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Vasari's Aretine Gonfalone as an Exposition on Style

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Giorgio Vasari's (1511–1574) paintings of the *Trinity* and *Three Angels Appearing to Abraham in the Plain of Marme* (Figs. 1 and 2), which functioned as two sides of a *gonfalone* or processional banner, were commissioned in 1572 by the Compagnia della Trinità, a confraternity active in the city of Arezzo, Vasari's birthplace and the location of one of his primary residences.[1] Although the painting of the Trinity was attributed to Vasari by Edmund Pillsbury in 1970 and the assembly of the banner was discussed by David Franklin in 1995, the two parts of the banner, which resemble a diptych—joined front to back—warrant further analysis because no one has commented on the fact that the two sides differ in style.[2] Examining the *gonfalone* will show the ways in which Vasari varied his approach to painting. It will be argued that the naturalism of the *Trinity* on one side of the banner was informed by Vasari's appreciation for the history of art and his pride in the artistic legacy of Arezzo, topics he discussed in his role as author of *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti* (his second edition of 1568, which fully explored the Aretine connections), for Arezzo was the home to artists such as Spinello Aretino and host to painters such as Piero della Francesca.[3] In contrast, it will be shown that *Three Angels Appearing before Abraham*, forming the other side of the banner, was a painting that possessed the bolder and more distinctive colors and complex figurative poses favored by Vasari and other Mannerists. The differences will be interpreted as affirming his mastery of painting and his conscious adaptation of stylistic elements to promote artistic practice during his own age. This assessment of the banner will allow us to consider Vasari's unique position at the culmination of his career, both as a painter and as author of the *Vite*, and to explore the ways in which Vasari used style not just to reference the past but also to build upon tradition with the idea of improving upon it.

Fig. 1: Giorgio Vasari, *Trinity*, 1572–1573. *Stendardo della Trinità* (*San Francesco, San Bernardo da Chiaravalle e San Donato in adorazione della Trinità*).

Fig. 2. Giorgio Vasari*, Three Angels Appearing to Abraham in the Plain of Marme,* 1573. Cenacolo of San Salvi, Florence.
Photo credit: courtesy of "su concessione del Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali e per il turismo–Direzione regionale Musei della Toscana–Firenze.

As noted in the vast literature on Vasari and his art theory, his artistic practice was informed by the imitation of the art of Antiquity and of established masters and by invention related to *disegno*.[4] In the "Preface to Part Three" of the *Vite*, introducing the art of the *quarta età* or fourth age, Vasari wrote about the role of his contemporaries as artists who strove not just to equal art of the past but also to surpass it:

> But what matters most is that artisans of today have made their craft so perfect and so easy for anyone who possesses a proper sense of design, invention, and colouring that whereas previously our older masters could produce one panel in six years, the masters of today can produce six of them in a year. And I bear witness to this both from personal observation and from practice; and these works are obviously much more finished and perfect than those of the other reputable masters who worked before them.[5]

Accordingly, artists had the ability to produce work that competed with art from the past by adhering to the principles of *ordine*, *regola*, *misura*, *disegno*, and *maniera* (rule, order, proportion, design, and manner) and by imitating nature and copying the best in art as a practice modeled on the legacy of Zeuxis.[6] It was by imitating nature, copying important works of art, and inventing compositions that artists could surpass their predecessors.[7]

In referencing art as well as nature, as a fundamental source for artistic practice, Vasari also showed an appreciation for the historicity of style.[8] Thus his artistic choices for iconography and style were firmly rooted in tradition. These choices can be illustrated by the assessment of one side of the *gonfalone* in terms of earlier Aretine and Florentine depictions of the Trinity.

