

THE *DISPUTA* IN DISPUTE: SAINT BONAVENTURE'S *JOURNEY OF THE MIND TO
GOD* AS AN INTERPRETATIVE GUIDE TO RAPHAEL'S *DISPUTATION OF THE
SACRAMENT* FRESCO

By

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To my family

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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
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The question of influence on the Stanza della Segnatura has kept scholars busy for many years. Harry B. Gutman proposed that the theme came from St. Bonaventure's *Journey of the Mind to God*, which John Pope-Hennessy later restated. Christiane L. Joost-Gaugier denied this idea entirely, and advanced her own explanation of the Stanza's iconology. More recently, Nicholas Temple examined the Stanza in relation to Pope Julius II's larger goals for Renaissance Rome, and briefly discussed a Bonaventuran interpretation of the Stanza. Despite these studies, the field lacks an expansive examination of the ways in which St. Bonaventure's *Journey of the Mind to God* can be used to interpret the *Disputa* fresco. Therefore, I seek to expand upon this scholarship by providing my own interpretation of St. Bonaventure and the *Disputa*; hopefully bringing to light the many intricate forces at work in the Stanza della Segnatura.

Chapter one presents an analysis of the current arguments and theories regarding the Seraphic Doctor's work as it relates to the *Disputa* fresco. Chapter two offers

background on the Franciscan della Rovere papacies, the commission of the Stanza della Segnatura, and an introduction to Bonaventure's *Journey of the Mind to God*. Chapter three applies the first stage of Bonaventure's journey to the *Disputa* and the *School of Athens*; chapter four continues into the second stage of the journey; chapter five culminates the journey with transcendence to the height of illumination; and examined in chapter six, the final ascension concludes this study as a metaphorical Sunday.

CHAPTER 1
SAINT BONAVENTURE IN STUDIES OF RAPHAEL'S *DISPUTATION OF THE SACRAMENT*

[The *Disputa*] succeeds sublimely in achieving the purpose, invention, and lofty conceptions of a divine poem raising viewers to those arcane visions, to the highest degree that corporeal forms of vision and mind are capable.¹

If Raphael's painting on the western wall of the Stanza della Segnatura (fig. 1-1) illustrates a divine poem that describes the human attainment of enlightenment, it should be a priority to identify the poem that inspired its creation. While there has been no definitive word on the program's authorship, contemporary scholars have attempted to identify influences for the fresco's iconography.² Much of this research gives little attention to St. Bonaventure (The Seraphic Doctor of the Catholic Church) and the Franciscan ideology that united Pope Julius II and his uncle Sixtus IV. This introductory chapter reviews the literature on St. Bonaventure's relationship to the Stanza della Segnatura and the *Disputa* fresco. Subsequent chapters elaborate on the Franciscan Order as a unifying factor between Julius II, Sixtus IV, and their theological and political goals and suggest that a study of St. Bonaventure's writings would provide a more complete understanding of the *Disputa*.

In 1958 Harry B. Gutman used St. Bonaventure's *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* (*The Journey of the Mind to God*) to explain the message of this fresco in an article largely

¹ Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *Descrizione delle immagini dipinte da Raffaello d'Urbino* (Rome: Giacomo Komarek, 1695), 13. Translation from Christian Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael* (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 2011), 40.

² This study discusses only those sources examining both St. Bonaventure and the *Disputation of the Sacrament* and/or the Stanza della Segnatura. For a recent list of sources on the *Disputa* and other works by Raphael, see bibliographic information in Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*; and Cathleen Hoeniger, *The Afterlife of Raphael's Paintings* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011). In addition, it should be noted that Giovanni Reale makes note of Bonaventure's possible influence in his book, *Raffaello La "Disputa": Una interpretazione filosofica e teologica dell'affresco con la prima presentazione analitica dei singoli personaggi e dei particolari simbolici e allegorici emblematici* (Milan: Rusconi Libri, 1998), esp. 25.

ignored by contemporary scholars. This article, entitled “Zur Ikonologie der Fresken Raffaels in der Stanza della Segnatura,” was mentioned briefly in John Pope-Hennessy’s *Raphael: The Wrightsman Lectures* in 1970.³ Pope-Hennessy accepted Gutman’s theory, but in 2002 this idea was discounted in Christiane L. Joost-Gaugier’s *The Stanza della Segnatura: Meaning and Invention*.⁴ After 2002, scholars gave little attention to Gutman’s work until 2011 when Nicholas Temple’s recent argument in *Renovatio Urbis* picked up on the relationship between Pope Julius II and his uncle Pope Sixtus IV in his larger study of the Julian Golden Age.⁵ By tying together theological ideas of the vertical nature of spirituality to the horizontal nature of terrestrial unification (a primary goal in Julius II’s papacy), St. Bonaventure fits Temple’s understanding of the fresco within the context of the Stanza della Segnatura and Rome. Positioning St. Bonaventure’s central role in understanding the *Disputa*, this chapter illuminates the oversights in contemporary scholarship and demonstrates the need for further analysis; thus examining the chain of scholarship that first suggested, but failed to expand upon, the influence of St. Bonaventure on the *Disputa* fresco and introducing the current state of research.

A Cursory Mention of Saint Bonaventure

In 1970 John Pope-Hennessy published a collection of lectures given at New York University with the support of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, appropriately titled

³ John Pope-Hennessy, *Raphael: The Wrightsman Lectures* (New York: New York University Press, 1970), 59, 139.

⁴ Christiane L. Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael’s Stanza della Segnatura: Meaning and Invention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 200n2.

⁵ For more on the relationship between Pope Julius II and his uncle, Sixtus IV, see Christine Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 9-51.

Raphael: The Wrightsman Lectures. In his first mention of the *Disputa* as key to Raphael's artistic development, Pope-Hennessy stated, "The programme of the fresco comes from St. Bonaventure, and depicts in panoramic form the efforts of human theologians to penetrate the divine mystery."⁶ At this point in his book, however, Pope-Hennessy offers no evidence for his statement; such support comes later in the text on page 139:

The programme of the wall frescoes in the Stanza della Segnatura seems to have been devised by a Franciscan, and is based mainly upon St. Bonaventure. Bonaventure's distinction between the natural and rational sciences accounts in the *School of Athens* for the separation of the mathematicians, physicists, and metaphysicians from the grammarians, logicians, and rhetoricians, and though the reconciliation of Plato and Aristotle was a common Neo-Platonic exercise, it is Bonaventure who describes how they were accorded respectively the 'sermo sapientiae' and the 'sermo scientiae', one gazing at higher and the other at lower things. Bonaventure's *Reductio Artium ad Theologiam* would explain likewise the presence of Evangelists in the *School of Athens* (if they were really there) and the iconography of the *Disputa*.⁷

This later statement expands the reach of Bonaventurian influence from the *Disputa* to the entire body of frescoes in the Stanza della Segnatura, but Pope-Hennessy goes no further, nor does he provide a statement of the importance of the text. He abruptly cites in the footnote, "For a summary of this case see H. B. Gutman,

⁶ Pope-Hennessy, *Raphael*, 59.

⁷ Ibid., 139. Pope-Hennessy simply notes that the support of this argument comes from H. B. Gutman's 'Zur Ikonologie der Fresken Raffaels in der Stanza della Segnatura' published in 1958 in *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*. *De Reductione artium ad theologiam* (note Pope-Hennessy's alternate spelling), or *On Retracing the Arts to Theology* resembles the *Journey of the Mind to God* by making use of analogies of three, divided further into six, and including a seventh stage of rest. Instead of using the six wings of a seraph to illustrate his argument, Bonaventure speaks of six types of light: "the light of Sacred Scripture, the light of sense perception, the light of the mechanical arts, the light of discursive philosophy, the light of natural philosophy, and the light of moral philosophy. Hence, there are six lights in the present life, but they have their sunset, for *knowledge will be destroyed*. Therefore, they are followed by a seventh illumination, a day of rest which has no setting, that is, the light of glory." Bonaventure *On Retracing the Arts to Theology* 6, ed. de Vinck, 20. See Appendix B for more on *Retracing the Arts*.

‘Zur Ikonologie....’⁸ This brief explanation and cursory footnote led to criticism for Pope-Hennessy’s conclusion by Christiane L. Joost-Gaugier in her text *The Stanza della Segnatura: Meaning and Invention*.⁹

Gutman’s Case: Zur Ikonologie der Fresken Raffaels in der Stanza della Segnatura

Harry B. Gutman begins his 1958 discussion of Bonaventure’s influence on the Stanza by referring to Pope Julius II’s intention to follow in the footsteps of his papal uncle, the Franciscan Sixtus IV, who canonized St. Bonaventure in 1482. The four themes that divide Gutman’s article reference the papal bull canonizing the Seraphic Doctor, in which Pope Sixtus IV described Bonaventure’s enlightenment through Christ: *Lux, Via, Vita, Veritas*, motifs drawn from the Gospel of St. John.¹⁰ Gutman claims that dividing the Stanza della Segnatura into these four themes explains many details, “which despite their apparent importance and special significance... more or less

⁸ Pope-Hennessy, *Raphael*, 279n27.

⁹ Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael’s Stanza della Segnatura*, 200.

¹⁰ *Superna Caelestis*: Our most holy Lord Pope Sixtus IV’s Diploma By which Bl. Bonaventure, Cardinal Bishop of Alba Is registered in the Canon of the Saints 1.5. “For having been illuminated by Him, who illumines every sense, who is *Light, Way, Truth and even Life*, he obtained in the space of a few years incredible knowledge (*scientia*), and he did not bind up the talent entrusted to him by the Lord in a handkerchief, nor did he bury it in the earth, but as a most wise dispenser he converted it for the common usefulness. For in the crowded lecture halls of Paris he reigned from a chair, where explaining in detail the hidden things of the Scriptures, not only did he by his own voice benefit many, but he even left very many of the best books, both in sacred letters and in the primary sciences, as monuments, which would be for the benefit of all time afterwards.” The connection between this paragraph in the canonizing bull and the Gospel of St. John can be found in the following passages: John 1:4, through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; John 1:14, The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father’s only son, full of grace and truth; John 10:9, I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture; John 11:25, Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me will live, even if he dies, he will live...;” John 14:6, Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me” (verses quoted from the New American Bible 2005).

remained a mystery and were ignored by almost all commentators.”¹¹ Thus, according to Gutman, the iconography of the room groups justice, knowledge, and grace into a tetrad with wisdom, a scheme inspired by Bonaventure’s *Journey of the Mind to God*, in which a person is reformed by grace (*gratia reformans*), purified by justice (*justitia purificans*), enlightened by knowledge (*illuminans scientia*), and perfected by wisdom (*sapientia perficiens*).¹²

Gutman applies these stages of Bonaventure’s journey to the frescoes decorating the four walls of the Stanza. He begins with an introduction that broadly describes St. Bonaventure’s influence on its overall design, claiming that the characterization of Plato and Aristotle with the sciences in the *School of Athens*, and the descent of light and representation of the Trinity in the *Disputa* are explained inherently in St. Bonaventure’s writings.¹³ The remaining four sections of Gutman’s article consist of focused analyses of each fresco. *Lux- The Disputa*, refers to light and grace in the *Disputa* (fig. 1-2); *Via- The Parnassus* references “The Way” and *sapientia perficiens* in the *Parnassus* fresco (fig. 1-3); *Vita- School of Athens*, refers to Life and *illuminans scientia* in the *School of Athens* (fig. 1-4); and *Veritas – Jurisprudence* explains Truth and *justitia purificans* within the *Jurisprudence* fresco (fig. 1-5).

Beginning with Light in *Lux – The Disputa*, Gutman interprets the fresco with a description of the iconography and its relation to St. Bonaventure:

In our painting, the rays of golden light stream from above through the angels and fill the empyrean. In the central axis of the fresco, surrounded

¹¹ Harry B. Gutman, “Zur Ikonologie der Fresken Raffaels in der Stanza della Segnatura,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 21 (1958), 30.

¹² Gutman, “Zur Ikonologie,” 30.

¹³ *Ibid.*

by this light, we see God the Father, and under him; Christ, the focus of the overall presentation; and under this, the dove of the Holy Spirit. The presentation of the Trinity in the order given here contradicts all the usual visual and theological traditions, with the sole exception of Bonaventure's. Under the Trinity Group is a golden monstrance on a pedestal on which the name of the reigning pope, Julius II is inscribed. This representation in conjunction with the above version of the Trinity is taken from the writings of St. Bonaventure: "(God) sent the Son and the Holy Spirit for the salvation of the human race... (The Son) sent fire to inflame the Holy Spirit to charity... he sent the Holy Spirit to build the earthly Jerusalem... when the Holy Spirit descended His fullness of charismata poured out to perfect the Mystical Body of Christ."¹⁴

Gutman follows this statement with a discussion of the figures in the clouds, their arrangement, and interactions with one another, associating each figure with Bonaventure's characters of Justice, Knowledge, Grace, and Wisdom. The men in the clouds to either side of Christ, the Virgin Mary and St. John the Baptist engage in conversations with one another. Old Testament figures engage with those from the New Testament and an additional figure in red robes (fig. 1-6) that Gutman mistakenly identifies as St. Francis.¹⁵

¹⁴ Gutman, "Zur Ikonologie," 30. My translation. The German selection from Gutman's original text is as follows: "In unserem Gemälde strömen die Strahlen goldenen Lichts von oben durch das engelserfüllte Empyreum. In der Zentralachse des Freskos, von diesem Licht umflossen, erblicken wir Gott Vater, unter ihm, im Mittelpunkt der Gesamtdarstellung, Christus, und unter diesem die Taube des Heiligen Geistes. Die Darstellung der Dreieinigkeit in der hier wiedergegebenen Ordnung widerspricht aller Bildtradition und auch den üblichen theologischen Traditionen, mit alleiniger Ausnahme der Tradition Bonaventura's. Unter der Dreifaltigkeitsgruppe steht eine goldene Monstranz auf einem Postament, auf welchem der Name des regierenden Papstes, Julius II., eingeschrieben steht. Auch diese Darstellung in Verbindung mit der obigen Fassung des Dreifaltigkeitsthemas ist den Schriften Bonaventura's entnommen: „(Deus) misit Filium et Spiritum Sanctum ad salutem humani generis... (Filius) misit ignem Spiritus Sancti ut inflammaret ad caritatem... misit Spiritum Sanctum ad aedificandum Jerusalem terrestrem... cum descendit Spiritus Sanctus effusa est plenitudo charismatum ad Corpus Christi mysticum consummandum." Gutman cites Bonaventure *Beviloquium* IV 10.8 as the source of his quotation, "(God) sent the Son and the Holy Spirit..."

