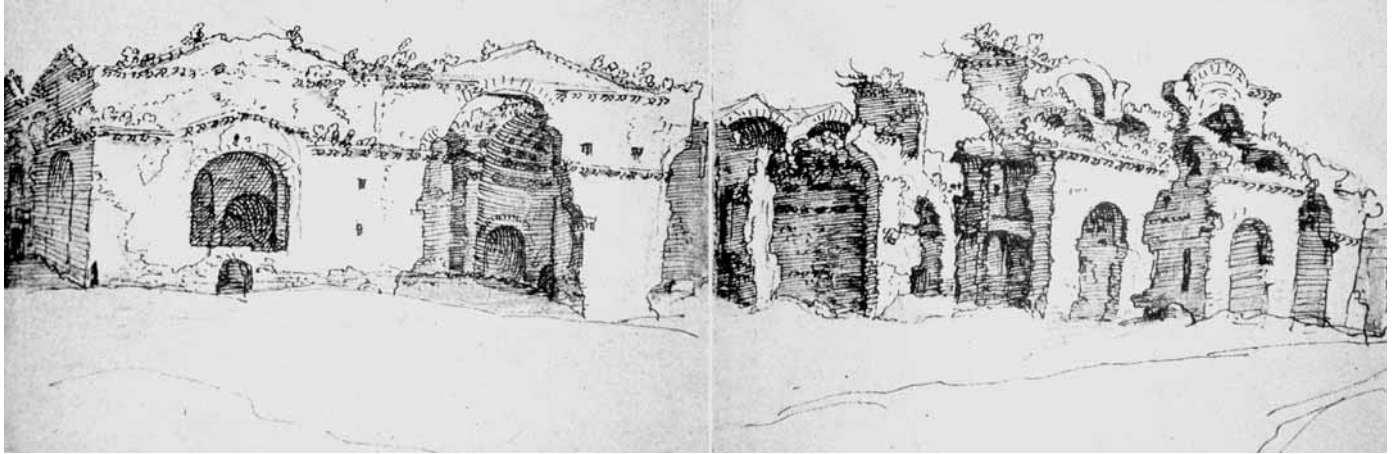


## Michelangelo's "Minimalism" in the Design of Santa Maria degli Angeli



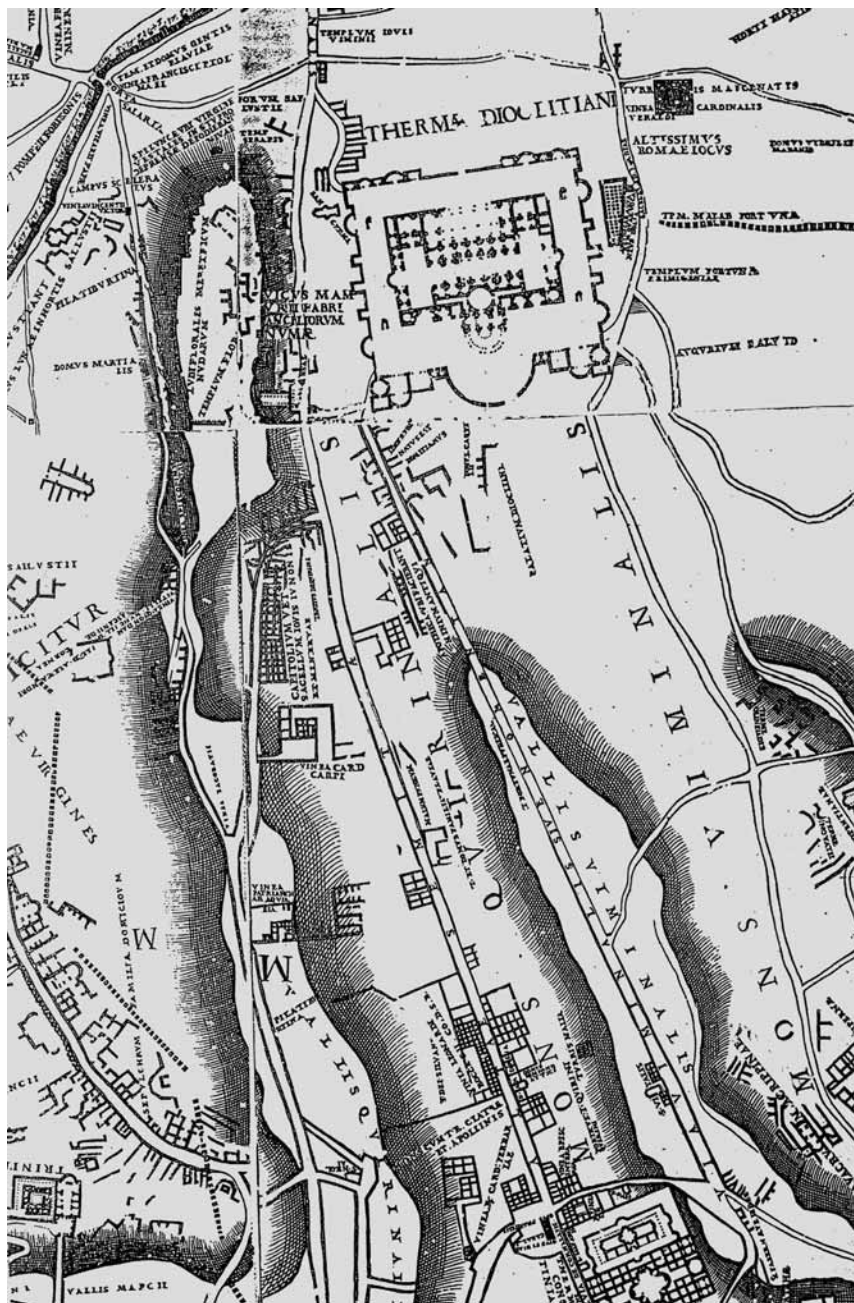
1. Marten van Heemskerck, View of the Baths of Diocletian, 1530s, calidarium in foreground, frigidarium visible beyond (from C. Hülsen, H. Egger [eds.], *Die römischen Skizzenbücher von Marten van Heemskerck*, Soest 1975, 11, fol. 83v).

In 1561, when Pius IV determined to build the new Carthusian basilica and monastery of Santa Maria degli Angeli at the Baths of Diocletian, he entrusted its design to Michelangelo (ill. 1)<sup>1</sup>. At eighty-six, Michelangelo would have little time to devote to this commission; when the first surviving construction records were issued in April 1563, he had only ten more months to live. One might even conclude that the limited modifications conducted under his supervision at the site were dictated purely by the constraints of time. Yet it is also possible to argue that Michelangelo's design in fact demonstrated his profound concern for the preservation of the ruins of ancient Rome. Indeed, Michelangelo had already adopted a consistent approach regarding preservation of pre-existing elements in his earlier projects, and these concerns would assume only greater prominence during his later career as a builder in the papal capital. In this essay we will consider how Michelangelo's design at the Baths of Diocletian – guided by what can be characterized as an intentional "minimalism" – attested to the artist's deliberate and sustained desire to preserve the ancient remains of Rome.

The creation of Santa Maria degli Angeli at the Baths signaled the sixteenth-century revival of the traditional Roman practice of converting ancient structures to serve Christian liturgical functions. The project has thus often been discussed as the manifestation of a reactionary Counter-Reformation rhetoric, predicated upon the subjugation of the pagan past to the Christian present<sup>2</sup>. But it is our contention that

Michelangelo's "minimalist" intervention was inherently more ambiguous than the associations with triumphal propaganda would lead us to believe. Indeed, by designating Santa Maria degli Angeli a straightforward conquest of antiquity by the institution of the Counter-Reformation Church, we overlook the importance which Michelangelo gave to the preservation of ancient remains, as a reflection of knowledge and experience which he acquired over a lifetime of working around and upon existing historic structures in Italy. While pre-modern interventions upon archaeological remains have been generally remained as insensitive or overly harsh, Michelangelo's "minimalist" solution at the Baths demonstrated not only a heightened sensitivity to these surviving artifacts, but a profound sympathy for their fragile physical condition<sup>3</sup>.

In this essay, we will first briefly discuss the broader tradition of preserving ancient remains at Rome as the necessary context for this building project. Then we will examine how Michelangelo's designs were conceived as specific preservation solutions for the ancient building fabric of the Baths. As noted earlier, Michelangelo's distinctive approach to the problem of protecting ancient remains took shape over the course of his long career. Already in his first architectural projects at Bologna and Florence he revealed an interest in preservation; this interest became even more apparent in the later work which he conducted among the monumental ancient ruins of Rome. In conclusion, we will con-



2. Leonardo Bufalini, Map of Rome, 1551, detail showing site of the Baths of Diocletian at the juncture of the Quirinal, Viminal, and Esquiline Hills (from L. Cangemi, *La Certosa di Roma*, in *Analecta Carthusiana*, edited by J. Hogg, A. Girard, and D. Le Blévec, Salzburg 2002, II, fig. 23).

consider how Michelangelo's plans for a new church at this ruined ancient site may be linked not only to Counter-Reformation ideology, but also to the broader religious notion of the resurrection. While such a study must remain to some degree speculative, it also has the merit of enabling us to better appreciate the inherent symbolic value of Michelangelo's "minimalist" approach.

*The tradition of preserving ancient remains at Rome*

The eventual disintegration of the imperial administration of ancient Rome, tends to be equated with the destruction of the city itself: we are

all familiar with the vision of barbarian invaders devastating the marble monuments of the post-classical city. Yet we should also be aware of the fact that, throughout history, there is evidence for persistent concern regarding the preservation of the city's buildings. Key preservation legislation was already instituted by imperial edict in late antiquity, and the defense of the city's ancient fabric would number among the key responsibilities of the ruling administration. Later rulers would continue to exploit the established association between preservation and power long after the fall of Rome<sup>4</sup>.

