Votive Churches, Reliquary Chapels, and Pilgrimage Shrines

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In contradistinction to the national and supra-national building programs of the New Orders (the Reformed Carmelites, Jesuits and Theatines, for example, with their more systematic and centralized approach to architectural design), the main characteristics of votive churches, reliquary chapels and pilgrimage shrines in the Renaissance and the Baroque are the specificity of the impetus to build them, their specificity of place and purpose, identification with a precise object or event, and their uniqueness of foundation as bespoke structures functioning as markers of special, holy sites to which people came to worship, often as pilgrims and, in the case of reliquary chapels, also to see or touch a specific cult object.[1]

Votive churches were churches built either because of a specific vow to God or to a saint (*votum*, *ex-voto*) during a period of crisis, or were built in gratitude for deliverance or salvation, without having been previously promised. Like the churches of the mendicant orders, these were generally located outside a city (*extra moenia*) and being built ex-novo, they generally implicated choosing an architectural form to be set within a landscape or extra-urban setting. These often have only spare architectural decoration and minimal decorative programs (painting cycles), because the focus remains on their function as a destination for pilgrims and processions, and in many cases these churches were only officially visited once a year and had no parochial status or activity. Architects designing votive churches that had no relics relied on planning strategies to ensure processional movement along a coherent itinerary through the building, with participants usually passing in front of a series of altars before exiting the church and either returning to the starting point of the procession or dispersing into the city or countryside.

Reliquary chapels were the larger architectural version of the original receptables used to house and protect holy relics, and these often ancillary spaces within churches were dedicated to the display, veneration and secure custody of relics within the context of a space in which the liturgy could also be celebrated. Because of their precious contents, and the power and status they represented for a town and its rulers, reliquary chapels were usually located somewhere in the heart of the urban fabric (*infra moenia*). They usually did not involve large-scale architectural design but rather the construction or modification of a single space or spaces within or adjacent to an existing church so that the intervention often implied a heightened relationship between architecture and sculpture functioning almost as large-scale liturgical furnishings and involving the fitting out of the reliquary chapel space. Reliquary chapels were usually located in highly frequented churches either because the presence of the relic caused the faithful to flock there, or because the church had been chosen as the location for the relic due to the frequency with which it was already visited, the status it had in the community, or the long association with a particular family such as the case of Santa Maria Incoronata di Canepanova, begun in 1492 to house the miraculous image of the Virgin owned by the Canepanova family.

Pilgrimage shrines represent a hybrid of these two above-mentioned categories: part faux-reliquary chapel, as a miraculous icon of the Madonna was not properly a relic, and part votive church, because a request for intercession (perhaps in response to war or the plague) was not the event that prompted the vote but rather a miracle or miracles. A shrine implies a holy place, relic or object, and also a special day of veneration or pilgrimage (*peregrinatio*).[2] Shrines could be located outside a town, such as Santa Maria della Consolazione at Todi of 1508 (Fig. 1), or in the heart of a city, such as Santa Maria dei Miracoli in Venice of 1481, because a key characteristic was the construction of the church on the precise site where the miraculous image was located.[3]

The specificity of site also was what prompted the construction of one of the best known shrines of the Renaissance: Donato Bramante's Tempietto in the cloister of the Franciscan friary of San Pietro in Montorio *c*. 1505, as it was here on the slopes of the Janiculum that Saint Peter was believed to have been executed. The stone with an inscription of 1502 that was buried in the foundations acquired the status of a relic (a faux-relic like miraculous icons) as the block on which Saint Peter's cross was erected, but as this was held to be the actual site of this saint's martyrdom this locus was so powerful that no relic was needed to prompt pilgrimage. The veneration of this martyr led to the building of his shrine (*martyria*) to commemorate the site of his martyrdom.[4] The architecture Bramante devised for this miniscule shrine immediately became celebrated and made the Tempietto a place of pilgrimage not only for the faithful but also for architects such as Sebastiano Serlio and Andrea Palladio, just to name two notable sixteenth-century visitors.

