that he sometimes worked out of doors, and some sheets seem to show him working in other settings.

A red-chalk drawing in Windsor Castle, for example, depicts a man weighing meat (fig. 20.10). Evidently done from life, it functions as a study of pose and balance: Annibale is learning how to elide facial features on a head tipped slightly forward, how to treat an arm projected toward the viewer. It also works as a study of the costume and activities associated with a characteristic neighborhood profession, in this case the one that Ludovico's own father practiced. A number of Annibale's drawings seem to have been ends in themselves, but the meat-weigher makes a second appearance, as a main character in





## AMMANATI'S LETTER TO THE ACADEMY

In 1582, the sculptor-architect Bartolomeo Ammanati wrote a public letter to his colleagues at the Accademia del Disegno in Florence, with the purpose, he announced, of unburdening his conscience. In his earlier works, Ammanati stated, he had followed the practice of his predecessors and represented the human figure in the nude. Since it was now impossible for him to convey his regret for what he had done by covering these sculptures up, his only option was to confess his mistake and to warn those who came after him to avoid falling into the same error.

The letter points in particular to the new emphasis the Catholic Church placed on confession. Ammanati composed it at a time when he and his wife, the poet Laura Battiferri, had become particularly attached to the Jesuits, and were devoting time and money to the construction of a Florentine church for the Order. Still, in writing that artists should stop making nudes, Ammanati was surely aware that he was going against the most fundamental principles of Renaissance art, the expectation that artists would place the human body at the center of their concerns, and learn to render it by studying ancient sculptures and live models. To address his letter to the Academy was to challenge central principles of late sixteenth-century educational practices: the letter goes on to outline an alternative pedagogy. Ammanati encouraged his readers to pay particular attention to Michelangelo's *Moses* in Rome (see fig. 13.37), and thus implicitly to turn their eyes away from that sculptor's local masterpieces, including the *David* (see fig. 12.3) and the Medici Chapel *Times of Day* (see figs. 15.11–15.13). And Ammanati insisted that sculptors seeking to show virtuosity in the achievement of difficult things could as easily focus their energies on drapery as on the body itself, since this, too, required art and grace.

The shift of concerns corresponds to changes in Ammanati's own practice: by the late 1570s, he himself had indeed stopped making the kinds of nude figures that featured in his Neptune fountain (see fig. 19.30). The fact that local rivals like Giambologna largely ignored the letter's injunction suggests that Ammanati, in his old age, had become something of a reactionary. Yet Ammanati was writing in the wake of Giovanni Andrea Gilio's dialogue *On the Errors of Painters Concerning History* and contemporaneously with Gabriele Paleotti's *Discourse on Sacred Images*. Those texts, published by priests, had framed the issue of Counter-Reformation art in terms of a conflict between license and decorum, artistic freedom and respect for convention. Whereas Gilio and Paleotti believed it to be the patron's role to see that artists stayed in line, Ammanati rather surprisingly saw this as the artist's own responsibility. The sculptor maintained "that most men who employ us give us no invention whatsoever, but rather leave things to our judgment, saying 'here I would like a garden, a fountain, a nursery, and so forth.'" When such patrons commanded artists to make dishonest and ugly things, Ammanati asserted, artists should simply not obey.

The Counter-Reformation involved a rethinking of what the artist was and did. The precedent set by Michelangelo, particularly in the Sistine Chapel (see fig. 12.31), appeared to be one of an artist deciding for himself what subjects to paint or sculpt. However little this appearance may have corresponded to reality, the very idea worried clerics, who sought more authoritarian control over what artists did. By claiming the initiative of reform, Ammanati paradoxically suggested that the artist could still work as the greatest of all Renaissance masters had — provided that artist was a good Christian.





ABOVE LEFT

**20.10**

Annibale Carracci, *A Man Weighing Meat*, c. 1582–83. Red chalk on beige paper, 11 x 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (27.8 x 17 cm). Royal Library, Windsor Castle



ABOVE RIGHT

**20.11**

Annibale Carracci, *Butcher Shop*, c. 1582–83. Oil on canvas, 6'2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 8'10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (1.9 x 2.71 m). Christ Church, Oxford

RIGHT

**20.12**

Annibale Carracci, *The Bean Eater*, 1580s. Oil on canvas, 22<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 26<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (57 x 68 cm). Galleria Colonna, Rome



Annibale's painting of a butcher shop (fig. 20.11). This figure alone nearly suffices to convince us that we are witnessing a collection of habitual labors, observed from life – or at least he would, were it not for the soldier standing to the man's right, wearing a foppish feather and a giant codpiece while moving his limbs in a senseless, seemingly random way. The intruder turns the whole picture into a commentary on the difference between the natural and the posed, between gestures that seem motivated by a purposeful activity and those that pursue nothing but gratuitous variety. At the same time, Annibale frames this distinction in terms of the local and the foreign, as though a character from a distant place, or a backward painting, had just stepped into a family workplace. An interest in

the everyday has become a means of opposing the values of art Annibale associated with other Italian centers.

