THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

MONOCHROME PAINTING AND THE PERIOD BODY IN ANDREA DEL SARTO'S CLOISTER OF THE SCALZO

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY

BY

CHRISTINE ZAPPELLA

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

JUNE 2022

Copyright 2022 by Christine Zappella. All rights reserved.

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES....................iv

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS....................xv

ABSTRACT....................xviii

CHAPTER I: Introduction....................1

CHAPTER II: Monochromatic Traditions....................64

CHAPTER III: The Meta/ Physics of Light in the Cloister of the Scalzo....................123

CHAPTER IV: The Sex of Monochromy…………....................175

CHAPTER V: The Gender of Monochromy…………………..……………………..293

CONCLUSION....................405

EPILOGUE……………………………………………………………………....423

BIBLIOGRAPHY....................428

APPENDIX A……………………………………………………..……………469

LIST OF FIGURES

The figures have not been included.

Figure 1.1 Piazza del Duomo, Florence.

Figure 1.2 *Angelic hierarchies; Last Judgment; Stories from Genesis; Stories of Joseph; Lives of Mary and Christ; Stories of John the Baptist*, by Cimabue and others, Baptistery, Florence, 1225-1230. Mosaic.

Figure 1.3 *North Doors (Gates of Paradise),* by Lorenzo Ghiberti, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo. Florence, 1402-1422. Gilded bronze, 4.57 x 2.66 m

Figure 1.4 *Palazzo Medici,* by Michelozzo di Bartolomeo Michelozzi. Florence, 1444-1448.

Figure 1.5 *Chiostro dello Scalzo*, by Andrea del Sarto. Florence, 1510-1526. Fresco.

Figure 1.6 *Tympanum* by Benedetto Bugloni (?). Florence, 1514.

Figure 1.7 Plan of Chiostro dello Sclazo showing location of paintings. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florece. Fresco.

Figure 1.8 *Baptism of Christ* by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1514. Fresco. 196 x 211 cm

Figure 1.9 *Charity*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1511-1515. Fresco. 191 x 90 cm

Figure 1.10 *Justice*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1515. Fresco. 191 x 90 cm

Figure 1.11 *The Preaching of St. John the Baptist,* by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1515. Fresco. 196 x 211 cm

Figure 1.12 *The Baptism of the Multitude*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1517. Fresco. 196 x 211 cm

Figure 1.13 *The Arrest of St. John the Baptist,* by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1511-1515. Fresco.

Figure 1.14 *North Architectural Framework*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1515. Fresco.

Figure 1.15 *West Architectural Framework*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1516. Fresco.

Figure 1.16 *The Blessing of St. John the Baptist,* by Franciabigio. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1519. Fresco. 196 x 211 cm

Figure 1.17 *Meeting of Christ in the Desert*, by Franciabigio. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1519. Fresco. 196 x 211 cm

Figure 1.18 *East Architectural Framework*, by Franciabigio. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1519. Fresco.

Figure 1.19 *The Dance of Salome*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1522. Fresco. 196 x 211 cm

Figure 1.20 *South Wall Architectural Framework*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1522.

Figure 1.21 *Execution*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1523. Fresco. 196 x 211 cm

Figure 1.22 *Feast of Herod*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1523. Fresco. 196 x 211 cm

Figure 1.23 *Hope*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1523. Fresco. 191 x 90 cm

Figure 1.24 *Faith*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1523. Fresco. 191 x 90 cm

Figure 1.25 *Annunciation to Zaccariah*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1523. Fresco. 196 x 211 cm

Figure 1.26 *Visitation*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1524. Fresco. 196 x 211 cm

Figure 1.27 *Birth of St. John the Baptist,* by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1526. Fresco. 196 x 211 cm

Figure 1.28 Reconstruction, by John Shearman. *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz, Florence, 1960.*

Figure 1.29 *Detail; Map of Florence showing the Chiostro dello Scalzo and Environs*, by Stefano Buonsignori. Palazzo Vecchio, Florence, 1584. Etching.

Figure 1.30 Detail; Lunettes, by Anonymous. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1722. Fresco.

Figure 1.31 *The Baptism of Christ*, by Lorenzo di Credi. Church of San Domenico, Fiesole, 1510. Tempera and oil on panel.

Figure 1.32 *Detail; The Dance of Salome*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1522. Fresco.

Figure 1.33 *Detail; figura di Dante in The Preaching of St. John the Baptist*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, 1515. Fresco.

Figure 2.1 *Detail; Northwest corner of the Chiostro dello Scalzo, by* Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence. Fresco.

Figure 2.2 *The Green Cloister*, by Paolo Ucello and Others. Santa Maria Novella, Florence, c. 1430. Fresco.

Figure 2.3 *Charity*, by Filippino Lippi. Strozzi Chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence, 1502. Fresco

Figure 2.4 *Detail; Attacking animals,* by Anonymous. San Vincenzo in Castro, Pombia. Fresco.

Figure 2.5 *Detail; Attacking animals* by, Anonymous. San Vincenzo in Castro, Pombia. Fresco.

Figure 2.6 *Detail; hanging curtain*, by Anonymous. San Tommaso Briga, Novarese. Fresco.

Figure 2.7 Detail; monochromatic dado, by Anonymous. San Maurizio, Roccaforte Mondovi. Fresco.

Figure 2.8 *Detail; monochromatic dado*, by Anonymous. San Maurizio, Roccaforte Mondovi. Fresco

Figure 2.9 *The Passion of Christ*, by Anonymous. Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta, Aquileia. Fresco.

Figure 2.10 *Detail; Knights and Warriors*, by Anonymous. Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta, Aquileia. Fresco.

Figure 2.11 *Main apse with Dado*, by Anonymous. Santa Maria Maggiore, Summaga. Fresco.

Figure 2.12 *Detail; Desperation*, by Anonymous. Santa Maria Maggiore, Summaga. Fresco.

Figure 2.13 *Detail; Temperance*, by Anonymous. Santa Maria Maggiore, Summaga. Fresco.

Figure 2.14 *Detail; Flagellants*, by Anonymous. San Bevignate, Perugia. 13th century. Fresco.

Figure 2.15 *Detail; Ranieri Fasani (?),* by Anonymous. San Bevignate, Perugia. 13th century. Fresco.

Figure 2.16 *The Last Judgment,* by Anonymous. San Vincenzo in Castro, Pombia. Fresco.

Figure 2.17 *Scrovegni Chapel, interior*, by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco.

Figure 2.18 *Virtues and Vices*, by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco.

Figure 2.19 *Detail; Faux Stone*, by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco.

Figure 2.20 *Justice*, by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco, 120 x 60 cm

Figure 2.21 *Hope*, by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco, 120 x 60 cm

Figure 2.22 *Faith,* by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco, 120 x 55 cm

Figure 2.23 *Injustice,* by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco 120 x 60 cm

Figure 2.24 *Envy*, by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco, 120 x 55cm

Figure 2.25 *Inconstancy*, by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco, 120 x 55 cm

Figure 2.26 *Desperation*, by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco, 120 x 60 cm

Figure 2.27 *Anger*, by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco, 120 x 55 cm

Figure 2.28 *Detail;* Caiaphas, by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco.

Figure 2.29 *Detail;* The Last Judgment, by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco.

Figure 2.30 *Detail;* The Last Judgment, by Giotto. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. c. 1305. Fresco.

Figure 2.31 *Interior view of chapter house*, by Master of the Pomposa. Chapter house Santa Maria, Pomposa. 1310-1318. Fresco.

Figure 2.32 *St. Peter and St. Benedict*, by Master of the Pomposa. Chapter house, Santa Maria, Pomposa. 1310-1318. Fresco.

Figure 2.33 *St. Paul and St. Guido*, by Master of the Pomposa Chapter house. Santa Maria, Pomposa. 1310-1318. Fresco.

Figure 2.34 *Prophets (south wall)*, by Master of the Pomposa Chapter house. Santa Maria, Pomposa. 1310-1318. Fresco.

Figure 2.35 *Prophets (north wall*), by Master of the Pomposa Chapter house. Santa Maria, Pomposa. 1310-1318. Fresco.

Figure 2.36 *Plan of paintings in chapter house*. Santa Maria Pomposa. Fresco.

Figure 2.37 *Detail; Thebaid and Scenes from the Life of St. Jerome*, by Circle of Lorenzetti. Santa Maria della Scala, Siena. c.1380. Fresco.

Figure 2.38 *Detail; Thebaid and Scenes from the Life of St. Jerome,* by Circle of Lorenzetti. Santa Maria della Scala, Siena. c. 1380. Fresco.

Figure 2.39 *Detail; Thebaid and Scenes from the Life of St. Jerome*, by Circle of Lorenzetti. Santa Maria della Scala, Siena. c. 1380. Fresco.

Figure 2.40 *Thebaid*, by Gregorio da Cecco. Santa Marta, Siena. Between 1390 and 1424. Fresco.

Figure 2.41 *Scenes from Life During a War,* by Gualtieri di Giovanni. Eremeto, Lecceto. 1442. Fresco.

Figure 2.42 *Scenes from the Life of St. Augustine*, by Gualtieri di Giovanni. Eremeto, Lecceto. c. 1442. Fresco.

Figure 2.43 *Scenes Under the Cross*, by Giovanni di Paolo. San Leonardo, Lago. 1445. Fresco.

Figure 2.44 *Passion Cycle*, by Giovanni di Paolo. Sant'Agostino, Monticiani. 1450. Fresco.

Figure 2.45 *Thebaid and Scenes from the Old and New Testament*, by Stefano d'Antonio. Pieve di S. Andrea, Cercina. 1450. Fresco.

Figure 2.46 *Scenes of Monastic Life,* by Paolo Ucello. San Miniato al Monte, Florence. 1447-1454. Fresco.

Figure 2.47 Exterior. Orsanmichele, Florence.

Figure 2.48 *Interior; Portinari Altarpiece*, by Hugo van der Goes. Uffizi, Florence. 1475–1478. Oil on panel.

Figure 2.49 *Exterior; Portinari Altar piece,* by Hugo van der Goes. Uffizi, Florence. 1475–1478. Oil on panel.

Figure 2.50 *Sassetti Altarpiece*, by Domenico Ghirlandaio. Santa Trinità, Florence. 1485. Tempera on panel.

Figure 2.51 *Interior; Triptych*, by Mariotto Albertinelli. Museo Poldo Pezzoli, Milan. 1500. Oil on panel.

Figure 2.52 *Exterior; Triptych*, by Mariotto Albertinelli. Museo Poldo Pezzoli, Milan. 1500. Oil on panel.

Figure 2.53 *Annunciation panel*, by Fra Bartolomeo. Uffizi, Florence. 1497. Oil on panel. 31 x 30 cm

Figure 2.54 *Annunciation Diptych*, by Jan van Eyck. Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid. 1434-1436. Oil on panel.

Figure 2.55 *Narbonne Altarcloth*, by Master of the Parement. Louvre, Paris. 1364-1378. Grisaille on silk.

Figure 2.56 *Interior*; Ghent Altarpiece, by Hubert and Jan van Eyck. St. Bavo, Ghent. 1432. Oil on panel.

Figure 2.57 *Exterior; Ghent Altarpiece*, by Hubert and Jan van Eyck. St. Bavo, Ghent. 1432. Oil on panel.

Figure 2.58 *The Baptism of Christ*, by Andrea Verocchio and Leonardo da Vinci. Uffizi, Florence. 1475. Oil on panel.

Figure 2.59 *The Baptism of Christ*, by Theodore Krüger. British Museum, London. 1617. Engraving.

Figure 3.1 *Plan of the Scalzo*, by Alfonso Parigi. BNCF MS Palatino 853 (old numeration 741-21,2), fol. 38v1570-1590.

Figure 3.2 *Crucifix*, by Antonio da Sangallo the Elder. San Domenico, Fiesole.15th century. Wood.

Figure 3.3 *Possible Portrait of Dante*, by Giotto. Bargello, Florence. 1335. Fresco.

Figure 3.4 *Portrait of Dante,* by Benozzo Gozzoli. 1449. Fresco.

Figure 3.5 *Portrait of Dante*, by Andrea dal Castagno. Uffizi, Florence. c. 1450. Fresco, transferred to wood, 250 x 154 cm

Figure 3.6 *Portrait of Dante*, by Domenico di Michelino. Santa Maria del Fiore, Florence. c. 1465. Fresco.

Figure 3.7 *Portrait of Dante*, by Alessandro Botticelli. Private collection. 1495. Tempera on canvas.

Figure 3.8 *Detail; Parnassus*, by Raphael Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican. 1511. Fresco.

Figure 3.9 *Detail; Disputation of the Holy Sacrament*, by Raphael Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican. 1509-1510. Fresco.

Figure 3.10 *Dante*, by Luca Signorelli. Chapel of San Brizio, Duomo, Orvieto. 1499-1502. Fresco. 432 x 432 cm

Figure 3.11 *Detail; Ecce Homo (no. 8),* by Dürer. Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY. 1512. Engraving. 11.8 × 7.5 cm

Figure 3.12 *Groteschi*, by Leonardo. Windsor Castle, Royal Library, Windsor. c. 1494. Pen and ink. 17.2 x 14.3 cm

Figure 3.13 *Torrigiani Death Mask*, by Tullio Lombardo (?). Palazzo Vecchio, Florence. 1483(?). Stone.

Figure 4.1 *Battle of Cascina (after Michelangelo*), by Aristotile da Sangallo. Holkham Hall, Norfolk. c. 1542. Oil on panel. 77 cm x 130 cm

Figure 4.2 *Detail; The Baptism of the Multitude*, by Andrea del Sarto. The Chiostro dello Scalzo.

Figure 4.3 *The Last Judgment*, by Michelangelo. Sistine Chapel, Vatican City. 1536–1541. Fresco. 13.7 m × 12 m

Figure 4.4 *Judith*, by Donatello. Palazzo Vecchio, Florence. 1455–1460. Bronze. 236cm

Figure 4.5 Florin. Gold.

Figure 4.6 *Mona Lisa*, by Leonardo. Louvre, Paris. c. 1503–1506, perhaps continuing until c. 1517. Oil on panel. 77 × 53 cm

Figure 4.7 *Self-Portrait at the Age of 28,* by Durer. Alte Pinakothek, 1500. Oil on panel. 67.1 × 48.9cm

Figure 4.8 *Baptism of Christ (after a lost work by Rogier van der Weyden)*, by Dutch Master. Städel Museum, Frankfurt. 1510. Oil on oak panel. 45.1 x 27.9 cm

Figure 4.9 *The Baptism of Christ*, by Andrea Sansovino. Museo dell' Opera del Duomo, Florence. 1502-05. Marble. 282 cm and 260 cm with bases.

Figure 4.10 *The Birth of Venus*, by Alessandro Botticelli. Uffizi, Florence. c. 1484–1486. Tempera on canvas. 172.5 × 278.9 cm

Figure 4.11 *Meeting of Christ and John in the Desert*, by Theodor Krüger. 1617. Engraving.

Figure 4.12 *David*, by Michelangelo. Galleria dell' Accademia, Florence. 1501-1504. Marble, once with gilded elements. 517 × 199 cm

Figure 4.13 *David*, by Donatello. Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence. 1440s?. Bronze. h. 158 cm

Figure 4.14 *Reconstruction: the David*, by Art Firenze.

Figure 4.15 *Charity*, by Sansovino. Private collection. Terracotta.

Figure 4.16 *Charity*, by Andrea del Sarto. Louvre, Paris. 1518. Oil on canvas (transferred). 185 x 137 cm

Figure 4.17 *Charity, by Andrea del Sarto*. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. 1530. Oil on panel. 119.5 x 92.5 cm

Figure 4.18 *Crucifixion*, by Lucas Cranach the Elder. Alte Pinakothek, Munich. 1513. Oil on panel. 138 x 99 cm

Figure 4.19 *The Baptism of the Multitude, after Andrea del Sarto*, by Giovanbattista Naldini. Museo di San Salvi, Florence. 16th century. Oil on panel.

Figure 4.20 *Detail; The Baptism of the Multitude*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence. 1517. Fresco.

Figure 4.21 *Detail; The Baptism of the Multitude*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence. 1517. Fresco.

Figure 4.22 *Detail; The Effects of Bad Government,* by Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Sala dei Novi, City Hall, Siena. 1338-1339. Fresco.

Figure 4.23 *Detail; The Baptism of the Multitude*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence. 1517. Fresco.

Figure 4.24 *Detail; The Life of St. John the Baptist (three scenes*), by Anonymous. Baptistery, Florence. Mosaic.

Figure 4.25 *Detail; South Doors*, by Andrea Pisano. Baptistery, Florence. 1330. Gilded bronze. 486 x 280cm

Figure 4.26 *Dance of Salome* by Giotto. Peruzzi Chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence. c. 1315. Fresco. 280 x 450cm

Figure 4.27 *Dance of Salome*, by Filippo Lippi. Church of Santo Stefano, Prato. 1465. Fresco.

Figure 4.28 *Dance of Salome*, by Domenico Ghirlandaio. Tornabuoni Chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence. 1485-1490. Fresco.

Figure 4.29 *Life of St. John the Baptist and The Life of St. Stephen*, by Filippo Lippi. Church of Santo Stefano, Prato. 1465. Fresco.

Figure 4.30 *Detail; Life of St. John the Baptist (placement of Salome),* by Filippo Lippi. Church of Santo Stefano, Prato. 1465. Fresco.

Figure 4.31 *Detail; Dance of Salome (Salome's face)*, by Theodor Krüger. 1617. Engraving.

Figure 4.32 *Study for The Arrest of St. John the Baptist*, by Andrea del Sarto. Louvre, Paris. Before 1517.

Figure 4.33 *Detail; The Dance of Salome, by Andrea del Sart*o. Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence. By 1522. Fresco.

Figure 4.34 *Detail; The Dance of Salome Andrea del Sarto*, by Chiostro dello Scalzo. Florence. By 1522. Fresco.

Figure 4.35 *Detail; The Dance of Salome*, by Andrea del Sarto. Chiostro dello Scalzo. Florence. By 1522. Fresco.

Figure 4.36 *David (reverse),* by Michelangelo. Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence. 1501-1504. Marble, once with gilded elements. 517 × 199 cm

Figure 4.37 *The Treachery of Images*, by René Magritte. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles. 1928-29. Oil on canvas. 60.33 × 81.12 cm

Figure 5.1 *School of Athens Cartoon,* by Raphael. Ambrosiana, Milan. 1509. Charcoal, Preliminary cartoon, White Lead. 285 × 804 cm

Figure 5.2 *Battle of Anghiari*, by Rubens (after Leonardo). Louvre, Parris. Before 1550 (drawing), circa 1603 (retouching and enlargement). Black chalk, pen in brown ink, brush in brown and gray ink, gray wash, heightened in white and gray-blue. 45.3 x 63.6 cm

Figure 5.3 *Drawing of Coition of Hemisected Man and Woman*, by Leonardo. Windsor Castle. 1492. pen and ink.

Figure 5.4 *Nativity of the Virgin*, by Andrea del Sarto. SS. Annunziata, Florence. 1513-1514. Fresco. 410 × 340 cm

Figure 5.5 *Madonna of the Harpies*, by Andrea del Sarto. Uffizi, Florence. 1517. Oil on wood. 208 × 178 cm

Figure 5.6 *Study for John the Evangelist in The Madonna of the Harpies*, by Andrea del Sarto. Louvre, Paris. Before 1517. Red chalk.

Figure 5.7 *Study for John the Baptist*, by Andrea del Sarto. Uffizi, Florence. By 1517.

Figure 5.8 *Madonna of Sant'Ambrogio (after Andrea del Sarto)*, by Jacopo da Empoli. Stokes Poges Church Buckinghamshire, United Kingdom.

Figure 5.9 *Rape of the Sabine Giambologna*, by Loggia di Lanzi. Florence, 1579-83. Marble. h. 410cm

Figure 5.10 *Charity*, by Filippino Lippi. Strozzi Chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence. 1487-1490. Fresco.

Figure 5.11 *Justice*, Designed by Bartolomeo Ammannati, carved by Francesco del Tadda (Ferucci) and son. Piazza Santa Trinità, Florence. 1580. Purple porphyry and bronze.

Figure 5.12 *Justice*, by Jacopo Sansovino. Tomb of Ascanio Sforza in Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome. 16th century. Marble.

Figure 5.13 *Charity*, Jacopo Sansovino. Palazzo Serman, Venice. 16th century. Papier maché

Figure 5.14 *Charity*, by Jacopo Sansovino. Doge's Palace, Venice. 16th century. Marble.

Figure 5.15 *Baglioni Altarpiece (predella fragments)*, by Raphael. Vatican, Vatican City. 1507. Tempera grassa on wood. 18 x 44 cm each

Figure 5.16 *Faith*, by Master of the E-Series Tarocchi. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. c. 1465. Engraving with gilding. 17.8 x 9.9 cm

Figure 5.17 *Hope*, by Master of the E-Series Tarocchi. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. c. 1465. Engraving with gilding. 17.8 x 9.9 cm

Figure 5.18 *Faith,* by Master of the Mantegna Tarocchi. Bibliotèque Nationale de France, Paris. c. 1465. Engraving.

Figure 5.19 *Hope,* by Master of the Mantegna Tarocchi. Bibliotèque Nationale de France, Paris. c. 1465. Engraving.

Figure 5.20 *Nativity of the Virgin*, by Francesco di Giorgio Martini. Bichi Chapel, Sant'Agostino, Siena. 1490. Fresco.

Figure 5.21 *Nativity of Christ*, by Francesco di Giorgio Martini. Bichi Chapel, Sant'Agostino, Siena. 1490. Fresco.

Figure 5.22 *Pala Bichi (reconstruction)*, by Luca Signorelli.

Figure 5.23 *The Battle of the Centaurs and the Lapiths*, by Michelangelo. Casa Buonarotti, Florence. 1492. Marble. 84.5 × 90.5cm

Figure 5.24 *Rondanini Pietá*, by Michelangelo. Castelo Sforzesca, Milan. Marble. 195 cm

Figure 5.25 *Page from Il Libro dei Disegni*, by Giorgio Vasari with drawings by Filippino Lippi, Botticelli, and Raffaellino del Garbo. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. Framework 1524. Album page with ten drawings on recto and verso in various media with decoration in pen and brown ink, brown and gray wash, on light buff paper. 56.7 x 45.7cm

Figure 5.26 *Cleopatra, by Michelangelo.* Casa Buonarotti. Florence. c. 1535. Black pencil. 232 x 182mm

Figure 5.27 *Pietá*, by Michelangelo. Isabella Stewart Gardener Museum, Boston. 1540. Black chalk on paper. 28.9 x 18.9cm

Figure 5.28 *Assumption of the Virgin*, Andrea del Sarto. Galleria Palatina, Florence.

Figure 5.29 *St. Anne Altarpiece*, by Fra Bartolomeo. San Marco, Florence. c. 1510. Oil on canvas. 218 x 149cm

Figure 5.30 *Study after the Medici Madonna,* by Rafaello da Montelupo. Louvre, Paris.

Figure 5.31 *Portrait of Raphael in a Cloak*, by Marcantonio Raimondi. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. c. 1517-1519. Engraving. 13.7 × 10.5cm

Figure 5.32 *Visitation (after Andrea del Sarto)*, by Giovanni Battista Naldini. Cenacolo di San Salvi, Florence. 16th century. Oil on panel.

Figure 5.33 *Birth of John the Baptist (after Andrea del Sarto)*, by Giovanni Battista Naldini. Cenacolo di San Salvi, Florence. 16th century. Oil on panel.

Figure 5.34 *Baptism of the Multitude (after Andrea del Sarto)*, by Giovanni Battista Naldini. Cenacolo di San Salvi, Florence. 16th century. Oil on panel.

Figure 5.35 *Arrest of John the Baptist (after Andrea del Sarto)*, by Giovanni Battista Naldini. Cenacolo di San Salvi, Florence. 16th century. Oil on panel.

Figure 6.1 *Reclining female with Two Putti*, by Andrea del Sarto. Uffizi, Florence. 1513(?). Gouache on Canvas. 56 x 142cm

Figure 6.2 *Reclining males with Armor*, by Andrea del Sarto. Uffizi, Florence. 1513(?). Gouache on Canvas. 57 x 114cm

Figure 6.3 *Warriors with Lances,* by Jacopo da Pontormo. Uffizi, Florence. 1513 (?). Gouache on Canvas. 90 x 66cm

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Any individual's intellectual output comes to exist within multiple overlapping networks of friends and colleagues. The person most responsible for the existence of this dissertation, though, is my adviser at the University of Chicago, Charles Cohen. He has been a constant source of intellectual and emotional support throughout graduate school and I will be forever grateful to him. A bounty of thanks is also due to Niall S. Atkinson. Classes, discussions, and arguments with him in Chicago, Italy, and elsewhere have fundamentally altered my approach to art history, which, I am sure he sees, is evident in this dissertation. I am also indebted to Rebecca Zorach for her help in conceiving and approaching this project. Her thoughtful and political scholarship serves as a model for the kinds of histories I want to write. This project would also not have come to fruition without the help and support of Elizabeth Pilliod, a true scholar of the art and personalities of sixteenth-century Florence, whose intellectual generosity and academic rigor remain an inspiration to the scholars around her. I am also quick to acknowledge the support of Margaret Morgan Grasselli, a generous mentor who taught me almost everything I know about both early-modern drawings and curating in museums.

A huge debt of gratitude is due as well to many professors I met at the University of Chicago and whose intellectual generosity I benefitted from, especially Susana Caviglia-Brunel, Claudia Brittenham, and Christine Mehring. I was also aided throughout the writing of this dissertation by professors outside of my own institution who took an interest in and helped me articulate my work, foremost among whom were Sheryl Reiss, Julia DeLancey, Dr. Lisa O'Neill Sanders, and Louis Alexander Waldman.

A year of research in Florence was instrumental in shaping this dissertation. It would not have been possible without the support of Alessandro Nova, who hosted me at the

Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz. I am also grateful to Janis Bell for visiting and discussing the Cloister of the Scalzo with me as well as the staff at the Archivio di Stato di Firenze for their generous help with documents. I also owe a huge debt of gratitude to Alana O'Brien, who has never hesitated to share documents, insights, and references with me and without whose published research this project would never have been possible.

Dear friends and colleagues whom I met in and outside of my own institution also deserve much thanks. Foremost among these are Kelli Wood, Cosette Bruhns Alonso, Ingrid Greenfield, Martin Schwarz, Caroline Altekruse, Barry Torch, Steven J. Cody, Tiffany Lynn Hunt, Lynette Hish, Savannah Esquivel, Kris Driggers, Sean Roberts, Dario Brancato, Rebecca Howard, Catherine Walsh, Megan Boomer, Hannah Segrave, Ashley Dimmig, and Hanne Graverson.

Throughout my time in graduate school, I received generous funding from the Art History Department at the University of Chicago to study language, research abroad, and write. Travel funding was also provided by the Nicholson Center for British Studies at the University of Chicago and the Sixteenth Century Society and Conference. I am particularly grateful to this society for its generous intellectual support of my dissertation research as well as the many enthusiastic scholars, not yet named in these acknowledgements, who gave me feedback and encouragement when I presented there in 2019, including Meredith Gill, Eric Hupe, James Clifton, Blake de Maria, and Jeffrey Chipps Smith. I also am thankful both to the Newberry Library in Chicago for allowing me to participate in its summer seminar in Italian paleography as well as the Harvard Art Museums for the knowledge and relationships formed in its first ever Summer Institute for the Technical Study of Art. I was also funded through internships and

fellowships at the National Gallery of Art, the Frick Collection, The Art Institute of Chicago, and the Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin.

Thanks are especially due to the wonderful friends and colleagues whom I had the privilege of working with in those museums, who supported me and helped me develop a greater understanding of early-modern art, especially: at the National Gallery of Art in Washington—Sue Cook, Jonathan Bober, David Gariff, Eric Denker, and Rodrick McElveen; at the Art Institute of Chicago—Rebecca Long, Elizabeth Wigfield, and Martha Wolff; and at the Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin—Holly Borham and Rosario Granadas-Salinas.

None of this, of course, could ever have been accomplished without the support of my family, especially, my mother Maryann Zappella; my sisters, Angela and Francesca; as well as my niece Elena and nephew Gabe. I am also grateful to Gabe Hopkins, who may as well be family. I would have never finished this dissertation, though, without the love, support, and encouragement of my husband, Alex Papanastassiou; his parents, Teri and Dimitri Papanastassiou; my children, Tess and Sandro; and my aunt Barbara Schulman.

ABSTRACT

From 1510 to 1526, all four interior walls of the Cloister of the Scalzo in Florence were frescoed with a monumental, *chiaroscuro* fresco cycle by renowned Florentine painter Andrea del Sarto (1486-1530). The cycle consists of twelve scenes from the life of John the Baptist, four allegorical figures of *Virtues*, and an entirely fictive architectural framework that organizes the space of the open-air atrium. The paintings were commissioned by the flagellant Florentine lay confraternity of St. John the Baptist, called the Scalzo.

Situating Baxandall's "period eye" in a period body, this dissertation examines the multiple ways that the cycle's monochromy may have activated overlapping networks of meaning-making, both cognitive and physiological, when experienced by a confraternity member in ritual context. To demonstrate, analyze, interpret, and even test the limits of possible embodied experiences, I begin each chapter with a passage of "critical story-telling," a third-person, omniscient, fictional narrative that, across the dissertation, follows the ritual experience of "the brother" into and out of his confraternal space. Demonstrating the narrative structure to be used throughout the dissertation and establishing cultural and geographic context, Chapter I follows the brother as he begins his journey through the streets of Florence before dawn to the Cloister of the Scalzo. In Chapter II, a historical and artistic contextualization of the *chiaroscuro* cycle is foregrounded by an imagining of the brother's entry into and experience in the cloister before morning services. Viewership of the claustral cycle is considered alongside that of its proper formal and spiritual precedents, Italian and Flemish monochrome painting, which promoted the perception of the decorated cloister as a physically and spiritually liminal space. Following the brother through his flagellant rituals, Chapter III considers the possibility for the brothers' emergence into the cloister after services to activate a symbolic, synaesthetic light

metaphor that was experienced by the body. This metaphor is related to significant liturgical features of Christian worship as well as to contemporary ideas about the symbolism and potential perception of divine light. Assessing the potential for transgressive sexual relationship between members, Chapter IV explored the possibility that monochromy's association with transcendence as well as its apparent pictorial artificiality elevated the perceived decorum of Andrea's images, allowing him to execute erotic compositions that underscored the need for close but ultimately-chaste homosocial relationships that contributed to the stability of Florentine society. The brother's participation in an art-theoretical argument among members introduces the final chapter of this dissertation, which explores embodied viewership of the cloister as a potential masculinity- and identity-constructing performance.

This dissertation thus demonstrates that color perception was integral to early-modern people's experience of ritual, their awareness of differences in ontologies, and their assessment of propriety, especially relating to gendered identity-construction. It furthermore shows that by regulating the kinds of human interactions and social performances possible in front of images and in the built environment, color perception can be construed as an early-modern hermeneutic for the negotiating of identity in space and the maintenance or dismantling of social order.

Chapter I: Introduction

1. Prologue

The brother hated the cold. He knew he should be used to it but he was always surprised how the cool air seemed to roll down from the hills surrounding Florence and pool in the urban valley overnight, making even some summer mornings feel chilly. By the afternoon, it would be hot. Uncomfortably so. But right now he felt so cold he was surprised that he could not see his breath in front of him or the few people he passed in the dark. He scrunched his shoulders and crossed his arms in front of his chest for warmth, but also to make himself as small as possible. Most of these streets were claustrophobic, he thought, and didn't smell great either. But to be a Florentine when he could have been born anywhere else? The countryside, the New World, or God forbid, Rome? He cringed. No thank you. He'd manage.

Of course, he could have already arrived at the confraternity. But he had decided to take the long way there. Up ahead he could begin to see the reason why: the radiating chapels of Santa Maria del Fiore (fig. 1.1) were coming into view and, as he walked closer, Brunelleschi's cupola that topped it. The dome was a marvel, to be sure, and he was happy to see it. But that's not why he endured the extra time in the cold.

Finally reaching the end of the street, the piazza opened up. There, in front of the church's unfinished façade and adjacent to Giotto's soaring bell tower, was the city's octagonal baptistery. As striking as it was from the outside, the interior (fig. 1.2), he knew, was dazzling—covered in the shining mosaics under which every Florentine baby, himself included, had been

baptized.[1] He walked towards it. The baptistery was one of his city's oldest and most holy buildings, its golden portals, he believed, the most beautiful in Italy, which to him meant the most beautiful in the world. He stopped in front of the baptistery's gilded northern doors (fig. 1.3), which had been fabricated by the long-dead Florentine artist Lorenzo Ghiberti. The doors were so beautiful, it was said, that Michelangelo himself had called them the Gates of Paradise.[2]

It was not mandatory, of course, that before the brother go to morning services he pay his respects to John the Baptist, patron saint of the building, the city, and his confraternity. But that's what he did. It made him feel better to think about John's suffering, how even as a little child the Baptist had left his family and went to suffer in the desert, an ascetic, surviving on only the locusts and wild honey he could forage, dressing himself only in a blanket of camel hair belted with shriveled leather at the waist.[3] What had it been like? Hadn't he been scared out there? Did he even believe his eyes when he saw his cousin, aunt, and uncle—Jesus, Mary, and Joseph—crossing the desert towards him?[4] How had it felt to part from them, secretly sure (for the brother was certain John must have known) that he was just as doomed as his cousin? And when that

[1] On baptism in Florence, refer to Richard Trexler. 1980. *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*. (NY: Academic Press), 48. On the baptistery mosaics, refer to Miklós Boskovits, Richard Offner, and Klara Steinweg. 2007. *The Mosaics of the Baptistery of Florence*. (Florence: Giunti).

[2] Giorgio Vasari and Gaetano Milanesi. 1878-1885. *Le vite de' più eccelenti pittori, scultori, ed architettori*. Vol. II. (Florence: G. C. Sansoni), 242: "*…un giorno Michelagnolo Buonarroti fermatosi a veder questo lavoro, e dimandato quel che glie ne paresse, e se queste porte eran belle, rispose: 'Elle son tanto belle, ch'elle starebbon bene alle porte del Paradiso'…"* (Hereafter Vasari-Milanesi).

[3] Mathew 3:4: "John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey."

[4] On the meeting of John and Christ in the Wilderness, refer to Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, "Giovannino Battista: A Study in Renaissance Religious Symbolism," *The Art Bulletin* 37.2 (1955): 85-101 along with "Giovannino Battista: A Supplement," *The Art Bulletin* 43.4 (1961): 323, which demonstrated that the iconography of John meeting the Christ child in the desert after the repose of the Holy Family in Egypt became an important mainstay of Florentine painting in the fifteenth century.

death came, at the hands of a friend and through the treachery of women, what were his last thoughts as he stared at the ground and heard the executioner's gleaming metal sword slice through the air towards the back of his exposed, sunburnt neck?[5] Had he forgiven them, like Christ? Or was John not Christ-like enough as, the brother suspected, he, himself, would not have been? The brother immediately felt remorse, even a little shock at himself. Of course the Baptist had forgiven them. The brother would have tried to, too.

"*Pater, filius, et spiritus sanctus*," he said in his head as he made the sign of the cross and continued onto Via Martelli.[6] Once the home of Florence's sword makers but now dominated by the Palazzo Martelli, this street turned into Via Larga, where the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist was located.[7] Even in the dark he could make out the hulking shape of the Palazzo Medici (fig. 1.4) just ahead. He had to admit it—no matter what you thought about the family, their palace really was impressive. Its three ascending tiers of rusticated to polished stone seemed at once to sit firmly on the ground and to soar upwards. Well, he thought, it wasn't quite so impressive now that Donatello's bronze *David* had been taken from its courtyard and placed in the Palazzo della Signoria's after they'd exiled the Medici from the city.[8] But, he shrugged to

---

[5] On the multiple ways in which Florentines interpreted the orchestration of John the Baptist's death at the hands of Herod and to what degree Herodias and Salome were held accountable for the saint's death, especially as depicted in Florentine art of early modernity, refer to Jane C. Long, "Dangerous Women: Observations on the Feast of Herod in Florentine Art of the Early Renaissance," *Renaissance Quarterly* 66. 4 (2013): 1153–1205.
[6] Guido Carocci. 1899. By'Gone Florence. (Florence: Galletti and Cocci), 33-34.
[7] Carocci, *By'Gone Florence*, 33.
[8] On the David's commissioning and movement as it related to Medicean politics, refer especially to, Sarah Blake McHam, "Donatello's Bronze 'David' and 'Judith' as Metaphors of Medici Rule in Florence," *The Art Bulletin* 83, no. 1 (2001): 32–47; Christine M. Sperling, "Donatello's Bronze 'David' and the Demands of Medici Politics," *The Burlington Magazine* 134.1069 (1992): 218–24; Roger J. Crum, "Severing the Neck of Pride: Donatello's 'Judith and Holofernes' and the Recollection of Albizzi Shame in Medicean Florence," *Artibus et Historiae* 22.44 (2001): 23–2; as well as his "Donatello's Bronze 'David' and the Question of Foreign versus Domestic Tyranny," *Renaissance Studies* 10, no. 4 (1996): 440–50; and Allie Terry.

himself, what did that matter now that Florence was once again under their rule? And how would history remember them, the brother wondered as he continued to walk up Via Larga.

Despite the early hour, there were many people moving about Piazza San Marco when he finally reached it. He barely noticed them. Just past the basilica and across the street from the enclosed garden behind it was his confraternal home. Though he could not yet make out the portal to the complex it was hard to think about anything else. It was the third Sunday of the month. That meant that within the hour he would find himself besides his brethren in the dark, cramped space of the *luogo vecchio*, the old place, throwing a whip over his own shoulder that, he knew, would come cracking down onto his back over and over again drawing out bright, red welts.[9] Or worse. He thought again about John the Baptist, bent over, waiting for the sound of the executioner's sword. It was just a rope, after all. Well, three ropes.[10]

He was even early enough to spend time in the cloister (fig. 1.5), he consoled himself. That was reason enough to submit to self-flagellation. Was it blasphemous to think that? Maybe. But surely he wasn't the only brother who did. He was sure, after all, that access to Andrea del

---

"Donatello's Decapitations and the Rhetoric of Beheading in Medicean Florence," *Renaissance Studies* 23.5 (2009): 609–38.

[9] The confraternity's statutes of 1579 read: CapCRS 80, 3r-3v: "*Ancora ordiniamo che nelle nostre tornate si dichino li sette salmi penitentiali con le letani et oration et con l'oratione e versetti et antifona del nostro Padre San Giovambattista e finite li psalmi si dica l'uffitio de la gloriosa Vergine Maria e finite l'uffitio debba il Governatore con semplicità e con quello spirito che Dio li somministra esortare alla frequenza della casa li Fratelli di quella mostrando loro l'obligo grande che hanno con Dio per il particular benfitto ricevuto dell'essere à quell'hora ragunati nella casa del Sig[no]re et esortanto ciascuno alla penitenza impongo il salmo Miserr[er]e mei Deus et tra tanto si invijno al luogo Vecchio dove si facia la disciplina pregando che ciascuno de Fratelli che può la eserciti et in quella finalmente raccomendando à Dio tutto il bisogno dello stato ecclesiastico et temporali accio che si eserciti l'atto della santa Charità*."

[10] On the tympanum above the entrance to the door to the confraternity, refer to Douglas Dow, "Evidence for Buglioni's Authorship of the Glazed Terra-cotta Tympanum at the Chiostro dello Scalzo," *Notes in the History of Art* 29.2 (2010): 15-20.

Sarto's cloister frescoes was the very reason so many artists had joined the confraternity.[11] And who could blame them? In his time, Andrea had been the greatest painter in Florence, summoned by the king of France to his court at Fontainebleau to work for him there.[12] Ok, that hadn't worked out very well, but all the better for us, the brother thought, considering that if Andrea had stayed there the confraternity's cloister would have been painted almost entirely by Franciabigio.[13] Franciabigio was a fine painter.[14] But he wasn't Andrea. No one was. (Not even Raphael, thought the brother, no matter what anybody said).

So, thank God Andrea had come back from France to finish the cloister. After all, who could handle paint like that these days, the brother asked. Andrea had covered the entirety of the cloister's four walls in illusionistic architecture, framing his twelve paintings showing important moments from the life of John the Baptist, all practically life-size. And you can't forget, he thought, the four allegorical *Virtues*—the beautiful women who stood on either side of the cloister's two portals, looking more like sculptures than some of the marble ones that adorned the public streets of Florence. Of course, all of this was possible only because Andrea had painted

---

[11] On the many Florentine artists who became members of the confraternity, refer to Alana O'Brien, "'Maestri d'Alcune Arti Miste e d'Ingegno': Artists and Artisans in the Compagnia dello Scalzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 55.3 (2013): 358-433.
[12] On Andrea's waxing and waning reputation from his own time until modern, refer to Serena Padovani. "Il Pittori Senza Errori," in *Andrea del Sarto, dipinti e disegni a Firenze*. (Florence: 1986), 59-68.
[13] On Andrea's time in the court of France, refer to John Shearman. 1965. *Andrea del Sarto*. Vol. I. (London: Oxford University Press), 1-4, which he places at the beginning of Andrea's "Heroic Style." Shearman's characterization of Andrea's temperament and biography is heavily based on the biography by Giorgio Vasari, according to whom Andrea returned to France at the behest of his wife carrying a large sum of money from the King of France, which he was meant to return. Vasari alleges that instead, Andrea bought a home in Florence with the money and never returned to France. I comment on this episode from his life in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.
[14] On the life and career of Franciabigio, refer to the definitive volume by Susan Regan McKillop. 1974. *Franciabigio*. (Berkeley: University of California Press). For his work in the Scalzo in particular refer to pages 63-65.

the cloister *in chiaroscuro*—that is, *in terreta*.[15] Yes, Andrea had practically used only one color in the entire cloister. The brother wasn't sure why the elders had decided that, but he was glad they did. Of course, they did have him embellish it with gilding, so both its beauty and value could be worthy of John the Baptist. It was no wonder the cloister teamed with young copyists, each trying to internalize the deceased master's style (the confraternity really needed to do something about them, he grumbled to himself).[16] No wonder that Andrea's students were becoming the most renowned painters in Florence and even throughout Europe.[17] Thank God for all of us, the brother thought again, that Andrea came back from France.

The brother stopped. He had finally made it up the long street and reached the entrance to the confraternity. From above the door, St John the Baptist's bright white face peaked out at him from over the ledge of a sculpted terra cotta tympanum (fig. 1.6). The Baptist looked sad, maybe sympathetic, the brother thought. And though it was too dark to see them, the brother knew that

---

[15] Vasari-Milanesi, V, 9. "…intorno *a detto chiostro, in dodici quadri di chiaroscuro, cioè di torretta, in fresco, dodici storie della vita di San Giovanbattista.*"

[16] On the confraternity's moves to prevent copyists from disturbing their worship, refer to Alana O'Brien, "Who Holds the Keys to the Chiostro dello Scalzo, 'Scuola di Molto Giovanni,'" *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 63.2 (2021): 233 as well as Appendix II, documents 1-3. O'Brien relates that as early as 1534 Scalzo administration was prohibited from lending any of the Scalzo possessions, including the keys to the cloister, to anyone who did not have the confraternity's government or be fined two pounds of wax. By 1543, the vote had to come from the membership or the lending administrator would be expelled from the confraternity. In 1558, a rule referred specifically to lending the keys to the cloister to copyists, which was passed unanimously. Refer to ASF, CRSPL, 1197:22, fol. 4: "*Richordo questo dì 4 di dicenbre 1558 chome el nostro Padre Ghovernatore cho[n] sua venerabili chonsiglieri e altri ufiziali e chorpo di chompangnia [h]anno vinto un partito per 27 fave nere e nesu[n]a bianche che per l'avenire non si posse prestare chiave né mettere alchuno per disegniare in nost[r]a chonpangnia o veramente in nostri chiostri per chi tenessi chiave chome se per sagre- stani o se nesu[no] o altri che in n'alchun modo la vole- sino e che alchuno ne parlassi di nostra chonpangnia di prestarle s'intenda esere privato e raso di nostra chonpangnia, e questo s'è fatto per buona chagione*."

[17] Among Andrea's students were the renowned artists Jacopo Pontormo, Rosso Fiorentino, Giorgio Vasari, and Francesco Salviati, among others.

on either side of the Baptist, pictured in the tympanum with him, was a penitential brother wearing his black habit—a long hooded robe, slit down the back so that the flagellant whip could hit his skin directly.[18] In the flickering torchlight, the brother could also see their scourges, three knotted ropes held in prayerful hands in front of them, painted just as white as the Baptist's face to catch the light.

The brother took a deep breath and looked at the entrance to the confraternity. He knew what was about to come. He reached his hand forward towards the door, still seeing the penitents' whips in his mind.

2. Introduction

From about 1510 to 1526 the cloister (fig. 1.5) of the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist, known as the Scalzo, was painted by Florentine artist and confraternity member Andrea del Sarto.[19] There, the artist depicted, in a single register counterclockwise around the room, *Scenes from the Life of St. John the Baptist,* which imaged the story of the Baptist's life from the annunciation of his miraculous birth and culminated with the presentation of his decapitated head. Andrea also included depictions of the four Virtues *Faith*, *Charity*, *Justice*, and *Hope*, represented as life-size female figures. They stand in fictive architectural niches on each side of the cloister's two main portals, which are at the north and south ends of the atrium. He set the narrative scenes and *Virtues* alike within an immersive and illusionistic architectural framework

[18] The confraternity's statutes, ASF, Cap CRS 152, 13r, describes the habit as "*una vesta near di panno grosso a uso di disciplina*."

[19] On the dating of the paintings, refer to Appendix A. On Andrea del Sarto's membership in the confraternity, refer to Alana O'Brien, "Andrea del Sarto and the Compagnia dello Scalzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 48.1/2 (2004): 258-267.

that once likely seemed continuous with the real architecture of the room.[20] One of the major features of the cycle is that although Andrea was known as a great colorist with mastery of the new medium of oil painting, he executed the cloister—a major monument of his career and of Florentine art—entirely in an extremely narrow range of inexpensive earth pigments with a few gilded embellishments.[21] The cycle, therefore, exhibits an austere and monochromatic appearance seemingly antithetical to the painter's great altarpieces and fresco cycles executed in polychrome.

The confraternity's extensive archival records, which provide us with almost all we know about the organization, give no indication why the commission was executed *in terreta*.[22] But it does provide other kinds of information about the cycle. Most important are documents that show credits to Andrea's confraternal account for his work in the cloister.[23] These records

---

[20] On the illusionism of the architecture, which would have been more apparent before the cloister's architecture was renovated in 1722, resulting in stylistic inconsistencies, refer to John Shearman, "The Chiostro dello Scalzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 9.3/4 (1960): 207-220.

[21] Vasari-Milanesi, V, 6-7, writes: "*…e se bene disegnò semplicemente, sono nondimeno i coloriti suoi rari e veramente divini*," [and if he drew simply, his colors were nevertheless rare and truly divine] and later "*…cominciò in assai picciolo spazio di tempo a far cose con i colori, che Gian Barile e gli altri artefici della città ne restavano maravigliati*." […he began in a rather little space of time to do things with colors, that Gian Barile and the other artisans in the city were stunned.] On the term "chiaroscuro," refer to Claudia Lehmann, Norberto Gramaccini, Johannes Rössler, and Thomas Dittelbach. 2018. *Chiaroscuro asl Äesthetisches Prinzip: Kunst und Theorie des Helldunkels, 1300-1550.* (Berlin: De Gruyter).

[22] The Archivio di Stato di Firenze stewards almost all of the confraternity's records. They are: ASF, Comp. Relig. Sopp. da Pietro Leopoldo, 1189-1210. The confraternity's Capitoli, or statutes, are also found in ASF, Cap. Comp. Relig. Sopp., 86, which were ratified in 1570 and added to until 1592; ASF, Cap. Comp. Relig. Sopp., 152/1, which represent the statutes of 1455 to 1456; and ASF, Cap. Comp. Relig. Sopp.152/2, which were ratified in 1631 and amended until 1744; ASF, Cap. Comp. Relig. Sopp., 80, is a copy of this last set of statutes. Another copy of the 1455 statutes and amendments is housed in the Biblioteca Riccardiana, MS. 2535, fols. 1-19.

[23] Alana O'Brien, "Andrea del Sarto," 261 first noted that the same documents that art historians use to determine the *ante quem* dates for the paintings also have, by 1517, cross-references to the *conto al campione*, the account where membership fees were recorded. Andrea was thus a

indicate that Andrea was not paid for his painting directly but instead applied his credits towards dues and other confraternal fees.[24] Since the credits are dated, they also provide us with a *terminus ante quem* for almost all of the paintings.[25] The records show that, perhaps significantly, Andrea did not paint the cycle in narrative order (fig. 1.7).[26] Rather, he probably began on the north wall with *The Baptism of Christ* (Fig. 1.8), likely followed by *Charity*, (Fig. 1.9) who stands in her fictive architectural niche between *The Baptism* and the cloister's northern portal. He then likely started on the other side of the portal with *Justice* (Fig. 1.10), for which Andrea received credit in 1515, along with *The Preaching of St. John the Baptist* (Fig. 1.11), which is located to the left of the allegorical figure. After a two-year break from the cloister, Andrea continued working on the cycle in a continuous, counter-clockwise way, completing *The Baptism of the Multitude* (Fig. 1.12) and *The Arrest of St. John the Baptist* (Fig. 1.13) by 1517. By this time Andrea had also executed the architectural framework on the north and west walls. (Fig. 1.14-1.15) Unfortunately for the brotherhood, it was at this time that Andrea was called to the court of Francis I in Fontainebleau. The painter quit Florence, leaving the Scalzo cycle incomplete.

---

member at least in 1517 but likely earlier. O'Brien's research also revealed that after his death, the confraternity opened and won a lawsuit against Andrea's widow, Lucrezia del Fede, in the amount of 26 *lire* and 10 *soldi*.

[24] On fees paid to the brotherhood by its members, refer to the company's statutes, ASF, CapCRS 86, 8r as well as ASF, CapCRS 152, 9v. On the fees paid by brothers to their confraternities more generally, refer to Christopher Black. *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 85.

[25] Refer to Appendix A.

[26] The potential significance of the decision to paint the cycle out of narrative order is discussed in chapter 3.

The Confraternity of St. John the Baptist waited for two years before hiring Andrea's good friend and collaborator, Franciabigio (1482-1525), to continue work on the cycle.[27] By 1519, Franciabigio painted *The Blessing by Zachariah* (Fig. 1.16) as well as *The Meeting of Christ and St. John in the Desert* (Fig. 1.17). He also completed the architectural elements of the east wall (Fig. 1.18) before being excused from the Scalzo commission when Andrea returned to Florence from France. By 1522, Andrea had begun painting in the Scalzo again, executing *The Dance of Salome* (Fig. 1.19) and the architectural framework of the south wall (Fig. 1.20). He was credited a year later with *The Beheading of St. John the Baptist* (Fig. 1.21), *The Feast of Herod* (Fig. 1.22), and *Hope* (Fig. 1.23, the latter of which stands next to the cloister's southern entrance. Andrea then moved to the other side of the portal, likely completing *Faith* (Fig. 1.24) and *The Annunciation to Zacchariah* (Fig. 1.25), the earliest of the narrative scenes in the cycle, around the same time. The following year his account was credited for *The Visitation* (Fig. 1.26) and two years after that, his final painting in the Scalzo, *The Birth of St. John the Baptist* (Fig. 1.27), in 1526. After nearly two decades of painting in the Cloister of the Scalzo, the cycle was finally complete.

The completion of Andrea's work must have pleased the brothers of the Scalzo, who would have been eager to make full use of their claustral space before and after their services. After all, the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist was a penitential lay confraternity.[28] Such confraternities had emerged in Florence as important religious organizations during the papal

---

[27] Andrea's relationship with Franciabigio is a major theme in his life of Andrea del Sarto. Refer to Vasari-Milanesi, V, 5-61. On Andrea del Sarto as a collaborator, refer to Daria Rose Foner. 2020. "Collaborative Endeavors in the Career of Andrea del Sarto," (PhD Diss, Columbia), the fourth chapter of which analyzes his collaborations in the Chiostro dello Scalzo in particular.
[28] On the distinction between different kinds of confraternities, refer to Ronald E. Weissman, 1982. *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence*. (New York, N.Y.: Academic Press), 46.

interdicts of the late Middle Ages, when, forcefully separated from the Church, the laity banded together to attend to their own spiritual life and salvation.[29] Ascetic in nature, the brotherhood of John the Baptist was also called the Scalzo, or barefoot, after the shoeless *confratello*, or brother, who would carry the group's monumental crucifix through the streets of Florence at the front of their many flagellant processions.[30] Serving as both the entrance and exit to the oratory, the cloister, now decorated with scenes from the life of their patron saint who exemplified the ascetic life valued by the confraternity, would have been an important space for the brothers as they transitioned into and out of their penitential religious ceremonies.

But the confraternity had not always made its home in that space. Rather, the brotherhood had been founded in 1376, at the Church of San Jacopo in Campo Corbolini.[31] By 1400, the confraternity had moved to a small garden house outside the Celestine convent house and church of San Piero da Murrone in Via San Gallo. In 1407, the Scalzo brotherhood acquired land from the Celestines on Via Larga (today called Via Cavour), across the street from the church of San Marco. There, they built their meeting house, which they enlarged in 1487 when they were able to acquire more land from the church. It was during this expansion that the brothers built an *ingresso*, or vestibule, to their confraternal home, as well as their now-famed cloister and

---

[29] Weissman, *Ritual brotherhood,* 43-44.

[30] This explanation has been customary since at least Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine* vol. 7 (1758; reprint, Rome: Multigrafica, 1989), 196-197.

[31] On the date of founding of the confraternity, refer to ASF, Comp. Relig. Sopp. Da Pietro Leopoldo 1189/1, "Raccolta di Notizie," which was written by Giuseppe Romolo Baccioni and Donato Martini in 1745. Lett. C, no. 1: "*Principio secondo, che apparisce da' Capitoli sottoscritti dall'Arcivescovo San Antonino, avanti il 1376, sotto il titolo di San Giovanni Battista de' disciplinati. Pare che si possa credere, che si radunassero appresso la Chiesa di San Jacopo in Campo Corbolini, e si comprende dal disteso in una Bolla di Monsignore Bartolommeo…Vescovo di Firenze in di 18 Luglio 1386 ....*"

adjoining *ricetto*.[32] This was a multi-purpose room that sometimes served as a *spogliatoio*, or dressing room, in which the brothers changed before entering their newly-constructed oratory.[33] But the brotherhood nonetheless retained their former oratory, which they began to refer to as the *luogo vecchio*, or old place, and in which they continued to practice their rites of self-flagellation.[34] In the early 1500s, Andrea began to work in the cloister.

Once complete, the cloister and the rest of the confraternity's premises remained untouched until 1722. Examining archival evidence, John Shearman found that it was in this year that the cloister underwent a major architectural renovation.[35] Mostly, the renovation related to the construction of a new roof with rounded vaulting. Trying to recreate the original building to give an architectural context to Andrea's frescoes, Shearman argued that the new rounded roof had replaced a simple, flat roof that sloped inwardly (Fig. 1.28) (as on Stefano Buonsignori's map of Florence, etched in 1584 and reprinted a decade later) (Fig. 1.29). Unfortunately, the rounded format of the new roof meant that to install it, the brothers would have to cut into the cloister wall as well as Andrea's painted trabeated architecture. The result was the production of repeating lunettes (Fig. 1.30) that had to be filled in with "a meaningless segment of *chiaroscuro* sky."[36] Shearman also hypothesized that the original roof had rested on substantial columns that

---

[32] On the history of the brotherhood of the Scalzo, refer to Rita Marchi. 1976 *"*La Compagnia dello Scalzo nel Cinquecento*,"* in *Da Dante a Cosimo I,* edited by Domenico Maselli, pp. 176-204. (Pistoia: Librerie e editrice Tellini) and Manuela Barducci. 1976. "La Compagnia dello Scalzo della origini alla fine del secolo XV," in the same volume.
[33] O'Brien, "Maestri d'alcune arti miste e d'ingegno," 380.
[34] The continued use of the *luogo vecchio* for flagellation is indicated in the confraternity's statutes: CapCRS 86, 3r-3v: *...et esortanto ciascuno alla penitenza impongo il salmo Miserr[er]e mei Deus et tra tanto si invijno al luogo Vecchio dove si facia la disciplina pregando che ciascuno de Fratelli che può la eserciti et in quella finalmente raccomendando à Dio tutto il bisogno dello stato ecclesiastico et temporali accio che si eserciti l'atto della santa Charità*." On the *luogo vecchio*, access O'Brien, "Apostles in the Oratory," 213-214.
[35] This renovation is the subject of Shearman, "The Chiostro dello Scalzo."
[36] Shearman, "The Chiostro dello Scalzo," 208.

would have been more stylistically related to the ones that Andrea pictured in his fictive architectural framework than the ones visible today.[37] He also discovered that the entire perimeter of the cloister had once been furnished with a low bench on which Andrea's painted columns once appeared to rest (see Shearman's reconstruction, Fig. 26). The possibility of the more or less matching columns in the atrium as well as the integration of Andrea's painted columns with the bench would have further confused the actual and the fictive architecture inside the atrium.[38] The premises probably remained like this until 1785, when the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist, along with most other confraternities in Florence, was suppressed by the Medici, who also seized and dispersed its artwork and property.[39] Today, all that is left of the confraternity's home is its small *ingresso* and Andrea del Sarto's painted cloister.

Despite the cycle's poor state of preservation, the fame of the claustral cycle has been solidified over the centuries, both because of Andrea's reputation and his use of the unusual

---

[37] The sloping roof is visible on the Buonsignori map of Florence, included in the figures. However, its accuracy should not be trusted.
[38] Shearman, "The Chiostro dello Scalzo," 215-218.
[39] Konrad Eisenbickler. 2000. "The Suppression of Confraternities in Enlightenment Florence," in *The Politics of Ritual Kinship: Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy*, edited by Nicholas Terpstra, pp. 262-278. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press**)**, 273–278. For more on confraternal suppression and the dispersal of their art, refer to Diana Toccafondi. 1991. "L'archivio delle Compagnie religiose soppresse: una concentrazione o una costruzione archivistica?," in *Dagli archivi all'Archivio: appunti di storia degli archivi fiorentini,* edited by Carlo Vivoli, pp. 107-127. (Florence: Edifir); Ludovica Sebregondi, "Tracce per la ricostruzione del patrimonio artistico delle Confraternitá florentine soppresse da Pietro Leopoldo," *Rivista d'arte* 43.7 (1991): 229-244; Annalisa Innocenti, "Dispersione degli oggetti d'arte durante la soppressione leopoldina," *Rivista d'arte* 44.8 (1992): 351-385; and Ludovica Sebregondi, "La soppressione delle confraternità florentine: la dispersione di un patrimonio, le possibilitá residue della sua salvaguardia," *in Confraternite, chiese e società: aspetti e problemi dell'associazionismo laicale europeo in età moderna e contemporanea*, edited by Liana Bertoldi Lenoci, pp. 457-501. (Fasano: Scheno).

palette.[40] Ever since its execution, renowned artists have sought entrance to the cloister, where they could draw after Andrea's paintings, turning their studies into prints, new paintings, and even tapestries.[41] Part of the artistic appeal of studying in the cloister surely came from the paintings' graphic quality, a result of the cycle's extremely limited color. This palette distinguishes it from other *terreta* cycles of its day, which, like the famous Green Cloister in the Florentine Church of Santa Maria Novella that was painted by Paolo Uccello (1397-1475) and others in the important nearby Florentine Basilica of Santa Maria Novella, were created with the use of multiple pigments in each picture field. Though still few in number, artists used these colors—often green, but also red, yellow, and even orange and blue—to distinguish, organize, and model their frescoes' compositional elements, while also giving the paintings a sense of visual variety.[42]

In contrast, each picture field of Andrea's monochromatic Cloister of the Scalzo is worked up in a single earth pigment. This means that though his pigments varied slightly from painting to painting, probably a result of the number of years that Andrea took between painting campaigns, his palette nonetheless falls into an extremely narrow range of hues. Accentuating the coloristic uniformity is that Andrea often applied his paints in thin washes to a nearly-visible *intonaco*. The almost-nude plaster that is evident throughout the cloister gives the space an overall creamy-white appearance. This method of painting, known as *chiaroscuro,* meant that

---

[40] On the cloister's state of conservation as well as interventions over time, refer to Cappuccini e Felici, "Il Chiostro dello Scalzo," 101-102. Related photos can be found at the Archivio dei Restauri e Fotografico dell'Opificio delle Pietre Dure, GR 3053.

[41] O'Brien, "Who Holds the Keys to the Scalzo." Stemming from this article, Alana's current research project, which she intends to publish as a book, focuses on artists' long appropriation of Andrea del Sarto's paintings in and beyond the Scalzo. Also refer to: M. Jaffé. "Rubens and Andrea del Sarto," *The Burlington Magazine* CXIX (1977): 774.

[42] For more on these kinds of monochromatic cloister paintings, refer to pages 87-92 of this dissertation.

instead of being defined by juxtaposed fields of color, all of the elements of the fresco cycle were defined by shadows and highlights falling across them, as if across a solid but colorless body. The cloister's coloristic exceptionality and the skill with which Andrea executed the paintings were already noted in the 1600s by Florentine nobleman Carlo Dati (1619-1676) who, writing within the artistic circle of Nicholas Poussin (1594-1665) called Andrea del Sarto's Cloister of the Scalzo the best example of a "*monochromata*" he had ever seen.[43] The cloister's near-monochromy, then, has always helped set it apart from its art-historical precedents and has long been a feature valued and prized by commentators.

Many hypotheses have been offered regarding the decision to paint the cloister in monochrome: the monastic tradition of Tuscan courtyard painting (explored fully in Chapter II), Alberti's suggestion that courtyards be painted monochrome, financial limitations, or the penitential mood evoked by the limited color palette.[44] All of these reasons seem plausible, suggesting that all of them may have been contributing factors. Nonetheless, while we will never know for certain why the Cloister of the Scalzo was painted in this monochromatic, *chiaroscuro* mode, the immersive, nearly colorless environment nonetheless presents us with an interesting case study. That is, art historians assume that the colors in images and the environment affect people's thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and cognition, but few comprehensive studies on color exist that examine these assumptions.[45] This is unsurprising, given the many kinds of

---

[43] Ingo Herklotz. 2012. *La Roma degli Antiquari: cultura e erudizione tra Cinquecento al Settecento,* (Rome: De Luca), 145-156. I am grateful to Janis Bell for bringing this letter to my attention.
[44] Borsook, *Mural Painters*, 128; Freedberg, *Andrea del Sarto*, I, 29-30.
[45] One of the few studies that thinks about the many valences of color in this period is Marcia B. Hall. 1992. *Color and Meaning: Practice and Theory in Renaissance Painting*. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press); she also produced a book on color more broadly, in 2019. *The Power of Color: Five Centuries of European Painting*. (New Haven: Yale University Press). Rosso Fiorentino's use of color received treatment in Linda Caron. "The Use of Color by

impediments to studying color.[46] For the most part, art history is a discipline done remotely. That means that for the majority of the discipline's history, art historians did the bulk of their research referencing proprietary black and white photos from which it would have been difficult for them to make claims about color. But even now in an era of widely available, full-color digital images, it is impossible to know whether the colors apparent in photographs and on screens truly represent the colors of an object or space seen in real life or if they are the trick of filters, editing, or miscalibrated computer monitors. Furthermore, even if a still image could represent color

---

Rosso Fiorentino," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 19.3 (1988): 355-378, as has Raphael's by Janis Bell. "The Critical Reception of Raphael's Coloring in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries," *Text* 9 (1996): 199–215. Interesting studies have been done by art historians working on indigenous people in central and South America, where evidentiary lacunae often means that all forms of visual evidence need be examined. These include Ananda Cohen Suarez. "From the Jordan River to Lake Titicaca: Paintings of the Baptism of Christ in Colonial Andean Churches," *The Americas* 72.1 (2015): 103-140; Diana Magaloni Kerpel. "The Hidden Aesthetic of Red in the Painted Tombs of Oaxaca," *Res* 57/58 (2010): 55-74; and her 2016. "The Eloquence of Color: Material and Meaning in the Cacaxtla Murals," in *Making Value, Making Meaning: Techné in the Pre-Columbian World*, ed. Cathy Lynne Costin (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections). Early-modern Italian color theory has been treated by James S. Ackerman. 1980. "On Early Renaissance Color Theory and Practice," in *Studies in Italian Art and Architecture, 15th through 18th Centuries*, edited by Henry A. Millon, 11–44. (MA: MIT Press); Janis C. Bell. "Zaccolini's Theory of Color Perspective," *The Art Bulletin* 75.1 (1993): 91–112 and her "Zaccolini's Unpublished Perspective Treatise: Why Should We Care?," *Studies in the History of Art* 59 (2003): 78–103; John Shearman. "Leonardo's colour and chiaroscuro," *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* (1962): 13-47; and Claire Farago, "Leonardo's Color and Chiaroscuro Reconsidered: The Visual Force of Painted Images," *The Art Bulletin* 73.1 (1991): 63–88. On the economics of color in early-modern Italy, refer to: Julia DeLancey. 2003. "Dragonsblood and Ultramarine," in *The Art Market in Italy* edited by Marcello Fantoni, pp. 141-150. (Modena: F.C. Panini) as well as her 2010. "Shipping Color: Valute, Pigments, Trade and Francesco di Marco Datini," in 2003. *Trade in artists' materials: markets and commerce in Europe to 1700*. (London: Archetype Publications); Jo Kirby. 2000. "The Price of Quality: factors influencing the of cost of pigments during the Renaissance," in *Revaluing Renaissance Art*, pp. 19-42. (England and Vermont: Ashgate); Louisa C. Matthew. 2002. "'Vendecolori a Venezia': The Reconstruction of a Profession," *The Burlington Magazine* 144. 1196 (2002): 680–86; and Thomas McGrath. "Color and the Exchange of Ideas Between Patron and Artist in Renaissance Italy," *The Art Bulletin* 82.2 (2000): 298–308.

[46] John Shearman. "Leonardo's Color and *Chiaroscuro*," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 25.1 (1962): 13, began his important tract by addressing this issue and asserted that color, light, and *chiaroscuro* could nonetheless be studied.

accurately, scholars know that the quality is mutable and inconstant, changing rapidly in different conditions of light. Also unstable are pigments themselves, many of which change color over time and also carry with them the possibility of an overzealous restorer's coloristic intervention.[47] It thus seems nearly impossible to talk objectively about the color of art objects and spaces when those colors are both difficult to capture on film and fundamentally unstable. As a result, few studies exist that examine color's effects in images and in the built environment.

Analysis of color in the Cloister of the Scalzo, however, is much less daunting, precisely because of its overall lack of color and its near-white surfaces. The apparent coloristic uniformity throughout the paintings and the claustral space means that the decorated cloister can serve almost like an experimental control set that allows us, through color's near-absence, to consider the many ways in which it could have affected people's perception of images and spaces. To examine these effects, I not only historically situate the paintings and cloister within appropriate artistic and cultural contexts, I also use evidence from fields in the humanities, social sciences, and biomedical sciences, to construct and animate an early-modern "period body" that experiences the intentional and unintentional effects of color within the Cloister of the Scalzo.

---

[47] In general, lake pigments are particularly suspect because of the way in which they are made. Rather than using a ground substance as a pigment directly, lake pigments are made by dyeing a substrate and using this secondary substance as a pigment. The dyeing process makes these pigments especially unstable. Refer to, for example, David Saunders and Jo Kirby, "Light-induced Colour Changes in Red and Yellow Lake Pigments," *National Gallery Technical Bulletin* 15 (1994): 79-97. For a restoration that has proved particularly contentious regarding the before-and-after appearance of pigments and color, refer to the digital publication regarding the conservation of Giotto's *Madonna and Child* in the National Gallery of Art, Washington (object number 1939.1.256, https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.397.html last accessed 6 February 2022): Barbara Berrie, Leona Marco, and Richard McLaughlin. 2016. "Unusual Pigments Found in a Painting by Giotto (1266-1337) Reveal Diversity of Materials used by Medieval Artists," *Heritage Science* 4.1 (2016), available at https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1186/s40494-016-0070-9.pdf, last accessed 3 February 2022.

Each chapter begins with a short, critically-constructed narrative that tells the story of an animate period body, "the brother," as he moves through his confraternal home. As each passage concerns a different aspect of the brother's time in the homosocial space of the cloister, the dissertation shows across chapters how color perception was integral to people's experience of religious ritual, their assessment of the ontology of images and spaces, their determination of the gender of space, and their estimation of pictorial and behavioral decorum. My dissertation thus demonstrates that in early modernity, the color of images and the built environment could be used to regulate the kinds of human interactions and social performances that were possible before and within them, and that people's own physical and cognitive perception of the colors around them affected how they negotiated and renegotiated their identities in front of others.

3. Historiography—The Scalzo in Context

a. Artistic Context

In my analysis of the many potential ways that color could have affected a period body using the space of the cloister in early-modern ritual context, it was first necessary to situate the monochromatic Cloister of the Scalzo inside of Andrea del Sarto's larger corpus. This critical context both shed light on the Scalzo paintings and allowed me to examine the validity of my own assumptions about them. One of the major themes of the texts about Andrea's career was his artistic ability compared to other painters of his time, a concern that certainly arose as a result of Vasari's ambivalent characterization of his erstwhile teacher. Vasari claimed that although Andrea was a great painter his timid and effeminate nature meant that he could never surpass

artists with more assertive temperaments.[48] Serena Padovani has already offered a comprehensive account of the fate of Andrea's reputation since the time of his death.[49] She

---

[48] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le vite*, Vol. V, 6: "…*in tanto che, se fusse stato Andrea d'animo alquanto più fiero ed ardito, sìcome era d'ingegno e giudizio profondissimo in questa arte, sarebbe stato, senza dubitazione alcuna, senza pari. Ma una certa timidità d'animo, ed una sua certa natura dimessa e semplice, non lasciò mai vedere in lui un certo vivace ardore, ne quella fierezza che, aggiunta all'altre sue parti, l'arebbe fatto essere nella pittura veramente divino; perciocché egli mancò per questa cagione di quegli ornamenti, grandezza e copiosità di maniere, che in molti altri pittori si sono vedute."*

[49] Serena Padovani. "Il Pittori Senza Errori," in *Andrea del Sarto, dipinti e disegni a Firenze*. (Florence: 1986), 59-68. Padovani shows that Andrea was praised in his own century by Francesco Bocchi. 1561. *Le Bellezze della città di Firenze*. (Firenze), 136-139: "*Non pare che siano fatte di color queste figure, ma di carne: non da artifizioso, ma da la natura panneggiate…"*; Francesco Scannelli. 1657. *Il Microcosmo della pittura*, (Cesena), 171, thought Andrea was second only to Raphael as a painter; G.P. Bellori. 1976. *Le Vite de' pittori, scultori, e architetti moderni* [1672], ed. E. Borea, (Torino), 330-331, reports that Secretary to Pope Gregory XV, Giovanni Battista Agucchi, informed the artist Domenichino that Andrea del Sarto was, next to Leonardo, the greatest Tuscan painter; F. Baldinucci. 1728. *Notizie dei profesori del disegno da Cimabue in qua opera di Filippo Baldinucci fiorentino Accademico della Crusca con note ed aggiunte.* III. (Firenze), 206, maintained that Andrea should be praised not only for his skill as a painter, but also for his facility in production, which made it impossible to find a single flaw in any of his works; G. Bottari. 1757. *Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura scultura e architettura*. (Roma), 226, says that Jean-Pierre Mariette lamented that there were few good prints of Andrea's works in France for young artists to copy. A. D'Argenville. 1745. *Abrégé de la vie des plus fameux peintres*. (Paris), 89, echoes this, saying that in France there were a surplus of prints of Andrea's Virgins and saints, but that an artist must also travel to Florence to see his cycles of the lives of St. John the Baptist and St. Filippo Benizzi. Henri Stendhal. 1932. *Mélanges d'art. (*Paris), 143, said that Andrea was the perfect model for the French, that he was on par with Raphael, and that his influence could be seen especially in paintings by Ingres; L. Lanzi, *Storia pittorica della Italia* [1792-96], edited by M Capucci. (Firenze: 1968), 119-21, enthusiastically praised Andrea as an equal to Raphael, reprising the more positive parts of Vasari's biography and nicknaming the artist "*Andrea senza errori";* A. von Reumont. 1835. *Andrea del Sarto*, (Leipzig), however, argued that although Andrea was a great artist, his creative powers were stifled by his timid and gentle nature; J. A. Crowe and G.B. Cavalcaselle. 1914. *A History of Painting in Italy*, edited by Borenius, (London), 161-204, restated this position, a harbinger of the negative criticism to come; Bernard Berenson. 1914. *The Drawings of the Florentine Painters*. (London), 404-406, argued that although Andrea was a superior draftsman, his paintings were characterized by a lack of imagination, being overly reliant on the work of Michelangelo and Raphael; Filippo Di Pietro. "I disegni di Andrea del Sarto negli Uffizi e la loro esposizione," *Vita d'Arte* 34-35 (1910): 126-232, restated this position; I. Fraenckel. 1935. *Andrea del Sarto: Gemalde und Zeichnungen*, (Strassburg), was instrumental in beginning modern Andrea studies in earnest. Ingeborg divided Andrea's career in half, claiming that the works up to 1524 were part of his "Sculptural Period" and those which followed constituted a

demonstrated that although he was once considered by some as great a painter as Raphael, his reputation has suffered over time at least in part because he and his followers were associated with the art-historical movement of Mannerism, which was held in low regard from the second half of the sixteenth century until Walter Friedlander's reassessment of the style in the late 1950s.[50] But more importantly, the texts on Andrea also describe the increasingly poor condition of his Scalzo frescoes, whose surfaces have suffered a great deal of humidity damage, especially

---

"Coloristic Period." She also reattributed many works previously thought to be by Andrea to such contemporaries as Franciabigio, Domenico Puligo, and Giovanni Antonio Sogliani. With these reattributions in place, it was more difficult to make the case that Andrea was himself a Mannerist. However, scholarly opinions about Mannerism also began to change, and by the middle of the century, interest in Andrea was supplanted by the "discovery" of his pupils, Rosso Fiorentino and Jacopo da Pontormo. In comparison to his students, Andrea's style became widely regarded as classical, derivative, and even insipid—one more related to that of Fra Bartolommeo then to Rosso or Pontormo, who, scholars argued, broke away from their master to create something new. Refer to: Palazzo Strozzi. *Mostra del cinquecento toscano in Palazzo Strozzi, Firenze, aprile-ottobre*. (Firenze: 1940), 32. L. Becherucci. *Manieristi toscani*, (Bergamo: 1944), 11, and L. Becherucci. *Andrea del Sarto,* (Milano: 1955). A. Venturi. *Storia dell'Arte Italiana, IX-1.* (Milano: 1925), 513-626. P. Barocchi. *Il Rosso Fiorentino*, (Roma: 1950). Palazzo Strozzi. "*Mostra del Pontormo e del primo manierismo fiorentino,*" (Firenze: 1956). L. Marcucci. *La Maniera del Pontormo.* (Firenze: 1956); L. Berti. *Pontormo*, (Firenze: 1964); C. L. Ragghianti, "Andrea del Sarto in Cortona," *Critica d'Arte* (1949-50): 123, argued that if Andrea were to be dismissed as an academic version of Leonardo, Raphael, and Michelangelo, one had explain away a huge pictorial counterargument: the Chiostro dello Scalzo fresco cycle, which displayed stylistic experimentation and forays into Mannerism, writing: "*…secondo la tradizione che dal Vasari ai monografisti, lo ha dipinto constantamente come costretto da inevitabili remore accademiche (il "senza errori'), come una sorte di gran professore di composizione e di disegno, pieno di razionale obsequieum per la trilogia dei Maestri (Leonardo, Raffaello, Michelangelo), e quasi come un mirabile contrappuntista delle forme di quelli, gli affreschi del Chiostro dello Scalzo debbono costituire un problema inescapabile";* Hugo Wagner. *Andrea del Sarto. Seine Stellung zu Renaissance und Manierismus*. (Strasbourg: 1951), argued that Andrea's career marked the height of the High Renaissance in Florence; At the same time that Shearman and Freedberg wrote their monographs, R. Monti. *Andrea del Sarto*. (Milano: 1965), also released one, in which he claimed that Andrea was an expert but derivative painter.

[50] Consult Walter Friedlander. 1957. *Mannerism and Anti-Mannerism in Italian Painting*. (NY: Columbia University Press).

along the lower part of the eastern wall.[51] Unfortunately, because of this decay and perhaps also because of its exceptional color palette, authors seemed to have little say about the Cloister of the Scalzo.

In the modern age, Andrea's reputation was revived by John Shearman and Sydney Freedberg in the 1960s, both of whom treated the Scalzo in their catalogues on the painter and also gave comprehensive accounts of his career.[52] But in the catalogue of the most recent exhibition dedicated to Andrea's work, "Andrea del Sarto: The Renaissance Workshop in Action," Julian Brooks recently noted that the "problem" with these texts is that they were seen as so definitive that few scholars were either willing to or saw a need to write more on the subject of Andrea del Sarto.[53] It was not until the five-hundredth anniversary of Andrea's birth in 1986, when the Palazzo Pitti brought together most of Andrea's extant works in Florence, that a major catalogue was published with new scholarship.[54] This catalogue focused on the patronage of Andrea's works, their iconography, and the artist's preparatory drawings. New technical innovations (especially infrared reflectography) were used to reveal Andrea's underdrawings and analyze his working methods. In 1998, Antonio Natali's short monograph (labeled "an extended essay" by the author) rejected the Vasarian idea that Andrea was timid and thereby unable to achieve greatness. He reframed Andrea as a bold innovator who became increasingly spiritual

---

[51] For a comprehensive and recent look into the cloister paintings' conservation, refer to Chiara Cappuccini and Alberto Felici, "Il Chiostro dello Scalzo: Osservazione sulla esecutiva attraverso l'analisi visive e la documentazione di archivio," *Kermes* 29-30 (2017): 101-106. The authors also describe and compare Andrea and Franciabigio's differing methods if design transfer, among other technical features.
[52] Shearman, *Andrea del Sarto* and Freedberg, *Andrea del Sarto*.
[53] Julian Brooks. 2015. *Andrea del Sarto: The Renaissance Workshop in action.* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum), 1.
[54] Palazzo Pitti. *Andrea del Sarto: dipinti e disegni a Firenze*. *Ministro per I Beni Culturali e Ambientali*. (Firenze: 1986).

and whose art became increasingly sacred over the course of his life.[55] The sacred aspects of Andrea's paintings were more fully explored in a recent volume by Steven J. Cody, who related the artist's depiction of light to Augustinian and Bonaventuran theological thought.[56] However, besides Shearman and Freedberg, these studies all focused on Andrea's polychrome corpus, which served as both a complement to and foil for my extrapolations about the monochromatic paintings in the Scalzo.

There were also studies of the Scalzo cycle itself to consider. In this regard, the research of John Shearman, who published significantly on the Scalzo paintings as well as Andrea's polychrome works, remains of fundamental importance. This is primarily because of his catholic approach to art-historical evidence. Shearman thought there was "only one central issue in art history…and that is to try to understand, in as many ways as possible, how it is that works of art come to look as they do."[57] This approach played out in his research on the Scalzo. For example, his aforementioned reconstruction of the Scalzo architecture was based on both archival and stylistic data and allows us to imagine Andrea's paintings as they were when the brothers used it in the sixteenth century.[58] He also treated the Cloister of the Scalzo holistically in his catalogue raisonné on Andrea del Sarto, which perhaps stands as the single most important piece of literature on the artist.[59] In it, Shearman published many important documents relating to the claustral frescoes, including the records that proved the *ante quem* for most of their dates.[60] He

---

[55] Antonio Natali. *Andrea del Sarto*. (New York, London, and Paris: 1998).
[56] Steven J. Cody. 2020. *Andrea del Sarto: splendor and renewal in the Renaissance altarpiece*. (Leiden: Brill).
[57] John Shearman. 1988. *Only Connect*. (Princeton: Bollingen Series), 261. I am grateful to Sheryl Reiss for this reference.
[58] Shearman, "The Chiostro dello Scalzo."
[59] Shearman, *Andrea del Sarto*, Vol. II, 294-307.
[60] Refer to Appendix A.

also identified drawn studies in Andrea's hand for many of the frescoes and found sources for Andrea's pictures in northern prints.[61] Shearman, thus, not only situated the Scalzo paintings within an architectural and historic context, he also began to provide them with an artistic context as well.

The Scalzo's artistic context, however, was probably more thoroughly addressed by Freedberg, who, two years prior to Shearman's catalogue, had treated the cloister in his own volumes on Andrea. Instead of treating all of the paintings at once as a single monument, Freedberg broke up his treatment of the cloister, situating them chronologically inside of Andrea's career and exploring their stylistic and formal aspects relative to his contemporaneous polychrome paintings.[62] Both Shearman and Freedberg's comments on the paintings furthermore laid the groundwork for a brief treatment of the paintings by Eve Borsook in her 1980 *The Mural Painters of Tuscany from Cimabue to Andrea del Sarto*.[63] Borsook not only synthesized Shearman and Freedberg's analyses, she also investigated technical aspects of the cycle and commented on the continued deterioration of the paintings as well as interventions made to them. The most famous of these was by Leonetto Tintori in 1968 who used experimental conservation

---

[61] For example, refer to the entry by Shearman, *Andrea del Sarto*, Vol. II, 299, no. 5, *The Preaching of St. John the Baptist*, in which the author comments on Andrea's use of German-print sources, especially by Dürer.

[62] Sydney J. Freedberg. 1963. *Andrea del Sarto*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 1:8, 30-32, 35- 37, 40-41, 63-73 and 2: nos. 8A, 24, 26, 33, 36, 38, 49, 53-57, 60-64; Though important, the reputation of Freedberg's catalogue seems to suffer from a current distaste in our field for anything that might be construed as connoisseurly. Freedberg also treated Andrea briefly in his 1971. *Painting in Italy, 1500-1600*. (Baltimore: Penguin), 54-57 and in his 1961. *Painting of the High Renaissance in Rome and Florence*. 2 Vols. (Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press).

[63] Eve Borsook. 1980. *The Mural Painters of Tuscany from Cimabue to Andrea del Sarto*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 127-130. Also refer to the brief treatment of the Scalzo by John Pope Hennessy. 1969. *Frescoes from Florence*. (London: The Arts Council of Britain), 186-197, which rehashes many of Shearman's Freedberg's arguments and observations.

techniques to remove and stabilize the paintings after the 1966 flood of Florence.[64] Borsook also emphasized that the frescoes were a collaborative work, noting that not only was Franciabigio's hand visible in the frescoes painted by Andrea, but also that Il Poppi (1544-1597) likely worked on the paintings years after Andrea's death and that a document published by Shearman had mentioned a "*garzone*" who assisted Andrea while he worked in the Scalzo.[65] Freedberg had already speculated that this *garzone* had been Andrea di Cosimo Feltrini.[66] Very little was written about the Scalzo paintings again until 1995, when Rosanna Caterina Proto Pisana created a short *guida turistica* that provided a brief overview of the scholarship and told the story of the St.-John narrative for a general audience.[67] Two years later, in 1997 Willi Hirdt wrote a short monograph on the Scalzo arguing that the iconography of the cycle should be interpreted according to the *Life of St. John the Baptist* contained in the *Vite dei Santi Padri*, written by Fra Domenico Cavalca in the fourteenth century.[68] But with the archives having little to say about the claustral paintings beyond their date and cost, analysis of Andrea's cycle has been limited primarily to the formal, stylistic, and the iconographic.

b. The Confraternal Context

Though after Shearman few art historians used the confraternity's archive to analyze Andrea del Sarto's frescoes, the archives were nonetheless mined by historians and art historians

---

[64] Borsook, *Mural Painters*, 130. On the cloister's conservation, also refer to Cappuccini and Felici, "Il Chiostro dello Scalzo," 101-106.
[65] Borsook, *Mural Painters*, 130. Borsook refers to Shearman's document number 51, dated 19 August 1520: "*E addì 19 dagosto 1520 lire ventuna portò guliano suo garzone auscita a. c. 174*."
[66] Freedberg, *Andrea del Sarto*, II, 9-10; Shearman, *Andrea del Sarto*, I. 60.
[67] Catarina Proto Pisani. 1995. *Il Chiostro dello Scalzo a Firenze*. (Florence: Giorgi & Gambi).
[68] Willi Hirdt. 2006. *Barfuss zum Lieben Gött: Der Freskenzyklus Andrea del Sartos im Florentiner Chiostro dello Scalzo*. (Tubingen & Basel: Francke).

alike who focused their efforts on understanding the Brotherhood of St. John the Baptist as a confraternal organization and as patrons. These studies provide us with the frescoes' confraternal and social context. Rita Marchi and Manuela Barducci first used the archival records to piece together the history of the confraternity, especially in relationship to the organization's religious practices and their land ownership.[69] Their studies were followed up by Ludovica Sebregondi, whose research primarily concerned the confraternity's liturgical and artistic furnishings. In the early 1500s, besides Andrea's frescoes, these furnishings consisted primarily of a *Baptism of Christ* altarpiece by Lorenzo di Credi (Fig. 1.31), now housed in the Church of San Domenico in Fiesole, and a monumental crucifix by Antonio Sangallo the elder, which is no longer extant. The rest of the company's artistic holdings were added mostly late in that century and were dispersed under Medici suppression.[70]

In the new millennium, art historians Alana O'Brien and Douglas Dow both built on these earlier studies, relating the confraternity more closely to its artistic production. Both authors first focused their research efforts primarily on reconstructing the confraternity's oratory and its decoration at the end of the sixteenth century.[71] O'Brien's work on the confraternity

[69] Marchi, *"La Compagnia dello Scalzo,"* 176-204 and Barducci, "La Compagnia dello Scalzo," 146-175. Also refer to Richa. *Notizie*, 196-211; Walter Paatz and Elizabeth Paatz. 1954. *Die Kirchen von Florenz*. Vol. V. (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann), 74-89.

[70] Refer to Ludovica Sebregondi. 1991. "Religious furnishings and devotional objects in Renaissance Florentine confraternities," in *Crossing the Boundaries: Christian piety and the arts in Italian Medieval and Renaissance confraternities*, edited by Konrad Eisenbichler, pp. 141-160. (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute); as well as her "Di due dipinti 'confraternali'," *Paragone* 45 (1994): 253-257.

[71] Consult Dow, "Confraternal Piety and Corporate Patronage"; also refer to: 2017. "An Altarpiece, a Bookseller, and a Confraternity: Giovanbattista Mossi's *Flagellation of Christ* and the Compagnia di San Giovanni Battista detta dello Scalzo, Florence," in *Space, Place, and Motion: Locating Confraternities in the Late Medieval and Early Modern City*, edited by Diana Bullen Presciutti, pp. 321-343. (Leiden & Boston: Brill). Consult, too, Alana O'Brien, "The Apostles Cycle in the Oratory of the Compagnia dello Scalzo: 'adornata da e mia frateli academize,'" *I Tatti Studies* 14/15 (2011/12): 209-262.

furthermore also revealed that the group counted among its members many noted Florentine artists, including, of course, Andrea del Sarto, which had long been suspected but never confirmed.[72] These were complemented by Dow's near-simultaneous texts that explored the membership of artists Benedetto Buglioni (1459-1521) and Benvenuto Cellini (1500-1571).[73] In her most recent publication, O'Brien demonstrated the lasting importance of the cloister cycle to younger artists by cataloguing those who had petitioned the confraternity for access to its keys for the purpose of drawing after Andrea's paintings.[74] Though the archival record thus shows an integral relationship between membership in the confraternity and Florentine artistic life, little of that record relates to the monochromatic claustral cycle painted by Andrea del Sarto.

One of the important take-aways from this extant literature on Andrea's work in the cloister is that any study of the Scalzo has to take seriously the large body of scholarship on confraternity studies. Dow's dissertation especially situated the archival evidence in relation to the broader confraternity-studies landscape. So too did his resultant book, in which the Scalzo oratory sculptures, added at the end of the 1500s, stand as one case study contemporary to many in which artworks depicting the Apostles was commissioned for Florentine confraternal spaces.[75] Like all interrogations of Florentine confraternities, his work necessarily relied on the

---

[72] O'Brien, "Maestri d'Alcune Arti miste e d'ingegno," as well as her "Andrea del Sarto and the Compagnia dello Scalzo." Marchi, "La Compagnia dello Scalzo nel Cinquecento," remarked that though she thought the confraternity was largely populated by artists it would be extremely difficult to find their names.

[73] Dow, "Evidence for Buglioni's Authorship." In his "Benvenuto Cellini's Bid for Membership in the Florentine Confraternity of San Giovanni Battista detta dello Scalzo," *Confraternitas* 20.1 (2009): 2-10 argued that Cellini had dropped his pursuit of membership in the confraternity after being charged with sodomy in 27 February 1557, O'Brien, "Maestri," 400, showed that the artist made payments to the confraternity in 1559 and 1561, indicating that he was still a member.

[74] O'Brien, "Who Holds the Keys to the Chiostro dello Scalzo."

[75] Dow, "Confraternal Piety and Corporate Patronage"; as well as his 2014. *Apostolic Iconography and Florentine Confraternities in the Age of Reform*. (Farnham: Ashgate), 75–102 and 175–190.

comprehensive studies put forth by Ronald E. Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence*, and John Henderson, *Piety and Charity in Late Medieval Florence*.[76] They show that in Florence, many aspects of a person's social and religious life were organized by his or her membership in one of the city's many confraternities. Confraternities not only provided members with various kinds of social and economic support during life, but were also paramount in ensuring a brother's proper burial and remembrance after death.[77] Taken together, Weissman and Henderson's hefty tomes represent an exhaustive body of knowledge touching on almost every aspect of Florence's lay confraternities and serve as the fundamental starting point for all studies involving Florentine confraternities.

Florence, however, was not the only Italian city where confraternities were integral to the operations of daily life. On the contrary, confraternities were important throughout Italy, resulting in a much larger historical, social, and religious context in which to situate the Scalzo frescoes. Foremost among the scholarship on these confraternities are studies by Christopher Black, Nicholas Terpstra, and Konrad Eisenbichler, which help fill in the gaps of knowledge about Florentine confraternities, especially as these gaps relate to the gendered religious and social world in which the brothers lived.[78] Studies by the latter two authors also appeared in an important volume edited by Barbara Wisch and Diane Ahl, *Confraternities and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Italy*, the sum of which demonstrated a multiplicity of ways that art could be

[76] Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood;* John Henderson. *Piety and Charity in late Medieval Florence*. (Oxford: Clarendon).
[77] Refer to: Barducci, "La Compagnia dello Scalzo," 153, as well as John Henderson. 1988. "Religious Confraternities and Death in Renaissance Florence," in *Florence and Italy: Renaissance Studies in Honor of Nicolai Rubinstein*, edited by Peter Denley and Caroline Elam, pgs. 383-394. (Exeter: Short Run Press, Ltd); and Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 45.
[78] The society for Confraternity Studies maintains an on-going, global bibliography, accessible at https://www.crrs.ca/Confraternitas/collection/Received.pdf (last accessed 25 January 2022), which includes the work of all three of these authors.

analyzed and interpreted in the confraternal context.[79] Moreover, because Venice's *scuole* were very similar to Florence's lay confraternities, Patricia Fortini Brown's *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio*, which often investigates works of art by locating them in their confraternal context, was another model for how to contextualize the Scalzo painting inside of the socioreligious organization.[80] Taken together, this large body of confraternal research allowed me to situate the frescoes not only in the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist but also within confraternal culture in Florence and in Italy more broadly.

c. The Florentine Context

Thinking about the many ways in which a person might have experienced color in Andrea del Sarto's images and in the space of the Cloister of the Scalzo meant considering what thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and associations the perception of the monochrome images might trigger in a historically-situated body. Embodied viewership of the claustral paintings therefore had to be contextualized within a dynamic and vibrant Florence of the 1500s, an urban center whose politics changed rapidly and drastically during and shortly after the time period in which Andrea was painting in the Scalzo. Political histories that chronicled the fall of the republic and the return of the Medici were thus critical in shaping my conception of the paintings' political context. Chief among these were Cecil Roth's *The Last Florentine Republic*, Eric Cochrane's

[79] Barbara Wisch and Diane Ahl. 2011. C*onfraternities and the visual arts in Renaissance Italy: ritual, spectacle, image*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
[80] Consult Patricia Fortini Brown. 1994. *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio*. (New Haven: Yale University Press). On the Venetian *scuole grandi*, also refer to: Brian S. Pullan. 1971. *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice: the social institutions of a Catholic state, to 1620*. (Oxford: Blackwell) as well as 1990. "The *scuole grandi* of Venice. Some further thoughts," in *Christianity and the Renaissance. Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, edited by Timothy Verdon and John Henderson, pp. 272-301. (NY: Syracuse University Press).

Florence in the Forgotten Centuries, and John Najemy's *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*.[81] But also important were shorter studies by Nicholas Scott Baker that focused on Medici tyranny and Republican resistance.[82] Together, these studies brought to the fore the ambivalence felt by Florentines toward the Medici, which constituted an important political context in which to situate viewership of the Scalzo.

The viewer of Andrea's frescoes, though, did not only exist within the space of the cloister. Rather, the confraternity members who saw and experienced it would have made associations with it and the outside world. They had also learned how to exist and act within Florentine society, affecting the ways in which he would have behaved in the space and in front of other *confratelli*. Political histories as well as information about Italian confraternal life therefore had to be brought into dialogue with Richard Trexler's monumental *Public Life in Renaissance Florence,* as well as Trexler's other works, which together made clear that early-modern Florence was a highly regulated city in which power had a spatial dimension and where life was lived and identity was constructed in relationship to other people.[83] While this Florentine

---

[81] Cecil Roth. 1968. *The Last Florentine Republic*. (New York: Russell & Russell); Eric Cochrane. 1973. *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press); and John M. Najemy. 2006. *A History of Florence: 1200-1575*. (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell).
[82] Nicholas Scott Baker. "Medicean Metamorphoses: Carnival in Florence, 1513," *Renaissance Studies* 25.4 (2011): 491-510, as well as "For Reasons of State: Political Executions, Republicanism, and the Medici in Florence, 1480-1560," *Renaissance Quarterly.* 62.6 (2009): 444-478, which were followed by his book in 2013. *The Fruit of Liberty: Political Culture in the Florentine Renaissance, 1480-1550*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press); also refer to: Alessandro Cecchi. 2018. *In Difesa della Dolce Libertà*. (Florence: Casa Editrice Leo S. Olschki); Athanasios Moulakis. 1998. *Republican Realism in Renaissance Florence: Francesco Guicciardini*'s Discorso di Logrogno. (MD: Rowman and Littlefield); H. C. Butters. 1985. *Governors and Government in Sixteenth-Century Florence. 1502-1519*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press); and J. N. Stephens. 1983. *The Fall of the Florentine Republic, 1512-1530*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press).
[83] Refer to Richard Trexler. 1980. *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*. (NY: Academic Press); as well as his: 1974. *The Spiritual Power: Republican Florence Under Interdict*. (Leiden: Brill); 1993. *Power and Dependence in Renaissance Florence*. (Asheville: Pegasus Press); 1985.

ethos was perhaps made most apparent during political meetings in front of the Palazzo Vecchio it was no less felt throughout the entire city.[84] Power and identity were at stake not only inside of the cloister, but also during festivals, games, funerals, religious processions, theater performances, orations, and other kinds of social spectacles.[85] It was even at stake in the ringing of bells.[86] Thinking about how Andrea's images would have been perceived in early-modern

---

Persons in Groups: social behavior as identity formation in medieval and Renaissance Florence. (NY: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies); 1993. *The Children of Renaissance Florence: Power and dependence in Renaissance Florence*. Vol. 1 (NC: Pegasus Press); "Florentine Religious Experience: The Sacred Image," *Studies in the Renaissance* 19 (1972): 7-41; and "Follow the Flag: The Ciompi Rebellion seen from the streets," *Bibliothèque d'Humanism et Renaissance* 46.1 (1984): 357-392.

[84] On this topic refer especially to Stephen J. Milner, "Citing the Ringhiera: The Politics of Place and Public Address in Trecento Florence," Italian Studies 55 (2000): 53–82; and for a comparison of the ways in which other similar spaces functioned in the city, Yvonne Elet. "Seats of Power: The Outdoor Benches of Early Modern Florence," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 61, no. 4 (2002): 444–469.

[85] Here, I refer to studies that have shaped my thinking, such as: Anthony M. Cummings. 1992. *The Politicized Muse: Music for Medici Festivals, 1512-1537.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press); Elizabeth Currie. 2017. *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence*. London and NY: Bloomsbury Academic); Suzanne Cusick. 2009. *Francesca Caccini at the Medici Court: Music and the Circulation of Power.* (Chicago: University of Chicago); Iain Fenlon. 2013. *Music and culture in late Renaissance Italy*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press); Carole Collier Frick. 2006. *Dressing Renaissance Florence: families, fortunes, and fine clothing*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press); David Rosenthal. 2015. *The Kings of the Street: Power, Community and Ritual in Renaissance Florence.* (Turnhout: Brepols); James M. Saslow. 2005. *The Medici wedding of 1589: Florentine festival as Theatrum Mundi*. (New York: ACLS History E-Book Project); Allie Terry, "Donatello's decapitations and the Rhetoric of Beheading in Medicean Florence," *Renaissance Studies* 23.5 (2009): 609-638; Sharon Strocchia. 1992. *Death and Ritual in Renaissance Florence.* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press); Evelyn Welch. 2009. *Shopping in the Renaissance: consumer cultures in Italy 1400-1600*. (New Haven: Yale University Press); Blake McDowell Wilson. 2020. *Singing to the Lyre in Renaissance Italy: memory, performance, and oral poetry*. (NY: Cambridge University Press); Kelli Wood. *The Art of Play in Early Modern Italy* (forthcoming, under contract with Amsterdam University Press in the series Cultures of Play: 1300-1700), as well as her "Balls on walls, feet on Street," *Renaissance Studies* 32.3 (2018): 365-387; and the many relevant chapters in Roger J. Crum and John T. Paoletti. 2011. *Renaissance Florence: a social history*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), among others.

[86] Consult: Niall Atkinson. 2017. *The Noisy Renaissance*: Sound, Architecture, and Florentine Urban Life. (PA: Penn State University Press) as well as his "The Republic of Sound: Florence

Florence, then, meant imagining them in a multisensory world where the tactile, auditory, olfactory, and even gustatory was packed with symbolic and cultural meaning and innuendo, operating all at once and over time.

And yet there was another aspect of Florentine life to consider. Because O'Brien's research has shown that so many of the confraternity members of the Scalzo had been respected Florentine artists, and because Andrea's Scalzo fresco cycle was itself a monumental studio undertaking, its paintings and its viewer needed to be contextualized within the world of the Florentine art-professional. On this front, Martin Wackernagel's *The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist*, which studied trends in patronage, the art market, workshop techniques, and economic practices was invaluable.[87] Also critical, of course, was Michael Baxandall's *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy*, which demonstrated the interconnectedness between the social context of an image's production and viewer reception.[88] So too were technical studies of Florentine art contemporary to the Scalzo that made clear that in Florence, becoming an artist meant not only practicing a profession but also gaining access to social and economic networks that both shaped the fabric of artists' lives and had demonstrable formal outcomes in the art that they produced.

Relationships between workshops, however, were not always friendly. Competition for patronage could also lead to social and professional rivalries. This was particularly troublesome in the world of early-modern Florence because workshop-head and official architect of Cosimo I

at the Threshold of the Renaissance," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 16.1/2 (2013): 57-84.

[87] Martin Wackernagel. 1981. *The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist: Projects and patrons, workshop and art market*, translated by Alison Luchs. (NJ: Princeton University Press).

[88] Michael Baxandall. 1972. *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century-Italy*. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press).

de' Medici, Giorgio Vasari, was also author of the *Lives of the Artist*. This text is not only fundamental to the discipline but it has also served for centuries as the primary source of information about Andrea del Sarto, who was Vasari's teacher, along with many of the Scalzo brothers and associates. However, research by Patricia Rubin, Paul Barolsky, and, in particular, Elizabeth Pilliod has demonstrated that Vasari's own social and professional agendas biased his characterization of these artists, with whom he was in competition for fame and patronage.[89] His biographies of these rivals, like possible Scalzo confraternity member Jacopo da Pontormo, whom he maligned, and especially the biography of Andrea himself, whose reputation it would have benefitted Vasari to diminish in order to demonstrate his own superiority over his master, were thus especially suspect.[90] Contextualization of the paintings within both this artistic and biographical context thus meant careful and critical consideration of multiple forms of evidence to arrive at a more tempered understanding of the world of the Florentine artist and of the artists in the Scalzo in particular.

---

[89] Elizabeth Pilliod. 2001. *Pontormo, Bronzino, Allori: A Genealogy of Florentine Art*. (London and New Haven: Yale University Press); as well as her "Bronzino's Household," *Burlington Magazine* 134 (1992): 92-100; 2003; and "The influence of Michelangelo: Pontormo, Bronzino and Allori," in *Reactions to the Master*, edited by Francis Ames-Lewis and Paul Joannides, pp. 31-5. (FL: Taylor and Francis); 1998; as well as "Representation, misrepresentation, and non-representation: Vasari and his competitors," in *Vasari's Florence,* edited by Philip Jacks, pp. 30-52. Also consult with Patricia Rubin. 1995. *Giorgio Vasari: Art and History*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), as well as Paul Barolsky. 1990. Michelangelo's Nose: A myth and its maker. (PA: Pennsylvania State Press), as well as his 1991. *Why Mona Lisa Smiles and other Tales by Vasari.* (PA: Pennsylvania State Press); and his 1992. *Giotto's Father and the Family of Vasari's Lives*. (PA: Pennsylvania State Press). Also consult Anne B. Barriault. 2005. *Reading Vasari*. (London and Georgia: Philip Wilson Publishers).

[90] O'Brien, "Maestri d'Alcune ingegni," 374-375 and 400, claims that Pontormo was noted as a Scalzo member in the *Libro dei moritori* of SS. Annunziata: "…*fu sepolto in chiesa nostra Maestro Jacopo da Puntormo, picture excellente, populo di San Piero Maggiore et della Compagnia dello Scalzo*." (ASSAF, *Libro dei moritori 1545-1557, fol. 126v).* However, Elizabeth Pilliod in private conversation with both me and Alana O'Brien has asserted that the notation regarding Pontormo's membership in the confraternity is ambiguous.

One of the striking characteristics of Andrea's paintings, though, is that many figures—both male and female—are highly erotic.[91] This is noteworthy because the paintings were intended to be seen only by and among men and in a religious context.[92] When it came to the interpretive possibilities of Andrea's sensuous bodies in this viewing context, that meant taking into account the image's potential to provoke sexual arousal and desire and how that possibility could be related to their color. In this regard, Michael Rocke's 1996 *Forbidden Friendships: Homosexuality and Male Culture in Renaissance Florence* remains the fundamental source for information about the image's potential homoerotic context and interpretations.[93] Rocke's investigation looked at the archival records of the Florentine judicial body the Office of the Night (*Ufficiali di notte*) which was responsible for the systematic persecution of sodomites in early-modern Florence, to shed light on the expression of homosexual desire in the period. Often, these records point us to the urban built environment, associating the expression and enactment of desire with certain spaces, places, and times of the day or year.[94] They especially locate homosexual desire and expression inside of lay confraternities.[95] Implicit within Rocke's study is an exploration of the many slippery ways in which sexual desire had often been kindled inside of friendships. This was problematic because, as Dale Kent's *Friendship, Love, and Trust in*

[91] The erotics of *The Beheading of St. John the Baptist* were first analyzed by Patricia Lee Rubin. 2018. *Seen from Behind: Perspectives on the male body and Renaissance Art*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press).
[92] Women were later allowed limited membership in the confraternity. On their membership, refer to O'Brien, "Who Holds the Keys?," 229.
[93] Michael Rocke. 2010. *Forbidden Friendships: homosexuality and male culture in Renaissance Florence*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press); refer also to his: "Sodomites in Fifteenth-Century Tuscany: The Views of Bernardino da Siena," *Journal of Homosexuality* 16.1-2 (1989): 7-32.
[94] Also critical in locating homosexual desire in Florentine space was John Najemy. 2019. *Between Friends: Discourses of Power and Desire in the Machiavelli-Vettori Letters*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
[95] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 148.

Renaissance Florence has shown, friendships were fundamental to the organization of early-modern Florentine life—the functioning of the city and the maintenance of its customs were underpinned by male homosocial ties.[96] Together, Rocke's and Kent's studies give the impression of a city in which male identity was constructed and performed in highly regulated ways and in front of male peers. The individual's acceptance by these peers was necessary to gain access to increasingly elite social, professional, economic, and political circles. That Andrea's paintings at once existed within this system and had the potential to undermine it was a dangerous possibility in the period and had to be taken into account.

4. Method in Context

   a. A Way of Doing

Study of the Cloister of the Scalzo is bound primarily by two determining factors The first, the limits of the archive, much of which has already been published and which rarely addressed the cloister frescoes directly; the second, and perhaps more important, the Scalzo's significant state of decay. In the 1700s, Vatican Librarian Giovanni Bottari had already reported that he thought that all that remained of the cycle was its exposed underpainting, citing how moisture had damaged the frescoes, which were blistering and bubbling.[97] To worsen matters, on the eastern wall, in the lower register of several scenes, water has destroyed a large horizontal band of fresco, taking with it, for example, the lower bodies of the young Baptist and his parents in *The Blessing of St. John the Baptist* (Fig. 1.16). The damage affects all the paintings on this

[96] Dale Kent. 2009. *Friendship, Love, and Trust in Renaissance Florence*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).
[97] Preface to 1730. Vincenzo Borghini. *Il Riposo.* (Florence), xiii-xiv. This was attributed to Bottari by Ugo Procacci, "Di un scritto di Giovanni Bottari sulla conservazione e il restauro delle opera d'arte,' *Bollettino dell'Istituto Centrale del Restauro* 22-24 (1955): 133.

wall in a similar way. These sections, however, can be imagined because they were depicted in contemporary drawings and prints after the frescoes.[98] Water has also caused much of the Scalzo's gilding to tarnish in varying degrees throughout the cloister, revealing an interesting and not-yet noted fact about the cloister's materiality: the gilding was not all gold, which does not tarnish.[99] Rather, Andrea had used a cheaper alloy with a high amount of bronze, copper, or silver that had darkened on the cloister walls. All of this evident damage to the frescoes begs the question: which sections of the Scalzo paintings still visible, if any, could really be used to think about Andrea's authorship of the images, and in what ways?

Examination of conservation photos in the Opificio delle Pietre Dure shows evidence of heavy-handed interventions over time.[100] *The Visitation* (Fig. 1.26) and *The Baptism of Christ* (Fig. 1.8) have significant damage across their entire surfaces.[101] Large sections of other paintings had pieces that, it seemed from evidence in the photos and from having assessed similar phenomena with conservators in the museum context, had bubbled up and then been laid down in a manner that flattened the picture's surface.[102] As a result, under direct observation, sections of the paintings seemed burnished and abstracted. This is especially evident in the face and upper torso of Salome, as she dances. (Fig. 1.32) It came as no surprise that *The Baptism of*

[98] For example, refer to the prints after the Scalzo engraved by Theodor Krüger, an excellent bound set of which is held at the British Museum (object 1891,0511).
[99] I am extremely grateful to conservators at the Frick Collection, NY, for first bringing this to my attention, and at the Art Institute of Chicago, for confirming.
[100] Refer to the photos in the Archivio dei Restauri e Fotografico dell'Opificio delle Pietre Dure, GR 3053.
[101] OPD, GR 3053, photos number 1133140 and 116109.
[102] I am especially grateful to Elizabeth Wigfield, conservator at the Art Institute of Chicago, who suggested that this polished or burnished look could have resulted during the introduction of adhesive to secure the surface of the painting, particularly if a heating spatula were used in the process. Any application of heat in an attempt to dry out the paintings could also have resulted in this polished effect.

the Multitude (Fig. 1.12) and *The Preaching of John the Baptist* (Fig. 1.11), the frescoes' whose surface texture seems the most spontaneous and whose handling of paint the most immediate, were also the two paintings showing the least apparent evidence of damage in pre-conservation photos. Nonetheless, given how confused the issue of authorial hand is, overall stylistic analysis and placement of the Scalzo within Andrea's corpus seemed inadvisable, if not nearly impossible. Rather, when visual evidence allowed and where it was appropriate, consideration of Andrea's hand was most usefully put in the service of other kinds of arguments.

In the only monograph currently in print about the Scalzo, those arguments are iconographic.[103] And to a large extent, my interpretations of Andrea's painting are iconographic in the traditional sense, in their insistence that Andrea's forms have symbolic powers beyond what is evidently pictured.[104] But I also know that there is no such thing as a definitive reading of any early-modern painting—that art historians argue about these things over centuries and, to different kinds of audiences, a single symbol could be interpreted in opposite ways at once.[105] On principle it thus seemed that using iconographic analysis where possible and appropriate, showing how a few select compositional elements worked together in what Patricia Simons called overlapping "social iconographies," or "the mutual feedback loop and reinforcement between imagery and its context," seemed the best approach.[106]

---

[103] Hirdt, *Barfuss zum Lieben Gött*.
[104] Refer to Erwin Panofsky. 1962. S*tudies in Iconology: Humanist Themes in the Art of the Renaissance.* (NY and Evanston: Harper & Row), originally published in 1939 by Oxford University Press.
[105] This was made evident especially in my research on Orphic iconographies in relationship to the Medici, especially as it relates to Agnolo Bronzino's *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici as Orpheus*, which has been the subject of competing iconographic analyses for decades. On this debate, and for an example of how symbols can connote two contradictory meanings at once, refer to my article, "The Implicating Gaze in Bronzino's *Cosimo de' Medici as Orpheus* and the Intellectual Culture of the Accademia Fiorentina," *Studies in Iconology* 42 (2021): 161-186.
[106] Patricia Simons, T*he Sex of Men*, 2.

At the same time, curatorial experience has taught me two important things about early-modern paintings. The first is that the context and way in which viewers approached a work of art fundamentally shaped the way they experience and understand them; and second, that for early-modern objects in particular, this context was so important that a great deal of time is spent these days thinking about how best or best not to present those objects. This is perhaps why I was struck by Baxandall's conception of "the period eye," the art historian's recuperation of the mental and cultural apparati that, in any era, came to bear on how a work of art looked and how it was received by its viewers.[107] Certainly, this accounting for period taste and context was fundamental. But as Adrian Randolph had already demonstrated in his work on early-modern birthing trays, the period eye was very much gendered.[108] That is, the kind of body the viewer had was itself a factor that had to be considered when thinking about art reception and the many possible ways that images in certain kinds of spaces functioned and could be interpreted. That seeing was a fundamentally embodied experience, though, was hammered home by Richard Trexler's "Follow the Flag: The Ciompi Revolt Seen from the Streets."[109] In it, Trexler told how people's ability to see different political groups' flags helped foment and spontaneously organize an urban political revolution. In his analysis of the event, flags had power not because they were displayed by political factions but rather because they were seen by a Florentine male viewer, situated in a body, who could act individually or in groups to exert his agency on the world around him. In this case, he could wage a labor revolution.

[107] Baxandall, *Painting and Experience,* 29-108.
[108] Adrian Randolph. "Gendering the Period Eye: Deschi da Parto and Renaissance Visual Culture," *Art History* 27.4 (2004): 538-562.
[109] Richard Trexler, "Follow the Flag: The Ciompi Revolt Seen from the Streets," *Bibliotèque d'Humanism et Renaissance* 46.2 (1984): 357-392.

This embodied understanding of history mapped on to what I already knew to be true about the early-modern city—that it was a highly-regulated sensory world in which personal identity was located in relation to other people and where public and private spaces mandated different kinds of behavioral performances at different times.[110] That is, by engaging with interdisciplinary scholarship that, on the one hand related broadly to the Florentine cultural world of the 1500s and, on the other, to the art and life of Andrea del Sarto, I had begun to consider the encounter between the Florentine viewer and the art object in the built environment as a loaded and ever-changing experience.[111] This encounter nonetheless had physical, psychological, cultural, sociological, theological, and political limits, many of which remained unchanged over time. Fleshing out Baxandall's period eye, I found myself situating viewership of the claustral paintings within a period body, one that was affected by factors like the weather, the time of day, the ritualized pain of the flagellant whip. That is, while the limitations first imposed on me by the archive, where the experience of the individual brothers in front of Andrea's paintings had been ignored or erased, meant that I could not reconstruct an individual person's experience with the cloister, I could nonetheless begin to construct a period body that could be situated inside of and could experience the cloister.

A body, however, is made of flesh and blood, and this flesh and blood needs consideration. Listening to Shearman's mandate that art historians take into account all forms of evidence that pertains to viewership (a position also found throughout the work of Baxandall and

[110] These behavioral performances were made clear in primary-source texts like Leon Battista Alberti, *I Quattri Libri Della Famiglia*, written in Rome and Florence from 1433-1440, as well as Baldassare Castiglione. 1528. *Il Cortegiano*. (Venezia).
[111] I share this approach with Allie Terry Fritsch. 2020. *Somaesthetic experience and the viewer in medicean Florence: renaissance art and political persuasion, 1459-1580*. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press).

implicit in Ernst Gombrich's focus on psychology in *Art and Illusion*), I began considering, as valid art-historical information, studies about the body and sensory perception that had originated in other fields, especially in psychology and medical research.[112] I also consulted with psychologists and neuroscientists directly, who were enthusiastic about applying their body of expertise to interrogate aesthetic and religious experiences. This kind of interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to art-historical research is not without precedent. Since 2007, David Freedberg's collaborations with scientists have shown, for example, that there is a neural basis for the ability of visual art to generate empathy responses in the viewer, and that even abstract gestural forms trigger viewer responses in viewers that mirror those of movement or physical and psychic distress.[113] The same year that Freedberg began publishing his collaborative studies,

---

[112] This belief was later fleshed out in Michael Baxandall. 1980. *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany, 1475-1525***.** (New Haven: Yale University Press), as well as 1981. *Patterns of Intention: On the historical explanation of pictures*. (New Haven: Yale University Press). Ernst Gombrich. 1960. *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*. (New York: Phaidon). For an analysis of this text at it pertains to his latent interest in the field that would later be called neuroaesthetics, consult Patrick Maynard. "'Neuroaesthetics,' Gombrich, and Depiction," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 56.2 (2016): 191-201.

[113] David Freedberg and Vittori Gallese, "Motion, Emotion, and Empathy, in Esthetic Experience," *Trends in Cognitive Science* 11.5 (2007): 197-203, as well as Freedberg, "Empathy, Motion, and Emotion," *Wie sich Gefühle Ausdruck verschaffen / Klaus Herding; Antje Krause-Wahl* (2008): 17-51; and his 2017. "From Absorption to Judgment: Empathy in Aesthetic Response," in *Empathy: Epistemic Problems and Cultural-Historical Perspectives of a Cross-Disciplinary Concept* ed. Vanessa Lux 139-180. (London Palgrave Macmillan UK: Palgrave Macmillan). Freedberg conducted a number of related studies, including: 2011. "Memory in Art: History and the Neuroscience of Response," in *The Memory Process: Neuroscientific and Humanistic Perspectives*, edited by S. Nalbantian, P.M. Matthews, and J.L. McClelland, pp. 337-358. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press); F. Battaglia, S. H. Lisanby, and D. Freedberg, "Corticomotor Facilitation during Observation and Imagination of a Work of Art", *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 5 (2011): 1-6; D. Massaro, F. Savazzi, C. Di Dio, D. Freedberg, V. Gallese, G. Gilli, A. Marchetti, "When Art Moves the Eyes: A Behavioral and Eye-Tracking Study," PloS ONE, May 2012; M. A. Umiltà, C. Berchio, M. Sestito, D. Freedberg, V. Gallese, "Abstract art and cortical motor activation: an EEG study", Frontiers in Human Neuroscience, 2012, 7 (5); "Sciences Cognitives et histoire de l'art, une coopération en devenir?", Debate moderated by Étienne Jollet in Perspective 2013 (1), pp. 101-118; B. Sbriscia-Fioretti, C. Berchio, D.

Barbara Stafford's *Echo Objects* also demonstrated the usefulness of the neurosciences to art history, investigating the ways that the neural basis of perception could be used to explore how the brain creates associations with images and, ultimately, how it makes sense of aesthetic experience.[114] Calling itself A *Field Guide to a New Meta-field*, her follow-up edited volume of collaborations between scholars in the humanities and the sciences investigated the neural basis for a variety of human experiences, including the perception of the visual arts as well as music and spirituality.[115] Such studies attest to the growing interest of art historians in the neural basis of aesthetic experience, or neuroaesthetics.

Freedberg, V. Gallese, M. A. Umiltà, "ERP Modulation during Observation of Abstract Paintings by Franz Kline", PLoS ONE, 2013, 8, 10; 2014. "Feelings on Faces. From Physiognomics to Neuroscience", in *Rethinking Emotion. Interiority and Exteriority in Premodern, Modern, and Contemporary Thought*, edited by Scott Denham, Irene Kacandas and Jonathan Petropoulos, pp. 289-324. (Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter); U. Kirk and D. Freedberg. 2015. "Contextual bias and insulation against bias during aesthetic rating. The roles of VMPFC and DLPFC in neural valuation", in *Art, Aesthetics and the Brain*, edited by J. P. Huston, M. Nadal, F. Mora, L. Agnati., and C. J. Cela-Conde, pp. 158-173. (Oxford University Press); C. Concerto, C. Infortuna, M. Sawah, D. Freedberg, E. Chusid, E. Aguglia, F. Battaglia, "Neural Circuits Underlying Motor Facilitation during Observation of Implied Motion," *Somatosensory and Motor Research* 30 (2015): 1-4.

[114] Barbara Stafford. 2007. *Echo Objects: The Cognitive Work of Images*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press).

