

ELOQUENCE AND IMAGERY: THE FUNCTION
OF FRA ANGELICO'S FRESCOES IN THE
CHAPEL OF POPE NICHOLAS V

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Abstract

Fra Angelico's fresco cycle of the lives and martyrdoms of SS. Stephen and Lawrence in the Chapel of Nicholas V (1447-49) communicate in a style which seems to be rhetorical in the sense that they employ numerous strategies which appear to aim at persuading viewers of the truth of the ideological notions the frescoes convey. This fact encourages one to consider the specific pressures which the context of the frescoes' production may have exerted. Commissioned by a pope who had the training of a professional humanist - and who, as a humanist, had interest in the efficacy of rhetoric - these frescoes convey their messages with a persuasive pictorial 'eloquence' which, in some respects, corresponds to or plays off on humanist definitions of eloquence. The following study attempts to explain what messages these frescoes were meant to communicate, and how their manner of communication is rhetorical. The rhetorical style becomes a method of conveying old ideas in new ways, and may have made the messages more resonant in the context in which they were meant to function.

A paucity of primary documentation on the frescoes makes this type of evaluation difficult. Problems in identifying the frescoes' intended audience and working on the troublesome ground between the rhetorical nature of

written and pictorial texts also complicates this investigation. Nevertheless, by considering the problems and aims of Nicholas V's pontificate, and by closely examining the subject matter, organization, and expression of the frescoes, some indication as to their probable function may be gained.

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INTRODUCTION

It is from a consideration of function that this thesis would like to examine a possible relationship between humanist interests in rhetoric and the frescoes in the chapel of Pope Nicholas V in the Vatican, which were painted by Fra Angelico and his assistants sometime between 1447 and 1449.¹ I would like to examine the possibility that the genre of chapel decoration was slightly readjusted by the context of Nicholas V's court, where, alongside traditional papal concerns, there was also the humanistic interests of Nicholas V who, like most humanists, promoted the eloquent communication of ideas and thus also promoted humanist eloquence as a useful and effective tool in the context of institutional power. The frescoes, I would like to propose, represent an instance where the deliberative and demonstrative aspects of humanist rhetoric found expression in visual art. The modifications of the genre of chapel decoration, which I shall define, are subtle but

¹ See Creighton Gilbert, "Fra Angelico's Fresco Cycles in Rome: Their Number and Dates," Zeitschrift fur Kunstgeschichte 38 (1975): 245-265. See also the discussion of the dates in John Pope-Hennessy, Fra Angelico (London: Phaidon, 1974), 212-213. The decorations in this chapel were only part of more extensive fresco decorations which Nicholas V had commissioned. This thesis discusses only the cycle in Nicholas V's chapel.

significant, and may have engendered a variety of responses from those who viewed them.

The defining of these reworkings of traditional subjects and formal arrangements for which I am arguing are difficult to pinpoint. Invariably there exist other exceptions to the conventions, and different reasons for explaining these variations other than the ones I would like to promote. This study therefore proceeds along a thin border between possibility and probability, though hopefully keeping closer contact with the latter.

There are a number of problems. One difficulty lies in the precision with which the social context of the frescoes can be fixed, and this includes not only the defining of the particular interests and concerns of the patron, but the identity of the audience whom the frescoes addressed.² The decorations in Nicholas V's chapel were obviously not meant to be viewed by the public (even though, like public images, they could serve didactic ends). The only viewer who can be

² In the recent studies by Gail Geiger and Patricia Rubin [Gail L. Geiger, *Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel. Renaissance Art in Rome* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Edward Brothers, 1986) and Patricia Rubin, "The Private Chapel of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese in the Cancelleria, Rome," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 50 (1987): 82-112], both authors include detailed accounts of the activity of the patrons, and both document humanist activity in the respective courts of Cardinals Oliviero Carafa and Alessandro Farnese. In the case of Patricia Rubin's study, though, the patrons' interests and the common expectations of the humanist, courtly audience are argued as being the fundamental impetus behind the frescoes' innovations. This, as opposed to the patron desiring to present himself as a certain kind of individual to others, which Geiger admits as crucial (pp. 142-146).

identified with certainty is Nicholas V himself. However, it is reasonable to assume that the frescoes were meant for a larger audience made up of the ecclesiasts and dignitaries visiting the papal court. Since the audience for the frescoes was probably drawn from this pool of individuals of high social rank (secular and religious), one might assume a degree of literacy and erudition on the part of the viewers. The actual degree of their erudition was relative;³ what was important was the pretense of it that humanism offered members of mid-fifteenth century courtly society.⁴ Still, it is difficult to speculate on how these individuals might have responded to the frescoes.

Intentionality, as is often the case, is also a problematic issue. The only contemporary document which refers to these frescoes is a brief contract which, telling though it is, still does not give a very detailed picture of what form these frescoes were to take or what their function was to be. It is therefore difficult to make claims regarding complex levels of intent. Yet I would like to

³ This was true even for humanists, despite their claims. As Baxandall writes, "Not until the 1430's and Lorenzo Valla's Elegantiae did the humanists start producing important new handbooks in the image of their own pretensions." See Michael Baxandall, Giotto and the Orators: Humanist observers of painting in Italy and the discovery of pictorial composition 1350-1450 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1971), 3.

⁴ See E. H. Gombrich, "From the Revival of Letters to the Reform of the Arts: Niccolo Niccoli and Filippo Brunelleschi," in The Heritage of Apelles: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press (1976), 93-94.

claim that, although the ideas which the frescoes communicate are not particularly innovative, the way in which they communicate suggests a concern for eloquent pictorial expression.

One is encouraged to search for modifications in intent because of the rather singular situation whereby a humanist - who, like most humanists, worked on the fringes of institutional power⁵ - found himself in a position of great political authority and supreme religious influence (though at this time neither of these things were very secure). Nicholas V's example represents a rare instance where an individual of rather humble origins who had not been trained primarily as an ecclesiast, was suddenly in a position of great religious and secular power and was able to commission major works of art.

But can the reworkings of the chapel fresco genre be definitely traced to the desires of the patron? What decisions can be considered Fra Angelico's? It is quite probable that Fra Angelico, well aware of the kind of audience his frescoes were going to be viewed by, responded with a virtuoso display skill and the employment of highly rhetorical modes of pictorial organization and expression. Since the notion of cultural progress was so prevalent in the writings of humanists, and since the pictorial arts were

⁵ John F. Tinkler, "Renaissance Humanism and the *genera eloquentiae*," Rhetorica 5, no. 3 (Summer, 1987): 288-291.

seen to progress alongside the rhetorical arts,⁶ Fra Angelico might have felt obliged to present fresh, rhetorical solutions to conventional problems. Surely the aging master must have been aware that this was one of his last major commissions (and it was his most prestigious up to this point), and may have felt pressured to display his ability in pushing the limits of the genre - to exhibit his *invenzione* and his mastery of *difficulta* - without breaching the bounds of *decorum*.⁷ Could the Renaissance conception of artistic progress, of which both Fra Angelico and his audience may have been cognizant of, been a crucial factor in determining the 'progressive' aspects of the frescoes?⁸ It is not likely that the problem of intentionality will be solved, but these possibilities need to be kept in mind.

Another difficulty lies in the defining of humanist notions of visual art, and how these might have affected aesthetic responses and/or artistic production. Humanists

⁶ Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini had written: "...as long as eloquence flourished, painting flourished...now we can see that both these arts have reached perfection." See Erwin Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art, (New York: Harper & Row Pub. 1972), 15-16.

⁷ An artist had to negotiate his way carefully to avoid criticism. Aretino, for example, criticized Michelangelo sharply for his 'Last Judgement' on the grounds that he had made *difficulta* the subject of his art, and had overstepped the bounds of propriety. Aretino had personal reasons for being upset with Michelangelo, but the reasons for which he attacked him were seen as justified.

⁸ The issue is discussed in E. H. Gombrich, "The Renaissance Conception of Artistic Progress and its Consequences," in Norm and Form. Studies in the Art of the Renaissance (London: Phaidon Press, 1966), 1-10.

gave instruction in Latin and mathematics, produced texts, gave orations, organized libraries, and so on.⁹ Through these activities humanists molded, and responded to, the needs and tastes of courtly society. Humanists in the employ of courts and other institutions could adapt their literary and rhetorical skills to many situations, but they were generally consistent in their dependence on antique paradigms for inspiration, guidance, and method. But how could these interests, slavishly dependent on ancient *topoi*, find expression in visual art? Since humanists themselves did not produce texts which can serve as direct and trustworthy guides to the relationship between visual and literary art, their comments on painting must be used with caution. Still, humanist assumptions on the power of eloquence may have encouraged painting to live up to the

⁹ On the professional nature of humanist activity see Paul Oskar Kristeller, Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1956), 553-583. See also Charles Trinkaus, "A Humanist's Image of Humanism: The Inaugural Orations of Bartolommeo della Fonte." Studies in the Renaissance 7 (1960): 90-147. But see also Hans Baron's "Leonardo Bruni: 'Professional Rhetorician' or 'Civic Humanist'?" Past and Present 36 (April, 1967): 21-37, where Baron claims that Kristeller's notion of humanists as 'pens for hire' should be qualified, since many humanists actually preferred the life of *otium* over professional posts.

Tommaso Parentucelli (Nicholas V) himself was best known for his expertise in librarianship. He had been the librarian at the Dominican Monastery of San Marco in Florence in the years Fra Angelico was decorating the monastic cells. Parentucelli also wrote a handbook, commissioned by Lorenzo de Medici, on the proper organization and content of a courtly library. See D. Robathan, "Libraries in the Renaissance," in The Medieval Library, edited by J.W. Thompson (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1939), 512-523 and 561-562.

rhetical power of the visual suggested by the Horacian dictum of *ut pictura poesis*.

To a certain extent, the problem parallels the difficulties of the application of semiotics to visual art, whereby a methodology developed for the study of written language is used to evaluate pictures. Since linguistic signs and pictorial signs are different in significant ways, the semiotic model had to be modified for use with visual images, and much of the literature on the semiotics of images has been devoted to the problems of these modifications.¹⁰ Importantly for this study, it is the rhetorical nature of the image which the semiotics of pictures has found most workable, since a clear parallel can be found within a certain type of language.¹¹ This thesis, in some ways, attempts to identify the rhetorical nature of

¹⁰ See Roland Barthes, "The Rhetoric of the Image," in Image, Music, Text. Translated by Stephen Heath. (New York: The Noonday Press, 1977), 32-51. The literature on the rhetorical nature of images has become vast in the past decade. Early studies include Jan Mukarovsky, "Art as a Semiological Fact," in Structure, Sign, and Function, translated by John Burbank and Peter Steiner (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1978), 82-88 [first published in 1936]; and Meyer Schapiro, "On Some Problems in the Semiotics of Visual Art: Field and Vehicle in Image Signs," Semiotica 1 (1969): 223-242. For a more thorough account see Meyer Schapiro, Words and Pictures. The Hague: Mouton, 1973. See also Michel Rio, "Images and Words," New Literary History 7, no. 3 (Spring, 1976): 505-512; and for a recent study see Norman Bryson, Vision and Painting. The Logic of the Gaze. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1988.

¹¹ For a model study see Irene J. Winter, "Royal Rhetoric and the Development of Historical Narrative in Neo-Assyrian Reliefs," Studies in Visual Communication 7, no. 2 (Spring, 1981): 2-38.

the frescoes in Nicholas V's chapel, but tries to relate them to the specific rhetorical concerns which may have existed in Nicholas V's humanist papal court.

Humanists did not concern themselves much with the art of painting.¹² When they did, they consistently remained within the confines of antique literary genres such as the *ekphrasis*. An *ekphrasis* strove to describe a painting with an aim to evoke the same feelings that viewing the picture would have aroused.¹³ The evoking of feelings was one of the primary aims of rhetoric,¹⁴ and Alberti expressed the opinion that "The *istoria* which merits both praise and admiration will be so agreeably and pleasantly attractive that it will capture the eye of whatever learned or unlearned person is looking at it and move his soul."¹⁵ According to Alberti, it would seem that any kind of viewer should have expected an image, at least in part, to please and move him or her emotionally, just like an eloquent oration. Since no primary texts are available to trace any critical evaluation of these frescoes, humanist theories

¹² The exception would be Leon Battista Alberti, who had had the training of an architect as well as a humanist education.

¹³ Svetlana Leontief Alpers, "*Ekphrasis* and Aesthetic Attitudes in Vasari's 'Lives'," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 23 (1960): 192.

¹⁴ Spencer, "*Ut Rhetorica Pictura*: A study in Quattrocento Theory of Painting," 26-27.

¹⁵ Leon Battista Alberti, On Painting, trans. John R. Spencer (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 75.

such as those outlined above are our only recourse towards a consideration of reception.

Another quality of eloquence, as humanists defined it, was that the medium was to adapt its style to the character of the audience.¹⁶ The concept parallels the notion of *decorum*, but it is not exactly the same thing, for *decorum* was more a question of appropriateness in a physical context based on typological models (i.e. one type of decoration was suited for the *studiolo*, another type for the bedroom), where eloquence sought to modify the style of presentation so as to persuade a defined audience. Ideally, the audience should be oblivious to the fact that they are being convinced, and should feel as if the message or meaning of the exhortation, verbal or pictorial, was a result of personal revelation.¹⁷ A rhetorical medium should be self-reflexive in a manner of speaking, and should endeavor to have the viewer focus on the medium, thereby diverting his/her attentions away from the ideological nature of the content. Thus eloquence considered audience as the fundamental component of context, since it was the audience who were the objects of the oration. This is not to suggest

¹⁶ Elizabeth Cropper, The Ideal of Painting. Pietro Testa's Dusseldorf Notebook (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), 158.

¹⁷ Spencer writes that in both Ciceronean oration and Albertian painting the "educative role is of the greatest importance and in both it is concealed from the audience." See John R. Spencer, "Ut rhetorica pictura: A Study in Quattrocento Theory of Painting," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute 20 (1957): 26. Perhaps Spencer's use of the word 'educative' is somewhat naive.

that the frescoes in Nicholas V's chapel modified the genre of chapel decoration to the extent that *decorum* was sacrificed for the sake of eloquent affect. Quite the opposite is true and the decorations are actually quite conventional in many ways. The frescoes are evidence that eloquence and *decorum* were not mutually exclusive.

Papal humanists claimed that the expression of theological ideas should be eloquent.¹⁸ The opinion had been stated by St. Augustine and echoed by Petrarch, for whom persuasive eloquence or demonstrative oratory (epideictic) was a more practical form of communication than argumentation because it sought to affect the will of a person instead of the intellect.¹⁹ This was thought to be an

¹⁸ Geiger, Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, 8.

¹⁹ I am not meaning to enter into the debate over the superiority of the will or the intellect. However, for humanist and scholastic perspectives on the topic see Paul Oskar Kristeller, "A Thomist Critique of Marsilio Ficino's Theory of the Will and Intellect," in Harry Austryn Wolfson Jubilee Volume. American Academy for Jewish Research, vol. 2 (Jerusalem, 1965): 463-494. Argan expresses the idea that Fra Angelico was able to produce images which struck a balance between Albertian Neoplatonism (which aimed to influence the will) and Thomist aesthetics (which aimed to influence the intellect). See Argan, Fra Angelico and his Times, 29. Since both Fra Angelico and Nicholas V had spent much time in both the Florentine Neoplatonist and Dominican milieus, the syncretic nature of the chapel frescoes should not be particularly surprising. Geiger suggests that the modern scholarly emphasis on Neoplatonism has clouded the fact that the currents of Neoplatonism and Thomism co-existed in quattroceto central Italy. See Geiger, Fra Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, 100. The frescoes in Nicholas V's chapel could also be seen to indicate a symbiosis of these intellectual/theological currents.

effective form for convincing people of the mysteries of the Christian faith.²⁰

The expectation of the evocation of feelings was complementary to the beliefs on the function of artistic images held by the Dominican Observants, for whom a religious image was meant to serve devotion and be an aid to meditation, and thus was to alter the viewer's psychological state.²¹ Since Fra Angelico - as a member of the Dominican Observant Order and it's most prominent artist - was attuned to these artistic currents, this aspect might also have played a role in the evocative tenor of the frescoes in Nicholas V's chapel.²²

In both humanist theories of art and Dominican aesthetics, however, there existed a conception that the engaging of the intellect was also a good way to interest certain audiences.²³ In other words there was knowledge of the worth of both the deliberative and demonstrative aspects

²⁰ Carroll William Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise: Alberti, Nicholas V and the Invention of Conscious Urban Planning in Rome 1447-1455 (London: Pennsylvania University Press, 1974), 41-42.

²¹ Geiger, Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, 141.

²² Geiger, Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, 26. Pope-Hennessy also stresses the links between the communicative aspects of Fra Angelico's art with Dominican tenets, particularly those of Giovanni Dominici. Pope-Hennessy, Fra Angelico, 2. This idea is also put forth by Giulio Carlo Argan, Fra Angelico and his Times (Lausanne: Skira, 1955), 14.

²³ Umberto Eco, The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas, trans. Hugh Bredin. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 163-189.

of eloquence.²⁴ The appropriateness of the levels of didacticism, or intellectual or emotional engagement was, as suggested above, determined by context. Generally speaking, images meant for the unlearned masses were instructional and aimed to teach, impress, and move the viewer to devotion.²⁵ Images in monastic settings, such as Fra Angelico's frescoes in the cells at San Marco, were to function as aids to devotion, with no didactic elements necessary. Images which were to function in the context of a court where the audience was composed of learned individuals, should tend towards engagement of intellect.²⁶

However, codes for the *decorum* of religious pictures were strict, and Fra Angelico's frescoes, as would befit a chapel, are religious in nature.²⁷ It would have been inappropriate at this time to include, for example, the more

²⁴ For a discussion of the *genera* of Renaissance eloquence, as the humanists understood it, see John F. Tinkler, "Renaissance Humanism and the *genera eloquentiae*," 279-309.

