

Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura and the Rhetoric of Julian Justice

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# **RAPHAEL'S STANZA DELLA SEGNATURA AND THE RHETORIC OF JULIAN JUSTICE**

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## **DEDICATION**

For my parents, Trey and Kathleen, who showed me the Stanza for the first time.

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## ABSTRACT

Raphael's *School of Athens* (1508-1509), an icon of antiquity's rebirth, has become synonymous with the Renaissance. The image commonly appears on the covers of textbooks, where Plato and Aristotle command an assembly of philosophers populating one of the greatest illusionistic vistas in the history of Western art. Yet even though numerous volumes on this famous masterpiece crowd library shelves, scholars still struggle to untangle the complexities of the painting's design, and the fresco is too often divorced from its companion images in the Stanza della Segnatura. Recent studies have focused on identifying Raphael's intellectual advisor for the room's painted program, but scholars have avoided discussion of the artist's innovative manner. To address the Roman renewal of the Christian capital under Julius II, Raphael invented a novel classicism that emulated and rivaled the restoration of ancient eloquence, but this new pictorial rhetoric has been scarcely examined. A new course of interpretation — one that centers on the *Stanza's* most neglected aspect, the books it once housed — has the potential to redraft our understanding of how the artist's creative intellect reshaped the symbolic landscape of papal Rome.

Raphael (1483-1520) rose to fame in Renaissance Rome under the auspices of the warrior and canon lawyer Pope Julius II (1503-1513). Raphael's most famous works, his decorations in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, or the pope's private library, today known as the Stanza della Segnatura, include four frescoes: the *School of Athens* (Philosophy), the *Disputa* (Theology), the *Parnassus* (Poetry), and the *Jurisprudence* (Justice), which sing of the great books and heroes celebrated within the library walls. Astonishing though it may sound, no one has yet proposed a single theme that adequately unifies the disciplines

represented by the paintings and explains their collective meaning. By resituating the room, its images, and its collection of manuscripts and printed books within the literary milieu that defined the Julian court, I demonstrate that Raphael invented a lofty new pictorial rhetoric, one that extols the history of the Christian Church, announces the Millennium, and proclaims the theme of Julian Justice. What emerges is a new understanding of Raphael's innovative manner, and of Julius II not as a mere warrior, but as a considerable intellectual whose juridical ideology is closely tied to Raphael's designs. The result of my study is a major revision to the traditional account: At last it is clear that the Stanza della Segnatura was conceived as a literary and aesthetic ensemble, whose style and contents herald the Julian Golden Age as the New Jerusalem.

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### **APPENDIX 4: LATIN ENCOMIA IN THE BIBLIOTHECA IULIA**

## 1. Introduction: Raphael and the Pope's Library

### TO THE BOOKS:

You, dear books, who were obscured for some time  
 In a gloomy and miserable place,  
 And were submerged in Lethaeon forgetfulness  
 By the envy of spiteful men,  
 Are now restored to light and splendor,  
 And are returned to the hands of the learned.  
 Eminent Giuliano has given this to you,  
 He who commands the name and renown  
 Of his uncle Sixtus to be eternal,  
 And who prophetically extends the green branches  
 Of his tree across the whole world with his deeds,  
 This is what that great Giuliano has given to you.

So wrote Aurelio “Lippo” Brandolini, favored poet of Sixtus IV (Francesco della Rovere; 1471-1484), in a small volume extolling the humanistic triumphs of the pope's reign.<sup>1</sup> Playfully addressed to books, this forgotten poem takes up an almost unprecedented subject to underscore the restoration of literature to the city of Rome.<sup>2</sup> Interrupting verses otherwise devoted to the Sistine renewal of the Christian capital, the eulogy presents a second dedicatee, one who promises equally to revive and defend the papal domain through the pious sanction of text. The champion of the books is none other than the pope's nephew, Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere, the future Pope Julius II (1503-1513), warrior and canon lawyer. Julius II's biography has underscored his martial reputation and legendary *terribilità*, but Lippo's repeated emphasis on the status of books impresses a sympathy of interests with the cardinal and presents us with a new dimension of the pope's humanistic repertoire. Even more importantly, the poem offers a rare glimpse into

<sup>1</sup> The poem is totally unstudied. Today it survives in two related manuscripts, dating to the last years of the Sistine papacy. The earlier, undecorated draft is in Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (hereafter BAV) MS [REDACTED] ff. 5r-6r. The second, a presentation volume decorated with Giuliano's device, is in Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma: MS [REDACTED] ff. 6r-7r. See Appendix 1 for the full verse, with my accompanying translation.

<sup>2</sup> To my knowledge, the only similar contemporary example is found in BAV MS [REDACTED] and reads “ad librum” (f. 3v).

his intended legacy, for which books served as a principal metaphor. The verse ends with the welcome shade of the oak's branches, a literary haven defended by the cardinal: "Here he will protect you; here he alone will cherish you; here are honor and resources for your poet; here he will give you life; here he will give you peace; here he will nourish your brothers and sisters; here he will ensure the succession of your siblings; in this place will be your Lord; here will be your God."<sup>3</sup> The repetition of "here," *hīc*, can only refer to a library, where the leaves of the Della Rovere oak find their counterpart in the books' pages.

Julius II is remembered chiefly as "the warrior pope," and contemporaries were quick to remark that the pontiff seemed better suited to the front-lines of battle than to the quietude of a well-furnished study. But in spite of his martial reputation, the Julian legacy is measured above all by the extraordinary florescence of art and literature fostered during his reign, a union uniquely exemplified by the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, his private library in the Vatican Palace. Today known as the Stanza della Segnatura — the "signing room," so named by Vasari decades later when the space functioned as an audience chamber for the endorsement of papal bulls — the Julian library is famous for Raphael's images, painted between 1508 and 1511, wherein the greatest authors of the Western tradition are assembled in a magnificent visual catalogue. The room includes four frescoes: the *School of Athens* (representing Philosophy; fig. 1.1), the *Disputa* (Theology; fig. 1.2), the *Parnassus* (Poetry; fig. 1.3), and the *Jurisprudence* (Justice; fig. 1.4), which sing of the great books and heroes once shelved along the library's walls. Scholars still struggle to untangle the complexities of Raphael's designs, and the frescoes are too often divorced

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<sup>3</sup> Lines 34-39.

from their companion images. To give visible form to the harmony of the state under Julius II in jointly literary and artistic terms, Raphael invented a novel classicism that rivaled the restoration of ancient eloquence, but this new painterly rhetoric has scarcely been examined. Surprisingly, no one has yet considered how the Stanza's use influenced the meaning of its images, or has proposed a single theme that unifies the disciplines depicted in the paintings. A new course of interpretation — one that centers on the Stanza's most neglected aspect, the books it once housed — has the potential to redraft our understanding of how the artist's creative intellect reshaped the symbolic landscape of papal Rome. By resituating the Stanza, its decorations, and its texts within the literary milieu that defined the Julian court, I present in this dissertation a new reading of the space as a verbal and visual ensemble, for which Raphael invented an innovative pictorial rhetoric that extols the history of Christian Church, heralds the New Jerusalem, and proclaims the theme of Julian Justice.

### 1.1 History of the Commission and Execution

When he returned victoriously to Rome in 1507 after long campaign, Julius II set out to renovate his papal apartments on the third story of the Vatican Palace.<sup>4</sup> The pope had long bemoaned the suite of his predecessor, the infamous Alexander VI (Rodrigo Borgia; 1492-1503), but it was only after his triumphant reentry that Julius staked his own artistic claim on the upper floor, a move motivated by rising demands for ecclesiastical reform and by his ambition to remake the Christian capital, with the

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<sup>4</sup> Paris de Grassis, *Diarium*, as cited in Vincenzo Golzio, *Raffaello nei documenti nelli testimonianze dei contemporanei e nella letteratura del suo secolo* (Vatican City: 1936), p. 14.

Vatican as its precinct, in his image.<sup>5</sup> The four rooms at the heart of this project, now known as the Camere di Raffaello, include: the Sala di Costantino and the Stanza d'Eliodoro in the east, the Stanza della Segnatura in the center, and the Sala dell'Incendio in the west (fig. 1.5).<sup>6</sup> Taken together, the series of chambers envisions the sacred narrative of the Christian history of Rome, auspiciously fulfilled under the papal office. The Stanza della Segnatura was the immediate and special focus of these efforts — not only was the room the first in the suite to be decorated (and the only one completed before the pope's death), but it was also selected to enjoy privileged views of Bramante's new courtyard.<sup>7</sup>

Within a year Raphael arrived to join a team of distinguished painters already at work on the space, perhaps, as Vasari tells us, on the introduction of his friend and compatriot Bramante.<sup>8</sup> As Vasari also says, Julius II was so impressed with the young artist that he dismissed the others and ordered their handiwork destroyed, reassigning the task exclusively to Raphael. Few other works of similar scope and complexity have ever been completed, and Raphael's stunning invention of a distinctive new Roman manner

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<sup>5</sup> Julius occupied the upper apartments in 1505 and 1506, but only launched its redecoration in 1507. The Borgia apartments were decorated by Pinturicchio between 1492-1494; the frescoes represent an encyclopedic worldview of the Christian faith. Pinturicchio integrated distinctive Egyptian elements into the cycle, which Raphael's style Roman classicism might be thought to counter. On the Borgia apartments and their paintings, see Salvatore Volpini, *L'appartamento Borgia nel Vaticano* (Rome: Tip. della Buona Stampa, 1887); Federico Hermanin, *L'appartamento Borgia in Vaticano* (Rome: Danesi, 1934); Jonathan B. Riess, "Raphael's Stanze and Pinturicchio's Borgia Apartments," in: *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 3.4 (1984), pp. 57–67; and Brian Curran, *The Egyptian Renaissance: The Afterlife of Egypt in Early Modern Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), Chapter Six in particular.

<sup>6</sup> John Shearman, "The Vatican Stanze: Functions and Decorations," in: *Proceedings of the British Academy* 57 (1971), has convincingly argued that these rooms were assigned the following functions during the Julian papacy: the Sala di Costantino probably served as the Aula pontificum superior; the Sala d'Eliodoro was an audience chamber; the Stanza della Segnatura was the *Bibliotheca Iulia*; and the Sala dell'Incendio was the Apostolic Signatura or the Triclinium penitius.

<sup>7</sup> The Stanza's cross-vault was also modified and its edges smoothed, probably by Bramante. See John Shearman, "Raphael as Architect," in: *Journal of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts* 116 (1968), p. 396; and *ead.* (1971), p. 186.

<sup>8</sup> Including Perugino, Luca Signorelli, Sodoma, and the Dutch miniaturist Johannes Ruysch.

cemented his status as the leading painter of his day. Embodying the intersection of humanist interests in ancient history, literature, and philosophy, as well as the papal response to demands for theological and ecclesiastical reform, Raphael's frescoes in the Stanza della Segnatura envision a composite picture of knowledge. In their harmony of subjects and style, the paintings boast a deep intellectual synchronism, an internal order and coherence of meaning that exemplify cultures of learning in the Rome of Julius II. Few paintings are more bibliographic, or more invested in activities of reading. Opening onto the vast vistas of literary history, Raphael's frescoes envisage the authorial tradition, and we bear witness as the written word is composed, debated, and made canon.

The glittering web of figures in the ceiling diagrams the union of disciplines set out in Raphael's frescoes (fig. 1.6). At the center of the vault, an octagonal *quadratura* preserves the coat of arms of Nicholas V (1447-1455), under whose patronage the Vatican Palace and library were founded.<sup>9</sup> Playfully painted *di sotto in sù*, twelve *putti* lower the papal device and unify the space under the pontifical office. Around the octagonal oculus, four allegorical *tondi* announce the disciplines pictured on the walls with their accompanying mottos. The space between them is spanned by a quilt of miniature panels and episodic *riquadri*. Like the illusionistic oculus, the small frames were probably painted by Sodoma, with the help of the Flemish miniaturist Johannes Ruysch, before Raphael's arrival. Nearest to the *quadratura*, grisaille panels juxtapose moments from ancient Roman history; below them, colorful mythologies transpose the

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<sup>9</sup> The octagon was originally circular; Sodoma transformed the shape of the *quadratura* prior to the other paintings. The network of *grotteschi* and the grisaille panels are attributed to Ruysch. Each was paid 50 ducats for his work. See John Shearman, "Raphael's Unexecuted Projects for the Stanze," in: *Walter Friedländer zum 90. Geburtstag* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1965), p. 160; *ead.*, *Raphael in Early Modern Sources, 1483-1602* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 125; see also Roger Jones and Nicholas Penny, *Raphael* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), p. 56.



cosmic order of the elements and impress celestial balance.<sup>10</sup> In the corners of the vault, large rectangular fields or *riquadri* interconnect the disciplines represented in the frescoes. Joining Theology and Justice, Eve and the serpent persuade Adam to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. Imagining the *Fall of Man*, the *riquadro* illustrates the scriptural history of divine law and its spiritual jurisdiction. Between Justice and Philosophy, the *Judgment of Solomon* describes the legal enactment of philosophical wisdom. Bridging Philosophy and Poetry, the Muse *Urania* spins the spheres. In the *Flaying of Marsyas*, which links Poetry to Theology, the competition of Apollo and the satyr gives ancient flavor to metaphors of divine inspiration and frenzy.

According to Vasari, Raphael launched his career in Julian Rome on the eastern wall of the Stanza della Segnatura: Philosophy, popularly known as the *School of Athens*. In light of its stunning compositional virtuosity, scholars have typically placed the fresco second in the Stanza's sequence of execution, but Vasari's chronology is corroborated by the rough quality of its plaster and distinctive features of its *giornate*.<sup>11</sup> The painting sets the formal and iconographic tone for the room's decoration at large. Against the backdrop of a soaring barrel vault and open dome, Raphael imagined one of the greatest illusionistic vistas in the history of Western art. The fresco's architectural landscape,

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<sup>10</sup> The small panels are essentially unstudied; the only essay to discuss them in meaningful detail, establishing the order of the elements, is Edgar Wind, "The Four Elements in Raphael's 'Stanza della Segnatura,'" in: *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 2.1 (1938), pp. 75-79.

<sup>11</sup> Raphael appears to have struggled with Roman *pozzolana*, the volcanic ash that once served as an essential binding agent in ancient concrete. The plaster used for the upper half was poorly mixed; its low quality gave way to small cracks and chips, a shortcoming that was apparently resolved before Raphael undertook the fresco's lower half using an improved plaster recipe consistent with the other frescoes. Furthermore, throughout the *School of Athens*, Raphael traced pouncing marks with a stylus, incised directly into the plaster. In the final *giornate* — the Ptolemy group, at the right of the composition — he instead used a brush to draw outlines of the figures. This second technique is found on all other walls, as well as in the ceiling. On the restoration of the fresco and its significance for the chronology of the room, see Arnold Nesselrath, "Raphael and Pope Julius II," in: *Raphael: From Urbino to Rome*, ed. Hugo Chapman, Tom Henry, and Carol Plazzotta (London: National Gallery, 2004), pp. 281-288 in particular.

recalling Rome's ruined baths and basilicas, is unprecedented in fifteenth-century painting and Raphael's *oeuvre* alike. Framed by the rigorous recession of triple arches, Plato and Aristotle command a sweeping assembly of philosophers, whose spirited debates give visible form to the activities and systems of knowledge. Affirming the subject of his *Timaeus*, behind which the painting's perspectival rays converge, Plato points to the realm of Ideas above. With the *Ethics* under his arm, Plato's student Aristotle outstretches an open hand over the rational world. Their pairing at the center of the painting is a monumental expression of the *concordia Platonis et Aristotelis*, or the harmony of their teachings under the banner of humanistic philosophy. The correspondence of their thought in the literature of contemporary Christian Neoplatonists has been the considered focus of academic study of the Stanza. Edgar Wind, Eugenio Garin, Heinrich Pfeiffer, Ingrid Rowland, and Christiane Joost-Gaugier, to name a few, have recognized the ideas of Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola behind the painting's sophisticated philosophical symmetry.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, the *pax philosophica* enunciated so eloquently in the fresco is reinforced in the ceiling by the crowning *tondo*. Cloaked in the elements, Philosophy's eidolon carries in her lap the *libri moralis* and

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<sup>12</sup> Edgar Wind first proposed that Raphael's figures could be reconciled in light of this humanistic doctrine in a brief note in: *Art and Anarchy* (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), pp. 62-63. In a series of unpublished papers now in the Bodleian Library, Wind later explained the *concordia* and indeed the landscape of the frescoes in terms of the philosophical writings of Ficino and Pico. See also "Raffaello e la 'pace filosofica,'" in: *Umanisti, artisti, scienziati* (Rome: Riuniti, 1989), pp. 171-181; Heinrich Pfeiffer, S.J., *Zur Ikonographie von Raffaels Disputa. Egidio da Viterbo und die Christlich-Platonische Konzeption der Stanza della Segnatura* (Rome: Università Gregoriana, 1975); Ingrid D. Rowland, "The Intellectual Background of the *School of Athens*: Tracking Divine Wisdom in the Rome of Julius II," in *Raphael's School of Athens*, ed. Marcia Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 131-170; and Christiane Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura: Meaning and Invention* (Cambridge, U.K. and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002). To this list, we may also add: Gunnar Danbolt, "Triumph concordiae: A Study of Raphael's Camera della Segnatura," in: *Kunsthistorisk Tidskrift* 44.3-4 (1975), pp. 70-84; and Giovanni Reale, *Raffaello: La Scuola di Atene. Una nuova interpretazione dell'affresco, con il cartone a fronte* (Milan: Rusconi, 1997).

*naturalis*, which echo the *Timaeus* and the *Ethics*. Two *putti* beside her summarize the painting's broad subject: CAUSARUM COGNITIO, or "knowledge of causes."

Facing Philosophy on the western wall, Theology or the *Disputa* offers a spiritual analogue to the *School of Athens*. Spanning a perspectival pavement that advances Philosophy's tiled floor, the *Disputa*'s golden dome of heaven replicates a Christian apse, an architectural significance that is underscored by the location of the fresco in the "liturgical east," mirroring the orientation of Saint Peter's itself. Reinventing the formal themes of the *sacra conversazione*, Raphael divided the fresco into three hierarchical planes: on the lowest level, Christian theologians congregate around the sparkling altar table and contemplate the mysteries of the Eucharist.<sup>13</sup> Hovering above them, biblical patriarchs are seated on ephemeral thrones of cloud *putti*. Higher still, Seraphic bodies take their shape from the illuminated rays of the sun, whose golden disk caps the imagined church below and extends a brilliant vault over the sacred space. Along the vertical axis of the painting, God the Father, Christ, the orb of the Holy Spirit, and the golden monstrance, where the painting's perspectival rays converge, preside over the unfolding drama of the Sacrament and direct the represented hierarchy of faith. Although scholars have often described the fresco as a contentious debate, there is no dispute here; instead, Raphael envisioned a lively *disputazione*, an energetic theological discussion in the scholastic tradition. This distinction is pronounced by the roundel in the ceiling,

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<sup>13</sup> As Marcia Hall has noted in her short essay, "History and Commission of the Scheme," in: Hall (1997), p. 11.

whose eidolon, holding a book and pointing emphatically to the scene below, professes the motto: DIVINARUM RERUM NOTITIA, or “knowledge of divine things.”<sup>14</sup>

The facing Albertian constructions in the *School of Athens* and the *Disputa* are without monumental precedent. These impressive compositional echoes not only establish the mutual transcendence of the intellectual disciplines, but also determine the governing order of the entire chamber. With corresponding vanishing points, behind the *Timaeus* and the Eucharist, respectively, the two frescoes compel an ideal viewer to behold the stages of space pictured within. To view the paintings as intended, the observer must stand at the relative center of the room, below the octagonal *quadratura*, where descending *putti* lower the papal tiara. In this way, the eastern and western walls project a three dimensional order reconciled only by the participation of a specific viewer, the person of the pope. Or, conversely, the Stanza’s unified perspectival system suggests that anyone who properly contemplates the frescoes is worthy of the papal tiara. In either case, the tiara faces the *Disputa* and designates the precedence of Theology, on whose altar the name of Julius II is twice inscribed and where the fresco cycle ultimately culminates.

On the windowed northern wall, Raphael conceived of Poetry as the pastoral paradise of Apollo, the *Parnassus*. The fresco comes third in the series of the Stanza’s decoration, as late drawings for the *Disputa*, which also include early sketches for the *Parnassus*, now attest.<sup>15</sup> Crowned with laurel wreaths, ancient and modern poets rhythmically gather along the mountain’s swell, as if visual articulations of the prosodic

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<sup>14</sup> As in the case of all four frescoes, Vasari gave the *Disputa* the name that has stuck for centuries. Scholars have generally understood “disputare” in terms of its modern translation, miscasting the composition as a “dispute” in the controversial sense.

<sup>15</sup> See again Nesselrath (1997), p. 285.

meters. Although Vasari claimed to recognize Boccaccio and Tibaldeo among the painting's poets, few are definite; only Sappho is labeled. On the mountain's crest, Homer motions blindly; behind him, in unmistakable profile, Dante trails the gesturing Virgil. The summit of *Parnassus* is reserved for the divine: here the chorus of Muses lyrically encircles the seated Apollo. With the creative waters of the Castalian spring flowing just beneath his feet, the god inhales a frenzied breath and plays a contemporary *lira da braccio*. His heavenward gaze reveals the sacred source of his song. Poetry is personified in the ceiling, where a winged genius looks toward Theology and delivers the inscription: NUMINE AFFLATUR, or "it [poetry] is inspired by the divine."

Hastily revised in mid-1511, the southern wall, the *Jurisprudence*, is dedicated to Justice. Of the four disciplines and their attendant frescoes, Justice has received the least attention by far. Thanks, in part, to the painting's hurried execution and its poor preservation, scholars have tacitly regarded the *Jurisprudence* as visually uninteresting and less complex than its companion images. Unlike the *Parnassus*, where a splash of figures garlands the window frame, the southern window bay is off center and to the left, interrupting the unity of its wall; this irregular feature was undoubtedly one of the significant compositional challenges Raphael faced in his designs, which he attempted to resolve by unifying the left and right fields under the Cardinal Virtues.<sup>16</sup> Alongside the window frame, the artist abbreviated the temporal and spiritual syllabus of law. To our left, under the legislative apse of an ancient basilica, sits the Byzantine emperor, Justinian (c. 483-565), the champion of Roman law and the principal author of the *corpus iuris*

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<sup>16</sup> On the problem of the window, see Paul Johannides, *The Drawings of Raphael: With a Complete Catalogue* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), p. 196.

*civilis*.<sup>17</sup> Clear preference is given to civil law's apostolic complement — canon law, or the *corpus iuris canonici* — which occupies the larger field on the window's right, significantly aligned with the *Disputa*. In the guise of Pope Gregory IX, Julius II receives the *Decretals*, the first collection of canon law, whose universal authority made it the essential text of the legal jurisdiction of the Church.<sup>18</sup>

In the upper lunette, painted *di sotto in sù*, the Cardinal Virtues (Fortitude, Prudence, Temperance, and Justice) are pictured as female figures. Unifying civil and canon law in the frames below, they evoke the precepts of medieval jurists, who were preoccupied with their definition as the governing agents of natural law.<sup>19</sup> A powerfully modeled Fortitude embraces the head of her attributive lion and grasps the trunk of an oak, an obvious allusion to Julius II and the Della Rovere. With her Janus face, Prudence simultaneously looks forward and back. She is flanked by two putti: one bears her usual mirror and the other a flaming torch. On our far right, Temperance counters Fortitude in her pose and purpose: her reins and bit restrain the passions with commitment and control. Not simply attendants, the putti envision the virtues of Christian grace and complete the cycle of Catholic Virtues: Charity plucks acorns from Fortitude's oak; according to Augustine, the mirror and the torch are the attributes of Faith; and Hope

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<sup>17</sup> Justinian is credited with ordering the compilation of the *Digests*, the *Institutes*, and the *Codex Iustinianus*; the *Novellae Constitutiones* were added later.

<sup>18</sup> See Loren Partridge and Randolph Starn, *A Renaissance Likeness: Art and Culture in Raphael's Julius II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 3. The image closely resembles Raphael's 1511 portrait of the pope. The association can be made largely on the basis of the beard, which Egidio da Viterbo had claimed was the first to be worn by any pope for centuries. The beard was first grown following Julius's long illness at Bologna in 1510, reported in documents until March of 1512.

<sup>19</sup> See Gillian R. Evans, *Law and Theology in the Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 15; István P. Bejczy, "Law and Ethics: Twelfth-Century Jurists on the Virtue of Justice," in: *Viator* 36 (2005), pp. 197-216; and *ead.*, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages: A Study in Moral Thought from the Fourth to the Fourteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 81-82.

gestures toward heaven.<sup>20</sup> Elevated to the ceiling, Justice reigns over the others morally and visually. Just as Justinian and the canonist Gratian ranked Justice ahead of her companion virtues as the basis of natural order, so Raphael placed her in the *tondo* overhead. Wielding her sword and scales, Justice affirms her authority: IUS SUUM UNICUIQUE TRIBUIT, or “to give each his due.”

## 1.2 The Library of Julius II

The obvious measure for any papal collection is the Vatican Library, the *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, today the finest institution of its kind. In contemporary sources and the modern academic record alike, the Vatican Library is heralded as the greatest living achievement of Sixtus IV, whose bull of 1475 (*Ad decorem militantis ecclesiae*) ensured the library’s permanent place as the intellectual armature of the Church to promote its universal authority. Under Sixtus, the Vatican collection was significantly expanded, its facilities improved, and new staff appointed.<sup>21</sup> The revivification of the library under the Della Rovere testifies to the institution’s new

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<sup>20</sup> As shown by Edgar Wind, “Platonic Justice,” in: *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 1 (1937), pp. 69-70. Wind explains the removal of Justice to the ceiling in Platonic terms. In the *Republic*, Socrates searches for Justice but cannot find it; he only sees it when he recognizes that Justice underlies the others and assigns each virtue its function.

<sup>21</sup> Nicholas V (1447-1455) put into place the purpose and structure of the Vatican Library, but scholars agree that it was Sixtus who channeled these efforts toward the official foundation of the library as an institution. The literature on the Vatican Library is vast, and here I summarize the most useful and representative of these works here. See José Ruyschaert, “Sixte IV, fondateur de la Bibliothèque vaticane (15 juin 1475),” in: *Archivum historiae Pontificiae* (1969), pp. 515-516; David Mycue, “Founder of the Vatican Library: Nicholas V or Sixtus IV,” in: *The Journal of Library History* (1974-1987) 16.1 (1981), pp. 121-133; *The Vatican Library: Its History and Treasures*, ed. Leonard E. Boyle et al. (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1989); *Rome Reborn: The Vatican Library and Renaissance Culture*, ed. Anthony Grafton (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Ingrid D. Rowland, *The Culture of the High Renaissance: Ancients and Moderns in Sixteenth-Century Rome* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 125 ff.; *Storia della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana: Le origini della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana tra umanesimo e Rinascimento (1147-1534)*, ed. Antonio Manfredi (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2010).

symbolic status as a visible marker of Christian history. Wedding apostolic doctrine to the humanistic *studium urbis* as the embodied testament of the Word of God, the Vatican Library served to facilitate the transmission of the *logos* through carefully curated systems of knowledge.

That Sixtus conceived of the Vatican Library as a principal dynastic metaphor is confirmed above all by the fresco of Melozzo da Forlì (c. 1476-1481; fig. 1.7), originally intended for the entryway to the Vatican reading rooms.<sup>22</sup> Melozzo's fresco is frequently cited as a compositional *comparandum* for Raphael's *Jurisprudence*, but its combination of text and image also points to the status of books as the verbal and visual instruments of Rome's restoration as the Christian *caput mundi* and as the catalogues of the papal worldview. Festooned with golden acorns, Melozzo's stately interior surely depicts the library itself, and the painting both commemorates the foundation of the new institution and hails the pope and his nephews as the harbingers of a new literary capital. At the near center of the composition, Bartolomeo "Platina" Sacchi — one of Rome's leading humanistic scholars, whom Sixtus invested as the library's new custodian — gestures toward a Latin epigram in the lower register:

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<sup>22</sup> On the location of the fresco, see the restoration reports and diagram published by Fabrizio Mancinelli, "Restauri in Vaticano, 1967," in: *Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia Romana d'Archeologia* 48 (1975-1976), p. 489; see also Isabelle Frank, *Melozzo da Forlì and the Rome of Sixtus IV (1471-1484)*, Ph.D. dissertation (Harvard, 1991), pp. 318-320; and Matthias Winner "Papa Sisto IV quale 'exemplum virtutis magnificentiae' nell'affresco di Melozzo da Forlì," in: *Arte, committenza ed economia a Roma nelle corti del Rinascimento (1420-1530)*, ed. Arnold Esch and Christoph Luitpold Frommel (Turin: Einaudi, 1996), p. 185.



Because you, Sixtus, made temples, built homes for the dispossessed,  
 repaired streets, courts, ramparts, and bridges,  
 And restored the virgin springs of Trevi,  
 And even though you now establish ports  
     to give ancient convenience to the sailors,  
 And build a yoke to gird the Vatican,  
 Still the city owes you more, for that which was hidden in squalor,  
 Has been distinguished in a fitting place: the library.<sup>23</sup>

Like Lippo's poem, the verse represents something of a papal *res gestae*, an index of Sistine euergetism that takes the Vatican Library as its literal and symbolic high note. Gathered around the seated figure of the pope from left to right, Giovanni della Rovere (1457-1501), Girolamo Riario (1443-1488), Giuliano della Rovere, and the teenage Raffaele Riario (1460-1521) are the family's spiritual and sovereign agents.<sup>24</sup> Not only were they among Italy's most ambitious patrons and soldiers; they also built deluxe libraries of their own. The literary patronage of Raffaele, for example, is witnessed by richly illuminated manuscripts and volumes of dedicatory verse.<sup>25</sup> His cousin, Cardinal

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<sup>23</sup> *Templa domum expositis: vicos fora moenia pontes:  
 virgineam trivil quod repararis aquam  
 prisca licet navtis statvas dare commoda portvs:  
 et vaticanvm cingere sixte ivgvm:  
 plvs tamen vrbs debet: Nam qvae squalore latebat:  
 cernitvr in celebri bibliotheca loco.*

<sup>24</sup> The figures in Melozzo's fresco have been the subject of some speculation and debate. José Ruyschaert dated the fresco to 1481 and identified Giuliano della Rovere (indisputable in his crimson robes), Pietro Riario, Girolamo Riario, Leonardo della Rovere, and Antonio Basso della Rovere, suggesting that the latter was removed at some point in the painting's production. He also argued that the librarian Giovanni Andrea Bussi — close friend of Nicholas Cusanus and Cardinal Bessarion — was represented in the place of Platina in earlier compositions, but replaced after his death. The figures were convincingly re-identified some decades later. I subscribe to the argument that the fresco was completed in 1477 in celebration of the Sistine Jubilee (1475). For an overview of the problems of identity and dating, with a useful bibliography, see Eunice D. Howe, *Art and Culture at the Sistine Court: Platina's "Life of Sixtus IV" and the Frescoes of the Hospital of Santo Spirito* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2005), pp. 60-68 in particular.

<sup>25</sup> The most famous of these is his copy of Cicero's *De amicitia*, produced by the scribe Bartolomeo Sanvito, now in the Morgan Library, New York (MS M.883, c. 1495). Another Riario, Raffaele's cousin Pietro (1445-1474) was a prodigal collector and literary patron, under whom the cardinal's palace at SS. XII Apostoli was first begun. Some scholars have speculated that Sixtus' attention was intensely focused on Pietro's library instead of his own, and that the pope took up plans for the Vatican Library only after his nephew's unexpected death in 1474. See Egmont Lee, *Sixtus IV and Men of Letters* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1978), pp. 105-110 and 121-122; also Nicholas Clark, *Melozzo da Forlì: Pictor Papalis* (London: Harper and Row), p.22, n. 10.

Domenico della Rovere (1442-1501) was both an enthusiastic supporter of the *studium urbis* and the founder of an impressive collection of luxury manuscripts and printed books, a precious wealth of which survives by rare and lucky chance in Turin and New York.<sup>26</sup> Another Sistine nephew Girolamo Basso della Rovere (1434-1507) acquired an assortment of sumptuous books from Rome's leading poets and philosophers, some of which were inherited after his death by his cousin, the future Pope Julius II.<sup>27</sup> The near center in Melozzo's painting, Cardinal Giuliano occupies a prominent place in the composition that stresses his importance for the Vatican collection and for his uncle's nepotistic ambitions. Standing before the single Corinthian capital, Julius is the figurative pillar of Vatican Library, and other than Platina, he is the only figure to stare directly at Sixtus.<sup>28</sup>

Like his uncle Sixtus, Julius II seized upon the ideological virtue of libraries to fortify his office, and even before his rise to the papacy, he appears to have been something of a bibliophile. During his cardinalship (1471-1503), Julius established private libraries in the new palace apartments of San Pietro in Vincoli and Santi XII

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<sup>26</sup> The best-known of these objects is the so-called Della Rovere Missal, today housed in the Archivio di Stato in Turin: MS J.b.II.4. Domenico's library is estimated to have contained at least 150 volumes, most of which is preserved in Turin (in the Archivio di Stato, the Museo Civico, and the Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria) as well as in the Morgan Library in New York. Some mutilated pages survive in the British Library in London. In the *De cardinalatu* of Paolo Cortesi, dedicated to Julius II and listed on the inventory of the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, Domenico's library is described as a public institution open to scholars of all kinds. Although the contents of the collection were broad and included the classical disciplines, the emphasis appears to have been ecclesiastical. For a detailed report of the library, its contents, and its archival history, see Silvana Pettenati, "La biblioteca di Domenico della Rovere," in: *Domenico della Rovere e il Duomo Nuovo di Torino: Rinascimento a Roma e in Piemonte*, ed. Giovanni Romano (Turin: Cassa di Risparmio di Torino, 1990), pp. 41-106.

<sup>27</sup> Julius notably commissioned Girolamo Basso's tomb in Santa Maria del Popolo in 1509. The manuscripts he inherited from his cousin are: BAV MSS [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; and [REDACTED]. See the appendix.

<sup>28</sup> On the iconographic significance of the column, see Rowland (1997), pp. 135-136.

Apostoli, which contemporary sources celebrated for their beautiful paintings.<sup>29</sup> As the Archbishop of Avignon and papal legate (1475-1476), he founded (through his uncle's provisions) the Collège du Roure, to which he and Sixtus gifted the library of the Avignonese popes — one of medieval Europe's premier collections, revered for its outstanding legal holdings.<sup>30</sup> With this model in mind, Julius built his own private library in Avignon's Apostolic Palace, which was later transferred to the Palais de Poitiers and eventually scattered.<sup>31</sup> A small fresco in the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia in Rome (fig. 1.8), clearly modeled after Melozzo's composition, envisions Cardinal Giuliano as a principal minister — perhaps even his uncle's partner — in the founding of the Vatican Library: together with Sixtus IV in the library's reading room, Julius presents the new collection.<sup>32</sup> These bibliophilic efforts were maintained and accelerated even after his elevation to the *cathedra petri* in 1503, and Julius both improved the collection of the Vatican Library and refitted its facilities with lavish new decorations.<sup>33</sup> Julius II was alone in neither ambition nor practice, and the privileged status of books during his cardinalship and papacy responds to a long tradition of arming martial and cultural

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<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the *opus sectile* pavement is consistent across these spaces. For contemporary descriptions of these spaces, see Francesco Albertini, *Opusculum de mirabilibus nove et veteris urbis Romae* [Rome, 1510], ed. August Schmarsow (Heilbronn: 1886), p. 35; also Ludwig Freiherr von Pastor, *The History of the Popes: From the Close of the Middle Ages. Drawn from the Secret Archives of the Vatican and Other Original Sources* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, and Co., 1902), p. 457, note.

<sup>30</sup> The patronage of the Della Rovere in Avignon is understudied, but during his residence there (both during his episcopate and self-imposed exile), Julius founded tremendous artistic and intellectual endowments. See Hastings Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895), vol. 2, pp. 175-176; and Léon Honoré Labande, "Les manuscrits de la bibliothèque d'Avignon provenant de la librairie des papes du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle," in: *Bulletin historique et philologique* (1894), pp. 145-160.

<sup>31</sup> Louis Jacob de Saint Charles, *Traicté des plus belles bibliothèques publiques et particulieres qui ont est, & qui sont à present dans le monde* (Paris: Rolet le Duc, 1644), pp. 609-610.

<sup>32</sup> Howe has argued that the frescoes were designed by Platina as a complement to his Latin "Life of Sixtus IV." On the panel above, see pp. 114-116.

<sup>33</sup> Although the specific details of these initiatives are now lost, their general measures survive in the writings of Sigismondo Ticci, BAV MS Chigi G.II.37 f. 231r-232v, cited and translated by Ingrid D. Rowland, "Rome at the Center of a Civilization," in: *The Renaissance World*, ed. John Jeffries Martin (New York and London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 44-45.

domains with comparable intellectual richness. Following in the footsteps of powerful fifteenth-century sovereigns like the Medici, Matthias Corvinas, and above all Sixtus IV, Julius II marshaled the institution of the library as a means not only of excavating and curating the textual legacy of the classical past, but also of situating his reign within the authoritative terms of the written word.<sup>34</sup>

The most famous of these enterprises sits at the center of the Julian apartments: the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, or the Stanza della Segnatura. Although Pietro Bembo likened the splendor of the Julian collection to the ornaments in his *Bibliotheca*, the importance of the library's function for its decorations has been mostly ignored.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, no sustained study of the library's inventory has yet been undertaken, and even though Raphael labeled certain titles in the paintings, the significance of the volumes for the Stanza's visual scheme has never been considered.<sup>36</sup> It would seem that neither the library's books nor Raphael's monumental images can be understood the one without the other, and by reconstructing the contents of the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, it is possible to illuminate forgotten aspects of the Julian papacy and reframe our understanding of Raphael's designs. I argue that Raphael, capitalizing on the *Bibliotheca* as an ideal site for the shared histories of word and image, transformed the frescoes into a visual thesis on contemporary theories of literary and artistic composition, and that the paintings were conceived with the unique contents of the Julian volumes in mind.

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<sup>34</sup> The great libraries cited by Paolo Cortesi in his *De cardinalatu* (1510), which he dedicated to Julius II and was housed in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*: BAV [REDACTED].

<sup>35</sup> In a letter dated January 20, 1513. See *Epistularum familiarum libri VI* (Venice: 1552), p. 188.

<sup>36</sup> The inventory, taken after the death of Julius II by librarian Romolo Mammacino, was published by Léon Dorez, "La Bibliothèque privée du pape Jules II," in: *Revue des bibliothèques* (1896), pp. 97-126. The document was later revisited by Giovanni Morello, who published a brief overview and surveyed the small cache of then-known examples in *Raffaello e la Roma dei Papi* (Rome: Palombi, 1986), pp. 51-67.

### 1.3 The Julian Inventory

What *were* the papal volumes? Ernst Gombrich considered the problem of texts the Stanza's greatest challenge, since few primary documents regarding the *Bibliotheca Iulia* survive.<sup>37</sup> More challenging still is reconstructing the discrete patterns of interpretation and use that were enacted by the scribes, artists, and readers of these luxury objects. Only one inventory of the Julian collection is known; alone, this document paints a limited picture of the papal *Bibliotheca*. Prepared in 1513 by the custodian Romolo Mammacino and Cardinal Luigi of Aragon, the inventory records 220 unique volumes that were absorbed by the Vatican Library or otherwise consigned after the death of Julius II.<sup>38</sup> Although a useful (indeed, the *only*) sample, the inventory is undoubtedly incomplete; contemporary sources report, for example, that Dante was one of Julius' favorite authors, but the poet is conspicuously missing from the library's list.<sup>39</sup> We might also speculate that certain books were lost here and there — loaned, stolen, gifted, or sold — or that others were housed elsewhere in the palace.<sup>40</sup> Whatever its shortcomings, we

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<sup>37</sup> Ernst Gombrich, "Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura and the Nature of its Symbolism," in: *Symbolic Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* (London: Phaidon, 1972), p. 98.

<sup>38</sup> BAV MS Vat.lat.3966, ff. 111r-115r. The inventory is divided into two lists: the first, which was taken by Mammacino, describes 183 volumes that were transferred to the larger holdings of the Vatican Library; the second, taken by the Cardinal of Aragon, includes an additional 37 titles. Joost-Gaugier (2002), pp. 30-31, has suggested that we may add another document to the 1513 inventory: a later list made by Inghirami (ff. 115v-117r: "Libri Greci opera Domini Thome Phedri Bibliothecae Pontificiae Presidis nuper religati;" "Sequuntur libri latini religati") includes 88 Greek and 17 Latin works. Noting the lack of Greek philosophers in the Julian collection, she hypothesizes that Inghirami's volumes would have filled this ostensible gap. I am skeptical of this proposal. Most authors on Inghirami's inventory are post-classical and few are philosophical. There is nothing to place the volumes in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*; unlike the inventories of Mammacino and Luigi of Aragon, the document refers only to the "pontifical library." Because his duties as prefect were not limited to the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, this instance of record-keeping cannot on its own be thought to reflect the Julian holdings. Indeed, the inventory appears to document those codices that Inghirami had recently ordered rebound.

<sup>39</sup> Reported by Stadio Gazio and cited in: Alessandro Luzio, "Isabella d'Este di fronte a Giulio II negli ultimi tre anni del suo pontificato," in: *Archivio Storico Lombardo* 4.27 (1912), pp. 278-79.

<sup>40</sup> Pope Nicholas V, for example, divided his private collection: the contents of his library were mostly theological, but he kept volumes of ancient poetry and history on the nightstands in his bedroom. See Antonio Manfredi, *I codici latini di Niccolò V: edizione degli inventari e identificazione dei manoscritti* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1994), pp. 507-514.

must perforce rely on this document as our initial portal of entry into discussions of the Stanza as *Bibliotheca*. A few bibliographic basics of the collection are immediately clear. The library was comprised of both manuscripts and printed books, most of which were manufactured on parchment – a rare feature in the case of printed volumes — and were variously bound in velvet, silk, and embossed leather. Several books, Mammacino notes, were fastened with expensive silver locks, while others with woven covers and ties were worth little money in comparison.<sup>41</sup> The collection was generally humanistic in character: it included the essential Latin classics (like Caesar, Sallust, Cicero, Ovid, Virgil, and Pliny, to name a few), as well as Latin translations of Homer, Aristotle, Herodotus, and Thucydides. To this roster, we may also add the ecclesiastical and legal titles befitting the educated clergy. Julius also owned copies of Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Bruni, but in general the collection housed fewer contemporary and vernacular authors. Summarizing the curricula of philosophy, theology, and law, as well as ancient traditions of history, poetry, and rhetoric, the disciplines listed on the Julian inventory broadly correspond to the exalted subjects of Raphael's frescoes, suggesting a mutual exchange between the *Bibliotheca's* walls and its contents.

But again, what *were* the papal volumes? Since Léon Dorez's 1896 publication of the Julian inventory, little effort has been made to locate the holdings of the *Bibliotheca Iulia*. After the Vatican Library was pillaged during the sieges of Rome in 1527 and 1799, the Julian volumes were assumed mutilated, destroyed, or randomly dispersed.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Mammacino notes these values at the conclusion of the first list: "Nonnulli ex supranotatis libris h[aba]nt serraturas argenteas . Aliqui de argenteas : aliqui nero sunt minimi pretii."

<sup>42</sup> Mutinous imperial troops occupied the Vatican during the Sack of Rome in 1527; evidence of their invasion includes graffiti in the Stanze di Raffaello. The Vatican Library was also pillaged in 1809 with the entry of Napoleon, who claimed its contents for France. Although most of these items were returned in 1817, three years after Napoleon's defeat, certain Julian volumes have remained in the Bibliothèque

Others speculated that the books were simply lost to the vagaries of time, as is so often the hazard of the archival rabbit hole. Although it is impossible to account for each inventoried item five hundred years later, my recent research demonstrates that surviving volumes are today mostly housed in the Vatican Library and Secret Archives; several others have surfaced in Paris, Valencia, and New York. A few of the known examples — presentation volumes identified by their heraldry and book plates — were photographed and displayed for the 1986 exhibition *Raffaello e la Roma dei Papi*.<sup>43</sup> The exhibition reinvigorated art historians and archivists alike, but surprisingly, no further endeavor into the itinerary of the books followed. Only now is a fuller picture of the *Bibliotheca Iulia* finally brought to light. After eighteen months in the Vatican collections, I have reconstructed nearly a third of the original collection, whose contents include unique dedications, miniatures, and annotations in the pope's own hand. These features are catalogued, described, and some reproduced in this dissertation for the first time. Thanks to this bibliographic revelation, it is now possible to revise our understanding of the Stanza della Segnatura as a lived intellectual space, and of Raphael's designs as critical respondents to the scriptural tradition.

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Nationale in Paris (some editions of Jerome [Bib.Nat. MSS Lat.8910 and 8911] and the *Taxe omnium mundi ecclesiarum* [Bib.Nat. MS Lat.4192]).

<sup>43</sup> Morello, p. 51 ff.

## 1.4 Overview of Literature and State of the Question

Although literature on the Stanza della Segnatura is vast, surprisingly little has been said about the significance of the chamber's use or the collective meaning of its paintings. Taking its cue from Giorgio Vasari in 1568 and Giovanni Pietro Bellori in 1696, critical examination of Raphael's Vatican frescoes is largely limited to their iconography and is generally cursory in scope.<sup>44</sup> On one hand, scholars have played an impossible guessing game, attempting to reconstruct the intellectual design of the paintings by identifying their various figures. Seeking to decrypt messages hidden behind the identities of the figures, the earliest scholarly monographs, by Johann David Passavant (1839) and Anton Springer (1883) named as many as fifty philosophers, poets, and theologians.<sup>45</sup> Even Joost-Gaugier's pioneering study of 2002, among the few to treat the frescoes as a unified program, hinges on the identification of certain figures and forgoes a clear thematic relationship between the images.<sup>46</sup> Barring the few examples with indisputable attributes, suggestions too tenuous to substantiate have clouded an understanding of the compositions in full. Iconography's narrow purview, moreover, runs the troubling risk of subordinating Raphael's designs to written sources as passive visual translations, an approach their complexity implicitly defies.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, e architettori: nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. Paola Barocchi (Pisa: 1994); Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *Descrizione delle quattro imagini dipinte da Raffaele D'Urbino nelle camere del Palazzo Apostolico Vaticano* (Rome: 1695).

<sup>45</sup> Johann David Passavant, *Rafael von Urbino und sein Vater Giovanni Santi* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1893), translated into French in 1860, and into English in 1872 as an abridged edition; Anton Springer, *Raffael und Michelangelo*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Seemann, 1878); *ead.*, "Raffaels Schule von Athen," in: *Die graphischen Künste* 5 (1883), pp. 53-106.

<sup>46</sup> Other studies that have addressed the frescoes collectively include: Sydney Freedberg's short essay — published by the Metropolitan Museum of Art's "Miniature Series" — *Raphael: The Stanza della Segnatura in the Vatican* (New York: 1953); and Gombrich (1972), pp. 85-101.

<sup>47</sup> Whereas Leonardo and Michelangelo bequeathed a prodigious body of written works that reveal a sophisticated and mutually-informative relationship between writing and drawing, only a handful of uninspired letters and sonnets survive from Raphael's lifetime; the young painter said frustratingly little about his art or career.



On the other hand, complex as the references in the frescoes may be, they also suggest a governing idea or advisor. The harmonies personified by Plato and Aristotle in the *School of Athens* allude to the intellectual legacies of the Florentine Neoplatonists.<sup>48</sup> Their exponent at the Vatican court was Egidio da Viterbo, the preferred orator of Julius II, whom Pfeiffer, Matthias Winner, and Rowland have identified as a powerful and persuasive voice behind the esoteric ideologies writ large in Raphael's compositions.<sup>49</sup> Egidio's syncretistic theology and his zealous promotion of a Julian Golden Age share their vision of Christian history with the ancient and biblical synergies expounded in the frescoes.<sup>50</sup> But Egidio is not the only possibility, and others have proposed an individual more closely related to the *Bibliotheca Iulia*. Following the suggestion of Paul Künzle, Rowland and Joost-Gaugier have argued that the librarian Tommaso Inghirami not only shelved the Julian volumes, but also served as a principal contributor to the room's intellectual program.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> As Edgar Wind argued in: *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (New York: 1968). He planned to develop discussion of their influence in a book on the Stanza della Segnatura, a project cut short by his death. His research survives in a series of incomplete chapters, now housed in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. See also Joost-Gaugier (2002); as well as her earlier essays, "Raphael's *Disputa*: Medieval Theology Seen through the Eyes of a Contemporary Commentator, Pico della Mirandola," in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 129 (1997), pp. 65-84; "The Invention of Philosophy and Its Platonic Connections in Raphael's *School of Athens*," in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 132 (1998), pp. 111-124; and "Plato and Aristotle and Their Retinues in Raphael's *School of Athens*," in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 137 (2000), pp. 109-24.

<sup>49</sup> See again Pfeiffer; Rowland (1997); and Matthias Winner, "Progetti ed esecuzione nella Stanza della Segnatura," in: *Raffaello nell'Appartamento di Giulio II e Leone X*, ed. Guido Cornini et al. (Milan: Electa, 1993), pp. 247-291.

<sup>50</sup> The oration of 1507 is known from a small *libretto*, now housed in Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Distrital of Évora, Portugal (MS CXVI/1-30), whose text was published by John O'Malley, S.J., in: "Fulfillment of the Christian Golden Age Under Pope Julius II: Text of a Discourse of Giles of Viterbo, 1507," in: *Traditio* 25 (1969), pp. 265-338. See also *ead.*, "Giles of Viterbo: A Reformer's Thought on Renaissance Rome," in: *Renaissance Quarterly* 20.1 (1967), pp. 1-11; *ead.*, *Giles of Viterbo on Church and Reform: A Study in Renaissance Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1968); and *ead.*, *Rome and Renaissance: Studies in Culture and Religion* (London: Variorum, 1981). A recent reiteration summarizing the Egidio argument is found in Meredith J. Gill, "Egidio da Viterbo, His Augustine, and the Reformation of the Arts," in: *Egidio da Viterbo. Cardinale agostiniano tra Roma e l'Europa del Rinascimento*, ed. Myriam Chiabò, Rocco Ronzani, and Angelo Maria Vitale (Viterbo, 2014), pp. 415-423.

<sup>51</sup> See Paul Künzle, "Raffaels Denkmal für Fedro Inghirami auf dem letzten Arazzo," in: *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant* (Vatican City: 1964), vol. 6, pp. 499-548; and again Rowland (1997); and Joost-Gaugier (2002).

Attractive though these suggestions are, my concern is not “who,” but rather “what.” The problem of an advisor both undermines Raphael’s role as artist and author and underestimates the climate of collaboration at the Julian court. The stunning proliferation of books in Raphael’s paintings suggests that the cooperative ways in which texts were produced and studied influenced the visual schemes in the spaces that housed them. In Raphael’s Rome, reading was not an isolated activity, but took place in dialogue with other works, interpreters, and critics, as the crowded margins of contemporary manuscripts now attest. Given this partnership of readers and their approaches to text, we should ask whether it is realistic to presume that a single individual supplied the symbols in the paintings. Still harder to imagine is that a single written source contains the key. By shifting the academic focus to the larger literary context of contemporary Rome and the Vatican court, I instead ask how this agreement of word and image, and of reading and composition, shaped the intellectual terrain that Raphael brought to bear in his execution of the frescoes.

The intended use of the Stanza della Segnatura as the *Bibliotheca Iulia* was convincingly resolved only in the last century and a half, when art history began to take shape as a discipline.<sup>52</sup> Prior to that time, the small chamber was thought to have served as the *Signaturae Gratiae*, as it functioned under Paul III when Vasari visited the papal

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<sup>52</sup> Indeed, some scholars are still surprisingly resistant to this well-substantiated opinion. Bram Kempers, “Rituals and Images: Paris de Grassis, Raphael, and the ‘Signatures’ in the Vatican Stanze,” in: *Functions and Decorations*, ed. Tristan Weddigen, Sible de Blaauw, and Bram Kempers (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2003), pp. 71-93, has argued that the room supported a shifting status, which was necessitated by the papal court. His student, David Rijser, *Raphael’s Poetics: Art and Poetry in High Renaissance Rome* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012), has maintained this reading. In his doctoral dissertation “Reason and Faith in Renaissance Rome: The Stanza della Segnatura” (Temple University, 1998), James E. Callaghan argued against the Stanza’s use as a library because, in his opinion, it defies the plans, decorations, and collections in Urbino and Siena. Callaghan’s assumption that libraries were static and rigidly paradigmatic is both anachronistic and utterly at odds with Raphael’s creative reinvention of literary themes.

palace and gave the room its name. Recognizing that Raphael's division of subjects belongs to the tradition of humanistic libraries, Anton Springer first proposed that the chamber had initially served as the *Bibliotheca Iulia*; in the following decade, Franz Wickhoff, Julius von Schlosser, and Léon Dorez advanced Springer's suggestion in light of the decorative legacy of *uomini famosi*.<sup>53</sup> John Shearman reaffirmed the Stanza's early status with documentary evidence in his 1971 paper, allowing scholars to imagine the setting intact for the first time.<sup>54</sup> When Julius' successor Leo X (Giovanni de' Medici; 1513-1521) ascended to the papacy, he provided for the installation of an intarsia *basamento* along the lower walls, presumably to replace the library's built-in book settles and presses. As they were extracted, these furnishings must have damaged parts of the Julian pavement, since select repairs bearing the Leonine insignia disturb the original tile patterns. After the Leonine *basamento* was removed some decades later and frescoed panels added in its place, fresh plaster was applied to the dry edge of Raphael's lunettes, leaving the length of the joining visibly exposed. Thus surfaces a picture of the *Bibliotheca Iulia*: a series of cupboards and desks must have occupied the height of the lower wall, where the papal volumes were shelved with their titled edges and spines in suggestive proximity to their authorial counterparts in the frescoes.

Modern scholars have expressed only marginal interest in the role of Julius II as Raphael's patron, but these newly unearthed objects promise to illuminate forgotten

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<sup>53</sup> Anton Springer (1878), vol. 1, pp. 199-201; Franz Wickhoff, "Die Bibliothek Julius II," in: *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 14 (1893); Julius von Schlosser, *Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte aus den Schriftquellen des frühen Mittelalters* 123 (Vienna: 1891), p. 147 ff.; *ead.*, "Giusto's Fresken in Padua und die Vorläufer der Stanza della Segnatura," in: *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 17 (1896), pp. 13-100; Dorez, pp. 97-126. It should be noted here that Morello offered strong evidence of this theory when he uncovered rare archival evidence dating to the Julian papacy that refers to the room as the "*bibliotheca superiore*," pp. 51-53.

<sup>54</sup> Shearman (1971).

aspects of the Julian papacy and its intended legacy. Although it is slanted by its disapproval of papal hypocrisy, Ludwig von Pastor's late nineteenth-century monograph continues to supply some of the richest evidence for the reigns of the Renaissance pontiffs. Moreover, the question of Julian ideology and its influence on papal artworks has yet to be sufficiently explained. Even Julian Klaczko's 1898 biography treats the pope as a peripheral figure whose martial reputation precluded an active interest in Vatican commissions.<sup>55</sup> This tendency to divorce the patron from Raphael's paintings has continued to characterize modern studies, including Christine Shaw's 1993 volume.<sup>56</sup> Recent conference proceedings have proposed to redress these deficiencies by asking how Julius II's legacy promoted the artistic and literary resurgence of early sixteenth-century Rome, but Raphael's contribution to this project is absent from the contemporary discourse.<sup>57</sup> My goal is to reshape the academic discussion by underscoring Julius II's role as a learned participant in the literary and artistic topographies of his court, and by tracing points of intersection between his intellectual biography and the symbolic program of Raphael's frescoes.

Surely the man behind some of the greatest literary and artistic achievements of the Roman Renaissance was not as un-intellectual and removed as historians have assumed. Combative characterizations of the pope are fair enough, but he was equally *terribile* in the cultural endeavors that occupied his court. After all, the foundational bull of the Vatican Library named the Church militant as its beneficiaries, along with more studious clientele.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, the "Warrior Pope" was aggressive to a fault, but the

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<sup>55</sup> Julian Klaczko, *Rome et la renaissance: essais et esquisses. Jules II* (Paris: 1898).

<sup>56</sup> Christine Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope* (Oxford: 1993).

<sup>57</sup> *Metafore di un pontificato. Giulio II, 1503-1513* (Rome: 2010).

<sup>58</sup> As Rowland (1997), p. 132, has noted.

ambivalence of his biographers has yielded a somewhat unbalanced portrait. Erasmus is, in part, to blame. His popular *Julius Exclusus* (c. 1514) imagines the pope barred from heavenly paradise and threatening to wage war on Saint Peter himself. Nor was Erasmus alone in his judgment. Ascanio Condivi recounts that as Michelangelo prepared to cast a bronze likeness of the pope, Julius demanded to be shown with a sword rather than a book. The pontiff, however, was not entirely resistant to letters. Paolo Giovio tells us that Julius took special interest in the decoration of his suite and that Raphael's paintings were executed to his personal prescriptions.<sup>59</sup> Then again, the humanist Raffaele Maffei, who dedicated his encyclopedic *Commentaria urbana* to Julius II, claimed that the pope lacked the patience to read the titles of the books gifted to him, but elsewhere, the same Maffei noted his appreciation of Latin verse.<sup>60</sup> Julius is also said to have recited the *Aeneid* while on military campaign, and Platina's inventories of the Vatican Library reveal that he borrowed the ancient *Vergilius Romanus*.<sup>61</sup> The Julian sword is thus double-edged. At the very least, the pope seems not only to have read (even if selectively), but also to have recognized books as judicious ideological metaphors for his domain.

Equally unexamined, but of similar importance for present purposes, is the particular centrality of jurisprudence in Julius' academic and papal initiatives. Prior to his

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<sup>59</sup> Paolo Giovio, "Raphaelis Urbinatis Vita," written c. 1525, but published for the first time in: Girolamo Tiraboschi, *Storia della letteratura italiana*, 2 vol. (Modena: 1772-95), vol. 10, p. 292; cited and discussed by John Shearman, *Raphael in Early Modern Sources* (New Haven and London: 2003), pp. 807-812.

<sup>60</sup> As cited in John F. D'Amico, "Papal history and Curial reform in the Renaissance. Raffaele Maffei's *Brevis Historia* of Julius II and Leo X," in: *Archivum historiae pontificiae*, 18 (1980), p. 200.

<sup>61</sup> BAV MS. Vat.lat.3867, described on the 1475 inventory of Bartolommeo Platina (BAV MS. Vat.lat.3964). Transcribed by Eugène Müntz and Paul Fabre, *La Bibliothèque du Vatican au XVe siècle d'après des documents inédits; contributions pour servir à l'histoire de l'humanisme* (Paris: 1887), p. 272: "Ego Platyna commodavi R<sup>mo</sup> d. Juliano car. s. Petri ad vincula Virgilium antiquum in majusculis corio copertum sine tabulis, die XV septembris 1475. — Restitutus est."

cardinalship, Julius trained as a canon lawyer at the University of Perugia, a curriculum of study today attested by legal manuscripts, conspicuously dedicated to the pope, that are housed in the city's archives.<sup>62</sup> During his archepiscopacy in Avignon, and with his uncle's support, eight new legal chairs were endowed at the local university; the school was then annexed to secular courts and granted the power of judicial appointment.<sup>63</sup> Julius entertained a similar task as pope, and had the *via Giulia* been realized to its full extent, with Bramante's proposed Palazzo di Giustizia, Rome's tribunals would have likewise been consolidated under the papal aegis.<sup>64</sup> From the 1513 inventory, it is clear that pride of place was assigned to the disciplines of theology and law, which together comprise nearly half of the total recorded volumes. By no coincidence, the legal books include the best examples of Julian annotations. Surprisingly, however, Raphael's corresponding fresco in the Stanza della Segnatura is almost entirely ignored by scholars. Following the leads of Edgar Wind and Nancy Rash-Fabbri, whose studies of the *Jurisprudence* and its corresponding details in the ceiling have alluded to the significance of Justice for the room's broad meaning, I take the fresco as a central point of departure

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<sup>62</sup> For example: Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta, MS F68 (Lud. Pretinus Alaster Florentinus, *Iudiculis dialecta et modi omnes disputationis*).

<sup>63</sup> See again Rashdall, pp. 175-176.

<sup>64</sup> Specifically, the palazzo would have unified the "Rota," the Camera Apostolica, the Roman Senate, and the Segnatura di Giustizia. On its architecture and purpose, see Domenico Gnoli, "Il Palazzo di Giustizia di Bramante," in: *Nuova antologia di lettere, scienze, ed arti* 5 (1914), pp. 170-254; Arnaldo Bruschi, "Il Palazzo dei Tribunali e la casa di Raffaello," in: *Bramante Architetto* (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1969), pp. 591-604; Christoph Luitpold Frommel, "Il Palazzo dei Tribunali in Via Giulia," in: *Studi bramanteschi. Atti di Congresso Internazionale, Milano-Urbino. Roma 1970* (Rome: De Luca Editore, 1974), p. 523-534; Franco Borsi, "Palazzo dei Tribunali in via Giulia - San Biagio," in: *Bramante* (Milan: Electa, 1989), pp. 281-286; Irene Fosi and Thomas V. Cohen, *Papal Justice: Subjects and Courts in the Papal State, 1500-1750* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), p. 25; and most recently, Nicholas Temple, *Renovatio Urbis: Architecture, Urbanism, and Ceremony in the Rome of Julius II* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), pp. 93-125.

in recreating the scope and shared meaning of the frescoes.<sup>65</sup> Until now, the “Golden Age” implied by the Justice composition has been cast in almost exclusively Neoplatonic terms. With the seminal work of religious historians John O’Malley and John F. D’Amico in mind, I instead emphasize the eschatological debate of the Millennium and the rhetorical strategies that facilitated its theological discussion.<sup>66</sup> By addressing the formative influence of divine law at the papal court, I evaluate how the ideological demands of Julian Rome inspired Raphael’s new style and promoted the use of the library as an ideal site for impressing judicial themes.

### 1.5 Review of Methods

In this dissertation, I ask how definitions of artistic design in Julian Rome intersected with contemporary literary culture, and how Raphael participated in shaping a new theory of painting. Although the relationship of word and image is a perennial topic in the history of Renaissance art, a means of inquiry that adequately reflects the intellectual ground shared by aesthetic and textual media has proved difficult to navigate. Our analysis of words is too often conducted at the expense of the art, or vice versa; but in Renaissance Rome, the boundaries between images and text were at once fluid and highly mediated, and the close relationship of these fields invited conversations about the fundamental principles of composition and representation. Scholars have long recognized

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<sup>65</sup> Edgar Wind, “Platonic Justice: Designed by Raphael,” in *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 1 (1937): 69-70; Nancy Rash-Fabbri, “A Note on the Stanza della Segnatura,” in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 94 (1979): pp. 97-104.

<sup>66</sup> John O’Malley, S.J., *Religious Culture in the Sixteenth Century: Preaching, Rhetoric, Spirituality, and Reform* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1993); *ead.*, *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome: Rhetoric, Doctrine, and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, c. 1450-1521* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1979); John F. D’Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome: Humanists and Churchmen on the Eve of the Reformation* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1983).

that manuscript illuminations and their adjacent text participate in the mutual production of meaning, but no similar approach sufficiently explains the interrelationship of monumental painting and the book arts. Because Raphael's frescoes in the Stanza della Segnatura were an integral component of the papal library, alongside books, letters, and the instruments of science and learning, it is not enough to consider the space through the lens of any single field of study. My premise is that Raphael's Vatican paintings can only be understood in light of the books shelved beside them, and that their governing theme is born from the reciprocal transactions that took place between the paintings, the pages, and the literary personalities at the court of Julius II. A fruitful approach to the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, therefore, not only demands consideration of the disciplines of Philosophy, Theology, Poetry, and Justice, but also of art history, philology, and codicology.

To examine the Stanza della Segnatura as a simultaneously visual and verbal stage, I propose that humanistic canons of eloquence, exercised in the margins of the papal volumes and by members of the Julian court, present a critical cultural framework that weds Raphael's novel classicism to the literary history allegorized in the Stanza's frescoes. The creative intermingling of textual and visual disciplines, understood and facilitated in terms of the principles of ancient rhetoric, reached its height at the prolifically literary and artistic court of Julius II. The relationship of rhetoric to the visual arts has a long history in practice and study. Ernst Robert Curtius, John Spencer, Ernst Gombrich, Michael Baxandall, and David Summers have aptly demonstrated that Italy's humanists turned to Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian in search of a living model that was



dually verbal and aesthetic.<sup>67</sup> As their research has shown, the language of rhetoric is fundamentally visual, and it supplied a flexible intellectual instrument for bridging categories of linguistics, literature, and painting in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Although the influence of classical oratory on the visual arts has been well defined, less considered is the role of the humanistic codices in which new canons of eloquence were developed and codified. Even less examined is the influence of the ancient rhetorical legacy on Raphael's shifting style.

That Raphael invented a new visual rhetoric is clear from the earliest descriptions of the Stanza della Segnatura. Seeking to match the visual vocabulary of the paintings, Vasari's ekphrasis celebrates Raphael's frescoes for their color, ordering, and grace; Bellori similarly extolled the artist's new quality of style.<sup>68</sup> Referring to the first virtue of rhetoric, Vasari and Bellori prized Raphael's decorum above all, casting the paintings in terms of the principles of eloquence. Their displays of exclamatory praise embody the highest degree of discourse — the epideictic, or the rhetorical genre *par excellence*. As commemorative practice, history is itself conceived as epideictic, and it comes as no surprise that Alberti's definition of pictorial histories, or *istorie*, prescribed appropriately embellished themes. It is well recognized that Baxandall seized upon Alberti's periodic

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<sup>67</sup> Ernst Robert Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (Bern: Francke, 1948); John R. Spencer, "Ut Rhetorica Pictura: A Study in Quattrocento Theory of Painting," in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 20 (1957), pp. 26-44; Ernst Gombrich, "Vasari's *Lives* and Cicero's *Brutus*," in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 23 (1960), pp. 309-311; Michael Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971); and David Summers, "Maniera and Movement: The *Figura Serpentinata*," in: *Art Bulletin* 35 (1972), pp. 265-301; *ead.*, "Contrapposto: Style and Meaning in Renaissance Art," in: *Art Bulletin* 59 (1977), pp. 336-361; and *ead.*, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

<sup>68</sup> Vasari, *Vite*, Edizione Giuntina (1568), p. 172, line 17-18: "senzaché egli riservò un decoro certo bellissimo;" see also Bellori.

structure of the composition, but this model has been applied to few examples.<sup>69</sup> Most importantly for this project, Raphael's paintings have yet to be discussed as literary analogies comparable to this rhetorical paradigm. I argue that Raphael reinterpreted ancient models of language and style, transmitted and revised by Rome's humanistic interpreters, and that by adapting these literary principles of eloquence to pictorial composition, the young artist invented a new theory of painting, which arose from the Stanza's particular circumstance as the *Bibliotheca Iulia*.

## 1.6 Written Program and Procedure

In this brief introduction, I have attempted to explain the relevant details of the history and commission of the Stanza della Segnatura, and to frame my methods of investigation in light of these issues. I have emphasized the role of reading and the centrality of Justice in the design of Raphael's frescoes, dimensions that have received surprisingly short shrift in the literature. In the chapters that follow, I trace four related aspects of Raphael's designs in light of these bibliophilic and juridical conditions.

"Reading Raphael in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*" illuminates the mutual transactions between monumental painting and the book arts and assesses Raphael's position in this field, an aspect of his career that is as yet unconsidered. Informed by extensive research in the Vatican Library and Secret Archives, I argue that Raphael's frescoes give visible form to the editorial practices of literary criticism and commentary, and enter images into this discourse by imitating, translating, and revising the models excavated from ancient and contemporary manuscripts. Like the books housed beside them, the paintings too

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<sup>69</sup> On the basis of the periodic sentence in the visual arts, see Baxandall (1971), 131-139. Application of this rhetorical principle to the visual arts is restricted to the book's titular artist Giotto.

demand to be *read*. My inquiries have yielded more than fifty lost Julian volumes, now finally brought to light, as well as folios of related poetry and laudatory prose, documented and cataloged for the first time in the appendix. From these precious objects, moreover, it is now possible to exhume forgotten aspects of the papacy of Julius II and reveal his active and cultivated investment in the legal discipline.

Complementing my study of Raphael's paintings and the library's collection, my examination of preparatory drawings in Chapter Three, "The Library, the Law, and the Julian Jerusalem," brings to light the significance of divine law for the *Bibliotheca Iulia*. We are in the debt of Marielene Putscher and John Shearman for recognizing that a *modello* for the *Jurisprudence* illustrates an apocalyptic episode, but both scholars stopped short of explaining the importance of this discarded image for the room's intended meaning or for the final formulation of the frescoes.<sup>70</sup> Upon reconsideration, this early composition can be understood more fully in light of Raphael's studies for the *Disputa*. By tracing the artist's revisions to his early designs, here I show that Raphael first imagined Theology as the *giudizio universale*, an image of the Millennium found in Augustine's account of the Last Judgment, in which pious souls are raised to reign with Christ over the New Jerusalem, here celebrated under the aegis of Julius II.

In "Raphael's Dante and a Julian *Comedy*," I argue that Dante, cast as the exemplary poet-theologian, served as an important literary model for the landscape of Raphael's compositions. Other than Julius II (who is pictured as Gregory the Great in the *Disputa* and as Gregory IX in the *Jurisprudence*), only Dante appears twice in the

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<sup>70</sup> Marielene Putscher, *Raphael's Sixtinische Madonna: Das Werk und seine Wirkung* (Tübingen: 1955), pp. 243-246; John Shearman, "Raphael's Unexecuted Projects for the Stanze," in: *Walter Friedlaender zum 90. Geburtstag*, ed. Georg Kauffman and Willibald Sauerländer (Berlin: 1965), pp.158-180.

frescoes: he is pictured with Homer and Virgil in the *Parnassus*, and in the *Disputa* he joins the Doctors of the Church. Although Edgar Wind demonstrated that the *Divine Comedy* influenced a single panel in the ceiling, Dante as author might be thought to carry deeper significance for the meaning of the entire room.<sup>71</sup> Contemporary sources report that Dante was one of the pope's favorite poets, but little has been said about the import of this preference.<sup>72</sup> Features within the paintings suggest that Dante served as an important model for Raphael's new visual vocabulary. For instance, the *Disputa* is arranged in a hierarchy of spheres, resembling the structure of Dante's Paradise, and the theologians whom Dante compared to bright lights are in the painting crowned with glittering haloes. On the *Parnassus* and in the *School of Athens*, we encounter the same poets and philosophers who populate Dante's Limbo. Reconsidering the frescoes through a Dantesque lens, I demonstrate that Raphael translated the language and figures of Dante's writings into visual metaphors for earthly and divine justice in Julian Rome, as well as for Renaissance principles of *ut pictura poesis*.

"A Painted *Ars Poetica*" reframes Raphael's compositions in terms of early sixteenth-century traditions of rhetoric. Here I argue that the artist invented a new pictorial eloquence in support of these judicial themes. After other chapters have focused on the lexical aspects of the *Bibliotheca* and its images, this final entry brings us full circle, as I reinstall the poets and critics who mingled in the space. Included on the inventory is Raphael's contemporary Marco Girolamo Vida. Vida, the author of the papal epic *Juliad*, has never risen from obscurity in the study of Renaissance art. As an ordained priest and esteemed poet, Vida joined the papal court at nearly the same

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<sup>71</sup> Wind (1968), pp. 171-176.

<sup>72</sup> See note 39 above.

moment as Raphael. At the Vatican, Raphael also encountered Pietro Bembo and Baldassare Castiglione, beneficiaries of Julius II and the artist's lifelong friends. The relationship of their arts, however, is remarkably unconsidered.<sup>73</sup> Like their predecessors on Raphael's *Parnassus*, these writers conceive of the artist-poet as a spiritual conduit and equate the written word with revelation. It now is clear that just as these Cinquecento texts pronounce the artistic canons of imitation and invention, so Raphael endowed his compositions with a rhetorical syntax that transforms the frescoes into lofty analogies for papal persuasion and the written history of the Christian *logos*.

My dissertation reshapes the way in which this famous space colors the modern comprehension of some of the most eminent artists and patrons of the Italian Renaissance, whose contribution to Rome's history exceeds the story told thus far. In Raphael's vision of ideal Athens, Plato and Aristotle (whom Castiglione calls the perfect courtiers) represent natural truth, just as the theologians on the *Disputa* wall gather in an ideal Jerusalem symbolic of revealed truth. It is finally clear that Julius II was no mere warrior, but a considerable intellectual and an ambitious canon lawyer. Governed by the theme of Justice, Raphael's frescoes, together with the library's volumes, must at last be understood as a persuasive visual argument for which the young painter invented a decorous new style that heralds the Julian Golden Age in the Half-Millennium of 1500 as the *City of God*.

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<sup>73</sup> Hermann Voss, *Die Malerei der Spätrenaissance in Rom und Florenz* (Berlin: 1920), vol. 1, pp. 46-52, also noted the significance of Bembo's rhetoric for Raphael, but his terms have yet to be fully developed. Both John Shearman, *Mannerism* (London: Penguin, 1967), p. 37 ff.; and Patricia L. Reilly, "Raphael's 'Fire in the Borgo' and the Italian Pictorial Vernacular," in: *Art Bulletin* 92.4 (2010), pp. 308-325, have taken up the terms of Bembismo outlined by Voss.

## 2. Reading Raphael in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*

Cicero once famously mused that if one has a garden in his library, there is nothing left to want.<sup>74</sup> Libraries are the resorts of knowledge, cultivated fields of words, whose shelves, like gardens paths, traverse and curate the fruits of wisdom. In the history of Italian libraries, the private collection of Julius II — the *Bibliotheca Iulia* — is among the most famous, but it is also the least studied. On one hand, scholars have focused on the pontiff's ferocious reputation and his infamous *terribilità*. Contemporary sources report that the Warrior Pope was quick to wield his cane as an improvised weapon against his underlings and insubordinates.<sup>75</sup> Defeat was not in his vocabulary, and to contradict him was fatal. Surely so martial a man would have cared little for arts and learning. On the other hand, until now, his collection of manuscripts and printed books was presumed lost. Whatever its contents, scholars have assumed that the library says more about Julius' Curia and courtiers than about the pope himself.<sup>76</sup> Only recently restored to light, these objects paint a different picture. Rich testimonies of both Rome's literary milieu and the pope's surprisingly vivacious intellectual life, the books reveal calculated transactions of reading and literacy, canon and revision, and word and image. At once textual and strikingly visual, these pressures of the page collide above all in the intellectual garden that housed them, the Stanza della Segnatura, today best known for Raphael's grandiloquent frescoes. I argue that the paintings were designed in

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<sup>74</sup> *Ad familiares* IX.4: "Si hortum in bibliotheca habes, nihil deerit."

<sup>75</sup> Shaw, pp. 170-173, provides an overview of primary sources, including the letters and diaries of Paris de Grassis and Cardinal Bibbiena.

<sup>76</sup> Joost-Gaugier (2002), for example, reasons that Tommaso Inghirami had more to do with the library's contents and organization — and therefore, with Raphael's frescoes — than Julius II.

conversation with these volumes, giving visible form to the literary practices of the period and entering images into this discourse as active interlocutors.

