Synagonism

Theory and Practice in Early Modern Art

Edited by Yannis Hadjinicolaou, Joris van Gastel
and Markus Rath

BRILL

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Cover illustration: El Greco, Variation of Michelangelo's Giorno (detail), c.1570, charcoal and black and white chalks on blue paper with blue wash at borders, 598 × 245 mm. Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung Munich. Commons.

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Synagonism: An Introduction

Yannis Hadjinicolaou, Joris van Gastel and Markus Rath

> I have also brought the greatest honour to the works of many painters, sculptors, and masons, in that I made a great number of sketches ("provedimenti") in wax and clay and very many drawings for painters; while for those who had to make figures greater than life-size I gave the rules for executing them in perfect proportion.[1]
>
> LORENZO GHIBERTI

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1

In speaking about the 'style of the future', Theo van Doesburg (1883–1931) inadvertently supplied a dictum for the present volume: 'Painting and sculpture, as they appear today, are well-adapted to forming a unity with modern architecture. All three employ general rather than individual forms. In a balanced form of use, one art form neither damages nor influences the other; instead, they together become the universal, powerful form for the content of the time: the universal style'.[2] These observations could be addressed using the conventional term 'intermediality'. More important, though, is the way Doesburg speaks, as an artist and theoretician, of a balanced art that does 'no damage', and even of the shared achievement of a 'universal, powerful' form. His characterization of the spirit of a future avant-garde art – formulated during the same year when he co-founded the artist association *De Stijl* – is by no means confined to the art of modernism. Rather, the artistic interdependency envisioned by his sentence should be seen as valid across historical periods, and was in fact especially prominent in the art of the early modern era in Europe.

Concerning the painter Andrea del Sarto (1486–1530) and his exact contemporary, the sculptor and architect Jacopo Sansovino (1486–1570), for example, Vasari reports that the two collaborated in a virtually symbiotic fashion, in

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1 Ghiberti 1949, 24.
2 Cited from van Bergeijk & van Faassen 2019, 414. Theo van Doesburg, "De Stijl der Toekomst," lecture delivered on November 1917.

particular by exchanging and discussing drawings and sculptural models.[3] He offers a suggestive example of cooperation between artists, one that is not captured by the term 'paragone', and is even obfuscated by it. Of relevance here instead is the phenomenon known as 'synagonism' (Greek: συναγωνισμός), which has to date received little or only inadequate attention in art historical research.[4]

For the area of research encompassed by the term 'synagonism', the focus is less on competition than on the complementary interplay between divergent art forms. It refers to the interactive, reciprocally beneficial cooperation between various forces, media, and modes of artistic presentation and representation, but also to collaborations that transgress boundaries between domains, for example in the form of artist's networks or workshop practices involving multiple media or practitioners. The term suggests an emerging paradigm in the study of art and culture that will hopefully sensitize us to a new conception of cultural production, and one capable of providing some productive dissension from conventional models of explanation based on competition, conquest, and exclusion. Familiar up to this point, significantly, is only the converse: antagonism, rivalry, envy.[5]

For both Germanic and Romance languages, the term 'synagonism' appears to be a neologism. In Greek, however, it is a common word.[6] Inherent to the concept is a significant if marginalized intellectual history, one whose beginnings lie in Greek antiquity. The term appears prominently already in the works of Aristoteles, Aristophanes, and Thucydides.[7] Sofia Aneziri, who is responsible – together with Nathalia Karayannis and Peter Wagner – for rescuing the term synagonism from historical forgetfulness, associates the term with performances in ancient Greek theater. This signals the involvement of the performative arts in general: synagonism can therefore take place within an artistic struggle (*agon*), and moreover in scenic or theatrical contexts.[8] Here, it is a question of a synagonism between the dancers of the chorus and the actors for the benefit of the theatrical performance.[9] Independently of the genre, whether tragedy or comedy, this interplay serves a common aim, not unlike

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3   Vasari 2007, 16.
4   An initial step in this direction was taken by the volume *Paragone als Mitstreit* (Van Gastel *et al.* 2014).
5   Goffen 2002; Graul 2022.
6   Liddell & Scott 1889, 766; Λεξικό της κοινής νεοελληνικής, Institute for Neohellenic Studies, 1998, 1285.
7   Aneziri 1997; Karayannis & Wagner 2005; Hadjinicolaou 2016; Hadjinicolaou 2018.
8   Aneziri 1997, 56.
9   Ibid.

the way in which, in a broader political or governmental context, it promotes the welfare of the 'polis', which is indeed understood as one of the 'original motives' for synagonism.[10] The above-mentioned proximity to the performing arts is of significance, since it allows us to construct a bridge to the fine arts.[11]

The hitherto unredeemed potential of the marginalized term synagonism resides in the way it brings together two ostensibly antithetical levels: 'syn' and 'agon'. Woven together to form a single word, the terms themselves point toward a gap in art-historical scholarship: syn-agonism can be understood as a (stimulating) form of collaboration, but also as a productive relationship that is genuinely competitive, even combative.[12] And only this conglomerate of opposed forces is capable of encompassing the tension that is so significant to the art of the early modern period, and which has nonetheless been substantially neglected to date. Now, pairs of categories that are traditionally regarded as antithetical, i.e., nature – art; theory – practice; body – spirit; tactility – visuality, acquire a new, dynamically expanded and hence productive perspective.

It is important to emphasize that the conceptual content of the term synagonism is not confined to any specific epoch. Art-theoretical debates addressing concepts related to synagonism took place beyond antiquity. Notably, they continue to be found in Byzantine art theory, which underscores the operative function of the term. Particularly significant for an awareness of its historicity are, for example, those sources which, translated now into modern Greek, circumscribe the process of representation with the term 'synagonism'. In his ekphrases on a circular marble image containing a personification of Earth, for example, Konstantin Manasses (1130–1187), the famous diplomat and author, writes:

> What a creature, truly, is man! With what inventive spirit does he rival nature, with what skill does he confront it synagonistically. He approaches her so boldly that his creations lack only breath. Oh, blessed hands and ingenious spirit, how closely you approach animate nature synagonistically, lacking only its spirit![13]

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10   Karayannis & Wagner 2008.

11   For overlaps between the performative and fine arts, see Brandstetter 2005; Van Eck & Bussels 2011.

12   See the contribution by Yannis Hadjinicolaou in this volume.

13   Agaphtos 2006, 54: «Τί πλάσμα είναι στ' αλήθεια ο άνθρωπος! Με πόση ευρηματικότητα ανταγωνίζεται τη φύση, με πόσα τεχνάσματα τη συναγωνίζεται, προσεγγίζοντάς την τόσο πολύ, που μόνο πνοή δεν μπορεί να βάλει στα δημιουργήματά του. Ω εσείς, χέρια προικισμένα κι ευφάνταστο μυαλό, πώς συναγωνίζεστε σ' όλα τα άλλα την εμψυχούσα φύση εκτός από την

Emerging here – beyond the familiar ekphrastic topoi – are two significant aspects:[14] to begin with, there are two different approaches to nature, one oppositional, the other cooperative, an antagonistic as well as a synagonistic creative process, which ultimately strives toward the most exalted aim of artistic creation, namely lifelikeness. In addition, there is the process through which this synagonism is generated: the fruitful intertwining of inventive imagination and technical ability give rise to a stimulating interplay with 'animate' nature.

Against the background of contemporary ecological knowledge, it hardly seems surprising that Byzantine ekphrases attest to synagonistic processes even in relation to plants and animals.[15] Related to this is the concept of symbiosis, of syn-biosis, of mutually beneficial coexistence.[16] In this spirit, Aristotle conceived of the polis itself as a *synoikismos*, literally a 'living together.'[17] In emphasizing the main argument pursued in his book *Together,* Richard Sennett brings the related concept of *cooperation* into play: 'Cooperation is the foundation of human development, in that we learn how to be together before we learn how to stand apart'.[18] This perspective is emphasized as well by the comparative psychologist Michael Tomasello, who supplements it with the concept of 'shared intentionality'. Although Tomasello is not generally interested in nonverbal phenomena such as images, the term is nonetheless applicable to the fine arts. Tomasello speaks of 'joint action, attention and

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ψυχή!» «Οἶον», εἶπον, «ζῷον ὁ ἄνθρωπος καί ὅπως ἀντιτεχνᾶται τῇ φύσει καί ἀνατισοφίζεται καί ἀνθαμιλλᾶται παρά τοσοῦτον ταύτης λειπόμενος, ὅσον μή ψυχήν ἀντιτιθέναι τοῖς δημιουργήμασι δύναται. Ὠ τεχνουργοί παλάμαι καί φρένες εὐμήχανοι, ὡς ἄρα τἆλλα πάντα πλήν τοῦ ψυχοῦν πρός τήν φύσιν ἀντιφερίζετε τήν ψυχώτριαν». For another description of this object, see ibid., 42–43.

14 On these topoi in the area of works in stone, see Dario Gamboni *et al* 2021; Barry 2022.

15 In addition to the condensed term synagonism, the related Greek usage ευγενής άμιλλα refers to a fruitful and respectful agon between the arts, and hence to a productive synagonism, a kind of *fair play*. Standing in the foreground here as a noble aim is the productive aspect of mutual *agonism*. This can consist, for example, in the striving for a particular proximity to lifelike effects, very much in the spirit of Manasses's ekphrasis on the marble panel. Institute for Λεξικό της κοινής νεοελληνικής 1998, 78. Agaphtos 2006, 98f.: «Μερικά [έντομα] συναγωνίζονται το ένα το άλλο, μερικά πολεμούν μεταξύ τους κι άλλα πάλι κάθονται πάνω στα λουλούδια. 'Some insects interact synagonistically, while others or against one another, and others simply sit on the flowers.' «... σαν δέντρο συναγωνίζεται τα δέντρα ... Οἷα δή δέντρον ἁμιλλᾶται τοῖς δένδροις.» 'As a tree, it stands in a synagonistic relationship to other trees.' Ibid., 154–155.

16 Brandstetter *et al.* 2017.

17 Sennett 2012, 4.

18 Ibid., 13.

cooperative communication as social co-operation'.[19] Competition hence becomes a collaborative activity.[20] It could be said, of course, that any form of cooperation is intended to profit the respective sides, allowing the pact to function advantageously.[21] In other words, cooperation or *συνεργασία* (collaboration) refers to the profiting of one party from the other in mutual awareness. Cooperation in the sense of the joining of forces, even of collaboration, is close to the principle of synagonism, but is nonetheless distinguishable because the latter is dedicated to a higher aim. To be sure, this aim is also dependent upon personal gain, but not exclusively: synagonism advances the polis, the theater, performance, or even artistic production, and does not take place solely for the benefit of the individual: it is collectivistic, not individualistic. Stated simply, it is inherently social.

The most fruitful form of collaboration takes place perhaps in one and the same workshop, where the signature of an artistic individual conceals the contributions of many different specialists. This pluralistic practice has always been shrouded in silence, and this is still true to some extent, by an art history that proclaimed the cult of the genius early on.[22] And the historiography of art of the early modern era, so strongly shaped by biographical concerns, has long been focused on individuals who strive to surpass one another; this has led to an underestimation of the degree to which they necessarily worked with or against one another within a socio-historical context and for the sake of shared goals.

In the section of his utopian *Christianopolis* (1619) entitled 'Theater of Nature', Valentin Andreae speaks of the sympathy and antipathy of the elementary forces of nature, as well as their interdependencies, within which like may be healed, or instead dispelled, by like.[23] In art history, antipathy has often been recognized, most recently, for example, in the exhibition *Idols and Rivals*, on view in Vienna, where sympathy is investigated in the context of artistic friendship rather than in the spirit of synagonism.[24] In light of the process of its production, interpretations of Michelangelo's statue of *David* on the Piazza della Signoria in Florence as a personal triumph tend to shift in the direction of a recognition of synagonistic strivings that favored the common good: the

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19   Tomasello 2014.
20   Ibid., 5.
21   With regard to the subversive aspect of such a pact, see the contribution by Jasmin Mersmann in this volume.
22   See most recently, for example Newman & Nijkamp 2022.
23   Andreae 1996, 72.
24   Cat. Vienna 2022. Cf. Chapman *et al.* 2020. Cf. Beyer 2017. See also Beyer's review of the exhibition: Beyer 2023.

contract provides a precise description of the situation that framed Michelangelo's intended creative response to his predecessor (Agostino di Duccio), and of the completion of the symbolic figure of the city it made possible. The intention was less to make possible the subsequently proclaimed 'victory' of Michelangelo, and instead to achieve the greater good of the polis and the piazza as a communal stage of Republican Florence, and to integrate the more suitable work into the public body of the fortified city, which can hence be seen as a *bonum communis*.[25]

In this scenario, two antagonistic, divergent actors whose relations are characterized by tension, work together in a competitive fashion in order to attain a higher goal, and in particular, as underscored by Karagiannis and Wagner, for the benefit of the polis.[26] Apropos here is Jacob Burckhardt's celebrated chapter, entitled 'The State as a Work of Art', according to which the reciprocal, even fruitful connection between state and work of art constitutes a larger whole.[27]

At the same time, competition and play are revealed as interrelated phenomena. In his classic book *Man, Play, and Games*, Roger Caillois refers to the 'principle of fair competition'.[28] Competition is a form of egalitarianism, while the contest between equals designed to unite the most capable is merely a different form of it, namely synagonism, and the root of both is agon.[29] Except that this antagonism is not necessarily mastered by equals, which is another fundamental difference. According to Caillois, a 'democratic' form of competition argues for the equality of rights. Opposed forces behave toward one another with solidarity, since in genuine competition, the same initial conditions prevail.[30] Once a verdict has been reached, however, comes real collaboration between rivals, for rivalry at the same time means loyalty, which again

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25   The text of the contract refers to this prehistory: 'Their excellencies of the consuls of the Arte della Lana meeting together with the Operai in the audience hall of the Opera, and being mindful of the usefulness and owner of said Opera, do appoint as culture of the said Opera the worthy master Michelangelo di Ludovico Buonarroti, a citizen of Florence, to the end of making and completing and, in good faith, finishing a certain marble statue called the Giant, blacked out in marble nine braccia high, now in the cathedral workshop, and formerly blocked out [badly] by master Agostino'. Cited from Gill 2002. Cf. also Verspohl 2003. See Bredekamp 2021, 121. On the complexity of publicly occupied space, see Hanke & Nova 2014; Hanke & Sölch 2019.

26   Karagiannis & Wagner 2005.

27   The title of Part 1, "The State as a Work of Art" is a connective conglomerate that favors the city. Burckhardt 1990, 19–96.

28   Caillois 2001, 157.

29   Ibid., 157.

30   Ibid., 110ff.

brings us close to synagonistic processes.[31] The rules of the game, moreover, which have a dynamic, processual, indeterminate function upon their emergence, are comparable with artistic processes in general, including collaborations between various artists.

Already sociologist Georg Simmel argued that a common goal, grounded in shared values, should be understood as the driving force between two opponents, rather than their explicit competition.[32] In a similar spirit, Chantal Mouffe uses the term 'agonism' in a way that positions it very close to synagonism: 'The opponents are not enemies but adversaries among whom exists a conflictual consensus'.[33] In other words, synagonism by no means refers to competition in a simplified way, nor to cooperation practiced blindly, but instead to an intensely charged, socially productive dialectic.

2

As mentioned above, the productive processes inherent in competitive behavior are often elided in the literature. Used most frequently in this connection is the word 'paragone', albeit without being generally understood in its original sense as a neutral comparison between the arts.[34] The focus on rivalry between artists and competition between the arts is based on an interpretation of the verb 'to compare' (*paragonare*) as genuinely dichotomous.[35] What has emerged from this is an at times inflationary and even deterministic use of the term 'paragone', so that more recent discussions consistently link the term with a confrontation between painting and sculpture in the narrower sense.[36] Given consideration as well, increasingly, have been processes located beyond hierarchically separate genres and exclusive specializations. The idea of the *uomo universale* has circulated ever since Jacob Burckhardt proclaimed not exclusive specialization but instead comprehensive cultural, artistic capacities as the aspirational ideal.[37] This ideal was recognizable, for example in those with multiple artistic capabilities, while our knowledge of the division of labor

31   Ibid., 110ff.
32   Simmel 1995. Cf. Macho 2022.
33   Mouffe 2013, see 7 and 25.
34   See most recently Gebhardt & Zöllner 2021.
35   Kosegarten 1980; Rauterberg 1996, 80ff*.; Cat.* Munich 2002; Patz 2007; Müller & Pfisterer 2011; Preimesberger 2011; Hessler 2014. On the aspect of a productive *aemulatio* within an oeuvre, see the contribution by Fabian Jonietz in this volume.
36   See for example the criticism in Nova 2003; Pfisterer 2017.
37   Hessler 2014, pt. 1, ch. v.

prevailing within workshop practice has been disseminated through intensi-
fied research into legal regulations governing the diverse fields of artistic activi-
ty.[38] In the early Renaissance, intermedial cooperations were common.[39] The
notion of the autonomous artistic individual that appears to have been pro-
moted by Vasari's *Vite* is relativized in the same work through the author's fre-
quent attentiveness to collaborations between artists of the Quattrocento and
Cinquecento.[40] Well-documented as well are comparable instances of artistic
teamwork north of the Alps – from the collaboration of Jan and Hubert van
Eyck all the way to the fruitful cooperation between Jan Brueghel and Peter
Paul Rubens.[41] An examination of the achievements of the so-called 'School
of Fontainebleau', with its play of forms that routinely transgress boundaries
between genre, gender, and media (and not just in the Gallery of François I,
but instead as a common feature of the 'French Renaissance' as a whole) calls
into question the validity of any rigidly individualized artistic biography (see
figure 0.1).[42] And yet, the related research is based only to a limited degree
on the fundamental principle of synagonism as defined here. This approach
emphasizes not so much the simultaneous or successive production of com-
plementary elements by cooperating partners, but instead the processual prin-
ciple of reciprocal fertilization as an emblem of artistic openness and a striving
toward continuing development, for example when an art form absorbs influ-
ences encountered in the context of other media.

At the start of the early modern period, this tendency is expressed, for
example, in demands for a pronouncedly sculptural approach to painting, or
to the 'painterly' execution of sculpted figures. Already in the early treatises on
art, for example by Cennino Cennini and Leon Battista Alberti, special atten-
tion was accorded to the development of sculptural qualities in the medium of
painting.[43] Leonardo da Vinci declared *rilievo*, i.e. sculptural effects achieved
through painting, to be the very soul and genuine task of the medium.[44]

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38   Hanke 2009; Siedler 2013. Cf. on guild collaboration, see also the contribution by Danica
      Brenner in this volume.

39   Wenderholm 2006; Israëls 2013.

40   Regarding Raphael as synagonistic artist, see the contribution by Franz Engel in this
      volume.

41   Cf. Cat. Los Angeles & The Hague 2006.

42   In addition to the well-known Italian influences, see for example Fagnart & Lecocq 2017;
      Tauber 2009.

43   On Cennino Cennini's treatise on art, entitled *Libro dell'arte,* cf. Skaug 1993; Tosatti 2007;
      Salvi 2005; Cat. Berlin 2008; Pfisterer 2008. On *rilievo* in Alberti, see Yih-Fen 1999; Kruse
      2000; Rath 2013.

44   'il quale rilievo è l'importanza e l'anima della pittura'. – 'La prima parte della pittura è che
      i corpi con quella figurati si dimostrino rilevati'. Leonardo 1995, Parte Seconda, ch. CXXI,
      83, and Parte Seconda, ch. CXXXIII, 87.

FIGURE 0.1   Rosso Fiorentino and Francesco Primaticcio (and workshop), Gallery of
Francis I, 1533–1539, Palace of Fontainebleau
PHOTO: © ANDREAS THULL

Conversely, Giorgio Vasari regarded Michelangelo's *Moses* as particularly admi-
rable because through the inimitable rendering of the soft, flowing beard, the
sculptor had transformed the chisel into a paint brush.[45] Emerging alongside
such demands, related both to practice as well as to the aesthetics of reception,
which proclaimed the integration of the sensual qualities of a sister art, was
the question of the 'ranking' of the respective media.

In the notations contained in the so-called *Trattato della pittura*, which
made an important contribution to firing the paragone debate, Leonardo
regarded himself, remarkably, as particularly capable of judgment with regard
to questions concerning painting and sculpture, having been trained by a
doubly gifted master, namely the painter and sculptor Verrocchio. Like many
Renaissance artists, the latter had been trained as a goldsmith – a profession
that was praised as a conglomerate of and as combining the synergies of many
different art forms.[46] A well-known highpoint of the paragone debate arrived
in 1547, when Benedetto Varchi distributed a questionnaire whose participants

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45   Cf. Vasari 2009, 65.
46   See Bloch 2022.

were asked to rank the arts, in particular painting and sculpture.[47] The replies he received from the responding sculptors and painters emphasized the putative aesthetic deficits of one medium in relation to another – although the very same arguments were soon deployed in reverse fashion: Pontormo, for example, refers to the skill involved in producing lifelike figures on a painted surfaces, while Tasso and Tribolò regard this practice as involving deception; Bronzino refers to the affinity between sculpture and the lower craft trades that work with hard stone, while Sangallo praises the lasting *fama* of an impervious sculpture. In his reply, the goldsmith Cellini expresses vehement partisanship for the art of sculpture, which he regards as being more complex and more complete by virtue of the multiple perspectives it presents to the viewer. And Giorgio Vasari emphasizes the more complex demands and higher powers of judgment required of the painter, who – in contrast to the three-dimensional material of the sculpture – must generate the envisioned lifelike, three-dimensional effect using only painterly resources. It is often overlooked that Vasari, in his seemingly explicit ranking, enunciates a demand for strongly convincing pictorial effects that ultimately rely however upon the transfer of qualities from one media to another. In this sense, his view is not so far distant from that of Michelangelo. 'I believe', wrote the latter, 'that painting is held to be better the more closely it approaches the [sculptural effect of] *rilievo*, and the *rilievo* worse to the extent it resembles painting'. In his rhetoric, which follows a dichotomous argument, Michelangelo adheres only seemingly to the separation of arts intended by Varchi, since, with his reference to *rilievo,* he actually has in mind the haptic-corporeal impact he regards as significant. In his letter, consequently, neither art form emerges as victorious, and in closing, Michelangelo explains – quite sarcastically – that the faculty of mind is the ostensible foundation of both art forms. He avoids taking an explicit position, remarking that the subject of the present dispute appears incidental to the practice of art.[48] Varchi was hence deprived of the verdict he had hoped to receive from Michelangelo. The putative highpoint of the paragone debate emerges here as a humanistic-theoretical discussion that reveals clear

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47   In accordance with the Aristotelian concept of substance, the desired unity of material
         and form, he tended toward the art of sculpture. Varchi 2013; Pfisterer 2017, 291.

48   'Because the one, like the other, namely sculpture and painting, arise from the same intel-
         lectual capacities, it suffices for them to make a good peace with one another, thereby
         renouncing many confrontations, which require more time than the making of figures'.
         Cited from Varchi 2013, 278. With this last equalization, Michelangelo refers to the fre-
         quently traveled path of connection: that of common basic principles or common ori-
         gins. This becomes clear, for example, in Vasari's *Vite*, where he recognizes *disegno* as the
         mother and father of all of the arts. Vasari 1966–1987, vol. I, 103ff. In his response to Varchi,
         he already advocates such an integrative position.

discrepancies both with regard to the demands of a multilayered aesthetics of the work of art, as well as with regard to contemporary synagonistic workshop practices.

3

The productive dialectic explored above should be understood not only in terms of the cooperation between different individuals, but also in terms of the convergence of artistic media, whether conceived as artistic 'ensembles' involving various media, or of the convergence of diverse media in a single artistic product.[49] A good example of the latter may be found in the works of the northern Italian artist Carlo Crivelli, which were recently characterized as 'hybrid media' for the way they combine painting with sculptural elements, while also referencing the textile arts and goldsmithing.[50] To describe such works as hybrid, however, tends to foreclose an analysis of the productive tensions between the divergent media involved. The same can be said with regard to the broader debate on intermediality. Essentially, synagonism proposes a specific kind of intermediality, one that regards the coming together of different media as productive, while the tension between these media is however never resolved.[51] Through the visual arts, moreover, diverse cultural techniques may enter into a productive exchange with one another.[52]

The productive potential of intermediality was thematized already by Marshall McLuhan in his seminal *Understanding Media* of 1964.[53] 'The crossings or hybridizations' of media, he writes, 'release great new force and energy as by fission or fusion'.[54] Artists are consigned a special role in this process, as they are, in McLuhan's words, 'always the first to discover how to enable one medium to use or to release the power of another'.[55] Finally, he also refers to the special significance of the beholder:

> The hybrid or the meeting of two media is a moment of truth and revelation from which new form is born. For the parallel between two media holds us on the frontiers between forms that snap us out of the

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49   For the convergence of media, see the contribution of Sandra Hindriks in this volume.
50   Hilliam 2022, with further references in n. 10.
51   For a discussion of intermediality, see the contribution by Helen Boeßenecker.
52   Cf. for ex. Oy-Marra *et al.* 2018, and the contributions by Isabella Augart and Maurice Saß in this volume.
53   McLuhan 1994.
54   Ibid., 48.
55   Ibid., 54.

Narcissus-narcosis. The moment of the meeting of media is a moment of freedom and release from the ordinary trance and numbness imposed by them on our senses.[56]

Notwithstanding McLuhan's suggestions, the productive tension inherent to intermediality has seldom been explored in any explicit manner; indeed, talk of the hybridization, crossing, or mixing of media rather suggests a peaceful coexistence or conjunction that results in something new, with the boundaries between media readily dissolving. W.J.T. Mitchell's claim that 'all media are mixed media', a claim posed in opposition to modernism's 'impulse to purify media' (the classic reference is of course Clement Greenberg's 'Toward a Newer Laocoon'), makes the question of the relative status of different media within the mix all the more urgent.[57] Indeed, Mitchell's observation challenges us to think the intermedial condition as the rule rather than the exception, and should make us aware that in speaking about media in essentialist terms, analysis is always incomplete, since it essentially denies everything that is deemed foreign to a specific medium. This is of course not to say that anything goes. In order to explore synagonistic phenomena, the questions of media boundaries must be raised – that is, the question of how we make distinctions between media, particularly when they come together in a specific media product. Evidently, these boundaries are fluid and depend largely on a broad consensus within a geographically or historically determined discourse – a consensus about what practices, techniques, materials, institutions, etc. are deemed proper to a specific medium.[58] From this perspective, the aforementioned debate about the respective merits of different media – the so-called *paragone* debate – becomes of interest as well: not because it tells us anything about actual artistic practice or reveals anything about the essence of any particular medium, but rather because it helps us to establish the ways in which a consensus about the boundaries between media were negotiated, and at the same time constantly shifted.

Behind this intellectual debate lies an artistic reality that brings us much closer to the special role McLuhan attributes to the artist at the forefront of intermedial experimentation. Aby Warburg, whose study on the Florentine Renaissance portrait may be read as a primer in the exploration of synagonistic processes, writes:

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56   Ibid., 55.
57   Mitchell 1994, 5. Cf. Mitchell 2005; Greenberg 1940.
58   Cf. Rajewsky 2010.

> The bourgeois public of the 1470 respected the artist as a master of tech-
> nical tricks, born under the planet of Mercury, who could do anything
> and supply anything; who painted and sculpted in his back workshop,
> but who had a front shop in which he sold all that anyone might need:
> belt buckles, painted marriage chests, church furnishings, votive waxes,
> engravings.[59]

In other words, the Renaissance artist – although this remains valid for beyond
the Renaissance, of course – worked *between* different media, easily overstep-
ping media borders – a point that can as easily be made about architects.[60]
This situation may tell us something about the way in which forms migrated
from one medium to another, and how media that are generally relegated to
the 'applied arts' could function as what Warburg, in another context, called
'image vehicles' ('*Bilderfahrzeuge*').[61] But perhaps more importantly, this situa-
tion gave the artist (or artists) the opportunity to experiment with a variety of
techniques and materials usually associated with other media. This synagonist
moment and particularly its productive force in the history of art has been
largely obscured by essentialist, mono-medial thinking,[62] prompted not only
by a focus on the paragone, but also inherent to questions of attribution, to the
search in a given work for a single 'hand'.

This focus on materials and techniques as well as the shift of attention
towards the applied arts also point in the direction of another important fac-
tor in synagonistic discourses, one alluded to already in Manasses' ekphrasis
discussed above: that of nature. For within synagonist constellations, nature
too can be regarded as a medium or agent. As such, the present discussion res-
onates with recent developments in what has been dubbed ecological or eco-
critical art history,[63] a perspective that seeks, in the words of anthropologist
Tim Ingold, 'to replace the dichotomy of nature and culture with the synergy
of organism and environment'.[64]

In the present context, the question remains how such a 'synergy' can be
understood, again, in terms of a productive tension in an artistic sense. For the
early modern period, the point of departure should not be the modern-day
museum, but instead the *Kunstkammer*, the cabinet of curiosities, which

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59   Warburg 1999a, 202.
60   Cf. Payne 2009.
61   Warburg 1999b. Cf. also more recently, Beyer *et al.* 2018.
62   Cf. Elston & Rislow 2022.
63   Kusserow 2021; Patrizio 2019; Heuer 2019.
64   Ingold 2000, 9.

orchestrate a productive confrontation between *naturalia* and *artificialia,* along with objects lying in between.[65] Here, the challenge is to think such collections in continuity with the artist's workshop – as we find, for example, with Rembrandt[66] – and thus in relation to artistic production. This means understanding the artist as deeply involved with natural history,[67] not only in terms of depiction, but also with regard to the natural materials he or she works with. Such examples might include Bernard Palissy's attempts to weave together his artistic materials and techniques with the productive processes of nature, but also of more common interactions with natural materials.[68] Such interactions, often involving a tacit, embodied knowledge, should not be understood in hierarchical terms. Materials have an agency of their own, and hence play an active role in the creative process.[69] Again, the question is how the synergy between art and nature – between artist and materials – can be understood in synagonistic terms, which is to say in terms of a productive tension. This tension may be explored as a productive force in the creative process,[70] but can also persist in the finished work, where textures and patterns shaped by nature – the grain of the wooden panel,[71] veining in marble[72] – becomes part of the image.

4

This volume focuses on the early modern period in Europe, and on cultural practices that developed primarily during this period and in this geographical region. We however do so in the awareness that such processes and such synagonism is observable on a global scale as well, and represents a new research desideratum, namely to explore the relationship between nature and culture, and between theory and praxis, and their synagonistic dimensions from a global perspective. The caves of Ajanta (India), a World Heritage Site, illustrate the wider relevance of the concept (see figure 0.2): beginning in the second century BCE, and continuing into the seventh century CE, the caves were decorated with an architectural, sculptural, and painterly program of extraordinary richness, and in a way that exemplifies synagonistic practices:

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65   Bredekamp 1995.
66   Cat. Amsterdam 1999.
67   Smith 2004.
68   See Elisabeth J. Petcu's contribution in this volume.
69   Knappett & Malafouris 2008.
70   See Joris van Gastel's contribution to the present volume.
71   Knight Powell 2017.
72   See Markus Rath's contribution to this volume.

FIGURE 0.2   Cave 1 with the Bodhisattva Padmapani to the left of the Buddha Shrine, *c.*5th
century CE, Ajanta, Maharashtra
PHOTO: YANNIS HADJINICOLAOU

> Sculpture and painting grew simultaneously closer, lending their essen-
> tials to each other ... The kinship between sculpture and painting that we
> find in India is something altogether unique in the history of world-art.
> Most impressive is the way the two art-forms co-exist at Ajanta, comple-
> menting each other ... The blending achieved must have been astonish-
> ing when the stone carvings were bedecked in colours, falling in line with
> the hue and colour-scheme of the murals.[73]

Here as well, clearly, the aim was a *tout ensemble* consisting of architecture,
and – in particular through the comparable bodily postures of the depicted
figures – of sculpture and painting, which was intended, as a *sur plus,* to
achieve a striking lifelikeness and efficacy of materials and forms, specifically
in the service of visualizing the life of the Buddha. Columns, sculptures, and
paintings enter here into a mutually assimilative and fructifying relationship:
manifestly, the 'avant-garde' dictum expressed by Theo van Doesburg 1500

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73   Ghosh 1996, 10, 42.

years later was already valid for the art of the time – 'All three employ general rather than individual forms. In a balanced form of use, one art form neither damages nor influences the other; instead, they together become the universal, powerful form for the content of the time'.

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PART 1

Theory and Practice

∴

El Greco's Synagonism

Yannis Hadjinicolaou

The yellow and red awake the dead who gesticulate and tear up their winding sheets. They stand up in these colors in the broken folds of linen rocks

J. COCTEAU on El Greco

● ● ●

The violent attack of these forms, by a relief so outstanding that by comparison the actual scene, the gallery and one's neighbors are reduced to the key of a Whistlerian nocturne

R. FRY on El Greco

● ● ●

He works in sculptural dimensions in which flat painterly expanses have no place

J. F. WILLUMSEN on El Greco

●●
●

1

In his texts, Domenikos Theotokopoulos often took a clear position on the so-called *paragone* debate – one that is however strikingly discrepant with his production as an artist.[1] He often remained ensnared in a theory which he to some extent appropriated, while at times arguing against it verbally, even

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1 Greco noted that the Greek manner (i.e. the Byzantine mode) was more difficult than that of Giotto (Marías 2001), 19. At the same time, he takes a clear position in favor of the *moderni* rather than the *antichi*, which seems all the more striking considering his origins and initial training. See Hadjinicolaou 2008.

acting counter to it. The interactive and productive tension between theory and praxis is a central concern of the present text. The focus is on the making of art as a physical act and its theoretical potential ('bottom up', not 'top down'); hence, my point of departure is very concretely in material, color, and form.

With regard to his artistic praxis, it should be emphasized that El Greco always reflected upon a given visual medium from a different position, considering sculpture through painting, for example, and in such a way that the two intensified one another reciprocally, with questions of two and three dimensionality becoming interwoven. For him, these media reinforced one another through their dialectical interaction, without either however forfeiting its specific mediality. This also means that the concept of intermediality cannot adequately circumscribe this phenomenon.

Greco was active primarily as a painter, but was also a sculptor and an architect, as well as a 'theoretician' of art.[2] He inscribed more than 18,000 words in the margins of Vitruvius's *De Architectura* and in the second edition of Vasari's *Vite*, which he had probably received as a gift from Federico Zuccari in Toledo.[3] Mentioned in the inventory of his library, compiled after his death in 1614, are a number of treatises on painting and architecture.[4]

Playing a central role in this essay is a close examination of his works and their respective materialities. This approach generates an intriguing relationship to Greco's implicit art theory, which is extrapolated here critically from his own commentaries and set in relation to the art theory of his time. Through his own praxis, he overcame certain conceptual obstacles that were operative in his own art-theoretical vocabulary. Greco is hence an outstanding example of the way in which language and artistic praxis can be united in an individual. The following discussion focuses on representative works from his oeuvre in all media, in conjunction with a reinterpretation of his commentaries with reference to synagonism in the visual arts.

The term synagonism refers to a struggle, an *agon*, but in a productive sense.[5] The additional *syn* designates a *surplus,* or as it is called in Greek: εὖ

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2   Here, it is fascinating that Jusepe Martínez, who regarded Greco as an important architect and painter, despite referring to him as 'extravagant' (p. 144), instead singled out his contemporary Alonso Cano as the artist who had mastered painting, sculpture, architecture, and perspective (p. 105). See Martínez 2017 (*Los discursos practicables del nobilissimo arte de la pintura*, 1672).

3   Marías & Bustamante 1981. See most recently Hochmann 2019, 108–111.

4   Cat. Madrid 2014.

5   Karagiannis & Wagner 2005; Hadjinicolaou 2018.

ἀγωνίζεσθαι (the good fight). Alongside Vasari's recounting of the confronta-
tion between Guglielmo della Porta and Michelangelo concerning the tomb of
Paul III, Greco remarks upon how productive their *agon* was: 'Que buena era
la competencia'.[6] With regard to synagonism and the relativity of the *paragone*
debate, the potential of this remarkable passage has yet to be fully addressed.

It is symptomatic that both English and German contain only the antithet-
ical term antagonism/*Antagonismus,* but no equivalent for synagonism. The
term 'Mitstreit' (comradeship) in German comes closest to what is intended
here, in the sense of the Latin *conpetere.* This aspect receives less emphasis in
the English word 'compete' and even less in the French 'combattre'. Initially, at
least, the term synergy seems appropriate, even as synonymous with the phe-
nomenon of synagonism. The distinction between synergy and synagonism,
however, is that synagonism likewise contains the principle of *agon,* and hence
generates a productive tension with *syn.*

In their Greek-English Lexicon, Liddell and Scott (1889) attribute the follow-
ing meaning to the ancient Greek verb s*ynagwnizomai*: '(a) to contend along
with, to share in a contest, (b) to help (c) to fight on the same side'.[7] Such usages
were already associated with the term in antiquity, for example in Thucydides,
Aristotle, and Aristophanes.[8]

In Aristophanes, we already encounter this use of the term synagonism in
connection with the performative arts, and hence implicitly with the fine arts
as well. Here it is a question of the greater good of the *polis,* and less of isolated
individuals or media being opposed to one another. This underscores the rela-
tivity of the artistic ego, since the term instead presupposes the collective and
productive activity of diverse perspectives and forces. The synagonism of such
dialectical forces and interactions is a dynamic process, not a static one.

From a contemporary perspective, antagonism has a decidedly 'neolib-
eral' flavor, and is associated with the notion that individual personalities
should strive to surpass one another. Here, this attitude is counteracted by
the concept of synagonism, which functions explicitly in and through the col-
lective. Put differently, it is a question of the *polis*, which consists of various
individuals (not least of all from a socioeconomic point of view) who work
together or against one another for the sake of the *cura publica*.[9] Here, the

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6 Cited from Marías 2001, 108–109.

7 Liddell & Scott 1889.

8 Aneziri 1997.

9 See Sennett 2012.

Burckhardtian formula of the 'state as a work of art' finds one of its most incisive manifestations.[10]

Relevant here too is the complex example of the construction of the cathedral in Martin Warnke's interpretation, which according to him 'represents a field of social action within which diverse – and even antagonistic forces – discovered a mode that allowed them to collaborate constructively to reach a determined goal'.[11] This idea is found as well in the work of Erwin Panofsky, whose famous treatise on the architecture of scholasticism speaks of solutions that are characterized by cooperation between contradictory possibilities.[12]

This consideration points as well toward the wider question of interdisciplinarity as an approach to solving shared problems through the simultaneous maintenance of divergent specialist perspectives.[13] Ultimately, the question of an (ideal) interdisciplinarity concerns explicitly the issue of the synagonism of diverse disciplines in relation to a specific problem, which may then fertilize an individual discipline with fresh impulses.

This allows us to speak of interdisciplinarity as an *epistemic synagonistic laboratory*, as a locus where first the interplay, and secondly the simultaneous reflection of the often-paradoxical dialectic of conjointly operative forces can be adequately comprehended.

Synagonism, consequently, ties together a number of diverse or even opposed fields which approach a shared goal or interest using disimilar resources from divergent perspectives. The differences between these interacting agents are of course manifest, but commonalities and intersections clearly emerge nonetheless. The interests behind these diverse perspectives may diverge to such a degree that the term *polemos* best characterizes their interaction, and may be determinate right to the finish. The resources employed may however display pronounced similarities, perhaps even adding a productive *syn* to a polemical confrontation. These forces may involve productive or medial conditions, and may extend all the way to the level of reception, social, or economic factors.

A sensitivity to synagonism does not mean that contradictions or differences are smoothed over, or even eliminated entirely, but instead that the dialectic, which is not suspended per se, defines a framework that – parallel to combative confrontations – allows competitive collective enterprises to unfold their productive potentials. For too long, this point has been neglected in the research.

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10   To cite the familiar title of the first chapter of Burckhardt's cultural history of Renaissance Italy (1860).

11   Warnke 1978, 153.

12   Panofsky 1951, 64: 'in both cases, the *final* solutions were arrived at by the acceptance and ultimate reconciliation of contradictory possibilities …'.

13   See for the following thoughts Hadjinicolaou 2018.

A central question raised by this essay is: How does the relationship between language and art-making come to expression? Does the one correspond to the other, and are discrepancies or contradictions observable between theory and praxis? Such questions (in the sense of an implicit and hence embodied knowledge) highlight a key problem: for the most part, it is speech, and not action that is taken at face value, as though only language possesses objective value. Vasari himself exemplifies this attitude. All too often, his 'theory' is regarded as evidence of his praxis. Michelangelo and other painter-sculptor-architects represent similar cases: one has to think for instance of his commentary to Varchi that sculpture and painting had a relationship similar to that between the moon and the sun. They are hence complementary. In this essay, Domenikos Thetokopoulos allows us to approach this problem from the perspective of a synagonistic relationship between theory and praxis.

2

In a painting produced by Greco after a stay of several years in Rome, and shortly after he settled to Spain, a male figure, his working tools held in his hands, confidently makes eye contact with the viewer (see figure 1.1).[14] Despite his noble attire, the bearded man, with his white collar and black garb, does not hesitate to show himself engaged in manual labor. His hands grip a mallet and chisel, and are highlighted so that the dust produced by the carving is clearly visible. The choice of sculpture is anything but arbitrary: its subject is a sovereign, Philip II of Spain.[15]

The granular texture of the canvas endows the image with a haptic effect. The positioning of the heads accentuates their respective material properties in a contrastive way. The surface is characterized by a delicate, even fragile roughness. Even the stone wall betrays a resemblance to the materiality of the sculpture, evidently of marble. The processuality of the material and its crystalline form – or put differently: the aspect of making – stands in the foreground, and moreover both motivically and formally. The black, non-mimetic strokes on the picture surface endow the whole with freshness and immediacy (in the area of the bust, or, in the opposite direction, the sculptor's head). The picture's *imprimatura* shows through in some areas, accentuating Philip's sculptural presence, as well as the painted figure of the sculptor, which resemble real bodies against a background.

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14   See Marías 2014, 158–161.
15   Kanzenbach 2008, pp. 195 and 252.

FIGURE 1.1   El Greco, *Portrait of a Sculptor* (*Pompeo Leoni*), 1577/80, oil on canvas,
                   92 × 87 cm, private collection
                   COMMONS

The picture is neither signed nor dated. Its attribution to Greco has however
never been in doubt. Unambiguous as well is the identity of the depicted fig-
ure.[16] The sculptor Pompeo Leoni, the son of Leone Leoni and court sculptor
to Philip II, is presented here as a noble individual whose honorable occupa-
tion is to fashion likenesses of sovereigns.[17] And in fact, a bust of Philip II by

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16   Cf. as illustrative Marías 2013, 122; Cat. Paris 2019, 117; Cat. Chicago 2020, 126.
17   With this painting of amity, El Greco also aligned himself with a series of court artists
      working for Philip II; he had hoped to establish himself in Spain in this role, but he failed
      (after the commission for the Escorial was rejected by the king).

FIGURE 1.2   Pompeo Leoni, *King Philip II of Spain*, after 1550, marble, 97.5 × 63.5 cm,
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
COMMONS

Pompeo Leoni betrays obvious similarities with the sculpted figure in Greco's
picture (figure 1.2).[18]

A number of elements in this unsigned portrait suggest friendly relations
between the two men: Domenico depicts Pompeo's profession in the medium

18   See Coppel *et al.* 2013.

of paint not in a paragonal, sublimated fashion, without critical distance (i.e., through a slackened *paragone*), but instead depicts physical labor with the material – whether from the perspective of sculpture or of painting – through the open form and the exposure of working processes.[19]

Greco, newly arrived from Rome, must have had contact already with Pompeo Leoni, who worked in the Cathedral of Toledo. The portrait can be dated *c.*1578, and hence to a time when Greco was occupied with his *Expolio* (*Disrobing of Christ*). The portrait remained in the possession of the sculptor. Mentioned in his inventory is a pair of works by Greco, 'an unfinished portrait of Pompeo with a marble statue', and 'another unfinished portrait from the hand of Domingo Greco'.[20] Leoni owned additional works by the 'Greek of Toledo'. Another circumstance suggests that the two artists must have been joined by more than a mere acquaintanceship: in 1605, Greco asked Pompeo Leoni to assess his work in Illescas, a project that showcased the interplay between Greco's activities as a sculptor, painter, and architect (more on which later).

Both of the pictures described in Leoni's inventory – and either may refer to the painting discussed above – were characterized as 'unfinished', a judgment no doubt conditioned (albeit not necessarily explicitly) by a specific academic theory of art, one that regards as adequate only a 'finished' paint surface, a prejudice associated with the principles of *disegno*.[21] A marginal remark by Greco concerning Vitruvius's books on architecture nonetheless presents a different and opposed conception: 'Perfection [tellion] does not always mean that that which has been completed [acabado] is perfect'.[22] This statement positions Greco in a tradition that extends from Titian all the way to Rembrandt, one based on the notion of a progressively evolving, organic creative process within which the partially unprocessed pigmented material plays a decisive role in the appearance of the picture surface and its vitality.[23]

3

Greco often altered his compositions (an example being the area around Leoni's head), even effacing or painting them over.[24] This at times destructive

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19   Van Gastel *et al.* 2014.

20   Waldmann 1995, 174–177.

21   See Cat. New York 2016.

22   Marías & Bustamante 1981, 64.

23   Hadjinicolaou 2019a; Bodart 2020/2021.

24   Garrido 2012, 26.

but simultaneously creative process is underscored by the term 'borrón' (mac-
chia, stain, blot). The verb 'borrar' still means to 'wipe away' or 'remove'. At
the same time, the noun 'borra' means 'coarse wool', which invokes a haptic
quality.[25] In the word 'borrón', meanwhile (and this is decisive here), tactile
and visual experience are conceived together – two sensory modalities that
are all too often regarded as separate, and are correspondingly assigned to
divergent media such as painting and sculpture. In *Christ Healing the Blind,* for
example (New York version), Christ appears as a magical sculptor who molds
the eyeballs, consisting – like 'borrones' – of unmodulated pigment, and is
hence shown in the act of endowing *tactus* with *visus* (see figures 1.3a, 1.3b).
This act is analogous to the artistic activity of Greco himself, who, as *alter deus*,
plastically shapes his colors in the tradition of Titian,[26] in whose workshop he
once worked.[27] This is reminiscent of the rough painting style of Titian him-
self, the surfaces of whose works which van Mander claimed could be probed
with the fingers as though by a blind man.[28] More recently, it is precisely the
rough brushstrokes used by the 'Greek of Toledo', his so-called *borrones*, that
researchers have characterized as 'sculptural', albeit without any consideration
of the synagonistic aspect of the respective media.[29]

   In the secondary literature, interest in Leoni's portrait has been relatively
muted. This work does however point out two tendencies that are significant
for the present discussion. First, the picture was characterized by Fernando
Marías in the catalog marking the 400th anniversary of Greco's death (2014) –
without further elaboration – as a case of *paragone*.[30] With reference to a
related picture by Velázquez (a well-known admirer of Greco) which depicts
the sculptor Montañéz, Valeska von Rosen relativizes this in the context of the

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25   McKim-Smith *et al.* 1988, 17.
26   Koering 2008/2009; Von Rosen 2016.
27   In a letter addressed to Cardinal Farnese dated 16 November 1570, Clovio wrote that El
      Greco was a 'discepolo di Titiano'. In the inventory of the collections of Fulvio Orsini (31
      January 1600), the 'Greek of Toledo' was characterized as a 'scolare di Titiano'. Then there
      is the well-known biography by Giulio Mancini (circa 1620) ('havendo studiato in Vene-
      tia et in particolare le cose di Titiano'), as well as the *Marginalie* (1646) of the humanist
      Durante Dorio da Leonessa, who refers to El Greco as a 'discepolo di Titiano … il quale
      attese alla maniera ultima de Titiano'. Finally, see Lavin 2019.
28   See most recently Hadjinicolaou 2019b, 130–131.
29   See for example Casper 2014, 56: 'The fluidity of the brushwork and sculptural plasticity
      of the figures … are both hallmarks of Italian painting that El Greco infused into his own
      working practice starting in Venice'. Cf. also Stoenescu 2019, 'especially Sculptural Quality
      and the Use of Borrones', 213–216.
30   Marías 2014, 161: 'it is also worth reflecting upon the *paragone* established by the Greek
      between his own monochrome portrait of Philipp II, which imitates the work of the court
      painter with its obsolete armour and appearance, and the real colourist portrait of the
      monarch that he was yet to paint …'.

FIGURE 1.3A   El Greco, *Christ Healing the Blind*, *c.*1575, oil on canvas, 119.4 × 146.1 cm, New
York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
COMMONS

FIGURE 1.3B   Detail 1.3a

FIGURE 1.4   Diego Velázquez, *Portrait of Juan Martínez Montañés*, 1635/36, oil on canvas,
110.5 × 87.5 cm, Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado
COMMONS

concept of *poeisis* (figure 1.4): 'It is a question here of what joins these two creative, forming artists'.[31]

4

A striking, monumental drawing in black chalk heightened with white on blue paper depicts a robust masculine figure (figure 1.5), which performs a forceful movement with the right shoulder, together with a somewhat less vigorous

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31   Von Rosen 2014, 17. For the concept of *poeisis*, see von Rosen *et al.* 2013.

FIGURE 1.5   El Greco, variation of Michelangelo's *Giorno*, *c.*1570, charcoal and black and
                   white chalks on blue paper with blue wash at borders, 598 × 245 mm, Munich,
                   Staatliche Graphische Sammlung Munich
                   COMMONS

rotation of the head. At the same time, the prominent left knee thrusts forward
so forcefully that it seems almost to rupture the two-dimensionality of the
paper surface. This powerful *rilievo* is further emphasized by the use of *figura
serpentinata*.[32] At the same time, it remains unclear whether the masculine

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32   Zeitler 2006, 13.

figure – which is nude apart from the length of fabric that lies across its right thigh – is seated, or whether it somehow hunches down on the brightly illuminated ground. The modeling of the body is soft, with flowing, indistinct transitions (*sfumato*) that give the emphatically sculptural figure a 'painterly' look, an excess of presence. As a consequence, it is not only *visus* that is stimulated, but *tactus* as well – at least imaginatively (the principle 'the eye becomes a finger').

Appearing on the sheet is the name 'Domenico Greco'. Surprisingly, perhaps, the drawing was found in the collection of Giorgio Vasari.[33] In all likelihood, it dates from the early part of Greco's stay in Rome, from *c*.1570–1572. Decisive here is that it depicts a familiar sculpture by one of the most celebrated artists of the time (not least of all by Vasari himself), namely Michelangelo's *Giorno* (figure 1.6).

Domenico does not delimit the figure's contours; instead, his strokes are open and dynamic vigorous. Moreover, the almost monumental format (598 × 245 mm) and the figure's rotation – which does not depend directly on Michelangelo's sculpture – endow it with an autonomy that goes beyond a mere study, to say nothing of a copy. The face too, with its loosely rendered features, underscores the spur-of-the-moment, sketchy character of the strokes. Greco models the Michelangelesque figure on the paper as though forming a *bozzeto* in his hands. Some writers have even conjectured that he had access to Michelangelo's clay models.[34] For the present argument, this provocative idea is superfluous: the directness of his study of the statue and the presence of further models in various materials in his workshop are enough to explain its effects of plasticity. According to Pacheco's report, along with Greco's own inventory, he owned dozens of models in clay and wax (some of which he created himself), along with hundreds of drawings.[35]

He must have become versed in the two-dimensional renderings of sculptural qualities when in Venice.[36] This art was practiced as well by Tintoretto, who played a major role in Greco's oeuvre.[37] The Venetian artist owned a number of *bozzetti* and clay models, and even executed a drawing whose

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33   Zeitler & Hellwig 2006.

34   Bray 2007; Ekserdjian 2007. See also Zeitler 2006, 22–23.

35   Marías 2013, 154: 'El Greco used [clay models] for studies of composition and lighting, with the inventory of 1614 listing twenty models of plaster (*bente modelos de yeso*) and thirty of earthenware and wax (*treinta modelos de barro i zera*) a figure which increased in 1621, perhaps exaggeratedly, to two hundred (*zien modelos de yeso, otros zientos de barro i zera*)'.

36   Cf. most recently the summary of this topic, albeit without the arguments presented here: Loffredo 2019, 151–155.

37   Van Gastel *et al.* 2014, 15–17. Bray 2006, 332. See also Heisterberg 2018, 72–91.

FIGURE 1.6   Michelangelo, *Giorno*, tomb of Giuliano de' Medici, Marble, 1520–1534, Florence,
San Lorenzo
COMMONS

feeling for form is similar to Greco's, a sheet which moreover depicts the same
work by Michelangelo from a different viewpoint (see figure 1.7).[38] Executed
with rapid, energetic strokes and spontaneous gestures, the nearly abstract,

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38   Bray 2006, 323–324.

FIGURE 1.7   Tintoretto, study after Michelangelo's *Giorno*, *c.*1550–1555, black and white chalk on
              blue paper, 35 × 50.5 cm, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
              COMMONS

unfinished figure acquires an extraordinarily plastic quality. The black shad-
owed areas in particular, applied more thickly, highlighted with carefully
applied white chalk alluding to polished marble, contribute to the impression
that the figure is genuinely of stone. We encounter similar effects in other
drawings by Tintoretto after works by Michelangelo.

          5

The use of *bozzetti* also allows an artist to achieve some distance from his or her
own body while trying out a variety of bodily attitudes, which are in turn trans-
lated from three into two dimensions, as in the case of works on paper or canvas,
or even, with reference to Greco, may be used subsequently for sculptural works
as well, which he then integrated into larger architectural ensembles. Domenico
clad his *modelli* in paper or cloth garments and suspended them from threads,
using these performative experiments to study both movement as well as the

interplay of light and shadow.[39] For as he himself emphasizes in his writings, shadows reveal the whole, allowing the artist to conceive three-dimensionality on a two-dimensional surface. These tactile tests, which resulted not just in mere *bozzetti*, but in finished sculptures as well, an example being the nude resurrected Christ (part of the architectural tabernacle for the main altar of the Church of the Tavera Hospital), represent an additional, specialized element of his visual praxis. The sculptural presence of a similar – albeit in this instance painted – figure of Christ testifies to this mode of productive and medial reflection: from sculpture to painting and back again (see figures 1.8a, 1.8b).[40] An example of synagonism *par excellence*! It is no accident that Thomas Hart Benton interpreted Greco's figure graphically as a manikin à la Luca Cambiaso.[41]

It often seems – an obvious instance being *The Adoration of the Name of Jesus* – as though Greco derived the rough quality of his figures, which indeed resemble sculptures or *bozetti*, along with the shaping of the painterly surface, from his own experience as a sculptor (figures 1.9a, 1.9b, 1.9c).[42] Inherent to the texture of the surfaces of the figures is not just a Michelangelesque quality, but also a waxy character that suggests the use of such models. As a result, not just the faculty of vision, but that of touch as well is activated when the viewer scans the two-dimensional surface.

As a comparison with the *Purification of the Temple* (the version in the Frick Collection in New York) clearly demonstrates, Greco relies thematically as well upon a formal comparison between sculpture and painting: the gestures of the figures in the sculpted relief on the upper left, which depicts the Old Testament motif of the *Expulsion,* display both thematic and formal analogies with those of the main scene, where the figures cringe away from Christ's assault (figures 1.10a, 1.10b).

The reflection of one medium through another is also related to Greco's strong feel for spatiality, a fundamental trait of sculpture in general (and leaving aside for a moment his reflection on the material qualities of the objects). This is also exemplified by the drawing after Michelangelo, which displays other Venetian elements, for example the colored ground.[43] The asymmetrical application of the blue tinting endows the two-dimensional figure with the

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39   Marías 2014b, 37. Vasari too describes this process, albeit only with reference to translating a *bozzetto* into two dimensions: 'Many masters before drawing the histories onto the cartoon, make a clay model … and place on it all the round figures, to see how the shadows fall, using an appropriate light for this purpose'. Cited from Bray 2007, 330.

40   Bray 2007, 329.

41   On the manikin, see Rath 2016. See also Boime 1995. Jackson Pollock followed Benton.

42   Hadjinicolaou 2016, 89. See Bray 2007, 339.

43   On tinted pictorial grounds, see Brahms 2022. See also Hellwig 2016, 130.

FIGURE 1.8A   El Greco, *The Risen Christ*, 1595–1598, polychrome wood, 45 cm, Hospital
Tavera, Toledo
COMMONS

appearance of a high relief, emphasizing the overall impression of an ellipse in
the drawing (see figure 1.6).[44]

Emerging in this way is a synagonism between fundamentally different
realms, which in turn engenders something genuinely new. It is a *tutto com-
posto*, where material and materiality are traces of the visibility of the picture

44   Also emphasized by Zeitler 2006, 31.

surface that serve to stimulate the imagination, which also evokes something that is not fully visible, but only sketchily indicated.

Drawing played a role for Greco, albeit not as an art-theoretical plea for *disegno*. According to one research tendency, *disegno* in the Vasarian sense is the connecting link between painting and sculpture (even though the Greek of

FIGURE 1.9A   El Greco, *The Adoration of the Name of Jesus*, *c.*1578–1579, El Escorial,
Monasterio de San Lorenzo
COMMONS

Toledo never actually used the terms *disegno* or *idea* with reference to his own work).[45] This does not mean, however, as some researchers have asserted, that he was not interested in drawing as a medium.[46] It is instead a question of the

45   Marías 2014b, 36.
46   Hellwig 2016, 50.

FIGURE 1.9B   Detail 1.9a

FIGURE 1.9C   Detail 1.9a

FIGURE 1.10A   El Greco, *The Purification of the Temple*, *c.*1600, oil on canvas, 106.3 × 129.7 cm,
National Gallery, London
COMMONS

FIGURE 1.10B   Detail 1.10a

perpetual testing of possibilities on paper (i.e. the three dimensionality of the two dimensional), which was to be sure also linked to the idea of failure and of learning through mistakes.[47] At the same time, this underscores the processuality of drawing, since the idea can change perpetually through the interaction between intellect, hand, and material support (in this case, paper).

Spatial vision – also a form of spatial thinking – becomes evident in another remark: 'You can see even in semidarkness'.[48] It seems likely that his experience with three-dimensionality was a factor in prompting such an assertion.

In his biography of Michelangelo, Vasari tells how his great idol of the *terza maniera* fashioned a model of the cupola of Saint Peter's (leaving aside the circumstance that for him, the Sacristy of San Lorenzo was the work in which he surpassed all other masters in all three arts).[49] Commenting on this, Greco remarks that Michelangelo's undertaking was characteristic of a visual artist, and that such an initiative did not emerge from Michelangelo's experience as an architect ('de esto se ayudara no como arquitecto').[50] Once again, this seemingly innocent comment harbors the synagonistic dimension of the pictorial arts.

His constant use of drawings and *bozzetti* too permitted a perpetual shift of thinking from two and three dimensionality. All of his activities were shaped by ceaseless reflection on the various media and their dynamic deployment. His attitude toward Michelangelo is of interest in connection with his relation to the various arts, since on the one hand, he praised Michelangelo as an architect and sculptor, and borrowed much from him, including his spatial thinking and the placement of figures, while criticizing him severely as a painter.[51]

In the Minneapolis *Purification of the Temple,* Greco positions a quartet of well-known artists – Titian, Michelangelo, Giulio Clovio, and most probably Raphael – in the place ordinarily reserved for a signature: as witnesses/authorities of the medium of painting (see figures 1.11a, 1.11b). In Rome, the miniaturist Clovio was a patron and friend of Greco, who also made forays into this medium. Raphael, who makes a pensive gesture with his index finger, is hence present 'with hand'![52] In this work, these artists appear as a four-headed creature. It is a question here of the adoption of medial but also formal traits,

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47   This notion of *learning by doing* resembles some of the maxims Frans Hals and Dürer used to instruct their students. See, for example Suthor 2010, 252.

48   Marías & Bustamante 1981, 165.

49   Vasari 1906, 249.

50   Cited from Marías 2001, 109.

51   See for example Joannides 1995; Casper 2014, pp. 75–83. Cited from Marías 2014b, 26: 'Michelangelo might have reached full perfection in sculpture, with colours he has done nothing'.

52   See finally Cat. Paris 2019, 178–180. Surely, this should not be interpreted as presenting a stylistic genealogy, as suggested by Ellis K. Waterhouse. See Harris-Frankfort 1995, 489.

FIGURE 1.11A   El Greco, *The Purification of the Temple*, *c.*1570, oil on canvas, 116.8 × 149.9 cm,
Minneapolis institute of art, Minneapolis
COMMONS

FIGURE 1.11B   Detail 1.11a

which are then fused to create something peculiarly Grecoesque. This has nothing to do however with eclecticism or hybridism.[53] In the medial sense as well, such a combinatorics functions in a way that is dissociated from the idea, without, however, entirely eliminating the opposition, at least verbally. Instead, it is a question of a dialectical coalescence that is brought about through medial synagonism. As a consequence, crude oppositions – in many instances, art-theoretical constructs that are detached from actual praxis – are overcome.[54] Instead, it is here a question of a fertile stimulus, of a reciprocal enhancement and expansion that does not abolish contradictions, but instead generates a collective productive tension in the form of a friction surface.

6

Through the formula 'the eyes of reason', Greco adopts a position vis-à-vis the question of the primacy of painting.[55] In the background here is the question of the comparison between sculpture and painting, in relation to which he took the following attitude: '[Painting] is the most difficult art which brings about the greatest delight (*más dileto*), and is therefore more intellectual (*más enteletuale*). Since I've loved both, I want to avoid giving the impression that I'm opposed to sculpture, but in all honesty, I can say that no painter has ever created an absolutely perfect figure, while in the realm of sculpture, even mediocre artists have done so, and this is manifest to the eyes of reason'. ('et esto es manifiesto a los hojos de razon').[56] According to Greco, the greatest difficulty for painting in relation to sculpture is that it offers numerous possibilities for depicting the invisible, and is accordingly more complex aesthetically, which was undoubtedly of central significance for his religious works. For this reason too, Pacheco referred to him as a philosopher, not only within painting, but in relation to *ars*

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53   Casper 2014, 74.

54   Casper 2014, 90. There exists no hierarchy within this quartet of artists. Hellwig, however, suggests the contrary (Hellwig 2016, 133).

55   Cited from Marías 2014, 37. See also Hadjinicolaou 2008.

56   Pacheco 2001, 349: 'De suerte, que haberse adelantado en la parte del debuxo, a exemplo de su gran maestro, le constituye por mayor pintor no siéndolo en el colorido. Por donde me maravillo mucho que preguntando yo a Dominico Greco el año de 1611 cuál era más difícil el debuxo o el colorido? me respondiese que el colorido. Y no es esto tanto de maravillar como oírle hablar con tan poco aprecio de Micael Angel (siendo el padre de la pintura) diciendo que era un buen hombre y que no supo pintar. Si bien a quien comunicó este sugeto, no le parecerá nuevo el apartarse del sentimiento común de los demás artífices, por ser en todo singular, como lo fue en la pintura'.

in general.[57] Undoubtedly, the primacy of the pigmented material is also related to the pragmatic fact that painting was also the original occupation of the artist. Pacheco also emphasized Greco's art-theoretical concerns with all of the visual arts. Later, Palomino too characterized Greco in relation to the above-cited 'triptych' of the arts as a 'pintor y escultor … consumado arquitecto'.[58] Both Pacheco and Palomino, certainly of unequal weight, stress Greco's preoccupation with the three arts – both theoretically as well as practically.

Domenico signals his esteem for both media simply by virtue of the fact that he practices each. Then too there is his practical involvement with architecture. The relevance of the 'eyes of reason' for the concept of *giudizzio del occhio*, which implies visual thinking, is hence clear enough. Greco even sketched an eye in profile with a kind of halo in the margins of Vasari's account of Michelangelo's life (see figure 1.12).[59] This doodle, an exception among the marginalia, can be regarded as a further indication of the evidentiary role of the *oculus,* as underscored by the previous argument. It is also a reference to the immediacy of vision (in Spanish, for example, *ojo!* also means pay attention!). At the same time, it is a question of a cognitive value, because this dictum reveals Theotokopoulos's critical thinking. The drawing displays the critical eye. The passage in question, underlined by Greco, refers to Michelangelo's method for creating a harmonious whole.[60] In Vasari's view, nature is incapable of approaching such *grazia*. Vasari has more to say about the labor of the hand and the judgment of the eye ('le mani operano, e l'occhio giudica'), which is directly suggestive of the drawn eye, and at least implicitly to the statement about the *hojos de razon*. The drawn eye refers directly to the textual passage, and could be interpreted as a critique of Michelangelo. For Vasari's argument is opposed by Greco's painterly praxis, but also by his written statements: 'For his figures, he would devise nine, ten, twelve heads, and sought nothing else, by fusing them together, but the achievement of a harmonious concordance of the whole, and with a grace that nature itself can never achieve. For this

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57   Pacheco 2001, 537: 'Fue gran filósofo de agudos dichos y escribió de la pintura, escultura y arquitectura.'

58   Palomino 1987, 83: 'He was indeed not only a great painter and sculptor, but also a consummate architect'. In 1687, the painter and architect José Jimenez Donoso (who would even become the master architect of the Cathedral of Toledo) wrote: 'And in Spain, in Toledo, Dominico Greco … was not prevented by being a great Painter from being a great Architect'. (Bérchez 2014, 85). That which otherwise appears as an opposition is united in the figure of the 'Greek of Toledo.' Cf. Blasco Esquivias 1991, 185.

59   Hadjinicolaou 2019a, 398–400. As marginalia, such eyes – or even hands and feet – often guide the gazes of readers in books. See Sherman 2008. This not only underscores the role of vision for reading, but also a process that is embedded in the entire body.

60   Brown 1982, 131ff.
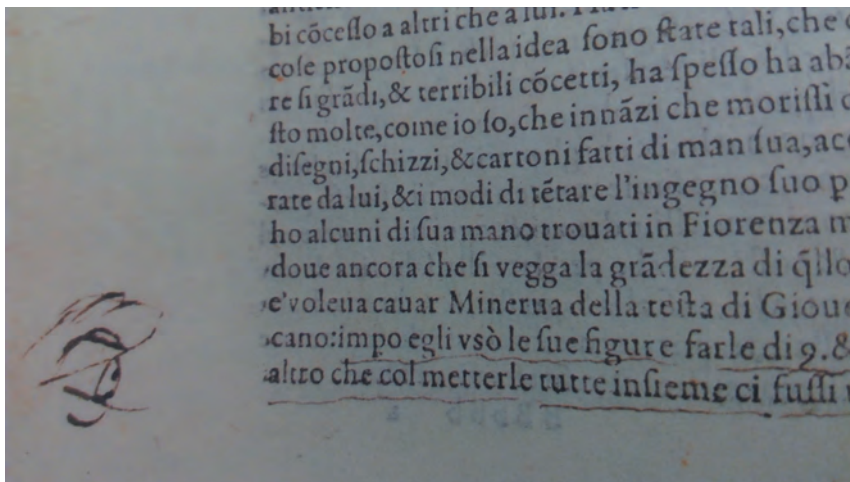
FIGURE 1.12   El Greco, eye, drawing in the margin of Vasari's second edition of *The Lives*,
Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid, p. 774

reason, you need to have, as he would say, the compass in the eye, and not in the hand, since the hand, according to him, is the executive organ, and the eye the one that judges'.[61]

As soon as it is applied, El Greco's practical, technical knowledge – his implicit knowledge – is a cognitive process. It is shaped by the interaction between hand, eye, and mind. It is hence opposed to drawing from memory, which he refers to as 'blind'.[62] Moreover, he also refers to mathematicians as 'blind'. In another comment, he even writes: 'The true path to proportion ... cannot be reached through mathematics'.[63]

This positions him in the tradition of Annibale Carracci and his sermons against Vasari, where only the concrete realization plays a role, not theoretical concepts.[64] Greco's artistic positions are neither a response to normative

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61   Vasari 1906, 270: 'imperò egli usò le sue figure farle di nove e di dieci e di dodici teste, non cercando altro che, col metterle tutte insieme, ci fussi una certa concordanza di grazia nel tutto [underlined by El Greco up to this point], che non lo fa il naturale; dicendo che bisognava avere le seste negli occhi e non in mano, perchè le mani operano, e l´ occhio giudica ...'.

62   Cited from Marías & Bustamante 1981, 165.

63   Cited from Marías & Bustamante 1981, 165: 'esta es la verdadera senda para alcanzar cualquier proporción puesto que ... no se puede alcanzarcon las matemáticas (que son muy) ...'.

64   This anti-Vasarian spirit was no exception. See, for example Robertson 1995.

concepts of academic art theory, i.e. a type of anti-tradition, nor can they be termed eclectic.[65] They display a different way of thinking about all three arts, both through his own works, but also through his commentaries. In this case, there is a reciprocal togetherness, which is interpretable as the conflictive incorporation of various media. The productive tension of this togetherness can be referred to as a synagonistic intermediality. Through his own artistic praxis, Greco overcomes the very opposition with which, to some extent, he operates in the context of art-theoretical conceptuality.

7

In a pioneering article on Greco's work in Illescas that was published in 1938, Enriqueta Harris emphasizes that this ensemble was the first Baroque *Gesamtkunstwerk*, although she regarded it as necessary to distance Greco from Bernini and the much-discussed Vasarian unity of the arts.[66] Illescas was the greatest challenge he faced following his artistic debut in Santo Domingo el Antiguo (where his colleagues claimed he lacked sufficient experience in carpentry, and that his measurements were imprecise) (see figure 1.13).[67] In the main altar in Santo Domingo el Antiguo, the oval Mandylion is carried by two sculpted angels. Unusually, the picture surface is not flat, as suggested by photographic reproductions, but instead three-dimensional (see figure 1.14). This means that the image quite literally has a *sculptural presence*.

This is consistent with the debate between *arquitectos constructores* and *arquitectos pintores*.[68] Greco is found among the latter. For him, it is the pictorial aspect of architecture, a type of two-dimensionality, which stands in the

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65   Cf. Busch 2009.

66   Harris 1938, 154.

67   Bérchez 2013, 273. See also Marías, who to some extent refers to Harris. All the same, remarkably, he perceives El Greco as exemplifying Vasari's concept of *disegno* (Cat. Madrid 2014, 234): 'El Greco had designed a total work of art, in a different sense from Bernini's *bel composto,* since he conceived of the unity of the arts in a way that was fundamentally removed from that of the Roman Baroque artist and more in accordance with Vasari's notion that all the arts are daughters of the same father, namely *disegno*'. The Chapel of San José in Toledo (1597–1599), designed by the architect Nicolas de Vergára the Younger, also testifies to El Greco's interest in the integration of architecture, painting, and sculpture.

68   Bérchez 2013, 272–276; Bérchez 2014, pp. 66–87. See also Riello 2013, 261. Cf. Almoguera 2019. The 'painterly' aspect of El Greco's architecture is confirmed by Bérchez, who asserts that the 'Greek of Toledo' 'transformed an architectural work in the world of the paintbrush'. Cf. most recently Tessari 2020.

FIGURE 1.13   El Greco, view of the main altar in Santo Domingo el Antiguo, Toledo
                 COMMONS

foreground, and predominates over the mathematical-measurable aspect. It is
no accident that when Vitruvius and Barbaro refer to the architect as an *uomo
universale* Greco criticizes their relationship to painting (remarking on how
little 'pintura' is actually valued).[69]

Greco's *retablo* in Illescas has the effect of an *ecclesia* within the *ecclesia*,
one that oscillates between the splendor of the miraculous statue (fash-
ioned, according to legend, by Luke himself) and the rational, white walls
(figures 1.15, 1.16).[70] Greco's painting of St. Ildephonsus, which stands on the

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69   Cited from Marías & Bustamante 1981, 103 and 229.

70   See Hadjinicolaou 2014; Hadjinicolaou 2019, 93–103; Stoenescu 2019, 99 ff. Nicolás de Ver-
        gara, the architect of the Hospital de la Caridad (completed in 1588–1600), asked which

FIGURE 1.14   El Greco, *The Holy Face*, 1577–79, oil on panel and wooden sculptures,
129 × 177 × 30.5 cm, private collection
PHOTO: YANNIS HADJINICOLAOU

left-hand side and is oriented toward the main altar, adopts a line of sight
within the building's interior that is close to that of the beholding faithful

artist might embody the authority and propriety demanded by the statue, which at the
same time underscores the central role of this acting and 'magical' image. Cf. also Marías
2013, 226.

(figure 1.17). From his lateral position, Ildephonsus – who here resembles a second Jerome in his Study – directs his attention toward the sculpture at his side, which follows its own intra-pictorial rules, underscoring its painterly sculpturality through an impasto, even *borrones*-like application (figure 1.18). It is no mere copy of the statue that is installed in the main altar, but nonetheless represents a parallel to the brightly shimmering splendor of the actual sculpture, for which material is paramount in relation to form.[71] This generates a complementarity between Greco's sculpture, architecture, and paintings, one that underscores his productive approach to material and form.

Fernando Marías speaks of a 'total artist' and of 'poikília, and even multidisciplinary synergy', thereby building on Harris's discussion, although, as mentioned above, he emphasizes Greco's paragonal thinking as determinative, and

FIGURE 1.15   Interior of the church of the hospital and shrine of Nuestra Señora de la
               Caridad, Illescas, Toledo
               COMMONS

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71   See also Marías 2013, 237.

FIGURE 1.16   Shrine of Nuestra Señora de la Caridad
COMMONS

FIGURE 1.17   El Greco, *St. Ildephonsus in his Study*, 1603–1605, oil on canvas, 187 × 102 cm,
              Church and shrine of Nuestra Señora de la Caridad, Illescas, Toledo
              COMMONS

does not conceive of the two directions as a fertile, dynamic opposition.[72] At
the same time, Marías does recognize the following: 'Architecture, sculpture
and painting worked together to give form to the space and its objects, but

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72   Marías 2014b, 26 and 40. Bérchez 2013, 272.

FIGURE 1.18   Statue of Nuestra Señora de la Caridad
               COMMONS

without negating their individual essences or characteristics. Vasari saw the different art forms as the daughters of *disegno*, but for Greco they could also be seen as collaborative, even if they had to stay independent. They could not deny their own essence and take on properties of the others'.[73] What else is

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73   Marías 2013, 237.

this observation (leaving aside the misleading commentary on Vasari) but an affirmation of Greco's intermedial synagonism? It is therefore no accident that Greco issued the following self-confident statement through his attorney during judicial proceedings with the clients of Illescas, who were dissatisfied with his work there:[74] 'As a construction, it is one of the best and most perfect in all of Spain, which is not difficult to demonstrate, and the architecture, the sculpture, the carpentry, and the painting are equal in quality …'.[75]

Greco once made a remarkable comment, and one that returns us to the start of the present essay. When Daniele Barbaro argued that architects were at a disadvantage because they were unable to show their art to customers and contracting authorities due to the expense involved (i.e. of producing architectural models), Greco remarked: 'As though there were no paper in the world!'[76] Once again, the transfer of one medium to another – in his case of three-dimensional architecture to two-dimensional paper – is manifested verbally as a principle of a synagonistic visual praxis.

Greco's interest in various media was purposeful. In this sense, he is transmedial. At the same time, he plays with the differing materialities of the media, displaying one from the perspective of another. To perceive in this a commonality with Vasarian *disegno*, toward which Greco was so critical, represents a considerable simplification, and one that disregards his synagonistic praxis and theory, and the impasto shaping of the pigmented material, referred to by Julius Meier Graefe as 'thinking material'.[77]

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74   The works were appraised by painters and sculptors such as Francisco Esteban and Franscisco de la Torre. Their criticism sounds the usual notes, which also characterized discussions on El Greco's work in the realm of academic art theory, namely that the works were imperfect, and that all of the pictures were executed in such a manner that they could not be viewed. The angels, it was said, lacked the correct dimensions, and were not sculpted rightly. At the same time, there was extensive discussion concerning the appearance of Jorge Manuel and the other Toledans who are presented beneath the Madonna's protective cloak wearing sumptuous contemporary costumes (thus transgressing against *decorum*). Cf. Marías 2013, 227–229 and Hadjinicolaou 2019, 96–97. With regard to form, such critiques were relatively consistent in their conclusions, whether regarding to the sculpture or to the painting.

75   Cited from Marías 2013, 228.

76   Marías & Bustamante 1981, 150 and 239: 'Esto es como no uviese papel en el mundo' ('Esto es como si no existiera papel en el mundo').

77   Bérchez 2014, 273. Meier Graefe 1910, 85.

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Touch and Trace: Clay in the Hands of the Baroque Sculptor

Joris van Gastel

> Entre la pensée de l'artiste et la matière de son art, s'est instituée une
> intime correspondance, remarquable par une réciprocité dont ceux qui
> ne l'ont pas éprouvée ne peuvent imaginer l'existence.
>
> PAUL VALÉRY (1932)[1]

∴

'[B]esides the images of form, so often evoked by psychologists of the imag-
ination, there are … images of matter, images that stem *directly from matter*.
The eye assigns them names, but only the hand truly knows them'.[2] Gaston
Bachelard's compelling intuition must, as Paul Valéry suggests, be a truism to
the artist, though the implications of this insight are starting to be explored
by art historians in a more systematic fashion since only relatively recently.[3]
Interestingly, it seems that for a long time, artists have been reluctant to admit
to the importance of their direct engagement with the materials of their art
as well, particularly those artists working south of the Alps. Indeed, whereas
northern artists were known to make their hands dirty,[4] their Italian colleagues
were steeped in the doctrine of the *Idea*.[5] As Erwin Panofsky has suggested in
his classic study on the concept of *Idea*, the implications of this doctrine can
be found most manifestly and influentially in the work of Plotinus (204/5–270
CE), who we may cite here at length:

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1   Valéry 1934, 142.
2   Bachelard 1983, 1.
3   Baxandall 1980 is an exception. For related approaches in other disciplines, see Ingold 2013;
    Sennett 2008; Malafouris & Knappett 2008.
4   Chapman & Woodall 2009. Cf. Hadjinicolaou 2019.
5   Panofsky 1960.

> Let us suppose, if you like, a couple of great lumps of stone lying side
> by side, one shapeless and untouched by art, the other which has been
> already mastered by art and turned into a statue of a god or of a man, of
> a Grace or one of the Muses if of a god, and if of a man not just of any
> man but of one whom art has made up out of every sort of human beauty.
> The stone which has been brought to beauty of form by art will appear
> beautiful not because it is a stone – for then the other would be just as
> beautiful – but as a result of the form which art has put into it. Now the
> material did not have this form, but it was in the man who had it in his
> mind even before it came into the stone; but it was in the craftsman, not
> in so far as he had hands and eyes, but because he had some share of art.
> So this beauty was in the art, and it was far better there; for the beauty in
> the art did not come into the stone, but that beauty stays in the art and
> another comes from it into the stone which is derived from it and less
> than it. And even this does not stay pure and as it wants to be in the stone,
> but is only there as far as the stone has submitted to the art.[6]

Matter is understood here as something negative, as an obstacle that needs to
be 'overcome' by art, an idea that can still (or again) be found in the writings of
Giorgio Vasari, Vincenzo Danti, Carlo Ridolfi, Gian Pietro Bellori, and beyond.[7]
It is this doctrine that for a long time has made of matter, also for the field of
art history, 'an anti-value'.[8]

One could ask if not also artists themselves contributed to such a view – and
indeed, Vasari and Danti were artists as well, both active within the orbit of
Michelangelo. Notably, Michelangelo himself evoked the tradition of the *Idea*
with his much-debated poem *Non ha l'ottimo Artista alcun concetto*:

> The perfect artist does not have any concept [*concetto*] that a single block
> of marble does not, within itself, circumscribe with its excess, though
> reveal it can only the hand that obeys the intellect.[9]

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6 Plotinus, *Ennead*, v.8.1, here cited after the trans. in Plotinus 1984, 237–239. Cf. Panofsky
   1960, 15.

7 Cf. Panofsky 1960, n. 226.

8 Didi-Huberman 1998, 140 'une *antivaleur'*. For a further chapter in the treatment of this his-
   toriographical problem, see Volavková 1971.

9 'Non ha' l'ottimo artista alcun concetto / c'un marmo solo in sé non circonscriva / col suo
   superchio, e solo a quello arriva / la man che ubbidisce all'intelletto'. Cf. Panofsky 1960,
   66–67. See also Summers 1981, 203–233.

If the marble is, for Michelangelo, no longer a true obstacle,[10] this is only because the hand has submitted to mind, the stone has 'submitted to art'.[11] And still, Michelangelo went to great lengths to hide the manual labour that was at the origins of his art; as Vasari relates, the artist 'burned a great number of sketches, drawings and cartoons by his own hand, in order that nobody would see the troubles he went to or find a way to equal his genius and to appear nothing but perfect'.[12]

Michelangelo's seventeenth-century emulator, Gian Lorenzo Bernini,[13] equally sought to downplay the role of the hand – or, at least, this is what his biographers suggest; working on what they construct as his last work, a bust of the blessing figure of Christ (figure 2.1),[14] Bernini tried, thus writes his son Domenico, to 'summarize' and 'condense' all his art, and 'although the weakness of his pulse did not correspond to the boldness of the idea [*Idea*], yet he succeeded in proving what he used to say, 'that an artist excellent in *disegno* should not fear any want of vivacity or tenderness on reaching the age of decrepitude, because the practice of *designo* is so effective that it alone can make up for the defect of the *spiriti*, which languish in old age'.[15] It is interesting to see how in this passage the fundamental quality of the *spiriti*, which for Domenico is directly related to his father's capacity to imbue his works with vivacity and tenderness,[16] is set aside for the more traditional concept of *disegno* – a concept that, again, is directly related to the idea (as becomes also clear from this passage) and annuls here the more organic flow of vital *spiriti*. Mind triumphs over matter.

This paper will seek to steer away from such a hierarchic dualism, arguing that, though artists may have paid lip service to the doctrine of the *Idea*, or have been framed in such a way by biographers and theorists, actual artistic

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10   Panofsky 1960, 68.

11   Clements 1954.

12   Vasari 1966–1997, vol. 6, 108: 'abruciò gran numero di disegni, schizzi e cartoni fatti di mano sua, acciò nessuno vedessi le fatiche durate da lui et i modi di tentare l'ingegno suo, per non apparire se non perfetto'. Cf. Perrig 1991, 1.

13   Cf. Mangone 2020.

14   For the bust, see most recently cat. Rome 2017, no. IX.10 (F. Petrucci, with further literature).

15   Bernini 1713, 167: 'In essa compendiò, e ristrinse tutta la sua Arte, e benche la debolezza del polso non corrispondesse alla gagliardia dell'Idea, tuttavia gli venne fatto di comprovare ciò, che prima ei dir soleva, che *Un'Artefice eccellente nel Disegno dubitar non deve al giunger dell'età decrepita di alcuna mancanza di vivacità, e tenerezza, perche è di tanta efficacia la prattica del Disegno, che questo solo può supplire al difetto degli spiriti, che nella vecchiaja languiscono'*. Trans. adopted from Lavin 2007, 295.

16   Cf. Fehrenbach 2006; Fehrenbach 2005.

FIGURE 2.1   Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Bust of the Saviour*, 1679, marble, Rome, San Sebastiano
fuori le Mura

practice is something altogether different. For an alternative account we may, in fact, refer to another ancient tradition in which modelling clay has become the metaphor *pur sang* for the creative process, a tradition in which an author such as Lucian of Samosata is willing to accept the epithet of 'Prometheus in words' if this is to mean that he, too, 'works in clay' and is, indeed, a 'clay-moulder [πηλοπλάθος]'.[17] Here, working in clay implies a continuous process of adjustment and refinement, a synagonistic process in which the final result only gradually comes into focus. It is this image, that has, in fact, always existed parallel to that if the *Idea*, even becoming, at times, a metaphor for the

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17   Lucian, *Prometheus Es in Verbis* 1; cf. Romm 1990, from which the trans. at p. 74.

Idea itself.[18] Looking at a number of seventeenth-century sources, this paper sets out to reveal something of this alternative discourse, focussing on the moment in which the seemingly looming gap between intellect and matter is bridged – that is, the moment in which the artist's fingers engage, touch, and shape the malleable material of clay – thus hoping to do justice to Bachelard's knowledgeable hand.[19]

1   **Touching Colours**

'[O]ne could say, that philosophy has its first origins in the sense of touch', writes the Neapolitan philosopher Leonardo Di Capua (1617–1695) in his *Ragionamenti intorno all'incertezza de' medicamenti* of 1689.[20] As in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the authority of the ancients gradually gave way to an empiricist predilection for sensory experience, artists and artisans gained a significant voice in the scientific debate – they had a hands-on knowledge of the materials they worked with.[21] Still, it is in the scientific literature that this knowledge is conceptualized more fully and that the role of the hand and the sense of touch in acquiring such knowledge is most fully acknowledged. In his *Saggiatore* of 1623, dedicated to the freshly elected pope Urban VIII, Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) reflects on the sense of touch as follows:

> A solid and, so to speak, very material body, moved and applied to any part of my person produces in me that sensation that we call *touch*, which, even though it occupies the entire body, nevertheless seems principally to reside in the palms of the hands, and especially in the fleshy tips of the fingers, by which we feel very small differences of roughness, smoothness, softness and hardness that we do not distinguish as well with other parts of the body. ... This sense, since it is more material than the others

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18   Cf. Cole 2001, 533; Panofsky 1960, n. 152, referring to Armenini 1988, 156: 'l'idea del pittore si può dire essere quella immagine, che prima egli si forma e scolpisce nella mente'.