The subject of the Trinity was selected for the *gonfalone* because it was eponymous, referring to the confraternity and the church of the Santissima Trinità, where the painting of the Trinity was later placed. The date of the commission for the *Trinity* c. 1572 can be substantiated because the *Trinity* was included in a list or inventory of artwork compiled by Vasari's nephew, Marcantonio.[9] We know that the painting was completed a year, or at most two years, before Vasari's death and long after Vasari had worked for Cosimo I de' Medici for over a decade on projects such as the renovation of Santa Maria Novella, the church that housed Masaccio's famous fresco of the Trinity (Fig. 3) from 1427. Masaccio's *Trinity* would remain a seminal image for Vasari throughout his life, one that he referenced in the *gonfalone* and in other work.[10]

Fig. 3. Masaccio, *Trinity*, ca. 1427-28. Santa Maria Novella, Florence.
Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons.

Vasari's admiration for Masaccio's fresco was noted in his biography of the artist published in the second edition of the *Vite*.[11] In addressing the life of Masaccio, Perri Lee Roberts notes that Vasari referenced the commentary by Cristoforo Landino that praised Masaccio's naturalism.[12] Roberts discusses Vasari's placement of Masaccio's life in the *Vite* after the biography of the Aretine painter Parri Spinello and before the life of his relative Lazzaro. Roberts also notes that Vasari emphasized Masaccio's birthplace of Castello San Giovanni in Valdarno, a province of Arezzo.[13] The references to Masaccio's connections to Arezzo were used to forge a personal association with the preeminent painter of an era that Vasari regarded as the second great age of Renaissance art.

Nonetheless, the fate of Masaccio's *Trinity* in Santa Maria Novella was that the fresco was obscured by the addition of a stone altar and one of Vasari's paintings, *The Madonna of the Rosary* (Fig. 4), created with the assistance of Jacopo Zucchi for the Capponi Chapel.[14]

Fig. 4. Giorgio Vasari, *Madonna of the Rosary,* 1569. Santa Maria Novella, Florence.
Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons.

The covering of Masaccio's fresco made Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle question Vasari's positive assessment of Masaccio in 1883, when they stated, "after having uttered many praises of the fresco, especially in regard to its perspective, Vasari had concealed it from the study and admiration of others, covering it with one of his own paintings." They also discussed the condition of Masaccio's fresco after it was later uncovered:

> The damages and the alterations due to the discovery, were as follows: it was missing the accessory parts, as for example, the color together with some pieces of the *intonaco* in the fictive enframement; the mantle of God the Father had in part lost color and in part become obfuscated and dark; the garments of the Madonna have also become darkened. Also the color of the arms and even more of the hands of the Christ were here and there either entirely lacking or faded, as are likewise faded the lower parts of the donors' garments.[15]

Other scholars, including Charles Dempsey and Louis Waldman, imply that Vasari caused damage to Masaccio's fresco when he worked on the renovation of Santa Maria Novella with the addition of his panel painting and the stone altar, which remained in place until 1906 when the altar and Vasari's painting were moved to the chapel in the right transept of the Church.[16] Ornella Casazza explicitly defended Vasari when she noted that "Vasari did not in fact ruin that half-barrel vault drawn in perspective, and compartmentalized in coffers containing rosettes that diminish and foreshorten so well that this wall seems punctured, as he had written admiringly in his life of Masaccio."[17]

The iconography and style of Vasari's *Madonna of the Rosary* upheld Masaccio's place in tradition, as the altarpiece referenced the Trinity; and the depiction of God the Father in foreshortening and the dove of the Holy Spirit above the Virgin and Child within it, as Hall has noted, resembled motifs in Masaccio's painting.[18] The painting also affirmed the efficacy of the rosary, as discussed by Liana Cheney in her study of the iconography.[19] Yet by physically supplanting Masaccio's fresco, it thereby fulfilled a wish that Vasari attributed to Perino del Vaga in the *Vite*. Perino claimed that, upon studying the frescoes in the Brancacci Chapel, he could surpass Masaccio:

> Nay, I will declare, if I may say it with the permission of the company, not in contempt, but from a desire for the truth, that I know many more resolute and richer in grace, whose works are no less lifelike in the painting than these, and even more beautiful. And I, by your leave, I who am not the first in this art, am grieved that there is no space near these works, wherein I might be able to paint a figure; for before departing from Florence I would make a trial beside one of these figures, likewise in fresco, to the end that you might see by comparison whether there be not among the moderns one who has equaled him.[20]

