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Illuminated Manuscripts *Frescoed* in the 15th Century in Rome: Rivalry between Two Major Mendicant Orders

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Cross the Ponte Vittorio Emanuele II over the Tiber River and step into the Borgo district between Vatican City and Castel Sant'Angelo, there stands a building façade with ancient style pilasters [Fig. 1]. It is the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, which was founded in the late 12th century by Pope Innocent III (papacy: from 1198 to 1216), then extended and renovated in the 1470s by Franciscan Pope Sixtus IV (papacy: from 1471 to 1484)⁽¹⁾. On the walls of the vast hospital ward, 46 narratives are frescoed [see the table on pp. 64-65.]: seven episodes from the foundation of the Hospital by Pope Innocent III and 39 scenes about the life of Pope Sixtus IV ranging from a miracle that occurred while he was in the womb to the

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(1) E. Howe's two books provide us basic information on the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia. Id., *The Hospital of Santo Spirito and Pope Sixtus IV*, New York 1978; Id., *Art and Culture at the Sistine Court: Platina's "Life of Sixtus IV" and the Frescoes of the Hospital of Santo Spirito*, Città del Vaticano 2005.



Fig. 1 The view of the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome

pope's entry to heaven. It is interesting that these frescoes were depicted while Sixtus IV was still on the cathedra. Exactly for this reason, this fresco cycle stands out in comparison to artworks of the same period. Needless to say, numerous series of frescoes depicting the lives of past saints or greats had been created. But there is no other example of such a large-scale biographical painting which had been made during the protagonist's lifetime⁽²⁾.

Discussions on the style of this mural have been extremely difficult due to its poor condition and the lack of relevant documents⁽³⁾. Any convincing arguments have not yet been presented about the painters involved in this enterprise or the date of its production. Meanwhile, the subject of each scene is clearly specified. Each painting has a large rectangular compartment at its bottom for a lengthy inscription

(2) For the history of portraits in Renaissance, Italy, see John Pope-Hennessy, *The Portrait in the Renaissance*, Princeton 1979 (ジョン・ポープ・ヘネシー『ルネサンスの肖像画』中江彬, 兼重護, 山田義顕訳, 中央公論美術出版, 2002年).

(3) On previous arguments on style of the Hospital frescoes, the following article is a handy and collective. S. Pasti, "Due cicli affreschi dalla scrittura all'immagine: la chiesa vecchia di Tor de' Specchi e la Corsia Sistina dell'ospedale di Santo Spirito (con un'ipotesi per l'ospedale e un miniature)," in *Il '400 a Roma: la rinascita delle arti da Donatello a Perugino*, M. G. Bernardini e M. Bussagli, ed., Milano 2008, pp. 179–187. The restoration of the frescoes currently in progress will open more discussion on this matter.



Fig. 2 The layout of the compartments of the Hospital frescoes, Rome

explaining the narrative above [Fig. 2]. As Howe discussed in detail (1978), these inscriptions are closely related to the *Lives of the Popes* written by the humanist Bartolomeo Platina (1421–1481), who was taken into Pope Sixtus IV's confidence and presented the *Lives* to the pope in 1474⁽⁴⁾. From this apparent correspondence between the text and the image, many attempts of interdisciplinary studies have tried to delve into the idea nurtured among the Vatican humanists around Platina⁽⁵⁾. Although these studies enriched the historical background of the project, they did not always unravel what the visual image itself was trying to represent. There have been a few attempts to present iconographic interpretations by selecting some particular scenes from many narratives and comparing them with traditional images⁽⁶⁾. These previous studies have emphasized the relationship between the frescoes and the Roman Curia. In contrast, this article takes the stand that the pope's identity as a Franciscan influenced the frescoes as much as, or even more

(4) E. Howe, *op. cit.* (1978). The scholar pointed out that the inscriptions have been re-written for three times and the current version is from the 17th century.

(5) On previous research, see E. Howe, *op. cit.* (2005), pp. 13–16.

(6) I. Walter, "Der Traum der Schwangeren vor der Geburt zur Vita Sixtus' IV auf den Fresken in Santo Spirito in Rom," in *Träume in Mittelalter Ikonologische Studien*, A. Paravicini Bagliani and G. Stabile, ed., Stuttgart 1989, pp. 125–136; D. B. Presciutti, "Dead Infants, Cruel Mothers and Heroic Popes: The Visual Rhetoric of Foundling Care," in *Renaissance Quarterly* 64 (2011), pp. 752–99.

than, his identity as a pope. The author will propose that one of the most important motivations to create the large fresco cycles telling the Franciscan pope's biography could be an artistic antagonism of Franciscan friars toward a certain artwork relating to the Dominican Order: the *Meditationes* frescoes in the first cloister of Basilica of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, the Dominican main base for the purpose of evangelism in the urban areas of Rome.

At the beginning, the selection of the subject matter, images and compositions of the Hospital frescoes are examined to propose that they should be regarded as having a stronger Franciscan identity than had ever been considered before⁽⁷⁾. Then, some visual singularities of the mural paintings are pointed out and its curious correspondence with the *Meditationes* frescoes is verified. Finally, it will be revealed that *Life of Sixtus IV* and *Meditationes* should be understood as a pair in the context of ideological framework, namely competitive consciousness in the field of art commission between the Franciscans and the Dominicans, which have been deeply rooted since their origins.