Pilgrimage shrines are mostly austere and have few, if any, other images so as not to draw attention away from the miracle-working object. Their primary function was to be a spatial container for ritual processions and visiting pilgrims and therefore what was required were coherent internal layouts aiding ceremonial itineraries. The exterior prominence within the larger urban or landscape setting was vital and thus for their design, architects focused on creating an impressive architectural structure, usually with a dome.

Centralized, Civic Pilgrimage Shrines

Because of their number, and because of their often innovative architectural forms, the specific Renaissance phenomenon of the civic pilgrimage church is of the greatest importance.[5] These were mostly dedicated to the Virgin whose feast of the Immaculate Conception was recognized

by Sixtus IV in 1476, and designed on a centralized plan surmounted with a prominent dome and built by civic and lay associations of a city as a result of popular devotion to a miracle-working icon of the Madonna.[6] The majority of new pilgrimage shrines (*scrinium*) constructed from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries were located on the periphery of a city or provincial town and their founding can be interpreted as a claim by the local citizens to establish a specific site of cult worship, thereby increasing the status of their quarter of the city with a beautiful new temple that would attract pilgrims and that would be distinct from the cathedral and the enormous mendicant churches.[7] Indeed, as Leon Battista Alberti remarked in his treatise, "I need not mention that a well-maintained and well-adorned temple is obviously the greatest and most important ornament of a city."[8]

These shrines came into being normally because the Virgin appeared to work a miracle and thereafter a church was built on that site, or because a Marian image that had been previously overlooked began to move, cry, or seep liquid from its front. The civic authorities, who usually paid for or greatly contributed to the cost of the construction of the new temple, generally resisted the attempts of religious orders to take control of the construction of the new church or to move its location from the precise spot of the miracle: at Lodi in 1488 for the Incoronata, which was erected on the site of an old brothel to honor the miraculous image of the Virgin over its entrance, the Council of the Comune opposed the request of the Dominican friars to officiate and by 1497 had obtained from Alexander VI recognition of the rights of the Citizens Council and the members of the newly established Confraternity of the Incoronata to participate in the governance of the church. The Council of Parma not only voted against a proposal of 1525 that would have transformed the Madonna della Steccata into a rectorate with control by the bishop, but threatened to strip citizenship from anyone who made this proposal again in the

future. In Venice, in the case of Santa Maria della Salute in 1631, the Republic avoided nominating any order to officiate the church until after its construction was well under way and then chose the Somascans, a local order, who could only take on their duties at the church after all the important design issues were settled (Fig. 2). This local control of new shrines, built as expressions of popular, communal religious devotion, characterizes the civic nature of these cult sites that affirmed the local identity of the citizens, council and, in some cases, important families. These sanctuaries called forth devotion across all classes and, by bringing together the whole community at least once a year, promoted the social cohesion that one associates with Renaissance confraternities, where like-minded members joined together in their dedication to charitable works.

The importance of building *in situ* was based on the belief that that precise spot was particularly holy and that only in that place would any further miracles be granted to pilgrims who would come there to pray for intercession.[9] It was this design condition that prompted much innovation, as architects sought to create a church that would respond effectively to the site, would be highly visible to pilgrims, and would attract and accommodate large numbers of visitors. Thus the contract of 1485 for the construction of the new church of the Madonna delle Carceri at Prato included restrictions intended to preserve the fortified wall on which the miraculous image of the Madonna was located, as well as the underground areas of the old prison into which the Virgin had descended.[10] The same held true for Santa Maria della Fortezza at Viterbo of 1523, where the church was also constructed on the external wall of the city, despite it presenting a security risk in providing cover for any attacking forces. At San Giovanni Valdarno, because the miraculous image was frescoed onto the wall directly over the entrance to

the city gate facing Siena in 1486 when the decision was taken to build a sanctuary dedicated to Santa Maria delle Grazie the structure was designed to enclose the frescoed wall.

