Cosini’s Bust of Raffaello Maffei and Its Funerary Context

ROLF BAGEMIHLM

The Metropolitan Museum of Art was recently given a terracotta bust representing Raffaello Maffei (Figures 1, 4, 6). When the bust came to light in 1987, Sir John Pope-Hennessy recognized its close relationship to the tomb of Raffaello Maffei on the left chancel wall of San Lino in Volterra, and he thought the bust likely to be by the Florentine sculptor Silvio Cosini (ca. 1495–ca. 1549). Cosini is recorded at work on the tomb in 1531 and 1532. His name is not the only one mentioned in the scattered documents for this project, or by Vasari, but the tomb as we see it is essentially his work, and Cosini thus emerges as the only serious candidate for the bust’s authorship.

This essay examines the character of both the bust and the monument. The Volterra tomb occupies an important place in the typological developments of the early cinquecento; the bust expands the limited number of known comparable works. The history, style, and social context of the tomb have been perspicuously reconstructed and analyzed by John F. d’Amico and by Gigetta Dalli Regoli. However, some of their interpretations warrant review and new documents shed a little more light on both bust and tomb as well as the context of a commission characteristic of its time.

There was ample reason to commemorate Raffaello Maffei (1456–1522), an eminent citizen of Volterra and one of the foremost humanists of his time. His fame rests on the Commentaria Urbana, one of the earliest modern encyclopedias, which divides universal knowledge into three branches: Anthropologia, Geographia, and Philologia. A serious student of Greek, he produced the first critical edition of the church father Basil. Raffaello and his younger brother, Mario (1469–1537), were highly regarded by the Medici pope Leo X, despite the fact that their eldest sibling, Antonio, had participated in the Pazzi Conspiracy against the Medici in 1478 and was duly hanged.

Their father, Gherardo, became a papal secretary in 1457. Like him, Raffaello never took holy orders.

Silvio Cosini is best known as one of the more valued carvers paid day wages for sculptural ornamentation in Michelangelo’s New Sacristy of San Lorenzo in 1524 and again in 1532, and decorative carving dominates most of his half-dozen works. Late in life he produced figurative reliefs for the Santo in Padua and for the Duomo in Milan, and sometime during the Maffei tomb project he skipped to Genoa, where he created a series of elaborate narrative stuccos that still adorn the Villa Fassolo of Andrea Doria. But no other figure by Cosini grips our attention with the force and authority of the Maffei effigy at Volterra.

The Maffei monument is a shallow wall-tomb situated close to the floor of the small monastery church of San Lino (Figures 2, 5, 7). The tomb is articulated as a simple triumphal arch, supported by four pilasters covered with imaginative grotesques. The central section is slightly wider than the two side wings combined. Here the effigy of Maffei reclines directly upon the flat lid of a simple sarcophagus with lion feet; in the side niches stand high-relief figures of the archangel Raphael and Blessed Gherardus of Villamagna. Raphael was the name saint of Raffaello, and a Maffei family cult revolted around Blessed Gherardus, whose name was conferred on Raffaello’s father and on his own first child, who died in infancy. A banderole with the Virgilian phrase “Sic itur ad astra” unfurls between Maffei’s hands. These words appear on the reverse of a portrait-medal of the youthful Maffei, cast by Lysippus some fifty years before the subject’s death (Figure 3). Behind Maffei, a cross with foliate ends and broad arms emits flames. The entablature pulls back under the central arch, where the cornice frieze changes to a pattern of cherub heads and swags. The arch is one coffer deep, and the large flaming emblem with the Greek letters IC + XS under the curve belongs to the same space as the cross and the effigy. Maffei invented this monogram of the name of Christ, a scholarly sort of revision of the holy trigram disseminated by San Bernardino, and it graces...
Figure 1. Silvio Cosini (Italian, ca. 1495–ca. 1549). Bust of Raffaello Maffei, ca. 1530–32. Terracotta, patinated, H. 46.4 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Edwin L. Weisl Jr. and Barbara Weisl, 1992, 1992.175
Figure 2. Silvio Cosini. Tomb of Raffaello Maffei, 1529–32. Volterra, San Lino (photo: Turchi)
both his letters and the official minutes of the Volterra city priors. A stucco mask crowns the arch, and two winged genii with torches surmount the niches. In the basement zone, thick pilasters akin to the Etruscan order in their severity separate two shields with the Maffei arms (including the episcopal miter proper only to Mario) from the epigraph. Two energetic genii, in low relief on separate slabs, tug upon ribbons attached to the faun masks at each end of the epigraphic tablet, which seems suspended in air.

When it first reappeared nine years ago, the bust was set upon a base of later date (now removed) inscribed with the name of Raffaello Maffei, and the head was skewed slightly to the viewer’s left. The overall sandy-colored surface of the bust seems to be original, although it may have been strengthened more recently in some spots. Altogether, the piece is in good condition. There are slight abrasions to the tip of the nose and at the top of the capacious scholar’s hat, the lower edge of which shows two small chips.

The lifesize head and neck, with the inside ring of the collar, form a single element that fits into the socket of the torso. There is no reason to suppose that the two pieces might belong to two different periods.
arms are cut close below the shoulders, and the bust’s outline dips to a point corresponding to the breast-bone. At the front, the ridges of the mantle terminate as irregular scallops, an unusual and attractive variant of classical clipeata (shield) busts. The bust can stand securely upon narrow portions of the front and back edges. This stability, the even finish of the bust on all sides, and its commemorative function all suggest that the bust could have been placed upon a low, flat surface such as a table, even though the lack of a solid base makes it more likely that the bust stood inside the lunette over a door than on a table. The clipeata shape was, in Roman and in Renaissance practice, widely adopted for portraits in elevated positions. In this bust the profile view is comparatively insipid. Seen from either side, the strokes defining the curls seem mechanical, the wrinkles of the neck and those following the contour of the jaw as it turns to the ear slack and casual (Figure 6). Sculpture for overdoors must respond to the demands of a three-quarter view, and from this angle as well as from the front both the wrinkled neck and the summary fringe of hair beneath the hat work admirably (Figure 4). As with many other early portrait busts, we know nothing of its intended lighting.

