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### **From the Florence Baptistery to the Camposanto: A Comparative Analysis of Last Judgments**

According to Samuel Edgerton, Jr., in his article *Icons of Justice*, representations of the Last Judgment in the late-medieval and proto-Renaissance periods are characterized by “ubiquity, uniformity, and continuity.”<sup>1</sup> They contain a set of “traditional schemata” including, most notably, Jesus sitting in judgment in the center of the scene, welcoming the blessed on his right-hand side to Paradise and condemning the damned on his left to the torments of Hell.<sup>2</sup> These images, Edgerton writes, convey the idea that the universe is static and dualistic, with clear-cut distinctions between Heaven and Hell, good souls and bad. Similarly, Joseph Polzer writes that all Last Judgments from this period “continue the medieval tradition of directly contraposing Heaven to Hell;” while the middle-ground of Purgatory, despite being part of official Church doctrine by this time, “remains excluded.”<sup>3</sup> This paper will argue, however, that while thirteenth and fourteenth-century depictions of the Last Judgment do not make explicit references to Purgatory, they do hint at the existence of a liminal space between the realms of Heaven

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Y. Edgerton, Jr., “Icons of Justice,” in *Past and Present*, No. 89 (Nov. 1980), 23.

<sup>2</sup> Edgerton, 23-4. “It is safe to say that every *Last Judgement* painted by artists in western Europe from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries was composed in this same hierarchical design” (23). While it is true that most, if not all, late-medieval/proto-Renaissance versions of the Last Judgment follow this model, there is a significant amount of diversity within the genre, as this paper will show.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Polzer, “Andrea di Bonaiuto’s ‘Via Veritatis’ and Dominican Thought in Late Medieval Italy,” in *The Art Bulletin* (June 1995) <[http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0422/is\\_n2\\_v77/ai\\_17239636](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0422/is_n2_v77/ai_17239636)>. Polzer does refer to a mid-fourteenth century work known as the *Purgatory of Saint Patrick*, discovered in Todi in 1975, which includes an explicit reference to Purgatory: a mountain where sinners are being punished is labeled with the words “Hoc est purgatorium ostensum a sancto Patritio” (ibid). This image, however, focuses on the lives of St. Patrick and other saints, and thus is not considered a representation of the Last Judgment.

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and Hell, in which sinners who had left their earthly lives behind could have one last chance at redemption.

The Church officially acknowledged the existence of Purgatory in 1254,<sup>4</sup> although the notion of a place where the souls of the dead could be purged of sin had been growing in popularity among both ecclesiastics and the laity for centuries.<sup>5</sup> According to Jacques Le Goff in his book *Your Money or Your Life*, the rise of the doctrine of Purgatory was due to “a general tendency to avoid confrontations resulting from a reductive dualism” and to the “interiorization of religious feelings.”<sup>6</sup> These developments led to the belief that a contrite sinner -- one who felt remorse for his sins but who died without atoning for them -- could make up for his transgressions in the afterlife by temporarily enduring torments similar to those inflicted on the damned for all eternity.<sup>7</sup> Le Goff links the belief in Purgatory to the rise of the middle class and, more specifically, to the justification of usury in late-medieval society. According to this mindset, it was possible even for someone who worked in the dirty business of making money from money to redeem his soul in the purifying fires of Purgatory.<sup>8</sup>

The belief in the intercession of the Virgin also gave repentant sinners hope of a more pleasant final resting place than that of the bolgie of Hell. The *Golden Legend* of

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<sup>4</sup> Daniel Kendall, S.J., “From Scripture to Doctrine,” in *Scripture from Scratch* (Sept. 2004), <<http://www.americancatholic.org/Newsletters/SFS/an0904.asp>>.

<sup>5</sup> Jacques Le Goff, *Your Money or Your Life: Economy and Religion in the Middle Ages*, trans. Patricia Ranum (New York: Zone Books, 1990), 75-77.

<sup>6</sup> Le Goff, 76-77.

<sup>7</sup> Le Goff, 76-77.

<sup>8</sup> Le Goff, 92-93.