Much the same can be said of Annibale's *Bean Eater* (fig. 20.12). This, too, probably began with a drawing from life – there is a drawing in the Uffizi of a boy eating. And it, like the *Butcher Shop* – and for that matter like the Vincenzo Campi paintings we saw in the previous chapter (see figs. 19.6 and 19.35) – raises questions about the intentions behind it. Is this a comic image of a worker, depicted according to stereotypes of the poor as ruled by their appetites, and devoid of grace and refinement in their manners? The window frame suggests a cross, as if ironically alluding to the non-Eucharistic character of the depicted meal. An elite patron who owned this image, or Campi's, would never have himself portrayed in this way. And yet there is more going on here than comic realism: there is an element of confrontation and disquiet in the attitude of the bean eater himself, as if he had suddenly noticed us. We seem uncomfortably close to him, almost as if we are seated at the other side of the table. He somehow refuses to be cast as a figure for our amusement: rather, we are prompted to think about his posture, about the act of eating, and through empathy and projection we become somehow "like" him. In painting him, Annibale may have had other intentions than exploiting the rising market for genre pictures. The anti-Vasarian revolution of the Carracci academy deliberately distanced itself from the courtly etiquette of the Florence Academy. The deliberately unrefined subject, and the brisk mode of rendering (Annibale had studied



the works of Tintoretto, Titian, and Veronese, although this is pointedly not like a Venetian painting), give the work the character of an artistic manifesto, reminding us that the Carracci professed to portray the physical world “in living flesh.”

### Altarpieces and the Question of Portraiture

In 1588 Ludovico completed an altarpiece for the Bargellini family in the convent church of the Convertite nuns in Bologna (fig. 20.13), a painting that illustrates how the Carracci insistence on direct portrayal from life could rejuvenate the principles of altarpiece design while also respecting its conventions and requirements. Ludovico refers conspicuously here to two early sixteenth-century masters: the delicacy of the figures, as well as the approach to color, evoke Correggio, whom the Carracci promoted as the iconic modern painter of Lombardy; the composition, on the other hand, derives from Titian’s *Virgin and Child with Saints Peter, George, and Francis* (see fig. 14.25), although with a tighter composition to facilitate a greater sense of psychological intimacy between the Virgin and Child and the saints. In borrowing from Titian’s Pesaro altarpiece, Ludovico did not merely wish to demonstrate his familiarity with a canonical predecessor. Rather, he recognized the similarity between Titian’s assignment and the one he had received, that of conveying a family’s collective devotion. Such a commission all but required the painter to include the family’s leading members, and Ludovico’s patrons may even have made this explicit. Yet here Ludovico departed from Titian’s example: rather than adding the family to a group of saints, he portrayed his models as saints, rendering the two men as St. Dominic and St. Francis, and the two women as St. Martha and Mary Magdalene.

So well do the Bargellini family members blend with their roles that the presence of portraits hardly imposes on us today: a later report by the Carracci biographer Carlo Cesare Malvasia claims that the painter “was assisted by the lucky circumstance that the two brothers were rather wan, pallid, and haggard of mien...and it would never have been possible to fit a more devout appearance and action to each one of them while retaining their own physiognomy, in which Ludovico showed as fine an imagination as could ever be desired.” Malvasia, that is, explains Ludovico’s approach as a demonstration of his ingenuity. In reducing the impact of the portraits, however, Ludovico may also have been responding to considerations of decorum, attempting to keep things in their proper place. In his treatise on the reform of art, Paleotti had ultimately targeted the kinds of devices that his friend and adviser Prospero Fontana had used in the previous decade, writing that painters should not only avoid por-



traiture in religious paintings but also never portray saints with the features of other recognizable individuals.

Ludovico, it seems, was caught here between the wishes of an employer and the precepts of a reforming cleric, and he opted for a solution much like his teacher’s from a decade before. The episode shows that even for a painter invested in reform, such reform was not a simple matter of top-down supervision and control. Church authority could run up against the expectations of lay patrons, and in such cases, the painter had finally to use his own judgment. Ludovico’s unusual decision to include a “portrait” of the city of Bologna in the background is likewise a gesture that negotiates the

#### 20.13

Ludovico Carracci, *Virgin of the Bargellini Family*, 1588. Oil on canvas, 9'3" x 6'2" (2.82 x 1.88 m). Pinoteca Nazionale, Bologna



interests of multiple parties. On the one hand, it commemorates the patron's and the artist's identification with a particular place, reminding viewers that the Carracci, no less than the Bargellini, were among the prominent citizens who lived in and identified with the city in 1588 (the painting is one of the few by Ludovico to bear a date). On the other hand, a local leader of the Church like Paleotti could only have approved of the motif's inevitable religious significance – that the saints implore the Virgin's protection of Bologna.