19   While, at least since Johann Gottfried Herder's *Sculpture* the idea that the art of sculpture relates in interesting ways to the sense of touch has become a commonplace, the most tactile moments of sculpture's creation remain largely unexplored. For an overview of related topics, see Dent 2014.

20   Di Capua 1689, 17: 'dirsi potrebbe, che dal tatto abbia avuto il primo suo cominciamento la filosofia'. Unless otherwise indicated, translations are mine.

21   Smith 2004.

and comes from the solidity of the matter, seems to have something to do with the element earth.[22]

If Galileo's linking of the senses to the elements is nothing new – already Aristotle stated that 'the sense of touch is connected with earth'[23] – the way he sees this connection is new. For him, in fact, there is a causal connection. Doubtlessly inspired by Lucretius' atomism,[24] he argued that 'some bodies are continuously dissolving into tiny particles'. These particles, in turn, 'when touching those parts of the body that are more sensitive than the skin', stand at the basis of the senses of smell and taste.[25]

Galileo's ideas about touch are reflected in the work of the Florence-based *letterato* and scientist Lorenzo Magalotti (1637–1712), who, however, gives a more practical interpretation, and indeed indicates that also the sense of touch is involved with particles:[26]

> [I]n some [people] the perceptiveness of the fingers has been able to intrude the domain of the eyes; for, even without counting the Blind Man of Gambassi, who by the force of touch alone created likenesses in the portraits he shaped in clay, there was here some years ago a Frenchman, who with closed eyes, and what is more, in the dark, could tell of a quantity of ribbons, which ones were black, white, green, yellow, or blue ...

This capacity to discern the different colours with the sense of touch alone, Magalotti attributes to 'long study' in which the Frenchman 'refined his sense and trained the perceptiveness of the most delicate capillary fibres of the fingertips'. It was this that allowed him to sense the 'roughness of the slight layers [*veli*], introduced to the silk by the different shapes of the tiny particles of which

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22 Galilei 1890–1909, 348–349: 'Un corpo solido, e, come si dice, assai materiale, mosso ed applicato a qualsivoglia parte della mia persona, produce in me quella sensazione che noi diciamo *tatto*, la quale, se bene occupa tutto il corpo, tuttavia pare che principalmente risegga nelle palme delle mani, e più ne i polpastrelli delle dita, co' quali noi sentiamo piccolissime differenze d' aspro, liscio, molle e duro, che con altre parti del corpo non così bene le distinguiamo ... : e questo senso, come più materiale de gli altri e ch' è fatto dalla solidità della materia, par che abbia riguardo all' elemento della terra'. Trans. from Dooley 1995, 77.

23 Aristotle, *De sensu* 439a; see the discussion in O'Rourke Boyle 1998, 6.

24 Cf. Camerota 2008; Shea 1970.

25 Galilei 1890–1909, 349: 'di questi corpi alcuni si vanno continuamente risolvendo in particelle minime ... mentre quelle vanno a ferire due parti del corpo nostro assai più sensitive della nostra pelle'. Trans. from Dooley 1995, 77.

26 In addition to Galileo, the ideas of Pierre Gassendi were important for Magalotti as well.

consist the varies colours'.[27] Though Magalotti speaks of a Frenchman, the case he describes is strikingly similar to that of the Dutch blind man Jan Vermaasen, whose capacities are discussed by Robert Boyle in his *Experiments and Considerations Touching Colours* of 1664.[28] In fact, Boyle claims to have obtained his account from Sir John Finch (1626–1682), a scientist who had spent considerable time at the Medici court in Florence – without doubt, Magalotti and Boyle are speaking about the same person.[29] If Vermaasen's capacities should be part of a philosophical argument is another matter. Likely, he had adopted a trick that was known to be used by cheating card players and described in Antonio Maria Cospi's *Il guidice criminalista* of 1643:

> Others introduce thick cards into the game, with such thick colours that they have a certain relief. And they keep the tip of the middle finger of the right hand well shaven, so that their skin is very thin there, and therefore have in that part [of the finger] a sensitivity that is most precise, and on touching the card with that finger, they sense those colours and know which card is underneath ...[30]

The feeling of colour, as Magalotti describes it, is in fact closer to Galileo's description of the sense of taste and smell, where he writes how 'particles' are received by the tongue and nose, producing a 'likable or disagreeable effect' depending, among others – a turn of phrase echoed by Magalotti – on 'the kind

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27   Magalotti 1943, 223: 'Dell'infallibilità del tatto basta dire ch'ella si piglia per traslato dell'evidenza la più indubitabile, perchè quando s'arriva a dire: questa è verità che si tocca con mano, non si può andar più in là. E il bello è che in alcuni la finezza del discernimento delle dita è arrivata a metter la falce nella messe degli occhi; poiché, senza contare il Cieco da Giambassi, che a forza di brancicare faceva somigliare i ritratti ch'ei formava di creta, fu qui parecchi anni sono un Francese, che a occhi chiusi e, quello ch'è più, al buio, VI sapeva dire d'una quantità di nastri: questo è nero, questo è bianco, questo è verde, questo è giallo, questo è turchino; e la Serenissima Granduchessa Vittoria con molte delle sue Dame di quel tempo, che vivono ancora, ve ne saranno buon testimonio di vista: tanto il lungo studio sulle varie asprezze de' veli, indotti sulle sete dalle differenti figure de' minimi corpicelli componenti le varie tinte, aveva raffinato il senso, e ammaestrato il discernimento delle capillari delicatissime fibre de' polpastrelli di costui, per fargliene, un nuovo, e forse fino allora inescogitato mestiere da buscarsi il vivere a sedere'.

28   Boyle 1664, 42ff. Cf. Schaffer 1998, 90–94.

29   Villani 2005.

30   Cospi 1643, 560: 'Altri mettono in giuoco carte grosse con colori così grossi che fanno un certo rilievo, & essi tengono il dito di mezzo della mano dritta nella sommità ben raso, tanto che VI hanno una pelle sottilissima, e per questo in quella parte anno un senso esattissimo, e nel tastare con quel dito la carta sente quei colori, e conosce che carta è sotto'. Trans. adapted from Graham-Dixon 2011, 105.

of contact with the various shapes of the particles'. Our skin, argues Galileo, 'does not feel the effect of materials that are so fine, delicate and soft' – but Magalotti suggests that this is something that can be learned, and indeed, as for Galileo all senses depend on a mechanism that is derived from the sense of touch, it seems only obvious that the sense of touch itself can enter in their domains as well.

The main point of confusion here appears to be the actual size of the tiny particles these authors are speaking about.[31] Around the turn of the century, Tommaso Campanella (1568–1639) had ridiculed Lucretius' atomism by speaking about 'infinite prickles and thorns' and 'gross grains' that didn't achieve the sensations suggested by the ancient author.[32] Francis Bacon (1561–1626) on the other hand (and at around the same time) showed, by comparing the subtle diffusion of 'a little saffron infused and stirred up in water' with 'a similar quantity of powder of Brazil-wood, pomegranate flowers, or any highly coloured substance' that atoms are more subtle than 'the finest powder'.[33] Magalotti's idea that the 'different shapes of the tiny particles of which consist the various colours' can, after long practice, be made accessible to the sense of touch, however, suggests that for him, the finely grounded pigments themselves are at the origins of our experience of a colour. Indeed, contrary to Francis Bacon, who writes elsewhere that atoms are 'unlike anything that could fall under the senses', for Magalotti they appear to do precisely that.[34]

2   The Perfect Clay

No matter what conclusions were drawn regarding the size of these particles, the grain of sand has remained the most persistent model for understanding atoms, while the question of cohesion – that is, the question as to how atoms stick together – has often been discussed in terms of the way in which water and sand can form a cohesive whole, namely: clay. Not coincidentally, Magalotti had a particular interest in clay, and it is instructive, bearing his considerations about the sense of touch in mind, to look at some of his remarks in his *Lettere odorose*, or *Letters on the Fragrant Ceramics of Europe and the Americas,*

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31   For a more general discussion, see Meinel 1988.

32   Campanella 2003, 35: 'Indi dico che il calore e freddore, sendo cose attive, di passivi athomi schietti, senza virtù agente non nasceno; ch'infiniti aculei e spine non mai scaldano, né le grosse farine affreddano'. Trans. from Dooley 1995, 42.

33   Bacon 1857–1874, 419–420.

34   Ibid., 464.

Commonly Called Buccheri, of 1695.[35] Dealing with a kind of red earth vases produced in Portugal and Latin America and particularly appreciated for their pleasant smell, Magalotti's letters have rightfully been seen as a primer in olfactory aesthetics. Here, however, it is the author's sensitivity to the *tactile* qualities of clay that interests us, as well as the question of how he relates these to the practice of modelling. These interests are central to a discussion that concerns roughly modelled animals created in the Portuguese city of Estremoz.[36] Magalotti writes:

> Since just a few years, I have seen arriving various animals of a most crude design ... made, I believe, to keep on one's desk, and most of them are lions, lapdogs, lambs, and different kinds of birds, almost all of them painted, or rather, smirched with white and blue, and touches of gold, which to me seem disgraceful, as with this barbarous ornament all that is good in this clay is annulled, all its fineness, smoothness, and lively colour.[37]

From this negative remark we may deduce that Magalotti presupposes a direct relation between the qualities of the material and that what it is used for. Three aesthetic principles are made central here – fineness, smoothness, and colour – of which the first two are clearly related to the sense of touch: Galilei's 'small differences of roughness, smoothness, softness and hardness'. The nature of the relation between material and use becomes even clearer in some remarks about his friend and travel companion Paolo Falconieri.[38]

> [H]aving arrived, this good *cavaliere*, in Estremoz ... [and] considering the extreme subtlety which was achieved in this clay, even with the coarse and inconsiderate handling of those artisans, and the docility with which it received the folds, even if hard and coarse, from both out- and inside, neither creating danger nor signs of cracks, he judged it to be incomparably superior to any other clay, no matter how refined by long

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35 For the relation between Magalotti's poetics and science, see Güntert 1966.

36 For this tradition, see Vermelho 2005.

37 Magalotti 1943, 78: 'Solamente da pochi anni in qua veggo venire diversi animali di goffissimo disegno ... fatti, cred'io, per tenere sugli studioli, e son per lo più leoncini, cagnoli, pecorelle, uccelli di più sorte, toccati quasi tutti, o, per dir meglio, impastricciati di bianco e di turchino e toccati d'oro, che a me paiono una porcheria, levandosi con questo barbaro ornato tutto quello che ha di buono questa terra, che consiste in quella finezza, in quella liscezza e in quella vivacità di colore'.

38 For Falconieri, see Bencivenni 1994.

maceration, to shape models of figures, particularly those dressed with fine draperies following the Greek manner, and taking a virgin sample from the quarry, he made a package of it, which he sent off to Rome, so that, on his return, he could make a present of it for Bernini, who would be very pleased with it.[39]

Magalotti's mention of the 'Greek manner' is interesting here, as it suggests a direct connection between the material and a particular style[40] – a style not necessarily related to the work of Bernini, but more readily to the Flemish sculptor François Duquesnoy (1597–1643). As Estelle Lingo has shown, the Greek manner in sculpture was all about the subtlety of the folds,[41] a point most clearly expressed by Paolo Alessandro Maffei in his preface to the *Raccolta di statue antiche e moderne* of 1704: 'when either decorum or necessity required Greek artists to make draped statues, the drapery was executed by them with such grace and fineness in the folds that they revealed that which they purported to cover'.[42] Arguably, this aesthetic of Greek draperies has found its most eloquent modern expression in Duquesnoy's *Saint Susanna* (figure 2.2), where, following Gian Pietro Bellori's no less eloquent description, the drapery falls in such a manner that 'the stone, having lost all its roughness, is attenuated in the folds and brought to life in the spirit and the attitude'.[43]

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39   Magalotti 1943, 80: 'Di qui credo che il signor Paolo Falconieri, così barbaro come egli è in tutto quello che è delizia anche innocente de' sensi, spaventato niente meno di me di quell'indegno pericolo a cui l'inconsiderata finezza del de Braz aveva esposta la nobiltà di quella terra, per redimerla in qualche modo da quell'uso obbrobrioso, s'avvisasse di destinarla a un altro tanto più nobile, quanto si è il servire all'intelletto di scultori insigni nella figurazione d'eroi sacri e profani. Che però, giunto questo buon cavaliere in Estremoz con la pietà, che ancora l'accorava, dello spettacolo veduto in Yelues, considerata l'estrema sottigliezza a cui vedeva ridur quella creta; anche col grossolano avventato maneggio di quelli artefici e la docilità con cui ella riceveva piegature ancorché aspre e crude, così in fuori come in dentro, senza dare apprensione non che apparenza di screpolo; la giudicò incomparabile sopra ogni altra terra; avvegnaché raffinata da lunga macerazione, per formare modelli di figure particolarmente vestite di panni fini secondo la maniera greca, e, presane dalla cava una quantità della vergine, ne fece una cassa e la mandò a Roma, per farne poi al suo ritorno un accettissimo regalo al Bernino'.

40   For a more recent related argument, though concerning a very different context, see Baxandall 1980. Cf. Lehmann 2014.

41   Lingo 2007; Lingo 2002.

42   Maffei 1704, IV: 'e qual ora o la congruenza, o la necessità portò quegli artefici a far statue vestite, fu da loro ciò eseguito con tanta grazia, e finezza nella panneggiatura, che svelarono quello, che mostravano di ricoprire'.

43   Bellori 1976, 291: 'Qui lo scultore prese occasione di esporre nelle pieghe tutta l'industria dello scarpello; poiché il manto, spiegandosi dal gombito e sotto il seno, vela il resto

FIGURE 2.2
François Duquesnoy, *Saint
Susanna*, 1633, marble, Rome,
S. Maria di Loreto

del corpo e si solleva all'altro fianco, e con doppio scherzo ricade in un lembo e si scuo-
pre sotto la tonaca a mezza gamba, scorrendo le pieghe sino all'altro piede, e tanto che
v'apparisce la rotondità pura delle membra; e sopra il petto e le mammelle s'increspa
gentilmente la tonaca in modo che il sasso, perduta affatto l'asprezza, s'assottiglia nelle
pieghe e si avviva nello spirito e nell'atto'. Trans. from id. 2005, 229.

What is interesting about Magalotti's remarks for the present discussion, is that he relays such achievements to a material that is strictly related to the design phase, a phase that, at least for the case of sculpture, had only recently started to draw the attention of collectors – an interest that, arguably, had been instigated by Bernini himself.[44] The subtlety of the folds, for Bellori directly connected with the liveliness of the sculpture, demand, Magalotti's remarks suggest, an equally subtle material. Indeed, opposed to the more neutral aesthetic categories of fineness and smoothness, Magalotti speaks here of the 'docility' of clay, suggesting that it actively facilitates the creative process. Style, then, is connected with the qualities of the material and how they respond to the modelling hand.

Magalotti's insights appear to be part of a broader interest in the practice of modelling and its importance for sculpture. This connection is, for example, stressed in a letter by Falconieri himself. Involved in the newly founded Florentine academy in Rome, he was in frequent contact with Cosimo III's personal secretary Apollonio Bassetti, to whom he made clear the importance of modelling for the students of the academy as follows:[45]

> I do not know who can be a sculptor who is not skilled at modelling. When Algardi came to Rome, Bernini said, wishing to discredit him, that Algardi was unable to make a statue. Bernini said this after he had been forced to admit that Algardi modelled in clay better than he. We have now seen what it means to model in clay, as Algardi has created works of such kind that Bernini will never be able to rival them in their glory.[46]

The effort of carving marble is here clearly downplayed in favour of modelling; sculpture has become all about hand and clay.

As to the historical context of these remarks, it might be considered somewhat surprising that Falconieri here speaks so negatively about Bernini, the same artist he made his gift to. They fit well, however, with what we find in the

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44   Cf. Montanari 2012. For further discussion of the collecting of models, see: Scherf 2004; Walker 1998.

45   For the academy and Falconieri's involvement, see Goldberg 1983, 184–226.

46   Letter from Paolo Falconieri to Apollonio Bassetti, 6 October 1674, in: Goldberg 1983, 334, n. 72: 'ne so che sia mai fatto scultore, che non sia stato buon modellatore, et il Lalgardi, che quando venne a Roma disse il Bernino per screditarlo, quando fu costretto a dire che modellava meglio di lui, che non avrebbe poi saputo fare una statua, si è poi veduto quallo che ha voluto dire saper maneggiare la grate, avendo fatte di quelle opere alle quale il Bernino non arriverà mai a pareggiarlo nella gloria'. Trans. from Bacchi 2012, 51.

FIGURE 2.3   Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Bust of King Louis XIV*, 1665, marble, Versailles, Château

circles where Falconieri moved. For the Florentine academy, directed by Ciro
Ferri (1634–1689) and Ercole Ferrata (1610–1686), leaned more towards the art
of Alessandro Algardi than to Bernini. In fact, Ferri is quoted to have said that
'good modelers can become perfect sculptors within a year', naming Algardi as
a case in point, and it might very well be that Falconieri is echoing the painter
here.[47] Magalotti too was interested in the work of Bernini, and he actually
met the sculptor when he made a stop-over in Florence on his way to Paris.

47   Letter from Torquato Montauti to Apollonio Bassetti, dated 6 October 1674, Rome, in:
       Lankheit 1962, 251, doc. 92: 'ha detto il Sig.r Ciro che i buoni Modellatori in un anno diven-
       gono perfetti scultori, et apportò l'esempio dell'Algarbi [= Algardi]'.

That also Magalotti was not that big a fan of Bernini's, may follow from his comment – to which Ferri heartily agreed – that Bernini's *Bust of Louis XIV* looked like 'a chick hatching from its egg' (figure 2.3).[48]

3   Touching Clay

But let us return to the issue of clay and the sense of touch. If our discussion up till now leaves little doubt that Magalotti's ideas about the sense of touch were informed by his interest in clay and modelling, this point is further confirmed by his mention of the Blind Man of Gambassi, 'who by the force of touch alone created likenesses in the portraits he shaped in clay'. It is not difficult to find out who Magalotti is talking about as the Blind Man of Gambassi, or Giovanni Gonnelli (1603–1656), as was his actual name, was quite a well-known figure in the period (figure 2.4).[49]

Born in the Tuscan town of Gambassi, Gonnelli trained as sculptor with the Florentine sculptors Chiarissimo Fancelli (d. 1632) and later Pietro Tacca (1577–1640).[50] His talent was discovered by the Gonzaga who invited him to their court in Mantua, though after moving there, he started losing his eyesight. Only several years later, now fully blind, Gonnelli picked up the practice of modelling again, soon staging the kind of novelty act he is known for.

The case is interesting for our discussion, also because sources often thematize the role of the sculptor's hands in the absence of sight. Among the references to Gonnelli made during the sculptor's lifetime we may have a closer look at Michelangelo Lualdi's short biographical sketch of the artist in his *Galleria sacra*, a projected but unfinished literary gallery describing the sights of Rome, compiled before 1645.[51] Lualdi writes how 'the hands, those instruments of the eye, ready executors and trusted ministers of that which the glance commands, by themselves and without the directions of an ingenious pupil, conceive of that which was the domain of the eye'.[52] In the wake of Aristotle and

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48   Letter from Ciro Ferri to Lorenzo Magalotti, dated 30 Septembre 1665, Bergamo, in: Bottari & Ticozzi 1976, vol. 2, 48: 'Io mi confermo col pensiero di vs. illustrissima in quanto che la statua del re di Francia parrà unn pulcino che esca dell'uovo; e non mi posso immaginare perchè non abbia fatta tutta la figura intera'.

49   See most recently Körner 2013. Another blind sculptor, known as the Cieco Palermitano, was active in the beginning of the seventeenth century; cf. Mongitore 1977, 57–58.

50   For a recent overview, see Bellesi 1983–2023.

51   For the dating of the manuscript, see Delbeke 2004, 71.

52   Biblioteca Angelica, Rome (hereafter BAR), ms 1593, fol. 176*r*: 'Che le mani che sono instromento dell'occhio pronte essecutrici e fide ministre di quanto lo sguardo comanda per

Galen, early modern authors generally saw the hand as tool, subjected to the intellect.[53] At times, though, sources suggest a slippage.[54] For Lualdi, the hand does no longer obey the intellect, but the eye – and in the case of Gonnelli, the hand has taken over fully.

Lualdi describes how the blind sculptor took a marble bust of Cosimo I de' Medici and, 'through the sense of touch', impressed the features of the grand duke 'in his memory'; then, 'immediately taking a mass of clay', he recreated the shape 'with all its measures and proportions'.[55] A more extensive account

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se stesse senza direttione della ingegnosa pupilla architettassero quello che era proprio officio degl'occhi'. Cf. Delbeke 2004, 189, who gives a slightly different transcription. For other early references to Gonnelli, see Servio 1642, 58–62; Aurelii 1637, 678–679. A pamphlet in Latin by the same author has been found by Federici 2010, n. 91. The relevant passage in Servio is transcribed by D. Moreni in Baldinucci 1812, 268–270 n. 1. The short biography in Oldoini 1651, 11–12 referred to by Baldinucci follows Aurelii almost wordily. Both include a woodcut portrait of the sculptor, which provides an interesting addition to the discussion regarding his appearance (cf. figure 2.4). For this discussion, see Fitz Darby 1957.

53   Cf. Leinkauf 2017, vol. 1, 148–153.

54   Van Gastel 2013a; Warnke 1987.

55   BAR, ms 1593, fol. 176*v*: 'Osservò col tatto si minutamente tutte le sue parti et in questa guisa si impresse nella memoria le specie [*illegible*] dal simulacro per il contatto, che immediatamente prendendo una massa di creta quella adattò in guisa, che quale era appunto l'effigie della statua di marmo di Cosmo tali con tutte le sue misure e proportioni nella creta si scorse'.

of Gonnelli's working method is found in a much later source, Filippo Baldinucci's *Notitie*, which may be quoted here *in extenso*:

> First, he would arrange his mass of clay, placing it in front of himself on a wheel or table, and, just like that, with his hands he roughly shaped it into a bust and head. And seating the person to be portrayed in front of it and nearby, in such a way that he could easily touch him, he placed his opened hands together, and gently folded them, just as much so that they took the shape of a mask, which he presented to the face of the sitter. In doing so, he gathered, I believe, at once a general knowledge of the height and width of the face, and of the parts standing out [*rilevate*] to a greater or lesser degree. Then he moved his hands apart little by little, while his two thumbs, one towards one side, and one towards the other, would move [over the face] searching, gently touching the lips and the other protruding or hollow parts of the sides of the head that they encountered. After these movements or explorations, both of the whole and the particulars, he would turn to his sculpture, adding an removing clay, and then covering it with the same mask made of his hands; then with his thumbs, and his index fingers, he would start to search again, until he ascertained himself, and as could be seen by the bystanders, that the shape of the person being portrayed started to appear in the clay ...[56]

If the sense of touch is clearly central in this account, the role of the hands is nonetheless varied: they shape, gather, search, explore, add clay, remove it, and, finally, ascertain. Obviously, many of these activities are not exclusive to

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56   Baldinucci 1618–1728, vol. 6, 254–255: 'Accomodava egli primieramente la sua massa di terra, formandone con mano così alla grossa, un busto colla testa d'avanti a se sopra deschetto o tavola: e dato luogo oppostamente ivi vicino a chi doveva essere ritratto, in modo di poterlo toccare a sua comodità, accostava insieme aperte le mani, piegandole gentilmente, tanto quanto avesse potuto formarne come una maschera, la quale egli presentava al viso del suo naturale: con che di primo tratto concepiva, a mio parere, una cognizione universale dell'altezza e larghezza di quella faccia, e delle parti poco o molto rilevate. Disgiungeva poi esse sue mani appoco appoco, mentre le due dita grosse, una verso una parte, una verso l'altra, andavano ricercando e gentilmente toccando le superficie delle labbra e d' altre parti da i lati del volto rilevate o cupe, in cui incontravasi. Dopo ognuno di questi moti o ricercamenti tanto universali, quanto particolari, egli applicavasi alla sua statua, ponendo e levando terra, e poi coprendo colla medesima maschera fatta dalle sue mani, poi colle dita grosse, e cogli due indici tornando a ricercare, finchè si accorgeva, e che vedevano anche gli astanti, che nella sua creta incominciava ad apparir la forma della persona ritratta: alla quale dava tuttavia perfezione col nuovo tatto [in 1812 ed. as 'tratto'] e ricercamento, sempre colle due mani intente all'operazione, una dall'una, ed una dall'altra parte del viso: e questo, cred'io, per mantenere nell'egualità delle due dette parti, e nel tutto, oltre alla somiglianza, anche il buon disegno.'

FIGURE 2.5
Giovanni Gonnelli, *Bust of Pope
Urban VIII*, 1637, terracotta,
Rome, Barberini collection

the blind sculptor. In an oft-discussed letter addressed to Bernini and written
by the *letterato* Lelio Guidiccioni, the latter expresses his amazement at the
manner in which the sculptor moulds the clay with his fingers, wondering
whether he 'carries in his fingers the images … that are to be expressed in the
marble', or that the final forms lay hidden in the marble and he 'reveals them
with the dominion over his hand, which he commands to find them'.[57] Berni-
ni's 'dominion' over his hands suggests that they too are 'docile', like Magalotti's
Portuguese clay. At the same time, however, it implies that they can do most of
the work on their own; it is the hands that 'reveal' the hidden forms.

Things become particularly interesting when we consider Gonnelli's *Bust
of Urban VIII* (figures 2.5, 2.6), modelled not after life, but, as Lualdi writes,

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57   Letter from Lelio Guidiccioni to Gian Lorenzo Bernini, dated 4 June 1633, in: Van
        Gastel 2013b, 217: 'ò Vostra Signoria tenga in punta de dita l'imagini […] per esprimerla sul
        marmo; ò che trovandosi quelle forme virtualmente occultate nell'istesso marmo, Vostra
        Signoria spogliandolo di rozzezze le scope et le faccia uscire fuori con l'imperio della sua
        mano, à cui comanda, che le ritrovi'.

FIGURE 2.6   Gianlorenzo Bernini (workshop), *Bust of Pope Urban VIII*, 1640, marble, Rome, Palazzo Spada

after a marble bust, probably one by Bernini himself.[58] We can imagine how Gonnelli's hands explored the bust, just as described by Baldinucci, thus forging a series of moments of translation – from the life model, to clay, to marble, and back to clay again – where the sense of touch gets an ever more

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58   BAR, ms 1593, fol. 177*r*: 'Questi giunto che fui presa una statua di marmo di N.S. Papa Urbano VIII, con l'istesso artificio del contatto talmente l'espresse nella creta che fattone humilissima offerto di persona a N.S. gli vedde se stesso fuori di se solo da se medesimo diverso a' gl' occhi il colore'.

important role. As recent research in psychology has shown, face recognition is not something solely confined to the sense of sight; in fact, it seems that tactile experiences make a significant contribution to the manner in which we perceive faces.[59] When talking about portrait busts,[60] then – and we have stumbled here upon a few sources that are about modelling faces – we could imagine that the act of modelling itself can make an important contribution to the purely visual exploration of the face.

4   Touching and Being Touched

At this point we will take a step back from the scattered sources presented here and bring a few things together; more in particular, the question is posed what these sources tell us about the relation between the sense of touch and the material of clay, seeking also to shed further light on this relation by discussing some more recent insights regarding the sense of touch. In a now classic essay of 1962, psychologist-philosopher James J. Gibson made an important distinction between passive touch and active touch.[61] Passive touch, here, is the kind of touch that is described by Galileo: 'A solid and, so to speak, very material body, moved and applied to any part of my person produces in me that sensation that we call *touch*'. Active touch, to the contrary, involves the active exploration, often with the hands, of the 'body' that is felt. As Gibson makes clear, in the latter case, more is involved than just the surface of the skin:

> [A]ctive touch involves the concomitant excitation of the receptors in the joints and tendons along with new and changing patterns in the skin. Moreover, when the hand is feeling an object, the movement or angle of each joint from the first phalanx of each finger up to the shoulder and the backbone makes its contribution. And these inputs occur relative to a continuous input from the vestibular organs along with the cutaneous input from contact with the ground. Presumably the feeling of an object by the hand involves the feeling of the position of the fingers, hand, arm, body, and even the head relative to gravity, all being integrated in some hierarchy of positional information.[62]

59   Wallraven 2014; Matsumiya 2013; More generally, Lederman *et al.* 2007.
60   For recognizing individuals in sculpted portraits, see: Van Gastel 2013b, 56–73; Van Gastel 2013c.
61   Gibson 1962. For a more recent overview of the state of research, see Symmons, Richarson & Wuillemin 2004.
62   Gibson 1962, 479.

Clearly, the kind of touch that is relevant for the sculptor is always active touch; no matter whether the artist is engaging a sketch model or polishing a nearly finished marble, touching implies the involvement of the full body.

The act of modelling, however, complicates the distinction made by Gibson. Where he writes that active touch does 'not modify the environment but only the stimuli coming from the environment' this is clearly not true for modelling; that is, modelling is both explorative *and* modifying.[63] If this situation is excluded explicitly by Gibson – and, it may be added, has as it seems not received any attention in the literature since – there are some further interesting insights to be gained from his observations. One important insight concerns that what Gibson calls the 'unity of the phenomenal object', indicating that when the object that is touched by different parts of the skin it is still perceived as a unified whole. Bearing in mind the approach of Gonnelli as described by Baldinucci, it is interesting to note, with Gibson, that '[t]he unitary perception occurs ... even when two separate hands are applied to the object'.[64] This implies that, in the process of modelling, and even in the absence of sight, the artist is aware of the whole of the figure being modelled; there is, in other words, a sense of unity, that, in addition, is complementary to that provided by the sense of sight.[65]

This, however, does not yet inform us of the role of the changeability of the material. 'The literal or proximal stimulus for touch', writes Gibson, 'is some sort of deformation of the skin', an 'elastic change' of its surface.[66] In a way, then, one of the essential prerequisites for the sense of touch is closely related to the material the modelling hand engages. The significance of the elasticity of the human body has come to the fore in what is maybe an unexpected field of research, a field known as 'soft robotics', which draws inspiration from animal and plant tissues for the design of robots.[67] In doing so, it relies on the insight that, as computer scientist Rolf Pfeifer and his colleagues write, 'one of the most important characteristics of soft bodies, is that they can incorporate some of the control or computation into their morphological and material properties'.[68] We may intuitively find a confirmation of this insight if we imagine a robot's attempt to hold an egg without braking it. It is much easier to safely hold the egg with a rubber hand than with a metal hand; rubber will, to a certain extent, adjust automatically to shape of the egg, thus regulating

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63   Ibid., 477.
64   Ibid., 481.
65   For a discussion of the problem of the visual perception of sculpture, see Van Gastel 2014.
66   Gibson 1962, 479.
67   Pfeifer, Lungarella & Iida 2012; Trivedi *et al.* 2008.
68   Pfeifer, Marques & Iida 2013, 7.

the amount of pressure, while at the same time securing a certain amount of grip; to the contrary, the metal hand needs a very precise range of pressure to secure that the egg will neither slip nor break. The owner of the rubber hand, then, can rely on the material of the hand to play a part in adjusting to the environment. Whereas the metal robot needs precise calculation, for the rubber counterpart rougher indications suffice.

There is a fundamental affinity, then, between the body that interacts with the material and the material itself, an affinity that we could call, in the words of philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, an '*adhérence charnelle*' – a 'carnal adherence'.[69] It may be asked to what extent, for the experienced modeller, deformations of the skin, or more generally, of the body, can be distinguished from deformations of the material. How can we define the point of interaction between the 'docile hand' and the 'docile clay'? Archaeologist Lambros Malafouris, in a discussion of what he has significantly coined 'material agency', has argued that clay is 'one of the earliest truly neuro-compatible materials in the history of humanity'. 'Neuro-compatible', he clarifies, 'here refers to materials that afford the flow of noetic activity [that is, activity we usually relegate to the 'mind'] beyond skin and skull thus bridging neural and cultural plasticity'.[70] In other words, not only can agency be situated in the hand, but also in the material of clay itself; a rigid distinction between hand, body and material, between subject and object, seizes to exist. This, however, is only one side of the medal. Continuities between these domains are never so absolute that they can no longer be separated. By virtue of its graininess, but also its viscosity, its humidity, clay always remains other. If, in the activity of modelling, there are moments where it becomes difficult to say if the material responds to the hand or the hand to the material, 'feeling touch' can always be made aware of the points of contact; not withstanding clay's affinities to the body, it can always be made accessible to the sense of touch.

<div align="center">∴</div>

Even if, to return to our initial remarks, Magalotti's intuitions regarding the connections between atomism, clay and touch were, we know now, fallacious, they do help us to understand something of – to refer again to Galilei – the 'earthiness' of the sense of touch. In the complex intertwining of touching, feeling, and shaping, a synagonistic tension comes into being, a tension between hand and matter that, in this tension, incorporates its own feedback loop; creation

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69   Merleau-Ponty 1964, 185; translation from Merleau-Ponty 1968, 142.
70   Malafouris 2008, 22.

is always also to feel the material take on its shape. Conversely, we can imagine the suggestive power of the sculptor's model; the hands engaging the clay, feeling, through touch, at once the building blocks of the universe in its graininess and the creation of form in the shape it takes on. If we can describe, as Baldinucci, the different roles of the hand and the sense of touch, for the sculptor these roles constantly intertwine. As the hands touch and trace, the clay, in the words of one seventeenth-century author, appears to 'take on a shape of its own'.[71]

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71   Imperato & Ferro 1672, 27: 'Lavorasi l'argilla, e da se stessa figurandosi, e pigliando impronti delle figure altrove fatte: e sottrahendo, e giungendo: ne solamente molle, ma secca scalpellata. e li membri separatamente figurati facilmente con l'istessa materia si commettono'.

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Raphael's *Mond Crucifixion* and the Lesson of Santa Maria Novella

Franz Engel

In the *Anthologia Graeca,* we find an epigram by Gaius Lucilius, a poet active in the era of Nero, which celebrates the erection of a statue honoring Apis, an antihero *avant la lettre*: 'His synagonists set up here the statue of Apis the boxer, for he never hurt anyone'.[1]

In the context of Greek-antique athletics, the word *antagonistai* would normally be used in this context, not *synagonistai*.[2] According to the conventions of ancient Greek theater, the *synagonistai* were the combatants who followed the actual protagonists, occupying the second tier. The verb *synagoniso-mai* means 'to engage in struggle/contestation together', as well as 'to follow someone into a battle/contest or action'. In theater competitions, prizes were reserved exclusively for the protagonists, and at times for directors, but never intended for the synagonists.[3] The epigram may refer to a real boxer who never injured anyone, which is tantamount to saying that he never won a match, which is indeed the conventional interpretation.[4] It may, however, have been a memorial for one of those synagonists who, according to tradition, never won a prize, which is to say for an actor, perhaps a shadowboxer, who was finally honored for his achievements thereby.

Up until now, antagonism – competition and rivalry between artists, and imitative gestures designed to surpass works from a shared or even a different genre – has played the primary role as a heuristic principle in the historiography of art, with synagonism, meaning comradely contestation between the arts, being relegated to a subordinate role.[5] Ever since Lodovico

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1   For hints and comments I would like to thank Arnold Nesselrath, Ian Pepper, Alexander Rös-
    tel, Clara Sawatzki, and Tristan Weddigen.
    Anthologia Palatina XI.80; Anthologia Graeca, vol. IV, 111, English translation slightly altered
    by the present author.
2   Robert 1968, 233f.
3   Aneziri 1997, passim; Slater 2015, 148; Slater 1993, 192.
4   Aneziri 1997, 57, with further literature.
5   From the comprehensive literature on the paragone, see Preimesberger 2011; Hessler 2014;
    Pfisterer 2017.

Dolce's *Aretino,* Raphael – as a to some extent constructed, to some extent authentic antithesis to Michelangelo – functioned as paradigmatic of the medium of painting vis à vis sculpture.[6] Both personalities appeared as the culmination of artistic as well as intermedial rivalry.[7]

Not that the heuristic value of antagonism is somehow intrinsically invalid, but a one-sided insistence on it can lead to distortions in our image of an artist and his oeuvre, one that can be corrected and supplemented by a synagonistic approach. While a heuristics of synagonism is not genuinely new, it has never really functioned as an explicit category.[8] In the case of Raphael as well, the task is not simply to write off paragonal approaches, and instead to identify and call attention to existing research on Raphael as a synagonist, including research into Raphael's relationship with sculpture, which upon closer inspection is characterized less by a paragonal dynamic, and more by a comradely competition between the respective media, seen as *arti sorelle*.[9] Correspondences between Andrea Sansovino's *Saint Anne* group and Raphael's fresco of *Isaiah* on the *Altarpiece of Saint Anne* in Sant'Agostino in Rome, for example, are interpreted as a sign of the sought-after unity of sculpture and painting, but at the same time as an early exemplification of paragonal relations.[10]

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6   Pfisterer's recent monograph (2019) considers Raphael primarily from the perspective of competition; see also Kleinbub 2012; Quednau 2019.

7   Goffen 2003; Vahland 2012.

8   After initial use of the keyword 'Mitstreit' (comradely contestation) in Van Gastel, Hadjinicolaou & Rath 2014, Hadjinicolaou first introduced the term 'synagonism' into art history in 2017. Categorizations harbor the danger of schematization, hence a decisive emphasis on heuristics. Nevertheless, the clarity offered by this category might conceivably have proven useful earlier, one example being Hanke's 2009 study of painter-sculptors, which employs the notion of a competition between media in order to elaborate what is actually a synagonistic type of artist who operates in relation to a cooperative relationship between the diverse media. There have already been attempts to render the concept of synagonism productive for political science; see Karagiannis, Wagner 2005; id. 2008.

9   In an epitaph composed on the occasion of Raphael's death, Celio Calcagnini, a humanist scholar and friend of the artist, refers to him first as a veritable sculptor who is said to have fashioned living countenances from marble, and only then as a painter, architect, and conservator of ancient Rome; cf. Shearman 2003, doc. 1520/77, 647; Francisco de Holanda maintained that the famous painter Raphael also taught sculpture and architecture; Shearman 2003, vol. 2, doc. 1548/5, 958–962, here 959f. On Raphael as a sculptor, Gennarelli 1873; Astolfi 1935; Serra 1941, 148–152; Shearman 2003, doc. 1523/10, 749–752; Gardelli 2009.

10   Bonito 1982, 268–270. Recently, however, Boeßenecker 2020, 80–87 and 361–366, has interpreted the Saint Anne Altarpiece in the context of a comradely contestation between the arts.

Like perhaps no other work, the Chigi Chapel in Santa Maria del Popolo should be examined under the sign of synagonistic relations between the media under the direction of Raphael, who not only designed the architecture, but also provided drawings for the statues of Elias and Jonah, which were carved by Lorenzetto, as well as conceiving the cupola with its mosaics, which he had executed by Luigi da Pace.[11] Complementary relations between the media are also manifest in particular in the multiplication of drawn and painted designs through prints and textiles.[12] In these instances as well, Raphael was alert not so much to the superiority of any individual medium, and instead to their reciprocal amplification.

With reference to the usage outlined above, the members of Raphael's workshop can be referred to as *synagonistai*.[13] The *Stanze* in the Pontifical Palace, and in particular the Vatican loggias and the frescoes in the loggia of the Villa Farnesina, are memorials to the kind of synagonism Vasari had in mind when he described how Raphael brought the antagonistic energies of his comrades into harmonious accord:

> Questo è che naturalmente gli artefici nostri, non dico solo i bassi ma quelli che hanno umore d'esser grandi (come di questo umore l'arte ne produce infiniti), lavorando ne l'opere in compagnia di Raffaello stavano uniti e di concordia tale che tutti i mali umori nel veder lui si amorzavano, et ogni vile e basso pensiero cadeva loro di mente. La quale unione mai non fu più in altro tempo che nel suo.[14]

The panorama of synagonistic works by Raphael sketched above encompasses relations between media as well as between artists. The present investigation

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11   On the Cappella Chigi, see Shearman 1961; the Chigi Chapel has often been seen as anticipating the intermedial chapel decorations of the Seicento; Lavin 1980, vol. 1, 24; Kummer 1987, 9.

12   On print works by Raphael and his workshop, see Bloemacher 2016; on the tapestries depicting the Acts of the Apostles, see Weddigen 1998, as well as more recently, Cat. Vatican City 2020.

13   For a recent and extensive discussion of Raphael's workshop, see Nesselrath 2020, 42–105, who attempts to characterize Raphael's work in relation to his workshop, an essentially synagonistic approach.

14   Vite 1568, II, 88; Shearman 2003, vol. 2, 1166. Vasari/de Vere 1996, vol. 1, 746f.: 'which was that our craftsman – I do not mean only the lesser, but also those whose humour it was to be great persons; and of this humour art creates a vast number – while working in company with Raffaello, felt themselves naturally united and in such accord, that all evil humours vanished at the sight of him, and every vile and base thought fell away from their minds. Such unity was never greater at any other time than his'.

focuses not however on these notorious examples, but instead seeks to determine whether the category of synagonism can be rendered productive as well when examining the genesis and impact of a seemingly pure representative of a single media, namely panel painting.

1   The Structure of Light-Dark Contrasts

Until 1808, Raphael's so-called *Mond Crucifixion* – now in the National Gallery in London – remained in its originally intended place of display in the Gavari Chapel of San Domenico in Città di Castello (figure 3.1).[15] The contemporary exhibition situation in the museum betrays few of the difficulties that confronted Raphael when executing the work under the unfavorable conditions of the commission and of the lighting situation of its intended location. The painting is normally displayed in diffuse toplighting (figure 3.2). In most contemporary museums, the lighting arrangement avoids directed in favor of diffuse light, which is distributive uniformly across the painting. Natural light is preferred, and it is scattered via diffusers, for example by opaque glass in skylights. The effect of such diffuse light, however, is not only to deprive objects in space of their plasticity as a consequence of the minimal formation of shadows, but paintings as well.[16]

In the case of the *Mond Crucifixion*, the gallery lighting tends to effect a visual homogenization of the figural ensemble, one that is in turn reversed into its polar opposite by a black-and-white photograph, which shows the original *pietra serena* aedicule frame, still *in situ*, with a copy of the *Gavari*

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15   For the most exhaustive provenance on this work to date, which includes hitherto unexploited source material related to its commissioner, Domenico Gavari, see Henry 2002, 270–274, and id. 2006, 37f.

16   The continuing success story of toplighting as the preferred source of illumination for galleries of paintings begins in the 16th century with Sebastiano Serlio's interpretation of the oculus lighting in the Pantheon, found in his Terzo libro di architettura, about which he claims that it is not only particularly well-suited for illuminating sculptures, but is well-adapted as well to all types of painting (Serlio 1544, fol. v). Inaugurated around the same time in Venice the Palazzo Grimani was the first proper exhibition space configured with toplighting on the model of the Pantheon. With the Tribuna in the Uffizi and the Salon Carré in the Louvre, great museums took up this tradition as well. Adopted for the new building of the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin in the late 1990s as well was the motto 'four walls and toplighting' (Hilmer/Sattler 1998, 40); here, the architects invoked a dictum of the painter Georg Baselitz (1979), and were evidently unaware of the 400-year-old tradition and of an idea deriving from the reception of an antique monument that is inherent in this maxim.

FIGURE 3.1   Raphael, so-called *Mond Crucifixion*, 1503, London, National Gallery
PHOTO: FRANZ ENGEL

Crucifixion put in its original spot and adding the missing altar mensa from
the opposite Brozzi chapel (see figure 3.3).[17] All the same, the black-and-white

17   The photomontage was made by Wolfgang Schöne together with his photographer Fried-
        rich Hewicker in the 1950ies. On a trip to Città di Castello he was able to have placed
        the 19th century copy of the *Gavari Crucifixion* by an anonymous to replace the original
        beginning in 1809 and now preserved in the Pinacoteca Comunale next to the church into
        the original frame (cf. Schöne 1958, 35, illustration 48). I thank Anke Napp for delivering

FIGURE 3.2   Current exhibition view of Raphael's *Mond Crucifixion* in the
               Sainsbury Wing, National Gallery, London
               PHOTO: FRANZ ENGEL

photograph clarifies the light-dark structure on which the painting is based:
somewhat more than half of the semicircular panel is occupied by the bright

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me copies of Schöne's photomontages. Today the frame houses a facsimile of the London
panel which was donated by the Università delle Tre Età, Città di Castello, and printed
by the local company Lino Service. According to Meyer zur Capellen 2000, vol. 1, no. 7,
120–125, 122, beside the above mentioned copy another copy realised by Francesco Oliva
can be found in the church of Battaglia, near Urbino.

sky. The horizon line is identical with the delimitation that separates it from
the darker lower zone. A number of 'warpages' are woven into this bright-
dark structure.[18] Conspicuous at first glance as contrasting within the lower,

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18   According to the terminology used by Johannes Itten in his visual analyses (Itten/Wick
       1988, 135), the term 'warpage' ('Verwerfung') used in the context of the arrangement of

darker zone are Saint Jerome on the left and Mary Magdalene on the right. Identifiable at second glance as more isolated contrasting areas are their hands and feet, as well as those of Mary and John, who stand behind them, along with their paler faces. In the upper zone, the two angels, dark areas on a pale ground, correspond to the contrasts found in the dark zone. And the ribbons that flutter up from their hips can be regarded as corresponding to the isolated contrasts found in the darker zone. Within this light-dark order, the cross is seen as a dark area on a pale ground. This dark area is quite extended, and forms a dark mass that is large enough to accommodate bright contrasts. The body of Christ represents a brighter area that is set on top of a dark contrasting area, which itself resides within a larger bright zone.[19] As a consequence, the figure of Christ is given special emphasis within the larger composition order.

It must not be emphasized that this approach to the painting involves a methodological anachronism. During this period, chiaroscuro painting had barely begun to develop, and it seems dubious to use the category as an analytical resource, to say nothing of having recourse to black-and-white photography. Moreover, this method is hardly adequate to the task of dealing with the iconography of the *Mond Crucifixion*.[20] Yet, the difficulty resides in reinserting the painting imaginatively, and at a distance, into its originally intended place of display, and then evaluating the relationship between the physical lighting at that location and the lighting scheme of the picture itself in relation to potentially synagonistic aspects.

2   The Unavoidable Iconic Situation

The stone frame is located on the south wall to the right in front of the choir (see figure 3.3). The frame and the picture format were predetermined by the specifics of the location, and were in all likelihood not subject to Raphael's

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light and dark within a picture, refers to the compositional distribution of bright spots within dark areas and of dark spots within bright areas.

19   Given the striking differences between this early work and the Transfiguration, Raphael's last painting, it seems all more astonishing that the two display a similar light-dark structure: below, bright figures on a dark ground; above, dark figures on a bright ground, while the backlit apparition of Christ generates dark shadows in the modeling of the figure which, like the dark cross in the Mond Crucifixion, serves as a darker mass for the brighter areas of the face and the white garments.

20   The term 'iconic situation' was coined by Haas in 2015.

artistic preferences.[21] The painting functioned as a counterpart to an altar-
piece located on the north wall opposite, for which Luca Signorelli had painted
a *Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian* in 1494 (today in the Pinacoteca Comunale).[22]
The aedicula that framed it served as a model for the Gavari altarpiece. As
emphasized above, a synagonistic perspective of Raphael's *Mond Crucifixion*
should by no means neglect paragonal elements of relevance to its genesis.
Signorelli had enriched the dramatism of his image with a multiplicity of pro-
tagonists and spectators, as well richly detailed antique and contemporary
architecture. In its renunciation of such narrative accessories, Raphael *Cru-
cifixion* seems almost to invert Signorelli's scene, installed opposite his own.[23]

The altar mensa has not survived. The semicircular arch is carried by two
composite half-columns. Between the blind arch, decorated with palmettes, and
the stone frame, with its 22 heads of cherubs, the wall continues, but appears
as an undecorated strip. The inner stone frame breaches the wall surface, and
is set diagonally within the wall itself. Below, the frame extends to a length of
approximately one head of a putto beyond the lower edge of the panel. This
free space originally accommodated the predella.[24] The relationship between

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21 Shearman 1986, 209, maintains that the frame of the altarpiece too was designed by
     Raphael, and that the altarpiece opposite, containing the panel with the martydom of St.
     Sebastian by Signorelli, was constructed around the painting only subsequently. Shear-
     man argues for the less likely scenario, but his emphasis on Raphael's sensibility for the
     interplay of place, architecture, frame, and painting is shared by the present author. As
     the possible creators of the pietra serena altars, Henry 2006, 44f., proposes the Florentine
     stonemasons Clemente di Taddeo Rinaldi and Geremia di Francesco, who were respon-
     sible for the capitals in the Cathedral of Città di Castello, but also refers to a local tradi-
     tion, which assumes Raphael to be the creator (F. titi, Ammaestramento utile e curioso
     di pittura, scoltura et architettura nelle chiese di Roma, Rome 1686, 439, cited in Henry
     2006, 61, n. 78). Casting doubt on Shearman's scenario, Ambrosini Massari 2019, 18–20,
     calls attention to the circumstance that this type of altar architecture was used not only
     for the main altar, no longer existent, which contained the panel by Francesco Tifernate,
     preserved today in the Pinacoteca Comunale in Città di Castello, but also for two altars in
     Sant'Agostino and San Francesco. This multiplicity of altars of the same type at various
     locations argues against Raphael's authorship, while the reliefs of cherubs suggest artists
     from the circle of Luca della Robbia.

22 A crucial piece of evidence suggesting that Raphael was indeed present in San Domenico,
     and was hence fully aware of the intended place of display of the commissioned painting,
     is a pen and ink drawing of an archer, seen from the back, from Signorelli's Sebastian
     panel (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, inv. P II 501, recto).

23 My thanks to Tristan Weddigen, who introduced the term 'inversion' into a discussion.
     Henry, Plazzotta 2004, 20, had called attention to the fact that after Signorelli left Città di
     Castello in 1496, Raphael probably sought to fill the resulting artistic vacuum on at least
     equal terms.

24 Two predella panels have survived. They show scenes from the life and the works of St.
     Jerome: first, Eusebius awakening three corpses to life (Lisbon, Museu Nacional de Arte

the *pietra serena* frame and the painting is characterized by three aspects: the painting takes up the rhythm created by the interplay of ornamentation and undecorated surfaces, as seen in the relationship between the ribbons of the angels and the sky; the three-dimensional curvature of the columns and the breaching of the wall are paralleled by the plasticity of the foreground figures and the atmospheric depth of the blue sky; and the window-like character of the frame is reinforced by the fact that the painting is not hung *on* the wall, but instead sits deeply *within* it.

The lower horizontal terminus of the stone frame bears an inscription that dates the altar to 1503.[25] And although this date does not necessarily correspond to the date of the crucifixion panel, it is likely that 1503 is the year of its completion.[26] The *Mond Crucifixion* is therefore the first work by Raphael to bear his signature,[27] found in gold letters below the cross: RAPHAEL / VRBIN / AS / P.[28] Considering that with the processional banner for the Confraternity of the Holy Trinity and the altarpiece for the Baronci Chapel in Sant'Agostino, Raphael had completed at least two major works in Città di Castello, it cannot be excluded

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Antiga, inv. 586 Pint.), and secondly St. Jerome Punishing the Heretic Sabinianus (Raleigh, North Carolina Museum of Art, inv. G.65.21.1). A silverpoint drawing in Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (inv. WA1846.153; for reproduction see https://collections.ashmolean .org/object/72187; accessed 1 April 2022) that shows a kneeling saint, his forearms upraised in prayer, is generally regarded as an early study for a figure from the Gavari Crucifixion. If we consider the hatching lines, evidently added after the execution of the figure itself in order to indicate cast shadows, which suggests incident light arriving from the right and casting a shadow on the ground to the figure's left, it appears unlikely that this drawing is indeed a study for the Gavari Crucifixion, since here, the light arrives from the left; cf. Cat. London 2004, 125, cat. no. 28 (Carol Plazzotta).

25   Shearman 2003, 82f., mentions that the date of 1503 found on the stone frame refers to the date of the altar as a whole, and should not be taken automatically as referring to the painting. The case of the main altar in the same church demonstrates that it is entirely possible for a painting to be completed only after the consecration of the altar itself. Until the 18th century, a date of 1504 was legible on the Magalotti Altar, but it is well-documented that Francesco Tifernate completed his Annunciation panel only in 1505–06. The inscription is reproduced in Certini 1728, c. 47r, and is first cited in Mancini 1983, 29; Shearman 2003, 83; Delpriori 2019, 140f.

26   The earliest dating, by Conti 1627, 156, who also proposes the year 1503, is rarely addressed in debates concerning the dating of this work. Conti presumably relies upon the inscription on the altar, but perhaps, writing 120 years after the panel's creation, he had access to other sources as well. Conti's *Fiori vaghi* constitutes an important source; among other things, the Gonfalone panel is attributed to Raphael for the first time (179); it is missing from the bibliography in Shearman 2003.

27   It may be that Raphael omitted the date from his signature because it was already inscribed on the altar; a year later, he inscribed the date prominently under his name on the temple in the background of the Sposalizio panel. The relative chronology prior to the Sposalizio also corresponds to the information in Vasari.

28   Cf. Shearman 2003, vol. 1, doc. 1503/3, 82f.

that the act of appending his signature indicated that he regarded this paint-
ing as achieving something unattained previously, which would then give the
work the status within his oeuvre of a kind of 'Opus 1'.

The current and rather austere impression of the interior of the single-nave
church, with its simple, whitewashed walls, does not correspond to what
we know of its original appearance in the early 15th century (see figure 3.4).
Like so many churches, San Domenico was redesigned in the Baroque style
during the early 18th century, its Gothic windows walled up, and altogether
twenty-two altars erected along the sidewalls.[29] All the same, the *Brozzi Altar*,
like the *Gavari Altar*, with panels by Signorelli and Raphael, remained *in situ*
unaltered. Only in 1912 – on the initiative of Giacinto Faeti, a priest in Città di
Castello, and marking the 600th anniversary of the death of Blessed Margaret,
whose relics were preserved in the church – did the church assumed its pres-
ent appearance (see figure 3.5).[30] As with all such cases, a reconstruction of
the original iconic situation of the *Gavari Crucifixion* is subject to the principle
that a return to an 'original' state is a realized fiction, one whose constructed
aspects must be made explicit in scholarly contexts. The stained-glass win-
dows are not original, for example, but the incidence of light does correspond
to the situation in the early 16th century.[31]

The choir of San Domenico is shaped by the main choir chapel, with its
rectangular terminus, as well as by the two half-sized chapels at the sides of the
choir (see figure 3.6). The rear walls of both chapels are broken by tall, Gothic
bifora windows (see figure 3.4). There are also smaller windows set along the

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29   Ascani 1963, 44f.

30   Ibid., 49–55; the photo on p. 51 (here figure 3.5) shows the state of construction work in
      1913: Baroque altars are still visible in the three choir chapels, although it is clear that the
      primary light falling from the right-hand side choir window and onto the Gavari Crucifix-
      ion was blocked by the altar. During the 'de-Baroquification' of the church, a number of
      mid-15th century frescoes reemerged to light on the sidewalls (Salmi 1920), among them
      a Crucifixion that includes the Good and Bad Thieves, its narrative character contrast-
      ing markedly with Raphael's version, with its emphasis on the devotional aspect and the
      exclusion of anecdotal detail.

31   The parameters for documenting a concrete iconic situation cannot be fixed in advance,
      but must be determined on a case to case basis. The lighting conditions of a restored
      medieval church interior are highly complex and difficult to evaluate, consisting – like
      those in San Domenico – of a mixture of directed and diffuse light sources, and are more-
      over dependent upon the time of day. In order to school one's vision, it would be helpful
      in the future to compile empirical data on location in collaboration with experts in nat-
      ural light, with the aim of comparing our subjective impressions of a specific timeframe
      with objective data. In any event, the key question is: At what point, and at what level
      of intensity do the in situ lighting conditions become relevant to the depicted lighting
      situation, and perhaps even semantically relevant?

Città di Castello - Chiesa di S Domenico · Interno.

FIGURE 3.4   Interior view of San Domenico, Città di Castello, postcard, *c.*1950s. Diakartei,
            Kasten 6905, Malerei Italien 16. Jhf. Raffael II, Tafelbilder 2, Altäre
            PHOTO: HISTORISCHE BILDARCHIVE, KUNSTGESCHICHTLICHE SEMINAR,
            UNIVERSITÄT HAMBURG

sidewalls of the nave, but the primary light entering the Gavari Chapel comes
from the choir.[32] In this respect, Raphael's use of leaf gold to depict the sun
produces a lighting effect that can only hardly be perceived by looking at the
reproduction. Even in front of the painting one has to find a position in which
the gold reflects. Then the remarkable effect occurs that the sun seems to shine
not from behind but as if shining from high above from the spectator's side
onto the panel and thus reinforcing (in the original situation) the choir light
coming from left.

    Not only was this lighting situation taken up in the shadowing and model-
ing of the individual figures. The suggested window situation also means that
the light of the choir strongly illuminates the three foreground figures, namely
Christ, Jerome, and Mary Magdalene – all three presented obliquely, and more-
over in poses that display torsion – while Mary and John occupy a second reg-
ister that is penetrated by this light only indirectly, as suggested by the slanting

32   Traeger 1997, 294, in one of the few attempts to characterize the original lighting situ-
      ation, also concludes that the main light arrives from the choir, and elevates its signif-
      icance to the semantic level, arguing that Raphael defines the lighting situation of the
      choir symbolically.
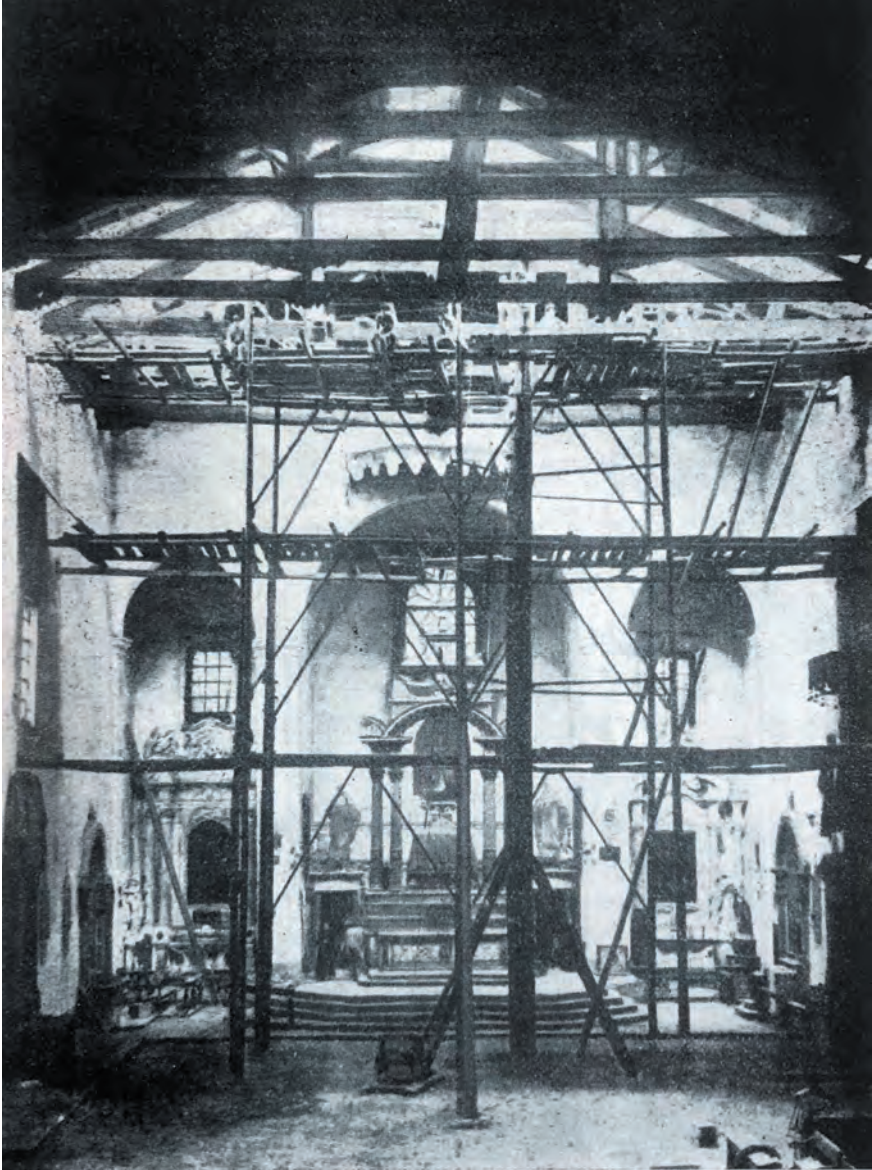
FIGURE 3.5   Interior view of San Domenico, Città di Castello, construction site 1913
PHOTO: ASCANI 1963, 51

shadows they cast on the ground. Compositionally, the lighting scheme results
in a pyramidal configuration, although this is not immediately evident due to
the oval arrangement of the figures. The lighting deemphasizes the oval dispo-
sition of the figures, countering it by emphasizing the triangular arrangement
of the three foreground figures.
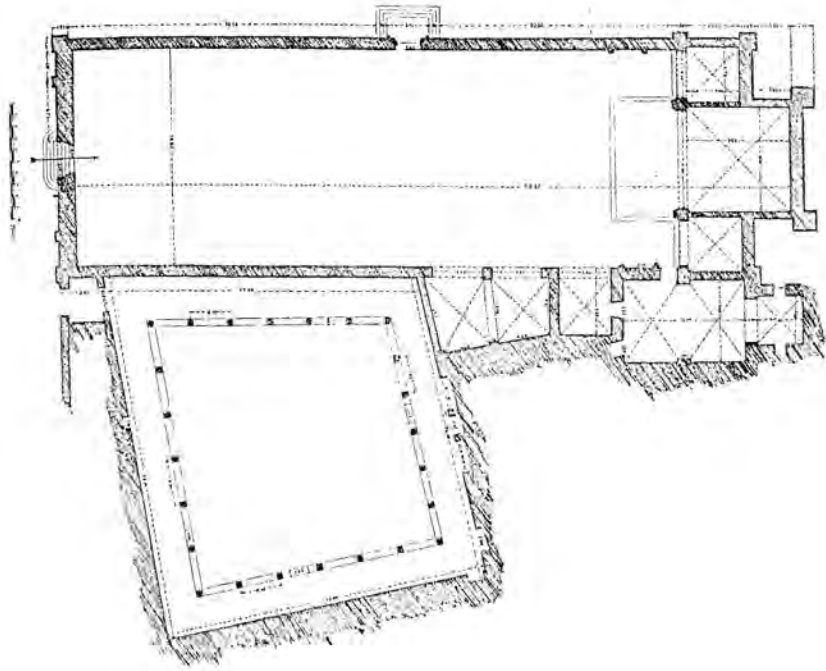
FIGURE 3.6   Plan of San Domenico, Città di Castello
ILLUSTRATION: TARCHI 1940, PL. CCVII

From textual sources, we know that later in life, Raphael set great store by a precise knowledge of the framing conditions of a given work, in particular the lighting. While composing his *Cortegiano* (1514–16), Castiglione sent a letter from Urbino to Isabella d'Este in Mantua, who had requested a painting by Raphael, and had moreover requested Castiglione's mediation. Castiglione conveys the gratifying news that Raphael has accepted the commission, and will soon begin work, but has requested certain information beforehand: 'Hora, per confirmatione di questo, pur mi scrive ch'io li mandi la mesura del quadro et il lume, perché presto pensa dargli principio'.[33]

That a painting appears to its best advantage only in natural light is maintained, finally, by the count in Castiglione's *Cortegiano* in a comparison that is made in passing, but whose casual nature makes it all the more telling, since it is clearly proffered as a commonplace: the ideal courtier, he says, achieves the full impact of his spoken or written words to the extent that they are fitting,

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33   Shearman 2003, document 1515/11, 216. 'Now, in confirming this, he [Raphael] also writes that I should send him the picture's measurements and the lighting [situation], since he wants to start work soon' (translation by the author).

FIGURE 3.7   Gavari Chapel, San Domenico, Città di Castello, seen from the right choir chapel
PHOTO: FRANZ ENGEL

well-chosen, brilliant, and delivered in a well-composed fashion, 'come tavole di pittura poste al suo bono e natural lume'.[34]

    If the beholder stands in the middle of the right-hand choir chapel with the light of the window behind him and looks at the painting, the left-hand column of the aedicule obscures Mary and Jerome, and it becomes clear that the strongest light reaches Mary Magdalene (see figure 3.7). Raphael incorporated

34   Cortegiano I.33; Castiglione/Barbaris 2017, 73. '[L]ike paintings displayed in good, natural light' (translation by the author).

this nuance into his lighting scheme, selecting the colors of the garments in such a way that the left-hand side figures – attired mainly in gray and black – appear darker in decreasing sidelight then the figures on the right.[35] Raphael's situative imagination extends to the rendering of the landscape: the identity of the town in the background has been disputed, but there is unanimous agreement that the river is the Tiber, which would – were views through the sides of the houses and the city walls possible – meander toward the south, as imagined by Raphael.[36]

The contract for the Gavari panel has not survived. But we do know that on 10 September 1502, Perugino received a commission for a painting that would serve as a backdrop for the life-sized crucifix in the church of the Franciscan Convent of Monteripido (S. Francesco al Monte) in Perugia (figure 3.8). The commission was completed only in 1504, accounting for the lack of clarity concerning the relative chronology of the *Gavari Crucifixion*.[37] The numerous similarities between the compositions make it unlikely that neither artist was aware of the other's work. The contract for the *Pala di Monteripido* mentions the number of figures, but makes no reference to an already existing composition by Raphael. In Perugino's panel, the figures form an upright oval, but Mary and John do not retreat into the shadows of the second row as they do in Raphael's panel, and instead seem to crowd into the foreground, an effect reinforced by the fact that they are barely reduced in size in relation to the kneeling figures of Mary Magdalene and St. Francis, as actually required by the perspectival scheme.

In the commission for the Gavari Chapel, the margin of artistic freedom is highly restricted: Raphael was to deliver a painted *Crucifixion*, in accordance (presumably) with a Peruginesque schema, which would then serve as a pendant to Luca Signorelli's *Sebastian* panel, and would moreover occupy a predetermined and somewhat dark location with sidelight at a prescribed height and in a stipulated framing architecture. It seems odd that this should have been the first work Raphael actually signed, for in this situation, he is far from being truly himself. But instead of so to speak painting in opposition to this constraining situation, Raphael reversed the polarity, intensifying these constraints even further, treating the site, and in particular the lighting conditions,

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35   See the conservation report with information about the pigments used, Roy, Spring, Plazzotta 2004.

36   Ambrosini Massari 2019, 55; on the landscape, and also the landscapes in the predella panels, see Pope-Hennessy 1970, 83.

37   Hiller von Gaertringen 1999, 46–54; the contract with Perugino is published in Sarnecka 2014, 209, 227, n. 3.
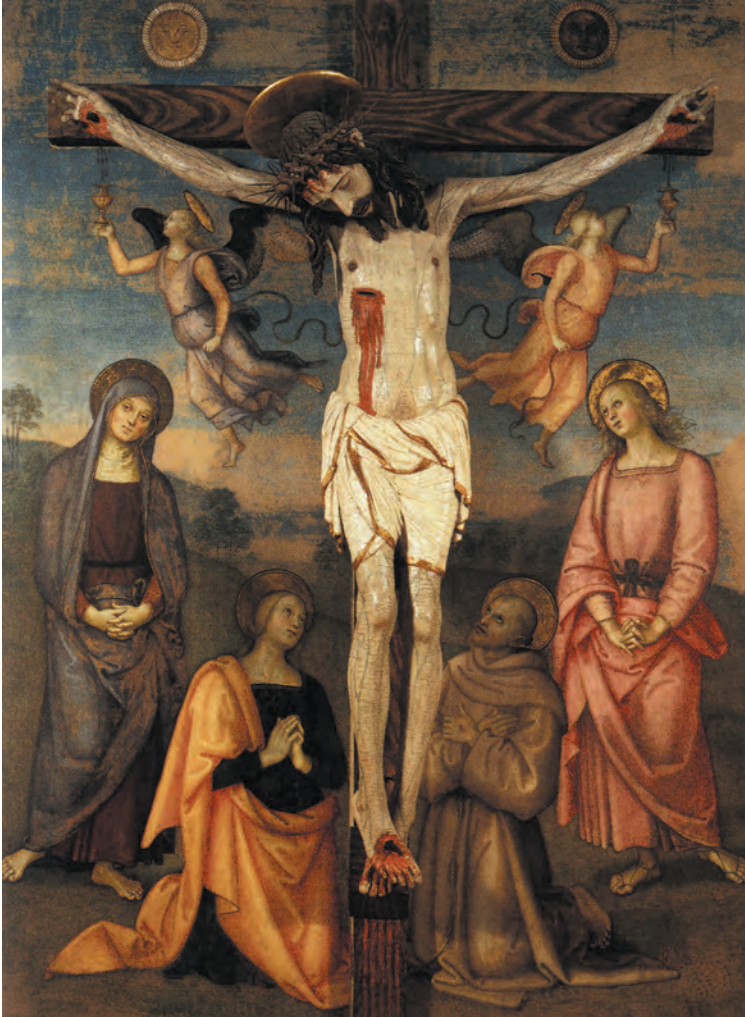
as guiding the iconic form, thereby transforming the situative compulsions not
into antagonistic factors, but instead into comrades in arms, into synagonists.

3   The *Unione del Colore* as the Synagonism of Color and Light

During his early years as an artist, it cannot have escaped Raphael that through
the principle of *chiaroscuro*, Leonardo had given contemporary painting a

radically new turn, in particular regarding color.[38] Leonardo believed that the homogenous impression of an iconic situation, as conditioned by the lighting scheme, could be generated only by sacrificing and muting local color.[39] In the late 15th century, as a result, he placed color in a paradoxical position: light is the precondition for the appearance and perception of color; as soon, however, as one or multiple light sources within a painting come to shape its luminous over-all appearance, the individual colors must submit to the 'dictates' of light. In general terms, we can say that in painting, it is to begin with the colors that are the medium for representing light. Leonardo's achievement consisted in the reversal of this principle; he made *chiaroscuro* the real basis of the work's appearance, and light and shade the operative engine of the appearance of the colors.

The difficulty of adapting the individual colors to a unified lighting scheme within the picture resides in the fact that the individual colors behave differently in relation to varied light intensity. A fully saturated red, for example, appears black in dark lighting, while the same red, applied more thinly, tends toward gray when viewed in the same lighting. And while the scale of tonal values of an individual color such as red in a given lighting situation does not behave precisely in accordance with the increase or decrease of light intensity, there is an additional problem as well: brighter colors such as yellow have a narrower tonal range. In his painting, Leonardo advocated the view that the individual character of one color could only be brought into harmony with the other colors by subduing it.

Under the conditions covered by *chiaroscuro*, the individual colors have so to speak no individual voice, and can no longer govern their own mode of appearance. The notion of an *amicizia dei colori*, still manifested for Alberti by each color presenting itself in its individual valence in relation to the others, was later disparaged by Vasari with reference to the 'colorful carpet' of the Quattrocento, and would ultimately be supplanted by Leonardo through the *unione del colore*, the achievement of unity by integrating every point on the picture surface into a unified lighting scheme.

In contrast, it is assumed with justice that Raphael consistently strove to assert the individual valence of the colors, their 'chromatic individuation',[40]

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38   Although Raphael's presence in Florence prior to 1504 has not been documented, it still remains possible that he was indeed there earlier, as argued again most recently by Nova 2020, 423. In his Vita (XXI.XCI.374) of Federico di Montefeltro, Giovanni Santi, Raphael's father, numbers Leonardo among the most important painters of the time: Santi/Michelini Tocci 1985, 674. Like Leonardo, Perugino had studied with Verrocchio, and he opened a second workshop in Florence in 1493, the same year during which he married Chiara, the daughter of the architect Luca Fancelli. A visit by Raphael to his teacher there cannot be ruled out.

39   For an extensive discussion of this issue, see Shearman 1962, as well as Wagner 1999, 375–378, upon which I rely in the following.

40   Henning 2005, 11f.

under luminous conditions. In the *Mond Crucifixion*, Raphael demonstrates this by juxtaposing an ostentatious *chiaroscuro* alongside a becalmed surface of almost pure color, which is not however obtrusive in the concrete on-site lighting situation, and instead achieves an astonishing luminous equilibrium. In the deep shadowed areas, Mary Magdalene's overgarment is set in black (figure 3.9). Its purple appears fully saturated only in a few transitional areas that lead toward those heightened with white. On the ridges of this pinkish-white, Raphael applies isolated pale-yellow streaks. The robe worn by Mary Magdalene traverses an extreme gamut from purple to white, and even yellow heightening, on the one hand, and toward black shadows on the other. At times, it is difficult to decide how these shifting tones are to be perceived, whether it is a question of the depiction of a varicolored fabric, or whether subsidiary tones have been interspersed within a basic color in order to heighten the effectiveness of the light.[41] In light of the iconic situation of the *Mond Crucifixion*, however, it quickly becomes clear that the *cangianti* of Mary Magdalene is owed to concerns with visual effects, not representational concerns.[42]

FIGURE 3.9   Raphael, so-called *Mond Crucifixion*, detail
              PHOTO: FRANZ ENGEL

41   On *cangiantismo* in particular in Michelangelo, see Hall 1992, 95, 123–129; Weil-Garris Brandt 1994.
42   With the benefit of the original iconic situation, it seems possible that Hall 1992, 108, would not have perceived the cangiantismo in the Mond Crucifixion as being 'harsh and abrupt'.

The same purple worn by Mary Magdalene is also worn by the figure of John behind her, who stands in a semi-shadowed zone. The purple of his cloak is for the most part fully saturated, and achieves its full impact in combination with the green of his undergarment. It is here that the concrete illumination of the painting has a powerful impact in determining how the two figures relate to one another. In the bright, diffuse light of the National Gallery, they seem less disparate: the extreme chromatic-tonal range becomes attenuated, while the more directed light of the church heightens the extremes, effecting an almost three-dimensional dissociation of Mary Magdalene from John. This analysis could be extended to encompass the entire picture, but it should already be clear at this point that with this painting, Raphael may have sought to demonstrate that a Leonardesque *chiaroscuro* need not necessarily nullify the individual valence of fully saturated colors, that an interplay between the two modes is indeed possible.

It is the analysis and comparison of pictures that constitutes the initial source for this synagonism between light and color, which can however also be supported by textual sources. An early textual testimonial is provided by Castiglione through a simile that compares the balancing and calibration of the at times competing virtues governing the comportment of the ideal courtier with the art of a good painter who knows how to use light and shadow in relation to various colors in such a way that no individual color is predominant, but instead, each is reinforced and its impact by the others:

> [I]n ogni operazion sempre una virtú è la principale; ma tutte sono talmente tra sé concatenate, che vanno ad un fine e ad ogni effetto tutte possono concorrere e servire. Però bisogna che sappia valersene, e per lo paragone e quasi contrarietà dell'una talor far che l'altra sia piú chiaramente conosciuta, come i boni pittori, i quali con l'ombra fanno apparere e mostrano i lumi de' rilevi, e cosí col lume profundano l'ombre dei piani e compagnano i colori diversi insieme di modo, che per quella diversità l'uno e l'altro meglio si dimostra, e 'l posar delle figure contrario l'una all'altra le aiuta a far quell'officio che è intenzion del pittore.[43]

43 Cortegiano II,7; Castiglione/Barberis 2017, 128; Castiglione/Singleton 2002, 71: '[E]ven though in every act one virtue is chief, still all the virtues are so conjoined as to move toward the same end, informing every effect and furthering it. Hence, he [the courtier] must know how to avail himself of them and, by the test and, as it were, the opposition of the one, cause another to be more manifestly known; as good painters who, by their use of shadow, manage to throw the light of objects into relief, and, likewise, by their use of light, to deepen the shadows of planes and bring different colors together so that all are made more apparent through the contrast of one with another; and the placing of figures in opposition one to another helps them achieve their aim'.

Vasari would present such a synagonism between *chiaroscuro* and color for the purposes of unifying a picture's overall impression under the term 'unione del colore' or 'unione del colorito' in a systematic way. His principle example was the painting of Raphael. Vasari's definition of this *unione* invokes musical terms, and its very structure is synagonistic: 'Lunione nella pittura è una discordanza di colori diversi accordati insieme'.[44]

4   Classical Clarity of Contour versus Defective Chiaroscuro

While Raphael profited on the whole from Vasari's effusive reception, perceptions of the *Gavari Crucifixion* suffered from the writer's dictum according to which the painting would have been taken for a Perugino had Raphael not inscribed his name below the cross.[45] Only with the *Sposalizio* from San Francesco did Raphael cast off Perugino's *maniera* by means of a finesse that

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44   Vasari 1568, 1.48; Vasari/Bettarini/Barocchi 1966, vol. 1, 124; 'Unity in painting is the discordance of diverse colours tuned together' (translation by the author); cf. Wagner 1999, 375.

45   Vasari/Bettarini/Barocchi 1966, vol. 4, 158: 'È cosa notabilissima che, studiando Raffaello la maniera di Pietro, la imitò così a punto e in tutte le cose, che i suoi ritratti non si conoscevano dagl'originali del maestro, e fra le cose sue e di Pietro non si sapeva certo discernere, come apertamente dimostrano ancora in San Francesco di Perugia alcune figure che egli vi lavorò in una tavola a olio per madonna Madalena degli Oddi; e ciò sono: una Nostra Donna assunta in cielo e Gesù Cristo che la corona, e di sotto, intorno al sepolcro, sono i dodici Apostoli che contemplano la gloria celeste; e a piè della tavola, in una predella di figure piccole spartite in tre storie, è la Nostra Donna annunziata dall'Angelo, quando i Magi adorano Cristo, e quando nel tempio è in braccio a Simeone: la quale opera certo è fatta con estrema diligenza; e chi non avesse in pratica la maniera, crederebbe fermamente che ella fusse di mano di Pietro, là dove ell'è senza dubbio di mano di Raffaello'. Vasari/de Vere 1996, vol. 1, 711f.: 'It is a very notable thing that Raffaello, studying the manner of Pietro, imitated it in every respect so closely, that his copies could not be distinguished from his master's originals, and it was not possible to see any clear difference between his works and Pietro's; as is still evident from some figures in a panel in S. Francesco at Perugia, which he executed in oils for Madonna Maddalena degli Oddi. These are a Madonna who has risen into Heaven, with Jesus Christ crowning her, while below, round the sepulcher, are the Twelve Apostles, contemplating the Celestial Glory, and at the foot of the panel is predella divided into three scenes, painted with little figures, of the Madonna receiving the Annunciation from the Angel, of the Magi adoring Christ, and of Christ in the arms of Simeon in the Temple. This work is executed with truly supreme diligence; and one who had not a good knowledge of the two manners, would hold it as certain that it is by the hand of Pietro, whereas it is without a doubt by the hand of Raffaello'.

focuses on essentials. Without considering the iconic appearance of the *Cruci-fixion*, Vasari has recourse to a paragonal model of development according to which harbored in every imitative effort – whether covertly or apparently – is a striving to overcome the imitated model. Vasari provides no description of the work's composition or in-situ impact. Meanwhile, the topoi of catching up with and overcoming competitors typify considerations of Raphael's early altarpieces. The *Mond Crucifixion* and the *Sposalizio* in particular are often considered in light of Raphael's zealous rivalry with Perugino,[46] even in analyses that attempt to present a Raphael 'without Vasari'.[47]

Only rarely do the sources mention the painting before its removal from the Church of San Domenico in 1808, and then never with reference to its appearance in situ, but instead as part of a list of objects worth viewing.[48] Johann David Passavant, the author of the first Raphael monograph, never saw the *Gavari Crucifixion* in situ, but instead, like Rumohr, in the collection of Cardinal Fesch in Rome.[49] As he emphasizes, Passavant printed the first engraving of the *Gavari Crucifixion* (figure 3.10). Although the black-and-white medium of engraving would have made possible a focus on light-dark relationships, the engraver, Ludwig Gruner, did not prove very sensitive to the work's luminous qualities. Only the figure of Jerome possesses anything resembling the

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46   Brown 1992, 30.

47   Recently, Pfisterer 2019 attempts to solve the 'Vasari problem' (p. 12) – which amounts to the difficulty of knowing when to take him seriously as a source, and when to reject him for propagating fables – by simply ignoring the writer in the hope that a Raphael 'without Vasari' will yield a fresh perspective onto his pictures. In the case of the Mond Crucifixion, which is taken up in the context of a paragone with Perugino (p. 32), it becomes clear just how deeply rooted Vasari's point of view has become. In an overview of motivic sources for the Mond Crucifixion, Hiller von Gaertringen 1999, 46–54 considers paintings by Perugino exclusively.

48   The first mention is by Conti 1627, 156: 'In questa Chiesa di S. Domenico, oltre l'altre belle pitture, vi è vna Tauola d'vn Crocifisso sopra l'Altare, dell'Eccell. pittore Raffaello da Vrbino nel 1503. & vn'altra per rincontro di vn S. Bastiano di Luca Signorelli da Cortona, nel 1497'. As mentioned above, Conti situates the painting across from Signorelli's panel of St. Sebastian, and dates it to 1503. A collocation that is no longer reconstructable today 'sotto all'Organo in S. Domenico' ('beneath the organ in San Domenico') appears in Lazzari 1693/1975, 286. As mentioned above, the church was redesigned in the Baroque style during the 18th century. According to Ascani 1963, 51, an organ in the main apse was demolished during restoration work undertaken in the early 20th century. I was unable to discover whether an organ once existed in the right-hand side choir chapel, or even closer to the Gavari Chapel.

49   Passavant 1839, vol. 2, 12f., cat. no. 7; engraving by Ludwig Gruner, pl. VI.
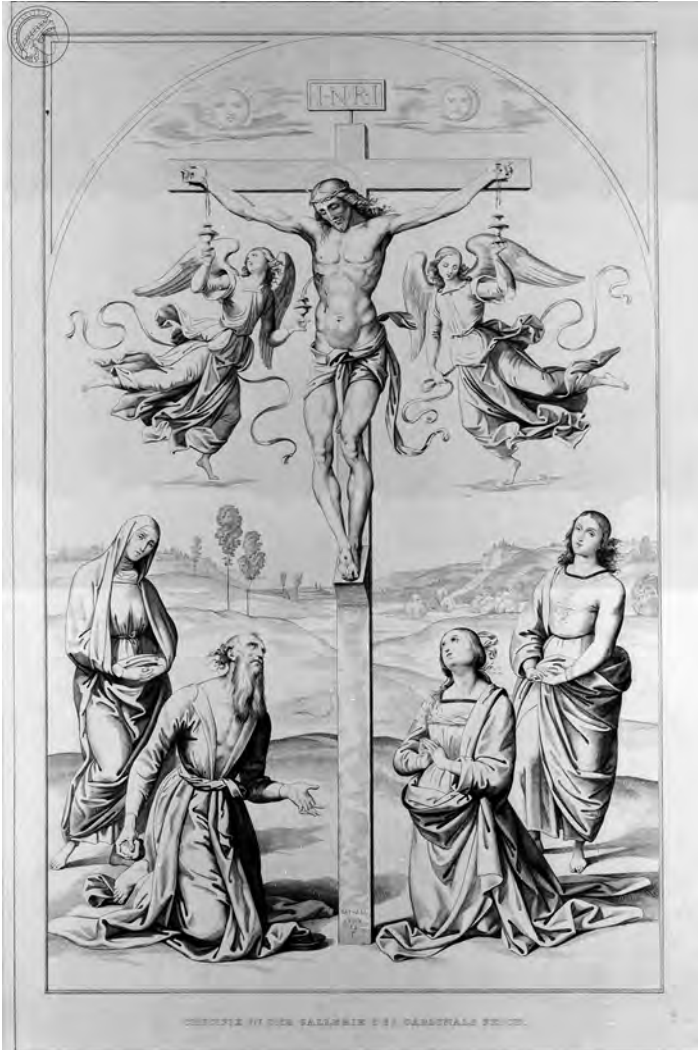
FIGURE 3.10   Ludwig Gruner, Raphael's *Gavari Crucifixion*, engraving, 1839
                        ILLUSTRATION: PASSAVANT 1839, PL. VI

contrast he creates in the painting. On the contrary, the originally dark cross is
brightly illuminated, and the rear register, consisting of the two angels, Mary,
and John, is modeled in the same way as the frontmost register. Gruner creates
a uniform oval whose dark areas contrast with the bright background. Through
the concise clarity of his contours, he gives his figures an almost haptic volume,

while nonetheless trivializing the composition through its reduction to a geometric-symmetrical distribution of figures on the picture surface.