1. Subjects of the frescoes and Sixtus IV's identity as a Franciscan friar

The infrastructure of Rome was dramatically improved during the reign of Sixtus IV⁽⁸⁾. He reconstructed and maintained roads, water supplies and bridges; a typical example was the Ponte Sisto named after the pope himself. At the same time, numerous facilities were constructed and restored. The extension of Santo Spirito

(7) Some scholars have pointed out the importance of the mentality and the art of the Franciscan Order in considering the Hospital frescoes especially Howe as we will see in the chapter 3. Other examples are, S. Danesi Squarzina, "Roma nel Quattrocento: il brusio dell'architettura", in *Ricerche sul '400 a Roma: pittura e architettura*, Roma 1991, pp. 57–80; M. A. Cassiani, "L'ospedale di Santo Spirito in Sassia: cultura francescana e devozione nel ciclo pittorico della corsia sistina", in *Sisto IV: le arti a Roma nel primo Rinascimento*, F. Benzi, ed., Roma 2000, pp. 167–173, especially pp. 167–168.

(8) For Sixtus IV, the following book is comprehensive, F. Benzi (ed.), *Sisto IV: Le arti a Roma nel primo Rinascimento. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi*, Roma 2000.



Fig. 3 Sandro Botticelli, *Temptations of Christ*, the Sistine Chapel, Vatican City

Hospital was also a part of his “renovation of the city” (*Renovatio Urbis*)⁽⁹⁾ and it must have had a special importance among his accomplishments. Speaking of art projects by Sixtus IV, what immediately comes to mind must be the enterprise to decorate the side walls of the Sistine Chapel conducted in 1481–82. The façade of Santo Spirito Hospital was depicted at the background of *Temptations of Christ* by Botticelli in the pope’s chapel [Fig. 3].

The fresco cycle of the hospital ward begins from narratives of its establishment by Pope Innocent III on the east wall (Nos. 1–4) and on the south wall (Nos. 5–7). All other 39 compartments are assigned to episodes of the life of Sixtus IV told in chronological order. Occasionally figures are inserted between each narrative such as angels, prophets, patriarchs, saints and a sibyl.

The Pope Sixtus IV’s biography can be divided into three parts: his early life from the vision of his mother to the miraculous event that occurred when young Francesco was saved by St. Francis and St. Anthony of Padua (Nos. 8–15), his career as a Franciscan friar from his joining the order to the election as the Minister General (Nos. 16–20) and his accomplishments at the Vatican from his appointment as cardinal, then as pope, to his entry to heaven (Nos. 21–28 at the south wall, Nos.

(9) For the *Renovatio Urbis*, see M. G. Bernardini e M. Bussagli, ed., *op. cit.*



Fig. 4 Unknown, *Vision of Luchina, Mother of Francesco della Rovere*, the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome

29–31 at the west wall, Nos. 32–46 at the north wall). The latter four sections (Nos. 40–44) were all painted about one hundred years after the death of the pope (finished in 1599). Thus, 34 frescoes of the life of Sixtus IV were completed during his lifetime⁽¹⁰⁾.

In these frescoes, Francesco della Rovere's identity as a Franciscan is visualized in multiple layers besides the direct representation of himself as a mendicant friar (Nos. 16–20). First of all, Franciscan saints, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Anthony of Padua appear frequently in the narrative of his life. For example, in *Vision of Luchina, Mother of Francesco della Rovere* (No. 8, Fig. 4), two saints carrying a Franciscan garb and a knotted cord come to Francesco before birth represented as a naked child. Their apparitions are repeatedly depicted such as in the relief of young Francesco (Nos. 11, 15) or when St. Francis attends to the pope with the Virgin as interveners in *Sixtus IV Presents his Work to God* (No. 45, Fig. 5).

Then, images and compositions of famous Franciscan artworks were applied to some subjects before starting his career in Vatican. For example, Howe pointed out the resemblance between *Innocent III's Dream of St. Francis Supporting the*

(10) S. Pasti, *op. cit.*, p. 181, note 12.



Fig. 5 Unknown, *Sixtus IV Presents his Work to God*, the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome



Fig. 6 Giotto di Bondone, *Innocent III's Dream of St. Francis Supporting the Lateran*, the Upper Basilica of Saint Francis, Assisi



Fig. 7 Unknown, *Vision of Innocent III*, the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome

Lateran in the upper basilica of Saint Francis of Assisi and *Vision of Innocent III* in the Hospital⁽¹¹⁾ [Figs. 6, 7]. Comparing these two works, it can be seen that they both show images of the pope lying on a bed in a room on the right side with two attendants below him and a building on the left side. The pope's right arm placed on his upper body further strengthens the direct connection between the two

(11) E. Howe, *op. cit.* (2005), pp. 143–144.



Fig. 8 Giotto di Bondone, *Honorius III Confirms the Franciscan Rule*, the Upper Basilica of Saint Francis, Assisi



Fig. 9 Unknown, *Sixtus IV Confirms the Privileges of the Mendicant Orders*, the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome

frescoes. Meanwhile, the latter represents the revelation from an angel to establish the Hospital and, thus, the original images and the composition are freely adapted to fit the subject such as by adding an angel above the pope and changing the left side building to Tor de' Conti, which was the fortress of the family house of the pope (Lotario dei Conti was his secular name). Nevertheless, viewers of the Hospital frescoes who were familiar with the history and arts of the Franciscan would have naturally associated them with *Innocent III's Dream* in Assisi. In addition to Howe's indication, the author believes the historical importance of the pope's supernatural vision which led to the approval of the Franciscan Order transfers into the episodes of the foundation related to the Hospital. The same could be applied to *Honorius III Confirms the Franciscan Rule* in Assisi and *Sixtus IV Confirms the Privileges of the Mendicant Orders* in the Hospital⁽¹²⁾ [Figs. 8, 9]. Needless to say, the significance of Honorius III to the Franciscan Order would have been aroused in viewers of the Hospital frescoes from the composition shared by both frescoes and emphasizing the importance of Sixtus IV for the Mendicant

(12) The resemblances between two frescoes were also pointed out by E. Howe (Idem., p. 144).