Few other spaces were as well suited to cultivate this floruit of visual and verbal media than a library. In the sections that follow, I reconstruct the Stanza della Segnatura as papal *bibliotheca*, an ensemble of images, texts, and literary personalities, whose mutual influence effected reconsideration of the principles of composition in artistic and literary fields. Whereas recent studies have centered on the question of an advisor, a local intellectual who guided the artist in the paintings' lofty designs, I offer an alternative to this approach. A change in academic tack, away from a single individual and towards the partnership of writers, critics, and artists so characteristic of the court of Julius II, promises to reframe our understanding of the conception and meaning of Raphael's Vatican frescoes. Focusing instead on the contemporary culture of the book, I argue that the collaborative ways in which literary volumes were produced, studied, and understood was extended to the chambers that housed them. Like the books that were shelved alongside them, Raphael's frescoes demand to be interpreted as participants in the textual discourses that took place around them. The frescoes must, therefore, also be *read*.

## 2.1 Raphael and the Art of the Book

In the Stanza della Segnatura, books are as present as Raphael's imagined figures, inhabiting both the paintings and the neighboring shelves. Between the frescoes and the ceiling, forty-six books are pictured in total, and seven of those are labeled. At the center of the *School of Athens*, Plato and Aristotle carry the *Timaeus* and the *Ethics*. In the *Disputa*, which includes more books than any other fresco, the vulgate Bible and the

*Epistles* lie at Jerome's feet; Gregory the Great is paired with his *Moralia in Job*; and Augustine, the only author in the act of writing, is seated before a labeled volume of *De civitate Dei*. In the *Jurisprudence*, Gregory IX receives the *Decretals*. Lastly, although they are untitled, we can safely assume that Justinian is presented with the three books he ordered compiled — the *Institutes*, the *Digest*, and the *Codex Justinianus*.

Correspondences between the Stanza's frescoes and its volumes point to a cooperation of word and image that exploits the utility of the room, and by transforming into visual idioms the formal conventions of the Julian volumes, Raphael wedded together the *bibliotheca's* visual and textual constituents as simultaneous metonyms for the cultural landscape of Julian Rome.

That panel and fresco painting considerably influenced manuscript miniatures is already well established, but the importance of those miniatures for monumental painting is less considered.<sup>77</sup> By the fourteenth century, historiated initials were transformed into three-dimensional stages for unfolding *istorie* — some were copied from the walls of churches and monasteries, and in other cases, painters of larger media were commissioned to produce stunning frontispieces in miniature formats.<sup>78</sup> A similar

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<sup>77</sup> The international exhibition *Il Gotico nelle Alpi* demonstrated a close formal relationship between certain manuscript miniatures and the fourteenth-century fresco cycles in the Castello di Sabbionara in Avio, the Torre Aquila, and the Castello del Arco. Less considered, however, are the ways in which these influences were negotiated, reformed, or turned to new use on the walls. See the exhibition catalogue: *Il Gotico nelle Alpi. 1350-1450*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo and Francesca de Gramatica (Trent: Castello del Buonconsiglio, 2002), the essays by Giovanna degli Avancini (pp. 289-322), Emanuele Curzel (339-342), and Francesca de Gramatica (343-366) in particular.

<sup>78</sup> Among the most famous Italian examples of this relationship between miniature and monumental painting are: the illuminated copies of Giotto's paintings in the Scrovegni Chapel made for choir books of the Padua Cathedral and Jean Pucelle's copies of Duccio's *Maestà* in the Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux. Indeed, it was not uncommon in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries for artists to work as both painters and illuminators; we might note that Simone Martini supplied the frontispiece for Petrarch's illuminated volume of Virgil, and Pinturicchio is often credited with the magnificent Crucifixion miniature in BAV MS Barb.lat.614 (f. 219v). On the influence of panel painting and frescoes on miniatures, see Millard Meiss, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry: The Limbourgs and Their Contemporaries* (New York: G. Braziller, 1974), *passim*; Erwin Panofsky, *Netherlandish Painting, Its Origins and*



argument can be made in the other direction. The courtly circles in which Raphael mingled were deeply invested in the culture of books, and traditions of the page — including the text, its glosses, and its illustrations — represented the elemental arenas of reading, with which the artist was unquestionably conversant. Even early in his career, Raphael integrated motifs that originated in the manuscript tradition, strategies that he developed, at least in part, from the workshops of Perugino, Signorelli, and Pinturicchio.<sup>79</sup> The jewel-like colors of his early career, or the hazy blue skylines, wispy riverbeds, and delicate farmsteads in the backgrounds of his portraits all attest to the influence of French, Flemish, and German miniatures on central Italian painting.

Raphael's images also demonstrate a practical familiarity with books as objects, boasting the flexible relationship of text and image and flaunting his simultaneous command over miniature and monumental formats. To move from one pope's books to another's, in Raphael's *Portrait of Leo X* (fig. 2.1), the illuminated folio of an open Bible is the subject of the pontiff's ruminations, and the details of the manuscript are so precise that scholars have successfully identified the specific volume pictured in the painting.<sup>80</sup>

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*Character* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), *passim*; Annarosa Garzelli, "Interventi di pittori sul codice," in: *Miniatura fiorentina del Rinascimento: 1440-1525*, (Perugia: Giunta, 1985), vol. 1, pp. 259-264; and the voluminous work of Jonathan J. G. Alexander, including: *The Decorated Letter* (New York: Braziller, 1978); "Facsimiles, Copies, and Variations: The Relationship to the Model in Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts," in: *Studies in the History of Art* 20 (1989), pp. 61-72; "Illuminators at Work: The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," in *Medieval Illuminators and Their Methods of Work* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 121 ff.; "Patrons, Libraries, and Illuminators in the Italian Renaissance," in: *The Painted Page: Italian Renaissance Book Illumination, 1450-1550*, ed. Jonathan J. G. Alexander (New York: Prestel, 1994), pp. 11-20; and "Mantegna in the Illuminators," reprinted in: *Studies in Italian Manuscript Illumination* (London: Pindar Press, 2002), pp. 257-261. Other helpful sources on this relationship include Federica Toniolo, "Il libro miniato a Padova nel Trecento," in: *Il secolo di Giotto nel Veneto*, ed. Giovanna Valenzano and Federica Toniolo (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2007), pp. 107-131. For an overview of types of initials in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italian manuscripts, see Alexander, "Initials in Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts: The Problem of the So-called 'litera Mantiniana,'" reprinted in: *Studies in Italian Manuscript Illumination* (London: Pindar Press, 2002), pp. 167-198.

<sup>79</sup> On the influence of Flemish miniatures on Italian painters, n. 78 above.

<sup>80</sup> Probably a personalized copy of the Hamilton Bible (now in the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin, MS 78 E 3 [Ham. 85]), open to ff. 400v-401r. The miniatures depict scenes from the Passion, Resurrection, and

The image is a joint portrait of Leo and his manuscript, and an aesthetic moment that Raphael manipulated to exploit the painterly significance of the object (fig. 2.2). The magnifying glass in Leo's left hand amplifies symbolically the visual and textual intricacies of the page, and the gentle brush of his fingers against the open parchment underscores the Bible's layered richness — the texture of vellum, expensive golden clasps, columns of text, and colorful register of images. Like scholars today, the intended audience at the Leonine court would surely have recognized the manuscript in the portrait thanks to Raphael's virtuosic reproduction of its features. Moreover, by rendering on a grand scale the particularities of the Leonine volume, Raphael capitalized on the metaphoric value of the physical page. The significance of the manuscript, real or imagined, is bound up in the conditions of its contents. In the painting, these features impart new levels of interpretation to sitter, viewer, and artist, presuming learned engagement with the actual object. As the portrait suggests, books are active participants in the creation of meaning, important and worthy of as much consideration as the figures with whom they interact.

The question remains to be answered: What was the influence of manuscripts on large-scale painting? There was no single or straightforward response, and the ways in which artists engaged with these issues shifted depending on the space and circumstances of production, or on the requirements of a commission. It is already clear that Raphael was sensitive to the visual and material effects of illuminated volumes, but I suggest that

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Ascension of Christ, and the text below legibly records the opening line of the Gospel of Saint John: "In principio erat verbum et verbum erat apud Deum." For an overview of the book and its identification, see Francesco P. di Teodoro, *Ritratto di Leone di Raffaello Sanzio* (Milan: TEA Arte, 1998), pp. 64-67 in particular; Max-Eugen Kemper, "[23] Sogennante Hamilton-Bible, Mitte 14. Jahrhundert," in: *Hoch Renaissance im Vatikan: Kunst und Kultur im Rom der Päpste: 1503-1534* (Ostfildern: Hatje, 1999), p. 443; and Nelson H. Minnich, "Raphael's Portrait 'Leo X with Cardinals Giulio de' Medici and Luigi de' Rossi: A Religious Interpretation,'" in: *Renaissance Quarterly* 56.4 (2003), pp. 1018-1026 especially.

his engagement was equally defined by patterns of the text and by the conditions of reading that were sustained on the field of the page. Along with a manuscript's illustrations, its marginal notes and images are the fundamentals of literary criticism and authority, features that carry an inherent ability to interrogate and interpret, or to embellish and emend, the subjects and expressions of a primary text. In the Stanza della Segnatura, Raphael turned the visual and textual mechanisms of the page to the walls of the *Bibliotheca*, extending the methods of commentary to pictorial design. By transforming the medium of the book from page to panel in a sweep of painterly artifice, Raphael exploited the tension between literary and artistic forms, and by transcending the boundaries of verbal and visual fields on the walls of the papal library, he argued for his role as both painter and author.

## 2.2 Raphael's Visual Commentary

Raphael's new classicism is generally understood as a lofty response to the fragmentary landscape of the Eternal City or an infatuation with the principles of ancient sculpture and architecture, but the allure of Rome was not only archaeological. When Raphael arrived in 1508, he entered a city whose ancient aesthetic was mutually material and textual, and this duality of the Roman terrain was at the center of his immediate and ongoing experience. Although the city's ruins inspired countless visual and poetic responses to its buried sculptures and built monuments, equally attractive was the recovery of its literary exempla.<sup>81</sup> Humanistic negotiations of the ancient city were

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<sup>81</sup> There was a sudden shift in approaches to Rome's antiquarian legacy in the fourteenth century. This change is the subject of Kathleen Wren Christian, *Empire without End: Antiquities Collections in Renaissance Rome, c. 1350-1527* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), whose appendix includes an invaluable catalogue of the collections of Rome's cardinals and elite patrons.

equally invested in the excavation of ancient manuscripts, whose literary models were the focus of intense issues of emulation and codification.<sup>82</sup> But classical texts did not exist then as they do for us today, and even the editions modern university students pore over in their literature courses are the descendants of these interventions. Beginning with Petrarch, the modern father of Latin literature, Italy's humanists were occupied with forming a new canon of eloquence, to restore in written form the moral and civic virtue of ancient Rome. Following the return of the papacy in the fourteenth century, Rome became the *locus classicus* for a new kind of literary antiquarianism and the redefinition of Latin style.<sup>83</sup> As they blossomed under the branches of the Della Rovere, the members of Rome's sodalities and *studium urbis* understood themselves to be the architects of a new historical and textual criticism.<sup>84</sup>

The Latin revival not only involved imitation of the subjects and styles of classical writers, but also sought improved principles for the interpretation of these literary forms. Although Baxandall has advocated a relationship between Renaissance

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<sup>82</sup> Although focused on Valois France, Claire Richter Sherman, *Imaging Aristotle: Verbal and Visual Representation in Fourteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), is a useful source on humanistic traditions of commentary. Taking up the first illustrated cycles of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*, she has argued that Nicole Oresme invented the illustrations as part of the project of the *translatio studii*, the excavation of antique culture and power.

<sup>83</sup> Roman humanists are distinct from the schools of Florence, which were more concerned with philosophical study and the academic revival of Plato. The Roman school depended on patronage from the curial court, and as such, was intellectually distinctive, especially in its approaches to Christian theology. The best source to date on Roman humanism is D'Amico, (1983), pp. 89-97. For an overview of humanism more generally, see Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Humanist Movement," in: *Renaissance Thought and Its Sources* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), p. 21 ff; Charles Trinkaus, *The Scope of Renaissance Humanism* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983); and for a useful survey of shifting historiographic methods, see Nicholas Mann, "The Origins of Humanism," in: *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, ed. Jill Kraye (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 1-19.

<sup>84</sup> The "Roman Academy" has become academic shorthand for the many humanistic groups that operated in late Quattrocento Rome, the most famous of which was led by the great Latinist and rhetorician Pomponio Leto (Giulio Sanseverino, 1427-1498). On the members and activities of the Roman Academy, see again D'Amico (1983), pp. 89-97; Eugenio Garin, "L'Accademia Romana, Pomponio Leto, e la congiura," in: *Storia della letteratura italiana*, ed. Emilio Cecchi and Natalino Sapegno (Milan: Garzanti, 1988), vol. 3, pp. 144-160; also Rowland (1998), pp. 10-24.

commentaries on rhetoric and the visual arts, the means by which these criticisms were understood and negotiated have yet to be sufficiently appreciated. The activities of commentary, moreover, were neither isolated nor static, and equally important were the systems by which these ideas were practiced and conveyed. Even as they devised their own treatises on grammar and rhetoric, the humanist scholars of Raphael's Rome copied and corrected ancient manuscripts, which they outfitted with critical apparatuses as textual guides or interrogations.<sup>85</sup> In some early examples, glosses, annotations, and miniatures filled the margins as a supplementary framework for engaging the primary text. In others, line-by-line analyses cited words or phrases as opportunities for excursus into history, mythology, or other suitable topics of study. These interpretative aids were often matched by accompanying visual forms. Alongside textual commentary and annotations, marginal drawings served as an important part of the critical apparatus, and these illustrative complements aided in explaining the philological or archaeological research of critics and readers.<sup>86</sup> Efforts of interpretation, moreover, were generally social, and schools of scholars traded in textual corrections and debate. But this historical network of humanistic influence also extended backwards. Humanistic editors were not the only mediators of a text; so too were ancient authors, whom commentators and

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<sup>85</sup> The critical apparatus is inelegantly termed "paratext" by modern philologists. On the theoretical function of the critical apparatus in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, see Gérard Genette, *Paratexts, Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 2-3 and 9; the introduction in *Renaissance Commentaries. Noctes Neolatinae. Neo-Latin Texts and Studies*, ed. Marianne Pade (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2005), pp. 6-8 in particular. For a more general introduction to Renaissance literary criticism, see Paul Oskar Kristeller's seminal work: *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* (Rome, 1985); and Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), Chapters 3 through 5.

<sup>86</sup> Examples of marginal illustrations in humanistic commentaries are discussed by John Dunstan, "A Student's Notes on the Lectures of Giulio Pomponio Leto," in: *Antichthon: Journal of the Australian Society for Classical Studies* 1 (1967), pp. 86-94; and Paul Gwynne, "A Renaissance Image of Jupiter Stator," in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 58 (1995), pp. 249-252.

readers resurrected in their glosses. In the exercise of reading, classical and contemporary writers were not solitary figures, but rather active interlocutors in the long history of literature, who staged their references, revisions, and reinventions of each other's works on the pages of books.

In the Quattro- and Cinquecento, these activities were advocated by Rome's sodalities and the *studium urbis* and flourished above all under the sponsorship of the Della Rovere.<sup>87</sup> After years of persecution under Paul II, the humanistic cohorts were reinvigorated by Sixtus IV, who advanced their status locally and at the papal court by funding the Roman Academy and installing its members in his Curia as the vanguards of the Vatican Library.<sup>88</sup> Julius took up a similar standard and stocked his court with humanistic scholars, poets, and theologians as intellectual analogues to his impressive *renovatio* of the city. The Latinist and apostolic secretary Domizio Calderini, for instance, accompanied the future pope to Avignon in 1476, and in 1507, Julius made Lippo's brother, the poet Raffaele Brandolini, his papal *cubicularius*. The *Bibliotheca Iulia* reinforced the esteemed status of humanists like these, who left an undeniable literary footprint on the Julian collection, as we will see in the sections that follow. For now, it is sufficient to note that many residents of the Julian court were the same individuals preoccupied with the revival of a classical literary canon, and were installed as custodial members of Vatican institutions under the Della Rovere.

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<sup>87</sup> The rising popularity of Rome's humanists was already glimpsed in the Curia of Nicholas V, where Giovanni Andrea Bussi, Niccolò Perotti, and Giovanni Tortelli set out to equip the Vatican Library with a new body of archetypal texts, whose language and grammar corresponded to newly defined rules of spelling, punctuation, and orthography. This intended legacy is attested by the dedicatory letters of corrected manuscripts, copies of which lived on in the Julian collection (BAV MS [REDACTED], item 38 on the inventory; BAV MS [REDACTED], item 53 on the inventory; and item 73 on the inventory).

<sup>88</sup> Platina provides a primary account of the situation under Paul II in his *vita* of the pope (in *Platynae historici liber de vita Christi ac omnium pontificum*, ed. Giacinto Gaida [Città di Castello: Lapi, 1913-32], p. 169). A good summary of events can be found in: Rowland (1998), pp. 14-16.

Like his papal patron, Raphael is known to have collaborated with members of the Roman Academy, including Angelo Colocci and Pietro Bembo, and we should imagine that his conversations with these figures took a shape similar to the kinds of discourses that molded Rome's literary topography.<sup>89</sup> My argument is that contemporary forms of commentary, with their ripe implications for new systems of language and eloquence, supplied the critical basis for Raphael's paintings in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*. The assembly of authors and ideas in Raphael's frescoes must be understood to make a claim similar to the Julian volumes: by grouping ancient and modern literary exempla together in conversation, the frescoes present a visual compendium on the virtues of imitation and invention, which they quote, explain, invert, and revise. And applying these textual themes to the walls of the papal *bibliotheca*, Raphael himself emulated and rivaled the restoration of ancient eloquence, inviting us to compare his role as artist to the contemporary undertakings of literary critics and commentators.

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<sup>89</sup> See Ingrid D. Rowland, "Angelo Colocci ed i suoi rapporti con Raffaello," in: *Res publica litterarum/Studia umanistici piceni* 11 (1991), pp. 217-225; *ead.*, "Raphael, Angelo Colocci, and the Genesis of the Architectural Orders," in: *Art Bulletin* 76.1 (1994), pp. 81-104; Carol Kidwell, *Pietro Bembo: Lover, Linguist, Cardinal* (Montreal and Ithaca: McGill and Queen's University Press, 2004), pp. 171 ff.

## 2.3 Imitative Arts and the Art of Imitation

The Renaissance culture in which Raphael worked was thoroughly suffused with the concepts of imitation and invention. At the center of all aesthetic discourse, both visual and verbal, these principles represented the fundamentals of composition. But before they were applied to painting, imitation and invention belonged to the language of ancient rhetoric, and with the revival of classical oratory in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Italian humanists turned to Cicero and Quintilian in search of a fitting vocabulary for theories of art and poetry.<sup>90</sup> When Alberti — whose principles of perspective loom large in the *School of Athens* and the *Disputa* — set forth a new framework for narrative painting, he described the picture plane in terms of the rhetorical *compositio*.<sup>91</sup> Following the rubric of rhetorical primers — which defined composition as the structure of a periodic sentence, its words, phrases, and clauses — Alberti borrowed these terms to recommend a harmonious hierarchy of forms. Although Alberti stopped short of discussing imitation or *imitatio*, he counseled that art should follow nature, anticipating the literary debate that gripped later generations. The first principle of rhetorical pedagogy, imitation, or the emulation of ancient literary models, was the bridge between theory and practice, between reading and writing. Most importantly for present purposes, Seneca's apian analogy of bees gathering honey was the authoritative source on imitation for Renaissance theorists: just as bees extract nectar from flowers, converting this

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<sup>90</sup> On the Renaissance inheritance of ancient theories of rhetoric and its influence on the visual arts, see n. 68 in the introduction. To this list, we should add: Rensselaer W. Lee, "Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting," in: *Art Bulletin* 22 (1940), pp. 197-269; and David Summers, "Michelangelo's 'Battle of Cascina,' Pomponius Gauricus, and the Invention of a 'Gran Maniera' in Italian Painting," in: *Artibus et Historiae* 28.56 (2007), pp. 165-176.

<sup>91</sup> See again Baxandall's *Giotto and the Orators*, "Alberti and the Humanists: Composition," pp. 121-139 in particular.



resource into honey, so the writer should transform his or her references by similar digestion.<sup>92</sup> For Seneca, the process of emulation is not simply eclectic, but is also transformative. When the poet imitates, he, like the bee, transforms his models into something new.

The transformative principle of imitation had wide purchase among literary and artistic theorists. Cicero wrote that his *De inventione* was “culled from the flower of many minds,” and in the same text, he cited an example from painting to explain imitation as a literary concept.<sup>93</sup> In a passage repeated by Alberti and ceaselessly throughout the Renaissance, Cicero recounted the story of the artist Zeuxis, who was commissioned to make a painting of Helen of Troy for the Temple of Juno in Croton. Croton was famous for its many beautiful women, and so instead of seeking a single one as his model, Zeuxis borrowed the best features from many. The tale not only resonated profoundly across Renaissance discussions of art as imitation, but was also an issue of direct interest to Raphael, whose famous Galatea letter (probably written by his friend Baldassare Castiglione) refits the story of Zeuxis to his own pictorial methods:

I say to you that to paint something beautiful, I must see several beauties, on the condition that your lordship is with me to choose the best. But since there is a shortage of good judges and good women, I require a certain Idea, which comes to me in my mind. Whether there is any excellence of art in this thing, I do not know, but I strive to achieve it in any case.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium* 84. On Seneca’s analogy in the Renaissance, see G.W. Pigman, “Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance,” in: *Renaissance Quarterly* 33.1 (1980), pp. 1-32.

<sup>93</sup> *De inventione* II.2.4: “non unum aliquod proposuimus exemplum cuius omnes partes, quocumque essent in genere, exprimendae nobis necessarie viderentur, sed omnibus unum in locum coactis scriptores, quod quisque comodissime praecipere viderentur, excerpimus et ex variis ingenias excellentissima quaeque libavamus?” As cited in James Ackerman, “Imitation,” in: *Origins, Imitation, Conventions: Representation in the Visual Arts* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2002), p. 127.

<sup>94</sup> I subscribe to John Shearman’s argument, “Castiglione’s Portrait of Raphael,” in: *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 38.1 (1994), pp. 69-97, that the letter was intended as a poetic eulogy for the painter, in the tradition of the moral portrait à la Martial. The Italian, from Shearman, p. 70: “. . . le dico, che per dipingere una bella, mi bisognaria veder piu belle, con questa conditione, che V. S. si

Raphael's ideal figure is an artificial form composed from many sources, whose perfection is only reached in the artist's imagination. As in the tale of Zeuxis, the role of the artist, like that of the bee or the poet, is not simply a copied task, but an exercise in *ingegno*, bringing about beautiful forms through the labor of the mind, or the intellectual test of invention.

Imitation and invention were equally central to the humanistic project of a modern textual criticism, and it is my argument that Raphael looked to these issues of literary canon in search of an appropriate visual vocabulary for the library of Julius II. As Italy's humanists and book hunters sought to correct and stabilize the ancient texts in their care, they exercised imitation down to even the most minor details of the page, from its formats and script to its rubrication and illustration. But the corruption of the time meant that ancient text fell under the close scrutiny of its Renaissance inheritors, who sought to repair the particularities of words and meter that had been lost in intervening centuries of scribal reproduction. To imitate the ancients, therefore, the invention, or *reinvention*, of their literary subjects and style was key. I have already discussed how these pressures were brought to bear in the margins of notebooks and manuscripts, but they were also enacted on a larger scale: the revival of ancient libraries as gardens of knowledge was the humanistic solution to the construction of a new literary canon.<sup>95</sup> Not only did libraries supply the catalogued sources to study and emulate, but in the systems of knowledge contained therein, these chambers were also meant to inspire their readers to imitation

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trovasse meco a far scelta del meglio. Ma essendo carestia, e de'buoni giudicij, e di belle donne, io mi servo di certa Idea, che mi viene nella mente. Se questa ha in se alcuna eccellenza d'arte, io non so: ben m'affatico di haverla."

<sup>95</sup> As the Florentine chancellor Coluccio Salutati recommended. Cited and discussed in Anthony Grafton, *Commerce with the Classics: Ancient Books and Renaissance Readers* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), "Into the Library" in particular, pp. 19-35.

and invention. The book hunter and papal secretary Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1469)

described the combined purpose of text and image to these effects:

For ancient and learned men are known to have put down many things in word and in image for the sake of emulation or study. Cicero himself, Varro, Aristotle, and others both Greek and Latin, outstanding in all fields of learning, directed themselves on to study thanks to images of virtue, and so they adorned their libraries and gardens, in order to ennoble the places in which they were established, affirming that these were sites of praise and industry. For they believed that the images of those who excelled in the study of glory and wisdom inspired and ennobled the mind when placed before the eyes.<sup>96</sup>

In the sections that follow, I examine how the *Bibliotheca Iulia* — from its books to its walls — was mediated and shaped by these principles of imitation and invention.

Moreover, I propose that these principles of a new literary criticism were the stimulus for Raphael's novel Roman style, and for articulating the theme of Justice.

## 2.4 *Uomini Famosi* and the Decoration of the Vatican Library

Populated with eminent writers from the past and present, Raphael's frescoes belong to a long history of decoration, which the artist both inherited and boldly reinterpreted. To understand Raphael's frescoes in light of the Stanza's intended purpose as the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, we must naturally consider how libraries were decorated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Raphael's assembly of writers is often compared to the ancient tradition of famous men, or *uomini famosi*, whose portrait busts or painted

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<sup>96</sup> Poggio Bracciolini, *Opera omnia*, ed. Riccardo Fubini (Turin: Erasmo, 1964), pp. 65-66: "Nam constat priscos etiam doctissimos viros in signis et tabulis comparandis plurimum opere studijque posuisse. Cicero ipse, Varro, Aristoteles, caeterique tum Graeci tum Latini insignes omnium doctrinarum genere viri, qui virtutum specie ad studia se contulerunt, eiusmodi rebus suas quoque bibliothecas et hortos excolebant, ad loca ipsa in quibus constituta erant nobilitanda, idemque laudis et industriae esse volebant. Multum enim ad nobilitandum excitandumque animum conferre existimauerunt, imagines eorum qui gloriae et sapientiae studijs flouissent ante oculos positos." Cited in Joost-Gaugier, "Poggio and the Visual Tradition: 'Uomini Famosi' in the Classical Literary Tradition," in: *Artibus et Historiae* 6.12 (1985), p. 58.

likenesses outfitted spaces of learning and governance with emulative models. Less considered, however, are the ways in which Raphael revised this classical paradigm. By making the language and devices of contemporary texts into visual idioms, Raphael envisioned a visual essay on the history of imitation, transforming the genre of *uomini famosi* into an allegory for literature and the arts in Julian Rome.

A simultaneously literary and artistic genre, *uomini famosi* surged in popularity as didactic exempla in fifteenth-century cycles.<sup>97</sup> Commemorated in portraiture and written histories alike, they were models to embrace and copy, which were displayed dually on walls and shelves as visual and textual topoi. At the same time that classical *vitae* were recovered from European monasteries and reproduced in humanistic notebooks and manuscripts, ancient sculptures experienced a remarkable shift in status as objects for private and civic emulation.<sup>98</sup> The simultaneous bloom of written and archaeological exempla demanded new suitable spaces to commemorate these emulative themes, and although cycles of famous men were popular in civic auditoria, throne rooms, and judicial halls, equally important were the *cortili* and gardens that served as fora for exercising the principles of poetic and artistic imitation.

Alongside the reinstatement of the Roman Academy under Sixtus IV, Rome's curial *familiae* — avid collectors of antiquities and classical manuscripts — built courtyards and loggias to display the sculptures and fragments recovered from the ancient

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<sup>97</sup> Although some earlier cycles precede the Trecento, they are dedicated to the chivalric rather than classical tradition. See Christiane Joost-Gaugier, "The Early Beginnings of the Notion of 'Uomini Famosi' and 'De Viris Illustribus' in Greco-Roman Literary Tradition," in: *Artibus et Historiae* 3.6 (1982), pp. 97-115; *ead.* (1985), pp. 57-74.

<sup>98</sup> On the changing status of antiquities and the elite collections of Rome, see again Christian, chapter 2 in particular.

ruins, and they opened these spaces to Rome's humanistic sodalities.<sup>99</sup> Indeed, alongside his libraries at Santi Apostoli and San Pietro in Vincoli, Julius installed some of Rome's best sculpture collections in new *cortili*, where he showcased marbles like the *Apollo Belvedere*, ceremoniously unearthed in 1489.<sup>100</sup> Had Bramante realized plans for the new *Cortile del Belvedere*, unprecedented in scale and design, we can imagine the pope's antiquities in direct conversation with his library, since the courtyard's perspectival terraces assumed an ideal viewer from the northern window of the Stanza della Segnatura.<sup>101</sup> Against the backdrop of the city's ruins, Renaissance patrons and their humanist clientele gathered for the mutual purpose of imitation, on which their own immortality (and Rome's) was staked: while cadres of poets and linguists sought to outclass in verse the ingenuity of ancient sculptors, their collectors aspired toward the fame of ancient heroes, preserved in the epigraphic relics and statues that adorned their gardens, courtyards, and studies.

But collections of ancient sculpture were not alone in this restoration of the Roman past, and the literary tradition of *uomini famosi* equipped these conversations with commensurate textual models. Like the antiquarian gardens that preserved physical anthologies of archaeological models, intellectual gardens of delights served as written

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<sup>99</sup> We might also note here that Sixtus IV encouraged his nephews to build spectacular new *palazzi*, the grandest of which is the Cancelleria, and whose *cortili* were decorated with some of the most exceptional examples of ancient sculpture. On the rise of antiquarian collections like these as venues for humanistic circles, see *ibid.*, pp. 125-149.

<sup>100</sup> As cardinal, Giuliano outbid Lorenzo de' Medici to purchase the *Apollo Belvedere* for his collection at *Santi Apostoli*. The sculpture was later transported to the Cortile del Belvedere and is frequently included in drawings and prints of the space.

<sup>101</sup> The tile patterns in the room's pavement reveal a thematic relationship between the Stanza and the Belvedere Courtyard, since the floor's irregular axis corresponds to the ideal position for viewing Bramante's perspectival architecture. See Shearman (1971), p. 197. For an overview of the Belvedere collection, see Christoph Luitpold Frommel, "I tre progetti bramanteschi per il Cortile del Belvedere," in: *Il cortile delle statue. Der Statuenhof des Belvedere im Vatikan*, ed. Matthias Winner, Bernard Andreae, and Carlo Pietrangeli (Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 1998) pp. 17-66; and more recently, Christian, pp. 265-275.

pendants. *Compilationes* and *florilegia* — like the *Hortus Deliciarum*, the *Liber Floridus*, and the *Manipulus florum* — were essential complements to these material collections.<sup>102</sup> Usually richly illustrated, these encyclopedic examples grouped together authoritative passages or quotations from ancient and patristic sources; in ways akin to the collections of elite sculpture gardens and courtyards, proverbs and other excerpts were organized as pedagogical topoi under topics of academic, literary, and pastoral conduct. To this mix of moral and homiletic exempla, we may add new critical editions of Thucydides, Aulus Gellius, Suetonius, Plutarch, and Valerius Maximus, which proliferated in the fifteenth century and made widely accessible antiquity's roster of illustrious *vitae*.<sup>103</sup> In the footsteps of these ancient histories and medieval compendia, humanists like Paolo Cortesi (1467-1510), whose *De cardinalatu* was dedicated to Julius II and is listed on his library's inventory, composed their own encyclopedic digests of classical inscriptions, ancient monuments, and exemplary individuals. Thus in Della Rovere Rome, catalogues of exempla were archaeological and textual tasks, and it was against the backdrop of these rubrics that legacies of learning were assembled and understood.

At the center of the *instauratio urbis*, the Vatican Library was the crown jewel in the Sistine tiara, the nerve center of the Christian Church, from which its doctrinal authority was energetically diffused.<sup>104</sup> Although the fabric of its collection and facilities

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<sup>102</sup> Julius owned a copy of the *Manipulus florum* (item 91 on the inventory: "Manipulus florum ex me[m]b. in rub[r]o").

<sup>103</sup> Valla's Latin translation of Thucydides was produced in 1452 for Pope Nicholas V; the *editio princeps* of Aulus Gellius followed in 1469; two *editiones principes* of Suetonius were published in 1470, and at least thirteen other editions were printed before 1500; most of Plutarch's *Lives* had been translated into Latin in the 1450s, and the *editio princeps* was published in 1470. See Marianne Pade, *The Reception of Plutarch's Lives in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, 2 vols. (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2007).

<sup>104</sup> The literature on the Vatican Library under Sixtus IV is practically endless. For starters, on the Della Rovere, see: John Willis Clark, "The Vatican Library of Sixtus IV," in: *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* (1898), pp. 1-52; *Un pontificato ed una città: Sisto IV (1471-1484)*, ed. Massimo Miglio et al. (Vatican City: Scuola vaticana di paleografia, diplomatica e archivistica, 1986); *Sisto IV e*

has continued to shift and evolve over the centuries, the Sistine institution was born against this background of commemoration and didacticism. Under Sixtus IV, the Vatican Library was a bombastic showpiece, a stunning statement of his gift to letters, making humanistic rhetoric into a vessel for reclaiming the history and grandeur of the Roman past. But it also served the important purpose of outfitting the Holy See with the intellectual capital to attract Europe's best scholars and rival the continent's sovereign powers.

The reading rooms survive intact (although their furnishings are long since removed), and some of their paintings are preciously preserved.<sup>105</sup> These extant decorations assert the symbolic cooperation of books and portraits as instruments of Roman and Christian exempla. This combination of books and images not only projects a microcosm of knowledge and learning under the aegis of Christian Rome, but also promotes the Vatican Library and its papal patron as fulfillments of these exemplary models. In the largest and most impressive of the public reading rooms was the *Sala*

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*Giulio II. Mecenati e promotori di cultura*, ed. Silvia Bottaro, Anna Dagnino, and Giovanna Rotondi Terminello (Savona: Soprintendenza per i Beni Artistici e Storici della Liguria-Comune di Savona, in collaboration with l'Università degli Studi di Genova, 1989); and Manfredi (2010), *passim*. The standard work on the Vatican Library is: Jeanne Bignami Odier and José Ruyschaert, *La Bibliothèque Vaticane de Sixte IV à Pie XI* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1973). Also see: José Ruyschaert, "Sixte IV, fondateur de la Bibliothèque Vaticane, 15 juin 1475," in: *Archivum Historiae Pontificae* 7 (1969), pp. 513-524; *ead.*, "Le fondation de la Bibliothèque Vatican en 1475 et les témoignages contemporains," in: *Studi offerti a Roberto Ridolfi*, ed. Berta Maracchi Biagiarelli and Dennis E. Rhodes (Florence: Olschki, 1973), pp. 413-420; *ead.*, "La Bibliothèque Vatican dans les dix premières années du pontificat de Sixte IV," in: *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae* 24 (1986), pp. 71-90; *ead.*, "Platina et l'aménagement des locaux de la Vaticane sous Sixte IV (1471 - 1475 - 1481)," in: *Bartolomeo Sacchi il Platina (Piacenza 1421-Roma 1481)*, ed. Augusto Campana and Paola Medioli Medioli Masotti (Padova: 1986), pp. 145-151; Leonard Boyle, "Sixtus IV and the Vatican Library," in: *Tradition, Innovation, and Renewal*, ed. Clifford M. Brown, John Osborne, and W. Chandler Kirwin (Toronto: PIAC 1991), pp. 65-73; and Grafton (1993), *passim*.<sup>105</sup> The circuit of rooms is complex and divided into four primary sections: the *Bibliotheca Graeca*, the *Bibliotheca Latina*, the *Bibliotheca Secreta*, and the *Bibliotheca Pontificia*. To what degree these partitions were invented and organized under Nicholas V and Sixtus IV is open to debate. The literature on the Vatican Library is vast. For the most up-to-date assessment of these problems and an overview of the history, see Antonio Manfredi, "La nascita della Vaticana in età umanistica da Niccolò V a Sisto IV," in: Manfredi (2010), pp. 147-236.

*Latina*, decorated by Domenico and Davide Ghirlandaio.<sup>106</sup> The brothers painted eight lunettes, which would have crowned Platina's new intarsia cabinets and reading desks (figs. 2.3 and 2.4). The murals promote a union of Christianity and classical learning, which Sixtus championed in the library's foundational bull. Wreathed by swags of oak leaves and acorns, classical philosophers and Christian Doctors — including Cleobulus, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Diogenes, Antisthenes, Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, and Gregory the Great — supervise the readers below. Reminiscent of the author portraits that occupy the opening pages of the volumes, the figures not only advertise the holdings of the Sistine collection, but also give form to the written body of wisdom contained in the collection. Probably devised by Platina, the text on their banderoles references passages from the manuscripts, at once exalting activities of learning and informing their purpose under a set of moral guidelines.<sup>107</sup> But the images are the servants of text — since the context of these phrases can only be completed by consultation of the adjacent volumes, the inscriptions demand a priority of words, guiding us from the books to the walls and back again.

Similarly reminiscent of the pages of contemporary manuscripts, Melozzo's composition would have sealed this visual scheme in the *Sala Latina* as the institutional

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<sup>106</sup> The dates of decoration are debated, ranging broadly from 1472 to 1476. For an overview of the decoration and problems of dating, see Toby Yuen, "The Bibliotheca Graeca: Castagno, Alberti, and Ancient Sources," in: *Burlington Magazine* 112 (1970), pp. 725-736; Guido Cornini, "'Dominico Thomasi florentino pro pictura bibliothecae quam inchoavit: il contributo di Domenico e Davide Ghirlandaio nella Biblioteca di Sisto IV,'" in: *Sisto IV. Le arti a Roma nel Primo Rinascimento*, ed. Fabio Benzi, Claudio Crescentini, and Malena McGrath (Rome: Edizioni dell'Associazione Culturale Shakespeare and Company, 2000), pp. 225-248; and Jeanne K. Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio: Artist and Artisan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 197-201.

<sup>107</sup> Platina is also thought to have planned the visual program in Santo Spirito, whose subjects appear to have originated in his *Vitae*. On the banderole, see Ruysschaert (1986), pp. 78-82; Manfredi (2003), p. 225. On the Hospital of Santo Spirito, see again Howe.



frontispiece of the Vatican Library.<sup>108</sup> At the near center of the painting, Platina kneels like the suppliants in contemporary presentation miniatures (fig. 2.5), but instead of extending a book to his patron, he gestures toward the collection the Vatican Library itself, the crescendo of the accompanying epigram. Melozzo's fresco would have served as a fitting complement to the Ghirlandaio's *uomini famosi*, using the language of illuminations to draw visual comparison between the library's Della Rovere founders and the illustrious individuals who inhabited the walls and shelves inside.

In the same way that the Vatican Library projected the return of learned virtue to Rome under the Della Rovere, the Stanza della Segnatura as *Bibliotheca Iulia* framed the Julian papacy in terms of Rome's outstanding precedents, with Raphael rewriting the written and visual history of *uomini famosi*. Whereas in the Sistine *Sala Latina*, the portraits are individually rendered, distinguished by name, and accompanied by didactic phrases, in Raphael's paintings, there is a notable absence of text. Instead, the artist transformed this aesthetic paradigm into a performance of literary history, and in his frescoes, philosophers, poets, theologians, and jurists intermingle — they pore over open books and unfurled scrolls, engage in lively conversations, and guide us emphatically across the space of the room. As critic and heir of the tradition of *uomini famosi*, Raphael playfully displayed his reinvention of the genre. Below the heavy barrel of the *School of Athens*' soaring vault, marble statues inhabit shallow tabernacles. In a preparatory study for the fresco (fig. 2.6), Raphael envisioned the marble figures with books and scrolls, only vaguely visible in the final fresco. By framing his figures with these sculptural precedents, Raphael both acknowledged his reception and unveiled his revision in a

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<sup>108</sup> Rowland (1997), p. 135, first compared the function of the fresco to a book's frontispiece.

moment of literary and visual artifice. Unlike in the *Sala Latina*, where the figures are animated only by the textual volutes they carry, in Raphael's paintings, the surprising poverty of words encourages a new relationship between the walls and the shelved volumes. His figures stage the history of the book on a monumental scale — they draw, debate, and search — but by limiting the inclusion of text, Raphael asks the reader to resolve their actions and relationships by seeking out counterparts in the Julian volumes. Imitating the act of imitation itself, Raphael painted a visual essay on the contemporary concept of emulation. By reimagining the role of *uomini famosi* in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, he not only catalogued the history of imitative exempla, but by remaking books into the accessories of his designs, he also paid tribute to the authoritative legacy of the genre and championed his own authorial mastery.

## 2.5 Urbino and the Library as Symbolic Form

Julius was alone neither in practice nor ambition, and the status of books during his papacy represents a persuasive symbol of his domain and dynasty. In spite of clear evidence of his bibliophilia, his martial reputation and legendary *terribilità* have precluded serious consideration of his intellectual life. The pope's militarism, however, was not as great an obstacle to ambitions of art and learning as scholars have thought. The humanistic retinue at the court of Julius II understood the virtue of books as symbols of fortification and as Christianity's single greatest arsenal. On the Feast of the Circumcision in 1508 — the same year that Raphael arrived in Rome — the humanistic scholar Battista Casali delivered an energetic sermon in the Sistine Chapel *coram papam*.

Its peroration deems the Vatican Library Christianity's best defense against the looming danger of the Ottomans:

. . . for once the beauty of the city of Athens incited a battle among the gods, where humanity, education, religion, morality, jurisprudence, and law are believed to have originated and been distributed among all the land, where Lycaeus [of Aristotle] and the Athenaeum and so many other *gymnasia* once stood; where the great founders of learning trained the youth and schooled them in virtue, fortitude, temperance, and justice — which all toppled thanks to that Mohammedan maelstrom.

But I think that it must have been by heavenly command that your uncle Sixtus rescued their remnants from the storm and sowed certain seeds, which gradually sprouted, now — under you, our Prince — finally give forth the great promise of learning, such that he built its foundation, but you have given it gables.

That pontifical library he erected now stands, and in it he seems to have transported Athens herself; salvaging from the shipwreck whatever books he could, he established the image of her Academy. But it was truly you, Julius II, our Pontifex Maximus, who restored the real thing, when you summoned its volumes, helpless and mostly ruined, as if from the dead, and when you decided to revive Athens, her study, her theater, her school with books, among threats of interrupted work.

That is to say, your other works are indeed magnificent and splendid, but I do not know how, without these things to celebrate them, they would not remain voiceless and mute. Truly this Athenaeum, which you have renewed, will never lapse into silence. Daily it will sing your praises in a hundred tongues, and when your other projects collapse, so long as these things are read, their memories will be eternally revived . . . Indeed, it is by this thing, Holiest Father, that you shall accomplish what your soldiers will never conquer by arms; you will lead your shackled foes through the torture of learning, learning with which, just like a sponge, you will erase all stains of terror and you will circumcise from within the inveterate roots of all crime as if wielding an inflexible scythe.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Delivered January 1, 1508, the oration survives in Milan (Ambr. MS G 33). Its text was first published by John O'Malley, "The Vatican Library and the *School of Athens*: A text of Battista Casali, 1508," in: *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 7 (1971), pp. 271-287; see also Rowland (1998), p. 139-149. The Latin reads: "Sed tuam imprimis fidem Athenae implorare videntur, de qua quondam urbe propter pulchritudinem etiam inter deos certamen fuisse proditum est; ubi humanitas, doctrina, religio, fruges, iura, leges ortae atque in omnes terras distributae putantur; ubi Lycium, ubi Athenaeum totque alia gymnasia erant; ubi tot doctrinarum principes, qui iuventutem exercebant et ad virtutem, fortitudinem, temperantiam, iustitiam erudiebant — quae omnia taeterrimae illius procellae Mahometicae turbine corruerunt. Sed divino

Although the parallels to Platina's epigram are obvious, the sermon inspires an image of Della Rovere Rome that exceeds the one emblazoned on Melozzo's fresco. Casali's pronouncement evokes the cast of characters in Raphael's *School of Athens*, where the teachers of Greek antiquity are revived under the beneficent patronage of the pope. Like Raphael's fresco, Casali's climactic note describes Julian Rome as a luminous panorama of ancient learning, and it names ancient and modern books the principal vessels of faith. Julius, Casali declares, has surpassed his uncle in his patronage of letters, and through the promotion libraries — the new *gymnasia* of Aristotle — the pope's place in Christian history is guaranteed.

Although the *Bibliotheca Iulia* was a bald dynastic extension of the Sistine institution, its precedents were not only papal, and here we turn to a collection with resonant significance for Raphael and his patron alike. The Della Rovere maintained a close relationship with the Montefeltro, the ruling family of the Duchy of Urbino, which aligned military force with cultural patronage.<sup>110</sup> Urbino was at once a political, literary,

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nutu ac potestate factum arbitror ut nonnullas ex ea tempestate reliquias Syxtus, patruus tuus, iam tum exceperit et semina quaedam iecerit, quae sensim crescendo nunc demum, te principe, divinitus magnum doctrinarum proventum ediderunt, ut ille fundamenta iecisse doctrinarum, tu velut fastigium imposuisse videaris. Exstat pontificia illa bibliotheca ab eo erecta, in quam ipsas etiam Athenas videtur transtulisse, qui ex eo naufragio libros quos poterat colligens imaginem quamdam Academiae instituit. Tu vero, Iuli secunde, pontifex maxime, veram condis cum iacentes ac paene obrutas litteras velut ab inferis revocas cum suis litteris Athenas, sua studia, sua theatra, suum Athenaeum, quod interruptis operibus minisque pendebat, restituere instituis. Cetera enim tua opera magnifica illa quidem sunt ac splendida, sed tamen nescio quomodo sine voce ac muta futura erant si deessent a quibus celebrarentur. Athenaeum vero illud a te instauratum numquam conticescet. Centum quotidie linguis tuas laudes decantabit et, ubi illa corruerint, [haec] dum legentur quotidie resurgent semperque eorum memoria renovabitur. Ea causa est, opinor, ut fabulae tradunt, vocales fuisse Thebarum muros ab Amphione conditos, quod scilicet insignes scriptores nacti fuerint qui eos suis monumentis prosecuti sempiternam memoriam pepererunt et posteritati fideliter commendarunt. Qua quidem re, Beatissime Pater, id consequeris, ut quos tui milites armis non expugnaverint, hos conculcatos doctrinae tormentis catenatos ducas, qua tamquam spongia omnes terrorum labes delebis et tot inveteratas facinorum omnium radices velut adamantina falce penitus circumcidis - DIXI."

<sup>110</sup> On military conquest and the elevation of the arts as simultaneous objectives and complements, see Pamela Long, "Power, Patronage, and the Authorship of *Ars*: From Mechanical Know-How to Mechanical Knowledge in the Last Scribal Age," in: *Isis* 88.1 (1997), pp. 1-41; on the Montefeltro in particular, see Ian

and artistic stronghold, against which Italy's sovereign powers and states were measured. Most of all, its magnificent library and *studiolo* were the outstanding expressions of a particular species of ruler — the warrior-scholar, a type of special significance for *il papa terribile*. In contents and decoration, the collections of Federico da Montefeltro (1422-1482) and his son Guidobaldo (1472-1508) — patriarchs of the duchy, comrades of the Della Rovere, and patrons of Giovanni and Raphael Santi — represented important and competitive models for the symbolism of libraries as arenas for fashioning and projecting a curated worldview. Although his relationship with earlier popes was notoriously embroiled, Federico enjoyed a productive association with the Della Rovere, bound up in the mutual ambitions of government and dynasty: in 1474, Sixtus IV raised Federico to the title of duke and appointed him commander of the papal army. The following day, Giovanni della Rovere — conspicuously included in Melozzo's fresco — was married to Federico's daughter Giovanna; their son, Francesco Maria, would become heir to Urbino and the favorite nephew of Pope Julius II.<sup>111</sup> Under Federico's tutelage, Raphael's hometown was transformed into one of the peninsula's most prolific centers of humanistic learning and the visual arts, and the duke employed in his retinue the scholar Cristoforo Landino (1424-1498) and the painters Paolo Uccello (1397-1475) and Piero della Francesca (1415-1492). Julius nurtured a similar kinship with the duchy, and he delighted in the many splendors of the ducal palace during his various sojourns.<sup>112</sup> As

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Verstegen, "Francesco Maria and the Duchy of Urbino, between Rome and Venice," in: *Patronage and Dynasty: The Rise of the Della Rovere in Renaissance Italy* (Kirkville: Truman State University Press, 2007), pp. 150.

<sup>111</sup> Francesco Maria della Rovere was adopted in 1508 by Guidobaldo, who produced no children of his own. Urbino remained in the hands of the Della Rovere until 1623. On the close relationship of these families, see Verstegen, pp. xxi-xxv.

<sup>112</sup> See Marino Sanuto, *I Diarii*, ed. R. Ulin et al. (Venice: 1879-1886), vol. 6, cols. 421-422, as cited by Shaw, pp. 157-158.

Castiglione's *Courtier* opens, the story's festivities are set in motion by the arrival of Julius II, who marched there with his legions en route to Bologna in 1506. Given the close and congenial alliance of the Della Rovere and the Montefeltro, it seems safe to assume here that Sixtus and Julius were not only aware of, but even more to the point, had personal knowledge of the duke's impressive library, one of the most outstanding luxury collections in all of Europe.

The shared significance of Urbino for Raphael, the Della Rovere, and the Montefeltro suggests that its ducal library was a personally significant standard for the Della Rovere *bibliothecae*, as well as for Raphael's decorations, and so its collection deserves some attention here. Installed in the *palazzo ducale* in the early 1470s, Federico's library was the largest in Italy save for that at the Vatican (which again, was founded a few years later, in 1475).<sup>113</sup> Like the other elite collections of his day, Federico's library corresponded broadly to the categories of the liberal arts, science, theology, and law. Its *corpus* was decidedly humanistic in its contents, and it housed more than nine hundred illuminated volumes in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, as well as in Arabic and the vernacular.<sup>114</sup> In addition to its outstanding size, the collection was exceptional in its cost and opulence. According to Vespasiano da Bisticci, the *libraio* whom Federico hired to aid in the acquisition of his collection, the artistry and extent of

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<sup>113</sup> The library, once on the ground floor of the palace, is no longer intact; the small space now houses the travertine reliefs that adorned the palace exterior. The ducal collection, which swelled to more than 2000 manuscripts under Urbino's Della Rovere heirs, was transferred to the Vatican Library in the seventeenth century and today comprises the *fondi* Urb.lat; Urb.gr; and Urb.ebr. The Latin titles and their corresponding shelfmarks can be found in the diligent catalogues of Cosimo Stornajolo, *Codices Urbinati Latini*, 3 vols. (Rome: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1902-1921).

<sup>114</sup> Roughly 32% of the volumes were classical authors; 28% were theological; 18% were medieval; 17% were humanistic; 3% were juridical; and 2% were holy or sacred. A comprehensive analysis of the collection and distribution is found in: Marcella Peruzzi, *Cultura, Potere, Immagine. La biblioteca di Federico di Montefeltro* (Urbino: Accademia Raffaello, 2004).

its holdings were without parallel, and the duke employed an army of scribes and illuminators to furnish the library with *codices ornatissimi*.<sup>115</sup> For all of its visual and textual splendor, the ducal library was not simply one of a scholar or enthusiast; rather, it advertised a carefully crafted portrait of the duke, not only as Europe's fiercest *condottiere*, but also as an enlightened ruler — the “Light of Italy,” as Federico is so often called.

Federico's soldierly and humanistic ambitions were articulated above all by his *studiolo* — the practical complement to his library — whose decorations promote or enact the kinds of literary discourses that would have unfolded in consultation of the books.<sup>116</sup> Famous for its remarkable intarsia cabinetry (figs. 2.7 and 2.8), the *studiolo* of Urbino is one of very few surviving chambers of its kind.<sup>117</sup> As an interactive arena of learning and politics, the *studiolo* probably served many functions related dually to

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<sup>115</sup> In his *Lives*, Vespasiano detailed the extraordinary contents of the ducal library. To build his collection, Federico followed the canon recommended by Tommaso Parentucelli (Nicholas V), on which Cosimo de' Medici's collection at San Marco in Florence was based. The canon later served as the basis for the collection of the Vatican Library. In addition to the private scriptorium in Federico's employ, writers like Cristoforo Landino contributed stunning presentation copies to the ducal collection; a few other volumes were the spoils of war. See Vespasiano da Bisticci, *The Vespasian Memoirs*, trans. William George and Emily Waters (London: Routledge, 1926), pp. 109-111; Luigi Michelini Tocci, “La formazione della biblioteca di Federico da Montefeltro: Codici contemporanei e libri a stampa,” and Luigi Moranti “Organizzazione della biblioteca di Federico da Montefeltro,” in: *Federico di Montefeltro. Lo stato, le arti, la cultura*, ed. Giorgio Baiardi, Giorgio Chittolini, and Piero Floriani (Rome: Bulzoni, 1986), pp. 9-49.

<sup>116</sup> It is interesting to note here that Petrarch referred to *studioli* as *bibliothecae*. See Cecil H. Clough, “Art as Power in the Decoration of the Study of an Italian Renaissance Prince: The Case of Federico da Montefeltro,” in: *Artibus et Historiae* 16.31 (1995), pp. 21-22 in particular. On the decorative program of the *studiolo* and its gubernatorial symbolism, see Luciano Cheles, *The Studiolo of Urbino: An Iconographic Investigation* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1986); and more recently, Robert Kirkbride, *Architecture and Memory: The Studioli of Federico da Montefeltro* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

<sup>117</sup> The first known example of similar intarsia work, surviving only known through written records, is that of Arduino da Baese for Paolo Guinigi of Lucca, sometime before 1414. For an introduction to Renaissance *studioli*, their contents, and their decoration, see Dora Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study: Ownership and Experience in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 57-60 and 69-70 in particular; see also *Inventions of the Studio: Renaissance to Romanticism*, ed. Michael Cole and Mary Pardo (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), pp. 1-35; and Graziano Manni, *Mobili in Emilia. Con una indagine sulla civiltà dell'arredo alla corte degli Estensi* (Modena: Artioli, 1968), p. 77.

contemplation and action; it was a space of reading and meditation, as well as of diplomacy and administration. Federico is said to have retreated there with his private tutors and to have used the space for counseling dignitaries and signing contracts.<sup>118</sup> Reserved for Federico's elite guests, the narrow space both boasts the credentials of its patron and confers on him the cachet of academic leisure.<sup>119</sup> The chamber's illusionistic book presses (*armaria*) and settles (*spalerae*) — which include fictive spills of books, literary *notae*, and glistening plates of armor — would have framed these hermeneutic activities, while paneled portraits of poets, philosophers, theologians and jurists in the upper register looked on in approval (fig. 2.9).<sup>120</sup> The variety of images defies a single thematic program, but this diversity manifests a poetic play on the social conventions of the space.<sup>121</sup> As the discourse of Castiglione's *Cortegiano* suggests, the ducal court had a taste for literary puzzles and wordplay.<sup>122</sup> Imagining the games of the *Courtier* unfolding in Federico's *studiolo*, the intarsia becomes a playful stimulus for the activities of the space, with the authors in the upper frieze as conversational participants.

But what of our protagonists and their papal libraries? Specific features of the ducal collection find reciprocal references between Urbino and Rome. In Federico's

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<sup>118</sup> See Vespasiano da Bisticci, pp. 109-111; see also Iris Origo, "The Education of the Renaissance Man," in: *Horizon* 2.3 (1960), p. 68.

<sup>119</sup> For an overview of the symbolic and ideological function of *studioli* in the Italian Renaissance, see "Introduction," in Thornton, pp. 1-13.

<sup>120</sup> These authors include: Plato, Aristotle, Hippocrates, Homer, Euclid, Solon, Ptolemy, Cicero, Seneca, Virgil, Moses, Solomon, Gregory the Great, Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, Boethius, Bartolo, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, Pietro d'Abano, Dante, Petrarch, Vittorino da Feltre, Pius II, Cardinal Bessarion, and Sixtus IV. Their artist is uncertain. Although Justus van Ghent is traditionally thought to have painted the panels, scholars have recently suggested the Spaniard Pablo Barruguete.

<sup>121</sup> Kirkbride has understood the *studiolo* to manifest physically the rhetorical practice of *ekphrasis* and the exercises of *progymnasmata*, pp. 33-36.

<sup>122</sup> For example, Cheles (p. 89) cites Book 1, chapter XXX: "... se le parole che usa il scrittore portan seco un poco, non dirò di difficoltà, ma d'acutezza recondita, e non così nota come quelle che si dicono parlando ordinariamente, danno una certa maggior autorità alla scrittura e fanno che 'l lettore va più ritenuto e sopra di sé, e meglio considera e si diletta dello ingegno e dottrina di chi scrive; e col bon giudizio affaticandosi un poco, gusta quel piacere che s'ha nel conseguire le cose difficili."



*studiolo*, Sixtus IV is included among the pictured writers; he is the only living author among them (fig. 2.10).<sup>123</sup> With his hand raised in benediction, Sixtus affirms his virtue as author and theologian, attended textually by the adjacent inscription: “To Pope Sixtus IV, to commemorate his knowledge of philosophy and theology when he became pope, [Federico] dedicates this to his immortal kindness.”<sup>124</sup> The image was matched by a splendid volume of the Sistine treatise (*De sanguine Christi, De futuribus contingentibus, and De potentia Dei*) in Federico’s collection, and it is probably not by coincidence that the pope’s author portrait in the custom manuscript closely resembles his image on the *studiolo*’s upper wall (fig. 2.11).<sup>125</sup> Making one further leap, we might note that in both the panel and the miniature, Sixtus is placed against a backdrop of green brocade, a distinctive feature that recalls the unfinished curtain in Raphael’s portrait of Julius II (fig. 2.12).

The frieze of *uomini famosi* in Urbino also finds purchase in figures assembled in the Stanza della Segnatura. Beneath the name of their patron, FEDERICUS MONTEFELTRUS, Plato and Aristotle (figs. 2.13 and 2.14) were paired for the first time in a monumental context in Urbino. Indeed, not only does their union foretell the *pax philosophica* in Raphael’s *School of Athens*, but even their gestures are visibly echoed in the Vatican painting. In the *studiolo* panel as in Raphael’s fresco, Plato’s finger is the symbolic agent of his philosophy. Whereas in the Stanza, he points powerfully to the sky,

<sup>123</sup> Pius II and Bessarion, who were similarly known for their fantastic humanistic collections, are also included, but both had died before the decoration of the space in 1474 (Pius in 1464 and Bessarion in 1472).

<sup>124</sup> The inscription reads: “Xysto IIII Pontif. Max. ob philosophiae theologiaeq. scientiam ad pontificatum traducto dic. benignitati immortal.” Two other figures from the papal court are included: Sixtus’ predecessor Pius II and Cardinal Bessarion, both of whom owned magnificent libraries of their own but had died in recent years.

<sup>125</sup> Now BAV MS Urb.lat.151.

the realm of Ideas, in the *studiolo*'s painting, the same digit emphatically points to the text open before him. We can only guess the volume is Calcidius' commentary on the *Timaeus*, which was included in Federico's collection.<sup>126</sup> Like Raphael's Aristotle, who clutches the *Ethics* and extends his hand over the rational world, the Aristotle in the *studiolo* rests his left hand on a bound volume and outstretches his right palm. Although the book lacks a label, we might imagine that it similarly represents the *Ethics*, a favorite of Federico, who exercised his administrative judgment by debating the work with his tutor, Maestro Lazzaro.<sup>127</sup> In Federico's *studiolo*, the two philosophers sit side-by-side in the same, coffered loggia, but as in the *Sala Latina* in the Vatican, they are separated and static; their conversations are isolated to their independent panels.

In the *School of Athens*, Raphael removed the partition. Placing the figures instead in direct dialogue, Raphael transformed their gestures into an organizational chain, whose repetition links together the various figures and groups. Echoing Plato's digit in the fresco, the figure beside him points to the master. The gesture carries us to Socrates, whose fingers are the voice of his dialectical debate. And next to Aristotle, a student mirrors his rational, open hand with a raised salute. By disintegrating the frame that isolates the philosophers from their companion panels in Federico's *studiolo*, Raphael instead animated the history of their ideas, making the figures into allegories for the web of conversations that were hosted in contemporary commentary editions. And whereas the figures in Federico's *studiolo* are individual representatives of the ducal collection, each of Raphael's frescoes is a grand vista of the library tradition, which enacts the very practices that were sustained in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*.

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<sup>126</sup> BAV MS Urb.lat.203.

<sup>127</sup> Vespasiano da Bisticci, p. 99.

One other feature of Federico's *studiolo* appears to have inspired the decoration of the Vatican Library and the *Bibliotheca Iulia*: its intarsia presses and settles. To equip the new reading rooms of the Vatican Library, the Sistine custodian Platina ordered a similar set of intarsia furnishings with the pope's heavy investment. The *armaria* and *spalerae* were crafted of inlaid panels, which included an array of perspectival landscapes, geometric instruments, and illusionistic volumes (fig. 2.15); to amplify this spectacle of illusionistic woodwork, the walls were similarly faced with intarsia paneling.<sup>128</sup>

Comparable furnishings probably also resided in the Stanza della Segnatura and were destroyed when Leo X repurposed the chamber. In the life of Raphael, Vasari reports that Julius ordered wooden *usci* and *sederi*, fashioned in perspective, from the woodcarver Fra Giovanni.<sup>129</sup> Intarsia doors, imitative inlay in the *basamento*, and the trompe-l'oeil socle (figs. 2.16 and 2.17) all appear to meet Vasari's description, at least in part, and it was presumably because of these elements that the Stanza was called the "Camera della Tarsia" under Paul III (1534-1541).<sup>130</sup> Although payment records show that these features were added later — the doors and *basamento* under Leo X and the socle under Paul III — it is attractive to imagine that they might preserve the style of Julian *armaria* that first

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<sup>128</sup> Produced by the workshop of Giovannino Dolci, the panels do not exhibit the same skill or virtuosity as those in Urbino, but their similarity is nevertheless striking. The surviving examples were removed from the Vatican Library under Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) to the Borgia apartments. They are now variously dispersed in the Secret Archives and collections; some of the benches remain in the Borgia rooms. See Clark, pp. 43-44, fig. 8 in particular; Lee (1978), p. 118.

<sup>129</sup> "... per fargli le spalliere di prezzo, come era la pittura, fece venire da Monte Oliveto di Chiusuri . . . Fra Giovanni da Verona . . . il quale vi fece non solo le spalliere, che attorno vi erano, ma ancora uscì bellissimi et sederi lavorati in prospettive." Patricia Lee Rubin has argued that Vasari only knew the later intarsia and that his ekphrases were meant to eulogize his first experience of the space, regardless of accuracy. See *Giorgio Vasari: Art and History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 367-368.

<sup>130</sup> See Shearman (1972), p. 48, n. 96; Klaczko, p. 218; and Fischel, p. 72, n. 90, who surmise that Perino's paintings in the socle probably replaced intarsia furnishings destroyed in the Sack of Rome, when the Spanish troops took up residence in the Vatican Palace.

occupied the lower walls.<sup>131</sup> Indeed, out of all the *sale* in the Camere di Raffaello, these illusionistic panels are found only in the Stanza della Segnatura, and in the Stanza as in Urbino, fictive lattices open to reveal cityscapes, polyhedra, and strata of books. The suggestion of a similar set of intarsia furniture in the *Bibliotheca Iulia* helps us to picture the room intact, and to imagine the books in place, a topic that I will address in the following section. For present purposes, it is enough to note that just as the intarsia in Federico's *studiolo* envisions the same accessories of courtly contemplation that probably existed in the chamber, we can imagine that the wooden panels in the Stanza della Segnatura served a similar purpose. By depicting the instruments of *studioli* and learned spaces, the room invites consideration of its grand scale artifice, laying bare the tensions between the activities of wisdom and the reinvention of those activities in painterly fields.

The agreement of military action and cultural enrichment represented a central method for achieving legitimacy and promoting the authority of the state, through which the Montefeltro and the Della Rovere marshaled claims of their political and intellectual empires. Like Julius II, Duke Federico valued the duality of active life and its scintillating contemplative counterparts, and to bolster his battlefield victories, he turned to arts and letters.<sup>132</sup> The built environments of their libraries, whose common features mirror the dynastic alliance of their families, not only gave material shape to their visions of a

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<sup>131</sup> On the addition of these features, see Shearman (1971), p. 48, n. 95, which cites payments made in May and June of 1513 to Fra Giovanni for his intarsia work. Changes to the pavement corroborate the Leonine intervention: large, permanent cabinets or furnishings were extracted from the space, necessitating repairs to the floor that are now evidenced by the Medici motto. Finally, the intarsia doors, which include an image of the pet elephant Hanno, are particularly Leonine.

<sup>132</sup> Federico's philosophical contraposition of contemplative and active lives is well known and often discussed in light of the contents of his library. See again Baiardi, Chittolini, and Floriani; Cecil H. Clough, "Art as Power in the Decoration of the Study of an Italian Renaissance Prince: The Case of Federico da Montefeltro," in: *Artibus et Historiae* 16.31 (1995), pp. 19-50; and Heinz Hofmann, "Literary Culture at the Court of Urbino during the Reign of Federico da Montefeltro," in: *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 57 (2008), pp. 5-59.

prosperous peninsula governed under their image, but also promoted the vision of an ordered world curated under their intellectual domains.

## 2.6 The *Bibliotheca Iulia* Restored

Until now, our view of the Stanza della Segnatura as papal *bibliotheca* has been limited to its walls. Without the chamber's manuscripts or printed books, one could only speculate about the relationship of the paintings to these lost objects. My research has exhumed nearly one-third of the original volumes, and this small sample of holdings promises to shed light on new dimensions of the meaning of the space. First, in their patterns of collection and use, the volumes represent some of the richest extant documents of the Julian papacy, and their contents include important details about the status and reception of text at the Vatican court. Second, striking similarities between the pages of the books and Raphael's frescoes reveal an essential discourse between the Stanza's texts and its images — that is, that Raphael received from the books subjects and idioms, both visual and verbal, which he developed within a separate but mutually informative field. I propose, moreover, that Raphael transformed the contents of the Julian volumes by imposing the very mechanisms of their pages, namely those principles of imitation, revision, and reinvention that were central to the contemporary practice of commentary. Above all, the clear priority of law represented by the Julian volumes reveals the precedence of the *Jurisprudence* — the least considered of the Stanza's frescoes — in the order and meaning of the space.

No sustained study of the Julian collection has been undertaken until now, and so it is necessary to consider here its character, scope, and unique features.<sup>133</sup> Although, as far as we know, the *Bibliotheca Iulia* boasted neither the size nor breadth of its princely predecessors and counterparts, its holdings were not unsubstantial, and the pope appears to have valued volumes not only of high intellectual and artistic premium, but also of political currency. The *Bibliotheca Iulia* included a wide variety of manuscripts and *incunabula*, roughly one-third of which have recently resurfaced from among the Vatican *fondi*. In their text and decorations, the books chart the *cursus* of Giuliano della Rovere's career, from his university study and cardinalship to his tenure as pope. Nearly all of the volumes were luxury objects produced at a high market value for powerful patrons, and Julius came by most of them secondhand. The oldest books in the collection date to the tenth century, and their origins span centers of production in France and Italy. Julius probably acquired a glossed edition of the *Decretals* from the celebrated legal libraries of Avignon, and from nearby monasteries, he gained select books of the Bible.<sup>134</sup> Ancient histories mostly originate in the humanistic workshops of Florence and Rome, and many are decorated with thick borders of white vine-stem filigree, popularly known as *bianchi girari*.<sup>135</sup> Interspersed between these colorful borders, the mottos and blazons of previous

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<sup>133</sup> The first attempt at locating surviving volumes in the Vatican Library was made by Theodor Mommsen, "Cassiodori senatoris variae," in: *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctores Antiquissimorum* XII (1894), p. XCVII, who tracked down BAV MS Vat.lat.570 (Cassiodorus); few years later, Dor  z identified BAV MS Vat.lat.1797 (Herodotus) when he published the inventory (pp. 120-121). Other discoveries have slowly emerged since then. Morello (1986), pp. 51-67, published a short overview of known volumes following the exhibition, *Raffaello e la Roma dei Papi*.

<sup>134</sup> Item 76 on the inventory is a glossed edition of the *Liber Sextus* by Zenzelinus de Cassanis and Jean Lemoine, both canonists from Avignon. Although Julius' precise copy is unknown, the *comparanda* in the Vatican Library are all of Avignonese origin. French examples of the Bible that were once part of the Julian collection include BAV MSS [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; and [REDACTED]. As I explain in the appendix, the provenance of the latter three is clear from their *ex libris*.

<sup>135</sup> The style originates in twelfth-century Italian scriptoria, but was thought by the humanists to be properly ancient. It became a popular motif in classical manuscripts alongside the new Roman script.

owners reveal tangled chains of ownership. Unsurprisingly, Julius annexed many volumes from the collections of other Della Rovere, Sixtus IV above all.<sup>136</sup> Still others can be traced to prominent members of the Curia with papal ambitions of their own.<sup>137</sup> That Julius often retained the emblems of previous owners seems a conscious choice: it was common to excise old insignia, but preserving residual markers like these would have broadcast the sequence of acquisition, exhibiting the extent of the pope's dominion in relation to his curial competitors. Like Julius' campaigns abroad, his library proposes to unify the constituents of Christendom and impresses a grand claim of governance, at once professing his erudition and giving visible form to his authority.

The books that belonged to the *Bibliotheca Iulia* are important witnesses of the educational, professional, and recreational interests of Julius II, but modern scholars have almost entirely overlooked these aspects of his biography. The academic record has instead highlighted the pope's legendary *terribilità*, but anecdotes from his lifetime also hint at a much richer intellectual life. It is well known, for example, that while on expedition to Perugia, Julius quoted Virgil, and that he was fond of Dante.<sup>138</sup> Although scholars tend to treat these episodes as apocrypha, the books in the Julian collection offer us a new means of resuscitating lost dimensions of his intellectual repertoire.

Like the disciplines represented in Raphael's four frescoes, the subjects of the Julian library correspond generally to the *studia humanitatis*, and close investigation of their contents reveals an even more purposeful priority of interests. Pride of place was

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<sup>136</sup> See the appendix for specific volumes acquired from the Sistine collection; also note BAV MS [REDACTED].

<sup>137</sup> For a detailed overview of the manuscripts' provenance, see Appendix 3.

<sup>138</sup> On Julius' recitation of Virgil, see the entry of Paris de Grassis, on October 19, 1506, in: *Le due spedizioni militari di Giulio II: Tratte del diario*, ed. Luigi Frati (Bologna: Regia Tipografia, 1886), pp. 65-66: "ex quibus Papa per risum et admirationem viarum dixit illud Virgilianum, videlicet: *Per varios casus per tot discrimina rerum tendimus in Latium etc.*"

assigned to theology and law, which amount to more than half of the volumes listed on the 1513 inventory.<sup>139</sup> Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Gregory comprise the largest part of the *Bibliotheca*'s ecclesiastical collection, and this disciplinary emphasis is mirrored by the *Disputa*, where the Doctors of the Church sit closest to the altar. Although the collections of popes and clerics were typically rich in theological sources, the character of the Julian collection was decidedly legal. The equation of Julius and his decretalist predecessor Gregory IX in the *Jurisprudence* alludes to the importance of legal books in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, and although this fresco is usually neglected, the pages of the manuscripts affirm the pope's preference for legal study. The majority of these examples come from Bologna, whose university is not only the oldest institution of its kind in the West, but was also Europe's principal center for studies of civil and canon law in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Bologna's jurists were the glossators that produced the authoritative legal commentaries.

Encompassing the curricula of both civil and canon law (the *corpus iuris civilis* and the *corpus iuris canonici*), the legal volumes seem to have been the first to enter the Julian collection, and only volumes belonging to the field of jurisprudence were produced as private commissions for Julius.<sup>140</sup> These examples represent the most practical aspect

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<sup>139</sup> It is worth noting here that prior to the interventions of Nicholas V, papal collections were almost exclusively comprised of theological and juridical texts, which together addressed the increasingly legalistic nature of clerical administration. A good overview of legal literature in the Middle Ages and Renaissance can be found in: Susan L'Engle and Robert Gibbs, *Illuminating the Law: Legal Manuscripts in Cambridge Collection* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2001), pp. 12-21 in particular; see also Susanne Lepsius, "Editing Legal Texts from the Late Middle Ages," in: *Textual Cultures of Medieval Italy*, ed. William Robbins (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), pp. 294-324.

<sup>140</sup> The first book in which Julius left a note of acquisition is BAV MS [REDACTED] Notably, the volume was acquired as a textbook for Julius' legal study in Perugia, before his cardinalship. Julius is now known to have commissioned two volumes, both during his cardinalship. In BAV MS [REDACTED] (item 37 on the inventory: "Gesta concilii Constantiensis ex me[m]bris in nigro"). The second example is BAV MS [REDACTED].



of the *Bibliotheca Iulia*: striking annotations in the pope's unmistakable hand are concentrated in the legal manuscripts. From section summaries in the margins, to corrections of diction and vocabulary, to quick notes on the significance of particular passages, Julius left visible testimonies of a specialist engagement with the juridical discipline, and it is tempting to consider how the pope's legal research might have shaped his pontifical decrees.<sup>141</sup> Facilitating legislation to disentangle Rome's competing jurisdictions and magistrates, Julius succeeded where his uncle did not — he clarified the domains of civil litigants, restructured Vatican finances and taxation, and in 1512 issued two bulls redefining the boundaries of Rome's legal courts and their attendant authorities.<sup>142</sup> Had his plans for the Via Giulia been realized, Julius would have consolidated Rome's tribunals in Bramante's proposed Palazzo di Giustizia, a new *sedes iustitiae*, effectively unifying civic and canon law and eliminating the city's autonomous powers in favor of the universal, apostolic one.<sup>143</sup>

Embellishing these curricular aspects of the Julian volumes, their material quality would have enhanced the visual experience of the room and its texts. Although many

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<sup>141</sup> In one such note, for example, Julius considers the gravity of punishment warranted by especially grievous offenses, grouping together sexual deviants, murderers, and simoniacs (BAV MS [REDACTED]). The latter category might remind us of Julius' reformatory efforts as pope, since his famous bull of 1506 condemned the crime of simony and considerably increased its penalty.

<sup>142</sup> On Julius' legislation, see Emmanuel Rodocanachi, *Histoire de Rome: Le Pontificat de Jules II. 1503 - 1513* (Paris: Hatchette, 1928), pp. 145-147; and Raffaele Belvederi, "Il papato nell'età dei Della Rovere," *Atti e Memorie: Convegno Storico Savonese. L'età dei Della Rovere*, (Savona: 1988), vol. 24, pp. 108-128.

