

INTRODUCTION: THE ART HISTORY OF RENAISSANCE ROME



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THE SITUATION IN ROME IN THE RENAISSANCE, as compared to other states on the Italian peninsula, was unique because Church and state were not separated. Until Mussolini, the pope was the ruler of the city, and throughout the Renaissance the history of the papacy determined the history of Roman art. During the Babylonian Captivity between 1309 and 1378, in which the papal court was transferred to Avignon, there was essentially no art produced in Rome. This state of suspension continued during the Great Schism (1378–1417), in which papal energy was directed to battling antipopes and councils. When the papacy finally resettled in Rome in the second quarter of the quattrocento, the city, its buildings, and its infrastructure were so badly deteriorated that they demanded immediate attention, as Ingrid Rowland and Meredith Gill make clear in their chapters.

There was, however, no native school of artists, so the history of quattrocento art in Rome is a history of masters imported, usually from thriving Florence, who returned home (or died) after completing their commissions. Between Martin V and Julius II the pattern was of artists called to Rome for specific projects who then returned home. Martin V brought Masolino from Florence, and he died in Rome, but Donatello and Filarete, after completing projects during Eugenius's rule, returned to their native Florence. Nicholas V employed two more Florentines: Fra Angelico, at the end of his career, to paint his chapel, and Bernardo Rossellino, who probably directed the reconstruction at Saint Peter's. Like Rossellino, Mino da Fiesole, who followed in the 1460s, returned home

to Florence. Sixtus IV codified the pattern when he created a team of Florentine and Umbrian painters to fresco his newly built Sistine Chapel in 1481. But the pattern continued in the last two decades, even as artistic activity gained momentum, with Mantegna called down from Mantua and Pinturicchio from Siena to decorate Innocent's Villa Belvedere, and the Pollaiuolo brothers from Florence to execute papal tombs. Although many of the leading artists of the century worked in Rome, none seemed to deem it advantageous to establish themselves in the city and set up permanent workshops there.

When Michelangelo came to Rome on his own initiative in 1494, it marks the beginning of a new pattern, and one that would eventually result in the emergence of Rome as the artistic center of the sixteenth century. Increasingly the curiosity of artists to see the wonders of the antique world impelled them to seek out the experience, even without the incentive of a specific commission, and increasingly some of those who came for a visit stayed and set up shop. This would not have been possible, of course, without energetic patronage, and this was provided by the ambitious Julius II (1503–13), who dreamed of a papal renewal of the Roman Empire. His commissions to Bramante, Michelangelo, and Raphael set the stage and the model for the cardinals to follow suit, and for succeeding popes.

But as this overview might suggest, Rome depended upon papal leadership in the arts. Just how vulnerable the city was to the varied fortunes of the papacy was demonstrated when, following the Sack

in 1527, the pope was forced to flee to Orvieto. The combination of the devastation wrought by the marauding soldiers and the absence of the pope brought artistic enterprises in Rome to a standstill. Whenever a new pope was elected, the city experienced an influx of artists seeking employment in the decorations for the papal coronation. It was at papal initiative that other kinds of festival were staged, such as the 1513 events when Leo had his brother awarded Roman citizenship,¹ or the triumphal entry of Emperor Charles V in 1536,² and these events likewise attracted artistic talent to the city.

As attractive as Rome was to artists, however, they could not count on a consistent flow of commissions. Because popes were usually old men when they were elected and their reigns tended to be short, policy toward artistic patronage changed frequently. And because the patrons in Rome were almost exclusively members of the papal court, there was a unique uniformity in the pattern of patronage. The cardinals followed the pope's lead in the kind and degree of patronage in which they would indulge. If there was an ascetic pope on the throne, like Paul IV or Pius V, the cardinals curbed their expenditure on building and its decoration, and focused their largesse on ecclesiastical rather than domestic commissions. Popes like Leo X and Paul III set a tone in which the cardinals felt free to lavish attention on their private palaces and villas, commissioning frescoes for the walls and transforming the surrounding landscape into elaborate gardens. If the pope disapproved altogether of art, like Adrian VI, the resulting dearth of commissions could force the artists to flee to regions where papal influence was not as strong.

Recognizing the importance of papal leadership, art historians increasingly have been studying the patronage of individual popes and cardinals. Important dissertations appeared in the 1980s and 1990s on the patronage of Julius III (Nova 1982), of Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, who became Pope Clement VII (Reiss 1992), and of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese (Robertson 1992). An enormous exhibition in Rome contributed to our understanding of Pope Sixtus V's artistic activities.³ Thus, because of the decisive importance of the pope in setting the tone of Roman artistic production, it is appropriate that we study Rome chronologically by papacy.

ROMAN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

Until the late 1960s, the religious thought of the Roman humanists had been neglected. John O'Malley's (1968) study of the sermons preached at the papal court – by showing that the Church was as open to the lessons of ancient rhetoric as any humanist in Florence – was a watershed, which pioneered a new era in the study of Roman humanism. John D'Amico followed with his *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome* (1983). As D'Amico pointed out, the residue of Erasmus's attack upon the Roman intellectuals (*Ciceronianus*, 1528), plus recognition of the moral laxity among the Roman clergy, had contributed to an atmosphere in which modern scholars did not take Roman intellectual speculation seriously.⁴ Instead, attention had regularly been diverted to study of the papacy and official doctrine as embodied in papal policy and pronouncements. For example, *The History of the Popes* by Ludwig von Pastor, valuable as it is, largely ignores or misunderstands the issues of intellectual history.