[115] Barbara Stafford. 2011. *A Field Guide to a New Meta-field: bridging the humanities--neurosciences divide*. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press). Written by a cognitive scientist whose previous publications include, 2019. *A Cognitive Historical Approach to Creativity*. (New York: Routledge), Subrata Dasgupta's forthcoming 2022. *The Renaissance Considered as a Creative Phenomenon*: *Explorations in Cognitive History*. (New York: Routledge) promises, according to its abstract on https://www.routledge.com/The-Renaissance-Considered-as-a-Creative-Phenomenon-Explorations-in-Cognitive/Dasgupta/p/book/9781032146843 accessed 8 December 2021, to situate the "innovations and discoveries" of "the Renaissance" "in individual minds." The book's clamor to reinforce a long-standing art-historical narrative of individual genius that has gone largely out of fashion because of its reductive and patriarchy-bolstering capacities perhaps speaks to the necessity of neuroarthistorical studies being conducted by collaborators in the arts and sciences together. So too do studies like Christopher W. Tyler, "Painters Center one eye in Portraits," *Nature* 392 (1998): 877-878, who claimed that his analysis of eye-placement in cherry-picked Old Master portraits "shows that explicit compositional principles are implemented with an unbiased accuracy of ± 5% over the past six centuries. This precision results from perceptual

I do not assume, however, that early modern bodies are identical to our own. In animal species facing significant selective pressure, evolution has been observed in as few as two generations.[116] It is therefore theoretically possible that although the structures of both the human eye and brain have remained stable since the 1500s, changes could exist in neural processes beyond that which can be seen in the structure of those organs. Nonetheless, the anatomy and physiology underlying vision and contrast recognition would be expected to be stable across time.[117] Still, studies on the human sensory perception show that even today, effects of perception vary from person to person and even over the course of a single person's lifetime.[118] The period body, like the period eye, would necessarily be a very generalized one.

The generality of a period body is problematic because one of my conceptual starting points is that bodies are specific, that they experience and are experienced by the world in different ways and, furthermore, that these differences should matter to art historians. In this respect, while my work is informed by the phenomenological frameworks advanced by Husserl, amended by Heidegger, and reshaped by Merleau-Ponty, my conception of the body in space and

---

processes that seem to be unexpressed by the artists themselves, suggesting that hidden principles are operating in our aesthetic judgements, and perhaps in many realms beyond portraiture." For a critique on portraiture-based, neuroarthistorical studies conducted without collaborators in the humanities specifically, access Yael Rice and Sonja Drimmer, "How Scientists Use and Abuse Portraiture," *HyperAllergic* 11 December 2020 https://hyperallergic.com/604897/how-scientists-use-and-abuse-portraiture/ who plainly stated: "Many scientific studies assume that painted faces are factual representations of the flesh-and-blood countenances to which they refer. This assumption is not only false; it is preposterous."

[116] Refer to Sangeet Lamichhaney et al. "Rapid Hybrid Speciation in Darwin's finches," *Science* 359.6372 (2017): 224-228.

[117] On confirming this, I am grateful to Michael Webster and Alex Papanastassiou.

[118] Conversation with Michael Webster, who noted that one of the single most important factors affecting human color perception were the colors prevalent in the environment in a person's infancy and childhood.

on the page was also shaped by feminist theory of the 1990s.[119] Especially important to me was the work of Judith Butler and Elizabeth Grosz, who both argued that our understanding of our body and our identity are volatile and ever-changing concepts, grounded foremost in our sexuality and negotiated always in front of others. For Butler, the body and its identities were primarily enacted as a social performance, whereas for Grosz, it was a social construction could be represented as a mobius strip that cycled seamlessly from fact through fiction, mind through body, subject through object, and back again.[120] This constant process of personal becoming would have been especially relevant in the context of the confraternity. There, highly ritualized and symbolic actions and movements along with other kinds of sensory perception experiences worked together to produce an intentional disassociation from the self in which male identity was repeatedly modeled, performed, negotiated, and renegotiated.

As the confraternity was a homosocial organization, a brother's negotiation of his body and his identity primarily happened in relationship to other men. For this reason, Eve Sedgwick's

---

[119] Edmund Husserl. 1989. *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*. Vol. II. Translated by Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer. (Dordrecht and Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers). From the German original unpublished manuscript of 1912, revised 1915, 1928. Known as *Ideas* II; Martin Heidegger. 1982. *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Translated by Albert Hofstadter. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press). From the German original of 1975. The text of a lecture course in 1927; and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. 1945. *Phénoménologie de la Perception.* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard). Feminist critiques of Merleau-Ponty include: Carol Bigwood. "Renaturalizing the body (with the help of Merleau-Ponty)," *Hypatia* 6.3 (1991): 54-73; Silvia Stoller. "Reflections on feminist Merleau-Ponty skepticism," *Hypatia* 15.1 (2000): 175-182; and Dorothea Olkowski and Gail Weiss. 2006. "Feminist Interpretations of Merleau-Ponty." (PA: Pennsylvania State University Press).

[120] Especially important was the follow-up to Judith Butler. 1990. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. (NY: Routledge), which was entitled 1993. *Bodies that Matter*: On the discursive limits of sex. (NY: Routledge) and, a year later, Elizabeth Grosz. 1994. *Volatile Bodies: Towards a Corporeal Feminism*. (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press). For a comparison of the two texts, refer to: Mary Bloodsworth. [Review of *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."; Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*, by J. Butler & E. Grosz], *Gender and Society* 9.5 (1995): 632-634.

analysis of male homosociality in English literature, which demonstrated that sexuality and desire were social constructs bound by history and expressed in art, was fundamental in my conception of embodied male identity-construction in the space of the Cloister of the Scalzo.[121] In the field of art history, the work of Patricia Simons, especially her *Sex of Men in Pre-Modern Europe,* shaped my understanding of male homosociality as an early-modern performance with and through objects and spaces that had cultural valences and symbolic meanings. Furthermore, she, along with Mary Garrard, have shown that these objects and spaces could be used by institutions to organize and regulate male identity-construction, which was a critical tool in the maintenance of the early modern state.[122] In thinking about how this organization and regulation occurred, Simons' and Garrard's work, along with that of Carol Walker Bynum, Patricia Reilly, Leo Steinberg, and Phillip Sohm, demonstrated from a wide variety of angles not only that early-modern people had performed gendered identities but so too had they projected gender onto objects, spaces, and even art-historical concepts such as color and style.[123] My study thus takes

---

[121] Eve Sedgwick. 1985. *Between Men: English literature and male homosocial desire*. (New York: Columbia University Press). Also refer to her related 1990. *Epistemology of the Closet*. (Berkeley: University of California Press).

[122] Patricia Simons. 2013. *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe: A Cultural History.* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press). Also consult her 2005. "Separating the men from the boys: masculinities in early Quattrocento Florence and Donatello's Saint George," in *Rituals, Images, and Words*, edited by F.W. Kent and Charles Zika, pp. 147-176 (Turnhout: Brepols) as well as 1997. "Homosociality and erotics in Italian Renaissance portraiture," in *Portraiture: Facing the Subject*, edited by Joanna Woodall, pp. 29-51. (Manchester: Manchester University Press). Refer also to her work on early-modern women, especially her 1992. "Women in frames: the gaze, the eye, the profile in Renaissance portraiture," in *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*, edited by Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard, pp. 38-57. (NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group); "Giovanna and Ginevra: portraits for the Tornabuoni family by Ghirlandaio and Botticelli," *I Tatti Studies* (2013): 103-135; and 1994. *Lesbian (in) visibility in Italian Renaissance culture: Diana and other cases of "donna con donna," Journal of Homosexuality 27.1-2* (1994): 81-122.

[123] Mary D. Garrard. 2010. *Brunelleschi's Egg: nature, art and gender in Renaissance Italy*. (Berkeley: University of California Press), as well as her "Who was Ginevra de' Benci: Leonardo's Portrait and its Sitter Recontextualized," *Artibus et Historiae* 17.53 (2007): 23-56

as its starting point two ideas: 1) that the gendering of objects and concepts fundamentally shaped and limited the way that early-modern people could and would have experienced them; and that 2) this is important because early-modern people used those objects and concepts to construct, perform, and express their own gendered identities.

It is perhaps this methodological desire—to imagine a period body that was necessarily generalized but that could also have a specific, historically-grounded experience—that led me to the shape of my chapters and, ultimately, my dissertation. Like all of the chapters of this dissertation, the one that you are now reading began with a short narrative relating a possible experience of "the brother" as he moves into, through, and out of his confraternal space. The narrative is written in the form of a third-person omniscient narrative and each episode foregrounds the art-historical analysis that follows it in each of the dissertation's five chapters. The brother's story is continuous across the dissertation, narrating a single, cohesive, and

---

and "The Cloister and the Public Square: Gender Dynamics in Renaissance Florence," *Early Modern Women* 11.1 (2016): 5-43; Leo Steinberg. 1983. *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and Modern Oblivion.* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Pres); Caroline Walker Bynum, "The Body of Christ in the Later Middle Ages: A Reply to Leo Steinberg," *Renaissance Quarterly* 39.3 (1986): 399-439; Patricia Reilly, "The Taming of the Blue: writing out color in Italian Renaissance Theory," in *The Expanding Discourse,* edited by Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard, pp. 86-99. (NY: Routledge, Taylor, & Francis Group); Philip Sohm, "Gendered Style in Italian Art Criticism from Michelangelo to Malvasia," *Renaissance Quarterly* 48 (1995): 759-808. Also refer to Patricia Lee Rubin. 2018. *Seen from Behind: Perspectives on the male body and Renaissance Art*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press); Yael Even. "The Loggia dei Lanzi: A Showcase of Female Subjugation," *Women's Art Journal* 12.1 (1991): 10-14; Philip Gavitt. 2011. *Gender, Honor, and Charity in Late Renaissance Florence*. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press); Valerie Traub. 2016. "History in the Present Tense: Feminist Theories, Spatialized Epistemologies, and Early Modern Embodiment," in *Mapping Gendered Routes and Spaces in the Early Modern World,* edited by Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, pp. 15-53. (London: Routledge); Natalie Zemon Davis. 1978. "Women on Top: Symbolic Sexual Inversion and Political Disorder in Early Modern Europe," in *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society*, edited by Barbara A. Babcock, pp. 147-190. (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press).

possible embodied experience that occurs across the morning of the third Sunday of a summer month, a day on which the brothers engaged in their flagellant rituals of self-mortification.

Though my use of third-person narrative to begin each chapter may be novel it is not without precedent. Certainly, the format is an extension of the historical "habits" or "practices" of microhistory.[124] Microhistories were controversial when experimented with by cultural historians in the 1970s because their authors were seeking to examine a "great historical question" through the minute examination of a singular human experience. These authors furthermore related their findings in the form a third-person narrative about a historical person. These narratives often made gestures towards authorial omniscience and were enriched by the author's broad knowledge of the culture as well as ability to write in an accessible, story-telling style.[125] Take the climactic moment in Natalie Zemon Davis's famed microhistory, *The Return of Martin Guerre*—which relates a case of identity theft in a sixteenth-century French village—when the real Martin Guerre finally arrives in court to reclaim his identity and is seen by his wife:

> "After one look at the newcomer she began to tremble and weep (all this according to Coras, who considered it the duty of a good judge to note the expressions of his witnesses) and ran to embrace him, asking his pardon for her fault, committed because she had been overwhelmed by the ruses and seductions of Arnaud du Tilh [the imposter]. Out tumbled all the prepared excuses: your sisters believed him too readily; your uncle accepted him; I wanted to have my husband back so much that I believed him, especially when he knew such private things about me; when I realized he was a fraud, I wished I were dead and would have killed myself except that I was afraid of God; the minute I knew he had stolen my honor, I took him to court."[126]

---

[124] On whether or not microhistory is a method, refer to Thomas Cohen, "The Macrohistory of Microhistory," 54, in which he calls microhistory a historical habit and his 2019. *Roman Tales*. (New York: Routledge), 1-2, in which he describes it as a practice.
[125] Sigurdor Gylfi Magnússon and István M. Szijártó. 2013. *What is Microhistory?: Theory and Practice*. (Oxon and New York: Routledge), 1-12.
[126] Natalie Zemon Davis. 1983. *The Return of Martin Guerre.* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 85-86.

The success in 1983 of Davis' *Martin Guerre*—which had been preceded also by that of Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms* in 1976 and Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie's *Montaillou* in 1980, which both similarly related historical human experiences—validated and even gave popular appeal to the microhistory genre.[127]

Since then, microhistories have been written that explore the macrocosmic experiences of people living across time and geography.[128] In the field of early modern Italian history, microhistories have been told by the likes of Edward Muir, in his *Mad Blood Stirring*, as well as Thomas Cohen, especially in his *Love and Death in Renaissance Italy* and his most recent study, *Roman Tales*.[129] Though Cohen has noted that microhistory comes from a linguistic turn in history-telling and therefore is often characterized by a lack of attention to material culture, in 1996, Michael Camille's *Master of Death*: *The Lifeless Art of Pierre Remiet, Illustrator,* used the genre to explore the identities and working methods of medieval manuscript illuminators.[130] The microhistory has thus been used for decades to examine the macrocosmic concerns of scholar in the disciplines of both history and art history.

---

[127] Carlo Ginzburg. 1976. *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth Century Miller*. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul); Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie. 1980. *Montaillou: Cathars and Catholics in a French Village, 1294-1324.* (London: Penguin Books); Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*; also refer to her 1988. *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon tales and their tellers in sixteenth-century France*. (Cambridge: Polity Press).

[128] Magnusson and Szijarto, *What is Microhistory?*, 1-12 offers a comprehensive global survey of microhistory.

[129] Edward Muir. 1993. *Mad Blood Stirring: vendetta & factions in Friuli during the Renaissance*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press); Thomas Cohen. 2004. *Love and Death in Renaissance Italy.* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press)*;* and 2021. *Roman Tales: A Reader's Guide to the Art of Microhistory.* (London and New York: Routledge).

[130] Thomas Cohen, "The Macrohistory of Microhistories," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 47.1 (2017): 60-62; Michael Camille. 1996. *Master of Death*: *The Lifeless Art of Pierre Remiet Illustrator*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press).

As those who write microhistories have already noted, the practice demands careful and rigorous consideration to many forms of evidence, primarily archival, and insists on attendance to minutiae.[131] As a result, the historical habit of microhistory tests the limits of the archive, revealing whose stories and what parts of them are or are not maintained through the material and cultural practices of history.[132] This has become particularly evident in the archival evidentiary lacunae surrounding the experiences of enslaved black women in America and stands as the basis for much of the scholarship of cultural historian Saidiya Hartman. Recognizing the impossibility of telling these women's stories with the dearth of archival evidence available to her, Hartman's "critical fabulations" represent a "radical act of imagination" in exploring these women's lived experiences in which the fact of evidentiary lacunae itself has weight.[133] By gleaning no more than a name from a register, Hartman, like the microhistorians, adds consideration of vast forms of cultural evidence to attempt to recuperate these women's lives.[134]

But what distinguishes Hartman from those who write microhistories is the experimental form of her prose, which she uses with meta-awareness at once to draw attention to the limits of the discipline of history and to push past them. For example, she writes:

---

[131] Cohen, "The Macrohistory of Microhistory," 54, characterizes the practice of microhistory as one "of obsessive attention to detail." Also refer to Magnusson and Szijarto, *What is Microhistory?,* 4-5; as well as Matti Peltonen, "What is Micro in Microhistory?," in *Theoretical Discussion of Biography: Approaches from History, Microhistory, and Life Writing,"* edited by Hans Renders and Binne de Haan, pp. 105-118. (Leiden and Boston: Brill).

[132] For example, refer to Stephanie E. Smallwood. "The Politics of the Archive and History's Accountability to the Enslaved," *History of the Present* 6.2 (2016): 117–32.

[133] Jennifer C. Nash, "Black Feminine Enigmas, or Notes on the Politics of Black Feminist Theory," *Signs* (2020): 520. Also refer to her review of Hartman's work, 2020. "Saidiya Hartman. Wayward Lives Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval," *The American Historical Review* 125.2 (2020): 595-597.

[134] Saidiya Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts," *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 26 (2008): 1-14; and 2019. *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval*. (New York and London).

> "If I could have conjured up more than a name in an indictment, if I could have imagined Venus speaking in her own voice, if I could have detailed the small memories banished from the ledger, then it might have been possible for me to represent the friendship that could have blossomed between two frightened and lonely girls. Shipmates. Then Venus could have beheld her dying friend, whispered comfort in her ear, rocked her with promises, soothed her with 'soon, soon' and wished for her a good return.
> Picture them: The relics of two girls, one cradling the other, plundered innocents; a sailor caught sight of them and later said they were friends. Two world-less girls found a country in each other's arms. Beside the defeat and the terror, there would be this too: the glimpse of beauty, the instant of possibility."[135]

In her transparency about what cannot be known and the claims she cannot make but asking the reader to imagine them anyway, Hartman's scholarship teaches that history-telling is itself an artform and that even the historian's writing determines the way that people's experiences are or are not remembered.

Situating my work in relationship to both the genres of microhistory and of critical fabulation, my project too reacts to the limits of the archives.[136] But there is a crucial difference between my use of narrative and the kinds of narratives put forth in microhistories and in critical fabulations. Microhistories are often lengthy, reconstructing the particular lived experience of a named historical person through the examination of historical minutiae. Critical fabulations, on the other hand, represent a radical act of imagination that recuperates what a specific person *would* have, in the subjunctive mood, have done. The actions of the brother in my short narratives, on the other hand, represent not what a real, living brother *would* have done, instead they represent what an aggregate or average brother *could* have done.

---

[135] Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts," 8.
[136] The tendency for microhistories to ignore or take for granted large historical contexts has already been remarked on by Hans Renders, "The Limits of Representativeness: Biography, Life Writing, and Microhistory," in *Theoretical Discussion of Biography: Approaches from History, Microhistory, and Life Writing,"* edited by Hans Renders and Binne de Haan, pp. 129-138. (Leiden and Boston: Brill).

This is why the brother's story is written as a third-person, omniscient narrative in the indicative and not the subjunctive mood. It is an entirely fictional construction written for the purpose of illustrating and exploring the embodied art-historical phenomenon that forms the bulk of each chapter. Still, though I describe myself as an omniscient narrator, the brother's narrative is circumscribed by a set of culturally- and temporally-bound limitations discerned through consideration of multiple forms of related evidence. That is, if there is fiction here in the archives, I hope it is only in the places where I have acted as a proxy-agent for the brother, choosing one historically appropriate action or thought for him over another to best illustrate or explore a specific art-historical phenomenon.[137] In the brother's story, fiction should not manifest itself as a detachment from historical reality.

My attention to evidentiary minutiae, however, does not mean that my knowledge of the brother's experience or environment is complete. Just as the limits of the archive have been shown to pose real restrictions on the writing of history, so too do the limits of what any one person can know about other people's lived experience, especially of those dead for half a millennium.[138] As Thomas Cohen has already noted, lived experience is a viscous thing.[139] Though careful scholarship may sometimes be able to clarify history, it at once always demonstrates that human experience is even more viscous, dense, sophisticated, or complex than we can imagine. It is for this reason that I have no hope that my narrative is complete. On the

---

[137] I gesture here, of course, to the title of Davis., *Fiction in the Archives*, another of her significant works written in the genre of microhistory.
[138] For comments on microhistory in relationship to the post-modern problem of knowing anything, refer to Richard D. Brown, "Microhistory and the Post-Modern Challenge," in *Theoretical Discussion of Biography: Approaches from History, Microhistory, and Life Writing,"* edited by Hans Renders and Binne de Haan, pp. 119-128. (Leiden and Boston: Brill) as well as Cohen, "The Macrohistory of Microhistory," 55.
[139] Cohen, "The Macrohistory of Microhistory," 63.

contrary, in order to maintain the integrity of the narrative, whenever evidence was lacking or ambiguous, my writing was guided by a wariness to embellish or expand upon what I could know and a determination to avoid any speculative details that were not necessary for the story's integrity. It is therefore my hope that scholars of the period, regardless of their area of study, will agree that the brother's story—and thus the possible embodied experience of viewership that it represents—does not conflict with but would rather be enriched by the application of their own knowledge of early modern experience. In leaving the narrative incomplete, I hope to have increased its plausibility.

b. The Ethics of Doing

As I have experimented with different narrative forms that might best relate the experiences of an embodied viewer in the Scalzo, I have been very aware of the ethical stakes of writing what is at its core a work of highly-informed, art-historical fiction. It is not lost on me that the habit of microhistory developed from the methods of leftist Italian cultural historians. These authors were seeking to remediate both the "Great Man" histories that came out of Germany around WWII and the French behavioralist writings that sought to take politics out of history all together.[140] Microhistories were written in a positivist tradition of giving voice to the voiceless, of telling history through the stories of people, events, and places that were not

[140] On this aspect of the history of microhistory, refer to Magnússon and Szijarto, *What is Microhistory?,* 13-38 as well as Carlo Ginsburg. 2014. "Microhistory: Two or Three Things I Know about It," in *Theoretical Discussion of Biography: Approaches from History, Microhistory, and Life Writing,"* edited by Hans Renders and Binne de Haan, pp. 139-168. (Leiden and Boston: Brill).

extraordinary.[141] People were put back into history not by exceptionalizing them but rather by exploring the richness of the lives of common men and women as well as common places. In *The Cheese and the Worms,* for example, Ginzburg examined the life of a man named Menocchio, a miller living in a small town in the north of Italy in the 1500s.[142] Moreover, the stakes of Hartman's critical fabulations are steep, as she imagines the stories of the anonymous enslaved black women whom the archive marginalizes and erases so that their names will not be lost to history. My project is a very different one. I use the narrative form to construct a generalized and essentially patriarchal experience of viewership, situated in a cis-gendered, fully-abled, native-Florentine male body in Florence in the early part of the 1500s. And while this is the point of view suggested by Baxandall's period eye, it represents one of the most privileged and historiographically-entrenched experiences in human history. What could there be to gain by giving this period eye a period body?

In writing this study of the Scalzo and the fictional narratives that foreground my analyses, I have tried to do so with a sense of political urgency. The first of my goals in constructing and then unpacking this privileged way of seeing was to examine patriarchy, "the domination of men over women within the nuclear family, a domination which is then generalized throughout society," in the historical past so as to better understand how it continues to function in my own contemporary world.[143] It is for this reason that, although my brother is from the artisan class, he is nonetheless in a privileged position, capable of oppressing those he

[141] On this aspect of the ethics of microhistory writing, I am particularly grateful for the generous and copious comments made in a series of email exchanges in which I was allowed to participate by Barry Torch, Thomas Cohen, dated 18 January 2022.
[142] Ginsburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*, xiv-xviii, discusses the "commonness" of Menocchio.
[143] I quote this definition of patriarchy from Mary Ann Clawson, "Early Modern Fraternalism and the Patriarchal Family," *Feminist Studies* 6 (1980): 371, because Clawson, like me, uses it to refer to both early-modern and contemporary structure of patriarchy.

marginalizes to his own advantage.[144] But as I considered how viewers would construct and reconstruct their identity over and over again in front of the scrutinizing eyes of male peers, a

---

[144] These people included not only his wife and children, but also foreigners, people with darker skin, disabled people, enslaved people, people from lower social classes, and people from other religions, as well as, perhaps, other people so erased to history that their presence is not, at this time, known. Although the histories of these people have, much to the field's detriment, traditionally been ignored by Florentine studies, much work has been done in recent decades to remediate these erasures Still, there is much work to be done. On the topic generally, refer to Stephen J. Milner. 2005. *At the Margins: minority groups in premodern Italy*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press). Also refer to studies on individual groups. On the subject of women, consult: Caroline E. King. 1998. *Renaissance Women Patrons: Wives and Widows in Italy c. 1300-1550*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press); Patricia Simons, "Women in Frames"; Marilyn Migiel and Juliana SchiesarI. 1991. *Refiguring Woman: Perspectives on Gender and the Italian Renaissance.* (New York: Cornell University Press); Samuel K. Cohn. 1996. *Women in the Streets: Essays on Sex and Power in Renaissance Italy*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press); Joan Kelly. 1999. "'Did Women Have a Renaissance?" in *Feminism and Renaissance Studies*, edited by Lorna Hutson, pp. 21-47. (Oxford: Oxford University Press); Christiane Klapisch-Zuber. 1994. *A History of Women in West, Volume II: Silences of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), Chistiane Klapisch-Zuber. 1985. *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy.* (London: The University of Chicago Press); Margaret L. King. 1991. *Women of the Renaissance* (London: The University of Chicago Press); and others. On the subject of children, refer to: Children: Trexler, *The children of Renaissance Florence;* Diana Presciutti. 2015. *Visual Cultures of Foundling Care in Renaissance Italy.* (Farnham: Ashgate); Konrad Eisenbichler. 2002. *The premodern teenager: youth in society, 1150-1650*. (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies) and 1998. *The boys of the Archangel Raphael: a youth confraternity in Florence, 1411-1785*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press); On sexual difference, refer to Rocke, *Forbidden Friendship*; Margaret W. Ferguson et al. 1986. *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe* (London: The University of Chicago Press); Simons, *The Sex of Men* and "Lesbian (in)visibility." On racial difference, refer to T. F. Earle and K. J. P. Lowe. 2010. *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*. (New York: Cambridge University Press); Irene Backus. 2014. *Asia materialized: perceptions of China in Renaissance Florence*. (PhD Diss. University of Chicago); Ingrid Greenfield. 2016. *A Moveable Continent: Collecting Africa in Renaissance Italy*. (PhD Diss. University of Chicago); Lia Markey. 2016. *Imagining the Americas in Medici Florence*. (University Park, PA: Penn State Press); and a forthcoming dissertation by Angela Zhang at York University, entitled *Investing in Infidels: Slavery in Trecento and Quattrocento Florence*. Also consult Hans Belting. 2011. *Florence and Baghdad: Renaissance art and Arab science*. (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press), whose problematics have been pointed out to me at length by scholars of Islamic art of the period in question; Sean E. Roberts. 2013. *Printing a Mediterranean World: Florence, Constantinople, and the renaissance of geography*. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press); Dana E. Katz. 2008. *The Jew in the Art of the Italian Renaissance*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press). Scholarship in the field of disability studies remains sparse.

subsequent and related goal emerged: to show how patriarchy oppresses even those it benefits.[145] These two goals seem especially poignant in my own contemporary moment: I began writing this dissertation in earnest immediately following the election of Donald Trump to the presidency in 2016 and the subsequent Women's March on Washington. I wrote it through the #MeToo movement, the rise of the Black-Lives-Matter movement, wide-spread civil unrest, the near-sack of the United States Capitol by domestic terrorists, and now conclude it during an on-going global pandemic in the year 2022. Though my narrative may give a body and voice to patriarchy it does so always to dismantle it.

Refer to Sefy Hendler. 2016. *Gracious and Beautiful Monster: the literary universe of Bronzino's Nano Morgante*; and Touba Ghadessi, "Lords and Monsters: Visible Emblems of Rule," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 16, no. 1/2 (2013): 491-523; and Elizabeth W. Mellyn. 2014. *Mad Tuscans and their Families: A history of mental disorder in early modern Italy*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press).

[145] Analysis of the pressures that men feel within patriarchal systems and the ways in which it also hurts them has been a concern of feminist studies since at least the late 1980s, especially in the work of Michael Kaufman and Michael S. Kimmel. For example, consult Michael Kaufman. 1987. "The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men's violence," in *Beyond Patriarchy: Essays by Men on Pleasure, Power, and Change,* edited by Michael Kaufman, pp. 1-17. (Toronto and New York: Oxford University Press); Michael S. Kimmel. 1994. "Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity," in *Theorizing Masculinities*, edited by Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman, pp. 119-142. (United Kingdom: Sage Publications); Don Sabo, Michael S. Kimmel, and Michael A. Messner. 1998. "Pigskin, patriarchy, and pain," in *Race, class, and gender in the United States*, edited by Paula S. Rothenberg and Christina Hsu Accomando, pp. 227-230. (NY: Worth Publishers); Michael S. Kimmel. 2018. *Guyland: The perilous world where boys become men.* (NY: Harper Perrenial). Also refer to studies like Marcia C. Inhorn. ""The worms are weak": male infertility and patriarchal paradoxes in Egypt," *Men and masculinities* 5.3 (2003): 236-256. Currently, conversations about the kinds of masculinities that hurt both men and women seem to revolve around the concept of "toxic masculinity," but perhaps they should not. Refer to: Andrea Waling. "Problematising 'toxic'and 'healthy'masculinity for addressing gender inequalities," *Australian Feminist Studies* 34.101 (2019): 362-375. The tendency for over-correctives in patriarchal structures that the author thought hurt men disproportionately to the ways in which they helped women was also the subject of the controversial book, Christina Hoff Sommers. 2000. *The War Against Boys: how misguided feminism is harming our young men*. (NY: Touchstone). However, this book can also be read as highlighting the widespread need for radical societal change.

One of the biggest ethical stakes, though, of my historical practice of narrative is that imagining the lived experience of another person—even a fictional one—is an inherently empathic act antithetical to patriarchy.[146] My goals here were both personal and scholarly. While the discipline of art history has known at least since World War II that the act of looking at art does not make us more ethical people, it is my sincere hope that the habit of practicing empathy in one's scholarship—whether as an author or reader—can increase our likelihood of practicing empathy in life's many other arenas. That perhaps the repeated act of weighing evidence and evidentiary lacunae to think about other people's experiences teaches us the impossibility of ever knowing or understanding the experiences, attitudes, motivations and external limits placed upon people around us in our own contemporary world. And that practicing the habit of empathy can become not only a scholarly habit but a quotidian one as well.

But there are also the practices of writing history and interpreting the material world to take into consideration. Where patriarchy wants us to understand meaning as made and disseminated in a top-down, monolithic way, imagining the brother's experience shows us how different it must have been from our own and, in doing so, lays bare the multiplicity of human experience. This concern also led me to the third-person narrative as my format, which I hope makes transparent that I have constructed one single possible embodied experience instead of another. In this way, the brother's story might make clear the limits of narrative and, consequently, of history. In a related way, though my chapters examine big cultural questions, this dissertation nonetheless centers the individual as the meaning-making locus of his or her

[146] Refer to Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor. "From human rights to feminist ethics: radical empathy in the archives," *Archivaria* 81.1 (2016): 23-43; as well as Claudia Strauss. "Is empathy gendered and, if so, why? An approach from feminist psychological anthropology," *Ethos* 32.4 (2004): 432-457.

own life.[147] That is, imagining the experience of another confraternity brother—or even a sister, as there were female members of the confraternity beginning in 1554—living with different biological, cultural, social, emotional, psychological, theological, or intellectual preconditions may have led me to different art-historical discoveries.[148] This means that, far from being burdensome, the consideration of many different kinds of encounters with art objects by people with many different kinds of bodies and identities has the potential to demonstrate both the rich and capacious interpretive possibilities that art objects have in the built environment as well as those art objects' continued relevance over time.

Still, in my conception of the period body and in my use of narrative fiction, I acknowledge a tension. Though both the narrative passages presented and the period body that stars in it is based on consideration of multiple forms of visual, archival, and scientific evidence, they are still hypothetical and speculative, not the story of a single historical person but rather a reconstructed way of perceiving the built environment that is at once both generalized and idealized. That is, as a character, the brother has a fictional period body. But he also represents the generalizable period body, which has a relationship with real individual bodies. He stands as a symbolic metonym for other men who can be grouped with him because of their common sex, gender, race, ethnicity, ability, age, class, and membership in the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist. It is my hope that by considering multiple forms of evidence that provide knowledge about different parts of the embodied experience of the Scalzo, I have allowed the brother to have a specific and yet generalizable experience in the cloister situated in a specific and yet

---

[147] Magnusson and Szijarto, *What is Microhistory?,* 72, talks about the microhistory's investigation of "big picture questions." Cohen, "The Macrohistory of Microhistory," 68, remarks on microhistory as an investigation of "the world in a grain of sand."
[148] O'Brien, "Who Holds the Keys?," 229.

generalizable body. Ultimately, I realize these tensions are embedded in the fraught and tenuous relationships among fiction, narrative, and truth that underpin the writing of history.

5. The Chapters

In constructing the narrative that stood at the beginning of this chapter, the consideration of hard evidence began with determining the time that the story should begin. Though their statutes give no fixed times for services, the time of confraternal rituals probably corresponded to the monastic canonical hours.[149] The confraternity's morning service would therefore probably have been at the same time as Lauds, which occurred during the first hour of each day. This hour moved according to the time of sunrise, ensuring that the traditional "Office of Daybreak" always began in the dark and ended in brightness, just as I have set the narrative.[150] The story also necessarily occurs on the third Sunday of the month because it was only at this second monthly meeting that the brothers flagellated, a ritual feature that I wanted to put in dialogue with viewership of the Scalzo frescoes.[151] In terms of time period, the narrative is imagined to have taken place after both the death of Andrea del Sarto in 1530 and the ascension of Cosimo I de' Medici to power in 1537. It furthermore takes place before 1552, when Cosimo ordered that the Scalzo brothers be displaced from their confraternal home by the nuns of the Order of St.

---

[149] Consult the second chapter of this dissertation.
[150] Catholic Church and Fernand Cabrol. 1916. *The Day Hours of the Church: now put forth according to the reforms of Pope Pius X: with a parallel English version*. (London: Burns & Oates), 4.
[151] John Henderson. 1990. "Penitence and the Laity in Fifteenth Century Florence," in *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, edited by Timothy Verdon and John Henderson, pp. 229-249. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press), 240, argues that the alternation of flagellation with public correction is proof that flagellation was seen as part of a system of penance rather than the major feature of penance.

John of Jerusalem.[152] I have also set the narrative in the summer, as this is the driest time of the year in Florence. [153] This environmental condition will become relevant in examination of the brother's physiological process of light adaptation that is the central subject the third chapter of this dissertation.

In the prologue to this chapter, the brother's attention was primarily oriented outward, towards the public world of Florence, as he walked to the confraternity on Via Larga and arrived at the entrance of his confraternal home. The expository of the brother's internal dialogue as he navigated Florence's urban landscape, I hope, gave a sense of the historical, cultural, theological, temporal, and geographic context of this dissertation, as well as demonstrated the method that will be used across the rest of the chapters.

Just as in every subsequent chapter, the Prologue of Chapter II of the dissertation picks up at where the narrative of the Prologue of the previous chapter ends, now with the brother entering the confraternity and taking a seat in the cloister as he waits for services to start. There, he begins to prepare spiritually and psychologically for the flagellant services that are about to occur in the adjoining oratory. The narrative thus sets the stage for the subsequent contextualization of Andrea del Sarto's cloister paintings into two primary formal traditions. The first is a long-standing Italian painting tradition that began in Romanesque abbeys and churches in Piedmont and the Veneto. In these religious spaces, the lowest, eye-level register of fresco, called the dado, were often monochromatic, picturing a curtain in front of which were a variety of different images with themes of secular strife. These images served as a liminal viewing zone that mediated the viewer's encounter with the sacred polychrome painting that was pictured

[152] Richa, *Notizie*, 201.
[153] I am grateful to Catherine Walsh for confirming that Florence's historic weather conditions are similar to those they experience today.

above the monochrome dado. Over time, these monochrome pictures were sorted out of the dado and into their own liminal architectural spaces—anterooms, porticoes, and cloisters especially—in which the viewer prepared for a transformative and collective spiritual encounter that would always be mediated by a sacred polychrome image. The chapter demonstrates that, by the quattrocento, these kinds of liminal, monochromatic cloisters were popular in Tuscany and especially in Florence, where renowned artists decorated the monumental cloisters of important basilicas and churches that would have been known and esteemed by the members of the Confraternity of the Scalzo.

Chapter II continues by arguing that this autochthonous and monochromatic Italian painting tradition would likely not have been the only source of formal and conceptual inspiration for Andrea del Sarto as he designed and painted the cloister. This is because, in the later quattrocento, Florence's merchant-class patrons developed a taste for the foldable Flemish altarpieces that had inundated the city, the exteriors of which were frequently decorated with monochromatic paintings of illusionistic carved stone sculptures represented in a liminal state between their sculpting and painting. These exterior monochromatic decorations were desirable for two reasons: first, they bypassed the need for monochromatic veils that would hide the paintings' color in church during the somber period of Lent; second, they prepared the viewer for a spiritual encounter with a sacred polychrome image on the interior of the altarpiece. Like the monochromatic dado frescoes and cloister cycles in Italy, the illusionistic, exterior images of Flemish altarpieces thus served as a liminal or transitional zone that mediated between the viewer and the polychrome pictorial world inside the altarpiece, helping to support a spiritual or divine revelation achieved through ritual practice. Situating Andrea del Sarto's Cloister of the Scalzo within these two visual traditions—one Italian and one Flemish—thus establishes the

claustral space of the Confraternity of the St. John the Baptist as one in which monochromatic paintings could support the brother's spiritual journey as he divested from the profane world of the street and began to prepare for the ritual transformation that would occur in the sacred space of the adjoining oratory.

With the confraternity's bell tolling, the Prologue to Chapter III finds the brother entering the *spogliatoio*, or dressing room, wherein he puts on his confraternal habit for the subsequent rituals in the oratory. Entering the confraternity's most holy spaces, the brother engages in a series of movements and activities, including flagellation in the *luogo vecchio*, designed to bring about a spiritual change. The narrative reveals that these spiritual activities occur in the increasing darkness of the interior while outside of the confraternity, the sun was rising. The result of the brother's adaptation to the darkness of the interior of his confraternity was that when he finally reemerges into the claustral space at the end of services, his vision is dazzled and overwhelmed by sunlight.

This moment is analyzed through two interpretive lenses. First, I relate its Christian light symbolism to the Office of the Tenebrae, a feature of Holy Week masses in which a church's candles were ritually extinguished until the participants sat in darkness. At the end of the masses a single candle was reproduced to light the congregants' exit. The reproduction of this candle also foreshadowed the lighting of the Paschal candle on Easter Sunday, the massive liturgical object whose light symbolized the incarnate *lumen Christi* of the Resurrection. The chapter thus argues that the brother's emergence into the cloister after the extinction of candles during confraternal services symbolically completed the Tenebrae Office, thus taking on the liturgical feature's religious symbolism. But more critically, the chapter also claims that the adaptive responses of the brother's body to overwhelming light were part of an affective devotional

program, enacted in space and over time, in which the automatic processes of sensory perception themselves became a hermeneutic for understanding God's mysteries.

Chapter III then takes into account the cloister's possible *figura di Dante*—that is, a figure meant to recall the Florentine poet Dante Alighieri—who stands at the fringe of listeners present in *The Preaching of John the Baptist* (Fig. 1.33).[154] The brother encountered this figure immediately upon entering the cloister after services, just near the spot where he experienced his moment of light blindness. Recalling the many moments throughout the *Commedia* in which Dante-pilgrim's vision is similarly overwhelmed with light, the chapter suggests that the *figura di Dante* encouraged the brother to bring his ritual experience of light into dialogue with the experiences of Dante-pilgrim as he ascended through supernatural realms. Analyzing the many artistic choices that Andrea del Sarto made to produce Dantesque effects of light—especially as they relate to the coloristic and optical theories of Leonardo da Vinci—this chapter argues that the experiential metaphysics of light in the Cloister of the Scalzo was intentionally designed and manipulated to confuse reality and fiction and to create a space in which divine light and sunlight might be taken for two manifestations of God's presence on earth.

The Prologue to Chapter IV of the dissertation finds the brother with his eyes adapted to the morning light in the cloister and aware that he is being watched by one of his brethren. His experience of viewing the homoerotic *Baptism of the Multitude* (Fig. 1.12) is juxtaposed with his own experience of being viewed in a potentially homoerotic way. The chapter puts the cloister and its monochromatic visual mode's potential to support such an encounter into dialogue with period anxieties about sodomy, paternal absenteeism, and the increasing power of women in

---

[154] On the *figura di Dante*, refer to Ernst Gombrich, "Giotto's Portrait of Dante(?)," *Burlington Magazine* 121.917 (1979): 477-480. I am greatful to Cosette Bruhns Alonso for first bringing this important article to my attention.

society. The analysis takes as its starting point a trend in art-historical literature on color that argues monochromatic painting represents a suppressed or less-real ontological status than polychrome painting with the ability to disrupt the body's physiological responses to sex, fear, and disgust. The chapter casts Andrea's unnatural palette as a form of "soft iconoclasm" that he used to create otherwise-naturalistic, life-size, and even sexually provocative images that were nonetheless received by viewers as orthodox.[155] This use of monochromy is especially evident in Andrea's depiction of *The Baptism of Christ* (fig. 1.8), where, despite its positive contemporary reception, Jesus' feminized body becomes the object of a "semenotic" relationship—that is, one relating to male ejaculation—with John the Baptist.[156] The monochromatic palette in the context of the brotherhood, though, neutralized the sexuality of the image, allowing the iconography to support the creation of close bonds of non-familial kinship, which were intentionally fostered to combat the enculturated sodomy, paternal absenteeism, and waxing political power of women that threatened male hegemony in early-modern Florence.

Chapter IV furthermore explores Andrea's palette as a form of soft iconoclasm in relationship to the cloister's negative exemplars of male behavior. These include images of women (Herodias and Salome) as well images in which men treat other men unjustly (Herod and the executioner). In *The Dance of Salome* (fig. 1.19), for example, the appeal of the young woman's body is heightened compared to contemporary depictions of the scene and sexual innuendo pervades the composition. The same erotic treatment of the body is true in *The Execution of St. John the Baptist* (1.21), where the Baptist's lifeless corpse is implicated in a sexual act with the homoerotic body of his executioner. This chapter thus argues that throughout

[155] Nagel, *The Controversy of the Renaissance*, 35-36.
[156] Simons, *The Sex of Men*, 2

the cloister, Andrea's limited palette afforded him the ability to experiment with compositions and iconographies that would have been unacceptable and even heretical had they been depicted in color. Even counterintuitively, in the homosocial context of the cloister, the graphic nature of these images would have made them particularly suitable for decorating a space in which normative masculinity was modeled and performed, a process upon which men rested the hope of preserving the Florentine state.

Made uncomfortable by his *confratello's* objectifying gaze, the Prologue to Chapter V of the dissertation sees the brother join a larger group of *confratelli*. He finds that they are debating the relative merits of Andrea del Sarto's paintings, especially as they pertain to the ongoing *paragone* debate, the argument about the supremacy of the media of painting and sculpture that preoccupied art theory of the cinquecento.

Closely related to the analysis of sexuality in the previous chapter, the group's comments set the stage for relating Andrea's paintings to the preparatory medium of drawing, which was only then becoming a viable artistic medium in its own right. The monumental *chiaroscuro* paintings are cast as a monument to the Florentine artistic ideal of *disegno*, or drawing/ design. However, in early modernity, *disegno* and its opposite, *colore*, gendered concepts with many theological, cultural, philosophical, and artistic associations. On one hand, *disegno*, relating to the Aristotelian concept of form, was aligned with masculinity, Florence, perfection, order, rationale, and godliness. On the other hand, *colore*, relating to Aristotle's matter, was aligned with femininity, Venice and the Flemish, superficiality, disorder, irrationality, and sin. The exploration of this dichotomy becomes the foundation for my analysis of the ways in which the monochromatic claustral space could be used to support the construction of orthodox masculinity and gendered identity construction in homosocial groups.

Finally, chapter V turns to a specific kind of social performance, referenced in the Prologue: the rehearsal of Florentine artistic debates about *paragone* and, specifically, Andrea's participation in it in the Scalzo through the use of monochromy and other formal devices. The chapter argues that, despite Andrea's Vasarian reputation as having been timid and uneducated, newly uncovered and overlooked period texts as well as formal analysis of the Scalzo cycle—especially the statuesque and sculptural *Four Virtues* (see figs. 1.9, 1.10, 1.23, and 1.24)—reveals that Andrea joined in the *paragone* debate in sophisticated formal ways. By focusing my analysis on the *Four Virtues*, this chapter discusses the ways that Andrea used monochromy in a Pygmalion-like way to enliven the sculptural figures. The result is that they have a sense of psychological and physical animation that can be related to the brother's constant process of identity-construction and the cloister as a homosocial space in which gendered identities were performed and negotiated in front of male peers.

By situating the perception of the Cloister of the Scalzo and its immersive, monochromatic frescoes by Andrea del Sarto in the period body of the brother, this dissertation hopes to demonstrate throughout that in early-modern Florence, the perception of color and light in the environment was part of an affective program that helped people understand their body and its place in intersecting social groups. By locating the body as the primary hermeneutical site and the act of sensing its primary apparatus, this dissertation reconsider methods for understanding the transhistorical aesthetic encounter while advancing claims about early-modern epistemologies of color, images, and the built environment.

So, let us rejoin the brother in the Prologue of Chapter II, who, still picturing flagellant whips, is just entering his confraternal home.

Chapter II: Monochromatic Traditions

1. Prologue

The brother took a deep breath and opened the confraternity door. He stepped through it. In the small *ingresso,* or vestibule, there was another person. The brother wished him peace and nodded as he strode through the room to the door at its back right corner.[1]

This was the door to the cloister.

At its entrance, the brother paused. He could here noises coming in through the atrium's central opening. Torchlight flickered on the walls. The brother could make out a few of the images on them—John the Baptist, pictured on the right as a youth to the left as an old man, pictured in some episode from his life. In this light, he found it hard to believe that the cloister's walls were not really covered in real, rather than painted, engaged columns and friezes carved with grotteschi and other ornaments (figs. 1.14, 1.15, 1.18, and 1.20). He stepped through the portal and turned right under the covered aisle, treading carefully in the darkness. On the wall in front of him was a painting of *The Visitation* (Fig. 1.26), the meeting between the pregnant cousins Mary and Elizabeth, which he thought underscored the importance of the communal assembly of the brotherhood. Even women knew what their familial duties were. When he reached the bench in front of the image he turned and sat on it (fig. 1.28).[2] The stone bench ran

---

[1] Different confraternities had different entrance rituals. For example, Ronald E. Weissman. 1982. *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence*. (New York: Academic Press), 92-93, found that in the Confraternity of Sant'Antonio, each man arriving at the confraternity entrance was greeted by the brother who had arrived before him who said "Go in Peace." This brother then continued on his ritual journey while the one that just arrived took his place and waited for the next *confratello*. He argued that the "unbroken chain of greeting, a rite of incorporation, highlighted the solidarity of the group."

[2] On the existence of this bench, refer to John Shearman, "The Chiostro dello Scalzo," 215-218.

around the perimeter of the room and was as chilly as the night around it. He folded his hands in his lap equally out of devotion and to produce warmth. From around the cloister, a few other faces emerged in the intermittent darkness. He knew all of his *confratelli* somewhat, and so nodded whenever he met one's eyes, mindful not to disturb the silence.[3] The brother bowed his head and began to pray.

Footsteps, however, soon distracted him from his meditation. When he looked up to see another brother entering the cloister, he noticed the scent of the potted plants placed in the courtyard in front of him[4] He knew that the birds nesting in the adjoining Medici garden would soon begin chirping on the atrium's gabled roof, filling the semi-covered cloister with song.[5] Would they be so pleasant if they could see what he could, blood streaming from the stump of John the Baptist's neck on the wall of the cloister across from him (Fig. 1.21)? He scanned the expanse of decorated plaster across from him, the narrative scenes of *The Life of St. John the Baptist* as well as the fluted pilasters, Corinthian capitals, and cornices that separated and framed

---

[3] ASF, Cap CRS 152, 13r: Brothers are to act "*no[n] chome gli stolti ma chome gli fani quando la nostra cittá ordinasse alchuna solenne prosciesione ó vero quando paresse al nostro ghovernatore fare alchune andata acio che più divotamente si vada."*

[4] Tanya Bayard. 1985. *Sweet Herbs and Sundry Flowers*: *Medieval Gardens and the Gardens of the Cloisters*. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art), 80-83. The presence of potted plants in medieval and Renaissance cloisters is attested to by images in illuminated manuscripts. Cloisters may also have been used as winter conservatories for fruit trees. Plants that could be kept in containers within cloisters include: artist's acanthus, aloe, carob, sour orange, fig, poet's jessamine, bay, myrtle, oleander, olive, date palm, pomegranate, rosemary, and squill. On the importance of gardens in cloisters, refer to Terry Comito. 1978. *The Idea of the Garden in the Renaissance*. (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press), 25-50. On both the practical and symbolic considerations of gardens in religious communities, refer to Paul Meyvaert. 1986. "The Medieval Monastic Garden," in *Medieval Gardens* edited by Elisabeth B. MacDougall, pp. 23-53. (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks).

[5] On Clarice Orsini's garden and its relationship to the *Compagnia dello Scalzo*, refer to Borgo, "The Medici Garden at San Marco," 237 as well as Caroline Elam, "Lorenzo de' Medici's Sculpture Garden," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz* 36.1/2 (1992): 41-83. On the gabled roof, access John Shearman, "The Chiostro dello Scalzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institut* 9.3/4 (1960): 217-218.

the images. He reminded himself that although it looked like it was made of marble, the architecture was all an illusion, designed and painted by deceased *confratello* Andrea del Sarto. The brother straightened up in his seat, aware that his back could damage Andrea's paintings. He looked around the cloister at his brethren sitting along the benches, noticing how each of them seemed a character in the drama of the painting that was behind him. He must look that way too, he thought, considering what it would have been like to witness John the Baptist leap in his mother's womb for the first time.[6]

The brother glanced towards the northern end of the room. There, between Andrea's allegorical figures of *Justice* and *Charity* (fig. 1.5), was the entrance to the *spogliatoio***,** or changing room**.** Inside, he would remove his clothes and dress in his confraternal robe. Then, he would be indistinguishable from the other *confratelli*. Together, the brothers would listen, pray, intone, bow, kneel, stand, chant, and sing, before receiving their scourges and retiring to the *luogo vecchio*, the old place. There, the brothers would scourge their own backs with whips made from three knotted ropes. As he sat on the cloister's stone bench, he catalogued his recent sins for which he offered this month's flagellation. He would be sure to apply the whip as hard as he could to make himself worthy of the eternal salvation offered to him through the miracle of Christ's resurrection.[7] He looked once more at *The Execution of St. John the Baptist*. (Fig. 1.21) He scrutinized the executioner's muscular back and the oversized sword in his hand. The

[6] Luke 1:41: "When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit."
[7] Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 206-207 argued that during the 1500s flagellation became to be seen as a hokey, quaint practice. Black, *Italian Confraternities*, 101-102, demonstrated, however, that the practice nonetheless persisted throughout Italy. Douglas Dow. 2006. "Confraternal Piety and Corporate Patronage: A Reconstruction of the Art and Oratory of the Company of San Giovanni Battista dello Scalzo, Florence." (PhD Diss., Penn State University), 48 produced receipts for whips as late as 1580, providing a likely *terminus ante quem* that the brothers of the Scalzo ended their flagellant practice.

assassin rested the tip of his blade on the ground and, with his free hand, placed the still-warm, gaping-mouthed head of John onto a plate held by Salome and her servant. The brother's mind drifted to the three knotted ropes. They was nothing compared to such a sacrifice.

The confraternity's bell tolled outside.[8] The brother took a deep breath, stood up, and, like the other *confratelli* still lingering in the cloister, headed towards the entrance of the changing room. He made his way down the covered aisle decorated with scenes of the Baptist's early life and walked slowly towards Andrea's *Baptism of Christ*. (Fig.1.8) At the end of the aisle, John the Baptist stood on the bank of the River Jordan, his outstretched arm pouring sacramental water onto his cousin's head. The water dripped down Jesus's face, running onto his nearly-nude body. Even Christ had asked to be cleansed. When the brother reached it and turned left, the picture was replaced by one of St. John's followers stripped nude, leaving their clothes to hang on rocks and trees as they prepared for Baptism. When he was halfway toward his destination, the brother turned right and stepped through the portal that led to the *spogliatoio*. There, by candlelight, he began to disrobe.

---

[8] The presence of a bell cote is attested to by the 1584 Buonsignori map of Florence (fig. 1.29). Shearman, "The Chiostro dello Scalzo," 208, has shown that no major renovations of the complex's architecture was made until 1722, so if the bell cote existed it was likely original to the building, demolished with the rest of the complex during the confraternal suppression of 1785. The existence of a bell tower is unsurprising, given that one of the reasons that Florence's parliament gave in 1890 when they finally upheld Leopoldo's confraternal suppression as law was "to regulate the ringing of bells" (*di regolare il suono delle campagne*). (Refer to Barbara Wisch and Diane Cole Ahl. 2000. "Introduction," in *Confraternities and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Italy*, edited by Barbara Wisch and Diane Cole Ahl, pp. 1-19. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press), 15 note 17 for the entire statute). That each confraternity set its own liturgical calendar and thus would have rung its bells in accordance with its own schedule would have resulted in confusion for the surrounding neighborhoods, which, as Niall Atkinson. 2017. *The Noisy Renaissance: Sound, Architecture, and Florentine Urban Life*. (Pennsylvania: Penn State University Press), especially 182-200, has shown, depended on the regular ringing of bells to organize their daily lives throughout the calendar year and to relay important civic information in times of political unrest.

2. Introduction

The narrative Prologue of this chapter finds the brother mentally and spiritually preparing for his monthly *disciplinati* rites. The cloister was well-suited for these preparations as it was an architectural form designed to exist between two worlds. A covered atrium, it was simultaneously indoors and outdoors. This meant that although the brother could safely find shelter from the elements under its gabled aisle, the central opening of the rectangular roof (fig. 1.28) let in the noises, weather, and even the birds from the street and surrounding gardens.[9] The long bench that ran around the cloister's perimeter marked it as a place for rest and meditation as well as for casual social interactions.[10] While this went on, other brothers could still engage in peripatetic meditation under the covered portico. And even though confraternal statutes demanded respectful behavior inside of its architectural complex and the hagiographic fresco cycle of the confraternity's saint were worthy devotional foci, with the one exception (the extended period beginning in 1552 when Cosimo I de' Medici displaced the brothers from their oratory) the cloister itself was not a space in which collective religious rites occurred.[11] Furthermore, the cloister was also the last space that could be penetrated by non-members and novices of the confraternity, who were barred from entering the *sancto sanctorum* of the oratory

[9] For a reconstruction of what the cloister looked like before its remodeling, access John Shearman, "The Chiostro dello Scalzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* (1960): 207-220; John Shearman. 1965. *Andrea del Sarto*. Vol. I. (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 52-56; and Dow, *Confraternal Piety and Corporate Patronage*, 162-165.
[10] Refer to Weissman, Ritual Brotherhood, 131 as well as Dow. "Confraternal Piety and Corporate Patronage," 98.
[11] Dow, "Confraternal Piety and Corporate Patronage," 78-79. On this period, refer to O'Brien, "Who Holds the Keys," 228-229.

that waited for the brother just beyond the *spogliatoio*.[12] As an architectural form, the cloister lay, according to the twelfth-century Benedictine monastic writer and Bishop of Chartres, Peter of Celle "on the border of angelic purity and earthly contamination."[13] The cloister was thus neither wholly sacred nor wholly profane, neither wholly private nor wholly public, neither wholly individual nor wholly collective. It was, necessarily, a liminal space.

The liminality of the cloister was critical to the religious practices of the confraternity. The ultimate goal of their affective religious rituals was to bring about a spiritual transformation that resulted in the revelation of God's mysteries.[14] Anthropologists have shown that such kinds of ritual transformations occur in three phases.[15] In the first, a person begins to detach, both mentally and physically, from his habitual state of being.[16] For the brothers of the *Compagnia dello Scalzo*, this separation from the self had begun earlier that morning, during their walk to the confraternity. Upon entering the confraternity, their direction, however, had been focused towards spiritual preparation. These preparations were done primarily in the cloister but were not fully completed until the brother changed into his confraternal habit in the *spogliatoio* and was

---

[12] William Hood. 1993. *Fra Angelico at San Marco*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), 123-124. On who could access the cloister and how access was granted, refer to Alana O'Brien, "Who Holds the Keys to the Chiostro dello Scalzo, *scuola di molti giovani*," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz* 63.2 (2021): 229-261.
[13] Peter of Celle. 1987. *Selected Works: Sermons*. (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications), 79.
[14] On affective devotion in this period, refer to Robert Gaston. 2005. "Affective Devotion and the Early Dominicans: The Case of Fra Angelico," in *Rituals, Images, and Words: Varieties of Cultural Expression in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, edited by F. W. Kent and Charles Zika, pp. 87-117. (Turnhout: Brepols). For more ways in which art was used to foment affective devotion, refer to Peter Parshall, "The Art of Memory and the Passion," *The Art Bulletin* 81.3 (1999): 456-472.
[15] Arnold van Gennep. 1960. *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 10ff, laid out the tri-partite scheme of ritual transformation. This was elaborated on by Max Gluckman, "Les Rites de Passage," in *the Ritual of Social Relations*, edited by Max Gluckman, pp. 26-43. (Manchester: Manchester University Press).
[16] Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 52.

subsumed into collective anonymity.[17] A space of contemplation and meditation, it was therefore primarily in the cloister that the brothers began to divest themselves from the profane world of the Florentine street they had just exited and along with it, their individual identities.[18] The necessary liminality of the cloister would have supported the brother's ability to make this ritual transition.

All of the mental, emotional, and spiritual preparations that the brothers undertook in their liminal cloister, of course, happened within the immersive environment of Andrea's earthen-colored fresco cycle and, although the Cloister of the Scalzo is often thought of as a peculiar artistic exception, a look at its many possible precedents demonstrates that the *chiaroscuro* cloister was well-suited to support the brothers' ascetic rites. This chapter argues that Andrea's cycle participated in a centuries-long tradition begun in northern-Italian Romanesque frescoes. Made of a few *terrete*, or earthen, pigments, this style of painting seems to have traveled with Christian reformers south to central Italy. Such limited-palette, or monochromatic *terrete* cycles became especially prevalent in Tuscany—and in Florence—in the 1400s. Through the use of multiple pictorial and spatial strategies, these monochromatic paintings appealed to the viewer's earthly nature, preparing him to experience a nearby fully polychrome painting. These polychrome images would have in turn facilitated a revelation of or encounter with the divine. Participating in this tradition, the Scalzo frescoes' colorism underscored the transitional nature of the cloister and supported the brother's ability to ready himself for the revelation of God's mysteries that would occur during the rest of the confraternity's rituals.

---

[17] On the ritual significance of the brother's habit, refer to Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 93.
[18] Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 51-52.

The *confratello's* understanding of the *terrete* medium's potential to promote his separation from the secular world, however, may have been informed not only by this medieval fresco tradition but also by contemporary artistic associations. As we shall see, the sculptural, monochrome figures of Andrea's frescoes had strong visual connections to the monochromatic exteriors of the northern-European foldable altarpieces that had flooded the city of Florence at the end of the quattrocento. In religious ceremonies north of the Alps, the monochromatic figures on the exterior of these altarpieces were only visible when folded closed—that is, when the interior polychrome image that, liturgically, promised a spiritual revelation, was hidden from sight. By situating Andrea's Scalzo cycle within the tradition of eleventh-to-fifteenth-century *terrete* fresco cycles and by putting it in dialogue with contemporary northern-European artistic sources, this chapter argues that Andrea's *Life of St. John the Baptist* established the cloister as a space of separation from the secular world, one that primed the viewer for his subsumption into the collective *corpo della compagnia* and, ultimately, the spiritual revelation of Christ's resurrection that took place as a result of the brother's ritual transformation.

3. Monochromatic Italian Paintings

    a. Relevance

Probably the most distinctive feature of Andrea's *Life of St. John the Baptist* is its overall monochrome appearance, as Andrea used only a small range of earth pigments to paint its entirety. However, color differences in the cloister are still apparent, especially noticeable in its corner scenes. There is a stark contrast in color, for example, in the northwest corner of the cloister, where the gray-green *Preaching of St. John the Baptist*, painted in 1515, meets the golden-brown *Baptism of the Multitude*, executed in 1517 (Fig. 2.1). At the same time, metal

elements in Andrea's pictures, like the Baptist's staff or *Justice*'s scales, as well as other objects believed to gleam, like halos, were often gilded. There is, then, chromatic variation throughout the cloister, both among and within the painted scenes.

That chromatic variation was an accepted feature of the Scalzo cycle despite its overall monochromatic appearance is especially attested to by Franciabigio's *Blessing of St. John the Baptist* (Fig. 1.16). The central action of this painting shows Zacharia blessing the Giovannino, young John the Baptist, before he takes to the wilderness as a child ascetic, which is depicted synoptically through the doorway on the picture's left. The drama takes place on a checkerboard-patterned plaza whose tiled squares alternate in color between white and violet, a dramatic departure from Andrea's earthen palette. That the confraternal patrons approved of this coloristic departure indicates that monochromy was not of primary religious importance to them. Nor does it seem to have been a primary artistic concern for Franciabigio.

In light of the Scalzo's varied chromatic features, it is possible to understand the whole of the Scalzo cycle not as a monochrome one, which implies the use of a single pigment throughout the entire space, but rather as a monochromatic one, employing an extremely limited number of pigments. Reconstrued in this way, the cycle has at least one Florentine precedent in the frescoed *Chiostro Verde*, or Green Cloister, which was painted by Paolo Uccello and other minor masters from 1425 to 1430 in the nearby Dominican Church of Santa Maria Novella.[19] (Fig. 2.2) The

[19] Alberto Felice, Serena Pini, and Andrea Vigna. "Il Chiostro Verde nel Complesso Di Santa Maria Novella a Firenze: Storia E Restauri," *OPD Restauro* 19 (2007): 25, discusses the comparison of the two cloisters; a rare well-illustrated analysis of the entire cycle of the Green Cloister is offered by Alessandro Parronchi. 1982. "Paolo Uccello im Grünun Kreuzgang," in *Santa Maria Novella: Kirche, Kloster, und Kreuzgänge*, edited by Umberto Baldini, pp. 134-155. (Stuttgart: Urachhaus); access also Almut Schäffner. 2009. *Terra Verde: Entwicklung und Bedeutung der monochromen Wandmalerei der italienischen Renaissance*. (Weimar: Verlag und Datenbank für Geisteswissenschaft*)*, 267-277.

basilica's monumental cloister, which is decorated in scenes from the Old Testamant, is named for the primary pigment used in the fresco cycle, *terra verde*, or green earth. However, the artists of the Green Cloister also used the pigments *terra rossa* (red earth) and *terra gialla* (yellow earth) throughout the cycle's many episodes. At Santa Maria Novella, then, though the artists' palettes were extremely limited, some chromatic variation was desired within the paintings.

That the Scalzo *confratelli* would have looked to the Green Cloister as a model, or at least a distinguished precedent, for their own cloister decoration is likely given the close relationship they enjoyed with the Dominican community of Santa Maria Novella, which is located just a few minutes' walk from the Scalzo. On this point, it is important to remember that the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist was both an unofficial organization for artists, engineers, and craftspeople as well as a reformed penitential religious group.[20] Santa Maria Novella's many artistic treasures made it an important site of artistic patronage and training for Florentine artists, the Green Cloister in particular. For example, Michelangelo had studied it, adapting both Uccello's *Flood* and *The Drunkenness of Noah* in his own renditions of these subjects on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, as well as his appropriation of the female-headed serpent that tempts Eve in the Sistine *Expulsion from Paradise*.[21] Members of the Scalzo confraternity and even Andrea del Sarto himself can also be placed inside the basilica studying its art and decorating its walls. For example, Filippino Lippi, who was a member of the Scalzo

---

[20] Manuela Barducci. 1976. "*La Compagnia dello Scalzo della origini alla fine del secolo* XV," *Da Dante a Cosimo I*, edited by Domenico Maselli, pp. 146-175. (Pistoia: Libraria Editrice Tellini), 163, and Alana O'Brien, "*Maestri d'Alcune Arti Miste e d'Ingegno*: Artists and Artisans in the Compagnia dello Scalzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 55.3 (2013): 358-433.

[21] William Wallace, "Between Flood and Fire," *Notes in the History of Art* 31.2 (2012): 26 and Jane Schuyler, "Michelangelo's Serpent with Two Tails," *Notes in the History of Art* 9.2 (1990): 26.

along with his son Roberto, was responsible for the paintings in the basilica's Strozzi Chapel, completed in 1502 and featuring scenes from the lives of the apostles Philip and James.[22] That Andrea studied Lippi's paintings, which are situated to the right of Santa Maria Novella's main altar, is evident in his Scalzo *Charity* (Fig. 1.9), which shares features with Lippi's monochrome *Charity* (Fig. 2.3).[23] Andrea and his brothers in the *compagnia*, many of whom were also painters, would thus have likely been intimately familiar with Santa Maria Novella's paintings and its many other important works of art.

The artistic relationship between the Scalzo brothers and the Basilica of Santa Maria Novella is significant because the Green Cloister by Uccello and his contemporaries can be placed securely within a stylistic and spatial tradition of Romanesque fresco painting in Italy. In this tradition, an extremely limited number of earth pigments—usually *terra verde* and *terra rossa*, sometimes with substitutions or additional highlights of *terra gialla*, brown ochre, and, very early on, indigo—were used to create narrative fresco cycles in liminal religious spaces. Like those in both the Scalzo and the Green Cloister, these cycles have been called "monochrome" even though they were actually made using a limited number of pigments, usually two to four of them.[24] This is still an extremely narrow chromatic range when

---

[22] On the membership of the Lippi family, access Alana O'Brien, "Meastri d'alcuna arti," 362-363, as well as Douglas N. Dow, "Benvenuto Cellini's Bid for Membership in the Florentine Confraternity of San Giovanni Battista detta della Scalzo," *Confraternitas* 20.1 (2009): 2-3, who shows that Roberto Lippi was elected to the office of *Padre Governatore* six times. Additional information on the life of Roberto Lippi is contained in Jonathan Nelson, *Aggiunte alla Cronologia di Filippino Lippi*," *Rivista d'Arte* 43 (1991): 50-51.
[23] Fritz Knapp. 1907. *Andrea del Sarto*. (Biefeld und Leipzig: Derlag von Delhagen & Klafing), 82, was the first to note the relationship, which has been universally accepted since.
[24] For example, though she calls them "monochrome" throughout, Jill Bain. 2012. "Signifying Absence: Experiencing Monochrome Imagery in Medieval Painting," *Wider Trecento: Studies in 13th- and 14th-Century European Art Presented to Julian Gardner,* edited by Louise Bourdua and Robert Gibbs, pp. 5-20. (Leiden and Boston: Brill), 8 n. 14 acknowledges that these

considering that twenty-two pigments were regularly used by artists at the time.[25] The limited number of pigments used in these paintings indicates that their monochromatic style was not defined by adherence to a single pigment, but rather one that created a certain restricted coloristic effect inside of a liminal or transitional space.

Although Andrea and his confraternity brothers were likely unaware that the Scalzo participated in a painting tradition that had originated in the north of Italy centuries earlier, a historical survey of such spaces and frescoes allows for a fuller religious, artistic, and spatial recontextualization of Andrea's monochromatic Scalzo fresco cycle. This recontextualization allows us to explore the many ways in which monochromatic claustral paintings encouraged the viewer to engage both with space and with other ritual images and objects to support and promote the efficacy of the confraternity's affective spiritual rituals.

b. Medieval Monochromatic Dadoes

Fortunately, the Scalzo's medieval monochromatic *comparanda* has not gone completely ignored by scholars. Jill Bain's study of limited-palette earthen cycles in Italy has shown that chromatically-limited cycles were almost always placed in the dado, or socle, register of a religious space where they would be eye-level with the viewer. It is also typical that the main action of those paintings takes place in front of a backdrop consisting not of a naturalistic landscape or even a solidly-colored *intonaco*, but instead depict an earthly material such as a curtain or faux stone niche. Although Bain began her study with an analysis of the twelfth-

---

paintings contain multiple colors, "typically a red-ochre and yellow-ochre or black combination against a white background."

[25] For the pigments available to medieval and early-modern artists, access Daniel V. Thompson. 1956. *The Materials and Techniques of Medieval Painting.* (New York: Dover), 80-188.

century frescoes in the Basilica of the Santa Maria Assunta in Aquileia in the Veneto, she also noted earlier precedents for these frescoes that date to the eleventh century. These are found in the Romanesque churches of San Tommaso in Briga Novarese and San Vincenzo in Castro in Pombia, which are located about twenty kilometers apart from each other in the Piedmont region of Italy.[26] That these churches are in architectural as well as pictorial dialogue with each other was already noted by Mario Perotti, who observed that the architecture of San Vincenzo in Castro, constructed between 1025 and 1050, was based on the earlier church in Briga Novarese.[27] From very early on, then, these monochromatic frescoes seem to share important formal and spatial characteristics.

The early conformity of these cycles to a type that shared not just a limited palette but also larger compositional and iconographical features is important because so many of these cycles have suffered significant damage and decay over time. As a result, treating the paintings chronologically is difficult. For example, though the paintings at Briga Novarese pre-date the paintings at San Vincenzo in Castro, the earlier ones are in such poor condition that the Pombia paintings need to be used as a visual reference to make sense of the ruins at the older church. At Pombia (Figs. 2.4-2.5) the main apsidal arch of the church is decorated by a polychrome image of the Virgin Mary in an upper register, with saints and evangelists below her in a mid-register. Under this painting, in the dado of the apse that stands at a height of about 75 cm, highly-stylized groups of fantastical beasts, executed entirely in red-earth pigments against a white *intonaco*, face each other, about to attack.[28] Behind these animals is pictured a hanging curtain, the top of

---

[26] Bain, “Signifying Absence,” 8.
[27] Mario Perotti, “La Chiesa di San Vincenzo a Pombia,” *L'Ovest Ticino nel Medioevo: Terre, Uomini, Edifice*, edited by *L’Associazione Storica Pombiese*, pp. 35–72. (Novara: Interlinea Edizioni), 46-47.
[28] Perotti, “La Chiesa di San Vincenzo a Pombia,” 49.

which is also painted in red with v-shaped blue lines, now faded, cutting through the dado. These indicate the stylized folds of drapery. The Pombia fresco thus appears to represent animals set in front of a curtain, attacking each other.

The composition of the Pombia dado image is interesting because of the many similarities it shares with the nearly-lost fresco at San Tommaso at Briga Novarese. There, in the dado under a similar apsidal arrangement of the Virgin Mary situated above a register of saints, the image of the top of a red hanging curtain highlighted with traces of blue pigment is still apparent. (Fig. 2.6). Although this fresco is almost totally destroyed, the outline of what appears to be the antler or horn of a mythical beast remains. Given the similarities between the apsidal placement of fresco in the architectural layout to the nearby church, as well as the correspondence of the three-register arrangement of Virgin, saints, and a red and blue curtain and evidence of animal life, it seems likely that the dado of San Tommaso at Briga Novarese also once pictured mythical beasts, probably in attack. This is confirmed by a description of the paintings by Grazia Bianchi, who saw them in 1970 before a so-called "restoration" left much of the dado white-washed. She wrote that the "velarium," referring to the dado's painted curtain, depicted a *centauromachia* along with images of a knight fighting a dragon and horseman hunting wolves and fantastic creatures that were "neither horse nor bull."[29] It seems secure then that at Briga Novarese, as at San Vincenzo in Castro, the monochromatic dado frescoes depicted

---

[29] Grazia Bianchi. 1970. "*Affreschi Medioevali Inedita a Briga Novarese*," *Novarien* (Commune di Novarese). Also refer to Guglielmo Tornielli. 1995. *San Tommaso di Briga Novarese*. (Oleggio: EOS Editrice), 52-53 as well as Giovanni Donna D'Oldenico, "*Introduzione storica allo Studio degli Affreschi Romanici di Briga Novarese*," *Bolletino storico-bibliografico subalpino* 71 (1986): 325-240. This may or may not be the case at the Basilica of San Giusto in Trieste, which, constructed from the ninth through the eleventh century, also contains a multi-register apsidal fresco composition, the dado of which is in total ruin except for the traces of the upper-most part of a curtain, executed entirely in red and yellow. Nonetheless, given its temporal and geographic proximity to Pombia and Novarese, its existence should be noted.

images with iconographic themes of aggression between opposed groups, all set in front of a curtain.

The trend of depicting battle imagery in a monochromatic dado register of religious spaces continued into the next century. A similar composition is found in the tri-register apsidal fresco of the twelfth-century church of San Maurizio in Roccaforte Mondovi, near Turin.[30] (Fig. 2.7-2.8) There, the upper register of the fresco contains a full-color image of Christ Pantocrater set in a mandorla and surrounded by an angel, man, bull, and eagle, the symbols of the Evangelists. Underneath, its mid-register depicts eight saints, all of whom are also rendered in polychromy. But in the dado, set in front of a blue curtain indicated, as at Briga Novarese and Pombia, by diagonal v-shaped lines, is a battle between wild men and fantastic animals, executed entirely in the color red. Thematically similar in iconography is the near-contemporary crypt of the Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta in Aquileia. The crypt's main pictorial decoration is a polychrome fresco cycle depicting Christ's Passion. (Fig. 2.9). Underneath this cycle, the dado that runs the perimeter of the room contains continuous imagery of knights and warriors fighting on horseback, who have been described as Christian and Arab cavalry fighting during the Crusades.[31] (Figs. 2.10). These dado frescoes are executed in only two colors: the outlines of the figures are rendered in red while modeling is achieved through the use of yellow highlights. The battle between the two groups is, once again, set in front of a curtain, the decorative edge of

---

[30] Bain, "Signifying Absence," 8, note 14, records the existence of the curtain-type dado frescoes at churches in Aquileia, Summaga, Roccaforte Mondovi, Pallanza, Briga Novarese, Pombia, Carugo, and Trieste, but her formal analysis is confined to the cycles at Aquileia and Summaga.
[31] On the specific iconography of this dado, access Thomas Dale. 1997. *Relics, Prayer and Politics in Medieval Venetia: Romanesque Painting in the Crypt of Aquileia Cathedral*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 66-76 as well as Jill Bain, *Romanesque Figural Dado Imagery in Northern Italy: Three Case Studies,* [MA thesis, University of Victoria, 1990], 122-172.

which is indicated in red with diagonal yellow v-shaped lines cutting through the socle picture-plane, indicating folds in the drapery of the background curtain. The San Maurizo frescoes as well as the Santa Maria Assunta ones thus share with the earlier frescoes their palette, placement, and iconographical themes.

But perhaps the most art-historically significant example of extant twelfth-century fresco cycles adorns the dado of the apse of the Benedictine Abbey of Santa Maria Maggiore in Summaga (Fig. 2.111), painted in the later part of century.[32] There, in front of a blue background curtain, are images not only of sword-wielding men fighting off wild beasts and armored knights but also the *Virtues* trampling the *Vices* under their feet (Figs. 2.12-2.13). The three allegorical figures still identifiable today are *Avarice*, *Desperation*, and *Temperance*, all of whom are labeled with their names and rendered with thick brown outlines. To create a sense of sculptural relief, the figures are modeled through the addition of red and yellow earth pigments.[33] Above them, in full polychromy, are depictions of the Crucifixion observed by the Old Testament figures Eve and Abraham, as well as Benedictine monks. The frescoes at Summaga thus represent a very early example of monochromatic paintings of *Virtues* and *Vices* rendered in juxtaposition to a polychrome religious fresco.

The presence of the *Virtues and Vices* in Summaga and their position below a polychrome religious fresco are especially important in two ways: first, the paintings at Summaga represent the earliest known fresco prototype for Giotto’s Scrovegni Chapel in Padua, the important fourteenth-century artistic monument that is most often taken as the starting point for discussions about monochromy in Italian early-modern painting; second, the iconography of

---

[32] Bain, “Signifying Absence,” 10.
[33] Bain, “Signifying Absence,” 10, note 21.

the paintings at Summaga suggest a clear allegorical relationship between the monochromatic dado and polychrome frescoes above.[34] That the viewer should take time to consider these iconographies is emphasized by the inclusion of depictions, in polychromy, of Benedictine monks observing the actions of the paintings around them Because the abbey paintings would primarily have been seen by a monastic viewer, the figures of the monks could be construed as analogous to or even projections of the real monastic viewer in front of them, who were also viewing the paintings. These viewers could see how Abraham, who so loved God that he was willing to slaughter his son, Isaac, at God's command, was contrasted with Eve, whose inability to obey God caused the fall of man. Like the allegorical *Virtue* and *Vice* pairs below, the juxtaposition of Abraham and Eve represented the internal struggle of sinners on earth who must commit themselves towards virtuous actions in order to overcome their propensity to sin. Ultimately, the outcome of this earthly struggle would determine whether the frescoes' viewers would be worthy of heavenly salvation.

This didactic and even cautionary allegorical relationship between the monochrome and polychrome frescoes was further emphasized by the paintings' palettes and spatial relationship. As Bain already noted, the limited palette of these dado paintings stood in great contrast to the full color ones above, denoting them as having a different ontological status from both the viewer as well as the polychrome paintings. This status represents a diminished experience of the

[34] Thomas Dale, *Prayer and Politics*, 68ff, argues that there are also *Virtues and Vices* depicted at Aquileia, but this identification is tentative. On other precedents for Giotto's cycle, access Julian Gardner, "Giotto: 'First of the Moderns' or 'Last of the Ancients'?" *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 44 (1991): 63-78; Joan Osborne, "The Dado Programme in Giotto's Arena Chapel and its Italian Romanesque Antecedents," *The Burlington Magazine* 145.1202 (2003): 361-365; and the important study Adolf Katzenellenbogen. 1989. *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art: From Early Christian Times to the Thirteenth Century*. (Toronto, Buffalo, and New York: University of Toronto Press).

world prior to the soul's unification with God, pictured in polychromy above them.[35] The diminished status of the monochromatic paintings compared to the polychrome ones was not only a result of their limited palette but also by their hierarchically subordinate position below the full-color ones. It therefore seems that, with their spatial placement, secular iconographies, and limited palettes, the monochromatic dadoes were subsidiary to the polychrome paintings above them.

Still, set in the dado directly in front of the viewer, this subordinate position of the monochromatic images meant that they were the most easily seen while standing on the abbey floor. The immediacy of viewing and experiencing these frescoes was compounded by the pictures' construction. While the monochromatic *Virtues*, *Vices*, beasts, and warriors of the dado existed in an imagined pictorial space, the scenes' background curtain, which presented a worldly and recognizable backdrop to the allegorical action, also allowed the viewer to imagine the action of the picture to be occurring inside of the space of the abbey directly in front of them. That is, the curtain did not represent a window into a world that extended the space of the image backwards. Rather, the image asserted itself as a boundary coterminous with the surface of the wall. As a result, the curtain pushed the monochromatic drama between the human and animal figures forward and into a liminal spatial zone, at once both real and imagined, in which the figures could engage the viewer directly. The iconographic choices and spatial construction of the monochromatic dado zone thus meant that is could serve as a pictorial bridge. The viewer, who confronted these secular images first, could use them as tools to understand or spiritually prepare for the experience of viewing an adjacent polychrome painting of a religious nature that

[35] Bain, "Signifying Absence," 13.

revealed more-profound spiritual truths.[36] Though ontologically and spatially subordinate, the monochromatic paintings therefore played a critical role in promoting the viewer's understanding of sacred knowledge.

Though there is a dearth of such limited-palette earth cycles to be found in thirteenth-century Italy, one significant exception is located in the Church of San Bevignate in Perugia. Built between c. 1256 and 1266, the congregation there was led by Ranieri Fasani, the founder of the penitential flagellant movement in central Italy, which he started in 1260 after a plague devastated Perugia.[37] Decorated in three phases, the main altar of the Church, dedicated to the patron saint of this penitential movement, contains the first known images of flagellants (Fig. 2.14), who stand bare-backed and throw the penitential whip over their own shoulders, scourging their bodies. One of these flagellants is thought to be Ranieri Fasani himself, an identification based on his distinguishing facial features compared to his fellow penitents.[38] (Fig. 2.15). The flagellants are painted only in two colors, their orange-outlined bodies modeled with yellow highlights, much like the *Virtues and Vices* in Summaga. At the same time, though the flagellants at San Bevignate do not appear in the dado, they still exist in a liminal zone, pushed to the margins of a polychrome cycle. Although this is not enough evidence to claim that these images follow directly in the established tradition of monochromatic dado scenes of battles set in front

[36] Bain, "Signifying Absence," 12-13.
[37] On the life of Ranieri Fasani, access Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani - Volume 45 (1995) at https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/raniero-fasani_(Dizionario-Biografico)/ accessed 6 January 2022. While it is tempting to credit the early flagellant movement in Perugia with inspiring that of Florence, John Henderson. 1990. "Penitence and the Laity in Fifteenth-Century Florence," in *Christianity and the Renaissance: image and religious imagination in the Quattrocento*, edited by Timothy Verdon and John Henderson, pp. 229-249. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press), 234-235, argues that the Tuscan flagellant movement began independent of the Perugian one and was based around the need to bury the dead properly.
[38] Fratini, *Un Ponte tra Oriente e Occidente*, 61.

of curtains, the monochromatic picture of flagellants nonetheless seems to share important coloristic and spatial characteristics with the earlier frescoes.

These monochromatic flagellants are particularly interesting with regard to the notion of embodied viewership. Even though their placement on the wall and their abstract, schematic color scheme immediately betrayed to the viewer that the figures belonged to the artificial world of the picture plane, the living penitential viewers looking at them would still have recognized that the monochromatic flagellants bore a relationship to their own physical bodies and religious identities. In the painting, the fictive penitents look out of their own pictorial field to observe a separate polychrome picture-plane in which San Bevignate appears to bless a member of a flagellant lay confraternity. The monochromatic flagellants observe the scene, serving as a mediating bridge between the penitential viewer and the polychrome image of blessing. In their perpetual observation of the polychrome painting, they seem to underscore the polychrome painting's great importance. The painted penitents were thus cast as interlocutors between the viewer and the polychrome images around them and modeled the correct devotional attitudes that would help the viewer achieve eternal salvation.

The images of the penitents at San Bevignate are not, however, the earliest example of this kind of figural use of limited-palette fresco painting in apsidal margins. The eleventh-century Church of San Vincenzo in Castro at Pombia, whose crypt was described above for the presence of the red and white dado depicting groups of fantastic beasts in attack, contains a polychrome image of *The Last Judgement* in its main apse. (Fig. 2.16) This painting is surrounded by a bi-chromatic fresco depicting saints, executed entirely in red and yellow earth pigments. These holy people clasp their hands in prayer in front of them and lift their heads to observe Christ's polychrome second coming. As in Perugia, the monochromatic figures serve as

models for the viewer. In both cases, their near-monochromy distinguishes them as existing in a separate reality from the polychrome fresco depicting an important Christian religious moment. At the same time, their lack of color also distinguishes them from the viewer, who sits in the nave of the church. The limited palette of the fictive observers allowed them, like the monochromatic dado cycles, to exist in an in-between state in which they could at once model correct devotional behavior while simultaneously asserting their own ontological status, one fixed between the viewer, who strives to imitate the spiritual attitudes of the monochromatic figures, and the divine central image that promised heavenly salvation to the worthy.

Just two decades after the decoration of the Church of San Bevignate, the Florentine painter Giotto di Bondone (d. 1337) traveled to Padua where he painted the interior of the Arena, or Scrovegni, Chapel in the years 1303-1305. This chapel was commissioned by Enrico Scrovegni, who, like his father Reginaldo, was a money-lender dealing with his complicity in the mortal sin of usury.[39] Giotto's cycle depicted, on its nave walls, the polychrome *Lives of the Virgin and of Christ*, and, on the west counter-façade, *The Last Judgment*. (Fig. 2.17) In the dado level Giotto painted a familiar grouping of *The Virtues and Vices* (Figs. 2.18)*,* depicted in a narrow range of color, each labeled with its name just as at Santa Maria Maggiore in Summaga. These figures, though, do not stand in front of a curtain, as in earlier dado frescoes. Instead, each *Virtue* and *Vice* is set within a fictive, shallow architectural niche. Each niche is separated from the ones to its side by the inclusion of two illusionistic, painted stone slabs surrounded by fictive

---

[39] As a result of the seriousness of this sin, Reginaldo Scrovegni was the only Paduan whom Dante placed in hell in the entirety of the *Inferno*. Dante. *Inferno.* xvii.64-70: "*E un che d'una scrofa azzurra e grossa/ segnato avea lo suo sacchetto bianco,/ mi disse: «Che fai tu in questa fossa?/ Or te ne va; e perché se' vivo anco,/ sappi che 'l mio vicin Vitaliano/ sederà qui dal mio sinistro fianco./ Con questi Fiorentin son padoano*." The azure pregnant sow was the emblem of the Scrovegni.

stone ornamentation (Fig. 2.19). Like earlier monochromatic paintings they have an overall monochrome appearance and are often called monochrome in the immense literature on the chapel but the *Virtues and Vices* are composed of many colors. The rear of each architectural niche is filled by a differently-colored stone panel, the marble frames are variegated in pink and blue, and additional elements, such as the fires under *Envy* and *Infidelity* (fig. 2.18), are rendered in color. The paintings are not monochrome at all, rather, they fit into the tradition of limited-palette dado cycles that began in the region nearly three hundred years earlier.[40]

One of the long-observed features of these monochromatic *Virtues* and *Vices* is that, at nearly four feet tall and two feet wide, the figures recall sculpture. Not only do the paintings' chromatic schema and surrounding formal elements ape the appearance of speckled stone, but some of the figures are even set atop a fictive marble frieze. Furthermore, Giotto fully modeled the sculptural bodies of the figures, using drapery to highlight the volume and weight of the *Virtues and Vices* underneath the fabric of their clothing. The best example of this is seen in his depiction of *Justice*. The personified virtue sits in a Gothic throne, her name, *Iusticia* (fig. 2.20), seeming to have been carved in a painted inscription across the top of her niche. Giotto placed strong white highlights across her chest and knees and contrasted those with the dark shadows in the folds of her robe, creating, especially across her lap, a sense of three-dimensional *rilievo*, or sculptural relief, that would become the standard for early-modern Italian painting.[41] At the same time, Giotto topped each of *Justice*'s scales with a faux-stone angel and adorned the *predella* of her niche with an illusionistic antique sculptural frieze. Overall, the alternating false stone panels

---

[40] Bain, "Signifying Absence," 10-14.
[41] On the importance of *rilievo* in art theory of this period, consult chapter V of this dissertation.

and sculptural *Virtues and Vices* result in a cohesive program of faux stone across the entire dado of the chapel's frescoes.

However, art historians have long argued that this "sculptural" program is much more spatially sophisticated—and much less sculptural—than it appears at first glance. On one hand, the figures seem to pay no mind to the physical limits of their fictive materials. *Hope* (fig. 2.21), for example, appears in the process of flying out of her niche, while the parchment scroll of *Faith* (fig. 2.22) flutters from her hand as if in a breeze; the throne of *Injustice* (fig. 2.23) is surrounded by "flimsy miniature trees."[42] On another hand, the niches in which Giotto placed the *Virtues and Vices* seem to make little architectural sense. For example, it seems impossible that *Justice'*s deep throne (fig. 2.20) could fit in such a shallow recess. Similarly, *Envy's* superficial niche (fig. 2.24) holds both her and a fire that consumes her. Furthermore, it must also be remembered that, despite persistent antiquarian myths attached to the period, which is sometimes called the proto-Renaissance, Giotto's *Virtues and Vices* were painted in a time before a noted presence in Italy or anywhere else of free-standing, unpainted marble sculptures, contemporary or ancient.[43] That means that no church extant at that time had such an arrangement of free-standing, unpainted sculptures down the length of either side of its nave, an indication that Giotto was not expecting the viewer to understand the *Virtues and Vices* as sculpture because of an awareness of a preexisting architectural context.[44] Thus, it is worth considering that Giotto

---

[42] Sven Sandström. 1963. *Levels of Unreality: Studies in Structure and Construction in Italian Mural Painting During the Renaissance*. (Uppsala: Almquist & Wiksells Boktryckeri Ab), 24.
[43] On the lack of monochrome sculpture in Italy during early modernity, refer to Frank Fehrenbach, "Coming Alive: Some Remarks in the Rise of 'Monochrome' Sculpture in the Renaissance," *Notes in the History of Art* 30.3 (2011): 47-55 and Patrick Reutersward, "The Breakthrough of Monochrome Sculpture during the Renaissance," *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* 69 (2000): 125-149.
[44] On this point I am particularly grateful to Dr. Hendrik Dey.

intended the *Virtues and Vices* to do more pictorial work than merely evoking, at first glance, any idea of sculpture.

The failure of the allegorical figures to convincingly maintain the illusion of sculpture was noted especially by Andrew Ladis who argued that the figures are more productively interpreted as fourteen character-studies into the psychology of the *Virtues* and *Vices*. For example, Giotto captured the emotional instability of *Inconstancy* (Fig. 2.25) by setting the figure atop a disc, her arms and clothes wildly careening as she struggles to keep her balance on a sloping marble floor. *Desperation* (fig. 2.26), having given up all hope, has just killed herself as a devil swoops in to collect her damned soul. Considered in this way, the *Virtues* and *Vices* can act as iconographic guides for interpreting the full-color frescoes above them as they frequently bear a formal correspondence to figures within those pictures. For example, *Anger* (fig. 2.27), who rends her clothes in fury, mirrors Caiaphas above her who performs the same action as he condemns Christ to death. (Fig. 2.28) And *Hope* (Fig. 2.21) resembles not only the crowded faithful in *The Last Judgment* (Fig. 2.29), but also Christ and his attending angels as he ascends into Heaven.[45] (Fig. 2.30). Thus, as in painting practices evident for at least three centuries, the human form, scale, subordinated position on the wall, psychological and physical animation, and placement in front of a material—here stone—that insists on a pictorial spatial construction that is continuous rather than contiguous with the viewer's, Giotto's monochromatic *Virtues and Vices* bear a bodily relationship to the viewer standing in the Arena Chapel. But in their iconographic relevance and their mirroring of the gestures and psychologies of the figures in the polychrome cycle above, they also direct the viewer towards the religious images above

---

[45] Andrew Ladis. 2008. *Giotto's O: Narrative, Figuration, and Pictorial Ingenuity in the Arena Chapel.* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press), 27-52.

them, serving as transitional images with a key role in spiritually and intellectually preparing the viewer for an encounter with the salvific polychrome images above them.

c. Monochromatic Images on the Architectural Edge

Throughout the 1300s, due largely to the fame of the Arena Chapel and its illusionistic *Virtues and Vices*, Giotto's many students, most of whose names are now lost, were commissioned to complete similar fresco cycles throughout Italy.[46] A significant and well-preserved example is located in the chapterhouse of the abbey of the reformed Benedictine monastery of Santa Maria di Pomposa.[47] (Fig. 2.31) Executed in the first or second decade of the 1300s, a polychrome fresco of the *Crucifixion* adorns the wall opposite the room's entrance, which would have been the primary devotional image during the socio-religious meetings held there by the friars.[48] On either side of *The Crucifixion* and abutting the edges of their respective walls are imaged in polychrome, respectively, saints Peter and Paul (Figs. 2.32-2.33). Adjacent these figures, abutting the same edge from the opposite, lateral walls, are the reform saints Benedict and Guido, also in polychromy. However, across the remainder of each of these two

---

[46] For a list of the monochrome or near-monochrome cycles completed by Giotto's students, refer to Sabine Blümenroder. 2008. *Andrea Mantegna: Die Grisaillen*. (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag), 159. On the attribution of the Pomposa paintings, also confer with: Mario Salmi. 1996. *L'abbazia di Pomposa.* (Roma: Cassa di Risparmio), 152 and 167; Hermann Beenken. "The Chapter House Frescoes at Pomposa," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 62.363 (1933): 254, Alessandro Volpe. 1999. "Pittura a Pomposa," in *Pomposa: Storia, Arte, Architettura,* edited by Antonio Samaritani and Carla di Francesco, pp. 95-152. (Ferrara: Corbo Editore), 126-131; and Daniele Benati. 1995. *Il Trecento Riminese: maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche.* (Milano: Electa), 58-165.

[47] For an early comparison of the Pomposa frescoes with Giotto's in Padua, refer to Beenken, "The Chapter House Frescoes," 253-261.

[48] On stylistic grounds the chapterhouse has been dated to 1310 to 1318, the year in which Salmi, *L'abbazia di Pomposa*, 167-170 reports the nearby refectory was painted. This termination date was scratched into the *arriccio* of the refectory fresco.

lateral walls, in the same pictorial register, were painted six gray monochrome, or *grisaille*, figures who stand grouped in pairs in each of three fictive colored architectural niches (Figs. 2.34-2.35), which recall those of Giotto's *Virtues* and *Vices*. No longer subordinated below the polychrome images, the twelve monochromatic figures at the Giottesque Pomposa chapterhouse thus stood next to and continuous with the room's polychrome images.

The change in the spatial relationship between the monochrome and polychrome figures is significant (fig. 2.36). In Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel and in earlier examples, the monochromatic dado frescoes had been understood to exist in a physically, pictorially, and ontologically liminal zone fixed between the viewer and polychrome paintings above, which in every case had been related to the life of Christ. The dado paintings required the viewer to turn there neck upwards through the images (and, perhaps, back) to compare them to the polychrome ones. In some spaces, such as in Padua, the monochromatic figures were even located in architectural spaces, like the nave of the church, that implied movement in or through that space. But in Pomposa, the elevation of the monochromatic figures to the same register as the polychrome images meant that the majority of the room was an entirely monochromatic zone. The embodied viewer was always encouraged to move or to look through this monochromatic zone towards the central, polychrome zone in which the action of the meeting was taking place. Though the monochromatic figures were as large and in the same register as the polychrome ones, they still existed in a liminal space on the periphery of the room. They were primarily perceived by a viewer with a moving or unstable gaze who would only briefly have time to consider the monochromatic images before ultimately fixing his attention away from them and towards an area decorated with polychrome images. More like the apsidal monochromatic paintings in Perugia (Figs. 2.4-2.15) and San Vincenzo in Castro (Fig. 2.16) the monochromatic

Pomposa Chapterhouse paintings were, literally and figuratively, images on the architectural edge.

This spatial change and the resultant change in the way of viewing the monochromatic images worked hand in hand with the iconography of the Pomposan cycle. Although contested early on, the monochromatic figures pictured in the chapterhouse are now accepted as depictions of the Old Testament prophets, called the minor prophets by Augustine.[49] Christians believed that these prophets not only foretold the coming of Christ but also gave instructions on how to live a virtuous life. A significant formal feature of the paired Prophets, though, is that each of them looks back towards the center of the architectural niche in which he stands, meeting the gaze of his partner. The Prophets' reflexive gazes were thus inaccessible to the viewer (Figs. 2.34-2.35). This compositional choice further encouraged the viewer to move his gaze through them and towards, on their respective sides of the room, the images of saints Benedict and Guido.

These two saints were pictured differently from the Prophets. Not only were the saints painted in polychrome but each was also set in his own substantial fictive architectural structure. With their gazes and bodies oriented centrally towards the *Crucifixion*, these two saints further encouraged the viewer to direct his gaze towards Christ. However, in order to that, the viewer's gaze would first pass through, on the side of Benedict, who had founded the order, an image of

---

[49] Augustine. 1866. Civ. 18.29*: Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum* (Vienna). 40.2.306. Though sometimes referred to as Old Testament figures, the twelfth of these prophets is Zachariah, father of John the Baptist and a character in the New, not Old, Testament. On the identifications of these figures, please refer **to:** Mario Salmi. 1996. *L'abbazia di Poposa*. 2nd. Edition. (Roma: Cassa di Risparmio di Roma), 149; Cetty Muscolino. 1992. "Gli Affreschi della Sala Capitolare," in *Pomposa: la fabbrica, I restauri*, edited by Carla di Francescao. (Ravenna: Longo Editore), 44; and Letizia Caselli. 1996. *L'abbazia di Pomposa: guida storica e artistica.* (Treviso: Canova), 74

Peter, first bishop and founder of the Church; and on the side that pictured Guido, the eleventh-century abbot who brought great renown to the Pomposan monastery by both inviting scholars like Peter-Damian to the community and by traveling to and preaching for other religious communities, an image of Paul, who had responsibility for popularizing the early Church through his evangelistic travels and epistles.[50] As both Peter and Paul also turned their bodies and gazes towards Christ, each also directed the viewer centrally towards the polychrome *Crucifixion*. The peripheral, monochromatic Prophets were, therefore, just like their prophecies, significant to Christian viewers primarily insofar as they began to prepare the way for an encounter with Christ. They represented the first of the chapterhouse's many pictorial zones, each of which constituted an increasingly spiritual threshold on the viewer's route to perceiving a salvific polychrome image of Christ.

This idea of lateral movement through a monochromatic architectural zone to arrive at a polychrome zone in which there was an image of the sacred can be seen again in the *terra rossa* fresco cycle in the Monastery of Santa Maria della Scala, or the Madonna of the Stairs, in Siena. It was executed in the 1340s or 1350s by a member of the circle of the Lorenzetti for the Confraternity of St. Jerome.[51] (Fig. 2.37-2.39). The cycle consists of images of the life of St. Jerome as well as depictions of observant friars engaged in religious study and activity. Although these images seem to depict everyday scenes of monastic life, Andrew Chen has recently shown that cycle's iconography derives from the *Thebaid*, a first-century poem that was rediscovered

---

[50] On the life of Guido, refer to *Acta Santorum*, March 3:912–915, www.heiligenlexikon.de/ActaSanctorum/Einleitung_Maerz_III.html , accessed 13 January 2022; A. M. Zimmerman. 1933. *Kalendarium Benedictinum: Die Heiligen und Seligen des Benediktineorderns und seiner Zweige,* 4 v. (Metten), 394–396; A. Butler. 1956. *The Lives of the Saints,* Vol. I, edited by H. Thurston and D. Attwater, 4 v. (New York: Christian Classics), 709–710.

[51] Chen, *Flagellant Confraternities and Italian Art*, 88.

and reproduced in manuscripts in Santa Maria della Scala in the early 1300s.[52] The poem tells the story of Moses' early monastic life in Egypt, and would become an important spiritual text for mendicant orders in Tuscany in the Quattrocento, with many renowned artists, such as Fra Angelico, painting scenes from the text for reformed monastic patrons.[53] The images of friars would have especially resonated with the members of the Confraternity of St. Jerome because it was not a strict lay confraternity. It also accepted members of the clergy of reformed orders, who would have especially been able to project themselves onto the brothers depicted in the monochrome *terra rossa* cycle.[54] The cycle's images of the *Life of St. Jerome* and the *Thebaid* would have thus provided confraternity brothers—lay and monastic alike—with role models of people following a mendicant path to salvation.

The modeling of mendicant salvation was an iconographic theme well-suited to the space in which the fresco was located. The *terra rossa* cycle adorns the walls of the room that was connected by a staircase to the flagellant confraternity's *sancta sanctorum* in Santa Maria della Scala's lower floor.[55] This location meant that it was in this monochromatically-painted anteroom that brothers first began their religious journey. It was a transitional space, one in which the monochromatic images would have typically been seen by a viewer with a moving body and an unstable gaze who was about to descend through a staircase—which, at a sanctuary for the Madonna della Scala would have itself had spiritual significance—and enter the confraternity's oratory. This oratory, furthermore, would have presumably contained a

---

[52] Chen, *Flagellant Confraternities and Italian Art*, 88-97.
[53] Alessandra Malquori. "La "Tebaide" degli Uffizi: Tradizioni letterarie e figurative per l'interpretazione di un tema iconografico," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 9 (2001): 119-137 and Ellen Callman, "Thebaid Studies," *Antichità Viva* 14.3 (1975): 3-22.
[54] Chen, *Flagellant Confraternities and Italian Art*, 92.
[55] Chen, *Flagellant Confraternities and Italian Art*, 88-97. The staircase that the brothers used was destroyed and rebuilt during the early modern period.

polychrome altarpiece and perhaps other devotional images related to the life of Christ. The *terra rossa* frescoes of the anteroom thus had a critical function. As at Pomposa, the monochromatic images constituted the first of a series of spiritual thresholds through which the brother would move and in which he prepared for the experience of a ritual encounter with or revelation of the polychrome divine. But unlike at Pomposa, that encounter with and revelation of the sacred was now accessible not just above or beyond the monochrome frescoes but rather situated in an entirely separate architectural space.

Although it was without the artistic renown of Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel, the decorative cycle at Santa Maria della Scala may have, nonetheless, contributed to the subsequent creation of a flurry of *terra rossa* and *terra verde* fresco cycles that were painted decades later in Tuscan monasteries. Primarily found in the monasteries of the reformed Augustinian order, the earliest extant example is in the Sienese convent of Santa Marta, founded in 1328 but not painted by Gregorio da Cecco until sometime between the year 1400 and his death in 1425.[56] (Fig. 2.40), at least half a century after the *terra rossa* cycle in Santa Maria della Scala. But like that earlier cycle, the monochromatic Santa Marta paintings consist of scenes specific both to the monastic life of the order's patron saint, Augustine, as well as scenes from the *Thebaid*. Notably, Gregorio da Cecco's master, Taddeo di Bartolo, was responsible for many frescoes in Santa Maria della Scala, including a renowned altarpiece for the Oratory of the Confraternity of St. Catherine of the Night, which also made its confraternal home in the convent.[57] Gregorio da Cecco was thus likely aware of the presence of or even gained access to the monochrome monastic cycle in Santa

---

[56] M. Boskovits. 1980. "*Su Niccolò di Buonaccorso, Benedetto di Bindo e la Pittura Senese del primo Quattrocento,*" *Paragone* 1.359-361 (1980): 3-22.
[57] Sibilla Symeonidea. 1965. *Taddeo di Bartolo*. (Siena: Accademia Senese degli Intronati), 86-87 and 209. This altarpiece depicts the *Virgin and Child with Angels and Cherubins between St. John the Baptist and St. Andrea* and is still housed at Santa Maria della Scala.

Maria della Scala, whose *Thebaid* images were still, in the early 1400s, a rare subject in Tuscan painting. Furthermore, even though *Thebaid* imagery can be found in other monasteries, there is no other apparent location in which scenes from the text were combined with didactic monastic images and executed in the monochrome technique. Thus, it is possible and even likely that Gregorio saw Santa Maria della Scala's cycle and used it as a formal and iconographic model for his Santa Marta cycle.

The Santa Marta cycle, however, is not just notable because of its iconographic and monochromatic similarities to the cycle at Santa Maria della Scala. It is also similar to the earlier cycle in its placement in architectural space. The frescoes were located in the anteroom of the sanctuary's cult space and would have also been seen by a moving viewer with an unstable gaze. As at Santa Maria dell Scala, the monochromatically-decorated walls constituted a liminal environment where, in ritual context, the viewer divested from his usual state of being and began to prepare for an encounter with the divine. This divine encounter happened in a separate space where it would be facilitated by a polychrome altarpiece and other polychrome devotional images towards which the viewer would be encouraged to orient his gaze. It thus seems that by the beginning of the 1400s, these kinds of monochromatic and polychrome images had come to inhabit different kinds of spiritual spaces in which the brother could find different kinds of spiritual support as he continued through his journey of ritual transformation and divine revelation.

d. The Move to the Cloister

At about the time that Gregorio da Cecco finished the *terra verde cycle* at Santa Marta in Siena, Paolo Uccello began his Green Cloister (Fig. 2.2) in the Church of Santa Maria Novella in

Florence, after which many such cycles were created in Tuscany. Thomas Dittelbach has noted that these cycles seem to appear most frequently in the monasteries of the Reformed Augustinian Order. He cited that, in addition to the cloister of Santa Marta, the portico and adjoining cloister of the Reformed Augustinian Monastery in Lecceto was painted around 1442 by Gualtieri di Giovanni with, respectively, *Scenes from Life During a War* and *Scenes from the Life of St. Augustine*.[58] (Fig. 2.41-2.42). This fresco cycle was painted in *terra verde* and ochre with embellishments in white, black, and red.[59] In 1445, the important Tuscan painter Giovanni di Paolo (1403-1482) frescoed the *Scenes Under the Cross* in the refectory of the monastery of San Leonardo al Lago in *terra verde* and *terra rossa*.[60] (Fig. 2.43) Five years later, he executed a *Passion Cycle* in *terra verde* and ochre in the *sala capitolare* of the Monastery of S. Agostino in Monticiano.[61] (Fig. 2.44) That same year, 1450, Stefano d'Antonio (1405-1483) painted, in yellow and green earth, a *Thebaid* and *Scenes from the Old and New Testament* in the cloister abbey of Pieve di S. Andrea in Cercina, near Florence.[62] (Fig. 2.45). Dittelbach's cataloguing of these six cycles thus revealed an important chronological trend: all but one of them were executed between 1442 and 1450.

The clustering of these cycles around the year 1450 was not lost on Dittelbach, who claimed that their painting was related to the 1443 decree by Pope Eugenius IV that gave the

---

[58] Thomas Dittelbach. "'Nelle distese e negli ampi ricettacoli della memoria': La monocromia come veicolo di propaganda dell'ordine mendicante degli agostiniani," *Arte e Spiritualità nell'Ordine Agostiniano e il Convento San Nicola a Tolentino* (1994): 101-108.
[59] Schäffner, *Terra Verde*, 293-297.
[60] Already in 1956, Eve Borsook. "The Frescoes at San Leonardo al Lago," *The Burlington Magazine* 98.643 (1956): 352 and 358 noted the coloring of these frescoes, but added that very little was visible and that without immediate intervention the frescoes would be lost.
[61] Schäffner, *Terra Verde*, 305-306.
[62] Schäffner, *Terra Verde*, 211-213.

reformed sect of Augustinians at Lecceto independence from the rest of the order.[63] Dittelbach asserted that the acceptance of the monochromatic scheme in the five reformed Augustinian monasteries was meant as a type of propaganda that demonstrated the importance of homogeneity across the order. Implicit within his argument was that a limited color palette could itself be taken both to connote political power and to argue for a political position.

However, Dittelbach's argument was larger. He also thought that the frescoes' chromatic colorism was related to Ausgustinian spirituality. He posited that, because they existed within a small chromatic range, the paintings were more easily recalled by viewers as they used them to understand the mysteries of spiritual experience than polychrome ones were.[64] This ease of recall was important, because for Augustine, it was in the memory and not the unreliable and easily-deceived senses that God could be apprehended. Dittelbach also noted that in Augustinian thought, the concept of *ars* referred not to the copying of nature, but rather to the copying of an idea in the artist's imagination that was itself already a copy of an idea that existed first in the mind of God. He argued that through their unnatural chromatic scheme, the *terra verde* cycles in the Augustinian monasteries showed that they were not imitating nature at all. Rather, they displayed their status as an invention of the artist, a work the Augustinian viewer knew was twice-removed from God. For Dittelbach, then, the Augustinian frescoes' monochromatic palettes not only expressed political unity inside of the order but their colorism also facilitated a

---

[63] Dittelbach, "Nelle distese e negli ampi ricettacoli della memoria," 103.
[64] If this is, in fact, what the Augustinian patrons believed, modern science studying the relationship between color perception and memory shows them to be incorrect. For example, Refer to, *inter alia*, Lynnay Huchendorf. "The effects of color on memory," *UW-L Journal of Undergraduate Research X* (2007): 1-4; Christof Kuhbandner and Reinhard Pekrun. "Joint effects of emotion and color on memory," *Emotion* 13.3 (2013): 375; Sarah R. Allred, and Jonathan I. Flombaum. "Relating color working memory and color perception," *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 18.11 (2014): 562-565.

spiritual exercise while simultaneously playing a key role in revealing the paintings' ontological status and their relationship to the Christian godhead.

Dittelbach's arguments regarding the spiritual efficacy of monochromy are compelling. But it should be noted that, around the year 1450, the coloristic mode was simultaneously being used throughout Tuscany—and especially in Florence—to decorate the cloisters of many other medicant orders. As already noted, from 1425 to 1430, Paolo Uccello and his contemporaries decorated the cloister of the Reformed Dominican Basilica of Santa Maria Novella in Florence in *terra verde* and *terra rossa*. After finishing the Green Cloister at Santa Maria Novella, Paolo Uccello headed over the Arno and uphill, where from 1447 through 1454 he executed a cycle of *Scenes of Monastic Life* in green and red earth in the monumental cloister of the important Benedictine Basilica of San Miniato al Monte.[65] (Fig. 2.46) Around 1435, the garden loggia of the Benedictine Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Florence was frescoed with a *Life of Benedict* painted in monochrome *terra verde*.[66] In 1448, another *terra verde* cycle depicting *Scenes from the Life of St. Benedict* was completed, possibly by the painter Bicci di Lorenzo (1373-1452), in the cloister of the Benedictine Church of St. Bernard in Arezzo.[67] Later in the century, around the year 1480, the second cloister of Florence's Servite Church of SS. Annunziata was decorated with a *terra verde* cycle of the *Life of St. Augustine*, possibly by Stefano d'Antonio, the same artist who executed the Augustinian cloister at Cercina.[68] Despite Dittelbach's argument regarding the use of monochromatic palettes as Augustinian propaganda, monochrome and monochromatic fresco cycles were commissioned by many different orders of

[65] Schäffner, *Terra Verde*, 280-284.
[66] For the cycle specifically, refer to Schäffner, *Terra Verde*, 249-251; for general information on the church complex, refer to Paatz, *Die Kirchen von Florenz*, 112-148.
[67] Schäffner, *Terra Verde*, 169-172.
[68] Schäffner, *Terra Verde*, 236-239.

mendicant communities in the mid-1400s, especially as they decorated their monumental cloisters inside and near the city of Florence.

Even as time passed, though, the monochromatic cloister cycles retained a relationship to the much-earlier monochromatic dado paintings found in north Italy. The link between these monumental Tuscan cloister cycles and the northern Italian dado paintings is perhaps best exemplified by the cycle in the Reformed Augustinian convent at Lecceto, a town about 45 miles south of Florence. (Fig. 2.41-2.42) In this case, the *Scenes from Life During a War* painted in the portico especially recalls the early dado frescoes depicting groups of mythical creatures or warring factions. When the monk passed through this space and into the cloister, he was confronted with monochrome *Scenes from the Life of St. Augustine*. The monochrome portico cycle, which depicted secular strife, thus served as an allegory for the internal spiritual strife that Augustine had faced in his own life. During the meditative ritual of walking a cloister, the identification between the monk and Augustine, the founder of his order, would trigger the brother's self-reflection on his own spiritual condition and facilitate his divestment of the secular world. The limited palette of the cycles of the portico and cloister thus acted as transitional, preparatory zones while the frescoes' iconographies supported the viewer's preparations for the collective spiritual revelation that would occur in the adjoining cult space, a revelation that would be mediated by polychrome art. The cycles at Lecceto demonstrate how, in both the dado and the cloister, monochromatic images in transitional pictorial spaces could be interlocutors for a viewer and divine polychrome images. But even more importantly, entire monochromatic programmes could be juxtaposed to polychrome art to create multiple spiritual thresholds with complementary or even typological iconographies that could support ritual transformation and a sacred revelation of God's mysteries.

Painted only a few decades after the *terra verde* cycle in the second cloister in nearby SS. Annunziata, Andrea del Sarto's *Life of St. John the Baptist* in the Cloister of the Scalzo (Fig. 1.5) shares many significant features with these earlier monochromatic cloister cycles. Like them, it was painted in *terreta* pigments with a composition organized in a single register inside a band of fictive architecture that wrapped around the perimeter of the cloister. Like many of the monastic patrons who commissioned hagiographies of their patron saints, the Scalzo cycle was also created for a reformed religious community, a *disciplinati* confraternity, and depicted the life of that confraternity's patron saint, John the Baptist. The Johannine hagiography of the Scalzo cycle was furthermore supplemented by images of four *Virtues—Faith* (fig. 1.24)*, Hope* (1.23)*, Charity* (1.9)*,* and *Justice* (1.10), an iconography popularized by the *Virtues*' inclusion in Giotto's Arena Chapel but found in the even earlier at Santa Maria Maggiore in Summaga. Paintings coming from this earlier tradition therefore serve as worthy *comparanda* for Andrea del Sarto's Cloister of the Scalzo paintings.

Even though Andrea was likely unaware of many of the medieval precedents for his *cinquecento* monochromatic cycle, the recontextualization of his Scalzo cycle within this tradition sheds light on its signifying capacities inside of the environment of the cloister. When the brother entered the space, he found himself in a liminal spiritual zone through which he would have to pass before entering a cult space where the brother would take part in a series of rituals, mediated by a polychrome altarpiece, that were meant to produce a spiritual revelation. The monochromatic Cloister of the Scalzo thus represented the first of many of the confraternity's increasingly spiritual spatial thresholds. In it, a viewer was meant to divest himself of his earthly and profane concerns and orient himself towards the meditation and contemplation. The spiritual example of his patron saint, the Baptist, as well as the ideals

personified by the four allegorical *Virtues* were presented as worthy subjects of contemplation. The brother's last moments spent as an individual were thus oriented towards facilitating his subsumption into an anonymous collective spiritual body in the adjoining oratory. There, if his affective rites of penitential devotion were efficacious, these experiences and movements would ultimately lead to the brother's ritual transformation and a divine revelation of God's mysteries.

4. *Paragone* and Flemish Altarpieces

It is important to note that, like at earlier monochromatic sites, the neutral, coloristic uniformity of Andrea's cycle also gave them many of the figures the illusionistic sense of having been sculpted from stone. This is especially true of the allegorical *Virtues*, two of which—*Charity* (Fig. 1.9) and *Justice* (Fig. 1.10)—were designed by synthesizing the compositions of *terracotta* models by Andrea's friend, the sculptor Jacopo Sansovino (1486-1570), as well as other sculpted and painted precedents.[69] The four *Virtues* also all stand, like Giotto's faux-stone ones, in illusionistic architectural niches. This is important because although true monumental monochrome sculptures had been nonexistent in Giotto's day, by the time of Andrea del Sarto, it had become common to display such sculptures inside of architectural niches. In Florence, for example, there were the renowned ones by Donatello (1386-1466), Nanni di Banco (1385-1421), Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446), and others that adorned the exterior of Florence's Orsanmichele (Fig. 2.47). Many of Andrea's figures throughout the Scalzo, then, seem intentionally designed to evoke sculpture.

This appeal to sculpture makes sense, given that the *paragone* debate over the supremacy of painting and sculpture was hotly contested by this time. The importance of the debate meant

[69] On these sculptures, refer to chapter V of this dissertation.

that throughout their corpora, Andrea and his contemporaries sought to champion the superiority of their own artform, often by imitating and then out-doing the practitioners of the other medium.[70] In the Scalzo, Andrea rivaled the medium of sculpture by seeming to breathe life into

[70] I discuss this debate and its many artistic outcomes in Zappella, "The Implicating Gaze in Bronzino's *Cosimo de Medici as Orpheus* and the Intellectual Culture of the Academia Fiorentina," 41 (2021): 171-177. For a full description and analysis of the arguments in favor of each medium, refer to Leatrice Mendelsohn. 1982. *Paragoni: Benedetto Varchi's Due Lezzioni and Cinquecento Art Theory*. (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press), 109-145. The inception of a "*paragone"* controversy is found in *The Republic*, X.607, where Plato refers to the "ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry." Rudolf Preimesberger. 2011. *Paragons and Paragone: Van Eyck, Raphel, Michelangelo, Caravaggio, Bernini.* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), viii, and David Summers. 1989. *Michelangelo and the Language of Art*. (NJ: Princeton University Press), 17, argues that Leonardo first revived and shifted this debate when he compared poetry to painting, taking up the Horatian simile *ut pictura poesis*. Leatrice Mendelsohn. 2001 "Simultaneity and the *Paragone*: Justifying Art in the Eye of the Beholder," https://www.academia.edu/1777177/ Simultaneity_and_the_Paragone_The_Justification_of_Art_in_the_Eye_of_the_Viewer, originally published as "Simultaneität und der Paragone: Die Rechtfertigung der Kunst im Auge des Betrachters," in *Im Agon der Künste. Paragonales Denken, ästhetische Praxis und die Diversität der Sinne*, *Acts of the Conference, Berlin, 19-22 February* 2001at the Frei Universitat, edited by Ulrike Mueller Hofstede, Hannah Baader, Kristine Patz, and Nicola Suthor, pp. 294-335. (Munich: Willhelm Fink Verlag), 2 and 32; Ben Thomas, "'The lantern of painting': Michelangelo, Daniele da Volterra and the paragone," Apollo, 154, no. 474 (2001), 46-53; Sefy Hendler. 2013. *La Guerre des arts Le Paragone Peinture-Sculpture en Italie XV-XVII siècle*. (Roma: L'Erma di Bretschneider); and Andrea G. de Marchi. 2014. *Daniele da Volterra e la prima pietra del Paragone*. (Roma: Campisano Editore). Mendelsohn has suggested that the quarrel was rekindled for good when artists completely removed the literary arts and substituted "sculpture" for "poetry." She maintained that the timing of this substitution was the result of many causes: art theorists wanting to engage in the ancient debate; artists wishing to assert that their professions were liberal arts and not merely crafts; the rediscovery of Aristotle's *Poetics*, which compared the structural merits of tragedy and painting; the dissemination of Leonardo's unpublished notebooks; the support of the debate by the duke of Tuscany, Cosimo I de' Medici's, at official meetings of the *Accademia Fiorentina*, Florence's literary academy; and as a response to the Reformation debate on iconoclasm. The need for a codification of the debate resulted in the publication of Benedetto Varchi's *Due Lezzioni*, a treatise in which the Florentine *literato* asked eight renowned artists—four painters and four sculptors—to write letters for publication that argued for a definitive position on the superiority of painting or sculpture. Refer to Paola Barocchi. 1962. *Scritti del Arte del Cinquecento* Vol. 1. (Milan & Naples: G. Einaudi), 493-523 for transcriptions of the letters written by the eight artists. The set artists were (in order of publication): Giorgio Vasari, Agnolo Bronzino, Jacopo Pontormo, Giovanni Battista del Tasso, Francesco Sangallo, Niccolo Tribolo, Benvenuto Cellini, and Michelangelo.

it, imbuing psychological and physical force to his sculptural forms, especially in the four *Virtues*.[71] Andrea was even directly implicated in the *paragone* debate by his contemporary, Giovanni Battista del Tasso (1500-1555), who, in his letter in the *Due Lezzioni*, the foremost treatise on art-making written in Florence in the cinquecento, described Andrea as being a supreme arbiter of art theoretical concerns.[72] The status of painting in relation to the medium of sculpture was thus certainly a concern of Andrea del Sarto as he designed and executed the sculptural figures and forms of the Cloister of the Scalzo.