It has been remarked that the carved portrait of the Maffei tomb must depend upon a life or death mask of Raffaello Maffei that is now lost. Certainly the Metropolitan Museum’s bust was worked up from a mask of this type. Its pitted skin and wrinkles achieve something of the startling effect of the faces of real men who have been recovered from ancient and medieval bogs. The face of the bust probably started as a section of clay pressed into a plaster cast taken from the original mask. This raises two related questions: Can one speak of artistic emphasis in the bust? Was the bust or rather the mask consulted when the tomb was carved?

The first question is more easily answered, for the sculptor clearly altered the impression from the mask. He added the hairs of the eyebrows and the wrinkles around the wryly curled mouth. With a few deft turns of the wrist he indicated the iris and pupil of the eyes, and he contrived a gaze that is distant without barring all contact (Figures 4, 5).

The differences between the faces of the bust and of the tomb reflect the changes in function, medium, and meaning. The main view of the bust is frontal, and Maffei’s eyes seem to meet ours. In the tomb the whole composition and the undulating effigy focus attention on the head, which tilts slightly back and forward to the right. We are thus induced to move around to inspect the face, but now the gaze merges with the
adjacent high altar of the church (Figure 5). In accordance with the qualities of marble, Cosini now emphasizes broader shapes: the strong cheekbone, the wrinkles added to the forehead, the clean shape of the jaw. The hollow cheeks, the cleft between the lips and the indentation of the upper lip, the asymmetrical twist of the eyebrows (that over Maffei’s left eye pulls in closer to the nose), and the bridge of the nose are all more prominent and set up a new play of lines and shapes (Figures 4–7). The sunken eyes and lowered pupils have an expressive as well as a veristic content. A fine character study, the bust has been transformed into the face of man contemplating the end. Maffei’s right hand rests upon a skull, and the shape of his own skull pressing outward arouses a sharp sense of mortality. Cosini imaginatively accentuated the effects of age yet, as we can now judge, at no point has the carved head become a less accurate record of Maffei’s appearance. Surely Cosini acquired such an intimate grasp of Maffei’s bone structure in the process of making the bust.

It is worth noting that in 1529, the year the Maffei tomb was contracted, the Florentine commune sent Cosini to make the death mask of Niccolò Capponi, a patrician statesman. Indeed (as Dalli Regoli failed to remark), Cosini went with the object of producing a portrait bust: “Essendo ... Niccolò Capponi ... morto in Castelnuovo della Garfagnana, nel ritornare a Genova, dove era stato ambasciatore della repubblica all’imperatore; fu mandato con molta fretta Silvio a formarne la testa, perche poi ne facesse una di cera, bellissima” (When Niccolò Capponi died at Castelnuovo Garfagnana, while returning to Genoa where he had been the republic’s ambassador to the emperor, Silvio was sent in all haste to mold his head, in order to make another head, of wax, which is most beautiful).12

Before considering the tomb’s style and typology, a review of its checkered history is in order. Information about the tomb is mostly confined to letters to and from Mario Maffei that provide a rich but inconsistent source of information.

Raffaello Maffei would almost certainly have disapproved of the tomb, which expresses the aspirations of his brother Mario, who ordered it and who supervised its completion. Although the two brothers both found careers in the Roman curia, they possessed very different personalities and attitudes. Even the motives that brought them back to Volterra were contrary. About 1480, already highly renowned, Raffaello retired to Volterra in order to devote himself to scholarship and to civic life; Mario returned forty-six years later, worn out by the fickle politics of preferment.13

Contemporary letters and later biographies state that after his wife, the local noblewoman Tita Minucci, had provided him with an heir, Raffaello plunged into a scholarly asceticism: he slept on a rude pallet, bound his waist with a penitential chain, and with his own hand painted the IC + XS emblem on a wall of the domestic cell that he inhabited.14 About 1490, Raffaello materially founded the Observant Franciscan nunnery of San Lino that houses his tomb with a gift of five thousand florins or more, a sum that may have helped in its construction, said to date to 1515. Raffaello himself may have procured the bust of the titular saint formerly set above the portal of San Lino, ascribed to Giovanni della Robbia (Figure 8).15 As the Commentaria informs us, Saint Linus, the second pope, was held to be of Volterran birth. Raffaello served two terms as city prior, and he belonged to the committee—guided by the formidable Timoteo da Lucca, an Observant Franciscan—that founded the local Monte Pio, or funded debt.16 After the death of his humanist kinsman Paolo Cortesi in 1509, Raffaello added a preface to the latter’s manual for the instruction of cardinals (which regrettabley has no prescriptions for tombs).17 There are only two brief paragraphs about modern artists in the Commentaria,18 but Maffei wrote of Donatello’s familiarity with Cosimo de’ Medici, and he
realized the importance of Michelangelo, whom he called “Arcangelo.”

Mario Maffei won the regard of Leo X and became the bishop of minor sees (Aquino and, in France, Cavaillon). His modest knowledge of antiquity, his versifying, and his other minor talents advanced him no further, and a disappointed and dyspeptic Mario retreated to Volterra in 1526 to consolidate the Maffei fortune. Even before this, from the 1510s to the early 1520s, he built the sprawling family palace in the center of town and a suburban villa at Villamagna. Difficulties in supervising the palace workmen and fears of cost overrun, despite his comfortable income, had frayed Mario’s nerves by the time he undertook his brother’s tomb. In order to continue the Maffei line, Mario formally adopted Paolo Riccobaldi, husband of Raffaello’s daughter, Lucilla, and the scion of an eminent local family, who reluctantly discarded his cognomen as Mario required. Paolo and his son Giulio later oversaw the execution of Mario’s prominent tomb in the Volterra cathedral, which until recently was widely ascribed to Giovanni Angelo Montorsoli (Figure 9).20

Raffaello Maffei died in February 1522. In his will of 1516 he requested a modest funeral, and in a codicil he asked for burial in a simple tomb at San Lino which was to be emblazoned with the IC + XS sign.21 Despite these conditions, Mario’s wishes made themselves felt immediately. In October 1521 Mario had received papal sanction for observance of the cult of Blessed Gherardus and subsequently urged Raffaello to found a chapel to Gherardus. A few weeks later, after Raffaello’s death, Mario advised Paolo Riccobaldi to amalgamate the Gherardus chapel with the planned tomb at San Lino.22 In 1528 Mario procured from no less a source than Baldassare Peruzzi a drawing of either the Sforza or the Basso della Rovere tomb in Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome, two tombs executed by Andrea Sansovino in about 1507 (Figure 10).23 These nearly identical tombs did indeed provide the basic scheme of the Maffei monument, a point we shall return to below. Finally, in January 1529, one “Giovannino” of Florence contracted for the tomb. There follows a silence of two years, coinciding with a period of political turmoil.