²⁵ Eve Borsook, The Mural Painters of Tuscany from Cimabue to Andrea del Sarto (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1980), xx-xxii.

²⁶ Rubin, "The Private Chapel of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese in the Cancelleria, Rome," 112.

²⁷ E. H. Gombrich, "Introduction: Aims and Limits of Iconology," in Symbolic Images. Studies in the Art of the Renaissance II (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 7-8. For a brief account of references concerning *decorum* in the architectural treatises of Alberti and Filarete see Charles Rosenberg, "Courtly Decorations and the '*Decorum*' of Interior Space," in La Corte e lo Spazio: Ferrara Estense, vol. 2, edited by Giuseppe Papagno and Amedeo Quodam (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 1982), 529-544.

blatantly classical and erudite references found in later fifteenth and sixteenth century chapels.²⁸ Since the range for modification in the frescoes was relatively narrow, innovations must be looked for not only in obvious places - such as in the invention of a scene - but also in the ways in which traditional subjects are put in new relations to one another, and how aspects of formal organization and expression are emphatically rhetorical.

In the frescoes, the representations of particular individuals and the relationships between them allow for the recognition of historical relations between the past and present. Although depicting narrative scenes which proceed in sequence, the viewer is also encouraged to recognize more expansive meanings by observing cross-references and correspondences between scenes, as well as correspondences between the scenes and the context in which they were displayed. This process required a degree of erudition on the part of the viewer (or provided an opportunity for the display of what the viewers considered erudition), and thus

²⁸ Such as the sibyls in the chapel of Cardinal Oliviero Carafa in Santa Maria sopra Minerva. See Geiger, Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, especially p. 67 where Geiger claims that the Carafa sibyls, painted in the late 1480's "present a new type of vault figure." (my emphasis), or the classically inspired motifs in the chapel of Alessandro Farnese (1546-7). For a discussion of the latter see Rubin, "The Private Chapel of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese in the Cancelleria, Rome," 82-112. See p. 89 where she writes: "In a chapel *decorum* demanded scenes pertaining to religion, even if they were not taken solely from the Bible or saints' lives." Even in the late 1540's then, with the wide acceptance of classical imagery in painting, chapel decoration still maintained appropriate religious reference.

engaged that viewer both intellectually and, perhaps, socially.

The frescoes deal with topics similar to those Roman, papal humanists dealt with in their orations and tracts: Papal and Petrine primacy, the importance of the sacraments, the virtues of charity and martyrdom, and so on. More importantly for this study, the expression of these principles and doctrines intended to move and convince the viewer in a manner which was promoted by humanists as an effective way of communicating. The theoretical bridge that allows discussion along these lines is, as mentioned, the humanists' conception of eloquence or epideictic oratory.

The humanists of Nicholas V's court probably did not affect the formal organization and expression of these frescoes directly, rather, humanist activities and interests tended to cultivate a rhetorical style common to the style of the intellectual discourse in the courtly circles where they found employment. Therefore, it may have been the visual expectations of the viewers, coloured by humanist stylistic and rhetorical concerns, which were being addressed in Nicholas V's chapel.

The way the frescoes engage the viewer promotes a concept of communication which humanism itself promoted; one which included a component of pleasure in the recognition of a display of expressive artistic skill and intellectual ingenuity.²⁹ The paintings strike a balance between decorous

subject matter, effective expression, and intellectual engagement, and they addressed an audience to whom Nicholas V may have wanted to demonstrate the efficacy of humanist rhetoric in an institutional context. In doing so, the frescoes also promote a conception of the patron as a pope who embodies a religious and cultural ideal strongly associated with humanist values and methods.

²⁹ The desire for this type of imagery was articulated in the early sixteenth century by the humanist Paolo Cortesi in his De Cardinalatu of ca. 1510: "Now it should be understood that the more erudite are the paintings in a cardinal's chapel, the more easily the soul can be excited by the admonishment of the eyes to the imitation [*imitatio*] of acts, by looking at [painted representations of] them." Text from Geiger, Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, 26.

CHAPTER ONE

The Tradition of Chapel Decoration; and the Representations of the Church Fathers, Aquinas, and SS. Stephen & Lawrence

The following chapter will briefly consider the non-narrative and narrative personae which were chosen for representation in Nicholas V's chapel. The choices are themselves evidence of how the decorations were meant to function, for they have special significance in the context of Nicholas V's papal court. First, a brief comment on how Nicholas V's chapel fits within the tradition of chapel types and the decorations which usually embellished them.

In mid-quattrocento Italy there were three main types of chapels. First, there were the family chapels found in the churches of the Mendicant Orders in Florence. These chapels were sepulchral and memorial, and were usually richly decorated. The other types of chapels could be found in residences, and these included a private type of domestic chapel, which was normally small and for private devotions, and palace chapels, which were often large (such as the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua), and thus provided space for courtly liturgical ceremonies. While in the mid-quattrocento the small, private chapels were often

undecorated except for a devotional image over the altar³⁰, palace chapels were often richly decorated.

The chapel of Nicholas V had its dimensions somewhat limited by the fabric of the Vatican apartments that Nicholas V began renovating in the late 1440's [fig. 1 & 2].³¹ Its size (6.6m x 4.0m) relates it closely to the private chapel type, but its function appears to have been similar to that of the palace chapel.³² The clearest evidence that this was the case, aside from the fact that the chapel was part of the pope's palatial Vatican residence, is the chapel's decoration which is narrative and splendid, and thus would seem to insist on an audience.

³⁰ The inclusion of a devotional image over the altar was required by an act of the Synod of Trier in 1310. See Borsook, The Mural Painters of Tuscany, xviii. See also Bruce Cole, Italian Art 1250-1550 (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 40-42.

³¹ See Franz Ehrle and Herrmann Egger, "Der Vaticanische Palast in seiner entwicklung bis zur mitte des XV Jahrhunderts" in Studi e documenti per la Storia Palazzo Apostolico Vaticano, vol. 2 (1935), 93-114. See also Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise. See especially Chap. 7, "The Papal Palace in the Vatican."

³² For a description see Antonella Greco, La Cappella di Niccolo V del Beato Angelico (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e zecca dello Stato, 1980), 18. Similar types of chapels could be found in the Palace of the Popes in Avignon. It is possible that Nicholas V desired to make sure Rome's papal apartments lacked nothing the palace of the popes in Avignon had. However, it is not really necessary to travel so far afield for an explanation since, as demonstrated, more local traditions and conditions can be used to explain the various aspects of the chapel's type. See Robert Andre-Michel, Avignon: Les Fresques du Palais des Papes (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1926), 43-57; and Sylvain Gagniere, Le Palais des Papes d'Avignon (Nancy: Caisse Nationale des Monuments Historiques, 1965), 40-51.

Indeed, the narrative aspects and their ideological content imply an audience to whom the 'story' is directed. Were the chapel to function simply as a locus for the pope's private devotions, Fra Angelico might have been asked to produce images similar in nature to those found in the monastic cells at San Marco or other contexts where private devotion and prayer were the main purposes of the rooms. The chapel was probably shown, on some occasions, to important ecclesiasts, certain members of the papal court, and visiting dignitaries and ambassadors.³³

Despite the fact that chapel decorations could vary according to their function in specific, local contexts, the genre was limited in its scope of subjects and formal arrangement. Essentially, the decorations in Nicholas V's chapel fit within the tradition of the frescoed family chapels (such as the Brancacci chapel) which were numerous in the churches of Tuscany, and comply with their conventions of subject matter and organization. Tuscan chapels were often decorated, as is Nicholas V's chapel, with fresco cycles showing the deeds of religious personages. The vault of Nicholas V's chapel is decorated with the figures of the four Evangelists, who were traditional inhabitants of quadripartite vaults [fig. 3]. Another feature common to both Tuscan family chapels and the

³³ One of the most significant entourages was most certainly Frederick III's, which visited the papal court in 1450 for Frederick's coronation as Holy Roman Emperor.

chapel of Nicholas V is the inclusion of *exempla*. In Nicholas V's chapel, seven Church Fathers and St. Thomas Aquinas are shown standing in front of elaborate gothic canopies [figs. 4-6].³⁴

At a basic level, then, the mural decorations in the chapel of Nicholas V have much in common with chapel decorations found in the churches of Tuscany (though, of course, examples exist outside Tuscany as well). Nevertheless, certain themes are developed in specific ways, and these help to communicate key concepts specifically significant within the context of Nicholas V's humanist court. It would be difficult to cite an example of an earlier chapel which paralleled Nicholas V's chapel in all its characteristics. The singular context makes the chapel, in the fine details, a unique type. Thus the choices that were made in this chapel, in terms of the selection of subject matter, may give important clues as to the intended function of the cycle.

The example of the Evangelists and the Church Fathers can serve to illustrate how the humanist context of Nicholas V's court may have encouraged a particular reading of the images, and how some of the non-narrative decorations relate to one another so as to establish one of the possible functions of the frescoes.

³⁴ Other *exempla*, Biblical personages and saints, are depicted as busts in octafoils in the soffits of the window.

In the vault of Nicholas V's chapel the Evangelists are shown with quills and books, thus confirming their authorial identities. The Church Fathers and St. Thomas Aquinas, also carrying books, occupy eight encapsulations which extend upwards along two barrel projections about one metre to either side of the vault which carries the images of the Evangelists.³⁵ The inclusion of the Church Fathers and Aquinas is indicative of the patristic and Thomist interests of the patron and the humanists of his court. The Fathers and Aquinas could be regarded as *exempla* of orthodoxy, because it was to their writings that papal humanists and Dominican theologians alike had turned to defend the papacy during the conciliar debates earlier in the century,³⁶ and they were also a fundamental source of ideas for Nicholas

³⁵ Compare the vault decorations by Masolino in the Church of *San Clemente* in Rome, where the Evangelists are shown with the Latin Doctors of the Church [fig. 7]. Here, the Doctors of the Church are shown occupying the same space, and thus the same 'timeless' celestial space as the Evangelists. In Masolino's work here is no historical differentiation between the figures, but since the figures in Fra Angelico's frescoes are separated spatially, they can more easily be understood as occupying different historical realms. See the interesting discussion by Louis Marin, "The Iconic Text and the Theory of Enunciation: Luca Signorelli at Loreto (circa 1479-1484)," *New Literary History* 14, no. 3 (Spring, 1983): 553-591. See especially section V: "Evangelists and Doctors: The Absent Voice and the Writing Mode of the Text," pp. 569-589.

³⁶ See Jeffery A. Mirus, *The Dominican Order and the Defense of the Papacy in the Renaissance*. PhD. Dissertation, Princeton University, 1973. Tomasso Parentucelli had played an important role in the Council of Florence. See the entry concerning him in Joseph Gill, *Personalities of the Council of Florence* (New York: Barnes & Noble Inc, 1964). See also Geiger, *Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel*, 100.

V's humanists.³⁷ Here, the Fathers and Aquinas serve as typological forebears to the intellectual activity of papal humanists, for whom the Fathers and Aquinas could serve as appropriate *exempla* in their lives and work.³⁸

The inclusion of Aquinas is of special significance. He was particularly favored by Nicholas V who had raised the importance of the saint by adding the singing of the Creed to his feast day celebrations, an act which effectively made him a Doctor of the Church.³⁹ The inclusion of Aquinas among the Fathers parallels this initiative. Aquinas is differentiated from the Church Fathers by the fact that his

³⁷ Important pro-papal texts produced during Nicholas V's pontificate, such as Juan de Torquemada's Summa de Ecclesia which drew heavily upon the writing of Aquinas, and Piero da Monte's Contra impugnantes sedis apostolicae auctoritatem, relied heavily on both Greek and Latin patristic literature, the latter especially on John Chrysostom's New Testament Homilies and Cyril of Alexandria's Thesaurus. Ambrogio Traversari's knowledge of patristic literature, unequalled in his time, made him one of the most authoritative humanists of Nicholas V's court. See Charles Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 167-170.

³⁸ The Fathers also represented a link with the Ciceronean style which humanists so admired (and which the Fathers had also emulated). John D'Amico, Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome: Humanist and Churchmen on the Eve of the Reformation (Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 126, notes that "The patristic Latin writers generally accepted this Roman ideal and occasionally cultivated a Ciceronean literary style in their writings... The humanists ...sought to recapture the ethical and cultural values of the Ciceronean orator by restudying ancient writings."

³⁹ John O'Malley, "The Feast of Thomas Aquinas in Renaissance Rome: A Neglected Document and Its Import," Rivista di storia della chiesa in Italia 35 (1981): 7. See also Geiger, Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, 32-33, and Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 143.

book is open and displaying, in highly abbreviated text, the lines from Proverbs with which he opened his Summa contra gentiles: "For my mouth shall speak truth and wickedness is an abomination to my lips."⁴⁰ For those who could recognize the references, the reiteration of orthodoxy would have been clear.⁴¹ The word 'wickedness' can be read as 'heresy', and 'truth' as 'orthodoxy'. The informed viewer could have recognized the relationship between the import of Aquinas's famous work and one of the messages of the chapel's decoration: the reiteration of orthodox notions of papal primacy and the traditional duty of the pontiff.

The passage of authority in the frescoes begins with God implicitly revealing His Word to the Evangelists, whose texts are in turn studied and elucidated upon by the writings of the Church Fathers and Aquinas. Humanist activity in the papal court could here be understood as being contiguous with this tradition of textual production and exegesis.

The humanists, unlike the Scholastic theologians of Rome, did not hold degrees and were sometimes suspect for their delving into religious issues which some theologians

⁴⁰ As quoted from Geiger, Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, 93. The same inscription appears in the scene of 'The Triumph of St. Thomas' in the Carafa Chapel frescoes.

⁴¹ The depiction of Aquinas with an open book had precedents. See Geiger, Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, 91. Still, these images were also to function in learned contexts, where the audience was made up of theologically learned Dominicans.

apparently considered their exclusive domain.⁴² In defense the humanists cited the examples of the Church Fathers and Aquinas who, the humanists claimed, had no degrees yet had founded and developed orthodox Christian theology.⁴³ Aquinas was praised by humanists, particularly for his classical literary virtues such as "order, clarity, and simplicity of expression."⁴⁴ Further, the humanist Aurelio Brandolini had argued that the ability to teach was paramount for a theologian, and thus the rhetorical training of the humanists made them more effective theologists. According to the humanists, "The orator brought to theology a breadth and communicability that was lacking in the *doctores theologiae*."⁴⁵ It was this clear, concise style which the humanists admired in the writings of the Church Fathers.⁴⁶

⁴² D'Amico, Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome, 144-145. Scholars disagree on the extent of the supposed friction between the Scholastic theologians of Rome and the humanists. See Geiger, Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, 8. However, in the 1480's, Bartolommeo della Fonte, to name one of many humanists, still felt it necessary to defend humanism from ecclesiastical critics. See Charles Trinkaus, "A Humanist's Image of Humanism: the Inaugural Orations of Bartolommeo della Fonte," 98.

⁴³ D'Amico, Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome, 144-145.

⁴⁴ O'Malley, "The Feast of Thomas Aquinas in Renaissance Rome. A Neglected Document and its Import", 22-23.

⁴⁵ D'Amico, Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome, 146-147. Although later in date than the frescoes in Nicholas V's chapel, Brandolini's text is developed from the attitude first promoted by Petrarch, and later by Lorenzo Valla during his tenure in Nicholas V's court; thus, these ideas are applicable here. See Charles Trinkaus, In Our Image and Likeness: Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought,

These *exempla* seem to incline the character of the chapel's non-narrative figural decoration towards the type of humanistic, secular *exempla* which might be found in a *studiolo* or library, such as the *uomini famosi* or *buoni autori* that decorated courtly libraries like Nicholas V's.⁴⁷ The Fathers and Aquinas presented the courtly viewer with an "ideal community"⁴⁸ of theologists who were the humanists' favorite literary sources. Although clearly religious in nature and quite traditional in depiction, those *exempla* revered for their textual production are given precedence.

vol. 2, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 651-682. These pages are adapted from Charles Trinkaus, "Humanist Treatises on the Status of the Religious: Petrarch, Salutati, Valla" in Studies in the Renaissance XI (1964): 7-45.

⁴⁶ See note 39 below.

⁴⁷ A precedent in Rome had already been set by Cardinal Giordano Orsini. By 1447 Orsini's library at his residence on Monte Giordano already had a completed cycle of *uomini famosi*. Even though the number of books in the papal library increased dramatically under the bibliophilic Nicholas V, it was still much smaller than many private libraries in Rome at the time. See the introduction in Robert Louis Mode's The Monte Giordano Famous Men Cycle of Cardinal Giordano Orsini and the 'Uomini Famosi' Tradition in Fifteenth Century Italian Art (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1970), 1-21. The biggest library was probably Cardinal Bessarion's. See Pearl Kibre, "The Intellectual Interests Reflected in Libraries of the 14th and 15th Centuries," Journal of the History of Ideas VII (1946): 261-262. For Nicholas V's own contributions and interests in books and libraries see the informative article by Robathan, "Libraries in the Renaissance," 512-523 and 561-562.

⁴⁸ The phrase is borrowed from Luciano Cheles who uses it to refer to the *uomini famosi* in Federigo da Montafeltro's *studiolo* in Urbino. See Luciano Cheles, The Studiolo of Urbino: An Iconographic Investigation, (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 1986), 39.