Fig. 10 Giotto di Bondone, *St. Francis abandoning his wealth*, the Upper Basilica of Saint Francis, Assisi



Fig. 11 Unknown, *Francesco Receives the Franciscan Habit*, the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome

Order. From these examples, it can be said that historical events of the Hospital assumed a certain kind of authority by adopting well-known iconographies of Franciscan saints and past popes who played an important role in the history of the Mendicant Order.

The author suggests that the following examples should be added to these “well-known image utilization”. The iconography of *St. Francis abandoning his wealth* in Assisi [Fig. 10] was utilized in the fresco of the same subject by Domenico Ghirlandaio at the Sassetti Chapel in Santa Trinita in Florence and in that of another subject, *Bestowment of the Garb to St. Bernardin of Siena* at the Bufalini Chapel in Santa Maria Aracoeli in Rome. The scene of *Francesco Receives the Franciscan Habit* of the Hospital fresco can be put in this development [Fig. 11].

Furthermore, *Francesco preaching in the cities of Italy* in the Hospital reminds viewers of the scene of sermons by Franciscan saints such as *St. Bernardin of Siena Preaching at Piazza del Campo* by Sano di Pietro [Figs. 12, 13]. Notably, the latter panel was painted during the saint’s lifetime⁽¹³⁾. So, the connection between the two images is further strengthened in that these were portraits as well as scenes



Fig. 12 Unknown, *Francesco preaching in the cities of Italy*, the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome



Fig. 13 Sano di Pietro, *St. Bernardin of Siena Preaching at Piazza del Campo*, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena

of preaching.

Numerous studies on the Sistine Chapel have emphasized the pope's identity as a Franciscan and tried to decipher thoughts of the order in the frescoes⁽¹³⁾, although no direct representation of Franciscan friars or saints exists in the Sistine frescoes depicted in the 15th century. On the contrary, as shown above, in the Hospital mural paintings, Sixtus IV's career as a mendicant friar is allocated to eight compartments, Franciscan saints frequently appear among the frescoes and then the viewer's visual experience which had been cultivated by looking at Franciscan art was sophisticatedly leveraged. Therefore, it must be necessary to precede research on the Hospital frescoes with greater awareness of the relationship between the frescoes and Franciscan art and thoughts.

(13) M. Seidel, ed., *Da Jacopo della Quercia a Donatello: Le arti a Siena nel Primo Rinascimento*, Milano 2010, pp. 280–283.

(14) The previous research on the Sistine frescoes of the 15th century is summarized, F. Burnelli, A. Duston e J. M. Mejía, *The Fifteenth Century Frescoes in the Sistine Chapel: Recent Restorations of the Vatican Museums*, vol. 4, Città del Vaticano 2003; H. Pfeiffer, S. J., *The Sistine Chapel. A New Vision*, tr. S. Lindberg, New York – London 2007.



Fig. 14 The layout of the compartments of the *Life of Christ* in the Sistine Chapel, Vatican City



Fig. 15 The layout of the compartments of the *Life of Santa Francesca Romana* in the Tor de' Specchi, Rome

2. The visual singularities of the frescoes of the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia

1) The layout of the compartments for the narrative and the inscription

Normally, inscriptions along the series of frescoes were written inside of oblong frames. For example, in the Sistine Chapel frescoes, they were written in one line at the top of each compartment, and in *Life of Francesca Romana* frescoed at the Tor de' Specchi in Rome during the same period, in two lines in small letters inside of the frame located at the bottom [Figs. 14, 15]. On the other hand, in the hospital walls, an unprecedentedly large section was reserved for a lengthy inscription explaining the narrative above for each compartment [Fig. 2]. It is also unique in that it was composed of such an enormous number of scenes: 44 in total. Indeed, it is appropriate to call this mural an “illuminated manuscript frescoed”.

2) Repetitive usage of similar images and compositions

Closely examining each scene, it is noticeable that similar images and compositions were used repeatedly, especially in the story after Francesco was appointed as pope.



Fig. 16 Unknown, *Sixtus IV in Procession to the Basilica of Lateran*, the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome / Unknown, *Pope Sixtus IV Visiting the Old Santo Spirito Hospital* (damaged), the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome



Fig. 17 Unknown, *Sixtus IV Receives Eleanor, Daughter of King Ferdinand of Naples*, the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome

In *Sixtus IV in Procession to the Basilica of Lateran* (No. 23) and *Pope Sixtus IV Visiting the Old Santo Spirito Hospital* (damaged) (No. 24), the pope on a palanquin at the former and a horse at the latter take exactly the same pose on the left side of each scene [Fig. 16]. Also, *Sixtus IV Confirms the Privileges of the Mendicant Orders* (No. 35) and *Sixtus IV Receives Eleanor, Daughter of King Ferdinand of Naples* (No. 36) were depicted with identical compositions, the pope with a profile sits on the throne on the right side and the crowds gather on the left side [Figs. 9, 17]. Both the throne and pope's posture are almost the same. This duplicative mentality can be pointed out in *Sixtus IV Dedicates the Women's Quarters* (No. 29) and *Sixtus IV Dedicates the Noble's Section* (No. 30) [Fig. 18]. In these frescoes, even the contents themselves resemble each other. The same theory can also be applied to *Demolition of the Old Hospital* (damaged) (No. 27) and *Sixtus IV Rebuilds the Hospital of Santo Spirito* (No. 28). These example leads the assumption of intending to present the pope's biography in an over-segmentalized manner. Furthermore, it is reasonable to say that the arrangement of the mural, which consists of numerous segments reminiscent of illuminated manuscript, was