Two letters to Mario of November 1531 prove that Cosini had been engaged to execute the monument. At that time and up until April 1532 Cosini was in the service of Andrea Doria in Genoa. The first letter was written by Paolo Riccobaldi, the second a few days later in Pisa by another Volterrano, Camillo Incontri. Riccobaldi reveals that Cosini had somehow failed to fulfill his obligations to complete the tomb, and that

Figure 9. Tomb of Mario Maffei. Tuscan, ca. 1538–40. Marble. Volterra, Duomo (photo: Turchi)

Figure 10. Andrea Sansovino (Italian, ca. 1467–1529). Tomb of Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, ca. 1507. Marble. Rome, Santa Maria del Popolo (photo: The Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art)
he and Mario had misplaced the contract and were therefore unable to prosecute him. The sculptor had entangled himself ("si era avviluppato") with the result that the ensemble was more elaborate than the original "disegno" shown to Riccobaldi by Mario—clearly a model of some sort—and that the contract no longer covered all his work. Ensnared in Genoa, Cosini had written to Mario with an offer to finish the task in exchange for a bonus of fifty scudi or a sum to be adjudicated by two masters of sculpture. Riccobaldi now urged Mario to resign himself to this further expense, since only upon these terms would Cosini ever give "l'ultima mano alla sepoltura" (the final touch to the tomb). In his letter,24 Incontri recommended that the project be taken away from Cosini, who was disinclined to leave Genoa and quite safe from liability for breach of contract. Incontri had also seen portions of the tomb. Far from referring to "the final touch" as Riccobaldi had, Incontri wrote: "Li marmi ... son quasi ammezzati di lavoro, massime el volto di Messer Raffaello è quasi finito, e rendeli buon'aria" (The marbles are almost halfway done, above all the head of Lord Raffaello, and it makes him look well). Incontri put forward the name of the Pisan sculptor Stagio Stagi. By July 1532, however, Cosini had materialized in Volterra. Mario composed the epitaph that same month, and two months later there is word that the tomb was nearly completed.25

Mario cannot have been displeased with the outcome, for in 1536 Paolo Riccobaldi suggested that Mario wait and see whether Cosini could be enlisted for a new project, a chapel, possibly Mario’s own tomb in the Duomo.26 In fact, Mario’s tomb and not Raffaello’s is perhaps the “new tomb” for which Riccobaldi was negotiating with Cosini as early as November 1532, when Raffaello’s tomb cannot have been finished more than one month.27 Much later, in the spring of 1538, the local sculptor Giovanni di Zaccaria Zacchi appealed in vain to Paolo for this commission, which apparently had only recently been awarded to another.28 Zacchi referred to a monument (unidentified) that he had just completed in one of the Roman churches dedicated to Saint Peter, bitterly deriding his successful competitor at Volterra as being of rustic extraction.29 Paolo did not entrust the tomb to Cosini and the result is decidedly conventional and ungainly compared to Raffaello’s tomb (Figures 9, 2).

The lost contract cited by Riccobaldi in 1531—still unrecovered—must have been a new agreement with Cosini, but this almost certainly confirmed most of the slightly earlier contract with Giovannino. Although some aspects of the 1529 contract are problematic, it lists many salient elements of the finished tomb such as the two lateral saints and the IC + XS sign in a sunburst. The projected width, seven braccia, is close to the actual San Lino tomb. The 1529 document also states that two “mozi” are to replace two eagles; it has been plausibly argued that this term, probably meaning half-figures or boys (mozzi), refers to the two genii holding the epitaph in the tomb as executed.30 The reference to a “modello” by the contractor “Giovannino,” either a finished drawing or a modeled relief, explains the selective description of the contract, which neglects to mention the effigy. This “contract,” it should be added, may be merely a draft of the actual, misplaced agreement, according to d’Amico, or else a kind of memorandum penned for Mario’s records.31

The identity of “Giovannino” is a problem that leads us to the more general question of possible contributions to the San Lino monument by hands other than Cosini’s. Recently, Del Bravo has discounted Cosini’s role in the lower section including the putti and one of the pilasters.32

The name “Giovannino” is too vague to be identified positively with any historical figure, let alone one whose carving style is known. D’Amico’s theory that he might have been Montorsoli (the presumed author of Mario’s tomb) is, despite Roberto P. Giardi’s objections, tenable.33 Dalli Regoli argued that he might have been the “Giovanni da Fiesole” who assisted Cosini in Genoa, and who in turn seems to be identical with Giovanni di Sandro—the supplier of much of the marble for the new sacristy in San Lorenzo, and much later an assistant to the sculptor Ordoñez, at Carrara.34 A corollary of this plausible hypothesis is that the Raffaello Maffei commission might have been transferred from one acquaintance to another. While no traces of Giovanni di Sandro’s handiwork can be identified with certainty, it has been claimed that he carved the architecture and that Cosini carved the four figures of the north portal of the Villa Fassolo in Genoa in 1532.35 The stiffness and dryness of these four figures could indicate partial intervention by di Sandro.

