The pair of bronze pulps by Donatello in San Lorenzo in Florence, together one of the seminal works of early Renaissance narrative sculpture, have suffered a tragic fate, historically as well as historiographically (Figs. 1–3). There is no contemporary documentation about them. We know only from Vespasiano da Bisticci and Vasari that Cosimo de' Medici commissioned them for San Lorenzo, which Brunelleschi had rebuilt for him into the first new basilica of the Renaissance. The pulps were Donatello's last work, left unfinished at his death in 1466 and completed by assistants. They were assembled by the early sixteenth century and later attached to the piers at the meeting of nave and transept, very likely the location for which they were originally intended. Early in the seventeenth century they were moved to their present positions in the adjoining nave arches.1

The pulps had been (as they continue to be) the subject of a good deal of discussion about attribution and dating—who did what when—until, in an article published nearly thirty years ago, I argued that they are, after all, a coherent work of art. Focusing primarily on the pulps' sources, my study "revealed, underlying their apparent diversities, a remarkable unity of function, meaning, and style." Functionally, the unity involved a return to the long obsolete custom of reading the Epistle and Gospel of the Mass from a pair of ambos, except that these were normally placed toward the middle of the nave; the tradition is best exemplified in the early basilicas of Rome such as the Florentine church's own namesake, San Lorenzo fuori le mura (Fig. 4). Thematically, the unity lies in a Christological narrative in which the events of the Passion—except the Last Supper—are portrayed on the left (facing the altar), while the post-Passion miracles appear on the right. In this passing from death to resurrection through the operation of the Eucharist at the altar, Donatello's cycle is unique.2 In its bilateral confrontation of promise and fulfillment, however, the program recalls the decorations of Early Christian basilicas, in which Old Testament and New Testament narratives flank the nave, or the mosaics of Sant'Apolinare Nuovo at Ravenna, where pre-Passion miracles confront the Passion. Formally, the unity consists in the systematic adoption and adaptation of more or less antiquated features in the overall design of the pulps as well as in the individual scenes. Donatello rejected the polygonal
Fig. 1. View in the crossing, San Lorenzo, Florence (photo: Soprintendenza per i Beni Artistici e Storici, Florence 27).

Fig. 2. Donatello, left pulpit. San Lorenzo, Florence (photo: Brogi 8635).
shape currently in vogue for pulpits in favor of the oblong format that had been neglected for at least a century (Fig. 5); and the design of the right pulpit, for example, clearly evokes early fourteenth-century sarcophagi like one by Tino di Camaino in Santa Croce (Fig. 6), where the Resurrection also occupies the center panel and is flanked by post-Passion miracles. A striking case among the individual scenes is the Three Marys at the Tomb (Fig. 7); for the portrayal of the event as taking place within an architectural setting, the nearest antecedents in Italy are found on the Tuscan Romanesque painted crosses (Fig. 8).

I concluded that

the unity is essentially one of intent, which may be defined as a concerted effort to resurrect the past and relate it to the present in a new and meaningful way. The past is therefore both an end in itself and the means to convey a more effective spiritual message. The message may have been entirely Donatello's invention; or it may have been a joint product of the humanist group surrounding Cosimo de' Medici, especially during his later years, of which a leading goal was to reconcile antiquity with Christianity by returning to the "early" phases of the Church. One is even tempted to imagine San Lorenzo as the embodiment of a collective ideal to recreate, in architecture, furnishings, as well as liturgy, a pristine Christianity.3

Since that article was published, it has become clear to me that while my eyesight was sharper in those days, my mindsight was more myopic. In this egregiously belated postscript I shall try to fit together what I now see as the pieces of a large and complex, indeed a cosmic, jigsaw puzzle.

The largest piece in the puzzle appeared in an illuminating talk entitled, significantly in our context, "Early Christian Topography in Florentine Chronicles," given at the annual meeting of the College Art Association in 1985 by the historian Charles Davis of Tulane University.4 Davis greatly expanded our view of the late medieval history and self-image of what he called the "pushy" Tuscan metropolis of Florence. Italian city-states commonly magnified their own images by emphasizing real or imagined claims to the glories of ancient Rome. Studying the early chroniclers, Davis found that in Florence this history rhetoric acquired a special dimension, topographical as well as figurative. Florence was assimilated to the early Christian notion—
it was invented by the early Church Fathers—of a New Rome under Christ superseding the old Rome of paganism. This grand religio-historical idea emerges first in the anonymous *Chronica de origine civitatis*, written about 1200. Here Florence is said to have been founded originally as a miniature Rome with capitol, amphitheater, aqueducts, and the rest, only to be destroyed five hundred years later by Totila, King of the Ostrogoths. The city was then rebuilt by Charlemagne in the image of the New Rome, and this relationship was specifically defined in the dedications and locations of the main churches. "Just as the church of St. Peter's is on one side of the city of Rome, so it is in the city of Florence. And just as the church of St. Paul is on the other side of the city of Rome, so it is in the city of Florence. And just as the church of St. Lawrence the Martyr is on one side of the city of Rome and on the opposite side the church of St. Stephen, so it is in the city of Florence. And just as on one side of the city of Rome is the church of St. John Lateran, so is the main church of the city of Florence" (Fig. 9). Davis observed that this parallelism with Early Christian Rome was brought into even clearer focus toward the middle of the fourteenth century by
Fig. 6. Tino di Camaino, tomb of Gastone della Torre. Santa Croce, Florence (photo: Brogi 3142).

Fig. 7. Donatello, Marys at the Tomb, right pulpit. San Lorenzo, Florence (photo: Alinari 2216a).
Giovanni Villani, whose *Historia nova* of Florence was the historiographical herald of the Renaissance. Villani gives an elaborate account of the layout of the city as modeled on that of Rome, and once again the churches are the chief points of reference, including again the analogy between the two San Lorenzos fuori le mura. The theme recurs in Goro Dati's *Istoria di Firenze* of about 1410, and the strength and persistence of the tradition may be gauged by a passage in Del Migliore's mid-seventeenth-century guide to Florence. The whole theme of Florentine emulation of the succession of paganism by Christianity at Rome is focused on San Lorenzo. According to Del Migliore, "it would not be amiss to say that the Florentines, as imitators of the actions of the Romans, especially in matters of religious rites, permitted the construction of San Lorenzo corresponding to the church built by Constantine outside the walls of Rome; nor is the opinion vain of those who give as a second motive its construction on the ruins of one of those three-naved buildings called basilicas."  