The result for art historians was a dearth of contextual studies such as began appearing in the 1960s for Florence by such authors as Rubinstein, Trinkaus, Brucker, Goldthwaite, Trexler, Molho, Martinez, Dale Kent, and William Kent, to name only a few. In Rome, no such study was possible until recently, but the gap has begun to be filled with the contributions of Peter Partner, Ingrid Rowland, Salvatore Settis, Charles Stinger, and most recently, Leonard Barkan.⁵

The first two decades of the sixteenth century were the focus of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholarship. In the second half of the past century individual monuments began to receive attention, and that attention moved progressively later through the cinquecento. A survey of some of the art-historical monographs on the major works in Rome suggests the pattern. Beginning in the 1950s, Julius II's Cortile del Belvedere was studied (Ackerman 1954), the Julius tomb (de Tolnay 1945–60, IV [1954]), Bramante (Bruschi 1977),⁶ Roman painting under Popes Julius and Leo (Freedberg 1961), the Belvedere Statue Court (Brummer 1970), Raphael's portrait of Julius II (Partridge and Starn 1980). The works of Leo X dominated the studies of the 1970s: the tapestry cartoons (Shearman 1972), the *Age of Leo X* (Mitchell 1973),

the Logge (Dacos 1977; Davidson 1985), the Sala di Costantino (Quednau 1979). The Sack, which had occurred during Clement VII's papacy, received a Mellon Lecture in 1977, its 450th anniversary (Chastel 1983). The long reign of Paul III received particular attention in the decade 1975–85: the decoration of the Castel Sant'Angelo (Harprath 1978, and in a 1981 exhibition)⁷ as well as the Oratory of San Giovanni Decollato (Keller 1976; Weisz 1984). Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* and Pauline Chapel, commissioned by Paul III, were covered in the final volume of De Tolnay's series (1945–60, V [1960]), the Pauline Chapel again by Steinberg (1975), and the *Last Judgment* again by Barnes (1998).

Monuments in the third quarter of the century have not generally received monographic treatment, with notable exceptions: *The Villa d'Este at Tivoli* (Coffin 1960), and the *Casino of Pius IV* (G. Smith, 1977). There was also a pioneering exhibition of monuments "Beyond Raphael" (1984).⁸

In the 1990s attention focused on the last quarter of the century: Gregory XIII's Tower of the Winds (Courtright 2004 [diss., 1990]) and the Gallery of the Maps (Gambi and Pinelli 1994; Gambi 1997). Sixtus V's patronage was the subject of a major exhibition (Madonna 1993), an exhibition of the Lateran Palace (Pietrangeli 1991), and a monograph on his chapel in Santa Maria Maggiore (Ostrow 1996a). Likewise Clement VIII and the last decade of the sixteenth century received attention in the final decades of the twentieth: painting under Clement VIII (Abromson 1981, Macioce 1990), the Lateran church (Freiberg 1995), Caravaggio's cardinal patrons (Gilbert 1995). The exhibition *The Genius of Rome, 1592–1623* (Brown 2001) highlighted the continuity of style across the Renaissance–baroque divide.

Little has been done so far on the period between the closing of the Council of Trent and Sixtus V, but three new monographs suggest it is about to receive the attention of scholars: *Girolamo Siciolante: Pittore da Sermoneta (1521–1575)* (Hunter 1996), *Girolamo Muziano* (Di Giammaria, 1997), and *Il Cavalier Giuseppe Cesari d'Arpino* (Röttgen 2003).

Resources for the study of Rome are plentiful. The archives, especially those of the Vatican, are unsurpassed and are relatively complete. In other Italian Renaissance centers where the principal patrons were

private families, crucial records have been lost, but in Rome records of artistic activity have survived as part of official records of the institutional Church. Unlike Naples, where the state archive was largely destroyed by bombs in World War II, or Florence, where floods have periodically taken a toll – most recently in 1966 – the records in Rome have escaped most natural and manmade disasters.

The writing of the sixteenth-century historian and artist Giorgio Vasari provides valuable firsthand witness of events in central Italy, and particularly Florence and Rome, where he himself worked. To be sure, much recent and ongoing scholarship has been sorting out the propaganda issues, prejudices, presuppositions, literary conventions, and tropes of Vasari's writing so that we can read him with more insight.⁹ He is not entirely reliable, but because his concerns were the concerns of central Italy, and because he believed that the art of central Italy was the indisputable pinnacle of artistic achievement, he is an invaluable resource.

THE "CLASSIC STYLE" AND "MANNERISM"

The Renaissance in central Italy was a kind of testing ground in scholarship for concepts of period style, probably in part because the basic problems of attribution and chronology had been worked out early, making it possible to found generalizations on reasonably firm ground. In the second half of the nineteenth century, when scholarly art history was just beginning, fatigue with academic classicism had brought artists and critics to a new appreciation of the late quattrocento painters. The Pre-Raphaelite movement is a contemporary expression of that taste. Thus, when Heinrich Wölfflin published his book *Die klassische Kunst* in 1899, he was giving fresh appreciation to the art of Michelangelo, Raphael, and their contemporaries. The term "classic style" was introduced with Wölfflin's book, which was translated as *Classic Art* in 1903. In using this term Wölfflin meant to equate the art of the first two decades of the cinquecento with the pinnacle of ancient art in terms of achievement, but he did not intend to emphasize that this art was inspired by classical antiquity. Quite to the contrary, we read in his Introduction (with some surprise

today) that the classic style “was not an imitation of a foreign prototype – the Antique.” This curious statement is somewhat elucidated by what follows: “. . . it is no spindly hot-house plant but one grown in the open fields in the full strength of vigorous life.” For Wölfflin and his contemporaries, standing at the end of four centuries of classicism – during which time the would-be artist was trained by copying plaster casts of Greek and Roman statues – it had become impossible to imagine that great art, and innovative art, could be inspired by imitating antiquity. It should be recalled as well that for a man of the late nineteenth century, “classical” meant Greek, and fifth-century Greek, moreover.