Indeed, the issue of preservation represented a shrewd political maneuver in a setting so profoundly marked by surviving symbols of imperial prestige and authority. By claiming to preserve these remains, rulers could assert their authority as the pious guardians of ancient Rome, underscoring their legitimacy as the rightful heirs of the imperial past. The right to dictate the fate of an ancient structure symbolized the right to exercise absolute power; what is more, through preservation one could coopt the proud imperial past as one's own. Thus the Gothic ruler Theodoric defended the preservation of Roman antiquities in the fifth century, as a means to assert his Romanized identity. In contrast, for the Byzantine author Procopius, writing in the next century, the preservation of Roman antiquity was a sign of solidarity between Byzantium and Rome, in opposition to the alien Gothic invaders. Preservation thus continued to offer a strategic means to structure the physical remains of the past to reinforce one's own political position<sup>5</sup>.

The political organ which exploited the potential of preservation to greatest effect in medieval Rome was the secular civic government, founded in the twelfth century on the Capitoline Hill<sup>6</sup>. The defense of ancient remains afforded these local civic leaders a strategic entrée into a hostile political environment dominated by the international papal court and powerful baronial families<sup>7</sup>. In the first recorded statutes of the fourteenth century, the Conservators, the leading officials of the civic government, identified the safeguarding of Roman antiquity among their exclusive prerogatives<sup>8</sup>. Following the return of the Holy See in 1420, however, the Conservators soon found that they had to yield many of these exclusive privileges – including preservation – to papal authority. As the popes asserted supreme temporal power over the ancient city, they also assumed the effective right to manage – destroying but also preserving – the surviving ancient remains.

While we know that much archaeological evidence was irretrievably lost during the construction of the Renaissance papal capital, at the same time the popes also took crucial steps to



regulate tumultuous urban expansion<sup>9</sup>. Invoking imperial precedent, the popes sought to rein in and control the destruction of ancient remains. This was attested by such acts as the reinstatement of the *maestri di strade* by Martin V in 1423, the 1462 bull issued by Pius II to protect the ancient remains of Rome, the 1534 appointment by Paul III of the first *commissario alle antichità*, as well as others<sup>10</sup>. Already the fifteenth-century humanist Biondo Flavio emphasized the crucial role of the popes in preserving the ancient city: in the *Roma instaurata*, compiled between 1444 and 1446, Biondo declared that Rome owed its very survival to the presence of the papacy. If the return of the Holy See had been delayed by so much as a decade, Biondo affirmed that the entire city – including both its inhabitants as well as its physical setting – would have perished<sup>11</sup>.

Like other humanists, Biondo advocated for the preservation of the city's threatened ancient remains; more unusual was the fact that he also recognized the qualitative differences between possible types of protective interventions. In particular, his use of terminology in the *Roma instaurata* drew a precise distinction between what we would now define as an act of *preservation*, as opposed to an act of *restoration*. Biondo declared that papal presence had ensured that the city of Rome survived intact; in this case, he used the term *conservare*. Yet soon after, he also praised the pope for having restored many of the city's ruined buildings, using the term *instaurare*<sup>12</sup>. In this case, as in the title of his volume, Biondo referred to an active rebuilding, where a structure – or even an entire city – could be returned to a more stable and secure condition. Thus we see Biondo, and Renaissance scholarship more broadly, making an important intellectual advance in conceiving preservation and restoration as two fundamentally different approaches to the historic artifact, a distinction that still remains axiomatic in contemporary historic preservation discourse<sup>13</sup>.

#### *The preservation of the Baths of Diocletian*

The history of the Baths of Diocletian reveals that there has been perennial interest in preserving these monumental structures, as the remains of the largest ancient bath complex ever built in Rome (ill. 2). Although isolated from the Vatican and the center of the medieval city, the Baths of Diocletian retained a vibrant hold over the popular imagination; medieval pilgrim itineraries indicate that the site attracted a stream of curious visitors<sup>14</sup>. It seems that there were a number of proposals in the middle ages to adapt the ancient site as a *certosa* or Carthusian monastery, although none of these came to fruition<sup>15</sup>.

The medieval idea of restoring and reusing the Baths for contemporary needs would itself be revived in the sixteenth century by the priest

Antonio Duca<sup>16</sup>. Early in his career Duca became devoted to the cult of the angels, and through his contacts with high-ranking Church officials and aristocratic patrons, he helped to promote the cult as an international phenomenon. Then, in 1541 Duca experienced an ecstatic vision convincing him that the Baths had been divinely ordained to become a church dedicated to the cult of the angels and the martyrs<sup>17</sup>. Over the next two decades, he made repeated appeals to the popes to support his plan, which however they turned down for its excessive anticipated expense. For example, while Paul III (1534-1549) expressed his support for Duca's vision, he too rejected the project as simply too large – “troppo gran macchina” – to be economically feasible<sup>18</sup>.

However, with the election of Pius IV in 1560, the tide finally turned in Duca's favor. Thanks to the enthusiastic determination of the new pope, Duca's longed-for and ambitious proposal would now become reality<sup>19</sup>. On 27 July 1561 Pius IV issued a papal bull which recorded the foundation of the new church at the site<sup>20</sup>. In this document, the pope declared that preservation of the ancient bath complex was a primary papal concern: after having lain “for many centuries derelict and neglected”, the repair and subsequent revamping of the ruins as a church would not only augment and promote the Christian faith, but contribute to the greater decorum and splendor of the papal capital<sup>21</sup>.

It may be that the unusual prominence of preservation in this papal legislation reflected a papal strategy to placate the Conservators. The conversion of the Baths marked a papal incursion upon the authority and privileges of the civic magistrates, in their role as the traditional guardians of the city's ancient remains<sup>22</sup>. Yet while Pius IV subtracted the Baths from the rightful purview of the Conservators, the bull served as a reassurance that the creation of the new church would also ensure the preservation and improvement of the ancient monument. Thus the attentive papal interest to preservation matters may have been conceived as a conciliatory gesture. It seems to have produced its intended effect, for when the Conservators submitted their approval of the proposed plan, they applauded it for preserving and restoring the ancient complex. As they declared, through this work “not only will the ancient remains be preserved, but they will also be restored, much amplified, and embellished”<sup>23</sup>.

#### *Michelangelo's “minimalism” as a preservation strategy*

While the obligation to preserve the ancient Baths was an explicit and integral part of the design program at Santa Maria degli Angeli, the solutions to achieve this goal would still be left to

the discretion of the designer. Michelangelo's accumulated knowledge and experience regarding preservation issues would have made him eminently qualified for such a commission. Indeed, it may have been specifically the issue of preservation which drew him to the project, persuading him to accept this additional commitment during this late and very busy phase of his career. Certainly the prospect of building a new church at the site represented an intriguing challenge. Integrating modern functions into an existing structural shell, while preserving its original unique character, required the invention of an unprecedented architectural preservation scheme.

What was the nature of Michelangelo's intervention at the site? According to the contemporary chronicler Matteo Catalani, the first priority was to "cover the principal vaults with tiles"<sup>24</sup>. The outermost skin of the structure demanded immediate attention; presumably this involved stabilizing and reinforcing the system of tile roofs above the *frigidarium* and the adjoining structures. With this strategy, Michelangelo sought to ensure the structural integrity of the complex and to arrest the inexorable process of decay.

Such initial maintenance work may have been relatively inconspicuous, but Michelangelo would also make decisions that would have critical impact upon the visitor's perception and experience of the ancient complex. All of this work appears to have been guided by an explicit "minimalist" approach, in the sense that his designs were calculated to reduce the destruction of the ancient remains to an absolute minimum. This was evident already in his orientation of the new basilica. Where Antonio Duca had proposed to align the new church along the length of the *frigidarium*, Michelangelo chose the alternative cross-axis for the new nave, thus arranging the plan in the form of a Greek cross<sup>25</sup>. With this plan, Michelangelo structured a sequence of liturgical spaces conforming to the original sequence of the ancient Baths. This design underscored the notion that the new function could be compatible with the original structure, rather than in conflict. By extension, it also implied that fewer alterations, rather than more, were sufficient to adapt the structure to its new use.