Because these images were often found on the side of a road, in order to maintain them *in situ*, in some cases the street had to be deviated around the church site, such as at the Madonna della Quercia at Viterbo in 1465, or shifted further away from the new temple to accommodate the high altar that traditionally was set at the rear of the building, as occurred at Santa Maria della Pietà at Bibbona of 1482 and at Santa Maria della Croce near Crema in 1490. Because pilgrims first viewed these latter buildings diagonally when approaching, their architects chose centralized plans with three more or less equally important entrances and sides as impressively revetted as the facade. As the central plan offered great design flexibility due to the number of variations in its shape, from Greek cross to polygonal, its use facilitated accommodating the image in its original locus when siting the church in an urban or landscape context, especially a restricted one, such as the Madonna dell'Umiltà in Pistoia of 1485, built to house a miraculous image of the Virgin, where the dome dominates the city and serves as a marker in the heart of the town.[11] Of course, the central plan was also the expressed preference of architectural theorists from Alberti to Palladio, and the presence of a prominent dome reinforced these theoretical preferences and provided external visibility for the church in the urban setting.

The vicinity of a new church to the street onto which the image faced meant that its lateral doors set on the transversal axis were close enough to the road to encourage the pilgrim to pass through the shrine. Functional passageways through the sanctuary were the crucial requirement for such buildings. Architectural design that facilitated the internal procession of large numbers of people who passed in front of the miraculous image on the high altar, entering and exiting by way of lateral doors, often located in the transepts, was of such importance that

where the latter were lacking on occasion they were subsequently added to resolve the logistical problems caused by their absence. This was the case at Santa Maria del Calcinaio a Cortona where Francesco di Giorgio's original design of the 1480s had a single entrance.[12] This was unsatisfactory and two more entrances were added to the front of the transepts in 1509. Some shrines, when they were very small, did without a main entrance and only had pairs of doors set more or less on the transverse axis, such as Santa Maria della Peste at Viterbo of 1494, where the side of the hexagon opposite the altar contains a window to illuminate it and the two doors immediately adjacent permit the pilgrim to pass through the miniscule interior of this shrine.

External access could also pose a problem. At Cortona the image of the Virgin that began working miracles in 1484 was set over a bath or "calcinaio" on a creek running through a deep valley southeast of the town where shoemakers went to wash their leather. The Corporation of Calzolai that owned the site became the patrons, elected a committee and rapidly constructed a chapel to protect the image. Their idea for a church on this difficult site was solved by Francesco di Giorgio who built a tunnel to channel the water from the creek and create a dry foundation, adding an embankment in front of the church and excavating the living rock at its sides so that two ramps could be laid out to facilitate access by pilgrims. A longitudinal plan was chosen because the miraculous image was located deep in the valley and a centralized church would have been all but invisible from the Valdichiana plain, whereas the projecting nave greatly increased its visibility, as did the highly placed cupola set over a very tall church body. The front facades of the transepts and the main facade and nave walls were revetted in costly stone, whereas the walls not visible to the pilgrim from the front of the church were only covered in plaster.

An opposite process of architectural and urban design occurred at Scherpenheuvel in Belgium, where in 1605 the monarchs Albert and Isabella personally oversaw the design and construction of a new town to house in its main square a centralized church with a miraculous statue of the Virgin.[13] The domed heptagonal pilgrimage church and heptagonal piazza mirrored the external seven-sided walled fortifications. Designed in 1609 by Wenceslas Cobergher, the architectural iconography of the temple refers to the seven joys and the seven sorrows of the Blessed Virgin, and was based on a heptagonal enclosed garden designed by Albert. The statue is housed in an imposing high altar opposite the entrance where, as a result of the odd number of sides and structural supports, the longitudinal axis through the rotunda of this large domed church is abruptly terminated by the high altar and its icon because the architect used the choice of planimetric form to focus the visitor's attention there. The chief supervisor of the towns' fortifications stipulated that both the close-up and long-distance views towards the church be protected as processional groups would focus on the shrine as they approached from afar in their annual visit to the city. Isabella also implemented a *non aedificandi* regulation indicated on a map of 1630 intended as a preservation document that she entrusted to the officiating Oratorians before her death.

In contrast, when S. Maria in Campitelli in Rome was commissioned by Alexander VII in 1667 as a vote of thanks for the cessation of plague the project involved re-housing a miracle-working image of the Virgin in a new church set over the site of the earlier Santa Maria in Portico located in the heavily built up area adjacent to the Campidoglio. Carlo Rainaldi designed a hybrid longitudinal plan with pronounced transversal axes in the nave joined to a second, centralized space dominated by a large dome, while light penetrated the apse via an aperture with yellow colored glass set in high altar that housed the miraculous image in a comparable fashion

to the Cathedra Petri or Peter's throne, in New St. Peter's, one of the most important relics of Early Christianity.