For Wölfflin, the classic style was exemplified by Leonardo, Raphael, Michelangelo, and, in Florence, Fra Bartolomeo and Andrea del Sarto. In breathing new life into this familiar art and calling it classic, he intended a value judgment. As the dictionary definition indicates, classic or classical implies “of a higher order.” For Wölfflin, the cinquecento put aside the quattrocento kind of naturalism that delighted in the charming or pretty detail. He found in classic art a new seriousness, which rose above the chatty, the random observation, the casual inclusion, for the sake of convincing verisimilitude. The artists of the classic style intended to make the grand statement. Wölfflin admired and held as emblematic of the classic artists that they boldly undertook to encompass the whole, whether it was the drama of Christian eschatology in Michelangelo’s Sistine vault or the world of knowledge in Raphael’s Stanza della Segnatura.

But Wölfflin’s purview was very restrictive. He could not include in the embrace of the classic style the late style of Raphael, perhaps because for him it reeked of the imitation of antiquity, reminding him and his contemporaries of that exhausted classicism the nineteenth century had only recently abandoned. For Wölfflin, Raphael in his later style had moved from spontaneous assimilation of the spirit of antiquity to a studious and belabored imitation. After the Stanza d’Eliodoro (finished in 1514), he discussed only the tapestry cartoons (see Fig. 97), *Baldassare Castiglione*, and the upper zone of the *Transfiguration* (see Plate XVII and Fig. 102). The rest of Raphael’s output after about 1515 he regarded as inferior because of the intervention of the workshop. Wölfflin’s judg-

ment on the workshop production was decisive: “Strident in colour, ignoble in composition, theatrical in gesture, and above all, lacking in proportion, the products of Raphael’s workshop must be accounted, for the greater part, among the most unpleasing pictures ever painted.”¹⁰

The period following the height of the classic style was generally called mannerism, and although Wölfflin did not use that designation, he shared the view that it was a period of decadence and decline, and he simply disregarded it. The basis for a new appreciation of mannerism was laid in the first years of the twentieth century when Alois Riegl demonstrated that the art of some nonclassical and supposedly decadent periods, like late Roman art and baroque art, could be interpreted in a positive way as “expressive.”¹¹ In his wake a small number of scholars, among them Walter Friedländer, began a reexamination of mannerism. They found in it relationships to the spiritual expressionism of their own time, especially of course, German expressionism. Friedländer formulated the interpretation of the paintings of Pontormo, Rosso, Parmigianino, and (selectively) Michelangelo as expressing a rejection of classicism and a rebellion against it. He entitled his essay “Die Entstehung des anticlassischen Stiles in der italienischen Malerei um 1520.” It was not translated into English until 1957, but well before then the “anticlassical style” had established a firm foothold in Anglo-Saxon scholarship.¹²

Important for our discussion was the treatment of Roman mannerism. Friedländer had considered the situation in Rome following the death of Raphael in 1520 only in terms of Parmigianino, but his pupil Frederick Hartt addressed himself to the school of Raphael.¹³ Picking up on Wölfflin’s exclusion of Raphael’s large-scale decorations beginning with the Stanza dell’Incendio, Hartt saw anticlassicism in the late workshop projects, where the overextended master had to rely heavily on his assistants. He attributed the execution of the *Fire in the Borgo* (see Fig. 91), and the conception and execution of the other frescoes in the room, to Raphael’s precocious student Giulio Romano. It was not until the *Fire in the Borgo* was cleaned in the 1980s that the execution was definitively restored to Raphael,¹⁴ and Raphael was not definitively credited with the conception of the Sala di Costantino (see Figs. 101, 114) – the most influential

room in Rome – until the early 1990s.¹⁵ With these fundamental revisions to the oeuvre of Raphael, modification of the interpretation of the classic style and of Roman mannerism was required.

Some scholars had been skeptical of Hartt's conclusions, despite the brilliance of his analysis. John Shearman wrote in his review of Hartt's book: "... it seems to me the estimate of Raphael's range is altogether too retracted ... as a result of this, many contrasts are drawn between master and pupil, where in reality no contrast exists, but continuity, and a false stature is given to the pupil on the basis of innovations which are not his."¹⁶ Sydney Freedberg (1961), in what is probably the most comprehensive and detailed study in the art-historical literature of style and stylistic interchanges among painters, tackled the problem of redefining the classic style and the beginnings of mannerism. Like Shearman he restored to Raphael much of the credit for the late works (eventually even the conception of the Sala di Costantino). He tempered the anticlassicism of early mannerism as well, recognizing that in Rome the attitude of Raphael's pupils toward their master was reverence, not rebellion. Nevertheless certain problems remained. Freedberg did not shrink from the value judgment implied in the term "classical," asserting not only its aesthetic superiority but its superior moral and intellectual value as well.¹⁷ Thus he could not avoid a pejorative assessment of mannerism. He appreciated mannerist works aesthetically, but for him they did not express the same high moral and intellectual values as classical works. Today, in a more pluralistic age, we reject such value judgments, and this creates a problem for the modern scholar, who may recognize the superb aesthetic achievement of the classic style but cannot subscribe to the implicit value judgment.

