IL PARMIGIANINO: THE ROMAN YEARS

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Art

by

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June, 1980
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my children Bill and Dean Shapiro.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Donald S. Strong for his class in the Art of the Sixteenth century, where I became fascinated with the historiography of the period and moved by the beauty of its art. As chairman of my thesis committee, he suggested readings that were always valuable and that enabled me to begin the work of reinterpreting the St. Jerome Altarpiece. Jean Weisz of the University of California at Los Angeles was most gracious in consenting to serve on my thesis committee. With her knowledge of Sixteenth century art and her suggestions on my work in progress, she provided helpful guidance. Louise Lewis has shared her knowledge in the field of prints, and her enthusiasm has meant a great deal to me.
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The purpose of this thesis is to examine the total production of Parmigianino in his Roman period (1524-1527) and to ascertain whether Rome was merely a formative period for the artist or a period of substantial achievement and innovation. A review of the history of this period and of the conflicts that engaged Pope Clement The Seventh with respect to the Hapsburgs and the Protestants provides essential background for understanding the artistic environment in Rome. With the realization that Parmigianino did not receive a papal commission because of the financial and political difficulties faced by the Pope, one views Parmigianino's work in the context of private patronage.
The most important commission that Parmigianino fulfilled in this period was the St. Jerome Altarpiece. On the basis of its stylistic elements the painting has been called devoid of religious sentiment by prominent art historians. My research has led to a new interpretation of the painting based upon its iconography. As a representation of the Virgin Immaculate the St. Jerome Altarpiece defends a doctrine that was highly important to the Catholic Church at the time of the Reformation, the intercession of the Virgin in the Redemption of man. The concept of the painting is appropriate to the religious order of S. Giorgio in Alga at the Church of S. Salvatore in Lauro. It was in that church that the painting would have been placed, had the Sack of Rome not intervened. Stylistically the painting employs changes of scale and multiple perspectives like the prints of Albrecht Dürer and like the other tall panels which served as altarpieces in Sixteenth century chapels. Both the painting and the related drawings are examined for their connection to works by Michelangelo and Raphael. The eclectic style is then related to the demands that were placed upon the artists' ingenuity.

In addition to the St. Jerome Altarpiece and to the three smaller paintings which he made in Rome, Parmigianino was a printmaker. Four of his designs were engraved by Jacopo Caraglio and will be studied. The eight
etchings which have been securely attributed to him disclose a highly innovative and spontaneous use of the etcher's needle. The six chiaroscuro woodcuts which were probably produced in Bologna after the Sack of Rome will be considered with the Roman drawings and prints upon which some of them are based. Parmigianino's role in the production of the woodcuts is somewhat clarified by our investigation of Ugo da Carpi's technique and Antonio da Trento's German style. The growing importance of the landscape in the woodcuts is explored for its possible connection to the Venetian tradition of Titian, who also worked with Ugo da Carpi. The prints are unique to this most important phase in the artist's career, Rome and its aftermath in Bologna.
INTRODUCTION

Young and eager to work, the artist Parmigianino arrived in Rome just two and a half years before the maurusin German soldiers put the city to the torch and the sword. The young artist's struggle will be viewed against the background of political intrigue and financial collapse that marked the papacy of Clement The Seventh. In view of the Pope's inability to patronize the artists, Parmigianino and his contemporaries worked in an artistic climate that was different from the one which Raphael and Michelangelo enjoyed. For this reason the political events which preceded the Sack of Rome will be examined.

Parmigianino's most important commission from a private patron in Rome was the St. Jerome Altarpiece. A careful examination of its iconography yields a new interpretation of the painting and links it to the monastic order at the Church of S. Salvatore in Lauro. The Immaculate Virgin and her role in the redemption of mankind was a central issue in the doctrinal conflict between the Protestants and the Catholics. The church where the painting would have hung if not for the Sack of Rome and the purpose of the church's monastic order gave the altarpiece a rationale which it has lacked for its modern audience. The iconography of the painting was indeed relevant for its
time. It has been said that Parmigianino used perspective in a disturbing and capricious way. This stylistic element, the use of more than one perspective, will be considered in relation to Albrecht Dürer's prints and in relation to the other Italian artists who used the tall vertical format for their altarpieces.

Those paintings of Parmigianino which preceded the St. Jerome Altarpiece show the influence of his early work in Parma, of Correggio's work and of that of his contemporaries in Rome like Perino del Vaga. The diverse styles of these paintings illustrate the dilemma of the artist who had left his provincial workshop and its style to come under the spell of Raphael, Michelangelo, and the art of ancient Rome.

Parmigianino's activity in Rome included designs for the reproductive media. That the engravings after his designs were part of his Roman production is demonstrable, but several of his etchings could have been made either in Rome or in Bologna. The chiaroscuro woodcuts are more difficult to study, since many of them were made from designs which had been stolen from Parmigianino. For the purpose of this thesis we shall consider only those woodcuts which involved Parmigianino's participation according to the criteria proposed by A. E. Popham. The woodcuts were probably executed in Bologna after the Sack of Rome, but some of them are based on drawings and
engravings of the Roman period. The chiaroscuros were made by two woodblock cutters, Ugo da Carpi and Antonio da Trento. The difference in their styles will be discussed in relation to Parmigianino's role in the production of his prints. The influence of Raphael and Michelangelo will be noted as well as that of the Venetians and their landscape tradition. An attempt will be made to connect Parmigianino with the woodcut tradition of Titian, since both artists worked with Ugo da Carpi.

A. E. Popham's *Catalogue of the Drawings of Parmigianino* is a great contribution to the study of the artist. In the preparation of this thesis it has been used extensively in an attempt to integrate the drawings, the paintings, and the prints. The achievements of Parmigianino's Roman years have perhaps seemed less than they are because the different media in which he worked have been studied separately. To correct this impression, I have tried to present as complete a picture as possible of the artist as painter and designer during the years that he spent in Rome.
Chapter 1

PARMIGIANINO AND THE PAPACY

Through his drawings, his prints, his paintings, and his frescoes Francesco Mazzola was to become an influential European artist; but in 1524, the year that he went to Rome, he was only twenty-one years old. It was probably in Rome that he came to be called Il Parmigianino, the diminutive that designated both the place of his birth and his youthfulness. In Parma he had worked for two noble patrons, had painted beside Correggio in S. Giovanni Evangelista and had received an offer to paint in the Cathedral.¹ In spite of this growing body of work, he left for Rome. Like so many artists of Italy and the Northern countries Parmigianino undoubtedly desired to know at first hand the works of Michelangelo and Raphael. Furthermore, he appeared hopeful of emulating the great Raphael as Vasari reported:

... the spirit of Raphael himself is said to have passed into the body of Francesco, in the youth's being seen as so outstanding in art and also in his dress as refined and graceful as Raphael had been,
and what is more, in the feeling that he tried hard to imitate him in all things, but especially in painting. 2

Parmigianino's ambition was probably kindled by the election of a new pope in December 1523. Clement The Seventh was a Medici. Long before he assumed the papacy, Clement had been an important patron of the arts. 3 Between the papacy of Clement and that of his uncle Leo The Tenth, Pope Adrian The Sixth had virtually eliminated all patronage of the arts because of his aversion to luxury and spectacle. 4 Both the artists and the bankers had fled from Rome, but with the election of Clement they began to return with the expectation of a renewal of the Church and a renewal of the arts. 5 The writer Pietro Bembo expressed


3As Cardinal Giulio de'Medici he had commissioned of Raphael the Transfiguration and the design for the Villa Madama.


these hopes when he proclaimed:

\[
\text{Clement The Seventh will be the greatest and wisest, as well as the most respected Pope that the Church as seen for centuries.}^6
\]

Parmigianino must have delayed his trip to Rome until the plague of 1524 had abated.\(^7\) When he arrived in Rome, he presented three paintings to Clement, whose patronage he obviously hoped to attain. These paintings were clearly meant to demonstrate his skill. For example, in the Self-portrait in a Convex Mirror the image of the artist is subject to distortion because it represents a reflection that is cast upon a convex surface. The distortions create the illusion that the flat surface of the painting is convex (Plate 1). The artist's right hand is enlarged and softly blurred. The walls and the ceiling of his studio appear to bend and curve. Only the artist's beautiful childlike face is brought into sharp, clear focus at the point of observation in the center of the tondo.\(^8\)

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\(^6\)Smith, "Rosso Fiorentino's 'Sposalizio,'" p. 28. Smith cites Bembo's letter of December 11, 1523.

\(^7\)Vasari-Milanesi, VI, 64. This plague and the date 1524 inscribed on the Portrait of San Vitale constitute the evidence by which his trip has been dated.

\(^8\)The convex mirror is an important detail in such paintings as Jan Van Eyck's Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife, the Van Weerl Altarpiece of Roger Van der Weyden's School,
The **Holy Family** in the Prado at Madrid displays Parmigianino's skill with figures and realistic detail. The contouring of the figures is soft and subtle; the rendering of the hair and draperies, crisp and precise.9

Vasari did not name or describe the third painting which Parmigianino was supposed to have taken to Pope Clement. A small painting which may have served that purpose is the **Circumcision** in the Detroit Institute of the Arts.10 This painting was evidently important to Parmigianino, since he made a detailed preparatory drawing.11 The still-life elements and the physiognomies make it possible to date the painting between 1523 and 1524.12 In the 1568 edition of *Petrus Christus' St. Eligius* and *Quintin Massey's Money-changer*. Jean Fouquet's medallion *Self-portrait* is closest to the way in which Parmigianino used the mirror as the pretext for his portrait.

9Cecil Gould, *The Paintings of Correggio* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1976), p. 85 and p. 95. The figure types which Parmigianino used in the **Holy Family** are like those of the great altarpieces which Correggio was designing before Parmigianino left Parma.

10Sydney J. Freedberg, "Parmigianino's 'Circumcision'," Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of the Arts, 55 (1977), Fig. 1 **Circumcision**, Oil on panel, 16 1/2'' x 12 3/8''.

11Freedberg, Fig. 2. The drawing is in the collection of the Cabinet des Dessins, Musée du Louvre, 10 1/2''x 8''.

12Freedberg, 132.
Lives Vasari described a more elaborate *Circumcision* by Parmigianino and claimed that the Pope had given it to the Emperor.\(^{13}\) Vasari never saw the painting; and I would suggest that he was actually describing a fresco by Luccio Gambara in the Cathedral of Parma. Vasari visited Parma in 1566.\(^{14}\) Although Vasari did not know or include the small *Circumcision* in his account of Parmigianino's works, the painting is noteworthy both for the quality of its light and for the quality of its brushwork. The rapid touches of the brush give this painting the spontaneous feeling and appearance of a sketch. Parmigianino used this technique in two small panels which he painted in Rome, the *Madonna and Child* and the *Adoration of the Shepherds*.

Pope Clement was astounded by the young artist's skill and expressed his desire that Parmigianino be given the task of painting the Vatican's Sala dei Pontefici.\(^{15}\) Parmigianino must have been extremely disappointed, however, for the work on the Sala dei Pontefici was not

\(^{13}\text{Vasari-Milanesi, V, 223.}\)

\(^{14}\text{The fresco by Gambara is in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art Slide Library, William Keighley Collection. Permission was not given to duplicate the slide. Cecil Gould, "Correggio and Rome," *Apollo*, 83 (1966), 330: Gould notes Vasari's trip to Parma and cites other paintings there which he confused such as the cupola paintings of the Cathedral and S. Giovanni Evangelista.}\)

\(^{15}\text{Vasari-Milanesi, V, 222.}\)
resumed; nor was he given any papal commission during the time that he worked in Rome. A. E. Popham has proposed that Parmigianino made a number of drawings in the style of Raphael because he desired a commission like the Vatican Stanze or the Sistine Chapel tapestries.  