A second piece of the puzzle may be discerned in two peculiar and complementary features of Brunelleschi's conception of the building. San Lorenzo is "wested," that is, the high altar is at the west end of the building rather than at the east, as is usual for Christian churches. San Lorenzo shares this abnormality above all with the prototypical basilicas of Rome, including St. Peter's and San Lorenzo fuori le mura itself in its original form, attributed to Constantine the Great. Closely related to this directional peculiarity is an equally distinctive liturgical orientation that Brunelleschi introduced in his plan for San Lorenzo. It is well known that in designing Santo Spirito, Brunelleschi had the radical notion of separating the altars from the chapel walls so that the officiating priest would face, rather than turn his back to, the congregation. This orientation *versus populum*, a radical departure from custom, was an early practice that had been retained in a variety of contexts, notably in churches of the Ambrosian rite in Milan—a precedent relevant to San Lorenzo, as we shall see—and most conspicuously in Rome, in the Lateran and St. Peter's, where the pope officiates, but in other churches as well, including San Lorenzo fuori le mura. In all these cases the altar was associated with a martyr's tomb (confessio) visible below or immediately in front. The arrangement was never put into effect at Santo Spirito, but
we now know that at San Lorenzo it was. Some years ago Loreclana Olivato and Howard Burns independently discovered a plan of San Lorenzo, dating from around 1500, that shows what must have been the original layout (Figs. 10, 11). The high altar is at the edge of the raised presbytery on a platform reached from behind, so that the celebrant must have faced the congregation in the nave. This remained the orientation of San Lorenzo's high altar until it was reversed in the early seventeenth century. The plan confirms, and helps partly to explain, one of the most novel features of Brunelleschi's rebuilding of the church. It had been the custom to install the choir in the crossing or nave before the high altar, especially in monastic churches where the liturgical devotions were the building's raison d'être. At Cosimo's behest, Brunelleschi shifted the choir to the apse behind the altar—precisely as in the Roman basilicas, where pilgrims were thus given unobstructed access to the tomb of the martyr. In the Roman basilicas, such as San Lorenzo fuori le mura (see Fig. 4), the confessio might be flanked by stairs leading up from the nave to the presbytery. However, Burns's reconstruction of the arrangement at San Lorenzo with flanking transverse stairs before the altar (Fig. 12) points insistently toward Old St. Peter's. There, in the sixth century, Pope Gregory I had given the Constantinian presbytery essentially the same disposition, including the high altar versus populam (Fig. 13). It was Gregory's installation that occupied the chancel of St. Peter's in the Renaissance. The purpose of this particular design at St. Peter's is evident: the stairways framed the confessio and focused on the tomb of the apostles in the crypt below. The function was surely analogous at San Lorenzo, where Cosimo de' Medici was given the rare privilege of being buried immediately in front of the high altar. The three salient features of San Lorenzo—the choir in the apse, the high altar versus populam, and the tomb at the foot of the altar—were thus interdependent innovations, all of which, like the paired pulpits, reflected Early Christian usage.

Cosimo's tomb, which has also been the subject of some controversy, is the third piece in the puzzle. The burial is marked in the pavement before the high altar by a square geometric design of inlaid marble with red and green porphyry; at the sides bronze gratings, which recall the grille of the early confessio, transmit light to the tomb contained in
Fig. 12. Reconstruction of the crossing of San Lorenzo with Donatello's pulpits, Verrocchio's tomb marker of Cosimo, Desiderio's tabernacle, and the high altar arrangement shown in Fig. 11 (drawing by Susanne Philippson Curčić).
the supporting pier in the crypt below (Figs. 14–15; Plate I). This curious arrangement was completed by Piero de' Medici in 1467 after his father's death in 1464. The basic explanation, often overlooked, was provided by Del Migliore, who referred to a conciliar proscription against burials in basilicas of the martyrs; San Lorenzo, in fact, has the sobriquet Basilica Ambrosiana, owing to its venerable antiquity and its having been originally dedicated by St. Ambrose himself on a visit to Florence from his episcopal see in Milan. In a fine essay published in the *Rutgers Art Review* in 1981, Janis Clearfield showed that the boldly conceived burial in front of the high altar, as well as the pavement marker—modestly conceived in comparison with the elaborately sculptured monuments erected for other important and wealthy men—conformed to Cosimo's own wishes as they were reported by Piero at the time of Cosimo's funeral. The duality corresponds to the subtle balance of Cosimo's own character and to the nature of his hegemony in Florence, based not on military power, as with other rulers of Italian city states, but on financial and political acumen, which included careful deference to the republican traditions of the commune.

Clearfield's argument supports an earlier theory of Howard Saalman's that Cosimo and Brunelleschi may have been led to install the choir in the apse to make room for the patron's tomb before the high altar, under the dome. The resulting disposition was surely meant to echo the privileged but discrete burial of Cosimo's own parents in Brunelleschi's Old...

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Fig. 13. Plan of medieval presbytery. Old St. Peter's, Rome (from Apollonio Ghetti *et al.*, 1951, fig. 156c).
Fig. 14. Andrea del Verrocchio, tomb marker of Cosimo de’ Medici. San Lorenzo, Florence (photo: Silvestri, Florence).
Sacristy at San Lorenzo (Figs. 16--17); the tomb, often attributed to Donatello, is also placed in front of the altar and directly under the cupola.\textsuperscript{19} The inlaid marble design of Cosimo's slab—the first documented work executed by Verrocchio—has no parallel as a tomb marker, but the location in front of the high altar of a major basilica has one obvious precedent: the bronze relief effigy of Pope Martin V, another work often attributed to Donatello, situated before the high altar in San Giovanni in Laterano. It was this project, according to Vasari, that occasioned Donatello's trip to Rome in the 1430s, and hence he would already have participated in a modern re-enactment of the early Christian practice of burial near the grave of a martyr.\textsuperscript{20} The situation at the Lateran also anticipated the innovative arrangement at San Lorenzo in that the earlier canon's choir in the nave had been removed by Martin V, making way for his own tomb, "as he himself ordered while alive."\textsuperscript{21} Reference to the Lateran, the cathedral of Rome, would have been appropriate at San Lorenzo, which had been the original cathedral of Florence.\textsuperscript{22}

Another piece of the puzzle was supplied by James Beck in an article dealing in part with the Sacrament tabernacle by Desiderio da Settignano, now in the north aisle but formerly in the Medici chapel of Saints Cosmas and Damian in the south transept of San Lorenzo (Fig. 18).\textsuperscript{23} Parronchi had suspected that the tabernacle was not intended for the Medici chapel, and he noted that the wings of the two standing angels have been clipped, indicating that they were once wholly in the round.\textsuperscript{24} Beck
Fig. 16 (left). Filippo Brunelleschi, Old Sacristy. San Lorenzo, Florence (photo: Alinari 44361).