Fig. 18 Unknown, *Sixtus IV Dedicates the Women's Quarters*, the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome / Unknown, *Sixtus IV Dedicates the Noble's Section*, the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome

planned first and then episodes were prepared to fit them, rather than fixing the number of narratives and then dividing the wall to satisfy the condition. In addition, these frescoes can be considered as a series of Sixtus IV's portraits as he was depicted over 30 times in this cycle which is more than any pope before.

When looking at the entire city of Rome in the second half of the fifteenth century, it can be noted that there was a mural strikingly similar to the frescoes of the Santo Spirito Hospital.

3. Frescoes of the first cloister of Santa Maria sopra Minerva

Around the 1450s, a mural decoration was executed on the walls of the first cloister of Santa Maria sopra Minerva. The fresco cycle was based on the texts of *Meditationes* written by an influential Dominican theologian, Cardinal Juan van de Torquemada (1388–1468), and consisted of 34 scenes of which the main subjects were taken from the New Testament⁽¹⁵⁾.

(15) For basic information and previous research of the *Meditationes* of the first cloister in the Santa Maria sopra Minerva and relevant manuscripts, see G. De Simone, "L'ultimo Angelico: Le Meditationes del cardinal Torquemada e il ciclo perduto nel chiostro di S. Maria sopra Minerva," in *Ricerche di storia dell'arte*, 76 (2002), pp. 41–88; A. E. Bourgeois, *Reconstructing the Lost Frescoes of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome from*



Fig. 19 *Meditationes*, BAV Lat 973, fol. 1. Meditation 1: The Creation of the World

The mural had been completely lost about a century after its completion due to the restoration of the cloister, then a new fresco cycle, *Miracle of Our Lady of the Rosary*, was painted. However, we can still get some information about the subjects and images of the lost frescoes from the 29 extant manuscripts and numerous typography books with woodcut illustrations. Among them, three manuscripts provide beneficial information about images on the wall. Those are the Vatican manuscript (BAV Lat 973) which believed to have been originally owned by Torquemada himself and which contains illustrations [Fig. 19], and two manuscripts with descriptions of the lost frescoes, inserted in the *Meditationes* text in Biblioteca Marciana, Venice (Ms. Marciano Lat. III. 167 (2782)) and Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon (Ms. 651 (566)). Judging from these materials, historians have considered that one compartment of the mural comprised a narrative painting at the upper register and a large frame for the text of praying cited from Torquemada's *Meditationes* at the lower register, in which a sitting and meditating friar was also depicted. Donati called this mural reminiscent of a book, "a huge illuminated manuscript" (un grande codice miniato) in the title of his article⁽¹⁶⁾.

Interestingly, *Meditationes* and *Life of Sixtus IV* share many distinctive features. First of all, the circumstance of the production must be pointed out in that a new book was compiled prior to both mural decorations and then the frescoes were painted based on the texts: Torquemada's *Meditationes* for the frescoes of the Minerva cloister and Platina's *Lives of the Popes* for the biographical paintings of

Meditationes of Cardinal Juan de Torquemada, Lewiston 2009. From historical documents, it is known that those frescoes were in monochrome of *terra verde*.

(16) L. Donati, "Un grande Codice miniato," in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 25 (1974), p. 5.



Fig. 20 *Meditationes*, BAV Lat 973, fol. 29r. Meditation 29: St. Sixtus with Cardinal Juan de Torquemada



Fig. 21 Unknown, *Sixtus IV entering heaven*, the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome

the Santo Spirito Hospital. Secondly, there is the resemblance of the unique layout of compartments. Two murals have the common characteristics of quite a large number of narrative paintings for one fresco series (34 of *Meditationes* and 46 of *Life*) and the format of a compartment with an upper register for the image and an unprecedented large section for the lengthy text beneath. As a result of these similarities that influence the overall impression of the mural, when a viewer saw one of them, he or she must have remembered the other. Here the mentality to utilize the viewers' visual experience can be pointed out again, as we have verified in the first chapter of this article.

Furthermore, the points in common relating to portraits should also be paid attention to. In *Meditationes* at the Minerva cloister, there was one scene in the cycle where Cardinal Torquemada appears and prays to St. Sixtus [Fig. 20]. In this scene, the saint notices Torquemada who belongs to a different time and space from himself and makes a blessing gesture to the cardinal. Meanwhile, in the scene *Sixtus IV entering heaven* that concludes the *Life* of Santo Spirito Hospital, St. Peter himself is leading the pope to heaven by the hand [Fig. 21]. These scenes share the concept that each saint of the past actively intervenes in the life of the respective donor, Torquemada and Sixtus IV.



Fig. 22 Unknown, *Annunciation*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London

In Northern Renaissance paintings, donors often appeared in the religious paintings with a strong presence almost equal to saints⁽¹⁷⁾. Those examples started to flow into Italian art at this period. However, even in light of the contemporary representations of donors painted in Italy, it was unusual that the saint and the model were so intimately involved. The author is convinced that the mentality to accept new expressions of a close relationship between saints making positive approaches to portraited figures has been developed at the Santa Maria sopra Minerva and the origin of that sense must be able to track back to the fresco of St. Sixtus and Torquemada in the cloister.