### Lavinia Fontana

Among the most admired artists of Bologna in these years was Lavinia Fontana (1552–1614), daughter and pupil of Prospero Fontana, who had been the teacher of Ludovico. As had been the case with Sofonisba Anguissola (see p. 513), collectors sought to acquire her self-portrait. In 1579, at the age of twenty-six, Fontana painted one on copper for a Spanish priest named Alfonso Ciacón (fig. 20.14), who also asked her to make a drawing of the then Bishop Paleotti. The collector was assembling a gallery of portraits of famous people that he planned to have reproduced in engravings, and he had promised Fontana that her self-portrait would hang next to one by Sofonisba. Fontana rose to the challenge, producing an image quite different from any of Anguissola's self-representations. She shows herself seated with pen in hand in a *studiolo*, magnificently attired and surrounded by bronze statuettes and by casts or statue fragments in a cabinet. If we did not know that she was a painter, we might think that she was a scholar and a collector in her study – and indeed, this is the place that Fontana is claiming for herself. She has elided the artist's studio with the scholar's

*studiolo*, making the polemical claim that a woman could occupy both spaces – and in fact Fontana probably learned what she knew of the human figure from sculptures rather than from live models. She demands to be seen as a *learned* woman artist, as likely to write as to draw.

### The “Holy Mountain” at Varallo

When Giambologna's *Appenine* (see fig. 20.1) and Annibale Carracci's *Butcher Shop* (see fig. 20.11) took “place” as a primary concern, the place at issue was that where the work was made. This was not the only possibility of the moment, however: the work of painters, sculptors, and architects could be used to simulate a pre-existing place in an entirely new location. In the late Quattrocento, an Observant Franciscan named Bernardino Caimi, having returned to northern Italy after a stay in the holy city of Jerusalem, decided to establish a surrogate city for pilgrims who wished to visit the Holy Land but who were prevented from doing so by the difficulties and dangers of the trip. On the mountainside behind his monastery in the north Italian town of Varallo, Caimi began to erect a series of chapels, each constituting a site associated with a key event from the infancy and Passion of Christ. Caimi died in 1499, but followers expanded on his scheme. In the 1520s and 1530s, Gaudenzio Ferrari added paintings to many of the chapels. These, in turn, became backdrops for a series of spectacular sculptural tableaux featuring dozens of lifesized figures (fig. 20.15).

Shortly before his death in 1572, the architect Galeazzo Alessi had produced a master plan for reorganizing the whole site, and in the early 1580s, while work on the Alessi modifications was underway, Archbishop Carlo Borromeo – a theorist of sacred architecture – began visiting the site and encouraging others to do the same. Borromeo seems to have been responsible for hiring the Milanese architect Martino Bassi (1542–1591) as the overseer of the project in that decade. Bassi ensured, among other things, that the renovations preserved Caimi's original chapels.

Though we tend to think of Italian sculpture as a tradition that emphasizes materiality, encouraging the viewer to think about marble or bronze as much as about the characters it depicts, the sculptures at Varallo were entirely the opposite: fully and realistically polychromed, and often outfitted with real human hair and dressed in real clothes. This maximized their integration with Ferrari's painted backdrops, creating literal and often graphically violent total environments that enhanced the pilgrim's experience of “being there.” Franciscans throughout Italy had long helped to popularize the “*devotio moderna*,” which involved imagining oneself into the events of Christ's life and death, and the Jesuit Ignatius Loyola's widely read

#### 20.14

Lavinia Fontana, *Self-Portrait in the “Studiolo,”*  
1579. Oil on copper,  
diameter 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (15.7 cm).  
Uffizi Gallery, Florence







*Spiritual Exercises* (1522–24) had ensured the endurance of such practices into the late sixteenth century. The “Holy Mountain” (Italian *Sacro Monte*) turned this kind of meditative drill into theater, such that even the illiterate could participate. So strongly did the chapels at Varallo resonate with Counter-Reformation spirituality that the 1580s saw at least two imitations at other north Italian sites, the Sacri Monti at Crea and Orta.

## Mapping Rome

The Sacri Monti remind us that no one had a stronger sense of place in sixteenth-century Europe than the pil-

grim, who traveled hundreds of miles, usually on foot, to reach destinations the very visiting of which could lead to salvation. Italy’s new “Jerusalem” notwithstanding, the city of Rome continued to be the peninsula’s chief destination for devout voyagers, and by the 1580s, pilgrims to Rome found themselves in the company of other kinds of wanderers. Artists from all over Europe now came in large numbers to study both the antiquities unearthed by the previous century’s archaeologists and the famous paintings of Michelangelo and Raphael. Joining them, perhaps for the first time, were regular tourists, visitors who came to Rome just because they had heard and read so much about the city and wanted to see it with their own eyes.