Fig. 17 (above). Tomb of Giovanni and Piccarda de' Medici, Old Sacristy. San Lorenzo, Florence (photo: Brogi 8664).
Fig. 18. Desiderio da Settignano (presumably following a design by Donatello), Sacrament tabernacle, San Lorenzo, Florence (photo: Soprintendenza per i Beni Artistici e Storici, Florence 1994-78).
looked again at the original records concerning the tabernacle and the new high altar at San Lorenzo. The notices had long since been published separately, but Beck put them back together and realized that they succeeded each other in a single document, referring to successive steps in a single enterprise.

In July 1461 the altar was built, on August 1 the Sacramento tabernacle was completely installed, and on August 9 the altar was consecrated. The tabernacle and the high altar must have been conceived and executed together. The decision to install the choir in the apse, rather than the crossing, thus also made it possible to relate the Sacramento directly to the high altar and to the congregation as a whole—an early instance on a monumental scale in Italy of the disposition that became a hallmark of Counter-Reformation church architecture in the sixteenth century. The tabernacle may have been placed directly on the altar, as Beck imagined, although it would have been awkward for a celebrant to say the Mass facing the congregation; indeed, this may explain why it was moved to the side chapel only a few decades later. It is much more likely that the tabernacle was placed behind the altar, allowing space for the celebrant between. Indeed, a disposition of this kind seems indicated by a series of drawings that incorporate tabernacles inspired by Desiderio in freestanding altars (Fig. 19), and by a particular detail of the altar installation shown in the early plan of San Lorenzo: the narrow rectangle behind the raised platform for the officiating priest, which must represent the parapet that supported the tabernacle (cf. Figs. 11, 12). The situation must have been precisely the same at Old St. Peter's, where the Stefaneschi triptych attributed to Giotto is reported to have stood on (super) the high altar, which was also oriented versus populam. Comparable arrangements involving monumental altarpieces placed behind the altar were created elsewhere around the middle of the fourteenth century, doubtless also following the example of St. Peter's: the Pala d'Oro in San Marco at Venice, and the reliquary altar tabernacle of the Holy Corporal in the cathedral of Orvieto. Each was a particularly precious and important work, devoted, like both the St. Peter's altarpiece and the San Lorenzo Sacrament tabernacle, to Christ and hence charged with eucharistic content.

The last piece in the puzzle is the coincidence of two facts concerning Donatello himself with the dedication of the altar and tabernacle in the summer of 1461. Having returned from Padua in 1454, Donatello left Florence for Siena in October 1457. He petitioned the Balla to let him live and die there in order to embellish the cathedral, and he is subsequently recorded as working on a set of bronze doors. He remained in Siena until March 1461, when at the urging of a compatriot, he abruptly abandoned the project and went back to Florence. This volte face is puzzling—one of the most intriguing mysteries of his entire career, according to Janson—unless one assumes that Donatello was enticed home by some urgent task. The task is unlikely to have been the San Lorenzo pulpits alone: they were not essential to the liturgy; they were unfinished when Donatello died five years later; and a century passed before they were installed.

I would relate Donatello's return to Florence to a long-neglected passage in Vasari's Raggionamenti, in which he attributes to Donatello "the model of the high altar and the tomb of Cosimo at its foot." The completion of the high altar was essential, and the whole episode would make perfect sense if Donatello went home to supervise the installation, participate in the dedication, and oversee the remaining work on a project he had designed for his friend and patron. Luisa Becherucci took a first bold step in the right direction by reviving an eighteenth-century attribution of the design of Cosimo's tomb to Donatello. I would further suggest that the high altar which formed part of Donatello's model may also have included the tabernacle executed by Desiderio and installed at the same time, six months after Donatello's return to the city. Here too, it is possible that one of the early writers knew the truth, for Del Migliore in the mid-seventeenth century already ascribed parts of the work to Donatello. Besides explaining the importance and urgency of Donatello's return, the hypothesis gives special meaning to the many similarities that have been noted between the tabernacle and works by Donatello, especially the Padua altar. Most important, the extraordinary addition to the high altar of the tabernacle containing the Sacrament is consonant with the extraordinary omission of the Last Supper from the passion cycle of the pulpits, indicating that this event was conceived as taking place at the altar itself.

This mutual, inner reciprocity between the pulpits and the altar completes our picture of what
Fig. 19. Attributed to Francesco di Simone Ferrucci, design for a freestanding altar with Sacrament tabernacle, drawing. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
might best be called the Early Christian Renaissance at San Lorenzo. The picture shows the whole—of which Charles Seymour, Luisa Becherucci, James Beck and others (including myself) have glimpsed parts—a coherent and unified conception that included the choir, the high altar, the tomb of Cosimo, and the pair of bronze pulpits. The arrangement would have been a powerful evocation of the early basilicas of Rome, St. Peter’s itself, and San Lorenzo’s own symbolic prototype outside the walls, where all the same features occur. The picture has another dimension, as well. One must add to it the dome over the crossing (Fig. 20), with the pulpits placed at the corners, Donatello’s four gigantic stucco sculptures of the evangelists, now lost, that stood in niches at the transept ends (Fig. 21), and the coffered ceilings. The emphasis on plastic decoration and the powerfully centralized focus would have been downright Pantheon-like. The conception would also have reflected, especially in view of the plan at Santo Spirito to orient all the altars versus populun, the centralizing tendency often observed in the development of Brunelleschi and of Renaissance architecture generally.

The implications of this point at San Lorenzo begin to emerge when one considers that the circular design of the tomb slab mirrors the dome above. I noted earlier the analogy with the unusual disposition of the tomb of Cosimo’s parents in the Old Sacristy (Figs. 16–17). The installation there is also noteworthy in that the sarcophagus is placed under the sacristy table, which is not made of wood, as usual, but of marble; the table thus acts as a monumental tomb slab, inlaid with a porphyry disk in the center. Covered with priestly vestments and liturgical utensils used in the Mass, the table provided a sacramental blanket for those buried beneath. The porphyry disk, whose diameter precisely equals that of the lantern opening in the dome above, is a conspicuous emblem of universal dominion; it may also
Fig. 21. View of north transept. San Lorenzo, Florence (photo: Brogi 26240).
have carried sacramental, indeed liturgical, meaning, as was the case with a similar disk that had a ceremonial function in the pavement of St. Peter's at Rome. 37