<sup>143</sup> Specifically, the palazzo would have unified the "Rota," the Camera Apostolica, the Roman Senate, and the Segnatura di Giustizia. On its architecture and purpose, see Domenico Gnoli, "Il Palazzo di Giustizia di Bramante," in: *Nuova antologia di lettere, scienze, ed arti* 5 (1914); Arnaldo Bruschi, "Il Palazzo dei Tribunali e la casa di Raffaello," in: *Bramante Architetto* (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1969), pp. 591-604; Christoph Luitpold Frommel, "Il Palazzo dei Tribunali in Via Giulia," in: *Studi bramanteschi. Atti di Congresso Internazionale, Milano-Urbino. Roma 1970* (Rome: De Luca Editore, 1974), p. 523-534; Franco Borsi, "Palazzo dei Tribunali in via Giulia - San Biagio," in: *Bramante* (Milan: Electa, 1989), pp. 281-286; Irene Fosi and Thomas V. Cohen, *Papal Justice: Subjects and Courts in the Papal State, 1500-1750* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), p. 25; and most recently, Nicholas Temple, *Renovatio Urbis: Architecture, Urbanism, and Ceremony in the Rome of Julius II* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), pp. 93-125.

books contain some evidence of active study, the *bibliotheca* — like Federico's *studiolo* — functioned equally as a showpiece for the Julian papacy.<sup>144</sup> In their text and decorations alike, the contents of the books served as symbols of learned prestige: the quality of their text imposed a high intellectual esteem, and their decorations functioned as foci for critical inquiry. Embellishments range in style and degree, and the most ornate examples include miniatures heightened with expensive pigments and burnished in silver and gold. Nor were these sumptuous details limited to the books' interiors. Various composed of velvet, silk, and embossed leather, many of the bindings consisted of an equally stunning array of materials and colors. Complementing the covers, the page edges were often lavishly gilt and goffered, sometimes with the title or author's name inscribed. As we imagine the books shelved in the Stanza, the intarsia *armaria* from the Urbino *studiolo* are instructive: the trompe-l'oeil panels imagine volumes laid horizontally, exhibiting alternately their titled edges and spines. Assuming that the Julian collection was similarly housed, the golden highlights and labeled volumes in Raphael's frescoes would have invited express comparison between the paintings and their physical pendants on the shelves. Entering the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, the viewer would have encountered a dazzling display of the collection's material and visual richness, whose coloristic splendor would have amplified Raphael's frescoes, and vice-versa.

The exceptional manufacture of the bindings is intensified by the quality of the books' pages, where the addition of highly personal ornaments unifies their contents in the image of the pope. Bridging together the library's otherwise diverse assortment of

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<sup>144</sup> As is already clear, the legal books in particular were used for practical study. In addition, certain editions of ancient history and classical poetry are heavily worn, and some appear to include *notabilia* in the pope's own hand; see, for example, BAV MSS [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], which are relatively unspectacular, but bear the trappings of sustained use nevertheless.

styles, colorful new plates fill the *bas-de-page* and announce the books' ownership: tangled borders of oak leaves, sparkling sprays of acorns, and portraits of Julius himself now flank the text (figs. 2.18, 2.19, and 2.20). In some cases, these addenda are coupled with leaves of crimson parchment whose bookplates, strung to the branches of golden oaks, announce the patron and his library. These distinctly Julian embellishments are limited to just twenty examples, not even half of the recovered number of books, and there is no clear order of authors among the refurbished volumes. Rather, it would seem that these exceptional cases point toward a planned redecoration of the total collection — that is, the addition of illuminations, papal portraits, and entire leaves — that was ultimately left unfinished.

Whatever the reason for abandoning this project, the ornaments include important clues that aid in reconstructing the *Bibliotheca*'s program and the itinerary of its contents. Presumably modeled after commemorative medals, the portraits in the books envision Julius in profile, and glittering *imprese* trumpet his status as the Sistine heir. In one salient example, the inscription girds a golden image of the mitred pope and closes with the year 1507 (fig. 2.21).<sup>145</sup> The only such date included in the miniatures, this rare instance forges an important link in the historical chain of the books' collection and their place in the Julian library. The volume evidently changed hands before arriving in the possession of the Della Rovere. Behind the family's emblem on the first folio, which is here crowned by the papal tiara, another coat of arms is still visible.<sup>146</sup> When the book was reclaimed, probably first by Sixtus, the original heraldry was carefully concealed

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<sup>145</sup> BAV MS [REDACTED]. (Item 53 on the inventory: "Ptolomei Cosmographia ex me[m]bris in rubro"), f. 3r: "IVLIVS.II.PONTIFEX.MAX.SIXTI.III.NEPOS M.D.VII."

<sup>146</sup> That of Angelo Fasolo, Bishop of Feltre (1464-1490); Fasolo had also once owned Julius' copy of Herodotus: BAV MS [REDACTED] (item 27 on the inventory).

with the Della Rovere crest. It follows that the Julian portrait was added even later — perhaps in 1507, as the *impresa* suggests — since this elaborate marker fills the lower register of folio 3r. Although others have argued that the emblem and *impresa* in the manuscript were copied from a lost medal, it is more likely that this dated portrait instead observes a significant occasion related to the book.<sup>147</sup> 1507 was a momentous year for the warrior pope, who returned triumphantly from Bologna in March and set to work on his new papal suite a few months later.<sup>148</sup> It is probably not by coincidence that the date in the manuscript coincides with the renovation of Julian apartments, at the physical and figurative center of which was the pope's library. It stands to reason that the *impresa* bears important witness to the foundation of the new *Bibliotheca Iulia*, and that the books and walls were envisioned as a cohesive unit. This consonance of dates implies not only that the frescoes were inspired by book culture at the Vatican court, but also that the ideas and images within the Julian volumes might find parallels in Raphael's compositions.

We have already seen that the Ghirlandaio brothers emulated ancient author portraits on the walls of the Vatican's *Bibliotheca Latina*, and that manuscripts bore considerable influence on monumental painting. Even from the outset, it appears that the Stanza imagined a pictorial discourse that mirrored on a large scale the contents of the Julian collection. The Flemish miniaturist Johannes Ruysch (c. 1460-1533), for example, collaborated on the small panels in the Stanza's vault, whose *groteschi*-filled borders and golden interlace closely resemble the decorative frames and initials in the Julian volumes. At the center of the ceiling, *putti* rigging the papal device are reminiscent of the playful

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<sup>147</sup> As Roberto Weiss has argued in his article "The Medals of Pope Julius II (1503-1513)," in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965), pp. 163-182.

<sup>148</sup> The decision to renovate the apartments is dated to 26 November 1507, according the diaries of Paris de Grassis, as cited by Shearman (1971), pp. 188 and 208, n. 10.

cherubs that string papal heraldry in the margins of manuscripts by Bartolomeo Sanvito, the expert calligrapher who worked in the retinue of Sixtus IV and produced the Julian edition of Sallust (fig. 2.22).<sup>149</sup>

Like his predecessors, Raphael looked to the tradition of books to populate the Stanza's frescoes. The Solomon panel, for example, probably derives from manuscript illustrations, since the representation of the deceased infant originates in the pictorial tradition of the *Historia scholastica*, which had a counterpart in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*.<sup>150</sup> The historiated initial in the Julian *Ethics* contains a bearded philosopher pointing upward to his book, a gesture evoked by the figures of Plato and Aristotle in the *School of Athens*.<sup>151</sup> But Raphael's figures are hardly verbatim copies, and the artist's creative manipulation of the manuscript volumes is rooted equally in the nuances and idioms of their text. For instance, the construction scene in the background of the *Disputa* has long puzzled scholars, but the image finds a stunning parallel in the *Decachordum*, dedicated to Julius in 1507 by his cousin Marco Vigerio (1446-1516).<sup>152</sup> Even though scholars have suggested that Marco could have served as one of Raphael's advisors, the relationship of his text to the frescoes has never been considered. The treatise includes the allegory of an architect, later revealed to be the Holy Spirit, who builds his home not from the mundane

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<sup>149</sup> BAV MS [REDACTED] (item 66 on the inventory: "Salustius ex me[m]branis in nigro"). The book was originally made for Bernardo Bembo.

<sup>150</sup> The precise edition of the *Historia scholastica* (item 157 on the inventory) is not currently known, and so I refer here to the general tradition of manuscript decoration. On the history and development of the iconography of Solomon in medieval manuscripts, see C.M. Kauffmann, "The Iconography of the Judgment of Solomon in the Middle Ages," in: *Tributes to J.G. Alexander: The Making and Meaning of Illuminated Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts, Art, and Architecture*, ed. Susan L'Engle and Gerald B. Guest (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), pp. 297-306.

<sup>151</sup> BAV MS [REDACTED], item 56 on the inventory: "Aristoteles de moribus ab Argiropylo traductus ex memb. in nigro"

<sup>152</sup> BAV MS [REDACTED], item 13 on the inventory: "Marci Vergerii Car. Senogallien[is] Decacordu[m] ex me[m]b. i[n] raso carmusino."

fabric of bricks and mud, but out of the constituents of the Church through the incarnation of the Word.<sup>153</sup> Rather than strictly replicating the contents of the books, it would seem that Raphael selectively interpreted their features to channel the dialectic of the commentator's page, and to argue for the comparable eloquence of painting.

## 2.7 Raphael's Ovid and Ovid's Sappho

It is fitting to begin our discussion of Raphael's poetic and artistic commentary with the *Parnassus*, where Sappho occupies a privileged position (fig. 2.23). She sits at the foot of the mountain's slope with her Aeolian lyre, which she rests across the window jamb to mediate between the fictional space of the image and the real space of the room. Holding a curled scroll, she is the only figure on the northern wall identified by name. At first blush, her label seems an extraneous detail, since she was the most celebrated female poet of antiquity. Longinus called her a companion of Apollo, and in the *Phaedrus*, Plato crowned her the "tenth muse." Aristotle compared her to Homer in his *Poetics*, and in Raphael's fresco, she reclines below the blind bard's outstretched hand, as if receiving his benediction. These citations would have been well known to the room's literate audience, so it seems unlikely that the detail serves the simple purpose of identification. Why, then, did Raphael include the scroll?

The answer requires consideration of Raphael's process of design. In spite of Sappho's obvious prominence on the northern wall, earlier plans for the fresco, known today from Marcantonio Raimondi's engraving (fig. 2.24), reveal that she entered the

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<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, f. XLIIIr, the section: "Declaratio per exemplum quo[modo] uerbum caro factum sit." The details of the manuscript are too rich to discuss here, but I plan to take up their significance for the room in later studies.

composition at a later stage.<sup>154</sup> The print also surfaces another meaningful difference in the sequence of design, one that helps to resolve Raphael's eventual inclusion of the Greek poetess. In earlier phases of composition, Raphael did not significantly distinguish between musical instruments. In the final fresco, however, the artist included a distinct variety, which he rendered in careful and suggestive detail: Sappho's lyre is crafted from an oblong tortoise shell, and Erato bears a horned cithara. Disrupting this taxonomy of ancient instruments on the *Parnassus*, Apollo carries a modern *lira da braccio*.<sup>155</sup> The array of lyres represented in the fresco is the subject of perennial fascination and debate, and the novelty of Apollo's *lira* has even led some scholars to doubt his presence in the painting.<sup>156</sup> It is both significant and suggestive, however, that these changes to the design appear to have been made together. Both Sappho and the instruments on Raphael's *Parnassus* can be resolved in the humanistic writings of the Vatican milieu. As I will show, these textual *comparanda* situate the artist within the contemporary tradition of poetic criticism by evoking visually the literary interplay of Sappho and Apollo.

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<sup>154</sup> The copy represents an intermediate design, and its composition falls somewhere between the engraving and the final fresco. Lisa Pon, *Raphael, Dürer, and Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying the Italian Renaissance Print* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 86-94, has argued the opposite, that the print should not be regarded as a reproduction of a lost drawing, but as an independent interpretation for a set of courtly viewers, and that it more closely represents the Vatican culture of Leo X.

<sup>155</sup> In a preparatory study for Apollo and the *lira da braccio*, Raphael fiddled with the balance of the instrument on the sitter's shoulder. The sheet is more clearly concerned with musical anatomy, or the motion of the human body as it shifts with the sweep of the bow. Emphasizing the strain of the sitter's neck and shoulders and the counterweight of his left leg and torso, Raphael conceived of the model's form as an outcome of the instrument he carries. Meticulously reworking the details of the *lira*, Raphael rendered its features in heavy pen, noting the shadow cast by the bow.

<sup>156</sup> Ancient literature on lyres is extensive; Pindar, Plutarch, and Pausanias discuss the various categories of "lyre." For an overview of the instrument in antiquity and its reception in the Renaissance, see Christiane Joost-Gaugier, "Sappho, Apollo, Neopythagorean Theory, and *Numine Afflatur* in Raphael's Fresco of the *Parnassus*," in: *Gazette des Beaux Arts* 122 (1993), pp. 125-126. Rather anachronistically, Luba Freedman, "Apollo's Glance in Raphael's *Parnassus*," in: *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 16.2 (1997), pp. 20-25, has suggested that Apollo might instead be Orpheus, since in antiquity, deities were never shown gazing heavenward.

We should note here that Apollo's instrument on the *Parnassus* is not wholly unprecedented, and its increasing popularity among Italy's courtly poets in the late Quattro- and early Cinquecento helps to explain its uptick in visual and verbal sources. In the *Cortegiano*, Castiglione ranked the *lira da braccio* among the highest musical forms, and Vasari tells us that Leonardo, Bramante, and Raphael's teacher Timoteo Viti all improvised on the *lira*. Raffaele Brandolini, Lippo's younger brother and one of the authors listed on the Julian inventory, composed a short treatise on meter and musical accompaniment, *On Music and Poetry*, wherein he dedicated lengthy digressions to the ancient origins of the modern lyre.<sup>157</sup> The prestige of the *lira da braccio*'s presumed antiquity made it an ideal emblem for the reclamation of classical eloquence, and this literary stress is reflected by the visual record. For example, Raphael placed angels with *lira da braccio* on the Virgin's cloudbank in the *Oddi Altarpiece* (fig. 2.25), and contemporary prints likewise imagine Orpheus charming the animals with a modern *lira*. Anticipating his representation on the *Parnassus*, Apollo was depicted with a *lira moderna* at the ducal palace in Urbino (fig. 2.26).<sup>158</sup> The extraordinary vogue of the *lira da braccio* was one consequence of the humanistic bid to revive ancient poetry, and by

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<sup>157</sup> As Lisa Pon has discussed in her essay: "Further Musings on Raphael's *Parnassus*," in: *Imitation, Representation, and Printing in the Italian Renaissance*, ed. Roy Eriksen and Magne Malmanger (Pisa: Fabrizio Serra, 2009), pp. 191-207.

<sup>158</sup> On Giovanni Santi's representation of Apollo in the Tempietto delle Muse, see Cecil H. Clough, "Il Tempietto delle Muse e Giovanni Santi," and Francesco Luisi, "Iconografia musicale in Giovanni Santi," both in: *Giovanni Santi: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi*, ed. Ranieri Varese (Milan: Electa, 1999), pp. 63-70 and 152-156; see also the extensive research of Elisabeth Schröter, "Der Vatikan als Hügel Apollons und der Musen: Kunst und Panegyrik von Nikolaus V. bis Julius II" in: *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte* 75 (1980), pp. 208-240; *ead.*, *Die Ikonographie des Themas Parnass vor Raffael: die Schrift- und Bildtraditionen von der Spätantike bis zum 15. Jahrhundert* (Hildesheim and New York: Verlag, 1977). On Botticelli's intarsia panel, see Luigi Parigi, "Nota musicale botticelliana," in: *Rivista d'arte* 19 (1937), pp. 71-77.



embracing the visual anachronism of the modern lyre, artists like Raphael brought Apollo closer to his legacy in Rome's poetic circles.

This significance of the *lira da braccio* in the Stanza della Segnatura comes full circle in a petite volume of Statius and Ovid, whose image and text trace the literary origins of the modern instrument to Sappho, the first lyric poet. Although the book is not expressly named in the 1513 inventory, its contents were modeled on the lectures of Domizio Calderini, the Latinist companion of Cardinal Giuliano, and it appears to have circulated in the papal milieu before joining the larger Vatican collection.<sup>159</sup> The book's rich commentary is rivaled only by its sumptuous miniatures, and its most spectacular example opens the lone Ovidian epistle, the famed "letter" of Sappho to Phaon (*Heroides* XV; figs. 2.27 and 2.28). After the near extinction of Sappho's poetry in the Middle Ages, her biography was pieced together from Strabo's *Geographia* and Pliny's *Naturalis Historia* (both of which had counterparts in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*). As the story goes, the poetess pined for the beautiful ferryman Phaon, who denied her affections; devastated, Sappho leapt in a moment of frenzy from the Leucadian cliffs sacred to Apollo.<sup>160</sup> The most complete retelling of the legend, Ovid's *epistula* supplied the primary biographical source for fourteenth- and fifteenth-century enthusiasts, and the "letter" became the primary basis for Sappho's reception in early modern Italy.<sup>161</sup> In the plainest sense, the

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<sup>159</sup> BAV MS [REDACTED]. For the sake of clarity, and to represent the text as it was understood in the Quattro- and Cinquecento, I have maintained the Latin in Calderini's manuscript.

<sup>160</sup> Strabo, *Geographia* 10.2; Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* 4.2. Items 3 and 38 on the first list; item 1 on the second. The Julian edition of Strabo is now known: BAV MS [REDACTED]. In [REDACTED], Calderini clarifies that Sappho was the first devotee to leap from the Leucadian cliffs in Apollo's name, and that this sacrifice explains his temple there. F. 78v: "Phoebus ab excelsa describit locum ubi erat templum Apollonis Achari Ibi . N erat saltus ex alto quo amores sedari putabant Sappho prima vide se deiecit ut Menander comicus scribit."

<sup>161</sup> On the reception of Sappho and *Heroides* XV, see Elizabeth D. Harvey, "Ventriloquizing Sappho, or the Lesbian Muse," in: *Re-Reading Sappho: Reception and Transmission*, ed. Ellen Greene (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 79-104, and 83-89 in particular.

subject of the poem is Sappho's unrequited love, but considered more deeply, the verse reveals itself to be a calculated feat of literary criticism, whose virtuosity unfolds in the invented voice of the first great lyric poet (and the lone poetic figure in the *Heroides*). In a masterful display of artifice, Ovid transforms Sappho's verse into his preferred elegiac meter, guiding the reader across a survey of her poetic style and instruments: Ovid identifies Sappho's *lira*, the principal emblem of her poetry, interchangeably as a *barbitos*, a tortoise-shell lyre, an Aeolian lyre, and a *cithara*. Ovid's Renaissance commentators deemed this variation deliberate and meaningful, and in the manuscript, these differences are emphasized in the accompanying marginal commentary.

The manuscript's miniature underscores Sappho's musical legacy, and it hardly seems by chance that here the poetess bears striking visual resemblance to Raphael's Apollo (fig. 2.29). In Calderini's volume, Sappho sits in a lush grove and faces heaven, raising her instrument in frenzy. Like the image in the manuscript, Raphael's Apollo gazes upward with a ready bow. Cast in the ecstatic *figura serpentinata* and seated on rocky thrones, the two figures are nearly identical in their representation, from the placement of their feet to their parted lips. Most strikingly, neither carries the classical lyre. Like Raphael's Apollo, the miniature Sappho is imagined with a *lira da braccio*, whose significance is flagged in the margins by the volume's commentator. To the left of the miniature, a short gloss cites the importance of the instrument *alla moderna* in the facing illustration.<sup>162</sup> Accompanying this note, a silverpoint drawing of a *lira da braccio* offers further clarity by embellishing visually the subject of Ovid's verse. From the commentary to the miniature to Raphael's Apollo, Calderini's equation of ancient and

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<sup>162</sup> f. 76r: "Canit Sappho elegiam quam scripsit ad Phaonem in sylva supra cithara."

modern instruments can be explained by what follows in the poem, which likens Sappho to her divine patron by virtue of their *lire*. At the poem's climax, Sappho consecrates her lyre to Apollo, calling it their "shared boon" and "suitable both to the giver and the god."<sup>163</sup> Their common instrument in the text is the same musical subject detailed by the commentator in the silverpoint illustration, which defines the legacy of the sacred lyre in the vocabulary of humanistic poets like Raffaele Brandolini, who recommended its performance in princely and papal courts.

It seems that Raphael recognized the close poetic association of Sappho and Apollo in the manuscript, playfully inverting them on the *Parnassus* wall. To translate visibly the Ovidian elision of the god and the poetess, Raphael added Sappho to the final composition and made Apollo's classical lyre into a contemporary *lira da braccio*, the same instrument that links them visually and verbally in Calderini's commentary. Alluding to the literary consonance of Sappho and Apollo in the poem, in the fresco Raphael drew visual comparison between them by coloring their cloaks in the same cerulean blue. The landscape of the *Parnassus* and its catalogue of instruments, moreover, find parallels in Ovid's *Heroides*. In the poem as in the painting, we survey the Latin instruments named by Ovid and underscored in the margins of the manuscript. In the fresco Sappho bears an Aeolian lyre (*lyra Aeolia*) fashioned from tortoise shell, like the instrument she dedicates in the poem (*chelyn Phoebos ponam*). In Raphael's painting, Sappho is the mortal echo of her divine counterparts on the mountain, reminding us that

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<sup>163</sup> Ovid, *Heroides* XV.181-184 (f. 79r): "Inde chelim Phoebos, co[m]munia munera, pona[m]/et sub ea versus unus et alter eru[n]t/grata lyra[m] posuit tibi, Phoebe, poetria Sappho/convenit illa mihi, convenit illa tibi."

Plato once called her the “tenth Muse.” Matching Sappho’s attentive pose, Erato carries a horned *cithara*.

Finally, Sappho’s conspicuous signature joins Ovid’s verse to Raphael’s design. At the beginning of the *epistula*, Sappho wonders aloud whether the reader will recognize her work: “Unless you had read the name of the author Sappho, would you not know from whence this short letter has come?”<sup>164</sup> Ovid makes the lines in jest, since the verse is a bold demonstration of poetic artifice, through which he compares his own style and composition to Sappho’s. On the *Parnassus*, Raphael borrows this Ovidian witticism, spelling out Sappho’s name on the scroll. Would the viewer recognize Sappho, if not for the letter she carries? For the poet and the painter alike, a simple “yes” or “no” misses the point. Naming Sappho serves a different purpose, one that boldly displays the principles of imitation and invention. In both the *epistula* and the painting, Sappho represents the creative device by which claims of poetic artifice are tendered; through her painted figures, we travel from Raphael to Ovid, Ovid to Sappho, and Sappho to Apollo. To enter into the fresco, Raphael’s poetess not only asks us to seek out her sources in the Vatican manuscripts, but also calls attention to Raphael’s pictorial interpretation of her poetic legacy, exposing the long chain of her reception and equating visual and textual authors. By casting *Parnassus* in the language of Calderini’s commentary, Raphael likens his role as painter to Ovid’s as poet, and defines his undertaking in terms taken from the margins of humanistic criticism.

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<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 76r, lines 3-4: “An, nisi legisses auctoris nomina Sapphus/hoc breve nescires unde movetur opus?”

## 2.8 Raphael, Julius II, and the Landscape of Law

Some of the strongest analogies between the paintings and the books are exhibited on the Stanza's southern wall, where the *Jurisprudence* both articulates the papal preference for juridical texts and commemorates one of Julius' greatest ambitions: to be entered into the catalogue of legal authority and its written history. Although the fresco is mostly overlooked by scholars, the equation of Julius II with the canonist Gregory IX hints at the centrality of Justice in the Stanza's design and meaning. It is well known that Raphael revised the composition in mid-1511, and scholars frequently attribute this change to the loss of Bologna to the French, after which Julius donned his famous beard in penance.<sup>165</sup> Equally as often, Melozzo's fresco for the Vatican Library is cited as Raphael's compositional model, but formal similarities between the frescoes might also be explained by their shared basis in contemporary book culture. By now it is clear that Melozzo looked to the tradition of papal presentation portraits, and that Raphael's compositions were devised in conversation with the *Bibliotheca Iulia*'s deluxe manuscripts and printed books. The sudden change to the *Jurisprudence*, however, suggests a more meaningful motivation behind its redesign, and that Raphael did not transcribe Melozzo's composition uncritically. Rather, both frescoes were conceived with the legacy of manuscript culture in mind; the artists thus struck at the same visual target, but employed different inflections to address the themes of their spaces, entering themselves into conversation with the books and authors housed nearby.

In the same way that the holdings of the *Bibliotheca Iulia* survey the legal discipline, the *Jurisprudence* traces the temporal and spiritual history of Western law,

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<sup>165</sup> On Julius' beard, see Mark J. Zucker, "Raphael and the Beard of Pope Julius II," in: *Art Bulletin* 59.4 (1977), pp. 524-533; and Partridge and Starn, pp. 43-46.

embodied in the fresco by Justinian and Gregory IX (figs. 2.30 and 2.31).<sup>166</sup> Together Roman law and canon law formed the *ius commune*, or European Common Law.<sup>167</sup> Flanked by the *School of Athens* on the left, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian receives a volume of the legal *constitutiones* assembled during his reign, the outcome of his juridical reforms in the sixth-century and the keystone of the *corpus iuris civilis*. The authoritative body of civil or Roman law, the *corpus iuris civilis* represented the Western basis for the principles, procedures, and responsibilities of law, including the *Codex* (the *constitutiones* or imperial pronouncements), the *Pandects* (a compendium of juristic writings and selections from legal treatises), and the *Institutes* (a student textbook based on the writings of the Roman jurist Gaius). Several volumes of the *Pandects* are listed on the Julian inventory, and the pontiff's personal copy of the *Institutes* survives today in the Vatican Library.<sup>168</sup> These books would have represented a crucial dimension of Julius' legal training, since in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, civil and canon law were studied side-by-side. The right half of the fresco fulfills this ecclesiastical component of this legal curriculum: the *corpus iuris canonici*. Facing the *Disputa*, the papal jurist Gregory IX personifies canon law and blesses the papal *Decretals*, whose principles and organization were based, in part, on Roman law and its codification under Justinian. Compiled in 1234 by Raymond of Pennafort, the *Decretals* constituted the authoritative collection of canon law and remained in use until the early twentieth century. From the 1513 inventory, it is clear that Julius owned at least two volumes of the Gregorian

<sup>166</sup> On the general iconography of the fresco, see Christiane Joost-Gaugier, "The Concord of Law in the Stanza della Segnatura," in: *Artibus et Historiae* 15.29 (1994), pp. 85-98.

<sup>167</sup> For a brief history of medieval law and its texts, see Susan L'Engle, "The Texts," in: L'Engle and Gibbs, pp. 12-21.

<sup>168</sup> See, for example, items 113, 117, and 136 on the inventory.

*Decretals*, as well as updated editions and collections of other canons by later popes.

Only one copy of the *Decretals* from the *Bibliotheca Iulia* is presently known, but striking similarities between the *Jurisprudence* and the visual vocabulary associated with legal texts enter Julius into the library's catalogue as the inheritor of divine justice and its arbiter on earth.

Produced in Bologna, Europe's greatest academic center for the study of law, the Julian *Decretals* contains a rich body of illuminations, to which were added the familiar papal embellishments.<sup>169</sup> The volume's pages demonstrate frequent use — an eager reader marked out important passages with inky drawings that include papal tiaras, turreted basilicas, and the keys of Saint Peter. Prefacing each book, brilliant miniatures illustrate the purview of canon law and the universal jurisdiction of the Church, whose ultimate authority, the glosses tell us, derives from the Word of God.<sup>170</sup> Illustrating the ecclesiastical administration of the law, these images are integral devices for gauging and interpreting the legal exposition that follows, supplying useful signposts for digesting the strata of canons and their accompanying textual apparatus. Formally codified by the early fourteenth century, the miniatures in the Gregorian *Decretals* follow a standard visual program, imagining the higher jurisdiction of the papacy over its civil counterpart, which informed visitors to the Stanza would have recognized from Raphael's composition.<sup>171</sup>

The complexity and meaning of the *Jurisprudence* is significantly deepened in light of the decorated pages of the *Decretals*, and so the order and composition of the

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<sup>169</sup> The first item on the inventory ("Decretales ex membranis in velluto rubro"), BAV MS [REDACTED].

<sup>170</sup> The five categories of canons, each of which is preceded by a miniature, are: Iudex (Judge), Iudicium (Trial), Clerus (Cleric), Connubia/Sponsalia (Marriage), and Crimen (Crime).

<sup>171</sup> For a survey of the visual apparatus in medieval legal books, see Susan L'Engle, "Legal Iconography," in: L'Engle and Gibbs, pp. 75-104; some specific features, especially those common to Gratian's *Decretum*, are discussed in: Anthony Melnikas, *The Corpus of the Miniatures in the Manuscripts of Decretum Gratiani*, 3 vols. (Rome: Institutum Gratianum, 1975).

book's images merit some review here. On the first folio of the Julian volume (fig. 2.32), a large frontispiece characterizes the distribution of power between representatives of the Church and the State. Enthroned at the center of the image, Christ enacts this allegory of temporal and spiritual authority as his angelic delegates crown the kneeling pontiff and emperor and award them their secular and ecclesiastic jurisdiction. The page that follows (fig. 2.33) opens the first title (*De summa trinitate et fide catholica*) and describes the divine issue of Christian law. At the center of the heavenly tribunal, Christ carries a bound volume in his lap and offers a sign of blessing, signaling the origin of the Word. Flanked by the figures of the Virgin on the left and Saint John the Baptist on the right — the standard order in images of the *Last Judgment* — he is attended by the Apostles, who promulgated holy justice by spreading the Gospel. Four smaller illuminations follow, corresponding to the major titles and divisions of canons, which promote the temporal enactment of the law by the pope, Christianity's highest earthly judge.

I propose that Raphael's *Jurisprudence* reinterprets the formula and features of these standard legal miniatures, above all author portraits of Gregory IX, wherein the mitred pontiff, whose role at the head of the Universal Church guaranteed his supreme domain, presides over an ecclesiastical court. In both the fresco and the manuscript, a tribunal apse frames the figure of the pope, whose authority is confirmed by attendant cardinals, and Gregory's gesture in both images ratifies the written word of the law. The heavenly court on the opening pages of the volume affirms the extension of universal power to Julius in the *Jurisprudence*. Like his jurist predecessor Gregory, whose legal authority is endorsed by the figure of Christ on the first folios of the *Decretals*, Julius faces Theology and receives his jurisdiction from its ultimate source. Just as the volume



begins with a vision of the holy Lawgiver, Christ is imagined in the *Disputa* residing in the tribunal of heavenly judgment. Accompanied by Mary and Saint John, he is framed by a golden sunburst as the Sun of Justice, and the four books of the Gospels that float below him empower the written history of canon law, locating its basis in the divine Word.

The *riquadro* between the *Jurisprudence* and the *Disputa* in the ceiling impresses the purview of Christian legal doctrine in both the books and the frescoes (fig. 2.34). Invoking the authority of Gratian, the Bolognese monk and father of the study of canon law, the panel verifies the universality of divine justice, resolving its scriptural origin and its medieval codification. Little is known for certain about Gratian's life, except for one extraordinary detail: around 1120, he distinguished canon law from theology as a new branch of learning. This contribution was groundbreaking and widely disseminated in the form of the *Concordia discordantium canonum*, more popularly known as the *Decretum*, a compilation of nearly four thousand texts on all aspects of Christian doctrine and governance. Assembled from a diverse body of conciliar canons, the *Decretum* aimed to resolve differences of decree across Christian scripture. Even after the *Decretals* were compiled nearly a century later, Gratian's *Decretum* remained the starting point in the corpus of ecclesiastical law and Christian lawmaking. The text was so influential that it was carefully studied and discussed by Aquinas and Dante; Luther would burn it publically as his reformation mounted. Like any good student of canon law, Julius II owned at least five copies of the *Decretum Gratiani*, both with its *glossa ordinaria* and with the commentaries of medieval jurists.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> The copies in the *Bibliotheca Iulia* include: item 2 on the inventory (BAV MS [REDACTED] "Decretum ex membranis in velluto rubro"); item 99 ("Decretum ex membranis in rubro"); item 101

The visual rubric popular in Gratian's *Decretum* was codified relatively quickly, by the thirteenth or early fourteenth centuries, and given the number of manuscripts in the Julian collection, we can assume that the pope was well familiar with the visual traditions associated with the work and its various textual iterations. In the *Distinctio Prima*, the opening text of the *Decretum*, Gratian distinguished between the legal authorities that preside over mankind: "The human race is governed by two things, namely natural law (*ius naturale*) and custom (*moribus*)."<sup>173</sup> Gratian continues that natural law, born from the divine Word, is immutable and moral, and he goes on to explore the legal importance of biblical scripture.<sup>174</sup> To clarify the origins of natural law and ecclesiastical legislation, Gratian's commentators pointed to Adam and Eve, citing the Expulsion as the first exercise of justice and the basis for all Roman and canon procedure.<sup>175</sup> It is, therefore, not

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("Decretum ex me[m]branis in rubro"); item 107 (Hugo super Decreto ex me[m]branis in gilbo"); item 112 ("Archidiaconi Rosarium sup[er] Decreto ex membran[is] in rubro"); and item 132 (BAV MS [REDACTED], "Bartholomeus Brixien[is] sup[er] Decreto ex me[m]b . in albo fracto").

<sup>173</sup> *Distinctio Prima*: "Humanum genus duobus regitur, naturali videlicet iure et moribus. Ius naturae est, quod in lege et evangelio continetur, quo quisque iubetur alii facere, quod sibi vult fieri, et prohibetur alii inferre, quod sibi nolit fieri. Unde Christus in evangelio: Omnia quaecunque vultis ut faciant vobis homines, et vos eadem facite illis. Haec est enim lex et prophetarum." For textual reference, I have used *Decretum Magistri Gratiani*, second edition, ed. Aemilius Ludwig Richter and Emil Friedberg (Graz: Akademische Druck, 1955), p. 1. For English commentary and a helpful translation, see: *The Treatise on Laws (Decretum DD. 1-20)*, ed. Augustine Thompson and James Gordley, 2 vol (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1993). For a detailed introduction to Gratian's *Decretum*, see Chapter 1 in: Anders Winroth, *The Making of Gratian's Decretum* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 1-10. On its contents, see James A. Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law* (London and New York: Longman, 1995), pp. 190-194; and Stanley Chodorow, "Law, Canon: After Gratian" in: *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, ed. Joseph R. Strayer et al. (New York: Scribner, 1982-89), vol. 6, pp. 413-418. The Julian editions of the *Decretum* are BAV MSS [REDACTED] (item 2 on the inventory) and [REDACTED] (item 132; glossed by Johannes Teutonicus and Bartholomaeus Brixien[is]). Julius also owned the glosses of Guido da Baysio (c. 1250-1313), Archdeacon of Bologna and author of the *Rosarium*, as well as the revised commentaries of Bernardus de Botone Parmensis (d. 1266).

<sup>174</sup> It is important to note here that the decretists and decretalists did not excerpt passages from the Bible as canons. Rather, they looked to relevant scriptural passages to aid in differentiating between law and religion.

<sup>175</sup> The legal subject of Original Sin was an attractive issue for the Church Fathers, and both Augustine and Jerome considered its ramifications. On the place of Adam and Eve in Gratian's commentary tradition, see Kenneth Pennington and Wolfgang P. Müller, "The Decretists: The Italian School," in: *The History of Medieval Canon Law in the Classical Period, 1140-1234: From Gratian to the Decretals of Pope Gregory IX*, ed. Wilfried Hartmann and Kenneth Pennington (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2008), pp. 130-131; and also L'Engle. "Legal Iconography," in: L'Engle and Gibbs, p. 85.

by accident that the same image weds the Justice wall to Theology. The panel depicts the moment of the Fall, and under a leafy oak, the coiled serpent mirrors the expression of the corrupted Eve, who tempts Adam away from the righteous path. Man was intrinsically good until his discovery of sin, which demanded punishment under the Law of God. Because humanity shares its origin in Adam, all people are equally governed by this primordial legal category. Embellishing this interpretation in the glosses, the doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin became illustrations to the opening of Gratian's work: entered into the standard formula of the *Decretum*'s decoration, the first folios of the primer typically begin with illustrations of the Expulsion (fig. 2.35). The placement of the *riquadro* on the ceiling thus behaves as a visual mechanism similar to the manuscript images and glosses in the text that elevated the study of canon law in European universities. As in Gratian's text, Raphael's *riquadro* serves as an auxiliary threshold to the body of contents — both written and pictorial — that follow below, and crowning the history of law, it throws into high relief the origin and authority of divine ordinance, making clear the supreme legislative powers of the Church.

## 2.9 A Priority of Titles

Pictorial echoes of the room's luxury manuscripts and printed books, Raphael suggestively titled certain volumes in the frescoes. In the *School of Athens*, Plato's *Timaeus* and Aristotle's *Ethics* have supplied the basis for most academic approaches to the room and its paintings. Plato's emphatic motion gives physical form to the realm of Ideas, the subject of the book he carries. Fifteenth-century humanists like Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola reinvigorated Plato's cosmology in their own

Christianized accounts of the universe, and their commentaries were soon entered into the Vatican collections. In the formal order of the frescoes, scholars have recognized Plato behind Raphael's geometric harmonies and esoteric allusions to number theory, giving meaning to the journey and structure of the human soul. Aristotle, whose *Nicomachean Ethics* was the basis for Christian theories of virtue in the Middle Ages, is taken as a counterbalance to Platonic metaphysics, personifying popular concepts of earthly order and justice. Striding together toward the beholder, the two philosophers imagine the physical essence of the Renaissance *concordia Platonis et Aristotelis* — a synergy repeated in the *Disputa* by the figure who stands near the altar and echoes Plato's upward gesture (fig. 2.36).<sup>176</sup> Other volumes illustrated in the paintings, however, have received scarcely any attention. As we have already seen, in the *Jurisprudence* the curriculum of Roman and canon law is abbreviated by representations of the Code of Justinian and the *Decretals*. More labeled books appear in the *Disputa* than in any other fresco: the *Epistles* of Saint Jerome; the Latin Bible; the *Magna Moralia* of Gregory the Great; and Augustine's *City of God*. At the feet of Sixtus IV, one other volume is emphasized by an attached *nota*. Although untitled, the book probably alludes to the Sistine treatise on the blood of Christ, *De sanguine Christi*, whose thesis is magnificently envisioned at the center of the image.

The extraordinary concentration of titles in the *Disputa* alludes to their shared significance as scriptural signposts charting the written history of the Christian Word.

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<sup>176</sup> Edgar Wind first proposed that Raphael's figures could be reconciled in light of this humanistic doctrine in a brief note in *Art and Anarchy*, pp. 62-63. In a series of unpublished papers now in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, Wind later proposed that the total scope of the room could be explained by the harmony of Plato and Aristotle as it was conceived in the philosophical writings of Pico della Mirandola. See n. 12 in the introduction. See also Garin (1989), pp. 171-181; Marcia Hall's introduction in: Hall (1997), pp. 1-47; and Reale, *passim*.

The patristic writers, closest to the *Disputa*'s altar, held that reading could be a spiritual exercise inasmuch as it was pedagogical, and so their emphasis in the *Bibliotheca Iulia* — in both the inventory and the paintings — carries strong implications for the Julian collection and its symbolism. Jerome, who appears most frequently among the Christian authors named in the Julian inventory, understood reading to be an essential step in the climb toward spiritual enlightenment, advising that “reading should follow prayer, and prayer should succeed reading.”<sup>177</sup> Also listed among the Julian holdings, Cassian echoed these sentiments that sacred reading and a healthy spiritual interior were reciprocally related, arguing that reading could bring forth the embodied form of knowledge described in text.<sup>178</sup> Augustine, the great theoretician of Early Christian approaches to reading and meditation, regarded contemplative study as an integral measure of Neoplatonic ascent.<sup>179</sup> The books belonging to the *Bibliotheca Iulia* and its paintings manifest a magniloquent diagram of the journey of the Christian Word from its divine source to the writings of man. Embodied in image and text within image, the Christian *logos* here validates the spiritual practice of reading as an avenue for accessing the divine and alludes to the library's status as an instrument of revelation.

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<sup>177</sup> *Epistolae* 107.9

<sup>178</sup> On the interrelation of reading and monastic praxis, see the conclusion in: Conrad Rudolph, *Violence and Daily Life: Reading, Art, and Polemics in the Cîteaux Moralia in Job* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 84-96; on Cassian and reading, see Steven D. Driver, *John Cassian and the Reading of Egyptian Monastic Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 83-84.

<sup>179</sup> See Gill (2004), p. 6 ff.

## 2.10 The Julian *Moralia* and Raphael's Gregorian Theology

The texts included in the frescoes are canonical, and save for the *Timaeus*, the *Bibliotheca Iulia* included real counterparts to the imagined volumes. Of the theologians gathered in the *Disputa*, Pope Gregory the Great (540-604) has received short shrift, but the rediscovery of his manuscripts in the Julian collection reveals important new dimensions of his representation in the fresco. On the altar's right, Gregory carries an open book and gazes toward the monstrance (fig. 2.37). A prolific writer, he was one of the most influential civic and spiritual leaders of Late Antiquity. Like his patristic predecessors, he advocated reading as a spiritual activity: "For we ought to change our own lives in accordance with what we read, since the soul is alerted through the sense of hearing so that we may put into practice in our lives what we have heard."<sup>180</sup> Even before his unanimous election to the papacy in 590, Gregory proved to be a dynamic administrator and diplomat; in his youth, he served as Roman prefect, and as pope he advanced major bureaucratic and ecclesiastical reform of the Church. Regarded as the exemplary scholar and pontiff, Gregory served as a moral guide for later ecumenical generations, and reforming popes turned to his writings in search of legal precedents as they built and revised the canons of Christian law.<sup>181</sup> Above all, he was celebrated in his lifetime and by later critics as an enlightened reader of scripture and an inspired interpreter of the Word, and he bequeathed a prodigious corpus of dogmatic letters,

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<sup>180</sup> *Moralia in Job* 1.24.33.

<sup>181</sup> René Wasselynck, "Présence de s. Grégoire le grand dans les recueils canoniques (X-XII)," in: *Mélanges de science religieuse* 22 (1965), pp. 205-219.

expositions, and commentaries. For many of his readers, Gregory represented the archetypal symbol of papal authority and the founder of the divine office.<sup>182</sup>

Gregory's esteemed place in the history of scripture and the liturgy is visually endorsed by his inclusion in the *Disputa*, where his enthroned figure mediates between the heavenly host and the terrestrial world. Like his successor in the *Jurisprudence*, this Gregory has long been taken to be a portrait of Julius II, whose representation in the fresco is matched by his beardless portraits on papal medals and in the manuscripts.<sup>183</sup> At Gregory's feet rests a labeled volume of the *Moralia* (LIBER MORALIUM), whose complement in the *Bibliotheca Iulia* is now known and discussed here for the first time.<sup>184</sup> A commentary on the biblical Book of Job, the *Moralia* is Gregory's longest work and his *magnum opus*, conceived as an encyclopedic manual of committed Christian life.<sup>185</sup> Taking the Old Testament narrative as a cue for reflections on morality and divine justice, Gregory uses the story of Job to plumb the exegetical depths of Christian wisdom and uncover spiritual teachings for a virtuous life. For Gregory and his readers, the mystical meaning of scripture exceeds its literal presentation. Hidden below

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<sup>182</sup> Constant J. Mews and Claire Renkin, "The Legacy of Gregory the Great in the Latin West," in: *A Companion to Gregory the Great*, ed. Bronwen Neil and Matthew Dal Santo (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 315-339; more broadly, on the historical sources that have attributed liturgical activity to Gregory, see David Hiley, *Western Plainchant: A Handbook* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 503-513.

<sup>183</sup> The identification was first advanced by Frederick Hartt, "Pagnini, Vigerio, and the Sistine Ceiling: A Reply," in: *Art Bulletin* 23 (1951), pp. 271-272; Paul Künzle has taken issue with the identification of Julius as Gregory, but most contemporary scholars accept this attribution. See "Zur obersten der drei Tiaren auf Raffaels 'Disputa,'" in: *Römische Quartalschrift* 7 (1962), pp. 226-249. Philipp Fehl takes up the problems of Gregory's representation in: "Raphael's Reconstruction of the Throne of St. Gregory the Great," in: *Art Bulletin* 55.3 (1973), pp. 373-379.

<sup>184</sup> BAV MS [REDACTED] (item 102 on the inventory). A second edition of the *Moralia* (115 on the inventory) was printed on paper and has not been located.

<sup>185</sup> Indeed, the *Moralia* is the longest patristic work, and even modern editions average around 2,000 pages. The *Moralia* is based on a series of lectures Gregory delivered in Constantinople during his tenure as papal ambassador. For some useful and accessible summaries, see Carole Straw, *Gregory the Great* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1996), pp. 49-50 in particular; and Stephan C. Kessler, "Gregory the Great (c. 540-604)," in: *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible in Ancient Christianity*, ed. Charles Kannengiesser (Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 1336-1368.

the surface of the written word, Gregory maintained, a deeper spiritual significance could be discerned through moral and allegorical interpretation.<sup>186</sup> Understanding God to be Job's ultimate author, Gregory insists that scripture transcends all forms of knowledge, and throughout the commentary, he reminds the reader that words are the cryptic vehicles of divine truth, that a good life is one of "lived reading or study."<sup>187</sup> Through this contemplation of text, Gregory proposed to find the true meaning of the Word.

Gregory's reception in Renaissance Rome was colored by the duality of his perceived character. For Italy's humanists, Gregory was at once the inheritor of classical antiquity, as well as a hero of Christian piety, and his writings were fundamental to the interpretation of Holy Scripture.<sup>188</sup> For the papacy, he represented a ripe symbol of the pontifical authority, which was easily shaped into the image and policies of his successors. In Raphael's time, Gregory's personal effects continued to serve as objects of veneration, the most important of which were his throne and altar table in the monastery of San Gregorio Magno on the Caelian Hill. It is often noted that Raphael modeled Gregory's marble seat in the *Disputa* after these patristic relics, and even in preparatory drawings for the *Disputa*, Raphael paid considerable attention to the architecture of

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<sup>186</sup> In his preface to the *Moralia*, Gregory distinguishes between three levels of Scriptural meaning. The first is the literal or historical (that is, what is obviously said); the second is the spiritual or typical level (the mystical and symbolic meaning of what is said); and the third is the moral (the imitation of Christ). For a good, recent overview of these distinctions, see the introduction by Mark DelCogliano, in: *Moral Reflections on the Book of Job: Preface and Books 1-5*, trans. Brian Kerns (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2014), vol. 1, pp. 17-26 in particular. The general literature on patristic exegesis is vast, but a good starting place for the interested reader is Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>187</sup> *Moralia*, 24.8.16.

<sup>188</sup> On Gregory's duality, as well as conflicts regarding his purported destruction of pagan antiquities, see Ann Kuzdale, "The Reception of Gregory in the Renaissance and Reformation," in: Neil and Dal Santo, pp. 359-382.; also Gregory Tilmann Buddensieg, "Gregory the Great, the Destroyer of Pagan Idols: The History of a Medieval Legend Concerning the Decline of Ancient Art and Literature," in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965), pp. 44-64.



Gregory's holy *cathedra*, importing its protome base and the acanthus scrolls of its armrests.<sup>189</sup>

Gregory's prominent place in the painting complements his literary presence in the Julian collection, which included several editions of his letters and homilies and at least two copies of the *Moralia*, one of which survives today in the Vatican Library.<sup>190</sup> Few other theological works have shared the influence of the *Moralia*, whose popularity was immediate and widespread, and which was read throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance as an authority of spiritual enlightenment. Not only was Gregory's written legacy broadly circulated in the medieval sourcebooks and patristic *florilegia*, but by the fifteenth century, the *Moralia* in particular proliferated into all important academic, monastic, and private collections.<sup>191</sup> The humanists were not immune to this profound demand, and they spurred the production of new manuscript and printed editions across the intellectual centers of Western Europe.<sup>192</sup> Like many of its extant counterparts, the Julian *Moralia* (figs. 2.38 and 2.39) is richly ornamented with illuminated initials and tangled *bianchi girari*, and its pages find striking affinities in Raphael's painting, impossible to reconstruct until now. Mirroring the interlace on the *Disputa*'s altar, golden knots and coils border the opening text. Raphael did not include the altar in his original plans for the painting, and it is significant that the table appears relatively late in preliminary studies, entering the scene with the patristic authors. The first version of the

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<sup>189</sup> For a thorough analysis of Gregory's throne, see again Fehl; and Künzle, p. 229, n. 7.

<sup>190</sup> The two other Gregorian volumes include the *Registrum epistularum* (his letters; item 35) and his *Homilies on Ezekiel* (item 149).

<sup>191</sup> On the influence of the *Moralia*, especially in the early modern period, see again DelCogliano, pp. 26-45; and especially Kuzdale.

<sup>192</sup> Especially in Rome, Venice, Basel, and Paris. For an overview of the transmission of the *Moralia* through the seventeenth century, see *La trasmissione dei testi latini del medioevo, Te.Tra. 5: Gregorius I Papa*, ed. Lucia Castaldi (Florence: Sismel and Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2013), pp. 44-68.

altar included placards of text flanked by cherubic bodies, which Raphael replaced in the fresco with the glittering cloth. We could speculate about the message of the altar's planned *titulus*, but it is enough to observe its clear emphasis at the center of the image, just below the convergence of the perspectival rays. The substitution of a written inscription with the pattern of golden interlace is therefore suggestive, and it would seem that the motif embodies what the text intended to convey. Visual echoes in the manuscript and the *Disputa* also indicate that the Sacrament of the Altar carries distinctly Gregorian connotations here, and that the power of the Eucharist as an instrument of cosmic justice in Gregory's writings is an integral dimension of its representation in the painting. Indeed, not only were the throne and altar table at San Gregorio Magno revered as devotional artifacts; many of the rituals related to Eucharist were also traced to Gregory the Great.<sup>193</sup>

The Eucharist or the Sacrament of the Altar is the essential ingredient of Gregory's moral theology. As the miraculous intercessor between God and mankind, the Host, for Gregory, is the focus of Christian life. Although conversations about the Mass as holy sacrifice already abound in the writings of his predecessors, Gregory put proverbial flesh to the idea.<sup>194</sup> In the *Dialogues*, Gregory defines the Eucharist (the *hostia*, or "victim") not simply as an act of thanksgiving, but as the replication or

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<sup>193</sup> See F. Homes Dudden, *Gregory the Great: His Place in History and Thought* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1967), vol. 2, p. 415 ff.

<sup>194</sup> The theology of the Eucharist had undergone substantial changes in the writings of Ambrose and Augustine. Gregory's position on the sacrament is advanced primarily in the *Dialogues* (particularly 4.60). On the tradition of the Eucharist and Gregory's contribution to its historical development, see Carole Straw, *Gregory the Great: Perfection in Imperfection* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 178 ff; see also Johannes Betz, "Eucharistie als zentrales Mysterium," in: *Mysterium Salutis: Grundriss heilsgeschichtlicher Dogmatik*, ed. Johannes Feiner and Magnus Löhrer (Einsiedeln: Benziger 1973), vol. 2, p. 229 ff. For an introduction to Gregory's theology and the Eucharist, see again Straw, "Gregory's Moral Theology: Divine Providence and Human Responsibility," in: Neil and Dal Santo, pp. 177-204.

continuation of Christ's immolation (4.60). When the Host is activated through the sacrament, it mystically joins God and mankind, enacting a reciprocal sacrifice from the Christian community. For Gregory, the Eucharist can achieve salvation even after death, and he endorsed Masses on behalf of the departed to grant temporal remission from punishment in Purgatory. Also in the *Dialogues* (4.55), Gregory recounts that he ordered Masses for the sinful monk Justus to liberate his soul, marking the origin of the Gregorian or "privileged" altar — an altar that grants plenary indulgences to the dead. As the monk's name (meaning "just" or "fair") implies, the episode illustrates the power of the Eucharist to heal the ancient consequences of the Fall (whose panel in the ceiling appears above Gregory), and to restore cosmic balance. If Raphael's imagined altar is Gregorian, as its golden dressings suggest, it not only imparts the ability to intervene between this world and the next, but also affirms the special duty of the celebrant as a spiritual authority. Because of their role in perpetuating Christ's sacrifice through the sacrament, Gregory calls priests the "portals" to the "heavenly court" and the "earthly images of Christ," legitimating their post as the gatekeepers of faith and the representatives of celestial government.<sup>195</sup>

By the Renaissance, following Gregory's sacramental interpretation of Christian ecclesiastical and ecumenical hierarchies, the mystical body of Christ or the *Corpus Christi* was not only extended to mean the Christian congregation, but even more suggestively, to refer to the papal office itself.<sup>196</sup> In the Christian theater of the *Disputa*,

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<sup>195</sup> For example, *Dial.* 4.60.3: "Quis enim fidelium habere dubium possit ipsa immolationis hora ad sacerdotis uocem caelos aperiri, in illo Iesu Christi mysterio angelorum choros adesse, summis ima sociari, terram caelestibus iungi, unum quid ex uisibilibus atque inuisibilibus fieri?" See also: *Homilia super Ezechielem* 2.7.1; 2.8.2; and *Mor.* 28.28.38. See Straw (2013), p. 105 ff., and 183 in particular.

<sup>196</sup> See Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 194 ff.; see also Partridge and Starn, p. 30.

this association of the Eucharist and the papacy is made explicit: Christ's vicar in salvation can only be Julius II, whose name is twice emblazoned on the altar cloth.

The centrality of the Eucharist in Gregory's writings deeply informed his legacy in papal Rome, a theological dimension of his reception that might also explain his elevated presence in Raphael's fresco. Like Gregory, the Della Rovere attached deep personal meaning to the symbolism of the Host. Answering a dispute between the Franciscans and the Dominicans, Sixtus composed the treatise on the blood of Christ (to which I will return in the final section of this chapter). During his papacy he also increased the number of privileged altars in Rome.<sup>197</sup> The Sacrament of the Eucharist appears to have been equally important to Julius, since it is twice celebrated in his apartments: in the *Disputa* and in the *Mass of Bolsena*, next door in the Stanza d'Eliodoro. The repetition of eucharistic imagery in the two *sale* was likely inspired by the same triumphal campaign that launched the redecoration of the suite.<sup>198</sup> As Julius traveled north to Bologna in 1506, he visited the cathedral of Orvieto to pay homage to the famous eucharistic relic of Bolsena. According to legend, in 1263 the consecrated wafer bled to reveal the real presence of Christ to a doubtful priest.<sup>199</sup> Julius not only attributed his sensational victories in Romagna and Bologna to the Bolsena relic, but during the expeditions of 1506 and 1510-1511, he also advertised his devotion to the *Corpus Christi* by marching with a consecrated Host.<sup>200</sup> Raphael commemorated these

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<sup>197</sup> Gabriel Biel, *Expositio canonis missae* (Johann Otmar for Friedrich Meynberger, 1499), lect. 57; Creighton, p. 72.

<sup>198</sup> Kłaczko, pp. 388-390; see also Frederick Hartt, "Lignum Vitae in Medio Paradisi: The Stanza d'Eliodoro and the Sistine Ceiling," reprinted in: *The Sistine Chapel*, ed. with intro. by William E. Wallace (New York & London: Garland Publishers, 1995), pp. 75-109.

<sup>199</sup> Indeed, Sixtus IV offered special indulgences to pilgrims who visited this relic. See Pastor, vol. 6, p. 596; as well as Hartt (1995), p. 120, n. 33 in particular.

<sup>200</sup> See again Hartt (1995), p. 120 ff.

eucharistic victories in the Julian apartments, above all on the southern wall of the Eliodoro, where Julius participates in the miracle and conspicuously kneels in reverence. With a portrait of the pope looking poignantly toward the monstrance, the *Disputa* might be thought to make a similarly pious claim of eucharistic devotion.

If Raphael's Gregory is a portrait of Julius, as it seems, it follows that the eucharistic themes claimed by the Della Rovere were also touched by the influence of his theology. Although the mystery of the Transubstantiation — that is, the conversion of the bread and wine into the real body and blood of Christ — was only made official doctrine at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), in a climate that stressed eucharistic piety, Gregory was regarded as the prototypical priest who had sustained Christ's sacrifice through the Sacrament.<sup>201</sup> Even if the patristic authors never took up discussion of the Transubstantiation *per se*, Gregory insisted that the Host transmutes into Christ's flesh in the mouths of the faithful.<sup>202</sup> Later readers understood him to anticipate this doctrinal direction, making him into a mouthpiece for the Holy Spirit through various eucharistic miracles. For instance, the *Bibliotheca Iulia* included a deluxe volume of the ninth-century *Vita Gregorii*, whose author John the Deacon credited Gregory with first proving Christ's real presence in the Eucharist.<sup>203</sup> Among other documented objects in the Julian

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<sup>201</sup> The word first appeared in mid twelfth century in the *Sentences* of Master Roland, a contemporary of Peter Lombard. The principle was refined in the thirteenth century, above all by Thomas Aquinas (who preferred the term "substantial conversion," following the metaphysics of Aristotle. See *Dial.* 4.60. On the Eucharist and Gregory's reception, see Straw (1988), pp. 180-182; and Mews and Renkin, pp. 337-339 in particular.

<sup>202</sup> *Dial.* 3.3.1-2; and 4.58. Gregory was notably associated with the mystery of the Transubstantiation in medieval lore, like the *Golden Legend* of Jacob de Voragine. As the story goes, Gregory saw an old woman smile when he described the Host as the Body of Christ. When he inquired about her amusement, the woman explained that she had baked the bread herself and therefore knew that it could not be Christ's flesh. In response, Gregory prayed, and the Host was transformed into a finger. As he prayed again, the Host again became bread. See Edward J. Kilmartin and Robert J. Daly, *The Eucharist in the West: History and Theology* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1998), p. 76 ff.

<sup>203</sup> Item 122; BAV MS [REDACTED]. John the Deacon's *Vita* was composed in the ninth century and includes an account of the miraculous Mass of Saint Gregory. See Kristen Van Ausdall, "Art and Eucharist

treasury was a tapestry featuring the *Mass of Saint Gregory*: as the story goes, while Gregory celebrated Mass, he experienced a vision of the Man of Sorrows, whose appearance confirmed the body of Christ in the Gifts and rendered visible Christ's sacrifice on the cross.<sup>204</sup> The theological landscape of the *Disputa* — one of the most eloquent representations of the Transubstantiation in any medium — might be seen to evoke the sacramental rite in Gregory's thought and teachings, and for both Gregory and Raphael, the Sacrament of the Eucharist suffuses the ordinary world with divine *praesentia*. In the *Dialogues*, Gregory explained that as the Host is consecrated, it undergoes a supernatural change that enters the congregation into communion with God: "As the celebrant speaks these words, the heavens are opened, the choirs of angels are present in the Mystery of Jesus Christ, the lowliest are joined to the highest, earth is yoked to the heavens, and there at the altar the visible and invisible are made one."<sup>205</sup> Without its literary context, this vivid passage might be mistaken for a description of Raphael's fresco itself, where the material and spiritual worlds meet in the eucharistic wafer, here stamped with an image of the crucified Christ and toward which Julius as Gregory directs his gaze.

But Gregory's relevance for the *Disputa* neither begins nor ends with the Eucharist. Returning again to the *Moralia*, out of all of Gregory's writings, none other was more widely dispersed during the Renaissance or better suited to the themes of the

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in the Late Middle Ages," in: *A Companion to the Eucharist in the Middle Ages*, ed. Ian Christopher Levy, Gary Macy, and Kristen Van Ausdall (Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 541-617, and 588 in particular.

<sup>204</sup> On the tapestry, see Müntz, *Raphaël* (Paris: H. Laurens, 1881), p. 211; a similar tapestry was displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2002. See their exhibition catalogue, *Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence*, ed. Thomas P. Campbell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 146-150, p. 148 in particular.

<sup>205</sup> *Dialogues* 4.58: "Quis enim fidelium habere dubium possit, in ipsa immolationis hora ad sacerdotis vocem coelos aperiri, in illo Iesu Christi mysterio angelorum chorus adesse, summis ima sociari, terrena coelestibus iungi, unumque ex visibilibus atque invisibilibus fieri?"

papal library.<sup>206</sup> Throughout the text, Gregory grounds the spiritual exercise of his reading in creative exegesis, promising hidden strata of meaning concealed by a rough facade. Expounding the utility of images to stimulate contemplation of the mysteries, Gregory's allegories offered a natural index of pictorial devices whose verbal form could be put to stunning visual effect. To elucidate the spiritual analogy of word and image, Gregory described God in the language of art, comparing the *logos* to a pigment, which spreads in its cup as it is ground.<sup>207</sup> Like Gregory, in the *Disputa* Raphael captured the transmission of the divine through visual metaphors, equating the Word with painterly technique. Scholars have often noted the liberal use of gold in the painting, which by the second half of the fifteenth century had largely gone out of fashion and seems incompatible with Raphael's otherwise stoic classicism.<sup>208</sup> The distribution of gold in the painting, however, should not be understood as a simple statement of papal opulence, or as a mere homage to the altarpieces and apsidal mosaics of Rome's early Christian churches. Instead, the gilding in the fresco is better understood as a spiritual actor, an essential character in the unfolding Christian drama.

Raphael's use of gold in the painting is selective and deliberate, corresponding only to the holiest bodies. The glittering interlace of the altar follows from the golden monstrance, whose color and shape are in turn received from the ascending spiritual forms of the Holy Spirit, Christ as the sun, and the dome of heaven. Perhaps not by coincidence, in the *Moralia* gold is a favorite metaphor for the illumination of Holy

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<sup>206</sup> See again Kuzdale, *passim*.

<sup>207</sup> *Moralia* 29.7.19.

<sup>208</sup> On the artistic shift away from gold, see Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 14-17.

Scripture, and Gregory ranks gold the highest of all colors and metals. For Gregory, “gold” refers variously to sanctity or virtue or righteousness, but it always appears in conjunction with divine inspiration, and over and over in the long text, Gregory compares gold’s sparkle to the mind of mankind:

But if these several particulars, which we have gone through, handling them according to the history, we also examine in respect of the mysteries of allegory, what else do we in this place take the gold to be, save for the wit of a bright understanding? What is ‘fine gold’ but the mind, which while it is fined clear by the fire of love, ever preserves in itself the brightness of beauty, by a daily renewal of fervor?<sup>209</sup>

Throughout the *Moralia*, “gold” penetrates all that is good, making it into a sacred vessel of the Word, and in the penultimate book of his *magnum opus*, Gregory concludes: “For by the term ‘gold’ in Holy Scripture is designated the innermost brightness of the Divine.”<sup>210</sup> Thus according to Gregory’s system, as the mind is raised in contemplation of the divine, it takes the reciprocal form of heavenly light, which is signified by the properties of gold in the written word and the natural world alike.<sup>211</sup> Within this scheme, Gregory tells us, the saints humbly receive the talents of God, which are transfused to them just as light reaches the golden prongs of an encrusted gem.<sup>212</sup> In the *Disputa*, the hierarchy of golden pigment begins from the top down: gilt and yellow beams flicker down from heaven’s dome and Christ’s scintillating mandorla: passing through the Trinity, it touches the saints assembled along the cloudbank of Christ’s court, finally illumining the altar cloth and the vestments of select theologians.

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<sup>209</sup> *Moralia* 22.4.7.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.15.26.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.4.6; 22.6.11.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.4.7.



As we might infer from this metaphoric order, Gregory's discussion of gold in the *Moralia* is bound to the heavenly metaphor of the sun, by then a popular allegory for Christ in art and literature, and a relationship that Raphael visualized in the colors and shapes of the *Disputa*. Just as gold has interchangeable meanings for Gregory, so too does the sun, and like gold, Gregory's various interpretations are always reconciled under the power of divine truth. Associating the coming of Christ with the "rising of the true sun," Gregory identifies the light that bathes mankind as the emanating splendor of God's grace. In an especially lucid passage, Gregory turns to meteorological symbolism to explain the experience of spiritual enlightenment:

There all day, as at midday, the fire of the sun burns with a brighter luster, in that the brightness of our Creator, which is now overlaid with the mists of our mortal state, is rendered more clearly visible; and the beam of the orb seems to raise itself to higher regions, in that 'Truth' from Its own Self enlightens us more completely through and through. There the light of interior contemplation is seen without the intervening shadow of mutability; there is the heat of supreme Light without any dimness from the body; there the unseen bands of Angels glitter like stars in hidden realms, which cannot be seen by men, in proportion as they are deeper bathed in the flame of the true Light.<sup>213</sup>

Gregory explains further that God's wisdom glows increasingly brighter in the souls of man as the *logos* gradually becomes known through the written word. The Christian equation of the sun and the Son of God was nothing new for either Gregory or Raphael, but the close physical and visual proximity of the *Moralia*, the altar, and the figure of the pope suggests that the artist was engaged with the figurative tokens of Gregory's theology. In Raphael's fresco, Gregory the Great is one of only three theologians who sees heaven's invisible landscape emerging above; the two others, Ambrose and Sixtus IV, also set forth Christ's presence in the Eucharist. Gregory's exceptional

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<sup>213</sup> *Moralia*, 9.11.17.

characterization in the painting — sitting with an open book as he experiences visionary communion with the divine — leads us back to the text of the *Moralia*. Not only is Gregory cast according to the premise outlined in his writings — that is, attaining divine wisdom through the contemplation of Holy Scripture — but his gaze carries us across transcendent planes of light reminiscent of his expositions in the *Moralia*. As in the text, in the *Disputa* the rays of truth radiate from the supreme light of the sun, which ascends in brilliant golden orbs toward the Father. And just as in the entry, ascending toward the heavenly source, rings of angels populate the illuminated vault like sparkling stars reflecting the light of God.

### 2.11 Raphael, Sixtus IV, and the *Disputa as Quaestio*

Like Gregory the Great, Sixtus IV occupies an esteemed place in Raphael's fresco. Similarly draped in sparkling gold robes, the nephew and his uncle face one another across the altar. Their visual relationship is reminiscent of the familiar format of a triptych or altarpiece, whose wings often included mirrored portraits of its donors.<sup>214</sup> The two Della Rovere center on the Eucharist, toward which their gazes are mutually

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<sup>214</sup> In at least one other instance, the two Della Rovere were cast together in similar circumstances. In the Sistine Chapel of Savona, the hometown of the Della Rovere, Sixtus commissioned a Franciscan cycle whose scheme corresponded to the themes of his writings, in particular the Immaculate Conception and the Holy Blood of Christ. Completed under Cardinal Giuliano in 1489, the provincial altarpiece was painted by Giovanni Mazzone. The panel confirms the themes of his uncle's theology and centers on the Crucifixion. In the wings flanking the Nativity, the uncle and nephew gather in prayer. Commemorating the Sistine thesis, Saint Francis holds a crucifix before the pope, and in the panel above, angels tearfully gather the blood spilling forth from Christ's wounds. Although it is doubtful that Raphael ever saw or even knew of this example, and it can hardly be said that the chapel and the Stanza share much in common, the text of the *De sanguine Christi* nevertheless appears to have supplied an important register of subjects for the family's associated imagery. The *Nativity*, with the Della Rovere donor panels, is today in the Petit Palais in Avignon; the *Crucifixion* is housed in the Pinacoteca Civica of Savona. Part of the predella is now owned by a private collector. On the altarpiece and its relationship to Franciscan themes of the blood of Christ, see Paola Grassi, "L'iconografia del 'De sanguine Christi' e la decorazione della Capella Sistina di Savona," in: Benzi, Crescentini, and McGrath, pp. 87-99. On the portraits more generally, Partridge and Starn, pp. 97-98.

fixed. Beholding the monstrance, Sixtus offers a gesture of blessing (fig. 2.40). In the company of Ambrose and Augustine to the right of the altar, his position suggests his theological proximity to the mysteries of the Holy Sacrament. The pope's prominence is underscored by the togate figure beside him, whose powerful arm points not to the Eucharist, but to the person of Sixtus himself. A bound volume earmarked with a small note lies suggestively at his feet. Since its themes would naturally suit the subject of the fresco, the volume in the painting is often thought to be the *Tractatus de sanguine Christi*, the Sistine treatise on the devotional status of Christ's blood. The significance of the work for Raphael's composition, however, has yet to be examined.

The only theologian of the Renaissance popes, Sixtus was long concerned with issues of piety and devotion, and his writings evince a considered engagement with the expansive terrain of Christian philosophy. Printed in 1471 after Sixtus ascended to the papacy, *De sanguine Christi* enters an impassioned response to contemporary controversies surrounding the blood of Christ.<sup>215</sup> Absent any papal pronouncements, disputes over the salvific power of the blood spilled in the Passion divided fifteenth-century mendicants on matters of physiology, theology, and the liturgy.<sup>216</sup> At odds with the Dominicans, the Franciscans argued that the blood of the Passion was separable from Christ's divinity, and thus inessential to redemption.<sup>217</sup> The idea soared perilously close

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<sup>215</sup> On Sixtus' revisions to the original text, in preparation for its authoritative print, see Concetta Bianca, "Francesco della Rovere: un francescano tra teologia e potere," in: *Un pontificato ed una città: Sisto IV (1471-1484)*, ed. Massimo Miglio et al. (Vatican City: Associazione Roma nel Rinascimento, 1986), pp. 19-56. Autograph notes in BAV MSS Vat.lat. 1051 and 1052 demonstrate the breadth of his revisions.

<sup>216</sup> For a good review of the dispute and the arguments marshaled by both orders, see Caroline Walker Bynum on the *Triduum Mortis* debate in: *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), pp. 120-125.

<sup>217</sup> They pointed to the relics at the Lateran, Mantua, and Venice, whose blood had browned and so corrupted, which would have been impossible if it had truly returned to Christ's incorruptible body. See Walker-Bynum (2007), pp. 123-124; Nicholas Vincent, *The Holy Blood: King Henry III and the Westminster Blood Relic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 113-117.

to the limits of Christian orthodoxy, raising dangerous questions about the doctrine of the hypostatic union — that is, the union of the *logos* and Christ's incarnate form. Thanks to his reputation as an accomplished scholar and a rousing speaker, Francesco quickly ascended through the Franciscan ranks, and as procurator general of the order in Rome, he was selected to defend the stance of his brethren against perceived Dominican literalism.<sup>218</sup> On Christmas in 1462, the future Sixtus made the case *coram papam* that the blood of the Passion is only a sign of Christ's sacrifice, not the cost of salvation as the Dominicans maintained. Instead, he argued, Christ's blood is bonded to the Word through His body by a kind of attraction or concomitance; the body joined to the *logos* is an *essential* one, independent ultimately of its effluvia.<sup>219</sup> Although Pope Pius II refused to deliver a formal verdict (he favored the Dominican persuasion), Sixtus reaffirmed his argument a few years later when he published *De sanguine Christi* following his own election to the papacy.<sup>220</sup> Although his position was not so momentous as to become doctrine, the issue of his treatise in print made a definitive claim about his authority and the nature of Christian salvation according to the Church.

Like most of the other volumes illustrated in the frescoes, *De sanguine Christi* is named on the Julian inventory.<sup>221</sup> But Sixtus' erudition not only earned him a spot on the shelves in his nephew's *Bibliotheca*. Certain patterns of his theological thought are also

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<sup>218</sup> For a survey of Francesco's soaring career in these years, see Lee (1978), pp. 15-22.

<sup>219</sup> Franciscans cited Innocent III and Albert the Great, who considered blood a humor and corruptible. See again Bynum (2007), pp. 124-125.

<sup>220</sup> This position is clear from Pius' autobiographic account of the debate: Pius II, *Commentarii*, ed. Florentine Alden Gragg, with introduction by Leona C. Gabel (Northampton: Smith College, 1937), pp. 283-285.

<sup>221</sup> Item 175 on the inventory ("Ioannis philippi de lignamine libellus ad sixtum quartum, ex membranis in cartis impressus") is most likely a presentation copy of the *De sanguine christi*, which was printed in 1471 by Johannes Philippus de Lignamine and contains a dedicatory letter from the printer commemorating the Sistine papacy.

reflected in the conceptual order of Raphael's composition. Here the contents of the Sistine treatise merit brief consideration. The work employs the argumentative structure of the *quaestio*, the central method of scholastic pedagogy recommended by Aquinas, which takes this general form: posing first a question, Sixtus establishes the Dominican objections he will then refute. In the sections that follow, he undermines their conclusions through the citation of authoritative passages and builds positive arguments defending the position he advocates. Finally, he dismantles the Dominican objections using this positive measure. Excerpting Aristotle, Albertus Magnus, Duns Scotus, Aquinas, Bonaventure, and the Latin Fathers, the treatise is a synthetic interpretation of philosophical and theological *auctoritates*, or the historical exempla of scholastic education, and it reads like a disputative catalogue on the subject of Christ's body and blood. When Vasari gave the fresco its name, he perhaps had in mind something like the scholastic dialectic, rather than the squabble modern readers tend to infer from the term. Assembling together a catechistic group of ecclesiasts seeking to understand the mystery of the Christian faith, Raphael enters painting into conversation with the literary form of the *quaestio*. Various depicted in acts of reading, discussion, and dissent, the figures in the *Disputa* address their interlocutors in the present, as they had done in the minds of Sixtus and his contemporaries, and diagram the activity of *disputatio*, which the elder Della Rovere actively and memorably practiced.

Even though *De sanguine Christi* lacks the vibrant descriptive language so characteristic of Gregory and the patristic authors, one might recognize other elements of the Sistine text in the figures and forms of the *Disputa*. The right of the composition is unevenly weighted with identifiable authors central to the tradition of Christian

scholasticism, and it is here that Sixtus IV joins the personalities who served as the deliberative basis for his *tractatus*. It is probably not by accident that he stands beside Aquinas and Bonaventure — the respective representatives of the Dominicans and the Franciscans — extending his benediction to the latter, whom he canonized in 1482. Already in the thirteenth century, the two had drawn battle lines between their respective orders, a separation that persisted well into the seventeenth century. In spite of their dissonance, however, Sixtus expressed deep admiration for both. Bonaventure's teachings were central to the Franciscan rebuttal, and Sixtus turned to his advantage scripture excerpted by Aquinas and his Dominican proxies.<sup>222</sup> As his planned masterwork, Sixtus proposed to demonstrate the fundamental concordance of Franciscan and Dominican theology — a theological *pax*, which, he maintained, interpreters had muddled due to differences of terminology.<sup>223</sup> Fittingly, in the *Disputa* Sixtus and the scholastics gather behind Augustine, a favorite theological authority of both Aquinas and Bonaventure, and whom Sixtus invokes most in his *De sanguine Christi*.

In his vision of Theology, Raphael alluded even more directly to the subjects of the Sistine *quaestio*. Affirming the opinions of his Franciscan predecessors, Sixtus argued that the blood shed in the Passion was necessary for Christ's sacrifice and, in turn, for the salvation of mankind. Its reunification with Christ's body was an essential moment of the Resurrection, and so recouped was glorified in the Son; blood left on earth following the Passion — preserved as relics — was of lesser status than its eucharistic counterpart, which had been restored to its divinity. In the *Disputa* Christ sits on axis with the Eucharist — again, stamped with an image of the Crucifixion — and exhibits his

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<sup>222</sup> The elder Della Rovere's private collection included the entire Thomistic *corpus* in duplicate.

<sup>223</sup> The project was ultimately unfinished. See Lee (1978), p. 24.

bleeding wounds. Insisting on a Sistine reading of Christ's blood and the eucharistic wafer, Raphael linked them through visual alliteration. The gesture of the togate figure in the foreground, signaling the importance of Sixtus in the fresco, duplicates that of Saint John, pointing to the crimson wounds of Christ.