The carving, motifs, and articulation of the major parts of the Maffei tomb are thoroughly characteristic of Cosini. They are extremely close to the altarpiece with four figures in relief at nearby Montenero (Figure 11), which Cosini carved immediately prior to the Maffei tomb (see below).36 Since Cosini had, by Paolo Riccobaldi’s account, almost completed the Maffei tomb by November 1531, he may have replaced “Giovannino” at an early date, perhaps as early as the summer of 1529. It could be argued that the rather bare arch and basement pilasters, which detract from the harmony of the
whole, were fashioned by “Giovannino” and reutilized by Cosini. But these elements could easily reflect the break during Cosini’s work on the tomb, or even an attempt on his part to imitate the stark vocabulary of Michelangelo’s new sacristy.

Vasari’s account and the available documents tend to discourage the view that Cosini was assisted on this tomb, and the ascription of parts of it to Stagio Stagi by earlier scholars acquainted with Incontri’s letter is unfounded.37 Dalli Regoli argued that the mask and the putto on the right side of the epigraph are by Cosini while the corresponding elements on the left side are by an assistant, possibly Montorsoli;38 this is a subtle distinction. In the right-hand plaque Cosini’s feathery touch crisply defines plumes, curls, and striations; in the left-hand plaque the relation of head to shoulder is more awkward and the forms are relatively inert and dull, even where a drill was employed. But Dalli Regoli’s dichotomy between the graphic and modeled character of these two halves may go too far. A sharp contrast between the poses and energy of the two putti was surely intentional, as the analogous pair on the Sannazaro tomb in Naples (1537) makes abundantly clear.39 Although Maffei wrote the epigraph in 1532, these lateral plaques might have been carved in an earlier rather than a later stage of work. The design of both panels must be Cosini’s, and if that on the left does not ripple with energy it may simply be because Cosini executed it with less attention.

The last part of the tomb to be carried out, the stuccos at the top, was long considered a later addition, but has recently been ascribed to Cosini himself.40 The stuccos of the Villa Fassolo and over the Andrea Doria tomb in San Matteo, in Genoa, and the bizarre stucco grotesques at Montughi outside Florence, executed for a future secretary of Cosimo I de’ Medici,41 all show affinities with the stuccos over the Maffei tomb, and together these works establish Cosini’s considerable skill as a modeler, even if they are too diverse in kind to prove the ascription of the bust.

The difficulties that Mario Maffei experienced were avoided by the Florentine patron of Cosini’s altarpiece for the Umiliati at Montenero (Figure 11). This was completed in May 1530, a year and two days after the contract. Cosini received a total of 225 ducats, paid in the form of an advance of 40 ducats and quarterly installments, one of 16½ and three of 56¼ ducats. The terms of the contract recall those of the agreements for the Raffaello Maffei tomb, and refer to “vno modello” in the hands of the prior, but they also bound Cosini to land the pieces on the beach at Livorno and to install them. It was stipulated that two masters would estimate the finished work, and Cosini’s salary then be increased or decreased accordingly. In his 1530 receipt of payment, Cosini consented to allow two years for this sentence to be delivered, since the Spanish troops prevented two sculptors (unnamed) from leaving Florence.42

There are two contemporary references to Raffaello Maffei’s visage in Volterra. Riccobaldi’s 1531 letter cited above provides a terminus ante quem for the face of the effigy and, by inference, for the Metropolitan’s bust. In another passage, hitherto overlooked, Mario wrote to his adoptive son Riccobaldi on July 18, 1529: “Quello della sepoltura manda a chiedere denari, non mi giova fare pacti chiari de pagamenti che tre volte la dimandati innanzi. Non so che cosa si habbi mandato costa su vorrebbe la impronta per far el vino. Non so come si fara” (The man doing the tomb sends to ask for money; it scarcely behooves me to be clear about the terms of payment

Figure 11. Silvio Cosini. Altarpiece, 1529–30. Marble. Livorno, Montenero, Santuario (photo: Università degli Studi di Pisa, Instituto di Storia dell’Arte)
since he’s already asked me three times for an advance [or, “for three advances”]. I don’t know what has been sent on up there, [he’d] like the mask so as to make the face. I don’t know how things will turn out). One might argue that the “quello” of this letter is the “Giovannino” who had signed a contract six months earlier and that the “viso” is the Museum’s bust, with “Giovannino” its author. But the available evidence is too slight to prove or disprove such inferences. As we saw, it is very possible that Cosini had been engaged by this date. The word “face” in this context seems likely to refer to the face of the tomb, the project for which Cosini was demanding payment, and “head” was the more usual term for a bust.

The Metropolitan Museum’s bust was probably designed to serve as a record of Raffaello’s features for the Maffei family and visitors to their grandiose palace in the center of Volterra. Familiar with art in Rome, Mario probably thought a funeral mask inadequate to commemorate his brother. The cast taken from the face would have been preserved but not displayed. The early history of the bust is, however, entirely unknown. Niccolò Maffei, one of the last descendants of Raffaello and director of the Museo Guarnacci in the middle of the last century, was involved in the art market. The original functions served by the chambers of the Maffei palace, now divided for commercial use, have never been studied. The bust presumably adorned the niche or table of a large reception room, like other commemorative busts of the Early and High Renaissance. For example, there is a record of an earlier head or bust of the Florentine humanist Carlo Marsuppini, probably cast by Desiderio da Settignano, informally sitting upon a desk in Marsuppini’s study after his death.

The bust rather than the tomb may have been consulted for a posthumous medal of Raffaello Maffei, in which the wrinkles of the neck have the same pattern and emphasis as in the terracotta (Figure 12). This timid work, the reverse of which shows a schematic view of Volterra—or “Otonia,” its early name—may someday prove to be a work of the local sculptor (and hydraulic engineer) Zaccaria Zacchi, father of the Giovanni who had appealed to Riccobaldi for the Mario Maffei tomb commission. A putative early work of Zacchi’s, the terracotta Christ in Piață in the Volterra Pinacoteca, exhibits a vigorous handling close to the Sienese Iacopo Cozzarelli (and remote from the Metropolitan’s bust). Zacchi probably entered the Roman art world on the coattails of the Maffei. His only signed small sculpture is the Nymph and Satyr, dated 1506, in the Metropolitan Museum (Figure 13). Jacopo Sansovino had little to fear from Zacchi, his unsuc-
cessful rival in the contest held that same year to produce an imitation of the *Laocoön*, even though Zacchi was fashionable. His *Nymph and Satyr* reflects the daintiness twisting poses and solid, top-heavy contours peculiar to a series of sophisticated classicized drawings of this period, once ascribed to Peruzzi and now given to Jacopo Ripanda.47

