

# The Art of Constructing La Città Santa

## The Patronage of Pope Gregory XIII (1572-1585)

Pope Gregory XIII was a prolific and tireless patron who sought to construct a sense of spiritual renewal within the Church and to reconstruct Rome as the route to salvation, the gateway to paradise. Gregory XIII employed art and architecture to achieve his vision of renewed spirituality by communicating with a wide audience, engaging with them emotionally and spiritually, instructing them on matters of doctrine, and offering them convincing evidence of the Church's position to counteract criticism from the Reformation movement. The effect of these new demands on art and architecture was a paradigmatic shift in the visual expression of art. There was a change in the function, iconography, style, and subject matter of art. Added to this was the appropriation of the ceremonial to enhance the spiritual message and the use of commemorative images in the form of prints, coins, and ampullae to elaborate the message further.

It is the patron and patronage responsible for these developments that is the subject of this research.

The number and variety of projects undertaken by Gregory XIII render it difficult to unify their analysis. This has resulted in a fragmented sense of what Gregory XIII achieved; disparate approaches to the analysis of his commissions; and little sense as to how his patronage influenced the development of art, artists, and architecture at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century.

In order to understand the dynamics of Gregory XIII's patronage more fully a systematic visual analysis of his commissions and their documentation will be conducted in terms of function, style, and subject matter. Having broken down the works into their constituent elements the objective then is to reconstitute them into their conceptual context and to place them within a holistic view of Gregory's patronage.