## Conclusion

Here it is fitting to revisit Condivi's anecdote in the *Life of Michelangelo*. It will be remembered from the introduction that as he prepared to cast the massive bronze statue of Julius II for the reconquered state of Bologna, Michelangelo first thought to put a book in the pope's hands. When Julius saw the sculptor's planned design, he exclaimed, "Give me instead a sword!" Although probably apocryphal, the story is nevertheless suggestive, not only because Michelangelo's first instinct was to identify the pontiff with a symbol of learning, but also because together, the book and the sword were two of the chief attributes of Justice. In the *Decretum Gratiani* and the *Decretals* of Gregory IX (fig. 2.41), the distribution of legislative powers to its secular and ecclesiastic deputies is represented by two books, or more suggestively, the book and sword.<sup>224</sup> What is more, that the statue was intended for Bologna, the legal capital of Europe, hints that the attributes mentioned in Condivi's story were not only civic reminders of the expulsion of the Bentivoglio, the city's tyrant rulers, but also symbols of the legislative authority of Julius II as Christ's vicar. Indeed, like the bronze sculpture of Bologna, the personification of Justice in the Stanza's ceiling lacks a book (fig. 2.42), and she is the only eidolon absent this feature. Weighing her scales in one hand, she brandishes a sword

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<sup>224</sup> L'Engle, in: L'Engle and Gibbs, pp. 75-104, p. 85 in particular.

in the other, and it is toward this iron instrument that three of her attendant *putti* gaze as they render the definition of Justice. In scripture, the sword is assigned special significance as the weapon of Christ's law. In Matthew (10.34), foretelling the End-Time, Jesus proclaimed: "Do not think that I come to bring peace on earth; I bring not peace, but a sword" — a turn of phrase eerily close to the words uttered by Julius in Condivi's anecdote.

To come full circle, the sword and the book are not so distant after all. In his sixth letter to the Ephesians, Paul defined the sword of the spirit as the Word of God. If the Word is Justice, and libraries curate the written word, then it follows that the *Bibliotheca Iulia* made its books into metonyms for the scriptural journey of the Word of God, and for the narrative of divine law. Returning to the subjects with which this chapter and dissertation began, like Cicero, Lippo described the library of Giuliano della Rovere as a garden: the future pope, whom he names the "cultivator of Justice," waters the leaves of the books that rest in the shade of his oak tree. And like the collection of books itself, Raphael's frescoes together trace the narrative of Christian history, into which the artist inserted his patron as the chosen vicar of earthly and spiritual Justice.



### 3. The Library, the Law, and the Julian Jerusalem

Thomas Aquinas once opined that the association of reading and the law is at least as old as their Latin etymologies.<sup>225</sup> In the ancient Roman lexicon, the word for law (*lex*, *legis*) was thought to derive from the verb “to read” (*legere*), suggesting that the application of law was a written task.<sup>226</sup> As we saw in the previous chapter, the Stanza della Segnatura as the *Bibliotheca Iulia* is the *summa* of its patron’s lexical experience. It is not by chance that the lion’s share of books in the Julian collection belongs to the disciplines of law and theology. In the early stages of design, the subjects of their walls

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<sup>225</sup> Aquinas was following the example of Isidore of Seville, who cited “reading” as the etymological origin of law (*Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, II.10.1: “nam lex a legendo vocat, quia scripta est”). Aquinas also suggested the Latin *ligare* “to bind” as a second possible origin. *Summa theologiae* Ia-IIae, 90, 1c: “Lex dicitur a ligando, quia obligat. Vel dicitur a legendo, quo publice legatur, secundum Isidorum.” The distinction between *legere*, “to read,” and *ligare*, “to bind,” is thought to represent the distinction between juridical law, that which is written and read, and eternal law, the law of nature, which governs all of creation. A good overview of the etymology of law in Isidore of Seville and Thomas Aquinas can be found in Jean-Robert Armogathe’s essay, “Deus legislator,” in: *Natural Law and Laws of Nature in Early Modern Europe: Jurisprudence, Theology, Moral and Natural Philosophy*, ed. Lorraine Daston and Michael Stolleis (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 276-277 in particular; also Oscar James Brown, *Natural Rectitude and Divine Law in Aquinas: An Approach to an Integral Interpretation of the Thomistic Doctrine of Law* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1981), p. 173.

<sup>226</sup> The origin of the word “law” is somewhat controversial today, but in antiquity and the Middle Ages, *legere* was thought to be its ultimate root. Since the ancients generally read aloud, *lex* as a form of *legere* has been interpreted to mean “to declare” or “to promulgate;” scholars have similarly argued that *lex* referred to the Senate practice of reading out the law before its ratification by oath (see here, for example, André Magdelain, *La loi à Rome. Histoire d’un concept* [Paris: Belles Lettres, 1978], pp. 18-21). According to Elizabeth Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law in the Roman World: Tabulae in Roman Belief and Practice* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 97-101, practices of inscribing, reading out, and posting were necessary for the ratification of the law as a “unitary act;” the performance of reading, moreover, brings the law to bear in particular cases. One of the earliest Roman associations of *lex* and *legere* appears in Cicero’s *De legibus* I.18-19, where “law” is defined as the written decree of the *populus*; in this instance, Cicero seems to have used *legere* in the sense of “to choose,” in order to emphasize the relationship of reason to the exercise of law (“eamque rem illi Graeco putant nomine a suum cuique tribuendo appellatam, ego nostro a legendo”). For Cicero, as for Aquinas, *lex* is the highest form of reason and order. On Cicero and law, see Jill Harries, “The Law in Cicero’s Writings,” in: *The Cambridge Companion to Cicero*, ed. Catherine Steel (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 115-117; and *ead.*, in: Shirley Robin Letwin and Noel B. Reynolds, *On the History of the Idea of Law* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 44-46 in particular. Modern scholars have suggested that the relationship between law and reading stretches back even further, to the Greek λέγειν (“to say” or, in other instances, like Plato’s *Theaetetus*, “to read”), and the phrase “read out the law” was common among fourth-century B.C. orators. See Jesper Svenbro, “The Vocabulary of Reading in Greek,” in: *A History of Reading in the West*, ed. Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), pp. 40-43 in particular.

were conceived as literary pendants, a harmony of meaning that this chapter will show to be central to the Stanza's governing theme. As Aquinas also argued, the highest order of law knowable to man, from which the rules of mankind derive and to which they must ultimately submit, is divine law — that is, the Word of God related through the scriptures.<sup>227</sup> Since the earliest examples of scriptural exegesis, there has existed a close relationship between activities of reading and the revelation of heavenly justice. This equation is central to the Book of Revelation, the pulsing heart of Christian eschatology — a book about God's book, from which the terms of cosmic judgment are issued. To describe the discipline of Justice in the private library of Julius II, Raphael first imagined the momentous episode of Revelation (fig. 3.1). The sections to follow consider this rejected scheme in relation to the whole program. By returning early drawings to the discourse of the space, Justice may again be understood as the wall on which the room's thesis turned.

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<sup>227</sup> The four categories of law in Aquinas are: 1. Eternal law and order, which regulates the universe and is unknowable to man; 2. Divine law, an aspect of eternal law that is known to man through revelation and contained in the scriptures; 3. Natural law, the aspect of eternal law that is known to man and applicable to earthly life; 4. Human law, which is the earthly application of the general principles of natural law. On Aquinas's legal theory, see his *On Law, Morality, and Politics*, now available in translation by William Baumgarth and Richard Regan (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1988); Anthony J. Liska, *Aquinas's Theory of Natural Law: An Analytic Reconstruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Ralph McInerny, *Ethica Thomistica: The Moral Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1997); David Novak, "Maimonides and Aquinas on Natural Law," in: *St. Thomas Aquinas and the Natural Law Tradition: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. John Goyette, Mark Latkovic, and Richard S. Myers (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2004), pp. 43-65; and most recently, Martin Rhonheimer, *Natural Law and Practical Reason: A Thomist View of Moral Autonomy* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000); *ead.*, *The Perspective of Morality: Philosophical Foundations of Thomistic Virtue Ethics* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2011).

### 3.1 Platonic Justice and Cosmic Order

Before we begin our discussion of Raphael's curious *modello* for the *Jurisprudence*, a word here is necessary about the general vision of Justice in the Stanza della Segnatura. Not only was the *Jurisprudence* privileged to include the portrait of Julius II as author and lawgiver, but the priority of Justice also resonates across the ceiling, suggesting its place as the room's rational governing order.

I will return to the topic of the mottos in the next chapter, but for present purposes, it is sufficient to note that at least two of the *tituli* derive from the language of Roman and canon law. The inscription above Justice (IUS SUUM UNICUIQUE TRIBUIT) is fittingly the opening line of Justinian's *Institutes* (Book One).<sup>228</sup> Justinian's so-called "Golden Rule" was reiterated by his ecclesiastical inheritors and unifies the curriculum of law on the southern wall; it was cited by Gratian and Gregory as a preface to their collections of canons. The motto above Theology (DIVINARUM RERUM NOTITIA) claims a similar source: following the definition of justice, in the *Institutes*, the discipline of jurisprudence is described as the "knowledge of things both human and divine."

Three of the four *riquadri* are similarly dedicated to juridical themes. As I discussed in the previous chapter, the *Fall of Man* (between Justice and Theology) illustrates the origin and earthly purview of natural law. The *Judgment of Solomon* (between Justice and Philosophy; fig. 3.2) is an obvious choice: often called the "philosopher king," Solomon was credited with composing *Ecclesiastes*, a lengthy

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<sup>228</sup> The passage reads: "Iustitia est constans et perpetua voluntas ius suum cuique tribuens. Iurisprudentia est divinarum atque humanarum rerum notitia, iusti atque iniusti scientia." The phrase was later employed by Raymond of Pennafort, who, no doubt, had the Justinianic Code in mind when he composed the preface to the Gregorian *Decretals*. See *Decretales* I: "Ideoque lex proditur, ut appetitus noxius sub iuris regula limitetur, per quam genus humanum, ut honeste vivat, alterum non laedat, *ius suum unicuique tribuat*, informatur." My italics.

reflection on the nature of truth that ends with the forewarning: “God will bring his judgment.” Justinian, above whom the Solomon panel appears, famously compared himself to the Biblical king and lawgiver.<sup>229</sup> Indeed, the first book of Justinian’s *Codex*, which compiled the legal promulgations of the Roman emperors, recounts the dissemination of law under the Apostolic See; acknowledging the authority of the Christian faith, the passage cites Solomon as the Old Testament legislator of the Word.<sup>230</sup>

The third of these *riquadri*, *Urania and the Spheres* (sometimes called “Astronomy,” between Philosophy and Poetry; fig. 3.3) has received surprisingly little attention.<sup>231</sup> Illuminated by the ancient philosophies over which she presides, Raphael’s Urania speaks to the universal or cosmic order of Justice. Not by accident, the panel appears above Plato and Pythagoras in the *School of Athens*. Toward the end of the *Republic*, in one of the most beautiful passages of his career, Plato transports us across the spheres of heaven, whose eight rings revolve to sing the concords of a single scale.<sup>232</sup> With Plato’s emphatic gesture, Raphael asks the beholder to participate in Plato’s vision of the spheres illustrated overhead. Closest to the viewer’s space, Pythagoras kneels to

<sup>229</sup> When Hagia Sophia was completed, Justinian was said to exclaim, “I have surpassed you, Solomon!”

<sup>230</sup> “Soli etenim vestris professionibus adversantur, de quibus divina scriptura loquitur dicens: ‘posuerunt mendacium spem suam et mendacio operiri speraverunt:’ et iterum qui secundum prophetam dicunt domino: ‘recede a nobis, vias tuas scire nolumus,’ propter quos salomon dicit: ‘semitas propriae culturae erraverunt, colligunt autem manibus infructuosa.’”

<sup>231</sup> As Rash-Fabbri, p. 100, has convincingly shown, the constellations in Urania’s armillary sphere correspond precisely to three hours after sunset on the evening of October 31, 1503 — the date of the election of Julius II to the papacy.

<sup>232</sup> Cicero explained this doctrine in *De re publica* (the famous “Somnium Scipionis,” VI.18.18-19), that the proportional intervals caused by the rapid motion of the spheres produce a pleasing sound; harmonies produced on musical instruments are not only echoes of this cosmic principle, but moments of communion with divine truth. On the harmony of the spheres in ancient and medieval thought, see David Summers, *The Judgment of Sense* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 50-53; see also, in general, S. K. Heninger, *The Cosmographical Glass: Renaissance Diagrams of the Universe* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1977). Although he stopped short of mentioning the panel in the Stanza della Segnatura, Pfeiffer noted Egidio’s debt to the music of the spheres in Neoplatonic and Neopythagorean thought, pp. 190-191; on p. 250 ff., he usefully transcribes related excerpts from Egidio’s text.

calculate the mathematical intervals that govern the musical chords — the fourth, the fifth, and the octave, drawn cleverly on his tablet. Earlier than Plato, Pythagoras is credited with discovering the laws of musical harmony, which formed the basis for the Platonic cosmogony set forth in the *Republic* and the *Timaeus*. Although no original texts by Pythagoras and his circle survive, the legend of his discovery was retold with gusto by medieval philosophers.<sup>233</sup> As the story goes, Pythagoras observed that the relative measures associated with sounds — such as the length of strings or the weight of hammers — elicited delight or disgust from the listener.<sup>234</sup> If the percussion struck at an appropriate ratio, it produced a melodious sound; but conversely, if the blow fell at the wrong interval, the outcome was decidedly discordant. The Pythagorean law of music is significant here not only because it joins ratio to harmony, but also because of its lofty implications for cosmological order. Like his successor Plato, Pythagoras concluded that the ordering principles of music could be extended to the natural world: the rotation of celestial bodies — the sun, the moon, and planets — produces a wide range of musical tones, which together hum a harmonious symphony that man's song can only approximate.

If Raphael's Urania spins the spheres of Plato and Pythagoras, how do we come to Justice? How do we arrive at a harmonious reading of the ceiling? In the *Republic*, Plato related music to meter and sung poetry, an equation Raphael made visible by

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<sup>233</sup> The most popular of these was Macrobius and his *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*. On the legacy of Pythagorean harmonics, see S.K. Heninger, *Touches of Sweet Harmony: Pythagorean Cosmology and Renaissance Poetics* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1974); Christoph Riedweg, *Pythagoras: His Life, Teaching, and Influence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 27 ff; David Summers, *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism* (London: Phaidon, 2003), pp. 405-410; Christiane Joost-Gaugier, *Measuring Heaven: Pythagoras and His Influence on Thought and Art in Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), *passim*; and especially *ead.*, *Pythagoras and Renaissance Europe: Finding Heaven* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2009), *passim*.

<sup>234</sup> See again Summers (1987), p. 53; and *ead.* (2003), p. 407.

joining Plato and Pythagoras to the *Parnassus* with Urania as their conduit.<sup>235</sup> From the panel in the ceiling to the *Jurisprudence*, the *Republic* also offers a unifying vision of the space. Plato's stunning survey of heaven is issued after some debate about the nature of Justice and its rewards. The purpose of Plato's digression is to illustrate Justice as harmony. Justice, like the spheres that spin in perfect concert, is the virtue of rational order, ensuring that each part is properly fitted or assigned. To define Justice, Socrates offers a riddle: he sets out in search of Justice, but finds only her sisters — Fortitude, Prudence, and Temperance. Like Socrates, in the *Jurisprudence*, we encounter only these three virtues; Justice sits in the ceiling alone and looks down upon the others. As in the *Republic*, Raphael's vision of Justice is not simply an accessory to Fortitude, Prudence, and Temperance; rather, Justice is the power of the soul that instills in each of these its purpose.<sup>236</sup> Spanning the space of the room with the cosmic web of legal and Platonic Justice, Raphael endowed the room with a visual order whose related harmonies trumpet Julian Justice as the Stanza's governing theme.

### 3.2 The *Jurisprudence* as *Apocalypse*

It will be remembered that the southern wall in the Stanza della Segnatura was suddenly re-planned in late 1511. Although the reason for this change has been the subject of endless speculation, *what* was changed is almost totally unconsidered. A small *modello*, now in the Louvre and never fully examined in this regard, preserves an early composition for the *Jurisprudence*. The drawing is curious, and its strange subject is perhaps the reason for its usual omission by scholars. In Raphael's visionary landscape,

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<sup>235</sup> 398c-403c.

<sup>236</sup> As Edgar Wind (1937) has ingeniously demonstrated.

clouds part to reveal the court of the divine legislator, the fearsome apparition of God as the Last Judgment is rendered unto earth:

And then I saw seven angels in the presence of God, and he gave to them seven trumpets. There was another angel that came and took his stand at the altar, with a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he could make an offering on the golden altar, which is before the throne of God, out of the prayers of all the saints. And the smoke of incense rose up in God's presence from the angel's hand, kindled by the saint's prayer. Then the angel took his censer, filled it up with fire from the altar, and threw it on the earth; thunder followed, and voices, and lightning, and a great earthquake. And then the seven angels with the seven trumpets made ready to sound them (*Revelation* 8.2-6).

Amidst the maelstrom of Raphael's trumpeting angels, the tempest of the Apocalypse begins. As the Seventh Seal on God's mysterious book is opened, the End of Days is sounded, and God emerges to herald the Last Judgment.<sup>237</sup> Standing before God's altar, an angel swings a censer, kindled by the plaintive prayers of saints, and pours out its embers onto the earth. As thunder rumbles, a lone candlestick is the single reminder of salvation, a symbol of Christ in John's vision of the Second Coming: "As I turned I saw seven golden candlesticks, and among them I saw one like the son of man . . . And he spoke to me thus: 'Do not be afraid. I am the beginning and the end, and I live. I who underwent death am alive, as you behold now, for all eternity, and I hold the keys of death and of hell'" (*Revelation* 1.12-18). Two privileged viewers receive Raphael's terrifying vision. To the right of the embrasure, the author of Revelation, John of Patmos, is inspired by his attendant eagle and a gesturing *putto*. In his open book, he inscribes the details of the mystical event unfolding before him. Across the window, Julius II humbly kneels and shares in Saint John's prophecy. With hands raised to signal his participation

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<sup>237</sup> Similarly foretold in the Letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians 4:15: "Quoniam ipse Dominus in jussu, et in voce archangeli, et in tuba Dei descendet de caelo; et mortui, qui in Christi sunt, resurgent primi."

in the sacred vision, the pope looks presciently toward the censer-bearing angel, and his gaze is met by the hovering figure of God. Three figures attend the pontiff and lift his holy miter, an unexpected expression of his humility before the divine.

Although puzzling, Raphael's image is not unprecedented. The representation of Julius II, with his tiara modestly removed, echoes Perugino's portrait of his uncle in a lost altarpiece for the Sistine Chapel (fig. 3.4).<sup>238</sup> Now replaced by Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* on the western wall of the chapel, Perugino's *Assumption* imagines Sixtus IV gathered together with the Apostles as they bear holy witness to the Virgin's assumption into heaven as its queen. The only figure absent a halo, Sixtus kneels with his miter placed dutifully before him.<sup>239</sup> Laying his key across the shoulder of his successor, Saint Peter intercedes on his behalf. In Raphael's *modello*, the identity of the pope's attendants is less clear, but their purpose is similar nevertheless. Just as Peter endorses Sixtus IV in Perugino's image, so in the *modello*, a figure rests his hand on Julius' back to present the pope as the rightful vicar. Only vaguely rendered, the group of figures might represent Julian cardinals, like the ones pictured in the final fresco, or Della Rovere relatives, like the ones in Melozzo's painting. More suggestively, we might imagine that they are saints, Apostles, or the three remaining Evangelists.

A second visual source probably reached Raphael in the form of a popular printed book. In the decade before the boy wonder's arrival in Rome, Albrecht Dürer produced

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<sup>238</sup> The *Assumption* was painted in 1480 to commemorate the dedication of the chapel. It was destroyed to make way for Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* in 1537, and its composition is preserved only in a surviving drawing, now in Vienna. It is worth noting here that Vasari names Perugino among the painters in the Julian apartments before the commission was given over in full to Raphael. His activities are attested by the ceiling in the Stanza dell'Incendio, which was eventually completed under Leo X by Raphael and his workshop.

<sup>239</sup> The Sistine Chapel was dedicated to the Virgin. Her cult was especially important to the Franciscan Sixtus IV, who is said to have prayed for hours before her image. On Sixtus IV and the image, see Rona Goffen, "Friar Sixtus IV and the Sistine Chapel," in: *Renaissance Quarterly* 39.2 (1986), pp. 218-262.



an illustrated volume of the Book of Revelation, for which he made fifteen woodcuts depicting the episodic unfolding of the Apocalypse.<sup>240</sup> Published in 1498, the series was a revolution of the medium, with immediate and far-reaching impact on the artistic imagination. Issued in Latin as well as in German translation, the volume uniquely interpreted the stunning spiritual vision of the biblical text; the woodcuts were of a generally larger size and expanded to fit their pages in full.<sup>241</sup> Inverting the typical relationship of word and image in printed books, Dürer conceived of the woodcuts as the first vehicle of Revelation: as the reader opened the bound volume, the images appeared on the right, usually reserved for text, and were faced on their left by their corresponding chapters. The eighth image in Dürer's series is the *Opening of the Seventh Seal* (fig. 3.5), a composition strikingly similar to Raphael's *modello*. In Dürer's woodcut, as in Raphael's *modello*, a sky swollen with clouds erupts to reveal a vortex of trumpeting angels, and as in Raphael's *modello*, God appears above His altar to hand down two trumpets to his End-Time messengers. With his characteristic *grazia*, Raphael softened the turbulence of Dürer's supernatural pandemonium. Restricting his version of John's vision to the cataclysm of angels, Raphael clarified Dürer's disharmony through subtle variations of tone and expression: simplifying the heavy drapery of Dürer's angels, the young painter described their billowing cloaks in alternating fields of light and dark, thrown into high relief through Raphael's selective use of the *figura serpentinata*.

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<sup>240</sup> Although famous, the *Apocalypse* series is surprisingly understudied, save for a cursory mention in the standard monographs. See Alexander Perrig, *Albrecht Dürer oder Die Heimlichkeit der deutschen Ketzer* (Weinheim: Acta Humaniora, 1987); David Price, "Albrecht Dürer's Representations of Faith: The Church, Lay Devotion, and Veneration in the 'Apocalypse,'" in: *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 57.4 (1994), pp. 688-696; and Cynthia Hall, "Before the Apocalypse: German Prints and Illustrated Books, 1450-1500," in: *Harvard University Art Museums Bulletin* 4.2 (1996), pp. 8-29.

<sup>241</sup> Even larger than the full-page illustrations in Koberger's *Nuremberg Chronicle* of 1483!

Transporting the censer-bearing angel out from behind the altar, Raphael built a visual bridge between the prophecy and its recipient, Julius II.

Would Raphael have known Dürer's *Apocalypse*? It would be difficult to imagine that he did not. Not only was the book widely distributed across Europe, but the two artists maintained a cordial professional relationship.<sup>242</sup> Raphael probably knew some of Dürer's engravings from Bologna, which the German painter had visited in the late fifteenth century, leaving behind some of his works. Dürer might have also traveled to Rome at some point during his Italian sojourn.<sup>243</sup> The engraver later sent to Raphael a self-portrait painted on linen, and in return Raphael sent some drawings of his own, including a preparatory study in red chalk for the *Battle of Ostia* (in the Sala dell'Incendio).<sup>244</sup> Certain of Raphael's drawings, moreover, demonstrate his careful study of Dürer's prints. In a preparatory drawing for the vault of the Stanza d'Eliodoro (fig. 3.6), God is propelled across the sky on a bed on clouds, whose shape and hatching are derived from those in the *Apocalypse* series.<sup>245</sup> Given their mutual exchange and interest in one another's works, it seems all but impossible that Raphael did *not* know Dürer's *Book of Revelation*. What is more, by re-envisioning Dürer's woodcut, with all of its significance for the changing visual culture of the printed book, Raphael again transformed traditions of reading into pictorial analogies on a monumental scale.

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<sup>242</sup> Indeed, a 1511 edition survives today in the Vatican Library: BAV Cicognara.IX.2022 (int.3).

<sup>243</sup> On Dürer's travels, see Gerund Arnolds, "Opus quinque dierum," in: *Festschrift Friedrich Winkler*, ed. Hans Möhle (Berlin: 1959), pp. 187-190.

<sup>244</sup> On the drawing, see Rolf Quedenau, "Raphael und 'alcune stampe di maniera tedesca,'" in: *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 46.2 (1983), pp. 129-175; and Arnold Nesselrath, "Raphael's Gift to Dürer," in: *Master Drawings* 31.4 (1993), pp. 376-389. Passavant, p. 616, suggested that Raphael's study for Saint Paul in the *Sacrifice at Lystra* includes an autograph drawing by Dürer on its verso, but this claim is yet to be substantiated.

<sup>245</sup> On the drawing, see Johannides, pp. 100 and 140. Raphael also appears to have copied the boars from Dürer's *Prodigal Son* in a cartoon for an unknown painting.

In spite of its significance for the space and as common ground for various artists and media, Raphael's *modello* is scarcely considered by scholars. On the rare occasion that it surfaces in the academic discourse, questions of its meaning are quickly ensnared in disputes over its intended placement.<sup>246</sup> Here a review of the drawing's reception in the secondary literature is instructive. Since its first appearance in scholarly sources, the drawing has tentatively been assigned to the second room in the Julian suite, the Stanza d'Eliodoro, either for its northern wall, now decorated with the *Liberation of Saint Peter*, or for its southern wall, with the *Mass of Bolsena* (fig. 3.7), where the portrait of the kneeling pope is recycled.<sup>247</sup> This latter suggestion gained steam when the drawing's verso was observed to include an early *concetto* for the fresco, wherein figures are pictured kneeling before an altar — a composition clearly evocative of Raphael's apocalyptic design. This argument was bolstered by the asymmetrical placement of the

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<sup>246</sup> Eugène Müntz led early debates. He uncritically assigned the drawing to the Stanza d'Eliodoro, without specifying its intended wall. Taking up this argument, Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, Anton Springer, Adolfo Venturi, and Dioclezio Redig de Campos argued that the *modello* was intended for the northern wall, eventually decorated with the *Liberation of Saint Peter*. Carl Ruland, Ludwig Freiherr von Pastor, Oskar Fischel, Ernst Steinmann, Frederick Hartt, and Sydney Freedberg suggested that it was instead meant for the southern wall, now decorated with the *Mass of Bolsena*. We are in the debt of Marielene Putscher for recognizing that the drawing belongs to the Stanza della Segnatura. John Shearman, Heinrich Pfeiffer, and Matthias Winner substantiated this argument some years later with an extensive review of the historiography. See Müntz (1881), p. 373; Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *Raphael: His Life and Works* (London: J. Murray, 1885), vol. 2, pp. 145 and 192; Springer, *Raffael und Michelangelo* (Leipzig: Seemann, 1895), vol. 1, p. 273; Venturi, *Raffaello* (Rome, E. Calzone, 1920), p. 176; Redig de Campos, *Raffaello e Michelangelo* (Rome: G. Bardi, 1946), pp. 78; Ruland, *The Works of Raphael Santi da Urbino as Represented in the Raphael Collection in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle* (London: Weimar, 1876), p. 40; Pastor, vol. 6, p. 592, n.; Fischel, *Raphaels Zeichnungen. Versuch einer Kritik der Bisher veröffentlichten Blätter* (Strasbourg: Trübner, 1898), p. 75; Steinmann, "Chiaroscuro in den Stanzen Raffael's," in: *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* 10 (1898-1899), p. 168 ff.; Hartt, "Lignum Vitae in Medio Paradisi: The Stanza d'Eliodoro and the Sistine Ceiling," in: *Art Bulletin* 32.2 (1950), pp. 120-121; Freedberg, *Painting of the High Renaissance in Rome and Florence* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 148. On the identification of the drawing with the Stanza della Segnatura, see Putscher, pp. 53 and 243-246; Pfeiffer, pp. 83-84; Winner (1993), p. 247 ff.; Shearman, "Raphael's Unexecuted Projects for the Stanze," in: *Walter Friedlaender zum 90. Geburtstag*, ed. Georg Kauffman and Willibald Sauerländer (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1965), pp. 158-180;

<sup>247</sup> Springer, p. 273, argued that the Apocalypse is more closely related to the political themes of the Stanza d'Eliodoro than the *Liberation of Saint Peter*, and that the *modello* was scrapped and replaced when Leo X assumed the papacy. His argument, however, is undermined by the window placement and the fresco's clear allusion to the titular church of the Della Rovere, San Pietro in Vincoli.

window in the drawing, which, offset to our left, is consistent only with the southern walls in the suite. The conclusion that followed was that the apocalyptic drawing, intended for the Eliodoro, was discarded sometime between 1511 and 1512; the sheet was then reversed and the lunette recycled to make way for the new design, the *Mass of Bolsena*. However, logically, we may dismiss this theory on two crucial fronts. First, the portrait of Julius supplies an important *terminus ante quem*: the pope is pictured clean-shaven in the *modello*, and the last time Julius was beardless in Rome was on August 17, 1510, when he left the Vatican on long campaign.<sup>248</sup> When he returned on June 26 of the following year, Julius arrived with his famous facial hair, which he maintained until his death in 1513. Second, no evidence — drawings or otherwise — survives to suggest that the room was planned in significant detail before 1511, when the neighboring Segnatura was completed.<sup>249</sup> It seems hasty, therefore, to assign the drawing to the second room in the Julian suite. As I will discuss in sections to come, the only room with which the subject of the drawing is compatible is the library of Julius II.

Disparities in style corroborate an early date of design and suggest a considered agreement between the *modello* and the other frescoes in the Stanza della Segnatura. The few extant drawings for the Eliodoro are of a strikingly different character, defined by heavy tonality and sharp contrasts of light and shade (for example, figs. 3.8 and 3.9). The apocalyptic *modello*, furthermore, lacks the Michelangelesque *gravitas* and congested

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<sup>248</sup> According to Paris de Grassis, as cited in Klaczko, p. 225.

<sup>249</sup> Indeed, Raphael was in high demand in 1511. In addition to his contracted work in the papal apartments, he received the commission to decorate the Chigi Chapel in Santa Maria della Pace in the spring of that year. He also produced several altarpieces and smaller panels, including the *Madonna di Foligno*, the *Sistine Madonna*, and the *Madonna di Loreto*. Three frescoes in the Stanza d'Eliodoro were completed before the death of Julius II in 1513: the *Expulsion of Heliόδorus*, the *Mass of Bolsena*, and the *Liberation of Saint Peter*, in that order. It was around this time that Raphael's workshop began to grow.

figure groups of the Eliodoro frescoes.<sup>250</sup> Instead, the whorl of angels in the *modello*'s lunette, with their spiraling bodies and billowing drapery, is a closer relative of projects executed in 1507 and 1508, around the time of Raphael's arrival in Rome — namely, the cartoons for a lost painting of the Virgin and Child (fig. 3.10) and for the unfinished *Madonna del Baldacchino* (figs. 3.11 and 3.12). Not coincidentally, the closest counterparts to the apocalyptic angels are found in the Stanza della Segnatura itself. In the earliest study for the *Disputa*, securely dated to 1508 and now in Windsor (fig. 3.13), the artist imagined an angel swirling in flight, whose pose mirrors his counterparts in the Louvre drawing. Even in the final fresco, the drapery and gestures of the angels framing heaven's golden dome preserve something of the style of these nascent designs. To our left, the outermost of these messengers gazes toward the southern wall and points to the enthroned Christ, hinting that the angels of Theology were planned in conversation with their adjacent cohort on the Justice wall. From these features — the conditions of date and the nuances of style — we may surmise that the sequence of the *modello*'s execution is thus: the drawing corresponds to a project of 1508, when Raphael arrived in Rome to decorate the first room in the Julian suite, the Stanza della Segnatura. When the design was abandoned in 1511 in favor of the *Jurisprudence* and work began shortly thereafter on the Stanza d'Eliodoro, the sheet was repurposed — the lunette was easily traced and offered a convenient, matching field for the southern wall in the Eliodoro, and so the verso was employed in preparation for the *Mass at Bolsena*.<sup>251</sup>

<sup>250</sup> Although Raphael's drawings of 1507 and 1508 evidence a growing appreciation of the perceptual qualities of light (informed, in part, by Leonardo's influence), by late 1511 or 1512, his style manifests a bold and dramatic shift toward heavy chiaroscuro.

<sup>251</sup> Scholars have typically deemed the *modello* to be a copy of Raphael's lost original, variously attributing the work to Baldassare Peruzzi or Gianfrancesco Penni. Today, scholars have mostly agreed on the latter. It is not inconceivable, however, that the drawing is autograph. First, the early studies for the *Mass of Bolsena* on the verso — probably the first images related to the final composition — are almost certainly Raphael's

With the intended place of the *modello* in the Stanza della Segnatura now established, we should wonder, how to square an image of the Apocalypse in a private papal library? Large-scale representations of the Apocalypse are surprisingly rare in Italian art. Had the *modello* for the southern wall been realized, the fresco would have represented the only monumental instance of this subject in a space that was not functionally liturgical. To elucidate its suitability — or, as I will propose, its precedence — it is necessary to reconcile Raphael's Apocalypse not only with Justice, but also with Theology, and to fix the shared themes of the frescoes in light of the pope's spiritual and ecclesiastical biography.

### 3.3 The Half-Millennium of 1500 as Julian Golden Age

In the Half-Millennium of 1500, apocalyptic anxiety was thick in the air. Not only was a new century just beginning to unfold, but the world was also thought to be in the midst of a universal transformation. Both early modern and more recent accounts of the papacy of Julius II have described his reign in terms of the new Golden Age, the era of peace and prosperity promised by the classical poets.<sup>252</sup> Although references to the

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own hand. In addition, a *pentimento* behind the hand of the eighth angel suggests that the *modello* might not be a copy. Finally, an overlooked, idiosyncratic feature is consistent with other autograph drawings: to the right of the window embrasure, the draftsman warmed his pen. This feature closely corresponds to the direction and strokes of the pen warming in other drawings securely attributed to Raphael, most notably the study for the *Portrait of a Woman*, also in the Louvre. In the portrait drawing as in the *modello*, the pen is warmed beside an architectural border; it is drawn counterclockwise in small circles of gradually decreasing size, with the final stroke forming a small, upturned tail to the right.

<sup>252</sup> The bibliography of the Golden Age in antiquity and the Renaissance is vast. For starters, see Arthur O. Lovejoy and George Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997 [reprinted, 1935]); and the seminal essays by Ernst Gombrich, "Renaissance and Golden Age" and "The Early Medici as Patrons of Art," both republished in: *Norm and Form: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 29-34 and 35-57; Harry Levin, *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969); Henry Kamen, "Golden Age, Iron Age: A Conflict of Concepts in the Renaissance," in: *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 4 (1974), pp. 135-155; Frances A. Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975); Schröter (1980) is especially important

Golden Age were common at the beginning of the sixteenth century, they appear with unprecedented frequency in the art and literature of Julius II. The pope encouraged this association, exploiting the equation of his crest with ancient literary metaphors. Just as Virgil foretold that the messianic era would descend when “the stubborn oak distills its dewy honey,” the golden oak of the Della Rovere embodied predictions of its imminent arrival.<sup>253</sup> The arboreal devices that ornament the family’s churches and chapels extol this moment, when the Della Rovere oak would bestow its golden bounty to nourish a new age of artistic and literary fecundity. As we have seen, the same motifs unify the papal volumes in the Vatican collections, where golden branches garland bookplates and frontispieces to announce the renewal of learning and letters. The analogy is employed most prominently in the Stanza della Segnatura, where the web of the vault opens onto panels of golden trees and acorns, and in the *Jurisprudence*, where Julius himself is robed in a cloak decorated with sparkling oaks.

The Golden Age, however, was not simply conceived along the lines of ancient literature, even if this dimension is the focus of most studies of Julian Rome. In Christological terms, the Golden Age was closely aligned with the Millennium, or the miraculous event when Christ would arrive to reign for a thousand years and God’s heavenly kingdom would at last be established on earth.<sup>254</sup> The last book of the New

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for studies of the Golden Age and its poetic influence. A good summary of these literary themes can be found in Stinger (1998), pp. 296-299.

<sup>253</sup> *Eclogues* 4, the so-called “Messianic Eclogue.” As Paul Barolsky has eloquently explained in: *Michelangelo’s Nose: A Myth and Its Maker* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), pp. 118-119.

<sup>254</sup> The concept of the Millennium is not uncontroversial, and its literal interpretation was regarded as radical, if not dangerous. Nevertheless, speculation was strong and had a powerful influence on early modern society in Europe. The foundational studies of the Millennium are Henry Focillon, *The Year 1000* (New York: F. Ungar Pub, 1969); and Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1970). More recently, see Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages: A Study in*

Testament, the Book of Revelation is the richest and most controversial source of the Christian concept of the End-Time. Its author, the putative John of Patmos, divined “a time, times, and half of time,” when the divine reckoning would finally commence, a cryptic forecast that many interpreted to mean the year 1500 (*Revelation* 12.14).<sup>255</sup> The cultural and political turmoil at the turn of the century only heightened millennial speculation. With the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Ottomans were increasingly cast in apocalyptic prophecies as agents of the Antichrist.<sup>256</sup> Political discord across Europe, especially the kind aimed at papal authority, gave way to a series of martial conflicts across the Italian peninsula in which Cardinal Giuliano and his peers were variously embroiled. And at the close of the Quattrocento, the discovery of the New World brought

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*Joachimism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); and the edited volume, *Prophetic Rome in the High Renaissance Period: Essays*, ed. Marjorie Reeves (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992), the introduction in particular; and *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. Richard Kenneth Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992). On definitions of the Millennium as Golden Age in early modern Italy, see the assorted essays in *Millenarismo ed età dell'oro nel Rinascimento*, ed. Luisa Secchi Tarugi (Florence: F. Cesati, 2003). The unpublished dissertation of Sharon Leftley includes a good overview, but the author hesitates to equate the Golden Age and the Eschaton, even if this comparison is expressly made by figures like Egidio da Viterbo: *Millenarian Thought in Renaissance Rome with Special Reference to Pietro Galatino and Egidio da Viterbo* (University of Bristol, 1995), especially chapter 2; as well as her essay “The Millennium in Renaissance Italy: A Persecuted Belief,” in: *Renaissance Studies* 13.2 (1999), pp. 117-129.

<sup>255</sup> For example, in his *Mystic Nativity* Botticelli imagined the first and second comings of Christ. He inscribed the upper panel in Greek to explain the apocalyptic significance: “This picture, at the end of the year 1500, in the troubles of Italy, I Alessandro, in the half-time after the time, painted, according to the eleventh [chapter] of Saint John, in the second woe of the Apocalypse, during the release of the devil for three-and-a-half years [the Tribulation]; then he shall be bound in the twelfth chapter and we shall see [him buried] as in this picture.” The textual and visual evidence of apocalyptic anxiety at the turn of the century is broadly summarized by John M. Court, *Approaching the Apocalypse: A Short History of Christian Millenarianism* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2008), pp. 93-110; as well as in Andrew Cunningham and Ole Peter Grell, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: Religion, War, Famine, and Death in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 1-18, and 32-42.

<sup>256</sup> Although the Ottomans had long been called agents of the Antichrist and the Beast of the Apocalypse, these references significantly increased in the latter decades of the Quattrocento, and their defeat became ever more important in peninsular rhetoric as the End-Time approached. See Robert Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk, 1453-1517* (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 1967).



with it the significant challenges of religious unity and shifting worldviews.<sup>257</sup> Mounting crises impelled the demand for spiritual *renovatio* or reform, validating the millennial premise that the Church would undergo a period of decline, to be followed by a generation of restored virtue and piety. Although it is difficult to measure precisely the position of the Church toward predictions of the impending Millennium, the year 1500 unequivocally inspired an atmosphere of eschatological exigency that demanded response from the highest Christian office.<sup>258</sup> The appointed arena for the coming of the end, the Rome Julius knew as cardinal and as pope was thoroughly suffused with the rhetoric of Revelation, but this evident uptick in apocalyptic urgency is almost entirely omitted from his biography. Together with the images in his private library, contemporary patterns of thought suggest that the Golden Age as Christian Millennium represented an essential dimension of his spiritual self-portrait.

In 1503 Julius thus assumed the *cathedra petri* at a moment of special theological and political import. Since the removal of the papacy to Avignon, Rome occupied a central and ambivalent place in apocalyptic discourse. Afflicted by heretics, fear of another schism, and the peninsular wars, in 1500 Rome was particularly susceptible to increasing unease over the expected turning point of history. The city was described alternately as the New Jerusalem, where the angelic pope would restore piety to the Church, and the New Babylon, the cradle of the Antichrist.<sup>259</sup> Obscured by his martial

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<sup>257</sup> On Columbus' prophetic writings, the Apocalypse, and the New World, see Adriano Prosperi's essay in Reeves (1992), pp. 279-303; and *ead.*, *America e apocalisse e altri saggi* (Pisa: Istituti editoriali e poligrafici internazionali, 1999).

<sup>258</sup> In spite of apocalyptic controversy, the notoriously skeptical Curia seems to have recognized an occasion to bolster its power and purview, ceremoniously deeming 1500 a Jubilee year.

<sup>259</sup> There was an outpouring of predictions regarding the angelic pope in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the most famous of which was the mystical *Vaticinia de summis pontificibus*, an early fourteenth-century catalogue of prophecies speculating about the rise of the angelic pope. Around the time of the Council of Constance, addenda were published in the form of luxury manuscripts. A good overview of

reputation and legendary *terribilità*, evidence of Julius' participation in this apprehensive atmosphere is scarcely discussed by historians. Nevertheless, thanks in part to the recent surge of scholarly interest in the eschatology of early Cinquecento Rome, it is now possible to reconstruct some record of his personal and circumstantial engagement with apocalyptic and millennial themes in spite of this general lapse.<sup>260</sup>

With an enormous increase in apocalyptic prophecy toward the end of the fifteenth century, Rome was abuzz with prefigurations of a *pastor angelicus*, or in grimmer outlooks, of the Antichrist. Under the protection of Sixtus IV, the Franciscan mystic Amadeus of Portugal reported a vision of the angelic pope, who would serve as the usher of Rome's transformation into the New Jerusalem and was already alive in Rome.<sup>261</sup> The prophecy was an instant success and was dispersed among Rome's nobility and ecclesiastical elite in the form of luxury manuscripts as the *Apocalypsis Nova*. At the opening of the schismatic Council of Pisa in 1511, Julius' curial adversary Bernardino

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apocalyptic and millenarian prophecies, especially those regarding the rise of angelic popes, can be found in: Reeves (1969), p. 335 ff.; Ottavia Niccoli, "Profezie in piazza. Note sul profetismo popolare nell'Italia del primo cinquecento," in: *Quaderni Storici* 41 (1979), pp. 500-539; Robert Lerner and Robert Moynihan, *Weissagungen über di Papste. Vat. Ross. 374. Entstanden um 1500* (Zurich: Belser Verlag, 1985), p. 59 ff.; Roberto Rusconi, "Ex quodam antiquissimo libello. La tradizione manoscritta delle profezie nell'Italia ardomedioevale: dalle collezioni profetiche alle prime edizioni a stampa," in: *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. Werner Verbeke et al. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), pp. 441-472.

<sup>260</sup> On Rome and the Apocalypse, see the introduction by Marjorie Reeves, "The Medieval Heritage," in: Reeves (1992), pp. 3-21. Associations of the papacy with the End-Time were especially prevalent when threats of schism ran high. On this rhetoric during the Avignonese papacy, see Bernard McGinn, "Rome and Avignon during the Captivity," in: *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp. 239-245; on the angelic pope, see his essay in the same volume, pp. 186-195; and Roberto Rusconi, "An Angelic Pope Before the Sack of Rome," in: Reeves (1992), pp. 157-187. Most famously, Luther and the Protestants likened the popes — Leo X and Clement VII in particular — to the Antichrist.

<sup>261</sup> Amadeus of Portugal is a curious figure, and his prophetic vision, disseminated as the *Apocalypsis Nova*, is even stranger. The text proved to be unstable, as its provocative nature caused it to undergo substantial revision during the papacy of Julius II, probably under the supervision of Bernardino Carvajal. One of the earliest known codices is BAV MS Vat.lat.3825. The definitive study of the work and its various textual permutations is: Anna Morisi-Guerra, *Apocalypsis nova. Ricerche sull'origine e la formazione del testo dello pseudo-Amadeo* (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 1970); *ead.*, "The *Apocalypsis Nova*: A Plan for Reform," in: Reeves (1992), pp. 27-50.

Carvajal pointed to the mysterious prediction and named himself the pontiff of Amadeus' premonition.<sup>262</sup> The dissent compelled Julius to convene the Fifth Lateran Council in 1512, quelling unholy humiliation and restoring the papal prerogative for ecclesial reform. The Warrior Pope's aggressive politics also stimulated a surprising increase in purported mystical visions and prophecies, which in turn fueled the apocalyptic propaganda marshaled on both sides.<sup>263</sup> The convocation of the Lateran Council and the perceived deterioration of the League of Cambrai, particularly the loss of Bologna to the French in 1511, were compounded by growing reports of monstrous births, thought to portend the Antichrist. The famous "Monster of Ravenna" was allegedly born in the midst of the French invasion, as the armies of Louis XII marched on northern Italy.<sup>264</sup> Ravenna's governor linked the creature's birth to contemporary horrors of war, and he sent prompt notice to the pope with much fanfare. Unwilling to chance spiritual catastrophe, Julius ordered the infant starved and circulated its image across Europe. The

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<sup>262</sup> Carvajal was excommunicated by Julius at the Fifth Lateran Council, only to be restored by Leo X in 1513 after formally renouncing the schism. On his life generally, see Hugo Rossbach, *Das Leben und die politisch-kirchliche Wirksamkeit des Bernardino Lopez de Carvajal, Kardinals von Santa Croce in Gierusalemme in Rom, und das schismatische concilium Pisanum* (Breslau: 1892); and more recently, G. Fragnito's entry in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1978), vol. 21, pp. 28-38. On Carvajal and the *Apocalypsis Nova*, see Nelson H. Minnich, "The Role of Prophecy in the Career of the Enigmatic Bernardino López de Carvajal," in: Reeves (1992), pp. 111-120; Morisi (1970), p. 34 in particular; and Cesare Vasoli's essay on Carvajal's friend and editor "Giorgio Benigno Salviati," in: Reeves (1992), pp. 121-156.

<sup>263</sup> Felix Gilbert has suggested that Julius' secular engagements came at a cost to the spiritual authority of the papacy. See his *The Pope, His Banker, and Venice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980), chapter 6, pp. 111-120. A stunning invective against Julian policies circulated in Venice between 1509 and 1510. The document claimed to report the word of Christ Himself and declared that the pope's secular investments had resulted in serious spiritual unrest. See the "Lettera fenta che Iesu Cristo la manda a Iulio papa II in questo anno 1509," 26 December 1509, in: Marino Sanudo, *I diarii*, ed. F. Stefani (Bologna: Forni Editore, 1883), vol. 9:567-570 (10 February 1510), as cited by: Stephen D. Bowd, *The Reform Before the Reformation: Vincenzo Querini and the Religious Renaissance in Italy* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), p. 149, n. 7.

<sup>264</sup> Published reports of the "Monster of Ravenna" are extensive and varied. Almost as soon as the event, illustrated pamphlets and broadsheets on the birth circulated widely. The most detailed academic treatment of the monster birth is found in: Ottavia Niccoli, *Prophecy and the People in Renaissance Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 35 ff.

sensationalism of the case and its popularity in later medical compendia make it difficult to disentangle the fiction from the fact, but what is clear is that the news was promulgated widely and quickly, either as confirmation of spiritual decline or, with the support of the Julius himself, to underscore the divine excellence of the papal office in this heady apocalyptic climate.

Apocalyptic rhetoric in Julian Rome was not merely contentious; it was also rallied to defend and celebrate the papacy. The pope's coterie at the Vatican promoted his image as the harbinger of the Roman *renovatio* and a spiritual Golden Age. The Franciscan Giorgio Benigno Salviati, best known for his apologia for Savonarola, endorsed Julius II as the angelic pope prefigured in the *Apocalypsis Nova*.<sup>265</sup> The Camoldese hermit Vincenzo Querini, deeply invested in the eschatological musings of prophetic Italy, upheld Julius as the one pope and the true vicar of Christ.<sup>266</sup> The champion of eschatological eloquence among papal supporters was none other than Egidio da Viterbo, often thought to have been the guiding hand behind Raphael's compositions in the Stanza della Segnatura. Elected prior general of the Augustinians under Julius II, Egidio was a favorite orator of the pope and a powerfully influential voice at the Vatican court who arrived in Rome just one year ahead of the young Raphael. Although recent studies have focused on Egidio's presumed relationship to the room's Neoplatonic symbols, the thematic ground shared by the Augustinian's sermons and

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<sup>265</sup> See Boyd, p. 186, n. 22. The author has not only written an exhaustive account of the life and thought of Vincenzo Querini, but also produced a broad and trenchant analysis of Rome's spiritual culture in the early sixteenth century..

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130 in particular. Querini offered his profound support of Julius in a letter of 1512, responding to Carvajal's threats of schism. For the letter's text, see Nelson H. Minnich and Elisabeth G. Gleason, "Vocational Choices: An Unknown Letter of Pietro Querini to Gasparo Contarini and Niccolò Tiepolo (April, 1512)," in: *Catholic Historical Review* 75 (1989), pp. 19-20.

Raphael's compositions has been less considered.<sup>267</sup> It is not my intention here to take up the question of Egidio's participation in the design of the Stanza's visual program, although we should acknowledge that he must have served as one of several intellectual collaborators, in conversation with the books themselves. Rather, his exceptional written legacy, restored to light in the last century, offers an important glimpse into the broader religious and historical conversations by which the Julian papacy was framed and promoted.<sup>268</sup>

By the time Egidio was summoned to the Julian court, a common motif appears across his writings and sermons: the consummation of Christian history in the promised Golden Age, a prediction he based dually on the Book of Revelation and the philosophical sources of the *prisca theologia*, the particular fusion of Florentine humanism so eloquently embodied in Raphael's *School of Athens*.<sup>269</sup> Although Egidio was a conservative reformist of the Church, he was also an energetic exponent of Platonic theology, understanding classical philosophy as the veiled instrument of Christian doctrine. Divine providence is key to Egidio's notion of philosophical history. His

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<sup>267</sup> See again Pfeiffer, pp. 171-208; Joost-Gaugier (2003), pp. 4-5.

<sup>268</sup> Thanks to the rallying cry and archival sleuthing of John O'Malley, shelves are now stocked with biographies and edited sermons. Anticipating O'Malley's seminal essays and books, Francis X. Martin published a survey of Egidio's modern fate in the hands of historians: "The Problem of Giles of Viterbo: A Historiographical Survey," *Augustiniana* 9 (1959), pp. 357-379, and 10 (1960), pp. 43-60. Before O'Malley's intervention, which has made Egidio's primary writings widely available, the only major published work of Egidio's was the edited edition by François Secret: *Scechina e Libellus de litteris hebraicis* (Rome: Centro Internazionale di Studi Umanistici, 1959). See O'Malley: "Giles of Viterbo: A Sixteenth Century Text on Doctrinal Development," in: *Traditio* 22 (1966), pp. 445-450; *ead.*, "Giles of Viterbo: A Reformer's Thought on Renaissance Rome," in: *Renaissance Quarterly* 20.1 (1967), pp. 1-11; *ead.*, *Giles of Viterbo on Church and Reform: A Study in Renaissance Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1968); *ead.*, *Rome and Renaissance: Studies in Culture and Religion* (London: Variorum, 1981). Recent decades have seen a surge of interest in Egidio's influence, including Marjorie Reeves, "Egidio da Viterbo: A Prophetic Interpretation of History," in: Reeves (1992), pp. 91-109; Ingrid Rowland, "Egidio da Viterbo's Defense of Pope Julius II, 1509 and 1511," in: *Do Ore Domini: Preacher and Word in the Middle Ages*, ed. Thomas Amos, Eugene Green, and Beverly Kienzle (Kalamazoo: University of Michigan, 1989), pp. 235-260; as well as the recent and handsome conference volume, ed. Chiabò, Ronzani, and Vitale.

<sup>269</sup> Namely the brand exemplified by Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, as I have discussed in the introduction.

calculation of an eschatological crescendo intermixed the linear patterns of Christian prophecy with the classical concept of a cyclical sequence of ages: from classical and scriptural texts, Egidio discerned the signposts of divine intention and read the direction of God's historical plan. It follows that Egidio's writings are built on what he terms the sacred history of the past, present, and future of the Church — the *imago providentiae*, the worldly embodiment of heavenly design.<sup>270</sup> Within this system, Egidio upheld the early generations of the Church as the historical prototype for the final Golden Age, when mankind would fulfill its divinely drafted purpose. After generations of a weak and wayward Church, a worldly *renovatio* would at last make way for the arrival of the Millennium under Julius II.

These theses found their greatest expression on December 21, 1507, in a torrential sermon pronounced at Saint Peter's in the pope's presence, the revised contents of which are now preserved in a dedicatory pamphlet.<sup>271</sup> Made at the behest of the pontiff himself, the 1507 oration is devoted to the providential scheme of the Golden Age, initiated by Christ and achieved under Julius II. Before the Curia, Egidio proclaimed Julius the preordained pope who would effect the revelation of the scriptural mysteries, and against the backdrop of prophetic Rome, he saw in his patron the fulfillment of the Old Testament patriarchy. Above all, Egidio celebrated the restoration of justice to the Vatican hill, made manifest in the new Saint Peter's, the appointed scion of the Temple of Solomon. Egidio's equation of the Julian basilica with the temple in Jerusalem is a

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<sup>270</sup> O'Malley (1981), p. 35.

<sup>271</sup> The 1507 sermon is preserved in a tract of 1508, now in the Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Distrital of Évora, Portugal (MS CXVI/1-30). The sermon was motivated by the Portuguese campaigns in the Far East, and the presentation manuscript was addressed to King Manuel of Portugal. The contents were first published with a brief critical analysis by John O'Malley in his 1969 essay.

salient one, not only because the Sistine Chapel — rebuilt under Sixtus IV and redecorated at the same time as the Stanza — evoked the auspicious dimensions of Solomon’s great temple, but also for the biblical king’s scriptural association with the Golden Age of Israel.<sup>272</sup> In First Kings, the reign of Solomon foreshadows the millennial glory of Christ and is described in terms of golden splendor and prosperity, a legacy invoked by both Della Rovere pontiffs.<sup>273</sup> The chapel’s inscriptions proclaim that Sixtus surpassed the deeds of the ancient king, and in his final bull (February 19, 1513), Julius cited “the wisest King of the Hebrews in the time of the Old Law,” as well as his magnificent temple in Jerusalem.<sup>274</sup> In addition to his robust collection of Bibles, Julius owned at least one glossed volume of Solomon’s attributed works, and as we have already seen, his judicious precedent is splendidly commemorated in the Stanza’s ceiling.

It is not necessary to conclude that Egidio was the mind behind Raphael’s Apocalypse in the Stanza della Segnatura, as millennial currents in 1500 bordered on a riptide, which could be harnessed for worse or for better by the ecclesiastical elite. Some of the most enthusiastic millennial voices were not only mainstream members of Julian Rome, but also powerfully provocative residents at his court.

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<sup>272</sup> As Eugenio Battisti has argued, in his essay “Il significato simbolico della Cappella Sistina,” in: *Commentari* 8 (1957), pp. 96-104; and *ead.*, “Roma apocalittica e il Re Salomone,” in: *Rinascimento e Barocco* (Turin: Einaudi, 1960), pp. 72-95. For the controversy of this claim, see Roberto Salvini, “The Sistine Chapel: Ideology and Architecture,” in: *Art History* 3 (1980), pp. 152-153.

<sup>273</sup> See *I Kings* 4.20-34; and 10:14-29, where Solomon’s rule is ranked in terms of its great wealth of gold.

<sup>274</sup> On the historical association of the papacy with Solomon, and his invocation by both Sixtus and Julius, see Stinger (1998), p. 222 ff.

### 3.4 Visions of the Word in Orvieto and the Canon of Revelation

The Book of Revelation is at once visionary and visual. Inasmuch as John's verse teems with vivid metaphors to describe the mystical events unfolding before him, the narrative of Revelation is rife with references to sight and perception.<sup>275</sup> The obscurity of the text and the peculiarity of its imagery inspired a rich tradition of interpretation, for which the visual arts played a critical exegetical role. By the thirteenth century, images of the Apocalypse were assigned new primacy in the presentation of the page, invading the space of text and gloss.<sup>276</sup> This growing autonomy of apocalyptic image cycles in illuminated manuscripts not only suggests that the miniatures acted as moralistic guides, but also that scriptural approaches to the Book of Revelation relied increasingly on the accompanying visual apparatus. In the lexical experience of Revelation, the pairing of John's verbal allegories with visual *figurae* brings the potential to transform the activity of reading into a spiritual vision like the one he describes.<sup>277</sup> The artistic repertoire that accompanied the Book of Revelation served not only to structure the minds of its readers, but also to promote allegorical thresholds of interpretation. As one Italian precedent demonstrates, the book arts represent a foundational verbal and aesthetic dimension of this tradition of scriptural revelation.

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<sup>275</sup> There is a long tradition of perception and the Apocalypse. On the three "types" of vision (which I consider in Augustinian terms later in this chapter), see J. K. P. Torell, *Théorie de la prophétie et philosophie de la connaissance aux environs de 1230* (Louvain: Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniense, 1970); for their influence on art, see Madeline Caviness, "Images of Divine Order and the Third Mode of Seeing," in: *Gesta* 22 (1982), pp. 99-120; and Michael Camille, "Visionary Perception and Images of the Apocalypse in the Later Middle Ages," in: Emmerson and McGinn, pp. 276-289.

<sup>276</sup> Suzanne Lewis has demonstrated this visual shift in Gothic Apocalypse manuscripts. See *Reading Images: Narrative Discourse and Reception in the Thirteenth-Century Illuminated Apocalypse* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1995), the introduction in particular.

<sup>277</sup> On the verbal tradition of *figura* in ancient and patristic sources, see Erich Auerbach, "Figura," in: *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1973), pp. 11-78.



In spite of the ubiquity and influence of apocalyptic speculation in the years leading up to and during the Julian papacy, surprisingly few monumental *comparanda* for Raphael's *modello* exist, and in only one other surviving instance is the subject of Revelation positioned alongside the poets and philosophers of antiquity.<sup>278</sup> In 1503 or 1504, while he was intermittently employed in Perugia, Raphael visited the Umbrian hill town of Orvieto, where he would have seen Luca Signorelli's frescoes in the Cappella Nuova underway. In one of the largest and most ghoulish presentations of the Apocalypse in Western history, Signorelli brings us face-to-face with the contorted bodies of the damned, the seductive fervor of the Antichrist, and the beatific reunion of saints in Paradise (fig. 3.14). Recent studies have brought to light the liturgical sources of Signorelli's frescoes, and it is not my intention here to examine the unique theological inflections of the compositions.<sup>279</sup> I focus instead on the pairing of the apocalyptic

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<sup>278</sup> These examples include the southern transept of the upper church of Saint Francis in Assisi, where Cimabue (c. 1240-1302) painted a few scenes, now largely deteriorated, that imagine the apocalyptic operations of the angels; the pendentives of the Old Sacristy in Florence, where Donatello (c. 1386-1466) included Saint John's vision on Patmos, complementing Brunelleschi's abaci in the nave of San Lorenzo, where the sacrificial lamb stands atop the seven seals of the Apocalypse; the Baptistery of Padua, in which Giusto de' Menabuoi (c. 1320-1391) depicted the numerous episodes of Revelation with striking, sometimes bizarre literalism. Raphael knew neither Assisi nor Padua, and there is no evidence that he visited the Old Sacristy during his sojourn in Florence. On Cimabue's frescoes, see Augusta Monferini, "L'Apocalisse di Cimabue," in: *Commentari* 17 (1966), pp. 25-55; Hans Belting, *Die Oberkirche von San Francesco in Assisi* (Berlin: Mann, 1977), pp. 131-134; Yves Christe, "L'Apocalypse de Cimabue à Assise," in: *Cahiers Archéologiques* 29 (1980/1981), pp. 157-174; and Irene Hueck, "Cimabue und das Bildprogramm der Oberkirche von San Francesco in Assisi," in: *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz* 25 (1984), pp. 280-324. On Giusto's cycle, see Sergio Bettini, *Giusto de' Menabuoi e l'arte del Trecento* (Padua: Le Tre Venezie, 1944), pp. 77-85; and *Le pitture di Giusto de' Menabuoi nel battistero del duomo di Padova* (Venice: N. Pozza, 1960), pp. 64-67.

<sup>279</sup> In her dissertation and book, Sara Nair James convincingly argued that the exemplary and didactic functions of the Roman liturgical texts determined the subjects and scope of Signorelli's visual program. See "Poetic Theology in Luca Signorelli's Cappella Nuova at Orvieto" (University of Virginia, 1994); and *Signorelli and Fra Angelico at Orvieto: Liturgy, Poetry and a Vision of the End-Time* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003). Other means of approach have been qualified by the influence of Savonarola and the millennial writings of Annio da Viterbo. On these aspects of the Chapel, see Jonathan Riess, *The Renaissance Antichrist: Luca Signorelli's Orvieto Frescoes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); and Creighton Gilbert, *How Fra Angelico and Signorelli Saw the End of the World* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003).

lunettes with author portraits in the socle, an aspect of design that has long puzzled scholars. Although it is often observed that these images prefigure Christ's Passion and the passage into the Christian afterlife, their significance as actors in the eschatological history of the Word has gone unnoticed.

There can be no doubt that Signorelli's vision of the End-Time was familiar to both Julius II and Raphael. It will be remembered that Julius detoured to Orvieto in 1506 to venerate the relic of Bolsena. The circumstances of Raphael's sojourn are somewhat more obscure, but his visit to the Cappella Nuova is attested by two drawings, one each preserved in the Ashmolean and the Uffizi.<sup>280</sup> The first of these is a palimpsest, best known for Raphael's study in ink of four warriors, but this moment in the sheet's itinerary is of only secondary interest for present purposes. More important is how the work arrived in Raphael's hands, and to what use it was turned. In the page's first iteration, Signorelli used it as a cartoon as he was mounting the *intonaco* for the *Resurrection of the Flesh* (fig. 3.15).<sup>281</sup> Just visible beneath fragmentary studies, a pricked profile is closely related to two figures, one in the Cappella Nuova, and the other in the Stanza della Segnatura. Whereas Signorelli employed the sheet for the figure rising at the center of his *Resurrection*, Raphael refitted the hairline, nasal bridge, and brow for

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<sup>280</sup> Raphael and Signorelli are often thought to have collaborated, but the details of their relationship are murky. Raphael apparently found favor with Signorelli's patrons in Città di Castello after the latter left for Orvieto. It is possible that Signorelli met Raphael earlier in Urbino, a suggestion that early scholars ventured on the basis of Giovanni Santi's *Cronaca*, but this introduction is now widely disputed. The elder Santi probably knew Signorelli from separate circumstances, and perhaps not even personally. On this relationship and the influence of Signorelli on a young Raphael, see: Luigi Pungileoni, *Elogio storico di Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino* (Urbino: V. Guerrini, 1829), pp. 13-15; Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century* (London: John Murray, 1866), vol. 3, pp. 13-14; Rudolf Wittkower, "The Young Raphael," in: *Allen Memorial Art Museum Bulletin* 20 (1963), pp. 150-168; David Allen Brown, *Raphael and America* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1983), pp. 113-114 and p. 189, n. 17; Creighton E. Gilbert, "Signorelli and Young Raphael," in: *Studies in the History of Art* 17 (1986), pp. 109-124.

<sup>281</sup> On the comparison of the drawing and the fresco, see Tom Henry, "Signorelli, Raphael, and a 'Mysterious' Pricked Drawing in Oxford," in: *Burlington Magazine* 135.1086 (1993), pp. 612-619.

the turbaned theologian in the *Disputa* by sharpening its angle of foreshortening.<sup>282</sup> Nor does Raphael appear to have acquired the cartoon incidentally. The second drawing, in the Uffizi, is also distinctly related to Signorelli's compositions in the Cappella, demonstrating a keen knowledge of the paintings that helps to place the young Raphael directly in the space. The recto probably belongs to the Piccolomini Library in Siena, where Raphael was employed by Pinturicchio in early 1503; when the young artist arrived in Orvieto with the Piccolomini sheet on hand, he filled the verso with foreshortened figures copied from the *End of the World* (fig. 3.16 and 3.17).<sup>283</sup> We might thus imagine that as he journeyed between Perugia and Siena, Raphael deviated to Orvieto from his usual course, to study in person the work of an artist in his close professional circles.

Raphael also absorbed Signorelli's techniques to render the luminous topography of heaven in the *Disputa*. The application of *pastiglia*, gilded wax to effect shallow relief, was notably uncommon in Umbrian and Roman art of the sixteenth century, and even rarer in fresco painting. In the Cappella Nuova, Signorelli selectively adapted the technique to mark out the sparkling light of God in regular droplets.<sup>284</sup> Similarly fixing spots of golden wax to a field of yellow pigment, the celestial story of Raphael's *Disputa* elicits comparison with Signorelli's vision of heaven in Orvieto. The holy axis in

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<sup>282</sup> Until conservation efforts in Orvieto demonstrated otherwise, the prevailing interpretation was that Raphael prepared the drawing in full for the *Disputa*. This argument was advanced by Carmen Bambach, "A Substitute Cartoon for Raphael's *Disputa*," in: *Master Drawings* 30 (1992), pp. 9-30. After climbing the scaffolding in the Stanza and the Cappella Nuova, Henry (1993), pp. 613-614, has convincingly reattributed the drawing to Signorelli.

<sup>283</sup> The drawing is typically associated with 520E in the same collection, the *modello* for the *Journey of Aeneas Piccolomini to Basel*. It is conceivable, however, that 537E could also have been intended for a different, unknown project. See Johannides (1983), p. 146; and Fischel (1898), item 35, p. 19.

<sup>284</sup> Another notable case, and one that was presumably known to Signorelli, is Fra Filippo Lippi's fresco in the apse of the Duomo at Spoleto. On Signorelli's *pastiglia*, see James (1994), pp. 123-124.

Raphael's painting — including God's cap, Christ's halo, and the golden rays of the sun — is carefully distinguished from the surrounding plaster. For Signorelli and Raphael, the creative use of *pastiglia* suggests a technical metaphor for the invisible reach of God, and in Revelation, the cacophony of the Apocalypse is described in terms of the separation of light and dark. While Babylon is engulfed in infernal abyss, lightning strikes, and at the end of Judgment, God's throne outshines all lanterns. Raphael used *pastiglia* only once in his entire *oeuvre* — in the *Disputa* — and his selective application suggests that the technique was adopted in the service of a subject similar to Signorelli's — a correspondence I will examine in the paragraphs that follow.

Signorelli's attention to the decorative surface suggests another important form of source media, advertised by the poetic medallions in the chapel's socle (fig. 3.18). The socle's features are often disputed, and although deeper consideration of Signorelli's figures would exceed the scope of the current chapter, it is enough to note that Dante, Homer, Virgil, and Ovid are obvious and well-founded candidates for Signorelli's roster.<sup>285</sup> But rather than *whom* or *what* these ornaments represent, I would like to turn the conversation to *why* they were included. The similarity of the lower registers to manuscript borders is sometimes noted, but the significance of their proximity to the

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<sup>285</sup> The problem of identification is due, in part, to the poor condition of the plaster and the lack of obvious attributes. Claudian, Statius, Sallust, Tibullus, Boccaccio, Petrarch, and Coluccio Salutati have all been ventured as possibilities. Ludovico Luzi, *Il Duomo di Orvieto descritto e illustrato* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1866), pp. 166-196, offered some deeply flawed identifications that have infected the literature ever since; Stanley Meltzoff is one of the first to consider the socle in meaningful detail, in: *Botticelli, Signorelli, and Savonarola: Theologia Poetica and Painting from Boccaccio to Poliziano* (Florence: Olschki, 1987); see also André Chastel, "L'Apocalypse en 1500: la fresque de l'Antichrist à la chapelle Saint-Brice à Orvieto," in: *Humanisme et Renaissance* 14 (1952), pp. 124-40; Rosemarie San Juan, "The Function of Antique Ornament in Luca Signorelli's Fresco Decoration for the Chapel of San Brizio," in: *Canadian Art Review* 12 (1985), pp. 235-242; Reiss, pp. 23-39; James (2003), p. 78 ff.; and Gilbert (2003), pp. 91-113 in particular.

monumental episodes of the Apocalypse above is not sufficiently explained.<sup>286</sup> In the previous chapter, I argued that Raphael transformed the tradition of humanistic commentary and its critical apparatus into a grand arena for exploiting the intersection of literary and artistic composition. I venture here that Signorelli anticipates Raphael's creative reinvention of the book arts by framing the episodes of Revelation with the conceptual order of its written legacy.

Divided into square bays, Signorelli's socle opens onto illusionistic windows, where ancient and early modern poets pore searchingly over open books. Surrounded by a web of grotesque candelabra, the figures are assigned four episodic medallions, rendered in grisaille, which envision virtues, vices, and visits to the afterlife. But Signorelli's medallions are not simply cautionary tales. These ornamental features are striking and specific, and are sometimes considered at odds with the narrative lunettes above. It will be remembered that the marginalia of the Julian volumes — from their borders and illuminations, to their annotations and glosses — served as the machinery of didactic *comparatio*, endowing ambiguous text with new interpretative strata. Just as the structure of the page supplied a critical site for making meaning in the mind of the reader, Signorelli's socle matches the Book of Revelation to its classical and poetic prototypes. On the fringe of the chapel, these panels mediate between the viewer and the primary images, insisting on reading as interpretation and comparing the history of the written word to the sacred power of the Word as Christ. The knots of metamorphosing vines,

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<sup>286</sup> There is no stipulation for the socle in the contract. Only James (1994), pp. 189-197; *ead.* (2003), 82-85; and Hellmut Wohl, *The Aesthetics of Italian Renaissance Art: A Reconsideration of Style* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1999) p. 206, have recognized that Signorelli probably had manuscript illuminations in mind. The scriptural relationship of marginalia to Signorelli's apocalyptic episodes has yet to be considered.

interspersed with cameo-like medallions, are reminiscent of humanistic books, where colorful borders threaten to spill over onto the primary text. In humanistic editions, textual associations of antique and Christian histories were often complemented visually by the cameo forms painted in the margins: Christ might appear alongside Augustus, or the personification of Rome beside that of the Church. In the Cappella Nuova, we survey Dante crossing the mountain of *Purgatorio*, Pluto at the gates of Hades, and Hercules and Orpheus entering the Underworld, while the Last Judgment is decided overhead. If the postures and expressions of Signorelli's figures seem familiar, it is because they recall the biblical tradition of Evangelist portraits, affirming the close relationship of textual composition and the experience of spiritual revelation in Christian scriptural history. Eliciting the contemporary culture of literary commentary, Signorelli's "margins" visualize the humanistic canon of the word. In its first meaning, a canon is the principle or measure by which something is judged, and in its earliest form, the word referred to what ought to be read, or the authority of the point at hand, specifically in the discipline of law. By placing the canon of the written word in the borders of the Cappella Nuova, Signorelli charted the hermeneutic history of the *logos* and its scriptural revelation.

The humanist prelate and canon lawyer Antonio Albèri, who was installed as the cathedral's archdeacon no later than 1499, is often thought to have supervised Signorelli in the decoration of the chapel's socle, but the question of an advisor is at least as thorny here as it is in Rome. Whatever his involvement in the Cappella Nuova, Albèri also employed Signorelli's workshop in 1500 to decorate his library in the adjacent palace.<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>287</sup> Albèri's library is virtually unstudied. Its 300 volumes were widely dispersed in the years following his death in 1505, and an inventory of its holdings is yet unknown. Painted between 1501 and 1502, the frescoes survive only in poor condition. They were covered over in plaster after the space was repurposed as a sacristy for local bishops, and were rediscovered in 1890.

The library's frescoes (fig. 3.19) are unexceptional — they are executed mostly in grayscale and follow the typical formula of *uomini famosi* — but one clever detail merits some attention here, which, like the socle in the Cappella Nuova, lays bare the influence of the *ars illuminandi*.

On the southern wall, in the window under civil law, the figure of an ape comments on the mediated practices of reading and viewing and the role of images in these mutual activities (fig. 3.20). Pictured illusionistically on the sill, as if seated alongside the library's readers, the spectacled simian wears a scholar's chaperon and studies an open book. Save for any miniatures in Albèri's collection, the ape is the singular figure of its kind in the library in Orvieto, and his attributes suggest a witty play on the kinds of parodic creatures that inhabited manuscript margins. The "literary ape" was a popular character in satirical writings and medieval miniatures, since its humanoid brain could imitate the trappings of real intellect.<sup>288</sup> But at best, the ape only apes, and its representation in manuscripts among monks and scholars served as a satirical foil for scholastic ideals of piety and learning. Moral fables told the story of a simian who made books of great superficial beauty, but since he only copied what others said, his works lacked the substance of true intellect. Loathed by readers, he finally admitted: "The writer produces nothing, if he is not informed by judgment."<sup>289</sup> Like the ape-author, images of the "literary ape" inhabited manuscript margins as mockeries of the Latin *Grammatica*, a jointly visual and textual significance transported by the figure in Albèri's library. The

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<sup>288</sup> As is often noted, images of apes fulfilled myriad roles as marginal figures. Jansen has charted the long history of the iconography of apes in Western art, with a particular interest in their role as cultural and social commentators. See *Apes and Ape Lore in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (London: Warburg Institute, 1952), pp. 167-169 in particular.

<sup>289</sup> "Nihil scriptor operatur, corde si non meditatur," as related in *ibid.*, pp. 167-168.

text open before Albèri's ape issues a similar moral on reading and interpretation:

LEGERE ET NON INTELLIGERE EST NEGLIGERE.<sup>290</sup> Quoted by Thomas Aquinas to justify his approach to scriptural commentary, the apothegm is attributed to Cato and delivers a witty play on Latin consonance and the verb *legere*: "To read and not understand is to not read at all."<sup>291</sup> Like the primates that playfully populate didactic parables and the margins of manuscripts, the ape in the Albèri library makes a joke about the activities of interpretation, whose punch line depends on the pages of books as arenas of informed readership. In the context of humanistic commentaries, like the ones that undoubtedly characterized Albèri's collection, the obsessive comparison of *scholia*, annotations, and glosses was a fundamental aspect of the archaeology of text, which could work to the advantage of its reader — or, if exercised imprudently, to his or her detriment. And in a wider, scriptural sense — the one referenced by Aquinas — the Word is ever beyond man's grasp, even in the best-stocked and most studied library.

This conjunction of images in Orvieto exemplifies the archetype of the written word in the *logos*. Like the humanistic readers of the *prisca theologia*, Signorelli proposes that revelation is embedded in the poetic-theology of ancient and early modern verse, a veiled history that is resolved in the Second Coming, when God reads from the Book of Life and the justice of the Word is fulfilled. In the Stanza, Raphael does more than promote a textual and visual catalogue of the history of the revealed Word. From its ancient sources to its ostensible epilogue in the Apocalypse, the *Bibliotheca Iulia* gives

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<sup>290</sup> Interestingly, the pages of the ape's fictive manuscript are also incised to evoke the ruling of real parchment.

<sup>291</sup> Originally from the *Disticha Catonis*, one of the most popular Latin primers in the Middle Ages. Cf., Aquinas, *Super Sent.* lib. 4, d. 24, q. 1, a. 3., qc. 2, arg. 3: "Nullus congrue legit qui non intelligit quod legit: quia legere et non intelligere, negligere est, ut dicit Cato."



new meaning to *legere*, transforming the frescoes themselves into a visionary treatise on inspired revelation through the interplay of the canons of word and image.