At the emblem of the Confraternity of the Santissima Annunciata founded by Torquemada and active in the Santa Maria sopra Minerva, girls who were getting married with the support of the confraternity are receiving a dowry from Virgin Mary⁽¹⁸⁾ [Fig. 22]. The representation of the direct interaction between saints and

(17) For portraits of donors in Renaissance Italy, see John Pope-Hennessy, *op. cit.*, pp. 257–302 (ジョン・ポープ・ヘネシー, 前掲書, 232–275頁).

(18) For the Confraternity of the Santissima Annunciata, see A. Esposito, “Le confraternite del matrimonio. Carità, devozione e bisogni sociali a Roma nel tardo quattrocento (con l’edizione degli statuti vecchi della Compagnia della SS. Annunziata),” in *Un’idea di Roma, società, arte e cultura tra Umanesimo e Rinascimento*, L. Fortini, ed., Roma



Fig. 23 Filippino Lippi, *Annunciation*, the Carafa Chapel, Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Rome



Fig. 24 Antoniazio Romana, *Annunciation*, the Chapel of Annunciation, Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Rome

laymen belonging to a different time and space was succeeded in *Annunciation* (1488–1493), which was painted by Filippino Lippi as the altarpiece of the Carafa Chapel in the same church [Fig. 23]. In this, the Virgin Mary who receives the Annunciation is blessing Cardinal Carafa. A further example is *Annunciation* painted in 1499 as the altarpiece of the chapel, located in Santa Maria sopra Minerva as well. It had been owned by Torquemada and then by the confraternity after his death [Fig. 24]. Here, Cardinal Torquemada, who died about 30 years prior, appears together with the girls receiving the dowry from the Virgin Mary.

Even more interesting is the suggestion by De Simone (2002) that all the friars appearing in Minerva's *Meditationes* could have been a Dominican cardinal, Torquemada himself⁽¹⁹⁾. The scholar focused on the fact that Torquemada's *Meditationes* was written in the first person and pointed out that he had been mentioned as a meditator in the text related to the fresco *St. Sixtus and Torquemada* (Marciana manuscript). Furthermore, considering that no friar appeared at the bottom of this scene, De Simone concluded that the friars depicted in the lower register of the cloister were all one person, Torquemada.

1993, pp. 7–51.

(19) G. De Simone, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

The author agrees with De Simone's opinion for the reasons below. The opening sentence of the printed book dated December 24, 1472 is as follows, "The most devout Meditations by Cardinal Juan de Torquemada of St. Sixtus. Compiled for the frescoes surrounding Maria Minerva. It is described and depicted in a truly literary text together with the brilliant images⁽²⁰⁾." As shown by this passage, the books of Torquemada's *Meditationes* have been diffused inextricably linked to the author himself. Furthermore, looking at the description of the first meditation in the Lyon manuscript, the explanation of the painting concludes with the words "a friar sits as if he was sleeping with resting his chin on his hand. To recite while meditating ...⁽²¹⁾", then the text of Torquemada's *Meditationes* begins. In other words, the texts written in the lower register of the mural were interpreted as the content imagined by the friar depicted at the bottom of the compartments. The same structure is applicable for every explanation of paintings inserted in the Lyon and Marciana manuscripts. Indeed, the authors of these manuscripts seem to have understood that all meditating friars who appeared in the frescoes were all Torquemada himself.

In addition, De Simone's ideas can be reinforced with the consideration of the manuscript illustrations that influenced the frescoes. The appearance of friars praying in various poses in the cloister of Minerva has often been connected to *De Modo Orandi*, a textbook for Dominican friars in training⁽²²⁾. It describes the nine

(20) "Meditationes reverendissimi patris domini Johannis de Turrecremata Sacrosancte Romane Ecclesie cardinalis posite et dipicte de ipsius mandato in ecclesie ambitu Sancte Marie de Minerva Rome": Idem, p. 44.

(21) "Et sub hac pictura. sedet monachus quasi dormiens super unam manum. contemplando ait": L. Donati, "Prolegomeni allo studio del libro illustrato italiano," in *Maso Finiguerra*, 1/2 (1939), p. 22.

(22) S. Tugwell, "The Nine Ways of Prayer of St. Dominic: A textual Study and Critical Edition," in *Mediaeval Studies*, 47 (1985), pp. 1–124; W. Hood, "Saint Dominic's Manners of Praying: Gestures in Fra Angelico's Cell Frescoes at S. Marco," in *The Art Bulletin*, 68 (1986), pp. 195–206.

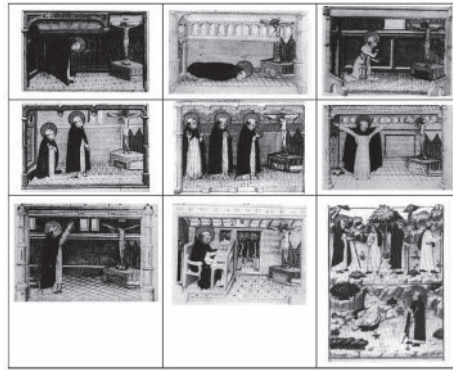


Fig. 25 *De Modo Orandi*, BAV. Ms. Lat. Rossianus 3

prayer methods that St. Domenico practiced when he prayed alone. A number of its manuscripts still exist and among them some were illuminated. For example, in the “Rossianus Manuscript” (BAV. Ms. Lat. Rossianus 3: *De Modo Orandi*), St. Domenico repeatedly appears and shows various prayer postures [Fig. 25]²³. Namely, both fresco cycles have the additional point in common that numerous portraits of Torquemada and Sixtus IV were depicted in their respective place during their lifetime.