I also noted that Cosimo's slab of marble has no precedent as a tomb marker, but it is imbued with pointed references to antiquity. The austere simplicity of the design; the use of inlay rather than the usual medieval techniques of incrustation, inscribed marble or mosaic; 38 and the use of porphyry, a prerogative of the emperor in ancient times—all evoke the mystique of imperial Rome and intimate Cosimo's sense of his own and his family's destiny. Similarly, I have not found an exact parallel for the design, whose centrality is reinforced by the inscriptions that face each other. Various elements are suggestive. The innermost pattern, which might be described as a right-angled intersection of two rectangles with rounded ends, seems like a flattened version of Solomon's knot, a common motif in Early Christian mosaic pavements, where it often serves as a sign of the Cross. 39 A similar scheme with circles in the corners, including Solomon's knots as filler motifs, occurs in the early fourth-century south basilica at Aquileia (Fig. 22). 40 Equally striking is the analogy with certain projects for centralized churches designed later in the century by Leonardo (Fig. 23), who was Verrocchio's pupil and certainly well aware of Cosimo's tomb and its meaning. 41 The comparison indicates that Leonardo both recalled Cosimo's tomb marker and evidently associated it with one of the noblest Early Christian churches in Italy, San Lorenzo in Milan (Fig. 24), whose layout the sketch plans clearly resemble. 42 Quite possibly, Cosimo's tomb itself alludes to the famous Milanese shrine; the invocation would have been doubly appropriate, apart from the dedication to St. Lawrence, since the church was also closely associated with Ambrose, whose special devotion to the martyr was well known. 43 The basic configuration of a circle containing a cruciform design of intersecting curves recalls a particular class of medieval geometric diagrams whose significance is relevant here (Fig. 25). The diagrams, based on the Christian cosmology of Isidore of Seville, relate the human microcosm to the macrocosm of the universe through tetradic divisions of Man, Time, and the World. 44 A complementary sense is conveyed by diagrams remarkably like that on Cosimo's tomb marker illustrating in geometrical form the numerical relationships.
defined in Boethius's *De institutione arithmetica* (Fig. 26). Through this work and his treatise on music Boethius was a key figure in the development of Platonic theories of proportion, the music of the spheres, and mathematical cosmology. Musical harmonies have actually been discerned in the proportions of the marker's geometric scheme. In this way, the marker seems to fulfill Alberti's requirements in the *De re aedificatoria*: that in churches there be nothing on the wall and pavement that is not informed by philosophy alone and that the pavement refer to musical and geometrical subjects, so we may be incited from every direction to the cult of the spirit.

Eloquent testimony to the meaning such a diagram might embody in a tomb occurs in a pavement laid by King Henry III in the thirteenth century at the entrance to the choir and before the high altar of Westminster Abbey in London (Fig. 27). Here a geometric design of intersecting circles is actually accompanied by surrounding inscriptions that explain it as a portrayal of the *primum mobile* through the convergence of the archetypal sphere and the globe of the macrocosm. There is good reason to suppose that the mosaic was made to cover the tomb of Henry, who had himself buried in the sepulcher of his venerated predecessor, St. Edward the Confessor, having earlier moved the saint's body to its present location behind the high altar. The pavement was made in the manner of the Italian Cosmati floors by an artist who actually came from Rome, where the design is fairly common—occurring, for example, in the choir and nave of San Lorenzo fuori le mura. Although not a tomb marker, a striking precedent is offered by the pavement of the chapel in the Vatican Palace decorated toward the middle of the fifteenth century by Fra Angelico—whose frescos included “remodeled"
Fig. 25. Isidore of Seville, microcosm-macrocosm (from Heningen, 1977, fig. 66).

Fig. 26. Boethius, diagram illustrating the nature of odd and even numbers. MS H. J. IV. 12, fol. 28r, Staatsliche Bibliotheck, Bamberg.
views of Old St. Peter's—for Cosimo de' Medici's good friend Pope Nicholas V (Fig. 28). The pope's name is inscribed in the four corner medallions, and a large emblem of the sun, its rays alternating with the initial letters of the months, appears in the center. A tomb marker with associations of this kind would be consonant with Cosimo's well-known philosophical and astrological interests, especially considering the resonant and frequently invoked cosmic pun on his name, Cosimo = cosmos. The depth of these interests is evident from the astro-

logical fresco Cosimo commissioned for the cupola over the altar niche of the Old Sacristy at San Lorenzo (Fig. 29). The arrangement of the constellations corresponds to July 4–5, 1442, only a month before Cosimo and the canons of the church formally agreed that he would underwrite the construction of the choir and crossing, including the high altar, in exchange for the exclusive right to be buried and display his arms there. The precise significance of the date, if any, is not clear, but extremely significant in our context is the recent hypothesis

Fig. 27. Plan of the pavement before the high altar. Westminster Abbey, London (from Royal, 1924, 26).
that the constellations also conform to the auspicious horoscope cast at the re-founder of Florence in 802. Cosimo identifies himself and his family with the Christian fortune of the city ordained in the heavens from the outset.\textsuperscript{52}

The sources give no hint of what Cosimo and Brunelleschi might have planned for the dome of San Lorenzo, except that Cosimo complained that what had been built after Brunelleschi's death was too heavy and dark. Doubtless the original project would have anticipated Brunelleschi's great innovation at Santo Spirito, a drum with windows above to provide truly celestial illumination (Fig. 30).\textsuperscript{53}

The full scope and import of the enterprise become apparent from the fact that the circle-in-square scheme of the marker mirrors that of the crossing with the dome inscribed directly above, and from Brunelleschi's use of the crossing square as the modular unit from which he derived the elevation of the crossing itself and the plan of the entire building.\textsuperscript{54} Cosimo's burial in the center of the crossing thus linked him, through the tomb marker,
Cosimo's interest in philosophy began in the period when he assumed responsibility for San Lorenzo and became a veritable passion toward the end of his life. The Council of Florence, which Cosimo fervently supported, in 1439 formally proclaimed the reunification of the Eastern and Western churches—a conscious effort to retrieve the ideal, premedieval unity of Christianity. Marsilio Ficino reported that Cosimo met the Greek philosopher Gemistos Plethon during the council and was inspired to establish a Platonic "academy" at his villa at Careggi, with the goal of reconciling Platonic philosophy with Christianity.55 That Cosimo's tomb marker may itself refer to this Neoplatonic-academic ideal is suggested, retrospectively at least, by the emblem Leonardo devised for his own idea of an academy: he inscribed the name "Academia Leonardi Vinci" on a number of complex interlacing geometric designs in which one may detect traces of the microcosm-macrocosm tradition (Fig. 31).56 Leonardo's designs also play on the resemblance between his own name and the Latin vincis, "to bind, fetter, tie." The pun combines two of the salient concepts associated with Platonic and Neoplatonic thought, reason and eros. The former, the principle of order in the universe, was expressed by the motto reputedly inscribed over the entrance to Plato's Academy in Athens, "Let no one enter who is not a geometer";57 the latter, the principle of union in the universe, was expressed by Marsilio Ficino as the perpetual knot (nodus perpetus), the world embrace (copula mundi), by which all things are bound (vincitur) together.58 Although the purpose of Leonardo's designs is unknown, they have been related to the pavement decorations in some of his studies of churches with a central plan (Fig. 32).59 On one occasion he used such a pattern, transformed into an arboreal trellis, to decorate a vault, the Sala delle Asse in the Sforza palace in Milan, where it served to express the union of conjugal love.60