How was the distinctive design of the tomb composed? It is essentially a simplification of the scheme of Sansovino’s Sforza and Basso della Rovere tombs, which Mario Maffei had explicitly selected as the pattern for the new tomb by 1528 (Figure 10).48 Although Cosini could have pared down the Sansovino design on his own, he may well have been aided in this process by access to Sansovino’s early solutions for these tombs, which seem to be recorded in two drawings, one in London and one formerly at Weimar (Figures 14, 15).49 A second Sansovino drawing in London for another project presents a radically different scheme (Figure 16).50 Both the Volterran tomb and the first London drawing allot an ample arch, fully twice the width of the lateral bays, to a reclining effigy. At this stage Sansovino conceived the tomb as a sort of wall sheathing, an approach closer to the Raffaello Maffei tomb than to the finished Santa Maria del Popolo tombs themselves. The Weimar drawing shows an increase in solidity but the vertical elements are still pilasters. Sansovino subsequently effected many alterations, most likely in accord with his probable supervisor, Bramante. As executed, the Roman tombs became more massive, with four columns supporting a true triumphal arch. Sansovino also added a socle zone between the main and the basement registers, richer swag and tendril ornamentation, and a heavy base for the sarcophagus. Two Virtues along with Christ and two angels adorn the uppermost cornice of the Roman tombs—a rather busy device to indicate that the slumbering cardinals await awakening into eternal life. These cardinals are cramped by a narrower arch than is found in the drawings,
although the proportions of the figures to the architecture remain the same. In both drawings the effigy’s head rests in the crook of the elbow, but in the Sforza tomb the head rests upon the hand.

These additions were not adopted by Cosini. The similarity between Cosini’s tomb and the Sansovino drawings seems unlikely to derive simply from a common Tuscan background. Sansovino himself allowed more space around the effigy in his later Manzi tomb. Moreover, a drawing for a tomb in the Uffizi that is ascribed to Sansovino and would therefore predate Cosini’s design shows an effigy similar to that of Maffei: a man in a scholar’s cap, reading, one arm resting upon a pillow, the far leg crossed, and the whole body swept by one piece of drapery (Figure 17).51

Sansovino’s formula for the Basso and Sforza tombs seems to have grown more popular with every year the Julius II tomb was delayed, and an upper-middle-level cleric such as Mario Maffei must have been susceptible to its appeal. He was certainly in a position to know of Sansovino’s initial ideas. The probable date of these tombs, 1507, coincides with the year Mario was appointed head of the Fabbrica of Saint Peter’s. (In 1520, after Raphael’s death, he was charged with supervising the completion of the Villa Madama decorations.)52 Nor was Andrea Sansovino’s name unknown at Volterra. In 1501, contemporary with Sansovino’s important group of the Baptist of Christ for the Florence Baptistery, the sculptor carved a marble font for the Volterra Baptistery (Figure 18). In 1499, the board of the local Monte Pio, the same institution that Raffaello Maffei helped to found, set up a bank account for the font project.53

The genesis of the effigy itself is a more complicated question. For Dalli Regoli, this figure rejects previous tradition, especially the slumbering cardinals of the Basso and Sforza tombs, and was devised with reference to both Michelangelo’s final ideas for the Julius II tomb and to Etruscan tomb sculpture, one of Michelangelo’s sources.54 This view is essentially correct. The effigy of Julius II involved the study of

Figure 16. Andrea Sansovino. Study for the tomb monument of a cardinal. Pen and ink on paper, 32.1 x 25.1 cm. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, inv. no. 8621 (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum)

Figure 17. Ascribed to Andrea Sansovino. Study for a tomb monument, ca. 1508. Pen and ink on paper, 60 x 46.2 cm. Florence, Gabinetto Disegni et Stampe, Gallerie degli Uffizi, inv. no. 142A (photo: Soprintendenza ai Beni Artistici, Florence)
antique sepulchral imagery and it established a new type of reclining figure, one which is awake, if drowsy, and faces forward. The influence of the Julius tomb derives from Cosini’s close connection with Michelangelo, from the near contemporaneity of the two projects, and from the fact (noted by Dalli Regoli) that the papal effigy was carved by Tommaso Boscoli, an associate of Cosini in the New Sacristy. Cosini evidently developed the stiff rectangular contour of the figure and the bare, flat support from this design. Surely the supple and attenuated Allegories of the New Sacristy and the designs for river gods of the preceding five years also entered into Cosini’s thinking. The analogy to Etruscan urns, a source that also seems to lie behind the Night of the New Sacristy, is undeniable and profound. Etruscan figures offer precedents for the crossed legs, the banderole, and the hands that point or hold an object, whether a patera or a banderole. Etruscan urns were certainly accessible: the excavation of one of the shallow tombs abundant near Volterra, reported in 1466, must have been one of many discoveries, and the sculptor Zaccaria Zacchi even reported discovering a Roman necropolis with bronzes near Moscona at a later date. Raffaello Maffei dealt with the history of ancient Tuscany in his encyclopedia. The detached glance, uncompromising verism, and even the crisp modeling of the Maffei bust could reflect close study of Etruscan or Roman portraits, since these characteristics occur in an exceptional terracotta votive bust of the first century b.C. from Cerveteri (Figure 19).