But because Andrea so frequently imitated stone in paint in the Scalzo, especially in its four allegorical *Virtues* set in their architectural niches, he may have looked at other formal sources related to the *paragone*—this time, though, not between artists of different historical moments but rather between artists of different geographies.[73] That Andrea would have looked to rival art from outside of Italy makes sense, as, during the 1400s, paintings by artists living north of the Alps had become wildly popular in the peninsula, due in part to the number of wealthy Italians working and commissioning art in the Low Countries. For example, Giovanni Arnolfini, from Lucca, commissioned the 1434 *Arnolfini Wedding Portrait* now in the National Gallery, London, and the following year the *Portrait of Giovanni di Nicolao Arnolfini* now in the Gemäldegallerie in Berlin; another Lucchese merchant, Alderigo Antelminelli, had a number of Flemish paintings in his estate when he died in Bruges in 1401; Battista Lomellini of Lucca commissioned a now-lost triptych by Jan van Eyck that was later in the collection of Alfonso of

---

[71] For formal analyses of these sculptures vis a vis their relationship to the *paragone* debate, refer to this dissertation, pages 327-352.
[72] For more on this letter, refer to this dissertation, pages 315-317. Tasso's letter appears in Benedetto Varchi. 1549. *Due Lezzioni*. (Fiorenza: Lorenzo Torrentino), 136-138.
[73] On the rivalry between northern-European and Italian painting styles, especially as it pertains to gender and sexuality, refer to this dissertation, pages 294-298.

Aragon and was one of his prized possessions.[74] The De Villa family of Piedmont were also patrons of Rogier van der Weyden and the Bolognese Loiani family became patrons of Hans Memling as well as other artists in Bruges.[75] With the support of these Italians and many more, Italy's merchant class was thus among the earliest important patrons of Flemish painters.[76]

By 1450, paintings by Flemish artists were found in collections throughout the Italian princely and papal courts.[77] Correspondingly, Italian court writers acknowledged the northerners' artistic hegemony. In his 1449 *Lives of Famous Men*, the Italian-humanist writer Ciriaco d'Ancona noted that "after that famous man from Bruges, Jan [van Eyck], the glory of painting, Rogier van der Weyden is considered the outstanding painter of our time." In 1455, the court historian and secretary to Alfonso of Aragon included both van Eyck and van der Weydan in his own *Lives of Famous Men*, giving Jan van Eyck the title "prince of painters." And in 1471 the Italian poet Jacopo Tiraboschi wrote that Rogier had surpassed all painters of all time, including those of ancient Greece.[78] Thus, by mid-century, many Italian commentators believed that Flemish painters had established themselves as the greatest artists of the day, even inside of Italy.

Despite the early-century popularity of Flemish paintings in the rest of Italy, a great market for Flemish paintings did not exist in Florence until the 1460s.[79] Their popularity was

---

[74] Johann-Christian Klamt. 1999. "The *Trinity* Triptych in Berlin: A Product of the International Style," in *Italy and the Low Countries: Artistic Relations in the Fifteenth Century*, edited by Victor M. Schmidt, Gert Jan van der Sman, Marilena Vecchi, and Jeanne van Waadenoijen, pp. 9-20. (Florence: Centro Di), 9.
[75] Paula Nutall. 2004. *Florence to Flanders.* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), 3.
[76] Nutall, *Florence to Flanders*, 31-51, gives a thorough account of Italian patronage in the Low Countries.
[77] Paula Nutall. 2013. *Face to Face: Flanders, Florence, and Renaissance Painting.* (San Marino: The Huntington Art Library), 23.
[78] Nutall. *Face to Face*, 20.
[79] Nutall, *Florence to Flanders*, 53-54. On collecting habits of the Medici during this time, see, Paula Nutall. 1995. "The Medici and Netherlandish Painting," in *The Early Medici and their Artists*, edited by Frances Ames-Lewis, pp. 135-152. (London: Birkbeck College).

cemented by the 1483 arrival of Hugo van der Goes' monumental triptych, the *Portinari Altarpiece*, now housed in the Uffizi gallery in Florence, which was sent to the city by Tommaso Portinari, the Medici attaché working at the family bank in Bruges.[80] (Figs. 2.48-2.49). The main interior panel of the triptych depicts *The Adoration of the Shepherds*. This central image is flanked by side panels: on the left panel, the donor, Tommaso Portinari, kneels with his two sons and saints Thomas and Anthony; on the right panel, his wife, Maria di Francesco Baroncelli similarly genuflects, accompanied by her daughter, Mary Magdalen, and St. Margaret. Despite the virtuosity of these paintings, it is the exterior of *The Portinari Altarpiece* that is most relevant to the Cloister of the Scalzo. When closed, the two exterior wings of the triptych, now made visible, reveal a monochrome *Annunciation* divided into two parts, one on each panel. Set each in an illusionistic stone architectural niche, van der Goes depicted, on the right panel, the angel annunciate Gabriel, who has just landed. His wings are unfurled and robes billowing behind him and his knees bent as he alights onto the ground. In the left niche, the Virgin turns from prayer to greet Gabriel. She holds her hand across her heart while the dove of the holy spirit hovers just above her head. Narratively, this *Annunciation* prefigures the *Adoration* on the interior of the triptych, as Christ's birth within proceeds from his conception pictured on the outside of the

---

[80] On the patronage of the Portinari Altarpiece, refer to Diane Wolfthal. 2007. "Florentine Bankers, Flemish Friars, and the Patronage of the Portinari Altarpiece," in *Cultural Exchange between the Low Countries and Italy (1400-1600)*, edited by Ingrid Alexander-Skipnes, pp. 1-22. (Turnhout: Brepols), 1-16 as well as Nutall, *Florence to Flanders*, 53-69. Indeed, the *Portinari Altarpiece* was not supposed to be the first monumental northern altarpiece to make it to Florence, but an earlier one, a *Last Judgment* triptych by Hans Memling commissioned by the Florentine Angelo Tani, whom Tommaso Portinari replaced at his job in the Medici bank, was captured at sea in 1473 by the privateer Paul Benecke, who sent the stolen altarpiece to the Burgundian courts. Despite Tommaso Portinari's connections to Burgundy and to the Pope, he was not able to secure the return of the painting to Florence for Tani. The altarpiece is now in Gdansk in the collection of the Narodowe Museum. For more on this altarpiece, refer to Barbara G. Lane, "The Patron and the Pirate: The Mystery of Memling's Gdansk *Last Judgment*," *Art Bulletin* 73.4 (1991): 623-639.

altarpiece. But more important is the formal aspect of the monochrome exterior. The architectonic folds of drapery and overall stony, stiff appearance of the two monochrome figures betrays how deeply concerned van der Goes was with the painted imitation of stone sculpture.

The arrival of the *Portinari Altarpiece* had an immediate and demonstrable impact on Florentine art. The only northern altarpiece displayed publicly in Florence, the triptych was set up in the centrally-located church of Sant'Egidio, which belonged to the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, where it was viewed by artists, potential patrons, and the public alike.[81] Since Erwin Panofsky made the initial connections, scholars have demonstrated the ways in which Florentines transformed these northern characteristics.[82] Especially comparable to the Portinari altarpiece is Domenico Ghirlandaio's 1485 *Sassetti Altarpiece* made for the church of Santa Trinità, where it is still located. (Fig. 2.50) Not only did Ghirlandaio choose the same subject of the Adoration for his altarpiece, which was then not a popular theme in Florentine painting, he also closely interpreted the figures of the three shepherds in van der Goes' painting and included those figures in the foreground of his own. Overall, Ghirlandaio's painting shows an interest in the crisp, clear articulation of individual compositional elements characteristic of *The Portinari Altarpiece*. Moreover, in its rolling hills that lead to a high vanishing point, the Italian landscape

[81] Paula Nutall, *Flanders to Florence*, 133. Before this time, Florentine artists who wanted to see Netherlandish painting had to gain access to a scant number of paintings in Florentine private collections. More accessible to them would have been northern prints and drawings circulating within the city. On what would be a rare point of contact between northern and Florentine artists, refer to Penny Howell Jolly. "Rogier van der Weyden's Escorial and Philadelphia Crucifixions and their relationship to Fra Angelico at San Marco," *Oud Holland* 95.3 (1981): 113-126, for the possibility that Rogier visited Florence on his way to or from Rome during his 1450 pilgrimage to the Holy Refer to for the Jubilee year; this argument, however, has not been widely accepted, since it is likely that Rogier knew Fra Angelico's work through drawings and there is no solid evidence that he made such a visit to Florence.
[82] Erwin Panofsky. 1947. *Early Netherlandish Painting and its Origins and Character*. (New York: Harper & Rowe), 330-334.

also recalls that of the northern triptych. Moreover, study of the altarpiece is evident not only in Ghirlandaio's work, but also in the paintings of Leonardo, Botticelli, and Filippino Lippi, among other prominent painters of the late 1400s, ensuring that the Portinari altarpiece cast a long shadow on the stylistic development of Florentine painting into the 1500s.[83]

It should be noted, though, that however enthralled the Florentines were with *The Portinari Altarpiece*, it is unclear how much exposure they would have had to its *grisaille* exterior (fig. 2.49). This is because there is no evidence or accounts of how it was displayed in Sant'Egidio and, as Roger Crum rightly notes, Italians had little familiarity with foldable altarpieces, a type that never really caught on in peninsular art.[84] Furthermore, a Baroque remodeling of the Gothic interior of Sant'Egidio has erased any material or circumstantial evidence relating to the altarpiece's display. Crum has postulated that it was probably exhibited with its wings half open on the choir altar at Sant'Egidio, which made it possible for the viewer to see the *grisaille* exterior paintings only if he were to walk around the sides of triptych.[85] Parish priests at Sant'Egidio would have been responsible for manipulating the altarpiece and it is unclear what their liturgical preference may have been. Florentine church altarpieces, even large polyptychs, tended—despite their complicated engaged molding that articulated individual

[83] On the subject of the influence of *The Portinari Altarpiece* on Florentine painting of the late quattrocento, see, inter alia, Eve Borsook and Johannes Offerhaus. 1981. *Francesco Sassetti and Ghirlandaio at Santa Trinità, Florence: History and Legend in a Renaissance Chapel*. (Doornspijk: Davaco), 33-34; Paula Nutall. "Domenico Ghirlandaio and Northern Art," *Apollo* 143.412 (1996): 16-22; J. Mesnil. 1911. *L'art au Nord et au Sud des Alpes a l'Époque de la Renaissance: Études Comparatives*. (Brussels & Paris: G. van Oest et Cie), 40-43; and Fritz Knapp. "'Hugo van der Goes' Portinari-altar und sein Einfluss auf Lionardo da Vinci, Botticelli, Filippino Lippi, Piero di Cosimo u.a." *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz*, II (1912-1917): 194-210.
[84] Roger Crum, "Facing the Closed Doors to Reception: Speculations on Foreign Exchange, Liturgical Diversity, and the 'Failure' of the Portinari Altarpiece," *Art Journal* 57.1 (1998): 7.
[85] Crum, *Facing the Closed Doors to Reception,* 8-9.

picture fields—to be single-sided, single-panel objects. The *Portinari Altarpiece*'s multiple wings and unconventional monochrome exterior may have confused the Florentine viewer, who would have preferred that the work be displayed wide open, close to a wall, with the polychrome exterior visible year-round.[86] It thus seems that if Florentine artists wished to see the exterior of the altarpiece, they may have had to make special arrangements to do so.

Despite the difficulty that may have been required to view the exterior of *The Portinari Altarpiece*, Florentine artists absolutely engaged with its multiple-panel, monochrome format, as demonstrated by two objects produced in Andrea's circle around the year 1500. The first is a small triptych created by Mariotto Albertinelli, now in the collection of the Museo Poldi Pezzoli in Milan. The interior of Albertinelli's Poldo Pezzoli triptych (2.51) depicts a central *Madonna Lactans* with adoring saints on each of the open interior wings. The reverse of the central panel of the triptych (that is, the back of the altarpiece) is decorated with an illusionistic *memento mori* of a skull sitting on a ledge. But when closed (Fig. 2.52) and viewed from the front, a *grisaille Annunciation*, set in the Madonna's bedroom, comes into view. The Angel Gabriel rests on bended knee on the left wing of the altarpiece. He holds a lily in his left hand and extends his right hand out with finger pointed towards the Virgin, addressing her. Above him, the dove of the holy spirit flies into the room. The Virgin herself stands in the right panel surprised by the angel. With her right hand she points at her own chest, questioning Gabriel in apparent disbelief. Importantly, Albertinelli was not only a highly sought-after Florentine painter of his day, he was also the master of Andrea's friend and colleague, Franciabigio, who completed two of the Scalzo

[86] Crum, *Facing the Closed Doors to Reception,* 10. I am grateful to Elizabeth Wigfield for sharing her knowledge of the fabrication of medieval and early modern altarpieces. For more on the construction of Italian polyptychs, refer to Joyce Hill Stoner and Rebecca Anne Rushfield. 2021. *The Conservation of Easel Paintings*. (Oxon and New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group), 72-87.

narrative scenes as well as a section of the fictive architecture.[87] Although it is unclear if Franciabigio was in Albertinelli's studio at the exact time as the execution of this triptych, he nonetheless would have studied this type of object, which can thus be directly connected to the artists working in the Cloister of the Scalzo.

The existence of the small-format triptych in the Poldo Pezzoli also attests to the type's desirability for private devotional use in Italy, as does a similar picture, a *grisaille Annunciation*, now in the Uffizi, painted by Andrea's greatest Florentine rival, Fra Bartolomeo.[88] (Fig. 2.53) The format of this painting is slightly different from Albertinelli's painting in that it is not a triptych but rather a double-sided, rectangular altarpiece made by joining two smaller rectangular, vertically-oriented panels together. That is, although it does not fold, its format and monochromatic color palette nonetheless imitate the appearance of a closed northern triptych.

---

[87] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, Vol. 5, 190**:** "*Imparò il Francia nella sua giovinezza, dimorando alcuni mesi con Mariotto Albertinelli*." Vasari then states that Franciabigio joined Andrea after Albertinelli retired from painting. Susan Regan McKillop. 1974. *Franciabigio*. (Berkely, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press), 7, argues that Franciabigio was in Mariotto Albertinelli's workshop from at least 1503, when he is recorded in the account books of the Compagnia di San Lucca as a "*dipintore"* to 1506, when Vasari tells us he set up shop with Andrea. It is certainly possible though that Franciabigio, who was born in 1482, was in Albertinelli's workshop as an apprentice at a much younger age, as boys were usually apprenticed at puberty or even younger. Thus, Franciabigio could have begun studying with Albertinelli in the mid-1490s, and would have then even been under his tutelage when the master created the Poldi Pezzoli triptych. Refer to Appendix A for Franciabigio's contributions to the Scalzo,

[88] On this panel's important context, refer to Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, IV, 176-177, who writes: "*Aveva Pier del Pugliese avuto una Nostra Donna piccolo di marmo, di bassisimo rilievo, di mano di Donatello, cosa rarissima; la quale per maggiormente onorarla glie fece fece fare uno tabernacolo di legno per chiuderla con una sportellina, che datolo a Baccio dalla Porta, vi fece dentro due steriette, che fu una la Natività di Cristo, l'altra la sua Circuncisione, le quali condusse Baccio di figurine a guise di miniatrua, che non è possible a olio poter far meglio; e quando poi si chiude, di fuora in su detti sportelli dipinse pure a oilio di chiaro e scuro la Nostra Donna annunziata clair Angelo. Questa opera è oggi nello scrittoio del duca Cosimo; dove egli ha tutte le antichità di bronzo di figure piccolo, medaglie, ed alter pitture rare di ini, tenuto da Sua Eccelenzia Illustrissima per cosa rara, come è veramente."* I am grateful to Elizabeth Pilliod for bringing this to my attention.

Like Albertinelli, Fra Bartolomeo set the narrative in a domestic space, the Virgin's bedroom, where, on the left panel, the angel Gabriel kneels with his lily. This time, though, he crosses his arms in front of his chest in reverence of the Madonna. She is stationed in the right picture field, from where she kneels at prayer with a book in her right hand and turns backwards to regard the angel, pressing her left hand to her chest. The center of the painting is occupied by a door half ajar that opens into another room where an elderly man—probably Joseph—is visible. (The reverse of the panels is decorated, on the left, with a polychrome depiction of *The Circumcision of Christ* and, on the right, with an *Adoration)*. In the hands of the Italians, therefore, the *Annunciation*s take on a more-pictorial and less-sculptural quality compared to Hugo van der Goes. These differences are evident both in that the Italian artists use painterly devices such as *sfumato* and linear perspective to construct space. They also set the drama in a domestic interior setting where there is an implication of a livable outside world, rather than in a closed stone niche. These two altarpieces thus speak to the Italian appropriation of such monochrome polyptych formats and the ways that Italian artists of Andrea's circle conceptually and technically engaged with them in order to meet the market demands of their common Italian patrons.

One of the main differences between northern objects like *The Portinari Altarpiece* and those painted by Italians is the northern painters' evident concern that the viewer apprehend the monochrome figures on the exteriors of the altarpieces as sculpture.[89] This is apparent in the artist's imitation of identifiable stones and their setting of figures inside architectural niches. In some cases, the artists even painted chips in the illusionistic stone sculpture or its niche to

[89] Till-Holger Borchert. 2008. "Color Lapidum: A Survey of Late Medieval Grisaille," in *Grisallas*, edited by Till-Holger Bochert, pp. 239-253. (Madrid: Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza), 240.

heighten the sense of realism.[90] Though not a triptych, this hyperrealism is perhaps best exemplified by Jan van Eyck's 1433-1435 panel painting of the *Annunciation Diptych* (Fig. 2.54), now in the collection of the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid. This painting presents the angel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary as marble sculptures set in matching stone niches on short marble bases. The rear of the niches are filled with an illusionistic black obsidian panel, which reflects the imagined backs of the fictive *trompe l'oeil* sculptures; the semi-transparent reflection of the highly ornate, braided hair of the Virgin is a particularly illusionistic passage of painting. Perhaps just as impressive is that, although called a diptych because of the painting's apparent format and participation in the northern tradition of depicting illusionistic sculptures on the exteriors of such altarpieces, van Eyck's small panel is not foldable at all. Rather, the painting exists on a single, flat picture plane. Even the apparent wooden frame surrounding each niche is a painted, hyperrealistic illusion. Through his striking and virtuosic *trompe l'oeil*, Jan van Eyck demonstrated the northern artists' commitment to the creation of an illusion of sculpture that only betrayed its status as a painting once the viewer was close enough to the object to verify its flat surface.

This commitment to hyperrealism is paradoxical because in the north, almost all sculptures—including those on the exterior of buildings—were polychromed. In light of this, Lynne F. Jacobs has argued that the fictional stone sculptures on the exterior of the Flemish polyptychs represent an in-between state, the time after the sculpture was carved by the sculptor but before it was painted in the painter's studio.[91] Till-Holger Borchert concurred with Jacobs, and asserted that this in-betweenness took on spiritual significance because the subject matter

---

[90] Till Holger Borchert. 2008. "Catalogue," in *Grisallas*, edited by Till-Holger Bochert. (Madrid: Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza), n. 1.
[91] Jacobs, *Early Netherlandish Carved Altarpieces,* 88.

usually depicted on those exteriors, *The Annunciation*, is the moment between the conception of Christ in the mind of God and Christ's becoming flesh. This moment is visualized in *Annunciation* paintings by the near-ubiquitous presence of an infant, a crucified Christ, or most commonly the dove of the Holy Spirit, who seems to fly in from an open window on a ray of light, making his way to the Madonna's womb, where he will become incarnate. For Borchert, neither the faux sculptures, caught in their in-between state, nor Christ, similarly imaged in a liminal moment, was fully-formed.[92] The faux-stone sculptures thus represented a diminished spiritual state compared to the polychrome image of Christ incarnate on the inside of the altarpiece.

That the illusionistic sculptures on the exteriors of the altarpieces capture them in an unfinished state may be intentional and due to the way in which the object-type developed. In her article on the subject, Molly Teasdale Smith argued that the practice of painting the exterior of these polyptychs in monochrome resulted from medieval liturgical practice. She shows that early on, both the interiors and exteriors of such foldable objects were painted in polychrome. Their interiors, however, were only displayed on feast days. Otherwise, the polyptychs were displayed closed, with polychrome exteriors exposed. Although acceptable most of the year, these brightly-colored images were considered inappropriate for display during the somber period of Lent, so they were covered with a veil for those forty days and nights. But patrons and viewers still desired figuration in the adornment of their churches, which was permissible even during Lent as long as the figures were not painted in color. Consequently, the veils used to cover the altarpieces were painted with figural *grisaille* pictures that were appropriate during Lent. The practice of veiling paintings with decorated altar cloths became ubiquitous throughout the Low

---

[92] Borchert, "Color Lapidum," 241.

Countries, France, Spain, and was even practiced in Italy, including in Florence; a rare surviving example of this type of veil is the *Narbonne Altarcloth*, made from 1364 to 1378 and now in the Louvre.[93] (Fig. 2.55) But soon, painters realized that they could avoid the need for veiling all together by painting the exteriors of the altarpieces themselves as if painting altarcloths—that is, in monochrome.[94] By the early 1400s, this practice became *de rigueur*, resulting in the altarpiece type with a polychrome interior and *grisaille* exterior that made its way to Florence in the monumental *Portinari Altarpiece*.

In her study of early-Italian "monochrome" frescoes, Jill Bain already noted that the exteriors of these northern diptychs functioned much like the limited-palette dados found in Romanesque churches. She argued that both the dados and the *grisaille* polyptych wings separate

---

[93] I am grateful to Martha Wolff for bringing these veils to my attention. For the argument that this altarcloth was not hung in front of the main altar but instead behind it, between the priest and the altarpiece, veiling it from the congregation, refer to Susie Nash. 2000. "The Parement de Narbonne: Context and Technique," in *The Fabric of Images*, edited by Caroline Villiers, pp. 77-87. (London: Archetype), 78. On the subject of veils made for altarpieces more generally, also refer to Donald L. Ehresmann. "Some Observations on the Role of Liturgy in the Early Winged Altarpieces," *The Art Bulletin* 64.3 (1982): 359-369. On the Italian tradition of veiling altarpieces, refer to: Alessandro Nova. 1994. "Hangings, Curtains, and Shutters of Sixteenth-Century Lombard Altarpieces," in *Italian Altarpieces 1250-1550: Function and Design*, edited by Eve Borsook and Fiorella Gioffredi Superbi, pp. 177-197. Also refer to: Johann Konrad Eberlein, "The Curtain in Raphael's Sistine 'Madonna,' *Art Bulletin* 65 (1983): 66-68; Hendrick W. Van Os. 1988. *Sienese Altarpieces*/ I. (Gronigen: Forsten), 55; Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, III, 474 as well as IV, 344-345; Cennino Cennini. 1971. *Il Libro dell'arte*, edited by F. Brunello (Vicenza: Neri Pozza), 170-176; Neri di Bicci. 1976. *Le Ricordanze* (*10 marzo 1453- 24 aprile 1475*), edited by Bruno Santi. (Pisa: Marlin), xix; R. Miller. 1985. "Registo dei documenti," in *I Campi e la cultural artistica cremonese del Cinquecento.* (Milano: Electa), 468 n. 217; Rodolfo Palluchini. 1969. *Tiziano* Tomo I. (Florence: G. C. Sansoni), 310; Bernardo Faino. 1961. *Catalogo delle chiese di Brescia. (Manoscritti Queriniani E. VII. 6 and E.I.10*) edited by C. Boselli. (Brescia: Geroldi), 24*;* Filippo Baldinucci. 1681. *Vocabulario Toscano dell'arte del disegno* (Florence), 127; as well as Elizabeth Pilliod, "Le Noli me tangere de Bronzino et la décoration de la Chapelle Cavalcanti de l'église Santo Spirito à Florence," *Le Revue du Louvre* 41.5/6 (1991: 50-61.

[94] Molly Teasdale Smith. "The Use of Grisaille as Lenten Observance," *Marsyas* 8 (1959): 43-54.

the viewer from the celestial realm imaged in the form of a polychrome painting. She also argued that both the dados and the altarpiece wings represented a state of incompleteness—in the case of the altarpieces, the *grisaille* sculptures were caught between their sculpting and painting, whereas, Bain argued, the dados also lacked the full chromatic treatment the viewer expects of a fresco and are thus also perceived as incomplete, more like a preparatory under-drawing than a finished painting. Bain also noted that the northern veils that pre-dated the painted altarpiece wings have a similar color scheme to the early Italian frescoes, as the textiles were executed not only in *grisaille* but also in red or brown earth tones.[95] Furthermore, the dado paintings in Italy were almost always of a secular subject set against an earthly backdrop, such as a curtain or architectural niche, and were thus earth-bound.[96] That architectural niches are imitated in both object types is obvious. However, by asserting that the fabric pictured in the backdrop of the dados were curtains, Bain overlooked the possibility that, given their chromatic and functional similarities, the frescoes may very well picture or at least allude to the very Lenten veils that were used to cover polychrome images in the Middle Ages.[97] But, whether or not the early-Italian painters were directly imitating the liturgical veils, monochromatic frescoes do indeed function in a way that is similar both to the altar cloths themselves and the *trompe l'oeil* paintings of sculpture that eventually replaced them. Both types of chromatically-limited images served as a spiritual and pictorial barrier the viewer had to penetrate to arrive at a polychrome image of the divine.

This comparison holds not only on the small scale, with the dado paintings and hand-held portable polyptychs used for private worship by an individual worshipper, but also on the

[95] Bain, "Signifying Absence," 20.
[96] Bain, Signifying Absence, 18 note 43.
[97] I am grateful to Claire Jensen for bringing this possibility to my attention.

monumental, public scale. On this front, Bain compared the wings of the *Ghent Altarpiece* (Figs. 2.56-2.57), completed in 1432 by Hubert and Jan van Eyck for Ghent's main Church of St. Bavo, to the lateral "arms" of the room created by the monochrome frescoes at the Pomposa Charterhouse.[98] (Fig. 2.31-2.36). She noted that both viewing experiences require that the viewer move through a near-monochrome realm whose images are of lesser spiritual significance to arrive at a polychrome image of the sacred. In the case of Pomposa, this movement is achieved by the viewer who walks through the space of the Twelve Prophets to arrive at the polychrome saints, and, ultimately, the *Crucifixion*. In Ghent, the *trompe l'oeil* sculpture on the triptych's exterior gives way, when opened, to the interior *Adoration of the Mystic Lamb*.[99] But it is critical to recall the size of these northern altarpieces: at over 12' high, the *Ghent Altarpiece* is about 7.5' wide when closed. Similarly, the closed *Portinari Altarpiece* measures over 8' high and just under 10' wide. These are already massive objects. But because the exterior wings bear a one-to-one planar correspondence to the interior central panel, these altarpieces double in width when they open. That means that an entire group of people must have been responsible for physically manipulating the cumbersome and heavy wooden triptychs on their altars. Thus, in a very real sense, the experience of arriving at the polychrome interior of such large-scale polyptychs was just as corporeal as walking through a painted room and the visual shift between the monochrome and polychrome realms just as dramatic.

A comparison between traditions of the chromatically-limited Italian fresco cycles and the northern polyptych is an especially useful way to understand the emergence and meaning of

[98] Bain, "Signifying Absence," 17-20.
[99] Paul Philipot. "*Les Grisailles et les 'Degres de Realité' de l'Image dans la Peinture Flamande des XVe et XVIe Siècle*," *Bulletin des Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique* (1966): 227-230, provides a thorough analysis of the multiple levels of reality suggested by the exterior of the *Ghent Altarpiece*.

earthen-palette cloister cycles that began to appear in central Italy in the 1400s. The exterior of these altarpieces would have been seen in the north by viewers in Lent, a period in which Christians prepare themselves through spiritual practice such as meditation, prayer, fasting, and making other sacrifices in preparation for Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday, the most important day of the liturgical calendar.[100] On this day, the arms of the altarpieces—whose images of unpainted sculptures depicted, more often than not, *The Annunciation*—would be opened, revealing the dazzling polychrome world in which Christ was finally incarnate. The opening and viewing of the altarpieces was thus a hermeneutic for understanding Christ's Resurrection. In the same way, the brother walking around a cycle of images painted in a Florentine cloister in could contemplate the chromatically-limited images in spiritual preparation for the celebration of the Christ's Resurrection, which would occur in an adjoining interior oratory and would have been facilitated by a polychrome image, usually of Christ. Walking the cloister, like viewing the limited-palette dado paintings and the exteriors of northern polyptychs, would have been a spiritually and chromatically restricted experience but one that was nonetheless necessary to prepare for celebration of Christ's incarnation. Thus, these monochromatic paintings, regardless of their religious context or their country of origin, served as mediators between the profane world of the viewer and the sacred polychrome world of the divine. Monochrome decorations supported worshippers as they physically, psychologically, and spiritually readied themselves for a transformative sacred experience arrived at through collective ritual practice.

[100] Harper, *Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy*, 53-54 and 104, gives the ranking of the liturgical feast days and the significance of Lenten practices, respectively.

5. Conclusion

Many factors may have been taken into consideration when Andrea and the confraternity made the decision to decorate the Cloister of the Scalzo with a monochromatic earth-pigment fresco cycle. By emphasizing that it was *terreta*, Vasari, for example, implied that the brothers made their chromatic decision not for representational reasons at all but rather for financial ones, as such pigments were cheap. This makes sense, given that thrift of materials and ease of labor is the most common explanation used to justify the use of earth-pigments over their more-expensive counterparts.[101] But the artist-brothers were also well-aware of Florence's many cloisters decorated similarly—among them, the important Basilicas of Santa Maria Novella, SS. Annunziata, San Miniato al Monte, and the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli. Moreover, at the same time that Andrea painted the Cloister of the Scalzo for the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist, the important penitential *Compagnia di San Giovanni Battista Decollato* also commissioned a *terra verde* cycle for their confraternal home, which is now totally lost.[102] The

[101] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, Vol. 5, 60. Since the work of Michael Baxandall. 1988. *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style,* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press), 81-86, the expense of pigments used in depicting different kinds of subjects has been of great concern in assessing how those paintings were meant to be seen both by the viewing public and by the holy figures imaged in them. On the relative values of pigments during early modernity, refer to Julia Delancey. 2003. "Dragonsblood and Ultramarine," in *The Art Market in Italy* edited by Marcello Fantoni, pp. 141-150. (Modena: F.C. Panini), her 2010. "Shipping Color: Valute, Pigments, Trade and Francesco di Marco Datini," in *Trade in Artists' Materials: Markets and Commerce in Europe to 1700,* pp. 74-85. (London: Archetype Publications), as well as Jo Kirby. 2000. "The Price of Quality: Factors Influencing the Cost of Pigments during the Renaissance" in *Revaluing Renaissance Art*, edited by Gabriel Neher and Rupert Shepherd, pp. 2-40. (Surrey: Aldershot Publishing).
[102] Georg Pudelko. "The Minor Masters of the *Chiostro Verde*," *The Art Bulletin* 17.1 (1935): 87. The *Compagnia di San Giovanni Battista* (the Beheaded St. John the Baptist) was also known as the *Compagnia dei Neri*, after the black robes they wore as they lead Florentine convicts to their executions, which was their primary charitable act. This confraternity became especially important because in Rome where a satellite branch was founded in 1488 by Florentines living in the city; Michelangelo was a member of this organization from 1514 until his death in 1564. For more on this fascinating and macabre confraternity, see, inter alia: Eugenio Cappelli. 1927. *La*

production of a monochromatic cycle in the Cloister of the Scalzo would thus not only have been cheaper and, at least theoretically, more quickly executed than a polychrome one, but was also an established and accepted mode for cloister painting in well-known, local reformed monastic and confraternal spaces. A confluence of factors thus probably tipped the Scalzo brothers' figurative scales in favor of a near-monochrome cycle in their own cloister.

Whatever the reasons for the choice of near-monochromy, all of the activities that occurred in the Cloister of the Scalzo were informed by the totally immersive, nearly monochrome setting of Andrea's paintings. Their limited palette meant that, from the moment the brother entered the cloister, he understood that Andrea's images, which did not represent the full-color world in which he lived, had a different ontological status than both himself and polychrome images of the sacred. Andrea's frescoes moreover decorated the cloister, a liminal architectural form fixed between the street and the oratory, the inside and the outside, the public and the private, the sacred and the profane. It was in this spiritually liminal space in which the brother would begin to divest from the profane world of the street and prepared to enter the sacred oratory. There, he could walk the claustral space in contemplation and meditation or he

---

Compagnia dei Neri: L'Arciconfraternita dei Battuti di Santa Maria della Croce al Tempio (Florence: Felice Le Monnier); Paatz, *Die Kirchen von Florenz* III, 304-306, for buildings associated with *Compagnia dei Neri* and the architecture of public executions; Konrad Eisenbichler. 2000. "The Suppression of Confraternities in Enlightenment Florence," in *The Politics of Ritual Kinship: Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy*, edited by Nicholas Terpstra, pp. 262-278. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press), 263-264, for Lorenzo de' Medici's involvement in the confraternity; Allie Terry, "Donatello's Decapitation and the Rhetoric of Beheading in Medicean Florence," *Renaissance Studies* 23.5 (2009): 616 and 629, for the confraternity's presence in festive life under the Medici; and Samuel Edgerton, "*Maniera* and the *Mannaia*: Decorum and Decapitation in the Sixteenth Century," in *The Meaning of Mannerism*, edited by Franklin W. Robinson and Stephen G. Nichols, Jr., (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1972), 67-103, for information about the confraternity's artistic production in both Florence and Rome and its relationship to the ritual of public executions.

could sit quietly on the low bench, protected at least somewhat from the elements and from the public eye. It was a space in which a limited and individual spiritual experience could occur, one that was a necessary transition before the brother disrobed from his street clothes and put on the confraternal habit that subsumed him into the collective so that a full spiritual revelation could occur in the adjoining oratory.

That the brothers may have understood the relationship between the monochromatic images in the cloister and the polychrome altarpiece in the adjoining oratory seems evident from Andrea's placement within the cycle and composition of *The Baptism of Christ*. (Fig. 1.8). John Shearman was the first scholar to note that this fresco is the only painting in the cycle taken out of narrative order. That is, in the story of the life of John, he began his ministry by preaching to and baptizing the regular people. His ministry then came to Christ's attention, whom he subsequently baptized.[103] Close analysis of both *St. John the Baptist Preaching to the Multitude* and *St. John the Baptist Baptizing the Multitude*, conform with the Biblical timeline, as in each of these images Christ enters the scene from an upper corner of the painting (the top left and top right, respectively), indicating that he is about to hear and see his cousin's ministry before being baptized. (Figs. 1.11 and 1.12) Christ's Baptism, then, should follow these images in narrative order, not, as it does, precede it (Fig. 1.7).[104] That is, the fresco of *The Baptism of Christ*, which is located in the eastern corner of the northern wall should instead be located in northern corner of the western wall where he depicted *The Baptism of the Multitude*, which, along with *John the Baptist Preaching* should both precede it. Andrea thus placed *The Baptism of Christ* two scenes

[103] Shearman, *Andrea del Sarto* Vol. II, 243.
[104] The story of John's preaching and Christ's baptism is told in the Bible in Matthew 3:3-17; in Mark 1:9-11; and Luke 3:21-22.

too early on an entirely different wall from where the proper biblical sequence would have demanded it.

This narrative revision has significant consequences. The diversion from the narrative's timeline forced each brother to look at this scene the entire time he walked the length of the portico to travel from the cloister entrance to the *spogliatoio*, the room from which he entered the oratory. There, Andrea's monochrome program finally culminated on the main altar of the oratory where, in pride of place, was the confraternity's only polychrome image used in regular worship, an altarpiece by Lorenzo di Credi that depicted *The Baptism of Christ*,.[105] (Fig. 1.31) Both of Andrea's and Lorenzo's versions take Verrocchio's 1475 depiction (2.58) of the same subject in the Uffizi as their obvious precedent, the latter so much so that it was mistaken as being by Leonardo, who was Verrocchio's assistant on the earlier panel painting.**[106]**

The similarities between the two *Baptisms of Christ* belonging to the Scalzo brotherhood merit cataloguing. In both Andrea's and Lorenzo's paintings, Christ appears centrally in the River Jordan, his body nearly nude, clad only in a flimsy loin cloth wrapped loosely about his hips. Though his weight in each image is born on the opposite leg, in both images he stands in *contrapposto* with his hands meeting in prayer in front of his chest. Also in both images, Christ looks down and to his left, where St. John the Baptist stands on a patch of earth on the right side of the composition, pouring the baptismal water from a shallow bowl over Christ's head. The depictions of John the Baptist are also similar. Both Baptists reach towards Christ with their right hands to administer the sacrament, their bodies forming a curve that complements Christ's *contrapposto*. John is of the same height and build as Christ, with the same long hair and

---

[105] Dow, *Confraternal Piety and Corporate Patronage,* 155. The painting was moved to the Church of San Domenico after the suppression of Florentine Confraternities.
[106] Dow, *Confraternal Piety and Corporate Patronage*, 155.

similarly well-defined facial features. Furthermore, in both paintings, John wears robes that wrap around his shoulders and hang down below his knees, though the arrangement of the drapery is slightly varied. The auxiliary figures in the paintings are also similar. In Andrea's painting, two angels kneel on the other side of the riverbank, the one farthest from the viewer looking towards the nearer angel who gazes at Christ. (In Lorenzo's altarpiece, these two angels are joined by a third, just behind them.) In both images, the dove of the Holy Spirit is placed prominently in the upper center of the image, directly above the head of Christ. Even the landscapes should be compared. Today, the landscape in Lorenzo's altarpiece is much more worked up, filled with the rolling river, piles of rocks on its banks, and a stand of trees behind the figures on each side of the composition. And though Andrea's *Baptism* today appears to have little landscape in the background, an early print by Theodore Kruger (Fig. 2.59), belonging to a 1617 series that he made after the Scalzo fresco cycle, suggests Andrea's image originally included the same landscape elements as well as the cloudy sky that the dove parts with his wings, just as in Lorenzo's altarpiece. The similarity between the two images thus would have been, then even more than now, striking.

The two pictures' similarities were crucial to the brother's experience of imagery in space. Their likeness meant that after viewing Andrea's monochrome *Baptism of Christ* (1.8) nearly the entire time that he walked through the cloister to the *spogliatoio*, Andrea's limited-palette painting seemed to come to full spiritual fruition in Lorenzo di Credi's polychrome rendition of the same subject (1.31), positioned on the confraternity's altar, its most holy place. The juxtaposition between the monochrome version of the subject in the cloister and the polychrome one in the oratory would have underscored for the brother both that his limited chromatic experience in the cloister had also been limited spiritually and in preparation for the

increased spirituality of the oratory. Just as the viewer of Romanesque frescoes had visually traversed the monochrome dados that allegorized the polychrome paintings above, and just as the *grisaille* exteriors of Flemish altarpieces had at once served as a visual barrier while also prefiguring the polychrome images within, Andrea del Sarto's *Baptism of Christ* prepared the brother for his encounter with Lorenzo's polychrome rendering of the same subject just as the overall monochromatic palette of the cloister helped to prepare him for a collective and ritual revelation of divine truth.

This historical and artistic recontextualization of Andrea del Sarto's Cloister of the Scalzo cycle is critical for reconceptualizing how the images functioned in the transitional space of the cloister. It shows that the paintings participated in a centuries-long tradition of limited-palette, earth-pigment fresco cycles that were first executed in the eleventh century in the north of Italy and moved south to Tuscany, where it became the primary mode for cloister painting of reformed monasteries in the 1400s. This tradition was informed later that century both by painting's rivalry with the medium of sculpture as well as the vogue for northern altarpieces in Florence, whose limited-palette exteriors designed for Lenten observance were chromatically, spiritually, and spatially similar in conception to the Italian fresco cycles in dados and cloisters. Movement of the eye or body through those images was integral to the phenomenology of viewership, as the monochrome or near-monochrome paintings decorated intermediary or transitional spaces wherein a viewer prepared for an encounter with the divine. That spiritual encounter is itself the subject of our next chapter.

With this in mind, let us join our confraternal brother in the Prologue of Chapter III, whom we left earlier in the *spogliatoio* of the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist. He is now just about to enter the *spogliatoio,* where he will change out of his street clothes and into his

black and white confraternal habit, surrendering his personal identity to become an anonymous member of the penitential confraternity.

Chapter III: The Meta/ Physics of Light in the Cloister of the Scalzo

1. Prologue

Leaving the chilly, torchlit cloister behind him (Fig. 3.1), the brother stepped into the *spogliatoio*, or changing room.[1] There, in near blackness and surrounded by his brethren, the brother changed into his habit. It was just like the ones pictured on the tympanum (Fig. 1.6) over the entrance to the confraternity's door—a rough black robe with slit down the back for flagellating.[2] He pulled the hood over his face and adjusted the eye holes.[3] The coarse fabric itched and chaffed his skin, just as it was meant to. Around the cramped room the men were all putting on their identical robes, disappearing, one by one into anonymity. Someone bumped into him from behind. He could not tell who.

Following the other *confratelli* through the door, the brother entered the oratory, where services were held. With night still looming outside the room's three western-facing windows, the path to the opposite side of the room was illuminated by candles, where the altar stood.[4] He kneeled in front of it, ignoring the scratchy fabric biting into his knees, to admire the altarpiece, a painting of the *Baptism of Christ* by Lorenzo di Credi. It was so like the one in the cloister, he observed, but here in color. The brother made his way from the altar to a seat in the three rows of

---

[1] Alfonso Parigi's plan contained in BNCF MS Palatino 853 (old numeration 741-21,2), fol. 38v labels it as a *ricetto*. The room was also used as a *spogliatoio*.
[2] ASF, Cap CRS 152, 13r, describes the habit as "*una vesta near di panno grosso a uso di disciplina*."
[3] On the importance of the habit in signaling a shift to collective identity, access Ronald F. E. Weissman. 1982. *Ritual brotherhood in renaissance Florence*. (New York: Academic Press), 74 as well as 82-84.
[4] Alana O'Brien. "Apostles in the Oratory of the Compagnia dello Scalzo: "Adornato da e mia Frateli Academizi," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 14/ 15 (2011-2012): 212, was first able to make sense of the schema drawn to the right of Alfonso Parigi il Vecchio's plan of the Scalzo (Fig. 2) as a cross-section of the Scalzo oratory, indicating the presence of three benches in rows on both sides of the room.

benches that ran lined the eastern wall of the oratory and genuflected on the rest in front of him. Somewhere behind him, one of his brothers read aloud from a religious text. He did not listen. Instead, his mind wandered to what was about to come. It would hurt. But it was nothing in comparison to Christ's suffering.

The reading stopped. The confraternity's *Padre Governatore* took his seat at his desk next to the door to the *spogliatoio*. There, the brother could see the governor's face illuminated from below by the candle on his desk. He opened a book and began to read. Fixing his gaze on the large wooden crucifix above the door to the *spogliatoio*, the brother marveled at Christ's muscular body. He examined the wounds in his feet, hands, and side. He heard the *Padre Governatore* read the psalms, the prayers to God and the Virgin, those for Peace, to Saint John the Baptist for protection and wisdom.[5] The brother chanted and murmured along as he was required, all the while inspecting the carved and polished trail of red blood that streamed down from Christ's crown of thorns to his brow. He examined the gash in Christ's side. The brother heard the Governor begin to preach, reminding him of his debt to God and the rewards that awaited him after death in the house of the Lord. These rewards, the Governor warned, were only available to the worthy, the penitent, who enacted and meditated on the self-sacrifice implied by Psalm 50: "Deliver me from blood guilt, O God of my salvation…For if Thou didst desire sacrifice, I would have indeed given it, but with a burnt offering Thou art not pleased. A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit."[6] The brother's gaze continued to wander over Christ's bloodied, dying body.

[5] ASF, Cap CRS 86, 3v-4r.
[6] Psalm 50: 16-17.

Then, the brother heard feet shuffle. He sensed the collective apprehension as something was passed to him in the darkness. He knew what it was. He ran his fingers along one of the whip's three cords of rope, feeling the heavy knots that would soon strike his back. The brother followed the *confratello* next to him to a door in the back-right corner of the room. The whip still in hand, he passed through a narrow antechamber and stepped into the *luogo vecchio*, the old place, where a century earlier the company had held their services.[7] The room was dark. He tried to make out the rest of his brothers in their identical coarse black robes. The identities of some his brothers was obvious—the very tall ones and the corpulent ones especially. The rest were anonymous, a mass of cloaked bodies in the darkness. He took his place among them.

The sound of a whip cracked through the air. Each brother tensed, then flung the long cords of the whip over his shoulder. Together, the brothers recited a chorus of Our Fathers and Hail Marys, punctuating their prayers every few seconds with the sound of dozens of whips hitting sinewy backs.[8] With each burst of pain, the brother reflected on Christ's Passion, the agony that he had suffered, the humiliation, the gruesome death so that mankind could be forgiven for its sins and granted eternal life.[9] There, intoning prayers in the confraternity's *sanctum sanctorum*, the brother pictured Christ's body lying lifeless on the stone slab of the tomb and begged God for forgiveness.

---

[7] On the *luogo vecchio*, access O'Brien, "Apostles in the Oratory," 213-214.
[8] Andrew Chen. 2019. *Flagellant Confraternities and Italian Art, 1260-1610: Ritual and Experience*. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press), 42. Though the statutes of the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist do not indicate the duration of self-flagellation, the closely-associated *Compagnia of San Zanobi* prescribed the whip for the length of ten number of *Hail Mary*s and ten *Our Fathers.* At a quick pace in Latin spoken aloud, this took me about eight minutes. It could have taken them much longer. Much earlier, Marchi, "Lo Compagnia dello Scalzo," 200, had argued, however, that flagellation was likely done in silence as, she claimed, other companies customarily flagellated.
[9] On affective devotion and the reenactment of Christ's passion, access Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 103.

When the last prayer finished the brother was exhausted. His arms were sore, his back burned with pain, and he could not tell if it was only sweat or also blood that trickled down his skin. In the darkness, the only way to know was to reach his arm around, touch his back, and put his wet finger to his tongue. Sometimes, it was salty—sweat. Other times, he tasted iron—blood. Those days, he felt especially devout.[10]

Moving slowly now, he handed his whip back to the Sacristan before settling into the oratory, kneeling in prayer once more. As he sat there, head bowed, he heard someone shuffle around the room. Each time the shuffling paused, the room grew darker and the scent of smoke intensified. Soon, all of the candles around the room were extinguished except one, that on the desk of the *Padre Governatore*, who used it to read the story of Christ's Passion. The wooden crucifix was no longer visible in the pitch blackness, the brother pictured it in his mind as he listened to the story of how Jesus had been shredded by whips and pierced by a crown of thorns before he was made to carry his own cross on his raw back; how he fell under it and under it again before he reached the top of the mount and was nailed to it; how he hung there between two thieves at Golgotha, beseeching his father for help in vain as he slowly suffocated from the weight of his own body; how the Romans punctured his lung, doused the wound with vinegar, and then gambled off his mantle before his friends and mother could bear his body to the tomb; how once the rock was rolled into place his body laid in the blackness of that tomb while his spirit visited the Underworld.[11] And then how finally on the third day the miracle of all miracles

[10] On the evidence that the brothers of the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist continued to flagellate into the 17th century, refer to the second chapter of this dissertation.
[11] This passage of the critical fabulation was inspired by Abraham Piper's description of the Passion on a TikTok video posted to his account on 1 November 2021. The video's theme was "What Bible story should never be told to children?" and began with a trigger warning for violence.

occurred: his soul reunited with his body, he stood up from his stone slab, and the rock rolled away from the tomb's opening, the light beckoning him from outside.

The brother hung his head in the darkness of the oratory. His back burned. The *Governatore* intoned more devotions, more prayers, before he finally beseeched the assembly to practice their faith in the outside world. Then the *Governatore* dismissed them in silence.[12] Still in pain and with only the single candle on the Governor's desk to light the way, the brother lumbered carefully in the darkness, out of the oratory and towards the small *spogliatoio* to redress.

The brother entered the dim, cramped changing room. By candle light, he pulled the rough hood and robe off over his head, folded it carefully, and wiped down his sore, red back. In the darkness he found his street clothes and put them onto his body. He took a deep breath.

Then he stepped into the cloister.

Morning light flooded his eyes. He flinched and shut them tight. After a few seconds he opened them and squinted across the open-air atrium, his eyelids fluttering. Although the brother knew that the courtyard's nearly-white walls were all decorated with the famed paintings by his deceased *confratello*, Andrea del Sarto, he could barely make them out, glowing as they seemed to be. All around him was brightness. He paid no attention to how much his body hurt as he rubbed his eyes. Is this what it was like to come back from the dead?

The brother looked around the cloister. A streak of light, reflected from some metallic surface, flashed before him. He blinked some more, seeing a bright slash even when his eyes were closed. But the unnatural light of the cloister seemed to be subsiding, the images on its walls were revealing themselves to him. Turning to the right, the brother saw John the Baptist

[12] ASF, CapCRS 86, 3v-4r.

pouring a bowl of cool water onto a neophyte's head, cleansing him of original sin (Fig. 1.11). The brother also felt cleansed. Finally able to see, he placed a tentative foot onto the ground in front of him and stepped into the new day's light.

2. Introduction

The narrative passage above deals with the brother's experience of his morning ritual from the time he exited the cloister at the beginning of service until he reentered it after morning offices. The most important source in constructing the brother's movements and activities during this period is the confraternity's by-laws written in 1456 and amended in 1579.[13] These by-laws describe the company's uniform, a habit consisting of a large, black robe made of rough fabric, with an opening down the back to facilitate flagellating. This robe was likely embroidered on its right shoulder with the "IHS" insignia of Bernardino da Siena.[14] After changing into the rough habit, statutes mandated that the brother enter the oratory, kneel before the altar, take a seat in the room's benches, and pray. Once a group of three or more *confratelli* entered the oratory, someone was required to read "spiritual things."[15] Then services began in earnest. Both sets of statutes describe how the Father Governor would lead the *confratelli* in a variety of religious readings and prayers. After whips were handed out, he would give a sermon. Then the brothers

---

[13] On the company's statutes refer chapter I of this dissertation.

[14] ASF, CapCRS 152, 13r, states that the robes were "*una vesta nera di panno grosso a[d] uso di disciplina*" and "*abbia il segno della nostra chonpagnia insulla spalla ritta*." ASF, CapCRS 152, 3r-3v describes that emblem as the "*nome di mesere iesu nostro salvatore*." Barducci, Manuela. 1976. "La Compagnia dello Scalzo della origini alla fine del secolo XV," in *Da Dante a Cosimo I*, edited by Domenico Maselli, pp. 146-175. (Pistoia: Libraria Editrice Tellini)," 159 argues that this refers to the monogram of San Bernardino of Siena.

[15] ASF, CapCRS 152, 10v-11r.

would flagellate, after which the candles were extinguished. After more prayers, the brothers were entreated to practice their faith in the outside world and dismissed.

The services described by the two sets of statues, however, are not identical. Comparison between them shows, for example, that over time the order and selection of prayers said together by the group changed. [16] For the purposes of this critical fabulation, however, there were two other, more significant changes to the service that had to be reconciled. The first is that in the

---

[16] Henderson, John. 1994. *Piety and charity in late medieval Florence*. (Oxford: Clarendon), 123. BRF, Ricc. MS 2535, ch. Xiii, fol. 9r-v: "And when the Governor deems it time to begin the office, after giving the usual sign he shall order the *Jube Domine Benedicere* with the lesson of Compline, and once the general confession has been done and the *Oration of St. Raphael* has been said, the Penitential Psalms are to be said with the litanies and orations and the *Magnificat* and the *Pace* is to be given. Afterwards they shall recite the Orations of Our Lady, of St. John the Baptist, and of the Peace; and once the *Benedicamus Domino* has been said with the *Salve Regina* and oration, everyone is to sit down and the Sacristans shall hand out the whips. Then the Governor shall give a sermon, comforting them, and the brothers shall whip themselves fervently. Once the lights have been put out his is to recite the *Chapter of the Passion* and the three stanzas of the Passion with other devotions and prayers, and [when] it is finished a general admonition shall be made. Then everyone shall dress himself again, singing a laud or in silence, as the Governor deems." The later statues state: CapCRS 8g, 3r-3v: "*Ancora ordiniamo che nelle nostre tornate si dichino li sette salmi penitentiali con le letani et oration et con l'oratione e versetti et antifona del nostro Padre San Giovambattista e finite li psalmi si dica l'uffitio de la gloriosa Vergine Maria e finite l'uffitio debba il Governatore con semplicità e con quello spirito che Dio li somministra esortare alla frequenza della casa li Fratelli di quella mostrando loro l'obligo grande che hanno con Dio per il particular benfitto ricevuto dell'essere à quell'hora ragunati nella casa del Sig[no]re et esortanto ciascuno alla penitenza impongo il salmo Miserr[er]e mei Deus et tra tanto si invijno al luogo Vecchio dove si facia la disciplina pregando che ciascuno de Fratelli che può la eserciti et in quella finalmente raccomendando à Dio tutto il bisogno dello stato ecclesiastico et temporali accio che si eserciti l'atto della santa Charità*." ["…at our meetings the seven penitential psalms be said with the lists and orations and verses and antiphon of our father San Giovanni Battista, and when the psalms are finished the office of the Glorious Virgin Mary is said, and when the office is finished the Governatore must, with simplicity and with that spirit that God summons, remind the brothers attending the meeting of their great debt that they have to God for the particular blessing received of being assembled at this time together in the house of the Lord and reminding each one of the penitence required of him by the Psalm Miserere Meus Deus. And before long he invites each one of the brothers that can [do] the exercise to the *luogo Vecchio* where the flagellation is done, each praying that through this practice he will finally entrust all his spiritual and earthly needs to God [who will meet them] in an act of Holy Charity."] Thanks to Cosette Bruhns Alonso for help with this translation.

1456 statues, no mention was made of retiring to the *luogo vecchio* for flagellation.[17] However, as the later by-laws likely reflected changes that had already been made to the brothers' regular practice, the men were probably moving to the *luogo vecchio* well before the 1579 statutes were written, and possibly soon after the confraternity built the new oratory in 1487.[18] These later statutes, furthermore, show no mention of the practice of extinguishing the confraternal candles. However, the light ritual most certainly continued as it did in other confraternities.[19] The critical fabulation thus includes both of these features, so that the brother moves to the *luogo vecchio* for flagellation before sitting through the ritual extinction of confraternal candles.

After the extinction of the candles, customary confraternal practice would have dictated that a single candle be left illuminated on the Padre Governatore's desk so that he could continue to read.[20] The arrangement also seems likely because, as we shall see, in the contemporary Holy Week liturgical Office of the Tenebrae upon which the brothers based their own light ritual, the extinguished candles were not relit.[21] Rather, a single candle remained ignited throughout the

---

[17] ASF, CapCRS 86, 3v-4r.
[18] On the evolution of the statutes of the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist, access especially Manuela Barducci. 1976. "La Compagnia dello Scalzo della origini alla fine del secolo XV," in *Da Dante a Cosimo I*, edited by Domenico Maselli, pp. 146-175. (Pistoia: Pistoia: Libraria Editrice Tellini.). For a brief history of the company's expansion, refer to the introduction of this dissertation, pages 10-12.
[19] Dow, "Confraternal Piety," 48-49: "Plunging the *confratelli* into darkness has been seen as both symbolic of the darkness cast over the earth during the crucifixion, and therefore a theatrical flourish that reminded the brothers of the object of their devotion, and as a way to further dissociate the brother from his individual identity and the social structures that defined him. Each brother, at the climax of the ritual, was hooded and unable to see or be seen in the darkness. Focused on his own personal devotion, he was also simultaneously aware of his contribution to the collective." Also consult Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 123-124, as well as Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 95.
[20] Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 123-124, repeated by O'Brien 2001, 223. Access: ASF, Cap. CRS 152:1, fol. 1 11r.
[21] Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 130.

ceremony and provided the only illumination as congregants exited the sanctuary.[22] It therefore seems likely that the single candle left lit on the *Padre Governatore*'s desk was the only source of light during the brothers' exit from the oratory.

There were other features of the narrative that were complicated by the differences in the two sets of statutes. This is because some of the activities described in the earlier statutes do not appear in the later ones. This was the case with the brother's exit, which, according the 1456 by-laws could occur in silence or while singing lauds according the Governor's preference. Also addressed in the earlier but not the later statues was the distribution of whips to the *confratelli*. Though there is no evidence to suggest that either the way in which the brothers were dismissed or the way in which whips were distributed changed from 1456 to 1579, such a procedural change may have occurred to accommodate other developing amendments to the ritual. For example, sometime after 1487, the brothers began to move from the oratory to the *luogo vecchio* to flagellate. Since that meant that the brothers had to get up and file into the *luogo vecchio*, whips could have been handed to the brothers as they entered the room. However, there is no evidence for or against this supposition. In an attempt to keep the critical narrative as tethered to historical reality as possible, it describes the procedure indicated in the earlier statutes.

Visual evidence was also an important source of information for the construction of the fabulation. For example, the type of whip likely used by the confraternity members were those pictured in Benedetto Buglioni's sculpted *terracotta* tympanum (Fig. 1.6), which topped the main portal to the confraternity on Via Larga.[23] In this sculpture, each of the two flagellants

[22] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 88.
[23] On the date and authorship of this tympanum, access Douglas N. Dow, "Evidence for Buglioni's Authorship of the Glazed Terra-Cotta Tympanum at the Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence," *Notes in the History of Art* 29.2 (2010): 15-20.

holds scourges consisting of three knotted cords, like those described in the narrative. But the most important piece of visual evidence in terms of reconstructing the built environment is a plan of the Scalzo drawn by confraternity architect-member Alfonso Parigi the Elder in the late-sixteenth century.[24] In his small journal, Parigi drew a plan (Fig. 3.1) of the now-lost confraternal complex, the exterior of which can also be seen in aerial view on Stefano Buonsignori's map of Florence (Fig. 1.29), a copy of which is now housed in the Palazzo Vecchio.[25] Parigi's plan shows the only parts of the complex still-extant, the vestibule entered from the street and the monochrome cloister that it adjoins. The plan then indicates that the door leading out of the cloister in turn funneled into a long-ago destroyed *ricetto*, which was used as both a small office and, in our narrative, the *spogliatoio*. This room once joined the much-larger oratory, which, according to Parigi, was 38 *braccia* by 15 1/3 *braccia* in dimension (approximately 23 x 9 meters). Parigi also indicated that the southern entrance to this room was flanked by desks for the *Padre Governatore*.[26] At the center of the wall, between two doors, was the main altar. The door to its left led to the sacristy and the right to the *luogo vecchio*. At 18 *braccio* long and 15 1/3 *braccia* wide (approximately 10 ½ x 9 meters), the *luogo vecchio* was less than half the size of the oratory. Finally, at the northernmost part of the building, the *luogo vecchio* entered into a

[24] On Parigi's membership in the confraternity, as well as that of many of the male members of his family, refer to Alana O'Brien, "Maestri d'Alcune Arti Miste e d'Ingegno": Artists and Artisans in the Compagnia dello Scalzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunstihistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 55.3 (2013): 361-362, 364-365, 370, 274-375, 377, 405, 408-409, 414, and 417.
[25] This was brought to light by Mazino Fossi. 1975. *Il Taccuino di Alfonso, Giulio, Alfonso il Giovane Parigi*. (Florence: Gonelli). The Buonsignori map was not long-ago part of the collection of the Museo di Firenze com'era. This museum's building was closed in 2010 when the Biblioteca degli Oblate was expanded. The museum's collection was then dispersed. Its Buonsignori map was sent to Palazzo Vecchio, though they seem to have not yet accessioned it. (The museum's other gems, the fourteen remaining paintings of the Medici Villas, created from 1599-1602 by the Flemish painter working in Florence, Giusto Utens, were sent for exhibition in 2014 to the Medici Villa la Petraia.)
[26] O'Brien, "Apostles in the Oratory of the Compagnia dello Scalzo," 212.

small kitchen and another small room for confraternal needs.[27] Parigi's plan thus helps us to understand the spatial layout of the confraternity and begin to reconstruct how a brother would have move in and around it.

But Parigi did not just provide a plan of the footprint of the building. Beside this drawing it he made another one: a side-view schema of the seating arrangement of the confraternity's oratory. The drawing indicates that there were three rows of benches and rests running laterally down the oratory. The wall behind the last row of seats, furthermore, was covered by a wooden s*palliera*.[28] This lateral arrangement of the seats meant that throughout the ritual, the brothers could simultaneously see both the main altar at the north end of the room as well as the *Padre Governatore* at the south. Along with candles on the main altar and the Governatore's desk, candelabra attached to the *spalliera* behind the brothers would have helped illuminate the oratory until the candles were ritually extinguished.[29] Parigi's plan and side-view drawing thus provide much of our knowledge of what the confraternal space, most of which is now lost, once looked like.

In addition to Parigi's drawings, confraternal records also show that above the central southern entrance of the room was also a one-meter tall fig-wood crucifix by Antonio Sangallo

[27] O'Brien, "Apostles in the Oratory of the Compagnia dello Scalzo," 213. In Parigi's plan, one of the rooms is labeled as a kitchen. Though not indicated by Parigi, the north end of this complex abutted the garden of Clarice Orsini ((1453-1488), wife of Lorenzo de' Medici. On Clarice Orsini's garden and its relationship to the *Compagnia dello Scalzo*, access Borgo, "The Medici Garden at San Marco," 237 as well as Caroline Elam, "Lorenzo de' Medici's Sculpture Garden," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz* 36.1/2 (1992): 41-83.
[28] O'Brien, "Apostles in the Oratory of the Compagnia dello Scalzo," 212. Barducci, "La Compagnia dello Scalzo," 158, had earlier argued that the seating arrangement would have been one resembling the ancient tradition of "agape" (love feasts), further reinforcing affection between the members.
[29] O'Brien, "Apostles in the Oratory of the Compagnia dello Scalzo," 224.

the Elder (1483-1546).[30] This crucifix was located directly across from Lorenzo di Credi's *Baptism of Christ* (Fig. 1.31), painted in the early 1500s.[31] The Scalzo brothers' crucifix must have been impressive in that it was given special praise by Giorgio Vasari in his *Life* of the artist along with two others, one sculpted by the Sangallo workshop for the friars of the church of San Jacopo tra Fossi in Florence and the other for the high altar of Florence's Santissima Annunziata.[32] This last one is still extant (Fig. 3.2) and is displayed in the church of San Domenico in Fiesole (which is, incidentally, also the home of Lorenzo di Credi's *Baptism of Christ*). As the three crucifixes likely conform to a type, that described in the narration is based on the Santissima Annunziata crucifix. While the Scalzo brothers must have had a crucifix long before they commissioned Sangallo's that they carried, barefoot, in the confraternity's many flagellant processions from which they received their nickname, once created, Sangallo's crucifix would have been used for these purposes as well as for decoration of the oratory.[33]

---

[30] Access O'Brien, "Apostles in the Oratory of the Compagnia dello Scalzo," 212 note 15 for a discussion of the documentation that led to this identification. It consists of: ASF, CRSPL 1198, ins. 28, fol. 7 des: 19 November 1514: "*E deono dare lire trenta cinque paghati a Antonio da Sanghallo in più partite per uno chrocifisso sopra l'entrata de chasa nel chorpo di cho[m]p[agnia] a suo conto in questo a 22*." And 22 des: 1514: "*Antonio di Francesco da Sanghallo de avere per ragione d'un'chonto d'un chrocifisso datoci a libro 20 segnato a c 109 lire 14."*

[31] Domenico Mořeni. *Notizie istoriche dei contorni di Firenze: Parte terza dalla Porta a San Gallo fino alla città di Fiesole.* (Florence, 1791-95, Reprinted Florence, 1972), 86; Ludovica Sebregondi. 1994. "La soppressione delle confraternite fiorentine. La dispersione di un patrimonio, le possibilità residue della sua salvaguardia," in *Confraternite, chiesa e società: Aspetti e problemi dell'associazionismo laicale europeo in età moderna e contemporanea*, edited by Liana Bertodi Lenoci, 457-501. (Fasano: Schena), 471. The altar was removed to its home of San Domenico a Fiesole under the 1785 suppression of Leopold.

[32] O'Brien, "Apostles in the Oratory of the Compagnia dello Scalzo," 212-213. Vasari 1906, 4:276.: "…there was no one in his [Antonio's] day who was a better master in carving, particularly for large Crucifixes of wood; to which witness is borne by the one over the high-altar of the Nunziata in Florence, by another that is kept by the Friars of S. Gallo in S. Jacopo tra Fossi, and by a third in the Company of the Scalzo, which are all held to be very good."

[33] Alana O'Brien, "Apostles' in the Oratory of the Compagnia dello Scalzo: 'Adornata da e mia Frateli Academizi," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 14/ 15 (2011-2012), 213, note 17.

Sangallo's crucifix was significant then, not only in that it could be a focal point of affective devotion, grounding the brother's meditation of the Passion in the body but also for its ability, as an object, to tie the reenactment of the Passion to confraternal identity.[34]

With the setting, ritual activities, and movement through space accounted for in the narrative, a curious phenomenon becomes apparent with regard to embodied viewership: over the course of the brothers' long penitential activities, they had engaged in a series of ritual movements into and out of this confraternal space (from the street, into the cloister, the oratory, the *luogo vecchio*, and then back out in opposite succession) that occurred against the rising of the sun. Walking to the Scalzo, the street had been almost totally dark, a darkness that was maintained in the open-air atrium of the cloister. The oratory was brighter, lit by candles. During flagellation, the *luogo vecchio* was also dark, a place of self-mortification, a metaphoric

---

The crucifix was carried by means of a belt, as indicated by ASF, CRSPL 1199, ins. 30, fol. 117 sin: 17 January 1570/1), which states: "*E adi decto lire tre soldi 10 sono per uno bociolo e sua cingnia per portare el chrocifiso...*"

[34] In addition to Parigi's documents and confraternal archives, a third source for imagining the interior of the Scalzo is a 1708 booklet written by Giuseppe Baccioni, *Ristretto degli obblighi spirituali che hanno i fratelli d[e]ll'antica, divota, e veneranda Compagnia del nome Santissimo di Giesu, sotto la protezione del precursore S. Giovanbatista detta lo Scalzo, della città di Firenze, cavato da suoi capitoli*. A copy of this text is housed in the Biblioteca Moreniana, Florence, Moreni. Miscellanea 99.4. This book describes the then-ornately decorated oratory, which contained an apostolic program of painted sculpture, as described in O'Brien, "'Apostles in the Oratory," as well as Douglas Dow. 2019. *Apostolic Iconography and Confraternities in the Age of Reform.* (New York: Routledge), 75-102. O'Brien, "Apostles in the Oratory of the Compagnia dello Scalzo," 217, found that the confraternity's financial records, however, show that the earliest of these sculptures was donated by artist-member Valerio Cioli (1529-1599) in 1573. As the fabulation is set between 1537 and 1563, these sculptures would not have yet been created. Nonetheless, the oratory probably had contained other devotional images prior to 1573. Any indication of what these might have looked like or how they may have been displayed would be pure speculation. Still, they probably conformed to a type of generic Tuscan devotional objects and images that would have had little effect on the outcome of the narrative, except, perhaps, to enhance the brother's meditational fervor. As this line of speculation seemed unnecessary for the coherence of the narrative, only Lorenzo di Credi's altarpiece and Sangallo's monumental crucifix, both of which were *in situ* in the early 1500s, were described.

death performed while contemplating Christ's Passion. Afterwards, back in the oratory, the room's candles were ritually extinguished and the brothers were once again invited to meditate on Christ's Passion. At the end of service, their last stop before entering the cloister was the cramped and poorly-lit *spogliatoio,* which joined the oratory. Modern lived experience of walking from dark to light spaces alone would suggest that when the brother finally exited the *spogliatoio*, the morning sunlight streaming into the cream-earth-and-white-colored space would have flooded their vision causing him great discomfort and perhaps even pain. In a few literal blinks of the eye, this blindness would have subsided. But until their eyes were fully light-adapted, the paintings would have seemed unnaturally bright, the images indistinct and difficult to see. It would not be for several minutes until the brothers would fully adjust to the new morning light and be able to see clearly once more.

Modern scientific research on vision and sensory perception, specifically on dark and light adaptation, bears this hypothetical experience out. In the first part of the ritual, brothers were exposed to increasing darkness. This would have triggered their bodies' dark adaptation responses, which would have increased their ability to see in the dark over time. Studies show dark adaptation occurs in two stages. The first stage is rapid, lasting only six to eight minutes and during which people make large gains in their ability to perceive in the dark. The second phase of dark adaptation can last over a half an hour but is marked by diminishing returns in sensory perception.[35] It would therefore take only eight minutes for significant gains in adaptation to occur but around forty minutes into the service when they were fully adapted. Although the exact length of the confraternal services is undeterminable and probably varied from week to week and from *Padre Governatore* to *Padre Governatore*, the by-laws show a

[35] McFarland and Fishers, "Alterations in Dark Adaptation," 424.

long list of the morning activities and movements. That the service also corresponded to Lauds, suggests that the bi-weekly events would have endured far longer than eight minutes and maybe longer than forty. The brothers would have therefore had long enough in the dark to reach a state of full adaptation to the darkness.

Before the brothers reentered the cloister, it could have been possible that exposure to a sufficient amount of light would have meant that they were already partially re-adapted to light, lessening the bedazzling experience as he entered the cloister. The narrative also has to take into account any natural light that could have come into the oratory. However, Parigi's plan of the confraternal complex indicates that there were only three small windows in the oratory and one in the *spogliatoio*. (Fig. 2). These windows, furthermore, were located only on the western wall of the architectural complex, opposite the rising sun where they probably let very little natural light pass into the cloister, even after the sun had begun to rise. Given the dearth of both natural and artificial light, the brothers of the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist likely had little opportunity to readapt to light before entering the illuminated cloister.

The narrative then takes into account the brother's reentry to the cloister. In the Introduction to this dissertation, I noted that the weather would come into play in the dissertations' third chapter. This is due to the fact that the efficiency of the body's ability to adapt to light is largely dependent on the difference between the eye's retinal stimulation before and after the introduction of light.[36] I therefore chose dry, sunny weather conditions to achieve maximum contrast in the darkness of the night and brightness of the morning as well as to ensure that the brother's perception of reflected light from the gilded areas of the wall, which is stronger

[36] Ross A. McFarland and M. Bruce Fisher, "Alterations in Dark Adaptation as a Function of Age," *Journal of Gerontology* 10.4 (1955): 424.

in drier atmospheric conditions, would be maximized.[37] That means that when the brothers moved from the oratory in a state of complete dark adaptation into the brightly lit cloister, the extreme contrast in the amount of light reaching the retina would have caused a quick series of responses in the eyes' photoreceptors. This flooding of the eye by light would have caused ocular discomfort and would have triggered the blinking reflex, the eye's most important defense against damage during light adaptation.[38] Soon the brother would be able to hold his eyes open and look at the cloister's walls. However, since the eye will adapt to the average amount of light in the room and try to resolve contrasting differences, the paintings could have temporarily seemed unnaturally brightened and reduced in contrast, like an over-exposed photograph.[39] The paintings, therefore, may have had a self-luminous quality and it likely would have been uncomfortable for the brothers to look at them.[40] But light adaptation occurs rapidly—much more rapidly than dark adaptation.[41] Thus, the brothers sensory perception mechanisms would

[37] Naval Radiological Defense Lab San Francisco CA, "A Review of the Research," 1. Citing. Samuel Glasstone, 1964. *Effects of Nuclear Weapons*, revised edition. (Washington: US Atomic Energy Commission). Also refer to Kathleen B. Digre and K. C. Brennan, "Shedding Light on Photophobia," *Journal of Neuro-Opthalmology* 32 (2010): 68-81," 75.

[38] On the process of light adaptation, access V. Govardovskii, P. Calvert, V. Arshavsky. "Photoreceptor light adaptation. Untangling desensitization and sensitization," *Journal of Gen Physiol*ogy 116.6 (2000): 791-794. doi:10.1085/jgp.116.6.791 accessed 3 November 2021. On the importance and efficacy of the blinking reflex access John Lott Brown, "Flash Blindness," *American Journal of Opthamalogy* 60.3 (1965): 515-516.

[39] I am grateful to Michael Webster for confirming this. Access his related research, including: "Changes in colour appearance following post-receptoral adaptation," *Nature* 349 (1996): 235-238; with RL De Valois et al, "Temporal Properties of brightness and color induction," *Vision Research* 26.6 (1986): 887-897; and with JD Mollon, "Colour constancy influenced by contrast adaptation," *Nature* 373.6516 (1995): 694-698.

[40] Michael Webster, personal correspondence, 19 October 2021.

[41] This was first noticed by B. H. Crawford, "Visual Adaptation in relation to brief conditioning stimulus," *Proceedings of the Royal Society* (1947): 134, 283-302, who advanced his theory of Early light adaptation (ELA). Also access: Brown, "Flash Blindness," 505 and 518 as well as McFarland and Fishers, "Alterations in Dark Adaptation," 424 and Joseph F. Sturr, Susan A. Kelly, and David A. Kobus, "Age-dependent magnitude of time course of early light adaptation," *Perception and Psychophysics* 31.4 (1982): 402.

have soon adapted to the cloister's light causing the brother to be able to see Andrea's paintings once more.

In this constructed narrative, a variety of cultural, archival, visual, environmental, and neurophysiologic evidence was brought together to suggest that the brothers likely experienced strong sensory reactions to physical stimuli, especially the perception of pain and light, in their confraternal environment. Given the ubiquity of light and pain metaphors in Christian symbolism, these sensory reactions would have been understood to have symbolic religious meaning, especially within the context of religious ritual. These sensory reactions and their possible symbolic meanings are the subject of this chapter. I argue that, in particular, two interpretive lenses were suggested by the confraternity. The first of these lenses is the Office of the Tenebrae, on which the confraternity based its own ritual manipulation of natural and artificial light. This office consisted of the ritual extinction and reproduction of candlelight during Triduum masses and culminated in the lighting of the Paschal Candle on Easter Sunday. The second interpretive lens was suggested by Andrea's painting of *The Preaching of St. John the Baptist*, which, I argue, contains a *figura di Dante,* a figure meant to recall the Florentine poet Dante Alighieri. The brother's physical position relative to this figure suggests that his experience of light as he entered the cloister could be interpreted through the *Commedia* and other writings, wherein Dante-pilgrim was repeatedly blinded by and adapted to overwhelming divine light. I argue that, in sum, the brother's changing state of adaptation to darkness and light in the cloister was a kind of affective devotion that resulted in the production of a bodily synaesthetic, or cross-sensory, metaphor for divine revelation that was perceived by and located in the body.

3. The Office of the Tenebrae

As a way to investigate the experience of changing light conditions over the course of the brothers' ritual services as a critical element in understanding the aesthetic and religious experience of the cloister, it is perhaps useful to examine a piece of the confraternity's regular liturgical practices in which the intentional manipulation of light for symbolic effect is evident—the snuffing out of the confraternity's candles after self-flagellating. John Henderson has already noted that this piece of confraternal liturgy is an adaptation of the Church's Office of the Tenebrae, in which candles were ritually extinguished as part of mass.[42] The Tenebrae office was performed on each of the three days of the Triduum—Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday—leading up to the celebration of Easter.[43] The Office of the Tenebrae was thus a central liturgical feature of the most important masses of the year.

The foregrounding of the critical symbolic capacities of light manipulation during the Holy Week masses was evident even before those masses were performed, in the way they were scheduled. Though the time that the Office of the Tenebrae was performed varied from monastery to monastery and church to church, the Triduum masses always took place at or after sunset so that they ended in the night.[44] This move ensured that the Tenebrae office would always occur in darkness. That the office be performed in total darkness was so important that in Italy, the church moved Triduum masses from their morning time, ordering them to be performed at dusk on the night before. This dramatic intervention to the liturgical calendar was

---

[42] Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 130.
[43] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 2-18. Initially, Good Friday and Holy Thursday were liturgically like the other nights of the year; the Holy Saturday Vigil, on the other hand, had been performed in total darkness. The practice of gradually extinguishing the lights in the Church over the course of the Vigil was first introduced in French monasteries. In the final stage of the liturgy's development the candles were extinguished on each of the three days.
[44] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 93.

instituted to ensure that the mass occurred "as the sun was setting."[45] Before the Tenebrae office even began, then, regulation of the time of day at which the office occurred guaranteed a dark setting for the dramatic snuffing out of the church's candles.

Over the long development of the office, both the number of candles and the points in the liturgy at which they were snuffed out varied.[46] By the cinquecento, the extinction of fifteen candles occurred on each of the three days of the Triduum during the *Benedictus.* As the prayer was said, the candles, set in an elaborate hearse, or candelabra, to the right of the altar, were extinguished two at a time at regular intervals until only one candle was left lit.[47] After a brief display on the main altar, the final candle was hidden beneath it.[48] At the end of the mass, participants repeatedly beat a stick known as a *strepitus* and the single candle was reproduced.[49] The Office of the Tenebrae foreshadowed and culminated in the lighting of the Paschal candle at the beginning of mass on Easter Sunday. In this way, the ritual manipulation of light through the extinguishing, concealing, revealing, and relighting of candles was central in the Holy Week commemoration of Christ's Passion and Resurrection.

One of the important features of the Office of the Tenebrae was that it was ripe with symbolic interpretations and these interpretations were explained directly to the services' participants by the presiding Bishop.[50] The bishop would have told congregants that some thinkers, like Bede (673-735), believed that, combined with the reading of liturgical texts, the

---

[45] Kendrick, Singing Jeremiah, 13-14. The *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* specified that the masses should be said "*…ut officium perficiatur hora tarde, hoc est, sole occidente*."
[46] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 48-57 and 68-82.
[47] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 22.
[48] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 88.
[49] Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah*, 14.
[50] Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah*, 16.

Tenebrae office catalogued the sins of humanity that had necessitated Christ's Passion.[51] In a more optimistic vein, some commentators had thought that the ceremony represented human penitence and the turning away from sin. This interpretation may have resonated with confraternity brothers in particular because the commentators who advanced it cited the verses of the penitential *Miserere*, or Psalm 50, which was said both in Church on the Triduum and in the brothers' regular confraternal services.[52] Other commentators noted that because the candles were snuffed out during the *Benedictus*, that prayer was also a lens through which the Office could be interpreted. This interpretation may have also resonated with confraternity brothers because the end of the *Benedictus,* which related primarily to events before Christ was born, contained Zacharias' prophecy that his son, their patron, John the Baptist, would be born 'to illuminate those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.'"[53] Recounting this interpretation, bishops would have explained that just as John came to prepare men for Christ's ministry on earth, so too was the Triduum a time when men prepared for the Resurrection, Christ's return to earth.[54] It thus seems that many of the bishop's explanation of the ceremony centering on the idea of penitence and preparation for Christ, which may have had special appeal to members of a *disciplinati* confraternity.

However, interpretations of the Tenebrae Office could also be related more directly to specific incidents that occurred during Holy Week. Because in the early development of the Office, the extinguishing of the candles had occurred only late on Holy Friday rather than all three days of the Triduum, their snuffing out corresponded temporally to the time in the Passion

[51] Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah*, 16 and 135.
[52] Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah*, 16. CapCRS 8g, 3r-3v.
[53] Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah*, 19. *'Illuminare huis, qui in tenebris et umbra mortis sedent*.'
[54] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 85-86.

narrative when Christ was arrested in Gethsemane. The candles, then, may have originally referred to the apostles who fled Jesus or the eyes of the disciples who were unable to stay awake.[55] However, over time commentators related the candles more directly to Christ. They argued that because wax was made parthenogenically by bees, the candles themselves represented the body of Christ, who was born of a Virgin.[56] The snuffing out of the candles thus represented Christ's death, with the whole of the office representing his funeral.[57] Accordingly, the time of darkness when no candles were lit or visible in the Church was said to represent the three hours on Good Friday when the Bible relates that darkness fell over the Earth. These three hours in turn prefigured the three days that Christ was in his tomb.[58] For Durandus, this time of darkness during the Office did not represent Christ's death *per se*, but rather the state of darkness that existed in the hearts of his followers during this time.[59] In addition to symbolizing ideas about penitence and mortality, the snuffing out of candles could also, then, be related directly to Christ's Passion.

Given that the Passion of Christ was a primary devotional focus of penitential confraternities, it is fitting that aspects of the Tenebrae office were incorporated into their services through the ritual extinction of candles in a confraternity's sanctuary.[60] Where and how in the service the candles' extinction occurred varied by confraternity. According to the 1456 by-laws of the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist, the ritual extinction of lights occurred near the end of service, after flagellation and before the reading of the *Chapter of the Passion* along with

---

[55] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 97.
[56] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 89 and 226-227.
[57] Kendrick, Singing Jeremiah, 16.
[58] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 186.
[59] Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah*, 18.
[60] Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 130-132.

verses of the Passion.[61] This placement in the service is notable because of the candle extinction's direct juxtaposition with the story of the Passion of Christ. The brothers' self-flagellation in the dark *luogo vecchio* was a penitential act done in imitation of Christ's gruesome Passion. Flagellation's ties to Christ's crucifixion were furthermore made clear in confraternal processions, when brothers whipped themselves under a monumental crucifix that they kissed at the end of the ceremony.[62] This was the same crucifix that hung in the oratory of the confraternity, presiding over the space in which the brothers sat in the increasing darkness, listening to the story of the passion. The extinction of the confraternity's candles, which concatenated self-flagellating on one side with the readings of the Passion on the other, would have made clear the christological analogy of the brothers' self-mortification.

During the Triduum masses, however, the Office of the Tenebrae did not end with the extinction of the candles and the hiding of the final candle under the altar. Rather, at the end of Mass, the hidden candle was returned to the participants' view. While this return was initially logistical, the candle serving to light the way out of the sanctuary, the Church's reillumination soon took on symbolic valence.[63] Because candles were identified with the body of Christ, the return of the last candle could represent the Resurrection. Commentators who applied this interpretation expanded on it, claiming that the time when the candle was hidden under the altar symbolized Christ's descent into the Underworld after his death.[64] Showing that multiple interpretations were applied simultaneously to the return of the candle, Durandus wrote at length about its significance. He said that the candle could represent not only Christ but also the Virgin

[61] Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 123. BRF, Ricc. MS 2535, ch. Xiii, fol. 9r-v.
[62] Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 132.
[63] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 88.
[64] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 89.

Mary, who never lost faith in her son; various aspects of the faith of the Apostles; the Holy Spirit; the deaths of the prophets; and the renewal of Christ's light to the world.[65] This last interpretation was often made clear in dramatic fashion. For example, at Angers, a senior choir boy would reproduce the candle and begin chanting the phrase, "*Lumen Christi*."[66] The return of the last candle was thus a critical part of the Office of the Tenebrae. It allowed the office not only to relate to the events of the Passion during the Triduum extinction of the candles but also to Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday.

The returned last candle of the Tenebrae office was also significant because it foreshadowed the lighting of the Paschal candle on Sunday morning. As the central liturgical prop on the most important feast day of the year, the Paschal candle was no ordinary candle. The Church dictated that it had to be of extraordinary size.[67] In 1512, for example, Emperor Maximilian furnished an Easter Candle to Echtemach in Luxembourg that weighed 354 pounds.[68] At the Lateran Basilica in Rome, the Paschal candle was so big a portable pulpit had to be wheeled into the church so that the Deacon could light it.[69] Made of white or yellow wax, the candle was also decorated. It was often marked with the sign of the cross and sometimes also inscribed with the Greek letters *alpha* and *omega*, as well as the year. This last feature marked the time since Christ's Incarnation, when believers thought that God's light had entered the

[65] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 187.
[66] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 89.
[67] *Caeremoniale Episcorum* II.27.1 reads "Praeparetur cereus Paschalis *praegrandis*" [original writer's italics].
[68] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 236.
[69] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 237-238. The candle was allowed to be smaller at small churches though, probably because of cost.

material world through the body of his son.[70] Even as an object, then, the Paschal candle was a powerful symbol of Christ's resurrected earthly body.

Given the importance of the Paschal candle, its lighting was done in an elaborate ceremony.[71] Before Mass, clergy constructed a fire. From this fire—which was thought to symbolize Christ's teachings, his new life, or the Holy Spirit—the Paschal candle was lit.[72] Clergy then brought the candle into the church. It was held aloft and processed, beginning with the cry "*Lumen Christi*," which was sounded at three intervals. Because the *Lumen Christi* chant happened three times and each time was associated with the lighting of a candle, it became synonymous with the revelation of the threefold godhead of the Trinity.[73] When the candle was finally brought into the choir of the church, the processors sang the antiphon *Lumen verum inluminans omnem hominem in hunc mundum venientem*.[74] Christ's returned presence through the Resurrection and the returned presence of light in the church were thus overtly equated during the Paschal candle lighting ceremony.

As in the Tenebrae office, the ritual of lighting the Paschal candle also took into account other natural and artificial light sources in the church. During the Easter lighting ceremony, however, the use of light was inverted so that it did not signify Christ's Passion and death but rather his return to the living world. This is why, unlike the Office of the Tenebrae, which occurred in the evening or at night, always surrounded by darkness, the lighting of the Paschal candle occurred, like confraternity meetings at Lauds, early in the morning when the sun was beginning to rise. Correspondingly, rather than progressively making the interior of the church

[70] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 248 and 278.
[71] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 213-215.
[72] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 307.
[73] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 217.
[74] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 211.

darker as they had during the Tenebrae office, after the lighting of the Paschal candle the clergy continued to introduce more and more artificial light in the church.[75] These artificial lights had special symbolic significance in Italian churches, where the Paschal candle was accompanied by two "man-size" candles that were placed on either side of the main altar, which were said to represent the angels that stayed in the tomb with Christ.[76] By the end of the Easter service, then, the entire interior of the church, brightened naturally by the risen sun and artificially by candles and torches, symbolically radiated with the *lumen Christi* of the Resurrection.

One of the interesting aspects of the Office of the Tenebrae was that it was intended for the clergy and nuns while lay participation was discouraged.[77] This was partially because lay people were known to engage too raucously in the beating of the *strepitus*, acting indecorously in church. Bishops thus placed regulations around the length of the outburst as well as the materials with which the audience was allowed to use to make noise.[78] The suppression of lay participation is significant because one of the most compelling theories regarding the exponential growth of both the number of confraternities in the tre- and quattrocento and their swelling enrollment was that confraternities gave *confratelli* an opportunity to participate in their own salvation in a

---

[75] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 309-310.
[76] MacGregor, "Fire and light in the Western Triduum," 327-328. Regina Stefaniak, "Replicating Mysteries of the Passion: Rosso's *Dead Christ with Angels*, *RQ* 45.4 (1992): 677-738, suggests that recognizing these two man-size candles as those pictured in the tomb alongside Christ's body in Rosso's painting, which is housed in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (58.527), is critical to interpreting its Passion iconography.
[77] Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah*, 17.
[78] Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah*, 14, claimed that the beating of the strepitus was central to Passion Week dramaturgy, and that it represented "the earthquake while Christ was on the Cross, the dispersion of the Apostles, the flaying while at Pilate's palace." It is worth noting that, according to David Nirenberg. 2015. *Communities of violence: persecution of minorities in the Middle Ages.* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press), 202, the beating of the strepitus had many symbolic associations, including "the killing of Jews." For the restrictions against the beating of the strepitus, access Corrain/Zampini, *Documenti etnografici*, 43, 88, 98, 153, 237, and 392.

period when they were increasingly barred from religious life.[79] For example, while mass was said in Latin, a language that fewer and fewer people understood, in the confraternal setting members were able to sing hymns and lauds in the vernacular. Confraternities also allowed lay people into the most holy religious spaces whereas in churches, congregants were separated from the clergy and altar by a large screen.[80] Confraternal membership thus gave *confratelli* a more participatory and more accessible path to salvation than did their parish churches.

Membership in a confraternity also allowed the laity to perform the roles of the clergy. Brothers were not only elected to clergy-like positions and carried out their own services, they were even encouraged to write and deliver high-quality sermons.[81] Furthermore, on the weeks that the brothers did not self-flagellate, they instead publicly admitted their sins and were admonished by the community. This meant that each brother heard the others' public confessions.[82] Members of the confraternity therefore acted analogously to members of the clergy, lacking only the ability to facilitate Transubstantiation and to forgive sin. The impulse to imitate or even embody the monastic community seems to have been especially vibrant in

[79] On the explosion of popularity of lay confraternities during this period, access Henderson, "Penitence and the Laity, 232. Pressure from lay people finally resulted in friars putting holes in screens so their congregation could as least see the elevation of the Host. For example, a large screen had been introduced that separated the clergy and laity; also consult Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 45-46.
[80] John Henderson. 1988. "Religious Confraternities and Death in Renaissance Florence," in *Florence and Italy: Renaissance Studies in Honor of Nicolai Rubinstein*, eds. Peter Denley and Caroline Elam, pp. 383-394. (Exeter: Short Run Press, Ltd), 383.
[81] On the numerous elected positions in the Brotherhood of St. John the Baptist, access Dow, "Confraternal Piety," 26-41. On sermons given by the laity, access Henderson, "Penitence and the Laity, 239; Oskar Kristeller, "Lay Religious Traditions and Florentine Platonism," in *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters.* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1956), 108-111; and Olga Zorzi Pugliese, "Two Sermons by Giovanni Nesi and the Language of Spirituality in Late Fifteenth-Century Florence," *Bibliotèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 42 (1980): 641-656.
[82] Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 104, argues that the purpose of these confessions was to solidify group bonds. Henderson, "Penitence and the Laity, 231, notes also that confession was a part of a three-part system of penitence that was practiced in Italian confraternities.

flagellant confraternities. Afterall, of the many types of confraternities, *disciplinati* groups were the only ones in which members wore habits, as did monks.[83] The office of self-flagellating was furthermore considered a special devotion not only because of its severity but also because it imitated the actions of monks and friars.[84] It is perhaps fitting, then, that the regular bi-monthly devotions of the *disciplinati* confraternities had aspects appropriated from the performance of the Office of the Tenebrae. The appropriation meant that every two weeks *confratelli* were invited to embody the clergy and perform the very important Triduum office from which their annual participation had been suppressed.

Given the many resonances that the Tenebrae office and the lighting of the Paschal candle could have for Florentine *disciplinati* confraternities and for the brothers of the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist in particular, it is curious that they did not complete the office of the Tenebrae by reproducing a light inside of the sanctuary, as did other confraternities. Instead, their statutes indicate that they dismissed their members from the oratory, illuminated only by the little natural light that came through the room's few western windows and the sole candle on the Governor's desk that had been left lit throughout the service. Although this amount of light must have been sufficient to allow the brothers to exit the room safely, other Florentine confraternities still chose to relight their torches before the end of service. For example, the statutes of the Company of Gesù Pellegrino show that the confraternity reignited their torches just before they dressed and left. Their candle extinguishing, furthermore, was not juxtaposed to readings about the Passion, but were instead read during intercessions to the saints.[85] There was

[83] Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 153-154.
[84] Henderson, "Penitence and the Laity," 243.
[85] Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 124-125.

evidently variation, then, in the performance and resultant symbolism of the candles' extinction from confraternity to confraternity.

The confraternities that relit their candles, however, reaped the symbolic along with the practical rewards of the act. Not only could members of those confraternities exit their sanctuary more safely, they could have interpreted the relighting of the candles as symbolic of Christ's Resurrection. In the Company of San Gesù Pellegrino, the timing of the relighting of the candles, which occurred immediately before the brothers' dismissal into the public world, was quite like the timing of the return of the last Tenebrae candle at the end of Triduum masses. Combined with the Governor's customary entreaties that the brothers reorient their devotions towards the outside world, the relit candle could also suggest that these men should bring the light of Christ's teachings with them into the world that were just about to enter. For members of this confraternity, the candles' relighting was like the return of the last candle during the Triduum masses as well as the lighting of Paschal candle on Easter Sunday and represented the full completion of the Tenebrae office.

The Confraternity of St. John the Baptist, though, seems not to have relit their candles before dismissing the brothers, maintaining the liturgical aspect of the exit from the sanctuary in darkness. However, the narrative episode that began this chapter demonstrated the potential that Scalzo brothers' choice not to relight their candles did not diminish the importance of the ritual return of light to the sanctuary. Rather, it underscores the physiological and symbolic importance of the *confratelli*'s emergence into the cloister at daybreak. Suddenly overwhelmed by natural light, the brothers' entrance into the bright, monochromatic cloister symbolically completed the Tenebrae office. Their dismissal from the dark oratory was thus an integral phase in a series of ritual movements into and out of their confraternal space that had been choreographed to

accompany the rising sun. The climax of these ritual movements, physiologically and symbolically, was the moment when the brother stepped into the overwhelming sunlight shining on Andrea's monochromatic cloister walls. The brother emergence into daylight equated to a spiritual revelation of Christ's light after a long period of physical and symbolic darkness. That is, having suffered and endured his own Passion through flagellation and having rested, thanks to the extinction of the candles, in the darkness of a figurative tomb, when the brother exited the oratory, he emerged, penance completed, into dawn's new light, now perceived as an even more spectacular *lumen Christi*.

The symbolic capacities of light in the cloister do not seem to have been lost on the confraternity members. Rather, the Confraternity's intention for the claustral light to have symbolic significance can be inferred from their Lenten ritual practices. During Lent, the confraternity met every Sunday, not just the first and third of the month. But more importantly, the time of these services (and only these services) was at night.[86] That is, they seem to have been scheduled, like the Triduum masses, to occur in darkness as the day was ending. The result of this deviation from the regular confraternal schedule meant that, during Lent, the brothers of the confraternity were dismissed from the oratory in darkness and remained in darkness as they exited the confraternity through the cloister. These light conditions correspond with church teachings that during Lent, Christ's light was hidden from the world.[87] The Lenten services were thus prevented from ending in daylight so that they were deprived of the sensory revelation of *lumen Christi* in the cloister that signified Christ's presence on earth.

---

[86] ASF, CapCRS 86, 2v-3r.
[87] Access Molly Teasdale Smith, "The Use of Grisaille as Lenten Observance," *Marsyas* viii (1959): 43-54.

The Christological revelation of the brother's emergence into the cloister may have been amplified by two potential effects of the sensory perception system. The first is that sensory distraction is a well-documented analgesic.[88] That means that, upon emerging into the cloister, the reactions of the brothers' sensory perception to the overwhelming light may have distracted from any lasting pain of their penitential devotions, providing noticeable physical relief. *Confratelli* could have interpreted the relief of their pain as a reward for or testament to the efficacy of their penitential devotions. Moreover, they could have credited the sense of relief to God and not to their own sensory perception systems. Another seemingly supernatural effect of light adaptation was that the frescoes in the cloister would have seemed to glow and the images would have temporarily been indiscernible, eventually seeming to reveal themselves as the brothers adapted to light. While it is possible that the brothers may have rightly understood these visual effects to have been generated by their own sensory perception systems, it is also known that people often misattribute effects of perception as qualities inherent in the stimuli. [89] It is

[88] This was suggested to me by Michael Webster, personal correspondence, 19 October 2021. Speaking to his point, Chan Lee DWH, et al, "Can visual distraction decrease the dose of patient-controlled sedation required during colonoscopy? A prospective randomized controlled trial," *Endoscopy* 36 (2004): 197–201, studied sensory distraction and pain perception, finding that aural and visual stimulation had a significant palliative effect on pain during invasive medical procedures. The analgesic properties of distraction has been especially studied in relationship to pediatric care. Access: Sola, Chrystelle, et al, "Childhood preoperative anxiolysis: is sedation and distraction better than either alone? A prospective randomized study," *Pediatric Anesthesia* 27.8 (2017): 827-834; Patel, Anuradha, et al, "Distraction with a hand□held video game reduces pediatric preoperative anxiety," *Pediatric Anesthesia* 16.10 (2006): 1019-1027;, Lindsey L. Cohen, et al, "Comparative study of distraction versus topical anesthesia for pediatric pain management during immunizations," *Health Psychology* 18.6 (1999): 591; Naser Aminabadi, et al, "The efficacy of distraction and counterstimulation in the reduction of pain reaction to intraoral injection by pediatric patients," *Journal of Contemporary Dental Practice* 9.6 (2008): 33-40; Donna Koller and Ran D. Goldman. "Distraction techniques for children undergoing procedures: a critical review of pediatric research," *Journal of Pediatric Nursing* 27.6 (2012): 652-681.

[89] Peggy Seriès, Alan A. Stocker, Eero P. Simoncelli, "Is the Homunculus 'Aware' of Sensory Adaptation?," *Neural Computation* 21.12 (2009): 3271–3304, found that "prolonged exposure to

therefore possible that the brothers would have credited the light effects to changes in the frescoes themselves and not in the way that they were perceiving them. In this case, the religious images would have been invested with supernatural powers, another testament to the spiritual efficacy of the images as well as the brothers' religious rites.

These potential effects of the sensory perception system underscore that in the Cloister of the Scalzo, religious truth was bound to the sensory perception system and understood largely in an affective way. This was perhaps demonstrated best during flagellation, when the brothers' pain was not abstract or theoretical, but was real and experienced by the body. But just as corporeal was the brothers' increasing adaptation to the darkness of the oratory, which figured them in the tomb with or even as Christ. When the brother emerged into the cloister, which shone with daylight, the failure and discomfort of their vision underscored that theirs was an encounter not with natural light but rather with the *lumen Christi* of the Resurrection, a revelation of God's returned presence to earth. In this way, the brothers' ritualized experience of pain, dark adaptation, and rapid light adaptation together formed an affective devotional program based on sensory perception in and of the built environment. It allowed them the potential to have an encounter with natural light perceived as the light of God.

---

a visual stimulus of a particular orientation, contrast, or direction of movement induces a systematic bias in the estimation of the orientation, contrast, or direction of subsequent stimuli." Also access S. Hammett, R. Snowden, & T. Smith, "Perceived contrast as a function of adaptation duration," Vision Res., 34.1 (1994): 31–40; M. Georgeson, "The effect of spatial adaptation on perceived contrast," *Spat. Vis.* 1.2 (1985): 103–112; G. Abbonizio, K/ Langley, & C. Clifford, "Contrast adaptation may enhance contrast discrimination," *Spat. Vis*. 16.1 (2002): 45–58; and B. Barrett, P. McGraw, & P. Morrill, "Perceived contrast following adaptation: The role of adapting stimulus visibility," *Spat. Vis.*, 16.1 (2002): 5–19.

3. Dante

Though the Tenebrae Office is a compelling liturgical lens to analyze the brothers' experience of the cloister, it was not the only interpretive lens available to them. The men also may have also recognized that their journey through darkness into overwhelming divine light paralleled the journey described by the Florentine poet, Dante Alighieri, in his famed *Commedia*, and which is also found as a recurrent theme throughout the Florentine poet's corpus of writings.[90] The brothers may have been encouraged to bring Dante's writings into dialogue with their experience by Andrea himself. Abutting the right edge of the fictive frame of *St. John the Baptist Preaching* (Fig. 1.11), the first non-allegorical figure that the brother would have encountered as he left the *spogliatoio* after services (Fig. 1.7) is a man sporting long robes, a cap, a downturned mouth, and a distinctive, aquiline profile (Fig. 1.33). That is, it seems that Andrea included a figure in the crowd surrounding John the Baptist that suspiciously evokes the Florentine poet Dante Alighieri.[91]

Andrea's suspicious evocation of Dante in this prominent position in the cloister is significant. As Ernst Gombrich argued, even in the fourteenth century, Florentine authors like Antonio Pucci described characters "*in figura di Dante*"—that is, characters who were not portraits of Dante *per se* but who had enough of the poet's recognizable characteristics to

[90] As Simon A. Gilson. *Medieval Optics and Theories of Light in the Works of Dante*. (Lampeter: The Edwin Mellon Press), 39-108 and Suzanne Akbari. 2004. *Seeing through the Veil: Optical Theory and Medieval Allegory*. (Toronto: Toronto University Press), 114-177, have shown, the theme is found as early as the first *canzone* of the *Vita Nuova* and is discussed at length in the *Convivio* before becoming the central theme of the *Commedia*.
[91] F. Ranalli. 1845. *Storia delle belle arti in Italia*. (Firenze), 634, first identified the portrait, believing that Andrea included Dante because the painter was confused between John the Baptist and John the Evangelist, who is an important figure in the *Commedia*. This assertion seems based on the traditional view of Andrea as uneducated (and perhaps even dimwitted). On the possible *figura di Dante*, also access: G.J. Ferrazzi. 1865. *Manuale Dantesco*. Bassano VI: Pazzato tip.), 398; and R. Monti. 1965. *Andrea del Sarto*. (Milan: Edizioni di Comunità), 57-58.

strongly recall him.[92] Designing such a figure would have been an easy task for Andrea because, by 1515, the *terminus ante quem* of the fresco, portraits of Dante were already ubiquitous in Italian art and conformed to a codified type.[93] These images almost always show him wearing the *lucco,* or Florentine "toga," that was in fashion through the fall of the Florentine republic and worn by the city's notable citizens.[94] He can be seen sporting the robe in images by (possibly) Giotto di Bondone (c. 1267-1337) (Fig. 1.3), Benozzo Gozzoli (1420-1497) (Fig. 3.4), Andrea dal Castagno (1419-1457) (Fig. 3.5), Domenico di Michelino (1417-1491) (Fig. 3.6), Alessandro Botticelli (c. 1445-1510) (Fig. 3.7), Raphael (148301520) (Fig. 3.8-3.9), and Luca Signorelli (1441-1523) (Fig. 3.10). These portraits also show him, as in the Scalzo, wearing a *chaperon*, or cap, sometimes—though as here not always—crowned with laurel. Though having been described by Giovanni Bocaccio (1313-1375), who wrote a *Life* of the poet based on anecdotes

---

[92] Gombrich, "Giotto's Portrait of Dante?," 478-479.

[93] On the dates of the paintings, refer to Appendix A. For a comprehensive look at portraits of Dante, access Richard Theyer Holbrook. 1911. *Portraits of Dante from Giotto to Raffael: A Critical Study, with a Concise* Iconography. (London: Philip Lee Warner), as well as G. Passerini. 1921. *Il ritratto di Dante*. (Firenze); Karl Frey. 1885. *Die Loggia dei Lanzi zu Florenz* (Berlin: Hertz), 56-58; Frank Jewett Mather Jr. 1921. *The Portraits of Dante compared with the Measurements of his Skull.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press); Fabio Frasetto. 1933. *Dantis Ossa, La forma corporea di Dante. Scheletro, ritratti, maschere e busti. Studio di Fabio Frassetto.* (Bologna: Università di Bologna); Oskar Wulff. "Das Dante-Bildnis sein Ursprung und seine Entfaltung," *Kuntschronik und Kunstmarkt* 32 (1920): 90-92; A. D. Ancona. 'I1 vero ritratto giottesco di Dante', *La Lettura* (1901): 203-208. On the possible Giotto portrait in the Bargello in particular, access: Giovanni Previtali. 1967. *Giotto e la sua bottega* (Milan: Fabri), 335-340. Access also J. B. Supino. 1920. *Giotto*. (Firenze), 229-243; Christian-Adolf Isermeyer. *Rahmengliederung und Bildfolge in der Wandmalerei bei Giotto und den Florentiner Malern des 4 Jahrhunderts,* (Wuirzburg: Mayr), 27 ff., along with Ernst Gombrich, "Giotto's Portrait of Dante?." For an analysis of the significance of Dante portraits in Florence in the mid-1500s, also access: Deborah Parker. "Vasari's *Portrait of Six Tuscan Poets:* A Visible Literary History," *Lectura Dantis* 22/23 (1998): 45–62.

[94] On the *lucco*, access Elizabeth Currie. 2019. *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence*. (London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts), 36-56 as well as Carole Collier Frick. 2002. *Dressing Renaissance Florence*. (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press), 149, 163, and 216.

and descriptions of him from people who know him, as bearded, the bard was almost always depicted as clean shaven.[95] Bocaccio also described Dante's protruding lower lip and downturned mouth, which was characteristic of the bard's famed *sdegno*, or disdain for the living world.[96] All of these characteristics are apparent in Andrea's Scalzo figure.

The most recognizable aspect of Andrea's figure, though, is Dante's aquiline nose.[97] As John Shearman already noted, Andrea's figure is largely inspired by a figure in Albrecht Dürer's small engraving of the "Ecce Homo" (No. 8) from *The Little Passion* of 1512 (Fig. 3.11).[98] Although Andrea's figure closely follows Dürer's model, there are two noticeable differences: first, he eliminated the ruffle from the German figure's hat so that his own corresponded to Florentine fashion.[99] But perhaps more important is the second major difference, the figure's beak-like nose. While artists depicted Dante's nose as sometimes straighter, as did Raphael, and sometimes aquiline, as did Andrea, the more hawkish version of the profile would have appealed to Andrea because it especially recalled the *grotteschi* drawn by Leonardo (Fig. 3.12), the artist

---

[95] Giovanni Boccaccio and Domenico Guerri. 1918. *Il comento alla Divina commedia e gli altri scritti intorno a Dante*. Vol XXII. (Bari: G. Laterza & Figli), 32-33: *"Fu adunque questo nostro poeta di mediocre statura, e, poi che alla matura età fu pervenuto, andò alquanto curvetto, e era il suo andare grave e mansueto, d'onestissimi panni sempre vestito in quell'abito che era alla sua maturità convenevole. Il suo volto fu lungo, e il naso aquilino, e gli occhi anzi grossi che piccioli, le mascelle grandi, e dal labbro di sotto era quel di sopra avanzato; e il colore era bruno, e i capelli e la barba spessi, neri e crespi, e sempre nella faccia malinconico e pensoso*." On Bocaccio's awareness and appropriation of Dante's poetry and poeticism, access Hollander, Robert. "Boccaccio's Dante," *Italica* 63.3 (1986): 278–89.
[96] Access Vittorio Graziadei. 1904. *Lo sdegno di Dante*. (Palermo: A. Reber), as well as access Gombrich, "Giotto's Portrait of Dante?," 472.
[97] The veracity of descriptions of Dante's "*naso aquilino"* such as that written by Boccaccio was confirmed by Stefano Benazzi et al., "The Face of the Poet Dante Alighieri reconstructed by virtual modelling and forensic anthropology techniques," *Journal of Archeological Science* 36 (2009): 278-283.
[98] John Shearman. 1965. *Andrea del Sarto*. Vol. II. (Larendon: Oxford Press), 230.
[99] On the *chaperon* in Florence refer to Elizabeth Currie. 2016. *Fashion and Masculinity in renaissance Florence*. (London: Bloomsbury), 6.

whose style Andrea most closely adopted throughout the Scalzo.[100] Furthermore, the profile of Andrea's figure also resembled that of the so-called Torrigiani death mask (Fig. 3.13), which was probably sculpted by Tullio Lombardo in 1483 and housed in the Palazzo Vecchio and which bears a striking resemblance to Botticelli's hawkish *Dante*, painted around 1495. (Fig. 3.7) The prominent profile of Andrea's figure, then, was one of his many obvious Dantesque characteristics. It seems safe to say that many of the Scalzo brothers would have apprehended the image of the man as a *figura di Dante.*

The position (Fig. 1.7) of this *figura di Dante* is significant because it is just outside of the *spogliatoio* door, the place where the brother emerged into the bright cloister from the darkness of the oratory, experiencing his light revelation. This proximity between the figure and the brother and the climactic moment of his morning's ritual journey suggests a link between the

[100] On Andrea's engagement with Leonardo access Steven J. Cody. 2020. *Andrea del Sarto: Splendour and Renewal in the Renaissance Altarpiece*. (Leiden and Boston: Brill), especially 5-11, 44-55, 84-94, and 104-123; Antonio Natali. 1999. *Andrea del Sarto* (New York: Abbeville), 37–65; 149; Sanne Wellen. 2003. "Andrea del Sarto 'pittore senza errori': Between Biography, Florentine Society, and Literature," (PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University), 181–272; Antonio Natali and Alessandro Cecchi. 1989. *Andrea del Sarto: catalogo completo dei dipinti* (Florence: Cantini); John Shearman, "Leonardo's Colour and Chiaroscuro," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 25 (1962): 13–47; John Shearman, *Andrea del Sarto* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), vol. 1, 131–48; Julian Brooks, "Introduction," in *Andrea del Sarto: The Renaissance Workshop in Action*, edited by Julian Brooks, Denise Allen, and Xavier Salomon, pp. 1–9. (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum); Szafran and Chui, "A Perfectionist Revealed: The Resourceful Mind of Andrea del Sarto," in *Andrea del Sarto: The Renaissance Workshop in Action*, edited by Julian Brooks, Denise Allen and Xavier Salomon, pp. 13-19. (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum); Dominique Cordellier, "Drawings by Andrea del Sarto after Ancient and Modern Sources," in *Andrea del Sarto: The Renaissance Workshop in Action*, edited by Julian Brooks, Denise Allen, and Xavier Salomon, pp. 20-27. (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum); and Marzia Faietti, "The Red-Chalk Drawings of Andrea del Sarto," *Andrea del Sarto: The Renaissance Workshop in Action*, edited by Julian Brooks, Denise Allen, and Xavier Salomon, pp. 28-33. (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum).

brother's ritual experience of light and the poet's writings.[101] Light was, after all, a central theme in Dante's corpus, especially the *Commedia*, which is generally structured as a three-part journey from darkness into light.[102] More importantly, beginning early in the *Purgatorio*, Dante-pilgrim time and again ascends into increasingly brightened environments or finds himself in the company of heavenly messengers whose radiating light momentarily overwhelms his vision.[103] For example, although the *Purgatorio* is a dimly lit realm, already in the second *canto* Dante's vision is overwhelmed by the arrival of an angel. The angel appears as a formless light that aggregates into the shape of a divine bird, "whose radiance," Martin Kemp, noted, "Dante's eyes (typically) could not withstand."[104] Like he would many times through the rest of the poem, Dante soon adapts to the angel's light and is able to perceive the celestial being.

Stationed so close to the place in the cloister that the brother had a similar experience with light (Fig. 1.7), the life-size *figura di Dante* in *The Preaching of St. John the Baptist* may have encouraged *confratelli* to bring their own lived experiences into dialogue with the experiences of Dante-pilgrim. Comparison between the Scalzo brothers' experience of sunlight and Dante-pilgrim's of God's light is fitting given that Dante himself equated divine light with sunlight, comparing the similar way that each had the power to overwhelm his sight.[105] This

---

[101] On the brother's indubitable familiarity with Dante's poetry, access Simon A. Gilson. 2018. *Reading Dante in Renaissance Italy: Florence, Venice, and the "Divine Poet."* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press).

[102] On the subject, access *inter alia* Martin Kemp. 2021. *Visions of Heaven: Dante and the Art of Divine Light*. (UK: Lund Humphries); Kemp noted that his entire study was underpinned by the fundamental work of Gilson. *Medieval* Optics. Access also: Monica Rutledge, "Dante the Body and Light," *Dante Studies* 113 (1995): 151-165; Akbari. *Seeing through the Veil,* 114-177; Ada Ruschoni. 2005. *Dante e la Poetica della luce*. (Novaria: Interlinea); Guido di Pino. 1962. *La Figurazione della luce nella Divina commedia*. (Messina: D'Anna).

[103] Gilson, *Medieval Optics*, 79. The phenomenon occurs so frequently that Dante has two words that refer to it, *soverchio* and *abbarbiglia*.

[104] Kemp, *Visions of Heaven*, 37.

[105] Dante, *Purgatorio* XVII 45-54.

motif is so central to the *Commedia* that the entire voyage culminates in Dante-pilgrim's vision of the Trinity as three rings of natural light—two rainbows and one ring of fire—so brilliant they overwhelm his perception, leaving him doubting whether his journey was real or *fantasia*.[106] *Dante*-pilgrim's repeated encounters with divine light share many similarities with that of the Scalzo brothers emerging into the dazzling morning light of Andrea's cloister and could have provided them with a way of understanding the experience of being overwhelmed by light.

One of the major differences between the brother's and Dante-pilgrim's experiences is that the latter understood that the divine light overwhelming his vision emanated directly from God.[107] Dante-pilgrim nonetheless experienced divine light in phases similar to those experienced in the Scalzo. In the first phase of each of his light exposures, Dante-pilgrim would be overwhelmed by light and lose his ability to see. But then, he would adapt to the new light and recover his vision. This process of adapting to light was critical in *The Commedia* because each time this occurred, his ability to withstand greater magnitudes of light increased, a phenomenon Simon Gilson called "visual tempering."[108] Through the process of visual tempering, Dante-pilgrim becomes strong enough to enter the central Empyrean level of Paradise, a realm of pure light where he will encounter God and the blessed.[109]

---

[106] Dante, *Paradiso* xxxiii, 116-141.
[107] On the use of language of "emanation" of light in Dante and in the writings of his predecessors, access Gilson, *Medieval Optics*, 21-22 and 175-183.
[108] Gilson, *Medieval Optics*, 84.
[109] Kemp, *Visions of Heaven*, 32. Simon Gilson commented that this process, which would ultimately lead Dante to his light-vision of God, was "paradoxical," but as noted in the introduction, sensory-perception research shows that one's capacity for light adaptation is dependent on the state of retinal adaptation entering the light stimulus. Thus, Dante-pilgrim's continuous ability to adapt to increasing divine light and ultimately to see the manifestation of the Holy Trinity seems to be rooted in Dante's knowledge of bodily sensory perception.

Visual tempering is interesting in the context of the Scalzo because Dante's understanding of vision was synthetic. That is, he had correctly ascertained that his perception of light was rooted in the structures and mechanisms of his body as well as of his intellect. He held this belief at least in part because he was a proponent of intromission, or the idea that in vision, light entered the eyes carrying information with it into the body.[110] There has been some controversy about this, however, because Dante often described his characters as sending rays out from their eyes to objects in the sensory world.[111] However, he did not believe that this light had originated in the seer's eyes.[112] Rather, the poet held that all light found its initial source in God. God's rays eventually entered the human eye where, at the back of the retina, they hit a mirror-like structure that reflected light back into the world.[113] It was this reflected light, emanating from but not originating in the seer's eye, that found sensory objects in the world and brought information about their form back to the seer. Once in the eye, light carried this information through the *spirito visivo*, or visual spirit, a nerve that Dante thought traveled from the pupil to the brain. Finally in the brain, sensory information was processed by the intellect.[114] Dante, well-versed in medieval optical theory, had determined that seeing was not merely an

---

[110] The fundamental work on optics and light in the literature of Dante remains Alessandro Parronchi. "La prospettiva dantesca," *Studi danteschi* 36 (1959): 5-103. Intromission was a belief held in contrast to the supporters of extramission, like Plato, who claimed that a fire originating in the eyes was sent out like a ray into the world, hit, and then reflected back off of an object, carrying with it sensory information to the eyes. On medieval optical theory, access the fundamental analysis, D. Lindberg. 1976. *Theories of Vision from Al-Kindi to Kepler*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press).
[111] For examples, refer to Akbari, *Seeing through the Veil*, 149-150 and 152.
[112] For a comprehensive and yet comprehensible explanation of Dante's understanding of how vision occurred, access Gilson, *Medieval Optics*, 58-72.
[113] Akbari, *Seeing through the Veil*, 130.
[114] On the brain's role in perception, access Gilson, *Medieval Optics*, 19, 24, and 69.

eye-based process but also a cognitive one.[115] Dante-pilgrim's increased ability to see in the *Commedia*, then, corresponded not metaphorically but literally to an increase in his intellectual capacities.

Dante noted, however, that the major problem with vision was that it so often failed.[116] Failure of sight could occur for two reasons: either there was a weakness or defect in the physical structure of the eye or there was a problem with the *mezzo*, or diaphanous medium, that carried the image to the eye.[117] A problem he first described in the early *Vita* Nuova, failure of sight due to excessive light, Dante believed, resulted from insufficient strength of the seer's visual spirit, the nerve running from eye to brain.[118] That Dante locates the weakness in the connection between the body and brain underpins the culmination of the *Commedia* in which Dante-pilgrim has a vision of God as pure light. While gazing on it, Dante "joins his aspect" with the Godhead, which results in the vision of the three interconnected rings of natural light. As Dante-pilgrim looks at them, however, his "mind" (*mente)* is overcome "by a flash" (*da un fulgore*).[119] The vision ceases and the pilgrim never comes to understand that he has just seen a manifestation of the Holy Trinity.[120] This climactic episode of the entire *Commedia* illustrates how for Dante as

---

[115] On Dante's sources of optics access: Parronchi. "La prospettiva dantesca"; Gilson, *Medieval Optics*, 7-38; Rutledge, "Dante, the Body, and Light"; and Kemp, *Visions of Heaven*, 17-30.
[116] Akbari, *Seeing through the Veil*, 134, writing specifically about *Conv*. 3.9.16. For an analysis of vision failure throughout Dante's writings, access Gilson, *Medieval Optics*, 75-107.
[117] Gilson, *Medieval Optics*, 82.
[118] *Vita Nuova* xi, 2: "*E quando ella fosse alquanto propinqua al salutare, uno spirito d'amore, distruggendo tutti li altri spiriti sensitive, pingea fuori li deboletti spiriti del viso, e dicea loro: 'Andate a onorare la donna vostra'; ed elli si rimanea nel luogo loro. E chi avesse volute conoscere Amore, fare lo potea mirando le tremare de li occhi miei."* Access Gilson, *Medieval Optics*, 39-40.
[119] Dante, *Paradiso* xxxiii, 116-141.
[120] Akbari, *Seeing through the Veil*, 164-177, offers a comprehensive interpretation of the nature and symbolism of the three lings as it relates to Dante's light metaphysics. Akbari argues that the two rings of fire are reflections of each other and represent the Father and the Son. The third ring

for many medieval optical theorists, the overwhelming of the visual spirit by too much light was analogous to the mind's inability to understand the mysteries of the three-personed God.[121] The ending of the entire *Commedia* thus conflates the ability to perceive light with the ability to understand.