There are fewer than a dozen of these drawings in the style of Raphael, and they may be studies after Raphael's works or designs for prints which Parmigianino hoped to make. The drawings reveal his close attention to Raphael's method of composing.

In Christ Healing the Sick some thirty figures pose on horizontal planes like the philosophers of the School of Athens. Seated and reclining figures create transitions from one group to the next. In the distance is Christ, framed by the columns of a massive arch. The figures of the background are further developed in drawings at the Louvre and the Fitzwilliams Museum. One of these drawings is on the back of the proof for Parmigianino's engraving of the Adoration of the Shepherds. Since the proof bears the date 1526, it shows that Parmigianino was making these drawings at the same time that he was

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17Christ Healing the Sick, Popham, II, Plate 189, no. 5.
designing for his engravings.\textsuperscript{18}

\textit{Christ, Surrounded by Apostles, Healing Lepers} is a highly developed drawing in which wash and highlights are used to achieve an effect of plasticity (Plate 2). The standing apostles and the kneeling lepers reveal Parmigianino's mastery of Florentine compositional technique.\textsuperscript{19}

The \textbf{Presentation of Our Lord} is a drawing with elements like those used by Parmigianino in his engravings of the \textbf{Martyrdom of St. Paul} and the \textbf{Marriage of the Virgin}, the steps and the arched top.\textsuperscript{20} A drawing which has been called the \textbf{Worship of Jupiter} repeats the placement of the figures in Raphael's \textbf{St. Paul Preaching in Athens}.\textsuperscript{21} The \textbf{Martyrdom of St. Paul}, a drawing which has been indented and transferred for engraving, may have been inspired by an engraving after Raphael's design for the \textbf{Martyrdom of S. Cecilia} or \textbf{S. Felicita} (Plates 3 and 4).

\textsuperscript{18}Popham, I, 10. The evidence Popham cites may invalidate his suggestion that the drawings were designs for projects that Parmigianino hoped to execute for the Pope, since the date is closer to the end of his Roman period and in the midst of his printmaking activity.

\textsuperscript{19}The drawing was used by Niccolò Vicentino for a chiaroscuro woodcut after Parmigianino's death in 1540.

\textsuperscript{20}Presentation of Our Lord, Popham, II, Plate 194, no. 218.

\textsuperscript{21}Worship of Jupiter, Popham, II, Plate 196, no. 193.
Popham suggested that this drawing was a design which Parmigianino hoped to paint for the Sala dei Pontefici, a room which had formerly been called the Sala dei Martiri after the martyred popes which Giotto had painted there. The fact that the *Martyrdom of St. Paul* was engraved by Jacopo Caraglio after Parmigianino's design appears to substantiate my suggestion that these drawings after Raphael were in fact designs for prints. The elements of this drawing too show Parmigianino's dependence upon Raphael, for there are steps and reclining figures and groups that relate to one another by glance and gesture. A series of studies reveal how Parmigianino clarified his composition. Other drawings in the style of Raphael are the *Descent of the Holy Spirit*, *Christ Enthroned with Two Saints*, and *St. Mary Magdalene Anointing the Feet of Our Lord*. These drawings may suggest great projects which Parmigianino might have realized in the Vatican, but in reality they resulted in only one design which was carried

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22Popham, I, 92-93.

23Popham, II, Plate 136, no. 379; Plate 137, no. 380; Plate 140, no. 417.

24Popham, II, Plate 186, no. 606 recto; Plate 237, no. 115; Plate 208, no. 746.
out in the reproductive media.\textsuperscript{25} Why was there no papal patronage for the young artist in spite of the fact that his talent had been greatly admired? The answer to this question provides useful background for an understanding of the artistic environment in Rome from 1524 to 1527, the years that Parmigianino was working there. Among the reasons that have been suggested for Parmigianino's failure to win a papal commission is the idea that Raphael's disciples intervened and kept Clement from providing patronage for the young artist.\textsuperscript{26} However, the artists who had worked with Raphael did not win commissions after 1524, when Giulio Romano and Raffaelino del Colle completed the Sala de Constantino for Clement. Even Perino del Vaga was not invited to finish the Sala dei Pontefici although he had decorated the beautiful ceiling of the room for Pope Leo.

Whereas the Sala dei Pontefici features a zodaical scheme with the emblems of Leo, the Sala de Constantino portrays a theme of major importance, the Emperor Constantine's donation of Rome and the Italian provinces to Pope Silvester The First in the Fourth century. Constantine's legendary donation supported Pope Clement's occupation

\textsuperscript{25}The Martyrdom of St. Paul became both an engraving and a chiaroscuro woodcut. It will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2. I do not include the Vicentino woodcut since it was made after Parmigianino's death.

\textsuperscript{26}Popham, I, 11.
of the northern territories in opposition to the armies of the Emperor Charles The Fifth. In all likelihood the Sala de Constantino was completed not only because it is a marvel of illusionistic painting but also because it served as propaganda, a powerful though fraudulent symbol.

In spite of the completion of this room, there was evidence that the resources of the papal treasury were severely strained. At the end of Leo's pontificate there had been a financial collapse, and Adrian's policies discouraged both banking and building.27 Finances were not Clement's only problem, however. According to the terms of his election, he was expected to maintain neutrality between the Emperor Charles The Fifth and the French king Francis The First. To this end Clement blocked the holding of a Church Council which might have effected a reconciliation between the Church and the adherents of Martin Luther. Clement apparently realized that the suppression of the Lutherans would only strengthen the Hapsburg position. He also feared that a Council would challenge his personal authority by raising the issue of his illegitimate birth. By his refusal to agree to a Council Clement alienated the Emperor, and the German princes conferred at Speyer

27Partner, Renaissance Rome 1500-1559, p. 137; p. 163.
and disavowed their allegiance to the papacy.28

Clement made alliances with France in 1525 and with France, Florence, Venice, and Milan in 1526 for the purpose of driving the Emperor's army out of Italy. In retaliation Charles' ambassador to Rome encouraged the rebellious Colonna family to raid the Vatican palace.29 It was then clear to all that the Pope was unable to defend the city. In 1527 the mercenary soldiers of the Emperor, mostly Lutheran and yearning for spoils, marched upon Rome and sacked the city. After the fierce Battle of Pavia in 1525 Clement might have beaten the Emperor's depleted army, but the Pope did not attack. He was probably short of funds and reluctant to spend what he had on the defense of Northern Italy. After the Sack of Rome, however, Clement spent enormous sums on the seige of Florence.30 Clement never forgot that he was a Medici, and the repossessing of Florence was a goal that he pursued.

Pope Clement The Seventh was forced to spend most of his funds and most of his energy on political and military operations. His pontificate did not fulfill the hopes

28Wilfred Steiner, "The Negotiations of Clement VII and Francis I Concerning the Calling of a Church Council" (PhD dissertation, Ohio State University, 1957), p. 64.


30Partner, p. 63 and p. 28. In 1526 Clement floated loans to raise two hundred thousand gold ducats.
for peace and a golden age. The misfortunes of the Pope became the misfortunes of the painters as well. The period of Clement's agony coincided with Parmigianino's journey to Rome. Inasmuch as the Pope did not engage Parmigianino or the other artists in the creation of great public monuments, they worked instead for private patrons. Much of their work was of a religious nature. In his study of Renaissance Rome, Peter Partner calls attention to this connection between politics and art:

No great church was completed in Rome during the Renaissance period. . . . The great art of the Roman Renaissance churches lies essentially in their private chapels. . . . But these chapels are socially just an extension of the same courtly society which produced the great villas and palaces.31

Parmigianino, like the other artists of this period, was dependent upon the patronage of the wealthy nobility. His most important Roman painting was an altarpiece for a privately commissioned chapel (Plate 5). Called a capricious painting and one of abnormal sensibility, the Vision of St. Jerome was, as I intend to demonstrate, a logical response not only to the form and function of an altarpiece but also to the religious confrontation between Catholics and Protestants.

31Partner, p. 183.
Chapter 2

THE ST. JEROME ALTARPIECE AND OTHER PAINTINGS OF THE ROMAN PERIOD

The most important painting of Parmigianino's Roman period is the St. Jerome Altarpiece. It is not only the largest and most impressive of his Roman paintings but also the one which has provoked the most critical comment from art historians. The essential simplicity of Parmigianino's altarpiece has been lost as determined critics have sought to find within it the reflections of a prescient society on the brink of disaster. Thus, S. J. Freedberg wrote,

... the Vision of St. Jerome seems to demonstrate an attitude in Pope Clement's Rome toward belief that is virtually indifferent to the accustomed values of a Christian devotion, willing to take the symbols of a religion and its dogma only aesthetically and as a matter to be exploited toward aesthetic aims in art.\(^1\)

Frederick Hartt called the work "exquisitely tormented" and "distorted spatially" and wrote,

In a sharply foreshortened pose, at an unexplained depth in the picture, St. Jerome lies sleeping fitfully. The entire painting, foreground and background (if we may call them that), is his dream. It may be for this reason that the Baptist and the

Virgin and Child are at least twice Jerome's size. The visionary figures towering before us form the vertical axis of the sharply constricted painting, the real figure is reduced to an afterthought.² Although he cited Michelangelo's Bruges Madonna and Child as the prototypes for Parmigianino's figures, Hartt nevertheless criticized the sculptural clarity of the painting:

In spite of the obvious Michelangelism of the Child's first steps, Parmigianino has sharply emphasized the genitals, just as he has with unprecedented daring shown the Virgin's nipples erect through the tight sheer fabric of her tunic.³

I hope to demonstrate that this very painting was intended to be an object of most sacred devotion. If the Sack of Rome had not occurred just as the painting neared completion, it would have been placed in the Church of S. Salvatore in Lauro within the family chapel of Maria Buffalini, the patroness.⁴ The Buffalini Chapel belonged to a part of the interior of the church that was destroyed by fire in 1591.⁵ Although no one has discovered any

³Hartt, p. 516.
documents that might elucidate the meaning of the altarpiece or the program of the chapel, the iconography of the painting yields an interpretation which I have studied in the context of the church and its monastic order.

In the twenty-nine drawings which Popham has identified as preparatory studies for the altarpiece, Parmigianino always worked with the same set of figures: the Virgin, the Christ Child, St. John The Baptist, and St. Jerome. In the drawings Parmigianino appears to have worked for the most dynamic synthesis of the poses that he sketched in preparation for the altarpiece. He began with a triangular design that balanced the figures of St. John and St. Jerome at the lower right and left sides of the sheet below the Virgin (Plate 6). In the end, however, he placed the figures asymmetrically so that the viewer is led in Baroque fashion from the figure of St. Jerome near the right edge of the panel along the projecting bent knee of St. John and upward along a series of highlighted surfaces toward John's face. St. John gazes down upon the viewer. The arm that crosses his chest and his pointing finger lead to the Christ Child. From the Child, the viewer comes to the Madonna. The alignment, pose and gesture of each figure direct the viewer's gaze along a

6Popham, Catalogue of the Drawings of Parmigianino, I, 90
deliberate spiraled ascent that has been highlighted by the artist. There is no abrupt division of the panel into an earthly zone and a heavenly zone. The radiance behind the Madonna provides a culmination for the viewer.

