



FONTES **E**-Quellen und Dokumente zur Kunst 1350-1750
Sources and Documents for the History of Art 1350-1750

PAOLO GIOVIO:

Michaelis Angeli vita

[um 1527]

mit drei Übersetzungen

herausgegeben und kommentiert von

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FONTES 12

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PAOLO GIOVIO

Michaelis Angeli Vita, quam Paulus Iovius, episcopus Nucerinus conscripsit.



FONTES 12
(Michelangelo 1)

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INTRODUCTION

Giovio's very brief *Michaelis Angeli vita* was presumably written in Rome during the Pontificate of Clement VII (1523-1534) and after 1524, owing to its mention of Janus Coricius's *Coryciana* (1524) and its further mention of the presence of Bandinelli's Laocoön in the courtyard of the Palazzo Medici in Florence (1524). The text is usually dated around 1527, although some have argued for earlier and later dates. A date later than the Pontificate of Clement appears most unlikely. For a recent discussion of the question of dating, see Shearman, *Raphael in Early Modern Sources*, 2003 (*infra*), vol. 1, pp. 809-810. It is not entirely certain that Giovio used the word 'vita' in his title, and this characterization may have been supplied later. Nevertheless, 'vita' and 'elogio' are two terms that Giovio applied to his biographies, some quite brief and other more lengthy.

An examination of the structure and content of the 'Vita' (*infra*: "Outline and Structure") reveals that it is principally concerned with a preeminent topic of humanist art history, the ranking of artists in an order which awards the first place to a single artist, a procedure in which the separate arts, *e.g.*, painting, sculpture, and architecture, were taken into account. This approach reflects the heroization of the artist and his special position often found in ancient writing about art and artists. Thus the place and rank of Michelangelo in his art, or arts, is the primary theme of the first and principal section of the *Vita Michaelis Angeli*. This 'vita' is to be read alongside Giovio's *vite* of Leonardo and Raphael. In this first section ("In pictura pariter scalpendoque marmore [...] nemo commensuratius atque venustius pinxisse censeatur") Giovio acknowledges that Michelangelo has rivalled the artists of antiquity and, implicitly, that he has surpassed his contemporaries, and thus the experts of sculpture and painting have awarded him the palm of victory, *i.e.*, the first place. Michelangelo's painting is discussed through the single example of the Sistine Ceiling, which until the late 1530s was Michelangelo's single complete masterpiece of painting. Turning to the field of sculpture in marble, Giovio reports that Michelangelo achieved immense early fame through his feat of making a marble Cupid which succeeded in simulating a work of ancient sculpture, and thus demonstrating that Michelangelo had effectively rivalled the master sculptors of classical antiquity. His giant David constitutes another artistic exploit, in which the sculptor transformed a long abandoned block of marble into a colossus, also an ancient sculptural genre. Further, the immense statues of the Julius Tomb earned Michelangelo enormous admiration. These considerations lead to the general conclusion of the first and principal section of the brief *Michaelis Angeli vita*: no other sculptor could carve marble with the expertise and speed of Michelangelo, nor has any painter painted with such commensuration and 'venustà' (beauty; grace). These conclusions demonstrate the truth with which the 'vita' opened: that Michelangelo has won the first place both in painting and sculpture.

A second, very brief part of the 'vita' makes two or three points about Michelangelo's person and his artistic succession. The placement of such topics at the end is typical of the scheme of the humanistic *vita*. First, his artistic genius was accompanied by an uncivil and untamed character and by an unbelievably mean and sordid domestic life. Second,

Michelangelo deprives posterity of his successors in art, in that he instructs no disciples. Finally, despite the pleas of princes, Michelangelo refuses observers access to his workshop.

A third part of the ‘*vita*’ is devoted, not to Michelangelo, but to three sculptors who follow him in rank, but at a great distance: Andrea Sansovino, Baccio Bandinelli, and Cristoforo Solari ‘il Gobbo’.

As mentioned at the outset, the *Michelangelo-Vita* by Giovio is brief and succinct – less than 400 words in length, and I shall comment briefly on some of its aspects in the order that they occur in the text. The indications of text passages in parentheses (e.g., I. I. a; I. II. c; II. a) refer to the “Outline and Structure of the *Michaelis Angeli vita*”, which immediately follows this Introduction.

(I. I. a) Michelangelo approaches very closely the same worth as that of the ancient artists, but there is a trace of reservation on Giovio’s part, even though he appears genuinely impressed with the magnitude of the fame that Michelangelo had attained.

(I. II. a) With regard to the Sistine, Giovio underlines the rich recompense promised to Michelangelo and the rapidity with which he carried out this immense work. The high prices attained by great works of art testified to their merit in writings about ancient artists, and this tradition was continued by Renaissance criticism. Michelangelo’s extraordinary earnings constitute one strand in his biographical tradition, and this topic is already present in Giovio’s presentation of the artist. A variant of this theme is presented in a recent lengthy and detailed book by Rab Hatfield, who believes that he has discovered this aspect of Michelangelo’s biography (*The Wealth of Michelangelo*, Roma 2002). The reader may wish to examine the author’s assumptions and conclusions critically. See further: Rab Hatfield, “The High End: Michelangelo’s Earnings”, in: *The Art Market in Italy*, ed. Marcello Fantoni *et al.*, Modena: Panini, 2003, pp. 195-201. A wealth of information concerning Michelangelo’s finances is assembled in these studies. In 1547 Giovio wrote to Vasari about the desolate condition of the Sistine ceiling (7.05.1543: “*la cappella di Michelangelo, quale si va consumando con il sanitro e con le fessure*”; Frey, *Nachlass*, no. 95).

(I. II. b) Giovio remarks the use of calculated light and shadow to create powerful effects of plastic modelling, with the result that two-dimensional painted reality simulates three-dimensional plastic reality in an effect of optical illusion so efficacious that it was capable of deceiving professional artists into believing that what they saw were three-dimensional stereometric solids rather than images painted on a plane surface. This appears as Giovio’s attempt to give expression, within the context of the critical vocabulary available to him, to the heightened, sometimes nearly pulsating plasticity of Michelangelo’s figures which lies at the centre of his artistic achievement.