The arrangement of the Evangelists, Aquinas, and Church Fathers, and the interplay and concordances between these *exempla* and the humanist context of Nicholas V's court, make the traditional religious decoration visually interesting for learned viewers who could make the connection between the figures in the frescoes, their activity, and the endeavors of papal humanists who made careers of writing and studying theological texts in defense of religious orthodoxy and papal primacy. This is not to pose the above as an iconological fact, but merely to state that the figures, their arrangement, and their contexts allowed for recognition of novel typological relationships between the *exempla* and the context which they were displayed.

The same sort of appropriateness can be argued for the inclusion of St. Stephen and St. Lawrence in the narrative scenes of the chapel. They were, as martyrs, appropriate types for chapel decoration.⁴⁹ Also, as martyrs whose relics were together in Rome, they were fitting subjects for a pope who was interested in encouraging pilgrims to come to Rome.⁵⁰ However, like the Church Fathers and Aquinas, they

⁴⁹ In the early 1440's, some scenes from St. Stephen's life had already been executed in the chapel of the Assumption in the Prato cathedral. In fact, Fra Angelico had been asked to continue with some other scenes from the saint's life in the main chapel of the same cathedral. Fra Filippo Lippi eventually accepted the commission. The best known of the SS. Lawrence and Stephen cycles was at San Lorenzo fuori la Mura.

⁵⁰ One of Nicholas V's early decisions as pontiff was to declare 1450 a Jubilee Year.

were particularly apt characters for viewers in the milieu of a papal court where humanists directed much of their energy to the defense of the papacy and the concept of Church hierarchy which sustained it.

Each of these two saints had been deacons and thus were part of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the early Church.⁵¹ The office of the diaconate represented a crucial historical link between contemporary Church hierarchy and apostolic authority, and the authenticity of such offices like the diaconate (and, in fact, the papacy) was dependent on this historic connection.⁵² The fact that St. Stephen was one of the seven original deacons and St. Lawrence was one of the original Roman deacons made them fitting protagonists for a papal chapel, since they were representative of the virtue of members of the Church hierarchy.

St. Lawrence's appearance is significant because he was the most important of the Roman martyrs, whose death, Prudentius claimed, signaled the end of paganism in Rome and heralded in the Christian era.⁵³ The presence of St.

⁵¹ St. Stephen was the patron saint of deacons, and had been one of the original seven deacons, as mentioned in the New Testament. See Acts 6:1-6.

⁵² The apostles' appointment of the seven deacons and elders was "seen to be a theological assertion of the 'apostolicity' of these forms of ministry in the Church." See Frank Hawkins, "Orders and Ordination in the New Testament," in The Study of Liturgy, edited by Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright and Edward Yarnold (London: SPCK, 1978), 295.

⁵³ Prudentius, Crowns of Martyrdom, trans. H. J. Thompson (Cambridge, Mass. & London, 1953) Sec. II, Book II,

Lawrence in the frescoes helps emphasize the importance of Rome and its long Christian heritage. Also meaningful is the fact that the two saints are shown tonsured. This convention, unhistorical as it was, nevertheless served to underscore the importance of the monastic orders (in this case the Dominican) in the defense of orthodoxy and hierarchy. The presence of SS. Stephen and Lawrence is indicative of a desire to emphasize certain things about these martyrs, notably that they are related to the Church and its hierarchy in a specific way: that is that they were devoted servants willing to die for the Church to which they belonged.

The relationships between the historical *exempla* and the contemporary (understandable for those viewers knowledgeable enough to trace them) discussed above can be found in more complex manifestations in the narrative scenes of the lives of SS. Stephen and Lawrence. Before these scenes are discussed though, an account will be made of the humanists' conception of the relationship between rhetoric and painting, and the importance of history in humanist methodology. Such an account will hopefully allow for subsequent discussion of how the rhetorical and historical interests of humanists may have indirectly determined some aspects of how the frescoes present and express their messages.

p. 109. See Rubin, "The Private Chapel of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese in the Cancelleria, Rome," 105-106.

CHAPTER TWO

Eloquence and Painting:
Humanist Conceptions of
Art and History

Eloquence, the prime virtue of the *studia humanitatis*, was the art of the orator.¹ The humanist orator strove to move his hearer by using language which encouraged the listener to visualize things, people and events.² A religious event, such as the martyrdom of a saint or the virgin birth, could easily be visualized, and this could move a listener more effectively than a complex metaphysical discourse on abstract theological principles regarding religious virtue.³

¹ The words that humanists used to describe themselves as a group were, in fact, *orator* and *rhetoricus*. See Baxandall, Giotto and the Orators, 1-2. John W. O'Malley, Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome: Rhetoric, Doctrine, and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, c. 1450-1521 (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1979), 5, writes, "A 'humanist' who made no profession of rhetoric was no humanist at all. And rhetoric, in its classical formation, meant oratory...if we wish to understand Humanism, we must study orations and oratory."

² Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 3, writes that "Both oratory and the arts... produced pictorial images, and these images were meant to induce devotion, veneration, and praise."

³ Aurelio Brandolini had argued that "humanist language made Christian teachings more appealing to the believer. It persuaded and moved the reader [or listener] to accept such doctrines as the Trinity and the Virgin Birth,

In both the ancient texts humanists admired, and the often imitative texts humanists produced, there existed a convention of equating painting with rhetorical art.⁴ This relationship, a literary *topos*, found its most thorough expression in Alberti's De pictura of 1436, which promoted a style of painting which paralleled the style of Ciceronean rhetoric.⁵ The humanist Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini wrote,

These arts [eloquence and painting],
love each other with mutual affection.
A mental gift (*ingenium*), and not a low
but a high or supreme one, is required
by eloquence as well as painting...⁶

This text implies that whatever respect painting enjoyed among humanists was determined by its degree or quality of which reason cannot grasp." D'Amico, Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome, 147.

⁴ Numerous classical texts conflated oratory and painting and/or poetry and painting. See, for example, the text from Philostratus's Prooemium 6 in Michael Baxandall, "Bartholomaeus Facius on Painting," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 27 (1964): 94.

⁵ John Spencer notes that; "Essentially, the aims and means of the new painting envisaged by Alberti in his treatise are similar to the aims and means of the rhetoric advanced by Cicero...In both Albertian painting and Ciceronean oratory the aim is to please, to move and to convince." John R. Spencer, "Ut Rhetorica Pictura: A study in Quattrocento Theory of Painting," 26-44. Spencer's thesis in this article is that Alberti's 'treatise' follows the form of a Ciceronean oration. This has been disputed by Edward Wright who claims the work follows the structure of a "classical pedagogic manual following the *ordo naturae*." D. R. Edward Wright, "Alberti's *De Pictura*: Its Literary Structure and Purpose," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 47 (1984): 52-71.

⁶ Quoted from Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences, 15-16, who also gives the original Latin text in the footnote.

ingenium. *Ars*, the skill of craft or manual skill, could certainly be admired, but the skill of invention (*ingenium*), or innovation, brought greater esteem. *Ingenium* referred to the evidence - in painting or in the literary/verbal arts - of the maker's aptitude in communicating to an audience. This respect for *ingenium* was formed by the greater reverence for intellectual over manual activities: "a mental gift, and not a low but a high and lofty one."⁷

For a fifteenth century humanist like Nicholas V, the recognition of *ingenium* may well have been a fundamental part of the aesthetic pleasure derived from a work of art. This recognition or comprehension was itself an intellectual activity. Aquinas had also equated the engagement of the intellect with aesthetic pleasure,⁸ and Manuel Chrysoloras, in a letter to his brother, similarly defined pleasure as the recognition of *ingenium*:

And the beauties of statues and paintings are not an unworthy thing to behold; rather they do indicate a certain nobility in the intellect that admires them...What is the reason for this? It is that we admire not so much the beauties of the bodies in statues and paintings as the beauty of the mind of their maker.⁹

⁷ Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences, 15-16

⁸ Umberto Eco, The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas, 49-63.

⁹ Michael Baxandall, "Guarino, Pisanello and Manuel Chrysoloras," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 28 (1965): 198.

The informed beholder (and this is surely what the individuals who visited Nicholas V's chapel considered themselves to be) "was in a position to distinguish between crude sensuous pleasure and some more complex and intellectual enjoyment offered by a painting or statue."¹⁰ According to Baxandall, the ability to be pleased by the recognition of skill was incongruous with being pleased by matter and this was "characteristic of the informed, as opposed to the uninformed, beholder."¹¹

Here we have some indication of the kinds of pleasure humanists, and perhaps others visiting Nicholas V's chapel, might have had from a work of art. A good painting would display the artist's *ingenium*, and the recognition of that *ingenium* could be pleasurable to the viewer. However, individuals familiar with courtly ideals were also obliged to display their erudition, and a work of art could easily provide an opportunity for this, thus giving the viewers a kind of social pleasure.¹²

¹⁰ Baxandall, Giotto and the Orators, 60.

¹¹ Baxandall, Giotto and the Orators, 62. However, Baxandall is considering a Florentine context. The problem with ostentatious display was much more prevalent in the republican atmosphere of Florence, and had little influence on the art of Rome. See Geiger, Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, 38. Further, Gombrich has suggested that one must not overrate the particularity of humanist tastes. See E. H. Gombrich, "Apollonio di Giovanni: A Florentine cassone workshop seen through the eyes of a humanist poet," in Norm and Form. Studies in the Art of the Renaissance (London: Phaidon Press, 1966), 11-28.

¹² Such as the kind of courtly erudition displayed by the characters throughout Castiglione's Book of the

Since these informed audiences apparently had limited use for didacticism in art, then any work of art addressed to them should certainly be a display of the artist's *ingenium*. If it were not, then the work of art would not be sufficiently engaging to viewers for whom the recognition of *ingenium* was a crucial aesthetic component. It is possible that Nicholas V would thus have wanted the paintings in his chapel to be a display of Fra Angelico's *ingenium*, and the contract for the frescoes indicates that this may have been the case. Fra Angelico and his assistants were paid for their time and the materials were supplied for the artists. The terms of the contract allowed time for the exercise of the master painter's *ingenium*. The annual rates for the four-man workshop were:

Fra Angelico.....	200 florins
Benozzo Gozzoli.....	84 florins
Giovanni della Checha...	12 florins
Jacomo da Poli.....	12 florins ¹³

The payment of the artist for his time represented a shift in the norm of contracts.¹⁴ Usually, artists were paid for set pieces; a certain, prearranged amount for an altarpiece

Courtier. See Baldaser Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier, trans. Charles S. Singleton (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1959).

¹³ Baxandall, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 19-20.

¹⁴ Baxandall, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy, 19-20.

or, in the extreme case of Borso D'Este, by the square foot of painted area.¹⁵

Nicholas V's generosity with time and materials could be linked to the pope's desire to be thought of as a certain type of patron, since this attitude towards patronage closely follows Aristotle's definition of the individual who embodies the virtue of magnificence; a virtue which was, at this time, closely associated with rulers. Aristotle had stated:

Moreover, he [the magnificent man] will spend gladly and generously because precise reckoning of cost is petty. He will consider how he can achieve the finest and most appropriate result rather than how much it will cost and how it can be done most cheaply.¹⁶

The rich decoration of the chapel, seemingly incongruous with the notion that *ingenium* or skill was a more important thing for learned viewers, could also be related to the theory of magnificence,¹⁷ since Aristotle suggested that a

¹⁵ Baxandall, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy, 1. Baxandall's first chapter "The Conditions of Trade", pp. 1-27, is a helpful discussion of contracts and what kinds of things they signified. See also Charles Hope, "Artists, Patrons, and Advisors in the Italian Renaissance, in Patronage in the Renaissance, edited by Stephen Orgel and Guy F. Lytle (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

¹⁶ Aristotle, The Nicomachean Ethics, trans. J.A.K. Thomson (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1978), 150.

¹⁷ See A. D. Fraser Jenkins, "Cosimo de' Medici's Patronage of Architecture and the Theory of Magnificence," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 33 (1970): 162-170.

magnificent man should "furnish his house in a way suitable to his wealth."¹⁸ Nicholas V's palatial papal apartments, including his chapels, library, and *studiolo*, were conceived of as the residence of a pope embodying magnificence, "the crown of virtues."¹⁹ Significantly, the Aristotelean concept of magnificence was also taken up by Aquinas in his Summa theologiae.²⁰ The line was echoed by one of Nicholas V's humanists, Lapo da Castiglione, who wrote that "...the life of apostolic poverty was now past and that cultivation of splendor and magnificence had become the appropriate way to gain men's allegiance."²¹

Perhaps one aspect of the nature of Fra Angelico's *ingenium* can be fixed a little more specifically, for he was famous for being able to communicate in a certain way. One of the words the fifteenth century humanist Cristoforo

¹⁸ Aristotle, The Nicomachean Ethics, 151.

¹⁹ Aristotle, The Nicomachean Ethics, 155. Aristotle also writes that "...the truly magnanimous man must be good. It would seem that the magnanimous man is characterized by greatness in every virtue." Aristotle, The Nicomachean Ethics, 154. This aspect of Nicholas V's virtues will be discussed in chapter three.

²⁰ Aquinas, however, says that great things should be done most especially for God (Summa theologiae II-II 134. 1-2). See Geiger, Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, 38, and note 102 on page 44. The immediate prototype for Nicholas V as a magnificent patron was no doubt Cosimo de' Medici, for whom Nicholas V had worked for in the years of Cosimo's lavish architectural patronage. See Jenkins, "Cosimo de' Medici's Patronage of Architecture."

²¹ Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 28.

Landino used to describe Fra Angelico's art was 'devoto'.
'Devotus' was a style of preaching.

...The fourth style is more devout
(*devotus*) and is like the sermons of the
saints which are read in church. It is the
most easily understood and is good for
edifying and instructing the people...
The fathers and the holy doctors of the
Church...kept this style.²²

This element of Fra Angelico's *ingenium* could have been
recognized and appreciated because the characteristics of
the 'devotus' style closely paralleled the Ciceronean
rhetorical style which the humanists admired and promoted.
Since Roman papal humanists wrote and spoke on religious
subjects, their oratory was, essentially, preaching.
Eloquence, though, as humanists actually used it, was not
meant for popular communication, as preaching often was.
Eloquent orations were stuff of the court, where ceremonial
occasions gave opportunity for their expression.²³

This conception of courtly eloquence seems to have been
strongly connected with a definition of high culture and

²² Baxandall, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy, 150. See also Baxandall, "Alberti and Cristoforo Landino: The Practical Criticism of Painting" in Problemi attuali di scienza e di cultura quaderno n. 209 [Convegno internazionale indetto nel quinto centenario di Leon Battista Alberti, Rome, 1972] (Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, 1974): 151-152.

²³ Trinkaus quotes Bartolomeo della Fonte: "The mastery of these arts [rhetoric/eloquence] must be sought for the sake of speaking effectively in public assemblies and meetings and for carrying out the functions of ambassadors of princes and cities." Trinkaus, "A Humanist's Image of Humanism," 99.

civilization. An eloquent individual was, the humanists claimed, superior to other men, and eloquence was a road "to the highest peaks of refined humanity."²⁴ One can easily see, with promises such as these, how humanists constructed the tastes of their courtly patrons, who were very much interested in being superior.

History could also help individuals become better and more refined human beings. In della Fonte's Oration in Praise of History, historical *exempla* move people to virtue:

For history confers the greatest utility on all. It deters the wicked from crime by the fear of infamy, and it inspires the good to virtue by the desire for eternal praise; by reading it private men are eager to imitate the examples of their ancestors...Kings and princes themselves are inspired to distinguished actions for the sake of acquiring immortal glory through historians.²⁵

Historical *exempla* were to be spoken about with eloquence or written with high rhetorical skill; ²⁶ this made them more alive and convincing, and thus more inspiring.

Humanists praised patrons, and hidden among all their exhortations is a plea for sponsorship, since the magnificence of an individual, his praiseworthy place in history, was assured by patronage. Indeed, Nicholas V was

²⁴ Trinkaus, "A Humanist's Image of Humanism," 99.

²⁵ Trinkaus, "A Humanist's Image of Humanism," 104.

²⁶ Trinkaus, "A Humanist's Image of Humanism," 101.

most often praised by both his biographers and later humanists, not for his religious virtues, but for his activity as a patron. Humanists seemed keenly aware that the texts they produced were historical documents, and that buildings, paintings, and other projects were the physical manifestations of the patron's virtue which would assure the survival of that patron's name in history. Patrons also seemed aware of the historical benefit of having humanists compose flattering *encomia* of their princely virtues. Humanists promoted the notion that the remnants of the antique - whether texts, buildings, or works of art - provided evidence of the greatness of past men, and historical greatness could be fixed by contemporary patrons by their imitation of these *exempla*.

Humanist orations on historical *exempla* also aimed to portray these persons as real people who were active in the real world, as opposed to those which seemed to exist in a realm temporally and historically separate from earthly existence. Similarly, the narrative scenes in Nicholas V's chapel attempt to portray SS. Stephen and Lawrence as historical individuals. In the narrative scenes events are depicted as sequential, and thus the protagonists are more convincingly portrayed as historical figures. Frequently, hagiographic narrative cycles telescoped events by depicting the main figure two times in one pictorial space. An early example, Maso di Banco's "St. Sylvester Closing the Mouth of the Dragon and Resuscitating Two Dead Romans" of 1340 [fig.