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Jacobus de Voragine describes incidents in which the Queen of Heaven snatches souls away from the clutches of the Devil. In the legend of the Assumption of the Virgin, for example, a sinner has a vision in which his good and bad deeds were weighed before God and Satan to determine who would take possession of his soul; it seemed like the devil was going to win the day, but suddenly the Virgin Mary “put her hand on the side of the scale where the few good deeds were,” thereby saving the man from damnation.<sup>9</sup> In another example from the same legend, a monk who is “much given to lechery but very devoted to blessed Mary” drowns in a river. When a standoff occurs between the devils and angels who come to claim his soul, the Virgin appears and takes his case to the King of Kings, who allows the monk’s soul to return to his body so that he can do penance.<sup>10</sup> Byzantine legends and medieval Western literature contain numerous descriptions of the Virgin descending into Purgatory or Hell and pleading with her Son to show mercy to the tormented souls there.<sup>11</sup>

The earliest Last Judgment this paper will examine -- the mosaic covering three of the eight sides of the cupola of the San Giovanni Baptistery in Florence -- *does* seem to support the arguments of Edgerton and Polzer regarding the straightforward, dualistic nature of medieval Last Judgments. The mosaic, which has been attributed to the late

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<sup>9</sup> Jacobus de Voragine, The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 86-87.

<sup>10</sup> Voragine, 88.

<sup>11</sup> Dorothy C. Shorr, “The Role of the Virgin in Giotto’s *Last Judgment*,” in The Art Bulletin, Vol. 38, No. 4 (Dec. 1956), 212-213.

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thirteenth-century,<sup>12</sup> contains an iconic image of Christ seated on top of the seven spheres of heaven and wearing a robe of gold-striated drapery that is characteristic of Italo-Byzantine art ([Fig. 1](#)). He sits with his arms extended horizontally in a cruciform pose that is mirrored by the cross visible in his halo. Both his hands and feet clearly show the marks of the Crucifixion. His right hand is extended toward the Blessed, while his left is turned downward “in a shoving gesture that topples the lost into damnation.”<sup>13</sup> With the exception of these hand gestures, however, Christ has little to do with the activity taking place beneath him. The King of Kings looks straight ahead with an impassive expression, paying no visible attention to the souls of either the damned or the blessed. This image of Christ as triumphant ruler, sitting in judgment over humanity while remaining emotionally disconnected from it, is based largely on the Byzantine model of Last Judgments.<sup>14</sup> Mary sits with the six apostles on Christ’s right-hand side, while John the Baptist, identifiable by his scraggly beard and scroll, is seated with the six on his left. Mary and John, like Jesus, stare down at the viewer and appear to be passive observers rather than actively participating in the event.

In this portrayal, there is no noticeable overlap between the realms of the saved and the damned. The resurrected souls exiting their tombs to the lower left of Christ are

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<sup>12</sup> According to Joseph Polzer, the mosaic dates from 1300. Polzer, “Aristotle, Mohammed and Nicholas V in Hell,” *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (Dec. 1964), 459. Ernest Hatch Wilkins, however, suspects that it was made several decades earlier. Wilkins, “Dante and the Mosaics of His Bel San Giovanni,” *Speculum*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Jan. 1927), 2. As stated by Hartt and Wilkins, the central figure of Christ in the mosaic has been attributed to Coppo di Marcovaldo. Frederick Hartt and David G. Wilkins, *History of Italian Renaissance Art*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2003), 69.

<sup>13</sup> Garry Wills, “Hunt for the Last Judgment,” in *The New York Review of Books* (April 20, 1995), 53.

<sup>14</sup> Robert S. Nelson, “A Byzantine Painter in Trecento Genoa: The Last Judgment at S. Lorenzo,” in *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 67, No. 4 (Dec. 1985), 558-9.

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immediately ushered by devils into the depths of Hell, portrayed vividly on the lowest register of the adjacent side of the cupola;<sup>15</sup> while those on the right are welcomed by angels to the ranks of the Elect as they proceed to the Gates of Paradise. The scene is symmetrical and dualistic, with two large ministering angels counter-balanced by two menacing, equally large devils. The mountain-like mass of the damned is similarly balanced by the crowds of the blessed standing in prayerful worship of Christ. There is little or no room for ambiguity in this representation of the Last Judgment. However, it is worth noting that the words in the banner extending from the angel who guards the Gates of Paradise -- “Venite Beneditti Patris Mei Possidete Preparatum”<sup>16</sup> -- were used by Dante in *Purgatory*, Canto XXVII, of his *Divine Comedy*; in this instance, he puts the phrase in the mouth of an angel who addresses the spirits “passing from Purgatory to the Earthly Paradise.”<sup>17</sup> Thus, although the artist probably did not intend to depict Purgatory in the Baptistery mosaic, Dante -- who was undoubtedly familiar with the work -- may have adapted this image for his literary representation of the realm between Heaven and Hell.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> For an analysis of the identity of individual figures of the damned, see Polzer in “Aristotle, Mohammed and Nicholas V in Hell.” According to Polzer, the creator of the mosaics may have included figures representing, as the title suggests, the philosopher, prophet and pope in the Hell scene in response to certain philosophical and political currents of the time (457-463).