Votive Churches

Votive churches were generally built to commemorate an event that was thereafter marked on its anniversary with a procession and Mass. As the cause for making such vows, positive events, such as military victories, were outweighed by negative ones, especially the plague, so the vote was more often the fulfillment of a pact or pledge entered into when heavenly intercession was requested by a community, rather than merely being a spontaneous offering of thanks for victory obtained. Generally these churches have neither relics nor miraculous images (at least at the outset) and function predominantly as destinations of urban processions and sites of ritual commemoration of the vote. Thus Santo Stefano della Vittoria at Foiano della Chiana was commissioned by Cosimo I to commemorate the victory on August 2, 1554, of the Imperial army over joint French-Sienese forces on the road between Arezzo and Montepulciano. This small but imposing domed octagonal chapel with two doors has no relic or miracle-working image but is one of a series of small, centralized memorial markers of votive intentions that were common in this period. Another is Santa Maria della Salute or "della Manna d'Oro" built in Spoleto in 1527 as a vote of thanks to the Virgin because the town remained unscathed by troops in the lead up to the Sack of Rome. In this case the shrine delimited one side of a square in the city, its urban context an appropriate choice of setting as it was the town and its community that were the beneficiary of grace.

The pair of votive *tempietti* built in 1453-4 on the city side of Rome's Ponte Sant'Angelo represents an unusual example of votive chapels intended to record a tragedy that occurred in the

Jubilee Year 1450.[14] On Saturday, December 19, when the pope decided not to display the Veil of Veronica, one of St. Peter's most treasured relics, the masses of pilgrims hastily returning over the Ponte Sant'Angelo to their lodgings in Rome became blocked on the bridge and over 200 of them died when they were either crushed in the panic or trampled underfoot, while others fell off the collapsing bridge and drowned in the freezing water. Nicholas V vowed to construct two *tempietti*, two regular octagonal chapels attached to the mouth of the bridge creating an impressive scenographic effect for the thousands of pilgrims who daily passed between them on their way to St. Peter's. These chapels (destroyed 1534) were modeled on Santa Maria delle Grazie in Florence of 1371, a shrine housing a miracle-working image of the Virgin set at the entrance to the Ponte delle Grazie that the pope must have known well, having grown up in Florence. These two *tempietti* were dedicated to Mary Magdalene and the Holy Innocents, strongly suggesting that they housed no miraculous images or relics, but that the iconographical choice of dedicatees symbolized the original catastrophe: innocents, in this case pilgrims, being massacred, while the Magdalene had funerary associations because she anointed Christ's body after his death and was a reformed sinner. The form of these *tempietti* influenced Santa Maria della Peste in Viterbo of 1494, which was built at the mouth of the Tremoli bridge.

It is in the second half of the sixteenth century that monumental, mainly civic, votive churches were built. In northern Italy as in Rome it was the plague that mostly brought about their creation: in Verona in 1559, in Milan and Venice in 1577, in Venice and throughout the Veneto in 1631, and in Rome in 1656. The debate that engulfed the construction of St. Peter's in Rome for a century – central or longitudinal plan, Greek or Latin cross – here reared its head as theory and architects' preferences favored centralized plans but practicality – accommodating large annual processions and thousands of pilgrims – favored longitudinal churches. Rotundas

with additional presbyterial and choral spaces, creating centralized buildings with strongly demarcated longitudinal axes within them, offered a successful solution to the problem.