Today to most commentators "Renaissance classicism" means the revival of classical antiquity. This terminology has the advantage of being value-free and of pointing to those characteristics of the period that are everywhere being elucidated. Thanks to the work of scholars of the past quarter-century like those mentioned above, we now know much more about the culture of Rome and the papal court in the early decades of the cinquecento. We are uncovering the inspiration of Roman antiquity in every aspect of life,

from Julius's vision of a new Catholic Roman Empire, to the sermons preached at the papal court, to the commissions to rebuild the Vatican. The identity of Florence and Rome, and therefore the unity of the central Italian school, can no longer be asserted as it was for so long, despite the fact that most of the artists who became Roman hailed originally from Florence or other parts of Tuscany.

Recognizing the uniqueness of Rome and the overwhelming importance of antiquity in shaping cinquecento Roman art, several art historians have recently undertaken to redefine the style of this period. They have noted that in the final years of the quattrocento, before the emergence of the classic style, artists from various parts of the Italian peninsula where antiquarianism was in fashion converged on Rome. Mantegna was invited to decorate the Villa Belvedere by Innocent VIII. Pinturicchio was the favorite artist of Pope Alexander VI. Jacopo Ripanda received major commissions, even while Michelangelo and Raphael were at work in the Vatican. Konrad Oberhuber (1987) dubbed this the "Alexandrine style" because three of the prime examples were completed during the pontificate of Alexander VI (1492–1503): Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel (see Fig. 65), the Pollaiuolo brothers' tomb of Sixtus IV (completed in 1493) (see Plate VII), and Pinturicchio's decoration of the Borgia Apartments (see Plate VIII and Fig. 66). Hellmut Wohl in writing of the same artistic phenomenon has called it the "ornate classical style."¹⁸ Both Wohl and the present writer have recognized that the "minor" artists working alongside the giants of the classic style in Rome contributed in a crucial way to Raphael's reformulation of his pictorial language in the last half-decade of his life.

In *After Raphael* (1999) I suggested that the late style of Raphael was founded on new aesthetic principles and that it was not the adolescent Giulio Romano who invented them, but Raphael himself, on the basis of antique Roman relief. In fact, Michelangelo had already been employing what I call the "relieflike style" as early as the Florentine *Battle of Cascina* and then in the Genesis scenes on the Sistine vault (see Plate IX), but it was codified by Raphael in his design for the Sala di Costantino. Wohl and I concur in seeing this as the moment at which the native Roman style (antiquarianism) and the classic style were

fused, forming the pictorial language for the art of the 1520s employed by Raphael's followers. Wohl has noted that reliefs were the works of antique art best known to Renaissance artists: "Of the 203 subjects listed by Phyllis Bober and Ruth Rubinstein, in *Renaissance Artists and Antique Sculpture*, as having been copied by or known to Renaissance artists, 136 are Roman reliefs, mainly of the second and third centuries, and 62 of these are fronts, sides, lids, or fragments of sarcophagi" (101). At a time when the whole culture was obsessively imitating antiquity – as Ingrid Rowland makes clear in Chapter 1 – it is no surprise that the painters turned to this relief sculpture to inspire their art. The *paragone* debate that looms so large in theoretical writing of the period is more easily understood once this becomes clear. Whether painting or sculpture is the superior art is indeed an issue of importance to a generation engrossed in the problem of making painting look like sculpture.¹⁹

In this model much of the art called mannerist is no longer anticlassical but rather archclassical; it is not the expression of rebellion but the carrying forward of new principles laid down by the master Raphael at the end of his short career. The term carries no pejorative implication, and the continuity of style is what is emphasized, rather than discontinuity. The transition from the quattrocento to the cinquecento is being viewed as less continuous by some scholars today than it was in the past,²⁰ and this is consonant with the formulations of the Alexandrine style, or the ornate classical style, or the relieflike style just described.

THE CINQUECENTO CRISIS OF RELIGIOUS IMAGES

As the capital of Christendom, Rome was most sensitive to religious dispute, and it was in the sixteenth century that the protests against abuse within the Church escalated into the Reformation and the establishment of the Protestant churches. At the center of the controversy were sacred images, which some of the Reformers banned and removed from places of worship, while others like Luther severely controlled. The Roman Church eventually responded formally with its own new guidelines for sacred images, prom-

ulgated in the last session of the Council of Trent in 1563.

It may be useful in this chapter, however, to look at the issue of images throughout the century and even before 1517, when Luther inaugurated what would become the Reformation. In a recent book Alexander Nagel (2000) has characterized the sixteenth century as an age of crisis in religion. In his understanding, the crisis extends beyond the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, and includes the crisis generated by the rapid modernization of art, which necessarily included religious art. The altarpiece, in particular, was being transformed from the traditional iconic image, presenting itself to the viewer for his or her meditation, to a dramatic – even theatrical – rendering of religious narrative. The painters of the High Renaissance in Rome and Florence, at least some of them, were aware that they could not simply sacrifice the conventions and traditions of the altarpiece. Focusing on Michelangelo's unfinished, undocumented, and disputed *Entombment* (London, National Gallery), Nagel makes a persuasive case for its authenticity on the basis not of its style but of the way it fits into the intellectual and stylistic history of the period around 1500. The Florentine episode of Savonarola's preaching and political hegemony in the 1490s awakened in that city, and in the young Michelangelo, an awareness of the justifiable demands of the Church on its artists and patrons. It has often been remarked that Savonarola anticipated the Counter-Reformation. What has not been remarked is that he sparked in some sensitive observers, like Michelangelo, an ongoing effort to accommodate the modern style to the tradition of the altarpiece. In Nagel's view, the problem resulted not just because artists were incorporating antique, classicizing features in their art. It was the whole process of what we might call competitive novelty, in which each painter tried to surpass the last by introducing another innovation.