When the brother in the Scalzo, therefore, stepped out of the darkened oratory after the morning ritual, multiple lenses were available for him to interpret his experience. But the *figure di Dante* in the fresco just next to him as he was blinded by and then adapted to light also could have reminded him of Dante-pilgrim's experience of being blinded by light. In this way, just as he could imagine himself in the place of Christ, emerging from the tomb on Sunday morning, he could also imagine himself in the role of Dante-pilgrim encountering a new and brighter source of divine light. In this case, the brother's ability to adapt to the light of cloister stood as evidence of his increasing spiritual capacities and the efficacy of his penitential rites. But the two ways of imagining oneself both pointed to the same kind of fundamental encounter. Because in Dante's world, perceiving light and understanding spiritual truths were equivalent, the brother's light adaptation also signified his increased ability to understand the mysteries of God—that he had, like Dante, experience visual tempering. His experience of and subsequent adaptation to light could thus be perceived as a divine revelation.

4. Conclusion

In interpreting the brothers' ritual experience of the light-filled interior environment through the lens of Dante, it is important to keep in mind that for the poet, the intromission of

---

is the result of the Father and Sun locked in a mutual, loving gaze, which results in the production of a rainbow, the Holy Spirit.

[121] Rutledge, "Dante, Light and the Body," 160.

God's divine light was not just a metaphor but a metaphysics, "a unified metaphysical system based upon the conception of light that is not merely metaphorical or analogical."[122] That is, the poet was clear that all of the natural light in the world emanated first from God. It then found and was reflected by heavenly bodies like the sun and the moon. According to Dante, these bodies reflected light towards other bodies that were also composed of God's light, like the human soul on earth.[123] It was the human soul that constituted the *mezzo*, or diaphanous medium, that transmitted light through the body.[124] In Dantesque terms, when the brother stepped into the cloister and was blinded by the sunlight entering his eye, his momentary lack of vision was more than metaphorical—he was quite literally being overwhelmed by God's reflected light.

In Suzanne Akbari's analysis of the use of allegory in medieval literature, she considered the conflation of reality and fantasy in Dante's *Commedia,* writing:

> "Conventionally, metaphor is used to signify abstract truth through figurative language: a vivid image is invented to take the place of some reality that cannot be expressed literally. But in his use of the metaphor of vision, Dante takes the qualities of the vehicle and assigns them to the tenor: the vehicle is real experience, and the tenor is a vivid, poetic image. This is, I think, the first example of a technique that Dante employs throughout the *Commedia* in which inexpressible truth is conveyed, not through a beautiful fiction, but through real experience, what is demonstrably truth. Dante does this most evidently in the *Commedia* on a large scale, where he uses real people and known history to describe the fate of souls after death. But he also does this on a smaller scale, employing extended metaphors and similes in which both vehicle and tenor are true. In the later parts of the *Commedia*, Dante does even farther, at times making it difficult to tell which is the tenor and which the vehicle, at times making tenor and vehicle apparently identical."[125]

[122] Gilson, *Medieval Optics*, 154. The term "light metaphysics" was coined by Clemens Baeumker, *Witelo, ein Philosphen un Naturforscher des XIII. Jahrhunderts*, in *Beitrage* 3/2 (1908), 360. On Dante's light metaphysics, access Gilson, *Medieval Optics*, 151-169.
[123] Beatrice describes this phenomenon in *Paradiso* 11.94-105.
[124] Akbari, *Seeing through the Veil*, 161.
[125] Akbari, *Seeing through the Veil*, 134.

Dante's ability to conflate and to fuse fantasy and reality by confusing vehicle and tenor may be a useful way of thinking about the effects that Andrea's monochromy could have had on the brother when he entered the brightened cloister. The effect of being blinded by light, after all, was not one about which artists of the day were ignorant. Leonardo wrote about the perception of natural light at length, noting that on bright, sunny days the effects of brilliant light on the environment were apparent.[126] Leonardo described two effects of full illumination in particular: *splendore*, when a light would hit a colored surface, reflect off of it, and carry color with it to a different object, which it would also color; and *lustro*, luster, when a concentration of light in an environment rebounded off a surface, appearing to the eye as a gleaming white flash, such as the sun reflecting off of metal.[127] For Leonardo, these effects increased visual pleasure because the more light that reached the eye, the more information that would be transmitted through the imagination, and the more inspired the viewer's mind would become.[128] Referring to the effects of light on color, Leonardo furthermore claimed that "the greatest beauty is in the luminous, great *splendore."*[129] For Leonardo, then, the physical world was best and most pleasurably perceived under full and direct lighting conditions.

---

[126] Cody, *Andrea del Sarto*, 114-115. Leonardo, *Madrid Codex II*, fol. 26v, cited in Farago, "Leonardo's Color and Chiaroscuro Reconsidered," 75. "*Quando il predetto obbietto sarà forte luminoso, la popilla, non la potendo soportare, si fa ttanto minore, che la similitudine di tale luminoso obbietto viene alla popilla non manco diminuità de sple[n]dore che di magnitudine.*"
[127] Cody, *Andrea del Sarto*, 115. Also Kemp, *Leonardo on Painting*, 97–98, reports that Leonardo planned an extensive discussion of this phenomenon as part of a treatise on shadows: "*I will compose a sixth book, in which will be enumerated the many wide diversities in the transmission of the reflected rays, which modify the original shadow with varied colors corresponding to the various places from which these luminous reflected rays derive*."
[128] Cody, *Andrea del Sarto*, 114.
[129] Leonardo, *Ms. E,* fol. 18r, in Farago, "Leonardo's Chiaroscuro Reconsidered," 77. ""*Pictura/ Li cholori possti nelle onbre participeranno tanto piiu o meno della lor natural belleza quanto essi saranno i minore o in maggiore osschurita, Ma se lli cholori saran situati in ispatio luminoso allora essi dimossteran di tanta magiore belleza quanto iluminoso sia di maggiore splendore*."

Leonardo knew his conclusion, however, was flawed. Although beautiful, the effects of *lustro* and *splendore* were problematic.[130] The artist noted that the large quantity of light brought to the eye to produce the two effects caused the pupil to contract rapidly. Leonardo incorrectly credited this physical phenomenon with light's ability to make it difficult or even impossible to see.[131] He was therefore presented with a paradox: the best theoretical lighting conditions for vision were the worst practical ones. He resolved this problem through the medium of painting, reasoning that a painter could, through manipulation of optical principles, represent the effects of *splendore* and *lustro* in the artificial world. When seen by a viewer inside of a church or other dimly lit interior, his pupils would dilate when looking at the surface of the painting instead of contract as they would if seeing the same light outside in nature. Leonardo thus concluded that *splendore* and *lustro*, represented by the painter, could be perceived by the eye more easily than they could be in real life.[132]

Like so many of his Florentine contemporaries who lived in the city during Leonardo's second Florentine period, Andrea del Sarto's appropriation of the elder's handling of paint as well as his treatment of light and color is evident throughout his corpus of oil paintings. But Andrea was not only familiar with the elder artist's visual artistic output. He was also familiar with the ideas contained in Leonardo's writings. Although Andrea likely did not read the older artist's notebooks, he still would have had access to their content through his interactions within

---

[130] On failures of vision in Leonardo, access Martin Kemp, "In the Beholder's Eye: Leonardo and the 'Errors of Sight' in Theory and Practice," *Achademia Leonardi Vinci* 5 (1992): 153-162.
[131] Cody, *Andrea del Sarto*, 115-116. Leonardo, *Ms. E*, fol. 17v in Kemp, *Leonardo on Painting*, 68. This statement forms part of what Farago describes as the "Trattato Sequences" in "Leonardo's Color and Chiaroscuro Reconsidered," 71–75, 85–88.
[132] Cody, *Andrea del Sarto*, 115, additionally notes that this forms the basis of Leonardo's *paragone* arguments in favor of painting over sculpture. Access also: Claire Farago, *Leonardo da Vinci's Paragone*, 94–99 as well as "Leonardo's *Battle of Anghiari*," 319–21; and Cole, *Leonardo, Michelangelo, and the Art of the Figure*, 1–29, 83–133.

learned Florentine artistic circles, where Leonardo's theories of art were hotly discussed and debated.[133] Of particular interest to Andrea seems to have been Leonardo's theories about light. Steven J. Cody's recent study of Andrea's polychrome altarpieces demonstrates how the younger painter particularly integrated Leonardo's writings about the effects of *splendore* and *lustro*—reflected color and reflected light—into the design and execution of color and light in his own religious paintings across the length of his career.[134] Leonardo's writings as well as his body of artistic output were thus both fundamental in shaping the way that Andrea del Sarto approached the representation of light in his paintings.

According to Cody, though, Andrea del Sarto's integration of Leonardo's light system had more than stylistic outcomes. This is because Leonardo's ideas about the representation of light—that is, the basis of Andrea's *colore*—mapped onto an elaborate system of light metaphors found in the writings of Christian authors like Augustine and Bonaventure.[135] For example, in Andrea's *Noli Me Tangere,* executed circa 1510 and now in the Uffizi, his *chiaroscuro* coloring gave the body of Christ a "heightened sense of corporeality" that related to the act of touching and figured the viewer, at least metaphorically, alongside Mary Magdalen at the Resurrection.[136] At the same time, the iconography of the painting is filled with "dissemblant signs or exegetical *figurae*" that trigger Augustinian meditation on the Incarnation. In another chapter, Cody

---

[133] Access Cody, *Andrea del Sarto*, 92-93, as well as Natali, *Andrea del Sarto*, 18-19 and 37-40. For a reconsideration of Andrea's participation with Florentine intellectual life more generally, also access Sanne Wellen, "La Guerra de' Topi e de' Ranocchi, Attributed to Andrea del Sarto: Considerations of the Poem's Authorship, the Compagnia del Paiuolo, and Vasari," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian renaissance* 12 (2009): 181-232.
[134] Cody, *Andrea del Sarto,* 92. On Leonardo's color, access John Shearman, "Leonardo's Colour and Chiroscuro," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschicte* 25 (1962): 13-47 as well as Claire J. Farago, "Leonardo's Color and Chiaroscuro Reconsidered: The Visual Force of Painted Images." *The Art Bulletin* 73, no. 1 (1991): 63–88.
[135] Cody, *Andrea del Sarto*, 5-11, 8-9, 31-44, 51-100, 122-137, 147-148.
[136] Cody, *Andrea del Sarto*, 6-7.

demonstrated how contemporaries thought that the changing effects of light and color in Andrea's San Gallo *Annunciation*, painted for the Augustinian church in 1512, embodied the desirable coloristic quality of *dolcezza*, or sweetness, which related to a sense of undulating chromatic instability. Cody argues that this *dolcezza* correlated to Augustine's descriptions of the *dolcezza* of the incarnated infant Christ "and the idea of spiritual renewal."[137] *Colore* thus had (and could have) spiritual significance.[138] Cody writes:

> "Augustine uses light as a metaphor, a most profound metaphor that describes everything from God's eternal nature, to the imperfection of the human condition (darkness, the absence of light), to the edifying effects of stripping off the old self and putting on the new. This process, the imperative of renewal, involves attaching oneself to the Light in order to be illuminated. It involves a type of devotional sentiment that Augustine describes as 'walking in the light,' following 'the way of love,' or as 'taking hold of Christ.' Andrea's light references all of these ideas."[139]

Andrea's charge in the Church of San Gallo, though, had been to create a single polychrome altarpiece that would be experienced in dimly lit conditions that allowed the pupil to dilate. His task in the Cloister of the Scalzo was very different. There, Andrea had to design and create a large portion of the built environment—the entire visible surface of all four of the cloister's walls, which were obscured only by the low bench running around the perimeter of the room. In this more encompassing space, Andrea would have to handle not only the treatment of light that he represented within his paintings, he would also have to contend with the large amount of natural light that would spill into the cloister, striking the paintings and the viewer alike. Although this space would sometimes have the desirable dim lighting that Leonardo valued in church interiors, after many morning services it would be filled with light that Andrea

[137] Cody, *Andrea del Sarto*, 99.
[138] On the relationship between color and spirituality more broadly, access Herman Pleij. 2005. *Colors demonic and divine: shades of meaning in the Middle Ages and after*. (New York: Columbia University Press).
[139] Cody, *Andrea del Sarto*, 99.

knew would hit the eye and cause the brother's fully dilated pupils to contract. Handling light in this context would mean something very different for Andrea than it did when he created stand-alone, polychrome altarpieces for dim church interiors.

Two of Andrea's artistic decisions, in particular, illuminate his approach to the handling of light in the Cloister of the Scalzo. The first decision was that the midground color throughout the cycle be a consistent cream color, similar to bare plaster or even paper. Perhaps the most innovative aspect of Andrea's design and based on Leonardo's ideas about *chiaroscuro*, which allowed for the creation of the relief in painting, the result of this choice was that the most predominant color in the Scalzo was (and remains) a high-value one, near white.[140] Andrea furthermore built up his figures not only with earth-colors but also with white highlights, giving the cloister an overall bright appearance. This is especially notable because, as illuminated in the previous chapter, Andrea's monochrome cloister cycle comes from a tradition of monochromatic cycles in which the most predominant colors are often green or wine red. Not only do these more muted tones reflect less light, but Andrea knew that the effect of *splendore* meant that, when seen in full sunlight, the light they reflected would be colored with their dimmer hues.[141] In contrast, in the Scalzo Andrea harnessed his knowledge of *splendore* to intensify the cloister's ambient brightness, knowing that his near-white walls would reflect near-white light. In addition

---

[140] Leonardo, *On Painting*, ch. 178, underscored the importance of *chiaroscuro*: "The first object of a painter is to make a simple flat surface appear like a relievo, and some of its parts detached from the ground; he who excels all others in that part of the art, deserves the greatest praise. This perfection of the art depends on the correct distribution of lights and shades, called *Chiaroscuro*. If the painter then avoids shadows, he may be said to avoid the glory of the art, and to render his work despicable to real connoisseurs, for the sake of acquiring the esteem of vulgar and ignorant admirers of fine colours, who never have any knowledge of relievo." Refer also to: Shearman, "Leonardo's Colour and Chiaroscuro" and Farago, "Leonardo's Colour and Chiaroscuro, Reconsidered."

[141] Consult Francesca Fiorani, "The Colors of Leonardo's Shadows," *Leonardo* 41.3 (2008): 271-278 and 218, on the ways that Leonardo handled colored light and its absence in painting.

to this coloristic choice, Andrea also added gilded details to the surface of the frescoes, a rare act but not completely without precedent, throughout the cycle.[142] This choice is also notable because Leonardo cautioned that burnished metallic surfaces would especially reflect the light that entered the cloister, causing its metal details to gleam with *lustro*. Therefore, it seems that rather than trying to mitigate the reflected light effects of *splendore* and *lustro*, Andrea's artistic choices magnified them.

Keeping in mind both Dante's understanding of the relationship between divine and natural light and his approach to allegory described by Akbari—an approach within which reality and fantasy were conflated and confused, wherein lived experiences were fictionalized and fiction was presented as fact—Andrea's treatment of light in the Scalzo seems especially poignant. Instead of focusing his efforts on representing, and in doing so, managing *splendore* and *lustro* within his paintings, the artist capitalized on the natural conditions of sunlight in the atrium to amplify *splendore* and *lustro* in the real world of the cloister. This choice seems all the more notable when considering that Andrea knew that Leonardo had warned these effects overwhelmed vision and made it difficult or impossible to see.

But Andrea was in a unique position. He was not only the painter for but also a member of the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist, one who used the confraternal space both before and after he painted the cloister.[143] If not through some other theoretical or abstract way, then at least through his own empirical experience of the confraternal ritual he would have been aware of the

[142] Gilding in frescoes had been a characteristic more common in the Trecento in Florence. Refer to Giovanni Buccolieri, et al, "Gold leafs in 14th-century Florentine painting," *ArcheoSciences* 33 (2009): 405-408.
[143] On Andrea's involvement in the Confraternity, access Alana O'Brien, "Andrea del Sarto and the Compagnia dello Scalzo," *Mitteilungen Des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz / Hrsg.: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz* (2004): 258-267.

potential optical effect produced by emerging from the dark oratory into the light-filled cloister, whose plaster walls, before he began painting, had been blank and white or near-white. His choice to not only maintain but to amplify the brightness of the empty cloister would have supported the brothers' evolving understandings of Christian light symbolism, the same understandings that Cody showed Andrea had tried to support in his polychrome altarpieces. Rather than rely on the representation of *splendore* and *lustro*, however, Andrea relied on the very qualities that made them undesirable—their ability to impair vision—to create an experience, perceived by the body, that facilitated the revelation of spiritual truths. At once mixing real life with artifice, the brother's experience in the confraternity's ritualized and regulated spaces was designed to be like that of Dante-pilgrim as he ascended realms in the *Commedia* or even like Christ as he rolled the rock away from his tomb and stepped into the morning light. It was a space in which lived, sensory experience and symbolic, spiritual experience were indistinguishable, in which sunlight and God's light could be perceived as two manifestations of the same thing.

In Christian texts and traditions, symbolic power had long been rooted in sensory perception, especially in the perception of light.[144] This tradition came straight from the Bible, which taught that God was both light and the Word.[145] The logical equivalency in the Christian tradition of the Word, which is heard, with Light, which is seen, has resulted in the prevalence of symbolic synaesthesia, or cross-sensory metaphors, throughout Christian texts in which the voice

---

[144] Hilary Powell and Corinne Saunders. 2021. "Medieval and Early Modern Visions and Voices: Contexts and Approaches," in *Visions and Voice-Hearing in Medieval and Early Modern Contexts*, edited by Hilary Powel and Corinne Sanders, pp. 1-14. (Switzerland: Palgrave and Macmillan).

[145] John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:5: "This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all."

of God is seen in (rather than heard as) a quantity of light.[146] Visio-aural synaesthesia was ubiquitous in the writing of religious thinkers from Philo to Augustine and epitomized by Moses' encounter with God on Mount Sinai. There, Moses happened upon a bush that, though burning, did not incinerate. Hearing God's voice in the light, Moses covered his eyes, blocking his own sight throughout the confrontation rather than look on the face of God.[147] In the New Testament, God's Word was again equated with light (and its comprehension with the act of seeing) in the conversion of Saul. The Pauline Epistles and the Acts of the Apostles describe how, on the road to Damascus, a flash of light threw Saul from his horse and blinded him. Christ's voice emanated from that light. Finally regaining his sight days later, the newly converted, now-St. Paul professed that Christ's voice had revealed to him the mysteries of God.[148] In fundamental Christian religious texts, then, the occlusion or failure and subsequent restoration of sight in the presence of overwhelming light had already been used in synaesthetic metaphors for a revelation of the Word of God.

The brothers in the Scalzo, however, were not characters in religious texts. They were real people having a real bodily experience of light and darkness in space, an experience heightened and exacerbated by the painful application of the flagellant whip. This experience of flagellation, so integral to confraternal identity, was emblemized on the tympanum (Fig. 1.6) that

---

[146] David Chidester. 1992. *Word and Light: Seeing, Hearing, and Religious Discourse*. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press). Also Access Humphrey, Edith McEwan. 2007. *And I turned to see the voice: the rhetoric of vision in the New Testament*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic) as well as Powell and Saunders, "Medieval and Early Modern Visions and Voices," 1-14.
[147] Chidester, *Word and Light*, 30 and 71-72.
[148] Access 1 Cor. 15:3-8; *2 Corinthians 12:1-7; Galatians 1:11–16*; *Acts 9:3–9 and 13-19;* and *Acts* 22:6-21. Giuseppe di Scipio. "Dante and St. Paul: The Blinding Light and Water," *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society* 98 (1980): 151-157 has already brought this episode into dialogue with Dante-pilgrim's repeated light blindings.

surmounted the entry way to the confraternal complex on Via Larga.[149] In the tympanum, designed by confraternity brother Benedetto di Giovanni Buglioni around the year 1514**,** two terracotta brothers kneel in prayer on either side of the composition, facing John the Baptist, who is depicted centrally.**[150]** Each brother wears a black habit and holds a whip of three knotted cords that hangs down in front of him. The brothers are set in a rocky, gray-green landscape in which grow tall, thin trees, also painted green. John the Baptist is not only many times larger than the brothers, he is also painted a stark white, his whiteness offset by the dark blue sky behind him and the bright yellow halo and cruciform staff he holds against his body. The Baptist's scale, monochromy, and overall iconic presentation differentiate him ontologically from the polychrome *confratelli* in the landscape. The discrepancies between the figures' treatment signify that the penitents are not being pictured as anachronistically present, like the *figura di Dante*, at an episode from the life of John the Baptist. Rather, the brothers are pictured atemporally, their penitential devotions having resulted in the production of a supernatural vision of John the Baptist before them in the wilderness.

In contrast to the two penitents, however, Buglioni's John the Baptist was not bound to the fictional world pictured in the tympanum above the confraternity's entrance. While the *confratelli* are modeled in low relief, their bodies fully engaged with the background landscape, the Baptist is modeled in high relief. He bends his neck forward so that his large, white face peers out of the tympanum and onto the street, creating a ligature between the fictional world of

---

[149] On street signs and their relationship to corporate identity, access Michael Camille. 2003. "At the sign of the "Spinning Sow": the "other" Chartres and images of everyday life of the medieval street," in *History and Images*, edited by Axel Bolvig and Phillip Lindley, pp. 249-276. (Turnhout: Brepols).
[150] On the dating and authorship of this tympanum, access Douglas Dow, "Evidence for Buglioni's Authorship of the Terra-cotta tympanum of the Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence," *Notes in the History of Art* 29.2 (2010): 15-20.

the image and the people in the real world of Florence at whom he is regarding.[151] In the already-liminal space of the portal, the Baptist concatenated the pictorial world with the real world.[152] His liminal status not only figured the two *confratelli* in the tympanum as witnesses to his miraculous appearance, it also meant that the tympanum's living viewer, standing in Via Larga, was witnessing his appearance. Moreover, like the holy figures depicted on street corners throughout early modern Italy, the Baptist over the confraternity's door was more than pictorial. His viewers would have believed that the Baptist, like icons and miracle-working images, had spiritual efficacy in the real-world affairs of the street in which they stood.[153] The relationship between John the Baptist in the tympanum and the *confratello* entering from the street thus primed the viewer to experience the confraternity's decorated built environment as one in which the real world and the spiritual world overlapped and were continuous with each another.

Inside the confraternal space, this continuity between the physical and spiritual realms was critical in the brothers' enactment of the morning rituals, where concentration on Christ's Passion was an overarching feature of their spiritual devotions. During those devotions, brothers engaged in a series of ritual actions that they could liken to moments in the Passion. But because their penitential devotions were affective in nature, their ritual actions—arriving before dawn, wearing course fabrics, flagellating, extinguishing candles, sitting in darkness, and finally, entering the bright cloister at daybreak—were understood not only by the mind in an abstract

[151] On the efficacy of such images, access Edward Muir, "The Virgin on the Street Corner: The Place of the Sacred in Italian Cities," in *The Italian Renaissance,* edited by Paula Findlen, pp. 151-166. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing).
[152] On the liminality of the portal access Michael Camille. 1992. *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 77-97
[153] On miracle-working images in Florence and their perceived spiritual efficacy, access Megan Holmes. 2013. *The Miraculous Image in Renaissance Florence.* (New Haven: Yale University Press) as well as Trexler, Richard C. "Florentine Religious Experience: The Sacred Image," *Studies in the Renaissance* 19 (1972): 7–41.

way, but were also perceived by the body in a concrete and physical way. When the brothers entered the cloister, and—thanks largely to Andrea's choices to paint in high-value monochromy and to gild the surface of his paintings—momentarily lost and then regained their sight, and then continued for the next few minutes to adapt to the claustral light conditions, they were enacting an embodied synaesthetic metaphor that promoted the conflation of natural and spiritual light. That is, in ritual context, the brothers' own sensory responses to the built environment could become a hermeneutic for understanding God's mysteries.

Once the brother adapted to the claustral light, however, it became a very different kind of space. No longer anonymized by the confraternal robes and part of a nameless religious collective, it was in the liminal and homosocial space of the cloister that the brothers would congregate after their morning meetings. There, twice a month, the brothers would be reintegrated into the confraternal collective as a known individual person. However, as the *confratelli* would soon find out, in a climate of overwhelming concerns about sodomy, paternal absenteeism, and female grabs for power, interactions between brothers could be fraught with social and sexual tensions.

So let us now rejoin our brother in the Prologue of Chapter IV, whose eyes have just adapted to the claustral light and who is just realizing that he is being watched.

Chapter IV: The Sex of Monochromy

1. Prologue

Finally able to see into the bright cloister, the brother stepped into the aisle and turned right. He could have just as easily gone the other way but, at least he told himself, it was his habit from walking the cloister while meditating to continue in this direction. Some brothers, hands folded and heads bowed, were already perambulating the rectangular perimeter of the room. These men too moved in this direction, the one implied by the progressing story of the life of St. John the Baptist on the cloister wall. He wondered if any of them had ever noticed that one of the scenes was out of order (Fig. 1.7).[1] Probably. But, he guessed, the end of the long aisle that the brothers used to enter in the morning was a much better place for such an important scene like *The Baptism of Christ* (Fig. 1.8) than where it should be—here, where it would only be looked at for a few moments before the brother turned and continued out of the cloister. That was a much better place for *The Baptism of the Multitude* (Fig. 1.12).

The brother caught the eyes of the man sitting on the bench in front of the painting, just a few *braccia* in front of him, and stopped short. He would never admit it out loud but the brother worried that this was the real reason he had turned in this direction. This was the man's customary spot. He was bearded, older, and extremely tall. The brother had seen him many times in the past. Not in the street (the brother didn't think the man lived in his neighborhood), but in the *luogo vecchio*, where even the pitch blackness and their hooded robes could not hide the man's extraordinary height.[2] It was because of this that the brother knew he had often watched

[1] Refer to this dissertation, pages 109-110.
[2] On the heterogeneity of confraternal membership and why this was critical to the Florentine economy, refer to Ronald Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 21-22**.**

the man fling the whip over his shoulder, surprised at how near the ceiling the knotted chords seemed to reach before falling across his broad back. Again and again, the man's entire body would tense with pain, he would groan, and then relax. Sometimes, through his robe's long posterior opening, the brother could make out the man's long sinewy back, covered with red welts that dripped with sweat and blood. The brother admired the man and had long wanted to introduce himself after services, but had been intimidated. Better, and probably easy, to manage an introduction. When he had the nerve.

Meeting the man's gaze across the sunlit cloister the brother could now see his face unobscured. There was nothing special about his face except his deep-set eyes, which were an icy shade of blue—a kind you don't see much in Florence.[3] When the brother realized he had been looking at them too long without speaking, his own darted upwards. He caught his breath, hoping the others would think he had been looking at *The Baptism of the Multitude* (Fig. 1.12) the whole time, admiring the famed paintings, for which the confraternity received great praise.[4] The brother sat down on the bench to his right, not wanting to draw attention to himself (Fig. 1.28).

Still feeling his brother's eyes on him from just a few feet away, his own wandered the smooth hard surface of the *Baptism of the Multitude* now adjacent to him. It was a wonder how often he noticed new details hidden in the painting. Now, he saw a hand resting on the shoulder of the nude boy on the rock on the right side of the picture. The brother was surprised to find that

[3] A quick survey of Florentine portraiture from the turn of the sixteenth century shows that blue eyes were extremely rare, with almost all sitters having brown or sometimes hazel eyes, and occasionally green.

[4] On the reputation of the paintings from the time of their construction into the eighteenth century, consult Alana O'Brien, "Who Holds the Keys to the Scalzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 63.2 (2021): 213-216.

in the space next to the boy, which he would have sworn had always been empty, was the profile of an older man, wearing a turban, who leaned close against the child. It was his hand on the child's shoulder. The character looked with interest down the front of the boy's exposed body. This did not shock the brother. Such sights were common in Florence these days. Nor was he scandalized by the bare buttocks of the man who flanked the right side of the painting. The painting, after all, was nothing compared to Michelangelo's *Battle of Cascina* cartoon (Fig. 4.1), filled with twisting nude bodies at the water's edge—and that had been set up for public display in city hall![5] Here, in the center of *The Baptism of the Multitude*, the young neophyte kneeled, nude, in front of the Baptist, water clinging to the young catechumen's ropy hair and flowing down his arms and chest (Fig. 4.2).[6] Examining the young man's wet upper body, the brother's gaze now floated just above the head of his older, the blue-eyed man, who was still seated adjacent to him on the cloister's long bench.

When the he saw the man stir in his seat, the brother shot his glance to the left side of the picture, away from him. There, a man perched his foot on a tall rock to untie his sandal. His garment pooled around his hips, exposing his body. Another nude man faced away. He pulled a towel over his head, drying off the water of the River Jordan from his body. He faced a group of men who gesticulated amongst themselves. Two of those men seemed to look through the painting and into the cloister, right back at the brother. The reciprocity of their gazes made him uncomfortable. He remembered the man, still sitting there on the bench.

[5] On the display of the *Battle of Cascina*, refer to chapter V of this dissertation, pages 311-312.
[6] The overall resemblance of this figure to the catechumen in Masaccio's *Baptism of the Neophyte* (1426-1427) in the Brancacci Chapel in Santa Maria del Carmine in Florence should be noted.

The brother looked once more towards John the Baptist. His body dominated the center of the painting. It was muscular, not the body of an ascetic at all. The brother's eyes traveled up and then down it, his gaze wandering closer to his man seated on the bench. The bowl of water in John's hand and the swath of fabric pulled across his hips came very near the young man's wet, bowed face. The brother followed the younger man's lowered gaze to the bottom center of the painting. There, he felt himself being looked at by another set of eyes, deep-set and blue.

The brother's heart quickened as he darted his attention to the painting's top right corner, where he had not yet looked. There, in the darkened stand of trees, was another scene. A group of older men, their bodies clad in heavy robes, surrounded the Baptist, nearly nude and vulnerable. They were going to arrest him. He was innocent.

"It's a very sad story, don't you think?" the blue-eyed man finally spoke.

The brother turned his head, meeting his gaze. "Yes," he agreed. He could feel his breath in his chest. A few seconds passed. The brother stood up and nodded his head at the man as he hurried away, down the aisle.

2. Introduction

The cloister of the Scalzo was one of the confraternity's most important spaces. Logistically speaking, the cloister was the only large communal space where people could congregate besides the oratory and *luogo vecchio*. But the brothers demanded that their oratory be reserved for religious rites alone. They enforced this in two ways. First, the keys leading to the oratory were held by a small number of trusted men: the governor, the servant, the *provveditore*, the sacristan,

and, occasionally, a vetted member of the confraternity.[7] Second, statutes forbade the brothers from socializing or acting indecorously within the oratory, behavior punishable by fine.[8] It seems unrealistic that standards of decorum would be more lax in the *luogo vecchio,* the even older, holier, space where the brothers performed their ritual flagellation. Because of these restrictions on access to and behavior within the oratory and *luogo vecchio*, most of the social activities of the confraternity must have occurred in the cloister.

The sorting of sacred and secular activity into two distinct spaces—the cloister and the oratory—was furthermore emphasized by confraternal costume. The s*pogliatoio*, or dressing room, where the brothers changed into and out of their confraternal habit, was located between the two spaces. That means that though they always entered and navigated the cloister in their street clothes and with their faces visible, while in the oratory and other spaces, the brothers wore their confraternal costume that hid their faces and subsumed them into an anonymous collective.[9] The cloister was therefore not only the sole space in which brothers could congregate and interact with each other in casual ways, it was also the only space in the complex in which the brothers were known as individuals who existed beyond the confraternity and in the secular world.

Outside relationships were very important to the confraternity. Although participation in most other organized groups and activities in Florence were limited to the neighborhood in

---

[7] On the governor, refer to: ASF, Cap. CRS, 86, fol. 12r and ASF, Cap. CRS 152:3, pp. 30; the sacristan: ASF, Cap. CRS, 86, fol. 19v and ASF, Cap. CRS 152:3, pp. 62; the servant: ASF, Cap. CRS, 86, fol. 20r and ASF, Cap. CRS 152:3, pp. 108. On the subject of the keys and who could access the Scalzo's premises and how, refer to O'Brien, "Who Holds the Keys," 211-246.
[8] ASF, CapCRS 152, 13r; also consult Douglas Dow. 2006. "Confraternal Piety and Corporate Patronage: A Reconstruction of the Art and Oratory of the Company of San Giovanni Battista detto lo Scalzo," (PhD. Diss, Penn State), 46-47.
[9] ASF, CapCRS 152, 15r and Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 93.

which one lived, one of the important features of confraternal membership was that it transcended neighborhood boundaries, opening up new social and professional networks for members.[10] Social relationships were, moreover, encouraged by the confraternity's institutional structure, as statutes required that new members be relatives or friends of established members.[11] This requirement also guaranteed that the values of new members did not differ radically from those of the established members.[12] In the immersive monochromatic environment of the cloister the brothers would have socialized and discussed their daily, religious, and professional lives, establishing friendships. It was in the cloister that they would have learned information like who was ill, who was betrothed, who was expecting a child, whose business was prospering, who had nominated a friend for confraternal membership, whose daughter needed a spouse, or who was down on his luck and in need of charity or credit.[13] The cloister was therefore a space critical to the construction and maintenance of the members' relationships in the outside world.

These relationships, of course, were homosocial—that is, they were non-sexual ones between members of the same sex.[14] Though sometimes earlier used in the social sciences, the term "homosocial" gained widespread usage after Eve Sedgwick closely examined the ways in which male same-sex desire was manifested and sublimated in eighteenth-century English literature. Sedgwick claimed that although what constituted the differences between homosocial

---

[10] On Florence's locality, refer to, for example, David Rosenthal. 2015. *Kings of the Street. Power, Community, and Ritual in Renaissance Florence* and Niall Atkinson. 2016. *The Noisy Renaissance*: *Sound, Architecture, and Florentine Urban Life*. (PA: Pennsylvania State Press), 138 on *campanilismo*. On confraternity structures, refer to Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 21-22**.**

[11] The process for nominating new members is described in ASF, CapCRS 86, 7r-8r.

[12] James R. Banker. 1988. *Death in the Community: Memorialization and Confraternities in an Italian Commune in the Late Middle Ages* (Athens: University of Georgia Press), 155.

[13] Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 93.

[14] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. 1985. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. (NY: Columbia University Press), 2.

and homosexual was historically-bound as were the possible stimuli that could foment desire, all same-sex relationships nonetheless existed on a continuum between homosocial and homosexual.[15] Non-sexual homosociality was important to men because, by promoting the welfare of other men and working together to subordinate women, these kinds of relationships led to the stability of structures of power within society.[16] Because homosociality was so important to the maintenance of social order, men were almost always taught to experience the continuum between homosocial and homosexual as radically disrupted.[17] Most western societies had therefore been characterized by rampant and vicious homophobia that Sedgwick likened to a kind of genocide.[18] Because the personal and collective consequences of homosexuality were so steep, any possibility for same-sex desire thus had to be stamped out, repressed, or sublimated.

So too it was in the Cloister of the Scalzo. As the environment in which this members' homosocialization occurred, the cloister served the important function of supporting the brothers' identity negotiation without fomenting or supporting same-sex desire. Week by week, surrounded by Andrea's claustral frescoes, brothers modeled and learned behaviors like how to speak, how to stand, what kinds of jokes to make, and what to wear.[19] As time passed, brothers

---

[15] Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 2-3.
[16] Sedgwick, *Between Men,* 3, referring to the definition of "patriarchy" used by Heidi Hartmann. 1981. "The Unhappy Marriage between Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union," in *Women and* Revolution, edited by Lydia Sargent, pp. 1-41. (Boston: South End Press), 14: "relations between men which have a material base, and which, though hierarchical, establish or create interdependence and solidarity among men that enable them to dominate women."
[17] Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 2.
[18] Sedgwick, *Between Men,* 3-4, noting that ancient Greek society is a counterexample that proves that patriarchy does not require homophobia. Her likening of the persecution of gays to genocide is taken from Louis Crompton. 1978. "Gay Genocide: From Leviticus to Hitler," in *The Gay Academic*, edited by Louie Crew, pp. 67-91. (CA: ETC Publications).
[19] On the importance of modeling as a tool to teach masculinity in this period, consult Todd W. Reeser. 2006. *Moderating Masculinity in early modern culture*. (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Studies in the Romance Language and Literature), 77-120. The importance of men being brought

would become more and more senior in the organization and proved themselves loyal to it and each other by opening up economic and social opportunities for other confraternity members.[20] In this way, over the course of many years the brother gained or lost authority and credibility in the group. During this time, the accrual of social capital was affected by other life events—such as the brothers' progressive aging, and related changes in marital and paternal status—that repositioned him within the hierarchy of confraternal social relations.[21] The cloister, where the brothers casually assembled after services, was thus the setting for their repeated reintegration into a fluid homosocial order that was negotiated and renegotiated at each confraternal assembly.

As this chapter demonstrates, this process of confraternal homosocialization was, as Sedgwick posited, a fundamental part of men's lives. This was true especially in Florence where advice books insisted that civic stability resulted from a type of trickle-up effect of the collective prosperity of the city's individual men; these men would themselves only prosper if they acted in time-honored ways endorsed by their ancestors.[22] In this way, Florentine men were taught that it was their familial and civic duty to perform their sex-assigned gender roles.[23] In return, they

---

into male company and taught how to behave in masculine ways was emphasized by Alberti, *Della Familia*, I, 62: "…it definitely shows a good mind if a child is rarely without occupation and is eager to do whatever he sees other doing…A great sign of a manly spirit in a boy is the way he responds to you quickly, showing you that he is ready, eager, and ardent to appear among men…Thus it seems practical not to keep little boys, as some mothers do, always in a room or in a lap, but to accustom them to people and teach them there to behave with due reverence towards all. One would never leave them in solitude, to sit in feminine leisure, or let them withdraw to skulk among the girls."

[20] On the advantages of and responsibilities of friends, refer to Dale Kent. 2009/ *Friendship, Love and Trust in Renaissance Florence*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 15-86.

[21] Refer to the attitudes about aging and social hierarchy documented in the Venetian context by R. Finlay. "The Venetian Republic as a Gerontocracy: Age and Politics in the Renaissance," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 8.1 (1978): 157-178.

[22] Laurie Nussdorfer, "Masculine Hierarchies in Roman Ecclesiastical Households," *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d'histoire* 22.4 (2015): 632.

[23] Consult Simons, "Homosociality and Erotics," 30 and Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 13 and 89-94.

would benefit from increased social power over time.[24] Each generation of men thus passed on fundamental Florentine values and behaviors to the younger generation, as at the bi-weekly assemblies that occurred inside the confraternity of the Scalzo. The homosocialization that occurred in the cloister after services was thus critical to the stability of the Florentine patriarchal state.

During Andrea's lifetime, though, the Republic of Florence faced near-constant internal political instability as well as frequent external military menace.[25] The state thus seemed to teeter on brink of collapse caused by a failure of Florentine masculinity. As this chapter shows, this perceived failure of masculinity seemed at least partially the result of a lack of masculine role models who could teach younger Florentine men how to act in adult society. By 1500, Florentines had become infamous across Europe for their penchant for and tolerance of sodomy while at the same time women seemed to be infiltrating the innermost spaces and workings of the Republic.[26] To remedy the instability of the family, a robust culture of ritual public festivity emerged to teach the Florentine *moda di vita* to young men in which one of the most important players was the lay confraternity. Not only were such organizations already invested in public ritual, but their internal structures also mirrored those of the traditional Florentine family,

---

[24] Clawson, "Early-modern Fraternalism," 384.
[25] On this period, refer to Cecil Roth. 1968. *The Last Florentine Republic*. (New York: Russell & Russell); Nicholas Scott Baker. "Medicean Metamorphoses: Carnival in Florence, 1513," *Renaissance Studies* 25.4 (2011): 491-510, as well as 2013; Alessandro Cecchi. 2018. *In Difesa della Dolce Libertà*. (Florence: Casa Editrice Leo S. Olschki); Athanasios Moulakis. 1998. *Republican Realism in Renaissance Florence: Francesco Guicciardini*'s Discorso di Logrogno. (MD: Rowman and Littlefield); and J. N. Stephens. 1983. *The Fall of the Florentine Republic, 1512-1530*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press).
[26] Michael Rocke. 2010. *Forbidden Friendships: Homosexuality and Male Culture in Renaissance Florence*. (NY: Oxford University Press), 3 and Mary D. Garrard. "The Cloister and the Square: Gender Dynamics in Renaissance Florence," *Early Modern Women* 11.1 (2016): 5-43.

allowing men to see, rehearse, and perform traditional gender roles. As one of these organizations, the activities and social interactions in which men engaged in Florence's *Compagnia dello Scalzo's* monochrome cloister would cement the strong kin-like bonds of trust that would ensure their own, and consequently the state's, prosperity. It was therefore critical that the cloister be able to support non-sexual homosocial interactions between men.

This function of the cloister is important because one of the Scalzo's primary formal features was that many of the images present erotocized male and female bodies set within compositions filled with visual sexual innuendo, seemingly far beyond what would have been considered decorous. In chapter II, I argued that the brothers of the Scalzo would have perceived their monochrome cloister as a liminal, transitional environment situated between the profane world of the street and the celestial world of the oratory. The monochrome images and the cloister that they decorated would have been understood as a limited, subordinated experience—spiritually and pictorially—from the polychrome world of the sacred oratory. I showed the potential for the brother to have a religious experience, facilitated by the paintings' color and the brothers' perception of them, that allowed the men to perceive the light of the cloister as *lumen Christi*, the light of God. When the brother reentered the cloister after services to socialize, it was thus not just with a sense that the images were coloristically limited, but perhaps that this limitation could be perceived as a kind of spiritual purity or elevation. As an environment, the cloister was well-suited to support the brother as he tried to orient both his body and mind towards the spiritual, the divine, the heavenly, the godly.

Taking this as well as the frescoes' apparent homoeroticism into consideration, this chapter argues that, in conceptualizing the formal relationships between bodies as well as their placement in larger compositions, Andrea was able to push erotic limits because of the effects of

his monochromatic visual mode. During morning rituals, the brother had already achieved an elevated spiritual state compared to when he entered. Moreover, though Andrea's cloister images were life-size and naturalistic, their lack of color meant that they were nonetheless distanced from reality, which almost all people perceive in color.[27] As a result, the images could not be mistaken for people, objects, and places in the real world, immediately revealing their status as a representation.[28] In this way, the coloristic abstraction of monochromy not only disinclined the brothers towards an erotic reading of the paintings because of the images' place in religious ritual context, it also provided Scalzo members with the critical distance necessary to allow Andrea to subvert traditional standards of pictorial decorum and to experiment with erotically-charged compositions.[29] This eroticism could then be used as a pictorial strategy that promoted

---

[27] Achromatopsia, a rare inborn, non-progressive failure of the eyes' cone systems affecting about one in 33,000 people, results in the inability to perceive color among other symptoms. Refer to Paul W. Brazis, Jose C. Masdeu, and José Biller. 2007 *Localization in Clinical Neurology. Fifth Edition.* (Philadelphia: Lipincott, Williams, and Wilkins), 479, describes the varieties and causes of achromatopsia.

[28] Nagel, *The Controversy of the Italian Renaissance,* 19, asserts: "When the threshold between art and life is put on view inside the painting, the effect is one of distanciation and staging."

[29] On decorum, refer to the dedicatory letter to Brunelleschi, dated 17 July 1436, found in Alberti's *De Pictura*, reproduced in Leon Battista Alberti. 1972. *On Painting and On Sculpture: The Latin Texts of De Pittura and De Statua.* (London: Phaidon), 40: "*Historia vero, quam merito possis et laudare et admirari, eiusmodi erit quae illecebris quibusdam sese ita amenam et ornatam exhibeat, ut oculos docti atque indocti spectactoris diutius quadam cum voluptate et animi motu detineat. Primum enim quod in historia voluptatem afferat est ipsa copia et varietas rerum. Ut enim in cibis atque in musica semper nova et exuberantia cum caeteras fortassis ob causas tum nimirum eam ob causam delectant quod ab vetustis et consuetis differant, sic mni re animus varietate et copia admodum delectatur. Idcirco in pictura et corporum et colorum varietas amena est. Dicam historiam esse copiosissimam iliam in qua suis locis permixti aderunt senes, viri, adolescentes, pueri, matronae, virgines, infantes, cicures, catelli, aviculae, equi, pecudes, aedificia, provinciaeque; omnemque copiam laudabo modo ea ad rem de qua illic agitur conveniat. Fit enim ut cum spectantes lustrandis rebus morentur, tum pictoris copia gratiam assequatur. Sed hanc copiam velim cum varietate quadam esse ornatam, tum dignitate et verecundia gravem atque moderatam. Improbo quidem eos pictores, qui quo videri copiosi, quove nihil vacuum relictum volunt, eo nullam sequuntur compositionem sed confuse et dissolute omnia disseminant, ex quo non rem agere sed tumultuare historia videtur. Ac fortassis qui dignitatem in primis in historia cupiet, huic solitudo admodum tenenda erit. Ut enim in principe*

strong homosocial relationships among men while also teaching the brothers the patriarchy-preserving attitudes of homophobia and misogyny. This chapter thus argues that monochromy was a critical tool in teaching the brothers to practice and maintain the established Florentine social order over the course of confraternal homosocialization.

3. Idolatry and Desire

---

maiestatem affert verborum paucitas, modo sensa et iussa intelligantur, sic in historia competens corporum numerus adhibet dignitatem. Odi solitudinem in historia, tamen copiam minime laudo quae a dignitate abhorreat. Atque in historia id vehementer approbo quod a poetis tragicis atque comicis observatum video, ut quam possint paucis personatis fabulam doceant. Meo quidem iudicio nulla erit usque adeo tanta rerum varietate referta historia, quam novem aut decem homines non possint condigne agere, ut illud Varronis huc pertinere arbitror, qui in convivio tumultum evitans non plus quam novem accubantes admittebat. Sed in omni historia cum varietas iocunda est, tamen in primis omnibus grata est pictura, in qua corporum status atque motus inter se multo dissimiles sint ... Obscoenae quidem corporis et hae omnes partes quae parum gratiae habent, panno aut frondibus aut manu operiantur ... Hanc ergo modestiam et verecundiam in universa historia observari cupio ut foeda aut praetereantur aut emendentur." Sara la storia, qual tu possa lodare e maravigliare, tale che con sue piacevolezze si porgera si ornata e grata, che ella terra con diletto e movimento d'animo qualunque dotto o indotto la miri. Quello che prima da volutta nella istoria viene dalla copia e varieta delle cose. Come ne' cibi e nella musica sempre la novita e abondanza tanto piace quanto sia differente dalle cose antique e consuere, cosi l'animo si diletta d'ogni copia e varieta. Per questo in pittura la copia e varieta piace. Dir6 io quella istoria essere copiosissima in quale a'suo luoghi sieno permisti vecchi, giovani, fanciullo, donne, fanciulle, fanciullini, polli, catellini, uccellini, cavalli, pecore, edifici, province, e tutte simili cose: e lodero io qualunque copia quale s'apartenga a quella istoria. E interviene, dove chi guarda soprasta rimirando tutte le cose, ivi la copia del pittore acquisti molta grazia. Ma vorrei io questa copia essere ornate di certa varieta, ancora moderata e grave di dignita e verecundia. Biasimo io quelli pittori quali, dove vogliono parere copiosi nulla lassando vacuo, ivi non composizione, ma dissoluta confusione disseminano; pertanto non pare la storia facci qualche cosa degna, ma sia in tumulto aviluppata. E forse chi molto cerchera dignita in sua storia, a costui piacera la solitudine. Suole ad i prencipi la carestia delle parole tenere maesta, dove fanno intendere suoi precetti. Cosi in istoria uno certo competente numero di corpi rende non poca dignita. Dispiacemi la solitudine in istoria, pure ne pero laudo copia alcuna quale sia sanza dignita. Ma in ogni storia la varieta sempre fu ioconda, e in prima sempre fu grata quella pittura in quale sieno i corpi con suoi posari molto dissimili ... Le parte brutte a vedere del corpo, e l'altre simili quali porgono poca grazia, si cuoprano col panno, con qualche fronde o con la mano. Cosi adunque desidero in ogni storia servarsi quanto dissi modestia e verecundia, e cosi sforzarsi che in niuno sia un medesimo gesto o posamento che nell'altro."

Throughout the quattrocento in Italy, developing trends in artistic ideals and consumer tastes meant that, more and more images were bearing likeness to the lived world. Patrons wanted, and artists created, paintings and sculptures that were naturalistic, showing believable human figures depicted in believable ways.[30] These figures were increasingly executed at a human scale and the composition in which they appeared often figured the viewer as a participant in the image's world.[31] This high degree of naturalism, however, presented a theological problem. Florentine clerics believed that the increased verisimilitude of images also increased the likeliness that the images would turn viewers into idolaters.[32] This is at least partially connected to the Neoplatonic belief that physical images served as the initial stimuli that produced a mental image of a sensory object in the mind of a viewer, which in turn could be used to focus worship towards its referent, who existed in the divine plane. [33] Idolatry occurred when a viewer intentionally or unintentionally misused the picture in his mind's eye for anything other than the worship of the image's heavenly referent.

Appropriate use of mental images had perhaps been easier in the Middle Ages, when the abstraction of icons meant that the painted images that viewers perceived with their senses were

---

[30] On Andrea del Sarto's naturalism and its relationship to art of the quattrocento refer especially to Sydney Freedberg. 1970. *Painting in Italy 1500-1600*. (Baltimore: Penguin), 54-57.
[31] For examples of the ways in which a viewer was figured in the painting's world, refer to Rebecca Zorach, "Love, Truth, Orthodoxy, Reticence; or what Edgar Wind Didn't Refer to in Botticelli's *Primavera,*" *Critical Inquiry* 34 (2007): 190-224 as well as Nagel, *The Controversy of the Italian Renaissance,* 46-49.
[32] Nagel, *The Controversy of the Italian Renaissance*, 13-29, as well as Camille, *The Gothic Idol*, 1-26.
[33] For an excellent summary of period understandings of the theory of optics and vision advanced by Augustine and Aquinas, refer to Sabine MacCormack. 1993. *Religion in the Andes: Vision and Imagination in Early Colonial Peru*. (NJ: Princeton University Press), 16-17, as well as Thomas Dittelbach. 1994. "'Nelle distese e negli ampi ricettacoli della memoria': la monocromia come veicolo di propaganda dell'ordine mendicante degli agostiniani," *Arte e Spiritualità nell'ordine agostiniano: e il Convento San Nicola a Tolentino* (1994): 103-104.

very different from the mental images they constructed of living people. But as art became more naturalistic, the distinction between mental image and referent began to collapse. As a result, contemporary moralists worried that viewers were at amplified risk of misusing the accompanying mental image that the picture stimulated and would unintentionally commit the grave sin of idolatry.[34] Early-modern viewers might misuse mental images in several ways. First, viewers might confuse an image with its real-world referent, thinking they were seeing the actual referent rather than an image.[35] Certainly, the possibility for this kind of encounter is implicit in Vasari's praise of painted figures—as he praised those in the Scalzo—that they were only lacking breath, referring to an image's ability to be so life-like that it almost seemed animate.[36] But even if not outright fooled by the image into believing it to be real, viewers could still have inappropriate responses to them, especially because early-modern figures were almost always idealized and often nude. These images need not be overtly erotic to provoke an inappropriate response. For example, it seems that the *Madonna Lactans* fell out of iconographic use in the 1400s because the increasingly lifelike images of the young, beautiful Virgin with an exposed breast, nursing or about to nurse Christ left too much potential for male viewers to eroticize the Virgin's body and perhaps even project himself onto her in an imagined sexual encounter.[37] Fears about idolatry, therefore, were manifold and had real artistic ramifications.

---

[34] Camille, *The Gothic Idol*, 244,

[35] Camille, *The Gothic* Idol, 61-62, cites Augustine, who thought that this was "the same duplicity of demons, tricking men into lust through the agency of representation." Refer also to the story of the Aphrodite of Knidos, which, Pliny, *Natural History* 36.4 recalls, was stained when a tourist attempted to copulate with her.

[36] For example, about the *Nativity of John the Baptisti,* Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, Vol. V, 45, wrote: "…*e Zacheria che scrive sopra una carta, la quale ha posata sopra un ginocchio, tenendola con una mano, e con l'altra scrivendo il nome del figliuolo tanto vivamente, che non gli manca altro che il fiato stesso*."

[37] Megan Holmes, "Disrobing the Virgin: The *Madonna Lactans* in Fifteenth- century Florentine Art," in *Picturing Women in the Renaissance and Baroque Italy,* edited by Geraldine A. Johnson

In Florence, idolatry, art, and religious practice were discussed openly. For example, in 1496, Dominican preacher Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498) took to the pulpit of Santa Maria del Fiore—despite a papal ban on his public ministry—to deliver Florence's Lenten sermons.[38] Savonarola's orations were so animated and impassioned that Michelangelo's biographer, Ascanio Condivi, reported that the great artist, even in his extreme old age, could still recall the sound of Savonarola's voice in the cathedral.[39] Michelangelo's recollection of the preacher is significant, given his excoriations of Florentine religious art. which, Savonarola seethed, Florentine elites used not to worship God but to promote the beauty of their marriageable daughters:

> Look at the customs of Florence: how the Florentine women marry off their girls, put them on show and outfit them so that they look like nymphs, and the first thing they do is take them to Santa Liperata. These are your idols, which you have put in my temple. The images of your gods are the images and similitudes of the figures you have painted in the churches and the young men go around saying about this one or that: 'This one is the Magdalen, this other Saint John,' because the figures you have made in the churches are in the likeness of one or another woman, which is very badly done and in great disregard for what is God's. You painters do badly, and if you knew the scandal that follows from it and the things that I know, you wouldn't paint them. You put all the vanities in the churches. Do you think that the Virgin Mary went clothed in the manner that you paint her? I tell you that she went dressed as a poor woman, simply and covered so that you could hardly see her face; and so did Saint Elizabeth go simply dressed. You would do well to erase the pictures painted there so indecently. You make the Virgin Mary appear dressed like a whore.[40]

---

and Sara F. Matthews Grieco. (United Kingdom: 1997), 178. However, she notes on pp. 191-192 that the motif made a huge comeback in the Tuscan countryside during the late-fifteenth century because of a series of miracles associated with the lactating Madonna that occurred in Tuscany, and the consequential rise in the number of Marian cults. The small Tuscan town of Montevarchi was even believed to a have a relic of the Virgin's breast milk, which was so revered that Leo X commemorated it in 1515.

[38] Alexander Nagel. 2011. *The Controversy of Renaissance Art*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), 13.

[39] Ascanio Condivi. 1823. *Vita di Michelangelo Buonarroti Scritta da Ascanio Condivi Suo Disceplo*. (Pisa: Niccolo Capurro), 79. "*…come gli scritti del Savonarola, al quale egli ha sempre avuta grande affezione, restandogli ancor nella mente la memoria della sua viva voce."*

[40] Reproduced in Nagel, *The Controversy of Renaissance Art*, 14: "*Guarda che usanza ha Firenze come le donne fiorentine hanno maritate le loro fanciulle, le menono a mostra e*

More than a general denunciation of the misuse of religious images, Savonarola's condemnation here points to the extreme—and extremely problematic—verisimilitude of portraiture. The use of portraiture in religious art meant that some figures on cathedral walls had two referents—the woman in front of the image as well as the holy person in heaven for whom, it seemed, she was a proxy. In identifying the women with the holy people, the young men of Florence were committing idolatry because they were not using the mental image the picture stimulated for the purpose of worshiping its holy referent. Rather, they were profaning the image by collapsing the distinction between the earthly model and the celestial referent.

This was hardly the young men's fault, according to Savonarola. He reprimanded the artists who made these images, accusing them of sacrilege when they inserted portraits into religious art, tarting up holy personages and dressing even the Virgin Mary "like a whore."[41]

---

acconcianle là che paiano ninfe, e, a prima cosa le menono a Santa Liperata. Questi sono l'idoli vostri, e' quindi avete messo nel mio tempio l'imagine de' vostri dei sono le imagini e similitudini delle figure che voi fate dipingere nelle chiese, e li giovani poi vanno dicendo a questa e quella: 'Costei è la Maddalena, quell'altra è santa Giovanni,' perché voi fate dipingere le figure nelle chiese alla similitudine di quella donna o di quell'altra, il che è molto male fatto e in grande dispregio delle cose di Dio. Voi dipintori fate male, ché se voi sapessi la scandolo che ne segue e quello che so io, voi nolle dipingeresti. Voi mettete tutte le vanità nelle chiese. Credete voi che la Vergine Maria andassi vestitta a questo modo come voi la dipingete? Io vi dico ch'ella andava vestita come poverella, seplicemente, e coperta che apena si gli vedeva il viso; così santa Elizabetta andava vestita semplicemente. Voi faresti un gran bene a scancellarle queste figure che son dipinte così disonestamente. Voi fate parere la Vergine Maria vestita come meretrice." Natalie Tomas. 2006. "Did Women Have a Space?" in *Renaissance Florence: A Social History*, edited by Roger J. Crumm and John T. Paoletti, pp. 311-330. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 319-321 implies that such a condemnation may have been harsh, since women were so confined to domestic spaces that there was little opportunity for them to be seen and thus to be evaluated for potential marriage contracts. Even in churches, they were corralled on one side of the nave opposite a curtain. The images on the church walls of the women thus seem important tools for broadcasting their beauty and wealth to potential spouses and their families.

[41] On the history of this kind of portrait leading up to its use in early-modern Florence, refer to Christine Zappella, "The Implicating Gaze in Bronzino's *Cosimo I de' Medici as Orpheus* and

This last accusation is especially significant because Savonarola implied that the sacred images were designed to arouse desire so that young male viewers would lust after them. The sermon continued with the preacher excoriating Florentine elites, accusing them of engaging in this practice of patronage to bring honor to their families at the expense of Florentine souls.[42] In this way, Savonarola implied, the Florentine artist and patron were responsible for constructing a system of decoration of sacred public spaces that compromised the souls of the Florentine men. His denunciation, bellowed from the city's most important pulpit, thus called into question the nature of images and the responsibility that artists had to use their skills to elevate the viewer, not deceive him.

This mistrust of artists was hardly new. Artists had long been held suspect because of their engagement in the act of fictive world-building, which brought to the fore anxieties about the viewers' ability to trust their own senses. For example, already in the 1480s, author and architect Antonio di Tuccio Manetti had written the *Novella del Grasso Legnaiuolo* in which he recounted a practical joke perpetrated by the Florentine architect Filippo Brunelleschi, "whose marvelous intellect and genius are still widely remembered."[43] As retribution for his having missed a dinner party, Brunelleschi and a group of associates conspired to convince their friend,

---

the Intellectual Culture of the Accademia Fiorentina," *Studies in Iconography* 42 (2021): 172-174.

[42] Reproduced in Nagel, *The Controversy of Renaissance Art*, 14-15. "Now the divine cult is ruined, and people care only about the honor done for themselves. Look at all the places in the convents: you will find them all full of the coats of arms of the people who had them built. I raise my head to the place above the doorway; I expect to see a crucifix and there is a coat of arms. There again, I look up, another coat of arms. Everything is full of arms. I put on a cope. I expect to see a crucifix on it; instead there is a coat of arms, and you know that they put the arms on the backs of copes so that when the priest is at the altar [with his back to the people] everyone can see the arms perfectly."

[43] Antonio Manetti. 1970. "The Fat Woodcarver," in *An Italian Renaissance Sextet*: Six Tales in Historical Context, edited by Lauro Martines, pp. 171-212. (New York: Marsilio), 173.

Grasso Legnaiuolo, the Fat Woodcarver, that he was really someone else entirely, a man named Matteo. Early in the joke, the Brunelleschi broke into Grasso's home, "being the kind of fellow who knew how to do such things."[44] In order to make Grasso believe that he really was Matteo, Brunelleschi enlisted the help of friends throughout Florence, including the sculptor, Donatello. The two work together to perpetrate the joke that leaves Grasso humiliated and self-exiled because of his shame. To make matters worse, years later, Grasso returned to Florence and confronted his friends. Feeling no remorse, Brunelleschi convinced him that he should be happy that they had played the joke on him, because it had resulted in his public fame.[45] This story is relevant because, in early modern Florence, artistic temperament and ability was regarded as an extension of individual personality and character.[46] Brunelleschi, Donatello, and friends were manipulative, clever, capable, and silver-tongued. They could leave you doubting your perception of reality through a series of tricks and convince you to be grateful to them for having shamed you. Artists and their endeavors, the story demonstrates, should not be trusted.

It is therefore no wonder then that anxiety about idolatry did not die in 1498 with Savonarola. On the contrary, over the course of the sixteenth century, major artists and artistic commissions were heavily censored for the sensuality of their content. Not even Michelangelo's artworks escaped denunciation. In Florence, the genitals of his *David* were girded with a gilded loin cloth by city authorities when it was put on public display in 1504.[47] The *David*'s indecency

---

[44] Manetti, "The Fat Woodcarver," 174.
[45] Manetti, "The Fat Woodcarver," 211.
[46] Refer to Philip Sohm, "Gendered Style in Italian Art Criticism from Michelangelo to Malvasia," *Renaissance Quarterly* 48.4 (1995): 774 referring here to Vasari's characterization of those who excel in fresco painting because of their masculine temperament.
[47] On the girdle, refer to Mary D. Garrard. 2016. "The Cloister and the Square: Gender Dynamics in Renaissance Florence," *Early Modern Women* 11.1 (2016): 28; Geraldine A. Johnson, "Idol or Ideal? The Power and Potency of Female Public Sculpture," in *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, edited by Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews-Grieco, pp. 222—245.

became a sticking point for *literato* Pietro Aretino (1492-1556), who, decades later, condemned Michelangelo's depiction of virile, idealized nudes in the Sistine *Last Judgment* (Fig. 4.3). He wrote to Michelangelo that the nudity of these figures was even worse than that of the *David* because they were in a sacred space, not a public square. At least, Aretino notes, ancient sculptors had covered their gods' shame, such as with the arrangement of the hands and legs of the *venus pudica*. Michelangelo, on the other hand, exhibited "saints and angels, these without earthly decency, and those without celestial honors." According to Aretino, Michelangelo was therefore more degenerate than even than the pagan idol-makers had been.

Aretino's excoriations spoke to the mounting anxiety about the propriety of sacred images, the correct use of which was finally regulated on 4 December 1563 by the Council of Trent. Especially important were the ways in which holy bodies, which were meant solely to be venerated, were portrayed. The regulation stated:

> Also, that the holy bodies of holy martyrs, and of others now living with Christ, which bodies were the living members of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Ghost, and which are by Him to be raised unto eternal life, and to be glorified, are to be venerated by the faithful; through which [bodies] many benefits are bestowed by God on men; so that they who affirm that veneration and honour are not due to the relics of saints; or, that these, and other sacred monuments, are uselessly honoured by the faithful; and that the places dedicated to the memories of the saints are in vain visited with the view of obtaining their aid; are wholly to be condemned, as the Church has already long since condemned, and now also condemns them.[48]

Soon after this decree, Michelangelo died and *The Last Judgment* was censored, with artist Daniele da Volterra hacking into the *buon fresco* in 1565, re-plastering, and adding loin cloths to

---

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 243-244; and John T. Paoletti. 2015. *Michelangelo's David: Florentine History and Civic Identity*. (NY: Cambridge University Press), 53.

[48] Available at http://www.thecounciloftrent.com/ch25.htm, last accessed 20 Feb 2022.

the hundreds of nude figures.[49] These kinds of denunciations and acts of censorship over the course of the 1500s speak to an ongoing concern about the role of the body in religious art and religious spaces.

Although the increased naturalism of Florentine art of the quattro- and cinquecento brought to the fore the problem of the image's capacity to stimulate physical desire or to misdirect religious worship, it was certainly not a new anxiety in Europe. Michael Camille has already shown that the problem of desire and idolatry had been a concern throughout the Middle Ages, with Hugh de St. Victoire (1096 -1141) describing the power "of images to stimulate but not gratify longing for an object…their capacity to arouse and stimulate physical feelings."[50] Pagan images, which were associated with lascivious pagan sexuality and seemed to have been strewn about the medieval world waiting to tempt naïve Christians, were particularly pernicious.[51] But so too were images of the nude body of any religious persuasion because, according to the Bible, the idol, "the sight whereof enticeth the fool to lust after it" was almost always naked.[52] Afterall, since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, the nude body had been equated with sin and sexuality.[53] As a result, throughout the Christian Middle Ages, the abnegation of the body had been a tenant of salvation and the human body perceived as an object of shame.

---

[49] Bernardine Barnes, *Michelangelo and the Viewer in his Time.* (London: Reaktion Books), 143-144, argues that this was a result of the circulation of prints, which were too potentially erotic for women and children. The cardinals, she argues, were of an educated class who, at least they maintained, understood the religious and aesthetic concerns of the artist and so were not at risk of idolatry.
[50] Camille, *The Gothic Idol*, 84.
[51] Erwin Panofsky. 1972. *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art.* (New York: Icon), 71-81, discusses Christian fascination with the antique world as well as its perceived danger.
[52] Wisdom 15:1.
[53] Genesis 3:7-11.

This attitude constituted an artistic problem: despite the negative associations of the nude body, it was still represented, increasingly, in art. As a result, Camille demonstrated, artists developed a multitude of pictorial devices that marginalized, erased, or occluded the nude body. But straight through the Middle Ages and into early modernity, the potential for images to evoke carnal desire was a concern of religious leaders, artists, patrons, and critics alike. It is likely for this reason that the artistic strategies identified by Camille were similar to many identified by Alexander Nagel, who demonstrated that throughout the 1500s, artists experimented with varying forms of what he called "soft iconoclasm" to ameliorate the idolatrous potential of pictures.[54] By the end of the century, Nagel argued, these moves away from verisimilitude led to a trend for complete aniconism in artistic representation.[55] Anxieties about idolatry could therefore push artists towards radical forms of abstraction.

The artistic interventions that artists developed to mitigate idolatry did not merely pay lip service to established Christian ideology. Rather, these interventions were necessary because idolatry was fraught with the potential to have negative consequences on the lives of actual, living people. Not only was an idolater's immortal soul in danger, but the sin soon became associated with deviant sexual behavior because in Christian thought, images reflected both God and Nature alike; in lusting after images, the idolater sinned against both, the same way that sexual deviants did. Idolatry was therefore especially linked to sodomy, which was likewise considered a choice to sin against both God and Nature.[56] The two sins were directly connected in sermons. As Bernardino da Siena (1380-1444), a primary spiritual source for the *Compagnia*

---

[54] Alexander Nagel. 2008. *The Controversy of the Italian Renaissance*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 10.
[55] Nagel, *The Controversy of the Italian Renaissance*, 261-286.
[56] Camille, *The Gothic Idol*, 92.

dello Scalzo and important quattrocento preacher and reformer, explained: “Whenever you love anything more than you love God, that thing becomes your God. And [Scripture] says: ‘Those who adore the beast or its image.’ What is its image? The appearance of a cute little boy before the mental and corporal eyes of the sodomites.”[57] This association between idolatry and sexual deviance seems to have persisted into early modernity. For example, Savonarola’s sermon against portraiture in religious images noted that not only were the women of Florence being used as sitters for indecorous images of female saints, but also male ones, such as John the Evangelist.[58] The promiscuous referentiality of images allowed artists to use them in visual forms of gender-bending that would not have been permissible in real life and that promoted sexual aberrance.[59] In Tuscany, the sins of idolatry and sodomy thus became almost interchangeable, with both being perceived as a misdirection of sexual desire that went against the so-called natural order of things.

2. The Confraternal Family

The link between idolatry and sexual aberrance—especially the practice of sodomy—was a critical concern of artists, patrons, and viewers who believed that sexual aberrance was both the result of and a contributing factor to a perceived public masculinity crisis.[60] This crisis snowballed over the course of the 1400s and, contemporaries believed, threatened the entire

---

[57] Romano, “A Depiction of Male Same-sex Seduction,” 2-3. Franco Mormando. 1999. *The Preacher’s Demons: Bernardino da Siena and the Social Underworld of Early Renaissance Italy*.” (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), 122.
[58] Reproduced in Nagel, *The Controversy of the Italian Renaissance Art*, 14: “*…e li giovani poi vanno dicendo a questa e quella: ‘Costei è la Maddalena, quell’altra è santa Giovanni.”*
[59] Simons, “Homosociality and erotics in Italian Renaissance portraiture,” 31-36.
[60] Simons, *The Sex of Men*, 17, asserts that we do a general disservice when we talk about a masculinity “crisis” because such narratives allows patriarchy to perpetuate a narrative of domination of a threat to itself.

Florentine state. This state was a patriarchal one in which men were able to navigate the public sphere relatively unhindered, while women remained in the home, indentured through marriage, their free domestic labor enabling the mercantile and civic exploits of their husbands, brothers, and sons.[61] In their presumed absolute control of the family unit, fathers and elder male relatives modeled the kinds of behavior and attitudes required of men to succeed in Florentine society and be respected by other men.[62] Although, during their early life, men were subordinated socially and economically by their elder patriarchs, they nonetheless anticipated future power for themselves. They therefore accepted the political, economic, and social dominance of their elders, knowing that power would then be passed on to them once they came of age.[63] This trans-historical structure, in which a man was presumed to have total control of his household and the members in it, was described by R. W. Connell as "hegemonic masculinity."[64] Hegemonic masculinity provided social order to early modern Florence because, across all strata of society, the peaceful and regular transfer of power from the older generation of men to the younger generation that they had mentored and readied for participation in public life resulted in cultural and political stability over time.[65]

---

[61] On the role of wives in a marriage and thus in maintaining the economy, consult Alberti, *Della Familia*, II, 98.
[62] Clawson, "Early-modern Fraternalism," 384.
[63] Clawson, "Early-modern Fraternalism," 384.
[64] R. W. Connell, *Gender and* Power, 184; Connell, *Which Way is Up*, 185; Donaldson, "What is Hegemonic Masculinity," 645. Carrigan, Connell, and Lee, "Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity," 86. On quattrocento Florence specifically as a hegemonic state in which women functioned as a type of currency, refer to Judith Bryce. 2009. "The Faces of Ginevra de' Benci: Homosocial Agendas and Female Subjectivity in Later Quattrocento Florence," in *Masculinities and Femininities in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, edited by Frederick Kiefer, pp. 131-158. (Belgium: Brepols).
[65] On the stability provided to patriarchy because of anticipated power, refer to Clawson, "Early-modern Fraternalism," 384, as well as Robert Finlay. (1978). "The Venetian Republic as Gerontocracy: age and politics in the Renaissance," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 8: 157-178.

In early-modern Florence, this system began to break down. Over the course of the fourteenth and into the fifteenth centuries, a series of Italian catastrophes including war, plague, and famine resulted in the decline of the male population, constantly threatening the extinction of the normative family structures on which the state was based.[66] At the same time, changes in Florence's economic structures required men to devote a larger portion of their early lives to the marketplace.[67] As a result, men began to delay marriage until their early thirties, postponing fatherhood along with it.[68] By 1427, though extreme old age was believed to begin at fifty, the father of the average baby born in Florence was already almost forty-years old.[69] Consequently, the average Florentine father died just before his son was a teenager, the same age at which Florentine boys needed to be introduced to adult male society and enter a *bottega*.[70] Fathers were therefore often dead before their sons reached adulthood and were thus unable to integrate them into the economic and social worlds of the adult Florentine man.[71]

The emergence of a proto-Capitalistic economic system in Florence meant that even when a father did survive into a son's adulthood, the effect on the child could still be crippling.[72]

---

[66] Romano, "A Depiction of Male Same-sex Seduction," 3. Refer to especially: JK Hyde, *Society and Politics in Medieval Italy: The Evolution of Civil Life, 1000-1350* (NY: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 178-198.
[67] On the structure of men's lives until they reach marrying age, consult Klapisch-Ziber, *Tuscans and their Families*, 136-144.
[68] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 171. For a thorough analysis of this topic that takes into account not only paternal age but also maternal, refer to David Herlihy and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber. 1985. *Tuscans and their Families: A Study of the Florentine Catasto of 1427*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), 81-88.
[69] Carlo Cipolla. *The Economic History of World Population*. (Baltimore: 1962): 78-82.
[70] Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, 89, as well as D. Herlihy. "Vieillir à Florence au Quattrocento," *Annales E. S. C.* XXIV (1969), 1342f. On a Florentine boy's time in a workshop, Martin Wackernagel. 1938. *The World of the Florentine Artist,* translated by Alison Luchs. (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 328-337.
[71] Fulton, "The Boy Stripped Bare by His Elders," 39; Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 28.
[72] On Florence and the emergence of Capitalism, refer to Sophus A. Reinert and Robert Fredona. "Political Economy and the Medici," *Business History Review* 94.1 (2020): 125-177 and Richard

As fathers spent more time in the marketplace, the home lives of many Florentine boys became highly unstable.[73] Infants of the middle and lower classes were passed around the homes of different wet nurses, never fully bonding with either parent.[74] In early childhood this instability continued. Children began their day early in a *bottega*, went to school where their teachers changed constantly, and then returned to work, having little contact with their biological family.[75] Even within that family, boys' interactions with their fathers were supposed to be more and more oriented towards teaching a son how to attain commercial success.[76] There was little emotional contact between father and son and male upbringing was strict to ensure that the boy would grow up to run the family business, control its fortune, and augment it.[77] Familial rapport could therefore be quite strained, with sons frequently rebelling against their fathers by participating in both organized and informal youth groups, some of which were violent or

---

Goldthwaite. 1980. *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History*. (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press), 29-66.

[73] Alberti, *Della Familia*, I, 68, advises that if one is too busy with work to raise his son, "let him find a person from whom the children may be able to learn to say and do honorable things in a good and wise way."

[74] Trexler, *Public Life*, 88. Alberti, *Della Familia*, I, 53, advises not using a wetnurse and having the child's mother nurse a baby, even if it means she is sterile for a time.

[75] Trexler, *Public Life,* 89.

[76] Alberti, *Della Familia*, 57, implies that this enterprise is especially important in Tuscany. There all people seemed to have a propensity for the acquisition of wealth, so a son needed also to desire and be able to acquire wealth in order to "follow the customs of the country."

[77] Fulton, "The Boy Stripped Bare by His Elders," 32. Alberti, *Della Familia*, I, 62-63, advises that boys should be separated from women on the first day of life and be brought among men so that "they can learn virtue rather than vice." He writes: …they can be made virile by activities as noble and grand as are possible for their age. They should be segregated from all feminine activities and habits. The Lacedaemonians used to make their boys go out at night among the tombs in the dark, to accustom them to fearlessness and teach them not to believe the inventions and fables of old women. They knew what no man doubts, that experience is valuable at any age, but perhaps more than at any other time especially effective in early youth. A man who was raised from childhood to pursue manly and lofty goals will find any achievement that is not really too heavy for his age, if not easy, at least not difficult. Boys should be set from the beginning, therefore, to do arduous and laborious things and to win praise and great honor by their industry and exertion."

menacing.[78] As Francesco Sassetti (1421-1490), a higher-ranking employee of the Medici bank in Florence, wrote: "A man wants to have sons. But five times out of six they become his enemies, desiring their father's death so that they can be free...abandoning those for whom they should [be willing to] die a thousand deaths."[79] It therefore seems that both because of delayed paternity and because of the mounting commercial concerns of mercantile fathers, Florentine boys often grew up without biological male role models and were almost totally unprepared for the society that they would enter upon adulthood.

The absenteeism of Florentine fathers was particularly problematic because of the highly-structured nature the city. Richard Trexler stressed:

> The Florentine young person entered a society that had behavioral rigidities of impressive dimensions. There was a right way to do everything, a set of images before which to do it, and a right frame encompassing these images, objective canons of decorum that honorable knights and saintly ascetics of old had found to 'work.' These procedures had not been invented any more than the image's power. Rather, they had been discovered; historical figures had found out God's behavioral plan.[80]

As a result of the lack of stability in childhood, Trexler furthermore argued, collective male rituals took on increased importance in adulthood—the city's elaborate system of public ritual provided a near-constant and stable context in which he could identify and imitate his peers' highly-regulated, divinely-sanctioned behaviors.[81] Participation in collective male rituals was thus one way of compensating for a lack of biological male role models at home.

---

[78] Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, 89, claimed that male elders were hostile to such groups because they allowed the boys to practice holding power in a hierarchical organization. However, in Chapter XIII, pages 491-547, he shows how the structures of youth groups helped foment and enact a revolution against the Medici that lead to the formation of the last Florentine Republic.
[79] Fulton, "The Boy Stripped Bare by His Elders," 32.
[80] Trexler, *Public Life*, 90.
[81] Trexler, *Public Life, 9*0-93 and 367-418.

The end result of participation in these collective rituals and of learning and demonstrating appropriate male behavior in public was that the individual man could forge close friendships and be integrated into networks of trust, or a tightly-knit community of men who worked together to ensure the success of other men within their networks.[82] It was through participation in multiple overlapping networks of trust that a Florentine negotiated exchanges of money, property, goods, and services. As Dale Kent has explained, early-modern friendships were characterized by patron-client-like exchange, "the obligation to assist one's friend in all his enterprises and to marshal the resources of the entire friendship circle or patronage network—all the friends of the friends—to intercede with others on his behalf."[83] The man's mercantile success in turn brought honor, wealth, and political stability to the city.[84] As a result, networks of trust were often considered even more important than a man's nuclear family because it was the network that allowed the family and therefore the city to exist at all.[85] A man's participation in

---

[82]The analysis of these kinds of networks was the subject of Kent, *Love and Friendship,* who on page 2, writes that these networks were the ancestors of the Italian mafia that was exported from southern Italy to New York and Chicago in the early 1900s. For an analysis of these kinds of networks as they play out in Florentine epistles, consult Paul McLean. 2007. *The Art of the Network: Strategic Interaction and Patronage in Renaissance Florence*. (Duke and London: Duke University Press), especially 150-169. On the seriousness of one's duties to one's friends, consider the words of Alberti, *Della Familia*, I, 46-47: "You know that I am a father myself, and that these are the sons of a friend who is my good and affectionate kinsman. If for these boys, who should be dear to me by blood and the more dear for having been commended to our care, I did less or felt differently than I would for my own sons…I would be neither a good kinsman nor a true friend. You would have to view me rather as a man without feeling, a traitor and a man of the lowest type. For this I should stand condemned, I should be infamous…Could anyone not find these last words engraved on his heart, words with which a kinsman, both relative and friend, leaves his sons, his dearest concerns to your care?...before I would let these children experience the least discomfort, I should suffer my own children to lack everything."

[83] Kent, *Love and Friendship*, 32 as well as Clawson, "Early-modern Fraternalism," 369.

[84] Alberti, *Della Familia*, II, 89, for example stresses the need to find a suitable wife because an individual man's wealth—and thus the entire Tuscan economy—depended on wives' fiscal and managerial prudence.

[85] Alberti, *Della Familia*, II, 92-107.

homosocial rituals was thus critical because they allowed him access to these networks of trust, which were in themselves fundamental to the prosperity of both the individual and the state.

By the sixteenth century, lay confraternities had emerged as one of the organizations that responded to the absenteeism of Florentine fathers, teaching young men how to behave amongst each other as equals and how to perform as heads-of-households, wielding patriarchal power over their inferiors. Confraternities were particularly suited to take on these roles for two reasons: first, as socioreligious societies, they were not only organized internally by collective religious rites, but much of their activity revolved around members' participation in public and semi-public rituals, which were so important for the construction of Florentine manhood. Second, as "brotherhoods" based on the notion of fictive kin relationships, the internal patriarchal structures of confraternities mirrored those of the biological family, the institution it was trying to replace.[86] At the head of the brotherhood was an elected patriarch, the *Padre Governatore*, or "Father Governor," who maintained ultimate authority over the company.[87] Under his paternal watch, the brothers bonded during intense religious rituals, which included public confessions, shamings, and self-flagellation, all acts of humiliation and emasculation intended to foster male intimacy.[88] *Confratelli* were also educated and socialized together, often spending time together before or after official confraternal activities.[89] Moreover, because initiates were sponsored by current members biological family members and old friends tended

[86] Clawson, "Early-modern Fraternalism," 368.
[87] On the election and duties of the *Padre Governatore*, refer to Dow, "Confraternal Piety," 29-22.
[88] On the subject of flagellation and its relationship to both shame and masculinity, refer to *The Scourge and the Whip*, 320-326.
[89] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 187, for example, tells the story of how, around 1498, a group of members of an unknown brotherhood got drunk together and then "went off to recite the office at their company, where it was the run of Scheggia [their ringleader] to deliver the lesson."

to cluster together in the same confraternities.[90] Still, because confraternity membership was dependent on neither the neighborhood in which a man lived nor his social class, the confraternal network of trust incorporated men from the entire city of Florence at all economic levels.[91] Thus, within the confraternity, a type of blended family emerged, one that was bound by both biological and non-biological ties of kinship and that transcended social class and neighborhood boundaries.

Not all people living in Florence, though, could be fully integrated into confraternal life. Because confraternal structure and gender roles within it were based on those found within the nuclear family, the two institutions, family and confraternity, both marginalized the same groups of people: women and children.[92] *Fanciulli*, or young male children, were barred from the adult confraternities and had to form their own groups.[93] And although *confratelli*'s wives, daughters, and sisters were sometimes granted membership in confraternities, their involvement in the organizations was greatly curtailed.[94] As in Florentine society, the women were disenfranchised, unable to participate in the electoral process that determined their governance. Women were also barred from ritual ceremonies with men, including confraternal processions, because their appearances in public were highly-regulated and they were typically confined to the domestic

---

[90] Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 78.
[91] Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 21-22**.**
[92] Trexler, *Public Life*, 16, cites the many ways in which these groups were likened and subordinated, noting that Guido Calvacanti. 1973. *The "Trattato Politico-Morale" of Guido Cavalcanti: 1381-c. 1451*, edited by Marcella T. Grendler. (Geneva: *Travaux d'humanisme et Renaissance*), 115, even wrote that young males "...because of their youth no less than because of their nude knowledge…are equal to the vile females."
[93] On these youth confraternities, refer especially to: Konrad Eisenbichler. 1998. *The Boys of the Archangel Raphael: A youth Confraternity in Florence, 1411-1785.* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press), and Lorenzo Potto. 2004. *Children of the Promise: The Confraternity of the Purification and the Socialization of Youths in Florence, 1427-1785*. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press).
[94] Rondeau, "Homosociality and Civic (Dis)Chord," 32.

sphere.[95] Nonetheless, women were tolerated in the confraternity—and perhaps even considered a necessary and quite-literal evil—because, despite their limited power, they reinforced the organizations' claim to familial structure and allowed men to exercise authority over women. Women's participation in the confraternal structures also promoted their submission to the authority of men, a skill they would need to in the home.[96] The confraternity was thus an environment in which even men still without families could begin to practice controlling and subordinating women and children.

The confraternity and the nuclear family did not just resemble each other in their shared social hierarchies, the brotherhood also filled social roles that, a century earlier, had typically been filled by a member's biological family. All brothers who were financially able contributed money to the confraternity that went towards promoting the welfare of its members and their families, especially after a *confratello*'s death. The two most important uses of these funds was the provision of dowries for the daughters of *confratelli* as well as for brothers' funeral arrangements.[97] Obligations to deceased brothers continued in perpetuity, as living members

---

[95] Schiferl, "Corporate Identity and Equality," 14. Kent, *Love and Friendship*, 13. Robert C. David. 1998. "The Geography of Gender in the Renaissance," in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy,* edited by Judith C. Brown and Robert C. Davis, pp. 19-38. (London and New York: Longman), 47-50 argues that lay confraternity's emphasis on public ritual was one of the ways in which men branded the street as a masculine space, further intimidating and controlling women inside of the home

[96] Rondeau, "Homosociality and Civic (Dis)Chord," 34-35 as well as Clawson, "Early-modern Fraternalism," 380.

[97] On the evolution of the company's dowry fund, access Dow, "Confraternal Charity and Corporate Patronage," 71-74. On the involvement of the confraternity with the funerals of deceased members, access Alana O'Brien, "Andrea del Sarto and the Compagnia dello Scalzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 48 (2004): 258-267. On the importance of confraternities in managing the deaths of its member more generally, refer to: John Henderson. 1988. "Religious Confraternities and Death in Renaissance Florence," in *Florence and Italy: Renaissance Studies in Honor of Nicolai Rubinstein*, edited by Peter Denley and Caroline Elam, pgs. 383-394. (Exeter: Short Run Press, Ltd).

were expected to pray forever for the souls of the deceased, hoping to shorten their departed brothers' time in Purgatory.[98] Confraternities also provided charity to members who were sick or down on their financial luck.[99] By taking responsibility in these ways for *confratelli* and their families, the confraternity constituted a strong social and financial network, serving as an intense system of support that kept many Florentine men afloat. The confraternity reproduced many of the central elements and benefits of belonging to a biological family unit.

Membership and involvement patterns in confraternities reflect their relationship to the family unit. Most Florentine men tended to enroll and participate most actively in confraternities between the ages of twenty-five and thirty, when they were too old for the protection of their biological family but too young to marry and head a household of their own.[100] Men's confraternal participation declined sharply when they married, which for 71% of them happened between the ages of thirty-one and thirty-six, even though they generally remained at least nominal members of the organization.[101] These trends in participation testify to the importance of the confraternity *qua* family in a time of Florentine men's lives when they had little access to women and little economic agency of their own.[102] The homosocial relationships formed

[98] Clawson, "Early-modern Fraternalism," 377-378; Black, *Italian Confraternities*, 104; Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 157-158; James R. Banker, *Death in the Community: Memorialization and Confraternities in an Italian Commune in the Late Middle Ages* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 161.
[99] Black, *Italian Confraternities,* 168-170, argues that charity was always distributed among members before the general public.
[100] On statistics related to the average age of members and their participation in confraternities, refer to Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 70-80. Also refer to Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Tuscans and their Families*, 138.
[101] Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 148-150**.**
[102] Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, 379-381, refers to many efforts made by the Florentine government to provide men with access to women for sexual pleasure, including, in 1421, passing a law that any man thirty years of age or older who was not married be disbarred from holding public office as well as recruiting foreign prostitutes for the men's pleasure.

between Florentine men in the confraternal context were thus critical in ensuring that they flourished economically and socially while at once perpetuating time-honored values. In this way, confraternities helped provide stability to the Florentine state from generation to generation.

3. A Failure of Masculinity

This model, of course—in which young men, through their participation in the confraternity over many years, learned how to behave properly as economically-independent, heads-of-household who maintained intimate and yet utilitarian friendships among themselves while subjugating those inferior to him—was an ideal and theoretical once. Practically, confraternities were hotbeds for homosexual activity, a microcosm of the virile culture of sodomy that flourished among men in the urban macrocosm of Florence. This phenomenon has been comprehensively studied by Michael Rocke.[103] Although in the 1400s sodomy was prevalent throughout Italy, Florentines were particularly noted amongst Europeans for engaging in the act. Germans, for example, began to use the words "*florenzen*" and "*Florenzer*" to mean, respectively, "to sodomize" and "a sodomite."[104] Given the large numbers of unmarried, adult men (youths too, and some old timers) engaging in homosexual activity in the city of Florence in the quattrocento, it is unsurprising that the unmarried, adult members of Florentine confraternities—who, at least theoretically, had no other sexual outlets save prostitutes—

---

[103] Rocke. *Forbidden Friendships.*

[104] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 3-5. Rocke notes that this reputation may have been slightly unfair. Dominican preacher Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498) suggested that Florentines may have gotten this reputation simply because they talked about sodomy more than other urban cultures. Certainly, homosexuality and homoeroticism was celebrated in Florentine vernacular culture, including in Dante (Cantos XV and XVI of *Inferno)* and in Bocaccio (*Decameron v,* 10) as well as in burlesque poetry and carnival songs.

engaged in homosexual sex acts with each other as well as with men and boys who were not members of their confraternity.[105]

While the men in the Scalzo might have engaged in homosexual sex acts with each other, it is important to note that the early-modern sodomite was not "a homosexual" in the modern sense.[106] While early-modern men and women seem to have had a sense of sexual consciousness, they did not construct sexual identities; rather, heterosexual attraction was entailed in their conception of gender—that is, to be a man, biologically and culturally, meant necessarily to be attracted to and to desire a partnership with a woman.[107] As a result, sodomy was not regarded as the primary sexual act that defined an alternate sexual identity. Instead, it was a "temporary aberration" from a masculine gender norm that could be policed and regulated.[108] Indeed, as gender identity is a process rather than a construct that played out between individual and society, there was little way for an early-modern man to construct a homosexual identity without a shared conceptual or practical framework for its performance and reception.[109] It was not until the eighteenth century, with the formation of "self-aware urban subcultures" whose members shared a set of group norms and behaviors that led, in the nineteenth century, to the development of the sexual-identity category of "homosexual."[110] Therefore, while early-modern men and women engaged in homosexual acts or satisfied other sexual desires that were considered

---

[105] Clawson, "Early-modern Fraternalism," 375, observed that all youth "faced the common dilemma of a prolonged period of celibacy and subordination."
[106] Carol Walker Bynum, "The Body of Christ," 406, argues also that Medieval people did not have the concept of "gay people."
[107] Knowles, "Sexuality: A Renaissance Category?" 685.
[108] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 43.
[109] Saslow, "A Veil of Ice and Fire," 80.
[110] Saslow, "A Veil of Ice and Fire," 80.

deviant, they were not gay in any sense that resembles modern gay identity.[111] To queer them with such labels is an imprecision of language that is worse than anachronistic. It erroneously implies the existence of a set of shared cultural conceptions, beliefs, values and frameworks for the construction of sexual identity where no such conceptions, beliefs, values, or frameworks existed.[112] This kind of misapprehension of the period has ramifications not only for our understanding of early modernity, but also our understanding of the status of queer people throughout history, a historical narrative that continues to have life-and-death consequences in today's world.

Even though the brothers of Florentine companies could not be said to be homosexuals in a modern sense, the prevalence of sodomy within their ranks was nonetheless threatening to the city's social institutions. James Saslow has shown that after a period of relative tolerance in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, a backlash to sodomy occurred in the 1400s. This shift in attitude corresponds to an increase of depictions of sodomites in art, especially men being tormented in Hell.[113] This is because sodomy was regarded—then, as it often is now—not only as a sin against God but also against Nature, threatening the fabric of moral society and the sanctity of the nuclear family. Indeed, Dante placed sodomites in the most-interior ring of the

---

[111] James Saslow, "'A Veil of Ice between my Heart and the Fire': Michelangelo's Sexual Identity and Early Modern Constructs of Homosexuality," *Genders* (1988): 77–90, as well as Michael Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships: Homosexuality and Male Culture in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 13–14.
[112] On how this played out in Florence specifically, refer to the example-rich analysis by Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 10-16. Also refer to Patricia Simons, "Homosociality and erotics," 31-32.
[113] James Saslow, *Pictures and Passions*, 67, shows that depictions of punishments for sodomy are similar to the act of sodomy itself. In San Gimignano in the Collegiate Church, Taddeo di Bartolo depicted a man in hell being punished by having a pole rammed through his anus, into his body, and out of his mouth, where it is forced into the mouth of another sinner. The figure is labeled "SOTOMITTO." The model for this work was Giotto in the Arena Chapel and Buonamico Buffalmaco in the Camposanto at Pisa in the middle of the fourteenth century.

seventh circle of hell, where they, along with other kinds of sinners who had committed violent acts against God himself, were tormented.[114] Public sentiment against sodomites reached a crisis point in the early quattrocento, resulting in a series of failed early-century reforms in the ways that sodomites were investigated and persecuted.[115] However vocal Florentine leaders were about persecuting sodomites in their midst, these reforms had no teeth and a wide-spread culture of sodomy continued to flourish into the 1400s.

That changed after the 1424 and 1425 Paschal seasons. In those years, the preacher San Bernardino of Siena came to Florence to deliver the Lenten sermons, which were arguably the most important ones of the year.[116] From Florence's cathedral he preached three full homilies against sodomy while commenting on it throughout the other masses. He warned that the sexual practice was the cause of wars, floods, plagues, pestilence, and that God would punish Florence as he punished Sodom. He also warned that sodomy carried with it a host of other sins including "gambling, blasphemy of God and the Saints, gluttony, frequenting taverns and other places of ill repute, lying, mistrust, deception, theft, 'and a thousand curses: you see well the damage it does to your country.'"[117] Elsewhere he harangued the Florentines from the pulpit: "O my lads, if you want to exterminate your city and motherland, I tell you, keep on being sodomites; I tell you, if you want her to be exterminated, then don't give up your sodomizing."[118] Scapegoated for the natural and manmade disasters that plagued Florence (many of which, were, in fact, a result of

---

[114] Dante, *Inferno*, 11.49-51: "*E però lo minor giron suggella/ del segno suo e Soddoma e Caorsa/ e chi, spregiando Dio col cor, favella.*"
[115] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 26-44.
[116] On Bernardino's denunciations of homosexuality, consult Michael Rocke. "Sodomitescin Fifteenth-Century Tuscany: The Views of Bernardino da Siena," *Journal of Homosexuality* 16.1-2 (1989): 7-32 as well as *Forbidden Friendships*, 36-44.
[117] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 36.
[118] Romano, "A Depiction of Male Same-sex Seduction," 3, as quoted in Mormando, *The Preacher's Demons*, 130.

poor decisions made by the elected Florentine government bodies), sodomites were cast as a danger to the public health and safety of all Florentines.

San Bernardino was especially afraid of the perceived deleterious effects that sodomy might have on the nuclear family. He even speciously blamed sodomy for the decline in population in Tuscany because sodomites did not want children, which, the preacher insisted, enraged God so much that he sent diseases to kill the Tuscan people.[119] Bernardino's inflammatory declarations seemed to have no limit. He once told the Sienese: "Above sodomites' heads… one could hear the ghastly cries of unborn babies urging 'vendetta vendetta vendetta' against their sterile fathers."[120] He furthermore claimed that he awoke once in the middle of the night to hear the voices of unborn children chanting 'to the fire, to the fire, to the fire.'"[121] For Bernardino, pederasty was the most egregious sex act. He thus argued that girls rather than boys be sent outside into the public sphere because raping little girls was "less evil" than raping young boys.[122] He was also wary of boys dressed in ways that blurred gender boundaries.[123] In language that recalls Savonarola's later denunciation of Florentine women in churches, Bernardino urged: "'Send [your boys] out [dressed] decently, not like girls…They're the beautiful color of hyacinth, these boys of yours become girls. Shame on you, fathers and mothers! Punish them, keep them at home at night or take them with you, fathers, and don't send them out spruced up

[119] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 37.
[120] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 37.
[121] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 37.
[122] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 38. 5
[123] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 38. On fashion and its relationship to masculinity, refer to Currie, *Fashion and Masculinity*, 1-13. Also refer to Timothy McCall, "Brilliant Bodies: Material Culture and the Adornment of Men in North Italy's Quattrocento Courts," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 16.1/2 as well as his 2022. *Brilliant Bodies: Fashioning Courtly Men in early Renaissance Italy*. (Pennsylvania: Penn State Press).

like maidens!"[124] With this kind of incendiary language, the preacher convinced Tuscans to take stricter measures against both sodomites and against effeminate behavior in men and boys.

San Bernardino's exhortations precipitated the creation, in 1432, of the *Ufficiali di notte*, or Officials of the Night, a special judiciary committee tasked solely with prosecuting sodomites, that remained in existence until 1502.[125] The committee was responsible for the largest-scale persecution of sodomites that had ever been undertaken in a premodern city.[126] Each year of its existence, about four hundred men were implicated in homosexual activity with about sixty of them condemned. Over the seventy years of its existence, this resulted in a total of approximately 17,000 charges and 3,000 convictions. While it is hard to believe, by the end of the quattrocento, almost every adult male in Florence was or would be charged with sodomy during his lifetime.[127] Rocke argues that one of these denunciations particularly illuminates the prevalence of sodomy within Florentine lay confraternities. In 1476, the carpenter, Piero di Bartolomeo, was accused of sodomizing fifteen-year-old Bartolomeo di Jacopo, who lived in Piero's neighborhood. Bartolomeo recounted that Piero had sodomized him "many times, both day and night" and that he had also been sodomized by thirteen other men. The informer who reported the case, however, seemed to justify Piero's behavior: "This he did out of great love and good brotherhood, because they are in a confraternity together, and he did what good neighbors do." By stating that a grown man sodomizing a teenager was an act of "great love and good brotherhood," and what "good neighbors do," the informer implied that homosexual acts were common within the culture of fifteenth-century Florentine confraternities.[128]

[124] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 38.
[125] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 4.
[126] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 4.
[127] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 5.
[128] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 148.

It is no wonder then, that Florentine lay companies took strict actions to deter men from committing homosexual acts, since they believed these acts would not only cause the brother to suffer eternally in Hell but also bring God's wrath upon the city of Florence. Sodomy was expressly forbidden by all Florentine confraternities. The statutes of the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist contained a clear interdict against sodomy, denouncing it as an "abominable and cursed and dissolute vice."[129] Although other grave sins—such as gambling, usury, cavorting in taverns, or even maintaining a female concubine—were punished by a fine, only sodomy was punished with expulsion, which had to occur at the very next meeting of the company.[130] Even more drastically, if the *Padre Governatore* failed to enforce the rules and allowed the sodomite to remain in the brotherhood, he himself would be expelled from the group.[131] For all Florentine confraternities, it is clear that the most egregious sin a member could commit was that of sodomy and that it was considered the moral imperative of the collective to drive out sodomites from their midst.[132]

Even outside of a religious context, Florence's obsession with policing homosexual activity is unsurprising, as it was believed to be particularly threatening to the city's social order. At a fundamental level, opposite-sex attraction was seen as integral to male identity. Pervasive

---

[129] Dow, "Confraternal Charity and Corporate Patronage," 80.
[130] ASF, CapCRS 152, 9v-10r. As Banker, *Death in the Community*, 157 and Weissman, *Ritual* brotherhood, 88, show, these punishments are similar to those of other confraternities in Florence.
[131] ASF, CapCRS 152, 10r: "*E se alchuno e sopra detti chomettesi labominevole e maladetto e disoluto viçio a pecchato di sodomia di fatto sia raso e privato alla prima tornata di nostra chompagnia… E se il ghovernatore nollo pubrichassi raso alla prima tornata seghuente sintenda essere raso detto ghovernatore*."
[132] It should be noted, however, that despite the fact that Benvenuto Cellini was charged for sodomy just four weeks after gaining membership in the Scalzo, he was still retained as a member. Refer to O'Brien, "Maestri d'alcune arti misti e d'ingegno," O'Brien, "Maestri," 400, n. 327.

instability of male identity could result in the instability of social and political hierarchies. Furthermore, in a city with capitalist concerns, the possibility of a romantic relationship between two men threatened total male domination of the marketplace, which was dependent on women's free domestic labor.[133] That is why within homosocial groups, men learned at once to suppress same-sex desire as well as to police other men's sexuality and to subjugate women. Men who fell into line with the normative *status quo* were rewarded with increased power and authority.[134] For these reasons it remained advantageous for men to regulate each other's feelings of desires even though accusations of aberrance could have catastrophic consequences on the lives of individuals.

Sodomy, however, was not the only force disrupting the unquestioned social, cultural, and political hegemony of Florentine men and their masculinity. At the beginning of the 1500s, apprehensions about the potential for homosexual desire and activity within the confraternity were paired with an increased anxiety about the place of women in society. In the late 1400s, the "feminization" of Lorenzo de Medici's court, exemplified by the power that women were given in Medici-sponsored art throughout the century, prompted the Dominican preacher and reformer Girolamo Savonarola to lash out against the luxury and immorality of the banking family, resulting in the notorious bonfires of the vanities.[135] Nonetheless, in 1496, Savonarola, gave women "an unprecedented voice in religious reform" that caused them to enter religious orders in record numbers. So many women entered nunneries at this time that temporary shelters had to be built to house them.[136] In 1500, there were over 200 nuns in Florence—four times the amount

[133] Connell, *Gender and Power*, 102-106.
[134] Connell, *Gender and Power*, 241-250.
[135] Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square," 31.
[136] Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square," 23.

in the 1300s. Between 1500 and 1520, four new convents were founded at the periphery of the city and the building type took up the greatest amount of space of all Florentine institutions, a phenomenon that prompted Richard Trexler to declare that monasticism "changed sex" during this time.[137] While this trend had many causes, the effect on Florentine culture was that, even in a time of overall decreased female agency occurring as a result of systematic reforms in the fifteenth and sixteenth century concerning the governance of the public sphere, nuns began to wield considerable cultural and political power.[138]

The year 1502 was critical for Florentine history. At the same time that nuns' political power was growing, Piero Soderini (1452-1522) was elected *gonfaloniere*. The city's highest executive office. In an attempt to bring stability to the failing republic, Soderini, for the first time in the office's history, had been elected to the position for life.[139] Upon his election, Soderini moved into the Palazzo della Signoria. A year later, he was joined by his wife, Argentina Malaspina (1460/62-1534) along with her retinue of female friends, relatives, and servants.[140] The move engendered considerable unrest amongst Florentines as women had, since at least

---

[137] Richard Trexler, *Power and Dependence in Renaissance Florence Vol. II. The Women of Renaissance Florence,* (Asheville, NC: Pegasus Press), chapter 7, cited in Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square," 26.

[138] Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square," 25. Sharon T. Strocchia. *Nuns and Nunneries in Renaissance Florence.* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), 28-35 says that "the explosive growth of convents and nuns in Florence after 1480 as the result of several factors. Marital strategies for patrilineal households changed as dowry costs rose, because convent dowries cost much less than marriage dowries. Foreign invasions, political unrest, and social violence in the 1490s led many fathers to place their daughters in convents for safety. Growing religiosity in the city in the wake of Savonarola was another factor."

[139] This did not work out for Soderini. He was ousted in 1512 when Medici supporters conspired with the family to bring about the collapse of the republic and exile Soderini. See, John N. Najemy. 2011. *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*. (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell), 408-411 on Soderini's election.

[140] Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square," 28; Randolph, *Engaging Symbols*, 281; K. J. P. Lowe. 2003. *Nuns' Chronicles and Convent Culture in the Renaissance and Counter-Reformation Italy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 181.

1415, been banned from entering the palace.[141] The palace and its accompanying piazza, was, since its construction, a contested space and a stage for Florentine political expression.[142] This expression was often staged visually through contests of gender and sexuality. For example, the perceived masculine weakness of Soderini, stationed in the seat of Florentine patriarchal power, may have resulted in the removal of Donatello's *Judith* (Fig. 4.4)—a symbol of female dominance over men—from its place of honor at the entrance of the Palazzo Vecchio, where it was replaced by Michelangelo's masculine *David* in 1504.[143] But, as Adrian Randolph has argued, the removal of *Judith* was not just an erasure of women, it was also a response to their threat.[144] Women were occupying, and perhaps even controlling, spaces of public power.

Shortly into his rule, Soderini did away with the Office of the Night. This was not because the judicial body had become ineffective or because Florence had solved its sodomy problem. Rather, the government justified its disbanding "to remove a certain burden that is understood to ensue the city…" That is, in its efficacy, the Office of the Night had become a

---

[141] Refer to for example the distress expressed by Bartolomeo Cerretani. 1994. *Storia Fiorentina*, edited by Giuliana Berti. (Florence: Leo S. Olschki), 315, as well as Piero Parenti, "Historia Fiorentina," BNCF, II II 133, 88v and 95r.

[142] Stephen J. Milner, "Citing the Ringhiera: The Politics of Place and Public Address in Trecento Florence," Italian Studies 55 (2000): 53–82.

[143] Yael Even. 1992. "The Loggia dei Lanzi: A Showcase of Female Subjugation," in *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*, ed. Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 127–37, 139–59; and Geraldine A. Johnson, "Idol or Ideal? The Power and Potency of Female Public Sculpture," *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews-Grieco (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 222–45. On the later relationship between the *Judith* and Cellini's *Perseus Beheading Medusa*, refer to Cole, Michael. "Cellini's Blood," *The Art Bulletin* 81.2 (1999): 217; Sarah Blake McHam. 1998. "Public Sculpture in Renaissance Florence," in *Looking at Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, edited by Sarah Blake McHam. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press), 163-169.

[144] Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square," 23. Adrian Randolph. 2002. *Engaging Symbols: Gender, Politics, and Public Art in Renaissance Florence*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press).

civic embarrassment, proving just how pervasive Florence's culture of sodomy had become.[145] Soderini's ascension to power can thus be seen as a critical period in Florentine history, an ambitious and fervent effort to save the Republic that was nonetheless marred by continued political instability, especially as it pertained to gender and sexual politics. As Andrea del Sarto decorated the Cloister of the Scalzo in the first quarter of the 1500s, he did so in a cultural climate in which Florentine men seemed unable to align their sexual desires and behaviors with their values, or to control and suppress the women around them.

By 1512, the Medici family was once again in control of Florence. After the revival of a short-lived last Republic, the Medici, aided by the Holy Roman Emperor, finally defeated the Florentine Republic in 1530. In bringing authoritarian stability to the city, the Medici dukes, beginning with Cosimo I de' Medici, attempted to brand themselves as the antidote to the compromised masculinity that they claimed had characterized the late Republic and allowed sodomites and women to run amuck inside of the city.[146] Indeed, many art historians—most notably Yael Even, Adrian Randolph, and Geraldine A. Johnson—have already commented on the ways that the sculptural program of the Piazza della Signoria and Loggia di Lanzi evolved over the early-to-mid sixteenth century, deploying images of men's domination of other men or images of sexual violence against women as metaphors for Medici political hegemony of Florence and Tuscany.[147] By filling the piazza in front of the city's seat of political power with

[145] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships,* 224-225.
[146] Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square," 31. On this, refer to also: Alison Brown, "Lorenzo de' Medici's New Men and their Mores: The Changing Lifestyle of Quattrocento Florence," *Renaissance Studies* 16.2 (2002): 113-142.
[147] Refer to especially, Yael Even, "The Loggia dei Lanzi: A Showcase of Female Subjugation," *Woman's Art Journal* 12.1 (1991): 10-14; and Margaret D. Carroll. 1992. "The Erotics of Absolutism: Rubens and the Mystification of Sexual Violence," in *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*, edited by Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard. (New York: Harper Collins, 1992), 139–59; and Johnson, "Idol or Ideal?," 222-245. Also refer to Virginia L. Bush,

images of men murdering, abducting, and dominating women, the Medici asserted their virile lust for and divinely-ordained domination of women. Both literally and figuratively, this was the Medici vision of the ideal Florentine state.

At the turn of the 1500s, Florentine confraternities found themselves in a predicament: the preservation of the state was partially dependent on their ability to teach normative male behavior to Florence's young men and to foment deep bonds of kin-like trust between their members. In public, they accomplished this task by engaging in regular processions on the city's major feast days, in which they marched through their city streets in a single costume, under a single banner.[148] In private, penitential confraternities engaged in intimate rituals of group humiliation that necessitated profound collective trust. Because of monthly public shamings, in which a member had to confess his most private sins to the group voluntarily or risk being denounced in by a friend, the brothers knew each other's deepest secrets and worked towards correcting their friends' behavior so that the men could do penance and be reintegrated into the group.[149] At monthly flagellations, the brothers participated in a violent ritual designed to produce a state of physical and psychological arousal that always had the potential for homoeroticism.[150] Flagellation's ability to inflame libidinous desire was so noted by the Church that by 1700 commentators argued that the practice should be banned.[151] Though the state needed confraternities to foster intimate homosocial bonds, such bonds always presented the risk

---

"Bandinelli's 'Hercules and Cacus' and Florentine Traditions," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 35.1 (1980): 163-206.

[148] ASF, CapCRS 152, 13r, shows that the processions could be ordered by the confraternity or the *commune*. On the importance of processions, refer to Trexler, *Public Life*, 253-256; Henderson, "Flagellant Movement," 147-160.

[149] ASF, CapCRS 152, 10v.

[150] On the erotics of the flagellation, refer to Niklaus Largier. 2007. *The Scourge and the Whip*. (NY: Zone Books), 221-336.

[151] Largier, *The Scourge and the Whip*, 221.

of fomenting erotic encounters. To compound the problem, confraternal structures seem to have given men an opportunity and a rationale to act on those desires. After all, the brothers would only be doing "as good neighbors do."

4. Il Battista, Il Fiorentino

As the pictorial and architectural environment in which much of the non-liturgical homosocial activities of the confraternity occurred, the Cloister of the Scalzo had an important function—it had to host the kinds of unregulated social activities that would allow men to form deep-rooted networks of trust that, they knew, were charged with erotic potential. Paramount in ensuring that the brothers' relationships remain chaste, then, was controlling the decoration of the room. Arousal could result if the religious bodies pictured within the frescoes were too life-like, too sensuous, too referential to real human bodies. The problem, though, was that those were precisely the kinds of images that artists and patrons desired. Moreover, because the confraternity of St. John the Baptist was filled with artists, these latter artistic concerns would have been nearly as important to the brothers as their religious ones. Combined with a variety of other pictorial strategies, monochromy, it seems, offered the possibility of reconciling artistic and religious problems.

Perhaps the fresco that best illustrates monochromy's ability to at once be naturalistic and referential while still halting the creation of mental images that could result in same-sex desire is *The Baptism of Christ*. (Fig. 1.8) This image was a special focal point of the cloister because the brother walked directly towards it the entire time that he strode under the vaulted path that led to the oratory as he navigated the complex for regular confraternal rituals. The picture was thus a primary devotional image as the brother began collective rites. The composition was, asnnoted

previously closely repeated in the next room, in polychrome, on the convent's main altarpiece. (Fig. 1.31) As a result of its repetition, the image of Christ's baptism had not only temporal continuity in that it was seen throughout the brother's time in the complex, but also spatial, in that it was always visible when the brothers were in the cloister or oratory.

The Baptism of Christ represents the heroic apex of the Johannine story because, in Christianity, the function of the sacrament of Baptism is to wash away original sin, or man's inclination towards evil. Christ's baptism therefore was seemingly pointless because dogma teaches that he was born without original sin. Theologians have thus long interpreted Christ's choice to be baptized as a demonstration to the community that Baptism was God's will, that John had been granted authority by God to baptize the people, and that no man—even Christ—was exempt from submission to the will of God.[152] In this way, by submitting to Baptism, Christ publicly legitimized both John and the sacrament of Baptism. *The Baptism of Christ* thus represented the moment in which the brothers' patron saint, John, became John the Baptist. Because of the importance of this image, it is not surprising to find that it was likely painted first and placed out of narrative order: the confraternity likely felt urgency in getting *The Baptism of Christ* onto the prominent northeast cloister wall to grant the cloister spiritual efficacy as soon as possible.

It was not only spiritual efficacy, however, that granted *The Baptism of Christ* its special status. The picture also put Andrea in dialogue with the city's great artists. The painting's composition shows that he was one of the many Florentine artists who studied Andrea del Verocchio's rendition of the subject (Fig. 2.58), which had been completed around 1475 and was

---

[152] Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ*, 53.

on display in the Church of San Salvi.[153] In this *Baptism*, a young Leonardo began to achieve in oil paint what Andrea was demonstrating in the Scalzo that he could attain, for the first time, in fresco: the effect of sfumato.[154] The obvious pictorial *paragone*, or comparison, between the two *Baptism of Christ* paintings is even more significant given the many ways that Andrea's cloister engaged with artistic dialogues surrounding the status of artistic media—such as drawing, painting, and sculpture—as well as the rise of the *nonfinito* style, which will be the subject of the following chapter.[155] Engaging in multiple spiritual and artistic discourses, Andrea's *Baptism of Christ* thus had the potential to position Andrea's reputation alongside renowned artists of the day like Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael.

Andrea's engagement in these kinds of discourses would have been important to the brothers of the Scalzo. His elevated reputation would have brought professional honor to Andrea's artist-brothers, who now could, because of their common membership in the confraternity, claim an affiliation with the master, even if they had not studied in Andrea's workshop. Even brothers who were not artists could still be proud of the artistic patronage that

---

[153] Freedberg, *Andrea del Sarto*, I, 8, notes that Andrea del Sarto would have also seen Ghirlandaio's version of the subject, which also takes its overall composition from the Andrea del Verrocchio altarpiece, in the Tornabuoni Chapel of Santa Maria Novella.
[154] Vasari, *Le Vite*, III, 366, in the life of Andrea del Verrocchio claimed that Leonardo's angel was so skillfully painted that Andrea resolved to never paint again: *"...e in quest'opera aiutandogli Lionardo da Vinci, allora giovanetto e suo discepolo, vi colorì un Angelo di sua mano, il quale era molto meglio che l'altre cose. Il che fu cagione, che Andrea si risolvette a non voler toccare più pennelli; poichè Lionardo, così giovanetto, in quell'arte si era portato molto meglio di lui*." Vasari, *Le Vite*, IV, 22, in the Life of Leonardo repeats this: "*Acconciossi dunque, come è detto, per via di ser Piero, nella sua fanciullezza all' arte con Andrea del Verrocchio, il quale facendo una tavola, dove San_Giovanni battez- zava Cristo, Lionardo lavorò un angelo che teneva alcune vesti; e benché fosse giovanetto, lo condusse di tal maniera, che molto meglio delle figure d'Andrea stava l'angelo di Lionardo; il che fu cagione ch'Andrea mai più non volle toccar colori, sdegnatosi che un fanciullo ne sapesse più di lui*."
[155] On the particular cultural importance of these kinds of comparisons in the Florentine context, refer to this dissertation, Chapter V, pages 311-312.

the confraternity could command because of the fame of its members, a concern that would have only been amplified later in the century when artist-members like Valerio Cioli (1529-1599) and Giovanni Battista Caccini (1556-1613) provided the decorations for the oratory and *luogo vecchio*.[156] Andrea's reinterpretation of Verrocchio's Baptism would thus have positioned the brothers to feel pride based on their relationship with Andrea, a sentiment that over time seems to have constituted a major part of their confraternal identity and to have drawn many of the city's artists into the brotherhood's ranks.

The legitimization of St. John the Baptist would have had special significance for the brothers of the Scalzo. As the patron saint of both their confraternity and their city, John the Baptist was tied up in many ways with both the brothers' corporate and individual identities. It was in the city's Baptistery, the interior, exterior, and altar of which were dedicated with important sculpture, reliefs, reliquaries, and mosaics depicting the life the Baptist, where, through the reenactment of Baptism, the sacrament instituted by John, a Florentine baby became a citizen.[157] This act tied up St. John the Baptist with every Florentine's civic identity from infancy.[158] Furthermore, his feast day was among the most important holy days in Florence, when all confraternities declared their devotion to the saint by marching under their banners in his honor, asserting their institutional presence and Johannine devotion in the streets of

---

[156] On the participation of later artist-members in the decoration of the Scalzo complex, consult Dow, "Confraternal Piety," 97-214 and his 2014. *Apostolic Iconography and Florentine Confraternities in the Age of Reform.* (Vermont: Ashgate), 75-102; as well as O'Brien, "'Apostles' in the oratory of the Compagnia dello Scalzo: 'Ordanata da e mie fratelli academize," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 14/15 (2011): 209-262.
[157] Trexler, *Public*, 48.
[158] For example, in Dante, *Inferno*, XIII, 142-144, rather than introduce himself as a Florentine, a soul in Hell introduces himself as being from the city of that traded patrons for John the Baptist: "*I'fui de la città che nel Battista mutò 'l primo padrone*."

Florence.[159] This day was also the most important contract-making day of the year as Florentines believed that it was especially egregious to go back on a contract signed on a day devoted to their patron; because of this the Baptist was associated with the value of a man's word and the maintenance of his personal reputation.[160] John the Baptist was such an important symbol of the city that for 300 years, he was pictured on the florin, the city's currency, opposite the *giglio*, the lily that still served, then as now, as the city's *stemma*. (Fig. 4.5) As the florin circulated throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa, St. John the Baptist became both an intercontinental ambassador and metonymic stand-in for Florence and its citizens, announcing the wealth, power, and virility of the city that was devoted to him through the economic supremacy of its currency.[161] Thus, the saint, as both a religious figure and an emblem, had already been tied up for centuries with Florentine male civic identity and the notion of Florentine exceptionality, not only within his city's limits but also on the global stage.

At the same time, John was not just a symbol of Florence but also his male embodiment. As a result, the male viewer could see how John's body was like his body, his face like John's. The repeated viewing of John—sometimes emblemized, sometimes naturalistic—on his city streets, his coins, and his art, resulted in a physical and psychological process of identification with the Baptist that took place over the entire course of a man's life. This assertion is supported by new interdisciplinary research by David Freedberg and collaborators in the sciences. Their study of human mirroring mechanisms showed that, when looking at art, not only do people have

---

[159] On the festival, refer especially to Heidi L. Chrétien. 1994. *The festival of San Giovanni: imagery and political power in Renaissance Florence*. (New York: Peter Lang).
[160] On the Feast of San Giovanni Battista and its relationships to contracts, refer to Trexler, *Public Life*, 263-270.
[161] On the symbolic value of the florin (and, in particular, the iconography of the *giglio* opposite the image of St. John the Baptist), refer to Mary Bergstein, "Marian Politics in Quattrocento Florence: The Renewed Dedication of Santa Maria del Fiore in 1412," *RQ* 44.4 (1991): 681-683.

automatic neural and physical responses that causes them to identify their own bodies with other bodies that they see, but also that viewers can even have body-part specific empathy-responses to elements of abstract, non-figural images.[162] As a result of this life-long process of self-identification, Florentine men saw John not only as a metonymic symbol of the city but also as a reflection of themselves. In Florence, John was at once every man and Everyman.

As the confraternity dedicated to John, confraternal practice reinforced the brother's identification with the Baptist. By virtue of their devotion to him, they enjoyed his special protection and staked part of their personal identity in their membership in his favored confraternity. His name was invoked repeatedly throughout their statutes; in the Preface, the confraternity petitioned him as "Our Father St. John the Baptist," listing him after only God, Mary, and Christ."[163] His lifecycle not only adorned their cloister but throughout their services, Lorenzi di Credi's *Baptism of Christ* altarpiece (Fig. 1.31), which was very close in composition to Andrea's fresco, stood in polychrome on their main altar on the north wall of the oratory.[164] While the brothers viewed Lorenzo's painting the confraternal rituals played out with the Father Governor and his counselors—offices held by established, and therefore older members—each taking part in a highly-regulated performance of power that taught both obedience to patriarchal hierarchies and moralized about the appropriate behavior for Christian men.[165] All the while, the confraternity members sat on the oratory benches, watching the ceremony, learning from the

---

[162] Refer to: David Freedberg and Vittori Gallese, "Motion, Emotion, and Empathy, in Esthetic Experience," *Trends in Cognitive Science* 11.5 (2007): 197-203, as well as Freedberg, "Empathy, Motion, and Emotion," *Wie sich Gefühle Ausdruck verschaffen / Klaus Herding; Antje Krause-Wahl* (2008): 17-51; 2017. "From Absorption to Judgment: Empathy in Aesthetic Response," in *Empathy: Epistemic Problems and Cultural-Historical Perspectives of a Cross-Disciplinary Concept* ed. Vanessa Lux 139-180. (London: Palgrave Macmillan).
[163] CapCRS, 86, 1r.
[164] O'Brien, "'Apostles,'" 213.
[165] Dow, "Confraternal Charity," 47-49.

example of older role models and from the direct instruction of sermons what Florentine men should believe and how they should behave.