(I. II. c) The description of the figure of God Father at the centre of the Sistine vault, who appears to turn with the observer as he moves around the space of the chapel (and indeed to change his gesture) describes a further optical illusion, almost an optical trick demonstrating genial virtuosity, which has been chosen for attention in the very brief account of the Sistine. It reflects an optical component in Giovio’s approach to works of art, one which takes into account not only the ‘seer’ but what is seen, and which may be derived from the science of optics and ancient art criticism. Giovio’s observations are not dissimilar from modern approaches to images that focus upon the relation of image and beholder (*Betrachter*), on the point of view, and on changing points of view. This effect is achieved in that the figure is, in Giovio’s words, with “*tanta symmetria delineatum*” – delineated or drawn with such

'*simmetria*', by which Giovio does not, it would seem, intend specular bi-lateral symmetry, but something more akin to proportionality or commensurateness, regarding the ordering of the parts in relation to or in correspondence with the whole and in relation to one another – a geometrically skilful disposition of the parts that renders the whole effective in creating its illusion.

(I. II. a) Turning to carved sculpture, and first to the marble 'Cupidine' ultimately sold to Cardinal Raffaello Riario, Giovio again touches upon the theme of the high price ("*insigni pretio*") the work achieved, but the work is even more remarkable as an artistic feat or exploit: artificially aged it successfully simulated a work of ancient sculpture.

(I. II. b) Similarly, in a further artistic exploit, Michelangelo's David transformed an abandoned block of marble ("*iacenti marmore*") into a statuary giant.

(I. II. c) With reference to the Monument to Pope Julius II, we hear again that Michelangelo received great sums of money ("*acceptisque multis millibus aureis*") – many thousands of gold ducats – but at this point large payment is, more than an encomiastic topos testifying to the artist's great merit, a recrimination reflecting a widespread and somewhat dangerous rumour that Michelangelo had taken many thousand ducats from the Pope's heirs and executors and had done little in return ("*aliquot eius operis statuas*") except for some very large statues ("*statuas praegrandes*"), a circumlocution which introduces an epideictic twist to the reproach.

(I. II. Conclusion) The final sentence of I. II. constitutes, in its first part ("*quae adeo [...] scalpisse*") a conclusion to Part I. II (on sculpture) and in its entirety ("*quae adeo [...] censeatur*") a conclusion to the entire first and principal part of the *Michaelis Angeli vita*: 'dotto' and "celere" in marble carving, and unsurpassed in "*commensurazione*" and in "*venustà*" in painting, Michelangelo earns the greatest admiration and, of necessity, the recognition that since antiquity no one is better than he is in sculpture and painting.

(II. I.-II.) These sections are considered below in the section "Outline and Structure", and they will be considered again in the context of Giovio's critical stance vis-à-vis Michelangelo.

(III.) The consideration of Michelangelo's rather distant rivals in the field of sculpture (A. Sansovino, B. Bandinelli, C. Solari) grows logically out of the consideration of Michelangelo's failure to assure artistic successors (II. I). That Giovio appends considerations of additional artists to his 'vite' of Michelangelo and Raphael suggests that he was indeed contemplating a wider survey of Italian artists, as Vasari writes (Vasari, 1568, II, p. 996).

Giovio is not writing an extensive biography of Michelangelo's life as it was lived, but instead a portrayal of his subject as a rhetorical object, a brief encomium, but one that was singularly short on praise. Although Shearman maintains that Giovio "evidently disliked" Michelangelo (2003 [*infra*], vol. 1, p. 810), and, although Steinmann speaks of the "*unüberwindliche Abneigung eines Giovios*" (*infra*, p. 8), the evidence for this is slight. Nevertheless, Giovio's *Michaelis Angeli vita* certainly contains a remarkably large measure of negative comment for a 'vita-elogio'. Ernst Steinmann in the first chapter of his *Michelangelo im Spiegel seiner Zeit* (Leipzig 1930) treats the "*Frühest Erwähnungen; Pier Soderini und Jacopo Salviati; Die Vita des Paolo Giovio*", which is an early discussion of Giovio's *vita*. In the first pages of this chapter Steinmann reviews many of the recurrent topics in contemporary criticisms of Michelangelo's art and person. He continues, "*In der merkwürdig wenig bekannten und benutzten Lebensbeschreibung Michelangelos von Paolo Giovio finden*

wir den Niederschlag aller dieser Gerüchte über einen Mann, der, wie Varchi es ausgedrückt hat, in selbst gewählter Einsamkeit dem Leben keine andere Deutung abzugewinne vermochte, als das unablässige Bestreben, bald die geheimen Mysterien der Kunst, bald die unerforschlichen Geheimnisse der Natur zu ergründen“ („tutto solo specolando da se hora i segretissimi misteri dell'arte e hora i misteriosi segreti della natura“: *Orazione funerale*, Firenze 1564, p. 15).

The fascination of money leads the layman to admire and respect ‚Art‘, even in the absence of any deep understanding, because of the high prices ‚art‘ has commanded and commands. And, if the philistine connotations of mere money were probably foreign to Giovio’s mentality, as we have seen above, Michelangelo’s high prices – placed in the foreground by Giovio – could be turned by critics against him, and he might be accused of miserliness, greed, avarice, and obsession with money, all traits in contrast with the ‘higher’ ends of his art. Even when Michelangelo is awarded the first place in his two arts, there remains a trace of concessionary qualification. The monument to Julius II is not praised except for the exceptional size of the few statues made for it. Steinmann writes, “*Gehässig weiß Giovio dann weiter zu berichten, daß Michelangelo von Julius II. viele tausend Golddukatens für sein Grabmal erhalten habe, ohne nicht mehr als einige überlebensgroße Statuen auszuführen*“ (p. 7).

But it is Part III of the *Michaelis Angeli vita*, dedicated to Michelangelo’s person and to his artistic succession (or lack thereof), where Giovio’s treatment becomes almost caustic. Michelangelo’s character: “*natura adeo agrestis ac ferus*”; his domestic life: “*ut supra incredibiles domesticae vitae sordes*” – it is difficult to know exactly what objective reality might correspond to these words. Condivi seems to answer similar criticisms, which probably circulated at the level of rumour (cf. Condivi, pp. 46r ff. *et passim*). At one point Condivi observes, “*Pur da un tempo in qua, vive piu accuratamente, ciò richiedendo l’età già più che matura. Più volte gli ho sentito dire, Ascanio per ricco ch’io mi sia stato, sempre son vissuto da povero*” (p. 47r). The criticisms of Michelangelo’s refusal to instruct disciples and his unwillingness to be seen at work, found early in Giovio, became standard themes in the ‘*sfortuna critica*’ of Michelangelo among his contemporaries. It is, however, well to remember that not all cooks are willing to write recipe books, their recipes often closely guarded secrets.