¹⁵ This figure has been identified as St. Stephen by Giovanni Reale, *Raffaello La "Disputa": Una interpretazione filosofica e teologica dell'affresco con la prima presentazione analitica dei singoli personaggi e dei particolari simbolici e allegorici emblematici* (Milan: Rusconi Libri, 1998) 45-46, 84., and as St. Lawrence by Christiane L. Joost-Gaugier, *The Stanza della Segnatura*, 60. The figure in gray robes to the right of the altar was identified as St. Francis by Giovanni Reale; see esp. 65, 85.

Gutman interprets the placement of Pope Sixtus IV and St. Bonaventure as they are depicted in the earthly level of the fresco as an additional sign pointing to a Bonaventurian influence. Here, the two “greatest Doctors of the medieval church” stand, St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure, the latter represented in full form carrying greater weight in the fresco than St. Thomas (fig. 1-7).¹⁶ St. Bonaventure’s proximity to Pope Sixtus IV further supports the Franciscan influence for which Gutman argues. Pope Julius II’s admiration for his uncle who canonized the saint, places the two figures in a position that according to Gutman, causes the viewer’s eyes to fall upon them first when entering the room from the facing door.¹⁷ This is one of the stronger points made by Gutman, as Ingrid Rowland asserted the significance of associated figures under Julius II’s patronage in her 1998 text *The Culture of the High Renaissance*, stating that Raphael’s paintings presented “certain immediately recognizable figures from classical antiquity and Church history” that during the papacy of Julius II, these figures “often took on added meanings that were highly specific to the papacy and its aspirations,” and promoted particular ideas through their visual arrangements.¹⁸

Though fraught with the misidentification of St. Francis (subsequently identified as St. Lawrence), and based primarily on his close interpretation of the *Disputa* through St. Bonaventure, Gutman opens a discussion for the Franciscan authorship of the Stanza della Segnatura. At the same time, he admits that the authorship of the program will not be resolved without the discovery of direct sources. His evidence, therefore, rests

¹⁶ Gutman, “Zur Ikonologie,” 31.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ingrid D Rowland, *The Culture of the High Renaissance: Ancients and Moderns in Sixteenth-Century Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 167.

heavily on the Franciscan leanings of Pope Julius II and his uncle Pope Sixtus IV, a relationship that will be examined in Chapter 2 of this study.

Meaning and Invention: Christiane L. Joost-Gaugier's Case for Authorship

Christiane L. Joost-Gaugier mentions the possible importance of Bonaventure in her text, *Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura: Meaning and Invention*, only in a footnote: "In 1970 Pope-Hennessy declared, without providing supporting reasons, that the program was derived from St. Bonaventure."¹⁹ Her assessment is not entirely correct, as we have already seen from the passage quoted from Pope-Hennessy's work and the examination of Gutman's 1958 article. Joost-Gaugier notably downplays the importance of Bonaventure as she proposes an altogether different explanation for the inspiration of the fresco.

Although she dismisses John Pope-Hennessy's statement regarding St. Bonaventure, Joost-Gaugier presents insight into the identification of the author in the Stanza della Segnatura, Pope Julius II's chief librarian, Tommaso Inghirami.²⁰ His early education under Lorenzo de' Medici in Florence familiarized Inghirami with religious theatrical displays, which Joost-Gaugier claims inspired the arrangement of the *Disputa* fresco.²¹ In 1483, he passed into della Rovere protection when he moved to Rome and became a papal librarian.²² Inghirami was appointed head librarian in 1505 and was

¹⁹ Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura*, 200n2. Joost-Gaugier offers the names of other scholars who give explanations for the design of the *Disputa*.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 22.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 71.

²² *Ibid.*, 24.

later named prefect.²³ Joost-Gaugier's biographical sketch of Inghirami places him under the influence of Pico della Mirandola, St. Thomas Aquinas, and distinguished Humanists whom he frequently quoted in his orations. His tie with contemporary humanists supports Joost-Gaugier's argument for the humanist undercurrents found in the decoration of the Stanza.

After offering a brief narrative of Tommaso Inghirami's life and work in the Papal libraries, Joost-Gaugier discusses each element of the room as it fits her theory. Representing Inghirami's particular style of humanism, the *Disputa* documents the contemporary view of the Christian faith as modeled after the universality of the Roman Empire.²⁴ A noted orator, Inghirami pushed for a worldview of Christianity concerned with ministering to new civilizations and bringing peace to the globe, goals that required a reform of Roman ideals.²⁵ Unity, concord, prestige, and harmony characterized Inghirami's new Christian universe, and are ideals that Joost-Gaugier claims were incorporated into the iconography of the *Disputa*.²⁶ Joost-Gaugier indicates the Trinity as the primary method of interpreting cosmological issues and mysteries enabling theologians to fully incorporate these humanist ideals into Christianity.²⁷ The Trinity is a concept developed in St. Augustine's *De Trinitate*, on which Richard of St. Victor, St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas Aquinas elaborated, developing it beyond doctrine and determining that only through the Trinity (prominently depicted in the center of the

²³ Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura*, 23.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 67.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 68.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 69.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

fresco), could the diversity of a newly expanded world be incorporated into universal harmony.²⁸

Joost-Gaugier works to reconcile the unity of the Trinity with the terrestrial and celestial realms depicted in the fresco, as well as the hierarchy of angels with the arrangement of terrestrial figures below. To do so, she cites Dionysius the Areopagite, Dante Alighieri, and St. Thomas Aquinas, notably ignoring St. Bonaventure's writings, which made many references to the Trinity and the hierarchy of angels. Bonaventure found inspiration in St. Augustine and Dionysius the Areopagite, and was a contemporary of St. Thomas Aquinas, a fact that Joost-Gaugier admits while still overlooking any useful interpretative advantage found in Bonaventure's writing.²⁹ Indeed, she claims that the angelic ideal found within the fresco "must have been" derived from St. Thomas Aquinas, as indicated by his inclusion in the fresco. However, as Gutman noted, the Dominican is placed in a secondary position to the Franciscan St. Bonaventure, who stands near the Pope who canonized him, Sixtus IV.³⁰ Dante's position in the fresco is also mentioned, both for his contribution to the arrangement of angels, and for his identification of the two medieval saints in his *Divine Comedy*.³¹

The Trinitarian theme featured so prominently in Joost-Gaugier's argument is also a major overtone in St. Bonaventure's writings, which I will expand upon throughout the

²⁸ Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura*, 69.

²⁹ *Ibid.*; Bonaventure clearly and frequently cites Dionysius the Areopagite and St. Augustine within his text.

³⁰ Gutman, "Zur Ikonologie," 30.

³¹ Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura*, 71.

course of this study.³² Furthermore, Bonaventure's prominent position in the fresco should indicate some level of importance to the author(s) of the program. Joost-Gaugier's negation of the Seraphic Doctor throughout her long career of scholarship on the Stanza della Segnatura leaves her argument incomplete.

Bonaventure's Role in the Refashioning of Julian Rome: Nicholas Temple's *Renovatio Urbis*

Nicholas Temple's 2011 book *Renovatio Urbis: Architecture, Urbanism and Ceremony in the Rome of Julius II* presents a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which Pope Julius II reinterpreted Rome to reflect his reign as Pope. Covering alterations of the streets, prominent architectural structures, Vatican refashioning and the frescoes of the Stanza della Segnatura, Temple weaves together a history of della Rovere succession and their use of the Roman landscape to assert their ideologies.

The Julian Golden Age sought to make Rome the spiritual and ideological axis around which the rest of the world should rotate, a notion which Joost-Gaugier also mentions in her text.³³ With great attention paid to siting, the cardinal directions, and the relationship of ancient Rome to Christian Rome, Julius II built upon the legacy of his uncle Sixtus IV.³⁴ The connection between these two pontiffs is made ever clearer throughout Temple's work, and provides a basis upon which we can interpret the *Disputa* fresco and the room in which it resides. Placed within the context of Julius's

³² Etienne Gilson, et al, *The Philosophy of St. Bonaventure* (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1965). Etienne Gilson's text elaborates on this extensively. A reading of Bonaventure's *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* (*The Journey of the Mind to God*) will also reveal the saint's heavy use of the Trinity to illustrate and explain the journey.

³³ Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura*, 69.

³⁴ Nicholas Temple, *Renovatio Urbis: Architecture, Urbanism, and Ceremony in the Rome of Julius II* (London: Routledge, 2011), 47.

Rome and his larger political ideals, the room's iconography "brought into dialogue actual locations, geographical destinations and idealized settings, which in turn gave credence to the belief that the Golden Age was an actual possibility, rather than simply a theological or philosophical notion."³⁵ The connection between the content and orientation of the frescoes in the Stanza della Segnatura indicates the functions and meanings of the buildings beyond its walls, further suggesting that the "*Stanza* was intended to serve as both a topographical and symbolic point of reference for Julius's ambitious programme of *Renovatio*."³⁶

Drawing from Joost-Gaugier's recent argument and the architectural study of Renaissance Rome by Manfredo Tafuri, Temple's work argues for the room's position within the larger political goals of Pope Julius II, a point also noted by Ingrid D. Rowland.³⁷ He builds this discussion from the foundation of vertical and horizontal cues that enlarge the room from its four walls to the greater landscape of Rome. These directional clues are tied to ideas of *sensus* (our temporal experience of the natural world) and *spiritus* (eternity of the soul), both themes dominating the *Disputa* fresco.³⁸ The vertical axis begins in the vault of the Stanza della Segnatura and "unfolds within the dimensions of the room," concluding with the marble mosaic floor. The horizontal

³⁵ Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 214.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Tafuri, Manfredo, *Interpreting the Renaissance: princes, cities, architects* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 2006. Tafuri's work focuses on the architectural restructuring of Rome starting with Nicholas V and continuing through to Charles V. There is no specific discussion in Tafuri's text regarding the Stanza della Segnatura. See also: Ingrid D. Rowland, "The Vatican Stanze," in *The Cambridge Companion to Raphael*, ed. Marcia B. Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 98. "There was no more important place to begin an account of the Julian Papacy... the Stanze served as the pope's personal suite; their decoration accordingly expressed the meaning of his papacy in a more immediate, personal sense."

³⁸ Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 218.

axis “draws all four frescoes into a unified scenographic ‘horizon’ of exemplary settings that project within the perspective depth of the frescoes.”³⁹ Temple insists that these axes function dependently upon one another, inextricably uniting the terrestrial realm of Pope Julius II’s Rome with the soul’s celestial path of ascension to God; basing his understanding of how the horizontal and vertical axes interrelate on his study of St. Bonaventure’s *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*.⁴⁰

Before beginning his examination of Bonaventure’s *Itinerarium*, Temple lays a foundation for the theology behind the interpretation of the *Disputa* fresco. Citing St. Augustine, he draws connections to the goal of making Rome a New Jerusalem, a city of God established by the Julian Golden Age.⁴¹ From there he asserts that St. Bonaventure’s writing provides a “distinctive architectural dimension that bridges the divide between text and pictorial representation” which will draw the vertical and horizontal axes together to illustrate Julius’s intentions for the room.⁴²

In order to provide weight to this Bonaventurian influence, Temple reiterates the Saint’s prominent position in the fresco, near St. Augustine and Pope Sixtus IV. In addition, Temple brings attention to the similarities between Giles of Viterbo’s idea of the Golden Age and Bonaventure’s treatise, which Giles described as a “metaphorical pilgrimage” that opens the soul to divine grace through prayerful meditation. Therefore, as Temple explains, the *Journey* “invokes, through the mystical ‘rite of passage,’ a fusion between the fullness of time, which Giles and others made synonymous with the

³⁹ Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 217.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 218.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 243.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 249.

imminent Golden Age of Julius's pontificate, and the timelessness of spiritual immortality."⁴³

This assertion connects Bonaventure to the Golden Age of Julius, demonstrating the probability of a strong Bonaventurian influence on the fresco. To offer a greater understanding of how the saint's degrees of spiritual contemplation relate to the *Disputa* and Julian Rome, Temple quotes a passage from the Saint's text:

It is possible to contemplate God not only outside us and within us but also above us: outside, through vestiges of Him; within, through His image; and above, through the light that shines upon our mind. This is the light of Eternal Truth, since 'our very mind is formed immediately by Truth Itself.' Those who have become practiced in the first way of contemplation have already entered the atrium before the Tabernacle; those who have become practiced in the second have entered into the Holy-Places; and those who are practiced in the third, enter with the High Priest into the Holy of Holies, where the Cherubim of Glory stand over the Ark, overshadowing the Seat of Mercy. By these Cherubim we understand the two kinds or degrees of contemplating the invisible and eternal things of God: the first considers the essential attributes of God; the second, the proper attributes of persons.⁴⁴

This excerpt clarifies Bonaventure's tie to the vertical axis in the Stanza. Starting with the figures in the terrestrial level of the fresco, the eye travels to the Eucharist in the center and upward through the Holy Spirit, Jesus, and finally God the Father in his golden empyrean. Thus, Temple notes the Seraphic Doctor's ultimate destination of spiritual passage: *ascensio*, above oneself and into God.⁴⁵

After our mind has beheld God outside itself through his vestiges and in his vestiges, within itself through his image and in his image, and above itself through the similitude of the divine Light shining above us and in the Light itself... Our mind reaches that point where it contemplates in the First and

⁴³ Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 250.

⁴⁴ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 5.1, ed. Brown, 28.

⁴⁵ Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 250.

Supreme Principle... Christ [who] is the way and the door; Christ [who] is the ladder and the vehicle....⁴⁶

Bonaventure considered the whole world to be a metaphor for Jacob's ladder and divided his journey into three principle stages that Temple identifies as *transire* (traces of God in bodily natures), *intrare* (into the mind, which is the Image of God), and *transcendere* (to pass to God himself).⁴⁷ He associates these three stages to the motifs of the primordial tent or cave and the mountain peak; settings he believes provide the backdrop for the *Disputa*'s visual narrative.⁴⁸

Referencing Harry B. Gutman, Temple constructs a short, but convincing argument for St. Bonaventure as the source who defined the journey with "marked signposts" and rest stops along the way.⁴⁹ Concluding his short section on Bonaventure with the reassertion of a della Rovere connection to the Franciscan Order and between Sixtus IV and Julius II, Temple asserts the role of Bonaventure's text as the primary method of interpreting the iconography of the *Disputa* and the Stanza in the context of his larger discussion of Julius's Golden Age. Though his study concerning Bonaventure consists of only two pages within his 272-page volume, it serves his argument by tying together the vertical and horizontal axes of the Stanza, supporting the room's reference to exterior Roman sites and its iconographical promotion of Pope Julius II's campaign to refashion Rome.

⁴⁶ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 7.1, ed. Brown, 37.

⁴⁷ Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 250.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 251.

Depth and Nuance

While there has been no definitive word on the matter of the program's authorship, Christiane L. Joost-Gaugier's case for Tommaso Inghirami resounds with plausibility. She does not, however, give adequate attention to St. Bonaventure and the Franciscan ideology that united Pope Julius II and his uncle Sixtus IV. She pays attention to the overall goals of the Julian papacy, but a further study of Bonaventure as a possible unifying factor between the theological and political goals would provide greater understanding of the complete message of the *Disputa*. Nicholas Temple's argument picks up on these threads admirably in his larger study of the Julian Golden Age. Harry B. Gutman and John Pope-Hennessy both present valuable introductions to the idea of Bonaventure as a source of inspiration and method of interpretation, but neither expands his theory into the broader study of Pope Julius II and his intentions as Vicar of Christ.