### 3.5 Heavenly Justice in the City of God, or the Julian Jerusalem

Returning now to the Stanza della Segnatura, the inclusion of the Apocalypse in Raphael's scheme becomes increasingly clear. To make sense of the *modello* in the place of the *Jurisprudence*, we must turn now to Theology, whose original subject was decidedly juridical. One crucial clue bridges Raphael's Apocalypse and the triumphal landscape of the *Disputa*. Of all the theologians in the painting, Augustine alone is imagined writing, an activity matched on the cloudbank above by the figure of Saint John, the reputed author of Revelation.<sup>292</sup> Inspired by the Eucharist, Augustine gestures toward a diligent scribe. Before him is a labeled volume of the *De civitate Dei*. The most important of the Latin Fathers, Augustine infused the definition of justice in Roman law with markedly Christian intonation. In the *City of God*, the distributive axiom that crowns the *Jurisprudence* — IUS SUUM UNICUIQUE TRIBUIT, or “to give each his due” — becomes a heavenly precept.<sup>293</sup> Justice, for Augustine, is the process through which humanity is restored to its right order with God, a harmony wrought by Christ in the *giudizio universale*. I propose that the solution to Raphael's Apocalypse is related to this doctrine, and that the *Disputa* finds expression in Augustine's account of the Last Judgment.

<sup>292</sup> See the epilogue in Gill (2005), pp. 208-214; and her essay: “Egidio da Viterbo, His Augustine, and the Reformation of the Arts,” in: Chiabò, Ronzani, and Vitale, pp. 415-423.

<sup>293</sup> *De civ.* X.4: “Quid iustitia, cuius munus est sua cuique tribuere (unde fit in ipso homine quidam iustus ordo naturae, ut anima subdatur Deo et animae caro, ac per hoc Deo et anima et caro), nonne demonstrat in eo se adhuc opere laborare potius quam in huius operis iam fine requiescere?”

Again we should ask, what books was Julius reading? The Book of Revelation is not independently listed on the Julian inventory, but other sources suggest a reasonable familiarity with popular apocalyptic literature of the period. Julius owned at least eight Bibles, but it is unclear from the inventory which books were included in these volumes.<sup>294</sup> The “most eloquent Christian” Lactantius (c. 250-325) is named three times on the inventory, and his *Divinae Institutiones* came into new vogue in the humanistic circles of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries — it was one of the first books published in Italy, and its earliest printed edition includes the first dated Italian imprint.<sup>295</sup> Renewed interest in the *Institutes*, which interpreted the Book of Revelation in literal terms, guaranteed his brand of millennialism a continued place on the eschatological stage. Augustine, who appears eight times on the inventory, shaped the Christian tradition of the Millennium most profoundly of all exegetical sources. Augustine’s mastery of rhetoric, along with his encyclopedic accounts of Latin literature, ensured an unflagging audience of energetic readers. In Rome of 1500, Augustine’s allegorical approach to scripture formed the basis for the humanistic understanding of the Golden Age as the Julian Millennium, above all in the mind of the Augustinian reformer Egidio da Viterbo.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> The books of the Bible were not always contained in a single volume, and several of the Julian editions are selective in their contents. One of the volumes (BAV MS [REDACTED]) includes both Old and New Testaments, but other examples in the collection are selective and include only specific books of the Old and New Testaments, sometimes not in order.

<sup>295</sup> The appellation is Leonardo Bruni’s. See Stinger (1977), p. 265, n. 116. On the growing popularity of Lactantius, see Robert E. Lerner, “The Medieval Return to the Thousand-Year Sabbath,” in: Emerson and McGinn, pp. 51-71. The imprint dates to 1465 and names the Benedictine monastery at Subiaco, near Rome.

<sup>296</sup> On Augustine and millennialism, see various entries in: *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, ed. Jerry L. Walls (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) and *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald, O.S.A. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999). The foundational monograph is Léon Gry, *Le millénarisme dans ses origines et son développement* (Paris: A. Picard, 1904); more recently, see Paula Fredriksen, “Apocalypse and Redemption: From John of Patmos to Augustine of Hippo,” in: *Vigiliae Christianae* 45.2 (1991), pp. 151-183; *ead.*, “Tyconius and Augustine on the Apocalypse,” in: Emerson and McGinn, pp. 29-35 in particular. On Augustine’s Renaissance reception more generally, see *Gli umanisti e Agostino. Codici in mostra*, ed. Donatella Coppini and

One of the first and most important literary achievements in Latin Christianity, Augustine's *De civitate Dei* was a mainstay of medieval and Renaissance libraries, and it was one of the first printed titles in Italy (alongside the *Divine Institutes*).<sup>297</sup> Julius owned at least five manuscript volumes of this title.<sup>298</sup> Written in response to the sack of Rome in 410, the sprawling work is Augustine's longest and most extensive.<sup>299</sup> Centering on the scriptural theme of revelation, the text mounts an eschatological philosophy of history, a progress of humanity toward salvation. Above all, Augustine's view is a sacramental one, in which the providential drama of divine justice cryptically unfolds, beginning with the "Original Justice" of Adam and Eve (again, pictured in the *riquadro* between Justice and Theology) and ending with the final delivery of divine justice.<sup>300</sup> Whereas earlier authors like Lactantius insisted that the end was nigh, and that the Millennium referred strictly to Christ's thousand-year residence on earth, Augustine instead advocated for a symbolic interpretation of Revelation, arguing that Christ was already present in the quotidian kingdom of the Church.

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Mariangela Regoliosi (Florence: Edizioni Polistampa Firenze, 2001); Meredith J. Gill, *Augustine in the Italian Renaissance: Art and Philosophy from Petrarch to Michelangelo* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>297</sup> In Subiaco, near Rome, in 1467. See Paul Oskar Kristeller, "Augustine and the Early Renaissance," in: *Review of Religion* 8.4 (1944), p. 350 in particular.

<sup>298</sup> Items 17, 34, 36, 71, and 142 on the first list of the inventory.

<sup>299</sup> The scholarship on the *City of God* is enormous, and there is hardly enough space here for even an introductory bibliography. A good summary and guide to the text is found in Gerard O'Daly, *Augustine's City of God: A Reader's Guide* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999), as well as the entry in: *Augustinus-Lexikon*, ed. C. Mayer (Basel: Schwabe & Co., 1986), vol. 1, pp. 969-1010. See also F. Edward Cranz, "De civitate Dei XV.2 and Augustine's Idea of the Christian Society," in: *Speculum* 25 (April 1950), pp. 215-225; Theodor Mommsen, "Augustine and the Christian Idea of Progress: The Background of the *City of God*" in: *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12 (1952), pp. 346-374; Peter Brown, "Saint Augustine," in: *Trends in Medieval Political Thought*, ed. Beryl Smalley (Oxford: Blackwell, 1965), pp. 1-21; Ernest L. Fortin, *Political Idealism and Christianity in the Thought of St. Augustine* (Villanova: Saint Augustine Lecture Series, 1972); *ead.*, "Augustine's *City of God* and the Modern Historical Consciousness," in: *Review of Politics* 41 (1979), pp. 323-343.

<sup>300</sup> See Ernest L. Fortin, "The Political Thought of Augustine," in: *History of Political Philosophy*, ed. Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 6-7.

A precious wealth of preparatory studies for the *Disputa* survives, by far the greatest quantity out of the entire suite. Although the western wall did not undergo the same tremendous redesign as its southern counterpart, early drawings for Theology respond to the resounding call of divine law in the apocalyptic *modello*. Raphael's original concept for the *Disputa*, documented on a sheet in Windsor, opens onto a visionary vista of the spiritual architecture of the Church (see again fig. 3.13). In this early study, Raphael set an assembly of theologians against a fantastical half-elevation — comprised improbably of an aedicule and two flanking columns. The architecture is often regarded as simple shorthand for Bramante's plans for the new Saint Peter's, which were already underway by the time Raphael arrived in Rome. But its curious features, illusionistic rather than substantial, hint at an allegorical reading, one that answers the eschatology of the *modello*. Corresponding to no obvious type, the fictive structure begins and ends with its facade, lacking any indication of interior space. The aedicule is placed asymmetrically at the far end of the bay. Although this feature could be an optical correction, since the column would have otherwise obscured the arch, other details are less readily explained. The columns and their syncopated entablatures suggest the beginnings of a portico, but the space is cut short, giving way instead to an open court banded on one side by a low balustrade. The ornamental forms and shallow footprint of Raphael's fictive architecture hint that the artist had theater in mind when he staged the fresco's composition. But let us now ask: To what effect?

Like the structure in the Windsor drawing, Augustine's image of the New Jerusalem is not built from the mortar or brick or metal described by his biblical

precedents.<sup>301</sup> Fashioned from the community of the faithful, Augustine's city "contains the image of the Church, which will be of the saints enjoying the angelic life. For Jerusalem means 'Vision of Peace.' Contemplation precedes vision, just as this Church precedes the one which is promised, the immortal and eternal city."<sup>302</sup> Augustine's Jerusalem is thus an "architectural" *figura* of divine revelation, and through sacramental participation in its body, salvation is attained.<sup>303</sup> In the Windsor drawing, the architecture is a similarly symbolic veneer for the sacramental meaning of the Church, a visible articulation of the Christian community on earth and in heaven. Where we might expect a portico, the theologians gather, framed by the isolated columns as human pillars of the theological discipline and the temporal body of the Church.<sup>304</sup> This equation of the Church and its followers is also preserved in the painting, where a monumental marble plinth infiltrates the congregation and reminds the viewer of the physical and ecclesiastical synecdoche of the Church.

Even without the wafer, in the Windsor drawing the symbiosis of the architecture, the theologians, and the heavenly court articulate the sacramental constituents of Augustine's New Jerusalem. Like the playful Cherubim that hoist the Julian device in

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<sup>301</sup> Again, like the Temple of Solomon. *De civ.* XVIII.48. On architectural theory and the medieval history of Augustine's New Jerusalem, see Ann R. Meyer, *Medieval Allegory and the Building of the New Jerusalem* (Suffolk: St. Edmundsbury Press, 2003).

<sup>302</sup> *En. Ps.* 9.12: "Ipse habitat in Sion, quod interpretatur Speculatio, et gestat imaginem Ecclesiae quae nunc est: sicut Ierusalem gestat imaginem Ecclesiae quae futura est, id est civitatis sanctorum iam angelica vita fruientium; quia Ierusalem interpretatur Visio pacis. Praecedit autem speculatio visionem, sicut ista Ecclesia praecedit eam quae promittitur, civitatem immortalem et aeternam."

<sup>303</sup> Auerbach, p. 37 ff.

<sup>304</sup> There is a long history of the association of architecture and the body in Italian Renaissance art, most notably in the drawings of Francesco di Giorgio. On this history, see J. Eisler, "Remarks on Some Aspects of Francesco di Giorgio's Trattato," in: *Acta historiae atrium academiae scientiarum hungaricae* 18 (1972), pp. 193-231; L. Lowie, "The Meaning and Significance of the Human Analogy in Francesco di Giorgio's Trattato," in: *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 42 (1983), pp. 360-370. More generally, see George L. Hersey, *Pythagorean Palaces: Magic and Architecture in the Italian Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976); and *Body and Building: Essays on the Changing Relation of Body and Architecture*, ed. George Dodds and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2005).

Vatican manuscripts, two angels balance on the abbreviated lintel and raise the papal crest. The upper story they inhabit is not a material one, extending instead across the dome or vault of heaven in ethereal cloudbanks. Similar to the final fresco, the upper half of the drawing is ordered in semicircular rings of celestial forms, where saints and Evangelists gather amidst heralding angels. Together with the composition's lunette frame, these heavenly tiers evoke the real architecture of Rome's Christian basilicas, giving the impression of an aerial apse. The apse, the architectural crown that marks the physical and sacral consummation of the liturgy in the Eucharist, occupies a special place in Christian ritual. Its popular motifs include the Crucifixion and the New Jerusalem, mapping visually the destination of the Christian journey toward the City of God, as it is facilitated through participation in the Sacraments. Although Augustine bequeathed no sustained study on the topic of the Eucharist, his writings advanced important themes on the unity of the Sacrament as an essential pathway to the New Jerusalem. Across his works, the ecclesiastical body of the Church and the Eucharist are tightly intertwined. Tellingly, the foundational passage on the Eucharist as sacrifice is found in *De civitate Dei*, where Augustine explains that "as in one body we have many members . . . so we, though many, are one body in Christ."<sup>305</sup> The eucharistic celebration is not only the

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<sup>305</sup> *De civ.* X.6: "Sicut enim in uno corpore multa membra habemus, omnia autem membra non eosdem actus habent, ita multi unum corpus sumus in Christo; singuli autem alter alterius membra, habentes dona diversa secundum gratiam quae data est nobis." The literature on Augustine's theology of the Eucharist is vast. For starters, see the entry on the Eucharist in Fitzgerald, et al., pp. 330-334; see also M. F. Berrouard, "L'être sacramentel de l'eucharistie selon saint Augustin," in: *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 44 (1977), pp. 702-721; G. Bonner, "The Doctrine of Sacrifice: Augustine and the Latin Patristic Tradition," in: *Sacrifice and Redemption (Durham Essays on Theology)*, ed. S.W. Sykes (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 101-117; *ead.*, "Augustine's Understanding of the Church as a Eucharistic Community," in: *Saint Augustine the Bishop: A Book of Essays*, ed. F. LeMoine and C. Kleinhenz (New York: Garland, 1994), pp. 39-63.

consumption of Christ's flesh and blood, but through His sacrifice, the Church is also animated and unified as a Christian body.

In the final fresco, the altar replaces the elevation of the drawing and suggests a similar comparison with the figures. In his well-known sermon on the Eucharist, Augustine explained the doctrine of the *totus Christus*:

You've heard nothing about . . . what great thing [what you see on God's altar] might symbolize . . . The bread is Christ's body, the cup is Christ's blood . . . To the wood He was nailed; on the wood He died; from the wood His body was taken down and buried; on the third day He willed to rise again; He ascended into heaven from whence He will come again to judge the living and the dead . . . So how can bread be His body? . . . If you want to understand the body of Christ, listen to the Apostle Paul speaking to the faithful: 'You are the body of Christ, member for member.' [1 Corinthians 12.27] *If you, therefore, are Christ's body and members, it is your own mystery that is placed on God's table. It is your own mystery that you are receiving.*<sup>306</sup>

Would Julius have known the passage? The inventory suggests that he did, since he owned at least two volumes of Augustine's sermons and homilies.<sup>307</sup> As the *totus Christus*, the Church is simultaneously physical and ecclesiastical, and Augustine calls the faithful the altars on which Christ's sacrifice is continually enacted.<sup>308</sup> The new "Temple of Solomon," Augustine continues, will be fashioned from the "living stones" of men; the architecture of heaven begins on earth, in the assemblies of the eucharistic

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<sup>306</sup> My italics. *Ser.* 272: "Sed quid esset, quid sibi vellet, quam magnae rei sacramentum contineret, nondum audistis. Quod ergo videtis, panis est et calix; quod vobis etiam oculi vestri renuntiant: quod autem fides vestra postulat instruenda, panis est corpus Christi, calix sanguis Christi . . . ligno suspensus est, in ligno interfectus est, de ligno depositus est, sepultus est, tertia die resurrexit, quo die voluit, in coelum ascendit; illuc levavit corpus suum; inde est venturus ut iudicet vivos et mortuos; ibi est modo sedens ad dexteram Patris: quomodo est panis corpus eius? et calix, vel quod habet calix, quomodo est sanguis eius? Ista, fratres, ideo dicuntur Sacramenta, quia in eis aliud videtur, aliud intellegitur. Quod videtur, speciem habet corporalem, quod intellegitur, fructum habet spiritalem. Corpus ergo Christi si vis intellegere, Apostolum audi dicentem fidelibus: *Vos autem estis corpus Christi, et membra*. Si ergo vos estis corpus Christi et membra, mysterium vestrum in mensa Dominica positum est: mysterium vestrum accipitis."

<sup>307</sup> Item 98 on the first list, item 22 on the second list.

<sup>308</sup> *De civ.* X.3: "Ei sacrificamus hostiam humilitatis et laudis in ara cordis igne fervidam caritatis."

community.<sup>309</sup> Here we should remember that Egidio, celebrating the advent of the Julian Golden Age and the restored era of Christ, sang of Bramante's Saint Peter's as the tabernacle of the New Law on the hill of the Vatican, and the anointed heir of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem — a major topos of the Sistine and Julian papacies. Indeed, Augustine like Egidio pointed to the Temple of Solomon as the embodiment of God's earthly and heavenly cities: "the prophecy of the future house of God . . . seemed to be fulfilled when King Solomon built that renowned temple. But this was not only an event in the history of the earthly Jerusalem; it was also a symbol of the Jerusalem in heaven."<sup>310</sup>

Containing the most famous and influential passages of *De civitate Dei*, Book 20 imports the motifs of the *giudizio universale* described by John as symbols of the living kingdom of God in the Church. In Revelation, as Christ arrives to lock Satan away, He is joined by the souls of the saints and launches the First Resurrection; the Second Resurrection follows, when the flesh is risen and the Last Judgment prevails over heaven and earth, bringing God's temple in Christ (*Revelation* 20-22). Certain references to the Eschaton are easily recognized in Raphael's fresco. Beside the throne of Christ, twelve elders preside over the earthly order as judges, a duty described in the Gospel of Matthew and traditional to the visual vocabulary of the Last Judgment (19:28).<sup>311</sup> In the early drawings and the painting alike, Raphael depicted the Four Evangelists floating below

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<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*, XVIII.45: Indeed, Augustine's description of a temple built from "living stones" is a clever allusion to the "living stone" — that is, Peter.

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.*, XVII.3: "Ad utramque vero pertinet hoc ipsum, quod Hierusalem dicitur Dei civitas, et in ea prophetatur futura domus Dei, eaque prophetia videtur impleri cum Salomon rex aedificat illud nobilissimum templum. Haec enim et in terrena Hierusalem secundum historiam contigerunt, et caelestis Hierusalem figurae fuerunt."

<sup>311</sup> The number of the Thrones was of particular interest to Augustine, and in a long exegesis into numerical symbolism, he explains the multivalent meanings of the number twelve in the Resurrection. See *Ps.* 50.8-15.



Christ's throne: in an ink study, now in Oxford, the four authors carry the written word and gaze upon the incarnate form of the *logos* (fig. 3.21). In the fresco, their figures are reduced to the opening lines of the Gospels, heralding the arrival of the Word of God. In the Book of Revelation, four living creatures — a lion, an ox, a man, and an eagle — are central to John's vision of the heavenly throne room, where he glimpses the sovereignty of God in all its glory and sees Christ carrying the scroll whose unsealing will launch the End-Time: "Around the holy seat were four living animals with eyes before and behind them. And the first animal was like a lion, and the second like an ox, and the third had almost the face of a man, and the fourth was a flying eagle" (*Revelation* 4.1-8).<sup>312</sup> Taken alone, these few features hardly persuade that Raphael's theological vista bears the conscious trappings of the Last Judgment, but one other figure, almost entirely unnoticed, makes the subject resoundingly clear.

The studies in Windsor and Oxford witness that in initial drafts, Christ was conceived as a markedly different character (figs. 3.13 and 3.21). With His right arm raised in a sweeping gesture of judgment, Raphael's earliest version of Christ is unmistakably apocalyptic. In both the studies and the painting, the figures that attend Him — the Virgin on the left and Saint John the Baptist on the right — are standard

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<sup>312</sup> Although the four creatures have been variously interpreted, the Western Church understood them liturgically as symbols of the Evangelists and their fourfold Gospels, an exposition that was already commonplace by the time of the Latin Fathers. The creatures inherit the scheme and symbolism of Ezekiel 1.5-25, which has served as comparative basis for their study since Late Antiquity. Their identification with the Evangelists dates at least to the mid second century; it appears for the first time in the writings of Irenaeus (c. 130 to c. 200) and is taken up widely by Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory the Great. Other early theologians have interpreted them as Cherubim, the elements, or the great works of Christ (the Nativity, the Passion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension). For a critical review of the literature, see Kenneth Stevenson, "Animal Rites: The Four Living Creatures in Patristic Exegesis and Liturgy," in: *Studia Patristica. Historica, Biblica, Theologica et Philosophica*, ed. M.F. Wiles and E.J. Yarnold, vol. 34 (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), pp. 470-492; see also Richard Bauckham, *Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2011), pp. 163 ff.

players in the *giudizio universale*. Although in later stages Christ was modified to display his wounds, in the painting He is framed by the golden rays of the sun as the *Sol Iustitiae*, or “Sun of Justice,” the prophetic title of the messiah foretold by Malachi (4:2).<sup>313</sup>

The equation of Christ and the sun has ancient roots. In the *Republic*, Plato called the sun the “Sun of God;” in the *Disputa*, a figure matching the philosopher’s gesture in the *School of Athens* stands behind the altar and emphatically points to Christ as the *Sol Iustitiae* (see again fig. 2.33). The epithet is also related to the attributes and mythology of Apollo, god of the sun, whose standard features the Early Christian Fathers borrowed to fashion an image of Christ in competition with the pagan pantheon.<sup>314</sup> Clement of Alexandria, for example, named Christ “the Sun of Righteousness,” making Apollo’s python into the serpent of Eden, his solar chariot into Christ’s carriage, and his lyre into Christ’s song.<sup>315</sup> The association of Apollo and Christ persisted well into the Renaissance, and even Dante invoked the pagan deity in his ascent toward Christian Paradise.<sup>316</sup> It follows that their relationship as solar types is charted visually across the Stanza. From his post in the *Disputa*, Christ looks toward Apollo in the *School of Athens*, where the pagan god occupies a shallow niche as a marble statue. In turn, Apollo in the *School of Athens* gazes toward his counterpart in the *Parnassus*, which is the Stanza’s

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<sup>313</sup> “Et orietur vobis timentibus nomen meum sol iustitiae, et sanitas in pennis ejus: et egrediemini, et salietis sicut vituli de armento.”

<sup>314</sup> Tempting though it may be to equate them, the *Sol Iustitiae* and the *Sol Invictus* were not analogues. Although Apollo’s type supplied a distinctive visual vocabulary for Christ as early as the first century, the *Iustitiae* and *Invictus* were generally treated as antitypes. See Ernst Kantorowicz, “Dante’s Two Suns,” reprinted in: *Selected Studies*, ed. Michael Cherniavsky and Ralph E. Giesey (New York: J.J. Augustin, 1965); pp. 325-338; Franz Joseph Dölger, *Sol Salutis: Gebet und Gesang im christlichen Altertum* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1975 [1925, Reprint]), p. 27, and 48-60.

<sup>315</sup> Thomas Halton has thoroughly reviewed Clement’s clever appropriation of Greek poetry to cast Christ as the new Apollo, arguing convincingly that Clement’s characterization of Christ as a cosmic lyre player is modeled after Orphic Hymn 34, to Apollo. See “Clement’s Lyre: A Broken String, a New Song,” in: *The Second Century: Journal of Early Christian Studies* 3.4 (1983), pp. 177-199.

<sup>316</sup> An episode to which I will return in the next chapter. Cf., *Paradiso* 1.13-15.

brightest wall when its shutters are thrown open. Bridging the *Parnassus* and the *Disputa*, Apollo appears with Marsyas in the ceiling *riquadro*, whose golden background sparkles as it is illuminated by light from the northern window, enacting a comparison of God as the sun on the western wall and the real sunlight that floods the space. And as he points toward Christ, Saint John gazes toward Apollo in the *Parnassus*.

The Sun of Justice is also a persistent motif in the writings of the Latin Fathers, who gather nearest to the altar in the *Disputa*, and the device merits some brief attention here. For these early authors, repentance was adjured; the return of Christ was imminent, and they sang of the heavenly justice that would heal the world. Jerome, who is represented ten times on the Julian inventory, sits in the fresco with his lion and galero. In his homilies, he called the Resurrection the “Day of the Sun of Justice,” when Christ ascended as victor.<sup>317</sup> Evoking Jerome’s association of the Resurrection and the *Sol Iustitiae*, Raphael depicted the resurrected Christ exhibiting his wounds. In the fresco, Ambrose sits behind his student Augustine and marvels at the sky, recalling his account of creation in the *Hexameron*: “Hear God speaking: ‘Let there be lights made in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth.’ . . . Therefore, God the Father says, ‘Let the sun be made,’ and the Son made the sun, for it was fitting that the Sun of Justice should make the sun of the world.”<sup>318</sup> In the *Disputa*, color and shape affirm the consonance of Christ’s mandorla and the vault of heaven in Ambrose’s mythos of Genesis, a theological context attested by the globe God carries. Related by circular forms, yellow pigment, and golden *pastiglia*, the mandorla and the firmament are composed of the same scintillating particles of light, the source of illumination conveyed

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<sup>317</sup> *Homilies* 94.

<sup>318</sup> *Hexameron* 4.1.2.

across the Holy Spirit and the Sacrament of the Eucharist, ordered hierarchically along the central axis of the composition.

Christ as the *Sol Iustitiae* is the champion of Christian eschatology, who appears to John as the Book of Revelation begins.<sup>319</sup> As we saw in the previous chapter, Gregory the Great occupies a special role as a leading patristic source for the colors and forms in the fresco, especially the glittering gold. In the *Moralia* — which again, is labeled in the fresco and was owned by Julius in multiple editions — Gregory stresses the role of the *Sol Iustitiae* in the Last Judgment: “Oftentimes in Holy Scripture, the Lord is known by the title of the Sun, as it is said by the Prophet [Malachi] . . . before God’s severity burns hot in the Judgment, every hypocrite shows himself bedewed with the grace of holiness.”<sup>320</sup> The image of the Sun of Justice presiding over the end of the world brought with it liturgical and visual implications that are evoked by the fresco and its place in the Stanza. Taking up the words of Malachi, John of Damascus proposed that Christians place their altars in the east to face the Sun of Justice as he rises.<sup>321</sup> On the western wall of the Stanza, the *Disputa* echoes the orientation of Saint Peter’s, whose altar is located in the liturgical “east.” The western wall was also typically reserved for images of the Last Judgment, including Michelangelo’s sublime example in the Sistine Chapel, whose Christ is one of the most celebrated renderings of the *Sol Iustitiae*.

Seated beside Ambrose in the *Disputa*, Augustine employed the metaphor of the *Sol Iustitiae* as the universal arbiter and the conduit of intellectual ascent. For Augustine, the interior light of man is a reflection of divine justice, which is gradually revealed until

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<sup>319</sup> Cf., *Revelation* 1:16; 16:8-9; 21:23; 22:5.

<sup>320</sup> *Moralia* 8.44.76.

<sup>321</sup> John of Damascus, *Expositions on and Orthodox Faith* IV.12, as cited in: Dülger, pp. 157-158

Original Sin is redeemed. Contemplation of this light is the expression of the soul's thirst for divine justice, which Augustine considers the supreme manifestation God's love. The principle of contemplating the *Sol Iustitiae* is central to Augustine's theory of enlightenment, that God is light, and that humanity perceives divine truth only as it is illumined through scripture.<sup>322</sup> Intellectual light for Augustine is an emanation of the divine, which brings the interior presence of God into view. This system is fundamentally bound up in Augustine's understanding of perception and its relationship to the discernment of the Word. Toward the understanding of scripture, Augustine describes three sequential modes of perception (*corporeale*, *spirituale*, and *intellectuale*), which formed the basis for late medieval discussions of spiritual vision and contemplation, and which early modern interpreters of Revelation attached to the critical apparatus of the Apocalypse.<sup>323</sup> At a *corporeal* level, sight is bodily and external; but turned inward toward *spiritual* vision, the same image is perceived by the mind, even in physical absence. The highest of the three modes, *intellectual* vision belongs to the supernatural order and is exercised without a sensual image. Vision undergoes a major shift in the final resurrection: for Augustine, as history reaches its end, God's justice will allow the blessed to see the immaterial through the eyes of their spiritual bodies.<sup>324</sup>

The diagrammatic structure of the *Disputa* and its tripartite architecture, which becomes increasingly immaterial as it rises, bespeaks Augustine's definition of intellectual light as the emanation of the divine mind as it imparts knowledge. The

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<sup>322</sup> On Augustine's theory of light and illumination, see Gerard O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* (London: Duckworth, 1987), pp. 66-67, and 100 ff.

<sup>323</sup> Augustine's theory of illumination is Neoplatonic. *De genesi ad litteram* XII.7.16; *Ep.* 147 (*De videndo Deo*); Summers (1987), pp. 112-117; Lewis, pp. 10-11.

<sup>324</sup> *De civ.* XXII.29

illusion of light in the Stanza issues from the intellectual realm of the *Disputa*'s heavenly firmament, whose ephemeral rays stand in contrast to the rigorous perspective of the diminishing pavement on the corporeal plane. Transcending the space vertically, the Trinity belongs to its own perceptual reality. Just as Augustine stressed the importance of the sacraments in the liturgy as essential channels for gleaned divine light, in the fresco all other actors turn inward toward Christ the *Sol Iustitiae*, whose shape is echoed in the wafer of the Eucharist. And because the *Disputa*'s central axis runs parallel to that of the room, inviting the observer to participate in the theater of contemplation, the fresco encourages us as viewers to aspire toward spiritual vision by calling to mind the written history of the Church.

Even in its final presentation, different though the fresco may seem from its early concept, Raphael's *Disputa* answers the apocalyptic drawing and gives exalted form to the moment of the *giudizio universale* as the triumph of the Church. Like Augustine's ambitious thesis on theology, the *Disputa* is a pastoral projection of the eucharistic community, "faithful in the Resurrection of Christ," allegorically conceived as the mystical body of the Church.<sup>325</sup> Although the Church cannot promise salvation, it offers hope in the anticipation of the Last Judgment. Christ appears at the center of the painting as the risen *Sol Iustitiae* and gloriously presides over the sacrament on the altar, pronouncing visually the eucharistic prayer: "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again."

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<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.*, XV.18.

## Conclusion

In the Stanza della Segnatura, Raphael did not picture the End of the World. Instead, he envisioned the arrival of the Half-Millennium in 1500 as the City of God. As he explains the mystery of the New Law, embodied above all in the Eucharist, Augustine speaks of the *res divina*, and in the ceiling, Raphael defined his landscape of the Theology in strikingly similar terms: NOTITIA DIVINARUM RERUM. But the vision here — along with its three levels — is a privileged one. To view the fresco as intended, Raphael's perspective requires the visitor to stand below the oculus at the center of the room. There the papal coat of arms points toward the *Disputa*, where Julius' name is twice inscribed and announces the Julian Jerusalem. The pontiff's implicit position as the ideal viewer is made explicit in the *modello*, where he alone experiences *intellectual* sight and beholds the gaze of God.

Raphael's *modello* for the Justice wall is bookish after all: it is an image of a book about *the book*, and arguably no space is better suited to *the book* than the papal library. Envisioning a discursive exchange between the frescoes and the books, Raphael designed an embodied landscape not simply of literary history, but of Revelation itself. To turn over an "old" leaf, with which the chapter began, we may enter one final word into the shared history of law and reading in the private library of Julius II. An Enlightenment linguist and legal scholar suggested a lost Latin etymology, from which *lex* and *legere* derive: surmising that in its earliest form, *lex* meant acorn, he posited the origin of law and reading in *ilex*, or an oak tree.<sup>326</sup> Although probably a false root, for the erudite

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<sup>326</sup> In the *Scienza Nuova*, the politician and jurist Giambattista Vico argued that the principal task of philology is to aid the archaeology of institutional histories by seeking out their significance in basic words. His chief example is the conjectured relationship of *lex* (normally "law") to *ilex* (240): "Come, per cagion d'esempio, '*lex*,' che dapprima dovett'essere 'raccolta di ghiande,' da cui crediamo detta '*ilex*,' quasi

readers of the Julian court, steeped in the traditions of Latin language and wordplay, a relationship between *ilex* - *lex* - *legere* can hardly be doubted. One last detail in the Stanza della Segnatura envisions this witty nexus. In the lunette of the *Jurisprudence*, Fortitude braces a budding oak and furnishes a dually artistic and verbal lexicon for Giuliano della Rovere (fig. 3.22). *Robur*, the Latin for oak, from which the *Della Rovere* took their name, has a second meaning: “Fortitude,” or the figure in the painting who grasps the tree and is wreathed by a crown of oak leaves. Julius II, the “Warrior Pope,” would have undoubtedly appreciated the association of his name with the virtue ascribed to military strength.

I would suggest that its Latin synonym, *ilex*, wins equal prominence here for Raphael’s canon lawyer patron. Bolstered by Fortitude, a *putto* plucks acorns from the branches of the oak tree — *legit*. Although in its more common usage, *legere* means “to read,” its fundamental entry is “to collect,” and before it meant “law,” the associated noun *lex* would have referred to a “collection” of words. Fortitude’s *putto* thus *reads* from the *ilex* of Julius II.<sup>327</sup> Perhaps Enlightenment readers were not alone in ascribing *lex* to the acorn. If the Roman humanists recognized a similar heritage of law and reading, we could understand Raphael’s Fortitude to summarize and enrich the

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‘*illex*,’ l’elce (come certamente ‘*aquilex*’ è ’l raccoglitore dell’acque), perché l’elce produce la ghianda, alla quale s’uniscono i porci. Dappoi ‘*lex*’ fu ‘raccolta di legumi,’ dalla quale questi furono detti ‘*legumina*’. Appresso, nel tempo che le lettere volgari non si eran ancor trovate con le quali fussero scritte le leggi, per necessità di natura civile ‘*lex*’ dovette essere ‘*raccolta di cittadini*,’ o sia il pubblico parlamento; onde la presenza del popolo era la legge che solennizzava i testamenti che si facevano ‘*calatis comitiis*.’ Finalmente il raccogliere lettere e farne com’un fascio in ciascuna parola fu detto ‘*legere*.’”

<sup>327</sup> Michelangelo’s early drawing for the tomb of Julius II lends further credence to this association of *legere*, “to gather,” and *lex*, “acorn.” The drawing reimagines the episode of the *Manna in the Wilderness*. In Michelangelo’s rendering, two *putti* deliver a heavenly oak tree, from which acorns (the manna) fall to feed a gathering crowd. In the register below, two nudes recline as they dine from a bowl of acorns. In Ovid’s vision of the Golden Age (*Metamorphoses* I.89-162), man is nourished by the acorns that have fallen from Jove’s oak tree.



etymology of the heraldic device of the Della Rovere. Indeed, the relationship of law and scripture also leads us to the oak. In the Old Testament, when Joshua ventured into Canaan, he “recorded in a book the divine word of the law,” and planted it under an oak tree in the precinct of the Lord (*Joshua* 24:25-26).<sup>328</sup> What is the Julian “collection,” if not a curated garden of *lex*? The Julian library, the consummation of *ilex* — *lex* — *legere*, is the symbolic embodiment of word and the Word. Where the golden oak heralds the New Jerusalem under the aegis of Julius II, his private library, related by the lexicon of reading and law, is elevated to an etymological and hermeneutic metaphor for the history of earthly and divine justice in the reign of the *Della Rovere*.

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<sup>328</sup> “Percussit ergo Josue in die illo foedus, et proposuit populo praecepta atque judicia in Sichem. Scripsit quoque omnia verba haec in volumine legis Domini: et tulit lapidem pergrandem, posuitque eum subter quercum, quae erat in sanctuario Domini.”

#### 4. Raphael's Dante and a Julian *Comedy*

No Western library, either Julian or present-day, would be complete without Dante. Dante is so familiar and his writings so ubiquitous that we often take for granted the breadth of his influence or the depth of his legacy. From Sandro Botticelli to Salvador Dali, Dante has moved the imaginations of countless artists, but his influence on the visual arts is not yet sufficiently understood. The particular qualities of Dante's sublime subjects and the transcendent language of his verse are perhaps considered least of all in light of Raphael's exalted paintings. In the Stanza della Segnatura, Dante appears twice. Cast as the consummate poet-theologian, he is pictured with Homer and Virgil in the *Parnassus*, and in the *Disputa* he joins the Doctors of the Church around the golden altar. Modern scholars, however, have mostly ignored Dante's pride of place in the frescoes. Edgar Wind demonstrated that the *Divine Comedy* influenced one detail in the ceiling, but Dante might be thought to carry deeper significance for the meaning of the entire room. In this chapter, I propose that by recasting the language, figures, and idioms of the *Divine Comedy* for his own bibliographic narrative of Christian literary history, Raphael transformed Dante's ekphrasis — his *visibile parlare*, or visible speech — into *parlare visibile*, or speech visualized — that is, a sublime allegory for contemporary principles of *ut pictura poesis* suited to a space where images and texts naturally converged. Just as Dante seized on the allegory of the written word as a vehicle for revealed truth, so Raphael, populating his frescoes with the subjects and idioms of Dante's verse, envisioned an epic of painting to chart the history of the Christian *logos*.

Although Dante is absent from the library's 1513 inventory, early modern sources report that his writings were highly esteemed at the papal court.<sup>329</sup> Dante is said to have been one of the favorite poets of Julius II, and during the Siege of Mirandola, Bramante entertained the pope with his vivid recitation of the *Divine Comedy*.<sup>330</sup> Dante's dual inclusion in Raphael's frescoes and his popularity in Julian Rome suggest that his poetry played an important part in the theater of Vatican literary culture. However, his significance for Raphael's designs and the meaning of the Stanza is surprisingly overlooked. Suffused with the lofty language of the *Divina Commedia*, Raphael's frescoes do not literally illustrate Dante's journey across the afterlife. Rather, by fitting the characters and devices of Dante's verse to the visual landscape of the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, Raphael painted an analogous vision of Dante's poetic theology. Through the painterly reassembly of Dante's subjects and language, Raphael reframed the legacy of his patron in terms evoking heavenly revelation, and, as in Dante's *Comedy*, culminating in a grand vista of earthly and divine Justice. Finally, I argue that as Raphael visually transformed the properties of Dante's poetry, he submitted his paintings in the Stanza della Segnatura as a visual *Commedia*, offering a retelling of Dante's literary and theological odyssey as artist and poet.

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<sup>329</sup> As I discussed in the introduction, the inventory is undoubtedly incomplete and should not be considered an exhaustive list of the books owned by Julius II.

<sup>330</sup> As reported by Stadio Gazio (see again Luzio, pp. 278-279). Bramante's reputation as a Dantista was also documented by the poet Gaspare Visconti, cited by Luca Beltrami, *Bramante poeta colla raccolta dei sonetti* (Milan: 1884), p. 8.

#### 4.1 Dante, Raphael, and Renaissance Art

In the *Divine Comedy*, Dante embarks on a moral and spiritual pilgrimage across the afterlife. As he visits the circles of *Inferno* (Hell), *Purgatorio* (Purgatory), and *Paradiso* (heavenly Paradise), he traverses the visionary topography of history's wicked and virtuous exempla. Just as Dante voyages across a landscape populated with pictorial metaphors, the stunningly visual rhetoric of the *Comedy* transports the reader across ekphrastic vistas of the hereafter, which wed together the narrative of the Christian past, present, and future. We read of the artist's brush and the sculptor's chisel, of shallow outlines and shadowed reliefs, and of lifelike figures and expert artifice. From manuscript miniatures to monumental frescoes, the stunning artistic character of Dante's verse inspired countless pictorial responses.<sup>331</sup> Vasari tells us, for example, that the frescoes attributed to Orcagna in Santa Maria Novella (1350-1357; figs. 4.1 and 4.2) were modeled after the *Comedy*, and he credits the same artist with painting the grisly hellscape in the Camposanto of Pisa (fig. 4.3).<sup>332</sup> In the Cappella Nuova (c. 1499-1503), Luca Signorelli illustrated the Terrace of Pride in a trompe-l'oeil medallion, whose illusionistic marble attends visually to the quality and texture of Dante's *marmo candido* in the *Purgatorio* (see fig. 3).<sup>333</sup> Sculptor, painter, and architect, Michelangelo was also a

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<sup>331</sup> On the afterlife of Dante in Renaissance culture, see the recent edition of John Freccero, Danielle Calligari and Melissa Swain, *In Dante's Wake: Reading from Medieval to Modern in the Augustinian Tradition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015).

<sup>332</sup> It is generally accepted that Orcagna's brother Nardo di Cione executed the frescoes in the Strozzi Chapel in Florence. The attribution of the Camposanto "Inferno" is a sticky issue. More recently, scholars have identified Buonamico Buffalmacco as the painter. Other suggestions include Bernardo Daddi, Pietro Lorenzetti, Vitale da Bologna, and Francesco Traini. On these problems of attribution, see Millard Meiss, *Illuminated Manuscripts of the Divine Comedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), vol. 1, pp. 56-70 in particular; Mario Bucci and Licia Bertolini, *Camposanto monumentale di Pisa: affreschi e sinopie* (Pisa: Opera della Primaziale Pisana, 1960), pp. 57-59; Eugene Paul Nassar, *Illustrations to Dante's Inferno* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1994), *passim*; *ead.*, "The Iconography of Hell: From the Baptistry Mosaic to the Michelangelo Fresco," in: *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society* 111 (1993), pp. 53-105.

<sup>333</sup> *Purgatorio* X.31-32: "Esser di marmo candido e addorno/d'intagli sì . . ."

well-known Dantista, and he deployed allusions to the *Comedy* in the Sistine Chapel, from the crucified Haman to the winged vessel of Charon (1508-1512; 1536-1541; figs. 4.4 and 4.5).<sup>334</sup> The culture to which Raphael and his papal patron belonged was thoroughly saturated in the tradition of Dante's verse and its characterization of the afterlife. It is no surprise, therefore, that the father of Florentine poetry was included in the fresco cycle in the private library of Julius II. That he appears twice is both significant and suggestive. However, it has yet to be explained *how* Dante's reception in text and image contributed to the greater meaning of the space, or his poetry influenced Raphael's visual language.

Whereas Giotto and Michelangelo have received significant attention in the arena of Dante studies, Raphael's engagement with Dante's legacy is less obvious, perhaps because Dante's infernal abyss made no great appearance in his *oeuvre*, as it did in the work of his peers. Raphael's debt to Dante's poetry, however, cannot be doubted. During his childhood in Urbino, Raphael's father, Giovanni Santi, modeled his epic chronicle to the late Federico da Montefeltro on the meter and structure of the *Divina Commedia*.<sup>335</sup> Raphael's paintings demonstrate a deep familiarity with the *Comedy* even before the artist's arrival in Rome. In the petite *Saint Michael* (1503; fig. 4.6), an early panel that has received little attention from modern scholars, Raphael borrowed elements of the

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<sup>334</sup> On Michelangelo's Dantesque references, see Ludwig Volkmann, *Darstellungen zu Dante's Divina Commedia bis zum Ausgang der Renaissance* (Leipzig: Druck und Verlag von Breitkopf & Härtel, 1892), pp. 42-45; *ead.*, *Iconografia Dantesca. Die bildlichen Darstellungen zur Göttlichen Komödie* (Leipzig: Verlag von Breitkopf & Härtel, 1897), pp. 73-76; Leo Steinberg, "The *Last Judgment* as Merciful Heresy," in: *Art in America* 63 (1975), pp. 49-60; Bernadine Barnes, "Metaphorical Painting: Michelangelo, Dante, and the *Last Judgment*," in: *Art Bulletin* 77.1 (1995), pp. 64-81; Summers (1981), pp. 119-122; and Paul Barolsky, "The Visionary Art of Michelangelo in the Light of Dante," in: *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society* 114 (1996), pp. 1-14.

<sup>335</sup> The so-called "*cronaca rimata*," which today survives in the Vatican Library, BAV MS Vat.Ottob.lat.1305 (c. 1492).

*Inferno* as a backdrop for the archangel's victory.<sup>336</sup> Commissioned by Federico's son Guidobaldo, the panel is thought to celebrate the conferral of the Order of Saint Michael on the young nephew of Julius II, Francesco Maria della Rovere.<sup>337</sup> Playfully alluding to the metaphor of the *gente dipinta*, the "painted people" of Canto XXIII, Raphael pictured a circle of translucent phantoms who echo in pigment Dante's text: the disembodied figures march against the weight of their "tawny cloaks" with "cowls pulled before their eyes."<sup>338</sup> And as in Canto XXIV, a heavy boulder marks the trek through *Malebolge*, the eighth circle or "evil ditch," where Dante sees a "swarm of serpents" knotted around the naked bodies of the damned.<sup>339</sup> Indeed, the small format of the painting and its saturated hues recall illuminated miniatures (figs. 4.7 and 4.8), and it is tempting to imagine that the panel was inspired by one the splendid books in the Duke's famous library. In contemporary editions of the *Comedy*, the craggy horizon and burnt skyline of Dante's *Inferno* recall the terrain and palette of Raphael's panel. As in the manuscripts, in Raphael's painting we gaze upon the same pallid forms and tortured anatomies of the damned. In Canto XXIII, as he descends further into the valley of perdition, Dante entreats his guide to "find someone whose name or deed [he] would recognize, and as we

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<sup>336</sup> See Müntz, p. 109; Volkmann (1892), p. 42; *ead.* (1897), p. 67; see also Julia Cartwright, *The Early Work of Raphael* (New York: E.P. Dutton and Company, 1895), pp. 39-40; Oskar Fischel, *Dante und Die Künstler* (Berlin: G. Grotesche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1921), p. 9; *ead.* (1962), pp. 21-22.

<sup>337</sup> Müntz, Volkmann, and Fischel have understood the painting to instead reflect the expulsion of Cesare Borgia by the Montefeltro and their allies (the Della Rovere).

<sup>338</sup> *Inferno* XXIII.58-102: "Là giù trovammo una gente dipinta/che giva intorno assai con lenti passi/piangendo e nel sembiante stanca e vinta./Elli avean cappe con cappucci bassi/dinanzi a li occhi, fatte de la taglia/che in Clugni; per li monaci fassi...E l'un rispuose a me: 'Le cappe rance/son di piombo si grosse..."

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid.*, XXIV.25-43; 82-99: "E vidivi entro terribile stipa/di serpenti, e di sì diversa mena/che la memoria il sangue ancor mis scipa . . . con serpi le man dietro avean legate; quelle ficcavan per le ren la coda/e 'l capo, ed eran dianzi aggroppate./Ed ecco a un ch'era da nostra proda/s'avventò un serpente che 'l trafisse/là dove 'l collo a le spalle s'annoda."

walk, look out with your eyes.”<sup>340</sup> Populating the panel with the figures of *Inferno*, which the educated viewer would surely recognize from manuscript miniatures, Raphael made visible Dante’s plea — to look out over Hell with our eyes — in the visual language of the poem.

Dante’s inclusion in the Stanza della Segnatura was thus anticipated by a tradition of art and literature in which the artist and his patron were thoroughly versed, and it would seem the Dante’s twin images in the *Parnassus* and the *Disputa* can only be understood in light of his own poetic self-portrait. The duality of Dante’s portraiture — that is, his representations in the Stanza della Segnatura and in his invented life — invites us to reconsider the intellectual ground shared by his verbal and visual representations. Dante’s “autobiographical” journey in the *Divine Comedy* and his inclusion in the private library of Julius II share one thing in common above all. Both the frescoes and the poem envisage the critical history of the book. In Dante as in Raphael, we encounter a striking assembly of the great writers of the Western tradition, culminating in the Christian Word. In Dante’s pilgrimage, the culture of books serves as a chief allegory for history of the Word of God and its transmission under the cloak of written text.<sup>341</sup> Over the course of the *Divine Comedy*, we not only survey an album of ancient and modern authors, but through Dante’s rhetoric and subjects, we also glimpse medieval customs of reading. As Dante ventures across the afterlife, we accompany him on an encyclopedic tour of knowledge, whose figures are at once a metaphor and a foil for the esoteric journey

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<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*, XXIII.73-74: “Per ch’io al duca mio: ‘Fa che tu trovi/alcun ch’al fatto o al nome si conosca/e li occhi, sì andando, intorno movi.’”

<sup>341</sup> On the mysteries of the Word in the Renaissance, and the Neoplatonic discourse of theological revelation, see Wind (1968), *passim*.

toward enlightenment.<sup>342</sup> At the conclusion of the *Comedy*, when Dante comes face-to-face with the divine, he compares the whole of existence to God's book, and the extraordinary bibliographic task of his poem as the symbolic form of spiritual enlightenment is at once made clear.<sup>343</sup> In the Stanza della Segnatura, as we have seen, the books and their authors perform a similar function. From the *Parnassus* to the *School of Athens* to the *Jurisprudence*, Raphael's sweeping visual catalogue carries us across the history of the written word and crescendos in the Word of God. And just as Dante's poem ends with the divine book, so in the *Disputa* we glimpse the *logos* unfolding on the heavenly stage of Raphael's imagined Paradise.

#### 4.2 Dante and the Poetics of Painting

A lofty destination in both the poem and the paintings, the *Parnassus* is a felicitous place to begin. In Raphael's fresco, Dante is conspicuously included on the mountain's crest, and in the *Comedy*, Parnassus is mentioned no fewer than five times.<sup>344</sup> In the *Comedy* and the frescoes, Parnassus is not only the home of the Muses; it is also an instrument for measuring the labors of Dante and Raphael as poet and artist. As Dante sails toward Paradise, he compares his heavenward ascent to the second peak of the mountain, and it becomes evident that Parnassus is a dual metaphor. On one hand, Dante

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<sup>342</sup> On Dante and the medieval encyclopedic tradition, see Giuseppe Mazzotta, *Dante's Vision and the Circle of Knowledge* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 5-15 and 16-33; *ead.*, "Humanism and the Medieval Encyclopedic Tradition," in: *Interpretations of Renaissance Humanism*, ed. Angelo Mazzocco (Amsterdam and New York: Brill, 2006), pp. 113-124.

<sup>343</sup> *Paradiso* XXXIII.85-87. Early Christian authors made a similar claim that literature and rhetoric could serve as instruments of divine wisdom. Consider, for example, Lactantius, *Divinae institutiones* I.1 and I.11; and Augustine, *De civitate dei* II.2-4.

<sup>344</sup> Diskin Clay, "Dante's Parnassus: Raphael's *Parnaso*," in: *Arion* 22.2 (2014), pp. 111-139, has recently examined Dante's invocations of Apollo and Parnassus in light of the ancient tradition, with some implications for the iconography of Raphael's fresco.



maintains its ancient symbolism as the creative wellspring of poets. On the other, as Dante prepares to fly out of Parnassus toward heaven, he equates the mountain with his theological voyage: “Those ancients who made in poetry the Golden Age and its happy state, perhaps dreamed of this place in their Parnassus.”<sup>345</sup> The two peaks of Parnassus, like Dante’s twin portraits in Raphael’s *Poetry and Theology*, allude to Dante’s paired trajectories of poetic and spiritual ascent. Even more saliently, for both the poet and the artist, the metaphor of the mountain serves as a rhetorical bridge for conventions of imitation and inspiration.

Raphael’s frescoes are praised as some of the highest examples of imitation, since they not only depict the writers who were considered worthy of such emulation, but also embody the virtues and forms of ancient art. Just as Dante compares the Golden Age to a poetic Parnassus, so on the northern wall, Raphael envisioned the poetic revival that was the hallmark of the Julian Golden Age. Like Raphael’s paintings, the *Comedy* represents a clever conceit for measuring Dante’s work against its poetic predecessors. Beginning with Virgil, who figures prominently in the poem and on the *Parnassus*, it is worth considering here the ways in which Dante’s imitation of the classics might have inspired Raphael’s pictorial vision of the mountain.<sup>346</sup> As the exemplar of Roman epic, Virgil represents the *Comedy*’s most prominent poetic model, and his legacy was especially important for Julius II. Julius owned at least one deluxe copy of Virgil — maybe one of the celebrated Early Christian codices now in the Vatican collections — and he famously

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<sup>345</sup> *Purgatorio* XXVIII.139-141: “Quelli ch’anticamente poetaro/l’età de l’oro e suo stato felice/forse in Parnaso esto loco sognaro.”

<sup>346</sup> On Dante and the classics, see broadly: *Dante: The Critical Complex, Volume 2: Dante and Classical Antiquity: The Epic Tradition*, ed. Richard Lansing (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

recited the *Aeneid* as he marched on Imola.<sup>347</sup> In the *Divina Commedia*, when Dante first encounters Virgil, his guide across Hell and Purgatory, the pilgrim impresses a comparison of their poetry, introducing a major trope of Dante's poem and his poetic autobiography: "You are my master and my author; from you alone I have taken that beautiful style which brought me honor."<sup>348</sup> The speech suggests Dante's rightful place alongside his ancient teacher, and in the *Comedy*, he not only makes careful allusion to the story and structure of the *Aeneid*, but also presumes to anticipate Virgil's voice in the character's responses, directions, and descriptions of the underworld. As they continue their journey, Dante advances this comparison further when he joins the cohort of ancient poets in Limbo. There Dante is greeted by the lone voice of Homer, who is followed by Horace, Ovid, and Lucan. Together with Virgil, the group personifies the ancient literary canon, and they name Dante as their heir: "And the even greater honor was mine, since they invited me to join them, and I was sixth among their intellects."<sup>349</sup> For Dante, imitation was nothing short of competition, and his selective representation of the classical authors gestures toward the literary agenda of the later humanists, whose measurement of history and literature depended in part on the resuscitation of this classical doctrine.<sup>350</sup>

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<sup>347</sup> Item 24 on inventory: "Vergilius ex me[m]branis in velluto gilbo." On Julius' recitation, see Chapter 2, n. 63.

<sup>348</sup> *Inferno* I.84-87: "Tu se' lo mio maestro e 'l mio autore;/tu se' solo colui da cu' io tolsi/lo bello stilo che m' ha fatto onore."

<sup>349</sup> *Inferno* IV.100-102: "E più d'onore ancora assai mi fenno/ch'e' sì mi fecer de la loro schiera/sì ch'io fui sesto tra contanto senno."

<sup>350</sup> Petrarch is the first Renaissance author to discuss imitation as a theoretical concept. In the whole of his *oeuvre*, Dante only discusses imitation twice — in the *Vita Nuova* and the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* — but in neither case is the actual term employed. In the *Vita Nuova*, Dante's treatise on love, he cites as models the same poets who appear in Limbo. As in the *Comedy*, Virgil occupies pride of place in Dante's literary worldview, and he is followed by Lucan, Horace, Homer, and Ovid. Dante made similar reference in the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, his essay on literary criticism, recommending study of the ancient *poetae*. On the selection of a fitting subject, Dante advises the reader to heed the words of Horace's *Ars Poetica*, and as he considers the principles of appropriate style, he points to Virgil, Ovid, and Lucan as the exemplars of Latin

From the beginning, there existed a close correspondence between the principle of imitation and the theory of art, and in the *Comedy* Dante consciously rivaled not only the poets of antiquity through the imitation of their subjects and verse, but also its artists.<sup>351</sup> The strikingly visual language of Dante's poetics presents a contest of representation, one that places the image below the word of poets and the Word of God. To sway the reader by means of literary artifice, Dante punctuates the *Comedy* with instances of "*visibile parlare*" — what he terms the imitative exercise of ekphrasis.<sup>352</sup> Likening language to artistic form, Dante casts Christian history in terms that are at once verbal and artistic. Dante's ekphrases, which reimagine the examples of his epic ancestors like Homer and Virgil, serve a double purpose: they are not only moral and didactic instruments that propel forward Dante's narrative, but are also markers of the inherited poetic discourse on word and image.<sup>353</sup> On the Terrace of Pride in Purgatory, for instance, Dante looks upon the marble frieze, the *Comedy*'s longest sustained commentary on imitation and the

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verse. Dante's relationship to the classical *poetae* was the principal concern of his early commentators, who emphasized that he had surpassed the ancient model by transforming pagan history and its verse into mirrors for the Christian purpose. See Maggie Kilgour, "Dante's Ovidian Doubling," in: *Dantean Dialogues: Engaging with the Legacy of Amilcare Iannucci*, ed. Maggie Kilgour and Elena Lombardi (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), pp. 174-175.

<sup>351</sup> The ancient rhetoricians looked to the example of painting to define imitation. See for example, Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* X.2.2: "Atque omnis vitae ratio sic constat, ut quae probamus in aliis facere ipsi velimus. Sic litterarum ductus, ut scribendi fiat usus, pueri sequuntur, sic musici vocem docentium, pictores opera priorum, rustici probatam experimento culturam in exemplum intuentur; omnis denique disciplinae initia ad propositum sibi praescriptum formari videmus."

<sup>352</sup> *Purgatorio* X.94-95: "Colui che mai non vide cosa nova/produsse esto visibile parlare."

<sup>353</sup> For example, in *Purgatorio* X-XII, Dante describes bas-reliefs and pavements that contain images from the Trojan cycle, which recall Virgil's ekphrastic description of the Temple of Juno in Carthage, *Aeneid* I.453-493. See Page Dubois, *History, Rhetorical Description, and the Epic from Homer to Spenser* (Totowa: D.S. Brewer and Biblio., 1982), p. 7 in particular; Marianne Shapiro, "Ekphrasis in Virgil and Dante," in: *Comparative Literature* 42.2 (1990), pp. 97-115; James A.W. Heffernan, "Visible Speech: The Envoicing of Sculpture in Dante's *Purgatorio*," in: *Museum of Words: The Poetics of Ekphrasis from Homer to Ashbery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 37-45; Hilary Lieberman, "Art and Power(lessness): Ekphrasis in Campanella's *The City of the Sun*, Virgil's *Aeneid*, and Dante's *Purgatorio* X," in: *RLA: Romance Languages Annual* 1997 9 (1998), pp. 224-231.

arts.<sup>354</sup> Dante describes figures so real that they seem practically alive, and in amazement he exclaims: “Not only Polycleitus, but Nature herself would have felt defeated there!”<sup>355</sup> The pictorial eloquence of the sculptures suggests the measure by which art should be judged — that is, likeness to life. At the same time, the images also surpass this very standard and, in doing so, make known God’s supreme artifice. The passage calls to mind the earliest known example of ekphrasis, Homer’s famous shield of Achilles, which makes a similar claim regarding the status of literary imitation and its visual models.<sup>356</sup> The shield has been extensively discussed elsewhere, but its implications for Dante and Raphael as the foundational example of poetic description deserve some consideration here.<sup>357</sup> Crafted by the divine hands of Hephaestus, the shield is saturated with images of human life. Because of its exceptional detail of decoration, it is often remarked that the shield defies reality. Surpassing the limits of the natural world, it bespeaks Homer’s

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<sup>354</sup> The bibliography of Dante’s “*visibile parlare*” and the Terrace of Pride is extensive. For a few select studies, see Robert Hollander, “God’s ‘Visible Speech,’” in: *Allegory in Dante’s Commedia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 297-300; Heffernan, pp. 37-45; James Thomas Chiampì, *Shadowy Prefaces: Conversion and Writing in the Divine Comedy* (Ravenna: Longo, 1981), pp. 69-85; Kenneth John Atchity, “Dante’s *Purgatorio*: The Poem Reveals Itself,” in: *Italian Literature: Roots and Branches. Essays in Honor of Thomas Goddard Bergin*, ed. Giose Rimanelli and Kenneth John Atchity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), pp. 85-115; Teodolinda Barolini, “Representing What God Presented: The Arachnean Art of Dante’s Terrace of Pride,” in: *Dante Studies, With the Annual Report of the Dante Society* 105 (1987), pp. 43-62; Christopher Kleinhenz, “Dante and the Tradition of Visual Arts in the Middle Ages,” in: *Thought: A Review of Culture and Idea* 65.256 (1990), pp. 17-26; Marianne Shapiro, “*Homo Artifex*: A Rereading of *Purgatorio* XI,” in: *Lectura Dantis X* (1992), pp. 59-69; Barbara J. Watts, “Artistic Competition, Hubris, and Humility: Sandro Botticelli’s Response to ‘Visibile Parlare,’” in: *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society* 114 (1996), pp. 41-78; William Franke, “Reality and Realism in *Purgatorio* X,” in: *Dante’s Interpretive Journey* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), pp. 171-177; Deborah Parker and Tibor Wlassics, “Visibile Parlare: Dante and the Art of the Italian Renaissance,” in: *Lectura Dantis (Charlottesville, VA)* 22-23 (1998).

<sup>355</sup> *Purgatorio* X.31-33: “Esser di marmo candido e addorno/d’intagli sì, che non pur Policeto/ma la natura li avrebbe scorno.”

<sup>356</sup> *Iliad* XVIII.478-608. We should note here that Dante had no Greek and Homer was not available in Latin until 1362, when Leontius Pilatus completed line-by-line translations of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*; vernacular editions first appeared in the fifteenth century. Homer was probably known to Dante only indirectly, through Latin mediators like Virgil, Horace, and Ovid and their commentaries. On the shield and ekphrasis, see Paul Barolsky, “Homer and the Poetic Origins of Art History,” in: *Arion* 16.3 (2009), pp. 13-44.

<sup>357</sup> On the shield, and for a useful, recent bibliography, see Andrew Sprague Becker, *The Shield of Achilles and the Poetics of Ekphrasis* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1995).

textual mastery of artistic invention and likens the poet and his song to the divine craftsman. In keeping, Homer's ekphrastic masterpiece earned him the title of "painter" among the ancient authors.<sup>358</sup> Likewise in Dante, the divine sculptures of Purgatory eclipse all human handicraft, and we cannot escape the comparison of poet and Maker as Dante wonders aloud: "What master of brush or of chisel could have drawn there such shapes and such strokes that would astonish all discerning minds!"<sup>359</sup> By representing representation itself, Homer and Dante hold a mirror to the artifice of imitation and, in so doing, reflect the creative virtuosity of the poet as *artifex*.

Where is Raphael in this long literary detour? Like Dante and the ancient *poetae*, Raphael charts the epic genre from Homer to the Italian vernacular, and his figures on the *Parnassus* give visible form to the concept of poetic imitation personified in Dante's Limbo. These striking correspondences between the inhabitants of Dante's Limbo and the figures in Raphael's frescoes, however, have been eclipsed in the academic literature. I propose that by imitating Canto IV of Dante's *Inferno*, Raphael inverted the exempla of literary ekphrasis and recast them in revised visual terms. In an otherwise unprecedented image, on the *Parnassus*, Dante, clutching what can only be the *Divine Comedy*, follows Virgil, who follows a gesturing Homer.<sup>360</sup> The comparison of the three epic authors was well recognized by Dante's commentators, who placed the three in a chain of poetic

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<sup>358</sup> Cicero, *Tusculanae disputationes* 5.114: "Traditum est etiam Homerum caecum fuisse; at eius picturam, non poësin videmus: quae regio, quae ora, qui locus Graeciae, quae species formaeque pugnae, quae acies, quod remigium, qui motus hominum, qui ferarum non ita expictus est, ut, quae ipse non viderit, nos ut videremus, effecerit? Quid ergo? Aut Homero delectationem animi ac voluptatem aut cuiquam docto defuisse umquam arbitramur?"

<sup>359</sup> *Purgatorio* XII.12.64-66: "Qual di pannel fu maestro o di stile/che ritraesse l'ombre e tratti ch'ivi/mirar farieno uno ingegno sottile?"

<sup>360</sup> See Volkmann (1897), p. 77; Fischel (1921), p. 10; Caitlin Flanagan, "Raphael and Dante" (Master's thesis, University of Virginia, 1987).

inheritance, to which Raphael responded by making their speech visible.<sup>361</sup> Homer, whose *Iliad* was the principal model for the *Aeneid*, is the only figure whom Virgil follows in *Inferno*, a hierarchy that Raphael maintained on the northern wall of the Stanza della Segnatura. Called by Dante the “sovereign poet” (*poeta sovrano*), the author of the “highest verse” (*altissimo canto*), and the one to whom “the Muses gave their highest gifts” (*che le Muse lattar più ch’altri mai*), Homer is tallest of all the figures on the *Parnassus*. Other than Virgil, he is also the only character in Canto IV who speaks, and in Raphael’s fresco, he stands with mouth agape as a diligent scribe records his song. And in Limbo as in Raphael’s painting, Virgil smiles to acknowledge Dante’s admission into their retinue of ancient poets. We might imagine that the other classical poets gathered on Raphael’s mountain include Horace, Ovid, and Lucan, whom Dante placed in Limbo alongside Homer and Virgil. Indeed, throughout the poem, Dante extends the metaphor of Parnassus to the landscape of Limbo and its inhabitants: “Our place is in the first circle of the blind prison, where often we talk about the mountain, where our nurses have always resided.”<sup>362</sup> Even if impossible to substantiate, the inclusion of Horace, Ovid, and Lucan on Raphael’s mountain seems likely, and Julius owned editions of the *De Tristibus* and the *Pharsalia*. By making careful visual reference to the language of Dante’s *Inferno*, Raphael not only articulated visually the literature of the Julian court, but also reformed Dante’s inheritance of the epic genre into a pictorial essay on the practice of imitation.

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<sup>361</sup> The comparison of Dante, Homer, and Virgil first appears in Boccaccio’s *Life of Dante*; see Hans Baron, *Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 536, n. 20d and 24.

<sup>362</sup> *Purgatorio* XXII.103-105: “Nel primo cinghio del carcere cieco;/spesse fiate ragioniam del monte/che sempre ha le nutrice nostre seco.”

Raphael's painting reverses the artifice of ekphrasis to make Homer, the father of artistic description, into an example of visual powers. It is often noted that in a preparatory study for the *Parnassus*, Raphael modeled the face of Homer after the *Laocoön* (figs. 4.9 and 4.10), but little has been said about the artist's reuse of this ancient model. Even before its recovery, the *Laocoön* was known from Pliny's *Natural History*, which deemed the work superior to all other examples of painting and sculpture.<sup>363</sup> Unearthed in 1506, just two years before Raphael began the decoration of the Stanza, the sculpture reinvigorated the rush of antiquarian culture at the Vatican court. Within three months of the *Laocoön*'s excavation, Julius purchased it for display in his new Belvedere courtyard, whose vista was framed by the *Parnassus* window.<sup>364</sup> The relationship of the sculpture to text was an immediate concern for Rome's artists and writers alike, who centered its rediscovery on questions of imitation.<sup>365</sup> At once physical and psychic, *Laocoön*'s grimace supplied a popular new *pathosformel*, and countless verses and images were crafted after its model.<sup>366</sup> Whereas other artists looked to the sculpture as a new emblem of trauma and pain, Raphael revised the Trojan priest's expression for new purposes. In the preparatory drawing, Homer's knotted brow and parted lips are endowed with the *mania* of the ancient marble, and by turning the poet's eyes heavenward,

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<sup>363</sup> The sculpture was identified by its inscription, which names its three artists: Hagesandros, Polydoros, and Athenodoros. See Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia*, Book XXXVI.4.102: "...sicut in laocoonte, qui est in titi imperatoris domo, opus omnibus et picturae et statuariae artis praeferendum."

<sup>364</sup> Christian, pp. 265-266.

<sup>365</sup> Lodovico Dolce, for example, claimed that Virgil copied his character from the statue: "It is a matter of mutual exchange that painters dig up their inventions from poets, and poets from painters." As cited in Leonard Barkan, *Unearthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 1-15 and 4 in particular; see also Norman E. Land, *The Viewer as Poet* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), pp. 72-75.

<sup>366</sup> Aby Warburg, "Tafel 41a, Leidenpathos. Tod des Priesters," in: *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, Bd. II, ed. Martin Warnke and Claudia Brink (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2003), p. 74; see also Sarah Blake McHam, *Pliny and the Artistic Culture of the Renaissance: The Legacy of the "Natural History"* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), p. 218 ff.

Raphael made *Laocoön*'s tragedy into Homer's ecstasy. Raphael's appropriation of the sculpture for Homer's portrait seems like a meaningful choice, since the character, even if absent from the *Illiad*, was a celebrated subject in the Homeric commentaries.<sup>367</sup>

The close visual proximity of the sculpture and the painting, moreover, implies a conscious comparison of Raphael's figure and its ancient model. In a later sketch, now in the Getty, Federico Zuccaro seems to have recognized the close relationship of the *Laocoön* to Raphael's frescoes in the Stanza della Segnatura (fig. 4.11). In the drawing, the *Laocoön* sits atop the upper terrace of Bramante's courtyard, the clear centerpiece of the papal collection of antiquities. In the distance, along the abbreviated architecture of the Vatican Palace, Zuccaro suggestively affixed the label "*le camore di Raffaello*," and in the Stanza's window, he placed the silhouette of a figure poring over an open book (fig. 4.12). By taking his portrait of Homer from the *Laocoön*, Raphael invites a many-layered comparison of text and image. Raphael both evokes the Homeric tradition of ekphrasis, matching his image of the blind bard to a conspicuously epic subject, and issues a challenge to Pliny's claim of the sculpture's supremacy. Imagining Homer as the *Laocoön*, which was visible through the window of the *Parnassus*, Raphael boldly suggests the rightful place of his painting as the modern successor to the statue and its ekphrastic history.

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<sup>367</sup> Although *Laocoön* is best known from Book II of the *Aeneid*, Virgil was not his only source in the Renaissance. *Laocoön*'s death received its most extensive treatment in the third-century *Posthomerica* of Quintus Smyrnaeus, a retelling of Homer's *Iliad*. Importantly, the *Posthomerica* was widely read in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as a guide to the Homeric epic. Angelo Poliziano, for example, used the *Iliad* and *Posthomerica* interchangeably in his Latin commentary on Statius. The *Posthomerica* was evidently also a favorite of the bibliophile Cardinal Basilios Bessarion, mentor of Sixtus IV. On the Renaissance legacy of the *Posthomerica*, see Manuel Baumbach and Silvio Bär, "An Introduction to Quintus Smyrnaeus' *Posthomerica*," in: *Quintus Smyrnaeus: Transforming Homer in Second Sophistic Epic*, ed. Manuel Baumbach, Silvio Bär, and Nicola Dümmler (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), pp. 15-17; also *Posthomerica: Tradizioni omeriche dall'Antichità al Rinascimento* (Genova: Dipartimento di archeologia, filologia classica e loro tradizioni, 1997-2000).



The affinity between poetic and pictorial imitation might also be understood in terms of the stylistic idioms of a well-crafted composition. Just as Dante weds the classical to the modern by refitting the language and subjects of antiquity to the vernacular, on the *Parnassus* Raphael transforms the fresco into a performance of the poetic tradition by analogy of a decorous periodic style.<sup>368</sup> Like the periodic sentence in classical literary theory, which was often equated to the picture, body, member, and plane in painting, Raphael's image marks out the members of literary history through a series of related gestures and forms. Dividing the composition into three groups, the features of the painting are distinguished by careful visual shifts. Poetry unfolds at the center of the *Parnassus*, where Apollo and the Muses are elevated by an otherworldly beauty: the softness of their features and the *grazia* of their expressions set them apart from the figures gathered along the mountain's slope.<sup>369</sup> At the left, Raphael placed the poets of classical Greece and Rome. As the mediators between Latin and its early modern inheritance, Dante and Petrarch are the only Renaissance authors among them. Petrarch, who championed the purity of the Latin tongue, lingers near three ancients as Sappho looks on. Dante, who esteemed the Italian *volgare* above all, yokes the classical tradition to Renaissance humanism as he follows Virgil across the mountain toward his early modern counterparts. Pointing to the literary future, Virgil makes this heritage clear, and his gesture is matched by a delicate Muse, who reminds the Renaissance writers below her to observe the classical precedent.

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<sup>368</sup> Baxandall (1971) defined the classical periodic sentence as the rhetorical hierarchy of "period, clause, phrase, and word," pp. 131-139.

<sup>369</sup> On the Neoplatonic significance of the beauty of Apollo and the Muses, see Paul Barolsky, "Raphael's 'Parnassus' Scaled by Bembo," in: *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 19.2 (2000), pp. 31-33.

The poets on the *Parnassus* are not varied only by their arrangement on the mountain; Raphael also separated the ancient from the modern using subtle disparities of style and representation. Idealized and unblemished, the classical poets embody the highest virtues of ancient art, and Vasari tells us that Raphael modeled their portraits after antique sculptures. We might note Homer's scribe, whose twisted neck and lifted leg recall both the *Spinario* and the sons of *Laocoön*. Balding, overweight, and unshaven, the contemporary poets present a significant stylistic change, and at the right of the mountain, we meet the gaze of figures with wrinkled brows and sagging skin.<sup>370</sup> Unlike the ancient poets, who are refined and distant, the more animated moderns offer the viewer's point of entry. Their highly individual features are unquestionably taken from life, and it is safe to assume that these figures were recognizable members of the Julian court. Although their identities are largely lost to us today, accounts of the life of Julius II record that the pope delighted in the recital of poetry at the Vatican, and his court blossomed with the production of new humanistic verse.<sup>371</sup> We might surmise that Raphael's contemporary poets on the *Parnassus* belong to a similar milieu and continued to dispute the primacy of Latin and the vernacular as the vehicles of modern eloquence. By exploiting devices of style to both balance and differentiate between the figures in the painting, Raphael made the *Parnassus* into a visual geography, charting the history of poetic language with Dante as the crucial link in its literary chain.

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<sup>370</sup> Although Vasari names Boccaccio and Tibaldeo, it is impossible to say for certain to whom the modern portraits belong.

<sup>371</sup> Paris de Grassis reports, for instance, that Julius was once entertained by a poet costumed as Orpheus, and in 1512 the pope awarded laurel crowns to Vincenzo Pimpinello and Francesco Maria Grapaldi (Transcript of the MS Diaries, 5 vols., British Library Add., MSS 8440-4, vol. 2, f. 23), as cited in: Mandall Creighton, *A History of the Papacy: The Great Schism to the Sack of Rome*, vol. 5 (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1897), p. 201; and in Jones and Penny, p. 72.

Apollo's stated place in the Stanza is greater than that of any other figure, and in both Dante and Raphael, Apollo's role as the agent of inspiration unites poetic and theological themes. On the *Parnassus*, he mediates between old and new styles. In the *School of Athens*, he appears as a monumental sculpture facing Poetry; and in the ceiling, Apollo bridges together Poetry and Philosophy. Dante supplicates Apollo twice in the *Divina Commedia*, seeking to make his verse into a worthy vehicle of the divine.<sup>372</sup> At the center of the *Parnassus*, Apollo embodies the same poetic inspiration Dante says he commanded. Turning in divine frenzy with eyes raised to heaven, the god manifests one of Raphael's favorite tropes, to which I will return in Chapter Five. In the *Divine Comedy*, Dante uses a similar device to describe the spiritual perception, which later authors like Pietro Bembo, Baldassare Castiglione, and Marco Girolamo Vida adopted as a symbol of God's wisdom. Turning the Neoplatonic concept of *furia* into an instrument for Christian enlightenment, throughout the poem Dante instructs the reader to raise his gaze heavenward.<sup>373</sup> For Plato as for Dante, the expression of inspired rapture is a symptom of the divine madness that moves the soul.<sup>374</sup> In the poem, Dante's ascent is echoed by the movement of his eyes, and Beatrice models the experience of revelation by fixing her sight on the sun. By no accident, Virgil gave poetic form to the ecstasy of inspiration, and his text links the ancient deity to the one in Dante and Raphael. In the *Aeneid*, the eponymous hero visits the mountain cave of the Cumaean Sibyl, who serves as Aeneas' guide into the Underworld, and it was this episode that most directly

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<sup>372</sup> *Paradiso* I.13; *ibid.* II.8.

<sup>373</sup> In myriad examples. See in particular *Paradiso* 10.7-9: "Leva dunque, lettore, a l'alte rote/meco la vista, dritto a quella parte/dove l'un moto e l'altro si percuote;" *Paradiso* 14.82-84: "Quindi ripreser li occhi miei virtute/a rilevarsi; e vidimi translato sol con mia donna in più alta salute."

<sup>374</sup> *Phaedrus*, ed. Harold North Fowler; intro. by W. R. M. Lamb (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1990), 244a-245a: "The greatest goods come to us through the madness that is given as a divine gift . . . this [madness] seizes a tender soul and stimulates it to rapt passionate expression."

influenced Dante's *Inferno*. Before they venture into Hades, the Sibyl is possessed by the god. The words by which Virgil describes her frenzy, *adflata est numine*, anticipate the maxim that crowns Poetry in the Stanza (NUMINE AFFLATUR).<sup>375</sup> To capture poetic inspiration as it was conceived by Virgil and Dante, Raphael employed the very experience of vision. Raphael thus invites the viewer to raise his eyes to the ceiling, matching Apollo's expression of *furia* to behold the divine source of the written word.