Many of the general traits of the *Michaelis Angeli vita*, including its very brevity and particularly with regard to painting, appear to be characteristic of humanistic art history and art biography and to the ancient authors on art which men like Giovio had read and studied, in the first place perhaps Pliny the Elder (see, e.g., Thomas F. Mayer and Kevin Pask, “Biography and Autobiography”, in: *Encyclopaedia of the Renaissance*, ed. Paul F. Grendler, vol. 1, New York 1999, pp. 226-231; Philine Helas, “Vita”, in: *Metzler Lexikon Kunstwissenschaft: Ideen, Methoden, Begriffe*, ed. Ulrich Pfisterer, Stuttgart 2003, pp. 372-375). These traditions found a *summa* in Franciscus Junius’s *De Pictura Veterum* (1637: English ed. 1638; see Junius, *The Painting of the Ancients*, ed. Keith Aldrich, Philipp Fehl, Raina Maria Fehl, 2 vol., Berkeley 1991, including vol. 1, pp. 361-410: “Glossary of Rhetorical Terms in Praise of Art”). See further: Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz, *Die Legende vom Künstler: Ein historischer Versuch*, Wien 1934, a remarkable book which marked a new departure in the consideration of *Kunstpöbel*, and Michael Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators*, Oxford 1971 [detailed preview at GOOGLE Books], a valuable work by a ‘cult’ author which sometimes overstates its conclusions. Sonia Maffei’s “Commento” to the *Michaelis Angeli vita* suggests numerous connections to classical texts which I have not treated here and which should be consulted in her comprehensive work (Sonia Maffei, *Paolo*

Giovio: Scritti d'arte, lessico ed ecfresi, Pisa: Scuola Normale Superiore, 1999, pp. 249-259). The edition of Giovio's *Michaelis Angeli vita* in Paola Barocchi, *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, vol. 1, Milano–Napoli: Riccardi Editore 1971, pp. 3, 10-13, 1098-1101, also contains many references to other contemporary texts. Both works, to an extent, and especially the second, often surround the text with a maze of citations which are, variously, sources or presumed sources, or analogous but not strictly related texts, or other more and less relevant texts, which, as an aggregation sometimes tend obscure the primary text in its essential outlines. Giovio was clearly acutely aware of the artists of antiquity, of their enormous fame, and of the high esteem in which they were held, for he speaks of this. In connection with Giovio, it is also of note that Pliny reports the portrait collection published by Marcus Varro, who in his prolific output of volumes inserted portraits of seven hundred famous people (NH, XXXV, II, iii, 11).

This introduction was compiled without consulting the very recent book (which was unavailable at writing), Barbara Agosti, *Paolo Giovio: uno storico lombardo nella cultura artistica del Cinquecento*, Firenze: Olschki, 2008 (*Quaderni / Fondazione Carlo Marchi per la Diffusione della Cultura e del Civismo in Italia*, 37), ISBN 978-88-222-5765-9. In light of the author's earlier studies, this work doubtless contains much valuable and interesting material.

OUTLINE AND STRUCTURE OF THE *Michaelis Angeli vita*

PART ONE: The Place and Rank of Michelangelo in his art, or arts (painting and sculpture).

This is the primary theme of the first and principal section of the *Vita Michaelis Angeli*.

- I. Place of Michelangelo in the Ranks of Artists, both as a Painter and a Carver of Marble
 - (a) Michelangelo and the ancient artists [Michelangelo and modern artists]
 - (b) The first place ('Palm of victory') is accorded to Michelangelo
- II. Painting, treated with the example of the Sistine Ceiling:
 - (a) Price
 - (b) Plastic illusion
 - (c) Optic illusion
- III. Sculpture (in marble):
 - (a) Michelangelo achieved great fame through the feat of making the marble *Cupid* which simulated a work of ancient sculpture (effectively demonstrating parity)
 - (b) *Gigante/David*: the feat of transforming an abandoned marble into a colossus
 - (c) *Sepulchre of Julius II*: the immense statues earn great admiration

Conclusion to I, II, and III: The Julius Monument shows that no other artist could carve marble with such expertness and skill and so quickly as Michelangelo, nor has anyone painted with so much commensuration (proportion/symmetry/consonance) and beauty, formal grace, and harmony.

PART TWO: Michelangelo's Person and Artistic Succession.

- I. Michelangelo's character and domestic life.
- II. Michelangelo's failure to teach disciples; his refusal to be observed working.

PART THREE: Three lesser contemporary Sculptors who merit mention.

- I. Andrea Sansovino
- II. Baccio Bandinelli
- III. Cristoforo Solari, il Gobbo

THE TEXT

Michaelis Angeli Vita, quam Paulus Iovius, episcopus Nucerinus conscripsit.

Paolo Giovio

Michaelis Angeli vita

In pictura pariter scalpendoque marmore Michael Angelus Bonarota Etruscus priscorum artificum dignitati proximus accessit, adeo aequabili fama iudicioque omnium, ut utriusque artis viri insignes meritam ei palmam ingenua confessione detulerint. In Vaticano Xistini sacelli cameram a Iulio secundo ingenti pecunia accitus, immenso opere brevi perfecto, absolutae artis testimonium deposuit. Quum resupinus, uti necesse erat, pingeret, aliqua in abcessus et sinus refugiente sensim lumine condidit, ut Olophernis truncum in conopeo, in aliquibus autem, sicuti in Hamano cruci affixo, lucem ipsam experimentibus umbris adeo feliciter protulit, ut repraesentata corporum veritate, ingeniosi etiam artifices, quae plana essent, veluti solida mirarentur. Videre est inter praecipuas virorum imagines media in testudine simulachrum volantis in coelum senis, tanta symmetria delineatum, ut si e diversis sacelli partibus spectetur, convolvi semper gestumque mutare deceptis oculis videatur.

Contigit ei porro laus eximia altera in arte, quum forte marmoreum fecisset Cupidinem, eumque defossum aliquandiu ac postea erutum, ut ex concepto situ minutisque iniuriis ultro inflictis, antiquitatem mentiretur, insigni pretio per alium Riario Cardinali vendidisset. Felicior quoque industria Gigantem funda minantem e iacenti marmore absolvit, qui Florentiae in vestibulo curiae conspicitur. Locatum est ei demum Iulii Pontificis sepulchrum, acceptisque multis millibus aureis, aliquot eius operis statuas praegrandes fecit, quae adeo probantur, ut nemo secundum veteres eo doctius atque celerius marmora scalpsisse, nemo commensuratus atque venustus pinxisse censeatur.