The methodologies applied thus far have proven themselves to be problematic with significant focus given to finding the man who authored the fresco. Gutman admits that definitive conclusions on the fresco's meaning will depend on locating this information, however later scholars have striven to execute such a study without it. Nevertheless, the methods with which Gutman and Temple apply the *Itinerarium* to the Stanza resound with a certain amount of plausibility for connecting the saint to the program of the *Disputa* and the larger program of the room. While unlikely to prove a direct influence on the *Disputa* fresco by St. Bonaventure, the Seraphic Doctor's awareness of the depth and nuances of religious experience contained within his treatise can shed light on the nuances and deep meanings inherent in the *Disputa* fresco. Bonaventure's complexity of thought and blending of philosophy, theology and

mysticism provide insight into the meaning of a fresco program that combines the same three elements into a major theme. Though the scholarship referenced in this chapter supports a clear direction toward uncovering the mysteries of the fresco program, it also reveals a lack of research in the field, warranting further discussion on the Seraphic Doctor's influence on the fresco, Pope Julius II's papacy, and the Franciscan link between both della Rovere Popes; factors to be elaborate upon in the chapters that follow.

CHAPTER 2
THE FRANCISCAN DELLA ROVERES, THE STANZA DELLA SEGNATURA, AND
SAINT BONAVENTURE'S *ITINERARIUM MENTIS IN DEUM*

The first fresco Raphael painted in Pope Julius II's private library, *The Disputation over the Sacrament*, or *La Disputa* (fig. 1-2), has been largely interpreted as a representation of the concept of Theology¹ and Christianity's victory over and transformation of the concepts in the *School of Athens* (fig. 1-4).² Placed opposite the famous fresco of Plato and Aristotle among other philosophers, the *Disputa's* iconography ties closely with della Rovere Franciscan leanings especially as a demonstration of the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, as it resolves medieval theology with high Renaissance ideologies and artistic styles. Concerned primarily with the *Disputation of the Sacrament*, or *Disputa*, this study argues that although integrated into a program rich with philosophical, theological, and artistic meaning, the iconographical program of the *Disputa* guides a viewer from philosophy and the rational understanding of earthly symbols toward spiritual union with God. With the arguments of Harry B. Gutman and Nicholas Temple as a starting point, Bonaventure's medieval treatise, *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* or *The Journey of the Mind to God*, will be used to interpret this fresco program. The *Disputa* suggests an understanding of this thirteenth century work, reconciling the upper and lower spheres allowing it to function as a religious image within a room dedicated to learning; thus providing the understanding necessary to contemplate God.

¹ James Beck, *Raphael: The Stanza Della Segnatura, Rome* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1993), 20.

² George L. Hersey, *High Renaissance Art in St. Peter's and the Vatican, an Interpretive Guide* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 135.

Before breaking the fresco down and applying Bonaventure's treatise to its iconography, the context for the fresco's commission will be established through an examination of the relationship between Julius II, Sixtus IV, and the Franciscan Order. Then, Bonaventure's text will be summarized before dividing the discussion of the fresco into the three main stages of the journey, *transire*, *intrare*, and *transcendere* in the chapters that follow.

The Della Rovere Papacies

While the Julian papacy began in 1503 after a history of schism, division, and contention in Rome, arguably the impetus of the Stanza della Segnatura may be traced to the first della Rovere papacy, that of Sixtus IV (Francesco della Rovere, 1471-1484). As a patron of the arts, Sixtus IV commissioned public works to refurbish Rome and advertise his role as secular and sacred leader.³ The refurbishment of Rome has a long history tracing back to the reign of the first Emperors; indeed, Raffaello Maffei (1451-1537) stated that Sixtus "made Rome from a city of a brick into stone just as Augustus of old had turned the stone city into marble."⁴

Recapturing the glory of ancient Rome was paired with the promotion of a new Christian Rome. Sixtus built churches, paved streets, established the papal libraries, founded the famous Capitoline museum as the first public collection of Antiquities in Europe, and reopened the Roman Academy—an act demonstrating his political approval of humanism.⁵ This new Rome depended on infrastructure improvements set

³ Jill E. Blondin, "Power Made Visible: Pope Sixtus IV as *Urbis Restaurator* in Quattrocento Rome," *The Catholic Historical Review* 91.1 (2005), 1.

⁴ Ian F. Verstegen, introduction to *Patronage and Dynasty: The Rise of the Della Rovere in Renaissance Italy*, ed. by Ian F. Verstegen (Kirkville: Truman State University Press, 2007), xvi.

⁵ Blondin, "Power Made Visible," 6.

forth by Sixtus IV including widened and repaved streets and the creation of the Via Sistina, a new street providing a more direct processional route from St. Peter's Basilica to Santa Maria del Popolo.⁶ Francesco Albertini lauded these accomplishments of Sixtus's papacy before his celebration of Julius II's accomplishments in the *Opusculum de Mirabilibus Novae Urbis Romae*:

Sixtus IV, the highest and greatest pontiff, began to restore the city. First, namely, he destroyed the dark porticoes and also extended the streets and squares of the city and covered them with brick, and brought back many completely destroyed churches to their original form. To be sure, his successors attempted to copy the man himself... indeed the structures themselves demonstrate the truth of the matter plainly, so that the city is able deservedly to be called new.⁷

These words of praise indicate the importance placed on the renovation of the sacred city, which continued during the reign of Julius II.

As an acclaimed theologian and scholar, Sixtus issued a charter in June 1475 officially founding the Vatican library—initially established by Nicholas V but neglected after his death.⁸ In the decade following the charter, the library expanded by approximately one thousand volumes, rivaling the collections of Medici and other Italian leaders.⁹ Perhaps more importantly, the library was a juxtaposition of antiquity with modern theology and scholarship, a reconciliation illustrated by Domenico and Davide Ghirlandiaio in eight painted lunettes in the original library.¹⁰ These decorations

⁶ Blondin, "Power Made Visible," 11.

⁷ Ibid., 13; Francesco Albertini *Opusculum de Mirabilibus Novae Urbis Romae*, ed. Schmarsow, 1.

⁸ Ibid., 20.

⁹ Ibid., 21.

¹⁰ For images of these frescoes see Jean K. Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio: Artist and Artisan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 45-46. Because of their poor condition, they have not received

prominently feature six Greek philosophers, the four Church Doctors, and Saints Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas holding banderoles and leaning over the painted balustrade in four groin-vaulted bays.¹¹ Large oak leaves and acorns decorate the arches, alluding to the della Rovere coat of arms.¹² In her article, “Power Made Visible,” Jill Blondin attributes the frescoes to Sixtus’ fame as a scholar, where the likenesses of philosophers and prominent saints serve as “learned exemplars for visitors to the library... [suggesting] the importance of ancient learning in the service of Christianity.”¹³ Her article concludes by reminding her readers that Sixtus attempted to renovate Rome through the revival of antiquity specifically to represent him as civic and spiritual commander of the city. Indeed, the reuse of ancient archetypes allowed the pontiff to utilize the history of Roman rule, uniting his “temporal and spiritual authority like two sides of a medal.”¹⁴

Thus, it is important to remember that what may appear as a celebration of antiquity and philosophy is actually to be taken in the context of Christianity and the goals of the papacy. This concept remains relevant in the discussion of the Stanza della Segnatura where the journey from antique philosophy and worldly vestiges to Christian enlightenment is depicted in *The School of Athens* and facing it, *The Disputation of the Sacrament*.

much scholarly attention, although their preservation does allow for interpretation of the images and identification of the depicted figures.

¹¹ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, 45.

¹² *Ibid.*, 46.

¹³ Blondin, “Power Made Visible,” 22.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 25.

Dedication to Francis

In addition to Sixtus' accomplishments as a scholar, he was a noted Franciscan. His Franciscan beginnings can be traced to his childhood when his parents prayed to Saint Francis to intercede during an illness, and after his recovery dedicated him to the Franciscan Order.¹⁵ A Friars Minor by age ten, Francesco della Rovere became minister general of the Franciscans in 1464, was made cardinal of San Pietro in Vincoli, and was eventually elected pope in 1471.¹⁶ He demonstrated his Franciscan dedication by making St. Francis' feast day into a double feast in 1472, canonizing the Franciscan St. Bonaventure in 1482, and constructing part of the Friary of St. Francis at Assisi.¹⁷

Sixtus also demonstrated Marian devotion during his papacy—another hallmark of the Franciscan tradition—by building and restoring several churches dedicated to the Virgin including Santa Maria della Pace and Santa Maria del Popolo.¹⁸ Contributing to his ambition to make the Franciscan view on the feast of the Immaculate Conception the generally accepted position of the Catholic Church, in 1476 he issued a papal bull recognizing the Immaculate Conception as a feast; reinforcing the idea of succession and continuity in papal rule and the status of the Franciscan Order as guardians of the Church.¹⁹

¹⁵ Andrew C. Blume, "The Sistine Chapel, Dynastic Ambition, and the Cultural Patronage of Sixtus IV," in *Patronage and Dynasty: The Rise of the Della Rovere in Renaissance Italy*, ed. by Ian F. Verstegen (Kirkville: Truman State University Press, 2007), 4.

¹⁶ Verstegen, introduction, xiv.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, xv; During and before his reign as pope, he contributed to the construction of St. Francis at Assisi.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, xvi.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, xv; and Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 181. The Immaculate Conception remained a recognized feast until the nineteenth century when it became part of the official doctrine of the Catholic Church.

The Papal Nephew

Almost immediately upon his election as pope, Sixtus elevated Giuliano della Rovere to the college of cardinals on December 15, 1471 along with his cousin and rival Pietro Riario. Neither man had much claim over the title of cardinal besides their status as *nipoti* to Pope Sixtus IV.²⁰ Through their election, the della Rovere papal ties to the Franciscans strengthened; as the head of the Franciscan Order prior to his papacy, Sixtus supported Giuliano's education at the Franciscan friary in Perugia where he studied civil and Roman Law and eventually took his holy orders.²¹ Soon after his election to the College, Giuliano was granted his uncle's titular church, San Pietro in Vincoli (St. Peter in Chains), leading to his identification as "Vincula" throughout his career as cardinal and labeling him as a particular favorite of the pope.²² In 1471, Pietro Riario was made cardinal protector of the Franciscan Order, an honor later granted to Giuliano after Riario's death in 1474.²³

Melozzo da Forlì's *Sixtus IV Appoints Platina Vatican Librarian* (fig. 2-1), a commission for the north wall of the Biblioteca Latina, suggests Julius's role as his uncle's favored *nipote* by the young cardinal's position of prominence. The painting commemorates the appointment of Platina as papal librarian and features Sixtus seated with his nephews Riario and Giuliano standing nearby and engaging with him in a

²⁰ Christine Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 9.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 10. Notable because it was not necessary to be a priest in order to be elected cardinal or pope.

²² *Ibid.*, 11.

²³ Verstegen, introduction, xv.

classical basilica.²⁴ In addition to electing Platina as the librarian, Sixtus assigned Giuliano the role of promoting the institution of the library—a role admittedly surmised only from this fresco and another in the Ospedale di Santo Spirito by an unknown artist in which Giuliano and Platina stand together with the pope in his new library (fig. 2-2).²⁵ Temple’s analysis of Melozzo’s work places Giuliano in the prominent position, centered and facing his uncle, claiming that the cardinal’s position in relation to that of Sixtus indicates his dynastic ambitions by illustrating existing importance and future prospects.²⁶ A green wall with two arched windows highlights the background and a vertical column placed behind Giuliano, a juxtaposition of human figure and pillar that Ingrid Rowland identifies with a familiar Renaissance iconographic device, which used here, identifies the significant supporter of the papal library.²⁷ Temple highlights the significance of the artist’s use of green; here, the color symbolizes “hope and promise,” providing the future della Rovere pope with a backdrop appropriately symbolic of the “chosen one,” linking his importance to Sixtus with the present pope’s intentions for the future of the Church and the della Rovere dynasty.²⁸ The other figures in the painting exhibit vacant facial expressions indicating secondary importance while the brightly lit

²⁴ Blondin, “Power Made Visible,” 21. “Melozzo’s painting takes place in a classical basilica that shows Sixtus as an imperial ruler and certainly calls to mind the lost portrait of Augustus that dominated the Palatine Library. However, the garments worn by Sixtus, the *camauro* and *mozzetta*, make it clear that the pope, as a religious leader, is using imperial language to showcase the superiority of his Christian Rome.”

²⁵ Rowland, *The Culture of the High Renaissance*, 156; and for more on the works of Sixtus IV, see Blume, “The Sistine Chapel, Dynastic Ambition, and the Cultural Patronage of Sixtus IV,” 3-18.

²⁶ Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 171.

²⁷ *Ibid.*; and Ingrid D. Rowland, “Intellectual Background,” in *Raphael’s “School of Athens,”* ed. by Marcia Hall (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1997), 135.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 171.

interior behind the pillar indicates Giuliano as the representation of the pope's active intervention in the restoration of Rome.²⁹

Julius II and the Stanza della Segnatura

Elected to the papacy in 1503 after self-imposed exile, Julius picked up where his revered uncle left off. Nicknamed *Il Papa Terribile*, for his warring to unite the Papal States, Julius's patronage of Rome has been described as a renewal aimed at uniting all of Christendom. Temple describes Julius II's image as that of a "reviver" of Ancient Roman imperialism, "albeit reconstituted in the image of a Christian empire of faith," drawing upon "ancient sources in order to reinforce the much vaunted continuity between papal Rome and classical Rome."³⁰ Concerned with the architectural legacy of his uncle, Julius embarked on urban projects that were intended to continue the reverence of Sixtus IV. For example, the Via Giulia connects the Ponte Sisto in the south to the Ospedale di Santo Spirito in the north—two important monuments of Sixtus's reign.³¹

Two years after his election as pope, and no longer desiring to gaze at the gilded portrait of Alexander VI in pious prayer, Julius decided to move out of the Borgia apartments into the rooms directly above after his first military campaign.³² His Master of Ceremonies, Paris de Grassis, details this move:

Today, November 26, 1507, the pope began to reside in the upper apartments of the palace, the reason being, he has told me, having to have before his eyes at all hours the image of his predecessor and enemy

²⁹ Rowland, "Intellectual Background," 136.

³⁰ Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 36.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 47.

³² Rowland, *The Culture of the High Renaissance*, 164.