Apollo's significance as an emblem of inspiration carries us across the Stanza's ceiling, where he joins the *Parnassus* and the *Disputa*. Bridging the dual portraits of Dante, a *riquadro* illustrates Christian revelation in Dantesque terms (fig. 4.13), as Wind has convincingly demonstrated.<sup>376</sup> Probably modeled after ancient Roman sculptures, the panel depicts the punishment of Marsyas, who foolishly boasted that his flutes could best the lyre of Apollo.<sup>377</sup> As the *Paradiso* opens, Dante invokes their contest: "Oh good Apollo, for this final task, make me into your vessel, as you demand to give your beloved laurel . . . Enter into my breast and breathe in me as when you drew Marsyas from the sheath of his limbs."<sup>378</sup> The passage is puzzling. Marsyas hardly seems like a fitting comparison for the poetic labor, but through the obscurity of this reference, Dante's petition transforms the myth into a Neoplatonic allegory. Dante wrote that doctrine is concealed under the veil of verse and that the hidden truth is perceived only when the steady intellect penetrates the strange outer surface.<sup>379</sup> Conceived as a mechanism for the divine, Dante's poem is built on the strata of symbolic references whose meaning must be

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<sup>375</sup> *Aeneid*, VI.50.

<sup>376</sup> See Wind (1968), pp. 171-176.

<sup>377</sup> For example, see the second-century Roman copies now in the Capitoline Museum, the Galleria degli Uffizi, and the Musée du Louvre.

<sup>378</sup> *Paradiso* I.119-121: "Entra nel petto mio, e spira tue/sì come quando Marsia traesti/de la vagina de le membra sue."

<sup>379</sup> *Inferno* IX.61-63.

drawn out from behind the curtain of his language. It is probably not by accident that Alcibiades and Socrates are reimagined in the *School of Athens*, where they appear under the statue of Apollo. In Platonic dialogue, Marsyas supplied just such an example of veiled truth. In the *Symposium*, Alcibiades equates Socrates and Marsyas, and he likens the philosopher to busts of Silenus, ugly on their exterior but with images of the Olympians inside.<sup>380</sup> Like Silenus, Marsyas and the satyrs were worshippers of Dionysus, and their flutes stimulated Bacchic frenzy. The equation of Socrates with the bacchantes implies a dichotomy of passion and reason, since Socrates famously claimed Apollo's dictum "Know thyself" as his own.<sup>381</sup> Transforming Marsyas' pain into a metaphor for Apollonian initiation and divine inspiration, Dante equates his verse with the revelation of truth, and by artfully concealing this purpose behind a cryptic reference to the ancient mysteries, Dante appeals to the ennobling ideal of mental art.

The recondite allusion to Marsyas in both Dante and Raphael suggests a critical engagement with the principle of high artifice, described in the art literature of the Cinquecento as *difficultà*.<sup>382</sup> Even though as an art concept, *difficultà* was not properly codified until the late fifteenth century, as a rhetorical principle it saturated the literature of poetry much earlier. Petrarch and Boccaccio, for example, exalted the "sweet labor" necessitated by *difficultà*, and Dante's commentator Cristoforo Landino recommended a dually allegorical and moral approach to the highest poets, as he deemed Homer, Virgil,

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<sup>380</sup> Plato, *Symposium*, trans. W.R.M. Lamb, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1925) 215b: "I say, that he is exactly like the busts of Silenus, which are set up in the statuaries, shops, holding pipes and flutes in their mouths; and they are made to open in the middle, and have images of gods inside them. I say also that he is like Marsyas the satyr." See again Wind, p. 173 in particular.

<sup>381</sup> See again Wind (1968), p. 173.

<sup>382</sup> On the history and principle of *difficultà*, see Summers, pp. 177-185; on *difficultà* and Dante, see Franke, pp. 92-100.

and Dante.<sup>383</sup> As is already clear, Dante's verse presumes an understanding of poetry that ranges from the literal to the allegorical, figured treatment of Christian ideals. Inherited ultimately from Plato's *Symposium*, Dante's Marsyas skillfully conceals the deeper meaning of the poet's purpose, appealing to a knowing audience of *intendenti*. Balancing Poetry and Theology on the Stanza's ceiling, Raphael's *riquadro* invokes a similar anagogical function of the image. Not simply an illustration of Dante's text, the painting bridges the two walls through the *difficultà* of its subject and style, presuming an audience familiar with the verse of Dante and its poetic origins in the Platonic dialogue.

#### 4.3 The *Famiglia Filosofica* in Raphael and Dante

Like the ancient *poetae*, the classical philosophers have parallels in Dante's *Inferno* and Raphael's frescoes, and their mutual representation in the poem and the paintings suggests Raphael's purposeful participation in the literary reception of Aristotle — a dimension of design that has gone unnoticed until now. As Dante moves from the circle of poets to the ancient philosophers, so we turn our attention now to the *School of Athens*. In the *Comedy*, Dante ventures deeper into the infernal valley and enters a luminous meadow, where he encounters the court of Limbo. There he reports seeing Democritus, Diogenes, Empedocles, Zeno, Thales, Anaxagoras, and Heraclitus, who stand alongside Seneca, Euclid, Ptolemy, Hippocrates, Galen, and Avicenna. At the center of their assembly, Dante catches sight of Aristotle, who is enthroned as their king and attended by Plato and Socrates. Limbo's *famiglia filosofica* — the “philosophical family” of antiquity's physicists, geometers, moralists, and astronomers — naturally calls

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<sup>383</sup> See again Summers p. 180-181; also Deborah Parker, *Commentary and Ideology: Dante in the Renaissance* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993), p. 194, n. 69.

to mind the figures of Raphael's *School of Athens*. In Raphael's fresco as in Dante's text, we encounter the melancholic Heraclitus, who in the painting leans against a block of stone; we see Diogenes and his lone cup; we glimpse Euclid, who inscribes a tablet with his compass; and we watch as the royal Ptolemy lifts a globe. All activity converges in the center, where Plato and Aristotle are framed by the coffered barrel of a marble vault. Near Plato, Socrates is engrossed in debate with the martial Alcibiades, suggesting their discourse in the *Symposium*. As I have argued in previous chapters, the composition is often compared to the author busts that popularly decorated ancient libraries, but Raphael's figures surpass simple didactic exempla. The philosophers in the fresco not only represent a bibliographic inventory of the imagined disciplines, but in the eloquence of their order and gestures, they also reinterpret visually the language and themes of their literary legacy. As we shall see, the only precedents for the *School of Athens* are textual and are mediated by Dante's verse.

The correspondences between Dante's Limbo and Raphael's painting are obvious, but it seems that both the poet and the artist shared another source, whose words they refitted as instruments of artifice in poetry and painting. It is well established that Dante's debt to Aristotle was second only to Virgil, and Aristotle's seat of honor at the center of Limbo is just one of many acknowledgments of his importance for the design of the *Comedy*.<sup>384</sup> Indeed, Dante's revision of Aristotle helped to ensure the philosopher's

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<sup>384</sup> Although Dante had no Greek, he came to know Aristotle primarily through the commentaries of Thomas Aquinas and Albertus Magnus. See Lorenzo Minio-Paluello, "Dante's Reading of Aristotle," in: *The World of Dante*, ed. Cecil Grayson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 61-80; Bruno Nardi, *Saggi di filosofia dantesca*, 2nd ed. (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1967), pp. 63-72; Simon A. Gilson, "Rimaggiamenti danteschi di Aristotele: 'gravitas' e 'levitas' nella Commedia," in: *Le culture di Dante: Studi in onore di Robert Hollander*, ed. Michelangelo Picone, Theodore J. Cachey, Jr., and Margherita Mesirca (Florence: Cesati, 2004), pp. 151-177; and Cesare Vasoli, "Dante, Alberto Magno e la scienza dei 'peripatetici,'" in: *Dante e la scienza*, ed. Patrick Boyde (Ravenna: Longo, 1995), pp. 55-70.

continued legacy, and in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, new Aristotelian commentaries proliferated among Italy's intellectual elite.<sup>385</sup> For example, Sixtus IV commissioned Theodore of Gaza to translate the entire Aristotelian corpus into Latin, and the new Vatican Library housed the works of Aristotle in duplicate.<sup>386</sup> Contemporary records suggest that Julius nurtured a similar interest in the philosopher. Although Plato is absent from the 1513 inventory, the *Ethics* and the *Politics* are documented among the pope's volumes, and the former survives today in a lavish manuscript edition.<sup>387</sup> Given Aristotle's popularity in the courtly culture of the Vatican, it is perhaps unsurprising that the philosopher features so prominently in the frescoes.

By filtering Aristotle's text through the lens of the *Comedy*, Raphael also pays homage to Dante and his reception of the philosopher. Dante's description of the *famiglia filosofica* appears to have been based, in part, on the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle's famed treatise on knowledge and being, which, in turn, supplied the cast for Raphael's fresco. The *Metaphysics* begins with a lengthy review of earlier philosophers and the tradition of the causes: first Aristotle names Plato and Socrates, then Thales, Diogenes, Heraclitus, Empedocles, Democritus, Anaxagoras, and others. By now, this list is already familiar

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<sup>385</sup> See Charles H. Lohr's extensive *Latin Aristotle Commentaries II: Renaissance Authors* (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1988); Charles B. Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988); and *Aristotelismus und Renaissance: In Memoriam Charles B. Schmitt*, ed. Eckhard Kessler, Charles H. Lohr, and Walter Sparr (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1988), in particular, Paul Richard Blum, "Der Standardkursus der katholischen Schulphilosophie im 17. Jahrhundert," pp. 127-148. We might also note here that Julius' uncle Sixtus, who taught philosophy at the University of Perugia, privately owned numerous volumes of Aristotle and his commentators. Under the direction of Sixtus, Platina also recorded several *armarii* of Aristotelian text in the much larger and more public collections of the Bibliotheca Apostolica.

<sup>386</sup> The most famous of which is BAV MS Vat.lat.2094. See John Monfasani, "Aristotle as Scribe of Nature: The Title Page of MS Vat.lat.2094," in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 69 (2006), pp. 193-205; Deno John Geanakoplos, *Constantinople and the West: Essays on the Late Byzantine (Palaeologan) and Italian Renaissance and the Byzantine and Roman Churches* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), p. 89.

<sup>387</sup> BAV MS [REDACTED].



from the philosophers imagined in Dante's Limbo and in Raphael's *School of Athens*, and both the poet and the artist manipulated the language of Aristotle's passage to shape their landscape of knowledge. When Dante encounters Aristotle in the *Inferno*, he describes the philosopher in words taken directly from the *Metaphysics*, which Raphael then pictured in the fresco. Above the *School of Athens*, a colorful eidolon is framed by two *putti* whose *titulus* explains the subject below: CAUSARUM COGNITIO ("knowledge of causes"). As the *Metaphysics* opens, Aristotle proposes that "all men naturally desire to know," and as the text continues, he defines wisdom as the knowledge of causes, which his Latin commentators later translated "causarum cognitio."<sup>388</sup> In the *Inferno*, instead of calling Aristotle by name, Dante uses this same turn of phrase, crowning the philosopher the "master of them who know." To glimpse Aristotle on his lofty throne, Dante notes that he must raise his gaze. In the Stanza's frescoes, Raphael evokes this episode in the *Inferno* by cleverly translating Dante's rhetoric into a visual experience. Just as Dante must look up to catch sight of Aristotle, whom he describes in words borrowed from the *Metaphysics*, so too must we lift our eyes to view Raphael's *tondo*, whose *titulus* derives from the same passage of Aristotle's treatise.

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<sup>388</sup> Above all, by Aquinas in his *Sententia libri Metaphysicae*, pr: "Unde, cum certitudo scientiae per intellectum acquiratur ex causis, causarum cognitio maxime intellectualis esse videtur." Other writers who would borrow the phrase include: Cicero (*Topica* 67); Virgil (*Georgics* II.490); and Marsilio Ficino (*Opera* 1949).

#### 4.4 Soaring toward *Paradiso* in the *Disputa*

Aristotle's influence on Dante and Raphael, however, was not unmitigated, and in the *Comedy* and the frescoes alike, Paradise is a picture of both the scientific structure of the cosmos and the subject of spiritual enlightenment. As Raphael's compositions suggest, Plato represents a second significant influence. Although Plato is the focus of most recent studies of Raphael's paintings, his significance for Raphael's vision of Dante is mostly ignored. In what follows, I argue that Dante's poetic inheritance of Plato and Aristotle inspired the harmonious landscape of revelation in Raphael's *Disputa*.

Paired as equals under the dome of the *School of Athens*, Plato and Aristotle exemplify the moral and natural schools of philosophy. Their combination alludes to the study of the natural world as a ladder to the divine, and they personify the books carried by the eidolon in the *tondo* overhead — *moralis* and *naturalis*. With the *Ethics* under his arm, Aristotle reaches his hand over the rational world. His teacher Plato holds the *Timaeus*, behind which the fresco's perspectival rays converge, and points to the realm of Ideas above. As I have said, their uncharacteristic balance at the center of the fresco is typically understood in terms of the *concordia Platonis et Aristotelis*.<sup>389</sup> Until the end of the fifteenth century, Plato and Aristotle had long been seen as incompatible. By Raphael's time, however, their reconciliation had gained significant traction in the philosophical and theological circles of Florence and Rome.<sup>390</sup> Even though a *concordia*

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<sup>389</sup> Whereas Aristotle had remained popular throughout the Middle Ages thanks to the scholastic tradition, interest in Plato was only renewed in the fifteenth century when new translations of the *Timaeus* attracted the attention of the Italian humanists like Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola. On Plato's study and reception in medieval Europe, see Ernst H. Kantorowicz, "Plato in the Middle Ages," in: *Selected Studies* (Locust Valley and New York: J.J. Augustin Publisher, 1965), pp. 184-193. See also n. 12 in this dissertation's introduction.

<sup>390</sup> One of the major sixteenth-century advocates of the *concordia Platonis et Aristotelis* was Egidio da Viterbo, the reformatory Augustinian at the court of Julius II, whose *Sententiae ad mentem Platonis* has

was not properly advanced until more than a century after Dante's death, the broad philosophical scope of his writings anticipates the humanistic harmony of Plato and Aristotle, and in the *Paradiso* Dante intermingles elements of their thought as he envisions the revelation of Christian providence.

In both Dante's *Paradiso* and Raphael's *Disputa*, heaven unfolds in a hierarchical sequence of circular planes of light, and this eclectic structure of Dante's ascent is undergirded by the physical nature of Aristotle's universe and the Neoplatonic doctrine of emanation. To understand Raphael's interpretation of these cosmological themes, Dante's fantastic vision of Christian and poetic Paradise deserves some brief consideration. From Aristotle, Dante borrowed the universal structure and movement of the crystalline spheres; and from the early Neoplatonists, who adapted their cosmological geometry from the *Timaeus*, he inherited the chain of being, culminating in a single, divine source.<sup>391</sup> The resulting field is a hierarchy of nine mobile planes ascending toward the Empyrean, whose supernatural light bridges the temporal and eternal, the senses and the intellect, under the divine One. In the *Paradiso*, Dante is moved toward God's single point of light by his increasing knowledge, and he crosses a series of concentric spheres, which are ranked in order of their perfection and are set into circular motion by Aristotle's Intelligences, which are themselves spun by the Prime Mover.<sup>392</sup> In distinctly Neoplatonic terms, Beatrice informs us that the spheres receive and reflect God's illumination according to their substance: "The organs of the universe function thus, as

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been linked to Raphael's designs for the *School of Athens*. See Pfeiffer; Garin (1989), pp. 171-181; Danbolt, pp. 70-84; Rowland (1997), p. 147; O'Malley (1968); and Joost-Gaugier (2002), pp. 87-96.

<sup>391</sup> See the seminal essay of John Freccero, "Dante's Cosmos" in: *Bernardo Lecture Series 6* (Binghamton: Center for Medieval & Renaissance Studies, SUNY, 1998). More recently, Christian Moevs, *The Metaphysics of Dante's Comedy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), has discussed the structure and philosophical history of Dante's Paradise in detail.

<sup>392</sup> The subject of *Metaphysics* 12.7.

you now see, from stage to stage, receiving from above and acting downward.”<sup>393</sup> In Dante’s system, as light and wisdom coruscate down through the hierarchy of the universe, he and Beatrice are conversely drawn upwards toward God by their desire for intellect. For Dante, as for the ancient philosophers, pure awareness — that is, the Intellect — is the ultimate condition of the divine, and to know God is to know oneself. The aim of Dante’s pilgrimage, therefore, is the revelation of truth, which his verse aspires to imitate through its increasingly veiled diction.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the dizzyingly difficult character of the *Paradiso* posed a dilemma to Dante’s illustrators, since as the pilgrim continues his journey, the structure and language of the verse becomes increasingly abstruse. Unlike the topography and subjects of the *Inferno*, which inspired myriad artistic representations, Dante’s poverty of words in the third canticle impeded a comparable visual vocabulary and raises the question: How does one picture enlightenment? Or envision the visionary? Or contain the infinite in a finite space? Seizing upon the circular structure of *Paradiso*, Botticelli addressed the problem of heaven’s ineffability by making a clever analogy to his draftsman’s tools. In Botticelli’s unfinished drawings for the *Comedy*, Dante’s ascent through the planets is captured by the raw frame of a compass line (fig. 4.14).<sup>394</sup> Even then, Botticelli’s drawings for the *Paradiso* are the least developed of his series, and their paucity of detail mirrors the elusiveness of Dante’s text, which the images would have faced.

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<sup>393</sup> *Paradiso* II.121-123: “Questi organi del mondo così vanno/come tu vedi omai, di grado in grado/che di su prendono e di sotto fanno.”

<sup>394</sup> By equating the shape and structure of Paradise with the line of his compass, Botticelli cleverly compared himself to the Creator, whom Dante compared in Canto XXXIII to a geometer.

The monumental scale of frescoes, however, presented another challenge.

Without multiple pages to support the evolving levels of Dante's *Paradise*, a fresco's single wall necessitated a more unified composition. Among the few painted examples of the *Paradiso*, the frescoes in the Strozzi Chapel evidence the problem of matching Dante's experience to a convincing visual expression. Whereas Orcagna's *Inferno* closely follows the structure of Dante's poem, the facing image of *Paradise* struggles to make sense of Dante's celestial hierarchy. Stumbling over the obstacle of immaterial vision, the artist sidestepped the spiritual structure of Dante's cosmos all together. Around the exaggerated figures of Christ and the Virgin, Orcagna imposed a teeming stadium of saints, whose sheer density overwhelms and obscures any impression of heavenly transcendence. As a result, the perfection of *Paradiso* is lost behind the oppressive inclusion of the holy men and women enumerated in Dante's epic. The mystifying language of Dante's invisible heaven demanded a new means for rendering illusionistically *Paradiso*'s allusive verse.

By appealing to the poetics of light, color, and space to capture the intuitive essence and form of Dante's Paradise, Raphael's *Disputa* is the first successful representation of enlightenment à la Dante on a grand scale. Exploiting those qualities that Orcagna eschewed, the *Disputa* is perhaps the most eloquent pictorial exegesis on Christian revelation ever conceived. Like Dante's vision of heaven, Raphael's painting imagines the revelation of truth against a backdrop of light and spheres, whose scheme is at once Aristotelian and Neoplatonic. Two figures in the *Disputa* join Theology to the *School of Athens* and allude to their cosmological *concordia*. Approaching the altar, a bearded figure turns his back to the viewer. Resembling Aristotle in the *School of Athens*,

he carries us across the space of the room. To the right of the monstrance, a second figure suggestively gestures toward heaven like Plato. In the *Disputa*, Christian philosophy transcends its earthly counterpart on the eastern wall. Raphael's cosmic designs for Theology are often thought to reflect the philosophy of Florentine Neoplatonists like Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, and it is probably not by accident that Dante's radical eclecticism and the story of his allegorical pilgrimage served as touchstones for the mystical theses of Ficino and Pico.<sup>395</sup> By instead refocusing our attention on the figures in the frescoes, it is possible to bring into focus a closer literary reading following the tradition of Dante.

Just as the *Paradiso* is characterized by a series of planetary spheres radiating outward from the divine sun, so Raphael's geometry is organized into a hierarchical series of related circles, whose composition betokens the dually Aristotelian and Neoplatonic structure of Dante's universe. For Dante, as for Raphael and the ancient philosophers, the circle is the perfect symbol of essential form and God's eternal nature, a point expounded in the *Convivio*: "As Euclid says, the point is the first element of Geometry, and, as he also demonstrates, the circle is the most perfect figure, and therefore ought to be considered its end."<sup>396</sup> Neoplatonic commentators like Augustine, with whom Dante is grouped in the *Disputa*, turned to this principle of a spiritual geometry to qualify the structure of Paradise, calling the Divine One the circle that sets

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<sup>395</sup> Ficino, for example, wrote the prologue to Landino's commentary on the *Comedy*. He also composed a version of the *De Monarchia*, in whose introduction Dante is called the "sententiae Platoniche." Similarly, Pico composed a lengthy encomium on Dante's poetry in a letter to Lorenzo de' Medici (1484). See Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters*, vol. 3 (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1969), p. 63, n. 63 in particular; and pp. 234-235.

<sup>396</sup> *Convivio* II.xiii.26: ". . .ché, sì come dice Euclide, lo punto è principio di quella, e, secondo che dice, lo cerchio è perfettissima figura in quella, che conviene però avere ragione di fine."

the soul into its radial motion.<sup>397</sup> Dante thus understood the whirling spheres of heaven to emulate their divine source, and these planets are ordered in increasing size and divinity as they move farther from the earth. As Dante travels beyond the earth's shadow and into the warmth of the sun, he recognizes that the universe takes its shape from the three circles of the Trinity.<sup>398</sup> In Raphael's *Disputa*, the circles of the Trinity supply the clear vertical axis that governs the formal harmonies of the painting. At the lowest level of the composition where the theologians gather, the perspectival rays converge behind a sparkling monstrance, whose shape is echoed by an increasing scale of circular forms. Above the altar, the Holy Spirit is framed by a golden orb. Higher and larger still, a glittering mandorla frames the figure of Christ. And at the highest level, God appears against the vault of heaven, which opens to expose the brilliant hemisphere of the sun, recalling Dante's description as he first beholds the light of God: "There above is the light that makes the Creator visible to the creature, who only has peace when he sees Him. And the light takes a circular shape as it expands, such that its circumference would be too great a girdle even for the sun."<sup>399</sup> Turning toward the Trinity at the center of the painting, the theologians on the terrestrial level, the saints on their cloudy thrones, and the angels in the heavenly zone acknowledge and imitate the circular body of the divine, in keeping with Dante's description of the universe. Raising our gaze to behold the Trinity, we bear witness to levels of increasing abstraction, whose forms remind us of Dante's spiritual vision. Like Dante, who admits a poverty of words as he rises across

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<sup>397</sup> Augustine, *Contra Faustum* XX.7-8.

<sup>398</sup> *Ibid.* Cf., *Paradiso* XXIII.49-51: "Ma nel mondo sensibile si puote/veder le volte tanto più divine/quant' elle son dal centro più remote," and XXXIII.115-117: "Ne la profonda e chiara sussistenza/de l'alto lume parvermi tre giri/di tre colori e d'una contenenza."

<sup>399</sup> *Paradiso* XXX.100-105: "Lume è là sù che visibile face/lo creatore a quella creatura/che solo in lui vedere ha la sua pace./E' si distende in circular figura/in tanto che la sua circonferenza/sarebbe al sol troppo larga cintura."

Paradise, Raphael's fresco carries us from the terrestrial ground, optically ordered around the monstrance, to the intangible rays of the sun that crown the composition.<sup>400</sup> In the earthly world, the round wafer of the Eucharist negotiates between the theologians and heaven, a role intimated by its golden monstrance, whose gilding reflects the illuminated forms of the Trinity above. Just as Dante describes physical blindness as he rises within view of the face of God, so Raphael's fresco differentiates between the levels of terrestrial and theological vision by a complex geometry of form.

Of the room's four walls, Theology is unequivocally the brightest, and the fresco is arranged in intensifying planes of tawny pigment and gold gilding. Like the poetic framework of the *Divine Comedy*, which describes the pilgrim's journey in progressive fields of increasing luminescence, the extraordinary quality of light in the *Disputa* represents another suggestive concordance between Dante's verse and Raphael's painting. Central to the design of both the poem and the frescoes, the sun of God is the source from which all intelligence originates, and illumination is handed down across Dante's Platonic chain of being, a premise the poet expounded in the *Convivio*: "Nothing that can be sensed is worthier to act as a symbol of God than the sun. It illuminates with visible light first and then all celestial and earthly bodies; so, God illuminates with intellectual light first Himself and then all the celestial and all other intelligent beings."<sup>401</sup> The association of the divine with light is among the most popular topoi in Christian scripture, and it is no surprise that both Dante and Raphael made the light of the sun into

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<sup>400</sup> On the "spiritual perspective" of the *Disputa*, see Christian Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), pp. 32-40.

<sup>401</sup> *Convivio* III.xii.13: "Nullo sensibile in tutto lo mondo è più degno di farsi essempla di Dio che 'l sole. Lo quale di sensibile luce sé prima e poi tutte le corpora celestiali e le elementali allumina: così Dio prima sé con luce intellettuale allumina, e poi le [creature] celestiali e l'altre intelligibili."



the prime symbol of revelation. In the Gospel of John, for example, Christ is called “the light of mankind, which shines in the shadows, and which the shadows cannot overcome” (*Gospel of John* 1:1-5). For Dante and the Neoplatonists, light is the universal principal of causality, which brings the senses into being, and in the *Comedy*, light is employed as a chief symbol of knowledge.<sup>402</sup> In the *Inferno*, a bright burst of light marks out the court of Limbo, and in the *Paradiso*, Dante soars across intensifying planes of light as he approaches the Empyrean. Throughout the poem, Dante’s journey across the afterlife is charted by the position of the sun in the sky, which measures the pilgrimage according to the Easter calendar. As Dante finally researches Paradise, we read of a sky “kindled with the flame of the sun,” and Beatrice explains that the light of the divine inspires mankind to aspire toward heavenly truth, calling God “the lantern of the world.”<sup>403</sup> For Dante, as for Raphael, the visionary aspect of the heavenly sphere is built on the principle of light as a perceptual actor for the divine.

In Raphael’s *Disputa*, as the hierarchy of spheres increases upward in size, so too does its golden embellishment. As the focal point of the earthly zone, the monstrance is backlit by the bright burst of dawn. The rays that emanate from the orb of the Holy Spirit, Christ’s mandorla, and the vault of heaven are highlighted by the application of gilt wax. Surviving drawings intimate that, even from the beginning, Raphael imagined light as the formal entity around which the illusory architecture of Paradise is built. In the earliest known study for the *Disputa*, the artist arranged the fresco according to tonal values of

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<sup>402</sup> See, for example, the *Liber de intelligentiis* 6-7; and *Divine Names* 4.4.697C. This correspondence is discussed in useful detail by Richard Lansing and Teodolina Bartolini, *The Dante Encyclopedia* (New York: Garland, 2000), pp. 39-42.

<sup>403</sup> See, for example, *Paradiso* I.37-39; 79-81; and V.115-119.

carefully modeled fields ranging from light to dark (see again fig. 3.8).<sup>404</sup> Whereas the earthly theologians are conceived as heavy masses in the drawing's lower field, in the celestial zone above, the court of heaven is faintly rendered with diluted ink. At the center of the study, Christ's radiant mandorla is barely visible and brightens the scene below. The figures closest to Him are the faintest and most delicately drawn, while those farthest from Him are the densest and most heavily rendered. We are reminded of the opening lines of the *Paradiso*, which describe the hierarchy of celestial illumination: "The glory of the One who moves all things penetrates the universe, and He shines in one part more and less in another."<sup>405</sup> Articulating through planes of *chiaroscuro*, the drawing realizes visually the Dantesque principle of divine illumination and its single source in the heavenly sun. Although Raphael later modified this early design, eliminating the elevation at the left and installing the altar at the center, a hierarchy of light similarly pervades the final fresco, where the scale of the golden disks and the glittering rays of the sun intensify as we approach God in the Empyrean.

The visionary symbolism of light in the *Paradiso* is matched by another aspect in Raphael's *Disputa*: the angelic hierarchies that occupy the fresco's celestial zone. In the theological curricula of medieval and early modern Europe, the order and operation of the angels constituted a formal course of study, and their representations in Dante and Raphael would have been recognized to participate in this discourse on the composition of heaven.<sup>406</sup> At the height of heaven in the *Primum Mobile*, Dante placed his angels,

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<sup>404</sup> On Dante and the drawings for the *Disputa*, see Fischel (1962), pp. 60-62.

<sup>405</sup> *Paradiso* I.1-3: "La gloria di colui che tutto move/per l'universo penetra, e risplende/in una parte più e meno altrove."

<sup>406</sup> On the angels in Dante and generally, see Carlo Zanini, *Gli angeli nella Divina Commedia* (Milan: L.F. Cogliati, 1908); Stephen Bemrose, *Dante's Angelic Intelligences: Their Importance in the Cosmos and in Pre-Christian Religion* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1983), pp. 56-76; Alison Cornish, "Planets and Angels in *Paradiso* XXIX: The First Moment," in: *Dante Studies with the Annual Report of the Dante*

whom he compared to both Aristotle's Intelligences and Plato's Ideas. The poet tells us that God made the angels highest of all created beings when He ordered the scheme of heaven.<sup>407</sup> The place of Dante's angels in Paradise is a result of the purity of their substance, which enables them to receive and reflect intellectual truth downward across the sequence of spheres. Dante recognized in the *Convivio* that angels are immaterial forms, and it is because of this absence of matter that they may impart the Word of God.<sup>408</sup> Setting the planets into their circular motion, angels for Dante are at once the Prime Movers of Aristotle's *De caelo* and the illuminative bodies of the *Celestial Hierarchy* of Pseudo-Dionysius, whom Dante set in the Sphere of the Sun and who considered light God's leading symbol.<sup>409</sup> Resembling both Aristotle's Movers and the Neoplatonic choirs, in their order and operation Dante's angels are the engines of God, the Prime or Unmoved Mover.<sup>410</sup> The whirling rings of fire that Dante sees in Canto XXVIII are the nine orders, and in a long excursus Beatrice explains their function: "You will see a wonderful agreement between the sphere and its Intelligence, the greater accords with more, and the smaller with less."<sup>411</sup> Just as the astronomical spheres are

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*Society* 108 (1990), pp. 1-28; also Meredith J. Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 15-59 in particular; on the angels in the *Disputa* generally, see Joost-Gaugier, pp. 70-75; and Kleinbub, pp. 32-40.

<sup>407</sup> *Convivio*, II.5.3-5.

<sup>408</sup> *Convivio*, III.7.5.; see again, Lansing and Bartolini, pp. 37-39.

<sup>409</sup> Dionysius the Areopagite was mistakenly believed to be the author of the *Celestial Hierarchy*, and this misattribution is maintained in the *Comedy*. It is worth noting here that Dante's angelic orders undergo a salient change between the *Convivio* and the *Comedy*. In the *Convivio*, Dante embraced the angelic hierarchy of Saint Gregory, which was described in the *Moralia in Job*; but in the *Comedy*, he instead described the system of Pseudo-Dionysius, and acknowledged this difference: "But later, Gregory disputed him, when he came here, and when he saw with open eyes, he smiled at his error" (*Paradiso*. XXVIII.133-135).

<sup>410</sup> Gill (2014) has demonstrated that Dante's angels occupy all three levels of the afterlife, and there are important distinctions between them. In *Inferno*, Dante meets the "neutral" angels, which are the messengers that stand guard and maintain the order of judgment; and in *Paradiso*, they are joyful celebrants of the blessed, who pour forth knowledge. See pp. 40-42. See also Moevs, *passim*.

<sup>411</sup> *Paradiso* XXVIII.76-78: "Tu vederai mirabil conseguenza/di maggio a più e di minore a meno/in ciascun cielo, a sua intelligenza."

arranged hierarchically according to their power and proximity to God, so the angels increase in purity and understanding. As in Pseudo-Dionysius, the angels farthest removed from their divine source are less acute in their knowledge of God, and Dante describes the ranks in keeping: the highest are the Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones, who are the emblems of God's rule by love, wisdom, and judgment; below them are the Dominions, Virtues, and Powers, who govern the lower orders; followed by the Principalities, Archangels, and Angels, who are God's messengers and soldiers. Arranging these diverse choirs into fiery spirals of ineffable light, Dante treats the angels as the facilitators of spiritual ascent and revelation.

Like Dante, who took his angels from the hierarchies of Pseudo-Dionysius and the Scholastics, Raphael organized the angelic order into successive levels of immaterial brightness, making them into the signposts of intellectual ascent. Under the brilliant dome of heaven, golden rays illuminate a diaphanous hemicycle of Seraphim, who are here represented with their characteristic six wings. The close relation of the Seraphim and Raphael's sun has parallels in Dante's *Paradiso*. In the *Divine Comedy* Dante compares light to angelic knowledge, and the divine light — which he calls the “Sun of the Angels” — shines over the Intelligences, who in turn multiply this divine splendor and raise Dante ever higher.<sup>412</sup> In the *Disputa*, the Seraphim — the purest angelic species — are the highest of the celestial orders and closest to God. Through striking visual metonymy, Raphael attended visually to the place of the Seraphim in Dante's angelic hierarchy by making them into the rays of the sun. The metaphysical light of Dante's angels moves us down the chain, and bordering the heavenly vault, a nebulous bank of Cherubim is more

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<sup>412</sup> See *Paradiso* X.52-54.

realized than their Seraphic siblings. The scintillating beams transmitted by the fiery Seraphim illuminate this second angelic rank. Thinking of Albertus Magnus, whom he placed in the Sphere of the Sun, Dante maintained in the *Convivio* that the quantity of reflected light is determined by the measure of nobility.<sup>413</sup> As we move farther from the heavenly sun, the angelic forms pass light down across the chain and become increasingly manifest. In keeping, Raphael tinted the arc of Cherubim with golden highlights as they mirror the sun's rays. Third in the hierarchy, the Thrones are distinguished by fleshier faces and colorful wings, and their forms are tinged with the sun's bright yellow reflection. In the painting Raphael made clever reference to their angelic function: the Thrones, whose duty is to serve the throne of God, shape the hemispherical pews of Christ and the Church Fathers. The three angelic levels of the *Disputa* are visual incarnations of the nature of Dante's Intelligences, which convey divine light across the spheres from the purest to the material and most distant. Indeed, Raphael appears to have imagined the lowest of the angelic groups in shorthand. As the governors and messengers that mediate between the spiritual and mundane, the lower angelic ranks — the Dominions, Virtues, and Powers, and the Principalities, Archangels, and Angels — are closer to earth. In the fresco, they appear as full-bodied specimens, and the theologians below imitate their gestures, pointing to the divine source.

The theological framework of the angels in both Raphael and Dante is closely associated with the Trinity, whose form is echoed by the congregation of terrestrial and celestial figures in the *Disputa*. These patterns of being are anticipated by two haloed figures to the right of the altar, Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure, the “bright lights” of

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<sup>413</sup> *Convivio* III.7.3-5; *c.f.*, Albertus Magnus, *De intellectu et intelligibili* 1.tr.3.2; *Liber de intelligentiis* 8.2. See also Gill (2014), pp. 40-41.

Cantos XI and XII in the *Paradiso*, behind whom Dante stands in the fresco.<sup>414</sup> In the *Comedy*, Aquinas and Bonaventure are the respective mouthpieces of the Dominican and Franciscan orders, and their eulogies reconcile the doctrinal controversies of their fraternal orders.<sup>415</sup> Beyond this colloquy, however, their place in the Sphere of the Sun suggests a deeper significance for Dante's cosmological vision.<sup>416</sup> The debt to Aquinas is obvious and often observed, since the Dominican wrote his own treatise on the hierarchy of angels (for which he is now known as the "Angelic Doctor"), which underscores their substance and operation in relation to the Trinity. In Aquinas, as in Dante and Raphael, angels are the immaterial substances through whom God works; only the highest are illumined directly by the Creator, and they work down the chain to impress their knowledge on the lower ranks, eventually imparting pieces of this intellect to mankind.<sup>417</sup> Less considered, but equally important to both Dante and Raphael, is the Franciscan Bonaventure, often called by his epithet, the "Seraphic Doctor." For Bonaventure, as in the *Disputa*, the hierarchy of angels represents a template for the soul's journey toward God, and the arrangement of the orders is itself a manifestation of the Trinity.<sup>418</sup> In the

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<sup>414</sup> It is worth noting here that a pope typically taken to be Sixtus IV also stands behind Bonaventure. Sixtus raises his hand in benediction, and this gesture notably overlaps the scholastic philosopher. The close visual association of the two figures perhaps alludes to the fact that Sixtus canonized Bonaventure (on April 14, 1482).

<sup>415</sup> Giuseppe Mazzotta, "The Heaven of the Sun: Dante between Aquinas and Bonaventure," in: *Dante for the New Millennium*, ed. Teodolinda Bartolini and Wayne Story (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003), pp. 152-168.

<sup>416</sup> Aquinas is one of the principal authorities through whom Dante came to know the work of Aristotle, and in the *Convivio* Dante also tells us that he studied in the Franciscan schools of Florence, where Bonaventure's work circulated more widely than that of any other medieval author. See *Convivio* II.12.7. See also Angela Meekins, "The Study of Dante, Bonaventure, and Mysticism: Notes on Some Problems of Method," in: *'In amicizia: Essays in Honour of Giulio Lepshey*, ed. Zygmunt Baranski and Lino Pertile, *The Italianist* 17 (1997), pp. 83-99; and Pamela Williams, "Dante's Heaven of the Sun and the Wisdom of Solomon," in: *Italica* 82.2 (2005): pp. 165-179, and 167 in particular.

<sup>417</sup> *De occultis* 162-64 and 238; *Summa theologica* III.Ic. For Aquinas, this knowledge is received by humans when angels influence their imaginations or communicate through sensible forms. See the entry on Aquinas in: *A Companion to Angels in Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Tobias Hoffmann (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

<sup>418</sup> See Zachary Hayes, "Bonaventure's Trinitarian Theology," in: *A Companion to Bonaventure*, ed. Jay M. Hammond, Wayne Hellmann, and Jared Goff (London: Brill, 2013), p. 204 ff; and Peter S. Dillard, *A Way*

*Soul's Journey into God*, Bonaventure proposed a Neoplatonic system of illumination, in which spiritual ascent closely follows the structure and operations of the angelic choirs through the imitation of the Trinity. Taking his cue from Bonaventure, Dante similarly considers the three ranks of angels to correspond to the contemplation of the Trinity:

Because each person of the holy three-part Trinity can be considered in a threefold manner, the three orders in each hierarchy contemplate their principal object in different ways. The Father can be considered in regard to Himself alone, and this contemplation is performed by the Seraphim, who perceive more of the First Cause than any other angelic entities. The Father can also be considered in relation to the Son that is separated from Him and united to Him, and the Cherubim contemplate. The Father can also be considered with respect to how the Holy Spirit emanates from Him, and relative to its separation from and union with Him, and this contemplation the Powers perform. And the Son and the Holy Spirit can be contemplated in these ways, and thus there are nine species of contemplative spirits or angels, to look upon the Light that can see itself completely.<sup>419</sup>

For Dante, the hierarchy of the angels not only reflects the structure and essence of the Trinity, but by contemplating in various ways the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Prime Movers also generate the revolution of the spheres. In Raphael's *Disputa*, similarities to this system abound. Closest to the figure of God, the Seraphim turn toward the Creator with hands clasped in prayer. On axis with Christ, the cloudy Cherubim point

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*into Scholasticism: A Companion to St. Bonaventure's 'The Soul's Journey into God'* (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2012), p. 149 ff.

<sup>419</sup> *Convivio* II.v.9-11: "E con ciò sia cosa che ciascuna persona ne la divina Trinitade triplicemente si possa considerare, sono in ciascuna gerarchia tre ordini che diversamente contemplano. Puotesi considerare lo Padre, non avendo rispetto se non ad esso; e questa contemplazione fanno li Serafini, che veggiono più de la Prima Cagione che nulla angelica natura. Puotesi considerare lo Padre secondo che ha relazione al Figlio, cioè come da lui si parte e come con lui sé unisce; e questo contemplano li Cherubini. Puotesi ancora considerare lo Padre secondo che da lui procede lo Spirito Santo, e come da lui si parte e come con lui sé unisce; e questa contemplazione fanno le Potestadi. E per questo modo si puote speculare del Figlio e de lo Spirito Santo: per che convengono essere nove maniere di spiriti contemplativi, a mirare ne la luce che sola sé medesima vede compiutamente." In the *Comedy*, the Powers become the Thrones for Dante. Here in the *Convivio*, Dante still has Gregory's hierarchy in mind.

to both the Father and the Son, alluding to Christ's dual nature, and at the center of the composition, the fleshy Thrones are lighted by the golden rays of the Holy Spirit.

Shared visions of Paradise in Dante and Raphael culminate in the *tondo* overhead. Whereas Virgil serves as a principal symbol of poetry in the *Comedy*, Beatrice is the icon of theology itself, and just as words evocative of the *Aeneid* express the theme of Raphael's *Parnassus*, so Beatrice crowns Raphael's *Disputa*. In the ceiling, Theology's crimson gown is draped with a green mantle, and her white veil, garlanded with olive leaves, wafts in an otherworldly breeze. By no mere accident, these features recall Dante's description of Beatrice in the *Purgatorio*: "Wreathed with olive leaves over her white veil a lady showed herself to me, and under her green mantle she was wearing a dress the color of a living flame."<sup>420</sup> Floating above the *Disputa*, Raphael's Beatrice offers to guide the viewer across the topography of Paradise, just as she led Dante through the heavenly spheres. Pointing to the image of God in the golden dome of the sun, she demonstrates the trajectory of revelation and invites us to consider the visionary character of the painting. At the end of the *Paradiso*, Dante is confronted by the three circles of the Trinity, and he struggles to grasp the theological paradox of the Incarnation.<sup>421</sup> In his frustration, Dante compares himself to a geometer seeking to square the circle, earlier having likened the geometry of heaven to God's compass.<sup>422</sup> Holding

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<sup>420</sup> *Purgatorio* XXX.31-33: "Sovra candido vel cinta d'uliva/donna m'apparve, sotto verde manto/vestita di color di fiamma viva." Oskar Fischel first noted the similarity of Raphael's Theology and Dante's Beatrice in "Raphael und Dante: Zur vierhundertsten Widerkehr seines Todestages," in: *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 41 (1920): pp. 86-89.

<sup>421</sup> A moment that John Freccero has aptly termed "Dante's final image." See "The Final Image: *Paradiso* XXXIII, 144," in: *MLN* 79.1 (1964), pp. 14-27.

<sup>422</sup> *Paradiso* XIX.88-90: "Cotanto è giusto quanto a lei consuona nullo creato bene a sé la tira/ma essa, radiando, lui cagiona." As Giuseppe Mazzotta has shown, "radiando" here also refers to the radius of a circle. See *Reading Dante* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), pp. 228.



the orb of the world, which echoes the globes in the *School of Athens*, the figure of God in Raphael's fresco wears a geometer's cap.

#### 4.5 Visions of Divine Justice in Dante and Raphael

As is often noted, the theme of revelation in Dante's epic poem is built on the scaffolding of divine justice and its execution on heaven and earth. In the *Inferno*, we survey the performance of divine retribution (the so-called *contrapasso*); the *Purgatorio* reveals the justice in mankind's suffering; and just as Plato equated the divine circles and spheres with justice, so the very structure of the *Paradiso* is a metaphor for the law of God.<sup>423</sup> Similar themes can be found in most of Dante's other texts. In his letters, for example, Dante compares himself to a "preacher of justice," and in the unfinished *Convivio* he voices plans to compose a treatise on the subject and conditions of justice.<sup>424</sup> The roots of Dante's conception of justice are deep, spanning the opinions of Roman law, the scholastics, and contemporary jurists, but they can ultimately be traced to the *Ethics*, the same book that Aristotle carries in the *School of Athens*. For Aristotle, as for Aquinas and later Dante, justice in its broadest sense is a rational mean and complete virtue. In a more particular sense, justice is distributive — that is, the award of one's due — or commutative — that is, moral reciprocity. In both cases, the institution of justice participates within God's universal infrastructure.<sup>425</sup> Across the *Monarchy* and the

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<sup>423</sup> *Philebus* 62a-b.

<sup>424</sup> *Epistole* IX.7 and *Convivio* IV.27; as cited and discussed by Allan H. Gilbert in: *Dante's Conception of Justice* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1925), p. v; pp. 33-66 in particular. As Gilbert has demonstrated, the treatise most likely would have adapted the work of Aristotle and Aquinas for the audience of the *Convivio*.

<sup>425</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics* V.1-15; for an updated bibliography and analysis of the metaphor of justice in Dante, see Mazzotta (1993), pp. 75-95; for a comparative study of concepts of justice in Aristotle and Aquinas, see Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988); for a broad history of the reception of the *Ethics*, see *The Cambridge History of Later*

*Comedy* — the two most studied texts of Dante's *oeuvre* — Dante maintains that divine law is sanctioned in the scriptures, from which mankind gleans natural law, and this definition brings with it strong implications for papal and sovereign powers. According to Dante, if the soul is to return to God, it requires guidance and law, which the divine hands down to its earthly vicars. In the *Comedy*, poetry serves as a vehicle for picturing the forms of political and theological justice, which, I argue, Raphael revised as a literary and visual index of the ambitions of his canon lawyer patron.

In the guise of Gregory IX, the portrait of Julius II faces the *Disputa*, and elements of Raphael's *Jurisprudence* reframe Dante's definition of justice from the purview of the papacy. In the *Divine Comedy* and the Stanza, the Roman emperor and lawgiver Justinian occupies an important position explaining the nature and function of civil law as an outcome of divine providence. Although Justinian only appears in late drafts for the painting, as the reader will remember, his inclusion in the *Jurisprudence* seems an obvious choice. The pope owned multiple editions of the *Pandects*, and a copy of the *Institutes*, which the young Julius acquired in Perugia as part of his legal training, today survives in the Vatican collection.<sup>426</sup> In Canto VI, Dante encounters Justinian on Jupiter, the sixth sphere and the visible source of earthly justice, and it is here that the poet recognizes the political and legal domains of the Roman Empire as consequences of the will of God. Notably, *Paradiso* VI is the only canto dedicated to a single speaker: Justinian tells us that his highest task was codifying Roman law in the form of the *Corpus*

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*Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, and Jan Pinborg (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 657-72.

<sup>426</sup> BAV MS [REDACTED].

*Iuris Civilis*. Justinian's code, as we have seen, deeply influenced the formation of canon law and papal discourses on the jurisdiction of the Church.

Although the image of the emperor is unexceptional at best, Justinian's presence takes a familiar form in the *tondo* overhead.<sup>427</sup> In the same way that Virgil and Aristotle supplied the *tituli* summarizing the disciplines of Poetry and Philosophy, citations from the *Institutes* crown both the *Jurisprudence* and the *Disputa*, bridging the disciplines of Justice and Theology and visualizing the harmony of earthly and divine law. In the *tondo* above the *Jurisprudence*, Justice — the highest of the virtues, according to Aristotle — wields her sword and scale, and she is framed by the phrase: IUS SUUM UNICUIQUE TRIBUIT, or roughly, "to give each his due." The *tondo*'s earliest source is the opening line of the *Institutes*, explaining that Justice is the consistent and equitable distribution of the law.<sup>428</sup> Like Raphael, Dante probably had this passage in mind when he composed Justinian's verse, since in the *Comedy* the emperor informs us that man's due is measured against his merit, and rewards should be neither more nor less than the just share.<sup>429</sup> Presenting the law as a vehicle for divine harmony, Dante's Justinian tells us that he was inspired by his renewed faith to transform the Roman legal code and that his imperial success was the outcome of God's favor. This ground shared by the imagined disciplines of Justice and Theology comes full circle in the *tondo* above the *Disputa*: DIVINARUM

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<sup>427</sup> As recent restorations have shown, Lorenzo Lotto executed the image of Justinian and his cohort. See Arnold Nesselrath, "Lorenzo Lotto in the Stanza della Segnatura," in: *Burlington Magazine* 142.1162 (2000), pp. 4-12.

<sup>428</sup> The passage reads: "Iustitia est constans et perpetua voluntas ius suum cuique tribuens. Iurisprudentia est divinarum atque humanarum rerum notitia, iusti atque iniusti scientia." The phrase was later employed by Raymond of Pennafort, who, no doubt, had the Justinianic Code in mind when he composed the preface to the Gregorian *Decretals*. See *Decretales* I: "Ideoque lex proditur, ut appetitus noxius sub iuris regula limitetur, per quam genus humanum, ut honeste vivat, alterum non laedat, *ius suum unicuique tribuat*, informatur." My italics.

<sup>429</sup> *Paradiso* VI.118-120.

RERUM NOTITIA, or “knowledge of divine things.” Like the *titulus* above the southern wall, this phrase derives from Justinian’s *Institutes*, where it immediately follows his definition of justice: “Jurisprudence is the knowledge of things that are both human and divine.” The passage continues to clarify that jurisprudence is the science of justice and injustice. For Justinian as for Dante, therefore, earthly order originates in divine justice, and Roman law can only succeed in cooperation with its spiritual authority.

We have already seen that Raphael modeled Theology’s eidolon after Dante’s portrait of Beatrice. That she is framed by words borrowed from Justinian’s *Institutes* is an important gesture to the heavenly origin of earthly law and just rule. Beatrice’s relationship to Justinian’s definition of jurisprudence is elucidated in Canto VII of *Paradiso*, wherein Dante ponders the divine system of checks and balances described in Justinian’s sermon. Sensing Dante’s uncertainty, Beatrice reveals the theological meaning behind Justinian’s words and cites the importance of the doctrines of the Fall, the Redemption, and the Resurrection for Christian justice. With Adam’s fall from grace, she tells us, mankind hung in a state of imbalance. In a supreme act of justice, God took on the nature of man as Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity. Between the Crucifixion and Resurrection, Christ descended into Limbo to redeem the souls of the Judeo-Christian patriarchs, and in Canto IV of *Inferno* Virgil reports to Dante that the “Great Lord” carried off Adam’s shade from Hell.<sup>430</sup> Christ’s sacrifice, therefore, constituted just punishment for Adam’s offense, and the Resurrection reopened the gates of heaven to humanity.<sup>431</sup> As part of this cosmic network of divine justice and retribution, Beatrice

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<sup>430</sup> *Inferno* IV.52-55.

<sup>431</sup> But because of his divinity, Christ’s trial and execution by man outraged God. According to Dante’s Justinian in Canto VI of *Paradiso*, this injustice was righted when Titus sacked Jerusalem.

promises Dante that his body will rise in the Second Coming, which is possible because God made the bodies of Adam and Eve immortal.

Fittingly, Beatrice's lecture is paralleled by an adjacent episode in the ceiling, which bridges Justinian's definition of justice above the *Jurisprudence* and the *Disputa*. Like the Marsyas panel, which weds Poetry to Theology in a decidedly Dantesque episode, the *riquadro* between Justice and Theology bridges the two disciplines in terms borrowed from Beatrice's speech. In the same way that Dante's text binds together in verse the layered narrative of Christian history, the panels in the ceiling reveal a visual essay on Dante's thesis that justice and poetry cooperate in harmony as the inspired instruments of the divine. We have already seen that the *Fall of Man* was visually significant in the study of the *Decretum Gratiani* — and in the *Comedy* (Canto X), Gratian is one of the bright, whirling flames. Dante perhaps had Gratian in mind as he composed Beatrice's exposition. As she goes on, she explains to Dante that the Fall set into motion a chain of consequences predetermined by the Creator's divine plan. The point of her speech is that history unfolds following God's will, and that God's will and divine justice are one and the same. Justice on earth, therefore, is a reflection of eternal justice in Paradise. Raphael's *tondi* and *riquadro* reassemble the words of Justinian and Beatrice in Dante's epic as a dually visual and literary point of reference for the *storie* that unfold in the Stanza's frescoes and its books.

The symbolism of the Fall carries us further around the room, where the remaining *riquadri* are similarly linked by Dante's verse. In *Purgatorio* XXIX, as Dante trudges through the garden of Earthly Paradise, he remembers and bemoans Eve — to whom Adam gestures in Raphael's panel — as the cause of the Fall and Christ's

enormous sacrifice.<sup>432</sup> At a loss for words, Dante implores the Muse Urania to help him put into verse the mysteries of revelation, a plea made as he prepares to begin his ascent across the spheres of heaven. It seems hardly by chance that between Poetry and Philosophy, across from the *Fall of Man*, Urania is pictured ordering the spheres. As I discussed in Chapter Three, Urania — whose name means “heaven” in Greek — was charged along with her sisters to set the celestial planets into motion.<sup>433</sup> Plato’s principle of the musical harmony was understood by its Renaissance commentators as the cosmic foundation of poetry, and they considered Urania, as the Muse of astronomy, to reflect divine ethics and operate on the basis of judgment.<sup>434</sup> In the *Paradiso*, when the rotating spheres of the “bright lights” sing to Dante of the Christian history, he remarks that their song surpasses that of the Muses moving the cosmos.<sup>435</sup> Dante’s meaning is that the melody of the Muses — their poetry, which his Christian epic both inherits and surpasses — only gestures toward divine truth. Framing the Muse, two *putti* carry books, perhaps the fruits of poetic inspiration and the musical harmony of the cosmos. Resituating the *riquadro* in Dantesque terms, we might imagine that Raphael’s astrological allusion to the Julian papacy envisions the theological purpose of poetry, as Dante maintained in his

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<sup>432</sup> *Purgatorio* XXIX.22-27.

<sup>433</sup> *Republic* X.617b.

<sup>434</sup> Indeed, the close relationship of justice and poetry has a long tradition. Plato famously defined justice as the harmony of parts to a whole, a concept that Augustine later extended to poetic meter. See *Conf.* 3.7.14, and the *De musica*, throughout. On the harmony of the spheres and poetry, see Coluccio Salutati, who inherited Urania’s function in the heavens from Plato and the Early Christian writer Fulgentius. See Concetta Carestia Greenfield, *Humanist and Scholastic Poetics, 1250-1500* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1981), pp. 137-141 in particular; see also Marsilio Ficino, *Commentaries on Plato: Phaedrus and Ion*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. Michael J.B. Allen (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), pp. 205-208.

<sup>435</sup> *Paradiso* XII.4-9. On Dante’s “bright lights” generally, see John Freccero, “The Dance of Stars: *Paradiso* X,” in: *Dante Studies: The Annual Report of the Dante Society* 86 (1968), pp. 85-111.

epic: here the written word serves as the vessel of the *logos*, which is handed down through the spheres, and is celebrated and received by Raphael's papal patron.

Turning now to the final *riquadro*, Urania's raised hand directs us across the space, where its gesture finds a compositional echo in the *Judgment of Solomon*. The biblical king's pride of place in Dante completes the cycle in the ceiling. In the *Paradiso*, Dante acknowledges that the religious virtue of his poetry was anticipated by the Song of Songs, and Solomon's proverbial wisdom earned him lasting esteem among the scholastic writers, above all Aquinas and Bonaventure, who appear alongside the king in Dante's Sphere of the Sun.<sup>436</sup> Indeed, Solomon's sagacity was apparently also recognized by Julius, who owned a deluxe edition of his attributed writings.<sup>437</sup> In Canto XIII, Solomon is heralded as the "brightest light" and the wisest king in Paradise, and Dante is instructed to ponder "what moved him to choose when he was bid to 'Ask.'"<sup>438</sup> Dante's Aquinas explains that Solomon's place in heaven is the consequence of divine wisdom, and that Solomon asked God for the gift to rule not by esoteric knowledge or syllogistic reasoning, but by the merit of his own good judgment.<sup>439</sup> In the *riquadro* between Philosophy and Justice, Raphael imagined Solomon and the choice he made "when he was bid to 'Ask.'" Below the panel in the *School of Athens*, Raphael placed those things

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<sup>436</sup> On Solomon in Aquinas and Bonaventure, and the significance of this scholastic discourse, see Williams, pp. 165-179; on Dante and the inherent wisdom of Solomon's Song of Songs, see Marguerite Chiarenza, "Solomon's Song in the *Divine Comedy*," in: *Sparks and Seeds; Medieval Literature and Its Afterlife (Essays in Honor of John Freccero)*, ed. Dana Stewart and Alison Cornish (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), pp. 199-208.

<sup>437</sup> Item 81 on the inventory: "*Salomonis Parabole glossate ex membranis in rubro*," recorded in the later inventories as "*Parabola Salomonis, Cantica, Ecclesiastes, Sapientia, Ecclesiasticus, Actus Apostolorum, Epistolae Canonicae, et Apocalipsis cum glossa ex membr. in rubro*."

<sup>438</sup> *Paradiso* XIII.92-93: "Pensa chi era, e la cagion che ' mosse/quando fu detto 'Chiedi,' a dimandare."

<sup>439</sup> Here Dante is revising the story of Solomon in 1 Kings 3.9. In the Bible, God appears to Solomon in a dream and offers him a gift of his choice. Solomon asks only for the wisdom to govern God's people, and the ability to judge good and evil.

Dante's Aquinas tells us Solomon valued less than the wisdom of judgment: he was not concerned with the number of the angels, like Plato and Aristotle, or with drawing "a triangle with no right angle in a semicircle," like the Greek geometers who gather around Euclid's tablet. It is likewise significant that Solomon appears above the figure of Justinian, who compared himself to the ancient king.<sup>440</sup> In the *Comedy*, Dante meets Justinian's Eagle of the Empire for a second time in the Sphere of Justice, and there he witnesses the celestial spectacle of the circling sparks. Representing the souls of the just rulers, the spiraling lights order themselves in the sky to spell out the opening words of Solomon's *Book of Wisdom*: "Love justice, you who govern over the earth."<sup>441</sup>

## Conclusion

In the footsteps of Dante's bibliographic vision of Christian history, Raphael endowed his frescoes in the Stanza della Segnatura with a visible poetic and theological order, to which he alluded by placing dual portraits of Dante in the *Parnassus* and the *Disputa*. By fitting the figures and language of Dante's verse to the library of Julius II, Raphael invented a commensurate visual comedy of revelation, an epic of the written word and the *logos*. From the *poetae* and the *famiglia filosofica* of Limbo (the *Parnassus* and the *School of Athens*) to the bright lights and spinning spheres of the *Paradiso* (the *Disputa*), Raphael's envisioned literary landscape is itself an invention of poetic theology à la Dante. Like the great Tuscan author, Raphael recognized the potential of poetic form as a veiled expression of theological wisdom. Not merely illustrations, Raphael's frescoes

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<sup>440</sup> When Justinian built Hagia Sophia, whose name he purportedly derived from the *Book of Wisdom*, he is said to have declared his succession from Solomon and the Temple of Jerusalem.

<sup>441</sup> Cf., *Paradiso* XVIII.91-93 and *Wisdom* 1.1: "Diligite justitiam, qui judicatis terram. Sentite de Domino in bonitate, et in simplicitate cordis quaerite illum."



seize on traditions of artifice as the vehicle of revealed truth, but by recasting Dante's idioms in new visual terms, the paintings are elevated as the very instruments of divine illumination.

Although this chapter has focused on Raphael's poetic vision of Dante's *Divina Commedia*, the legacy of Dante's *De monarchia* merits an afterword here, again bringing the theme of Justice full circle. Advocating a separation of Empire and Church, Dante's definition of secular and spiritual domains was at the center of conversations about Italy's shifting political landscape in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Raphael's comparison of civil and canon law on the southern wall of the Stanza della Segnatura offers a resounding papal reply. Since the fourth century, God's creation of "two great lights" (the sun and the moon; *Genesis* 1.16-18) was seen as an allegory for the relationship of sovereign and papal powers, and the Church seized upon the currency of this metaphor to consolidate its jurisdiction and argue for the supremacy of canon law.<sup>442</sup> Fortified by this interpretation of scripture, the papal decretalists claimed that the Holy Roman Emperor receives his authority indirectly from the pope, in the same way that the moon's light is received from the sun. Much ink has been spilled about Dante's imperial sympathies. In the *Monarchy*, he maintained that the emperor's domain is handed down directly from

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<sup>442</sup> The first record of the papal comparison appears in a letter of Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) to Acerbo Falseroni and Tuscany's nobility. On the history of the allegory of the sun and moon and the papacy, see Ernst Kantorowicz, "Dante's Two Suns," in: (1965), pp. 325-338; Anthony Cassell, "'Luna est Ecclesia: Dante and the 'Two Great Lights,'" in: *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society* 119 (2001), pp. 1-26; *ead.*, *The Monarchia Controversy: An Historical Study with Accompanying Translations of Dante Alighieri's Monarchia, Guido Vernani's Refutation of the "Monarchia" Composed by Dante, and Pope John XXII's Bull Si fratrum* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2004); Brenda Deen Schildgen, *Divine Providence. A History: The Bible, Virgil, Orosius, Augustine, and Dante* (London: Continuum Books, 2012), pp. 114-120.

God himself, and that as “two suns,” the papacy and Empire should jointly enlighten the world as the harbingers of terrestrial and celestial Paradise.<sup>443</sup>

Julius II hardly shared Dante’s separatist philosophy, as his papacy endured political threats from the secular kingdoms of France and the Holy Roman Empire alike. We might note that in 1511 — the same year that Raphael painted the *Jurisprudence* — the papal state of Bologna was lost to the forces of Louis XII and his Italian surrogates, the Bentivoglio, while Maximilian I conspired to crown himself the new emperor-pope.<sup>444</sup> In light of these imperial threats to the papacy, how can we fit Dante to Raphael’s vision of Julian Justice in the Stanza della Segnatura? By reclaiming the papal metaphor of the *sol iustitiae* for the papacy, Raphael’s frescoes relay a vision of the new Golden Age ushered by their enlightened canon lawyer patron, who governs justly under the sanctioned auspices of the divine *logos*. Represented as the great papal canonist Gregory IX, Julius faces the *Disputa* and offers a sign of benediction. The pope is also often recognized as Gregory the Great in the *Disputa*, as I have said. Thus depicted as the two great founders of the Church’s spiritual and temporal jurisdiction, Julius is envisioned as Christian Rome’s undeniable advocate and arbiter. Like Dante, enrapt by his vision of God in the *Paradiso*, Raphael’s papal patron, illuminated by the rays of Christ the *sol iustitiae*, asks that we “set our eyes on the sun” and ushers us toward holy revelation.<sup>445</sup>

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<sup>443</sup> See Kantorowicz, “Dante’s Two Suns” (1965), pp. 327-328.

<sup>444</sup> Aloys Schulte, *Kaiser Maximilian als Kandidat für den päpstlichen Stuhl 1511* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1906); A. Nägele, “Hat Kaiser Maximilian I in Jahre 1507 Papst werden wollen,” in: *Historisches Jahrbuch* 28 (1907), pp. 44-60; pp. 278-305.

<sup>445</sup> *Paradiso* I.52-54: “per li occhi infuso/ne l’image mia, il mio si fece/e fissi li occhi al sole oltre nostr’ uso.”

### 5. A Painted *Ars Poetica*

Ever since Vasari and Bellori, scholars have obsessed over the presumed portraits that populate Raphael's Vatican frescoes. In most cases, attempts at identification are fanciful at best, but the certain inclusion of contemporaries suggests another critical component of the Stanza's bibliographic design. As the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, the room was comprised not only of paintings, books, and the accoutrements of learning, but also of courtly residents and visitors. To this union of word and image, we must wed the interlocutors who guided the conversations of the pope's prolifically literary and artistic court. Rather than focusing on the question of an advisor, the Stanza's complementary visual and verbal programs suggest that its paintings were designed not simply to the prescriptions of a single individual, but with contemporary literary personalities in mind. Raphael chose his company carefully and ambitiously, and he maintained long and famous friendships with Rome's most celebrated authors and critics. These personal relationships between artist and poet are well attested, but a relationship of their crafts is surprisingly less considered. With the *lexical* significance of Raphael's designs established, this final chapter reconsiders the room in light of a final criterion, putting flesh to the ideas discussed in previous sections: the painter's literary colleagues, whose philosophies of language find visual vehicles on the walls of the *Bibliotheca Iulia*.

When Raphael arrived in Rome, his pictorial style not only shifted toward the magniloquent harmonies for which he is most remembered, but also realized a novel classicism unprecedented in its thematic, figural, and compositional syntax. Although Raphael was a voracious student of Rome's ancient sculptures and monuments, I propose that his approach was equally motivated by Italy's literary topography. We have already

seen how Raphael visually recast traditions of the book in monumental media, but his engagement with theories of literature was not limited to these objects in the Vatican collection. When Raphael joined the Julian court in 1508, Rome was gripped not only by millennial fever, but also by growing controversy over a national literary language — the so-called *questione della lingua*. Although the *questione* motivated many influential voices, my focus here is on three individuals whose orbits collided with Raphael's in the early years of his Roman residence. In his epic commentary on the reclamation of eloquence, *De arte poetica*, Marco Girolamo Vida advocated the poetic superiority of Latin. The greatest proponent of the vernacular movement, Pietro Bembo preferred the old Tuscan, a position he incisively submitted in his *Prose della volgar lingua*. Baldassare Castiglione, the superlative courtier and author, expressed an eclectic view in Book One of his *Cortegiano*, where he recommended a mélange of courtly tongues. Although publication of these three foundational texts only occurred after Raphael's death (in 1527, 1524, and 1528, respectively), they were drafted and revised as the artist put paint to plaster in the library of Julius II. Surprisingly, none of these works is yet considered in light of Raphael's frescoes in the Stanza. Given the coincidence of these undertakings and the extraordinary bookishness of the paintings in the Stanza della Segnatura, it follows that the transformation of Raphael's Roman style was inspired by the very demands of the space as a literary arena and institution. To the Julian collection, we must therefore add the new styles of literary criticism that reverberated throughout Cinquecento Rome.

### 5.1 Raphael's New Classicism

Raphael's meteoric rise to fame was thanks in part to his great emulative talents and protean pictorial manner. The novelty of style in the Stanza della Segnatura represents not only a major turn in Raphael's artistic maturity, but also the first instance of a new category of classicism, whose influence impressively loomed over the next centuries. Although Raphael's youthful activities in Umbria and Tuscany are seemingly separated by a stylistic gulf, a greater leap is the sudden change between these early works and his Roman commissions under Julius II.<sup>446</sup> His attitude toward antiquity was neither static nor progressive, and his early paintings manifest a surprisingly limited engagement with ancient idioms and themes. The first of Raphael's Roman undertakings was probably the *School of Athens*, a paragon of Renaissance classicism even in its own time. To describe the discipline of philosophy, Raphael placed a throng of togate Greeks under the lofty barrel vaults of Rome's imperial skyline. A chiasmus of figures radiates outward from Plato and Aristotle in the center of the painting, where the harmonies of ancient philosophy are handed down in symmetrical order across the spill of interlocutors. No earlier painting, by Raphael or his predecessors, approaches such a magnificent visual enunciation of ancient subjects and ideas. It would be hyperbole to say that Raphael's style shifted from zero to sixty with the sweep of a brush, but the

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<sup>446</sup> Greater still is the tremendous transformation of style in his late paintings, considered most recently in the exhibition (Madrid, June-September 2012; Paris, October 2012-January 2013) and catalogue: *Late Raphael*, ed. Tom Henry and Paul Johannides (London: Thames and Hudson, 2013). See also the accompanying volume of essays, *Proceedings of the International Symposium*, ed. Miguel Falomir (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 2013).

sentiment is not far off. To approach the sudden novelty of Raphael's Julian style and its impetus, we must therefore first ask how Raphael understood "the classical."<sup>447</sup>

Raphael's early works are traditionally separated into two geographic and formal categories. Before his arrival in Florence, his style is characterized by the jewel-like colors and delicate anatomies familiar from Perugino and the Umbrian school. After his journey to Tuscany where he encountered Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Fra Bartolommeo, his paintings took on new forms of psychic and coloristic expression. Even examples from the early years of Raphael's career reveal a stunning degree of difference, and during his youth, Raphael's approach to antiquity was trendy and superficial. Classical subjects and motifs appear very rarely in this period of his professional life, and these few instances are tentatively formulaic and adolescent. In the allegorical *Vision of a Knight* (fig. 4.1), painted around 1504 on a small poplar panel, Raphael pictured the dream of Scipio Africanus, Roman general *par excellence*. Here the figures are fashionably classical, but their antiquity ends almost where it begins. Gentle *contrapposti* evoke the comparison of Virtue and Pleasure, whose vaguely Roman garb is a reminder of the subject's ancient origins, even as the spired rooftops of the Umbrian hillside in the

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<sup>447</sup> Literature on the legacy of the antique in the Renaissance is vast. Leonard Barkan and Kathleen Wren Christian, already mentioned in notes throughout, have led the recent charge in Roman reception studies. See also Aby Warburg, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999); Roberto Weiss, *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1969); Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture 1500-1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981); *Memoria dell'antico nell'arte italiana. L'uso dei classici*, ed. Salvatore Settis, 3 vol. (Turin: Einaudi, 1984-1986), vol. 1 in particular; John Onians, *Bearers of Meaning: The Classical Orders in Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); *Antiquity and Its Interpreters*, ed. Alina Payne, Ann Kuttner, and Rebekah Smick (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Nicole Dacos, *Roma quanta fuit, ou, l'invention du paysage de ruines* (Brussels: Musée de la Maison d'Erasmus, 2004); David Karmon, *The Ruin of the Eternal City: Antiquity and Preservation in Renaissance Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Jessica Maier, *Rome Measured and Mapped: Early Modern Maps of the Eternal City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

background betray a more recent history. The painting was probably paired with the equally delicate *Three Graces* (fig. 4.2), inspired by the popular sculptural theme.<sup>448</sup> Like a triptych mirror, the Graces duplicate each other's forms in turn — a repetition that weds the painting to its pendant. In the *Vision of a Knight*, Pleasure is the formal twin of the leftmost Grace, whose girdle, in turn, recalls Pleasure's translucent veil. Although both are celebrated examples of Raphael's early *bellezza*, their soft expressions and static poses are distant relatives of the Muses on *Parnassus*. The only known secular subjects Raphael painted before his arrival in Rome (aside from portraits), the two panels were undoubtedly intended for an audience with antiquarian or humanistic tastes, but the antiquity of their references are glib dressings for chivalric conceits.

As Vatican architect under Leo X, Raphael frequently turned to the legacies of Vitruvius and Pliny, and to the ruins of Rome and Tivoli, as compositional models, but ancient architecture makes scant appearances in his works prior to Rome. In the 1507 *Esterhazy Madonna* (fig. 5.3), which only survives as an underpainting, Raphael interjected an ancient cityscape, placing medieval turrets across the broken cornice lines of fractured temples. The insinuation of ruins in Nativities and images of the Madonna was hardly uncommon, and Botticelli, Mantegna, and Ghirlandaio similarly set their

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<sup>448</sup> There is a good deal of debate about the subjects of both paintings, as well as their pairing and patron(s). The panels are of the same size, but the difference in the scale of their figures suggests that they were not attached as a diptych. The *Vision of a Knight* is typically understood to illustrate a passage from the *Punica* of Silius Italicus, which enjoyed significant popularity in the humanist circles of central and southern Italy. Raphael's panel represents one of the only illustrations of the episode in painting, and it is often noted that Raphael turned the terms of a moral dilemma into an allegory for chivalric duty. The subject of the *Three Graces*, so close formally to the sculpture in the Piccolomini collection, has led some scholars to guess that the patron was Sienese. See Passavant, vol. 1, pp. 231-234; Cecil Gould, *The National Gallery Catalogues. The Sixteenth-Century Italian Schools* (London: National Gallery, 1975), pp. 212-225; Chapman, Henry, and Plazzotta, pp. 46-47, and 138-142; and Edgar Wind, "Virtue Reconciled with Pleasure," reprinted in: *Sixteenth Century Italian Art*, ed. Michael Cole (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006), pp. 40-55. The paintings were recently cleaned. The findings of their restoration are reported in: Ashok Roy, Marika Spring, and Carol Plazzotta, "Raphael's Early Work in the National Gallery: Paintings before Rome," in: *National Gallery Technical Bulletin* 25 (2004), pp. 4-35.

*sacre conversazioni* against ancient colonnades and aqueducts to announce the coming of the new law under Christ.<sup>449</sup> The visual proximity of the ancient portico to the Virgin in Raphael's panel insists on their metaphoric comparison, an allusion to Mary's place in scripture as the metaphysical body of the Church.<sup>450</sup> The integration of ruins here is exceptional among Raphael's early career and looks forward to the ruined landscapes of his late Holy Families (figs. 5.4 and 5.5), elements that become as vivid and animated as the figures themselves. None of these examples is *un*-classical per se, but in these early cases, Raphael's approach to antiquity is cautious, superficial, and undeveloped, something akin to theater costumes on a stage set. Prior to his arrival in Rome, Raphael only broadly imported ancient citations with limited amendment, which he finely tuned to the *concetti* of chivalric courts, without the same grand insistence of a coherent historical manner.

But Rome was a watershed moment for the boy wonder, something like love at first sight. Raphael visited the Eternal City as early as 1506 and during his brief stay prepared some of the most famous architectural studies of the period: the interior of the

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<sup>449</sup> The "Golden Age" is foretold by Paul, *Ephesians* 4.20-24, who wrote of leaving behind the "old self" — that is, the law of the Old Testament. The use of ruins was by no means always classical; they seem to be motivated, in part, by local geographies. On ruins in Christian contexts generally, see Karl Borinski, *Die Antike in Poetik und Kunsttheorie* (Leipzig: Dieterichsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1914), pp. 1-32; Cadogan, pp. 31-33; Henrik Cornell, *The Iconography of the Nativity of Christ* (Uppsala: Lundequistska bokhandeln, 1924); Louis Réau, *Iconographie de l'art chrétien*, 3 vol. (Paris: Presses universitaires de France 1955-1959), vol. 2, pp. 213-255 in particular; Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus G. Mohn, 1966), pp. 69-98 in particular; Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), pp. 135-146, and 313-319; and most recently, Andrew Hui, "The Birth of Ruins in Quattrocento Adoration Paintings," in: *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 18.2 (2015), pp. 319-348. More specifically, see Nicole Dacos, *Ghirlandaio et l'antique* (Rome: Academia Belgica, 1962), *passim*; Daniel Arasse, *Léonard de Vinci, le rythme du monde* (Paris: Hazan, 1997), p. 352, has suggested that Leonardo used ruins as a metaphor for the collapse of pagan antiquity.

<sup>450</sup> Jan van Eyck similarly installed Mary in a Gothic nave, exaggerating her scale in relation to the columns beside her. See Erwin Panofsky (1953), pp. 144-147; Ernst Herzog, "Zur Kirchenmadonna van Eycks," in: *Berliner Museen* 6 (1956), pp. 2-16; and Carol J. Purtle, *The Marian Paintings of Jan van Eyck* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 144-156.