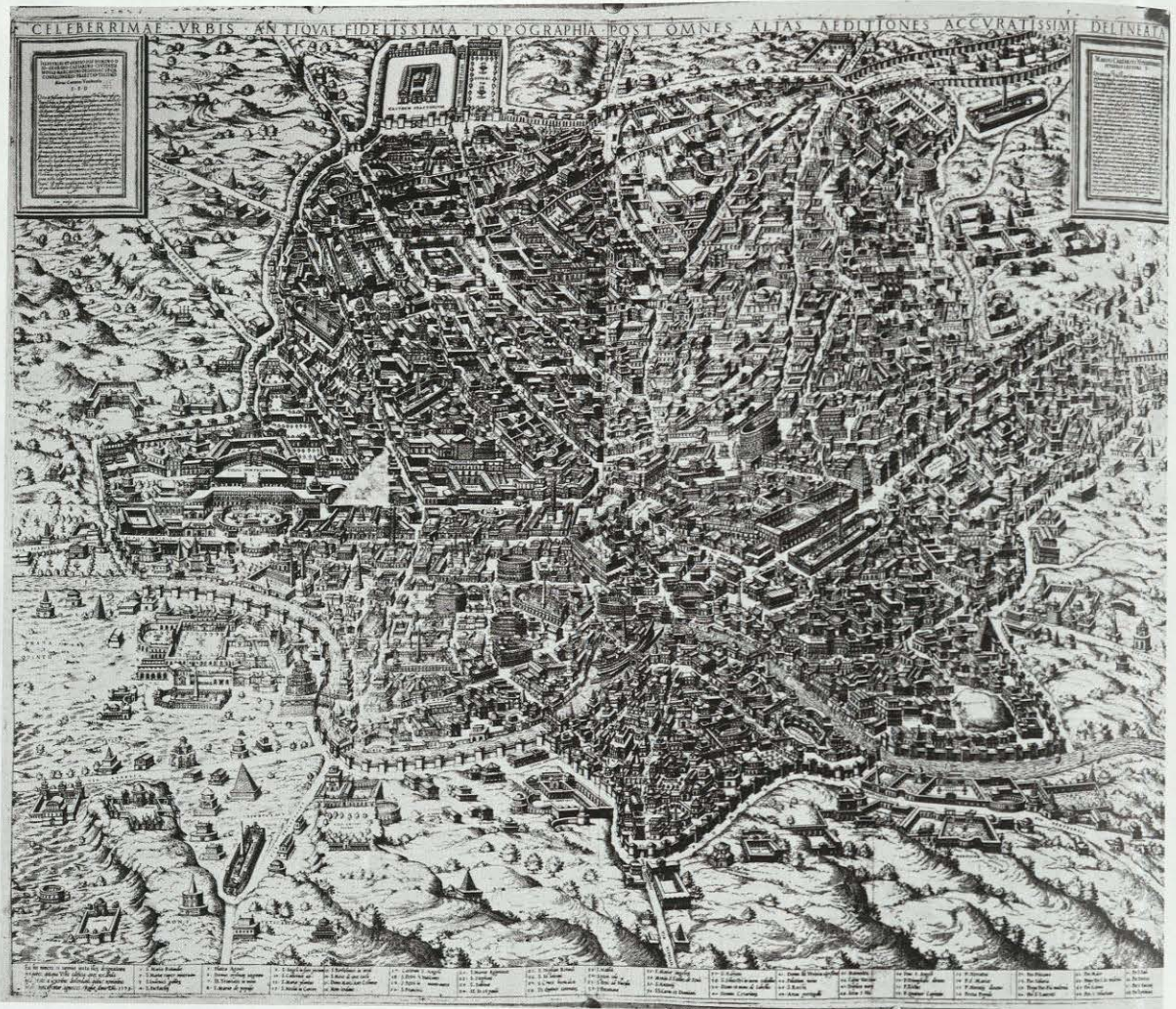
20.15

Passion Group, Sacro Monte di Varallo. The chapel was constructed and decorated in 1600–16 by the painter Il Morazzone and the sculptor Giovanni d’Enrico, but adhering closely to the precedents established at the site by Gaudenzio Ferrari a century before.



## 20.16

Mario Cartaro, Map of Rome, 1579. Engraving, approx. 35 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 44 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (91.1 x 113 cm). Private Collection



Anyone arriving in the Eternal City in the 1580s would have been able to find and identify the major historical sites with two relatively new kinds of printed tool, the guidebook and the map. Among guidebooks, the most useful in those years would still have been the two that Andrea Palladio had written: the *Antiquities of Rome* and the *Description of the Churches, Stations, Indulgences, and Relics of Rome* (both 1554, though the immensely popular *Antiquities* had gone through many more editions by 1580). Palladio's *Fourth Book*, also largely on ancient Rome, gave more weight to illustrations than to text, which eliminated a barrier for foreigners who could not read Italian and for locals who could not read Latin or who could not read at all. The most recent map of the ancient city, meanwhile, was the multi-sheet engraving that Mario Cartaro (c. 1540–1620) had executed in 1579 (fig. 20.16).

The desire to map Rome dated at least to the time of Raphael, though the century's single most important cartographic achievement was no doubt the 1551 map by Leonardo Bufalini, who for the first time showed the

city in an ichnographic plan (i.e., from directly above; see p. 460). Cartaro's map, the first version of which he published in 1575, abandoned this scheme in favor of a perspectival rendering, which allowed depiction of the monuments it featured, and not just of their footprints. The inscription at the right declares that Cartaro undertook his project with the most advanced archaeological means at his disposal, measuring the ruins personally by using appropriate modern tools, verifying that everything he depicted was correctly scaled, and consulting both learned locals and the available printed reconstructions of ancient buildings to glean information he might be able to use. At the same time, the map acknowledges the modern experience of the city as much as it aims at history. It is oriented with north to the left, so that the most natural way to read the map, left-to-right, accords with the movements of visitors coming to the city from Florence or Pisa or from across the Alps. It makes no attempt to indicate how Rome looked under any single ancient ruler, but rather works up a compact reconstruction of each important ruin that sur-



vived to the author's day. The question "what was here?" takes precedence over any interest in how the city looked at any particular moment in its history.