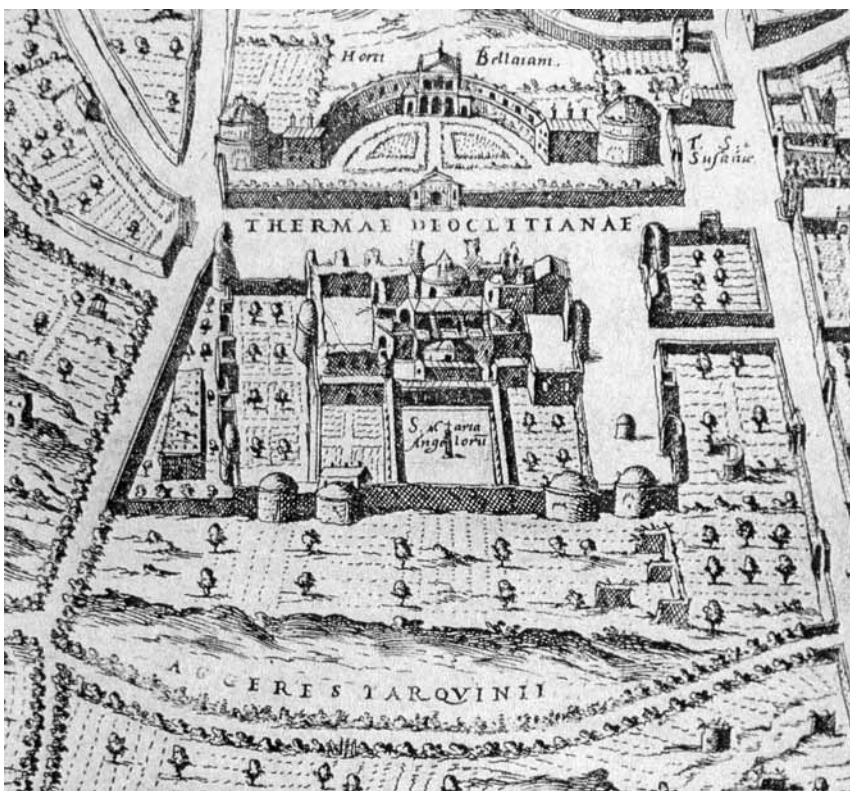
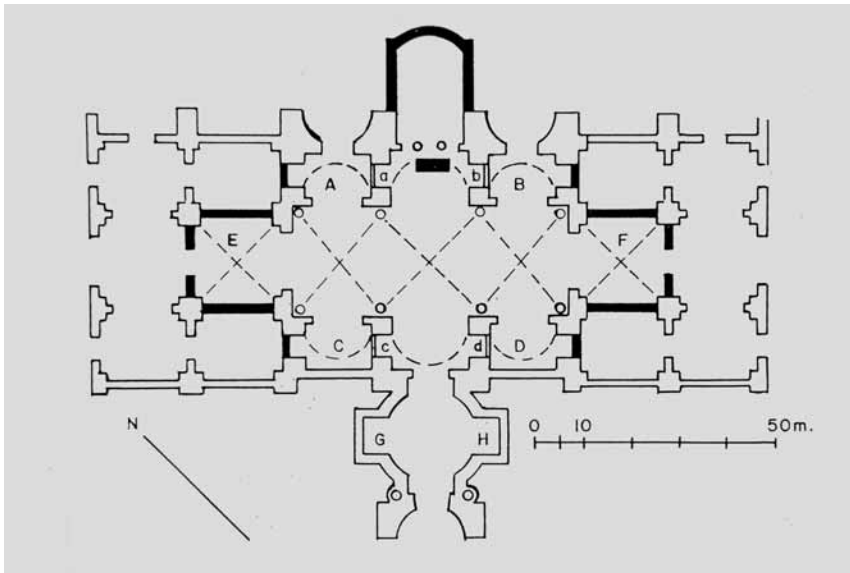
Yet this "minimalist" approach did not preclude the introduction of significant new structural elements to the ancient Baths. On the contrary, Michelangelo inserted ten new masonry partitions between the existing internal structural piers of the *frigidarium*. This created a new perimeter wall for the church which as Catalani reported, "ristrinse il corpo della chiesa", restricting it to a smaller portion of the original ancient hall (ill. 3)<sup>26</sup>. As Catalani observed, Michelangelo also began work on a new chancel extending into the area of the *natatio*, opposite

the rotunda of the *tepidarium*. The construction of such partition walls offered three principal advantages to the builder. First, they circumscribed the most impressive vaulted spaces of the *frigidarium*, isolating and preserving them as the core of the new church. Second, they cut off the lower external bays, reducing the vast interior space and making it less unwieldy. Third, by eliminating these external bays, Michelangelo also avoided the expensive restoration of the external bays, as the most damaged surviving parts of the ancient complex<sup>27</sup>. Budgetary concerns would have been a primary preoccupation for Pius IV; like his predecessors, the pope was anxious to avoid exorbitant building expenses. Indeed, Catalani reported that the pope favored Michelangelo's design specifically because it required minimal financial outlay<sup>28</sup>.

The design of the new chancel in particular provides an even better example of the ingenious means with which Michelangelo's "minimalist" solutions could balance preservation concerns with new uses (ill. 4)<sup>29</sup>. The chancel, as the setting for the high altar, was the most important liturgical space of the new church. Michelangelo's design for the new chancel would integrate the new ecclesiastical functions with the existing architectural forms seamlessly. His design both satisfied the needs of the officiating clergy while at the same time preserving the distinctive character of the ancient *frigidarium*.

Originally many of the numerous arched entryways linking the different interior spaces of the Baths of Diocletian were bridged by column screens. These monumental architectural frameworks, consisting of an entablature and supported by freestanding columns, had little structural value; nevertheless they served a crucial visual function, marking clear boundaries between the successive halls without compromising the spatial continuity between these spaces<sup>30</sup>. Contemporary drawings of the *frigidarium* at the Baths of Diocletian suggest that when Michelangelo began work on the site, the column screens were mostly in ruins, with only some fragmentary pieces still in place<sup>31</sup>.

Michelangelo would adapt this characteristic motif from the imperial baths of Rome to generate his design for the chancel surrounding the high altar (ill. 5). We do not know whether the column screen spanning the central bay of the high altar survived intact when Michelangelo began work. Probably he had to conduct significant repairs to the structure; he may have even reassembled its dismembered parts, thus adopting a procedure which modern archaeologists call anastylosis. In any case, this was not an exact reconstruction, for Michelangelo altered the ancient arrangement of the column screen by inserting a partition wall between the two columns



3. Reconstructed plan of Santa Maria degli Angeli as designed by Michelangelo (from H. Siebenbüner, *S. Maria degli Angeli in Rom*, in *“Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst”*, 6, 1955, fig. 19).

4. Etienne Dupérac, Map of Rome, 1577. Bird's-eye view of the Baths of Diocletian with Michelangelo's new chancel (from Cangemi, *La Certosa di Roma*, cit., II, fig. 49).

(ill. 6)<sup>32</sup>. By introducing a clear separation between the *frigidarium* and the chancel, the column screen now provided a private setting for the clergy to officiate. This was calculated to satisfy the needs of the new occupants of the structure, the Carthusian monks, who desired a more private setting for their ceremonies<sup>33</sup>. Yet at the same time, Michelangelo's solution reinforced the importance of the original column screen in the design of the ancient bath complex. Indeed, this may be viewed as a quintessentially “mini-

malist” solution, where a single feature performed double duty; thus the column screen served new liturgical needs while also reestablishing the character of the original *frigidarium*.

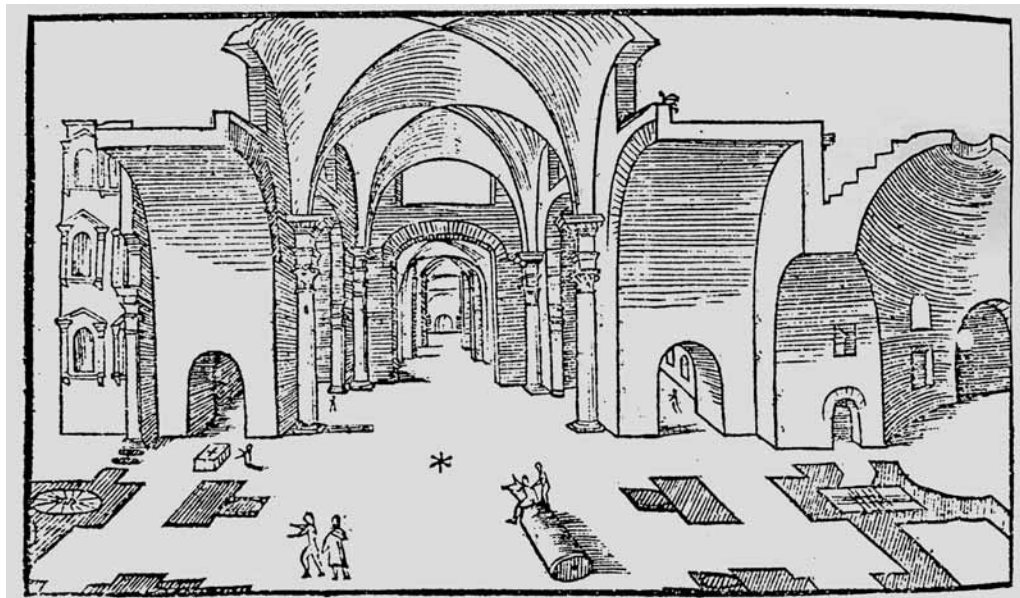
Michelangelo's management and use of ancient materials for new construction on the building site also suggest an attention to preservation issues. The evidence of the surviving account books suggests that Michelangelo deliberately minimized the use of *spolia* in the new construction of Santa Maria degli Angeli<sup>34</sup>. In the ten months that elapsed between 24 April 1563, the date of the first entry in the records, and 18 February 1564, the date of Michelangelo's death, the account books recorded the acquisition of common building materials such as bricks, volcanic sand, and lime but made almost no reference to the use of other, more valuable, and possibly ancient building materials. Often the production of lime involved the burning of ancient marble, but in this case the entries specified *calce da Trivoli*, suggesting the use of local travertine rather than more expensive marble. Perhaps this even meant travertine was shipped in from new quarries in Tivoli rather than excavated from ancient sites in Rome<sup>35</sup>. The building accounts also specified the use of tufa, the volcanic, friable building stone available in abundance around Rome. While tufa offered economic advantages as a cheaper building material, its use could also signal a preservation strategy, as this was a building stone that generally lacked antiquarian value in sixteenth-century Rome<sup>36</sup>.

Marble, on the other hand, commanded both economic and antiquarian value, causing the despoliation of many ancient sites around the city. Yet marble was conspicuous only in its absence from the building accounts. The only reference in the accounts to *marmo* before Michelangelo's death was a payment for the marble heraldic shield carved with the papal insignia, recorded on 4 January 1564<sup>37</sup>. The same accounts also reported payments for a travertine cornice and six travertine capitals for the chancel surrounding the high altar<sup>38</sup>. As we have seen, while such travertine might have been collected from ancient sites in Rome, it is equally likely that it was collected from quarries in Tivoli. In any event, the use of such travertine was clearly very limited during Michelangelo's supervision of the building site.