Caeterum tanti ingenii vir natura adeo agrestis ac ferus extitit, ut supra incredibiles domesticae vitae sordes successores in arte posteris inviderit. Nam vel obsecratus a principibus numquam adduci potuit ut quemquam doceret vel gratia spectandi saltem in officinam admitteret. Probantur secundum eum, sed longo equidem intervallo, suamque laudem meriti, Sansovinus ex Aretino agro, cuius est Anna cum Maria filia, et nepote Christo infanti, multis carminibus ambiotiose celebrata, quum eam Coritius Trevir poetarum patronus epulo praebito dedicaret, et Baccius Florentinus, ab certa potius indole quam ab exacta manu laudandus. Hic Orpheum Cerberi ferociam lyra demulcentem fecit, quem Clemens ante pontificatum ademptum in cavedio Mediceae domus constituit. Idem Laocoontem, qui in Vaticanis est hortis, olim concordii trium summorum artificum ingenio absolutum, eleganter aemulatus est; quem idem Clemens non procul ab Orpheo iussit collocari, ut et suum quoque Laocoontem Florentia patria miraretur. Fuit et in honore Gobeus Insuper, qui Mediolani templum maximum pluribus variorum numinum statuis replevit.

Steinmann-Wittkower, 1927, no. 831: „Paolo GIOVIO, *Michaelis Angeli vita*, um 1527 (?), 1 S. Erst in: Tiraboschi, 1777-1781, XIII, Tomo 7, parte IV, S. 2495/96 = Girolamo Tiraboschi, *Storia della letteratura italiana*, Napoli: Giovanni Muccis, 1771-1781, 11 vol., vol. XIII.

Tomo 7, parte IV, pp. 2495-2496. Ernst Steinmann, *Michelangelo im Spiegel seiner Zeit*, Leipzig 1930, no. 114, p. 77.“

Tiraboschi's publication can, in the edition of the 'Società tipografica de' classici italiani' of Girolamo Tiraboschi, *Storia della letteratura italiana*, Milano 1824, vol. VII, Parte Quarta, pp. 2495-2496, be read at GOOGLE Books. E-texts of the Michelangelo *vita* can be located rapidly by using the search term '*gobeus insuber*'.

THE TEXT: *German version*

Michaelis Angeli Vita, quam Paulus Iovius, episcopus Nucerinus conscripsit.

Paolo Giovio

Michaelis Angeli vita

„In der Malerei ebenso wie in der Bearbeitung des Marmors kam Michelangelo Buonarroti aus Toskana dem Ruhme der antiken Künstler am nächsten und zwar nach der übereinstimmenden Meinung und dem Urteil aller derart, daß in beiden Künsten ausgezeichnete Männer ihm die verdiente Palme mit offener Anerkennung reichten. Von Julius II. mit beträchtlichen Geldsummen für das Gewölbe der Sixtinischen Kapelle im Vatikan herbeigerufen, legte er ein Zeugnis seiner vollkommenen Kunst ab, indem er das ungeheure Werk in kurzer Zeit vollbrachte. Während er auf dem Rücken liegend malte, wie es erforderlich war, verbarg er einiges in die Winkel und Bogenfelder, wo das Licht merklich nachläßt, wie den Körperstumpf des Holofernes im Himmelbett, bei einigen anderen aber, wie etwa bei dem gekreuzigten Haman, verstärkte er gerade das Licht durch hervorhebende Schatten so glücklich, daß vor der Wahrheit der Körperdarstellung sogar talentvolle Künstler das, was flach war, gleichsam als körperlich-plastisch bewunderten. Unter den hervorragendsten Darstellungen von Männern mitten an der Wölbung ist das Bild eines in dem Himmel fliegenden Greises zu sehen, mit so viel Symmetrie gezeichnet, daß er für unsere irreführendes Auge sich immer weiter zu drehen und seine Haltung zu verändern scheint, wenn man ihn aus den verschiedenen Teilen der Kapelle betrachtet. Es wurde ihm ferner hohes Lob in der anderen Kunst zuteil, als er einmal einen marmornen Cupido gefertigt ihn eine Weile vergraben und später wieder herausgeholt hatte und ihn, um nach dem erdachten Fundort und nach kleinen, absichtlich zugefügten Beschädigungen eine Antike vorzutauschen, für einen beträchtlichen Preis durch einen anderen an den Kardinal Riario verkauft hatte. In noch glücklicherer Arbeit vollendete er aus einem aufgegebenen Marmorblock einen Giganten, der mit der Schleuder droht und den man zu Florenz am Eingangstor des Palazzo Vecchio erblickt. Endlich wurde ihm das Grabmal des Papstes Julius im Auftrag gegeben, und nachdem er viele tausend Golddukaten dafür empfangen hatte, schuf er einige überlebensgroße Statuen für dieses Werk, die man so schön findet, daß man der Ansicht ist, niemand habe seit den Alten erfahrener und schneller als er den Marmor bearbeitet, niemand harmonischer angemessener und schöner gemalt. Im übrigen war der Man mit dieser Begabung von Natur so [78] rauh und schroff, daß er abgesehen von dem unglaublichen Schmutz seines häuslichen Lebens der Nachwelt Nachfolger in seiner Kunst nicht gönnte. Denn obgleich er von den Fürsten beschworen wurde, konnte er niemals dazu gebracht werden, jemanden in die Lehre zu nehmen oder wenigstens zum Zuschauen in seine Werkstatt einzulassen.“

The German translation largely follows that in: Ernst Steinmann, *Michelangelo im Spiegel seiner Zeit*, Leipzig 1930 (Privatdruck), S. 77-78 („Übersetzung aus *Girolamo Tiraboschi, Storia della letteratura Italiana*, vol. 13 [tom. VII, 4] von *Werner Körte*. Siehe *Michelangelo-Bibliographie von Steinmann-Wittkower Nr. 831.*“).

THE TEXT: *Italian version*

“Tanto nel dipingere che nello scolpire di marmo il toscano Michelangelo Buonarroti è giunto vicinissimo al valore degli artisti antichi, per così comune consenso e pari fama, che insigni esponenti dell’una e dell’altra arte gli hanno assegnato con franco riconoscimento la meritata palma. Nel Vaticano, chiamato da Giulio II con l’offerta di un compenso ingente, compiendo in breve tempo un’opera immensa, lasciò la volta della Cappella Sistina a testimonianza di un’arte perfetta. Pur dipingendo di necessità in posizione supina, ha quasi nascosta alcune figure in recessi incavati a luce via via digradante, come il tronco di Oloferne nella tenda, ma altre, come in Aman crocifisso, ha esaltate così felicemente, con le ombre che evidenziano la stessa luce, che persino gli artisti più dotati sono stati indotti con loro stupore a percepire come solidi, per verità della rappresentazione, corpi in realtà piani. È dato vedere al centro della volta, tra le più importanti figure di uomo, l’effigie di un vecchio che vola nel cielo, così proporzionatamente disegnata che a chi lo guardi da punti diversi della cappella sembra per illusione ottica girarsi sempre e mutare il proprio gesto.