The references to Masaccio's painting as a touchstone may well inform why in 1573, Vasari would again take up the subject of the Trinity for the Aretine *gonfalone* and why this part of the banner depicting the Trinity would occupy a permanent place within one of the city's churches after this section of the *gonfalone* (which measures approximately 175 x 135 cm.) was cut down from 196 x 138 cm. to fit the stucco frame when the Compagnia della Trinità had the work installed in Santissima Trinità.[21]

The *gonfalone* of the Trinity enhanced the physical decoration of Santissima Trinità by referencing past Aretine work, such as a fresco that was originally located on the exterior of the very same church and depicted the *Trinity with Saints Peter, Cosmas, and Damian* (Fig. 5).[22] Indeed, Vasari mentioned the historical fresco in his *Vite* and dated it c. 1385. He noted that the fresco depicted the Saints Peter, Cosmas, and Damian in their traditional dress, "worn by doctors at that time."[23] The fresco, now in the Museo Statale d'arte Medievale e Moderna Arezzo, has been attributed to Spinello Aretino (c. 1350–1411) by Mario Salmi, who regarded the treatment of the drapery and the palette as typical of Spinello's late manner.[24]

Fig. 5. Spinello Aretino, *Trinity with Saints Peter, Cosmas, and Damian,* ca. 1385.
Museo statale d' arte medievale e moderna, Arezzo.
Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons

Vasari's rendering of Christ's pose in the *Trinity* shows his knowledge of, and admiration for, the exterior fresco attributed to Spinello. Both Spinello and Vasari represented Christ with a downturned head tilted along a diagonal, with outstretched arms that are parallel to God's, placed at the outer most edges of the cross. The seated figure of God with his jutting knees, visible on either side of Christ, accentuated the solidity of the figure. Both artists positioned Christ's legs with one nail driven into his feet. Similarly, Vasari included

angels along the horizon and translated the mandorla and halos in Spinello's work into a luminous band of light that surrounded the head and shoulders of the Godhead, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Vasari's band of light behind the Trinity not only recalls the golden mandorla in Spinello Aretino's fresco but also is evocative of the new iconography of the "menacing storm cloud" from Augustine that Andrea del Sarto employed to replace the traditional dove of the Holy Spirit in his *Disputation of the Trinity* from c. 1520 (Fig. 6).[25] However, unlike del Sarto, Vasari included the dove and adapted elements from Spinello's fresco; and overall, Vasari's painting adhered to earlier Renaissance stylistic elements and iconography employed by Spinello.

Fig. 6. Andrea del Sarto, *Disputation on the Trinity,* 1517.
Palazzo Pitti, Florence.
Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons.

There was another precedent for the format of the banner: the confraternity owned a fifteenth-century banner that was originally commissioned from Piero della Francesca, famous for frescoes referring to the Legend of the True Cross at the Aretine Church of San Francesco (although the earlier banner may have been executed by Luca Signorelli and has not been preserved).[26] In creating the banner, Vasari followed the example of the great painters Spinello Aretino, Piero della Francesca, and Luca Signorelli, all of whom were associated with Arezzo.

Iconographically, some of the saints included in the *Trinity* were also important to the history of Arezzo. The references to Bernard of Clairvaux and Augustine would make the imagery an explicit formulation of Augustine's writing on the Trinity and his search in Scripture for references to the Trinity and Bernard's treatment of the subject in response to Abelard's treatise on the Trinity, a work Bernard regarded as heretical.

