



The Medieval Content of Raphael's "School of Athens"

Author(s): Harry B. Gutman

Source: *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 2, No. 4, (Oct., 1941), pp. 420-429

Published by: University of Pennsylvania Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2707020>

Accessed: 17/07/2008 03:52

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=upenn>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1995 to build trusted digital archives for scholarship. We work with the scholarly community to preserve their work and the materials they rely upon, and to build a common research platform that promotes the discovery and use of these resources. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

JSTOR
GUTMAN, H.B.
1941



The Medieval Content of Raphael's "School of Athens"

Author(s): Harry B. Gutman

Source: *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 2, No. 4, (Oct., 1941), pp. 420-429

Published by: University of Pennsylvania Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2707020>

Accessed: 17/07/2008 03:52

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=upenn>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1995 to build trusted digital archives for scholarship. We work with the scholarly community to preserve their work and the materials they rely upon, and to build a common research platform that promotes the discovery and use of these resources. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE MEDIEVAL CONTENT OF RAPHAEL'S "SCHOOL OF ATHENS"

BY HARRY B. GUTMAN

Few works of art have been so differently interpreted by their commentators as Raphael's "School of Athens." Since the seventeenth century the famous fresco has usually been considered to be a triumphant representation of worldly science and philosophy, strictly separated from theology, represented in the opposite fresco of the "Disputa." However, the commentators of the sixteenth century, Vasari¹ as well as Borghini² and Lomazzo,³ did not share this point of view. They all saw in the picture rather a glorification of Christianity and Christian theology.

According to Vasari the picture shows "theologians engaged in the reconciliation of Philosophy and Astrology with Theology. In the work all the sages of the world are depicted, arranged in different groups, and occupied with various disputations. There are certain astrologers standing apart who have made figures and characters of geomancy and astrology, on tablets which they send by beautiful angels to the evangelists who explain them. . . . St. Matthew is copying the characters from the tablet which an angel holds before him, and setting them down in a book." Borghini literally copied this interpretation. The engraving by Agostino di Musi⁴ changes the design of St. Matthew's tablet into the Angelic Salute, thus elucidating the meaning of the group of the evangelists.

Vasari was nine years old when Raphael died. He is the only one of the commentators on the picture who can be considered a contemporary. He had the opportunity of meeting many older contemporaries and even friends and pupils of the master, who were able to give him valuable information. For this reason his writings, so far as Raphael is concerned, should be taken as a relatively trustworthy source.

Nevertheless, with the sole exception of Borghini, almost all the later interpreters ignored Vasari's report. Lomazzo saw in the

¹ Vasari, *Le Vite*, Florence 1550, "Vita di Raffaello."

² Borghini, *Il Riposo*, Florence 1584.

³ Lomazzo, *Trattato dell' Arte della Pittura, Scultura ed Architettura*, Milan 1584, Libro VI, Cap. II.

⁴ Agostino di Musi (Agostino Veneziano), engraving B 492, from 1923.

painting a representation of St. Paul preaching to the philosophers of Athens. This interpretation was accepted in the engraving of Giorgio Ghisi, *il Mantevano*,⁵ and, later on, modified by Scanelli,⁶ who misinterpreted the two central figures as St. Paul and St. Peter.

The vast majority of scholars, however, have accepted the theory mentioned in the beginning, which issued from Félibien,⁷ Bellori,⁸ Baldinucci,⁹ and the inventor of the name "School of Athens."¹⁰ This theory sought for the literary sources of the composition in Diogenes Laertius,¹¹ in Sidonius Apollinaris,¹² in the encyclopaedia of Vincent of Beauvais,¹³ in Dante,¹⁴ in Petrarch's *Triumph of Fame*,¹⁵ and in the literature of the Humanists.¹⁶ Some of the later authors simplified the question. Influenced by the tendency of the *l'art pour l'art* period to minimize

⁵ Giorgio Ghisi, *Il Mantevano*, engraving B 24, from 1550.

⁶ Scanelli, *Microcosmo della Pittura*, Cesena 1657, vol. II, p. 159.

⁷ Félibien, *Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages des plus excellens peintres anciens et modernes*, Paris 1666.