Alexander... I replied to him that one could, as required, remove the image and crests of Pope Alexander from wherever they were painted on the walls; he responded that that would not be appropriate, and that he did not want to live there in the presence of that wicked and criminal memory.³³

Soon after, Julius hired a team of artists to begin decorating his new papal suite. In 1508, Raphael arrived in Rome at the urging of his friend Bramante, and on January 13, 1509, was paid for work on the *Disputa* indicating that he won the commission.³⁴ The Stanza is a unified program of frescoes combining floor, ceiling and all four walls. Though the examination of each individual element is beyond the scope of this study, it is important to note their overall connections—some of which will be discussed in coordination with the relationship between the *School of Athens* and the *Disputa*. A brief description of the unifying properties of the vault (fig. 2-3) will suffice to offer an understanding of how the iconography of the Stanza ties together.

A central octagonal *oculus* unites four roundels illustrating enthroned female personifications of theology, philosophy, poetry, and law. The crest of Nicholas V is preserved in the *oculus* while the spaces between each of the roundels and their corresponding rectangular scenes are filled with della Rovere oaks. Above the *oculus* are eleven *putti* contrasted against the sky, while a frieze of floriate *grotteschi* surrounds this central composition. Other filler motifs occupy the remaining spaces between the main elements, uniting the entire vault thematically and geometrically.³⁵ Each corner rectangular scene corresponds to the roundel to its left, illustrating the concept

³³ James E Callaghan, "Reason and Faith in Renaissance Rome: The Stanza della Segnatura." (PhD diss., Temple University, 1998), 45.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 217n715. This date comes from a document stating that Raphael was paid for work in the "vaulted room" marking the officially documented employment of Raphael.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 219.

contained within the personification and on the wall below. The personification of *philosophia* roundel identifies the *School of Athens* with an image of Wisdom (Sophia) *Observing the Cosmos*; *Parnassus* is defined by the *poesia* roundel and the *Punishment of Marsyas* scene (fig. 2-4); for the *Disputa (theologia)*, the rectangular scene illustrates *The Fall*; and *Jurisprudence* features the *Judgment of Solomon* and a roundel with *iustitia* personified (fig. 2-5).³⁶ Because the frescoes integrate so closely with the vault, the room presents a unification and collaboration of the forms knowledge that Renaissance scholars and theologians would have been concerned with.

According to Nicholas Temple, the *School of Athens* and the *Disputa* are the two principle frescoes, oriented east and west, respectively. Oriented roughly toward St. Peter's Basilica, the *Disputa* stands as emblematic of the Basilica of Rome. The *Parnassus* fresco is oriented toward the Cortile de Belvedere, and the Villa Belvedere to the north; *Jurisprudence* coordinates with Bramante's Palazzo dei Tribunali in the south; and the *School of Athens* celebrates human knowledge and commemorates the Vatican library (fig. 2-6).³⁷ Building upon the discussion of Temple's argument from Chapter 1, these orientations are indicative of Julius's goals for a unified world under Christianity, with Rome at its center.

The relationship between the vaulted space of the chamber and the projective terrain represented in the wall frescoes below, forms a matrix of symbolic and spatial alignments. As both witness to—and agent of—the new Golden Age, Julius II would probably have construed the Stanza as his own personal point of reference, from which to contemplate the destiny of papal Rome.³⁸

³⁶ Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura*, 48-51.

³⁷ Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 216.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 220.

In addition to connecting the layout of the room to the topography of Rome, Temple identifies the iconography of the frescoes as indicative of a spiritual journey “that begins at the level of human discourse and culminates in divine knowledge.”³⁹ In other words, the *School of Athens* acts as a preparation of things to come, as revealed in the *Disputa*. The connection of the *School of Athens* to the *Disputa* will be explored further in Chapter 3, as it supports the first stage on Bonaventure’s *Journey of the Mind to God*.

La Disputa

As a representation of the concept of Theology the *Disputa* illustrates the unification of the Three Persons of the Trinity with the Eucharist on earth.⁴⁰ Placed in the horizontal center of the fresco and contained within a golden monstrance, the Eucharist traces its path from God the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit in a vertical line.⁴¹ The vanishing point of the architectural perspective and the gestures, poses and glances of the surrounding figures direct the viewer to follow this chain of divine substance, a compositional technique that Raphael is especially well known for.⁴² Raphael’s perspectival pavement orders the terrestrial level of the fresco building upon the gestures and actions of prominent figures to draw the composition to the center

³⁹ Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 220.

⁴⁰ Beck, *Raphael: The Stanza Della Segnatura*, 20; and George L. Hersey, *High Renaissance Art in St. Peter's and the Vatican, an Interpretive Guide* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 135.

⁴¹ Frederick Hartt and David G. Wilkins, *History of Italian Renaissance Art* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 2003), 544.

⁴² Hersey, *High Renaissance Art in St. Peter's and the Vatican, an Interpretive Guide*, 136; and Beck, *Raphael: The Stanza Della Segnatura*, 50.

exhibiting the Eucharist's connection to the three Persons of the Trinity.⁴³ Additionally, Raphael's warm color scheme indicates the fresco's theological meaning; originating from heaven, the rich golden light bathes the figures with warm tones, a technique used during the High Renaissance to indicate theological and spiritual ideals of a work of art.⁴⁴

The four Church Fathers frame the altar, emphasizing the presence of the Eucharist: Saints Gregory the Great and Jerome sit on the left, and Saints Ambrose and Augustine sit to the right (fig. 2-7). Pope Julius II's clean-shaven likeness is ascertained in the face of St. Gregory,⁴⁵ and other recognizable figures include Sixtus IV (identified by the book at his feet, *De Sanguine Christi*) and Dante Alighieri.⁴⁶ Two Doctors of the medieval church, St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure, stand behind the Church Fathers, with Bonaventure represented in full form, an artistic device used to give greater weight to the Seraphic Doctor than to St. Thomas (fig. 1-7).⁴⁷ St. Bonaventure's proximity to Pope Sixtus IV further supports a Franciscan influence on the design of the program and could allude to Sixtus IV's role in canonizing the saint in his 1482 bull. As noted earlier, Pope Sixtus IV (Francesco della Rovere) was the head of the Franciscan order before becoming Vicar of Christ in 1471.⁴⁸ Gutman argues that Pope Julius II's

⁴³ Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), 39.

⁴⁴ Beck, *Raphael: The Stanza Della Segnatura*, 78.

⁴⁵ Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 52.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁴⁷ Gutman, "Zur Ikonologie," 31.

⁴⁸ Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope*, 10.

admiration for his uncle places the two figures in a position that directs the viewer's eyes toward them first when entering the room from the facing door.⁴⁹

Surrounded by four *putti* holding open the Gospels, a golden mandorla encircles the Holy Spirit as it hovers over the Eucharist. As if the mouth of a divine funnel, the Holy Spirit's rays of gold light shine beyond the boundaries of the gold disc and pour into the monstrance, connecting the presence of Christ on earth to the Trinity in heaven. The prominent placement of the Trinity in the *Disputa* fresco serves as an exposition of the Eucharist in the center of the painting, referenced by the prominent Church Fathers. The three golden mandorlas anchored into the composition by the Persons of the Trinity unite the celestial world to the terrestrial, forming a ladder to the mind of God (fig. 2-8). In the center of the Trinity, Jesus sits with Mary as intercessor and St. John the Baptist in his animal skins as precursor. The youthful, beardless Christ raises his hands to display his wounds, but his demeanor is one of tenderness and grace, not judgment. Biblical and early Church figures sit on the bank of clouds as it arcs away from Jesus. Six figures from the Old Testament, whom Gutman identifies as representatives of justice, alternate in order with six Christian witnesses, who represent grace.⁵⁰ On the left, Old Testament figures converse with those from the Gospels, identified as St. Peter, Adam, St. John the Evangelist, King David, St. Lawrence (Gutman identifies him as St. Francis), and Isaiah (fig. 2-9). On the right, closest to Christ is Judah Maccabees,

⁴⁹ Gutman, "Zur Ikonologie," 31. Made a Cardinal shortly after Sixtus IV's election to the papacy, Julius II (Guiliano della Rovere) served his uncle for many years. For more on Julius's activities as a Papal nephew see Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope*, 9-51.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

St. Stephen, Moses, St. Matthew, Abraham, and St. Paul (fig. 2-10).⁵¹ These men to the right do not converse with one another, but are involved in their own contemplation. Supporting the entire arc of cloud, angels make up the base of the cloudbank, keeping it afloat. Fully formed angels hover above the seated figures, three on either side of God in the largest of golden mandorlas. Cloud-substance angels trim the border of His empyrean, and golden Seraphim float among the rays of light inside, emphasized by Raphael's use of gold leaf. This transition from mundane to heavenly finds emphasis in Raphael's use of High Renaissance ideals combined with the gold leaf Giovanni Pietro Bellori referred to as "dated" in his *Descrizione delle imagini dipinte da Raffaello d'Urbino* (1695).⁵² Emphasizing the spiritual substance of God's empyrean, Raphael's gold leaf highlights the rays of light while gold colored paint renders the seraphim surrounding God. According to Christian Kleinbub, Raphael's use of the outdated style could be interpreted as following the contemporary Roman taste for opulence, as Julius was not opposed to splendor.⁵³ By integrating traditional and contemporary styles of visionary imagery Raphael reiterated the Eucharistic dialectic of presence and accident through the interplay of abstract and naturalistic visionary forms. In other words, the pigment renders the accidental structure of the angels, while the gold leaf accents indicate their otherworldly substance. Similarly, the rendered bread substance of the Eucharist indicates its earthly nature, while the monstrance and rays of golden light

⁵¹ Reale, *Raffaello La "Disputa,"* 84. I support Christiane L. Joost-Gaugier's identification of the saint as St. Lawrence, due to his iconographical props and attire. St. Lawrence was grilled to death, and is often depicted in red with a flame on his garment. Though it is unclear whether the determination can be proven, for these reasons I will refer to him as St. Lawrence.

⁵² Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael,* 31.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 32.

allude to the physical presence of Christ. This transitional relationship of terrestrial and celestial initiates our discussion of Bonaventure's *Journey of the Mind to God*; indeed, the Saint's first steps—finding God in earthly objects and vestiges—resound quite strongly with recognizing God in the Eucharist.

Bonaventure's *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum: The Journey of the Mind to God*

Two years before composing the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* in 1259 Saint Bonaventure of Balneoregio (b.1217 - d.1274) became Minister General of the Franciscan Order.⁵⁴ Master of Theology at the University of Paris and Cardinal, Bonaventure became known as the Seraphic Doctor of the Catholic Church, marking his religious conviction by endeavoring to integrate faith and reason. Bonaventure considered Christ the one true master who could offer mankind the knowledge developed through rational understanding and perfected by a mystical union with God. Based on St. Francis's vision of Christ in the guise of a Seraph, the *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, or *Journey of the Mind to God*, details the journey of spiritual enlightenment through Christ as seen through a Franciscan point of view.

Allegorically interpreting the six wings of the crucified Seraph as stages on the ideal approach to God, this symbol serves as the driving force and backbone of Bonaventure's treatise. The Seraph's lower wings denote the seeing of God through footprints in the visible world. Pointing toward God and creation, these footprints are reminders of him that appear in the sub-human world, and in the relationships people have with objects and creatures on Earth. Bonaventure posited that man's vision is distorted by ignorance and so fails to see reality, but Scripture brings "man back to a

⁵⁴ Stephen F. Brown, introduction to *The Journey of the Mind to God*, ed. by Stephen F. Brown (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993), ix.

true vision of sensible reality by revealing that these objects of our own experience do not explain themselves.⁵⁵ Looking at the origin of the vestiges, their greatness, multitude and beauty, man should realize “God’s power, wisdom and goodness in the splendor of created things.”⁵⁶ Taking strong influence from St. Augustine’s illumination theory of knowledge, Bonaventure believed that the first thing we know is God, present in things. Therefore, the first pair of wings covers the feet of the Seraph, allegorizing Bonaventure’s Chapters One and Two, where man focuses on the earthly realm to find the footprints of God.⁵⁷ It is by first analyzing things on earth with our sense knowledge that man comes to realize God’s invisible presence in them.⁵⁸

The middle pair of wings relates to Chapters Three and Four; level to man, the Seraph uses them to hover, activating its presence within the material world.⁵⁹ Here, the soul turns to itself through the faculties of memory, intelligence, and will, recognizing their analogous relationship to the three persons of God. After this realization, God restores the soul from the human, bent-over form into His likeness; unfolding the soul through faith, hope and love, purifying, enlightening and perfecting it.⁶⁰ Note here that Bonaventure’s frequent use of threes recurs as a major theme throughout his *Itinerarium*.

⁵⁵ Brown, introduction, ix.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ José de Vinck, *The Work of Saint Bonaventure, Cardinal, Seraphic Doctor, and Saint* (Paterson: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1960-63), vol. 1, 3.

⁵⁸ Brown, introduction, xvii.

⁵⁹ de Vinck. *The Work of Saint Bonaventure*, 4.

⁶⁰ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 3.5, ed. Brown, 21.

The upper pair of wings represents seeing through reason that God possesses one divine nature and seeing God in the Holy Trinity through faith. Covering the face of the Seraph, this pair of wings symbolizes that which is above man, the symbol for Bonaventure's Chapters Five and Six.⁶¹ Building on the previous steps, man becomes aware of the perfect *Being* that is God in three persons, "most simple, most actual, most perfect, and supremely one."⁶² Finally, the realization of God as *The Good* brings the mind to its highest perfection in union with God.

Bonaventure likens these three main stages of perception to a "triple way of seeing" which is "equivalent to the three days' journey in the wilderness:"

It is like the threefold enlightenment of each day: the first is like evening; the second like morning; and the third like noonday... it reflects the threefold substance in Christ, Who is our ladder: His corporeal substance, His spiritual substance, and His divine substance.⁶³

The threefold enlightenment of each day corresponds with the placement of each pair of wings. The sun is below the horizon in the evening, and is therefore analogous to the wings covering the seraph's feet. At dawn, the sun begins to rise and therefore aligns with the middle wings. Finally, at noon the sun reaches its highest point corresponding with the highest enlightenment of the mind, allegorized in the top pair of wings. To further this explanation, the Seraphic Doctor explains the mind's three principle ways of perception:

In the first way it looks at the corporeal things outside itself, and so acting, it is called animality or sensibility. In the second, it looks within itself and into

⁶¹ de Vinck. *The Work of Saint Bonaventure*, 4.

⁶² Brown, introduction, xviii.