“Ha ottenuto d’altro canto alta fama nella scultura quando fece un Cupido di marmo e, dopo averlo tenuto sepolto per un certo tempo e poi riportato alla luce, in modo che le macchie acquistate ed altre piccole offese appositamente inflitagli ne simulassero l’antichità, lo vendé per un gran prezzo, attraverso un intermediario, al cardinale Riario. Con impegno ancora più felice ha tratto da un blocco di marmo abbandonato il Gigante che minaccia con la fionda, che si vede all’entrata del Palazzo della Signoria di Firenze. Gli è stata infine commessa la tomba di papa Giulio, e, ricevute molte migliaia di fiorini d’oro, ha fatto per essa varie statue grandissime, le quali riscuotono tanta ammirazione da ritenere che nessuno dopo gli antichi abbia scolpito il marmo con più perizia e più rapidità di lui, né abbia dipinto con più proporzione e grazia.

“D’altra parte a un genio così alto ha fatto riscontro un carattere tanto rude e selvatico da informare la sua vita domestica a un’incredibile grettezza e privare i posteri di discepoli che continuino la sua arte. Pregato infatti persino dai principi, mai si è lasciato indurre a fare da maestro a qualcuno o almeno ammetterlo nella sua bottega come osservatore. Dopo di lui, ma a grande distanza, sono assai apprezzati, con riconoscimento personalmente meritato, il Sansovino, nato nel contado di Arezzo, autore di quel gruppo di Anna con la figlia Maria e il nipotino Gesù, che è stato splendidamente celebrato con molti versi quando Coricio di Treviri, patrono dei poeti, lo consacrò con sontuoso banchetto; e Baccio Fiorentino, lodevole più per indole risoluta che per precisa esecuzione. Questi ha scolpito Orfeo che ammansisce Cerbero con la lira, gruppo che papa Clemente prima del suo pontificato collocò nel cortile di Palazzo Medici. E ha emulato con eleganza il Laocoonte dei giardini vaticani, condotto nell’antichità a perfezione dal genio concorde di tre sommi artisti, un gruppo che lo stesso Clemente ha fatto porre non distante da quello di Orfeo, affinché anche la nativa Firenze avesse un proprio Laocoonte da ammirare. Ha ottenuto rinomanza, inoltre, il Gobbo Lombardo, che ha riempito il cattedrale di Milano con statue di vari santi.”

The Italian version is based on and largely follows that of Sonia Maffei, in: Maffei, 1999, p. 247, which, in turn, closely follows that of Paola Barocchi, in: *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, ed. Paola Barocchi, vol. 1, Milano-Napoli: Ricciardi Editore, 1971: The reading “*iacenti marmore*” (Tiraboschi: “*janesi marmore*”) is owed to Paola Barocchi (p. 1100).

THE TEXT: *English version*

“In painting and in marble sculpture the Tuscan Michelangelo Buonarroti has come very close to achieving the same worth and significance as that attained by the artists of antiquity, and this is generally agreed, owing to his equal fame. Thus the notable men of both arts have openly recognized Michelangelo’s merits and have accorded him the palm of victory. Called by Julius II, with the promise of rich recompense, he has completed in the Vatican, in a short time, an immense work: he has left the vault of the Sistine Chapel as a testimony to his perfect art. Despite having to paint lying on his back, he has almost hidden some figures in hollow recesses, such as the torso of Holophernes in the tent, and in others, such as in the crucified Haman, he has marvellously exalted the shadows that give force to the light itself, in such a way that even the most gifted artists are, to their amazement, compelled to perceive them as solid. Here we see at the centre of the vault, among the most important figures, the effigy of an old man who flies through the sky, so proportionately drawn that, to whomever looks at him from any vantage point in the chapel, he appears always to be turning and changing his gesture.

“And, on the other hand, Michelangelo attained the highest fame in sculpture when he made a Cupid of marble, and, after having kept it buried in the earth for a time and then bringing it to light again, so that, owing to the spots and stains it had acquired and to the other small imperfections which had been intentionally inflicted upon it, the Cupid simulated a work of antiquity. He sold it then for a great price through a middleman to Cardinal Riario. And in an even more extraordinary endeavour he extracted from an abandoned block of marble the Giant who threatens with his sling, the statue which one sees at the entrance of the Palazzo della Signoria in Florence. And, then he was commissioned to make the tomb of Pope Julius, and, having received many thousands of gold florins, he has made for this tomb several very large statues, which have earned so much admiration that it may be said that none after the ancients has carved marble with such skill and rapidity as he did, nor have they painted with more proportion and grace.

“Despite this, Michelangelo’s great genius was contrasted by a character so ‘*rude*’ and ‘*selvatico*’ (“*natura adeo agrestis ac ferus*”) as to confer on his private life an unbelievable ‘*grettezza*’ (“*sordes*”) and to deprive the future of the disciples who might have continued his art. Although princes implored him to do so, he never let himself be persuaded to be the master of anyone or even to allow anybody in his workshop as an observer. Coming after him, but at a very great distance, there are held in high esteem, with a recognition that they personally merit, firstly, Andrea Sansovino, born in the region around Arezzo, the author of the group of Anna with her daughter Mary and her little grandson Jesus (a group that has been finely celebrated in many verses when Coricio di Treviri, patron of poets, consecrated it with a sumptuous banquet), and, secondly, the Florentine Baccio Bandinelli, laudable more for the resoluteness of his engagement than for the exactness of his execution. He has carved the group of Orpheus who tames Cerberus with his lyre, a group that Pope Clement, before his pontificate, placed in the cortile of the Palazzo Medici. And Bandinelli has elegantly imitated the Laocoön of the Vatican gardens, a work carried out in antiquity with a perfection that combined the genius of three artists. Clement has caused Bandinelli’s Laocoön group to be placed near that of Orpheus, so that his native Florence might have its own Laocoön to admire. Gobbo Lombardo has also obtained recognition and honour. He has filled the Cathedral of Milan with statues of various saints.”