The dilemma for the Church, which intended to present timeless and universal sacred images, is nicely encapsulated in the complaint of a prelate of the Byzantine Church, where tradition was overwhelmingly strong, who was experiencing for the first time Western churches during the Ferrara–Florence Council in 1438: "When I enter a Latin church, I do not revere any of [the images of] the saints that are there because

I do not recognize any of them.” So I make the sign of the cross, he says, and revere it – a familiar, unchanging, and universal symbol.²¹

Raphael too demonstrated his awareness of this issue. Two of his altarpieces, in particular, reveal that he intended to preserve the iconic image even as he gave modern dramatic impact to it. The *Sistine Madonna* is a traditional *sacra conversazione*, updated into a vision: The Virgin, proceeding toward the worshiper, is revealed as the curtains are drawn back. The *Transfiguration* (see Fig. 102) is his masterpiece in this endeavor. The drama of the Apostles frantically attempting to heal the epileptic boy in the lower zone is contrasted with the iconic image of Christ transfigured, presented frontally to the worshiper. The scene below provides the artistically requisite narrative drama, while the miracle in the upper zone satisfies the needs of the Church for a devotional image.

In the same way that the transition between fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is being reassessed, so too is the transition from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century, but with the opposite result. We now understand on the basis of recent delving that the dynamic of the Counter-Reformation, which took shape in the wake of the Council of Trent, gathered momentum in the latter part of the century and carried over without marked change into the succeeding seventeenth century. Thus the boundaries we have traditionally drawn, grouping the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as the Renaissance, and demarcating the seventeenth century as the beginning of a new era called the baroque, are being reconfigured. It can be argued that the second half of the cinquecento has more in common with the seventeenth century than even the first half of the cinquecento has with the quattrocento.

The period between 1520 and 1600 was generally neglected in earlier scholarship: Heinrich Wölfflin ignored it altogether in his *Principles of Art History* (*Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, 1915) in which he undertook to compare sixteenth-century with seventeenth-century art.²² But as we saw in our survey of the literature, the focus of scholarly study of the cinquecento progressively moved later throughout the twentieth century. The Catholic response to the Protestant Reformation in terms of images has drawn increasing scholarly attention in recent years. Rome receives special attention because, in the mid-

cinequecento, Roman art in particular was the focus of discussion within the Church concerning the decorum of devotional images. Long before the Decree on Art was promulgated at the Council of Trent in December 1563,²³ there had been ongoing debate, and the decree merely codified what had already become practice in Rome. More than in most regions, the patrons and painters in Rome responded to complaints about the inappropriateness of the prevailing mannerist style for devotional images, and reshaped the pictorial language to avoid the suggestion of lasciviousness or of excessive artifice. Michelangelo himself contributed importantly to the formation of this new countermannerist or counter-*maniera* style around midcentury with his frescoes in the Pauline Chapel. The decrees may actually have acted as a liberating factor by making explicit what was, and was not, acceptable. In the 1570s a revised and chastened genre of devotional image began to appear until, under Sixtus V (1585–90), the Church Triumphant proclaimed its support of images, in contradistinction to Protestant Puritanism, by covering every surface with frescoes. Sixtus, in decorating the walls as part of his energetic building campaign, demonstrated a new decorum of images that boldly spread all over the walls and ceilings, but differentiated the kind of decoration according to function. Teams of artists collaborated on projects, pioneering the kind of organization that would become popular in the baroque era.²⁴

The new orders that became dominant in the Counter-Reformation were quick to affirm the usefulness of images and sponsored campaigns to decorate their new buildings. The Gesù and the Chiesa Nuova of the Oratorians contributed to the flood of altar commissions and chapel decorations in the last decade and a half of the century. Once again drawing upon its own seemingly inexhaustible resources, Rome turned to the surviving Early Christian churches and their decoration to find models for a new kind of Christian art.

COLOR AND MATERIALS

The local travertine, a spongy tufa limestone from the area of Tivoli, was the most common building material in Renaissance Rome, but whenever possible,

it appears, Romans recycled marble from the ruins. This may seem an incomprehensible contradiction to us, when we consider the awed respect this culture expressed toward antiquity. What we often fail to understand is that the reuse of materials from hallowed monuments was an expression of reverence for the original and of the hope of transferring to the new structure some of the glory of the source.

Revetment with colored marbles, as had been used in the interiors of buildings in antiquity, was revived in the sixteenth century in Rome. Agostino Chigi's chapel in Santa Maria del Popolo was the first use, modeled on the Pantheon (see Fig. 89 and Plate XIV). In the last third of the century, as part of the revival of early Christian models, marble revetment became a means to transfigure a sacred interior and to promote a transcendental experience.²⁵

The materials of painting in Rome were the same as elsewhere in central Italy. Egg tempera was gradually replaced by oil in the last quarter of the quattrocento. The pigments were the same as those used elsewhere – at least until Sebastiano del Piombo arrived from Venice. When he painted the *Raising of Lazarus* (see Fig. 103) in competition with Raphael and his *Transfiguration*, he appears to have imported special pigments from his native Venice that were not used at the time in Rome, particularly realgar, a striking orange pigment derived from arsenic.²⁶ Michelangelo created some dazzling and unfamiliar effects in his Sistine vault, but they resulted more from unusual combinations than from rare pigments (see Plates IX, X). The plaster for fresco used in Rome differed somewhat from that of Florence, making use of pozzolana, a local volcanic material, in place of the sand that was used in Florence. Vasari reported that Michelangelo had trouble with his plaster not drying properly at the beginning of his painting of the Sistine vault, but he was told to change the proportions of the mixture of pozzolana and lime, and after that he had no further problems.²⁷