⁶³ Bonaventure, *The Journey of the Mind to God* 1.3, ed. Brown, 6.

itself, and is then called spirit. In the third, it looks above itself, and is then called mind.⁶⁴

Thus, corresponding to the three pairs of wings are the three principal stages of the journey. *Transire*, where man perceives exterior material objects, classified as animal or sensual; *intrare*, in which man perceives that which is within, recognized as the spirit and the image of God; and *transcendere*, the perception of that which is above oneself, finally and the soul's passage to God.⁶⁵ With these stages Bonaventure asserts, "all three ways should be employed to ascend to God so that He may be loved *with the whole heart, and with the whole soul, and with the whole mind*. Herein lies the perfect observance of the Law and at the same time in this is found Christian wisdom."⁶⁶

Bonaventure then divides these three principle ways of seeing into six stages for completing the journey to the mind of God. "just as God created the world in six days and on the seventh day rested, so man, the microcosm, is led in a most ordered way, through six progressive steps of enlightenment, to the quiet of contemplation."⁶⁷ Thus, the three pairs of wings are broken down into six unique steps, "whereby we ascend from the lowest things to the highest things, from the things outside us to those that are within, and from the temporal to the eternal."⁶⁸ The *transire* steps are found in the lowest wings, considering God through His vestiges in the universe,⁶⁹ and in His vestiges in

⁶⁴ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 1.4, ed. Brown, 6.

⁶⁵ Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 250.

⁶⁶ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 1.4, ed. Brown, 6.

⁶⁷ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 1.5, ed. Brown, 6.

⁶⁸ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 1.6, ed. Brown, 6-7.

⁶⁹ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 1.2, ed. Brown, 5-6.

this visible world.⁷⁰ The *intrare* steps found in the middle wings require the consideration of God through His image within our natural powers,⁷¹ and in His image reformed by the gifts of grace.⁷² Finally, the top pair of wings indicate the *transcendere* steps, when a person considers that which is above himself: contemplating the Divine Unity through its primary name which is *Being*,⁷³ and the most blessed Trinity in its name which is *The Good*.⁷⁴ The use of the words “through” and “in” alludes to Bonaventure’s symbolic use of the mirror; to be seen *through* the mirror means that the mind comes to God *through* understanding the objects or vestiges investigated. Being seen *in* the mirror means that the mind perceives God acting and present *in* the objects investigated.⁷⁵ In the end,

The soul has climbed the six-story mountain. The mind has reached the high point of its being. The intellect has done all that it can do to bring itself to the fullest possible understanding of God, the object of the soul’s desire. The mind not only yearns to understand God; it yearns to be united with Him... there is one being who can serve as the Mediator, Jesus Christ. As the Crucified He came to Saint Francis and transformed him to His image. Upon the Crucified now the soul must fix its gaze and wait, full of confidence in Christ, expecting from His grace the ultimate union with God.⁷⁶

This journey toward an ultimate union with God is a major theme depicted in the *Disputa* fresco. Raphael depicted the steps inherent in Bonaventure’s text using High Renaissance techniques, gestures and color schemes. That the message is depicted in

⁷⁰ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 2.1, ed. Brown, 11.

⁷¹ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 3.1, ed. Brown, 18.

⁷² Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 4.1-3, ed. Brown, 23-24.

⁷³ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 5.2, ed. Brown, 28.

⁷⁴ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 6.1, ed. Brown, 33.

⁷⁵ de Vinck, *The Work of Saint Bonaventure*, 3.

⁷⁶ Brown, “Introduction,” xviii.

a room dedicated to learning should also resound with the overall intention of the journey. Using knowledge and wisdom found in the private library of Pope Julius II, the journey of the mind to God culminates in the contemplation of God the Father in the golden light of heaven, presiding over His Son, the Holy Spirit, and the men depicted in the fresco.

The many Trinitarian divisions influence the structure of this study just as they influence the program of the frescoes. Therefore, beginning with *transire* in the chapter that follows, each of the three main stages of the journey will be applied to the *Disputa*. Using the *School of Athens* to provide further connections between the material, sensible world and the next stage, the traveller enters the mind (*intrare*) and finds the Holy Trinity's likeness inside himself. After discussing *transcendere* and Raphael's visionary techniques, I will conclude with a metaphorical Sunday, the final ascent to the mind of God.

CHAPTER 3 *TRANSIRE*: BEGINNING THE JOURNEY IN THE VESTIGES

Now since it is necessary to ascend Jacob's ladder before we can descend it, let us place our first step in the ascent at the bottom, setting the whole visible world before us as a mirror through which we may pass over to God, the Supreme Creator.¹

The first two steps of Bonaventure's Journey involve the contemplation of vestiges of God in the visible world. The first step—the consideration of God through his vestiges in the universe—acknowledges that God created visible objects according to His purposes; to lead men to God through the objects by contemplating their origin, beauty, and greatness. “The supreme power, wisdom and goodness of the Creator shines forth in created things in so far as bodily senses inform the interior senses.”² In the *Disputa*, the reading St. Jerome, St. Augustine dictating interpretations of scripture (fig. 2-7), and St. Bonaventure standing immersed in a volume of text (fig. 1-7) illustrate these acts of earthly investigation. The many books on the terrestrial level of the fresco correspond to the men nearby and their acts of investigation and interpretation. Step two—the consideration of God in His vestiges in this visible world—focuses on the physical presence of God in objects. Sense knowledge and judgment developed in the previous step enables man to infer God's presence and power in the visible realm. This chapter examines the ways in which Raphael indicated these vestiges within the *Disputa* and the *School of Athens*, ultimately leading the traveler toward the mind of God.

¹ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 1.9, ed. Brown, 8.

² Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 1.10, ed. Brown, 8.

Sensible Vestiges in the *Disputa*

As a physical object of meditation, the Eucharist visualized inside a golden monstrance on the altar of the *Disputa* serves as the most perfect vestige of God on earth. According to Catholic doctrine, upon Transubstantiation the bread of the Host becomes the flesh of Christ. Thomas Aquinas writes that Christ in the Eucharist cannot be detected by its visible appearance or the accidents of the bread “substance,” thus, Christ’s presence can only be determined by means of spiritual vision, only achieved by the beatific soul and the angels.³ Raphael illustrated this spiritual vision with the inversely proportional size of the golden mandorlas containing the Holy Spirit, Christ, and God the Father rising vertically above the altar, granting spiritual access to the substance of the Host.⁴ By placing the Host at the vanishing point of the fresco, the painting’s composition, “visually as well as conceptually... radiates out from this focal point where, in Christian theology and in the basic structure of Raphael’s composition, divine meets human.”⁵

Placing the Eucharist on the earthly level where it exists in reality emphasizes its role as a guide for men to contemplate God *in* His vestiges on earth. This divine body of Christ on earth symbolizes the attainment of human perfection, thus creating a springboard to the next steps on the *Journey of the Mind to God*. Raphael’s use of

³ Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 36.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁵ Ingrid D. Rowland, “The Vatican Stanze,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Raphael*, ed. Marcia B. Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 99.

perspective to draw the composition's focus toward the Trinity indicates this transition from terrestrial to celestial,⁶ an essential step described in the *Itinerarium*:

In order to arrive at the consideration of the First Principle, which is the most spiritual being and eternal and above us, we must pass through vestiges which are corporeal and temporal and outside us. This is what is mean by *being led in the way of God*.⁷

In his text, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, Christian K. Kleinbub asserts that the architectural setting of the terrestrial level of the fresco also serves as a connection to the divine; stating, "The stone walls rising at the sides of the pavement emblemize the process by which order is made of matter; they show how man's sensual intelligence works to link earth to God through His Church."⁸ Kleinbub's statement corresponds with Bonaventure's use of sensual intelligence to find traces of God through objects in the sense world, and then God's presence in those objects. Linking man to the physical body of the church and thus the spiritual essence, Raphael's emphasis of the idea that the church is made of people rather than architecture is posited by Matthias Winner who quoted Hugh of St. Victor, who in his *Speculum de Mysteriis Ecclesiae*, stated:

The church in which the people assemble in order to praise God represents the Holy Catholic Church, which is built in heaven from living stones. The Church's foundation is Christ Himself, the cornerstone on which the foundations of the apostles and prophets rest. Upon this base are built the walls consisting of Jews and Gentiles who come to Christ from the four corners of the world. The columns represent the Doctors of the Church,

⁶ Kleinbub. *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 39.

⁷ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 1.2, ed. Brown, 6.

⁸ Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 40.

who support the Temple of God through their teaching, just as the evangelists support the throne of God spiritually.⁹

This metaphor of a living church survives even in the early studies for Raphael's *Disputa*; the Doctors of the church stand like statues against columns, and the theologians are seated on overturned building blocks.¹⁰ The clouds on which the heavenly entourage sits in the completed fresco were originally imagined as an entablature of a colonnade, and beneath the Son of God, Ss. Paul and Peter were positioned as if part of the supporting architecture.¹¹ Furthering his idea of architectural allegory, Winner posits that the position of Sixtus IV and Bonaventure in front of two pilasters protruding from a cornerstone can be interpreted as the living stone described in the New Testament. This connection is found specifically in the Epistles of Paul (1 Corinthians 3:10; 2 Corinthians 3:16), and St. Peter (1 Peter 2:3-7) urging Christians to serve as living stones in the construction of the living church, of which Christ is the living cornerstone.¹² This idea of spiritual life within a sensible object reiterates Bonaventure's assertion that through rational understanding and spiritual enlightenment we can come to find God in the natural world.

Analyzing the gestures of prominent figures in the fresco, Rudolf Kuhn also reconciles the terrestrial and heavenly realms in his article, "La *Disputa* e la *Scuola di Atene* Storie o No? Proposte per la Lettura del Componento Ordinato in Raffaello."

⁹ Matthias Winner, "Projects and Execution in the Stanza della Segnatura," in *Raphael in the Apartments of Julius II and Leo X*, ed. by Roberto Caravaggi (Milan: Electa, 1993), 257. He cites Hugh of St. Victor, *Speculum de Mysteriis Ecclesiae*, ed. J.P. Migne, vol. 177, 335-337.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

To the right, the man closest to the altar (identified as Justin Martyr by Giovanni Reale) gestures toward the sky. Next to him, St. Ambrose looks in awe while contemplating the Trinity, and St. Augustine dictates to a secretary (fig. 2-7).¹³ The curve of Justin Martyr's arm establishes continuity between heaven and earth, a thematic point of view inspired by an immediate understanding of the Sacrament on the altar as a promise of Christ's presence on earth.¹⁴ His gesture aids us on our journey toward the mind of God; seeking the vestiges of God on earth through the men surrounding the altar and in the Eucharist, the mind is now ready to ascend above earthly footprints into the realm of intellectual and spiritual contemplation. Additionally, Kuhn speaks of the man in blue standing in the left foreground of the fresco gesturing toward the ground, linking his gesture to that of Aristotle in the *School of Athens* and further connecting the earthly realm to the heavenly through the repetition of gestures between frescoes.¹⁵

The School of Athens

Although this study primarily focuses on the *Disputa* fresco and Bonaventure's influence on its iconography, the *School of Athens* (fig. 1-4) provides an additional terrestrial basis for the journey by initiating the reconciliation of Plato and Aristotle. With Plato pointing up toward the sky and Aristotle's hand mirroring the horizon establishing the idea of earth, we gather a sense of the reconciliation between spirit and sense striven for by Neoplatonists. Ideas of *spiritus* and *sensus* are further emphasized by the

¹³ Rudolf Kuhn, "La *Disputa* e la *Scuola di Atene* Storie o No? Proposte per la Lettura del Componento Ordinato in Raffaello," in Raffaello e l'Europa, Atti del IV Corso Internazionale di Alta Cultura [1983], a cura di Marcello Fagiolo e Maria Luisa Madonna (Roma: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Libreria dello Stato 1990), 74.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

mimicked positions of the philosophers' books; Plato holds his *Timaeus* vertically and Aristotle balances his *Nicomachean Ethics* horizontally on his leg (fig. 3-1).¹⁶ The gestures of Plato and Aristotle replicate the symbolic juxtaposition of heaven and earth.¹⁷ Indeed, the harmony of Plato (*in divinus*) and Aristotle (*in naturalibus*) is an important way to unify two dominant philosophers, thereby uniting them as a hypostatic union, paralleling the unification of spiritual and material in the person of Christ, developed further in the *Disputa*.¹⁸ Drawing additional connections between the *School of Athens* to the *Disputa*, Winner describes the bald Plato “with the long beard” as resembling the archetypal St. Paul and Aristotle as resembling the archetypal St. Peter, and suggesting that the only two columns in the *School of Athens* therefore provide a vestigial reference to Saints Peter and Paul.¹⁹ Used to divide the only window in the fresco into three smaller windows, one might conclude that these pillars are an intentional allusion to the Trinity, thus connecting the overall program of the facing frescoes.²⁰

The blues, off-whites, and cooler shades of red are part of a color palette used during the High Renaissance as a way to emphasize the logical and rational ethics that are present in the *School of Athens*.²¹ The horizontal nature of the composition serves

¹⁶ Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 221.

¹⁷ Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 58.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 61.

¹⁹ Winner, “Projects and Execution,” 257.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Beck, *Raphael: The Stanza Della Segnatura, Rome*, 78.

to accentuate philosophical, natural, and physical values grounded in the realistic nature of earth, which is Bonaventure's first principle way of seeing called sensibility:

In the first way of seeing, the observer considers things in themselves and sees them in weight, number, and measure: weight in respect to the place toward which things incline; number, by which things are distinguished; and measure, by which things are determined. Hence he sees them in their mode, species, and order, as well as substance, power, and activity. From all these considerations the observer can rise, as from a vestige, to the knowledge of the immense power, wisdom, and goodness of the Creator.²²

Without providing a long narrative and explanation of each figure's activities in the *School of Athens*, it should certainly be understood that the men in the fresco are acting out various scientific methods. Diogenes sprawls out upon the steps examining a pamphlet, Pythagoras concentrates on writing in a large volume, Euclid demonstrates a theorem on a chalk tablet, and a group of men referred to as the "Socrates Group" engage in animated discussion.²³ The arrangement of philosophers and mathematicians not only serves as an assemblage of the great minds of history, but also as a representation of pupils and instructors communicating knowledge over the span of several periods of history. This contemplation of philosophy and knowledge embodies Bonaventure's second step on the journey in which Bonaventure begins to expound on the methods of observation, concluding that these activities in themselves are "vestiges in which we can perceive our God."²⁴ Indeed,

"Number is the principal exemplar in the mind of the Creator," and in things, the principal vestige leading to Wisdom. And since number is most evident to all and very close to God, it leads us... very close to Him; it makes Him known in all bodily and visible things when we apprehend numerical things,

²² Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 1.11, ed. Brown, 8.

²³ Marcia Hall, introduction to *Raphael's "School of Athens,"* ed. by Marcia Hall (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1997), esp. fig. 9, 15, 17, 18.

²⁴ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 2.7, ed. Brown, 13.

when we delight in numerical proportions, and when we judge irrefutably by the laws of numerical proportions.²⁵

Therefore, the mathematical examinations and theorems set forth by Euclid and Pythagoras define quite accurately the principal exemplar of the Creator according to the Seraphic Doctor. Depicting these men with their counterparts engaged in philosophical study of the natural world leads the traveler to these earthly vestiges and prepares him to continue his journey.