But the potential of the relaxed, composed figures of Sansovino’s tombs was not lost on Cosini. The evolution of the recumbent tomb figure in High Renaissance Rome seems so peculiar that one must allow for the possibility that important tombs or statues have been destroyed. From the available evidence it has been inferred that the motive of reclining poets or scholars first emerged in woodcuts, widespread especially in France, and was then taken up in two major Spanish tombs. These or similar figures would have been seen by Andrea Sansovino during his decade-long sojourn in Portugal, and Sansovino was the first to present the motif in Rome, where he returned in 1502, in the very two tombs that later caught Mario Maffei’s eye. The obvious affinity in pose between the reclining prelates of early cinquecento tombs and the famous woodcut of the recumbent nymph on the “Panton Tokadi” page of the

Figure 18. Andrea Sansovino. Baptismal Font, 1500–1501. Marble. Volterra, San Giovanni (photo: Soprintendenza ai Beni Artistici, Pisa)

Figure 19. Etruscan votive portrait from Cerveteri, 1st century B.C. Terracotta, H. 33 cm. Rome, Museo Nazionale di Villa Giulia (photo: Soprintendenza Arch. Etruria Meridionale)
Hypnerotomachia Poliphili may not be entirely casual. Sansovino apparently devised his sleeping figures with reference to the most elegant Classical prototypes available, the flexuous statues of sleeping Ariadne and the bacchantes of sarcophagus reliefs.60 If the Santa Maria del Popolo tombs quicken few pulses today, in their own time they provided a welcome alternative to a long succession of rigid figures laid upon biers—an alternative backed by Classical authority and more orderly in appearance than the Spanish figures. In one of the Spanish effigies a young noble reads from an open breviary in his right hand, but in Italy the anecdotal attribute was de-emphasized, by Sansovino as well as by Michelangelo. The realistic elaboration of the conceit would later be explored by Francesco da Sangallo in his figure of Bishop Angelo Marzi (ca. 1545), who wears his age less comfortably than his Etruscan counterparts if the Last Trump has caught him after a sleepless night.61

Cosini did adopt elements of the pattern established by Sansovino. Like the Basso and Sforza effigies, Maffei rests on one elbow, holds the opposing hand near his raised knee, and has books by his pillow. But the disparity stems largely from Cosini’s exploitation of a diverse aspect of antique art with a mentality alien to Sansovino’s. Cosini recognized and extended Michelangelo’s stroke of genius by adopting the alert attitude, the portrait realism, and even the intimacy of Roman and Etruscan sarcophagi and urn covers in the equivalent modern form. While the elaborately robed figure of Maffei could never be mistaken for one of his distant ancestors, when it is compared with contemporaneous tomb effigies we find that Cosini chose to release Maffei from an affected pose and endowed him with a severe dignity that reflects his philosophy. Cosini’s effigy of Raffaello Maffei influenced three tombs that all date to 1556 or not long after: that of Matteo Corte, designed by Niccolò Tribolo and executed by Antonio Lorenzi with Pierino da Vinci, and that of the jurist Filippo Decio by Stagio Stagi—both in the Camposanto, Pisa—as well as that of the cleric Angelo Lancini by Montorsoli in Arezzo.62 Cosini avoided the two extremes of harsh naturalism and heroic generalization represented by the Corte, Decio, and Lancini tombs. That the Maffei tomb exerted no wider influence does not alter the fact that Cosini achieved something new. Cosini allowed a recumbent effigy to express its personality unhindered by trivial devices, and he made that personality the animating principle of the tomb. In hindsight, the bust may be read as Cosini’s initial attempt to grasp and to project that personality, penetrating behind the mere cast from the face made available to him. The wrinkles, the glance, the furrowed brow, the strands of hair enliven the face of the bust with a mobile expression as they enhance the structure of the head.

The modern wish for some sort of contact with the personality represented by a monument, beyond the mortal shell, is addressed less often and less successfully in cinquecento sculpture than one might expect. Ironically, Raffaello Maffei rejected the promotion of magnificence in his time, and he took a dim view of tomb monuments, admiring instead the bare tombs of the early saints and subscribing to the stoical view that “the whole earth is the tomb of the wise.”63 Raffaello’s tomb sprang in part from his brother’s ambitions, but Mario managed to obtain an eloquent image of the man. The phrase “Ἀναφωρεῖ Ἡμών” (Without breath, I respire) on the front of the casket must allude as much to the afterlife of Maffei’s thoughts in the minds of men as to the immortality of his soul.

NOTES


7. Hill, Corpus, no. 797, p. 207, pl. 131; Ulrich Middeldorf and Dagmar Stiebral, Renaissance Medals and Plaquettes (Florence, 1983) cat. no. 15.
8. Cf. Volterra, Archivio Storico Comunale, A nera 53, passim. (It is unclear when this usage began; Dalli Regoli, Silvio Magister, p. 2, fails to note the public application of the emblem.) Similar crosses, and rhombi with the "yb" symbol inscribed in flaming circles, decorate the walls next to the effigies of the Santa Maria del Popolo tombs; see George H. Huntley, Andrea Sansovino: Sculptor and Architect of the Italian Renaissance (Cambridge, 1935) fig. 38.

9. A thermoluminescence test conducted by Daybreak/Archeometric Laboratory Services in 1995 yielded the date range of 1355-1715 for the last firing of the bust.

10. This form seems unusual in a bust of this date but it can be paralleled in medals. Cf. George F. Hill, A Corpus of Italian Medals before Cellini, 2 vols. (London, 1930) II, nos. 482, 543, 612, 1075.

11. Dalli Regoli, Silvio Magister, p. 22.


15. Allan Marquand, Giovanni Della Robbia (Princeton, 1914) cat. no. 39, pp. 46-47; Enzo Carli, Volterra nel Medioevo e nel Rinascimento (Pisa, 1978) p. 87, fig. 84. For the convent, see Benedetto Falconcini, Vita del buon servo di Dio Raffaello Maffei detto il Volterrano (Rome, 1722) p. 46.

16. See Prioristica vallariana dal 1455 al 1643, Biblioteca Guarnacci, Volterra [hereafter BGV], 5674, fol. 12, 15. For the Monte Pio, see the section of this title in Annibale Cinci, Dall'Archivio di Volterra: Memorie e Documenti (Volterra, 1885), and Mario Bocci, "II Monte Pio," in Banche e banchieri a Volterra nel Medioevo e nel Rinascimento, M. Luzzati and A. Veronese, eds. (Pisa, 1993) pp. 223ff.