After Michelangelo's death, the attention to preservation on the active building site appears to have plummeted. On 16 April 1565, the wagon driver Jacopo da Castiglione brought four columns with bases and capitals, undoubtedly ancient *spolia*, for one of the altars in the new church, while later that summer, on 24 August 1565, a team of ten horses dragged blocks of travertine from the neighboring Esquiline Hill to decorate the new chancel<sup>39</sup>. The construction



5. Bernardo Gamucci, *Transverse section of frigidarium with altar located in central bay, site of future chancel designed by Michelangelo* (in *Id., Libri quattro dell'antichità della città di Roma, Venezia 1565. From Cangemi, La Certosa di Roma, cit., II, fig. 37*).



of the famous cloister of Santa Maria degli Angeli, built in the area of the *natatio* outside the *frigidarium* and often attributed to Michelangelo but in fact begun only after his death in 1565, also made extensive use of recuperated ancient stones<sup>40</sup>. This suggests that while Michelangelo's construction management of Santa Maria degli Angeli was distinguished by a frugal, even fastidious "minimalism", his successors settled for the more convenient Roman building practice of reusing ancient stones for new construction.

#### *Michelangelo's engagement with preservation issues*

The importance which the preservation of antiquity assumed during this intervention at the Baths was not an accidental coincidence or an aberrant tangent. On the contrary, there is persuasive evidence to suggest that Michelangelo took ongoing interest in such matters. Yet because of the prevailing interpretation which emphasizes the notion that Renaissance builders unthinkingly destroyed ancient remains, we still tend to overlook the cumulative evidence attesting to his lifelong interest in preserving ancient remains.

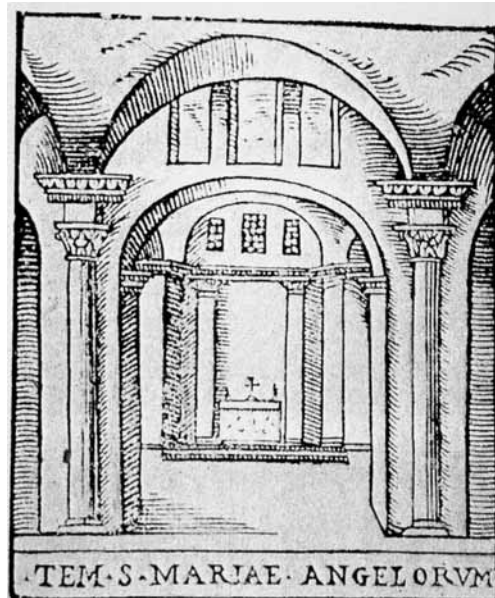
Undoubtedly Michelangelo's noted inventiveness and liberty from convention has also helped to distract our attention from his interest in preservation. As Vasari noted, Michelangelo's unprecedented designs "broke the bonds and chains that had previously confined [artists] to the creation of traditional forms"<sup>41</sup>. The vigorous rejection of standard architectural models might seem to clash on principle with the cautious, preservation-minded outlook of the scholarly antiquarian. Further, Michelangelo's drawings after antiquity also indicate an unorthodox, even casual approach toward ancient remains,

suggesting a contrast with the painstaking accuracy of the antiquarian. Rather than attempting to produce a systematic visual record, the fragmentary drawings by Michelangelo that survive suggest that he focused upon those details of ancient forms which appealed to him at the moment; these included rapid sketches of unidentified columns and entablatures, as well as a partial elevation of the Arch of Constantine<sup>42</sup>. Such work does not readily conform to the antiquarian notion of a corpus of measured drawings of antiquity, and one might well conclude that other concerns took priority for Michelangelo over the preservation of ancient remains.

Yet we would be mistaken if we were to make such an assumption. If anything, Michelangelo's apparent indifference to antiquarian practices might suggest his resistance to the notion of creating an arbitrary and prescriptive classical grammar. But in terms of making new interventions in a pre-existing context, there is evidence to prove that Michelangelo strongly favored the preservation of ancient remains, and that he took key steps to protect ancient structures from harm.

Already as early as 1510, more than fifty years before construction began at the Baths, Michelangelo participated in an extraordinary series of preservation measures for the portal of San Petronio in Bologna<sup>43</sup>. The proposed construction of a new façade for San Petronio required the rebuilding of its main portal by Jacopo della Quercia. In response to this situation, the building contract included the precise stipulation that the existing portal and all of its ornamental elements should be dismantled and then remounted precisely "in that form which it has now"<sup>44</sup>. It seems clear Michelangelo was well aware of this project, as he had just completed the monumental bronze statue of Julius

6. Girolamo Franzini, *Single surviving view of the altar and column screen designed by Michelangelo (in Le cose maravigliose dell'alma città di Roma, Venezia 1588. From Cangemi, La Certosa di Roma, cit., II, fig. 46).*



II destined for the same façade – indeed, the contract specified that his statue had already been installed in its niche directly over the portal. We know Michelangelo admired the work of Jacopo della Quercia, which makes it seem likely he would have favored such an intervention; possibly he was even responsible for conjuring up this elaborate preservation campaign, which required the laborious reconstruction of the original portal immediately adjacent to its original position.

An exchange of letters around fifteen years later provides further evidence that Michelangelo refrained from the established practice of excavating building stone from ancient sites. In 1526, during his supervision of the construction site at the Basilica of San Lorenzo in Florence, Michelangelo was preparing for the installation of the new reliquary tribune balcony against the interior of the front façade of the church. The design included two monolithic freestanding columns flanking the front entrance, which would support the reliquary balcony.

The surviving correspondence between Michelangelo in Florence and his agent Fattucci in Rome suggests that the builders had encountered difficulties in acquiring stone of suitable size from local quarries for the columns at San Lorenzo. In a letter to Michelangelo dated 3 April 1526, Fattucci reported that columns of the necessary dimension could be obtained by excavating at Porto, the ancient port of Rome, now a marshy archaeological landscape along the Tyrrhenian coast<sup>45</sup>. Yet while Fattucci invoked common Roman building practice, proposing to use *spolia* for new construction, Michelangelo evidently declined to take this advice. Instead, he would excavate new columns of *pietra serena* from quarries in the mountains outside Florence<sup>46</sup>.

While the transport of marble columns from Rome to Florence would certainly be expensive, it is clear that Fattucci's suggestion would still appeal to a builder in search of large monolithic columns. Indeed, this was the reason why so many ancient columns were used as *spolia* throughout medieval Italy: this was a labor-saving and cost-cutting technique, one that obviated the need to excavate and work up a new column from scratch. But by refusing to excavate at Porto, and rejecting the reuse of ancient stones in his new construction, Michelangelo made a radical break with this centuries-old traditional building practice.

Upon moving to Rome in 1534, Michelangelo participated even more directly in the active preservation of ancient Roman remains. For instance, he provided the design for a classicizing wall-mounted tabernacle in the Conservators Palace to house the *Fasti*, the fragmentary calendar inscriptions recovered from the Roman Forum<sup>47</sup>. In 1540 Paul III authorized the collection of building stone in the Roman Forum for the building site at St Peter's, and in 1546 this led to the first unearthing of the *Fasti* remains near the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina. This inaugurated an unprecedented preservation project, where the leading antiquarians of Rome participated in the deciphering and collocation of these remains<sup>48</sup>. Michelangelo's selection as designer not only attested to his status as leading artist in Rome, but to his mastery of antiquarian knowledge, which equipped and qualified him for such a complex task. Indeed, the tabernacle design raised numerous philological issues involving the "correct" recomposition of the surviving texts. The project also raised contextual issues as well, where the designer was responsible for recreating a lost architectural setting.

In the next decade Michelangelo also was involved with a proposed scheme to improve the existing conditions at the Column of Trajan. Paul III had recently ordered the demolition of a medieval chapel built against the column's base to reveal the elaborate relief sculpture decorating the pedestal<sup>49</sup>. This demolition, which greatly augmented the view of the Column of Trajan, would precipitate much broader urban interventions. In a decretal issued in September 1558, the Conservators announced that they wished to display the ancient landmark in a manner more befitting its august status: "as the Column of Trajan is one of the most beautiful and best-preserved antiquities in this city, it is fitting that the site where it stands should be adorned and arranged to correspond with the beauty of the Column itself"<sup>50</sup>. At this point the civic magistrates sought Michelangelo's advice; according to the decretal, they acquired a drawing "for this purpose [...] by Michelangelo".

Yet after making this casual reference to



7. Roma, Baths of Diocletian (Santa Maria degli Angeli), view of the vaults in the frigidarium.

Michelangelo's involvement in the project, the Conservators made no further mention of this design, and we do not know if anything came of this supposed project<sup>51</sup>. However, we know that Michelangelo's house, in the Via Macel de' Corvi, stood in the shadow of this beloved ancient monument. As the civic magistrates proposed to finance these interventions at the site by levying a *gettito* or "betterment tax" upon neighboring property-owners, perhaps Michelangelo's design for the setting of the Column may have served as a means to discharge this obligation<sup>52</sup>. But Michelangelo may have taken particular interest in this operation also because it posed an intriguing preservation problem<sup>53</sup>.

Finally, Michelangelo's work in directing construction at the New St Peter's may have also critically shaped his approach to the preservation of ancient remains in Rome. He served as chief architect of this immense worksite for eighteen years, from 1546 until his death in 1564<sup>54</sup>. This was an experience that afforded a unique perspective upon preservation issues: it was precisely during his tenure as chief architect that Raphael had composed the celebrated *Letter to Leo X*, with its urgent appeal to the pope to preserve what little vestiges of antiquity still survived<sup>55</sup>. Michelangelo would have invariably been struck by the same dilemma in supervising the building site of St Peter's, where the pressure to accelerate construction translated into the aggressive collection of ancient building stone throughout Rome.

We have evidence suggesting Michelangelo's troubled response to the rapid demolitions taking place at the Vatican itself. According to Michelangelo's biographer Condivi, the artist criticized Bramante for his impetuous demoli-

tion of the existing columns at St Peter's. He noted that in the process of dismantling the ancient nave, Bramante had toppled the venerable columns and thus dashed them to pieces, rather than lowering them gently, to ensure they survived intact<sup>56</sup>. While later glosses appended to Condivi's text suggest that Michelangelo sought to moderate this criticism, we may assume the artist still regarded Bramante's behavior as wasteful, if not sacrilegious<sup>57</sup>.