Pillsbury based the attribution of the banner painting of the Trinity to Vasari on a comparison of the saints to figures in the *Martyrdom of St. Peter of Verona*, which was made for the Vatican but is now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum.[27] In the work from Vienna, Vasari depicted the martyrdom of the Dominican friars in the forest c. 1252, with Peter on the ground, pointing to "*Credo*," written with his own blood, a reference to his recitation of the Apostle's Creed as he was about to be struck with a sword.[28] Pillsbury regarded his companion, the standing clean-shaven, tonsured figure, as similar in appearance to the figure of St. Francis in the *Trinity*.[29]

A preparatory drawing for the *gonfalone* Trinity with a black chalk grid in brown pen and brown wash at the Cincinnati Art Museum, attributed to Vasari in 1980, depicted saints whom Pillsbury identified as Francis, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Augustine.[30] However, the original contract of 28 November 1570 identified the figure that Pillsbury believed to be Saint Bernard as Saint Donato, the bishop of Arezzo.[31] Vasari's inclusion of Donato in the *Trinity* tied the work more indelibly with history of Arezzo. Francis was included in Vasari's painting because of the church's association with Franciscan nuns and Francis's

popularity in Arezzo, as Francis received the stigmata at La Verna, within twenty miles of the city.[32] Augustine was included because he wrote *De Trinitate* and searched Scripture for references to the Trinity.[33]

Vasari depicted the figures in the *Trinity* with elements that provide some stylistic continuity with the elements used to create *Three Angels Appearing to Abraham*, the painting that comprised the other side of the banner. The pink and gold worn by Saint Donato were colors that were also employed for figures in *Three Angels Appearing to Abraham*. Similarly, Donato's pose and his placement at the lower right of the composition resemble the pose and location of Sarah. Nonetheless, as noted above, for most of the composition, Vasari referenced Spinello's angels and saints when he depicted the saints flanking Christ and directing their gaze toward him with devotion. Vasari followed Spinello by making the Trinity an apparition for both the saints and angels. Yet he also made the spiritual vision of the Trinity palpable to the viewer.[34] The strong modeling of Christ, the dove of the Holy Spirit, and God the Father also alluded to the naturalism employed by Spinello Aretino and Masaccio.

Vasari was more inventive in the second image, creating a unique composition for *Three Angels Appearing to Abraham*, now in the Museo di San Salvi in Florence, after it was removed from Arezzo during the Napoleonic period.[35] The scene from the life of Abraham from Genesis 18:1–19 referred to a time when members of Abraham's household washed the angels' feet and brought them food as gestures of hospitality. Vasari depicted Sarah seated at the set table with Abraham kneeling in front of it, while the woman holding the child to the right may represent Hagar, the mother of Ishmael, who was Abraham's older son. The angels appeared to Abraham and Sarah to bring the news that they would have a son. They delivered a message that was a prefiguration of the Annunciation while the angels that appeared to Abraham and the others in a vision as a triumvirate foreshadowed the Trinity.[36]

In his autobiography, Vasari referred to earlier works he created in Bologna that depicted the same subject. He also remarked on the thematic content of a meal unifying a group of paintings created for the church of San Michele in Bologna. He described the individual scenes that were related to the preparation and sharing of a meal: the supper of Saint Gregory conceived as a meal with Gregory seated at a table with twelve paupers before Christ appeared to them; a depiction of Christ in the house of Mary and Martha where Martha was preparing a meal; and the representation of Abraham setting the table for three angels.[37]

The theme of banqueting seems to have had special importance to Vasari, as he created numerous works related to the subject, including several drawings of the three angels appearing to Abraham and the other figures and several paintings depicting sumptuous meals.[38] Earlier in his career he produced a monumental painting of the feast of Esther and Xerxes for the refectory of the Benedictine monastery of Saints Flora and Lucilla in Arezzo from c. 1548, and he continued to mine the theme of banqueting in his *Vite* and in other work. Paul Barolsky notes that Vasari discussed the subject of meals in San Pietro in

Perugia and depictions of the Marriage at Cana, Elisha with the sweet and bitter pot, and Saint Benedict given wheat by angels.[39] The generative power granted to such meals may account for the story that it was during a conversation after a dinner given at the court of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese in 1546 that Vasari came up with the idea for the *Vite*.[40]