<sup>16</sup> “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Matthew 25:34.

<sup>17</sup> Wilkins, 5.

<sup>18</sup> For an analysis of the correlation between the images in the Baptistery and those in Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, see Wilkins, “Dante and the Mosaics of His *Bel San Giovanni*,” 1-10.

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The next major Last Judgment this paper will examine is Giotto's fresco depiction of the event in the Arena Chapel, Padua, dating from about 1305 ([Fig. 2](#)).<sup>19</sup> There are many differences between this version and that of the Baptistery, most notably the attitude of Christ and the role of Mary. Christ sits on a rainbow throne supported by the Evangelical tetramorphs, within a mandorla flanked by twelve angels ([Fig. 3](#)/[http://www.wga.hu/html\\_m/g/giotto/padova/4lastjud/05\\_lastj.html](http://www.wga.hu/html_m/g/giotto/padova/4lastjud/05_lastj.html)). His drapery falls realistically over his body, so that his legs and knees are apparent under his robes.<sup>20</sup> The wound on his side is visible through a rip in his tunic, an attribute that calls attention to the suffering of Christ and his atonement for the sins of mankind.<sup>21</sup> As in the Florence Baptistery, he gestures to the Elect with his right hand and turns his left hand down in the direction of the damned. These simultaneous saving and damning gestures contain much more intensity than in the mosaic image, however. In Giotto's version, Jesus thrusts his arms downward at unequal angles, giving him an unbalanced and dynamic aspect as though he were caught in mid-action. We are presented not with a frontal view of Christ, as in the Baptistery, but with a three-quarter view of his face as he gazes down at the

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<sup>19</sup> Hartt, 95.

<sup>20</sup> Revelation describes a throne in heaven surrounded by "a rainbow that looks like an emerald . . . . Around the throne, and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind." (Revelation 4: 3-7). These winged creatures resemble a lion, an ox, a human, and an eagle, and became the symbols for the Four Evangelists. See also Henkel, [The Apocalypse](#), for an analysis of the imagery appearing in representations of the Apocalypse. Kathryn Henkel, [The Apocalypse](#) (Maryland: University of Maryland Art Gallery, 1973), 13-72.

<sup>21</sup> According to Robert Nelson, the inclusion of Christ's side wound and of the instruments of his Passion -- the *arma Christi* -- in Last Judgment scenes leads to the "notion of Jesus as victim, not victor" (559). It may be too extreme to call Christ in the Last Judgment a "victim," however, as he continues to look majestic and imposing in these representations. The images of the wound and the *arma Christi* remind the viewer of his victory over Death.

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Elect.<sup>22</sup> Although he does not look in the direction of the damned, he is linked to them by means of the four rivers of fire that flow from his mandorla into the image of Hell on his lower left-hand side. The Christ in this scene, therefore, is much more emotionally connected to the human souls presenting themselves for judgment.<sup>23</sup>

According to Dorothy Shorr, the role of Mary in this fresco also reflects “a new and more direct relationship between man and the Deity.”<sup>24</sup> Shorr posits that the Virgin is shown three times in this work -- twice as she accepts the chapel from the donor, Enrico Scrovegni, in the form of Maria Annunziata and Maria della Carita; and thirdly as the Queen of Heaven, at the head of a column of the Elect.<sup>25</sup> The donation scene appears in the center of the composition, in the space directly between Heaven and Hell. By including the figure of the donor in this area, Giotto attempts to show, if not Purgatory, then at least an intermediate ground on which a sinner could make a stand for the salvation of his soul. For Enrico was, by contemporary standards, a sinner -- he engaged in usury like his father, Reginaldo, whom Dante placed in the seventh circle of Hell, and

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<sup>22</sup> According to Shorr, Christ’s expression is one of anger (211). In my opinion, however, his expression is one of gentleness or compassion, which would be in accordance with the fact that he directs his attention toward the blessed.