19. For the palace, see d'Amico, "Maffei Monument," pp. 474-476. Mario derived 500 scudi a year from benefices until 1510 and twice this sum after 1524 (Paschini, "Una famiglia di curiali," pp. 359, 370) at a time when revenues of 1,000 or 1,200 were common for higher prelates. Barbara McClung Hallman, Italian Cardinals, Reform, and the Church as Property 1492-1563 (Berkeley, 1985) pp. 19, 99ff.

20. For this tomb, see Giardi, in Giardi, Dalli Regoli, Lessi, Scultura del '500: d'Amico, "Maffei Monument," pp. 487-488 and nn. 67-68; Birgit Laschke, Fra Giovanni Angelo Montorsoli. Ein Florentinischer Bildhauer des 16. Jahrhunderts (Berlin, 1994) pp. 23-24. Giardi accepts Montorsoli's partial authorship, Laschke denies it. D'Amico rightly allows both that the "Giovanni scarpellino" who authored a Maffei chapel design (cited in two letters of 1536) might have been the contractor of 1529 and that he might have been Montorsoli.

21. "Ideoque apud virgines sacras [scil., corpus suum reliquit]. Intus autem in facie Jesu Christi nomen graeci hoc modo scriptum reperier IX + ZX, in fine vero eiusdem nominis caracterem, quo fermi signandi modo ipse uti sole impressum apparuerre, quam brem caedere sic esse." (Therefore he chose burial at the place of the holy virgins. Below, at the front, [he wished] the name of Jesus Christ to be written in Greek letters thus: IX + ZX, and at the end his own name, in the form in which it was always published, seemingly carved). D'Amico ("Maffei Monument," p. 477) mentions no will for Raffaello. That which Falconcini, Vita, pp. 207-209, and Paschini, "Una famiglia di curiali," p. 318, call Raffaello's will is really the first of two codicils. The will of June 14, 1516, was followed by two codicils dating to the next day (once more redacted in the observant convent of San Girolamo) and to Jan. 23, 1520. (These acts are in BGV, Pergamene della Badia, box 23, sub datibus; after reading these papers I found that they were cited by Domenico Moreni, Memorie storiche fiorentine. Spogli, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Florence, ms. Moreni 30, fol. 262-v). The first codicil contains the passage quoted above; the second codicil confirms San Lino's right to the inheritance.


25. Mario in Rome wrote to Riccobaldi on Sept. 12, 1532, "La sepultura è a buon porto che è stato in tanto impaccio et spesa che per mille ducati non cattreeri in simile labirinto." (BGV, Archivio Maffei [hereafter AM], xvi1.2.1-2.). For a Nov. 1532 remark that may be relevant, see note 27 below. A 1647 deposition made when the San Lino tomb was opened (Falconcini, Vita, pp. 19-21) seems to be the source of the claim that Maffei was interred here in 1538 (d'Amico, "Maffei Monument," pp. 487-488). During the restoration of the church in 1989-90 a small mysterious box of black metal was found in a niche in the adjacent sacristy.

26. See d'Amico, "Maffei Monument," pp. 487-488 and nn. 67, 68, and Falconcini, Vita, p. 234, for the role of Riccobaldi and his son Giulio, and for a tablet recording Mario's bequest for repairs to the cathedral.
27. See the unremarked letter in BGV, AM, xlvii.2.1–2 (Paolo Riccobaldi in Florence to Mario Maffei in Volterra, Nov. 1, 1532): “Ho inteso della presta che voleva Silvio sopra la nova sepultura, mostra in verita d’esser taccagno, perch’ha scripto, che ha fatto el disegno, et che lui yerrebbe qua per far mercato meco /o/ che mi aspettera costi tanto che j’o tornassi. Li resposi, che qua non venissi che non haveva capo ad tal faccende, ne ancora mi tornata aspettasi, perch’non sapeuo la mia tornata ma che lasciassi el disegno a julio, et una notula del prezzo, et li tempi de pagamenti, et che lo a’ mia tornata la consideri, et che piacendomi che subito glenadui sera[i], si che non accadeva, domandasi denarj, recte me ne scripsi, caute negociabamur.” When, twelve days later, Mario declared himself “stucco di quelli stucci” and asked Riccobaldi to say “come ti riesce la sepultura et quiet offendi” (d’Amico, “Maffei Monument,” p. 487 and n. 65), he may thus have meant the new project for his own tomb and not (according to d’Amico) Raffaello’s.

28. See the two letters sent by “Giouanni di Zacheria Zacchi scultore” from Pologna and dated May 25 and June 28, 1538, in BGV, AM, 47.2.1–6. The operative passages, in sequence, read: “... Silvio Zacchi: cusino mio mia detto che credde che si’ab a farne la sepultura della bella memoria di mon.sor Mario il quale me giunge la sua partita et me ne duole assai di tal morte et avendosi a far tal sepultura molto desiderer tali cosa per far onore alla bonta Vostra e dipoi alla patria et a me et se V.S. vora far tal sepultura la prego che me ne daste auesso per il portatore di questo che ritorna in dretto per che li faro dua ouer tre disegni e uederette il mio buono animo et academdduro uerto costo aposta” and “... se fussi tocho a me la sepultura del vostro mon.sor et padrion mio: arei fatto Honor alla patria et poi a V.S. e a me: che n’aueuo gran disierio di una opera tal: et pur se parera alla cortesia sua di tramatarsi lo potra farlo: acio che la casa de Zacchi li abino obrigo perpetuo: le ’me bene stato aspra che un contadino di sangue abbi auuto tal memoria: et pur orra no finito unna di marmo di mon.sor di Penezmia et posto in S.to Pietrov.”


30. Dalli Regoli, Silvius Magister, p. 46.

31. This problematic text, which I have not reread, is given by d’Amico, “Maffei Monument,” pp. 479–480, n. 43. D’Amico and Dalli Regoli (Silvius Magister, p. 17, n. 30) both fail to stress that Cosini and Mario Maffei must have made a new contract.


33. Ciardi in Giardi, Dalli Regoli, Lessi, Scultura del ’500, d’Amico, “Maffei Monument,” pp. 48–49, 487–488. One can hardly exclude the possibility that Montorsoli may have been known by this diminutive.