The angels' visit to Abraham at the meal also called for invention because it was a spiritual vision witnessed by the two servants and the three adult figures and the child dominating the lower portion of the image. The angels and figures have a graceful elegance typical of Vasari's Mannerist style. They have less weight and solidity and none of the emotional reserve of the key figures of Christ, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit on the other side of the banner. As a *gonfalone* with imagery displayed front and back, the banner provided a format that allowed Vasari to imitate art of the early Renaissance and also create a more rarefied subject in his personal style. It exhibits a duality of styles because, with its two separate components, the banner creates a tension between naturalism and spirituality, referring to the monumental solemnity of Spinello Aretino and Masaccio on one side, and to the attenuated, graceful figures preferred by Vasari on the other. Together, the two sides provide a "more finished and perfect" counterpart to tradition because one side showcases traditional stylistic elements, such as naturalism found in the art of Masaccio, and the other promotes Mannerist dynamism and grace associated with Vasari and his contemporaries.[41]

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[1] A special thanks to Dr. Daniela Galoppi, Rector of the Fraternita dei Laici, Arezzo for providing me with a photo for Fig. 1. Laura Corti, *Vasari catalogo complete dei dipinti*, Cantini, Florence, 1989, p. 88, refers to the painting, *Three Angels Appearing to Abraham in the Plain of Marme*, originally at Santissima Trinità in Arezzo. It is also titled *Abramo visitato da tre angeli*. The *Trinity* was attributed to Vasari by Edmund Pillsbury and identified as part of the *gonfalone* by David Franklin. See Edmund Pillsbury, "Three Unpublished Paintings by Giorgio Vasari," *The Burlington Magazine*, 112, no. 803 (Feb. 1970), pp. 84–101. For the identification of the work as part of a *gonfalone*, see David Franklin, "A Gonfalone Banner by Giorgio Vasari Reassembled," *The Burlington Magazine,* 137, no. 1112 (Nov. 1995), pp. 747–750.

[2] Franklin, *op cit*., p. 747, discusses the construction of the banner but does not comment on the two sides differing in style.

[3] For the text in Italian, see Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti. Il primo fondamentale testo della storia dell'arte italiana*, intro. and ed. Marizio Marini, Grandi Tascabili Economici Newton, Florence, 1991; and *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, e architettori nelle readazioni del 1550 e 1568*, the comparative edition ed. Rosana Bettarini and Paolo Barocchi, 6 vols., Sansoni, Florence, 1966–1987, hereafter cited as Vasari-BB.

[4] For imitation and invention and for the *cinque aggiunti* (rule, order, proportion, design, and manner), see the writing of Liana De Girolami Cheney, "Giorgio Vasari's Fine Arts from the *Vite* of 1550: The Splendor of Creativity and Design," *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, 7, no. 2 (Feb. 2017), pp. 140–178; Liana De Girolami Cheney, *Giorgio Vasari's Prefaces: Art & Theory*, Peter Lang, New York, 2012, pp. lvi, xxxii, lii, and lvi; and Liana De Girolami Cheney, *Giorgio Vasari's Teachers: Sacred & Profane Art*, Peter Lang, New York, 2007, pp. 29 and 144–145.

[5] Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists*, trans. Julia Conaway Bondanella and Peter Bondanella, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1991, repr. 1998, p. 281.

[6] For Vasari's indebtedness to Vitruvius for theoretical concepts relevant to architecture and applied elsewhere in the *Vite* and for his interest in imitation modeled on Zeuxis, see Philip Sohm, *Style in the Art Theory of Early Modern Italy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK/New York, 2001, pp. 101–105; and Patricia Lee Rubin, *Giorgio Vasari: Art and History*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1995, pp. 240, pl. 86, 296, and 339n.

[7] Sohm, *op cit.*, pp. 103–107.

[8] Robert Williams, *Art, Theory, and Culture in Sixteenth-Century Italy: From Techne to Metatechne*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge/New York/Melbourne, 1997, pp. 80–84.

[9] For Marcantonio Vasari's list including a reference to the "Gonfalone della Compagnia della Trinità d'Arezzo," see Karl and Herman-Walther Frey, *Der Literarischer Nachlass Giorgio Vasaris*, vol. 2, Georg Muller, Munich, 1930, p. 885, cited in Franklin, *op cit.*, p. 747.