Most surprising, perhaps, is the key at the bottom of the page, with entries corresponding to small numbers distributed across Cartaro's sheets. Rather than using this key to label or give information about the things he actually depicted, Cartaro listed and located the major churches that had grown up on top of the pagan ruins. None of the items in the key is actually shown in the image: rather, the user of the map is invited to match ancient sites to modern places, to find buildings that could no longer be seen in places known from lived experience. When Cartaro's inscription underscores his accomplishment of putting "each monument in its proper place," he means that the relative positions of these monuments are clear, but also that the map makes visible the continuity between ancient and modern Roman worlds.

### The Vatican Hall of Maps

The scale of maps like Cartaro's, which stretches across four folios, along with their emphasis on the sometimes literally buried histories of places, must have appealed not only to those who did not know Rome well, but also to

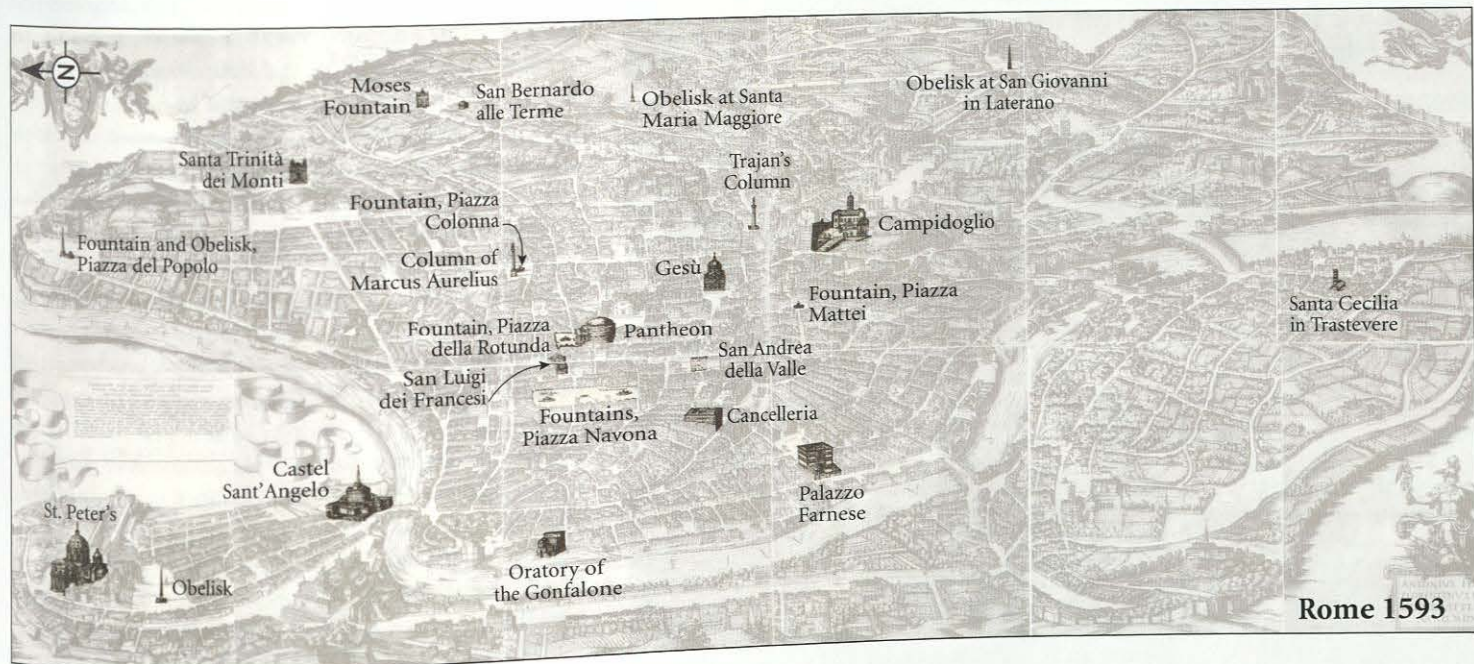
its most prestigious residents. For decades, palace owners had followed the advice they read in Alberti and what they regarded as the examples of the ancients, and commissioned painted city views as decorations for public rooms. In the early 1580s, however, the mural map reached an unprecedented level of grandeur.

A key actor in this development was a mathematician by the name of Ignazio Danti (1536–1586). Brother of the sculptor Vincenzo Danti, Ignazio had been living in a Dominican monastery in Bologna and working as a math professor when, in 1577, he was summoned to his native Perugia to survey the city. The drawings he produced during his sojourn there so impressed Cardinal Iacopo Boncompagni, the son of Pope Gregory XIII, that the cardinal invited him to extend his work to the entirety of the Papal States, assembling portraits of Romagna, Umbria, and the Latium, among other regions. Beginning in 1578, Danti filled one sketchbook after the next with ink drawings representing mountains and roads, waterways and significant buildings. In 1580, Pope Gregory himself took notice of Danti's activities, and summoned him to Rome to transform his studies, in combination with other, similar sources, into monumental decorations.