Pantheon and an exterior view of its porch (figs. 5.6 and 5.7).<sup>451</sup> The drawings are the beginnings of the artist's lifelong fascination — he was famously buried in the same building, and pilgrims visit his tomb in droves to this day.<sup>452</sup> Raphael's Pantheon studies are strange, drawn from competing angles and under shifting perspectives, but they nevertheless testify to the young painter's growing infatuation with the artistic worldview of antiquity and its possibility for reuse, revision, and reinvention. Probably reworked over time, the interior drawing is not a record precisely, but an exercise toward understanding the psychology of the Pantheon's ancient form and space, a problem of design he struggled to articulate convincingly or confidently.<sup>453</sup> Seeking at once to capture and retune the building's imposing internal harmonies in two dimensions, Raphael widened the angle of vision to include the facing exedrae and trimmed the number of tabernacles from four to three. Something like the distortion from a panoramic lens, the result is both admired and criticized for its perceived idiosyncrasies.<sup>454</sup>

Regardless of the drawing's checkered reception in the academic literature, it offers an improved picture of the young artist's burgeoning approach to antiquity as a means of not only subject, but also artifice and composition.

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<sup>451</sup> The drawing was convincingly attributed to Raphael in the late nineteenth century by Heinrich von Geymüller, "Trois dessins d'architecture inédits de Raphaël," in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 2.3 (1870), p. 79 ff. The attribution was sharpened later that year by Camillo Ravioli, "Sopra tre disegni architetonici o schizzi di Raffael da Urbino," in: *Il Buonarroti* 5 (1870), p. 134 ff. See also Fischel (1913), entries 216 and 217; and Wolfgang Lotz, "Das Raumbild in der italienischen Architekturzeichnung der Renaissance," in: *Mitteilungen des kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 7 (1956), p. 218 ff. The problem of the drawing and its legacy is discussed at length by John Shearman, "Raphael, Rome, and the Codex Escorialensis," in: *Master Drawings* 15.2 (1977), pp. 107-146, and 189-196.

<sup>452</sup> After the tomb was reopened in 1833 on the orders of Pope Gregory XVI to great fanfare, Raphael's skull was measured and fit for a plaster cast. The physiognomic craze of the nineteenth century led to a frenzied comparison of the artist's skeletal remains and his portraits. See Hermann Schaaffhausen, *De Schädel Raphaels: Zur 400 Jährigen Geburtstagsfeier Raphael Santis* (Bonn: Max Cohen & Sohn, 1883); and more recently, Brown (1983), pp. 183-184 in particular.

<sup>453</sup> And probably retouched by a second hand, distinguished by color of ink and cross-hatching. See Shearman (1977), pp. 111-113.

<sup>454</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111. Shearman describes the drawing as rife with "solecisms" and "sins of commission."

When he took up permanent residence in the city and joined the team already at work in the Stanza della Segnatura, Raphael's enchantment with the principles of ancient form continued to grow, and antique sculptures represent another important aspect of his developing Roman repertoire. Indeed, as is often observed, Raphael's Roman paintings are inhabited by the spoliated forms of ancient sculptures. As I noted in the previous chapter, Homer in the *Parnassus* was inspired by the *Laocoön* in the adjacent courtyard, while Homer's scribe (fig. 5.8) combines the postures and expressions of *Laocoön*'s strangled son and the *Spinario* (fig. 5.9).<sup>455</sup> Switching the *Spinario*'s thorn for a quill, Raphael used the same sculpture to picture an enthralled neophyte in the *School of Athens* (fig. 5.10). Some years later, making playful jest to the Hellenistic preferences of his Leonine patron in the *Fire in the Borgo* (fig. 5.11), Raphael modeled the pitiable mothers at the fresco's center after an ancient Niobid group (fig. 5.12), attending to the volume and density of the painting's figures as separate sculptural units.<sup>456</sup> Much could be said (and indeed, has been) about Raphael's inheritance of antiquity and the appearance of classical sources in his painterly works. Rather, my purpose in offering this brief review is to suggest a new interpretation of Raphael's classicism, one that opens new vistas for the cultural *zeitgeist* to which he belonged, and which he helped to shape.

When Raphael joined the Vatican court of Julius II, he not only came face-to-face with the ancient city's marble legacy, but also joined a crowd of poets and critics for whom antiquity's best representative was its language, and who sought to rival and

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<sup>455</sup> The *Spinario* was probably unearthed in the twelfth century, although its circumstances of discovery are unknown. It is the first known ancient sculpture to appear in medieval and Renaissance drawings. In the 1470s, the sculpture was ceremoniously transferred by Sixtus IV to the Palazzo dei Conservatori (now the Capitoline), where it remains. Haskell and Penny, p. 308.

<sup>456</sup> The precise group is unknown. On Raphael's mature paintings under Leo X and the influence of ancient sculpture, see Johannides, p. 24.

surpass the classical model by redefining the principles of composition and style. Conceiving of literary history in terms of imitation, invention, and inspiration, they turned to the very strata of ancient literature to set their modern foundations. I argue that alongside Rome's ruins, these conversations about the nature of literary aesthetics were equally powerful influences, looming as large as the *Laocoön*, and that Raphael's paintings in the Stanza della Segnatura performed as active participants in these new theories of eloquence, presenting us with an analogous visual canon of the Roman style.

## 5.2 Pictorial Eloquence in Cinquecento Rome

Before turning to Raphael's new pictorial eloquence, a brief word is necessary here regarding Rome's literary landscape and the critics who shaped contemporary canons of composition. Although Vida, Bembo, and Castiglione represent distinct patterns of subject, style, and syntax, their positions belong to a similar cult of eloquence, one that arose from a common heritage in traditions of ancient rhetoric. Each stressed that good poetry depends not merely on its subject matter, but especially on the mechanisms of its verse. All of this will be discussed at greater length in its proper place, but for now it is enough to give a brief overview of the positions at stake. Beginning with Petrarch and Boccaccio in the Tre- and Quattrocento, rhetoric effected a magnetic and somewhat natural attraction to literary criticism: the chairs of the *studia humanitatis* depended on the foundations of oratory as the *cursus* for teaching and interpreting figures, tropes, and other verbal schemes in prose, poetry, and *epistolae*.<sup>457</sup> Eloquence, which Cicero placed

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<sup>457</sup> This relationship, of course, began much earlier. Although the bibliography on rhetoric in the Renaissance is vast, see these select sources: Paul Oskar Kristeller, "Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance," in: *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1969), pp. 571-572; Jerrold E. Seigel, *Rhetoric and Philosophy in Renaissance Humanism* 24 (1968), pp. 3-

in the domain of oratory, was defined as a wisdom of style that moves men to moral and creative virtue. For Italy's humanists, the virtuous exempla of antiquity were inscribed by the authority of ancient texts, and surviving manuscripts verified that eloquence was not simply the monopoly of orators, but served equally the genre of poetry.<sup>458</sup> It follows that Renaissance theorists described poetry in the terms of rhetorical composition, or *compositio*, as "bound by numerous rhythms," "circumscribed by separate measures," and "adorned by various ornaments and flowers."<sup>459</sup> The rhetorical substance of poetry was thus an issue of style, or *elocutio*, the prized third principle of oratory on which eloquence is built, whose highest achievement was its ability to conjure a subject in the minds of the audience, as if placing it before their very eyes.<sup>460</sup> Concerned with ornament and the qualities of representation, *elocutio* naturally raised questions of artifice and illusion: How to reconcile content and style? Which ornaments are fitting, and to what degree? — questions that carried with them vast consequences for theories of the visual arts.

The shape of these arguments was deeply concerned with the aesthetics of an appropriate or fitting composition, the principles of which found purchase in the visual

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169; Giulio Vallese, "Retorica medievale e retorica umanistica," in: *Da Dante ad Erasmo: Studi di letteratura umanistica* (Naples: G. Scalabrini, 1962), pp. 39-59; O.B. Hardison, "The Orator and Poet: The Dilemma of Humanist Literature," in: *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 1 (1971), pp. 36-27; Craig Kallendorf, "The Rhetorical Criticism of Literature in Early Italian Humanism from Boccaccio to Landino," in: *A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 1.2 (1983), pp. 33-59; and most recently Ronald G. Witt, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), *passim*.

<sup>458</sup> See Hanna H. Gray, "Renaissance Humanism: The Pursuit of Eloquence," in: *Journal of the History of Ideas* 24.4 (1963), pp. 497-514.

<sup>459</sup> As Cristoforo Landino described in his commentary on Horace (*Horatius cum quattuor commentariis*, CLXV verso; in Bernard Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963], vol. 1, p. 80), as cited in Summers (1981), p. 481, n. 48.

<sup>460</sup> Aimed at persuasion, the first three virtues of composition include: invention (*inventio*), arrangement (*dispositio*), and style (*elocutio*). For a detailed discussion of these principles, see Summers (1981), p. 42 ff.

field with Alberti's *Della pittura*.<sup>461</sup> Likening a painting to an oration, Alberti famously seized on the periodic sentence as the basis for his narrative *istoria*, turning the instruments of *compositio* to the ordered structure of lines, planes, and bodies in a painting.<sup>462</sup> Like the humanist poets of his generation, Alberti counseled painters to read the orators, and in the *Della pittura*, he both adapted the structure of Ciceronian rhetoric and invoked Quintilian by name.<sup>463</sup> Explaining pictorial composition in the words of the ancient rhetoricians, he stressed a priority of persuasive virtues to these effects: good *istorie* demand a proper balance of clarity (*perspexitas*), ornament (*ornatus*), and suitability (*decorum*).<sup>464</sup> As we have already seen, the facing perspective in the *School of Athens* and the *Disputa* is an articulation of the Albertian system writ large, and harmonies of order in the frescoes at once embody and transcend the lofty philosophical and theological subjects described therein. By Raphael's lifetime, not only was Alberti a pervasive and well-established model for persuasive pictorial design, but these same terms were under reconsideration in complementary discussions of poetics.

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<sup>461</sup> First written in the *volgare* in 1435; then published in Latin the following year.

<sup>462</sup> According to this template, writing begins with the discovery or invention of a subject; when the topic is chosen, the orator must then determine the order or arrangement of the planned verse; finally, he embellishes or puts words to the subject using figures of grammar and speech. See again Baxandall, pp. 129-139, has demonstrated; Thomas Puttfarcken, *The Discovery of Pictorial Composition: Theories of Visual Order in Painting 1400-1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 62 ff.; and Caroline van Eck, *Classical Rhetoric and the Visual Arts in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 20-30.

<sup>463</sup> See John Spencer, pp. 26-44, who cites Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini: "Amant enim se artes he (eloquentia et pictura) ad invicem. Ingenium pictura expetit, ingenium eloquentia cupit non vulgare, sed altum et summum. Mirabile dictu est, dum viguit eloquentia, viguit pictura, sicut Demostenis et Ciceronis tempora docent. Postquam cecidit facundia iacuit et pictura. Cum illa revixit, hec quoque caput extullit. Videmus picturas ducentorum annorum nulla prorsus arte politas. Scripta illius aetatis rudia sunt, inepta, incompta. Post Petrarcham emerunt littere; post Jotum surrexere pictorum manus; utramque ad summam iam videmus artem pervenisse" (p. 27). From a letter of 1452, in: *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*, ed. Rudolph Wolkan (Vienna: Hölder, 1918), vol. 2, p. 100, n.

<sup>464</sup> In Section 38 of his *De pictura*, Alberti borrowed the last three of Quintilian's four *virtutes dicendi*: *latinitas* (purity of Latin), *perspexitas*, *ornatus*, and *decorum*.

The principles of eloquence advanced by Vida, Bembo, Castiglione, and Raphael assumed two other related doctrines that deserve attention here: we return again to imitation and invention, the cooperative terms of composition. In earlier sections, I have discussed imitation as the emulation of nature and of literary and artistic models. Imitation, as I have said, was also a central principle of rhetorical pedagogy and a strategy of invention, one that lies at the center of Raphael's pictorial practice.<sup>465</sup> Invention, the first and indispensable virtue of the art of rhetoric, is the faculty of discovery — the discovery of an idea or subject, as well as its means of expression.<sup>466</sup> It will be recalled that invention was central to rhetorical and poetic composition in the Renaissance, deriving at once from the study of tested topoi and from the orator or poet's *ingegno*.<sup>467</sup> Even as some retrieved the familiar models of the distant and recent past, there was a fine line between discovery and theft, and good invention relied on the power of wit to steer its noble course. It was to these rhetorical and poetic ends that Cicero

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<sup>465</sup> In *De inventione* II.2.4, for example, Cicero wrote that he had “plucked the blossoms of many minds.”

<sup>466</sup> Aristotle (*Rhetoric* I.2.1) defined the concept in broad terms as “discovering the means of persuasion in reference to any subject.” In *De partitione oratoria* (I.3-2.5), Cicero described the power of invention in terms of *res* (a speech's ideas and facts) and *verba* (the words deployed to express these ideas and facts). According to Cicero, the discovery of a subject necessarily precedes the discovery of words. In *De inventione* (I.7.9), he called invention “foremost” (*princeps*) of the parts of rhetoric. On ancient and early modern definitions of invention, see Ullrich Langer's essay in: *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: The Renaissance*, ed. Glyn P. Norton (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1999), vol. 3, pp. 136-143.

<sup>467</sup> As I discussed in Chapter 2.3. It is not my intention here to take up the complex history of *ingenium* or *ingegno*. It is enough to note here that *ingenium* was essential to Cicero's definition of rhetorical invention, *De oratore* I.xxiii.108-109: “Nam et animi atque ingenii celeres quidam motus esse debent, qui et ad excogitandum acuti, et ad explicandum orandumque sint uberes, et ad memoriam firmi atque diuturni.” Even in antiquity, the concept of *ingenium* was bound up in issues of inspiration, divine insight, and *fantasia*, and I will discuss certain of these principles in the following section. Here I use *ingegno* in the sense defined by Summers (1987), pp. 232-233: “Action, or skilled action — art — has to do with individual character compounded with experience, *ingenium* compounded with *ars*. It is to be noted that *ingenium* is not simply shaped by *ars*, rather *ingenium* is in effect always a part of apprehension and judgment, of the continual evaluation of states of affairs. Our actions are inevitably interlaced with sensate judgment and experience.” On the relationship of imitation, invention, and *ingegno*, see *ead.* (1981), p. 207 ff.; and Martin Kemp, “From Mimesis to Fantasia: The Quattrocento Vocabulary of Creation, Inspiration, and Genius in the Visual Arts,” in: *Viator* 8 (1977), pp. 347-398.

recounted the story of Zeuxis and the women of Croton, or that Raphael's Galatea letter aspired.

On issues of imitation and invention, and of poetry and painting, Horace is of special concern here.<sup>468</sup> The well-known Horatian simile *ut pictura poesis* was incessantly cited in Renaissance discussions of painting, but even more important were the beginning lines of his *Ars poetica*.<sup>469</sup> In a passage on hybrid forms and *groteschi* candelabra, Horace wrote that poets and painters are equal in their shared license of invention.<sup>470</sup> Although he made the statement in order to negate it, and he obviously intended to delimit freedom of ornament, the text was nevertheless upheld in the Renaissance as an authority for the comparison of the sister arts. Horace presented two critical alternatives for his inheritors: on one hand, he encouraged license to invent, but on the other, he circumscribed creative freedom. My purpose is not to dwell on the various ways in which these oppositions found currency; it is enough to note here that one was moderate and controlled, and the other fantastic and purely artificial.<sup>471</sup> What is of interest for present purposes is the relationship between form and content. The Horatian association of painting with the embellishments of language was not only an essential stimulus for humanistic rules of poetics, but it also enforced the common

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<sup>468</sup> We might also point to Aristotle, who compared poets and painters in their imitation of human nature in a well-known passage from the *Poetics*. He explains that painters and poets alike imitate men as better and worse than ourselves: Polygnotos imagines them as better, Pauson as worse, and Dionysios as we are. Some books later, on tragic theater, he offered a similarly visual analogy, observing that a canvas splashed at random with beautiful colors does not elicit the same pleasure as a portrait drawn in outline. *Poetics* 48a1-6 and 1450b1. As cited in Lee, p. 199, ns. 12 and 13 in particular; see also Ackerman (2002), pp. 126-127.

<sup>469</sup> Horace used the simile to suggest that good literature, like painting, should be viewed at a distance, and not scrutinized for its minutiae.

<sup>470</sup> *Ars poetica* 9-10: "pictoribus atque poetis/quidlibet audendi semper fuit aequa potestas."

<sup>471</sup> Horace was making a distinction between styles related to forensic and epideictic rhetoric. Renaissance writers identified the second of these as "sophistic," a conspicuous license of execution and artificial virtuosity. On *ut pictura poesis*, artifice, and skill, see Summers (1981), pp. 17-20, and 42 ff.

intellectual bond of poetry and painting as laboratories for testing theories of imitation and invention.

In the sections that follow, I argue that Raphael's frescoes in the Stanza della Segnatura endow the ancient tradition of the *Ars poetica* with a new visual volume, one that exploits analogies of poetry and painting, as well as relationships of content and form. From the subtle distinction of its figures to the periodic style of its paintings, the *Bibliotheca Iulia* projects a persuasive argument on literary themes of imitation and invention, in which Raphael positioned himself as student and teacher, as inheritor and critic, and as imitator and inventor.

### 5.3 Parnassus, Poetry, and Della Rovere Domains

Home of the Muses and paradise of poets, Raphael's *Parnassus* is one of the first monumental instances of its subject in painting, and the place where Raphael's pictorial expression of poetic culture finds its most obvious visual purchase in theme and in style.<sup>472</sup> Just as the models for the *School of Athens* are all literary, precedents for the *Parnassus* are found in epic or panegyric sources, where the invocation of the Muses and their mount is commonplace. It will be remembered that the margins and miniatures in the Calderini manuscript supplied a clever pivot point between Vatican readership, Sappho, and Raphael's Apollo. A similarly bookish analogue explains how the fresco transforms the library's popular poetic tropes into a simultaneously literary and visual locus. In ancient poetry, the Muses are entreated to confer their gift of song; in contemporary occasional verse, the Della Rovere are their patrons and the Vatican their

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<sup>472</sup> Earlier is Andrea Mantegna's so-called "Parnassus," painted for Isabella d'Este in 1497. Its subject and symbolism, however, are still widely debated.



home. A few pages after he proclaimed the Julian salvation of books, Lippo Brandolini extolled Apollo's return to the Eternal City.<sup>473</sup> Ever on the topic of books, he wrote that the god was persuaded by the new Vatican Library of the Della Rovere and its literary riches; there the Muses made their new home in the very volumes inspired by their *numen* to preside over the creation and curation of knowledge.

Nor was Lippo the only poet to associate Apollo and papal libraries in such exalted terms. The sentiments of Lippo's poem, that Sixtus and Julius achieved Rome's revival through the reclamation of verse, is reaffirmed by dedicatory volumes once shelved in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*. In a small *libellus*, dedicated dually to Sixtus and Cardinal Giuliano in 1471, the Vatican librarian Venturinus Prior sings of the return of Apollo and the Muses: "Now the Pierides have led you to the sacred waves of their Helicon; they dedicate their plectrum and cithara. And now those dwellers of the mount are able to sing with your mouth as their vehicle; because Apollo strums his tortoise lyre for you; when you speak, all the joyful chorus of Apollo is near, and the whole cheerful cliff of Parnassus."<sup>474</sup> The itinerant poet Johannes Michael Nagonius, who dedicated one of the most exquisite volumes in the Julian collection (fig. 5.13), celebrated the prolifically literary papal court in similar eulogistic terms. Equating Parnassus and the New Jerusalem, likening Apollo and the Sun of Justice, his panegyric ushers the reader across the room, from Raphael's mountain to the arrival of the Apocalypse.<sup>475</sup>

<sup>473</sup> See again the introduction, n. 1, and the appendix for full text. On the Della Rovere, Apollo, and Parnassus as panegyric and visual themes, see again Schröter (1980) and (1977).

<sup>474</sup> Item 177 on the first list of the 1513 inventory: BAV MS [REDACTED] f. 3r - f. 4v: "Te quoqu[e] pierides sacras heliconis ad undas/Adduxere sui : plectru[m] citara[m]qu[e] dederu[n]t ./E[t]que tuo possunt dulces heliconides ore/Nunc cantare : chelim quo[n]iam tibi pulsat apollo. /Ipse chorus quando dictas amphyrus omnis/L[a]etus adest tota est hylaris parnasia rupes." See Appendix 4.

<sup>475</sup> Item 23 on the first list of the 1513 inventory: BAV MS [REDACTED]. For the most complete historical review of the poet, his subjects, and the Julian manuscript, with partial transcription, see Paul

The persistent theme of the Vatican as a new Parnassus in the eulogistic literature of the Della Rovere suggests that Raphael's painting was imagined at once as a visual summit of this poetic locus and a portrait of Rome's literary terrain. In the books and in the painting, the citizens of Parnassus are more than just symbols of Rome's florescence under the Della Rovere. Through the library, the popes become their delegates and pronounce their inspired message. Reading the lyric verse of Venturinus, Nagonius, and their peers, we imagine Sixtus and Julius before the sparkling Castalian waters, where Apollo and the Muses pluck their instruments and sing through the voices of the popes. Gathering this "joyful chorus" together on the Poetry wall, Raphael's fresco enacts a visual performance of the divine court of Julius II and summarizes its vast domain in three echoed forms: the verse contained in the *Bibliotheca*'s volumes, the pronouncement of these Parnassian themes in the painting, and the view from the northern window. The vista opened onto the Vatican hill, the Mons Vaticanus, which contemporary poets related etymologically to *vaticinium*, the Latin for "prophecy" or "divine inspiration."<sup>476</sup> The poems and the painting are, of course, something like the statues and monuments excavated from the city's ruins, the best examples of which Julius ravenously hunted for display in his private garden. Other than the *Laocoön*, the crown jewel in the Julian tiara of antiquities was the *Apollo Belvedere*, whose placement in the courtyard embodied the god's arrival on the Vatican, the new Parnassus. A concert of verse and vision, the poetry, the painting, and the vista profess the restoration of the antique in three mutual metaphors of the papal domain, summarized by the Stanza as humanistic space.

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Gwynne, *Poets and Princes: The Panegyric Poetry of Johannes Michael Nagonius* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), pp. 227-247 in particular.

<sup>476</sup> Elisabeth Schröter, "Raffaels Parnass: eine ikonographische Untersuchung," in: *Actas del XXIII. Congreso internacional de historia del arte 3* (1978), p. 595; Jones and Penny (1983), p. 68.

#### 5.4 Marco Girolamo Vida and *De arte poetica*

Whereas the lives and works of Bembo and Castiglione are the subjects of numerous biographies and academic studies, frustratingly less is known about Marco Girolamo Vida. What is certain is that his masterpiece, *De arte poetica*, skyrocketed his reputation as one of the influential “canons” of sterling *latinitas* in Cinquecento Rome.<sup>477</sup> In the footsteps of Horace and his *Ars poetica*, Vida’s *De arte poetica* is a didactic epic on the theory of poetic composition — the clearest expression of his professional thesis on literary virtue and pedagogy.<sup>478</sup> Like Horace, who sought to validate and encourage the poetic enterprises of Augustan Rome, with *De arte poetica*, Vida aspired to impart the same vital principles of imitation, invention, and inspiration that excelled in his text. Probably underway between 1507 and 1513, the work was disseminated (unofficially) in 1517 as a classroom primer; with its eventual publication in 1527, it was instant dynamite, earning its author a place in Italy’s literary pantheon alongside the same ancient poets he championed.<sup>479</sup> In spite of the poem’s smashing success and wide

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<sup>477</sup> As he was called by his contemporary Lilius Gregorius Giralduus, *De poetis nostrorum temporum*, ed. Karl Wotke (Berlin: Weidmann, 1894), as cited in: Ralph G. Williams, *The De Arte Poetica of Marco Girolamo Vida* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), p. XVII-XVII: “Admirari ego soleo, id quod vos minime fugit, Marcum Hieronymum Vidam Cremonensem, unum ex sodalibus, quos a vitae regula canonicos appellamus.”

<sup>478</sup> Like Horace, Vida wrote his poem as a dedicatory epistle in the hexameter.

<sup>479</sup> The precise date of the poem’s composition is unknown. The work took shape over the course of many years before its publication in 1527. Similarity of style and references to contemporary figures suggest that it was first conceived around the same time as the *Scacchia ludis* – that is, between 1507 and 1513. All early traces, however, are lost. The unofficial edition of the text, disseminated for school use in Cremona, was completed around 1517 and is substantially longer than the published edition (by more than 700 lines). In the final edition, all references to non-Medici figures are omitted or replaced. The early version has never been translated into English, but Williams has helpfully included the Latin in his volume, along with a line-by-line chart of differences and similarities (pp. 199-273; along with the letter of 1520 sent to the *patres* of Cremona explaining its pedagogical use). It is important to note here that the 1517 version was never meant for publication, nor did Vida consider it authoritative. To navigate these problems of chronology and authorial intent, I have consulted both. On early versions of the text, and its evolution, see Mario A. di Cesare, “The *Ars Poetica* of Marco Girolamo Vida and the Manuscript Evidence,” in: *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Lovaniensis*, ed. J. IJsewijn and E. Kessler (Louvain: Leuven University Press, 1973), pp. 207-218. One of the best and most thorough introductions to Vida’s life and the text is Williams,

publication, it has only received lukewarm reception by modern literary scholars, and although translators occasionally note the strikingly visual character of his verse, Vida has never risen from obscurity in the study of Renaissance art.<sup>480</sup> At the Vatican courts of Julius II and Leo X, however, Vida would have encountered some of the most influential artists of the period, including Raphael, Michelangelo, and Leonardo; he was also acquainted with the literary luminaries Bembo and Castiglione.<sup>481</sup> To understand the aesthetic reach of his verse, it is necessary here to restore Vida's voice to the Vatican circles in which he worked.

Accounts of Vida's early life are few, but it is possible to glean something of his blossoming reputation as a worthy papal poet. Born in Cremona between 1480 and 1485, Vida traveled to Rome sometime in the first decade of the Cinquecento, probably to undertake advanced study in philosophy and theology, but the precise details of his movements are uncertain.<sup>482</sup> Mention of his literary activity appears frequently enough around this time, and his talents seem to have found favor at the papal court not long after his arrival in the Eternal City. Taking orders as a young man, he built his reputation as an

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pp. XII-LII in particular; see also the translation and commentary of James Gardner, *Christiad* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009).

<sup>480</sup> Vida's champions are surprisingly few. In recent decades, Ralph Williams and Philip Hardie, "Vida's *De arte poetica* and the Transformation of Models," in: *Apodosis: Essays Presented to Dr. W. W. Cruikshank to Mark his Eightieth Birthday* (London: 1992), pp. 47-53, have sought to restore his reputation. Some other useful discussions of Vida's legacy, especially in light of the Virgilian tradition, include: Craig Kallendorf, "Virgil to Vida: The Poeta Theologus in Italian Renaissance Commentary," in: *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56.1 (1995), pp. 41-62; Robin Sowerby, *The Augustan Art of Poetry: Augustan Translation of the Classics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 7-61.

<sup>481</sup> See Williams, XVI.

<sup>482</sup> As he reported in: *M. Gerolamo Vida, Elogio dello stato (De rei publicae dignitate)*, 1: "Quum enim iam adolevissem, relictis studiis illarum artium quas qui tenent eruditi vocantur, me totum philosophis, tum theologis tradideram erudiendum," published by Giuseppe Toffanin, *L'umanesimo al concilio di Trento* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1955), p. 11, and cited by Williams, p. XVI, n. 13.

ordained *poeta theologus*, matching his ecclesiastical duties to his Latin composition.<sup>483</sup>

By 1511, Vida's *Juliad* — an epic account of the pope's military victories, now lost — was already substantially drafted.<sup>484</sup> Around this time, Vida also composed a series of Latin eclogues, as well as the *Felsiniad* — presumably another epic, similarly lost — whose single known volume is listed on the 1513 inventory of the Julian library.<sup>485</sup>

Although we can only speculate as to the nature and contents of these missing works, it is nevertheless possible to reconstruct something of Vida's poetic mission during the papacy of Julius II through the *De arte poetica*, underway at the same moment as Raphael's frescoes.

Divided into three books, Vida's *De arte poetica* is conceived at once as a didactic guide and a work of art in its own right. The text is an exuberant commentary on the poetic and theological task of Latin composition, which the poet-priest understood to be the primary instrument of Rome's cultural recovery and the essential vehicle of its continued immortality under the papacy. As Vida saw it, Rome's destiny rested not on the fruits of war, but on learning and the arts, and he foresaw a new and greater empire built on the reclamation of ancient eloquence.<sup>486</sup> Just as Quintilian established a comprehensive code of rhetoric, the chief aim of Vida's *ars poetica* was to codify the principles of Latin prosodic composition for early modern readers. Its three books are

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<sup>483</sup> A canon regular, he was made Bishop of Alba in 1533. He went on to participate in the Council of Trent in 1562 and publish the *Contitutiones Synodales*, the first document to articulate the aims of the Counter Reformation.

<sup>484</sup> After the pope's death in 1513, Vida approached his brother Leonardo della Rovere for aid in publishing a revised version of the poem.

<sup>485</sup> Item 31 on the Julian inventory: "Hieronymi Vid[a]e felsinaidos ex me[m]b. in velluto rubro." The 1518 inventory of the Vatican Library includes a tantalizing note, that its prefect Filippo Beroaldo had taken (or was gifted) the volume. Beroaldo died in Rome later that year, but the afterlife of his collection — and so also of the *Felsiniad* — remains a mystery (BAV MS Vat.lat.3948, f. 40r: "Hieron. Vidae felcinaidos in velluto rubro — Beroaldus Bibliothecarius abstulit.").

<sup>486</sup> For example, *De arte poetica* [1527 ed.], II.558-565.

dedicated to the rhetorical norms discussed above: invention (*inventio*), arrangement (*dispositio*), and style (*elocutio*), which Vida tells us are what elevate poetry to art.

Although this rhetorical system is the formative basis of the poem, the text is even more obviously a crafted Virgilian epic, whose language and style illustrate the very doctrines it puts forth. But instead of plotting the hero's journey to Latium as Virgil had, across the waters of the Hellespont and Aegean, Vida's course is an authorial odyssey, a poet's pilgrimage toward the summit of Parnassus as he seeks inspiration through verse.

Imitation undergirds Vida's verse from beginning to end, and Vida advocates the long and deliberate study of ancient models. His purpose is twofold: the poet learns his best strategies from the past, and in so doing, makes a place for himself in the established canon of antiquity. For Vida, the emulation of ancient precedents is at once precept and practice, and across the poem he maintains its fundamental importance for the invention of a subject, syntax and style, and poetic inspiration. We will return to inspiration later, but for now, some words about Vida's conception of imitation are in order. Vida's definition is essentially consistent with Seneca's analogy of poets and bees, according to which models are selected, studied, and transformed.<sup>487</sup> In a particularly lucid passage, Vida explains imitation's process and merits: "We devour the golden words [of the ancients]; desiring these things, we plunder their particular honor. Consider how we fit to our own use the trappings of the ancients; here we appropriate their brilliant inventions, there the order and spirit of their words, and even the words themselves. Nor should we

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<sup>487</sup> See again, Chapter 2, pp. 10-12. Vida hints at the analogy at various points in the poem. Consider *De arte poetica* [1527 ed.] II.252-255: "Me nulla iccuro quiret vis sistere, quin post/Naturas & apum dictas & liquida mella,/Tristis Aristaei questus, monitusque parentis/Prosequeretur dulci sermone, & Protea vinctum."

be ashamed of occasionally speaking with another's tongue."<sup>488</sup> As the passage continues, Vida explains that polished poets know to conceal their piracy by giving everything "an entirely new image."<sup>489</sup> The poet's challenge and reward are in covert references, just as Vida assembles his own quilted work from disguised citations, turned to Christian purpose. In essence a labor of *difficultà*, this poetic exercise of cloaking old models with new order and embellishment demands the shared efforts of author and audience to craft and appreciate imitative artistry.<sup>490</sup>

Toward these imitative aims, Vida's verse is colorfully ekphrastic, abounding with verdant groves and glittering shields. It is also built on the vocabulary of sight, but in spite of the poem's boldly artistic character, its relationship to contemporary painting has never been discussed.<sup>491</sup> Over and over, Vida entreats his readers to gaze upon the visual spectacle of the words before them, and he defines the poet's task as setting images in the readers' minds.<sup>492</sup> Before the poet puts pen to paper, Vida advises that he must first "fashion in prose an image."<sup>493</sup> In a long exercise in citation, Vida lists the kings, queens, and heroes that populate the ancient rosters, repeating that the poet must "paint" portraits

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<sup>488</sup> *De arte poetica* [1527 ed.], III.210-216: "quorum depascimur aurea dicta./Praecipuumque avidi rerum populamus honorem./Aspice ut exuvias, veterumque insignia nobis/Aptemus . rerum accipimus nunc clara reperta,/Nunc seriem, atque animum verborum, verba quoque ipsa:/Nec pudet interdum alterius nos ore loquutos."

<sup>489</sup> *Ibid.*, [1527 ed.], III.220: "nova sit facies, nova prorsus imago."

<sup>490</sup> On the history of *difficultas* or *difficultà*, see the chapter in Summers (1981), pp. 177-185.

<sup>491</sup> James Gardner has observed the aestheticism of Vida's verse in his translation of the *Christiad*, p. XIV, but never seriously takes up the discussion. Instead, he seems mired by a surprisingly reductive characterization of contemporary religious painting: "Even artists as great as Titian and Raphael, in their depictions of New Testament subjects, tend toward what seems to us stereotypical conceptions of pious emotion."

<sup>492</sup> For example, *De arte poetica* [1527 ed.], III.66-75: "Ille tamen silvas, interque virentia prata/Inspiciens mirantur, aquae quae purior humor/Cuncta refert, captosque eludi imagine visus./Non aliter vates nunc huc traducere mentes/Nunc illuc, animisque legentum apponere gaudet/Diversas rerum species, dum taedia vitat./Res humiles ille interea non secius effert/Splendore illustrans alieno, & lumine vestit:/Verborumque simul vitat dispendia parcus."

<sup>493</sup> *Ibid.* [1527 ed.], I.75-77: "Quin etiam prius effigiem formare solutis/Totiusque operis simulacrum fingere verbis/Proderit . . ."

of these characters and episodes.<sup>494</sup> By emulating both the ancient poets and the natural world, Vida maintains that words manifest an artificial counterpoint to the vivacity of life, a point he expressly likens to fashioning an image.<sup>495</sup> Taking up Vida's visual verse as a new lens, I suggest that Raphael envisioned an *ars poetica* of his own. Transforming the literary exempla of the library into an artistic performance of poetic composition and style, Raphael accomplishes what his poetic colleagues stressed most: to place his subjects before the eyes of the audience.

### 5.5 The Artist Inspired: Raphael and Vida

In previous chapters, I have discussed Raphael's visual scheme in the Stanza della Segnatura as a pictorial essay on imitation in conversation with the library's deluxe volumes. Here, Vida's premise widens our purview to shed new light on the pictorial reinvention of literary exempla, and again the *Parnassus* is a fertile place to begin. Not only was the mountain a popular metaphor for the Della Rovere and their sponsorship of books, but it was also a favorite allegory of poets for the task of composition. In a tradition that reaches back to Virgil, as well as Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, who are also pictured on *Parnassus*, the master strategy of Vida's poem is the characterization of the author as the epic hero, and the wanderings of Aeneas and Odysseus are transformed into ancient metaphors for the poet's path toward the heavenly summit: "In the meantime, let the Muses be your escorts. Now dare to climb with me to the steep groves of

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<sup>494</sup> *Ibid.* [1527 ed.], II.68-75: "pingunt clypeos . . . Nunc variis pingunt cum floribus auricomum ver."

<sup>495</sup> *Ibid.* [1527 ed.], 2.459-464: "Hinc varios moresque hominum, moresque animantum,/Aut studia imparibus divisa aetatibus apta/Effingunt facie verborum; & imagine reddunt/Quae tardosque senes deceant, juvenesque virentes,/Femineumque genus; quantum quoque rura colenti,/Aut famulo distet regum alto e sanguine cretus."



Parnassus!”<sup>496</sup> Apollo and the Muses are mentioned most frequently of the characters punctuating Vida’s verse, and as he promises to guide the reader toward the summit of Parnassus, Vida also describes his own work as an ascent. Interleaving these three layers, Vida writes:

This is the custom of speaking . . . which the heaven-dwellers themselves practice in the lofty halls of the sky, and which the chorus of Muses brought down to earth long ago and taught to men — these splendid inventions of the gods! For they say that in the divine court of Jove, the Muses socialize with the gods and dance a festal chorus, and that they sing ever the one after the other, and they delight in conversation with Apollo, and inspire the breasts of the poets from on high.<sup>497</sup>

As Vida describes a vibrant assembly of Apollo and the Muses lending their voices to mortal men, so Raphael imagined *Parnassus* as both the poetic source and its journey. In forms reminiscent of Vida’s vision, Raphael intermingles ancients and moderns on the mountain, where he charts the heritage of models and imitators, inviting the viewer in turn to emulate these figures.

Not only did Raphael depict the poets worthy of emulation, but like Vida, he also distinguished between them in their representation. To prepare the poet for inventing a subject, Vida begins his *ars* by reviewing the ancient poetic genres. Highest of all he ranks epic, which he calls the sacred gift of Apollo, and he advises students to dedicate themselves to the study of Homer and Virgil: “Compare our Aeneas with Achilles, who burns in his fiery spirit, and with the roaming Ithacan, impelling the two bards to compete

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<sup>496</sup> *De arte poetica* [1527 ed.], I.24-25: “in altis/Jam te Parnassi mecum aude attollere lucos.” *C.f.* Virgil, *Georgics* III.291-292: “Sed me Parnasi deserta per ardua dulcis/raptat amor.”

<sup>497</sup> *De arte poetica* [1527 ed.], III.76-83: “Hunc fandi morem (si vera audivimus) ipsi/Caelicolae exercent caeli in penetralibus altis,/Pieridum chorus in terras quem detulit olim,/Atque homines docuere, deum praeclara reperta./Illae etenim Jovis aetherea dicuntur in aula/Immixtae superis festas agitare choreas,/Et semper canere alternae, Phoebisque fruuntur/Colloquio, vatumque inspirant pectora ab alto.”

often.”<sup>498</sup> On the *Parnassus* Raphael rendered a similar hierarchy, placing epic on the mountain’s peak. In his description of the fresco, Vasari names the elegists Catullus, Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid, but we can only speculate as to the presence of certain ancient poets.<sup>499</sup> The epic fathers, however, occupy an indisputable place of pride in the painting. Aside from Apollo and the Muses, only Homer, Virgil, and Dante tread the summit of Raphael’s *Parnassus*. When the Stanza’s *basamento* was redecorated under Leo X, their precedence was suggestively maintained in two grisaille panels along the lunette’s lower frame. Bookending *Parnassus*, these miniature episodes reaffirm the priority of the epic poets above: envisioning the emperors Augustus and Alexander as they preserve the Trojan saga, the panels metaphorically bear the visual and foundational weight of the mountain and poets above, corresponding to the essential curriculum Vida recommends to begin the Parnassian journey.

Vida also describes the poet’s ascent as a contest for the laurels, and he mentions only one other poet in his survey of genres: before Virgil took up the Homeric mantle and composed for Rome its great national poem, Ennius cultivated the Latin tongue. According to Vida, it was through Ennius, the founder of Roman literature, that the Muses traveled from Greece to Rome: “Then the whole grove resounded to the rustling woodland trees. With his rough speech, father Ennius had yet to brave battle lines and arms — Ennius, who later was first of the Latin poets to dare to hope for the verdant

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<sup>498</sup> *Ibid.* [1527 ed.], 1.33-37, Vida relates the story of Phemonoe, the daughter of Apollo and the first priestess of Delphi, who was thought to have invented hexameter. The maxim “Know thyself” is often attributed to her. See also 1.126-128: “Nostro Aeneae jam conferet igneis/Aeaciden flagrantem animis, Ithacumque vagantem:/Atque ambos saepe impellet concurrere vates.”

<sup>499</sup> Some ambiguity was probably deliberate, inviting viewers to participate in conversation and debate. See Jones and Penny, p. 69.

crown from the Greek's head."<sup>500</sup> Named by Vasari as Homer's seated scribe, Ennius seems a likely candidate for the *Parnassus* (see again, fig. 5.8). Framed by the branches of the olive tree, the blond youth turns to hear Homer's song; Homer, in turn, outstretches his arm and signals the conferral of his meter. Gazing toward the blind bard, the scribe is the only mortal in the painting without the poet's crown. Although "Father Ennius" is described with certain deference in *De arte poetica*, Vida stops short of giving him a crown, reserving the precious laurels for his successor Virgil.

The art of composition, however, is only teachable to an extent, and its success depends equally on the celestial ingredient of inspiration, which by the fifteenth century had become a major point of comparison between poetry and painting.<sup>501</sup> Vida's approach to poetic composition is distinctly spiritual, and like his fellow Julian authors, he stresses the place of the poet as Apollo's mortal mouthpiece. By imitating the enlightened poets of antiquity, inspiration surpasses the natural reach of art — without it, the stuff of composition (invention, syntax, and style) is a stale exercise. Through inspiration, Vida says, *difficultà* is made possible and artifice is rendered divine; this inspired frenzy properly belongs to poets and is channeled through their works.<sup>502</sup> Vida's premise is essentially Neoplatonic, that the poet is the elected recipient of divine *furor*, and that his inspired song becomes the vessel of veiled truth.<sup>503</sup> Already in the Trecento, Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio had invoked this classical doctrine, appealing to ancient

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<sup>500</sup> *De arte poetica* [1527 ed.], 153-157: "... tunc ome sonabat/Arbustum fremitu silvai frondosai,/Nondum acies, nondum arma rudi pater Ennius ore/Tentarat, qui mox Grajo de vertice primus/Est ausus viridem in Latio sperare coronam."

<sup>501</sup> On this history, see Summers (1981), pp. 60-70; and Kallendorf (1995), *passim*.

<sup>502</sup> *De arte poetica* [1527 ed.], II.13-14: "Durus uterque labor . sed quos deus aspicit aequus,/Saepe suis subito invenient accommoda votis."

<sup>503</sup> Indeed, Vida uses the verbal and adjectival forms of "furor" to describe divine possession, e.g.: "Huc atque huc furit . . . Talis Phoebeus vates rapiturque furitque/Incensus plenusque Deo stimulisque subactus" (1517, 2.591-614).

texts like the *Pro Archia*, eventually disinterred in 1333. By the sixteenth century, the creative conditions of *furor* were widely discussed, due in part to the wide availability of Plato's *Phaedrus* and *Symposium*, whose late-Quattrocento commentaries and translations resulted in the significant return of the inspired poet as theme.<sup>504</sup> Emulating these Platonic models, Vida the poet-priest maintained that invention originates in the election of the gods and that the poetic subject is a labor of the spirit. This union of imitation, invention, and inspiration, as Vida understands it, reaches beyond the basic limitations of art and infuses poet and poem alike with the transcendental beauty of the divine.

Just as Vida described composition as an inspired activity, Raphael envisaged divine animation in his portrait of Tommaso Inghirami (c. 1510), the Vatican humanist and papal librarian (fig. 5.14). Fondly called "*Fedra*" after a memorable performance of Seneca's titular *Phaedra*, Inghirami is remembered as a lively Vatican fixture and celebrated poet laureate.<sup>505</sup> In Raphael's portrait, the prefect is clad in the crimson of a cardinal, and he touches an inky pen to the blank page. Like the Evangelist Saint Matthew or Apollo on *Parnassus*, Raphael's *Fedra* gently twists from his desk in search of the poetic source. The portrait transforms an eye-catching imperfection, *Fedra*'s famous strabismus, into a symbol of his inspiration.<sup>506</sup> It is tempting to imagine that Inghirami's open book might represent Plato's *Phaedrus*, close in title to the librarian's

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<sup>504</sup> Petrarch uncovered and transcribed the *Pro Archia* in Liège in 1333. The motto above Poetry is sometimes noted to resemble the words of Cicero (*Pro Arch.* VIII.18): "Quasi divino quodam spiritu inflari."

<sup>505</sup> On the two portraits of Inghirami and the autograph status of the one in the Palazzo Pitti, see Giovanni Battistini, "Raphael's Portrait of Fedra Inghirami," in: *Burlington Magazine* 138 (1996), pp. 541-545.

<sup>506</sup> This elegant device has been noted by Jones and Penny, p. 159; Rowland (1997), p. 151; Joanna Woods-Marsden, "One Artist, Two Sitters, One Role; Raphael's Papal Portraits," in: *The Cambridge Companion to Raphael*, ed. Marcia B. Hall (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 128; and Paul Barolsky, "The Elusive Raphael," in: *Falomir*, p. 10.

namesake and in content to the painting's subject. Describing the *furia* of a soul possessed or moved by the divine, Plato explains that "the greatest goods come to us through the madness that is given as a divine gift," and "this [madness] seizes a tender soul and stimulates it to rapt passionate expression."<sup>507</sup>

Inspiration also permeates the lyrical landscape of Raphael's *Parnassus*, which Vasari described as a rhapsodic cadence of poets and bards, transfigured by the breath of the divine. Unfolding in small groups of alliterated colors, gestures, and gazes, the figures are related by their rhythm of expressions. Capturing this elevated beauty, Vasari writes that Raphael's figures are so close to life that they seem to inhale the very spirit of divinity (*spiri un fiato di divinità*). He describes the quivering leaves and the soft wind, as if blown by the breath of Apollo and the Muses (*con tanta bellezza d'arie e divinità nelle figure, che grazia e vita spirano ne' fiati loro*).<sup>508</sup> And so in the fresco, we behold a composition animated by the divine spirit. Above the garlands of figures on the mountain's slope, Raphael's Muses are an otherworldly vision of beauty, moved by the melody of Apollo's instrument. Enrapt, Apollo gazes heavenward to the music of the heavenly spheres, suggestively pictured in the ceiling, whose harmonies are echoed by the celestial beauty of the Muses.

Like Raphael, Vida describes poetry as inhaling the divine, and he asks the Muses to breathe into his spirit as he strives toward their Helicon. Just as Homer and Virgil began their epics with an invocation of the Muses, Vida's *ars poetica* opens and closes with a frenzied plea for the inspired breath, which Raphael echoed by placing a similar

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<sup>507</sup> Plato, *Phaedrus*, ed. Harold North Fowler; intro. W. R. M. Lamb (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1990), 244a-245a.

<sup>508</sup> Barolsky (2000), pp. 31-33.

plea in the ceiling above the *Parnassus*. Just as Apollo gazes to heaven, so we lift our eyes to behold the inscription NUMINE AFFLATUR (fig. 5.15). As I discussed in previous chapters, the *titulus* makes obvious reference to Book VI of Virgil's *Aeneid*, when Apollo possesses the Cumaean Sibyl. I suggest that Vida is the mediating source for Poetry's motto. Defying the verbatim precision of the other inscriptions, Raphael's turn of phrase is unique here, selectively revising Virgil's words (*adflata est numine*). This difference is surely neither arbitrary nor an error. Like Vida, I argue, Raphael transformed Poetry's motto into a witty statement on the powers of the artist as poet.

For Vida, the divine power of poets is not only the pervasive leitmotif of *De arte poetica*, but also a demonstration of his own authorial voice. Vida does more than insinuate Virgil's words, characters, and themes into the text as his poetic standards; at the end of the poem, he infuses Virgil with the spirit of Apollo as the heavenly gatekeeper of inspired verse.<sup>509</sup> Their union is anticipated some passages earlier as Vida emulates the Cumaean Sibyl's speech, knitting her words into the very theory and fabric of his text. As Vida surveys of the history of verse, he relates the sibyls and poets by the shared origins of their trade in heaven; he continues to list the oracles who spoke for Apollo until the poets took up their birthright as prophets.<sup>510</sup> In Book Two, Vida tells the story of a poet seized by Apollo's will, whose "whole body surges with the divine spirit . . . he shouts out words that are no longer his own, oblivious of his mortality . . . For the

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<sup>509</sup> *De arte poetica* [1527 ed.], III.577-592: "Nil adeo mortale sonas . tibi captus amore/Ipse suos animos, sua munera laetus Apollo/Addidit, ac multa praestantem insigniit arte./Quodcumque hoc opis, atque artis, nostrique reperti/Uni grata tibi debet praeclara juvenus,/Quam docui, & rupis sacrae super ardua duxi,/Dum tua fida lego vestigia, te sequor unum,/O decus Italiae, lux o clarissima vatum. . . nos aspice praesens,/Pectoribus tuos castis infunde calores/Adveniens, pater, atque animis te te insere nostris."

<sup>510</sup> *Ibid.* [1527 ed.], I.530-545.

poet is filled with the god . . . unable to overcome this task.”<sup>511</sup> The poet’s fervor and transformation by the god is a bald allusion to the sibylline episode in the *Aeneid* — signaled here by the repetition of the Virgilian exclamation, *deus ecce deus*.<sup>512</sup> Vida also referenced the particular diction of Virgilian inspiration, *adflata est numine*, revising the phrase by his own *ingegno* and installing it as a lexical topos across his *ars poetica*. In *De arte poetica*, we read again and again of Apollo’s *numen* as it invades the poet and moves his pen; in turn we read of the poet, *afflatus*, as he is filled with the god. Elsewhere in his hymns, Vida petitions: “Oh god, I receive you and suffer gladly when you fill me with your divine purpose (*me numine afflasti*)!”<sup>513</sup> And: “For he who was never inspired by great divinity, now marvels at your wonders” (*te afflatum numine*).<sup>514</sup> Vida’s use of the Virgilian trope is unmistakable, but he is careful never to repeat it precisely, instead inverting and reinventing Virgil’s turn of phrase, at once naming himself the Virgilian heir, impressing his authority as editor, and boasting his role as the new voice of Virgil and Apollo.

Returning at last to Raphael, we now reconsider Poetry’s *titulus* in light of this tradition of inspiration and poetic authority. Like Virgil and Vida, whose poems open with a plea for heavenly sanction, Raphael heralds the divine origin of his painted Poetry.

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<sup>511</sup> *Ibid.* [1527 ed.], II.409-454: “Nec se jam capit acer agens calor, igneaeque intus/Vis saevit, totoque agitat se corpore numen./Ille autem exsultans jactat jam non sua verba/Oblitus hominem, mirum sonat . . . plenusque deo . . . non ille dapum, non ille quietis,/Aut somni memor hanc potis est deponere curam.”

<sup>512</sup> *Aeneid* VI.46-51: “Ait: ‘deus, ecce, deus!’ cui talia fanti/ante fores subito non vultus, non color unus/non comptae mansere comae, sed pectus anhelum/et rabie fera corda tument, maiorque videri/nec mortale sonans, adflata est numine quando/iam propiore dei.” *De arte poetica* [1527 ed.], II.429-430: “deus ecce deus iam corda fatigat,/Altius insinuat venis, penituique per artus/Diditur, atque faces saevas sub pectore versat.”

<sup>513</sup> Preserved in the edited edition of 1536, which includes his other major works, like the *De Bombyce*, the *Scachca ludae*, and the *De arte poetica*: “Te dive . . . accipio, patiorque libens, me numine quando Afflasti . . .” The hymns are thought to have been written early in Vida’s Roman tenure, probably in the first decade of the sixteenth century, before they were revised and published decades later.

<sup>514</sup> *Ibid.*, the Hymn to the Martyred Stephen: “Nam quis non magno te afflatum numine quondam/Protinus obstupuit mira . . .”

As in the verse, the painting's threshold is marked by a statement of supplication, which announces the divine aspirations of its subject and style. By evoking Virgil and Vida in the ceiling, Raphael not only invites comparison of his *Parnassus* to their arts of poetic composition, but also submits his painting as an equal participant in the contemporary literary project. The permutation of the motto from *adflata est numine* is permissible because the phrase has entered the tradition of editorial revision and reuse, bridging the strategies of imitation and inspiration. The words thus quote neither Virgil nor Vida exactly, and herein lies the point. Just as Vida spun the Virgilian trope, Raphael takes up the task of the inspired editor and transforms the phrase in jointly poetic and pictorial terms. Poetry's motto is thus imitation in action: instead of copying the model's forms, Raphael makes them into competitive stimuli by which he showcases his own poetic revision. For Raphael, as for Vida, modern classicism is tempered by reinvention, wherein the topoi of antiquity offer opportunities for manipulating pedigreed idioms. Placing on *Parnassus* the exempla of poetic history, Raphael presents us with the very ingredients of imitation, invention, and reinvention, a literary palette whose figures and forms lend themselves to new use under the modern Roman style.

## 5.6 Vida, Vulcan, and an Imitative Interlude

Turning to the rules of arrangement and style, Vida describes a poem's ornament in the visual language of art, and these concepts lend themselves to the painterly play put forth in Raphael's vision of Poetry. One of the great masters of artifice, Vida tells us, is the goddess Venus, who used the rhetorical art of persuasion to spin her web of wiles and



secure a shield for her son, Aeneas.<sup>515</sup> To ensnare her reluctant husband, the divine blacksmith Vulcan, Vida tells us that Venus breathed words embellished with love. The association of artifice with Venus is significant here, since it is through her seductive *ars* that she surpasses Vulcan, the *artifex par excellence*. Vida probably had in mind Aristotle, who cited well-effected imitation as the source of natural pleasure.<sup>516</sup> The orator's art is like the poet's, Vida concludes, and just as Venus led Vulcan, the beauty of language should move the minds of the audience toward pleasure.<sup>517</sup> As Vida continues, he ranks Vulcan a superior poetic figure. Even as the charm of Venus elicits poetic pleasure, Vulcan's deformities do not exclude him from poetic excellence. Like words on the page, the lame god's features can themselves fulfill the requisites of poetic ornament, and Vida promises: "You will be captivated with admiration when Vulcan flings his fire through forests and fields and it consumes the stubble with kindling flame."<sup>518</sup> Perhaps not by chance, the same story frames the *Parnassus* in the miniature panel overhead.

Between Theology and Poetry, a small *quadro* pictures a similar relationship of imitation, artifice, and poetic pleasure (fig. 5.16) à la Venus and Vulcan.<sup>519</sup> In the miniature panel, the smithy huddles over his hot forge. Echoing Vida's verse, the panel imagines flames billowing from the divine furnace and engulfing the branches of the barren tree beside him. The smithy turns in surprise to find Cupid above his shoulder. Embodying Venus' "embellished love," young Cupid arrives to conduct his mother's

<sup>515</sup> *De arte poetica* [1527 ed.], II.505-507: "Artibus his certe Cytherea instructa, dolisque/Arma rogat nato genetrix, & adultera laesum/Vulcanum alloquitur, dictisque aspirat amorem."

<sup>516</sup> *Poetics* 1448b4-19. On Vida and Aristotle's *Poetics*, see Williams, p.167 in particular.

<sup>517</sup> Cf. Horace, *Ars poetica* 99-105.

<sup>518</sup> *De arte poetica* [1527 ed.], III.397-399: "Hinc etiam solers mirabere saepe legendo,/Sicubi Vulcanus silvis incendia misit,/Aut agro, stipulas flamma crepitante cremari."

<sup>519</sup> It should be noted here that the small panels in the ceiling are probably the work of Sodoma or Ruysches.

bidding; her persuasion made flesh, he seeks a divine aegis for his half-brother, Aeneas. And at Vulcan's feet, the artist placed a pile of bronze shields, evoking the ekphrases of Virgilian and Homeric verse. The Virgilian shield, on which Vulcan cast the story of Augustan Rome, revises the Homeric archetype, both instances of imitative artifice at its literary finest. Here I suggest that Vida and the *quadro* challenge these ancient models as new persuasive exempla. Recasting in his poem the artifice of Homer and Virgil, as well as of Venus and Vulcan, Vida imitates the ancient authors to both leverage his place in their pantheon and elicit delight from the knowing reader. But the panel presses Vida's claim one step further: by imitating the imitator, the artist enacts the same artificial syllogism as Vida to Virgil, or Venus to Vulcan.

### 5.7 Vida's Pedagogy and Raphael's *Paedogeron*

The wide success of Vida's *De arte poetica* arose, in part, from its poetic didacticism. Vida conceived of the poem above all as a successor to Quintilian in its pedagogical focus, and he built each book around the journey of the teacher and neophyte as the scale Parnassus. Even above imitation and inspiration, discipleship is the guiding theme of Vida's work, and he situates these terms — the study of ancient poets and the emulation of their subjects and style — within the prosodic narrative of pedagogical ascent. Like Quintilian, who advised that teachers are a young orator's greatest aliment, in his introductory letter, Vida offers a statement of purpose: that through his verse, the reader might become "more learned" or "enflamed to take up these studies."<sup>520</sup> Nested in

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<sup>520</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 2.2.8: "ipse aliquid immo multa cotidie dicat, quae secum auditores referant. licet enim satis exemplorum ad imitandum ex lectione suppeditet, tamen viva illa, ut dicitur, vox alit plenius praecipueque eius praeceptoris, quem discipuli, si modo recte sunt instituti, et amant et

the didactic terms of mentor and student, Vida's pedagogical *cursus honorum* is a profession of moral virtue. Hardly exclusive to the literary field, Vida's course of pupil and master, of amateur and expert, suffuses the frescoes in the Stanza della Segnatura, where the theme of discipleship underwrites the room at large and adds a new dimension to the relationship of the beholder and the paintings.

Raphael's professional journey, his rise to astronomic fame, is the story of a student and his masters. As soon as Raphael was born, Vasari says, his father, Giovanni Santi, saw that his son was placed on the right path, which he, a mediocre painter at best, was never shown himself. In the workshop of Perugino, Raphael proved so intelligent and adept that soon it was impossible to tell the master from his apprentice, the imitated from his imitator. In Florence, Vasari says, he discovered the work of Leonardo and Michelangelo, and, eschewing Perugino's Umbrian style, turned once again from master to pupil; within a few months, he was forced to learn as a grown man those things that demanded the aptitude and study of a youth.<sup>521</sup> Indeed, it was for this reason that Raphael was exceptional in Vasari's esteem. The biographer maintains that the artist must learn early the principles of style, striving to master every aspect as a boy. And in Rome, when Raphael beheld Michelangelo's ceiling in the Sistine Chapel, under way a few doors down, he paid homage to the sculptor's style and expertise by inserting his portrait in the *School of Athens* as the melancholic Heraclitus.

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verentur. vix autem dici potent, quanto libentius imitemur eos, quibus favemus." Dated to 1520, the earliest introductory letter (addressed to the Cremonese Senate) is reprinted in Williams, pp. 212-213.

<sup>521</sup> Vasari [ed. Giuntina, 1568], p. 205: "Il quale smorbatosi e levatosi da dosso quella maniera di Pietro per apprendere quella di Michelangelo, piena di difficoltà in tutte le parti, diventò quasi di maestro nuovo discepolo, e si sforzò con incredibile studio di fare, essendo già uomo, in pochi mesi quello che avrebbe avuto bisogno di quella tenera età che meglio apprende ogni cosa, e de lo spazzio di molti anni."

Also in the *School of Athens*, Raphael's self-portrait behaves at once as commentator and disciple, facilitating the viewer's entry into the fresco and offering a moral gloss on its subjects. To our right, Raphael looks out and meets the viewer's gaze, inviting him or her to join the drama of the image. Beside him, dressed in white, an older figure looks on and smiles (fig. 5.17). Often thought to be his friend or collaborator — perhaps Sodoma or a courtly advisor — the individual occupies the visual position typically assigned to an artist's mentor.<sup>522</sup> The figure's contented expression and gaze signal the proverbial passing of the torch, the gift of ideas, subjects, or styles realized under his mentorship. We might note here that Raphael returned to the same trope some years later, in a self-portrait with a figure often thought to be Giulio Romano or another member of his workshop (fig. 5.18). In the canvas, Raphael places his hand on the shoulder of his companion, who points to the viewer as the artist looks out and smiles. Unprecedented in portraiture, the gesture is anticipated only by the narrative groups in monumental formats of painting, as in the *Disputa* and the *School of Athens*.<sup>523</sup> If the sitter is Raphael's student or a painter in his *bottega*, then the canvas is a playful inversion of the pupil realized as commentator: in the dual portrait, the painter is no longer student, but teacher and mentor. In this case, the painting might be seen as a witticism of workshop imitation, since Raphael deployed its many members as the executors of his own hand.

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<sup>522</sup> The iconography of student and mentor was well established by the sixteenth century. The most famous example is the *Preaching of the Antichrist*, in Signorelli's Cappella Nuova. No convincing identification for Raphael's companion has yet been put forth. Scholars have suggested Timoteo Viti or Sodoma; Edgar Wind, in his notes on the room (now housed in the Bodleian), suggested that the man is Raphael's advisor, whom he thought to be Celio Calcagnini.

<sup>523</sup> As noted by Jones and Penny, p. 171.

In the *School of Athens*, Raphael and his elder friend are matched across the painting. To our left, beside the column base, the inclusion of the hoary old man and his toddler companion has long puzzled scholars (fig. 5.19). The curious pair probably does not represent real persons or characters, but rather performs as a pendant to Raphael and his mentor companion, personifying the concept of pedagogy. Cradled by the bearded man, the child mirrors Raphael's gaze and stares out at the viewer. The combination of the *puer-senex*, or *paedogeron*, was an ancient and patristic symbol, whose counterbalance of the hoary youth summarized the course of practical wisdom.<sup>524</sup> In Plato's *Theaetetus*, Socrates — who appears on the side of Raphael's *paedogeron* in the *School of Athens* — questions the eponymous child about the nature of knowledge and expertise.<sup>525</sup> As he explains the labor of thought, Socrates compares himself to his midwife mother, but whereas she delivered infants, he gives birth to the rational boy. That the artist and his mentor and the *puer-senex* are cast as the fresco's commentators, the visual glossators to its subject, suggests that the visual topography of the *School of Athens* is rooted within the strata of pedagogy. At the center of the painting, the supreme student-teacher example, one old and one youthful, gives discipleship its most persuasive philosophical expression: Plato and Aristotle.

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<sup>524</sup> As Wind suggested in his unpublished papers in the Bodleian, p. 94. On the *paedogeron* generally, see Curtius, pp. 98-115; and Wind (1968), pp. 99-100; 200; and 202 n. The most famous example of this visual motif is Dürer's painting, now in the Louvre, of the so-called "bearded child" (c. 1527).

<sup>525</sup> *Theaetetus* 150b-c.

### 5.8 *Bembismo* and Vulgar Eloquence

Although little is known about Marco Girolamo Vida, the life and works of Pietro Bembo are well accounted, as are his advantageous relationships with Julius II and Raphael. Born into a privileged family of humanists and scholars, Pietro was the son of the Venetian diplomat and book collector Bernardo, who had pursued favor at the Vatican court of Sixtus IV.<sup>526</sup> Following his father's example, the younger Bembo similarly benefitted from a cultivated literary and political alliance with the Della Rovere. In 1503, for example, he dedicated a sonnet to Julius II — then Cardinal Giuliano — predicting his imminent elevation to the papacy; on behalf of the Venetian Republic, he then followed Julius to Rome to congratulate the new pontiff on his election.<sup>527</sup> Some years later, in 1508, Julius awarded Pietro the *commenda* of the Knights of Saint John in Bologna, and Bembo took up residence in Rome toward the end of the Julian papacy.<sup>528</sup> Even better known is Bembo's long friendship with Raphael, so familiar that scholars have sometimes identified Bembo as Raphael's helpful ghostwriter.<sup>529</sup> Along with Castiglione and the poets Andrea Navagero and Agostino Beazzano, Bembo famously

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<sup>526</sup> Although Bernardo has hardly received the same scholarly attention as his son, there are a few helpful biographies that examine his long humanistic and political careers. Bernardo and Francesco della Rovere may have met in Padua, where the latter taught before ascending to the papal throne. Bernardo's relationship with Sixtus IV was mostly productive; politically, it was bound up in Venetian diplomacy and shifting alliances in northern Italy and across the Alps. Extant letters appear to indicate that he also favored the Della Rovere cause as Cardinal Giuliano agitated for the French to defrock Alexander VI. See Nella Giannetto, *Bernardo Bembo. Umanista e politico veneziano* (Florence: Olschki, 1985), pp. 152, 216-218; and Howard Burns, "Bernardo Bembo, padre di Pietro," in: *Pietro Bembo e l'invenzione del Rinascimento*, ed. Guido Beltramini, Davide Gasparotto, and Adolfo Tura (Venice: Marsilio, 2013), pp. 112-125.

<sup>527</sup> The sonnet was surely a reflection of Bernardo's sentiments regarding the Della Rovere, as well as Pietro's. See Giannetto, p. 217; and more recently, Kidwell, p. 23.

<sup>528</sup> See Alessandro Ferrajoli, *Il Ruolo della Corte di Leone X*, ed. Vincenzo de Caprio (Rome: Bulzoni, 1984), pp. 313-317; and again Kidwell, pp. 195-197.

<sup>529</sup> Prior to Shearman's 1994 essay, the Galatea letter was sometimes attributed to Bembo. See Vittorio Cian, "Nel mondo di Baldassare Castiglione" in: *Archivio storico lombardo* 7 (1942), p. 76; and Andrea Emiliani, *L'Estasi di Santa Cecilia di Raffaello da Urbino nella Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna* (Bologna: Afta, 1983), pp. xxxii.

accompanied the young painter on an archaeological outing to Tivoli in 1517; Raphael's portrait of Navagero is also said to have hung in his house. The poet and the artist presumably met some years earlier in Urbino, perhaps in 1505 or 1506, when the former took up residence at the ducal court. During the coincidence of their stay in the Marche, Raphael is said to have made a drawing of Bembo in black chalk, now lost, and some have speculated that the portrait of a young man (fig. 5.20), now in Budapest, is another early likeness of the future cardinal.<sup>530</sup> Whatever the circumstances of their introduction, their camaraderie was lifelong, and Bembo poignantly commemorated his friend's death with the eulogistic epitaph marking Raphael's gravesite in the Pantheon.

By the time of their presumed first meeting in Raphael's hometown, drafts of the *Prose della volgar lingua* were already well underway. Given the close relationship of the painter and the poet and their occasional collaborations, we can assume that Raphael was at least acquainted with Bembo's new theory of language. The presence of a distinctive figure in the *Parnassus* suggests that Raphael might have had his friend in mind when he designed the compositions for the Stanza. To our right, along the mountain's slope, a poet dressed in burgundy and draped with golden chains raises a finger to his lips. His striking physiognomy indicates that the figure must have been drawn from life. The poet has variously been called Sophocles, Ovid, or Anacreon, and most recently he has been identified as the occasional poet Bernardo Accolti.<sup>531</sup> None of

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<sup>530</sup> The attribution of the portrait to Bembo is widely disputed. The sitter has some of Bembo's most famous features — most notably the aquiline nose — but Venetian noblemen typically wore black berets, unlike the red one imagined in the painting. Moreover, Bembo, who was born in 1470, would have been around 35 at the time of the portrait's execution, significantly older than the youthful sitter appears. Contemporary descriptions of the drawing were first transcribed by Giovanni Morelli, *Notizie d'opere di disegno nella prima metà del secolo XVI* (Bassano: 1800), p. 18; see also Passavant, pp. 68-69; Müntz, p. 171; and Golzio, p. 171.

<sup>531</sup> Crowe and Cavalcaselle, p. 81 n. 12, suggest Ovid; Anacreon is discussed and ultimately dismissed in F.A. Gruyer, *Essai sur les fresques de Raphaël au Vatican* (Paris: Jules Renouard, 1859), pp. 132-133;

these suggestions, however, adequately explains the figure's features, nor would Accolti's fairly limited celebrity have merited so ostentatious a position in the fresco. The figure's verism and his theatrical gesture indicate someone of noted literary esteem and influence, easily recognized and appreciated by Raphael's coevals in Julian Rome: the humanist and literary theorist with ties to painter and patron, Pietro Bembo. As he built coveted relationships within the papal circle, Bembo visited Rome in 1506 and again in 1508, taking up permanent residence there three years later.<sup>532</sup> As we have seen, at least one of his father's luxury manuscripts entered the collection of the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, but inasmuch as his ferocious talents and literary acumen earned him a ready place in Italy's most prestigious courts, Bembo did not build his reputation on good looks.<sup>533</sup> His homely appearance is well attested by a considerable wealth of portraits and medals, all of which emphasize the same peculiar features.<sup>534</sup> To this list, we may now also add the pensive poet on the eastern slope of the *Parnassus*. With deep-set eyes and an aquiline nose, the figure in Raphael's fresco is distinguished by his heavy brow and combed-over hair; equally individual are his gaunt cheeks and jawline. These same details are preserved across the catalogue of Bembo's verified portraits, notably in Gentile Bellini's *Miracle of the Cross at Ponte San Lorenzo* (fig. 5.21), the Valerio Belli medal of 1532 (fig. 5.22),

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Godefridus Hoogewerff, "La Stanza della Segnatura, osservazioni e commenti," in: *Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archaeologia* 23 (1947-1949), pp. 326-327, suggests Sophocles.

<sup>532</sup> On Bembo's itinerary and travels until 1511, see Kidwell, Chapter 5: "Bembo the Courtier," p. 150 in particular.

<sup>533</sup> The petite volume of Sallust: BAV MS [REDACTED].

<sup>534</sup> For a discussion of this body of portraits, see Giulio Coggiola, "Per l'iconografia di Pietro Bembo," in: *Atti del Reale Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere, ed Arti* 74 (1914-1915), pp. 473-514; Klára Garas, "Die Bildniss Pietro Bembo's in Budapest," in: *Acta Historiae Artium* 16 (1970), pp. 57-67; Davide Gasparotto, "La barba di Pietro Bembo," in: *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa* 4.1-2 (1996), pp. 183-206; and Debra Pincus, "Giovanni Bellini's Humanist Signature: Pietro Bembo, Aldus Manutius and Humanism in Early Sixteenth-Century Venice," in: *Artibus et Historiae* 29.58 (2008), pp. 89-119. Edgar Wind, *Bellini's Feast of the Gods* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 42, n., proposed that Bembo is pictured as Silenus in Bellini's *Feast of the Gods*, a suggestion that is generally rejected by modern scholars.



the miniature portrait by Lucas Cranach the Younger (fig. 5.23), and a portrait by Titian during his cardinalship (fig. 5.24). With Bembo's inclusion on the mountain established, we now must consider *why* Raphael placed him there.

While Raphael decorated the walls of the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, Bembo was at work on the first systematic guide to the Italian vernacular.<sup>535</sup> Seeking to codify a common national language, Bembo's *Prose* represents a revolutionary shift in literary criticism, one that ranks the style and form of a composition over its subject and narrative — an eloquence in the *volgare*. Conceived as a courtly dialogue, the work advocates a new standard of linguistic beauty in search of strict definitions to these effects. Speaking through the interlocutor Carlo, in Book Two Bembo compares the works of Dante and Petrarch, judging them by the measure of their styles: "I say that each manner of writing is made of two parts: one is the invention, and the other the disposition of words." It is then the challenge of the writer to decide "the order, composition, and harmony of those words . . . For not all words . . . are equally severe or pure or sweet, nor does every composition of those words have the same adornment, nor do they please or delight in the same way."<sup>536</sup> Bembo thus establishes his criteria for aesthetic harmony:

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<sup>535</sup> Even Dante's *De vulgari eloquentia* was unpublished and relatively unknown in the early sixteenth century.

<sup>536</sup> Roughly. *Prose*, 2.4, p. 136: "La materia o soggetto, che dire vogliamo, del quale si scrive, e la forma o apparenza, che a quella materia si dà, e ciò è la scrittura. Ma perciò che non della materia, dintorno alla quale alcuno scrive, ma del modo col quale si scrive, s'è ragionato ieri e ragionasi oggi tra noi, di questa seconda parte favellando, dico ogni maniera di scrivere comporsi medesimamente di due parti: l'una delle quali è la elezione, l'altra è la disposizione delle voci. Perciò che primieramente è da vedere, con quali voci si possa più acconciamente scrivere quello che a scrivere prendiamo; e appresso fa di mestiero considerare, con quale ordine di loro e componimento e armonia, quelle medesime voci meglio rispondano che in altra maniera. Con ciò sia cosa che né ogni voce di molte, con le quali una cosa segnare si può, è grave o pura o dolce ugualmente; né ogni componimento di quelle medesime voci uno stesso adornamento ha, o piace e diletta ad un modo."

There are two parts that make writing beautiful: *gravità* and *piacevolezza*. . . and so that you better understand these two parts and the differences between them, under *gravità*, I place nobility (*onestà*), dignity (*dignità*), majesty (*maestà*), magnificence (*magnificenza*), grandiosity (*grandezza*), and their synonyms. Under *piacevolezza* belong grace (*grazia*), suavity (*soavità*), beauty (*vaghezza*), sweetness (*dolcezza*), jests (*scherzi*), games (*giuochi*), and whatever else falls under this manner.<sup>537</sup>

Neither quality can exist without the other —*gravità* alone borders on stifling severity, and excessive *piacevolezza* threatens insipidity.<sup>538</sup> Paired together, the artful combination of these opposite *maniere* promises a balanced composition and represents the measure by which words ought to be judged.

Bembo's operations on the aesthetic laws of language manifest a pivotal analogue to developing principles of artistic style, whose surface scholars have only begun to scratch.<sup>539</sup> Although Bembo champions the historical Tuscan dialect as the modern cognate of Latin and Greek, his *regole* for achieving linguistic beauty bespeak a new visual tradition, a courtly manner that found its earliest currency in the library of Julius II. That Bembo conceived of literary style in terms related to artistic discourse, and that he imagined Raphael at the center of a new Roman *maniera* is clear from Book Three, which delays the dialogue with an ekphrastic vision of Rome's artistic topography.

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<sup>537</sup> *Prose*, 2.9, p. 146: “. . . che perciò che due parti sono quelle che fanno bella ogni scrittura, la gravità e la piacevolezza; e le cose poi, che empiono e compiono queste due parti, son tre, il suono, il numero, la variazione, dico che di queste tre cose aver si dee riguardo partitamente, ciascuna delle quali all'una e all'altra giova delle due primiere che io dissi. E affine che voi meglio queste due medesime parti conosciate, come e quanto sono differenti tra loro, sotto la gravità ripongo l'onestà, la dignità, la maestà, la magnificenza, la grandezza, e le loro somiglianti; sotto la piacevolezza restringo la grazia, la soavità, la vaghezza, la dolcezza, gli scherzi, i giuochi, e se altro è di questa maniera.”

<sup>538</sup> *Cf.*, *Prose*, 2.19, pp. 172-173.

<sup>539</sup> This omission by scholars is due in part to the limited availability of the *Prose* in translations from the old Italian. Voss, pp. 46-49, first noted a correspondence between Bembo's premise of literary beauty and pictorial practice in early Cinquecento Rome, identifying the *maniere* of *gravità* and *piacevolezza*. Both Shearman (1967), p. 37 ff.; and Reilly (2010), pp. 308-325, seem to have Voss in mind when they discussed the influence of a new *Bembismo*. Shearman applied Bembo's *Prose* to Roman mannerism. Reilly has taken up a similar thread in the underappreciated *Sala dell'Incendio*. Although I find her conclusions persuasive, she misreads Petrarch as Dante's rhetorical antithesis. For Bembo, Petrarch represents a balance of Italian style; he is by no means discussed as *piacevolezza*'s limit, as Reilly suggests.

Bembo wanders across fields of ancient marbles and lost bronzes, through broken arches and ruined theaters, where artists have flocked to study the fractured relics of Roman antiquity. Out of all of them, however, only Michelangelo and Raphael rival the classic perfection of the ancient *maestri*.<sup>540</sup> For Bembo, Michelangelo and Raphael have succeeded not simply through the duplication of ancient subjects, but through the clarity and simplicity of their compositions in the Vatican Palace, qualities that bring to bear the tempered ancient ideal of *gravità*.