<sup>23</sup> It should also be noted that Giotto takes great care to individuate the souls of the blessed, who are far larger than the souls of the damned. Although the row of haloed figures who stand behind the Queen of Heaven are probably patriarchs and saints, those on the lower level have no haloes and wear contemporary attire (Shorr, 211). They are from a wide range of social classes -- some are clerics, others noblemen, still others commoners (Fig. 5/ link unavailable). Such attention to the identities of the saved heightens the work’s dramatic impact by allowing the viewer to associate him or herself with specific figures.

<sup>24</sup> Shorr, 209.

<sup>25</sup> Shorr, 209. The dual roles of Mary as the Annunziata and as della Carita can be understood in light of the fact that the church that used to stand on the site was dedicated to S. Maria Annunziata, while the new chapel was rededicated to S. Maria della Carita (208). Shorr posits that this third figure of Mary is grasping the arm of a kneeling woman who represents Eve, thereby symbolizing her role as the “new Eve” and as an instrument for man’s salvation (210-11).

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from whom he had inherited a great deal of money.<sup>26</sup> Enrico reportedly built the chapel to atone for his own materialism and, in the words of a contemporary, “pro eripienda patris anima a poenis purgationis et ad illius expianda peccata.”<sup>27</sup> Giotto thus shows us a man who is trying to expiate his own sins as well as those of his dead father, and intentionally places him in the middle-ground between the saved and the damned.<sup>28</sup>

The donation scene is also reminiscent of the legends described above, in which Mary intercedes with her Son on behalf of individuals on the verge of damnation. According to Shorr, it is S. Maria della Carita who “graciously extends her right hand in token of acceptance,”<sup>29</sup> thus indicating that she will aid him in his quest for salvation. The inclusion of a monk, kneeling at the side of the chapel and helping Enrico support it, evidences the Church’s encouragement of such penitential acts. Giotto seems to be implying that the fate of a sinner, whether dead or alive, was not set in stone but could be altered by penance or purgation.<sup>30</sup> The chapel, in addition to being a vehicle for its donor’s salvation, played an even broader role in the expiation of sin: in 1304, possibly at

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<sup>26</sup> Hartt, 95; Shorr, 208.

<sup>27</sup> Shorr, 208.

<sup>28</sup> This interpretation is in agreement with Le Goff’s proposition that Purgatory was complementary to the practice of usury: “For the usurer who was ready for final contrition, Purgatory was the hope and, soon, the quasi-certainty of being saved, of being able to have both his money, here below, *and* his life, his eternal life beyond the grave. . . . The hope of escaping Hell, thanks to Purgatory, permitted the usurer to propel the economy and society of the thirteenth century ahead toward capitalism” (Le Goff, 92-93).

<sup>29</sup> Shorr, 209.

<sup>30</sup> According to Polzer in “Andrea di Bonaiuto’s ‘Via Veritatis,’” the “suffering of purgatory complements after death the act of penance occurring in this life.”

<[http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0422/is\\_n2\\_v77/ai\\_17239636](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0422/is_n2_v77/ai_17239636)>

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the urgings of Scrovegni, the pope announced he would grant indulgences to those who visited it on designated feast days.<sup>31</sup>

Numerous scholars have noted the little figure, or homunculus, that hides itself behind the Cross being lifted by two angels in the bottom center of the composition ([Fig. 4/ http://www.wga.hu/html\\_m/g/giotto/padova/4lastjud/10\\_lastj.html](http://www.wga.hu/html_m/g/giotto/padova/4lastjud/10_lastj.html)). Garry Wills, for example, regards it as an example of the “storytelling power of Giotto,”<sup>32</sup> as we are led to wonder what will happen to the man, of whom only two feet, a hand, and a lock of hair are visible. Andrew Ladis views it as an example of Giotto’s dark humor, and believes that the soul is a damned one that is momentarily evading the marauding devils of Hell.<sup>33</sup> However, given the positioning of the figure -- dead-center between Heaven and Hell, behind the instrument of Christ’s torture and his means of atoning for man’s sin -- it seems possible that the soul occupies an intermediate zone akin to the realm of Purgatory. His proximity to the donation scene, and his apparent movement in the direction of the two figures of Mary, could indicate his desire for intercession.