The Madonna di Campagna begun in 1559 outside Verona has a hybrid function in that it houses a fourteenth-century image of the Virgin on a piece of wall that was moved here in 1561 and set behind the high altar, but the impetus for building this pilgrimage shrine – for grace received following a pledge – was the series of miracles worked by the image for the citizens of Verona who requested intercession following the famine of 1557-8 and the plague of 1559. The large, colonnaded exterior portico surrounding the tall, cylindrical rotunda offered shelter for pilgrims' repose after their long journeys to reach the shrine. Michele Sanmicheli established two clearly articulated axes through the main octagonal body: one from the main entrance through the tall rotunda to the second domed space where originally the miraculous image was to have been set on the high altar and another that aligned with the transverse entrances. The difficulties of constructing the new temple amid a continuous flurry of religious devotion came to the fore here as the miracle-working image was immediately placed in the small rectangular choir space that was built first while the numerous pilgrims were accommodated in the apsidal sanctuary preceding it. This arrangement was not subsequently altered even when the construction of the main rotunda was completed and thus the image does not dominate the main space or the sanctuary and its visual impact is therefore significantly less than at Scherpenheuvel where Cobergher's design choices ensured prominence for the miniscule miracle-working statue.

Sanmicheli's ideas were influential in northern Italy and Our Lady of Soccorso at Rovigo of 1594, built to house a miraculous image of the Virgin, has a domed octagonal rotunda surrounded by a colonnade and three entrances similarly disposed. After the plague of 1576-7 in Milan, Pellegrino Tibaldi designed San Carlo al Lazzaretto as a domed, octagonal arcade

originally open on all sides, while his San Sebastiano has a tall, cylindrical main body with an ancillary high altar space and three entrances from the street. This preference for centralized shrines with marked longitudinal axes was also the solution eventually adopted by Andrea Palladio for Il Redentore which was commissioned by the Venetian Senate on September 4, 1576, fulfilling a vow made during the worst period of the 1576-7 plague.[15] The small, idealizing centralized temple raised over a basement and preceded by steps and a portico that Palladio first proposed could never have accommodated the huge numbers of pilgrims that would have flocked to the building during the annual procession. The patrons rejected this initial project proposal and requested Palladio devise something more suitable. Hence he subsequently designed a large longitudinal nave with flanking chapels succeeded by an apsidal sanctuary and choir that together provided more effective purpose-built and interlinked spaces. The Doge and Signoria could now process through the nave to the apsidal sanctuary and be accommodated there in their purpose-built seating during their annual visit. Thus they occupied the most prestigious space under the dome facing the high altar, the most appropriate location as it was this group that represented the official fulfillment of the original vow requesting Christ's intercession to save the city from the plague (here no precious icon or relic was present).

Half a century later in similar circumstances, on October 22, 1630, the Venetian government commissioned the new church of Santa Maria della Salute and vowed to hold an annual procession on November 21.[16] Baldassare Longhena won the design competition with his conception for an enormous centralized church in which an ambulatory enclosed the octagonal rotunda. This explicitly provided a clear itinerary for the processional movement of the thousands of members of the confraternities and regular clergy who passed through the church on its feast day. Longhena made this clear in the original memorandum accompanying his

design: "between the large nave of the church and the chapels, there will be space for being able to go around and around with the processions of the main feast days without the impediment of the people that one finds in the middle of the church." Thus the processional groups would enter the church by one of the two side doors included in the design to specifically facilitate their entrance and exit. Then they would process around the rotunda passing all six altars of the rotunda, and then they would leave through the other side door, an elegant and efficient arrangement that remedied Palladio's single entrance solution for the Redentore.

The basilica of the Nativity of Mary, known as the Sanctuary of Vicoforte, near Mondovì in Piedmont represents a hybrid votive church and pilgrimage shrine housing a miraculous image. Its construction was prompted by an accident when in 1590 a hunter shot a fifteenth-century fresco of the Madonna and Child that was found on a pillar of a medieval building and, as a consequence, it started bleeding. Hanging up on the pillar adjacent to the image his arquebus that had prompted the miracle, the hunter began collecting funds to repair the damage. Quite soon the place became a pilgrimage site and in 1596 Carlo Emanuele I, Duke of Savoy, commissioned a new temple from Ascanio Vitozzi to house the frescoed pillar and gun that were rehoused on the high altar set in the main oval space of this enormous elliptical church where the gun symbolizes the original vote of the hunter, the frescoed pillar the miracle working image, and the sponsorship of the new temple by the House of Savoy part of a dynastic strategy of building magnificent new pilgrimage shrines and reliquary chapels as a manifestation of their power.