When she is depicted in this way with the rays of the sun behind her, with a crown of stars above her and with a crescent moon beneath her, the Virgin Mary becomes the Apocalyptic Woman whom St. Jerome envisioned:

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations.

Apocalypse 12:1-12

As early as the Fourteenth century the Immaculate Virgin had been represented by Apocalyptic Woman. St. Jerome was one of the Church fathers who was related to the notion of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, and his writings were given an Immaculist interpretation so that Mary's conception like Christ's would be free of Original Sin.

By the Sixteenth century the attributes of Apocalyptic Woman were frequently bestowed upon the Virgin, and the Child became more prominent. This depiction reflected the

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8D'Ancona, p. 70.
increasing acceptance of the doctrine that Mary was pre-
served from sin through the merit of Christ in opposition
to the Thomist theory that Mary was born in sin and her
soul was sanctified thereafter.

Embodying the merit by which the Virgin was pre-
served from sin, Parmigianino's Christ Child closes the
book wherein His sacrifice is prophesied and steps out to
embark upon His destiny. In her left hand the Virgin car-
rries the palm of His martyrdom. St. John The Baptist
also contributes to the depiction of the Immaculist con-
cept, for he was not preserved from Original Sin but
sanctified within the womb of his mother. Parmigianino
appears to contrast the two doctrines through the figure
of the Virgin as Apocalyptic Woman on high and the figure
of St. John The Baptist below. Just as Jerome envisioned
the woman who would bring forth the Christ Child, so did
John precede and prepare His coming. Each of Parmig-
ianino's four figures contributes not only to the meaning
but also to the visual experience of the altarpiece.

The beauty of the Virgin also relates to the
Immaculist concept in which she is as a bride, beautiful
and free of sin. When Parmigianino chose to reveal her

9Giovanni Copertini, Il Parmigianino, II (Parma:
M. Fresching, 1932), 70. Copertini's description of the
picture was helpful in its attention to such details.

10D'Ancona, p. 24. The Song of Songs represents
this idea.
breasts through the clinging fabric of her gown, he was incorporating a Marian symbol. The Immaculate Virgin was also the Virgin Mediatrix; the breast, a symbol of her intercession for mankind. The importance of the Mediatrix is certain. For example, within the context of a religious drama, the character of St. Bernard cries out that God will not listen to man:

There is nothing which will avail. Except that, in the midst of so many processes, scourges, and perils, we may hurry surely to the port of safety, that is, to the advocate of sinners, the Mediatrix of God and man, the Queen of mercy and the Mother of God; we may have recourse to the inviolate Christ-bearing Mary, crying out new praises so that she will out of pity throw open her breast to us, and, raised to greater devotion in the enumeration of her Presentation, will deign to intercede for our misery before that blessed fruit of her womb, Jesus, her only begotten son, appeasing him more than usual; we may, with her assistance and protection, be delivered from evil, to be led back to the right path, and, with nothing to fear from the hands of our enemies, serve Him from this time forth in sanctity and justice for all our days.  

I suggest, therefore, that Parmigianino's altarpiece represents the Immaculate Virgin, her role as Mediatrix and her son's role as Redeemer. Long disputed, the Immaculist doctrine gained adherents in the second and third decades of the Sixteenth century.

With Protestantism, nevertheless, discussion was resumed on the question of the loss of Grace, and

there was sharpened on the Catholic side—in opposition to the reform theories—the polemic on the problem that links the Redemption of Christ to the attributes of the Madonna. This motive, it must be insisted, is essential for understanding what Catholics meant to reaffirm, in opposition to the Sixteenth century heresy about the Redemption. The definition of Mary's attributes was, in the devotional writings of the Italian Cinquecento, tightly linked to the Savior. Thus the Sixteenth century mariology was but an aspect of Christ-centeredness.12

Parmigianino's altarpiece was therefore highly relevant to the major religious issue of its time. Far from being indifferent to Christian devotion, as Freedberg claimed, the painting championed a concept and defended a faith. Vasari stated that the Buffalini Chapel was the closest to the entrance of S. Salvatore in Lauro.13 In this prominent place the painting would have served to herald Mary's role in the Redemption. In his Descritione de la chiese de Roma, published in 1554, Andrea Palladio described the location of the church as being across the river from Castel S. Angelo; and he identified the church with the monastic order of San Iorgio d'Alega.14 Le Merveilles de la ville de Rome, a guide book published in 1546, noted


13Vasari-Milanesi, V, 227.

14Andrea Palladio, Descritione de le chiese de Roma (Rome: 1554), n.p.
that the Church of S. Salvatore in Lauro was built by the Cardinal Latin Orfino, that it was an extremely beautiful building and that it served as a monastery for the order of S. George in Alga.15

S. Giorgio in Alga was a secular order that originated in Venice. The spirit of religious reform in Venice had been fostered by the preaching of Bartolomeo of Rome and Bernardino of Siena in the Fourteenth century.16 The Order of S. Giorgio in Alga cultivated in its monastic centers the foundations of a Catholic reformation that was to occur in the Sixteenth century. It was a movement that grew in silence, "that silence that surrounds the communion between the soul and God."17 The young Venetians who joined Gabriele Condulmer, founder of the Order in about 1402-04, devoted themselves to combatting the decadence into which the religious orders had fallen.18 With love as their only law and the Gospel as their only set of rules, they initiated a new form of quiet prayer and meditation. The influence of the Order spread especially because the

15 Le Merveilles de la ville de Rome (Rome: Mario Catalani, 1546), p. 47.


17 Ibid., Note 73. 18 Cracca, 72-74.
saintly Bishop Lorenzo Guistiniana recommended it to the Pope.\textsuperscript{19} The Order was called to a number of monasteries and convents where it established itself in a true spirit of pious devotion to Christ. The purpose of the Order was \textit{devotio} or reverence to the person of Christ.\textsuperscript{20}

The spirit of the Order of S. Giorgio in Alga was not a solitary phenomenon at this time in Rome. In his essay "Power and the Individual in Mannerist Art," Frederick Hartt cites the Oratorio del Divino Amore, a group which was dedicated to reforming the Church and which became the Order of the Theatines in 1524.\textsuperscript{21} More than a few orders, old and new, took up the gospel of Christ with new fervor and dedicated themselves to helping the unfortunate.\textsuperscript{22} The \textit{St. Jerome Altarpiece} of Parmigianino reflects the reverence of the reform orders. At the same time that Parmigianino was depicting the concept of the Immaculate Virgin, his contemporary and companion Rosso Fiorentino painted the \textit{Dead Christ}. Like Parmigianino's Madonna, Rosso's Christ is heroic, serene, and majestic. Both of these paintings give form to a concept rather than

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\item \textsuperscript{19}Cracca, 70.
\item \textsuperscript{20}Petrocci, II, p. 129.
\item \textsuperscript{22}Ibid.
\end{itemize}
to an incident. Rosso's altarpiece was probably intended to represent the Sacrament, as Hartt has suggested.\textsuperscript{23} I would suggest that Parmigianino's work was intended to represent not only the Immaculate Virgin but also her role in the Redemption of man. Therefore, both paintings raise theological issues that were hotly disputed by Protestants and Catholics: the bodily presence of Christ as represented by the Sacrament and the role of the Virgin in the Redemption of man.

Parmigianino treated the theme of the Immaculate Virgin in his paintings of the \textit{Madonna della Rosa}, the \textit{Madonna del collo lungo} and the \textit{Madonna of St. Stephen}.\textsuperscript{24} The Vision of St. Jerome, like these other paintings, was a product of the years of debate and conflict over the Reformation.\textsuperscript{25} Upholding the role of the Blessed Virgin


\textsuperscript{24}In the literature on Parmigianino's works the \textit{Madonna della rosa} has never been treated as a devotional work yet its iconography is clearly Immaculist. The rose had no thorns until Adam took it from Paradise after the Fall of Man, and it symbolizes the Virgin, who is free of Original Sin. The exposed breast symbolizes her intercession for mankind. The globe symbolizes the Creation and the predestination of Christ in Proverbs 8:23, "I was set up from eternity, and old before the earth was made." See D'Ancona, \textit{The Iconography of the Immaculate Virgin}, 31-35.

\textsuperscript{25}Cecil Gould, \textit{The Sixteenth-Century Italian Schools} (London: The Trustees' Publications Departments of the National Gallery, 1975). This publication calls the altarpiece the \textit{Madonna and Child with Sts. John the Baptist and
and Christ in the Redemption was appropriate to an order whose devotions centered upon Christ, the Order of S. Giorgio in Alga at the Church of S. Salvatore in Lauro.

As the comments of Freedberg and Hartt indicate, the Altarpiece has been linked to Italy's cultural crisis on the basis of its style. For this reason I propose to examine some of the components of Parmigianino's style in this painting. An image of Albrecht Dürer probably influenced Parmigianino, for Dürer made many representations of the Virgin on the Crescent and made more of her attributes visible (Plate 7). As Dürer's engravings became more luminous, the Virgin's nimbus became more radiant. He always depicted the nimbus as well as the crescent moon and the Jerome. The title is less narrative in its implication than the Vision of St. Jerome.

26Maurizio Faggiolo dell'Arco. Parmigianino: Un Saggio sull'ermeticismo nel Cinquecento (Rome: Mario Bulzone, 1970). This author interprets all of the works of Parmigianino as references to alchemy, 12-14. In the St. Jerome Altarpiece the sunlight behind the Virgin becomes a reference to the alchemist's pursuit of gold, to the phenomenon of the eclipse and to light as a source of life, 77-78. This interpretation is admissible in the sense that alchemy became a metaphor for the pursuit of perfection in man. The transmutation of the metals was symbolic of man's moving from the sinful state towards perfection. However, the symbols of alchemy are not only numerous but also eclectic, derived as they were from mythology, astrology, theology, and philosophy. It is therefore possible to apply secret meanings too broadly. Lacking specific historical evidence of a reference to alchemy by Parmigianino or his patron, we must reject the idea of secret meanings in the St. Jerome Altarpiece.
crown of stars. Sometime Dürer depicted the Virgin with her breast exposed. Sometimes he combined the seated Virgin of Humility with the Apocalyptic Woman as in the frontispiece of *The Life of the Virgin*, one of the Three Large Books which he published in 1511. The frontispiece of each of these books shows a celestial figure trodding upon ground which has been lifted into transcendency.²⁷ Parmigianino's *Vision of St. Jerome* shows the Virgin and Child in the same relationship to the ground.