The examination of vestiges would not be complete without an appropriately symbolic setting. A series of three mighty vaults rises above the philosophers creating an illusion of looking into the nave of a great basilica. These three barrel vaults recede into the background, part of a device that Christian Kleinbub calls the “perspectival *veduta*.”²⁶

Othogonals launch the *veduta* in the foreground, traced in squares of red and white stone...Beyond the crossing, the orthogonals fall swiftly again along another vault, ducking through a triumphal arch to arrive on a view of the sky... [indicating] the ultimate, transcendental object of the whole horizontal construction. While the perspectival *veduta* thus stands for a physicalist idea, designed according to rule and built of hewn stone, it is also a conduit of observation. It captures our attention and then directs it. In the context of philosophy, the perspectival *veduta* serves as a figure for a condition or model of thinking, but thinking directed to the specific purpose of understanding the spiritual world by means of its evidences in the physical one.²⁷

The last sentence of the above quote embodies quite succinctly the first stage of St. Bonaventure’s *Itinerarium*. Philosophy here becomes a tool for understanding the divine through the mundane, and therefore coming to see God in the natural world.

²⁵ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 2.10, ed. Brown, 15.

²⁶ Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 50.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

Indeed, the gestures of Plato and Aristotle discussed above therefore tie to this method of understanding the divine. In particular, the vaulting of the great nave helps to emphasize the gesture of Plato; if the curve of the arch were completed to form a circle, the bottom of it would underline his gesture toward heaven.²⁸ Kleinbub emphasizes that their figural movement and gestures suggest “how the perspectival *veduta* there represents thought itself, a coming into knowing.”²⁹ The viewer traces the philosophers’ movements and meets them at the same intellectual destination, with our minds rising to the *veduta* of sky “symbolizing the heavens, and the philosophers finish their debate facing the *Disputa*.”³⁰ Therefore, the humanists concern with “a millennial Christian belief that every human quest for wisdom is inspired by God, the Universal Father,” who brings men and women to Christ “through the Spirit of Truth, and often across centuries of slow cultural evolution,” was thus illustrated by Raphael as “the power and wisdom of God” personified.³¹

The motion of east to west in the Stanza della Segnatura further illustrates this journey from sense to spirit. Raphael depicted Plato and Aristotle walking toward the viewer and into the facing fresco; larger in scale and arranged toward the outside of the frame, the men in the foreground leave a division for the two philosophers to walk through, defining the path from philosophy to theology. The frescoes on the north and south walls also indicate this motion from the *School of Athens* to the *Disputa*; Timothy

²⁸ Roger Jones and Nicholas Penny, *Raphael* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 77.

²⁹ Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 53.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Verdon, “Pagans in the Church,” in *Raphael’s “School of Athens,”* ed. by Marcia Hall (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1997), 127.

Verdon explains that the south-oriented *Jurisprudence* features Pope Julius II as Gregory IX angled toward the *Disputa*, indicating progression to theology (fig. 3-2).³² To the north, *Parnassus* (fig. 1-3) features transitory levels from the assembly in the *School of Athens* as they exist in the lower half of the composition, to the natural hillside over the window where higher placed figures draw the eyes upward, concluding the rising composition with the multi-leveled *Disputa*.³³

Intellectually, this movement progresses from philosophy, behind the visitor, through poetry, at the right, to the highest form of 'knowledge and inspiration,' God Himself, contemplated in Christ, Mary, and the Saints, in the Sacred Scriptures, and in the Eucharist: all shown clearly in the *Disputa*.³⁴

Therefore, the iconological program was meant to situate the contemporary visitor within a grand procession of human thought, leading from philosophy and earthly studies to a union with God. As Christian Kleinbub so eloquently stated:

Clearly Raphael understood the epistemological pathway between visible things and the divine, for he attempted to articulate this in his paintings by means the visual terms of perspective Raphael's *School of Athens* reflects the idea that the study of the commensurable world, as in philosophy, points to the transcendence of the incommensurable one. The eye engaged here—I shall call it "philosophical"—is thus an extrapolating organ that attempts to embrace the divine through its evidences, or vestiges, in the visible world...the eye finds the signature of God, first in the laws defining the artist's perspectival framework and then in the sky that is framed by it.³⁵

³² Pope Gregory IX's inclusion in the fresco program may be a further amplification of the Franciscan theme of the frescoes, particularly because he is looking directly toward the *Disputa*. Gregory IX supported St. Francis during his papacy, and supported the creation of the Franciscan Order. See Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 319n125.

³³ Verdon, "Pagans in the Church," 121.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 63.

Following the flow of the room from the *School of Athens* to *Parnassus* to the *Disputa* seems a natural development of interpretation for the visitor to the Stanza della Segnatura. In this way, we are led to contemplate the philosophical foundations of Christian teaching, journey through the arts, into ourselves, and finally continue our ascent to God. Together with the figures represented, the layout of the room, and the architectural backdrop, the frescoes provide a narrative of the beginning of the journey. From here, we continue to the second stage, *intrare*, in which we enter the mind, “where the divine image shines forth.”³⁶

³⁶ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 3.1, ed. Brown, 18.

CHAPTER 4
INTRARE: FINDING TRINITARIAN SIGNS WITHIN THE MIND

After acknowledging God through the objects investigated on earth and His presence in them, the soul moves to step three—the consideration of God through His image imprinted on our natural powers—turning to itself through memory, intelligence, and will. These three attributes of the soul are analogous to the three Persons of God; thus, the traveler discovers the parallel between his soul’s attributes and those of the Trinity.¹ Step four—the consideration of God in His image reformed through the gifts of grace—consists of the restoration of God’s image in man’s soul (lost through original sin) by means of the gifts of faith, hope and charity, resulting in the hierarchical, purified soul; a necessary condition for the final ascent to the mind of God. The *School of Athens* and the *Disputa* both provide examples for the inward contemplation of the Trinity, and the layout of the room places the viewer on a sort of stage between rational knowledge and spiritual knowledge; physically and metaphorically positioning the viewer to complete the second stage, steps three and four, of Bonaventure’s *Journey of the Mind to God*. Contemplation of the Trinity is essential to this process; in the *Disputa*, Ss. Gregory and Ambrose turn their faces toward the Trinity, illustrating this spiritual contemplation as it takes place on earth.

Standing Between the Frescoes: The Consideration of God through His Image Imprinted on our Natural Powers

In Bonaventure’s third step, we are led to “reenter into ourselves, that is, into our mind, where the divine image shines forth. Now it is, on a third step, that entering into ourselves, and, as it were, forsaking the outer court, we ought to strive to see God

¹ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 3.5, ed. Brown, 21.

through a mirror....”² A prominent example of this step exists in the figure of Michelangelo in the *School of Athens* (fig. 4-1). Matthias Winner posited that the sculptor’s block of stone in the *School of Athens* is a “solid body” or *corpus solidum*, facing and corresponding to the Host in the *Disputa*; in fact, the stone is “emphasized in a similar way to the square of light behind God’s head in the *Disputa*,” providing additional visual continuity between the frescoes.³ Additionally, the heavy square block resounds with the square altar upon which the golden monstrance displays the Eucharist. Kleinbub identifies the figure leaning against the block as Heraclitus in the guise of Michelangelo, with his eyes closed in thought.⁴ Ficino described this Greek philosopher from Ephesus in *Platonic Theology*, saying that the philosopher looked “forlorn in aspect from the intensity of his study.”⁵ Kleinbub then associates the figure of Heraclitus with the necessary rejection of the physical eyes in order to reach an understanding of God. He dwells in his own mind with a “nonempirical philosophical method, a philosophy of internal matters and spiritual being,” and based on Ficino’s portrayal of Heraclitus, he is “among those philosophers who are described as being like visionary saints, ‘swept up... by a divinity in the midst of contemplation.’”⁶ Here we

² Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 3.1, ed. Brown, 18.

³ Winner, “Projects and Execution,” 280.

⁴ Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 64.

⁵ Ibid. Kleinbub’s footnote states that this is quoted from Hettner, *Italianische Studien*, 208, who was the first to put forward the Heraclitus identification. The original Latin reads, “[I]ntentione studii subtristis videbatur aspectu.” Ficino *Platonic Theology* XIII.II.2, 4:122-23, quoted from Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 162n63.

⁶ Ibid., 65.

can draw a connection from the empirical studies of philosophy in the *School of Athens* to the more spiritual contemplation found in the *Disputa*.

Taken literally, the viewer may also experience this third step by standing between the *School of Athens* and the *Disputa*. With the worldly vestiges of God in the first stage depicted in the *School of Athens* and the third stage depicted in the transcendence and upward motion of the higher registers of the *Disputa*, it is plausible that the act of standing between the frescoes in contemplation represents the first part of this second stage. Meditatively, the traveler can contemplate the meaning of the frescoes, apply the vestiges represented there to his understanding of God seen through the universe, and then apply them to himself. Then, the traveler can contemplate the Trinity, finding its likeness within his soul through intellect, memory, and will; thus understanding God as if through a mirror.⁷ Bonaventure expands upon each of these faculties, explaining memory as “an image of eternity, whose indivisible present extends itself to all times;”⁸ intellect as “joined to eternal Truth Itself,” enabling a person to “see within [himself] the Truth that teaches [him];”⁹ and will as the elective faculty, allowing a person to move toward that which he loves most, through his desire for the highest Good.¹⁰

See, therefore, how close the soul is to God, and how, through their activity, memory leads us to Eternity, intelligence to Truth, and the elective faculty to the highest Good.¹¹

⁷ See Appendix B for a table that delineates the attributes of the Holy Trinity.

⁸ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 3.2, ed. Brown, 19.

⁹ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 3.3, ed. Brown, 20.

¹⁰ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 3.4, ed. Brown, 21.

¹¹ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 3.4, ed. Brown, 21.

Moreover, if one considers the order, the origin, and the relationship of these faculties to one another, he is led up to the most blessed Trinity itself. For, from memory comes forth intelligence as its offspring... From the memory and the intelligence is breathed forth love, as the bond of both. These three—the generating mind, the word, and love—exist in the soul as memory, intelligence, and will, which are consubstantial, coequal, equally everlasting and mutually inclusive.¹²

Encouraging the move to within the soul, Timothy Verdon posited in “Pagans in the Church” that the Renaissance viewer registered the frescoes with their eyes, and read them with their hearts and minds in a poetic process differing considerably from that of modern art historians.¹³ Therefore, the stage of entering the mind exists in the center of the room. Indeed, “the Renaissance experience depended on immersion, not extrapolation, conditioned by familiarity with the decorated rooms where the imagery on one wall echoed and reverberated with imagery on the others,” which Verdon calls a “serious difference in perception.”¹⁴ Indicating the consistent perspective on both walls and the uniform figure techniques, Verdon argues that the frescoes create a powerful visual impression of a single scene.¹⁵

The virtually life-size scale of Raphael’s figures, their natural movements, and the great number of contemporary portraits throughout the room must have made sixteenth century visitors feel that the space at the center of the Stanza was itself part of the composition and that “visitors” were also “players” on a stage that stretched from the *School of Athens* to the *Disputa*, opening to right and left in the *Parnassus* and *Jurisprudence* images.¹⁶

¹² Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 3.5, ed. Brown, 21. Note here the Trinitarian language, these qualities “consubstantial, coequal, equally everlasting and mutually inclusive” are descriptions of the Holy Trinity’s unity in three persons, indivisible yet distinct.

¹³ Verdon, “Pagans in the Church,” 117.

¹⁴ Ibid. Verdon attributes the misalignment of the vanishing points in the *School of Athens* and the *Disputa* to a symbolic device used to allude to the divide between the natural and spiritual worlds.

¹⁵ Ibid., 118.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Given Verdon's position, it appears likely that this second stage of Bonaventure's treatise is played out in the center of room, in addition to key figural examples in the frescoes. These figures, as discussed below, offer the "player" an example of how to accomplish this stage while depicting the result – transcendence to the mind of God – awaiting in the third stage. Verdon continues his discussion of viewer participation, calling it "dynamic involvement," noting that the figures in the *School of Athens* seem to move toward the *Disputa*, whose figures appear to move into the depth of the scene, closer to the altar.¹⁷ Additionally, the normal traffic flow through the Stanze introduces visitors through the eastern wall (the wall depicting the *School of Athens*), so that upon entering they are immediately faced with the *Disputa*, and thus mimicking the traffic of the two frescoes:¹⁸

Standing in the middle of the stanza, a Renaissance cleric or layman could believe himself a living component in the movement of history out of pagan antiquity, through the present, and toward the eternity of Christ, an eternity already glimpsed in the sacramental bread displayed on the altar, believed to render really present those higher mysteries that Raphael shows above the altar: the Holy Trinity and the Communion of Saints.¹⁹

Entering himself, the viewer can therefore complete the third step of the journey by identifying the vestiges of the Trinity within his soul and thus understanding:

If God, therefore, is a perfect spirit, then He has memory, intelligence, and will. He also has a Word begotten and a Love breathed forth, which are necessarily distinct, since one is produced by the other... The mind, then, when it considers itself by looking into itself as through a mirror, rises to the speculation of the Blessed Trinity, the Father, the Word, and Love, Three

¹⁷ Verdon, "Pagans in the Church," 119.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 120.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 121.

Persons coeternal, coequal and consubstantial, so that whatever is in any one is in the others, but one is not the other, but all three are one God.²⁰

Contemplation of the Trinity and the Consideration of God in His Image Reformed through the Gifts of Grace

The Trinity rises above the Eucharist in a series of golden mandorlas increasing in size as they make their vertical ascent. Residing in the largest of these is God the Father holding a celestial sphere and making a sign of blessing. Directly beneath him sits Christ displaying his wounds, and the Holy Spirit sends forth rays of light directly below Christ's feet. Revisiting the passage quoted in Chapter 1, Gutman offers a succinct description of the arrangement, uniting it to the work of St. Bonaventure:

In our painting, the rays of golden light stream from above through the angel and fill the empyrean. In the central axis of the fresco, surrounded by this light, we see God the Father, and under him; Christ, the focus of the overall presentation; and under this, the dove of the Holy Spirit... Under the Trinity Group is a golden monstrance on a pedestal on which the name of the reigning pope, Julius II is inscribed. This representation in conjunction with the above version of the Trinity is taken from the writings of St. Bonaventure: "(God) sent the Son and the Holy Spirit for the salvation of the human race... (The Son) sent fire to inflame the Holy Spirit to charity... he sent the Holy Spirit to build the earthly Jerusalem..., when the Holy Spirit descended His fullness of charismata poured out to perfect the Mystical Body of Christ (Breviloquium IV 10.8)."²¹

Referring to the Trinitarian theme running throughout Bonaventure's texts, Gutman adds weight to his proposal that these writings can help us understand the fresco. St. Augustine initiated the doctrine of the Trinity in his *De Trinitate*, which Richard of St. Victor and Ss. Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas later elaborated on, encouraging the use of the Trinity as a key to interpreting mysteries such as creation and redemption.²²

²⁰ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 3.5, ed. Brown, 21-22.