During this process, the formal relationship of Andrea del Sarto's and of Lorenzo di Credi's versions of the *The Baptism of Christ* would have been paramount. On one hand, their similarity would have created visual continuity between the two spaces, the oratory and the cloister. At the same time, it also created continuity between the *confratello*'s two viewing selves—the individual self of the cloister and the collective self of the oratory. In this way, over time, as the *confratello* entered, experienced, and exited ritual activities, moving through the cloister, into the oratory, and back out again through the cloister, *The Baptism of Christ* served as a continuous memory-image that bound the collective and individual selves together over the course of the ritual activities, throughout the many years of a brother's confraternal participation.[166] John the Baptist's repeated pictorial body, with which the viewer already identified because of life-long process of Florentine enculturation, thus represented a powerful source and symbol of the brother's personal and collective as well as religious and civic identity.

The relationship between John the Baptist's pictorial body in the cloister and the brothers' bodies, however, could be problematic. As both Michael Camille and Leo Steinberg noted, *The Baptism of Christ* was an erotically-charged subject. Depicting the scene in the Scalzo required that Christ's nude, wet, idealized, life-size, adult body be put on display frontally in a direct confrontation with the male viewer.[167] At the same time, Christ's erotic body was also set

---

[166] On memory-images and the way that writers warned that they can be confused when using multiple sources that are close to each other, consult Mary Carruthers. *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*. (NY: Cambridge University Press), 10-11. Also refer to her "Ars oblivionalis, ars inveniendi: The Cherub Figure and the Arts of Memory," *Gesta* 48.2: 99-117, on the way that this played out with six different images of cherubs.
[167] Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ*, 16-17 introduces this problem.

in close pictorial relationship with the body of St. John the Baptist, with whom the brother had long been taught to identify. This meant that the *confratello*, who identified with the image of John the Baptist, could even more vividly imagine himself, like the saint, in a direct confrontation with Christ's nude, idealized body. It was thus critical—in the confraternal context especially—that pictorial interventions be made to images of *The Baptism of Christ* so that they meet conventional standards of decorum. In the context of the Scalzo, Andrea and Lorenzo alike would both have to disrupt their image's potential to foment or foster an erotic response to Christ's body, or even suggest a lax attitude towards homoeroticism, that could in turn promote an erotic encounter between brothers.

5. The Sexuality of (The Baptism of) Christ

Andrea del Sarto and Lorenzo di Credi were not the first artists to confront this task. Just as Camille noticed the dangerous ways that idolatry was linked to sexual desire in the Middle Ages, he also identified a variety of pictorial interventions that artists introduced to mitigate the sexuality of the naked body in a variety of pictorial contexts. For example, naked bodies were often pushed to the margins of the page where they were no longer the picture's focus, existing in a liminal zone where different social and pictorial rules applied. This division, Camille maintained, created "a map of permissible and impermissible areas" for visual play and misbehavior. In other cases, the artist chose simply to render the nude figures without their genitalia.[168] In still other cases, the nude body was given a negative association and cast as an "emblem of evil," such as images in which Lot's nude wife turned into a pillar of salt. Finally, Camille argued, the nude figure could be allegorized, coming to stand for something other than

[168] Camille, *The Gothic Idol*, 96.

itself, losing its carnality in its intellectual abstraction.[169] All of these artistic interventions, he maintained, ameliorated the sexuality of the nude body, neutralizing it.

These ways of dealing with the naked body are much like the forms of "soft iconoclasm" identified by Nagel, who argued that in order to interrupt the mimesis of religious pictures, artists of the sixteenth century looked backwards, channeling forms of visual archaism to reveal the masquerade of images. One of these strategies was to depict the figure as a quasi-icon, such as in the Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* in Paris (Fig. 4.6) or Albrecht Dürer's *Self Portrait* of 1500 (Fig. 4.7), now in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich (inv. no. 537).[170] Part of this strategy was the use of the "dramatic close-up," which came from Byzantine icons that, Nagel argues, flooded the Florentine art market after the 1453 fall of Constantinople.[171] Nagel's most compelling claim, though, is that in order to subvert mimesis, art became increasingly aniconic, relying more and more on symbols, such as the crucifix or the circular Eucharistic wafer, to do signifying work.[172] Naturalistic representation became so troublesome, Nagel argues, that artists began to eschew figuration all together.

Andrea did not turn to one of these cinquecento strategies, but rather seems to have looked to the quattrocento to solve the artistic problem presented by the Scalzo. By the time that both Camille and Nagel were writing, Steinberg had already identified the use of compositional interventions to mitigate the sexuality of Christ's body in depictions of his Baptism, which had long been recognized for its potential to be indecorous or even erotic.[173] In the ninth and tenth centuries, he found that artists often depicted Christ standing in Baptismal waters up his waist,

---

[169] Camille, *The Gothic Idol*, 97-99.
[170] Nagel, *The Controversy of the Italian Renaissance*, 35-36.
[171] Nagel, *The Controversy of the Italian Renaissance,* 43.
[172] Nagel, *The Controversy of the Italian Renaissance,* 262-280.
[173] Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ*, 134-138.

which were darkly-colored or embellished with wavy lines that indicated the movement of the River Jordan. Both of these aqueous renderings were strategies used to obscure his genitalia.[174] Sometimes, though, the water that artists depicted was clear, but Christ would be given no genitals at all.[175] From the turn of the thirteenth century through the mid-quattrocento, artists began to take a more naturalistic approach to Christ's body, softening the blow of his nudity by depicting him as a *cristus pudicus*. (Fig. 4.8) In this type, which appears almost exclusively in northern Europe, Christ covered his genitals with his left hand while using his right to bless the viewer.[176] Steinberg argued that all of these solutions must have appeared ungainly to the early-modern painter, who finally chose to ignore the sacramental requirement of nudity and simply paint Christ in the Jordan's shallow waters while wearing a loin cloth.[177] Steinberg argued that this solution became conventional and so barely registers with the modern viewer, even though at the time it was an innovative move away from the sacramental requirement of nudity to accommodate a move towards pictorial naturalism.[178]

This last pictorial solution represents how Andrea depicted Jesus in his the Scalzo *Baptism of Christ*. (Fig. 1.8) In the center of the composition, Christ stands in the shallow waters of the River Jordan, nude save a loincloth covering his genitals. His head is bowed and hands clasped in prayer in front of his chest. John, who stands on the bank of the river, pours baptismal waters from a shallow bowl onto Christ's head. John's chest is bare, the upper portion of his draped garment having slipped behind his right shoulder as a result of the extension of his arm forward in the baptismal gesture. The Baptist's garment consists of a cape knotted at his neck as

---

[174] Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ,* 136.
[175] Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ,* 136 and Camille, *The Gothic Idol*, 96.
[176] Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ,* 136.
[177] Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ,* 137.
[178] Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ, 136-137.*

well as a large piece of fabric covering his body that spans from neck to feet; it is placed over his left shoulder and belted at the waste. In John's left hand he holds the cruciform staff, which he supports between his index and middle fingers and rests on his left thigh. On the opposite river bank, two angels, depicted as adolescent boys, witness the scene. The one closest the viewer is portrayed in profile and looks directly at Christ, pointing towards him. The other angel looks towards his mate while pointing back at himself. The entire scene is set in the wilderness with rocky outcrops, a scattering of trees, and vegetation growing on the rolling banks of the river. Centrally located above Christ's head is the dove of the Holy Spirit. Once, gilded rays of light, now visible in contemporary prints and drawings after the painting (Fig. 2.59), emanated from his beak in three distinct lines, one beam of sacred light directed each towards John, Christ, and the angels.[179] The overall composition of this fresco is nearly identical to that of Lorenzo di Credi's altarpiece, (Fig. 1.31) once attributed to Leonardo.

The similarity between the paintings is not surprising given that both Andrea's and Lorenzo's paintings are modeled on the *Baptism of Christ* (Fig. 2.58) by Andrea del Verrocchio and Leonardo da Vinci. Although the date of Andrea's *Baptism of Christ* is uncertain, it was probably produced between 1511 to 1514.[180] The date of Lorenzo's *Baptism* is unknown. It is likely that both paintings were completed around the same time and that both artists were directed or decided together to model their compositions on Verrocchio's. Alternately, the artist working later, whether Andrea or Lorenzo, may have deliberately chosen to base his composition on the other's to create visual continuity through the cloister into the oratory. Although it is not impossible that the two artists could have produced these pictures completely independently,

[179] Refer to Chapter I: Introduction, pages 31-32, on the severe damage apparent in this painting.
[180] On date of *The Baptism of Christ*, refer to Appendix A.

given how similar they are and that they were ordered by the same commissioning body—a body in which at least Andrea, if not Lorenzo, was himself a member—it seems likely that the painter of the later *Baptism* was aware of the earlier's composition. It cannot be ruled out, even, that the two artists may have even produced their versions in conversation with each other.

While the three *Baptism of Christ*s—that of Verrocchio, Andrea del Sarto, and Lorenzo di Credi—are extremely similar, there are minor but significant differences. Comparison among Christ's body is particularly illuminating. In all three paintings, he stands in *contrapposto*. Verrocchio achieves that contrapposto by dropping Christ's left knee far below and to the side of his right one and spacing Christ's feet wide apart. Both Andrea and Lorenzo, in contrast, straightened Christ's left, loadbearing leg, raising his hip high enough to meet his left elbow. This move creates a strong curve down the left side of the body. To ameliorate this feminine curve, Lorenzo di Credi spaced Christ's legs apart and straightened his right leg, turning out his foot to show its flatness to the ground. As a result, Christ seems securely anchored to the earth, a feeling that is augmented by the parallel placement of Christ's legs. Andrea, on the other hand, kept Christ's legs closed with his right knee crossing in front of his left. At the same time, Andrea placed Christ's right foot only about an inch in front of the left and raised his heel off of the ground, pointing Christ's toe towards the viewer. This crucial compositional move resulted in the noticeable curve down the right side of Christ's body, which is emphasized by the billowing drapery of his loin cloth. As a result, though Christ's stance in the paintings by Verrocchio and Lorenzo are stable, solid, and masculine, Andrea seems to have intentionally amplified the feminine curve of Christ's lower body.

The sense of gender difference of the three Christs is apparent not only in their legs and feet, but is continued into their loincloths. The loin cloth by Andrea stands in contrast to the ones

modeled by the Christs of Verrocchio and Lorenzo di Credi, though the latter's is most similar to his. Like that of Andrea, the loin cloth by Lorenzo is narrow and translucent, revealing both Christ's hips and the top of his pubic bone. It barely covers his genitals. Also like in Andrea's painting, the cloth is knotted suggestively in front of Christ's genitals. Both Steinberg and Patricia Simons have traced the loincloth as an artistic device through European art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, concluding that it often stands in for Christ's penis, allowing the loin cloth to "reveal what it might conceal."[181] In this respect, Lorenzo's loin cloth, admittedly, is racy. However, the garment appears firmly tied, is in no danger of slipping off, and is pulled close to Christ's body. The fabric hits both of Christ's outer thighs at the same level, emphasizing his narrow, manly hips, and the solid placement of his legs. Though perhaps provocative for the conservative style of Lorenzo di Credi, the loin cloth is overall masculine in character, with the narrow cut of the fabric in front of Christ's genitals emphasizing his sex rather than his sexuality.[182]

Verrocchio's Christ wears a very different loin cloth. Made of a stiff, opaque, striped fabric, although narrowed in front of Christ's genitals, it seems more like a constructed garment than casually tied drapery. Combined with his manly stance, Christ's lower body does little apparent work to call into question the normativity of his masculinity. The loin cloth of Andrea's Christ, however, is very different in character compared to that of either Lorenzo or Verrocchio.

---

[181] Steinberg, "On the Sexuality of Christ," 136-137. Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, 294, agrees with Steinberg that loincloths can often refer to Christ's penis. Unlike Steinberg, who thought that presentation of Christ's genitals confirmed his human status, Simons thought the iconography spoke to male anxieties about their own phallus.
[182] As Patricia Simons, *Gender of Men*, 6, has already noted, though Steinberg titled his essay "On the sexuality of Christ…," the argument is not about sexuality at all but rather Christ's sex and its signifier, his penis. For Steinberg, the emphasis on Christ's penis referred to the theological belief that Christ was incarnate as a man.

Made of a lightweight fabric loosely handled, it rests precariously atop Christ's high left hip, and slips diagonally downwards across his body to where it finally gathers around his mid right thigh. Here again, the loin cloth is secured in front of where Christ's genitals should be. The corner of a bit of fabric has been pulled upward in front of Christ's pubic bone, cheekily suggesting a phallus. In addition to humanizing Christ, the visual play helps the observer construct a mental image that more highly references Christ's body, which, his coquettish stance and sensuous loincloth imply, is much more effeminate than masculine in character.

The upper bodies of the three Christ's also bear comparison. Verrocchio's Christ leans forward slightly with his shoulders pushed back, arms placed in front of his chest, palms flattened together in a gesture of prayer. The verticality of Christ's torso is emphasized by his musculature, which is articulated through his stomach, chest, and arms. Even though Christ bows his head and lowers his eyes, he is still positioned slightly higher than John. This causes his cousin to have to reach awkwardly high into the uppermost part of the picture plane to baptize him. Lorenzo's Christ is similar in depiction. Though he bows his head to a greater degree, it remains higher than John's. With his palms pressed in front of him, Christ keeps his arms flush to the sides of his body save his left elbow, which does not actually touch his hip but instead is held slightly above it. The negative space created there emphasizes the distinct curve of his hip. However, this curve stands in contrast to Christ's muscular torso, the articulation of which creates a strong vertical shadow from his chin to groin that is carried to the ground through the interior boundary of his left leg. This strong chin-to-ground line further draws attention to the planted feeling of his feet and the near-frontality of Christ's body. Though the Christs of Verrocchio and Lorenzo di Credi both appear slightly elongated and perhaps even elegant, the

figures overall dominate the composition as appropriately masculine counterparts to John the Baptist.

Another major difference between Andrea's Christ and that of Verrocchio and Lorenzo is the gesture he uses to pray. Rather than flattening his palms together, he lays his right hand horizontally on top of his left with his right knuckles facing the viewer. This parallel placement of his hands and arms blocks his chest from sight. This chest has a peculiar feature in that it is narrower than his hips, which accentuates the excessive width of his lower abdomen. The fleshiness of his midsection as well as his upper thighs is further emphasized by the loincloth that is angled diagonally across this part of his body. Compared to the Christs of Lorenzo and Verrocchio, whose bodies are sinewy and stalwart, turning John into a secondary character, in physicality and in attitude Andrea's Christ is curved, fleshy, and feminine, occupying pictorial space that is complementary to that which is inhabited by his cousin.

That Christ's body might be characterized as feminine is not uncommon. In her response to Steinberg, Caroline Walker Bynum demonstrated that during the Middle Ages, in both text and in art, Christ's body was not only "enfleshed" by the Virgin Mary (because Jesus had no human father) but also that "over and over again in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries we find representations of Christ as the one who feeds and bleeds."[183] Bynum showed that even the wound in Christ's side was often depicted as analogous to a lactating breast and that Christ's body often functioned in the way a woman's body did.[184] Steinberg, she argued, was so fixated

[183] Caroline Walker Bynum, "The Body of Christ in the Later Middle Ages: A Reply to Leo Steinberg," 427.
[184] Bynum, "The Body of Christ," 407-434. Refer to also, Vida J. Hull, "The Sex of the Savior in Renaissance Art: The Revelations of Saint Bridget and the Nude Christ Child in Renaissance Art," *Studies in Iconography* 15 (1993): 77-112. On the ways in which such a feminized Christ may have been deployed by the patriarchy to control female viewers, consider Julie Melnyk,

on Christ's male sexuality (although, as Simons later noted, Steinberg was not analyzing Christ's sexuality but rather the obsession with his sexual organ) that he missed the ways in which Christ's body was often construed as female.[185] Even Steinberg's only nod to the possibility that a feminine iconographical tradition might bear on the representation of Christ's body, the identification of the *cristus pudicus*, masculinizes its female counterpart, the *venus pudica*.[186] The *cristus pudicus* accomplishes this by raising his arm to bless the viewer with an authoritative gesture that exposes his nude chest. Christ's chest—unlike that of the *venus pudica*, who covers hers—is permissible because it is not shameful. Christ also covers his genitals with his left hand, which, in Steinbergian terms, "gave assurance that the Incarnate was complete in every part of a man."[187] Andrea's Christ, however, does not do this. Rather, he places his hands horizontally in front of him and parallel to each other. In this way, Christ makes the gesture of humility typical of the Madonna Annunciate who reacts to the divine presence of the archangel Gabriel.[188] That is, in Andrea's feminine depiction of Christ's sinless body at his Baptism, he has also evoked the immaculate female body of Christ's mother, the Virgin Mary.

The placement of Christ's hands on top of each other, towards but not touching his chest, was not Andrea's invention. The gesture of humility was used a few years earlier at the beginning of the sixteenth century by Andrea Sansovino (1467-1529) in his own sculptural group of *The Baptism of Christ* (1502-1505) (Fig. 4.9), which remains situated above the prominent

---

"'Mighty Victims': Women Writers and the Feminization of Christ," *Victorian Literature and Culture* (2003): 131-157.
[185] Patricia Simons, *The Sex of Men*, 6.
[186] Steinberg, "On the Sexuality of Christ,"136-137.
[187] Steinberg, "The Sexuality of Christ," 138.
[188] Nagel, *The Controversy of the Italian Renaissance*, 45, notes that this hand gesture was typical of images of the Madonna Annunciate beginning in the Byzantine period and developed from earlier images of the Madonna grieving her son at his death.

eastern portal of the Florentine Baptistery.[189] The lower half of Sansovino's Christ also bears similarity to Andrea's. They share the same load-bearing left leg and hip with bent right knee and feet only inches apart, which causes Christ's loin cloth to slip in nearly-identical ways. However, there are two major differences in the lower halves of the bodies. The bent right leg of the sculpted Christ is turned outwards, in a similar way to, though more extreme than, the Christ by Lorenzo di Credi. The leg of the Andrea's Christ, in contrast, turns inwards towards the body, causing his knees to cross like a *venus pudica*. At the same time, while the loin cloth of Andrea's Christ is clearly inspired by the earlier Sansovino sculpture, the drapery on the sculpture has a rigid feel that is not only a function of its materiality. Instead, the marble pleats and folds are broad, stylized, and regular; though slipping towards the middle of Christ's right thigh, the drapery on his right side falls stiffly back towards his leg, not away from it, as it would if reacting to the movement of Christ's body and the natural environment. This gives the loin cloth the feeling of being solid and deliberately arranged, as it would have been in a drapery study in the studio.[190] In comparison, the loin cloth of Christ in Andrea's rendition is feminine.[191] Unlike Sansovino's solid forms, the drapery of the Scalzo Christ slips naturally down Christ's raised hip, the height of which is emphasized by the intricately and irregularly folded drapery that

---

[189] On the correspondence of these figures, refer to Ingeborg Fraenckel. 1935. *Andrea del Sarto: Gemälde und Zeichnungen*. (Strassburg: Heitz), 36, 150, and 212. Fraenckel claimed that even the folds of drapery of the figures were identical. I hope to have demonstrated that despite their extraordinary similarity there are small, but critical, differences.
[190] On the preparation of drapery models using wax, refer to Wackernagel, *World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist*, 320. On the importance of these kinds of studies in artistic training and an examination of several of them by Florentine artists of the period, consult Jean K. Cadogan, "Linen Drapery Studies by Verrocchio, Leonardo, and Ghirlandaio," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 46.1 (1983): 27-62, whose primary concern is group of related studies of drapery from this period that were painted on linen using an unusual technique.
[191] The definition of "feminine" according to Florentines of the sixteenth century is the subject of the next chapter.

Andrea built up on the higher left hip, accentuating its curve. Strong highlights catch the many undulating folds of the cloth, as if it were made of a lightweight material that responded to its wearer and the world around it. This feeling is carried into the drapery that falls around the outside of Christ's right thigh, which flows away from and flutters off of the body. Even though it is much more similar to Sansovino's loin cloth than that of Verrocchio or Lorenzo di Credi, the naturalistic and even sensuous arrangement of the gauzy material around the hips of Andrea's Christ remains distinctly naturalistic and feminine.

Having established that the lower half of this depiction of Christ's body evokes the *venus pudica* type, it is worth considering that the femininity of his loin cloth may be due to another formal inspiration: the long, streaming red hair featured around the hips of Botticelli's *venus pudica par excellence,* the nascent goddess in *The Birth of Venus* (Fig. 4.10) painted in the 1480s and now housed in the Uffizi. Not only would this painting been known to Andrea, his adaptation of its composition in *The Baptism of Christ* fits into Andrea's early artistic agenda of reinterpreting established Florentine masterpieces to situate himself within a specific artistic tradition that he could then surpass.[192]

Andrea does, in fact, seem to have looked at the painting as a model for his horizontally-formatted *Baptism of Christ*. Unlike the vertically-oriented panel paintings of the subject by Verrocchio and Lorenzo, Andrea's fresco was made for a rectangular section of a wall. His three main figural groups are spread out across the picture plane in a much more airy setting, similar to the horizontal use of space in Botticelli's *Birth of Venus.* On the right side of Andrea's picture, John, who reaches awkwardly to baptize Christ, takes the place of Venus' handmaiden, who

[192] Steven J. Cody. 2020. *Andrea del Sarto: Splendor and Renewal in the Renaissance Altarpiece*. (Leiden: Amsterdam university Press).

offers the goddess her robe. On the left of Andrea's picture, the two angels evoke the earlier artist's winged winds, who also appear on the left side of the composition and closely overlap each other to form a single compositional unit. Finally, the feminized Christ takes the place of the central figure of Venus, her semi-circular scallop shell appearing inverted as the semi-circular mouth of the river Jordan, at the top of which stands Christ.

The similarities between Andrea's *Baptism of Christ* and Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* do not end with the figural groups and their placement in space. Even the landscape between Christ and John is more similar to the one pictured between Venus and her handmaid in Botticelli's picture than it is between the two main figures in either *Baptism of Christ* by Verrocchio or Lorenzo. In those two paintings, the water between Christ and John is interrupted by a tall, brown, rocky outcrop that dominates the background. No such outcrop appears in Andrea's picture, which instead features the sloping banks of the Jordan that reach like fingers into the river, which is much more reminiscent of the shoreline in Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*. The arrangement of bodies relative to the shore means that even the negative space between the two main figures in both the *Baptism* and the *Birth* are similar to each other. This is because the Baptists by both Verrocchio and Lorenzo are pictured each with a leg moving towards Christ whereas the legs of the figures on the shore by both Andrea and Botticelli lead with their knees, creating a curved line towards Christ. It therefore seems that when Andrea stretched his composition into a horizontal format to fit the cloister's pre-determined dimensions, he realized that Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* could serve equally as an artistic precedent for the composition as Verrocchio's *Baptism of Christ*. In this light, Jesus' slipping loin cloth in the Scalzo, which wraps around from behind his left hip and cascades down across him in lengths of extraneous

fabric, now appears as a stand-in for the Venus' sensual red-blond hair that at once covers and draws attention to her genitals and curving body.[193]

The potential for Christ's body to take on even the symbolic mantle of femininity allows for new relational dynamics to emerge between the two main characters in Andrea's *Baptism of Christ*. These dynamics come into focus when the image is compared to Franciabigio's *Meeting of Christ and John in the Desert*, (Fig. 1.17) which is located on the northeast wall of the cloister immediately perpendicular to *The Baptism*. That is, the *confratello* standing in front of *The Baptism of Christ* could make a close and direct comparison between the two images simply by turning his head. On the right side of Franciabigio's image, John and Christ appear as young adolescents, but they are, as in Andrea's picture, in close physical proximity and respond to each other compositionally.[194] On the bottom right of the composition, the young Jesus, who faces the viewer, stands above John and pulls him towards him. Although the lowest section of this fresco was destroyed in the 1966 flood, contemporary prints and drawings show that John was genuflecting to Christ on his right knee. (Fig. 4.11) Despite this deferential gesture, the closeness of the two adolescent boy's relationship is indicated by the warmth of their embrace, as Christ pulls the adolescent John off the ground and towards his body by pressing his hands both on John's shoulder and the back of his head. In a gesture that expresses John's self-perceived unworthiness to embrace Christ, he flings his arms out to his side. In these ways, Franciabigio

[193] The implications of the implicit iconographical comparison between the Neoplatonic celestial Venus and Christ, virginal god of love, is analyzed in the next chapter.
[194] On this iconography, refer to Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, "Giovannino Battista: A Study in Renaissance Religious Symbolism," *The Art Bulletin* 37.2 (1955): 85-101. In her "Giovannino Battista: A Supplement," *The Art Bulletin* 43.4 (1961): 323 n. 19, she noted similarities between Franciabigio's composition in the Scalzo to a predella scene by Piero di Cosimo in the predella of *The Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saint*s in the collection of the St. Louis Museum of Art (obj. 1:1940).

established Christ's authority over the young Baptist, who responds to him with appropriate deference and awe.

In Andrea's *Baptism of Christ* that relationship has fundamentally changed. The two figures, John and Christ, are no longer young adolescents but rather mature men at the prime of their lives. This is emphasized by Christ's almost-nude body, which, like John's, is slightly elongated, causing their adult male bodies to dominate the majority of the picture plane. This pictorial dominance is further emphasized by the two adults' juxtaposition to the two much-younger angels who, in contrast, sport compact and fully-draped bodies. These angels watch the older men, their gesticulations—one pointing at the scene, the other back at himself—mirroring those of Mary and Joseph in the *Meeting of Christ and John in the Desert*, who are similarly located on the left side of the composition and respond to an encounter between the two cousins. The parents' gesture of concern in the earlier scene has thus been transformed into one of devotion in the latter. Having come of age, John and Christ are no longer in need of protection but rather imitation. This is especially interesting given that the Biblical telling of Christ's Baptism locates it at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, when he was about thirty or thirty-one years old and John was only a few months older. This is the same age that *confratelli* were establishing their own business, marrying, and becoming heads of households, a point at which they would become models for younger members of the confraternity.[195] This is analogous to

---

[195] Alberti, *On the Family* I, 38, is clear about elder men's responsibility to be a model for younger and younger to obey them. He writes: "Therefore let the elders be ever alert and busy for the well-being and honor of the whole family, counseling, correcting, and keeping a firm hold, as it were, on the bridle of the whole family," and later, "The old cannot more appropriately acquire, increase, and conserve great authority and dignity than by caring for the young," followed by "The old, then, should be common father to all the young." He ends with, "I conclude, my children, that the duty of the young is to love and obey the old, to respect age, and to have toward all their elders the same attitude as toward their father, showing them all the required submissiveness and reverence."

Andrea's *Baptism of Christ*, in which the two main figures become men and enter the marketplace (insofar as their entrance into public religious ministry, a non-profit activity, was construed as a profession) at the same moment. Together, the cousins are now no longer objects of adult concern but rather role models to other men, which is denoted by the young angels, who demonstrate to the onlooking *confratelli* the appropriate reverence for the two men in the picture.

The way in which the central group of John and Christ changes in depiction from the younger coupling in *The Meeting of Christ and John in the Desert* to the older one in *The Baptism of Christ* also speaks to Christ's coming of age in relationship to his cousin. In the earlier scene, Christ is in a physical position of dominance over the smaller figure of John. Christ's head is higher than his cousin's, his body erect. John, in contrast, genuflects to Christ, the bareness of his arms emphasized by the kinetic force with which he flings them to his sides and by their juxtaposition to the heavily draped figures of Christ, Joseph, and Mary. This detail, along with that of John's bare feet contrasted to the sandaled feet of Christ, speaks not only to John's ascetism but the physical vulnerability that that ascetism brings with it, which warrants Joseph and Mary's concern. But Christ is already attending to his cousin ahead of the adults. The placement of his hand on the back of John's head recalls the tender "chin-chuk," or the infant Christ's tendency to grasp the chin, face, or even the hair of his mother to bring her face to his, a recurring motif identified by Steinberg.[196] Christ here uses a similar gesture to lift John from the ground and embrace him. The relationship between John and Christ is summarized by this action, which at once emphasizes their deep emotional bond but also asserts Christ's dominance over his cousin.

---

[196] Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ*, 3-5, as well as excursis III. "On the dignity of the touched chin."

An interesting feature of *The Baptism of Christ*, then, is its inversion of Franciabigio's composition to show John in a position of dominance over Christ. On the bank of the river, the Baptist's head is slightly higher than his cousins, a long-standing visual indicator of dominance. Although John is still clothed, Christ is now nude save a loin cloth and has removed his shoes, the position of vulnerability in which John was earlier pictured. Christ's hand on the back of John's head is replaced by the baptismal gesture, the water flowing from John's bowl and wetting Christ's hair, which hangs down in rope-like furls around his head and shoulders. John's pictorial dominance over Christ is supported because, having no original sin, it was believed that Christ submitted to baptism to set an example for other men to follow that legitimized John's ministry and to demonstrate the importance of obedience to God, who ordained both the sacrament of Baptism and John's status as a prophet.[197] But because Christ and God are one and the same, when Christ asserts obedience to God he is really asserting obedience to himself. His submission to Baptism thus reinforces his own authority as well. Thus, John's performance of and Christ's submission to the sacrament of Baptism at once legitimizes the authority of both men. The two peers, Christ and John, *cristus* and *alter cristus,* take on their position as fully-legitimized men in society reciprocally, their extremely close relationship each investing authority in the other to continue his public ministry.

That Christ's body is effeminized and that he is submissive to John calls into question the potential for this close bond to turn erotic. Patricia Simons has argued at length that much Italian art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries operated within a system of semenotics, the suggestion "that in premodern Europe there was substantial meaning (or semiotic valence) to three non-

[197] Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ*, 52-53, referring to the explanation offered by Bede, though noting that it is thoroughly Augustinian.

penile factors: semen, testicles, and what was considered the concomitant matter of innately masculine 'heat.'"[198] That is, rather than signifying masculinity just by depicting the shaft and glans of the penis or by equivalent "phallic symbols," masculinity was also signified in the arts by the testicles and its materials. Semen, the products of the testes, was signified in a multitude of ways, most notably through fluid.[199] At the same time, sexual stimulation could be represented by back-and-forth repetitive acts, such as sawing, spinning, or stirring.[200] Artists likened the orgasmic release of semen from the penis to water flowing or bursting forth, as from a spigot.[201] In the case of *The Baptism of Christ*, a semenological relationship could be construed between the two cousins. It is implied both by John's repeated act of pouring water over the heads of catechumens as well as in the visual repetition of the three gilded rays that radiate from the dove of the holy spirit towards the three main male figural foci of John, Christ, and the angels (now visible only in prints, such as Fig. 2.59). That these rays and even the dove itself can be construed as semenological seems amply evident from the countless depictions of the annunciation of the Virgin, in which they regularly play a role in impregnating the chaste Mary. Andrea thus seems to have exploited the possibility that the viewer could have construed these visual cues—Christ's effeminate body, John's position of domination over him, the pouring of water, and the repetition of this in the gilded rays—as semenological, an indicator of the extremely close relationship between John and Christ that foreshadows their parallel destinies.[202]

---

[198] Simons, *The Sex of Men*, 2
[199] Simons, *The Sex of Men*, 4-6.
[200] Simons, *The Sex of Men*, 254-289, explores the many household items and objects that could be used to represent.
[201] Simons, *The Sex of Men,* 112-122. On sawing and its relationship to playing a bowed instrument in the semenological context, refer to Zappella, "The Implicating Gaze," 183.
[202] That these destinies were parallel was made evident by the many juxtapositions of the lives of Christ and John the Baptist, which, scene for scene, compared the major events of their lives.

This is not to suggest that *The Baptism of Christ* implies a sexual relationship between the men. Rather, the opposite is expressed. It seems that Andrea's image was considered perfectly acceptable for public display in the religious space and was not subject to censure by contemporaries of which we know. Rather than arousing erotic desire, then, the painting can be construed as an important model for homosocialization. Because the viewer already identified with St. John the Baptist, who was in a close, but fully platonic, relationship with Christ, the brother came to understand that he could have similarly intense relationships with his brothers that, though characterized by extreme intimacy, did not turn sexual. In this way, the picture afforded the viewer the opportunity to understand that not all relationships between men were experienced as chaste/sexual binaries but rather existed on a homosocial continuum, a spectrum of desire in which chastity and sexuality occupied the extremes.[203]

5. *Homines Magni et Albi*

Instead of desexualizing *The Baptism of Christ* it appears that Andrea magnified the erotic potential of Christ's body by feminizing it. Narratively and compositionally this move placed Christ in a state of submission to John. Through the signification of male *efluviae* in the form of the baptismal waters of the Jordan and the golden rays of the Holy Spirit, Andrea placed the male body of John and the effeminate body of Christ in a semenological relationship with each other. In so doing, he allowed the viewer, who saw himself in John, to understand himself on a homosocial continuum. But if the image aroused actual desire, this strategy would backfire,

---

This was the case, for example, in the Florentine Baptistery mosaics where Christ's Passion is juxtaposed to the Passion of John the Baptist.

[203] Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 2.

threatening rather than strengthening relationships within the confraternity and calling into question the group's reputation. Thus, if the brothers had believed the highly-effeminate and semenological composition to be overly indecorous or sexual in nature, they would have intervened when shown the *modello* before the execution of the fresco cycle or even censored the composition after, as critics did in the Sistine Chapel, to ameliorate the picture's potential for idolatry.[204] But how was the decorum of Andrea's *Baptism* being achieved? Could a flimsy loin cloth alone really render Christ's nude body acceptable for public religious display?

In her analysis of the removal of Donatello's *Judith* from the its place of pride in front of the Palazzo Vecchio in 1502 to make room for Michelangelo's *David*, (Fig. 4.12) Mary Garrard pointed out that the installation of the marble sculpture represented the first flagrant display of a monumentally-scaled nude male body in public since antiquity.[205] Garrard argues that the replacement of the female tyrannicide with the male giant-slayer was a "response to fear" of the danger of the increasing power of women in Florence at that time.[206] Casting it as a sexually-threatening foil to Donatello's young, androgynous *David* (Fig. 4.13), who stood nearby, Michelangelo's sculpture represented a beautiful young man whose imposing body guarded the entrance of the Palazzo della Signoria. Described as the *homo magnus et albus*, the "great, white man," in the records, his physique and physiognomy represented erotic ideals.[207]

---

[204] On documents and technical notes related to Daniele's interventions, refer to Fabrizio Mancinelli, Gianluigi Colalucci, and Nazzareno Gabrielli. 1994. "The Last Judgment*: Notes on its Conservation History Technique, and Restoration,* in *The Sistine Chapel: A Glorious Restoration*, edited by Pierluigi de Vecchi, pp. 236-255. (NY: Harry N. Abrams), 236-238.
[205] Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square," 29, especially note 50.
[206] Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square," 28. On this removal, refer to also: Sarah Blake McHJam, "Donatello's Bronze *David* and *Judith* as Metaphors of Medici Rule in Florence," *Art Bulletin* 83 (2001): 32-47; Randolph, *Engaging Symbols*, 243-286.
[207] On the *David*, refer to Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square," 29 and Paoletti, *Michelangelo's David*, 27-28. On erotic ideals, consult Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 1-4.

The initial working of the marble block that became the *David*, however, was not executed by Michelangelo but rather by the earlier Florentine artist Agostino di Duccio (1418-1481) and later by Antonio Rossellino.[208] Recent scholarship has argued that the earlier artist played a much larger part in shaping the final state of the *David* than has been long believed.[209] Adding to this conversation, Sean Roberts has suggested that even in the late 1470s, Antonio's very-unfinished *David* may have been compared to Praxiteles' (395-330 BCE) homoerotic sculpture of *Eros* in the city of Thespiae.[210] Though lost by late antiquity, copies and descriptions of the sculpture indicate that the youthful god of love and sex was depicted as a colossus in the round. His nude adolescent body bore no identifying attributes, but his face was marked by an expression of suffering. The sculpture was praised for its intense psychological portrayal of the pain that amorous desire can cause.[211] This potential association between Praxiteles' pained, homoerotic *Eros* with the earliest state of the *David* demonstrates that maybe even from the time earlier artists worked on the block, the sculpture's potential to arouse male desire was understood and acknowledged.

The *David*'s eroticism was problematic. As an old-testament figure, a viewer's sexual response to the sculpted *David* would constitute idolatry specifically because of the statue's referentiality to the Biblical King David. But the problem was compounded because Michelangelo's sculpture also could be seen as a symbol of the ideal individual Florentine man. This identification seems to have been at least partially deliberate. On 3 September 1501,

---

[208] Paoletti, *Michelangelo's David*, 21 and 35-36, describes the commission before Michelangelo's involvement in the project.
[209] Paoletti, *Michelangelo's David*, 72-75.
[210] Sean Roberts. "Antonio Rossellino, the *Eros* of Praxiteles, and Michelangelo's *David*." *Source: Notes in the History of Art* (2020): 219-229.
[211] Roberts, "Antonio Rossellino," 220-222.

Michelangelo decided to construct a brick and wood shed around the statue, which had until that time been plainly visible in the courtyard of the Opera del Duomo. The artist kept the *David* hidden until 23 June 1504, when he unveiled it for the public celebration of the Feast of St. John the Baptist, which was the following day.[212] The David's reappearance in Florence on the feast day of its patron saint—in a year that belonged to a period of fervently renewed republicanism—was politically and theologically loaded.[213] But at the very least, it created an association between the *David* and St. John the Baptist, with whom Florentine men already identified, that in turn supported his potential identification with the sculpture. In this way, just as St. John the Baptist could stand as a proxy for any Florentine man because of a process of enculturated viewing, so too could the *David.* That meant that sexual desire aroused by the body of the sculpture was experienced vis á vis one's own body and its relationship to the bodies of neighbors, brothers, and friends. It was therefore critical that the *David*'s sexuality be nullified.

Garrard argues that as a result of the *David*'s potential sexuality and the need to neutralize it, his genitals were considered so indecent by many city fathers that they had to be covered. The men therefore decided to fix a gilded girdle of leaves to the crotch of Michelangelo's sculpture that probably remained in place for decades.[214] By hiding the *David*'s genitals, the city's elders, Garrard claims, desexualized him, causing him to be able to function symbolically as a masculine ideal rather than as object of desire.[215] She writes that it appeals to "masculine solidarity," the:

> "…homosocial continuum, and the sexual potency that is mystically conferred to every member of the brotherhood who imagines himself standing with, and as, this *homo*

[212] Roberts, "Antonio Rossellino," 226.
[213] On this period, refer to Najemy, *History of Florence*, 409-420.
[214] Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square, 28-29. On the girdle, refer to Paoletti, *Michelangelo's David*, 53. It seems to have been in place when Aretino wrote his letter to Michelangelo.
[215] Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square," 29.

> *magnus et albus*. David now comes forth, not as the object of masculine desire, but as the embodied subject of masculine aspiration. This manly hero makes Donatello's boy seem childish and feminine. In one fell swoop, Michelangelo's *David* feminized all that came before."[216]

Garrard thereby argues that by girding the *David*'s loins, its homoerotic epicenter, the sculpture was rendered acceptable for public display and was able to function as an ideal of masculinity rather than as a sexual ideal. That is, because a Florentine man could now look at the perfect nude male body of the *David* and acknowledge his physical perfection without feelings of lust, the sculpture facilitated the realization that male beauty could be experienced by the intellect. Just, as I have argued, Andrea exploited the sexuality of Christ's body in his *Baptism of Christ* to emphasize the intense ideal relationship between men, the sexuality of Michelangelo's *David*—neutered through its girding—allowed his physical perfection to stand for an abstract Neoplatonic ideal of Florentine manhood.

Garrard is certainly correct about the potential ability of the *David* to be perceived as a symbol of masculine perfection rather than as an object of homosexual desire, despite the homoerotic appeal of his idealized body. However, for Garrard as for Steinberg, the male genitals were the locus of all of male potency, which was nullified as soon as the offending organ was obscured. This seems insufficient, of course. Who could see the nude, muscular, body of *David* from across the Piazza della Signoria and think that the colossus' sexuality had been neutered by the addition of the golden leaves around his hips? The *David*'s erotic appeal was not confined to his penis, but rather, as Garrard herself suggests, was a result of his complete adult physique, sculpted in the round and situated in the Florence's main civic space, interacting with both other sculpted bodies and the bodies of real Florentine men. A loin cloth was simply not

---

[216] Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square," 29-31. "Donatello's boy" of course, refers to his bronze *David*, now in the Bargello.

enough. Men had to be able to look at the figure and perceive it on a continuum in which homosociality and same-sex desire were radically disrupted.

A radical disruption, in pictorial terms, would mean that the sexuality of *David*'s entire dangerous body, not just his genitals, would have to be overcome. In this light, the official description of the sculpture, *homo magnus et albus*, the "great, white man," seems particularly revealing. In an inversion of the scale of the Davidian story, Michelangelo's shepherd is not diminutive but himself a Goliath relative to the Florentines who navigated the Piazza della Signoria. At an impressive seventeen-feet tall, the *David*'s magnitude immediately announced that he was a sculpture, not a real person. The sculpture's size, as a disruption, was therefore quite radical, announcing its artificiality in its failure to refer to any living person with a one-to-one correspondence. The distantiation of the image that resulted because of the apparent artificiality of its impossible magnitude was a way in which the verisimilitude of the *David's* body, and with it the potential for an erotic encounter with the statue, was subverted.

But was the *David*'s great size a disruption that was radical enough? Perhaps not. Imagine, for example, a *David* exactly the same as he is now except painted naturalistically by one of the city's great painters, so that one might say in praise of him that "all he lacked was breath."[217] Seen from a distance across an empty Piazza della Signoria, could not the vast space result in a confusion of scale that might cause some viewers to perceive the *David*—even for a moment—as a real nude youth standing guard in front of the palace, stationed on its *ringhiera*, the elaborate stage constructed in front of the palace for the performance of civic business?[218] A moment of sensorial confusion would be all it took to have an inappropriate response to the

[217] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, Vol. IV, 11, praising Leonardo as an exemplum of the "*maniera moderna*" writes "…*dette veramente alle sue figure il moto ed il fiato*."
[218] On the sculpture's placement on the *rhingiera*, refer to Paoletti, *Michelangelo's David*, 20.

naturalist image. This was especially dangerous because the area around the Piazza della Signoria was, according to Macchiavelli, a good place to solicit young male prostitutes.[219] But even if not completely deceived by polychromy at a distance, or even viewed from up close, would the David's seventeen feet, in full polychromy—where blood seemed to run under the surface of his gleaming skin and a heart seemed to beat—be enough to disrupt the erotics of his sensuous body? Would the *David*'s size alone save his viewer from idolatry and allow the sculpture to function as an abstract ideal rather than as an object of desire?

This is why the second half of the descriptor of the *David* is also critical. The *David* was not only *magnus* he was also *albus*. The announcement of the *David*'s marble materiality through its apparent color, like his scale, asserted his status as *imago*.[220] This was true even though, as with Andrea's figures in the Scalzo, gilded elements—the *David*'s slingshot and the tree stump against which he rests (Fig. 4.14)—were attached to the giant's white body [221] The signifier of whiteness, furthermore, could announce his non-human status from any distance, at any size. This is true of monochromy in general: from the handheld votive figure to the colossus, a monochrome sculpture, like all monochrome images that do image a referent that is itself monochrome, betrays to the viewer immediately that what he sees is an image and not its intended referent. A Florentine man viewing the *David* could therefore always be sure, through

---

[219] Najemy, *Machiavelli's Novelle*, 273-76.
[220] On Michelangelo's preference for pure white Carrara marble, see, inter alia: Michael Hirst. "Michelangelo, Carrara, and the Marble for the Cardinal's Pietà," *The Burlington Magazine* 127.984 (1985): 154-52; Norman E. Land. "Michelangelo and the Stonecutters," *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 33, no. 1 (2013): 16-20; William E. Wallace. "La Bella Mano: Michelangelo the Craftsman," *Artibus Et Historiae* 32, no. 63 (2011): 85-99, and, more popularly, Eric Scigliano. 2014. *Michelangelo's Mountain: The Quest for Perfection in the Marble Quarries of Carrara*. (NY: Atria Books).
[221] Paoletti, *Michelangelo's David*, 52, notes that a payment was made by the Priors and the Gonfalonier of Justice for the gilded elements and the golden wreath on 31 October 1504.

apprehension at any distance of his color, that he was inanimate. At the same time, the David's lack of naturalistic color also meant that he did not represent a single individual. Instead, the viewer was allowed to project his idea of perfection onto the white sculpture. Was the *David*'s hair golden or dark? His eyes brown or blue? The lack of descriptive data that resulted from monochromy meant that the mental image of the sculpture was always different from the viewer's idea of the appearance of the Biblical David or even of the generalized ideal Florentine man with whom he could also identify the sculpture. This discrepancy between the white image and a viewer's idea of any living or once-living polychrome referent was the radical disruption necessary to subvert the *David*'s potential status as sex symbol and cement him as Neoplatonic ideal.

This important characteristic of monochromy—its ability to disrupt bodily responses through formal difference from the living world and, as I will discuss in the following chapter, to promote culturally-bound intellectual responses to images—is particular not only to marble sculpture but is a general property of monochromy that articulates Andrea del Sarto's *Baptism of Christ*. By the logic of both Steinberg and Garrard, when Andrea girded Christ's loins, hiding his penis from view, he de-eroticized Christ's body. This is partially true. But, as with the *David*, the sensuality of Christ's body is not contained only within his penis and scrotum but rather in his entire male body. In the case of *The Baptism of Christ*, the girding of the protagonist's loins with drapery seems even less efficacious in disrupting his sexuality than in the case of the *David*, as Andrea seems to have gone out of way to present Christ's body in a manner reminiscent of a feminine sexual ideal, the *venus pudica*. The sexuality of the Scalzo Christ in particular stems less from his obscured male genitals but more from his posture, the curves of his body, his deferential gaze. On top of this, he was nearly life-size, nearly nude, and placed in intimate

proximity to John the Baptist, to his close male peer and relative, with whom the viewer already symbolically identified. The picture displays many of the characteristics of artworks censored under contemporary standards of decorum, especially those governing sacred spaces.[222] But the Scalzo frescoes have one additional and very notable characteristic: monochrome, they immediately betray their status as *imago*. As in the case of the *David*, the beholder's immediate sensorial apprehension of monochromy stifled his ability to project sexual desire onto the image. As a result, it allowed the two male bodies of Christ and John to act as a symbol for the ideal utilitarian friendships that should exist Florentine men. These bonds were at extremely intimate so trust could be maintained and so that the men inside of those relationships could, like Christ and John, reciprocally legitimize each other.

4. Sublimation

It is perhaps not coincidental that the very next image in the Scalzo cycle after *The Baptism of Christ* is *Charity*, (Fig. 1.9) a female figure traditionally depicted nursing a baby while other children of various ages play around her. There may have been a great number of reasons to place an allegory of this *Virtue* right before the entrance to the inner sanctum of the convent, not least of which would have been to remind the *confratelli* to be generous with their charitable contributions to the confraternity. But the result of this placement was that as soon as the *confratello* passed the *Baptism of Christ*, a representation of ideal love between men, he was

[222] Although these standards were hinted at by Aretino in his denigration of Michelangelo's *Sistine* nudes, the standards of decorum necessary in different architectural spaces was written about directly by Ambrogio Traversari (1386-1439), a scholar and monastic reformer who was responsible for overseeing major Florentine art projects in the Late Middle Ages. Refer to Georgia Clarke. "Ambrogio Traversari: Artistic Adviser in early Fifteenth-century Florence," *Renaissance Studies* 11.3 (1997): 161-178.

immediately confronted with a young, beautiful mother, whose voluptuous body was angled towards him in a three-quarters stance with her imposing knee seeming to break out of her fictive architectural niche and into his space. Despite being a Virtue and being dressed, *Charity*'s appearance is hardly chaste. Her entire body is presented to the viewer, the curves of which Andrea accentuated by mimicking the wet drapery effect of the *terracotta* Sansovino model that inspired her. (Fig. 4.15) Her classical *peplos* slips off her shoulder revealing her décolletage as well as her naked right breast along with the flesh just below. In her arms is a chubby baby, his genitalia prominently displayed, Steinberg would argue, to confirm his nascent masculinity.[223] Still, the baby's generous haunches echo and draw attention to *Charity*'s own ample hips and thighs, further emphasizing her sexuality and procreative power. The boy looks down and to his left. This means that rather than addressing a brother standing in front of his own compositional frame, he looks down at the viewer of *The Baptism of Christ*. The baby reaches his arm closest to this viewer back across his body and points to *Charity*'s erect nipple, as if offering the *confratello* his mother's breast. While the baby might put his lips chastely to his mother's breast to nurse, the adult male *confratello* could easily imagine himself, just as quattrocento viewers of the *Madonna Lactans* seem to have, in a sexual act.[224] In this way, the infant directs the confraternal viewer of the potentially-erotic *Baptism of Christ* to an appropriate sexual outlet: fertile women.

That the viewer could still imagine himself in a sexual encounter with *Charity* is critical in understanding the important, but ultimately limited, role that monochromy plays in disrupting a sexual response to images. While monochromy might immediately jar the viewer into

---

[223] Steinberg, *On the Sexuality of Christ*, 8.
[224] Holmes, "Disrobing the Virgin," 178.

understanding the image's artifice right away and thus disrupt an involuntary erotic response, it would not necessarily prevent the image from serving later as fodder for an imagined erotic encounter. As a result, artists combined monochromy with other compositional interventions—such as, in the *David,* his size—to further lessen an image's verisimilitude, an act which disrupted the viewer's sexual response. In this way, *Charity's* sexual body not only served as a didactic tool for communicating to the marriageable confraternal viewer of *The Baptism of Christ* that, upon reaching manhood it was his duty not only to practice charity as a Virtue but also to marry and father children. She therefore could function both as an allegory and an appropriate focal point—a fertile female body—on which he could sublimate any sexual desire he might experience for other men.

That said, even in the case of *Charity*, whose eroticism was, to some extent, desirable, monochromy seems to have done its job in dampening her sexual appeal. This becomes especially apparent when the monochrome *Charity* is compared to two polychrome versions of the subject that Andrea painted—the 1518 version now in the Louvre (Fig. 4.16) and the late one that was in his studio when he died in 1530, now housed in the National Gallery of Art, Washington.[225] (Fig. 4.17). In these compositions, Andrea could not rely on monochromy to provide a veil of decorum for the images and so employed other compositional interventions. In the Louvre picture, though an idealized beauty, *Charity* has a pyramidal body built up by

[225] According to Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite,* Vol. V, 27, the painting was meant for Francis I but Andrea died while he was painting it, and it remained in his studio after his death. The painting's prolonged presence in the studio explains why it was so frequently copied. Versions of it exist in the Metropolitan Museum of Art as well as the Museo del Cenacolo di San Salvi, among other places. Lucrezia del Fede, Andrea's widow, finally sold the painting to Domenico Conti. The painting remained in Florence until at least 1584 but perhaps much later. Refer to Andrea Bayer, Michael Gallagher, et al. "Andrea del Sarto's *Borgherini Holy Family* and *Charity*: Two Intertwined Late Works," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 52 (2017): 34-55.

architectonic drapery that totally obscures the female body underneath. These many pieces of fabric add bulk to her body and cover almost all of her flesh, including her décolletage. Only a small opening in the fabric allows the child, who turns towards her in her arms, to suckle her breast. His mouth, along with a heavy shadow that falls partially over his face, obscures his mother's nipple. The closed composition of the four figures is a far cry from the open, inviting composition of the Scalzo *Charity,* which deliberately invites the viewer's to direct his gaze to the woman's breast.

The same comparative compositional restraint evident in the Louvre *Charity* is also apparent in the NGA picture. Though this *Charity*'s breast is exposed, it is obscured with a dark shadow that crosses her nipple and the lower part of her breast. Even though the drapery of her gown betrays a real human body, an extra piece of blue fabric along with the edge of the table and the muscular baby create a barrier between *Charity* and the viewer. The focal point is not *Charity*'s body but rather the circular interplay of gazes from viewer to mother to and through children who gaze back to the viewer. Furthermore, in both polychrome versions of the subject, *Charity* wears a red gown and blue mantle, the traditional garb of the Madonna. The possibility that the viewer might associate or even conflate these *Charities* with the virginal mother emphasized their allegorical and chaste status.[226] The differences in these *Charities* compared to the one in the Scalzo suggests that, unlike in monochromy, where Andrea could go so far as to even emphasize the sexuality of *Charity*'s body, in polychromy he had to introduce new compositional devices to downplay the erotic possibilities of the young mothers' allegorical bodies.

---

[226] Camille, *The Gothic Idol*, 56, argues that because allegorical figures have a semantic referent they are more difficult to idolize.

6. The Baptism of the Multitude

Monochromy's ability to suppress the eroticism of a picture plays throughout the rest of the cycle, which the *confratello* saw as he was leaving the confraternity, re-entering Florence's public sphere. In seeming response to his anticipated course out of the sacred complex, this half of the cycle addressed the civic world. Its iconographies stressed the importance of allegiance, first and foremost, to a man's male peers over women, whose interference in governance could be disastrous. It told the story of John's tragic denouement, of power-hungry villainesses bent on the ruin of good men, of a flippant ruler made slave to his sexual appetites, and of the kowtowing courtiers who enabled tyranny. The story demonstrated that there could be real-world political consequences to succumbing one's sexual desires and failing to properly wield patriarchal power over women.

In the context of the penitential confraternity, where the practice of self-flagellation in remembrance of Christ's Passion was primary not only to devotion but also to corporate identity, religious lessons were learned and practiced on the body. The body did not only function, though, as hermeneutical apparatus during flagellation. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, while moving in and out of the confraternal spaces, the brothers' ongoing sensory responses to a variety of stimuli like pain, fatigue, darkness, and light constituted an affective program aimed at spiritual revelation. This meant that the body's own experience of itself could be harnessed as an important pedagogical and spiritual tool.

This ability of the body to function as a hermeneutical apparatus seems to have factored into Andrea's choice not to shy away from the potential sexuality of John's story, but rather to deploy erotic imagery throughout the cycle. These different kinds of provocative images

provoked different kinds of arousal suited to teach different kinds of social and spiritual lessons. But these images always carried with them the danger of idolatry. Monochromy, as we have seen, was a crucial tool in mitigating this danger, but it was not the only one. Andrea's strict limitation of color was one in a network of artistic interventions that he employed to at once heighten and ameliorate the erotic potential of the pictures. With these additional interventions, Andrea was often able to invite the brothers to identify with the men pictured in the paintings. They became not only viewers of but also actors in the unfolding drama of the scene, which they knew was artificial and observed at a critical distance because of its monochromy. The limitations of the cycle's color thus facilitated Andrea's other compositional innovations, which, through their provocation of the body, increased the overall didactic efficacy of the paintings.

The use of monochromy to repress the eroticism of the images while simultaneously maximizing their didactic efficacy is demonstrable in *The Baptism of the Multitude* (Fig. 1.12), which Andrea painted on the most-northerly section of the west wall of the cloister in 1517. (Fig. 1.7) On their way into the oratory, brothers confronted the picture quickly just as they turned left at *The Baptism of Christ* to continue towards the portal of the *spogliatoio*, or changing room. But, as we saw in the prologue, this placement also meant that *The Baptism of the Multitude* was the first image the brother saw after services when he exited the *spogliatoio* and turned right out of the portal. (Fig. 1.7) In the picture's center stands an idealized John. One leg elevated on a rock, he pours the baptismal waters onto the bowed head of a neophyte who kneels before him. Surrounding them are groups of men of various ages in various stages of undress either waiting for or drying off from Baptism. The placement of the image is significant also because the actions—preparing for, participating in, and re-dressing after a ritual act of purgation—were

analogous to the activities in which the *brothers* were just about to or just had participated. They were primed to identify with the men in the baptismal throng on the banks of the river.

This identification is problematic because of the image's homoerotic sensuousness. For example, one of the most prominent figures in the painting stands on the right of the picture, watching the Baptism with his back to the painting's viewers. This idealized figure is completely nude save a draped piece of fabric wrapped around his shoulders like a shawl. The result is that he displays his naked, muscular backside and legs to the viewer. The strength and suppleness of his body is amplified by the tree that is positioned just above the figure's head. It continues to the top of the picture field, emphasizing the young man's verticality. This elongated figure is at once highly idealized, extremely naturalistic, and obviously sensuous. This is significant because Patricia Lee Rubin has recently argued that within this system of enculturated viewing, a male figure "seen from behind" almost always insinuates same-sex desire and a figure's availability for sexual gratification.[227] If so, not only does Andrea's nude figure invite the viewer's lustful gaze, it also implied his own as he looks down at the neophyte, whose own backside is angled towards him in an equally licentious way. In this way, the nude figure is at once the object and subject of erotic lust.

But the homo-erotics of this picture were not just confined to its right margin. In his analysis of the ways in which a loin cloth "reveals what it might conceal," Steinberg uncovered a long tradition of the use of strategically placed and shaped loin cloths, that ranged in size from naturalistic to priapic, to insinuate the presence of the penis (Fig. 4.18).[228] Although John wears a

---

[227] Refer to Pat Rubin. 2018. *Seen from Behind: Perspectives on the Male Body and Renaissance Art.* (New Haven and London): Yale University Press, especially, for general attitudes about such dorsal figures, 15-47.
[228] Steinberg, "The Sexuality of Christ," 16-19, first introduces concept, which is explored throughout the text. Also consult Simons, *The Sex of Men*, 294-295.

full garment, Andrea has emphasized the drapery around the loins so that it too emphasizes what it might conceal: the fabric bulges across the genitals. A moment of great *sprezzatura*, the lengths to which Andrea went to create this phallic arrangement of textile are noteworthy. The edge of fabric is pulled from John's right hip across his body to where it wraps around his body-length, cruciform staff. He evidently holds both the fabric and staff in his left hand at the side of his body, though this action is not visible. John's lifting of his robe is not likely done to protect the garment, as the Baptist is unperturbed by the fact that much of it still lies on the ground underneath his feet. (He is, after all, an ascetic). Rather, this seems a compositional device introduced as an excuse to display John's lower legs, which itself adds to the sensuality of the picture. Furthermore, that the fabric and staff, itself a phallic symbol, work together to form this arrangement of drapery speaks to the intended function of the fabric to index the presence of John's unseen penis.

The indexing of John's sexual organ could be considered indecorous because of the presence of the neophyte on the ground in front of John, whose face meets the loin cloth's bulge at a hard-right angle. The homoeroticism of this feature of the picture is especially amplified in a mid-to-late sixteenth-century drawing after it, (Fig. 4.19) now in the Louvre, by the accomplished student of both Jacopo da Pontormo and later Vasari, the Florentine artist Giovanni Battista Naldini (1535-1591).[229] Naldini, who often drew after Andrea, master of both

---

[229] Naldini additionally produced a color version (Figs. 5.32-5.35) of the painting done in small scale on panel, probably originally part of the Medici Collection, now housed in the Cenacolo di San Salvi in Florence. The painting, which is part of a series after the Scalzo cycle, also features the drapery. Moreover, in this case, it also seems that the artist has made many formal concessions to ameliorate the potential semenological relationship between John and the catechumen, which would support my argument that polychrome paintings require additional artistic interventions to ameliorate eroticism, even at a small, unnaturalistic scale. However, though no conservation file on the object exists, it shows great damage. The panel is bowed, betraying exposure to water or humidity. This is so severe that the painting has eight large

of his masters, placed the drapery at the very compositional center of the painting, where the Baptist pours the water that streams down the initiate's head and face.[230] This action causes his long wet forelocks to hang around his shoulders while he kneels in deference to the older man. The sexuality of the drawing testifies to the extent to which the eroticism of the initial fresco was evident to contemporaries. That is, in *The Baptism of the Multitude,* Andrea once again cast John in a semenotic relationship with his catechumen, just as he had in *The Baptism of Christ*.

The relationships among the male figures, then, attests to the potential for the *Baptism*—which takes place semi-nude in close physical proximity to one another, just like the brother's own ritual of self-flagellation—to become erotic. This potential is evidence throughout the composition. On the left side of the picture, the man undoing his shoe on a rock looks over his shoulder at the pair, his bent right leg proceeding from his crotch at a sharp upward angle. (Fig. 4.20) That this arrangement is meant as sexual innuendo is perhaps suggested to by the presence, at the end of the man's bent knee, of the scrotum-shaped codpiece worn by the man behind

---

vertical cracks running down its surface corresponding to the joins of the eight boards out of which it is constructed. The depiction of the sky also shows that the varnish has yellowed. Overall, the painting shows a significant grime layer. More importantly, it seems to have been subject to restoration, long enough ago that the varnish has yellowed and grime has accrued. At this time, and perhaps even at many moments over history, it appears that restorers liberally inpainted the damaged panel. As a result, the surface of the picture is characterized by paint applied in broad flat brushstrokes and clumsy modulations of color. These paint strokes appear to sit on top of the surface of the picture, especially in the Baptist's arm and the neophyte's body, but the figures in general lack modeling as well as surface detail. I am therefore uncertain how much autograph paint is on the panel, especially in the bottom righthand quarter where the figures in question are, and am hesitant to introduce it as evidence for my argument.

[230] Refer to Bernard Berenson. 1938. *The Drawings of the Florentine Painters*. Vol. I (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 321. For a compelling account of the life of Naldini in relationship to Pontormo, Vasari, Bronzino, Vinceonzo Birghini, and Cosimo I de' Medici, refer to Elizabeth Pilliod. 2001. *Pontormo, Bronzino, Allori: A Geneology of Florentine* Art. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), especially 6, 43-46, 75-79, and 120-124.

him.[231] Taken together, the voyeur's bent leg and his associate's abutting codpiece enhance the sense of visual play that used to suggest the potential for erotic encounters, which is present throughout the composition.

Though the erotic visual play of the image is evident and the homoeroticism is implied, another pair of figures may refer to sodomy more directly. Just above and to the right of the neophyte's head, a small boy sits nude, slipping one leg over each side of a rock (Fig. 4.21). Though he places his right hand in front of his splayed-open legs, he still reveals his genitals. The child twists his body at the waist to bare a muscular torso. Perhaps the most menacing character in the picture is the older man who crouches just above and behind the young boy. He stares down at the child's genitals while placing one arm around his back and on top of his shoulder. This hand is a critical inclusion, for without it the viewer might miss the man's face, which is hidden in shadow between the young boy and the dorsal nude figure on the painting's right. The older man wears a turban, adding a discriminatory orientalist flare that would have signified otherness, emphasizing his ominous and yet effeminate masculinity.[232] In the homoerotic *Baptism of the Multitude,* then, Andrea may have included a direct reference to pederasty.

Andrea's coupling is not without artistic precedent. That the older man may be interested in an improper and even exploitative sexual relationship with the young child is attested to by the couple's similarity to a pair of sodomites in the foreground of Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *The Effects of Bad Government*, which he painted in 1338 in Siena's executive room, the *Sala dei Nove*, of

---

[231] On the use of codpieces on their testicular symbolism and their ability to indicate sexual virility and availability, refer to Simons, *The Sex of* Men, 98-106.
[232] On Italian attitudes towards Arabs and Muslims, consult Juliann Vitullo, "Masculinity, Sexuality, and Orientalism in the Medieval Italian Epic," *Olifant* 21.1/2 (1996-1997): 77-78.

city hall.[233] (Fig. 4.22) There, the intergenerational pair is dressed in matching confraternal clothing. Like Andrea's picture, the older man is behind the younger, with his head over the younger's right shoulder and arm wrapped around his left.[234] These two figures appear to make intimate eye contact while the older partner points towards the younger man's genitals. That the older man presses the front of his body against the back of the younger and focuses direction onto his genitals implies a sexual relationship between the two figures. The similarity of the arrangement of the confraternal bodies in Siena to Andrea's pair in the Scalzo suggests that the older man might be angling to solicit the boy. Andrea's inclusion of the pair is especially revealing, given the contemporary preoccupation with the sexual exploitation of young boys, which was common in Florence, especially by confraternity members who might employ the defense that they were merely doing "as good neighbors do."[235]

Although the monochromy of Andrea's picture may have rendered the image acceptable for display in the sacred cloister, its overt depiction of a man and potential catamite alluded to an unspeakable crime against God and the state. It is fitting then, that directly above this grouping John is synoptically pictured in a stand of trees (Fig. 4.23). He is surrounded by a group of men recognizable from the next narrative scene, *The Arrest of St. John the Baptist.* (Fig. 1.13) They are John's imprisoners. The primary role of the group seems to be to advance the narrative. But their inclusion is unnecessary, as the following fresco depicts John's capture in full scale. Still, the juxtaposition of homoerotic imagery in the middle- and foregrounds of Andrea's painting with the scene of arrest above reflected the Florentine reality that, even though the Office of the Night had been disbanded years earlier, there were still social and judicial consequences for

---

[233] Romano, "A Depiction of Male Same-Sex Seduction," 1-15.
[234] Romano, "A Depiction of Male Same-Sex Seduction," 7.
[235] Consult Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 87-111, on intergenerational same-sex relationships.

those who acted on same-sex desire, especially when this desire was intergenerational.[236] The inclusion of this scene can therefore be understood as a compositional intervention that not only advances the narrative but also combats the potential that the image might be seen as condoning or even promoting same-sex erotic encounters between men.

The homoeroticism of *The Baptism of the Multitude*, then, showed just how complicated the issue of idolatry was. In its abstraction away from verisimilitude, monochromy had been an important pictorial tool that allowed Andrea to depict and to explore same-sex desire in a safe way. But if monochromy did not sufficiently stifle the homoeroticism of the fresco, the brothers might still experience arousal related to the implication of same-sex desire in the image. Viewers of *The Baptism of the Multitude* had been directed to project lingering desire onto *Charity*, a voluptuous and fertile female figure. But viewers of *The Baptism of the Multitude* were presented with an immediate reminder that the judicial process would humiliate and punish them if they acted on same-sex desire, especially, it seems, if that meant pederasty, which was held in special contempt. The images thus had a special didactic function. By making brothers aware of any potential same-sex desire or arousal they may feel, by suggesting to them appropriate outlets for that desire and by reminding him of the consequences of that desire, the homoerotic pictures, in an almost affective way, gave him the opportunity to practice regaining control over his desire. By affording Andrea the ability to explore in pictures the kinds of close relationships between men pictured in *The Baptism of Christ* and *The Baptism of the Multitude*, monochromy was one

[236] Consult Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 227-235, on the continued persecution of sodomites in the sixteenth century. Also refer to Margaret Ann Gallucci. 2001. "Cellini's trial for sodomy: power and patronage at the court of Cosimo I," in *Cultural Politics of Duke Cosimo I de' Medici*, edited by Konrad Eisenbichler, pp. 37-46. (NY: Routledge) and R. Sherr. "A Canon, a Choirboy, and Homosexuality in late Sixteenth-Century Italy," *Journal of Homosexuality* 21.3 (1991): 1-22.

of the important tools—but not the only tool—that Andrea used to reach artistic goals while simultaneously promoting the cloister as a chaste homosocial space in which close bonds of friendship could be formed.

7. The Dance of Salome

Florentine masculinity, though, did not just require that men suppress homoerotic desires towards each other, it also required that they exert domination over women and keep them out of Florence's politics and political spaces. This is relevant because one of the significant features of Andrea's *Life of St. John the Baptist* is that it is one of the few examples of the cycle in Italy in which the *Feast of Herod* appears twice. The first time Herod's feast is the setting for Salome's dance (Fig. 1.19), the second, for the presentation of the Baptist's decapitated head (Fig. 1.22). The Scalzo's model for this was most likely the Florentine Baptistery, where it was so pictured both in the interior mosaics (Fig. 4.24), created around the year 1300, and on Andrea Pisano's south doors (Fig. 4.25), created in 1330.[237] In almost all other apparent local contemporary models, Salome's dance along with the presentation of the Baptist's head are imaged synoptically within the same scene.[238]

---

[237] Jane C. Long, "Dangerous Women: Observations on the Feast of Herod in Florentine Art of the Early Renaissance," *Renaissance Quarterly* 66.4 (2013): 1159-60.

[238] Having searched for other examples of a Johannine cycle that images the scenes in this way, I found only one, part of The Art Institute of Chicago's Ryerson Collection, which includes a set of six panels by Sienese artist Giovanni di Paolo (Obj. no. 1933.1010-1016) that depict the *Life of St. John the Baptist*. In these, Giovanni pictured the dance, execution, and presentation in three scenes as Andrea does, suggesting that the narrative construction was not particular just to Andrea del Sarto, Andrea Pisano, and the artists who designed the Florentine Baptistery. These panels seem to have originally been mounted together and formed the decorative wings of a reliquary. The quattrocento context of the panels remains unclear.

There were quite a few examples of this other type in and near Florence. These representations include Giotto's fresco cycle of *The Life of St. John the Baptist* in the Peruzzi Chapel of Santa Croce, (Fig. 4.26) executed in 1315. The *Dance of Salome* therein served as the prototype for a *predella*, now in the Louvre, executed by Taddeo Gaddi and/ or Lorenzo Monaco for the main altarpiece in the Nobili Chapel of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Florence, as well as a *predella* made by Niccolo Gerini in 1387 for the altarpiece in the Stoldi Chapel in the same church.[239] Also synoptically-depicted was Donatello's bronze relief, made in 1427, which adorns the baptismal font of the Baptistery of Siena, as well as another *predella* of 1454, painted by Giovanni di Paolo and housed in the National Gallery of Art, UK (NG5452). Chronologically closest to Andrea's frescoes are Filippo Lippi's rendering of the subject, (Fig. 4.27) located in the choir loft of the Church of Santo Stefano in Prato, painted in 1465 and, even closer, Domenico Ghirlandaio's Tornabuoni Chapel (Fig. 4.28) in the important Florentine Church of Santa Maria Novella, painted from 1485 to 1490. All of these aforementioned models collapse the three scenes.

This narrative compression was important because an image of the dancing seductress posed a big problem to a male audience, for whom a tension existed between standards of decorum and narrative requirements. Despite period anxieties about idolatry, the artist of the *The Dance of Salome* had a legitimate Biblical reason to evoke the eroticism of the young woman's body: the seductress' dance was meant to be erotically charged. Moreover, the more desirable the brothers perceived Salome to be, the greater would be their understanding of Herod's choice to

---

[239] On the authorship of the Gaddi, refer to Erling S. Skaug, "Towards a Reconstruction of the Santa Maria Degli Angeli Altarpiece of 1388: Agnolo Gaddi and Lorenzo Monaco?" *Mitteilungen Des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 48, no. 1/2 (2004): 245-57, as well as National Gallery of Art Online Edition: Italian Paintings of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries. https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.206122.pdf. Accessed 7 April 2020.

murder the Baptist and his courtiers' decision to enable him. Understanding the magnitude of the predicament in which Herod and the men of his court found themselves required that the viewer understand that the dancer and her dance were, in fact, seductive. If Salome failed to seduce, she failed to have power over the men around her. *The Dance of Salome* was therefore an opportunity for artists to push the boundaries of erotic responses to images.

To take advantage of this opportunity, however, the artist had to play a dangerous game. He would have to lead the viewer into and out of an encounter with Salome's body that would resemble and come close to idolatry. This is perhaps one reason why it became so common to picture Salome's dance, Herod's judgment, and the presentation of the head in an image at once. By collapsing the narrative, the artist was able to juxtapose Salome with John's severed head. As in the inclusion of John's captors in *The Baptism of the Multitude*, the *paragone* between erotic body and consequence could serve not only as a narrative or moral teaching strategy but also as an affective self-assessment of the viewer's own character. If viewers had a strong reaction to Salome's sexuality, seeing John's decapitated head would—just as it did for the pictorial banquet-goer—serve as a reminder of the horrific consequences of their lust for the dancer. That is, their own arousal would mirror Herod's, whose desire had tragic results. In this way, the collapsing of the narrative allowed artists one way of both provoking and stifling the viewer's desire for Salome that could cause him to examine the ways in which his reaction to the image might be like Herod's reaction to the dancer. This affective process of self-identification and self-reflection could allow him to confront his desire towards images of them, making him aware of his tendency for idolatry. As Mary Garrard would has pointed out, viewers' responses to

images of women would have also made him examine his own sexual desire for living women.[240] The juxtaposition of John's severed head was thus a powerful visual tool that the artist could use to stifle the possibility that the viewer would idolize an image of Salome.

In truth, though, in almost all of the *Life of St. John the Baptist* cycles mentioned above, the severed head needed to do very little to ward off potential idolatry. The *predelle* were miniature. The opposite in scale to the *David*, the viewer not only apprehended them as images immediately but also rarely saw them clearly, being almost always at a distance from altarpieces.[241] Even at a larger scale, however, such as in Giotto's Peruzzi Chapel, (Fig. 4.26) which was the prototype for these *predelle* renderings, the likelihood that the viewer could have an erotic encounter with the image was still much lower. This was primarily because of the cycle's compositional structure and architectural placement. Giotto's narrative is arranged in stacked registers and continues high onto the chapel walls. Nonetheless, his *Dance of Salome* is on the lowest register, just above the viewer's head, increasing the likelihood that he might have an intimate encounter with her. This is why it is critical that Giotto's highly-stylized, static Salome barely appears to dance. This is likely why, as Nagel rightfully pointed out, anxieties about idolatry reached a crisis point in the 1500s: the abstract and schematized renderings

---

[240] Regarding the sculptural program in the Piazza della Signoria, Garrard, "The Cloister and the Square," 41, asks: "In feminist readings of the statues earlier cited, sex and gender are metaphors for the successful Medici domination of women standing in for political domination, with misogyny a casually cruel byproduct. But what if this masculinist assault on the female is not secondary but primary? What if the targets of decapitation, dismemberment, and rape are not metaphors at all but, subconsciously, real targets? And if an excessive display of power reflects, not confidence, but anxiety, what is this anxiety about?"

[241] Roger J. Crum, "Facing the Closed Doors to Reception? Speculations on Foreign Exchange, Liturgical Diversity, and the 'Failure' of the Portinari Altarpiece," *Art Journal* 57.1 (1998): 9-11, discusses the differences in the potential ways that Florentine altarpieces in side chapels were viewed and manipulated by clerics and lay people.

created of Salome in the trecento were much less likely to turn a viewer into an idolater than the more naturalistic ones of the following centuries.

Despite coming from a later century, however, the same criticism can also be leveled at Andrea's most contemporary model, Domenico Ghirlandaio's *Dance of Salome* (Fig. 4.28) in the Tornabuoni Chapel. Painted less than forty years earlier than Andrea's Scalzo *Salome*, Ghirlandaio's rendering of Salome is hardly convincing as a naturalistic body. Her drapery seems stiff and overworked, the position of her arms and legs totally unnatural and rigid. Her depiction does not evoke a dance sensuous and uninhibited enough to overwhelm Herod with carnal lust. Furthermore, Ghirlandaio situated his *Dance of Salome* in the uppermost register of a very tall, narrow, poorly lit space, where it is extremely difficult to see. Perhaps this is why Ghirlandaio did not have to emphasize the gore of John's severed head, which rests, barely noticeable to the left of the dais, as if sleeping, on a platter. Having not aroused viewers' real desire for Salome's, Ghirlandaio did not have to dampen it with the macabre presentation of the Baptist's head.

This is why, insofar as he can be said to have succeeded in making life-size, naturalistic religious pictures appropriate for a religious space, Fra Filippo Lippi's *Feast of Herod* (Fig. 4.27), painted two decades before Ghirlandaio's, is perhaps the Scalzo's more appropriate *comparandum*. The two cycles are not only related in relative time period, region, subject, medium, and scale, they are also linked formally. Andrea's dancing Salome, oriented in the same direction as Lippi's and wearing a similar *peplos*, seems especially related to the older artist's.[242] Although much earlier than the Scalzo, in many ways, especially in the delicate coloring of Salome's cheeks, Lippi's rendering appears more naturalistic than Andrea's. This naturalism

[242] On this, refer to Shearman, *Andrea del Sarto,* II, 302.

seems apparent even when trying to account for the Scalzo's monochromy, which, as we have seen, always disadvantages it in the arena of comparative naturalism.

However, the Scalzo dancer's overall abstraction may not be entirely Andrea's fault. Today, both Salome's body and, especially, her face appear generalized and schematized. Her pose, though kinetic, is stiff, almost sculptural, the kind of design that seems inspired by an ancient frieze, sarcophagus, or cameo. Though this schematization may be considered another pictorial intervention used to ameliorate Salome's sexuality, this kind of stylistic analysis is here extremely misleading due to severe damage caused to the figure by water.[243] Documentation at the Opificio delle Pietre Dure in Florence shows that Salome has been subject to heavy modern restoration.[244] This is why the bold white highlights, restored as part of a 1986 conservation campaign, that fall vertically on Salome's entire body seem both inconsistent with the use of highlights in the image and schematized overall, as does the drawing and modeling of the figure, especially on and around the face. While her overall handling, then, seems today clumsy and stylized, it seems reasonable to believe that originally Salome looked just as naturalistic as the other women in the cycle, even the ones, like *Charity* and *Justice*, that were based on sculptural models.[245] It seems especially reasonable to expect that Salome was originally rendered just as naturalistically as Herodias was in the same fresco. Salome can also be compared to Andrea's other female figures made in 1522, which is about when he also painted *The Execution of John the Baptist*. (Fig. 1.21) There, the female figures are rendered quite naturalistically, especially the painterly hand servant at left, who looks out towards the viewer.

[243] On the cycle's damage as well modern restorations, refer to this dissertation, Chapter I: Introduction, pages 31-32.
[244] Refer especially to the Archivio dei Restauri e Fotografico dell'Opificio delle Pietre Dure, GR 3053, photo number 115887.
[245] Refer to my discussion of these figures in the next chapter, pages 327-344.

While the conservation work therefore renders comments on the relative stylistic naturalism of Andrea's Salome as speculative at best, it should be acknowledged that Lippi's fresco cycle is not only, like Andrea's, life-size, but also polychrome. This fresco cycle was therefore exactly the kind of image that Christian commentators denounced. By increasing the image of Salome's capacity to bear a one-to-one correspondence with the surface of a real woman's body, its color amplified the ability of Lippi's picture to deceive or seduce the viewer. It was therefore a prime candidate to turn unwitting viewers into idolaters. To make a decorous image, Lippi was going to have to overcome the tendency towards idolatry that increased when an image was painted in naturalistic polychromy.

The most critical factor here may have been the fresco's ritual use and context. Andrea's Scalzo images were seen then as now from up close, which positioned the viewer in an intimate physical encounter with them. Lippi's *Life of the Baptist*, on the other hand, was pictured in multiple stacked registers on the church's southern choir wall. (Fig. 4.29) Across from it, on the north lateral wall of the choir was a similarly-registrated cycle depicting *The Life of St. Stephen*. Between these two cycles was the short western wall that the congregant in the nave saw most clearly, facing it directly from behind the main altar. This narrow wall was decorated with stained glass windows as well as frescos of the evangelists. As a result of this arrangement of the hagiographies on the tall, lateral walls of the narrow choir space combined with the viewer's position at ground level in the nave of the church, Lippi's cycles were extremely difficult for the lay-viewer to see. Only the most elite religious viewers ever came near them, who would have

argued themselves impervious to this kind of image.[246] Viewers most at risk of being seduced by them, the lay person, would likely never be close enough to the images to be seduced.

But what of the clerics who could not withstand Salome's erotic body, or other susceptible viewers that made it behind the main altar, like tourists today? The cycle's registrated arrangement up the narrow wall meant, as it does still, that when a viewer was in the choir space, the narrative scene most legible was the one in the bottom register, *The Dance of Salome* (Fig. 4.30). Standing in the church's most holy space, the viewer was poised to have a highly-intimate encounter with Salome's life-size, naturalistically rendered, polychrome body. To help viewers identify with Herod and his court members and in doing so increase the religious efficacy of his painting, Lippi could exploit the erotic potential of this encounter. This kind of rendering would furthermore allow Lippi to demonstrate his own artistic acumen. But to execute this feat safely, Lippi would have to quickly negate Salome's sexuality, offering his audience a way both into and out of a risky encounter with the image as idol.

To a large extent, Lippi relied on visual rhythm to meet this requirement. Though Salome's dance is set at a raucous banquet populated by guests, servants, and musicians, in the foreground of this fresco the painter included a series of visual focal points, read horizontally from left to right. The first is the large man wearing all red in the foreground of the image. The use of this bold color in the figure's clothing, his swarthy skin, curly gray hair and beard, patterned drapery, long staff, gold tiara, and turban all serve to orientalize him and make him an object of initial visual interest. If viewers linger, they may catch sight of the Baptist's decapitated head, held by the hair in the left of the picture as it is retrieved by a handmaiden who turns away

[246] Bernardine Barnes, *Michelangelo and the Viewer*, 143-144, showed, for example, that this was the claim of clerical viewers of Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*. Refer to page 180 of this dissertation.

in apparent disgust. But this is easy enough for the viewer to miss because Lippi leads the viewer away from this man to Salome's dancing body, kinetic and clad in a flowing white garment. Lippi encourages the viewer to linger on the dancer by dressing her in a white dress set against a dizzying pink and green checkerboard floor, at which it is difficult to look at for too long. At the same time, the many folds and wrinkles of Salome's garment that appear as she dances hold the viewer's attention. These folds are critical. They not only cling to her body, they also articulate the outline of the inner crease of her legs and genitals, describing them to male viewers. In this way, Salome's body becomes the sexual object of the male gaze.

Salome's dress plays another role in the rhythm of the painting. It also relates to the white tablecloth, which continues to direct the eye over the checkerboard floor and to the kneeling handmaiden on the right. This woman is also dressed in a flowing white garment, the stiff vertical pleats of its sleeve in great contrast to the undulating white ones the fly away from Salome's body. The kneeling figure turns her head to directly confront the viewer, cuing him to pay attention to the platter in her hands. Upon it is the Baptist's gray severed head and the red stump of his bloodied neck. By balancing the composition with the two figures in white, Salome and the hand servant, and inserting a horizontal field of white that connects them through the picture plane, Lippi created a direct visual comparison between Salome's dance on the left and John's head on the right. In this way, Lippi encouraged the viewer to have a sensuous encounter with his Salome while also almost immediately disrupting that encounter with the sight of John's head.

Lippi continued these strategies. On the other side of the white tablecloth, he positioned Herodias at the head of the table. A strong highlight lands on the opalescent skin of her face and décolletage. She, like Salome is beautiful and she, like Salome, is dangerous. Her nonchalant

response to the head is contrasted to the visceral disgust of the two figures at the far right of the table. Having seen the head, they turn towards each other, grabbing each other's arms and pushing their bodies away from the head in revulsion. Courtiers behind the two figures also act with revulsion to the gore of the decapitated head. But the two figures on the right edge of the composition complete the left-to-right rhythm of the picture and stop the eye, giving them the final word on the appropriate reaction to the macabre sight. In this way, Lippi uses John's head as one device within a system of similar elements that at once activates and negates Salome and Herodias' eroticism.

One of the major differences in Andrea's *Life of St. John the Baptist* compared to Lippi's the former's depiction of the *Feast of Herod* twice: once in which Salome performed and another, painted a year later, in which she presented his head to her mother. (Fig. 1.19 and 1.22) That meant John's severed head could not be included in the dancing scene, as he had not yet been martyred. Although the severed head is pictured prominently in the left side of the next scene, *The Execution of John the Baptist*, the horizontal format of the pictures combined with the narrowness of the colonnade prevent the viewer on the same side of the cloister from seeing Salome and the head up close at once. As a result, could not rely on the head nor peoples' reactions to it to mitigate the erotics of the narrative. To make matters worse, the absence of the head introduced another problem: without John's head Herod's banquet is just another Roman feast. Without it, Andrea had to picture one of the most important and profound moments in the Johannine narrative in a festive environment devoid of obvious religious content or context.

Still, as in many of the frescoes, Andrea seems not to have shied away from provoking an erotic response to his pictured bodies but rather, compared to Lippi's, have augmented the sexuality of the picture. Although Andrea's Salome wears very similar clothing to Lippi's, she is

much more sexually forward. While the legs of Lippi's Salome remain covered by her dress to the ankles, her feet clad in close-toed shoes, the skirts of Andrea's Salome, in contrast, part to reveal her bare leg and foot, a seeming breach of propriety. Even though the bodices of the garment of both dancers are similar, Andrea's figure has conspicuously erect nipples, as if she herself is aroused, whereas Lippi's does not. The hair of Lippi's Salome is furthermore tamed in an elaborate braid that is tied into a pony tail and pulled over the dancer's left shoulder. The hairstyle of Andrea's Salome is less apparent. It seems only to be tied in a loose ponytail at the nape of her neck, left to stream wildly behind her as she spins. One of the most critical differences, though, is their gazes. Lippi's Salome bows her head and holds her eyes downcast towards the floor in front of her, as if deferring both to the men around her and Herodias. Andrea's Salome, on the other hand, holds her head up and meets the gaze of the figure in the right of the composition whom viewers would have seen from behind, a position that could have indicated to viewers the man's sexual availability. Although Salome's face has been largely in-painted and so reveals little about the nature of her gaze, Theodore Kruger's engraving, made in 1617, suggests that it was amorous. (Fig. 4.31) Compared to Lippi's Salome, then, the design of Andrea's villainess is, on the whole, more sensual, more brazen, more seductive.

Without any ameliorating factors, the sexuality of this Salome should have raised eyebrows. Rarely in early modernity were women seen dancing in public, never mind undertaking a semi-private solo performance with the intent, according to Florentines, to seduce. Salome's seductive powers had long been known. St. Ambrose (340-397 AD) was one of the earliest Christian writers to denounce Salome, describing her very much as Andrea depicts her:

> What could she have learnt from an adulteress [Herodias] but loss of modesty? Is anything so conducive to lust as with unseemly movements thus to expose in nakedness those parts of the body which either nature has hidden or custom has veiled, to sport with the looks, to turn the neck, to loosen the hair? Fitly was the next step an offence against

> God. For what modesty can there be where there is dancing and noise and clapping of hands?''[247]

Florentines had an even lower opinion of the biblical temptress. While Ambrose and other early-Christian commentators levied culpability for the Baptist's murder equally amongst Herod, Herodias, and Salome, by the 1400s, Florentines believed that only the women were responsible for the saint's assassination and that Herod had been tricked into murdering his friend.[248] In the Florentine context, this oversight is interesting. Whereas earlier accounts that took the stance that Herod was innocent had placed the blame ultimately on Herodias or on Satan, who demonically possessed Salome, Florentine accounts—which were great in number due to John's status as protector of the city—were clear that the two women acted together and of their own will, without the aid of Satan. This seems apparent in Lippi's fresco, where Herod, though pictured centrally at his table, is not a critical part of the composition, not implicated in the women's web of guilt. This distinction allowed Florentines to generalize Herodias's and Salome's capacity for evil onto all women.[249]

That Salome is a seductress, sharing in the culpability of John's death is certainly the stance that Andrea takes in the Scalzo. This is evident first and foremost from the setting of the so-called feast. Set in a private, confined room, only Herodias and Herod sit at opposite sides of the table. Upon it is a single plate that holds a piece of roasted poultry. There are no guests, no

---

[247] Long, "Dangerous Women," 1155.

[248] Long, "Dangerous Women," 1162, referring to the sacred plays reproduced in citing Nerida Newbigin. 1983. *Nuovo corpus di sacre rappresentazioni fiorentine del Quattrocento edite e inedite tratte da manoscritti coevi o ricontrollate su di essi.* (Bologna: Cpmmissione per I testi di lingua), 113-133.

[249] Long, Dangerous Women, 1162, as well as Lucrezia Torbanuoni. *Sacred Narratives*, edited and translated by Jane Tylus. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 216-220. Lucrezia for example, wrote a renowned poem recounting the life of John the Baptist, (reproduced on pages 248-260) in which both women act of their own volition. She suggests, however, that Salome was also an innocent victim of her mother's manipulation.

festivities, no drinks, no wine, and no entertainment other than the two musicians who provide the music for Salome. As a result, the dance seems to occur in a private chamber meant for Herod and his wife, into which Salome has been invited. The spartan setting of the dinner heightens the intimacy of the dance and emphasizes its sexual nature. It is fitting that in the group of two musicians only a drummer is visible. Patricia Simons has already noted that the short, repetitive blows to a drum with a stick, in a culture that already likened music-making to the sexual act, has long been visually likened to stimulation of the male genitals.[250] At the same time, Marsilio Ficino had already warned in his *Commentary on the Symposia,* that bestial love—the kind that destroys men—was inspired "by the eyes and the ears," the senses primarily engaged by Andrea's Salome and her dance.[251] Andrea leaves little room for the male viewer to deny that Salome's intent was to seduce.

The efficacy of Salome's dance is evident from the reactions of the men around her. Salome seems most interested in the servant with whom she locks eyes, who is, as would observe, "seen from behind" in the right of the picture. With an empty serving plate in his left hand and his right heel just lifted as if hesitating to take a step, this man seems to have forgotten his task at hand, beguiled by the dancer. His desire for Salome is indicated not only in his shirking of his work, but also in his dress and bodily orientation. Even though he is clothed, the figure's pants are tailored to his skin that, without color, he appears nude from the waist down.

---

[250] Simons, *The Sex of Men*, 254-259.

[251] Jane Sears Reynolds and Marsilio Ficino, *Marsilio Ficino's Commentary on Plato's Symposium: The Text and a Translation, with an Introduction* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1944), VI, ix: "*Le porte dell'animo sono gli occhi e gli orecchi, perché per questi molte cose entrano nell'animo, e gli affecti e costumi dell'animo chiaramente per gli occhi si manifestano. Gl'innamorati consumano el più del tempo nel badare con gli occhi e con gli orecchi intorno allo amato, e rade volte la mente loro in sé si raccoglie, vagando spesso per gli occhi e per gli orecchi.*" Of this type of love, Ficino writes in VII, iii: "…*venga da infermità humana….*"

Nonetheless, a large piece of fabric is tied to his waist and hangs in front of him and to his left side. That Andrea may intend this piece of drapery to indicate the man's sexual arousal seems plausible given Steinberg's demonstration of how often loincloths were similarly used to reveal what they might conceal.[252] At the same time, the tailoring effect of the young man's pants allowed Andrea to depict his idealized buttocks and the backs of his legs, much like the figure at the right of *The Baptism of the Multitude*. In this way, this figure also invites the brothers' admiration, inviting them to join a homosocial continuum in which men can simultaneously be subjects and objects of desire.

Another noteworthy figure is the caped man standing at the right edge of the fresco. This character is far more menacing than the other servant. His gesture is striking in a black-chalk drawing study for the figure that Andrea made, now in the Louvre (Fig. 4.32).[253] In both the fresco and the drawing, the man seems to have just walked into the picture field. He reaches his right hand around to the left side of his body, pulling up his cloak. With his free left hand, he reaches for something in his pocket. This could be key to John's cell, as he appears to be the same man, seen from behind in the previous fresco, *The Arrest of St. John the Baptist* (Fig. 1.13), who oversaw the saint's imprisonment. Alternately, he could be reaching for a weapon. Either way, the action creates a sharply defined fold in the drapery by the man's hand that in the fresco appears dagger-like. One of the main differences between the Louvre study for this figure and the final painted image is the simplification of the drapery to create this effect. The defined pleat runs at a downward-sloping angle to the front of the figure, where it joins a large swath of fabric.

---

[252] Steinberg, "On the Sexuality of Christ," 136-137. Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, 294.
[253] First identified by Berenson, *The Drawings of the Florentine Painters*, 1903, no. 146.

As in the case of the male servant, this drapery hangs at his genitals like a semi-erect, phallus. The man's reaction towards Salome thus seems at once violent and sexual.

The most telling of the men's reactions comes from Herod (Fig. 4.33), who sits at the table with his wife, Herodias. His right index finger crooked backwards at the moment of judgment, Herod appears here overcome not with lust but with sadness. His face visibly saddened, he leans forward over the table, resting his weight on his right elbow. The tensed fingers of his left hand wrap around the edge of the table, pulling its stiff table cloth taut underneath it. The deep pleats in the fabric that drop vertically from each corner of the table along with the fabric's still appearance results in a large horizontal plane in the center of the composition that makes the table appear solid and heavy. As a result, Herod seems to be leaning forward over a plastic block of wood or stone. This compositional feature, along with the central emphasis on his hands, was echoed in the next fresco (Fig. 1.21) by John's lifeless corpse, which lay dead and bound slumped over a block. It is therefore interesting that at the moment of Herod's great denouement, he does not look at Salome at all. Rather, he only interacts with her through the compositional interjection of the knife that rests near his elbow and points directly at her body. This dangerous phallic symbol, all the more noticeable because it is the only utensil on the sparse table, sums up the violent aggression, sexual in nature, that Herod harbored for his niece-*cum*-stepdaughter.[254]

Herod's direct gaze at Herodias, in contrast, is noteworthy. By the 1450s, popular Florentine versions placed blame for the Baptist's murder on her alone, with pictures, plays, and hagiographies reaffirming her guilt. Florentines recounted how Herodias was wary of John's influence over the public and over her husband, which meant that he posed a political threat to

[254] Simons, *The Sex of Men*, 115, on knives as phallic symbols.

her. She thus forced Herod to execute the Baptist, even though he was against it.[255] But the way in which she did this made the act even more perverse. Herodias exploited Salome's desire to please her mother to compel her daughter to perform an erotic dance for Herod, Herodias's brother-in-law-turned-husband and Salome's uncle/ stepfather. If Salome's young, seductive body was the efficient cause of Herod's undoing, then Herodias' conniving, deceptive nature was its ultimate source. Taken together, Herodias and Salome represented the ways that women and images alike could seduce: one seduction—Salome's dance—was immediate, the other—Herodias's deception—took place over time. In the same way, an image could deceive instantaneously or it could linger in the brothers' minds, causing them, eventually, to lose control of their desire and engage in idolatry. Women and images, Andrea suggested, were both dangerous. Most dangerous were the ones that worked a long game.

Andrea inserted another iconographic detail that hinted at Herodias's extreme sexual perversion. Directly behind her chair on the ground, curled in a ball and gazing warily into the cloister, is a sleepy but wary cat. (Fig. 4.34). In early modernity, cats were a symbol of sexual lasciviousness. The belief that she-cats roved the neighborhood at night for anonymous encounters with countless mates mapped onto Aristotelian beliefs that a womb was a hungry animal that compelled undersexed women to wander and stalk men like prey.[256] They were adept at this because they could see in the dark, which also suggested that they were connected to the devil. At the same time, stories about witches warned that they were able to shape-shift into cats and enter homes.[257] As a result, cats were also becoming associated with witchcraft. Early-

[255] Long, "Dangerous Women," 1160-1162.
[256] Reeser, *Moderating Masculinity*, 37 and Helen King, "Once Upon a Text," 59-61.
[257] Ilse E. Friesen,"Leonardo da Vinci's Unorthodox Iconography: The *Madonna with the Cat*," *RACAR* 16.1 (1999): 19-20.

modern Neoplatonists believed that women turned to witchcraft as a way of gaining power. This was because women were naturally subservient to men, so women who desired power were disordered. Satisfaction of their unnatural desires required unnatural means: witchcraft.[258] Herodias' cat then not only insinuates her depraved sexual appetite and desires. It also signifies her thirst for power, a result of her perverted nature, into the service of which she enlisted her own and then her daughter's sexualized bodies.

Both Andrea del Sarto and his artistic forbear, Filippo Lippi, then, both executed naturalistic, life-size images of images of Salome dancing at Herod's feast for solemn religious spaces. Neither of these artists shied away from the sensuality and sexuality of Salome's dance. In fact, formal analysis of the two paintings suggests a direct compositional comparison between Lippi's *Dance of Salome* and Andrea's. Both organize the space of a rectangular room with vertical architectural features around a central table set in front of rounded archways that open onto sky. The centers of both compositions are also dominated by an open floor, on the left side of which Salome dances. It seems in fact that this kind of modernization of the composition would be consistent with Andrea's overall artistic agenda at this moment of his career. Steven J. Cody has recently argued that, faced with Raphael's ascendance in Rome, Andrea looked backwards, intentionally historicizing the Florentine visual tradition. He modernized important local works of art that, like Masaccio's *Trinity* in Santa Croce, Nanni di Banco's *Quattro Santi Coronati* on the façade of the Orsanmichele, and Andrea dal Castagno's *Last Supper* in the Cenacolo di Sant'Apollonia, were already recognized as artistic monuments in their own time. In so doing, Andrea del Sarto not only made a visual argument for the continued relevance, if not supremacy, of Florentine painting, but also positioned himself as the summit of its

[258] Davis, "Women on Top," 148.

achievement.[259] It seems not out of the question, then, that Andrea did in fact base his *Dance of Salome* heavily on that of Lippi, his direct Florentine forebear, just as he seems to have done in the case of *The Baptism of Christ* (Fig. 1.8) with Botticelli's earlier *Birth of Venus* (Fig. 4.10).

Having collapsed different narrative moments, however, Andrea's *Dance of Salome* is a very different kind of dance. For Andrea, it was not a light-hearted, if risqué, diversion at a party. On the contrary, the dance was pictured as a grave and calculated grab for power that resulted in an innocent man's murder. Through the deliberate design of the figures and inclusion of iconographic signifiers, Andrea emphasized the sexuality of Salome and Herodias. He furthermore amplified the intimate nature of the event and the men's violent reactions to the women, even providing an object of male same-sex desire in the figure seen from behind. The result of this was that the brothers viewing the image were not only presented with the sexually available body of Salome, as was Herod, they were also implicated in a potential act of sodomy. The result of these multiple pictorial devices that confused and blurred sexual object with subject was a sparse composition that evoked the psychological intensity of Herod's choice.

Standing before the image, each brother's intimate confrontation with Salome's body paralleled the Biblical dilemma. In this regard, Andrea's placement of the figures in the composition is telling, as they stand along clear orthogonals that lead to a central vanishing point, the arched portal in the background. The creation of an ordered perspectival space that extended from the brothers' own physical space, confused all the more because of Andrea's integration of faux and true architectural elements, resulted in continuity between the pictorial world of the fresco and the real world of the cloister. The greater capacity for this spatial

[259] Cody 2020, 462-471.

conflation that the image offered, the greater the capacity for the brother to feel a part of Herod's court and to increase the devotional and didactic efficacy of the image overall.

One of the interesting effects of the creation of this space is the way that it leads the eye through Andrea's image. When read from left to right, a strong diagonal guides the eye from the bottom left corner of the picture plane, through Salome, through Herodias, and to the bright archway. Following the darker color of the door, the eye drops and then settles, curiously, on the plate of roasted poultry on the dining table. This plate is positioned at the very center of the composition, almost sacramentally, under the central arch. The royal couple does not share an entire bird but rather a half of one that has been butchered vertically down the keel bone. With the knife positioned between it and Herod's hand, it is evident that the bird and John, whose death Herod is in the moment of sentencing, are analogous. The bird at the center of the composition thus anticipates and perhaps even indexes John's severed head.

But the bird's presence is loaded. In common Florentine slang, an *uccello*, or "bird," was a sexually desirable young man or boy. Correspondingly, *uccellare*, "to bird hunt," was slang for the act of an older man soliciting a younger man for sex with a *bosco* or woods the place where such solicitations occurred.[260] The presence of the bird at the center of the composition thus further complicates the sexual dynamics of the composition, likening Herod's execution of John the Baptist to an act of sodomy. In likening Herod to a Sodomite, Andrea implied that Herod's inability to rule his kingdom properly was a result of his failed masculinity. That is, though Florence may have exonerated Herod of the guilt of John's death, it was nonetheless the ruler's inability to keep the women around him in their subordinated position that resulted in his friend's

[260] John Najemy. 2019. *Between Friends: Discourses of Power and Desire in the Machiavelli-Vettori Letters of 1513-1515.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 273.

death. The visual punning on John's head as an *uccello*, or catamite, is particularly important in its relationship to political power. This is because, over the course of the 1500s, homoerotic and erotic images of men violently dominating men as well as women were deployed in Florence to stand for the accrual and exertion of political power, especially in the sculptural program of the Piazza della Signoria.[261] Donatello's *Judith* having already been moved a few years earlier, these kinds of visual sexual politics were already being negotiated by the time Andrea began the Scalzo around 1510.[262] In using an iconographic signifier to liken John's execution to sodomy, Andrea's *Dance of Salome* participated the same kind of coded system of sexual politics.

According to such sexual politics, though, Herod was not just a negative exemplar of a ruler, he was also a negative exemplar of masculinity. Where domination over one's enemies was heroic and resulted in the perpetuation of the state, as in the Piazza della Signoria, Herod's domination of the Baptist in the Scalzo was perverse, resulting in the failure of the state. This was a lesson that would need to be learned. In presenting the viewer with an idealized male figure "seen from behind," one that is also the object of Salome's lustful gaze, (Fig. 4.35) Andrea's picture figured the brothers in a performative way in the place of Herod. Through the brothers' physical and cognitive engagement with the sexual politics of the image, they could

---

[261] Refer especially to: Yael Even, "The Loggia dei Lanzi: A Showcase of Female Subjugation," in *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*, edited by Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 127–37 as well as Geraldine A. Johnson, "Idol or Ideal? The Power and Potency of Female Public Sculpture," *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews-Grieco (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 222–45. Also consult: Allie Terry, "Donatello's Decapitations and the Rhetoric of Beheading in Medicean Florence," *Renaissance Studies* 23.5 (2009): 609-638.
[262] Paoletti, *Michelangelo's David*, 156, asserts that the piazza was already gendered male by 1504.

come to understand Herod's failure. They thus had the opportunity, even if only as a mental exercise, to practice exerting control over themselves and others.

5. The Castration of John the Baptist

One of the major effects of separating the scenes of Salome's dance from the presentation of John's head was that John's martyrdom was finally pictured as its own subject. By picturing it on its own, the Baptist's graphic execution was allowed to stand as an extreme example of what happens when masculinity fails—men let base desires get the better of their good judgment and sense of justice. This was more complicated in the Florentine context. There, Herod executed John not because wanted to, but because felt obligated to, having given his word already to Salome that she could have anything she wanted.[263] In the Scalzo, although it is clear from Andrea's solemn depiction of Herod that he knows he has erred, he abuses his power and in doing so becomes a tyrant. This is possible only because Herod has a coterie of men, just as corrupt, who carry out the egregious act. This represents the breakdown of an entire gendered system in which men enabled an abuse of power. Because Herod was a king, his failure was furthermore linked to a failure of the state. John's execution in its own scene in which Herod does not even appear shows the extent to which Herod's enablers are responsible for John's death. The failure of masculinity, the images demonstrate, was not just an individual failure but a collective one.

Nonetheless, Florentines especially perceived John's execution as a calculated assassination orchestrated by a woman, Herodias.[264] The seductress had flaunted not only her

[263] Long, "Dangerous Women," 1162.
[264] Long, "Dangerous Women," 1162.

own sexuality but also her daughter's to position herself close to and to manipulate the king, her former brother-in-law, predicting that the men around Herod would be too weak to stand up to him and in turn foil her grab for political power. It is thus fitting that John's execution is carried out by beheading. After all, "To decapitate," Freud wrote, "is to castrate," an understanding that Patricia Simons, Cristelle Baskins, and Laurie Schneider have argued was equally true in early-modern Florence as it was in Freud's Vienna.[265] In "coercing" Herod into decapitating John, Herodias effectively castrated not just John but the entire male collective.

Given the connection in the Scalzo between images, John's decapitation, and sexual politics, it is not surprising that the scene depicting the story's ultimate denouement, *The Execution of John the Baptist*, (Fig. 1.21) painted in 1523, is especially—and almost lewdly—homoerotic. The action of the scene is initiated on the right of the picture by Herod's magistrate, who gestures with the *fasces,* or rod, that indicates his power.[266] In the center of the composition, seen from behind, stands the hulking executioner. He has already killed the Baptist. In his left hand, he holds John's severed head out to Salome and her handmaiden who, platter extended, wait to his left at the edge of the picture. The executioner does not look at them, but rather stares down at John's lifeless body. The Baptist's corpse remains kneeling on the ground in front of him to his right, slumped over a large block. Blood spurts and pours out of the unseen stump of John's severed neck, which is blocked from view by the executioner's right leg. Between his legs rests the tip of the executioner's massive sword—a perverse foil to the one held by allegorical

---

[265] Consult Simons, *The Sex of Men*, 71; Cristelle Baskins, "Donatello's Bronze *David*: Grillanda, Goliath, Groomn?," *Studies in Iconography* 15 (1993): 113-134; and Laurie Schneider. "Donatello and Caravaggio: The Iconography of Decapitation," *American Imago* 33.1 (1976): 76-91.

[266] On the significance of the *fasces*, refer to Ollovsdotter, *The Consular Image: An Iconological Study of the Consular Diptychs*, 86.

Justice (Fig. 1.10) in her niche a few yards away. Above the archway in the background is a crowd of spectators who lean over the railing to get a good view of the saint's death.[267]

Andrea's composition suggests that there was good reason for the voyeurs to pause. Through a confluence of visual innuendo, Andrea has likened the execution to a public act of fellatio. Seen from behind, the executioner's large and over-developed body, is the central and primary focal point of the composition. Especially of note are his cut-off shorts that conform to the shape of his buttocks and legs, which, lacking color, seem barely there, leaving little to viewer's imagination. His extremely broad back is exposed, his shirt having slipped off his right shoulder and falling in intricate folds and pleats around his hips and down in front of his right thigh. In this way, the drapery pulls the eye to a critical point in the composition—the place where the executioner, the sword, and John's dead body meet. There, held against the outside of the executioner's right thigh, the bulbous hilt of his sword with its priapic blade hanging to the ground exaggeratingly suggests the executioner's now-flaccid penis.[268] In the obscene semenological pantomime, his sexual climax is suggested by the blood that pours out of the unseen stump of John's neck onto the ground in front of them. In this way, John's execution is likened to an act of sexual violence.

That Andrea would allude to a sexual act is not at all unheard of, especially given its use here to emphasize the perversion of the execution of a saint. That a man like the executioner would engage in this kind of activity made cultural sense. Florentine executioners were outcasts

---

[267] Rubin, *Seen from Behind*, 133-34, suggests that this device was inspired by northern prints, perhaps specifically Lucas Cranach the Elder's *Beheading of John the Baptist*. Although this print does share the feature of having onlookers present at the Baptist's execution, it is hard to see more particular compositional similarities and so this claim seems tenuous.
[268] On phallic symbols associated with violence or aggression, refer to Simons, *the Sex of Men*, 112-122.

who lived on the literal and figural margins of society. They were looked at, much like women, as necessary evils. The Florentine justice required executioners but those men were nonetheless likened to the devil and forced to live in segregated in municipal housing. Because no respectable people would marry their daughters to them, the children of executioners intermarried, creating dynasties.[269] Executioners were also extremely athletic. They had to be both precise enough with the sword to hit exactly between two vertebrate and strong enough to sever the head from the body in a single blow.[270] The Herculean physique of Andrea's executioner was thus another marker of his otherness. His figure not only referred to his profession but also resonated culturally. Even though he might physically dominate another man, seen from behind, the corporeal executioner verged towards the world of the grotesque, an extreme example of masculinity that has failed not because of weakness but because of excess.[271] That such a man would enact Herod's order to execute the Baptist seems consistent with his immoral character, which is intimated through his excessive physique, his fringe profession, and the aberrant sado-sexual mode in which Andrea pictured the execution.

In this respect, it is critical that John's hands are bound. The insinuation that John is an unwilling participant, along with the picture's place in the larger logic of the Johannine narrative, seems to exonerate John of the guilt of sodomy. As Rocke has shown, that intergenerational-crime was all too common in early-modern Florence.[272] Furthermore, like John the Baptist in the Scalzo fresco, the older partner was almost always the active partner. By 1522, older men had

[269] Edgerton, "Maniera and Mannaia," 88.
[270] Edgerton, "Maniera and Mannaia," 87.
[271] On masculinity as a state of moderation between two extremes (effeminacy and grotesqueness), consult Todd. W. Reeser. 2006. *Moderating Masculinity in Early Modern Culture*. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press), 11-76.
[272] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 94-111.

already described deriving pleasure from seemingly-selfless sex acts including oral sex. They may have also hoped that performing them would result in their younger partner's willingness to consent to anal penetration.[273] For confraternal viewers, whose own civic, religious, and personal and collective identities were so wrapped up in images of St. John the Baptist, the execution of the saint imaged in this way meant that he and John could at once be object and subject of same-sex desire. Moving away from a rigid understanding of the way that pictures signify, this image can be seen to speak to the brother's sociocultural anxieties about the effects of engaging in aberrant sexual encounters of a variety of natures, through consent or assault.

At the same time, if the monochromy of the executioner failed to prevent him from arousing the viewer's physical desire (as he seems so evidently seems designed to do), the *confratello*'s anxieties would be activated not only because of his identification with the saint, but also because of his own physical response to the image. This biological response, as we have seen from depictions of Salome, was dangerous. It was idolatry. Perhaps this is why the executioner so prominently presents to the viewer John's severed head. It here seems to serve the function that it did in earlier Tuscan images of Salome's dance, to stifle or dampen physical desire, ameliorating the possibility of idolatry. Having allowed the viewer ample time to identify with John and explore his own potential desire for the executioner, the dismembered head, held out to the villainess Salome and her handmaiden, serves as a graphic reminder of the consequences of same-sex lust.

But John the Baptist did not just stand for the individual Florentine. He also embodied the city that was dedicated to him. In this way, John's death could represent the collapse of the Florentine state. It is most appropriate then that when Andrea depicted John's executioner, a

[273] Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 93.

negative exemplar of a masculine ideal, he seems to have looked to Michelangelo's idealized—and politicized—*David* for inspiration. (Fig. 4.36) Accounting for the executioner's overall larger and more mature physique, both colossuses stand with their backs straight and feet spread apart. They both turn their heads, though in opposite directions. Although the Scalzo executioner is far more muscular than *David*, their vertical body proportions are similar. Even in his nudity, the sling of Michelangelo's *David* falls over his left shoulder, diagonally across his torso, and over his right buttock. This arrangement is similar to the falling shirt of Andrea's executioner, emphasizing each figures's broad back and shoulders as well as his round buttocks. Andrea seems especially to have based the right arm of the executioner on the earlier sculpture. In both figures, this arm drops straight down to the outside of his lower right hip. There, the *David* holds a rock and the executioner the hilt of his sword, each man's fingers curled toward the viewer in an almost identical gesture. And, of course, both men lack color. In designing his giant who executed a shepherd, Andrea seems to have deliberately looked backwards to Michelangelo's shepherd who executed a giant.[274]

The inverse ideological relationship between the two decapitators is also worth keeping in mind. Instead of symbolizing a masculine idea of chaste perfection who, like the *David*, stood in protection of the state, the executioner was the antithesis of that. He was a social outsider. All body and no intellect, the decapitator executed Herod's order without thinking, putting his brute strength into the service of a tyrant. A type of sideshow strongman, he was grotesque in his violent eroticism and implied deviant sexual appetites. One of the last scenes a *confratello* saw

[274] Rubin, *Seen From Behind*, 133-136, noted the similarity between Andrea's executioner and a figure of Hercules designed by Rosso Fiorentino and included in a print series by Gian Giacomo Caraglio, engraved in 1526 in Rome. However, it is just as (if not more) likely that Rosso, one of Andrea's younger contemporaries, modeled his Hercules on Andrea's figure as the reverse.

before exiting the complex, the scene of the execution was supposed to stand as a warning, a testament to the danger of sexual desire in the outside world. In the world beyond the confraternity, lust could cause Florentines to act in unmanly ways, their desires could enslave them. To communicate the seriousness of this admonition, Andrea needed to make an equally bold statement of depravity. This was the pantomiming, between the executioner and John, of sodomy. It was an invitation to identify with John and to see oneself as the performer of a sexual act on the executioner, whom Andrea presented to the viewer in a way designed to invite the brother's lustful gaze. The executioner was an invitation to idolize. Andrea's own *homo magnus et albus*, he represented the opposite of end of the homosocial continuum from Michelangelo's *David*. He was not an aspirational ideal of chaste Neoplatonism, he was a grotesque embodiment of carnal eroticism. The executioner was the *David* seen from behind.

Andrea was only able to design the executioner in this way because of the major artistic interventions that ultimately rendered the subject decorous enough for view by an educated and juried audience. Andrea's choice to depict the moment right after John's decapitation allowed him not only to display the freshly severed head but also the warm blood pouring out of the unseen stump of his neck. The omission of John's neck itself seems to invite the viewer to imagine the gaping wound that he cannot see. At the same time, the monochromy served, as it did throughout the Scalzo, to at once radically disrupt the body's response to idolatry and then to prevent the viewer from manufacturing a highly-indexed mental image of the referent's body—in this case, the executioner—that would allow him to imagine himself in a same-sex encounter with him. Monochromy was thus one of the tools that allowed Andrea to create a productive tension between arousing and stifling desire. In this way, he was able to elicit an affective sexual

response that strengthened his ability to communicate an urgent warning about the state of Florentine masculinity.

6. Conclusion

By the end of the quattrocento in Florence, art seems to have needed reform. Although not initiated by him, the sermons of Girolamo Savonarola and his dramatic bonfires of the vanities engendered a mistrust of art and artists that changed the character of artistic production. Artists found themselves in a delicate balancing act between producing naturalistic images desired by patrons while having to account for and mitigate the potential for idolatry. In the Scalzo, monochromy was a crucial artistic strategy that not only allowed Andrea to paint life-size, naturalistic images in a *trompe l'oeil* setting, but, in conjunction with the creation of *paragoni* like *Charity*'s body or John's head, even allowed him to push the boundaries of what was considered decorous. In the Scalzo, Andrea's chromatic freedom resulted in erotic design innovations that seemingly magnify the erotic conceits of the paintings and result in new forms of artistic experimentation in the use of pictorial devices and the design of compositions and their elements. In doing so, Andrea was participating in a coded Florentine visual culture in which sexual imagery could be deployed in joking, bawdy, or provocative ways to stand for other kinds of exchanges of power, often political.

In linking Andrea to this culture, this chapter makes an implicit claim about Andrea del Sarto as an artistic personality. Throughout the text I have argued that Andrea used, exploited, or otherwise deployed monochromy in sophisticated ways that suggests a certain kind of intellectual and creative artistic intentionality. This, I believe, is likely. While the increasing Michelangelism of his later Scalzo figures, especially those in *The Dance of Salome* and *The*

Execution of St. John the Baptist, serve as evidence of a possible, though contested, trip to Rome in 1519, the deliberate harnessing of the figures' sexuality in increasingly erotic and audacious compositions (even as his polychrome figures remained comparatively tame) seems to suggest that the artist ascertained and, over time, capitalized on, the capacity of monochromy to amplify an object's degree of decorum.[275] This kind of artistic thoughtfulness accords with more recent assessments of Andrea del Sarto, whose reputation suffers because he left no written records or treatise and because of Vasari's ungenerous characterization of his teacher as a weak man ruled by a domineering wife.[276] As I hope to convince the reader in the next chapter, Andrea was, on the contrary, an extremely self-conscious artist directly involved in *paragone* with Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael. That his workshop produced some of the greatest Florentine painters of the sixteenth century, among them Jacopo da Pontormo, Rosso Fiorentino, Giorgio Vasari, and Francesco Salviati, is not surprising. These artistic progeny did not just benefit from Andrea's technical prowess but also from his sophisticated understanding of and engagement in Florentine artistic dialogues. Andrea's monochromy in the Scalzo seems intentionally situated within these larger cultural debates.

At the same time that monochromy worked against idolatry, it also worked against the closely related sin of sodomy. As a result, it was particularly suited for use in the casual homosocial meeting space of the confraternity. At the same time, the organization needed to

---

[275] On the possibility that Andrea went to Rome, refer to Freedberg, *Andrea del Sarto*, 24-54. Shearman, *Andrea del Sarto,* I, 68, argues that there is a possible reference to Raphael's *Blinding of Elymas* in Andrea's *Arrest of the Baptist.*

[276] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, 19: "*Ma essendosi d'una giovane inamorato, e poco appresso essendo rimasa vedova, toltala per moglie, ebbe più che fare il reminanente della sua vita, e molto più da travagliare che per l'adierto fatto non aveva; perichè oltre le fatiche e fastidj che seco portano simili impacci communemente, egli se no prese alcuni da vantaggio, come quell oche fu ora de gelosia ed ora de una cosa ed ora da un'altra combattuto*."

foster intense relationships between men but also ensure that these relationships remained, at least theoretically, chaste. In revealing the images' immediate artifice and allowing the brothers to perceive the images with a critical and intellectual distance, the monochromy of the Chiostro dello Scalzo meant that Andrea could experiment with pictorial devices and compositions, harnessing the potential of erotic attraction between two figures to explore different kinds of close human relationships. Moreoever, in allowing the brothers to experience a range of responses to the sexual bodies of men and women arranged in this way, the pictures allowed him to practice responding to those bodies and to sexual desire in a safe environment. In this way, Andrea's images both allowed the *confratello* to locate himself on a homosocial continuum that could remain radically disrupted from homosexual experience and to practice skills necessary for him to succeed in public, group life.

But there is a bigger picture here, the stakes of which are the properties of monochromy in artistic representation more broadly and, maybe, across time. Perhaps the most fundamental property of monochromy in the representation of objects, bodies, or environments that are not themselves monochrome is that the viewer always apprehends that what he is seeing is, in fact, a representation, one seemingly drained of color. As a result, the onlooker is unlikely to be fooled by a monochrome image, no matter how otherwise lifelike it is. C*eci n'est pas une pipe*, monochromy seems almost always to announce, just as effectively as René Magritte did in his *The Treachery of Images* of 1928 to 1929 (Fig. 4.37), now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. In the canvas, Magritte's introduction of text allowed him to critique the relationship between sign and referent, between representation and reality, by insisting on the artificiality of an image that was hyperrealistic. In the Scalzo, Andrea's monochromy functioned like Magritte's text, announcing the artificiality of highly naturalistic, life-size images that seemed to

exist in the viewer's space and to engage him, physically and cognitively. Monochromy thus constituted a form of abstraction that, in cultural context, reinforced patriarchal hegemony while probing at the boundaries between idea, image, and object.