With respect to Parmigianino's style yet another aspect of Dürer's printmaking appears to play an important role, the discernible difference in the scale of the figures which Hartt noted in his commentary on the Altarpiece. Although Dürer had studied perspective on his second trip to Italy in 1506, he did not adhere to a single point perspective. He fused sketches of architectural backgrounds with sketches of figures. For the architecture he usually employed a high center point of view; for the figures, low center points of view.²⁸ These heterogeneous viewpoints were then contained within a


single landscape. For example, the Engraved Passion of 1515 contained an Agony in the Garden in which the figures of Christ and his disciples were strikingly different in scale yet were situated within the same rocky landscape. 29 Many of Dürer's most admired prints like St. Eustace of 1503 or Joachim and the Angels of 1513-14 combined three or four points of view with figures that were scaled accordingly. 30

Dürer . . . actually worked out a system of perspective that resulted in a systematic denial of the homogeneity of space. Much of the peculiar psychological quality of his work can be traced directly to this. 31

Italian artists and collectors admired Dürer's prints and their visualization of space. Vasari had praised Dürer for his perspective. 32 Dürer's prints must have contributed to the visual conditioning of Parmigianino and his contemporaries. Parmigianino's early patron, the Cavaliere Baiardo of Parma, had collected seventeen prints by Dürer and Raimondi. 33 Even if Baiardo had collected

30 Knappe, Figs. 32 and 228.
32 Vasari-Milanesi, VI, 402-403.
these prints after Parmigianino had left Parma, his taste for Dürer's work was noteworthy, since all but one of his five hundred and fifty-eight drawings were by Parmigianino. Since Parmigianino himself was making prints as he worked on the St. Jerome Altarpiece, it is logical to assume that he had studied Dürer's work. However, the Italian artist themselves had a compelling reason to break with the use of a single point perspective.

By the second decade of the century both the architecture and the decoration of the chapels had begun to change with the individual chapel becoming more prominent. Narrative episodes which had previously expanded along the walls of a chapel or cloister were now being concentrated within the vertical format of a tall panel. Two such panels were the Transfiguration by Raphael and his school and the Raising of Lazarus by Sebastiano del Piombo (Plate 8). These paintings combine several points of view. They were intended to hang above the altars far from the spectator's eye level. A single perspective would have forced the artist to make awkward foreshortenings of distant figures or to eliminate distant landscapes altogether.

34 Popham, "The Baiardo Inventory," p. 28.

Not only the compression of the biblical incidents but also the extreme height of the panels encouraged these changes of perspective within a painting.\textsuperscript{36} The complexity and the number of figures in the \textit{Transfiguration} and the \textit{Raising of Lazarus} make the joining of their disparate viewpoints less obvious than Parmigianino's painting does. While the \textit{St. Jerome Altarpiece} was not a narrative, it is tall enough to require more than one perspective for its four figures.

St. John the Baptist appears to look down upon the spectator from his position just above the altar. The torsion of his chest and arm would be more plausible when viewed from below. The viewing point for the Virgin, on the other hand, is very high. The small figure of St. Jerome is asleep beneath the hilltop where the Virgin is seated upon the crescent moon. He is viewed as if the spectator were looking down upon him from a high vantage point at some distance from the surface plane. Far from being an "afterthought" the figure of Jerome is dynamic because of its oblique placement, foreshortened pose and

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different perspective. The figures share a common landscape in spite of the fact that they are seen from different points of view. This compression of time and space on a canvas or panel had its counterpart in the theatre of the Italian Renaissance, where the unities of time and place were rigorously observed.37 In summary, it appears that the "spatial distortion" which shocked some Twentieth century critics of the painting was in fact an important addition to the aesthetic program of Roman artists in the early Sixteenth century.

The landscape was the most original feature of Parmigianino's representation of the Virgin, since it departed from the conventional separation of heaven and earth in Italian altarpieces like the Madonna di Foligno, which Raphael had painted in 1511, The Coronation of the Virgin, which his workshop had completed in 1516, or the contemporary modello for an Assumption of the Virgin, which Sebastiano del Piombo was preparing for the Chigi Chapel.38 Parmigianino's landscape resembles most closely the hilltop

37 Dana Stone Clark, "The Unities of Time and Place in Sixteenth Century Theatre and Criticism" (PhD dissertation, State University of New York at Binghamton, 1976), pp. 82-86.

of the Transfiguration by Raphael and his school. In that painting Christ hovers above the hilltop, larger in scale than the disciples who recline on the hill beneath Him.

Cecil Gould suggested that the dynamic figures of Correggio's Madonna and Child with Sts. Sebastian, Geminian and Roche inspired the figures of Parmigianino's altar-piece (Plate 9). St. Sebastian is a spiraling, twisting figure; St. Geminian looks at the viewer but points behind himself to the Virgin on high; St. Roche, though not foreshortened, represented a sleeping figure. Parmigianino may have synthesized these poses by using them for the figures of his two saints, and he may have transposed the position which all of Correggio's saints occupied parallel to the surface plan; however, there are other exemplary figures by Michelangelo and Raphael that are reflected by Parmigianino's great painting.

In Parmigianino's preparatory drawings the Virgin evolves from a Raphaelesque Sistine Madonna to a more elegant classical figure. With her gown belted beneath her

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39 Gould, The Paintings of Correggio, 144. Gould contends that Parmigianino would have known the designs for this altarpiece before he left Parma for Rome, and he maintains that all of Parmigianino's paintings were similarly influenced by Correggio's work. Our study of Parmigianino in Rome leads us to believe that Gould has placed too much emphasis on Correggio's influence.

breasts and clinging so as to reveal them, she becomes the sister of Rosso's Zipporah in Moses Defending the Daughters of Jethro and of Penni's Caryatid in the Sala de Constantino, daughters themselves of the Venus Genetrix of ancient Rome. The Virgin's face is identical to that of Raphael's St. Michael (Plate 10). In successive drawings the Christ Child moves from the Virgin's arms to her lap and comes to rest upon the ground between her knees. Finally the Child steps out away from his Mother. The figure of the Child is apparently a synthesis of Michelangelo's Bruges Madonna and the classical sculpture of Ganymede.

For his St. John The Baptist Parmigianino began with the pose of Michelangelo's Libyan Sibyl (Plate 6). Then he raised St. John to rest upon one knee, a pose which had already appeared in a number of important paintings.

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43Popham, Catalogue of the Drawings of Parmigianino, Plate 97, No. 54 recto; Plate 99, No. 335; Plate 102, No. 291; Plate 100, No. 609; Plate 104, No. 519 recto.

44Shearman, "Maniera as an Aesthetic Ideal," pp. 210-11, Note 64.

45Penni's God Appearing to Isaac in the Vatican Loggia; Peruzzi's Moses and the Burning Bush in the Stanza d'Eliodoro; Raphael's cartoon and tapestry of The Death of Ananias.
Again it was Raphael who appears to have influenced the final pose of Parmigianino's St. John, for St. John reaches his bent arm across his twisting torso like Raphael's St. Michael.46

Freedberg criticized the elegance of the altar-piece and suggested that it was inconsistent with the values of Christian devotion. Not only does its repertoire of admirable poses and beautifully realized heads contribute to an impression of elegance but also its polish or finish. Are these elements the indicators of cultural crisis? No, the cultivated poses and gestures, the sculptural precision and strong modeling and even the use of more than one perspective are elements of a style that was appropriate to an artistocratic patronage in the city of Rome.47

Is Parmigianino's Vision of St. Jerome, by virtue of its elegant style and aristocratic patronage, untainted by the cultural crisis that occupied Pope Clement The Seventh and sent legates and envoys on perilous journeys back and forth across Europe? It is the iconography of the

46Shearman compared the heads of Raphael's St. Michael and Parmigianino's Madonna. He did not relate the pose of St. Michael to that of St. John The Baptist.

St. Jerome Altarpiece rather than its style which is representative of this moment of danger, this turning point in European history.

Three extant paintings preceded the altarpiece. Vasari described several paintings of Parmigianino which are today unknown or undiscovered; however, the loss of these works is not surprising when we consider the destruction of manuscripts and works of art that occurred during the Sack of Rome.48 Whereas Parmigianino's altarpiece assimilated elements from the work of Raphael and Michelangelo, his earlier paintings are transitional. They bridge the distance between Parma and Rome.

The Madonna and Child and the Adoration of the Shepherds are very small panels (Plates 11 and 12). The Madonna is a static, quiet figure like the Madonna depicted by Correggio in many of his cabinet-size paintings and miniatures.49 Like Correggio Parmigianino closed one side of the background and opened the other, but he broke the rigid symmetry with which Correggio usually divided the background through the use of the diagonal curtain. The same physiognomy is seen in both Correggio's Madonna and Parmigianino's. The oval faces are slightly elongated with

48Andrieux, Rome, p. 264.

49Gould, The Paintings of Correggio, p. 43 and Plate 16A, the Madonna and Child and the Giovannino.
well defined chins and long, straight noses. The eyes are cast downward; the lashes and brows, arched with slender delicate lines. Upon examination Parmigianino's panel reveals areas of tension in the Christ Child's crossed legs, the trees that bend in the wind, the fingers of the Madonna as they press together, the curtain that hangs suspended overhead, the Christ Child's turning head, the Holy Dove which has come to rest on His hands and the curving spine of the book which lies open upon His lap. These staccato touches of excitement are enhanced by Parmigianino's nervous calligraphy especially in the folds of cloth upon the table where the Christ Child sits, in the sleeve and the cowl of the Virgin's mantle and in the swiftly descending lines of the curtain. The brushwork achieves that blend of light and color that distinguishes the small painting of the Circumcision. The landscapes of both the Madonna and Child and its companion panel the Adoration of the Shepherds are atmospheric with soft, loose brushwork.

The Adoration shows a new awareness of Roman painting and its language of expressive gestures, especially in the figure of the youth who flings his arms toward heaven but turns his head to glance back at the Mother and Child. Mary and the old shepherd bend reverently toward the Child.

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The pose of each figure implies movement. Their legs, arms, heads, and hands are highlighted as are the gleaming edges of their richly colored garments. Not only the gestures but also the application of the paint communicates excitement. The figures appear to have been painted swiftly by a brush laden with pigment.

Parmigianino handled the Adoration with confidence. He was practiced at painting small panels, and he had made many preparatory sketches. In all of these drawings there are similar poses, gestures and motifs. In the most elaborate of them the Virgin and Child occupy the middle ground; the shepherds, the foreground. In the painting, however, the figures are placed along a curving diagonal line, and their placement expresses the artist's preference for a dynamic and asymmetrical composition.

The grouping of figures in the Adoration resembles the Deposition which Perino del Vaga painted for the altar of a chapel at S. Maria sopra Minerva. This composition of Perino is known today through a drawing in the British Museum (Plate 13). Perino's figures are piled up into an

51Augusta Ghidiglia Quintavalle, Parmigianino (Milan: Fratelli Fabbri, 1964), n.p. There is a large reproduction of the Adoration in color.


53Ibid., Plate 148, No. 297.
arc at the right hand side of the drawing. The configuration of this group of figures and their gestures serve to emphasize the surface plane. Against the ladder that rests upon the Cross, Perino posed a youth with outstretched arms. It seems that major elements of Parmigianino's Adoration panel correspond to those of Perino's Deposition.

Bernice Davidson has attributed to Parmigianino a drawing of Perino's Annunciation in the Pucci Chapel transcript. With respect to the period that preceded the Sack of Rome, so much of Perino's work has vanished that it is difficult, if not impossible, to pinpoint the influence which these artists may have had upon one another. Both Perino and Parmigianino cultivated an appearance of spontaneity, ease, and skill in their work. Their success was undoubtedly the result of the many preparatory sketches and designs that they made.

The influence of yet another contemporary artist, Rosso Fiorentino, may be linked to a specific work, for Parmigianino's engraving of the Marriage of the Virgin is based on Rosso's painting in Florence. Parmigianino's


55Davidson, Mostra di disegni di Perino del Vega e la sua cerchia, p. 6.