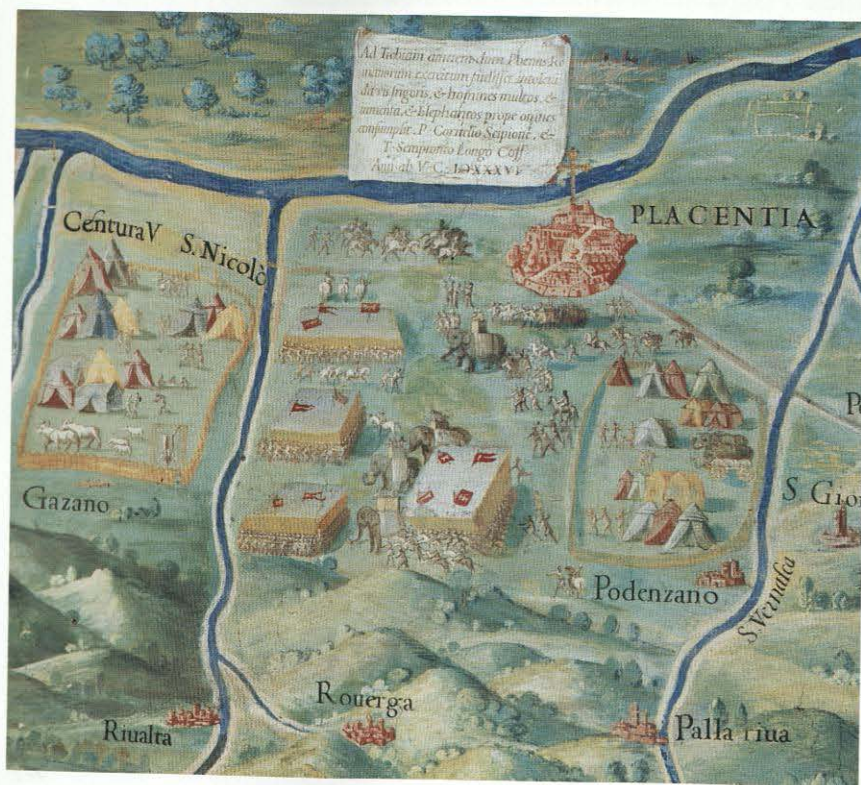
Under Danti's supervision, a group of painters frescoed in its entirety one of the grand corridors Bramante

20.17

Antonio Tempesta, map of Rome, engraving, 1593, modified to highlight sites under discussion.







LEFT

20.19

*The Lombardy Region* (detail). Fresco. Hall of Maps, Vatican. The photograph shows one example of the way the paintings overlay historical moments: it features the town of Piacenza (Latin "Placentia"), newly important from a Roman perspective because it was governed by the Farnese family. The cross suggests a Christian era, but the inscription and the elephants commemorate Scipio's defeat of Hannibal in the third century BCE.

ABOVE

20.18

Hall of Maps, Vatican, begun 1580. Frescoes designed and supervised by Ignazio Danti, executed by Paul Bril, Girolamo Muziano, Antonio Tempesta, and others.



had designed to connect the older parts of the Vatican Palace to the papal villa on the hill above. The team was an international one, and notably brought together three of the best landscape painters then active in Italy: the Brescian Girolamo Muziano, the Florentine Antonio Tempesta, and the Fleming Paul Bril. On the walls, the artists created colossal maps of the various regions of Italy, marking on these the sites of important battles and miracles; in the vault above, they showed site-specific episodes from Church history (figs. 20.18–20.19). To a certain extent, the frescoes captured the experience of moving through the different regions of the Italian-speaking world. Like the chapels at Varallo, however (see fig. 20.15), they also made history a function of place, organizing space according to where events had happened.

In contrast to the frescoed depictions of Bologna that Pope Gregory himself had commissioned in another part of the Vatican just a few years before, the Hall of Maps did not limit itself to the home territory of a Pope, or even to the Papal States. Nor did it aspire – like the painting of the Guardaroba Nuova (see p. 457) that was still under way in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, a project Danti himself had earlier helped to conceive – to any kind of global reach. Rather, the new artists took advantage of the felicitous congruence between the shape of the long gallery and the peninsular form of Italy itself to line up regions and cities in the order that a traveler would encounter them.