²¹ Gutman, "Zur Ikonologie," 30.

²² Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza Della Segnatura*, 69.

The *Disputa*'s relationship to the *School of Athens* provides additional relevance to the Trinitarian theme as Joost-Gaugier posits that Cicero's interpretations of Plato and Aristotle concluded that the two philosophers agreed on a "three-fold scheme of things."²³ This triple classification has Pythagorean overtones and ethics, harmonizing the material world with natural forces.²⁴ In addition, the inclusion of Abraham in the *Disputa* provides further allusions to the Trinitarian theme, as he was met with three angels, a commonly referenced prefiguration of the Trinity.²⁵

Additional elaboration of the Trinitarian theme in the *Disputa* comes from Pico della Mirandola who described three worlds in his *Heptaplus*. These worlds consist of the angelic, the heavenly, and the earthly; all bound together spreading rays of warmth over the universe.²⁶ Joost-Gaugier posits that the imagery in the fresco combines these three worlds, united by the Trinity whose rays of light unite the supercelestial world (presided over by angels under the direction of God), the elemental or earthly world (interpreted by the Church fathers), and the celestial world in the middle (made up of saints and Biblical figures in the cloud register surrounding Christ).²⁷ While Pico della Mirandola came after St. Bonaventure's time, his distinction of the three worlds does not contradict a Bonaventurian interpretation of the *Disputa*.

Etienne Gilson reiterates this Trinitarian theme in his *Philosophy of St. Bonaventure* by defining the Saint's clearly visible systematic method of division, where

²³ Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza Della Segnatura*, 69.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 74.

²⁷ Ibid.

every subject breaks down into threes, and the final subdivision or final three is always explained as representing the Power of the Father, Wisdom of the Son, and the Goodness of the Holy Spirit.²⁸ This threefold interpretation is moral, allegorical and mystical,

Now this threefold interpretation corresponds to a threefold hierarchal action: purgation, illumination, and perfective union. Purgation leads to peace, illumination to truth, and perfective union to love. As soon as the soul has mastered these three, it becomes holy... know also that there are three approaches to this triple way: reading with meditation; prayer; contemplation.²⁹

The moral interpretation refers to our deeds, the allegorical to our beliefs, and the mystical to our search for a union with God,³⁰ all necessarily implemented in the *Journey of the Mind to God*, and in the *Disputa* fresco. Starting with our search for a union with God, we use our belief in and understanding of the Trinity to find God on earth and in man's deeds, after which we ascend to His mind through further contemplation.

Identifying the attributes of the Trinity in the soul brings the traveler to step four, where the consideration of God's presence in the soul purifies, enlightens, and perfects it. The twelve Biblical and early Church figures surrounding Christ embody purified, enlightened and perfected souls. Expounding the theme of heavenly grace, Gutman identifies three particular figures (fig. 2-10) as representative of the Seraphic Doctor's account of grace. St. Stephen in a green habit looks up to the sky representing Acts 7:59, "Lord reckon this sin against them not," symbolizing the forgiveness of sin –

²⁸ Gilson, *Philosophy of St. Bonaventure*, 3.

²⁹ de Vinck, *The Work of Saint Bonaventure*, vol. 1, 63.

³⁰ Ibid.

purification. St. James (St. Matthew according to Giovanni Reale) gazes upon the bustle of the earth, referring to James 2:22, “By works was faith perfected,” thereby representing the fullness of justice—perfection of the soul. Finally, St. Paul with his sword faces the Trinity, alluding to Romans 6:23, “God’s grace, eternal life,” embodying the attainment of eternal happiness—enlightenment.³¹ By comparing the heavenly figures to those on earth, we can see the contrast between Bonaventure’s steps completed in the earthly realm and those completed with the aid of the Holy Spirit, whose image found to be analogous to the structure of the mind brings the soul closer to God.

With Heraclitus providing us with an example of inward contemplation in the *School of Athens*, the arrangement of room necessarily including the visitor at its center, and Saints Stephen, James, and Paul illustrating the soul reformed by grace in the *Disputa*, we are now prepared to step outside the mind and into the divine light, where the traveler moves on to stage three, *transcendere*, joining the saints seated around Christ and the angels accompanying God the Father in his golden empyrean. Indeed, “It is possible to contemplate God not only outside us and within us but also above us: outside, through vestiges of Him; within, through His image; and above; through the light that shines upon our mind. This is the light of Eternal Truth....”³²

³¹ Gutman, “Zur Ikonologie,” 31.

³² Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 5.1, ed. Brown, 28.

CHAPTER 5
TRANSCENDERE: THE FINAL STEPS TOWARD GOD

Transcendere refers to the final two steps on the *Journey of the Mind to God* in which we move above the mind to find the essential and personal attributes of God. Here, man builds upon observations made along other stages of the journey coming to a consideration of the pure and simple being of God. Step five considers the Divine Unity through its primary name which is Being, and step six considers the most Blessed Trinity in its name which is *The Good*.¹ To reach this highest perfection, the mind contemplates Christ, who is the perfect image of the invisible God.

Contemplating the Divine Unity through its Primary Name which is Being

Bonaventure explains his fifth step as the soul's gaze fixed "primarily and principally on Being Itself, declaring that the first name of God is *He Who is*." Looking primarily to the figures of the Old Testament, "which proclaims chiefly the unity of the divine essence. Hence it was said to Moses, *I am Who I am*," the viewer finds that the exemplars here allude to the unity of the Trinity, and thus, Bonaventure's concept of Being.² Bonaventure does not dwell immediately on this; instead he explains the means by which we come to understand the concept of being, or rather *Being*. To quote one of his more concise explanations,

But just as the eye, intent on the various differences of color, does not see the light through which it sees other things, or if it does see, does not notice it, so our mind's eye, intent on particular and universal beings, does not notice that Being which is beyond all categories, even though it comes first to the mind, and through it, all other things.³

¹ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 5.1, ed. Brown, 28; and 6.1, ed. Brown, 33.

² Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 5.2, ed. Brown, 28.

³ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 5.4, ed. Brown, 29.

Here we understand Being through an analogy of the material world—as light, which we cannot see, yet enables us to see that which surrounds us. In the same way, Being provides all other things with being, and so we do not see the Being behind the universal things. The simple and eternal nature of this is God, “the name of the being that is first, eternal, most simple, most actual, and most perfect, such a being cannot be thought not to be, nor can it be thought to be other than one. *Hear, therefore, O Israel, the Lord our God is One Lord.*” He concludes, “If you realize this in the pure simplicity of your mind, you will be enlightened to some extent by the illumination of Eternal Light.”⁴

The *Disputa* succeeds in illustrating the contemplation of unity and transcendence in several ways. Raphael’s use of circular mandorlas references the spiritual significance of circles in the hierarchy of geometric shapes, representing ideals of geometric order and harmony sanctioned by both philosophy and theology.⁵ With this circular scheme, Raphael represents the hierarchy of divinity by contrasting the materiality of the wafer with the increasingly large circles of the Holy Spirit, Christ, and God the Father. While their similar shape and gold color reveal the “consubstantial” nature of the four mandorlas, the accessibility of each to our physical sense is defined by the order and nature of their presentation in spiritual perspective;⁶ of which the relationship between the Eucharist on earth and the increasingly dominant golden circles is evinced in St. Bonaventure’s treatise—a vertical journey toward the mind of the God. Beginning on earth with the Eucharist, a perfect image of Christ, man becomes

⁴ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 5.6, ed. Brown, 30.

⁵ Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 33.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 36.

aware of Christ's bodily presence in the wafer only through the beatific vision provided above in the three heavenly circles.⁷ The Eucharist is therefore united with the Persons of the Trinity by means of the repetition of the golden circle, that of the Eucharistic wafer and the golden monstrance, the mandorlas of the Holy Spirit, Christ, and the abbreviated circle of God's large golden empyrean. While the circle represents heaven, the square represents earthly imperfections and materiality, a contrast bearing significance in the *Disputa*. The alignment of circular mandorlas with the rectangular altarpiece plays out this relationship between the circle and square, representing the transition from earth to heaven geometrically, while maintaining the Eucharistic connection to the Trinity.⁸

The differing stages of materialization found in the angels as they ascend the heavenly levels also indicate this transition from earth to heaven. The angels depicted nearer the terrestrial level consist of human flesh while the angels above appear as if part of the clouds; finally the Seraphim at the top consist of pure light, modeled from the golden rays of God's empyrean.⁹ The sequence from material to immaterial or vision to visionary can not be ignored, especially when considering that Bonaventure's journey similarly begins with a rational understanding of earthly surroundings and culminates in a beatific vision. Raphael's visionary transition resounds with Bonaventure when he writes:

Furthermore, you have here something to lift you up in admiration. For being itself is both the first and last; it is eternal and yet most present; it is

⁷ Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 36.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁹ *Ibid.*

most simple and yet the greatest; it is most actual and still most changeless; it is most perfect and nonetheless immense; it is supremely one and yet pervades all things. Admiring all these considerations with a pure mind, you will be flooded with a still greater light when you behold further that pure being is precisely the last because it is the first. For since it is the first, it does all things for itself, and thus the first being is of necessity the ultimate end; it is the beginning and the fulfillment, the *Alpha* and the *Omega*.¹⁰

One could surmise that Bonaventure is writing this with the geometrical perfection of the circle in mind. Indeed, as Kleinbub stated, the circle represented ideals of harmony and order in both philosophy and theology, a shape that Raphael chose to represent the mandorlas of all three persons of the Trinity. He did not use the almond-shaped full body halo of tradition; he used a series of perfect circles, unending, complete, changeless, and simple to illustrate the perfect unity of the Trinity, its endless Being permeating all things.

Raphael's Use of Visionary Elements to Define the Heavenly Realm in Consideration of the Most Blessed Trinity in its Name which is *The Good*

The empyrean surrounding God is likened to the highest ranking of angels and divine beings described by Dante in his *Paradiso*, Dionysius the Areopagite, St. Thomas Aquinas, and even St. Bonaventure.¹¹ In the fresco, God's empyrean appears ambiguously as either a vertical circle or as a dome cut off by the border of the fresco. "As eternal and most present, it encompasses and enters all durations, existing as it were, at one and the same time as their center and their circumference."¹² The angels bordering it can either continue along the circumference of the vertical circle, or follow

¹⁰ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 5.7, ed. Brown, 30-31.

¹¹ See Dante Alighieri *Paradiso*; Dionysius the Areopagite *The Celestial Hierarchy*; St. Thomas Aquinas *Summa Theologica*; and St. Bonaventure *Breviloquium*, and *Intinerarium Mentis in Deum*.

¹² Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 5.8, ed. Brown, 31.

the outward-curving direction of the cloudbank below.¹³ If that were the case, the golden rays emanating from within this paradise would originate from the oculus of a golden dome, encompassing all of Christendom. This would at once bathe us in the Eternal Light Bonaventure uses to describe Being:

‘the most intelligible sphere, whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere.’ As most actual and changeless, it is that which, ‘remaining unmoved itself, gives movement to all things.’ Further, because it is most perfect and immense, it is within all things without being contained by them; it is outside all things without being excluded by them; it is above all things without being aloof; it is below all things without being dependent on them. Finally it is supremely one and yet pervasive, it is *all in all*, even though all things are many and it is itself but one... Hence *from him and through him and unto him are all things*, for He is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-good.¹⁴

The immensity of this hypothetical golden dome is suggested by its unavoidably abbreviated depiction. Indeed, it does not fit within the confines of the fresco; instead, it expands outward giving the illusion of an all-encompassing dome that extends indefinitely. This paradise under a heavenly dome is that which we strive to reach at the end of the journey through unification of all things previously encountered and contemplated on the journey. After understanding the consubstantial Being that is God, Bonaventure turns to step six, the consideration of the most blessed Trinity in its name which is *The Good*.

Bonaventure discusses this step in direct relation to step five, after understanding Being as “the principal source of the vision of the essential attributes of God, as well as the name through which the others become known, so the Good itself is the principal

¹³ Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 33.

¹⁴ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 5.8, ed. Brown, 31-32.

foundation of the contemplation of the personal emanations.”¹⁵ Here, Bonaventure speaks of diffusion, without which the highest good cannot exist, therefore the diffusion of good through the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is found parallel to the diffusion of Being in the creation of the world. This diffusion of consubstantial Being is what defines *The Good*:

If, therefore, there is supreme communication and true diffusion, then there is also true origin and true distinction. And, since the whole is communicated and not a part merely, then whatever is had is given, and given completely. As a result, He who proceeds and He who produces are distinguished by their properties and yet are one and the same in essence.¹⁶

Bonaventure evokes here the Platonic discussion of the one and the many—or what Verdon calls the “progress of human knowledge toward God” in which the earliest philosophers understood God in plurality because they did not yet know Christ.¹⁷ Indeed, the concepts inherent in Bonaventure’s chapters five and six resound quite forcefully with the pagan concepts of unity and multiplicity, also discussed by Leonard J. Bowman in “The Cosmic Exemplarism of Bonaventure.”¹⁸ In this vein of multiplicity and unification, Raphael’s imagery makes visual that which is unattainable to human eyes: the unification of the three persons of the Trinity.

Raphael’s journey begins in the terrestrial register of the *Disputa* and the *School of Athens*, which is on the whole “terrestrial” apart from the allusion to heaven in the perspectival *veduta* leading to the sky. From this terrestrial realm, the traveler is led into

¹⁵ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 6.1, ed. Brown, 33.

¹⁶ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 6.3, ed. Brown, 34.

¹⁷ Verdon, “Pagans in the Church,” 123.

¹⁸ Leonard J. Bowman, “The Cosmic Exemplarism of Bonaventure,” *The Journal of Religion* 55.2 (1975), 193.

his mind to find the image of God, reformed by the gifts of grace, and finally upward into a visionary realm unseen in the material world. Raphael's visionary elements in the *Disputa* provide clues to its role as a beatific vision, as has been so thoroughly examined by Christian Kleinbub in *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*. The contrast of earthly and heavenly, vision and visionary is intrinsic to Raphael's work in the *Stanza della Segnatura* and provides a visual guide to Saint Bonaventure's *Journey of the Mind to God*. Indeed, after finally arriving at the visionary, immaterial Being that is God in his golden empyrean, the human mind has naught to do but enjoy its perfect illumination:

In this contemplation consists the perfect illumination of our mind, when, as it were, on the sixth day it sees man made to the image of God. For... then when our mind contemplates in Christ the Son of God, Who is by nature the image of the invisible God... and when at the same time it sees united the first and the last, the highest and the lowest, the circumference and the center... it has already reached something that is perfect. Thus it arrives at the perfection of its illuminations on the sixth step, as God did on the sixth day. And now nothing further remains but the day of rest on which through transports of mind the penetrating power of the human mind *rests from all the work that it has done*.¹⁹

The journey now concludes with *ascensio*, the ascension of the mind to God, and rest on the seventh day, as we have traveled from mundane to heavenly, terrestrial to celestial and supercelestial; having completed the *Journey of the Mind to God* in Raphael's golden empyrean.