Reliquary Chapels

The bodies of saints were the holiest of relics; that of Saint Peter in Rome and of Saint Mark in Venice, two of the Four Evangelists, were among the most revered, but usually relics of this importance were housed in or under the high altar of a titular church and not in a separate chapel. At the next level of importance were contact relics, such as the Nativity Crib, the Veil of Veronica, the Holy Shroud, and fragments of the True Cross, or founding relics of Christianity such as the Cathedra Petri, all of which had unique spatial and architectural solutions for their safekeeping and display. The Arca del Santo, the tomb chapel of Saint Anthony of Padua,[17] the Holy House of Loreto, and the stupefying architectural display by Guarino Guarini in the 1660s to display the Shroud of Turin are all bespoke architectural solutions that defy categorization (Fig. 3).

The process by which relics could be created, housed, moved, and transformed by their architectural and urban setting is important. For example, the Compagnia di Santa Maria di Orsanmichele, the largest Florentine confraternity, built a replacement grain loggia in 1351 that housed Andrea Orcagna's tabernacle with its "replacement" image: Bernardo Daddi's newly painted panel of the Virgin that substituted the miracle-working original badly damaged by fire in 1304.[18] The Compagnia later decided to fill in the arches of the loggia to transform it an oratory, shield it from the street, and create a gloomy and more suggestive interior for the tabernacle, an aesthetic preference that became widespread and that was usually achieved either by using much colored glass or having very few windows in order not to distract focus from the image. Candle-lit shrines also had an economic relevance: at Orsanmichele over 3000 candles a day were purchased and these were often set on the balustrade with screens of metal and marble that functioned as a barrier between the image and the faithful; a similar situation pertained at the

SS. Annunziata in Florence of 1448, where candles illuminated the image and represented the pilgrims' presence.[19]

An equally telling example is the Tribune of the Reliquaries designed by Michelangelo for the de' Medici family in 1530-1 on the internal facade wall of San Lorenzo in Florence.[20] The task was to house forty-five relics, some of which had been collected by Piero il Gottoso and his son Lorenzo the Magnificent and, until then, stored in the Medici Palace in Via Larga, while others had been collected from Constantinople by Leo X de' Medici, who had had them all remounted in specially made vases with lids. Michelangelo translated the relics to a balcony above the main entrance of the church, an idea derived from a similar balcony built in 1434-8 at Santo Stefano at Prato for the ostension of the Sacra Cintola della Madonna. This solution represented a significant shift away from Michelangelo's first proposal that followed Roman tradition to house relics in a ciborium and rendered the relics visible only from a great distance but avoided the danger of their theft.

The Neapolitan example of Cardinal Oliviero Carafa's forcible translation of the relics of San Gennaro from the outlying monastery of Montevergine to the cathedral in the heart of the city (and the successive renovation of the Succorpo reliquary chapel in 1497-1508 to better accommodate them in their new home) was well-known.[21] Spurred on by decrees regarding the veneration of saints promulgated at the Council of Trent, Philip II of Spain did something similar when he donated to the royal monastery of the Escorial one of the largest collections of relics in all Catholicism (a combination of acquisitions both on the 'market' and compulsory). Over 7500 relics were stored in 570 sculpted reliquaries designed by Juan de Herrera and distributed throughout the monastery, with the most important being concentrated in the basilica. Unlike these physical translations, a translation of a more mystical kind was the miraculous

transportation of the Holy House, the chamber from Nazareth in which Jesus was born, to Loreto.[22] Once there, on this hilltop town in the Marches, the Santa Casa was enclosed in a large basilica built from 1468, where pilgrims could enter and pray inside the relic rather than merely glimpse it from a distance or touch its exterior.

In cases such as Turin, the relic of the Holy Shroud was so closely identified with the Savoy family dynasty that it was taken by the family from Chambery to Turin and was housed in a type of Palatine chapel in the cathedral attached to the ruling house's residence.[23] By the 1660s, each May 6 when the Shroud was brought in procession from the cathedral and displayed in front of the ducal residence, in a ritual procession carefully designed and controlled by the master of ceremonies, the ostension could be conveniently maintained well above the crowd gathered on the piazza, as part of much larger architectural-urban itinerary. After 1668, when Guarino Guarini's ducal Chapel of San Lorenzo and reliquary chapel for the shroud were finished, this prized relic, which was only rarely and briefly displayed, was instead housed in and represented by Guarini's wondrous architecture.