Gruner, who will have executed his print in consultation with Passavant, perhaps echoes Anton Raphael Mengs's harsh criticism of Raphael's use of *chiaroscuro*. Mengs had studied Raphael thoroughly during a stay in Italy in 1741–44, to some extent copying him, and in particular adapting him in a classicizing way, which is to say, purging him of chiaroscuro and effects of *cangianti*, which he – although a fervent admirer of Raphael – regarded as errors. Through his harsh criticism, aimed primarily at the *Transfiguration*, but also presumably valid for the *Gavari Crucifixion*,[50] Mengs does however emerge as a precise observer:

> Raphaels System bei seinen Gemälden bestand darin, dass er seine his-torischen Gegenstände und seine Gründe dadurch hervorheben wollte, dass er alle Figuren gleichsam weiss bekleidete. Nach diesem Grundsatze hatte er die ersten Lichter an die Stellen vertheilt, wo sie seiner Meinung nach seyn mussten, und von da aus liess er sie sodann stufenweise bis in die weiteste Entfernung abnehmen; man sieht deshalb auf dem Vorder-grund seiner Gemälde meistens weisse oder gelblichte Gewänder. ... Ein weiteres fehlerhaftes Princip an Raphael war es, dass er auf der Stelle, wo das Gewand seiner Natur nach von reiner Farbe seyn sollte, ein gleich helles Licht verbreitete ... So werden die Farben bei den lichten Stellen bis zum höchsten Weiss erhöht, während sie bei den schattigen bis zum tiefsten Schwarz versinken. Dasselbe beobachtete er bei den dunkeln Stellen; den stärksten Nachdruck brachte er vorne an, und von da an ging er sodann stufenweise zu den lichteren über. Diese Methode entsprach seinem Geschmack besonders, weil sie die Gegenstände erhabener darstellt und kräftiger wirkt, als irgend ein anderes Mittel, indem den vor-deren Partien der stärkste Schatten verliehen ist. Allein dieses Verfahren erzeugt Widernatürliches, Unwahres.[51]

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50   Whether Mengs ever saw the *Gavari Crucifixion* in situ has never been determined.

51   Mengs 1843, 132f. 'Raphael's system in his paintings consists in striving to emphasize his historical objects and their causes by cladding all of his figures, so to speak, in white. According to this principle, he then distributes the first highlights at those places where, in his view, they needed to be, and from this point, allows them to diminish stepwise into the furthest distance; it is for this reason that we see mostly white or pale yellow garments in the foreground of his paintings ... A further faulty principle adopted by Raphael was the application of bright highlights to those parts of the garments that, according to their

At least initially, Rumohr too joined the chorus of voices that regarded Raphael as the prototype of the competitive imitator who aspired in the spirit of Winckelmann's classic ideal to achieve the inimitable through imitation.[52] Rumohr was aware of the danger that the local colors, if applied incorrectly, could disrupt the luminous unity of the picture. He characterizes this problem with reference to a discussion of flesh tones in Raphael:

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nature, ought to be in pure colors ... In the brighter areas, the colors are heightened to the point of the brightest white, while sinking in the shadowed areas to deepest black. He did the same in the dark areas; the strongest emphasis is applied at the frontmost areas, from which point he proceeds stepwise to the highlights. This method corresponds to his taste, in particular because it allows objects to appear more noble and powerful than would be possible with other means, since the frontmost parts are given the strongest shadows. This procedure alone generates things that are unnatural, untruthful'. Translation by Ian Pepper. In another passage ('Über Schönheit und guten Geschmack in der Malerei, Dritter Theil. Beispiele des guten Geschmacks'; ibid., 231), Mengs finds fault with Raphael's painting on similar grounds.

52   Rumohr 1831, 15f.: 'Das erste, was hier auffällt, ist jenes an Nachahmung grenzende sich Anschmiegen an Vorbilder, welche im Laufe seines [Raffaels] Jugendlebens ihm sich dargeboten haben, besonders an Pietro Perugino, welcher, seit Vasari, für Raphaels Lehrmeister galt. Diese Erscheinung indeß kann nur auf den ersten Blick befremden, da es bey näherer Untersuchung sich zeigt, daß dem Lehrling, Schüler und Gehülfen im alten Sinne des Wortes die Kunst und Art des Meisters für einige Zeit der Gegenstand war, den er vor anderen ins Auge faßte, wetteifernd zu erreichen, man könnte sagen, darzustellen strebte. Daß Raphael hierin es weiter gebracht als, selbst den Spagna nicht ausgenommen, alle übrigen Schüler und Gesellen des Perugino, begründet demnach keinen Einwurf. Zudem zeigt sich gerade in seinen frühesten Arbeiten viel unabhängiges Urtheil; denn das Einzelne, der ganzen Zusammenstellung Untergeordnete, ist darin häufig durch Vergleichungen mit dem Leben verbessert, zu gleichgültigen oder ganz widrigen Manieren des Meisters ausgewichen, so daß man sagen dürfte, Raphael habe in den Arbeiten der bezeichneten Art den Perugino zugleich erreicht und übertroffen'. – 'The first thing that becomes noticeable is a clinging to models that approaches imitation, particularly models available to him during his youth, in particular Pietro Perugino, who has been regarded as Raphael's teacher since Vasari. This appearance may seem disconcerting at first glance, but upon closer examination we realize that the apprentice, student, and assistant in the older sense of the word, took the art and the manner of his master for his subject for a period of time, allowing it to occupy his attention more than others, striving competitively to equal it, striving to duplicate it, so to speak. That Raphael achieved more in this regard than any other student or apprentice of Perugino, not excepting even Lo Spagna, is accordingly no grounds for reproach. His earliest works, moreover, display much independent judgment; for the individual element, which is subordinate to the larger composition, is often enhanced through comparisons with real life, thereby avoiding the indifferent or even repugnant manner of the master, allowing us to say that in his works, Raphael simultaneously equals and surpasses the characteristic manner of Perugino'. Translation by Ian Pepper.

> In der Bildnerey beruhet die Darstellung auf einer gewandten Hand-
> habung reeller Formen. Da nun hingegen die Malerey des bloßen
> Anscheines von Formen sich bedient, welchen sie künstlich auf einer
> Fläche hervorruft, so muß einleuchtend in ihr jegliches der Apparenz
> Entgegenwirkende, oder sie Aufhebende, sehr ernstlich zu vermeiden
> seyn. Dahin gehören Localtöne, welche durch eine ungehörige Farbe,
> durch zu viel Dunkelheit oder Helle, Zusammenhängendes durchschnei-
> den, also, was als Form erscheinen soll, in Flecke verwandeln. Dieses
> Gesetzes gewärtig suchte Raphael den Localton des Haares durch dessen
> Helligkeit mit dem Hauptlichte der Stirne in Zusammenhang zu brin-
> gen, die Lichtparthien seiner Gewänder, ohne linearische Schönheiten
> zu vernichten, mit Anmuth in breitere Flächen zu vereinigen, Eindrücke
> und Vertiefungen durch sanfte Uebergänge in die anstoßenden Lichter
> zu verschmelzen.[53]

If classicizing critiques of Raphael's use of light and color seemed guided to an
excessive degree by the aesthetic preferences of the authors, then they none-
theless give voice to a sensibility for a luminous-coloristic problem that is per-
ceived, albeit without being understood. They therefore go further than many
later interpretations that perceive primarily linear principles in the *Mond
Crucifixion*, or instead even a kind of calligraphism.[54] It was only Christoph
Wagner who again conceived of the *Mond Crucifixion* as a coloristic problem,
perceiving it however as a paradigmatic example of a 'polychoral [spaltklangli-
che] color composition consisting of independent local colors and character-
ized by varicolored [wechselfarbige] symmetries and chromatic repetitions'.[55]

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53 Ibid., 20f. 'In painting, the depiction is based on the skillful treatment of real forms. And
    whereas painting makes use of the pure appearance of forms, which it evokes artfully
    on a surface, it should be self-evident that everything that counteracts this appearance,
    or annuls it, must be avoided in all earnest. This includes local colors which, by virtue
    of an indecorous tone, or through too much dark or light, disrupts the picture's coher-
    ency, transforming what should appear as a whole into patches. Aware of this principle,
    Raphael sought to bring the local color of the hair into harmony with the main highlights
    of the forehead through its brightness, and to unify the brighter parts of his garments,
    without destroying their linear beauty, gracefully with the broader surfaces, using gen-
    tle transitions to merge depressions and concave areas with the contiguous highlights'.
    Translation by Ian Pepper.

54 De Vecchi 1986, 75.

55 Wagner 1999, 395–397.

5   The Lesson of Santa Maria Novella

With a few exceptions,[56] typological correspondences with the *Monteripido Crucifix,* together with Perugino's painted background scene, seems to have discouraged a search for alternative models, in particular sculptural ones. No documentary evidence exists for a stay in Florence by Raphael prior to his time in Città di Castello, which is to say before 1504, but a number of indications, among them the following discussion, argue for placing the future burden of proof on those who cast doubt upon such a stay.[57] At any rate, the correspondences with Brunelleschi's wooden crucifix from Santa Maria Novella are certainly remarkable (figure 3.11). Brunelleschi rotates his Christ to the right, and as a result, the axis of the breast is displaced in relation to that of the Cross. The gaping wound below Christ's right breast produces an oblique line that runs from lower left to upper right. The torsion of the hips reinforces the turn toward the right effected by the lower body. The legs are bent in such a way that in conjunction with the other extremities, they outline a nearly precise square. In contrast, Raphael's Christ has been rotated to conform to the vertical axis of the cross. The upper body runs parallel to the axis it circumscribes. At the same time, Raphael's Christ too displays the rotating hips, and the right leg forms a curve that moves toward the viewer's left. In silhouette, it resembles an ivory tusk in shape. A number of elements point toward the model role played by Brunelleschi's *Crucifixion*: to be sure, the moment in the narrative represented by Brunelleschi may arrive slightly later, for in Raphael, Christ's reddish-blonde hair – similar in both style and color to that of Brunelleschi's Christ – is swept back over the left shoulder by a breeze, while in Brunelleschi, the corresponding two thick locks of hair 'drop like a plumb line', to cite a vivid description.[58]

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56   Recently, Ambrosini Massari 2019, 56, proposed Benedetto da Maiano's Crucifix in the Chiesa della Madonna Bianca in Ancarano as a model for the Christ in Raphael's *Gavari Crucifixion*. Similarities are indeed present. Evident upon closer inspection, however, are a number of differences: the position of Christ's arms comes close to paralleling the transverse member of the cross, the characteristic hip muscles are absent, as is the rotation of the hips, while the big toe is less splayed in relation to the others.

57   See above, n. 38.

58   Exhib. cat. Florence 2008, cat. no. 2, 170–174, Filippo Brunelleschi, Crocifisso (Luciano Bellosi). Raphael follows a similar procedure regarding the wafting of the hair and beard in the Paris drawing after Donatello's seated figure of John the Evangelist (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Florence). In this drawing, Raphael varies his subject rather than reproducing it faithfully: the feet are retracted further underneath the robe, and the left hand, which rests on the spine of the book, seems more relaxed, while John's gaze, fixed resolutely on the distance in Donatello, is translated by Raphael into a more introspective

FIGURE 3.11   Filippo Brunelleschi, *Crucifixion of Christ*, coloured wood sculpture, 1410–15,
Florence, Santa Maria Novella
PHOTO: FRANZ ENGEL

But the placement of the crown of thorns, here as in Brunelleschi, a rather
scanty garland of dark-brown woven material, the plaiting rotated toward
the right, leaves a characteristic space on the forehead between crown and

gaze that avoids eye contact with the viewer, and moreover emerges more powerfully
due to the sparser beard and head hair; resolute self-assurance seems to have been con-
verted deliberately here into phlegmatic self-doubt, with the form being preserved, but
the expression reversed into its opposite. On the drawing, see recently Nova 2020, 424f.

FIGURE 3.12   Detail 3.11

hairline (figs. 3.12–3.13).[59] The hip muscles which run downward conically in the pubic region are characterized similarly in Raphael's Christ. Raphael shows the red loincloth tied rather loosely around Christ's hips, as though wanting to display as much of the hip muscles as possible, without, however, exposing the private parts.[60] The big toe is splayed noticeably away from the others (figure 3.14–3.15). The way in which the instep arches upward, flounder-style, behind the little toe, is characteristic of both the *Crucifix* and the altar painting. Is it conceivable that Raphael, without having seen Brunelleschi's *Crucifix*, would have arrived independently at so many similar details?

With reference to Brunelleschi's *Crucifix,* Vasari – with his focus on a putative paragone with Donatello's Crucifix from Santa Croce, whose rustic face he claims was overcome in Brunelleschi's idealizing version – has nothing to say about the more plausible model of Giotto's *Croce sagomata* in Santa Maria Novella (figure 3.16).[61] Brunelleschi's Christ differs from Giotto's through the absence of a nimbus – he wears the crown of thorns instead. The crossbeam of the Cross is higher, so that the arms fall more steeply toward the shoulders.

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59   The crown of thorns of Brunelleschi's figure of Christ is removable; for an image without the crown, see Fehl 1982, 164.

60   Regarding the question of the type of this loincloth in Brunelleschi's crucifix, see Fehl 1982; Speranza 2018.

61   On the paragone between Donatello and Brunelleschi, see Tönnesmann 2002.

FIGURE 3.13   Detail 3.1

The inclination of the head, the reddish coloration of the hair, the beard, the pronouncedly sinewy quality of the limbs, and in particular, the motif of the blood flowing down the body and all the way to the calf, from the wound on the side, are taken up by Brunelleschi, the latter in a way that suggests he simply allowed the paint to run downward along the sculpted figure from the side wound. This painterly effect, together with the oily, glossy flesh tones, have led to the Crucifix being celebrated less as a masterpiece of sculpture and instead as a triumph of painting.[62]

In his analysis of the relationship between the illumination of the architectural setting and the internal lighting scheme of Masaccio's famous fresco (figure 3.17), Paul Hills notes that a deliberate correspondence between the two was a traditional feature of painting beginning at the latest with Giotto, and that it was commended by Cennino Cennini, and he goes on to remark

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62   Cat. Florence 1977, cat. no. 4, 33–38 (Antonio Paolucci), 35ff. On Brunelleschi's Crucifix as the work of a 'painter-sculptor', see Hanke 2009, cat. no. 1, 83f. The issue of synagonism within painted crucifixes should be investigated independently. An early reference is the Madonna di Bugnara (1262) in Abruzzo, a polychrome wooden figure signed by Machilone and his son with 'depinserunt hoc opus', and not 'sculpserunt' (cf. Sarnecki 2014, 213).
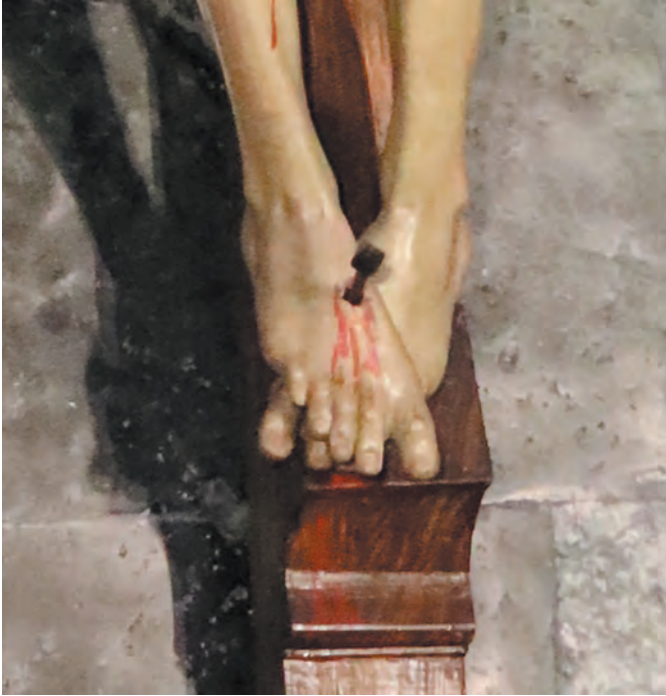
FIGURE 3.14   Detail 3.11

that the consistency with which the lighting scheme of the painting represents
an extension of the lighting situation within the church attains a new level of
quality in the fresco of the *Holy Trinity*.[63] In his analysis, Hills emphasizes that
the actual function of the depicted barrel vault of the chapel within the fictive
space of the fresco is to emphasize the extension of the physical lighting of the
chapel within the lighting scheme of the depicted scene, and not to provide
an ostentatious display of the still novel conventions of central perspective.
Hills thereby incorporates both the iconotopic as well as the luminous condi-
tions into his analysis as decisive factors of the form process. All the more con-
spicuous, then, are disturbances or 'violations' of the imperative to continue
the physical illumination into the pictorial lighting, for example the shadow
that falls onto the left side of Mary's nose, although the primary light arrives
from the left, an infringement interpreted by Hills as Masaccio's concession to
the requirement for plasticity and heightened dramatism in this figure.[64] And

63   Hills 1987, 134; Cennini/Brunello 1971, chap. IX, 10f.
64   Hills 1987, 134.

FIGURE 3.15   Detail 3.1

while a close view betrays luminous irritations, which are however overridden by the heightened plasticity of the total effect, Hills observes at the level of the work's total appearance that the distribution of color and light responds to changes in lighting in the course of the day, with Masaccio marking light spots on the highlighted on the white marble frames of the cassettes as if, on a half-cloudy day, the sun would shine through from time to time and its rays would graze the vaults.

Given their direct physical proximity, attention has been drawn repeatedly to similarities between Giotto's painted *Crucifixion*, Brunelleschi's *Crucifix*, and Masaccio's crucified Christ in the fresco of the *Holy Trinity*, and inferences made about relations of dependency between them.[65] When positioned in this series, it becomes clear that Raphael's Christ comes closer to Brunelleschi's *Crucifix* then to Masaccio (figs. 3.18a–d). In relation to Masaccio, Raphael seems to have realized that a greater role in the work's development must be accorded to an awareness of the lighting conditions of its permanent place of

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65   Speranza 2018, 149.

FIGURE 3.16   Giotto di Bondone, *Croce sagomata*, 1290–95, Florence, Santa Maria Novella
PHOTO: FRANZ ENGEL

installation. That in accepting a commission for a painting of the crucifixion
for the Santa Maria Novella, Raphael may well have oriented himself in rela-
tion to one of the main sites of the Dominican Order is just a further indication
of his keen awareness of a synagonism between these depictions of the Cruci-
fixion, all of which remain among the most important of their kind.[66]

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66   The series of Crucifixions produced by Giotto, Brunelleschi, Masaccio, and Raphael also
      includes Francesco Francia's Crucifixion panel for the Oratorio di Santa Cecilia in Bologna,

FIGURE 3.17   Masaccio, *Trinity*, fresco, 1427–28, Florence, Santa Maria Novella
PHOTO: FRANZ ENGEL

presumably created in dependence upon the *Gavari Crucifixion*. On this painting, see Negro/Roio 1998, cat. no. 31, 159f. In his vita of Francia, Vasari (Vite 1550, 530, Shearman 2003, 969f.; 1568, I 505, Shearman 2003, 1132f.) reconstructs the very late friendly correspondence between the Bolognese artist and Raphael, which took place when the latter was already in Rome, and which kindled Francia's desire to see works by Raphael. Vasari concludes from this that Francia had seen no works by Raphael previously. In Vasari's account, Raphael finally asked his friend to inspect his painting of Saint Cecelia upon its arrival in Bologna to see whether it has survived the journey undamaged, and to assist

FIGURE 3.18 Left to right: Giotto (figure 3.16); Brunelleschi (figure 3.11); Masaccio (figure 3.17); Raphael (figure 3.1)

6   Castiglione's Synagonistic Aesthetic

Before Vasari, it was mainly Raphael's friend Baldassare Castiglione who
sought to elaborate the key features of the painter's aesthetic: in a letter that
is occasionally attributed to Raphael himself, but more often to Castiglione,
which appeared in 1554 in the introduction to a volume containing letters from
famous men assembled by Lodovico Dolce, Raphael – after responding with a
formulaic expression of modesty to Castiglione's praise of his *Galathea* – says
that in order to paint a beautiful woman, it is necessary to have seen many of
them.[67] This passage probably forms the nucleus of the notion of Raphael's art
(also circulated by Vasari) as an eclectic synthesis: '[Raffaello] prese da tutti il
meglio'.[68] And the *Gavari Crucifixion* too could be regarded as such an eclectic
synthesis between Peruginesque elements and the above-mentioned works
in Santa Maria Novella, but this would conceal the elements of compulsion
that shaped its genesis, and which had to be overcome. The achievement of

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with its installation. When Francia finally saw the painting, he was so strongly affected
'per il terrore, e per la bellezza della pittura' that he died just a few days later 'di dolore e
malinconia [...] essendoli advenuto nel troppo fisamente contemplate la vivissima pit-
tura di Raffaello'. Strehlke, in Cat. Madrid 2019, no. 14, 110f., claims that the figure of the
Crucified in Fra Angelico's crucifixion painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art New
York, is also based on Brunelleschi's Crucifix. The provenance of the painting is uncertain
but Strehlke supposes that it was probably commissioned by a Dominican patron, per-
haps for a friar of Santa Maria Novella.

67   '[L]e dico che per dipingere una bella, mi bisogneria veder più belle, con questa condi-
tione, che v. S. si trovasse meco a far scelta del meglio'. (Shearman 2003, doc. 1522/16, c.
1522, 734–741, here 735. Shearman's main argument against Raphael's authorship is that
Castiglione was in Rome continuously between January and at least 17 August 1514, while
Raphael informs his friend in the letter that he has just been appointed architect of St.
Peter's (ibid., 739).

68   Proem to the Vite 1568, II, no pagination; Proemio della Terza Parte, Shearman 2003, 1133:
'ma più di tutti il graziosissimo Raffaello da Urbino, il quale, studiando le fatiche de' Mae-
stri vecchi e quelle de' moderni, prese da tutti il meglio e fattone raccolta, arrichì l'Arte
della Pittura di quella intera perfezione che hebbero anticamente le figure d'Apelle e di
Zeusi, e più, se si potesse dire, o mostrare l'opere di quelli a questo paragone. Laonde la
natura restò vinta dai suoi colori'. Vasari/de Vere 1996, vol. 1, 620: 'But more than all did the
most gracious Raffaello da Urbino, who, studying the labours of the old masters and those
of the modern, took the best from them, and, having gathered it together, enriched the
art of painting with that complete perfection which was shown in ancient times by the
figures of Apelles and Zeuxis'. Here, Vasari varies a topos that had been a commonplace
since Pliny (Nat. Hist. XXXV.64) and Cicero (De inventione II.1), according to which, while
preparing to execute a portrait of Helen, the Greek painter Zeuxis, then in Crotone, had
the five most beautiful women in the town brought to him. Both Ariosto (*Orlando furioso*
XI.71) and Castiglione (*Cortegiano* I.53) take up this topos.

a synthesis here consists first in the unification of correctly chosen elements. But secondly, it involves the taming of antagonistic forces to form a whole. This principle is also found in Castiglione.

As explicitly as Castiglione favors painting in the dispute between media, often being invoked as a prominent voice in the paragone debate,[69] his basic aesthetic categories – often exemplified by the works of Raphael – are strongly shaped by a fundamentally synagonistic structure: he characterizes the extraordinary personality of Elisabetta Gonzaga as a balanced tension between 'graziosa e grave maestà' ('gracious and sober dignity'), 'modestia e grandezza' ('modesty and grandeur'), and finally 'onestissimi costumi e grandissima libertà' ('decorous customs … joined with the greatest liberty').[70] Beauty results from a 'gioconda concordia' generated from contrasts between various colors in conjunction with light and shadow,[71] and *grazie* through 'sprezzatura', a word whose wholly positive connotations can be overlooked, since Castiglione derives it from *sprezzare*, 'to scorn', at the same time recommending that the difficulties that often arise in relation to certain activities be greeted by cultivating complacent disdain – that they be treated as though they were not even there.[72]

7   The Iconosphere

In the early 20th century, Rudolf Laban developed the concept of the 'kinesphere' as the basis for his dance notation. The kinesphere is the space surrounding the human individual that lies within her physical reach. It seems plausible to posit an equivalent concept for pictures. The image does not terminate with its surrounding frame, but only at the boundaries of its 'iconosphere'. Such a move would have a substantial impact on exhibition practices. No longer would toplighting set the standard; of primary importance instead would be a reconstruction of the relationship between the original in situ lighting and the lighting scheme of the picture within its historical iconic situation.

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69   Cortegiano I.50. In his Lezzioni (in Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento, ed. P. Barocchi, Milan/ Naples 1971, 524f.), Varchi invokes Castiglione with reference to the superiority of painting in relation to sculpture.

70   Cortegiano I.4; Castiglione/Barbaris 2017, 22; Castiglione/Singleton 2002, 12f.

71   Cortegiano IV.52; Castiglione/Barbaris 2017, 416; Castiglione/Singleton 2002, 244: '[A] certain radiant harmony of various colors set off by light and shadow'.

72   Cortegiano I.26–28; Castiglione/Barbaris 2017, 58–64; Castiglione/Singleton 2002, 31–35.

Not every painting wants to be seen exactly as it was painted. Side- and backlighting may render certain elements imperceptible, but may at the same time effect more powerful contrasts within the image as a whole. Given the high level of necessary security, a return of the *Mond Crucifixion* to its original place of display in San Domenico in Città di Castello is hardly to be expected, and the same is true of many other paintings of comparable quality. All the more urgent, then, is the task of a synagonistic exhibition practice that allows the power of an image to come into its own, that it be permitted to assert itself in a recalcitrant lighting situation, which is to say that the lighting arrangements in museums and exhibitions conform to the demands of the painting.

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Collaborations

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Normatively Conditioned Synagonism: Competition and Collaboration, Specialization and Quality Enhancement in the Context of Guild Monopolies on Painting

Danica Brenner

In Europe, the field of activities covered by premodern painters was widely diversified, and at the same time progressively differentiated via normative standards. Frequently, guild-affiliated painters and others who worked as painters and in the craft trades were drawn into contention concerning the delimitation of their respective areas of activity. At times, collective monopolies were defined and collectively defended against third parties. Such confrontations, together with the increasing textual formalization of normative standards and the progressive differentiation of the respective commercial monopolies favored the formation of niches and specialization within artistic and trade activities, a phenomenon accompanied by the quality enhancement of the results. For many products, the normatively installed division of labor between craft trades necessitated cooperation between various specializations, and resulted in joint products that could never have been achieved at the same level of quality by any of the individuals involved. Such synagonism is observable within the field of oil painting as well: often, artists specializing in diverse genres or motifs – and at times engaged in intense competition on the art market – would willingly collaborate on the making of artworks. Thanks to their complementary, mutually enhancing abilities, they were able to create works whose added value resulted not solely from the renown of the participating masters; often, outstanding quality resulted when each depicted element was the work of highly-prized specialist in his respective area.

1 Painters as Guild-Affiliated Artisans

In Europe during the early modern era, artists such as painters and sculptors were as a rule categorized among the artisans or craft tradesmen. In virtually all cities, accordingly, painters and sculptors were organized – like other

FIGURE 4.1   Anonymous, Saint Luke in the clouds with his painting of Mary, his ox, the paint-
ers' guild's coat of arms and painting utensils above a painters' guild procession
towards the city of Augsburg. Inner front book cover of the guild book of the
Augsburg Saint Luke's brotherhood. Painted after 1600. Watercolors on paper.
Augsburg, Bistumsarchiv, ABA HS 168
IMAGE: BISTUM AUGSBURG, ARCHIV DES BISTUMS / PHOTO: CHRISTOPH
MEIERFRANKENFELD

artisans – into guilds. These religious, military, political, and/or commercial
corporations supervised various artistic and trade occupations, and influenced
the lives of their members in substantial ways from cradle to grave. The paint-
er's guilds, with their guild charters, maintained a system of rules that regu-
lated, among other things, commercial aspects such as training, the allocation
of artisans in workshops, and access to raw and working materials.[1]

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1   Brenner Diversity 2016. On the definition of the guilds as military entities, commercial
associations, political organizations, or religious fraternities capable of assuming military,

FIGURE 4.2   Christian Carl Falck, flag of the Frankfurt painters and varnishers, painted
1840. Tempera on silk, 225 × 142 cm. Frankfurt am Main, Historisches Museum
Frankfurt
IMAGE: HISTORISCHES MUSEUM FRANKFURT / PHOTO: SAŠA FUIS

Organizationally, the painters' guilds differed from town to town, and were
subject to change over time. In many places in the early years, the paint-
ers were organized together with other artisans into collective guilds; these

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commercial, political, and/or religious/charitable functions, see Heusinger 2010. On the
guild-dependent training of painters, see Brenner Künstler 2021, and Brenner Malermeister
2016.

FIGURE 4.3   Anonymous, flag of the Frankfurt house painters, painted 1859(?). Tempera on
silk, 217 × 149.5 cm. Frankfurt am Main, Historisches Museum Frankfurt
IMAGE: HISTORISCHES MUSEUM FRANKFURT / PHOTO: SAŠA FUIS

became distinguished gradually only down through the centuries, as the num-
ber of exclusive painters' guilds increased. This becomes clear, for example,
in various painters' guilds in the German-speaking regions of the Old Empire.
In Frankfurt am Main, for example, the painters were organized even prior
to 1377 together with saddlers, sign-makers, glaziers, horse collar makers, and

shearers; on 2 July 1590, they entered a joint organization together with local stained-glass painters, receiving authorization to form their own 'Malergesellschaft' (association of painters) only on 2 September 1630.[2]

In the collective guilds, painters were often organized together with related artisans, including glaziers, stained-glass painters, woodcarvers, statue painters, gilders, and grocers. In Augsburg, for example, they shared a guild with glaziers, woodcarvers, and gold leaf makers, and were, like the local corporation of saddlers, subordinated to the guild of smiths. In Magdeburg (ca. 1197), Basel (1361), Trier (ca. 1465), and Ulm (1496), the painters were organized together with grocers, which is logical to the extent that the painting of everyday objects was a not inessential aspect of their spectrum of tasks.[3] At times, however, the painters might be incorporated into a guild together with occupations that seem unrelated to their own at first glance. This was the case, for example in Landshut (at the latest in 1564) and Freiburg im Breisgau, where they were organized together with the swordsmiths, and respectively with the barber surgeons, barbers, glaziers, wigmakers, saddlers, and rope makers.[4]

2 Separation of Crafts

The guilds monopolized specific occupations: nonmembers were forbidden to practice these. Confrontations between various artisan groups or between a group of artisans and outsiders concerning the scope of such guild monopolies were prevalent. Where close points of contact existed between occupations, or confrontations occurred with notable frequency, these circumstances tended to be reflected in guild regulations. Normally, such regulations defined

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2 On the Frankfurt guild of painters, referred to by contemporaries as the *Malergesellschaft* (association of painters)*, cf. Institut für Stadtgeschichte Frankfurt am Main, Handwerkerbuch 2, fol. 93r–96r, published in Tacke et al. 2018, II.32–2, 132–136; Institut für Stadtgeschichte Frankfurt am Main, Handwerkerbücher 231, fol. 2v–10v, published in Tacke et al. 2018, II.32–4, 143–149; Institut für Stadtgeschichte Frankfurt am Main, Handwerkerakten 5988, fol. 24r–27r, published in Tacke et al. 2018, II.32–8, 170–172. Schamschula 2019, 87f., among others, assumed that the statutes adopted by the sign makers as early as circa 1355 may have led to the founding of the first guild of painters in Frankfurt; cf. Institut für Stadtgeschichte Frankfurt am Main, Handwerkerakten 402, no. 4, published in Tacke et al. 2018, II.32–1, 129–130.

3 Brenner Diversity 2016, esp. 175–183. On these examples, see also the corresponding ordinances of the guild of painters in Laufner & Kocks 1996, 98; Schürle 2003, 34; Weilandt 1993, here 370, 374; Rott 1934, 73–75.

4 Cf. Brenner Diversity 2016, esp. 177f., as well as the corresponding guild ordinances in Liedke 1979, 140–142; Tacke 1999, 325.

FIGURE 4.4   Sign of the lodging for the journeymen of the Frankfurt carpenters and joiners,
               made and painted around 1800. Oil on wood, 95 × 92 cm. Frankfurt am Main,
               Historisches Museum Frankfurt
               IMAGE: BRENNER KÜNSTLER 2021 FIG. 48

the respective fields of competence belonging to the diverse craft trades based
on the working or raw materials or tools employed by each. Based on them,
practical measures undertaken by the guilds against individuals that were
deemed to have infringed upon protected fields of activity – in addition to
demands for financial payments or other potential punishments by the guilds
or the authorities – often involved the confiscation of the tools employed in
the so-called 'violation,' which were reserved exclusively, as a rule, to the craft
discipline that had been infringed upon. The strong identification between
artisans and their corporations with particular tools, working or raw materials,
and products, were also reflected in their coats of arms and guild symbolism.
Commonly depicted on the guild crests of carpenters were planes, compasses,
and T-squares, while the crests of goldsmiths often displayed rings or goblets,
those of bakers loaves of bread; butchers and fishmongers often chose oxen

FIGURE 4.5   Jost Amman, winged ox with painters' guild's coat of arms. Woodcut,
             186 × 144 cm. In: Jost Amman (inventor), Peter Schmid (printer), Sigmund
             Feyerabend (editor), *Kunst- und Lehrbüchlein*, printed 1578. Wolfenbüttel, Herzog
             August Bibliothek, HAB, 27.4 Geom. (3–26)
             IMAGE: HAB JAMMAN AB 3.41H

or fish as their heraldic animals; the crests of painters usually displayed three
white or silver shields on a red or blue ground.

For painters as well, the monopoly on the craft of painting held by guild
members, and the delimitation of their area of competence from the activities
of other artisans and from the 'liberal arts,' were regulated by guild statutes.
As with other craft skills, these rules were based on the materials employed.
In many places, the use of oil paints was restricted to painters exclusively. At
times, the production of complex pictorial imagery was reserved to them as
well. An example is the delimitation of the field of activities of painters from
those of whitewashers and housepainters. In Augsburg at the latest beginning
in 1516, for example, facade painting was reserved to the members of the paint-
ers' guild, while the task of whitewashing or painting a wall white, as well as

the execution of simple wall paintings, were regarded as ordinary labor, and was often executed by common laborers or masons, who belonged to the carpenters' guild, and were responsible for plastering and painting buildings and window frames. As in many other towns, the distinction between the areas of competence of painters and whitewashers respectively was framed with reference to the utilized materials. In Augsburg, but also in Konstanz (1515/1521),[5] Memmingen (1516),[6] and Ulm (1572),[7] only the simple painting of walls with water or distemper-based paint was excluded from the painters' guild monopoly.[8] In Augsburg, the delimitation with reference to painting materials went even further: on 17 October 1564, the normatively secured monopoly of (image) painters over wall painters was extended by a stipulation that henceforth, only individuals belonging to the painters' guild would be permitted to use the colors yellow, white, black, or gray to paint the walls of houses. In February and December of 1577, further decrees stipulated that *weÿsser oder tagwercker* (whitewashers and laborers)[9] would be permitted to work only with water-based paints and *Leimwasser* (distemper) in *weiß auß kalh, schwartz, kugelroth, kugelgelb oder holzfarb, grau oder stainfarb* (in the colors white, black, red, yellow, and gray),[10] but never in oils, with the exception of the illusionistic painting of masonry on plastered walls, and could otherwise use oil paints or varnish only for the finishing stages of their work.[11] Even in the late 17th century, restrictions of housepainters and whitewashers to less permanent distemper

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5   Cf. Wielandt 1936, 480.

6   Cf. the corresponding guild ordinances, published in Vischer 1890, 83.

7   Cf. the corresponding decree by the Ulm Council, published in Rott 1934, 77.

8   Cf. a letter written by the Augsburg painters and addressed to their colleagues in Memmingen; Stadtarchiv Memmingen, Schublade 382, fasc. 2, published in Wilhelm 1983, Beilage XII, 674; on wall painting in Augsburg, see also same author, esp. 2, 71.

9   Meant are housepainters, which is to say whitewashers and day laborers. StadtAA, Historischer Verein, H 28 (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschlager 1549–1626 or later, § 51.

10 Cited from Bierdimpfl 1884, 29. StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Zünfte, Nr. 004 Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer, Goldschläger, Silberdrahtzieher (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschlager in Augsburg. Ordinance of 1549, supplemented up until 1654, fol. 11v.

11 StadtAA, Historischer Verein, H 28 (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschlager 1549–1626 or later, § 46, 51f.; Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg, 4° Cod Aug 222, fol. 18r–18v; StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Zünfte, Nr. 004 Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer, Goldschläger, Silberdrahtzieher (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschlager in Augsburg. Ordinance of 1549, supplemented up until 1654, fol. 8r, 11r–11v; StadtAA, Handwerkerakten, Maler 8 (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschläger von 1681), § 9; StadtAA, Handwerkerakten, Maler, fasc. 1, fol. 155v, 303r; as well as ibid., fol. 118r, the last-mentioned point published in Hascher 1996, 47–48.

FIGURE 4.6   Christoph Weigel, *Der Tüncher*, printed 1698. Copperplate print. In: Christoph
Weigel, *Abbildung und Beschreibung der gemeinnützlichen Hauptstände*,
Regensburg 1698
IMAGE: CILLESSEN, TACKE 2019 106

or water-based paints was common in many places, and is reflected in Christoph Weigel's *Ständebuch* (an album of images depicting various occupations).[12]

In delimiting the activities of painters from other fields of activity, such separation of occupations with regard to the utilized materials, primarily pigments and paints, was common. In the sources on the Augsburg painter's guild, the work of the enamellist (*Amulierer*) was described as follows: they were to *mit solchen Farben auf Glas und Kristall malten, die nit mit Nuß= oder Leinöl, sonnder Anndern materialen hergestellt wurden und maists durchs feur zuwegen gebracht warden* (paint on glass and crystal, and moreover with pigments which are not bound in oil, but instead fired).[13] Chest and trunk painters, in contrast, were permitted to use *vff den Wismat vnd von Leimfarben auf Thrülen, Laden vnd Schißlen* (to paint caskets and dishes with bismuth and distemper colors.)*,*[14] while the activities of printmakers (Briefmaler) were characterized by the application of colors not freehand, but instead with the use of *patroniren*, i.e. templates. Illuminators and draftsmen (Reißer), finally, were artists *die das 'Reißen' (Zeichnen) und mit Farben zu 'Luminiren' verstehen* (who know how to 'reißen' (draw) and to 'illuminate' with colors).[15] In disputed instances, the involved parties invoked the areas of artisanal competence stipulated by the guilds and argued with reference to the utilized materials for or against the affiliation of the disputed activity with the monopoly held by the guild lodging the complaint.

Nor did guild persecution of so-called 'violators' neglect newcomers or practitioners taking up temporary residence. For local artists, practitioners arriving from elsewhere and working at a qualitatively high level, often for specific occasions or commissions, were substantial competitors. In confrontations with the guilds, they often argued that their activities did not fall under the local painters' monopoly covered by the guild by virtue of the working materials, raw materials, or techniques employed. Exemplary here is the case of Hubert Gerhard. On 11 October 1582, the sculptor, a native of 's-Hertogenbosch, requested permission from the Augsburg City Council for he and his wife to reside and work in the free city for one year, and moreover absent any requirements to join the painters' guild, which also incorporated local sculptors. According to his petition, Gerhard planned to execute a number of antique-style figures for

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12   Weigel 1698.
13   Cited from Bierdimpfl 1884, 29.
14   Cited from Bierdimpfl 1884, 29.
15   Which is to say that they could produce and color drawings, as well as book paintings. Cited from Bierdimpfl 1884, 29, parenthesis and emphasis adopted from source.

FIGURE 4.7
Hubert Gerhard, *Hercules*, made
1582/1584 for the portal of the Fugger
residence at Kirchheim an der Mindel.
Terracotta.
IMAGE: DIEMER 2004, 260, TAB. 76

Hans Fugger during his stay (see figure 4.7).[16] Gerhard claimed that his work represented no conflict with the regulations of the Augsburg guilds – referred to as 'crafts' in the local sources since the abrogation of the guild regiment – *dieweil solliche* [Gerhard's] *khunst kheinem handtwerkh anhengig sonnder allain aus blosser erden verricht würd,*[17] which is to say that his art would not be classified as 'artisanal' because it was fashioned from mere 'earth' (meaning here terracotta). Like the delimitation of the painter's activities from those of white-washers, Gerhard's argument for his occupation as a 'liberal art' turned on the materials employed. The council seems to have conceded the point: surviving alongside the statue of the emperor surmounting the Augustus Fountain in Augsburg, cast in 1588 according to Gerhard's models, are his over-life-sized terracotta figures which, in a way consistent with the commission referenced in his petition, seem to have been intended as decorations for the Fugger

16   Cf. StadtAA, Geheimer Rat, Fuggerakten, Karton 2, Nr. 4 (27): *für Hannß Fugger etliche antiquische Bilder machen* [...]
17   Cf. StadtAA, Geheimer Rat, Fuggerakten, Karton 2, Nr. 4 (27).

Castle in Kirchheim.[18] With his figures, Hubert Gerhard, together with Carlo di Cesare del Palagio, brought the art of terracotta – along with large-scale bronze casting – from Italy into the region north of the Alps. Hubert practiced both techniques in Augsburg, as documented not just by the above-mentioned terracotta figures, but also by the *Fountain of Mars and Venus* found in Kirchheim, before he and di Cesare moved on to the Munich Residence, and from there to Dresden.[19]

In other instances, the activities of visiting artists infringed quite explicitly on the scope of tasks covered by guild monopolies. Nonetheless, they could receive time-limited special exemptions that allowed them to execute the commissioned work free from the guild regulations in force. This was true in particular for artists such as Hubert Gerhard, who made significant contributions to technology transfer, and potentially to the permanent local establishment of specialist knowledge. Another instance of this is Giulio Licinio, a painter from Venice,[20] who was granted permission by the painters' guild on 20 June 1560 on the basis of a council resolution which granted him permission – in contravention of normal guild regulations – to work *wie ain anndern Iren hanndwerkhsgenossen*, which is to say, like an ordinary artisan member, allowing him to execute wall paintings (lost today) for Hieronymus Rehlinger with the help of assistants, although he was unmarried.[21]

In delimiting the work of painters from those of other artisans, further criteria were added in the course of the 16th century alongside those related to working materials. In addition to the above-mentioned restrictions, the painter's field came to be differentiated from that of whitewashers to an increasing

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18   On Gerhard as an individual and his commissions, see Weihrauch 1964; on the Kirchheim Castle and its artworks, see Lill 1908, 86–127.

19   Cf. Diemer 2004, 259f.

20   Licinio's signature on an appeal for this exceptional status refers to him as a *painter from Venice;* StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Maler, fasc. 1, fol. 68.

21   StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Maler, fasz. 1, fol. 65r–67r, 68r–v, 70r–v, 126; StadtAA, Historischer Verein, H 28, § 26; StadtAA, Zünfte, Nr. 004, Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschlager in Augsburg (ca. 1654), fol. 8v–9r, with nearly identical wording found in Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg, 4° Cod Aug 222, fol. 8r. StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten Maler, fasc. 1, fol. 67, 126, also published in Hascher 1996, 469; StadtAA, Bürgerbuch 1447–1680, fol. 6r, published in Vertova 1976, 529; StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Baumeisteramt, Rechnungen (Baumeisterbücher), 1561, fol. 12r, after Lieb 1952, 264. Brenner 2017; Hascher 1996, 461f. The building, which was demolished in 1948, stood at what is today Philippine-Welser Straße 14. For a reconstruction of the facade, see Hascher 1996, 461–469. Work on Rehlinger's home is documented in a photograph of 1873. According to Joachim von Sandrart, Licinio completed it in 1561, Cf. Sandrart 1675, 177; Hascher 1996, 461.

FIGURE 4.8   Giulio Licinio, façade painting at the Rehlingerhaus in Augsburg
(today Philippine-Welser Straße 14 [D278], lost in WW2), painted 1560/61,
photograph from 1873. Location of original photograph unknown
IMAGE: BILDARCHIV FOTO MARBURG

degree by restricting the use of certain motifs to members of the painters'
guild: in Augsburg (1577),[22] Donauwörth (1581),[23] Memmingen (1608),[24] and
Nuremberg (1615),[25] the statutes demanded that *die gesimbs mit gefarbten*

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22   Infringements of the provisions of the ordinances continued to be punished with a
payment of two guilders per violation. StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Zünfte Nr. 004 Maler, Gla-
ser, Bildhauer, Goldschläger, Silberdrahtzieher (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer
und Goldschlager in Augsburg. Ordinances of 1549, supplemented up until 1654, fol. 11v
(undated); StadtAA, Historischer Verein, H 28, (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und
Goldschlager, 1549–1626 or later, § 52 (7 December 1577). The identical Augsburg Coun-
cil ordinance is transmitted in StadtAA, Handwerkerakten, Maler, fasc. 1 (1515–1603), fol.
303r. A dating of the ordinances there to 7 September 1577 is presumably attributable to a
copyist's error.

23   Staatsarchiv Augsburg, GU Donauwörth 535 (Ordnung der Schreiner, Glaser, Drechsler,
Maler und Bildhauer, 6 March 1671), here: §7 of 6 January 1581, published in Tacke et al.
2018, I.20–1, 693–695, here 695.

24   Stadtarchiv Memmingen, A 482/1 (Ordnung der Maler, 1 September 1608), fol. 5r, pub-
lished in Tacke et al. 2018, III.72–1, 621–624, here 623.

25   Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg, Archiv, Reichsstadt Nürnberg XII/44, fol. 1r–
9r (Ordnung der Maler. After the Hauer manuscript), published in Tacke Hauer 2001,
168–173.

FIGURE 4.9   Jost Amman, duel of a painter and a wall painter. Etching, 55 × 80 cm. In:
              Jost Amman (inventor and printmaker), Stephan Hermann (editor), *Duelle*
              zwischen Handwerkern. Printed 1588. Wolfenbüttel, Herzog Anton-Ulrich
              Museum, JAmman WB 3.68
              IMAGE: BRENNER KÜNSTLER 2021 FIG. 45

strihen ein zue fassen, laub und rollenwerkh und dergleihen sahen, so in der
maler gerehtigkeit gehörig, zue mahen verboten.[26] In other words, only mem-
bers of the painters' guild were permitted to cover cornices with colored paint,
or to paint scrollwork or foliage or other motifs covered by the guild monop-
oly. Not just the use of oils, along with most of the colors of the spectrum,
but also motifs such as scrollwork or foliage, which departed from the simple
labor of the whitewashers – and self-evidently, the execution of more complex
imagery – stood under the monopoly of the painters' guild. In Würzburg (1513),
housepainters were explicitly permitted – in addition to painting buildings –
to execute the names of saints along with other inscriptions, as well as deco-
rative borders; anything beyond this was reserved to guild-affiliated painters

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26   See Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschlager in Augsburg von 1549, sup-
      plemented up until 1654, StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Zünfte, Nr. 004, Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer,
      Goldschläger, Silberdrahtzieher fol. 11v: *die gesimbs mit gefarbten strihen ein zue fassen,*
      laub und rollenwerkh und dergleihen sahen, so in der maler gerehtigkeit gehörig, zue mahen
      verbotten.

FIGURE 4.10
Veit Stoß (inventor), Gilg
Sesselschreiber (casting), *Cimburgis of
Masovia* (attributed), cast in the first
third of the 16th century for the tomb
of Maximilian I. Bronze. Innsbruck,
Hofkirche
PHOTO: STEPHAN ELSLER

that also produced images.[27] This distinction between (image) painters and
housepainters or whitewashers with reference to painted motifs is also docu-
mented through disputes with other non-guild members, and also emerges as
a signal of attempts to ennoble the activities of fine artists (an aspect that is
not explored further here).

   At times, meanwhile, a differentiation of the spheres of activity belonging
to diverse artisans based on working materials meant harsh restrictions for
artists. In 1514, for example, they interfered with the plans of Veit Stoß, a sculp-
tor from Nuremberg, for casting bronze figures for the tomb of the Emperor
Maximilian I. Since bronze casting fell under the monopoly of the bronze
founders, Stoß was prevented from casting the figures from the clay molds he
had already created. But he was also forbidden from calling in bronze casters
for the work. The dispute dragged on for weeks while the unused clay forms
dried out, whereupon Stoß lodged a complaint with the council, demanding

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27   Stadtarchiv Würzburg, Ratsbuch 383, fol. 1r–11r (Malerzunftsatzungen, ordinance of 1470
      with later supplements, up until 1571), here: fol. 3v–4v, published in Tacke et al. 2018,
      v.128–2, 845–854, here 848f.

compensation for his wasted labor. Finally, a compromise was reached, accord-
ing to which the council – probably anxious to avoid calling imperial disfavor
upon itself – permitted the carver/sculptor to cast the forms himself. Excep-
tionally (and the arrangement states quite explicitly that this should by no
means be regarded as a precedent), he would be permitted to use the compo-
nents necessary for bronze casting, although in principle, these were reserved
exclusively for trained bronze founders. Because Stoß did not have his own
foundry, the council resolved on 25 September 1514 that *Maister Veiten Stoß soll
man zu seinem vorhabenden guß aines kupferin pilds ainen zwinger leyhen,*[28]
which is to say that for the planned casting of his copper statues, the master
should be granted access to a casting site. It is not known whether or not he
actually carried out the casting. Among the 'Schwarzen Mandern' (Black Men)
found in the Hofkirche in Innsbruck, researchers have attributed to him the
figure of Cimburgis of Masovia, believed to have been cast in Innsbruck by Gilg
Sesselschreiber, as well as the model of Elisabeth of Görz-Tirol, executed after
a design by Albrecht Dürer.[29]

3   Cooperation Regarding the Enforcement of the Division of Trades

At times, the painters shared their monopoly on specific activities with other
artisans. Specific agreements governed shared or overlapping fields of activ-
ity, offering each practitioner legal protection against infringement by third
parties. In Augsburg in 1561, for example, extensive negotiations between the
painters and goldsmiths resulted in a written agreement sharing the monop-
oly on *die arbait des etzen unnd deckens auff silber unnd alle andere metall,
nichts außgenommen.*[30] Which is to say that henceforth, the painters and gold-
smiths shared a monopoly on etching and painting on silver and other metals.
Infringements onto these working areas by other artisans would be prosecuted
by the painters on behalf of both groups.[31] The interests of both groups were
also represented when the painters and goldsmiths agreed upon a contract

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28   Cited from Kohn 1981, 301.
29   Cf. Brenner 2011, 141; Kohn 1981, 300f.; Pelzl 2017, 108f.; Petz 1889, Dok. 5799–5803; Schnei-
      der 1983, 352.
30   Cited from StadtAA, Historischer Verein, H 28, Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und
      Goldschlager, 1549–1626 or later, § 24.
31   StadtAA, Historischer Verein, H 28, § 24–25; almost identical to Staats- und Stadtbiblio-
      thek Augsburg, 4° Cod Aug 222, fol. 7r–7v; StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Zünfte, Nr. 004, Ordnung
      der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschlager in Augsburg (ca. 1654), fol. 8r–8v; StadtAA,
      Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Maler, 8, Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildschnitzer und

FIGURE 4.11   Jost Amman, duel of a painter and a goldsmith. Etching, 5.9 × 8.6 cm. In: Jost
Amman (inventor and printmaker), Stephan Hermann (editor), *Duelle zwischen
Handwerkern*. Printed 1588. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
62.662.24
IMAGE: THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, ANNE AND CARL STERN
FUND, 1962

with the ring makers concerning the decoration of rings with etched imag-
ery. The contract, dated 7 January 1563,[32] stipulates precisely the way in which
painters and goldsmiths are to be compensated for etched work and paintings

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Goldschlager in Augsburg 1564, with later supplements, § 1–2. This decree was also incor-
porated into the statutes of the organization of goldsmiths; see Weiss 2008, 144, 253.

32   So dated in StadtAA, Historischer Verein, H 28, (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und
Goldschlager, 1549–1626 or later), § 28f.; Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg, 4° Cod
Aug 222, fol. 9r–12r; StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Maler, fasz. 8, Ordnung der
Maler, Glaser, Bildschnitzer und Goldschläger 1564, no pagination. StadtAA, Reichsstadt,
Zünfte, Nr. 004, Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschlager in Augsburg
(ca. 1654), fol. 9r–10v, in contrast, dates the statute to 2 January 1563, probably due to a
copyist's error. A letter written by the foreman of the organization of tradesmen dated 9
March 1564, which refers to this statute, instead dates the comparison to the settlement
of 12 September 1562; see StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Säckler, fasc. 1, without
numbering.

executed on rings. The types of rings to be etched are entered in list form, and prices for their decoration prescribed.[33]

In 1564, the contractual parties became involved in a dispute with local purse makers (*Säckler*). The conflict resulted from the circumstance that the purse makers wished to continue decorating the locking rings they used, among other things, in the manufacture of purses, while the painters, etchers, and goldsmiths, together with the ring makers, invoked the contract adopted in 1561 to argue that locking rings fell under the monopoly on the ornamentation of metal rings. In opposition to customary law, the council approved their request.[34] The joint monopoly on etched imagery shared by the painters and goldsmiths and their contract with the ring makers was thereby extended to encompass existing activities. Since the painters and goldsmiths – in contradistinction to the purse makers – were able to receive formal training in etching, the subsumption of ornamentation of locking rings under their monopoly is also interpretable as a means of ensuring quality.

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33   StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Maler, fasz. 8, (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildschnitzer und Goldschläger 1564), fol. 9r–v. Although the sources dealing with the trades engaged in decorating rings consistently refer to *beede handwerckher als maler oder ezer und ringmacher*, the statutes included goldsmiths engaged in etching activity. Cited from: StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Maler, fasc. 8, Ordnung 1564, p. 4. Preserved in StadtAA, Handwerkerakten, Beinringler, fasc. 2, as well as StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Säckler, fasc. 1, are the applications that preceded the enactment of the ordinance and related correspondence, along with a transcript of the ordinance. For the settlement and its incorporation into the ordinances of the guild of painters, see StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Zünfte, Nr. 004, Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer, Goldschläger, Silberdrahtzieher (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschlager in Augsburg. Ordinance of 1549, supplemented up until 1654, fol. 9r–10v; Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg, 4° Cod Aug 222, fol. 9r–12r; in StadtAA, Historischer Verein, H 28, (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschlager, 1549–1626 or later), § 28f.; StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Maler, fasz. 8, (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildschnitzer und Goldschläger 1564), no pagination. The statutes were also incorporated into the ordinances for ring makers; see StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Beinringler, fasc. 1, no pagination.

34   Earlier, on 17 February 1564, the purse makers had sought to affirm their position by appealing to the council, among other things invoking customary law, which had allowed them to work on such rings from time immemorial. The resolution was preceded by a number of written exchanges and testimony from members of the trades. Cf. StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Säckler, fasc. 1, no pagination (letter from the city official responsible of consulting the grocer's guild regulations dated 9 March 1564), as well as various unpaginated letters from early 1564. See also Brenner 2017, 40.

4   Cooperation in Production

For a multitude of products, the normatively codified separation of the various trades from one another – demanded by the artisans and supported by the authorities via guild regulations – both required and promoted close collaboration between various craft disciplines. In creating some objects, the painters too collaborated – whether voluntarily or under duress – with practitioners of other trades.

A well-known instance of such collaboration is the production of large late medieval carved altarpieces such as Hieronymus Imhoff's *Altar of the Rosary* in the Chapel of St. Roche in Nuremberg.[35] Directing its production, presumably, was Hans Burgkmair the Elder, who received 86 guilders, the lion's share of the total cost, amounting to altogether 147 guilders. He seems to have been responsible for overall supervision, and supplied designs for parts of the reliefs, as well as executing the polychromy on all of the carvings. Other payments included 32 guilders to the carver Sebastian Loscher, as well as payments to other Augsburgers who contributed to production, transport, or assembly – among them 22 guilders to the joiner (Kistler) Thomas Hebendanz for manufacturing the altar shine, and three guilders and 12 kreutzers to the blacksmith who assembled the individual parts, probably using hinges and iron mounts.[36]

It is well-known that the artists Hans Holbein the Elder, Gregor Erhart, and Adolf Daucher – all immigrants to Augsburg from Ulm – often worked together as well, as reported in 1502 by an annalist from Kloster Kaisheim: *ain costlich chortafel ... daran die besten III maister zu Augspurg haben gemacht, alß sy zu der zeit weit und prait mochten sein, der schreinermayster Adolf Kastner in Kaißhamerhof, pildhauer maister Gregori, der maler Hanß Holpain.*[37] In this quote, the annalist mentions the joiner (Kistler) Adolf Kastner (which is to say Adolf Daucher), the sculptor Gregor Erhart, and the painter Hans Holbein as joint producers of a retable known today as the *Kaisheimer Altar.* Moreover, his remarks, which refer to the Augsburg artists as the best three masters of their time to be found far and near, bear witness to the awareness on the part of the client of having drawn upon the best practitioner of the respective trade for the project. Also exemplary of the numerous instances of such collaborative

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35   The altar with its sculptured central shrine and painted wings is still found in its original place of display in the Imhoff Chapel of the St. Rochus Cemetery in Nuremberg.

36   Cf. Falk 1968, 117f.; Jakupski 1984, 102, 151–153, n. 274. Nuremberg, Germanisches National-museum, Imhoff-Archiv, fasc. 34, Nr. 4 (loose sheet), after Falk 1968, 117f.; Wegmann 2003, 245.

37   Knebel 1902, 354, Bl. 226, entry for the year 1502.

FIGURE 4.12   Hans Burgkmair, Sebastian Loscher, *Rosenkranzaltar*, made around 1522. Altar
with sculpture and oil on panel. Nuremberg, St. Rochuskapelle
IMAGE: KIESEWETTER 2010 216

works is the cooperation between Hans Holbein and Michel Erhart in 1493
that produced a retable for the Chapel of St. Mary in the Abbey of Weingarten,
the collaboration between Holbein, Erhart, and Adolf Daucher in 1502 for the
Kaisheimer Altar,[38] and the *Early Mass Altar* for St. Moritz, on which the gold-
smith Jörg Seld worked alongside Holbein, Adolf Daucher, and Gregor Erhart.[39]
The to some extent detailed statement of costs for such commissions, and for

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38   See Krause 2002, 151–158.
39   Cf. Krause 2002, 326. Further examples can be found among others in Strecker 1998, 263;
      on the collaborations of Jörg Seld (design work), Adolf Daucher (case), Gregor Erhart
      (carving work), Ulrich Apt (polychromy) and Hans Holbein the Elder (painted wings).

even more comprehensive ones, also makes possible comparisons between the prices for 'artistic' performances in relation to other forms of labor.[40]

As explained above, the delimitation of the domains of competence proper to painters from those of other artisans differed from town to town, and was based on the types of working materials employed, as well as the application of specified visual motifs. One example of the division of trades based on the function of the painting work will be discussed below with reference painters and compass makers. In addition to the apparatuses for which their occupation was named, the compass makers also manufactured sundials and lunar clocks, as well as other technical and astronomical devices. In Augsburg, numerous exemptions were granted to individuals pertaining to the manufacture of timepieces and technical instruments; these exceptions were intended to promote the local production of these complex devices, which required the participation of a number of different trades. There, the making of timepieces enjoyed the status of a liberal art, and was hence open to all individuals.[41] Tobias Klieber was such a non-guild-affiliated compass maker. Surviving from his hand are various devices, among them a pocket sundial dated 1581, an undated gun mount, and various astronomical pocket instruments (dated among others to 1559, 1562, and 1595). He also manufactured wall sundials in Augsburg, including the ones located on the Lower Watertower (1589), the Hay Scales (1595), and St. Ulrich and St. Afra (1601). The local painters sought to impose a fine of one guilder for the transgression of painting his sundials, regarding this activity as an infringement upon their occupation. In his response to the council, Klieber argued that the painting of sundials did not fall under the monopoly held by the painters' guild, and moreover that its members lacked the competence necessary to carry out this task. In the past, he maintained, the painters had repeatedly painted his sundials incorrectly as a consequence of their lack of technical knowledge concerning the correct construction of timepieces, compelling him to undertake numerous corrections. The council resolved the conflict through a compromise that required a permanent partnership between the painters and the compass makers: henceforth, the painting of all technical aspects of timepieces would be reserved to the compass makers, which is to say the outline, the sun, the numbers, the 12 Zodiacal symbols, and the images of the planets. All other accompanying painted elements, including figures, images, and crests, would be subject to the monopoly of the painters'

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40   For Augsburg, for example, see the preserved invoices for the new Town Hall, cf. Buff 1887.
41   Himmelein 1980, 55f.

guild.[42] As an artisan proficient in the construction of timepieces and technical devices, Klieber was ascribed with the competence to correctly design and execute wall sundials, while the execution of artistic aspects was left to the painters, held to be well-versed in that specialized craft. The council's decision, therefore, also represented a means of ensuring quality. Henceforth, the parties in dispute would be obliged to collaborate, joining together their specialized skills in order to manufacture products which neither of the parties would have been capable of producing on their own. Deemed advisable as well was cooperation with the whitewashers, in the event that house owners wished to have their facades painted as well.

5   Specialists

As a further example, chest painting and 'Dockenmachen,' which is to say the manufacture of dolls and marionettes, was a matter of dispute for the chest and trunk painters Peter Mair and Wolf(gang) Metzler in Augsburg. In many spa locations in what is now southern and southwestern Germany, for example Baden-Baden or Wildbad, painting chests (also called 'Wismutmalen,' or bismuth painting) was a recognized guild craft. There, such caskets, consisting of thin boards that were nailed together and painted with tempera on silver bismuth and sometimes finished with a yellow bismuth varnish that gave them a golden appearance, were offered for sale by chest painters, and were a popular souvenir or small gift.[43]

In Augsburg, however, bismuth painting was not established prior to the arrival of Peter Mair. The customary guild-based training of this chest painter and of Wolf Metzler, an apprentice who had arrived from Wildbad, was not recognized by the painters of the free imperial city as qualifying them for guild membership. The painters' guild declined to accept Mair as a guild master, a status that would have allowed him to work unhindered, along with Metzler's legitimate appointment as a journeyman, instead prosecuting the two chest painters as 'Störer' (troubemakers), a common term for people interfering with guild monopolies. Even Metzler's presentation of the requested certificate of apprenticeship, which certified his recognized guild training, altered

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42   Cf. Bobinger 1966, 87–88, 248, 418, 422; Museen der Stadt Augsburg – Evangelisch-Lutherische Landeskirche in Bavaria 1980 vol. 2, 448f.

43   On chest painters, see also Appuhn 1986, 791f.

FIGURE 4.13   Anonymous, bismuth casket, undated (15th – 18th century). Painted and
varnished pine, metal, 10 × 17.5 × 9 cm. Stuttgart, Landesmuseum Württemberg
IMAGE: LANDESMUSEUM WÜRTTEMBERG, HENDRIK ZWIETASCH

nothing.[44] Only a council resolution dated 30 September 1595 resolved the
dispute: the two chest painters received permission to paint simple wooden
articles for purposes of sale, and were hence permitted to practice the guild-
trained trade of bismuth painting in Augsburg without guild membership.
Mair could moreover bequeath his trade to one of his descendants: a potential
son or son in law of the chest painter would also have the right to practice his
craft in Augsburg. Moreover, the chest painter received an exclusive monopoly
on *Dockenmachen* (puppet making: in German, a *Docke* is a doll or puppet). In
the present context, which concerns the painting of wooden objects, the term

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44   The document, created on 24 August 1595 by the Baden panel and chest painter Erhart
      Weber, witnessed by the Baden citizens and chest painters Jacob Duffes, Tobias Ruaff,
      and Hannß Hannß, and sealed with a paper imprint of the seal of the town of Baden
      (Baden-Baden), confirmed Metzler's proper training as a trunk painter from 1572 until
      1577 by Jacob Kottler and by Weber himself. See StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten,
      Maler 1, fol. 270f., also published as a reproduction in Landesbildstelle Baden & Badisches
      Landesmuseum Karlsruhe 1986 vol. 2; 793, ill. 22, where the name of the master is inter-
      preted as 'Jacob Kettler.'

is interpretable primarily or entirely as referring to the painting of wooden puppets and marionettes.[45]

As before, the polychroming or painting of any type of sculpted work or of larger objects remained the unrestricted monopoly of the guild-affiliated painters. Moreover, members of the painters' guild were permitted to paint all types of wooden objects for their own use, as well as on commission, and the decision states that *neben dem flach und etzmalen nit allain die laden und trühlen, sondern auch gunglen, schisslen und was dergleichen bad und maler arbeit ist, nichtzit außgenomen oder hindangsetzt, wie die der Mair bis anhero gemacht und noch machen mag, zue maln guete macht haben.*[46] Which is to say that alongside painting and etching on flat surfaces, activities on which their guild held a monopoly, the painters were entitled to paint various small wooden objects such as caskets, boxes, spindles, and dishes – an activity that elsewhere belonged to the sphere of competence of the chest or trunk painters, which was carried out in Augsburg by Mair.[47] The Augsburg painters were however forbidden by the local regulations on tradesmen from peddling their painted wares or offering them for sale publicly outside of the three permitted Augsburg fairs: the Fair of St. Ulrich, St. Ulrich's Day, and the Fair of St. Michael's, since this would infringe upon the guild rights of the tradesmen.[48] Theoretically, the established painters were hence also permitted to practice bismuth painting, which had probably not been represented earlier in Augsburg, and for which Mair and Metzler had received proper training. It seems likely, however, that the guild-affiliated painters – who lacked access to the open market (the primary sales venue for these products) for bismuth caskets or small painted objects, and moreover lacked the necessary technical expertise for bismuth painting – made forays into the (at least for them) novel technique only in exceptional instances. The establishment of casket painting as a specialized technology in Augsburg was hence only secured by a council decision, which shielded the casket painters from the objections of the guild, while at the same time preventing them from infringing on activities covered by the monopoly of the painters' guild. Both the authorization permitting

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45   Cf. Fischer & Taigel 1986, Art. 'Docke', 107.

46   Cf. the correspondence found in StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, fasc. 1, fol. 268r–269r.

47   Cf. StadtAA, Historischer Verein, H 28, Ordnung der Augsburger Maler, Glaser, Bild-schnitzer und Goldschlager, 1549–1626 or later, §56, pp. 24–25 (without pagination; page numbers supplied for the sake of clarity), cited from ibid., p. 25. On the disputes, see Stad-tAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Maler 1, diverse fol., inter alia fol. 268f., 270f., 277f., 280–282, 284–291.

48   Brenner 2017, 41f.

the specialists to pass on their expertise to trainees and the stipulation that Mair hire only journeyman who had received training as chest painters were designed to ensure the long-term viability of this specialized trade in the town on the Lech, while at the same time ensuring that the painters need not fear that their own journeyman would be poached. The official approval and protection received by the chest and trunk painting that had already been practiced for an extended period of time in Augsburg by Peter Mair can therefore be equated with the establishment of a new specialized trade in that town.

In the succeeding period, disputes between professional painters and others concerning trades that employed painting techniques concerning *Dockenmachen* (puppet making) and the painting of small wooden objects occurred with greater frequency. One instance is exemplary: in 1595, a dispute between the guild-affiliated painters and the illuminators Jeremias Fimpel and Christof Griesser resulted in a council decision which permitted both illuminators, despite objections raised by the painters, to execute work on silver and metal cases of timepieces using enamel colors. The painting of wooden parts of the timepieces, as well as the heads of dolls, both of which they also practiced, would however be prohibited.[49] As early as the following year, the same conflict resulted in a renewed dispute between the two parties. The quarrel was resolved on 18 January 1596 through a compromise that resulted from mediation by the officials in charge of the guild ordinances on painting: it specified that the two illuminators would be still be permitted to *den goltschmiden ir golt und silber arbeit mit iren masierenden färblein zue zieren* und *den uhrmaheren die geheuß und bleh, des gleihen die kampf radlein zun uhren einzuelassen und auf die pluemen von mössing zu malen.*[50] Which is to say that they would still be permitted to work for the goldsmiths to execute enamel painting on objects fashioned from gold and silver, as well as painting timepiece cases and other components for horologists. Not least of all, the decision responded to the circumstance that here, a specialized skill was being applied in which the professional painters were not as a rule trained; nor was it covered by the guild monopoly held by the goldsmiths. For the enamel technique referred to here should not be confused with the above-mentioned and long-standing tradition of enameling based on the firing of powdered pigments in compartments

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49   Cf. StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Maler, fasc. 1, fol. 304, 306–308, 310–315, 317f., 320 and StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Zünfte, Nr. 004, Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer, Goldschläger, Silberdrahtzieher (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschlager in Augsburg. Ordinance of 1549, supplemented up until 1654, fol. 13v–14r.

50   Both citations StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Zünfte, Nr. 004, Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschlager in Augsburg (ca. 1654), fol. 13v–14r.

FIGURE 4.15   Anonymous (Augsburg), gold and painted-enamel cased verge watch,
               case painted 1650–1660. Enamel on gold. London, British Museum
               IMAGE: THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

created through depressions or bars, an example being the deep cut enamel
executed with such mastery by David Altenstetter.[51] References to 'enamel
painting' is instead related to the technique of enamel painting (painting with
enamel) that is documented beginning in the 14th century, or to the painting
on enamel that is traceable to the 16th century, and which was prevalent pri-
marily beginning in the 17th century. Since painting on enamel – despite hav-
ing a local precursor during the preceding years in the goldsmith Hans Jakob
Mair – emerged among the goldsmiths in Augsburg only in the late 17th cen-
tury, the first possibility seems more probable.[52] The question of exactly which
technique was employed by Fimpel and Griesser cannot be conclusively deter-
mined at this point. Of greater significance for the dispute with the painters'

51   Cf. Weinhold 2000, 17. On the various enamel techniques, see ibid., esp. 13–19, 21–22.
52   Cf. Weinhold 2000, 23.

guild is the circumstance that the technique they employed did not involve
the use of pits, cells, or reliefs for monochrome surfaces, that the enamel was
instead applied extensively, and worked in a painterly fashion, which must
indeed have triggered the complaint lodged against the illuminators by the
painters.

The council's decision validated the separation of the activities of the paint-
ers and the enamel painters respectively based on the materials employed, the
same criteria that had been used a number of times to demarcate the trades
from one another. Not only did the painting of objects in gold and silver with
fired pigments, undertaken by the illuminators for the goldsmiths, as well as
'inserts' on timepiece cases, sheet metal, and other parts, undertaken for mak-
ers of timepieces, along with the painting of brass flowers with fired colors, did
not fall under the customary spectrum of tasks assumed by the painters; as a
rule, the latter simply lacked both the technical expertise and the implements
required for the execution of enamel work. Emerging through the increasing
specialization and differentiation of the handicraft trades, as well as through
innovation, was a niche which the illuminators and enamel painters were able
to occupy outside of the guild structure. Contributing now to the manufacture
of decorated timepieces alongside the primary producers, namely the time-
piece makers and gold and silversmiths (cases) were the illuminators (enamel
painters), as well as, as a rule, the painters (the painted wooden parts on the
balance wheel).

For according to the council's decision, the *hülzenen dockenköpf, maderlen
uf den uhren und dergleihen malwerkh*,[53] which is to say the wooden compo-
nents of the timepieces, are reserved exclusively to the painting trade. Out-
side of the painters' guild, only the illuminators Fimpel and Griesser received
specific permission to paint dolls' heads and the wooden parts of timepieces
(i.e. images of girls appearing there), along with similar work. But they were
forbidden on threat of penalty from calling on journeyman, apprentices, or
their own children to perform such work unless the latter had been properly
trained in the craft of painting.[54] The painting of the wooden figures set on the

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53 StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Zünfte, Nr. 004, Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer, Goldschläger, Silber-
    drahtzieher. Ordinances of 1549, supplemented up until 1654, fol. 13v.

54 StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Zünfte, Nr. 004, Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer, Goldschläger, Silber-
    drahtzieher. Ordinances of 1549, supplemented up until 1654, fol. 13v. In order to prevent
    further disputes, a compromise between the two parties adopted by the council was
    incorporated into the guild ordinances; it stipulated that the special ordinances repre-
    sented an exception, and should not be taken as establishing a precedent for future dis-
    putes. The letters that preceded the agreement between the painters and illuminators
    are preserved in StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Maler, fasc. 1, among others fol.

balances of timepieces, such as girls or memento mori motifs, also remained a task for painters, who sought to defend this privilege against encroachments by illuminators.[55]

6   Synagonism

The term Synagonism refers to the advancement of an artwork or art form through a productive contention with other 'arts', which is to say an attempt to adopt phenomena characteristic of other media productively for one's 'own' art form, hence arriving at a more complex, multilayered result. The concept of synagonism is well-suited to an incisive appraisal of the above-described proceedings in two different ways:

First, the regulations deployed represented a necessary procedure with respect to a synagonism that was consistently present. Such synagonism consisted in the continuous absorption of elements from neighboring domains of activity with the aim of making these fruitful for one's own production. In order to restrict such manifestations of synagonism, i.e. the adoption of such elements by individuals not affiliated with the painters' guild, violators were prosecuted at the instigation of the corporation on the basis of the division of trades described in the normative guidelines. But the actions taken by the painters' guild against individuals, groups, or corporations said to have infringed upon their trade, as reflected in various petitions, supplications, statutes, and decrees, were hardly unique to image painters. They were instead symptomatic of efforts to differentiate one trade from the others, always with the intention of achieving 'food security,' ('Nahrungssicherung') which is to say of securing the income that would allow the individual guild member to achieve self-sufficiency. Adopted to this end as well were alliances with other

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304, 306–308, 310–315, 317f., 320. The resolution of 18 January 1596 is found in ibid. (StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Handwerkerakten, Maler, fasc. 1) in fol. 321–322. In identical wording, it was incorporated into the ordinances of the painters' guild, and is preserved in a transcript from circa 1654; see StadtAA, Reichsstadt, Zünfte, Nr. 004, Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer, Goldschläger, Silberdrahtzieher (Ordnung der Maler, Glaser, Bildhauer und Goldschlager in Augsburg. Ordinances of 1549, supplemented up until 1654, fol. 13v–14r. On the dispute between the guild painters and the illuminator Jeremias Fimpel, see also Spamer 1930, 57–58.

55   An appeal by the painters dated September 1647 shows that this remained a point of contention between the painters and the illuminators even after the latter had been converted by a decree of the city council into a guild craft with protection by ordinances on 22 December 1626; cf. Bierdimpfl 1884, 28–30.

trades; these were designed to delimit the respective domains of competence from one another, as well as agreements with third parties and/or joint procedures against third parties, as illustrated by the action taken by the Augsburg painters, etchers, and goldsmiths in opposition to the ring makers and purse makers. Local individuals who were often active primarily as artisans, specialists arriving from elsewhere, and notable nonlocal artists were often perceived as competitors by the guild-affiliated painters, and were hence prosecuted by them. Attempts to suppress such synagonistic appropriations were manifested in charters designed to delimit the craft monopoly of the painters from the spectrum of tasks covered by other artisans, as well as from non-guild affiliated activities, and were based on the use of specific working materials, techniques, or motifs. Such definitions of the areas of competence and the associated specialization of trades with reference to specific raw materials and implements, and to the manufacture of certain products – an example being the use of oil paints – excluded extensive categories of individuals from guild-affiliated painting.

Secondly, the concept of synagonism is well-adapted to precisely evaluating the special permissions and exceptions issued by the authorities, which override the guild rights in force in support of the public interest by establishing new technologies in a given municipality, whether temporarily or permanently. Emerging at times through the existence of guild statutes were new spaces that were situated 'between' statutes; only these rendered legal appropriations made by artisans without guild affiliations. For it was the precise definition of activities that stood under guild monopolies that generated spaces 'ex negative', which existed outside of the spaces protected by normative guidelines – spaces for unregulated labor and the liberal arts. These spaces, which remained beyond the standardized activities covered by the guilds, also harbored the potential for the explicit protection of newly arrived artisans or individuals planning to settle in a given town, while also promoting new niche technologies. Regarding the proceedings initiated by the Augsburg painters against Peter Mair and Wolf Metzler, as well as against Jeremias Fimpel and Christof Griesser, the claim that such individuals have infringed upon a guild monopoly proved toothless, since these artisans, as bismuth painters or enamel painters respectively, practiced new techniques and employed materials that had never been covered by the monopoly enjoyed by the painters' guild. And as Hubert Gerhard successfully argued, his terracotta figures did not fall under the monopoly held by the painters, but instead qualified – like his large-format cast bronze figures – as a locally new and moreover highly prized technology. It therefore proved possible for the authorities to protect these new technologies from efforts by these painters' guild to enforce their monopoly, while the

painters were in turn free to involve themselves synagonistically with novel practices, appropriating them fruitfully in their own production.

As shown above, moreover, the occasional overriding by the authorities of valid guild rights could advance practices by non-guild members that did not fit neatly into existing niches, even where these were said to infringe upon the guild monopoly enjoyed by the guild-affiliated painters. And not infrequently, special regulations or exceptions were issued for the sake of the welfare of the town and its citizens, who benefited when new technologies or exceptionally high-ranking artists became established locally, or were at least able to work in the town free of the restrictions imposed by guild regulations. And from the perspective of the local authorities, a synagonistic relationship that took the form of a productive confrontation on the part of local artists and artisans with newly authorized art forms was indeed highly desirable. An example of the licensing of an artist in contravention of valid guild rules is the above-discussed authorization of 1560, adopted by the Augsburg city council and by the mayor, probably thanks to an intervention by an influential client, which made possible Giulio Licinio's acceptance by the painters' guild, although he was unmarried. At a time when the 'welsche' (Italian) style enjoyed great popularity in Augsburg, it seems likely that Hieronymus Rehlinger deliberately recruited the Italian artist to cover the facades of his house using fresco technique, and had intervened with the council on Licinio's behalf in response to the complaint lodged by the painters' guild.[56]

In many places, the authorities commonly reserved the right to adapt existing guild statutes as needed via council decisions, even retrospectively. Inscribed on occasion into the regulations, moreover, was the stipulation that in general, the authorities reserved the right to authorize specialists by means of individual exceptions and in contravention of current legal practice. This was the case in Nuremberg in relation to the regulations on painters, for example, when in 1595, the city council explicitly granted authorization to exceptionally capable journeyman from the Netherlands or elsewhere who wished to be active in the town on a temporary basis as portraitists or specialists in other painting genres. Such individuals, however, would by no means be permitted to maintain their own households.[57] Since the employment of assistants was as a rule practiced 'around one's own hearth',[58] which is to say that it was associated

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56   For a detailed description of the paintings on the facades of Rehlinger's house, see Hascher 1996, 462–468.

57   Cf. ordinances concerning the Nuremberg painters and etchers of 1595, Staatsarchiv Nuremberg, Reichsstadt Nürnberg, Rep. 52b, Amts- und Standbücher, vol. 259, fol. 919r–922r, here fol. 920r, published in Tacke et al. 2018, III.80–1, 938–942, here 940; Tacke Ordnung 2001, 168–173.

58   The German term for this prerequisite was 'Eigen Haus und Rauch'.

with the maintenance of an independent household,[59] in which said assistants were expected to reside and which as a rule presupposed marriage, such single painters were generally not permitted to hire apprentices or journeyman. A further example that could be cited is the Ulm guild regulations of 1549. There, it was established that the council could grant special permits, provided *ein kunstericher oder gschickhter mahler, bildhauer, seydenstikher, glaser oder buchbinder alher käme und sich allhie zusezen und sein handtwerkh zutreiben begehrte*, and that the council wished to allow his establishment and his entrance into the grocer's guild.[60] Which is to say that the council reserved the right to grant permission to especially skillful or proficient painters, sculptors, embroiderers, glaziers, or bookbinders to settle in Ulm, even if this infringed upon the regulations of the tradesmen's guild. In Ulm, ultimately, all of these occupations were grouped together as the painters' guild or trade, which fell under the tradesmen's guild.[61]

Such special concessions and the targeted recruitment of experts promoted technology transfer, and were hence a means of promoting industry, in relation to which synagonistic processes were explicitly deemed as desirable. In the later Middle Ages, for example, the towns recruited specialists and skilled workers in a targeted way, for example in the textile industry or the technically specialized trade of gunsmithing.[62] The practice was widespread in the southern Alpine region as well. In the Italian cities, for example, metal and textile workers in particular were sought after, with the aim of assisting the domestic trades through special expertise and/or initiating the development of one or several export industries.[63] Often, the initiation of such relationships occurred via long-distance traders, who 'enjoyed contacts with other locations, knowledge of the success of promising technologies, financial resources, and access to markets by virtue of their supra-regional activities.'[64]

Even though painting, among municipal occupations, represented an economically lightweight, not to say insignificant trade, a deeper motivation lay behind the simplified authorization of specialists and exceptional artists. The intention was to establish hitherto unfamiliar technologies in a given municipality, while attracting uncommonly talented artists who would serve as an

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59   Cf. Wissell & Schraepler 1971, 97.
60   Cf. Ordnung der Maler, Bildhauer, Seidensticker, Glaser, Kartenmaler und Buchbinder, 31 January 1549 and later supplements, in Stadtarchiv Ulm, A [2508], fol. 6v, published in Tacke et al. 2018, v.114–3, 468–479, here 471, citation ibid.
61   Cf. Weilandt 1993, 372, 374, for further examples, ibid.
62   Cf. Reith 2005, 358; cf. also Holbach 1999; also Schulz 2016.
63   Cf. Schulz & Suchard 2005, 81–83.
64   Quote translated from Reith 2005, 358.

impetus for local enterprises, bringing together exceptionally capable individuals for the purposes of municipal 'self-marketing' and the prestige of its elites. And it is certainly no accident that the genre of portraiture is mentioned explicitly in the sources with reference to certain striking instances of exemptions granted by economically and politically aspiring imperial cities such as Augsburg, Nuremberg, and Ulm (two of which, as central trading towns that had moreover served a number of times as the venues for imperial diets, could expect numerous affluent visitors from elsewhere). And it also suggests a desire to recruit qualified portrait artists – an exceptionally active sector of the art market – in flourishing towns characterized by powerful patrician classes, an ambitious bourgeoisie, and high-ranking guests. Thanks to large numbers of visitors, these towns also boasted a high demand for technically innovative handicrafts in the lower-priced market segment, including bismuth painting and doll and puppet making.

Both existing law and newly adopted statutes made possible the limited protection of the liberal arts as well as of new technologies and areas of activity, whether as a whole or instead with reference to individuals, thereby protecting them against monopolization by the guilds. Continuous negotiation concerning activities monopolized by the guilds, the free space lying between these, and the granting of special authorizations to engage in specific activities, whether granted to individuals or to small groups: all were central to the progressive differentiation of the guilds into increasingly specialized trades, and in the gradual formation and establishment of guild-independent specialized technologies, which might however later receive guild protection through tailor-made statutes.

For the craft trades in general, specialization ensured superior quality while at the same time tending to lower prices. As research shows, this was often true as well for the category of 'high art,' so often split off from craft production from a contemporary perspective; according to former research, Veit Stoß achieved an exalted level of artistry not *despite*, but instead precisely *in response to* strict municipal requirements and the specialization of the trades prevailing in Nuremberg.[65] The restrictions with regard to the accessibility of tools and materials that were stipulated by guild statutes regarding the separation of trades compelled Stoß to specialize in the medium of wood, in which he then came to shine so brilliantly.

That within the medium of (oil) painting as well, enhancement of quality could be achieved through greater specialization is well illustrated by Dutch

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65   Cf. Baxandall 1983, 15.

FIGURE 4.16   Paulus Potter, *The Bull*, painted 1647. Oil on canvas, 339 × 235.5 cm, Mauritshuis,
The Hague
IMAGE: MAURITSHUIS, THE HAGUE

and Flemish painting of the 17th century, when a flourishing economy in
the Netherlands led to the rise of a so-called Golden Age. An unprecedented
demand for furnishings, decorative objects, and works of art, by means of
which a well-established and steadily continually group of prosperous burgers,
traders, and patricians, but also tradesmen and other citizens – the strata that
could be termed the middle-class – strove to demonstrate its newly elevated
status, fueled a market that gave producers access to considerable revenues
from sales, encouraging the rise of new genres such as landscape painting and
genre painting, soon making it possible for hundreds of painters to compete
with one another within a given town.[66] Specialization in a particular genre,
pictorial theme, or motif allowed artists to concentrate on the naturalistic
rendering of a favored motif while honing their skills, and hence occupying a

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66   There exists an extensive literature on this topic, among them North 2001, esp. 101f., who
shows that during the 1670s, for example, estate inventories in Delft listed an average of
20 paintings, and in Amsterdam 40 paintings per household, and that larger collections as
well were commonplace during that decade; a cloth dyer in Leiden, for example, owned
64 paintings (1643), while two other dyers owned 96 and 103 paintings respectively.

unique niche within the multifarious products offered on the art market. An example of this is the painter Paulus Potter, renowned for his depictions of animals, cows in particular.