It is even possible that Michelangelo entertained notions of revamping the entire project of the New St Peter's to allow for the preservation of significant surviving portions of the existing early Christian basilica. A surviving sketch attributed to Michelangelo suggests he considered leaving the original structure as it stood, limiting new construction to the area of the crossing and the dome<sup>58</sup>. Preservation concerns could have prompted Michelangelo to contemplate this surprising new direction, the most radical departure yet from Bramante's original design, thus bringing the apparently inexorable process of destruction set into motion by Julius II in 1506 to a grinding halt.

Indeed, by the mid-sixteenth century it was no longer apparent whether the ancient basilica would in fact be demolished at all. In 1534 Antonio da Sangallo closed the fractured end of the ancient structure with the *muro divisorio*, making the nave usable again, which was perhaps intended as a permanent solution<sup>59</sup>. Liturgical celebrations and even religious burials continued to take place in the ancient structure, suggesting that its demolition was no longer expected to be imminent or even possible<sup>60</sup>. Popular opposition to Bramante's reconstruction project continued to mount over the course of the sixteenth century, and while it is unlikely that Michelangelo himself shared this view, it is true that the ancient nave was still standing on its original foundations when he died in 1564<sup>61</sup>. This fact, coupled with the absence of a definitive solution by Michelangelo for the façade of the new basilica, reminds us that the artist did not rush to solve this complex and perhaps intractable problem. Instead he chose to concentrate his efforts upon the cupola, the portion of the basilica that was already under way, leaving the problem of the nave to be resolved by a future generation.

*Preservation, "minimalism", and the resurrection of the body*

From 1510 until his death in 1564, throughout his entire career as an architect and builder, Michelangelo was engrossed with the problem of preserving ancient structures. This issue became even more all-absorbing when he began working in Rome: in this unique setting, Michelangelo confronted both greater obstacles



8. Michelangelo Buonarroti, Last Judgment, 1534-41, detail (Roma, Sistine Chapel. From L. Partridge, G. Colalucci, F. Mancinelli, Michelangelo, The Last Judgment: a glorious restoration, New York 2000, plate 45, photograph Takasbi Okamura).

in the form of obdurate surviving physical remains, but also greater opportunities, where ancient structures could be adapted in innovative ways to accommodate changing contemporary needs. Certainly by the time Michelangelo embarked upon his design for Santa Maria degli Angeli, he was an acknowledged authority regarding the preservation of ancient remains, with at least half a century of accumulated knowledge and experience.

Although scholarship has generally consigned preservation to the periphery of architectural concerns in Renaissance Rome, and although modern preservation orthodoxy tends to prevent us from recognizing Renaissance preservation solutions, it is clear that every builder working in this context had to contend with such issues. Still, Michelangelo's design for Santa Maria degli Angeli differs from other contemporary interventions upon ancient remains. Michelangelo, in demonstrating a cautious mindfulness regarding the irreplaceable historic fabric of the Baths, anticipated the approach of modern archaeologists and conservationists to an astonishing degree. The notion of preserving an ancient artifact unchanged also invites intriguing parallels with very different cultural traditions, such as the philosophy of *wabi-sabi* in sixteenth-century Japan<sup>62</sup>, which attributed special aesthetic and cultural value to precisely those artifacts that were weathered or deformed with age. Clearly the concern for the preservation of ancient artifacts was not uncommon in the early modern world.

Finally, we may conclude by posing a new direction. As noted at the beginning of this essay, the scholarly literature has presented Michelangelo's unusual design for Santa Maria degli Angeli, with its exposed plastered walls anticipating the stripped-down, penitential interior of the Gesù by just five years, as conforming to the austerity and severity of the post-Tridentine Church (ill. 7). The inscription placed upon Pius IV's tomb in the new chancel, by exalting the Virgin's exorcism of pagan idols from the site, suggested an even more antagonistic attitude toward the surviving pagan remains<sup>63</sup>. Yet such a censorious message seems strangely at odds with Michelangelo's evident, lifelong interest in preserving ancient remains.

Michelangelo's spiritual preoccupations also seem to contrast with the reformers' goal to stamp out heresy. The "minimalism" of Santa Maria degli Angeli may offer insight regarding Michelangelo's concern with the resurrection, as the central mystery of the Christian faith and an abiding preoccupation of the artist, as demonstrated by numerous drawings and writings produced over the course of his career<sup>64</sup>. Of these, the monumental Resurrection scene in the lower part of the *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel is



among the most powerful depictions of this event, where the dead called forth from their tombs by the beckoning gesture of Christ ascend toward Paradise (ill. 8)<sup>65</sup>. Late in life, Michelangelo is said to have become increasingly absorbed with the thought of death; as Romeo De Maio observed, Michelangelo achieved intellectual serenity through his constant meditation upon these matters<sup>66</sup>. As Salvatore Settis has noted, ruins – at least in the Western tradition – have long been associated with the cycle of death and rebirth<sup>67</sup>. The miracle and mystery of the resurrection could not have been far from the mind of the elderly Michelangelo, as he moved slowly among the ruins of the ancient Baths.

Of course, Michelangelo's poetic economy of means – the very restraint which characterized his intervention at Santa Maria degli Angeli – cannot be confined to any single interpretation. His turn to architecture from the figurative arts late in his career has been persuasively described as an expression of deepening pessimism, a way of "saying no by falling silent"<sup>68</sup>. Taken to an extreme, one could argue that the minimal nature of Michelangelo's intervention at the Baths even represented a kind of self-abnegation. Yet surely we need to moderate this view by considering the changing function of the ruined Baths. For if Michelangelo's project left the ancient structures intact and unchanged, his design also infused them with new vitality. From this perspective, Michelangelo's "minimalist" intervention, which preserved the skeleton of the Baths intact, might even evoke a parallel with the longed-for resurrection of the flesh<sup>69</sup>. Perhaps Michelangelo's "minimalism" thus could also function as an expression of hope for God's mercy, and for the fulfillment of the promise of everlasting life.

A version of this argument was presented at the Renaissance Society of America conference in 2005. I am grateful to many friends for advice and assistance, including the members of the panel which generated this talk, Anthony Grafton, Ingrid Rowland, and Francesco di Teodoro. William Wallace generously pointed out critical additional evidence. I have also benefited from conversations with Christy Anderson, Rabun Taylor, Paolo Fancelli, Pier Nicola Pagliara, Virginia Raguin, and Jody Ziegler. Key comments from the anonymous readers have also enlarged this study. Thanks in particular to Lidia Cangemi for providing me with the results of her research on the Carthusian monastery at Santa Maria degli Angeli. Finally, I would like to dedicate this work to my patient advisor and friend, James Ackerman.

#### Abbreviations

ASC = Roma, Archivio Storico Capitolino.

ASR = Roma, Archivio di Stato.

BAV = Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.

1. The two primary sixteenth-century accounts of Michelangelo's interventions at Santa Maria degli Angeli are Giorgio Vasari, *La vita di Michelangelo, nelle redazioni del 1550 e del 1568*, edited by P. Barocchi, Milano-Napoli 1962, I, p. 111 and commentary; *ibid.*, IV, pp. 1767-1784; and the manuscript of Matteo Catalani, *Historia dell'erezione della chiesa di Santa Maria degli Angeli in Roma*, Roma 1597 (BAV, *Vaticanus Latinus* 8735). Further literature on Michelangelo's work at Santa Maria degli Angeli includes R. Lanciani, *Storia degli scavi di Roma*, Roma 1989, II, pp. 147-149; A. Pasquinelli, *Ricerche edilizie su Santa Maria degli Angeli*, in "Roma: rivista di studi e di vita romana", 3, 1925, pp. 349-356 and pp. 395-407; *Id.*, *La chiesa michelangiolesca di S. Maria degli Angeli*, in "Roma: rivista di studi e di vita romana", 3, 1932, pp. 152-153; *Id.*, *S. Maria degli Angeli: la chiesa di Michelagnolo nelle Terme Diocleziane*, in "Roma: rivista di studi e di vita romana", 8, 1935, pp. 257-264; A. Meliù, *S. Maria degli Angeli alle Terme di Diocleziano*, Roma 1950; L. von Pastor, *Storia dei papi dalla fine del medioevo*, edited by A. Mercati, Roma 1950, VII, pp. 574-585; A. Schiavo, *La vita e le opere architettoniche di Michelangelo*, Roma 1953, pp. 224-237; *Id.*, *Santa Maria degli Angeli alle Terme*, in "Bollettino del centro studi di storia dell'architettura", 8, 1954, pp. 20-21; H. Siebenhüner, *S. Maria degli Angeli in Rom*, in "Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst", 6, 1955, pp. 176-206; R. de Maio, *Michelangelo e la controriforma*, Roma-Bari 1978, pp. 329-333; P. Fancelli, *Demolizioni e restauri di antichità nel Cinquecento romano*, in M. Fagiolo (ed.), *Roma e l'antico nell'arte e nella cultura del Cinquecento*, Roma 1985, pp. 390-395; J.S. Ackerman, *The Architecture of Michelangelo*, II ed., Chicago 1986, pp. 260-268; *Id.*, *The Architecture of Michelangelo: Catalogue*, I ed., London 1961, pp. 136-138; R. Pacciani, *Michelangelo, Pio IV e i Certosini a S. Maria degli Angeli*, in *Certose e certosini in Europa*, conference proceedings (Padula, 22-24 September 1988), Napoli 1990, pp. 109-121; G.C. Argan, B. Contardi, *Michelangelo architetto*, Milano 1990, pp. 354-357; L. Cangemi, *Michelangelo e i Certosini a Roma*, in *Analecta Carthusiana: The Mystical*

*Tradition and the Carthusians*, edited by J. Hogg, Salzburg 1997, pp. 109-130; *Ead.*, *La Certosa di Roma*, in *Analecta Carthusiana*, edited by J. Hogg, A. Girard, and D. Le Blévec, Salzburg 2002, 2 vols. See also the recent discussion by Christof Thoenes in F. Zöllner, C. Thoenes, T. Pöpper (eds.), *Michelangelo 1475-1564: complete works*, Köln 2007, pp. 355-376, 487-488.