8],²⁷ demonstrates this clearly. In Masolino's "Healing of the Cripple and the Raising of Tabitha" [fig. 9] in the Brancacci chapel, St. Peter appears twice, occupying the same pictorial space.²⁸ Although Masaccio's work displays a more convincingly illusionistic depiction of architecture and space, the telescoping of temporal events in one scene was still not considered problematic in 1425. Even in the 1450's, Fra Filippo Lippi could depict St. Stephen four times in a single pictorial space.²⁹

In the chapel of Nicholas V most of the scenes from the lives of St. Stephen and St. Lawrence are more definitely divided. An attempt has been made to separate the progressive elements of the story by placing a vertical architectural element between scenes.³⁰ This discourages the

²⁷ This work is in the Bardi di Vernio Chapel in Sta. Croce, Florence. For a relevant discussion see John White, The Birth and Rebirth of Pictorial Space (London: Faber & Faber, 1967), 88-90.

²⁸ St. Peter appears three times in the scene of the 'Tribute Money', also in the Brancacci Chapel.

²⁹ The cycle is found in the main chapel of the Prato cathedral and was painted between 1452-1466.

³⁰ This is done, of course, where the architecture of the chapel does not provide separations. To a great extent, the chapel's architecture has determined the organization and separation of scenes. The four sections of the vault which the evangelists occupy, for example, or the lunettes which contain the scenes from St. Stephen's life are all examples of structural 'fields' offered by the chapel's architecture. Painters sometimes worked with these fields and sometimes created their own *trompe l'oeil* architectonic divisions. See Sven Sandstrom's Levels of Unreality: Studies in Structure and Function in Italian Mural Painting During the Renaissance (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells Boktryckeri, 1963).

perception of temporal and spatial simultaneity. St. Stephen does something in one space at one moment, then he does something else in another space at another moment. Time and space are ordered into a progressive narrative by rendering time atomistically, and organizing its moments into a sequence. Sequentiality supercedes simultaneity, and thus the deeds and martyrdoms of the saints move into the domain of history. Decidedly unlike the religious images executed in the *maniera greca* (which Giotto had transcended) with their subjects floating in gilded, timeless voids, these figures enact their lives in convincingly illusionistic spaces (the significance of which will be discussed in greater detail in chapter three), and within the order of narrated time. The viewer was invited to experience history in a 'historical' way, by seeing the events depicted as an extension of his or her own world.³¹ These things facilitated the engagement of the viewer and brought "the beholder into closer communion with the subject."³²

Another aspect of the frescoes which tends to encourage perception of the events depicted as historical is the lack of any celestial figures such as angels or Christ.

³¹ See Yves Bonnefoy, "Time and Timelessness in Quattrocento Painting," in Calligram. Essays in New Art History from France, edited by Norman Bryson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 8-26. In the same volume see Julia Kristeva, "Giotto's Joy," particularly the section entitled 'Narration and the Norm'. Kristeva's intent in this article is to consider the psychological function of colour.

³² Borsook, The Mural Painters of Tuscany, xxx.

Traditionally, in scenes of the martyrdoms of either St. Stephen or Lawrence, Christ appears in the sky, his gesture confirming their sainthood.³³ However, Christ does not appear in either of the martyrdom scenes in Nicholas V's chapel. The absence of supernatural personages in these specific narrative cycles, along with the depiction of illusionistic space and sequential, 'historic' time, could also be related in some way to Nicholas V's desire to give "historical credence to the martyrs."³⁴ Nicholas V had commissioned Antonio Agli to write a "humanistically revised version of the early Christian martyrs,"³⁵ because fabulous events often seemed implausible to learned readers and undermined the historical authenticity of the martyrs and their deeds. Thus the absence of these types of figures may be an attempt to make the narrative parts of the cycle more palatable to certain kinds of viewers.

³³ As in the scene of St. Stephen's martyrdom in the Prato cathedral,

³⁴ Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 171.

³⁵ Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 171. The problem had been articulated by Sant' Antonino as well, who had written that "precocious images" should be avoided, as well as "things that are curious and ill-adapted to excite devotion, but tend on the contrary to promote laughter and vanity." See John Pope-Hennessy, Fra Angelico, 2. Sant' Antonino's suggestions, rather than being a call for historicism, is more an echo of St. Bernard's invective against "ridiculous monsters" and "those loutish apes", and so on, from chapter 12 of his Apologia ad Guillelmum; See Umberto Eco, Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages, translated by Hugh Bredin (New Haven & London: Yale University Press), 7-8. At any rate, this would not have applied to the figure of Christ in the scenes discussed here.

Supplementary evidence that these issues were current can be found by considering the case of St. Peter. The perception of St. Peter underwent a significant change largely due to the efforts of Nicholas V's papal humanists, who promoted a notion of Peter, "not so much as an abstract principle of monarchical governance, but rather as the historical apostle."³⁶ History, not myth, became the proof-test of the contemporary. It was the historically recoverable St. Peter, rather than the mythic personage, who reached through the events of history - chronologically and sequentially arranged - to the contemporary papacy, passing on the keys of apostolic authority.³⁷ The stressing of the historical individual rather than the mythic personage opened up possibility for actual imitation of *exempla* by contemporary individuals. When historical fact replaced mythic event, the viewer was invited to admire the active persons of the past and imitate them in the present.

Nicholas V and his humanists also seemed intent on purging culture of its historical errors or myths. Vegio's De rebus antiquis memorabilibus Basilicae S. Pietro Romae contains a digression on the historian:

³⁶ Stinger, The Renaissance In Rome, 170.

³⁷ Nicholas V's court was not the first place where history was used in this way, for the historical perspective certainly appears as a crucial theme in Leonardo Bruni's Laudatio Florentinae Urbis. See Marvin Anderson, "Laurentius Valla (1407-1457): Renaissance Critic and Biblical Theologian," Concordia Theological Monthly 39 (1968): 15. See also Beatrice R. Reynolds, "Latin Historiography: A Survey 1400-1600," Studies in the Renaissance 2 (1955): 8-9.

He [the historian] must be well-versed in the *studia humanitatis*, be acquainted with human mores, and be attentive to source material pertinent to locating the time and place of events - and ...[defend] the authority of the historian against the claims of the theologians and canonists.³⁸

Vegio demanded humanist background because he believed that only a humanist had the intellectual tools to rigorously analyze historical texts (which, in such a case as Lorenzo Valla's exposure of the Donation of Constantine, was probably true). The result of this claim of expertise shifted the interpretation of religious history upon the humanist, "against the claims of theologians and canonists."³⁹

Despite this apparent claim to historical veracity, humanists were more concerned with effect than exactness. The aim of eloquence was never precision, but the persuasion of the listener. This aspect of eloquence can be used to explain the obvious historical inaccuracies in the chapel frescoes, such as St. Stephen being ordained in a quasi-Roman setting, or SS. Stephen and Lawrence being tonsured, of Sixtus II being in full, Renaissance pontificals. Potent communication of ideas and themes was clearly more crucial than historical accuracy.

³⁸ Stinger, The Renaissance In Rome, 179.

³⁹ Stinger, The Renaissance In Rome, 179.

The representation of the events in the frescoes as taking place in historical or 'real' time is one of the central rhetorical aspects of the cycle. When combined with convincing illusionistic space (discussed below), the time and space of the figures represented in the frescoes seems natural and real. Narration itself implies being, and the narrative time expressed in these works engages the viewer in a discourse between history and his/her own reality. The landscape and architecture of many of the scenes also corresponds to structures and spaces a mid-quattrocento viewer would have found familiar and so would have paralleled the reality he or she experienced. The topographical features of landscape and architecture, and historical narrative content, become the verifiers of the truth of the scene.⁴⁰ The implications of this will be discussed further in the following chapter.

⁴⁰ See Irene Winter, "Royal Rhetoric and the Development of Historical Narrative in Neo-Assyrian Reliefs," 2-3.

CHAPTER THREE

The Issues in the Narratives and Rhetorical Style

The major themes of the chapel frescoes which I will deal with in this chapter are papal and Petrine primacy, the [papal] virtues of charity and martyrdom, and the importance of eloquence. Why would these issues, taken up in the frescoes, need to be communicated to our hypothetical audience of dignitaries, ambassadors, and ecclesiasts? Eloquent reiterations of papal virtues and the pope's natural right to universal religious authority were made necessary by the the fact that these very assumptions had been strongly contested by conciliarists throughout the previous century. As an institution, the papacy was by no means secure and, on the eve of Nicholas V's election, it still struggled with its credibility due to ongoing schism.¹

The election of Nicholas V, the first pope who had had a career as a professional humanist², could be taken as evidence that the Church hierarchy recognized the value of training that led to a practical knowledge of the factors

¹ However, Nicholas moved quickly to negotiate the resignation of the last of the antipopes, Felix II. Felix accepted Nicholas's offer of a red hat.

² A number of biographies of Tomasso Parentuccelli exist. The most accessible account of the major events in Nicholas V's pre-pontifical life is Ludwig Freiherr von Pastor, The History of the Popes, vol. 2, edited by F. I. Antobus (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 7th ed. 1949), 3-313.

in the equation of humanism, the kind of cultural input it offered, and theology.³ The need for some kind of cultural program to restructure the papacy derived from the vicissitudes the papacy suffered in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.⁴ The early quattrocento papacy, shorn of much of its temporal power and financial resources, and deprived of a secure, permanent home, needed to re-establish itself physically in Rome, and ideologically in the minds of the princes and despots who wielded such financial and military power.⁵ Nicholas V may also have been

³ Knowledge of humanism began to be incorporated, during Nicholas V's pontificate, into the definition of the ideal pope. D'Amico, speaking of Giannozzo Manetti's biography of Nicholas V, observes that Manetti "presented the pope as the ideal humanist cleric. Manetti envisioned a clergy whose education incorporated the new humanist culture and traditional theology." See D'Amico, Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome, 120.

⁴ Martin V (1417-1431) and Eugenius IV (1431-1447) had led peripatetic terms and they had been continually preoccupied with the challenges of the Councils of Basel and Constance. See Charles Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 1, 158. See also Leona C. Gabel, "The First Revival of Rome: 1420-1484," in The Renaissance Reconsidered Symposium. Smith College Studies in Art History 44 (1964): 113-25, and Denys Hay, Europe in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries (London: Longman's, 1966), 291. For a discussion of the conciliar debates and the papacy for this period see Joachim W. Steiber, Pope Eugenius IV, the Council of Basel, and the Secular and Ecclesiastical Authorities in the Empire: The Conflict over Supreme Authority and Power in the Church (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978).

⁵ The papacy had lost much of its temporal power over the Romagna by this time. One of Nicholas V's greatest diplomatic victories was the formation of the Lega Italica, which sought to unify the states of the Italian peninsula. Since Nicholas V was one of the instigators of this pact, the papacy thus presented itself as the unifying entity of these states and the princes who ruled them. See Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 159. Still, some princes,

conscious of influencing ecclesiasts who had taken conciliar stances. The papacy needed to draw these individuals into partnership with the Church. Nicholas V's challenge was immense: to reaffirm orthodox ideas of papal authority within a developing political and cultural framework where power and influence were increasingly reliant upon the tools of humanism wielded in the courtly setting.⁶ Although humanists had been employed by the papacy in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, it is in the decade leading up to the election of Nicholas V, and the return of the papacy to Rome, that humanism began to effectually serve the cultural (rather than just theological) hegemony of the papacy.⁷

like Sigismondo Malatesta, remained antagonistic to the papacy, which led eventually to his excommunication by Pope Pius II.

⁶ For a general discussion, see Chapter 11 in Lauro Martines's Power and Imagination: City States in Renaissance Italy (New York: Knopf, 1979), 191-217. More specifically, of Nicholas V, John B. Toews, in his "Formative Forces in the Pontificate of Nicholas V," Catholic Historical Review 54 (1968-9) 283, writes: "Culture was one of several expedients holding some promise for an effective papal restoration, and so must be viewed from the standpoint of his overall involvement as a pope. The pontiff's patronage of culture, sincere and extravagant as it may have been, was at heart an effort to place culture in the service of the Church."

⁷ D'Amico, Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome, 117. D'Amico writes that "The first, tentative, expression of a special relationship between the *Curia Romana* and the papacy and the new humanist culture came from the Florence-born humanist Lapo da Castiglionchio (1405-1438)". D'Amico's reference is to Lapo's short treatise Dialogus super excellencia et dignitate Curiae Romanae. See also Charles Trinkaus, In Our Image and Likeness: Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought, vol. 2, 556. For a succinct

Papal humanism, with its application to theology, papalism and religion, had a unique character and dealt with specific topics,⁸ such as papal and Petrine primacy, and the virtues of charity, martyrdom and eloquence. The following sections trace the topical similarities between the frescoes and the texts of papal humanists, and also compare their methods of dealing with those topics. This is not to suggest that these frescoes were adapted from humanist texts, but, rather, that the method and style which humanists used to argue things seems similar to the ways in which the frescoes argue their points. Insight into the significance of the virtues illustrated in the frescoes (charity, martyrdom and eloquence) may be obtained by consideration of the texts which humanists produced since, in Nicholine *encomia* these same virtues are current themes.

Even though topical similarities exist between the frescoes and humanist texts, it should be reiterated that the medium of fresco painting imparted ideas differently than written texts or orations, since images are consumed with the sense of sight rather than the sense of hearing. This may seem the obvious difference but it is significant because visual images have the potentiality to engage the viewer existentially in a way that the word cannot. The

account of Lapo's argument see Leona C. Gabel, "The First Revival of Rome: 1420-1484," 22.

⁸ D'Amico, Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome. See especially Part II, Chap 5, "The Idiom of Roman Humanism," 115.

following chapter really has two objectives, to trace some of the main themes of the frescoes and to examine how these themes are communicated in a rhetorical style.

A comment should be made about the problem of hypothesizing on the more emotive aspects of the frescoes. Any claim presupposing an emotional response on behalf of the fifteenth century viewer is problematic because such responses are culturally specific. Yet psychoanalytical and perceptualist/phenomenological approaches can help explain how some aspects of the pictorial organization of the frescoes might have worked.⁹ Though it may be impossible to accurately reclaim something like a psychological response from history, the consideration of psychological response is justified because psychological manipulation was one of the crucial aspects of rhetoric. Since we lack documentation which records this type of response, the text of the frescoes must serve as evidence of rhetorical intent.

⁹ For a recent discussion see the introduction to David Freedberg, The Power of Images. Studies in the History and Theory of Response (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1989), xix-xxv. See also Julia Kristeva, "Giotto's Joy," in Calligram. Essays in New Art History from France, edited by Norman Bryson (New York & Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 27-52.

Papal and Petrine Primacy

St. Peter's primacy among the apostles, as well as his historic connection to the office of the papacy, was central to the notion of inherited papal authority.¹⁰ During the early fifteenth century the concept of the primacy of St. Peter was challenged by conciliarists as a way to undermine the concept of papal sovereignty within the Church.¹¹ Early in his pontificate, Nicholas V had attempted to re-emphasize the connection between St. Peter and the contemporary papacy by moving the papal residence from the Lateran to the Vatican, which was connected to St. Peter's basilica where the relics of the apostle lay.¹² He also brought the Petrine *cathedra*, the symbol of inherited authority, from the Lateran to St. Peter's.¹³ The move made

¹⁰ Defenses of St. Peter's position began with the well-known passage from Matthew 16:18-19.

¹¹ See John A.F. Thompson, Popes and Princes, 1417-1517. Politics and Polity in the Late Medieval Church (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980), 12-13.

¹² Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 264.

¹³ The Lateran had developed ponderous, imperial associations which the papacy desired to downplay at this time. Nicholas V's leaving of the Lateran was also an abandonment of the Constantutum Constantini, 'The Donation of Constantine', which had been the fundamental legal document justifying papal temporal power in the Romagna since the days of the early Church, and which had been exposed as a forgery by Lorenzo Valla in his De Falso Credita et Ementita Constantini Donazione Daclamatio of 1439. See Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 4, and Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 248, who also mentions on

explicit, topographically and typologically, the connections between the papacy and St. Peter, and in doing so stressed the priestly and apostolic, rather than imperial, nature of the papacy.¹⁴ By such acts, Nicholas V strove to reassert Petrine primacy against conciliarist challenges. These initiatives were supplemented by papal humanists who attempted to accentuate, through textual and historical exegesis and the composing of theological tracts, new validations of papal authority.¹⁵

p. 250: "In the later middle ages critics of the Church's material wealth came to focus on the Donation as a source of the Church's corruption." See also Marvin Anderson, "Laurentius Valla (1407-1457): Renaissance Critic and Biblical Theologian," Concordia Theological Monthly 39 (1968): 19.

¹⁴ Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 19-20. The shift was from a legal definition of the power of the papacy to a more theological and apostolic denotation, and this shift was also demonstrated in a crucial document signed just a few years before Nicholas V became pope, the bull Laetentur Coeli, which was promulgated and ratified by both the Roman and Eastern Churches at the Council of Florence. A crucial aspect of the bull was that it defined and articulated the nature and powers of the papacy in a way very different from the way that the bull Unam Sanctam had done. Unam Sanctam had been promulgated in 1302 by Boniface and, until the drafting of Laetentur Coeli, had operated as the principle document articulating the nature of the papacy. See Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 125. Unam Sanctam had stressed both the spiritual and temporal nature of the papacy while Laetentur Coeli stressed the spiritual and made no reference to the temporal [compare the anti-papal conciliar bull Haec Sancta of 1415; see Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 159]. Nicholas V's shift from the Lateran to the Vatican paralleled the shift in the emphasis of the two bulls; from a concern with the temporal powers of the papacy to its spiritual and apostolic mission.