Researchers have long been familiar with the frequency of collaborations between in some instances highly-esteemed artists, in particular in 17th century Holland and Flanders.[67] Frans Francken II, for example, worked together with 12 different – and equally celebrated – artists, and at least 71 of his works are collaborations.[68] Moreover, this includes collaborations between painters who and workshops that would otherwise have stood in a competitive relationship to one another on the art market. For painters of the Golden Age, this is also – or in particular? – true for artists who worked at a qualitatively and artistically exceptional level, and who specialized in specific genres or motifs.

Extensive collaborations between established artists are also documented for a number of major art centers. The extreme spatial proximity between the workshops of a given town, and in particular those of successful artists, who often occupied the same or adjacent districts, must have fostered such associations. Hans Holbein the Elder, Gregor Erhart, and Adolf Daucher, mentioned already in the context of intermedial collaborations, for example, lived in Augsburg in immediate proximity to one another.[69] Regarding the numerous collaborations between Antwerp painters, the minimal distance between their workshops must have fostered rapid and uncomplicated exchanges, as well as close coordination when they joined forces to create a picture. Particularly notable among the collaborative works of the Antwerp painters is a pair of panels bearing allegories of the five senses that was purchased by the town of Antwerp from Jan Brueghel the Elder in October of 1618, and which perished in a fire at Coudenberg Palace in 1731; the work is known today from copies, dating from 1633, that are found today in the Museo del Prado in Madrid.

The large-format panels, 'waerinne gevrocht hebben tweelff diversche van de principaelste meesters deser stadt' (an endeavor that involved twelve of the best Antwerp masters),[70] brought together an exceptionally large number of artists. Substantially involved in this prestigious commission were Peter Paul Rubens and Jan Brueghel the Elder, the only artists mentioned by name in the relevant sources. In an unprecedented way, these paintings, received by Albert

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67   Exemplary here are Woollett & Suchtelen 2006, and the international conference 'Many Antwerp Hands: Collaborations in Netherlandish Art, 1400–1750,' which took place on 5/6 November 2018 at the Rubenianum in Antwerp.

68   Peeters 2002, 70.

69   Brenner Künstler 2021, 202f; Brenner 2018.

70   Cited from Suchtelen 2006, 99, n. 12.

FIGURE 4.17   Jan Brueghel the Elder, Hendrick van Balen the Elder, and Frans Francken II, *Allegory of sight and smell*, painted *c.*1620. Oil on canvas, 176 × 264 cm, Museo del Prado
IMAGE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

and Isabella of Spain as a gift from the city of Antwerp, offered the regents works by the entire contemporary 'Antwerp School' – and that on just two panels. Among the likely contributors alongside the above-named pair was Jan Brueghel the Younger, Frans Snyders, Frans Francken II, Hendrik van Balen, Jan Wildens, and Joos de Momper.[71] More celebrated today is the collaborative *Allegories of the Five Senses* produced by Peter Paul Rubens and Jan Brueghel the Elder in circa 1617 – 1618, in all likelihood also for Albert and Isabella of Spain, also preserved today in the Prado; here, a single large-format panel is devoted to each of the five senses. Rubens and Brueghel – a well-known instance of a calculated collaboration between competitors – produced numerous further artworks jointly,[72] and cooperated frequently with other artistic competitors as well.[73] Jan Brueghel the Elder also worked with Hendrick van Balen, for

71   Suárez Blanco 2016; Suchtelen 2006, 95f.
72   For examples, see Woollett & Suchtelen 2006, cat. nos. 1–13.
73   Woollett & Suchtelen 2006.

example.[74] All of these artists resided in Antwerp in close proximity to one another.[75] Given their shared presence in Antwerp, collaborations between these artists were relatively convenient, and the relatively short routes between their workshops made possible the alternating production of individual works and regular consultations.

But highly successful and lasting collaborations between painters were also carried out across great distances. One example is Hans Rottenhammer. During his time in Venice, he collaborated with other painters on a number of large-format canvases, among them a *Venus und Amor*[76] created with Paolo Fiammingo, and the same is true of his stay in Rome. There, for example, he executed figures for a *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* produced by Jan Brueghel the Elder, who also resided in the Eternal City in 1595, versions of which are preserved among others in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna and the Mauritshuis in The Hague. Even after returning to Venice in autumn of 1595, Rottenhammer continued working with Jan Brueghel, who had meanwhile returned to Antwerp. Among the numerous products of this international collaboration is the *Baptism of Christ in the Jordan River*, *Christ's Descent into Limbo* (see figure 4.18), the *Contest of Apollo and Marsyas* (the *Judgment of Midas*), and the *Marriage of Neptune and Amphitrite*.[77] Rottenhammer also worked across the boundaries of cities and countries with Paul Bril, then living in Rome. When in Rome, he painted the figures for Bril's *Rest on the Flight to Egypt*, among others.[78] Following his return to Venice, they collaborated on the production of paintings on copper, among them the *Christ with Mary and Martha* preserved today in the Musei citivi di Treviso.[79] The logistical demands of such international collaborations were enormous. For the collaboration between Rottenhammer and Brueghel, the tiny, shock-sensitive copper images had to be shipped back and forth between Venice and Antwerp, possibly via ship on an Atlantic route around Western Europe, or more probably via land route across the Alps via postal service or messenger.[80] Consultations between the artists, moreover, were possible only indirectly, a drawback that

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74   For examples, see Woollett & Suchtelen 2006, cat. nos. 17–21.

75   For a map showing the residences of Jan Brueghel the Elder, Peter Paul Rubens, Hendrick van Balen, and Frans Snyders, see Woollett 2006, 11, figure 11.

76   The painting is preserved today in the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum in Braunschweig.

77   These paintings are found today in the Schaetzlerpalais – Deutsche Barockgalerie Augsburg, the Mauritshuis in the Hague, Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, and the Hermitage in St. Petersburg.

78   This painting is found today in the USC Fisher Museum of Art in Los Angeles.

79   Bischoff 2005.

80   On the postal routes, see Poettering 2013, 229–232.

FIGURE 4.18   Jan Brueghel the Elder, Hans Rottenhammer, *Christ's Descent into Limbo*, painted 1597. Oil
on copper, 35.5 × 26.5 cm, Mauritshuis, The Hague
IMAGE: MAURITSHUIS, THE HAGUE

appears less grave when we consider that in particular experienced art-
ists had already established well-functioning modes of cooperation, so that
detailed discussions concerning individual paintings were not absolutely
imperative.[81]

The question nonetheless arises of the motivation for such elaborate collab-
orations. Both Jan Brueghel and Paul Bril were celebrated artists and in high
demand, and both were perfectly capable, presumably, of painting adequate
figures themselves. In particular when it comes to collaborations between
Antwerp artists, the participants were highly experienced and established fig-
ures, all of them – despite their respective degrees of specialization – adept at
executing their paintings to a high degree of quality on their own. It is worth

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81   Cf. Doherty, Leonard & Wadum 2006, 217f., 228; here, it is argued with reference to Peter
Paul Rubens and Jan Brueghel the Elder that because the artists had a precise conception
of the overall composition and placement of the figures, detailed preliminary drawings
or a textual specification of the conditions of the collaboration, which would presumably
have reflected extensive prior consultations, were rendered relatively superfluous.

stressing however, that while such a specialized painter would have been quite competent at adequately rendering other types of objects (flowers, precious metal objects, animals, human figures, and so forth), he could not have done so to the same level of excellence as another artist specializing in that motif. And in particular for artists working at a high level, precisely this was the motivation for numerous collaborations among painters. In such collective works, their complementary and reciprocally enhancing capacities – although their relations on the art market were indeed highly competitive – were joined together in a way that showcased the exceptional abilities and specialized expertise of each.[82] This resulted in objects that attained new superlatives, both by virtue of their exceptional painterly qualities, as well as by virtue of the celebrity of the participating artists and their workshops. This was especially clear with the now lost *Allegories of the Five Senses* painted for Isabella and Albert of Spain. Not only did this precious gift testify to the self-confidence of Antwerp as a prospering city that was home to high-quality artists. For the regents, the pair of panels –whose special value consisted in the way in which each detail had been painted by an artist specializing in that particular motif, allowing each element to serve as the best example of its kind – also represented a singular enhancement to their art collections.

As elaborated above, this was the case as well for other artisanal traditions and collaborations. With more technically complex objects, specialization in specific materials and techniques, genres and motifs made collaboration between a number of independent artisans (or at times between specialists within the same trade) necessary and/or desirable. Participating in the manufacture of timepieces in Augsburg alongside horologists were, among others, silversmith and goldsmiths, painters and enamel painters (illuminators), while the fresh painting of a house facade, including sundial, involved collaborations between whitewashers, compass makers, and painters, and large carved altarpieces resulted from the collaborative work of joiners, carvers of figures, polychromy specialists and gilders, painters and blacksmiths.

Disregarding the circumstance that among the artist's range of tasks were those we might regard today as rather mundane,[83] specialization in specific types of work allowed them to concentrate on perfecting their technical and artistic abilities within their chosen fields. This is true of activities such as oil painting, which we would regard today as belonging to the fine arts, as well

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82   Cf. Doherty, Leonard & Wadum 2006, 217, on the collaborations between Brueghel and Rubens.

83   Among other things, they decorated everyday objects and produced small art objects such as religious icons for direct sale, adorned municipal objects such as grain sacks with the city's coat of arms, blackened writing tablets, and so forth; cf. Brenner 2017, 36, 44; Wagner 2014.

as those we would classify as handicrafts. The interplay between practitioners of specialized areas, often implemented normatively or animated by market mechanisms, and generally emerging only through confrontations and/or attempts at differentiation, allowed artists to cooperate in producing works of art and handcrafted objects at the highest technical, craft, and artistic level, arriving at results that no 'all-arounder' could have produced in comparable quality.

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A Soul for a Bridge: On the History of Architectural Collaborations with the Devil

Jasmin Mersmann

Gnashing his teeth, but willing, a half-naked devil helps a bishop build a church. Holding a trowel in his right hand, the saint allows the crow-footed creature to hand him pieces of stone, while a demonic comrade eagerly wheels in mortar (figures 5.1a, 5.1b). The painted wooden relief, which dates from the first quarter of the sixteenth century, is one of the earliest known depictions of a legend according to which the church on Lake Wolfgang was erected with the assistance of the devil.[1] In a roughly contemporary panel picture from the Stiftsgalerie St. Lambrecht, the saintly Bishop no longer soils his own hands, and instead gestures with his white gloves, imparting instructions that are carried out by eager little devils equipped with trowels, hammers, plumb lines, and compasses (figure 5.2). As a reward for his assistance, the devil demands the soul of the first pilgrim to enter the church, but after the saint says a prayer, God sends a wolf into the church as the first visitor, and it furiously bites the cheated assistant.

As Rudolf Zinnhobler has shown, the active participation by the devil in church building was a relatively late addition to the Legend of Saint Wolfgang. The earliest written document, which dates from 1369, claims that the saint built the church *propriis manibus*; accordingly, Michael Pacher's famous *St. Wolfgang Altarpiece* of 1471/81 shows him alone with an assistant.[2] Johannes Wyssenburger's woodcut of 1515 contains an allusion to the devil's demand for the first pilgrim, but not his participation in the building.[3] Only in Johann Christoph Wasner's vita of 1599 does the devil offer his services as a helper and supplier of building materials – a collaboration that evidently struck the author as so unusual he felt himself obliged to supply an explanation: 'In fact, the saints have to deal with devils, and must compel them to perform labor that

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1 See Zinnhobler 1976, 57–59 and 114–115, no. 61. Around 1854, the romantic painter Moritz von Schwind transformed the legend into an allegory of the cunning overcoming of adversity in the *Legend of the Bishop and the Devil* (oil on wood, Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemälde-sammlungen, Schack Collection).

2 See Koller 1998, 32, pls. 10 and 16.

3 See Zinnhobler 1976, 58.

FIGURE 5.1A   Master of the Legend of St. Wolfgang, *The Building of the Church of St. Wolfgang with the Help of the Devil*, 1515/1520, wood, Linz, Schlossmuseum (originally in the Monastery of St. Florian) OÖ Landes-Kultur GmbH, Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte bis 1918, inv.-no. S11
IMAGE: OÖ LANDES-KULTUR GMBH

FIGURE 5.1B   Master of the Legend of St. Wolfgang, *Wolf Disguised as a Pilgrim*, 1515/1520
(see 5.1a).

serves the glory of God, and display the merits of the saints, but are nothing
but mockery and injury to the devil'.[4]

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4   Wasner 1599, fol. 53: 'Dann es mögen die heyligen Leuth wol etwas mit den Teuflen schaf-
fen, und sie zu verrichtung etlicher Geschäfft, so zu der Ehr Gottes unnd anzaigung deß

FIGURE 5.2   Anonymous, *The Building of the Church of St. Wolfgang*, 1510–1520, tempera
on wood, St. Lambrecht, Stiftsgalerie
IMAGE: INSTITUT FÜR REALIENKUNDE, UNIVERSITÄT SALZBURG

In earlier legends of the saints, however, the devil appears not as a laborer, and
instead – as one would expect – as a saboteur of sacred building projects. In

Verdiensts seiner Heyligen, ihme dem Teufel aber zu Spott und Schanden geraichen,
zwingen'.

the legend of Saint Benedict, chronicled by Gregory the Great, for example, the devil weighs down a stone that becomes movable only after being blessed by the founder of the order, and even strikes dead a monk who is constructing a monastery wall.[5] In his fresco cycle in San Miniato al Monte, which dates from 1388, Spinello Aretino includes both the scene with the devil, who squats down obstinately on the stone slab, as well as the dramatic episode of the building of the wall, where the powers of the dark demon cause a monk to be buried beneath a mass of white stone. The stones create wounds from which bright red blood flows across the monk's pale face and onto the ground, before the victim is brought back to life by Saint Benedict in the foreground (figures 5.3, 5.4).[6] Here, the intervention of the devil not only testifies *ex negativo* to the building's godliness, but also offers Benedict an opportunity to demonstrate his sanctity.

The legends of master builders that emerged in the sixteenth century belong to a tradition, stretching all the way back to late antiquity, of tales of people who became engaged with the devil in the hope of acquiring certain skills, worldly treasures, power, or love. A search for this motif in artist's biographies, however, tends to lead to disappointment. Encounters by artists with the devil are generally depicted as disturbing rather than productive: Hugo van der Goes, for example, who was plagued by terrifying visions, ceased painting altogether due to his mental derangement.[7] Spinello Aretino, confronted by the devil for the offense of portraying him with extreme ugliness, is frightened to death by a demonic dream apparition.[8] After he has made a pact with the devil, only an exorcism saves the Bavarian painter Christoph Haizmann.[9] Franz Xaver Messerschmidt found himself pursued by the demonic 'spirit of proportion', which he kept at bay only by means of the grimaces he then translated into images.[10] Only Benvenuto Cellini – who styles himself in his autobiography as an exceptional character, and who continually comes into contact with the elements of fire and with the demonic – succeeds in channeling this 'diabolical furor' in order to create a masterwork when casting his Perseus. In the end, however, the success of the creation of the bronze statue, which seems to surpass human powers and nearly costs the sculptor his life, seems nonetheless to be indebted to divine favor.[11]

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5   See Gregory 1979, book II.9, 170 and II.11, 172; see Voragine 2014, part 1, 661, no. 49.

6   See Poeschke 2003, 392–403 and Weppelmann 2003, 180–181, no. 33. The episode is already described in a manuscript by Desiderius of Montecassino from the end of the eleventh century (Vat.lat. 1202, fol. 40A) and later also in Luca Signorelli's Benedict cycle in the Abbey of Monte Oliveto Maggiore (see Oberer 2008, 205–206, no. 24).

7   See Dolev 1999, 125–137.

8   See Vasari 1966–1987, vol. 2, 288; see also Fehrenbach 2005, 1–40, esp. 21.

9   See Haizmann 2017 and the forthcoming monograph by the author of this article.

10   See Gampp 2008.

11   See Cellini 1996, 673: 'quel diabolico furore'. An essential source for the link between demonology and art is Cole 2002.

FIGURE 5.3   Spinello Aretino, *Scenes from the Life of St. Benedict: The Devil Weighing Down a Stone*, *c.*1387/88, fresco, San Miniato al Monte
IMAGE: JOACHIM POESCHKE, *WANDMALEREI DER GIOTTOZEIT IN ITALIEN. 1280–1400*, MUNICH 2003, PL. 240

In the literature on art, angels more often than demons appear as benevolent assistants. They leap into the fray whenever the human paintbrush fails, creating veracious images – whether in sleep or after a supplication by the painter. Not only the celebrated painting of the Virgin in ss. Annunziata in Florence is said to have been completed by a divine helper: among other images attributed to angels are the *vera effigies* of St. Francis of Paola and an icon of Alypius, the Russian saint and iconographer.[12]

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12   See Holmes 2004; Lucas Valdès, *Angel Painting the Portrait of St. Francis of Paola*, 1710, oil on canvas, Museo de Bellas Artes de Sevilla.

FIGURE 5.4   Spinello Aretino, *Scenes from the Life of St. Benedict: The Devil Slays a Monk by
             Collapsing a Wall*, *c.*1387/88, fresco, San Miniato al Monte
             PHOTO: JASMIN MERSMANN

According to legend, master builders have been involved with the devil with
greater frequency and success than painters. As a source for this motif, Ernst
Kris and Otto Kurz have identified the apocryphal Testament of Solomon,
according to which the king compelled demons to assist him in building the
first Temple in Jerusalem.[13] Historically, it can be shown that these legends
emerged in particular where an achievement had been deemed unattainable
for humans, or where competitive situations between two master builders or a
variety of commissioners generated an "agonal climate". And while the earlier
legends – according to which the devil appears as an obstacle to the comple-
tion of a building pleasing to God or beneficial to the general welfare – are
interpretable as a kind of cover narrative for constructive challenges or as the
personification of adverse natural forces, explanations of legends that involve
the enlistment of the devil to accomplish such tasks appear more complex.
The dyadic relation now becomes triadic: at least temporarily, human and
devil struggle together to defeat a competitor or overcome natural forces. To

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13   See Kris & Kurz 1979, 58. Another source might be the pagan legends of giant builders
      who were later "diabolized". The Edda tells the story of a giant who, after constructing the
      castle of Asgard, is deceived by the gods (see Röhrich 1970, 29).

the extent that antagonistic forces, emerging from diverse motivations, work together to engender a great work in a way that parallels Martin Warnke's interpretation of medieval cathedral building as a 'product of balance'),[14] such cooperation can be referred to as 'synagonistic'. The devil, of course, is not concerned with building as such, and instead with capturing souls. But the master builder harnesses the Evil One for his own purposes – for the sake of a seemingly impossible building. The competitor even contributes to progress involuntarily by spurring his rival onward toward greater triumphs.

In the legends, the devil appears as a welcome ally because – despite his inability to work miracles – he is able to accomplish extraordinary feats within the laws of nature, and (as a disembodied spirit) to travel through both space and time. At the same time, however, the figure of the devil is interpretable as an embodiment of the unease that was associated with the construction of Babylonian buildings, in particular towers and bridges. As a liminal creature, a trickster, and a border crosser, the devil appears with particular frequency as a *builder of bridges* – not solely, as in John Milton, between Earth and Heaven,[15] but also between territories that have been separated by God, by nature, or by terrestrial rulers: countless bridges have been named after him, with at least fifty 'devil's bridges' located in France, Spain, Italy, England, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Austria, Germany, and Switzerland.[16]

In the research to date, no systematic attempt has been made to generate a reliable chronology of the emergence of the first texts documenting legends of master builders in the modern era.[17] The present study cannot fulfil this

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14   Warnke 1976, 154. When it came to the construction of large-scale projects, the new 'level of demand', which exceeded the resources of the individual, made collaboration indispensable. In particular cathedral building was 'a field of social action ... within which a variety of in part antagonistic social forces found a modus vivendi for working together constructively to reach a predetermined goal'. (see ibidem, 151–153). In particular, the speed with which such buildings were completed (see ibidem, 23–24) is a topos that is also invoked with an eye toward satanic collaboration. On Martin Warnke and the concept of "synagonism", see Yannis Hadjinicolaou's contribution in this volume.

15   In John Milton's *Paradise Lost,* Satan appears – in a travesty of the pope as *Pontifex Maximus* – as a bridge-builder ('new wondrous pontifice'; 10.348). He petrifies chaos, thereby erecting a bridge between hell and earth (10.294, 10.312f.).

16   In contrast, I am aware of only one bridge said to be constructed with the assistance of angels: the Pont d'Avignon above an arm of the Rhône River, known mainly because of its ruinous condition. According to legend, a shepherd youth, St. Bénézet, is commanded by a celestial voice to build a bridge and granted superhuman strength, allowing him to lay the heavy cornerstone (see Walter 2006, 65–76).

17   The *Handwörterbuch des Deutschen Aberglaubens* for example, presents examples without information on dates of origin (see Bächtold-Stäubli 1927, cols. 1659–1665). The same is true of the so-called *Aarne-Thompson-Index* (see Aarne & Thompson 1961, 275 and 372 (type 810A and 1191), as well as for collections of legends and monographs on individual

desideratum either. However, it tests the hypothesis according to which narratives concerning pacts with the devil by master builders rarely emerged before the sixteenth century, and experienced their broadest dissemination in the eighteenth century.[18] As so often, these putatively "ancient" legends tell us less about the historical periods about which they supposedly report than about the epochs during which they themselves were produced and disseminated – and about the notions then prevailing with regard to earlier historical eras.

Even very early on, popular culture sought to create a distance from the fearful figure of the devil, rendering him a ludicrous figure or affirming human superiority within the delicate synagonism of mortal and demon: in most legends, the devil is outwitted or cheated.[19] Many master builders took advantage of a loophole in their contracts by sending an animal, instead of a human being, across the threshold as the first to enter the building (St. Wolfgang, Regensburg, Frankfurt, Schöllenen Gorge), or by shortening the time period stipulated for the completion of the building, for instance by having a rooster crow early (Roter Hauberg near Husum).[20]

Most of the legends do not deplore these tricky collaborations with demonic forces, and instead celebrate the ingenuity of the master builders for their ability to turn antagonistic forces toward their own – and their community's – advantage. Beginning in the Middle Ages, the documents not only assert the *communis utilitas* of bridges, which – as in the case of the bridge over the Danube River in Vienna, built in 1439 – 'prove greatly beneficial and useful to lands and to people, to rich and poor alike', but also deem their construction and maintenance as *pium opus*.[21] Not only did bridges qualify as legal entities with their own official seals and secular revenues, but were also the recipient of pious donations, and even indulgences.[22]

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buildings. An exception is Gustav Gugitz, who includes an attempt at a chronology in his collection of Viennese legends; the volume includes the pact with the devil by the cathedral architect (see Gugitz 1952, 218–219).

18   Frank Knight already observed that the notion that the devil not only demands a victim, but also appears himself as a master builder, emerges relatively late as part of these legends (see Knight 1910, 851).

19   See Wünsche 1905, chap. 2.

20   The problem of animal souls is passed over with vague formulations such as "the first one alive" (Grimm & Grimm 1816, 437) or "the first to cross the bridge" (Scheuchzer 1708, 44). Sacrificed are cats (Pont del Diable, Catalonia; Pont du Diable in Céret/Pyrenees), dogs (Schöllenen Gorge, Devil's Bridge in Ceredigion (Wales), Kirkby Lonsdale (England)), rabbits (Düvelsbrück on the Elbe near Hamburg), swine (Ponte del Diavolo on the Via Francigena near Lucca), and roosters (Regensburg; Bamberg; Frankfurt, Sachsenhausen).

21   Maschke 1977, esp. 271–272 and 282.

22   See ibidem, 271 and 280–285; Becker 1869.

Examined here are two paradigmatic cases in which synagonism between human and devil occurs in a situation characterized by an *agon*: first, the building of the *Stone Bridge* (*Steinerne Brücke*) in Regensburg, where the master builders of the cathedral and the bridge respectively competed with one another, and where the bishopric and the citizenry, along with two adjoining territories, stood in a relationship of conflict; and secondly, the erection of the *Devil's Bridge* at St. Gotthard, where the builders were obliged to pit themselves against the overwhelming forces of nature.

1   Regensburg

The *Stone Bridge* (*Pons lapideus*), erected between 1136 and 1145 in the form of 16 segment arches across two arms of the Danube River near Regensburg, linking the free imperial city with the Bavarian dukedom, was adorned with numerous reliefs (figure 5.5).[23] Depicted alongside the 'Brückenmännlein' (little bridge man), which has been dated to 1446, a small nude male figure that emblematizes civil liberties and emancipation from the guardianship of the bishop,[24] and a variety of probably apotropaic emblems (a basilisk and a weasel as the only animal capable of withstanding its deadly gaze), is a cockfight (figures 5.6–5.8).[25] In 1664, Matthäus Merian interpreted the reliefs, along with the 'Bruckmanndl,' as references to the legendary rivalry between the master builders of the cathedral and the bridge respectively, behind which, presumably, was a conflict between bishop and municipality: 'The quarreling and rancor between the builders of the tower and the bridge was suggested not just by the little man [who looks toward the cathedral], but also by the relief of a cockfight that can be seen on the bridge'.[26] Jakob Sturm, who arrived in

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23   See Dirmeier 2005.

24   The figure was restored in 1579 and moved in 1810; in 1826, the fragment was transferred to the museum; a modified replica was installed in 1854. Today, the nude figure, which shades its eyes from the sun, is generally interpreted as a "Südweiser" (a figure that points south) (see Bauer 1997, 458–461). On the pun in the inscription, see Beranek 1961. H.-E. Paulus still refers to the figure as an emblem of the 'rivalry between the master builders of the cathedral and the bridge', as well as an allusion to the historical 'emancipation of the city from the bishop' (Paulus 1996, 51).

25   See Bauer 1997, 462–463 and Volkert 2000, 1103.

26   Merian 1644, 46: 'Es ist beyder Werckmeister nämlich deß Thumbs vnd der Brücken, Zanck und Haß, nicht allein durch solches [zum Dom schauende] Männlein, sondern auch durch den Hanenkampff, der auff einen Stein gehawen, unnd auff dieser Brück zu sehen, angedeutet worden'.
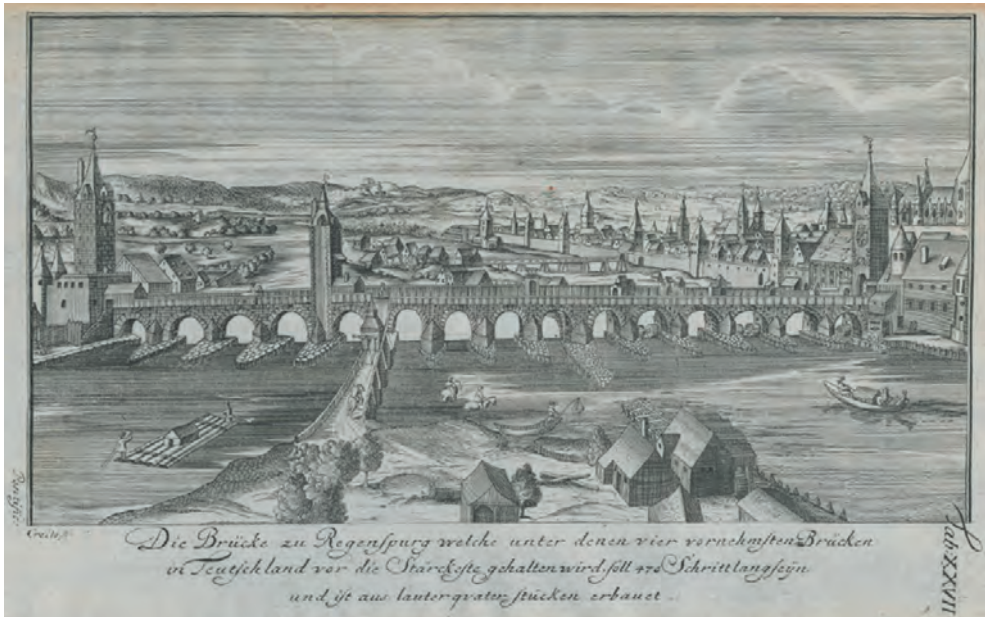
FIGURE 5.5   *Stone Bridge* (*Steinerne Brücke*), Regensburg, in: Jacob Leupold, *Theatrum pontificale, Oder Schau-Platz der Brücken und Brücken-Baues,* Leipzig 1726, pl. XXVII, Zurich, Zentralbibliothek
IMAGE: JACOB LEUPOLD

FIGURE 5.6
Bruckmandl, 1854, limestone, copy of a sculpture from *c*.1446, destroyed in 1579
IMAGE: STADT REGENSBURG, BILDDOKUMENTATION

FIGURE 5.7   Weasel or lizard, stone relief on the flank of the Stone Bridge,
Regensburg, chalk lithograph, 1835, in: Karl Bauer: *Regensburg.
Kunst-, Kultur- und Alltagsgeschichte*, Regensburg 1997, p. 462
IMAGE: KARL BAUER

FIGURE 5.8   Cockfight, 1580, stone relief on the flank of the Stone Bridge, Regensburg
PUBLIC DOMAIN

the city in 1663 as a member of the imperial legation on the occasion of the imperial diet in Regensburg, claimed that the figure was shown gazing in the direction of the then still incomplete spire, 'as though wanting to ask: When will it be finished?'[27] In fact, Regensburg Cathedral was erected far later than the bridge – after the fires of 1272 and 1273.

Significantly, however, neither Merian nor Sturm mention the collaboration of the devil. The motif emerges in Regensburg (and hence perhaps not accidentally in Saint Wolfgang's home diocese) only in Johann Georg Keyssler's travel report of 1741.[28] Among the trademarks, Keyssler mentions 'stone effigies on the parapets of the bridge of a dog without a head and two roosters received by the devil. The master bridge builder cunningly chased these animals across the bridge, making them the first to traverse it, the Evil One having assisted with the construction work in the hope of procuring a human being, having stipulated that the first [living being] to cross the bridge would belong to him'.[29]

Found here are all of the topical motifs: the cunning master builder enlists the services of the devil, who in a countermove demands the first or the first three living beings that step onto the bridge. But in Regensburg too, the devil is deprived of his remuneration when the master builder sends across the bridge the animals whose likenesses are now preserved in the reliefs.[30]

In Lübeck, the situation is similar: here as well, the civic builders of St. Mary's Church (*Marienkirche*) are supposed to have enlisted the powers of the devil in their rivalry with the cathedral chapter, persuading him that together, they would build an inn where he could capture human souls. Shortly before the completion of the church, when the devil realizes he has been deceived, he hurls a stone against the house of God, which just misses the

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27   Sturm [1663?] 1875, 53: '… als ob er fragen wolt: Wenn er gebaut soll sejn?'.

28   Keyssler 1741, 1235–1236.

29   Ibidem: '… auf dem Geländer der Brücke die steinernen Bilder eines Hundes ohne Kopf und zweer Hahnen, die dem Teufel zu Theil worden, als der Meister der Brücke solche aus List zuerst darüber gejagt, nachdem der böse Feind, in der Hoffnung eine menschliche Creatur zu bekommen, seine Hülfe zur Aufführung des Werckes mit diesem Bedinge geleistet hatte, daß das erste, so über gedachte Brücke paßiren würde, ihm zugehören solte'. In 1785, when J. Diehlhelm reports on the 'fairy tales and fables' that surround the reliefs, he hastens to add: 'Only the year 1580, said above the roosters, is inconsistent with the date of the bridge's construction'. (Dielheim 1785, 243–244). Moreover, the cathedral and the bridge were built at different times.

30   Evidently, the legend migrated from Regensburg to Bamberg, where a narrative emerged of a competition between the cathedral building master and his journeyman (see Kuhn 1859, no. 418; see also Grimm 4th ed., 1875, 972).

nave and remains up to the present as testimony to the rivalry.[31] Such 'indices' are typical for the emergence and authentication of the legends, for when the devil is deceived, he leaves behind traces of his wrath: he flings stones (Lübeck, Schöllenen Gorge),[32] twists the church spire (Mayen), leaves behind finger, horn, or footprints (Hildesheim, Sennewitz, Schleitz, Munich), or he scratches or perforates walls (Pisa Cathedral, St. Michael in Weidenberg).[33] Most of the legends of the master builders, consequently, serve an etiological function, which is to say that they explain the formation of extraordinary buildings or rock formations while conversely referring to these as evidence for the veracity of the narratives. Such evidence ensured the transmission of these narratives, and hence the survival of the devil in the imagination. As 'wandering legends', these tales were related in similar form at various locations and contained numerous motifs that were also familiar from other stories involving pacts with the devil, in particular material related to the Faust legend.[34]

But to return to Regensburg: there, the bridge built by the citizenry links the free imperial city with the Duchy of Bavaria, which is delimited by the Danube River, and with which the town continually found itself in disputes over sovereignty.[35] So alongside the municipal power struggle between bishop and town, mirrored in the competition between the two master builders, there existed a

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31   Theodor Storm incorporated the legend of the building of St. Mary's Church in Lübeck into a ballad: 'Die Maurer und der Teufel,/Die haben zusammen gebaut;/Doch hat ihn bei der Arbeit/Kein menschlich Aug geschaut./Drum, wie sich die Kellen rührten,/Es mochte keiner verstehn,/Daß in so kurzen Tagen/So großes Werk geschehn...' ('The mason and the devil,/they worked together as builders;/But no human actually saw them/ While they were at work./And how the trowels stirred themselves,/No one could understand it,/And that in so few days/Such a great edifice could rise ...') (Storm 1967, 981–983, cited on 981).

32   R. Zelger traces the motif of the flung stone back to the Roman legal custom of registering objections to a new building by throwing a stone (see Zelger 1996, 157).

33   The "Teufelsstein" (Devil's Stone) near Sennewitz has five holes, as though from five fingers, not unlike a stone in the vicinity of Kühnsmühle near Schleitz (see Größler 1880, 257, no. 307 and Eifel 1871, 7, no. 13). According to legend, the devil assisted with the construction of the Frauenkirche in Munich under the condition that it should have no windows. But the master builder outwitted him – from the entrance, the structure did indeed appear windowless. In reaction, the devil is said to have stamped in a rage, leaving behind the so-called "Teufelstritt" (ill. in Pfister 2017, 7). Other footprints from the devil are preserved in St. Marien in Oythe, in Mariä Empfängnis in Zulling, and in St. Cyrpian or Cornelius in Ganderkesee near Bremen, among others. The grooves might derive from the practice of chipping off stone for use in folk medicine (see Jütte 2023, 308–309).

34   See Aarne & Thompson 1961, 260 and 372 (type 756B and 1191). See Garry & El-Shamy 2005, 309 and Uther 2004, 69.

35   See Schmid 1995.

greater political conflict, in which the Holy Roman Emperor functioned as the guarantor and promoter of civil rights. As early as 1182, Frederick Barbarossa had issued a bridge charter in which he declared:

> [O]n the advice and with the consent of our dear Bishop Kuno of Regensburg, and of Duke Otto of Bavaria and other princes and noblemen of our court, as well as based on our own carefully considered decision, and at the request of the citizens of Regensburg and the bridge master, we establish and grant the aforementioned bridge, Herbord, comprehensive freedom, such that no measures for the compulsory collection of revenues shall be enforced on anyone crossing the bridge, apart from voluntary contributions willingly given for its maintenance and improvement.[36]

Accordingly, the bridge was a neutral location protected by a higher authority, and was consequently an expression of civic emancipation in relation to both duke and bishop.[37] The bridge master was always a councilman, and the bridge, with its figures of kings and lions, was a 'constitutional program of king and city, now set in stone', and hence a 'monument to the rights of a self-constituted citizenship'.[38]

In Regensburg, then, the devil made an appearance precisely at a boundary or transitional zone that had been a disputed location for centuries. Another motive for the emergence of the legend, however, must have been the imposing structure itself, which evidently struck travelers in the early modern era as far too massive to have been erected by medieval craftsmen.[39] In 1515, significantly, it is not the devil who is mentioned to an Italian curate as the builder of the bridge, and instead the Emperor Hadrian.[40] In the sixteenth century,

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36　　Cited from Dünninger 1996, 10.

37　　See Paulus 1996, 51.

38　　Ibidem, 51 and 52.

39　　Something similar is true for the Roman Limes, which was referred to in many places as the "devil's wall", according to Johann Alexander Döderlein. He comments: "Zu bewundern … ist fürwahr die Einfalt nicht wenig vernüfftiger Menschen, daß sie, wo ihnen etwas vorkommet, welches die menschliche Kräfften zu übersteigen scheinet, so gleich auff Satanische Wecke fallen." (Remarkable here is the naiveté of certain sensible people who, confronted by something that seems to surpass human powers, immediately have recourse to satanic explanations) (Döderlein 1731, 31). Characteristic of Döderlein's intermediate position between superstitious beliefs and enlightenment values is that he seems to regard as entirely plausible reports about wild hunts or horses shying at the Limes, while at the same time declining to accept these reports as certifying satanic authorship (ibidem 35).

40　　Bartolini 1515, unpaginated; also in Althamer 1536, 37. As late as 1676, Johann Beer still mentions the Emperor Tiberius as the builder (reprinted in Wurster 1978, 243).

such a structure seemed attributable only to the Romans; another motive may however have been a desire to brag to Italian guests over purported local links to classical tradition.[41]

If the legends about the devil had actually been as old as modern histories of Regensburg attempt to persuade us, Hans Sachs would hardly have missed an opportunity to transmit them in 1569.[42] Nor, as late as the 1590s, does the Bohemian nobleman Friedrich von Dohna seem to be familiar with the rivalry between master builders, nor of the participation of the devil. Becoming established instead was a kind of *paragone* between cities according to which 'in German lands, the bridge in Prague is the longest, the one in Dresden the most beautiful, and the one in Regensburg the most stable'.[43] Nor, as mentioned above, do we find references to satanic collaboration in the works of seventeenth century authors. On the contrary: in 1663, Jakob Sturm admired not just the bridge's construction, but also its remarkably brief building schedule, which he however attributed not to supernatural forces and instead to human ingenuity.[44] The human mastery of nature is celebrated in a particularly euphoric tone in Jacob Leupold's *Theatrum pontificale* of 1726, according to which the *Stone Bridge* once again demonstrated 'that no river is too broad, too deep, too rapid or turbulent to prevent human reason from conquering it with pillars and bays'.[45]

Nonetheless, an oral tradition must have given the devil his due, allowing Keyssler to draw upon it in his above-cited travel report of 1741. Just 28 years later, Johann Christoph Schmidlin referred to the legends as 'marvelously charming little stories',[46] which he elaborated through new details into a master-disciple conflict with a fatal outcome:

> The master builder in charge of the bridge was said to have been a former apprentice of another master builder, responsible for building the cathedral, with its tower. They competed with one another to see which of the two could complete his work first. In order to prevail in this contest, the former apprentice made a pact with the devil, promising him that the first three souls to cross the bridge after its completion would be

41   See Aventinus 1884, 323.

42   See Keller & Goetze 1895, 326.

43   Dohna, handwritten travel report, cited from Dünninger 1996, 13.

44   Sturm [1663?] 1875, 53: 'Was hat nicht Wiz und Kunst der Menschen aufgebracht? was noch unmöglich wird verwundernde geacht?'.

45   Leupold 1726, 2: 'daß kein Strohm zu breit, zu tieff, zu schnell und ungestüm, den der menschliche Verstand mit Pfeilern u. Jochen nicht bezwungen ... hätte'.

46   See Schmidlin 1941, 120: 'wunderb[ar] artiges Histörgen'. Döderlein also interprets this competition as rivalry between a master and a disciple (see Döderlein 1731, 32).

his. When the cathedral building master saw that his former apprentice had finished before him, he flung himself from the tower of the church. In order to compensate the devil for services rendered, however, the first building master drove a rooster, then a dog, and finally a goat across the bridge before any other soul could cross it. The devil tore the first two creatures to pieces on the spot. When the goat arrived, he became so enraged at failing to acquire any human souls that he grabbed the poor animal in his claws and struck the bridge with it with such force that a cavity was formed. To this very day, and as fabulous as this tale might seem, you can nonetheless still see the hole created in the bridge by the devil.[47]

Schmidlin may have overheard talk about a cathedral building master who flung himself from the tower on a journey to Vienna. There, the presence of the supposedly demolished (but in fact never-completed) northern tower of St. Stephen's Cathedral was explained by a legend about the master builder Hans Puchsbaum, to whom the devil provided assistance under the condition that Puchsbaum never utter any holy name on the building site. Finally, when Puchsbaum stood before his completed tower and called out to the Virgin Mary, he is said to have been plunged into the depths together with his handiwork.[48]

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47   Schmidlin 1941, 120–121: 'Der Baumeister, so die Brücke baute, solle vorhin ein Lehrling des anderen Baumeisters, der die Domkirche mit dem Thurm baute, gewesen seyn. Sie eiferten miteinander, welcher von beeden mit sr. Arbeit zuerst fertig werden würde. Der gewesene Lehrling schloß, um den Vorzug zu erhalten, einen Bund mit dem Teufel mit dem Verspruch, daß der Teufel die 3 ersten Seelen, welche über die Brücke, wann sie fertig wäre, gehen würden, haben sollte. Als der andere Baumeister an der Domkirche sahe, daß sein ehemaliger Lehrling vor ihm fertig würde, so stürtzte er sich von dem Thurm der Kirche herunter. Um aber den Teufel für seine geleisteten Dienste zu befriedigen, so trieb der erste Baumeister ehe eine andere Seele über die Brücke ging, zuerst einen Hahn, hernach einen Hund und zuletzt einen Bock hinüber. Die beiden ersten zerriß der Teufel auf der Stelle. Als der Bock kam, so ward er so böse, daß er gar keine Menschen-Seele bekommen sollte, daß er denselben zwischen seine Klauen nahm und dergestalt auf die Brücke stieß, daß die Brücke ein Loch davon bekam. So fabelhaft diese Erzählung aussieht, so zeigt man doch auf der Brücke noch heutigen Tages das Loch, das der Teufel gemacht haben solle.'

48   See for example Vogl 1845, 69–74. In reality, work on the northern tower designed by Hans Puchsbaum commenced only in 1466/1467, 13 years after his death (see Schedl 2018, 124). Circulating through eighteenth-century Vienna alongside the legend of the pact with the devil was a tale about master-disciple conflict which Friedrich Tilmez attempted to rationalize in 1722 by tracing it back to the master builder's name (see Tilmez 1722, 93). E. Koller-Glück explained the legend of the devil with reference to Puchsbaum's perfor-

With Schmidlin, the 'charming little story' from Regensburg still bears etiological traits: here, a hole in the wall testifies to the truth of a narrative that is parodied at the same time. Moreover, the three animals sacrificed to the devil are associated with the stone reliefs, and the 'Brückenmännchen' is now mentioned in connection with the new narrative component of the master builder's suicide: the little figure, turned toward the city, is said to gaze 'through binoculars [!] at the tower of the cathedral ... from which the building master throws himself down'.[49]

2   Schöllenen Gorge

Perhaps the best-known example of a bridge erected with satanic assistance is the 'Teufelsbrücke' that spans the Reuss River on the way to the Gotthard Pass. Erected at this location in the Schöllenen Gorge as early as 1230 was a wooden construction referred to as 'Stiebende Brücke' ('Bridge in the spray') that was replaced by a stone structure in 1595, and supplemented by a more stable version in 1830.[50] In this case, the stimulus for the pact with the devil was a curse pronounced by a despairing official after numerous failed attempts: 'Then let the devil build the bridge!'[51] Thanks to the kind of verbal magic that seems to have proven efficacious in other instances as well, the mere mention of the devil was enough to summon his presence.[52] Precisely when the legend of the pact with the devil took shape cannot be determined with any certainty in this case.[53] In a text of 1479, the bridge is referred to as 'pons inferni'; in 1574, as 'pons

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mance, seen retrospectively as "superhuman," and the master-disciple variant with reference to the historical importance of artistic envy. She does not, however, exclude the possibility of a real fall from the scaffolding by a master builder (see Koller-Glück 2009, 53–58). St. Stephen's Cathedral is one of the few instances for which an alternative legend tells of the collaboration of an angel or 'beautiful journeyman' (see ibidem, 55).

49   Schmidlin 1941, 121: 'durch eine Fern-Röhre [!] gegen den Thurm der Domkirche ... wie sich der Baumeister davon herabstürzt'.

50   See Brunner 2008, 354; Conzett 2016.

51   See Gisler-Pfrunder 2005. Diverse variants of the legends are recorded in: Lütolf 1865, 178–181.

52   See Havers 1946, esp. 109–110; Hegedüs 1958, esp. 89–90.

53   In view of its designation, widely diffused until the late sixteenth century, as 'Stiebende Brück', R. Laur-Belart is convinced 'that the name Devil's Bridge is literary in character, and was given to the bridge by savants and then [around the turn of the seventeenth century] penetrated the common people, giving rise to the widespread legend of the devil as a master builder, which was then localized here'. (Laur-Belart 1924, 165).

satanae aut inferni'.[54] In 1587, the Basel merchant Andreas Ryff transmitted the popular name 'Hell or Devil's Bridge', which he however attributed solely to its terrifying appearance:

> And because this place is enclosed all around so closely by high, smooth cliffs, and the water rushes and splashes so, the country people refer to [the gorge] as the Inferno, or Hell, and the bridge El Ponto Dilferno, Hell Bridge or Devil's Bridge. There is no one so manly that when he must cross this high, narrow bridge ... he is not terrified and filled with fear, particularly since there are no railings or sides on it.[55]

The legend finally becomes tangible in 1625 in a report by a Polish traveler who again attributes the pact with the devil to a saint, namely St. Gotthard.[56] The legend became public mainly through the version supplied by Johann Jakob Scheuchzer in 1708: when the builders from Uri despaired, confronted with the 'depth of the tall cliffs and the danger of falling into the Reuß [River] that flowed and foamed below', the devil offered his assistance in order to 'accomplish something that would be nearly impossible for them, or at least highly dangerous' – under the condition that he [the devil] would receive 'the first to cross the bridge'.[57] Upon completing the structure, however, the devil is doubly cheated. In place of a human being, the cunning country folk persuade a dog across the bridge; when the furious devil hauls a stone to the bridge in order to destroy it, a 'holy man' steps into his path.[58] The presence of precisely

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54 Hug & Weibel 1988, col. 642; Simmler 1574, fol. 102r.

55 Ryff 1600, fol. 34v; cited from Bruckner 1937, 336–337: 'Und diewyl dann dis Ort eng und rings herumb mit hochen glatten Felsen umbringet und die Wasser also rouschen und stieben, so haben die Landleut Infernno, die Hell, und die Brücken El Ponto Dilfernno, die Hellbrucken oder des Teuffelsbrucken, gênent. Keiner ist so manlich, ders nie gesehen, wan er so ilents unversechens umb dz Eck des Felsens darzuo kompt und über dise hoche, schmale Brücken muoss, der nit erschrecke und sich dorab nit etwas entsetze, sonderlich diewyl keine Länen oder Nebenwend doran sind ...'.

56 Pac 1879, 431: 'Wir ritten über eine Brücke, welche auf Befehl jenes Heiligen, wie die Sage überliefert, der Teufel selbst, vertragsmässig zu bauen gezwungen wurde'. ('We rode across a bridge that, according to legend, had been constructed by the devil himself, compelled by a saint, and in accordance with contract'.)

57 Scheuchzer 1708, 44: '[zur] Bewerkstelligung dessen, so ihnen sonst fast unmöglich, wenigstens höchst gefährlich seye'. Johann Melchior Füssli's dramatic accompanying engraving of the "Pons Diaboli" is also found in Leupold 1726, pl. xxv (see 96, § 193) and Schramm 1735, pl. 7.

58 Scheuchzer 1708, 45. In a later passage, he offers an explanation of the name that is based on sensory experience: 'Da indessen die Reisenden auf schmalen, oft in Felsen ausgehauenen Wegen mit Forcht und Schreken von der Schöllinen ab- und in die Tieffe

this episode in a marginal drawing executed by Johann Melchior Füssli on Scheuchzer's large map of Switzerland, the *Nova Helvetiae Tabula Geographica* of 1712/13, which contributed significantly to the eighteenth century enthusiasm for the Alps (figure 5.9), suggests that increasingly, such legends were now seen as anecdotal relics of the past. In 1743, the Enlightenment philosopher Johann Georg Sulzer clarified the question using a tape measure: 'The width of this bridge from one foundation to the other is 50 shoes, its height above the water … may be circa 70 shoes. I therefore see no reason to regard the devil's contribution as necessary to build this bridge, human skill having achieved far greater things'.[59]

3   Building Sacrifices

The conquest of nature through 'human ingenuity' has been a central topos in descriptions of bridges since the early modern era. In many respects, however, the overcoming of natural forces and gravity has always been precarious. Completed through enormous effort, bridges were threatened by storm surges and ice drifts, overloading or military aggression.[60] In addition, there were remnants of an ancient notion according to which the bridging of a river represented not just a logistical challenge, but also an impious transgression. Rivers were regarded as sacred boundaries that were watched over by divinities, and their crossing seen as sacrilegious.[61] The construction of a bridge – and often its use as well – therefore required sacrifices in order to appease the *genius*

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sehen, und hören die aneinander und an die Felsen anschlagenden, in einem hohen Wasser Staub sich auflösenden Wellen'. ('Travelers, often walking on narrow paths, many hewn directly into the cliff, gaze down with fear and terror from the Schöllinen and into the depths, and hear the waves crashing against one another on the rocks, sending their spray high into the air'.) (ibidem, 94).

59   Sulzer 1747, 54. In 1763, Johann Gerhard Reinhard Andreae, who had also measured the bridge, remarked: 'Das bekante Märchen von des Teufels wunderbarer Erbauung dieser Brükke, dessen Scheuchzer erwähnet, erzählet here niemand mehr. Eine abermalige Probe von der überall schwindenden Kraft des Aberglaubens und der dagegen mehr und mehr sich ausbreitenden Herrschaft der Vernunft …' ('No one here continues to tell the familiar fairytale, mentioned by Scheuchzer, of the devil's miraculous construction of this bridge. Another example of the universally dwindling power of superstition, and the increasing dissemination, in opposition to it, of the rule of reason.') (Andreae 1776, 127).

60   In 1784, the *Stone Bridge* too nearly fell victim to a dramatic ice drift that was captured in an engraving by Johann Mayr (GNM Nuremberg, inv. no. HB19810).

61   See Cassani 2014, 34–38.

loci or a river god, or to protect the structure from demons.[62] Hesiod already warned of the wading through the sacred precinct of a river god who could only be appeased through a sacrifice.[63] If it was accepted, the relationship was reversed: henceforth, the bridge itself was regarded as sacred.[64]

René Girard interpreted sacrifices in the context of his mimetic theory as a controlled repetition of the slaying of a scapegoat, which is to say the culture-constituting murder that transforms the violence of all against all into a collective excess against an isolated individual.[65] Child sacrifice was later supplanted by animal sacrifice, and finally by models, shadows, or the sacrifice of objects, and supplemented by apotropaic figures or plants.[66] Material evidence of this practice is however rare. Researchers have warned against identifying every human corpse found buried beneath a wall or threshold as a building sacrifice, since these might instead have been penal immurements or other forms of burial.[67] Alongside archaeological finds, however, textual sources also testify to the perpetuation of sacrificial practices in the early modern era.[68] When inspecting a dike in 1615, for example, Duke Anton Günther of Oldenburg is said to have learned of an attempt by his workers to immure a child in its foundations.[69]

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62   See Daxelmüller 1983, cols. 1669–1670; Grimm 4th ed., 1875, 956–957; Klusemann 1919; Brewster 1971, 74; Durkheim 1991, 210–211; Burkert 1972, 49.

63   See Hesiod, *Works and Days*, verse 737. Xerxes sacrifices white horses to the River Strymon (see Herodotus, *Histories*, VII.114). Bulls and horses were sacrifice as well to the river god Skamandros (see Homer, *Iliad*, V.223). Even Caesar is said to have sacrificed horses before crossing the Rubicon (see Suetonius, *The Life of Julius Caesar*, verse 81). See Reimbold 1972, 55–78, 60.

64   See Knight 1910, 848. The 'building sacrifice' becomes a topos in Baroque panegyrics. Carl Christian Schramm refers to his text as a 'monument sacrifice', and praises the Great Elector as the vanquisher of Neptune (see Schramm 1735, Widmung und Zuschrift, unpaginated).

65   See Girard 2005, 8 and 101–104. See Palaver 2nd ed. 2004, 229. On building sacrifices, see also Kris & Kurz 1979, 84–85.

66   Paul Sartori describes various forms of sacrificial substitution, but also warns against a premature assumptions concerning original human sacrifices (Sartori 1898, esp. 31 and 47–55; see Brewster 1971, 73).

67   Freckmann 2013, 76.

68   The skeleton of a child was discovered underneath the bridge gate leading to Bremen, for example (ibidem 15 and 36); construction workers in Vienna discovered a mummified cat that is preserved today in the Wien Museum. Preserved in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich is a child's boot from St. Sebaldus in Nuremberg, which was probably walled in during the vertical extension of the southern tower in 1483 (inv. no. I 7 273).

69   See Baring-Gould 1892, 15. A late echo of this practice is found in Theodor Storm's 1888 novella *Der Schimmelreiter*, in which an enlightened dike warden is barely able to prevent the sacrifice of 'something living' during the construction of a dike (Storm 1967, 778).

Against this background, the devil is interpretable as the successor or antagonist of jealous river gods who demanded sacrifice in exchange for their reluctant cooperation.[70] Enacted in the context of the tabooed transgression of a natural boundary is an *agon* between supernatural and human powers, or between human and natural forces. Such buildings can only succeed if the architect breaches boundaries or takes advantage of natural laws, i.e. does not simply overcome nature but incorporates it 'synagonistically', in his plan or engages it as a collaborator in the guise of the devil. This imputed collaboration with an adversary could thus also be interpreted as an indication that ultimately, a bridge or tower cannot be built *against* nature, and instead must be built in cooperation *with* nature – with due consideration given to statics, material, flow behavior, climate etc.

4   Synagonism

Collaboration with the devil is certainly a perilous form of synagonism. For only apparently do master builders and devil pursue a shared goal; only apparently do they struggle together against natural forces, competitors, or time; in truth, they have different motives: the builders strive toward the humanly impossible; the devil takes advantage of human competitiveness in order to prey on souls. Together, however, they – or the building masters exploiting natural forces – succeed in doing what humans alone can hardly do. The residue of uneasiness concerning human hubris, the presumptuous transgression of divine or natural limits, may be partially responsible for the emergence of legends about the devil, which belong to the tradition of building sacrifices that existed right up into the modern age.

In conclusion, the legends provide a narrative form for highly diverse situations of conflict or fruiful competition: rivalry with other master builders, between political actors (emperor/bishop/citizenry), or with (divine) nature. For the most part, competition is regarded as productive, as a factor that enhances performance or hastens the work process; at the same time, however, it is regarded with a certain ambivalence. From the perspective of a successful building project, competition appears as synagonism, as the fruitful interdependency of conflicting forces.

But such a materialist point of view, which regards the legends as cover stories for underlying conflicts, should not lead to the neglect of the world

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70   See Bächtold-Stäubli 1927, col. 1662.

of experience and belief of the parties involved. For the legends are always threefold: first of all, they are topical, to the extent that they react more to earlier narratives than to reality; secondly, they are humorous, since they invoke the power of the devil while ultimately subjecting him to ridicule; and thirdly, they are the expressions of a world in which the devil, along with God and the angels, are self-evident actors within a lived reality. A complicating factor is that the legends (which are frequently also etiological in character) postdate

FIGURE 5.9A   Johann Melchior Füssli, *Devil's Bridge*, in J. J. Scheuchzer, *Nova Helvetiae Tabula Geographica*, 1712, colored engraving
PUBLIC DOMAIN

FIGURE 5.9B
Detail 5.9a (the devil's stone)

the events they narrate, and hence tell us more about the understanding of nature and technology that prevailed when they were invented – or about contemporary conceptions of the past as conceived at the moment of their emergence – than they do about the times in which they are actually set.

It is remarkable that the devil consistently gets a raw deal in the context of these collaborations. Unlike the deterrent example of Doctor Faustus, the legends of the building masters – which supplanted narratives about collaborations between saints and the devil – evidently served less as warnings against pacts with the devil or worldly *agon* than as celebrations of human ingenuity and the fruitfulness of competitive behavior. According to Goethe in the first part of his *Faust*, Mephistopheles is lulled into believing that he has won the wager made in the prologue; in the second part of the tragedy, however, he meets with failure precisely through the success of a synagonistic building enterprise: Faust is saved despite his disastrous dike project, realized with Mephistopheles's assistance.

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The Burden of Success in Quattrocento Sculpture: Lorenzo Ghiberti, Mino da Fiesole, Donatello

Fabian Jonietz

1 Between Continuity and Innovation

That an altered socio-aesthetic idea of artistic 'originality', and with it, a qualitative valuation of 'novelty', emerged between the waning Trecento and the early Cinquecento is a matter of little dispute among art historians, but explanations of this phenomenon – along with its broader historiographic implications – have been vigorously contested. On the one hand, no single factor explains why the repetition or replication of visual motifs increasingly came to be regarded as monotonous, and thus of lesser value. On the other, art historians still struggle to objectively describe innovative artistic tendencies or previously unknown degrees of stylistic plurality without taking recourse – even if indirect – to teleological models of analysis, based on notions of 'progress' or 'Renaissance'.[1]

The problem lies in the oppressive weight of historiographic tradition. As early as the sixteenth century, such standards of judgment were not only formulated, but also coupled with notions of linear progress in art. A celebrated example, neatly embodying the figure of the outmoded artist, is the purported astonishment expressed by Pietro Perugino when criticized for his repetitive approach to painting: he failed to understand why his figures, having received resounding acclaim, should not be met with equal favor when repeated in new works.[2] This anecdote, first disseminated in 1550 in Giorgio Vasari's *Vite*,

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1 Cf. – purely exemplary – the overview and problematization of older and more recent research positions in Oy-Marra 2011; for more on this question, see the second section of this essay, which deals with historiography.

2 'Io ho messo in opera le figure altre volte lodate da loro, e songli infinitamente piacciute: se ora gli dispiacciono e non le lodano, che ne posso io?'; Vasari 1966–1997, III, 610. On Vasari's critique of artistic repetition in the *Vite* in comparison with his own practice, see Jonietz 2010, pp. 173–175.

is frequently cited in the literature as evidence of two factors that arose during the Quattrocento, and came to be established as veritable laws by the first half of the Cinquecento: first, the expectations of an audience that wanted to see new and 'original' productions come out of every high-level commission; second, a competitive market in which artists had to strive continually toward the further development of their art, or else risk being cast aside as retrograde.

Nevertheless, this dynamic, and by extension, broader characterizations of the era, do have clear boundaries. There is virtually no fifteenth-century artist who radically departed from his established formal language, and this for readily apparent reasons: as Cennino Cennini had already clearly stated in the early Quattrocento, the aim was not to demonstrate stylistic and formal flexibility as an end in itself, so much as to develop and maintain one's own particular *maniera*, so as not to end up an eclectic, eccentric *fantastichetto*.[3] Toward the middle of the century (around 1460), Filarete demanded unequivocally that the 'handwriting' or style ('le sue lettere … la sua maniera … lo stile') of each architect, writer, or artist had to be absolutely unmistakable.[4] In contrast to earlier centuries, moreover, the entire Renaissance was characterized by the serial manufacture of workshop products using new reproductive techniques, works that were highly recognizable by virtue of their style, color scheme, and production methods, and were thus capable of disseminating the branding or corporate identity of a specific workshop all throughout Italy. Other classes of purchasers were wooed by more affordable sculptures in *stucco* or *cartapesta*, produced by successful masters such as Lorenzo Ghiberti, Donatello, and later Andrea del Verrocchio, or with continually varying flagship products, as in the case of the Della Robbia family.[5] Recent research has rightly argued that examples of this kind not only relativize the relationship between the esteem accorded to the original and the copy in the early modern period. Beyond that, insofar as most such works were produced individually, and exhibit minor variations, they also raise the question of how much deviation from an earlier *invenzione* was necessary before a new work was no longer regarded as a copy.

In this regard, such workshop products do not necessarily differ from the more 'original' paintings or sculptures that were newly commissioned from celebrated artists. In particular, the oeuvre of especially successful artists suggests

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3   Cennini 2003, 80 (ch. XXVII).

4   'Se uno … fabricasse, come colui che scrive o uno che dipigne, fa che le sue lettere si conoscono. E così colui che dipigne, la sua maniera delle figure si conosce, e così d'ogni facultà si conosce lo stile di ciascheduno'. Filarete 1972, I, 69.

5   On the topic of artistic repetition, cf. most recently Cupperi 2014; Osano 2017; Bellavitis 2018; for cases from the seventeenth century onward see the contributions in Beyer, Jollet & Rath 2018.

an intriguing dialectic between pointed references to the recognizable authority of established *invenzioni*, on the one hand, and the ongoing development of precisely such original models on the other. Image production, then, oscillates between passive and active impulses: the artist does not content himself with a previously developed model of success (like the artistically stagnant painter Perugino), neither is his aim a *superatio* that would undermine his own recent successes, recasting them as obsolete or outmoded. This is corroborated by numerous, demonstrably ambivalent references to the fundamental creative principles of an artist's earlier production, whose formal design remains a clear point of departure, even as the artist simultaneously measures himself against it in a self-emulating fashion.

Complementing extensive research on productive competitions between rival artists,[6] the present essay focuses on the critical confrontations of artists with their *own* work and the relationships that emerge between consecutively completed projects. From the outset it should be emphasized that the artistic dialectic shaped by this tension between continuity and disruption, *renovatio* and *innovatio*, cooperation (σύν) and rivalry (ἀγών) – an 'auto-synagonism', so to speak – can by no means be reduced to an inner monologue that revolves around an isolated, individual oeuvre. Ultimately, questions about the 'integrability' of the artist's previous production, and more generally, the need for stylistic or compositional 'improvements', are determined by the parameters and value judgments of the larger cultural framework within which he acts – a framework shaped by the power of rivals on the local market. Once the social relations of production are incorporated into the discussion, an artist's engagement with his own oeuvre assumes wider levels of significance, both diachronic and synchronic. When a renowned artist like Ghiberti – as illustrated by my initial case study, which examines the two versions of the *Sacrifice of Isaac* – returned to the design of his first successful work about two decades later, and critically measured himself against it, he was not merely engaging in a retrospective confrontation with a previous achievement. He was also responding to a stylistic trend set in motion by a generation of artists that had emerged from his own *bottega*, and was to a considerable extent still active there.[7]

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6 On the agonal principle as the alleged epochal signature of art and culture after the Middle Ages, see Müller & Pfisterer 2011, containing numerous examples and bibliographical references; cf. most recently Neumann, Poettering & Thiessen 2023.

7 Among the numerous studies dealing with collaborations between sculptors of the Florentine Quattrocento and the 'multi-handedness' of the resultant works, see for example Lightbown 1980; Even 1984; see also the references in Bloch & Zolli 2020, 14–15.

There are further reasons why it can be useful to focus not only on comparisons between an artist and his contemporaries, but also on the parallel dependencies and rivalries, so to speak, that pertain to the artist's own work. This becomes evident in my second case study, namely Mino da Fiesole's tomb monuments in the Badia Fiorentina, which have been discussed almost exclusively in relation to prominent models by Bernardo Rossellino and Desiderio da Settignano, ignoring the relationship between Mino's first monument and its immediate successor. Their installation in the same church suggests that Mino may have deliberately intended viewers to make comparisons between the two – in contrast to Ghiberti's two reliefs of the *Sacrifice of Isaac*, and also in contrast to my third example, Donatello's bronze and marble versions of *Herod's Banquet*. As will be shown in the latter case, a long-established historiographic tradition, maintained up to the present, has developed around the juxtaposition of these two reliefs as putative pendants, along with the thesis that one of the reliefs constitutes the earliest art-theoretical demonstration piece. In neither work, however, is there evidence of a comparative intention on the part of the sculptors, nor is it right to assume that they ever could have been compared prior to the era of photomechanical reproduction. Instead, what both works manifest is the testing and variation of an artistic *invenzione* – an individual formal investigation that operates simultaneously *with* and *in opposition to* the artists' own earlier creations.

2   *Bis Repetita Non Placent*? Explanatory Models

Two main assumptions in the scholarly literature, mentioned above with reference to the anecdote concerning the 'backward' artist Pietro Perugino, should not be dismissed without further clarification. In a city like Florence, competitive pressure did promote creativity, even – or indeed, especially – among frequently collaborating artists, and presumably it was the supply generated by this competition that shaped the expectations of clients and purchasers, rather than the latter's own wishes or demands, as a circular argument might well suggest. However, when it comes to the links within an individual artist's oeuvre, the question centers upon the role that the artist's own, inward reflections would have played within these complex, multilateral structures.

In fact, this approach is fully compatible with – if not central to – the explanatory model that has pervaded the field since the publication of Michael Baxandall's pioneering work, particularly in regard to the tendency toward formal and stylistic variation that becomes unmistakable around 1400. As is well known, Baxandall identified the established rules of classical rhetoric

as a crucial model for such artistic ideals, drawing them into a comprehensive argument for the first time.[8] This applies both to the above-mentioned demands of the client, as well as to associated standards of *decorum* – a term intimately associated with questions of style – in the intended site of display.[9] The hypothetical desire of an individual artist to showcase his *fantasia*, his stylistic versatility and virtuosic ability to master and playfully vary a variety of *modi* (in the sense of *copia*) is entirely consistent with the rhetorical demand for *varietas*.[10]

However, lingering doubts remain. Barely thematized in the art-historical research, and for good reason, is the difficulty of corroborating the widespread dissemination of rhetorical stylistic principles prior to the late Quattrocento, such that arguments of this kind are susceptible to accusations of sustaining the artificially constructed image of a universally educated *artifex doctus*.[11] In many cases, moreover, rigorous historical investigations of the application of rhetorically derived art-theoretical concepts have resulted in a more differentiated picture. The term *varietas*, for example, whether in Leon Battista Alberti or later in Vasari, commonly refers to the stylistic means deployed within a single work – not to general differences of style or composition between multiple works. When a writer such as Cristoforo Landino praises the sculptor Donatello in 1481 as 'mirabile in compositione et in varietà', he is refering to the *varietas* of figures within a single *storia*, not to differences between two different *storie* by the artist.

The resources of rhetoric are surely useful to the analysis of this dynamic between consecutively completed works by a single artist, but they provide no basis for a universal model. This is a point that has proven difficult for the field to grasp, whether conceptually or terminologically. As an all-too-easily eternalized 'artistic quest for form', or 'confrontation by the artist with his own work', this line of inquiry was central to many psychological and philosophical studies of the artist, which now seem problematic for many reasons – not

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8   On the tradition of considering rhetorical modes in art history, see comprehensively Knape 2007; Brassat 2017.

9   On local *decorum* as the basis for stylistic variability, see for example Ames-Lewis 1992. More generally on *decorum* and scholarship dealing with this concept most recently Jonietz, Richter & Stewart 2023, here esp. 18.

10   On discussions of this stylistic concept, see – in addition to the references listed below – in particular Sohm 2001; Pfisterer 2002; on the special case of an artist's deviating 'late style', see Sohm 2007. On the concept of *varietas* in the Renaissance, see for example De Courcelles 2001.

11   See Galand-Hallyn 1999.

least their immediate association with the notion of the brooding 'genius'.[12]
The topic of artistic reflexivity, the focus of an increasingly large body of
scholarship since the 1990s, is ultimately tied rather directly to this tradition,
albeit without devoting sufficient attention to the countervailing phenomena
described above. The weight of Burckhardt's thesis regarding the 'rise of the
individual' in the early modern era presumably made it possible to do without
causal explanations that might link the question of artistic personality with
the artistic character of the epoch. Interestingly, less attention has been paid
to approaches that consider an individual artist's continuous process of cre-
ative reflection in relation to more general tendencies of the time, perhaps due
to their manifest debt to Burckhardt. In current discussions, for example, it is
hardly evident that even Alois Riegl's concept of 'Kunstwollen' (today often
reduced to the formation of a collective style) had introduced the individual,
subjective drive toward creation, which an artist could to some extent con-
sciously instigate and guide, as an element that at times ran counter to more
universal human expressive forms – initially in *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie*
(*Late Roman Art Industry*) (1901), and especially in *Holländisches Gruppenpor-
trät* (*Group Portraiture in Holland*) (1902).[13]

   The possibility of attending to the self-reflexive action of an individual with-
out linking it with the purported 'achievements' of the Renaissance, however,
has been well demonstrated in the work of cultural historians. Interestingly,
this includes forms of competition that involve just a single actor. In his defini-
tion of *agôn*, for example, Roger Caillois examines a possibility that remained
absent from Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens*: games and competitions in which
a single 'champion' faces no direct opponent, but instead loses himself entirely
in a 'ceaseless and diffuse competition' with himself toward the solution of a
problem, continuously striving for an alternative – and superior – result in rela-
tion to the one previously attained.[14] Some recent art-historical discussions of
competition have at least acknowledged that the great theme of artistic rivalry
is not only conceivable as occurring between two actors. When distinguishing
forms of artistic competition, for example, Renate Prochno includes 'compe-
tition with one's own production', through which an artist makes 'what he has
achieved earlier into a standard'.[15] In the following, I hope to show that this phe-
nomenon was a decisive aspect of creative activity during the Quattrocento,

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12   On this notion, see Zilsel 1926; Soussloff 1997; Emison 2004.
13   Cf. Rampley 2003.
14   Caillois 2001, 17.
15   Prochno 2006, 3.

beginning with a case that can in fact be counted among the most prominent instances of artistic rivalry in the early modern era.

3   First Case Study: Ghiberti and the Weight of Victory

Like few other comparable instances, the so-called 'competition reliefs' by Lorenzo Ghiberti and Filippo Brunelleschi emblematize the widely disseminated narrative of a Renaissance that was shaped by a culture of emulation (see figures 6.1 and 6.2). The two surviving test pieces for the competition of 1401 – in which seven competitors are presumed to have vied for the commission for a second set of bronze doors for the Baptistery in Florence – are perfectly suited to an analysis of compositional and stylistic differences insofar as they employ an identical format and the same set of figures to depict an Old Testament scene, the *Sacrifice of Isaac*.[16] The story of the success of Ghiberti – a relatively inexperienced goldsmith and sculptor who had been born around 1378 – over Brunelleschi and the other celebrated artists who participated in the competition is a familiar one. Nevertheless, historians of art have often found it difficult to accept the decision of the Arte di Calimala, which organized the competition, in favor of the 'Gothic' Ghiberti over Brunelleschi and his conspicuous citations from antiquity. Leaving aside the less credible legend, propagated by Antonio Manetti, in which the committee awarded the commission to both sculptors jointly but Filippo decided to withdraw, Lorenzo's victory is occasionally attributed solely to his superior handling of casting techniques and the reduced quantity of materials he required.[17]

Given the current state of research, there is no need to elaborate on the unsustainability of accounts based on the notion that the contest of 1401 exemplifies a collision between a now fading 'Gothic' style and the 'early Renaissance' style supposedly advocated by Brunelleschi. The following discussion is devoted to a less emphasized aspect, namely that in the course of his subsequent activities as a sculptor, the success enjoyed by Ghiberti – whose sculptural debut on the stage of his hometown was no doubt intimately associated with the artistic tradition of the later Trecento – compelled him to engage in artistic contention with his own production. The awarding of the commission

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16   Representative studies include Sachs 1965, 10–11; Rauterberg 1996; Niehaus 1998, 46–60; Tönnesmann 2004; Heinen 2006; Prochno 2006, 35–41.

17   Cf. Prochno 2006, 35; already Schmarsow 1899, 3, and Planiscig 1940, 7, offer critical comments on art-historical exaggerations of the contest between Ghiberti and Brunelleschi and the at times careless adoption of literary motifs from the Quattrocento.

for the bronze doors was hardly the sole consequence of his winning the 'palm of victory' in 1401, as Ghiberti writes proudly in his autobiography ('Mi fu conceduta la palma della victoria').[18] It also meant that over the succeeding two decades, he was able maintain a workshop that dominated the town and to gather a team of gifted assistants around him, allowing him to acquire numerous prestigious commissions, not least of all the third set of bronze doors for the Baptistery, awarded almost immediately after the completion of the north portal in 1424, which would later be installed on the east side and come to be known as the *Gates of Paradise* (figure 6.3).

To understand Ghiberti's artistic reorientation – strikingly apparent from a comparison of the north and east doors – one must account for the fact that it was only after producing 28 quatrefoil reliefs for the north doors over a period of about two decades that he turned abruptly, in 1424, toward a different manner of expression, one that thus appears to have stemmed from a conscious decision.[19] Direct comparison between the two sets of doors is complicated by the replacement of the traditional quatrefoil frames with ten square fields, providing Ghiberti with a far larger format, and one capable of accommodating a larger number of scenes, and at times also more main protagonists. It has not proven possible to determine whether this change originated from the committee of the Arte di Calimala, consultation with some third party, or Ghiberti himself, who at this point fundamentally reconceptualized his approach – a shift that would have many implications for his work in subsequent decades.[20] Ghiberti, now in his late forties, was confronted by an unusual situation, as his new bronze doors would inevitably be compared with his earlier work, installed on the same building. He was thus obliged to contend with a wholly altered artistic milieu, to certify himself as 'modern', which involved the risk of superseding his own early work and its stylistic idiom as outmoded or 'dated'.[21]

Ironically, it was Ghiberti's own students and assistants who, during the first quarter of the Quattrocento, had accustomed Florence to radically new forms of expression. As divergent as Ghiberti's two sets of doors may appear, he accomplished no radical stylistic shift; instead, when confronting the inevitability of comparisons with his first major work alongside the obligation to position himself in the present, he found a balanced position that looked

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18 Ghiberti 1998, 93 [II, VI.1].

19 For recent detailed accounts of the *Porta del Paradiso,* see Giusti 2015 and Bloch 2016.

20 In opposition to the frequent supposition that Leonardo Bruni was involved in design decisions, see Jonietz 2017, 108.

21 On the concept of modernity in the early modern era, see the comprehensive study Brennan 2019a.

FIGURE 6.1   Filippo Brunelleschi, *Sacrifice of Isaac*, 1401, gilded bronze. Florence, Museo
Nazionale del Bargello

FIGURE 6.2   Lorenzo Ghiberti, *Sacrifice of Isaac*, 1401, gilded bronze. Florence, Museo
Nazionale del Bargello

FIGURE 6.3
Lorenzo Ghiberti and workshop, *Gates of Paradise*, 1425–1452, gilded bronze, formerly Baptistery, East Door. Florence, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo

FIGURE 6.4   Lorenzo Ghiberti, *The story of Abraham*, *c.*1432/34, gilded bronze, formerly Baptistery, East Door. Florence, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo

forward and backward simultaneously. In this regard, a somewhat neglected detail of the *Gates of Paradise* can be seen as an emblem of Ghiberti's decision to work in opposition to the approach he had chosen for his first monumental work, while at the same time gesturing emphatically toward the origins of his success.

Barely discussed in the literature is the fact that twenty-five years after his victory in 1401, certain iconographic requirements compelled Ghiberti to turn for a second time to the subject of the triumphant test piece of his youth (see figure 6.4).[22] For the right-hand side relief depicting the *Story of Abraham*, probably produced around 1432/34, which is divided vertically into two scenes around its midpoint, again depicts the *Sacrifice of Isaac*.[23] The scene differs from Ghiberti's first version*,* and not solely by virtue of the altered format; despite numerous differences, however, it also contains clear references to the test piece of 1401.

In the literature, the *Abraham* relief of the *Gates of Paradise* ranks among Ghiberti's least discussed designs. Among studies devoted to the individual compositions appearing over the past few decades, it has received far less attention than, for example, the scene of *Noah* with the ark, given its fascinating geometry, or *Solomon with the Queen of Sheba*, with its suggestive use of central perspective.[24] As in the competition scene of 1401, the scene on the right-hand side of the *Abraham* relief, which depicts the *Sacrifice* along with the visit of the three angels on the left, is divided by a diagonally fissured rock. Above, the angel arrives from the right to interrupt the imminent act of sacrifice; below, two companions are shown in conversation, while a donkey laps water from a spring. However, essential compositional elements are articulated differently. The angel now seizes Abraham's dramatically raised sword, while Isaac, awaiting death, gazes down at the ground. The geometry of the sacrificial altar – shown in 1401 from a curious perspectival arrangement more as a surface than from the side, almost as if toppling downward – takes on a clearer form in the later version, such that it almost resembles a mirror-image of the same structure in Brunelleschi's competition piece.

Yet it seems implausible that the crucial point of reference for Ghiberti in the 1420s would be the design of his former competitor from a quarter century earlier – a design that he does not single out for praise in his *Commentarii*, by

22   Exceptions include Heinen 2006, 117–120, and Oberer 2014.

23   On its dating, see Krautheimer-Krautheimer Hess 3rd ed. 1982, XVII, 192–193; exhib. cat. *Materia e ragionamenti* 1978, 334 (M.G. Ciardi Duprè Dal Poggetto).

24   A discussion of the *Abraham* relief is missing, for example, from the extensive treatment of the *Gates of Paradise* in Poeschke 1990, 70–73.

an artist who had abandoned sculpture entirely after that point.[25] By virtue of these formal borrowings, Ghiberti seems to have been concerned primarily with presenting an improved version of his own test piece, eliminating the potential weaknesses, and producing a sophisticated reinterpretation of his own *invenzione*. That his concept does not aim to surpass the earlier version in all regards – toward an absolute 'auto-superatio' – is underscored by multiple direct references to the relief of 1401 and its pictorial details: in both, Isaac is again depicted – hardly as a matter of course – as a boy kneeling on firewood whose garments have been torn from his body; the ram is an almost ostentatiously literal copy of the first.

These recapitulations merit all the more attention alongside other details that testify to Ghiberti's capacity for depicting geometric forms, such as the complex foreshortening of the round dish in the foreground, among others.[26] The contrast between the self-citation of the resting ram and the donkey, shown from the rear in extreme foreshortening on the other side, illustrates the artistic aims of a now mature artist, who looks both backward as well as forward, and who demonstrates – at a distance of just a few centimeters – that the early Quattrocento mode of depiction is still valid, still convining, although he has meanwhile internalized a more complex mode of representation that moves toward the art of *rilievo schiacciato*.

A further argument, moreover, may be implicit in the 'symbolic form' of the perspective view of the donkey. In 2003, Georg Satzinger (in a Festschrift essay that has in a sense laid 'hidden' from most Ghiberti scholars) proposed that in the *Noah* relief, Ghiberti inserted concrete references to Pliny's statement that the ancient painter Pausias depicted a bull not from the side, but instead frontally, in perspectival foreshortening, and in a way that the viewer was nonetheless aware of the animal's full dimensions (*Nat. hist.* XXXV: 126).[27] Ghiberti, who as is known draws liberally from Pliny in his *Commentarii*, refers at one point specifically to this passage, certifying his knowledge of ancient compositional practices.[28] A more explicit, and for contemporary viewers more visible example can be found in the *Gates of Paradise* – not in the relief discussed by Satzinger, but instead in the figure of the donkey drinking from a stream in the lower section of the *Sacrifice of Isaac*. Significantly, this scene is thematically

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25   In opposition to the main thesis of Oberer 2014. Cf. also above, n. 17.

26   Cf. Krautheimer-Krautheimer Hess 3rd ed. 1982, 195; on perspective in the *Abraham* relief, see Bloom 1969.

27   Satzinger 2003, 107–108.

28   Ghiberti 1998, 80 [I, VIII.30]. On Ghiberti's reception of Pliny, see most recently Brennan 2019b.

linked to the work by Pausias discussed in Pliny, which similarly illustrates the sacrificial offering of an animal. The foreshortening of the donkey, then, does more than satisfy the demands of theoreticians like Alberti and, before him, Brunelleschi. If we accept the interpretation of this artistic device as referring to ancient modes of depiction, then a rich competition with his own earlier mode of depiction arises, for with his donkey, Ghiberti demonstrates a connection to antiquity that is not only designed to invalidate criticism of his earlier use of classical models – criticism stemming back to 1401 – but also proposes an approach to ancient models that goes beyond the direct quotation of surviving statues, such as the celebrated *Spinario* once cited by Brunelleschi, in order to recover and reactivate the theoretical tenets of lost paintings that only survive through ancient textual descriptions.[29]

4   Second Case Study: Mino and the Comparison of Unequal Memoria

This alternation between maintaining distance from one's own artistic prototype and cultivating references to it raises the question: to what degree can Ghiberti's second version of the theme – which, as shown above, should be regarded neither as a faithful repetition nor a fully independent reformulation – be understood not solely in relation to a personal search for artistic form, but also as a response to the expectations of contemporary viewers? The question is complicated by the fact that Ghiberti's test piece was only accessible to a restricted public, which nevertheless included the circle of his direct clients. Whereas Brunelleschi's piece was installed after the competition as the tabernacle door in the original altar of the Old Sacristy of San Lorenzo, erected in 1419, Ghiberti's relief remained the property of its commissioner, the Guild of Cloth Finishers and Merchants. The Arte di Calimala reserved the right to have the *Sacrifice of Isaac* installed in a third door, to be fashioned later, and had the piece gilded, probably in 1402/03.[30] Antonio Manetti's biography of Brunelleschi refers to its presence in the audience hall – the Udienza – of the guild palace, which occupied a relatively prominent site on Via dei Calzaiuoli between

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29   On other possible citations from antique works in Ghiberti's *Abraham* relief, cf. Krautheimer-Krautheimer Hess 3rd ed. 1982, 346.

30   Krautheimer-Krautheimer Hess 3rd ed. 1982, 38, 43 and 370, doc. 33 ('Deliberossi poi di [?] mettere nella Porta sopradetta il Testamento Nuovo e si riserbo la detta Storia per metterla nell'altra Porta se Testamento Vecchio vi si facesse'). Cf. Rauterberg 1996, 80.

the Piazza della Signoria and Orsanmichele; it was still evidently there in 1568, when Vasari described it.[31]

A far more direct form of comparison between works of art, and consequentially a different sort of self-challenge for artists emerged in the context of altars and funerary monuments installed in churches in immediate proximity to one another. Comparisons between the various attempted solutions become central to studies of funerary sculpture in the Renaissance when we consider that beginning in the mid-Quattrocento, the typology of the Florentine tomb was completely redefined by experimental, mutually competitive, and to some extent also collaborative projects by Bernardo and Antonio Rossellino, Desiderio da Settignano, Benedetto da Maiano, Giuliano da Sangallo, Michelozzo, Francesco di Simone Ferrucci, and Mino da Fiesole, and moreover that this competition – to put it synagonistically – gave rise to the development of shared formulae for expressing dignity and rank that were designed to glorify the pantheon of the Tuscan intellectual elite. In particular, two trailblazing contributions by Bernardo Rossellino (the memorial to Leonardo Bruni, figure 6.5) and Desiderio (the tomb of Carlo Marsuppini, figure 6.6) have played exceptional roles in past research. This is not only due to the demonstrable successes of both designs, but also to the fact that, sitting directly opposite one another in Santa Croce, they have always lent themselves to direct comparison.

Even better suited to the question of how an artist proceeds after enormous initial success, however, are two examples by a representative of the last generation to reshape the Florentine tomb in the fifteenth century – that is, before Michelangelo's innovations in the century to follow. The protagonist of this development was Mino da Fiesole, an artist born around 1430, whose teacher has to date never been securely identified, but must have been trained by one of the aforementioned Florentine masters. In the Badia Fiorentina, Mino created a wall tomb for the lawyer, diplomat, and politician Bernardo Giugni (d. 1466), probably executed from about 1464/66 to 1468/69 (figure 6.7).[32] Prior to the later reorientation of the church, and with it, the relocation of the monument, the tomb was located in the right transept, presumably on the southern wall. It is unknown whether Bernardo himself provided the commission, or

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31   Manetti 1976, 62; Vasari 1966–1997, III, 81 ('la quale ancora si vede dentro all'Udienza dell'Arte de' Mercatanti') and 147 ('in sagrestia vecchia di San Lorenzo, nel dossal dell'altare, e quivi si truova al presente'). Much later, the reliefs by Ghiberti and Brunelleschi, which had never been entirely forgotten by Florentine art lovers, entered the Medici Collection, where they were inventoried only shortly before the mid-seventeenth century; cf. Krautheimer-Krautheimer Hess 3rd ed. 1982, 42–43.

32   Angeli 1905, 117–118; Lange 1928, 14–17; Sciolla 1970, 29–30, 67–68, no. 11; Zuraw 1993, in particular 276–288, 829–844, no. 51 (with further literature).