The underlying meaning of the whole complex at San Lorenzo is perhaps best conveyed in Ficino's letter to Lorenzo the Magnificent, Cosimo's grandson, referring to Cosimo's death. Ficino reports that Cosimo died shortly after they had read together Plato's dialogues "On the One Principle of Things" and "On the Highest Good."61 These were the titles Ficino gave to the Peripatetics and the Philebus, which he had translated at Cosimo's behest. The two men's
understanding of these works must have been influenced by the critical discussion in the *Republic*, Books VI–VII, of the idea of the good and the world soul, the universal principle of harmony, expressed in the theory of numbers, geometry, and astronomy; at one point Plato even remarks that "we must use the blazonry of the heavens as patterns to aid in the study of those realities, just as one would do who chanced upon diagrams drawn with special care and elaboration by Daedalus or some other craftsman or painter."62 Ficino's very next, closing, sentence urges Lorenzo to model himself on the idea of Cosimo, "just as God formed Cosimo on the idea of the world."

The pulpits may have expressed the idea of harmony literally, since we know that they might be used for singing.63 The singers' tribunes, or cantorie, of Donatello and Luca della Robbia had similarly formed a pair in the crossing of Florence cathedral, above the sacristy doors flanking the choir.64 At San Lorenzo, however, it is well to recall the traditional link to St. Ambrose, mentioned earlier. In the *Confessions*, St. Augustine attributes to Ambrose the introduction into the service of responsorial singing, which became the model—the Ambrosian chant—for the subsequent development of antiphonal music in the liturgy.65 Could it be that the pulpits were intended from the beginning both for the reading of the lessons and for giving voice, as it were, to the venerable Ambrosian antiphons?

It is clear that Cosimo, Brunelleschi, and Donatello developed a collective vision of the crossing of San Lorenzo that was remarkably retrospective. While it entailed a sophisticated knowledge and choice of sources, it was not purely antiquarian. Rather, it facilitated a radically new and self-consciously holistic view of the building, its furnishings, and its functions. Cosimo was interred in a setting that related him to a rediscovered heritage and an auspicious future in the Christian universe.

The new vision was also remarkably prophetic, however. The porphyry in the memorials of Cosimo and his parents established a tradition for Medici funerary art at San Lorenzo that continued a decade later in Verrocchio's second tomb, for Cosimo's sons Piero and Giovanni, in which Piero's sons Lorenzo the Magnificent and Giuliano were later also interred. After the white marble hiatus of Michelangelo's Medici chapel the tradition culminated in the 1560's with Vasari's grandiose *riposte* to Michelangelo, the
Fig. 32. Leonardo, project for a church with a central plan, drawing, detail. MS Ashburnham I, fol. 5v, Bibliothèque de l’Institut de France, Paris.
Cappella de' Principi memorial for Grand Duke Cosimo I and his family, completely encrusted with colored stones. The imperial associations of such lavish polychromy reflected a tendency in the political ambitions of the family that became explicit in the 1530's with the establishment of dynastic rule over Florence under Cosimo I, who invoked the memory of his revered ancestor in more than name only. Paired pulpits had a notable history well into the next century, including projects by Michelangelo, perhaps, as well as Baccio Bandinelli and Benvenuto Cellini for the Florence cathedral. Christoph Frommel has defined Cosimo's burial near the high altar as inaugurating a tradition in Italy that culminated in Michelangelo's project for the tomb of Julius II at St. Peter's; the analogy would be especially close if Julius also intended to be buried under the main cupola. Howard Burns observed that the disposition of the stairs and the orientation of the high altar versus populum were echoed in Michelangelo's design of the altar precinct of the Medici chapel in the New Sacristy of San Lorenzo (Fig. 33). (Indeed, in the wake of Vatican II all church altars have been given this orientation.) Placing the choir in the apse to provide an unobstructed view of the high altar became the norm in the sixteenth century, as did the custom of placing the Sacrament on the high altar. Essentially the same spirit prevailed in the 1520's with a project by Michelangelo that would have replaced the Sacrament tabernacle by a reliquary ciborium with four columns over the high altar, retaining the orienta-
tion versus populum and recalling the fourteenth-century arrangement at San Giovanni in Laterano in Rome (Fig. 34). The whole system, complete with paired ambos, confessio, flanking lateral stairs and altar ad populum, was revived again with quasi-archaeological exactitude at the end of the sixteenth century in the “restorations” of the early Roman basilicas San Cesareo and Santi Nereo e Achilleo (Fig. 35), sponsored by the great Counter-Reformation historian Cardinal Baronio.

Above all, however, the vision was prophetic in its very unity and in its innovative recollection of a long, increasingly self-conscious, tradition of Florentine historicism—the tradition that defined the city’s religious, political, and cultural nature through what can only be described as a mystical transfer of identity from the past to the present.
Fig. 34 (opposite). Michelangelo, project for the high altar of San Lorenzo, drawing, Casa Buonarroti, Florence (photo: Soprintendenza per i Beni Artistici e Storici, Florence 117145).

Fig. 35. View in the nave. Santi Nereo e Achilleo, Rome (photo: Anderson 5202).
1. Donatello's Bronze Pulpits in San Lorenzo and the Early Christian Revival

The gist of this paper was first presented at a meeting of the College Art Association of America, February 1986. An earlier version was published in German in Cœmmerer, ed., 1989, 155–69. I have profited greatly from the suggestions of kind and knowledgeable friends: Isabelle Hyman, Ernst Kitzinger, Howard Saalman, and Marvin Trachtenberg. Beverly Brown generously allowed me to read and learn from a draft chapter on San Lorenzo and Santo Spirito in the study she is preparing, entitled Sacred Settings: Choir and Altar Placement in Renaissance Italy.