The study of color, long neglected, has recently begun to get its overdue attention. The scholars of Venetian painters could not, of course, avoid studying color and light, and the contrast between the interest of the Venetians in *colore* and the obsession of the central Italians with *disegno* was for a long time the inevitable scholarly cliché. John Shearman's (1962) ground-

breaking article on Leonardo's sfumato focused on Florence, but its implications spread to Rome. We have recently recognized that the importing of painters from different backgrounds and different schools to Rome in the early cinquecento made it a testing ground, as well as a demonstration field for innovations in color. Four modes of coloring, derived from different sources, were on display there by the middle of the teens: Leonardo's sfumato; Raphael's *unione* mode, derived and adapted from it; Michelangelo's *cangiantismo*, boldly demonstrated on the Sistine ceiling; and the chiaroscuro mode developed by the Venetian-trained Sebastiano and by Raphael. Offered these different expressive possibilities, the painters could choose among the modes, matching mode to mood.²⁸

In the Roman atmosphere of emulation of antiquity one would expect the artists to look to the ancients for models of coloring, but there was very little actual Roman painting that could serve as models, except for the murals newly revealed in the Domus Aurea.²⁹ The model it provided was for highly ornate and artificial color. The ornate and artificial mode of *cangiantismo*, in which color in a modeling sequence shifts improbably from one hue to another, became the favored mode among the successors to Raphael, especially for fresco. It did not derive from the Domus Aurea decorations, but it resembled them in its sheer delight in ornament. Especially in fresco, where the range of pigments is severely restricted and the most brilliant are excluded, *cangiantismo* offered opportunity for *ornatus*.

It is in cinquecento Rome that large-scale fresco takes the lead in decoration. Fresco is a medium ideally suited to the arid conditions that prevail in central Italy. Those same first-century frescoes in the Domus Aurea demonstrated its capacity for survival (though their preservation was largely due to their having been sealed up). Of course patrons required panel paintings to adorn the altars of their chapels, but regularly they called for the vault and side walls of those chapels to be frescoed. In the quattrocento, frescoes in palaces and other secular settings appeared infrequently, or they were restricted to a zone at the top of the walls, leaving space below for tapestries or for *damasco* (painted leather covering). The walls of the Palazzo Venezia were decorated with frescoed friezes

just below the cornice, and Pope Alexander VI had Pinturicchio paint his Borgia Apartments in the Vatican in this manner (see Plate VIII), with fresco restricted to the vault and the top of the walls. But little more than a decade later, Julius ordered Raphael to cover the walls of his apartment, one story higher in the palace, with frescoes. Beginning with Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura it became the fashion to cover the walls and the vaults of palace rooms (see Fig. 83). The Stanze must have provided the model for Agostino Chigi to imitate at his Villa Farnesina, the more desirable for being inspired in turn by the all-over frescoes of the Domus Aurea. The most relevant Renaissance precedents were in Mantua: Mantegna's Camera degli Sposi and before that Pisanello's *Lancelot* cycle. Perhaps Mantegna introduced the model to Rome in his lost frescoes for the Villa Belvedere. It is not that the decoration of the Stanze was unprecedented, but that the timing of the commission coincided with an emerging taste for monumentality and for decoration *all'antica*.

Within a decade Raphael and his workshop led the way in introducing the material that would become the most popular ancillary to fresco. Giovanni da Udine, after an inspiring visit to the Domus Aurea, committed himself to reinvented ancient Roman stucco, that rock-hard plaster with which the ancients had created the most delicate and subtle reliefs. Giovanni rediscovered the ancient Roman formula, which was probably manufactured from marble dust and travertine chips. When Giovanni, under Raphael's direction, painted the grotesque decorations on the walls of Bibbiena's loggia in 1516–17 (see Fig. 98), no stucco was introduced. But in the subsequent commission for the Logge 1518–19 (see Fig. 100), the grotesques are interspersed with *stucchi* in a stunning imitation of the Domus Aurea vaults.³⁰ Stucco would go on to be used as a complement to fresco, for borders, in vaults, and to simulate marble statues far into the future (see, for example, the Sala Regia [Fig. 141] and the Courtyard of Palazzo Spada [Fig. 153]).

Although there are no specific complaints about color in the writings of the Catholic Reformers, one can deduce that the painters understood that extravagant *cangiantismo* contributed to the kind of fantastical effect that the Reformers criticized. In sacred images of the second half of the century, coloring be-

comes more naturalistic and less ornamental, just as do frames, spatial construction, figure proportion, pose, and gesture.

WORKING PRACTICE

Scholarship has increasingly been turning attention to the working practices of artists. Important contributions to the literature, though not limited in their focus to Rome, have shed new light on how the monumental fresco projects, which were more common in Rome than elsewhere, were accomplished. Increasingly in the cinquecento, following Raphael's model, large workshops divided up the work for enormous projects. There had been large workshops in Florence in the late quattrocento, like those of Verrocchio and Ghirlandaio, but Raphael showed that the master need not train all the assistants as apprentices. A successful operation could be organized with associates, some of whom were specialists. Giovanni da Udine, for example, who was only five years younger than Raphael, became the workshop's specialist in birds, animals, and *grotteschi*. Raphael established a trend toward workshops that tolerated much more diversity of personal style than their quattrocento predecessors did. By the time of Vasari's Sala dei Cento Giorni at the Palazzo della Cancelleria at mid-century (see Fig. 148), a workshop could be assembled overnight of artists who happened to be available but who had not previously worked with the master.