34. Dalli Regoli, Silvius Magister, pp. 25, 46–47; Wallace, Michelangelo at San Lorenzo, pp. 150–151, 156, 237 n. 106, 138 n. 121.


36. D’Amico, “Maffei Monument,” p. 485, citing P. Bacci, with the dubious claim that Mario selected Cosini on the basis of the Montenero shrine.


38. Dalli Regoli, Silvius Magister, p. 50.

39. See Maria Grazia Giardi Dupre, “La prima attività dell’Ammanati scultore,” Paragone 135 (1961) pp. 11–12, fig. 6, with the proposal that Cosini carved one of the reliefs of this tomb. Dalli Regoli, Silvius Magister, pp. 22, 49, notes a thematic distinction between the two lateral saints at Volterra.

40. Dalli Regoli, Silvius Magister, p. 46 (with question).


42. The Montenero contract is mentioned by Miriam Fanucci Lovitch, Artisti attivi a Pisa fra XIII e XVII secolo (secondo volume) (Ospedaletto, 1995) p. 369; the artist is not identified as Cosini. For the delivery quittance, see Silvia Tacci Turchi, in Dalli Regoli, Silvius Magister, pp. 41–44, and P. Vigo, “Il vero autore dell’antico altare di Montenero attribuito a Minio da Fiesole,” Arte e Storia XVIII.3 (1899) pp. 17–19. Vigo’s corrupt text has to be corrected against the original act (ASF, NA, 15492, Giovanni di Francesco da Bibbiena, fols. 28v–29r, which is followed (fols. 30v–v) by an accord for a polisso for this church. It is unclear if the “modello presente apresso dicto padre priore” of the contract was a drawing or a terracotta (ASF, NA, 15193, Niccolò di Giuliano da Pisa, fols. 76v–78).

43. See BGV, AM, xlvii.2.1. D’Amico, “Maffei Monument,” p. 482, n. 51, quotes only the words from “Quello” to “innanzi,” and the phrase: “... bisogna provvedere ancora alla sepultura...” from another letter in the same packet.

44. On April 15, 1687, the Livornese shipper Tommaso Patet wrote of a “cassone di quadri” then in Maffei’s hands and destined for New York, where other pictures had been sold “vantaggiosamente” (BGV, AM, 199).

45. See an inventory drawn up for creditors of his sons on April 8, 1476, which I discuss elsewhere: ASF, NA, 2202, Girolamo Beltramini, no. 22, fol. 15: “i desco da sciure su/j /j testa di messere Carlo piu e suoi librucci da tener convij.”


49. For the London drawing, see Ulrich Middeldorf, “Two Sansovino Drawings,” Burlington Magazine 64 (1934) pp. 159–164.
(still the best analysis); Peter Ward-Jackson, *Victoria and Albert Museum Catalogues: Italian Drawings, Volume I, Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries* (London, 1979) cat. no. 311, p. 147. A series of dots along the base indicates the precise scale. For the Weimar drawing, see Hunley, Andrea Sansovino, pp. 97-98, fig. 71.

50. This is usually said to be a study for a tomb for Leo X; see Middeldorf, "Two Drawings," pp. 164-165; Ward-Jackson, *Victoria and Albert Museum*, cat. no. 312, pp. 147-148; Ian A. Wardroper, in *Sculptors’ Drawings of Six Centuries*, exh. cat., C.T. Eisher, ed. (New York, 1981) cat. no. 6, n.p. But since the vestments are a cardinal’s, cardinals’ hats crown the two blank shields, and the draft for the epitaph has Leo’s name in the nominative case, this would appear to be the project for a tomb of an unidentified cardinal dedicated by Leo X, analogous to the Santa Maria del Popolo tombs. Since writing, this has been observed by Charles Davis, "Jacopo Sansovino and the Engraved Memorials of the Cappella Badoer-Giustianini in San Francesco dell Vigna in Venice," *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 3rd ser., XLV (1994 [1995]) pp. 157-159.

51. Gabinetto dei Disegni, 142 a: Licia Collolbi Ragghianti, *Il Libro de’ Disegni del Vasari*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1979) 1, p. 107, no. 326, II, fig. 172. The commission is unidentified. The statues seem to show, above, Saint John the Evangelist and another Apostle and, below, Saint Paul and Saint Peter(?); both bases have reliefs with equestrian combats. The rectangular Pietà with angels over the center of the entablature must have been crowned by a lunette with sculptures of the Resurrected Christ or of the Virgin and Child (this part of the drawing is missing).


53. Hunley, Andrea Sansovino, pp. 48-49, 108, fig. 30. For the Monti Pio, see note 16 above. For the unpublished account, see ASCV, Terna 3, fol. 38v (dated Jan. 14, 1499-1500, at the top of the page):

El Batteismo in San’ Giovanni di Volterra de havere £ CCLXXVI.1 si accattoremo al tempo della offerta si fece in procacciione solenne al tempo dello reverendissimo priore frate Bartolomeo Petri de Melano frat de Osservant de San Francesco. E quali sanno a spendere in fare una fonte da batteismo depositate a BINDO MAESTRO de Monte [as noted on fol. 46 of his records] . . . £ CCLXXXVI.1

Annone auuto a’di 15 d’aprile 1501 fl. XXV d’oro in oro larghi da Niclaio di Giusto d’Antonio de Nardi maestro de Monte. E quali fl. si pagharan agli infrascripti oficialii sopra el batteismo sono: Gionuani d’Antonio Zac[c]hi / Piero di s. Benedetto [dei Broccardi] / Nello Inghirami—offitalii sopra decoto batteismo Annone nauuto paghi a soprascripti da Niclaio di Giusto Nardi maestro de Monte comppare al suo libro d’uscita a c. 52 in due partite £ centosette s. quattordici d. ottio ciiio . . . £ 107 s. 14 d. 8


55. Ibid., p. 21. For the new sacristry, see note 6 above. Claudia Echinger-Maurach, *Studien zu Michelangelos Juliusgrabmal* 2 vols. (Hildesheim, 1992) I, pp. 373-385, argues that the lower story of the papal tomb was fully installed during the campaign of 1533.