FIGURE 6.5   Bernardo Rossellino and workshop, *Tomb of Leonardo Bruni, c.*1444–1451.
Florence, S. Croce

his brother Ugolino Giugni. What is certain is that work was emphatically well
received, such that Mino – who up to that point had never executed a major
project of this kind – was contracted by the Benedictine monks immediately
after its completion to take over work on the most important monument in
the Badia, namely the tomb for the Margrave Ugo di Toscana (d. 1001), a major
patron of the church, and the son of its founder, Willa. Apart from the interrup-
tion of a trip to Rome in 1473/74, Mino supervised work on the tomb, installed
in the main choir chapel, until its completion in early 1481 (figure 6.8).[33]

33   Angeli 1905, 115–117; Lange 1928, 18–26; Sciolla 1970, 46–49, 64–67, no. 10; Zuraw 1993,
        esp. 288–306, 845–860, no. 52. On the Badia Fiorentina and its relationship to Ugo di Tos-
        cana, see in particular, most recently Leader 2012; Tigler 2016; Spinelli 2021.

FIGURE 6.6   Desiderio da Settignano and workshop, *Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini*, 1453–1455.
Florence, S. Croce

Although Vasari reprimanded Mino elsewhere throughout his *vita* for a sty-
listic dependency on Desiderio, thus highlighting the relationship between
imitation and 'stagnation' ('l'imitazione è una ferma arte'), he characterized
both of the Badia wall tombs in terms of qualitative improvement or 'prog-
ress'.[34] As Vasari explains, it was the success of the first monument – Mino's
artistic debut, which he signed proudly and prominently with OPVS MINI –
that earned him the commission for the second, which then became his finest
work.[35]

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34   Vasari 1966–1997, III, 405; cf. Sohm 2001, 103–105.

35   'La quale opera fu cagione che l'abate di quel luogo e' suoi monaci, … feciono fare a Mino
di marmo di Carrara una sepoltura, che fu la più bella opera che Mino facesse mai'; Vasari
1966–1997, III, 410.

FIGURE 6.7   Mino da Fiesole and workshop, *Tomb of Bernardo Giugni*, 1464/66–1468/69.
                      Florence, Badia Fiorentina

Vasari scholars who have read Minos's *vita* exclusively in light of the warn-
ing against excessive imitation have tended to overlook the stylistic discrep-
ancy within his oeuvre.[36] By contrast, some recent discussions of these tombs
have appropriately emphasized their subtle handling of models by Rossellino
and Desiderio at Santa Croce from the early 1450s, as well as the innovative
character of Mino's designs. Building on observations by Shelley E. Zuraw, and
taking into account additional reliefs by Mino found in the same complex of
the Badia, Thomas Pöpper recently went so far as to suggest that here, the
sculptor sought to showcase his artistic capacities through divergent show-
pieces.[37] Nevertheless, the importance of manifest differences between the
monuments for Giugni and Ugo have never been recognized or explained.

36   For example Rubin 1995, 247, 301, and 327; Gregory 2014, 231–232.
37   Zuraw 1998; Pöpper 2016.

FIGURE 6.8   Mino da Fiesole and workshop, *Tomb of Margrave Ugo di Toscana*, *c.*1470–1481.
Florence, Badia Fiorentina

When such differences are mentioned, as in Pöpper's commendable analysis, they primarily concern iconography (the accompanying figures and the substitution of a portrait tondo by a Madonna with Child) and the rhetoric of the inscriptions, which can be traced back to the patron rather than the artist. In earlier monographs by scholars such as Gianni Carlo Sciolla, assessments are restricted to the question of whether each monument was oriented more toward Rossellino or Desiderio.[38] Even Zuraw, whose monographic dissertation and subsequent articles laid the foundation for a re-engagement with Mino's oeuvre in the 1990s, sees them as a pair of more or less equivalent 'visual companions' despite many differences of design, which are then evaluated in terms of Mino's responses to the tombs of Bruni and Marsuppini in Santa Croce.[39]

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38   An exception, albeit largely without consequences, is Burger 1905, 213–215, who regards Mino as the last Florentine before Michelangelo who still produced 'something original in the area of tomb architecture' (215).

39   Zuraw 1998, 452, 458, 470.

In fact, it is only on first glance that Mino's designs appear as related variants of the same artistic idea, as a viewer standing in front of the stairs to the presbytery could have easily confirmed with just a slight bit of movement.[40] The two monuments share a basic structure – one that ultimately goes back to the type of the Bruni tomb – consisting of a rectangular niche framed by pilasters with a segmented, arched pediment into which a sarcophagus with gisant has been inserted, as well as details such as the vertical tripartite division of the rear wall of the niche with a central standing figure, the tondo in the pediment, and the inscription, carried by *putti* or angels. In the slightly later tomb of Ugo di Toscana, however, the architectural proportions and method of construction are entirely different.[41] The niche structure now rests on an enormous base, which bears the inscription panel (located on the sarcophagus in the earlier work). The earlier work's narrow double pilasters, decorated with consoles rather than capitals, have now been replaced by pilasters that conform to the classical orders. Furthermore, a pair of consoles now support the lateral projecting sections of the cornice, and the tomb is crowned by a semicircular arch that takes the form of an archivolt instead of a flat, segmented arch. In the ornamental details, the sculptural decoration is oriented more decidedly toward the canonical forms of antiquity, in contrast to the Giugni tomb, whose ornamentation was characterized by Zuraw as an 'eccentric', 'fantastic', or 'bizarre' variation on classical motifs.[42] Mino also takes up motifs such as the curtain above the figure of the deceased, an indirect citation of medieval monuments, which had surmounted the niches as a three-dimensionally formed textile in designs from the circle of Donatello and Michelozzo, and closer to Mino's own time, the funerary monument to the Cardinal of Portugal in San Miniato al Monte or works by Benedetto da Maiano.[43] However, Mino only paraphrases this motif, suspending the curtain above the niche and allowing it to fall down the sides of the framing sections, producing a subtly modulated play of shadows. In both cases, the range of playful effects is attributable to great freedom in the treatment of architectural elements: consoles as capitals, curved armrests as continuations of pillars and subdividing elements, etc.

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40   Cf. Pöpper 2016, 38, who speaks of similar 'twin' monuments', whose differences and *varietas* could be compared by the beholder. Writing in contrast is for example Angeli 1905, 118: 'L'organisme architectonique de ce sépulcre est toujours de même et Mino y apporte les mêmes modifications'.

41   On the principle of deviation in architecture, cf. for example Pauwels 2001.

42   Zuraw 1993, 278; Zuraw 1998, 456.

43   On the tomb chapel in San Miniato, see Markus Rath's chapter in this volume.

– indeed, as Fritz Burger pointed out as early as 1905, in the treatment of architecture as ornamentation.[44]

Since these fantastic elements cannot be attributed to architectural orders or other rule-based systems, it is difficult to explain these differences as indications of a divergent *decorum*. Nor do the numerous sources documenting the genesis of the tomb of the Margrave Ugo provide any indication that someone other than Mino was responsible for its subtle formal modifications. To be sure, Hildegard Lange, whose dissertation on Mino amounts to a harsh critique of his artistic abilities, hypothesizes that he was compelled to follow a wide range of 'specifications concerning the composition, down to the last detail' prepared by the priors of the Badia.[45] This supposition is not only improbable given the common practice of the time,[46] but also contradicts statements by the same author concerning Mino's 'efforts toward the design of his own architectural' ideas, which are said to be 'idiosyncratic' and even taken 'to extremes'.[47] A *ricordanza* dated 25 June 1471 mentions a drawing ('uno certo disegno f[a]cto in carta pergamena'), since lost, which is moreover referred to as contractually binding. This can hardly have been anything other than the sculptor's *modello,* produced for the purpose of establishing costs. Given that Ugo's tomb is oriented toward a type of tomb monument that had only emerged in the 1450s, it becomes evident that the commission developed without an initial *disegno* and clay model like those for which Luca della Robbia received payment in 1440, though the latter project was never executed.[48]

Emerging from the final invoice, however, prepared ten years later in 1481, are numerous deviations from the initial contract, which suggest changes that may have been conditioned to some extent by Mino da Fiesole's stay in Rome in the 1470s. Subsequently there were no major changes of plan, since the 1481 document records only the insertion of a *sottarco* into the segmented arch, a backrest (*spalliera*), a step (*scaglione*), and the replacement of a number of parts that would originally have consisted of dark sandstone (*macigno*) with more expensive marble. These changes in relation to the initial design entailed an increase in the final payment of about eleven percent (from 1.600 to 1.777 lire).[49] Although the phrasing actually speaks of the extension of the 'rear wall'

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44   Burger 1905, 214; in contrast, see Zuraw 1993, 56.

45   Lange 1928, 19.

46   On the stipulations of commissioning clients in the Quattrocento and Cinquecento, see Jonietz 2017, here esp. 100–111.

47   Lange 1928, 19–20; cf. Zuraw 1993, 56.

48   The payment to Luca ('per sua fatica d'un disegno e d'un modello di terra fe' per fare la sepoltura d'Ughone') was discovered and transcribed by Poggi 1903, 103.

49   Poggi 1903, 102.

or the 'back of the bench' ('agiunto la spalliera'), presumably a reference to seating accommodations desired by the monks below the tomb in the choir area, this is probably a reference to the actual bench between the lower step and the zone of the base. For the base area, which carries an important inscription, was certainly part of the original planning. The Benedictines' desire for a bench to sit on would therefore only have altered the established proportions of the monument imperceptibly, and the same is true for the substitution of materials and the supplemental ornamentation. Indeed, the *sottarco aggiunto nell'arco* cannot refer to the architrave with lateral consoles beneath the lunette, as Zuraw mistakenly reads it (an insertion that indeed would have enlarged the entire tomb); instead, it refers to the inner, semicircular marbled strip with bead molding and dentils.[50]

Clearly then, from the very beginning, Mino conceived a tomb that not only varied the details of the earlier Giugni monument, situated opposite, but was also conceived in a fundamentally different way, both structurally and conceptually. The observation that the second version is closer to designs in Santa Croce is not wrong. If Mino had created the architecture of the Ugo tomb in the spatial context of monuments by Rossellino or Desiderio, then his closer orientation to classical architectural canon, as well as his dependence on this earlier generation of artists, would have provoked precisely the criticism that Vasari later directed toward Desiderio's supposed epigones. Through its direct spatial juxtaposition with another monument that had been completed immediately before, however, Mino's choice came to be interpreted in direct contrast to the Giugni tomb – an artistic experiment with the possibilities of the wall tomb for which his own design served both as a point of departure and a foil, allowing him to devise innovative solutions and display them as such to Florentine observers.

5   Third Case Study: Variation and Distance in Donatello

Against this background, we can now return to the question, adduced briefly above, of whether and to what extent contemporaries would have seen Ghiberti's two versions of the *Sacrifice of Isaac* as a critical, self-reflective investigation of the theme. After all, such artistic reformulations do not typically take place in spatial settings like the Badia Fiorentina, where direct comparisons are possible and presumably even intended. In the absence of a public forum

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50   Cf. Zuraw 1993, 848.

amenable to the recognition of such differences, the possibility considered at the outset of this essay acquires greater plausibility: namely, that such revisions are motivated primarily by an artist's solitary search for a more fitting form of expression.

Compared to the Florentine *Sacrifice of Isaac*, beholders would have had far more difficulty recognizing Ghiberti's *Baptism of Christ* for the baptismal font in Siena, datable roughly between 1417 (and perhaps only after 1424) and 1427, as a reinterpretation of his own earlier *Baptism*, also a bronze relief, produced around 1409 for the north door of the Baptistery in Florence (figures 6.9 and 6.10).[51] Ghiberti again takes up key motifs, but an essential difference is observable in the transformation of the virtually three-dimensional angels into an aureole-like circle that almost merges with the background – an effect that became possible only with the establishment of the technique of *rilievo schiacciato* and Donatello's sculptural ideas.[52] In this case as well, Ghiberti invents nothing radically new; instead, he competes with himself, applying novel working methods to his own earlier designs. And although Ghiberti's earlier production stood before him during work on the relief for Siena (which took place in Florence, of course), he could nonetheless take it for granted that future viewers would hardly be aware of similarities or differences between the Florence and Siena versions, since the two reliefs would never be directly compared with one another.

A third and final example serves to illustrate this point with greater clarity while at the same time problematizing its implications. Donatello's oeuvre provides the best-known case in favor of the view, presented at the start of this essay, that at a certain point near the onset of early modernity, it becomes virtually impossible to speak of individual styles, but rather only of the congenial deployment of stylistic modes, at least in the case of leading masters. The enormous range of stylistic variation across his works defies style-based attempts at dating, rooted in traditional notions of stylistic 'development' in accordance with biographical chronology, and instead, demands for new explanatory models. After 1989, when Artur Rosenauer published his thought-provoking contribution *Zum Stilpluralismus im Werk Donatellos*, it was principally the dissertation of Ulrich Pfisterer, published in 2002, that established a framework

51   Krautheimer-Krautheimer Hess 3rd ed. 1982, 82, 120, 123 (on the relief for the north portal), 139, 149, 153 (on the date of the relief on the Sienese baptismal font); exhib. cat. *Materia e ragionamenti* 1978, 227 (A. Batazzi Becci); on this comparison, see Galli 2005, 43.

52   On this aspect, see Krautheimer-Krautheimer Hess 3rd ed. 1982, 153; on the archaic elements of the Sienese *Baptism,* which ultimately go back to Pisano, see ibid., 215.

FIGURE 6.9   Lorenzo Ghiberti, *Baptism of Christ*, *c*.1417/24–1427, gilded bronze. Siena,
             Baptistery

in which to explore this question, grounded in early modern literature on art
and theory.[53]

Two aspects are decisive for our investigation. First, certain works by
Donatello are not simply realized in a 'different style', but seem rather to repre-
sent a step-by-step 'transformation' of an initial version. Second, the literature
on Donatello illustrates precisely how an art-historical hypothesis concerning
pictorial types can take on a momentum of its own, such that a series of works
comes to be analyzed primarily in terms of mutual opposition, foreclosing any
simultaneous recognition of links and continuities between them.

A literary phantom relief can serve as the emblem of an open question in
this regard: just how far the presence of highly divergent works by Donatello in
the same city, alongside local knowledge of them, would have provided a basis
for their historical assessment. According to a dubious reference in Vasari, the

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53   Rosenauer 1989; Pfisterer 2002.

FIGURE 6.10   Lorenzo Ghiberti, *Baptism of Christ*, c.1409, gilded bronze, formerly Baptistery, North Door. Florence, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo

Florentine palazzo of the Arte del Cambio is said to have received a third test piece from the competition of 1401 by Donatello.[54] Since it is unlikely that Donatello, who was probably born around 1386, would have participated in the competition by virtue of his age, it is not clear whether this reference resulted from confusion with Ghiberti's relief in the Palazzo dell'Arte di Calimala, or with a third relief by another competition participant, or whether it can be written off as a free literary dramatization. Likewise, the question arises as to whether we can assume that Florentine viewers were familiar with the appearance of Donatello's contribution to the above-mentioned Sienese baptismal font (a textbook example of the agonal and synergetic element of sculptural collaboration).[55] Between 1423, when the commission was received, and April of 1427, when the relief was transported to Siena for gilding, Donatello also

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54   Vasari 1966–1997, III, 147 ('quella di Donato fu messa nell'Arte del Cambio'). Cf. also Krautheimer-Krautheimer Hess 3rd ed. 1982, 40, n. 36, and 43, n. 42.

55   Cf. Paoletti 1967.

FIGURE 6.11   Donatello, *Feast of Herod*, 1423–1427, gilded bronze. Siena, Baptistery

executed a bronze relief of *Herod's Banquet*. To be more precise, this relief of *Herod's Banquet* had already been cast in preparation for cleaning and chasing by August 1425 (figure 6.11).[56]

No known documentation sheds light on the context in which Donatello produced a second marble version of the same subject, now preserved in the Musée Wicar in Lille (figure 6.12). Today this relief is dated rather vaguely to the late 1420s or 1430s. More recently, the period around 1435 has enjoyed favor, largely due to the views of Hans Kauffmann and Horst W. Janson.[57]

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56   Kauffmann 2nd ed. 1936, esp. 61–63; Janson 1957, II, 65–75; Paoletti 1967, on dating esp. 77–83; Rosenauer 1993, 77–83, 99–102, cat. no. 15a (with older literature); Niehaus 1998, 82–84.

57   Kauffmann 2nd ed. 1982, esp. 63–66; Janson 1957, II, 129–131; Trudzinski 1986, 97–143 (with the most detailed treatment to date); Rosenauer 1993, 158–161, 184–185, cat. no. 39 (with older literature); arguing for an earlier dating to the 1420s, which found favor mainly in the nineteenth century, is for example Bennett & Wilkins 1984, 140. A dating to the Paduan period, proposed by Eugène Müntz (in 1885) and Samuel Fechheimer (in 1904),

FIGURE 6.12   Donatello, *Feast of Herod*, *c*.1430/40 (?), marble. Lille, Musée Wicar

Their proposed dating draws upon Alberti's *De Pictura*, which – as Kauffmann was the first to observe – explains the perspectival principles of *costruzione legittima*, upon which the relief, executed at least in part in *rilievo schiacciato,* seems to rely (the work has even be elevated to 'a didactic exposition of Alberti's *De Pictura*', as John Pope-Hennessy writes, or a 'frontespizio marmoreo del *De Pictura*', to cite Gabriele Morolli).[58]

Unlike the works by Ghiberti discussed above, the paired reliefs by Donatello have been compared so frequently that it would be virtually impossible to adequately summarize such discussions, which span from research on Donatello to studies of Renaissance perspectival construction.[59] Nevertheless, all of these

unanimously rejected today. In the catalogues of the most recent Donatello exhibitions in Florence, Berlin and London – all three published after the drafting and submission of the present essay – the Lille relief is mentioned, if at all, only in a very cursory way.

58   Morolli 1989, 48; Pope-Hennessy 1993, 133–134. More cautious Avery 1994, 9: 'The panel seems to be a deliberate demonstration on Donatello's part of how this theory [i.e. 'Alberti's instructions for creating an ideal picture'] works in practice'. On recent art-historical discussions of the connection between relief and theories of perspective in the early modern period, cf. (absent any discussion of the reliefs of Donatello) Lakey 2018.

59   Cf. for example Morisani 1952, 150–161; Rosenauer 1975, 75–86, here esp. 80, 84; Niehaus 1998, 95–96; Pfisterer 2002, 217–232; Motture 2004, 22–24; Field 2005, 53–55; Brennan

studies share an exclusive focus on differences in the perspectival design of the room, which in the first relief – to name only the most conspicuous difference – uses two vanishing points, and hence has a somewhat experimental character, while the later relief is consistent (apart from minimal differences, for example the placement of the horizon line) with the *costruzione legittima*.[60] References to differences in material are encountered less frequently, and discussions of the utterly divergent approaches to composition remain exceptional.[61] In the Siena version, the foreground scene is dominated by the dramatic responses of the observers to the delivery of the head of John the Baptist – even Salome seems to pause at this moment amidst her dance. In the relief in Lille, by contrast, the innocuously twirling figure of the dancing girl – an almost textbook example of 'bewegtes Beiwerk' (an animated accessory figure) – is positioned along the central axis, while on the right-hand side, the soldiers support themselves passively on their shields. Joachim Poeschke has pointed out that the scene may also be interpreted as resonating with a very different aspect of Alberti's reception: namely, his ideas concerning *motus* and *modestia*.[62] However, other differences lack any such correspondence with theoretical points of reference. The bench on the left-hand side has no evident function with regard to the perspectival construction, and instead seems to serve Donatello's intention to delimit an intimate space within the architecture, and perhaps also as a reference to the antique *Letto di Policleto* in Ghiberti's possession.[63]

Other details suggest Donatello's preoccupation with the version of this composition that he had produced only slightly earlier. This is corroborated in particular by the presence of the horrified courtier who holds his hand in front of his face, a figure that is present in both versions, albeit mirror reversed. The fact that so little attention has been paid to such recollections of the earlier *invenzione*, which indicate a degree of continuity in the creative process, and that the two reliefs have instead been regarded as contrasting or even competing designs is ultimately related to notions of the autonomy of the work of art: interpretations developed during the third quarter of the 20th century to a considerable extent in relation to this key work in Lille.

2019b, 52; cf. also the information provided by the following footnote.

60   A typical example being White 1972 [1957], esp. 149–151 and *ad indicem*; Edgerton 1966, 374; Damisch 1987, 865–866; Kemp 1990, esp. 14–15, 24; Field 2005, 53–54 (on Siena); as well as Kemp 1990, 40; Field 2005, 54 (on Lille).

61   These exceptions include Morisani 1952, 158–161; Rosenauer 1993, 160–161; Poeschke 2002, 186–188; Petrucci 2003, 72–80.

62   Poeschke 2002, 186–188.

63   For a detailed discussion of possible references to antique works, see Trudzinski 1986, 127–138. I am grateful to Robert Brennan for suggesting that the bench could indeed be linked to Alberti's discussion of the limits of figural extension.

Given the relief's provenance, recent art historians have been increasingly convinced, as with few other artifacts from this period, that Donatello addressed the whole design to an educated, art-loving audience, or even that he had created an 'autonomous work of art'. In fact, the piece may be identical with an object that received a matching description and attribution when it was inventoried in 1492 after the death of Lorenzo Magnifico de' Medici, together with other religious subjects that had been present in an anteroom to his sleeping chamber.[64] Indeed, claims for the special status of this second version of the *Herod* relief may seem all the more astonishing given the remarkable ambivalence that has greeted this relief,[65] ranging from the most elevated art-theoretical praise (leading Alessandro Parronchi to the far-fetched thesis that Leonardo da Vinci was involved in its creation)[66] all the way to criticisms of its allegedly conspicuous deficits of execution (which led Bonnie A. Bennett and David G. Wilkins to express grave doubts concerning its attribution, and prompted Pope-Hennessy to exclude it from Donatello's oeuvre entirely).[67]

Such claims have circulated in German-language research since the 1970s, and evidently go back, again, to Artur Rosenauer. In his dissertation, he became the first, to my knowledge, to claim that the marble version of *Herod's Banquet* belongs, along with a number of Madonnas, to a group of 'reliefs which, we can assume, were always intended as self-sufficient works of art', a claim Rosenauer himself has repeated a number of times.[68] This thesis was adopted early on by

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64 'Uno quadro di marmo chon molte fighure di mezo rilievo e altre chose a prospettiva, c[i]oè – di sancto Giovanni, di mano di Donato' (Spallanzani & Gaeta Bertelà 1992, 33).

65 For a pointed discussion of the resultant problems, see exhib. cat. *L'uomo del rinascimento* 2006, 422–423, cat. no. 167 (G. Bonsanti).

66 Parronchi 1989, 58–60.

67 'Un'attribuzione errata, di più gravi conseguenze, è quella del rilievo in marmo della 'Presentazione a Erode della testa del Battista' che si trova ora a Lilla. Prima avevo solo qualche dubbio ma, nelle ultime due occasioni in cui ho avuto modo di studiarlo, mi è sembrato sotto ogni aspetto incompatibile con l'opera di Donatello'. (Pope-Hennessy 1986, 64); cf. Wilkins 2007, 94, n. 29 (for an earlier discussion of the relief – still without the author's knowledge of the original – see Bennett & Wilkins 1984, 140).

68 Rosenauer 1975, 80; similarly Rosenauer 1985, 32 ('probably conceived as an autonomous relief, possibly as an item for a collector or a connoiseur [*sic*]'); Rosenauer 1988, 39 ('wohl von Anfang als autonomes Relief, möglicherweise als Sammlerstück für einen Kenner geschaffen'), 50; Rosenauer 1993, 158 ('sembra esser stato creato come opera autonoma e non presenta alcun elemento che possa far pensare ad un contesto più ampio'), 161 ('creata come rilievo autonomo') and 184 ('lascia supporre che esso sia stato concepito come opera d'arte autonoma').

    However, Rosenauer's main thesis is somewhat anticipated in an anonymous catalogue entry in *Cent chefs-d'œuvre du Musee de Lille* 1970, 34, cat. no. 9: 'Au-delà du thème, ce site architectural s'impose comme un extraordinaire exercice de perspective mathématique en sculpture. Plus que dans un but précis, Donatello semble ici s'exercer à

Volker Herzner, who concluded categorically that 'the relief had evidently no liturgical function'. Believing that it was produced to showcase the artist's technical abilities, Herzner concluded that 'as one of the first autonomous works of art', it possesses 'a position of the highest rank in the history of modern art'.[69] Joachim Poeschke and Andrea Niehaus, too, took up this proposal, repeating that the piece in Lille was 'evidently created as a self-sufficient artistic paradigm of a *storia*, as an artistic demonstration', or as a 'virtuoso piece intended for a private connoisseur'.[70] Internationally, this view has been received with greater caution and hesitancy, although some scholars like Marc Bormand and Francesca Petrucci have taken up Rosenauer's idea, the latter even proposing that Donatello may have created the relief in Lille as one of the earliest autonomous contributions to the paragone question.[71] James David Draper and Nicholas Penny, in contrast, proceed from the suggestive explanation that the

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cet usage nouveau d'une méthode séduisante de l'expression de l'espace. ... Aussi l'œuvre apparaît-elle bien comme une sorte de gageure, quelque chef-d'œuvre, dans le sens artisanal du thème, où l'Artiste a cherché à mettre en valeur tous les secrets de son métier. Par le côté essentiellement graphique de l'œuvre, il rivalise avec la peinture. Par la finesse du modelé ... il veut prouver sa science de tailleur de pierre. Aujourd'hui, le bas-relief apparaît comme l'une de ces créations purement intellectuelles de la Renaissance italienne, obsédée par l'évocation d'un monde d'une beauté rationnelle'.

69   '[T]he relief had evidently no liturgical function. There is no indication, in any case, that it had been destined for a Saint John altar or a baptismal font; it most certainly was not a devotional image. ... If, thus, the relief really was produced to demonstrate a specific technical skill, it would assume a prominent place in modern art history as an early, autonomous artwork'; exhib. cat. *Italian Renaissance Sculpture* 1985, 118–119, cat. no. 19 (v. Herzner); identical: 'il bassorilievo non ha alcuna funzione liturgica. Non c'è alcun segno che indichi che l'opera fosse destinata ad un altare di San Giovanni o ad un fonte battesimale; decisamente non era un'immagine votiva. ... Perciò, se il bassorilievo è stato davvero eseguito per dimostrare una particolare abilità tecnica, dovrebbe detenere un posto di primo piano nella storia dell'arte moderna come una delle prime opere d'arte autonoma'; exhib. cat. *Donatello e i Suoi* 1986, 140–141, cat. no. 29 (V. Herzner).

70   Poeschke 1990, 105 (similar Poeschke 2002, 187: 'The marble relief in Lille, obviously not created for a sacred context, and instead as a so-called autonomous work of art'); Niehaus 1998, 96.

71   Petrucci 2003, 80 ('La formella di Donatello non sembra aver mai avuto una destinazione precisa e pare ideata proprio come prova delle possibilità pittoriche della scultura in una gara di eccellenza fra le arti, in anticipo sulla questione sollevata da Benedetto Varchi negli anni Quaranta del Cinquecento'); exhib. cat. *Primavera* 2013, 410–411, cat. no. VII.6 (M. Bormand) ('Donatello crea quello che forse è uno dei primi rilievi autonomi dell'epoca moderna').

        Appearing after the writing of the present essay was Coonin 2019, who advocates the same view (133): 'probably intended from the start as a demonstration piece in sculpture of the principles Alberti describes in reference to painting'.

piece was intended for 'domestic devotion' or 'private contemplation'.[72] Astonishingly, recent Donatello studies do not even raise the perfectly reasonable question of whether the work constitutes a fragment of an otherwise undocumented decorative scheme: for example, the altar of a baptistery, a baptismal font, or perhaps a subdsidiary scene for the base of a statue.[73]

Moreover, the interpretation presently favored in the literature, which regards the artwork as a demonstration piece, neglects the question of why this subject in particular should have been chosen for the *storia*. Neither the broader outlines of the narrative of John the Baptist nor this specific episode seem necessarily suitable for an artistic showpiece. The sole reason why Judith V. Field deemed it exceptionally appropriate for a perspectival composition ('a likely subject for perspective') is that the scene transpires in an interior, but as she herself points out, the action itself, the 'amount of sex and violence on show', is likely to distract the beholder from the primary artistic objective.[74]

But this is of only marginal relevance for the question of why and precisely how Donatello took his earlier design as a point of departure for the marble *Banquet*. More to the point, it must be said that such references appear all the more astonishing and unexpected if we accept Rosenauer's argument, according to which Donatello enjoyed unparalleled artistic freedom to reinvent the composition, but nonetheless decided somehow – in the absence of any external impetus – to rework the *invenzione* of the Sienese relief while altering decisive features. The recognizable similarities he retained can by no means have been intended for comparison by contemporary viewers. In Lorenzo's art collection (where the marble *Herod's Banquet*, it should be stressed, is traceable – if at all – for the first time only 50 years or so after its creation), the categorical and subtle differences with the initial composition of the 1420s could hardly have been significant, and deliberate acts of self-citation even less so. It was only for Donatello himself that, during work on the marble version in Florence, the design of the earlier version that had traveled to Siena stood before his inner eye. In this light, the relief of the 1430s can be regarded not only as a hypothetical artistic demonstration belonging to a specific point in time, but

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72 Exhib. cat. *Masterworks* 1992, 180–183, cat. no. 44 (J.D. Draper) ('The Lille relief was probably meant from the start to be an object for private contemplation, not part of a greater whole'); repeated in exhib. cat. *Lille* 1995, 200–203, cat. no. 44 (J.D. Draper) ('Le bas-relief du musée de Lille avait probablement été destiné dès l'origine à un cadre privé et non pas à un grand ensemble'); Penny 2007, 80–81.

73 Cf. for example the Herod scene, also executed as a rectangular relief in marble, produced by Domenico Gagini in the late 1440s as part of the outfitting of the Cappella di San Giovanni Battista in Genoa; see Kruft 1972, 240–241, no. 19 and *ad indicem*.

74 Field 2005, 55.

even more so as a momentary interim result within a years-long search for a suitable and challenging form of expression. In other words, it stands as evidence of a synagonistic process that had generated only a provisional solution.

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In summary, it can be said that all three examples discussed above display modifications to a successful design that were of significance primarily to the artist himself, for in no case can such changes be convincingly attributed to the stipulations of a commissioning client. With the exception of the tomb monuments in the Badia Fiorentina, few contemporaries were ever even aware of the manifest differences between each individual iteration.

The significance of spatial relations of this sort can be developed most reliably by drawing upon architectural history. For Bernardo Rossellino in Florence, a virtually literal citation of Alberti's facade for the Palazzo Rucellai, for example, would presumably have been inconceivable – certainly, there is no instance of twin facades that are identical down to the last detail. In Pienza, where Rossellino erected the Palazzo Piccolomini immediately after Alberti produced his initial design, such a borrowing was unproblematic. This point can be illustrated even more tellingly with reference to architectural self-reflection during the Cinquecento. Today, such comparisons are components of numerous architectural propaedeutics in university courses. Andrea Palladio planned the facade of San Giorgio Maggiore around 1566, when the cornerstone was laid, while the facade was executed by Vincenzo Scamozzi only three decades after Palladio's death. Erected just a few hundred meters westward between 1577 and 1592 was Il Redentore. Compositionally, there are enormous differences between these two Venetian facades, which however take recourse to an identical 'assembly kit' of motifs, based on the classical temple front. To mention just a few here with the greatest brevity, we can note the vertical thrust of Il Redentore, the emphasis of the central axis, and the staggering of additional facade levels in the upper zone. Since in both instances, it is to some extent a question of superimposed blind facades that make a deceptive impression with regard to the spaces behind them, and that were conditioned only marginally by the actual church building, these striking differences can primarily be regarded as a purely artistic decision: clearly, Palladio and his client sought to avoid too close a correspondence between the two facades, which could easily have been compared directly with one another by a viewer from San Marco or Dorsoduro with only a minimal change of position. Similar considerations would have played no role in the design of San Giorgio Maggiore, whose facade was in turn a near variant of Palladio's facade for San Francesco della Vigna, designed not long before but in an entirely different area of the city. This

example shows that it is unwarranted to assume that Palladio became more 'experimental' in a later phase, or that he called his earlier approach to design into question. Instead, as in the case of Mino da Fiesole in the Badia Fiorentina, he took the beholder's perspective seriously.

The example of Palladio also suggests the need to reflect upon the implications of synagonistic elements in the process of artistic creation for established periodizations. Certainly, the development of printed reproduction techniques beginning in the late fifteenth century and the dissemination of literary descriptions and comparisons of works of art beginning in the mid-Cinquecento led to a radical reorientation of aesthetic discourse, which, by circa 1600, emphasized creative originality and novelty as a central element of theories about art.[75] On the other hand, the examples from the Quattrocento discussed above diverge fundamentally from the practice of a sought-after sculptor of the late-Cinquecento such as Giambologna, who single-handedly and repeatedly reproduced his complex reliefs and individual figures in precious materials such as bronze, marble, and alabaster. Conversely, it could be argued that as early as the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, synagonistic dynamics within a workshop shaped the design of the four celebrated pulpits of Nicola and Giovanni Pisano in Pisa, Siena, and Pistoia, which, as is well known, resemble one another as much as they differ. Leaving aside the divergent iconographic requirements of these pulpits, it is conceivable that the clients desired concrete differences in relation to earlier creations by the workshop, which nonetheless inspired enthusiasm as models. First and foremost, however, both Nicola and Giovanni, as father and son, were oriented toward their own successful model, while at the same time continually setting themselves the same demands, albeit in new ways. By these means, they were able not only to express an awareness of their own temporality – something that would become genuinely tangible in art-theoretical terms only with Ghiberti's *Commentarii* – but simultaneously, to exemplify the activity of an individual artist in a workshop where collaborative competition and self-referentiality need not necessarily represent countervailing forces.

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PART 3

Intermedialities

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Sound Spaces: Visualizations of Religious Music in Caravaggio

Isabella Augart

Compellingly visualized in the *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (figure 7.1, *c.*1597, Galleria Doria Pamphilj, Rome), painted by Michelangelo Merisi, known as Caravaggio (1571–1610), is an episode from the childhood of Christ.[1] In an autumnal landscape, the Holy Family has settled down to rest during the Flight into Egypt. The Virgin, who holds the Christ child, is immersed in deep sleep. Seated to her left on the stony ground on a travel bundle is Joseph, who holds a volume of music up to the celestial violinist positioned at the picture's center. As he listens, Joseph's furrowed brow, intense gaze and wide-opened eyes betray his strain and his amazement at the sight of the young visitor. Is this seminude apparition meant to be an angel? Why does this divine emissary require notated music for his performance?

Caravaggio's angelic violinist invites us to reflect on the relationship between painting and music in the Italian art of the late 16th century from a synagonistic perspective. The focal reference to the art of sound in this painting is the musician's manuscript: as a beholder, we share the angelic performer's view of the sheet, which displays the Marian motet *Quam pulchra es et quam decora, carissima in deliciis,* composed in 1519 by Noël Bauldewijn.[2] In this essay, I want to show how Caravaggio enriched his painterly art in his *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* through a productive confrontation with contemporary religious music in order to arrive at a complex mode of presentation that brings together visual, acoustic, and spatial dynamics.

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1 Michelangelo Merisi, called Caravaggio, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, *c.*1597, Rome, Galleria Doria Pamphilj. See Ebert-Schifferer 2009, 70–73, 286–287; De Marchi 2010, 17–22; von Rosen 2009; Cat. Dresden 2020.

2 See Camiz Trinchieri 1989, 198–221, here 216 and 220f., n. 68; Slim 1983, 303–311, here 326.

FIGURE 7.1   Michelangelo Merisi, called Caravaggio, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt, c.*1597, oil on canvas,
                Rome, Galleria Doria Pamphilj
                IMAGE: EBERT-SCHIFFERER 2009, 286

1   Il riposo durante la fuga in Egitto

In the immense literature on Caravaggio, the *Rest on the Flight* is discussed
rather infrequently; alongside investigations into its possible commissioning
client and relation to the early Roman works, attempts have been made to
shed light on the work from the perspective of musical iconography.[3] While
the focus of such research has been primarily on the identification of the
depicted musical score, I want to show how Caravaggio's reference here to

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3   See Ebert-Schifferer 2009, 70–73, 286–287; De Marchi 2010, 17–22. On investigations of the
    Rest on the Flight from the perspective of musical iconology, see Camiz Trinchieri 1989,
    198–221; Camiz Trinchieri & Ziino 1983, 67–83, here 77; Mascioli 2003, 181–206; Ziane 2007,
    161–179.

the art of sound was conceived as a multilayered interplay between diverse media. Executed in oils on canvas in a horizontal format (it measures 135.5 × 166.5 cm), this religious image was intended as a collection piece, presumably for Gerolamo Vittrici, whose close connections to the Oratorian community are relevant to its semantics. Preserved today in the Galleria Doria Pamphilj in Rome, this early work has been dated *c.*1597, and enjoys a secure provenance going back to 1647.[4] It is mentioned for the first time in 1620/21 by Caravaggio's biographer Giulio Mancini;[5] Giovan Pietro Bellori describes the Holy Family and the music-making angel in 1672.[6]

Depicted is an apocryphal episode from the childhood of Christ, namely the *Flight into Egypt*.[7] Joseph is shown seated on the left on a brightly colored traveling bundle, a wicker bottle at his side. He wears a coarsely woven violet robe; his sienna-colored cloak lies across his knees in heavy, sculpturally elaborated folds. Joseph is so absorbed in contemplating the angel that he fails to realize that he covers part of the volume of music with his rough, artisan's hands.[8] While the character study of the old man evokes concentration and astonishment, Mary and the Christ child emanate tranquility and self-absorption. Set back slightly in the right-hand side of the picture, the Virgin, the child at her breast, has fallen asleep at the feet of an oak tree. Partially concealed by the angel's wing, Mary is seated cross-legged on the ground, her bare left foot protruding from the hem of her robe. Her head has dropped onto her left shoulder, and her face rests on her infant's blonde head. Evoked by the contrast between the red hair and pale face is a reference to the *Penitent Magdalene*.[9] Even in sleep, the Mother of God safeguards her son's tranquility with her right arm, which rests lightly on her knee. The child's feet rest on his mother's lap, a pose to which Christ will eventually return in the pictorial type of the *Pietà*.[10]

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4   Beginning in 1647 the picture is documented in the collection inventory of the Palazzo Pamphilj; see Marini 1987, 393.

5   See Mancini 1621, 59–61.

6   See Bellori 1672, 203. See Bellori ed. 2018.

7   On the iconography of the *Rest on the Flight,* see Schweicher & Jászai 1990, 43–50. In Italy, the theme of the *Rest* is encountered less frequently than the *Flight into Egypt*, and was localized primarily in northern Italy. The Italian tradition favors a richly figural composition with angels refreshing the holy family with fruits, water, or music; a single angel is unusual.

8   On the depiction of Joseph, see Wagner 1958, 31, and Raabe 1996, 75.

9   Caravaggio, *Penitent Magdalene*, ca 1596&97, Rome, Galleria Doria Pamphilj, oil on canvas, 106 × 97 cm. Wagner 1958, 28f., dated slightly earlier than the *Rest on the Flight*. See Hibbard 1983, here 50f. and 285. See also Krüger 1999, 33–49.

10   König 1997, 92. This temporal link is suggested as well by the donkey: the beast of burden from the *Flight into Egypt* returns in the donkey of Passion iconography.

Caravaggio plays here with contrasts: the youthfulness and beauty of the Madonna on the right is juxtaposed with the character study of the aged face of Joseph on the left. The relaxed togetherness of mother and child in sleep contrasts with the attentiveness and concentration of the adoptive father. These contrasts are inscribed into the landscape as well.[11] Visible on the ground on the left-hand side of the picture are isolated patches of grass and greenery, pebbles, and pieces of stone. Opening up behind Mary is a view of the autumnal landscape, which proceeds in layers from the waterway, edged with reeds, with its grain stalks, all the way to the hilly horizon. The landscape type, with its high horizon and a view into the distance confined to one side of the picture, betrays Veneto-Lombardian influences.[12] Alongside Mary, thistles, blackberry vines, and thorny rose branches refer to the crown of thorns, and reeds to the flagellation of the Passion.[13]

2   Sounding Bodies

Serving as a hinge figure between the spheres of worldly reality embodied by Joseph and Mary's sublimation is the angel (figure 7.2), who is characterized as a heavenly musician by the violin and music manuscript.[14] Within the Italian image tradition, it is certainly exceptional to assign such prominence to a music-making angel.[15]

   In this paper, I attempt to demonstrate that through the angel, the apocryphal narrative is enriched via multilayered reflections on music as an art form and the interrelationship between music and painting. Visibility and invisibility, visuality and sound: the relationship between acoustic and visual art had already been interwoven on many occasions, and their medial manifestations interrogated for commonalities, differences, and overlaps.[16] In the image tradition of the early modern era, we encounter numerous allusions to music

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11   Only in the *Sacrifice of Isaac* does a similar landscape offer views into depth. Caravaggio, *Sacrifice of Isaac*, oil on canvas, 104 × 135 cm, Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi.

12   Concerning stylistic models for the landscape, see Held 1996, 53 and Friedländer 1955, 151.

13   In place of the palm tree that would be typical of the iconography of a *Rest on the Flight,* the oak tree evokes the oak wood of the Cross. On deviations from the pictorial tradition, see Johnson Jordon 1987, 225–227.

14   For essential contemporary reflections on angels, see Goga 2018.

15   See Schweicher & Jászai 1990, 43–50.

16   See for example Shephard & Leonhard 2014; Symanczyk, Wagner & Wendling 2016; Oy-Marra, Pietschmann, Wedekind & Zenck 2017; Hunter-Crawley & O'Brien 2019; Zgraja & Urchueguía 2021.

FIGURE 7.2   Michelangelo Merisi, called Caravaggio, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (detail),
              *c.*1597, oil on canvas, Rome, Galleria Doria Pamphilj
              IMAGE: EBERT-SCHIFFERER 2009, 286

which take the human body as a point of reference, in a sense transforming
it into a resonating body. Art-historical and visual studies have investigated
such superimpositions in the form, for example, of depictions of figures with
instruments or with actual or imagined musical scores, in portraits of well-
known musicians and composers, in pictures of musical performances involv-
ing soloists or ensembles, and in allegories of love or of convivial gatherings.[17]
Areas of reflection on the possibilities of articulation and on human sensory
experience remain bound up with the body, as are music-related personifica-
tions of the order and harmony of divine creation: in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*

17   See Cat. Vienna 2001; Scherlies 2001, 23–29; McIver 2003; Erben 2008.

FIGURE 7.3   "*Armonia*", in: Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia overo Descrittione di diverse Imagini cavate dall'antichità et di propria inventione*, Rome 1603, fol. 26
IMAGE: © UNIVERSITÄTSBIBLIOTHEK HEIDELBERG / PUBLIC DOMAIN

of 1603, for example, the body of a lute player becomes an emblem of *Armonia* (figure 7.3).[18]

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18   See Ripa 1603, 26; Feinstein 1977. In the literature on the art of the early modern era, the topos of musical harmony repeatedly mirrors the aesthetic structure of visual images; see Korrick 2003, 193–214.

Caravaggio presents the figure of the angel as a sounding body. Through the ambiguous display of the angel's emphatic corporality and sensuality, he plays with the reception contexts characteristic of religious works intended for collectors.[19] The violinist angel is positioned at the foremost plane of the picture, close to its center, albeit shifted slightly to the left, and subdivides the picture space as a repoussoir figure. The posture of the youthful figure corresponds to classical contrapposto; the lowered right hip causes the slender upper body to flex slightly toward the right, with the right shoulder raised slightly. The balanced movement of the celestial musician is enhanced by the white loincloth, which is knotted around the right hip and guided in a richly modeled system of folds across the left upper thigh, forward, and then down to the ground.[20] The youth's ruddy face, topped by reddish-blonde curls, turns in a semi-profile toward the violin and sheet music. The plumage of the angel's wings ranges from whitish to grayish tones. The left wing, shown in extreme foreshortening, corresponds to the picture's central axis, and is oriented toward the aesthetic threshold that leads into the space of the beholder, while the right wing partially conceals the Virgin's left shoulder and arm.

The angel's performance of celestial praise is consistent with actual practices of contemporary violin playing.[21] His gaze is directed toward the violin, whose neck he holds close to his body in his bent left-hand, while the right hand holds the bow at some distance from the fingerboard. Through a volumetric play of shadows, Caravaggio articulates the gleaming body of the violin, with its pegs. One string has snapped, and curls like a fine thread in front of the manuscript.[22]

With regard to the interplay of media, one aspect, it seems to me, is of special importance: the painterly interaction with music seems to be consistently conditioned by other images. 'Pictures of music' generate new visual figurations. During the 16th century, musical subjects were popular north of the

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19   See von Rosen 2015, 261–280.

20   See Marini 1987, 395: radiographic investigations have revealed pentimenti in the left-hand area indicating that the angel was originally depicted entirely in the nude before being concealed with drapery. The musical angel has repeatedly been associated with Pomarancio's *North Wind* (1580, Vatican, Tower of the Winds) and the *Luxuria* in Annibale Carracci's *Hercules at the Crossroads* (1595–1597, Naples, Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte). See König 1997, 93 and Ebert-Schifferer 2009, 72.

21   See Braun 1990, 308–310, here 308f.: 'Increasingly during the fifteenth century, depictions of music-making angels approach the actual conditions of contemporary musical practice … Music-making angels thereby represent a kind of ambivalence between celestial and terrestrial praise.'

22   Iconographically, the broken string is interpreted as a reference to the end of life and the Passion. On broken violin strings, see Raabe 1996, 72, and Calvesi 1985, 252, n. 144.

AUDITVS SENSORIVM EXTERIVS EST AVRIS ET CRASSVS QVIDAM IN EA AER INTERIVS VERO NERVI AB AVRIBVS AD CEREBRVM PERTINENTE

FIGURE 7.4   Cornelis Cort after Frans Floris, *Auditus*, 1561, engraving, 209 × 268 mm,
Antwerp: Hieronymus Cock, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, University
Art Collection, D 4139
PHOTO: KATHARINA A. HAASE

Alps and in northern Italy in particular, and were also disseminated through prints.[23] Possible sources for Caravaggio's angelic violinist may be found in the Veneto-Lombardian tradition, which played a key role in his development. Observable in northern Italian art of the 16th century is a marked interest in portrayals of musicians, with depictions of concerts featuring multiple figures being gradually displaced by images of soloists.[24] The painterly preoccupation with music goes beyond any quasi-documentary recapitulation of contemporary musical events.[25] Reflected upon as well through representations of the figures of musicians is the status of the human form as a resonating body, its possibilities for articulation, and the human sensorium. As depicted figures of 'painted music,' allegories of the sense of hearing often involve concrete contexts of musical performance: in an engraving after Frans Floris that dates from 1561 (figure 7.4), Cornelis Cort depicts a female personification of the sense of

23   See Egan 1961, 184–195, here 194.
24   See ibid., 194.
25   See Lütteken 2011; Vaccaro 1995; Atlas 1998; Reese 1954.

hearing amidst numerous musical manuscripts, shown strewn on the ground along with wind and string instruments. Leaning against a drum, she listens with concentration to her own lute playing.[26] Through the depiction of a figure engaged in the act of listening, the invisible sound is in a sense rendered present visually, and the paradox of 'silent painting'[27] is broken apart. Visualized frequently in northern Italian painting in particular, so important for Caravaggio's stylistic development, are various stages of the pictorially immanent participation in and reflection on the sonic impression of a vocal concert.[28] In the *Rest on the Flight*, the sounding body of the violin is almost entirely concealed by the figure of the angel, who is seen from behind; through the concentration of the celestial musician on his fingerings and the gaze of the attentively listening Joseph, the sonic impression of the violin playing becomes sensuously perceptible and almost audible in the viewer's imagination.

3   Notations

Alongside figural depictions of musicians, reflections on music in the pictorial tradition also encompass a fundamental confrontation with the sensuous phenomena of the art of sound. In the context of our present interest in the synagonistic interaction of the arts, this threshold zone of medial overlapping is of special importance. As a phenomenon, temporality can be regarded as having a special link with music. In 1612, the first Italian-language dictionary published by the language society known as the Accademia della Crusca defines music (*musica*) as the 'Scienza della proporzion della voce, e de' suoni'.[29] Invoked here is the ordering of the sonorities in time, the sounding and fading away of the individual tones and their harmonious interrelationship as intervals. With regard to the temporality of musical experience, Elisabeth Oy-Marra too contrasts the two art forms quite pointedly: 'First, the medium of music, bound up with the moment of performance and hence transitory in nature, which nonetheless also lays claim to permanence and repeatability through the notation of the tones, and secondly, the medium of painting, capable of depicting transitory encounters with permanence'.[30] Transitoriness and permanence: the

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26   Cornelis Cort after Frans Floris, *Auditus*, Antwerp, Hieronymus Cock, 1561, engraving, 209 × 268 mm, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, University Art Collection. See Cat. Göttingen et al. 2007–2008, cat. no. 53.

27   But for an essential on the paradoxes of painted music, see Krüger 2017, 198–235 and Krüger 2015, 49–69.

28   See Bertling Biaggini 2011. See Egan 1961, 184–195, here 191.

29   See the entry 'musica' in the *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca*, Venice 1612, 548.

30   Oy-Marra 2017, 37–43, here 37, transl. Ian Pepper.

notation of the ephemeral tones makes it possible to endow their sequencing within a temporal order with permanence. The visual system of notation can therefore be understood as the 'becoming-image' of music.

The depiction of musical scores in visual art does more than to translate other concrete or imagined works into painting. By correctly identifying the musical works represented in images, to be sure, research into musical iconography sharpens our attentiveness to premodern visual works in productive ways; yet the medial aspects of musical notation and its inscribing of the characteristics of acoustic phenomena is often given too little attention. Painterly depictions of sheet music and comparable systems of notation function precisely along the threshold zone between the art of the image and the art of tones where 'sound is imitated using visual resources',[31] as illustrated, for example, by Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo's *Flute Player* (*c.*1539, Brescia, Pinacoteca Tosio Martinengo)[32] (figure 7.5). An elegantly clad young man directs this gaze from the picture space at the viewer; presumably, we have just interrupted his music-making.[33] The pale color values draw our gaze toward the flute shown held in his hands. Along the left-hand side of the picture, Savoldo renders the texture of a small book of music in rich detail, the crinkled pages providing a clear image of the musical notation. On the wall behind the youth, a second music score draws the viewer's eye.[34] Its conspicuous presentation, ostentatiously oriented toward the viewer's space, invites the scopic reproduction of the music, now converted into image form, transforming the viewer into the second voice of a polyphonic composition. At the same time, the musical notation reflects upon its own medial conditions within the arts: in his confrontation with the system of signs used in the musical score, Savoldo highlights the texture of the piece of paper, attached securely to the wall and folded at its center, using oil on canvas to imitate the musical notation, executed in pen and ink, with its black symbols for notes and rests.

In a richly detailed way, Caravaggio's book of music in the *Rest on the Flight* too invokes the system of signs, the musical notation that endows sound with permanence and visibility. In 1983, Franca Camiz Trinchieri and Agostino Ziino identified the manuscript as the superius of the motet *Quam pulchra es et quam decora, carissima in deliciis* by the Franco-Flemish composer Noël

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31   Bertling Biaggini 2017, 59–66, here 59, trans. Ian Pepper.

32   Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo, *Lute Player*, ca 1539, oil on canvas, 74.3 × 100.3 cm, Brescia, Pinacoteca Tosio Martinengo, See cat. no. I. 29, in Cat. Frankfurt a. M. 1990, 178–179. See Cat. Brescia 2014.

33   On the social dimension of musical instruments, see also Lorenzetti 2003.

34   Gentili 1990, 71–77, here 74. See also Bertling Biaggini 2017, 59–66, here 65.

FIGURE 7.5   Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo, *Flute Player*, *c.*1539, oil on canvas, 74 × 100 cm,
Brescia, Pinacoteca Tosio Martinengo
IMAGE: EBERT-SCHIFFERER 1990, 179

Bauldewijn (1480–1529/30).[35] While the motet, a 'text-based polyphonic com-
position',[36] had already been published in by Petrucci in 1519 in the collection
Moteti de la Corona, the Roman initial 'Q' refers to the Roman edition of 1526,
published by Giunta-Dorico-Pasotti; Franca Camiz Trinchieri and Agostino
Ziino were able to identify deviations in the transcription.[37] The depicted part,
for *superius*, is notated in G clef for soprano voice, and is hence readily adapt-
able to performance on a violin.[38] In the Renaissance, polyphonic music was
rather published in parts, not in score, which explains the appearance of the
superiors enforce on its own.[39]

Joseph holds the music before the violin playing angel, offering the beholder
as well a clear view of the text. We too are able to bring this pictured notation,

35   On the identification of the musical notation, see Camiz Trinchieri & Ziino 1983, 67–83,
here 77; see Slim 1985, 241–263.
36   See Grüß 1989, 485.
37   See Camiz Trinchieri & Ziino 1983, 67–83, here 76.
38   Ibid. 69, and Camiz Trinchieri 1989, 198–221, here 215.
39   I would like to thank Ian Pepper for this observation.

note by note, to a sounding state. The materiality of the pages of the book is
visualized through a subtle play of light and shadow. In his painterly recourse
to the symbol system of musical notation, Caravaggio recapitulates the struc-
ture of the sheet with its staves, time values, and rests, along with the clef.
This conspicuous display of musical notation is exceptional within the Italian
pictorial tradition of the *Rest on the Flight to Egypt*. To be sure, we encounter
comparable images of musical notation north of the Alps: in late 16th century
prints produced in the Netherlands, as Max Seiffert and Thea Vignau-Wilberg
were able to demonstrate in the context of musicology and art history, we find
numerous 'picture motets' that integrate musical notation into figural and
pictorial structures in a way that crosses between media.[40] An engraving by
Johannes Sadeler after a work by Marten de Vos, published in 1585, for exam-
ple, depicts a multi-voiced ensemble that clusters around St. Cecilia (figure 7.6,
Leipzig, Grassi Museum Of Musical Instruments at Leipzig University).[41] The
celestial musicians perform a *Magnificat* by Cornelis Verdonck whose man-
uscript is held up to the ensemble, and to the beholder, by angels from the

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40   Seiffert 1918, 49–67. See Vignau-Wilberg 2013 and Vignau-Wilberg 2015, vol. 2, 219–228.
41   Seiffert 1918, 49–67, here 55. See also Cat. Rome 1985, 264. See Camiz Trinchieri 1989, 216.

ensemble.[42] The members of the music-loving circle of Roman connoisseurs and clients around Caravaggio were presumably acquainted with such pictorial formulae, much of it published in Antwerp or Rome.[43] The depiction of musical notation in Caravaggio's *Rest on the Flight* takes the form of a multi-layered medial manifestation: the materiality of the paper and of the notation reinforces its painterly transfer onto the image. Print works such as the Dutch picture motets function as membranes within this transfer process. The coexistence of graphic and painted visual systems makes it possible to transport the immaterial products of music into a state of visibility, endowing them with permanence as an image.

Through its positioning within the composition, the musical notation calls itself to the beholder's attention, hence assigning us a place within the musical performance. Caravaggio turned his attention towards depictions of music-making and musical concerts a number of times; the possibility or impossibility of viewing musical notation that is displayed in a picture is a detail on whose basis it becomes possible to grasp the respective inscription of an implicit beholder into the compositional structure. In addition to the *Rest on the Flight*, painted for Vittrici, Caravaggio produced other musical compositions for his music-loving patrons Del Monte and Giustiniani:[44] for the latter, he painted the St. Petersburg *Lute Player* (1595/96[45] and the *Amor Vincit Omnia* in Berlin;[46] for Cardinal Del Monte, the New York *Lute Player* (1596)[47] and *The Musicians*[48] (1595, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, oil on canvas, 92 × 118.5 cm, figure 7.7). In both the *Rest on the Flight* and *The Musicians*, the beholder enjoys the same view of the musical manuscript as the musicians.

42   Seiffert 1918, 49–67, here 55.

43   See Cat. Rome 1985.

44   On Del Monte's and Giustiniani's musical interests, see Camiz Tranchieri 1991, 213–226. See also Macioce 2001 and Camiz Trinchieri 1989, 198–221.

45   Caravaggio, *Lute Player*, ca 1595, oil on canvas, 94 × 119 cm, Hermitage, St. Petersburg. The sheet of music displays a madrigal von Jaques Arcadelt. See König 1997, 38. See Camiz Trinchieri Rome 1989, 205ff. See Cinotti 1983, 203–641, no. 24. See Cinotti 1991, no. 12. See Held 1996, 36–38. See Bertling Biaggini 2017, 59–66, here 62. See Ebert-Schifferer 2009, 95–99.

46   Caravaggio, *Amor Vincit Omnia*, 1602&03, oil on canvas, 156 × 113 cm, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie Staatliche Museen. See Camiz Trinchieri 1989, 198–216.

47   Caravaggio, *Lute Player*, c.1600, oil on canvas, 100 × 126,5 cm, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. See König 1997, 38. See Camiz Trinchieri 1989, 198–216. See Bertling Biaggini 2017, 59–66, here 59. See Ebert-Schifferer 2009, 95–99.

48   See König 1997, 9; Camiz Trinchieri 1989, 198–216; Held 1996, 39f.; Ebert-Schifferer 2009, 91–95.

FIGURE 7.7   Michelangelo Merisi, called Caravaggio, *The Musicians*, 1595, oil on canvas,
             92 × 118 cm, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
             PUBLIC DOMAIN

While in the *Lute Player*, the madrigal[49] has been rotated 180° toward the player, and is held toward the beholder by a repoussoir figure in *The Musicians*, the volume of music in *Amor* is not positioned within a performance context.

Caravaggio's image aims toward the boundaries of perception, the boundaries of the visualizable. With the music manuscript and the figure of the angel in the *Rest on the Flight*, we encounter a paradox: the visualization of nonvisible sound. As shown earlier through an analysis of the singular positioning of the music manuscript in this work, a genuinely reflexive significance

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49   On the madrigals, see Camiz Trinchieri 1989, 206–207: depicted in the St. Petersburg *Lute Player,* painted for Giustiniani, are the bass voices of four madrigals by the Franco-Flemish composer Jacob Arcadelt (*c.*1500–1568): *Chi potrà dir, Se la dura durezza, Voi sapete ch'io v'amo,* and *Vostra fui.* The musical manuscripts depicted in Del Monte's New York version have been identified as the bass voice of a four-voice madrigal by Francesco Layolles (1492–*c.*1540), a setting of Petrarch's *Lassar il Velo,* and Giachetto Berchem's *Perché non date voi.*

must be attributed to the relationship between beholder and angelic figure. The centrally positioned repoussoir figure of the angel elicits the beholder's identification; the foreshortened left wing plays with the aesthetic threshold between the image space and space of the beholder.[50] Via a direct view of the sheet music, we participate in the angelic performance in this intermedially-conceived image, which has been referred to by Marini as a 'quadro che si può suonare'.[51] While the angel's violin distorts or refuses the notated tones by virtue of its broken string, it is left to the beholder to fill the image with sound. As we contemplate the *Rest on the Flight*, our perceptual experience oscillates, so to speak, between active music-making and passive listening, between hearing and seeing, non-hearing and non-seeing. In this way, the musical score that is offered to our view in the painting incorporates the implicit beholder into the aesthetic structure, in a sense constituting a medial membrane along the threshold between image space and viewer space.

4   Sound Spaces

In a final step, I want to show that the musical work selected for depiction on the sheet music in this painting in particular links the pictorial space and the space of contemporary reception with one another, giving rise to a shared 'sound space'. Visual depictions of 'painted music' are interpretable as reflections on the medial potential inherent to painting, on its authentic mediality, aesthetic facture, and materiality. The art of painting is capable not just of evoking the instruments and voices of the art of sound through motivic depictions or bodily signs, but in particular through the aesthetic structure of the overall composition. Alongside the proportions of the sounds within a temporal sequence, the spatial structure of the music too, the spatial extension of its reverberations, as a fundamental acoustic phenomenon, may give rise to visual imagery.[52] In a miniature by Taddeo Crivelli produced in Ferrara in 1469, for example, we see St. Gregory kneeling within a fictive space before an altar (figure 7.8).[53] Meandering on either side of this interior are ribbons: on the left, Gregory is identified, in accordance with tradition – first by name, secondly through the musical notation – as the originator of Gregorian chant. Crivelli,

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50   See Seong-Doo 1996, 49.

51   Marini 1987, 395.

52   See Lowinsky 1941, 57–84.

53   Taddeo Crivelli, *St. Gregory*, ca 1469, tempera and gold leaf on parchment, 108 × 79 mm, Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, Ms. Ludwig IX 13, fol. 172v. See Barstow 2000.

FIGURE 7.8   Taddeo Crivelli, *St. Gregory*, *c.*1469, tempera and gold leaf on parchment,
108 × 79 mm, Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, Ms. Ludwig IX 13, fol. 172v
PUBLIC DOMAIN

an important protagonist of Ferrarese book painting during the second half of
the Quattrocento, depicts the saint singing at the top of his lungs. Amplified by
divine inspiration, his powerful voice flows from his wide-opened mouth and
out into the space; not only does this space constitute a sounding board for his
song, but is at the same time shaped by it: with its vigorous curves, the reddish

veining of the marble materializes the vocalization that reverberates within the chamber.[54]

By means of painting technique, through the rhythmic veining and radiating golden beams, Crivelli visualizes the space-creating power of music. Would it go too far to say that Gregory's powerful voice overcomes the boundaries of the page of this book of hours, becoming audible in the space of the beholder? In its potent power to transgress spatial boundaries, Crivelli's miniature uses 'space' to illustrate an aspect that has, in my view, received too little attention on the literature on the mediality of painted music to date. In the following, I want to show how questions concerning painterly possibilities for generating space, as well as questions concerning the traces of space-boundedness in pictorial works, can lead toward a more nuanced understanding of *musica picta*.

Recent research on the 'sound sphere' of premodern societies has shown that cultural artifacts must always also be situated within acoustic spaces and societies.[55] Caravaggio's musical pictures were produced as collector's pieces for a musically educated clientele. His primary patrons in Rome were participants in the discursive field of musical innovation around 1600, including the continuing development of the madrigal and the formation of the medium of opera: in 1628, Giustiniani composed his *Discorso sopra la musica dei suoi tempi;* Del Monte was acquainted with major composers and musicians and participated in a reform of the use of *cantus firmi* in 1594.[56] Implicit for the presumed commissioner of the *Rest on the Flight* too is an interest in and knowledge of music:[57] Howard Hibbard and Lothar Sickel have proposed Gerolamo Vittrici as the first owner of the *Rest on the Flight*.[58] This conjecture is based on Mancini's account of viewing the *Rest on the Flight* prior to 1595 during a stay in the Palazzo Petrignani. This visit was made possible by Prospero Orsi, who established contact between Caravaggio and his brother-in-law Gerolamo Vittrici. Vittrici belonged to an upper middle-class milieu and – like his father,

54   On the valences of painted marble, see Markus Rath's essay in this volume, as well as Augart 2018, 21–30. On early modern discourses on marble and stone, see also Augart, Saß & Wenderholm 2018.

55   The scientific network (DFG) 'Soundscapes of the Middle Ages', for example, takes up questions concerning methodological approaches to the premodern mediatization of ephemeral sounds.

56   See Camiz Trinchieri 1989, 198–216.

57   According to Sickel 2003, 63, a harpsichord in the *sala* is mentioned in the inventory estate for Gerolamo Vittrici.

58   See ibid., 55; see also Hibbard 1983, 53–54, 285–286.

the papal chamberlain Pietro Vittrici[59] – maintained an association with the Roman Oratorians.

While the *Lute Player* in St. Petersburg and the version in New York, as well as the New York *Musicians,* depict secular concerts or music in an allegorical context of earthly delights (*Amor Vincit Omnia* in Berlin), Caravaggio inserts his violinist angel into a religious context in the *Rest on the Flight.* Of relevance to the production context is the circumstance that the choice of the depicted musical work was by no means arbitrary, and was probably requested by the client with the aim of enhancing the visualization of a religious message. Caravaggio depicts his violinist angel performing the Marian motet *Quam pulchra es et quam decora, carissima in deliciis,* dating from 1519, by the Franco-Flemish composer Noël Bauldewijn (1480–1529/30).[60] The music manuscript displays the text of the *superius,* chosen for the violinist, of the four-voice composition. Not depicted, meanwhile, is the work's text. Bauldewijn's motet sets various passages from the biblical Song of Songs:

> Quam pulchra es et quam decora, carissima, in deliciis! / Statura tua assimilata est palmae, et ubera tua botris. / Caput tuum ut Carmelus, collum tuum sicut turis eburnea. / Veni, dilecte me, egrediamur in agrum; videamus si flores fructus parturiunt, si florebunt mala punica; ibi dado tibi ubera mea. Amen.[61]

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59   Caravaggio's *Deposition* was originally found in Vittrici's Cappella della Pietà in the Chiesa Nuova. Many of Caravaggio's Roman clients moved in the circle of the Oratorians, among them Vittrici, Medici, Crescenzi, Borromeo, Mattei, and Giustiniani; see Ziane 2007, 161–179, here 174.

60   See Camiz Trinchieri & Ziino 1983, 67–83, here 77. See van Doorslaer 1930, 167–180 and Sparks 1972.

61   See https://gregorien.info/chant/id/6605/0/de. See also https://stcpress.org/pieces/quam _pulchra_es, translation by Carol Anne Perry Lagemann:
How beautiful you are and graceful,
the sweetest and with such enticements.
Your shapely figure is like a towering palm tree;
your breasts are like pomegranates
and your head is a mountaintop
and your lovely neck a pearly fortress turret.
To me, O my adored;
come, let us go to the orchards;
let us discover
if all the little flowers have borne fruit,
if pomegranate trees are blossoming.
In the fragrant orchards, my breasts I'll give you.
Alleluia.

Bauldewijn's setting of the Song of Songs is interpretable as a medial interweaving within which music and biblical text come together. In its basic structure, the Song of Songs from the Old Testament evokes a sensuous and lyrical dialogue between a bride and a bridegroom.[62] In some exegeses, the bridegroom is equated with Christ, and the bride with Mary, and the description of the bride's sensuous beauty is interpreted as a tribute to Mary's spiritual purity. Noël Bauldewijn's compositions were widely disseminated during the European Renaissance; the choice of this setting of *Quam pulchra es et quam decora, carissima in deliciis* for inclusion in Caravaggio's *Rest on the Flight* positions the painting firmly in the intellectual milieu of the Oratorian community, with which its presumed commissioner Gerolamo Vittrici maintained close ties.[63] The veneration of the Virgin as a mediator between the believer and God was accorded special significance by the Oratory of Filippo Neri.[64] Oratorian imagery frequently invoked the semantic link between the Virgin Mary and the mystical bride of the Song of Songs. A façade inscription on the Chiesa Nuova (S. Maria in Vallicella) reads '*TOTA PULCHRA ES AMICA MEA*' and '*ET MACULA NON EST IN TE*,' and motifs from the Song of Songs such as the *Tower of David* or the *Tower of Lebanon* were visualized in the church interior. In religious music as well, an intensive interest in the Song of Songs is tangible in the circle around the Oratory. In fact, Oratorian texts in praise of the Virgin Mary are often based on the exegesis of the Song of Songs according to which the bride is equated with Mary; a variation by the Oratorian Padre Francesco Soto on motifs from the Song of Songs dating from 1595, for example, reads: '*Io dormo, e l'mio cor veglia / O sonno, o soavissimo riposo In cui la sposa cara*'.[65] It would appear that when he depicts Mary in deep sleep, listening to the angelic violin music, Caravaggio visualized precisely the image world of the bride's sweet sleep from the Song of Songs. Music was a fundamental component of the Oratorian community. By virtue of its direct evocation of emotion, music was integrated into the pious practices of believers, and offered them affective access to the devotional spirit: 'Contemplare le cose celesti per mezzo di

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62   See von Burgsdorff 1990, 597–611.

63   See Sickel 2003, 55; see also Hibbard 1983, 53–54, 285–286.

64   On the Mariological veneration of the Oratorians, see Venturoli 1988, 109 and Barchiesi 1995, 130–149.

65   'Io dormo, e l'mio cor veglia / O sonno, o soavissimo riposo In cui la sposa cara / Con allegrezza rara / Gode altamente del celeste sposo / Mentr'ella si ritrova Immersa tutta in quel sonno profondo / Col diletto s'abbraccia / E quanto più l'allaccia / Sente gusto d'amor via più giocondo In si dolce quiete / Ogn'altra cosa, e se medesima oblia / Onde in alto stupore / Per eccesso d'amore'. See Padre Francesco Soto, *Il quinto libro delle laudi spirituali a tre e quatro voci* (1598), cited from Mascioli 2003, 181–206, here 189, 206.

armonie musicali', remarks Chiara Mascioli incisively.[66] Vittrici, the putative commissioning client, and his religious milieu were well-acquainted with the praise of the Virgin Mary and with the Marian Vespers,[67] as well as with song-based forms of prayer and the musical celebration of prayer as a concrete reality of their faith. Music as a component of devotion, then, was notably important to the Oratorians – not only in the church, but in the open landscape as well.[68] Through the above-described Oratorian references to the Song of Songs and their valence between text, visual culture, music, and devotional practices, it becomes possible to reconstruct a religious-intellectual context for the reception of Caravaggio's *Rest on the Flight*. Caravaggio superimposes these Oratorian musical practices onto his angelic violinist, who offers praise to Mary in the midst of an autumnal landscape: the membrane separating the space of the image from that of the beholder thereby becomes permeable in both directions. Through its involvement with religious sound worlds and the bodily and devotional practices associated with them, the picture generates a virtual space that lies between the space the image and that of the beholder – a sound space that is filled with the praise of Mary, the Mother of God.

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66   See Mascioli 2003, 181–206, here 187.
67   König 1997, 92 referred to the horizon of meaning of the Marian Vespers, and hence to the relationship between the *Flight into Egypt* with the Passion. On the Office of the Virgin Mary, performed in the late afternoon, see Schrammek 1989, 743–745.
68   Camiz Trinchieri & Ziino 1983, 67–83, here 80.

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Beyond the *Paragone*: Andrea del Sarto's Color-Reduced Fresco Cycle in the Chiostro Dello Scalzo in Florence Considered as a Case Study of Synagonism

Helen Boeßenecker

In his guide to Florence of 1591, Francesco Bocchi provides an extensive description of the chromatically reduced frescoes by Andrea del Sarto (1486–1530) in the Chiostro dello Scalzo, which date from the early Cinquecento.[1] In particular, he praises del Sartos's use of *chiaroscuro* and its associated visual impact, namely the pronounced impression of plasticity that characterizes the parts of the figures and their garments. He describes the *Charity* group (figure 8.1), one of four personifications of the Virtues, which flank the entrance doors to the Chiostro, as follows:

> Charity is very beautiful; she is accompanied by three little children, one of whom she holds and the other two of whom are at her feet to either side. In these four figures one sees the fine understanding of this distinguished artist, for those parts which would be illuminated by natural light if they were actually in relief are touched with strong highlights, and other parts with darks, in such a masterfully assured manner that they project wonderfully from the wall and seem to be in relief when seen from a certain distance. And even though they do not directly imitate living figures, but rather marble ones which imitate living ones, who will

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1 Since the individual frescoes of the Chiostro dello Scalzo differ in coloration and tonality, so that it is not simply a question of various gray tones, the present author avoids the common term 'grisaille' (derived from the French *gris,* gray); it seems more appropriate to speak instead of frescoes that are coloristically reduced or monochrome, although the latter term is inapplicable, strictly speaking, since it is not solely a question here of tonal gradations within a single color. On terminological issues regarding color-reduced wall painting, see most recently the differentiated discussion in Stahlbuhk 2021, 25–29. For more on the term 'grisaille painting', see Krieger 1995, esp. 3–6.

FIGURE 8.1   Andrea del Sarto, *Charity*, *c.*1513, fresco, Florence, Chiostro dello Scalzo (detail)
IMAGE: KUNSTHISTORISCHES INSTITUT IN FLORENZ, MAX-PLANCK-
INSTITUT / PHOTO: RABATTI – DOMINIGIE PHOTOGRAPHY

say – so forcefully are they presented – that they are not both real and of marble?[2]

Through the formal principle of painterly *rilievo*, based essentially on the elaborate application of light and shadow, del Sarto endows his Charity group with three-dimensionality and heightened bodily presence.[3] The sculptural impression of the figures is invoked as well by also the animated style of depiction and the framing: Charity and her children have been placed in a simulated stone niche within which their bodies cast shadows. Charity stands upright, her right leg supported by a pedestal. On her left arm, she holds a small boy, who uses his legs to balance himself on her right upper thigh while looking to his left, at the same time using his left arm to point animatedly in the other direction, toward her breast. Two further small children are found at Charity's feet. The little boy standing on the pedestal holds his arm above his head, gazing up at his mother, while the boy on the right alongside Charity takes a step forward and peers under her outer garment. Both boys have been captured in a state of movement, and seem to come toward the beholder. The impression that the figures move closer to the viewer is heightened by the transgression of an aesthetic boundary: the right arm of the child on the left and the robe of Charity, held up by the second boy, overlap the frame of the niche. As suggested by Francesco Bocchi's description, the figures seem extraordinarily lifelike, yet at the same time evoke the impression of marble sculpture. Contributing to this effect alongside their decidedly sculptural impact is the framing, for the rectangular recess they occupy is reminiscent of a niche for a statue.

That the painter Andrea del Sarto grappled in his fresco of Charity with the sculptural medium becomes even more tangible when we consider that in conceptualizing his figures, he drew inspiration from specific three-dimensional works: evidently, he was oriented here toward three-dimensional models fashioned by the sculptor Jacopo Sansovino (1486–1570). First, there is an early wax model by Sansovino, preserved in Budapest, which depicts the Virgin with the Christ Child (figure 8.2), and which has long been discussed by researchers as

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2   '[B]ellissima è la figura della *Caritá*, con tre puttini, uno de'quali tiene in collo, & due sono da basso da una banda, & dall'altra. In queste quattro figure si conosce la rara intelligenza di questo nobile artefice: però che quelle parti, se fossero di rilievo, che sono illuminate dalla natura, con sicura pratica sono toccate quì molto col chiaro, & da altra parte con l'oscuro, in giusa che spiccano miralbilmente dal muro, et alquanto dilungi paiono di rilievo. E perche primamente non imitano il vivo, mal il marmo, col quale tuttavia si imita il vivo chi dirà (poscia che con tanta forza sono state effigiate) che vere non siano queste figure, & di marmo?' Bocchi 1971, 237 (English translation from Bocchi 2006, 221).

3   On painterly *rilievo,* see most recently Rath 2013, 3–29.

a prototype for Sarto's *Charity*.[4] Emerging recently on the art market, secondly, was a terracotta model of a Charity group, attributed to Jacopo Sansovino, which displays a nearly identical composition, and which presumably functioned as the immediate point of departure for the fresco (figures 8.3 and 8.4).[5]

Del Sarto's recourse to *bozzetti* by this sculptor in particular is no accident, since beginning around 1511, the two young artists – who were indeed contemporaries – maintained studios in the same building in the vicinity of Santissima Annunziata in Florence, and were (according to Giorgio Vasari) close friends during that period.[6] In his *Vite*, Vasari describes their reciprocal helpfulness, how they discussed shared artistic challenges, and how the

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4 Shearman 1965, vol. 1, 62. See also the discussion in Myssok 1999, 211.

5 Both the stylistic attribution to Jacopo Sansovino as well as the cited arguments for the hypothesis that the terracotta model preceded the fresco, and that the fresco emulates it, seem plausible. See Dickerson 2010, 30–34.

6 Cf. Vasari 1966–1987, here vol. 4, 346, and Vasari 1966–1987, vol. 6, 177. See also Shearman 1965, vol. 1, 62; Boucher 1991, vol. 1, 17 f.

FIGURE 8.3
Jacopo Sansovino, *Charity*, *c.*1513, terracotta, 59 cm, Art Market (Moretti Fine Art), in: Cat. New York, Williams Moretti Irving Gallery, *Body and Soul: Masterpieces of Italian Renaissance and Baroque Sculpture* (A. Butterfield, ed.), Florence 2010, p. 27

FIGURE 8.4
Jacopo Sansovino, *Charity*, *c.*1513, terracotta, 59 cm, Art Market (Moretti Fine Art), in: Cat. New York, Williams Moretti Irving Gallery, *Body and Soul: Masterpieces of Italian Renaissance and Baroque Sculpture* (A. Butterfield, ed.), Florence 2010, p. 25

sculptor Jacopo created sculptural models for his painter friend Andrea.[7] From Vasari, we also learn that in 1515, both artists worked on the temporary decorations for the facade of Florence Cathedral produced for the festive entry

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7   'Giovò anco pur assai all'uno ed all'altro la pratica e l'amicizia, che nella loro fanciullezza, e poi nella gioventù ebbero insieme Andrea del Sarto et Iacopo Sansovino; i quali seguitando la maniera medesima nel disegno, ebbero la medesima grazia nel fare, l'uno nella pittura e l'altro nella scultura: per che, conferendo insieme i dubbii dell'arte e facendo Iacopo per Andrea modelli di figure, s'aiutavano l'un l'altro sommamente … '. Vasari 1966–1987, vol. 6, 177. As an example, Vasari mentions Sansovino's clay model of a figure of John the Baptist, which del Sarto used for the figure of John the Baptist in his *Madonna of the Harpies* (1517). Cf. ibid.

of Pope Leo x in Florence. While Sansovino designed the architecture of the
festival apparatus and supplied three-dimensional sculptures and reliefs, del
Sarto produced *chiaroscuro* paintings.[8] The close friendship between the two
artists reported by Vasari, along with their productive collaboration, have
been explored by researchers,[9] and as John Shearman has shown, the *Charity*
in the Chiostro dello Scalzo can be regarded as 'a primary document for the
understanding of Sarto's relationship with his colleague Jacopo Sansovino'.[10]
In the research to date, however, the productive exchange between del Sarto
and Sansovino has been discussed primarily with an eye toward the degree
to which the two artists 'influenced' one another motivically and stylistically,
with the priority placed on the clarification of stylistic questions and dating.
Rather than pursuing the – methodologically problematical – topic of the sty-
listic influences these artists may have exerted on one another, the process
of exchange between the two artists is conceived here rather as an active
process of reception that transgresses medial boundaries.[11] With a focus on
Andrea del Sarto's fresco cycle in the Chiostro dello Scalzo, the present essay
begins with the assumption that the artistic cross-fertilization taking place
between the two artists goes beyond stylistic and formal references, and is
instead reflected emphatically in their oeuvres on the levels of the concep-
tualization of imagery and of media.[12] Examined here are the intermedial
references[13] – which have been addressed in the research only sporadically
to date – found in del Sarto's coloristically reduced frescoes, which are dis-
cussed with regard to the interdependency and interpenetration of media they
embody.[14] The intermedial relationships explored here however go beyond

8   Vasari 1966–1987, vol. 4, 361 f. and Vasari 1966–1987, vol. 6, 182.
9   Cf. Shearman 1965, vol. 1, 63 f.; Boucher 1991, vol. 1, 20; Morresi 2000, 367–372.
10   Shearman 1965, vol. 1, 62.
11   Christine Tauber has sensitized us to the art-historiographical problematic according to
      which discussions of 'stylistic influence' are often bound up with the notion of an inflow
      of passively received material. See Tauber 2019.
12   In this essay, I elaborate upon ideas from my dissertation, and take them further with
      reference to the frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo. Cf. Boeßenecker 2020, 371–373.
13   The literary scholar Irina O. Rajewsky distinguishes three types of intermedial phenom-
      ena: medial transposition, media combination, and intermedial references. She conceives
      of an intermedial reference as a procedure for constituting meaning in which 'the given
      media-product thematizes, evokes, or imitates elements or structures of another, con-
      ventionally distinct medium through the use of its own media-specific means'. Rajewsky
      2005, 51. See also Rajewsky 2002, 17.
14   At this point, there exists no detailed monographic study of the coloristically reduced
      frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo that is attentive to their specifically medial qualities.
      On the fresco cycle, see Freedberg 1963; Shearman 1965, here vol. 1, 52–74 and vol. 2, 294–
      307; Proto Pisani 2004; Hirdt 2006. Under the premise of 'reading pictures', Hirdt devotes

those between (wall) painting and sculpture, and encompass those between color-reduced wall painting and the graphic media as well.

The synagonistic perspective adopted here does not focus however exclusively on intermedial references, but also examines forms of artistic cooperation and intermedial exchanges between the painter del Sarto and the sculptor Sansovino in the context of workshop practices, thereby also providing a supplemental approach to concepts of intermediality. But in another respect as well, the concept of synagonism is well-suited to an analysis of the frescoes of the Chiostro dello Scalzo. Our notions of the relationship between the pictorial arts in early modern Italy, in particular between painting and sculpture, have been strongly shaped by the so-called *paragone* debate. Researchers have discussed the *paragone* issue primarily in relation to rivalry and attempts to surpass competing art forms, hence emphasizing the competitive relationship between media that prevailed during the Quattrocento and Cinquecento.[15] In contrast, the editors of the collection *Paragone als Mitstreit* adopted a new approach to the early modern *paragone* debate, conceiving it less as competition for status between the arts and instead as a more productive form of contention.[16] Explored here in this spirit is the thesis that references to other artistic media and the associated *paragonal* structures in Andrea del Sarto's fresco cycle are motivated less by an attempt to demonstrate the superiority of painting as a medium against the background of art-theoretical arguments concerning the *paragone;* of primary importance instead, I argue, is the productive evocation of a parallel medium, deployed as an artistic mean for heightening the work's impact.[17] As an operative concept, syn*agon*ism proves useful in this

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himself among other things to their iconography and underlying literary sources. He attributes little importance, however, to their artistic design or reduced coloration. On the use of coloristic reduction as a resource for engendering piety, see most recently Stahlbuhk 2021, esp. cat. 15, 257–259.

15   This focus on rivalry and competition is reflected in the title of central publications on the *paragone* debate, even though they do of course acknowledge the productivity of competition as an engine of artistic creativity. See cat. Munich & Cologne 2002; Prochno-Schinkel 2006; Baader et al. 2007; Hessler 2014; Lehmann 2017.

16   Cf. Hadjinicolaou, Rath & van Gastel 2014. Important considerations on the productive interaction of the arts in the early modern period and on media discourses before the *paragone* are also provided by Iris Wenderholm in her study on so-called intermediary altarpieces: Wenderholm 2006.

17   Although the theoretical *paragone* debate reached its highpoint only in the mid-Cinquecento with Benedetto Varchi's artist's survey, the discussion had already become heated around 1500, and, Leonardo, among others, had already addressed the question of the ranking of the arts intensively in his writings. On the *paragone* in the Quattrocento, see Hessler 2014.

context because it focuses attention on the productive collaboration between the arts, simultaneously encompassing, as *'fair play-Agon'*,[18] both relations of tension and agonal forces. In the following attempt to shed light on the frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo from a synagonistic perspective, however, the focus on medial interdependency is not confined to art-immanent questions exclusively. Addressed as well is the motive of the coloristic reduction of the frescoes; pursued here is the assumption that the evocation of other media and forms of materiality contribute decisively to heightening the significance and impact of these frescoes. Bound up with their artistic conception – and this hypothesis serves as my point of departure – are certain aesthetic effects and intentions, and these are characterized by the intertwining of reflections on art and perception with the aim of promoting devotion and piety. It is therefore vital that the circumstances of the work's commissioning and its intended function be integrated directly into a synagonistic analysis.

Andrea del Sarto created his fresco cycle for the little cloister of the Compagnia dei Disciplinati di San Giovanni Battista, a flagellant confraternity devoted to John the Baptist, whose members referred to themselves as discalced (*scalzo*). The Chiostro is located at the center of Florence in the immediate vicinity of the Convent of S. Marco, although some original elements of the larger complex – among them the chapel of the confraternity and adjacent rooms – are no longer extant, while the cloister itself was redesigned in the 18th century.[19] Del Sarto's frescoes were executed in multiple stages during an extended period between circa 1511 and 1526, so that the compositions date from different periods of his career, and are correspondingly varied stylistically.[20] During the Cinquecento, these frescoes – which are no longer preserved in a complete state, particularly in the lower portions – enjoyed great fame and were, as reported by both Giorgio Vasari and Francesco Bocchi, frequently studied by young artists.[21]

The fresco cycle of the rectangular inner courtyard encompasses twelve history paintings depicting the events from the life of St. John the Baptist, along with personifications of the virtues Faith and Hope framing the entrance door, as well as Justice and Charity framing the door – now walled up – opposite the

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18   Hadjinicolaou 2018, 152. See also the introduction to this volume.
19   On the conversion measures undertaken by the architect Pietro Giovanozzi in 1722, see Shearman 1960.
20   During del Sarto's stay in France in 1518/1519, moreover, two of the frescoes were executed by Franciabigio.
21   Cf. Vasari 1966–1987, vol. 4, 369; Bocchi 1971, 238.

entrance which once led into the oratorio and other rooms belonging to the confraternity (figures 8.5 and 8.6).[22] The paintings are contained by a simulated framing architecture, with individual compositions separated by feigned decorated pilasters featuring grotesque motifs.[23]

1 Intermedial References I: Color-Reduced Wall Painting and Sculpture

Andrea del Sarto's fresco cycle manifests references to the sculptural medium on many levels. The *Charity* – like the other three virtues *Faith, Hope*, and *Justice* that are depicted on the narrow walls of the Chiostro dello Scalzo – are interpretable as referring to the medium of sculpture in general, with their evocation of virtually monochrome, fully three-dimensional statues in rectangular niches.[24] With his simulated stone sculptures in the medium of monochrome painting, del Sarto takes up a widely disseminated variant of grisaille painting, founded, it is widely recognized, by Giotto in Italy around 1300,[25] and developed further north of the Alps during the 15th century by artists such as

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22 The cycle begins with the *Annunciation to Zachary* to the right of the entrance, and concludes with the *Presentation of the Head of John the Baptist* to the left of the entrance, so that the reading direction of the episodes from the life of John the Baptist runs counterclockwise. The frescoes were however not painted in chronological order; del Sarto began with the *Baptism of Christ* (circa 1511). Cf. Freedberg 1963, vol. 1, p. 29; Shearman 1965, vol. 1, 57.