2. The portrayal of Santa Maria degli Angeli as a victory of Christian Rome over paganism was already a fundamental feature of one of the most important sixteenth-century sources for the Baths project, the commemorative text composed by Catalani, *Historia dell'erezione...*, cit. [cf. note 1]. However, for Michelangelo's complex and often tense relations with Counter-Reformation orthodoxy see de Maio, *Michelangelo e la controriforma*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 3-15. The adaptive reuse of monumental ancient remains in Rome escalated notably under Sixtus V (1585-1590), who developed a visionary urban planning program for the papal capital based upon precisely such interventions. For a discussion of Sistine repairs to the Column of Marcus Aurelius (crowned with a bronze statue of St Paul), see G. Martines, *Silla Longhi e il restauro della Colonna Antonina*, in Fagiolo (ed.), *Roma e l'antico...*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 179-207.

3. In general, the scholarly literature has given scant attention to the importance of preservation efforts prior to the advent of modern or "scientific" archaeological practices; see the otherwise still indispensable work of R. Weiss, *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity*, Oxford 1969. More recent studies have revealed the need for a more expansive scope; see in particular S. Settis, *Nota dell'editore*, in *Id.* (ed.), *Memoria dell'antico nell'arte italiana*, I-III, Torino 1984-1986, I, *L'uso dei classici*, pp. XXIII-XXVII; and I. Bignamini, *Introduction*, in *Ead.* (ed.), *Archives and Excavations: essays on the history of archaeological excavations in Rome and southern Italy from the Renaissance to the nineteenth century*, London 2004, pp. 1-10. For broader cultural issues regarding the study of the past in earlier historical periods, see D. Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, Cambridge 1985; F. Haskell, *History and its Images*, New York-New Haven 1993; A. Schnapp, *The Discovery of the Past*, New York 1997. For the notion that early modern culture tolerated a broader range of possibilities in the transmission of material artifacts over time, see A. Nagel, C. Wood, *Interventions: Toward a New Model of Renaissance Anachronism*, in "The Art Bulletin", 87, September 2005, pp. 403-415, followed by critical responses by C. Dempsey, M. Cole, C. Farago, and the authors.

4. For discussion of fourth and fifth century legislation and its efficacy see J. Alcheremes, *Spolia in Roman Cities of the Late Empire: Legislative Rationales and Architecture Reuse*, in "Dumbarton Oaks Papers", 48, 1994, pp. 167-178.

5. Procopius, *Gothic Wars*, 4.22. For Theodorici's interest in preservation and the survival of ancient remains in late antique Italy, see B. Ward-Perkins, *From Classical Antiquity to the Middle Ages: urban public building in northern and central Italy*, Oxford 1984.

6. The civic government, claiming to be the successor of the *Senatus Populusque Romanus*, was a popular institution founded in 1143 in rebellion against the pope. Already in 1162 the civic magistrates claimed the right to protect the Column of Trajan, as a means to challenge their powerful adversaries and to claim this potent symbol of ancient Rome as their own. For this edict see A. de Bouiard, *Gli antichi marmi di Roma nel medio evo*, in "Archivio della reverenda società romana di storia patria", 34, 1911, pp. 240-241; A. Cavallaro, "Una colonna a modo di campanile facta per Adriano imperatore". *Vicende e interpretazioni della colonna Traiana tra Medioevo e Quattrocento*, in *Studi in onore di Giulio Carlo Argan*, edited by S. Macchioni and B. Tavassi La Greca, Roma 1984, I, pp. 73-74.

7. On the civic government's use of ancient remains as a source of political legitimacy, see N. Gramaccini, *La prima riedificazione del Campidoglio e la rivoluzione senatoriale del 1144*, in *Roma centro ideale della cultura dell'antico nei secoli XV e XVI: da Martino V al sacco di Roma, 1417-1527*, international conference proceedings (Roma, 25-30 November 1985), edited by S. Danesi Squarzina, Milano 1989, pp. 33-47, with bibliography.

8. For the text of the statutes see C. Re, *Statuti della città di Roma*, Roma 1880, p. 188. For the institutional history of the Conservators, see M. Franceschini, *I conservatori della Camera Urbis: storia di un'istituzione*, in M.E. Fittoni (ed.), *Il palazzo dei Conservatori e il palazzo nuovo in Campidoglio: momenti di storia urbana di Roma*, Pisa 1997, pp. 21-24.

9. Sources for archaeological protection in early modern Rome include F. Cerasoli, *Usi e regolamenti per gli scavi di antichità in Roma nei secoli XV e XVI*, in "Studi e documenti di storia e diritto", 18, 1897, pp. 133-149; J.J. Gloton, *Transformations et réemploi des monuments du passé dans la Rome du XVI siècle: les monuments antiques*, in "Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire", 74, 1962, pp. 705-758; M.B. Jestaz, *L'exportation des marbres de Rome de 1535 à 1571*, in "Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire", 75, 1963, pp. 415-466; G. de Angelis d'Ossat, *Restauro: architettura sulle preesistenze, diversamente valutate nel tempo*, in "Palladio", 27, 2, 1978, pp. 51-68; P. Leisching, *Roma restauranda: Versuch einer Geschichte des päpstlichen Denkmalschutzrechtes*, in *Römische Kurie, Kirchliche Finanzen, Vatikanisches Archiv: Studien zu Ehren von Hermann Hoberg*, edited by E. Gatz, Roma 1979, I, pp. 425-443; Fancelli, *Demolizioni e restauri...*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 357-406; M. Franceschini, *La magistratura capitolina e la tutela delle antichità di Roma nel XVI secolo*, in "Archivio della società romana di storia patria", 109, 1986, pp. 141-150; R. Ridley, *To Protect the Monuments: The Papal Antiquarian (1534-1870)*, in "Xenia antiqua", 1, 1992, pp. 117-154; F. Choay, *The Invention of the Historic Monument*, translated by L. M. O'Connell, Cambridge 2001, pp. 27-39; C. Franzoni, *Urbe Roma in pristinum formam renascente: le antichità di Roma durante il rinascimento*, in A. Pinelli (ed.), *Roma del rinascimento*, Roma-Bari 2001, pp. 291-336; V. Curzi, *Bene culturale e pubblica utilità*, Bologna 2004; I. Campbell, *Rescue Archaeology in the Renaissance*, in Bignamini (ed.), *Archives and Excavations...*, cit. [cf. note 3], pp. 13-22; P. Fancelli, *Le*

*rovine tra spolia e restauri*, in *La Roma di Leon Battista Alberti*, exhibition catalogue (Roma, Musei Capitolini, 24 June-16 October 2005), edited by F.P. Fiore with the collaboration of A. Nesselrath, Roma 2005, pp. 57-67; D. Karmon, *Renaissance Strategies to Protect the Colosseum*, in "Future Anterior", 2, 2, Winter 2005, pp. 1-10; *Id.*, *Printing and Protecting Ancient Remains in the Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae*, in R. Zorach (ed.), *The Virtual Tourist in Renaissance Rome. Printing and Collecting the Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae*, Chicago 2007, pp. 36-49.

10. For a chronological (if partial) summary of papal protective legislation, see Leisching, *Roma restauranda...*, cit. [cf. note 9].

11. "Confirmavit etiam nostrum describendi propositum tuus in ipsam pontificatus tui sedem reditus adeo illius conservationi utilis atque necessary, ut constet eam senior calamitatibusque confectam, si altero absumis decennio, paene funditus peritura" (Biondo Flavio, *Roma instaurata*, in R. Valentini, G. Zuchetti [eds.], *Codice topografico della città di Roma*, Roma 1953, IV, pp. 259-260).

12. "Neque enim sola comitantis curiae praesentia, quod semper civitatis opulentiae plurimum profuit, Romanos foves, sed collapse deformataque aedificia multis in locis maximo instauras reficisque impendio, decorum certe et magnanimo principe dignissimum facinus, et quod omnes florente olim Roma iacta moles factaque aedificiorum structuras laude et gloria tanto superset, quanto nostra huius saeculi tenuitas immani illorum affluentiae opum cedit" (*ibid.*, p. 260).

13. See N.S. Price, M. Kirby Talley, Jr., A. Melucco Vaccaro (eds.), *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, Los Angeles 1996, pp. 201-259; J. Jokilehto, *A History of Architectural Conservation*, Oxford-Amsterdam 1999, pp. 137-212; S. Muñoz Viñas, *Contemporary Theory of Conservation*, Oxford 2005, pp. 1-21.

14. The *Thermae Diocletianae* were recorded as early as the eighth or ninth century in the chronicle of the Anonymous of Einsiedeln; see *Silloge epigrafica itinerario descrizione delle mura di Roma del codice Einsiedlense*, in *Codice topografico della città di Roma*, I-III, Roma 1940-1946, II, 1942, p. 164. See also the enthusiastic twelfth-century description of the *frigidarium* in Magister Gregorius, *De mirabilibus urbis Romae*, *ibid.*, III, 1946, p. 155.