There was a trend, as well, toward large collaborative projects that would provide a model for the seicento and would continue into the future. The histories frescoed in the Sala Regia, for example, originally planned to be commissioned to one painter, then to two (Daniele da Volterra and Salviati), were eventually assigned by Pope Gregory XIII to thirteen painters, who made no pretense of working in the same style (see Figs. 141, 184, and 187). This was a looser organization than the 1480s project for the Sistine Chapel, when the artists were clearly required to conform to certain predetermined guidelines.

In the tre- and quattrocento it is difficult to separate Florence and Rome in terms of working practices, because most of the innovations originated in Florence and were brought to Rome. But in the

cinquecento the center shifted, and many of the new techniques originated in Rome. Cartoons, to be sure, were first used by the Florentine workshops. Toward the end of the quattrocento painters began to rely on full-scale drawings as the last preparatory step to executing a design. Such cartoons were an outgrowth of the expanded availability of paper and were increasingly necessary as compositions became more complex. Three famous cartoons were made and exhibited in Florence in the first years of the cinquecento (all now lost),³¹ but Raphael's cartoon for the figures of the *School of Athens* survives. We can see how useful it would have been to the workshop that was charged with executing the design, for everything except the colors is present here, including the tonal values. The outlines could be traced (probably using a substitute cartoon prepared in sections for that purpose),³² by pricking them and then dusting the pinholes with charcoal. This pouncing technique was the most popular method of transfer, but for a fresco the outlines might alternatively be incised with a stylus. Michelangelo used both methods of transfer in the Sistine vault (see Plates IX, X, and Figs. 80, 81) and *Last Judgment* (see Fig. 138).³³

The making of these cartoons was enormously expensive, both in terms of materials and labor. It seems clear that painters often used much simpler outline cartoons, and that they made elaborate, detailed cartoons, like the one for the *School of Athens*, as finished works of art. Vasari praised such finished cartoons with fervor, and they were collectors' items, often never used except as the model for the consumable substitute cartoon. It is not surprising then, that as speed and facility came increasingly to be valued, the painters found shortcuts. In fact, the entire process of preparing a composition changed in the course of the first half of the cinquecento.

At the beginning of the century, once the disposition of figures had been determined, the painters made studies of the live model. Splendid chalk studies of this kind from the hands of Raphael and Michelangelo, for example, have come down to us. But in the second quarter of the century an alternative method was introduced that would become very popular. Michelangelo, when he needed to design some four hundred poses for the *Last Judgment*, created small wax figures that could be warmed in hot water and

molded into the desired poses. He could then study them in various lights. This technique obviated the need for studies of the live model, and when those figures had been painted, Michelangelo could reshape the figurines.³⁴ We know that Salviati used this method of studying figure poses as well,³⁵ and that it found its way to Venice, where Tintoretto used it.

Another device to avoid tedious study of the model was sometimes used by painters of midcentury. Artists would make elaborate and detailed figure drawings and then reuse them in a different context when the opportunity permitted. The taste for highly ornamented and artificial poses could mean that the figure fitted its new context more successfully as an ornament than as a convincing expression of the appropriate emotion. Salviati and Vasari in particular drew upon their portfolios.³⁶ This kind of practice disappeared, at least in devotional art, when Counter-Reformation criticism demanded that only those figures called for in the scriptural account be included in the painting.

As we have seen, before the cinquecento there was no native Roman school. Artists obeyed the call of the popes, or anticipated opportunities and came from other parts of the Italian peninsula to work in Rome for a period. This meant that there was little unique to Rome until Julius II determined that the Eternal City would become a monument worthy of symbolizing the Christian empire and began to build and decorate on an unprecedented scale. Such a program required the artists to whom he showed his favor to make their homes in Rome. Beginning with the pontificate of the northerner Adrian VI (1521–3), not only *forestieri* (natives of other parts of the Italian peninsula) but also *stranieri* (people from other countries) flocked to the city. They came to see the sites, ancient and modern, to fill sketchbooks they could take home, and in some cases, to seek employment (though during Adrian's rule there was virtually none). Some of these sketchbooks have proved valuable archaeological documents of the state of monuments, like those of Martin van Heemskerck, who sojourned in Rome from 1532 until 1536 or 1537.³⁷ On the whole the Roman patrons remained loyal to their fellow countrymen, but northern European painters won acknowledged status as specialists in landscape painting, especially landscapes with ruins,

and a number of them were able to make a living in Rome. At the end of the century the Bril brothers were unsurpassed as landscapists, it would seem.³⁸ All this traffic meant that the Roman style was exported across the European continent, and with engraved prints in the hands of proselytizing missionaries, especially the Jesuits, it was exported around the world.



Rome in the Renaissance had gone from being an important artistic center in the late Middle Ages, then had suffered more than a century of abandonment and neglect with the Babylonian Captivity and the Great Schism, while Florence rose to preeminence. Slowly, beginning in the second quarter of the quattrocento, it began to climb back. The concentration of antique remains, the need of the Curia for learned Latinists, and the willingness of the popes to patronize the arts converged to provide the unique set of conditions to make Rome the unrivaled center that it became in the cinquecento. As the center of Christendom and the capital of the Papal States it was necessarily the hub of the religious controversies and the struggle for the political hegemony of Europe that dominated the century. Risen from the ashes of which Petrarch wrote, as quoted by Rowland in Chapter 1, it would never again lose its position as one of the world's greatest centers of art and culture.