Note to the English text: The English version also utilizes the prior translations given above. It is provided as a point of departure, scarcely more than a crib sheet. The primary text is naturally Giovio's Latin one, and the paraphrases or renderings in other languages are offered as aids or auxiliary material. Giovio often uses very general words, and his text is open to interpretation.

INDEXING:

The following list of artistic terms, Persons, Places, Objects, *etc.* offers a rapid overview of the contents of *Giovio's vita* of Michelangelo. It also affords a reading list of searchable terms.

absolutae artis (arte perfetta)
Anna cum Maria filia, et nepote Christo infanti (Anna, Maria e bambino, S. Agostino, Roma)
antiquitatem mentiretur (ne simulassero l'antichità)
Baccius Florentinus (Baccio Bandinelli fiorentino scultore)
Clemens ante pontificatum (cardinale Giulio de' Medici, poi papa Clemente VII)
commensuratius (commensurazione, proporzione)
Cupidem (Cupido, di marmo, venduto al cardinale Riario)
deceptis oculis (illusione ottica)
dignitati (valore)
doctius atque celerius marmora scalpsisse (scolpito il marmo con perizia e rapidità)
Etruscus (toscano)
fama (fama)
Florentiae (Firenze, di Firenze)
Gigantem (il Gigante; il Davide di Michelangelo)
Gobeus Insuber (il Gobbo Lombardo, Cristoforo Solari)
Hamano cruci affixo (Aman crocifisso)
iacenti marmore (marmo abbandonato per terra)
in cavedio Mediceae domus (cortile di Palazzo Medici, Firenze)
in officinam (in bottega)
in testudine (volta)
In Vaticano (in Vaticano)
in vestibulo curiae (nell'entrata del Palazzo della Signoria di Firenze)
incredibiles domesticae vitae sordes (la vita domestica di una incredibile grettezza)
ingenti pecunia (compenso ingente, molto denaro)
Iulii Pontificis sepulchrum (il sepolcro di papa Giulio II)
Iulio secundo (papa Giulio II)
Laocoontem Florentia (...) (Lacoonte, di Bandinelli, ora agli Uffizi, Firenze)
Laocoontem, qui in Vaticanis est hortis (Lacoonte dei Giardini Vaticani)
luce (luce)
marmore (marmo)
Mediolani templum (il cattedrale di Milano)
Michael Angelus Bonarota (Michelangelo Buonarroti)
multis millibus aureis (molte migliaia di ducati d'oro)
natura adeo agrestis ac ferus (una natura o carattere rude e selvatico)
Olophernis truncum (il tronco di Oloferne)
Orpheum Cerberi ferociam lyra demulcentem (Orfeo di Bandinelli, Palazzo Medici, Firenze)
palmam (palma, vittoria)
pictura (pittura, dipingere)

plana (piani)
priscorum artificum (artisti dell'antichità classica)
Riario Cardinali (cardinale Raffaello Riario)
Sansovinus ex Aretino agro (Andrea Contucci di Montesansavino, detto il Sansovino)
scalpendo (scolpire [in marmo])
simulachrum volantis in coelum senis (l'immagine di un vecchio che vola nel cielo)
solida (solidi)
statuas praegrandes (statue grandissime)
successores in arte (seguaci in arte)
symmetria delineatum (disegnata con 'simmetria')
umbris (ombre)
venustus (grazia, bellezza)
Xistini sacelli (Cappella Sistina)

See further the alphabetical glossary of figural or artistic terms in Maffei, *Giovio: Scritti d'arte*, 1999, pp. 379-404. This "Glossario" is essentially an index to the terms in Giovio's texts.

IDENTIFICATIONS:

Sistine Chapel (Cappella Sistina): in the Apostolic Palace of the Vatican; ceiling painted by Michelangelo, 1508-1512

Pope Julius II: Giuliano Della Rovere (1443-1513), pope 1503-1513

Holofernes: Fresco of Judith and Holofernes painted in a spandrel of the Cappella Sistina ceiling, 1509

Haman crucified: Fresco of the Crucifixion of Haman painted in a spandrel of the Cappella Sistina ceiling, 1511

Cupid, Cupidine (Riario): A lost sculpture of a *Sleeping Cupid* by Michelangelo, ca. 1496, which deceived experts into believing it was an ancient work

Cardinal Raphael Riario: Raffaello Riario (1460-1521), cardinal 1477; in 1496 Riario purchased Michelangelo's *Sleeping Cupid* in the belief that it was an antique sculpture.

Gigante/Davide: Michelangelo's David (1501-1504), marble statue of David, 5.17 m high, originally before the Palazzo della Signoria, Florence, now Accademia delle Belle Arti

"in vestibulo curiae", Florence: at the entrance of the Palazzo della Signoria (Palazzo Vecchio), Florence

Monument to Pope Julius II: Monumental tomb project by Michelangelo for Julius II in St. Peter's; eventually realized on a reduced scale in the church of San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome

"Sansovino ex Aretino agro": Andrea Sansovino from Montesansavino, near Arezzo

"Anna cum Maria filia, et nepote Christo infanti": Andrea Sansovino's marble group of the Madonna and Child with St. Anne, 1512, in the church of Sant'Agostino, Rome

"Coritius Trevir poetarum": Janus Coricius (Johann Goritz), humanist in Rome; see *infra*.

"multius carminibus ambitiose celebrata": Poems written in praise of Andrea Sansovino's marble group of Saint Anna, the Madonna, and the Christ Child, collected and published, in 1524, under the name of *Coryciana* reflecting that of Janus Coricius (Johann Goritz)

"Orpheum Cerberi (...)": Marble statue of Orpheus by Baccio Bandinelli in the courtyard of Palazzo Medici in Florence, ca. 1519

“*Clemens ante pontificatum*”: Giulio Giuliano de’ Medici (1478-1534), Cardinal 1513-1523; Pope Clement VII, 1523-1534

“*Laocoontem, qui in Vaticanis*”: Ancient marble statuary group of Laocoön and his sons, now in the Vatican Museums

“*Laocoonte*”, Florence: Baccio Bandinelli’s large-scale marble copy of the Laocoön, first in the courtyard of the Palazzo Medici in Florence, and now in the Galleria degli Uffizi

“*Gobeus Insuber*”: ‘Gobbo Lombardo’, Cristoforo Solari, il Gobbo, ca. 1468/1470; m. 1524. In Rome: 1513/1514

“*Mediolani templum*”: The Cathedral or Duomo of Milan.