[10] Marcia Hall, *Renovation and Counter-Reformation: Vasari and Duke Cosimo in Sta. Maria Novella and Sta. Croce, 1565–1577*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1979, pp. 114–117.

[11] Vasari-BB, 3:17.

[12] Perri Lee Roberts, "Vasari's 1568 Life of Masaccio," in David Cast (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Giorgio Vasari*, Ashgate, Burlington, VT, 2014, pp. 91–106, here p. 92, references Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Florence*, Clarendon Press, London/New York, 1972, p. 118.

[13] Roberts, *op cit.*, *ibidem*.

[14] For *The Madonna of the Rosary* created for Camilla Capponi and the Compagnia della Rosario, see Liana De Girolami Cheney, "Giorgio Vasari's *Madonna of the Rosary*," in Cheney, *Giorgio Vasari: Artistic and Emblematic Manifestations*,New Academia Publishing, Washington, DC, 2011, pp. 385–403.

[15] Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, *Storia della pittura in Italia dal secolo II al secolo XVI*, vol. 2, Monnier, Florence, 1883, pp. 316–317, trans. Orenella Casazza, "Masaccio's Fresco Technique and Problems of Conservation," in Rona Goffen, *Masaccio's Trinity*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998, pp. 65–89, here p. 70.

[16] See Charles Dempsey, "Masaccio's Trinity: Altarpiece or Tomb?" *Art Bulletin*, 54, no. 3 (September 1972), pp. 279–281. See also Louis A. Waldman, "'Vadunt ad habitandum hebrei.' The Otto di Balia, Vasari, and the Hiding of Murals in Sixteenth-Century Florence," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 56, no. 3 (2015), pp. 351–354. See also Hall, *op. cit.*, *ibidem*; also cited by Cheney, "Giorgio Vasari's *Madonna of the Rosary*," p. 385.

[17] Casazza, *op cit.*, p. 70.

[18] Hall, *op cit.*, p. 62 cites Raffaello Borghini, *Il Riposo*, ed. and trans. Lloyd H. Ellis, University of Toronto Press, Toronto/Buffalo/London, 1991, p. 10.

[19] Cheney, "Giorgio Vasari's *Madonna of the Rosary*," p. 385.

[20] Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, trans. Gaston du C. De Vere, vol. 2, Random House, London, 1996, pp. 164–165.

[21] Pillsbury, *op cit.*, p. 100 gives the dimensions as 5'9" x 4'5". Franklin, *op cit.*, p. 747, proposes the larger dimensions for the intact work. *Abraham and the Three Angels* measured 196 x 138 cm., the same dimensions that Franklin proposes for the *Trinity*, before it was installed in the church. The Compagnia was established in 1316, early enough to claim that it was the oldest flagellant company in Arezzo. David Franklin, "An Unrecorded Commission for Piero della Francesca in Arezzo," *The Burlington Magazine* 133, no. 1056 (Mar. 1991), pp. 103–194, here p. 193. The confraternity shared the church of Santissima Trinità with the Franciscan sisters until the Compagnia was suppressed in the eighteenth century. See also ASFi, Compagnie religiose soppresse da Pietro Leopoldo, 2404, Ss. Innocenti di Arezzo, 3, *libro di partiti e deliberazioni,* 1761–1785, c. 5r, cited in Andrea Andanti, Giuliano Centrodi, Anna Pincelli, and Michele Tocchi, *La Chiesa di Sant' Agostino in Arezzo: Guida Storico Aristica*, Petruzzi Editore, Arezzo, 2017, p. 47 n18. Vasari had worked on the architecture for the confraternity during the 1550s, and the church was renovated in the eighteenth century and later named the Misericordia. Mario Salmi, "Due lettere inedite di Giorgio Vasari," *Rivista d'arte*, 8 (1912), pp. 121–124. Today it is connected to an office providing ambulance and emergency medical rescue services.