⁸ Bellori, *Descrizione delle Imagini Dipinte da Raffaello d'Urbino nelle Camere del Palazzo Apostolico Vaticano*, Rome 1695.

⁹ Baldinucci, *Notizie de' Professori del Disegno da Cimabue in Qua*, Tom. III, Florence 1728, Raffaello d'Urbino.

¹⁰ The name "School of Athens" is generally considered to have been used for the first time in 1671 by the voyager, Marquis de Seignelay (*Gazette des Beaux Arts*, Paris, 1865, Tom. I, p. 363). Félibien uses it in the second edition of his work from 1685. Bellori calls the picture "Il Ginnasio."

¹¹ Passavant, *Raffael von Urbino und sein Vater Giovanni Santi*, Leipzig 1839. W. Watkins Lloyd, *Fine Art Quarterly Review*, London 1864, vol. II, p. 42.

¹² A. Springer, "Raffael's Schule von Athen," *Graphische Künste*, Jahrgang 5, pp. 53-106, Vienna 1883. The views of Springer, basing his interpretations (like Du Bos, Scherer and H. Grimm before him) upon Sidonius Apollinaris and Marsilio Ficino, were accepted by Crowe & Cavalcaselle, *Raphael, His Life and Works*, London 1885.

¹³ Julius v. Schlosser, "Giusto's Fresken in Padua und die Vorläufer der Stanza della Segnatura," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistor. Sammlungen des Allerh. Kaiserhauses*, Vienna 1896.

¹⁴ References to Dante were made by many of the other commentators. For a paper basing the identification of all the single figures of the composition upon Dante see Grimm Hubert, "Raffael's Schule von Athen in Dante'scher Beleuchtung," *Rep. f. Kunstwissenschaft*, Bd. 47, pp. 94-112, Berlin 1926.

¹⁵ Muentz, *Raphael, sa Vie, son Oeuvre et son Temps*, Paris 1881. Muentz emphasizes also the influence of Marsilio Ficino, referring to A. Springer.

¹⁶ References to various humanistic authors were made by many scholars. A. Springer (see note 12) refers to Marsilio Ficino's commentaries on Plato's *Republic*, interpreting from this source the reliefs under the figure of Apollo.

the importance of the literary content, they were satisfied with the identification of some of the single figures.¹⁷ Generally, even those who looked back to medieval sources assumed that modern conceptions ruled the composition as a whole.

All this confusion originated from the famous description of the painting by Bellori. Bellori identified the sitting man in the left foreground, Vasari's St. Matthew, with Pythagoras, rightly explaining the signs on the tablet before him as Pythagorean. He interpreted, therefore, the whole group of the left foreground as a group of arithmeticians and musicians, and eliminated the theological element from the picture. He thus, however, created new difficulties. It proved impossible to identify all the single members of this group with arithmeticians and musicians. Also, the placing of such a group on the side on which the *trivium* (Grammar, Dialectic, Rhetoric) was obviously represented seemed unsatisfactory. Above all, it became impossible to reconcile the new content with the artistic composition and to understand the special accentuation which this group enjoys within the total composition.

But Bellori overlooked the fact that the Pythagorean designs on the tablet had found a special interpretation in Christian medieval philosophy. The Pythagorean scheme of the musical intervals symbolized harmony itself, achieved by the *coincidentia oppositorum*, the accordance of the polarities, and the mathematical scheme of the holy tetractys indicated nothing less than the light of the "higher" reason of theology in contrast with the "lower" reason of science and philosophy. This interpretation originally issued from Nicolaus Cusanus, Cardinal of the Church in 1448-1464. According to the writings of this influential thinker, who was highly respected in Raphael's time as Calcagnini's admiration shows, the foundations of all knowledge and wisdom were symbolized by the three *quaternari*: the senses by $100 + 200 + 300 + 400$, the lower reason by $10 + 20 + 30 + 40$, whereas the higher light of the theological reason was demonstrated by $1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10$, the sign on Raphael's Pythagorean tablet.¹⁸

Thus the whole group can easily be interpreted as an assembly of theologians. The sitting man writing in his book before the Pythagorean tablet is sufficiently characterized by the angel beside him as St. Matthew, if we follow Vasari's description. It is now possible to identify the two prominent men at his left with St. Mark

¹⁷ H. Wölfflin, *Die Klassische Kunst*, Munich 1924, p. 99; M. Dvorak, *Geschichte der Italienischen Kunst*, Munich 1927, v. II, p. 48.