56The engraving and the painting will be treated more extensively in Chapter 3 on printmaking.
design was engraved by Jacopo Caraglio, who was also working on two sets of designs by Rosso and Perino. Vasari mentioned the friendship among Perino, Rosso, Parmigianino, and others. The style of Rosso and the style of Parmigianino were at variance in many of their works, for Rosso employed the heroic figure and Parmigianino, the graceful one. Nevertheless, the altarpieces which they painted in 1526-27 are comparable in the monumentality of the figures, the religious significance, the strong modeling and the polished execution. Later, the classical imagery of Rome inspired the most beautiful work of both of these artists, that of Parmigianino in S. Maria della Steccata and that of Rosso at Fontainebleau.

The subject of a portrait that has been attributed to Rosso Fiorentino may well be Parmigianino himself. The


58Vasari-Milanesi, VI, 10.

59John Gere, Il Manierismo a Roma: i disegni dei maestri (Milan: Fratelli Babbri, 1971), pp. 5-6. By the end of their Roman period, Rosso and Parmigianino had assimilated the classical proportions of Raphael and the works of Michelangelo.

60Evelina Borea, Rosso Fiorentino (Milan: Fratelli Fabbri, 1965), p. 5. They may have collaborated on the decoration of a palace on the Via Giulia that is no longer extant.
tall, elegant youth of the portrait is less full of face than the young artist of the Convex Mirror; but he has the same piercing dark eyes, long nose, full lips, and rounded jaw line (Plate 14). The aristocratic portrait is sober; the sitter, self-conscious. His hands with their long slender fingers are gracefully posed. Behind him is a doorway that is framed by volutes, pilasters, and moldings. The volutes are like those which Rosso used for the tomb of the Dead Christ. The motif of the volutes, the monumental proportion of the figures and the dramatic lighting suggest that the portrait and the Dead Christ were painted at the same time, the end of Rosso's days in Rome about 1526-27. It seems fairly certain that Parmigianino and Rosso enjoyed a close friendship during their Roman years.

The single extant portrait by Parmigianino in Rome celebrates the appearance of the captain of the papal guard, Lorenzo Cybo (Plate 15). It resembles the Portrait of Galeazzo San Vitale, which Parmigianino painted before he left for Rome in 1524. In both portraits the artist has called attention to the ornaments of costume and the details of physical appearance. Lorenzo Cybo's slashed velvet tunic and hat, his knotted sash and the elaborate

hilt of his broadsword are emphasized. Since the captain stands beside his small page, their two figures are contrasted; and the image of Cybo becomes more powerful and authoritative.

Parmigianino's four Roman paintings are so diverse in their styles and execution that they suggest a struggle for artistic identity.62 In this sense, the Roman paintings indicate a time of crisis not only for Parmigianino but also for the artist collectively.63 Emancipated his place of birth and from the traditional workshop, the artist was expected to draw upon a variety of techniques and means of expression and to obtain "... from mixed nectars, a new kind of honey."64 He was free of the obligation to imitate nature but was expected to excel by means of his intellect and his spirit.65 The paintings which

62Quintavalle, Parmigianino, 1. On the basis of his drawings, Quintavalle interprets Parmigianino's struggle as a quest for perfection that made him unable to work spontaneously.


65Irving Zupnick, "The 'Aesthetics' of the Early Mannerists," The Art Bulletin, 35, No. 4 (December 1953), 302-05. Zupnick contends that these neoplatonic ideas
Parmigianino executed in Rome have been aptly characterized as "... a wavering between the school of Correggio and that of Rome, between spontaneous grace and grace that is sought after and affected, between sculptural effects and pictorial ones." In Rome there was a dichotomy between Raphael's venusta (the graceful manner) and Michelangelo's terribilita (the heroic manner) and between Roman precision and Venetian sensuality. Rome in the 1520s was a "forcing house of styles."

Parmigianino's St. Jerome Altarpiece provides an important documentation of this process of assimilation and selection. Its style bears witness to the changes that occurred in the young artist's work during the three years that he lived in Rome. Its iconography bears witness to the religious drama of the Sixteenth century.

began to influence Italy's artists in 1469, when Ficino wrote his Commentaries on Plato's Symposium; Giovanni Battista Armenini, On The True Precepts of The Art of Painting, ed. and tr. Edward J. Olszewski (Burt Franklin, 1977), p. 40; Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, Trattato dell'arte della pittura, scultura ed architettura, 3 vols. (Rome, 1844), I, 50.

66Copertini, Il Parmigianino, p. 78.


Chapter 3

PARMIGIANINO AS A PRINTMAKER

Parmigianino probably designed for the reproductive media as a practical alternative to the monumental commissions which had failed to come his way due to the economic and political pressures upon the Pope.1 His involvement in the making of the prints seems to have been far greater than Raphael's.2 Most of the prints after Raphael reproduced designs which he had already created for paintings, frescoes, and tapestries. These designs were frequently the work of his followers and were subject to the style of Marcantonio Raimondi, his master engraver. Parmigianino worked on the designs for his prints at the same time that he was working on his paintings. For example, the figure of Diogenes was created alongside the figures for the St. Jerome Altarpiece in a drawing at the Uffizi (Plate 16).

The engravings constitute the most coherent group of prints, since all four of them were engraved from


Parmigianino's designs by Jacopo Caraglio in Rome. They are the Adoration of the Shepherds, the Diogenes, the Marriage of the Virgin and the Martyrdom of St. Paul (Plates 17, 18, 19, and 20). There are finished drawings for each of the engravings except the Diogenes; and the date 1526 was furnished by the proof sheet for the Adoration.

Caraglio had come to Rome to work with Marcantonio Raimondi. Raimondi's printer was Il Baviera, who continued the profitable business after Raphael's death and made Caraglio his chief engraver. Parmigianino may have come to know Caraglio through his friends Rosso Fiorentino and Perino del Vaga, for they had a contract with Il Baviera to make designs which Caraglio engraved.

Born about 1500, Caraglio was a young master when he began to engrave for Parmigianino. Although he had worked for Raimondi, he was able to deviate from the massive, forcefully modeled figures which were Raimondi's trademark. As he interpreted Parmigianino's drawings, Caraglio allowed both line and light to be more important than plasticity. Caraglio's forms softened, and he began

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3 Raimondi had been censured by the Pope and imprisoned because of the illicit engravings which he had made from designs by Giulio Romano. For this reason, perhaps, Caraglio became the chief engraver.

4 Koschatsky and Oberhuber, p. 27.
to achieve a certain luminosity with his burin.\textsuperscript{5} Hind extolled his mastery of light and shade, which is evident in the engraving of the \textit{Adoration} (Plate 17).\textsuperscript{6} At the upper left side of the composition an open landscape lies beneath the rising sun. The shepherds crowd in from the left as if they had journeyed from the distant hills. The seated Virgin is a figure of consummate grace. A female attendant cradles the Christ Child. Some of these figures also appear in Parmigianino's etching of the \textit{Adoration} and in the painting of the \textit{Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine}, which he painted in Bologna.\textsuperscript{7}

The strong modeling of the \textit{Diogenes} which Caraglio engraved is different from the pictorial quality and blended shading of the \textit{Adoration}. In this engraving the anatomy of the figure predominates (Plate 18). The circular cross-hatchings of the torso and the left leg are dense and very dark. In contrast the head, right arm, right leg, and left forearm are very white, which causes them to appear sculptural and hard like marble.\textsuperscript{8}

\textsuperscript{5}Mary Pittaluga, \textit{L'incisione italiana del Cinquecento} (Milan: 1930), pp. 172-73.


\textsuperscript{8}Alfredo Petrucci, \textit{Panorama della incisione italiana: il Cinquecento} (Rome: Carlo Bestelli Edizione d'arte,
deeply incised contours make the figure stand out against the background detail. The predominance of the massive figure and the tension that is created by his spiraled pose and by the treatment of the burin make this engraving closer in style to the series of classical gods which Caraglio engraved from the designs of Rosso Fiorentino and Perino del Vaga. Parmigianino's design is more complex in its iconographic detail.

Diogenes was a fourth century philosopher from Pontus, a disciple of the cynic philosopher Antisthenes. Diogenes was morose. He practiced self-denial and was said to sleep in tubs and barrels. At the left of the engraving and framing the head and torso of Parmigianino's Diogenes is a barrel with an opening and some bedding. This barrel represents the philosopher's rejection of luxury. Against a grassy hill at the right a featherless chicken struts beside a knarled tree. The bird mocks Plato's definition of man as a featherless biped.

Close to the seated philosopher are his books, and behind him is

n.d.), p. 45. Petrucci claimed that the woodcut of Diogenes preceded the engraving and that its stains of color and impression of mass so impressed Caraglio that he sought to imitate its flat areas with his burin. All other scholars believe that the engraving preceded the woodcut.


10Adam von Bartsch, Le Peintre Graveur, XVI (France: J. V. Degen, 1811), 100, No. 10.
a lamp which refers to his search for an honest man.

Caraglio achieved remarkable textures in the ground, the grasses, the rocks, the books, the tree trunk, the barrel, and the fur pelt which Diogenes wears across his chest. These details enrich the engraving and recall Dürer's use of the burin. The figure itself owes its powerful form to those prophets, patriarchs and ignudi which Michelangelo created in the Sistine Chapel.

In the Uffizi drawing for the Diogenes a hand measures the space between the two points of a geometric diagram (Plate 16). The thumb and the first finger are spread wide like the compass that lies nearby. In the engraving the left hand of Diogenes holds an object against his chest with this same, strained pose of the fingers. The hand in this position creates tension at the center of the composition. Parmigianino may have been inspired by the hand of Goliath, the fallen giant, in Raimondi's engraving David (Plate 21). Like David, Parmigianino's Diogenes makes use of the powerful arms and twisting cape to create an impression of strength and tension.

Titian's woodcut of St. Jerome exhibits a solitary, seated figure with a strong torso and a powerful straight arm (Plate 22). Like Diogenes, St. Jerome brings a bent arm to his chest in a gesture of remorse. The three quarter profile of St. Jerome is not as dynamic as the pose that Parmigianino adopted, for Diogenes initiates a
twisting movement in the torso in opposition to the direction of his knees. Since Parmigianino was working on the figures for the St. Jerome Altarpiece and on his designs for prints, he may well have studied the Titian woodcut.

The melancholic figure of Diogenes may have had social and religious significance. Diogenes and his followers were watchdogs of morality.\textsuperscript{11} They had rejected the very worldliness and luxury which were prevalent in Rome before the Sack.

The third of the engravings which Caraglio made for Parmigianino was an adaptation of Rosso's painting Marriage of the Virgin (Plate 19). Popham suggested that Parmigianino had made the finished drawing as he passed through Florence on his way to Rome in 1524.\textsuperscript{12} It is more likely that Parmigianino made the drawing for the reproductive medium, since he had to make important changes of scale and placement in order to render the scene complete within its smaller format. In this way, the drawing like the engraving would be a product of the Roman period.