In this chapter I have built on arguments from the second chapter of this dissertation, wherein I showed that in the Late Middle Ages and into early modernity monochrome images were considered as subordinate and ontologically different than polychrome ones. They seemed subordinate and limited, marking the cloister as a liminal space. This may be part of the reason why the viewer was able to perceive the claustral images with critical distance, understanding them as both different from themselves and helping provide the viewer with critical distance. At the same time, if brothers had just come from the experience of light as a divine revelation, their perceived elevated religious status may have also helped them orient their contemplation of the images away from the carnal and towards the sacred. But an intellectual understanding of the images was also promoted by the Scalzo's monochromy. As I will argue in the next chapter, the images' ability to imitate sculpture both ancient and modern brought the cycle and the semi-fictive built environment into dialogue with intellectual and theoretical discourses about art that were taking place in the 1500s. As I will argue, the brothers' participation in these dialogues would have itself constituted a social performance and their understanding of them would have helped underpin the way in which they conceptualized and practiced their masculinity in front of each other.

To see this play out, let us now rejoin our brother in the Prologue to Chapter V, as he hurries away from the man on the bench and joins a group of his artist-brothers, whose loud debate is now beginning to disturb the peace of the cloister.

Chapter V: The Gender of Monochromy

1. Prologue

The brother walked towards the end of the aisle, where a small group of men clustered together in the cloister's south corner. Most of their backs were to him, but the brother still recognized a few of them—local artists and artisans, like him. One of them threw his hands up in the air and turn around, his face beginning to redden. The brother approached the group.

"I understand that! But you know very well that durability is a quality of stone, not of sculpture," one of them said sternly, holding his hands with pinched fingers in front of his chest and shaking them.[1] Another jumped in, a big grin on his face: "And it's that very durability of stone that has turned you into day laborers, sweating and caked in marble dust. When I see you at the end of some days, you're so covered in flour and white mud that it seems as if you spent the day working in a bakery and not an artist's workshop!"[2] A few men in the circle laughed from their bellies but not everyone seemed to think the joke was funny.

"Well that's because sculpture is a more difficult activity," one of them rejoined when the laughing had subsided.[3] "And therefore more noble. And there are other ways in which it is more

---

[1] Leonardo, in Paola Barocchi. 1979. *Scritti d'Art del Cinquecento*, Tomo I. (Milano and Napoli: Riccardo Ricciardi), 478, citing Leonardo's Codex Urbinas Latinus 1270, ff. 20 sg. About 1492], as well as Pontormo writing in Benedetto Varchi. 1549. *Due Lezzioni di M. Benedetto Varchi*. (Fiorenza: Lorenzo Torrentino),134. This was often an argument made in favor of Sculpture, such as by Tasso writing to Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 136.

[2] Leonardo in Barocchi, *Scritti*, 475, writes: "*…accompagnato spesse volte da gran sudore composto di polvere e convertito in fango, con la faccia impastata, e tutto infarinato di polvere di marmo che pare un fornaio, e coperto di minute scaglie, che pare gli sia fioccato addosso*."

[3] The physical difficulty of carving hard stone as well as the increased difficulty of correcting errors were common arguments made in favor of Sculpture. Refer, for example, to Tasso, in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 136 as well as to Michelangelo in the same volume, page 155, ironically indicates that he thinks that Sculpture has "*maggior giudizio, et difficultà, et impedimento*" resulting in its "*maggior nobiltà*."

difficult than painting, too. The figure is seen from eight views, for example.[4] And each of them has to be as beautiful as the other." He threw his hands in the air, exasperated. "Eight views!" he exclaimed again. An older, calmer man butted in. "Look," he said, seeming amused. "I understand you want to champion your own art, Painting, but I just think that it's obvious you're wrong and that if Andrea del Sarto himself were here," he paused for emphasis, "he would tell all you painters to admit it and get back to work."[5]

This incensed the painters. "Andrea del Sarto! You want to bring up Andrea del Sarto?" a man stepped forward. "Look around you!" he waved his hands in the air above his head. "Can you really argue that designing eight views is a more difficult task than what Andrea del Sarto did right here in our own cloister? You tout these eight views while everywhere you turn your head here you find some new delight. Look at all of these figures, each of them lifelike, each only lacking breath![6] And," he said, index finger towards the ceiling, "you know that very few of you give thought to eight perfect views. Most of you hide your sculptures up against a wall so they might as well be flat."

A chorus of "heys" arose from the sculptors, who thought the painter had gone too far. Another painter, an older, calmer one, intervened. "OK, ok, but he has a point about Andrea del Sarto," at mention of his name, the sculptors were willing to listen. "How many of you, the first time you entered this cloister doubted your eyes, unsure of what was real and what was not

---

[4] Benvenuto Cellini, in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni,* 152.
[5] Tasso, in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 136, recounts a relevant episode between Antonio del Giansi and Andrea del Sarto, discussed later in this chapter, pages 315-317.
[6] Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite de' Piu Eccelenti Pittori Scultori ed Architettori*, IV, edited by Gaetano Milanesi. Florence: 1881. (Hereafter Vasari-Milanesi), 11, praises Leonardo as a paradigmatic painter because he gives breath to these figures. In Tomo V, 46, he praises Andrea's figures that "lack nothing but breath." All translations are the authors' own, unless otherwise noted.

real?”[7] A few of the men in the crowd nodded. He smiled. “I watched you that first day,” he continued, pointing at a man across the circle, “You stopped short in front of *Charity,* so convinced you were that you were about to run into the knee of a sculpture, you remember that?”[8] The accused man reddened, prompting laughter from his friends. “What are you all laughing at him for?” continued the brother. “Half of you duck your heads every time you walk past *Justice*’s scales!” A big smile spread across his face. “You call yourselves sculptors but his paintings still fooled you, didn’t they?”

“You’re exaggerating,” retorted a sculptor.

“Oh yeah? Look at *Charity*,” another brother joined in, pointing across the atrium to the cloister’s opposite corner. “She’s half alive and her little babies, too. You can almost hear them laughing! And I’ve seen some of you, even after years, go to lean on a pilaster finding only a painted flat wall beneath your hands. And then on top of that, look at how in every *storia* of our beloved Giovanni Battista, Andrea brought to life every figure, placing each in among buildings and plants and animals, all according to the rules of divine perspective.[9] Look at how he depicted even water![10] He told the entire story of *nostro padre santo* Giovanni Battista.” The brother knit his brow and spoke seriously. “And all of this he did without color, mind you, like you sculptors

[7] Painting’s superior ability to imitate the world was argued by Vasari and Pontormo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 124 and 133, respectively, as well as Leonardo, reproduced in Barocchi, *Scritti*, 480.
[8] Painting’s ability to create *rilievo* was considered its primary laudable quality. Refer to Pontormo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 134, as well as Leonardo, in Barocchi, *Scritti*, 479-480 and 486-487.
[9] Vasari in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 124, refers to the “*prospettiva divinissima*,” that governs painting. Also consider Leonardo in Barocchi, *Scritti*, 479.
[10] Painting’s ability to depict translucent bodies was noted especially by Vasari and Bronzino in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 123 and 128, respectively, as well as Leonardo. Refer to Barocchi, *Scritti*, 480.

do with your Carrara rocks that you make so much of. As if you made them yourselves and God didn't just leave them there for you to find out in nature."[11]

At this, a few of the brothers, painters, raised their eyebrows, still smiling. The sculptors said nothing.

"Has this painter turned you into stone then, sculptors?" a wizened man seated on the bench accused, his eyes twinkling. The man's beard was long and white, split down the center and hanging equally on either side of his chin. His coarse, curly hair was cropped close to his head and his wrinkled skin seemed to hang from his face. "No response?"

A sculptor spoke sternly into the silence. "I think we all agree that the greatest quality of all the arts of *disegno* is *rilievo*, relief. And in that arena, it is obvious that Sculpture is superior. It produces a real thing in the world—a sculpture—that can be appreciated with multiple senses and is therefore the highest and most noble art."[12]

"Very good argument," replied the old man. He turned his head and stared straight at the brother. "And what do you think, young one? What do you have to say to this sculptor?"

At that the group fell silent and each brother turned his head towards the young brother, who swallowed so hard he was sure the other men could hear.

"Well, I…" he stammered, prompting eye rolls and smiles from the group. "Well, I don't pretend to have the wisdom you have, sir…" The old man smiled, pleased. "Or you," he nodded towards the sculptor who had just spoken, who nodded back. "And of course, this is a very difficult question, both Painting and Sculpture being arts of *disegno* and therefore both of great

---

[11] Pontormo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 134, points out the natural qualities of Carraran marble. Color, which increased painting's ability to imitate nature, was noted as one of its characteristics by Francesco da Sangallo as well as Vasari in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 139 and 124, respectively.
[12] Refer to letters by Giovan Battista Tasso and Tribolo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni,* 137 and 150, respectively.

dignity."[13] A few others nodded at this too. "Thank God we're not Venetians!" a large man whispered loudly, elbowing the man next to him.

The brother cleared his throat and continued: "And I agree that *rilievo* is the most important thing in both Painting and Sculpture." He paused, considering. "But I think if that is true, then it is probably more difficult to create the illusion of *rilievo* on a flat surface than it is to do with a solid block of stone, that has its own *rilievo*."[14] He paused again. Then he added quickly: "And I think it must be especially difficult to do that in *chiaroscuro*, as Andrea did that here, without color." He hoped that praising Andrea, whom all of the brothers revered, might soften his rebuttal. It seemed to work. The men turned their heads and waited for the old man's response from the bench. The brother held his breath.

"Help me up," the old man said after a long time. A few men hurried to his side. "You have a point young man, you have a point. And I would even add that you can look as long as you want at this cloister, but you will not find an error in Andrea's painting."[15] The brother finally exhaled. "But," continued his elder, "there is nonetheless a man in Rome still far greater than Andrea was, a Florentine, who excels at both arts of *disegno* equally and at that so well that he is called *il Divino*.[16] And that man is Michelangelo."[17] At his name, a few men bowed their

---

[13] Benedetto Varchi's second lesson on the *paragone* argued that both being arts of *disegno*, Painting and Sculpture were equivalent. The nobility of *disegno* is repeated by Vasari and Pontormo. Consult Varchi, *Due* Lezzioni 61-119 (Varchi), 122 (Vasari), and 132 (Pontormo).
[14] This quality is discussed especially by Leonardo, in Barocchi, *Scritti*, 476-487 as well as by Pontormo in Varchi *Due Lezzioni*, 132-133.
[15] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, IV, 12: "*…l'opere sue sono senza errori*."
[16] Patricia A. Emerson. 2004. *Creating the "Divine" Artist: from Dante to Michelangelo*. (Leiden: Brill), 51-63, traces the history of this epithet through Michelangelo's lifetime, noting that though largely associated with cult-like worship of the artist, it could be sometimes used to dismiss his abilities rather than exalt them.
[17] Many artists appealed to Michelangelo's artistry in constructing their own arguments. Refer to letters by Pontormo and Cellini in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 134 and 153-154, respectively.

heads. “And if this most excellent, divine mind tells us that the more difficult, more noble, more excellent art is Sculpture, than who are you or I—and forgive me but who even is Andrea del Sarto—” he said, suddenly animated, waving his hands around his head, “to say otherwise?”[18] He left the circle more quickly than the brother thought it possible for the old man to move.

With that many of the men found their friends and began to disperse. The brother felt the elbow of a man next to him hit his side. He turned quickly towards him as the man leaned in closer, putting his arm around him. “Michelangelo. *Che cazzo.* His name always ends this conversation, doesn’t it?” He rolled his eyes and began to guide the brother to the center of the cloister, where he continued to talk. “He may be called *il Divino* but it’s not his sculptures that everyone down there is nuts over! It’s the paintings in the Sistina!”[19] And let me ask you something anyway. When was the last time anyone around here even saw Michelangelo, hiding down there in Rome and leaving the rest of us to deal with the—well, you know who…”[20] He

---

Michelangelo gave his own opinion, delivered sarcastically, that Sculpture was superior to Painting in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 154-155.

[18] Michelangelo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 154-155, sarcastically asserted that Sculpture was superior to Painting.

[19] Pontormo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 134, writes: “*Dico ancora, per gli essempi che se ne può dar, Michelagnolo non aver potuto mostrare la profondità del disegno e la grandezza dello ingegno suo divino nelle stupende figure de rilievo fatte da lui, me nelle miracolose opera di tanto varie figure e atti begli e scorci di pittura, sì avendo questa sempre più amata come cosa più difficile e più atta allo ingegno suo sopranaturale, on già per questo ei non conosca la sua grandezza e eternità ne partecipa più le cave de’ marmi di Carrara che la virtù dello artifice, perché è in migliore soggetto, e questo soggetto, cioè rilievo, apresso di gran maestri è cagione di grandissimi premii e molta fama e alter dignità in recompense di sì degna virtù.”*

[20] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite,* VII, 268, reports that Michelangelo died in Rome: *“E cosi a dí 17 di febraio l’anno 1563, a ora ventitré, a uso fiorentino, che al romano sarebbe 1564, spiró per irsene a miglior vita.”* Michelangelo had moved there after leaving Florence upon Cosimo I de Medici’s ascension to power in 1534. On this topic, refer to Ruffino. 2011. *Art Without an Author: Vasari's* Lives *and Michelangelo's Death.* New York: Fordham University Press, 14-15 as well as Rudolf and Margot Wittkower. 1964 *The Divine Michelangelo: the Florentine Academy’s Homage on his Death in 1564.* (London: Phaidon Press), 11-12 as well as 118. Barzman, *The Florentine Academy*, 144, suggests that Michelangelo’s absence from Florence

quickly scanned the cloister. "Who was your sponsor?[21] Oh, he's an old friend. How come you and I have never met before today then? How did you say you knew him? Are you from the same *quartiere* or same profession? Or perhaps you are kin? Where is he, anyway?"

The two men turned and scanned the faces in the crowded cloister.

2. Introduction

This chapter focuses on how the monochrome Cloister of the Scalzo relates to Cinquecento art theory and how that affected identity-construction within its walls. Because Andrea left no written documents about his art theoretical positions and understandings, this investigation begins by situating the formal and stylistic features of the Scalzo within contemporary artistic dialogues. In the Scalzo, one of the major formal results of Andrea's *chiaroscuro* method of painting is that his pictures can appear less like finished frescoes and more like monumental *cartoni*, or cartoons. As this chapter will show, Scalzo brothers would have been familiar with these kinds of drawings both through their professional use, as many of them were artists, and also through the civic display of such drawings, which played a major role not only in Florentine social life but also in artistic training.

This chapter argues that the link between the Scalzo paintings' formal appearance and the medium of drawing is crucial because of the Florentine obsession with *disegno*, the city's artists' most fundamental tenet of art-making. Emphasizing the importance of line, *disegno* referred both

---

and related concerns for the city's artistic hegemony was one of the reasons that Cosimo I founded the Accademia del Disegno.

[21] On the confraternity's sponsorship system, consult ASF, CapCRS 86, 7r-8r, as well as James R. Banker, *Death in the Community: Memorialization and Confraternities in an Italian Commune in the Late Middle Ages* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 155, and Christopher Black. *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 85-86.

to the cognitive process of designing well as the manual practice of drawing.[22] As a result, Florentines believed that *disegno* provided the essential underlying order and harmony to a representation, juxtaposing it with its antithesis, *colore*.[23] *Colore*, with its emphasis on paint and fields of color, constituted the polychrome surfaces of a work, its perceivable body.[24] The cultural ramifications of the division between *disegno* and *colore* were pervasive because the two ideas mapped onto Florentines' preexisting ideas about form and matter.[25] These Aristotelian concepts represented, respectively, the idea of a sensory object and the object's materials.

This chapter will show that the Florentines' association of *disegno* with form and *colore* with matter was problematic because these concepts were already culturally far-reaching, and especially related to ideas about mind-body dualism. The mind, associated with *disegno*, was superior, authoritative, and masculine; the body, associated with *colore*, was inferior, dangerous, and feminine. The relationship between these ideas was also problematic because *disegno* was a recognized source of Florentine exceptionality while *colore* was demeaned. The demeaning of *colore* and anything related it to it, like paint and makeup, was used by Florentine men to justify the othering of the feminine and effeminate—especially women, Venetians, oil paint, and the Flemish. With respect to the Scalzo, these artistic beliefs and cultural attitudes meant that by eschewing color and focusing on *disegno*, Andrea's frescoes abnegated the bodily and eradicated

---

[22] On *Disegno* as a cognitive and manual process, refer to Barzman, *The Florentine Academy,* 145-151, who analyzes the artistic concept through the writings of Benedetto Varchi and Giorgio Vasari.
[23] Reilly, "Writing out Color," 89.
[24] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite,* V, 113: *"[La pittura] è un piano coperto di campi di colori, in superficie o di tavola o di muro o di tela, intorno a' lineamente…I quali per virtù di un buon disegno di line girate circondano la figura."*
[25] Reilly, "Writing Out Color," 79, quoting Alberti, *Della Pittura* (1950): "*Et sappiano che con sue linea circuiscono la superficie et quando empione di colori e luoghi descritti niun altra cosa cercarsi che in questa superficie si presentino le forme delle cose vedute, non altrimenti che se essa fusse di vetro tralucente tale*."

the feminine and effeminate. His monochrome claustral environment thus championed and appealed to the ideal, the eternal, the unchanging, the pure, the patriarchal, the Italian, the masculine.

That monochromy could carry ideological weight was critical because, as argued in the last chapter, it was in the semi-public environment of the cloister that the brothers rehearsed their personal identity within a collective of vetted Florentine men.[26] The cloister, furthermore, would have been of special professional significance to the brothers of the Scalzo, many of whom were artists and artisans.[27] Taking this into account, this chapter will argue that, as demonstrated in the Prologue, in the rehearsal of their many public identities—brother, Florentine, artist, man—brothers could have pointed to Andrea's engagement with contemporary artistic debates to demonstrate not only his artistic genius, with which they were associated because of their common confraternal membership, but also to prove their own intellectual acumen and awareness of current artistic trends. Foremost among these trends was the *paragone* debate, the sixteenth-century argument over the superiority of painting or sculpture. Reevaluating Andrea's Vasarian reputation, this chapter will argue that throughout the Scalzo Andrea deployed style as a polemical tactic to evoke and then surpass the artistic limits of sculpture and even nature. This preoccupation is especially apparent in Andrea's four *Virtues*, of which the two earlier figures, *Charity* and *Justice*, engage directly with the work of contemporary Florentine sculptors and the latter two, *Faith* and *Hope*, seem to exist in a Ovidian state, metamorphosing from stone to flesh.

---

[26] Refer to this dissertation, pages 167-170.

[27] Alana O'Brien, "'Maestri d'Alcune Arti Miste e d'Ingegno': Artists and Artisans in the Compagnia dello Scalzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 55.3 (2013): 358-433.

The final section of this chapter puts these artistic concerns and ideas into dialogue with the Scalzo's engagement with the emergent *nonfinito*, or unfinished, style in art. This chapter argues that, supported by the new sentiment that visual artists were not craftspeople but, like poets, enjoyed a special status in society, the artist was set up as a type of intermediary between man and the divine with special access to the godhead, who was the font of all artistic ideas. As a result, an unfinished work of art could not only express divine truths but could also have special pedagogical value for young artists because their unfinished appearance revealed their underlying *disegno*. This chapter thus shows that the decorated environment of the Cloister of the Scalzo participated in cultural and spiritual dialogues about *disegno* and masculinity. The cloister thus constituted an intellectual and social environment where brothers could rehearse their identities as artists, Florentines, Christians, and men. My analysis of the claustral environment in terms of cinquecento art theory and its relationship to gender thus not only examines the important role that color played in contemporary artistic dialogues but also sheds light on the capacity for the decorated built environment to play a role in male-identity and masculinity construction in early-modern Florence.

3. Italian Art Theory and the Construction of Gender

By the end of the fifteenth century, *buon fresco* made increasing use of large-scale *cartoni*, or highly-finished drawings that bore a one-to-one correspondence in size and shape to the final paintings.[28] Unfortunately, the process of transferring the cartoon's design to the wall

[28] On Andrea's working method, refer to Borsook, *The Mural Painters of Tuscany,* 129, and Chiara Cappuccini and Alberto Felici, "*Il Chiostro dello Scalzo: Osservazione sulla esecutiva attraverso l'analisi visive e la documentazione di archivio*," *Kermes* 29-30 (2017): 102-105. In general, Andrea worked in 6-8 *giornata* per day with *giornate* closely following the lines of the figures. Borsook, "Technical Innovations and the Development of Raphael's Style in Rome,"

resulted in the physical degradation of the cartoon, few of which survive today.[29] The now-rare *cartoni* should be put in relationship with Andrea's frescoes because of their strong resemblance to them. For example, the Scalzo paintings bear comparison to the largest extant early-modern cartoon, Raphael's *School of Athens* (Fig. 5.1). This monumental drawing was executed in 1509 in conjunction with the artist's work in the Stanza della Segnatura in the Vatican and is now held in the Ambrosiana Library in Milan. As the cartoon shows no sign of transfer, Eve Borsook has argued that it served as a "master cartoon" that Raphael used while painting the Vatican fresco.[30] She even argued that its technical and formal resemblances to the later Scalzo frescoes suggests Andrea saw it directly, even if he had to go to Rome to do so.[31] Its preservation demonstrates that, by 1509, cartoons similar in appearance to the Scalzo frescoes were already considered important and collectible in their own right, suggesting a taste and market for such images.

Though preparatory, Raphael's cartoon is highly finished. It exhibits a full range of consistent, *sfumato* modeling that results in a sense of coherent atmospheric perspective throughout the image. Raphael created the sense of relief not only through this application of regular shadows to indicate recess but also through the addition of lead-white highlights to indicate that compositional features projected towards the viewer. The paper's surface is also visible throughout the composition, those shadows and highlights having been laid down as if

---

RACAR 12.2 (1985): 128 that the practice of artists creating large-scale, painting-like cartoons for Flemish weavers, such as Raphael's in the Victoria and Albert Museum, lead to their use in the creation of complete fresco cycles.

[29] On Andrea's surviving cartoons, refer to Furio Rinaldi, "Introducing Cartoons by Andrea del Sarto," *Master Drawings* 54.1 (2016): 3-14, who noted that new technical data had confirmed Carmen Bambach's initial hypothesis that Andrea used the *calco* technique for transfer, described on page 4, which is particularly destructive to the cartoon. Also refer to Carman Bambach, *Drawing and Painting in the Italian Renaissance Workshop*, 466-467.

[30] Borsook, "Technical Innovations," 132.

[31] Borsook, "Technical Innovations," 135-136.

over transparent bodies receding or projecting from the paper's surface. The result of Raphael's labor is a highly-accomplished, monochrome *chiaroscuro* composition that modulates the pigment saturation with the application of white highlights, just as in Andrea's Scalzo frescoes.[32]

The resemblance of the Scalzo frescoes to Raphael's drawing and others like it is significant because, by the early 1500s, the average Florentine viewer and artist alike would have likely associated Andrea's frescoes to monumental *cartoni*. During the decade leading up to the commencement of Andrea's work in the Scalzo around 1510, Florentines had begun displaying and viewing such hitherto-intermediary drawings in prominent public places. This trend began when, in 1501, after returning from Milan to Florence, the elderly Leonardo da Vinci created a now-lost cartoon depicting the *Virgin, Child, and Saint Anne*. Although some scholars believe that the cartoon was made for display on the high altar of the Basilica of SS. Annunziata, this remains unproven. But a contemporary drawing after the cartoon made by an unknown sixteenth-century artist is labeled "Leonardo nella Nunziata," lending credence to Giorgio Vasari's claim that Leonardo's drawing was displayed publicly in the basilica.[33] Vasari writes:

> During this time, he [Leonardo] did a cartoon representing Our Lady and Saint Anne with the figure of Christ, which not only amazed all of the artisans but, finished as it was, for the two days [it was displayed] in the room men, women, young and old went to see it, like they go to solemn festivals, to see the marvels of Leonardo, which stupefied the entire populace. For in the face of this Madonna was visible all the simplicity and beauty that can attributed to Christ's mother, since Leonardo wished to show the modesty and humility of a virgin delighted to gaze upon the beauty of her son, who holds him with tenderness in her lap, while with a modest downward glance she notices Saint John as a

---

[32] Borsook, "Technical Innovations," 135.

[33] Jonathan Nelson, "The High-Altar-piece of SS. Annunziata in Florence: History, Form, and Function," *The Burlington Magazine* (1997): 87. On the drawing, consult: Carlo Pedretti. 1982. *Leonardo dopo Milano. La Madonna dei fusi.* (Firenze: Giunti Barbera), l8, note 21; Frederick Hartt, "Leonardo and the Second Florentine Republic," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 64 (1986): 101; Mart Kemp's Introduction to Kenneth Clark. 1988. *Leanardo da Vinci*. (London: Penguin Books): 32-34.

> little boy who is playing with a lamb, not without a smile from Saint Anne, overjoyed to see her earthly progeny become celestial.[34]

The display of Leonardo's drawing speaks not only to the changed status of the artist—people went to see the drawing primarily because it was executed by the great Leonardo—but also a shift in attitudes about the preparatory tools that artists use to make art.[35] A drawing could communicate spiritual beliefs and inspire visual pleasure on its own right, as evidenced by Vasari's enthusiastic description of the beauty and humility of Leonardo's graphic Virgin and her family.

These burgeoning ideas about the status of drawings were tested again only two years later when, in 1503, the city of Florence commissioned its two most renowned artists, Michelangelo and Leonardo, to paint frescoes of historic battle scenes in the city's town hall, the Palazzo della Signoria.[36] Although neither fresco was ever completed, the monumental, full-size cartoons that the artists made for the project, which exist now only in copies (Figs. 4.1 and 5.2), were both set up in the palace on a dais in front of the walls for which they had been designed,

---

[34] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, Vol. IV, 38: "*Finalmente fece un cartone dentrovi una Nostra Donna ed una Sant'Anna con un Cristo, la quale non pure fece maravigliare tutti gli artefici, ma finita ch'ella fu, nella stanza durarono due giorni d'andare a vederla gli uomini e le donne, i giovani ed i vecchi, come si va alle feste solenni; per veder le maraviglie di Lionardo, che fecero stupire tutto quel popolo; perchè si vedeva nel viso di quella Nostra Donna tutto quello che di semplice e di bello può con semplicità e bellezza dare grazia a una madre di Cristo, volendo mostrare quella modestia e quella umiltà, ch' è in una vergine, contentissima d'allegrezza nel vedere la bellezza del suo figliuolo che con tenerezza sosteneva in grembo, e mentre che ella con onestissima guardatura a basso scorgeva un San Giovanni piccol fanciullo, che si andava trastullando con un pecorino, non senza un ghigno d'una Sant'Anna, che colma di letizia vedeva la sua progenie terrena esser divenuta celeste*."
[35] On the rising status of the artist in this time period, consult Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics. Part I," *Journal of the History of Ideas.* 12 (1951): 496-527.
[36] On this commission, refer to the foundational study J. Wilde, "The Hall of the Great Council of Florence," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 7 (1944): 65-81.

the first time in Florence that drawings were used as proxies for finished paintings.[37] The two cartoons were viewed not only by the Florentine public but were also studied and copied by the city's artists.[38] Vasari reports that the two drawings were finally only taken down because they were being destroyed by the copyists.[39] Vasari confirms that Andrea was among the copyists who went to the *sala* whenever he could and spend the day with the other young men copying them.[40] Constituting the greatest Florentine artistic competition since the 1401 contest for the commission for the bronze doors of the city Baptistery, the *paragone*, or comparison, between the two great artists, Leonardo and Michelangelo, habituated Florentines to viewing monumental cartoons displayed *in situ*.[41]

The display of these drawings and Andrea's study of them so close in time to his beginning work in the Scalzo sometimes before 1510 is notable. Andrea's frescoes were, after all, formally similar to the *cartoni* in their high degree of finish. Not only did these drawings contain all of the aspects of the final composed fresco but they were also often modeled with a strong sense of naturalistic relief. As in the Scalzo, artists created shadows and recesses through the thick application of carbon black charcoal or other dry medium, finishing the drawings with lead white highlights that seemed to proceed from the paper's surface. In between the dark shadows and white highlights was every tone of color in between the two extremes, just as in

---

[37] On the creation and display of the work, refer to Vasari, VII, 159-160.
[38] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, VII, 161, which he says turned the room into an art studio.
[39] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite,* VI, 343 wrote that he had to commission Aristotile da Sangallo (1481-1555) to reproduce Michelangelo's drawing *in chiaro scuro* because it had been so badly damaged by copyists that he foresaw its ultimate destruction by the young artists. He claims on page 135, that this finally happened when Florentine sculptor Baccio Bandinelli (1488-1560) destroyed Michelangelo's cartoon in a fit of jealousy, but this is almost certainly untrue.
[40] A Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, V, 8, went to see the cartoons whenever he could and spent the day with the other young men copying them.
[41] On the baptistery commission, refer to Richard Krautheimer. 1990. *Lorenzo Ghiberti.*(NJ: Princeton University Press), 31-49.

Andrea's frescoes. At the same time, the drawings depicted holy figures and historical events that had special cultural relevance to the Florentine people and these drawings were the centerpieces of an almost-festive cultural practice of viewing them in large social groups. It seems very probable then, that even the casual Florentine viewer, but the professional artist especially, would have likened Andrea's monochrome frescoes to the monumental drawings that had previously been considered preparatory tools.

4. *Disegno* and Masculinity

Understanding just how much the paintings resembled and recalled drawings is critical in establishing the Cloister of the Scalzo's status as a monument to Florentine *disegno*. *Disegno*, design or drawing, was the *sine qua non* of Florentine art.[42] Although *disegno* could simply refer to the physical drawing, it's symbolic valences were so much more for Florentine artists. It also referred to the process of repeated drawing that spanned an artist's life.[43] With each iteration in this process of creating drawings, judging them, and redrawing, the artist achieved an increasingly higher degree of formal and conceptual finish.[44] When it came to individual commissions, the artist would engage in this practice until he produced a final drawing, known

[42] Barzman, *The Florentine Academy*, argues that Vasari, Petrarch, and Ghiberti thought *disegno* was the "principle" of art in the Aristotelian sense, "the first point from which a thing either is or comes to be or is known."
[43] For a poignant demonstration of this practice, refer to a drawing showing the hands of Michelangelo and Antonio Mini in the British Museum, no. 1859,0514.818. On the left side of the page Michelangelo drew a *Virgin and Child*, which Mini, on the right, copied poorly. Across the surface of Mini's drawing, Michelangelo penned the sentence: "*Disegnia Antonio disegnia Antono e no[n] p[e]rder te[m]po*." (Draw Antonio, draw Antonio, and don't waste time). Refer to Barzman, *The Florentine Academy*, 144-145. The image is available online at the British Museum's Website, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1859-0514-818 last accessed 8 March 2022.
[44] Barzman, *The Florentine Academy*, 149-151.

as a *modello,* or model.[45] This *modello* had two primary functions: it could serve as a contract between artist and patron, an agreement of what a final piece of commissioned art would look like; it could also be passed on to workshop assistants who would use it to transfer the drawing to a final support, like canvas, panel, or the four sides of a marble block.[46] These lines guided the artist's hand while realizing the surface of a final work and so constituted the underlying conceptual and physical framework of a work of art.

The dual, conceptual and physical nature of *disegno* was described by Vasari:

> "Father of our three arts (architecture, sculpture, and painting), *disegno* proceeds from the intellect, drawing from many things a universal judgment similar to a form or idea of all the things of nature, which is most singular in its measures….[And] from this cognition is born a certain concept…such that something is formed in the mind and then expressed with the hands, which is called *disegno*. One could conclude that this *disegno* is none other than an apparent expression and declaration of the concept that evolves in the soul…When it has derived from a [universal] judgment an image of something, *disegno* then requires that the hand be trained through study and practice to draw and express with a pen, with silver-point, with charcoal, or with chalk) whatever nature has created. For when the intellect puts forth concepts and judgments purged [of the accidents of the phenomenol world], the hands that have many years of practice make known the perfection and excellence of the arts along with the knowledge of the artist."[47]

---

[45] On the historic use of the word "*modello"* to refer to drawings of a certain class, refer to the exchange between Michael Hirst and Carman Bambach, "A Note on the Word Modello," *The Art Bulletin* 74, no. 1 (1992): 172–73.
[46] On drawings' use as negotiable contracts, consult Thomas McGrath, "Color and the Exchange of Ideas between Patron and Artist in Renaissance Italy," *The Art Bulletin* 82.2 (2000): 298-308. On this practice of drawing vis à vis a renowned Florentine artist, consult Elizabeth Pilliod, "Method and Practice in Bronzino's Drawing Modes: From Study to Modello," *Artibus et Historiae* 27.54 (2006): 95-127.
[47] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, I, 168-169: "*Perché il disegno, padre delle tre arti nostre archtitettura, scultura et pittura, procedendo dall'intelleto cava di molte cose un giudizio universal simile a una forma overo idea di tutte le cose della natura, la quale è singolarissima nelle sue misure…; e perché da questa cognizone nasce un certo concetto…che si forma nella mente quella tal cos ache poi espresso con le mani si chiama disegno, si può conchiudere che esso disegno altro non sia che una apparente espressione e dichiarazione del concetto che si ha nell'animo….Questo disegno ha bisogno, quando cava l'invensione d'una qualche cosa dal giudizio, che la mano sia mediante lo stido et essercizio di molti anni spedita et atta a disegnare et esperimere bene qualunche cosa ha la natura create, con penna, con stile, con carbone, con matitta, o con altra cosa; perché, quando l'intelletto manda fuori I concetti purgati e con giudizio, fanno quelle mani che hanno molto annu essercitato il disegno conoscere la perfezzione*

As Barzman has explained, Vasari's text supports an artistic theory of induction. That is, the artist first comes to know an object in the world through the senses. Through repeated drawing the artist comes to ascertain the abstract form of the thing, its *giudizio universale*. This *giudizio universale* is a *concetto purgato*, an idea of the thing purged of its individual accidents, which can be expressed in line, as a *disegno*.[48] For Florentines, then, *disegno* as a cognitive and manual process was a way of coming to know an abstract *giudizio universale* as well as a concrete way to express it.

Because of *disegno*'s link to divinity (Vasari had, after all, argued that *disegno* was *una apparente espressione e dichiarazione del concetto che si ha* nell'animo), the continuous process of drawing and designing was almost a ritual Florentine religious practice. It is unsurprising then that later in the century, an art academy—the Accademia del Disegno—would be born out of and remain associated with the religious *Compagnia di San Luca*, one of the city's craft confraternities.[49] The academy's artist-members of the sixteenth century argued in writing that God favored them because of their dedication to *disegno.* The proof of this was, according to

---

e eccellenza dell'arti et il sapere dell'arteficie insieme." (Translation above by Karen edis-Barzman).

[48] Barzman, *The Florentine Academy*, 149-151.

[49] On the *Comagnia di San Luca* and its relationship to craft guilds, consult Barzman, *The Florentine Academy*, 26-27 as well as Dennis V. Geronimus and Louis Waldman. "Children of Mercury: New Light on the Members of the Florentine Company of St. Luke," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 47.1 (2003): 118-122. On craft guilds, refer to John Henderson. 1994. *Piety and Charity in Late Medieval Florence*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 45 and Appendix 47a, 52a, 53a, 67a, 84a, 103a, 132a; Ronald Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence*. (Florence and New York: Academic Press), 64-67; and Richard Goldthwaite. 1981. *The Building of Renaissance Florence*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), 267 and 415. Also refer to: Francesco Salvestrini. 2015. "Associazionismo e devozione nella Compagnia di San Luca (1340ca-1563), in *Accademia delle Arti del Disegno: 450 anni di storia*, edited by Bert W. Meijer and Luigi Zangheri, pp. 3-18. (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki).

them, the city's status as world epicenter of artistic innovation.[50] *Disegno*, then, was not only the single guiding principle that underscored Florentine artistic theory and practice, it was also a central and quasi-spiritual concept around which Florentine artists established their self-perceived exceptionality.

Florentine artists' obsession with *disegno* stood in juxtaposition to what they perceived as its antithesis, *colore*, or color, the juxtaposed fields of paint that made up the visible surface of a painting.[51] If *disegno* provided the conceptual bones and musculature of a work of art, aligned manually with drawing, *colore* was its skin, aligned with painting and pigment. These alignments caused Italian painters—and Florentine ones in particular—to have an ambivalent relationship with their medium. Art theorists Giovanni Battista Armenini, Paolo Pino, Leon Battista Alberti, and Vasari all warned against the excessive use of colored paints, with Alberti and Pino both noting that very little glory went to a painter who pleased viewers by applying pigments that, even in their containers, were already considered beautiful.[52] Alberti, Leonardo, and Pino both praised *colore* as a necessary part of painting but warned that the basis of all art-making remained drawing.[53] They based these beliefs on those of Aristotle, who had been more damning. He believed that "a canvas 'smeared' with colors would not give as much pleasure as an outline…"[54] As a result, even though color constituted a work of art's visible surface, the only

---

[50] Accademia dell'Arti di Disegno, *Gli Statuti dell'Accademia del Disegno*, edited by Francesco Adorno and Luigi Zangheri. (Florence: 1998), 3-6.
[51] Consult Barzman, *The Florentine Academy*, 150, who emphasized that Aristotle had argued that one does not perceive the lines or edges of thing but rather its color, which is a property of surfaces.
[52] Reilly, "Writing Out Color," 81.
[53] Reilly, "Writing Out Color," 81.
[54] Reilly, "Writing Out Color," 78. Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1450b.

part that was ever seen by the viewer, it was nonetheless widely considered a secondary aspect of an art object.[55]

This belief in the supremacy of *disegno* guided Florentine workshop practice and pedagogy. In the studio, years passed before an apprentice was ever allowed to paint. Instead, he spent the first portion of his training drawing and redrawing the designs of his master until his own were indistinguishable from the hand of his teacher.[56] Only having internalized both the conceptual and practical tenets of *disegno* would the student then begin his training in *colore*. Then, he would be mature enough to understand that true mastery of painting came from wielding color responsibly and skillfully to enhance, without overshadowing, his design.[57] Vasari warned, for example, that *colore* obscured *disegno*, declaring that colors had the power to produce their own effects on the viewer and that paintings with a too-vivid application of paint were "like stains and loaded with body."[58] He furthermore thought that artists used beautiful and thickly-applied paint to hide their inability to draw. *Colore*, then, was not only perceived as inferior to *disegno*, its excess even signaled a potential lack of talent and caused art to suffer.

This division of the component parts of an artwork into *disegno* and *colore* was significant because Florentine intellectuals of the sixteenth century had a hylomorphic

---

[55] Reilly, "Writing Out Color," 79-81. Alberti, *Della Pittura* (1950): "*Et sappiano che con sue linea circuiscono la superficie et quando empione di colori e luoghi descritti niun altra cosa cercarsi che in questa superficie si presentino le forme delle cose vedute, non altrimenti che se essa fusse di vetro tralucente tale*."
[56] On drawing training and its materials in the workshop, refer to Bambach, *Painting and Drawing in the Italian Renaissance* Workshop, 81-126.
[57] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, VII, 427-428: "*Disegnando in carta, si viene a empiere la mente di bei concetti e s'impara a fare a mente tutte le cose della natura, senza avere a tenerle sempre innanzi, o avere a nascere sotto la vaghezza de' colori io stento del non sapere disegnare*."
[58] Reilly, "Writing Out Color," 82. Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, I, 124: "*Messi in opera accesamente e vivi con una discordanza spiacevole, talché siano tinti e carichi di corpo—si come usavano di fare già alcuni pittori—il disegno ne viene ad essere offeso di maniera che le figure restano più presto dipinte dal colore, che dal pennello*."

worldview in which all objects consisted of two component parts: form and matter.[59] Form, they learned from Aristotle, was the idea of a thing, that which could be apprehended only through the intellect. Matter, on the other hand, was the stuff of a thing, that which was sensed empirically. Form provided the logic and order that organized matter into a shape or organism.[60] Form was therefore very much like *disegno*, the design that guided the application of *colore*, which itself aligned with matter.[61] Armenini wrote about form and *disegno* interchangeably, declaring that matter was base and vulgar but could be given beauty through *disegno*.[62] In Florentine artistic thought, then, *disegno* and *colore* were not only closely linked to conceptions of form and matter, but, in the same way that *disegno* was considered superior to the *colore* that it shaped, so too was form positioned above matter.[63]

The idea that *disegno* could give shape to matter was a contentious one because it paralleled the way that the same thinkers understood animal reproduction. The womb, they argued, toeing the Aristotelian party line, was a nebulous soup of blood and humidity, a formless goo. It awaited shaping by the male ejaculate, which gave form to this goo to produce the fetus. The belief is illustrated in a drawing by Leonardo (Fig. 5.3), now in Windsor, that illustrated the

---

[59] Summers, "Form and Gender," 251.
[60] Reilly, "Writing out Color," 78-79.
[61] This is also implied by Barzman, *The Florentine Academy*, 150, in her discussion of line versus color in Aristotle.
[62] Reilly, "Writing Out Color," 79, citing Areminini, *Precetti,* 49: "*Cosi ogni materia, quantunque vile sia, reduce in sommo pregio, perciò che, ridotta in diverse forme, o di figura o di altra cosa, di magistero fatte, dignissime si tengono appresso gli uomini d'onore."* Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, I, 113: *"[La pittura] è un piano coperto di campi di colori, in superficie o di tavola o di muro o di tela, intorno a' lineamente…I quali per vitù di un buon disegno di line girate circondano la figura."*
[63] Reilly, "Writing Out Color," 78-79. Also refer to Patricia Simons, 2014. "The Sex of the Artists in Renaissance Italy," in *The Renaissance: Revised, Expanded, Unexpurgated*, edited by D. Medina Lasansky, pp. 64-84. (Pittsburgh and New York City: Periscope Publishing Ltd.), especially 69-83.

man's seminal canal originating in his brain.[64] In a dialogue in *The Courtier*, Baldassare Castiglione even said, through the character of Gaspare Pallavicino to Giuliano de' Medici, "I will say only that in the opinion of very wise men, as you know, man is as the form and woman as the matter; and therefore, just as the form is more perfect than the matter—nay, gives it its being—so man is far more perfect than woman."[65] This was an opinion shared by Aristotle. To him, men were rational, ordered, predictable, harmonious, more akin to the intellectual nature of form.[66] In this way, Form, *Disegno*, and masculinity were understood as related concepts.

In contradiction to Form, *Disegno,* and masculinity, thinkers argued, was another set of related concepts: Matter, *Colore*, and femininity. Women, for Aristotle as for early-modern critics, were the opposite of men—irrational, disordered, chaotic, carnal, and corporeal like Matter.[67] Because women were associated with Matter, early-modern artists believed that their bodies lacked underlying *disegno.* Aristotle damningly wrote: "The truth is that what desires the form is matter, as the female desires the male and the ugly the beautiful."[68] Similarly, in the *Libro del'Arte*, Cennino Cennini declared that while he would give the reader the formula for the ideal proportions of a man, he could not do that for women. These, he asserted, had to be learned

[64] Reilly, "Writing Out Color," 84-85. In the same volume, Mary D. Garrard. 1992. "Leonardo da Vinci: Female Portraits, Female Nature," in *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*," edited by Mary D. Garrard and Norma Broude, pp. 58-86. (New York: Harper & Collins), 69-83, argues that, to his credit, Leonardo's drawings of female anatomy demonstrate an understanding that there was an underlying order to the female reproductive system, as opposed to the Aristotelian view that the female body was filled by inchoate menstrual blood.
[65] Simons, "The Sex of Artists in Renaissance Italy," 67. Aristotle, *Poetics*, 192A.
[66] Reilly, "Writing out Color," 78-79.
[67] Maryanne Cline Horowitz, "Aristotle and Woman," *Journal of the History of Biology* 9.2 (1976): 183-213; Gerda Lerner. 1986. *The Creation of Patriarchy*. (NY: Oxford University Press), 199-211; Ian Maclean. 1980. *The Renaissance Notion of Woman: a study of the Fortunes of Scholasticism and Medical Science in European Intellectual Life.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1-46.
[68] Summers, "Form and Gender," 256, quoting Aristotle, *Poetics*, 192A.

from study “like other animals that lack reason.”[69] With these kinds of arguments, Matter was aligned with femininity and distanced from *Disegno*.

Because Matter and femininity were related in opposition to *Disegno*, they were soon aligned as well with *Colore*. For example, Patricia Reilly first noted how consistently artists of allegorical paintings imaged *Drawing* or *Disegno* as an old man while *Colore* or *Painting* was a beautiful young woman.[70] At the same time, *colore* was denigrated by contemporaries in ways that related it to the female gender. For example, critics warned that excessively brilliant or beautiful colors could be used to trick a viewer, to pander to his basest nature in the same way that prostitutes and even Florentine wives used makeup on their faces to seduce men.[71] Throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, commentators also repeatedly brought up women’s use of makeup in relationship to painter’s use of pigments. Cennini, for example, moralized against the use of color on a woman’s face in his *Libro del’Arte*; in a tale by Franco Sacchetti (1335-1400), when asked who was the greatest painter of the age, the character responded that it was none other than Florentine women, who used makeup to completely transform their appearances; Alberti’s *I Libri Della Familia* even contained strategies for men to curtail their wife’s use of makeup.[72] In *The Courtier*, Baldassare Castiglione was particularly

---

[69] Summers, “Form and Gender,” 256.
[70] Patricia Simons, “The Sex of Artists in Renaissance Italy,” 82, rightly notes that, despite being the allegorical embodiments of Painting women were nonetheless barred from art academies. Mary D. Garrard, “Artemisia Gentileschi’s Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting,” *The Art Bulletin* 62.1 (1980): 97, makes the point of the titular painting that “no man could have painted this particular image because by tradition the art of painting was symbolized by an allegorical female figure, and thus only a woman could identify herself with the personification.”
[71] Reilly, “Writing Out Color,” 83 and 88, citing admonitions made in Paolo Pino’s *Dialogo,* Federigo Luigini’s 1554 *Il libro della Bella* Donna, *Angelo Poliziano’s Rispett*, Aretino’s *Il Marescalo* and *Ragionamenti*, Firenzuola’s *Dialogo delle Bellezze delle Donne*, Alessandro Piccolomini’s *La Rafaella*, Armenini’s *Precepts* and Alberti’s *Della Famiglia.*Also refer to Sohm, “Gendered Style,” 781-782, especially, n. 60.
[72] Reilly, “Writing Out Color,” 88.

excoriating regarding the relationship between makeup and paint, noting that the men who bought the most vulgar, colorful paintings were also the primary patrons of court sex workers. This kind of man, he argued, acted not out of intellect but rather responded to carnal desire and so was attracted to the crudity of color just as he was the corporeality of prostitutes.[73] A strong association thus formed between pigment, makeup, and women's immorality and for this reason it became considered shameful for men to apply pigments to their face.[74] To make oneself up with color was not only a show of vulgarity, it was also bodily and deceptive, and therefore feminine. Artists' paint was implicated in this vulgarity because it was another kind of pigment that produced surface beauty.

The association of femininity with surface beauty accorded with other misogynist attitudes held by early-modern writers and artists. Women's lack of reason, they argued, accounted for their attraction to decorative things, like ornamentation and surface color, and was a result of their apprehension of the world through the senses, not, like men, the intellect.[75] This attitude was best summed up by Michelangelo when, according to an uncorroborated claim made by Francisco de Hollanda (1517-1585), the artist commented on his Flemish contemporaries:

> Flemish painting will please the devout better than any painting in Italy…It will appeal to women, especially very old and young women, and also to monks and nuns and to certain men who have no sense of true harmony. In Flanders they paint, with a view to deceiving

---

[73] Reilly, "Writing Out Color," 87-88.
[74] Sachetti, *Il Trecentonovelle*, 354: "*Io credo che il maggior maestro che fosse mai di dipignere, e di comporre le sue figure, è stato il nostro Signore Dio; mea e' pare che per molt che sono, sia stato veduto nelle figure per lui create grande difetto, e nel tempo presente le correggono. Chi sono questi moderni dipintori correttori? Sono le donne fiorentini. E fu mai dipintore, che sil nero, o del nero fecesse bianco, se non costoro? E nascerá molte volte una fanciulla, e forse le piú bianche che 'l cicero. E qual artista, o di panni, od I lana o dipintore, è, che del nero possa fare bianco? Certo niuno, però che è contro natura. Será una figura pallida e gialla. Con artificiati colori la fanno in forma di rossa*." Alberti, *della Famiglia*, II, 271: "*E racontasi come e' persuadevano alle donne per questo non si dipignessuno il viso con cerusa, brasile, e simile liscio alcuno*."
[75] Sohm, "Gendered Style," 768.

> sensual vision… they paint fabrics and masonry, the green grass of the fields, the shadows of trees, and rivers and bridges, which they call landscapes, with many figures on this side and that. And all this, though it pleases some persons, is done without reason or art, without symmetry or proportion, without skillful selection or boldness and finally, without substance or vigor.[76]

Although it is unlikely that Michelangelo ever said these precise words, the critique nonetheless speaks to perceived Italian attitudes about painting in northern Europe. Because the "deceptive" Flemish painters concerned themselves with things like the brilliant colors of fields and the indefinable shadows of trees, both alluring but fleeting, ineffable qualities of nature, their painting appealed to those without reason: the very old, women, and religious people. Furthermore, by criticizing Flemish art for lacking "symmetry," "proportion," "boldness," "substance," and "vigor," Michelangelo's putative words implied that these were, in contrast, the qualities of Italian art—his art. The conceptual dichotomy between the two regional artistic styles was crystallized by Giovanni Battista Gelli (1498-1563), a member of Florence's literary academy, the Accademia Fiorentina. He described painting as falling into two schools: that of Michelangelo and that of the Flemish. The Flemish school was defined by the *vaghezza*, or beauty, of its *colore*. As Philip Sohm has noted, *vaghezza*, itself was a gendered descriptor coming from the verb *vagare*, which meant "to wander," and referred to a wandering and amorphous beauty that lacked reason or proportion.[77] In contrast, Gelli maintained that the

---

[76] On this letter, refer to Sohm, Gendered Style," 775-776, as well as Robert Clements, "The Authenticity of De Hollanda's *Dialogos en Roma*," in *The Peregrine Muse*, pp. 110-124 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press) and David Summers. Also refer to Deswarte-Rosa, Sylvie. "Idea et le Temple de la Peinture. I. Michelangelo Buonarroti et Francisco de Holanda," *Revue de l'Ar*t 92 (I99I): 20-4I.

[77] Sohm, "Gendered Style," 767-768. Note that knowledge of *disegno*, according to Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, 427-428, prevents that artist "*ad avere a nascere sotto la vaghezza de' colori lo stennto del non sapere disegnare*.'

hallmark of the beauty of Michelangelo's Florentine style was its order and proportion.[78] These characteristics were not only superior, they were masculine and rational, appealing to an audience with the faculty of reason: men.

Criticism of excessive *colore* was not reserved for northern art. Michelangelo reportedly felt the same way about Flemish art as he did Venetian, criticizing Titian for his lack of *disegno* and his reliance on the help of nature over intellectual and manual training. Vasari reported that after meeting Titian in his studio in Rome, Michelangelo told the writer:

> "…that he liked his coloring and style very much, but it was a sin that in Venice that they don't learn the principals of good drawing and that these painters don't have a better method in their studio. With that it might be, (he said) that if this man had been helped by art but by *disegno*, like he was by nature, no one would beat him, nor would anyone do better."[79]

As these words were put into the mouth of Michelangelo by another, Vasari, it is once again impossible to say whether the sculptor ever said them. But the criticism nonetheless speaks to a Florentine cultural bias against the coloristic art of the Veneto. Helped "*dalla natura*," such art would not only be appreciated by women, it was itself womanly.

The denigration of Flemish and Venetian painting in misogynist terms had as much to do with the final, coloristic, precious appearance of art from the regions as it did the artistic medium

---

[78] Barzman, *The Florentine Academy˜,* 66-67, noted that in the 1570s, evidence of only one lecture is known to have been delivered at the Accademia del Disegno. It was on natural philosophy and discussed the temperaments of people from different geographic regions. While Tuscans were known to have the same temperament as other Italians, they were praised especially for their natural excellence in the arts, another important example in which ethnicity wa related to artistic temperament.

[79] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, VII, 447: "*Dopo partiti che furono da lui, ragiondasi del fare di Tiziano, il Buonarotto lo commendò assai, dicendo che molto gli piaceva il colorito suo e la maniera; ma che era un peccato che a Vinezia non s'imparasse da princiio a disegnare bene, a che non avessono que'pittori miglio modo nello studio. Con ciò sia (diss'egli) che se quest'uomo fusse punto aiutati dall'arte e dal disegno, come è dalla natura, e massimemaente nel contrafe il vivo, non si potrebbe far più nè meglio.*"

in which it was executed—oil paint. Oil paint was problematic for the Florentines because of its non-native origins. Vasari believed that the medium was brought to Florence by Domenico Veneziano, a Venetian, who taught it to his Florentine master Andrea del Castagno. That such an important innovation was taught to the Florentines by a Venetian was regarded as so shameful to Florentines that Vasari claims Andrea murdered Domenico as soon as he mastered the technique rather than have people know where he acquired his new skills. Domenico's murder demonstrated that for a Florentine, "Venice was an easy target," largely because they believed it to be feminine. This was because, like Venice, women were believed to be wet and humid; *Venezia* was almost homonymic to *Venere,* or Venus, the female goddess of love; and culturally, women had more intellectual and physical freedom in Venice than in Florence.[80] It would be an assault not only on Florentine artistic supremacy but also on Florentine masculinity to praise oil painting wholesale or to hold it above tempera or fresco—the preferred media of the Florentines—simply because they believed it came from the effeminate *Serenissima.* Vasari thus at once credited Venice with the development of oil paint while branding it as a feminine, and therefore inferior, medium.

Vasari accomplished the gendering of the oil paint medium through implication. He described oil paint using feminine adjectives like "soft," "sweet," and "delicate." "This style of coloring kindles the pigments so that nothing else is needed except diligence and love because the oil in itself renders the coloring softer, sweeter, and more delicate and makes it easier to attain a unified and *sfumato* style than the other media, especially fresco," he wrote, implying that it was the medium's style of coloring that rendered it feminine and suggesting that the paint,

---

[80] Sohm, "Gendered Style," 785, especially n. 68.

not the painter, was in control of artistic production.[81] Vasari went farther in the technical preface to the *Lives*, contrasting the unctuous medium of oil paint "especially" to fresco.[82] Vasari writes:

> There is needed in fresco a hand that is dexterous, resolute and rapid, but most of all a sound and perfect judgment because while the walls are wet the colors show up in one-way, and afterwards when dry, they appear different… many artists excel at other techniques, that is, in oil or in tempera, but in fresco they do not succeed, fresco being truly the most virile, most certain, most resolute, and most durable of all the methods.[83]

With this language in place, Vasari set up Florentine painting, whose internal logic was governed by a strong foundation in *disegno*, as the masculine antidote to the femininity of Flemish and Venetian oil painting.

Michelangelo's claim, according to Vasari, was even bolder. "Oil painting is a woman's art and only fit for lazy, well-to-do people like Fra Sebastiano," he supposedly said, at once condemning oil paint and calling into question the masculinity of his erstwhile-confidante-turned-enemy, Sebastiano del Piombo, a Venetian.[84] In a related way, Vasari recalled that Michelangelo's falling out with Sebastiano occurred because the Venetian convinced Pope Clement VII that the Sistine *Last Judgment* should be painted in oil rather than in fresco. Vasari claimed that Michelangelo "never forgave Sebastiano for the injury which he thought had been

---

[81] Sohm, "Gendered Style," 785-787.

[82] Sohm, "Gendered Style," 787-788. Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite,* I, 185: "*Questa maniera di colorire accende più I colori; nè altro bisogna che diligenza ed amore, perchè l'olio in sè si reca il colorito più morbido, più dolce e dilicato, e di unione e sfumanto maniera più facile che gli altri; e, mentre che fresco si lavora, I colori si mescolano e si uniscono l'uno con l'atro facilmente."*

[83] Vasari. 1907. *Vasari on Technique*, translated by Louisa Maclhose. (London: JM Dent,) V.81, 221.

[84] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, V, 584: "*Ma essendo pur sollecitato, egli [Michelangelo] finalmente disse che non voleva farla [the Last Judgment] se non a fresco, e che il colorire a olio era arte da donna e da persone aggiate et infingarde, come fra' Bastiano*."

done to him."[85] While Michelangelo avoided painting all together except for when forced to by powerful patrons, the submissiveness required by oil paint might have contributed to his preference for fresco when he had to pick up his brush.[86] He, like Vasari, thought the medium was foreign, feminine, and duplicitous.

5. Vasari's Andrea

It seems a strange notion that a material, like oil paint, could have a moral or ethical nature, and that this nature could be understood as a reflection of the character of the artist who preferred the material. Still, that is what Vasari and his contemporaries, oftentimes through the mouthpiece of Michelangelo, imply. This attitude is especially interesting with respect to the *vita* of Andrea del Sarto and his work in the Cloister of the Scalzo. Recall that for Vasari, an artist's style was an extension of his personality.[87] Vasari's description of his teacher was famously ambivalent. Though praising his teacher's art, Vasari nonetheless attacked Andrea's character, perhaps because it could have benefitted the biographer to tarnish the superior painter's professional reputation so that he could claim to have surpassed his elder master.[88] He wrote:

> …if Andrea had possessed a little more fire and boldness of spirit, to correspond to his profound genius and judgment in his art, without a doubt he would have had no equal. But a certain timidity of spirit and a sort of humility and simplicity in his nature made it

---

[85] Sohm, "Gendered Style," 786-787.
[86] On passivity and submission as a female characteristic, consult I Timothy 2:11-13; St. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (I, Q, 92.a.1).
[87] Sohm, "Gendered style in Italian Art Criticism," 774.
[88] On Vasari's maligning of his competitor's refer especially to Elizabeth Pilliod. 1998. "Representation, misrepresentation, and non-representation: Vasari and his competitors," in *Vasari's Florence,* edited by Philip Jacks, pp. 30-52. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

> impossible that there should be seen in him that glowing ardor and that boldness which, added to his other qualities, would have made him truly divine in painting.[89]

Andrea's alleged weakness and frailty of character was thus a defect that could be readily ascertained in his paintings.

Andrea's lack of ardor and boldness was particularly evident in his relationship with his wife, Lucrezia del Fede, whom, Vasari reports, reversing the natural order of things, was the dominant partner in the marriage:[90]

> But he [Andrea] became enamored of a young woman, and…took her for his wife; and then he had more than enough to do for the rest of his life, and much more trouble than he had suffered in the past, for the reason that, in addition to the labors and annoyances that such entanglements generally involve, he undertook others into the bargain, such as that of letting himself be harassed now by jealousy, now by one thing, and now by another.[91]

According to Vasari, Andrea's marriage had professional consequences. When the painter was at the court of Francis I, it was supposedly correspondences from his wife that prompted him to return to Florence. The artist thus made hollow promises to the king that he would return to France with his wife so that he would be "more comfortable" upon his return:

---

[89]Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, V, 6: "*in tanto che, se fusse stato Andrea d'animo alquanto più ardito, quanto più fiero d'ardito, sì come era ad' ingegno giudizio profondissimo in queste arte, sarebbe stato, senza dubitazione alcuna senza pari. Ma una certa timidità d'animo, ed una sua certa natura dimessa e semplice non lasciò mai vedere in lui un certo vivace ardore, ne quella fierezza che, aggiunta all'atre sue parti, l'arebbe fatto essere nella pittura veramente divino…*"

[90] Refer to note on women's perceived natural passivity, above. Also refer to Natalie Zemon Davis. Women on Top: Symbolic Sexual Inversion and Political Disorder in Early Modern Europe," in *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society*, edited by Barbara A. Babcock. (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press), 147-190.

[91] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, V, 19:" *Ma essendosi d'una giovane inamorato, e poco appresso essendo rimasa vedova, toltala per moglie, ebbe più che fare il rimanente della sua vita, e molto più da travagliare che per Tadietro fatto non aveva; perciocché oltre le fatiche e fastidj che seco portano simili impacci comunemente, egli se ne prese alcuni da vantaggio, come quello che fu ora da gelosia ed ora da una cosa ed ora da un'altra combattuto*."

> Thus, then, he arrived in Florence, and for several months blissfully took his joy of his fair lady, his friends, and the city. And finally, the time at which he was to return having passed by, he found in the end that what with building, taking his pleasure, and doing no work, he had squandered all his money and likewise that of the King. Even so he wished to return, but he was more influenced by the sighs and prayers of his wife than by his own necessities and the pledge given to the King, so that, in order to please his wife, he did not go back; at which the King fell into such disdain, that for a long time he would never again look with a favorable eye on any painter from Florence, and he swore that if Andrea ever came into his hands he would give him a very different kind of welcome, with no regard whatever for his abilities. And thus Andrea, remaining in Florence, and sinking from the highest rung of the ladder to the very lowest, lived and passed the time as best he could.[92]

Andrea's professional sacrifice for love was for naught, as Vasari relates that Lucrezia was absent from her husband's deathbed, "for fear of the plague, [she] kept as far away from him as she could. He died, so it is said, almost without a soul being aware of it; and he was buried by the men of the Scalzo with scant ceremony in the Church of the Servi..."[93]

Vasari's description of Andrea's death is especially noteworthy. By juxtaposing two ideas–that Andrea died alone because of Lucrezia's fear for her own health and that the brothers of the Scalzo buried him–Vasari implied a causal link, suggesting that an unloving Lucrezia shirked her wifely duties to attend to her dying husband. Lucrezia's absence at Andrea's

---

[92] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, V, 31-32: "*E così arrivato a Fiorenza felicemente, si godè la sua bella donna parecchi mesi, e gli amici e la città. Finalmente, pas- sando il termine, in fral quale doveva ritornare al re, egli si trovò in ultimo, fra in murare' e darsi piacere e non lavorare, aver consumati i suoi danari e quelli del re parimente. Ma nondimeno volendo egli tornare, potettero più in lui i pianti e i preghi della sua donna, che il proprio bisogno e la fede promessa al re; onde non essendo (per compiacere alla donna) tornato, il re ne prese tanto sdegno, che mai più con diritto occhio non volle vedere per molto tempo pittori fiorentini, e giurò che se mai gli fusse capitato Andrea alle mani, più dispiacere che piacere gli arebbe fatto, senza avere punto di riguardo alla virtù di quello. Cosi Andrea restato in Fiorenza, e da uno altissimo grado venuto a uno infimo, si tratteneva e passava tempo, come poteva il meglio*."

[93] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, V, 55: "*…standoli più lontana che poteva la moglie per timor della peste, si morì (dicono) che quasi nissuno se n' avide;' e così con assai poche cirimonie gli fu nella chiesa de' Servi, vicino a casa sua,' dato sepoltura dagli uomini dello Scalzo, dove sogliono seppellirsi tutti quelli di quella ComPagnia*."

deathbed, though, was not only unremarkable, it was also advisable. Alberti, for example, had been insistent that family members had to abandon the side of loved ones affected by the plague for the interest of the public good—caretakers were too easily infected, potentially causing a more devastating outbreak of pestilence that could ruin an entire city.[94] At the same time, despite Vasari's side-eye at Lucrezia for leaving his interment to the Scalzo brothers, Andrea's wife was not, according to custom, responsible for burying Andrea. Rather, the performance of funeral rites was perhaps the single most appealing aspect of lay-confraternity membership to Florentine men.[95] The duty thus fell squarely on the brothers of the Scalzo.[96] Lucrezia del Fede's actions at the time of Andrea's death, were then, all together appropriate. Nonetheless, through Vasari's misogynist lens, she emerges as an important secondary character in Andrea's biography, characterized as an overbearing ingrate. Her power to control her husband compromised not only Andrea's success but also the careers of all subsequent Florentine painters, who lost international royal patronage because of her manipulative interventions on henpecked Andrea's behavior.[97]

---

[94] Alberti, *della Famiglia*, II, 125: "And since we have started on this subject of not abandoning kinsman in time of illness, I feel I should not pass in silence over my next point, though it is a matter more important to the family's survival than pleasing to the tenderhearted…it is hardly prudent not to avoid contact with persons to whom, because of contagious and most dangerous disease, you can show kindness and be helpful only at the risk of your own health and your life. The laws permit, even in the cases of nonfatal contagion, that a man abandon the dearest thing and disengage himself from the first and best natural union of matrimony. If even the husband is allowed to leave a leprous wife, shall we assert that to leave a man with plague is not legitimate?" Perhaps, however, both Alberti and Vasari only thought that self-preservation was justified in the case of men.

[95] Barducci, "La Compagnia dello Scalzo," 153; John Henderson. 1988. "Religious Confraternities and Death in Renaissance Florence," in *Florence and Italy: Renaissance Studies in Honor of Nicolai Rubinstein*, eds. Peter Denley and Caroline Elam, pgs. 383-394. (Exeter: Short Run Press, Ltd); and Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 45.

[96] On Andrea's membership in the confraternity and their responsibility to bury him, with they did, refer to Alana O'Brien, "Andrea del Sarto and the Compagnia dello Scalzo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 48.1/2 (2004): 158-267.

[97] For the art-historical consequences of the acceptance of Vasari's characterization of Andrea, consult the conclusion of this dissertation.

But with no evidence to corroborate Vasari's account, it seems just as likely that the author was scapegoating Lucrezia to justify his own inability and the inability of his students to secure patronage by Francis I of France.

Still, with regard to the Scalzo, Vasari's characterization of Andrea as unable to control his wife who acts out of her own selfish desires is relevant because his criticisms are contrasted with the praise that he lavished on his teacher's colorism. Vasari writes: "Although he drew simply, all that he colored is rare and truly divine."[98] He furthermore recounted that even as a boy Andrea used color in a way that filled the artists of the city "with marvel."[99] Vasari's superlative characterization of his teacher's use of paint and color is interesting in that, as we have seen, the artist-biographer characterized Andrea's preferred medium of oil paint as feminine in its formal qualities. It put the artist in a subservient position to his materials just as he claimed that Andrea was, in his personal life, subservient to his wife. At the same time, color itself was perceived as deceptive, ornamental, superficial, mutable, feminine. To praise Andrea's colorism in oil was to suggest that there was something effeminate, mutable, and docile about his nature.[100] Not only did this temperament explain his weak and timid behavior, it also meant that Andrea could never be a divine artist like Michelangelo because he lacked the "glowing ardor and boldness" of a masculine temperament.

Vasari's characterization of Andrea is interesting, given Andrea's monumental monochrome *chiaroscuro* cycle in the Cloister of the Scalzo. There, Andrea not only painted in the masculine and virile medium of fresco, he did so without the superficial and duplicitous

---

[98] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite,* V, 6: "*…e se bene disegnò semplicemente, sono nondimeno i coloriti suoi rari e veramente divini*."
[99] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite,* V, 7: "*…onde cominciò in assai picciolo spazio di tempo a far cose con i colori, che Gian Barile e gli altri artefici della città ne restavano maravigliati*."
[100] Sohm, "Gendered Criticism in Italian Art Theory," 774.

beauty of *colore*. This is perhaps why Vasari praises the Scalzo almost unabashedly, calling it "*straordinario*."[101] Vasari claimed that the figures were so excellently drawn (*disegnato*) they looked less like paintings and more like "*istorie di marmo*."[102] As a result of the cloister's perfection, artists went there to study, and it became a "scuola di molti giovani."[103] Vasari even compared the figures of Andrea's last painting in the Scalzo, *The Nativity and Naming of John the Baptist* (Fig. 1.27) to Michelangelo's sculptures in the New Sacristy.[104] This was high praise for a cycle that was, according to Vasari, "*dignissima di ogni lode.*"[105]

Despite these panegyrics, Vasari still made one significant criticism of the Cloister of the Scalzo paintings. Vasari claimed that Andrea's overreliance on figures from prints by Albrecht Dürer showed that his teacher lacked *invenzione*.[106] However, Vasari's criticism here seems pointed. Writing about the Scalzo, the biographer was unable to use his usual rhetorical motif of maligning Andrea and his paintings because of their great colorism in oil because they were monochrome and in fresco—that is, unimpeachably masculine and Florentine. Instead, Vasari tried to diminish Andrea's cloister cycle by implying that Andrea's work was derivative and

---

[101] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite,* V, 9.
[102] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, V, 22 and 32.
[103] Vasari, Vol 5, 32. On this topic, also refer to Alana O'Brien, "Who Holds the Keys to the Chiostro dello Scalzo, 'Scuola di Molto Giovanni,'" *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 63.2 (2021): 211-261.
[104] Vasari-Milanesi, Vol V, 45: "*Mancava al cortile dello Scalzo solamente una storia a restare finito del tutto; per il che Andrea, che aveva ringrandito la maniera per aver visto le figure che Michelagnolo aveva cominciate e parte finite per la sagrestia di San Lorenzo, mise mano a fare quest'ultima storia, ed in essa dando l'ultimo saggio del suo miglioramento fece il nascer di San Giovanni Battista, in figure bellissime e molto migliori e di maggior rilievo che l' altre da lui state fatte per l' adietro nel medesimo luogo*."
[105] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, V, 45.
[106] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite,* V, 22: "*Non tacerò che mentre Andrea in queste ed in altre pitture si adoperava, uscirono fuori alcune stampe intagliate in rame d'Alberto Duro, e che egli se ne servì e ne cavò alcune figure, riducendole alla maniera sua: il che ha fatto credere ad alcuni, non che sia male servirsi delle buone cose altrui destramente, ma che Andrea non avesse molta invenzione*."

Germanic. Vasari's critique of the Scalzo, though, seems especially unwarranted, given how Andrea's *chiaroscuro* Scalzo cycle has been noted in modern times to best exhibit the painter's bold experimentation and *invenzione* that has even been characterized as Mannerist in its audacity of form and expression.[107] That is, despite Vasari's half-hearted and coded attempt to malign the paintings that he and many Florentine copyists admired, the "colorless" paintings in the Cloister of the Scalzo were not derivative or foreign in conception. Rather, they remained a monument to and of Florentine *disegno*.

6. Artistic Debates in Florence

The apparent relationship between the monochrome Cloister of the Scalzo and the masculine Florentine artistic tenet of *disegno* is crucial because of the situation, described in the last chapter, in which Florentine men found themselves by the end of the 1400s: more and more Florentine boys were growing up fatherless and, as a result, lacked entrance to the networks of trust that would help them flourish in Florentine society.[108] As demonstrated, the result of this crisis was that by the sixteenth century, lay confraternities were regarded as crucial in stabilizing the state because their familial structure made them effective at teaching and policing male behavior. In the homosocial circle of the confraternity, elder brothers modeled, and younger members rehearsed, the correct behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs that were required of them to be

[107] In particular, C. L. Ragghianti, "Andrea del Sarto in Cortona," *Critica d'Arte* (1949-50): 123, argued against Andrea's reputation coming from Vasari as a derivative academic painter, citing the Cloister of the Scalzo as evidence of the artist's *invenzione*. He wrote: "…*secondo la tradizione che dal Vasari ai monografisti, lo ha dipinto constantamente come costretto da inevitabili remore accademiche (il "senza errori'), come una sorte di gran professore di composizione e di disegno, pieno di razionale obsequieum per la trilogia dei Maestri (Leonardo, Raffaello, Michelangelo), e quasi come un mirabile contrappuntista delle forme di quelli, gli affreschi del Chiostro dello Scalzo debbono costituire un problema inescapabile."*
[108] Chapter IV of this dissertation.

accepted into Florentine society. Through this process of homosocialization, young members became integrated into the networks of trust that bound each member by social obligation to help the other succeed. For the men of the Scalzo, their monochrome cloister was the semi-public, liminal environment in which this process occurred, where the brothers rehearsed and constructed their personal identities while negotiating and renegotiating their position within their collective social hierarchies. The monochrome cloister was thus critical in the process of confraternal masculine identity-building, the stakes of which were at least to some extent the perpetuation of the Florentine state and its way of life.[109]

The cloister's role in the construction of male identity is particularly interesting in the confraternal context because of the strong representation of artists within the ranks of the confraternity's membership.[110] For these artist-members—painters especially—the cycle also resonated with their professional identities. By standing as a testament to Andrea's membership in and involvement with the confraternity, the paintings would have construed each artist-member as a kind of non-biological relative of the elder master, whether or not they had any other association with him.[111] But, as we saw in the Prologue of this chapter, for artist-members especially, the cloister would not only have been important as an emblem of corporate identity but also a tool that they used to rehearse their professional and personal ones. This is because, increasingly over the quattro- and cinquecento, the social and professional world of artists and *literati* alike became a discursive one in which artworks and art theory were habitual topics of oral and written conversation.[112] Facility in these arguments—which occurred over dinner, in

[109] Refer to the fourth chapter of this dissertation for these arguments.
[110] Refer to chapter I of this dissertation.
[111] On non-biological kinship in the confraternal context, refer to Chapter III of this dissertation.
[112] Refer to Mendelsohn, Paragoni, 29-33, as well as Virginia Cox. 2008. *The Renaissance dialogue: literary dialogue in its social and political contexts, Castiglione to Galileo*.

personal and public letters, and even treatises on manners and courtly behavior—carried cultural caché.[113] For the brothers of the Scalzo, their cloister could have served as both a physical setting for and pedagogical tool for participation in these kinds of dialogues, which would have constituted another avenue in which brothers could negotiate and renegotiate their personal identity within the group.

The Scalzo was well-suited for this kind of activity because it was both a social space and was decorated with Andrea's *chiaroscuro* painting. Inside it, the artist-brothers could have pointed figuratively as well as literally to Andrea's contributions to contemporary artistic debates. On the one hand, doing so would allow the brothers to demonstrate Andrea's assumed artistic genius, which reflected positively back on the confraternity. On another hand, by rehearsing theoretical arguments amongst each other, brothers also demonstrated their own intellectual acumen and awareness of current intellectual trends as well as their social facility in these kinds of elevated discourses. The homosocial space of the Scalzo, with its great artistic monument by one of Florence's greatest artists, located in a semi-public space unofficially zoned for fraternization, would have been the perfect environment for such intellectual debates, the stakes of which were the reputation of each brother, of the confraternity, of Andrea del Sarto, and even the artistic hegemony of the city of Florence against its rivals, especially those in Venice and northern Europe.

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 9-33; and Deborah Stott, "Fatte á Sembianza di Pitura: Jacopo Sansovino's Bronze Reliefs in S. Marco," *The Art Bulletin* 64.3 (1982): 370-388.

[113] Refer to Lynn M. Louden, "'Sprezzatura' in Raphael and Castiglione," *Art Journal* 28.1 (1968); 43-49 + 53, especially her discussion Castiglione's belief that the perfect courtier was useful only if he could do things for the court, especially demonstrate learning and intellect as well as awareness in contemporary cultural and intellectual debates.

One of the most important artistic dialogues that the men of the Scalzo, along with intellectuals and artists from all over Italy, engaged in during the sixteenth century was the *paragone* debate concerning the supremacy of painting or sculpture.[114] Karen edis-Barzman has noted that although in the nineteenth century the language used to discuss the *paragone* was neutered, in the sixteenth century the *paragone* was very much characterized as a *disputa,* dispute or argument, and was contextualized within broader epistemological debates.[115] Over the course of the century, male artists and literati engaged in the dispute in their personal and professional lives in epistolary, academic, and social vanguards. Arguments can be found in the writings of Leon Battista Alberti, Leonardo da Vinci, Guarico, Lodovico Dolce, Paolo Pino, and Benedetto Varchi. The letters of the traveling *literato* Pietro Aretino, for example, to his friends, the Venetian painter Titian and the

---

[114] Rudolf Preimesberger, *Paragons and Paragone: Van Eyck, Raphel, Michelangelo, Caravaggio, Bernini.,* Los Angeles 2011, p. viii, and David Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art*, New Jersey 1981, p. 17, shows that Leonardo first revived and shifted this debate when he compared poetry to painting, taking up the Horatian simile *ut pictura poesis*. Leatrice Mendelsohn has suggested that the quarrel was rekindled for good when artists completely removed the literary arts and substituted "sculpture" for "poetry."[#] She maintained that the timing of this substitution was the result of many causes: art theorists wanting to engage in the ancient debate; artists wishing to assert that their professions were liberal arts and not merely crafts; the rediscovery of Aristotle's *Poetics*, which compared the structural merits of tragedy and painting; the dissemination of Leonardo's unpublished notebooks; the support of the debate by the duke of Tuscany, Cosimo I de' Medici's, at official meetings of the *Accademia Fiorentina*, Florence's literary academy; and as a response to the Calvinist debate on iconoclasm. Leatrice Mendelsohn, "Simultaneity and the *Paragone*: Justifying Art in the Eye of the Beholder," https://www.academia.edu/1777177/Simultaneity_and_the_Paragone_The_Justification_of_Art_in_the_Eye_of_the_Viewer, originally published as "Simultaneität und der paragone: Die Rechtfertigung der Kunst im Auge des Betrachters," in Im Agon der Künste. Paragonales Denken, ästhetische Praxis und die Diversität der Sinne, Acts of the Conference, Berlin, 19—22 February 2001 at the s Frei Universitat, eds. Ulrike Mueller Hofstede, Hannah Baader, Kristine Patz, and Nicola Suthor, pp. 294—335. (Berlin: 2007), 2 and 32.

[115] Barzman, *The Florentine Academy*, 145. On the term *paragone*, refer to Claire Farago. 1991. "The Classification of the Visual Arts in the Renaissance," in *The Shapes of Knowledge from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, edited by D. R. Kelley and R. H. Popkin, pp. 23-47. (The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers).

Florentine sculptor and studio-mate of Andrea del Sarto, Jacopo Sansovino (1486-1570), discuss the *paragone*. Aretino furthermore referenced dinner parties, attended sometimes by the letters' recipients along with other notable contemporaries, at which the dialogues were the topic of conversation amongst the author's learned and aristocratic friends.[116] Treatment of the debate in the form of a dialogue between the duke and a courtier in Baldassare Castiglione's *The Courtier* shows that facility in the argument was considered a princely virtue.[117] The *paragone* debate was thus well-rehearsed in intellectual homosocial circles, with adept participation in the discourse cementing one's standing in those social networks.

The debate was waged particularly inside of the city of Florence, where artists and writers were in near-continuous communication regarding the status of the two arts. Letters on the topic circulated even to and from Florentines in exile in other cities.[118] The perceived need for a codification of the debate resulted in the publication of Benedetto Varchi's *Due Lezzioni* in 1550. The text contained two parts. The first began with a sonnet, "*Non ha l'ottimo artista alcun concetto*" by Michelangelo, which Varchi interpreted, using it to give his opinion on the *paragone*. He argued that Michelangelo's sonnet could be read to mean that painting and sculpture, being arts of *disegno*, had the same nature and were therefore equal.[119] Varchi also asked eight renowned artists—Vasari, Bronzino, Pontormo, Cellini, Tasso, Francesco da Sangallo, Tribolo and Michelangelo—to write letters for the publication arguing their position in the debate.[120] Varchi's opening statement

---

[116] Stott, "Fatte á Sebianza di Pittura," 384.
[117] Baldassare Castiglione. 1959. *The Book of the Courtier*, translated by Charles Singleton. (NY: Anchor), 79.
[118] Mendelsohn, *Paragoni*, 4-5.
[119] Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 7-55.
[120] For transcripts of the letters, refer to Barocchi, *Scritti*, I, 493—523 for transcriptions of the letters written by the eight artists. The eight artists were (in order of publication) Giorgio Vasari, Agnolo Bronzino, Jacopo Pontormo, Giovanni Battista del Tasso, Francesco Sangallo, Niccolo Tribolo, Benvenuto Cellini, and Michelangelo.

conveyed the ubiquity of the *paragone*: "I do not think that anyone can be found these days of any intelligence who does not know how important the rivalry and the controversy concerning the nobility and precedence of painting and sculpture has always been and is today, more than ever."[121] In his own letter, the architect and sculptor Giovanni Battista del Tasso (1500-1555) complained about the *paragone* conversation, calling it an "ugly bell tower that could be heard throughout Florence."[122] The *paragone* debate was thus just as passionately waged inside of Florence as it was in the rest of the Italian peninsula.

Florentines of the cinquecento based their *paragone* arguments on ones made in the previous century, primarily by Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472) and Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519). While Alberti did not address the *paragone* directly, his mathematical approach to picture-construction was understood as an implicit argument that painting was an abstraction requiring greater intellectual rigor than sculpture.[123] Leonardo made this point outright, arguing that painters did superior intellectual work compared to sculptors, which is why painters wore fine clothes while sculptors were coated in marble dust and looked like bakers caked with flour.[124] Leonardo furthermore noted that unlike painters, sculptors produced objects that existed in the real world. The concrete nature of sculpture, he argued, meant that it was necessarily simpler than painting, which resulted in the creation of an entire illusionistic world.[125] Leonardo even claimed that though this kind of illusionism could be achieved in *bas relief* sculpture, which was a medium like painting, the

---

[121] Varchi, *Due Lezzioni,* 89: "*Io non penso, che niuno di qualche ingegno si ritruovi in luogo nessuno, il quale non sappia quanto grande sia stata sempre, et sia hoggi piu, che mai la condesa, et differenca non solo fra gli Scultori, et Pittori, ma fra gl'altri ancora…"*
[122] Tasso in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 136: "*Luca Martini m'ha mostro una lettera dive voi dite di quella torraccia ch'andò per tutto Firenze, fatta da quello amico*."
[123] Alberti, *On Painting*, I: 37-59.
[124] Barocchi, *Scritti*, I, 475.
[125] Barocchi, *Scritti*, 479.

mathematical proportions and harmony of such sculptures were almost always lacking due to the ignorance of their creators.[126] The result was that even though the perfection of Michelangelo's sculpture would later become a strong defense in sculpture's favor, by the early 1500s, painting seemed well in the lead of the *paragone* debate.

Painting's lead in the debate did not sit well with the Florentine intellectual Benedetto Varchi, who, after his defeat along with the rest of the *fuorusciti* rebels by the Medici at the Battle of Montemurlo in 1537, took refuge in the universities and learned circles in northern Italy, where he learned the Aristotelianism that seemed to supplant the Neoplatonic thinking customary in Florence.[127] Still, to the Florentine intellectual living in this diaspora, arguments in favor of painting verged on a defense of Venetian art.[128] Like his peers, Varchi saw Venetian painting as the antithesis of that of his beloved Florence, with even its materials—expensive pigments suspended in unctuous walnut or flax oil—suggesting excess, sin, corporeality, lasciviousness. It was likely for this reason that when Varchi was called out of exile by his former-enemy-turned-patron, Cosimo I de' Medici, and installed in the duke's official literary academy, the Accademia Fiorentina, his first lectures addressed the *paragone* debate.[129] With his assertion that painting and sculpture had the same nature and were therefore equal, Varchi shifted the discourse away from a rivalry between artistic media

---

[126] Leonardo in Barocchi, *Scritti*, I, 479: "*…tu non troverai nissuna in basso rilievo, che non sia piena d'errore nel tutto rilievo...*" In the early 1500s, Baldassarre Castiglione also took up the *paragone* in *The Courtier*, arguing in favor of painting, rehashing Leonardo's arguments. Only the theorist Pomponio Gaurico defended sculpture, but his treatise, *De Scultura*, met limited circulation. On it, refer to Donatella Varotto, "Il 'De Scultura' di Pomponio Guarico: una testimonianza sulla fortuna critica dell'arte di Donatello a Padova,"" *Storia dell'arte* 113/114 (2206): 77-102.
[127] It is in the north that incorporated Aristotelian concepts into his thinking, which has been discussed at length by Mendelsohn, *Paragoni*, 7-15. Also refer to Barzman, *The Florentine Academy*, 144-148 and Francois Quiviger, "Benedetto Varchi and the Visual Arts," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 50 (1987): 219-224.
[128] Mendelsohn, *Paragoni*, 37-88.
[129] Mendelsohn, *Paragoni*, 37-88.

and instead celebrated that which he believed was uniquely Florentine: *disegno*.[130] By arguing for the primacy of *disegno*—a work of art's underlying form—above its matter—whether that form was expressed as a sculpture or painting—Varchi pledged allegiance to the Florentine state and all else for which *disegno* stood: masculinity, patriarchy, the idea, the rational, the divine.[131] His *paragone* lectures and the publication that followed it, *Due Lezzioni*, was thus an act of early-modern self-fashioning specifically designed to tap into Florentine ideals and values through debate about its most fundamental art-making principle, *disegno*.[132]

As both propaganda for and an olive branch offered to the Florentine ducal state, the orientation of Varchi's intellectual output in this period around the *paragone* did more than allow the *literato* to focus on the supremacy of *disegno*. It also allowed him to engage in an act that was itself a Florentine cultural phenomenon: the artistic competition. Although also waged in other parts of Italy, staged comparisons between artists, artworks, and artistic media had been a part of Florentine culture since the contest held in 1401 for the commission of the gilded north doors of the city's baptistery.[133] This adjudicated public contest set a precedent for the side-by-side public display of

---

[130] Mendelsohn, *Paragoni*, 37-88.
[131] On the circumstances surrounding Varchi's exile, consult Ann E. Moyer. 2020. "The Intellectual World of Sixteenth-century Florence: Humanists and culture in the age of Cosimo I. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press), 24. At the same time, Mendelsohn, *Paragoni*, 7,and 11-15, has suggested that by showing his knowledge of a range of arguments made in all of Italy's major scholastic and intellectuals circles—Venice, Padua, Florence, Bologna, and Rome, especially—Varchi distinguished himself from his Florentine peers who had never spent significant periods of time in Italian universities of the north. On the intellectual and philosophical character of these northern cities when Varchi was in them, consult the introduction to Pietro Pomponazzi, "On the immortality of the soul (*De immortalitate animae*)," in *The Renaissance philosophy of man*, ed. Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oscar Kristeller, and John Hermann, pp. 280-381. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
Jr. Randall (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 280-381.
[132] On self-fashioning in this period, refer to Stephen Jay Greenblatt. 1984. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1-10.
[133] Krautheimer, *Lorenzo Ghiberti,* 31-49.

artworks, such as of the lost monumental cartoons for *The Battle of Cascina* (Fig. 4.1) and *The Battle of Anghiari* (Fig. 5.2), by Michelangelo and Leonardo, respectively, that were displayed in the Palazzo Vecchio in 1504.[134] As artists and art theorists argued for the elevated status of the visual arts as well as artists, these public competitions, which recalled the ancient one between Zeuxis and Parrhassius described by Pliny, were performative events that Florentines felt attested to the acumen of their collective aesthetic judgment.[135] One can imagine that, for a city of merchants who prided themselves on their ability to make visual estimations, these kinds of visual competitions in which the on-looker had to asses both quantitative and qualitative value were especially related to the performance of Florentine masculinity.[136] Engaging in the related *paragone* debate among the arts was thus related to one's *fiorentinità* and a rehearsal of the kinds of civic events and cultural attitudes that, to the Florentines, demonstrated the exceptionality of their city and of its citizens.

Because of Varchi's investment in the *paragone* debate as an act of Florentine self-fashioning, it seems especially relevant that, after Michelangelo's sonnet and Varchi's own arguments, he structured the second section of *Due Lezzioni* as a selection of letters from eight of the city's top artists. Although these letters—which Erwin Panofsky called, "the first public opinion poll on art"—were collected two decades after Andrea del Sarto finished painting in the Scalzo, they are nonetheless of particular interest with regard to the monochrome cloister.[137] That is because five of the eight authors—Jacopo da Pontormo, Niccolò Tribolo (1500-1550), Francesco da Sangallo (1494-1576), Giovanni Battisto del Tasso, and Benvenuto Cellini (1500-1571)—were members of the

[134] Wilde, "The Hall of the Great Council of Florence," 65-81.
[135] Pliny, *The Natural Histories*, 35.10.
[136] Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, 15-27, discusses the importance of being able to evaluate the value of the materials of an object separate from the value of the work done to the materials.
[137] Erwin Panofsky. 1954. *Galileo as a Critic of the Arts*. (The Hague: M. Nijhoff), 2.

Confraternity of St. John the Baptist.[138] Although no evidence has been found that the remaining three authors—Vasari, Agnolo Bronzino (1503-1572), and Michelangelo—were members of the Scalzo, Vasari and Bronzino, in particular, were tied to the reputation of Andrea del Sarto.[139] Vasari, after all, was his student and Bronzino was the student and nearly-adopted son of fellow letter-writer and Andrea's studio assistant, Jacopo da Pontormo.[140] The eight letters published in *Due Lezzioni* thus reflect the attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and self-stylings of associates of Andrea del Sarto as well as active members of the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist.

The content of these letters has received much critical attention from literary scholars.[141] But to understand how the letters may have functioned in cultural context, analysis of their tone is just as necessary as analysis of their content. This is because many of the letters make their arguments in ironic and ludic ways, in keeping with the jocular, witty, and burlesque nature of the Accademia Fiorentina for which they were written.[142] The joking nature of the letters is readily apparent in that written by Jacopo da Pontormo. Though claiming that all that is really noble was the two media's foundation, *disegno*, the painter still went on to champion his art in an ironic way.[143] Among his

---

[138] O'Brien, "Maestri d'alcune arti misti e d'ingegno," 396 (Tribolo), 400 (Pontormo), and 412 (Tasso). On Cellini's membership, refer to Douglas Dow, "Benvenuto Cellini's Bid for Membership in the Florentine Confraternity of San Giovanni Battista detta dello Scalzo," *Confraternitas* 20.1 (2009): 2-10 as well as O'Brien, "Maestri," 400.
[139] O'Brien, "Maestri," 382, suggests that the lack of evidence for membership of these men could mean that higher-ups in the Medici court were not likely to seek membership in the Scalzo.
[140] Elizabeth Pilliod. 2001. *Pontormo, Bronzino, Allori: A Genealogy of Florentine Art*. (London and New Haven: Yale University Press), 11-144 and "Bronzino's Household," *Burlington Magazine* 134 (1992): 92-100.
[141] On this, consult Mendelsohn, *Paragoni*, 39-64.
[142] Refer to my comments on this in Christine Zappella, "The Implicating Gaze in Bronzino's *Cosimo I de' Medici as Orpheus* and the Intellectual Culture of the Accademia Fiorentina," *Studies in Iconography* 42 (2021): 180-185.
[143] Pontormo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 132: "*La cosa in se è tanto difficile che la non si puo disputare e manco risolvere, perche una cosa sola ce che è nobile che è el suo fondamento, è questo sie el disegno…*"

many reasons for the supremacy of painting, Pontormo cited its ability to overcome nature by making, on a flat surface, figures that seem living.[144] Then, Pontormo continued: "If he [the Painter] had at least considered that when God made man, he did it in three dimensions [*in rilievo*], as it was easier to make things seem living, he would not have chosen a subject [*rilievo*] so artificial, and rather miraculous, and divine."[145] That is, the painter's task was even more difficult than God's when he created earth. Pontormo's letter thus called into question the *dificultà* of Sculpture, but in an ironic, self-deprecating, and nearly heretical way.

The tone of Michelangelo's letter is similar to Pontormo's in its use of irony. The final rejoinder that closes the entire text of *Due Lezzioni*, Michelangelo's very brief letter takes on Varchi's assertion that the arts were equal, a claim that Varchi arrived at through the interpretation of Michelangelo's own sonnet, commentary on which had constituted the first of Varchi's *Lezzione*.[146] Michelangelo concluded, "I say that painting seemed good to me the more it went towards *rilievo* [relief/ three-dimensionality], and *rilievo* worse the more it tended towards painting; and so I always believed that sculpture was the lantern of painting, and the difference between one and the other was the same as that between the sun and the moon."[147] That is, Painting, Michelangelo had earlier thought, was like the moon, which did not produce its own light but rather

---

[144] Pontormo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 134: "*Ma quello che io dissi troppo ardito, che la importa[n]za sie superare la natura in volere dare spirito à vo[str]a figura, è farla parere viva, e farla in piano*."
[145] Pontormo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 134: "*Che se almeno egli havesse considerato, come cosa piu facile à farlo vivo, e no[n] si harebbe preso uno soggetto si artifitioso, e piutosto miracoloso, e divino."* Later in his letter, Pontormo reveals that "*il* soggetto" of Painting is "rilievo." On this section of the letter, also refer to Maratsos, "Pictorial Theology and the Paragone in Pontormo's Capponi Chapel," *Art History* 40 (2017): 939-940.
[146] Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 7-55.
[147] Michelangelo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 154-155: *"Io dico che la pittura mi par più tenuta buona quanto più va verso il rilievo, et il rilievo più cattivo quanto più va verso la pittura; e però a me soleva parer che la scultura fussi la lantern della pittura, e che da l'una a l'altra fussi quella differenza che è dal sole alla luna."*

reflected the light of the sun, referring to Sculpture.[148] But Micheangelo then claimed that after considering Varchi's "little book", he had changed his mind. The sculptor stated that "…if greater judgment and difficulty, impediment and labor do not make greater nobility, then painting and sculpture are the same thing." If they are the same, he asserted, "each painter should not do less of sculpture than of painting, and similarly the sculptor of painting." The absurdity of this statement revealed Michelangelo's sarcastic manner and, along with it, his real opinion. The arts are were not the same and Sculpture was the greater one.

In addition to their ironic tones, the letters of Pontormo and Michelangelo are also similar in their denigration of Varchi's abstract approach to the *paragone* debate. This anti-theoretical attitude is evident in Pontormo's assertion, for example, that if practicing painters had considered the difficulty entailed in the creation of figures with the ability to "*superare la natura*," they would have become sculptors. Michelangelo disagreed completely with Pontormo, citing the greater difficulty that he found in the physical act of sculpting as evidence for its superiority over Painting. Both of these artists, moreover, included barbs towards Varchi for his philosophical approach to the *paragone* debate. In Michelangelo's letter, this barb is up front, when he sarcastically states, "Now that I have read in your little book where you said that, speaking philosophically, things that have the same end are the same thing…" that he had changed his opinion.[149] Pontormo's *bons mots* come at

[148] Zdenek Kopla, *The Moon*. (Dordrecht: 1969), 421, reports that Anaxagoras, writing on eclipses, was the first to assert that the moon's light was reflected light. Aristotle, *On the Heavens* II.11 repeats this argument. As David Topper and Cynthia Gillis, "Trajectories of Blood: Artemisia Gentileschi and Galileo's parabolic path," *Women's Art Journal* 17.1 (1996): 10 explain, Aristotle's theories about the moon were canonical in early-modernity and were referenced until the time of Galileo in representations.

[149] Michelangelo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 155: '*Ora poi che ho letto bel vostro libretto dove dite, che parlando filosoficamente quelle cose, che hanno una medesima fine sono una medesima cosa, io mi son mutato d'oppenione…*" Barzman, *The Florentine Academy*, 148, explains that Varchi thought that Painting and Sculpture had the same end because they both resulted in the production of an object that imitated nature.She noted that Baxandall, 1971. *Giotto and the*

the end of his letter, when he makes fun of Varchi's long-windedness along with his lack of artistic experience.[150] Citing Varchi's philosophical letters, the painter concludes his own letter:

> "In sum, having regained strength, and this notebook of leaves not being sufficient–and not only that–because we're now in your arena [that is, writing], but because I don't want these to seem too tedious ceremonies, to not boor you nor to dye it [this letter] any more with ink, especially because it [paper] is very useful to me, it is enough that I note the day of the month, which is the 18th of February."[151]

Through irony and jest, both Pontormo and Michelangelo, then, implied that the practice of art-making along with the opinions of practicing artists should be centered in the *paragone* debate.

This attitude is especially interesting when put in relationship to another letter in Varchi's *Lezzioni*, that by Giovanni del Tasso. Seemingly overlooked in the scholarship on Andrea del Sarto, Tasso tells that, given the ubiquity of the debate, he did not want to write a letter at all.[152] This is because, he said, among the painters, there was one, defeated by the reasons in favor of Sculpture, who wanted to do what the painter Antonio del Giansi had done to Andrea del Sarto:

> "…[Antonio] having shown him [Andrea] one of his paintings so that he would give his opinion and tell him if there were errors, and imploring Andrea that it should be pleasing for him to do so, Andrea, who was neither lacking in manners nor valor, lovingly showed him [Antonio] several things that did not please him [Andrea], giving him the reasons why; to which Antonio, not knowing how to respond, not wishing to have transgressed

---

Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition. (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 141, reproduced a relevant passage by Petrarch, who, in *De remediis utriusque fontunae*, wrote: "*…pene ars una, vel si plures, unus ut dixumus fons artium graphidem dico…"* (["The practices of the painter and the sculptor] are almost one art, of it there are different, they come (as they say) from one source, [which] I call drawing." Barzman's translation.)

[150] Varchi's long-windedness was also noted in a later context. Wittkower, *The Divine* Michelangelo, 27-28, related that the excessive length of Varchi's speech at Michelangelo's funeral prompted an anonymous mourner to write a letter complaining about the impossibility of sitting through it on a hot July day.

[151] Pontormo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 125: "*Sommi aveduto che l'ha ripreso vigore, a non le basterebbe isto quaderno di fogli, non che tutto questo, perché l'è ora nella beva sua, ma io, perchè le non vi paressino ceremonie troppo stuchchevoli, per non vi infastidiare non la intignerò più nello inchiostro, pure che la mia serva così tanto che io noti i dì del mese che sono XVIII di Febbraio….* " On Varchi's use of the phrase "*nella beva sua*," refer to www.treccani.it/vocabolario/beva/, last accessed 27 February 2022.

[152] I am indebted to Steven J. Cody for confirming the absence of this letter from the literature.

any pact between them but overcome by anger [that had been] provoked by his own ignorance, said: 'Andrea, I am a man to show you weapon in hand (*con l'armi in mano*) that this is a beautiful painting.' At which words Andrea responded that he [Andrea] had gone there to tell him the errors of the painting, like he [Antonio] had begged of him, and, as for fist-fighting/ going back to work (*del menar le mani*) again, he would see."[153]

There are many outstanding features to this story about Andrea del Sarto as recounted by Tasso, a contemporary of the painter. One is that when Antonio is criticized by Andrea, the lesser painter asserts his manhood just before threatening his friend. Tasso's letter thus suggests a direct link between the *paragone* debate and the construction of masculinity. This is especially interesting given another noteworthy feature of the letter: Tasso's apparent great respect for Andrea. Tasso positions the Scalzo painter as the arbiter of Florentine Painting standards and describes him as well-mannered and valorous. This is not the end of his praise. In the analogy between, on one hand, Antonio and Andrea and, on the other hand, Tasso's contemporary Florentine painters and sculptors, Tasso has Andrea stand in for the Sculptors. These are the men whom the sculptor-architect believed were on the correct side of the *paragone* debate as well as smarter and better-behaved than the painters. This analogy between Andrea and the Sculptors would have constituted high praise for Tasso, an architect and sculptor championing the medium of Sculpture in the authoritative statement on the *paragone* dispute. But perhaps most noteworthy, given Andrea's reputation for being timid, is

[153] Francesco San Gallo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 146: "*…che fra loro era qualcuno che, vinto dalle vere ragioni della scultura, voleva fare come fece Antonio del Giansi a Andrea del Sarto: che avendogli mostrato un suo Quadro perché gnene dicesse l'oppenione sua e gli avvertisse se vi erano errori, pregandolo strettamente lo dovesse in ciò conpiacere, Andrea, che non era manco cortese che valente, gli mostrò amorevolmente assai cose che non gli satisfacevono, dandognene le ragione; al che non sapendo Antonio rispondere altro, né volendo patto alcuno aver fatto male, vinto dalla collora mossa da l'ignoranzo sua, diss: <<Andrea, io sono uomo per mostrarvi con l'armi in mano che questo è un bel Quadro>>. Alle quali parole rispose Andrea che era ito quivi per dirli li errori del Quadro, come da lui ne era stato pregato, e che del menar le mani un'altra volta lo rivederebbe.*" Tasso is here also playing with words here himself, as he has Andrea del Sarto, whose works were described by Vasari-Milanesi, IV, 12, as "*senza errori*," pointing out the errors in Antonio's painting.

the unexpected way that the story plays out. When Antonio lashes out at Andrea, saying that he will show the other painter "with weapon in hand" that his painting was beautiful, Andrea's response is socially and intellectually nimble. Punning on Antonio's threat through the use of the phrase "*menar le mani*," which means both to hit and to go back to work, Andrea diffuses the threat of violence in a clever way. Punning on Antonio's threat, he suggests that Antonio should go back to work to address the errors in his painting, which Andrea would then be able to see. At once reasserting his artistic superiority in the *paragone* debate and implying that he is not afraid of Antonio's threat, The impression that Tasso gives of Andrea del Sarto is thus opposite that proffered by Vasari. In Tasso's hands, the painter is cast as smart, esteemed, gracious, and assertive.

7. Andrea: A Reassessment

Tasso's letter is especially significant because it joins a growing body of evidence that suggests Andre del Sarto was a much more accomplished—or at least more vibrantly engaged—intellectual than history has remembered him. Though the view of Andrea as an unsophisticated intellect, the son of a lowly tailor, comes largely from Vasari, it is in *The Lives* that we find earliest evidence of Andrea's academic engagement with his contemporaries and their art. In the life of Jacopo Sansovino, Vasari writes that in their youth, the two artists—Florence's greatest painter and sculptor, respectively, of the age—benefitted from each other's friendship because Sansovino made small sculptural models that Andrea used in his paintings while Andrea engaged the sculptor in theoretical conversations about art-making.[154] Given the ubiquity of the *paragone* debate in the time

[154] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, VII, 487-488: "*Giovò anco pur assai all' uno ed all'altro la pratica e l'amicizia, che nella loro fanciullezza, e poi nella gioventù ebbero insieme Andrea del Sarto ed Iacopo Sansovino; iquali seguitando la maniera medesima nel disegno, ebbero, la medesima grazia nel fare, l'uno nella pittura, e l'atro nella scultura, perchè conferendo insieme i dubbi dell'arte, e facendo Iacopo per Andrea modelli di figure, s'aiutavanao l'un a l'atro*

that Andrea and Jacopo were living and working together, it seems likely that contemporary readers would have understood that the young painter and sculptor discussed the *paragone* together at length. It is particularly illuminating that Vasari reports that Jacopo provided Andrea with a manual product, a *modello*, whereas Andrea's gift to his friend was abstract: conversation, ideas. Vasari thus implies that even though Andrea did not write his artistic theories down, he certainly had them and solicited the city's great sculptors for their opinion on the matter, hashing and rehashing the debate amongst his esteemed peers.

At the same time, the assertion that Andrea left no written records has itself recently been challenged. Though long known to scholars, *The Battle of the Mice and the Frogs*, published in 1778 by Abbot Francesco Fontani, librarian of the Biblioteca Riccardiana in Florence, as an epic poem attributed to Andrea del Sarto, has been all but ignored by the literature because it was believed to be a forgery. However, as Sanne Wellen recently observed, this belief stemmed largely from scholars' impression, via Vasari, that Andrea would not have been capable of authoring such a text. Wellen pointed out that when ignoring Vasari's biased biography of the artist, little evidence exists to suggest that Andrea would have been incapable of penning such a tract except that he had no formal education. Interestingly, the author of *The Battle of the Mice and the Frogs* acknowledged his lack of education in the opening of the poem. But the author's lack of early formal education is the only resemblance that the poem's bold and daring author bears to Andrea del Sarto as history remembers him. Far from disproving the poem's authorship, Wellen argued that the disjunction between

sommementa." Vasari also remarks on their friendship in Vol. V, 10: "…*Onde avvenne che Andrea, ed Iacopo Sansovino allora giovane, il quale nel medesimo luogo lavorava di scultura sotto Andrea Contucci suo maestro,' feciono sì grande e stretta amicizia insieme, che ne giorno ne notte si staccava l'uno dall'altro, e per lo più i loro ragionamenti erano delle difficulta del- l' arte; onde non è maraviglia se l'uno el'altro sono poi stati eccellentissimi, come si dice ora d'Andrea, e come a suo luogo si dirà di Iacopo*."

history's impression of Andrea del Sarto and the personality of the author of the poem suggests that it was likely not written by a forger, who would have taken great pains to convince the audience of its authenticity. Instead, Wellen suggests, Andrea had probably authored the poem's core, which was embellished over time by subsequent writers. As proof that Andrea could have authored the poem, Wellen pointed to Andrea's overlooked engagement with burlesque artistic circles, especially that of the *Compagnia del Paiuolo*, "the Kettle Club," a festive intellectual brigade of the city's artists that was founded by the sculptor Giovanni Francesco Rustici (1474-1554*).* Wellen argued that Andrea would not only have been commissioned to make stage props and scenery for the *compagnia*'s performances but also would have been called on to act and to participate in those performances. He was thus continually exposed to the intellectual rhetoric of this elite circle of artists and thinkers.[155] If Wellen did not prove to a skeptical reader that Andrea wrote the poem, she at least demonstrated that he had much more informal intellectual training than previously acknowledged and that it was possible that such a man might have authored a mock epic poem.

This confluence of textual evidence—Tasso's letter, Vasari's life of Sansovino, the possible epic poem in Andrea's hand, and archival documentation of his participation in artistic confraternities—suggests a thoughtful and reflective artistic mind at work. Analysis of Andrea's paintings seems to confirm not only that Andrea was much more actively engaged in academic debates than previously thought and had access to the ideas contained in Leonardo's notebooks, he also seems also to have been educated in contemporary Florentine vernacular theology and had a great understanding of Augustine as well.[156] This seems likely, given the prominence of Augustine's

---

[155] Sanne Wellen, "'La Guerra de' topi e de' ranocchi' Attributed to Andrea del Sarto: Consideration on the Poem's Authorship, the Compagnia del Paiuolo, and Vasari," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 12 (2009): 181-232.
[156] Refer to Chapter III of this dissertation.

writings in Florentine theological circles, including inside of the Confraternity of the Scalzo where his texts were regularly read and studied.[157] It furthermore seems inconceivable—especially if one believes Michelangelo, who argued in the sonnet that opens *Due Lezzioni* that the artist's hand obeys his intellect—that Andrea could become one of the most important artists of his generation without a substantive theoretical understanding of picture-making and designing. Taken together, then, both written and pictorial evidence suggests an alternate view of Andrea del Sarto compared to the one handed down to us from Vasari. That is, Andrea may not have had formal academic training in his childhood but he was an active participant in the intellectual activities of his many social and professional circles and this intellectual engagement is evident in his pictures.

Unlike the artists afforded the opportunity by Varchi, Andrea seems never to have written down his definitive position on the *paragone* argument. Certainly, the artist would have championed Painting, as was customary for painters. He would have done this making many of the same generic arguments as had been made by Leonardo as well as, in the *Due Lezzioni*, Vasari, Pontormo, and Bronzino. But, as evident in both the letters by Pontormo and Michelangelo, the *paragone* debate was best played out not in abstract and ideas and letters. Moreover, in the analogy of Tasso's letter, this position is hinted at by Andrea, who directs his friend Antonio back to the practice of art-making to overcome the errors of his painting. In this way, the artists' letters themselves direct readers back to their authors' artistic output.

Yet still, modern commentators have already noted that, to the field's detriment, analysis of the Florentine *paragone* debate has occurred almost entirely along literary lines. That is, rarely have

---

[157] On the reception of Augustine in early-modern Italy, consult Meredith Gill. *Augustine in the Italian Renaissance: art and philosophy from Petrarch to Michelangelo*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); on Andrea del Sarto's absorption of Augustine theology and its effects on his art, refer to Steven J. Cody. 2020. *Andrea del Sarto: Spendor and Renewal in the Renaissance Altarpiece*. (Leiden: Boston).

the artworks that their artists produced been considered as weighty evidence alongside the eight letters. Exceptions are studies by Leo Steinberg, John Shearman, and, most recently, Jessica Maratso, which have all taken on Pontormo's letter in relationship to the Capponi Chapel in Florence as a response to Michelangelo's Roman *Pietà*.[158] Along with Mendelsohn, Robyn O'Bryan has also made observations about sculptures' unique claim to simultaneity, or the ability of a work of art to represent multiple sides of a figure, a quality cited in favor of Sculpture's supremacy.[159] She referred specifically to Bronzino's *Dwarf Morgante*, putting the double-sided object in relationship to the bawdy, punning, and subversive culture of the Accademia Fiorentina.[160] With regard to Florence's *paragone* debate, analysis of the artworks produced by the respondent of Varchi's poll–the place where they put their ideas into practice, using the tools and methods of their own trade—is thus an apparent evidentiary mine in need of excavation.

This is no less the case for the work of Andrea, whom the historical record, via not only Tasso but also by the seicento biographer Filippo Baldinucci (1624-1697), already put in direct dialogue with the *paragone* debate. Baldinucci reported that "nostro Jacopo" went to draw after Andrea del Sarto's *Nativity of the Virgin* (Fig. 5.4) in the *chiostrino* of SS. Annunziata many times and that "…coming from her devotion, Lucrezia [del Fede], who was of great age and had been wife of Andrea, would stop there to watch him work with great pleasure, and going to him hinting that the portraits (*i ritratti*) that were in this picture had been captured from life from her very own

---

[158] Refer to John Shearman. 1971. *Pontormo's Altarpiece in S. Felicita.* (Newcastle: University of Newcastle); Leo Steinberg, "Pontormo's Capponi Chapel," *Art Bulletin* 56.3 (1974): 385-399; Maratsos, "Pictorial Theology and the Paragone," 939-963.
[159] For example, refer to Vasari and Benvenuto Cellini, in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni,* 128 and 152, for this argument in favor of Sculpture.
[160] Robin O'Bryan, "Portrait of a Renaissance Dwarf: Bronzino, Morgante, and the Accademia Fiorentina," *Art Bulletin* 100.3 (2018): 80-105.

face…"[161] Both Sydney Freedberg and Alana O'Brien have previously noted Baldinucci's reference in the plural to "the portraits," implying that Andrea depicted Lucrezia twice in the image.[162] Good candidates for these two portraits may be the pair of women in the center of the painting, one who wears a red dress and is seen in three-quarters profile looking to the viewer's left, the other immediately to her right who wears and identical yellow dress and is seen in full profile. Portraits of Lucrezia or not, the presence of this pair of women demonstrates Andrea's use of a conventional pictorial strategy that would later be used by Bronzino to take on Sculpture's unique claim to representational simultaneity—showing a figure from two sides.[163] Baldinucci's story thus shows that formal analysis of Andrea's paintings productively sheds light on the *paragone* debate.

8. *Paragone* in the Scalzo

   a. Space and Iconography

[161] Baldinucci, Notizie, III, p. 6: "*… venendovi a sua devozione Lucrezia allora di grave età, stata maglie d'Andrea, si fermava quivi con gran piacere a vederlo operare, e andavagli accennando I ritratti, che sono in quella storia stati catti al naturale dal volto di lei medesima…"* I am very grateful to Alana O'Brien for sharing this citation with me.
[162] I first heard this discussed by Alana O'Brien in her paper "Santissima Annunziata's Chiostro dei Voti, Chiostro dei Ricordi: Viewer Response to Portraits in the Atrium," read on 15 April 2021 at the Renaissance Society of America's annual conference, held virtually. Freedberg, *Andrea del Sarto*, II, 45, had also made note of the peculiar reference to "the portraits." O'Brien plans to publish her research on the portraits in her forthcoming book, whose current working title is *Receptive Imagery: Devotional practices and Andrea del Sarto's San Filippo Benizi Frescoes in the SS. Annunziata, Florence.*
[163] It should be noted that Lucrezia's comments were likely also reported by Baldinucci as a barb at Lucrezia's supposed vanity, the characterization of her that comes from Vasari. The misogyny of Baldinucci's tone is revealed as he continues describing the interaction between Jacopo and Lucrezia. Balinucci, *Notizie*, III, 6, claims that Lucrezia did this*, "discorrendo col giovinetto (forse non senza lagrime) del tempo e luogo ed alter circostanze del suo stare al naturale al martito quando gli faceva*," suggesting, in its maudlin characterization of the wife, that her reactions were hysterical and perhaps insincere.

Given the attitude of Pontormo and Michelangelo who suggested that the best evidence in the *paragone* argument would be found in art, not in writing; given the multiple forms of written evidence that show Andrea directly engaging with contemporary intellectual and artistic debates and performances, the *paragone* dispute specifically; and given the visual evidence in the *chiostrino* of SS. Annunziata, analysis of Andrea's engagement with the *paragone* in the Cloister of the Scalzo seems warranted. For example, as suggested in the Prologue to this chapter, Andrea's attacks on Sculpture's unique claim to simultaneity seem not to be limited to his work in the Annunziata's *chiostrino*. The physical magnitude of the Scalzo, which insists on the illusionism of its architecture, also seem to take on the issue of sculptural simultaneity, or the idea that Sculpture was superior because it had to been seen from multiple views as a viewer walked around it. In the Scalzo, however, Andrea's creation of a fully immersive pictorial space figured the viewer in a different kind of circumambulation. Rather than looking at a central object, the cloister paintings drew the brothers' gazes to the periphery their space, where they would always find a surface covered by painting. By surrounding its viewers, the Scalzo paintings thus inverted the relationship between viewer and artwork that was entailed in sculptural simultaneity.

This effect is possible, in part, because Andrea painted the fictive sculpted architecture (Fig. 1.14, 1.15, 1.18, and 1.20). It is critical to keep in mind that the four true walls of the Cloister of the Scalzo are flat.[164] They delineate the room's boundary and support its roof. This means that much of the cloister's architectural and spatial order is provided by Andrea's fictive architectural framework that surrounds all of the narrative and allegorical paintings. This illusionistic feat was not only a testament to Andrea's painting abilities, it also meant that

[164] On the 1722 architectural renovation of the Scalzo, refer to Chapter I: The Introduction.

sightlines could be organized so that physical relationships between images, true architecture, and the brothers' bodies allowed them to construct new meanings and relationships that were religious, social, and civic in nature. For example, they might notice from one angle and not another that *The Visitation* (Fig. 1.26)—the moment that the fetal John first moved in Elizabeth's womb, giving his mother his first sign of life on earth—was juxtaposed with his *Execution* (Fig. 1.21) across the aisle, the moment of his death. Walking the cloister, brothers might notice also that *Hope* (Fig. 1.23) appeared to be walking alongside him in her false architectural niche. Staning in one of its corners he might see how the empty altar in *The Annunciation to Zaccharia* (Fig. 1.25), the moment when the elderly father learns that John will be born, is diagonally juxtaposed to *John the Baptist Preaching* (Fig. 1.11), where, prophecy fulfilled, the altar seems to have been transformed into the rock upon which the adult Baptist stands, delivering his sermon. With an infinite number of possible views, all potentially resulting in some new level of formal or iconographical meaning and all having to be beautiful, the immersive Cloister of the Scalzo cycle allowed Andrea to surpass the merit of sculptural simultaneity by, in a sense, turning it inside out.

In the Scalzo, Andrea also seems to have argued for the supremacy of Painting over Sculpture iconographically. Repeated in the decorative register above the main frescoes of the Scalzo that runs around perimeter of the room, Andrea included images of St. Veronica's *sudarium*, This was the veil with which Christ wiped his face and left behind his own miraculous portrait. Known as the *vera icon*, it was believed that the cloth had been brought to Rome in 1204 where it was housed in the Lateran Basilica. By the year 1500 images of Veronica's sudarium was ubiquitous in Italian art as well as in art from north of the Alps with the image reproduced in paintings, prints,

and on badges.[165] The image related to the *paragone* debate because, throughout the Middle Ages, the icon had been used to argue against iconoclasm as a demonstration of the belief that God himself created and left behind religious images for people's use.[166] But critically, the image left behind by Christ was not a sculpture, such as the pagans had used to worship their so-called gods. Rather, the true Christian icon came in the form of a flat image. Andrea's repetition of the *vera icon* around the room would therefore have served as a reminder that not only had Christ authorized religious images but that he had specifically endorsed flat ones, like paintings. Moreover, commentators have already noted that images of the veil compare the painter to Christ in their shared creative act.[167] By Christological standards, Andrea's repeated images of Veronica's veil seemed to argue, painting was superior to sculpture.

b. Istorie di marmo

One of the most direct implications of the Scalzo in the *paragone* debate, however, came from Vasari, who likened the, to "*storie di marmo*," pictures of marble—that is, a sculpted *bas relief*

[165] Joost Keizer, "Michelangelo, Drawing, and the Subject of Art," *The Art Bulletin* 93 (2011): 104. Morgen Steen Hansen, "After the Veronica: Crisis and the Ars Sacra of Polidoro da Caravaggio and Pontormo," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 17.2 (2014): 354-367, discusses Pontormo's depiction of the sudarium in the Papi Chapel of Santa Maria Novella, executed in 1513 for the Florentine celebration of Giovanni de' Medici's election to the papacy, and its relationship to the sudarium's inclusion in the Passion cycle in Certosa del Galluzo in Florence.
[166] On the *vera icon* in Rome and its context within discourses about Christian images of the time, refer to Nino Zchomelidse, "The Aura of the Numinous and its reproduction: Medieval Paintings of the Saviour in Rome and Latium," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 55 (2010): 221-263.
[167] On this aspect of the sudarium and its relationship to the *paragone*, refer to Livia Stoenescu, "Ancient Prototypes Reinstated: Zuccari's *Encounter of Christ and Veronica* of 1594," *The Art Bulletin* 93.4 (2011): 425, who compares Zurburan's depictions to the original in that Christ "materializes before one's eyes." Also refer to Joost Keizer, "Michelangelo, Drawing and the Subject of Art," *The Art Bulletin* 93.3 (2011): 304.

cycle.[168] With this description, Vasari implied that Andrea's Scalzo paintings challenged sculpture directly. Having the illusionistic appearance of something they were not, the frescoes were exemplary of Painting's superior ability over Sculpture to imitate the sensory world.[169] But the Scalzo paintings in particular seemed to imply that Painting was so superior to Sculpture that it could create the illusion of Sculpture itself, And, as Pontormo emphasized, it did this *in piano*. Vasari's comparison would have thus been widely understood not only as praise of the frescoes' illusionism but also their appearance of having *rilievo*.