¹⁸ Nicolai de Cusa, *Cardinalis Opera*, Basilea 1555: *De Coniuncturis*.

and St. Luke,^{18a} and the fair youth, generally identified with Francesco Maria, Duke of Urbino, with St. John. It is, of course, possible that Raphael gave him the features of the Duke. He is the only evangelist who does not participate in the mental labor of his three colleagues. He has no book with him as they have, for he is the visionary who appears a second time at another place, in the "Disputa," among those who are possessed of the highest wisdom enabling them to attain the utmost limit of knowledge symbolized in Nicolaus Cusanus's writings by the divine "1." There he writes down his vision. Consequently, the angel who holds his gospel in the "Disputa" looks upwards to him, while the other three angels, with the gospels of St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. Matthew, look to the earth.

Apart from other reasons, especially the reasons afforded by the artistic composition itself, it would, for theological reasons, be impossible to omit the evangelists in a sequence of frescoes belonging together, which show, as the frescoes of the *Stanza della Segnatura* do, the whole hierarchy of the heaven, the representatives of the Old and of the New Testament, of the apostles, the apologists, the fathers, saints and doctors of the church.

The two men looking into St. Matthew's book are, then, representatives of the Jewish and the Mohammedan theology. This, again, agrees fully with the ideas of Nicolaus Cusanus and his followers, who ascribed to these faiths also the possession of the higher reason and truth.¹⁹ The writings of the distinguished Jew-

^{18a} St. Matthew excepted, the evangelists are not characterized by their symbols. As the contemporary case of Dürer and many other representations show, these symbols are often omitted. The types used for the representation of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. John correspond with the commonly used ones. Although the fourth figure, St. Luke, is also not at odds with the familiar type, it seems, nevertheless, not quite so closely related to the popular conception of the saint's appearance. The stylistic examination shows that it must have been depicted later than the other figures. It already shows the Michelangesque influence of Raphael's later period. On the Milanese cartoon the figure is omitted. It was, as Fischel (O. Fischel, *Raphael's Zeichnungen*, Abt. VII, p. 355) rightly demonstrated, cut out from it. It is obvious that there was an original figure which was, later on, repainted. Redig de Campos (*A inspiração platónica a cristã no "Stanza della Segnatura" de Rafael no Vaticano*, O Instituto, Coimbra, 1937, vol. 91, pp. 5-24) assumes this figure to be a portrait of Michelangelo, and one could fancy that the Pope wished a portrait of Michelangelo to be included in the painting since it already contained the portraits of the other leading artists of the Papal Court: Raphael himself, Sodoma, Bramante, and Leonardo da Vinci who was at that time in Rome. Thus, Raphael may have been ordered to repaint it in accordance with the wishes of the Pope.

¹⁹ Nicolai de Cusa, *Cardinalis Opera*, Basilea 1555: *De Pace Fidei*.

ish and Mohammedan theologians were diligently studied in ecclesiastical circles since Nicolaus de Lyra, the *Doctor Planus et Utilis*, had acknowledged Rashi's commentaries on the Scriptures as his model. According to Vasari, we find the portrait of Nicolaus de Lyra among the famous doctors of the church in the "Disputa." He is closely connected with the world of thought in this painting, having figured prominently in the famous discussions on the Beatific Vision as an adversary of the heretic Pope John XXII.²⁰ A new edition of Occam's treatise on this question in the time immediately preceding the work in the *Stanza della Segnatura* demonstrates the interest in this topic at that time. In the "Disputa," Nicolaus de Lyra is represented kneeling at the side of the altar, next to St. Jerome, his predecessor as commentator on the Scriptures.

The influence of Nicolaus de Lyra's writings upon the whole thought of the time of the Renaissance and Reformation can hardly be overestimated. Everyone who was interested in questions of faith, and, therefore, every educated person, knew his commentaries. At the same time at which Raphael painted the *Stanza della Segnatura*, Michelangelo represented the pre-existence of Christ in his ancestors, after Nicolaus's interpretation of their names, in creating that grandiose variation upon the theme Faith, Hope, and Charity, which supports the symphony of the ceiling of the Sistine chapel.