In the Camposanto Last Judgment in Pisa, we see more evidence of the belief that the fate of souls was not necessarily fixed upon death.<sup>34</sup> This Last Judgment, which is part of the *Triumph of Death* fresco in the graveyard cloister, is particularly unusual with

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<sup>31</sup> Laura Jacobus, “Giotto’s ‘Annunciation’ in the Arena Chapel, Padua,” in *The Art Bulletin* (March 1999), <[http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0422/is\\_1\\_81/ai\\_54517310/](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0422/is_1_81/ai_54517310/)>.

<sup>32</sup> Wills, 54.

<sup>33</sup> Andrew Ladis, “The Legend of Giotto’s Wit and the Arena Chapel,” in *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 68, No. 4 (Dec. 1986), 586.

<sup>34</sup> There is disagreement about the authorship of this work, but many scholars attribute it to Francesco Traini; see Joseph Polzer, “Aristotle, Mohammed and Nicholas V in Hell,” (467). It has also been attributed to Buffalmacco (Hartt, 151). Although scholars originally believed the work was produced after the arrival of the Black Death, most now believe that it dates from the 1330s. See Polzer, 467-8.

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regard to the placement of its key figures: Christ and Mary are seated in twin mandorlas at the top of the composition, an arrangement without Scriptural foundation that was “surely considered too extreme,” as it “had no real following among significant later Last Judgments.”<sup>35</sup> Both Mary and Jesus incline their heads toward the damned, but their reactions to what they see are very different ([Fig. 6](#)). An angry Christ gestures to his side wound with his left hand and raises his right arm menacingly at the sinners,<sup>36</sup> while Mary puts her hand to her chest in a gesture of concern or pity -- perhaps another reference to her role as intercessor, as depicted in popular literature such as the *Golden Legend*. In this version of the Last Judgment, the vision of Hell has been expanded to take up the entire width of the wall to the left of Christ.

Polzer draws attention to the activity taking place at the bottom center of the Last Judgment, in which a crowned figure emerges from his tomb below the archangel Michael ([Fig. 7](#)). Michael is, however, “oblivious to the emperor’s presence, and his attention is turned toward a man in bourgeois costume who is led toward him by an interceding angel from the side of the sinners.”<sup>37</sup> A man on the side of the blessed is simultaneously being “dragged by the hair” by another angel “toward the sinners.”<sup>38</sup> Polzer believes that the scene represents a reaction to events in local politics -- namely,

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<sup>35</sup> Joseph Polzer, “Andrea di Bonaiuto’s ‘Via Veritatis’ and Dominican Thought in Late Medieval Italy,” in *The Art Bulletin* (June 1995) <[http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0422/is\\_n2\\_v77/ai\\_17239636](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0422/is_n2_v77/ai_17239636)>.

<sup>36</sup> According to Wills, the act of Christ exposing his side wound is “always a symbol of mercy tempering justice” (55). The Christ in this image, however, seems wrathful rather than merciful, in spite of his gesture to his wound.

<sup>37</sup> Polzer, “Aristotle, Mohammed and Nicholas V in Hell,” 466-7.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid*, 467.

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the failed attempt of German emperor Ludwig of Bavaria to install his puppet pope Nicholas V in Rome, and his subsequent disgrace in the eyes of the Pisans.<sup>39</sup> Although Polzer does not know precisely whom these figures are supposed to represent, he suspects that the kingly figure is that of Ludwig, while the two men are “Pisans of note who participated on opposite sides in the political life of their city.”<sup>40</sup>

Although Polzer’s argument is not without merit, the dramatic scene of an apparent sinner being chosen to join the Elect, and of a seemingly blessed soul being relegated to the ranks of the damned, may be more than a commentary on contemporary politics. This “swapping” of souls could be an oblique reference to the existence of Purgatory and the belief that a Christian’s ultimate fate was not necessarily sealed upon death. We will probably never know why these two men have been singled out, but this scene reinforces the idea that there is no clear boundary between the saved and the damned. Behind the activity taking place in the foreground, we see more angels standing next to the sinners on Christ’s left-hand side. It is clear from the raised arms and threatening postures of some of these angels that they are menacing or punishing the sinners, but the actions of others are not so straightforward. For example, the angel standing next to St. Michael, directly behind the angel rescuing the soul of the sinner, seems to be reaching out for a man who is making eye contact with him. It is unclear

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<sup>39</sup> *ibid*, 464-8.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid*, 467.