Rilievo was not just a quality of painting valued by letter-writers Vasari, Bronzino, and Pontormo.[170] As discussed earlier, in his discussion of the *chiaroscuro* modeling that is apparent throughout the Scalzo, Leonardo da Vinci had argued that the primary task of the painter was to depict bodies as if they were sculpted. Centuries earlier, Cennino Cennini had implicitly championed the appeal of *rilievo* when he dedicated an entire chapter of his *Libro dell'Arte* to teaching painters how to create the effect of three-dimensionality through the use of light and shadow.[171] Sculptors argued in favor of painting's *rilievo* too. Michelangelo's letter to Varchi, for example, had asserted that a painting was better the more it looked like sculpture *in rilievo*.[172] Cellini's letter supported this position, arguing that Michelangelo and then Bronzino were the best painters that had ever lived because all that they painted came from the most-studied models in sculpture.[173] The sculptor

[168] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, V, 22.
[169] Vasari in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni,* 123.
[170] Refer to comments made by Vasari, Bronzino, and Pontormo, respectively, in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni,* 123, 131, and 132. Vasari is especially noted for his argument about foreshortening being a problem peculiar to Painting.
[171] Cennino Cennini, *Il Libro dell'Arte, o Tratta della Pittura di Ceninno*, Florence 1859, p. 7. The chapter is entitled, "*Come tu de' dare (secondo) la ragione della luce, chiaroscuro alle tue figure, dotandole di ragione di rilievo.*"
[172] Michelangelo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni,* 155.
[173] Cellini in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 152: "*...si vede Michelagnolo essere il maggiore Pittore che mai ci sia stato notitia, no infra gli antichi, ne infra i moderni, solo perche tutto quello che fa di*

emphasized the production of *rilievo* as a standard for painting again in his *Due Trattati,* published first in 1568, writing: "The greatest praise that can be given to a good painting, if not said, is that it burgeons out in some way, that it appears like relief."[174] Florentine painters and sculptors alike both agreed, then, the most important quality of a painting was its sense of *rilievo*.

Andrea was well-prepared for his task of designing and executing paintings with a superior sense of *rilievo*. As we have already seen, he was known to engage in intellectual conversations about art-making with contemporary sculptors.[175] But Andrea also seems to have been practically engaged with sculpture as well in his habitual practice of drawing after contemporary and ancient sculptures alike.[176] Vasari even mentions that Andrea's friends provided Andrea with models for his personal study.[177] For example, he noted that the painter based the figure of John the Evangelist in *The Madonna of the Harpies*, (Fig. 5.5) now in the Uffizi, of 1517, on a sculpture by Sansovino.[178] John Shearman claimed that a red-chalk study of the figure in the Louvre (Fig. 5.6) by Andrea del Sarto was likely related to Vasari's story.[179] Shearman also postulated the another drawing in the Uffizi (Fig. 5.7)—which was related to the figures of John the Baptist in both a lost altarpiece of the *Madonna of Sant'Ambrogio*, a copy of which was made by Jacopo da Empoli and is housed in Stokes Pages Church in

---

pittura lo cava da gli studiatissimi, mode gli fatti di scultura ne so cognoscere chi piu s'appressi hoggi à tale verita d[']arte che il virtuoso Bronzino…"

[174] Benvenuto Cellini, *Due Trattati.* Milano 1811, p. 212: "*E qual maggio lode si può dare a una bella pittura, se non dir, ch'ella spicchi in tal modo, ch'ella paia di rilievo."*

[175] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, VII, 273.

[176] Brooks, *Andrea del Sarto*, 8, 22-24, 97-98.

[177] On his friendships with sculptors, refer to Brooks, *Andrea del Sarto*, 8, 32, 42, 192.

[178] Vasari-Milanesi, VII, 488. The model was not specifically made for Andrea but rather for a competition for the commission of a sculpture on the façade of Or San Michele, which was won by Baccio da Montelupo.

[179] John Shearman, "A Lost Altarpiece by Andrea del Sarto 'The Madonna of S. Ambrogio,'" *The Burlington Magazine* (1961): 229.

Buckinghamshire in the United Kingdom (Fig. 5.8) as well as the Scalzo *St. John Preaching to the Multitude* (Fig. 1.11)—was probably made after a now-lost Sansovino sculpture.[180] Jacopo Sansovino thus likely provided his friend, Andrea, with many *terracotta* models, which, due to their fragility, do not survive today.

c. Overcoming Sculpture: The Early Virtues

Andrea's engagement with Jacopo Sanosvino and other Florentine sculptors is perhaps most clearly apparent in his *Four Virtues*. Two of them—Andrea's *Charity* (Fig. 1.9) and *Justice* (Fig. 1.10), which Vasari described as "*bellissime*"—seem to be based directly on models by Sansovino.[181] The fortunate survival of at least one of them provides the opportunity to analyze how Andrea engaged with sculpture in the Scalzo and in the *paragone* debate more broadly. Sansovino's extant *terra cotta* model (Fig. 4.15)—only recently discovered and now located in an unknown private collection—relates to the first *Virtue* that Andrea painted, *Charity* (Fig. 1.9), completed before 1515.[182] The designs for the figures by each Andrea and Jacopo feature a young, idealized woman wearing a *peplos* that reveals her right breast. She is in the company of three children, the youngest of whom she holds in her left arm and who points at *Charity*'s

---

[180] Shearman, "A Lost Altarpiece," 229, writes of the Uffizi drawing: "…it does not have the character of a life study, and seems to have been, so to speak, a Baptist from the moment of its first realization on the paper. There is, to my knowledge, only one other drawing of exactly this type, a much-damaged study in the Louvre for the Evangelist in the *Madonna of the Harpies*; this figure was based on a terra-cotta *modello*, also of the Evangelist, by Jacopo Sansovino, a connection which explains the nature of the drawing. A similar derivation from a sculptural prototype may account for the general character of the Baptist drawing, and for a detail like the strange treatment of the hair.
[181] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, Vol 5, 21.
[182] On the dating of *Charity*, refer to Appendix A**.** On the Sansovino model by Andrew Butterfield, refer to https://www.andrewbutterfield.com/major-discoveries/jacopo-sansovino last accessed 10 March 2022.

exposed breast.[183] In both compositions, the woman looks down to her opposite right side, where another child, young but of unnaturally muscular build, looks back up at her. He stands on a large block upon which *Charity* also places her right foot, a stance that bends her body forward. On her other side, another muscular child stands and supports the drapery that falls off of *Charity*'s body above him. His feet spread wide with knees bent and right leg apparently straining, he seems to struggle under the weight of the fabric. In the painted model, his apparent struggle to support the drapery adds to the feeling of plasticity and even heavy stoniness of the painted cloth. Side-by-side comparison between the two *Charity* compositions thus demonstrates that Andrea intentionally captured and preserving the model's sculptural plasticity and weight.

Unlike Andrea's fresco, though, Sansovino's model was conceived fully in the round. Viewed from a static frontal position, the viewer observes that his clay *Charity* turns her right knee outward, away from her body. This opens up compositional space in the bottom center of the sculpture, where *Charity*'s gown falls between her legs, creating intricate and irregular folds and pleats in its fabric. *Charity* looks down at the child who is positioned partially behind her turned right leg. The lower half of this boy's body is seen in profile up to his unusually high waist. There, he twists towards the woman, turning his upper body to the viewer. From this frontal view, his right leg is invisible, seeming to wrap around and behind the woman's body.

This difference between the painting and sculpture is critical because in the sculpture it continues a rhythmic, corkscrew spiral that Sansovino constructed through and around the entire group. This spiral begins at *Charity*'s head and is pulled through her diagonally-set shoulders into the face of the baby in *Charity*'s arms, who addresses the viewer directly. It continues through his arm, which brings the viewer's attention to the woman's exposed breast and then to

[183] On the potential sexuality of this figure, refer to chapter IV of this dissertation.

the face of the child on the lower left. It is picked back up on the upper right in the prominent left hand of *Charity*, which she uses to hold the baby. It runs in a downward sloping diagonal through his lower body into the hand of the child on to the lower left, which pulls the viewer's eye through his mid-section. The viewer can imagine this line wrapping around and up the back of the sculpture. It continues again in the hand of the child at right, which he uses to hold the drapery. It proceeds through his curved arm and through the knee of *Charity* to the bent left leg of the child on her left side. This is where his right leg, extended around the back of *Charity*, pulls the viewer around the sculpture where the viewer can imagine the line continued around the back of the group and into the left and right knee of the child on the right. The uneven height of the blocks on the left and right of the sculpture on which either baby stands grounds this asymmetrical, spiraling composition. The overall result is a compositional torque that runs arounds the entire figure that invited the viewer to contemplate it in the round.

Sansovino's careful and deliberate construction of this torque through the multifigural group is, perhaps, its main innovation. Its kineticism was a quality that would be so valued in Florentine sculpture a few decades later, such as in the art of Giambologna (1529-1608), where it can be observed in its fully matured form in his *Rape of the Sabine* (Fig. 5.9) of 1579-83. But it is certainly the characteristic that distinguishes it from the painted model that both Andrea and Jacopo must have studied, Scalzo member Filippino Lippi's painted monochrome *Charity*, (Fig. 5.10), who appears as a fictive relief in the painted architectural framework of the *Strozzi Chapel* in Santa Maria Novella, which Lippi worked on from 1487 to 1490.[184] The niche in which this *Charity* and her three babies are set is so shallow that the lowermost child seems about to slip out

[184] O'Brien, "Maestri d'alcune arti miste e d'ingegno," 384, notes that Filippino must have been a member before his death in 1504 because his son Roberto entered through the sponsorship of his father.

of it and *Charity*'s toes seem to proceed into the viewer's space. All four figures are arranged in a single plane with no figural or compositional elements occluded from the viewer's sight. Instead, though *Charity* appears in three-quarter profile and lifts her left knee onto a block, she has a frontal orientation and feels solidly grounded by the horizontal line of the frame beneath her. Because *Charity* holds two children close to her body—not, as in the Sansovino model and Andrea painting, just one of them—she pulls the entire figural group to the left side of the niche. The vertical line of this side of the frame serves as an axis around which Lippi constructed a strong, crescent-shaped curve down the right side of her body. The curve runs from the top *Charity*'s head, through her left shoulder, around the nursing child, and from *Charity*'s hand through the composition into the bottom left corner of the niche. Though the composition is not symmetrical it is nonetheless both frontal and static.

In designing his own *Charity* Andrea certainly drew from his friend Sansovino's model, with which it shares striking similarities.[185] However, he did not adapt it wholesale. Andrea also borrowed compositional elements from Lippi that shed light on his pictorial strategies for producing the illusion of *rilievo in piano*. Andrea's most obvious reference to Lippi's composition is in the gilded crown that *Charity* wears, which seems inspired by the painted one belonging to the Strozzi Chapel *Charity*. So too did Andrea adapt her flaming urn, one of *Charity*'s attributes, which sits on the block in the lower left of Andrea's fresco and the lower right of Lippi's but is absent in Sansovino's terracotta model. Though the painted niches of both two compositions only feature a single stone block on the floor, Andrea's is on the opposite side

[185] Pope-Hennessy, "A Relief by Sansovino," 7, argues that Sansovino may have designed the figure with the raised knee in *St. John Baptizing the Multitude* "where the torsion is more extreme than is usual with Andrea at this time. Almost certainly Sansovino, with the glamour of his Roman years, was the dominant partner in this relationship." This is purely speculative.

as in the Strozzi composition. This similarity results in the overall feeling of stability that is a feature of Andrea's group but not that of Sansovino, who included two unevenly set blocks that ground the three figures at unbalanced levels. Nonetheless, the scooping up of both children by Lippi's *Charity* and not by Andrea's or Sansovino's, who let their third ward play on the ground next to them, is a major compositional difference. Overall, Lippi's *Charity* remains static and restrained, almost stylized in the geometric abstraction of the curve down the right side of her body. Andrea's, though more stable than Sansovino's because of the inclusion of only one block, is more kinetic and dynamic than Lippi's composition.

Andrea's *Charity*, though, is not simply derivative of the two models. In several areas of the picture where the construction of *rilievo* was at stake, Andrea made compositional choices that were independent of or combined the Lippi and Sansovino models. For example, Andrea borrowed from Sansovino the conceit of the baby in *Charity*'s arms who makes direct eye contact with the viewer and crosses his left arm across his own chest to gesture at her right breast. However, in Sansovino's *terracotta* model, this baby's arm remains pressed against his body, his hand resting on the chest of the Madonna. Andrea's baby does not do this. Instead, this baby always maintains space between his body and arm, which he bends only slightly. The baby's gesture of pointing towards *Charity*'s breast is therefore achieved mostly through the dramatic bend in the child's wrist. The result is that the near-flat back of his hand catches a broad white highlight, emphasizing just how far it is from *Charity*'s body and, therefore, its insistent *rilievo*.[186]

[186] This difference is noteworthy because it may be evidence of an earlier dating of *Charity*. The young John the Baptist of Andrea's *Madonna and Child with Saints Elizabeth, Catherine, and John the Baptist,* now in the National Gallery, London, maintains the same position, in reverse, suggesting the two paintings are from about the same period. Furthermore, Sansovino's model, in which the arm is pressed completely against the body, along with the body position of the

Another difference among the allegories' designs is that in contrast to Sansovino's composition, Andrea turned *Charity's* right leg towards the viewer. The most apparent effect of this choice was that it caused the women's bent knee and leg to push entirely out of her fictive space and proceed into the viewer's real architectural space. Just how far Andrea conceived of this leg pushing into the cloister becomes apparent when *Charity* is compared to the central figure of John the Baptist in *The Baptism of the Multitude* (Fig. 1.12), the next painting the viewer saw as he turned left to continue on in the cloister. Although in this fresco, John stands with his left leg, similar to *Charity*'s, perched on a rock, it is fully contained within the picture's imaginary, recessing space. In fact, Andrea seems to have set the Baptist just far enough away from the bottom edge of the frame to prevent his leg—and his bent right elbow, which similarly proceeds away from the Baptist's body—from breaking the picture plane and proceeding into the cloister. *Charity*'s leg, comparatively, pushes almost entirely into the cloister's aisle.

At the same time, *Charity*'s turned leg also allowed the child on the left of the picture to move so far in front of her right hip that he too seems fully conceived in the claustral space rather than in a fictive pictorial world. His forward placement is emphasize by his elbow, held above his head, which crosses in front of the frame of his niche. Furthermore, although Sansovino's corresponding boy turns his body at his high waist, the twist in Andrea's child begins at the knees, causing him to expose his entire left side and torso to the viewer. The child's body, left hand, and *Charity*'s right leg all are hit by a strong highlight that originates over the

---

child, is similar to the young St. John the Baptist sitting in the foreground of *The Mystical Marriage of St. Catherine* of 1512-1513, now in the Gemäldegalerie in Dresden. Given that no documentation exists for *Charity* and her dating has always been determined on stylistic grounds, it is indeed possible then that Andrea had obtained Sansovino's model for *Charity* and was preparing its composition as early as 1512, when he designed the Dresden picture. I am indebted to Steven J. Cody for first pointing out to me the similarities among these pictures.

left shoulder of the viewer, seemingly from the cloister's central atrium. Andrea's choice to turn *Charity*'s hip in the opposite direction of Sansovino's model, then, appears deliberately designed to move all of the figures forward in their niche and allow them an existence that begins to break free of the illusionary space represented in the picture field. They seem to exist on a spatial continuum between the real space of the cloister and the fictive space of their niche.

This feeling of a spatial continuum between real and fictive worlds is also evident on the right side of the composition. There, Andrea reconciled the Sansovino model with Lippi's fresco design by eliminating the second block on which the other child stands. The space of the niche is thus arranged as in the Strozzi Chapel painting but in reverse, with the single grounding block placed at the lower left corner of the fictive architectural space. But unlike Lippi's *Charity*, Andrea's leaves her third ward to play on the floor on the vacant right side of this niche. There, he appears behind a piece of her trailing garment that he raises above his head as in the Sansovino model. Without the addition of the second block, though, this child stands flat on the niche floor. There, he lunges with his right leg stretching diagonally behind him into the back of the shadowy niche, disappearing behind *Charity*'s gown. The boy's right leg is positioned far in front of this foot, with his left knee bent and his corresponding foot positioned about two-thirds of the way to the front of the niche. This stance thus calls attention to the depth of the niche, which, seen from above as true architecture would be from that vantage, appears continuous with the space of the room. The viewer thus feels as if he is peering into it.

At the same time, the child's stretched posture also causes him to push *Charity*'s raised garment across the fictive frame and into the viewer's space. The transgression of this garment, along with the crossing of the elbow of the boy's counterpart on the left, are among only places in the entire claustral cycle where Andrea broke his fictive frame with a pictorial element (the

only other instance, as we shall see, appears in the depiction of the Virtue *Justice* (Fig. 1.10), *Charity*'s pendant). Of course, this compositional choice speaks to the iconographical necessity of crowding several figures in a small but believable architectural space. But it also had the effect of emphasizing just how far Andrea conceived these figures as pushing into the physical environment of the cloister. Andrea's compositional choices, then, as he combined and translated Lippi's and Sansovino's designs into a single and cohesive painted composition, were aimed at magnifying the faux-sculptural group's evocation of *rilievo*.

Andrea's artistic choices also bear on the *paragone* debate in that they speak to the way in which he suggested *Charity*'s fictitious materiality. As an iconographical conceit, by crossing her right leg in front of her rather than opening it away from her body as did his friend Sansovino, Andrea added to *Charity's* sense of decorum because the modest posture corresponded to the chaste nature of the allegorical *Virtue*.[187] But the change in the direction of the leg also meant that at the center of the faux sculptural group Andrea lined up *Charity*'s face with her right breast, knee, and foot. He thus designed the group around a strong vertical axis with a closed central core. Andrea thus suggests greater compositional stability than does Sansovino's spiraling model, despite the actual material plasticity of the sculptor's *terracotta* group. Andrea's change in the direction of the leg compared to his sculptor-friend's composition thus stabilized the composition as a whole and worked towards evoking the traditional solidity of sculpture.

Andrea's choice to change the direction of the leg also meant that he had to reconceive the drapery of the lower part of *Charity*'s *peplos*. Sansovino's open composition allowed the

---

[187] On decorum refer to Alberti's dedicatory letter of *De Pictura* to Brunelleschi, cited in chapter IV of this dissertation.

excessive fabric of *Charity*'s *peplos* to fall and ruffle in irregular and swooping curves across the female figure. In contrast, Andrea's drapery falls in hard diagonal pleats that are nearly vertical from hip to toe along the figure's right side. The dark vertical shadows apparent between the pleats are regularly spaced and nearly as wide as the edges of the pleats themselves. The regularity of the juxtaposed bands of highlight, representing fictive gleaming stone, and lowlight, indicating the shadows between the stony pleats, suggest that the folds of drapery are modeled in high relief and fall far from *Charity*'s body. This is confirmed by the apparent distance between the edge of *Charity's* left hip and left foot, which suggests a large amount of space between *Charity*'s skirt and leg in which the excessive fabric can fall in deep folds. Highly stylized, heavy, and rigid, these folds seem more made of stone than cloth. Andrea's compositional choice to change the direction of *Charity*'s knee thus resulted in a much more stable and solid composition than Sansovino's, representing another calculated artistic decision that communicated falsely that *Charity* and her children were stone sculptures.

A similar purpose is served by the drapery that the child pushes out of his pictorial plane and into the claustral space on the right side of the composition. The passage of drapery between the child's visible right hand and hidden left one which holds the fabric at about shoulder height near the edge of the fictive frame falls in four narrow and irregularly-spaced, curving folds, suggesting a naturalistic illusion of fabric. But in front of the child's left hand, the drapery that hangs into the viewer's space is of a different character. Composed almost tectonically of a large rhombus broken into trapezoids, rectangles, and triangles, this fabric falls in one broad fold over the child's hand, holding its stiff shape as it cuts diagonally through the picture plane towards the viewer. Its solidity is emphasized by the hard, gleaming highlights that hit the fabric's edge in two near-vertical lines. These lines correspond to the front and back edges of the right inside-

wall of the niche, especially at the point where the textile breaks the fictive frame. Because Andrea laid the white highlights down evenly over the fabric and stone niche, he created the illusion that they reflect light at the same angle and thus are made of the same material. As a result, the geometric arrangement of this piece of fabric and the highlights that fall on it as well as its niche has an architectonic rather than woven plasticity that again suggests stone sculpture.

Andrea's *Charity*, then, begins to show how the then-young artist set about engaging in the *paragone* debate. Andrea engaged with the sculptors on their own terms, over and over again insisting on his figures' sense of *rilievo*. First, he began with a sculptural model provided by his friend, the renowned sculptor, Jacopo Sansovino. But both young artists shared a model in the elder Lippi's Strozzi *Charity*. Andrea did not just combine the two models, one made by a contemporary innovator in sculpture, another by an elder master painter and confraternity member. Rather, Andrea made a series of compositional and stylistic choices that demonstrated his awareness of and engagement with the *paragone* debate, specifically the claim that sculpture was superior because it resulted in the production of a real thing in the world in *rilievo* that could be touched. Though imitating sculpture in its faux-stone materials and its fictive architectural setting, Lippi's *Charity*, in contrast to Andrea's, exhibited very little *rilievo*. The figures instead seem to press back into their shallow niches to avoid engaging the viewer in his space. This is not the case for Andrea's *Charity*, whose figures not only to progress into but also whose architectural space recedes away from the real architecture of the cloister, creating a spatial continuum between the viewer and the back of figures' fictive niche. Though the figures in Andrea's group were flat and could not actually be touched, Andrea nonetheless created the illusion of having freed his multifigural group from flatness and created an illusion of plasticity that challenged the notion that these qualities were peculiar to physical sculptures.

Andrea juxtaposed *Charity* to *Justice* (Fig. 1.10), located in a fictive architectural niche on the opposite left side of the northern portal. *Justice* stands with her muscular and almost-masculine body turned in a three-quarter profile towards the viewer's left. Andrea facilitated this pose by inserting a low, illusionistic step in the bottom right of the niche, onto which *Justice* places her foot. Her stance creates a bend in the *Virtue*'s knee that mirrors that of *Charity* on the portal's right. As a result, *Justice* leans backwards slightly at the hips, creating an s-curve down the right side of her body. The mild *figura serpentinata* is completed by her head, which she turns in the opposite direction of her body to show her face in three-quarters profile. The composition, however, is stable overall. Andrea achieved this stability not only by emphasizing the muscular heft of *Justice's* body but also by echoing her load-bearing, straight right leg with her oversized, imposing sword. Although she holds this sword away from her body, the tip is near the side of her foot, resulting in a prominent, tapered diagonal line that slices through the left side of the rectangular picture field and, thanks to the cross in the hilt of the sword, suggests the shape of an arrow or dart that points to the bottom of the niche. This strong vertical anchor emphasizes the hard stability of the architecture in which she is set. Though the other side of her body is curved, her stature and stance nonetheless contribute to an overall tall and narrow v-shape to her body oriented around a strong central axis where her head, left knee, and right foot align. Though not static because of her gentle *figura serpentinata*, Andrea's *Justice* was, because of her build, posture, and placement, stable, solid, and sculptural.

As with *Charity,* though, *Justice* did not just rival sculpture's plasticity. She also pushed into the claustral space. Though both of her feet are firmly planted on the ground of her niche, her bent knee burgeons forward, seemingly transgressing the picture plane and projecting out into the cloister. So too does her sword, whose shadow crosses the left side of the niche's fictive

frame, the final place in the Scalzo in which a fictive frame's boundary is trangressed. Though *Justice*'s scales are today oxidized and dark, in their own age their gilding would have glistened an orangey gold, reflecting light into the cloister.[188] A high-value, metallic surface, the scales must have also once seemed close to dangling into the cloister's aisle. At the same time, because the scales were life-sized and golden, they were identical in materiality and magnitude to real scales, heightening the illusion that they hung into the cloister's aisle. This multi-media use of gilding and monochrome fresco was furthermore similar to the way that sculptors incorporated metal into otherwise-stone sculptures, such as the statue of *Justice* that would in 1580 be designed by Bartolomeo Ammanati (1511-1592) for Duke Cosimo I's triumphal column in Piazza Santa Trinità. (Fig. 5.11). Andrea picked up this gilding in the decorative hem that articulates the plastic edges of *Justice*'s garment, amplifying the figure's solidity and tactility. Just as with *Charity*, Andrea's *Justice*, then, seems intentionally designed to take on sculpture in the *paragone*, not only in its sculptural illusionism but especially in its evocation of *rilievo*.

Perhaps Andrea was able to so capture *rilievo* and tactility in this painting because, like *Charity*, *Justice* may also have had a contemporary model in a sculpture designed by Jacopo Sansovino. Commentators have already noticed *Justice*'s similarity to Sansovino's marble sculpture of the same allegory on the tomb of Ascanio Sforza in Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome (Fig. 5.12). Like in the Scalzo, Sansovino's Roman, marble *Justice* also constitutes the left half of an allegorical pair and is similarly set in an architectural niche. The conception of this figure, though, is less daring than Andrea's painted female allegory. Sansovino's *Justice* is set on a stone wedge that lifts her heels off of the ground. She stands with her left leg forward, knee bent. But because she does not step onto a block, the bend in her knee is much less pronounced than

[188] Refer to chapter I of this dissertation.

Andrea's. The results are both that her knee does not push quite as far from the niche as that of Andrea's figure seems to. She also does not drop the bulk of her weight backwards as *Justice* does in the Scalzo. At the same time, Sansovino's *Justice* holds her head vertically and turns it only slightly to the left. There is therefore no s-curve down the side of her body. Sansovino also rendered flat other elements that push forward in Andrea's painting. He not only broke off the blade of *Justice*'s sword, simplifying the composition, he also covered her left arm with a broad swath of carved and stylized fabric that forms a visual barrier between the statue and the viewer, containing *Justice* inside of her architectural niche. If indeed Andrea did look at Sansovino's *Justice* when he designed his own version of the allegorical figure, the differences suggest that, in adapting its design, the painter took pains to combat the static, flat feeling of his friend's marble composition.

It seems unlikely, though, that Andrea was looking to Sansovino's Roman *Justice* when creating his own composition for the Scalzo. Instead, it seems much more probable that Sansovino would have provided Andrea with a small clay model, as he did with *Charity*, that both he and his friend each used in designing their final compositions. If such a model for *Justice* ever existed, it seems likely that the sculptor's *terracotta* miniature design would have been much more compositionally bold and kinetic than the woman in the staid marble monument in Rome. This hypothesis seems reasonable given the differences in materiality between stone and clay, which would allow a small terracotta to be sculpted in a more improvisational way than a life-size stone figure. It is also suggested by the existence of a papier maché and plaster model (Fig. 5.13) of Sansovino's *Charity* in Venice. This model, discovered in 1975**,** likely served as the inspiration for the sculptor's marble *Charity* (Fig. 5.14) in the doge's palace, made in the

1550s.[189] The stone *Charity* in Venice, however, shares only a few compositional features with either Sansovino's plaster or the extant clay prototype used by Andrea for his Scalzo *Charity*. The Doge's palace marble *Charity* is furthermore oriented frontally, lacking the daring torque created by the spiraling interplay of the many figures in either the *terracotta* or papier maché models. The great degree to which Sansovino adapted his own spiraling *terracotta* model for his static Venetian *Charity*, muting the compositional kinesis and sense of *rilievo* in the final stone sculpture, suggests the similar possibility that a small clay model for his Roman *Justice* would have likewise had a much more active composition than that apparent in the final marble work.

It is highly unlikely, though, that even if a *terracotta* model by Sansovino for *Justice* did once exist that Andrea's Scalzo *Justice* would have faithfully represented any one of its infinite possible views. As in *Charity*, where the painter combined Sansovino's model with that of an established Florentine artist, Filippino Lippi, also introducing his own artistic conceits into the design, Andrea would most likely have made alterations to Sansovino's composition to suit his artistic agenda. This seems particularly evident in the radically different conception of *Justice's* sword compared to that designed by Sansovino in Rome. The sculpted *Virtue* holds the sword's hilt in her hand at her right, waist height, blade pointed upwards. Even though Sansovino designed the sword with the blade broken a few inches away from the base, its very different position and unremarkable size stand in stark contrast to the sword supported by Andrea's *Justice.* The sword of this painted *Justice* is almost as tall as she is, pointing downwards at her right. To accommodate its magnitude, *Justice's* painted hand rests on its hilt at breast height. Andrea's sword is thus a major departure from Sansovino's conception.

---

[189] Rosella Bagarotto, Luigi Savio, and Bruce Boucher. "The Madonna Delle Muneghette: A New Work by Jacopo Sansovino," *The Burlington Magazine* 122.922 (1980): 22-29.

Just as Andrea looked to Lippi's *Charity* in designing his own allegory, he may have also, with *Justice,* been inspired by another source. That source could have been Donatello's bronze *David*, (Fig. 4.13), now in the Bargello but once displayed publicly in several locations in the city and thus well-known to all Florentines, especially the city's artists. The sculpture was designed by the Florentine sculptor in the mid-to-early quattrocento. Seen frontally, Donatello's slender, lithe, adolescent *David* bears little resemblance in stature to Andrea's Sibylline *Justice*. However, the stance of the two sculptures is quite similar. Both figures hold their oversized swords in an analogous position at their right sides. And although *David*'s sword is smaller than *Justice*'s, it is still far too big for his diminutive body, having been taken from the corpse of the giant Goliath. Its hilt likewise features a bulbous pommel capped by a rounded button. In both compositions, these swords lead their viewer's eye to the ground, where the sword-bearers lift their left legs onto an object—in the fresco, a block, in the sculpture, Goliath's head. In both figures this move forces the figure into contrapposto. *David* thus leans slightly back, hips and shoulders akimbo. Though his head is tilted at a slightly lesser angle than Andrea's *Justice*'s, it is nonetheless tilted, unlike Sansovino's stone *Justice*. This results in the construction of a rhythmic vertical wave through the body that anticipates the sixteenth-century *figura serpentinata*.[190] These qualities suggest that although Andrea's fresco exhibits similarities to Sansovino's contemporary marble *Justice* in Rome, it also bears likeness to Donatello's bronze *David*, borrowing from it the motif of the oversized sword, the placement of *Justice's* foot onto a large object, and the resultant dynamic yet stable posture.

[190] On Donatello's tendency to anticipate stylistic trends of the cinquecento, refer to Chistopher Fulton, "Present at the Inception: Donatello and the Origins of Sixteenth-Century Mannerism," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 60.2 (1997): 166-199.

Setting aside for the moment the iconographical and cultural implications of Andrea, in 1515, referencing the earlier *David* in his design for a Florentine *Justice*, the choice also had clear implications in terms of the Scalzo's institutional position in the *paragone* debate. Donatello's *David* had been the first nude, free-standing sculpture displayed publicly since antiquity. A paradigmatic Florentine artistic symbol, the sculpture was made by a renowned Florentine artist, Donatello, for a major Florentine Patron, Cosimo il Vecchio de' Medici. Having been moved with great fanfare from the courtyard of the Palazzo Medici to the courtyard of the Palazzo Vecchio when the Medici were exiled from Florence in 1494, Donatello's *David* was a Florentine artistic and civic symbol well-known to all members of the confraternity.[191] What's more, the sword that David used to decapitate Goliath and the giant's head onto which he placed his foot were the statue's main iconographical signifiers. When looking at Andrea's *Justice* in the Scalzo, it seems likely then, that at the very least the members would have realized that the massive sword held diagonal to *Justice'*s side was not Andrea's invention and that they had seen something similar before. But many of these brothers were artists who had studied both Andrea's and Donatello's designs with care. These men likely would have recognized the oversized sword and perhaps even the *Virtue*'s posture as deriving from the already-iconic bronze *David*.

Andrea's possible adaptation of the *David*'s composition does not, then, seem a random choice. The brothers' potential recognition of *Justice*'s formal relationship to Donatello's *David* meant that Andrea's allegorical figure could not only be admired for her general relationship to sculpture but also for her relationship to a famed Florentine artistic symbol specifically. For

[191] On the David's display, refer to Frances Ames-Lewis, "Donatello's bronze *David* and the Palazzo medici Courtyard," *Renaissance Studies* (1989): 235-251.

Andrea, this was important. Of course, there was credibility to be earned in engaging in the *paragone* vis á vis the bronze *David* created by the Florentine artistic paradigm, Donatello. But in the case of Donatello, Andrea does not seem to have set out to surpass the artist, having adapted so few of his compositional devices and then having done so in a loose, interpretive manner. Instead, Andrea's reinterpretation of Donatello's two structural motifs—David's sword and Goliath's head—along with the bodily posture that resulted from their inclusion seems intended to speak to the painter's general absorption of the Florentine artistic tradition, upon which, Florentines of the Cinquecento believed, the perfection of their own artistic moment was grounded.[192]

Analysis of Andrea's early *Virtues*, therefore, sheds light on the artist's position in regard to the *paragone* debate around 1515, at about which time he completed both paintings. Andrea's two early *Virtues* do not engage in the *paragone* through the virtuosic mimesis of stone sculpture. Rather, his monochrome *Virtues* evoke Sculpture with their solid and weighty geometric constructions and closed compositions that evoke the plasticity and stability of sculpture. He furthermore established the sense both that *Justice* and *Charity* burgeoned into the cloister while their architectural niches simultaneously recessed from it. In these ways, *Justice* and *Charity* demonstrate that by 1515, Andrea looked to sculptures so that he could evoke a sense of *rilievo* in his figures that could surpass that of Sculpture. But in Andrea's early *Charity* and *Justice,* we find him championing more than just Painting. Steve Cody has already shown that in the first decades of the 1500s, Andrea's artist-colleagues in and native to Rome were just then beginning to develop their own style that attracted the praise of Italians throughout the

[192] On this artistic self-perception, refer especially to the *Proemio to the third part* of Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, IV, 7-15.

peninsula. As a result, asserting the long supremacy of the Florentine artistic tradition was becoming a great concern for the city's artists, Andre included.[193] In this artistic context, Andrea's evocation of Florentine sculptural models in his Scalzo frescoes did more than demonstrate the superiority of Painting over Sculpture in the *paragone* debate. His respectful homages to Sculpture in his painted compositions also suggested the inherent nobility of *disegno*, the two arts' shared foundation and Florence's fundamental artistic tenet.[194] In this way, in the Scalzo, Andrea championed the Florentine artistic style at large.

d. Overcoming Nature: The Later Virtues

Given that *Charity* and *Justice* were among the first paintings executed in the Scalzo cloister, it is particularly fortuitous that the remaining two *Virtues* were among the last. *Hope* (Fig. 1.23) and *Faith* (Fig. 1.24), who are situated on either side of the southern portal, opposite *Justice* and *Charity* respectively, were probably executed between early May and late August of 1523, when only two paintings—*The Annunciation to Zachariah* and *The Nativity of St. John the Baptist*—remained incomplete.[195] These two allegorical paintings are significant in understanding Andrea's on-going engagement with the *paragone* arguments over the course of his career. With the two earlier *Virtues*, Andrea had been interested in the evocation of sculpture and the construction of *rilievo*. With *Faith* (Fig. 1.24) and *Hope* (Fig. 1.23), in contrast, Andrea

---

[193] Steve Cody, *Andrea del Sarto*, 138-140, discussed the "Romanization" of Florence and the ways in which Andrea at once participated in the stylistic shift and pushed against it.
[194] The equal nobility of Painting and Sculpture because of their shared foundation in *disegno* is argued by Varchi and referred to by both Vasari and Pontormo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 7-55, 122, and 132, respectively.
[195] Appendix A. Andrea received a credit from the Scalzo for *Hope* on 22 August 1523. Scholars agree that *Faith* was probably executed at the same time. On either May 2 or 11 earlier in the year, he had received credits for another batch of paintings. He probably executed both frescoes, therefore in the time in between those two dates.

seems set on employing a range of painterly styles to construct monochrome paintings that, though flat and lacking color, nonetheless seemed alive. These paintings show Andrea not only attempting to overcome Sculpture in the *paragone* but, more than that, they show him attempting to—as Pontormo had argued Painting could—"*superare la natura,*" overcome nature.

An attempt to overcome Nature is evident in the construction of *Faith* (Fig. 1.24), the final *Virtue* that Andrea executed in the Scalzo. *Faith* stands alone on the solid ground of her fictive, recessed niche on the left side of the southern portal to the cloister. Situated in the center of her rectangular space, *Faith* turns the left side of her body away from the viewer at a three-quarter angle towards the portal. She simultaneously turns her head away from the door and the towards the brothers standing on the cloister floor, her downcast eyes visible to him in 5/8 profile. At breast-height in her right hand, she holds out a eucharistic chalice containing the blood of Christ. *Faith* balances the base of the chalice between her thumb and forefingers, which turn away from the viewer and back towards her own body. The mouth of the cup is covered by the gilded eucharistic monstrance, now oxidized. On this monstrance is the communal wafer, which stands vertically resting on its edge, seeming to disobey the laws of physics. *Faith's* right wrist is bent towards the viewer, resulting in the chalice that she holds in that hand being the closest element of the painting to the space of the cloister. However, the chalice, monstrance, and wafer do not push into the aisle. Rather, they line up with the edge of the faux niche, not breaking its frame. As a result, *Faith* seems not to offer the *confratello* the blood and body of Christ but rather to display it for worship, presenting it as a means of salvation.

The sense that *Faith* is contained within her niche is not just a result of her failure to breach the fictive architecture's boundaries but also results from her overall compact, stable position and heavy, solid appearance. *Faith* holds her left arm just below her breast where her

high waist is articulated by her cinched *peplos*. There, her bent arm crosses the middle of her torso with her hand coming to rest at the center of her body. In this hand at a slight diagonal to her body she holds a long, gilded crucifix, the top of which she supports with her upper right forearm. Crucially, this crucifix never crosses the left-right boundaries of her painted body or her garment. Though, once brilliant and high value in color, both the crucifix and the monstrance that tops the chalice would have proceeded slightly forward from the rest of the cream-colored painting, they would have also simultaneously reinforced *Faith*'s narrow composition, as even the monstrance, though held beyond the left side of her body, aligns with the inside edge of her skirt. This skirt falls in wide and stylized pleats to the floor with even the doubled-over section of the *peplos* gathering in large, broad bunches, producing a stiff and stony feeling. The plasticity of *Faith*'s garment is amplified by the dark shadow cast by her body. Falling on the left side of her niche, the shadow corresponds to the direction of the cloister's natural light source, its atrium, from which light would have entered over the brothers' right shoulders. The illusionistic shadow cast by *Faith* helps amplify the feeling that her body is three-dimensional and can be touched. Taken together, then, *Faith*'s narrow, static composition, combined with her overall plastic feel result in a *Virtue* that seems self-contained, sculptural, and statuesque.

This static, sculptural feeling, however, is not maintained throughout the entire figure. Though *Faith* holds the chalice and crucifix close to her body, the hands that grasp these items do so in a naturalistic way. Both hands are tense, the tendons and knuckles of her fingers clearly articulated and dimpled. As a result, the long right index finger that supports the Eucharistic chalice and rigid thumb above the rim of the cup seem to struggle with its weight. Her fingers are unable to keep the heavy cup level and she does not hold the chalice horizontally. Rather, it slopes downwards on the right side, away from *Faith*'s body. This minor detail is not

immediately noticeable as Andrea compensated for the imbalance with the gilded monstrance atop the chalice, which appears horizontal. The result of this is that there is a greater distance between the edge of the monstrance on the right side of the chalice than on the left, a distortion that he perhaps tried to account for in a realistic way to by positioning the Eucharistic wafer asymmetrially, slightly to the left of the center of the chalice, as if it had rolled back towards *Faith* in that direction. Moreover, the fingers of *Faith*'s left hand, which hold the base of her crucifix, are grouped irregularly around the crucifix's staff. The knuckles and tendons of this hand are naturalistically modeled, enlivening her hand and fingers. As a result, about *Faith's* hands begins to emerge a spark of human life that competes with the stylized, statuesque feeling of the columnar composition of the lower part of her body.

The naturalism of *Faith*'s hands and fingers, though, was not the only way in which Andrea created a disparity between the upper and lower portions of the sculpture. Despite the narrow, closed composition throughout the figure of *Faith*, Andrea nonetheless began to activate a human, psychological intensity in the *Virtue* through his creation throughout her upper body of multiple pictorial focal points in different pictorial planes. About *Faith*'s midsection, Andrea set each of her two hands and two elbows at different depths progressively through the picture's space, with her right hand the part of her body closest the viewer and left elbow the farthest. The painting's gilded elements, the monstrance and crucifix, both of which once shone in a brilliant high-value color, would have formed visual focal points that are set at a strong diagonal from each other, also each in their own plane. *Faith*'s right and left shoulders, turned, form a competing, though not as dramatic, diagonal in the opposite direction from the gilded elements, with her neck and face set in their own plane of space and still at an angle to the viewer. And although *Faith* turns her eyes far to the right, it is not to meet the viewer's gaze but rather to pass

it, as she projects her glance over his left shoulder. In great contrast to the static, stylized composition of her lower body, the design of her upper body, though remaining closed, draws the viewer's eye into, through, and out of the space of the niche and the multiple planes of her body to enliven the otherwise statuesque composition.

This animation is continued in the psychological treatment of *Faith*'s face. She gazes over her viewer's shoulder, her intense gaze to the viewer's left suggesting that she is perhaps regarding the monochrome rendering of *The Visitation* on the cloister's adjacent wall. None of the excitement of the improbable meeting between the two pregnant, holy women, however, shows on the face of *Faith*. Rather, her deep-set eyes, broad nose, small and parted mouth, along with her short, rounded chin are relaxed and serene. These features are, furthermore, individualized. Her head seems situated upon a neck that, from the modeled base of the throat through the shadowed wrinkles of skin, is naturalistically rendered. Overall, the figure gives the impression of being not a generalized image but rather a portrait.

The model for this portrait is, of course, Andrea's own wife, Lucrezia del Fede.[196] Lucrezia was an apt choice for the allegory as her surname, del Fede, means "of the faith." This kind of erudite play on word and image is in keeping with the revised estimation of the painter as intellectually engaged. At the same time, this kind of portrait—alternately known as a composite portrait, identification portrait, cryptoportrait, and, later, *portrait historié*—in which the sitter was depicted in the guise of another character (here, the allegory *Faith*), was meant to suggest that the sitter embodied an ideal that was exemplified by that character.[197] Andrea's

---

[196] This identification was first suggested by Paul Mantz. "André del Sarte," *Gazette del Beaux-arts* 1015 (1877): 267 and has been accepted since.
[197] For "composite portrait," refer to Edgar Wind, "In Defense of Composite Portraits," *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 1.2 (Oct. 1937): 138–62; for "identification portrait," refer to Peter Bloch. 1980. "Bildnis im Mittelalter: Herrscherbild - Grabbild - Stifterbild," in *Bilder vom*

identification of his wife, Lucrezia, with the allegory, *Faith*, might be taken, then, as more evidence of his fawning adoration of his wife, in keeping with Vasari's description of him. But it could also simultaneously represent a sly rebuke of accusations of her infidelity, hinted at by Vasari in his slanderous account of Andrea's life.

With his *Faith*, then, Andrea took arms against sculpture's claims to superiority not by mimicking it or even by evoking to the maximum of his capacities the paintings' greatest possible sense of *rilievo*. He had already accomplished this in the earlier *Charity* and *Justice*. Rather, with *Faith,* he challenged sculpture by making it seem that her stiff, statuesque body was coming alive. In this process, her face was not only already fully animate it also a living person in the sensory world. With his *Faith*, Andrea thus evoked the Ovidian myth of Pygmalion, the sculptor who fell in love with his own sculpture, which Aphrodite, answering the man's prayers, brought to life so that he could wed her.[198] In this sense, it seems especially poetic that *Faith* is a portrait of Andrea's wife, Lucrezia, whose face appears throughout Andrea's corpus—sometimes, as we have seen, twice in one picture. In the Scalzo, the portrait of Lucrezia as *Faith* helps Andrea evoke a kind of Ovidian, metamorphic monochromy that emphasized the

---

Menschen in der Kunst des Abendlandes: Jubliläumsausstellung d. Preuss. Museen Berlin 1830–1980, in d. Nationalgalerie, exhib. cat., ed. Peter Bloch and Brigitte Hüfler (Berlin: Mann), 105–42; for "cryptoportrait," refer to Gerhart Ladner. 1983. "Das Anfänge des Kryptoporträts," in *Von Angesicht zu Angesicht: Porträtstudien. Michael Stettler zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Florens Deuchler, Mechthild Flury-Lemberg, and Karel Otavsky (Bern: Stämpfli), 78–97; for the history of *portrait historié*, refer to Volker Manuth, Rudie van Leeuwen, and Jos Koldeweij, "Introduction," in *Example or Alter Ego? Aspects of the* Portrait Historié *in Western Art from Antiquity to the Present*, edited by Volker Manuth. (Turnhout: Brepols).
[198] Ovid, *Matamorphoses*, Ov. Met. 10.243-297. Available online at http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0028%3Abook%3D10%3Acard%3D243 last accessed 6 March 2022. (Reproduicing the edition of 1922. *Metamorphoses*. Translated by Brookes More. (Boston: Cornhill Publishing Co. 1922).

painterliness of his medium to create the impression that it was enlivening hard stone.[199] What's more, the difficulty of this task was increased in the Scalzo, where Andrea had to make the woman appear living not only on a flat surface but also without the use of color.[200] Thus committing a creative act like that of the goddess Aphrodite, Andrea demonstrated Painting's superiority not only to Sculpture but its superiority even, as Andrea's student Pontormo had asserted, to Nature itself.[201]

Andrea also capitalized on the Ovidian potential of monochromy in *Hope* (Fig. 1.23), which flanks the opposite side of the main portal of the Scalzo, just across from *Faith*. He depicted the female *Virtue* as a woman wearing heavy drapery and facing towards the left side of a rectangular space. Eyes closed, she gazes upwards and holds her hands in prayer in front of her breast. Leaning slightly backwards a gentle curve through her body that presses her hands and mid-section towards the cloister door. This curve begins at her head and projects through a prominent piece of drapery that begins over her left shoulder, is pulled downwards through her sleeve crossing her left elbow, and slopes backwards through a long diagonal fold in her skirt that culminates at the floor behind her left heel. There, a section of her skirt meets the bottom right corner of the fictive architectural space. Both of *Hope*'s feet along with her praying hands are oriented towards the space of the cloister, giving the impression that the space of her niche is continuous with the space of the cloister. The result of these compositional choices is that *Faith*

---

[199] On the relationship between Florentine art of the quattro- and cinquecento to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, refer to Paul Barolsky. "As in Ovid, So in Renaissance Art," *Renaissance Quarterly* 51.2 (1998): 451-474.

[200] This act seems very close to one of the reasons given in favor of Painting by Vasari in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 123, who wrote: "*Formasi la stultizia e la saviezza in elle teste pittura, et in esse si fa le mortezze e vivezze di quelle; variasi il color delle carni, cangiansi I panni, fassi vivere e morire, e di ferrite coi sangui si fa veder I morti, secondo che vole la dotta mano e la memoria d'un buono artifice*."

[201] Pontormo in Varchi*, Due Lezzioni,* 134.

does not seem to stand as a static sculpture in her niche. Instead, the young woman seems to pad towards the door of the Scalzo, walking with the brothers as they moved counter-clockwise around the aisle to perambulate or exit the cloister.

Hope's animation could have had religious as well as artistic weight. In her motion towards the cloister door, she was able to embody the hope that the brother would be able to carry his sacred teachings and revelations with him into the public sphere, where he would have to put them into practice in order to live a righteous life.[202] But at the same time, *Hope* was not, like the viewing brothers, fully human. Though a gentle *sfumato* defines her left jaw and even her hands, which strain against each other with such force so as to appear almost skeletal, the rest of her body is abstract and schematized. The folds that make up the drapery of her garment are stylized throughout, falling in heavy, regular and geometric pleats, especially in the very middle of the composition between her visible elbow and the belt that ties her *peplos*. The fabric appears, therefore, to undulate in an unnatural and contrived way. At the same, the pleats reflect light regularly and evenly as would a reflective stone surface. As a result, *Hope* is at once in motion and sculptural, neither quite human nor quite sculpture. Andrea seems to have captured a liminal pictorial state, having brought the fictive sculpture to life but not quite completely. As with *Faith*, he has not only surpassed sculpture by showing his ability to imitate stone and statue but even to have surpassed nature in his god-like ability to create the painted illusion that he has metamorphosed inanimate rock into the animate human body.[203]

---

[202] This is discussed in chapter III of this dissertation.
[203] On the importance of Ovidian metaphors of transformation in the production of early-modern art, refer to Paul Barolsky, "As in Ovid, so in Renaissance Art," *Renaissance Quarterly* 51.2 (1998): 451-474.

This analysis of Andrea's four *Virtues*, two painted during the initial and two during the final campaigns of the Scalzo decoration, shed light on the range of the artist's ideas about the *paragone* debate. The later two *Virtues* are very different from the earlier ones. One of the notable features about Andrea's later *Virtues*, *Faith* and *Hope*, is that they seem not to have been made after sculptures or sculptural models, as was the case with *Charity* and *Justice.* Rather, Andrea probably adapted his compositions from two-dimensional artistic sources.[204] For example, Andrea's *Faith* and *Hope* seem especially related to two of the grisaille figures (Fig. 1.24 and 1.23, respectively) in the predella of Raphael's famed *Baglioni Altarpiece* (Fig. 5.15), painted in Perugia in 1507. Though now fragmented and in Rome (the main panel in the collections of the Galleria Borghese and the predella in the Vatican) the altarpiece remained on view in the church of San Francesco al Prato in nearby Perugia until 1608.[205] But in his own construction of the pictures, Raphael had also looked to established iconographies, as similar depictions of the *virtues* appear in print sources such as the *Faith* and *Hope* cards of the early E-Series (Fig. 5.16-5.17) and Mantegna Tarrochi (Fig. 5.18-5.19).[206] In designing the later *Virtues*, Andrea thus seems to have engaged primarily with paintings and possibly also with Italy's emergent print culture for artistic inspiration, eschewing sculptural sources.

That Andrea worked from two-dimensional sources in his creation of *Faith* and *Hope* seems to have affected his conception of the pictures, especially relating to his construction of

---

[204] On the development of this idea, I am particularly grateful to Kelli Wood for her generous sharing of her expertise in printed cards, books, and gameboards of the early-modern period.
[205] On the commission and the altarpiece's Perugian setting, consult Donal Cooper, "Raphael's Altar-Piece in S. Francesco al Preto, Perugia: Patronage, Setting, and Function," *The Burlington Magazine* (2001): 554-561.
[206] As Kelli Wood has emphasized to me in personal communication, neither of these series were true *tarocchi*, which did not include images of the Christian Virtues. Rather, they were a type of didactic card game related to the tarot.

space. As already noted, the later *Virtues* do not have the same kind of high *rilievo* that the earlier *Virtues* do. Even though Andrea implied he figures' movement, especially in *Hope,* neither she nor *Faith*, who holds out her chalice, breaks her fictive frame. Both figures seem completely contained within their illusionistic niches, caught forever in a liminal state between animate and inanimate. Andrea's use of flat sources for the figures, then, was likely not because they were more-readily available to him but rather because they helped him deploy a full range of visual arguments in the *paragone* debate. These later *Virtues* allowed Andrea to demonstrate that Painting could not only surpass Sculpture, but that it could even surpass Nature by seeming to bring to life flat figures. This, Andrea's student Pontormo would later argue, was the unique burden of the painter, whose job, he jokingly added, was more difficult than God's. And in the Scalzo, Andrea accomplished this feat without the help of color.

e. *Rilievo* and *Chiaroscuro*

Andrea's sculptural *Four Virtues*, however, are not the only paintings wherein we the artist can be shown to champion Painting in the *paragone*. Its monochrome coloristic mode was itself a testament to the painter's ability to create *rilievo*, even without *colore*—the duplicitous and feminine surface quality of Painting that gave it a wandering, amorphous, artificial beauty. Rather, in the Scalzo, Andrea created *rilievo* solely through the representation of light and shadow, or *chiaroscuro*. Leonardo was clear about role that *chiaroscuro* played in Painting to produce *rilievo*, its most valuable characteristic. He wrote: "The first intention of a painter is to make a superficial flat surface appear like a figure in relief and detached from the surface; and he who surpasses all of the others in that part of the art, deserves the greatest praise, and this investigation, the crown of that science, is born of shadows and lights, or, if you want,

chiaroscuro.[207] In the Scalzo, the relationship between Andrea's colorless *chiaroscurism* should thus be considered as evidence of his insistence in Painting's superiority in the *paragone* debate.

To bring into clarity the evolved conception of *chiaroscurism* at play in the Cloister of the Scalzo, it is perhaps useful to compare Andrea's frescoes to those in the Bichi Chapel in the Augustinian church of Sant'Agostino in Siena, painted by Francesco di Giorgio Martini in 1490. The chapel cycle consists of only two images, Nativities of both the Virgin and Christ (Fig. 5.20-5.21). Andrea would have almost certainly seen the images, if not sought out for their similarity to the Scalzo commission then because the Bichi Chapel also contained an important altarpiece, the Pala Bichi (Fig. 5.22), which Luca Signorelli began painting in 1498. Now split between museums worldwide, figures in Signorelli's panel seem to have inspired ones in Andrea's *Baptism of the Multitude* (Fig. 1.12).[208] Andrea also seems to have adapted elements from Martini's *Nativity of the Virgin* in his designing of a fresco of the same subject (Fig. 5.20) in the

[207] Leonardo, *Della Pittura,* 136.406: "*La prima intenzione del pittore è fare che una superficie piana si dimostri un corpo rilevato e spiccato da esso piano; e quello che in tale arte eccede piú gli altri, quello merita maggior laude, e questa tale investigazione, anzi corona di tale scienza, nasce dalle ombre e dai lumi, o vuoi dire chiaro e scuro*." On the topic of Leonardo's *chiaroscuro*, consult especially: John Shearman. "Leonardo's Colour and Chiaroscuro," *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* (1962): 13-47; and Claire Farago, "Leonardo's Color and Chiaroscuro Reconsidered: The Visual Force of Painted Images," *The Art Bulletin* 73.1 (1991): 63–88.

[208] Its many pieces are discussed in Martina Indengaay, "Rekonstruktionsversuch der 'Pala Bichi' in San Agostino in Siena," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 23. 1/2 (1979): 109-126. Andrea's nude dorsal figure on the far right of the 1517 *Baptism of the Multitude* feels inspired by a similarly located, nude figure from the central panel of Signorelli's altarpiece. On the left of Andrea's same fresco, both the dorsal figure of the man taking off his shirt over his head and the man who overlaps him, standing with his bent knee on the rock also seem adaptations of the man in Signorelli's *Pala Bichi* who takes off his shirt in a similar manner and who is himself overlapped by a figure designed after the ancient sculpture of the *Spinario*, who sits with his bent leg on a rock just behind him. It thus seems that Andrea studied the *Pala Bichi*a by Signorelli, when he would have also then seen Francesco di Giorgio Martini's monochrome frescoes.

forecourt of SS. Annunziata.[209] Andrea then seems not only to have known the chapel and its art, but to have adapted formal elements from them for his fresco cycles in Florence.

Andrea's likely knowledge of the Bichi Chapel frescoes is interesting because, more than earlier monochromatic cycles, such as Paolo Uccello's Green Cloister in Santa Maria Novella (Fig. 2.2), each painting in Francesco's two *Scenes from the Life of the Virgin* give the impression of being, like Andrea's *Life of St. John the Baptist*, fully monochrome. This is especially true for *The Nativity of Christ* (Fig. 5.21) where the entire picture field, except for extremely minor details, is monochrome.[210] That means for Martini just as for Andrea, the creation of *rilievo* had to be handled achromatically. In this respect, despite the two cycle's formal and conceptual similarities, Francesco's earlier paintings are abstracted, stylized, and schematized. Not only do the paintings rely on linear perspectives to create space, architectural elements and figures appear flattened within these artificial spaces. This flatness is the result of crisp and heavy outlines around the compositional elements, the unconvincing modeling of which is achieved through dramatic contrasts in light and dark, so that the figures especially are

[209] According to Centro Documentazione, Polo Museale Fiorentino, Catalogo Ufficiale, no. 281825, Andrea's *Nativity of the Virgin* was mostly painted around the year 1513. Similarities between Andrea's *Birth of the Virgin* and that of Dürer, made in woodcut in 1503, have been rightly noted throughout the literature. But Andrea's composition also nods to that of the same subject by Francesco. His adapting is especially evident in the overall arrangement of space, which is more symmetrical and airy, as well as in the inclusion of specific architectural elements, such as the mantle behind St. Anne's bed and the open portal in the far left of the composition. He even seems to have borrowed the placement of figures, such as the woman crouching in the back center of Francesco's *Nativity*, whom Andrea replaced with the figure reminiscent of Raphael's Michelangesque one in the foreground of the *School of Athens*. It thus seems not only likely that Andrea visited the Bichi Chapel before executing his own Scalzo frescoes but that its paintings were a direct source of inspiration for more than one of Andrea's Florentine fresco cycles.

[210] It should be noted whenever discussing *The Baptism of Christ* in the Scalzo that the entire fresco suffered extreme damage and so formal observations are difficult. Interestingly, this in contrast to the well-conserved *Charity* immediately next to it. For more on the condition of the cycle, refer to Chapter I: The Introduction.

not rounded gradually and consistently around implied curves of the body but are rather built up through stark and schematized contrasts in shading.[211] Though Francesco di Giorgio Martini seems more concerned with coloristic unity than did earlier painters of monochromatic cycles, he was not yet able to evoke a sense of unified *rilievo* through space.

Martini's stilted spatial constructions are a far cry from Andrea's painterly *Life of the Baptist*. In Andrea's paintings, bodies are modeled with even variations of color across their surfaces, their rounded surfaces suggested through space with hazy *sfumato* modeling such that they appear integrated in their atmospheric settings. Shearman described how Leonardo had accomplished this in oil paint, where he achieved tonal unity by narrowing and darkening his palette to subtly model the surfaces of objects and bodies in his paintings, resulting in "a three-dimensional dialogue between light and shadow."[212] But fresco and oil paint were very different media.[213] In fresco, pigments could not be blended as they could in oil so that tonal unity could be achieved throughout a polychromatic picture field.[214] To worsen matters, in fresco, the visible guiding lines incised in the intonaco of a wall during the fresco painting process along with visible joins between *giornate* caused formal boundaries of elements to be rigid. This meant that the construction of space in fresco was largely dependent on the artist's reliance on two spatial-representation strategies: scientific perspective and in skillfully juxtaposing high and low-value

[211] Shearman, "Leonardo's Colour and Chiaroscuro," 16-17.
[212] Shearman, "Leonardo's Colour and Chiaroscuro," 27.
[213] The different limitations of materials used by early-modern painters meant that each medium had to be mastered—technically and conceptually—in its own right. This greater difficulty is being referred to by Leonardo in Barocchi, *Scritti*, I, 482, as well asl letters to Varchi by Vasari and Pontormo in Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 124 and 133-134, respectively. Pontormo writes, for example: "*Oltre a questo e' varii modi di lavorare, in fresco, in olio, a tempera, a colla, che in tutto bisogna gran ptrattica a maneggiare tanti vari colori, sapere conscere I loro effete, mesticati in tanti varri modi, chiari scuri, ombre e lumi, reflessi, e molte alter appartenenze infinit.*"
[214] Hall, *Color and Meaning*, 18-20, on fresco techniques.

fields of colors that would appear to recede or proceed from the picture plane.[215] This kind of chromatic and mathematic construction of space, however, almost always results in a composition where spatial unity is inconsistent by of the natural tendency of bright colors to proceed from the picture plane farther than dark ones can. To achieve a Leonardesque spatial unity, Andrea was going to have to overcome the material limits of fresco.

Though it is unlikely that the confraternity took into consideration the possibility of rivaling the *chiaroscuro* oil paintings of Leonardo when they settled on a monochromatic commission, by unnaturally limiting color, the Scalzo cycle nonetheless gave Andrea the opportunity to experiment with the construction of *rilievo* in space through pure *chiaroscuro*. There, Andrea followed Leonardo's advice to establish a mid-tone, neither dark nor light, from which darkened elements would appear to recede and brightened ones to process forth.[216] By radically reducing his palette beyond that which had been seen in Florence before, Andrea was able to apply a single color in consistent and continuous saturations throughout the pictures' space. He could articulate and model figures and other compositional elements with *sfumato* boundaries ultimately allowing him to suggest a cohesive atmospheric perspective throughout the picture plane.[217] This could never have been accomplished in polychrome fresco, where material and practical limitations meant that the effect of *sfumato* was nearly impossible to

[215] Shearman, "Leonardo's Colour and Chiaroscuro," 14-18, discusses what he calls "the pigment problem." Painters' strategies for overcoming this problem are discussed at length in Hall, *Color and Meaning*, 47-115.
[216] Leonardo, *Della Pittura,* 199, no 660: "*Il chiaro e lo scuro, cioè il lume e le ombre, hanno un mezzo, il quale non si può nominare né chiaro né scuro, ma egualmente partecipante di esso chiaro e scuro; ed è alcuna volta egualmente distante dal chiaro e dallo scuro, ed alcuna volta piú vicino all'uno che all'altro.*"
[217] Shearman, "Leonardo's Color and Chiaroscuro, 14-34.

produce.[218] The result of the artificial and unnatural coloristic limitation of monochromy in Andrea's Scalzo images was, paradoxically, a new kind of Leonardesque naturalism in fresco painting, one that allowed the artist to flaunt his production of *rilievo*, the most important quality of arts of *disegno*.

The difference between Andrea's conception of the achromatic construction of space compared to other painters is perhaps best exemplified by comparison with the paintings in the Scalzo that he did not paint—Franciabigio's *Blessing of St. John the Baptist* (Fig. 1.16) and *Meeting of Christ in the Desert* (Fig. 1.17). While damage to these frescoes excludes them from a thorough stylistic analysis, it is still possible to analyze the way that Franciabigio constructed space.[219] His lack of concern for the achievement of tonal unity is readily apparent in *The Blessing* picture. There, the picture's primary space-constructing apparatus is the checkboard floor. Far from achromatic, this floor is the only place in the entire cycle where polychromy exists within a picture, the alternating violet and white tiles describing the artificial space from the picture's implied surface to the represented surface of the building behind the checkered *piazza*. *The Meeting of Christ and the Baptist* is monochrome. But it nonetheless exhibits a different conception of space from that seen in Andrea's pictures. In it, Franciabigio pushed all four of the large main figures to the front of the picture plane. They do not seem integrated into the rolling landscape behind them but rather appear like actors in front of stage scenery. Franciabigio's attempt to achromatically render naturalistic space thus fails, as, unlike the

---

[218] Hall, *Color and Meaning*, 102, suggested that Raphael's use of a tinted *intonaco* in the Stanze allowed him to achieve a sense of coloristic *unione* that approached tonal unity.
[219] On the conservation of the Scalzo, refer to chapter I. On the damage done to Franciabigio's frescoes, especially its lower register, refer to chapter IV of this dissertation.

praised colorist Andrea, he was not able to achieve consistent tonal unity throughout the picture field.

9. The Scalzo and the *Nonfinito*

a. The Emergence of *Nonfinito*

Around the year 1510, that the Scalzo could or would be conceived as an entirely *chiaroscuro* monument was certainly related to the rise of the *nonfinito* style in Florentine art. This mainly-sculptural style described works of art that had a sketchy or unfinished look, whether because the artist intended a low degree of surface finish or because he had been, for some reason or other, forced to abandon the work while in progress, leaving it incomplete.[220]

[220] When the artist abandoned it was usually described as *imperfetta* in contemporary literature. On the subject, consult Teddy Brunius, "Michelangelo's Non-finito," *Contributions to the History and Theory of Art* 6 (1967): 34. Juergen Schulz, "Michelangelo's Unifinished works," *The Art Bulletin* 57.3 (1975): 368 also categorized Michelangelo's unfinished sculptures as "inexplicably abandoned" and "abandoned due to outside circumstances." The most famous example of a sculpture abandoned because of outside circumstances is the unfinished Tomb of Julius II, which Ascanio Condivi. 1999. *The Life of Michelagnolo Buonarroti*, translated by Alice Sedgwick Wohl. (LA: Louisiana State University), 77, calls "the tragedy of the tomb." On page 67, Condivi also reports that Michelangelo "ran out of time" while working on the sculptures of the Medici Chapel. Andre Chastel, *Art et humanisme à Florence au temps de Laurent la Magnifique*, (Paris: 1959), 330, explains Vasari's comment that *furor* kept Michelangelo from completing sculptures. Chastel believes that this refers to Michelangelo's inability to compromise his artistic conception for a sculpture if he found a fault in the marble; rather than change his design he would abandon the work all together. Paola Barocchi, "Finito e non-finito nella critica vasariana," *Arte Antica e Moderna* 3 (1958): 222, shows that Vasari was actually speaking about the *furor* of Donatello. When he wrote, "*…il furore dell'arte in un subito esprime il concetto dell'animo; il che non pio fare la diligenza a la fatica nelle cose pulite*." Michelangelo was actually writing about Donatello's choir sculptures. Aldo Bertini, "*Il problema del non-finito nell'arte di Michelangelo*," *L'Arte* 1 (1930): 122, buttressed Vasari's other claim that Michelangelo's ideas were too large to be executed in stone, noting that the number of drawings that show a sculptural problem resolved, only to then be abandoned by the artist, indicate that Michelangelo was interested only in the idea and not the execution of the block. By the eighteenth century, artistic intention became part of the *nonfinito* debate. For example, refer to Joshua Reynolds. 1959. Discourse 8, in *Discourses on Art*, edited by Robert Wark (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library), 163 compared to Marcia Allentuck. 1971. "In

Artists whose works exhibited *nonfinito* qualities had gained fame throughout the Florentine quattrocento. The characteristic was apparent especially, one could argue, in Michelangelo's sculptural forebears such as Donatello and Bertoldo di Giovanni (?-1491), the now all-but-forgotten steward of the Medici sculpture garden while the young Buonarotti was in residence.[221] But it was finally Michelangelo's own corpus that brought the *nonfinito* style, and with it, related conceptual concerns, to the fore. This was not only through his sculptures, about three-fifths of which today appear unfinished, but also through the iconographic ambiguity of his paintings and his advocacy of drawings as final, disseminable works of art.[222] As a result, by the end of Michelangelo's life, *nonfinito* was a characteristic valued across media throughout the Italian peninsula.

One of the interesting features of Michelangelo's *nonfinito* sculptures is that they come from every part of the artist's career. Even his early works, such as *The Battle of the Centaurs*

Defense of an Unfinished *Tristam Shandy*: Laurence Sterne and the *Non Finito*," in *The Winged Skull: Paper from the Laurence Sterne Bicentenary Conference*, edited by Arthur H. Cash and John M. Stedmond. (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press), 147-150; also refer to shed Works," Art Bulletin 57 (1975). Other important studies include Henry Thode. 1908. *Michelangelo Kritische Untersuchungen.* Vol. I. (Berlin: G. Grote, 1908), 91, and Carlo Am, "La veduta unica e il problema del non-finito in Michelangelo," *Arte* 8 (1937): 46-52.

[221] For the latest scholarship on the life and work of Bertoldo di Giovanni, refer to Aimee Ng, Alexander J. Noelle, Xavier F. Salomon, and Peter Jonathan Bell. 2019. *Bertoldo di Giovanni: the Renaissance of sculpture in Medici Florence*. (New York: The Frick Collection); also refer to the fundamental study by James Draper. 1992. *Bertoldo di Giovanni, Sculptor of the Medici Household: critical reappraisal and catalogue raisonné.* (London: University of Missouri). On the academy that he run, refer to Karen edis-Barzman. *The Florentine Academy and the Early Modern State: The Discipline of Disegno*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 6-7. She notes that the most detailed account of the art school at San Marco is found in Vasari's *vita* of Michelangelo.

[222] Paula Carabell, "Image and Identity in the Unfinished Works of Michelangelo," *RES* (1997): 85. She notes that the most important sources for comments on Michelangelo's unfinished works are Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, VII, 242-243 and 270, as well as Ascanio Condivi, [refer to note 5], vol. 7, pp. 242-243, 270) and Ascanio Condivi. 1927. *Michelangelo: La vita raccolta dal suo discepolo Ascanio Condivi*, edited by Antonio Maraini. (Florence), 102.

and the Lapiths (Fig. 5.23), made just weeks before Lorenzo the Magnificent died in 1492 and now housed in the Casa Buonarotti in Florence, exhibits a roughness of surface that has caused audiences to wonder whether the work was intentionally left unpolished or whether the artist was interrupted while the sculptures were in progress. Interruption certainly caused him to halt work on his final sculpture, the *Rondanini Pietà* (Fig. 5.24), which the artist sculpted throughout the day until at least six days before he died with it unfinished; it is now displayed, incomplete, in the Castello Sforzesca in Milan.[223] The consistency of Michelangelo's production of *nonfinito* works not only means that there are a great number of them, it also suggests that they were, to some degree, acceptable to their creator.

These unfinished sculptures also seem to have had value to collectors. During his life, Michelangelo's unfinished works were purchased and displayed, such as the Bargello's *Apollo-David* and its *Pitti Tondo*, which were exhibited in the private quarters of Cosimo I de' Medici and Bartolomeo Pitti, respectively. Additionally, without employing other artists to finish them as had been the custom, the incomplete sculptures for the Medici Chapel were installed by Vasari in the New Sacristy.[224] This new kind of recognition of Michelangelo's unfinished sculptures as artistically important and worthy of display implies that even incomplete works of art could show artistic merit that resonated with contemporary audiences.

That Michelangelo left sculptures unfinished through his life is also critical because it meant that the *nonfin*ito sculptures accumulated concurrently with the rise of the status of

---

[223] Refer to the letter by Daniele da Volterra dated 11 July 1564, and published by Charles de Tolnay. 1971. *Michelangelo: The Final Period*. Vol. 5. (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 155: "*…o non mi ricordo se in tutto quello scritto io messi chome Michelagnolo lavoro tutto il sabbato della dominica di carnovale ellavoro in piedi studiando sopra quel corpo della pietà...*"
[224] Teddy Brunius, "Michelangelo's Non-finito," *Contributions to the History and Theory of Art* 6 (1967): 34.

drawing as an art. That is, for the first time, the once-preparatory medium of drawing was being increasingly regarded as a viable artistic medium in its own right. This phenomenon resulted primarily from the public exhibition of monumental *cartoni* discussed at the beginning of the chapter.[225] Their display acclimated the public to accepting drawings, even ones made as part of the artistic process that were never intended as final works, as a valid artistic medium capable of expressing artistic, religious, and civic values.

The public display of drawings, moreover, reflected collecting and art-viewing practices in the private sphere. During the cinquecento, for example, Giorgio Vasari began to collect the drawings of elder Florentine masters such as Botticelli and Filippo Lippi and to display them by pasting them onto large sheets of paper. (Fig. 5.25) Arranging many on a single page, Vasari contextualized the drawings within his own drawn architectural frameworks. This formal display suggested that the images were not for workshop use, which had been, up to that point, the main impulse behind the collection of drawings by Italian artists.[226] Rather, these drawings had been curated and prepared to be displayed within the elite circle of court artists and thinkers working for Cosimo I de' Medici.[227] Vasari may have been inspired to collect and display such drawings

---

[225] Giovanni Battista Armenini. 1587. *De' veri precetti della pittura*. (Ravenna): 99-104, describes these kinds of objects, which he called "*ben finite cartone*," citing cartoons by cinquecento artists Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, Perino del Vaga, Giulio Romano, Daniele da Volterra, and Taddeo Zuccaro. Also consult Carmen Bambach. 1999. *Drawing and Painting in the Italian Renaissance Workshop: Theory and Practice, 1300-1600.* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press), 249-282.

[226] The literature on the use of drawings in Italian workshops is vast, but consult especially Bambach, *Drawing and Painting in the Italian Renaissance Workshop*. On Andrea del Sarto specifically, refer to Brooks, *Andrea del Sarto,* and Filippo di Pietro. 1910. *I Disegni di Andrea del Sarto negli Uffizi*. (Siena: L. Lazzeri).

[227] That Vasari's book of pages has been not only unbound but even its individual sheets cut into pieces and sold separately speaks to their sustained collectability. Examples of fragments of Vasari pages can be found in museum and collections throughout the world and are still being discovered. For example, refer to Laura Moretti and Sean Roberts, "From the *Vite* or the *Ritratti?* Previously Unknown Portraits from Vasari's *Libro de' Disegni*," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian*

as finished works by Michelangelo himself, who had been pioneering the genre of the "presentation drawing." This kind of drawing was highly-finished and large in scale but was unrelated to commissions in other media.[228] Michelangelo gifted these drawings to his elite friends and patrons, such as the Casa Buonarotti *Cleopatra*, (Fig. 5.26) which the artist gave to Tomasso da Cavalieri in 1532 as well as the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum's *Pietà* (Fig. 5.27), gifted to Vittoria Colonna in 1544.[229] In the beginning of the 1500s, drawings, preparatory and highly-finished, became increasingly valued by private collectors as works of art in their own right.

It comes as no surprise that at about the same time, unfinished paintings by important Florentine artists also came to be valued as finished objects. This attitude bore directly on the work of Andrea del Sarto, who died in 1530 while painting an *Assumption of the Virgin* (Fig. 5.28), now in the Galleria Palatina, for an important Florentine patron, Bartolomeo Panciatichi

---

Renaissance 21.2 (2018): 105-136, recently discovered a fragment in the Gabinetto del Disegno of the Uffizi. Aretino was also known to collect drawings. Refer to Carmen Bambach. 2018. *Michelangelo: Divine Draftsman and Designer.* (NY: Metropolitan Museum of Art), 212-213.

[228] On these kinds of drawings, refer to: *Il Carteggio di Michelangelo*. *Edizione postuma di Giovanni Poggi* Vol. III, edited by Paola Barocchi and Rienzo Ristori. (Florence: 1965-1983), no. DCCXCVIII and vol. IV, nos. CMXXXII, CMLXVI, and CMLXVIII. For more on their circulation and uses, refer to James Hall, *Michelangelo and the reinvention of the Human Body*. (New York: 2005), 167.

[229] On the Cleopatra drawing, refer to Frederich Hartt. *Michelangelo Drawings.* (New York: 1970): 2F. Andrea Schumaker, *Michelangelos Teste Divine: Idealbildnisse als Exampla der* Zeichenkunst. (Munster: 2007), 26, was the first person to suggest that the drawing was by Cavalieri, although other scholars have long maintained that it was a student copy. William Wallace. 1995. "Instruction and Originality in Michelangelo's Drawings," in *The Craft of Art: Originality and Industry in the Italian Renaissance and Baroque Workshop*, edited by A. Ladis and C. Wood, pp. 113-133. (Athens: The University of Georgia Press), 19-20, declared the Cleopatra on the verso to be by a student. Also refer to his "The Woman Behind Michelangelo's *Cleopatra*," *Artnews* 10 April 2013. http://www.artnews.com/2013/04/10/behind-michelangelos-cleopatra/ last accessed 6 March 2022.

the Elder.[230] Its unfinished state would have released Bartolomeo, who died three years after Andrea, from his contract. Nonetheless, after another three years, his son, Bartolomeo the younger acquires the work.[231] What's more, he paid Andrea's widow, Lucrezia, forty florins as a "residuum" on the painting, which he added to his personal collection.[232] The price of the residuum is significant. Forty florins would have been a hefty sum to pay even for a completed painting. But the use of the term "residuum" in the contract seems to imply that an initial down payment had already been made.[233] The Panciatichi family thus probably paid even more than 40 florins for the abandoned painting. The *nonfinito* work was at some time acquired from the Panciatichi by Piero di Alamanni Salviati, an elite Florentine anti-Medicean rebel, who displayed it in his private villa in a chapel that, according to Vasari, he had made especially for "for ornament of this painting."[234] Along with the rest of the rebel's estate, it was finally seized by Cosimo I de' Medici and entered his ducal collection.[235] It then entered the Galleria Palatina, where it remains on display.[236] Andrea del Sarto's unfinished paintings were thus specifically prized by Florence's most important collectors.

Andrea's Panciatichi *Annunciation*, however, is near-finished. The state of unfinish suggested by the Scalzo paintings is much greater. This is why it is worth considering Fra Bartolomeo's incomplete *St. Anne Altarpiece* (Fig. 5.29), now on display in the Museo San

---

[230] On the painting, refer to Alessandro Cecchi, "Assunzione della Madonna (Assunta Panciatichi)," in *I Dipinti della Galleria Palatina e degli Appartamenti Reali: le scuole dell'Italia Centrale, 11450-1530.* (Firenze: Giunti), no. 13, pp. 67-70.
[231] Louis Waldman, "A Document for Andrea del Sarto's *Panciatichi Assumption*," *The Burlington Magazine* 139.1132 (1997): 470.
[232] Waldman, "A Document," 469-470.
[233] Waldman, "A Document," 470.
[234] Waldman, "A Document," 470, as well as Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, V, 33-34. Cecchi, "Assunzione," notes that this transfer occurred in 1548.
[235] Cecchi, "Assunzione," 68.
[236] Cecchi, "Assunzione," 68.

Marco. In 1510 Fra Bartolomeo, Andrea's greatest contemporary Florentine rival, received a commission from Gonfaloniere Piero Soderini for the Republic's secular space of the Sala del Consiglio Maggiore in the Palazzo della Signoria, which had been built in 1494 in the wake of the Medici expulsion from the city.[237] For this room, Bartolomeo began painting the monumental *St. Anne Altarpiece*. But when the Medici returned in 1512, the altarpiece was abandoned with only the monochrome *chiaroscuro* underpainting completed. Fra Bartolomeo passed away in 1517, never having finished the painting, which remained in San Marco, where the *frate* had been working on it. Nonetheless, in 1529, the Signoria ordered that it be removed from San Marco and displayed, even though incomplete, in the hall in Palazzo Vecchio for which had originally been intended.[238] The unfinished painting was later acquired by Ottaviano de' Medici (1484-1546) in 1540, who used it as the main altarpiece in his prominently-located chapel in the family Church of San Lorenzo. There, it functioned as the space's primary devotional image until 1924, when it was moved back to San Marco, where it remains on display today.[239] The desirability of Fra Bartolomeo's unfinished *St. Anne Altarpiece* in several different contexts demonstrates that, by 1510, even *chiaroscuro* underpaintings could be understood by Florentines

---

[237] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, IV, 198: "*Gli fu da Piero Soderini allogata la tavola della sala del Consiglio, che di chiaro oscuro da lui disegnata ridusse in maniera, ch'era per farsi onore grandissimo*."

[238] Cecil Roth. 1968. *The Last Florentine Republic*. (New York: Russell & Russell), 106-107, as well as 113, n. 127, which reproduces the decree by the Signoria CXXX, 29 March 1529-1430: "*Quod Tabula consilij ponatur in dicto consilio…deliberaverunt quod egregia tabula consilij maioris picta per ilm Fratrem Bartholomeum fratrem santj Marci que hodie reperitur in concenctu Santi Marii prectj hinc ad per totam diem Sabati que erit dies iij mensis Aprilis proxime future ponatur in sala consilij maioris in capella et loco…ordinato in dicta sala per eos ad quos petinet sub pena eorum indignationis…"* Wilde, "The Hall of the Great Council of Florence," 77, wrote: "This act is an epitome of the whole history of the Council building."

[239] John T. Paoletti and Gary M. Radke. *Art in Renaissance Italy*. (NJ: 1997), 389-90.

to have artistic, religious, and political merit, worthy of prominent display in civic and sacred spaces.

Begun just as Fra Bartolomeo began the *Saint Anne Altarpiece*, the *chiaroscuro* Scalzo cycle is worth contextualizing within the emergent *nonfinito* style of art. As we have already seen in this dissertation, the Scalzo cycle was also even more limited in color than Florence's other monumental monochromatic cloister cycles like the Green Cloister (Fig. 2.2) in Santa Maria Novella.[240] It therefore appeared most similar not to other finished paintings, but rather to *chiaroscuro* underpaintings like Fra Bartolomeo's *St. Anne Altarpiece*. The Scalzo cycle was also similar in appearance to monumental drawings, like the prized cartoon for Raphael's *School of Athens* (Fig. 5.1) and other drawings by both Leonardo and Michelangelo, which had been publicly celebrated in Florence during Andrea's teenage years and which he is reported to have studied at length. His Scalzo frescoes would certainly have appeared to the contemporary viewer to fit within this nascent *nonfinito* tradition.

Still, unlike Michelangelo's incomplete sculptures, Leonardo's abandoned cartoon, or Fra Bartolomeo'a unfinished altarpiece, the Cloister of the Cycle was in fact a completed monument. This is why it is worth paying special attention to one of the Scalzo's most peculiar features—its gilding, which constituted the final finishing touch in the artistic process.[241] Although gilding is apparent throughout the cycle in paintings by both Andrea and Franciabigio, by the cinquecento, the gilding of fresco surfaces was a technique that had fallen out of use inside the city of

[240] Refer to chapter II of this dissertation.
[241] On the methods and materials of gilding, refer to Cennino Cennini, *Il Libro* d*ell'Arte*: xcix, cxxiii, and cxxxiv-cxliii.

Florence.[242] That is why it is interesting that gilding is also a feature of Francesco di Giorgio Martini's monochromatic *Nativities* (Fig. 5.20-5.21) in Siena. Whether or not Andrea was inspired by Giorgio to gild the Scalzo frescoes, this gilding would have been executed as he finished each picture, before the scaffolding had been taking down in front of the image. This distinction is important because it means that Andrea planned to gild the paintings in his initial design. There may have been several reasons for him to do so. He knew, for example, that the gilding would provide some chromatic variation in the monochrome cloister, adding visual interest. The application of metal also helped them refer to real metal objects in the world, such as *Justice*'s scales, adding to their sense of realism. The luster and high color-value of these gilded objects would have also caused them to appear to proceed into the claustral space, adding to the objects' *rilievo*. And the gilding's presumed (though feigned) monetary value would have also performed appropriate homage to St. John the Baptist.[243] All of these were adequate reasons to gild the surface of the monochrome frescoes.

Andrea may, however, have had another consideration in mind. Given the paintings' formal and technical similarities to both underpaintings and *cartoni*, Andrea may have wanted to make clear that his paintings were, in fact, finished. Without their gilding, the Scalzo cycle had the potential to look as much like highly worked-up *sinopie* or *in situ cartoni* as they did finished

---

[242] Refer to Giovanni Buccolieri, et al, "Gold leafs in 14th-century Florentine painting," *ArcheoSciences* 33 (2009): 405-408. Also refer to Marcia Hall, *Color and Meaning*, 22-27, on gilded frescoes.

[243] Alana O'Brien suggested to me in a private correspondence on 31 December 2020, "Considering the occupations of many of the Scalzo members, perhaps one of Andrea's goldsmith or gilder friends/confratelli managed to save lots of little bits from odd jobs to use in the Scalzo. They wouldn't have needed an awful lot." This seems very plausible given that the major impetus for executing the frescoes in *terrette* was probably the low cost, as implied by Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, V, 9, who writes: "*Onde vedendo alcuni di loro che Andrea veniva in grado d'ottimo pittore, deliberarono, essendo più ricchi d'animo che di danari, che egli facesse intorno a detto chiostro.*"

paintings. The disparity between the cheap, earthen pigments he used to create the frescoes and the more expensive gilding he used as finishing touches on their surfaces would have removed the viewers' doubt that the frescoes were complete. The combination of cheap, earthen pigments and expensive, polished materials thus allowed Andrea to explore the threshold that existed between *nonfinito* and *finito*.

b. Nonfinito and *Disegno*

To be sure, Andrea was able to explore this boundary partially because the monochrome cycle was not a complete break with centuries-long monochromatic claustral fresco painting traditions and cinquecento viewers were, to some extent, accustomed to seeing monochromatic cycles in cloisters and understanding them as finished. But this established visual culture does not account for the great number of copyists who crowded the Cloister of the Scalzo. This is particularly interesting given that there is no record of artists thronging his contemporary and renowned polychrome frescoes in the nearby Chiostrino of SS. Annunziata. This lack of evidence may be because those frescoes were located in a more-accessible, more-public space than the Scalzo and the copyists' presence did not bother the Servites who managed the church—or at least, no archival record has yet surfaced that indicates their complaint.[244] But the copyists in the monochrome Scalzo were so numerous that they interrupted ritual practice to the extent that the brotherhood was forced to change its statutes to keep artists from interrupting ceremonies.[245] The frescoes seem, therefore, to have had a special pedagogical appeal to young artists.

[244] I am grateful to Alana O'Brien for consulting on this point.
[245] On the statutes and their amendments, chapter I of this dissertation.

This appeal is noteworthy because Michelangelo's *nonfinito* works of art were also recognized as having special pedagogical value. Even during his life, the sculptor knew that his *nonfinito* artworks had an immediate effect on his contemporaries. Giorgio Vasari, for example, had to commission Aristotile da Sangallo (1481-1551) to make the grisaille copy of the cartoon for *The Battle of Cascina*, (Fig. 4.1) because he saw that the sheer number of copyists was destroying the monumental drawing.[246] Michelangelo himself wrote of the cartoon's fame, which to him "seemed half finished."[247] Vincenzo Borghini also reported that Jacopo Tintoretto (1519-1594) in Venice commissioned Daniele da Volterra (1509-1566) to sculpt models for him of the unfinished *Times of Day* in the Florentine Medici Chapel, which the Venetian and his students copied in drawing.[248] A sheet, now in the Louvre, (Fig. 5.30) by Rafaello da Montelupo (1504-1566), executed probably while the artist was working as an assistant for Michelangelo in Florence, records the unfinished *Medici Madonna* in a very early state, before the master had even abandoned it. Vasari noted that Michelangelo's unfinished sculptures were invaluable didactic tools for young sculptors and was particularly enthusiastic about the sculptor's *St. Matthew*.[249] He argued that the sculpture demonstrated how Michelangelo sculpted unifacially, from front to back of a block, so that a figure seemed to emerge from the stone as if being raised

---

[246] On its destruction, refer to Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, VII, 161.
[247] Paolo Gioavio in Barocchi, *Scritti*, 7: "*...giá era facto el cartone, chome è noto actuto Firenze: che mi parevon mezzi guadagnati*."
[248] Many of Tintoretto's drawings after the *Times of Day* sculpture still exist; refer to David R. Coffin, "Tintoretto and the Medici Tombs," *The Art Bulletin* 33.2 (1951): 120-121, for illustrations of both his studies and subsequent paintings based on the drawings.
[249] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, VII, 339-340: "*Ed in questo tempo ancora abbozza una statua di marmo di San Matteo nell'Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore; la quale statua cosi abbozzata mostra la sua perfezione, ed insegna agli scultori in che maniera si cavano le figure de' marmi, senza che venghino storpiate, per potere sempre guadagnare col guidizio, levando del marmo, ed avervi da potersi ritrarre e mutare qualcosa, come accade, se bisognassi."* Also consult: Paula Carabell, "Image and Identity in the Unfinished Works of Michelangelo," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 32 (1997): 96-97.

from a pool of water.[250] These abandoned sculptures all seemed to have artistic value, then, not in spite of their state of unfinish but because of it.

It cannot be overstated that in Andrea's lifetime a workshop master's drawings were highly revered and coveted. Drawings books were not only valued by artists but were so prized they could also constitute princely gifts. In Venice, for example, Gentile Bellini gifted a drawing book by his father, Jacopo Bellini, to the Ottoman Sultan Mehmett II as a way of honoring the ruler and cementing his own favor at court.[251] In Florence, drawings were passed from a workshop master to his best student, which the Florentines believed created continuity in style from one generation to another.[252] The importance of this continuity was paramount because, as I have already discussed, Florentines believed that their artistic achievements were proof that God favored them, and that it was their complete dedication to drawing and to the larger concept of *disegno* that distinguished their artistic style from other regions of Italy and that had garnered

---

[250] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, VII, 273: *"…che se e' si pigliassi una figura di cera o d' altra materia dura, e si mettessi a diacere in una conca d'acqua, la quale acqua, essendo per sua natura nella sua sommità piana e pari, alzando la detta figura a poco a poco del pari, cosi vengono a scoprirsi prima le parti più rilevate, ed a nascondersi i fondi, cioè le parti più basse della figura, tanto che nel fine ella così viene scoperta tutta. Nel medesimo modo si debbono cavare con lo scarpello le figure de' marmi; prima scoprendo le parti più rilevate, e di mano in mano le più basse: il quale modo si vede osservato da Michelagnolo ne' sopradetti prigioni…*" This method was also praised by Benvenuto Cellini. 1960. *Trattato della Scultura*, edited by Carlo Cordié (Milan and Naples: R. Ricciardi), 1095: "*E, da poi che uno si sia satisfatto nel sopradetto modello, si debbe pigliare il che la sia ben disegnata; perchè chi non si risolvessi bene al disegno, talvolta si potria trovare ingannato da' ferri. Ed il miglior modo che si sia mai visto è quello che à usato il gran Michelangelo: il quai modo si é, di poi che uno à disegnato la veduta principale si debbe per quella banda cominciare a scopire con la virtú de ferri come se uno volessi fare una figura di mezzo rilievo, e così a poco a poco si viene scoprendo."*
[251] This notebook is now preserved in the Louvre. On this subject, refer to Mary C. Fournier. 2006. "Drawing as Gift: Jacopo Bellini's Paris Volume in Ottoman Istanbul," (Phd diss. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).
[252] On drawing practices in Florence in this period, consult Anna Forlani Tempesti. 1994. "Studiare dal Naturale nella Firenze di Fine '400," in *Florentine Drawings at the Time of Lorenzo the Magnificent*, edited by Elizabeth Cropper, pp. 1-16. (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale).

this divine favor.[253] It was perhaps for this reason that Bronzino cut ties with the promising young artist Giovanbattista Naldini, for example, who had been a student in Pontormo's workshop, after Pontormo's death. This was because Naldini testified against Bronzino in court, vowing that Pontormo did not want to leave Bronzino his studio drawings but rather intended them for a cousin who later appeared in Florence claiming Pontormo's estate. Naldini's testimony thus contributed to Bronzino's loss of his teacher's drawings.[254] This was an especially palpable injury for the Florentine Bronzino, who would have seen in them the demonstration of the elder artist's *disegno.*

At his death, Andrea left few known drawings.[255] The number of copies and variations on his painting of *Charity*, which remained in his workshop after he succumbed to the plague, suggests that Andrea's students had access to their master's workshop after he died. But it is unclear what his widow, Lucrezia, did with her late husband's drawings.[256] This is at least partially why the Cloister of the Scalzo, with its monumental frescoes embodying the artist's *disegno*, would have been an instructive treasure trove for the young artists who crowded the claustral space. Not obscured by layers of brilliant paint, young artists could look to frescoes to learn *disegno* from Florence's most renowned painter.[257] They could see in the monochrome

---

[253] Accademia dell'Arti di Disegno, *Gli Statuti*, 3-6.
[254] On Naldini and Pontormo's estate, refer to Pilliod, *Pontormo, Bronzino, Allori*, 119-124 and 144.
[255]Julian Brooks. 2015. "Introduction," in *Andrea del Sarto: The Renaissance Workshop in Action*. (LA: J. Paul Getty), 5, discusses the survival of Andrea's drawings.
[256] On the fate of the contents of Andrea's studio, refer to Andrea Bayer, Michael Gallagher, et al., "Andrea del Sarto's *Borgherini Holy Family* and *Charity*: Two Intertwined Late Works," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 52 (2017): 34-55.
[257] Veritty Platt, "Orphaned Objects: The Phenomenology of the Incomplete in Pliny's Natural History," *Art History* 41.2 (2018): 494-496, discusses Pliny's belief that *nonfinito* works reveal the "*ipsae cogitations*" (the very thoughts) of their creator more than finished works and therefore are often more celebrated that finished ones.

paintings how naturalistic figures could be designed, drawn, and fully modeled in a coherent and believable atmospheric space with achromatic *chiaroscuro*. In pushing against the threshold for artistic finish, Andrea had laid his *disegno* bare.

c. *Nonfinito* and Neoplatonism

The special pedagogical value of the paintings brings up another important point about the *nonfinito*-style cycle: like the many copyists who drew and learned from Michelangelo's unfinished works, the young artists in the Scalzo went there to draw from the frescoes largely because of Andrea del Sarto's reputation as great artist worthy of emulation.[258] Couched within Neoplatonic philosophy, his highly praised artistic output implied that he was in an elevated intellectual and spiritual position that gave him special access to divine knowledge.[259] These Neoplatonic beliefs came directly from St. Augustine. According to Augustine, "*ars*" was not the imitation of nature but rather the imitation of ideas or numbers that existed in the artist's imagination, ones that the artist saw with his "internal eye."[260] These ideas and numbers came to the artist directly from the godhead, which Augustine called "the supreme art." The artist was therefore implicated in a double imitation. The image in his imagination was already a less-perfect imitation of the supreme art, the Neoplatonic forms that existed in the mind of God. The

[258] On Andrea del Sarto's reputation and his emulation in academies, refer to Chapter I: Introduction of this dissertation.
[259] E. H. Gombrich, "Botticelli's Mythologies: A Study in the Neoplatonic Symbolism of his Circle," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 8 (1945): 38, as well as Julius v. Schlosser. 1924. *Die Kunstliteratur*. (Vienna); E. Panofsky. 1968. *IDEA. A concept in Art Theory*, (1960), 2nd revised edition. (NY: Columbia University Press); and Anthony Blunt. 1940. *Artistic Theory in Italy 1450-1600.* (London: Oxford University Press).
[260] Refer to Steven J. Cody, "Andrea del Sarto's *Noli me Tangere*: Sight, Touch, and an Echo of St. Augustine," *Arion* 26.2 (2018): 47-48. Also refer to Karen C. Adams. "Neoplatonic Aesthetic Tradition in the Arts," *College Music Symposium* 17.2 (1977): 17-24.

physical piece of art that he produced on earth with his hands was an imitation of that imperfect image in his head. The artistic process, therefore, originated from God, and passed through the artist's mind to the artist's hand—not from God to the artist's hand directly or, as Florentines claimed of the Venetians, from nature to the artist's hand.[261]

It is of this artistic process that Michelangelo was speaking when he wrote the verse that opens Varchi's *Due Lezzioni,* "*The greatest artist does not have any concept/ Which a single piece of marble does not itself contain/ Within its excess, though only/ A hand that obeys the intellect can discover it.*"[262] Great artists had to be manually skilled. But that manual skill had to be put in the service of the artists' intellect, without which they could never produce great art. The more perfect an artist was, the closer his artworks came to imitating the supreme art. This is why Michelangelo, the greatest of all artists, seemed to have special access to sacred wisdom and was called "divine" by his contemporaries. According to Erwin Panofsky, this Neoplatonic belief also may explain why an engraved *Portrait of Raphael in a Cloak* (Fig. 5.31), created around 1520 by Marcantonio Raimondi, depicted the artist surrounded by his artistic materials but with his arms and hands covered.[263] He argued that the print implied that Raphael's mind and not his manual faculties were the true source of his art.[264] For this reason, it was thought that imitation

---

[261] On this Augustinian understanding of image-construction, which is also discussed in the last chapter of this dissertation, also refer to Thomas Dittelbach. 1994. "Nelle distese e negli ampi ricettacoli della memoria': la monocromia come veicolo di propaganda dell'ordine mendicante degli agosiniani," in *Arte e spiritualità nell'ordine agostiniana e il Convento San Niccola a Tolentino*, edited by Graziana Campisano, pp. 101-108. (Roma: Argos), 103.
[262] Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, 13.
[263] Panofsky, *Idea*, 30.
[264] Panofsky, *Idea*, 30, connected the print to a quote by Plotinus: "Then the block of stone formed by art into an image of the beautiful will appear beautiful not because it is a block of stone (for then the other one would be just as beautiful) but because of the shape art has lent to it. The material did not possess this shape, but it was in the mind of him who envisaged it before it came into the stone. And it resided in the artist's mind, not insofar as he had eyes and hands, but only insofar as he partook of art," *Enneades*, I. 6. 1. The question of "Raphael without hands,"

of important artists like Michelangelo and Andrea del Sarto trained not only the young artist's hands but also his intellect. By absorbing the elder masters' styles these young artists might one day produce their own images that succeeded in reproducing the supreme art that existed in the mind of God. They, too, might become divine.

In Florence, this complicated conception of artistic production was further complicated by the process of *disegno*. As Vasari had indicated in his description of *disegno*, discussed above, artists did not see a form in their imagination and go straight to work on a prepared surface with their pigments. Rather, their first step was to make a drawing—in fact, many, many drawings, as they tried to get closer and closer to the imitation of the supreme art.[265] It was only when he was pleased with the drawing that they could pick up paintbrush or chisel to give artistic ideas, the form, its materials, or matter. The closest the artist ever got to the idea of the thing, then, was the drawing, the first product of his hand that was not, as Vasari had criticized, "loaded with body."[266] *Nonfinito*-style works, then, like Andrea's Scalzo frescoes—which lacked surface finish and were less loaded with the body of saturated, opaque pigments that obscured the conceptual bones of the work of art, its *disegno*—could be understood as coming even closer to the supreme art than highly-finished works did.

---

however, was first asked in *Emilia Galotti* by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. 1979. *Samtliche Werke*, ed. by Karl Lachmann and Franz Muncker, Stuttgart, 1886-1924, Reprint: (Berlin), 381, 383, 384: "Art must paint in just the same way that plastic nature—if there is one—conceived of the picture: without the imperfections which the resisting material makes unavoidable. [...] Ha! What a pity that we do not paint directly with our eyes! How much is lost on the long path from the eye, through the arm, into the brush! [...] Or do you think, [...] that Raphael would not have been the greatest artistic genius had he unfortunately been born without hands?"

[265] Refer to Vasari's description of *disegno*, above.

[266] Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, I, 124

10. Conclusion

This Neoplatonic understanding of the *nonfinito* reestablishes the perceived liminality of the Scalzo frescoes. As demonstrated in the second chapter of this dissertation, almost everything about this type of monochrome cycle was liminal.[267] It was located in the liminal space of the cloister, which is necessarily both public and private, indoor and outdoor, sacred and divine. The cycle also helped the viewer transition and prepare for a sacred encounter with the divine in the adjoining private space, manifest in the form of the polychrome image. In the case of the Scalzo, this image was the confraternity's altarpiece by Lorenzo di Credi, *The Baptism of Christ* (Fig. 1.31), which bore a striking resemblance to Andrea's monochrome version of the same subject, the fresco that was the last image a brother saw before entering that space, reinforcing the connection between the two *Baptisms*. Perhaps most importantly, monochromatic cloisters like the Scalzo were designed on a human scale and at near eye-level with the viewer. They therefore produced a special relationship between body and image. The viewer could identify with the figures pictured in them but only partially. This was because, as argued in Chapter IV, for all their naturalism, the paintings' lack of color always announced their artifice, undermining a full bodily identification with the images. In Neoplatonic terms, they pictures were caught in a state between the idea of the thing—the supreme art—and the final manual outcome—a polychrome image—or, in Michelangelesque terms, the intellect and the hand that obeyed it.

Since at least the 1800s, art historians and art historians alike have asserted that unfinished works of art were pleasing to the viewer precisely because of their liminality, in that they invited the beholder to imagine them as finished, construing viewers as a type of creative

[267] Refer to Chapter II of this dissertation.

cooperator with the artist.[268] But even three centuries earlier, Andrea was likely aware of the possibility for this kind of visual pleasure when he made the Scalzo images. The brothers would have surely imagined the Virgin greeting Elizabeth in *The Visitation* (Fig. 1.26) wearing her habitual blue mantle and red undergarment. Andrea also perhaps relied on the viewer to provide the coloristic iconography necessary to recognize Dante in the crowd of figures in *The Preaching of St. John the Baptist*, (Fig. 1.33) even without his signature red robes.[269] That viewers and copyists alike did imagine and even desire to see the Scalzo images in color is evident from the number of colorized copies by contemporaries, such as a set of oil panels by Giovanni Battista Naldini, now housed in the Cenacolo di San Salvo (Figs. 5.32-5.35). That the Scalzo frescoes seemed to be caught between one state—the idea, the sacred, *disegno*/ drawing, *nonfinito*—and another—the body, the earthly, *colore*/ painting, *finito*—increased, not only their pedagogical value for young artists and their ability to facilitate a ritual encounter but may, according to Pliny, have even increased the visual pleasure because of the creative interaction that the viewer

This type of creative cooperation is of particular interest with regard to the Scalzo because, as I argued in the last chapter, it was a homosocial space, one in which male identity was modeled, rehearsed, remediated, and performed. If, as theorists like Elizabeth Grosz and Judith Butler argued, people's identity and even their bodies are social constructs that exist and are understood by the self only within social frameworks and that as a result they are in a perpetual state of becoming, then the constant imagining and reimagining by the viewer in front of *nonfinito* works was much like the way in which confraternal members created and formed

[268] On the relationship between creative cooperation and nonfinito, refer Wendelin A. Guentner. "British Aesthetic Discourse, 1780-1830: The Sketch, the Non Finito, and the Imagination," *Art Journal* 52.2 (1993): 40-47.
[269] On the potential *figurea di Dante*, refer to this dissertation, chapter III.

their own identity and even apprehended their own body in that space in relationship to their male peers.[270] This Neoplatonic struggle to construct and reconstruct the self over the course of a lifetime was commented on by early-modern Humanist authors like Pico della Miradola who argued that this process did not only happen passively but that it should be actively and consciously engaged in by the individual to achieve the highest and most dignified level of self-actualization.[271] The *nonfinito* work of art was a visual metaphor for this process, this Neoplatonic struggle that Paula Carabell has argued was embodied by Michelangelo's unfinished *figure serpentinate* that seemed always striving to be born, always caught, like their viewers, in a state of becoming.[272] In the Scalzo, Andrea's engagement with the *paragone* debate, wherein he sought not only to surpass sculpture but even nature itself, creating, in both *Faith* and *Hope*, figures that seemed in an Ovidian state of metamorphosis, of coming alive, were much the same. They embodied the always-becoming that the male viewer himself experienced as he negotiated and renegotiated his personal and communal identity in front of these images and amongst his peers.

In this regard, monochromy's relationship with masculinity is crucial. The cloister's monochromy meant that the space was well suited for the construction of Florentine masculinity,

---

[270] Elizabeth Grosz. 1994. *Volatile Bodies: Towards a Corporeal Feminism*. (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press), 3-24. Also refer to Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theater Journal* (40.4 (1988): 519-531. These ideas were developed in 1990. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. (NY and London: Routledge), as well as 1993. *Bodies that Matter: On the discursive limits of "sex."* (NY and London: Routledge).
[271] Consult the analysis of the academic exchange between Pietro Bembo and Pico della Mirandola on this topic in Paula Carabell, "*Figure Serpentinata:* Becoming over Being in Michaelangelo's Unfinished Works," *Artibus et Historiae* 35.69 (2014): 84. Also refer to Pico della Mirandola. 1948. "Oration on the Dignity of Man (1486)," in *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, edited by Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and John Herman Randall. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), 225.
[272] Carabell, "*Figura Serpentinata*," 79-96.

one that was primed to remediate the "crisis of masculinity" discussed in the last chapter, which had resulted from chronic paternal absenteeism and the aggregation of power by female prelates.[273] As argued in Chapter IV, each image began to work to remediate this crisis immediately, by announcing its artifice, its status as *imago*. This quality of monochromy allowed Andrea to construct pictures that provoked a bodily reaction, such as disgust or arousal, which counterintuitively allowed Andrea to promote tight-knit bonds of kinship amongst the Scalzo brothers. Correct and close homosocial relationships were modeled through the relationships of the members of the Holy Family, especially Christ and John. These young cousins in particular seemed bound together in a seemingly-erotic but ultimately-chaste, Platonic love. At the same time, the other half of the cycle, featuring John's adulthood, warned against the kinds of relationships—traitorous ones among men and lustful ones amongst men and women—that would result in man's moral failure. In historic context, these moral failures were linked to the failure of the Florentine state. The Scalzo pictures of same-sex and opposite-sex relationships thus taught the young *confratelli* how they should comport themselves amongst men as well as women.

But at the same time, the cloister's monochromy also appealed to a divine masculinity, one that rejected the colorism of the body, the effeminacy of lapidary and brilliant oil paints that might engender sinfulness or its equivalent: the effeminacy that was closely associated with sodomy. Monochromy blocked the viewer's full identification of the image with his body while also causing him to associate the pictures with artistic concepts related to masculinity and godliness, promoting an intellectual and spiritual understanding of the pictures and their iconographies.

[273] Refer to the fourth chapter of this dissertation.

But perhaps the monochromy of the cloister did more than suggest this through conscious or unconscious associations that the brother might have harbored about theoretical artistic concepts. Despite current art historical vocabulary that divides the landscapes of early-modern pictures into foreground, midground, and background, contemporary artists understood all pictures as consisting of two basic parts: *figure*—human figures—and *campi*—fields of paint or landscape. Rather than characters on a stage, human *figure* were set within the *campi* that surrounded them and that constituted a rich pictorial environment.[274] In the monochrome Scalzo, this played out in three dimensions with real human *figure*, the brothers. This was not only because the environment was the cloister itself, the totally immersive pictorial space that Andrea illusionistically constructed and set around the brothers, but also because Andrea deliberately confused fictive and real architectural elements. As a result, the brothers were not only involved in the drama of his own world of contemporary Florence, they were also by-standers in the fictive drama of Andrea's *Life of St. John the Baptist* that played out around them. In this way, the cloister of the Scalzo deliberately construed the brothers as a *figura* in two environments, one contemporary and real and the other historical and fictive.

The duality of the brother's ontological position may have been perceived as even greater when central area of the cloister was still open to the elements.[275] Like the religious processions and performances that were enacted throughout Christendom or even the staged, public reenactments of Biblical events that occurred within the city of Florence—such as, incidentally, the execution of St. John the Baptist—the effects of light and atmosphere that the brothers

---

[274] I am grateful for the aid of Chloe Pelletier, whose dissertation, 2021. "From Gold to Green: Visualizing the Environment in the Italian Renaissance. (PhD Diss, University of Chicago), addresses this topic.
[275] Shearman, "The Chiostro dello Scalzo," 208.

experienced in the cloister linked it to the outside world of Florence. The continuity between interior and exterior world helped suggest that the Johannine drama played out and was playing out infinitely and always, in all times, under all atmospheric conditions, and that it was constantly repeating and actualizing itself inside of the cloister.[276] An actor in this drama, the viewer was construed and figured in the same process or continuous self-actualization.

However, the brothers' process of always-becoming and actualization did not end once he exited the cloister. Because of monochromy's links to Florentine public festive culture and because of the civic symbolism of John the Baptist, even stronger ligatures tied Andrea's images to the outside, public world. This was the setting for the brotherhood's many flagellant processions that occurred on each of Florence's multitudinous religious holidays. This context will be addressed in our next and final chapter, Chapter VI: The Conclusion, which follows our young brother, who has just now found his friends and is preparing to leave the cloister and reenter the public world of sixteenth-century Florence.

---

[276] On the long tradition of stational liturgy in Christianity, consult John F. Baldovin. 1982. *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: the origins, development, and meaning of stational liturgy*. (Roma: Pont. Institutum Studiorum). On religious processions in Florence, refer to Richard Trexler. 1980. *Public Life in Renaissance Florence.* (NY: Academic Press); Paola Ventrone. 2008. *Lo spettacolo religioso a Firenze nel Quattrocento*. (Milano: Università cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Diritto allo studio); Konrad Eisenbichler. "Nativity and Magi Plays in Renaissance Florence," *Comparative Drama* 29.3 (1995): 319–33; Rab Hatfield. "The Compagnia de' Magi," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970): 107–61; and Maureen C. Miller. "Why the Bishop of Florence Had to Get Married," *Speculum* 81.4 (2006): 1055–91. Allie Terry, "Donatello's Decapitation and the Rhetoric of Beheading in Medicean Florence," *Renaissance Studies* 23.5 (2009): 609-638, deals with John the Baptist performances and processions.

Conclusion

The five chapters of this dissertation represent the first in-depth study of the Cloister of the Scalzo as a monochrome, *chiaroscuro* artistic monument painted by the renowned Florentine artist, Andrea del Sarto (1486-1530). In "Chapter I: The Introduction" of this dissertation I set out to approach the Cloister of Scalzo as an experimental control set to think about how color affected early-modern people's perception of images and spaces. I undertook to accomplish this from the standpoint of an embodied viewer—that is, one that was not only reduced to what Michael Baxandall called "the period eye" but rather a viewer that existed in and beyond the claustral walls in a culturally- and temporally-bound period body. I also endeavored to explore the way that art-historical writing is itself a mechanism through which research questions are tested and answered. To do this, I would consider multiple ways that historians use writing to create different kinds of narratives that get at different kinds of aesthetic experiences and encounters.

Consideration of these tasks caused me to structure the dissertation as a narrative journey of a single period body, "the brother," into and out of the cloister on a morning on which the brothers performed their flagellant *disciplinati* rituals. I began, in Chapter II, by identifying and situating the confraternal experience of the cloister within the traditions that constituted the paintings' formal and coloristic precedents. I argued that Andrea drew on both Italian and Flemish monochromatic modes of painting in which monochromatic zones constituted liminal physical and spiritual spaces in relationship to a polychrome image or space. I furthermore suggested that because of established cultural and religious ways-of-seeing as well as the images' inseparability from the architectural form of the cloister, which was itself liminal, the

ritualized in-betweenness of the Cloister of the Scalzo could be ascertained by members of the confraternity whether or not they were directly familiar with those painting traditions.

Establishing the liminality of the cloister early on in the dissertation was critical. It was the suggested state-of-becoming or in-betweenness of the cloister that paved the way for the potential spiritual revelation examined in Chapter III. There, I argued that confraternal liturgy and member's movement through space over the course of their morning ritual was deliberately orchestrated to harness possible effects of the human sensory perception system. This was especially apparent in relationship to the members' perception of pain and light. Consideration of human sensory perception allowed me to argue that the brothers' emergence into the cloister after services had the potential to activate a synaesthetic light metaphor that was experienced by the body. This metaphor was related to significant liturgical features of Christian worship as well as to contemporary ideas about the symbolism and possible sensory perception of divine light. More importantly, the potential for the members to experience a sustained, multi-part bodily metaphor demonstrated that affective devotion was not just limited to the liturgical feature of flagellation. Rather, the affective nature of the confraternity members' devotion persisted over the course of their entire ritual and related to multiple sensory-perception effects of the human body. The perception of these effects was supported by the monochromy of the paintings' open-air claustral form, whose potential to fill with and amplify light fostered a confusion and overwhelming of the senses that, in ritual context, promoted the potential for the brothers to feel that they were in the presence of the true, sensate light of God.

With the brother having reentered the claustral space after services, Chapter IV explored the possibility that monochromy's association with transcendence as well as its obvious pictorial artificiality—perceptions also supported by the established liminality of the monochrome

claustral form—elevated the perceived decorum of Andrea's images. As a result, he was able to experiment with erotic compositions that underscored the need for close but, ultimately, nonsexual relationships among men that could contribute to the overall stability of Florentine society. This chapter thus continued to demonstrate the ways in which monochromy had the capacity to act as a stimulant on the body's sensory perception system (a system that involved not only physical but cognitive processes that were culturally and temporally bound) to advance an ideological agenda. In doing so, this chapter also demonstrated that, for early modern people, the perception of color in space had the potential to have far-reaching consequences beyond the boundaries of an isolated aesthetic encounter in a particular place and moment.

The final chapter of this dissertation explored the ways in which the brothers' viewing Andrea's images inside the cloister after services did not only advance an orthodox way of performing masculinity but was itself a potential masculinity-constructing performance. This was because of the images' relationship to Florentine artistic theory as well as social customs regarding the rehearsal of artistic arguments between men. I argued that, to the embodied period-viewer, the *chiaroscuro* paintings' formal appearance mapped on to discourses about *disegno*, the basic Florentine artistic tenet that represented the perfect idea of a thing. Like the embodied light metaphor examined in the chapter before, the relationship between Andrea's monochromy and *disegno* supported the idea that the monochrome images did not represent an unformed or immature state of being but rather one transcendent of physical reality, a pure form that had to find expression in the corporeal world. In this way, Andrea's Scalzo paintings could also be related to *nonfinito* work of art, with which they also bore a formal resemblance. As with those works of art, the monochromy of Andrea's frescoes resulted in a tendency for them to be perceived as transcendent and anti-corporeal. This effect contributed to the *confratelli*'s potential

to perceive the images in space as having a male gender identity and Florentine ethnic identity, factors that amplified the perception of the cloister's overall orthodoxy. These perceptions also supported the cloister's liminality, which was sensed in the images' potential to appear as if they were caught between flat and three-dimensional, between drawing and painting, between painting and sculpture, between illusionistic and artificial, and between inanimate and animate. The rehearsal of these art-theoretical arguments within homosocial groups contributed to confraternity members' negotiation of their social position within the collective.

Over the course of this dissertation, then, the Cloister of the Scalzo has emerged as an environment well-suited to the construction of Florentine male identity, both personal and communal. It was in the cloister that, upon entering, the brothers solemnly prepared for religious transformation and for the physical and spiritual trials they would endure in the confraternity's adjoining spaces. That the cloister was both the entrance and exit to the building was critical. This spatial arrangement meant not only that it was in this space that they detached from their secular state of being but also returned to it, when, after services, they could have congregated and socialized amongst themselves. There were thus many opportunities of different masculinity-building personal encounters between men, encounters in which members were always integrating and reintegrating themselves into a hierarchical social order. Their continual process of personal becoming was supported not only by the established liminality of the cloister but also by monochromy's suggestion of an unfinished, pure state of being that was transcendent of physical reality. We can thus understand the space of Andrea's cloister as one in which a tension existed between the centrality of the body in making sense of the world and its promotion of the understanding of the body as an obstacle to be surmounted. These perceptions and tensions

aligned with the character of *disciplinati* worship that promoted the mortification of the body as a means of ascending to higher spiritual planes.

Throughout this dissertation I have shown how, in early-modernity, the perception of color in space had the potential to activate meaning-making networks beyond the temporal, cognitive, and physical boundaries of an isolated aesthetic encounter. One of the possible networks that I have hinted at is the potential that the monochromy and imagery of the Cloister of the Scalzo could have related to the outdoor, political world of Florence. Moreover, it seems possible that the political sentiment supported by the cloister may have been anti-Medicean in nature. This is largely because of the known existence of monochrome, *chiaroscuro*-painted *palazzi* facades in Florence as well as the prevalence of monochrome *chiaroscuro* ephemera that were created, even by Andrea and his students (Figs. 6.1-6.3), for political events.[1] Though our knowledge of these two *chiaroscuro* modes is fragmentary, there nonetheless seems a strong possibility that in the cinquecento the viewer of Andrea's Cloister of the Scalzo cycle may have likened the claustral frescoes to the *chiaroscuro* ones he saw in Florence's outdoor, festive world.

If monochrome *chiaroscuro* displays were primarily seen in the public context, it could mean that the coloristic mode may have also had the potential to be understood in relation to

---

[1] On early-modern Florence's painted facades, consult Eleonora Pecchioli. 2005. *The Painted Facades of Florence*: *from the fifteenth to the Twentieth Century*. (Florence: Centro Di), 11-110. On *chiaroscuro* festive ephemera, refer to: John Shearman. *Andrea del Sarto*. Vol. II, 213–214, as well as his "Pontormo and Andrea del Sarto," *The Burlington Magazine* 104. 716 (1962): 450+478-483; Patricia L. Reilly. 2020. "Triumphal Chiaroscuro Painting During the Reign of Julius II," in *Eternal Ephemera: The Papal* Possesso *and its Legacies*, edited by Jennifer Mara DeSilva and Pascale Rihouet, pp. 125-164. (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies). Also refer to Vasari, *Le Vite*, I, 140: "*…in tela per archi che si fanno nell'entrate de' principi nelle città e ne' trionfi o negli apparati delle feste e delle comedie, perchè in simili cose fanno bellissimo vedere*."

political displays and events. In relation to the Scalzo, the possibility that *chiaroscuro* itself could possibly itself have been construed as a political mode of representation is important given that such an association would have been augmented by its Johannine iconography. As I have argued throughout this dissertation, the Baptist was not only the patron saint of the city he was also a civic emblem, whose life, therefore, it was always possible to interpret as political allegory.[2] Between the relationship of *chiaroscuro* to the public world and the Scalzo paintings in particular to the St. John the Baptist, speculative and circumstantial evidence thus begins to mount that viewership of the Cloister of the Scalzo cycle is well-situated within a political context.

Assessing political attitudes in this period is difficult because of the potentially fatal consequences of opposing the Medici.[3] Thus, we would expect to find no concrete evidence that the confraternity was anti-Medicean in nature but rather, if the confraternity took a pro-Republic, anti-Medicean stance, it would likely only be able to be inferred by a confluence of historical, cultural, archival, and visual evidence. With this in mind, it should be noted that the confraternity was founded as an anti-papal organization.[4] Moreover, the confraternity's ritual processions were

---

[2] On St. John the Baptist as an allegory for political injustice, refer to: Allie Terry, "Donatello's Decapitation and the Rhetoric of Beheading in Medicean Florence," *Renaissance Studies* 23.5 (2009): 609-638.

[3] On the use of capital punishment by the Medici in this period, refer to Nicholas Scott Baker, "For Reasons of State: Political Executions, Republicanism, and the Medici in Florence, 1480-1560," *Renaissance Quarterly.* 62.6 (2009): 444-478. On capital punishment and its possible use against members of the Scalzo refer to Barducci, "La Compagnia dello Scalzo," 164-165.