15. The earliest conversion project may date from the eleventh century; see Lanciani, *Storia degli scavi...*, cit. [cf. note 1], II, p. 147. For the papal bull issued by Urban V in 1363 authorizing the construction of a "monasterium", see F. Cerasoli, *Documenti inediti medievali circa le terme di Diocleziano ed il mausoleo di Augusto*, in "Bollettino della commissione archeologica comunale di Roma", 1895, pp. 301-308. It seems the reclusive members of the Carthusian order would have found this remote and secluded site well-suited to their needs. For San Ciriaco, a small medieval church attested on the grounds of the bath complex as early as the fifth



century, see C. Hülsen, *Le chiese di Roma nel medioevo*, Firenze 1927, p. 245.

16. For Duca, in addition to the text compiled by his colleague and disciple Catalani, *Historia dell'erettione...*, cit. [cf. note 1], see C. Bernardi Salvetti, *S. Maria degli Angeli alle Terme e Antonio Lo Duca*, Roma 1965.

17. Catalani, *Historia dell'erettione...*, cit. [cf. note 1], 21-23. For the renewed interest in the cult of the angels in sixteenth-century Italy, spearheaded by Duca, see G.A. Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque: Jesuit art in Rome, 1565-1610*, Toronto 2003, 68-69. Duca, as recorded by Catalani, expressed particular interest in the problem of preserving the ancient Baths. In a forthcoming essay to be published by the Center for Reform and Renaissance Studies at the University of Toronto, I investigate the crucial importance of faith and fantasy in shaping Duca's approach to the preservation of antiquity.

18. "Sua Santità rispondeva che era troppo gran macchina, e c'era molta spesa per ridurla in chiesa..." see Catalani, *Historia dell'erettione...*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 39-39v. Duca counted not only Paul III but also Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor and the most powerful ruler in Europe, among his supporters, as the cult of the angels strategically served both Farnese and Hapsburg dynastic ambitions. Other popes were less sympathetic to Duca's proposal; Catalani reports that Julius III was persuaded by his nephews to turn down Duca's petition, as his proposed church would interfere with their use of the *frigidarium* as a place to ride horses.

19. Duca's proposed church would only become feasible when incorporated into an even vaster urban development program affecting the entire eastern region of Rome. The new church was conceived to function as not only a centerpiece for a new urban quarter, but even as the papal funerary monument. For this program see M. Fagiolo, M.L. Madonna, *La Roma di Pio IV, parte 1*, in "Arte illustrata", 51, 1972, pp. 383-402; *Id.* *La Roma di Pio IV, parte 2*, in "Arte illustrata", 54, 1973, pp. 204-212. See also Cangemi, *La Certosa di Roma*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 31-42.

20. For the text of the bull, see Meliu, *S. Maria degli Angeli...*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 20-21, and Schiavo, *La vita e le opere...*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 279-282. For the Act of Concession, which recorded the laying of the foundation stone on 5 August 1561, see *ibid.*, pp. 277-279.

21. "... et divini cultus augmento verum etiam Thermarum, quarum parietinae per multa iamque secula derelictae et neglectae paulatim collabi noscuntur manutentioni, et Urbis predictarum decori, venerandaeque in eis antiquitatis memoriae, non mediocriter consuleretur".

22. As noted in Siebenhüner, *S. Maria degli Angeli...*, cit. [cf. note 1], p. 191.

23. ASC, *Camera capitolina*, cred. I, vol. 21, 111-112: "... non solo ne resterà conservato l'antico, ma anche restaurato, et molto ampliato e abellito". See also Schiavo, *La vita e le opere...*, cit. [cf. note

1], p. 283. Catalani recorded that almost all the Conservators supported the anticipated conversion as a pragmatic solution, as the best means to preserve the ruins: "quasi tutti li Romani nel consiglio di Campidoglio favorivano i negotii della Chiesa nelle Terme perché dicevano che in tal guisa quella antichità si sarebbe meglio conservata" (Catalani, *Historia dell'erettione...*, cit. [cf. note 1], p. 55v).

24. "... prima copri le volte principali de' tavoloni ..." (*ibid.*, p. 100). Alberti in *De re aedificatoria* emphasized the crucial importance of a well-made roof in protecting a building from decay; see Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, translated by J. Rykwert, Cambridge-London 1996, I, 11, p. 26; also II, 1, pp. 34-35.

25. "... conciossia che Antonio aveva voluta, che la chiesa si fusse fatta per lungo, secondo la sua devotione per haverla divisa in sette cappelle [...] nondimeno a Michelangelo gli parve disegnarla in croce" (Catalani, *Historia dell'erettione...*, cit. [cf. note 1], p. 80).

26. "... fece dalle fondamenta la cappella maggiore con la tribuna, aprì la porta verso ponente, e ristrinse il corpo della chiesa per due mura, nell'uno fece la porta verso tramontana, nell'altro muro la porta verso mezzogiorno, e cominciò a far dare il bianco dentro alle volte" (*ibid.*, pp. 100-101). Catalani used the three principal doorways to orient the reader to Michelangelo's project. For contemporary descriptions of the design see Siebenhüner, *S. Maria degli Angeli...*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 180-184; Fancelli, *Demolizioni e restauri...*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 390-395; Ackerman, *The Architecture of Michelangelo*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 260-268.

27. Catalani reports that the roofs of the lower external bays had collapsed: "a Michelangelo gli parve [...] di restringerla [sc. la chiesa] e levar le cappelle basse, sfondate di tetto, e così veniva a stare la parte più alta intiera, la volta della quale e sostenuta da otto colonne ..." (Catalani, *Historia dell'erettione...*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 80-81).

28. Catalani reports that Duca supported Michelangelo's design because it was much more cost-effective than his own project, which involved restoring all of the ancient *frigidarium*; Duca recognized that an economic solution would be much more likely to gain papal support. "Antonio non si oppose a questo disegno di Michelangelo dubitando che il papa facendosi d'altro modo per non far molta spesa si fosse ritirato, e veramente era il negotio considerabile, perché a voler ristorare tutte le quattordici cappelle ci bisognava doppia spesa, e Michelangelo si restrinse alla metà..." (*ibid.*, pp. 81-81v). For Pius IV's anxieties regarding adequate financing for Santa Maria degli Angeli, see Pastor, *Storia dei papi...*, cit. [cf. note 1], VII, p. 577. As Ackerman noted, in the end the building accounts for Santa Maria degli Angeli suggested a remarkable economy, where the total cost of the entire project came to only approximately twice the amount for the construction of the new Porta Pia. See Ackerman, *The Architecture of Michelangelo*, cit. [cf. note 1], p. 137.

29. For a critical re-examination of Michelangelo's design of the chancel, see

Cangemi, *La Certosa di Roma*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 50-56. Cangemi's research has shown that the present chancel is in fact the structure originally constructed by Michelangelo, thereby discrediting the later hypothesis that the chancel was entirely rebuilt in the eighteenth century.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 51. For discussion of the synthesis of Roman vaulting and Greek orders in imperial Roman baths, see F. Yegül, *Baths and Bathing in Classical Antiquity*, New York-Cambridge (MA) 1992, p. 2.

31. The Gamucci print showing the transverse section of the *frigidarium* is based upon the drawings of Giovanni Antonio Dosio (Gamucci reproduces Dosio's drawing unchanged, adding only a small altar in the location of the new chancel to indicate the religious function of the Baths). Dosio's drawings, admired for their archaeological accuracy, suggest that by the time construction began on the Baths the column screens were in very poor condition. Two transverse section drawings (Uffizi, UA 2549 and UA 2579) indicate that a portion of the original column screen still stood in the middle bay that would be designated as the new chancel by Michelangelo. Two additional drawings in the same series (Uffizi, UA 2545 and UA 2546) indicate that even less of the original column screen was still in place on the opposite side of the hall; here only a single column and a small piece of architrave survived in their original positions. For Dosio's drawing activity in Rome, see C. Acidini, *Roma antica*, in Giovanni Antonio Dosio, *Roma antica e i disegni di architettura agli Uffizi di Giovanni Antonio Dosio*, edited by F. Borsi, Roma 1976, pp. 27-166; see also discussion in Campbell, *Rescue Archaeology...*, cit. [cf. note 9], p. 14.

32. The print by Girolamo Franzini, taken from the guidebook *Le cose meravigliose dell'anima città di Roma*, Venezia 1588, is the only surviving visual source for the chapel as completed by Michelangelo; see Ackerman, *The Architecture of Michelangelo*, cit. [cf. note 1], fig. 139. As recorded in a print by Fioravante Martinelli, *Roma ricercata*, Roma 1644, the column screen would later be removed to expose the entire chapel to view (*ibid.*, fig. 135).

33. Vasari praised Michelangelo's design for its dextrous accommodation of the needs of the Carthusians: "suo disegno che fece [...] tante belle considerazioni per comodità de' frati Certosini..." (Vasari, *La vita di Michelangelo...*, cit. [cf. note 1], I, p. 111). As Ackerman observed, this design also afforded the Carthusians convenient and direct access to the high altar from their monastery, which would be built in the area of the *natatio* beyond. See Ackerman, *The Architecture of Michelangelo*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 263-266; see also Cangemi, *Michelangelo e i Certosini...*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 113-118. For Carthusian opposition to Pius IV's decision to relocate the order to the Baths of Diocletian from Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, see Paciani, *Michelangelo, Pio IV e i Certosini...*, cit. [cf. note 1], p. 116.

34. The building accounts (ASR, *Camerale 1, Fabbriche*, reg. 1525) have been published in part; see Appendix I in Cangemi, *La Certosa di Roma*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 119-123. As Lanciani already noted, they

suggest the construction site was consciously organized to limit damage to the ancient monuments of Rome: "apparisse da essi che ben pochi danni furono commessi sia a carico delle terme, sia a carico di altri monumenti antichi ..." (Lanciani, *Storia degli scavi...*, cit. [cf. note 1], II, p. 149). For orientation to the extensive literature on *spolia*, see A. Esch, *Reimpiego*, in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, Roma 1998, IX, pp. 876-883, as well as D. Kinney, *Spolia*, in W. Tronzo (ed.), *St Peter's in the Vatican*, Cambridge 2005, pp. 16-47.