[22] Pillsbury, *op cit.*, *ibidem*.

[23] Vasari wrote: "Alla Compagnia della Trinità, S. Piero, S. Cosimo e S. Damiano vestiti in quella sorte d'abiti che usavano portare i medici in quei tempi" (Saints Peter, Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian in the company of the Trinity are dressed in the sort of clothing

worn by doctors at that time). Quoted in Anna Maria Maetzke, *Il Museo Statale d'Arte Medievale e Moderna in Arezzo*, Cassa di risparmio, Florence, 1987, p. 49.

[24] Salmi wrote: "chiarmente la sua maniea più tarda nel largo muover dei panni, e nel cororito" (clearly the movement of the drapery and the coloring are in his later manner). Salmi also stated that the painting had been restored by the Sienese painter Franchini. See Maetzke, *op cit*., *ibidem*.

[25] Antonio Natali, *Andrea del Sarto*, Abbeville Press, New York/London/Paris, 1999, p. 93.

[26] Franklin, *op cit*. (1995), p. 748; and Franklin, *op cit*. (1991), p. 193.

[27] Pillsbury, *op cit*., *ibidem*.

[28] Hall, *op cit*., p. 243

[29] Pillsbury, *op cit*., *ibidem*.

[30] Franklin, *op cit*. (1995), *ibidem*. Franklin also noted that there is another similar unpublished drawing in the Uffizi. Inventory 7077F without the grid.

[31] Franklin, *op cit*. (1995), p. 747, stated that Saint Donato holds a communion chalice, but the photo taken at the church and the black and white reproduction in Pillsbury's article show that the figure holds a palm of martyrdom. See also Frank Dabell, "New Documents for the History and Patronage of the Compagnia della SS. Trinità in Arezzo," *Arte Cristiana*, 79 (1991), pp. 412–417, here p. 417 n30, cited in Franklin, *op cit*. (1995), *ibidem*.

[32] Liana De Girolamo Cheney, "Giorgio Vasari's Saint Francis: An Aretine Fervor," *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, 5, no. 10 (October 2015), pp. 859–873, here p. 860.

[33] Augustine made the imagery an explicit reference to Augustine's *De Trinitate*. James Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects & Symbols in Art*, Harper & Row, New York, 1974, repr. 1979, p. 309. Bernard of Clairvaux wrote on the subject in response to Peter Abelard's treatise on the Trinity, a work that Saint Bernard regarded as heretical.

[34] Ursula Schlegel, "Observations on Masaccio's Trinity Fresco in Santa Maria Novella," *Art Bulletin*, 45, no. 1 (Mar. 1963), pp. 19–33, here p. 28. Similarly, Andrea Castagno's *Vision of St. Jerome* c. 1454–1455 in SS. Annunziata, places the Trinity in a landscape and makes it appear to be a vision of the saints in the lower part of the picture. Vasari also uses the witnesses to place the image of the Trinity within the visionary realm.

[35] Franklin, *op cit*. (1995), *ibidem*.

[36] Abraham told them, "*...et dixit Domine si inveni gratiam in oculis tuis ne transeas servum tuum*" (Lord, if I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away from thy servant). Quoted in Franklin, *op cit*. (1995), *ibidem*.

[37] Franklin provides the measurements, *op cit*. (1995), *ibidem*. For the iconography, see Paul Barolsky, *Why Mona Lisa Smiles and Other Tales by Vasari*, Penn State University Press, University Park, 1991, pp. 112–113.

[38] One drawing of three angels appearing to Abraham was auctioned at Christies in 1994, and another, composed with most of the figures shown in reverse (suggesting that he may have wanted to create an intaglio), was part of the Rosenbach Foundation. See figs. 44 and 45 in Franklin, *op cit*. (1995), p. 749.

[39] Barolsky, *op cit*., *ibidem*.

[40] See Patricia Lee Rubin, *Giorgio Vasari: Art and History*, Yale University Press, New Haven/London, 1995, p. 11.

[41] See the statement in his "Preface to Part Three," in Vasari, *op cit*., p. 281.

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