1. Lavin, 1959 (my main conclusions were adopted earlier by Janson, 1957, 209ff.). The pulpits have since been the subject of a number of studies, listed here, to which I shall refer individually only as they affect my own argument: Herzner, 1972; Becherucci, 1979; Parronchi, Donatello, 1980; Greenhalgh, 1982, 193–99; Bennett and Wilkins, 1984, 11–28.

2. In my original study (Lavin, 1959, 19 n. 4) I argued for the coherence and meaningfulness of the relationship between the two narrative sequences; but I allowed that the striking formal differences between the two pulpits—relatively rational and spacious Passion scenes vs. smaller and more crowded and “expressionistic” post-Passion miracles—may have been due to a chronological gap. I am now inclined to believe that the visual juxtaposition was also a deliberate complementary contrast—a reversal, as it were, of the relationship on the Padua altar between the scenes of St. Anthony’s miracles and the Entombment of Christ.


4. I am grateful to Professor Davis for a typescript copy of his paper, since published with a different title (Davis, 1988). The basic work on the early accounts of the Roman origins of Florence is that of Rubinstein, 1942. On Florence as the New (imperial) Rome, see Simons, 1987, 243ff., with further references. Davis’s observation of the equation of Christian Rome and Florence was adumbrated in Green, 1972, 137ff.

5. “Et sicut est ab uno latere urbis Roma ecclesia beati Petri, ita est in civitate Florentiae. Et sicut est ab uno latere urbis Romae ex adverso ecclesia beati Pauli, et ita in civitate Florentiae. Et sicut
est ecclesia beati Laurenzii martris ex una parte urbis Romae, ex adversa parte ecclesia beati Stephani, et ita in Florentiae. Et sicut est ex una parte urbis Romae ecclesia Sanctae Johannis in Laterano, ita est major ecclesia civitatis Florentiae” (Hartwig, 1875, 59).


7. Cf. Green, 1972, 137.

8. “Il dirsi, che i Fiorentini, come imitatori dell’azzione de’ Romani, e massime de’ Riti appartenenti alla Religione, ne permettessero l’edificazione fuori della Città, corrispondente a quella, che il Magno Costantino edificò, ancor egli ad onor di S. Lorenzo, fuori delle Mura di Roma, non è fuor di proposito, si come non è del tutto vano l’opinione di quelli, che portano per seconde motivo, esservi seguito ciò, come Fabbrica alzata sopra alle rovine, d’un di questi Edifizi de’ Gentili, che spartiti in tre Navate..., chiamati per la lor magnificenza Basiliche ...” (Del Migliore, 1684, 157).

9. Frey, Codex, 1892, 66; idem, Lüb, 1892, 33.

10. The orientation is discussed by Hager, 1962, 100f., and Nussbaum, 1965. On the Ambrosian rite, see p. 23 below; on Rome, see J. Beau, 1924, I, 411.

11. Burns, 1979; Olivato, 1980, 804 and 806 n. 14. Burns dates the plan 1490–1510; in fact, it must precede a documented reconstruction of the high altar in 1499 (see n. 26 below).

12. Richa, 1754–62, V, 57, reports the change in 1622.

13. The new choir arrangement was emphasized by Brunelleschi’s early biographer, Antonio Manetti, and by Vasari; the former attributes the idea to Cosimo, the latter to Brunelleschi (cf. Manetti, 1970, 109, 147f. n. 143; Vasari, 1666–70, Testo III, I, 185).


17. On this point see Gutkind, 1938, chapter III, “Cosimo, Primo Inter Pares.”


After completing this essay I received the typescripts of important papers dealing with Verrocchio’s Medici tombs, by S. McKillop, W. S. Sheard, and C. Sperling (all forthcoming; see Bibliography), whose arguments at several points intersect and reinforce my own. Particularly relevant are McKillop’s exploration of the liturgical context for the developments at San Lorenzo (see p. 23 below), Sheard’s discussion of the symbolic use of porphyry in these monuments (pp. 15–17 below), and Sperling’s reference of the installation of the tomb of Cosimo’s parents to the early tradition of placing martyrs’ relics beneath the mensa, or altar table (p. 15 below; see also Fortuna, 1960, 11).

20. Janson, 1957, 232ff. Janson rejected Vasari’s anecdote as well as the attribution to Donatello, but there is no consensus; see Bennett and Wilkins, 1984, 235 n. 16. The recent discovery that the bronze slab was sent from Rome to Florence (Esch and Esch, 1978) seems to me to lend weight to Vasari’s story: a trip to Rome would have been necessary for the inspection of the prospective site of the monument.


Unaware of Beck's contribution, Van Os (1988–90, II, 209ff) assumed that the high altar at San Lorenzo had no altarpiece.

26. Beck (1954, 214f) documented a complete reorganization of the high altar in 1499, at which time Desiderio's tabernacle must have been moved to the Medici chapel, then dedicated to Cosmas and Damian and thereafter also referred to as the Chapel of the Sacrament.

27. The basic essay on the drawings referred to is by Kurz, 1955; Ames-Lewis, 1985, 216, has also emphasized that the relevant drawings are for freestanding altars and relates them to a work of this kind at Prato commissioned by a son of Cosimo de' Medici. The studies clearly seek to resolve the problem of combining a monumental Sacrament tabernacle with an altarpiece by placing the former atop the latter, an arrangement that had no long-term success (although Carl, 1990, 1991, has shown that it was occasionally carried out); this further suggests that the prototype, Desiderio's tabernacle, stood free, without an altarpiece. In fact, as Van Os observed (1988–90, II, 209ff), there is no evidence that the high altar at San Lorenzo had a proper altarpiece. In a recent article Dunkelman (1991) stresses the importance of the three-dimensional character of Donatello's Sacrament tabernacle in St. Peter's; might the St. Peter's tabernacle itself once have stood free and hence foreshadowed the San Lorenzo tabernacle in this as in other respects?

The rectangle shown behind the priest's platform in the Venice plan cannot be a step, which would normally have extended along the sides of the platform as well.

28. On the St. Peter's altar see J. Gardner, 1974, 61 n. 23, 78ff; Kempers and Biauw, 1987, 95ff. With the arrangement I propose, the altarpiece when seen from the nave would indeed have appeared to stand on (or above) the altar. (As far as I am aware, no one has considered the solution offered here to the problem of the Stefaneschi altar.) On the Pala d'Oro, cf. Fiocco, in Hahnloser, ed., 1965, 81ff. On the chapel at Orvieto, Fumi, 1896; Benois et al, 1877, pl. 1, for a plan. Nicholas of Verdun's enamel altar at Klosterneuberg may have been given a similar disposition at this same period; cf. Fillitz, 1984, esp. 86.