¹⁵ One of the most influential texts was Juan de Torquemada's Summa de Ecclesia of 1449, which argued strongly against the conciliarist notion that the apostles had been equals. See Thompson, Popes and Princes, 12-13. See also Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 163-164, who

There was also a desire to alter the papacy's influence from being religious to more broadly societal. Since Nicholas V's desire was to stabilize the papacy's position in Rome, he turned much of his attentions to the city. Nicholas V's patronage of artistic and architectural projects (including the repairing of the city walls, an aquaduct, and his renovations on the Capitoline), as well as his political involvement, stressed the papacy's civic concerns.¹⁶ Here too humanists had decisive input. The strong connection of the papacy with the city of Rome was articulated by humanists who believed that Rome represented cultural primacy. The cultural primacy of the ancient Romans was based on their socially ordering institutions, and Nicholas V wanted to reform Rome's political institutions and thereby make the city more stable politically.¹⁷

A text which clearly laid out connections between Roman culture and the office of the papacy was Lorenzo Valla's Oratio in principio sui studii.¹⁸ The tract encouraged the papacy's active leadership in worldly affairs. Furthermore, Valla's "assertions were embedded in his theory of language

discusses Torquemada's reliance upon Aquinas. See also Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 20.

¹⁶ See Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 52-62, 123-127.

¹⁷ Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 52-62

¹⁸ The essay dates from 1455 but summates and clarifies ideas which had been developing in Nicholas V's pontificate from its first years.

as the means of cultural transmission."¹⁹ For Nicholas V and his humanists, the idea of cultural primacy being linked to the primacy of the Latin language must surely have been an attractive concept, since the Latin language was exactly what Nicholas V and other humanists were interested in.

Given these notions, it is clear why Nicholas V might have wanted to accentuate the papacy's historic and apostolic links to St. Peter and early Rome in his chapel frescoes. Not only did these actions shift the accentuation of the papacy's office towards the apostolic and spiritual, but they also emphasized the papacy's long historical link with Rome itself, thus partaking of the city's antique heritage.

The fresco of the Ordination of St. Stephen can be seen to operate in a way which parallels these initiatives [fig. 10]. The ciborium at which Peter stands in the fresco could be meant to correspond with the ciborium over the tomb at the transept crossing in St. Peter's basilica,²⁰ thereby closely associating these (pseudo-historical²¹) actions of St. Peter with the actual locus of his relics.

¹⁹ D'Amico, Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome, 118-119.

²⁰ Support for the identification of this as St. Peter's is given in Richard Krautheimer, "Fra Angelico and - perhaps - Alberti," in Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Painting in Honour of Millard Meiss, edited by Irving Lavin and John Plummer (New York: New York University Press, 1977), 290-296. The type of ciborium shown in the frescoes, with slender columns and surmounted by a pyramid, was in fact similar to the type in St. Peter's at this time.

The connection with the contemporary papacy is made clear by looking below the Ordination of St. Stephen scene to the fresco showing the Ordination of St. Lawrence, where Sixtus II, with the features of Nicholas V, is shown giving the chalice to St. Lawrence [fig. 11].²² Through this visual connection the ancestry of Nicholas V's authority is thus presented as having apostolic roots with St. Peter and the other apostles who are in the Ordination of St. Stephen scene.

In presenting the ordination scenes as pendants, the frescoes utilize pictorial intertextuality as a method of encouraging the viewer to assent to the historical justification of the papacy's right to power.²³ It is important to note that it is not immediately obvious that the two ordination scenes are pendants (the scale of the mural space is different, the architectural space has a different emphasis, etc.). This subtlety also contributes to the rhetorical nature of the pairing, because the viewer 'comes upon' or 'discovers' the intertextual relationship in a 'natural' way. The 'truth' of the relationship is

²¹ St. Stephen was never in Rome. His ordination into the diaconate took place in Jerusalem.

²² Besides his coinage and these frescoes, Nicholas V's likeness can be found in his tomb effigy, as well as in a small statue on the Vagnucci reliquary in Cortona.

²³ For a brief discussion see Wendy Steiner, "Intertextuality in Painting," American Journal of Semiotics 3, no. 4 (1985): 57-67.

therefore perceived as being part of the objective world of the viewer.²⁴

Central is the concept of hierarchy. Any hierarchy requires something to occupy each position including the top, and thus the notion of hierarchy fortifies the concept of papal and Petrine primacy.²⁵ The influential writings of Dionysus the pseudo-Areopagite were crucial documents justifying ecclesiastic hierarchy.²⁶ Dionysus's writings proposed that there was a hierarchy in heaven and that an anagogical hierarchy should exist on earth as a reflection of the divine order.²⁷ The Church, of all earthly

²⁴ Norman Bryson, Word and Image: French Painting of the ancien Regime (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 12 writes that, "Perspective, besides being a technique for recording a certain optical phenomenon, is also a technique for distributing information in a pattern which at once arouses our willingness to believe." and on p. 15, writes: "Because the 'subtle' meanings are hard to prise out, they are valued over those meanings which, as it were, fall into the hand of their own accord; and because the meanings are discovered in a neutral territory, amidst the innocent, perspective-based spatial information, they seem immaculate."

²⁵ Humanist texts like Juan de Torquemada's Summa de Ecclesia, which was dedicated to Nicholas V and was supported by extensive patristic and scholastic citations, strongly sanctioned papal primacy within the Church's hierarchy. See Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 164.

²⁶ Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 164. For an excellent account of Dionysus' concepts see Georges Duby, The Age of the Cathedrals: Art and Society 980-1420, translated by E. Levieux and B. Thompson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). See especially the chapter entitled "God is Light", 97-135.

²⁷ See O'Malley, Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome, 10, where he notes also that: "The papal court was a reflection of the heavenly court, and the papal liturgies were a reflection and image of the heavenly liturgies."

institutions, should most closely mirror the heavenly hierarchy.²⁸ The celestial and earthly hieratic concordance established a philosophical and theological support for the concept of the pope as *vicarius Christi*, and justified his primacy within the ecclesiastical context.

In the scene of St. Stephen's ordination, St. Peter alone performs the mass while the others look on.²⁹ The image differentiates St. Peter and implies he has the authority to confer the office on St. Stephen while the others do not, thus establishing the sense of St. Peter's primacy among the apostles. Similarly, the scene of St. Lawrence's ordination presents the contemporary pontiff as being at the head of a hieratic scale, albeit a more finely articulated one. Behind Sixtus II/Nicholas V and St. Lawrence is a semi-circle of eight ecclesiasts who hold liturgical objects and who are hieratically differentiated from one another by their dress. The vestments and tiara of Sixtus II/Nicholas V, as well as the fact he is seated, clearly define him as the highest ranking person of the

²⁸ These ideas are considered by John McManamon, who discusses orations of the papal court which portray the pope as the necessary head of the mystical body of the Church, which is closely related to the medieval 'mirror of princes' theory. See John M. McManamon, "The Ideal Renaissance Pope: Funeral Oratory from the Papal Court," Archivum Historiae Pontificiae 14 (1979): 38-42.

²⁹ The Biblical account of this event has all the apostles conferring the diaconate by the laying on of hands. Some earlier representations depict the laying on of hands, but St. Peter is usually in a prominent position.

group and emphasizes his regality.³⁰ The other ecclesiasts seem to be arranged so that the trio behind the pope (at the left) are of a high order, owing to their luxuriant copes. The pair of figures in the blue gowns seem to be of the next lowest rank of Churchmen, and the three at the right, with their plain, pleated gowns, appear to occupy the lowest end of the scale.³¹

These scenes also emphasize the historical tradition of the sacraments.³² The depiction of St. Stephen receiving the chalice from St. Peter, in contrast to the Biblical account where the laying on of hands conferred the deaconate, reveals an intentional emphasis on contemporary sacramental

³⁰ Sixtus II/Nicholas V's headdress is liturgically incorrect. Colin Eisler explains a similar idiosyncrasy in a portrait statue of Nicholas V on the Vagnucci reliquary:

The pope is shown wearing a tiara rather than a mitre. This is not the correct attire since, in celebrating the mass, the pope should wear the vestments proper to a bishop, the tiara not being a liturgical headdress but a symbol of his supreme office and jurisdiction.

Colin Eisler, "The Golden Christ of Cortona and the Man of Sorrows in Italy," Art Bulletin 51, no. 2 (June, 1969): 110.

³¹ For a brief account of the types of vestments worn in the Ordination of St. Lawrence scene see Cyril E. Pocknee, Liturgical Vesture (London: Mowbray & Co., 1960), 44-45, Plate X.

³² Nicholas V adhered strictly to orthodox conceptions of the sacraments. See Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 150. On p. 47 Stinger writes that Nicholas V had a new version of the Liber caeremoniarum made, and "this handbook to the liturgies and ceremonies of the papal court preserved substantially unaltered the practices of the 13th and 14th centuries, and thus was consciously conservative in purpose."

practice. In the scene of St. Lawrence's ordination, the unprecedented display of liturgical implements lends even more contemporaneity to the representation of the mass. Here too, the sacraments are understood as being contemporary manifestations of the practices of the early apostolic Church.

The illusionistic architectural settings of the ordination scenes play dual rhetorical roles. On the one hand, the use of contemporary styles and types of architecture (including the 'Roman' cityscape in the scene of St. Stephen distributing alms) provides particularity for the scenes and verify their reality for the viewers.³³ On the other hand, their convincing perspective (particularly symmetrical and deep in the St. Lawrence scene) work to engage the viewer by presenting the pictorial space as an extension of the viewers real space.³⁴ The scene of St. Lawrence's ordination, centered on one of the chapel walls, roughly square in shape, and flanked by the chapel's two windows, is the most 'iconic' and least narrative of the chapel scenes (though the scene of St. Lawrence distributing alms is similarly static and symmetrical). The viewer is

³³ See Winter, "Royal Rhetoric and the Development of Historical Narrative in Neo-Assyrian Reliefs," 2, where she writes "...topographical features and signature elements of dress, headgear, or associated goods - [are] carefully selected to provide the 'particularity' of the place and moment." The vesture and liturgical implements mentioned above also play this role.

³⁴ Norman Bryson, Vision and Painting. The Logic of the Gaze, 106.

compelled to take up a centered position before it. The gaze is fixed at this moment of centering, where the space and gaze of the viewer coincides with the spatial organization of the picture. This moment of perceptual alignment anchors the viewer's attentions, and orchestrates his or her viewing in a manner different from the way the narrative scenes manipulate the pattern of looking. The formal organization of the ordination of St. Lawrence fresco focusses the attention on the figures of St. Sixtus II/Nicholas V and St. Lawrence. But this fixing of the gaze is still only momentary; the lure of the narrative encourages the viewer to disengage from the image which captivates the attention and continue to view the cycle's other scenes.

St. Lawrence kneels before the seated figure of Sixtus II/Nicholas V. The ceremony of ordination includes a mass and St. Lawrence raises both his hands to receive the chalice. While this is going on they look into each others' eyes. It would be tempting to attach the term *devotus* to this scene,³⁵ but this would be guesswork. A comparison to a contemporaneous work by Fra Angelico - his Annunciation fresco in the *Museo San Marco* [fig. 12] - does, however, help justify the use of the term '*humiliatio*' or '*submission*', which was one of the '*Five Laudable Conditions of the Blessed Virgin*'.³⁶ In each of the two paintings a

³⁵ See pages 35-36.

³⁶ Baxandall, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy, 51

figure kneels in front of another figure, and in each the two figures look into each others' eyes. Baxandall has convincingly argued that the emotion Mary's pose and gesture was meant to represent and elicit was one of submission.³⁷ St. Lawrence's submission, appropriately, is to the pope, the authority of the Roman Church. In his acceptance of the chalice and thus his acceptance of his place in the hierarchy of the Church, St. Lawrence also sanctions the authority of the pontiff. Thus, the eliciting of the emotional attitude of submission fits well with the subject of the frescoes. Intertextuality, this time with a common type of religious image, is thereby used to give meaning and rhetorical strength to the scene.³⁸

In the ordination scene the gaze by which the two figures hold one another is indicative, as it is in Fra Angelico's Annunciation scene, of significant spiritual communication - a sort of *sacra conversazione*. The tension created by the solemn gazes of the figures is augmented by the multi-directioned gazes of the others that surround

³⁷ Baxandall, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy, 51-56. See also William Hood, "Saint Dominic's Manners of Praying: Gestures in Fra Angelico's Cell Frescoes at S. Marco," 198-199, where he notes that St. Dominic's De modo orandi "rests on the clearly articulated notion that specific states of mystical consciousness can be stimulated by deliberately assuming bodily postures."

³⁸ As Baxandall writes: "...the fifteenth-century experience of a painting was not the painting we see now so much as a marriage between the painting and the beholder's previous visualizing activity on the same matter." Baxandall, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy, 45.

them. In contrast, the intent, reciprocal gazes of the two haloed saints seems all the more profound.

The scene of St. Sixtus giving St. Lawrence the treasures of the Church is similarly dramatic [fig. 13]. As the soldiers knock on the door, the sense of urgency is suggested by the furtive glance of the figure carrying the jumbled stack of metalware. Even the two putti over the doorway act as empathetic signifiers since they register their concern as they look at the two groups of figures. As St. Lawrence genuflects before the standing figure of Sixtus II/Nicholas V, the two look at each other, and their significant communication is made more obvious by the activity of the busy, distracted figures behind them.³⁹ Despite this, the emotion of *humiliatio* (submission) is not the only, or even the most predominant, affection promoted in this scene. Again, a category of annunciation scene helps to identify one of the emotive functions.

Behind and to the left of Sixtus II/Nicholas V, a tonsured figure in a rust-coloured robe turns his head to look behind him, knits his brow and, while pointing with one hand, he slightly raises and opens his other. This figure is reacting to the Roman soldiers who are banging on the door and who have come to take Sixtus II to his martyrdom.

³⁹ Sixtus II/Nicholas V blesses St. Lawrence with a gesture which is exactly like the blessing gesture used by Christ in the small lunette above the door the Roman soldiers are knocking on. This clearly presents the pope as being the inheritor of Christ's authority, the *vicarus Christi*, as well as a *typus Christi*.

Another of the 'Five Laudable Conditions of the Blessed Virgin' was *conturbatio* or 'disquiet'.⁴⁰ Another contemporaneous scene of the annunciation, this time by Filippo Lippi, serves to illustrate this attitude [fig. 14]. The chiastic pose and the slightly raised and open hand indicates that the Virgin is disturbed.⁴¹ The similar pose and gesture of the figure in the scene of the giving of the treasures of the Church suggests that he too signifies and expresses *conturbatio*. Obviously, this state of being is quite appropriate considering what is happening.

In each of the two scenes just discussed the postural and gestural significations of mental conditions codified in the genre of annunciation scenes has been utilized to heighten the drama of the scenes in Nicholas V's chapel. Fra Angelico's experience with this genre aided in the expression of the themes and messages of the frescoes.

Other 'intertextual' figures which could be found in other types of conventional devotional images are present in the chapel frescoes. For example, in the scene of St. Stephen distributing alms, a man in a green cape places his hands in an attitude of prayer [fig. 10], reminiscent of numerous such devotion figures in other types of paintings. In the scene of St. Stephen preaching, two women raise their

⁴⁰ Baxandall, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy, 51.

⁴¹ As *conturbatio* suggests, being related to *turbare* (to disturb) or L. *turbatio* (disturbance, disorder) from whence our 'turbid' and 'perturb'.

hands in gestures signifying worship or devotion [fig. 15]. In the scene of St. Lawrence distributing alms a figure on the right raises his hands in an attitude of prayer, while on the left side of the scene a mother holds a child in a manner strongly reminiscent of a Madonna and Child grouping, thus echoing a well-known devotional motif [fig. 16].

Other gestures and poses play roles in contrasting the states of individuals or furthering the narrative. St. Stephen's praying gesture and pose during his martyrdom is sharply contrasted with the violent gestures of his executioners [fig. 17]. Similarly, in the scene of his expulsion, his graceful movement is contrasted with the violent movement of those who push him.⁴² The disputation scene, with its quick sequence of gestures which accelerate the narrative, imparts the heat of the debate and heightens the drama of the altercation [fig. 15].

The richness and variety of gestures and poses in the cycle suggests a desire for rhetorical richness. The rhetorical strength of the use of intertextual references lies in the fact that the conventional poses and gestures communicate dramatic moments clearly, but are visually interesting for being used in somewhat novel situations. Conventions are exploited for clarity, but are made vibrant by their new contexts. Rhetoric also worked within

⁴² Pose and gesture was evidence of the moral quality of the individual. See Jean-Claude Schmitt, "The Ethics of Gesture," in Fragments for a History of the Human Body, Part II (New York: Zone Press, 1989), 130.

conventions, but good rhetoricians used them in innovative ways.

The Virtue of Charity

The two almsgiving scenes [figs. 10 & 16] promote the notion of the charitable nature of the institution of the Church which, especially in the St. Lawrence scene, strongly links that charity with the pontiff. The virtue should be understood as love for humankind (the greatest of all Christian virtues⁴³) of which generosity is only one expression.⁴⁴ In both the scenes of almsgiving the Church is implied as being the source of the charity while the two saints are merely the active arms of a benevolent institution. It was St. Stephen's duty to distribute alms to widows.⁴⁵ St. Lawrence, also a deacon, had a similar duty. The inclusion of the Biblical scene of St. Stephen giving

⁴³ I Corinthians 13.

⁴⁴ One of Nicholas V's biographers, Vespasiano da Bisticci, mentions that Nicholas V often carried a bag of coins about with him from which he would distribute papal largesse. This was actually an ancient *topos* for describing the generous person. See Vespasiano da Bisticci, Renaissance Princes, Popes and Prelates, translated W. George and E. Waters (New York & London, 1963), 51. See also Pastor, The History of the Popes, vol. 2, 200.

⁴⁵ Indeed, it was the reason the diaconate was invented. See Acts 6:1-5. The widows were, in fact, to be served food. For a brief account of St. Stephen see the 'Stephen' entry in Ronald Brownrigg's Who's Who in the New Testament (New York: Holt, Rhinehart & Winston, 1971), 423-4.

alms illustrates that charity, in the form of almsgiving, was an activity of the early, apostolic Church.