Collecting permanent, historically anchored maps in this fashion was something that only a potentate would do, and the Pope's motives must have been varied. When Leonardo made an aerial view of Imola, a small town near Bologna, in 1502, he was working for Cesare Borgia, a mercenary with military interests in the region; and when, still earlier, the Venetian Council of Ten commissioned a series of maps of their territories, these were for tax purposes. Although no one, before the age of flying machines, could see in person the kinds of views that maps provided, the height at which they positioned the spectator implied a sort of surveillance. The regions shown in the Vatican's Hall of Maps did not all fall within the Pope's temporal jurisdiction, but they did represent a united Catholic bastion, an unintentional reminder of the fragmentation that the Reformation had wrought on Europe. The maps have less to do with real strategic interests than with a sense of the past; concentrating on the Italian peninsula made it possible to point to where the Pope's Church still governed. In effect, the gallery inverted the conception of the Cartaro map, showing not what had become of ancient places but what had happened before in modern ones.

The scale, medium, and location of the decorations also bear comparison with Giulio Romano's Sala di Cos-

tantino (see figs. 14.1–14.3), as if the Pope and his artists aimed to outdo their predecessors by using places like the Mulvian Bridge, rather than warriors like Constantine, as their subjects. In this respect, the Hall of Maps marks a shift from explicit propaganda justifying papal legitimacy to something less direct; the papacy displays its power by proclaiming its control of knowledge. The knowledge involved was in part geographical and in part technical, since only an expert like Danti, with sophisticated mathematical skills, could project aerial views. Yet the “naturalism” of the imagery, particularly its close relationship to the emerging genre of landscape, is also suggestive. Constructions involving the natural world provided one of the most common ways that local potentates conceived and conveyed their dominion, as if their rule existed within the order of nature itself.

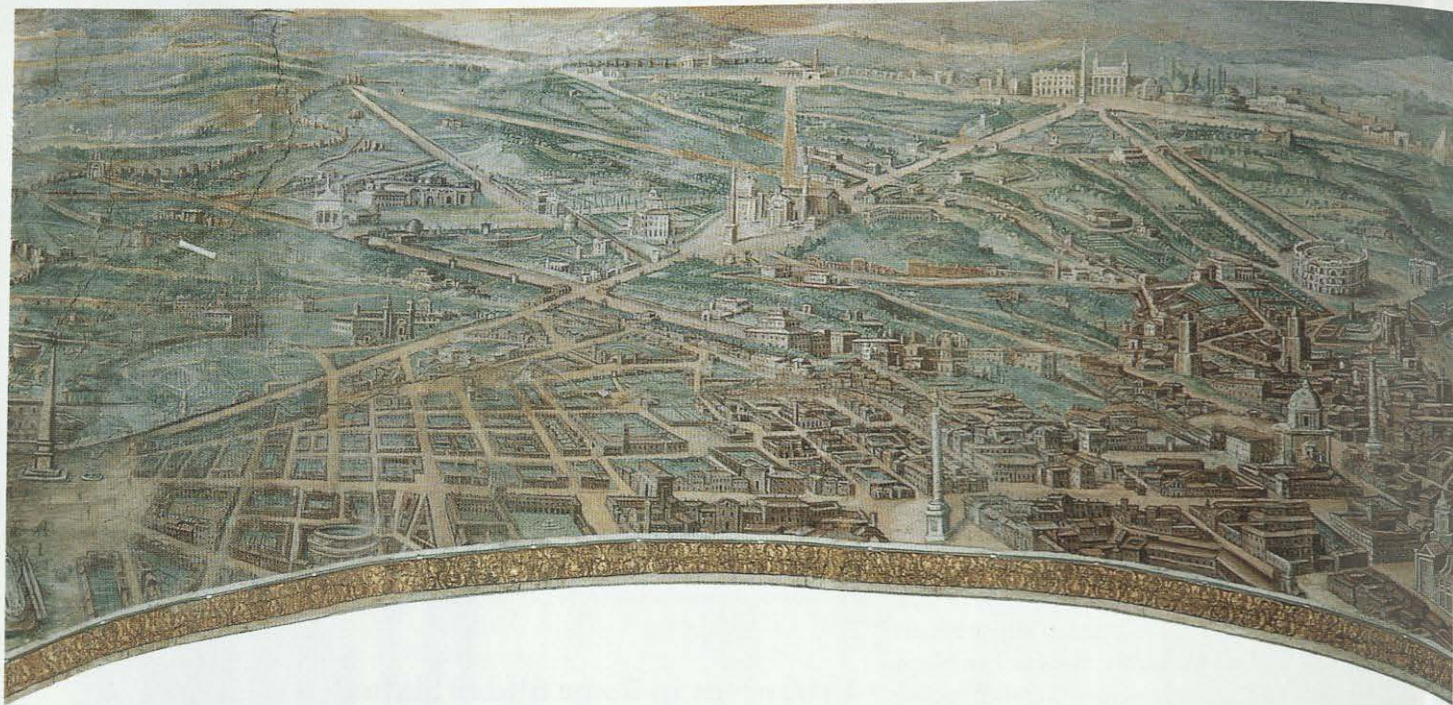
## Urbanism in Rome under Sixtus V

### Center and Periphery

The Hall of Maps was not the only room in the Vatican to feature cartographical imagery. In 1585, Felice Peretti-Montalto succeeded Gregory XIII as Pope, taking the name of Sixtus V. For his library, the Salone Sistino, Sixtus commissioned a fresco showing the city of Rome, offering a simplified picture of the transformations he was by then well into the process of introducing, with a web of straight avenues running through the city and little evidence of the irregularity that characterized the islands of buildings these divided (fig. 20.20). Sixtus had another map, this one by Giovanni Francesco Bordino, printed in multiple, so as to be available to pilgrims; this one suggested that the new streets Sixtus projected were not just a practical way to facilitate travel between destinations, but an attempt to fashion the entire urban grid into a kind of emblem to himself: the star the streets seem to form was one of his family's heraldic devices (fig. 20.21).