So far, the common characteristics of two fresco cycles have been examined. When considering these frescoes in the history of the art of two major Mendicant Orders, it emerges that *Life* in the Santo Spirito Hospital, which depicts the life of Sixtus IV, might have never been created without the inspiration of the Minerva cloister’s *Meditationes* frescoes.

²³ Although there is a difference between “vision” and “meditation,” in the tradition of illuminated manuscript, there is also an expression which can be found in manuscripts of *Apocalypse* that John the Evangelist as a narrator frequently appears outside the frame that visualizes his vision. The above was suggested by the study group of the A02 Mendicant Orders Team of Grant-in-Aid for Transformative Research Areas (B) 20B103.



Fig. 26 Italian, probably active in Bologna, *Dominican and Franciscan Friars Singing at Lecterns*, Ms. 107, Abbey Bible, fol. 224r, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

4. Competitive consciousness between the two mendicant orders in the art field

The Dominican Order and the Franciscan Order, both founded in the early 12th century, have been in confrontation in every respect since their establishments⁽²⁴⁾. It is frequently pointed out that, in some cities, the church of each order had been built with a certain distance, with their territory in mind. Also, in 1255, the Priors of both orders felt the need to warn their friars not to quarrel in public. The confrontational relationship between these two orders can also be confirmed in the illustration of the manuscript which is believed to have been made in the mid-13th century in Bologna [Fig. 26]⁽²⁵⁾. At the bottom of this foglio are several Dominican and Franciscan friars singing hymns. Christ appears from above to bless the Dominicans only. Their competitive consciousness had emerged in various ways, including in

(24) See D. Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty*, Philadelphia 1989, pp. 149–150; T. McGrath, “Dominicans, Franciscans and the Art of Political Rivalry: Two Drawings and a Fresco by Giovanni Battista della Rovere,” in *Renaissance Studies*, vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 185–207.

(25) T. Kennedy, D. Cooper et al., *Sanctity Pictured: The Art of the Dominican and Franciscan Orders in Renaissance Italy*, Nashville and London 2014, p. 1.

the art field, as exactly revealed in this foglio.

The work mentioned above was displayed at the exhibition *Sanctity Pictured: the Art of the Dominican and Franciscan Orders in Renaissance Italy* held in Nashville in 2014, which was significant in that it was the first attempt to present art works related to these two orders in comparative ways⁽²⁶⁾. It suggests that discussions on the relationship between the two Mendicant Orders over art should be further explored in the future. However, the results of the preceding case studies indicate that the Mendicant friars were very attentive to the competitor's movement in art and, when a new artwork appeared in the rival's field, they tried to make a similar, but more magnificent one⁽²⁷⁾.

In the introductory article of the catalogue of *Sanctity Pictured*, Kennedy gives an example of what can be considered as the competition of both orders on the scale of their church buildings in Bologna in the 13th century. That is, the length of the Dominican Order's Basilica, San Nicolo delle Vigne (now the Basilica of St. Domenico) and the Basilica of St. Francesco in the same city⁽²⁸⁾. The former's expansion had begun in 1228 and it was 282 feet 2 inches in length when completed. It had been significantly larger than the Bologna Cathedral at 52 feet 6 inches and had become the largest building in the city at the time. Then, the Basilica of St. Francesco was completed in 1250, which was 296 feet 3 inches. It resembles modern countries competing to build a higher tower to show their national power.

(26) Idem.

(27) For example, see J. Cannon, "The Creation, Meaning and Audience of the Early Sienese Polyptych: Evidence from the Friars," in *Italian Altarpieces 1250–1550: Function and Design*, E. Borsook and F. S. Gioffredi, ed., Oxford 1994, pp. 41–79; 松原知生「列聖の条件、聖者の身体—ピサ、サンタ・カテリーナ聖堂《聖トマス・アクィナスの勝利》を巡って」『京都大学文学部美術史学研究室紀要』第十八号(1997), 187–230頁. Matsubara mentioned that Saint Louis of Toulouse by Simone Martini and Triumph of St. Thomas Aquinas which is thought to be painted by Lippo Memmi and Barna as evidence of rivalry between two mendicant orders.

(28) T. Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 11.



Fig. 27 The façade of the Santa Maria in Aracoeli



Fig. 28 A drawing of the old façade of Santa Maria sopra Minerva

The next example in Rome shows the similarity in the appearance of the churches, in the façade of the Franciscan Basilica di Santa Maria in Aracoeli and the old façade of the Dominican Basilica of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva [Figs. 27, 28]. The latter was covered with the white rectangular structure in 1725 [Fig. 29]⁽²⁹⁾, but previously it had been laid with long brown bricks [Fig. 30]. Comparing the two buildings by complementing that fact, it can be seen that the faces of the church, which were the base of activities of both orders in the city, were like two peas in a

(29) For the history of the architecture of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, see G. Palmerio and G. Villetti, *Storia edilizia di S. Maria sopra Minerva in Roma 1275–1870*, Roma 1989.



Fig. 29 The present façade of Santa Maria sopra Minerva



Fig. 30 Long brown bricks of the building covered by the white structure of Santa Maria sopra Minerva

pod.