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whether the angel is pushing this soul back toward the sinners, or drawing him out to join the blessed.

As stated above, the Hell scene has been expanded and given a separate space on the Camposanto wall. If the souls of the damned occupy this space, then who are the people standing adjacent to the Hell mountain, to the left of Christ? Perhaps these are souls whose fate has not yet been determined. In the lower right portion of the scene, a well-dressed lady clutches the arm of another woman and pulls her away from the base of the mountain, while others look on with concern -- such a show of compassion would be incongruous in a soul already damned and without hope of salvation. Many of the figures have their hands clasped together, seemingly in prayer ([Fig. 8](#)). They exhibit genuine signs of repentance and, according to Le Goff, it was believed that the contrition and internal conversion of a sinner could save him from eternal damnation.<sup>41</sup> The sinners to the left of Christ and Mary seem to exist in an eschatological grey area similar to Purgatory, where penitence could still have an impact on the fate of their souls. The image of a tonsured monk being pulled in opposite directions by an angel and a demon, present in the Triumph of Death scene to the right of the Last Judgment, is also worthy of note ([Fig. 9/ http://www.wga.hu/html\\_m/b/buffalma/1trium04.html](#)). This scene, which may hark back to Voragine's story of the monk whose soul was claimed by both demons and angels, reinforces the sense of uncertainty about when the ultimate fate of the soul was sealed.

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<sup>41</sup> Le Goff, 76.

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Although this paper will not explore it in depth, Giovanni Pisano's pulpit of Pisa Cathedral, executed between 1301 and 1310, also demonstrates the overlap between the realms of the saved and the damned. According to Shorr, the pulpit shows the Virgin in one scene standing among "the Blessed," some of whom "cling to her, imploring her aid"<sup>42</sup> (Fig. 10/ link unavailable). It is questionable whether these are, in fact, the blessed, as souls who are already saved would have no need of her intercession. Indeed, the expressions and postures of a number of the figures exhibit anxiety and fear -- not the feelings one would expect of the Elect. But neither are they the damned, who are represented in the adjacent panel as a mass of writhing, tormented figures (Fig. 11/ <http://rubens.anu.edu.au/htdocs/surveys/italren/pics.art/0198/19865.JPG>). Perhaps these are souls in Purgatory, begging the Virgin to reduce the time they must spend expiating their sins. Similarly, in Giovanni's Pistoia pulpit, the Virgin reaches out to Christ, who is enthroned above her, and bares her breast to him in a dramatic plea on behalf of the souls clinging to her garments (Fig. 12/ <http://rubens.anu.edu.au/htdocs/surveys/italren/pics.art/0198/19880.JPG>).

In another low-relief sculptural version of the Last Judgment, Lorenzo Maitani's marble panel on the façade of Orvieto Cathedral, dating from 1310-1330,<sup>43</sup> we again see a space that is neither Heaven nor Hell, in which souls clasp their hands together and beg for mercy from Christ enthroned in a mandorla (Fig. 13/ <http://www.wga.hu/>

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<sup>42</sup> Shorr, 212.

<sup>43</sup> Hartt, 153.

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[html\\_m/m/maitani/4pillar.html](#)). These souls are positioned above the figures of the resurrected and the damned, which occupy the first two levels of the pier; and below the levels portraying the souls of the Elect and the saints who sit next to Christ. Angels appear among these souls and apparently select some of them to be saved. One man on the right side of the panel is particularly conspicuous as he stands apart from the crowds of the saved and the damned, kneeling before an entwined grape vine and praying to Christ -- a representation, perhaps, of a soul doing penance or purgation for his sins. We do not know his ultimate fate, but he, like many of the other figures described in this paper, reminds the viewer that penitence and contrition are the keys to salvation. In conclusion, scholars such as Edgerton and Polzer may have over-simplified the representations of the Last Judgment in the thirteenth and fourteenth-centuries. Several major artists of this period, instead of portraying a clear-cut distinction between Heaven and Hell, created a space in their compositions where the souls of the dead could continue their struggle for salvation into the afterlife. The rising importance of Purgatory and the internal contrition of the sinner, as described by scholars such as Le Goff, may have contributed to this more complex vision of the End of Days.

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