Parmigianino's design differs from Rosso's painting in significant ways. For example, Parmigianino's figures of Mary and Joseph and the priest are placed within


\textsuperscript{12}Popham, Catalogue of the Drawings of Parmigianino, I, 205; II, Plate 141, no. 622.
a classical niche and framed by tall, slender Corinthian columns. Eight of these columns form a portico that serves as a decorative background at the top of the composition. The secondary figures do not crowd in upon the nupital proceedings as they do in Rosso's painting. Instead they pose self-consciously on the steps of the temple. Two small male figures are seated on the steps in front of the temple to bridge the distance between the foreground figures and the betrothal. In spite of his measured classicism and regular symmetry, Parmigianino's scene is animated because there are changes of scale, expressive gestures and the crowd of rods in the distance which suggest the presence of those men who were rivals for Mary's hand.13

Parmigianino's finished drawing for the Marriage of the Virgin is softly shaded and delicate, but Caraglio's engraving is not. Parmigianino's studies for the foreground figures are sensuous in their flowing linearity.14 Caraglio's cross-hatching in the style of Raimondi rounds the figures and gives them a strong plasticity. Parmigianino diffuses the light throughout his drawing,

13Koschatsky and Oberhuber, Parmigianino und sein kreis, Intro. ix. The authors suggest a date of 1526 for the engraving and call it an example of the conflict between Roman monumentality and formal organization and Northern liveliness and expressiveness.

14Popham, Catalogue of the Drawings of Parmigianino, II, Plate 142, no. 312.
and Caraglio appears to follow Parmigianino's system of highlighting; however, Caraglio's regular hatching and cross-hatching give such a dark, even density to the shadows that the light becomes strongly contrasted rather than softly diffused. The effect is less pleasing than either the Adoration of the Shepherds or the Diogenes. On the basis of this observation, one might conclude that the Marriage of the Virgin was the first of the four engravings which Caraglio made from Parmigianino's designs.\textsuperscript{15}

The fourth engraving by Caraglio is the Martyrdom of St. Paul with St. Peter Led Away to Execution (Plate 20). A finished, reversed drawing that is identical to the engraving is inscribed along its lower edge Fran Parm. F. 1527 and has been indented from transfer to the Plate.\textsuperscript{16} The most notable quality of the engraving is the soft, even shadow. Caraglio achieved this with extremely fine, closely spaced, long and even pulls of the burin. The curving, pliant contours of Parmigianino's figures are not eradicated by harsh contrasts or modeling that is too vigorous. In this engraving the figures stand as if they are revealed by light rather than carved from stone. The

\textsuperscript{15}Koschatsky and Oberhuber, pp. 28-29. The authors note that certain original elements in Parmigianino's design for the Marriage of the Virgin foreshadow the Madonna del collo lungo: sensuous classical figures and tall columns that soar above small figures.

\textsuperscript{16}Popham, II, Plate 135, no. 190.
details which flooded the other three engravings are suppressed in this one. The delicacy of the sky suggests twilight, and long shadows bathe the stones where Paul kneels to die and Peter receives the sentence of crucifixion.

The symmetry of the composition is subtle. Nero and his guards gather at the base of a tall platform. Above them sits a powerful attendant or personification of authority with a Roman eagle and a shaft of wheat. These figures are muscular and pose with rigid strength. Opposite Nero there is a crowd, probably the disciples of Christ. No helmets or imperial curls deck their heads. The long hair, long beards, and flowing robes have an air of agitation. The heads meet in whispered conversation or dreadful expectation. The two groups are separated by the kneeling saints and the standing executioners. Set apart by their dramatic poses, by the swords which menace them and by the white light which falls upon them, Peter and Paul are easily located at the heart of the composition and at the low point of a curving line which threads its way from Nero to the disciples. The balancing of the two groups is softened by the open sky behind Nero's platform and by the long, horizontal steps of a market or temple that closes the composition behind the disciples and the saints. Small figures on the steps of the building and within its portico unite the architectural background and
the narrative foreground. The only iconographic details in the engraving are the eagle, the wheat and the keys of St. Peter. The Martyrdom is a successful composition in the style of Raphael, and it has probably been underrated as an engraving.\textsuperscript{17} It was not enhanced as the Diogenes was by its reproduction in the woodcut medium.

After the Sack of Rome in 1527 Parmigianino went to Bologna. Caraglio did not. Popham thought that Caraglio's absence might have caused Parmigianino to take up other media for the making of prints and that he might have learned the technique of etching from Marcantonio Raimondi, who had also taken refuge in Bologna.\textsuperscript{18} Popham, however, was unable to ascertain whether Parmigianino's etchings were made in Rome or in Bologna.\textsuperscript{19}

Although only eight etchings by Parmigianino are commonly studied and reproduced, they are the first etchings to depart significantly from the engraving process.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{17}Petrucci, Panorama della incisione italiana: il Cinquecento, p. 44. Caraglio's contemporaries held him in high esteem, and Aretino is said to have stated that Caraglio had surpassed Raimondi.

\textsuperscript{18}Popham, Catalogue of the Drawings of Parmigianino, I, 14.


\textsuperscript{20}Hind, History of Engraving and Etching, p. 105, note 1: "In fact the etchers of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were often more truly 'engravers' using the acid to reinforce the lines already cut or scratched on the plate. . . ."
In this medium Parmigianino succeeded in reproducing the swiftness, grace, and spontaneity of his pen drawings.²¹ Allowing the acid to bite his lines into the plate, he experimented and achieved varied depths of tone. Whereas the tone of the Adoration is dark and the variety of hatchings suggest many textures, the plate for the Sleeping Girl was more evenly bitten.²² Often called the Sta. Thaïs, the Sleeping Girl depicts a young woman who is seated within a dim, softly shadowed room.²³ The composition is similar to Raimondi's engraving after Raphael's design, the Woman in Meditation.²⁴ The even tone and gentle mood of the Sleeping Girl also characterize Parmigianino's etching of Judith.²⁵ The Arm and the Sleeping Cupid are

²¹Hind, p. 110.

²²Popham, Catalogue of the Drawings of Parmigianino, I, Figs. 30 and 31.


²⁵Pittaluga, L'incisione italiana del Cinquecento, p. 203, Plate 203.
more like studies and experiments than complete compositions. Arm reverses the right arm of Diogenes and depends for its volume on the contour as well as the cross-hatching. Sleeping Cupid achieves a painterly quality with its delicate hatching.

The two etchings which signal Parmigianino's emancipation from the influence of the burin are the Annunciation and the Entombment (Plates 23 and 24). In the Annunciation the Virgin kneels with the Holy Spirit above her. Rapid touches of the etcher's needle communicate the swift passage of the light and the ecstatic attitude of the Virgin. The Entombment is Parmigianino's most accomplished etching. Two versions of this etching are now attributed to Parmigianino. Since the second and more dramatic version reverses the figures of the first version, the second is probably a reworking of the first. The same criss-cross hatching occurs throughout the print and creates a dream-like effect of light and shadow. In the second version more extensive cross-hatching and a deeper tone define both the figures and the landscape.

26 Popham, Catalogue of the Drawings of Parmigianino, I, Figs. 32 and 33.

27 Marcus Sopher, Sixteenth Century Italian Prints (Claremont, California: Pomona College, 1978), p. 40. The first was considered a copy of the second and was attributed to Guido Reni. Its reattribution to Parmigianino was made by Konrad Oberhuber in Alte und Moderne Kunst, VIII, 19.
elements more completely. The Entombment is most likely a product of the graphic workshop which Parmigianino established in Bologna and where he produced woodcuts as well as etchings.

Four woodcuts identified by Vasari in the second edition of Lives and two more attributed to Parmigianino by Popham constitute the body of chiaroscuros which was produced in Bologna under Parmigianino's supervision. 28 These are the Diogenes, the Martyrdom of St. Paul, Augustus and the Tiberine Sibyl, the Seated Man Seen from the Rear, St. John The Baptist in the Wilderness and the Luteplayer. St. John The Baptist and the Luteplayer were added to Vasari's list by Popham because they were printed with the monogram of Antonio da Trento, Parmigianino's wood block cutter in Bologna, and because they closely resemble Parmigianino's drawing style. The last three of these woodcuts are notable for their landscapes. The Diogenes and the Martyrdom of St. Paul illustrate two very different styles of wood block cutting, the first by Ugo da Carpi and the second by Antonio da Trento (Plates 25 and 26). The difference in style raises questions about Parmigianino's relationship with the two wood block cutters.

28 Vasari-Milanesi, V, 226. Vasari also mentioned "an oval Our Lady," but Popham excluded the woodcut because he believed it was based on the painting Madonna della Rosa. Vasari called the Martyrdom a Decapitation of S. Peter and S. Paul.
and appears to substantiate the suggestion that Parmigianino drew his designs directly upon the blocks which Antonio da Trento cut for him.

Ugo da Carpi made the Diogenes and probably took the design from Caraglio's engraving.29 The woodcut bears Ugo da Carpi's monogram. In his "Life of Marcantonio Raimondi" where he discussed the printmakers extensively, Vasari claimed that Francesco Parmigianino had made a Diogenes that was superior to any of Ugo da Carpi's prints.30 Vasari also stated there that Parmigianino had taught his young apprentice Antonio da Trento to make chiaroscuro prints from three wood blocks. Although Ugo da Carpi's relationship to Parmigianino has never been clearly understood, most scholars now believe that Ugo da Carpi was in Bologna after the Sack of Rome; and it has even been proposed that he taught both Antonio da Trento and Niccoló Vicentino.31 Popham, on the other hand, disagreed with the idea that Ugo da Carpi could have taught Antonio da Trento, since their styles were so different.32

29Pittaluga, pp. 237-38; Koschatsky and Oberhuber, Parmigianino und sein kreis, Intro. xii and p. 38. The only exception to this opinion is Petrucci's (Footnote 8 of this chapter).

30Vasari-Milanesi, V, 422, "... che fu piu bella stampa che alcuna che mai facesse Ugo."

31Sopher, p. 50.

There is no evidence to suggest that Parmigianino himself had learned to cut the wood blocks other than Vasari's statement. On the contrary, it appears that Parmigianino was entirely too busy making paintings for his Bolognese patrons.\(^{33}\) It is possible to conjecture that Ugo da Carpi may have taught Antonio the older German style of wood block cutting that he himself had used in Venice with Titian. A number of woodcuts from Parmigianino's designs were attributed to Ugo da Carpi by Adam von Bartsch; however, these attributions are not secure except in the case of the \textit{Diogenes} with its monogram.

Antonio da Trento cut the blocks for all of the designs except the \textit{Diogenes}. He worked with Parmigianino in Bologna until the dire morning that Parmigianino arose to discover that Antonio had stolen his designs and his plates.\(^{34}\) This event signaled the end of Parmigianino's participation in the making of prints. The fact that prints were made from the stolen designs has made the attribution of the chiaroscuro woodcuts more difficult. Since the object of this study is Parmigianino's work in Rome and the etchings and woodcuts which relate to the Roman period, only the six woodcuts which have been closely

\begin{itemize}
\item Altena, 16, No. 5 (1969), 48-50.
\item \(^{33}\)Vasari-Milanesi, V, 226.
\item \(^{34}\)Vasari-Milanesi, V, 227.
\end{itemize}
identified with the artist and his workshop in Bologna will be considered.

Ugo da Carpi's woodcut of the *Diogenes* remains one of the great prints of the Sixteenth century (Plate 25). Ugo was a highly skilled and practiced cutter by the time that he executed the *Diogenes* from Parmigianino's design or from the engraving by Caraglio. Born about 1480, he grew up in the Po Valley town of Carpi between Ferrara and Mantua. Carpi was a Renaissance city with a tradition of book printing. Wood block cutting was part of that tradition.\(^{35}\) Ugo became an illustrator. He made wood blocks for illustrations of scientific treatises and for devotional images.