35. This was already an established building practice for papal building projects in the fifteenth century; for payments for travertine shipped by barge from Tivoli on the Aniene during the pontificate of Nicholas V, see E. Müntz, *Les monuments antiques de Rome au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in "Révue archéologique", 2, 32, 1876, p. 172.

36. An entry dated 15 April 1564 records that tufa used on the building site of Santa Maria degli Angeli was excavated in famous quarries belonging to Vitale Galgano; see Lanciani, *Storia degli scavi...*, cit. [cf. note 1], II, 149.

37. Cangemi, *La Certosa di Roma*, cit. [cf. note 1], p. 120.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 119-120.

39. Lanciani, *Storia degli scavi...*, cit. [cf. note 1], II, p. 149. Lanciani identifies the source of the ancient travertine as the Maccellum Liviae. He also reports that an ancient capital found near the Colosseum was used to replace a missing capital for one of the main columns in the *frigidarium* after Michelangelo's death.

40. For scientific investigation of the construction of the cloister at Santa Maria degli Angeli, see L. Cangemi, *Il grande chiostro nelle Certose di Roma, Napoli, e Padula*, in *Certose di Montagna, Certose di Pianura*, conference proceedings (Villar Fochiardo-Susa-Avigliana-Collegno, 13-16 July 2000), [Borgone Susa] 2002, pp. 349-350.

41. "... gli artefici gli hanno infinito e perpetuo obbligo, avendo egli rotti i lacci e le catene delle cose che per via d'una strada comune egli di continuo operavano". For this famous description, composed in reference to Michelangelo's design of the New Sacristy at San Lorenzo in Florence, see Vasari, *La vita di Michelangelo...*, cit. [cf. note 1], I, pp. 58-59.

42. For Michelangelo's drawings after ancient remains, dated to 1515-1517, see Argan, Contardi, *Michelangelo architetto*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 154-160.

43. J. Beck, M. Fanti, *Un probabile intervento di Michelangelo per la 'porta magna' di S. Petronio*, in "Arte Antica e Moderna", 27, 1964, pp. 349-354.

44. "... ipsa porta sine delesione demolitur et in opere reponatur [...] aliis suis ornamentis in illam formam prout nunc est" (*ibid.*, p. 350).

45. For Fattucci's letter, see Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Il carteggio di Michelangelo*, posthumous publication by G. Poggi, edited by P. Barocchi and R. Ristori, I-V, Firenze 1965-1983, III, 1973, p. 217.

46. For discussion see W. Wallace, *Michelangelo at San Lorenzo: the Genius as Entrepreneur*, Cambridge 1994, p. 48. Thanks to Bill Wallace for bringing this episode to my attention.

47. For the discovery of the *Fasti*, see A. Degrassi, *Inscriptiones Italiae 13: Fasti et Elogia*, Roma 1947, I, pp. 1-17; Lanciani, *Storia degli scavi...*, cit. [cf. note 1], II, pp. 222-226. See also Argan, Contardi, *Michelangelo architetto*, cit. [cf. note 1], p. 254.

48. These scholars included Gentile Delfino, Tommaso Milizi, Tommaso Cavalieri, and Bartolomeo Marliani; Degrassi, *Inscriptiones Italiae...*, cit. [cf. note 47], I, p. 2.

49. Lanciani, *Storia degli scavi...*, cit. [cf. note 1], II, pp. 70, 131.

50. ASC, *Camera capitolina*, cred. I, vol. 20 (27 August 1558), p. 166: "Perciò la Colonna Traiana è una delle più belle et integre antichità che siano in questa città, pare conveniente cosa che selli adorni et accomodi il loco dove ella sta di sorte che corrisponda alla bellezza di essa; et per questo si è havuto sopra ciò un disegno de Michelangelo..." See also Lanciani, *Storia degli scavi...*, cit. [cf. note 1], II, p. 137.

51. In 1569, after Michelangelo's death, there was renewed discussion by the civic magistrates of building retaining walls around the base of the Column of Trajan; evidently little progress had been made in the interim.

52. For the *gettito* as a standard procedure used to collect revenue to finance urban improvement projects in early modern Rome, see R. Lanciani, *La via del Corso drizzata e abbellita nel 1538 da Paolo III*, in "Bullettino della commissione archeologica comunale di Roma", 1902, pp. 229-230; E. Re, *Maestri di strada*, in "Archivio della reverenda società romana di storia patria", 43, 1920, pp. 54-60.

53. In a discussion recorded by Francisco da Holanda, Vittoria Colonna asked for Michelangelo's advice regarding her proposed project to install a convent among the ruins of the Temple of Serapis, located on Colonna property on the Quirinal. Michelangelo enigmatically observed, "... il portico diroccato potrà servirvi da campanile" which he then qualified by noting, "... mi sembra che Vostra Eccellenza possa costruire assai bene tale monastero [...] vi darò di buon grado un'occhiata per suggerirvi qualche idea". See Francisco da Holanda, *Colloqui con Michelangelo*, edited by E. Radius, Milano 1945, p. 40. The anecdote implies that Michelangelo was in fact consulted as an authority regarding preservation and adaptive reuse. For the more circumstantial report by a seventeenth-century source regarding Michelangelo's appreciation for the unique value of the Column of Trajan, see G. Agosti, V. Farinella, *Michelangelo: studi di antichità dal Codice Coner*, Torino 1987, p. 54; *Id.*, *Nuove ricerche sulla colonna Traiana nel Rinascimento*, in S. Settis (ed.), *La Colonna Traiana*, Torino 1988, p. 584.

54. For Michelangelo's work at St Peter's, see H. Millon, *Michelangelo to Marchionni, 1546-1784*, in Tronzo (ed.), *St Peter's in the Vatican*, cit. [cf. note 34], pp. 93-101.

55. F.P. di Teodoro, *Raffaello, Baldassar Castiglione e la Lettera a Leone X*, San Giorgio di Piano 2003.

56. A. Condivi, *The Life of Michelangelo*, edited by H. Wohl, translated by A. Sedgwick Wohl, London 1976, p. 57.

57. C. Elam, "Ché ultima mano!" Tiberio Calcagni's marginal annotations to *Condivi's Life of Michelangelo*, in "Renaissance Quarterly", 61, 1998, p. 490. Michelangelo also criticized the design for the New St Peter's by Antonio da Sangallo for threatening parts of the Vatican Palace, including the Sistine Chapel, with destruction; see Buonarroti, *Il Carteggio di Michelangelo*, cit. [cf. note 45], IV, pp. 251-252.

58. This interpretation of Michelangelo's sketch was first advanced by Charles de Tolnay in 1927. For a review of de Tolnay's argument as well as more bibliography, see P. Berdini, *Il Borgo al tempo di Paolo III, parte 2*, in "Arte cristiana", 78, 740, 1990, pp. 342-343, notes 109-111.

59. As suggested by C. Thoenes, *Alt und neu St. Peter unter einem Dach*, in *Architektur und Kunst im Abendland: Festschrift zur Vollendung des 65. Lebensjahres von Günter Urban*, edited by M. Jansen and K. Wiands, Roma 1992, pp. 54-58.

60. See L. Rice, *La coesistenza delle due basiliche*, in *L'architettura della Basilica di San Pietro, storia e costruzione*, conference proceedings (Roma, Castel Sant'Angelo, 7-10 November 1995), edited by G. Spagnesi, Roma 1997, pp. 258-260.

61. For the increasingly harsh sixteenth-century criticism of the ongoing destruction at St Peter's, see de Maio, *Michelangelo e la controriforma*, cit. [cf. note 1], pp. 325-329.

62. For *wabi-sabi*, see L. Koren, *Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets, and Philosophers*, Berkeley 1994; M. Keane, *Japanese Garden Design*, Rutland (VT)-Tokyo 1996, esp. pp. 76-77; A. Juniper, *Wabi-Sabi, the Japanese Art of Impermanence*, Boston 2003. I thank the "Annali" readers for the reference to this similar Japanese practice.

63. Pius IV's inscription reads: "Quod fuit Idolum, nunc Templum est Virginis - Auctor est Pius ipse Pater, Daemones aufugite"; see Schiavo, *La vita e le opere...*, cit. [cf. note 1], p. 231. For the suggestion that this inscription was installed with Pius IV's remains only in 1583, see Pasquinelli, *Ricerche edilizie...*, cit. [cf. note 1], p. 353.

64. For Michelangelo's early studies of the *Resurrection*, see C. de Tolnay, *Morte e resurrezione in Michelangelo*, in "Commentari. Rivista di critica e storia dell'arte", 15, 1964, pp. 3-20.

65. For notions of the Resurrection in the *Last Judgment*, see L. Steinberg, *Michelangelo's Last Judgment as Merciful Heresy*, in "Art in America", 63, November-December 1975, pp. 48-63; M. Hall, *Michelangelo's Last Judgment: Resurrection of the Body and Predestination*, in "The Art Bulletin", 58, 1, 1976, pp. 85-92; *Id.*, *Michelangelo's Last Judgment as Resurrection of the Body: The Hidden Clue*, in *Id.* (ed.), *Michelangelo's Last Judgment*, Cambridge 2005, pp. 95-112.

66. De Maio, *Michelangelo e la controriforma*, cit. [cf. note 1], p. 430.

67. S. Settis, *Futuro del 'classico'*, Torino 2004, pp. 85-86.

68. Thoenes, *Michelangelo 1475-1564...*, cit. [cf. note 1], p. 8.

69. The notion of preservation, as well as that of restoration, can be seen as offering potent metaphors in the context of the resurrection. For the contemporary sixteenth-century debates over the nature of the resurrection, which involved a shift from the doctrine of the immortality of the soul based upon reason, to the doctrine of the resurrection of the body based upon scripture, see Hall (ed.), *Michelangelo's Last Judgment*, cit. [cf. note 65], pp. 85-88.