After having accepted the interpretation of the group of the left foreground as a group of the evangelists, we can easily understand the character of the other groups of the painting. Raphael follows exactly the doctrines of the medieval Franciscan philosophy. He differentiates between the natural and the rational sciences quite in the sense of the Franciscans. Their classification issued from Bonaventura who subdivided the natural sciences into Mathematics, Physics, and Metaphysics, and the rational sciences into Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric.^{20a} We see, accordingly, at the right side Euclid and his group as representatives of Mathematics, Ptolemy and Zoroaster with their globes as representatives of Physics, and, on the higher level, the metaphysicians. The high and lonely figure under the statue of Athena is of special compositional

²⁰ *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, Paris 1889-1897, C.F. No. 970-987. H. Sbaralea, *Suppl. ad Script. Ord. Min.*, Rome 1908-1921, pp. 276-281. Nicolaus de Lyra, *Tractatus de Visione Beatifica*, Cantabrigiae Bibl. Univers., cod. 1040.

^{20a} *St. Bonaventura, De Reductione Artium ad Theologiam*, Ed. Collegium a S. Bonaventura ad Claras Aquas, 1882-1902, vol. 5, pp. 319-325.

importance. Since the corresponding place at the left side is void he gets a very accentuated position, making the right half of the painting more ponderous. This disturbance of the balance is equalized by the asymmetric order of the foreground, where the group of the left side, the evangelists, clearly has a superior place. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the man under the Athena is also of special importance so far as the literary content is concerned. He connects the lower with the higher groups by the gesture of his hand pointing at the globe in the hands of Zoroaster. But he is also connected with the group of the theologians by the direction of his gaze. He is the true Pythagoras looking after the tablet which he had just sent to the theologians. It is possible to recognize other metaphysicians too, for instance, Empedocles, the old priestlike man with the walking-staff. Pythagoras as well as Zoroaster and Ptolemy enjoyed in Raphael's and Vasari's time the reputation of astrologers. Thus it can be understood why Vasari speaks of geomancers and astrologers.

On the left side we see, on the higher level, the logicians and rhetoricians. Among others we see Socrates (one of the few figures of the painting that can be derived from older representations of this thinker) explaining something to his attentive listeners, among whom the martial figure of Alcibiades (or Xenophon?) is conspicuous. The group around the pillar, consisting of people of different ages and sex, represents grammar, even according to the old commentators.

The central group is formed by Plato and Aristotle. Their appearance corresponds, again, exactly with the idea of their philosophy as Bonaventura expressed it:

Et ideo videtur quod inter philosophos datus sit Platoni sermo sapientiae, Aristoteli vero sermo scientiae. Ille enim principaliter aspiciebat ad superiora, hic vero principaliter ad inferiora.²¹

The attitudes of Plato and Aristotle are emphasized by the medallions on the walls of the central hall of the painted architecture. The left one shows a man looking up, the right one a woman looking down at a globe. The front of the building is adorned with the statue of Apollo at the left and Athena at the right. Springer²²

²¹ St. Bonaventura, *Sermo 4*, No. 18. In the edition of the P. P. Collegium a S. Bonaventura ad Claras Aquas, 1882-1902, vol. V, p. 572. Not contained in the Papal edition of 1668. Quoted by Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste seit dem Ausgange des Mittelalters*, vol. III, p. 828.

²² A. Springer, see note 12.

has already explained the meaning of the reliefs under these figures. The relief under Apollo shows a struggle of men, and the one below this a triton overwhelming a nymph, both characterizing Apollo as the representative of reason triumphant over passion and lust. Under the feet of Athena a female allegorical figure representing Investigation is shown. Athena herself represents the spirit of science.