It is fairly certain that Ugo moved to Venice in 1510. By 1511 books appeared there with his name on some of the illustrations.\(^{36}\) Ugo began to print with colored inks, a practice which had been taken up by the Venetian book printers.\(^{37}\) Applying to the Venetian Senate in July of 1516 for an exclusive copyright privilege, Ugo claimed that he had "found a new way to print light and dark, a


new thing and never previously done." Ugo may have developed the chiaroscuro woodcut in Italy, but he had not invented it. In Germany Lucas Cranach The Elder, Hans Burgkmair and Cranach's wood block cutter Jos de Negker had printed with contrasting colors earlier in the century.

The first chiaroscuro woodcut with Ugo da Carpi's monogram was the Titian St. Jerome (Plate 22). Ugo had worked the design in the German manner. The line block carried the design while a tone block was printed in a single color with white areas of highlighting. Eventually Ugo developed a style that gave Italy its own chiaroscuro tradition, for he used the wood blocks to create flat areas of color that would be printed in different tones unlike the German style with its reliance on the line block. Another woodcut which Ugo da Carpi executed for Titian was the monumental Sacrifice of Abraham. This print was not a chiaroscuro, but it was a milestone in the art of the woodcut because of its size and the intricacy of its landscape. In spite of his success with Titian's woodcuts, Ugo da Carpi left Venice for Rome. Like many others he may have feared that the armies which were massed in Northern

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38Vasari-Milanesi, I, 212. In his section on technique Vasari credits Ugo da Carpi with inventing the chiaroscuro woodcut in three blocks.

39Rosand and Muraro, Titian and the Venetian Woodcut, Fig. 82.
Italy, those of Lombard and of the League of Cambrai and of the Hapsburg Emperor, would invade Venice. He may have found Titian's designs too hard to cut and too intricate for the new chiaroscuro process which he was developing. He may also have been eager to go to Rome because of the great demand for prints that reproduced the famous works of art there. 40

In Rome from 1518 until the Sack Ugo da Carpi was Raphael's interpreter in the medium of the woodcut. He made some thirty-one woodcuts for Raphael and his circle; most of them, reproductions of finished drawings that had been made for Raphael's paintings. 41 Gradually he developed the use of the tone blocks. The Beheading of Goliath was the first print to be cut from more than two blocks. The Sibyl was the first in which parts of the design were carried by the tone blocks instead of the line block. 42 After the Sibyl Ugo did not use a complete outline block. His tone blocks imitated pen and wash drawings on colored grounds, and this appears to have been the purpose of the new process.

40Michelangelo Muraro and David Rosand, Tiziano e la silografia veneziana del cinquecento (Vicenza: Neri Pozza Editore, 1976), pp. 33-34. I have used both the English and the Italian editions of this catalogue.


42Trotter, pp. 31-32.
This process of printing the key design in black over additional blocks in different tones, in imitation of drawings on colored paper heightened with the brush, was indeed one of the most far-reaching xylographic developments of the early Cinquecento, a full acknowledgment of the woodcut's evolving role as the disseminator of the art of drawing.\textsuperscript{43}

Ugo da Carpi began to use three and sometimes four blocks, and Clement The Seventh granted him a patent for his process. On the first block he raised partial outlines and hatchings; on the second, the area of the color that would be printed close to the lines and hatchings like shadows. On the third and fourth blocks stood the areas of the colors that would be printed as the lighter tone and the ground. These last blocks were hollowed in places so that no ink could reach the paper as it was being printed and the effect of white highlights would be created. In this process each block of pearwood or boxwood carried but one part of the total design.\textsuperscript{44} The design

\textsuperscript{43}Rosand and Muraro, Titian and the Venetian Woodcut, p. 20.

\textsuperscript{44}Vasari-Milanesi, I, 212. This description of the chiaroscuro woodcut is taken from Vasari's volume on technique; Ralph Mayer, A Dictionary of Art Terms and Techniques (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1969, "chiaroscuro woodcut": a woodcut technique for printing single color prints in which light and shadow effects are produced by using a different block for each tone in the print. Blocks are marked to print in register. Key block is printed in the darkest tone, usually black or dark brown. Sometimes the darkest tone is printed with an etched or engraved copper plate and only tints are printed with wood blocks. After the darkest tone is printed, tone block or blocks are inked and printed with graduated shades of the same color or tones of a different color. Most popular colors
could be completed only when all of the blocks had been printed. Integrating the cutting of these blocks in order to achieve the subtle gradations of tone required much skill.

The *Diogenes* is the result of an extremely subtle and sophisticated integration of the tone blocks, one that creates tension between the figure itself and the abstract patterns which are caused by the irregular areas of the tones, the highlights and the shadows. Believing that Parmigianino had drawn his designs directly upon the blocks which Antonio da Trento cut, Popham was unable to concede this degree of participation in Ugo's print.45 The style of the *Diogenes* is so different from the prints that were cut by Antonio. Popham concluded that the woodcut was based upon the Caraglio engraving. Trotter, on the other hand, was disturbed by the apparent difference in scale between the woodcut's figure of Diogenes and the engraving's; and he concluded that Parmigianino did draw directly upon the blocks for the woodcut *Diogenes*.46 Upon examination, however, the difference between the engraving and were brown, green, and sepia.


the woodcut is not so much a matter of scale as one of mass. Ugo's flat areas of color appear to spread, enlarging the figure with wild hair and cape and giving him bulk or volume. There are dark, heavy accents; but no continuous lines confine the areas of color which define the figure. The figure of Ugo da Carpi's woodcut Diogenes is seen impressionistically with light and shadow playing a far more important role than line.

Contini wrote that the Diogenes was probably Ugo da Carpi's self-portrait. With what was more like poetic license than documented scholarship, Contini suggested that the foreign domination of Carpi following the Battle of Pavia was the reason for Diogenes' tragic demeanor. One could maintain with equal license that the Sack of Rome was the reason; however, the Diogenes engraved by Caraglio before the Sack of Rome is equally pensive and morose. Although much has been written about Ugo da Carpi, the circumstances surrounding the Diogenes and Ugo's relationship to Parmigianino await further scholarship.

The five woodcuts which Antonio da Trento made for Parmigianino are the Martyrdom of St. Paul, Augustus and

47Maria Van Berge, "Lugt as a Collector of Chiaroscuro Woodcuts," Apollo, NS, 104, No. 176 (October 1976), 261. Van Berge pointed out that the Diogenes appears to have different dimensions in prints of different colors. Most prints of the Diogenes are inked in browns or gray-greens.

48Contini, p. 16.
the Tibertine Sibyl, the Seated Man Seen from the Rear, St. John The Baptist in the Wilderness and the Luteplayer.

There is a series of drawings for St. John The Baptist in the Wilderness. Parmigianino may have begun the drawings in Rome, where he was working on a figure of St. John for the St. Jerome Altarpiece. There are studies for Augustus and the Tibertine Sibyl. There is a landscape drawing which is identical to sections of the Seated Man Seen from the Rear. The sections of the print are not reversed, and the drawing was not used to transfer the design to the block.

There is no finished drawing for any of the five woodcuts which Antonio made yet all of them approximate Parmigianino's drawing style. For this reason Popham advanced the hypothesis that Parmigianino himself drew upon the line blocks for these prints. The diary of a certain

49 Popham, Catalogue of the Drawings of Parmigianino, II, Plate 117, nos. 7, 8, and 110; Plate 118, no. 4 verso; Plate 115, nos. 205, 206, and 415; Plate 116, nos. 370, 371, and 688.

50 Popham, II, Plate 126, no. 398; Plate 127, no. 595 recto.

51 Popham, II, Plate 134, no. 2.

52 Popham, I, 110. In accordance with his argument, Popham proposed that the woodcuts which are very close to extant drawings by Parmigianino are probably those which are based on the drawings stolen by Antonio da Trento and copied faithfully by artisans who had no artist to supervise their work. Examples are the Apollo and Marsyas series; Christ, Surrounded by Apostles, Healing Lepers.
Alessandro Vittoria lends support to Popham's hypothesis, for it records the purchase on February 12, 1558 of a wood block drawn by Parmigiano.53

The Martyrdom of St. Paul with St. Peter Led Away to Execution should probably be considered a transitional woodcut (Plate 26). Antonio da Trento attempted to use the tone blocks as Ugo da Carpi had, but the figures are not shaded with Ugo's dark, flat tone. Instead they are shaded with striations or hatchings that compete with the abstract patterns of the tone blocks and distract from the narrative. In this print the Italian tone block and the German line block appear to compete with one another. The figures are larger here than in Caraglio's engraving, and the architecture has been compressed. A winged figure has been added to the composition, another detail from the Raimondi engraving of the Martyrdom of S. Cecilia or S. Felicita (Plate 4). It is clear that neither Parmigianino nor Antonio da Trento, his young assistant, could have effected the complex integration of the tone blocks that Ugo da Carpi had achieved after some twenty years as a wood cutter. It is also possible, however, that Parmigianino preferred to have line be the predominant element in the

The Bathing Nymphs and Circe and the Companions of Ulysses in Popham, II, Plates 115-134.

53Popham, I, 49.
in the chiaroscuros that were based on his designs and that he encouraged Antonio da Trento to move in the direction of a more linear style.

In the drawings from Rome and Bologna and in the panels that Parmigianino painted in Bologna there is a decided enrichment of the landscape element. Three of the prints that Antonio da Trento made are noteworthy for their use of landscape. Both *St. John the Baptist in the Wilderness* and the *Luteplayer* depict a single figure within a woodland setting. The lines of the *St. John* are complex, and it has hatching and stippling. The lines of the *Luteplayer* are simple, strong, and rhythmic; and the figure is like one of Parmigianino's shepherds. The lines of the *Luteplayer* are printed over a colored ground with just a few white highlights. Gone are the flat areas of color which Ugo da Carpi had used for a play of light and shadow.

The *Seated Man Seen from the Rear* has the most fully developed landscape (Plate 27). It is Antonio's most accomplished print with unusually fine lines and cross-hatchings that create a variety of tones. A mood of

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54 *St. John the Baptist in the Wilderness*, Popham, I, Fig. 22; *Luteplayer*, Sopher, *Sixteenth Century Italian Prints*, p. 51, no. 67.

55 Sopher, p. 52. The traditional identification of the nude figure in this woodcut is Narcissus; and the title, *Narcissus at the Spring*. Vasari did not call the print by this name, and Bartsch also rejected the mythological implication.
melancholy and mystery pervades the composition, for the figure sits alone beside a broken marble bust within a plentiful landscape.

These prints reflect the growing taste for landscape among Northern Italian collectors. Vasari considered Parmigianino to be foremost among the painters of Lombard who could make beautiful landscapes. In Padua Parmigianino's contemporary, the wood block cutter and engraver Domenico Campagnola, assembled a workshop and produced an enormous number of landscapes in combination with genre, pastoral or archeological motifs. Campagnola's woodcut of Two Goats at the Foot of a Tree and Parmigianino's Seated Man Seen from the Rear show a similar treatment of the trees, the foliage and the rocks (Plates 28 and 27). The animals of Campagnola's print are placed in the same relationship to the tree as Parmigianino's man; and in both prints the serpentine forms of the animals and the man are integrated within the landscape design. This similarity permits the hypothesis that the two artists were serving a common market and that both had derived their

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56Rosand and Muraro, Titian and the Venetian Woodcut, p. 158.

57Vasari-Milanesi, V, 217. This judgment was based not only on the woodcuts but also on Parmigianino's paintings like the Conversion of Paul and the Madonna with St. Zacariah.