NOTES

- 1 The ceremonies of 1513 are described by Jacks (1993), 175–6.
- 2 Chastel (1983), with bibliography, 209–15.
- 3 Madonna (1993).
- 4 D'Amico (1983), xv–xvi.
- 5 Leonard Barkan, *Unearthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).
- 6 Greatly abridged from the Italian original, *Bramante architetto* (Rome: Bari, 1969).
- 7 *Gli affreschi di Paolo III a Castel Sant'Angelo: Progetto ed esecuzione, 1543–1548* (exh. cat. 1981).
- 8 *Oltre Raffaello* (1984).
- 9 See Rubin (1995). Paul Barolsky has contributed important studies of individual artists or anecdotes reported by Vasari, centered principally on Florence: See, for

example, *Michelangelo's Nose: A Myth and Its Maker* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990); *Why Mona Lisa Smiles and Other Tales* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991); *Giotto's Father and the Family of Vasari's Lives* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992).

- 10 Wölfflin (1932), 139.
- 11 Riegl's *Spätrömische Kunst-Industrie* was published in Vienna (K. K. Hof- und Staats-druckerei) in 1901 (trans. Rolf Winkes as *Late Roman Art Industry* [Rome: Bretschneider, 1985]). His lecture notes on baroque art were published posthumously as *Die Entstehung der Barockkunst in Rom* (Vienna: Anton Schroll, 1908). For analysis of Riegl's theory, see Henri Zerner, "Alois Riegl: Art, Value, and Historicism," *Daedalus* 105 (Winter 1976): 177–88.
- 12 A helpful analysis of the literature of mannerism is Elizabeth Cropper's Introduction to Craig Hugh Smyth, *Mannerism and Maniera* [1963], 2d ed. (Vienna: IRSA, 1992), 12–21.
- 13 Hartt's original article (1944) was followed by his monograph on *Giulio Romano* (1958).
- 14 Nesselrath (1992).
- 15 For the bibliography, see Fehl (1993).
- 16 *Burlington Magazine* 101 (1959): 457.
- 17 Freedberg (1961), 14.
- 18 Wohl (1999), especially chap. 4.
- 19 On the *paragone* debate, see Mendelsohn (1982).
- 20 For example, Nagel (2000).
- 21 Cited in *ibid.*, 74.
- 22 Wölfflin (1932).
- 23 "On the Invocation, Veneration, and Relics of Saints, and on Other Sacred Images."
- 24 On the decorum of images under Sixtus V, see Hall (1998).
- 25 On the intention to create transcendental effect with colored marble, see Ostrow (1990).
- 26 Hirst (1981), 73, who credited the late Joyce Plesters of the National Gallery Scientific Department.
- 27 See Colalucci (1992), 30.
- 28 The modes of coloring are fully discussed in Hall (1992), chap. 4.
- 29 Two recent books on the Domus Aurea reproduce illustrations made before the colors had faded to their present deplorable state. They give us an idea of what the Renaissance explorers, who lowered themselves into the underground grottoes of Nero's buried palace, would have seen. Marie-Noëlle Pinot de Villechenon, *Domus Aurea: La decorazione pittorica del palazzo neroiano nell'album delle "Terme di Tito" conservato al Louvre* (Milan: Franco Maria Ricci, 1998), and Irene Iacopi, *Domus Aurea* (Milan: Electa, 1999).
- 30 Stucco was used in the *stufetta* attached to Bibbiena's loggia. On stucco in Raphael's late workshop see *Hochrenaissance im Vatikan* (1998), cat. nos. 316, 321–2.

- 31 Leonardo's *Madonna and Child with Saint Anne*, his *Battle of Anghiari*, and Michelangelo's *Battle of Cascina*. These examples and the whole question of cartoons have been examined by Carmen Bambach (1999). The discussion that follows is based on her exemplary study.
- 32 Substitute cartoons have been studied by Bambach, who explains that they were copies of portions of the full cartoon made to be used and then discarded. See, for example, her "A Substitute Cartoon for Raphael's *Disputa*," *Master Drawings* 30 (1992): 9–30.
- 33 See Bambach's Appendix, where she has tabulated the kind of transfer Michelangelo used in each of the Sistine scenes. It is worth noting that in some instances, like the *Ancestors of Christ* for the flat walls of the lunettes, he did not go through the arduous process of preparing cartoons but painted freehand. Fabrizio Mancinelli described Michelangelo's transfer technique in "The Painting of the *Last Judgment*: History, Technique, and Restoration," in Partridge (1997), 155–86, at 166.
- 34 Giovan Battista Armenini reported Michelangelo's practice in *De' veri precetti della pittura*, his how-to book of 1586: bk. II, chap. ii; trans. and ed. Edward J. Olszewski, *On the True Precepts of the Art of Painting*, Renaissance Sources in Translation (New York: Burt Franklin & Co., 1977), 169.
- 35 Nova (1992), 93, quoting Armenini, bk. III, chap. xv; English edition, 293. For further discussion of working practices see Hall (1999), 159–62.
- 36 See Nova (1992).
- 37 The sketchbook of Marten van Heemskerck was published by Huelsen and Egger (1913–16).
- 38 On landscape, see Francesca Cappelletti, "The Enticement of the North: Landscape, Myth, and Gleaming Metal Supports," 172–205, and Patrizia Cavazzini, "Towards the Pure Landscape," 205–47, both in Brown (2001).