The scene of St. Lawrence distributing alms also plays strongly on the notion that the Church is the source of charitable benevolence since, like St. Stephen, St. Lawrence distributes the alms from the portal of a church. However, the scene is more specific since the adjoining scene shows Sixtus II (again with the visage of Nicholas V and wearing a Renaissance tiara and full pontificals) giving St. Lawrence the Church treasures to be given to the poor [fig. 16]. The source of the largesse is thus Sixtus II/Nicholas V; the pope and the head of the hierarchy of the Church, and it is his generosity and love for humanity which these actions express.

Nicholas V may have wanted the virtues of liberality and charity to accrue to himself for a number of reasons. Displays of Church generosity may have partially been a strategy to attract the donations of the pious. The spiritual liberality of the pope in making 1450 an *Anno Santo*, and generating the plenary indulgences that go along with such a year, was certainly rewarded by the vast amounts of money that the pilgrims donated to the Church.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ John B. Toews, "Formative Forces in the Pontificate of Nicholas V 1447-1455," 279. Not all the money was through donation. As Toews notes on page 281: "Anticipating a mass consumption of food during the jubilee, the curia raised the food tax." This calls to mind St. Bernard's doubts about the function of opulent visual art. Quoting St. Bernard, Umberto Eco writes: "Can it be, he [St. Bernard] goes on to ask, that these riches are meant to draw riches after them, to

A representation of the Church as a source of charity may also have had a practical, popular message. Giuseppe Brippi, a poet in Nicholas V's court, urged the pontiff to support the poor, "because the love of the citizens is the best defense of a ruler."⁴⁷ Nicholas V was himself perhaps trying to embody the generosity of the scenes of St. Stephen and St. Lawrence by founding the papal almshouse near the German *Campo Santo*,⁴⁸ a public gesture which might have served to deflect any popular discontent with Nicholas V's presence in Rome.

The desire to equate the virtue of charity with the papacy was so great that Nicholas V promoted himself as "an *exemplum* of charity." ⁴⁹ Westfall claims that Nicholas V saw the virtue of charity as necessarily active rather than stimulate financial donations to the Church?" Umberto Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages*, 7.

⁴⁷ Brippi's exhortation echoes earlier writings on the nature of the perfect prince, but certainly the advice was pertinent to a pope whose predecessor, Eugenius IV, had been driven from Rome by a rebellious populous. See Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 235.

⁴⁸ Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 20. Nicholas V was a great patron of the Germans in Rome who composed the largest foreign community in the city, and one of the most influential. See the informative volume by Clifford W. Maas, *The German Community in Renaissance Rome 1378-1523*, edited by Peter Herde (Freiburg: *Romische Quartalschrift für Christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte*. Supplement to volume 39, 1981).

⁴⁹ Westfall, *In this Most Perfect Paradise*, 162. Westfall writes of Nicholas V's throne in St. Peter's: "From this dignified seat at the head of the Church the pope was an active participant in the affairs of the world. He was an *exemplum* of charity." It is perhaps understandable that the head of the hierarchy of the Church should most embody the most important of the virtues.

contemplative.⁵⁰ Citing works like Torquemada's Poenitentia, Westfall argues that the virtue of papal charity was a potent weapon in the battle against sin, specifically the sin of *superbia*.⁵¹ "Superbia caused the expulsion from the garden charity made it possible for mankind to return to paradise."⁵² As the primary *exemplum* of charity for Christians, Nicholas V's active, priestly role defines him as being not only a *vicarus Christi* but a *typus Christi* as well, and the exercising of his virtue leads to the ordering and salvation of society.⁵³ If order is the result of Nicholas V's vital virtue of charity, even the stable, symmetrical ordering of the church 'nave' in the scene of St. Lawrence giving alms can be seen to be an outcome of it.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 162. In this respect, though, Nicholas V was not unlike other humanists who promoted the active, rather than the contemplative Christian life. See Geiger, Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, 51. Naturally, they were praising their own efforts in the field of theology.

⁵¹ Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 160.

⁵² Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 160.

⁵³ Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 164. In Westfall's words, "Only through the exercise of his *virtu* in the world can the pope bring order to the Church." Westfall also notes the parallel between chivalric notions of the virtue of charity and its active role in governance, and gives the example of Nicholas V's diplomatic victory in the formation of the Lega Italica. Describing the celebrations of the accord, Westfall writes that "The entire affair was a display of chivalry. Knights with their love set on God were conquering lusts; order was being established; charity was vanquishing *superbia*." Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 159.

The scenes in Nicholas V's chapel are architecturally ordered to a degree uncommon for the time. Virtually every scene is dominated by architecture, either interiors or facades. The only scene with any appreciable amount of landscape, St. Stephen's expulsion and martyrdom, is bisected by a long, sweeping section of city wall which is a virtuoso display of Fra Angelico's skill in rendering convincing, dramatic perspective. These displays of Fra Angelico's skill in handling perspectival problems are so varied that the cycle, at times, seems like a series of lessons on perspective. The views include cramped interiors (disputation scene), basilica-like interiors (both direct and sidelong), civic views, oblique views (preaching scene), and the city wall mentioned above. The types of architecture also vary from ecclesiastic to civic and 'antique' types.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ This ideal of the ruler who brings order was a convention. Aquinas had also dealt with it. "For Thomas [Aquinas] the world was nothing if not ordered. The mark of wisdom, divine or human, was to be able to produce order; it was thus the gift most needed by the ruler. These ideas had classical and patristic equivalents and were easily assimilated into a humanistic world view. They were congenial to a court where order and harmony were postulated as desirable and realizable goals." Quoted from O'Malley, "The Feast of Thomas Aquinas in Renaissance Rome. A Neglected Document and its Import," 23.

⁵⁵ In the scene of St. Stephen preaching, the 'palazzo' in the background, with its three-storey, blocklike appearance, is reminiscent of the Palazzo Medici, and Krautheimer has suggested that the 'modernity' of the representation of the architectural elements in the ordination of St. Stephen scene reflects Alberti's influences. A number of scholars have discussed Fra Angelico's architectural spaces and attempted to relate them to architectural production of the time. See Krautheimer, "Fra Angelico and - perhaps - Alberti," 290-296.

These displays of *ingenium* in the solving of complex perspectival problems, and the representation of varied styles and types of architecture, could also have been admired by viewers. On a very practical level, the emphasis on perspectival depth enhances the effectiveness of the frescoes because the chapel itself is so small. By covering the walls with images which have deep, emphatic perspectives, the tiny chapel's space is illusionistically enlarged and thereby made more visually spectacular. Thus, along with the psychological engagement of the viewer and the particularizing of 'historic' space, the illusionistic architecture also responds to the very practical aspect of organizing 'stages' on the mural surfaces of a room with limited spaces. The predominance of oblique perspectives in the Stephen cycle, which occupies the lunettes high on the wall, address their spaces to a viewer near the centre of the chapel.⁵⁶

The fact that the saints stand at the portals of church structures in each of the almsgiving scenes is also important because Nicholas V seemed conscious of the manifold significations of architecture, both as impressive visual stimuli and how the patronage of architecture defined

⁵⁶ Kristeva notes that in Giotto's frescoes in Padua: "...Giotto avoids frontal settings as well as vanishing points: conflicting oblique lines indicate that the central viewpoint is not in any fresco, but rather in the space of the building where the painter or viewer is standing." Kristeva, "Giotto's Joy," 43.

him as a magnificent patron.⁵⁷ For Nicholas V, architecture and its ordering nature seems to have been related to charity. Of the papal palace and St. Peter's basilica Westfall writes that these architectural settings "would provide figures which revealed that the doctrine of charity directed the governor of the Church."⁵⁸ Architecture was the visible expression of the charitable order Nicholas V ruled over, and was also a long-lasting messenger of doctrine to the masses who saw it. It is worthwhile to recall the 'death-bed oration' with which Nicholas V addressed the cardinals.

We want your graces to know and to understand that there were two main reasons for our buildings....the throngs of all other [unlearned] peoples...their assent, supported as it is on a weak foundation, gradually collapses in the course of time, until it falls back to nothing, unless they are moved by certain extraordinary sights. But when that vulgar belief founded on doctrines of learned men is continually confirmed and daily corroborated by great buildings, which are perpetual monuments and eternal testimonies seemingly made by God, it is forever conveyed to those, both present and future, who behold such admirable constructions.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Although, for the most part, Nicholas V followed the conservative line on architectural patronage recommended by Giovanni Dominici, to renovate old churches rather than build new ones. See Jenkins, "Cosimo de' Medici's Patronage of Architecture and the Theory of Magnificence," 162.

⁵⁸ Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 164.

⁵⁹ Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, 33.

In this text, Nicholas V's concern for the continued faith of the masses is indicative of his charity. But it also reveals his view that the power of the visual should be used to indoctrinate the masses. Architecture, a medium of high rhetorical content, was obviously seen as an effective tool in influencing people. The presence of the basilical structures in the scenes of almsgiving may be seen as a pictorial reiteration of the doctrinal signification of church structures. They too represent the charitable order created and presided over by Nicholas V. Significantly, as patron of architecture, Nicholas V was compared to the Biblical *exempla*, Solomon, by his humanist biographer Manetti. Solomon, as the builder of the Temple, served as the prototype for the portrait of Nicholas V as builder. Manetti wrote that,

Nicholas magnanimously and courageously imitated Solomon, King of Jerusalem, the wisest man of all men who have existed or will at any time, inspired not only by the oracle of Apollo as it is written of Socrates, but by the will of the omnipotent God.⁶⁰

The association of these conceptions with the frescoes required an understanding of these significations of architecture, and it would be difficult to argue that fifteenth century viewers, even learned ones, would have made these kinds of connections. The visual medium presents

⁶⁰ This text is from a translation generously supplied to me by Dr. Deborah Pincus.

conceptions of order - in this case through the architecturally ordered spaces of the chapel frescoes - which the viewer would have apprehended but not necessarily comprehended. At this level of signification, one is reminded of the constant representation, in medieval and Renaissance Christian art, of paradise as an architecturally ordered space, and hell as 'architectureless'.⁶¹

The Virtue of Martyrdom

The fact that Sixtus II, St. Stephen, and St. Lawrence were all martyrs, compels a brief discussion of the theme of martyrdom.⁶² St. Stephen was the first martyr or protomartyr and St. Lawrence was one of the early Roman martyrs. St. Stephen's position as protomartyr was naturally one of great importance and, similarly, St. Lawrence was considered Rome's most important post-apostolic martyr.⁶³ The two

⁶¹ Kristeva makes the interesting observation (speaking of Giotto's Last Judgement in the Arena Chapel) that: "The representation of Hell would be the representation of narrative dissolution as well as the collapse or architecture and the disappearance of colour." Kristeva, "Giotto's Joy," 31. Kristeva's inference that narrative is linked to architecture is relevant to the frescoes in Nicholas V's chapel as well.

⁶² St. Stephen and St. Lawrence were considered 'brother martyrs' because their relics lay together in the church of *San Lorenzo fuori la mura*. St. Stephen had been martyred in Jerusalem but his relics had been brought to Rome from Constantinople sometime in the sixth century. As the legend goes, when St. Stephen's body was brought to San Lorenzo, St. Lawrence was found to have moved over to make room for his fellow deacon martyr.

saints could therefore, because of their prominence, be said to exemplify the virtue of martyrdom.

It has already been demonstrated how the ordination frescoes linked the contemporary papacy with St. Peter, Rome's most prominent martyr. The moving of the Holy See from the Lateran also established a topographical relationship between the domicile of the pope, the *cathedra*, and the relics of the martyred St. Peter. Topographical issues, as they related to the holy sites where the relics of the martyrs lay (and, sometimes, where certain events took place, like the martyrdom of St. Peter for example ⁶⁴), were also dealt with by humanists.⁶⁵ The purpose of emphasizing these geographical sites was primarily for the pilgrims, who could gain more immediate contact with the martyrs through visiting these sites, since the site provided a tangible, physical, and historic link to the deeds of the martyrs. A place was an ideal kind of link with the past because, unlike people and events which had passed away and had to be reproduced in texts and images, places were eternal.⁶⁶ For the pilgrims, the city of Rome became "a

⁶³ The invention of the saint took place in 1447, the same year the frescoes were begun. This act, instigated by Nicholas V, served to promote and elevate St. Lawrence as an important Christian martyr.

⁶⁴ See J. M. Huskinson, "The Crucifixion of St. Peter: A 15th Century Topographical Problem," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 32 (1969): 135-161.

⁶⁵ Flavio Biondo's Roma instaurata is the most frequently cited text. See Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 170.

vast repository of sacred relics."⁶⁷ Nicholas V's proclamation of 1450 as a Jubilee year and his renovations of the important Roman basilicas was a promotion of the pilgrimage and the veneration of Roman martyrs.

This may also be related to the quasi-Roman setting in which the scenes from the life of St. Stephen are enacted. The scene of almsgiving has, in the background, the types of towers that could be found in fifteenth century Rome. Similarly, the cityscape in the preaching scene has architectural forms which allow the viewer to place the action in a Roman setting, since these forms are suggestive of fifteenth century Italian structures. The events from St. Stephen's life, which actually occurred in Jerusalem, are shown as being enacted in a generic, but quasi-quattrocento civic space. By not including distinctive architectural signs identifying the city as either Jerusalem or Rome, the frescoes avoid the blatantly unhistorical, but, by implication, the viewer is invited to construct, typologically, a relationship between Jerusalem and Rome. This relationship was, indeed, a literary and theological commonplace. The final scenes of expulsion and martyrdom augment this. Although it was traditional to depict St. Stephen being stoned outside the walls of Jerusalem, the

⁶⁶ See Peter Brown, The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981) and Patrick J. Geary, Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978).

⁶⁷ Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 33.

monumentality of the wall in the chapel scene could also have been perceived as a section of Rome's Aurelian walls. If so, an interesting topographical relationship could emerge, since St. Stephen's relics were kept in San Lorenzo fuori la Mura. The locality of the relics could thus be seen to (falsely) mark the site of his martyrdom. But, even in a more general way, the frescoes subtly promote Rome as a city full of places where significant religious events happened.

The humanists of Nicholas V's court attempted to connect the virtue of martyrdom with the contemporary pontiff. Nicholas V's 'martyrdom' was the "incessant cares and constant cares and anxieties he had borne in caring for his flock."⁶⁸ The notion of Nicholas V's 'martyrdom' was promoted in biographies by Michele Canesi and Giannozzo Manetti. Canesi asserted that Nicholas V "possessed all the spiritual values - faith, piety, sincere love, religion, charity, holiness, and martyrdom - acclaimed in Sixtus, Urban, Sylvester, Gregory, Bernard, and the other Fathers of the Church."⁶⁹ Manetti's account of Nicholas V's life was "a highly hagiographic account of the pope's life, filled with

⁶⁸ Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 173. Stinger notes that martyrdom is a key theme in Nicholas V's chapel. He writes that, "Martyrdom as a key virtue of Christian leadership and as a primary source of Rome's sacredness found prominent expression, too, in the fresco cycles Fra Angelico painted in Nicholas V's small private chapel in the Vatican." Later, on page 177, Stinger writes that the theme of martyrdom was so important that it became "a leitmotiv of the restored Roman papacy."

⁶⁹ Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 173.

the kind of *mirabilia* present in the lives of the early saints." ⁷⁰ Nicholas V, by depicting himself as Sixtus II, identifies himself with an early Roman martyr and pope.

Here too, then, the subject matter and ideas expressed in the frescoes prove extensive to the activity of Nicholas V's humanists. More importantly, though, is the fact that the frescoes play a role in constructing a portrait of an ideal pope, and portraying Nicholas V in that role. The virtues of charity and martyrdom are suggested as being active through the person of Nicholas V, thus God's grace works through him to produce order and harmony through the virtue of charity, and salvation through the virtue of martyrdom.

Obviously, it is the portrait of Nicholas V as Sixtus II which allows these notions to be perpetuated in the frescoes. The portrait could be explained by an exhortation of Alberti's, where he suggested the inclusion of a well-known figure to attract the eye of the viewer.⁷¹ Alberti recognized this as an effective rhetorical element, whereby the viewer discovers the portrait of an individual who is contemporary (and quite possibly in the chapel with the viewer!) with the viewer's world. The truth of the ideas and connections illustrated in the scenes, and their perception as an extension of the real world is thus augmented.

⁷⁰ Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 173.

⁷¹ See Geiger's comment on this Albertian passage in Geiger, Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel, 139.

Eloquence

The scenes of St. Stephen preaching and disputing with the Sanhedrin work together as a testament to the virtuousness of eloquence [fig. 15]. This 'virtue' - a decidedly humanist rather than Christian one - like the virtues of charity and martyrdom, was strongly associated with Nicholas V. Numerous texts from Nicholas V's reign testify to the importance of this ability, and suggest how it related to the portrait of the ideal pope. For humanists, eloquence was the preeminent virtue (just as charity was the preeminent Christian virtue) and these two scenes especially magnify these events from St. Stephen's life where St. Stephen, as orator and martyr, is presented as a syncretic *exemplum* of both humanist and religious virtue.⁷²

That St. Stephen is speaking to his audience is indicated by his gesture; one which, in the preaching scene, shows him counting off points on his fingers.⁷³ The proper

⁷² D'Amico writes of the humanists' Ciceronean ideals: "Rhetoric of eloquence not only expressed *humanitas* but also came to be identified with it; the perfect representative of *humanitas* was the orator, the man who spoke and wrote elegantly and thus was truly human." D'Amico, Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome, 124. For a collection of essays on eloquence see Renaissance Eloquence, edited by James J. Murphy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

⁷³ An interesting comparison is Fra Angelico's earlier panel of St. Peter preaching from the predella of the Linaiuoli Triptych [fig. 18] St. Peter simply assumes an

use of gesture during oration was considered important to the humanists of the mid-fifteenth century. Paris de Grassis had "harsh words for those preachers who did not know the difference between gestures proper to an orator and those proper to an actor."⁷⁴ The concern for gesture was a rejuvenation of chironomic notions codified in antiquity and preserved for the Renaissance in volumes on rhetoric and rhetorical gesture like Quintilian's Institutio oratoria, a work which carried a great deal of influence during this period.⁷⁵ The gestures made while speaking were not to be overly theatrical, but were to be appropriate and dignified.⁷⁶ Gesture also indicated the ethical state of an individual, and was regarded "as the outward (*foris*) physical expression of the inward (*intus*) soul."⁷⁷

orant pose. The effects of his words on the women who sit before him are similar to the reactions of the women listening to St. Stephen.