Both the Plato and Aristotle are ideal types. Plato is represented as the old long-bearded man whose furrowed features bespeak his knowledge of the world, achieved not only by scientific observation but by wisdom. This type is not unknown to us. It shows the features of the self-portrait of Leonardo da Vinci and reminds us of the imaginary portraits of Aristotle we know from several painted and sculptured representations of him, executed in the fifteenth century.²³ Just then it happened that Aristotle, who had been reputed the paragon of all wisdom, had been lowered in rank under the grave attacks of Georgios Gemistos Plethon²⁴ and his followers of the Platonic Academy. Thus, perhaps, we can explain the strange fact that Plato is represented here by a type used not long before to characterize his antagonist. The type of Aristotle shows a somewhat younger man of energetic appearance with sharp eyes observing the world of things. Both represent the height of worldly wisdom and knowledge. Nevertheless, they express different opinions, inconsistent with one another, for worldly wisdom and knowledge are not able to overcome the contradictions. Theology alone is able to do this, to achieve the *coincidentia oppositorum*, and thus the results of scientific and philosophical thinking, symbolized in the Pythagorean tablet, must be submitted to the higher reason of theology in order to be fully understood in their true sense.

The fact that Raphael painted also, in the middle ground of the "Disputa," two men pointing with their hands to heaven and forward, as Plato and Aristotle do, shows, among other signs, the close connection between the two frescoes. There is, however, a great difference between the gestures in the "School of Athens" and in the "Disputa." Plato's and Aristotle's gestures demonstrate their discordance. The gestures of the figures in the "Disputa," which I have reasons to identify, as some other authors have done before, with Justin Martyr and St. Ignatius of Antioch, express

²³ L. Planiscig, "Leonardo's Portraits und Aristoteles," *Festschrift für Julius Schlosser*, Vienna 1927, pp. 137-144.

²⁴ Georgios Gemistos Plethon, *De Platonicæ et Aristotelicæ Philosophiæ Differentia*, Florence 1439.

concordance. One of them points to Christ in heaven, the other to the Christ of the sacrament.

It is, after all, rather evident that the right half of the fresco, including Aristotle, refers to the mind of scientific investigation, i.e., to the natural sciences, the left half, including Plato, to the mind of speculative reason, i.e., to the rational sciences and the human science of theology. The supernatural theology finds its glorification in the "Disputa." The distinction between the two theologies has its source also in the writings of the medieval Dominican and Franciscan theologians.

There are some painted figures which do not belong among the representatives of science, philosophy and theology. One of them is the angel who holds the Pythagorean tablet. One figure is hastening right out of the picture. Another enters it at the left side carrying books with him. The upper part of his body is unclothed. He shows an ideal appearance by his nakedness and his loose hair, contrasting him with all the other members of the assembly. Such figures may be identified with Vasari's angels. Vasari's art theory laid particular stress upon the mastery of the nude. It is natural, therefore, that the figure mentioned attracted his peculiar attention. It is characteristic that he bestows particularly on this figure and on that of Diogenes, who is also partly nude, both being the only such figures in the fresco, the epithet "beautiful."

The angels of the "School of Athens" are wingless and so are the *putti* of the medallion of "Philosophy" and two of the *putti* of the medallion of "Jurisprudence" on the ceiling. In the *Stanza della Segnatura*, wingless angels and *putti* accompany the representations of human things, such as science, philosophy, human theology and human law, winged ones the representations of divine things, such as supernatural theology, poetry as divine inspiration (*numine afflatur*), and the divine law of the Church.

Any description of one of the single frescoes of the *Stanza della Segnatura* would be incomplete without considering the greater unity to which they belong. Like the great cathedrals of the thirteenth century the *Stanza della Segnatura* was intended to be a *speculum mundi* and to represent the whole idea of the moral and mental world. The "Disputa," *divinarum rerum notitia*, reveals the climax of wisdom and goodness in the representation of the Beatific Vision. It shows the outpouring of the Holy Spirit according to the writings of Bonaventura. The "School of Athens," *causarum cognitio*, symbolizes human thought, the "Mount Parnassus" poetry as divine inspiration, while Justice (*jus suum*

cuique tribuit) is illustrated by the transmission of the pandects and decretals, and demonstrates the two great medieval powers, the Empire and the Papacy. Between the single frescoes are many interrelations.