30. Speaking of Donatello's works for Cosimo at San Lorenzo, Vasari mentions the stucco decorations and bronze doors of the Old Sacristy, the "quattro figure di stucco, grandi, che sono ne' tabernacoli della crociera della chiesa, e le cere da far gittare di bronzo i pergami di San Lorenzo, ed il modello dell'altar maggiore con la sepultura di Cosimo a' piedi" (Vasari, 1906, VIII, 99). Referring to this passage, Herzner (1972) proposes that the relics of the right-hand pulpit were originally intended for the tomb, even though Vasari clearly distinguished between the pulpits and the tomb; elsewhere, Herzner argues that Donatello left Siena for lack of funds, rather than for a Medici commission (1971, 176f). With regard to the first point, Herzner fails to consider that the tomb in question might be the one actually executed by Verrocchio; with regard to the second, he fails to note the coincidence of Vasari's report with the date of Donatello's return to Florence and the date of the consecration of the high altar.

31. It is worth recalling Vasari's report that at Cosimo's wish Donatello was buried near his own tomb "so that the dead body should be near him in death, as they had always been near in spirit when alive" ("a cagione che così gli fusse vicino il corpo già morto, come vivo sempre gli era stato presso l'animo"); Hinds, 1963, I, 312; Vasari, 1906, VIII, 99). Documentary confirmation of the report was discovered by Lightbown, 1980, II, 327ff.

32. Becherucci, 1979, 7; cf. Passavant, 1969, 171, and Garzelli, 1983. This is not to deny that Verrocchio may have influenced the design. Vasari reports Verrocchio's early interest in geometry, and Verrocchio later echoed the materials, technique, and pattern of the Cosimo marker in the platform on which his tomb of Piero and Giovanni de' Medici rests (Passavant, 1969, 9; Seymour, 1971, 51). The pattern of the bronze
gratings recalls those used by Brunelleschi in the
cupola of the Old Sacristy (Luporini, 1964, figs. 228–33).
33. Del Migliore, 1684, 164.
34. On this point, see Lavin, 1959, 23; Beck, 1984, 216. A close model for this arrangement may
have been provided in the Brancacci chapel in
Santa Maria del Carmine; it has been suggested
that the altar there may have been decorated
with Donatello’s early relief of Christ giving the
Keys to St. Peter in the Victoria and Albert
Museum, London, thus explaining the absence
of this crucial subject from Masaccio’s fresco
cycle (Pope-Hennessy, 1964, I, no. 61, 70–73).
It is also interesting to speculate—as Marilyn
Aronberg Lavin has pointed out to me—that
Donatello’s pulpits narratives may help to explain
the striking absence of Christological subjects,
except for the crowning figure of Christ in
Glory, in the fresco cycle including Old Testa-
ment and eschatological scenes executed in the
choir of San Lorenzo around the middle of
the sixteenth century by Pontormo (see Cox-
Rearick, 1964, I, 318ff.).
35. Seymour, in particular, saw the relationship be-
tween the tomb, the high altar, and the pulpits
(1971, 50ff.); Beccherucci, 1979, 10; Beck, 1984,
217.
36. On the dome, see pp. 21f. below. Vasari also per-
ceived Donatello’s work at the crossing as a
unified whole, mentioning together the evan-
gelists, the pulpits, the high altar and the tomb;
see n. 28 above. On the stucco figures, see the
literature cited by Paatz and Paatz, 1952–55, II,
512, 588 n. 287.
37. Ruschi, 1986, 23 n. 28. Cf. Delbrueck, 1932,
27ff., 148ff. and Deef, 1959, 149. On the last
point, see the illuminating essay by Tronzo,
Seymour (1971, 55) noted the resurrectional
symbolism of the vestment table and related it
to Brunelleschi’s allusion to the Holy Sepulcher
in the design of the Old Sacristy.
38. For a perceptive discussion of the technique, see
Passavant, 1969, 10.
Vasconcellos, 1918, 69–71.
41. The analogy was the subject of a perspicacious
43. Cf. Calderini et al., 1951, 46ff.
Our Fig. 25 (Heninger’s fig. 66) is from the editio
princps of Isidore’s De natura rerum, Augsburg,
1474. The tetradic diagram, which also relates to
the theme of the Four Ages of Man, is discussed
by Sears, 1986, 16–20, who reproduces many
similar schemata.
45. Murdoch, 1984, 102; Masi, 1983, 87–89. Barbara
Obrist kindly brought this comparison to my
attention. Cosimo owned a Boethius manuscript
as early as 1426; see Gutkind, 1938, 228. A
strikingly similar design, no doubt of related
origin, appears on a late fifteenth-century Otto-
man talismanic shirt in the Topkapi Museum,
Istanbul, that is covered with magical diagrams
containing numbers and Koranic verses (Circ
46. The geometry of the design has been studied in
this sense by Adorno, 1989, 46ff.
47. “Sed velim in templo cum parte um et pavi-
mentum nihil adsit quod meram philosophiam
non sapiat”; “Maximeque pavementum refertum
velim esse lineis et figuris, quae ad res musicas et
geometricas pertinent, ut ex omni parte ad
animi cultum excitemur” (Alberti, 1966, II, 611).
48. I am greatly indebted to Ernst Kitzinger for
reminding me of this precedent, for which see
the fine essay by Wander, 1978; also Clausen,
1987, 76–85; and Binski, 1990.
50. On the pavement, cf. Biagetti, 1933, 211ff., and
Gilbert, 1975, 253; on the portrayal of the Con-
51. Cosimo’s philosophical readings, especially of
Plato, with Marsilio Ficino, are described by
Gutkind, 1938, 239ff. On the cosmic pun, see
Chastel, 1961, 227ff.; M. A. Lavin, 1974, 364
n. 94 (a strikingly similar pun was made on
Sigismondo Malatesta’s given name); Cox-
Rearick, 1984, index, p. 326, in “Cosmos”; for

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the reprise of the name and the pun by Cosimo I in the sixteenth century, see Crum, 1989, 248–50.

After this essay was completed I learned, thanks to Günter Passavant, that precisely the same observation concerning the tomb slab of Cosimo was made by Liebenwein, 1977, 52, 241 n. 186. Recently, Weil-Garris has related Raphael's cupola of the Chigi chapel to the same cosmographical tradition (1986, 138–40).