⁷⁴ O'Malley, Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome, 28. Baxandall notes the differences between sacred and profane gesture in Painting and Experience, 70. An interesting hypothesis on the source of Fra Angelico's gestures is given in William Hood's "Saint Dominic's Manners of Praying: Gestures in Fra Angelico's Cell Frescoes as San Marco," Art Bulletin 68 (June, 1986): 195-206.

⁷⁵ Cheles, The Studiolo of Urbino: An Iconographic Investigation, 41.

⁷⁶ See Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, translated by H. E. Butler (London: William Heineman, 1920), Bk. I, xi 12-17.

⁷⁷ Jean-Claude Schmitt, "The Ethics of Gesture," in Fragments for a History of the Human Body, Part II (New York: Zone Press, 1989), 130.

These rules extended to preachers as well.⁷⁸ In the scene, St. Stephen counts off his points on his fingers. This counting gesture was meant to signify the systematic reasoning of St. Stephen's argument, which passed through logical stages of division and subdivision.⁷⁹ Rhetoric was not improvisation, but a highly structured orchestra of movements (including many formalities) which moved inevitably and logically to a conclusion. The gesture, then, could imply that St. Stephen is an preacher who has reached an advanced position in his mastery of rhetorical art.

Another aspect of eloquence is emphasized in the scene of St. Stephen disputing with the Sanhedrin.⁸⁰ At the left

⁷⁸ Baxandall, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy, 64 writes: "An Italian preacher could tour northern Europe successfully preaching...getting his effect largely through gesture...The problem was always, where to draw the line; Thomas Waley's mid-fourteenth-century De modo componendi sermones urged, '...let the preacher be very careful not to throw his body about with unrestrained movement - now suddenly lifting up his head high, now jerking it suddenly down...'"

⁷⁹ Cheles, The Studiolo of Urbino: An Iconographic Investigation, 41. Cheles speaks of this gesture in reference to the figures of Duns Scotus and Aquinas in the studiolo of Federigo da Montefeltro [see fig. 19]. See also Caroline Elam, 'Studioli' and Renaissance Court Patronage (London: M.A. Report, Courtauld Institute of Art, May, 1970), 23. For an account of this gesture in Renaissance art see Mme. O. Chomentouskaja, "Le Comput Digital. Histoire d'un Geste dans l'art de la Renaissance Italienne," Gazette des Beaux-Arts 20 (1938): 157-172. Angelico could well have seen this gesture in Masolino's cycle of Saint Catherine of Alexandria in the Basilica of San Clemente in Rome. Saint Catherine is also shown using the gesture in a disputation scene [fig. 20].

⁸⁰ The scene of the disputation depicts a specific moment in Stephen's life which is recorded in Acts 6:1-15 and 7:1-60. The pair of Jews who make points to be answered

two men make points with emphatic gestures. The elder of the Sanhedrin, seated on a canopied dais and seeking a response, turns a hand towards St. Stephen. The saint's reply is indicated by his raised arm, which is reminiscent of the imperial *adlocutio*.

Here, St. Stephen's eloquence is also shown to be adaptable to argumentative discourse, and thus the eristic proto-martyr is portrayed as being doubly virtuous in terms of his oratorical skills since he demonstrates his ability to speak in the contentious, judicial language of disputation, as well as be inspiring as a preacher. St. Stephen's forensic aptitudes thus give him even greater breadth since, as Quintilian mentions; "...no one can be called a perfect orator unless he be an expert debater," ⁸¹ and St. Stephen is clearly implied as being this as well.

As mentioned, the virtue of eloquence was also an attribute which Nicholas V's humanists attempted to relate to the pontiff.⁸² Indeed, Nicholas V was recorded as being

to Stephen can be associated with the members of the 'Synagogue of Freedom' who disputed unsuccessfully with Stephen and who conspired to bear false witness against Stephen in the court of the Sanhedrin [Acts 6:8-15]. The gesture of the high priest corresponds to the question he puts to Stephen in the book of Acts [Acts 7:1] after hearing the accusations, "Is this true?"

⁸¹ Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, Bk. VI, iv, 1-5.

⁸² Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome*, 84. Da Bisticci gives a detailed and laudatory account of Parentuccelli's abilities as a scholar, diplomat and orator. Nicholas V's knowledge was presented as being encyclopaedic in nature: "He knew the works both of the modern and the ancient doctors, and there were few Greek and Latin writers whose works he had not studied. He knew the Bible by heart, and

elected to the chair of St. Peter largely due to his excellent Oratorio de eligendo Pontifice (Oration Concerning the Election of the Pope).⁸³ Vespasiano da Bisticci records that,

The oration was spoken with great dignity and eloquence, and gave such great satisfaction to all the College and the others present that it moved the cardinals to make him Pope ...his reputation was greatly augmented by this noble oration."⁸⁴

Nicholas V emphasized the skill of eloquence as being a crucial attribute of the ideal Renaissance pope,⁸⁵ and used

his citations thereof were always correct." Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 33. Stinger cites many of da Bisticci's comments on Nicholas V's oratorical aptitudes. For example, in disputations in defense of the Church at the council of Ferrara/Florence, "He would constantly be found in the place above named holding discussions, or about the Pope's court, conversing and arguing, for he was a very ardent dialectician [p.35]; and, "In all these disputations Messer Tomasso found himself on the side of the Latins. He was amongst the leaders and the highest in esteem with both factions, through the universal knowledge he possessed of the Holy Scriptures, and of the doctors, ancient and modern." [p.36].

⁸³ John M. McManamon. "The Ideal Renaissance Pope: Funeral Oratory from the Papal Court", 9. But more probably, as Stinger writes, "...[Nicholas V's] election came about because of sensitive rivalry between the Colonna and Orsini...to break the deadlocked conclave, Bernardi proposed Parentuccelli, who besides his neutrality in Roman and Italian politics also had the virtue of being a staunch anticonciliarist..." The Renaissance in Rome, 84.

⁸⁴ Vespasiano da Bisticci, Renaissance Princes, Popes and Prelates, 43. See also McManamon, "The Ideal Renaissance Pope: Funeral Oratory from the Papal Court", 9:10:15.

⁸⁵ McManamon writes, "Hence, the general portrait of the ideal pope is of one outstanding in virtue and wisdom.

the frescoes in his chapel as one of the vehicles by which the idea of the power of eloquence could be developed and transmitted. Specifically, the scenes impart the important concept that eloquence is an effective instrument in theology. Given the apparent need for the justification of humanist methods in theological applications, these scenes could also be seen as advertisements for the theological activities of humanists.

Furthermore, eloquence had an important role to play in the rites of the Church which Nicholas V, throughout his office, desired to embellish. O'Malley writes that preaching was something that "must be seen in its liturgical context, the *inter missarum solemnia*." ⁸⁶ If the chapel of Nicholas V functioned as the locus for these more private, courtly masses or *cappelle pontificie* - even though it is quite small for these - the presence of frescoes which attempt to associate the virtue of eloquence with the pope may have had meaning in terms of the liturgies which took place there.

St. Stephen's eloquence is registered by the responses of those he speaks to. The viewer can easily perceive that eloquence has a variety of powerful affects on people. At this very moment of perception, of course, it is the rhetorical power of the visual which slyly asserts itself.

His virtue is especially related to active works of charity, while an eloquence to persuade his fellow men to peace and concord and a moral life is the hallmark of his wisdom." **McManamon**, "The Ideal Renaissance Pope: Funeral Oratory from the Papal Court", 38.

⁸⁶ O'Malley, Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome, 8.

CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to define some of the circumstances surrounding the production of the frescoes in the chapel of Nicholas V - as well as evaluate their content, organization, and style - with the intent of proposing a probable theory of their function.

Two levels of content have emerged as relevant: the content which is often referred to as subject matter, and the content which is usually called style. The personae of the frescoes, and the themes of papal primacy, charity, martyrdom and eloquence can be designated subject matter. The mural and pictorial organization of the frescoes, and the types of visual strategies used to engage the viewer may be taken as being some aspects of style. Both are carriers of meaning, even though the meaning that style carries may not always be very obvious.

Art historical scholarship dealing with humanism and visual art, with the exception of that of Michael Baxandall and a few others, has largely concentrated on humanism's influence on painting at the level of subject matter. I have attempted to argue that humanist rhetorical style found a parallel expression in a cycle of frescoes produced for a humanist pope. I would like to suggest that, at one level, the style of these frescoes meant that the institution of the papacy was interested in cultivating a cultural diplomacy which could be used with those who might not be

quite convinced of the ideals and ideologies that the papacy was structured upon. The employment of eloquence and an eloquent style in painting aimed to use the rhetorical as a means of persuasion whereby the audience assented to the 'truths' implied by the subject matter content.

A number of issues could still be considered for further study. For example, it is possible that Fra Angelico's *devotus* style (and his reputation as a 'saintly' painter), aside from its highly rhetorical nature, may have mediated the expression of some of the less traditional ideas the frescoes communicate, like the suggestion of eloquence as a saintly virtue. Terms such as 'rhetoric' and 'eloquence' could also be defined more closely within the specific context of Nicholas V's court, and the way in which rhetoric served the particular needs of institutions at this time might also be an element which could engage further study on the subject.

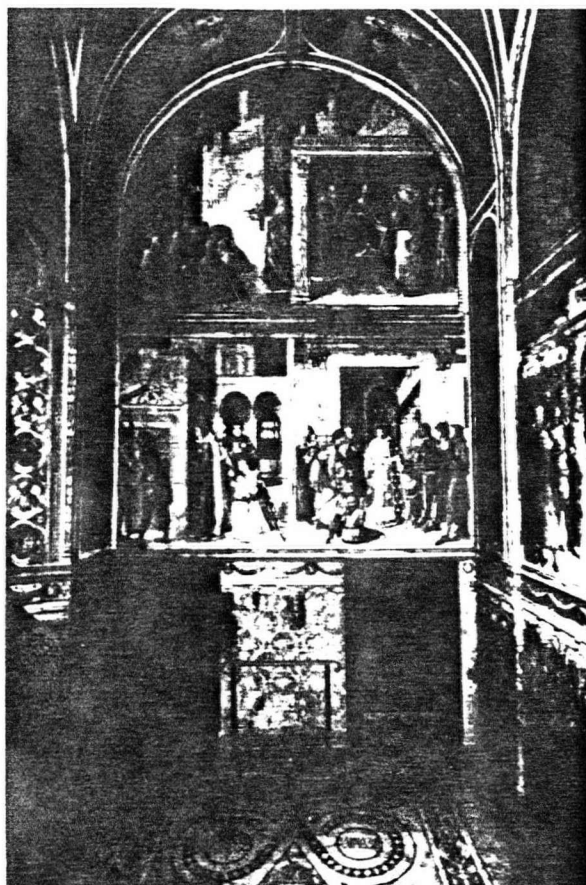
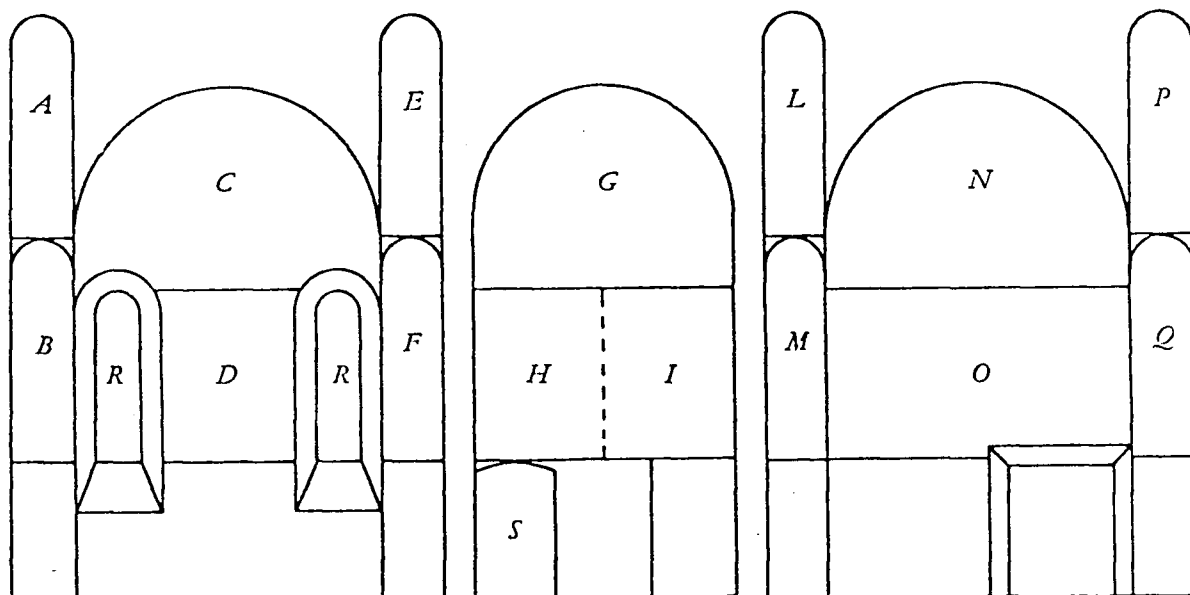


Figure 1: Partial view of the Chapel of Nicholas V, the Vatican (Source: Eve Borsook, The Mural Painters of Tuscany).



Key

- A - St. Leo the Great
- B - St. John Chrysostom
- C - St. Stephen's Ordination, Almsgiving.
- D - Ordination of Lawrence
- E - St. Gregory the Great
- F - St. Anastasius
- G - Preaching of Stephen, disputation
- H - St. Lawrence receiving Church's treasures
- I - St. Lawrence distributing treasures
- L - St. Ambrogio
- M - St. Thomas Aquinas
- N - Expulsion & stoning of Stephen
- O - St. Lawrence before Valerianus, martyrdom
- P - St. Agostino
- Q - St. Boneventura
- R - Windows
- S - entrance
- T - actual entrance

Figure 2: Diagram of the organization of the decoration in the Chapel of Nicholas V (Source: Antonella Greco, La Cappella di Niccolò V del Beato Angelico).



Figure 3: Fra Angelico, the Four Evangelists in the vault of the Chapel of Nicholas V
(Source: John Pope-Hennessy, Fra Angelico).



Figure 4: [left] Fra Angelico, St. Ambrose. The Chapel of Nicholas V (Source: The 'Meisters Gemalde' Series).

Figure 5: [right] Fra Angelico, St. Augustine. The Chapel of Nicholas V (Source: The 'Meisters Gemalde' Series).



Figure 6: Fra Angelico, St. Thomas Aquinas. The Chapel of Nicholas V (Source: The 'Meisters Gemalde' Series).

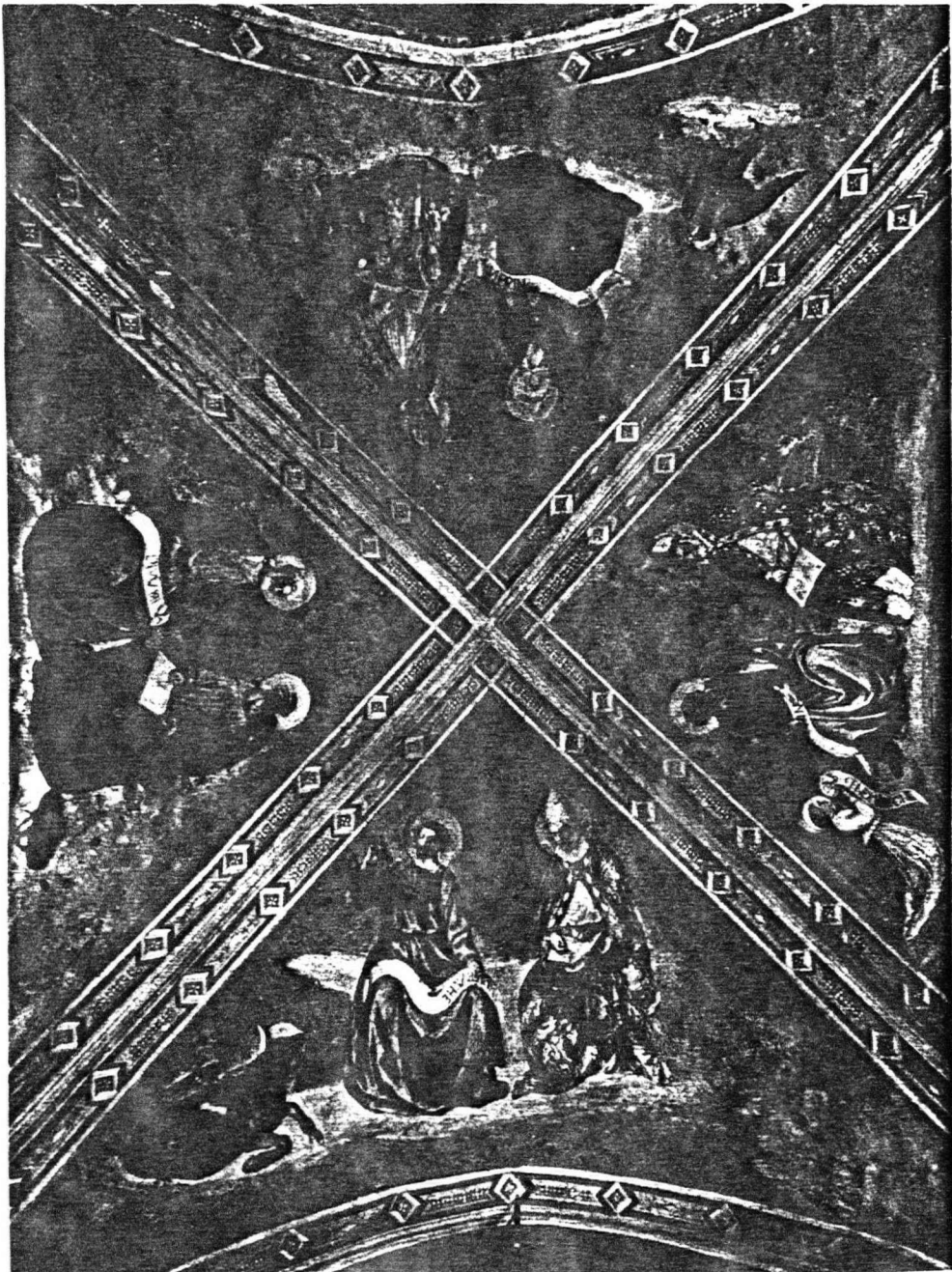


Figure 7: Masolino, the Evangelists and the Latin Doctors of the Church. San Clemente, Rome (Source: Mario Salmi, Masaccio).