[4] Refer to: John Henderson. 1990. "Penitence and the Laity in Fifteenth-Century Florence," in *Christianity and the Renaissance: image and religious imagination in the Quattrocento*, edited by Timothy Verdon and John Henderson, pp. 229-249. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press), 234-235, argues that confraternities in Florence were founded as a result of papal interdicts in the 1370s. Those interdicts were the result of Florence's participation in the War of the Eight Saints. On the topic of the War of the Eight Saints, refer especially to: David S. Peterson. 2002. "The War of the Eight Saints in Florentine Memory and Oblivion," in *Society and Individual in Renaissance* Florence," edited by William J. Connell, pp. 173-214. (Berkeley: University of

not only ubiquitous in public life, they also continuously rehearsed the spontaneous celebration of the overcoming of a political, papal tyrant, Gregory XI, by the Florentines.[5] Also to take into consideration is the inherently antagonistic relationship that the Medici seem to have long had with the confraternities and the Confraternity of St. John the Baptist in particular.[6] The confraternity's spiritual and political association with Archbishop Antonio Pierozzi, a political opponent of the Medici, has already been noted as evidence that the confraternity made have harbored Medici resistors.[7] But also worth considering is Andrea del Sarto's active participation in defending the Republic of Florence from the Medici during the final siege of the city as well as the number of other Scalzo brothers who were known to have resisted the Medici.[8]

Formal visual evidence inside of the Scalzo also suggests the possibility of an anti-Medicean bent. In this regard, it should be noted that monochrome *chiaroscurism* has already

---

California Press); Marvin B. Becker, "Florentine Politics and the Diffusion of Heresy in the Trecento: A Socioeconomic Inquiry," *Speculum* 34.1 (1959): 60-75; and Richard C. Trexler, "Who were the Eight Saints," *Renaissance News* 16.2 (89-94) and 1974. *The Spiritual Power: Republican Florence under Interdict* (Leiden: Brill), 126-132.

[5] Barducci, "La Compagnia dello Scalzo," 148 and Marchionne di Coppo Stefani. 1903. *Cronaca Fiorentina*, *Rerum italicarum scriptores*. (Città di Castello: S. Lapi), 757.

[6] On the suspicious relationship between confraternities and Florentine civic rulers including, but not only, the Medici, refer to Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 163-194.

[7] Refer to Barducci, "La Compagnia dello Scalzo," 165-166. On the bust of Pierozzi that was in the Scalzo and which was part of the movement to canonize Antoninus, refer to Sally J. Cornelison. 2012. *Art and the Relic Cult of St. Antoninus in Renaissance Florence*. (Vermont: Ashgate), 90-92

[8] On Andrea's time as well as Scalzo member Benvenuto Cellini's in Stefano Colonna's militia, refer to Cecil Roth. *The Last Florentine Republic*. (New York: Russell & Russell), 195-196. On the *pitture infamante*, reported by Giorgio Vasari, Benedetto Varchi, and the *anonimo Magliabecchiano* as having been painted by Andrea del Sarto, refer to: Shearman, *Andrea del Sarto,* I, 161-162, and II, 320-321. Edgerton, *Pictures and* Punishment, 112-122; and Cecchi, *In Difesa della Dolce Libertà*, 105-108. Cecchi is less certain than the other authors that the *pitture* were painted by Andrea, asserting that there is no way to know.

been associated with pro-Republic sentiment.[9] But critically, there has also been speculation that anti-Medicean iconographic details may be present in the decorative register of the Scalzo's fictive architectural frieze.[10] Also of potential interest is Andrea's formal adaption of Donatello's *David* (Fig. X), which was then an anti-Medicean symbol, in his figure of *Justice* (Fig. X).[11] In addition, worthy of consideration is Andrea's inclusion of the *figura di Dante* (Fig. X), who, though a Guelph, insisted on strict limits to secular papal authority.[12] Taken together, these potential avenues of research seem to suggest that an anti-Medicean attitude could have pervaded the confraternity at this time, an attitude that may or may not have persisted within the organization throughout the cinquecento.

This potential is interesting in that it maps on to another avenue of research that runs through my dissertation but merits its own treatment: Vasari's characterization of Andrea del Sarto. Throughout my dissertation I have shown ways in which Vasari's characterization of Andrea del Sarto needs reconsideration because it has perhaps erroneously shaped our understanding of the painter's artistic personality. That is, though Vasari characterized Andrea as timid, meek, and henpecked, and therefore unable to attain true artistic greatness, I have shown throughout this dissertation that the artist was respected by his peers who took seriously the

---

[9] Refer to Johannes Wilde, "The Great Council Hall of Florence," 76-77, who discusses the pro-Republican sentiment entailed in the *chiaroscuro* images of Leonardo's Battle of Anghiari, Michelangelo's *Battle of Cascina*, and Fra Bartolomeo's *St. Anne Altarpiece*.
[10] This was suggested to me by Laura Blom in personal communication. Her hypothesis is based on research from her, 2017 "From Soderini's Cenotaph to the Cazzuola's Spectacles: Subverting Medicean Mythopoesis with the Macabre." (PhD Diss., Johns Hopkins), and is related to her forthcoming book on the subject.
[11] Refer to the fifth chapter of this dissertation.
[12] On the presence of the *figura* refer to Chapter III of this dissertation. On Dante's insistence that the secular authority of the pope be restricted, refer to Dante Alighieri. 2012. *De Monarchia* (1312-1313) translated and annotated by Aurelia Henry. (Veritatis Splendor Publications), 128-137.

painter's opinions about art and described him as valiant, well-mannered, and intellectually engaged. Nonetheless, Vasari's description of Andrea has shaped the way that art historians have approached the evaluation, analysis, and interpretation of his works of art as well as his contributions to developments in artistic theory, which heretofore have been considered slight. In many instances in this dissertation, I have suggested that Vasari may have maligned Andrea because it would have benefitted the later artist to have been able to claim that he had surpassed his teacher.[13] However, Vasari's erasure of Andrea's service to the Republic makes it seem as though his demeaning description of Andrea could have also been designed to advance a pro-ducal political agenda. This would have been important to the Duke Cosimo I de' Medici because Andrea died in 1530 and thus never lived under his rule. Vasari's description of the artist thus placed within the narrative ducal domination that was not possible for the duke to achieve in real life. Afterall, how could a man dominated by an overbearing wife, Vasari implicitly asks his reader, have opposed the force of the Medici?[14] It is therefore worthy of

[13] As an example of the way Vasari's characterization of Andrea has affected scholarship, refer to Sydney J. Freedberg, "Andrea and Lucrezia: Two New Documents in Paint for Their Biography'," *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 1 (1966): 21-22, in which the author erroneously speculated that that two small portraits in the collection of the Art Institute of Chicago were of Andrea and his wife Lucrezia. Freedberg additionally suggested that the atypical, flat, brown frames surrounding the portrait were meant to recall portraits in an early-modern interior, and claimed that Andrea had originally mounted them as a diptych, which could have served as a personal keepsake while he journeyed to France. The portraits, however, are of Becuccio Bicchieraio and his wife, Lucrezia. (Refer to: Alessandro Conti, 'Andrea del Sarto e Becuccio bicchieraio," *Prospettiva* 33/36 (1983): 161-165 and Alessandro Cecchi, *Dipinti della Galleria Palatina*. 2014. (Florence: Firenze Musei), 80, for documents relating to his wife's identity). Freedberg's willingness to identify the portraits as Andrea and his wife Lucrezia as well as his conclusion that the portraits' strange format meant they were a commemorative love token for the artist's personal use certainly stem from his deference to Vasari's characterization of Andrea's life as dominated by his overbearing wife, Lucrezia del Fede, who had romantically beguiled him.
[14] This doubt, for example, is expressed by Cecchi, *In Difesa della Dolce Libertà*, 105-108.

consideration that Vasari's treatment of Andrea, which seems intentionally to mischaracterize the painter, deserves greater and more sustained investigation.

The understandings and potential future understandings about the Cloister of the Scalzo that I have arrived at were largely the result of my insistence on embodied experience as the locus of meaning-making. These understandings are also at least partially the result of the ways that my experimental forms of writing helped underscore and reveal the potential for the many ways that the Cloister of the Scalzo promoted bodily experience in and beyond the realm of the cloister. Thus, meriting discussion are the ways that I constructed the embodied viewer and then used my art-historical writing to, at different moments, demonstrate, analyze, interpret, and test the limits of possible embodied experiences in the cloister.

In considering how I would construct the period body, I used a variety of kinds of evidences with which I had varying degrees of expertise. As such, the necessary interdisciplinarity of my study required the input of experts from many different fields and sub-fields (especially paintings and sculpture conservators, historians, Italian literary scholars, psychologists, neuroscientists, and geophysicists). In this methodological project I have been particularly conscientious of the way in which Baxandall conceived of the period eye. He did not just suggest that we account for period taste but also that we think about all of the components that could possibly contribute to the construction of period taste.[15] This approach was most enthusiastically taken up by John Shearman, who wrote so much of the fundamental literature about the Scalzo, it seems nearly impossible to study the space without integrating, to some extent, Shearman's approach to the cloister.[16] And it should be stressed that Shearman did indeed

[15] Baxandall, *Painting and Experience,* 29-108.
[16] For example, refer to the passage in John Shearman. 1988. *Only Connect*. (Princeton: Bollingen Series), 261, cited in the Introduction.

study the entire cloister, including its architecture, considering how the paintings and space were inherently dependent on each other.[17] In my dissertation's insistence on the consideration of multiple forms of evidence and the interrelation between the spatial and the pictorial, this study has, to an extent, followed from Baxandall and Shearman's work. However, it has stretched the reach of their work by insisting that the period eye be situated in a period body, a contemporary viewer with an unstable gaze who existed across time and in space.

The significant contribution of this approach has been the addition of neurophysiological data to what we normally consider valid art historical evidence. The fruit of this approach is especially evident in the concrete phenomenological claims of the second chapter of this dissertation where the symbolic capacities of a light-bound, synaesthetic metaphor are only revealed when we consider viewership as situated in a human body with a sensory perception system that reacts to its environment. However, the approach also foregrounds many of my claims about the many ways in which Andrea del Sarto's Cloister of the Scalzo paintings participated in and activated overlapping networks of knowledge and experience in which meaning could be constructed in early-modern Florence. For example, this constructed way-of-seeing perhaps sits at the basis of many of my claims about the perceived liminality of the cloister and its capacity to serve as a space in which masculinity could be constructed and reconstructed across time. It is also apparent in my claim that monochromy acted as a form of soft iconoclasm that dampened sexual responses to images.[18] I have therefore demonstrated that this embodied approach to art and the consideration of untraditional forms of evidence has the potential to bear art-historical fruit.

---

[17] Shearman, *The Chiostro dello Scalzo*.
[18] Alexander Nagel. 2008. *The Controversy of the Italian Renaissance*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 10.

This study, of course, is not without its limitations. The first is an evidentiary one. It remains true that my understanding of neuroscience, psychology, comparative literature and other fields is as expert as a concerned scholar in those fields could be of the discipline of art history. This understanding seems to account for the paucity of interdisciplinary (especially neuroaesthetic) research that holds up to expert art historical scrutiny. Far from preventing art historians from engaging in this kind of research, these conditions underscore the importance of doing embodied studies with the input of a larger scholarly community whose members bridge the humanities-sciences divide.

In the spirit of collaborative scholarship, while almost all of my dissertation conforms, to a lesser or greater extent, to conventions of art historical writing already accepted by the field, my use of what I have come to call critical story-telling in the Prologues of each chapter necessarily makes Florentine art history more accessible to a broader scholarly audience. But even for specialist audiences, there are benefits to this approach, and these seem to relate to the nature of story-telling. There seems to be a particular kind of bodily and psychological identification that occurs between the reader or listener of a story and its characters told in the third-person indicative ("the brother turned right…") rather than the subjunctive mode ("a brother would have turned right…") that is characteristic of other speculative and experimental forms of academic writing, such as the microhistory and critical fabulation.[19] The narrative format of the Prologues thus supports readers' ability to project themselves onto "the brother" and put themselves in his place in space and time. The critical story-telling writing format thus not only builds empathy with the subject, it also encourages readers to consider the

[19] On these writing habits, refer to the Introduction of this dissertation.

extraordinarily great number of factors that could be coming to bear on a human aesthetic experience at any given moment.

Critical story-telling has another benefit. In considering why the brother may have chosen one set of actions over another, it, like other art-historical methods, necessitates that the author identify, weigh, and evaluate relevant data against itself, all the while keeping in mind that all people experience and are experienced by the world in their own way. In encouraging readers to project themselves onto "the brother," I have also asked them to consider how they would or would not act in a particular context and how people would or would not respond to them. This set of questions opens up the consideration of the multiple kinds of possible encounters and conversations inside of the space of the cloister, the likes of which may or may not have happened but nonetheless could have and even if they did not, this helps us to push the limits of the many possible potential functions of color and images in space. Critical story-telling thus not only opens up for serious consideration new kinds of evidentiary lines and questions, it also gestures towards the ways that even more traditional forms of art-historical writing and analysis are themselves at least partly always a work of historical fiction.

This dissertation also shares with previous modes of art-historical analyses a similar kind of presumed viewer. That is, the period body that I have constructed is an able-bodied, cis-gendered, young, native-Florentine man. In other words, Florence's "common man." In writing this dissertation, though, I have continued to wonder how it is possible to write the story of the Florentine common man, when, until recently, everything about the historical record has been orchestrated to support the belief that such a man was anything but common.

As I asserted in the introduction to this dissertation, it is important to acknowledge that the point of view of this kind of period body, like that of Baxandall's period eye, is always in a

necessarily-privileged viewing position. Throughout this dissertation's chapters, I have argued that investigation of this privileged viewer allows us to understand how patriarchy was constructed in this period as well as the ways in which art and the built environment were either strategically deployed or developed in tandem with other societal structures and attitudes to maintain and perpetuate patriarchal power. This is especially evident in my study's treatment of gender and sexuality, in which I showed that the space of the cloister was a staged environment in which a certain kind of masculinity was allowed to flourish while other forms of non-traditional masculinity that, to them, looked like effeminacy, were suppressed. Perceived colors were thus not only understood as having a gender and sexuality but also became one of the basic environmental elements through which one's gender and sexuality could be performed, constructed, and understood.

By situating viewership in a body, I have also ascertained fundamental truths about the perception of color in art. As Leonardo told us, color is not an innate property of sensory objects but rather is attached to our perception of light.[20] This can be shown in scientific terms. For humans, color starts with light being bent, refracted, and reflected off of and through surfaces in our environment. The light that then arrives in our eyes exists within in certain frequency ranges, some of which we are able to perceive.[21] For most—but not all—people, an encounter with a sufficient amount of light in the visible range over a sufficient amount of time results in our perception of color.[22] Color, therefore, is not an innate quality of anything. Rather it is the mutable and inconstant perceived manifestation of a relationship that exists among the body, the

[20] Here I refer to Leonardo's discussion of *splendore* and *lustro*, which is explored in chapter III of this dissertation.
[21] We cannot, for example, perceive infrared or ultraviolet light.
[22] Refer to my discussion of dark and light adaptation in chapter III of this dissertation.

brain, light, and surfaces.[23] That colors can be described and connote meaning to people who cannot see them demonstrates the degree to which color is an abstract construct that carries meaning beyond any perceived physical reality.

Another important understanding about color that I have inherently argued for is that because color perception happens as soon as our eyes adjust to light, we almost always perceive the world around us in color whenever light is present.[24] This is a great portion of our waking time in the great majority of our environments. As a result, our perception of color is or is potentially related to our perception of all of the physical and cognitive networks in which light can be perceived—that is, almost all of those in which we exist. A student of politics, for example, should not only ask, "Does this color have a political meaning or context?" but rather extend that question to, "How might the perception of this color be working within a physical and cognitive system of meaning-making when situated within and examined through its political context?" For example, I have suggested in this conclusion that further research could potentially reveal that the coloristic mode of Andrea's monochrome *chiaroscuro* Scalzo paintings may have been associated not only with occupation of public space, but with politics and with anti-Medicean politics in particular. However, this hypothesis may not bear the weight of sustained art historical scrutiny. Still, to find that the perception of the Scalzo's *chiaroscuro* environment may not have significantly related to the viewer's political ideas in historical context, or may have done so in another way, would itself clarify understandings not only about the Scalzo and political history, but also the way in which early-modern art and the built

[23] I am grateful to Dimitri Papanastassiou for his help in clarifying this concept.
[24] This is part of the primary underpinnings of chapter III of this dissertation.

environment had the potential (or not) to activate and interact with different kinds of culturally- and biologically-bound systems of meaning-making.

In a related way, by shifting my focus from the examination of the objective meaning of a color as it appears in a painting or a space to the exploration of color as the result of human perception, I have emphasized that our perception of color occurs almost immediately but at a superficial level. This is important because, as soon as we think we perceive it, color allows us to apprehend differences between people, objects, and spaces in the world. Color thus allows us to create taxonomies that can be ordered, ranked, and given value. The way this occurs is culturally dependent. In the case of the Cloister of the Scalzo, the cloister's monochromy is critical because it differentiates it and the images in it from similar polychrome spaces and images. The monochrome cloister's liminality is established because, as I have shown, a variety of relevant visual, intellectual, and cultural networks of meaning-making ranked polychrome images above monochrome ones in terms of their degree of physical reality and their relationship to the divine. At the same time, other aspects of the images still maintained a relationship with the human viewer. The liminal status of the cloister, which is to a great extent a function of its coloristic mode, demonstrates the extent to which color is one of the main apparatuses through which we rank and give value to things in our world, whether these be materials, art objects, spaces, or people.

However, color is not the only factor that comes into play in establishing the Scalzo frescoes' liminality. So too does the architectural form in which they are located (the cloister) as well as the ritual moment (before and after religious services) in which they are encountered by the viewer. The different art historical outcomes arrived at when we shift analysis of the Cloister of the Scalzo from examination only of the images or the architecture to exploration of the

viewer’s possible perception of them in cultural and historic context shows how reciprocally dependent early-modern pictures and sculptures were on their spatial and temporal context to construct and to signify meaning. Removing consideration of either the pictures’ or the viewers’ spatial and temporal context would result in different kinds of understandings about art. This is not to suggest that art objects or spaces should not be examined as loci of analysis in and of themselves, but rather to suggest that all such analysis can potentially contribute to additional understandings about the viewer’s experience of art in space.

These understandings about color, which are revealed by an embodied approach to the experience of color in the cinquecento, have resulted in larger conclusions about viewership of the Cloister of the Scalzo and about the functions of color in early-modern painting more broadly. Across the chapters of this dissertation, I have argued that color perception was integral to people’s experience of religious ritual; their awareness of differences in ontologies of images and spaces; as well as their assessment of pictorial and behavioral decorum, especially as it related to gendered identity-construction in homosocial groups. My dissertation has thus shown that by regulating the kinds of human interactions and social performances possible in front of images and in the architectural spaces, color perception can itself be construed as a hermeneutic for the negotiation of personal and group identity and, as a result, the maintenance or dismantling of social order. Because of this, my study has thus also shown the degree to which the color of environments could be contributing to the construction of power, both within and beyond the environment immediately under investigation.

That my study investigates the Cloister of the Scalzo, an important artistic monument of early-modern Florence, is also critical. Certainly, this study has shed light on Florentine art, religion, politics, and masculinity in the cinquecento. But this period is one of the most

historiographically-entrenched periods in the history of art as well as in other fields in the humanities and social sciences. As a result, the study of Florentine art and culture in the period commonly known as "the Renaissance," (a term I have avoided throughout this dissertation because of the way it privileges a white, western, and classical tradition of thinking, making, and doing) sheds light on how our modern attitudes about color might be informed by attitudes handed down to us from the historic past. For example, what does it mean when we today call a person "colorful" or an arrangement of colors (in a synaesthetic metaphor) "loud"? The answers to these questions may reveal the unconscious and inherent biases that, because of the way seeing is a learned activity with a cognitive dimension, have now become embedded in the processes of our own sensory perception.

But since there is still more research to be done, perhaps it is best to rejoin our brother one more time, in the Epilogue, and imagine one more kind of encounter that it may have been possible to have had in the Cloister of the Scalzo.

Epilogue

"There he is," said the brother to the stranger, the bearded man who had just claimed to know his sponsor. The brother gestured down the cloister's covered aisle. His sponsor saw them and made his way to the southwest corner of the cloister. The three men greeted each other and sat down on the bench.

"I'm glad you met," said the brother's sponsor. They had known each other since the brother was a boy. "You should know each other. What did I miss?"

The brother replied. "Your friend was just saying that it's been a long time since anyone's seen Michelangelo in Florence.[1] But he's never coming back, is he?"

"Well, not as long as you-know-who is around, he's made that very clear," said the bearded man.[2] "Do you think it will ever end?"

The sponsor rolled his eyes, sighing. "One can hope. But I don't know, it doesn't seem like there's anyone left who is going to do anything about it. It's all talk and no action ever since…." He gestured with his thumb towards the place on the wall where the Baptist was being decapitated. "Well, you know….[3]"

Then the bearded man remarked, "You know, we were just talking about Andrea del Sarto. I'm glad he missed all that."

---

[1] On Michelangelo's self-exile to Rome refer to chapter V of this dissertation.
[2] On Michelangelo's refusal to return to Florence while Cosimo I remained in power, refer to chapter V of this dissertation.
[3] On Cosimo's executions of defenders of the Florentine Republic, refer especially to Nicholas Scott Baker, "For Reasons of State: Political Executions, Republicanism, and the Medici in Florence, 1480-1560," *Renaissance Quarterly.* 62.6 (2009): 444-478.

The brother looked surprised. "Why? You think they would have?" His sponsor threw up his hand. The bearded man shrugged and raised his eyebrows.

"Oh I don't know. Probably not. They like to seem beneficent," answered his sponsor.

The bearded man jumped in: "Well, God knows they'd have wanted him working for them. I'm sure they would have loved to make him use his paintings to bring glory to our…most reverend duke." He rolled his eyes.

The brother was surprised. "I didn't realize Andrea had opposed them. He did so many paintings for them, even in their villas." He paused. "And I've heard about all of those spectacular *chiaroscuro* decorations he made for their carnivals. You know, the ones they used to send out on the carts. They must have looked a lot like the ones here in the cloister." The brother looked around at the *chiaroscuro* paintings in front of him, imagining what the carnivals must have been like.

"Are you kidding?," asked the bearded man, amused. "It's not like he really had a choice. What was anyone to do?" Then he said practically in a whisper: "Ask Benvenuto the next time you see him at services.[4] No one likes to talk about it anymore but they served alongside each other in Stefano Colonna's militia."[5]

Then his sponsor also whispered. "And he made some paintings, you know. *Infamante*.[6] Traitors to the Republic. I heard he painted them in the middle of the night, but who knows? At

---

[4] Cecil Roth. *The Last Florentine Republic*. (New York: Russell & Russell), 195-196.
[5] On Andrea's service to the Republic, refer to Roth. *The Last Florentine Republic*, 195-196. Also refer to The Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini, (Book XLII), in which the artist at once indirectly acknowledges his service to the public but simultaneously disavows it.
[6] Refer to John Shearman. *Andrea del Sarto*. II. (London: Oxford University Press), 320, citing descriptions (reproduced below) by Benedetto Varchi, the *anonimo Magliabecchiano*, and Vasari. On these also refer to Samuel Edgerton.

any rate, we all woke up on Easter morning and there they were. Two sets of them.[7]" He smiled. "The last paintings of the great Republic. I'll show you where they are.[8] Whitewashed now."[9]

"Oh, I know where those are," said the brother. "But I thought someone else painted them?"[10] The two older men next to him smiled.

"Sure," his sponsor finally replied, amused.

The bearded man laughed and then elbowed the brother's sponsor. "You and I should paint some pictures of the duke that are by someone else." They chuckled together on the bench. Then his sponsor finally whispered: "You're going to get us killed."

"Ohhhhhh, you worry too much," responded the bearded man. "Who in here would betray us? We took an oath!"[11]

---

[7] Shearman, *Andrea del Sarrto*, II, 320, shows that Varchi reported three sets of *pitture infamante* were made, only two of which were by Andrea. The other set did not consist of *pitture*, per se, but were rather rag dummies made by Giovanni da Sessi and hung on San Miniato, facing the traitors' new camp.

[8] On the location of the *pitture infamante*, refer to Edgerton, *Pictures and Punishment*, 112-113 and note 48. He argues that though the descriptions of the *pitture* by both Giorgio Vasari and Benedetto Varchi place them on the Palazzo del Podestá (now the Bargello) and the Condotta (now-destroyed), multiple payment vouchers indicate the paintings were on the Mercatanzia, (better known as the Mercanzia, today the Gucci Garden) which was the traditional setting of *pitture infamante*. Edgerton therefore concludes that Varchi and Vasari were both incorrect about the location of the paintings and that they were really on the Podestà and the Mercanzia.

[9] Shearman, *Andrea del* Sarto, II, 321, points out that the paintings must have been whitewashed by at least 1550 when Vasari published the first edition of *The Lives*. However, given that it would have been a reminder of Republican resistance in Florence, it seems likely that the whitewashing would have occurred shortly after the Medici took control of the city.

[10] Vasari-Milanesi, V, 53-54 and Benedetto Varchi, *Storia Fiorentina*, II, 20 both relate that though the paintings were executed by Andrea they were intentionally misattributed to his student, Bernardo del Buda.

[11] Brothers were bound by oaths of secrecy to not reveal the names of any other brothers or secrets of the *compagnia*. On this, refer to Weissman, Ritual Brotherhood, 88, who especially focuses on analysis of the *Statues of the Compagnia di San Domenico*. Also refer to Ellen Schiferl, "Corporate Identity and Equality: Confraternity Members in Italian Paintings, c. 1340-1510," *Notes in the History of Art* 8.2 (1989): 13. Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 97, notes that eventually the swearing of oaths was banned by confraternities because the stakes were too high

"Well…I know you don't like to think so….but I don't trust everyone in here anymore," he said, still in a whisper.[12] The three men scanned the faces in the cloister, suddenly aware of who might be listening. Then they sat in silence for some time.

Their silence was finally broken by the bearded man, who sounded agitated. "Justice. Hah!" The brother noticed his gaze was fixed on the allegorical painting of the figure of *Justice* (Fig. 1.10) who adorned the wall of the cloister across from them. "Not anymore…"

"Well it was a different time then," responded the sponsor, nodding towards *Justice*.

"I don't really remember it," replied the brother. With those words, the two men turned sullen. The bearded man slumped in his seat. His sponsor put his hand on the brother's shoulder. Then he said, "You might be better off. I don't know." They fell silent again.

Finally, the bearded man took an audible, deep breath. The other two men finally breathed too. "*Amici*," he said, standing up. His friends sprung up. The bearded man turned around and nodded towards the painting of *Hope* (Fig. 1.23), who was just next to them. The brother had always admired that figure in particular, the beautiful young woman who seemed to be padding, with eyes closed, towards the cloister's exit.[13] The bearded man grinned and raised a single eyebrow. "How about we follow her out?" he asked, then turned, putting his arms around their backs. His sponsor rolled his eyes at his friend's typically off-color joke, but still seemed amused.[14]

---

if they were broken, as betraying the confraternity was considered a mortal sin. If anything, this speaks to the possibility that brothers were breaking their oaths.

[12] In personal communication, 13 April 2021, Alana O'Brien hypothesized that archival evidence suggests Medici spies were able to infiltrate the *compagnia* in the sixteenth century.

[13] Refer to my formal analysis of this figure in Chapter V.

[14] On the bawdy intellectual culture of Florentine artist-intellectuals, refer to Christine Zappella, "The Implicating Gaze in Bronzino's *Cosimo de' Medici as Orpheus* and the Intellectual culture of the Accademia Fiorentina," *Studies in Iconography* 42 (2021): 175 and 183.

Together, the three men exited the cloister and walked through the confraternity's vestibule and up to its main door, the one the brother had entered from earlier this morning. When they reached it, he grabbed the handle and held it open for his sponsor and new friend. "Please, go ahead," he said, gesturing for them to proceed. When the elder men were through the door the brother followed, stepping onto the bright street. He saw many of his other brothers on it, walking away from the confraternity in both directions. Most walked towards Piazza San Marco. Here and there, the bells began to toll.[15] Together, the three men started down Via Larga and back towards the baptistery.

[15] On the ways that bells organized the urban space of Florence and the activities therein, refer to Niall S. Atkinson. 2016. *The Noisy Renaissance.* (PA: Pennsylvania State Press), 121-152.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbonizio, G., Langley, K., & Clifford, C. W. G.. “Contrast Adaptation may Enhance Contrast Discrimination.” *Spat. Vis*. 16.1 (2002): 45–58.

Ackerman, James S.. “On Early Renaissance Color Theory and Practice.” In *Studies in Italian Art and Architecture, 15th through 18th Centuries*, edited by Henry A. Millon, 11–44. MA: MIT Press, 1980.

Accademia dell’Arti di Disegno, *Gli Statuti dell’Accademia del Disegno*, edited by Francesco Adorno and Luigi Zangheri. (Florence: 1998), 3-6.

Adams, Karen C.. “Neoplatonic Aesthetic Tradition in the Arts,” *College Music Symposium* 17.2 (1977): 17-24.

Akbari, Suzanne. *Seeing Through the Veil: Optical Theory and Medieval Allegory*. Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2004.

Alberti, Leon Battista. *I Quattri Libri Della Famiglia.* Rome and Florence, 1433-1440.

Alberti, Leon Battista. *On Painting and On Sculpture: The Latin Texts of De Pittura and De Statua.* London: Phaidon, 1972.

Alighieri, Dante. *De Monarchia* (1312-1313). Translated and annotated by Aurelia Henry. Place of Publication not Identified: Veritatis Splendor Publications, 2012.

Allentuck, Marcia. “In Defense of an Unfinished *Tristam Shandy*: Laurence Sterne and the *Non Finito.*” In *The Winged Skull: Paper from the Laurence Sterne Bicentenary Conference*, edited by Arthur H. Cash and John M. Stedmond. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1971.

Allred, Sarah R. and Jonathan I. Flombaum. "Relating color working memory and color perception." *Trends in cognitive sciences* 18, no. 11 (2014): 562-565.

Am, Carlo. "La veduta unica e il problema del non-finito in Michelangelo." *Arte* 8 (1937): 46-52.

Ames-Lewis, Frances. “Donatello’s bronze *David* and the Palazzo medici Courtyard.” *Renaissance Studies* (1989): 235-251.

Aminabadi, Naser et al,. "The Efficacy of Distraction and Counterstimulation in the Reduction of Pain Reaction to Intraoral Injection by Pediatric Patients." *Journal of Contemporary Dental Practice* 9, no. 6 (2008): 33-40.

Ancona A. D.. 'I1 vero ritratto giottesco di Dante', *La Lettura* (1901): 203-208.

Armenini, Giovanni Battista. *De' veri precetti della pittura*. Raveena, 1587.

Atkinson, Niall. "The Republic of Sound: Florence at the Threshold of the Renaissance," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 16.1/2 (2013): 57-84.

Atkinson, Niall. *The Noisy Renaissance*: Sound, Architecture, and Florentine Urban Life. PA: Penn State University Press, 2017.

Augustine. *Civ. 18.29: Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum.* Vienna, 1866.

Backus, Irene. Asia materialized: Perceptions of China in Renaissance Florence. PhD Diss. University of Chicago, 2014.

Bagarotto, Rosella, Luigi Savio, and Bruce Boucher. "The Madonna Delle Muneghette: A New Work by Jacopo Sansovino." *The Burlington Magazine* 122, no. 922 (1980): 22-29.

Bain, Jill. "Romanesque Figural Dado Imagery in Northern Italy: Three Case Studies." MA thesis, University of Victoria, 1990.

Bain, Jill. "Signifying Absence: Experiencing Monochrome Imagery in Medieval Painting." In *Wider Trecento: Studies in 13th- and 14th-Century European Art Presented to Julian Gardner,* edited by Louise Bourdua and Robert Gibbs, 5-20. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012.

Baker, Nicholas Scott. "For Reasons of State: Political Executions, Republicanism, and the Medici in Florence, 1480-1560." *Renaissance Quarterly.* 62.6 (2009): 444-478.

Baker, Nicholas Scott. "Medicean Metamorphoses: Carnival in Florence, 1513." *Renaissance Studies* 25.4 (2011): 491-510.

Baker, Nicholas Scott. *The Fruit of Liberty: political culture in the Florentine Renaissance, 1480-1550.* MA: Harvard University Press, 2013.

Baldinucci, F.. *Notizie dei profesori del disegno da Cimabue in qua opera di Filippo Baldinucci fiorentino Accademico della Crusca con note ed aggiunte*. III. Firenze, 1728.

Baldinucci, Filippo. *Vocabulario Toscano dell'arte del disegno* Florence, 1681.

Baldovin, John F.. *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: the Origins, Development, and Meaning of Stational Liturgy*. Roma: Pont. Institutum Studiorum, 1982.

Bambach, Carmen. *Drawing and Painting in the Italian Renaissance Workshop: Theory and Practice, 1300-1600.* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Bambach, Carmen. *Michelangelo: Divine Draftsman and Designer.* NY: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018.

Banker, James R., *Death in the Community: Memorialization and Confraternities in an Italian Commune in the Late Middle Ages.* Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988.

Barducci, Manuela. "La Compagnia dello Scalzo della origini alla fine del secolo XV," *Da Dante a Cosimo I*, edited by Domenico Maselli, 146-175. Pistoia: Libraria Editrice Tellini, 1976.

Barnes, Bernardine. *Michelangelo and the Viewer in his Time.* London: Reaktion Books, 2017.

Barocchi, Paola. "Finito e non-finito nella critica vasariana," *Arte Antica e Moderna* 3 (1958): 222.

Barocchi, Paola. *Il Rosso Fiorentino*. Roma, 1950.

Barocchi, Paola. *Scritti d'Art del Cinquecento*, Tomo I. Milano and Napoli: Riccardo Ricciardi, 1979.

Barolsky, Paul. "As in Ovid, so in Renaissance Art." *Renaissance Quarterly* 51.2 (1998): 451-474.

Barolsky, Paul. *Giotto's Father and the Family of Vasari's Lives*. PA: Pennsylvania State Press, 1992.

Barolsky, Paul. *Michelangelo's Nose: A Myth and its Maker*. PA: Pennsylvania State Press, 1990.

Barolsky, Paul. *Why Mona Lisa Smiles and other Tales by Vasari.* PA: Pennsylvania State Press, 1991.

Barrett, B. T., McGraw, P. V., & Morrill, P., "Perceived contrast following adaptation: The Role of Adapting Stimulus Visibility." *Spat. Vis.*, 16.1 (2002): 5–19.

Barriault, Anne B.. *Reading Vasari*. London and Georgia: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2005.

Baskins, Cristelle. "Donatello's Bronze *David*: Grillanda, Goliath, Groomn?" *Studies in Iconography* 15 (1993): 113-134.

Baxandall, Michael. *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century-Italy*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1972.

Baxandall, Michael. *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style,* Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Baxandall, Michael. Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981.

Baxandall, Michael. *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany, 1475-1525*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.

Bayard, Tanya. *Sweet Herbs and Sundry Flowers*: *Medieval Gardens and the Gardens of the Cloisters*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1985.

Bayer, Andrea, and Michael Gallagher, et al.. "Andrea del Sarto's *Borgherini Holy Family* and *Charity*: Two Intertwined Late Works" *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 52 (2017): 34-55.

Becherucci, L.. Andrea del Sarto, Milano: 1955.

Becherucci, L.. *Manieristi toscani*, Bergamo: Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche, 1944.

Becker, Marvin B. "Florentine Politics and the Diffusion of Heresy in the Trecento: A Socioeconomic Inquiry." *Speculum* 34.1 (1959): 60-75.

Beenken, Hermann. "The Chapter House Frescoes at Pomposa." *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 62.363 (1933).

Bell, Janis. "The Critical Reception of Raphael's Coloring in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries." *Text* 9 (1996): 199–215.

Bell, Janis. "Zaccolini's Unpublished Perspective Treatise: Why Should We Care?" *Studies in the History of Art* 59 (2003): 78–103.

Bellori, G.P.. *Le Vite de' Pittori, Scultori, e Architetti Moderni* [1672], ed. E. Borea, Torino, 1976.

Belting, Hans. *Florence and Baghdad: Renaissance art and Arab science*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011.

Benati, Daniele. *Il Trecento Riminese: maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche.* Milano: Electa 1995.

Benazzi, Stefano et al., "The Face of the Poet Dante Alighieri Reconstructed by Virtual Modelling and Forensic Anthropology Techniques." *Journal of Archeological Science* 36 (2009): 278-283.

Berenson, Bernard. *The Drawings of the Florentine Painters*. Vol. I. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938.

Bergstein, Mary. "Marian Politics in Quattrocento Florence: The Renewed Dedication of Santa Maria del Fiore in 1412," *RQ* 44.4 (1991): 681-683.

Berti, L.. *Pontormo*, Firenze: Rizzoli, 1964.

Bertini, Aldo. "*Il problema del non-finito nell'arte di Michelangelo.*" *L'Arte* 1 (1930): 122.

Bianchi, Grazia. "*Affreschi Medioevali Inedita a Briga Novarese.*" *Novarien,* Commune di Novarese, 1970.

Bigwood, Carol. "Renaturalizing the Body (with the Help of Merleau-Ponty)." *Hypatia* 6.3 (1991): 54-73.

Black, Christopher. *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Bloch, Peter. "Bildnis im Mittelalter: Herrscherbild - Grabbild - Stifterbild." In *Bilder vom Menschen in der Kunst des Abendlandes: Jubliläumsausstellung d. Preuss. Museen Berlin 1830–1980, in d. Nationalgalerie*, exhib. cat., edited by Peter Bloch and Brigitte Hüfler 105-142. Berlin: Mann, 1980.

Blümenroder, Sabine. *Andrea Mantegna: Die Grisaillen*. Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 2008.

Boccaccio, Giovanni and Domenico Guerri. *Il comento alla Divina commedia e gli altri scritti intorno a Dante*. Vol XXII. Bari: G. Laterza & Figli, 1918.

Bocchi, Francesco. *Le Bellezze della città di Firenze*. Firenze, 1561.

Borchert, Till Holger. "Catalogue." In *Grisallas*, edited by Till-Holger Bochert. (Madrid: Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, 2008.

Borchert, Till-Holger. "Color Lapidum: A Survey of Late Medieval Grisaille." In *Grisallas*, edited by Till-Holger Bochert, 239-253. Madrid: Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, 2008.

Borsook, Eve, and Johannes Offerhaus. *Francesco Sassetti and Ghirlandaio at Santa Trinità, Florence: History and Legend in a Renaissance Chapel*. Doornspijk: Davaco, 1981.

Borsook, Eve. "The Frescoes at San Leonardo al Lago." *The Burlington Magazine* 98.643 (1956).

Borsook, Eve. *The Mural Painters of Tuscany from Cimabue to Andrea del Sarto*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980.

Boskovits, M.. "*Su Niccolò di Buonaccorso, Benedetto di Bindo e la Pittura Senese del primo Quattrocento.*" *Paragone* 1.359-361 (1980): 3-22.

Boskovits, Miklós, Richard Offner, and Klara Steinweg. *The Mosaics of the Baptistery of Florence*. Florence: Giunti, 2007.

Bottari, G.. *Raccolta di Lettere Sulla Pittura Scultura e Architettura*. Roma, 1757.

Brazis, Paul W., Jose C. Masdeu, and José Biller. *Localization in Clinical Neurology. Fifth Edition.* Philadelphia: Lipincott, Williams, and Wilkins, 2007.

Brooks, Julian. *Andrea del Sarto: The Renaissance Workshop in Action.* Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2015.

Brown, Alison. "Lorenzo de' Medici's New Men and their Mores: The Changing Lifestyle of Quattrocento Florence." *Renaissance Studies* 16.2 (2002): 113-142.

Brown, Consult Patricia Fortini. *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.

Brown, John Lott. "Flash Blindness," *American Journal of Opthamalogy* 60.3 (1965): 515-516.

Brown, Richard D., "Microhistory and the Post-Modern Challenge." In *Theoretical Discussion of Biography: Approaches from History, Microhistory, and Life Writing,* edited by Hans Renders and Binne de Haan, pp. 119-128. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014.

Brunius, Teddy. "Michelangelo's Non-finito." *Contributions to the History and Theory of Art* 6 (1967): 34.

Bryce, Judith. "The Faces of Ginevra de' Benci: Homosocial Agendas and Female Subjectivity in Later Quattrocento Florence." In *Masculinities and Femininities in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, edited by Frederick Kiefer, 131-158. Belgium: Brepols, 2009.

Buccolieri, Giovanni et al,. "Gold leafs in 14th-century Florentine painting." *ArcheoSciences* 33 (2009): 405-408.

Bush, Virginia L.. "Bandinelli's 'Hercules and Cacus' and Florentine Traditions." *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 35.1 (1980): 163-206.

Butler, A.. *The Lives of the Saints, Vol. I,* edited by H. Thurston and D. Attwater, 4 v. 709–710. New York, 1956.

Butler, Judith. "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory." *Theater Journal* (40.4 (1988): 519-531.

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. NY: Routledge, 1990.

Bynum, Caroline Walker. "The Body of Christ in the Later Middle Ages: A Reply to Leo Steinberg." *Renaissance Quarterly* 39.3 (1986): 399-439.

Cabrol, Ferdnad and the Catholic Church. The day hours of the Church: now put forth according to the reforms of Pope Pius X: with a parallel English version. London: Burns & Oates, 1916.

Cadogan, Jean K.. "Linen Drapery Studies by Verrocchio, Leonardo, and Ghirlandaio." *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 46.1 (1983).

Callman, Ellen. "Thebaid Studies." *Antichità Viva* 14.3 (1975): 3-22.

Calvacanti, Guido. *The "Trattato Politco-Morale" of Guido Cavalcanti: 1381-c. 1451*, edited by Marcella T. Grendler. Geneva: *Travaux d'humanisme et Renaissance*, 1973.

Camille, Michael. "At the sign of the "Spinning Sow": the 'other' Chartres and images of everyday life of the medieval street." In *History and Images*, edited by Axel Bolvig and Phillip Lindley, 249-276. Turnhout: Brepols, 2003.

Camille, Michael. *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992.

Camille, Michael. *Master of Death*: *The Lifeless Art of Pierre Remiet Illustrator*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996.

Cappelli, Eugenio. *La Compagnia dei Neri: L'Arciconfraternita dei Battuti di Santa Maria della Croce al Tempio* Florence: Felice Le Monnier, 1927.

Cappuccini, Chiara and Alberto Felici. "Il Chiostro dello Scalzo: Osservazione Sulla Esecutiva Attraverso l'analisi Visive e la Documentazione di Archivio." *Kermes* 29-30 (2017): 101-106.

Carabell, Paula. "*Figure Serpentinata:* Becoming over Being in Michaelangelo's Unfinished Works." *Artibus et Historiae* 35.69 (2014): 84.

Carabell, Paula. "Image and Identity in the Unfinished Works of Michelangelo," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 32 (1997): 96-97.

Carocci, Guido. *By'Gone Florence*. Florence: Galletti and Cocci, 1899.

Caron, Linda. "The Use of Color by Rosso Fiorentino." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 19.3 (1988): 355-378.

Carroll, Margaret D.. "The Erotics of Absolutism: Rubens and the Mystification of Sexual Violence." In *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*, edited by Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard. New York: Harper Collins, 1992.

Carruthers, Mary. “Ars oblivionalis, ars inveniendi: The Cherub Figure and the Arts of Memory.” *Gesta* 48.2: 99-117.

Carruthers, Mary. *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*. NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Castiglione, Baldassare. *The Book of the Courtier*, translated by Charles Singleton. NY: Anchor, 1959.

Caswell, Michelle and Marika Cifor. "From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in the Archives." *Archivaria* 81.1 (2016): 23-43.

Cavanagh, P.. "Sciences Cognitives et histoire de l’art, une coopération en devenir?” Debate moderated by Étienne Jollet in Perspective 1, 20130: 101-118.

Cecchi, Alesaandaro. In Difesa della Dolce Libertà. Florence: Casa Editrice Leo S. Olschki, 2018.

Cecchi, Alessandro. “Assunzione della Madonna (Assunta Panciatichi).” In *I Dipinti della Galleria Palatina e degli Appartamenti Reali: le scuole dell’Italia Centrale, 1450-1530.* edited by Serena Padovani, 67-70. Firenze: Giunti, 2014.

Cecchi, Alessandro. Dipinti della Galleria Palatina. Florence, 2014.

Cellini, Benvenuto. *Trattato della Scultura*, edited by Carlo Cordié. Milan and Naples: R. Ricciardi, 1960.

Cerretani, Bartolomeo. *Storia Fiorentina*, edited by Giuliana Berti. Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1994.

“Changes in colour appearance following post-receptoral adaptation,” *Nature* 349 (1996): 235-238; with RL De Valois et al, “Temporal Properties of brightness and color induction,” *Vision Research* 26.6 (1986): 887-897.

Chen, Andrew. *Flagellant Confraternities and Italian Art, 1260-1610: Ritual and Experience*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019.

Chidester, David. *Word and Light: Seeing, Hearing, and Religious Discourse*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992.

Chrétien, Heidi L.. *The festival of San Giovanni: imagery and political power in Renaissance Florence*. New York: Peter Lang, 1994.

Christiane Klapisch-Zuber. *A History of Women in West, Volume II: Silences of the Middle Ages.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994.

Cipolla, Carlo. *The Economic History of World Population*. Baltimore: Penguine Books, 1962.

Clarke, Georgia. "Ambrogio Traversari: Artistic Adviser in early Fifteenth-century Florence." *Renaissance Studies* 11.3 (1997): 161-178.

Clawson, Mary Ann. "Early Modern Fraternalism and the Patriarchal Family." *Feminist Studies* 6 (1980): 371.

Clements, Robert. "The Authenticity of De Hollanda's *Dialogos en Roma.*" In *The Peregrine Muse*, 110-124. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1969.

Cochrane, Eric. *Florence in the forgotten centuries*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973.

Cody, Steven J.. "Andrea del Sarto's *Noli me Tangere*: Sight, Touch, and an Echo of St. Augustine," *Arion* 26.2 (2018): 47-48.

Cody, Steven J.. 2020. *Andrea del Sarto: Splendor and Renewal in the Renaissance Altarpiece*. (Leiden: Amsterdam university Press), forthcoming.

Coffin, David R.. "Tintoretto and the Medici Tombs." *The Art Bulletin* 33.2 (1951): 120-121.

Cohen, Lindsey L., et al,. "Comparative Study of Distraction Versus Topical Anesthesia for Pediatric Pain Management During Immunizations." *Health Psychology* 18, no. 6 (1999): 591.

Cohen, Thomas, "The Macrohistory of Microhistories." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 47.1 (2017): 60-62.

Cohen, Thomas. *Love and Death in Renaissance Italy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Cohen, Thomas. *Roman Tales: A Reader's Guide to the Art of Microhistory*. London and New York: Routledge, 2021.

Cohn, Samuel K.. *Women in the Streets: Essays on Sex and Power in Renaissance Italy*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.

Cole, Michael. "Cellini's Blood," *The Art Bulletin* 81.2 (1999): 217.

Comito, Terry. *The Idea of the Garden in the Renaissance*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1978.

Concerto, C., C. Infortuna, M. Sawah, D. Freedberg, E. Chusid, E. Aguglia, F. Battaglia. "Neural Circuits Underlying Motor Facilitation during Observation of Implied Motion." Somatosensory and Motor Research, September 30 2015, 1-4.

Condivi, Ascanio. *The Life of Michelagnolo Buonarroti*, translated by Alice Sedgwick Wohl. LA: Louisiana State University, 1999

Condivi, Ascanio. *Vita di Michelangelo Buonarroti Scritta da Ascanio Condivi Suo Disceplo*. (Pisa: Niccolo Capurro, 1823.

Conti, Alessandro. "Andrea del Sarto e Becuccio bicchieraio." *Prospettiva* 33/36 (1983): 161-165.

Cooper, Donald. "Raphael's Altar-Piece in S. Francesco al Preto, Perugia: Patronage, Setting, and Function." *The Burlington Magazine* (2001): 554-561.

Cordellier, Dominique. "Drawings by Andrea del Sarto after Ancient and Modern Sources." In *Andrea del Sarto: The Renaissance Workshop in Action*, edited by Julian Brooks, Denise Allen, and Xavier Salomon, 20-27. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2015.

Cornelison, Sally J.. *Art and the Relic Cult of St. Antoninus in Renaissance Florence*. Vermont: Ashgate, 2012.

Cox, Virginia. *The Renaissance dialogue: literary dialogue in its social and political contexts, Castiglione to Galileo*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Crawford, B. H.. "Visual Adaptation in Relation to Brief Conditioning Stimulus." *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*, (1947): 134, 283-302.

Crompton, Louis. "Gay Genocide: From Leviticus to Hitler." In *The Gay Academic*, edited by Louie Crew, 67-91. CA: ETC Publications, 1978.

Crowe, J. A. and G.B. Cavalcaselle. *A History of Painting in Italy.* London: Borenius, 1914.

Crum, Roger J. and John T. Paoletti. *Renaissance Florence: a Social History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Crum, Roger J., "Severing the Neck of Pride: Donatello's 'Judith and Holofernes' and the Recollection of Albizzi Shame in Medicean Florence." *Artibus et Historiae* 22.44 (2001): 23–2.

Crum, Roger J.. "Donatello's Bronze 'David' and the Question of Foreign versus Domestic Tyranny." *Renaissance Studies* 10, no. 4 (1996): 440–50.

Crum, Roger J.. "Facing the Closed Doors to Reception? Speculations on Foreign Exchange, Liturgical Diversity, and the 'Failure' of the Portinari Altarpiece." *Art Journal* 57.1 (1998).

Cummings, Anthony M.. *The Politicized Muse: Music for Medici Festivals, 1512-1537.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Currie, Elizabeth. *Fashion and Masculinity in Renaissance Florence*. London and NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017.

Cusick, Suzanne. *Francesca Caccini at the Medici Court: Music and the Circulation of Power.* Chicago: University of Chicago, 2009.

D'Argenville, A.. Abrégé de la vie des plus fameux peintres. Paris, 1745.

D'Oldenico, Giovanni Donna. "*Introduzione storica allo Studio degli Affreschi Romanici di Briga Novarese.*" *Bolletino storico-bibliografico subalpino* 71 (1986): 325-240.

Dale, Thomas. *Relics, Prayer and Politics in Medieval Venetia: Romanesque Painting in the Crypt of Aquileia Cathedral*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.

Dasgupta, Subrata. forthcoming 2022. "The Renaissance Considered as a Creative Phenomenon: Explorations in Cognitive History." PhD diss., Routledge University, forthcoming.

David, Robert C.. "The Geography of Gender in the Renaissance." In *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy,* edited by Judith C. Brown and Robert C. Davis, 19-38. London and New York: Longman, 1998.

Davis, Natalie Zemon. "Women on Top: Symbolic Sexual Inversion and Political Disorder in Early Modern Europe" In *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society*, edited by Barbara A. Babcock, 147-190. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1978.

Davis, Natalie Zemon. *The Return of Martin Guerre.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983.

Davis, Natlie Zemon. *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988.

de Marchi, Andrea G.. *Daniele da Volterra e la prima pietra del Paragone*. Roma: Campisano Editore, 2014.

DeLancey, Julia. "Shipping Color: Valute, Pigments, Trade and Francesco di Marco Datini." *Trade in Artists' Materials: Markets and Commerce in Europe to 1700*. London: Archetype Publications, 2010.

Delancey, Julia. "Dragonsblood and Ultramarine." In *The Art Market in Italy* edited by Marcello Fantoni, 141-150. Modena: F.C. Panini, 2003.

Delancey, Julia. "Shipping Color: Valute, Pigments, Trade and Francesco di Marco Datini." In *Trade in Artists' Materials: Markets and Commerce in Europe to 1700,* 74-85. London: Archetype Publications, 2010.

della Mirandola, Pico. “Oration on the Dignitify of Man (1486).” In *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, edited by Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and John Herman Randall. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948.

Deswarte-Rosa, Sylvie. "Idea et le Temple de la Peinture. I. Michelangelo Buonarroti et Francisco de Holanda," *Revue de l'Ar*t 92 (I99I): 20-4I.

di Bicci, Neri. *Le Ricordanze* (*10 marzo 1453- 24 aprile 1475*), edited by Bruno Santi. Pisa: Marlin, 1976.

di Corrado, Fratini. *Un ponte tra Oriente e Occidente. I Templari in Umbria e la chiesa di San Bevignate in Perugia. Ediz. italiana e inglese.* Phillippa Stannard, Volumnia Editrice, 2018.

Di Pietro, Filippo. “I disegni di Andrea del Sarto negli Uffizi e la loro esposizione.” Vita d’Arte 34-35 (1910): 126-232.

di Raniero, Orioli. “Fasani, Raniero in ‘Dizionario Biografico.’” in "Dizionario Biografico". Accessed 7 April 2020. https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/raniero-fasani_(Dizionario-Biografico)/.

di Scipio, Giuseppe. “Dante and St. Paul: The Blinding Light and Water.” *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society* 98 (1980).

Digre, Kathleen B. and K. C. Brennan. “Shedding Light on Photophobia.” *Journal of Neuro-Opthalmology* 32 (2010): 68-81, 75.

Dittelbach, Thomas. “Nelle distese e negli ampi ricettacoli della memoria’: la monocromia come veicolo di propaganda dell’ordine mendicante degli agosiniani.” In *Arte e spiritualità nell’ordine agostiniana e il Convento San Niccola a Tolentino*, edited by Graziana Campisano, 101-108. Roma: Argos, 1994.

Dow, Douglas N.. “Benvenuto Cellini’s Bid for Membership in the Florentine Confraternity of San Giovanni Battista detta della Scalzo.” *Confraternitas* 20.1 (2009).

Dow, Douglas. “An Altarpiece, a Bookseller, and a Confraternity: Giovanbattista Mossi’s *Flagellation of Christ* and the Compagnia di San Giovanni Battista detta dello Scalzo, Florence.” In *Space, Place, and Motion: Locating Confraternities in the Late Medieval and Early Modern City*, edited by Diana Bullen Presciutti, 321-343. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2017.

Dow, Douglas. “Confraternal Piety and Corporate Patronage: A Reconstruction of the Art and Oratory of the Company of San Giovanni Battista dello Scalzo, Florence.” PhD diss., Penn State University, 2006.

Dow, Douglas. “Evidence for Buglioni’s Authorship of the Glazed Terra-cotta Tympanum at the Chiostro dello Scalzo.” *Notes in the History of Art* 29.2 (2010): 15-20.

Dow, Douglas. *Apostolic Iconography and Confraternities in the Age of Reform.* (New York: Routledge, 2019.

Draper, James. *Bertoldo di Giovanni, Sculptor of the Medici Household: critical reappraisal and catalogue raisonné.* London: University of Missouri, 1992.

Earle, T. F. and K. J. P. Lowe. *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Eberlein, Johann Konrad. “The Curtain in Raphael’s Sistine ‘Madonna.’" *Art Bulletin* 65 (1983): 66-68.

Edgerton, Samuel. “*Maniera* and the *Mannaia*: Decorum and Decapitation in the Sixteenth Century.” In *The Meaning of Mannerism*, edited by Franklin W. Robinson and Stephen G. Nichols, Jr., 67-169. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1972.

Edis-Barzman, Karen. *The Florentine Academy and the Early Modern State: The Discipline of Disegno*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Ehresmann, Donald L.. “Some Observations on the Role of Liturgy in the Early Winged Altarpieces.” *The Art Bulletin* 64.3 (1982): 359-369.

“Einleitung März III.” Acta Sanctorum: Einleitung März III - Ökumenisches Heiligenlexikon. Accessed April 26, 2022. http://www.heiligenlexikon.de/ActaSanctorum/Einleitung_Maerz_III.html.

Eisenbichler, Konrad. *The Premodern Teenager: Youth in Society, 1150-1650*. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 202.

Eisenbichler, Konrad. “Nativity and Magi Plays in Renaissance Florence.” Comparative Drama 29, no. 3 (1995): 319–33.

Eisenbichler, Konrad. “The Suppression of Confraternities in Enlightenment Florence.” In *The Politics of Ritual Kinship: Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy*, edited by Nicholas Terpstra, 262-278. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Eisenbichler, Konrad. *The Boys of the Archangel Raphael: A Youth Confraternity in Florence, 1411-1785.* Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1998.

Elam, Caroline. “Lorenzo de’ Medici’s Sculpture Garden,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz* 36.1/2 (1992): 41-83.

Elet, Yvonne. “Seats of Power: The Outdoor Benches of Early Modern Florence,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 61, no. 4 (2002): 444–469.

Emerson., Patricia A.. *Creating the “Divine” Artist: from Dante to Michelangelo*. Leiden: Brill, 2004.

Even, Yael. “The Loggia dei Lanzi: A Showcase of Female Subjugation.” In *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*, edited by Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard, New York: Harper Collins, 1992.

Faietti, Marzia. “The Red-Chalk Drawings of Andrea del Sarto,” *Andrea del Sarto: The Renaissance Workshop in Action*, edited by Julian Brooks, Denise Allen, and Xavier Salomon, 28-33. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2015.

Faino, Bernardo. "*Catalogo delle chiese di Brescia." Manoscritti Queriniani E. VII. 6 and E.I.10,* edited by C. Boselli. Brescia: Geroldi, 1961.

Farago, Claire. “Leonardo's Color and Chiaroscuro Reconsidered: The Visual Force of Painted Images.” *The Art Bulletin* 73.1 (1991): 63–88.

Farago, Claire. “The Classification of the Visual Arts in the Renaissance.” In *The Shapes of Knowledge from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, edited by D. R. Kelley and R. H. Popkin, 23-47. The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991.

Fehrenbach, Frank. “Coming Alive: Some Remarks in the Rise of ‘Monochrome’ Sculpture in the Renaissance.” *Notes in the History of Art* 30.3 (2011): 47-55.

Felice, Alberto, Serena Pini, and Andrea Vigna. "Il Chiostro Verde nel Complesso Di Santa Maria Novella a Firenze: Storia E Restauri." *OPD Restauro* 19 (2007).

Fenlon, Iain. *Music and culture in late Renaissance Italy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Ferguson, Margaret W., et al. Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe. London: The University of Chicago Press, 1986.

Finlay, Robert. “The Venetian Republic as Gerontocracy: Age and Politics in the Renaissance.” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 8 (1978):157-178.

Fiorani, Francesca. “The Colors of Leonardo’s Shadows.” *Leonardo* 41.3 (2008): 271-278.

Foner, Daria Rose. “Collaborative Endeavors in the Career of Andrea del Sarto.” PhD diss., Columbia, 2020.

Fossi, Mazino. 1975. *Il Taccuino di Alfonso , Giulio, Alfonso il Giovane Parigi*. (Florence: Gonelli).

Fournier, Mary C.. “Drawing as Gift: Jacopo Bellini’s Paris Volume in Ottoman Istanbul.” Phd diss. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2006.

Fraenckel, Ingeborg. *Andrea del Sarto: Gemälde und Zeichnungen*. Strassburg: Heitz, 1935.

Frasetto, Fabio. *Dantis Ossa, La forma corporea di Dante. Scheletro, ritratti, maschere e busti. Studio di Fabio Frassetto.* Bologna: Università di Bologna, 1933.

Freedberg, David and Vittori Gallese, “Motion, Emotion, and Empathy, in Esthetic Experience.” *Trends in Cognitive Science* 11.5 (2007): 197-203.

Freedberg, David. "Memory in Art: History and the Neuroscience of Response.” In *The Memory Process: Neuroscientific and Humanistic Perspectives*, edited by S. Nalbantian, P.M. Matthews and J.L. McClelland, 337-358. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011.

Freedberg, David. “Empathy, Motion, and Emotion,” Wie sich Gefühle Ausdruck verschaffen / Klaus Herding; Antje Krause-Wahl (2008): 17-51; 2017.

Freedberg, David. “Feelings on Faces. From Physiognomics to Neuroscience.” In *Rethinking Emotion. Interiority and Exteriority in Premodern, Modern, and Contemporary Thought,* edited by Rüdiger Campe and Julia Weber, 289-324. Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter, 2014.

Freedberg, David. “From Absorption to Judgment: Empathy in Aesthetic Response.” In Empathy: Epistemic Problems and Cultural-Historical Perspectives of a Cross-Disciplinary Concept, edited by Vanessa Lux 139-180. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2017.

Freedberg, Sydney J.. *Andrea del Sarto*, 2 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963.

Freedberg, Sydney J.. *Painting in Italy, 1500-1600*. Baltimore: Penguin, 1971.

Freedberg, Sydney J.. *Painting of the High Renaissance in Rome and Florence*. 2 Vols. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1961.

Frey, Karl. *Die Loggia dei Lanzi zu Florenz*. Berlin: Hertz, 1885.

Frick, Carole Collier. *Dressing Renaissance Florence*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.

Friedlander, Walter. *Mannerism and Anti-Mannerism in Italian Painting*. NY: Columbia University Press, 1957.

Friesen, Ilse E.,“Leonardo da Vinci’s Unorthodox Iconography: The *Madonna with the Cat.*” *RACAR* 16.1 (1999): 19-20.

Fritsch, Allie Terry. *Somaesthetic Experience and the Viewer in Medicean Florence: Renaissance Art and Political Persuasion, 1459-1580*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020.

Fulton, Chistopher. "Present at the Inception: Donatello and the Origins of Sixteenth-Century Mannerism." *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschicte* 60.2 (1997): 166-199.

Gallucci, Margaret Ann. "Cellini's Trial for Sodomy: Power and Patronage at the Court of Cosimo I." In *Cultural Politics of Duke COsimo I de' Medici*, edited by Konrad Eisenbichler, 37-46. NY: Routledge, 2001.

Gardner, Julian. "Giotto: 'First of the Moderns' or 'Last of the Ancients'?" *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 44 (1991): 63-78.

Garrard, Mary D.. "Leonardo da Vinci: Female Portraits, Female Nature." In *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*," edited by Mary D. Garrard and Norma Broude, 58-86. New York: Harper & Collins,1992.

Garrard, Mary D.. "The Cloister and the Public Square: Gender Dynamics in Renaissance Florence." Early Modern Women 11.1 (2016): 5-43.

Garrard, Mary D.. "Who was Ginevra de' Benci: Leonardo's Portrait and its Sitter Recontextualized." *Artibus et Historiae* 17.53 (2007): 23-56.

Garrard, Mary D.. *Brunelleschi's Egg: nature, art and gender in Renaissance Italy*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.

Gaston, Robert. "Affective Devotion and the Early Dominicans: The Case of Fra Angelico." In *Rituals, Images, and Words: Varieties of Cultural Expression in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, edited by F. W. Kent and Charles Zika, 87-117. Turnhout: Brepols, 2005.

Gavitt, Philip. *Gender, Honor, and Charity in Late Renaissance Florence*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Georgeson, M. A., "The Effect of Spatial Adaptation on Perceived Contrast." *Spat. Vis.* 1.2 (1985): 103–112.

Geronimus, Dennis V., and Louis Waldman. "Children of Mercury: New Light on the Members of the Florentine Company of St. Luke." *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 47.1 (2003): 118-122

Ghadessi, Touba. "Lords and Monsters: Visible Emblems of Rule," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 16, no. 1/2 (2013): 491-523.

Gill, Meredith. *Augustine in the Italian Renaissance: art and philosophy from Petrarch to Michelangelo*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Gilson, Simon A.. *Medieval Optics and Theories of Light in the Works of Dante*. (Lampeter: The Edwin Mellon Press, 2000.

Gilson, Simon A.. *Reading Dante in Renaissance Italy: Florence, Venice, and the "Divine Poet."* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Ginzburg, Carlo. *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth Century Miller*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976.

Glasstone, Samuel. *Effects of Nuclear Weapons*, revised edition. Washington: US Atomic Energy Commission, 1964.

Gluckman, Max. "Les Rites de Passage." In *Essays on the Ritual of Social Relations*, edited by Max Gluckman, 26-43. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1975.

Goldthwaite, Richard. *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980.

Gombrich, E. H.. "Botticelli's Mythologies: A Study in the Neoplatonic Symbolism of his Circle." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 8 (1945): 38.

Gombrich, Ernst. "Giotto's Portrait of Dante(?)." *Burlington Magazine* 121.917 (1979): 477-480.

Gombrich, Ernst. *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*. New York: Phaidon, 1960.

Govardovskii VI, Calvert PD, Arshavsky VY. "Photoreceptor light adaptation. Untangling Desensitization and Sensitization." *J Gen Physiol*. 2000;116(6): 791-794.

Graziadei, Vittorio Graziadei. *Lo sdegno di Dante*. Palermo: A. Reber, 1904.

Greenblatt, Stephen Jay. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.

Greenfield, Ingrid. "A Moveable Continent: Collecting Africa in Renaissance Italy." PhD Diss., University of Chicago, 2016.

Grosz, Elizabeth. *Volatile Bodies: Towards a Corporeal Feminism*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994.

Guentner, Wendelin A.. "British Aesthetic Discourse, 1780-1830: The Sketch, the Non Finito, and the Imagination." *Art Journal* 52.2 (1993): 40-47.

Hall, James. *Michelangelo and the Reinvention of the Human Body*. New York: Pimlico, 2005.

Hall, Marcia B.. *Color and Meaning: Practice and Theory in Renaissance Painting*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Hall, Marcia B.. *The Power of Color: Five Centuries of European Painting*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019.

Harper, John. *Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.

Hartman, Saidiya. "Venus in Two Acts." Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism 26 (2008): 1-14.

Hartman, Saidiya. *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval*. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2019.

Hartmann, Heidi. "The Unhappy Marriage between Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union." In *Women and Revolution*, edited by Lydia Sargent, 1-41. Boston: South End Press, 1981.

Hartt, Frederick. "Leonardo and the Second Florentine Republic." *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 64 (1986): 101.

Hatfield, Rab. "The Compagnia de' Magi." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970): 107–61.

Heidegger, Martin. *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Translated by Albert Hofstadter. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982

Henderson, John. "Penitence and the Laity in Fifteenth-Century Florence." In *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, edited by Timothy Verdon and John Henderson, 229-249. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990.

Henderson, John. "Religious Confraternities and Death in Renaissance Florence." In *Florence and Italy: Renaissance Studies in Honor of Nicolai Rubinstein*, edited. y Peter Denley and Caroline Elam, 383-394. Exeter: Short Run Press, Ltd, 1988.

Henderson, John. *Piety and Charity in Late Medieval Florence*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

Hendler, Sefy. *Gracious and Beautiful Monster: the Literary Universe of Bronzino's Nano Morgante.* Florence: Maschietto editore, 2016.

Hendler, Sefy. La Guerre des arts Le Paragone Peinture-Sculpture en Italie XV-XVII siècle. Roma: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2013.

Herklotz, Ingo. *La Roma degli Antiquari: Cultura e Erudizione Tra Cinquecento al Settecento,* Rome: De Luca, 2012.

Herlihy, David and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber. *Tuscans and their Families: A Study of the Florentine Catasto of 1427*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985.

Herlihy, David. "Vieillir à Florence au Quattrocento." *Annales E. S. C.* XXIV (1969), 1342f.

Hirdt, Willi. *Barfuss zum Lieben Gött: Der Freskenzyklus Andrea del Sartos im Florentiner Chiostro dello Scalzo*. Tubingen & Basel: Francke, 2006.

Hirst, Michael. "Michelangelo, Carrara, and the Marble for the Cardinal's Pietà." *The Burlington Magazine* 127.984 (1985): 154-52.

Holbrook, Richard Theyer. *Portraits of Dante from Giotto to Raffael: A Critical Study, with a Concise* Iconography. London: Philip Lee Warner, 1911.

Hollander, Robert. "Boccaccio's Dante." *Italica* 63, no. 3 (1986): 278–89.

Holmes, Megan. "Disrobing the Virgin: The *Madonna Lactans* in Fifteenth- century Florentine Art." In *Picturing Women in the Renaissance and Baroque Italy,* edited by Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews Grieco. United Kingdom: 1997.

Holmes, Megan. *The Miraculous Image in Renaissance Florence.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.

Hood, William. *Fra Angelico at San Marco*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993.

Horowitz, Maryanne Cline. "Aristotle and Woman." *Journal of the History of Biology* 9.2 (1976): 183-213.

Huchendorf, Lynnay. "The Effects of Color on Memory." *UW-L Journal of Undergraduate Research X* (2007): 1-4.

Hull, Vida J.. "The Sex of the Savior in Renaissance Art: The Revelations of Saint Bridget and the Nude Christ Child in Renaissance Art." *Studies in Iconography* 15 (1993): 77-112.

Humphrey, Edith McEwan. *And I turned to see the voice: the rhetoric of vision in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2007.

Hurst, Michael and Carman Bambach. "A Note on the Word Modello." The Art Bulletin 74, no. 1 (1992): 172–73.

Husserl, Edmund. *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, Second Book. Translated by Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer. Dordrecht and Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989.

Hyde, JK. *Society and Politics in Medieval Italy: The Evolution of Civil Life, 1000-1350.* NY: St. Martin's Press, 1973.

Indengaay, Martina. "Rekonstruktionsversuch der 'Pala Bichi' in San Agostino in Siena." *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 23. 1/2 (1979): 109-126.

Inhorn, Marcia C.. ""The Worms are Weak": Male Infertility and Patriarchal Paradoxes in Egypt," *Men and masculinities* 5.3 (2003): 236-256.

Innocenti, Annalisa. "Dispersione degli oggetti d'arte durante la soppressione leopoldina," *Rivista d'arte* 44.8 (1992): 351-385.

Jacobs, Lynn. *Early Netherlandish Carved Altarpieces, 1380–1550: Medieval Tastes and Mass Marketing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2021.

Jaffé, M.. "Rubens and Andrea del Sarto," *The Burlington Magazine* CXIX (1977): 774.

Johnson, Geraldine A.. "Idol or Ideal? The Power and Potency of Female Public Sculpture." *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, edited by Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews-Grieco, 222-245. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Jolly, Penny Howell. "Rogier van der Weyden's Escorial and Philadelphia Crucifixions and their relationship to Fra Angelico at San Marco." *Oud Holland* 95.3 (1981): 113-126.

Katz, Dana E.. *The Jew in the Art of the Italian Renaissance*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.

Katzenellenbogen, Adolf. *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art: From Early Christian Times to the Thirteenth Century*. Toronto, Buffalo, and New York: University of Toronto Press, 1989.

Kaufman, Michael. "The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men's Violence." In *Beyond Patriarchy: Essays by Men on Pleasure, Power, and Change,* edited by Michael Kaufman, 1-17. Toronto and New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Keizer, Joost. "Michelangelo, Drawing and the Subject of Art." *The Art Bulletin* 93.3 (2011): 304.

Kelly, Joan. "'Did Women Have a Renaissance?" In *Feminism and Renaissance Studies*, edited by Lorna Hutson, 21-47. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Kemp, Mart. "Introduction to Kenneth Clark." *Leanardo da Vinci*. London: Penguin Books, 1988.

Kemp, Martin. *Visions of Heaven: Dante and the Art of Divine Light*. UK: Lund Humphries, 2021.

Kendrick, Sin*ging Jeremiah: music and meaning in Holy Week*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2014.

Kent, Dale. *Friendship, Love, and Trust in Renaissance Florence*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009.

Kerpel, Diana Magaloni. "The Hidden Aesthetic of Red in the Painted Tombs of Oaxaca." *Res* 57/58 (2010): 55-74.

Kerpel, Diana Magaloni. "The Eloquence of Color: Material and Meaning in the Cacaxtla Murals." In *Making Value, Making Meaning: Techné in the Pre-Columbian World*, edited by Cathy Lynne Costin. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, 2016.

Kimmel, Michael S.. "Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity." In *Theorizing Masculinities*, edited by Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman, 119-142. United Kingdom: Sage Publications, 1994.

Kimmel, Michael S.. *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men.* NY: Harper Perrenial, 2018.

King, Caroline E. *Renaissance Women Patrons: Wives and Widows in Italy c. 1300-1550.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998.

King, Margaret L.. *Women of the Renaissance.* London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991.

Kirby, Jo. "The Price of Quality: Factors Influencing the Cost of Pigments during the Renaissance." In *Revaluing Renaissance Art*, edited by Gabriel Neher and Rupert Shepherd, 2-40. Surrey: Aldershot Publishing, 2000.

Kirk, U. and D. Freedberg. "Contextual Bias and Insulation Against Bias During Aesthetic Rating. The Roles of VMPFC and DLPFC in Neural Valuation." In Art, Aesthetics and the Brain, edited by J.P. Huston, M. Nadal, F. Mora, L. Agnati, and C.J. Cela-Conde, 158-173. Oxford University Press, 2015.

Klamt, Johann-Christian. "The *Trinity* Triptych in Berlin: A Product of the International Style." In *Italy and the Low Countries: Artistic Relations in the Fifteenth Century*, edited by Victor M. Schmidt, Gert Jan van der Sman, Marilena Vecchi, and Jeanne van Waadenoijen, 9-20. Florence: Centro Di, 1999.

Klapisch-Zuber, Chistiane. *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy.* London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985.

Knapp, Fritz. "'Hugo van der Goes' Portinari-altar und sein Einfluss auf Lionardo da Vinci, Botticelli, Filippino Lippi, Piero di Cosimo u.a." *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz*, II, 1912-1917.

Knapp, Fritz. *Andrea del Sarto*. Biefeld und Leipzig: Derlag von Delhagen & Klafing, 1907.

Koller, Donna and Ran D. Goldman. "Distraction Techniques for Children Undergoing Procedures: a Critical Review of Pediatric Research." *Journal of pediatric nursing* 27.6 (2012): 652-681.

Krautheimer, Richard. *Lorenzo Ghiberti.* NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.

Kristeller, Oskar. "Lay Religious Traditions and Florentine Platonism." In *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters,* 108-111. Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1956.

Kristeller, Paul Oskar. "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics. Part I." *Journal of the History of Ideas.* 12 (1951): 496-527.

Kuhbandner, Christof and Reinhard Pekrun. "Joint Effects of Emotion and Color on Memory." *Emotion* 13.3 (2013): 375.

Ladis, Andrew. *Giotto's O: Narrative, Figuration, and Pictorial Ingenuity in the Arena Chapel.* Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008.

Ladner, Gerhart. "Das Anfänge des Kryptoporträts." In *Von Angesicht zu Angesicht: Porträtstudien. Michael Stettler zum 70. Geburtstag*, edited by Florens Deuchler, Mechthild Flury-Lemberg, and Karel Otavsky, 78-97. Bern: Stämpfli, 1983.

Ladurie, Emmanuel Le Roy. *Montaillou: Cathars and Catholics in a French Village, 1294-1324.* London: Penguin Books, 1980.

Lamichhaney, Sangeet et al. "Rapid Hybrid Speciation in Darwin's finches." *Science* 359.6372 (2017): 224-228.

Land, Norman E.. "Michelangelo and the Stonecutters." *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 33, no. 1 (2013): 16-20.

Lanem Barbara G.. "The Patron and the Pirate: The Mystery of Memling's Gdansk *Last Judgment.*" *Art Bulletin* 73.4 (1991): 623-639.

Lanzi, L.. *Storia pittorica della Italia* [1792-96], edited by M Capucci. Firenze: 1968.

Largier, Niklaus. *The Scourge and the Whip*. NY: Zone Books, 2007.

Lavin, Marilyn Aronberg. “Giovannino Battista: A Study in Renaissance Religious Symbolism.” *The Art Bulletin* 37.2 (1955): 85-101.

Lee, Chan et al, “Can visual distraction decrease the dose of patient-controlled sedation required during colonoscopy? A prospective randomized controlled trial,” *Endoscopy* 36 (2004): 197–201.

Lehmann, Claudia. Norberto Gramaccini, Johannes Rössler, and Thomas Dittelbach. *Chiaroscuro asl Äesthetisches Prinzip: Kunst und Theorie des Helldunkels, 1300-1550.* Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018.

Lerner, Gerda. *The Creation of Patriarchy*. NY: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim. "Emilia Galotti." *In Samtliche Werke,* edited by Karl Lachmann and Franz Muncker, Stuttgart, 1886-1924, Reprint: Berlin, 1979.

Lindberg, D.. *Theories of Vision from Al-Kindi to Kepler*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976.

Lisanby, Battaglia, F., S.H. and D. Freedberg, "Corticomotor Facilitation During Observation and Imagination of a Work of Art.” *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 5 (2011): 1-6.

Long, Jane C., “Dangerous Women: Observations on the Feast of Herod in Florentine Art of the Early Renaissance.” *Renaissance Quarterly* 66. 4 (2013): 1153–1205.

Louden, Lynn M., “’Sprezzatura’ in Raphael and Castiglione.” *Art Journal* 28.1 (1968); 43-49 + 53.

Lowe, K. J. P.. *Nuns’ Chronicles and Convent Culture in the Renaissance and Counter-Reformation Italy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

MacCormack, Sabine. *Religion in the Andes: Vision and Imagination in Early Colonial Peru*. NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993.

MacGregor, A. J.. “Fire and light in the Western Triduum.” MN: Liturgical Press, 1992.

Maclean, Ian. The Renaissance Notion of Woman: a Study of the Fortunes of Scholasticism and Medical Science in European Intellectual Life. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.

Magnússon, Sigurdor Gylfi and István M. Szijártó. *What is Microhistory?: Theory and Practice*. Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2013.

Magnússon, Sigurdur Gylfi and István M. Szijártó. “Microhistory: Two or Three Things I Know about It.” In *Theoretical Discussion of Biography: Approaches from History,*

Microhistory, and Life Writing," edited by Hans Renders and Binne de Haan, 139-168. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013

Malquori, Alessandra. "La "Tebaide" degli Uffizi: Tradizioni letterarie e figurative per l'interpretazione di un tema iconografico." *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 9 (2001): 119-137.

Mancinelli, Fabrizio, Gianluigi Colalucci, and Nazzareno Gabrielli. "The Last Judgment: Notes on its Conservation History Technique, and Restoration." In *The Sistine Chapel: A Glorious Restoration*, edited by Pierluigi de Vecchi, 236-255. NY: Harry N. Abrams, 1994.

Manetti, Antonio. "The Fat Woodcarver." In *An Italian Renaissance Sextet*: Six Tales in Historical Context, edited by Lauro Martines, 171-212. New York: Marsilio, 1970.

Manuela Barducci. "*La Compagnia dello Scalzo della origini alla fine del secolo* XV," *Da Dante a Cosimo I*, edited by Domenico Maselli, 146-175. Pistoia: Libraria Editrice Tellini, 1976.

Manuth, Volker, Rudie van Leeuwen, and Jos Koldeweij. *Example or Alter Ego? Aspects of the* Portrait Historié *in Western Art from Antiquity to the Present*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2016.

Maratsos, J.. "Pictorial Theology and the Paragone in Pontormo's Capponi Chapel," *Art History* 40 (2017): 939-940.

Marchi, Rita. *"La Compagnia dello Scalzo nel* Cinquecento." In *Da Dante a Cosimo I,* edited by Domenico Maselli, 176-204. Pistoia: Librerie e editrice Tellini, 1976.

Marcucci, L.. *La Maniera del Pontormo*. Firenze: 1956.

Markey, Lia. *Imagining the Americas in Medici Florence*. University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2016.

Martin Kemp, "In the Beholder's Eye: Leonardo and the 'Errors of Sight' in Theory and Practice." *Achademia Leonardi Vinci* 5 (1992): 153-162.

Massaro, D., Savazzi F, Di Dio C, Freedberg D, Gallese V, et al. "When Art Moves the Eyes: A Behavioral and Eye-Tracking Study," PloS ONE, May 2012.

Mather, Frank Jewett Jr. *The Portraits of Dante compared with the Measurements of his Skull.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921.

Matthew, Louisa C.. "'Vendecolori a Venezia': The Reconstruction of a Profession," *The Burlington Magazine* 144. 1196 (2002): 680–86.

Maynard, Patrick. "'Neuroaesthetics,' Gombrich, and Depiction." *British Journal of Aesthetics* 56.2 (2016): 191-201.

McCall, Timothy. "Brilliant Bodies: Material Culture and the Adornment of Men in North Italy's Quattrocento Courts." *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 16.1-2 (2013): 445-490.

McCall, Timothy. *Brilliant Bodies: Fashioning Courtly Men in early Renaissance Italy.* Pennsylvania: Penn State Press, 2022.

McFarland, Ross A. and M. Bruce Fisher. "Alterations in Dark Adaptation as a Function of Age." *Journal of Gerontology* 10.4 (1955): 424.

McGrath, Thomas. "Color and the Exchange of Ideas between Patron and Artist in Renaissance Italy," *The Art Bulletin* 82.2 (2000): 298-308.

McHam, Sarah Blake "Donatello's Bronze *David* and *Judith* as Metaphors of Medici Rule in Florence." *Art Bulletin* 83 (2001): 32-47.

McHam, Sarah Blake. "Public Sculpture in Renaissance Florence." In *Looking at Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, edited by Sarah Blake McHam, 163-169. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

McKillop, Susan Regan. *Franciabigio*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

Mellyn, Elizabeth W.. *Mad Tuscans and their Families: A history of mental disorder in early modern Italy*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.

Melnyk, Julie. "'Mighty Victims': Women Writers and the Feminization of Christ." *Victorian Literature and Culture* (2003): 131-157.

Mendelsohn, Leatrice. "Simultaneity and the Paragone: Justifying Art in the Eye of the Beholder." Universitat, edited by Ulrike Mueller Hofstede, Hannah Baader, Kristine Patz, and Nicola Suthor, 294-335. Munich: Willhelm Fink Verlag, 2001.

Mendelsohn, Leatrice. *Paragoni: Benedetto Varchi's Due Lezzioni and Cinquecento Art Theory*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1982.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phénoménologie de la Perception.* Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1945.

Mesnil, J.. *L'art au Nord et au Sud des Alpes a l'Époque de la Renaissance: Études Comparatives*. Brussels & Paris: G. van Oest et Cie, 1911.

Meyvaert, Paul. "The Medieval Monastic Garden." In *Medieval Gardens* edited by Elisabeth B. MacDougall, 23-53. Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1986.

Michel-Ange, Giovanni, Paola Barocchi Poggi, and Renzo Ristori. *Il Carteggio di Michelangelo*. Firenze: Sansoni, S.P.E.S, 1965-1983.

Migel, Marilyn and Juliana Schiesari. *Refiguring Woman: Perspectives on Gender and the Italian Renaissance.* New York: Cornell University Press, 1991.

Miller, Maureen C.. "Why the Bishop of Florence Had to Get Married." *Speculum* 81, no. 4 (2006): 1055–91.

Miller, R.. "Registo dei documenti." In *I Campi e la cultural artistica cremonese del Cinquecento.* Milano: Electa, 1985.

Milner, Stephen J., "Citing the Ringhiera: The Politics of Place and Public Address in Trecento Florence," Italian Studies 55 (2000): 53–82.

Milner, Stephen J.. *At the Margins: Minority Groups in Premodern Italy*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005.

Mollon, JD. "Colour Constancy Influenced by Contrast Adaptation." *Nature* 373.6516 (1995): 694-698

Monti, R.. *Andrea del Sarto*. Milano, 1965.

Mořeni, Domenico. *Notizie istoriche dei contorni di Firenze: Parte terza dalla Porta a San Gallo fino alla città di Fiesole.,* (Florence, 1791-95, Reprinted Florence, 1972), 86;

Moretti, Laura, and Sean Roberts. "From the *Vite* or the *Ritratti?* Previously Uknown Portraits from Vasari's *Libro de' Disegni.*" *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 21.2 (2018): 105-136.

Mormando, Franco. The Preacher's Demons: Bernardino da Siena and the Social Underworld of Early Renaissance Italy." Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999.

Moulakis, Athanasios. *Republican Realism in Renaissance Florence: Francesco Guicciardini*'s Discorso di Logrogno. MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998.

Moyer, Ann E.. "The Intellectual World of Sixteenth-century Florence: Humanists and culture in the age of Cosimo I. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020.

Muir, Edward. "The Virgin on the Street Corner: The Place of the Sacred in Italian Cities." In *The Italian Renaissance,* edited by Paula Findlen, 151-166. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008.

Muir, Edward. *Mad Blood Stirring: Vendetta & Factions in Friuli During the Renaissance*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.

Nagel, Alexander. *The Controversy of the Italian Renaissance*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011.

Najemy, John. *A History of Florence: 1200-1575*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006.

Najemy, John. *Between Friends: Discourses of Power and Desire in the Machiavelli-Vettori Letters of 1513-1515.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019.

Najemy, John. *Between Friends: Discourses of Power and Desire in the Machiavelli-Vettori Letters*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019.

Nash, Jennifer C., "Black Feminine Enigmas, or Notes on the Politics of Black Feminist Theory." *Signs* (2020): 520.

Nash, Jennifer C., "Saidiya Hartman. Wayward Lives Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval." *The American Historical Review* 125.2 (2020): 595-597.

Nash, Susie. "The Parement de Narbonne: Context and Technique." In *The Fabric of Images*, edited by Caroline Villiers, 77-87. London: Archetype, 2000.

Natali, Antonio and Alessandro Cecchi. *Andrea del Sarto: catalogo completo dei dipinti* Florence: Cantini, 1989.

Natali, Antonio. *Andrea del Sarto*. New York, London, and Paris: Abbeville Press, 1998.

Nelson, Jonathan. "The High-Altar-piece of SS. Annunziata in Florence: History, Form, and Function." *The Burlington Magazine* (1997): 87.

Nelson, Jonathan. *Aggiunte alla Cronologia di Filippino Lippi.*" *Rivista d'Arte* 43 (1991): 50-51.

Newbigin, Nerida. *Nuovo corpus di sacre rappresentazioni fiorentine del Quattrocento edite e inedite tratte da manoscritti coevi o ricontrollate su di essi.* Bologna: Cpmmissione per I testi di lingua, 1983.

Ng, Aimee, Alexander J. Noelle, Xavier F. Salomon, and Peter Jonathan Bell. *Bertoldo di Giovanni: the Renaissance of sculpture in Medici Florence*. New York: The Frick Collection, 2019.

Nirenberg, David. Communities of violence: persecution of minorities in the Middle Ages. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2015.

Nova, Alessandro. "Hangings, Curtains, and Shutters of Sixteenth-Century Lombard Altarpieces." In *Italian Altarpieces 1250-1550: Function and Design*, edited by Eve Borsook and Fiorella Gioffredi Superbi, 177-197. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Nussdorfer, Laurie. “Masculine Hierarchies in Roman Ecclesiastical Households.” *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d’histoire* 22.4 (2015): 632.

Nutall, Paula. “Domenico Ghirlandaio and Northern Art.” *Apollo* 143.412 (1996): 16-22.

Nutall, Paula. “The Medici and Netherlandish Painting.” In *The Early Medici and their Artists*, edited by Frances Ames-Lewis,135-152. London: Birkbeck College, 1995.

Nutall, Paula. *Face to Face: Flanders, Florence, and Renaissance Painting.* San Marino: The Huntington Art Library, 2013.

Nutall, Paula. *Florence to Flanders.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004.

O'Brien, Alana. "The Apostles Cycle in the Oratory of the Compagnia dello Scalzo: 'adornata da e mia frateli academize,'" *I Tatti Studies* 14/15 (2011/12): 209-262.

O’Brien, Alana. “Andrea del Sarto and the Compagnia dello Scalzo,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 48.1/2 (2004): 258-267.

O’Brien, Alana. “Apostles’ in the Oratory of the Compagnia dello Scalzo: ‘Adornata da e mia Frateli Academizi,” *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 14/ 15 (2011-2012).

O’Brien, Alana. “'Maestri d’Alcune Arti Miste e d’Ingegno’: Artists and Artisnas in the Compagnia dello Scalzo,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 55.3 (2013): 358-433.

O’Brien, Alana. “Who Holds the Keys to the Chiostro dello Scalzo, ‘Scuola di Molto Giovanni,’” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 63.2 (2021).

O’Bryan, Robin. “Portrait of a Renaissance Dwarf: Bronzino, Morgante, and the Accademia Fiorentina.” *Art Bulletin* 100.3 (2018): 80-105.

Ollovsdotter, Cecilia. *The Consular Image: An Iconological Study of the Consular Diptychs.* Oxford: Bar Publishing, 2005.

Olkowski, Dorothea and Gail Weiss. *Feminist Interpretations of Merleau-Ponty.* PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006.

Osborne, Joan. “The Dado Programme in Giotto’s Arena Chapel and its Italian Romanesque Antecedents.” *The Burlington Magazine* 145.1202 (2003).

Paatz, Walter and Elizabeth Paatz. *Die Kirchen von Florenz*. Vol. V. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1954.

Padovani, Serena. “Il Pittori Senza Errori.” In *Andrea del Sarto, dipinti e disegni a Firenze*. Florence, 1986.

Palluchini, Rodolfo. *Tiziano* Tomo I. Florence: G. C. Sansoni, 1969.

Panofsky, Erwin. *Early Netherlandish Painting and its Origins and Character*. New York: Harper & Rowe, 1947.

Panofsky, Erwin. *Galileo as a Critic of the Arts*. The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1954.

Panofsky, Erwin. *IDEA. A concept in Art Theory,* 2nd revised edition. NY: Columbia University Press, 1968.

Panofsky, Erwin. *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art.* New York: Icon, 1972.

Panofsky, Erwin. *Studies in Iconology: Humanist Themes in the Art of the Renaissance*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1939.

Paoletti, John T.. *Michelangelo's David: Florentine History and Civic Identity*. NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Parker, Deborar. "Vasari's *Portrait of Six Tuscan Poets:* A Visible Literary History." *Lectura Dantis* 22/23 (1998): 45–62.

Parronchi, Alessandro. "La perspettiva dantesca," *Studi danteschi* 36 (1959): 5-103.

Parronchi, Alessandro. "Paolo Uccello im Grünun Kreuzgang." In *Santa Maria Novella: Kirche, Kloster, und Kreuzgänge*, edited by Umberto Baldini, 134-155. Stuttgart: Urachhaus, 1982.

Parshall, Peter. "The Art of Memory and the Passion." *The Art Bulletin* 81.3 (1999): 456-472.

Passerini, G. L. 1921. *Il ritratto di Dante*. Firenze, 1921.

Patel, Anuradha, et al,. "Distraction with a Hand□Held Video Game Reduces Pediatric Preoperative Anxiety." *Pediatric Anesthesia* 16, no. 10 (2006): 1019-1027.

Pecchioli, Eleonora. *The Painted Facades of Florence*: *from the fifteenth to the Twentieth Century*. Florence: Centro Di, 2005.

Pedretti, Carlo. *Leonardo dopo Milano. La Madonna dei fusi.* Firenze: Giunti Barbera, 1982.

Pelletier, Chloe. "From Gold to Green: Visualizing the Environment in the Italian Renaissance." PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2021.

Peltonen, Matti Peltonen. "What is Micro in Microhistory?" In *Theoretical Discussion of Biography: Approaches from History, Microhistory, and Life Writing,"* edited by Hans Renders and Binne de Haan, 105-118. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013.

Perotti, Mario. “La Chiesa di San Vincenzo a Pombia.” *L'Ovest Ticino nel Medioevo: Terre, Uomini, Edifice*, edited by *L’Associazione Storica Pombiese*, 35–72. Novara: Interlinea Edizioni, 2000.

Peter, of Celle Bishop of Chartres; Hugh Feiss. Selected Works: Sermons. Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications. 1987.

Peterson, David S.. “The War of the Eight Saints in Florentine Memory and Oblivion.” In *Society and Individual in Renaissance* Florence,” edited by William J. Connell, 173-214. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

Philipot, Paul. “*Les Grisailles et les ‘Degres de Realité’ de l’Image dans la Peinture Flamande des XVe et XVIe Siècle.*” *Bulletin des Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique* (1966): 227-230.

Pilliod, Elizabeth . *Pontormo, Bronzino, Allori: A Genealogy of Florentine* Art. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001.

Pilliod, Elizabeth. "Representation, Misrepresentation, and Non-Representation: Vasari and his Competitors.” In Vasari's Florence, edited by Philip Jacks, 30-52. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Pilliod, Elizabeth. "The Influence of Michelangelo: Pontormo, Bronzino and Allori.” In *Reactions to the Master*, edited by Francis Ames-Lewis and Paul Joannides, 31-5. FL: Taylor and Francis, 1998.

Pilliod, Elizabeth. “Bronzino’s Household.” *Burlington Magazine* 134 (1992): 92-100; 2003.

Pilliod, Elizabeth. “Le Noli me tangere de Bronzino et la décoration de la Chapelle Cavalcanti de l'église Santo Spirito à Florence.” *Le Revue du Louvre* 41.5/6 (1991): 50-61.

Pilliod, Elizabeth. “Method and Practice in Bronzino’s Drawing Modes: From Study to Modello.” *Artibus et Historiae* 27.54 (2006): 95-127.

Pisani, Catarina Proto. *Il Chiostro dello Scalzo a Firenze*. Florence: Giorgi & Gambi, 1995.

Pitti, Palazzo. *Andrea del Sarto: dipinti e disegni a Firenze. Ministro per I Beni Culturali e Ambientali*. Firenze, 1986.

Platt, Veritty. “Orphaned Objects: The Phenomenology of the Incomplete in Pliny’s Natural History.” *Art History* 41.2 (2018): 494-496.

Pomponazzi, Pietro. “On the immortality of the soul (*De immortalitate animae*).” In *The Renaissance philosophy of man*, edited by Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oscar Kristeller, and John Hermann, 280-381. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2007.

Potto, Lorenzo.. *Children of the Promise: The Confraternity of the Purification and the Socialization of Youths in Florence, 1427-1785*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Powell, Hilary and Corinne Saunders. "Medieval and Early Modern Visions and Voices: Contexts and Approaches" In *Visions and Voice-Hearing in Medieval and Early Modern Contexts*, edited by Hilary Powel and Corinne Sanders, 1-14. Switzerland: Palgrave and Macmillan, 2021.

Preimesberger, Rudolf . *Paragons and Paragone: Van Eyck, Raphel, Michelangelo, Caravaggio, Bernini.* Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2011.

Presciutti, Diana. *Visual Cultures of Foundling Care in Renaissance Italy.* Farnham: Ashgate, 2015.

Previtali, Giovanni. *Giotto e la sua bottega*. Milan: Fabri, 1967.

Procacci, Ugo. "Di un scritto di Giovanni Bottari sulla conservazione e il restauro delle opera d'arte,' Bollettino dell'Istituto Centrale del Restauro 22-24 (1955):133.

Pudelko, Georg. "The Minor Masters of the *Chiostro Verde*," *The Art Bulletin* 17.1 (1935): 87.

Pugliese, Olga Zorzi. "Two Sermons by Giovanni Nesi and the Language of Spirituality in Late Fifteenth-Century Florence." *Bibliotèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 42 (1980): 641-656.

Pullan, Brian S.. "The S*cuole Grandi* of Venice. Some Further Thoughts." In Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento, edited by Timothy Verdon and John Henderson, 272-301. NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990.

Pullan, Brian S.. *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice: The Social Institutions of a Catholic State, to 1620*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1971.

Ragghianti, C. L.. "Andrea del Sarto in Cortona." *Critica d'Arte,* 1949-50.

Randolph, Adrian. "Gendering the Period Eye: Deschi da Parto and Renaissance Visual Culture," *Art History* 27.4 (2004): 538-562.

Randolph, Adrian. *Engaging Symbols: Gender, Politics, and Public Art in Renaissance Florence*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002.

Reeser, Todd W.. *Moderating Masculinity in Early Modern Culture*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

Reilly, Patricia. “The Taming of the Blue: writing out color in Italian Renaissance Theory.” In *The Expanding Discourse,* edited by Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard, 86-99. NY: Routledge, Taylor, & Francis Group, 1992.

Reilly, Patricia. “Triumphal Chiaroscuro Painting During the Reign of Julius II.” In *Eternal Ephemera,* edited by Jennifer Mara DeSilva and Pascale Rihouet, 125-164. Toronto: Center for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2016.

Reinert, A., and Robert Fredona. “Political Economy and the Medici.” *Business History Review* 94.1 (2020): 125-177.

Renders, Hans. “The Limits of Representativeness: Biography, Life Writing, and Microhistory.” In Theoretical Discussion of Biography: Approaches from History, Microhistory, and Life Writing, edited by Hans Renders and Binne de Haan, 129-138. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012.

Reutersward, Patrick. “The Breakthrough of Monochrome Sculpture during the Renaissance.” *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* 69 (2000): 125-149.

Reynolds, Jane Sears, and Marsilio Ficino. *Marsilio Ficino’s Commentary on Plato’s Symposium: The Text and a Translation, with an Introduction.* Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1944.

Reynolds, Joshua. "Discourse 8." In *Discourses on Art*, edited by Robert Wark. San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1959.

Rice, Yael and Sonja Drimmer, *How Scientists Use and Abuse Portraiture.* HyperAllergic, 2020. https://hyperallergic.com/604897/how-scientists-use-and-abuse-portraiture/.

Richa, Giuseppe. Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine vol. 7 (1758; reprint) Rome: Multigrafica, 1989.

Rinaldi, Furio. “Introducing Cartoons by Andrea del Sarto.” *Master Drawings* 54.1 (2016): 3-14.

Roberts, Sean E.. *Printing a Mediterranean World: Florence, Constantinople, and the Renaissance of Geography*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2013.

Roberts, Sean. “Antonio Rossellino, the *Eros* of Praxiteles, and Michelangelo’s *David*.” *Source: Notes in the History of Art* (2020): 219-229.

Robin, Patricia Lee. *Seen from Behind: Perspectives on the Male Body and Renaissance Art*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2018.

Rocke, Michael. “Sodomites in Fifteenth-Century Tuscany: The Views of Bernardino da Siena.” Journal of Homosexuality 16.1-2 (1989): 7-32.

Rocke, Michael. *Forbidden Friendships: Homosexuality and Male Culture in Renaissance Florence*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Romano, "A Depiction of Male Same-sex Seduction in Ambrogio Lorenzetti's 'Effects of Bad Government' Fresco." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 21.1 (2012): 1-15.

Rosenthal, David. *The Kings of the Street: Power, Community and Ritual in Renaissance Florence.* Turnhout: Brepols, 2015.

Roth, Cecil. *The Last Florentine Republic*. New York: Russell & Russell, 1968.

Rubin, Pat. *Seen from Behind: Perspectives on the Male Body and Renaissance Art.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2018.

Rubin, Patricia. *Giorgio Vasari: Art and History*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995.

Rutledge, Monica. "Dante the Body and Light." *Dante Studies* 113 (1995): 151-165.

Sabo, Don, Michael S. Kimmel, and Michael A. Messner. "Pigskin, Patriarchy, and Pain." *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States* (1998): 227-230.

Salmi, Mario. *L'abbazia di Pomposa.* Roma: Cassa di Risparmio, 1996.

Salvestrini, Francesco. "Associazionismo e devozione nella Compagnia di San Luca (1340 ca-1563)." In *Accademia delle Arti del Disegno: 450 anni di storia*, edited by Bert W. Meijer and Luigi Zangheri, 3-18. Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 2015.

Sandström, Sven. *Levels of Unreality: Studies in Structure and Construction in Italian Mural Painting During the Renaissance*. Uppsala: Almquist & Wiksells Boktryckeri Ab, 1963.

Saslow, James M.. *The Medici wedding of 1589: Florentine Festival as Theatrum Mundi*. New York: ACLS History E-Book Project, 2005.

Saslow, James. "'A Veil of Ice between my Heart and the Fire': Michelangelo's Sexual Identity and Early Modern Constructs of Homosexuality." *Genders* (1988): 77–90.

Saunders, David and Jo Kirby. "Light-induced Colour Changes in Red and Yellow Lake Pigments." *National Gallery Technical Bulletin* 15 (1994): 79-97.

Sbriscia-Fioretti, B., C. Berchio, D. Freedberg, V. Gallese, M.A. Umiltà. "ERP Modulation During Observation of Abstract Paintings by Franz Kline." PLOS ONE 8(10): e75241

Scannelli, Francesco. *Il Microcosmo della pittura*. Cesena, 1657.

Schäffner, Almut. *Terra Verde: Entwicklung und Bedeutung der monochromen Wandmalerei der italienischen Renaissance*. Weimar: Verlag und Datenbank für Geisteswissenschaft*,* 2009.

Schneider, Laurie. “Donatello and Caravaggio: The Iconography of Decapitation.” *American Imago* 33.1 (1976): 76-91.

Schulz, Juergen. "Michelangelo's Unifinished works.” *The Art Bulletin* 57.3 (1975): 368.

Schuyler, Jane. “Michelangelo’s Serpent with Two Tails.” Notes in the History of Art 9.2 (1990): 26.

Scigliano, Eric. *Michelangelo’s Mountain: The Quest for Perfection in the Marble Quarries of Carrara*. NY: Atria Books, 2014.

Sebredgondi, Ludovica.“Religious Furnishings and Devotional Objects in Renaissance Florentine Confraternities.” In *Crossing the Boundaries: Christian Piety and the Arts in Italian Medieval and Renaissance Confraternities*, edited by Konrad Eisenbichler, 141-160. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, 1991.

Sebregondi, Ludovica. “Di due dipinti 'confraternali'.” *Paragone* 45 (1994): 253-257.

Sebregondi, Ludovica. “La Soppressione Delle Confraternità Florentine: la Dispersione di un Patrimonio, le Possibilitá Residue Della sua Salvaguardia.” In *Confraternite, Chiese e Società: Aspetti e Problemi Dell'Associazionismo Laicale Europeo in età Moderna e Contemporanea*, edited by Liana Bertoldi Lenoci, 457-501. Fasano: Scheno, 1994.

Sebregondi, Ludovica. “Tracce per la Ricostruzione del Patrimonio Artistico delle Confraternitá Florentine Soppresse da Pietro Leopoldo.” *Rivista d'arte* 43.7 (1991): 229-244.

Sedgwick, Eve. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.

Sedgwick, Eve. *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.

Seriès, Peggy, Alan A. Stocker and Eero P. Simoncelli. “Is the Homunculus ‘Aware’ of Sensory Adaptation?” *Neural Comput* 21.12 (2009): 3271–3304.

Shearman, John. "Leonardo's Colour and Chiaroscuro." *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* (1962): 13-47.

Shearman, John. “A Lost Altarpiece by Andrea del Sarto ‘The Madonna of S. Ambrogio,’” *The Burlington Magazine* (1961).

Shearman, John. “Pontormo and Andrea del Sarto, 1513.” *The Burlington Magazine* 104.716 (1962): 450+ 478-483.

Shearman, John. “The Chiostro dello Scalzo.” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 9.3/4 (1960): 207-220.

Shearman, John. *Andrea del Sarto*. Vol. I. London: Oxford University Press, 1965.

Shearman, John. *Only Connect.* Princeton: Bollingen Series, 1988.

Shearman, John. *Pontormo’s Altarpiece in S. Felicita.* Newcastle: University of Newcastle, 1971.

Sherr, R.. “A Canon, a Choirboy, and Homosexuality in late Sixteenth-Century Italy.” Journal of Homosexuality 21.3 (1991): 1-22.

Simons, Patricia. "Giovanna and Ginevra: portraits for the Tornabuoni family by Ghirlandaio and Botticelli". *I Tatti Studies / Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies. (2013):* 103-135.

Simons, Patricia. "Homosociality and Erotics in Italian Renaissance Portraiture.” In *Portraiture: Facing the Subject*, edited by Joanna Woodall, 29-51. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997.

Simons, Patricia. "Lesbian (In)visibility in Italian Renaissance Culture: Diana and Other Cases of *donna con donna.*" *Journal of Homosexuality* 27.1-2 (1994): 81-122.

Simons, Patricia. "Separating the Men from the Boys: Masculinities in Early Quattrocento Florence and Donatello's Saint George." In *Rituals, Images, and Words*, edited by F.W. Kent and Charles Zika, 147-176. Turnhout: Brepols, 2005.

Simons, Patricia. "Women in Frames: the Gaze, the Eye, the Profile in Renaissance Portraiture.” In *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*, edited by Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard, pp. 38-57. NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 1992.

Simons, Patricia. “The Sex of the Artists in Renaissance Italy.” In *The Renaissance: Revised, Expanded, Unexpurgated*, edited by D. Medina Lasansky, 64-84. Pittsburgh and New York City: Periscope Publishing Ltd., 2014.

Simons, Patricia. *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe: A Cultural History.* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Skaug, Erling S.. "Towards a Reconstruction of the Santa Maria Degli Angeli Altarpiece of 1388: Agnolo Gaddi and Lorenzo Monaco?" *Mitteilungen Des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 48, no. 1/2 (2004): 245-57.

Smallwood, Stephanie E.. “The Politics of the Archive and History’s Accountability to the Enslaved.” *History of the Present* 6.2 (2016): 117–32.

Smith, Molly Teasdale. “The Use of Grisaille as Lenten Observance.” *Marsyas* 8 (1959): 43-54.

Snowden, S. T., R. J., & A. T. Smith, “Perceived Contrast as a Function of Adaptation Duration.” Vision Res., 34.1 (1994): 31–40.

Sohm, Philip. “Gendered Style in Italian Art Criticism from Michelangelo to Malvasia.” *Renaissance Quarterly* 48 (1995): 759-808.

Sola, Chrystelle, et al,. "Childhood Preoperative Anxiolysis: is Sedation and Distraction better than either alone? A Prospective Randomized Study." *Pediatric Anesthesia* 27, no. 8 (2017): 827-834.

Sommers, Christina Hoff. *The War Against Boys: How Misguided Feminism is Harming our Young Men*. NY: Touchstone, 2000.

Sperling, Christine M.. “Donatello’s Bronze ‘David’ and the Demands of Medici Politics.” *The Burlington Magazine* 134.1069 (1992): 218–24.

Stafford, Barbara. *A Field Guide to a New Meta-field: Bridging the Humanities--Neurosciences Divide*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2011.

Stafford, Barbara. *A Cognitive Historical Approach to Creativity*. New York: Routledge, 2019.

Stafford, Barbara. *Echo Objects: The Cognitive Work of Images*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Stefaniak, Regina. “Replicating Mysteries of the Passion: Rosso’s.” *Dead Christ with Angels*, *RQ* 45.4 (1992): 677-738.

Steinberg, Leo. “Pontormo’s Capponi Chapel.” *Art Bulletin* 56.3 (1974): 385-399.

Steinberg, Leo. *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and Modern Oblivion.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Pres, 1983.

Stendhal, Henri. Mélanges d’art. Paris, 1932.

Stephens, J. N.. *The Fall of the Florentine Republic, 1512-1530*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983.

Stoenescu, Livia. “Ancient Prototypes Reinstated: Zuccari’s *Encounter of Christ and Veronica* of 1594.” *The Art Bulletin* 93.4 (2011): 425.

Stoller, Silvia. "Reflections on feminist Merleau-Ponty Skepticism." *Hypatia* 15.1 (2000): 175-182.

Stoner, Joyce Hill, and Rebecca Anne Rushfield. *The Conservation of Easel Paintings*. Oxon and New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2021.

Stott, Deborah. "Fatte á Sembianza di Pitura: Jacopo Sansovino's Bronze Reliefs in S. Marco." *The Art Bulletin* 64.3 (1982): 370-388.

Strauss, Claudia. "Is Empathy Gendered and, if so, Why? An Approach from Feminist Psychological Anthropology." *Ethos* 32.4 (2004): 432-457.

Strocchia, Sharon T.. *Nuns and Nunneries in Renaissance Florence.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013.

Strocchia, Sharon. *Death and Ritual in Renaissance Florence.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.

Strozzi, Palazzo. "*Mostra del cinquecento toscano*" in Palazzo Strozzi, Firenze, (Aprile-Ottobre 1940): 32.

Sturr, Joseph F., Kelly, Susan A., and Kobus, David A., "Age-dependent magnitude of time course of early light adaptation," *Perception and Psychophysics* 31.4 (1982): 402.

Suarez, Ananda Cohen. "From the Jordan River to Lake Titicaca: Paintings of the Baptism of Christ in Colonial Andean Churches," *The Americas* 72.1 (2015): 103-140.

Summers, David. *Michelangelo and the Language of Art*. NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989.

Supino, J. B.. *Giotto*. Firenze, 1920.

Symeonidea, Sibilla. *Taddeo di Bartolo*. Siena: Accademia Senese degli Intronati, 1965.

Szafran and Chui, "A Perfectionist Revealed: The Resourceful Mind of Andrea del Sarto." In *Andrea del Sarto: The Renaissance Workshop in Action*, edited by Julian Brooks, Denise Allen, and Xavier Salomon, 13-19. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2015.

Tempesti, Anna Forlani. "Studiare dal Naturale nella Firenze di Fine '400." In *Florentine Drawings at the Time of Lorenzo the Magnificent*, edited by Elizabeth Cropper, 1-16. Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1992.

Terry, Allie. "Donatello's Decapitations and the Rhetoric of Beheading in Medicean Florence." *Renaissance Studies* 23.5 (2009): 609–38.

Thode, Henry. *Michelangelo Kritische Untersuchungen.* Vol. I. Berlin: G. Grote, 1908.

Thomas, Ben. "'The Lantern of Painting': Michelangelo, Daniele da Volterra and the Paragone." Apollo, 154, no. 474 (2001), 46-53.

Thompson, Daniel V.. *The Materials and Techniques of Medieval Painting.* New York: Dover, 1956.

Toccafondi, Diana. "L'archivio delle Compagnie Religiose Soppresse: una Concentrazione o una Costruzione Archivistica?" In *Dagli archivi all'Archivio: appunti di storia degli archivi fiorentini,* edited by Carlo Vivoli, 107-127. Florence: Edifir, 1991.

Tomas, Natalie. "Did Women Have a Space?" In *Renaissance Florence: A Social History*, edited by Roger J. Crumm and John T. Paoletti, 311-330. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Topper, David and Cynthia Gillis. "Trajectories of Blood: Artemisia Gentileschi and Galileo's parabolic path." *Women's Art Journal* 17.1 (1996): 10.

Tornielli, Guglielmo. *San Tommaso di Briga Novarese*. Oleggio: EOS Editrice, 1995.

Traub, Valerie. "History in the Present Tense: Feminist Theories, Spatialized Epistemologies, and Early Modern Embodiment," in *Mapping Gendered Routes and Spaces in the Early Modern World,* edited by Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, pp. 15-53. London: Routledge, 2016.

Trexler, Richard C.. "Who were the Eight Saints." *Renaissance News* 16.2 (89-94).

Trexler, Richard. "Florentine Religious Experience: The Sacred Image." *Studies in the Renaissance* 19 (1972): 7-41.

Trexler, Richard. "Follow the Flag: The Ciompi Revolt Seen from the Streets." *Bibliotèque d'Humanism et Renaissance* 46.2 (1984): 357-392.

Trexler, Richard. *Persons in Groups: Social Behavior as Identity Formation in Medieval and Renaissance Florence*. NY: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1985.

Trexler, Richard. *Power and Dependence in Renaissance Florence*. Asheville: Pegasus Press, 1993.

Trexler, Richard. *Public Life in Renaissance Florence.* NY: Academic Press, 1980.

Trexler, Richard. *The Children of Renaissance Florence: Power and dependence in Renaissance Florence*. Vol. 1 NC: Pegasus Press, 1993.

Trexler, Richard. *The Spiritual Power: Republican Florence Under Interdict*. Leiden: Brill, 1974.

Tyler, Christopher W. "Painters Center One Eye in Portraits." *Nature* 392 (1998): 877-878,

Umiltà, M.A., Berchio, C., Sestito, M., Freedberg, D., Gallese V., "Abstract Art and Cortical Motor Activation: an EEG Study," Frontiers in Human Neuroscience, 6 (2012).

Van Gennep, Arnold. *The Rites of Passage.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960.

Van Os, Hendrick W. *Sienese Altarpieces*/ I. Gronigen: Forsten, 1988.

Varchi, Benedetto. *Due Lezzioni di M. Benedetto Varchi*. Fiorenza: Lorenzo Torrentino, 1549.

Vasari-Milanesi, *Le Vite*, Vol. 5, 190: "*Imparò il Francia nella sua giovinezza, dimorando alcuni mesi con Mariotto Albertinelli*."

Vasari, Giorgio and Gaetano Milanesi. Le vite de' più eccelenti pittori, scultori, ed architettori. Florence: G. C. Sansoni, 1878-1885.

Ventrone, Paola. *Lo spettacolo religioso a Firenze nel Quattrocento*. Milano: Università cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Diritto allo studio, 2008.

Venturi, A.. *Storia dell'Arte Italiana, IX-1*. Milano: Hoepli, 1925.

Vitullo, Juliann. "Masculinity, Sexuality, and Orientalism in the Medieval Italian Epic." *Olifant* 21.1/2 (1996-1997): 77-78.

Volpe, Alessandro. "Pittura a Pomposa." In *Pomposa: Storia, Arte, Architettura,* edited by Antonio Samaritani and Carla di Francesco, 95-152. Ferrara: Corbo Editore, 1999.

Von Reumont, Alfred. 1835. *Andrea del Sarto*. Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus.

Wackernagel, Martin. *The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist: Projects and Patrons, Workshop and Art Market. T*ranslated by Alison Luchs. NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981.

Wagner, Hugo. *Andrea del Sarto. Seine Stellung zu Renaissance und Manierismus*. Strasbourg, 1951.

Waldman, Louis. "A Document for Andrea del Sarto's *Panciatichi Assumption.*" *The Burlington Magazine* 139.1132 (1997): 469-470.

Waling, Andrea. "Problematising "Toxic'and 'Healthy' Masculinity for Addressing Gender Inequalities," *Australian Feminist Studies* 34, no. 101 (2019): 362-375.

Wallace, William. "La Bella Mano: Michelangelo the Craftsman." *Artibus Et Historiae* 32, no. 63 (2011): 85-99.

Wallace, William. "Between Flood and Fire." *Notes in the History of Art* 31.2 (2012): 26.

Wallace, William. “Instruction and Originality in Michelangelo’s Drawings.” In *The Crat of Art: Originality and Industry in the Italian Renaissance and Baroque Workshop*, edited by A. Ladis and C. Wood, 113-133. Athens and London: 1995.

Wallace, William. “The Woman Behind Michelangelo’s *Cleopatra.*” *Artnews* 10 April 2013.

Weissman, Ronald E. *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence*. New York: Academic Press, 1982.

Welch, Evelyn. *Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer Cultures in Italy 1400-1600*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.

Wellen, Sanne. “Andrea del Sarto ‘pittore senza errori’: Between Biography, Florentine Society, and Literature,” PhD diss. Johns Hopkins University, 2003.

Wellen, Sanne. “La Guerra de’ Topi e de’ Ranocchi, Attributed to Andrea del Sarto: Considerations of the Poem’s Authorship, the Compagnia del Paiuolo, and Vasari.” *I Tatti Studies in the Italian renaissance* 12 (2009): 181-232.

Wilde, J.. “The Hall of the Great Council of Florence.” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 7 (1944): 65-81.

Wilson, Blake McDowell. *Singing to the Lyre in Renaissance Italy: Memory, Performance, and Oral Poetry*. NY: Cambridge University Press, 2020.

Wind, Edgar. “In Defense of Composite Portraits.” *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 1, no. 2 (Oct. 1937): 138–62.

Wisch, Barbara and Diane Ahl. C*onfraternities and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Italy: Ritual, Spectacle, Image*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Wolfthal, Diane. “Florentine Bankers, Flemish Friars, and the Patronage of the Portinari Altarpiece.” In *Cultural Exchange between the Low Countries and Italy (1400-1600)*, edited by Ingrid Alexander-Skipnes, 1-22. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007.

Wood, Kelli. "The Art of Play in Early Modern Italy." In *Cultures of Play: 1300-1700.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, forthcoming.

Wood, Kelli. “Balls on Walls, Feet on Street.” *Renaissance Studies* 32.3 (2018): 365-387.

Wulff, Oskar. “*Das Dante-Bildnis sein Ursprung und seine Entfaltung*.” *Kuntschronik und Kunstmarkt* 32 (1920): 90-92.

Zappella, Christine. “The Implicating Gaze in Bronzino’s *Cosimo de’ Medici as Orpheus* and the Intellectual Culture of the Accademia Fiorentina.” *Studies in Iconology* 42 (2021): 161-186.

Zchomelidse, Nino. “The Aura of the Numinous and its Reproduction: Medieval Paintings of the Saviour in Rome and Latium.” *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 55 (2010): 221-263.

Zhang, Angela. "*Investing in Infidels: Slavery in Trecento and Quattrocento Florence."* PhD diss., York University, forthcoming.

Zimmerman, A. M.. *Kalendarium Benedictinum: Die Heiligen und Seligen des Benediktineorderns und seiner Zweige,* 4 v. Metten, 1933.

Zorach, Rebecca. “Love, Truth, Orthodoxy, Reticence; or what Edgar Wind Didn’t Refer to in Botticelli’s *Primavera.*” *Critical Inquiry* 34 (2007): 190-224.

APPENDIX A

Dates of frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo, according to John Shearman. 1965. *Andrea del Sarto.* II vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press).

Fresco	Artist	Date	Style
North wall decorative elements	Andrea del Sarto	By Nov. 1, 1515	Style, 296
West wall decorative elements	Andrea del Sarto	By 30 Oct. 1516	Doc. 38
South wall decorative elements	Andrea del Sarto	By 20 February 1522	Doc. 57
Baptism of Christ	Andrea del Sarto	Variable, before 1514	Style. pp. 297-298
Charity	Andrea del Sarto	1511-1515	Style, pg. 298
Justice	Andrea del Sarto	By 1 Nov. 1515	Doc. 34
Preaching of St. John the Baptist	Andrea del Sarto	By 1 Nov. 1515	Doc. 34
Baptism of the Multitude	Andrea del Sarto	By 15 March 1517	Doc 40
Arrest of St. John the Baptist	Andrea del Sarto	By 19 July 1517	Doc. 45
East wall decorative elements	Franciabigio	By 3 April 1519	Doc. 57
Meeting of Christ and the Baptist	Franciabigio	By 3 April 1519	Doc. 57
***Blessing* by Zachariah**	Franciabigio	By 3 April 1519	Doc. 57
Dance of Salome	Andrea del Sarto	By 20 Jan 1522	Doc. 55
Execution	Andrea del Sarto	By 2 or 11 May 1523	Doc. 62
Feast of Herod	Andrea del Sarto	By May 1523	Doc. 66
Hope	Andrea del Sarto	By 22 August 1523	Doc. 77
Annunciation to Zachariah	Andrea del Sarto	By 22 August 1523	Doc. 77
Faith	Andrea del Sarto	Summer 1523 (?)	Pg. 304
The Visitation	Andrea del Sarto	By Nov. 1524	Doc. 80
The Birth of the Baptist	Andrea del Sarto	By 24 June 1526	Doc. 90