BIOGRAPHY OF PAOLO GIOVIO

PAOLO GIOVIO (Como, April 1483 – Florence, 11 December 1552; Latin: *Paulus Jovius* or *Iovius*) was an Italian historian and humanist, a bishop of the Church, and a medical doctor, as well as a collector, especially of portraits of important men. His family was from the Isola Comacina of Lake Como. Little is known of Giovio's youth. Following the early death of his father, a notary, Giovio's education was entrusted to his brother, Benedetto, a humanist and historian. Although interested in literature, Giovio trained as a physician in Padua and Pavia. He practiced medicine first in his native Como and then in Milan, and he was devoted to the cultural patrimony of Como, in particular to its historians, the elder and younger Plinys.

Giovio soon began to travel in Italy and Europe, and, by 1512, he was in Rome. There he practiced his profession, first as physician to Cardinal Bandinello Sauli (cf. the group portrait by Sebastiano [Charles Davis, "Un appunto per Sebastiano del Piombo ritrattista", in: *Mittlungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 26, 1982, pp. 383-386]), but he also dedicated himself to historical studies, particularly to persons and events of his own day. He aimed to use the extensive material that he had collected in a broad historical work covering all of Europe. This work brought him to the attention of Pope Leo X, who, in 1514, appointed him professor of rhetoric at the Roman University. In 1517, he became the personal physician to Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, the future pope Clement VII, in whose service Giovio remained for some years, accompanying the Cardinal to Florence. In the field of medicine he wrote such works as the *De optima victus ratione*, where he expresses doubts about pharmacology and raises questions about the relative merits of preventive and curative medicine, as well as a tract on fishes, *De romanis piscibus* (1524).

Pope Adrian VI named Giovio a canon of the cathedral of Como. The accession of Giovio's patron, Giulio de' Medici, to the papacy as Clement VII in 1523 gave Giovio an important position in the cultural world of Rome. Giovio aided Clement VII during the Sack of Rome in 1527, and, in 1528, Clement appointed him Bishop of Nocera to redress Giovio's losses sustained during the Sack. In 1530 Giovio was at Bologna for the Coronation of Charles V, where he received the title of Palatine Count.

In the same period Giovio began to write historical essays, and he wrote a life of Leo X soon after the pope's death. (An Italian translation by Cosimo Bartoli, *La vita di Leone X scritta in latino da Paolo Giovio e volgarizzata da Cosimo Bartoli*, cod. II, IV, 499, is found in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze.)

Giovio, in fact, spent most of his career at the papal court, and he knew most of the significant cultural and political figures in Rome. He became a member of the Accademia della Virtù and the Accademia degli Intronati. In addition to contemporary history and medical texts, Giovio composed a highly influential dialogue about *impresa* (Rome 1555), and numerous biographies, including those of Michelangelo, Leonardo, and Raphael. Giovio collaborated with artists in the realization of three large pictorial programmes: the *salone* of

the Villa Medici at Poggio a Caiano by Andrea del Sarto, Pontormo, and Franciabigio (ca. 1520 ff.), the façade of the Neapolitan *palazzo* of the Florentine Tommaso Cambi (ca. 1540), and Vasari's Sala dei Cento Giorni in Rome (Palazzo della Cancelleria, 1546). Giovio also advised the Fabbrica of San Pietro (Rome) and the Fabbrica of the Cathedral of Milan. He played a seminal rôle in the origin of Vasari's *Vite*, published in 1550.

Following the death of Clement VII in late 1534, service as a courtier to Paul III and his nephew Cardinal Alessandro Farnese assured Giovio's continuance at the Vatican, and he became an influential member of the Farnese court. During the papacy of Paul III Giovio sought to be transferred from the bishopric of Nocera to the See of Como, and, failing this, he left the Seat of Nocera, leaving his nephew as his assistant, and went to Como. Giovio shortly decided to move to Florence, where, in 1550, he settled at the court of Cosimo I de' Medici, and the Florentine Duke became Giovio's last patron, one who oversaw the completion and publication of Giovio's most important writings. In Florence Giovio died in 1552, and Cosimo I arranged Giovio's funeral including an honorific ceremony in the Basilica of San Lorenzo, where a commemorative monument to his honour was erected in the first cloister with a seated life-size statue of Giovio by Francesco da Sangallo in 1560.

Giovio is remembered as an historian, the author of a famous work of contemporary history, the *Historiarum sui temporis libri XLV*, of a collection of lives of famous men, the *Vitae virorum illustrium* (1549-57), and of the *Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium* (1554). He is best known as a chronicler of the Italian Wars. His eyewitness accounts of many of the battles belong to the most significant primary sources for the period. According to Price Zimmermann, "Giovio's virtue as a historian was that he revived the Greek tradition of contemporary eyewitness history and perfected the collation of eyewitness accounts in narratives that preserve much military history of the wars in Italy. (...) It was his commerce in the latest news, spiced with his own trenchant observations, that made him a figure to be reckoned with in the world of sixteenth-century Italy and led the influential historian of historiography to call him a revolver journalist" (the latter estimate, one which subsequent historians have revised).

As Giovio's writings show, he was a creature of his time. His worldly life did not follow religious prescriptions – Busini described him as "*lascivetto*" and "*avaruzzo*" (Steinmann, *Spiegel*, p. 7) –, and Giovio was judged negatively for his life as a courtier, finding an adversary in Pietro Aretino, with whom Giovio exchanged epigrams. As Giovio's letters testify, he remained in contact with the leading humanists of his time, and he was an active collector of works of art, especially of portraits, which he brought together in his 'Museo' at Como (*infra*).

Giovio's mundane life did not, however, impede him in assembling his major historical work, and he steadily added new material to it. Nevertheless the printing of the work began only in 1550, and it was completed only shortly before Giovio's death in 1552. The *Historiarum sui temporis libri XLV* appeared in Florence in two volumes, and later at Basle in 1560, with an Italian translation being published in Florence in 1551-1553. This work treats events from 1494 to 1544. Both the *Vitae virorum illustrium* (1549-57) and the *Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium* (1554) were also published in Florence, rather late in Giovio's life.

A brief list of selected works by Giovio follows:

De Romanis piscibus, Roma: F. M. Calvo, 1524

De legatione Basilii Magni principis Moschovie, Roma 1525

Commentario de le cose de' Turchi, Roma: A. Blado, 1532

Vita Sfortiae, Roma: A. Blado, 1539

Elogia veris clarorum vivorum imaginis, apposita quae in Musaeo Comi spectantur (Venezia: M. Tramezzini 1546); Italian translation by Lodovico Domenichi, *Le iscrizioni poste sotto le vere imagini degli uomini famose le quali a Como nel Museo si veggiono* (Firenze 1552)

Elogia virorum litteris illustrium or Elogia doctorum virorum, Firenze 1546

Vita Leonis decimi, Firenze: Lorenzo Torrentino 1548

Descriptio Britanniae, Scotiae, Hyberniae et Orchadum, Venezia: Tramezzino, 1548

Vitae duodecim Vicecomitum Mediolani, Paris: R. Estienne, 1549

Illustrium virorum vitae, Firenze: L. Torrentini 1549; Italian translation by Lodovico Domenichi, Firenze 1549–1547, 7 vol.