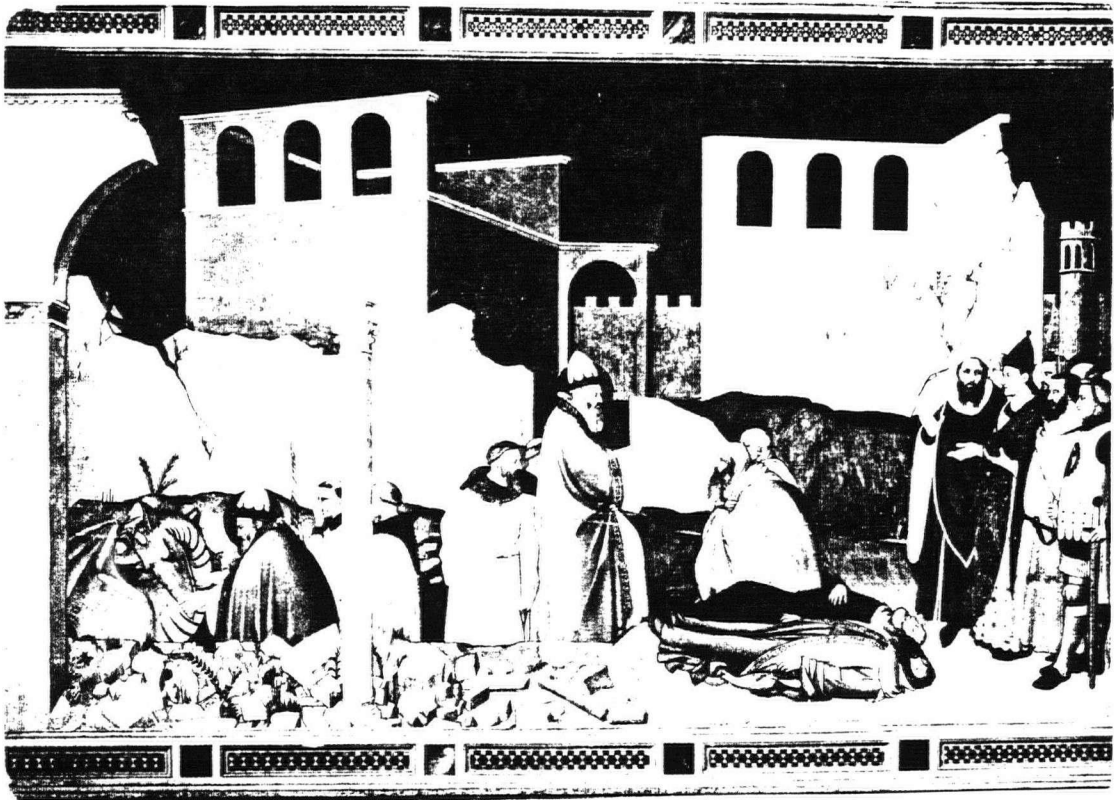


Figure 8: Maso di Banco, 'St. Sylvester Closing the Mouth of the Dragon and Resuscitating Two Deceased Romans', c. 1340, Bardi di Vernio Chapel, Florence (Source: Frederick Hartt, History of Italian Renaissance Art).



Figure 9: Masolino, 'The Healing of the Cripple and the Raising of Tabitha', Brancacci Chapel, Florence, 1424-1425 (Source: Frederick Hartt, History of Italian Renaissance Art).

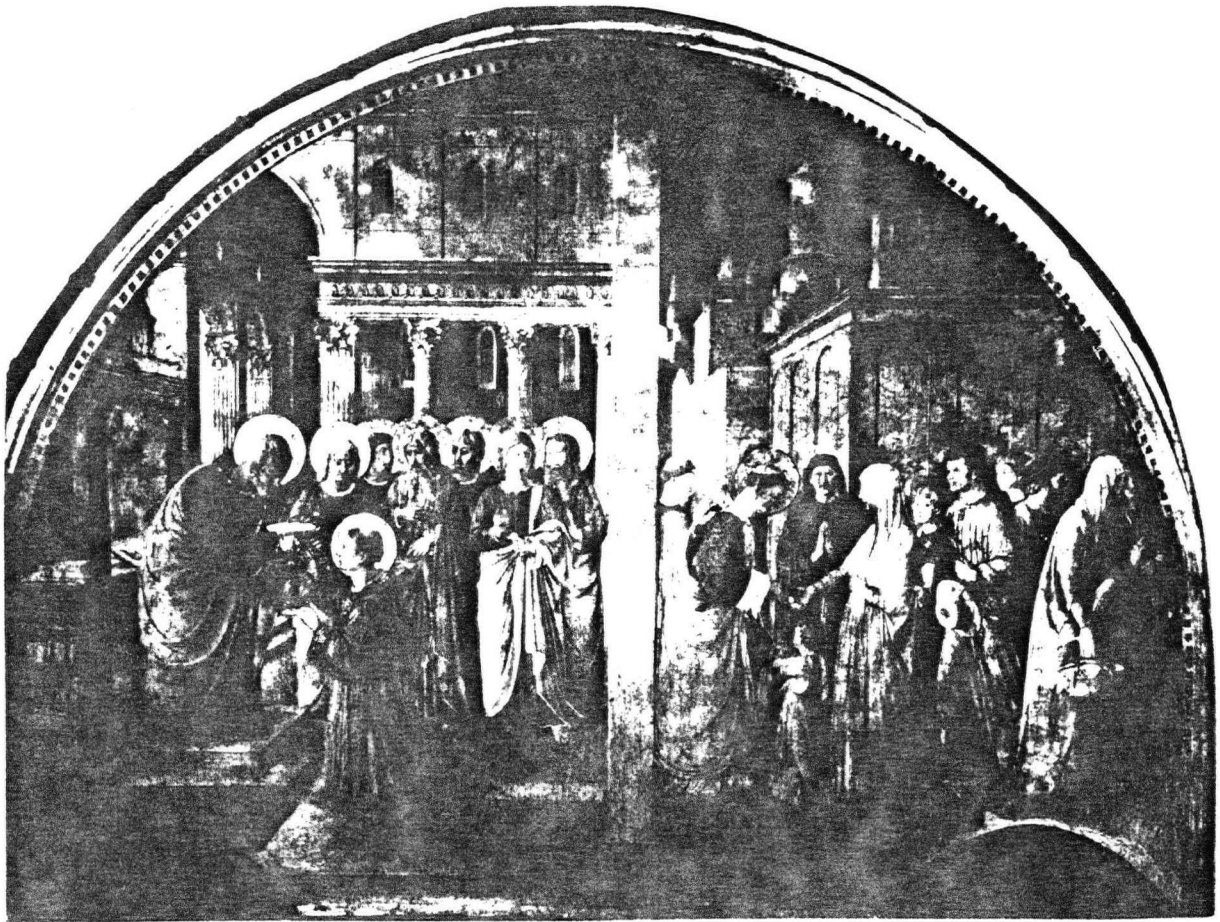


Figure 10: Fra Angelico, 'The Ordination of St. Stephen and St. Stephen Distributing Alms'. The Chapel of Nicholas V (Source: John Pope-Hennessy, Fra Angelico).



Figure 11: Fra Angelico, 'The Ordination of St. Lawrence'.
The Chapel of Nicholas V (Source: John Pope-
Hennessy, Fra Angelico).



Figure 12: Fra Angelico, 'The Annunciation', c. 1440-1460, Museo San Marco, Florence (Source: Michael Baxandall, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy).



Figure 13: Fra Angelico, 'Sixtus II giving St. Lawrence the Treasures of the Church'. The Chapel of Nicholas V (Source: John Pope-Hennessy, Fra Angelico).



Figure 14: Filippo Lippi, 'The Annunciation' c. 1440-1460, San Lorenzo, Florence (Source: Michael Baxandall, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy).

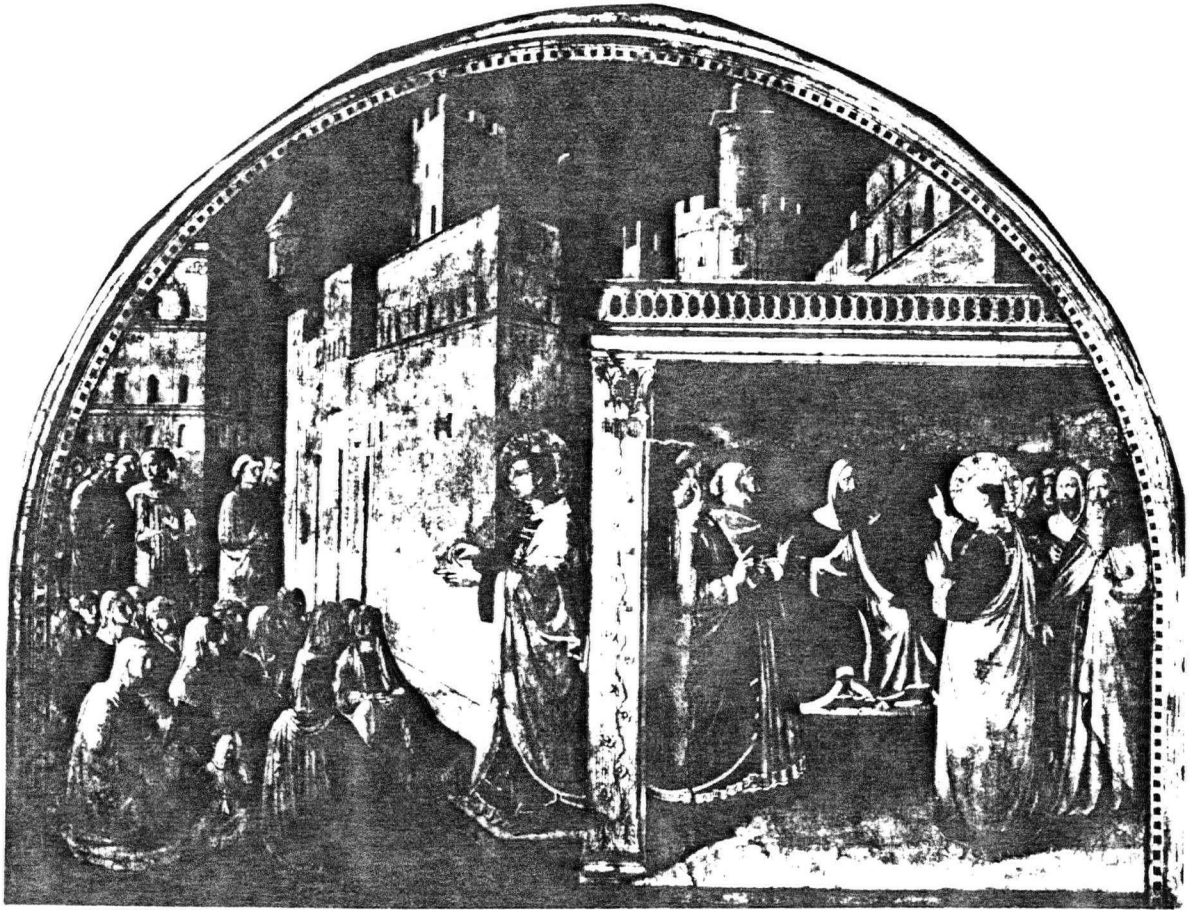


Figure 15: Fra Angelico, St. Stephen Preaching and Disputing with the Sanhedrin. The Chapel of Nicholas V (Source: John Pope-Hennessy, Fra Angelico).



Figure 16: Fra Angelico, 'St. Lawrence Giving Alms'. Chapel of Nicholas V (Source: John Pope-Hennessy, Fra Angelico).

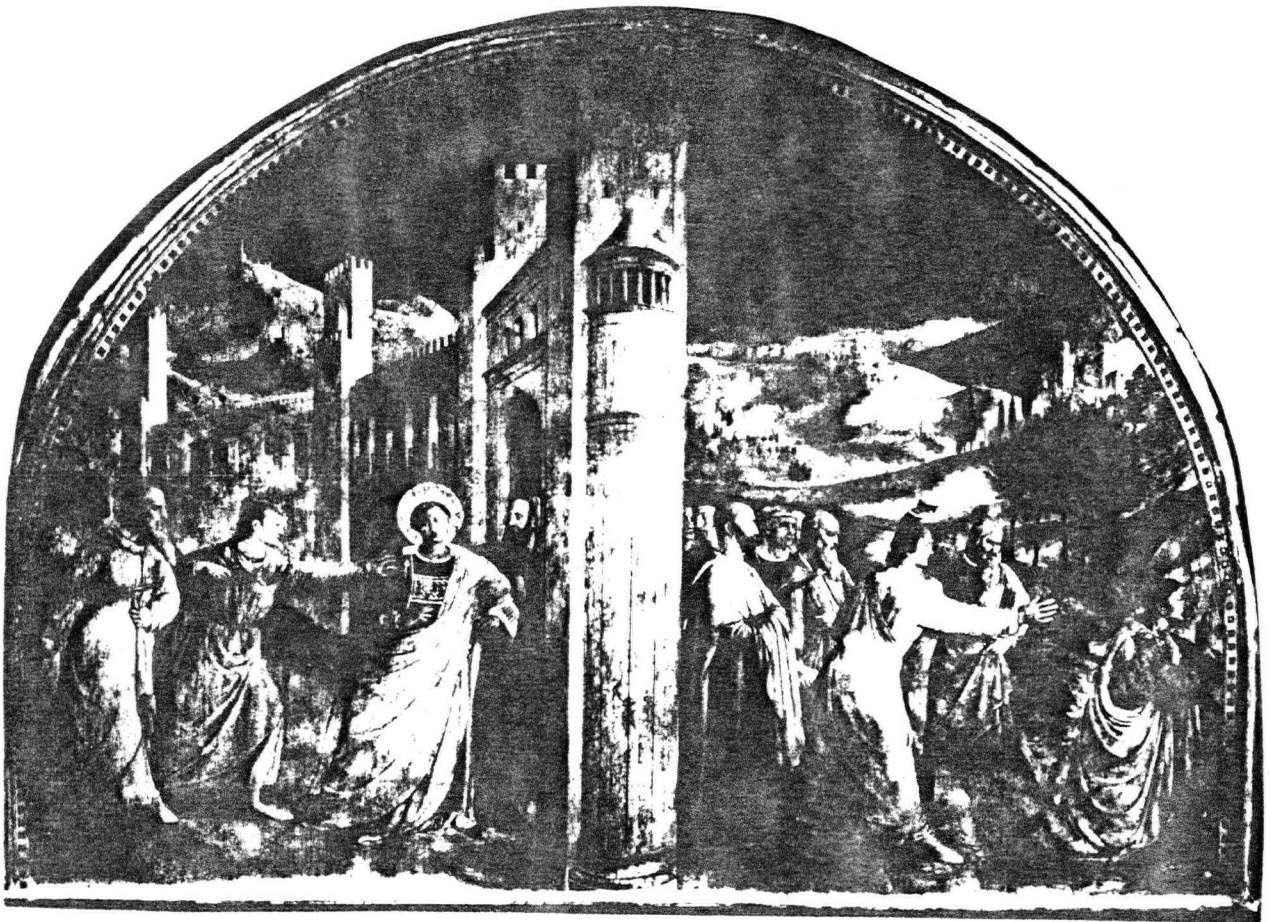


Figure 17: Fra Angelico, 'The Expulsion and Lapidation of St. Stephen'. The Chapel of Nicholas V (Source: John Pope-Hennessy, Fra Angelico).



Figure 18: Fra Angelico, 'St. Peter Preaching', from the Linaiuoli Triptych, Florence (Source: John Pope-Hennessy, Fra Angelico).



Figure 19:

Juste la Gand, St. Thomas Aquinas,
from the studiolo of Federigo da
Montefeltro, Urbino (Source: Mme.
O. Chomentouskaya, "Le Comput
Digital").

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Figure 20;

Masolino, 'St. Catherine Disputing',
San Clemente, Rome (Source: Mme.
O. Chomentouskaya, "Le Comput
Digital").

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