The actual streets laid out by the time of the Pope's death in 1590 included the Via Felice, which took travelers from the Pincian to the Viminal Hill, the Via Panisperna, which ran west from there to the Campidoglio, and the Strada di Porta San Lorenzo, which led to a city gate and then to the church outside the city walls from which it took its name. All these roads are related in location, in that they are concentrated at the eastern edge of the city. In part, this reflects the ease of building in unpopulated as opposed to truly urban zones; with the modern development of the city, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that one of the reasons Sixtus managed to build longer straight streets than anyone before him is because fewer existing structures had to be demolished to make way for



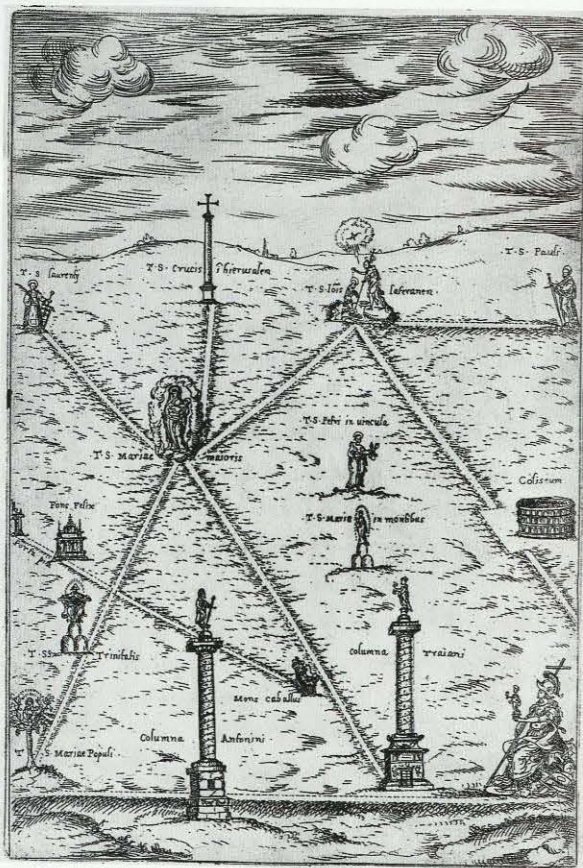


ABOVE  
**20.20**  
 Giovanni Guerra and Cesare  
 Nebbia, *View of Rome*, c. 1588.  
 Fresco, Salone Sistino, Vatican.

The fresco imagines a bird's-eye  
 perspective from West to East.  
 The Piazza del Popolo, with its  
 new obelisk, is on the left, the  
 Column of Marcus Aurelius, with

its new statue, just right  
 of center at the bottom. The  
 map emphasizes Rome's new,  
 straight streets.

RIGHT  
**20.21**  
 Giovanni Maggi (?),  
 idealized Roman street  
 plan, from Giovanni  
 Francesco Bordini, *De rebus  
 praeclare gestis a Sixto V*,  
 1588, p. 48. In this map,  
 saints stand in for their  
 eponymous churches: St.  
 Lawrence, top left, marks  
 the location of San Lorenzo  
 fuori le Mura; St. Paul, top  
 right, that of San Paolo  
 fuori le Mura; the Baptism  
 that of San Giovanni in  
 Laterano; and so forth.  
 The image suggests that  
 Rome's new street pattern  
 constituted a star, one of  
 the emblems of  
 Pope Sixtus V.



them. It is striking, nevertheless, that the finished roads reinforce the impression given by the frescoed map in the Salone Sistino (see fig. 20.20) but not by earlier maps of the city, that the center of Rome was no longer the Campidoglio, but the church of Santa Maria Maggiore. It was in this church that the Pope wished to be buried, constructing a magnificent chapel that featured not only his tomb but also a set of shrines containing what were long believed to be the manger of Christ and the body of St. Jerome. And it was directly adjacent to this church that the Pope had his villa, its lands stretching over the space now occupied by the Termini train station.

The mix of public and private interests is also evident in the way Sixtus took over Gregory's waterworks projects. Unlike Gregory, Sixtus did not aim to add fountains to a sequence of piazzas that had formerly had none, but he did undertake something no less ambitious: he virtually introduced a whole new aqueduct system. For this, he ultimately turned to Domenico Fontana (1543–1607), the architect who would become his right-hand man. They restored a group of aqueducts still standing from antiquity, uniting them into a course that entered the city from the east near the Porta Maggiore, then ran through the site of the Baths of Diocletian, turned west toward the Quirinal (allowing for the Quattro Fontane, the “Four Fountains,” that would give their name to a famous church by Francesco Borromini), then all the way