23 Worth exploring is the relationship and interplay between the simulated framing architecture and the real architecture of the inner courtyard, one hindered by the modifications undertaken in 1722; this question cannot be pursued further here. Shearman perceives discrepancies between architecture and the painted decor: according to his reconstruction, which might constitute a point of departure for subsequent investigations, the original building had neither arcades nor a dome, and instead a flat roof. According to Shearman, the *chiaroscuro* paintings in the lunette fields above the rectangular history frescoes were therefore not part of the painted decoration from the early Cinquecento, but were applied only in the course of conversion measures. Cf. Shearman 1960. Useful for the sake of a clarification of the relationship between architecture and painted decoration would be a consideration of the tradition of reduced coloration in Florentine Quattrocento architecture, and a preference for local gray *macigno* sandstone for dividing elements of the architecture.

24 Cf. Freedberg 1963, vol. 1, 32; Shearman 1965, vol. 1, 55.

25 Giotto: *Vices and Virtues*, 1303–1305, Padua, Cappella degli Scrovegni (Arena Chapel).

FIGURE 8.5   Andrea del Sarto, frescos in the Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, *c.*1511–1526
IMAGE: KUNSTHISTORISCHES INSTITUT IN FLORENZ, MAX-PLANCK-
INSTITUT / PHOTO: RABATTI – DOMINIGIE PHOTOGRAPHY

FIGURE 8.6   Andrea del Sarto, frescos in the Chiostro dello Scalzo, Florence, *c.*1511–1526
IMAGE: KUNSTHISTORISCHES INSTITUT IN FLORENZ, MAX-PLANCK-
INSTITUT / PHOTO: RABATTI – DOMINIGIE PHOTOGRAPHY

Jan van Eyck, the Master of Flémalle, and Rogier van der Weyden, with feigned stone sculptures appearing there mainly on the outer wings of altar retables.[26]

This productive confrontation with the sculptural medium is also evident in the circumstance that in his working process for the fresco of *Charity*, as mentioned above, del Sarto had recourse to a sculptural prototype, namely to *bozzetti* produced by his sculptor friend Jacopo Sansovino. In the case of the gilded wax model known as the *Budapest Madonna* (figure 8.2), the similarities pertain to the standing motif, the design of the garments, and the direction of the gaze of the *Madonna* or *Charity* respectively, as well as the movement motif of the child she holds in her arms, although Sansovino has the Christ Child held by his mother on the opposite side. Compositionally, there are still more striking parallels between the *Charity* fresco and Sansovino's terracotta model of *Charity*, although even here, and despite close correspondences between the two, there is no question of del Sarto copying Sansovino's model exactly, since subtle differences between the two are readily detectable. As C.D. Dickerson has already observed, the fresco does not reproduce a particular view of Sansovino's sculptural *Charity* group, and instead combines at least two different views: while *Charity*, the child on her arm, and the boy on the right for the most part present frontal views of the terracotta model (figure 8.3), the child standing on the pedestal on the left, together with Charity's propped leg, instead offer a lateral, diagonal view of the sculpture (figure 8.4).[27] In Sansovino's *bozzetto,* the figures are arranged on a round plinth, and the flanking boys, both set on the pedestal as well, are positioned further apart laterally, enlivening the side views and the group's expansive, fully sculptural impact. By virtue of the multiple views they proffer – a feature that is central to our perception of three-dimensional works of art – and of their physical presence in space, fully-rounded statues and sculptures elicit an active, corporeal form of perception to a far greater degree than paintings or reliefs.[28] This is true as well for a

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26   The phenomenon of painted sculpture in Dutch and German grisaille painting of the 15th and early 16th century has stimulated a diversity of interpretive research approaches. On this topic see especially Täube 1991. For an overview of the literature, see Krieger 1996; Bushart & Wedekind 2016, XII, n. 19. Cf. also the contribution by Sandra Hindriks, chapter 9 in the present volume.

27   Cf. Dickerson 2010, 30 f.

28   On the significance of viewing sides for our perception of sculpture, see van Gastel 2014. It should be mentioned here that in the context of the *paragone* debate, as we know, the multiple points of view offered by a sculpture constituted a central argument for the advocates of sculpture, and in particular Benvenuto Cellini, when it came to substantiating the superiority of their medium. On multiple views in sculpture in relation to the *paragone* debate, see Morét 2003.

small-format *bozzetto* such as Sansovino's *Charity*, which can be turned in the hand and viewed from various sides. Although the painter cannot reproduce the multiple points of view of the *bozzetto*, del Sarto did confront this problematic, combining various views in a new composition on a plane surface. That del Sarto arranges the figures more parallel to each other has the effect of making the painted *Charity* group flatter, more relief-like, than the three-dimensional model.[29] Del Sarto however also counteracts this effect by providing the figures with cast shadows, thereby emphasizing their corporeality and evoking the illusion of freestanding bodies in space. He appropriates certain motivic elements and specific properties of the sculptural medium, such as three dimensionality and corporeality, at the same time distancing himself from his model by using resources immanent to the painterly medium in order to arrive at an independent pictorial result. It is not, therefore, simply a matter of the transfer of three-dimensional prototypes into the two-dimensional medium of color-reduced wall painting, and instead of a medial process of appropriation and transformation.

To date, we cannot say whether Jacopo Sansovino prepared his terracotta model of *Charity* at del Sarto's request, or instead produced it for his own use, with del Sarto reusing it later on for his own purposes. Given Vasari's report, according to which Jacopo prepared figural models for Andrea, it appears quite conceivable that the terracotta model of *Charity* was indeed prepared especially for his painter friend. Assuming this was the case, it seems significant that the sculptural composition he prepared for the painter was not governed by a primary or central viewpoint, and instead offers multiple views in a way that highlights the media-specific properties of sculpture. This strengthens the argument that del Sarto's intended to engage in a systematic confrontation with the three dimensional qualities of his sculptural prototype.

We know from Vasari that Sansovino prepared sculptural models for other painters as well: during his stay in Rome, Sansovino fashioned numerous wax models for Pietro Perugino, among them the multifigure *Deposition* (*c.*1510, London, Victoria and Albert-Museum), after the painter had seen the 'bella maniera del Sansovino'.[30] Researchers have assumed a similar functional connection for Sansovino's gilded wax model of the *Madonna* in Budapest. Since this figure does not correspond to any completed sculpture by Sansovino, and since its technical structure resembles that of the model for the London *Deposition* fashioned for Perugino, Johannes Myssok has concluded that the

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29   Cf. Dickerson 2010, 31.
30   Vasari 1966–1987, vol. 6, S. 179.

Budapest Madonna was also created for a painter's studio, and not as a preparatory work for a large-scale sculpture.[31]

Recourse to a three-dimensional model allowed painters to try out complex compositions, along with the appearance of three-dimensional figures in space with attention to lighting conditions, as well as the study of drapery. Of particular interest in this connection is the technique used by Sansovino for his wax models. For the gilded wax model known as the *Budapest Madonna* and for the *Deposition*, the parts of the figures were modeled in wax, while the garments consist of thin, canvas-like fabric dipped in plaster (figure 8.7).[32] This resembles a procedure used during the Florentine Quattrocento in the circle of the Verrocchio workshop, which involved clothing sculptural models in plaster-soaked fabric in order to execute drapery studies.[33] Through the differentiated deployment of light and shadow values, as Markus Rath has shown with reference to a monochrome drapery study from the Berlin Kupferstichkabinett,[34] such drapery studies display pronounced effects of *rilievo* that are associated with the strikingly corporeal presence of the depicted objects.[35]

In view of these workshop practices, it seems likely that del Sarto did not simply use Sansovino's sculptural models as a source for motifs, but also to investigate effects of light, shadow, and plasticity on both garments and parts of bodies. After all, del Sarto's *Charity* fresco possesses an emphatically sculptural quality, and as characterized by the above-cited description by Francesco Bocchi, the skillful application of *chiaroscuro* endows the parts that are bathed in light, when viewed from a certain distance, with an impression of sublimity, allowing them to emerge from the surface as though three-dimensional.

In his description of the *Charity* fresco cited above, Francesco Bocchi gives voice to an ambivalent quality that is inherent to these figures: they have the appearance of feigned sculptures, but also of animate beings.[36] This

31   Cf. Myssok 1999, 214 f. and 352. Myssok however regards the correspondences between Sansovino's *Budapest Madonna* and del Sarto's *Charity* to be minimal, and concludes that the first did not necessarily serve as a model for the second. Cf. ibid. 214.

32   On technical matters, cf. the information detailed in ibid., 225, 352.

33   Cf. ibid., 225.

34   Leonardo da Vinci or Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Drapery Study of the Apostle Matthew,* circa 1475, 236 × 177 mm, brush in brown tones with white highlighting on brownish primed canvas, Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

35   Cf. Rath 2013, 3–6.

36   See n. 2. This liveliness is also mentioned by Vasari as a quality of the history scenes, who, in connection with the fresco *Baptism of the People,* elicits a comparison with 'vive istorie di marmo', and hence an interpretation of the frescoes as evocations of a specific material of sculpture. Vasari 1966–1987, vol. 4, 359 f.

FIGURE 8.7   Jacopo Sansovino, *Madonna* (*Virgin and Child*), *c.*1510–1511, 65.5 × 23.5 × 19 cm, wax, gilded canvas, Budapest, Szépmüvészeti Múzeum, Inv. Nr. 1177 (detail)
IMAGE: SZÉPMŰVÉSZETI MÚZEUM/MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BUDAPEST, 2023

ambivalence also characterizes other 'paintings of stone' produced both south and north of the Alps: in connection with Giotto's early Trecento cycle of the *Virtues and Vices* in the Arena Chapel, Reinhard Steiner speaks of a perceptual paradox: Giotto's simulated statues on the plinth zone invoke stone figures, while also displaying an extraordinary lifelikeness, adopting movements and poses that would be inconceivable in the sculptural medium.[37] While Steiner interprets Giotto's 'paradoxical sculptures' as a self-reflexive strategy and touches upon a possible connection with the *paragone* debate,[38] Marion Grams-Thieme connects the 'liveliness' of Netherlandish grisaille painting with the biblical *lapides* vivi.[39] Furthermore, if we consider Filippino Lippi's grisaille paintings on the window wall of the Strozzi Chapel in S. Maria della Novella, which take the form of strikingly lifelike, animated depictions of the personified Virtues (and Lippi's *Charity* in the base of the feigned stone architecture may conceivably have served as another direct model for del Sarto's *Charity*), it becomes clear that there already existed a medium-immanent discourse concerning the lifelikeness of simulated (stone) sculptures in the media of both wall and panel painting.[40]

With del Sarto, this discourse – given his recourse to specific sculptural works by Sansovino – seems however to have involved a more emphatic confrontation with actual sculpture: an impression of lifelikeness is a quality that is also attributable to Jacopo Sansovino's sculptural work. Alongside Michelangelo and Andrea Sansovino, Jacopo Sansovino was among the Florentine sculptors of the early Cinquecento who aspired to endow their figures with maximum liveliness through the use of dynamic movement motifs. With Sansovino's *Budapest Madonna* and his terracotta model of *Charity,* it is the children in particular that manifest a physical dynamism that give them a

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37   Steiner 1990, esp. 75.

38   Steiner 1990, 74 ff.

39   Grams-Thieme 1988. The intriguing oscillation between the impression of stone sculpture and a living form is explored consistently by a number of painters, and implemented in various ways. An interesting example is Hans Memling's *Annunciation* on the exterior of the triptych for Jan Crabbe (1467, Bruges, Groeningemuseum). Gabriel and Mary are set on pedestals and within niches, an explicit allusion to the conventional presentation of sculpture, yet the hair and flesh are rendered in 'natural' colors, which is to say not in the gray tones of stone, allowing the figures to appear as animate beings. The use of a fine bluish shimmer sets the white garments off from the gray stone of the stone bases; nonetheless, the question arises of whether the tone of the garments might not be interpretable as alluding to a specific stone, for example grayish-blue limestone from Tournai, yet another manifestation of ambiguity.

40   The importance and significance of liveliness (*vivacità*) as a central topos of early modern art and art theory has been investigated by Frank Fehrenbach (Fehrenbach 2021).

situative, lively impression. That in his frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo, del Sarto entered into productive competition with 'lifelike' sculptures becomes clear through a further allusion to a contemporary Florentine sculpture: detectable in the *Baptism of Christ* (figure 8.8), apparently the first fresco he completed for the Chiostro, are noticeable reminiscences of Andrea Sansovino's sculptural group of the *Baptism of Christ*, completed just a few years earlier, for the eastern portal of the Florentine Baptistery (figure 8.9). In Andrea Sansovino's marble group, John the Baptist uses his raised right arm to pour the baptismal water over Christ, who folds his arms meekly across his chest. With regard to both pose and sculptural modeling, del Sarto's figure of Christ in particular displays unmistakable reflections of Sansovino's figure of Christ.[41] With the dynamic movement motif of the outstretched arm, as Hans Körner has shown, Andrea Sansovino endows his figure of the Baptist with greater liveliness, entering with his sculptural bravura piece of the *braccia in aria* into a productive rivalry with contemporary painting, where the motif had already become well-established in connection with the iconography of baptism.[42] The innovative potential of Andrea Sansovino's baptism group in turn supplied a stimulus to Andreas's student Jacopo Sansovino, who in his *Bacchus* (1511, Florence, Bargello) sought to further heighten the motif of the vigorous, outstretched arm, thereby surpassing Michelangelo's *Bacchus* (1497, Florence, Bargello) in liveliness.[43] Andrea del Sarto's fresco of the *Baptism of Christ*, with its allusion to Andrea Sansovino's prominent sculptural group, and his *Charity* fresco, with its lively, Sansovinesque children, are reflective of the innovative impulses found in Florentine sculpture around 1500. It seems conceivable that agonal aspects may have played a role – specifically against the backdrop of the competitive climate of the early modern era, one that prevailed among Florentine artists not least of all due to prevailing socioeconomic conditions. By engaging in a paragonal relationship with sculpture, del Sarto sought to display his skill and his capacity for creating illusion in the medium of coloristically reduced (wall) painting. But the intention associated with this exercise does not seem to have been primarily that of deploying his own artistic skill in order to demonstrate the superiority of painting in relation to sculpture, establishing the superior status of his own medium in a competition between the arts.[44]

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41   Cf. Shearman 1965, vol. 1, 61.

42   Cf. Körner 2003, 228 f.

43   Cf. ibid., 226.

44   With the arguments put forth in Rudolf Preimesberger's discussion of Jan van Eyck's *Annunciation Diptych* in Madrid as a point of departure, a widely disseminated interpretive approach has consisted in interpreting the 'imitation sculptures' of grisaille painting as expressions of an artistic *paragone*. Cf. Preimesberger 1991. In the more recent research,

FIGURE 8.8   Andrea del Sarto, *Baptism of Christ*, *c.*1511/13, fresco, Florence, Chiostro
dello Scalzo
IMAGE: KUNSTHISTORISCHES INSTITUT IN FLORENZ, MAX-PLANCK-
INSTITUT / PHOTO: RABATTI – DOMINIGIE PHOTOGRAPHY

FIGURE 8.9   Andrea Sansovino, *Baptism of Christ*, 1502–1505, marble, Florence, Baptistery,
in: J. Poeschke, *Die Skulptur der Renaissance in Italien. Band 2 Michelangelo und
seine Zeit*, Munich 1992, table 110
IMAGE: J. POESCHKE

In particular with regard to the personifications of the *Virtues* displayed in simulated niches, del Sarto clearly succeeded in conjuring the media-specific qualities of sculpture – its three dimensionality, the physical presence of the figures in space, and the associated possibility of perceiving them with the tactile sense – in the medium of fresco painting, which is enriched now through the incorporation of qualities inherent in the sister medium of sculpture. The recourse to sculpture, this 'detour' via another representational means, one that possesses the qualities of three dimensionality and physicality by virtue of its character as a medium, seems to be aimed specifically at enhancing the corporeality and plasticity of the painted figures, thereby endowing them with a lifelike presence. The artistic resources deployed, in particular *chiaroscuro* and the resultant effect of painterly *rilievo*, can however be regarded as genuinely painterly in character.

Also taking into account the close friendship joining the painter del Sarto and the sculptor Sansovino, it seems more plausible to interpret del Sarto's references to the sculptural medium as a friendly challenge, and less with regard to the mechanisms of competition and rivalry. The aim of making figures as lively and vivid as possible was evidently shared by Florentine painters and sculptors of the early Cinquecento, and the productive friction between painting and sculpture seems to have been a catalyzing factor, a stimulus to the discovery of innovative solutions.

An emphatically sculptural quality is inherent to the twelve historical scenes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo as well, a consequence of the renunciation of a full palette of colors and the pronounced *rilievo* of the figures, particularly when it comes to the sculptural shaping of the garments.

The horizontal pictorial fields, which display narrative scenes from the life of John the Baptist, are set in open landscapes or in front of buildings. Through the simulated framing architecture, the horizontal formats, and the narrative contextualization of the scenes, however, these biblical scenes do not evoke the impression of fully rounded sculptures, and seem instead to allude to the sculptural medium of the relief.

The personifications of the Virtues and the narrative scenes display contrasting modes of representation respectively, each doubtless also grounded in their respective contents: through their larger dimensions and statuary appearance, the Virtues in their simulated niches possess a more immediate

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however, the relevance of the *paragone* argument – along with associated arguments concerning 'painted art theory' – have been increasingly called into question, especially for the region north of the Alps. Cf. Kemperdick 2016, esp. 26 f., and the contribution by Sandra Hindriks, chapter 9 in the present volume.

bodily presence than the figures in the narrative frescoes. The Virtues embody abstract moral concepts, and are accordingly conceived as (simulated) fully-rounded individual statues, flanking the entry doors, which turn as tangible presences directly toward the beholder, performing virtuous actions that are intended to inspire emulation in viewers.[45] In contrast, the events from the life of St. John the Baptist are presented as historical narratives, but they too seek to involve the beholder directly through the pronounced affect language conveyed by the figures.[46]

Detectable in the frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo, then, are allusions to the sculptural medium (both to statues and to reliefs),[47] while the reduction of color in particular evokes comparisons with marble sculpture, as thematized already by Vasari, who introduces a comparison with 'vive istorie di marmo' in connection with the narrative frescoes.[48] The allusions to the medium of the relief in the narrative scenes is certainly more subtle than those to rounded sculpture in the personifications of the Virtues, although it is possible that the heightened significance of Florentine relief in the Quattrocento and the currency of certain monumental early-16th century relief projects (in particular the project for the sculptural facade of S. Lorenzo in Florence, which was presented between late 1515 and summer of 1516, and for which Jacopo Sansovino too contributed a design with statues and large-format narrative reliefs), may have intensified comparisons with the Florentine art of the relief; it therefore seems plausible that local competitions may have played a role here as well.[49]

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45   A comparable interpretation was proposed already by Andrea Lermer in relation to Giotto's *Virtues and Vices* in the Arena Chapel, which are presented in the plinth zone, and hence at eye level with the beholder. Lermer relies upon a text by Sicardus of Cremona (1155–1215), who emphasized the didactic content of imagery, discussing the Virtues and Vices as *exempla* of relevance to the present. Cf. Lermer 2007, here 308 f. For sources texts by Sicardus of Cremona, cf. Cremonensis 1855, column 40.

46   In the frescoes *The Blessing of the Young St. John, John the Baptist Preaching in the Desert, The Capture of St. John the Baptist*, and *The Beheading of St. John the Baptist*, the affective language of the figures is especially emphatic. Del Sarto's capacity to depict human affects using only chiaroscuro was singled out for special praise by Francesco Bocchi. Cf. Bocchi 1971, 238.

47   That Andrea del Sarto's frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo served in turn as a point of departure for later statues and reliefs, thereby carrying forward this intermedial discourse, is demonstrated by Baccio Bandinelli's marble relief *The Birth of the Virgin Mary* (1518, Santa Casa di Loreto), where Bandinelli to some extent takes up the bodily posture of del Sarto's *Charity* in the female figure who holds a child on her arm on the right side.

48   See n. 36.

49   On Florentine relief art in the Quattrocento and early Cinquecento, see Niehaus 1998. On the facade projects for S. Lorenzo, see Satzinger 2011; on the design by Jacopo Sansovino,

Despite these allusions, it would be insufficient to conceive of the frescoes simply as imitations of marble statues and reliefs.[50] Had this been his intention, del Sarto could have achieved it unambiguously using relatively straightforward artistic means, for example by depicting the veining of the marble, hence rendering the materiality of sculpture with greater explicitness. The intended aesthetic effect of these works is not however exhausted in the emulation of sculpture, for the use of *chiaroscuro* instead gives rise to a highly particular and characteristic aesthetic.

2   Intermedial References II: Color-Reduced Wall Painting and Graphics

Coloristically, the frescoes are restricted to various gradations of brown, green, and grey, and their sculptural impact results in particular from the use of white heightening in concert with nuanced shadowed areas.[51] It is therefore primarily the use of *chiaroscuro* and the painterly and graphic means used in its service that generate pronounced effects of *rilievo*.[52] In his wall paintings, by means of differentiated gradations of light and shadow values, which are also generated – as in the fresco *John the Baptist Preaching in the Desert* (figure 8.10) – by parallel or crosswise hatching lines and superimposed dotting, as well as highlights created through white heightening, del Sarto investigated the aesthetic potential of *chiaroscuro*. The luminous appearance of the figures, their apparent three-dimensional emergence from the plane surface, is enhanced further by the gilding of individual details, for example Charity's crown or the Baptist's halo. At the same time, some passages display a pronounced painterly quality which results from the freer handling of the brush, for example the section of landscape appearing in the upper left in *John the Baptist Preaching*.

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esp. p. 25 f. and 45 f. and figure 15. On the predilection for sculptural decoration with large-scale reliefs around 1500, cf. ibid., 168 ff.

50   Nonetheless, Francesco Bocchi – who praised the frescoes exorbitantly – seems to have viewed them in this way, perceiving them primarily as imitations of marble, not of nature. Cf. Bocchi 1971, p. 245.

51   In her recently published dissertation *Oltre il colore. Die farbreduzierte Wandmalerei zwischen Humilitas und Observanzreformen*, Katharine Stahlbuhk associates the frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo with terra verde painting, a group of wall paintings executed in green tones, among whom she includes murals that feature the use of the so-called 'green earth' pigments, but also those in which a mixture of greenish pigments prevails. See Stahlbuhk 2021, p. 28 and cat. 15, p. 257 ff.

52   The intimate connection between *chiaroscuro* and *rilievo* is emphasized in early modern art theory, beginning with Cennino Cennini's treatise on painting. See Lehmann 2018.

FIGURE 8.10   Andrea del Sarto, *John the Baptist Preaching in the Desert*, *c.*1515, fresco,
Florence, Chiostro dello Scalzo (detail)
IMAGE: KUNSTHISTORISCHES INSTITUT IN FLORENZ, MAX-PLANCK-
INSTITUT / PHOTO: RABATTI – DOMINIGIE PHOTOGRAPHY

That the use of *chiaroscuro* here positions these paintings in close proximity to the medium of the drawing has been mentioned by Norbert Schneider, who was reminded of silverpoint or sepia drawings when viewing the frescoes for the first time.[53] The question of a possible connection between color-reduced wall painting and drawing has been addressed in the research; so-called colored-ground drawing in particular, also characterized by a pronounced use of *chiaroscuro*, deploys aesthetic means and aims for effects that relate it closely to monochrome wall painting.[54] In a preparatory drawing (figure 8.11) for the fresco *The Tribute to Caesar* in the Medici Villa in Poggio a Caiano, for example, del Sarto deployed a pronounced use of light and shadow values to produce an atmospheric intensity that is comparable to that found in the narrative scenes of the Chiostro dello Scalzo.

53   See Schneider 2012, 78 f.

54   For a discussion of these aspects, see Schäffner 2009, 72–75; Stahlbuhk 2021, 53 ff. On color-reduced wall painting, see also Kraft 1956; Dittelbach 1993. On colored ground drawing, which is to say *chiaroscuro* drawing on color-toned paper, see Brahms 2016. On *chiaroscuro*, see Lehmann 2018.

FIGURE 8.11   Andrea del Sarto, The Tribute to Caesar, *c.*1519/21, brush in brown and gray over
                black chalk, heightened with white, on brown primed paper, 43 × 33.5 cm, Paris,
                Louvre, Département des Arts Graphiques, INV 1673, Recto
                IMAGE: RMN-GRAND PALAIS [MUSÉE DU LOUVRE] / MICHEL URTADO

But the frescoes of the Chiostro dello Scalzo display a relationship to the graphic media on still another level: in his discussion of the frescoes *The Baptism of the People* (figure 8.12) and *John the Baptist Preaching in the Desert* (figure 8.13), both completed around 1515, Vasari claims that in his wall paintings, del Sarto had assimilated the print works of Albrecht Dürer.[55] According to him, individual figures were borrowed from the German master's engravings and

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55   Vasari 1966–1987, vol. 4, 359 f.

FIGURE 8.12   Andrea del Sarto, *The Baptism of the People*, *c.*1515, fresco, Florence, Chiostro
dello Scalzo
IMAGE: KUNSTHISTORISCHES INSTITUT IN FLORENZ, MAX-PLANCK-
INSTITUT / PHOTO: RABATTI – DOMINIGIE PHOTOGRAPHY

FIGURE 8.13   Andrea del Sarto, *John the Baptist Preaching in the Desert*, *c.*1515, fresco,
Florence, Chiostro dello Scalzo
IMAGE: KUNSTHISTORISCHES INSTITUT IN FLORENZ, MAX-PLANCK-
INSTITUT / PHOTO: RABATTI – DOMINIGIE PHOTOGRAPHY

FIGURE 8.14   Albrecht Dürer, *Ecce Homo*, from *The Passion*, 1512, engraving, 11.8 × 7.5 cm, New
York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

FIGURE 8.15   Andrea del Sarto, *Arrest of John the Baptist*, *c.*1517, fresco, Florence, Chiostro dello Scalzo
IMAGE: KUNSTHISTORISCHES INSTITUT IN FLORENZ, MAX-PLANCK-INSTITUT / PHOTO: RABATTI – DOMINIGIE PHOTOGRAPHY

woodcuts: for example, the man wearing a slitted cloak and head covering who stands at the right-hand edge of *John the Baptist Preaching* is said to be copied, with minor alterations, from Dürer's engraved *Ecce Homo* (1512, figure 8.14), while the seated woman with child are said to be borrowed from the woodcut *The Birth of Mary* (*c.*1503).[56]

   With a number of interruptions, del Sarto worked on the fresco cycle over an extended period, circa 15 years. In his attempt to date the individual frescoes and to trace del Sarto's stylistic development, John Shearman made the intriguing observation that the chromatic tones vary between individual frescoes: while *The Baptism of Christ*, which dates from circa 1511/1512, displays a warm sand tone that tends toward reddish-orange, the *Charity*, datable to around 1513, is restricted more noticeably to grayish and greenish tones, a color scheme that corresponds to the frescoes of *Justice, John the Baptist Preaching,* and *The Baptism of the People*.[57] With the *Arrest of John the Baptist* (figure 8.15), which dates from circa 1517, the use of monochrome shifts yet again:

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56   See Shearman 1965, vol. 1, 66; Cordellier 2015, 20.
57   See Shearman 1965, vol. 1, 56 f.

However when he came to paint the Arrest, in summer 1517, he again changed his mind and reverted to a softer, warmer monochrome rather closer to the one with which he had started, but with one important difference; the tonal levels here are differentiated in the exact nuance of colour like the block-printing of a *chiaroscuro* woodcut. The latter was a new medium assuming great importance at this precise moment in Rome, and it is quite possible that its rich pictorial effects inspired Sarto's technical development towards a more complex monochrome.[58]

The technique of the *chiaroscuro* woodcut, where a motif is printed using two or more blocks with multiple colors, was invented north of the Alps around 1508 and introduced into Italy around 1516 by artists such as Ugo da Carpi.[59] One particular attraction of the technique was its capacity to produce painterly *chiaroscuro* effects comparable to those seen in monochrome wash and pen-and-ink drawings, and it seems quite plausible, as Shearman assumes, that del Sarto sought to familiarize himself with this new printing technique.[60]

The adaption by del Sarto of motifs from engravings and woodcuts by Dürer document that he was preoccupied in his frescoes with the graphic media, and Sydney Freedberg has aptly noted that through the reduction of color, it was first and foremost del Sarto's talent as a draftsman that came into play here.[61] As argued above with regard to intermedial references to sculpture, it is not simply a question of motivic borrowings, but instead, beyond this, of a confrontation with the characteristic representational means and effects of the respective medium. Evidently, del Sarto strove to produce effects in the medium of wall painting that would be comparable to those resulting from the innovative practices of *chiaroscuro* drawings and woodcuts. As mentioned above, the use of *chiaroscuro* in the frescoes seems to be bound up in particular with del Sarto's attempt to generate emphatic effects of *rilievo*. The question arises, however, whether other aesthetic concepts play a role here in the prac-

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58   See Shearman 1965, vol. 1, 57.

59   On the *chiaroscuro* woodcut, see cat. Vienna 2013; cat. Los Angeles & Washington 2018.

60   References to other works, media, or techniques are detectable in *chiaroscuro* woodcuts on further levels as well: in Italy, the *chiaroscuro* woodcut often adapted pictorial formulae by other artists; Ugo da Carpi, for example, often worked from designs by Raphael or Parmigianino. References to other media appear as well, since the *chiaroscuro* woodcut was used in the late 16th century for print reproductions of three-dimensional sculptures and reliefs (for example Andrea Andreani after Giambologna). See van Gastel 2007. On the translation of statues and reliefs into print see recently Bloemacher, Richter & Faietti 2021.

61   See Freedberg 1963, vol. 1, 30.

tice of color reduction. In chapter 25 of his *Introduction to the Three Arts of Disegno,* Vasari deals with the *chiaroscuro* principle in wall painting, explaining that *chiaroscuro* painting tends more toward *disegno* then toward color.[62] This remark once again positions monochrome wall painting in proximity to practices of draftsmanship, although in this case, the specific meaning of *disegno* may be closer to the idea, the intellectual conception.[63] Without postulating a direct connection between the color reduction of the wall paintings and the growing prestige of the concept of *disegno* in Cinquecento art theory,[64] I do want to emphasize the potential of *chiaroscuro* for expressing abstract or intellectual concepts – an aspect that is explored further below.

Andrea del Sarto's frescoes, then, not only involve a confrontation with (marble) sculpture, but also with the graphic media. As in the case of the sculptural medium, nonetheless, we can by no means speak of the straightforward imitation of specific artistic procedures found in drawing or printmaking. Important here is an attentiveness to the format of the frescoes and the circumstance that collectively, they formed a room decoration: through the monumental scale of the frescoes and the sequence of images, which were perceived in spatial terms by the beholder, del Sarto generated an aesthetic experience that is fundamentally different from the mode of perception associated with the graphic media.

3   The Interaction of Media

Clearly, then, these wall paintings, each embedded in a comprehensive decorative framing system, manifest a variety of intermedial references or concepts. While the four personifications of the Virtues create the impression of fully three-dimensional, highly animated statues occupying niches, the multifigured narrative scenes first of all display sculptural qualities that bring them close to the art of the relief, and secondly, painterly and graphic values

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62   'Vogliono i pittori che il chiaroscuro sia una forma di pittura che tragga più al disegno che al colorito, perché ciò è stato cavato da le statue di marmo, contrafacendole, e da le figure di bronzo et altre varie pietre'. Vasari 1966–1987, vol. 1, 139. For the context under discussion here, it is not uninteresting to note that Vasari here traces *chiaroscuro* back to the imitation of statues in marble, bronze, or other stone materials.

63   For a broader discussion of the term *disegno*, see Kemp 1974; for the current literary discussion of *disegno* in Vasari, see Pfisterer 2016, 219, n. 7.

64   Klaus Kraft has explained the emergence of monochrome wall painting by, among other things, the growing esteem accorded to *disegno* in early modern art theory. See Kraft 1956, 4 f.

that link them to the graphic media. In order to differentiate these levels, del Sarto evidently also employed the gradation of chromatic tones: the sculptural impression of the *Charity*, for example, was strengthened by her grayish-green tonality, which contrasts noticeably with the warm sand tones of the adjacent narrative fresco of the *Baptism of Christ* (see figure 8.6 and 8.16). And I must agree with John Shearman's observation, according to which del Sarto also employed a differentiated *chiaroscuro* in order to distinguish between 'sculpture' and 'history painting'.[65]

Through the adaptation and simulation of specific characteristics of the media of sculpture and the graphic arts, along with their aesthetic effects, del Sarto demonstrated the fictive potential of monochrome wall painting, at the same time showcasing his own artistry by giving form to his image program using a limited palette of colors.[66]

Regarding aesthetic impact, intermedial references contribute to establishing a further level of reality, one that proffers an additional potential meaning for the (sophisticated) beholder. They can also be understood as a specialized resource for heightening impact. The allusion to sculpture seems closely bound up with the intention of heightening the appearance of the frescoes. Analogies to the *chiaroscuro* drawing or woodcut have a comparable effect, yet at the same time, they give rise to painterly qualities. Their interaction generates tension, for the sculptural character of the frescoes, the consistent illusion of three-dimensionality, is countered by their painterly effects.[67] This emphasis on genuinely painterly qualities should however not interpreted as an intentional competition with sculpture, and hence as an expression of a *paragone*, but instead as an artistic mean designed to intensify the impact on the beholder. From the perspective of reception, the combined use of painterly and seemingly three-dimensional elements results in a highly-charged oscillation between haptic and optical impressions. The media interpenetrate, each heightening the other's impact.

In the research, the grisaille painting of the late Middle Ages and early modern era (I have recourse here in a simplified way to a generic term for diverse varieties of color-reduced painting) is often subdivided into two main tendencies: first, there is the sculptural or stone painting, which is generally

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65   See Shearman 1965, vol. 1, 65.

66   In other contexts as well, color reduction has been interpreted as a deliberate restriction of artistic resources through which the artist strives to showcase his mastery. See Preimesberger 1991, 481 ff. On the concept of the conscious renunciation of color in painting, which is documented already for antiquity, see Bushart & Wedekind 2016, x.

67   This tension has already been noted with regard to the impact of other grisaille paintings. See the observations of Krieger 1996, 584; Biermann 2000, 121; Schäffner 2009, 132.

FIGURE 8.16   Andrea del Sarto, *Charity*, *c.*1513, fresco, Florence, Chiostro dello Scalzo
IMAGE: KUNSTHISTORISCHES INSTITUT IN FLORENZ, MAX-PLANCK-
INSTITUT / PHOTO: RABATTI – DOMINIGIE PHOTOGRAPHY

interpreted as unequivocally imitating sculpture or mineral materials; and secondly, figural, scenic images which present the 'real', multicolored world as devoid of color or with a reduced palette, without however alluding to a different medium of representation or artistic material.[68] The latter variant is often interpreted as involving deliberate effects of alienation or abstraction.[69] In contrast, del Sarto's frescoes, which are embedded in a feigned framing system, have a complex visual status, and hence elude such classifications: the narrative frescoes show 'real' scenes in gradations of light and dark, and could hence be reasonably assigned to the latter category, but the statuary appearance of the Virtues in their feigned niches clearly allude to the sculptural medium, raising the possibility of sculpture as a potential reference in the narrative scenes as well. This impression is heightened further by the chromatic assimilation of the scenes with the framing system, which simulates stone.[70] It would also be inaccurate, however, to speak here of mere 'imitation' of certain image media, or of their materiality or techniques, in color-reduced wall painting. It is rather an evocation that unites various representational modes, and which is bound up – beyond material imitation – with its own aesthetic impact.[71]

4   Powerful Images

It seems reasonable to assume that it was not artistic-aesthetic motives alone that led to the creation of a color-reduced fresco cycle, that theological factors, i.e. the aim of encouraging piety, played a decisive role as well. With color-reduced wall paintings, the renunciation of precious pigments and coloristic splendor meant the choice of an economical, 'quiet' decorative form

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68   See for example the discussion in Krieger 1995, 3 ff., or more recently Stahlbuhk 2021, 13 f. and 27 f. This distinction has of course been differentiated further for various periods or cultural milieus. Stephan Kemperdick, for example, distinguishes three central variants of grisaille painting in the 15th and early 16th centuries north of the Alps. See Kemperdick 2016, esp. 16 –25.

69   See for example Kemperdick 2016, 21.

70   Cf. Stahlbuhk 2021, 259.

71   Katharine Stahlbuhk too problematizes the interpretation of the frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo as imitations of marble, and assigns the frescoes to the figural-scenic tradition of terra verde painting (see Stahlbuhk 2021, 259). In the present essay, it is instead argued that while we can hardly speak of straightforward material imitation, intermedia references are indeed of central importance on the level of aesthetic impact, and that Andrea del Sarto's frescoes must be distinguished in this regard from other color-reduced wall paintings which deploy color reduction in an abstract manner without reflecting upon or rendering fruitful other visual media or artistic materials.

that was interpretable in sacred contexts as a gesture of modesty and humility and an injunction toward asceticism and penitence.[72] This religious connotation of monochrome painting is consistent with the self-conception of the penitence-oriented Compagnia dello Scalzo, a religious lay association that belonged to the flagellant movement, and whose members organized collective self-flagellation and barefoot processions.[73] It seems likely that Andrea del Sarto – who himself became a member of the Compagnia dello Scalzo, founded in the 14th century, at the latest in 1517[74] – experienced a special obligation to do justice to the spiritual ideals of the penitential fraternity.[75] Within the fresco program, the theme of penitence is visualized in particular in the *St. Baptist Preaching*, which focuses on John as a preacher of repentance.[76] A contemplative immersion in the pictorial subject is fostered by color-reduced painting, allowing it to acquire the function of a medium, that enhances meditation.[77] At the same time, the powerful, vivid, depiction of the figures, with their effects of *rilievo*, described above by Francesco Bocchi ('con tanta forza sono state effigiate'),[78] must have catalyzed the excitation of affect in beholders.[79] In combination with the dynamic sequential pacing of

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72 On this aspect of monochrome wall painting, see Schäffner 2009, 133–139. With regard to possible theological or liturgical motives, researchers have proposed a close connection to Lenten rites. This is grounded in the use of monochromatic textiles to cover altar images during Lent, as well as the frequent appearance of grisaille depictions on the outer wings of folding altarpieces. See Teasdale Smith 1959. The argument for cost savings as a primary motivation for color-reduced wall painting, which has been proposed often by researchers, and which has at times led to a blatantly negative valuation of such works, has been rejected in the current research, not least of all due to the prominent places of display of many such frescoes, and the positive judgments of *chiaroscuro* painting expressed by contemporaries. On this aspect, see Stahlbuhk 2021, 10 and 15 f.

73 See Freedberg 1963, vol. 1, 30. On the penitential fraternities in Italy, see also Dehmer 2009; Chen 2018.

74 See Shearman 1965, vol. 1, 52. On the archival documents testifying to del Sarto's membership in the Compagnia dello Scalzo beginning in 1517, see O'Brien 2005. The fraternity membership included merchants and craftsmen, but also artists, among them leading painters, goldsmiths, sculptors, and architects. See O'Brien 2014.

75 In a recent study, Katharine Stahlbuhk has explored the encouragement of piety as a motivation for color-reduced wall painting in the Quattrocento in the spirit of *humilitas*, and discusses the frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo in this context. See Stahlbuhk 2021, esp. cat. 15, 257–259.

76 See Hirdt 2006, 100.

77 Also, Almut Schäffner has stressed the capacity of monochrome wall painting to enhance meditation. Cf. Schäffner 2009, 133.

78 See n. 2.

79 Widely diffused in the early modern treatise literature, as Valeska von Rosen has shown, is the notion that a painting that displays a successful *rilievo* is powerfully effective, which

the scenes, the original presence of a stone bench for sitting running along the pedestal zone of the frescoes,[80] which encouraged lingering and the intensive contemplation of the scenes, must have served as a further stimulus to contemplation by the fraternity members. With respect to this intended effect of the frescoes, aspects related to the semantics of color play an important role as well. In addition to gradations of a variety of brownish and sand tones, the predominant colors in the frescoes are gray and green. The spiritual dimension of the 'achromatic' color gray has repeatedly been emphasized in the research, at times with reference to philosophical contexts: gray signifies a divergence from everyday experience, and is suggestive of intellectual and theoretical contexts and cognitive processes.[81] Based on her examination of numerous source texts, Katharine Stahlbuhk recently showed that during the Middle Ages and early modern era, green was assigned a 'middle' position in the color spectrum, and was attributed with the capacity to stimulate lingering, concentration, and contemplation.[82] By virtue of their color scheme, the frescoes – which cover the walls of the entire interior courtyard – encouraged viewers to turn away from the distractions of the world and to engage in contemplation and inward reflection. And undoubtedly, the immersive potential of the frescoes was further enhanced by the intimate architectural dimensions of the small cloister.

The door opposite the entrance, which has meanwhile been walled up, originally led into the chapel and the assembly rooms of the fraternity that lay behind, where ritual activities – including flagellation – were performed, so that the Chiostro demarcated a threshold space between the inner and outer worlds (figure 8.6).[83] Before the fraternity members entered the chapel and the other spaces, they would have been collectively attuned by del Sarto's monochrome frescoes to the pious aims and ideals of the fraternity, and emotionally affected by the intensely-present wall paintings, with their three-dimensional appearance. That the use of *chiaroscuro* played a decisive role here is substantiated by the circumstance that the statutes of the fraternity stipulated that the

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       is why the terms *forza* and *rilievo* are frequently used in the same context. See von Rosen 2000, 185.

80   Freedberg 1963, vol. 1, 29; Shearman 1965, vol. 1, 53.

81   With reference to Goethe and Hegel, see Steiner 1990, 62; Bushart & Wedekind 2016, esp. IX and XVI.

82   See for example Wilhelm Durandus (1230–1296): 'Cortina alba significat munditiam, rubea caritatem, *virides contemplationem* [emphasis by the present author], nigra carnis mortificationem, livea trabulationem'. Durandus, *Rationale divinorum officiorum*, I, III, 39, cited from Stahlbuhk 2021, 11. For additional source materials, see ibid., 104–112.

83   See Shearman 1965, vol. 2, 294; O'Brien 2005, 260.

flagellation ritual was to be performed in darkness – that the light should be extinguished in the room where it was to be enacted.[84] Through the *chiaroscuro* imagery of the frescoes, the fraternity members were already encouraged to leave the colorful outside world behind them, to prepare themselves inwardly for the self-flagellation in which they would soon be engaged.[85] And this level of meaning and intended effect cannot be assumed only for the narrative scenes from the life of John the Baptist, but also for the female Virtues, in particular the fresco of *Charity*, who – as the personification of Christian (neighborly) love and solicitude – embodies a central ideal of the organization.[86]

To date, the phenomenon of color reduction in late medieval and early modern painting has yet to receive a conclusive interpretation, and it is of interest to note that the various explanatory approaches proposed are often in contention with one another: some interpretive attempts, for example, argue for the relevance of art-theoretical issues (*paragone*, the demonstration of artistic skill, and so forth), while other researchers tend to relativize art-theoretical considerations and instead foreground theological or liturgical motivations as explanatory models.[87] The present essay instead argues that it is necessary to consider the art-reflexive potential of the frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo in conjunction with their functional context and related devotional practices – not however with regard to a potential competition between the arts, but instead in relation to reflections on collaboration between the media, with the intention of creating haunting, potent images that were intended to heighten the devotion and humility of the fraternity members while acting as a stimulus toward meditative contemplation. References to the sculptural medium heightened the three-dimensional corporeality of the fictive figures, while the sheer complexity of the implied intermedial references and the resultant perceptual ambiguity encouraged viewers to engage in intensive and protracted viewing.

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84   On the liturgical sequence of the ritual and the relevant passage in the statutes, see Chen 2018, 186.

85   See most recently the discussion by Stahlbuhk 2021, 259.

86   On the significance of charitable ideas for the religious fraternities, see Dehmer 2009, 224 f.

87   See Bushart & Wedekind 2016, XII and the detailed discussion of the literature in ibid., n. 19 especially with regard to the numerous interpretive approaches to Netherlandish and Dutch grisaille painting in the early modern era.

5   Conclusion and Outlook

The color-reduced fresco cycle in the Chiostro dello Scalzo in Florence, dating from the early Cinquecento, was chosen as an exemplary case because synagonistic processes can be identified here on many levels. This relates first to the friendship and productive exchange between the painter Andrea del Sarto and the sculptor Jacopo Sansovino. While to date, the research has shed light on the exchange between these two artists primarily from stylistic and formal-aesthetic perspectives, this essay discussed references to Sansovino's sculptural model in the working process for the *Charity* fresco as a process of medial appropriation and transformation and argued that the suggestion of a lifelike presence was an aim shared by del Sarto's *Charity* and Sansovino's sculptural works.

The complexity of the intermedial references in del Sarto's fresco cycle is manifest in the fact that the painter not only alludes to the sculptural medium, but to the graphic media as well. In doing so, he fathomed the affinity for and interdependency with other monochrome image media, first the (color-reduced) sculpture, and secondly the graphic arts, in particular the hand drawing and the *chiaroscuro* woodcut. The synergy between the media that results from this complex set of intermedial references in the medium of wall painting can be conceived as a synagonistic added value: the media, which stand in a relationship of tension, fertilize one another reciprocally, heightening their impact on the beholder.

It seems likely that intermedial references play a significant role in other works by del Sarto as well, a topic worth investigating more deeply than the level of motivic references.[88] Considering Vasari's assertion that the exchange between the two artists was reciprocal in nature, it would also be worth asking whether this productive process was reflected as well in Jacopo Sansovino sculptural oeuvre.[89] Potentially relevant alongside Sansovino's *Cartapesta* reliefs, where the use of color positions this medium in close proximity to painting,[90] would be marble sculptures, such as the *Madonna del Parto* (1518–1521, Rome, S. Agostino), which rotates in relation to the niche as though genuinely

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88   References to sculpture seem relevant as well, for example to del Sarto's *Madonna of the Harpies* (circa 1517); here, he creates the impression that the Madonna, who has been positioned on a pedestal, and is hence reminiscent of a statue, is being awakened to life. See Nagel 2011, 105; Boeßenecker 2020, 371.

89   See n. 7. See Shearman 1965, 63 f.

90   On the *Cartapesta* reliefs, see Boucher 1991, here vol. 2, 345–351; Zindel 1992.

alive, an artifice Jacopo Sansovino may have developed through his reception of ideas present in contemporary Florentine painting.[91]

The relationship between Andrea del Sarto and Jacopo Sansovino, documented by Vasari, is a striking example of a close friendship between a painter and a sculptor in the early modern era, and the associated process of conceptual and artistic exchange, and one that is moreover far from unique, as shown by other examples from the Cinquecento. Contemporary sources report that in Venice, where he settled in 1527 during the Sack of Rome, Jacopo Sansovino developed a close friendship with the painter Titian, and that the two artists engaged in intellectual exchanges concerning topics related to the *paragone* in the circle of the writer Pietro Aretino.[92]

An additional such instance is the friendship and productive collaboration between the terracotta sculptor Antonio Begarelli (1499–1565) and the painter Correggio (1489–1534), about which no contemporary sources have however been discovered to date; the earliest mention of their relations dates from the 17th century.[93] In his *Raccolta de'Pittori, Scultori, et Architetti Modonesi più celebri* (1662), the Modenese historian Lodovico Vedriani reports that Begarelli executed terracotta models for use by Correggio in his working process for the cupola fresco in the Cathedral of Parma, while Correggio in turn is said to have modeled three of the figures for Begarelli's multi-figure *Deposition* (S. Francesco, Modena).[94] And although – given the absence of contemporary textual sources – their collaboration has not been documented beyond doubt, it would be worthwhile to examine the shared artistic qualities and expressive forms of these artists from Emilia-Romagna more closely, both of whose oeuvres are characterized by 'tender modeling and soft *chiaroscuro*'.[95] While sculptors and painters confronted one another as antagonistic parties in the academic and theoretical *paragone* debate of the Cinquecento, at times presenting their arguments with great vehemence, the instances discussed here instead suggest instead a friendly and playful competition between the media in artistic practice, a productive interplay that suggests a more complex image of the relationship between the arts in the Cinquecento.

The monochrome frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo reveal a heightened and reflexive consciousness by del Sarto concerning the mediality of the

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91   For greater detail, see Boeßenecker 2020, 366–373.

92   On the 'strettissimi amici' Pietro Aretino, Jacopo Sansovino, and Titian, and their discussions of the *paragone,* see Boucher 1991, vol. 1, 69; von Rosen 2001, 92–98.

93   On a possible artistic exchange between the sculptor Begarelli and the painter Correggio, see Lightbown 1964; Gasparotto 2008; Bonsanti 2012.

94   Vedriani 1662, 48 and 50. See Lightbown 1964, 8 f.

95   Ibid., 7. On this aspect, see Boeßenecker 2022.

different art forms and their potential aesthetic impact, one that he took up and transformed in a playful spirit. And the mutual penetration of the media seems to have played a role in other color-reduced room decorations as well. Concerning the monochrome fresco cycle, dating from the mid-Cinquecento, that is found in the portico of the Roman Church of S. Stefano Rotondo, Veronica Biermann has noted that despite the evident allusion to stone reliefs, the painterly impression of these wall paintings is less of painted sculptures than of wash drawings.[96] Whether the Florentine frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo served this anonymous artist – who may have emerged, as Veronica Biermann conjectures, from Vasari's inner circle[97] – as a source of inspiration for his Roman cycle on penitence and martyrdom (the scenes illustrate the lives of Saints Paul and Stephen) must remain open here, but seems conceivable when we consider the comparable subject matter.

Stephan Kemperdick too, who has studied 15th and early 16th century grisaille painting north of the Alps, discusses the adoption of certain representational resources that were developed first in print media before being transferred to monochrome painting.[98] In their search for sophisticated and vivid modes of depiction, early modern artists were evidently preoccupied with novel techniques in use for other monochrome image media, and often explored the affinities between them. In the southern and northern Alpine regions around 1500, color reduction seems to have been connected to an orientation toward materiality and the investigation of surface textures. Referenced here might be the engravings and woodcuts of Albrecht Dürer (which Andrea del Sarto clearly drew upon in his fresco cycle), but also Tilman Riemenschneider's color-reduced carved altarpieces, whose surfaces he structured sculpturally and finished with lightly-tinted, yellowish-brown glazes, or Veit Stoß, who in certain works – among them the *St. Roche* in Ss. Annunziata in Florence – seemed to transform the wooden material into gleaming bronze through the virtuoso surface treatment.[99] Andrea del Sarto's *chiaroscuro* frescoes too should be viewed against this horizon: through fine gradations of light and dark, through the 'shining forth' and sculptural emergence of the figures from the shadowed surfaces, the allusion to other artistic materials

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96   Cf. Biermann 2000, 122.

97   See Biermann 2000, 123 f. The author discusses various comparative examples, del Sarto's fresco cycle in the Chiostro dello Scalzo is not however mentioned as a possible model. See ibid., 124 f.

98   See Kemperdick 2016, 24 f.

99   See Dümpelmann 2018. On color-reduced wooden sculpture north of the Alps, see Taubert 1967; Rosenfeld 1990; Habenicht 2016.

(gilded marble) and the aesthetic potential of light-dark contrasts are explored through an interplay with other materialities and media.

The reflections on artistic media encountered in the written documents of the *paragone* debate, then, reverberate as well in artistic practice, an instructive instance being the color-reduced frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo. A self-reflexive quality is inherent to them, for the artistic media involved, their media-specific properties and their mimetic and fictional potential are negotiated playfully by del Sarto and rendered fruitful with regard to aesthetic impact. A synagonistic perspective has the potential to heighten our awareness of the complexity and productivity of this intermedial discourse, which cannot be fully comprehended either through references to stylistic and motivic 'influences' that cross medial boundaries, nor with the catchphrase *paragone*.

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Medial Difference and Medial Synthesis in the Winged Altarpiece: The Oscillating Play of Artforms and the Range of Human Vision

Sandra Hindriks

The early success story of the medium of the panel painting – whose origins can be traced in the German-speaking world back to the 13th century, and reached a highpoint in the transition between the late Middle Ages and early modern era – arrived at its consummate expression with the genesis of the winged altarpiece. From the start, intermedial references and constellations constituted a central and striking trait of the new genre of the winged altarpiece, among whose central achievements, as Klaus Krüger has argued, was 'the abrogation of heterogeneous multiplicity in favor of overarching homogeneity in a perceptual order.'[1] According to Krüger, the winged altar shrine – as a 'mixed' form of the winged altarpiece – transferred the various elements that were gathered together on the altar, and which differed in design, function, and valence, into an overarching system of order that subsumed the various media and modes of representation and made possible a set of reciprocal formal and thematic interrelationships. As a liturgical form, this type aimed in particular at 'polyfunctionality within a formally unified and integrated structure, also with regard to optical impact.' This resulted, according to Krüger, in a 'perspectivation of perception' that relativized the presence of reliquaries and statues to such an extent that they were now embedded in a unified field of vision, and at the same time also in a representative function.[2]

The winged altarpiece, therefore, strove toward a system of order that translated multiplicity into unity without however seeking to nullify or negate the aspect of difference. Instead, such difference was embedded now in a shared perceptual and representational form, with perception being furnished now in a very particular way with a symbolic, religious, and philosophical coding. And although the invention of the winged altarpiece aimed first and foremost toward the resolution of a preexisting 'conflict' between image programs on

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1   Krüger 2001, 70.
2   Ibid. 82–83.

the one hand and the display of relics on the other,[3] this difference – and hence the potential for friction between media – continued to exist within the new perceptual order. With the genesis of the winged altarpiece, a zone of conflict now in a sense becomes a field of play upon which differing and to some extent divergent tendencies could engage in aesthetic rivalry, but at the same time work together. And it is precisely from this dialectic that an additional level of epistemological value could potentially emerge for the viewer.

The present essay seeks to trace this productive dialectic of the winged altarpiece, and to examine in greater detail in particular the difference between panel painting and sculpture, as manifested in the cooperation but also the opposition between the two media. As Krüger has emphasized, it was panel painting in particular that profited in a very special way from the 'tendency toward perspectivation.' Within the larger 'process of the specific engendering of visual orders of perception,' this still-young medium succeeded in establishing its presence on the altar in an effective and lasting way – first through a close and varied recourse to the liturgical situation prevailing on the altar and the resultant intermedial constellation, and secondly by exhausting and further developing its own genuine representational and expressive potential.[4] How does the interplay – conceived here as synagonistic – between the media take shape with regard in particular to concerns related to optics and perceptual issues? As the research of the past two decades has clearly shown, 'the gaze and the eyes' in the late Middle Ages were 'essential bearers of religious and social communication, of the act of cognition as well as of education.'[5] But what specific experiential and cognitive value – in the sense of added value – could intermedial references, the coexistence, opposition, or collaboration of the respective media and their differing qualities, offer religious beholders at the altar, but also in private devotions? This question will be examined more closely with reference to two altarpieces, both – not coincidentally – from Cologne. Observable early on in the metropolis on the Rhine in particular in relation to the altarpiece was a 'tradition of medial synthesis,' and concomitantly, of medial reflection:[6] discussed briefly as an initial instance of the 'process of the specific engendering of visual orders of perception' is the *Kleine Dom* (*Little Cathedral*), a 'mixed' (i.e. combining painting and sculpture) baldachin altarpiece that dates from 1350/60, and which may have originally included relics. Subjected to a detailed analysis and interpretation afterwards will be

3   On this field of conflict, see ibid. 72ff.
4   Krüger 2017, 32ff.
5   Lentes 2002, 179.
6   See in particular Krischel 2008, 100.

the *Crucifixion Triptych* by the Master of the St. Bartholomew Altarpiece, dating from 1490/95, an exquisitely painted winged altarpiece that nonetheless invokes sculpture on both its outer and inner wings.

1   Incarnation and Otherworldliness in the *Kleine Dom*: the 'Oscillating Gaze'

Little is known about the early history of the small winged altarpiece known since the late 19th century as the *Kleine Dom*, or *Little Cathedral* (figures 9.1, 9.2), and preserved today in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum. Stylistic and technological comparisons leave little doubt that this work, produced in the 1350s, is one of a series of surviving 14th-century Rhenish carved altarpieces.[7] No concrete information, however, has survived concerning its context of origin, i.e., the executing artist or donor, original place of display, or intended use. Only in the 19th century, when the 'beautifully carved holy shrine, furnished with two towers'[8] entered the collection of the brothers Sulpiz and Melchior Boisserée, in the process acquiring the name *Kleine Dom* among their circle of family and friends (probably an allusion to the still-unfinished Cologne Cathedral), was strong light shed on its origins. A note discovered in the posthumous papers of the brothers suggests that the little altar-shrine came from the Franciscan Convent of St. Clare in Cologne, which was secularized in 1802 and destroyed two years later. Presumably, Sulpiz Boisserée acquired it shortly after the building's demolition together with the celebrated *Altarpiece of St. Clare,* which came from the same church. The question of when and how the small-format shrine and relic altar came into the convent, and whether it was originally commissioned for this institution, or had instead served previously as a house altar for private devotions by an unknown owner, must unfortunately remain unresolved.[9]

Including its crowning superstructure, the vertical, rectangular altar shrine, fashioned from oak, measures altogether 147.5 cm in height; when opened, it measures 123.5 cm in width, and 53 cm when the wings are closed. It is

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7   Although doubts arose during the 1970s concerning the authenticity of the *Little Cathedral*, which was dismissed by some researchers as a Neo-Gothic work, a painstaking technical examination and conservation begun by the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in 1981 confirmed its medieval dating and origins in Cologne. See in detail Hilger, Goldberg & Ringer 1985; same authors 1990; Ringer 2001.

8   It was with these words that Sulpiz Boisserée characterized the work in a letter to Friedrich Schlegel dated February 13, 1811; cited from Hilger 1990, 15.

9   On the work's history, see Hilger 1990, 12–15.

FIGURE 9.1   *Der Kleine Dom* (*Little Cathedral*) (exterior view), Cologne, *c.*1360, 147.5 × 123.5 cm
(when closed: 147.5 × 53 cm), Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. L
MA 1968 a-d
IMAGE: CREATIVE COMMONS / BAYERISCHES NATIONALMUSEUM

FIGURE 9.2   *Der Kleine Dom* (*Little Cathedral*) (exterior view), Cologne, *c.*1360, 147.5 ×
123.5 cm (when closed: 147.5 × 53 cm), Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum,
inv. no. L MA 1968 a-d
IMAGE: HILGER, GOLDBERG & RINGER 1990, PP. 52−53

only 17.1 cm deep. The work's intermedial character is evident to the viewer at first glance, and in addition to combining painting and sculpture, it refers unmistakably to yet another artistic genre. Structually, the little winged altarpiece, which takes the form of a baldachin shrine with crowning superstructure, consisting of a double tower group, manifestly adapts the monumental architecture of the Gothic cathedral.[10] The concomitant symbolic reference to the 'cathedral's inherent depiction of the heavenly Jerusalem,'[11] and hence to the celestial 'city of pure gold' described in the Bible (Revelations 21:18) is enhanced through an invocation of yet another artistic genre, namely the art of goldsmithing. Although fashioned from wood, the *Kleine Dom* deliberately imitates the achievements and techniques of the art of goldsmithing. Omitting only the painted base, the outer sides of the shrine's rear wall, and the groined vault of the baldachin, the architectural framing structure was originally given a comprehensive gloss and matte gilded covering in imitation of the beaten and cast elements of the contemporary goldmith's art. Moreover, the technique of punchwork, used in the leaf ornamentation on the gilded rear wall of the shrine, corresponds to the art of goldsmithing, while the glazed coloration of the paintings, positioned against the gold ground, with their figural emphasis, evokes the appearance of enamel work.[12]

Although the little altar in Cologne probably served originally as a reliquary, it nonetheless signals a shift in meaning with regard to the relationship between image program and the display of relics. The tendency, referenced above, in the development of the winged altarpiece – namely towards the relativization of the presence of the relic as a consequence of its embeddedness in a unifying structure that aims primarily at a visual impact – is manifested in the little baldachin altar to the extent that here, the shrine itself no longer served as a repository for a relic, and was instead reserved exclusively for the image program. While the relic itself, which has meanwhile been lost, was probably preserved in the window stories, backed with parchment, of the tower zone, the main body of the shrine accommodates the fully sculptural group of the Annunciation.[13] The figures of the Archangel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary, each set on its own base, are carved from walnut, and have been given in partially gloss (the garments) and partially matte (the hair) poliment gilding. The

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10   See ibid. 18–21.

11   Ibid. 33.

12   For a detailed discussion of the references to the art of goldsmithing, see Hilger 1990, 10–11 and 15–16; Ringer 1990, 61; Ringer 2001, 210–213.

13   The spires of the towers are removable, allowing relics to be placed in the tower zone. See Hilger 1990, 33; Ringer 2001, 207 and 211.

Mother of God, who kneels before a prie-dieu, her right hand raised, seems to be shown at just the moment when she reacts to the message of the Angel of the Annunciation who kneels behind her. Originally, his initial words, *Ave Maria gratia plena,* were legible on a texted strip held by the angel in his right hand, and which – like the wings that were once affixed to his back by means of notches – has not survived.[14] Appearing above the edge of a cloud in the baldachin zone above the Annunciation group, flanked by two additional angels, is a half-figure of God the Father, who makes a gesture of blessing with his right hand, while also turning toward the Virgin.

With the scene of the Annunciation, the little winged altarpiece revolves around the central mystery of the history of Christian salvation, which is to say the moment of the Incarnation of Christ. This scene is supplemented and framed on the inner wings by additional painted scenes from the the childhood of Jesus. Displayed in the wider compartmental fields of the inner wings are – proceeding against the reading direction – the birth scene with the Adoration of the Child by Mary and Joseph, followed on the upper left by the Adoration of the Kings, the Presentation in the Temple on the lower right, and the Flight into Egypt on the lower left. Depicted in the vertical fields of the inner compartments of the wings are two male and two female saints: on the left the Princes of the Apostles, Peter (above) and Paul (below), and on the right, and identified by their attire as noble abbesses, St. Gertrude of Nivelles (above) and St. Agnes (below).[15] The elevated status accorded to the Annunciation scene when the shrine is viewed in an opened state may seem perfectly legitimate, but may cause confusion when the outer wings are examined, for oddly enough, they repeat exactly the same scene. When closed too, the little altar displays an Annunciation, although the Archangel and the Virgin appear now as painted figures against a green ground that is dotted with stars. Gabriel, whose left wing is still shown outspread and extending upward, seems to have just appeared before Mary, who interrupts her reading to turn toward the angel. Her head lowered submissively, she seems to willingly receive the divine message, and hence her destiny, as probably communicated originally by the raised texted band she holds in her right hand. The dove that hovers directly above her head indicates that she is overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, and hence marks the moment of her virginal conception.

It seems surprising that the *Kleine Dom* displays the Annunciation scene twice rather than according a central position on the interior to another episode from the history of salvation, perhaps the Birth or Epiphany of Christ,

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14   See Hilger 1990, 10–11; Ringer 2001, 207.
15   On the painted image program, see Goldberg 1990.

and hence to the actual becoming-visible of God in the world and for human-ity. Hans Peter Hilger speculates that this unconventional iconography may have been influenced by the theology of the Franciscan John Duns Scotus, who lived in Cologne beginning in 1307, and died there a year later, since his teach-ings revolved to a large extent around Christ's incarnation, as consummated through the Annunciation, understood theologically as the '*summum opus Dei.*'[16] For Hilger, the work discloses an intersection of two different pictorial programs: 'The first conceives the Annunciation as the prelude to the salva-tion narrative and accords the isolated scene a position at the entrance of the church space, and in particular at the base of the altar … The other pictorial program incorporates the Annunciation into a succession of scenes that depict the childhood of Christ,' with the Annunciation however being accorded spe-cial significance.[17] Roland Krischel proposed a different explanation, one that, while thoroughly compatible with Hilger's thesis, accords greater attention to the interplay of media. According to Krischel, the *Kleine Dom* is characterized by a particularly intimate and well-considered interplay between painting and sculpture, through which it aims toward a very specific act of seeing on the part of the beholder.[18] Constitutive of this envisaged perception and revelation of truth is the double depiction of the Annunciation – once in the medium of painting, once in the medium of sculpture – on the outer and inner sides of the altarpiece:

> When the little altar is opened, the pictorial presentation is not only broader, more detailed, and more splendid, but also effectuates a new, third dimension, in a sense incarnating and reflecting the theme of the Annunciation on a medial level. When the wings are moved successively, the effect is even more astonishing. One figure remains standing there for a brief time as a flat image, a disembodied, robed figure, while the other has already been awakened to three-dimensional life – and has moreover kneeled down …[19]

Through the transition from two to three dimensions, the Incarnation – the transformation of the word into flesh, and hence the physical embodiment of the Son of God – becomes comprehensible for the beholder of the *Kleine Dom* in medial terms. In her study of intermedial altarpieces in the early

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16   See Hilger 1990, 25–26.

17   Ibid. 25.

18   Krischel 2008, 105–106.

19   Ibid. 105–106.

Italian Renaissance, Iris Wenderholm attributed an 'ontological superiority' to the sculpted figures, which she justifies in particular through their haptic quality, their evocation of presence and lifelikeness.[20] The *Kleine Dom* too takes this enhanced de facto presence of the sculptural elements within the structure of its medial combination into account: when the altarpiece is opened, the change of media is accompanied by a heightened sense of presence and experiential concreteness of the events of the Annunciation for the beholder. The increased realism that accompanies the change from a two to a three-dimensional medium was intended not just to visualize the Incarnation as a process of transformation or change in medial terms, but may also have served to present the central event of the salvation narrative – so crucial for the individual's aspiration for personal salvation – before the viewer's eyes in a more striking way, rendering it palpable, and hence leaving an inward imprint. Since, in the Aristotelian tradition, every sensory act is also conceived as a kind of contact, and the process of seeing understood as an imprinting onto the soul of the looker,[21] the strategic change of media may have aimed toward an intensification of devotion, and hence may have stood in close proximity to the instructions for meditation offered by the Franciscan mystic Ugo Panziera (d. 1330), who in his *Trattato della Perfezione della mentale azione*, written in the early 14th century, characterized the inward visualization of Christ as a 'quasi-incarnational process that emanates from the *logos*':[22]

> Nel primo tempo nel quale la mente cominci colle infrascrite circunstanzie di Cristo a pensare Cristo pare nella mente e nella imaginativa scritto. Nel secondo pare disegnato. Nel terzo pare disegnato e ombrato. Nel quarto pare colorato e incarnato. Nel quinto pare incarnato e rilevato.[23]

But the heightened – with regard to both concreteness and impressiveness – presence of the salvific events in the sculptures of the *Kleine Dom,* which undisputedly represents an 'added value,' coexists with another tendency, one whose point of departure is found in the lavish use of gold. Through the nearly all-encompassing gilding of both the shrine cabinet and the figures, the corporeality and presence that is inherent to the three-dimensional medium is relativized and countered here by a tendency toward otherworldliness. To be sure, the pronounced use of gold as a 'metaphor for the sacred' also stimulates

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20   Wenderholm 2006, 190.
21   See ibid. 109–112; Camille 2000, 209–210.
22   Tammen 2009, 136.
23   Cited from Hessler 2014, 737.

an experience of sensory presence in the beholder, in the sense of an evocation of the divine; this intended experience of transcendence, effected through the special properties of the material, specifically its characteristic brilliance, is also however accompanied by an effect of dematerialization.[24] Through their embeddedness in a shimmering gold luster that encompasses the various scenes, the figures are robbed of their corporeality. Roland Krischel was the first to remark that the inside of the shrine, being entirely covered in a gold ground with punchwork, merges optically with the insides of the wings, also covered by a gold ground. And constituted by precisely this unifying perception, claims Krischel, is 'a complex aesthetic fusing together of the various pictorial planes,' to which the five figures of the shrine also contribute. To be sure, the latter display a greater spatial presence by virtue of their sculptural treatment,[25] yet any evocation of physical presence is at the same time attenuated by the gold covering of the figures, which also attaches them to the gold ground.

> This attachment has an intellectual-ecclesiastical and a perceptual-psychological dimension. Enveloped in the eternal light of the Heavenly Jerusalem, the figures – which are actually physically graspable – ultimately escape the world of the beholder, are removed from it both temporally and spatially. Parallel to this ambivalence, visual perception of the shrine oscillates between an impression of pictorial planarity and an impression of depth.[26]

The *Kleine Dom*, claims Krischel, demands of the beholder a 'gaze that jumps back and forth,' an 'oscillating gaze;' in his view, such a vibrating mode of perception, which alternates between two and three dimensionality, is entirely consistent with the principle of the intermedial altarpiece.[27] This image-immanent strategy does not, however, seem to be propelled solely by the material-aesthetic qualities of metallic gold, but is also – with regard to the painting – intensified and reflected upon through use of color. A technical investigation of the altar carried out in 1981, accompanied by conservation measures, revealed that the wings of the two music-making angels originally displayed an elaborate, detailed painted surface in the form of a peacock

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24   See Wenderholm 2014, 134–136.
25   The mounted figure of God the Father, for example, seems to 'push forward into the third
      dimension from the depths of the flat gold ground'; Krischel 2008, 105.
26   Ibid. 105.
27   Ibid. 126–127.

pattern[28] – an ornamentation that may have extended to the lost wings of the Angel of the Annunciation. This motif must have had a symbolic significance: since the early Christian era, the peacock has been regarded, among other things, as a symbol of paradise, of heaven, and of immortality, founded in the erroneous belief that the bird's flesh never decays. Moreover, the iridescent feathers of the peacock, which can appear in all of the colors of the rainbow depending on the viewing angle, also served as a conventional topos in treatises on visuality, where it served to exemplify deceptive visual appearance (i.e. in contrast to true existence).[29] With its shimmering play of colors, the wings of the angels would have additionally thematized and visualized the intended impact of the *Kleine Dom*, with its oscillation between transcendent appearance and actual presence.

Without in principle wishing to dispute the 'ontological superiority' of sculpture, I want to emphasize here the importance of the oscillating play of media as an important aspect of the complex network of relationships that characterizes the 'altar ensemble.' With the celebration of the mass, the mystery of the Eucharist is enacted repeatedly on the altar: according to Catholic doctrine, not only does the sacrificial death of Christ experience a permanent actualization at the moment of the transformation of the bread into the Body of Christ; occurring as well is a connection between terrestrial and celestial liturgy, and hence a union between the visible and the invisible.[30] In its material, three-dimensional appearance, does sculpture not correspond more closely to the notion of the authentic presence of Christ in the sacrament? Hence accommodating the inner need of the faithful for bodily presence? But the question nonetheless arises: How is it possible, at the same time, to do justice to the mystery, to the nonvisible, to the enigmatic and ultimately incomprehensible? And does painting, with its capacity for conjuring illusion, perhaps possess a certain 'added value' in this context?[31] This question is equally relevant to the mystery of the Incarnation, depicted doubly in the *Kleine Dom*, on both inside and outside. Ultimately, the transformation of the word into flesh,

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28   See Ringer 1990, 46 and 49; Ringer 2001, 207.

29   See Panayotova 2016, 310, as well as the succeeding cat. no. 108, 342–343.

30   In his *Dialogues*, Pope Gregory the Great describes this connection occurring at the moment of transformation as follows (Lib.IV,60): 'For, who of the faithful can have any doubt that at the moment of the immolation, at the sound of the priest's voice, the heavens stand open and choirs of angels are present at the mystery of Jesus Christ. There at the altar the lowliest is united with the most sublime, earth is joined to heaven, the visible and invisible somehow merge into one.' Cited from Gregory the Great & Zimmermann 1959, 273; see also Krüger 2017, 50.

31   See Marrow 2007.

which transcends all terrestrial boundaries, cannot – because it exceeds the limits of human knowledge – be grasped by the intellect, but only accepted as a matter of faith. This mystery of faith was characterized quite eloquently by Bernardino of Siena (d. 1444) in his *De triplici Christi nativitate,* which contains the much-cited passage according to which 'Eternity appears in time, immensity in measurement, the Creator in the creature … The unfigurable in the figure, the unnarratable in discourse, the inexplicable in speech, the uncircumscribable in space, the invisible in vision.'[32] Through the oscillation between two and three dimensionality, this paradox seems to become visually palpable in the *Kleine Dom.* While sculpture, through its three dimensionality, runs the risk of arousing suspicion concerning the possible confusion between reality and fiction, the perhaps puzzling, iridescent play of media – since here, the gaze leaps not just forward, but backward as well, generating presence, to be sure, but at the same time canceling it – can serve to make the viewer aware not just of the scope of human perception, but of its limits as well.

2   The *Crucifixion Altarpiece* of the Master of the Bartholomew Altarpiece as a Reflection of the Scope of Visual Perception and Intellectual Cognition

The productive, cognitively generative tension that emerges from the opposition and cooperation between the media and the oscillating gaze associated with them may be a primary reason why recourse to intermedial constellations – first and foremost involving painting and sculpture, but also architecture, goldsmithing, and the textile arts – remained a virtually omnipresent phenomenon in altarpieces in later periods as well – and moreover, not only in 'mixed' altarpieces, but specifically in the exclusively painted winged altarpieces of the 15th century. There can be little doubt that this tendency found its most prominent expression in the use of *grisaille* north of the Alps: depictions of unpainted stone sculpture in the medium of monochrome painting, initiated primarily by the Flemish masters Jan van Eyck and the Master of Flemalle, became well-established on the outside of winged altarpieces, specifically in order to produce a deliberate and graded relationship toward the inner wings, whether these were painted in various colors, executed in relief, or instead took the form of fully three-dimensional sculpture. Moreover, painted works that were suggestive of carved altarpieces enjoyed great popularity: in his *The Descent from*

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32   Cited from Didi-Huberman 1995, 35.

FIGURE 9.3   Rogier van der Weyden, *The Descent from the Cross*, before 1443, oil on wood,
              204.5 × 261.5 cm, Madrid, Museo del Prado, inv. no. P002825
              IMAGE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

the Cross in Madrid (figure 9.3), Rogier van der Weyden created the perhaps
best-known and most elaborate example of a painted altarpiece that deploys
illusionistic techniques to evoke the impression of a carved shrine containing
figures that have now been awakened to life.

In particular since the early 1990s, the intermedial discourse that is mani-
fested in both the use of *grisaille* and the painterly imitation of carved altar-
pieces has been the subject of intense discussion – and has been associated
with a heightened interest within art history in pictorial self-referentiality and
reflexivity, in the question of how artworks thematize their own existence as
images, which is to say their genuinely medial status, their artificiality as some-
thing created or invented, but also their illusionistic power and communicative
functions.[33] Repeatedly, the research has invoked intermedial references –

33   Interest in this issue has been propelled substantially by Victor I. Stoichita's study *The
      Self-Aware Image: An Insight Into Early Modern Meta-Painting*, first published in French in
      1993; Stoichita 1997. See also the review by Kruse 1999; von Rosen 2003; Rimmele 2007.

especially in the early years – in order to attest to an art-theoretical confrontation, which is to say a competitive or disputatious relationship between sculpture and painting that is said to prevail in the north as well. This thesis of a painted or 'silent paragone,'[34] however, lacks additional textual sources, and has moreover been contradicted, among other things, by the well-documented fact that leading artists such as Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden were active as painters-gilders of figures, and also prepared designs for sculptures.[35] Meanwhile, more recent art scholarship has done better justice to the circumstance that these intermedial references are found primarily in religious altarpieces and devotional images, which has led to an abandonment of a one-sided focus on art as 'painted art theory,' and to the realization that this research must be interdisciplinary, and must be situated in the context of an image discourse that involves exchanges between image production and philosophy or theology respectively – as phenomena which, by virtue of the fact that they thematize the medial status of images (painting, as well as sculpture) and hence aspects such as color, corporeality, materiality, etc., engage in reflection concerning the semantic and metaphorical potential of artworks, and on their shaping by theological doctrine concerning imagery.[36]

Discussed now with reference to a specific example is precisely this potential – in relation to synagonism as well – and the demands made upon the beholder's perceptual powers by this type of intricate illusionistic play. The work in question is the *Crucifixion Altarpiece* by the Master of the Bartholomew Altarpiece, a work that in sophisticated ways exploits both the concept of the painted shrine cabinet whose figures appear to have been summoned to life, as well as *grisaille* technique.

The painted triptych, which dates from 1490/95, was commissioned by the highly educated Cologne attorney Peter Rinck, who was born to a wealthy merchant family and studied at the universities in Erfurt, Paris, Cologne, and Pavia, later becoming a professor at the law school at Cologne University. After attempting as a young man to join the Carthusian Order, whose strict demands he evidently found himself physically incapable of satisfying, he resolved upon a life as a scholar, henceforth devoting himself to other, more private forms of piety. Rinck, who was among the most important donors in the Cologne of the late 15th century, not only owned an extensive library whose primary focus, apart from law, was theology, but a private chapel as well. And it was there, in all likelihood, that the *Crucifixion Altarpiece* was first installed. A testamentary

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34   Formative for this discussion was Preimesberger 1991, here 8.

35   See Kemperdick 2018, 63–67. With regard to references to sculpture in the works of Rogier van der Weyden, see also Fransen 2013.

36   See among others Schlie 2000, esp. 293ff.; Rimmele 2010.

FIGURE 9.4   Master of the Bartholomew Altarpiece, *Crucifixion Altarpiece* (exterior view),
c.1490/95, oak, wings: each 107 × 34 cm, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv.
no. WRM 0180
IMAGE: © RHEINISCHES BILDARCHIV KÖLN

provision specified that following Rinck's death in 1501, the altarpiece would
be transferred to the church of the Carthusian Order, which cultivated close
contacts with Cologne's political, financial, and intellectual elite.[37]

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37   For a detailed account of Peter Rinck's biography and his activity as a donor, see Schmid
1994, 63–139; Schmid 2001, 54–55.

The outer wings of the altarpiece (figure 9.4), painted in gray monochrome, are conceived as a pair of stone niches that receive uniform illumination from the upper left, and which however make an odd impression architecturally: while the semicircular space of the niche is clearly delimited at the sides, with the flattened front edge of the curved masonry wall running directly along the actual picture frame like a second frame, the space extends upward without delimitation, nor is the lower edge of the picture given a genuinely unambiguous terminus. A circular base resembling a millstone has been inserted into each niche, and appears – since, in a remarkable play of concave and convex elements, it does not rest on the ground, but instead on a kind of sill or ledge – to float freely in space while projecting into the viewer's space. This impression of a transgression of the foremost boundary of the picture is, however, immediately counteracted in a remarkable fashion, with the real picture frame overlapping the edge of the feigned stone bases. As Michaela Krieger has rightly observed, the Bartholomew master seems to have deliberately nullified the trompe-l'oeil effect of this idiosyncratic niche architecture, something achievable however without difficulty.[38]

Present already with the mineral coloration of these figures and their settings, their framing by niche architecture, and their presentation on bases are the three dispositive traits that contribute to the suggestion of stone sculptures – a suggestion that the painter, however, deliberately subverts in the further configuration of the two outer wings, and in ways that are equally playful and artful. Highly unusual already with the use of *grisaille* is the combination of two figures per niche, one positioned above the next, and moreover with the respective images' zones being delimited from one another by detailed interlaced branches. Seated upon these in the upper halves of the pictorial fields are the figures of the apostle princes Peter and Paul, while the lower zone is reserved for the Annunciation. Neither the Archangel Gabriel nor the Virgin Mary, with their fine and differentiated shaping, each shown kneeling on the rearmost section of their round bases, and hence actually depicted within the respective niche, make a particularly sculptural impression. Gabriel in particular, with his animated, elaborately draped garments, as well as his outspread wings and the texted ribbon that curls around his messenger's staff, fluttering freely – both virtually unachievable in a sculptural medium – makes an extremely lively impression. By comparison, the Virgin, who kneels in front of a prie-dieu, receiving the divine message, makes a more passive impression; but she too, with her fine facial features and graceful hands, whose translation into stone seems virtually inconceivable (not unlike the clasp on the cloak or

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38   Krieger 2001, 228–229.

the ornaments worn on the head of the Angel of the Annunciation), lacks any unambiguously sculptural character. At first, both figures suggest an intrusion into the sphere of the beholder, since their garments are draped in front of them on the projecting stone bases, while both the right hand, raised in a gesture of greeting, belonging to the angel, who is placed diagonally in the niche, as well as Mary's prie-dieu, seem to break through the foremost image plane; this initial impression is however immediately undermined, both along the lower picture frame, as well as by the edge of the right-hand-side boundary of the niche. This perplexing play with various levels of reality, and with the beholder's perceptual habits, observable already with the niche architecture, is extended both here and elsewhere. The branches upon which the princes of the apostles have assumed their positions in the upper zones of the image fields have been attached to the lateral edges of the niches in such a way that they project in front of, then behind, and finally again in front of the imaginary aesthetic boundary. Moreover, the branches are only loosely affixed to the inner lateral edges of the niche, and their casual mooring further undermines the impression of sculpture, for this construction seems to negate the physical weight of the apostles, hence defying the laws of gravity as much as the multiply curled texted band seen in the panel depicting the Virgin. All the more reason, then, to regard as a humorous gesture the painter's decision to have the dove of the Holy Ghost settle rather inelegantly on the Virgin's head rather than hovering freely in space, while Peter's key receives support from a stone bar, although the sculptural character of the apostles figures otherwise remains highly ambiguous.[39] The pair of Apostle Princes, who seem to function as 'door guards'[40] and representatives of the church, are also endowed with a presence that seems to go beyond the boundaries of the picture, although they do not transgress the lateral frames of the niches: at least initially, Peter's opened book seems indeed to do just that; but this illusionistic detail – which remains visible here only because the painted layers of the edge of the niche have become partially transparent – was ultimately painted over.

To interpret the highly creative use of *grisaille* in the *Crucifixion Altarpiece* primarily as the expression of an artistic *paragone* would fail to do justice to

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39   See ibid. 229–230.

40   Rimmele 2010, 275. In a different context, the author refers as well to the significance of the opened and closed books in connection with the attributes of the key and sword: 'The popular motif of the Annunciation as an event that occurs *prior* to the fulfillment of the Crucifixion, and the two Princes of the Apostles as *subsequent* advocates and intermediaries, is a combination that appears to be thematized by the repeatability of the opening and closing of the triptych, with its depiction of the central event of salvation'; Rimmele 2016, 31–32.

the work's extraordinary sophistication.[41] As often remarked in the research, such an argument collides with the circumstance that non-polychromy stone sculpture represented an extreme exception, and was never found on the outsides of altarpieces. The panels by the Bartholomew Master however contradict the idea of an explicitly competitive situation in particular because in a number of instances, the painter seems to *avoid* seizing or exhausting the available opportunities for outdoing sculpture illusionistically. This oscillation between the media of painting and sculpture, this illusionistic play with various levels of reality and fiction, and the associated deliberate unsettling of the beholder's perceptual habits must, to be sure, be conceived as a gauging of certain dichotomies and potentials – not in the sense of an emphatic rivalry, but instead in a playful mix of opposition and collaboration. I am arguing here that this preoccupation with recognizable strategies of visual deception does not simply serve a multilayered (pictorial) theological message, but can also be situated more precisely in the context of an optical and epistemological discourse concerning the scope of visual perception and intellectual cognition.

That recourse to a different artistic medium allowed the art of painting, with its capacity for illusion, to highlight its own artificiality and its own medial image status has been regularly emphasized in the research – not least of all with reference to a persistent skepticism or critical stance with regard to images.[42] But caution is advised regarding interpretations that conceive of the graduation or staggering of *grisaille* outer wings and full-color painted interiors far too strictly as antithetical, as juxtaposing exterior, purely empirical perception and inner, imaginative, or intellectual vision – as proposed in particular by Hans Belting with his thesis of the painted anthropology of the gaze.[43] To the extent that many *grisaille* outer wings, including those of the *Crucifixion Altarpiece,* undermine fixed dichotomies through their concrete designs, since they deliberately oscillate between the media, between the suggestion of inanimate stone material and animate figures, at the same time exploiting trompe-l'œil effects to confront the viewer with the fallible character of external perception, they consciously demand and instigate an intellectual, cognitively-oriented mode of viewing. As an 'already … mediating intermediate stage with the real world that lies before them,' they instead open up a transition, a perspective, from the empirically perceptible to the intellectually intelligible.[44]

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41   This is however the case in Krieger 2001, 224–225.