The author also has discussed in another place before in that there are also examples of mural decorations inside these churches that can be seen from the perspective of their competitive consciousness⁽³⁰⁾. Those are the frescoes of Bufalini Chapel in Aracoeli painted in the early 1480s and those of the Carafa Chapel in Minerva undertaken in the late 1480s [Figs. 31, 32].

In addition, it is not too much to say that the Minerva's *Meditationes* frescoes

⁽³⁰⁾ F. Araki, *Le cappelle Bufalini e Carafa. Dall'odio dottrinale e culturale tra domenicani e francescani alle rivalità artistiche*, Roma 2019, especially pp. 143–152.



Fig. 31 Cappella Bufalini, Santa Maria in Aracoeli, Rome



Fig. 32 Cappella Carafa, Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Rome

themselves were created with the consciousness of *Meditationes Vitae Christi*, which is believed to have been written by Pseudo-Bonaventure, a Franciscan friar at the end of the thirteenth century⁽³¹⁾. The book was translated into various languages and widely disseminated. The fact that over 200 manuscripts are in existence also shows its popularity⁽³²⁾. So to speak, the Franciscan Order was overwhelmingly influential in practicing meditations. The need of the “manuscript” style for the frescoes in Minerva Cloister can be explained from the fact that all Europeans of that time were striving for meditation using Franciscan literature as if it were a textbook.

Naturally, Sixtus IV was well informed about Torquemada’s *Meditationes* frescoes in the cloister of Minerva in Rome. Indeed, he was carefully monitoring

(31) About this issue, the author has discussed in the article, 荒木文果「瞑想するドメニコ会士—ローマ、サンタ・マリア・ソプラ・ミネルヴァ修道院の失われた第一回廊装飾壁画」『西洋中世研究』No. 9, 2018, 64–93頁。

(32) For *Meditationes Vitae Christi*, G. Rosalie and I. Ragusa, ed., *Meditations on the Life of Christ: An Illustrated Manuscript of the 14th Century*, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Ital. 115, Princeton 1977. For the relationship between *Meditationes* frescoes and the Franciscan book, see W. Hood, *Fra Angelico at San Marco*, New Haven 1993, p. 227.

for Dominican art. He prohibited the visualization of St. Caterina of the Dominican Order receiving the stigmata or presenting them to the viewer in 1472 at the time of his ascension to the cathedra³³. The reason is probably that the Pope thought that only St. Francis of Assisi should be allowed to be represented in this way. This prohibition was withdrawn by his successor Innocent VIII in 1491. Also, *Sixtus IV Confirms the Privileges of the Mendicant Orders* suggests the fact that the Pope was deeply concerned with both orders. Furthermore, Confraternity of the Santissima Annunciata which had been established by Cardinal Torquemada was more influential in the city of Rome after his death. Finally, under the papacy of Innocent VIII, the Mass on 25th March, the holiday of annunciation performed by the pope himself at the high altar of Minerva was starting and the bestowal of dowry follow by the Mass³⁴. Sixtus IV could not have been ignorant about the Confraternity, which was closely related to Torquemada. The fact that his successor, Innocent VIII, lifted the prohibition against images of St. Catherine and established the relationship between the pope and Confraternity of the Santissima Annunciata could testify Pope Sixtus IV's dishonest attitude toward the Dominican Order.

From above, it can be said that Sixtus IV as a Franciscan friar was very aware of the *Meditationes* frescoes and wanted mural paintings similar to the Dominican artwork but more splendid. It might be more than only a coincidence that 34 of the total 39 scenes in the Hospital frescoes depicting the pope's life were completed before his death. The number is in exact accordance with that of the frescoes in the Minerva.

Conclusion

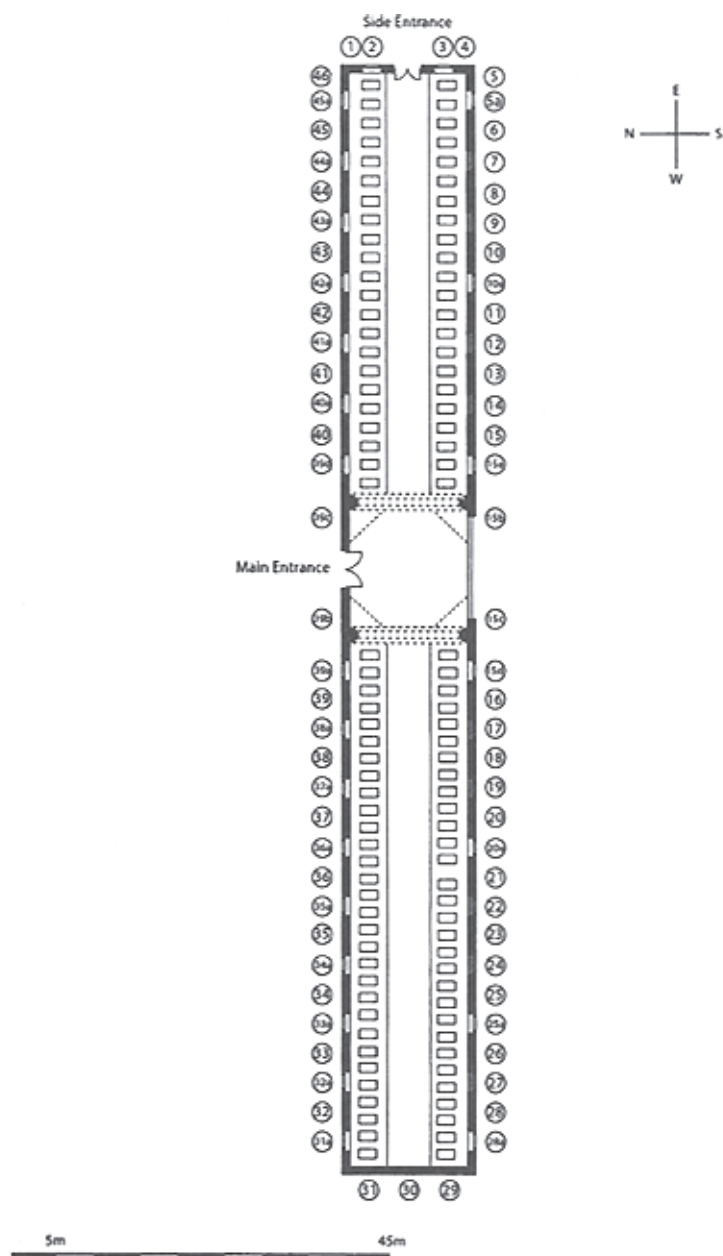
This article verified that two fresco cycles, *Life* in Santo Spirito Hospital and *Meditationes* in the first cloister of Minerva have many features in common such as