The inclusion of the two artists as the paragons of a new Roman style also serves a second purpose, which presumes a familiar and competitive relationship or *paragone* of the arts. Bembo's high praise of Michelangelo and Raphael, on par with the celebrated artists of the past (he names, for example, Myron, Phidias, Apelles, Vitruvius, and Alberti), is a judgment he reserves for them alone. No other contemporary artists or authors are awarded similar esteem.<sup>541</sup> But following this brief interlude on the visual arts, Bembo's paeon shifts its focus to the superior virtue of language. Just as the authors of antiquity immortalized the glittering landscape of the ancient city, the endurance of modern artists and images depends on the preservation of words. Bembo presents this artistic digression as an ultimate warrant for the use of the Italian vernacular, which he promises will perpetuate the reputations of Michelangelo and Raphael for future

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<sup>540</sup> *Prose*, 3.1, p. 183-184: “. . . intendono di rassomigliarli col loro artificio procacciando quanto essi più alle antiche cose fanno per somiglianza ravvicinare le loro nuove; perciò che sanno e veggono che quelle antiche più alla perfezion dell'arte s'accostano, che le fatte da indi innanzi. Questo hanno fatto più che altri, monsignore messer Giulio, i vostri Michele Agnolo fiorentino e Raffaello da Urbino, l'uno dipintore e scultore e architetto, parimente, l'altro e dipintore e architetto altresì . . . e hannolo sì fatto, che amendue sono ora così eccellenti e così chiari, che più agevole è a dire quanto essi agli antichi buoni maestri sieno prossimi, che quale di loro sia dell'altro maggiore e miglior maestro.”

<sup>541</sup> Although early modern artists are often compared to Myron, Phidias, and Apelles, Vitruvius and Alberti are significantly more unusual. Bembo's chief reason for naming Vitruvius and Alberti is unequivocally their literary legacy as authors. Alberti is a particularly suggestive choice, since his *Della pittura* was first published in the Italian vernacular.

generations, above and beyond their own artworks.<sup>542</sup> From there, the text resumes its standard course on the grammar and orthography of the Tuscan *volgare*, whose verbal artifice, Bembo holds, naturally serves the visual vocabulary of art.<sup>543</sup> The dependence of images on words as Bembo presents it, however, cannot be discounted so quickly. In the epistle that precedes Book Two, Bembo weighs men of letters against men of action. Like artists and their artworks, men of action and their good deeds are only known and emulated thanks to the written histories of men of letters; the praise of ancient philosophers and the scripture of the Egyptians, the Phoenicians, the Chaldeans, and especially the Greeks and Romans, have committed to posterity the exemplary labors that steer empires through times of war and peace.<sup>544</sup> The dialogue that follows includes a review of the Italian literature that aspires toward this purpose, culminating in Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio.<sup>545</sup> A bibliographic tour of vernacular poetry and prose, the

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<sup>542</sup> C.f. *Prose*, 3.1, pp. 184-185. As an example, Bembo recounts how Alexander the Great, upon visiting the tomb of Achilles, marveled at the hero's good fortune to live forever in the words of Homer.

<sup>543</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.1, p. 185: "Il che se così è, che essere per certo si vede, facciamo ancor noi, i quali agli studi delle lettere donati ci siamo e in essi ci trastulliamo, quello stesso che far veggiamo agli artefici che io dissi, e per le immagini e forme, che gli antichi uomini ci hanno de' loro animi e del lor valore lasciate, ciò sono le scritture, vie più che tutte le altre opere bastevoli, diligentemente cercando, a saper noi bene e leggiadramente scrivere appariamo."

<sup>544</sup> I abbreviate the passage, which is otherwise too long to cite here, *ibid.*, 2.1, pp.127-128: "Due sono, monsignor messer Giulio, per comune giudicio di ciascun savio, della vita degli uomini le vie, per le quali si può, caminando, a molta loda di sé con molta utilità d'altrui pervenire. L'una è il contemplare, non pur le cose che gli uomini far possono, ma quelle ancora che Dio fatte ha, e le cause e gli effetti loro e il loro ordine, e sopra tutte esso facitor di loro e disponitore e conservator Dio. Perciò che e con le buone opere, e in pace e in guerra, si fa in diversi modi e alle private persone e alle comunanze de' popoli e alle nazioni giovamento, e per la contemplazione diviene l'uom saggio e prudente e può gli altri di molta virtù abondevoli fare similmente, loro le cose da sé trovate e considerate dimostrando. E in tanto furono l'una e l'altra per sé di queste vie dagli antichi filosofi lodata, che ancora la quistion pende, quale di loro preporre all'altra si debba e sia migliore. Ora se alle buone opere e alle belle contemplazioni la penna mancasse, né si trovasse chi le scrivesse, elle così giovevoli non sarebbono di gran lunga, come sono . . . Per la qual cosa primieramente da quelli d'Egitto infinite cose si scrissero, infinite poscia da' Fenici, dagli Assirii, da' Caldei e da altre nazioni sopra essi; infinite sopra tutto da' Greci, che di tutte le scienze e le discipline e di tutti i modi dello scrivere stati sono grandi e diligenti maestri; infinite ultimamente da' Romani, i quali co' Greci garreggiarono della maggioranza delle scritture, istimando per aventura, sì come nelle arti della cavalleria e del signoreggiare fatto aveano, di vincerne gli così in questa, nella quale tanto oltre andarono, che la latina lingua n'è divenuta tale chente la vediamo."

<sup>545</sup> Bembo names various vernacular writers hailing from Sicily to Milan.

passage calls to mind Raphael's vast literary catalogue in the Stanza della Segnatura. But whereas Bembo insists on the primacy of the word in the history of the visual arts, Raphael inverts the paradigm. Dressing the library's walls with the visual equivalent of literary *Bembismo*, Raphael counters that painting can, in fact, write the history of men and words.

### 5.9 *Il Pittore Piacevole* and Raphael's *Bembismo*

Although Vasari praised Raphael in terms clearly borrowed from Bembo's category of *piacevolezza*, describing both the young painter and his artworks as *piacevole*, *dolce*, and *grazioso*, the paintings in the Stanza della Segnatura are conceived of a more nuanced idiom of style. By the time Raphael set to work on the adjacent rooms – the Sala d'Eliodoro and the Sala dell'Incendio — his style advanced a new monumentality, marked by heavy chiaroscuro, powerful nudes, emphatic motion, and shifting perspective, a transformation that is usually explained by the looming influence of Michelangelo's *gravità* — or, as Vasari called it, *la via del gran maniera*.<sup>546</sup> Indeed, the addition of Heraclitus in the *School of Athens* is often thought to be a portrait of the divine sculptor, which Raphael hastily added after the completion of the fresco when he visited the Sistine Chapel, presumably in 1509 or 1510 when the initial scaffolding came down. The sculpted modeling of the melancholic figure, whose marble block defies the painting's rigorously maintained perspective, not only alludes to the visual intensity of Raphael's future style, but also acknowledges his painterly ability to operate selectively between modes or *maniere*. Before he viewed the Sistine ceiling and encountered

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<sup>546</sup> On Michelangelo's *gravità* and traditions of rhetoric, see Summers (2007), pp. 165-176.

Michelangelo's Roman *grandezza*, Raphael aimed at a decorous Julian style under the very general rules of composition. Although the ancient material precedent represented one possibility of expression, its modern reinvention demanded a visual vocabulary that was at once commensurate and novel, for which *Bembismo* offered another updated solution. Yet when Raphael undertook the decoration of the Stanza della Segnatura, visual synonyms for Bembo's *gravità* and *piacevolezza* were not yet strictly defined or pictorially dictated. I suggest that Raphael's frescoes in the Stanza represent his first effort, a stylistic middle ground in which he intermingled instances of his mastery of *maniere*.

What are the conditions of *gravità* and *piacevolezza*? Not all similar words are suitable for every subject, but neither are Bembo's concepts rigidly fixed, and both ultimately derive from the systems of ancient oratory. In the tradition of the Greek and Latin orators, *gravitas*, or the grand manner, is the highest and most difficult style, bound up in conditions of ornament or a fitting artificial order.<sup>547</sup> The fundamental principle of ornament concerns the kind or degree of artifice that is suitable to the subject; ornament should sweeten the composition, but should not be obvious in itself.<sup>548</sup> Lacking appropriate embellishment, the heavy forms associated with *gravitas* threaten to become histrionic or discordant. Bembo's definition of *maniere* is based on this discernible mean, and in his assessment of the best vernacular writers, he denounces Dante's heavy-handed use of outmoded and foreign phrases as the follies of excess.<sup>549</sup> In the text that follows,

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<sup>547</sup> See Summers (1971), *passim*; *ead.* (1981), pp. 180-181.

<sup>548</sup> See Summers (2007), p. 6 in particular; as well as the many various Latin entries in David E. Orton and R. Dean Anderson, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation for Literary Study* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

<sup>549</sup> *Prose*, 2.5, pp. 138-139: "Il qual poeta non solamente se taciuto avesse quello che dire acconciamente non si potea, meglio avrebbe fatto e in questo e e in molti altri luoghi delle composizioni sue, ma ancora se egli avesse voluto pigliar fatica di dire con più vaghe e più onorate voci quello che dire si sarebbe potuto, chi pensato v'avesse, et egli detto ha con rozze e disonorate, sì sarebbe egli di molto maggior loda e grido,

Bembo instead champions as his poetic ideal Petrarch, who intermixed severe and sweet qualities equally, “such that it is impossible to decide whether he was a greater master of the one or the other.”<sup>550</sup> Unlike Dante, whose *Comedy* was mired in a thicket of oppressive lexical forms, Petrarch deploys *piacevolezza* to soften the asperity of *gravità*. Although Bembo explains Petrarch’s middle style in terms of the *volgare*, his lesson is essentially descended from classical rhetoric. On the duality of *gravità* and *piacevolezza*, Bembo borrows whole passages and phrases from Cicero’s *Orator*, where the middle style serves to delight.<sup>551</sup> Like Bembo, Cicero identifies severity (*gravitas*) and pleasantry (*suavitas*) as the fundamental ingredients of ornament, and outlining the rules of narrative, he urges: “inasmuch as we must relate clarity and cogency, we must also add charm.”<sup>552</sup> Even if dressed up in the Italian vernacular, the clear, polished, and precise expression that Bembo finds in Petrarch is hardly novelty; rather, *Bembismo* is a repackaged presentation of the principles of classicism, turned to Cinquecento aesthetics.

Before all other qualities and features, clarity is the critical aesthetic framework on which Bembo and Raphael assembled their compositions. As he enunciates the rules of style, Bembo stresses that whatever the subject or *maniera*, the writer should choose only “the purest, the most uncorrupted, and always the clearest words” — a definition of

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che egli non è: come che egli nondimeno sia di molto.” For a detailed discussion of this criticism see, Kidwell, p. 229.

<sup>550</sup> *Prose*, 2.9, p. 147: “Dove il Petrarca l’una e l’altra di queste parti empié maravigliosamente, in maniera che scegliere non si può, in quale delle due egli fosse maggior maestro.”

<sup>551</sup> Cicero, *Orat.* 69: “Probare necessitatis est, delectare suavitatis, flectere victoriae; nam id unum ex omnibus tot sunt genera dicendi: subtile in probando, modicum in delectando, vehemens in flectendo; in quo uno vis omnis oratoris est.”

<sup>552</sup> C.f. Cicero, *Invent.* 2.49: “Omnia autem ornamenta elocutionis, in quibus et suavitatis et gravitatis plurimum consistit, et omnia quae in inventione rerum et sententiarum aliquid habent dignitatis in communes locos conferuntur.” See also: *Part.* 31-32: “Nam ut dilucide probabiliterque narremus, necessarium est, sed assumimus etiam suavitatem.”

approach he filched straight from Quintilian's *Institutes*.<sup>553</sup> Clarity is upheld across the text as a chief condition of *Bembismo* and the primary feature of the ancient literary and artistic ideal. Like his definitions of style, Bembo's mandate for clarity also has its roots in ancient rhetorical theory. Toward this clarity of exposition, Quintilian ranked *perspecuitas* — that is, right or lucid order — the first virtue of eloquence.<sup>554</sup> Turning to the question of ornament, Quintilian writes that *perspecuitas* demands *repraesentatio*, “representation” or vivid illustration, which he then compares to painting.<sup>555</sup> Alberti's composition, as we have already seen, was born from the canons of rhetoric, and to set the rules of his *historia*, Alberti adapted this language of clear and persuasive order. Although Alberti stopped short of using the term “perspective,” his construction envisions something akin to Quintilian's *perspecuitas*, a persuasive pictorial system for staging a balanced hierarchy of visual forms.<sup>556</sup> The bridge was made by Pomponius Gauricus, the humanist and polyglot, who resided in Julian Rome between 1509 and 1512 and whose brother Luca was an esteemed astronomer at the court of Julius II.<sup>557</sup> Describing perspective, Gauricus wrote that brilliance is achieved through perspicuity, or clarity of composition, and the decorous use of ornament within this ordered visual framework. Indeed, as Alberti and Gauricus suggest, this close relationship of linear

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<sup>553</sup> *Prose*, 2.4, p. 147: “Tuttafiata generalissima e universale regola è in ciascuna di queste maniere e stili, le più pure, le più monde, le più chiare sempre, le più belle e più grate voci sciegliere e recare alle nostre composizioni, che si possa.” C.f., *Inst.* VIII.2.1: “perspicuitas in verbis praecipuam habet proprietatem, sed proprietas ipsa non simpliciter accipitur. primus enim intellectus est sua cuiusque rei appellatio, qua non semper utemur; nam et obscena vitabimus et sordida et humilia.”

<sup>554</sup> C.f., Quintilian, *Inst.* I.6.41: “oratio vero, cuius summa virtus est perspicuitas, quam sit vitiosa, si egeat interprete?” C.f., II.3.8; and VIII.2.1. It is important to note here that *perspectiva* does not exist for Quintilian; the word enters the lexicon with Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae*, V.

<sup>555</sup> Specifically, Quintilian advises *enargeia*. See *Inst.* VIII.3.64: “. . . est igitur unum genus, quo tota rerum imago quodammodo verbis depingitur;” and Summers (2007), p. 171.

<sup>556</sup> Summers (2007), 171.

<sup>557</sup> While in Rome, Gauricus wrote a commentary on the *Ars poetica* of Horace. For a short biography and introduction, see the essays in *Pomponio Gaurico. De sculptura*, ed. Paolo Cutolo (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1999), p. 82.



perspective and *perspecuitas* indicates that the illusionistic grid functions as a visual metaphor for harmonious classical order.<sup>558</sup> This historical equation of clarity and perspective naturally joins verbal and visual media, alluding to the convenient common ground between Bembo's text and the pictorial order of Raphael's frescoes.

The sophisticated harmonies of the Stanza della Segnatura and its frescoes rely first on the monumental construction of facing perspective in the *School of Athens* and the *Disputa*, whose rational clarity impresses the visual order associated with Bembo's ideal composition. At once affable and audacious, grandiloquent and witty, Raphael's frescoes articulate an expert symmetry of Bembo's *gravità* and *piacevolezza*, rendered in proportionate compositional order. In the *Disputa*, Raphael underscores this organizational system and its thematic significance for the fresco by insinuating two commentator figures closest to the picture plane (figs. 5.25 and 5.26), whose gestures ask us to behold the glistening wafer. Dressed in similar hues of blue and yellow, the two point toward the monstrance in the center, where the perspectival rays converge. Not coincidentally, their heights correspond to the horizon line of the painting, and their gestures are roughly aligned with the orthogonal rays charted by the receding pavement. Separated from the surrounding figures by his ethereal beauty, the one to our left is sometimes thought to be an intervening angel or philosopher, whose presence resolves the Neoplatonic undertones of the scene.<sup>559</sup> Inasmuch as his effortless beauty and grace distinguish him from the gathered theologians, so too is the figure on our right separated

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<sup>558</sup> Gauricus used Greek terms here, but as Robert Klein, "Pomponius Gauricus on Perspective," in: *Form and Meaning. Essays on the Renaissance and Modern Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 102-128, and Summers (2007), p. 170 ff., have noted, these words find their Latin complements in the rhetorical traditions of Quintilian.

<sup>559</sup> Giovanni Reale, *Raffaello: la "Disputa"* (Milan: Rusconi, 1998), p. 99, suggests the angel of Revelation with little explanation; Joost-Gaugier (2002) has proposed Giovanni Pico della Mirandola.

by his heavy drapery, dramatic expression, and exaggerated musculature. Matched in their poses, gestures, and colors, Raphael's commentator figures in the *Disputa* are stylistic foils — I suggest that they serve not only as allegories for the fresco's perspectival order, but also for Bembo's concepts of *gravità* and *piacevolezza*, pronounced here in painterly form. The powerfully sculpted arms of the figure on our right are singular in the painting; cast in shadow, his intense expression is equally unique. Behind him, Raphael suggestively placed Dante, whom Bembo accused of excessive *gravità* and who looks on with stunning severity. The beautiful commentator to our left is his ostensible antithesis: dressed in a similar costume of yellow and blue, the angelic figure is conceived of a softer and brighter palette. Whereas his silken drapery hangs delicately, his weightier counterpart is dressed in deeper hues and carries the heavy folds of his woolen mantle. Their artful opposition — the one gentle and sinuous, the other powerful and moody — is a virtuosic demonstration of Raphael's mastery of *maniere*, and by placing these personifications of *gravità* and *piacevolezza* in formal harmony, the artist enters as evidence his expert eloquence.

As in the *Disputa*, where Raphael apposed the personified exempla of *gravità* and *piacevolezza*, this harmony of style suffuses the room at large. For instance, the powerfully muscled Virtues on the Justice wall recall the *gravità* of Michelangelo's Sistine sibyls in their poses and volume. Their visual volume is answered across the space by the *piacevolezza* of the Muses, who seem weightless in their levity of expressions and dress. A similar harmony of *gravità* and *piacevolezza* pervades the *School of Athens* as the visual virtues that give visible form to the *pax philosophica*. Assembling in a single sweeping vista ancient edifices like the ones Bembo lists in the

third book of the *Prose*, the fresco not only boasts a new Roman style, culled from the city's ancient material and rhetorical exempla, but also advertises a similar duality of forms.<sup>560</sup> Ordering the composition around Plato and Aristotle, Raphael differentiated between their philosophical schools and encoded the painting's lofty themes through subtle distinctions of style. On our left, Pythian Apollo presides over the Platonic domain, where Socrates, Alcibiades, and the symposiasts of Plato's text gather in heated debate. Below them, Pythagoras kneels before an inscribed tablet to describe the musical harmonies. Parmenides — the eponymous subject of Plato's dialogue — swings energetically toward the Pythagoreans, whose metaphysical doctrines are at the heart of his legendary lost poem. Wreathed with grape leaves, the hedonist Epicurus leans against a column base and smiles. Under the rigid figure of Minerva, Aristotle projects empirical order and logic. The cynic and ascetic Diogenes reclines with his cup against the marble steps. Euclid — Raphael's purported portrait of Bramante — bends with a compass to deduce the principles of geometry before a group of astonished pupils. Behind him, the princely Ptolemy carries a globe, alluding to his *Geography* and *Almagest*, while Strabo lifts a star-studded sphere, a detail that perhaps references his treatise in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*.<sup>561</sup> The intellectual network that unifies these philosophers with their mascots Plato and Aristotle has been discussed in detail elsewhere, but wholly overlooked is the clever syntax of their representation and their pictorial order.<sup>562</sup>

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<sup>560</sup> Scholars variously cite the Basilica of Maxentius, the Temple of Janus Quadrifons, and Roman triumphal arches as models for Raphael's fictive architectural setting. Indeed, the impression of an open-air structure evokes the experience of Rome's resident artists as they strolled through the open forums and across piecemeal ancient landmarks.

<sup>561</sup> BAV MS [REDACTED].

<sup>562</sup> The division of Raphael's philosophers into their representative schools of thought is the subject of Chapter Seven in Joost-Gaugier (2002), pp. 81-114.

The *School of Athens* gives form to a coordinated order of sweet and severe, adapted to endow the painting's philosophical inhabitants with a didactic visual style. In a preliminary drawing for Philosophy, now in Lille (fig. 5.27), Raphael again set two opposites side-by-side, a philosopher and an early version of Apollo. Crosshatched in heavy strokes of ink, the former is dressed in dense robes and looks on pensively; the gravity of his thought is marked by the pendulous shift of his *contrapposto*. The slender figure of Apollo beside him illuminates their stylistic degree of difference. Modifications to the sketch reveal that Apollo was drawn by a freer hand; his soft limbs were drafted and redrafted with levity and play. Even in its final form, the figure's sinuous curve and tumble of curls stand out in obvious contrast to the density of the philosopher's pose and the thick jumble of his beard.

This counterbalance of style is maintained in the final fresco, where the diametric relationship of Apollo and Minerva presides over a similar duality. In style and subject, the two exhibit the passions of the soul, the limits of *piacevolezza* and *gravità*. Almost totally unconsidered, the paneled reliefs below the deities articulate these extremes (figs. 5.28 and 5.29). Three asymmetric *quardi* are visible: two belong to Apollo, and one to Minerva. Below the musical god, we behold irrational exuberance — radical *furor* unleashed. In the upper frame, iron weapons clash in a violent war; in the rectangle just below, a water nymph struggles to free herself from a rapacious triton. Plato and Socrates appear suggestively on the side of Apollo's *quadri*, offering a useful gloss on the frames. In Book IX of the *Republic*, Socrates describes tyranny as a nightmare. While the rational soul sleeps, he says, savagery is emboldened, and the ravenous chimera he describes closely corresponds to the panels imagined in the fresco: "It does not shirk from trying to

lie with a mother, as it fancies, or with any other human, or god, or beast . . . and it will commit bloodthirsty murder.”<sup>563</sup> Only the temperance of philosophy, Socrates tells us, can fend off the untamed tyranny of the irrational soul. Illustrating the limits of *Bembismo*, Raphael removes the bridle from *piacevolezza*: the *grazia* of its lyric becomes oppressive discord.

Across the fresco, Minerva embodies a rational character. The *quadro* below her personifies reason. Attended by the zodiac of the Ram, which Manilius placed under Minerva’s protection, Reason is attended by two *putti* bearing Aristotle’s *tabula rasa*.<sup>564</sup> The fixed *gravità* of Minerva’s panel, a foil to the gratuitous *piacevolezza* of Apollo’s frame, imbues the qualities of *Bembismo* with philosophical potency. Again Plato sheds some light. In the *Phaedrus*, Plato describes the soul as charioteer, whose cart is drawn by two winged horses. One is hot-blooded and irascible, the other indignantly moral.<sup>565</sup> The winged charioteer represents reason, weaker than either horse, but able to direct their course through the slalom of divine madness toward the ridge of heaven. Thus to our left, below the spirited figure of Apollo and in Plato’s domain, Raphael set the soul’s appetite and spirit, its cravings and its desire for honor, which he fit to the aesthetic principle of *piacevolezza*. To the right, he placed the majesty of reason, with its grandeur and *gravità*, in the province of empirical wisdom.

<sup>563</sup> *Republic*, ed. and trans. Chris Emlyn-Jones and William Preddy (Harvard: Loeb, 2013), IX.571c-d.

<sup>564</sup> Manilius, *Astronomica* 2.439: “Lanigerum Pallas.” Wind rightly suggested the ram in the unpublished Bodleian papers, p. 62.

<sup>565</sup> Plato, *Phaedrus* 246a - 254e; on the tripartite soul, see also *Republic*, IX.580d - 581d.

### 5.10 Castiglione's *Courtier* and Raphael's Julian Courtiers

Of the many poets in Raphael's circles, none is more famous than Baldassare Castiglione, the Mantuan count and diplomat whose *Libro del Cortegiano* supplied the definitive account of courtly life in the early Cinquecento. Although their friendship is well attested in correspondence and by Raphael's exquisite portrait (fig. 5.30), surprisingly little has been said about their mutual influence. Even more suggestive is their literary collaboration: Castiglione is thought to have aided Raphael in writing the famous letter to Leo X, and he probably authored the so-called Galatea letter, previously attributed to the painter, in memoriam of his artist friend.<sup>566</sup> In *Il Cortegiano*, Raphael is named four times, and in the dedicatory letter, Castiglione compares his masterpiece to a painting: "I have sent you this book as a painted portrait of the Court of Urbino, not by the hand of Raphael or Michelangelo, but by that of a lowly painter and one who only knows how to draw the principal lines, without adorning the truth with attractive colors, or fashioning through the art of perspective that which is not there."<sup>567</sup> The comparison of Castiglione's dialogue to Raphael's painting, however humble the poet is in his introduction, implies a mutual measure of design between the visual and literary arts.

Their friendship probably began around 1504, when both were based in Urbino under the patronage of Duke Guidobaldo da Montefeltro.<sup>568</sup> Although details of their

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<sup>566</sup> On the Leonine letter, see Francesco P. Teodoro, *Raffaello, Baldassar Castiglione e la lettera a Leone X* (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editore, 1994); and Cammy Brothers, "Architecture, History, Archaeology: Drawing Ancient Rome in the Letter to Leo X & in Sixteenth-Century Practice," in: *Coming About: A Festschrift for John Shearman* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Art Museums, 2001), pp. 130-140; Shearman (1994), pp. 69-97.

<sup>567</sup> *Il libro del cortegiano del Conte Baldesar Castiglione* (Venice: Aldo Romano, 1528), f. 2v: "... mandovi questo libro, come un ritratto di pittura della Corte d'Urbino, non di mano di Raffaello, o Michel'Angelo, ma di pittor ignobile & che solame[n]te sappia tirare le linee principali, senza adornar la uerità de uaghi colori o far parer per arte di prospettiva quello che non è."

<sup>568</sup> Julia Cartwright, *Baldassare Castiglione: The Perfect Courtier* (London: John Murray, 1908), vol. 1, p. 107 ff; and Lynn M. Loudon, "'Sprezzatura' in Raphael and Castiglione" in: *Art Bulletin* 28.1 (1968), p. 43.

early relationship are scarcely known, their courtly bond was solidified when Guidobaldo commissioned Raphael to paint the miniature *Saint George and the Dragon*, now in Washington, D.C. (fig. 5.31); in 1506, Castiglione was charged with delivering the panel to England as a token of thanks after King Henry VII elevated the duke to the prestigious Order of the Garter.<sup>569</sup> Their friendship was probably resumed in 1509, when Castiglione visited the Eternal City before joining the service of the pope's nephew, Francesco Maria della Rovere, as a gentleman in arms. It was around this time that he began to draft early versions of the *Cortegiano* in earnest.<sup>570</sup> As with the *Prose*, the *Cortegiano* aspires to codify a new Renaissance ideal, but Castiglione's focus is broader, on the essence and dignity of the perfect courtier, and over the course of four fictive conversations, he touches on a wide range of topics, including politics, classical learning, love, and the visual arts. The timing of the book and its subjects of conversation seem as significant for Julius II as for Raphael. In the dedicatory epistle, Castiglione explains that with the expulsion of the Borgias from the Marche and the elevation of Guidobaldo to Captain of the Church, the ducal household in Urbino was saturated with a new influx of noble and worthy *cortegiani*.<sup>571</sup> The dialogue that follows, Castiglione tells us, was inspired by the

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<sup>569</sup> Saint George's garter is inscribed with "HONI," the beginning of the order's motto ("HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE"). There is some debate as to whether the panel was meant for Henry VII himself or for his emissary Gilbert Talbot. On the painting's provenance, see Carlo Volpe, "Due questioni raffaellesche," in: *Paragone* 7.75 (1956), p. 12; Helen S. Ettlinger, "The Question of St. George's Garter," in: *Burlington Magazine* 125.958 (1983), pp. 25-29; John Shearman, "A Drawing for Raphael's St. George," in: *Burlington Magazine* 125.958 (1983), pp. 15-25; and David Alan Brown, "Saint George in Raphael's Washington Painting," in: *Studies in the History of Art* 17 (1986), pp. 37-44.

<sup>570</sup> Early sketches appear in a notebook of 1508 (now housed in the archives of Casa Castiglioni in Mantua). Written in Latin, these early concepts reveal a markedly different design, with lists of exemplary women, proverbs, and ideas on the topic of love. On the genesis and development of early drafts, see Ghino Ghinassi, "Fasi dell'elaborazione del *Cortegiano*," in: *Studi di filologia italiana* 25 (1967), pp. 155-96; and more recently, Amedeo Quondam, "La nascita del *Cortegiano*. Prime ricognizioni sul manoscritto autografo," in: *Nuova rivista di letteratura italiana* (1999), pp. 423-441.

<sup>571</sup> *Cortegiano* I.6, f. 2r: "Essendo poi ascenso al po[n]tificato Iulio II . fu fatto Capitan della chiesa. Nel qual tempo segue[n]do il suo consueto stile stile, sopra ogni altra cosa precuraua che la casa sua fosse di

passage of the pope through duchy in 1507: after subduing the Baglioni and retaking Bologna for the papal states, Julius II and his retinue spent several days in Urbino, which hosted elaborate festivities in his honor.<sup>572</sup>

As in Vida and Bembo, the *Cortegiano* presents a bibliographic “thesaurus” of literary and historical exempla, which Castiglione cites as courtly models and consultants. Letters and reading, he says, are the “ornaments” worn by men of arms, and valor demands the cultivation of learning.<sup>573</sup> Alexander read Homer, Caesar studied widely in Latin and Greek, and even Sulla and Hannibal were conversant in literature. The great histories they read in books and sought to resemble in life instilled excellence in their great deeds; in turn, these inspired labors won them a place in the chain of written history as imitative ideals. Not only does Castiglione’s great “portrait” of literary learning evoke the index on the walls of the Stanza della Segnatura, but since, like Alexander and Caesar, Julius relished epic verse, the visual and textual assembly of heroic authors in his *bibliotheca* boasts his similar aspirations as soldier and scholar.<sup>574</sup> The role of literary exempla as courtly advisors is a persistent thread across the tapestry of Castiglione’s text,

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nobilissimi, & ualorosi gentilhomini piena: co i quali molto familiarmente uiueua, godendosi della conuersatione di quelli.”

<sup>572</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 3r - 3v: “Haue[n]do adunq[ue] Papa Iulio . II . con la presentia sua & co[n] l’aiuto de Franzesi ridotto Bologna alla obediencia della sede apostolica, nell’anno . M.D.VI. & ritornando uerso Roma, passò per Urbino: doue qua[n]to era possibile honoratame[n]te, & con quel piu magnifico, & sple[n]dido apparato, che si hauesse potuto fare in qual si uoglia altra nobil città d’Italia, fu riceuuto: di modo che oltre al Papa tutti i Signor Cardinali, & altri Cortegiani restarono summamente satisfatti: & furono alcuni, i quali tratti dalla dolcezza di questa co[m]pagnia, partendo il Papa, & la corte, restarono per molti giorni ad Urbino: nel qual tempo non solame[n]te si continuaua nell’usato stile delle feste, & piaceri ordinarii, ma ogn’uno si sforzaua d’accrescere qualche cosa, & massimamente ne i giochi : a i quali quasi ogni sera s’atte[n]deua.” Castiglione’s account of events here is a bit muddled. When Julius stopped in Urbino in 1506, it was to meet the Bolognese envoys of Giovanni Bentivoglio (who never appeared; Bentivoglio refused diplomacy and invited the siege). The papal return to Rome took place in 1507.

<sup>573</sup> *Ibid.*, I.43, f. 20v - 21r: “. . . ne mi ma[n]cheriano esempi di tanti eccellenti Capitani antichi: i quali tutti giu[n]sero l’ornamento delle lettere alla uirtù dell’arme . . . & che la uera gloria sia quella che si commenda al sacro Thesauro delle lettere, ogn’un po’ comprendere, excetto quegli infelici, che gustate no[n] l’hanno.”

<sup>574</sup> On this soldier-scholar type, Castiglione surely had in mind his ducal patrons in Urbino – Guidobaldo and Francesco Maria in particular. As we have already seen in Chapter One, like his counterparts in Urbino, Julius cultivated a similar reputation as a learned man of action.



and in the final book he interweaves stories of ancient teachers of honor, virtue, and wisdom. In a long passage describing princely tutors and companions, he celebrates the “divine spirits” Plato and Aristotle and names them “the perfect courtiers.” Defending their courtly perfection, Castiglione continues: “We can believe that they practiced courtiership, since they wrote of it on occasion, such that the very artists of the subjects of which they wrote know that they understood these things to the deepest roots of their marrow.”<sup>575</sup> As in the *Cortegiano*, in the *School of Athens* Plato and Aristotle appear in the company of their students — not only those disciples pictured in the fresco, but also the courtly readers that visited the *Bibliotheca Iulia* — and offer their counsel as literary guides.

Castiglione’s particular literary fortune rests on his invention of a new aesthetic virtue: *sprezzatura*, the cardinal trait of his ideal courtier. A novel and somewhat elusive concept, *sprezzatura* is the central issue of courtly grace, itself one of the key concerns of the *Cortegiano*, whose expression was tangled in the brambles of authority, beauty, and the divine.<sup>576</sup> Often translated (imprecisely) as “nonchalance” or “detachment,” *sprezzatura* regards the performance of difficulty with natural ease:

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<sup>575</sup> *Ibid.*, IV.47-48, f. 100r and v: “Ne penso che Aristotile, & Platone si fossero sdegnati del nome di perfetto Cortegiano . . . Non è quasi licito imaginar che questi dui spriti diuini non sapessero ogni cosa; & però creder si po che operassero ciò che s’appartiene all Cortegiania: perche doue lor occorre, ne scriuono di tal modo, che gli artfici medesimi delle cose da loro scritte conoscono che le intendeuano in fino alle medulle, & alle piu intime radici.”

<sup>576</sup> The interlocutors variously discuss grace and authority (I.29); grace and brilliance (II.35); grace and dignity (I.36); grace and virtue (II.59); grace and elegance (III.2); beauty and grace (III.58); and grace and the soul (III.69). On the difficulty of these definitions and the concept of *sprezzatura*, see Ita Mac Carthy, “Grace and the ‘Reach of Art’ in Castiglione and Raphael,” in: *Word & Image* 25.1 (2009), pp. 33-45.

Having considered many times already how grace arises (leaving aside those who receive it from the stars), I have found a universal rule, which seems to me valid above all others, and in all human affairs, whatever is done, or said, or anything else. . . Practice in all things a certain *sprezzatura*, so as to conceal art and make whatever is done or said appear to be without effort and almost without any thought. And I believe a good deal of grace is derived from this, because everyone knows the difficulty of rare and well-done things, whereas facility in these things generally causes the greatest wonder . . . Thus we may call that art true art, which does not appear to be art.<sup>577</sup>

The refinement required by *sprezzatura* marks a shift in Renaissance aesthetics, a new moment of artistic performance. It is often observed that *sprezzatura* uniquely distinguishes Raphael's painting, but its visual means are surprisingly less considered.<sup>578</sup> Although the first drafts of the *Cortegiano* and Raphael's frescoes in the Stanza della Segnatura are exactly contemporary, no one has examined the influence of the one on the other. Indeed, it is precisely the opacity of *sprezzatura* that makes its identification difficult, since by the word's very definition, obvious examples of artifice constitute staccato interruptions of grace. In Raphael's designs, *sprezzatura* is quietly manifested through subtle twists and turns of figure, form, and color rendered with such suffusive sensitivity that, as Castiglione says, art does not seem like art.

If Raphael's Muses on *Parnassus* are the embodiments of grace, as they are so often said to be, then we might consider how exactly this quality is pictured. The causal

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<sup>577</sup> *Cortegiano* I.26, f. 12r: "Ma hauendo io gia piu uolte pensato meco, onde nasca questa gratia lasciando quegli, che dalle stelle l'hanno, trouo una regula uniuersalissima : la qual mi par ualer circa questo in tutte le cose humane, che si sacciano, o dicano piu che alcuna altra. Et ciò è suggir quanto piu si pò: & come un asperissimo, & pericoloso scoglio la affettatione, & per dir forse una noua parola, usar in ogni cosa una certa sprezzatura, che nasconda l'arte, & dimostri ciò si fa, & dice uenir fatto senza fatica, & quasi sena pensarui. Da questo credo io che deriui assai la gratia, per che delle cose rare, & ben fatte ogn' un fa la difficoltà, onde in esse la facilità genera grandissima marauiglia: & per lo contrario il sforzare, & (come si dice) tirar per i capegli da somma disgratia & fa estimar poco ogni cosa, p[er] grande ch'ella si sia. Però si po' dir quella esser uera arte, che non apare esser arte."

<sup>578</sup> Only Louden, Mac Carthy, and Clark Hulse, *The Rule of Art: Literature and Painting in the Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 85-93, have examined the consequence of *sprezzatura* for Raphael's painting. All, however, have focused on the Castiglione portrait.

relationship of *sprezzatura* and grace in Castiglione implies either the artist's cultivated mind (his *ingegno*) or a gift of God (*lasciando quegli, che dalle stelle l'hanno*). I propose that Raphael's Muses manifest both. In the *Cortegiano*'s final act, *bellezza* and *grazia* are turned from the courtier's wit to inspired revelation, channeled again through the divine breath. As we have already seen, Vasari cast Poetry in terms of inspiration, and Raphael's Muses are inspiration's animated form. Vasari describes the soft wind and gentle breeze, instilled with the breath of the divine; inhaling the spirit, the Muses sway with *grazia* and *bellezza*. In the book's most famous episode, Pietro Bembo delivers a stunning Neoplatonic speech on divine love, claiming possession by "holy frenzy."<sup>579</sup> Enrapt in his vision and with eyes raised to heaven, Bembo contemplates earthly and celestial beauty: "The rational lover understands that, even though the mouth is part of the body, nevertheless it produces words, which are the interpreters of the soul, and that intrinsic breath which is itself even called a soul."<sup>580</sup> Just as Vida implored Apollo to breathe into him the divine spirit, Bembo's ecstatic monologue is an exercise in inspiration, taking the breath as its heavenly instrument. On the *Parnassus*, Apollo and the Muses are touched by spiritual *anima*. Languid and delicate embodiments of Bembo's *piacevolezza*, the Muses move with transcendent grace. With parted lips like Castiglione's Bembo, Apollo raises his eyes toward the *tondo* in the ceiling, whose motto (NUMINE AFFLATUR) speaks literally to the divine breath that moves his consorts on the mountain.<sup>581</sup> Inspiration's

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<sup>579</sup> *Cortegiano* IV.71, f. 116v: "... io ho detto quello, chel sacro furor amoroso improuisamente m'ha dettato."

<sup>580</sup> *Ibid.*, IV.64, f. 114r: "Ma l'amante rationale conosce, che anchora che la bocca sia parte del corpo, nientedimeno per quella si da exito alle parole, che sono interpreti dell'anima: & à quello intrinseco anhelito, che si pur esso anhora anima."

<sup>581</sup> Barolsky (2000).

gentle breeze is made visible in the soft billows of Melpomene's lavender peplos and by the delicate wisps of her sisters' hair blowing delicately in the wind.

The otherworldly beauty of the Muses also belongs to the language of the *Cortegiano*. As Bembo continues his speech, he tells us that the ascent to the sublime begins when we glimpse "bodies so fair and full of grace that they kindle in us . . . such delight . . . what blessed awe, must we think is that which fills us, that occupies our souls, that they aspire to the vision of divine beauty."<sup>582</sup> Toward this vision, Bembo explains that the courtier must first contemplate the beauty of a mortal woman. Little by little, in his mind he should ornament her image so that she subsumes various other beauties. The single, transcendent beauty that results in his mind will touch all of nature, including the woman whose form the courtier first pondered.<sup>583</sup> Again we are reminded of Zeuxis and Raphael's Galatea letter, where "una cert' Idea" in the artist's mind aspires toward *bellezza's* divine form. The journey from mundane to the celestial, from mortal to the divine, is similarly mapped in Raphael's fresco. Beginning with Sappho, who leans invitingly into the viewer's space, our eyes are carried up the slope of the mountain, where her form is reflected in the figures of Euterpe and Erato beside Apollo.

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<sup>582</sup> *Cortegiano* IV.69, f. 115v: "Se adunq[ue] le bellezze, che tutto di con questi nostri tenebrosi occhi uedemo ne i corpi corruptibili, che non son però altro che sogni, & ombre tenuissime di bellezza, ci paion tanto belle & gratiose, che in noi spesso accenden foco ardentissimo: & con ta[n]to diletto, che riputiamo niuna felicità potersi agguagliar à q[ue]lla che tallhor sentemo per un sol sguardo, che ci uenga dall' amata uista d'una do[n]na, che felice marauiglia, che beato stupore pe[n]siamo noi che sia quello, che occupa le anime, che perue[n]gono alla uisione della bellezza diuina?"

<sup>583</sup> *Ibid.*, IV.67, f. 115r: "Il che gli succederà, se tra se anderà considera[n]do come stretto legame sia il star sempre impedito nel conte[m]plar la bellezza d'un corpo solo: & però per uscir di questo così angusto termine, aggiungerà nel pensier suo à poco à poco tanti ornamenti, che cumulando insieme tutte le bellezze, farà un concetto uniuersale: & ridurrà la moltitudine d'esse alla unità di q[ue]lla sola, che generalmente sopra la humana natura si spande: & così non piu la bellezza particular d'una donna, ma quella universale, che tutti i corpi adorna, contemplerà."

The courtier's journey from sensual beauty to the sublime is echoed on a surviving sheet, now in the Ashmolean (fig. 5.32), where word and image find their mutual expression. Here Raphael drafted a sonnet beside an early sketch for one of the reclining Muses. Lightly drawn with a tentative hand, the Muse awaits her embellishment or animation.<sup>584</sup> Like the drawing, the excised lines and hanging word bank expects the artist's elaboration. Selectively rendered in close visual proximity, the figure and verse seem to share a similar consonance of worldly love and heavenly grace. Scribbled in the same ink as the drawing, the sonnet complains that the artist burns with the fire of desire, and Raphael laments his enslavement to Amor, whom he places above the Olympians. Before breaking the poetic structure of the sonnet and suppressing the latter half, he suggestively made *gratia* a closing rhyme. Although Raphael lacked the prosody of his peers, the labor of the poem — the literal *difficoltà* of its invention and delivery — invites comparison of the artist's apotheosis, or his aspiration toward poetic grace, to Bembo's contemplation of love and beauty in the *Cortegiano*.

## Conclusion

On the *Parnassus*, a lone poet appears between Virgil and the Muses (fig. 5.33). Scholars have often suggested that the figure, afforded a special place on the summit of the mountain, is Raphael. Indeed, it is tempting to imagine that the figure is the artist's own self-portrait. If Raphael placed himself in the painting, closest to Apollo and the Muses, then his laurel crown commemorates his visual *ars poetica*, the pictorial eloquence pronounced by his paintings in the Stanza della Segnatura.

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<sup>584</sup> The same figure was later recycled as Sappho and the Alba Madonna (c. 1510). On the drawing, see James Grantham Turner, "Raphael as Poet," in: *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 32.2 (2013), p. 6-11.

Raphael, Vasari's great imitator, imitated not only art, but also poetics, and by endowing his compositions with a new visual syntax, the painter transformed the *Bibliotheca Iulia* into a lofty commentary on the principle of *ut pictura poesis*. To describe the great authors of Western history with a fitting visual rhetoric, Raphael turned to the new canons of language as disciple and critic. In Raphael's new visual classicism, we behold a panegyric landscape, whose citizens embody the very idioms of imitation, invention, and inspiration to which the Stanza as library was disposed. Aspiring to the rhetorical clarity and ornament prescribed by his contemporaries, Raphael's visual lexicon envisions an ideal Rome, which he populated with an imagined body of historical advisors to guide the Julian ideology and give meaning to the harmony of the state in jointly literary and aesthetic terms.

## Conclusions

A new reading of the Stanza della Segnatura is long overdue. Astonishing though it may sound, scholars have yet to consider how the room's use influenced the meaning of its paintings, and no one has proposed a single theme that unifies its represented disciplines. This dissertation does not simply offer a new understanding of the space as the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, with Justice as its governing theme; it also submits a new paradigm for understanding the relationship of word and image in the Italian Renaissance, as well as new models for approaching the historical legacies of Raphael and Julius II, among the most eminent artists and patrons in Western history. It is rare that a cache of new documents like the Julian volumes surfaces, and these objects carry with them the unusual opportunity to revise the historical account. My study has only begun to scratch the surface of these larger implications, illuminating the mutual transactions between pictorial composition and traditions of the book, revealing Raphael's creative reinterpretation of literary themes, and restoring lost aspects of the biography of Julius II. Although my focus has been the Stanza della Segnatura, by resituating the room, its images, and its collection of manuscripts and printed books within the literary milieu of the Julian court, this dissertation also offers a new lens for approaching Raphael's novel canon of style, and for proving that Julius II was no mere warrior, but a considerable intellectual and canon lawyer.

Many art historians have worked from the assumption that in spite of his painterly talents and facility, the boy wonder from Urbino could not have been responsible for the high-minded subjects and ideas articulated in his paintings. Whereas artists like Leonardo and Michelangelo bequeathed a wealth of writings — letters, contracts, and notebooks —

Raphael left only a meager record. Those few examples that survive offer only the most fleeting glimpses of his thoughts and lack the refinements of language that are so evident in the writings of his contemporaries. Scholars have regarded the stuttering inelegance of his poems and personal letters as markers of a simple mind or an artist unequipped to invent the lofty visual harmonies in the Stanza della Segnatura.<sup>585</sup> I have operated on the premise that Raphael was deeply aware of his participation in a highly intellectual tradition, and that his art was not simply driven by these humanistic engines, but in turn acted as a motor that propelled them forward. To part the veil of Raphael's romantic mythos — that is, the artist as lover and dullard — I have sought to reestablish the nuances of his literacy, what Howard Gardner might have called a “pictorial intellect.”<sup>586</sup> In a prolifically textual culture, Raphael was an author of another kind, who understood the significance of the ideas set forth in his paintings.

Toward a definition of Raphael's “pictorial literacy,” I have asked how the artist interpreted and responded to the relationship of word and image in the Stanza della Segnatura as *Bibliotheca Iulia*, a space where verbal and visual media naturally converged. How did reading and exegesis, the critical activities for which the room was intended, inform a cooperation of literary and artistic fields? Where other scholars have sought a guiding hand or single key text to reconcile the complexities of Raphael's frescoes, often in vain, I have instead looked to the requirements of the chamber to chart a new course of interpretation. I have argued that Raphael's designs can only be

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<sup>585</sup> Here I distinguish between Raphael's quotidian letters (i.e., to his uncle, Simone Ciarla, which report casual news) and epistles (i.e., the “Galatea letter” or the letter to Leo X, which were designed as something akin to showpieces). The latter were unequivocally collaborative efforts, written in drafts with the help of figures like Bembo, Castiglione, or Lodovico Dolce.

<sup>586</sup> I refer to Gardner's groundbreaking thesis *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).



understood in light of the Stanza's purpose, and that conditions of reading and authorship offer a new lens for understanding the paintings as a bridge between contemporary theories of pictorial and literary composition. Striking at a new target, one that addresses hermeneutic questions of design and meaning, I have thus aimed to redirect the academic focus from the problem of an advisor toward the stunning novelty of Raphael's frescoes. What emerges is a new picture of Raphael's theory of painting: even if the artist was not "lettered," he was consciously engaged with the bookish themes inherent to the Stanza as *bibliotheca*, and by transforming with his brush the principles of contemporary literary culture, he participated in these humanistic conversations of the book as the author of a new visual canon.

Study of the Stanza della Segnatura therefore demands a new tack, but books have posed a problem of their own. Because the Stanza's status as the *Bibliotheca Iulia* was forfeited over five hundred years ago under Julius' successor Leo X, scholars thought it impossible to recreate the space as it was intended. Until now, our vision of the Stanza was woefully incomplete. Missing were the papal volumes, without which there would have been no *bibliotheca* to begin with. With the rediscovery of many of these lost objects, it is now finally possible to understand the Stanza della Segnatura as a grand ensemble and Raphael's frescoes as active respondents to the literary theories, idioms, and exegeses exemplified by the contents of the Julian collection. As objects familiar to patron and painter, the papal books present a new means of approach, one that opens privileged vistas onto the ways in which contemporaries tested and codified the elements of composition through text and image. Outfitted with strata of critical commentary, which take both verbal and visual form, the pages of the books offer us a new means for

approaching Raphael's compositions as their interlocutors. For example, the Calderini manuscript in the Vatican (BAV MS [REDACTED]; Chapter 2.7), suggestively similar in its illumination and glosses to Raphael's *Parnassus*, has revealed the painter's considered engagement with humanistic traditions of commentary. Just as Ovid makes Sappho into an arena for his own virtuosic performance of verse, in the manuscript's margins, Calderini in turn transforms Ovid into a field for the critical interpretation of the *lira da braccio*. To this chain of criticism, where the boundaries between authors and interpreters were flexibly defined, we may now add Raphael's frescoes. Inverting the image in the manuscript in a witty play on the language of Ovid's poem, Raphael asks the library's readers to compare Calderini's commentary to his painting as a commentary in visual form. From patterns of the page as sites for imitation, revision, and reinvention, Raphael devised commensurate strategies of pictorial composition. Not only did Raphael catalogue the great writers of Western history on the walls of the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, but by adapting visually the mechanisms of their reception in contemporary book culture, he also entered himself into their history as an author.

Raphael's selective use of text in the paintings affords us another point of entry into the Stanza's design and meaning, one that was scarcely considered until now. In the frescoes, he labeled seven of the forty-six books, and in the ceiling, the mottos heralded by the eidola are quotations excerpted and revised from the authors that inhabit the space's literary and artistic volumes. The labeled books are not simply visual coordinates; they had real counterparts in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, and similarities between the physical and painted volumes demonstrate a cooperation of meaning that transcends the Stanza's real and represented spaces. My rediscovery of the Julian *Moralia*, whose interlace

borders match the golden knots on the altar cloth in the *Disputa*, has revealed Raphael's representation of the Eucharist at the center of the painting to be distinctly Gregorian, an aspect of meaning previously overlooked.

Complementing the titles as textual signposts in the paintings, the *tituli* overhead both organize the literary categories below and impart a governing order. Mediated by sources like Augustine (Chapter 3.5 and 3.6) and Dante (Chapter 4.3 and 4.5), these mottos behave as a critical apparatus or commentary gloss, reinforcing Raphael's visual essays with authoritative citations. They also insist on a harmony of literary disciplines. Joining together the *riquadri*, they carry us around the room and give visible shape to Justice as the Stanza's governing theme. The *Fall of Man* marks the beginning of natural law; the *Flaying of Marsyas* represents at once a plea for Platonic initiation and the exercised justice of Apollo; *Urania* spins the spheres, a cosmic metaphor for justice as fitting order; and the *Judgment of Solomon* is a mortal allegory for applied justice. By limiting his inclusion of text in a profoundly textual space, Raphael impresses a new form of visual literacy, which directs readers to seek out these networks of meaning in consultation with the books themselves.

From the miniature to the monumental, these critical cycles of commentary and excursus, as well as of imitation, revision, and reinvention, also suggest the participation of Renaissance poets past and present. Although Dante appears twice in the frescoes, the father of the Tuscan *volgare* has received surprisingly short shrift in studies of the Stanza. Even if Edgar Wind demonstrated that Dante's *Paradiso*, between the *Disputa* and the *Parnassus*, is the textual source of the *Marsyas* panel in the ceiling, few other scholars have considered the broader significance of his writings for the chamber. Not only do the

characters and structure of the *Disputa* re-envision the metaphysics of *Paradiso*, but in the *Parnassus* and the *School of Athens*, we come face-to-face with the poets and philosophers Dante encountered in Limbo. I have argued that by recasting Dante's figures in his own bibliographic vision of Christian history, Raphael inverts the Dantesque paradigm of *visibile parlare* to make painting into a persuasive metaphor for the revelation of the Word.

Who were Raphael's *intendenti*? To the pope's personal and diplomatic retinues, we should add those literary scholars who famously found favor under the Della Rovere aegis and sought through commentary to write a new canon of poetry. At once archaeological and literary, Rome's topography was a watershed for the young painter. Raphael's new classicism in the Stanza della Segnatura is unprecedented, and before arriving in Rome, he had undertaken nothing so large in scale or grand in scheme. Although scholars have long approached study of Raphael's art by distinguishing between his many dexterous shifts in style, few have understood him as the agent of this change. The academic discourse has focused instead on problems of attribution and Raphael's workshop, or on the influence of artists like Leonardo and Michelangelo. That Raphael was moved by these encounters is without question, but his conscious participation in these issues of style and meaning is too often taken for granted. I have argued that Raphael was not simply aware of the culture and conversations around him, but that he commanded an active and pioneering response to this inheritance. His paintings in the Stanza della Segnatura, I have suggested, are a grandiloquent testimony of his meaningful reception and revision of the literary themes served by the space. To understand Raphael's invention of a new visual vocabulary, I have turned to the textual

legacies of his friends and colleagues, Marco Girolamo Vida, Pietro Bembo, and Baldassare Castiglione, whose important theses were underway at the same moment as his masterworks in Vatican Palace. Vida, Bembo, and Castiglione prescribed new models for literary eloquence, founded on the principles of ancient rhetoric, and each defined aesthetic practice as a process based dually on imitation and inspiration. Across the visual and literary landscape of the Stanza's frescoes, we survey Vida's Virgilian *numen*, Bembo's counterbalance of *gravità* and *piacevolezza*, and Castiglione's portraits of Plato and Aristotle as the ideal courtiers. By fitting these terms to pictorial composition, Raphael transformed the frescoes into lofty allegories for *ut pictura poesis*, entering himself alongside his poetic peers as the author of an analogous new visual canon.

By reconstructing the *Bibliotheca Iulia* as an ensemble of books, poets, and paintings, a task that has never before been undertaken in earnest, it is now finally possible to illuminate new aspects of the Stanza della Segnatura's decoration and bring into focus lost dimensions of the biography and intended legacy of the Warrior Pope. The outcome of this dissertation is thus twofold. We may now understand Raphael not as the illiterate hayseed that history has often made him out to be, but as a keenly invested inheritor and critic. Something similar may be said for Pope Julius II. That he was powerfully combative and formidably bellicose cannot be doubted, but it is history's mistake that his legendary *terribilità* has been seen to preclude an energetic intellectual life. Indeed, as I have demonstrated, the soldier-scholar was a type marshaled by contemporaries like Federico and Guidobaldo da Montefeltro, the Dukes of Urbino. Even though modern scholarship has emphasized the pope's penchant for warfare, my recovery

of his books demonstrates that Julius envisioned himself as a legislator who expressed calculated interest in the legal reform of the Church and its Roman authority.

The theme of jurisprudence was a perennial touchstone for arguments of papal primacy, and under Julius' leadership the Universal Church braved new threats of schism as the Reformation approached. Responding to the Venetians' conciliar appeals, in 1509 Julius extended the *Execrabilis* of Pius II to safeguard the spiritual and temporal authority of the papacy.<sup>587</sup> Two years later, with the support of Louis XII, the Conciliabulum of Pisa railed against papal absolutism. Although this effort was mustered only by a handful of cardinals, their contempt spurred the pope into action, and on July 18 Julius published a bull assembling the Fifth Lateran Council to thwart the menace of conciliarism. Around this same time, Raphael painted the *Jurisprudence* — the final of four walls in the Stanza della Segnatura — and began the pope's famous portrait, frequently cited as a *comparandum* for the fresco.<sup>588</sup> Shortly thereafter, he also refined his designs for the first two walls in the Stanza d'Eliodoro, the *Expulsion of Heliodorus* and the *Mass of Bolsena*. This cluster of images seems to have been forged out of the political crucible that incited the pope's fierce legal defense, and critical examination of the Julian collection of books suggests that the *Bibliotheca Iulia* envisions a similar thesis on the pope's legislative domain and his efforts to fortify the legal apparatus of the Universal Church.

Among the richest extant documents of the Julian papacy, the pope's private collection of books demonstrates an active and cultivated engagement with the legal discipline. These records, however, have only now become available, and promise to

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<sup>587</sup> During the League of Cambrai. See the decree "Suscepti regiminis" in: *Magnum Bullarium Romanum*, Lyons, 1692, I, pp. 511-512.

<sup>588</sup> On the portrait and the Stanza d'Eliodoro in this turbulent context, see Mark J. Zucker, "Raphael and the Beard of Pope Julius II," in: *Art Bulletin* 59.4 (1977), pp. 524-533.

revise the modern biography of *il papa terribile*. Close investigation of the books' pages reveals an even more purposeful priority of interests: legal volumes, spanning the history and literature of the *corpus juris civilis* and *corpus juris canonici*, contain striking annotations in the pope's unmistakable hand, and it is tempting to consider how Julius' legal research might have shaped his pontifical decrees.<sup>589</sup> In one such note, for example, he considers the gravity of punishment warranted by especially grievous offenses, grouping together sexual deviants, murderers, and simoniacs.<sup>590</sup> The latter category might remind us of Julius' reformatory efforts as pope, since his famous bull of 1506 condemned the crime of simony and considerably increased its penalty.<sup>591</sup> From section summaries in the margins, to corrections of diction and vocabulary, to quick commentaries on the significance of particular passages, interventions like these affirm the pope's specialist engagement with the literature of law and its historical tradition.

These shared histories of the book and the legal domain of the Universal Church under Julius II come full circle on the Justice wall. First conceived as the Apocalypse, the *Jurisprudence* was the hinge on which the Stanza's meaning turned. A discarded *modello* pictures the *Opening of the Seventh Seal*, with Julius II as the recipient of Saint John's prophetic vision. The drawing is understood more fully in light of preparatory studies for the *Disputa*, which first imagined Theology as the *giudizio universale* according to Augustine, the only figure in the fresco pictured writing. Opening onto the allegory of the spiritual architecture of the Church, early studies for the *Disputa* envision Augustine's

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<sup>589</sup> As in BAV MS [REDACTED], f. 78v; BAV MS [REDACTED], f. 4r; and myriad letters now housed in the Vatican Secret Archives.

<sup>590</sup> BAV MS [REDACTED], f. 12r: "Nota: Revibus peniis veniant puniendi fornicator symoniacus: et homicidus." This is item 134 on the inventory.

<sup>591</sup> On the bull, see M. Dykmans, "Le conclave sans simonie ou la bulle de Jules II sur l'élection papale," in: *Miscellanea Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae III* (Vatican City: 1989), pp. 203-255.

New Jerusalem, in which the pious souls are raised to rule with Christ over the earthly order, at last resolving the ancestral scourge of the *Fall of Man* and restoring humanity to its intended harmony with God under the New Law. In a decade of apocalyptic and political exigency, the Stanza della Segnatura heralds the Half-Millennium of 1500 as the City of God under the aegis of Julius II, whose name is twice inscribed on the *Disputa*'s altar. Just as Plato and Aristotle (whom Castiglione calls the perfect courtly advisors) represent natural truth in Raphael's vision of ideal Athens, so the theologians in the *Disputa* gather in an ideal Jerusalem symbolic of revealed truth. Both the books and the paintings affirm the papal priority of justice, and by depicting Julius in the guise of his canonist predecessor in the final fresco, Raphael elevated his canon lawyer patron to the status of an author and champion of the New Law. And like the collection of books itself, Raphael's frescoes together trace the narrative of Christian history, into which the artist inserted his patron as the chosen vicar of earthly and divine justice.

That the *Bibliotheca Iulia* was repurposed under Paul III as the seat of the Signatura Gratiae et Iustitiae, the highest court of the Apostolic See, suggests that the grand theme of Justice was still recognized decades after the death of Julius II, warrior and canon lawyer, and that the chamber was selected for this new use due to its associations with the discipline of law. As the *Bibliotheca Iulia*, where the history of Western literature was catalogued and interpreted on its shelves and in its paintings, the Stanza della Segnatura represents the embodied metaphor of the journey of the Word of God through the written word of man. As in Dante's *Paradiso* and the Book of Revelation, Raphael's paintings culminate in a sweeping vision of Christian law as their protagonist and patron comes face-to-face with God's book, where the justice of



salvation is composed. We now at last understand that the four frescoes are populated by Julius II's imagined courtiers, the authors of the literature shelved below, who envision the order of the heavenly spheres and give meaning to the harmony of the state as the *giudizio universale* approaches. United under the theme of Justice, Raphael's frescoes must finally be understood as a persuasive theological argument for the spiritual aspirations of Julius II, for which the young artist invented a lofty new style of visual rhetoric.

## APPENDIX 1: ILLUSTRATIONS

### Chapter 1: Introduction

Figure 1.1  
*The School of Athens* (Philosophy)  
Raphael  
1508-1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 1.2  
*The Disputa* (Theology)  
Raphael  
1509-1510  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 1.3  
*The Parnassus* (Poetry)  
Raphael  
1510  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 1.4  
*The Jurisprudence* (Justice)  
Raphael  
1511  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 1.5  
Plan of the Vatican Palace  
Third Floor  
After Shearman (1971)

Figure 1.6  
Ceiling  
Raphael and others  
1508-1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 1.7  
The Foundation of the Vatican Library  
Melozzo da Forlì  
c. 1476-1481  
Pinacoteca, Vatican Museums



Figure 1.8  
Sixtus IV Visiting the Vatican Library  
Unknown artists  
c. 1476-1477  
Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome

## Chapter 2: Reading Raphael in the *Bibliotheca Iulia*

Figure 2.1  
*Portrait of Pope Leo X*  
Raphael  
c. 1518  
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

Figure 2.2  
Detail  
*Portrait of Pope Leo X*  
Raphael  
c. 1518  
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

Figure 2.3  
*Sala Latina*, Vatican Library  
c. 1475-1476  
Vatican Palace

Figure 2.4  
Detail  
*Sala Latina*  
Domenico and Davide Ghirlandaio  
c. 1475-1476  
Vatican Palace

Figure 2.5  
*In epistula a. Paulis commentarius*  
Dedication copy for Sixtus IV  
Theophylact (illuminated by Matteo Felice)  
Late fifteenth century

Figure 2.6  
Preparatory study for the *School of Athens*  
1508-1509  
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Figure 2.7  
*Studiolo* of Federico da Montefeltro  
Workshop of Giuliano da Maiano  
c. 1472-1476  
Ducal Palace, Urbino



Figure 2.8  
Detail  
*Studiolo* of Federico da Montefeltro  
Workshop of Giuliano da Maiano  
c. 1472-1476  
Ducal Palace, Urbino

Figure 2.9  
*Uomini Famosi* cycle  
*Studiolo* of Federico da Montefeltro  
Justus van Ghent (?)  
c. 1472-1476  
Ducal Palace, Urbino

Figure 2.10  
*Portrait of Sixtus IV*  
*Studiolo* of Federico da Montefeltro  
Justus van Ghent (?)  
c. 1472-1476  
Ducal Palace, Urbino

Figure 2.11  
BAV MS Urb.lat.151  
f. 6r  
Francesco della Rovere (Sixtus IV)  
Between 1474 and 1482  
Vatican Library

Figure 2.12  
*Portrait of Julius II*  
Raphael  
1511  
National Gallery, London

Figure 2.13

*Plato**Studiolo* of Federico da Montefeltro

Justus van Ghent (?)

c. 1472-1476

Ducal Palace, Urbino

Figure 2.14  
*Aristotle*  
*Studiolo* of Federico da Montefeltro  
Justus van Ghent (?)  
c. 1472-1476  
Ducal Palace, Urbino

Figure 2.15  
Intarsia *armaria*  
Vatican Library of Sixtus IV  
Workshop of Giovannino Dolci  
c. 1475  
Vatican Library



Figure 2.16  
Tromp-l'oeil intarsia  
Northern wall (Poetry)  
c. 1513  
Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 2.17  
Intarsia doors  
Eastern wall (between Poetry and Philosophy)  
Fra Giovanni da Verona  
c. 1513  
Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 2.18

BAV MS [REDACTED]

f. 5v

Saint Jerome

*Letters*

1468

Vatican Library

Figure 2.19  
BAV MS [REDACTED]  
f. 1r  
Augustine  
*De Trinitate, De doctrina christiana, and Adversus quinque haereses*  
1468  
Vatican Library

Figure 2.20  
BAV MS [REDACTED]  
f. Iv  
Thucydides  
*De bello peloponnesiaco*  
Fifteenth century  
Vatican Library

Figure 2.21  
BAV MS [REDACTED]  
f. 3r  
Ptolemy  
*Cosmographia*  
Fifteenth century  
Vatican Library

Figure 2.22  
BAV MS [REDACTED]  
f. 1r  
Sallust  
*De bello Catilinae*  
c. 1475-1480  
Vatican Library

Figure 2.23  
Detail  
*The Parnassus* (Poetry)  
Raphael  
1510  
Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace



Figure 2.24  
*The Parnassus*  
Marcantonio Raimondi, after Raphael  
c. 1518  
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Figure 2.25  
*Oddi Altarpiece*  
Raphael  
c. 1504  
Pinacoteca, Vatican Museums

Figure 2.26  
*Apollo*  
After the designs of Botticelli  
1470s  
Hall of the Angels  
Ducal Palace, Urbino

Figure 2.27  
BAV MS [REDACTED]  
f. 76r  
After 1475  
Vatican Library

Figure 2.28  
Detail  
BAV MS [REDACTED]  
f. 76r  
After 1475  
Vatican Library

Figure 2.29  
Detail  
*The Parnassus* (Poetry)  
Raphael  
1510  
Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 2.30  
Detail  
*The Jurisprudence* (Justice)  
Raphael (executed by Lorenzo Lotto)  
1510  
Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 2.31  
Detail  
*The Jurisprudence* (Justice)  
Raphael  
1510  
Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace



Figure 2.32  
BAV MS [REDACTED]  
f. 1v  
*Decretals* of Gregory IX  
Fourteenth century  
Vatican Library

Figure 2.33  
BAV MS [REDACTED]  
f. 2r  
*Decretals* of Gregory IX  
Fourteenth century  
Vatican Library

Figure 2.34  
*The Fall of Man*  
Ceiling  
Raphael  
1508-1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 2.35  
Fitzwilliam Museum MS 262  
f. 1r  
Gratian  
*Decretum*  
Thirteenth century  
Cambridge University

Figure 2.36  
Detail  
*The Disputa* (Theology)  
Raphael  
1509-1510  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 2.37  
Julius II as Gregory the Great  
*The Disputa* (Theology)  
Raphael  
1509-1510  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 2.38  
BAV MS [REDACTED]  
f. 1r  
Gregory the Great  
Second volume, *Moralia in Job*  
Fifteenth century  
Vatican Library

Figure 2.39  
Detail  
BAV MS [REDACTED]  
f. 1r  
Gregory the Great  
Second volume, *Moralia in Job*  
Fifteenth century  
Vatican Library



Figure 2.40  
Sixtus IV  
*The Disputa* (Theology)  
Raphael  
1509-1510  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 2.41  
Fitzwilliam Museum MS 183  
f. 1  
Gratian  
*Decretum*  
Bologna, c. 1320-1330  
Cambridge University

Figure 2.42  
*Justice*  
Ceiling  
Raphael  
1508-1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

### Chapter 3: The Library, the Law, and the Julian Jerusalem

Figure 3.1  
*Modello* for the southern wall of the Stanza della Segnatura (Justice)  
Raphael (or workshop?)  
c. 1508?  
Louvre, Paris

Figure 3.2  
*The Judgment of Solomon*  
Ceiling  
Raphael  
1508-1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 3.3  
*Urania Ordering the Spheres*  
Ceiling  
Raphael  
1508-1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 3.4  
Drawing for *Assumption*  
Perugino (or workshop)  
c. 1481  
Albertina, Vienna

Figure 3.5  
*The Opening of the Seventh Seal*  
Illustrated Book of Revelation  
Albrecht Dürer  
1498



Figure 3.6  
*God the Father*  
Preparatory drawing for the Stanza d'Eliodoro  
After 1512  
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Figure 3.7  
*The Mass of Bolsena*  
Raphael  
c. 1512  
The Stanza d'Eliodoro, Vatican Palace

Figure 3.8  
*Modello* for the southern wall of the Stanza d'Eliodoro (the *Deliverance of Saint Peter*)  
Raphael (and Gianfrancesco Penni?)  
c. 1512-1513  
Ashmolean, Oxford

Figure 3.9  
(Copy after?) *modello* for the western wall of the Stanza d'Eliodoro (the *Repulse of Attila*)  
Workshop of Raphael  
Probably after 1513  
Louvre, Paris

Figure 3.10  
Cartoon for *Virgin and Child*  
Raphael  
c. 1507  
Musée Condé, Chantilly

Figure 3.11  
Cartoon for the *Madonna del Baldacchino*  
Raphael  
1508  
Chatsworth House, Derbyshire

Figure 3.12  
*Madonna del Baldacchino*  
Raphael  
1508  
Pitti Palace, Florence

Figure 3.13  
Preparatory study for the *Disputa*  
Raphael  
1508  
Royal Collection, Windsor



Figure 3.14  
*The Damned*  
Luca Signorelli  
c. 1503  
Cappella Nuova, Orvieto

Figure 3.15  
Large profile with anatomical studies  
Raphael and Luca Signorelli  
c. 1500-1506  
Ashmolean, Oxford

Figures 3.16 and 3.17  
Riders on horseback, probably for the Piccolomini Library (left)  
After Signorelli's *End of the World* (right)  
Raphael  
c. 1503  
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

Figure 3.18  
Detail of socle  
*Dante*  
Luca Signorelli  
c. 1503  
Cappella Nuova, Orvieto

Figure 3.19  
Library of Antonio Albèri  
Workshop of Signorelli  
c. 1503  
Cardinal's Palace, Orvieto

Figure 3.20  
Detail  
Library of Antonio Albèri  
Workshop of Signorelli  
c. 1503  
Cardinal's Palace, Orvieto

Figure 3.21  
Preparatory study for western wall (Theology)  
Raphael  
1508  
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Figure 3.22  
Detail of Fortitude  
*The Jurisprudence* (Justice)  
Raphael  
1511  
Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace



## Chapter 4: Raphael's Dante and Julian Comedy

Figure 4.1

*Paradise*

Nardo di Cione (attributed to Orcagna)

1354-1357

Strozzi Chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence

Figure 4.2  
*Hell*  
Nardo di Cione (attributed to Orcagna)  
1354-1357  
Strozzi Chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence

Figure 4.3  
*Hell*  
Artist disputed (Buonamico Buffalmacco?)  
1335-1340  
Camposanto Monumentale, Pisa

Figure 4.4  
Detail of Charon  
*The Last Judgment*  
Michelangelo  
1537-1541  
Sistine Chapel, Vatican Palace

Figure 4.5  
Pendentive with Haman  
Michelangelo  
1508-1512  
Sistine Chapel, Vatican Palace

Figure 4.6  
*Petite Saint Michael*  
Raphael  
c. 1503-1504  
Louvre, Paris

Figures 4.7 and 4.8  
Canto XXIII (above) and Canto XXIV (below)  
Yates Thompson MS 36  
ff. 42r and 44r  
British Library, London

Figure 4.9  
Preparatory drawing for the *Parnassus*  
Raphael  
1510  
Royal Collection, Windsor



Figure 4.10  
Detail  
*The Laocoön*  
Polydoros, Athanadoros, and Agesandros  
Hellenistic (disputed)  
Belvedere Courtyard, Vatican Museums

Figures 4.11 and 4.12  
*Taddeo Zuccaro in the Belvedere Courtyard* (above)  
Detail (below)  
Federico Zuccaro  
c. 1595  
J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

Figure 4.13  
*Flaying of Marsyas*  
Ceiling  
Raphael  
1508-1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 4.14  
*Canto II, First Planetary Sphere*  
For Lorenzo de' Medici  
Sandro Botticelli  
c. 1480-1495  
State Museum, Berlin

## Chapter 5: A Painted *Ars Poetica*

Figure 5.1  
*The Vision of a Knight*  
Raphael  
c. 1504  
National Gallery, London

Figure 5.2  
*The Three Graces*  
Raphael  
c. 1504  
National Gallery, London

Figure 5.3  
*Esterhazy Madonna*  
Raphael  
c. 1507-1508  
Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest

Figure 5.4  
*Holy Family with an Oak*  
Raphael (and workshop?)  
c. 1518  
Prado, Madrid



Figure 5.5  
*Madonna of the Blue Diadem*  
Raphael (and workshop?)  
c. 1512-1518  
Louvre, Paris

Figure 5.6  
Drawing of the Pantheon (interior)  
Raphael  
c. 1506  
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

Figure 5.7  
Drawing of the Pantheon (porch)  
Raphael  
c. 1506  
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

Figure 5.8  
Detail (Homer's scribe)  
*The Parnassus*  
Raphael  
1510  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 5.9  
*The Spinario*  
Hellenistic  
Capitoline Museums, Rome

Figure 5.10  
Detail  
*The School of Athens*  
Raphael  
1508-1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 5.11  
*The Fire in the Borgo*  
Raphael (and workshop)  
1514  
The Sala dell'Incendio, Vatican Palace

Figure 5.12  
*Slaughter of the Niobids*  
Fourth century C.E.  
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, Crete



Figure 5.13  
BAV MS [REDACTED]  
ff. 8v and 9r  
Johannes Michael Nagonius  
*Ad divum Iulium II*  
c. 1503-1513  
Vatican Library

Figure 5.14  
*Portrait of Tommaso Inghirami*  
Raphael  
c. 1510  
Palazzo Pitti, Florence

Figure 5.15  
*Poetry*  
Ceiling  
Raphael  
c. 1508-1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 5.16  
Northwest corner (*Vulcan at the Forge*)  
Ceiling  
Raphael  
1508-1509  
Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 5.17  
*Self-portrait with companion*  
*The School of Athens* (Philosophy)  
Raphael  
1508-1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 5.18  
*Self Portrait with Friend*  
Raphael  
c. 1518-1520  
Louvre, Paris

Figure 5.19  
*Paedogeron*  
*The School of Athens* (Philosophy)  
Raphael  
1508-1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 5.20  
*Portrait of a Young Man*  
Raphael  
c. 1504  
Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest



Figure 5.21  
Detail (Pietro Bembo)  
*Miracle of the Cross at Ponte San Lorenzo*  
Gentile Bellini  
c. 1500  
Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice

Figure 5.22  
Portrait medal of Pietro Bembo  
Valerio Belli  
c. 1532  
Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Figure 5.23  
*Portrait of Pietro Bembo*  
Lucas Cranach the Younger  
c. 1532  
Private Collection

Figure 5.24  
*Portrait of Pietro Bembo*  
Titian  
c. 1540  
National Gallery, Washington, D.C.

Figure 5.25  
*Piacevolezza*  
*The Disputa*  
Raphael  
1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 5.26  
*Gravità*  
*The Disputa*  
Raphael  
1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 5.27  
Preparatory drawing for the *School of Athens*  
Raphael  
c. 1508  
Lille, Musee des Beaux Arts

Figure 5.28  
*Quadri* below Apollo  
*The School of Athens*  
Raphael  
1508-1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

Figure 5.29  
*Quadro* below Minerva  
*The School of Athens*  
Raphael  
1508-1509  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace



Figure 5.30  
*Portrait of Baldassare Castiglione*  
Raphael  
c. 1514  
Louvre, Paris

Figure 5.31  
*Saint George and the Dragon*  
Raphael  
c. 1504-1505  
National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Fig. 5.32  
Preparatory study for the *Parnassus*  
Raphael  
c. 1510  
Oxford, Ashmolean Museum

Figure 5.33  
Self-portrait of artist?  
*The Parnassus*  
Raphael  
1510  
The Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace

**APPENDIX 2: AD LIBROS**

[REDACTED]

### **APPENDIX 3: THE BIBLIOTHECA IULIA**

[REDACTED]

**APPENDIX 4: LATIN ENCOMIA IN THE *BIBLIOTHECA IULIA***

[REDACTED]

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