58Rosand and Muraro, p. 158.
landscape style from a common source, the Venetian landscape tradition of Giorgione and Titian.59

Landscape with Milkmaid was one of three woodcuts which Titian designed between 1525 and 1530 (Plate 29). In this woodcut and in the St. Jerome in the Wilderness, and the Stigmatization of St. Francis the figure has been subordinated to the richly detailed and atmospheric representation of the landscape.60 Titian's drawings for the three woodcuts show how carefully he prepared every detail of the landscape. Domenico Campagnola worked with Titian in Padua and in Venice. Campagnola and Parmigianino may have known one another's work, but Parmigianino's drawing Rustic Scene suggests that he knew the Titian woodcut Landscape with Milkmaid and that Rustic Scene is an example of the transmission of the Venetian landscape tradition (Plates 29 and 30). Parmigianino undoubtedly studied the landscape of those Venetian prints and drawings that circulated in Rome before the Sack.61 The Venetian printmakers with whom he had contact, Caraglio and Ugo da Carpi, would have been


60Rosand and Muraro, p. 138 and nos. 21, 22, and 23.

61A. E. Popham, "Notes on Old and Modern Drawings: Parmigianino as a Landscape Draughtsman," Art Quarterly, 20, No. 3 (Autumn 1957), 284. In this article Popham suggested that Parmigianino's interpretation of the Giorgionesque landscape was based on engravings, but Popham did not specify how or when this occurred.
avid collectors of the new work from Venice.

Although Parmigianino had used landscape as a backdrop in the idyllic frescoes of Diana and Acteon, in the Portrait of San Vitale and in the Holy Family which he took to Rome in 1524, his wholehearted response to landscape occurred in his Roman drawings and in the woodcuts and paintings at Bologna. In Rome the artists of Raphael's circle had developed a landscape with ruins of ancient monuments. Raimondi's pupil, the engraver Agostino Veneziano, had evolved a landscape with vegetation and ruins in which he combined elements from Dürer and from Giulio Campagnola, who himself had made engravings after Giorgione. The landscape tradition became so strong in Rome that visiting artists like Jean Gossart, Jan van Scorel, and Michel Coxcie incorporated the Roman landscape with its ruins into their paintings. Parmigianino's landscapes are more Venetian than Roman

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62Like Rustic Scene there are a number of landscape drawings by Parmigianino which Popham assigned to the Roman period. For Rustic Scene: Popham, I, 110.


64Ibid.

not only in the characteristic density of the woods but also in the way that the figures relate to the trees and rocks. The landscapes which emerge in Antonio da Trento's woodcuts are more than likely the products of Parmigianino's Roman years.

The four engravings which were realized by Jacopo Caraglio from Parmigianino's designs demonstrate the artist's assimilation of works by Raphael, Rosso Fiorentino, Michelangelo, and Titian. Parmigianino's innovative technique with the etching needle enabled him to reproduce the grace and spontaneity of his sketches. The woodcut that Ugo da Carpi made from Parmigianino's Diogenes represents the apogee of the Italian chiaroscuro style, while those which Antonio da Trento cut are perhaps more faithful to Parmigianino's style of drawing. In the shadow of the High Renaissance and in the crisis of the Reformation when a papal commission was not forthcoming, Parmigianino turned to the reproductive media. Although he did not produce a large number of prints and his projects for engraving were interrupted by the Sack of Rome, many of his images are striking and have contributed to an acceptance of the drawing as an independent media that is worthy of reproduction. Parmigianino the printmaker has been the complement of Parmigianino the draughtsman, both playing important roles in the development of art during the Renaissance.
CONCLUSION

The advent of Clement The Seventh to the papacy in 1523 seems to have been the event that brought Parmigianino and many other artists to Rome, where they expected to receive the patronage of the new Medici Pope and to participate in a renewal of artistic life. The two, possibly three paintings which the young Parmigianino brought to the Pope demonstrate that the artist was skillful, innovative and not unrealistic in aspiring to follow in the footsteps of the great Raphael.

Parmigianino did not receive papal patronage. In fact, Clement The Seventh granted only one important commission during these years, the completion of the Sala de Constantino in the year 1524. The legendary episode that is depicted there appears to relate to Clement's papacy and to his struggle with the Hapsburg Emperor over the control of the Northern Italian provinces. The history of this period suggests that the problems which confronted Clement The Seventh had a most decided effect upon the artists of Rome, dashing their hopes for a return to the conditions which had prevailed for Raphael and Michelangelo.

In his three volume Catalogue of the Drawings of Parmigianino, A. E. Popham suggested that Parmigianino's drawings in the style of Raphael may have been designs for
A hall in the Vatican. On the other hand, these drawings such as the Martyrdom of S. Paul appear to have been made toward the end of Parmigianino's Roman period. Since the Martyrdom was engraved by Jacopo Caragio in 1527, the other designs probably did not become engravings because the Sack of Rome had intervened.

In the absence of papal patronage, Parmigianino worked for private patrons. His most important commission was the St. Jerome Altarpiece for the Buffalini Chapel at S. Salvatore in Lauro. Two important aspects of the painting have been studied: the iconography of the Madonna and Child and the use of more than one perspective to depict the four figures. Since Parmigianino's Madonna displays special attributes like the crescent moon, the crown of stars, the radiant nimbus and the martyr's palm, she is the Apocalyptic Woman, who was envisioned by St. Jerome. The Apocalyptic Woman had been used to symbolize the Immaculate Virgin since the Fourteenth Century. In the Sixteenth century the Virgin was thought to be Immaculate through the merit of Christ and, with her attributes, to intercede on man's behalf for his Redemption. The polemic between the Protestants and the Catholics at the time of the Reformation centered on the issue of Redemption. The St. Jerome Altarpiece is therefore the representation of a doctrine that was highly important to the Catholic Church.
Old guidebooks to the city of Rome describe the Church of S. Salvatore in Lauro and cite the name of its monastic order. S. Giorgio in Alga was one of several reform orders whose secular priests dedicated themselves to the renewal of the Church through the teachings and the spirit of Christ. The St. Jerome Altarpiece was to have been displayed in a prominent place within the church of this most devout order. This finding serves to affirm that henceforth the painting should be viewed as a deeply religious work rather than one which reflects a decadent society.

The conventional interpretation of the St. Jerome Altarpiece was not based upon its iconography but upon its style. Art historians have not understood why Parmigianino used a different scale for each of his figures. A study of the prints of Albrecht Dürer reveals that the use of more than one perspective was not only accepted in the early Sixteenth century but also admired. Furthermore, the Roman altarpiece with its tall, narrow format made it necessary for the artist to compress his representation of a narrative incident or a concept and to make his forms visually accessible to a viewer who stood well below the altar. The use of more than one perspective was essential, and it explains why Parmigianino used more than one scale for the figures of the St. Jerome Altarpiece.
Parmigianino made three other paintings in Rome. These works are transitional, for they show not only the influence of Correggio and of Parmigianino's early work in Parma but also that of his contemporaries in Rome like Perino del Vaga. The Madonna and Child, the Adoration of the Shepherds, the Portrait of Lorenzo Cybo, and the St. Jerome Altarpiece are so diverse that they seem to represent the proliferation of techniques and styles in Sixteenth century Rome. Roman monumentality and precision, Venetian sensuality and the figures created by Raphael and Michelangelo were among the elements which an artist like Parmigianino was expected to assimilate and to manipulate.

Parmigianino probably made prints in Rome and Bologna as an alternative to major commissions which he did not receive from the Pope. Some of the woodcuts produced in Bologna are based upon earlier engravings and drawings which were carried out in Rome. Therefore, this aspect of the Bolognese period of Parmigianino's career seemed to be a necessary extension of the study.

The four engravings by Caraglio after Parmigianino's designs reveal Parmigianino's inventive use of elements from the work of Michelangelo, Rosso Fiorentino, Raphael, and perhaps Titian. The engravings also display Caraglio's skill and his attempts to reproduce the soft, diffuse light of Parmigianino's finished drawings. Parmigianino was the first Italian artist who used the
etching medium to transmit the rapidity or the delicacy of a drawing. A few of his eight etchings are fragmentary studies. A few of them are experiments with texture and tone. The most elaborate is the final version of the Entombment, an etching which shows Parmigianino's mastery of the medium. Of the six chiaroscuro woodcuts, only the Diogenes was made by Ugo da Carpi. Since Ugo da Carpi was a master wood block cutter who had developed a chiaroscuro style that was unique to Italy, it may be that Parmigianino and his young assistant Antonio da Trento were not capable of reproducing Ugo's tone blocks and that Parmigianino preferred the linear style because it rendered his designs with greater fidelity. The landscape element in three of the woodcuts suggests that the Venetian landscape tradition was probably transmitted to Parmigianino from Titian by way of the Venetian printmakers in Rome and the Venetian prints and drawings that circulated there.

This survey of Parmigianino's work from 1524 to 1527 has led to the conclusion that the Roman period was one of substantial achievement for Parmigianino.
PLATES
PLATE 1

Self-portrait in a Convex Mirror, 1524, Parmigianino
PLATE 2

Christ, Surrounded by Apostles, Healing Lepers, Parmigianino
PLATE 3

Martyrdom of St. Paul, Parmigianino
PLATE 4

Martyrdom of S. Cecilia or S. Felicita, Marcantonio Raimondi after Raphael
PLATE 5

Vision of St. Jerome, 1527, Parmigianino
PLATE 6

Study for a Composition of the Virgin and Child with SS. John The Baptist and Jerome, Parmigianino
PLATE 7

Virgin on the Crescent with a Crown of Stars, 1508, Albrecht Dürer
PLATE 8

Transfiguration, c. 1520, Raphael and School
PLATE 9

Madonna and Child with Sts. Sebastian, Geminian and Roche, Correggio
PLATE 10

St. Michael, 1518, Raphael
PLATE 11

Madonna and Child, 1524-25, Parmigianino
PLATE 12

Adoration of the Shepherds, 1524-25, Parmigianino
PLATE 13

Deposition, Perino del Vaga
PLATE 14

Ritrato di giovane, 1527-29, Attributed to Rosso Fiorentino
PLATE 15

Portrait of Lorenzo Cybo, 1524-26, Parmigianino
PLATE 16

Studies of an Arm, a Leg and Two Hands, Parmigianino
PLATE 17

Adoration of the Shepherds, 1526, Jacopo Caraglio after Parmigianino
PLATE 18

Diogenes, Jacopo Caraglio after Parmigianino
PLATE 19

Marriage of the Virgin, Jacopo Caraglio after Parmigianino
PLATE 19

Marriage of the Virgin, Jacopo Caraglio after Parmigianino
PLATE 20

Martyrdom of St. Paul, Jacopo Caraglio after Parmigianino
David, C. 1527, Marchantijo Raimondi

PLATE 21
PLATE 22

St. Jerome, c. 1516, Ugo da Carpi after Titian
Diogenes, Ugo da Carpi after Parmigianino

PLATE 25
PLATE 26

Martyrdom of St. Paul, Antonio da Trento
after Parmigianino
PLATE 27

Seated Man Seen from the Rear, Antonio da Trento after Parmigianino
PLATE 28

Two Goats at the Foot of a Tree, c. 1530-35, Domenico Campagnola
Landscape with Milkmaid, c. 1525, Titian

Plate 29
Rustic Scene: Partington

PLATE 30
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