52. Following the recent cleaning (Lapi Ballerini, 1986), the most likely date for the sacrists' cupola has been established by Forti et al., 1987; further observations concerning the date will be found in a study being prepared by Kristen Lippincott. The association with the re-foundation horoscope of Florence is developed in a forthcoming essay by Peter Blume, "Regentes des Himmels. Zur Geschichte astrologischer Bilder in Mittelalter und Renaissance." I am much indebted to Lippincott and Blume, who kindly allowed me to read their work in manuscript. For other recent interpretations of the cupola, see Lapi Ballerini, 1988; Beck, 1989; L. Schneider, 1990, 268ff. For Cosimo's contract with the Canons, August 13, 1442, see Ginori Conti, 1940, 626, 240ff.


54. The first observation was also made by Adorno, 1989, 46. On the second point see the master's thesis by Nyberg, 1953, 15–20; Heydenreich and Lotz, 1974, 8; Scarchilli, 1977, no. 1, 43–47. These relationships give particular meaning to Paolo Giovi's observation (cited by Clearfield, 1981, 22) that the entire church served as Cosimo's sepulcher.


56. For a helpful discussion, based on Dürrer's woodcut copies of the designs, see Talbot, ed., 1971, 173f; also Pedretti, 1981, 296ff; Alberici, ed., 1984, 216.


58. "... omnes mundi partes, quia unius artificis opera sunt, eiusdem machinac membra inter se in essendo & uiendo similis, mutua quadam charitate sibi inuisce circumcuet; ut merito dici possit amor nodus perpetuos & copula mundi, partiumq. & eius immobile sustetaculum, ac firmum totius machinac fundamentum" (Ficino, 1576, 2: 1330, cf. Marcel, 1956, 165). The leading phrase of Ficino's motto for his own Academy had a similar ring: "a bono in bonum omnia diriguntur" (Ficino, 1576, 1: 599). See Kristeller, 1943, 112, 145, 296, and, in relation to Ficino's Platonic Academy, idem, 1965, 96ff. Ficino's academy was also imbued with a sense of cosmic irony by a depiction on one of the walls of the philosophers Democritus and Heraclitus flanking a terrestrial globe, the one laughing, the other weeping at the foolishness of worldly concerns (Della Torre, 1902, 639ff, recorded in a fresco fragment by Bramante from a house in Milan, Cima 1492, 1991, 229).

Three passages in Leonardos own notebooks are relevant in this context. "No mi legga, chi non è matematico, nell mia princi" (Let no man who is not a mathematician read the elements of my work [Richter, 1939, I, 112, no. 3]) is an obvious allusion to the inscription on Plato's Academy. "Amor onj cosa vice" (Love conquers everything [Pedretti, 1977, II, 250]) may involve a further pun linking Leonardo's name to the idea of love as the binding force of the universe. "Mvouesi l'amante per la cosa amata come il senso . e lo sensible, e cò seco s'uniscie e fassi vna cosa medesima; l'opera è la prima cosa che nasce dall'unione . . ." (The lover is moved by the beloved object as the senses are by sensible objects; and they unite and become one and the same thing. The work is the first thing born of this union . . . [Richter, 1939, II, 249, no. 1202]) is clearly of Neoplatonic inspiration and again expresses the uniting force of love.

In an ironic passage in the Republic concerning
the education of the young. Plato himself associates geometry and eros through the notion of binding necessity: the students, living in close proximity, will mate "not by the necessities ['αμέτρητης, also bonds, constraints] of geometry but by those of love, which are perhaps keener and more potent than the other to persuade and constrain the multitude" (Shorey, 1956, I, 456ff).

Finally, the interface pattern enveloping the name Julius II in the altar in Raphael’s Disputa should be recalled in this connection (Pfeiffer, 1975, 94, 196).

59. Pedretti (1980 and 1981, 298) has revived an eighteenth-century idea that the designs may have been intended for floor decorations in central-plan churches, referring also to Michelangelo’s Capitoline pavement, which in turn has been compared to medieval astronomical schemata illustrating Isidore of Seville’s De natura rerum (Ackerman, 1961, I, 72, pl. 38c).

60. On the Sala delle Asse, see M. Kemp, 1981, 181ff.

61. "Itaque postquam Platonis librum de uno rerum principio, ac de summo bono legitimus ... paulo post decessit ... Vale, et sicut Deus Cosmum ad ideam mundi format, ita te ipse ... ad ideam Cosmi figura" (Ficino, 1576, I, 649). Ficino repeats the account in the preface to his translation of another, pseudo-Platonic, dialogue on death. See Klubansky, 1943, 314ff; A. M. Brown, 1961, 203ff.


63. One of the pulpits, at least, served this purpose in 1515. Kauffmann, 1936, 179, even supposed they were intended as singers’ tribunes; but see Janson, 1957, 213ff. The existence of a singers’ tribune (also often attributed to Donatello) in the left aisle over the portal to the cloister, however, did not preclude the use of the bronze pulpits for singing as well.


65. I follow here a suggestion by Battisti, 1981, 369 n. 17. As McKillop points out (forthcoming), the Ambrosian rite also normally calls for the altar to be oriented versus populum. On the Ambrosian chant, and Confessionis 9.6–7; see Cattaneo, 1950, esp. 12ff.


67. See Morselli, 1981.

68. Frommel (1977, 47) also notes that the idea may have originated in the placement of the tomb of Cosimo’s mother and father under the dome of the Old Sacristy.

69. Burns, 1979, 150.

70. Paronchi, "Un tabernacolo," 1980, documents a marble Sacrament tabernacle by Brunelleschi, 1426–27, placed in relation to the high altar of San Jacopo in Campo Corboli in Florence, but the wording is not clear.

71. Barocchi, 1962, 120ff; Wallace, 1987, 43ff. The high altar is shown close to the steps leading to the choir, and therefore oriented versus populum, in an anonymous plan of about 1550 and in a sketch plan by Sallustio Peruzzi (Burns, 1979, 149 fig. 4, 151 n. 11).

72. Baroni’s projects have been studied most recently in a paper by a former student of mine, Alexandra Herz, 1988. Herz compares these projects to the medieval presbytery of St. Peter’s.

2. David’s Sling and Michelangelo’s Bow

An earlier version of the first part of this essay was presented at a colloquium entitled "Der Künstler über sich in seinem Werk," organized by Matthias Winner at the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome in February 1989. In the discussion that followed Horst Bredekamp, Phillip Ehl, Kristina Herrmann Fiore, Christoph Frommel, Justus Müller-Hofstede, and Matthias Winner made especially helpful comments. I have incorporated several of their suggestions here. The present version was published in abbreviated form in the Acts of the Twenty-Seventh International Congress for the History of Art at Strasbourg in September 1989 (Lavin, “David’s Sling,” 1990).

I. Because the fascinating story of the David as


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