Historiarum sui temporis ab a. 1494 ad a. 1547 libri XLV, Firenze 1550-1552; Italian translation by Lodovico Domenichi, Firenze 1551–1553, 2 vol.

Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium veris imaginibus, Firenze 1551; Italian translation by Lodovico Domenichi, *Gli elogi: vite brevemente scritte d'huomini illustri di guerra, antichi e moderni*, Firenze 1554

Dialogo dell'imprese militari e amorose di Paolo Giovio Vescovo di Nucera, Roma 1555

See further: Maffei, 1999, pp. 351-352; and the [kubikat](#) OPAC as well as other electronic catalogues of large depository libraries.

Giovio's Italian letters, reflecting a wide ranging correspondence with the men of his day, were published by Lodovico Domenichi, "Lettere volgari" (Venezia 1560). Giovio's collected works appeared in three folio volumes at Basel in 1678. See: *Paolo Iovii opera*, ed. Societatis Historicae Novocomensis, 9 vol., Roma: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1956-1984: *Lettere (1514-1552)*, 2 vol., ed. Giuseppe Guido Ferrero, Roma 1956-1958.

Giovio's two major and related artistic undertakings were the formation of his celebrated portrait collection and the building of his 'villa-museo' to house it in Borgo Vico, north of Como on the Lago di Como. Giovio may have begun collecting portraits soon after his arrival in Rome. Ultimately the collection contained more than 400 portraits of illustrious men of

Europe present and past. The works were often replicas and copies, but it was the likenesses of the *'illustri'* that was important and not artistic quality. Giovio's portrait collection was the most important one of its time, inspiring other similar collections. Giovio's villa was built in 1537-1538 near the site of the villa of Pliny the Elder. Giovio's portrait collection is visually documented by copies made for Cosimo de' Medici (Uffizi, begun in 1552), for Federico Borromeo (Ambrosiana), and for Ferdinand of Tyrol (Innsbruck, Schloss Ambras). Woodcuts after the portraits by Tobias Stimmer illustrate editions of Giovio's *Elogia virorum bellica* (...) (Basel 1575), his *Elogia veris clarorum* (...) (Basel 1577), and Nicolaus Reusner's *Icones sive imagines vivae literis claris* (Basel 1589). See the excellent dissertation of Linda Susan Klinger [see also: Linda Klinger Aleci; Linda S. Aleci], *The Portrait Collection of Paolo Giovio* (Princeton University, 1990; ed. University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor 1991).

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Massimo Petrocchi, in: *Enciclopedia cattolica*, vol. 6, Città del Vaticano 1951, col. 647 (cf. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, also in Internet)

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Linda Susan Klinger, in: *Grove Macmillan Dictionary of Art*, vol. 12, London 1996, pp. 719-720

T. C. Price Zimmermann, "Paolo Giovio", in: *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance*, ed. Paul F. Grendler, vol. 3, New York 1999, p. 68

T. C. Price Zimmermann, in: *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, vol. 56, Roma 2001, pp. 430-440

Barbara Agosti, "Note autobiografiche di Paolo Giovio (1528-1537)", in: *Ottant'anni di un maestro: omaggio a Ferdinando Bologna*, ed. Francesco Abbate, Napoli: Paparo 2006, vol. 1, pp. 283-285

Barbara Agosti, *Paolo Giovio: uno storico lombardo nella cultura artistica del Cinquecento*, Firenze: Olschki, 2008

Biographies of Giovio can be found at *WIKIPEDIA* in various languages. The Italian and English versions are at present the fullest. See also: the general bibliography for Giovio.

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Recent literature has been cited more intensively. Many earlier studies, which often retain their value and may scarcely thought to be 'superceded', can be found in library catalogues and OPACs and in the notes and bibliographies of the studies listed below, as well those mentioned in the introduction and in the biography of Giovio.

Monographic studies:

The most recent monograph by an historian is T.C. Price Zimmermann, *Paolo Giovio: The Historian and the Crisis of Sixteenth-Century Italy*, Princeton 1995. It is available as an e-Book for about US \$ 22, and at some subscription (non-'open access') sites. The author has also written a number of articles concerning Giovio.

The two recent monographs on 'Giovio and the arts' are:

Barbara Agosti, *Paolo Giovio: uno storico lombardo nella cultura artistica del Cinquecento*, Firenze: Olschki, 2008

Sonia Maffei, *Paolo Giovio: Scritti d'arte, lessico ed ecfraasi*, Pisa: Scuola Normale Superiore, 1999

General studies of Giovio:

Franco Minonzio, "In mano de messer Evento, unico chiaritore della fortuna": nuove prospettive nelle ricerche gioviane; bilancio di un decennio", in: *Periodico della Società Storica Comense*, 64, 2002 (2005), pp. 5-108

Lara Michelacci, *Giovio in Parnaso: tra collezione di forme e storia universale*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2004 (*Collana del Dipartimento di Italianistica Università di Bologna*, 18)

Franco Minonzio, *Studi gioviani: scienza, filosofia e letteratura nell'opera di Paolo Giovio*, Como: Società Storica Comense, 2002, 2 vol.

Nicola Longo, *Letteratura e lettere: indagine nell'epistolografia cinquecentesca*, Roma: Bulzoni, 1999 (*Biblioteca del Cinquecento*, 86)

Markus Völkel, *Die Wahrheit zeigt viele Gesichter: der Historiker, Sammler und Satiriker Paolo Giovio (1486 - 1552) und sein Porträt Roms in der Hochrenaissance*, Basel: Schwabe, 1999 (Vorträge der Aeneas-Silvius-Stiftung an der Universität Basel, 34)

Fondi archivistici gioviani, ed. Magda Noseda and Cesare Sibilìa, 2nd ed., Como: Centro Stampa Comune di Como, 1983 (*Paolo Giovio: 1483 – 1983, V centenario della nascita*)

Luigi Rovelli, *L'opera storica ed artistica di Paolo Giovio comasco, vescovo di Nocera: il museo dei ritratti*, Como: Cavalleri, 1928

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