¹⁹ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 6.7, ed. Brown, 36.

CHAPTER 6
ASCENSIO: THE SEVENTH STEP OR METAPHORICAL SUNDAY

Immaterial and Incommensurable: The Final Ascension

Finally, with *Ascensio*, the mind unites with God after completing the six stages of the journey; Bonaventure refers to this final state as, “the spiritual and mystical transport of the mind in which rest is given to our understanding and our affection passes over entirely to God.”

Here, as elsewhere, the beatific vision of God, though almost accessible through contemplation of the figure of Christ, ultimately requires leaving behind the state of the wayfarer. God’s essence can only be truly experienced after death.¹

Indeed, as Christian Kleinbub stated above, the end of the journey cannot exist on earth, “for it is absolutely true that *Man shall not see me and live.*”² Raphael’s depiction of the heavenly realm using visionary techniques is not an illustration depicting the wayfarer as he is finally unified with God; rather, it is one in which a viewer must place himself metaphorically in order to move toward his final objective.³ The ultimate, immaterial situation remains unreachable unless the traveler relinquish intellectual activities, devote himself to unctio and interior joy, transport his loftiest affections to God, and attribute everything to the Creative Essence, thereby finally addressing the Triune God. Indeed, this final intention is decidedly not imagined by Raphael, for it is the “supremely unknown, superluminous, and most sublime height of mystical knowledge.”⁴

¹ Kleinbub, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael*, 142.

² Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 7.6, ed. Brown, 39.

³ I have purposefully chosen to avoid using terms here that imply a physical location. This stage is understood as the ascension to the “superessential gleam of the divine darkness by an incommensurable and absolute transport of a pure mind.” Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 7.5, ed. Brown, 39.

⁴ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 7.5, ed. Brown, 38.

Thus, the *Disputa* functions only as a guide to reaching this height; after adhering to the steps in Bonaventure's text and using the Stanza della Segnatura as an illustrated companion, one can renew his journey, and with a pure mind "abandon the senses, intellectual activities, and all visible and invisible things—everything that is not and everything that is—and, oblivious to [himself], let [himself] be brought back, in so far as it is possible, to union with Him Who is above all essence, and all knowledge."⁵

Let us, then, die and enter into this darkness. Let us silence all our cares, our desires, and our imaginings. With Christ crucified, let us pass *out of this world to the Father*, so that, when the Father is shown to us, we may say with Philip: *It is enough for us*. Let us hear with Paul: *May grace is sufficient for you*, and rejoice with David, saying: *My flesh and my heart have fainted away: You are the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion forever. Blessed be the Lord forever, and let all people say: so be it, so be it. Amen.*⁶

Connecting the Stages

Raphael's transition from earth to heaven in the frescoes illustrates an essential part of Bonaventure's journey as a visionary connection between celestial and terrestrial realms. The first steps on the *Journey of the Mind to God* involve considering God through His vestiges in the universe,⁷ and in His vestiges in this visible world.⁸ After that, the soul considers God through His image within our natural powers,⁹ and in His image reformed by the gifts of grace.¹⁰ The image within our natural powers refers to the inward journey of identifying Trinitarian vestiges within our souls; illustrated by

⁵ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 7.5, ed. Brown, 38.

⁶ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 7.6, ed. Brown, 39.

⁷ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 1.2, ed. Brown, 5.

⁸ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 2.1, ed. Brown, 11.

⁹ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 3.1, ed. Brown, 18.

¹⁰ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 4.1-3, ed. Brown, 23-24.

Heraclitus in the *School of Athens* and implied by the viewer's intermediary position while standing in the Stanza. The men on the right arm of the cloudbank embody purification, enlightenment and perfection, as suggested by Harry Gutman. The four putti holding the gospels and hovering to either side of the Holy Spirit indicate the way in which we come to understand the Trinity; through interpretation and contemplation. Finally we consider that which is above, contemplating the Divine Unity through its primary name, *Being*,¹¹ and the most blessed Trinity in its name, which is *The Good*.¹² Ascending to the ranks of Biblical and early Church figures seated on the divine cloudbank, additional gestures guide us to the Divine Unity; St. Lawrence points toward the earthly realm of investigation with his right hand while gesturing toward Christ with the other, uniting the stages of the journey. Saints Peter and Paul look inward toward Christ and identify Him as the primary name, *Being*. Christ makes eye contact with the viewer inviting him to begin the *Journey of the Mind to God*—his Father—who resides behind and slightly above the Son, a position clarifying the intercessor role of Christ; indeed, we cannot enter God's golden empyrean without first contemplating His Son.

Through the examination of literature on Raphael's Stanza, Bonaventure's *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, and the history of the della Rovere papacy, it becomes clear that while proof of a Bonaventurian influence on the *Disputa* may not be available, the possibility does exist. Scholars have yet to delve deeply into this topic; thus, it has been my hope to provide an introduction to a branch of study that deserves more examination. The Franciscan heritage of the della Roveres coupled with Bonaventure's

¹¹ Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 5.2, ed. Brown, 28.

¹² Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 6.1, ed. Brown, 33.

canonization by Sixtus IV and his placement in the *Disputa* fresco provides visual evidence for the saint's importance to Julius II. Gutman's argument set the stage for contemplating the iconographical and iconological likelihood of a Bonaventurian influence in the Stanza della Segnatura, though his work has not been fully developed. Promising new scholarship by Christian Kleinbub explores the visionary elements of the *Disputa* and the *School of Athens*, without applying the *Itinerarium* to either fresco. His examination of the iconography and visionary elements within the frescoes, however, resounds profoundly with the text by Bonaventure.

Certainly, the scope of this project had to be somewhat limited; nonetheless, by providing a deeper understanding of the Franciscan background of Pope Julius II della Rovere, St. Bonaventure's treatise, and the visionary indicators in the fresco, I hope to have reopened the discussion of the Seraphic Doctor's possible influence on the Stanza della Segnatura. Though documentary proof of his influence on the *Disputa* lacks in the historical record, by finding the vestiges of Bonaventure's treatise in Raphael's artistic conventions, compositional elements, and the figures depicted, we come to see how *The Journey of the Mind to God* can serve as an approach to understanding how the *Disputa* functions as a devotional religious image guiding the viewer toward an ultimate union with God.

APPENDIX A FIGURE CITATIONS

Figure 1-1. Raphael, *Stanza della Segnatura*, 1508-1511, general view. Vatican Palace, Rome.¹

Figure 1-2. Raphael, *Disputation of the Sacrament (Disputa)*, 1509, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.²

Figure 1-3. Raphael, *Parnassus*, 1510, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.³

Figure 1-4. Raphael, *School of Athens*, 1511, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.⁴

Figure 1-5. Raphael, *Jurisprudence*, 1511, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.⁵

Figure 1-6. Detail of *Disputa* (fig. 1-2) St. Lawrence.⁶

Figure 1-7. Detail of *Disputa* (fig. 1-2) St. Bonaventure and Sixtus IV.⁷

Figure 2-1. Melozzo da Forlì, *Sixtus IV Appoints Bartolomeo Platina Prefect of the Vatican Library*, ca. 1477. Fresco removed and transferred to canvas, 14 ft. 7¾ in. by 10 ft. 4 in., Pinacoteca, Vatican Museum. Inv. 40270.⁸

Figure 2-2. Unknown artist, *Sixtus and Platina in the Vatican Library, 1477-78*. Scene from the cycle depicting the life of Sixtus IV, Rome, Ospedale di Santo Spirito.⁹

¹ Kliemann, Julian, and Michael Rohlman, *Italian Frescoes: High Renaissance and Mannerism 1510-1600* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 2004), 147, plate 24.

² Winner, "Projects and Execution," 254.

³ *Ibid.*, 258.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 255.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 259.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 254. For each of the details of the *Disputa* cited from Winner's text, I have scanned, enlarged, and cropped the same image from page 254.

⁷ *Ibid.* Digitally enlarged and cropped.

⁸ Kliemann, *Italian Frescoes*, 133, plate 17.

⁹ Blume, "The Sistine Chapel," 6, figure 1.

Figure 2-3. Raphael and Sodoma, *Vault*, 1508-1511, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.¹⁰

Figure 2-4. Raphael, top from left: *Philosophia, Poesia*. Bottom from left: *Observing the Cosmos, The Punishment of Marsyas*. Detail of *Vault*, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.¹¹

Figure 2-5. Raphael, top from left: *Theologia, Iustitia*. Bottom from left: *The Fall, The Judgment of Solomon*.¹²

Figure 2-6. Plan of the Vatican Palace, Cortile del Belvedere and the new St. Peter's Basilica (as originally designed by Bramante), indicating the location of the Stanza della Segnatura and the approximate cardinal axes of the frescoes.¹³

Figure 2-7. Raphael, Detail of Church Fathers, Saints Gregory and Jerome on the left seated on thrones with books and named halos. On the right, the seated Saint Ambrose looks skyward and next to him, Saint Augustine points to his left and looks down. *Disputation of the Sacrament (Disputa)*, 1509, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.¹⁴

Figure 2-8. Raphael, Detail of Trinity, *Disputation of the Sacrament (Disputa)*, 1509, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.¹⁵

Figure 2-9. Raphael, Detail of Saints and Figures in the Clouds left of Christ; from the left they are identified as St. Peter, Adam, St. John the Evangelist, David, St. Lawrence, Isaiah. *Disputation of the Sacrament (Disputa)*, 1509, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.¹⁶

Figure 2-10. Raphael, Detail of Saints and Figures in the Clouds to the right of Christ; from the left they are Judah Maccabees, St. Stephen, Moses, St. Matthew, Abraham, and St. Paul. *Disputation of the Sacrament (Disputa)*, 1509, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.¹⁷

¹⁰ Winner, "Projects and Execution," 246.

¹¹ Kliemann, *Italian Frescoes*, 148, plate 25.

¹² Kliemann, *Italian Frescoes*, 149, plate 26.

¹³ Temple, *Renovatio Urbis*, 219, figure 6.3.

¹⁴ Winner, "Projects and Execution," 254. Digitally enlarged and cropped.

¹⁵ Ibid. Digitally enlarged and cropped.

¹⁶ Ibid. Digitally enlarged and cropped.

¹⁷ Ibid. Digitally enlarged and cropped.

Figure 3-1. Raphael, Detail of Plato and Aristotle, *School of Athens*, 1510, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.¹⁸

Figure 3-2. Raphael, Detail of Julius II as Pope Gregory IX, *Jurisprudence*, 1511, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.¹⁹

Figure 4-1. Raphael, Detail of Michelangelo in the guise of Heraclitus, *School of Athens*, 1510, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.²⁰

¹⁸ Winner, "Projects and Execution," 255. Digitally enlarged and cropped.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 259. Digitally enlarged and cropped.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 255. Digitally enlarged and cropped.

APPENDIX B
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

De Reductione Artium ad Theologiam or On Retracing the Arts to Theology

Parallels between the *Journey* and *On Retracing the Arts* exist in several ways. First, Bonaventure repeats the division of steps, or stages, into six active stages and a seventh restful stage of illumination. Second, the purpose of both texts is to lead toward a union with God, in this case by using the arts to find the vestiges of God in the universe. Note that the medieval use of the word “art” did not refer to visual arts necessarily, but to skill as a result of learning or practice. Therefore, the text examines the ways in which earthly skills can be traced to God. Bonaventure speaks of six types of light:

the light of Sacred Scripture, the light of sense perception, the light of the mechanical arts, the light of discursive philosophy, the light of natural philosophy, and the light of moral philosophy. Hence, there are six lights in the present life, but they have their sunset, for *knowledge will be destroyed*. Therefore, they are followed by a seventh illumination, a day of rest which has no setting, that is, the light of glory.¹

He retraces the latter five lights to the first, that of Sacred Scripture. The following is an outline adapted from de Vinck’s text:

- I. The Light of Sense-Perception:
 - The *medium* points to the Word begotten and incarnate.
 - The *exercise* points to the norm of life.
 - The *pleasure* points to the union with God.
- II. The Light of Mechanical Arts
 - The *method* points to the Word begotten and incarnate.
 - The *product* points to the norm of life.
 - The *fruit* points to the union with God.
- III. The Light of Discursive Philosophy
 - The *speaker* points to the Word begotten and incarnate.
 - The *spoken word* points to the norm of life.
 - The *purpose of speech* points to the union with God.

¹ Bonaventure *On Retracing the Arts to Theology* 6, ed. de Vinck, 20.

IV. The Light of Natural Philosophy

The *proportion* points to the Word begotten and incarnate.

The *cause* points to the norm of life.

The *medium* points to the union with God.

V. The Light of Moral Philosophy

Righteousness points to the Word begotten and incarnate.

Rectitude points to the norm of life.

Uprightness points to the union with God.²

The Word begotten and incarnate refers to Christ and concerns faith, the norm of life concerns morals, and the union with God is the “final outcome of both.”³ Sense-perception refers to the knowledge of perceptible things; mechanical arts refers to the production of artifacts; discursive philosophy is verbal expression; natural philosophy consists of the formal principles as they exist in matter, soul, and divine wisdom; and moral philosophy is concerned with matters of uprightness.

The short treatise therefore deals with using the skills and products of those skills to become one with God, thus echoing the purpose of Bonaventure’s *Journey*.

² Bonaventure *On Retracing the Arts to Theology* 8, ed. de Vinck, 21n.

³ Bonaventure *On Retracing the Arts to Theology* 5, ed. de Vinck, 20.

Attributes of the Holy Trinity

Divine Person	Father	Son	Holy Spirit
Divine Function	Creator	Word	Love
Divine Causality	Efficient	Exemplary	Final
Metaphysical Attribute	Oneness	Truth	Goodness
Corresponding Faculty	Memory	Intellect	Will

Table 1. Triads of faculties associated with the Three Persons of the Trinity as determined by Bonaventure’s texts.¹

¹ Adapted from Bonaventure *On Retracing the Arts to Theology* 17, ed. de Vinck, 26n. I changed the following: elimination of row “Relationship of Creature,” and alteration of row “Corresponding Faculty,” which originally was ordered as Father-Intellect, Son-Will, Holy Spirit-Memory. I disagree with those identifications based on my reading of Bonaventure *The Journey of the Mind to God* 3.4-5: “See, therefore, how close the soul is to God, and how, through their activity, memory leads us to Eternity, intelligence to Truth, and the elective faculty to the highest Good. Moreover, if one considers the order, the origin, and the relationship of these faculties to one another, he is led up to the most blessed Trinity itself. For, from memory comes forth intelligence as its offspring... From the memory and the intelligence is breathed forth love, as the bond of both. These three—the generating mind, the word, and love—exist in the soul as memory, intelligence, and will, which are consubstantial, coequal, equally everlasting and mutually inclusive.”

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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