³³ T. McGrath, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

³⁴ A. Esposito, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

the process of their production, their format reminiscent of a manuscript, the representation that suggests the close relationship between saints and donors and the recurring portraits of Torquemada and Sixtus IV depicted during their lifetime. It also proposed that these characteristics should be understood with the context of historical confrontation between the Franciscan Order and the Dominican Order.

In the middle of the 16th century, when the *Meditationes* frescoes was demolished, the *Life of Sixtus IV* cycle lost its counterpart and its intrinsic value at the same time. As two works had been created from the hostility of both Orders, their meanings were also dependent on it. The subject of the rivalry between the two Mendicant orders in the art field is still a novel problem for art history and not yet well explored. The comprehensive research is required by compiling case studies as well as pointing out similar examples that this article proposed.



Placement of the Frescoes in the Corsia Sistina (E. Howe, *Art and Culture at the Sistine Court: Platina's "Life of Sixtus IV" and the Frescoes of the Hospital of Santo Spirito*, Città del Vaticano 2005, pp. 198–199.)

East wall

1. Infanticide
2. Tiber Scene (damaged)
3. Tiber Scene (damaged)
4. Fishermen Present Dead Babies to Innocent III

South wall

5. Vision of Innocent III
- 5a. King Solomon
6. Innocent III Orders the Construction of the Hospital
7. Innocent III Institutes Hospital Order (damaged)
8. Vision of Luchina, Mother of Francesco della Rovere
9. Birth of Francesco della Rovere (damaged)
10. Baptism of Francesco della Rovere
- 10a. Prophet Isaiah
11. Illness of the Infant Francesco and his Mother's Vow
12. Luchina's Vow (damaged)
13. Infant Francesco Blessed the Townspeople
14. Luchina Renews Her Vow (damaged)
15. Francesco saved by Saint Francis and Anthony of Padua
- 15a. Prophet Isaiah
- 15b. Angel on Eastern Arch
- 15c. Angel on Western Arch
- 15d. Unidentified King
16. Francesco Receives the Franciscan Habit
17. Francesco at the Cathedra (damaged)
18. Francesco Preaching in the cities of Italy
19. Dispute over Christ's Blood (damaged)
20. Francesco Elected General of the Franciscans
- 20a. Unidentified Prophet
21. Francesco Receives the Cardinal's hat
22. Sixtus IV Elected Pope (damaged)
23. Sixtus IV in Procession to the Basilica of Laterano
24. Sixtus IV Visiting the Old Santo Spirito Hospital (damaged)
25. Sixtus IV Visits the Members of the Hospital Order
- 25a. Unidentified Prophet
26. Sixtus IV Rebuilds the Ponte Sisto
27. Demolition of the Old Hospital (damaged)
28. Sixtus IV Rebuilds the Hospital of

Santo Spirito

- 28a. Unidentified Prophet

West wall

29. Sixtus IV Dedicates the Women's Quarters
30. Sixtus IV Dedicates the Noble's Section
31. Sixtus IV Builds Santa Maria del Popolo

North Wall

- 31a. King Solomon
32. Sixtus IV Receives the King of Denmark
- 32a. King Solomon
33. Sixtus IV Receives King Ferdinand of Naples
- 33a. King Solomon
34. Sixtus IV Receives the King of Bosnia
- 34a. Prophet Ezekial
35. Sixtus IV Confirms the Privileges of the Mendicant Orders
- 35a. St. Luke
36. Sixtus IV Receives Eleanor, Daughter of King Ferdinand of Naples
- 36a. King David
37. Sixtus IV Visits the Vatican Library
- 37a. King David
38. Sixtus IV Receives Queen Charlotte of Cyprus
- 38a. St. Paul
39. Victory of the Papal Fleets over the Turks
- 39a. Prophet Joel
- 39b. Angel on Western Arch
- 39c. Angel on Eastern Arch
- 39d. Unidentified Prophet
40. Canonization of St. Bonaventure (addition)
- 40a. Prophet Isaiah (addition)
41. Construction of Santa Maria della Pace (addition)
- 41a. St. Augustine (addition)
42. Rebuilding of Rome (addition)
- 42a. St. Paul (addition)
43. Sixtus IV Receives Eastern Sovereigns (addition)
- 43a. Sibyl (addition)
44. Funeral of Sixtus IV (addition)
- 44a. King Solomon (addition)
45. Sixtus IV Presents his Work to God
- 45a. Unidentified Prophet
46. Sixtus IV entering heaven