The ceiling is dominated by four medallions each containing a figure corresponding in situation and content to the large frescoes of the walls. Accentuating the spirit of Bonaventura's philosophy, each of these figures has a mental and a moral significance. They represent on one side Faith, Justice, Philosophy, and Poetry as mental powers, on the other side Faith, Justice, Charity and Hope as moral ones. So far as the "School of Athens" is concerned, Charity is closely connected with science and philosophy. "*Scientia inflat, sed caritas aedificat; ideo oportet iungere cum scientia caritatem*," Bonaventura wrote in his *Tractatum de Septem Donis Spiritus Sancti*.²⁵ The same thought is accentuated by him also in other works like the *Itinerarium Mentis*. The woman of the medallion holds two books, one referring to science, the other to morals. Charity inspires the *habitus affectivum* of the theologians, which contrasts, according to Bonaventura, with the *habitus practicum* of the scientists and the *habitus pure speculativum* of the philosophers. While Charity, Hope, and Faith represent the Theological Virtues, Justice and the three figures in the lunette above the frescoes of the transmission of the pandects and decretals, namely Fortitude, Temperance, and Prudence, symbolize the Cardinal Virtues. That the Cardinal Virtues alone are not sufficient is shown by the little angels of the lunette fresco, one, Hope again, pointing to heaven, the second, Faith, holding the torch, and the third, Charity, plucking fruit.

Looking at the left of the single medallions we see Faith accompanied by the "Fall of Man," Justice by the "Judgment of Solomon," Philosophy by the "Looking at the World," and Poetry by the story of "Apollo and Marsyas." These mental connections are plain, but there are mental connections as well if we look from every figure to the right. The "Fall of Man" is also in correlation with Justice, and so is the "Apollo and Marsyas" with Faith, for the martyrdom of Marsyas indicates also the way of redemption. The St. Stephen of the "Disputa" is connected with this picture by the direction of his gaze. The "Looking at the World" is related not only to Wisdom but also to Poetry, and in the "Judgment of Solomon" Wisdom and Justice join hands. The smaller paintings

²⁵ St. Bonaventura (see note 21), Ed. Claras Aquas, vol. V, p. 478, *Tractatum de Septem Donis Spiritus Sancti*.

of the ceiling must have a similar interconnection.²⁶

The predominance of Franciscan ideas in the *Stanza della Segnatura* is not at all accidental. In the time of Julius II the Franciscan philosophy had the dominant influence. The first member of the della Rovere family who became Pope, Sixtus IV, the uncle of Julius II, had been Franciscan General and a distinguished Franciscan theologian before having been elected to the papal throne. Under his reign, Julius, who fervently admired and loved his uncle, had become priest, got his Cardinalate, and had become, later on, Cardinal-Protector of the Franciscan Order. The most distinguished Franciscan philosopher, Bonaventura, was sainted in 1482 during the reign of Sixtus IV. The leading Franciscan theologian of Raphael's days was the Cardinal Marco Vigerio, also of the della Rovere family, a close friend of Julius II, to whom he devoted his chief work *Decachordum Christianum* in 1507. It is possible that he gave his advice as to the decoration of the *Stanza della Segnatura*, inasmuch as he had to do with the papal residential buildings. The important rôle played by the Franciscans, especially under the two Popes named, is also shown by the number of contemporary Franciscans who were, later on, sainted.²⁷ Paolo Cortese, a famous theologian of the Pope's court, accentuated in his *Sentences* of 1503 the predominance of theology over philosophy and science quite in the sense of St. Bonaventura.

Modern thought, in Vatican circles, was chiefly represented by views originating in Nicolaus Cusanus, the friend of Pope Nicholas V. Though some details of the paintings show the influence of contemporary humanists like Marsilio Ficino and Landino, the basis for the whole composition of the room and its paintings, which express both a formal and a philosophical unity, is established by the Christian philosophy of the later Middle Ages. Julius II, an ardent Christian and a pious man, in spite of his violent temperament and warlike attitude, ordered the execution and gave, at least, the leading ideas. The work was executed, as Giovio relates, "ad præscriptum Julii Pontificis."

New York City.

²⁶ The analysis of Dr. Wind, *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, vol. II, London 1938, though not convincing in its totality, sees in the eight smaller frescoes of the ceiling a representation of the four elements, which play a rôle in the medallion of the "Philosophy" too.

²⁷ Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste seit dem Ausgange des Mittelalters*, vol. II and III, Freiburg i/B., 1894-1895. Hurter, *Nomenclator Litterarius*, vol. IV, pp. 920, 927, Innsbruck, 1903, shows the Franciscan predominance at the time.