42   See among others Itzel 2004.

43   Belting & Kruse 1994, 60–62.

44   Rimmele 2016, 19; Jacobs 2016.

It should be emphasized at this point that precisely because *grisaille* fulfills this transitive function, it becomes possible to thematize and negotiate vision itself through its use. Beginning in the late 13th century, theories of visual perception, i.e. the external and internal processes of seeing, as well as the question of the status, reliability, and significance of information derived from visual perception, shaped epistemological discourse in a new and sustained way.[45] While this question cannot be discussed in detail here, it should be stressed that taking shape in relation to *species* theory, given a decisive development by Roger Bacon, was a theory of knowledge with a strongly visual emphasis, one that conceived of our experience of the world and the ensuing process of cognition not as direct, but instead as always mediated by images. Grasped by the term *species,* so rich in implications, was the entire process of perception and cognition, regarded as proceeding inward from the outside. As an immaterial form that was held to be detached from the concrete object and its material substrate, the *species* – according to a common if much-debated, varied, and not uncontroversial scholastic view – represented the visible, three-dimensional object, without however possessing the same characteristics. Through the multiplication of the *species* that are emitted by objects, a *similitudo* or image of the viewed object enters the eye via the medium of the air, from whence it is transferred to the inner senses. There, finally, these images (*species sensibiles*), held to be necessary for human cognitive processes, but at the same time liable to error, are converted in a stepwise internal process of cognitive processing, evaluation, and abstraction into mentally intelligible cognitive images (*species intelligibiles*), which represent the object – independently of its actual outward presence.[46]

Turning now again to the phenomenon of *grisaille* against the background of this theory of visual perception and the accompanying notion that the world is not directly experienced or recognized in the act of vision, but instead apprehended indirectly via images, we find that the deliberate oscillation between simulated stone sculpture and the depiction of life-like figures, along with the dichotomy between mediated/unmediated which it conveys, acquires a new meaning. Through the *grisaille* translation of a three-dimensional object – one that is identified as material through its stone appearance – into a de facto two-dimensional image, albeit one that is perceived as three-dimensional by the recipient, it is precisely the transformation of presence into representation (analogous with the *species sensibiles*) that is taken up as a theme. The striking and calculated artistic play with visual deception encountered in the

45   See Camille 2000, 201–202; Tachau 1988, xvi.
46   See Smith 2014, 248ff.; Camille 2000, 208–209.

Crucifixion Altarpiece gives rise to an attitude in the viewer that is not sim-
ply sensual in character, but also requires protracted thought. It prompts the
viewer to recognize himself as someone who sees and thinks. Looking, then, is
presented and performed as a complex reflexive act, one in relation to which –
as Michael Camille has emphasized – 'the image is not the reflection of some
external view of the world but the beginning and foundation of a process of
thought.'[47]

    With the Annunciation on the outer wings of the *Crucifixion Altarpiece*, the
Bartholomew Master took up a subject that was executed in *grisaille* more often
than any other, doubtless with the intention of reflecting upon the semantic
and metaphorical dimension of this central Christian mystery of faith via the
'metaphoricity of the image support', but also by means of the chosen mode
of depiction.[48] That first, the engendering of illusion, and second, the paral-
lel undermining of this consummate optical deception are of special signifi-
cance in this context was first demonstrated by James Marrow, for to the extent
that this paradox serves as a stimulus to reflection on the scope of sensual
perception and intellectual cognition, it also serves to heighten the behold-
er's awareness of the visual and intellectual elusiveness and inconceivability
of the mystery of the Annunciation.[49] With the alteration of the viewing side
from the gray monochrome outer wings to the colorful painted interior of the
Crucifixion Altarpiece, this emergence of a new, incarnated visuality finds its
corresponding visualization (figure 9.5).[50] The transition from Annunciation
to Crucifixion, from the moment when Christ becomes flesh to an image of
redemption via sacrificial death by the Son of God does not however corre-
spond to a full transcendence of sensual and intellectual vision. The fact that
the outer wings of the altarpiece display the Annunciation in stone niches – its
presence doubly fractured medially – as a representation of a representation
must be interpreted as a commentary on the finitude and narrowness of the
mundane world to which the beholder is subjected.[51] And if the new hope of
redemption is communicated when the altarpiece is opened, then this does
not imply that the viewer can immediately overcome the boundary between
this world and the hereafter. Through the oscillation between media and the
delimitation and unboundedness of the gaze, I will argue below, this pictorial
discourse concerning the scope of visual perception and intellectual cognition
is carried further on the inside of the *Crucifixion Altarpiece* (figure 9.6).

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47   Camille 2000, 216.
48   See Rimmele 2010, 69–72.
49   See Marrow 2007, 165–168.
50   See Rimmele 2010, 71; Rimmele 2016, 17.
51   On the niche as a metaphor for finitude, see Kruse 1996, 44.

FIGURE 9.5   Master of the Bartholomew Altarpiece, *Crucifixion Altarpiece* (exterior view),
c.1490/95, oak, wings: each 107 × 34 cm, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv.
no. WRM 0180
IMAGE: © RHEINISCHES BILDARCHIV KÖLN

Also staged intermedially in a very specific way on the central panel is the
central salvific event, namely Christ's death by crucifixion. In dependence
upon a pictorial concept that was first developed by Rogier van der Weyden
in his Madrid *The Descent from the Cross*, the Bartholomew Master too situates

FIGURE 9.6   Master of the Bartholomew Altarpiece, *Crucifixion Altarpiece* (interior view), c.1490/95, oak, central panel: 107 × 80 cm, wings: each 107 × 34 cm, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. no. WRM 0180
IMAGE: © RHEINISCHES BILDARCHIV KÖLN

the events taking place on Golgotha in an illusionistic, gilded shrine cabinet, which is identifiable as such primarily through the decorative tracery work visible along the upper and lateral sides of the frame, as well as by the use of cast shadows. The painted figures, in contrast, counteract the impression of a sculpted altarpiece, since they act not just within this containing structure, but also – in a tried and tested play with the boundaries between pictorial and physical space – before it as well. The sandy, stony ground of the hill of Golgotha extends far forward from the case of the shrine and all the way to the lower picture frame, forming a stage space for the crucifixion group, whose traditional pictorial formula is expanded and varied in significant ways. Flanked by the sorrowing Virgin Mary and the equally distraught John the Evangelist, whose gaze conveys compassion, and ringed by two rows of lamenting putti, the crucified, emaciated and now dead body of Christ, from which blood still flows from the wound on his side, dominates the upper half of the image. Gaps in the tracery work border guide the gaze toward Christ's hands, nailed to the cross, but also to the trilingual titulus of the cross, which is copied here faithfully by the artist based on woodcut versions, having been purportedly rediscovered in Rome in 1492.[52] The spatial location of the cross is perplexingly indeterminate: in the upper zone of the picture, it seems to be placed in shadow on the interior of the shrine, while the stipe of the cross, albeit for the most part concealed from view, is evidently – at least if the positioning of the figures is taken into account – positioned in front of the shrine case. The same ambivalence affects the brightly illuminated body of the dead Son of God, whose proportions and shadowed hands correspond to a localization in the middle image plane, while Mary Magdalene, who huddles at his feet, clinging to the cross with her entire body, situates it alongside the Virgin and the evangelist in the foremost picture plane. Since the life-giving cross virtually penetrates the womb of the despairing penitent, the vertical axis of the picture – which is further extended by the ointment vessel and Adam's skull – is emphasized in a way that is significant for the beholder. With his gaze beginning at the lowest edge or threshold of the picture and moving toward the scattered remains of the father of humanity, then to the figure of the penitent, and finally to the body of Christ, the viewer is confronted directly with his own impermanence and sinfulness and consequent need for redemption. Yet this message, already staged with such emphasis, is extended to include an additional skeleton, positioned horizontally with curved legs and bent arms, also along the central axis of the picture, but at a remove spatially from the crucified figure and set in

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52   See Exhib. Cat. Cologne 2001, cat. nos. 78 and 79, 408–411.

FIGURE 9.7   Master I.A.M. of Zwolle, *Memento Mori: A Skeleton in a Niche*, late 15th century,
engraving, 13.6 × 22.4 cm, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no
59.595.23
IMAGE: THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK

the background on the rocky surface of Golgotha. Borrowed from contempo-
rary depictions of *memento mori* found in print works (figure 9.7), the motif
undoubtedly served as an admonitory figure of identification for the beholder,
a gestural reminder of his own self-caused fate.[53] At the same time, the rather
macabre 'optical co-mingling of the hair that remains on the skull with John's
beautiful locks' imparts a subtle warning concerning the fleeting and transi-
tory character of earthly life.[54]

The vanitas reference, but also the deliberate play with trompe-l'œil effects,
signal the beholder's imprisonment in the here and now. Accompanying this
recourse to the sculptural altarpiece, the situating of the salvific events in a
contained, flat shrine cabinet, and the corresponding emphasis on the arte-
factual, is a decided limitation of vision. Here, the image does not open up
a view onto a completely different, celestial place, nor does it correspond to
the Albertian metaphor of the picture as a window, with its associated idea

53   See Roland Krischel in ibid. cat. no. 62, 376–377.
54   Lothar Schmitt and Marcus Mrass in ibid. cat. no. 74, 400–401.

of transparency.[55] With an eye specifically toward the concept of the 'living shrine,' Marius Rimmele has defined the triptych as 'a place' that resides between two spheres:

> The object is at once the abode of that which is represented and the medium of its representation. It hence belongs simultaneously to two different spheres: as a medium of embodiment in the beholder's here and now, but also as the abode of a simulated image world. In this way, it acts as a relay between immanence and transcendence ...[56]

To be sure, the aesthetically strained oscillation between the fictional levels of 'shrine altarpiece' and 'animate representation,' and hence also between the media of sculpture and painting respectively, generates the impression of an obfuscation of the boundary between the two spheres, but in the case of the *Crucifixion Altarpiece* of the Bartholomew Master, this oscillating play – it should be emphasized at this point – also represents a critical delimiting of precisely this boundary. If the depiction of salvific history, both the interior view as well as the outer wings, is ultimately always identified as an artistic representation by means of intermedial discourse, then this clarifies for the viewer that he always remains subject to the limitations of earthly existence. But this recognition need not result in resignation: precisely through the generation and undermining of visual deception, through the construction and dismantling of illusion, the viewer's own act of perception is showcased as a process that is to be sure subject to limitations, but at the same time opens up new insights through reflection on these limitations, thereby making possible at least an intellectual approach to that which remains essentially incomprehensible.

   The presence of two saints as yet unmentioned in this discussion – namely the church father and scholar St. Jerome on the left, and the youthful and initially doubting but later chastened apostle Thomas on the right – support this interpretation, since they witness the crucifixion scene in an irritatingly uninvolved fashion. Positioned along the lateral edges of the panel (where they make a decisive contribution to the beholder's recognition of the illusion), they do not appear as putative eyewitnesses to the adjacent events, but are instead presented both by virtue of their books, and the by carpenter's square Thomas holds in his hand, as contemplative, inward-looking figures, representatives of the church who search for the truth through faith and in the sacred texts. It was

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55   See Rimmele 2010, 265ff.
56   Ibid. 276.

in particular Thomas, the doubter among the apostles, who required visual and tactile confirmation before accepting the truth of Christ's resurrection. Here, he is identified through his attribute, the carpenter's square – whose overlapping with the picture frame explicitly visualizes the question of the measurability/conceivability of the intrinsically immeasurable – as the chastened believer and master builder, not of a terrestrial, but instead of a celestial world.

Thomas and Jerome are supplemented by the four additional saints seen configured in pairs on the outer wings: on the left, John the Baptist and Cecelia, on the right Alexius and Agnes, each group standing on a slightly elevated grassy bank in front of ornamented cloth of honor, while extending far into the distance above or behind the brocade curtain is a landscape view. On the one hand, by positioning the saints – painted in an equally detailed and differentiated fashion – on a narrow stage in close proximity to the beholder, this textile boundary constitutes a link to the central panel, with its recourse to the sculptural altarpiece. On the other, this impression (strengthened further by the golden thistle tendrils set along the upper edge of the picture) is deliberately disrupted by the view into depth, which represents – in combination with the painted shrine cabinet – an artistic innovation by the Bartholomew Master. Taking remarks by Klaus Krüger as his point of departure, Felix Prinz has characterized this tension or polarity between the pictorial suggestion of the proximity and presence of the saints (who are nevertheless manifestly segregated from the mundane exterior world) and the extreme distance of the landscape view, which reveals 'the remoteness of the beyond of the saints within the this-worldly space of the image,' as a further 'optical dissociation' by means of which a 'space for reflection' is opened up for the beholder.[57]

3   Conclusion

In summary, it is this dense arena of play and reflection, which encompasses all of the panels, that allows the *Crucifixion Altarpiece* of the Bartholomew Master to become not an exemplar of a *paragone*, and instead an independent and self-aware artistic statement within an optical and epistemological discourse concerning the scope of visual perception and intellectual cognition. This altarpiece – which may have been intended from the start for private contemplation as well as for a church altar – was capable of satisfying highly

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57   Prinz 2018, 224–225. See also Krüger 2000.

divergent requirements: while it had a sacramental significance in a liturgical context, it could also offer the individual believer emotional support – affective stimulation – during devotions. It may have served as well as a stimulus toward a more intellectual quest for knowledge, since a confrontation with the finitude of his own existence and the limitations and fallibility of his own perceptual faculties could guide the viewer toward speculation concerning the potential of this-worldly spiritual knowledge and the perfectibility of virtue. The oscillating play of painting and sculpture, which encompasses all of the altarpiece's panels, contributes to this extraordinary density of reflection in a very special way. The various characteristics, potentials, and capacities of the two media are consciously explored through their opposition, juxtaposition, and collaboration: with regard to painting, this means mainly the possibility of lifelikeness and illusion, but also the cognitive gain associated with the exposure of visual deception, whereas the haptic and three-dimensional medium of sculpture (even if only painted) lays claim to a greater expressiveness in particular with respect to the aspects of embodiment, presence, and authenticity. Precisely this opposition, juxtaposition, and collaboration between the media makes possible a higher-order, multilayered (visual) theological statement: it does so by inducing the viewer to engage in reflections concerning the scope of his own vision and cognition, and hence of the boundaries between the mundane and celestial worlds, and potentially, by extension, to reflect on the mediating function first of the saints, who of course dwell in heaven, and whose power (*virtus*) is maintained through the presence of their relics,[58] and secondly of the liturgy of the Eucharist, which is celebrated in front of the altar. In particular in the context of the sacrament, Heike Schlie was the first to emphasize that reflections concerning media could be rendered especially fruitful in order to heighten the believer's awareness of the mystery of transubstantiation, the substantive presence of the body of Christ in the host, coinciding with the absence of his image (which is to say, the oscillation between real presence and symbolic representation).[59] Far from a competitive relationship that revolves around surpassing a rival, the intermedial discourse that is so characteristic and formative for winged altarpieces instead involves a fundamental recognition and accentuation of the special mediatory potential and functioning of artistic images in the context of religious contemplation and liturgy.

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58   See Prinz 2017, 20–21.
59   See Schlie 2002, 308 and 327–328.

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PART 4

Nature and Art

∴

Hands at Work: The Stone Cutter and the Artist

Maurice Saß

In 1641, the Dutch physician Nicolaes Tulp (1593–1674), known to art historians primarily through a celebrated work by Rembrandt (1606–69) depicting of one of his anatomical dissections, published his *Observationes medicae*, which soon – despite being aimed primarily at a specialist readership – became a popular bestseller and appeared in translation in numerous vernacular languages.[1] One of the most sensational cases reported by Tulp concerned a remarkably productive but by no means self-evident occupational intersection, specifically between craftsmanship and urological surgery, and one I intend to dissect further in the present essay. Tulp reports that an Amsterdam blacksmith named Jan de Doot (1621–65) suffered from a bladder stone, accompanied by intense pain which no physician had succeeded in relieving through conventional medical treatments, including those attempted by two itinerant 'stone cutters,' as lithotomists – surgeons specializing in bladder stones – were called at that time.[2] Not once, but twice, this 'optimistic and incredibly courageous man'[3] had submitted to a surgical procedure, extremely dangerous at the time, involving the use of a knife to slice through flesh and tissue between the testicles and anus in order to expose the bladder – but in vain: his sufferings are said to have increased to such a degree that the blacksmith finally performed the operation on himself, using a knife he had fashioned with his own hands. Only a journeyman remained at his side, his wife having been sent away on some pretext. The results of this self-surgery were preserved by the Rembrandt student Carel van Savoyen (1620/21–65) in a portrait that seems to have been executed circa ten or twenty years after Tulp's report was published (figure 10.1).[4] In this image, the standing blacksmith holds the bladder stone in one hand, and the knife used to perform the procedure in the other. Both objects are preserved today in the Museum of Anatomy at Leiden University, which presumably also commissioned the portrait.[5] Jan de Doot cut the 'stone, weighing four ounces,

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1   Tulp 1641; on Tulp cf. Beijer & Apeldoorn 1991.
2   Tulp 1652, 341–344.
3   Tulp 1652, 341: 'Faber ferrarius, vir fidens, atque inauditae audaciae …'
4   Sumowski 1983, vol. 4, 2546, no. 1697.
5   Anonymous 2004.

FIGURE 10.1   Carel van Savoyen, *Jan Jansz de Doot*, oil on canvas, 96 × 84 cm, 1655, Leiden,
Academisch Historisch Museum
IMAGE: ANONYMOUS 2004, 4

and having the size of a good-sized chicken egg' from his own flesh, surviving
the operation well enough that on 31 May 1651, he was able to visit the notary
Pieter de Bary (1615–73) personally in order to deliver a written account of the
experience, having it authenticated through his own drawing of the stone and
the knife.[6] A reproduction of this drawing is among the standard illustrations
included in later editions and reprints of Tulp's *Observationes* (figure 10.2).[7]

Given its transmission through both material and textual documents,
the report is generally regarded as authentic by historians of medicine.[8]

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6   Tulp 1652, 343: 'Calculus autem hic ovo gallinaceo major, ac ponderans unicias quatuor ...'
7   Tulp 1652, 342 (full-page).
8   Murphy 1969; Van de Laar 2015, 25–36.
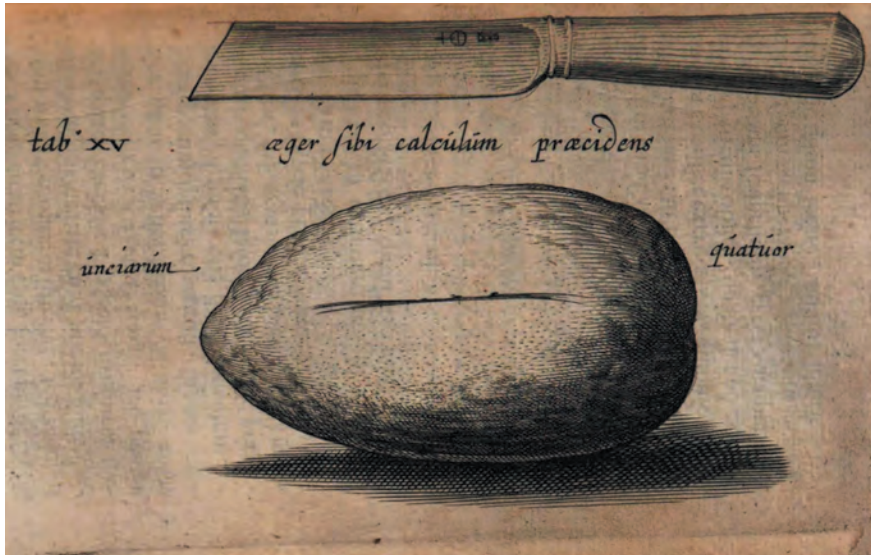
FIGURE 10.2   Anonymous, *Bladder Stone and Cutting Blade of Jan De Doot*, in Nicolaes Tulp,
Observationes Medicae, 2nd expanded edition, Amsterdam 1652, pl. 15

Nonetheless, or perhaps all the more so, one might inquire into the role played in this self-surgery by the patient's occupation, so dependent upon manual skill. Tulp had emphasized that de Doot had 'himself secretly fashioned' the knife, a task for which his skills as a blacksmith must have proven handy.[9] Carel van Savoyen emphasizes the blacksmith's imposing stature, in particular his thick, muscular hands. Despite the middle-class elegance of his attire and hairstyle, his hands signal clearly enough that de Doot was accustomed to working with them. He grips the surgical knife firmly, its sharpness dramatized emphatically by the use of highlights. At the same time, he holds the bladder stone in his left hand with a circumspection that strongly suggests the precision and confidence with which his experienced hand guides his work tools.

A blacksmith, of course, is no surgeon, and a 'student of Vulcan' is no stone cutter – not even in the early modern era, at a time when surgery had not yet been professionalized as a medical specialization, and was still mostly practiced by skilled wound physicians, highly experienced, ideally, but without the benefit of a university medical training. Still, one of the cultural-historical points of interest of this incident, and one that also accounts, surely, for its

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9   Tulp 1652, 343: 'cultro a se clanculum praeparato ...'

fascination for contemporaries, is that it so clearly illustrates the indeterminate relationship between medical knowledge and the craft of surgery: first and foremost, de Doot's case reminds of the epistemological potential of manual activity, an issue explored by Pamela Smith in her *The Body of the Artisan* (2004) with regard to the workshops of artists and other practitioners.[10] And second, more specifically, the incident documents the necessity for the practice of medicine – which retained its theoretical orientation well in the early modern era – to recognize the importance of manual skill, and to acknowledge the intertwining of the two realms.[11] In this historical process, Tulp – a trained physician who became the *praelector anatomiae* to the surgeons of Amsterdam – was a celebrated protagonist who carried out his anatomical dissections, significantly, in the Nieuwe Waag in Amsterdam, a building that brought together the guild of surgeons and the Guild of St. Luke under a single roof.[12]

Finally, Carel van Savoyen's blacksmith, who displays the visible results of his deftness and the bodily control he regained as a result, enjoins us to pose questions concerning the intersection between the pictorial arts and the art of 'stone cutting.' For the multifaceted relationship between medicine and surgery, as well as the general dialectic of knowledge and corporeality, characterizes precisely those parameters that were decisive as well for the early modern discourse about art, and which were taken up, for example, by Rembrandt in his *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, and even more in his *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Deijman*, in order to fathom the conditions of his own art.[13] The most obvious commonality between stone cutter and artist is the use of their hands. The Dutch term *handeling*, of significance in particular for the art of Rembrandtesque painters like van Savoyen, is wonderfully apposite here.[14] And in a much quoted passage, Marco Boschini (1605–81) writes of Titian (1488–1576) that 'like a benevolent surgeon,' the painter excises superfluous or defective elements from his works 'with no consideration for the pain involved.'[15] For both painting and surgery,

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10   Smith 2004.

11   For an introduction to the history of the emancipation and establishment of surgery as a subfield of university medicine in the early modern era, see Ellis & Abdalla 2019, 21–46; Sachs 2000–2005, esp. vol. 4, 1–12 and 223–261.

12   Kurpershoek 1994, 29–64, esp. 42–47.

13   See Koos 2017, 358–377.

14   Hadjinicolaou 2016.

15   Boschini 1674, fol. b4v–b5r: 'e scoprendo alcuna cosa, che non concordasse al delicato suo intendimento, come chirurgo benefico medicava l'infermo, se faceva di bisogno

it is a question of an operational skill, not solely of intellectual activity, of a discipline belonging neither to the academy nor to the university. Both had to observe with great precision, both possessed great powers of discernment, and both had to imagine that which was concealed. But their actual activity involved work with the hands, in Greek: *cheirôn érgon* (χειρῶν ἔργον), or contracted into a compound word, *cheirurgia* (χειρουργία). Both the stone cutter and the artist were 'surgeons.' For both, the focus was the human body. And both of them profited from but also promoted anatomy. Both battled the deficiencies of the human body, striving to perfect it, striving toward the approximation of an ideal that was defined both empirically and theoretically.

This essay addresses such synagonistic phenomena, specifically in relation to the boundaries and possibilities of the comparability as well as the collaboration between two practices that are ostensibly poles apart.[16] As with the contributions by Fabian Jonietz and Jasmin Mersmann in the present volume, it is hence not a question of a competitive relationship between artists, media, or disciplines within a given field of shared interests, ideas, or contexts of action. In the cases under investigation here, the focus is instead on a *simulated* synagonism, one in which the confrontation is constituted only through a successive and on-sided process of conceptual convergence. Foregrounded here will be sociohistorical, epistemological, and media-theoretical aspects of a simulated instance of such productive competition. Urosurgery and art will however not be examined together from an overarching perspective. Advisable methodologically speaking, if we are to fully and accurately comprehend their reciprocal and historically reflected entanglement is a double focus, one that seeks to illuminate points of contact and of friction from the perspectives of each practice. In order to achieve this, we begin with a work by the sculptor Tilman Riemenschneider (1460–1531), one that takes up the theme of a miraculous 'stone cutting' procedure in order to underscore the value of the artist's own manual dexterity. An example dating from the German Renaissance will also be central to the second part of this essay, albeit with a shift of perspective as we inquire, in relation to the stone cutter Georg Bartisch (1535–1606/7), into the possible significance of the pictorial arts for the practice of urosurgery.

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spolpargli qualque gonfiezza, o soprabondaza di carne, radrizzandogli un braccio, si nella forma l'ossatura non fosse così aggiustata, se un piede nella positura avesse presa attitudine disconcia, mettendolo a luogo senza compatir al suo dolore, e cose simili.'

16   On the concept of synagonism, see the introduction to this volume, as well as Karagiannis & Wagner 2005, 237–245.

1   Tilman Riemenschneider's *The Removal of the Stone*

During the Middle Ages, and far into the early modern period, surgery was excluded from scholastic studies. Interventions into the genital area in particular were frowned upon, and were often consigned to traveling barber-surgeons or other specialists (often of dubious reputation) who lacked university training.[17] The Hippocratic Oath already advises physicians soberly: 'I will not cut persons laboring under the stone but will leave this to be done by practitioners of the work.'[18] Today, this dictum is interpreted as a credo for the division of labor between general practitioners and specialists, one not always lacking in competitiveness. In the Middle Ages and early modern period, in contrast, it was understood primarily as a warning to all educated physicians who were oriented toward rational principles, as well as a final judgment on all stone cutters, and a sweeping condemnation of the bumbling, pretensions, and deceptiveness of the latter occupation. Reflected in this basic conflict between school medicine and the craft of surgery is the traditional privileging of the liberal over the mechanical arts, and more generally of the repeatedly invoked primacy of intellectual activity over manual labor that persisted well into the early modern era (and, in principle, down to the present day).[19] As we know, this hierarchy, so deeply grounded in Christian culture, was invoked in discussions about art in Florence, Rome, and later Paris. Prevailing north of the Alps in contrast was, *grosso modo,* a less idealistic understanding of art, one that was far more naturalistic and materialistic, and was ultimately oriented more emphatically toward corporality, as emphasized at the latest with Michael Baxandall's *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* (1980) and Svetlana Alpers's epochal *The Art of Describing* (1983).[20] Francesco Doni (1513–74) – to give one example – writes in his treatise on art of 1549 that, according to a proverb (one that has received some attention from Martin Warnke), the northern alpine artists do indeed have 'their heads in their hands.'[21] It hardly seems astonishing, then, that in particular north of the Alps, the preferential

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17   On the professionalization of urosurgery in the early modern era, cf. Moran 2014; Hauri 2013; Konert 2002, 55–92; Hasenbach 1984, 124–148; Ellis 1969, 4–17; Keller 1965. For a general overview, see Steinbock 1993.

18   For a detailed account, see Androutsos & Marketos 1995; Sachs 2003.

19   Cf. the incisive chapter on the hand in Leinkauf 2017, vol. 1, 148–153.

20   Baxandall 1980; Alpers 1983. For a differentiated overview (with an emphasis on the early modern Netherlands), see Chapman & Woodall 2009.

21   Doni 1549, fol. 16v: 'si dice in proverbio che gl'hanno il cervello nelle mani;' cited in Warnke 1987.

treatment of university medicine in relation to practical surgery gave rise to a community of interest that encompassed artists and surgeons.

A good instance of this commonality is a sculpted relief by Tilman Riemenschneider that testifies to the artist's intensive preoccupation with the craft of the lithotomist. This work arose in connection with a commission received in 1499 by the Würzburg sculptor, who worked in both stone and wood, for the redesign of the tomb of the Emperor Henry II (St. Henry; reigned 1002–24) and his also sanctified wife Kunigunde (c. 978–1033/39; see figure 10.3).[22] This monument, carved from Solnhofen marble, was set up in Bamberg Cathedral in 1513, and consists – alongside the cover slab bearing their effigies – of five reliefs depicting scenes from the lives of the two saints. Since Riemenschneider used models by other hands in producing other scenic reliefs, there has been speculation about a possible cooperation with the Bamberg painter Wolfgang Katzheimer (1478–1508).[23] It is important to keep this in mind with regard to the extraordinary iconography of the tomb, even if, for the sake of simplicity, Riemenschneider is referred to below as its sole author.

Of special interest here is the relief depicting the *Removal of the Stone*, an event from the Emperor's life that transpired in the Benedictine monastery in Monte Cassino and was effected by the community's founder, already long deceased at that time (figure 10.4). A number of different opinions circulated concerning the performance of this legendary act of healing.[24] The *Legenda aurea* by Jacobus de Voragine (1228–98) mentions the appearance of St. Benedict (c. 480–547) in a dream, so that the miraculous healing takes place while the Emperor sleeps.[25] More concrete in contrast is the description contained in *Der Heiligen Leben*, the most important German-language collection of legends.[26] Here, we read explicitly that Benedict held 'a small piece of sharpened iron, which he used to cut out the stone.' By virtue of its minimal invasiveness, then, the event qualifies as 'miraculous,' if not, however, the actual procedure itself: 'And [he] cut him,' we read further on, 'removing the stone with great

22   Kalden-Rosenfeld 2004; Kalden-Rosenfeld 2001, 62–71 and 132–133, no. 33; Kalden-Rosenfeld 1987; Neundorfer 1985; Bier 1947; for additional literary references, see Iris Kalden-Rosenfeld, 2010. For an overview of the cult of the sanctified imperial couple, in particular in Bamberg, see Guth 2002, 97–119 and (on the tomb) 130–132; Klauser 1957.

23   Kalden-Rosenfeld 2001, 73–81.

24   This act of healing has also been much discussed in the historiography of medicine; see among others Schöppler 1919; Sticker 1941; Sachs 2000–2005, vol. 4, 88; Joost 1985, 7; Nemes 2016.

25   Cf. also the useful itemization in Bier 1973, 39–40; and Nemes 2016, 2–3.

26   For an introduction to *Der Heiligen Leben,* see Williams-Krapp 1986, 188–346.

FIGURE 10.3　Tilman Riemenschneider, *Tomb of Emperor Henry II and His Wife Kunigunde,* tomb, Solnhofen marble, 143 × 116 × 241 cm (h × w × l), 1499–1513, Bamberg Cathedral
IMAGE: KALDEN-ROSENFELD 2004, FIGURE 1

FIGURE 10.4   Tilman Riemenschneider, *The Removal of the Stone,* relief on the imperial tomb,
Bamberg Cathedral
IMAGE: KALDEN-ROSENFELD 2004, FIGURE 14

gentleness. Upon which the wound immediately closed again, so that only a
little bit was [still] visible. Then, [he] placed the stone in the Emperor's hand.'[27]

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27   Brand, Jung & Williams-Krapp 1996–2004, vol. 1, 239: 'Da erschein im sanctus Benedictus
vnd trůg ain clains scharpfes eysen, da mit man den stain sneydet. Vnd güzzet den kayser
vnd sprach: "Seit du zu got gehofft hast vnd zu mir, so hat mich got zu dir gesant, daz ich
dir erczney schol. Vnd lazz mich dich dar ümb sehen, daz nu nymmer zweyfelst..." Vnd

It is this variant of the legend that Riemenschneider illustrates.[28] He shows the Emperor sleeping in bed. His sufferings are signaled by his cramped feet, although Benedict has already arrived and freed him of his agony, whose source, the stone, he lays in the patient's hand as evidence. Riemenschneider expands the surgical scene to include a third figure, one absent from all hagiographical sources. Presumably, he is the Emperor's personal physician.[29] Arguing for this interpretation is the figure's attire, as well as the drinking vessel and box visible in the background, which stand *pars pro toto* in this stone image for the medicinal treatment of the imperial patient. For according to contemporary university medicine, as explained above, bladder and kidney stones were by no means to be cured through surgery, and were instead treated pharmaceutically. The melancholic gesture therefore recalls that the holy stone cutter appeared to St. Henry II only in a dream, while in reality urosurgical operations were forbidden in the monastery.

It is against this background that the exceptional quality of Riemenschneider's relief comes to light: in conformity with the report in *Der Heiligen Leben,* Riemenschneider has not treated the removal of the stone as an ominous mystery, depicting it instead as the miraculous result of a highly skilled act of urosurgery. Contributing here is the design of the surgical knife, the form of whose handle and blade correspond to contemporary illustrations found in surgical treatises (cf. figure 10.8).[30] Moreover, the strongly protruding veins on the back of the hand that guides the knife are suggestive of the physical strength required to perform the now completed operation. Explicit in particular is the contrast between *factura* and *littera*: the well-schooled physician must sleep in order for the saint to wield the knife. The knowledge inherent in scholastic medicine must rest before the stone can be cut out manually. The founder of the order himself – although he actually departed this life 500 years earlier – must lend a hand in order to free the Emperor from bodily suffering, while the *studiosus* turns his back on the sacred operation.

[er] snayde im do den stain gar senfticlichen herauz. Da gienge im die wunde wider zu, daz man im newr ain claine masen sach. Vnd leget dem kaiser den stain in die hant. Da erwachet er vnd gedaht im, obb e zain traum wer oder ob ez war wer. Do vant er den stain in der hant. Do wart er gar fro ... '

28   On Riemenschneider's *The Removal of the Stone* in particular, see Ott 2010, 91–100; Neundorfer 1985, 32–36; Bier 1973, 38–41; Bier 1947, 109–111.

29   On the contrary identification of the figure as a chamberlain, encountered frequently in the older literature, see Bier 1973, 39.

30   Cf. in detail Ott 2010, 95–97 (with, among other things, a reference to an even more similar illustration from Santo 1535).

We can hardly speak of a close cooperation, of helpful interaction between the physician and Benedict; prevailing here instead is rivalry and competition between learned medicine and the practical craft of stone cutting. This is a clear case of the failure of the first and a demonstration of the superiority of the second.[31] Forming between the surgeon and the sculpture, in contrast, is a relationship of virtual solidarity, between the divine stone cutter and the artist who created the saint's tomb with his own hands. At issue here are the dispositions of the bodily and questions of materiality, of a miracle of manual skill and of the alterity of human knowledge and divine intervention. It hardly seems surprising that only the vernacular variants of the legend characterize the act of healing as a performance of manual skill, hence invoking a tension between the craft of surgery and university medicine within which St. Benedict is assigned an astonishing position.[32] As a consequence, the miracle becomes more mundane and more circumscribed, but at the same time acquires an entirely new quality through the graphic comparability between this act and the manual skills of the faithful, one that elicits astonishment and wonder, and one that is explicable only as a divine intervention. Riemenschneider takes up this impulse, cladding a praise of manual dexterity in the narrative garb of the legend. In so doing, he makes the bladder stone, positioned between the hands of the two saints, the visual point of focus and semantic nodal point of the scene as a whole. In a double fashion, the stone insists upon the significance of the corporeal: first, it is a visual emblem of the earthly suffering endured in this life by St. Henry II. But secondly, it constitutes material testimony to the consummated miracle (and by extension for the presence of St. Benedict, whose body resided in the monastery of Monte Cassino, of such importance to the emperor), deposited now directly into his hand. The stone that has been cut out of his body serves as a tangible argument, and constitutes a form of evidence that could never be rendered solely verbally.[33] By shifting this object to the center of the narrative and organizing the action around its presentation, Riemenschneider also shapes the scene as an emblem of the manual fabrication of an image of faith that is, so to speak 'set in stone.' The theatrical quality of the bed curtain that has been drawn to one side functions as a familiar

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31 Neundorfer (1985, 34) argues that the man's sleep is an attribute of negativity, of failure ('Der Schlaf dieses Mannes ist Attribut des Negativen, des Versagens').

32 On the fit between the tomb relief and contemporary popular piety in general, see Kalden-Rosenfeld 1987, 81–87.

33 In this sense, bladder and kidney stones were widely used votive gifts; see, for example, Döhlemann et al. 2011.

symbol of the power of illusion inherent in pictorial representation, in a sense visualizing the extract of the scene from the stone block.[34]

Foregrounded unequivocally in Riemenschneider's *Removal of the Stone* is the granting of divine grace and the Christian remembrance of an exemplary saint.[35] Inscribed in this paramount function of the depiction is a specific undertaking, namely the conversion of the legend of the miraculous cutting of the stone from the emperor's body into an emblem of the artist's own bodily labor, aimed at extracting a human figure from the stone. Moreover, this eulogy to manual labor is compatible with the overall character of the monument, installed in the central nave of the cathedral. Striking in particular is the parallelism with the *Miracle of the Crystal Bowl*, displayed on the exact opposite side of the tomb (figure 10.5).[36] This scene depicts the empress rewarding the builders of the Church of St. Stephen in Bamberg. Manifested in this scene, according to Iris Kalden-Rosenfeld, is the incipient tension between the cathedral chapter, reserved for the aristocracy, which played the decisive role in commissioning the monument,[37] and the wealthy burgers of Bamberg.[38] In her view, the scene is meant to appeal to the citizens of Bamberg to recognize the just, Christian, and legitimate rule of the authorities. Conversely read, the *Miracle of the Crystal Bowl* simultaneously reflects the striving of the citizenry for the adequate remuneration for services to church and town, as well as their demands for righteous rule and political influence. In the eyes of an aspiring burgher in Bamberg, Riemenschneider's interlinking of his own manual skill with the urosurgical miracle of St. Benedict would have appeared less as a self-reflexive statement by an artist than a subversive political statement concerning social status and opposition to the clergy – a constellation familiar to Riemenschneider from his own activities as a councilman in Würzburg.[39]

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34   It should be mentioned in this context that earlier scholars have regarded the physician, who wears contemporary dress, as a crypto-self-portrait of Riemenschneider, an identification that was supported primarily through a comparison with the likeness of the artist on the gravestone fashioned by Jörg Riemenschneider; cf. for example Lutzeyer 1975, 27; Toennies 1900, 184; Streit 1888, vol. 1, 13; countering this argument was, among others, Bier 1973, 40.

35   In this sense, the animals too are legible through the usual interpretive apparatus of Christian allegorism; cf. Ott 2010, 98.

36   On the legend, cf. Meyer 2003, and here on the legend of the *Miracle of the Bowl* in relation to the building of St. Stephan 73 and 85–88.

37   On the details of the commission, see Kalden 1990, 53–64; Kalden-Rodenfeld 1987, 69.

38   Kalden 1990, 55–57; Kalden-Rosenfeld 2004, 48–51.

39   On Riemenschneider's political engagement in Würzburg, see Schneider 2010, esp. 79–82; Kalden 1990, 17–32; the complications with the canons are emphasized by Trenschel 2004, 48–49; on Riemenschneider's role in the Peasants' Revolt, see Dembinsky 2011.

FIGURE 10.5   Tilman Riemenschneider, *Miracle of the Crystal Bowl,* relief on the imperial
tomb, Bamberg Cathedral
IMAGE: KALDEN-ROSENFELD 2004, FIGURE 12

Riemenschneider's approach here to pointedly choreographing a parallel
between his own artistic activity and a saint is not unique within his oeuvre.
Just as, on occasion, he would give the figures of saints the features of a specific
client, he deliberately invested St. Nicodemus with his own facial features in at
least one of his works.[40] Following the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, according

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40   On the clients, see Schleif 1993, 614; on Nicodemus, see ibid., 603–610 and 618–619; on the
      reception history of Riemenschneider's self-portrait, see Schleif 2004; on the 'authentic'
      crucifix in Lucca, supposedly fashioned by Nicodemus, see Savigni 2017, 275–285.

to legend, Nicodemus – using 'not his own, but instead divine art' – fashioned a crucifix with a perfect image of Christ, which was revealed to work miracles, and which was henceforth able to function as a legitimation and prototype for later images.[41] Together with Corine Schleif, then, it seems reasonable to interpret Riemenschneider's physiognomical self-inscription onto the body of the first Christian sculptor (and the same is true of Adam Kraft's (*c.* 1455–1509) similarly conceived self-portrait) simultaneously as a sign of his humble *imitatio* of this godly exemplar, and as a self-reference to his own authorship of a sculpture that is both pious and prestigious.[42] With the subtle intertwining in the relief for the emperor's tomb of his own art and the manual skill displayed by St. Benedict, similarly, Riemenschneider may have had the Christian purity of his own artistic production in mind, at least latently.[43]

2   Georg Bartisch's *Kunstbuch* (*Book of Practical Knowledge*)

Riemenschneider's *The Removal of the Stone* provides revealing testimony to the interest on the part of early modern artists in urosurgery in the context of profiling their own discipline. In the following, this inherently one-sided view of the social, technical, and intellectual intersections between these two practices of manual skill will be complemented by an examination of the significance which, conversely, the pictorial arts may have had for lithotomists vis à vis their attempts to establish themselves socially and intellectually. In this gradual process of valorization of surgery as a craft practice, Georg Bartisch was a typical but by no means average protagonist.[44] After many years of travel throughout Europe, the 'oculist, cut, and wound doctor,'[45] who was

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41   The entire passage reads (Schnürer & Ritz 1934, 128): 'Forme igitur corporis Christi quantitate et qualittate diligentissime denotata, liniamentis etiam mente descripttis, sacratissimum vultum non sua, sed divina arte desculpsit.' – For an introduction to the Volto santo of Lucca, see ibid., 117–123.

42   In this spirit, Corinna Schleif (1993, 610–626) interprets self-depictions as Nicodemus by artists (in particular those of sculptors, and not only those produced by the German Renaissance). For a later comparable self-positioning, see Shrimplin-Evangelidis 1989; see also on Michelangelo's kidney stone, Eknoyan 2000, 1190–1201.

43   For a far later instance of the identification of an artist with a saintly practitioner of miraculous surgery, see Thimann 2016, 556.

44   For an introduction to Georg Bartisch, see Dietrich, Hausmann & Konert 2009; Hausmann, Konert, & Dietrich 2009, 45–56; Marré & Walther 1985; Keller 1955.

45   This is Bartisch's self-description in the title page of Bartisch 1583: 'Bürger, *Oculist*, Schnit vnd Wundartzt in der Churfüstlichen Alten Stadt Dresden'.

born near Dresden in 1535, was appointed court oculist by Augustus of Saxony (reigned 1553–86), and was able to settle in Dresden in 1572, dying there in 1607. Bartisch repeatedly emphasized this settlement in order to separate himself from the mass of itinerant surgeons, barber-surgeons, and similar profiteers on human infirmity.[46] He made a name for himself primarily as an eye doctor and practitioner of cataract couching. For more than a century, his *Ophthalmodouleia. Das ist Augendienst*, published at his own expense in Dresden in 1583, remained a standard work for the operative treatment of all types of cataracts and related diseases.[47] With his readiness and efforts to publish his practical expertise, which he set in relationship to the teachings of university medicine, as well as to recent findings in the field of anatomy, Bartisch marks a break within the history of European surgery and medicine, and can be positioned alongside better-known wound doctors such as Ambroise Paré (1510–90) and Wilhelm Fabry von Hilden (1560–1634).[48] This makes Bartisch – not unlike, for example, Gabriel Kaltemarckt (d. before 1611) and his commitment to the electoral *kunst-cammer* – one of the aspiring protagonists who made Dresden into a prospering Renaissance city during the second half of the sixteenth century.[49] At the same time, Bartisch's title as court oculist should not obscure the fact that his publication activity is also interpretable as an attempt to establish his reputation in relation to an economy of courtly attention within which personal physicians to the elector such as Johann Neefe (1499–1579), Paul Luther (1533–93), and Caspar Peucer (1525–1602), with their engagement as humanist authors, enjoyed greater prestige.[50]

Characteristic of Bartisch's courageous commitment to the standing of surgery is his relative disinterest in emphasizing the intellectual character of his activities. He was far more concerned with a fundamental reevaluation of manual activity. A striking instance of this marked appreciation of manual accomplishments is his richly illustrated *Kunstbuch* from 1575, with a length of 239

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46 For example in the title page of his *Ophthalmodouleia* (see the quote in note 45) in which he additionally reproduces official testimonials to his success (Bartisch 1583, fol. c1v-e3v); for another example, see Holländer 1917.

47 Bartisch 1583; for an introduction to this work, see Gerste & Pillunat 2018, 3–14; Gliem 1985; Hirschberg 1899–1918, vol. 1, 332–353. Appearing while this essay was in the publication process was Berger 2021.

48 Baker 2017; Heidel 1985, 12–15.

49 On Kaltemarckt, with further references, see Müller 2018; Liebenwein 2016, esp. 139–140.

50 Neefe 1898; Strauchenbruch 2010; *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 19 (1884), 692–694; Roebel 2012.

pages, which however remained unpublished.[51] The full title of the text, which was dedicated to the Saxon elector, reads like a table of contents: *Contained herein is a complete ... report of the teachings concerning the hard, sharp, painful, distressing bladder stone ... : How the bladder stone shall be artfully, correctly and reliably cut, dislodged, and entirely removed through the manual operation of the golden handle and the* [*suitable*] *instruments. With accurate descriptions and illustrations of all of the instrument and figures that are of great use in this art, and in this manual operation.*[52]

The 'illustrations of all of the instruments' used by the urological stone cutter are the subject of Book III.[53] Here, Bartisch assembles descriptions, together with his own illustrations, of all of the instruments used in the procedure, according to the so-called Marian Method, successfully employed for the first time around 1520 by Giovanni de Romanis of Cremona (d. after 1522), and established increasingly during the sixteenth century as the standard procedure for bladder stone removal (cf. figure 10.9).[54] This chapter opens with a section that bears the heading: 'The first article and instrument is the sense of touch, the fingers.'[55] Preceding all of the other surgical instruments, Bartisch places an image of a hand (figure 10.6), which calls attention to the primary – and bodily – tool of all human activity with captivating clarity. From a distance, the image seems reminiscent of the Christian gesture of blessing and the associated promise of salvation (a gesture that assumes pictorial form, for example, in arm reliquaries). In particular, however, this drawing resembles the self-reflexive gesture of Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617), whose drawing of his own right hand, which often wielded a burin, is itself designed to resemble an engraving, and at the same time betrays the individual story of his own bodily

51   Georg Bartisch, *Kunstbuch* [...], 239 sheets, 298 × 190 cm (sheet), 1575, Dresden, SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. C-291. – There are two modern editions, by Mankiewicz 1904; and Hausmann, Konert & Dietrich 2009, 57–1027.

52   Bartisch 1575, title page: 'Darinnen ist der gantze ... bericht und erweisung unnd Lehr des hartenn, Reissenden, Schmertzhafftigenn, Peinlichenn Blasenn Steines ... Wie derselbige ... Blasenstein ... künstlich Eigentlich Recht unnd gewis durch die Handwirckunge des Güldenngriffs unnd Instruments, Soll geschnitten, gebracht und gewonnen werdenn. | Mit Rechter Eigentlicher beschreibung und abcontrafactur aller Instrumenta und Figuren. So zu dieser Kunst unnd Handwirckunge sehr dienstlich ...'

53   Bartisch 1575, fol. 78r: 'Inn dem i. Theil | Wirdt ... vor augen gestelt, Der brauch unnd | abcontrafactur aller Instrument ...'

54   See Hauri 2013, 29–34; the method was first published by Santo (1522), whose title led Bartisch to speak of a 'golden handle.' On Giovanni de Romanis, see Fabbri 1868.

55   Bartisch 1575, fol. 79r: 'Das Erste Stuck und Instrument ist die Fühle und sindt die Finger.'

FIGURE 10.6 Georg Bartisch, *The First and Noblest Instrument*, pen and ink drawing, in Georg Bartisch, *Kunstbuch*, 1575, fol. 79v

suffering (figure 10.7).[56] Bartisch too uses the depicted gesture to convert the hand of the stone cutter (specifically the left hand, which wields no instrument during the surgical procedure, and instead effects the rectal fixation of

56   Konečny & Lencová 2013; cat. Amsterdan, New York & Toledo 2003, 244–246, no. 85; Reznicek 1961, vol. 1, 305–306, no. 165.

FIGURE 10.7   Hendrick Goltzius, *Goltzius's Right Hand*, pen and ink drawing, 229 × 328 mm,
                1588, Haarlem, Teylers Museum, inv. no. N-058
                IMAGE: KONEČNY & LENCOVÁ 2013, 102

the stone) into a sensing and operational instrument. About it, he writes in the
corresponding chapter:

> And the first and noblest instrument consists of two fingers of the hand.
> These are used at the start to feel for, locate, and grasp the stone, [as well
> as to] guide it within the bladder, bringing it to the desired side and posi-
> tion so that it can be cut out. And since these two fingers have the most to
> do, following [from this] are their correct types, shapes, and skillfulness.[57]

The central significance of the hand of the surgeon is reflected as well in Bar-
tisch's catalog of the requirements of a good lithotomist.[58] Here, we read:

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57   Bartisch 1575, fol. 79r: 'Und das Erste und vornembste Instrument ist und seint Zwene
      finger der Faust. Darmit muß mann erstlich und vornemlich den Stein fülenn, findenn
      und greiffenn, denselbenn auch in der Blasenn hertzu treibenn und auff die Rechte seitte
      und stelle bringenn. Damit er Zu schneyden sey. Unnd müssen dieselbigenn Zwene finger
      am meisten außrichten und bey diesem werth thun, folget die rechte Art, gestalt und
      geschickligkeyt derselbigenn.'
58   The catalog of requirements constitutes the second part of the *Kunstbuchs*: Bartisch 1575,
      fol. 6v–19v; Mankiewicz 1904, 32–45; see also Keller 1965, 809–810.

Fourth, it is good and useful for the surgeon to learn to play the harp, the lute, or other such instruments, … for which the hands and fingers must be used. This allows the physician to acquire flexible joints, subtle and supple limbs and fingers, which are highly useful and necessary for this art.[59]

On the whole, Bartisch's requirements are reminiscent of Vitruvius's list of preconditions for becoming a good architect, as well as of the multiplicity of catalogs of virtues required for diverse occupations and fields of activity which are based on it.[60] Above all, the stone cutter should be God-fearing and virtuous, and should, in particular possess a knowledge of Latin; secondly, he should be not simply a lithotomists, but a surgeon and wound physician as well; fourth, as cited above, he should play an instrument; and fifth, should have studied anatomy. The ideal character of this catalog is difficult to overlook, along with the discernible attempt to place stone cutting on level comparable to university medicine.

Of particular interest from an art-historical perspective is the third requirement, which the author discusses in some detail:

Third, it is arguably necessary as well for a stone cutter and surgeon to be familiar with the art of painting, to know and master it. For as a rule, this delightful art has the peculiarity and the character of forming subtle, wise, skillful, prudent, reflective and perceptive minds. In the art of medicine, and particularly surgery, these are greatly necessary, just as in the art of painting it is necessary to be able to reflect assiduously, to consider, in order to lay out the poses and proportions pleasingly and with excellence, so that things are neither too short nor too long, that they do not seem either too small nor too thick, that one is instead able to apply them quite pleasingly and with the correct dimensions, form, and manner. It is [also useful] to know [like a painter] how to handle any objects when it comes to shadowing and volume , so that it has neither too much nor too little shadow, but that one instead endows it with the qualities it merits. Required, similarly, when it comes to the dangerous procedure

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59   Bartisch 1575, fol. 11v–12r: 'Zum Vierdenn. Ist einem Schneidt Artzt gut unnd nützlichenn, das er auff der Harffen und Lautten und anderen dergleichen Instrumenten lehrnne … [d]artzu einer die Hendt und finger brauchen muß. Dardurch bekömpt ein Arzt seine gelencke, gefüge, Subtile, gelinde glidtmassen und finger, die einen zu dieser Kunst sehr nützlich und nötig sein.'

60   Vitruvius 2001, chapter 1, 'The Education of the Architect,' 21–24.

of cutting out the stone is even greater caution, even more scrupulousness and circumspection. For with this operation, it is required that one [has] good perceptions, is constantly attentive and foresighted, so that one does neither too little nor too much in treating the stone. For when one goes too far, everything is spoiled, so that it can no longer be easily removed. Therefore, it is necessary to have and to exercise a keen, reflective, and prudent intellect.[61]

This passage is revealing in a number of respects. First, it demonstrates that a pioneering role can indeed be attributed to the artists of the early modern era by virtue of their striving for heightened intellectual and social prestige. That Bartisch refers here to painting and not simply to technical drawing may betray an awareness of the painting chapter in Hermann Ryff's (*c.* 1500–48) architectural treatise.[62] In any case, we may see a connection with the circumstance that during the second half of the sixteenth century, painting had in many places already succeeded in enhancing the esteem accorded to the physical activity involved, and moreover in a way that remained a distant goal for Bartisch's own discipline.[63] Accordingly, he emphasizes the traditionally ennobled faculties of seeing, imagining, and thinking, whose interplay is indispensable for the manual performance of both disciplines. Explicit, on the

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61   Bartisch 1575, fol. 9v–10r: 'Zum Dritten, werr und ist auch wol vonn nöten, das ein Steinschneider und Schnidt Arzt der Kunst des Malens bericht sey, dasselbige könne und wisse, denn gemeiniglich diese liebliche Kunst die Art und eigenschafft hat, das sie feine vorstendige, geschickte, vorsichtige, nachdenckliche und Scharffsinnige Köpffe giebeth. Welches dann Inn der Artzney und sonderlich im Schneiden, hoch vonn nötenn ist, gleich wie man in der Kunst des Malens ein fleissig nachdencken und betrachtung habenn muß, auff das man die Possenn und Proportion Artlich und Recht wisse zu stellenn, auff das es nicht zu kurtz oder zu lang werde, auch nicht zu klein noch zu dicke scheine, sondern dasselbige gantz Artlich und in Rechter mas, form und weis zu stellenn. Auch das man wisse, wie man ein iedes stück, was es sey, mit der Schattirung und vorförmung weiß recht zu thun. Das es nicht zu sehr noch zu wenigk schatten habe, sondern Ihm sein gebürlich Recht thue. Also muß mann fürwar in dieser gefehrlichenn Chur den Stein schneiden, Ja viel vorsichtiger und grösser bedenckenn und nachtrachtung habenn, denn da ist vonn nötenn, das mann gutte betrachtung, fleissigk auffsehe und fürsichtig sey, darmit man Ihm ia nit zu viel noch zu wenig thue, Und da mann ihm da ein mal zu viel thut, wirdt es vorderbet, das ihm nicht leichtlich zu helffen ist. Darumb ist vonn nötenn, das man einen scharffen nachdencklichen und vorsichtigen verstandt dartzu habe und gebrauche.'

62   Cf. Berger 2021, 44.

63   On the protracted process of establishment of urological surgery in the early modern era, see n. 11; on the value placed on art at the Saxon court during the second half of the sixteenth century, see Liebenwein 2016, 139–140.

other hand, is his recourse to medieval thinking concerning the *artes liberales* and the *artes mechanichae*, when he claims concerning stone cutting that 'this art should rightly be regarded and esteemed as an independent art,' (with the familiar argument that it delivers people from suffering, making them free).[64]

Secondly, this passage is readable as a synagonistic moment of the intermeshing of the fine arts not just with stone cutting, but also with a plethora of practical activities, a moment so general in character that it is easily overlooked: drawing is among the fundamental epistemic practices of numerous disciplines during the early modern era. Aristotle had already recommended it for the education of young princes.[65] Above all, however, it was part of the basic equipment of a wide variety of crafts and practices that became professionalized in the early modern period. The 'thinking hand' and the 'drawing eye' are catchphrases for research into the history of knowledge, carried out in recent years,[66] which has made the significance of the art of drawing across all of premodern society abundantly clear.[67] In broad sections of society, drawing was a fundamental tool of the trade. This becomes clear when Bartisch continues:

> Moreover, the art of painting is necessary and beneficial to the stone cutter and surgeon with regard to his instruments and tools ... for it allows him to design and draw his tools and instruments artfully and in accordance with own ideas, [and to] instruct the gold or metalsmith precisely as to how he is to proceed ...[68]

64   Bartisch 1575, fol. 6r-v: 'Unnd ist diese Kunst billich vor eine freye Kunst zu achtenn, unnd zu haltenn, nicht derwegenn, das eß ein jeder loser verlauffener Bube braucht, und zugelassenn werd und frey stehe, wie itzt leihder geschieht. Sonndernn darumb wirdt es eine freye Kunst geheissen unnd genent, das mann einen jedenn Menschenn, der da große Qual ... leiden muß, ... helffenn, das er gesundt unnd frisch wirdt, seiner schmertzenn ganz quitt, ledigk unnd loß wirdt.' – On the valuation of the fine arts as 'liberal arts' in the late fifteenth century north of the Alps, see the references in Saß 2016, 50–56.

65   Aristotle 1956, vol. 9.4 (2005), 50 (*Politics* § 1337b and 1338b).

66   See, for instance, Bredekamp 2005 and 2015; Rath, Trempler & Wenderholm 2013; Payne 2015.

67   Essential here are the three-volumes cat. Munich & Heidelberg 2014; cat. Heidelberg 2015; Nanobashvili & Teutenberg 2019.

68   Bartisch 1575, fol. 10r-v: 'Weitter ist diese Kunst des Malenns einem Steinschneider und Schneidt Artzte vonn nötenn und zutreglich, vonn wegen der Instrument und Zeugk [...], da kann Er seinen Zeugk und Instrument selbst Künstlich und gar eigentlichen entwerffen, abreissen den Golt unnd Klein Schmiedenn. Recht an und vorgeben, wie es sein sölle.'

That Bartisch himself had mastered the art of drawing to a certain level is underscored by his depictions in the *Kunstbuch,* which include, alongside an image of a hand (figure 10.6), renderings of additional instruments (figure 10.8). With great immediacy, their subtle distinctions convey the degree to which the desired appearance can be articulated with greater exactitude through images

FIGURE 10.8   Georg Bartisch, *Three Cutting Blades*, pen and ink drawing, in Georg Bartisch, *Kunstbuch*, 1575, fol. 89v

than through language. Also found among the illustrations from Bartisch's own hand are numerous images of surgical techniques (figure 10.9) and anatomical drawings, as well as a self-portrait at the start of the book, through which the author presents himself in the persona of a scholar, complete with surgical knife and urinary bladder catheter.

FIGURE 10.9 Georg Bartisch, *Bladder Incision According to the Marian Method*, pen and ink drawing, in Georg Bartisch, *Kunstbuch*, 1575, fol. 142r

For his book on ophthalmology as well, Bartisch produced all of the illustrations himself, something he does not fail to stress in his preface. These 'self-produced, hand-drawn, realistically rendered' illustrations, he explains, brought him 'acclaim' even among 'panel and miniature painters.' That the 'art of painting ... is highly necessary and beneficial' is just as true for eye surgery as it was for urosurgery. This was known already to the Greeks, Bartisch claims, whose model he emulates.[69] Following this preface, it only seems logical for Bartisch to again include a detailed discussion of the art of painting in his catalog of things that should be 'understood, mastered, and known' by 'a proper eye doctor;' here, we encounter a modified version of the unpublished list prepared for the *Kunstbuch*.[70] First, it is indispensable in order to provide the goldsmith with precise instructions for the fabrication of the necessary instruments, and secondly, the practitioner also acquires more fundamental abilities through the 'art of painting and drawing.'[71] These skills are said to give rise in particular to 'dispositions and people who are reflective and rich in ideas, which are essential, useful, and beneficial in the art of medicine.'[72] The last part is decisive, and it sharpens an argument that is present already in the *Kunstbuch*: The hand of the stone cutter is not simply a tool of his mind. Instead, painting is useful to the surgeon because the artistic activity of the hand actually schools the mind, or more specifically, gives rise to 'perceptive minds,' as Bartisch expresses it in his treatise on stone cutting.[73]

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69   The entire passage reads as follows, Bartisch 1583, fol. b3r (Vorrede): 'Auch alle dieselbigen eusserlichen Gebrechen / Schäden und Mengel selbest entworffen / abgerissen und *Contrafectet*, [...] Zu welchem mir die Malerkunst / so mir Gott auch verliehen und mitgeteilet / nicht wenig ursache gegeben / sondern viel dienstlich und förderlich gewesen. Denn keinem *Oculisten* und Schnitartzte solches möglich ist ins werck zu richten oder zu bringen / er könne denn selbest reissen und malen / Wie mir solches alle Maler und *Illuministen*, die mein fürnemen gesehen und wissen / Zeugnis und beyfall geben. Und darzu hat mich vornehmlich beweget und gebracht der Griechen Exempel / von welchen man schreibet / das sie ihre jugent / als bald sich dieselbige zum *studio Medicinae* begeben / und damit umbgangen / auch unverharlich neben ihrem Studiren das Reissen und die Malerkunst haben lernen und üben lassen / Als die nach ihrer weisheit wol verstanden / das solches zu der kunst der Artzney hoch nötig und nützlich sey.'

70   Bartisch 1583, fol. 10r: 'Das IIII. Capitel meldet / wer und was ein rechter Oculist ... verstehen, können und wissen / und wie er sich verhalen sol.' This chapter encompasses the pages: ibid., fol. 10r-12v.

71   Bartisch 1583, fol. 11v: 'Zum achten ... [ist] sehr nötig / das er der kunst des malens und reissens bericht und erfahren sey.'

72   Bartisch 1583, fol. 11v: 'Darzu ist es alle maal an dem / das die jenigen / so der kunst des Malens und Reissens bericht sind, vornemlich sinnreiche und nachdenckliche köpffe und menschen sein vor andern / welches in der Kunst der Artzney hochnötig / sehr nützlich und zutreglich ist.'

73   For the citation, see n. 61.

For Bartisch, the 'art of painting' is not only – and in a contradistinction to university anatomists and naturalists of his time – of decisive importance epistemologically; a vivid and extreme case of this side of the intertwining of surgery and the fine arts in the domain of anatomy is provided by the illustrations to an edition of ancient classics of surgery prepared by Francesco Salviati (1510–63), where the bodies upon which surgical and other procedures are performed are modeled on the aesthetics of classical and contemporary statues.[74] Rather, Bartisch's interests went far beyond questions of a visual episteme or of evidence. For him, as a practicing surgeon, images played a crucial role in his understanding of his own creative and productive work with his hands.

In opposition to this idealization of painting and draftsmanship, Bartisch concludes his discussion with a far more sober assessment. He makes the rhetorical nature of his claims explicit, or rather, highlights his extraordinary proficiency when he states:

> But what is there to say. Today, it is a rare wound physician or surgeon who learns painting or other things that would be enabling, useful, and beneficial to the art of medicine. [For] this would cost a great deal, and would prolong the use of apprenticeship, hence delaying marriage.[75]

No doubt, Bartisch's elevation of the art of painting and drawing to a basic prerequisite for the stone cutter is also part and parcel of his efforts at courtly self-presentation. Notwithstanding, his characterization is quite apposite to the argument that comes into focus here. The manual labor, the *cheirôn érgon*, performed by artists and lithotomist is comparable, and the one can learn from the other how to establish proportions, maintain measure, practice precision. The stone cutter, just like the painter, must ' likewise' shape his material with his hands, in order to create an image, must handle his material in a way that leads to success.

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Tilman Riemenschneider's *The Removal of the Stone* and Georg Bartisch's *Kunstbuch* are two striking instances of the historical proximity of urosurgery

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74   Brockmann 2009.

75   Bartisch 1575, fol. 11r: 'Aber was soll mann viel sagenn, selten die Wundt und Schnitt Ertzte itziger Zeit noch Malenn lernen, oder andere dinge die zu der Artzney tüchtig, nützlich und gut werenn, das würde viel Kosten und würden die Lehr-Jahr viel zu lange werenn, müßten zu langsamb Weiber nehmenn.'

and art. From complementarity points of view, they investigate the comparability of two fundamentally different disciplines. Through a double movement of conceptual approach and delimitation, they simulate a synagonism that helps each to sharpen the profile of the respective occupation and to defend it against prejudicial comparisons with more intellectual disciplines. In the incisiveness and depth of their arguments, Riemenschneider and Bartisch may seem exceptional. Still, it would be wrong to marginalize them as curious special cases.[76] For the bases of the persuasive power of their virtual affinity are the social, manual, and conceptual commonalities of the two practices, which were observed and described as well by other contemporaries. This becomes legible in discussions concerning the natural images that were perceived in certain bladder and kidney stones,[77] as well as in the multiplicity of mainly Dutch prints and paintings that take urosurgical procedures as models for moralizing allegories, often incorporating the role of the fine arts in a self-reflexive way as well.[78] And while these images characterize stone cutters as itinerant barber-surgeons, imposters, and illusionists in ways that Bartisch would have utterly disdained,[79] the manifold overlaps between medicine and art constitutes the larger framework for the convergence between artistic and urological procedures that is pursued here: St. Luke, anatomy, and the use of certain materials by both artists and physicians are among the well-researched tropes of this long-standing shared cultural history.[80]

Essentially, the socio-historical, epistemological, and media-theoretical intersections between urosurgery and art are by no means essentially unique. The struggle for courtly acceptance, financial success, and intellectual prestige,

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76   Qualifying as genuine special cases would be neurologists who were also practicing artists, among them Sir Henry Jacob Thompson; cf. Dunsmuir & Kirby 1995. Exceptional as well is Marin Marais's musical setting of a stone cutting procedure; see Evers 1998.

77   For a kidney stone whose supposed imagery became the subject of an intense religio-political discussion, see Stein 2013; Pilaski 2007; for the semantic charging of bladder and kidney stones as evidentiary symbols, see Schutte 2002.

78   On depictions of stone cutters that are readable against the backdrop of early modern art theory, see Saß 2019.

79   Wilhelm Fabry von Hilden's *Lithotomia Vesicae*, one of the advanced specialist treatises on urology, and in particular the treatment of bladder and kidney stones, contains a report on a pseudo-surgical charlatan (ibid., 41): 'Solcher Landstreicher einer ist zu meiner zeit gen Cölln kommen / da er sich grosser sachen und Künsten hat außgeben: Als nun daselbst er einen am Stein hat schneiden wollen / und aber keinen Stein bey ihm findet / läßt er verborgener weiß / und mit grosser geschwindigkeit / einen Stein auß dem Ermel zu der Zangen fallen / und thut dergleichen als wann er ihn hette auß der Blaser bracht ...'

80   For introductory material, see the still insightful study by Holländer 1903.

and correspondingly, the revaluation of bodily as well as manual processes, a genuine interest in anatomy and the interdependencies of the natural world: all of these commonalities are observable in the relationship between the fine arts and other disciplines and practices. The same is true for recourse to graphic procedures and the deployment of images for the sake of their epistemic as well as representative qualities, along with the role of imagination in manual activities, which – in the realm of the material – means the exposure of the previously nonvisible. Only through the specific combination of these factors is the comparability of artist and stone cutter distinguishable from comparisons with physicians, barber-surgeons, but also poets, musicians, alchemists, fencers, and so forth. The historical solidarity between urosurgery and art, meanwhile, remains for the most part virtual, and the differences between them are so fundamental that the connections between them remain for the most part conflict-free. For both Riemenschneider and Bartisch, the added value of this comparison lies not in outrivaling the respective counterpart discipline, but instead primarily in social as well as occupational profiling and self-assertion in relation to immediate rivals within the respective trade.

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Renaissance Architectural Culture and Geological Inquiry

Elizabeth J. Petcu

Sometime between 1565 and 1570, architects Pirro Ligorio (*c.*1500–1583) and Jacopo Barozzi da Vignola (1507–1573) devised the so-called 'Leaning House' (figure 11.1) for the Sacro Bosco of Duke Vicino Orsini (1513–1584) at Bomarzo.[1] Ligorio and Vignola designed the structure to tilt a disconcerting 9.5 degrees off the vertical axis, such that one imagines it succumbing to unstable terrain. And in fact, Bomarzo was built with boulders seismic activity loosed from a nearby mountainside.[2] In evoking volatile ground, the Leaning House alludes to the structures, matter, processes, and history of the earth and its rocks, or what is now called geology. The house's tilting disposition also contrasts the ignorance of geological conditions that might lead an architect to devise a seismically susceptible tower with the geological ingenuity of Ligorio and Vignola, whose leaning structure has endured for over 450 years. The Leaning House figures the symbiosis between early modern architectural culture, by which I mean the totality of media, practices, and discourses related to architecture, and geological inquiry, or the principled investigation of geological phenomena and discourses concerning such investigations.

Between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, architectural culture in Europe and the territories it colonized developed a rapport with geological inquiry mediated across books, drawings, prints, and buildings. Architects required geological knowledge for pragmatic reasons. Geological conditions set parameters for design and construction, determining the availability of lithic building materials as well as the disposition of sites. Geological knowledge also supported figurative aspects of architectural design, as in the Leaning House's allusions to seismic activity. By the same turn, individuals one might now call 'geologists' mined architectural sources for insights on the earth and

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1 On the chronology of the project, see Bredekamp 1991, 51.

2 See Margottini 2013.

strategies for investigating it. I contend that the rapport between architectural culture and geological inquiry constituted a ubiquitous intellectual and artistic tradition in early modern Europe and the territories it subjugated that calls for further scrutiny.

Before continuing, I want to acknowledge the rich research upon which this paper builds, and pinpoint my intervention. Topics subsumed under what

is now called geology have received substantial attention in scholarship on architecture in early modern Europe. One tradition scrutinizes the materials and forms of lithic building, often addressing religious or political symbolism as well as the poetics of stone construction.[3] For instance, many Renaissance scholars have considered grottoes, subterranean fixtures of ancient gardens revived during the second half of the fifteenth century and renowned for figuring the formation and degeneration of stone through interactions with water.[4] Research on rustication – that is, the use of stone with textures other than the smooth surfaces of ashlar masonry, such as unworked rock – has persisted since at least the 1980s.[5] Besides scholarship concerning the materials and forms of stone architecture, an emerging body of work addresses how architects and individuals we today call engineers manipulated terrestrial and subterranean materials, structures, and forces in pursuits such as mining.[6] Collectively, such literatures have established the substantial overlaps between premodern geological inquiry and architectural culture. And yet, a general account of how early modern architects in Europe and its colonies engaged with geological inquiry, or what those we would now call 'geologists' drew from architectural culture, remains unwritten. Scholars have not, by and large, scrutinized what conditions of investigation traversed early modern architectural culture and geological inquiry, from the organization of research campaigns to speculations across text, images, building, and other fora.[7]

Numerous questions arise when one examines at a synoptic scale the intellectual history of exchanges between Renaissance architectural culture and geological inquiry in Europe the lands it colonized – so numerous, in fact, that they exceed the parameters of a brief paper. One could investigate the evolving exchanges of physical practices between architectural culture and geological inquiry; activities such as surveying, digging, and stone-cutting. One could also ask how the traversal of such procedures between architectural culture and geological inquiry shaped the figuration of geological phenomena, including in architectural design. By the same turn, one could scrutinize architectural design and construction as platforms of geological inquiry, sometimes wielded in the service of [colonial] resource extraction. But what greased the wheels of such relationships? If a response (perhaps under more capacious circumstances) to the foregoing questions concerning the evolving rapport between

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3   See, for instance, Barry 2020.
4   Pertinent bibliography is cited in Brunon 2007.
5   A foundational analysis of rustication is Ackerman 1983.
6   See, for example, Asmussen & Long 2020, and the essays from the same issue.
7   An exception is Ng 2021.

geological inquiry and building seems desirable, then a look at the mediation of research practices between geological inquiry and architectural culture is in order.

The present investigation centers printed materials produced in Europe that synthesized practices of architectural and geological research.[8] Since printed materials circulated more widely than buildings, queries that probe intersecting inquisitive practices in architectural and geological publications yield superior insight into the formation of research norms in both fields. For instance, how did architectural research techniques align with the investigative tactics of those who composed geological literature, and vice versa? What textual and visual traditions undergirded the dialogues between the two fields? How did such exchanges develop over time? Far from crystallizing knowledge in the realm of abstract theory, the geological and architectural publications of the Renaissance behaved like sandboxes, inviting audiences to engage operatively and generatively.[9] Indeed, as I will establish toward the conclusion, they constituted a main vehicle of interactions between geological inquiry and building.

What follows, then, is a survey of the intellectual conditions and norms of engagement between architectural culture and geological inquiry in printed literature produced in Renaissance Europe. I contend that the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century renascence of an ancient rapport between architectural culture and geological inquiry revived a research mode I call 'Vitruvian learned empiricism'.[10] This investigative paradigm combined the study of ancient and modern texts with empiricism, or the then-controversial position that knowledge derives from sensory experience, in the context of architectural culture and under the auspices of the Vitruvian tradition and interdisciplinary ethos. As Renaissance thinkers revived Vitruvian culture, they resurrected an ancient, synagonistic rapport between geological and architectural research, enriching the age-old synagonism between nature and art.

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8   Of period publications that host intersections of architectural culture and geological inquiry, those produced in Europe outnumber those printed beyond the continent. I foreground these European publications with the understanding that such books facilitated the extractive architectures of, for instance, colonial mining campaigns in what is now called 'Latin America', and thus cannot be disentangled from extra-European architectural and geological discourses.

9   On this practice-oriented paradigm of Renaissance reading, see the canonical study by Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton: Jardine & Grafton 1990.

10   Here I adapt the term 'learned empiricism' as developed by Gianna Pomata and Nancy G. Siraisi in Pomata & Siraisi 2005, 8. On empiricism in this period, see, for instance, Salter 2010.

1   Vitruvian Learned Empiricism

Before alighting on Vitruvius (fl. late 1st century BCE), I would note that the word 'geology' did not acquire anything like its current usage until the 1603 testament of Bolognese natural historian Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522–1605), and was not widely employed until the later seventeenth century.[11] Nor did authors in Europe treat the topics entailed in what we today consider the discipline of geology as parts of a unified subject. Gregor Reisch's (*c.*1467–1525) 1503 summation of human knowledge, *Margarita philosophica,* considered the exhalations of the earth and earthquakes eighteen chapters apart from minerals and the transformation of metals.[12] In 1548, the index to the universal bibliography (*Biblioteca universalis*, 1545–1549) of Zürich polymath and geology expert Conrad Gessner (1516–1565), *Pandectarum, sive partitionem universalum* […], framed the elements and phenomena of earth, earthquakes, stones and gems, and metals and minerals as disparate areas of literature.[13] Gessner's list also attests that premodern geological writing occurred across texts on medicine, meteorology, agriculture, and other subjects.

The heterogenous character of premodern geological inquiry resembled the diverse facets of premodern architectural knowledge. An early formulation of architecture's heterodox knowledge profile occurred in Vitruvius's *De architectura libri decem*, the only ancient treatise dedicated primarily to architecture that would survive to the Renaissance. According to Vitruvius, 'Architecti est scientia pluribus disciplinis et variis eruditionibus ornata, cuius iudicio probantur omnia quae ab ceteris artibus perficiuntur opera' ; 'The architect should be equipped with knowledge of many branches of study and varied kinds of

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11   Dean 1979, 35–36. Dean also notes one earlier English usage that did not prove etymologically fruitful.

12   The discussion of terrestrial exhalations and earthquakes occurs under Reisch 1503, fol. Diiii^v, section 9.6, 'De distinctione mixtorum & mixtis prime & secundæ cōpositionis'; the comments on minerals occur in fols. Eiii^v–Eiiii^r, section 9.24, 'De mixtis tertiae compositionis: quæ sunt mineralia', and a treatment of the transmutation of metals occurs under fols. Eiiii^v–Ev^r, section 9.25, 'De metallorum transmutatione'. To locate these passages, I have made grateful use of Cunningham & Kusukawa 2010, 103–104, 128–130, and 131–132.

13   Gessner 1548. Gessner covers elements and phenomena of the earth under 'TITVLVS III. DE ELEMENTis in genere primum: deinde singillatim de igne, aëre, aqua & terra', fols. 186^v–188^r; earthquakes appear under 'TITVLVS V. DE MEteoris', fol. 191^r; stones and gems are treated under 'TITVLVS VI. QVI SCRIPSErint de naturis rerum omnium naturalium perfecte mixtarum, id est, de lapidibus, metallis, plantis, & animalibus communes historias: Mox priuatim de lapidibus ac gemmis primum', fols. 192^v–194^v; and metals and minerals are addressed under 'TITVLVS VII. DE METALLis, & mineralibus ut uocant, in genere primum, deinde singillatim', fols. 194^v–196^r.

learning, for it is by his judgement that all work done by the other arts is put to test'.[14] Vitruvius expected architects to synthesize knowledge of various arts and sciences within their practice, including fields where premodern geological inquiry occurred, such as medicine, meteorology, and geography.[15] The shared heterogeneity of premodern geological inquiry and architectural knowledge, as formulated by Vitruvius, allowed both spheres to transact on multiple fronts.

Indeed, the rapport between architectural culture and geological inquiry in Europe began no later than Vitruvius's *De architectura*. Much learned discourse about the formation, degradation, and causes of terrestrial phenomena descended from the foundational accounts established in Plato's (*c.*429 or 242/3–*c.*348/7 BCE) *Timaeus* and expanded in Aristotle's (384–322 BCE) *Meteorologica*, a tradition that prevailed into the eighteenth century.[16] But an account of the earth and theories of sublunary chemistry also appeared in Book 2 of *De architectura*, where instead of Plato or Aristotle, Vitruvius cited Thales (*c.*636–*c.*546 BCE), Heraclitus (*c.*536–*c.*470 BCE), Democritus (*c.*460–*c.*370 BCE), Epicurus (*c.*341–*c.*270 BCE), and the Pythagoreans.[17] The passage, emblematic of Vitruvius's and his Roman contemporaries' wider engagement with the learning of the Greek world, constitutes a performance of natural philosophical and antiquarian erudition.[18]

Vitruvius's learned engagement with the sublunary chemistry of mostly pre-Socratic philosophers prefaces his explanations, made on the basis of his own observations and practical experience, of the uses of clay, lime, sand, and

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14   Vitruvius, *De architectura libri decem*, 1.1.1. As transcribed in Vitruvius 1912, 2. Translation from Vitruvius 1914, 5.

15   See Vitruvius, *De architectura*, 1.1.4–11. On Vitruvius's concept of architecture as a nexus of various arts and sciences, see Brown 1963.

16   See, for instance, Plato, *Timaeus*, 60c-61c; Aristotle, *Meteorologica*, 2.365b-369b, 3.378a 14–378b 6; 4.378b 10–26; 4.379b 10–26; 4.383a 15–383b 18. On the lingering influence of Aristotelianism in geology, see for instance, Oldroyd 1996, 17.

17   See Vitruvius, *De architectura*, 2.2.1–2, here 2.2.1: 'Thales primum aquam putavit omnium rerum esse principium; Heraclitus Ephesius, qui propter obscuritatem scriptorum a Graecis σκοτεινὸς est appellatus, ignem; Democritus quique est eum secutus Epicurus atomos, quas nostri insecabilia corpora, nonnulli individua vocitaverunt; Pynthagoreorum vero disciplina adiecit ad aquam et ignem aera et terrenum'. / 'First of all Thales thought that water was the primordial substance of all things. Heraclitus of Ephesus, surnamed by the Greeks σκοτεινὸς on account of the obscurity of his writings, thought that it was fire. Democritus and his follower Epicurus thought that it was the atoms, termed by our writers "bodies that cannot be cut up," or, by some, "indivisibles." The school of the Pythagoreans added air and the earthy to the water and fire'. As transcribed in Vitruvius 1912, 33. Translation from Vitruvius 1914, 42.

18   On Vitruvius's appropriations of Greek knowledge, see Nichols 2017, 23–41.

stone in construction.[19] Fra Giovanni Giocondo's (1433–1515) 1511 edition of *De architectura* would later become the first to illustrate the practical applications of Vitruvius's advice in print (figure 11.2), creating a paradigm for the presentation of lithic construction practices in printed, illustrated books of the sixteenth century and beyond.[20] Book 8 of *De architectura*, on water, had meanwhile repeated Book 2's tactic of combining received literary knowledge with practical experience. It is also introduced by a discussion of sublunary chemistry that cites the aforementioned philosophers in addition to Anaxagoras (*c.*500–*c.*428 BCE) and Empedocles (*c.*490–*c.*430 BCE), and offers a precocious account of how to locate groundwater.[21] Vitruvius translator Cesare Cesariano (1476/8–1543) illustrated these investigative tactics in the first printed, illustrated vernacular edition of *De architectura* in 1521 (figure 11.3).[22] The woodcut evokes a first-hand encounter with nature so intimate that the investigator must make near total body contact with the earth in order to discern the vapours that billow from a nearby rock. In mingling received knowledge concerning terrestrial chemistry with first-hand observations of geological phenomena, Vitruvius established a precedent for synthesizing the insights of Greek geological authorities with one's own empirical research. His model of learned empiricism thereafter shaped architectural and geological research alike.

Just as Vitruvius probed geological topics, ancient and medieval geological writers drew from *De architectura*. The thirteenth-century mineralogist Albertus Magnus (*c.*1200–*c.*1280) used the terminology of Vitruvius and seems to paraphrase Vitruvius and Pliny the Elder's (23–79 CE) descriptions of stones in his own *De mineralibus*.[23] Book 36 of Pliny's *Naturalis historia* (first circulated 77–79 BCE) had cited Vitruvius as an authority on stones.[24] Discussions of mineralogy across Books 33–37 emphasize the uses of stone in building and drew broadly from *De architectura*.[25] The sweeping and enduring sway of the *Naturalis historia* and Pliny's use of geological themes from *De architectura* in natural historical inquiry cemented the geological authority of Vitruvius for posterity. In fact, until the eighteenth century, Europe harboured a Plinian view that architecture, like the topics now subsumed under geological inquiry,

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19   See Vitruvius, *De architectura*, 2.3.1–2.8.10. On Vitruvius's empirical study of geological phenomena, see Jackson, Kosso, Marra, & Hay 2006.

20   Vitruvius & Giocondo 1511.

21   See Vitruvius, *De architectura*, 8.pref.1–4 and 8.1.1–7, respectively.

22   Vitruvius & Cesariano 1521.

23   Wyckoff 1967, 44; and 46, which refers to Vitruvius alone.

24   Pliny the Elder, *Historia naturalis*, I, under 'Libro XXXVI [...] Ex auctoribus:': 'Vitruvio'. As transcribed in Pliny 1949, 160.

25   See Fane-Saunders 2016, 2.
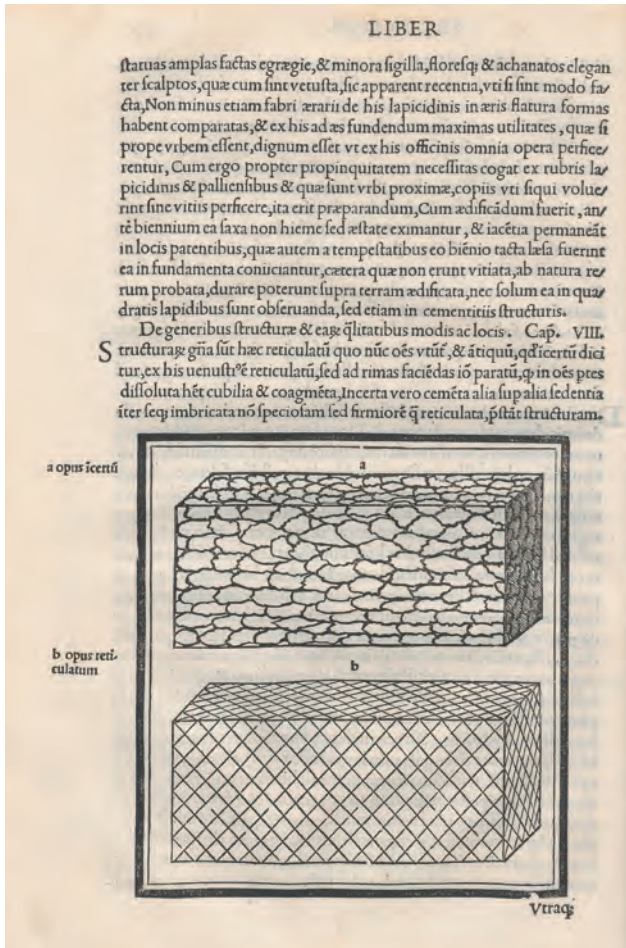
FIGURE 11.2   *Opus icertū; opus reticulatum*. Woodcut, *c.*1511. From: Vitruvius and Fra Giovanni
Giocondo, *M. VITRVVIVS PER IOCVNDVM SOLITO CASTIGATIOR FACTVS CVM
FIGVRIS ET TABVLA VT IAM LEGI ET INTELLIGI POSSIT*,
ed. Fra Giocondo (Venice, Giovanni da Tridentino: 1511), Zurich, ETH-
Bibliothek Zürich, Rar 6790, fol. 16ᵛ. https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-10519
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belonged to natural history.[26] But it was not until the fifteenth-century revival
of Vitruvian ideas in Italy and across Europe that the relationship between
architectural culture and geological inquiry resumed in earnest.