St. Peter's has some of the most important relics, such as the Sudarium or Veil of Veronica housed in a raised chapel set behind the southwest dome pier, and the Cathedra Petri. In the 1630s the latter was moved from the sacristy into the chapel closest to the door of the basilica and there set in a reliquary altarpiece designed by Gianlorenzo Bernini and cast in bronze. However, in the late 1650s the Fabbrica of St. Peter's decided, given its location at the entrance to the church, to use this chapel as a baptistery, and Bernini was then able to make this relic the centerpiece of his solution for the difficult task of completing the apse decoration in such as way that it did not overshadow the high altar and his spectacular baldacchino, but did manage to conjure up an appropriately dignified setting for such an important relic and such an

important part of the basilica. The confection of marble, stucco, and colored glass that Bernini

conjured up to enclose and exalt the Cathedra Petri (Chair of St. Peter) in the Apostle's church in

Rome (Fig. 4) is one of the two most spectacular Baroque reliquaries along with Guarini's

Chapel of the Holy Shroud in Turin.[24]

Suggestions for Further Reading:

Adorni, Bruno ed. *La chiesa a pianta centrale: tempio civico del Rinascimento* (Milan: Electa, 2002).

Conforti, Claudia ed. *Lo specchio del cielo: forme significati tecniche e funzioni della cupola dal Pantheon al Novecento* (Milan: Electa, 1997).

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Guidarelli, Gianmario. "Le chiese in Europa," in *Luoghi, spazi, architetture*, eds. Donatella Calabi and Elena Svalduz, *Il Rinascimento italiano e l'Europa* 6 (Vicenza: Colla, 2010), 661–86, 814–19.

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Thuno, Erik, and Gerhard Wolf, eds. *The Miraculous Image in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Bretschneider: Rome, 2004).

Captions:

1. Baldassare Peruzzi and others, Santa Maria della Consolazione, Todi, 1504-1617. (Photo: Vanni / Art Resource, N.Y.)

2. Baldassare Longhena, Santa Maria della Salute, 1631, Venice. (Photo Credit: Erich Lessing / Art Resource, N.Y.)

3. Guarino Guarini, Chapel of the Shroud of Turin, Duomo, Turin, 1668. (Photo Credit: Scala / Art Resource, N.Y.)

4. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, The Cathedra (Chair) of St. Peter, St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican State, 1647-53. (Photo Credit: Scala / Art Resource, N.Y.)

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[1] Paul Davies, "Studies in the Quattrocento centrally planned church" (PhD diss., University of London, 1992); Sofia Boesch Gajano et al., eds, *Santuari d'Italia: Lazio* (Rome: De Luca, 2010); Gianmario Guidarelli, "Le chiese in Europa," in *Luoghi, spazi, architetture*, eds. Donatella Calabi and Elena Svalduz, Il Rinascimento italiano e l'Europa 6 (Vicenza: Colla, 2010), 661-86, 814-19, www.santuaricristiani.iccd.beniculturali.it.

[2] Peter and Linda Murray, *The Oxford Companion to Christian Art and Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 391-3.

[3] Mario Piana and Wolfgang Wolters, eds., *Santa Maria dei Miracoli a Venezia: la storia, la fabbrica, i restauri* (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2003).

[4] Murray, op.cit. 488.

[5] See the essays in Bruno Adorni, ed., *La chiesa a pianta centrale: tempio civico del Rinascimento* (Milan: Electa, 2002). See also Dominique Julia and Phillipe Boutry, eds., *Pèlerins et pèlerinages dans l'Europe moderne* (Rome: École Française, 2000); Gaetano Dammacco and Giorgio Otranto, eds., *Profili giuridici e storia dei santuari cristiani in Italia* (Bari: Edipuglia, 2004).

[6] See the many important essays in Claudia Conforti, ed., *Lo specchio del cielo: forme significati tecniche e funzioni della cupola dal Pantheon al Novecento* (Milan: Electa, 1997); Erik Thuno and Gerhard Wolf, eds., *The Miracuolous Image in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Bretschneider: Rome, 2004).

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