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26   On the confluence of the artificial and the natural in premodern natural history, see Bre-
dekamp 1993.
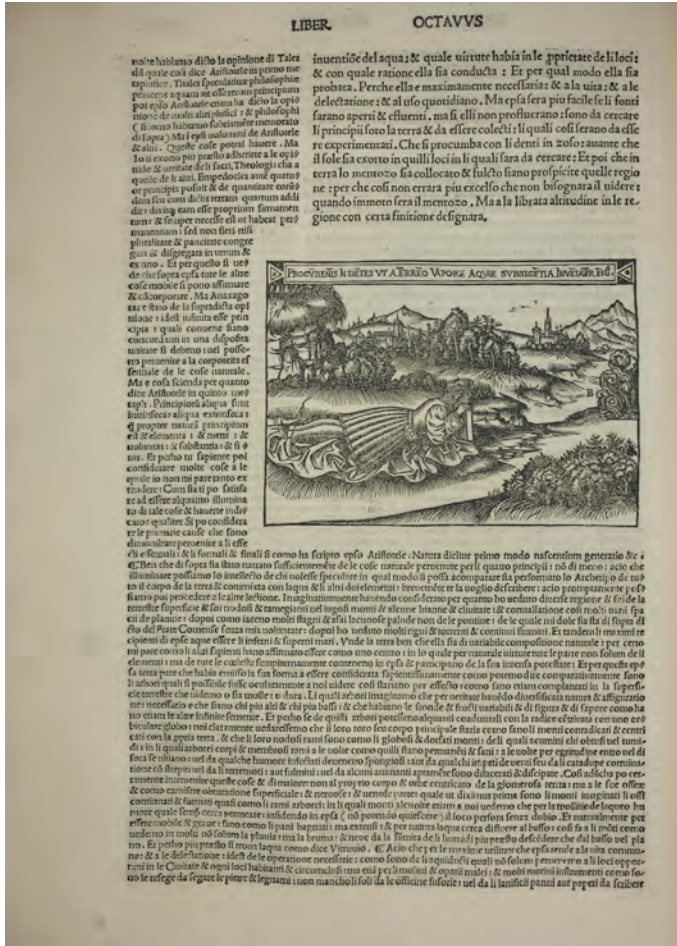
FIGURE 11.3   Cesare Cesariano[?], *Searching for Groundwater*. Woodcut, *c*.1521. From:
Vitruvius and Cesare Cesariano*, DI Lucio Vutruuio Pollione de Architectura Libri
Dece traducti de latino in Vulgare affigurati* [...], trans. and ed. Cesare Cesariano
(Como, Gottardo da Ponte: 1521), Einsiedeln, Stiftung Bibliothek Werner
Oechslin, A05c; app. 2917, fol. CXXVᵛ. https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-19393

2   Renaissance Vitruvianism and Learned Empiricism

Following the inaugural printing of *De architectura* in 1486, Latin editions
and vernacular translations circulated Vitruvius's remarks on geology on an
unprecedented scale and scope. *De architectura* commentaries explained Vit-
ruvius's textual sources and geological observations while tracing his impact

on geological inquiry and elaborating his ideas on geological topics. For instance, Book 11 of the 1556 edition of Daniele Barbaro's (1514–1570) *De architectura* translation and commentary cites Pliny's geological engagements with Vitruvius and incorporates verses from Barbaro's natural philosophical poem, *Meteore*.[27] Book 11 of the 1567 edition also cites Saxon physician and mining expert Georg Baur (1494–1555), also known as Georgius Agricola, as well as the humanist architect Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472), whose geological contributions to architectural culture will figure below.[28] Barbaro thus aligns ancient and modern geological authors, including an architect, whilst incorporating recent geological research and his own empirical observations. This is in keeping with the Vitruvian learned empiricism also evident in the frontispiece that appears in the first edition (figure 11.4), an allegory of the architect in his study in which documents and books mingle with instruments of first-hand observation.[29] *De architectura* translations and commentaries such as Barbaro's made Vitruvian publishing a site of modern geological writing and another node of exchange between geological inquiry and architectural culture while also reviving Vitruvius's learned empiricism.

Geology experts also consulted Vitruvian texts. Gessner, in his 1548 *Pandectarum*, cites editions of *De architectura* by Fra Giocondo, Guillaume Philandrier (1505–1565), and Gaudenzio Merula (1500–1555).[30] Meanwhile, the expansive study of mining practices Agricola debuted in 1556 as *De re metallica* paraphrased Vitruvius's appeal for the liberal education of architects. Agricola insisted that the miner must learn many subjects, including architecture, so that he is able to build or direct the construction of mining machines such as ore crushers and underground structures such as mine shafts.[31] The author's insistence that architecture exists within a web of other arts and sciences that constitute the multidisciplinary knowledge of the miner echoes Vitruvius's

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27   References to Pliny occur in Vitruvius & Barbaro 1556, for instance on p. 48; verses from "Meteore" occur on p. 44.

28   Daniele Barbaro in Vitruvius & Barbaro 1567, 78 and 83 respectively. I have been assisted in my reading by the translation Barbaro & Williams 2019.

29   On the ethos of learned empiricism in the frontispiece, see Payne 1999, 221.

30   Gessner 1548, 1, under 'TITVLUS II., DE ARCHItectura […]', fol. 168ʳ: 'De architectura M. Vitruuij libri 10. Vide Tomo I. Iacob. Iocundus Vitruuiũ collatis exēplaribus repurgauit. In Vitruuij Architecturā Gulielmi Philandri annotationes. In Vitruuium Gaudentius Merula.' / 'M. Vitruvius's *Ten Books on Architecture*. See tome 1. Fra Giocondo edited the collated copies. Guillaume Philandrier's annotations in Vitruvius's [*Ten Books on*] *Architecture*. Gaudenzio Merula's [edition of] Vitruvius'. The listings are identified in Davis 2007, 6–7.

31   Agricola 1556, 1: 'architecturæ, ut diuersas machinas substructionesque ipse fabricari, uel magis fabricandi rationem aliis explicare queat'. In studying *De re metallica*, I have referred to the English translation: Agricola 1912.

FIGURE 11.4   *Allegory of the Architect in his Study*. Woodcut, *c.*1556. From: Vitruvius and
Daniele Barbaro, *I DIECI LIBRI DELL'ARCHITETTVRA DI M. VITRVVIO* […],
trans. and ed. Daniele Barbaro (Venice, Francesco Marcolini: 1556), Zurich,
ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, Rar 9902, frontispiece. https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-7582
PUBLIC DOMAIN

interest in the liberal education of the architect. In so emulating the Roman
architect-author, Agricola confirmed that *De architectura* could attract geology
experts not only for its remarks on terrestrial matters, but its positions on the
formation of natural historical knowledge.

   In addition to *De architectura*, early modern architects engaged with a diver-
sity of ancient and modern books devoted to geological topics. Gessner's *Pan-
dectarum* classified the geological writings of such ancient natural historians as

Theophrastus (*c.*372–*c.*287 BCE) and Pliny as essential reading for architects.[32] Modern editions of ancient geological writings and contemporary geological research also entered architects' libraries. Venetian architect-engineer and Vitruvius translator Giovanni Antonio Rusconi (*c.*1520–1587) possessed two iterations of Agricola's *De re metallica* (the editions of 1556 and 1561), two Latin copies of Pliny's *Naturalis historia,* as well as three vernacular translations thereof.[33] The library of Württemberg architect-engineer Heinrich Schickhardt (1558–1635) included a volume on the *Kunstkammer* containing the 'secrets' of Theophrastus as well as a 1580 German translation of Agricola's *De re metallica*, called in German *Berckwerck Buch…* (*Mining Book*).[34] The norm of possessing geological literature endured among seventeenth-century architects. Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598–1680), for instance, likewise owned a 1563 Italian translation of Agricola's *De re metallica*.[35] Collectively, period bibliographies and library inventories indicate that architects' interests in geological topics ranged from the natural historical and natural philosophical knowledge of authors such as Pliny and Theophrastus to the learned but more pragmatic guidance of individuals such as Agricola.

The revival of *De architectura* catalysed Vitruvian geological inquiries in Renaissance architectural writings. If Alberti's *De re aedificatoria* (composed 1443–1452, published 1485) has often been regarded as a Vitruvian treatise, its comments on geological subject matter form an under-acknowledged facet of that relationship.[36] Alberti dedicated part of the second chapter, on materials, to the qualities of stones used in building and how to leverage such characteristics in the construction of architectural projects, including grottoes.[37] The illustrations of brickwork added to Cosimo Bartoli's (1503–1572) 1550 *De re aedificatoria* translation (figure 11.5), published by Lorenzo Torrentino

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32   Gessner 1548, fol. 168[r]: 'De lapidibus ad structuram, qui igni et tempestati resistunt, Plinius 36.22 … De cisternis, & calce, & harenæ generibus, & mixtura calcis & harenæ … Plinius 36.23. De medicinis calcis, & maltha et gypso, Plinius 36.24 … De succis arborum, & natura materiarum … Plinius 16.39 … Theophrastum'. / 'On fire- and weather-resistant stones for building Pliny 36.22 … On wells, and lime, and types of sand, and mixtures of sand and lime … Pliny 36.23. On medicinal lime and cement, and gypsum … On the sap of trees and natural wood … Pliny 16.39 … Theophrastus'.

33   Cellauro 2001, here 230–232.

34   Schickhardt 1630–1632, fols. 122[v]–123[r]: '82. Kunstkammer darin man findet die Theophrastische geheimnuß … In Folio Berckwerck Büch … durch Georgium Agricolam …'. The *De re metallica* translation is likely Agricola 1580.

35   Agricola 1563. On Bernini's library, see McPhee 2000, here 444.

36   See, for instance, Krautheimer 1963, which does not mention geological themes.

37   The qualities of stone used in building are addressed in Alberti 1485, fols. 28[v]–30[v]. The passages are translated in Alberti, Rykwert, Leach & Tavernor 1988, 47–50.

LIBRO TERZO. 77

Ma nelle muraglie ordinarie di mattoni, Io hò veduto a ogni cinque pié-di, essere stati contenti in luogo di legatura, di vno ordine di mattoni, di gran dezza di duoi piedi;

Ho visto ancora chi hà sparse per le mura piastre di piombo, molto lunghe & molto larghe; secondo la grossezza del muro: Accio faccino legamento. Ma nel murare pietre molto grandi, io veggo che e' si sono contentati di ricinti piu rari, anzi quasi solamente delle Cornici. Nel fare le Cornici, perche queste ancora ricingono la muraglia, con fermissima legatura; bisogna non si far' beffe d'alcuna di quelle cose, che noi habbiamo dette insino a qui di essi ricinti; cioè che in queste non si metta pietra alcuna che non sia lunghissima, larghissima, & saldissima; & si adattino con commettitura continouara, & bene cōmessa; spianati i filari secondo l'archipenzolo, & ridottili, & pareggiatili cō il regolo; ciascuno secōdo il suo bisogno: Et tanta maggior cura, & diligentia in ciò debbi porre; quanto che le ricingono l'opera, in esso luogo, piu atto a rouinare. I tetti ancora hanno l'ufficio loro nelle mura; & di qui è che e' dicono alle mura di mattoni crudi, fauui vna cornice di mattoni cotti; accio che dalla fine del tetto, o dalle grondaie se acqua alcuna vi cadesse, non gli nuoca; ma sieno difese dallo sportare in fuora d'essa cornice. Et per que-

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FIGURE 11.5   Cosimo Bartoli (inventor), *Opus reticulatum and opus quadratum*. Woodcut, *c.*1550. From: Leon Battista Alberti, *L'ARCHITETTVRA DI LEONBATISTA ALBERTI. Tradotta in lingua Fiorentino da Cosimo Bartoli Gentil'huomo & Accademico Fiorentino. Con la aggiunta de Disegni.*, trans. Cosimo Bartoli (Florence, Lorenzo Torrentino: 1550), Zurich, ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, Rar 9906, 77. https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-770
PUBLIC DOMAIN

(*c.*1498/1501–1563), evoke the Vitruvian paradigms behind such commentary, in that their compositions recall the paradigmatic masonry woodcuts debuted in Fra Giocondo's 1511 edition of *De architectura* (see figure 11.2).[38] It appears Bartoli also authored the section on architecture in the preamble on materials and techniques prefacing the *Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori*

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38   Alberti 1550.

(*Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*), first published by Torrentino in 1550 with the author named as Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574).[39] Like Alberti's discussion of the architectural uses and emulation of stones, the technical preamble to the *Vite* counselled readers on selecting lithic building materials and explained ways to imitate geological forms such as stalactites, as well as geological processes such as crystallization.[40]

Between the 1550 edition and the revised, expanded edition of 1568, the discussion of stones within the *Vite*'s technical preamble moved from a tone of Plinian antiquarianism to one of technical pragmatism, perhaps indicating Vasari's enhanced involvement in the revised version.[41] Whatever the case, the collaboration between the erudite Bartoli and Vasari the expert technician embodies Vitruvian learned empiricism's particular synthesis of ancient natural-philosophical knowledge and observations derived from first-hand experience. Through such relationships, fifteenth- and sixteenth-century architectural writing composed in the shadow of *De architectura* and its progeny advanced the learned empiricism of Vitruvius's geological excurses for modernity.

Thus, in addition to textual sources, Renaissance architects and geology researchers adopted shared inquisitive methods, for instance experimenting with sixteenth-century Europe's deepening affinity for empirical investigation.[42] Agricola's *De natura fossilium*, which he published in a 1546 compendium of geological writings and substantially revised in 1558, compiled modern translations of ancient geological terms and built on empirical texts by such authors as Paracelsus (1493/4–1541) to foreground close observations of geological specimens and their specific qualities or accidents.[43] In so doing, Agricola leveraged humanistic understandings of ancient and modern geological texts to lay foundations for empirical minerology.[44] *De re metallica* further drew upon Agricola's first-hand knowledge of mining operations to catalogue extractive architectures through hundreds of woodcuts. One figure portrays a network of constructions for sorting and washing yields, positioning architecture as a vehicle of geological resources, discernment, and practical, empirical knowledge (figure 11.6). Pamela Smith has argued that while the vernacular theories of Agricola and other mining experts relied on ancient lore, they also formed 'practical knowledge systems' that nurtured the emergence

39   Frangenberg 2002, 255.

40   The passages in question are reprinted in Vasari, Bettarini & Barocchi 1973, 31–54; 72–74.

41   On the shift, see Morrogh 1985, 312.

42   On this phenomenon more broadly, see Long 2017.

43   Agricola 1546, 165–380.

44   On Agricola's humanism, see, for example, Hannaway 1992; on Agricola's empiricism, see, for instance, Fritscher 1994.

FIGURE 11.6   Georgius Agricola (inventor?), Blasius Weffring, Hans Rudolf Manuel Deutsch, or unknown artist (draftsman), and Zacharias Specklin or unknown artist (woodblock cutter), *Sorting and Cleaning of Ores*. Woodcut, *c*.1556. From: Georgius Agricola, *GEORGII AGRICOLAE DE RE METALLICA LIBRI XII.* [...] (Basel, Hieronymus Froben: 1556), Basel, Universitätsbibliothek Basel, hv I 22, p. 227. https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-52830

of geological inquiry as an empirical science.[45] Here, too, one discerns echoes of Vitruvian learned empiricism.

The nascent empiricism of sixteenth-century geological inquiry dovetailed with research practices in Renaissance architecture, especially archaeological studies.[46] Though most obviously evidenced in a mutual interest in the stratigraphic autopsy of terrestrial environments, the relationship between geological inquiry and the archaeological studies of architecture experts ran deeper, to shared strategies of measurement and classification. Decades before sixteenth-century geology experts promoted empirical investigation in writing, architects from Raphael Sanzio (1483–1520) to Philibert De L'Orme (*c.*1510–1570) drew ancient Roman ruins and buildings such as the Colosseum and Pantheon, sometimes with detailed measurements taken first-hand or copied from other such drawings.[47] A sheet from the Goldschmidt Scrapbook authored by an anonymous French draftsman during the first half of the sixteenth century depicts, for instance, the measurements and other minutiae of a Corinthian column from the Pantheon in Rome (figure 11.7). Through such graphic archaeology, architectural researchers revived models of first-hand, empirical investigation promoted in the geological discussions of *De architectura.*

Sixteenth-century geology experts and architects both came to apply a form of Vitruvian learned empiricism to their mutual commitment to classifying forms by mathematical means. In 1565/6, the collection of works Gessner released as *De omni rerum fossilium genere*, including his own *De rerum fossilium, lapidu et gemmarum maxime, figuris & similitudinibus liber* integrated discussions of disparate geological phenomena and examined their causes.[48] *De rerum fossilium* used the visible geometries of mineral bodies as a basis for defining various classes of rocks.[49] The book substantiated its geometrical argument through some of the earliest naturalistic illustrations of minerals in print, such as this woodcut depicting the regular and indeed architectonic geometries of basalt columns (figure 11.8).[50] Here the draftsperson and *Formschneider* leverage woodcut's linear clarity to advantage Gessner's geometrical argument. The hand-colouring, a feature Gessner exhorted the publisher to add to some volumes – perhaps to underscore differences between specimens within his typology – imparts the subject with the appearance of a first-hand observation.[51]

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45   Smith 2017.

46   On the beginnings of early modern archaeology, see Barkan 1999.

47   See, for instance, Yerkes 2017, 15–22.

48   Gessner 1565, fol. Aa1ʳ–fol. 169ʳ.

49   See, most recently, Zorach 2020.

50   On the primacy of iconicity in Gessner's visual argument, see Fischel 2010, 152–154.

51   Gessner 1565, fol. Aa 7ᵛ: 'Quamobrem Typographum hortatus sum … exemplaribus aliquot colores addendos curet.' / 'Thus I have urged the printer … that in certain copies

FIGURE 11.7   Anonymous French draftsman, Pantheon, portico, Corinthian column
capital, projection, plan, and details; column shaft, profile; beam architrave,
elevation (recto), *Goldschmidt Scrapbook*, early to mid-sixteenth century.
Dark brown ink, black chalk, and incised lines, sheet, 43 × 32 cm. New York,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Rogers Fund, Joseph Pulitzer
Bequest, and Mark J. Millard Gift, 1968, 68.769.4

FIGURE 11.8   *Basalt Columns*. Hand-coloured woodcut, *c.*1565. From: Conrad Gessner, *DE RERVM FOSSILIVM, LAPIDVM ET GEMMARVM* [...] (Zurich, Jacobus Gesnerus: 1565), Zurich, Zentralbibliothek Zürich, FF 1264, fol. Dd4ʳ. https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-4176
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Geological researchers' turn to geometry as a mechanism for identifying mineralogical norms and classifying specimens resonated with existing impulses in architectural culture. During the early modern period, architecture was regarded as a form of applied mathematics, and geometrical knowledge formed one of its core competencies – a convention evident in the geometer's ruler and compass at the fingertips of the architect in the allegory from

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[of the book] he should take care to add some colors'. The strategy is discussed in Zorach 2020, 345.

Barbaro's frontispiece (see figure 11.4).[52] The prevailing early modern understanding of architecture as an arena of mathematical practice allows one to compare the geometrical inquiries of geology experts and architects, for instance the geological taxonomy of Gessner, to mathematically-based typologies of architectural form. Vitruvius had assigned Doric, Ionic, Corinthian and Tuscan genera a range of arithmetic proportions, a system renovated throughout the early modern period.[53] In sheets such as the rendering of Corinthian ornaments above (see figure 11.7), artists measured ruins to identify evidence of normative dimensions and ornaments indicative of the architectural genera mentioned in *De architectura* and adapted in modern Vitruvian literature – norms which could likewise come to circulate in print.[54] Though most of its mathematical annotations mark arithmetic measurements, the plan of the Corinthian capital arises from intersections of circles or arcs within a series of square frameworks, geometries that recalling the graduated facets of a crystal. The resemblance seems no coincidence. In collating specific archaeological observations to synthesize conventional images of ancient architectural morphologies, such geometrical investigations anticipated geology experts' use of geometrical principles to identify morphological norms and typologies amongst the vast specimens of the earth. Thus, both architectural culture and geological inquiry perpetuated Vitruvian learned empiricism by using the ancient abstractions of mathematical knowledge to organize observed specimens into systems of normative forms.

Given the shared texts, methodologies and classificatory imperatives of Renaissance experts in geology and architecture, it is unsurprising that thinkers from Leonardo da Vinci (1542–1519) to Athanasius Kircher (1602–1680) researched both architectural and geological topics. Occasionally, the empirical imperatives of architecture and geology coalesced in a single project. In 1560, Agricola's Saxon colleague, Georg Fabricius (1516–1571), released the first published survey of the stones of antique monuments as *Roma, Antiquitatum Libri Duo*, a work that linked the first-hand study of ancient ruins with geological knowledge.[55] Fabricius's guide courted the substantial contingent of Italian architects who spoliated geological specimens with ancient provenances for their own constructions.[56]

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52   On architecture and geometry, see, for instance, Gerbino 2014.

53   The proportions of the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian genera are summarized in Vitruvius, *De architectura*, 4.1.6–10; those of the Tuscan genus are covered in *De architectura*, 4.7.2.

54   The system of architectural orders was effectively a modern invention. See Thoenes & Günther 1985.

55   Fabricius 1560. On Agricola's influence upon Fabricius's project, see Hannaway 1992, 560.

56   On the re-use of stones from ancient constructions in Renaissance Rome, see Waters 2016.

In another case, archaeology's learned empiricism shaped geological research within a single career. The natural historian Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522–1605) initially experimented with methods of first-hand observation and indeed the typological and hierarchical organization of specimens in research for his *Di tutte le statue*, a guide to the marbles of ancient Rome released in 1556 and revised and re-published in 1558 and 1562.[57] Like Gessner, Aldrovandi applied vast bibliographical knowledge as well as empirical tactics of observation and description to investigate and categorize *naturalia*, recording his findings in the manuscript for what became *Musæum Metallicum* (*Museum of Metals*).[58] Published in 1648, over four decades after Aldrovandi's death, the treatise offered a systematic and comprehensive account of the character, origins, formation, and uses of metals, clays, lithified fluids and rocks.[59] But unlike *Di tutte le statue*, the *Musæum metallicum* also contained illustrations, many of unworked geological specimens, as well as images of lithic artefacts that remind the initiate how archaeology provided a paradigm for the author's geological investigations. In woodcuts such as this image of speckled, striated alabaster (figure 11.9), the book summoned a mix of descriptive precision and typological generalization also honed in Aldrovandi's antiquarian studies of marble sculptures. It did so to craft exacting images of specific mineralogical objects that one could nevertheless use to identify similar specimens in the field. In sum, techniques of learned empiricism traded between geological inquiry, the archaeological studies of Renaissance architecture, and back again formed mutually reinforcing research cultures in both fields.

3   The Book of the Earth

By emphasizing how practices of Vitruvian learned empiricism cut across architectural culture and geological inquiry, I do not mean to convey that either field lost the air of enchantment each had also possessed prior to the sixteenth century. Mythological, poetic, and vernacular understandings that had suffused geological and architectural writing since antiquity persisted in both realms. For instance, while the Leaning House (see figure 11.1) suggests an emergent understanding of topographies as products of seismic activity, it

57   Aldrovandi 1556. On Aldrovandi's archaeological methodology as an entrée to his natural history methods, see Gallo 1992, 488.

58   Aldrovandi 1648. On Aldrovandi's empirical methods in natural history studies, see, for instance, Olmi 2014. On Gessner and Aldrovandi as learned empiricists, see Kraemer & Zedelmaier 2014.

59   See Vai & Cavazza 2006.

Muſæi Metallici Lib. IV.   749
Alabaſtrites maculis fluuium imitans.

dum indicat hoc genus Marmoris, & illam gemmam, quàm Vulgares Calcedonium appellant, & Græci Onichem, quia colorem vnguis referat. At Onyx quoque pro Alabaſtrite marmore apud Dioſcoridem, & Galenum vſurpatur, fortaſſis propter ſimilitudinem, quam cum gemma habere videatur. Alioquin Alabaſtrites, de quo in præſentia ſermonem habemus, coloris etiam mellei cum maculis commendatur, vt in præſenti icone oſtendimus; erat enim Alabaſtrites maculis fluuium imitans.
Cæterùm illud Marmor candidum, quòd in Agro Volaterrano foditur, nomine Alabaſtri, facilè vritur, neq; ingenti mole reperitur, eſt quidem materia pulcherrima candida, & tranſlucida, tanquam Onyx, ſed propter fragilitatem à natura Marmoris recedit, & à nonnullis libentiùs inter ſpecies Gypſi collocatur.
NIGRA Marmora primo comprehendunt Numidicum, quòd eſt liuidum, & eximio ſplendore radians; ex hoc primus omnium M. Lepidus Conſul, authore Plinio, limina conſtrui curauit. Sunt qui Numidicum colore etiam flauo reperiri aſſeuerent. Huc refertur etiam Tænarium à Tænaro Laconiæ Promontorio nominatum, cum ibi effodi ſoleat,

Marmora nigra. Lib. 36. r. 7

Rrr 3

FIGURE 11.9   Cornelius Schwindt or member of Aldrovandi workshop (inventor), Cristofo
Coriolano (woodblock cutter), *Alabastrites maculis fluuium imitans*. Woodcut,
before *c.*1648. From: Ulisse Aldrovandi, *VLYSSIS ALDROVANDI PATRICII
BONONIENSIS MVSAEVM METALLICVM IN LIBROS IIII DISTRIBVTVM* [...], ed.
Marco Antonio Bernia and Bartolommeo Ambrosini (Bologna, Giovanni
Battista Ferronii: 1648), Zurich, ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, Rar 1027, 749.
https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-13017

also evokes the subterranean growth of living rock and the construction work
of mythical giants.[60] Aldrovandi's *Musæum metallicum* (see figure 11.9) in turn
casts alabaster as 'Alabastrites maculis fluvium,' likening the stone's speckled

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60   See Morgan 2015.

striations to a spotty flow. If anything, such cases suggest that the endurance of mythological, poetic, and vernacular understandings of terrestrial and subterranean themes in architectural and geological research enriched the descriptive vocabularies of each field's emergent empirical ethos. At the same time, the persistence of ideas about terrestrial and subterranean themes not based on experience filtered through the lens of learned discourse, indicating that Vitruvian learned empiricism was not the only strategy whereby Renaissance thinkers synthesized geological and architectural research.

Having foregrounded publications that hosted intersections of architectural culture and geological inquiry, I now turn briefly to one confluence of texts and building to scrutinize an alternative to Vitruvian learned empiricism in the transactions between the two fields. The limitations of Vitruvian learned empiricism as a paradigm of architectural and geological inquiry found an implicit critique in the works of sixteenth-century natural philosopher, ceramicist, and grotto architect Bernard Palissy (*c.*1510–1590), an artist who synthesized geological research with architectural practice. Throughout the later sixteenth century, Palissy engaged in multiple grotto commissions whilst writing on geological topics such as earthquakes, the formation and degradation of stones, and the genesis of what we now call 'fossils'. Geological discussions in Palissy's 1563 *Architecture* and *Recepte véritable* (*True Recipe*) as well as his *Discours admirables* of 1580 combine Aristotelian frameworks of sublunary chemistry and specific references to Pliny's *Naturalis historia* with borrowings from such modern natural philosophers as Girolamo Cardano (1501–1576).[61] The *Discours admirables* also shows Palissy's awareness of such architectural writers as Francesco Colonna (1433–1527), Sebastiano Serlio (1475–*c.*1554), and Jacques Androuet Du Cerceau the Elder (*c.*1515-after 1584).[62] Nevertheless, the artist denied reading ancient writings and posed sensory experience as the supreme source of knowledge, having the character 'Practice' boast in his *Discours admirables* that 'Ie n'ay point eu d'autre liure q le ciel & la terre' ('I do not have any book besides the heavens and the earth').[63] Here Palissy promotes a staunch flavour of empiricism, one that does not wholly square with his own reading habits or his authorial activities.[64] Contradictions aside, the artist's professed preference for sensory experience as the ultimate source of

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61   Research on Palissy's intellectual debts is summarized in Thompson 1954, 161–165; a list of books Palissy likely read is included in La Rocque 1957, 10–12.

62   Ibid., 11.

63   Palissy 1580, 199.

64   Several authors since at least the early twentieth century have evaluated Palissy's empirical approach to artistic and geological research. One excellent source, which cites earlier research, is Smith 2004, 100–106.

knowledge clashes with the academic disposition of Vitruvian learned empiricism as a common denominator of Renaissance architectural and geological studies.

Palissy devised grottos and ceramic ornaments that visualized phenomena of stone-formation and degradation treated in his writings. Archaeologists have excavated fragments of Palissy's abandoned Parisian grotto for Catherine de' Medici (1519–1589) (figure 11.10) in the ruins of the Tuileries.[65] Remains such as this shard from the Louvre evidence the ceramicist's experiments with re-creating the visible effects of geological phenomena such as marled jasper and shells, the latter of which Palissy regarded as the architecture of mollusks.[66] Palissy learned about geological phenomena by executing grottoes and other ceramic projects, and such labours in turn shaped his geological thinking and writing.[67] The Louvre fragment, for instance, registers Palissy's knowledge of mollusks and stones working in tandem with his grasp of the behaviours of clays, of the metals and ground minerals comprising his glazes, as well as insight into the elemental forces that governed their transformations in the kiln. Like Practice and indeed the snails figured in the Tuileries shard, Palissy required no conventional books in order to manipulate terrestrial matter, whether as architect or proto-geologist.

But if this circuit of natural philosophical practice and reflection could presumably have operated without Palissy composing books, and if the artist rejected books as trustworthy sources of knowledge, why did he compose at least three dialogues concerning architecture and geological inquiry? Palissy's *Architecture*, *Recepte véritable*, and *Discours admirables* collectively argue for the authority of first-hand experience in geological, ceramic, and architectural inquiry as no other network of contemporary texts. All three writings locate their own authority always beyond themselves, in the object evidence of the field. In describing a potent alternative to the Vitruvian learned empiricism of architectural and geological researchers who took textual knowledge as the essential framework and backdrop for first-hand investigations, Palissy laid groundwork for dissent against the ultimate authority of texts in both architecture and geological inquiry during the seventeenth century.

<div style="text-align:center">∴</div>

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65   Dufay, Kisch, Trombetta, Poulain, & Roumégoux 1987.

66   Palissy 1580, 106: 'Ou bié que ne regardé t ils de quoy le poisson à formé ceste belle maison, & prendre des semblables matieres, pour faire quelque beau vaissaeu. Le poisson qui fait laditte coquille n'est si glorieux que l'homme, c'est vn animal qui à bien peu de forme, & toutesfois il sçait faire ce que l'homme ne sçauroit faire'.

67   On the reciprocity of artistic and geological research in Palissy's oeuvre, see for example, Andrews 2014/2015. Cf. caveats to this position in Petcu 2021.

Between antiquity and the Renaissance, the rapport between geological inquiry and architectural culture within printed literature shifted from a filial relationship in which architecture initially emulated geological ideas, to a fraternal relationship in which they mutually exchanged ideas under the banner of Vitruvian learned empiricism. In architecture, Vitruvius borrowed from Pre-Socratic accounts of terrestrial chemistry. But Vitruvius also supplied future geological inquiry with two key models of thought. First, his canonical argument for the liberal education of architects gave geology experts such as Agricola an ideal of interdisciplinary knowledge-formation that facilitated exchanges between both fields during the Vitruvian revival

of the Renaissance. Second, Vitruvius presented geology experts a framework for writing about the empirical investigation of geological phenomena in light of classical and other learned texts. Vitruvius's inquisitive model facilitated exchanges between architecture and geological inquiry amidst sixteenth-century empiricism. It was through Vitruvian learned empiricism as well as reactionary philosophies like that of Palissy that Renaissance geological inquiry and architectural culture revived their ancient rapport and brokered another mutually generative, synagonistic exchange between art and nature.

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Synagonism in Stone

Markus Rath

For premodern art, mineral materials, with their variations of color and form, were a constant source of inspiration. Numerous reflections on the visual qualities of stone structures; observations on the advantages and disadvantages of stone or terracotta as working materials; pictorial inventions and techniques devoted to painterly imitations of stone: together, they circumscribe a broad field of artistic activity of overarching relevance to sculpture, painting, and architecture, and moreover both practically as well as theoretically.[1] Meanwhile, this complex of issues has yet to be adequately explored with regard to its capacity for linking diverse media; up to this point, the successful social ascent of the artist has often been associated with specialization, with the trained mastery of a particular medium. In this context, the oft-invoked 'paragone of the arts' has emerged as a phenomenon that academic discourse of the 16th century already attempted to apply to the Quattrocento, although the concept would only acquire a clear historical profile during the 19th century.[2]

Contradicting any abrupt discontinuity between sculpture and painting, it is clear that hybrid works, multiple competencies on the part of early modern artists, intermedial forms of collaboration, interior design schemes encompassing multiple media, and recourse to neighboring art forms as a strategy for enhancing the prestige of the medium employed formed a dense network of processes of creative exchange.[3] It seems all the more astonishing that categorical boundaries were established between media, finally, even in fields where strict categorization is by no means actually present, for example in the area of the 'artistic handling of stone'. This deliberately broad designation is designed to circumscribe first, all creative processes that either adopt mineral substances as artistic materials, including marble sculptures, stone reliefs, and terracotta figures, but also works in mosaic and the glyptic arts, and secondly

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1   For recent and comprehensive accounts of this complex, see Augart, Saß & Wenderholm 2019; Barry 2020; Wenderholm 2021; Gamboni, Wolf & Richardson 2021.
2   Farago 1992; Pfisterer 2003, 530 ff.; Patz 2007; Baader 2011; Hessler 2014; Pfisterer, 2017.
3   See for example Wenderholm 2014; Hanke 2009; on forms of intermedial interference the in light of the rivalry debate see van Gastel, Hadjinicloaou & Rath 2014.

and more broadly, paintings that strive to evoke mineral substances or their forms of appearance.

Since such artistic forays into foreign materials engender works that represent a special challenge to the medium being employed, such productive processes of interference can legitimately be conceived as instances of 'synagonism'. The elementary principle according to which creative invention is defined as a reciprocal exchange process, that is, as an interaction between resistant material and intelligent organization, and thus between the potentialities of the various media, emerges particularly clearly in the various fields of artistic handling of stone. Four exemplary instances of the artistic treatment of stone, all of which involve – albeit in very different ways – the aesthetic appeal of neighboring art forms as productive challenges are: the painterly evocation of stone sculpture; frescoed stone fields as interior decorations; intermedial interior decor involving natural, artificial, and painted stone; as well as the lapidary arts, which exploit the coloristic traits of mineral materials, assembling them to form two-dimensional imagery.

1   Van Eyck's Stone Mirror

Thirty years ago, in his pioneering discussion of Jan van Eyck's diptych of the *Annunciation* the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection, Rudolf Preimesberger provided a major cornerstone for research into the *paragone* in the Renaissance (figure 12.1).[4] His main question focuses explicitly on van Eyck's painted imitation of stone: 'Why did Jan van Eyck, in this late diptych … choose to represent the Annunciation on the inner wings by means of two fictive statuettes? Why transpose the subject into the hard medium of unpainted sculpture? Why increase the aesthetic distance, while the representation of a representation instead of a representation in its own right'?[5] Previously, the renunciation of color had been interpreted as a response to the diptych's use during Lent.[6] According to Preimesberger's analysis, it was only with Robert Campin's *Throne of Mercy* that the mimetic transmutation into stone shifted from gray,

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4   Preimesberger 2011. Subsequently, other research areas – on painting on stone, on grisaille, and on the mimetic qualities of early Netherlandish painting – relied upon related methodological approaches. Cf. Krieger 1995; Itzel 2003; Lehmann, Gramaccini, Rößler & Dittelbach 2018.

5   Preimesberger 2011, 459.

6   Smith 1957–58; Grams-Thieme 1988. Unlike the Dresden triptych by the same artist, the grisaille paintings of the Madrid folding altar appears instead on the interior, i.e. intended for feast days.

FIGURE 12.1 Jan van Eyck, *The Annunciation Diptych*, *c.*1433–1435, oil on panel. Left wing
(The Archangel Gabriel): 38.8 × 23.2 cm. Right wing (The Virgin Mary): 39 × 24
cm, Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid
IMAGE: © MUSEO NACIONAL THYSSEN-BORNEMISZA, MADRID

monochrome depictions toward the imitation of contrasting types of stone.[7]
It is worth noting that, like van Eyck, Campin was not active solely as a panel
painter, but also received commissions for painting stone sculptures. His differ-
entiated awareness of various types of stone can therefore be assumed.[8] By vir-
tue of its imitation of three-dimensional statues, the genre- and media-reflexive
content of the diptych in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection concerns, first,
the evocation of a painterly *rilievo,* which is to say, corporeal-sculptural effect
on a planar surface.[9] But in the differentiated rendering of diverse types and

7   With Campin, as is well known, this knowledge is displayed in the depiction of sculptural
    techniques, i.e., the painterly rendering of the sculpting of the pupils of the eyes through
    boring.

8   Preimesberger 2011, 29, n. 22.

9   On the *rilievo,* cf. Grassi 1978; Freedman 1989; Niehaus 1998; Yih-Fen 1999; Preimesberger
    2003; Ostrow 2004, esp. 331–338; Lakey 2009; Rath 2013.

treatment of stone, secondly, we find a richly-faceted transfer of the sculptural arts into the realm of painting, and one that links the depicted scene, the inscriptions, and the frame with one another in such a way that the perceptual levels of the pictorial space and the space of the beholder become interwoven.

Van Eyck's diptych is one of the first instances of this particular transgression: of a stone *Annunciation* group in the medium of painting. And according to Preimesberger, it also testifies to a contest, one elicited by the object itself, and one associated with an increasingly distinct consciousness of medial differences. 'The assumption is that the avoidance of color originally motivated by liturgical reasons, and the prerequisite and instigation of the painterly resolution of the painterly problem of imitating sculpture became a *movens* [cause] in the epoch-scientific process of painting as a genre and the social ascent of the painter and his art. Almost as a matter of course painting – which used its own means to create a deceptively real impression of the alien medium of three-dimensional sculpture – entered into competition and a mutually comparative relationship with the other genre [sculpture]; painting became conscious of its own, long-ago formulated advantages, it means and limits, and proclaimed its greater worth'.[10]

In fact, van Eyck's 'stone' *Annunciation* set off a wave of painterly successors which at times even heightened the mineral qualities of the figures, one example being Rogier van der Weyden's *Annunciation* in the *Altarpiece of the Last Judgment* in Beaune (figure 12.2). Here, the young painter achieved a *tour de force* with regard to the technical procedures of the medium of sculpture he invokes using painterly resources: he incorporates the thin stone bars that are often used to provide stability to especially fragile parts of real statuettes.[11] Worth pursuing, finally, is a reciprocal development within this larger topic, namely the painterly reanimation of fictive stone sculptures.[12]

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10   Preimesberger 2011, 29. This painterly further development was founded, meanwhile, on a sculptural tradition that had been continuously refined across generations, as exemplified, for example, in Claus Sluter's figures for the Chartreuse de Champmol and his statuettes of *pleurants*.

11   This inspiration was intensified – again through an exchange with contemporary sculpture that is staged within the medium of paint – in Hugo van der Goes's *Annunciation* for the exterior panels of the *Portinari Altarpiece*. Here, the stone bar that serves to attach the dove to the painted niche appears only as a shadow. Cf. Belting/Kruse 1994, 230–34; Tf. 171–81; Itzel 2003, 83.

12   In Gerard David's *Annunciation* in the Metropolitan Museum, for example, the exposed parts of the bodies are given flesh tones – not solely in order to heighten their situative presence by playing off of the corresponding painterly effect, but also to invoke the intended lifelike effect of contemporary painted sculptures that served as devotional images. A comparable example would be the *Annunciation* on the outer wings of the

FIGURE 12.2   Rogier van der Weyden, *Annunciation, The Beaune Altarpiece*, *c.*1445–1450.
220 × 548 cm (excluding frames), oil on oak, Hospices de Beaune
PUBLIC DOMAIN

Unlike many subsequent stone Annunciations, van Eyck does not place his statuettes in a stone niche, but instead on pedestals in front of a polished mirror surface that is framed in stone: 'It is one of the main conceits of this diptych that this stone is polished and, on closer examination, distinctly reflective'.[13] These mirror reflections testify to van Eyck's knowledge of catoptrics and his subtle adjustment of the perspective to accommodate its reception from an oblique angle. They also give some suggestion of the appearance of the concealed sides of the statuettes, thereby neutralizing the central argument that

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Rehlinger Altarpiece, produced by the Apt workshop. Numerous further works underscore the utilization of grisaille as a play between animate and inanimate; Jacob de Backer's *The Awakening of Lazarus* offers an ingenious play with diverse types of stone, and is interpretable as a variant of the theme of the potential for 'bringing to life' that is inherent in painting, while in Mantegna's *Dead Christ*, the lifeless body itself appears to have turned to stone. For a comprehensive account of the topos of 'bringing to life,' in particular with works in stone, see Fehrenbach 2021.

13   Preimesberger 2011, 31.

was conventionally deployed against painting within the paragone debate: its inability to depict objects in three dimensions.[14]

Significant as well is Preimesberger's link between this mirrored stone surface and the black touchstone of the goldsmith or moneychanger. He recognizes this rear wall as the siliceous shale that is required to determine the fineness of gold, a material prevalent during the Middle Ages under the names 'Streichstein,' 'Goldstein,' 'pierre de touche' 'toetssteen,' or 'pietra di paragone'.[15] Through it, van Eyck ingeniously incorporates the 'touchstone and mirror' of his painting into the image.

This observation, meanwhile, also suggests a turn that favors collaboration between the arts. The artistic determination of quality via the *pietra di paragone* is presented through the resources of painting; the topical examination of the image with the help of a mirror is achieved here through a reflection in a *stone* surface. Disclosed in and through the paragone stone is the singular quality of painting. In reality, the black mineral material that appears in the image is placed in the service not of the art of painting, but instead of goldsmithing and metalworking, and is also used by metal merchants to appraise the fineness of materials used in goldsmithing. Stonecutters too prized the material's dark coloration. In this sense, van Eyck's diptych is interpretable less as exemplifying an understanding of the artistic media as mutually discrete; instead, the smooth, polished *pietra di paragone* assumes a mediating role between the arts and nature, in the sense of an interplay between aesthetic and qualitative categories.[16] Since the black, reflective background mirrors the painted statuettes as though they were real objects occupying the viewer's own space, he establishes an additional reference to reality for his *Annunciation* group. And since this backdrop, executed in oils, forms a surface that is still reflective in the present, these painterly effects are supplemented by added reflections that are captured, intriguingly, on the picture surface depending upon the lighting situation at the moment of viewing.[17] The mirror stone, then, represents

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14   Ibid., 477–481.

15   Ibid., 486–489. Also referred to at times as a 'pietre di paragone' were those publicly displayed stones that served as a reference for standard measurements in local use. Cf. Lugli 2010.

16   In this light, van Eyck's diptych would be seen less as an attempt to demonstrate the singularity of painting, and instead as an attempt to overcome the boundaries between the genres in the smallest possible format while presenting an universal pictorial form intended for devotional purposes.

17   In considering these effects, it is worthwhile to examine a number of other dark black backgrounds. Preimesberger has discussed the example of Dürer's *Self-Portrait* of 1500, see Preimesberger 1999. Not only in the portrait, but in the devotional image as well, then,

a particularly productive image reference, for not only does it present optical and haptic phenomena in a double sense, but also functions as a vivid and stimulating reference to reflection as such.

2   Painted Stone

Although the *Annunciation* diptych in Madrid is one of the earliest 'stone Annunciations,' an even more revolutionary evocation of stone in the medium of paint had already been achieved a full century earlier. Giotto's fresco program in the Cappella degli Scrovegni assembles and transforms perhaps the most consequential early evocations of stone in painting. The pedestals zone of the elongated hall, which reaches up to eye level, presents a variety of frescoed stone surfaces. Arranged in pairs, these *marmi finti* take up the traditional wall decoration, with the stone panels set alongside one another in axial symmetry. With their ambiguous suggestion of the fortuitous play of mineral forms, the frescoed fields allude with remarkable subtlety to actual stone wall paneling.[18]

In a number of respects, the 'aggregate states' of the stone that is given pictorial form in the Arena Chapel open up a meta-pictorial network of relationships, one that links the substances of the production process with the depicted content: in the medium of the lime-bound fresco, pigments derived from mineral substances give rise to a pictorial cycle that in turn reflects various preparatory processes and artificial ways of utilizing stone.[19] The rhythmic *marmi finti* frames, in turn, surround grisaille images of the *Virtues and Vices* (figure 12.3). While the zones of the square marble fields appear planar and extend upward as the delicate encrustations of the framing fields of the chapel as a whole, the painted allegorical figures positioned in the vertical niches appear as artfully elaborated, markedly three-dimensional sculptures.[20] The allegorical figure of *Inconstantia* exemplifies an artistic awareness of a differentiated spectrum of painted stone in a particularly striking way (figure 12.4).

the black background acquires an additional layer of meaning: Antonello da Messina's *Annunziata di Palermo*, which depicts neither the surrounding space nor the archangel, is given a polished, deep-black background not solely by virtue of Mary's unique theological status; it also serves – and moreover in a way that closely parallels van Eyck – to incorporate the subtle mirror effects of the beholder's space into the image, thereby linking it directly with the depicted space.

18   Cf. Cordez 2019. On the application of stone wall cladding, cf. Flood 2016.

19   See also Barry 2020, 31.

20   Pisani 2004. On the context of the cycle, cf. Poeschke 2003, 184–223, as well as Schwarz 2010. On *marmi finti,* cf. Luisi 2008; Cordez 2013.

FIGURE 12.3   Giotto, narrative panels with virtues and vices, *c.*1305, fresco cycle, Arena
Chapel (Cappella degli Scrovegni), Padua
PUBLIC DOMAIN

The wavering, unstable figure, depicted in monochrome gray, balances on a
slanting marble surface that is given varicolored speckling in a particularly
striking pattern. Here, the enigmatic stone patterning alludes in its own pecu-
liar language to the unforeseeable, the unpredictable.[21]

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21   Cf. Rath 2019.

FIGURE 12.4   Giotto, *Inconstantia*, narrative panels with virtues and vices, *c.*1305, fresco cycle,
Arena Chapel (Cappella degli Scrovegni), Padua

This painterly evocation of the *Virtues and Vices en grisaille*, with their quality of being 'carved in stone,' which is to say supratemporal and abstract, are subordinate to the more lifelike rendering of the *Life of Christ*, with its dazzling colors. They therefore seem related to the stone imitation in van Eyck's *Annunciation* only to a limited degree.[22] It would be difficult, however, to overestimate the influence exerted by Giotto's painted stone fields. Countless wall paintings in the succeeding period refer in a variety of ways to such simulated stone decorations. The colorful fields that cover the wall below Agnolo Gaddi's fresco of the *Annunciation* in the Cappella del Sacro Cingolo in Prato, which forms a pedestal zone in a comparable fashion, and whose alternating colors evoke a variety of marble types, are related to Giotto's precedent, as are the areas that presumably imitate stone in Fra Angelico's *Annunciation* in San Marco. With these and many other examples, such iconographically vacant areas of the pictorial space, which bear neither figural nor landscape motifs, but instead present a naturally privileged play of colors and forms, were able to carve out a sphere of unbounded creative invention under the dictum of painterly evocations of stone.[23]

In an exemplary fashion, the floor and wall areas of Fra Angelico's *Annunciation* in San Giovanni Valdarno present decorative fields that have manifestly become emancipated from the ancillary imitation of natural stone surfaces (figure 12.5). Colored highlights emerge from the gray ground in an irregular rhythm. Merging with one another without being delineated by contours, the blotches of color on the floor and walls form individual pulsating centers, intensifying into a dynamic whirl of color. Appearing as non-representational areas of color in many other devotional images from the Quattrocento, in works by Giovanni di Francesco Toscani, Zanobi Strozzi, Benozzo Gozzoli, and Bartolomeo Caporali, are comparable floor and wall fields, which are moreover barely reminiscent of natural stone structures. As preliminary forms of pictorial figuration, they are interpretable as references, immanent to the works, to the substrate character of the pigments, and hence also to the processual substance of the genesis of these images.[24]

Traceable in the Quattrocento beginning with Giotto's differentiated treatment of stone in Padua are two diverging branches of the planar evocation of stone: first, a growing variety of painterly depictions of natural mineral

22   See also the use of 'grisaille' in Bellini and Mantegna as the merging of monochrome figures and expressively charged carved stone in a single image. Blumenröder 2008; Cat. Berlin etc. 2018.

23   Didi-Huberman 1990; Rath 2019.

24   Cf. in general Engel & Hadjinicolaou 2016; Rath 2020.

FIGURE 12.5   Fra Angelico, *Annunciation*, *c.*1430–1432, tempera on panel, 195 cm × 158 cm,
              Museo della Basilica di Santa Maria delle Grazie, San Giovanni Valdarno
              PUBLIC DOMAIN

structures, in particular on the basis of a growing knowledge and harvesting
of the most diverse types of marble – leading toward a veritable catalog of
types, as in Andrea del Castagno's *Last Supper* (figure 12.6).[25] And secondly,
arriving in the wake of Lorenzo Monaco and via the circle around Fra Angelico,
there are the free, abstract floor and wall fields that depart markedly from nat-
ural models, and which at the same time represents a link between productive
processes of painterly inventiveness and natural processes of form-generation.
The process of a *natura naturans* that seems to form itself spontaneously is
mirrored in these rich painterly evocations of multicolored marble, agate

25   Dunlop 2015.

FIGURE 12.6   Andrea del Castagno, *Last Supper*, 1445–1450, fresco, 453 cm × 975 cm,
 Sant'Apollonia, Florence
 PUBLIC DOMAIN

crosssections, and other minerals, as well as in contemporary examinations of fortuitous imagery, iconic ambiguity, and divine form-creation.[26] Consequently, these colored fields must be read as intrinsic to art, as a reflective preoccupation with the painting process, and with the materials utilized, conceived now as autonomously active.[27]

3   Mineral Synergy

In relation to the bifurcation in painting between naturalistic imitation and unfettered imagination, the frescoed stone fields of the Scrovegni Chapel form an initial reference point for subsequent intermedial decorative processes. Frescoed stone fields often entered into provocative dialogue with real mineral wall cladding. A particularly eloquent example is the decoration of the Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal (Cappella di San Giacomo) in the Olivetan Church of San Miniato al Monte, whose stone surfaces echo one another in diverse and intermedial ways (figures 12.7–12.13). The chapel – erected in 1460, consecrated in 1466, its decoration completed in 1468 – was designed as the burial site of the

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26   Janson 1961; Baltrušaitis 1984, chap. 2 *Bilder im Stein*; Gamboni 2002; Rosenberg 2007; Rosenberg 2016. That this phenomenon is also encountered north of the Alps is exemplified by Albrecht Dürer's *Man of Sorrows* in Karlsruhe. Cf. Fricke 2020.

27   Cf. Rath 2020.

FIGURE 12.7   Entrance of the Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal (Cappella del Cardinale del Portogallo), 1460–1468, width of chapel 480 cm, San Miniato al Monte, Florence
PUBLIC DOMAIN

FIGURE 12.8   Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal (Cappella del Cardinale del Portogallo),
               1460–1468, width of chapel 480 cm, San Miniato al Monte, Florence
               PHOTO: KERMES RESTAURO

Cardinal of Portugal (James of Portugal), who died in August 1459. The original
scheme was the work of the Brunelleschi student Antonio Manetti; following
his death, supervision of the project was transferred to Giovanni Rossellini.[28]

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28   On the chapel's construction and decoration, as well as its iconography, cf. the essential
      contribution by Hartt, Corti & Kennedy 1964, and the review of Warnke 1967; see also
      Hansmann 1993; Koch 1996; Apfelstadt 2000; and Ng 2020.

Contributing to the design of the chapel – which can hence be regarded as a revealing example of a many-sided collaboration between the arts and between artists – were Alesso Baldovinetti, Stefano di Bartolommeo, Antonio di Manetto Ciaccheri, Antonio di Tuccio Manetti, Antonio and Piero Pollaiuolo, Luca della Robbia, as well as Antonio and Bernardo Rossellino, alongside numerous workshop assistants, and hence a cross-section of the most important Florentine artists of the time.

Through a highly ramified network, the young deceased cardinal and his family were closely tied to Florence and to the Medici. The particular interest on the part of the Republic is evident to begin with in the state financing of his immensely costly funeral. Subsequently as well, the project was closely associated with financial and political priorities.[29] Commissioned with the chapel's construction, and in particular its decoration, designed to perpetuate James's memory, alongside younger Florentine artists were older and more experienced figures.[30] Recognizable here is an attempt on the part of Bishop Álvaro Afonso – whose meritoriousness is declared prominently in the inscription at the entrance – to elicit a reciprocal stimulation between the arts, their capacities, and their styles (figure 12.8). The intertwining and fertile borrowing of motifs and forms, of colors, and in particular of materials, shape the character of the chapel as a *Gesamtkunstwerk*.[31] From a practical perspective, multiple borrowings and transgressions testify to the close temporal and artistic interrelatedness of the executants. The intended effect, meanwhile, consisted in an evocation of the interconnection and transgression of the spheres of existence that is as multilayered as it is intertwined, and one that is rendered tangible in and through the pictorial program of Christian faith while achieving a transcendence of worldly life.

By virtue of its artistic presentation of the materials, which extend from the floor to the ceiling, the chapel offers a particularly incisive example of an ensemble that relies upon the artful use of both stone and imitations of mineral substances.[32]

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29   Apfelstadt 2000. Cf. also regarding the political dimension of synagonism, grounded in engagement and competition, Karagiannis & Wagner 2005.

30   Hansmann 1993, 294–295.

31   Warnke was the first to introduce the term 'Gesamtkunstwerk' (total work of art) in this context. Warnke 1967, 261; cf. also Hansmann 1993, n. 36, who points out that in later comparable projects, conceptual supervision was entrusted to a single artist, again emphasizing the reciprocal involvement of the executants in the cardinal's chapel. Cf. also, with inclusion of the chapel light, Fehrenbach 2021, 51–53.

32   Hansmann emphasizes that 'concerning the overall impact ... evidently planned from the beginning, the precious stone encrustations that extend across all of the walls are a

Set into the wall of the left-hand side aisle of the Benedictine church, the entrance to the chapel is flanked by a pilastered arcade that is taken up again in the three interior wall surfaces as a framing device.[33] The elaborate marble tomb of the Cardinal by Antonio Rossellino is located in the niche to the right of the entrance. Like the arched reveals of the other niches, this one is also decorated by cassettes with gilded stucco flowers. A fictitious marble curtain, originally painted and gilded, is tied back from the arch to reveal the sarcophagus, the effigy, the angels and the Madonna and Child against a background of porphyry once decorated with a gilded pattern.

The central wall niche, which contains the altar and is visible from the outside, is dominated by a monumental altarpiece by the Pollaiuolo brothers, which depicts Saints Vincent and Eustace alongside centrally positioned Saint James, thereby bringing together the name, titular, and national saints of the deceased (figure 12.9).[34] Observable here are reciprocal connections between the neighboring decorative elements of 'discrete' works. The color and materiality of Eustace's red ermine coat, for example, is echoed immediately above in the frescoed curtain pulled aside by angels. This curtain too is ennobled by its red exterior and ermine lining. But mineral transgressions emanate from the altar painting as well. Striking here is their elevated placement within the picture space, on a richly ornamented pavement consisting of stone intarsia: set before an expansive landscape, they seem to stand before a balustrade on a high roof terrace, while the *opus sectile* of the painted floor, whose colored inserts function as significant markings within the image, take up the elaborate stone incrustations of the surroundings. The position of St. James is particularly significant, for he stands on a circle consisting of porphyry. The ennobling significance of this precious material was intimately bound up with the political self-image of the City of Florence and of the Medici.[35] The red porphyry generates a manifest connection with another representative

decisive, if not a dominating factor'. Neglected by this statement, however, is the fact that the encrustations by no means consist exclusively of cut stone, but are also supplemented by painted and ceramic surfaces. Hansmann 1993, 296.

33   Sherman 1992, 76–78.

34   Warnke 1967, 262. In his discussion of the works executed jointly by the Pollaiuolo brothers, Vasari mentions this panel first: 'Per la qual cosa spronato dalla vergogna più che dallo utile, appresa in non molti mesi la pratica del colorire diventò maestro eccellente, et unitosi in tutto con Piero lavorarono in compagnia dimolte pitture; fra le quali, per dilettarsi molto del colorito, fecero al cardinale di Portogallo una tavola ad olio in San Miniato al Monte fuori di Fiorenza, la quale fu posta su lo altare della sua cappella, e vi dipinsero dentro S. Iacopo apostolo, S. Eustachio e San Vincenzio, che sonostati molto lodati'. Vasari 1966–1987, III, 502–503. The original Pollaiolo altarpiece is in the Uffizi, replaced in the Chapel by a copy.

35   Butters 1996; Schmuhl 2016.

FIGURE 12.9   Antonio and Piero del Pollaiuolo, Cardinal del Portogallo altarpiece, *c.*1466,
                Tempera and oil on oak panel, 172 cm × 179 cm, Uffizi, Florence
                PUBLIC DOMAIN

decorative scheme, one underpinned by a comparable material-based iconography, namely the chapel in the Palazzo Medici.[36]

The wall niche on the left-hand side is occupied by an elaborately decorated stone throne, whose backrest is made of porphyry, as are the sides. On September 27, 1466, Baldovinetti was commissioned to paint 'tutt'e vani della Chappella' for the sum of one hundred and twenty florins. The mural cycle consists of four lunettes with the four Evangelists and the Fathers of the Western Church, ten spandrels with prophets and patriarchs. Baldovinetti's *Annunciation* panel fills this section of the wall precisely; it is surmounted by a frescoed,

36   Beyer 1993. On the role of the Medici in the design of the burial chapel, cf. Hansmann 1993.

FIGURE 12.10   Alesso Baldovinetti, *Annunciation*, *c.*1466, fresco. Below throne with colored
stone inlays by Antonio Rossellino, Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal (Cap-
pella del Cardinale del Portogallo)
PUBLIC DOMAIN

arched field that contains natural motifs and is perforated centrally by a circu-
lar window (figure 12.10).[37] In a set of dialogical references, the stone panels

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37   The central niche too displays an oculus in the same position, while the right-hand side
      of the tomb niche displays a round blind window & filled with a relief tondo depicting a

FIGURE 12.11   Antonio Rossellino, *Tomb of Cardinal James of Lusitania*, *c.*1466, Chapel of the
                Cardinal of Portugal, Basilica of San Miniato al Monte, Florence
                PUBLIC DOMAIN

of the throne and its framing wall cladding are taken up above in the painted fields, enhancing one another reciprocally in their multiple effects.

The total conception, designed by Bishop Álvaro, envisioned an all-encompassing decorative scheme featuring precious stone encrustations, as documented by the early placement of an order for costly stone material from Rome, namely porphyry for the ornamentation of the chapel.[38] Additional evocations of this stone underscore the reciprocal references that character-ize this intermedial decorative scheme. The rear wall of the cardinal's tomb, positioned opposite, also takes up the royal color of this stone, while for-merly, additional gold ornamentation simulated a monumental stone cloth of honor, echoing the one that is suspended behind the Virgin in Baldovinetti's painting.[39]

The bright white tomb of the youthful cardinal consists of a base that bears antique-style pictorial formulae and carries a sarcophagus, together with its recumbent *gisant*, as well as six figures of angels, the uppermost pair carrying the crowning marble tondo depicting Mary and the Christ Child set against a blue background (figure 12.11). This niche is framed by a finely rendered, fic-tive marble curtain that is pinned back to reveal the monument, endowing it with the character of an ephemeral *tableau vivant;* this cloth has a painted pendant in the frescoed curtain of the central niche. The angels holding this curtain are depicted in the very same posture as the marble angels, but in a mirrored arrangement: colorfulness and liveliness on the one hand and the supra-temporal and pure form of the pure white stone on the other hand are reciprocally transferred through this superimposition.

The floor and ceiling of the burial chapel betray an even more explicit rela-tionship: Stefano di Bartolommeo's extraordinarily skillful cosmatesque-style geometric flooring consists of three squares set one within the next, the inner-most square filled by five circles (figure 12.12). As a continuous strip, the four colorful lateral ring forms circumscribe an uninterrupted movement. Not unlike the chromatic borrowings, the underlying geometric forms proliferate through the larger space. Mediated by the oculi and tondo positioned above, these rounded surfaces are taken up again in the tondi of the cupola. The vault is clad entirely in brilliantly colored terracotta work from the hand of Luca della Robbia (figure 12.13). While the central tondo present the *Holy Ghost* in the form of a dove surrounded by seven candelabra (hence completing the

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half-figure of the Virgin. The windows follow a deliberate overall lighting scheme and may be conceived as an intermedial element. On the lighting design, see Ng 2020.

38   Hartt, Corti & Kennedy 1964, 51; Hansmann 1993, n. 20.

39   Hartt, Corti & Kennedy 1964, 20; Ng 2020, 248.

FIGURE 12.12   Stefano di Bartolommeo, geometric flooring of the Chapel of the Cardinal of
Portugal, 1460–1468, San Miniato al Monte, Florence
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Annunciation below), the tondi occupying the corners of the vault contain the
four *Cardinal Virtues,* personified as angels. The arrangement on the chapel
ceiling of Cardinal James of Portugal seems to follow the biblical verses from
James 3:17: 'But the *wisdom from above* is first pure, then peaceable, gentle,
willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or
hypocrisy'.

The blue-and-white color scheme of the kiln-fired ceramic images echo the
same colors in the image of the Virgin above the tomb. The tondi seem to float
before a contrasting pattern of geometric cubes.[40] Despite its allusion to the
mosaic elements of the flooring, this pattern possesses an optical autonomy,
since the cubic forms are not distributed uniformly across the interspaces and
pendentives, and instead acquire physical presence by being rotated depend-
ing upon spatial orientation. In flickering candlelight, the darker elements of
the blue, yellow, and black cubes in particular must have generated a variegated

40   On early forms of this pattern, cf. Warnke 1967, 259.

FIGURE 12.13   Luca della Robbia, ceiling decoration, glazed terracotta, Chapel of the
                 Cardinal of Portugal, 1460–1468, San Miniato al Monte, Florence
                 PUBLIC DOMAIN

play of light.[41] As with the use of porphyry, the inclusion of this elaborate decorative element was incorporated already in the early phase of the concept for
the tomb – as early as 14 April 1461, Luca della Robbia received a commission
from Bishop Álvaro; he would ultimately complete the crowning work for the
chapel in August of the following year.[42] In a certain respect, finally, the vault
represents a highpoint in the transfer between genres, and one moreover that
enjoys an eminent art-theoretical pedigree: none other than Leonardo da Vinci

41   As with van Eyck, the polished black fields serve as reflexive surfaces within the particular
      lighting condition prevailing in the chapel.
42   Warnke 1967, 259. The della Robbia workshop provided comparable ceiling decorations
      for other chapels, among them the Cappella Martini in San Giobbe, Venice.

regarded the colorfully glazed terracotta work of della Robbia as a special form through which painting was transferred into the solidity of sculpture.[43]

When it comes to the decisive question of the reciprocal fertilization of the arts, this ensemble, so tightly coordinated both temporally and artistically, is particularly instructive; rarely do we encounter such a dense concentration of highly charged references.[44]

Another striking detail, which has been treated only in passing, can be interpreted as an interplay of natural and reciprocal artistic design. Appearing between the recumbent figure of the deceased cardinal and the tondo of the Virgin is an encrusted, blue and red, architecturally framed lattice structure. At the center of this decorative element is an intarsia square consisting of an axially symmetrical, horizontal slice of black and white petrified wood set within a pale, veined onyx frame (figure 12.14).[45] Its richly contrasting, splinter pattern makes a strong impression, and is conditioned by the stark black and white chromatic contrast, whose symmetrical arrangement serves as a stimulus to identify the shapes. Its latent figuration oscillates between preserved footprints, a heart, the letter v, and a shaded face. While the lattice structure was linked recently to comparable 'half-open' lattice structures found in contemporary reliquaries and sanctuaries,[46] the reciprocal reference to the balustrade latticework on the altar retabel of the Pollaiuolo brothers has been overlooked to date. Suspended there, between comparable columns, is a grid of golden cables which reveals a view of the expansive riverine landscape in the background. Presented to the viewer through this diamond pattern is an interplay of water and earth, the elements whose interaction has been regarded by traditional mineralogy ever since Aristotle and Albertus Magnus as giving rise to rock formations.[47] According to Albertus, the formation process results from the influence of a specific formative force, the virtus mineralis lapidis formativa, which, depending on local and stellar disposition, ex virtute stellarum et loci, produces diverse rock varieties from earth and water. In this sense, the stone panel, positioned within the grid structure between the tomb and the image of Mary, seems to demonstratively scenarize fundamental formative

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43   Kuhn 1988, as well as, on a transitional form of this work, Cambareri 2016.

44   Cf. also Hansmann 1993, 301 & 307. The Cappella del Cardinale del Portogallo Viele harbors many further forms of compositional and material interference, a circumstance that brought it not just praise, but also later criticism of its supposed decorative overexuberance. Cf. ibid., n. 55.

45   On the question of materials, cf. Hartt, Corti & Kennedy 1964, 82; Warnke 1967, 263; Hansmann 1993, n. 23.

46   Ng 2020, 254.

47   Cf. Strunz 1951/52; Magnus 1967.

FIGURE 12.14   Antonio Rossellino, *Tomb of Cardinal James of Lusitania* (detail), *c.*1466,
                Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal, Basilica of San Miniato al Monte, Florence

processes – and the iconic latencies inherent in stone. To a point, what we see here is a natural-historically based, stone-formed visual theology. Circulating up until the present is the supposition that the stone panel consists of petrified wood, which further reinforces the interpretation proposed here of a remembrance that is translated here into permanence through art. However, the most recent restoration, completed last summer, has yielded no new evidence in this regard. Instead, it seems likely that it is a an 'open stain' slab of black and white Aquitaine marble.[48]

With regard to its processual character and aesthetic impact, the artistic decoration of the chapel displays a marked affinity for this framed natural form: all of the arts are manifest in this place of commemoration. The process of transgression visualized here through the interplay of the arts finds a divinely authorized prototype in the petrified structure, transformed by nature, and hence by God. These decorations, designed to harmonize with the natural forms and the multicolored slices of stone, generates a larger image which inserts the tomb of the prematurely deceased cardinal into a divine history of salvation and providence. Visualized here in particular through variations in the mineral materials – the fired, colorfully glazed clay of the ceiling, the colorful stone encrustations, as well as the painted and frescoed *marmi finti* – is the divinely sanctioned process of *natura naturans* and an artistically consummated *natura naturata*. The celestial act of the creation of the natural forms finds its homage and appreciation in the act of creation that produces the artistic forms.

4 Sliced Colors

Giorgio Vasari begins his introduction to the *Vite* with the treatment of stone, and moreover with porphyry.[49] For him, this mineral – the object of special esteem historically – represents the noblest type of stone, since it is the hardest, and hence most permanent, as well as the most difficult to process, which is to say that it harbors within itself a materially intrinsic agonal disposition, one that in the best instances results in a celebrated and long-lived work through a collaboration between a natural material and a technically skilled artist.[50]

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48 My cordial thanks to Maria Maugeri and Andrea Vigna for the relevant information.

49 Vasari 1966–1987, I/II, 31, Cap. I, *Delle diverse pietre che servono agl'architetti per gl'ornamenti e per le statue della Scultura.*

50 Cf. Burioni 2006, 13; interpretable in this sense, arguably, are the painted evocations of porphyry found on the reverses and Jacometto Veneziano's portrait of Alvise Contarini

It seems logical, then, that Vasari prefers stone inlay work over the inarguably lively yet more fragile work in wooden intarsia: 'It [the relatively straightforward production method of wooden intarsia] results in a large production of such works, and this métier brings forth compositions with figures, fruits, and animals, some of them incredibly lifelike. Such works, however, soon darken, and do little more than imitate painting, compared to which they are less important, and given the effect of woodworm and fires, less permanent as well. That is why their production is regarded as wasted effort, even when they are thoroughly praiseworthy and display genuine mastery'.[51]

Works in stone inlay display comparable natural motifs, and just as often, yet Vasari regards them as far more permanent and hence more praiseworthy. A particularly telling example is Vasari's discussion of chiaroscuro mosaics, whose artistry – as earlier with Giotto and van Eyck – resides both in the limited colors employed, and in the *painterly* effect that nonetheless results. Consequently, these works signify a coordinated exchange between painter and sculptor or stonecutter: 'This art is of such innovative and lasting quality that presented with a black-and-white inlaid image, one could hardly wish for anything better or more beautiful. It is composed from three types of marble which originate from the mountains of Carrara: one is a white, very fine and flawless; the other is also white, but with a bluish tinge, so that it represents a middle value in relation to the white; the third is a gray marble that tends toward silver, and is used for the dark surfaces. If one wishes to create a figure using them, one begins by fashioning a chiaroscuro cartoon using the same tonal values. Then the middle, dark, and pale tones are used to execute the contours, and the flawless pale marble set inside of them, the middle marble next to it, and the dark marble alongside it, in conformity with the outlines provided by the artist in his cartoon. When all of the marble pieces, the pale, the dark, and the medium, have been assembled into the work and laid out flat on the floor, the artist who prepared the cartoon takes a brush dipped in diluted black paint and delineates the contours on the dark surfaces of the

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(1485–95) and Leonardo's portrait of Ginevra de' Benci (1474/1478), as well as, earlier, on the eight frames by Jan van Eyck that imitate marble or porphyry: since their unchanging documentation (entirely in the Albertian sense) of the portrayed figure corresponded to the permanence of the mineral.

51   'E così s'è causato che molte opere vi si sono fatte e si sono in questa professione lavorate storie di figure, frutti et animali, che invero alcune cose sono vivissime; ma per essere cosa che tosto diventa nera e non contrafà se non la pittura, sendo da meno di quella e poco durabile per i tarli e per il fuoco, è tenuto tempo buttato invano, ancora che e' sia pure e lodevole e maestrevole'. Vasari 1966–1987, I, 157. As Vasari mentions, precisely this hard, noble porphyry is not fire-resistant (it loses its luster and splits).

marble, just as one takes up a pen and uses contour lines and hatchings to execute a chiaroscuro drawing on a sheet of paper. Finally, the sculptor uses his tools to carve all of the lines and contours specified by the painter, making grooves everywhere in the work where the brush has left behind black lines.... Once this is done, the work does indeed appear like the surface of a painting, its extraordinary power uniting skillfulness and mastery'.[52] The special quality of the art of stonecutting is associated with its ability to mimic the effect of the 'surface of a painting,' and hence parallels the effect achieved by van Eyck's grisaille, namely to evoke the appearance of sculpture by means of the artful interlocking of a reduced range of chromatic tones on a planar ground. Here, mastery is demonstrated by using the resources of a sculptural genre in the successful production of pictorial forms that are borrowed from the neighboring genre of painting.

The pictorial, aesthetic, and philosophical qualities of stone inlay and the framing of petrified materials were discussed above with reference to Cappella del Cardinale del Portogallo. Displayed repeatedly by *pietra dura* centerpieces as well is an oscillation between natural patterning and its counterpart, the generation of patterns from preexisting schema (*disegno*). It therefore seems especially remarkable that a tabletop that was recently linked directly to Vasari makes no use of the natural motifs so typical of painting – and hence guides the principle of disegno into a field that is situated between ornamentation and nonobjective form. Presented at the art fair TEFAF in Maastricht in 2018, flanked by Alessandro Allori's life-sized *Portrait of Francesco I de' Medici,* and enjoying a distinguished provenance, was a *pietra dura* tabletop, today on

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52   'Questa arte ha tanto del buono, del nuovo e del durabile, che per pittura commessa di bianco e nero poco più si puote desiderare di bontà e di bellezza. Il componimento suo si fa di tre sorte marmi che vengono de' monti di Carrara, l'uno de' quali è bianco finissimo e candido, l'altro non è bianco ma pende in livido, che fa mez[z]o a quel bianco, et il terzo è un marmo bigio, di tinta che trae in argentino, che serve per iscuro. Di questi volendo fare una figura, se ne fa un cartone di chiaro e scuro con le mede sime tinte; e ciò fatto, per i dintorni di que' mez[z]i e scuri e chiari a' luoghi loro si commette nel mez[z]o con diligenzia il lume di quel marmo candido, e così i mez[z]i, e gli scuri allato a que' mez[z]i, secondo i dintorni stessi che nel cartone ha fatto l'artefice. E quando ciò hanno commesso insieme e spianato di sopra tutti i pezzi de' marmi, così chiari come scuri e come mez[z] i, pigl[i]a lo artefice che ha fatto il cartone un pennello di nero temperato, quando tutta l'opra è insieme commessa in terra, e tutta sul marmo la tratteggia e proffila dove sono gli scuri, a guisa che si contorna, tratteggia e proffila con la penna una carta che avesse disegnata di chiaro o scuro. Fatto ciò, lo scultore viene incavando coi ferri tutti quei tratti e proffili che il pittore ha fatti, e tutta l'opra incava dovunque ha disegnato di nero il pennello.... Il che fatto, resta l'opera in una maniera che ella pare veramente pittura in piano, et ha in sé grandissima forza con arte e con maestria'. Vasari 1966–1987, I, 152ff.

FIGURE 12.15A   Bernardino di Porfirio da Leccio (sculptor) and Giorgio Vasari (designer), *Pietre Dure Tabletop* (*Tavolino di Gioie*), *c.*1568–1577, marble encrusted with semi-precious stones, English 17th century style giltwood stand, 160 × 107 × 8 cm, Louvre Abu Dhabi, in: Robilant & Voena / Burzio (Hg.): The Medici and Westminster Pietre Dure Tabletop, Brochure for TEFAF 2018, Published on Oct 17, 2018, 1, 13

display at the Louvre Abu Dhabi (figures 12.15a, 12.15b).[53] This object consists of a complex system of colored stone pieces that form a geometric symphony of colors and forms. Marble fillets link together a refined network of circles and ovals, rectangles, lozenges, and amphora-like forms. The center is occupied by a symmetrical lapis lazuli oval veined with yellow and white, which is ringed by additional ovals and circles and framed by four rectangular agate slices, nearly identical in size, in a cruciform arrangement; found at the corners are large, lapis lazuli, diagonally positioned, blossom-style amphorae, which form a transition to the corners of the table. In a symmetrical and harmonious arrangement, all of the interspaces are filled by additional forms, all the way down to the smallest circular, drop-shaped, or lozenge-shaped compartments. Developing from the simplest geometric colored elements, among them circles, rectangles, and ovals, is a spectacle of shifting colored forms whose playful

53   Cf. www.louvreabudhabi.ae/en/explore/highlights-of-the-collection/tavolino-di-gioie (accessed 25.01.2023).

FIGURE 12.15B   Side view 12.15a

variations – in particular through the inevitably arising oscillation among the alternating mineral colors – allows them to radiate an almost pulsating liveliness despite the overall symmetry of the arrangement. The inventory number still visible on the reverse of the tabletop can be reconstructed, allowing the piece to be traced further back; corresponding entries are found in the numerous inventories of the Palazzo Pitti, which the tabletop entered in the late 18th century through Ferdinando II de' Medici. Ferdinando was the great nephew of Francesco de' Medici, who had been Grand Duke of Tuscany beginning in 1574, succeeding his father Cosimo I. The archival sources extend all the way back to him.[54]

In the second edition of the *Vite*, Vasari tells of the production of such a tabletop in the context of his description of the lives of the members of the *Accademia del disegno*: 'His Excellency [Francesco de' Medici] also commissioned the making of a richly decorated little table [tavolino di gioie], intended as a counterpart to another one [owned by] Duke Cosimo, his father, which had been completed not very long ago according to a design by Vasari. It is an exquisite piece, entirely in Oriental alabaster with large pieces of jasper and heliotrope, carnelian, lapis lazuli, and agate, as well as other precious stones and jewels, having a value of altogether 20,000 scudi. This table was made by

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54   Colle 2018.

Bernardino di Porfirio from Leccio, who is highly skilled in the production of such things, and who also created an octagon[al?] table in jasper, inlaid with ebony and ivory, for Bindo Altoviti, after a drawing by Vasari: this same Bernardino is now in the service of his Excellency'.[55] This table – whose completion required many years due to the rarity and expansiveness of the materials employed – was presumably fashioned by Bernardino after Vasari's designs in the Casino Mediceo di San Marco.[56]

A brief look at comparable tabletops may help to clarify the unusual status and relevance of such objects for the complex of synagonism: a tabletop that is today in the Prado was sent from Rome to Philip II of Spain in 1587 by Cardinal Michele Bonelli, the nephew of Pope Pius V (figure 12.16). The unusual proportions of the inlaid elements are intended to evoke the impression that these are primarily in precious stones. The table measures 260 × 136 cm, and is hence far larger than the Medici tabletop; at the same time, the proportion of agate, jasper, lapis lazuli, and African and white marble is far lower. Here too, the ornamental forms are drawn from nature: readily recognizable are blossoms, leaves, and fruits. Also preserved in the Prado is a tabletop once belonging to Rodrigo Calderón, secretary to Philip III (figure 12.17). Its decor, dominated by military motifs, suggests an association with victory at the Battle of Lepanto. It consists of alabaster, lapis lazuli, African, white, and polychromy marble, as well as lydite, also known as *pietra di paragone*. Depicted in Jan van Eyck's diptych, it was identified by Preimesberger as a touchstone for appraising the quality of metals. This *pietra di paragone* was used with conspicuous frequency for tabletops, among them the tabletop formerly belonging to the Duke of Osuna in the Prado, whose center features a coat of arms and military motifs, while the frame tends toward an abstract and geometric play of forms. This object, fashioned in 1614 from lapis lazuli, white marble, polychrome marble, and *pietra di paragone* is once again a collective achievement: the duke's

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55   'Ha dato Sua Eccellenzia principio ancora fare un tavolino di gioie con ricco ornamento per accompagnarne un altro del duca Cosimo suo padre, fini[to], non è molto, col disegno del Vasari, che è cosa rara, commesso tutto nello alabastro orientale, ch'è ne' pezzi grandi di diaspri e eli[t]ropie, corgnole, lapis[lazzari] et aga[t]e, con altre pietre e gioie di pregio che vagliono venti mila scudi. Questo tavolino è stato condotto da Bernardino di Porfirio da Leccio, del contado di Fiorenza, il quale è eccellente in questo, che condusse a messer Bindo Altoviti, parimente di diaspri, un ottangolo, commessi nell'ebano et avorio, col disegno del medesimo Vasari; il quale Bernardino è oggi al servigio di Loro Eccellenzie'. Vasari 1966–1987, VI, 242.

56   Butters 2000.

FIGURE 12.16   Anonymous Roman sculptor, *Philip II's Tabletop*, before 1587, inlay (agate,
                 jasper, lapis lazuli, Africano marble, white marble), 260 × 136 × 7 cm, Museo
                 Nacional del Prado, Madrid
                 IMAGE: © MUSEO NACIONAL DEL PRADO

coat of arms was executed by the German artist Jacopo di Gian Flasch, while
Jacopo Ligozzi was responsible for the vases with flowers.[57]

Roughly contemporary and stylistically comparable is the so-called *Farnese
Table* in the Metropolitan Museum (figures 12.18a, 12.18b, 12.18c).[58] Created
between 1565 and 1573, it too is the result of artistic collaboration: the design is
by Jacopo da Vignola, the marble parts of the base were fashioned by Guglielmo
della Porta and his assistants, and the execution of the *pietra dure* tabletop is
attributed to Giovanni Mynardo (Jean Ménard, active 1525–1582).[59] Its form – a
marble tabletop resting on three marble pillars – mirrors the antique Roman
prototypes of the kind seen in frescoes.[60] The geometric figures – medallions,
cartouche, rectangles, and ovals – are inlaid with such accuracy that the large,
underlying slab of white marble is visible only as fine lines. Set into the cen-
ter of the slab, and surrounded by black slate borders containing *pietra dure*
rosettes and stylized lilies, are two large fields of Egyptian alabaster.

Important here is not just the aesthetic impact of the stone itself. As with
the preceding examples, the varieties of stone and the motifs they are used to

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57   González-Palacios 2001, 85–88.
58   Raggio 1960, 213–31; Cat. New York 2008, 120–122.
59   Cf. Wenderholm 2019, 231.
60   Cat. New York 2008, 122; Morley 1999, 24, 30 and figure 36.

FIGURE 12.17   Anonymous Roman sculptor, *Tabletop of don Rodrigo Calderón*, *c.*1600, inlay
(alabaster, lapis lazuli, Africano marble, white marble, polychrome marble,
paragone), 263 × 133 × 6 cm, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid
IMAGE: © MUSEO NACIONAL DEL PRADO

FIGURE 12.18A   Jacopo Barozzi da Vignola (Design), Guglielmo della Porta (Marble piers),
Giovanni Mynardo (Pietre Dure top), *The Farnese Table*, *c.*1565–1573, inlay
(marble of different colors, semiprecious stones, Egyptian alabaster, residue
of paint of different colors on the piers), 379 × 168 × 95 cm, The Metropolitan
Museum of Art
PUBLIC DOMAIN

FIGURE 12.18B   Detail 12.18a

FIGURE 12.18C   Tabletop, detail 12.18a

create testify to a profound knowledge of the origins of these materials, and are hence suggestive as well of the territorial and cultural claims to power of its owner. The diverse origins of these minerals, but also the use of spolia, involve an additional semantic charge, and one that represents a decisive extension of the above-described iconography of stone as a material.[61]

With the *pietra dure* tabletops, the present discussion of synagonism includes a number of works in stone whose elaborate and intertwining semantics have never – due to their hasty categorization as decorative rather than fine art – been carefully analyzed. While the representational content becomes the focus later in the context of reception, an examination of the conditions of production already brings decisive synagonistic contents to light. Not only is it a question here of works produced by multiple hands and minds through which a variety of forms of expertise challenged one another reciprocally. Since natural processes of color and form were appropriated productively and rendered fruitful here, these works also clarify the utilization and visualization of 'productive nature'.

Finally, this form of the artistic treatment of stone calls into question the boundaries separating the genres, or even overcomes them entirely. In his reference to the fundamental biological structure of stone, regarded now as organic beings composed of individual parts, Giacinto Gimma (1668–1735) refers to precisely such tabletops.[62] In particular, he mentions the celebrated *Tavola di Gemme* belonging to Rudolf II, which gives the impression of being cut from a single piece of stone rather than assembled from varicolored pieces. In fact, the landscapes, trees, and birds that decorate the table are shaped as expressively as any painted picture: '[le] cose naturali erano così bene *espresse*, che *una pittura* più tosto appariva …'.[63] Accordingly, the singularly expressive force – the *bene espressione* – of the inlay work seems to place it in a category that transcends individual genres.

In the ambiguity between collaboration and independence, between demarcation and organic intertwining, between simmering chromatic potency and artful invention, the tabletops display a multifaceted spectacle. These works in contoured, cut stone strive toward a transgression of the sculptural material and toward an involvement with the neighboring genre of painting. In the field of painting, in frescoed stone surfaces, for example, mineral pigments

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61   Wenderholm 2019.

62   Cf. van Gastel 2018.

63   Cf. Gimma 1730, 1, 264. Here, Gimma references Anselmus de Boodt (1550–1632), who achieved fame for his *chef d'oeuvre Gemmarum et Lapidum Historia* (1609), 7–8.

were used to create durable colored surfaces; in stone inlay works, the mineral materials were composed like colored surfaces to form an overall image. Both the chiaroscuro floorings as well as the *pietra dura* tabletops drew upon the painterly characteristics of the two-dimensional image, making it the standard of aesthetic excellence. Serving as a source of inspiration for the artistic treatment of stone in the early modern period – just as with painterly simulation of stone statuettes or frescoed *marmi finti*, as well as with intermedial decorative schemes – was an aesthetic rapprochement with a neighboring art form that resulted in productive collaborations that were based on eminently synagonistic principles.

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Index

The present volume explores for the first time the concept of synagonism (from "σύν", "together" and "ἀγών", "struggle") for an analysis of the productive exchanges between early modern painting, sculpture, architecture, and other art forms in theory and practice. In doing so, it builds on current insights regarding the so-called paragone debate, seeing this, however, as only one, too narrow perspective on early modern artistic production. Synagonism, rather, implies a breaking up of the schematic connections between art forms and individual senses, drawing attention to the multimediality and intersensoriality of art, as well as the relationship between image and body.

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